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HANDS AND
TURKISH 
PRISONS  
1914-1918 

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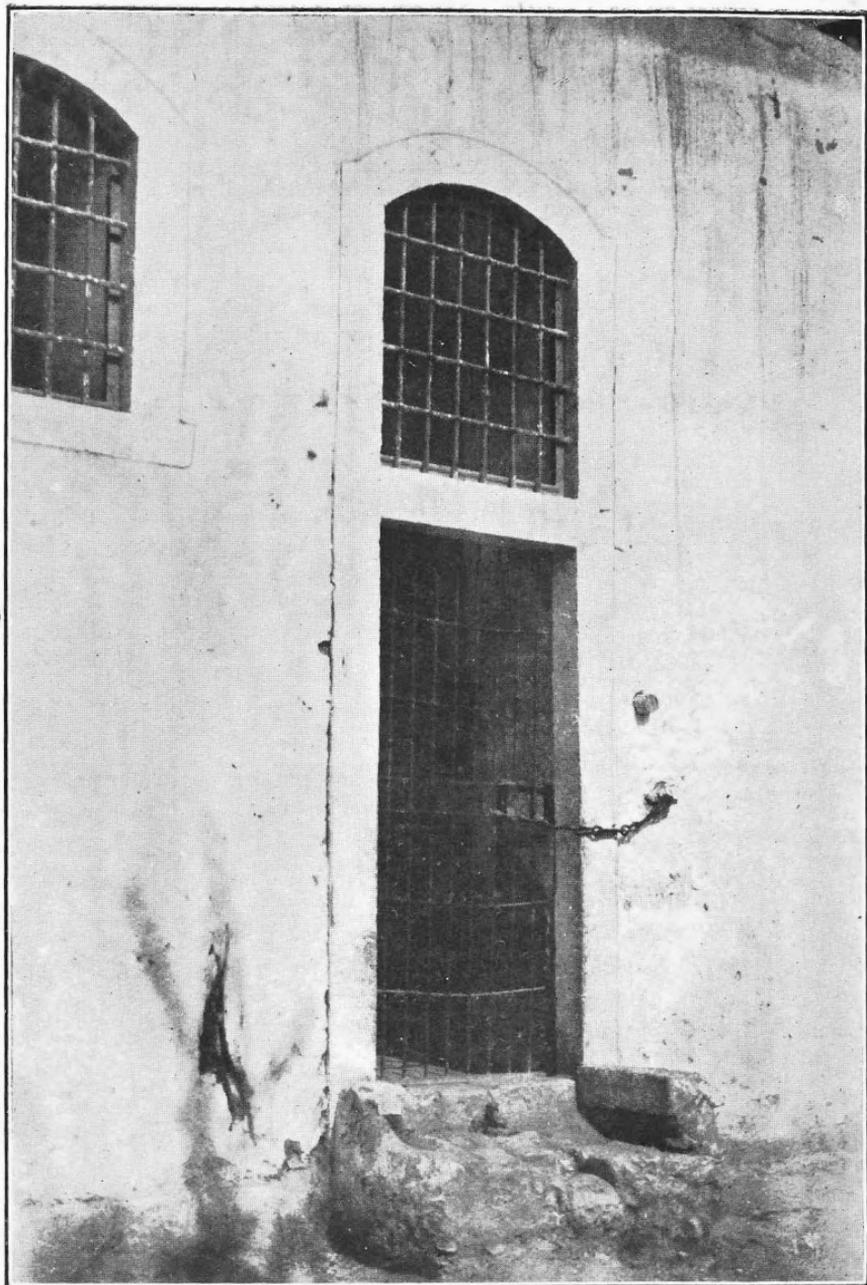


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[A. FORDER.

The iron gate of the cell in the Damascus prison that for two years stood between the writer and liberty

Frontispiece.

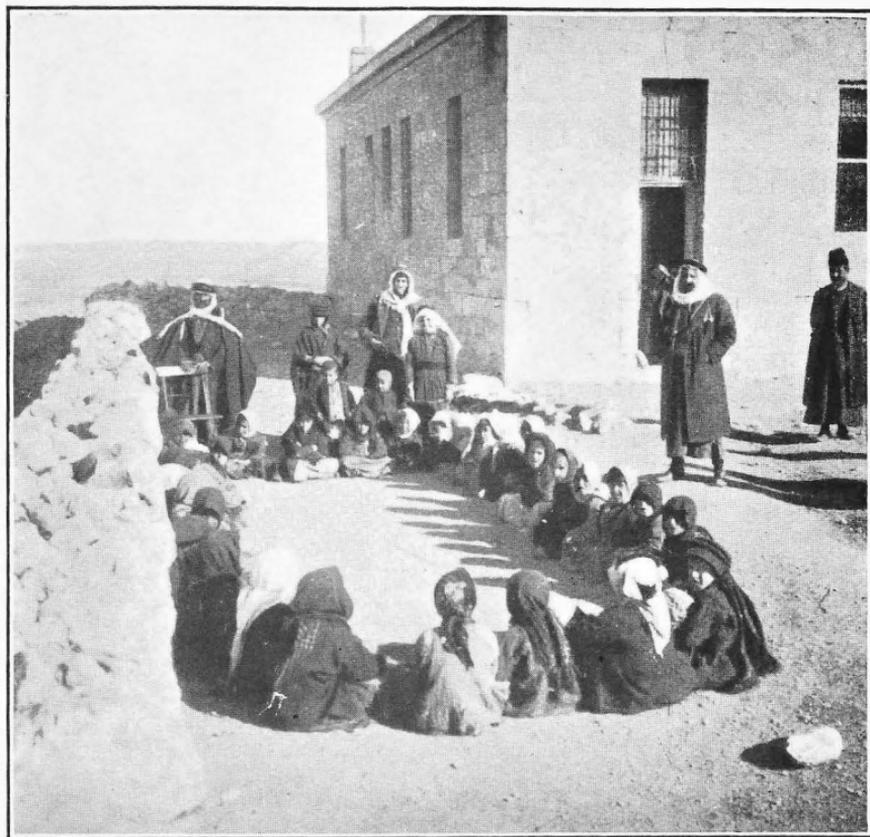


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[A. FORDER

A school of Arab boys in the Bawdee. They prefer the warmth of the sun to the cool of the schoolroom

IN BRIGANDS' HANDS
AND TURKISH PRISONS
1914-1918

BY A. FORDER

ILLUSTRATED BY AUTHOR'S OWN PHOTOGRAPHS

MARSHALL BROTHERS, LIMITED
LONDON EDINBURGH NEW YORK

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TO

**FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT ALLENBY, G.C.M., G.C.M.G., K.C.B., C.B.,
FROM WHOM THE AUTHOR RECEIVED MUCH KINDNESS AFTER THE
BRITISH OCCUPATION OF DAMASCUS HAD RESTORED TO HIM HIS LONG-
LOST LIBERTY.**

Foreword

AN APPRECIATION

DURING the early days of the occupation of Moab and the districts east of the Jordan by the Sherifian troops, another officer and I proceeded to visit those historic regions. We crossed the Dead Sea by motor-boat and landed on the eastern side. Soon after going ashore, we met an Arab from Kerak, who inquired about one named Abu Jirius, in whose welfare he seemed much interested. Fortunately, we were acquainted with the story of Abu Jirius and were able to give a satisfactory reply to the native of the natural citadel in the ancient land of Moab.

We made the steep ascent to Kerak on foot, and found ourselves among the hospitable chiefs of the warlike tribes who even to this day engage in constant feuds not unlike those of Scottish clans in former days. Again, many were the inquiries about Abu Jirius, and great was their satisfaction when we assured them he was alive and well.

We met with the same inquiries as we traversed the tableland of the Trans-Jordan, and many were the expressions of thanks from our Arab and Bedouin friends when we assured them of the well-being of Abu Jirius. This man, in whom the sons of the wilderness showed such a great interest, is none other than the author of this book, who has spent the best part of his life minis-

Foreword

tering to the physical, mental, and spiritual needs of the people of Moab and Edom.

If such an impression can be made on these nomad and semi-pastoral peoples, then the author and his work deserve every encouragement. It gives me great pleasure to write these words of appreciation, and I wish all success to Abu Jirius and this volume as it goes out to the world of readers.

I. N. CAMP.

*(Formerly serving with the British Army
in Palestine and Trans-Jordania).*

JERUSALEM,
September, 1919.

Preface

FRIENDS are responsible for my sending out another volume to add to the "making of books." Critical friends, whose only complaint of former books has been that I have said too little about myself. Exacting friends, who say that the public should know more than I have written about myself. Interested friends, who want to know what has followed former books, and numerous unknown readers who have frequently written me, saying, "Write more about the Arabs, their life and country." To try and please the foregoing I have put together the pages of this book, hoping that my many and varied friends will find something of interest in it, and thus gain an added interest in the people of the Bawdee.

Of necessity the personal pronoun will be prominent, but as far as possible it shall be obliterated, lest it jar too much on the reader's ears.

Chapters XVIII, XIX, and XX are inserted, to put into permanent form the papers read at a Bible-school in Jerusalem, this too at the request of hearers and friends.

My incarceration as a political prisoner in Damascus for four years, during the late war, gave me time and opportunity for writing what is herein contained. Any repetitions, errors in dates, names, or such like, must be pardoned by the reader, for the absence of all books and papers to refer to is the cause of any such.

Preface

More need not be said. To what I believe is a kindly disposed public, I send *In Brigands' Hands and Turkish Prisons*, with one wish only, that it may prove instructive, interesting and helpful to all into whose hands it may come.

Writing it has whiled away time in captivity ; may it also while away the time of thousands who enjoy their liberty in other lands.

A. FORDER.

JERUSALEM,
September, 1919.

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CHAPTER I

BEHIND PRISON BARS

IT was Friday morning, November 6, 1914, one of those cool, clear, beautiful days that can only be known by those resident in Palestine during the autumn. I had been to the city to buy fresh eggs from the peasants, and was returning, and had nearly reached home, when from a carriage coming toward me there suddenly alighted two Turkish soldiers and an officer. They seized me and asked if my name was Forder, to which I answered in the affirmative. One of the soldiers, the only one that could speak Arabic, then told me that they had orders to arrest me, and take me to the military authorities, whose headquarters were in the barracks inside the Jaffa Gate. I was hustled into the carriage and driven to the gate of the barracks, and ushered inside, but without any idea why I had been arrested. After waiting about an hour I was taken before two officers, one of whom handed me a packet of letters among which were some I had written to relations and friends in England and America. It must be explained that as there was no mail service from Jerusalem, because of war conditions, many residents took occasion to send letters by a gentleman leaving for Egypt, for him to mail on arrival there. By some means, not yet fully understood, these letters were seen and taken by the official in the Jaffa custom house, and as they all, more or less, savoured of local news concerning the excitement caused by the declaration

In Brigands' Hands and Turkish Prisons

of war between Turkey and the Powers, they were considered a great catch.

My letters were the first to be read and acted upon. The paper on which they were written was, to the authorities, suspicious looking, because on it were printed the words, "To Evangelize Ishmael," which to them savoured of a political propaganda. As mine were the only letters acted upon, the reader may be interested to know why the other writers escaped punishment and what became of their epistles, many of which stated facts and things concerning military movements and activity which were more important than anything I had penned. After my epistles had been separated from the bundle, the rest were sent in an official envelope to the office of the court-martial, then in Jerusalem. No doubt the intention was to call up the writers and examine and punish them for their thoughtlessness in writing so fully and freely at such a critical time, but such intention was upset and an investigation made impossible in a manner quite unexpected and unusual, which saved all the writers such experiences as I had, but which evidently caused me to become the scapegoat for all. Suddenly from the office of the military court the letters vanished.

How did it happen? Thus:

One afternoon late, an old Russian Jew was hailed before the court on some charge which neither he nor any outsider knew about. As the Jew could not speak Turkish, nor any of the officials Russian, little could be done on either side. At last, tired and angry, the chairman of the court shouted at the culprit before him, and then with his associates got up and left the room, leaving the Jew alone. As the chairman shouted, probably saying, "Get out of here, you Jewish dog, for we can make nothing of you," he seized the bundle of letters lying on the table before

Behind Prison Bars

him, and threw them at the Jew's head. Of course they fell on the ground and remained there, whilst the angry and weary investigators made for their homes. The Jew, finding himself alone, stooped down and seized the bundle, not knowing what it was, put it under his greasy and ragged coat, and left the room too. No sentry stopped his exit, so with his bundle of unknown contents he made his way to the Italian Consul, then in charge of Russian affairs, told him what had happened, and finished his visit by giving him the letters. The Consul, on looking at the bundle, saw that they were English and American letters, so took or sent them to the American Vice-Consul whom he found in his hotel. The latter shut himself in his room and quickly investigated the contents of this unfortunate package, and realizing how dangerous they were to the writers, called for the chambermaid to light a fire in the stove in his bedroom, and then alone and unseen wisely burnt this bundle of incriminating evidence against innocent, but unwise, scribes. Otherwise, no doubt, they would have made the acquaintance of the inside of a Turkish prison, as did I, whose letters escaped the flames, and were the cause of the experiences chronicled in this record. Strange it was, that both concerned in the destruction of the letters were Jews, and if the Gentiles who penned those epistles have nothing else to thank the Hebrews for, at least they can be grateful to these two for rendering them valuable service at such a critical time in their lives.

But to return to my own affairs. I noticed that my letters were in several places underlined with red ink, sentences which had references to local matters being thus indicated. I may explain, however, that I had made not one allusion to affairs military, or warlike preparations. I would also point out to the reader that my letters were written and dated seventeen days before the declaration

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of war between Great Britain and Turkey, so that legally the authorities had no right to hold me up, or punish me, for what was done before the commencement of hostilities. I will admit that in some of my letters I had made remarks about the Government that, although true, were not complimentary, but, strange to say, in my examination and trial by the court-martial later on, no reference was made to any of the things I had written about the authorities.

One of the officers asked me if I was the writer of the letters, to which I answered in the affirmative. He then bullied and rated me in a manner unbecoming one in such a position as he held. He threatened me with death by shooting ; he told me I should be thrashed by the soldiers every day, and such-like intimidations, and finished up by ordering two soldiers to remove me and put me in safe keeping until such time as some decision was made about me. Between fixed bayonets I was marched into the inner court of the barracks, and put into a small vaulted room some fifteen feet square. This had been used as a stable previous to my occupation of it, and was in a filthy condition. There was an apology for a door, and a windowless window, both facing the direction from which the wind and rain came, so that I was frequently exposed to the storm, and my clothes and bedding drenched by the rain that was blown in on me. In the centre of the floor, which was of damp earth, was a well, into which was drained the dirty water of the large courtyard outside, and as the yard was in a filthy condition from numerous cattle and animals, the water was consequently very strongly scented. Besides, the well emitted bad smells and bred millions of hungry and vicious mosquitoes. The door was guarded day and night by a sentinel with fixed bayonet, who was forbidden to speak to me, or procure for me either food or water. Fire was forbidden me,

Behind Prison Bars

and I was not even allowed outside for exercise. A few shavings that were in one corner of the room were taken away, so that nothing was left for me to sit or lie on save the damp earth.

At last, through the intervention of the U.S. Consul, I was allowed a camp-bed and chair, and food was sent me daily from my home. But alas for the food that reached me, for between the outer gate of the barracks and my cell the contents of the basket diminished considerably by passing through the hands of numerous officers and soldiers. Communication with my family or friends was forbidden me, and during the thirty-seven days I was confined in the barracks, my wife was allowed to visit me only twice. From all that was gathered at the time, the intention of the authorities was to liberate me after a short confinement, but alas for me, a German in Jerusalem, a bitter hater of our nation, took upon himself to telegraph official headquarters in Damascus that "an English spy named Forder had been taken in Jerusalem, and that he knew the country and people better than any other." Once this information had reached Damascus my liberation became almost impossible to the local authorities, for they began to receive telegrams ordering them to send me to the military court in the capital of Syria. However, my departure was delayed, whether intentionally or otherwise I cannot say.

One morning, after thirty-seven days' confinement in the damp cell, I was called before an officer, and told that I was to go to the military court for my trial, so between three soldiers with fixed bayonets I was conducted through the bazaar and streets of Jerusalem to a house outside the Damascus gate. But no court was sitting, so I was kept waiting, a gazing-stock for passers-by, till near sunset. Then a young officer appeared, who, after asking me a few simple questions, informed

In Brigands' Hands and Turkish Prisons

me that I was to be sent to the common prison for confinement among the criminals there, and to await further trial. Two guards escorted me thither, and turned me over to the guardian of the prison, who in turn handed me to one of the keepers, who landed me in a small room, about 15 × 10 feet in size, and which already contained fourteen men. There was little enough room for me, and the prisoners resented another being crowded in among them. But there was no remedy and no one to appeal to.

How shall I describe the inside of that hell upon earth? It contained twelve hundred prisoners, mostly Moslems. Many were condemned for life, and many were there awaiting their trial. After one, two or three years of confinement many knew not why they were imprisoned, and the trial of others had stretched over months and years without any end in view.

We were allowed out of our cells all day to sit or walk in a yard some fifty yards square, on to which some twenty-four cells opened, each cell being secured by double iron doors which were all locked one hour before sunset. The authorities make no provision for prisoners in the way of clothes, bedding, food, except three small loaves daily (and this was refused me), and water. Each had to manage for himself, consequently it went hard with a stranger who had no one to bring him things from outside. Of the sanitary arrangements and filthiness of the prison the less said the better; they were abominable, disgusting and a disgrace to any Government. And what shall I say about the bugs, rats, lice and other vermin with which the place and each prisoner swarmed? For decency's sake, I will say nothing, only I may say that that was the hardest part to bear through all the months of my long confinement.

As the space in the cell into which I was put was

Behind Prison Bars

already occupied, I had to take a place near the door, so that all who went out or came in had to step over me and even on my bed and covering, so that it soon became unfit for use. The nights were the hardest to bear, for the Orientals abhor fresh air, and even the slits in the wall which served as windows were stuffed up to exclude all air; the door, too, was shut. What with vile tobacco smoke, charcoal fumes, and the smell from dirty, unwashed bodies, the atmosphere was enough to poison the strongest. And yet men live through it. In such a place I spent three months, the last month in a small room with two others, but the change was a bad one, for neither sun nor wind entered the place, and the walls ran water continually from the excessive dampness.

One afternoon I was called to the court-martial for a second time. Again I was marched between fixed bayonets, as though I were the greatest, worst, and most dangerous criminal in the empire. One officer was in attendance; he examined me as to my pedigree, calling and presence in the land, but no reference was made to the letters or anything with which I was charged. He spent time, energy and breath in bullying and cursing me, probably with the idea of making me angry, and getting me to say something he could take hold of; but I let him do the talking, and said little, which only enraged him all the more. The examination or bullying over, I was taken back to the prison without knowing any more than I did when I went out.

I must not forget to say that free fights among the prisoners were a daily occurrence, and frequently many were seriously hurt. Toward the latter end of my stay in the Jerusalem prison, a fight occurred which became so fierce and serious that a squad of soldiers was called to quell it. They fired on the contending prisoners

In Brigands' Hands and Turkish Prisons

through the bars of the gate, killing six and wounding others. Of course, an investigation followed, and among others who came with the officials was the head of police. On their arrival in the prison yard we were all lined up for inspection, and the leaders in the fight were called out to answer for their bad behaviour. They were bound with hands behind them, then thrown face down on the ground, their bare feet secured and turned sole upward, and then beaten with canes until the flesh was a mass of pulp sodden with blood. Need I attempt to describe the shrieks of those unfortunate men, or repeat their appeals for clemency or mercy? My blood boiled at such a sight, and at such sounds; but what could I do, for all about us were soldiers with loaded rifles and fixed bayonets, and guards with iron bars and huge clubs, each ready to attack us should any one show signs of moving or interfering. The beating over, the poor fellows crawled away to their cells, followed by their hard-hearted persecutors who lavished blows freely and heavily on their heads and backs, until they reached the shelter of their dirty dens. And why did they fight? some will ask. Because for twenty-four hours some of them had been without bread, and hunger forced them to steal bread from their fellows who had little enough for themselves. Such scenes I frequently saw, and now understand the use of the bastinado, and the torture and agony caused by such inhuman treatment.

The day following the above scene I was called to the barred gate of the prison yard to see the director of the prison. He was accompanied by a policeman, who asked me my name, nationality, charge against me, and many such questions, all answers to which he wrote down, and then went away. Later came another officer and asked much the same questions, and later again came the prison director who told me that I

Behind Prison Bars

was to go at once to the police station, but for what purpose he knew not. Some few minutes' walk brought me before the head of the police, who told me that he had noticed me among the prisoners when he was at the prison the day before. He had asked the director of the prison about me, but he could give him no particulars, because no committal papers had been sent him by the court-martial. He told me also that he had received five urgent telegrams from Damascus ordering him to send me there, but that he had failed to find me although he had asked the director of the prison about me, and it was only by seeing me that he thought I was the one wanted. He was indignant, and expressed himself freely, that one like myself had been treated as I had, and finished up by telling the policeman who had brought me from the prison to return with me, get my few things that were there, and bring me again to him.

So after nearly three months of misery amidst uncongenial companions, abominable filth, and abundance of vermin, I bade farewell to the Jerusalem prison, not knowing where my lot would be cast next. On returning to the head of police he asked me about my family and home, and then, to my surprise, told me that I was at liberty to go to them, accompanied by a policeman. Imagine the amazement of my wife and daughter at seeing me walk into the house just before noon, and their joy at hearing that I had done with the prison for a time at least. The policeman, who was a nice, kindly, considerate man, left me alone, telling me he would return at four o'clock to escort me back to the police station, which time was specified by the head of the organization.

I returned fifteen minutes before the time. The good man asked me, "Why did you return so early? why did you not stay and sup with your family?" to

In Brigands' Hands and Turkish Prisons

which I replied, that I did not like to take advantage of his kindness, or to disobey his orders. He then asked the officer about my home and family, and evidently was pleased with his answer, for he told me, "Go and stay with your family until I call for you, and unless I hear again from Damascus I shall not send you there, but eventually release you, for there appears to be nothing against you here." Thus was I treated by this intelligent, kindly inclined Turk, who, I regret to say, was later on sent into exile, where he died, because he inclined to mercy, and was favourable to foreigners.

For eight days I enjoyed the comfort, cleanliness and society of my home and loved ones. On the morning of the ninth day I was called before my kind friend again, who told me that during the night he had received another telegram to the effect that, if he failed to send me immediately to Damascus, he himself must go there to answer why.

He had no option now but to send me, and I must be ready to leave in two hours. A few necessaries were packed, hurried farewells taken, and accompanied by the same kindly disposed officer I left for Damascus.

By carriage and train we reached the so-called Pearl of the Desert, and the next day in company of the U.S. Consul and my official companion I appeared before the court-martial of Damascus. Having given me into the hands of the authorities, the policeman left me, for his duty was done. After some talking and deliberation it was settled that I could remain at liberty in the city, the Consul being surety for my appearance. Thinking the matter settled, and considering myself a prisoner of war on parole, I left the court and went to an hotel to arrange about my stay there.

Next morning, early, I was called and told by a policeman that at 3 p.m. I must appear before the military court. At the time appointed I was there.

Behind Prison Bars

Behind a long table sat some officers, only one of whom could speak Arabic. They asked me if I could speak Turkish, to which I replied in the negative. I asked for an interpreter, so that there should be no mistake or misunderstanding in what was said between us, but they said it was unnecessary, and besides they had no one, although, before I entered the court, a young man had spoken to me in English, telling me he was the official interpreter. A few simple questions were asked me about my past life, my present work, and means of support, which questions I answered truthfully and simply, only to be told that I lied, and it would be better for me to tell the truth if I wished to avoid death. Then came a time of abuse, intimidation, and bullying, all with the idea of getting me angry and saying something they could catch hold of. But I heard all and said little. The vile, disgusting, filthy things they said about my wife and daughter will not bear repetition, my wonder being that men in high positions should soil their mouths and allow themselves to utter such things. But such they did. I was next told that I was an informer and spy, and as such should be shot, that people like myself were responsible for the war, that I received from our Government a thousand pounds yearly to report to them the doings of the Ottoman authorities, and that I paid a cook six hundred of the amount to make me good food and drink, that I was a stirrer-up of strife among the Bedouin against the Government, and that the letters I had written were all secret, and did not mean what they said. They also told me that they had the code to interpret the letters, and that by inquiry they had found out that the supposed relations and friends to whom they were addressed were none other than prominent officials connected with my Government. What could I say to such things? **Everything** I said was replied to by the words, " You

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are a liar ; tell the truth, or you'll be shot in the morning." At last I ceased to speak, which angered them more, so they had a long conference together, and finally told me that they considered me guilty of five charges, viz. :

1. Being a missionary when mission work was prohibited by the abolishing of the capitulations.

2. Inciting young men in England to enlist and fight against the Turks.

3. Telling in a letter that German officers were in Jerusalem.

4. Telling my wife to write letters stating that a massacre was imminent.

5. Encouraging my daughter to send letters without her proper signature (she having written to a girl friend and signed her nickname when at school).

I was asked what I had to say in defence, but the same words were used to all I said, viz. : " You lie." Then another whispering among themselves, which ended by my being asked, " Can you give us two hundred pounds? If so, it will be well with you ; if not, we shall treat you as your people do ours in Egypt, and shoot you." I said I had no money to give them, and was ready for whatever they did to me.

This ended my trial before the military court in Damascus, and an hour later found me lodged in the prison inside the old castle, not knowing for how long, or what was to befall me. Here let me state that, in spite of intimidation, bullying, and all that I endured before and from the court, half of those sitting in judgment on me were inclined to my release, as there was really no definite or serious charge against me, but the vote of the chairman against me made a majority of one, so I was committed to prison.

One of the officers of the court himself told a friend of mine, that it was unfair and a disgrace that I was



Photo by]

[A. FORDER.

**Aleya, the healed leper woman who carried food to the Author whilst in the
Jerusalem prison**

To face p. 24



Ahmed Jamal Pasha, Turkish Commander-in-Chief of the Fourth Army Corps

To face p. 25

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treated as I was, but the feeling against the British was so bitter during the first year of the war, that the Turks were only too glad to vent their spite and revenge on any of my nationality that fell into their clutches.

CHAPTER II

WAITING FOR DEATH

ON delivery to the keeper of the prison I was put into the worst place possible. This was a room some twenty yards square in which were sixty-seven men, our numbers being increased daily until there was no space to lie down, and newcomers tried to sleep leaning against the walls. Here the filth and vermin were worse than in Jerusalem, and after my first night my chest, arms and neck were sore and running blood, from the scratching and irritation of the past hours that should have been passed in sleep. The days were as awful as the nights, only in another way. Many of the prisoners were confirmed hasheesh (a form of opium) smokers, the fumes of which were most obnoxious to the uninitiated like myself, and produced severe headache and sickness. Many passed their time gambling, and fierce and frequent were the fights between winners and losers, because of supposed or real cheating. Here also the sanitary arrangements were disgusting and inadequate for such a number of inmates. We were allowed outside for exercise every third morning for forty-five minutes. No sun and little air entered the place, neither was there any convenience or arrangement for washing. In such a place and among such uncongenial companions I passed twenty days and nights with the constant hope of release, which is the only comfort and cheer of all prisoners.

Waiting for Death

One morning I was called outside and told that my place of confinement was to be changed. Following one of the keepers, he led me to a small room off which there were five tiny cells, dark, dirty and airless, and which was entered through two iron and one wooden doors. The place was occupied by two men, each in heavy chains which clanked every time they moved. I soon learned that my new lodging was the condemned cell, and that its two inmates were daily expecting their sentence of death to be acted upon. I saw them both taken out never to return and four others take their place. During my stay of eight days in this place of anticipated death, I was frequently told by the head warder of the prison, "It is your turn in the morning;" the mornings came but no summons to prepare for dispatch. As those under sentence of death increased, the small space available was needed for their temporary accommodation, and I was again moved to another place, this time in the innermost prison, where most of the inmates were in for life or fifteen years, nearly all of them being murderers. The reason of my being moved from the condemned cell was because as yet my fate had not been decided on, nor any sentence passed on me by the court-martial.

Three months later the director of the prison informed me that I was sentenced to three years' confinement in prison, but for what reason he did not know, as it was not stated on the official papers sent him by the authorities. That evening in the local paper of Damascus, notice was given of the punishment of an English subject, his sentence being three years "galla-bend," a Turkish word which means—"confinement within the boundaries of a city in which is a fort, and under police supervision." One of the prisoners who understood the notice explained to me that my imprisonment among criminals was a miscarriage of justice and contrary to

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the terms of my sentence, at the same time advising me to agitate for my rights. In this he was correct, as later on was proved.

But how was I to agitate? No one was allowed to visit me, although two hours daily were allowed for friends and relations to visit their incarcerated acquaintances. At first a few friends came to see me, but this was soon stopped, so that I had no means of communicating with the outside world. Food I had to secure, for money, as best I could from the prisoners, for the usual allowance of bread given to the inmates was refused me, and many are the entries in my diary: "Hungry, no food all day," "only one small loaf to-day," etc., etc.

Woe to the stranger in a Turkish prison! To all but the keepers he is a dead thing, and to the keepers one to be robbed, cheated and imposed upon. With no one to appeal to, and no redress for wrongs inflicted, the prisoners are a helpless and miserable lot. The reader will in some measure be able to enter into my feelings and circumstances at that time—a stranger among strangers, the only European among sixteen hundred Orientals of different creeds, nationalities, sects and cliques—practically the only clean and decently clothed being among the crowd, and the only one acknowledged by the prisoners "who told the truth." My watch was the town clock for the prison, by it exercise and visiting hours were regulated; my tiny cupboard was the safe deposit for much money and other things belonging to the prisoners; my kettle and saucepan soon came into general use by those who had none; my purse was always drawn on for the needy and destitute; and my decision frequently invited in disputes and quarrels.

Looking back on those long, dreary months I am surprised at the way I was tolerated, respected and

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treated even by the worst and most evil-minded of my companions. Do not imagine that there were no dangers for me—there were ; but in each instance some one kindly inclined would forewarn me, and tell me what was brewing. For instance, when the news came that Turkish troops had crossed the Canal and had entered Egypt, the excitement among all parties was intense.

The news reached the prisoners by one of the warders, and they in their way kept up a jollification until far on in the night, singing the praises of their country's troops, and inciting to dreadful things against the enemy, of which I was a representative.

In one of the cells was a set of bad characters, ignorant and fanatical, who were a constant source of trouble in the prison. One of these suggested to his fellows that in the morning, whilst out exercising, they should make a rush on me and among them kill me, as their share in the defeat of the enemy. Early next morning, as soon as the cell doors were opened to permit the prisoners to pass out for exercise, a young man came to the room in which I slept, and in a whisper told me what was anticipated and warned me not to go out that morning. But I did, for I thought it best not to show signs of fear. So in company with some others I made a few rounds of the yard, keeping my eye on the intending evildoers, who, seeing that I was suspicious of them, were slow to attack me, and that time failed to carry out their evil designs. I lost no time in telling the director about the plot, and he informed the inmates of that cell, some thirty in number, that if they or any others interfered with me, they would be bastinadoed and put in chains. This effectually put a stop to their evil designs on me.

On another occasion, in the Jerusalem prison, one of my companions was a young man, a fanatical Moslem who was anxious to get rid of me from the room so that

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a friend of his might fill my place. One evening the prison director, two warders, and two soldiers came to the door of our room, opened it and called me outside. The director and two of those with him entered and asked to be shown which were my few things. These they searched thoroughly, but for what reason I could not understand. When they had finished and come out, the director asked me, "Where do you keep the wine and gin you drink at night, and give to the prisoners?"

Such a question surprised me, for I have been a lifelong abstainer, and abhor intoxicants and tobacco. I replied, "I do not drink wine or gin; you see the basket that comes to me daily with my food, in it you never find drink of any kind; I have nothing of the sort among my things." There the matter ended until next morning when again came the director and others with him, and asked me about the drinking. I replied much as before, and then each man in the room was asked to swear whether or no he had seen me drinking, especially at night. All replied, "No, never"; but when it came to the young Moslem's turn he was silent. Then the director told us, that he—this prisoner—had sent a written complaint to the authorities that the Englishman smuggled drink into the prison and sat up late at night drinking, so that the others could not sleep. The young man denied what the director said, but the latter produced the document and in face of that the writer was silenced. Instead of my being removed and punished, my adversary was dealt with, first by being bastinadoed before all the prisoners, and then by being put in chains and shut up alone for several days.

Again intended mischief was averted and my character cleared.

Another time in Damascus I narrowly escaped a

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charge which might have been very serious for me. Some of the prisoners, intent on doing me harm, put in a written complaint to the director, asking him to forward it to the court-martial, in which they said that I was continually cursing the Sultan and the Mohammedan religion, daily abusing the Government and authorities, and always wishing for the defeat of the Ottoman army, each in its way deserving of severe punishment.

The director appeared next day in our midst and asked those with whom I was confined if they had ever heard me cursing or in any way speaking in such manner as the petition stated. They all answered in the negative, and then turning on those who would do me harm he rated them severely, and threatened that if any more complaints were made against me without a reason, those who made them would be dealt with severely. Here I would say, in justice to the prison director, that although a very hard man, a bitter hater of Christians and foreigners, he treated me fairly well, but gave me no privileges above the other prisoners.

The foregoing will give some idea of the constant fear and anxiety which constantly occupied my mind whilst incarcerated, for I did not know what any day would bring for me from the evil-minded men among whom I sojourned.

There were some decent men in the place, but as we were constantly being changed around, good and congenial companions were not long together.

Personal danger was possible also from another source which was always present, and but for a strong constitution, strict personal cleanliness, and care as to food and water, I might have succumbed, as did many that I saw and knew.

The danger was from the many diseases which lurked in every corner of the place, and from which many of

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the prisoners suffered. Smallpox, fevers of many kinds, consumption, cholera, dysentery, and various forms of venereal diseases, were always present with us, and as doctors' visits were rare, isolation cells non-existent, and suitable treatment lacking for those who needed it, the struggle for life favoured the strong, and the weak, poor and helpless went under. Without doubt, my past hard life and living among the Bedouin had fitted me to endure the hardships, privations and trials of prison life.

Danger also to life and limb was possible from the frequent fights among the prisoners both in the cells, and also when exercising in the prison yard. The inmates being Orientals quickly got excited and lost their heads. In their frenzy they would grab the first thing that came to hand, and either use it as a weapon of attack, or hurl it at their opponent. Thus during a fight in a cell one was in danger of being struck by a stone, bottle, stool, shoe, saucepan or stick, or even a knife or dagger, of which there were many secreted among the prisoners. I kept myself free from quarrels and fights, but on one occasion got a hit on the head from a flying bottle, and another time my leg was grazed by a stool thrown my way. In the fights outside fists, knives and daggers were used, and the excited contestants could only be quieted and separated by the advent of a squad of soldiers who were always near in case of emergency, and who frequently and freely used the butt ends of their rifles to scatter the excited fighters. Occasionally a volley was fired to frighten those taking part in the fracas, and an investigation always followed an outbreak among the prisoners. For days after a fight in the prison yard the cells were all kept locked, and the inmates deprived of the daily time outside for exercise, the innocent thus suffering with and for the guilty. To the credit of the prisoners it must be said that they were

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slow to tell on each other when called on to do so ; if compelled by fear of punishment, they would either evade the questions or tell lies. Several times I was placed in a very awkward position by prisoners saying to the director, after having questioned some of my companions, " Ask the Englishman, he never lies, and will tell you the truth "—a statement true enough, but I did not want to give away any delinquents, and was fortunate enough to escape on each occasion by not being called up for examination, for the director probably knew that my evidence would make me enemies, so diplomatically passed me by.

My constant endeavour during the twenty-seven months I was confined was to keep clear of all quarrels, and to keep friends with all, which I succeeded in doing fairly well. Some disliked me because I would be no party to their lying or underhand working, but they dared do nothing against me lest I should tell on them. Once some of the men in my room got smuggled in three bottles of native gin with which most of them got drunk. Next day I told them that if they did so again I should tell the director, and they knew that a severe beating and heavy chains would be the result. Needless to say, no more intoxicants were brought whilst I was there. One of the things that made my companions wonder, was my complete abstinence from drinking, smoking, gambling, playing cards, or doing many things that I consider questionable for a Christian, and especially for myself as a missionary. I found other things to occupy my time with profit to myself and, I hope, to others, about which I will write in the next chapter.

The time was a hard, critical and anxious one, made more so, because until near the end I was forbidden to receive letters from my wife, a privilege allowed to all prisoners, but denied to me. Occasionally

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some one knowing about me would come and see me, and one man, whom we had frequently helped in Jerusalem, walked from Beyrout to Damascus, about a hundred miles, to see me and take some message back to my wife in Jerusalem. His coming was a red-letter day for me, and he lost nothing by coming.

My best friends in the prison, and those from whom I received most kindness, help and sympathy, were Arabs, many of whom had been arrested on false and frivolous charges, and sent to prison for terms varying from one to three years. Finding out that I was conversant with their tribes, districts and even chiefs, they quickly made friends with me, and our meeting and stay together under such adverse circumstances will, I hope, in future mean good for us both, for they gave me cordial and earnest invitations to visit them in the interest of my mission work. Strange indeed that a prison cell should be the place from which blessing should begin to flow, but such was and will be the case ; for,

" God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform."

Unfortunately, a few of the Arab friends I made in the prison did not live to return to their homes, for confinement and prison life caused them to droop and die, as do birds and animals shut up in cages. The Creator has ordained for them a free and open life, and when that is denied them they cannot live.

In closing this chapter I must confess that God was good to me during the long trial, and I was given grace faith and strength daily to bear the burden, keep up my courage, and witness a good confession before my fellows. I had many and severe temptations to give up my faith in a God of Love, one who doeth all things well, and chasteneth those only whom He loves, but I rejoice that I held on, and came out victorious. It is

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true I never fought with any of the prisoners, but I had contests daily with self and Satan, and at times I was near giving in, but was again and again helped by the thought that many in different places were praying for me, and that God would sustain and eventually deliver me. I was also strengthened by the constant reading of the Word and claiming the fulfilment of the promises in it, and by the constant remembrance of all the past faithfulness of my God. I felt that it did not become me, with the light I had, to give way and let Satan have the victory.

Again I repeat, frequent and severe were the testings and temptations, but praise God, I held on and came out victorious, strengthened, and, I trust, a better man. A verse of a hymn that was continually in my mind, and helped me very very much, was as follows :

“ Wherever in the world I am,
In whatsoever estate,
I have a fellowship with hearts
To keep and cultivate ;
And a work of lowly love to do
For the Lord on whom I wait.”

Fellowship and Work, Fellowship and Work, rang in my ears like bells, and a voice seemed to say distinctly and always,—“ How can you give up? How can you doubt? Hold on, for you belong to God, and you cannot go back.” I kept the fellowship, and did the work, and now in many ways praise God for the experiences and trials told in these pages, for they gave me fresh proofs of His love and faithfulness, a deeper insight into His marvellous keeping, and an enlarged faith to meet the future and all it may bring for me.

CHAPTER III

PRISON CUSTOMS, LIFE AND DOINGS

PRISON life, régime and doings have an attraction for civilians in all lands, for what goes on behind barred gates, iron doors and high walls, raises a spirit of curiosity and inquiry in the mind of the average person. Probably in no land is prison life harder, more mixed and varied than in Turkey, and what I saw and learnt in the prisons of Jerusalem and Damascus is a good sample of like places all over the land. In most countries prisoners are made to work—a wise, wholesome and good ordinance; for men spending weeks, months and years without anything to occupy mind or hands, quickly deteriorate, and the old adage proves itself true—

“Satan finds some mischief still
For idle hands to do.”

If men cannot do good they will do evil. No occupation was found for the prisoners I was confined with, consequently they were at liberty to do anything that they were inclined to, in order to pass the time and make money for themselves.

In Jerusalem many of the inmates worked at making purses of silk and cotton with a crochet needle. Into these purses they worked the name Jaffa or Jerusalem, and being made in various colours, patterns and sizes, there was a big demand for them by dealers and shopkeepers outside. These latter would place large orders

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with the best workers, and even give them money in advance in order to secure the work. Clever and industrious men made good money, besides passing their time profitably and occupying their minds and thoughts.

In Jerusalem, too, the prisoners were allowed to keep shops, if such a word may be used for a selling-place, from which they sold to the other prisoners charcoal, meat, vegetables, fruit, and many other things necessary in daily life. Of course, only those prisoners whose friends were near could be shopkeepers, for eatables must be fresh and brought at stated hours, and none but friends would be trusted with the cash needed to make the purchases outside. These petty dealers were a great boon to the prisoners who were strangers and friendless, and who otherwise would have had to be content with the coarse dry bread given them by the authorities, and the customers were a boon to the dealers, enabling them to make money on the principle of ready money, small profits and quick returns. Other enterprising men would make money by boiling beans or peas, making them savoury with a few drops of lemon juice, and supplying a small saucerful for a coin worth half a penny.

Others served groups of prisoners as domestics by carrying water, lighting fires, sweeping the rooms, washing the saucepans and crocks, for which they were paid at the rate of a penny a week for each one they served. Some men took in washing, charging a penny a garment if washed with soap and warm water, and half the price if without soap and in cold water. But whilst such occupations kept some busy, the majority of the prisoners were idle. Yet many of the seemingly idle were not idle, for there were always some planning how they could escape, and whilst others slept they were working at the walls of their cell, loosening the stones to remove when the time came to make a dash for liberty.

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These covered up their works of darkness during the day by piling their beds against the wall they were working at and by blinding the eyes of their warder with coins. Many were the attempts made to escape, and while some got away, others were discovered. There is an unwritten law in the Orient which forbids civilians from trying to hinder or secure runaway or escaped prisoners, so that once free of the prison, the seeker for liberty has little to fear from the crowd outside.

I said in the previous chapter that no provision is made in Turkish prisons for bedding or food, except a daily allowance of bread, so that all prisoners have to arrange for themselves. If a prisoner is rich or imprisoned in his own town or city, no limit is placed on the good things or comforts he may have and enjoy, but for a stranger prison life is hard. A prisoner shut up in his native town and in touch with his family can be supplied with hot meals as often as he likes, and in some measure see after his affairs and business; the prison makes little difference to him except depriving him of his liberty.

If the reader could have looked in on us at Damascus just before evening, he would have seen many of us cooking our suppers on small charcoal fires, the fumes of which, mixed with the odours from the cooking, might have made him sick. What a variety of cooking there was! Here is a man roasting lights on a skewer; there another frying liver, another boiling some kind of roots; another frying eggs in bad oil; another cooking some onions and wheat; another making lentil soup, etc., etc., whilst others are content with bread and an onion, or a radish, or even with bread dipped in salt to give it some flavour. Many of the prisoners were so poor that they would sell one of their three loaves, and with the penny gained buy some cheap relish to eat with their bread. Thus a poor man would buy for a

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penny some green onions or a radish, when in season, and in the morning eat the green tops, and at night the bulb, thus making a little go a long way.

Sleeping accommodation is a simple matter. Each prisoner has a mattress of sacking stuffed with rags or straw. On this he lies at night, and sits by day. Padded quilts, cheap blankets or sacks, serve as covers, according to the standing of the owner. Over each one's head, hung on the wall, is a small cupboard, in which are kept food and utensils. Prisoners in for long terms keep clothes and other things in trunks or boxes, which are securely locked. When a man's time is finished he sells most of his belongings, so as to go out as light as possible. Over the heads of the prisoners, stretched from wall to wall, there is a network of string and rope; on this the washing is suspended to dry, the clothes hung at night by those who undress, and various canopies spread to catch the dust and vermin that continually drop from the roof. The middle of the room is common ground by day, but usually occupied by sleepers at night. In Damascus each room has its sanitary arrangement, and a constant supply of good water, blessings much appreciated by the prisoners.

When a prisoner dies it casts a gloom over the whole prison, for it is considered a disgrace and shame to die away from one's home and under condemnation. Usually the body is removed from the cell at once; sometimes it remains in its place, for if the prison doctor is away for a day's outing, or cannot be found, the body cannot be moved. In the room in which I was for a time, a dead body lay four days, and another thirty hours. Before a corpse can be removed from the prison for burial, certain Government officials have to see it, in addition to the prison and municipality doctors. One of the officials says over the body some such words as these: "So-and-so, God has pardoned

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you ; we do the same, and the remainder of your sentence is remitted. You are fortunate ; we forgive you for sinning against your Government. You are free." If friends are available they may take the body and bury it. If the religious community to which the deceased belonged is known, they are informed that one of their adherents is dead, and requested to inter the body. If the deceased is a stranger the municipality buries the body in the simplest way possible. Most bodies leave the prison as they came into the world, for their clothes are stripped off them either by the keepers or the prisoners, whichever gets the first chance. When executions take place the condemned man is only aware that his time is short when called from among his fellows to go to the gallows or stake. I bade farewell to many taken out to die, and tried by a kind or helpful word to prepare them for their fate.

We always knew what end the man was to meet, for if the police came and took him it meant hanging, and, if soldiers, shooting. Once a young man was called out by mistake, and the wrong discovered when he was placed under the noose, and by not answering to the name called. He was returned to our midst, but died three days later from the strain and shock resulting from the mistake.

When a fresh prisoner is introduced into a cell or room, he becomes the guest, for a day or more, of the inmates. They feed and entertain him until such time as he can arrange for himself. When a prisoner's time is up and he is dismissed, it is the custom for him to visit his late associates and to bring a present of meat, sweets or fruit, sufficient for all in the room in which he was confined. This he will do three or four times, if able, and then drop off.

Now imagine yourself a visitor to one of the rooms in the prison, and note some of the things being done

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by the inmates, and maybe from them something may be learned.

Here is a young man shaving another, but not with a razor. No such weapon is allowed in the prison, but the prisoners get shaved, for a piece of glass will do the work, and if nothing more can be said for the ingenious barber, at least he can be credited with performing a barbarous operation.

Pass on to another and see what he is doing. Nothing less than ironing his jacket, which he has recently washed, but not with the orthodox flat or box iron. He has improvised his own iron, which is simple and effective, and is none other than a frying-pan, the bottom of which he has cleaned with ashes, and weighted with anything available to make it heavy. Others are waiting to smooth a rough-dried shirt, or some other garment, for some of the prisoners are bits of dandies and appreciate things clean and nice, so that the frying-pan serves more than its accustomed purpose.

Pass on to another and see him cooking an egg in a novel and cheap way. He has contrived some kind of a thing from a few inches of wire with which he holds the egg over a lighted candle, and by continually turning the egg he cooks it without burning his fingers. Others are working at the purses already mentioned, others more ambitious work at skullcaps, gloves, and socks, in cotton or wool, and do very creditable work, for which they get good pay and prices.

Stealing from each other is a rare thing among the prisoners, occasionally a case occurs, and the thief is punished if discovered. A few cases happened during my time, two of which I will relate as they are typical prison stories. One morning a man discovered that three Turkish pounds had been stolen from him during the night. He complained to the director and said that he suspected his neighbour, as he was a well-known thief.

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The suspect was called up and examined, but denied the charge, and a strict searching of his clothes and person failed to reveal the missing coins. As things were against the accused, the director ordered that he be shut up alone in a small room bare of furniture except a tin bucket, and that one of the warders should keep a strict watch on him. Then the prisoner was forced to take a violent purge, with the result that the three gold pieces were soon found. In his fear of being discovered he had swallowed the money, and evidently thought it safe for a time in the recesses of his stomach. This is not a case of hearsay, but one I can vouch for as knowing the parties, place and time concerning it. Another case occurred in the room which I occupied with others.

One day the director put in with us a young man named Georgie, a well-known thief and possessing nothing but a few rags that covered his nakedness. The director told us that we must look after our things as the fellow's fingers were long, and already he had stolen money, for which he had been beaten and removed from other cells, also that as he was poor we must feed him, as being only a three months' prisoner, he had no bread allowance.

The next morning one of the hasheesh smokers raised a cry that his precious weed had been stolen from his pocket during the night. The thief turned out to be the new-comer Georgie. We threatened to report him, but as he begged so piteously for mercy we forgave him on his promising not to steal again. A few mornings later, a purse of money was missing, and as Georgie was suspected the matter was reported, and a good beating produced the purse hidden in a hole in the wall of the retiring-room. We then asked the director to move the man from our room, as nothing was safe with him among us. But he insisted on Georgie remain-

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ing with us, saying that the thief had given his word of honour that he would steal no more, and that he, the director, would be responsible for his good conduct.

Next day, Georgie, as part of his punishment, was called out to sweep the prison yard, and to empty the rubbish tins of the cells. When he had finished and returned to our room, some of us noticed that he carried the rubbish tin on his shoulder instead of holding it low as usual. A little later, one of our number told us that the lavatory was full of white feathers, and that it looked as if they had been in water for they were all wet. Soon afterwards, the servant of the room said that Georgie had hidden a freshly-plucked fowl among the beds, and had told him, the servant, that he intended to cook and eat it in the night whilst we slept. So Georgie was called on to the carpet, and asked about the fowl. At first he denied all knowledge of it, but on the bird being produced he said that he had bought it from a Jew outside the prison, whilst he was sweeping, for four meteleks, about $2\frac{1}{2}$, or 5 cents. Of course, we did not believe his story, so taking charge of the fowl, we sent for the head warder, told the story and produced the bird as evidence.

Next morning the director appeared in our room to investigate. Georgie stuck to his statement about buying the fowl, but could not account for a Jew selling cheap fowls being in the prison yard. Suddenly the director turned to one of the warders with him and said, "Go, count my fowls, there should be eight, and see if the white one is among them." In a few minutes the messenger returned saying that there were only seven fowls, and no white one, so it was evident that Georgie had secured one of the director's birds and had intended to feast at his expense. A thrashing made the culprit confess that seeing the fowls near he

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aimed the empty bucket at them and brought down the white bird, which he hid in the bucket and carried back into our room. He had tried to put the feathers down the drain, but being wet they stuck on the sides, and the entrails were found under a layer of dirt and ashes in the bottom of the bucket.

Now that the director had been bitten he was furious. In addition to the beating, Georgie got two years added to his sentence, and was compelled to stand for a few minutes before the door of each cell in the prison, and then to walk about the streets of Damascus, with the plucked fowl hung round his neck, as a warning to all who might feel inclined to help themselves to property not belonging to them. He was not returned to our room again, neither did we care what happened to him, as long as he was away from us. What eventually became of the purloined bird I cannot say; probably the prison cats ate Georgie's intended midnight meal.

Although stealing in the prison was a rare occurrence, stealing outside was encouraged and helped by the prisoners. Incarcerated thieves had their mates and accomplices outside, and frequently these latter would bring stolen property to their friends in the prison for them to keep. Thus jewellery, clothes, rugs, and a variety of other articles found a secure lodgment in the cells of the prison, to be taken out later on and disposed of. Who would think of looking for stolen things in a prison? In no other land but Turkey would one do so, but there such an investigation might prove very profitable.

I have already mentioned that much of the prisoners' time is spent in gambling; besides playing for money with cards they pass much of their time playing dominoes, a kind of chess, and several other native games. Usually after supper some of the prisoners would enter-

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tain us with music, playing on the native flute, mandolin, or one string fiddle; others would play physical games, and others perform tricks. Frequently the prisoners would tell how they committed the murder, robbery or other crime for which they were punished, and many an exciting and dramatic story have I heard from the lips of these Oriental criminals. Many of them longed for the time when they would be free again, for they had their plans made for new murders and robberies.

One of the smartest things I heard was that which was done by a young man, but never discovered. He knew a house in which there were four boxes, containing eight tins, of petroleum. Choosing a favourable time he carried off the four boxes, and put them in a place near by. Then he emptied the petroleum into other tins, and refilled the empty ones with water, called in a tinman and had them soldered as before. He soon turned the petroleum into money, and a few days later turned up at the house from which he had stolen the four boxes and said to the owner, "If you will give me two dollars I will show you where your boxes of petroleum are." The bargain was made, the boxes were revealed, and the thief paid to carry them back to the place from which he had taken them. But what the owner said or did, when later on he found water instead of petroleum in the tins, cannot be told, for the thief made himself scarce, after he had made all he could out of his duped neighbour.

The reader may not know that in the Orient, among Christians, it is customary to bury a corpse fully dressed in new clothes, even to gloves, shoes, necktie and collar. One of the prisoners I was confined with was an adept at opening graves the night after an interment, and stripping the body of its clothes. These he would sell for good money. I have heard him mention the names

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of many of those that he had robbed of their last and costly shrouds, and tell what narrow escapes he had had of being caught. One night proved disastrous for him when he was about to make off with an expensive outfit in which a rich man had been buried. A watch had been set on the grave, and at the time when the thief thought he had succeeded, hands were laid on him. He was tried for his deeds of darkness, and sentenced to three years' imprisonment. He told us regretfully, and I have since verified it, that it is now customary to cut, slit up, and damage the clothing in which dead bodies are dressed, so as to put a stop to the business of evil men of stripping the bodies at night.

From what I have related, it will be understood that life in prison was full of variety, and that there were many things to be seen and heard, only a few of which I have related. Inspections by various civil officers were frequent. Of their coming we were always warned. Things forbidden quickly disappeared. Knives were hidden in loaves of bread, hasheesh in meat, cards and games between the beds, daggers, and iron tools for working the wall into mattresses, so that nothing suspicious was to be seen at the coming of the inspector.

Scares of smallpox, cholera, typhus and typhoid, were frequent, and sometimes real. Then the whole prison was put into quarantine, visitors were forbidden, and nothing in the shape of vegetables, fruit or clothing was allowed in from the outside. But yet the warders were allowed to go to their homes, and the dirty clothes of local prisoners to go out for washing, and in other ways infection was carried and spread into the city. At such times, our heads were shaved as bare as bladders of lard, by a barber brought in from the city.

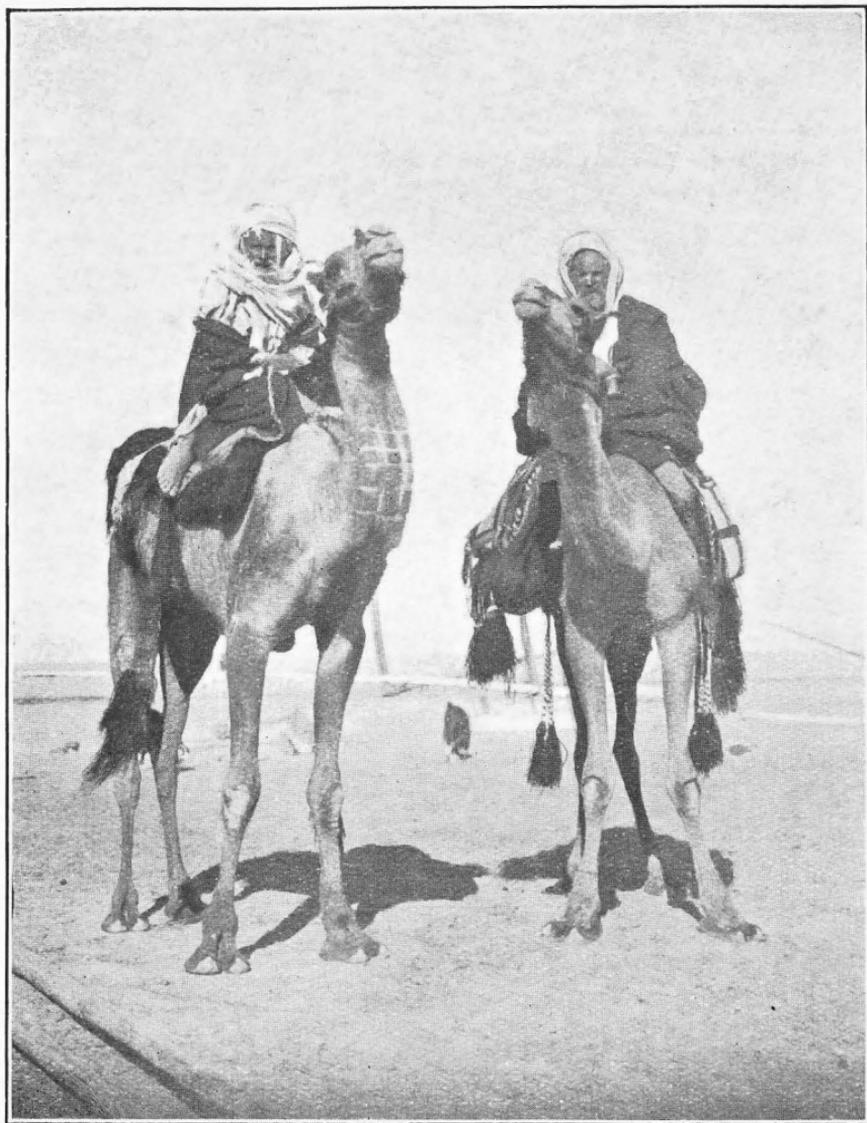


Photo by]

"Two Arabs mounted on camels rode up to the guest tent"

[A. FORDER

To face p. 46



Photo by]

[A. FORDER

“ Ahmenee was behind the tent weaving goat's hair cloth ”

To face p. 47

CHAPTER IV

RELEASE, REUNION, RE-SEPARATION

IN a previous chapter I stated that the sentence of three years passed on me did not call for my close confinement among the worst criminals of the country. There was always present with me the idea that if I could get my case before, and considered by, the Commander-in-Chief of military operations in Syria, I might be released. But how was I, shut off as I was from contact with the outside world, to get into touch with the authorities? I spoke with the Consul when he visited me; I sent him frequent letters about the matter, but received no encouragement or help for some time. On the contrary, he said, "Now is not the time to stir up matters," or "Your application would have no success, for the feeling against the English is so bitter that you would do yourself more harm than good. You must bear your lot patiently and look forward to the end."

With such-like excuses my appeals were met by the one who represented British interests in Damascus, but the more I was discouraged the more I persisted. At last it was arranged that I should write an appeal to the Consul, asking him to present my letter to headquarters for the consideration of the Commander-in-Chief. I was briefly to state my case, and on the strength of reasons I could give, ask for a pardon and remission of the balance of my sentence. Then just at

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that time there came an order to the prison, that all prisoners sentenced "galla-bend" (see page 27 for meaning) were to be sent away to Yagad, a town in the mountains of Northern Asia Minor, there to be at liberty within the town, and not kept in prison. Thus, after nearly two years, the meaning and carrying out of my sentence came to light, for I was to be sent, chained and handcuffed to criminals, to finish my time in that far-away Turkish town, among strangers whose language I knew not, and away from all human help. However, I sent my letter to the Consul, asking for a pardon and giving three reasons why I should have it, viz. :

1. That the letters held against me were written before the commencement of hostilities between Great Britain and Turkey, consequently the authorities had no hold on me.

2. That I was charged with sending false information to my Government in the letters, whereas the letters never left the country; therefore, how could the information reach my Government?

3. That, for nearly two years, I had suffered from a miscarriage of my sentence, and was closely imprisoned among the worst criminals of the country, instead of being at liberty within city limits.

I asked for immediate consideration, as there was the danger of my being sent away. I had done what I could, and could only pray that right should prevail, and patiently wait and hope for the best.

On these grounds I asked for a pardon.

My letter to the Consul, with a copy in French, was at once sent to headquarters, and read by Ahmed Jamal Pasha, the Commander-in-Chief. He at once promised to look into the case, which he did, and finding that all I said was true, he at length told the Consul that he would get me a pardon from Constantinople, as the Sultan only can grant such to sentenced pris-

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oners. Of the result of my letter, or what was doing, I was in the dark, for the Consul's visits were few and far between.

It was late afternoon of Tuesday, January 9, about half-past four. The day had been a wet, cold one, and most of the prisoners were seated before their fires cooking their suppers; I too was busy at the same important business. Suddenly the loud, harsh voice of the prison director was heard at the door of our room saying, "Where is the Englishman? Send him here." I soon appeared at the iron grating of the door, and was told, "Put on your things, for you are wanted at the military court." I asked what for, but the director said he knew not why. To add to my dismay, I saw that with the director were four soldiers, each with rifle and fixed bayonet, and I must confess that I feared the worst. I was very reluctant to obey the order, and asked to be allowed to remain till morning; but my request was refused, so I put on my boots, hat and coat, and passed out to I knew not what. My fears were in no way lightened when the director said to the soldiers, "This is the man you want; take him," and the taking of a receipt for me by the director assured me that I was not to return to the prison.

Through the streets of Damascus I was escorted by the armed guards. As I passed along I heard remarks made such as, "There goes another to his death"; "Look, poor fellow, going to eat his fate"; "Another for the rope," and such like, all along the way till we reached the place where the court was sitting. I was ushered in before seven military men, one of whom spoke Arabic. After some talk in Turkish among themselves, the Arabic-speaking one said to me, "What is your name?" I told him.

"For how long are you sentenced?" "Three years."

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"No, you are sentenced six years." "No," I answered, "three."

"For what are you imprisoned?" "I do not know for certain."

"How long have you been in prison?" "Twenty-seven months."

"Well, it is finished, for this afternoon there came from the Sultan in Constantinople a special pardon for you. You are free; go and do not think about the past; it is all a mistake, and will pass away as a dream."

I said, "After twenty-seven months you see the right; the memory of that time will not pass away. I thank you. Now please give me a written paper to say I am freed, for I may get held up by the police and have nothing to show to clear myself."

They replied, "Come in the morning at ten o'clock and we will give you a paper as is customary."

Bidding them "Good evening," I passed out into the busy street and stood wondering if it were true that I was free, and after some minutes realized that it was a reality and not a fancy. Then came to me the thought, "Where shall I go?" for I was not known in Damascus, and who would take heed to a lean, shabby, moneyless, discharged prisoner?

I cannot adequately describe my feelings at that time, words in writing fail me; but since that hour I can sympathize with men facing the world after a term of imprisonment, and also pray God's blessing on the Prison Gate Missionaries who seek to cheer, advise and help men just released. It was now past sunset, and every one was hurrying home. The sellers of eatables made their presence known by proclaiming aloud their tasty dishes and wares. Every one had some one or something to associate with or do; I was alone, thrown suddenly into a busy world not knowing any and unknown. I found myself wishing I were

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back in prison. There I had a bed, something to eat and a shelter, but I had been thrust out of there as quickly and unceremoniously as I had been put in, and could not go back there that night even to get my few things, for the place would be closed and admittance forbidden.

As I stood wondering what I should do and where I should go, a man emerged from the crowd, gripped my hand and said, "Welcome, Aboo George—[i.e., father of George]—what are you doing here? I thought you were yet in prison, for your time is not finished." The speaker was a man who had been a companion in bonds with me, and whose sentence of three years had proved a miscarriage of justice, so after two years of confinement he was released, and, though free, visited me frequently. In a few words I told him what had happened, and in reply he said, "To-night you will sup with me and sleep in my house," so away we started and soon reached his home.

Next morning, raw, wet and cold as it was, I started for the military court, but alas for promises, the officials told me they had changed their minds, and would give me nothing in writing, and abruptly dismissed me. I then went to the prison, gathered up my few things, said farewell to my incarcerated friends, gave the warders and the director a parting word also, and left for good the place that had been home, shelter, mission field, and witness-stand for nearly two years. The men in my room rejoiced at my release, but were sorry to see me leave them, for being shut up together creates a kind of bond between us which is difficult to break when suddenly separated.

I left the prison fully satisfied that I had done my best whilst there, for I had helped many poor, tended many sick, taught the Truth to the ignorant, stood by and sympathized with the weak and helpless, and kept

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the Faith myself. Thus came to an end my long trial, only one part of the experience caused by the struggle of the nations, but sufficient for a lifetime, and harder to bear because I had done nothing worthy of punishment, or to justify the authorities in dealing with me as they did. If I did not actually suffer on the battlefield as an Englishman, I did within the walls of Turkish prisons for being one, of which I have no regrets.

Naturally my first action after release was to telegraph the good news to my wife in Jerusalem, and needless to say our friends there were not slow in obeying the Scripture to "Rejoice with them that rejoice" (Rom. xii. 15), and to give thanks to Him who had heard their prayers on my behalf. Then having temporarily settled myself in a room I set the wheels in motion for permission to return to my home in Jerusalem, and thus rejoin my wife after our long and enforced separation.

As no one could travel from place to place without an order from military headquarters, I applied there for the necessary permission. My application was favourably received and referred to the Bureau of Information for them to investigate and find out if there was anything against me to hinder my being allowed to go. In due time a satisfactory reply was returned to headquarters, and permission given for me to depart.

But fortune was against me and all my hopes scattered by the action of one man. The paper on which was written permission for me to go to Jerusalem was in the hands of one of the minor officials at headquarters, and to him I had to go to learn the result of my application. After several visits to him he at last told me, through his interpreter—for he was a Turk—that the Commander-in-Chief had refused my application, and would not consent to my leaving Damascus, so that

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ended the matter. Of course I believed this, sorry as I was to hear it. I wired my wife that I could not leave for Jerusalem, and advised her to try and come to me. Thus passed many days during which I was trying to find rooms or a small house in which to make a home by the time my wife came.

Now it happened one day that the Consul had occasion to visit the Commander-in-Chief, and having finished his business with him referred to my matter and asked his Excellency why he had refused my application to go to my home in Jerusalem. The Pasha was surprised and said, "I gave permission; the man has suffered enough. I wondered why, to-day, I received a telegram from his wife asking my permission to come to Damascus. I have replied telling her she may come, and also told the Jerusalem authorities to facilitate her leaving. What does it mean?"

The Consul then told him what the minor officer had said to me, with the result that a messenger was sent to the offender ordering him to appear immediately before the Pasha, his head and chief. Soon the summons was obeyed and the officer appeared before his chief. "What did you tell the Englishman about his going to Jerusalem?" asked the Pasha. "Nothing," replied the officer, "for I have not seen him." Said the Pasha, "Did you tell him I refused to give him permission?" "No," said the officer, "I told him he could go." "You lie," said the Pasha. "You dare to change my orders. Are you Commander-in-Chief? You dog, you pig, you infidel, hand me that sword on your side, and get out of here. To-morrow I will show you what will be done to you." The degraded officer, minus his sword, left the room; a day or two later he was reduced in rank, and sent off to the front.

Meanwhile my wife was getting ready to join me, and I was busy hunting for rooms. But as often as I

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engaged rooms, the owners would go back on their agreement with me, most of them giving the same reason—afraid to have an Englishman in their house, or they looked upon me as a suspicious character because I had been in prison. Others said, "Bring permission to live with us from the Chief of Police and we will take you in"; others asked a written paper from the Commander-in-Chief, so as to secure themselves from arrest for housing one of the enemy. In one way and another I was put off, and it seemed as if in all the city of Damascus there was no place for one Englishman.

During these days I was kindly entertained by the Rev. J. E. Hanauer, a clergyman of the English Church, and agent of the London Jews' Society's Mission in Damascus. This family showed me "no little kindness," which at such a time was a Godsend and much appreciated. For days, in the rain and mud, I walked and searched, but no one wanted an Englishman. Time and again arrangements were made only to be broken a few hours later, and so weary did I get, and so hopeless seemed the task, that I began to wish myself back in prison again. The Consul, a Jew by religion, would give me no help or encouragement, neither financial help for rent, cruelly telling me that I must pay rent out of my monthly relief which was only six paper liras value 300 piastres=about £2. Out of that amount I was supposed to live, with food at semi-famine prices, pay house rent, and dress decently. Alas for the hard-heartedness of man, and the severities of war, for they fall heavy on those placed as I was.

One afternoon I was out in the rain room hunting, when on turning a corner, I came face to face with a man. Addressing me in English he said, "Hello, Mr. Forder, I thought you were in prison. What are you doing out in the rain? What do you want?" Briefly I told him, and then he said, "Do you know —,"

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maybe he can help you ? ” I replied, “ I do not know him. Who is he, and where does he live ? ” He said, “ I will go with you to his house and introduce you to him,” so off we started and soon reached the house. The one wanted was not at home, but we waited till he returned, and then explained my position. But he received me coldly, and soon the old fears and excuses were trotted out, and hope or help appeared fruitless. The interview closed by my being told to call again in the morning, as perhaps some place might be found for me, thus giving me a little hope.

Next morning I appeared as arranged, and was told that the one with whom I was now dealing, had in his charge a small house the property of the Irish Presbyterian Mission, which was empty, and it might suit me. I went and saw it, and bare and dirty as it was, took it, the man kindly agreeing with me to pay the rent in gold after the war rather than take it in paper at its low value. So far I had secured a shelter, and moved in with my kit bag and few clothes. The friend thus found was one of the native teachers of the above named Mission, a Syrian gentleman, named Mr. Raphael Saada, in whom I afterwards found a real Christian, a ready helper to all in need, a trustworthy friend, and a credit to the cause and mission he represented. In later times I spent many pleasant hours, and had fellowship in his home with his wife and children. He truly was God’s angel to me at that time, and his help, kindness and advice will always be gratefully remembered.

Now at last I had a house, but how was I to furnish it ? Here again my newly made friend, “ whose heart the Lord opened ” proved his willingness to help, and gave us such things as were necessary from furniture and bedding of the absent missionaries that he had in his charge. Thus, in this unexpected way, I had a

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small home furnished and ready for my wife to come to on her arrival at Damascus. Surely I am entitled to name that home in the Syrian capital—Jehovah-jireh, for the Lord did see my extremity, and provided in my need.

Ten days after our new home was arranged my wife came, arriving in Damascus an hour after midnight on the 24th of February, 1917. Our new home was in the Christian quarter near what is known as Bab-Tuma—i.e., the gate of Thomas—the main entrance to the city on the north side. There for four months we were reunited, but the suffering of the time of separation had so told upon my dear one that the reunited life was a short one, and soon I was left alone, parted by the mysterious visitor we call Death, who knows no mercy, makes no distinction, oftentimes comes when least expected, and who generally takes those who can least be spared. So it was in my case, as will be told. We had been reunited to be re-separated.

It would be out of place in these pages for me to sound the praises of my partner for twenty-three years; those who knew her can do so, but not I. Suffice it to say that she was a loyal companion, a good housewife, a real mother, and a friend and helper to all needing sympathy, assistance, and advice, and when she was taken many lost a real friend and helper. The two years and more of our separation had told much upon my wife, and on our reunion I saw how she was changed. Anxiety about myself, and the absence of news about our bairns, and always in fear about our boy who had volunteered early in the war, had made her nervous and weak, although strong in faith. As a real mother she naturally longed to know of the welfare of our children, who had been sent away at the outbreak of hostilities. All we knew about them was that the boy was in the army and the girl in London. But no news

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came, and anxiety and worry did their part in bringing about the end.

Soon after joining me in Damascus my wife began to suffer from stomach trouble, severe indigestion, and weakness of the heart, but as life for her was now fairly easy, and the nervous strain and anxiety somewhat relieved, no serious results were anticipated.

One day toward the end of June, she remarked that "as she felt tired she would like to stay and rest in bed all day." Of course I agreed, and she lay quiet and restful all that day, which was Friday. At night, I was anxious about her, and called in a doctor, an old and experienced man who was well recommended. He saw nothing to fear in her condition, except the weakness of her heart, for which he prescribed some stimulant. On Saturday she seemed better, and on Sunday there was no apparent change. On Sunday evening she went into a nice sleep until ten o'clock, when she awoke and said, "What a nice sleep I have had. Please give me a drink." I gave her some lemonade, and she slept again. I, too, dozed on my bed in the same room. An hour later I rose to give her some medicine, but on speaking to her there was no answer. Going to her with a light, I saw the sightless eyes, and the last laboured breath, and a minute later the spirit had fled to its Creator. All alone in the silence of the night, in a strange city, among strangers and enemies, we were again separated. No last word, no last desire, no last farewell, no last kiss, no last look. Better perhaps as it was, but hard to bear. A strange dispensation of Providence and difficult to understand, but the ordering of Him who "doeth all things well." We call it death, but lines on a card, sent me by a friend soon after, say :

Oh, call it not death ; it is life begun,
For the waters are passed, the home is won ;
The ransomed spirit hath reached the shore
Where they weep, and suffer, and sin no more.

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She is safe in her Father's house above,
In the place prepared by her Saviour's love ;
To depart from a world of sin and strife,
And to be with Jesus ; yes ; this is life.

Oh, call it not death ; 'tis a holy sleep,
And the precious dust the Lord doth keep ;
She shall wake again ; and how satisfied
With the likeness of Him who for her died.

As He rose again, she shall also rise
From the quiet bed where safe now she lies ;
Then cheer ye, fond mourners, who sadly weep,
For happy are they who in Jesus sleep.

Oh, call it not death ; 'tis a glorious rest,
" Yea, saith the Spirit," for all such are blest,
" They rest from their labours, their work is done,"
The goal is attained, the weary race run.

The battle is fought, the struggle is o'er,
The crown now replaces the cross they bore,
The pilgrimage path shall no more be trod,
" A rest remains to the people of God."

Oh, call it not death, it is true indeed
The soul from the shackles of earth is freed,
'Tis true that dissolved is the house of clay,
And the spirit unchained hath passed away.

'Tis true, too, the loved one hath gone before,
The home now darkened that knows her no more ;
He chides not your grief, for Jesus, too, wept
O'er the grave where His friend, a Lazarus, slept.

But call it not death ; a few short days o'er,
Ye shall meet her in glory, to part no more ;
What a " blessed hope," lo ! Christ shall appear,
For " the restitution of all things " here.

Then—if not till then—you will see her again,
When, brought by the Lord with His glorious train,
Those " sleeping in Jesus " shall be restored,
" And so shall we ever be with the LORD."

Call it Death, Sleep, Rest, Liberation, or by any other name, to me it was Re-separation, and meant loneliness, sorrow and darkness, coming as it did at such a

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time in my life. The following day the empty tabernacle was laid away in the Protestant cemetery to await "the voice of the archangel and the trump of God." "Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them . . . and so shall we ever be with the Lord" (1 Thess. iv. 16, 17). Jaffa and Jerusalem friends, banished from their home, and acquaintances made in Damascus, gathered about her grave, but I was not permitted to be there, for at noon on the day of the funeral I collapsed completely, and whilst dust was committed to dust, I lay as one dead, but for the breath in my body. Under the boughs of a large old fig tree sleep the remains of Mum—the name by which she was known in our home. Thus life shadows death, fertility looks on decay, age is companion to sterility, and fruitfulness to barrenness.

Around her last resting place are the graves of many of Britain's sons, who died in Damascus, having been stricken down in the cause of loyalty, freedom and justice, a silent guard but appropriate for one of Britain's daughters buried in a strange land.

There is little left to tell after the re-separation. I gradually recovered from the collapse that came upon me, and after five weeks returned to the empty home near the city gate, there to await the time when I could communicate with my boy and his sister, and return also to my home in Jerusalem. But the time was long and needed patience, faith, and grace, all of which were given as the days came and went.

CHAPTER V

THE AFTERMATH

IT is not easy to write of the things that followed on what was related in the last chapter, for they savour of hardships, trials, disappointments and sufferings.

As soon as I was recovered from the collapse that befell me, I returned to my rooms in Damascus. With the exception of robbers, no one had been near them since my wife died. While I lay helpless in my friend's home, the robbers had cleared out everything worth taking, leaving me not a scrap of my wife's clothing and little of my own. What with the dust, unwashed vessels, articles thrown about the rooms by the robbers, and the bareness of the place, there was little that was inviting to one returning as I was under such circumstances. But I had to make the best of things and do for myself what was necessary, for most people were afraid to have anything to do with me because I was an Englishman, and to mix with one of the enemy meant exile, death or some other punishment.

I cleaned up the place and put what was left in order and commenced to live life over again, this time alone, shunned by almost every one, and in constant fear as to what the Turks would do with or to me. Frequently I was summoned to appear before the Head of Police to answer some foolish charge made against me, only to be dismissed with a warning.

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Several times at midnight I was roused and told that I must appear at once before the Director of Police at his office on the far side of the city, and on arriving there was told that he had gone to his home and I must come in the morning. This was done to annoy and weary me with the hope that in a hasty moment I should say a word that they could lay hold of and do something to me, but through it all grace was given to bear patiently all that was put upon me, and to keep silent.

Once I was called before a tribunal of officers and told that the German Emperor had become Moslem and all the German nation had done likewise, and as all the Christian powers would soon be conquered it was best for me to become Moslem too, and thus save myself trouble and probable punishment by remaining a Christian. My reply was that it was no business of mine what the Germans did; I was born a Christian and should remain a Christian till I died, and I had no intention of changing my religion. Then I was dismissed with the words, "Think it over, and when you have decided to accept our religion come to us, and we will make arrangements at the mosque for you to become a Moslem."

Another time I was called up and asked if I had heard the latest news, to which I replied "No." I was then told that the Germans and Turks had completely routed the British and French armies, so that in future there would be no more English, so it was now necessary for me to give up my British passport and take a Turkish one, thus becoming a Turkish subject. Naturally I declined to accede to this demand, so I was told that if I preferred to remain as I was, a person without national protection, the authorities would not be responsible for anything that might happen to me.

I was frequently stopped on the street by secret

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police who addressed me in good English, asking me such questions as these :

“ Have you heard that the English have had a great victory over the Turks ? ”

“ Who do you think will win the war ? ”

“ Do you believe the news that the English have conquered the Germans ? ”

All such questions were put to me hoping to catch me saying something against the enemy, but my answers were all given in Arabic and non-committal.

In many ways I was continually worried by the Turks and their 'agents, so that I oftentimes wished myself back in prison so as to be free of their machinations and traps.

Another thing that made life hard was the shortage of food and the deterioration of the Turkish paper money, the pound gradually going down until it was worth only two shillings or half a dollar in value. Then again the exorbitant prices of food and all clothing material made it impossible for me to renew my outward appearance, until at last I was ashamed of myself as the only representative of the British in the city of Damascus with its half million of people.

Frequently I had only one meal a day, and oftentimes I would lie in bed till near noon so as to save a meal, for the Spanish Consul, who had charge of British affairs, only allowed me a small allowance monthly, which, with the lowness of the paper money, did not suffice for bread alone.

An egg once a month was a treat, a bit of meat occasionally a luxury, fruit and vegetables were out of the question although plentiful, bread in limited quantities was the rule, and a cup of tea or coffee a memory only, although much longed for.

And all this time there was no prospect of release and the news served up in the daily Turkish and Arabic

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papers always told of defeat and withdrawal, defeat and withdrawal of the British armies on all fronts. During the time that I was on parole in Damascus I was constantly in touch with the British wounded that were brought up from the Gaza front, and at last became undertaker to the British dead.

And why?

Because the Turks disposed of the dead British in such a way that no decent human being, especially one of their own, could quietly stand by and do nothing.

Our British soldiers, as soon as the breath was out of their bodies were stripped of their hospital clothing, and minus shirt, blanket or shroud were carried out by Turkish porters and thrown into a huge pit to rot under the sun or to be eaten by dogs, with which Damascus abounds. Quiet interference through a middleman, for I dared not let it appear that I was the instigator of the movement, caused this barbarous way of disposing of our dead to be altered, and the order was given that all British dead were to be interred in the Protestant cemetery at the expense of the Turkish military. The account for the expenses was to be rendered monthly, which was done, but trouble began when the Turkish officer and his clerk wanted a receipt for twice the number that had been interred, so as to augment their monthly salary, which was little enough and paid in Turkish paper.

Of course, we declined to give a receipt for more than we had expended in burying the soldiers, the consequence being that the officer refused to pay the account. We laid a complaint before the Commander-in-Chief, who ordered the account to be paid, but Turkish delay and duplicity were stronger than the orders of Jamal Pasha, and the account is owing till this day.

Then the Spanish Consul, for the British, promised that if I would see to the interment of the dead soldiers

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he would pay the expenses, so up till the time of the British occupation of Damascus I undertook to see that the dead boys were decently buried, and over each grave I put a cross bearing their names and date of their death.

This was the most and the least I could do for my own countrymen who died far from home and in the land of the enemy, but in doing so I ran the risk of incurring the wrath of the Turks by interfering with things that did not concern me, according to their way of thinking, and my action might have caused me exile, imprisonment a second time, or even death by shooting or hanging. But a higher power than Turkish watched over me and carried me through.

Only the readers of this record will know who buried the British dead in Damascus, for no report was ever made of my doing so. Hence nothing in the way of recognition was ever made of my services, but somehow or other mention was made to General Allenby that a native of Damascus, one of the Protestant community there, did the work, and to him was sent an official letter of thanks for his services to the British wounded and dead, when he never saw a dead soldier.

The Rev. J. E. Hanauer, the Chaplain to the British Consul in Damascus, and a German subject, officiated at the graveside, and but for us two the boys would have been laid to rest without a friend or one of their own to stand by them at the last.

I have frequently been asked, "Did you get any kind of news from the outside world whilst in Damascus?" To that I answer, "Yes." "But how?" ask the questioners, so I tell them what then I dared not divulge, namely, that every week I had a good read at *The Times*, the *Morning Post*, the *Daily News*, and the *Manchester Guardian*, so I was well posted in what was doing on all fronts. The way I saw these papers was as follows: Jamal Pasha, the Turkish Commander-

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in-Chief, and the German Consul, both received weekly the above newspapers. On coming to the Post Office in Damascus, a clerk, who was a friend of mine, would slip off the wrappers, take the papers home with him, read them and then pass them on to me. So in the quiet of my room I would read and learn how things were going in Europe and elsewhere, much to my satisfaction and delight. Had the police held me up on the streets of Damascus at certain times they would have found a batch of newspapers encircling my waist and held in position by my belt. But the papers came and went and the owners were none the wiser as to any delay in their delivery.

In addition to my friends the newspapers I made the acquaintance of a young German who spoke English and was desirous of improving himself in reading and conversation. I agreed with him for half an hour daily for conversation and reading, in return for which he brought me a loaf of bread, and, what was also important, the latest news from the front, especially the Palestine front, and as he was on the telephone staff he knew all that was happening from day to day.

In this way I learned about the last great move a few hours after it commenced, and shortly after of the rush of the Australians towards Damascus.

On Thursday, September 26, the first British aeroplane flew over Damascus, and when I saw it I shed tears of joy, for I knew that deliverance was near. But alas for my joy, it was soon turned into doubt and sorrow, for whilst on the way to my rooms I was met by a policeman, who stopped me and said, "I have just received orders from my chief to come with two others at midnight to arrest you, and to-morrow you will be on your way to the interior, for your people will be here in a few days and if you remain you will be saved by them."

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Naturally his words were unwelcome, but ere I could say anything he proceeded and said, "I have told you what I have to do ; now it remains for you to do your part," and with these words he left me.

I knew what he meant, so at sunset disappeared, and when he and his companions came to my house at midnight I was not there, so could not be taken. I was in hiding where no one knew of, and there I stayed till the following Tuesday when the Australian troops entered Damascus.

How can I describe my feelings of joy when I saw the troops parading the streets of Damascus ?

If I remember right the first thing I did was to stand still and say "Thank God," then I began to cry with joy, then I became as one who was awaking from a dream, and the fact dawned on me that I was free and no longer in the clutches of the Turk and that I had my liberty, and all this only increased my confused mind so that at times I was not conscious of what I was doing.

Whilst in this state of mind and wandering down one of the main bazaars of Damascus I was confronted by two British officers, who were accompanied by a native guide. One of the officers came to me and asked, "Are you Mr. Forder ? We have orders from General Allenby to make search for you until we find you, for your case is well known to him and we have to find you and report on your state and condition."

Having answered their questions, I was taken to be interviewed by the General in command, who having sympathised with me and my condition, gave orders that I was to be sent to Jerusalem by the first automobile or lorry returning south. But orders were easier given than carried out, for with the great rush of the troops coming up there were few conveyances going

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back, and after waiting for several days I gave up the hope of leaving Damascus until slacker times.

Then I was commandeered for the Intelligence Department because I was so well acquainted with the city and people, and for six weeks served in bringing in news of secret doings in the city and of undesirables of whom there were many in the place, and in return for which I received military rations.

Many grumbled at the rations and said they were "fed up on bully beef and biscuit," but to me the rations were luxury, and never in all my life did cheese, jam, eggs and bacon, etc., etc., taste better, for such things had been unknown to me for a long time, and a cup of tea had not been in my menu for many months, so it tasted good when supplied *ad lib*.

Being anxious to return to Jerusalem to see how my home and personal concerns fared, I did not prolong my stay in Damascus. At my request the authorities kindly gave me an officer's pass which, after five days on the railway, landed me in Jerusalem again, after an absence of just four years.

I found my house occupied by others, and what furniture was left to me piled up in a back room. Hard indeed after all I had endured to return home only to find that no corner was available for me in which to sit down or lay my head. This I felt very much indeed. It seemed the last straw to find my home, to which I had looked forward to reoccupying, in the hands of others and all entrance to myself barred.

Friends, however, were kind and took me in until such time as I could arrange for myself, which in time I was able to do, and occupy two rooms in my own home.

Shortly after my return to Jerusalem work opened up for me in connexion with the Syria and Palestine Relief Fund, and I was glad to be thus occupied, for it provided me with rations and also with money where-

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with to pay debts that had accumulated during my long absence.

But success and work were not long to be mine, for shortly after I took on with the Relief Fund I was badly injured in a motor-car accident and was compelled to be in hospital and on the convalescent list for three months. After that time I was worth very little as regards health, and my nervous system was even worse than my physical. Gradually I regained strength, but, alas! I am not what I was before the war, for then I was a nerveless, strong, tireless, and healthy giant, now I find that I have nerves, weariness, weakness, and constant reminders that I am human.

CHAPTER VI

BOYHOOD DAYS

IN the preceding chapters I have described the unhappy experiences through which I passed while a prisoner in the hands of the Turks. As stated in the preface, the years spent in prison gave me an opportunity to write, if only to pass the weary hours, and I found not a little solace in recalling events and incidents in my life. The work which for so many years I have been doing will, I feel sure, be better understood if I start at the very beginning.

If the local records of Salisbury, Wilts, England, for September 2, 1863, show nothing else, at least they tell that to George and Sophie Forder there was born a son, who in due time was named Archibald. Like Topsy, this boy grew, but little did his parents or friends think what experiences, varied and dangerous, were in store for him, and it is my lot, as this same Archibald Forder, to tell some of the things that remind me of my boyhood, and later years.

My boyhood was a very happy one, as I have many times reviewed it, and wished to live most of it over again.

As a boy I was very nervous along some lines. To cross a wooden bridge under which the water could be seen flowing, was a terror to me, and could only be done with my eyes shut, and to go upstairs in the dark alone, was a thing most difficult for me to do. When quite a small boy I had a fright one night on awaking from sleep, by seeing a white figure promenading in

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our bedroom, and made more visible by the light of the moon, and which eventually vanished out through the doorway. The morning revealed this seeming ghost to be my eldest brother who was walking in his sleep, a performance unknown to me in those days, but which did not strengthen my youthful nerves.

Another terror of my small-boy days was the periodical coming to our city from the country on market days, of an old woman named Mrs. Rideout, who pioneered a small cart drawn by two donkeys to and from her country home, and in doing so passed our house every time. My fear of this country dame was, that one day she would take me off in her tiny conveyance and make me captive to serve her and the donkeys. How this fear possessed me I have no remembrance, but Mrs. Rideout and her donkey-cart were a real terror to me in those days. When a bad boy, as I often was, the mention of Mrs. Rideout by my parents wrought more in me than many stripes, and would quickly bring me to order.

A thunderstorm was another trial of my boyhood days, and during such times my head might have been found in my mother's lap enveloped in her apron, or if that worthy parent was absent, I sought refuge in a dark cupboard under the stairs.

Who would have prophesied that from such a bundle of nerves, I should eventually become practically a nerveless being, but such has been the case, or the many experiences of later years would have made this record impossible.

In due time school days came, and although I cannot boast of anything in the way of certificates gained by an elaborate education, yet I have cause to be thankful for a good grounding in the orthodox Three R's,—Reading, 'Riting, 'Rithmetic,—all three of which have served me well.

Boyhood Days

My schoolboy days recall many experiences of different kinds, but space permits of only a few being told.

As a boy I was an enthusiastic hunter of the finny tribe, generally with good success for so young an angler. Most of my half-holidays, and much of the summer vacation were spent at the end of the fishing-rod.

On one occasion one of my brothers was with me fishing ; from a long narrow bridge we tempted the fish to accept the bait. The sides of the bridge were protected only by a handrail, which was serviceable for adults and large children, but no protection to small folk who might stray on to the bridge. As we fished two small bairns came our way, and being attracted by the flowing water were quite unconscious of all danger. Suddenly one fell backwards into the water, and was soon followed by the other. Hearing the screams and splashes called for action. Being quite near I lay flat on the bridge, and as the first child appeared, grasped it, and with the help of my brother lifted it out of the water. As the second child had gone beyond our reach, the only way to reach it was by getting into the river, so in I went and soon had the second bairn in hand and on dry land.

An old gentleman who had watched our efforts on behalf of the immersed pair, rewarded us by giving us some faded flowers from his coat, and a penny between us.

The former recalls another fishing experience of quite a different kind. As boys we had our favourite spots for collecting bait, a kind known to us as cattus, and which was found clinging to the sides of walls or wooden banks under water.

One half-holiday I was off fishing when my father called me and gave me money, gold, silver and copper,

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wherewith to pay a gas account on my way. As I wanted to make the most of the afternoon, I delayed going to pay the account till after fishing, when on presenting myself and the account before the collector at his office, and feeling in my pocket for the cash, I found that all the money was gone. Needless to say I was much concerned, for a guilty conscience told me that the lost money was a result of disobedience. It was evident that the money had fallen from my pocket at some place where I had lain at full-length, and a retrospect of the afternoon led me to think that the loss had occurred at the place where early in the afternoon I had found my bait.

This was a small pool in a meadow where the water, deep and swift, was kept in on one side by a wooden bank. There was nothing to do but to make for this pool, although the time was come for me to be home to tea, and the pool was a long way off.

As fast as my young legs would carry me I went to look for the money, and on reaching the pool, and looking into the clear water, I saw the coins scattered among the pebbles at the bottom of the pool. They had slipped from my pocket whilst lying on my chest and leaning over to get bait from the side of the pool.

There was nothing for it but to strip and go in and get the money from the water, but now opposition came in the shape of two lady artists who were sitting by the pool sketching. When they saw me beginning to strip their modesty gave vent to something like the following: "What are you going to do, little boy?" which made me explain what I was after. But the shocked artists had no sympathy with me, and they requested me to desist in language somewhat like this: "Go away, you naughty boy; you must not undress here, you disgusting little boy; go away quickly," and such-

Boyhood Days

like talk. But I persisted in spite of protestations, and whilst the modest sketchers hid themselves behind their umbrellas, I went into the pool, and one by one collected the coins which fortunately had not been seen by other eyes. It did not take me long to dress, and bidding a good-evening to the ladies, hasten to the gas-agent's house and rid myself of the money that had given me such a fright, and so much extra exercise. If any small boys read this story, let them learn from it to obey their parents' commands before pleasing themselves.

Another water experience befell me as follows. One winter afternoon with other boys I went skating, and for a time was content to enjoy the fun on safe ice. But boyish desires for something new led me toward an island where a notice warned skaters to keep away. Collecting my young companions I challenged them to follow me round an island on the ice which was proclaimed unsafe, and leading off was soon ahead of them ; but I did not go far, neither did they follow me, for sooner than I knew it I was floundering in cold water amid broken ice, and but for timely help and a long ladder I might have ceased my skating days.

The day was so cold, and the freezing so severe, that my skate straps were frozen, so that I had to hobble home on skates. Fortunately our house was near, and I arrived a stiffer, colder, and more subdued boy than when I started out.

I was packed off to bed and given simple remedies, which prevented any serious results following my recklessness.

The reader must not think that all my spare time was given up to sporting ; other things occupied some of my hours and half-holidays. Twice a week music lessons claimed me, and between lessons set times for practice ; my musical training was much interfered

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with by the changes of teachers, caused by death, but I am always thankful for the little of music I acquired, as it has enabled me to fill many a gap at services and meetings in the absence of the appointed musician.

If I remember rightly, the first money I ever earned was sixpence, for playing a piece of music correctly at a public entertainment. If I had my time over again I would give more heed to music, for I see in it a means of giving pleasure and help to others. Youthful readers take heed.

As a small boy I occupied many Sunday evenings in conducting services at home whilst the elder members of the family were away at church. My congregation usually consisted of my two small sisters and numerous chairs, and as far as my memory serves me the service was noted for its complete silence. Had any one prophesied that the young mute preacher would some day stand before churches and conventions, to plead the cause of missions, or encourage saints and sinners to a better life, their prophecy might have been laughed at, but such has come about, through no seeking of the writer's.

Another occupation of my early days was the collecting of funds for missions and such-like purposes. Three boxes were allotted to me in which to gather money, one for foreign missions, one for the British and Foreign Bible Society, and one for Dr. Barnardo's Homes for destitute children. My ambition always was to be at the head of the list of juvenile collectors, an ambition in which I was often successful.

Many rebuffs and scoldings were mine as I solicited friends and others for coins for my boxes, but such was not always the case, for many helped and encouraged me in my endeavours to help on the causes I represented.

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In a former volume¹ one of my experiences whilst collecting is related, which for the benefit of new readers I will repeat briefly.

My knock at the door of a house was answered by a kindly domestic, who in response to my request for something for my box went back to ask her mistress. The result was an invitation to enter and wait in the parlour for the coming of the lady of the house. On her appearance I was kindly received, and a few inquiries as to who I was, and what I was after, led to an order for the servant to bring wine and cake for my benefit. Being a total abstainer I refused the wine, for which lemonade was substituted, and did my duty with the cake and cooling drink. The result of my visit, in addition to the cake and drink, was a good-sized silver coin for my box, and a promise of more in the future. I learned later that the lady's liberality and kindness had been prompted by some timely help given to her husband by my father some time previous.

If I continue writing in the foregoing strain the reader will conclude that I was a model boy, but, like all boys, I was sometimes naughty, and often thought I was made the scapegoat for the family. As I write two instances of my naughtiness come to mind, one at school and one at home.

A new teacher, young and stern, made his appearance in our classroom one morning, and was not long in chastising the troublesome members of the class, of which I was one.

I watched my opportunity for revenge, and butted him with my head in the stomach, and as he inclined to corpulence, my attack nearly doubled him up. Needless to say, I did not escape punishment, which I suppose was fully deserved, but which taught me to respect him who was placed over me.

¹ *With the Arabs in Tent and Town.* Marshall Brothers, 5s.

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The other exhibition of youthful naughtiness took quite another form in the way of punishing my parents. For some offence I had been ordered early to bed. On my way upstairs the idea came to me to hide, which I did in a cupboard where were kept brushes, brooms and such like. Soon I fell asleep and was quite unconscious of the hunting and bustle that were going on on my account, for when my brothers went to bed and saw that I was missing, the whole family became concerned because of my absence.

Search was made everywhere for me, but of no avail. At last, as my father was going up the stairs for another look round, he espied the cupboard, and on opening the door found the lost culprit curled up asleep amid the house-cleaning utensils. I was soon hauled out of my hiding-place, brought to my senses, and sent to a better resting-place. On this occasion my naughtiness had punished my parents in a way I never anticipated, for their anxiety about my absence had naturally been great, and after all, was I not one of their bairns although a naughty one. Many times in later years was that evening recalled, and many a hearty laugh had over me, my hiding-place, and my father's anxiety and rejoicing on my account.

I will conclude this chapter on boyhood days by merely mentioning the experience which was to shape the greater portion of my life, and which eventually led me to the mission field, viz., the coming in contact with Robert Moffat, the veteran African missionary.

Being an enthusiastic collector for foreign missions, the name of Moffat of Africa was not unknown to me, and when I learnt that he was to visit Salisbury, and preach and speak on behalf of missions, of course I wanted to see and hear him.

His address on his life, work and experiences in Africa

Boyhood Days

impressed itself on my young mind, and that evening the seed was sown in my life which only matured after many years. Some readers, from former writings, will know how it all came about, and how the life of the African pioneer reflected itself in the life of the youthful listener to his experiences, as he related them that evening long ago.

But enough of youthful days and doings, for others must be considered whose influence and help did much toward leading my way to the little known, and less thought of, Bawdee, and these will be written of in the next chapter.

CHAPTER VII

MY PARENTS

THIS chapter is included not with any desire to advertise my parents, but rather as an appreciation of a father and mother of whom I have the most pleasant memories.

My parents were everyday folk, but thoroughly good, in the fullest meaning of the word.

My father was clerk to a firm of solicitors, a situation in which he served for considerably more than half a century. One of the firm was clerk to the county magistrates, and in this way my father was continually in touch with the law, especially the criminal side of it.

As boys, my brothers and myself thought ourselves much favoured when allowed to sit by father's side, under the bench in court, and hear the trial of prisoners.

My father was a local preacher of the Methodist Free Church, in the days when the preachers walked to their country appointments, and many were his experiences in going to and fro on those itinerations, and which whiled away many an hour as he related them to us as boys.

One of the pleasures I enjoyed as a boy, in company with my brothers, was going for walks into the country with father, and making a call on some farmer known to my parent, and who, knowing the liking of boys, would either turn us loose in his orchard or garden, or regale us with fresh milk and home-made bread and cheese, for my father's calling gave him a large acquaint-

My Parents

ance with the gentry, farmers and countryfolk of our own, and neighbouring counties.

I have already said that my parents were good; religion was a real thing to them. Family prayers were never omitted, and in father's absence were conducted by my mother. A daily rule of my father's was to retire to his room after dinner for private prayer, and I can testify in these later years of my life, that "the joy of the Lord" was a very real thing to him.

As children we all accompanied our parents to God's house on Sundays, for the Lord's Day was strictly observed in our home, and what with Sunday School morning and afternoon, and one or two attendances at public worship, Sunday was no dull day for us.

The religious influences of my homelife were not wasted on me as a boy, and went a long way in shaping my career in later years.

My father passed peacefully away in his sleep, soon after retiring to rest, and ere my mother joined him. He lived to be eighty-four years of age, most of which were spent in the interest of others.

Of my mother it is more difficult to write, for her's was a life of another nature, and words are giants when they do us an injury, but dwarfs when we want them to do us a service, and here words fail me to write as I would.

Mother was thoroughly devoted to her husband and family, but not to the extent of spoiling us, and "Mother says so" was sufficient to ensure obedience when youthful minds inclined to disobedience or rebellion. Even when we were all grown up and our own masters, mother's word still passed for law.

My mother was a woman of good works, and my earliest recollections are of Dorcas meetings, poor and old women's tea meetings, and many quiet and unadvertised ways of helping others. Missionary and

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Bible societies, philanthropic works and agencies, church and local efforts, were all encouraged by her, and as far as possible assisted with funds from the Lord's tenth, a portion regularly laid aside from the pin-money allowed by my father, or of special gifts.

As with my father, so with my mother, worship was a very real thing, and many an afternoon would find mother at some devotional meeting, or special service of the Evangelical Church of England, for in her maiden days she had been associated with the Established Church at Mortlake in Surrey, although at marriage she thought it right to attend the church of her husband.

As children we often wondered why mother wept frequently during the services, and at home would ask her, Why? Her invariable reply was, that she "wept for joy," a thing which to us juveniles seemed strange indeed, but which I now fully understand from personal experiences in later years.

When the opportunity to go to the mission field came to me, it was with my mother's hearty approval that I went, for she had frequently said that "from birth her children had been dedicated to the Lord," and she proved it when the time came. I always enjoyed my mother's sympathy in my work among the Arabs, and till her last days was supported by her prayers.

But I have said enough for the reader to know that I had a good mother, and my anticipation of seeing her again was taken away as I sailed homeward, by receiving the news of her death by a letter handed me at Gibraltar. Like father, she passed away suddenly, without any pain or sickness, and went to be with her Lord, whose she was, and whom she served.

Both my parents sleep together in Salisbury cemetery, awaiting the time when "the dead in Christ shall rise first" to be, "for ever with the Lord."



Mother

To face p. 80

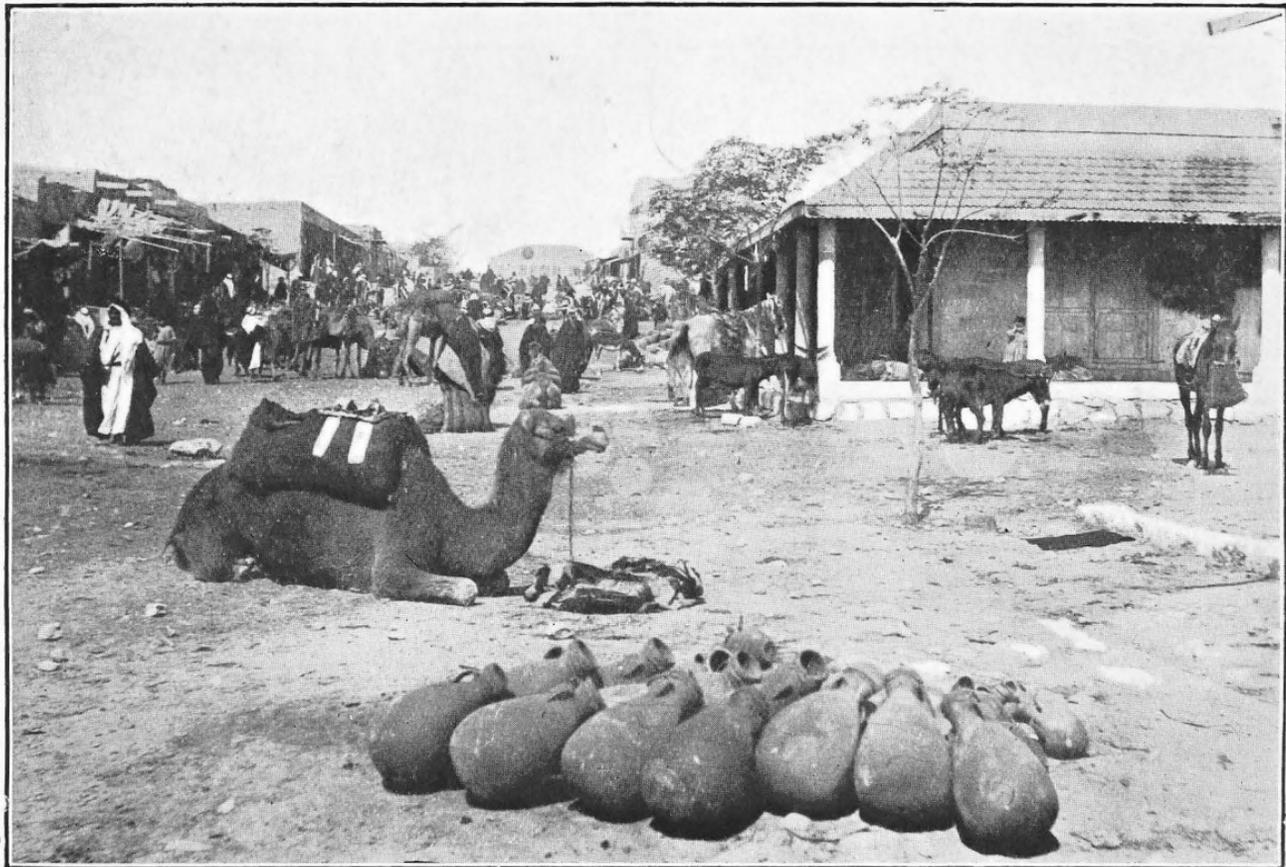


Photo by]

Street scene, Beersheba

A FORDER

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My Parents

When asked by my eldest brother to name a suitable Scripture quotation to inscribe on their tombstone, I could find nothing to my mind more suitable than 2 Samuel i. 23: "Pleasant in their lives, and in their death they were not divided." This tells more than many volumes, and I count it a privilege to be able to give this my testimony to the best of fathers and mothers.

CHAPTER VIII

STARTING IN LIFE

PROBABLY the desire of every boy is to end his school days and be free from the restrictions of teachers and masters ; at least I measure the desire of most boys in my own bushel, for I thought that with the end of school days I should be largely my own master. But alas for boyish anticipations !

My education as regards school ended when I was fifteen years of age, for my parents were unable to give me more than an ordinary grammar-school training, and as my father believed in every boy learning some practical everyday business, I was early apprenticed to a grocer and baker at Longham, in Dorsetshire, to serve for three years.

I did not relish being sent away from home, and well remember how I cried myself to sleep the first few nights. Gradually I settled down to my new life and surroundings, and in many ways tried to make myself useful.

I had only one dislike to my new duties, and that was getting up early in the morning to assist the baker in his work in the bakehouse. Every morning the kneader of dough would come and rouse me from sleep, but I invariably returned to my slumbers as soon as he had retired to the regions below. Many threats were made of punishments to cure me of my laziness, but of no avail ; but one morning threats were put into action, for the baker having called me to get up, and

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finding that I was slow in doing so, made a second appearance in my bedroom.

This time he came to apply a cure, for he had in his hand a bunch of stingnettlles, which he forcibly applied to my bare skin, and which made me desire to get into my clothes quickly to save myself further torture.

That morning I did more rubbing than kneading, much to the amusement of my master and the baker, for together they had conspired to adopt this means to cure me of my liking for bed when I should be up and at work. Needless to say, the remedy proved effectual and the baker had little trouble with me afterwards as regards early rising.

My lot having been cast in a country village where the only choice of a place of worship was between an interdenominational chapel and the Established Church, I naturally chose the former, especially as my master was the most active agent in connexion with the chapel.

Preachers were supplied from Bournemouth, who drove out and back on Sundays, and as many of these locals were unused to the calling of a Jehu, it usually fell to my lot to drive them a part of the way on their return, especially on dark nights when some streams had to be crossed, and about which those unaccustomed handlers of the lines were very nervous. In this way my youthful services were of use to these preachers of the Gospel.

My youthful talents were also used in the Sunday School by teaching a class of small children, also in having to play the organ when the organist was absent from chapel or school. In these unostentatious ways I was gradually being prepared for a larger service which was eventually to be expended in the interests of the peoples of the Bawdee.

I must state here for the benefit of the reader, that although nominally a Christian, and in my small way

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doing Christian work, I had not as yet made a definite choice of Christ as my Saviour, or any decided stand for Him. Like many others, in all times, I thought I was all right because I was not as others who took no interest in good things and lived careless lives as regards the future.

It was after I had served my apprenticeship, and was home for a holiday, that I saw my need of a Saviour, and made a decided choice of Jesus Christ, through the preaching of an evangelist and the kindly pleading of an old Sunday School teacher.

My next move was to Wandsworth, Surrey, where my eldest brother lived, but who died soon after my settling there. It was through him that I cast in my lot at St. John's Hill Wesleyan Church, where for several years I enjoyed the ministrations of many godly men, and in connexion with which I served in different capacities.

Soon after taking up membership in this church, I went into business on my own account, and then came the temptation to spend my Sundays more leisurely, especially as Saturday was a hard day, and often kept me busy till midnight. But one Sunday morning at church I was asked by one of the stewards to assist in taking the offertory, a compliment which, as a young man, I much appreciated, as this service, although small, was usually done by the older and more prominent members of the church.

This request was repeated the following Sunday, and the thought came to me that my service in this way was needed, if only occasionally, consequently I must always be in my place to serve if asked.

Without any doubt in my mind, I frankly record here, that the requisition of my service in this small way went a long way to keeping me attached to the church, and I am sure many a young Christian and

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member of the Church would be helped, and kept from wandering to other places, if some simple service were asked of him by the officials of his church. I repeat again, in my case, the constant thought that my services might be required, kept me regular in my attendance at God's house.

In connexion with the Sunday School and local missions of the church my services were of some little use, and it was in slum missions, children's services, or temperance meetings, that I made my maiden addresses.

For some years I acted as missionary secretary in the Sunday School, and was well rewarded for any services in that capacity by seeing the missionary collection increase year by year.

As I look back to the years spent in service, fellowship and worship at Wandsworth, I would fain live them over again, for they were happy and profitable times.

It was about this time in my life that I took to myself a wife, who like myself was in full and active sympathy with all Christian work, and who eventually went with me to the Land of Moab, seemingly only to die there, for after a few months she was suddenly translated to be with her Lord, and her mortal remains lie in a hillside far from the haunts of men, and known only to a few. For the details of my wife's passing away, and the sympathy and doings of our new friends, the Arabs, I must refer new readers to a former volume, already mentioned in these pages, for it is too much for repetition here.

CHAPTER IX

OFF TO THE CHANGING BAWDEE

THE reader will hardly need telling that many years of contact with missionary efforts, work, and workers, had in a large measure prepared me for foreign service, but that the day or opportunity would ever come for me to take up service abroad, was far from my thoughts, or those of my relations or friends.

All unexpectedly the opportunity came, and that it was of and from God no doubt remains in my mind, even after a quarter of a century.

I had quite settled down to a home life with my newly-married wife, had a cosy and well-furnished home, and an increasing and profitable business of my own, when the test came as to my willingness to break all up, and go to an unthought of, and practically unheard of land to assist in missionary work.

The call came one Sunday afternoon as I sat reading about a mission in Moab, and the need of a young practical man as helper in the work. As I read, a voice seemed to say—"You are the one needed, it is for you"; and I could not get away from the thought that I must write and get particulars.

Investigations on the side of the mission authorities favoured my acceptance, but the committee were slow to take upon themselves the responsibility of breaking up my home and business with loss to myself.

A mutual agreement was come to between us to wait three months, and if at the expiration of that

Off to the Changing Bawdee

time business and home were disposed of, it was to be the intimation that I was to fill the place on the mission field.

An advertisement about the sale of the business brought several replies, all of which but one came to nothing, and the one desirous of buying was dubious of so doing, for after examining all my books and ledgers, he thought they were faked, and said to his son —“ They are too clean to be genuine,” a remark which cut me closely, for it was the first hint ever given that I was dishonest.

I suggested that my ledger be compared with those of the wholesale firms with which I dealt, as a proof of their genuineness, so making a few notes and extracts from them the critical would-be buyer departed.

The three months were drawing to a close when the critic of accounts came again, this time to settle matters finally, and in a few days the business passed from my hands to his, and not only the business but most of the furnishings of my home too, for his son was soon to marry and live on the premises.

Ere the three months ended I was free, and at once began preparations for a new life. Several months were spent in the London Hospital, Whitechapel Road, where I saw, learnt, and did much, both medical and surgical, that has been useful to myself and others since my going to work among the people of the Bawdee.

Early in September, 1891, I left England for the land of Moab, in due time reached Jerusalem, and a few days later passed on to the goal of my journeyings, Kerak, the ancient and modern capital of the Land of Moab.

Again I must refer the reader to a former work for an account of all that befell us on our journey

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between Jerusalem and Kerak, how we were captured and held by the Arabs, how released, and finally escorted to our new home by those who had captured us.

My new life among the Arabs of Moab was a busy one, and in one way and another I soon made friends with the local chiefs, many of whom had been opposers of the mission in former days.

Since my joining the small band of workers at that lonely outpost of the Bawdee, many and unlooked-for changes have come about, which have entirely altered matters both as regards the missionaries and the natives.

I will briefly relate some of these changes, so that the reader may have an intelligent and up-to-date idea of the conditions in Moab and its region.

The most important change after my advent into the Land of Moab, was that of government, for the Turkish authorities extended their jurisdiction and did away with the local government of the native sheikhs. For some twenty-three years the Government has ruled the turbulent tribes and clans of Moab and Edom, for the new jurisdiction extended its power over both these districts.

With the incoming of power, local strife has largely ceased, and the tribes that for years had been at enmity are now friendly, largely through the patience and diplomacy of the governors sent from Constantinople.

Roads and guard houses have been made and erected, which makes travel easier and safer, and to add to the safety and comfort of travellers in the newly-controlled districts, the Government is always ready and willing to provide a military escort to any that apply.

With a firm hand over them, and a certain amount of security, the natives have launched out into enterprises hitherto not attempted.

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Where flowing water is found gardens are now the fashion, and different kinds of vegetables vary the diet of the native. On many a hill-side, hitherto barren and uncultivated, may now be found thousands of grape vines and a goodly assortment of fruit trees; for the Arab is not averse to fruit, and works hard to secure a little.

In Kerak itself many changes have come about; wider streets, a mosque, hospital, schools, and a town council, are some of the most prominent; and whereas in former years travellers journeyed to and through Moab on horse or muleback, they now use the iron road, for Kerak is only six hours' ride west of Gatraneë, a station on the Mecca railroad. It will not be long ere carriages, or a branch line, will convey travellers over this six hours of road, for a well-built track is being made with all speed between the two points. This new connexion between Moab and Syria has made itself felt for the worse in Palestine, especially in Jerusalem, for it has diverted all the once extensive trade of Moab to Damascus and Hedjaz, instead of the Holy City as in times previous to the coming of the iron horse.

But probably the most interesting and conspicuous change of recent years is one which should claim the attention of many, especially in these days of prophecy fulfilling itself, and which I designate as—the rebuilding and repeopling of Moab.

When I went to Moab, twenty-five years ago, it was possible to ride for two days and not find anything in the way of human dwellings, except the “encampments that Kedar doth inhabit,” or in other words, the camps of black goat's-hair tents in which the Bedouin live, and which are constantly on the move. But conspicuous on the landscape, dotted about on the plains and on almost every elevation, were ruins of former towns

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and cities, all bearing evidence of a once well-populated land.

In recent years dozens of these ruined sites have put on life, and are being rebuilt and repeopled, so that Moab no longer remains a desolation, but is again being revived, and much of its extensive and fertile plains, which for centuries have lain barren, are now being cultivated to produce heavy crops to supply the needs of those who dwell in the resuscitated sites of ancient Moab.

Many of these new dwellers in Moab are emigrants from Tripoli in North Africa, and from the Balkans, who left their own lands after the recent wars rather than live under Christian government, and set out to find homes under the government to which they belonged.

In this resuscitation of Moab may we not see the hand of the Almighty, and a near fulfilment of Jeremiah *xlvi*. 47: "Yet will I bring again the captivity of Moab in the latter days, saith the Lord"?

Upon such a theme much of interest might be written, but what I have penned must suffice to assure the reader that changes have come about in the lands of the Bawdee since first I turned my face that way.

On my last missionary tour in Moab, only fifteen months ago, I visited many of these new settlements, and from local friends got the names of more than sixty new places, all inhabited, that had sprung up from the ruined sites and cities of ancient Moab.

Of a few of the most important I will make mention, hoping that it may stimulate the reader to further study and observation along these lines.

Dibon	Isaiah xv. 1.
Medaba	Isaiah xv. 2.
Heshbon	Isaiah xv. 3.
Aroer	Jeremiah <i>xlvi</i> . 19.

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Beth-meon	Jeremiah xlvi. 23.
Sihon	Jeremiah xlvi. 45.
Ar of Moab	Isaiah xv. 1.
¹ Kir-of-Moab	Isaiah xv. 1.
¹ Kirhareth	2 Kings iii. 25.
¹ Kirhareth	Isaiah xvi. 11.
¹ Kirheres	Jeremiah xlvi. 36.
¹ Kerioth	Jeremiah xlvi. 41.

No doubt with further research and observation other sites might be identified by their names, which, as above, would tally with those of the Bible.

Ere closing this chapter I will briefly refer to other changes that have come about, and which in a way touched me closely, viz., the loss of friends of many years' standing.

Death has taken away three men who for a long time were not only personal acquaintances, but valuable and willing helpers of the mission whilst at work in Kerak.

Sheikh Saleh Mujelly, the chief of the country, was from the beginning always inclined to assist the missionaries and, as far as possible, hinder all opposition. Many times he has entertained me in his goat's-hair home, and he is one I miss every time I visit the place where I commenced my missionary career. I have regretted many times that his photograph is not among my collection of Bedouin friends, not from any fault of mine, but because of his suspicion and dread of the camera.

His son Gedr inherited the chieftainship and has so far proved himself an able and bold leader, as demonstrated in the way he planned and carried out the

¹ These different names probably refer to the modern city of Kerak, now the civil capital of Moab, but in Bible times the military capital or stronghold.

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Kerak massacre and rebellion, a full account of which is given later on in this book, together with a photograph of this wily son of the Bawdee.

Another friend lost is the headman of the Christian community at Kerak. For many years he lived at Medaba, and his house was always open to the missionaries as they went and came to and from Kerak to Jerusalem. The later years of his life were passed at Kerak among his immediate relations, and to them the mission is largely indebted, for in many ways their services helped to establish and sustain the mission, and none regretted the withdrawal of the missionaries and the closing of the work, more than Sheikh Khaleel Senāā, friend of Christian and Moslem, Bedouin and peasant, rich and poor, foreigner and native, and a ready helper of all in trouble or distress. A short time before his death I persuaded him into letting me photograph him, and the reader may look for himself on the reproduction of this late friend and helper of many who lived in, and passed through, the Land of Moab, with its uncertainties and dangers.

“Old Faithful” is another tried friend gone. Needless to say, he gained this name by his constancy, faithfulness, and thoughtfulness for us as a family, and to myself personally.

A rough and ignorant son of the wilderness he was, but because of his honesty, love of the truth, and fidelity to friends, was respected and trusted by all. He was recommended to me as a guide, companion and servant, soon after I went to Kerak, and his loss is one I much regret, although I am not sorry that he has been spared all the troubles that of recent years have come to his land and people.

For years he accompanied me on my journeys among the Bedouin, and was a great help to me in many ways, oftentimes anticipating my wants, and always thoughtful

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as to my needs and comfort. Frequently he stood between me and danger, and was always ready with good advice and prompt action when needed.

During all the years of our close acquaintance I think I am safe in saying that only once did I cross him or see him vexed, and as that occasion was amusing to us I will relate it.

When twins were born to us, a boy and a girl, they saw the light for the first time in Jerusalem.

Six weeks later, accompanied by "Old Faithful," I came from my Moab home to the Holy City to see the new additions to our family. Next to ourselves nobody was more interested in the twins, especially as one was a boy, than "Old Faithful," and when the time came for him to be allowed to see them, he was as glad as myself.

His request to have one of them in his arms was complied with by giving him the girl. Thinking it to be the boy, he kissed her and called down manifold blessings on her head, and after due admiration returned her to her mother with many exclamations of gratification. We then gave him the boy, but kisses and blessings were not so freely lavished on him, for the desert ranger thought it was the girl, and who of his people would think of fondling a baby girl?

When both babes were returned to their beds, I asked "Old Faithful" which he thought the better of the two infants; he replied, "The boy, of course." Then I told him he had neglected to serve the boy as he did the girl, and asked him why?

He at once discovered my trick on him, and was thoughtful for a few moments, then asked, "had he really kissed the girl and called down heaven's blessings on her?" I told him "Yes," and nothing would satisfy our old friend but to have the boy a second time and give him extra kisses and added blessings.

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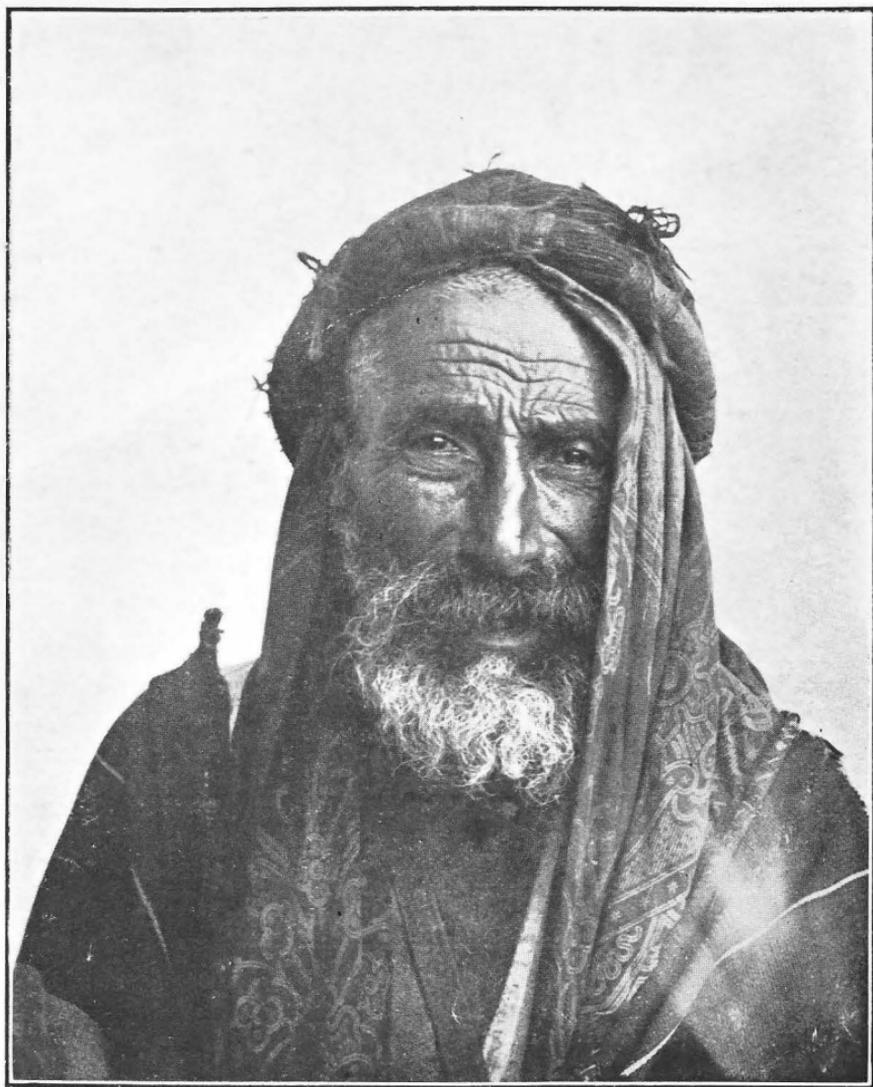
Later, when alone, "Old Faithful" reprimanded me for tricking him as I did, and made me promise I would not tell his people that he had nursed and kissed a baby girl, as well as invoked blessings on her from heaven.

Needless to say, the secret was kept between us, but my treatment of our old friend was never forgiven me, and this will serve to tell the reader how little girls are thought of by the people of the Bawdee.

When, nine years later, the twin-boy was taken from us by typhoid, we had no more sympathetic friend, in his rough way, than "Old Faithful," for our bairns really loved the old Arab, and were always the first to welcome and serve him when he visited us.

Many friends were lost to me by the Kerak massacre and rebellion, an experience I passed through and which is told later on; but in spite of changes both political and social, I have yet many good friends in Moab and its adjacent lands, and if the time comes again for reopening mission work in Kerak, the missionaries will find many warm and open hearts, in rough exteriors, to welcome and help them, one result of seed sown, and work done, through former years, and amid adverse and dangerous surroundings.

But enough of the changing Bawdee, for thoughts constantly remind me that it is time I told the reader something of the land I have designated the Bawdee, and why. This will occupy attention in the next chapter.



Old Faithful.

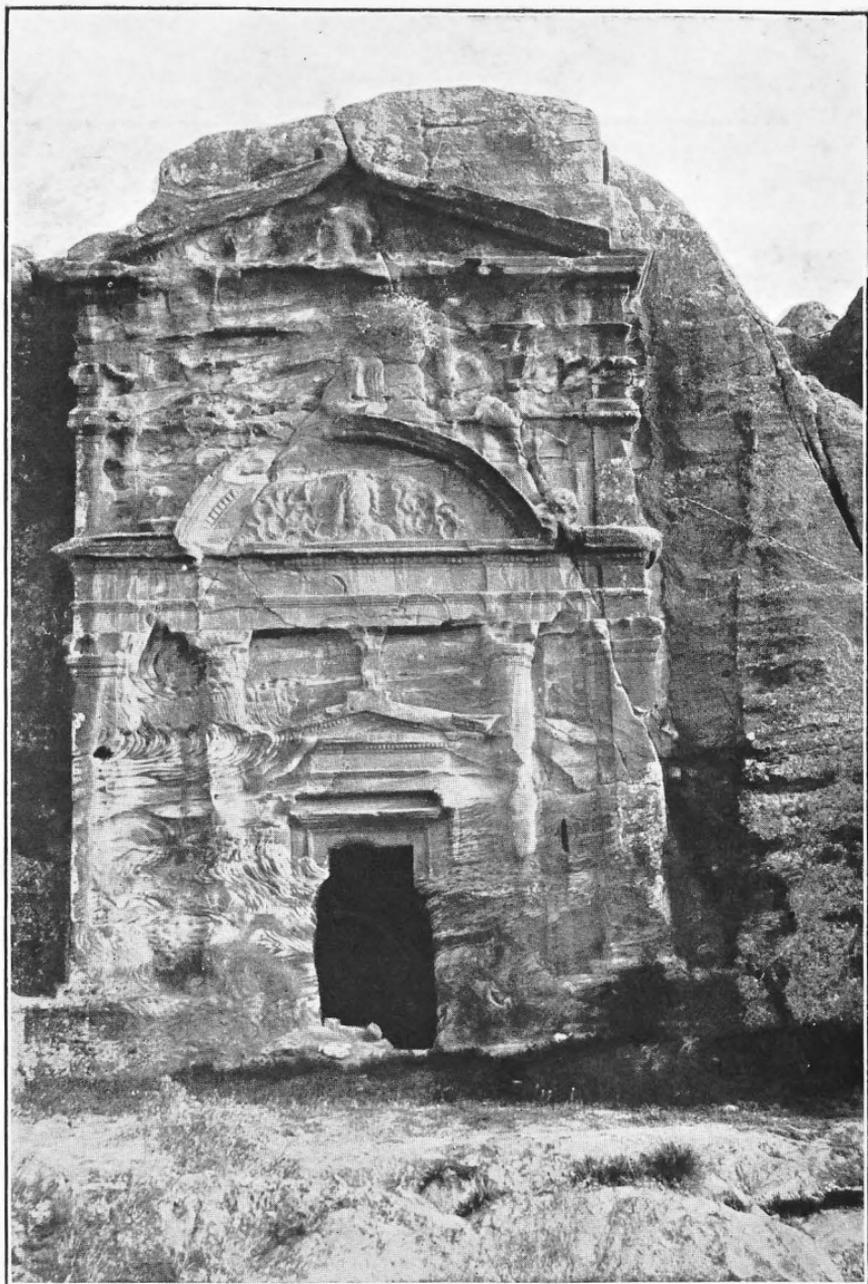


Photo by]

[A. FORDER

One of the many excavations in the rock-hewn city of Petra. During the rains the Bedouin use these caves for themselves and their flocks.

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CHAPTER X

THE BAWDEE, AND SOME OF ITS INCLUDES

WHEN pondering for a word with which to designate the lands or districts in which a quarter of a century of my life has been passed the classical Arabic word Bawdee came to my mind, and as it exactly fits the description of the spheres of my wanderings and work, I at once decided that the word was the one I needed, so have Romanized and used it for this book.

Bawdee in the Arabic language means the void and deserted place, such as the wilderness or desert, in contradistinction to the cities, towns and villages in the land. From Bawdee comes the word Bedouin, meaning the dwellers in the Bawdee, wilderness or desert. The word is one not used in colloquial Arabic, but frequently found in books and papers, and is also used by those who when speaking use high-class Arabic. The word is much in use by the Bedouin, and city people of Central Arabia where good Arabic is spoken.

If a more general or universal interpretation of the word Bawdee were given, it might well be put into one word, viz., Arabia, for probably no country is more thought of, or considered to be desert and wilderness, than the great peninsula between Africa and the sun-rising.

I am not forgetting, as I write, that there are other lands that have deserts and wildernesses in them ; but I think I shall be spared criticism if I say, that Arabia

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takes pre-eminence of all lands for desert stretches, in fact, the entire country is a sandy track from side to side, and end to end, interspersed with oases, in and about which are cities, towns and villages, not omitting the Bedowee, who calls no place home with his movable tent of goat's hair.

The reader will now fully understand the meaning of the word Bawdee, and as it is used in this book will bear in mind that the deserts and wildernesses of Arabia are referred to when mentioned, and that the words Arabia and Bawdee are interchangeable.

Arabia, or the Bawdee, is one of the oldest of inhabited lands, and is not without mention in the Scriptures. Isaiah in Chapter xxi. verse 1, speaks of the country as "the desert of the sea," a name both appropriate and simple. Take a map and see how much of the borders of Arabia are washed by the ocean, and do not forget to notice how the Tigris and Euphrates take the place of the ocean, and you must admit that Isaiah's designation of Arabia is a fitting one.

Within, or on the borders of, Arabia much of early history took place; Job was one of its early chiefs, Abraham probably traversed its northern parts, from the south came the Queen of Sheba to visit Solomon, and the purchasers of Egypt's to-be saviour, Joseph, were traders of the land. Paul had a three years' residence somewhere in the peninsula, and it is not too much to believe that the seekers of Him who was "born King of the Jews" came from the Bawdee, for is it not due east of Jerusalem and Bethlehem? From the land of the Bawdee came, in later years, Mohammed, who set up the religion known as Islam, which has become the sternest antagonist of Christianity since its earliest days.

Within, or on the borders of the Bawdee, are to be found the ruins of a mighty civilization, much of which

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the excavator's pick and shovel have brought to light as a substantiation of the truth of Scripture history. Sites, buildings, and excavations mentioned in the Bible are to be found in the includes of the Bawdee, and did space permit proof could be given and shown of a once prosperous country.

As to the size of the Bawdee as a whole, it is much larger than most people suppose. Does the reader realize that on or in the boundaries of the Bawdee many of the most interesting sites of Bible history are to be found and seen ?

Babylon and Nineveh, once extensive, flourishing, and civilized cities, have been unearthed, and reveal much of their former glory to present generations.

Sinai, so closely connected with Israelitish history, and the giving of a law upon which civilization rests for security, and on which the jurisdiction of Christian nations is founded, is among the includes of the Bawdee, in fact is part of the Bawdee itself, for desert and wilderness are intermixed in and about this old-time region which after four thousand years has not lost its interest for travellers and students, many of whom find their way thither in spite of the hardness of the road and the fatigue of travel.

Another of the Bawdee's includes is Petra, the Sela of 2 Kings xiv. 7, and Isaiah xvi. 1, and against which the prophecies of Obadiah were uttered, and which differs in a unique way from all else connected with the Bawdee, except Medine-Saleh, because of its wonderful and elaborate excavations in the rock, telling of a time when people preferred the solidity of a home in the rocks, to that of a home made with hands.

Much has been written about Petra, so well designated. "A rose-red city, half as old as time," with its temples, tombs, theatres, high places of worship, and homes, that he who would may read, and it is not my

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purpose here to give any description of these old-time workings but only to repeat what I have already penned, that this ruined city of rocky wonders is another include of the Bawdee.

The Bawdee holds within its sandy grip the only two cities of modern days into which all outside of the religion of Islam are forbidden entrance, in other words, into which no Christian, heathen, or Jew may enter, viz., Mecca, the birthplace of Mohammed, and Medina, 200 miles north, where his remains lie buried within an elaborate mosque. To these cities flock annually hundreds of thousands of those whose allegiance is to the Arabian prophet, who himself was a son of the Bawdee, and in which he spent the early years of his life.

Of other parts of the Bawdee I cannot write here, for this is not intended to be a treatise on the Arabian Peninsula, but only a brief description of the Bawdee and some of its includes, so that "he who runs may read" and have some idea of the land into parts of which my journeyings have led me.

He who would write of the deserts of Arabia must have a more ready pen than mine, for with all the desolation and danger common to the Bawdee, it has a charm and attraction difficult to explain or write about.

Who can adequately describe the mirage, with its allurements and deception, picturing to the ignorant and weary traveller palm groves, lakes, cities, and even companies of travellers approaching from the distant or even near horizon?

Many times when on the back of a camel, crossing the Bawdee, weary, thirsty, hungry, and fearful, have I been momentarily cheered by seeing in the distance that which promised rest, protection and refreshment, but, alas, which soon faded away, or receded as we

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advanced towards it. It was the mirage, changeful, dangerous, deceptive, mysterious, and attractive in its many forms and phases.

Or who can express the sense of freedom inhaled in the Bawdee, with its limitless stretches, its blue and open heaven, its isolation from the demands of city life, or the conventionalities of civilization? No pen can justly describe such liberty, or words express the feeling of freedom exhaled in the Bawdee, an experience to be enjoyed but not explained.

Added to the freedom of the Bawdee is yet another feature, namely, the constant expectation of attack from roving bands of hostile tribes, or the coming of companies not known to be friends or enemies. For those of the Bawdee still have their "hand against every man," and until faced, are not known as friend or foe. This constant expectation of surprise or attack is a great set-off against the dreary solitude of the Bawdee, and goes a long way to while away many a day or hour that otherwise would be wearying and depressing.

Who would say, after sojourning or even travelling in the Bawdee, that it is uninteresting or unattractive, with its mirages, freedom, and expectations of miniature battles, robbings, or friendly greetings? I venture to say, none but those who are never pleased, and there are plenty such in the world.

Ere closing this chapter on the Bawdee, I will name only two more of its includes or attractions, namely the oases that break the desert expanse, and the people of the country itself.

An oasis must be seen to be appreciated. After crossing for days nothing but golden sand or stony expanses, what more pleasing than suddenly to come upon a clump of green, oftentimes several miles over, and usually in a hollow, so that it is not seen from a distance?

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A nearer acquaintance reveals palms and tamarisks growing side by side, the former raising its graceful head above the latter, but together making a welcome shade. From amid the palms comes the creaking of the wheels over which the ropes are pulled that brings the huge skins of water from the wells of the oasis, and a still nearer acquaintance reveals numerous small streams of water finding their way along tiny channels to irrigate the gardens in which a small variety of vegetables is under cultivation.

As you wind in and out of the mud-brick homes of the oasis, the thud of the pestle pounding newly-roasted coffee adds to the attractions of these paradises of the Bawdee, and you will not be long in the place before some hospitable member of the community, almost in his birthday costume, will invite you to his house to regale yourself with newly-made coffee and delicious dates.

These oases are valuable assets of the Bawdee, and the owners of the palms in them consider themselves rich by the number they possess.

Few in western lands know how useful the palm tree is to its owner. From it he gathers annually a goodly crop of dates of varying qualities which serve him and his family as bread. His few goats or cow, camel or donkey, find satisfaction in eating date stones, after they have been reduced to pulp by soaking in pits of water for several days.

From the trunk of the palm tree beams for house roofs and rough thick boards for doors are hewn with the most primitive tools. From the fibre of the palm the native weaves ropes, makes mats, and with a wooden hook crochets for himself a skull cap from fine thread spun from the finest of the fibre.

Baskets for packing dates in for sale or export, and mats for house use, are made from the graceful fronds

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of this useful tree, and not a small part of its annual loppings serves as fuel either in the guest-room or the kitchen of the establishment to which they belong.

Let me give the testimony of a son of the Bawdee about his country, as I accidentally came across it in a land far from either deserts or oases.

When in America last, I one day received a call on the telephone. I was in New York city and knew very few who were likely to call me up in this way. The voice over the phone told me that the speaker had heard me lecture the evening before, and would be glad if I would dine with him that evening in his rooms in an up-town hotel. Being disengaged that evening I accepted the invitation, wondering what it could mean. Ere the connexion was cut off I was told on arrival at the hotel, to enquire for Mr. Homer Davenport, the famous cartoonist of one of New York's leading dailies, which one I have forgotten.

In due time I presented myself at the door of my unknown inviter, who opened it himself and gave me a hearty welcome.

Soon dinner was served, everything Eastern, even to the coffee in tiny cups. As dish after dish of Arab viands followed each other my eagerness to know who cooked it, and from where they came, was increased, and at the close of dinner my new friend and kind host told me that years before he had travelled in the Bawdee, and after hearing me lecture wanted to learn more from me, especially to find out if I knew the language of the Bawdee and could use it readily.

After coffee, my host told me that he had a youth to whom he wanted me to talk, and the ringing of his bell brought into the room a real Bedowee clad in the costume of the Bawdee.

"Speak to him," said my host, so I greeted him with an evening salutation in Arabic.

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On hearing my voice his face brightened and he exclaimed, "Blessed is the day on which I hear again my own language," and at once we settled down to a long talk.

The son of the Bawdee told me that he had been brought to New York to care for some horses bought by my host when in the Orient, and that he was kindly treated.

In conversation I asked him what he thought of New York, and was much interested in his reply. He said :

"Only one thing pleases me, after caring for the horses, and that is to go out at night and see the lights on the houses and streets (meaning the illuminations outside the theatres, which in New York are both elaborate and extensive), for they make me think that it must be like Paradise, but I care for nothing else, for in this country there are no palms, no camels, no raiding, and not much sun."

I stayed talking till midnight, and then left for my room, wishing that the longings for the Bawdee of my newly-found friend could be realized, and that it were in my power to help him return to the land of oases, camels, sun and raiders, of which in a brief way I have tried to give some idea.

Some time since I heard that the famous cartoonist was dead, and my thoughts led me to wonder what had become of the stable-boy whose heart was in the Bawdee.

As I have made this chapter longer than I intended I will write of the remaining include of the Bawdee, its people, in the chapter following.

CHAPTER XI

THE PEOPLE OF THE BAWDEE

“**T**HE wealthy nation—a nation that is at ease (R.V.) — that dwelleth without care, which have neither gates nor bars, which dwell alone.” That is an old-time description of the people about whom I would write, given by Jeremiah in his book, Chapter xlix. verse 31, nearly two thousand seven hundred years ago, and speaking generally, true to-day.

The people of the Bawdee are one of the most interesting among the peoples of the earth, although perhaps, with a few exceptions, less is known of them than of other nations, because of their isolation and non-contact with others.

The nature of their country renders access to them difficult, and their suspicion of outsiders makes them dangerous, so that few care to go to them, thus civilization has done little for them.

They are a people living as did their forefathers, and the founder of their nation, with few wants, and little knowledge of the outer world, tied to customs and usages common five thousand years ago, and in vogue at the present time.

Tribes, clans, and families that pretend to trace their pedigree back to earliest years, and who, all down through the centuries, have retained their independence and freedom, although oftentimes assailed.

These are some of the things that may be penned about the people of the Bawdee ; much more might be

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written, but the reader will be wanting to know who they are, and from where they came.

The people of Arabia, or the Bawdee, are half-brothers of the Jews, having come into existence from Abraham, through Ishmael, the son of his bondwoman. Abraham's impatience and lack of faith are responsible for the nation known as the Arabs, the Ishmaelites of Bible lore, who since their becoming a nation have inhabited the watered districts of "the desert of the sea" (Isa. xxi. 1).

One interest that attaches to the Arabs is the complete fulfilment, in their history as a nation, of the predictions made concerning them, and which is well worthy of study, for it serves to show and prove the truth of Old Testament writings and predictions.

Although given in my other books, the subject is of such interest as to bear repetition here, for there may be new readers to whom the recital of these Bible predictions may be valuable and interesting, as fulfilled in the history, as a nation, of the people of the Bawdee.

Before Ishmael was born it was said to his mother, "I will multiply thy seed exceedingly, that it shall not be numbered for multitude" (Gen. xvi. 10). Thirteen years later (Gen. xvii. 25) it was said of him to Abraham, "I will make him a great nation" (Gen. xvii. 20). Later, it was said about this same one, again to Abraham, "of the son of the bondwoman will I make a nation" (Gen. xxi. 13), and again to his sorrowing mother, "I will make him a great nation" (Gen. xxi. 18).

These four statements made by Jehovah to both the parents of Ishmael, are fulfilled in the people of the Bawdee to the extent of many millions, some say seven, others ten, and others thirteen, these resident in their own land, and not including the Arabs of other lands such as Egypt, Souḍan, North Africa, Palestine and Syria. Add these to the millions of Arabia and you

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have a nation far outnumbering their half-brothers, the Hebrews, by many millions, for the Jews, all told, only number some twelve millions.¹ This one phase of Ishmael's history ought to suffice to show how they have fulfilled the prophecies made about them on this line alone, but there are others.

Their unbroken existence as a nation may be traced back to Genesis xvi. 12, to words spoken by the angel of the Lord to Hagar, Ishmael's mother, "he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren," or as another interpretation has it, "he shall dwell over against all nations." These words have been fulfilled in Ishmael's history by a continuous existence as a people all down through four or more millenniums, and although many attempts have been made by other nations to subdue and conquer the Arabs of the Bawdee, they have all failed, and they still "dwell over against all nations."

The wild, roving, ferocious, and almost untameable nature of the Arab, is another fulfilment of what it was said the seed of the bondwoman should become, and may be traced back to Genesis xvi. 12, "He will be a wild man—as a wild-ass among men (R.V.)—his hand will be against every man, and every man's hand against him."

The nomadic life led by a large proportion of the Arabs, the Bedouin, their adherence to the free, open, wild life of the plains and desert, their love of raiding and fighting, and their dislike, suspicion and hatred of all outside their own nation, and ofttimes tribe, are all proofs of how the words of prophecy have been fulfilled.

It is an interesting fact to notice, in connexion with the people of the Bawdee, that as a nation they origi-

¹ Statistics about the Jews, given at the World Missionary Conference, Edinburgh, 1910, showed that the approximate Jewish population on January 1, 1910, was twelve millions.

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nally had twelve heads or chiefs, just as did the Hebrews, so that in this respect Jehovah treated both the stocks of Abraham in the same way, although the twelve heads of the Hebrews came from a later generation than did those of the Arabs.

Scripture again tells of these twelve heads, from which was to come the Ishmaelitish nation, and again the prediction was spoken by Jehovah Himself, and not by any prophet. "Twelve princes (or chiefs) shall he beget" (Gen. xvii. 20). "These are the sons of Ishmael . . . twelve princes according to their nations" (Gen. xxv. 16). The foregoing verses in this same 25th chapter, give in full the names of these twelve sons of Ishmael, from the eldest to the youngest. Recently, I was introduced to a resident in Damascus, a native and large plantation owner of Central Arabia, whose family name is Mibsam, and who claims to be a descendant of the fourth son of Ishmael (Gen. xxv. 13), who bore that name, and he assured me, in conversation, that there are other families that bear the names of some of the other sons of Ishmael, things that are of unusual interest and value especially as they link up ancient and modern history.

The statements made at the commencement of this chapter are all as literally true of the Arabs in these days as they were when they were spoken, and a brief reference to them will not be out of place here.

"The wealthy nation," counting wealth, not in coin, but in stock, plantations, possessions and income. "A nation that is at ease," not in contact, alliance, competition or warfare, with other nations, consequently "at ease."

"Dwelling without care," because largely isolated from outside peoples, and not mixed up in or with the political, social or commercial affairs of the European and Asiatic governments.

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“ Having neither gates nor bars,” referring to Kedar (see verse 28), the nomads of the Bawdee, whose only dwelling is their black tent (see verse 29, and Song of Solomon i. 5), to which a gate or bar would be a useless appendage.

“ Which dwell alone,” in the wilderness, deserts, valleys and mountains of the Bawdee, having no contact with each other or outsiders, by post, telegraph, telephone, or newspaper. A people unacquainted with the doings and news of the outer world, and who eye with suspicion, and receive coldly, any who venture into their land ; consequently few go in, or come out of, the land of the people to which these definitions refer.

The people of the Bawdee have a love for trading, and from the earliest years of their history caravans have gone and come to the lands that are adjacent to their own, and here again Scripture bears witness to the trading propensities of the Arabs, for Gen. xxxvii. 28 says, “ Then there passed by Midianites, merchantmen, and they drew and lifted up Joseph out of the pit ; and sold Joseph to the Ishmaelites, and they brought Joseph into Egypt.”

This verse telling to whom Joseph was sold is of great interest, for it not only gives the nationality of the buyers of the hated brother, viz., Ishmaelites, but also the tribe to which they belonged, viz., Midian. It also shows that the Ishmaelites, the people of the Bawdee, were a nation of traders long before the Hebrews were a nation, for several hundred years elapsed between the selling of Joseph and the exodus from Egypt.

Hospitality is another trait of the character of, or life in, the Bawdee, and one of the best compliments that can be paid to a Bawdee chief is to speak of his liberality towards his visitors. A favourite way of expressing the hospitality of a host is to say, “ the coffee is always on the fire.” This kind, generous, and universal

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liberality to guests is another of the old-time Biblical customs still in vogue in the Bawdee, and in Judges xix. 4, we read of the three days it is customary for strangers and visitors to limit their stay to when visiting in the Bawdee.

Consideration of the weaker sex, women, is also another trait for good in the Arab ; and although woman is not so exalted or considered as in Western lands, and has to take a large share of the daily work of the family, yet unkindness or roughness to the women or girls is the exception, and any man that ill-uses his women is looked down upon by his fellows, and has to make amends for any ill-treatment to the female members of his household. This trait in the character of the Oriental is also brought out in Scripture, see Ruth ii. 15-16, in Boaz's treatment of the stranger maiden Ruth in the harvest field : " Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not, and let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not."

Revenge for life taken or blood spilt is another feature of the Arab's life, and no man is considered brave if he does not, either sooner or later, have revenge on the slayer of any member of his family. This is carried to such an extent as to endanger the safety of large tribes, and to interfere largely with the going and coming of caravans when they have to traverse the domains of a tribe against which there is blood.

This custom of revenge, or blood for blood, is very strikingly told of in the Old Testament in a very few words : " So Joab and Abishai his brother slew Abner, because he had killed their brother Asahel at Gibeon in the battle " (2 Sam. iii. 30 ; in also 1 Kings ii. 28-34).

Total abstinence from intoxicating drink is one of the prominent features in the life of the Bawdee, and a

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proof that civilization, with its curses as well as its blessings, has not yet reached that people.

The universal drink of entertainment is coffee, of the very best kind, and never made by a woman. Many little etiquettes are observed in serving this national beverage, which space forbids me detailing here, and no host, however poor, will consider his guest entertained if he has not drunk coffee. Water and lebn—sour milk—take the place of the many drinks thought necessary and luscious by the Occidental, and with these two, plus the coffee, the Arab is content.

The dwellers in the Bawdee are a people of ready replies to what is said to them, and they are never at a loss for an answer to any remark made about them or their circumstances.

Of this readiness to answer I will give two instances again from my own experience.

I was riding from the east of Jordan to the Holy City. All day the rain had been coming down in torrents, and my companion and self were soaked to the skin, and were of all travellers the most miserable. As we neared the Jordan we had difficulty in proceeding, for the mud made riding dangerous, as our horses slipped about in all directions, or sank more than ankle deep in the mire.

We had reached the dense growth of trees that abounds on the east bank of the river, and were some hundred yards from it, although hidden by the trees, when a man appeared coming towards us, he had his long cotton shirt girded up above his knees, and, like ourselves, was slowly finding his way through the mud and slush.

As it is customary for the larger number to greet the lesser when meeting, I saluted him with the usual, "Salaam—ay—layk"—i.e., Peace to you. He replied with "Allah sellam-ak," i.e., God grant you peace.

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Then for something more to say to him, I asked, "Is the bridge far away?" although I knew it was not more than two minutes' ride.

The reply to my inquiry came readily, and was as follows: "The mercy of God is nearer than the bridge." An answer brief, simple, beautiful and expressive, for it meant that just as the mercy of God was about us, even on that cold wet day, so the bridge, for which I inquired, was not far away.

On another occasion I was at a weekly market of animals, so common in Oriental lands. I was sauntering among the crowd, and came across two men trying to drive a bargain over a donkey with its young one, the latter jet black and only a few days old.

I stopped to admire and stroke the tiny to-be bearer of burdens, and remarked to the owner that "the little donkey was beautiful." His ready reply was, "All the creation of Allah—God—is beautiful," and then returned to his bargaining, leaving me to go my way, pondering over the truth of the words of this son of the Bawdee, with no college or city training, and yet acknowledging a fact to which millions in other lands are blind, although of a higher civilization.

Story-telling is another faculty of the Arab, and many hours are whiled away round the fire, or on the road, by reciting imaginary doings of kings, warriors, and other worthies of the Orient. Space forbids me telling here any of these Arab stories; some are given in my other books and must suffice, for already I have said more than intended for this chapter.

The stories of the Old Testament are much appreciated by the dwellers in the Bawdee, and I have seen men moved to tears over the story of Joseph, and heard others call down curses on Jael for her treatment of Sisera, for he was her guest, and according to Oriental usage, entitled to protection, although an enemy.

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Over the story of David and Goliath I have heard men utter exclamations of praise for the youthful victor, as in imagination they saw him sever the giant's head with his own sword, and march off with it in his hand to the camp of the fearful Israelites.

Many of the stories of the Bawdee are well thought out, and have good morals to them ; the *Arabian Nights* is a good sample of Arab stories, only unusually long.

Enough has now been said to give the reader some idea of the people to whom I went, and among whom twenty-five years of my life have been spent. I have many good friends among them, for to a friend they are true, and I am not conscious of having one enemy among them, something to be able to say after my varied experiences among such a many-sided people.

Of their religion, with its teaching and effects on them as a people, I will write later on, for like other nations they have their religion, although its origin, teaching, observances, and demands are all cloudy to the people of the Bawdee, among whom it originally came.

In concluding this chapter, I would have the reader bear in mind that what I have written refers to the people of the Bawdee only, and not to the coast towns of the Arabian Peninsula, although even in them there is much in common as regards manners and customs, but contact with commerce and Western ideas has had its influence on them and given them a savouring of civilization which has not yet reached their inland brothers.

CHAPTER XII

BREAKING GROUND IN THE BAWDEE

IT is not the purpose of this chapter to tell the doings of the many years lived among the Arabs; those who have stood with me in prayer and sympathy are already acquainted with the way in which those years were spent, and of the experiences and dangers that accompanied the work as told in other writings.

This chapter will record the goings and doings of recent years, with the idea that those who have not received my annual letters, may get some knowledge of breaking new ground for missionary purposes, for instead of settling down to work in one place with a limited sphere of service, I have gone to many fresh places where the missionary and his message were entirely fresh to the people.

I have come to think, that in the remaining years of this dispensation, be they few or many, it should largely be the business of the Church, through its missionary agencies, to go forward and scatter the message of the Gospel, both oral and printed, among the peoples so long neglected and unreached. That there must be pioneers of the Gospel, as well as for commerce and civilization, none will deny, and it has been in this capacity that I have served during recent years, and about which I would write.

Again I regret the absence of my diaries, so that I might give the dates on which I visited the places of which I tell. Critical readers only would desire these

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details, and they can be had by correspondence and the expenditure of the necessary stamp to carry the information. What more can I say or offer?

Naturally my desires to serve turn towards the land and city of the Bawdee where my early experiences and years of missionary life were spent, namely Kerak in Moab.

Since the withdrawal of settled workers in that city, I have again and again visited both the city with its thousands of settled dwellers, and also many of the new settlements referred to in another chapter, not overlooking the numerous encampments of the plains and valleys of the district. With the prospect of the reopening of the work in Kerak, either by the society which formerly had it, or by some other, these periodical visits, three a year, will have served to keep the missionary enterprise in touch with the people of Moab, and to assure them that Christian sympathy does not forget them, and would help them continually if circumstances permitted.

Another result of these visitations has been to cheer and encourage the few who had allied themselves to the mission in its working days, and who still hold firmly to the teaching given and the confession of faith made in spite of opposition and some persecution. Add to these a large number who were and are favourably disposed to the Protestant mission, and with whom it is of importance to keep in touch, and the value of these visits will be admitted as of some use, and better than leaving the field to lie untilled, and the few sheaves gathered to go to waste for want of a little care.

From Kerak my visitations have been extended into Edom, dividing my time between the people of Māān and those of Wady Moosa, or Petra.

Māān is a large Arabian town some two miles west

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of the station on the Mecca railway that bears the same name. The inhabitants may number about ten thousand, dwelling in houses made of mud brick, and of good dimensions, with windows, and enclosed gardens, but surrounded on all sides by a barren, stony desert, off which blow almost continually clouds of fine dust and snow.

The Māāney, as the natives are called, are a very clean, industrious and [intelligent] people, more so than any I have met in the Bawdee east of the Jordan. The majority of them can read well, and I found many eager purchasers of the Scriptures in the place. During my residence in Kerak, years ago, I had met and made friends with many Māāney, and these vie with each other in entertaining me when I visit them, as well as helping me in any way I may require of them.

The women of Māān, unlike most of their kind in the Bawdee, are unusually industrious and in their spare time work at embroidery in different coloured silks, which is used to decorate their dresses, and for which they find a ready sale.

I was interested to note that the women of Māān wore much of their jewellery suspended from a belt round the waist, in addition to what they have on their head-dresses. Usually, the decoration of the headgear is of gold coins, and that from the waist of silver chains and coins of varying values.

On feast days, the women in their elaborately figured and embroidered dresses, and their sparkling array of gold and silver jewellery, make a very gay picture, and are much admired by the male members of the community.

I was interested to learn from the Māāney that a few generations back many of them were Christians, and one family even now bears the name "the house, or family of the priest," but for want of shepherding

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they had lapsed into Mohammedanism. Among these people I found many willing and interested listeners to the Gospel message, and on return visits saw there was a desire to know more, and to hear with greater interest and attention.

Some day there will be an established mission station in this town of the Bawdee, and it will be an important stepping stone towards the more densely populated districts of Central Arabia.

From Māān I have visited Petra, the Sela of the Old Testament. Here, amid the ruins of the once famous capital of Edom, are thousands of simple, semi-civilized Arabs, who, unless reached in these visitations, would never hear the Gospel, but who are willing, during the evening hours, over their coffee and round their fires, to listen to the story the missionary has to tell.

During a visit to Petra it is possible to have a different audience every evening, varying in numbers from ten to thirty persons of both sexes, for in addition to the people in the ruins, there is the village of Eljy near, and all around in the valleys are dozens of small camps, the people of which give a hearty welcome to any one from the outside world.

To many of these camps I have gone with the news of the Gospel, and many a long evening and early morning have been spent in telling the people of Salvation, and answering their many questions and objections; and although I cannot report definite conversions from among these people of the Bawdee of Edom, I have the satisfaction of knowing that they have heard and understood the message, and that "this Gospel of the kingdom . . . has been preached . . . for a witness," to the out-of-the-way dwellers in the camps and ruins of Petra in Edom.

Towards the close of 1913, when at Māān, I had the opportunity of visiting Akaba, the supposed Ezion-

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Geber of the Old Testament, and situated on the shore of the Gulf that bears the same name, Akaba.

From Māān it is two long, or three short days' ride, over a sandy and stony country, the latter part of the journey being through long deep valleys, and the entire route void of water or habitations.

Akaba is only a small place of about three hundred houses, surrounded by palms from which a goodly crop of fine dates is annually gathered, which adds greatly to the limited fare of the people, which consists largely of fish.

My stay of three days at Akaba was made pleasant and helpful, because the civil ruler of the town, an intelligent young Turk recently arrived from Constantinople, was my host, and gave me all the liberty I wished in going and coming in and out among the people.

Although small, there is a constant stream of people to the town, and I was very interested in watching the men and women, shepherds and shepherdesses of the Bawdee, lead their flocks of goats, or herds of camels to the seashore to water them. At first, from a distance, I wondered how the cattle could drink salt water, but on closer investigation I found that fresh water was being imbibed from small pits scooped in the sand within one or two feet of the water's edge, and from which there bubbled up a constant supply of fresh water. From these pits the water skins for family use were filled, and carried away on donkeys' backs to the camps among the near valleys and mountains.

As a first visit to Akaba my journey was valuable, for information as to conditions, distances and possibilities was gained, which will be useful in the future.

Some day Akaba may be an out-station of the mission at Māān, an outcome of this first journey from a missionary standpoint, and the unostentatious visit of a lonely breaker of new ground in the Bawdee.

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In a previous chapter mention has been made of the many new settlements that have lately come into existence on the plains and from the ruins of Moab. To many of these settlements I have gone both preaching and selling the Word, and have found among these isolated peoples many small communities who are adherents of either the Greek Orthodox or Roman Catholic churches. In one only of these settlements did I find a priest, and he was in charge of a small community of Latins, who were responsible for his support, and for the upkeep of a school and native teacher. When missionary work is established in Moab on a good basis, many of these new settlements will open their doors to the mission worker, be he spiritual, medical or educational, one result of this ground breaking and periodical visitation among the dwellers in the Bawdee of Moab.

Another new sphere for work has been in Gilead, among the few villages in the southern hills of that old-time region. The dwellers in these villages are mixed, viz., Moslem and Christian, so that it is possible to reach both classes, and to get the Word into their hands with comparative ease. I might say here that I have found among the settlements and villages of Moab and Gilead a great desire for reading matter, and next to the Old and New Testaments, Blackstone's *Jesus is Coming*, has been in great demand, and a gift of this helpful book, translated into Arabic, has made it possible for many a priest and intelligent adult to have a copy gratis.

The reader must not think that all my time and efforts have been spent in the Bawdee east of the Jordan, for such is not the case.

There is a huge Bawdee on the west of the Jordan and Arabah, into which the bearer of the Gospel, both verbal and printed, never goes, and which was, until recent years, quite neglected. This Bawdee may be divided into two districts, both of huge dimensions;

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that south of Palestine and east of the Arabah is known as the Negeb, or south country, and that away to the south-west, as far as the Gulf of Suez, known as the Sinai Peninsula. The inhabitants of these regions are very difficult to number. The estimate of the Egyptian Government puts the Arabs of Sinai at 50,000, most of them dwellers in tents or caves. The capital of the Negeb is none other than Beersheba, a modern settlement, built of ancient material, on the site of the home of the Patriarchs, and supplied with water from the wells which were dug to supply drink for the families and flocks of Abraham and Isaac, see Gen. xxi. 27-33, xxvi. 32, 33.

My visits to Beersheba commenced when none but the Bedouin had his tent there, and one lonely trader, a Greek Christian of Gaza, who from his one-roomed store and home supplied the needs of his nomadic neighbours. From Beersheba I went to the camps within a radius of thirty miles, and so came to be well known to the Arabs of the district. Later, the Turkish Government made a civil station of Beersheba, from which to control the Negeb, and in a comparatively short time the site of Bedouin tents became a small town, with wide and level streets, and well-built houses, supplied with water pumped from the ancient wells by a petroleum engine made in Lincolnshire, England.

In this modern town, of ancient name, settled a small community of Greek Christians, whose desire for a resident spiritual helper and teacher for their children has been supplied by the Jerusalem branch of the Christian and Missionary Alliance of New York, and Beersheba is now recorded as a station on the list of that missionary agency. We have thus an illustration of how one sows and another reaps, of how one labours and others enter into his labours—but together both rejoice in that the work proceeds.

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For several years it had been my desire to go to the Arabs and Bedouin of the Sinai Peninsula, but year after year passed and the desire was unfulfilled. Sinai, with its 50,000 nomads, ought to be cared for by some of the numerous missions in Egypt, but they all seem too busy with existing work to extend their efforts to the many thousands of the Sinaitic Bawdee, hence all the more reason why some one else should break the ground, and open a way for others to follow.

During the past two years I have gone thrice to the Arabs of Sinai, and have been much encouraged and well repaid for the efforts made. In my twenty-five years of work among the Arabs and Bedouin, I have found none so open to the Gospel as those of Sinai, and during my three visits I made many friends.

The region of Sinai is a very difficult one to labour in, because of the absence of towns and villages from which to work, but this was overcome by making headquarters at the Greek monastery which is in a deep valley on the south-west side of the historic mount under whose shadow the Israelites camped, and from which the foundation of all national jurisprudence was given. The monks of the monastery, twenty-seven in number, made me very welcome to their home in the Bawdee, and did all in their power to help me. They provided me with an intelligent and trustworthy man as guide, This I found to be very necessary, as the Arabs seem to delight in hiding themselves away in the valleys and recesses that abound in that mountainous region, and without a guide I might have wandered day after day and finally concluded that the Arabs of Sinai were a myth.

My guide lost no time in leading me from camp to camp and introducing me to the people, and by means of my few medicines, some needles and thimbles, and a coloured garment for some naked bairn, I soon made

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myself acceptable to the natives, and was even allowed to sit among the women and speak to them.

The Bedouin ladies and girls of Sinai are the most coy and shy of any I have met. They are well clothed, and delight in decorating themselves with strings of coloured beads. Unlike other women of the Bawdee with which I have mingled, they are closely veiled, and are very reluctant to show their faces even among their own people. This veil is suspended from the forehead by a protrusion of hair three or four inches long, and which rests on the upper part of the nose, pointing upward. From early girlhood the hair is so twisted and trained that in time it is possible to make this support for the face-covering, irrespective of the unnatural and hideous appearance it gives to the wearer. After many failures I succeeded in getting a snapshot of one of these strange ornaments of hair, and the reader may see for himself how the Sinaitic lady has reversed nature in order to provide a support for her veil.

Another thing in connexion with the women of Sinai I noticed was, that they always cared for the flock of sheep and goats, instead of the men doing so, and in many cases they even herd the camels. This work on the part of the women is unusually interesting, as it appears to be an Old Testament custom, and is referred to early in the Scriptures, as the following quotations will show: "Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh, and dwelt in the land of Midian, and he sat down by a well. Now the priest of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and drew water, and filled the troughs to water their father's flock" (Exod. ii. 15, 16); "And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came with her father's sheep, for she kept them" (Gen. xxix. 9). Read also the account of Rebekah at the well drawing water for the camels (Gen. xxiv. 15-20). Nowhere else in my

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wanderings in the Bawdee have I seen girls and women caring for the flocks and herds of their tribes ; evidently it is a custom confined to the Peninsula of Sinai, and has been from earliest days.

From an educational standpoint the Arabs of Sinai are very ignorant, as there are no schools, teachers or priests among them, consequently I found no buyers for Scriptures except at Tor, a small village on the coast, with a mixed population of Christians and Moslems. In this village, with its Greek church, priest, teacher, and few monks, I found a ready sale for Scriptures, for such were a rarity among these people in spite of their connexion with one of the oldest of the Christian Churches. I am not without hope of making more visits to the Arabs of Sinai, for if they are to be reached with the message of the Gospel, it must be by going from camp to camp, and family to family, as they may be found hidden away in the mountains. Some may question the value of such efforts, and ask for visible results in the way of churches built, schools established, and congregations formed. Such questioners will have to wait a long time for results like these, but it is not too much to expect that individuals will find a Saviour in the Christ who is preached to them, in obedience to the great commission given to His followers, which was "Preach the Gospel to every creature," but no mention is made of church building, school establishing or forming of congregations.

If the reader of these pages will follow the efforts of the writer in his work among the Arabs of Sinai and elsewhere, results will follow, for God has given to each, whether at home or abroad, a power to use in connexion with evangelistic work, as says the poet :

" But there's a power, which man can wield,
When mortal aid is vain,

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An eye, an arm, a love to reach,
A listening ear to gain.

“That power is Prayer, which soars on high,
Through Jesus to the throne.
And moves the hand, which moves the world,
To bring Salvation down.”

Ere closing this chapter on my movements in the Bawdee, mention must be made of a journey made to Orfah, on the borders of Kurdistan. This was not a ground-breaking journey in the sense referred to in the pages of this chapter, but was made in company with three blind girls who were being transferred from Miss Lovell's blind school in Jerusalem to the industrial mission for the blind connected with the American Mission at Orfah. Having been in touch with Miss Lovell's work for some years, and knowing the girls to be transferred, I was asked to care for them on their journey and see them to their destination.

Our way took me over new ground, and enlarged my desire to do something for the unevangelized region through which I passed. Between Baalbek and Aleppo I saw scores of villages, many of them nominally Christian, which are untouched by any missionary effort or Scripture-selling agency. Beyond Aleppo and on to the river Euphrates again a region dotted with villages, and between the river and Orfah another line of habitations all awaiting the Gospel messenger. As I passed these, and thought of the possibilities, one thought was pressed home on my mind, viz., “The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few. Pray ye therefore.” Would that some wealthy steward of the Lord's appointing would undertake to send me on a visit to these neglected peoples, with the spoken and printed Word, that at least some of them might hear of, and possess for themselves, the Way of Salvation through Jesus Christ.

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The houses that make up these villages and hamlets are unlike any I had seen elsewhere, and from a distance resembled huge beehives rather than human habitations, as a glance at the illustration will show.

On my return I stopped over for a day at Hama, and did some Scripture selling in the streets of that populous city. My small stock was soon exhausted, for I found ready buyers for what was evidently rare and desirable to the people. Hama is famed in local lore for its huge wheels which raise water from the river Orontes for irrigating the gardens and plain which enclose and surround the town. These wheels are of wood, native made, and vary in diameter from ten to seventy-five feet. The creaking and sighing of these ponderous machines may be heard long before they are seen, as they make their revolutions with the precious fluid which means life, fertility and beauty to the neighbouring country, and plenty and satisfaction to the thousands whose existence largely depends on the constant music of these water-raising contrivances.

Of other efforts on behalf of the people of the Bawdee I need not write in these pages, for friends who sympathize with and support me in the work are kept supplied with details of what is done. Suffice to say that when at home in Jerusalem, during the rainy season, or for a few weeks of rest between journeys, local claims are not neglected.

Weekly visits to the lepers in the Siloam colony, to hold a simple Gospel service with them, and as funds permit to supply them with a few additions to their daily fare of dry bread, have been made for several years, with encouraging results. The superintendence of the Sunday School in connexion with the American Church has also been a pleasant service to render, as well as occasionally taking the Sunday services in either English or Arabic. My main efforts, however, have been

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towards the Bawdee, which in earlier years were wrought with dangers.

These are now largely things of the past, as I am now well known over a large region. It is possible, however, to fall into unlooked for trouble in unexpected places, as the following chapters will relate.

CHAPTER XIII

TRAPPED BY THE BEDOUIN.¹

ON Saturday, December 3, 1910, a party of ten persons rode into the city of Kerak, the ancient capital of Moab, and distant from Jerusalem about one hundred miles south-east.

The party consisted of six men and four women. Their leader and guide was the writer, an Englishman, who for nearly a score of years had served as a missionary among the wandering tribes east of the Jordan and who with his wife had resided for some time in Kerak ministering to the people there. Hence he was well known throughout the region, which accounts for the kindness and consideration shown to the party which is told in the foregoing pages.

The rest of the party were (all but one) members of the Brethren Church of America, and were out for a two-fold reason. First, to prospect for probable openings for mission stations, and, secondly, to see and investigate the lands east of the Jordan, and especially the rock-hewn city of Petra, four days' ride south of Kerak.

For the information of the reader it will be well to state that the writer is known among the Arabs as

¹ The experience related in this and the two following chapters is told from a record made directly after the return from the journey during which it occurred. No alterations have been made, as first impressions are generally better than later recollections.

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"Abou Jerius," meaning the Father of George, and as George is the name of his son it is honourable and respectful to name the father thus. So that wherever the name "Abou Jerius" occurs in this book the reader will know to whom it refers.

With these few words of explanation we will proceed to our story.

On entering Kerak, where we intended spending Sunday, we did not pitch our tents, but took up our abode in small rooms which had until recently been occupied by some missionaries. This was providential, for had we been in tents our danger would have been increased, as will be learned later.

Sunday was passed quietly in the rooms where we were located at the north-west end of the city, near the Christian quarter. During the day two gentlemen of the party and myself called on the civil governor of the city and district to pay our respects to him and acquaint him with our desire to proceed south on the morrow, this being customary in such cases.

He received us kindly, gave us coffee and tea, and entered heartily into all our plans, promising us any needed help and an escort of soldiers for the remainder of our journey. Whilst with him two others called; they were the two principal chiefs of the district, who controlled tens of thousands of Arabs and Bedouin divided into numerous clans.

These two men were known to me personally, for we had grown up together, and on several occasions I had treated them or their relatives medically or surgically. We exchanged salutations, and I informed them in a friendly way why I was in their district, where I was going and who were with me, to all of which they gave heed. Their coming was providential, as it let them know of our presence in the city, for little did I guess that these two men were the leaders of a rebellion and

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massacre about to commence in a few hours, and that the Turkish official whom we were all visiting was doomed to die ere the next day dawned. But such was the case.

Here I will pause in the story that concerns ourselves and briefly relate some of the circumstances that had led up to the intended rebellion and massacre. Some seventeen years before the Turks had extended their jurisdiction over Moab and Edom, parts that had been independent for long centuries, thus putting the Arabs under control, and at the same time treating them harshly and inflicting on them heavy taxes and other burdens, all of which created a spirit of discontent and rebellion, which increased the longer it smouldered.

The long-stifled discontent burst into flame when the following was demanded of the people by the Government: the giving of their sons as soldiers in the army, and the laying down of their firearms. There were other demands, but these two touched the family and national life of the Arabs, and although the chiefs promised acquiescence to the demands, it was generally understood between them and their people that neither demand should be met.

At once plans were made for a general massacre of the troops and officials throughout the Kerak district, but how was it to be done without the least resistance and in as short a time as possible? But Arabs are smart fellows, and the following plan was conceived and partly carried out.

When the time came for the names of those available for soldiers to be taken, and for the firearms to be collected, the wily chiefs advised the governor of Kerak to scatter eight companies of soldiers among the camps of the district in case the natives gave any trouble. This was readily done, for the governor had no idea of foul play. A few days later the chiefs came again, saying that

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the Arabs were inclined to resent the giving of their sons and rifles, and suggested that instead of eight companies of soldiers there should be sixteen located at different places to deal with any disorders that might occur.

Again the governor fell in with their wishes, and more troops were ordered out and settled in small companies among the camps of the Arabs throughout the district. In this way some eight hundred soldiers and officers were drawn from the barracks in the city and scattered among the Arabs, Moslems among Moslems and Arabs among Arabs, for the soldiers were all of Arab extraction and followers of Mohammed.

At the prearranged time—namely, after supper on the evening of the fourth day after the new moon—the sixteen companies of unsuspecting soldiers were set upon by their entertainers and in a short time all killed in cold blood, and their arms and ammunition appropriated by their slayers to be used against those that remained in the city not far distant.

After this slaughter, the plan was to repair to the city and remain quiet until the troops in the castle were brought out to drill, and then for a part of the Arabs to rush the castle and secure it, with the ammunition and stores, whilst the others attacked the soldiers with the idea of killing them.

But the success of the previous evening so elated the Arabs that they could not wait for the arranged moment to attack both castle and soldiers together, but, on entering the city at daybreak at once opened fire on the officials' houses, the Government House, and any place where soldiers were on duty, or were to be found outside the castle, thus in a short time killing quite a number of men, women and children who were unable to defend themselves.

Now I will return to the personal part of the story.

Monday morning had dawned, and we were all up

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early in readiness for an early start south. The day was just breaking, and the loads were being prepared for the animals, when one of my Kerak friends, Saleh by name, and a Moslem, was heard calling to me from outside to open the gate and let him in. I did so, thinking he had come to help with the loading, but instead he commenced to shout in an excited way, "O Aboo Jerius, the Keraky have risen against the soldiers and we cannot move; we shall all be killed. Prepare to defend yourselves, for all the country is up against the Government." No confirmation of what he said was needed, for the cracking of rifles, whizzing of bullets over our heads, together with the shouting of the crowds in the city, assured me that unless God intervened there was no escape for us from the angry, excited, bloodthirsty and wild mob out on the war-path without restraint or leaders.

I at once told my companions what had occurred, and assured them that to attempt to move would be foolish and dangerous, and that we must stay where we were. I ordered all our animals, which were tethered outside, to be stabled in a large house adjoining the rooms we were in, that they might be free from the bullets that were flying in all directions.

Saleh left us to see that his family and belongings were being cared for, and in a very short time hundreds of men, women and children were hurrying out of the city, taking with them such things as they could load on donkeys, mules or their own backs, for they all knew that in the city there would be nothing but danger, death, hunger and thirst, but safety, liberty and plenty in the wilderness, at least for a time.

Our first business was to commit ourselves to God, and to ask and claim His protection according to the promises in His Word, and never did the 91st Psalm seem more real than on that morning. Then, having prayed,

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we barricaded the entrance with huge stones and settled down to wait the development of affairs.

From the location of our rooms we could see Arabs coming towards the city from all directions, fully armed and bent on slaughter and robbery.

It seemed as if nature conspired to help the people to get into the city, for a thick mist enveloped the place and under cover of it hundreds of armed fellows climbed the steep sides of the city and entered the scene of carnage. When the mist cleared the Arabs had possession of the place and set about finishing their long-intended work.

First the military hospital was attacked, the inmates killed in their beds, everything looted, and the place set on fire. From a protected point of vantage I saw all this, for the hospital was quite near to our rooms. I did not acquaint my friends with what I had seen, lest I should frighten them, for I preferred to suffer myself rather than excite them unnecessarily.

Near our rooms, with only a small yard between, resided a military officer with his family, also a civil officer with his family, and with them some ten soldiers. These were unable to reach the castle when the revolt broke at daybreak in the city, consequently they were in great danger, for the Arabs knew of their being in the house, and having killed all the others next turned their attention to these.

During the morning I received a message from the chiefs that we were not to fear, for they had given orders to all the Arabs that we were not to be molested or harmed, and that as far as possible they would protect us from injury and interference. For this we were thankful, and we took it as an assurance that God had heard our prayer and was answering it.

The Arabs having killed off all that were outside the castle, including many civilians and traders from a

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distance, turned their energies to looting the shops and houses, and very soon every place was ransacked and many of them were set on fire. First to go was the prison, then the Government House with all it contained, then the mosque, and last the officials' homes.

As the day advanced the city filled with thousands of wild fellows who had hurried in to participate in the plunder so plentiful and easily gotten, and as all telegraph wires had been cut, and miles of the Mecca railway torn up, communication with the outside world was impossible.

Late in the afternoon the excited mob turned their attention to the houses in which we were lodged, for as yet they had not captured or seen the officers whom they wished to kill, for the few soldiers had been able to defend themselves with their rifles until their limited supply of ammunition was exhausted; but as there was nothing more to do in the city all were bent on the slaughter of the two officers and their families near us.

About noon the officers had appealed to me to allow themselves and families to take refuge with us in our rooms, but knowing that would be to court danger I was obliged to refuse their request, suggesting, however, that they should send their families to take refuge in the Christian quarter near by, for the rising was against the Government and not against the Christians. But how to get them there was the question.

I should have said that when the trouble commenced in the morning, two natives, old friends and neighbours, came to our rooms to stay with us in case I might need their help during the day. So I told the hard-driven officials that I would undertake to send their women and children to a place of safety, but I could do nothing for them. Reluctantly they turned their families over to me, never to see them again. I called my two native

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friends, and asked them to take the women and children to a Christian family I named, and ask them to care for them until such time as help came.

They said it would be more to their minds to kill them all, but for my sake they would do as I requested, so accordingly they took them all to the family I mentioned, left them there, and returned to us ready for any other service they could render me. The women and children of these officials passed the next twelve days in a well which had no water in it, and was in the house of the family to which I had sent them, the entrance being concealed by being covered with a rush mat on which stood a water jar, food and water being lowered to them at night.

By sunset the house of the official was surrounded by an angry mob clamouring for the life of the poor man and his few soldiers inside. As darkness came over the city they fired the doors and windows of the house, and as the soldiers fled from it they were instantly killed, but the official escaped, none seeing or knowing whither he had gone, thus adding to their fury and desire for revenge. As night advanced the shouting and chanting of war songs by the blood-intoxicated thousands in the city increased. The shouting, roar of voices, and clamouring of thousands, made a sound that I shall not soon forget. I had often heard it on a smaller scale, but never like this, and under such circumstances, and never do I want to hear it again, or the discharge of a gun either. To add to the uncertainty of affairs our two native friends had not returned to us, having gone at sunset to see to their families.

After having had supper I requested that all lights be put out, so as not to attract attention to our rooms, and thus bring the mob down on us. Then after prayer, thanking God for His care of us during the day, and asking the same for the night, we lay down on our

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mattresses, some soon falling asleep, tired out with the suspense and excitement of the past day. Sleep would not come to me, neither did I desire it, for I knew that having prayed it was needful to watch also, and who more suited to watch than myself, having the language of those who were likely to molest us?

Towards ten o'clock the din of excited voices told me that the crowd was coming our way, and every few moments getting nearer as the noise increased. It was not long before the crashing of glass and the battering in of doors told me that the crowd was attacking the place we were in, and in a minute more a knock on the door was followed by a voice saying, "Aboo Jerius, you must come at once, for the Arabs are breaking in the door of the stable and are taking away the horses. We are helpless, and shall all be killed if we resist; come quickly."

I rose, called my friends, told them in a few words the situation, and that it was necessary for me to go and face the Arabs, otherwise we might all be killed. I also said, "I know not what may happen any moment; be ready for anything. I must go; pray hard."

With those few words I opened the door and stepped outside into a tiny yard about five yards across. On my left was a door through which I could have escaped to safety in the darkness, and a momentary temptation came to me to do so, but was soon brushed aside, and I passed into the house that sheltered our animals and men; then, pushing my way through the animals, came to the door that stood between me and the excited mob, and as I opened it this thought flashed through my mind: "I may be dead in less than a minute; will my wife and bairns ever know what became of me?" for the probability was that a volley of bullets

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would meet me as soon as I faced the crowd. But there was no time for thinking for nine lives were at stake, so I stepped out into the courtyard on the other side of the door and came face to face with the mob that crowded it.

The illuminated sky told me that everything burnable in the city was ablaze, and the flames of the official's house near showed up the crowd of half-naked, bare-headed, bloodthirsty Arabs, all armed to the teeth, and anxious to possess themselves of horses they had learned were in the stable, and to kill those who had charge of them.

Instead of the shower of bullets that might have met me, it was otherwise. In front of the mob was its leader, a son of one of the chiefs well known to me. As soon as he saw me step into the yard he rushed at me, gripped me by the hand and shouted at the top of his voice, "Don't be afraid, Aboo Jerius, we are your friends and will not harm you," and then turning to the mob he cried at the top of his voice, "Leave him ; it is Aboo Jerius, our friend ; I will kill anyone that harms him let him and his alone." Meanwhile one of our muleteers was shouting in my ears that the horses were being taken, so I told the leader of the mob, who rushing at the thieves beat them with his rifle, and with many curses told them to return them to the stable, and not to touch a thing that belonged to Aboo Jerius, for, said he, "he is our friend, and has been for years ; we will do him no harm."

Then I drew him aside and told him I had nine others with me in the rooms near by, and asked that they be spared all interference or trouble.

He replied, "Aboo Jerius, your friends are our friends ; go and tell them that no harm will come to them ; they need not fear." I said, "You come with me and tell them yourself ;" but he replied, "I would

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not enter the room where there are women ; you can tell them." But I insisted, and taking him by his long sleeve I pulled him through the stable to the door of the room, and banging on the door called to those inside to open, as the Arabs were friends and not enemies.

It was a relief to them to hear this. Then as the door opened, I pulled my captive inside, and as my friends gathered about a newly-lit candle I introduced my wild Arab, who, leaning on his rifle and rubbing his fingers together in sign of friendship, shouted in Arabic, which I translated, "Fear not, we are your friends ; Aboo Jerius is our brother, and has been our friend for years ; nothing shall harm you ; lie down and sleep." With this he disappeared, and when we reached the yard again his followers were quarrelling over two of the official's horses which they had found in a stable near by ; but he quickly settled the quarrel by appropriating one animal for himself and giving the other to his son who was among the mob. Then they disappeared and we were left alone, thankful that so far we had been delivered, and our steeds and mules left to us.

I returned to my friends, lay down on my mattress for a while, when there came a second knock at the door and a voice saying, "Aboo Jerius, the Arabs have come back and are calling for you to come out to them ; come at once." As quietly as possible I went out through the stable and into the large yard ; there I found six wild men with the leader of the mob, all armed to the teeth.

They closed round me and put their weapons in a threatening attitude, then the leader demanded from me the missing official whom they said I was hiding, for, said the spokesman, "one of my men that has watched from the roof since sunset saw him enter your

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rooms, and as yet he has not come out ; give him up or we shall kill you instead of him."

Here was a demand that it was impossible for me to meet for I had not seen the unfortunate man since the afternoon, and for all I knew he was dead ; but little did I think, much less know, that he had fled from his house when they fired it, rushed into the open door of our stable, and had been lowered into a small waterless cistern that was in the floor of the building. But such was the case, and fortunate it was for me that I did not know it at the time.

It seemed useless for me to deny all knowledge of the official, for they insisted and threatened, and matters began to look bad for me, but as nothing was gained from me for some fifteen minutes the leader at last said, " Aboo Jerius does not lie ; fifteen years ago when my father's head was split open, he rode three hours through a snowstorm to doctor it, so that he might keep a promise made to us that he would come " ; and such had been the case, although I had quite forgotten it.

Then another spoke, saying, " Make him swear by his religion, by God and the prophet Jesus and by Mary his mother, that he has no one in hiding, for only then will we believe him," " But," I said, " I never swear. I always tell the truth and you know it " ; to which they all agreed and after some more talk they reluctantly went away, leaving me free to return to my room.

The rest of the night passed quietly, but for the din of voices out in the city, and during the night my prayers went up to my Heavenly Father for wisdom to know how to act on the morrow, and for protection during the hours so full of danger. Little did I know that the latter part of the petition was answered so quickly, but it was, for the chiefs had placed men on the



Photo by]

[A. FORDER.

Sheikh Gedr Mujelly ibn Saleh, the Kerak chief who planned and carried out the massacre of the Turks in Moab, in December 1910. He was poisoned in Damascus during the Great War

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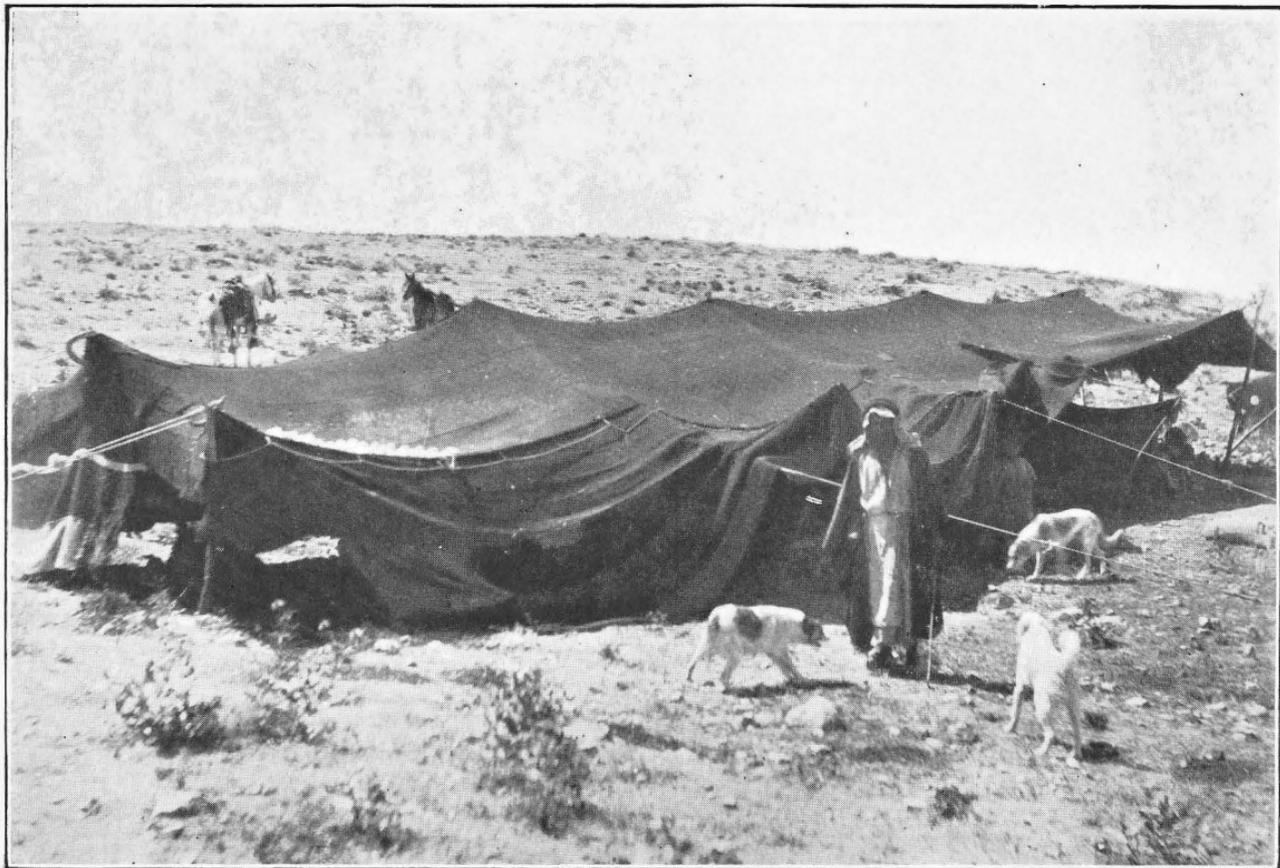


Photo by]

[A. FORDER,

The goats' hair tent in Wady Kerak, in which the fleeing party were entertained by their Arab friends

CHAPTER XIV

UNDER THE SHADOW OF DEATH

“ He shall deliver thee in six troubles, yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee.”—*Job v. 19.*

IT was plain that some move must be made to get out of Kerak, for there was increasing danger the longer we stayed. Since the insurrection broke out thousands of wild Arabs had come into the city ; these did not know me, and would have counted us as those connected with the Government, and gloried in killing us, so it was advisable to get away if only on this account. But other reasons made it necessary for us to move : we had no water, barley, chaff or provisions for our animals, and our supply of food was running short as well as that of the muleteers. I knew that in the camps outside the city we would find food and water for man and beast and that we should have a certain amount of liberty, whereas under the circumstances we were like birds in a trap, with no prospect of release.

I communicated my plan to the male members of the party, suggesting that we move out into the country and seek the protection of some Bedouin camp. Hardly had I named it to them when our friend Saleh appeared at the gate, calling me to open and let him in.

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With him was one of the chiefs of his clan, accompanied by some ten men.

On being admitted Saleh spoke thus : “ Aboo Jerius, you must get out of here as quickly as possible, for the city is full of strangers who do not know you as we do, and we cannot protect you from them. Our camp is down the valley ; you must all go there. Sheikh Derweesh has come with his men to escort you there in safety, for the way is full of robbers, and you will be safe in our tents.”

Here was the answer to my prayer in the night. Whilst I had been praying these Arabs had been talking about us in their tents around the fire, and had decided to come and rescue us from the dangerous situation we were in, thus becoming God's means of answering our prayers for help.

I asked my friends to get ready as quickly as possible, saddle their horses and be ready for a start. Reluctantly the muleteers loaded the most necessary of the baggage, for not being able to hire any animals we could not take all with us ; and as the rifle firing had commenced again I hurried them all the more, so as to be free of the city ere the sun rose, for every delay was dangerous.

But here I must pause and make a break in the story so as to complete it ere I forget.

Whilst my friends and the muleteers were busy getting their loads and animals ready, and I was occupied outside superintending the loading, one of the party came to me, saying, “ Mr. Forder, there is a man down in a well in the stable, and he is shouting at the top of his voice.” Instantly it occurred to me that it must be the official who had escaped the Arabs the evening before, and if the Arabs heard him calling for help now they would haul him up, kill him at once before our eyes, and probably massacre us for

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secreting him in the well, and denying all knowledge of him.

I went to our head muleteer, and in an undertone asked him if he had put the official in the well in the stable the evening before, to which he replied, " Yes " ; but when I told him the prisoner was shouting at the top of his voice he nearly collapsed for fear, realizing what a foolish thing he had done and what danger he had put us in.

At once I sent him to tell the fellow to cease shouting, as if the Arabs heard him they would pull him up and kill him at once. Fortunately he was able to do this unnoticed, as all attention was centred in the loading, and no Arab saw or heard what was done.

A few animals yet remained in the stable, so I ordered them to be taken outside at once, for I wanted to lock up the place and give the keys to the landlord, who was standing close by, so practically driving out man and beast I locked the three doors, but kept the keys in my hands until every beast had gone down the hill-side ; then I gave them to the landlord, bade him farewell, and followed the caravan down the valley. Never in my life have I felt worse than when I turned my back on the closed doors of that room with the man imprisoned down the well inside, and for days he was in my mind continually, although his end soon came.

After we had left, my friend the landlord went to look through the rooms, and when in the stable heard the voice coming from the well. Fortunately he was alone at the time, so could speak with the prisoner. The night following the official was taken from his prison to the landlord's house, he being a Greek Christian, but the Arabs soon got wind of it and demanded that he be turned over to them, that they might kill him. The Greek

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kept him safe as long as he was able, but at last handed him over, on the understanding that he should not be killed, but given an opportunity to escape, in consideration for a certain sum of money which was to be given them. But once in their hands the Arabs proved false, killed him and brought his head as a trophy to the city, where it was kicked about until buried by one of the Christian community. These facts I learned some weeks later when definite news came to me from Kerak, but none will ever know how the fate of that man haunted me as I pictured him in the well slowly dying from hunger, thirst and exhaustion in his lonely situation. Had I been alone at the time, I should have done all I could to rescue him, but I felt a duty to my American friends, feeling that if the worst happened, it was better for one life to be lost rather than ten. Besides, there was no possible hope of escape for the official, whereas there was for us.

But to return to my story.

As we rode down the hill-side away from Kerak, bullets whizzed all about us, and many were the exclamations from those we met to "kill them," but all the response to such were, "Do you not know this is Aboo Jerius and his friends? they are going to our camp to stay with us, so that they may be safe from harm." Such a brief assurance was enough to pass us in safety by many an ugly Arab with his friends city bound, who otherwise would have delighted to make a target of us, thinking we were officials fleeing from the city. I cannot answer for my companions, although I feel safe in saying that they, like myself, laid hard hold on God that morning as we rode away from that city to the camp of our friends, for dangers abounded on every side, and bullets came from all directions, but not one hit any of us.

I seemed bound down to one petition as I rode; it

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was just this: "Deliverance, Lord; deliverance, Lord"; and as we passed one exposed place after another, with rifles cracking around us but without any harm to man or beast, all I could exclaim was, "Thank you, Lord; thank you, Lord," and that out of a full and thankful heart.

In about three hours we reached the camp of Saleh and his friends. In anticipation of our coming they had prepared a large tent for our accommodation, for our near approach had been announced to them. The reception accorded us set my friends' minds at rest, and assured them that at least for the time being they were in good hands. And here let me say to the credit of my Arab friends that they could not have treated us better or kindlier than they did on that occasion, and with no expectation of recompense.

From time to time news reached us of what was transpiring in the city; we could distinctly hear the boom of the cannon as shells were discharged at the people in or near the city, and the arrival of wounded men told us that fighting was still going on between the imprisoned troops and the besieging Arabs.

On the afternoon of the second day in the camp a horseman arrived from the city with a letter to me from the chiefs assembled there. It requested me to come to them at once under the keeping of the man who had brought the letter. The messenger told us of the looting of our rooms two hours after we had left them by a mob who were angered at the escape of the official, and the reader will see how good God was to us in thus enabling us to escape ere the mob attacked the place we were in for a time.

I of course consulted with my friends as to whether I should comply with the demand of the letter, and as I felt that our safety might depend on my seeing the chiefs I decided to go, trusting God for protection, and

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leaving my friends in the camp with the Arabs, with whom they now felt quite at home, although they could not speak with them in Arabic.

As the sun was setting I started, riding one of our horses. Soon after sunset we turned into a camp to spend the night, my guide telling me that we should enter the city at dawn. To the people of the camp I was well known. A rough and ready supper was provided for me, and in the midst of sheep and goats I lay down to rest—not to sleep, for my mind was too busy to allow of sleeping, and I was glad when my companion called me to rise and proceed toward the city, which we entered soon after dawn and unobserved, except by the few armed men who were posted here and there in case of any trouble coming from outside during the night.

I was taken by my guide to a house in which the chiefs were assembled waiting my coming. I shall never forget the look of that city, which had been my home for so many years, as I rode through it that morning. Everything that was burnable had been devoured by flames, shops and houses destroyed, so as to secure loot; dead bodies everywhere, and hundreds of wild fellows lounging about ready for any destruction that might come in their way. The sight of it all was enough to strike terror into the heart of the strongest, and the feeling of helplessness, from a human standpoint, that came over me was more than can be described. But all the time I had the firm assurance that God was with me and would carry me through whatever I had to face, for, I quite expected that the summons was in connexion with the hiding of the official in the well; but it was not.

I need only say that the summons that came to me from the chiefs was that they might induce me in some way or other to secure for them the assistance of the

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English Government in the struggle that they knew would soon come against the Turks, because of their having rebelled and killed the soldiers. Thus I found myself face to face with a delicate and difficult matter to deal with, for I did not wish to anger the chiefs by refusing to comply with their wishes ; but what could I do to help them in their coming struggle ? I cannot tell all that passed between us during the hours we conferred, suffice it to say that wisdom was given me to answer their questions and to deal with their difficulties without in any way committing myself or causing any unpleasantness between us, and I was glad to be freed a little before noon and at liberty to join my friends in the camp.

I had obtained from the chiefs an escort to accompany us to the limit of their territory, with a letter committing us to their care and protection to be passed on to others in safety.

The only way back to Jerusalem was viâ Hebron, for all the roads north were held by the Arabs, and going on to Petra was impossible, as every tribe of Arabs was up in arms.

With the sealed letter of the chiefs in my possession, I bade my Arab friends farewell, thankful to have escaped their clutches through the goodness of an all-seeing Providence. Those chiefs I shall never see again, for they have paid for their folly with their lives, for on the Turks regaining Kerak they were hanged or executed on the castle wall in sight of their own people as a warning to others not to organize another rebellion.

On joining my friends in the camp, and telling them in a few words all that had happened, we at once set about moving forward, for time was precious, and there was more safety in getting away than in staying in the district, which by this time was being overrun by the

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Arabs bent on looting and destroying all they could lay hands on.

We bade farewell to our kind entertainers and made our way west towards the shores of the Dead Sea, our escort of eight men with us. We had to keep clear of the main roads for they were all held by the Arabs who were on the look out for any soldiers or officials that might have escaped from the city. Fortunately for us we did not meet a single man, for our way lay through valleys and up and down steep rocky hillsides until we emerged on to the plain on the east side of the Dead Sea, and about two hours after sunset we reached a large encampment of Arabs to which our escort belonged.

Our coming was heralded before our arrival, and great was the excitement, and with the prospect of plunder hundreds of armed men turned out to meet us ; but our escort, whom I had known for years, as well as their tribe, disappointed their greedy desires by shouting, " It is Aboo Jerius, our friend, who has come to spend the night as our guest." This was enough to make them desist from any unpleasant action, and we took up our quarters in one of their tents and settled down for the night, feeling quite safe, for I was known in the camp.

Next morning, after an early and hurried breakfast, we set out for what I knew would be a hard and dangerous day, our escort with us, hoping to reach the camp of the Arabs at the south end of the Dead Sea to which we were consigned, and whom I also knew very well ; but God willed otherwise, no doubt to test our faith and give us a proof of His power to deliver even in extreme circumstances.

We had been on our way some two hours when we were overtaken by a band of Arabs who had as their leader one of the worst villains in all those parts, and

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from a tribe noted for daring robberies and murders. The leader was known to me, but in this case friendship went for nothing, for with a possibility of robbery from ourselves and getting such a lot of animals any leaning to mercy was out of the question.

I cannot recount all that we endured that day, suffice it to say that from the time the robbers joined us it was one continual threatening to murder us unless we met their demands for money. Again and again we were held up and money extorted from us until at last there was nothing more to take. Several times I was taken aside to consult with the oldest of the band as to how much should be given them, and it would have been an easy matter, whilst thus separated from my friends, for the Arabs to have bound me, made me prisoner and then done as they liked with the rest of the party. The robbers tried their best to induce me to take sides with them, promising me a share of all the plunder; but that was of no avail, and frequently I had to stand between the loaded rifles of some of the fellows who fell to quarrelling over the division of the money, as it was handed out to them.

The reader will never be able to imagine what that day meant to me, for I did not intend that the robbers should get the best of me if possible and then be free to do as they liked with my friends in one of the most lonely and barren parts of the world. But God was with us, and enabled me to deal with the fellows without ever showing any signs of fear, in spite of the many threats made to kill us and thus get us out of the way.

At sunset I handed them the last money we had, with the promise that we should be taken to the camp we desired, which was yet quite a long way off. I should have said that the band of Arabs that had thus worried us had driven back our first escort, so they had us at

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their mercy, with the exception that I knew the country well.

When at last we moved again I saw that the route taken was in an easterly direction, whereas our way should have been west, but on pointing this out to the leader of the band he told me that as the camp to which we desired to go had moved to another pitch far away we must pass the night in their camp, so with a heavy heart I had to yield, not at all pleased at the prospect of passing the night in the camp of the robbers.

About nine in the evening we rode into the camp and were housed in a part of the guest tent. I told my friends that they must keep close guard over their belongings, but did not breathe a word about the likelihood of trouble during the night, not wishing to alarm them after the severe and trying day they had had.

Soon some of them were asleep, but I took a place around the camp fire so that I might hear what the talk was about for I feared foul play. Several times they begged me to lie down and sleep, but I was not to be caught thus, for it was not a time for sleeping but for watching. At last, to please them, I lay down, covered my head with my large cloak, and as they thought slept soundly. But I was more on the alert than ever, for they commenced to plan our murder on the morrow, and when I had heard all I wanted I brought their talking to an end by getting up and rejoining them round the fire.

Then they broke up and went to their several tents, leaving me with my sleeping companions and the robber chief, who soon went to sleep, leaving me to keep watch for the remainder of the night.

Reader, can you imagine my thoughts as I kept that lonely watch? All the night I lay on the edge of the tent or occasionally made a walk round it, for often

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some suspicious-looking fellow would appear possibly with the idea of seeing if anyone was on the alert. Whilst I watched I prayed and planned, and ere day broke my plans were made and committed to God, and He graciously granted all I desired.

CHAPTER XV

HOW DELIVERANCE CAME

“ So He bringeth them to their desired haven.”—*Psalm* cvii. 30.

AT daybreak the robber chief called me to load the animals, as he was going to accompany us to Hebron ; but having heard their plans the evening before, I knew this was not so ; but I kept my own counsel. I roused the party, told them to get some breakfast, on which, when ready, I was asked to seek God’s blessing. From the few words I said and in the way they were uttered my friends gathered that we were in sad case ; but I encouraged them to keep praying and trust in God, also to keep close to and follow me wherever I went.

Fortunately I was well acquainted with the country we were in, so could not be deceived as would have been a stranger. When loading the animals one of the muleteers came to me and said he had heard the Arabs talking the evening before, and he told me that their plan was to kill us all that morning, and to take all we had. I told him to trust in God and with the others to follow me closely, always keeping in the rear, and I believed we should be delivered, as I had friends in the region.

Our way lay directly west, but on leaving the camp we were ordered to go due south, following a few men led by the robber chief ; but I refused, insisting that

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it was the wrong direction, and that the way to Hebron was due west. Now I must explain that the plan was to take us to some boggy ground south and then for the Arabs to close in on us, shoot us down, throw our bodies into the bogs to rot, and then secure our horses and all that was left to or on us ; but in it all they were thwarted.

Persistently I pulled west, for I quite believed that ere long we would come across the camp to which we should have gone the evening before, and once there should be with friends and quite safe. In this I was not disappointed, as the reader will learn. Frequently the robbers would grasp the heads of our animals and try to lead off in the direction they desired ; but I would beat them off and keep moving in a westerly direction. There was no road, for the plains at the south end of the Dead Sea are covered with a dense undergrowth of shrubs and trees, thus making it somewhat of a forest, intersected by endless paths and tracts.

For some hour and a half we forged our way ahead, much against the wills of our unwelcome companions, then suddenly we rode into an open space that had been cleared of trees, and in which a man was ploughing. Urging on my horse, I soon reached the ploughman, and in an undertone asked him, " Where is the camp of Sheikh Derweesh ? " to which he replied, " As far away as it would take time to smoke a cigarette." With this news I rode on, followed by my companions, the muleteers and the Arabs.

Through the trees we rode for about five minutes, then out into open ground, and from the appearance of the place I could see that it had been the pitch of an encampment which had moved only that very morning. But away on the right was one solitary tent, and in front of it a man standing, whom I at once recognized as

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Sheikh Derweesh, my friend and our deliverer. On seeing me emerge from the trees he at once shouted, "Aboo Jerius, Aboo Jerius, this way, this way ;" but without waiting for me to go toward him, he started towards us. But the Arabs did not mean thus to lose their game and prey, and at once set about driving our beasts in the opposite direction, affirming that we were in danger and that they would deliver us from those who would harm us, so the distance between us and Sheikh Derweesh was increased. But I jumped off my horse and told my friends to do the same, which they did, thinking it was another hold up ; but their minds were soon relieved when Sheikh Derweesh came up, called me by name and greeted me heartily. It was with indescribable joy that I was able to tell the party that we were delivered, as God had sent friends and not enemies, and that all I had prayed for during my night-watch had been granted me.

God had kept Sheikh Derweesh from moving his tent that morning ; had he done so and gone with the camp, I never could have found them, for they had pitched right in the middle of the undergrowth and out of sight.

It was only the work of a few minutes to tell my Arab friend how we were situated, but he knew all about it, for on the previous day a man and girl with a poor donkey had travelled with us from the camp north ; and when we were held up the last time at sunset, they passed on to the camp we should have gone to and told the Sheikh that Aboo Jerius the Englishman with some friends had been taken by the robbers and forced to go to their camp. At once plans were made to deliver us if we did not turn up in the morning ; but, as the reader has learnt, we did turn up and providentially met friends.

In every detail of this story God's leading and power

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may be seen, for man could never have made things fit in so perfectly as they did, and it can only be said that God restrained Sheikh Derweesh from moving his tent that morning.

The robbers, seeing that they were foiled, commenced a noisy wrangle with Derweesh, the effect of which was to bring from the camp near by, in the trees, a large number of horsemen all armed and ready to help us even if it meant fighting to do so. With their coming the noise increased, for the robbers did not mean to give up their prey easily, and suiting action to words began to pull me away from those who would have rescued me. But I held hard to my horse's halter, with the result that with the severe pulling the chain cut deep into my arm, but at last I was freed.

Whilst the Arabs wrangled, I, having remounted, called my friends to follow me over to the solitary tent, where I knew we should be safer than among the mixed crowd. But we were immediately followed by all the Arabs, and as they came up to where we were I heard the robber chief say to some of his men as he cursed bitterly, "Better if we had killed them last night"; but they had reckoned without God, and He in whom we trusted had frustrated all their plans and saved our lives.

From the solitary tent we went to the camp, accompanied by our newly-found friends, who were as rejoiced at seeing us as we were them, and in about five minutes we were all housed in the guest tent of the encampment. The production of the letter from the chiefs in Kerak was sufficient to assure us all the help and protection necessary, so telling my friends to make themselves as comfortable as possible under the circumstances, we settled down, thankful to our Heavenly Father for so signally delivering us from what was, humanly speaking, certain death.

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A long and stormy wrangle ensued between the Arabs of the camp, the robbers and myself, as to future movements ; but as the morrow was one of the great Moslem feasts which is kept for three days, I decided that we would not move for at least three days, and with this decision the robbers made off to their camp to wait for other prey, an angry, disappointed and desperate lot of cut-throats.

But my mind was not easy, although for the time we were safe. I knew that there was danger in delay, and that if we stayed until the fourth day ere getting away we should have another experience with those from whom we had just been delivered, also that the road before us was more dreary, dangerous, and difficult than any we had traversed.

So I took the two chiefs of the tribe aside and consulted with them as to the possibility of getting away at once to Hebron, which was at least twenty-four hours' ride distant. As there was no money to offer in payment of an escort, it was difficult to settle anything, as no men would go with us without recompense. At last the chiefs agreed to give us a good escort to take us to the limit of their territory in return for the best of our mules, which by rearranging the loads I found we could spare. From the boundary of the tribe's territory I could find my way to Hebron, and all danger would be passed.

About nine that evening Sheikh Derweesh came and told me that the escort was ready, so I roused my sleeping companions, told them to get ready for a start, and having had the mules loaded we rode off on what was one of the greatest ventures of faith I have ever attempted. But as I was not seeking my own comfort or safety, but that of my friends, who were strangers in a strange land, I believed God would carry us through, and so He did in a glorious way.

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Our way for about four miles was through a short undergrowth of rank grass and shrubs which would make a splendid place for robbers to hide in or any intending mischief to passers-by. The moon was past the first quarter and showing a good light, which in some ways was a blessing, but for some reasons I would have preferred to have been without it. As attacks generally come from behind I brought up the rear of the large caravan, for our escort numbered some twenty men, all armed and mounted. By being behind I could raise the alarm if necessary, as well as meet any trouble first, thus giving my friends time to escape.

As we rode I prayed ; all I could say was, " Help, Lord ; deliverance, Lord " ; and when we emerged from the undergrowth on to the mud flat at the end of the Dead Sea my thanks to God found vent in some such words as these ; " O thank you, Lord, you have done well, splendid ; go on, Lord ; we want deliverance."

Let not any reader think me profane, I was thankful, so much so, that other words failed me, and all through that night, as we passed point after point that was familiar to me, and which meant a stage nearer safety, all I could do was to clap my hands, raise my eyes heavenward, and thank God in such language and manner as the above. If real prayer and thanksgiving are the expression of the heart, then the above petition and thanks cannot be condemned.

At daybreak our escort bade me farewell, saying they could go no farther, as that was the limit of their territory ; they had done their work well, so saluting each other we parted, they to return to their feasting, and we to continue our way to Hebron. At sunrise we halted for a few minutes so that I might give each one a small piece of dry bread to serve as breakfast, and then off again until about eleven o'clock, when we called a halt

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and dismounted, having been in the saddle for fourteen hours.

Weary with nights of watching and anxiety, also days of responsibility, planning, wrangling, and urging, I lay down on the stony ground, and with a boulder for a pillow fell asleep, and for a time was wrapped in

“Tired nature’s sweet restorer, balmy sleep,”

whilst my friends enjoyed the remains of our food, and the animals were watered from a brackish spring near by.

But rest was not yet, for a place of safety for man and beast must be sought for the coming night, as well as food for man and beast, so early in the afternoon another move was made, and in a few hours we were sheltered in the guest tent of an encampment about six hours’ ride from Hebron, somewhat against the wishes of some of the party, who had seen enough of Arab camps and would have preferred to have ridden on to Hebron, a thing which was impossible after the forced ride of the previous night and best part of the day just passed.

The Arabs received us kindly, and did all they could to supply our needs and make us comfortable, and as we were the first to arrive from Kerak after the rising they were interested in hearing all I could tell them about the affair.

Never was sleep more welcome than that night; whereas for several nights experience had proved the truth of the words, “Thou holdest mine eyes waking” (Ps. lxxvii. 4), then was realized the words, “He giveth His beloved sleep,” and but for an arousing to quell the nervous fears of one of the party, I was oblivious to all that was going on in the camp or tent, as well as to the intense cold and hard frost.

With the sunrise we were in the saddle, and with the call of the “muezzin” to noonday prayers we rode

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into Hebron, acknowledging with thankful hearts the truth of the words that sounded forth over the town from the numerous minarets, "There is no God but God." We had indeed proved it, and but for His power, love and faithfulness, this story would never have been written.

It was a cheerful and grateful party that rode into Jerusalem the next day soon after noon, and as the city with its surrounding hills loomed into sight, the words of the Psalmist were forced into my mind :}

"As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth for ever" (Ps. cxxv. 4).

This too we had proved, and may every reader of these lines so trust as to do the same, even if not under such circumstances as we did.

The gratitude of the friends whom I was thus used to help and save from destruction, was shown by sending me a silver watch, which is a constant reminder of the experiences we passed through together, but there were other compensations for all the risks I had run, and fatigues undergone on their behalf, viz. :

1. The knowledge that I had done my duty to those who were travelling with me.

2. The great satisfaction of seeing the attitude of the Arabs toward myself and friends after many years of missionary work among them, especially as all the help and kindness we received came from Moslems when so excited and bloodthirsty.

3. The encouragement to go on preaching the Gospel to the children of the desert, assured that the time will come when the Arabs will accept Christ as their Saviour.

And, lastly, the joy of knowing that through the experiences told and related here, some have heard the cry of the Ishmaelite, "No man cared for my soul" (Psalm cxlii, 4), and will in future offer daily the prayer

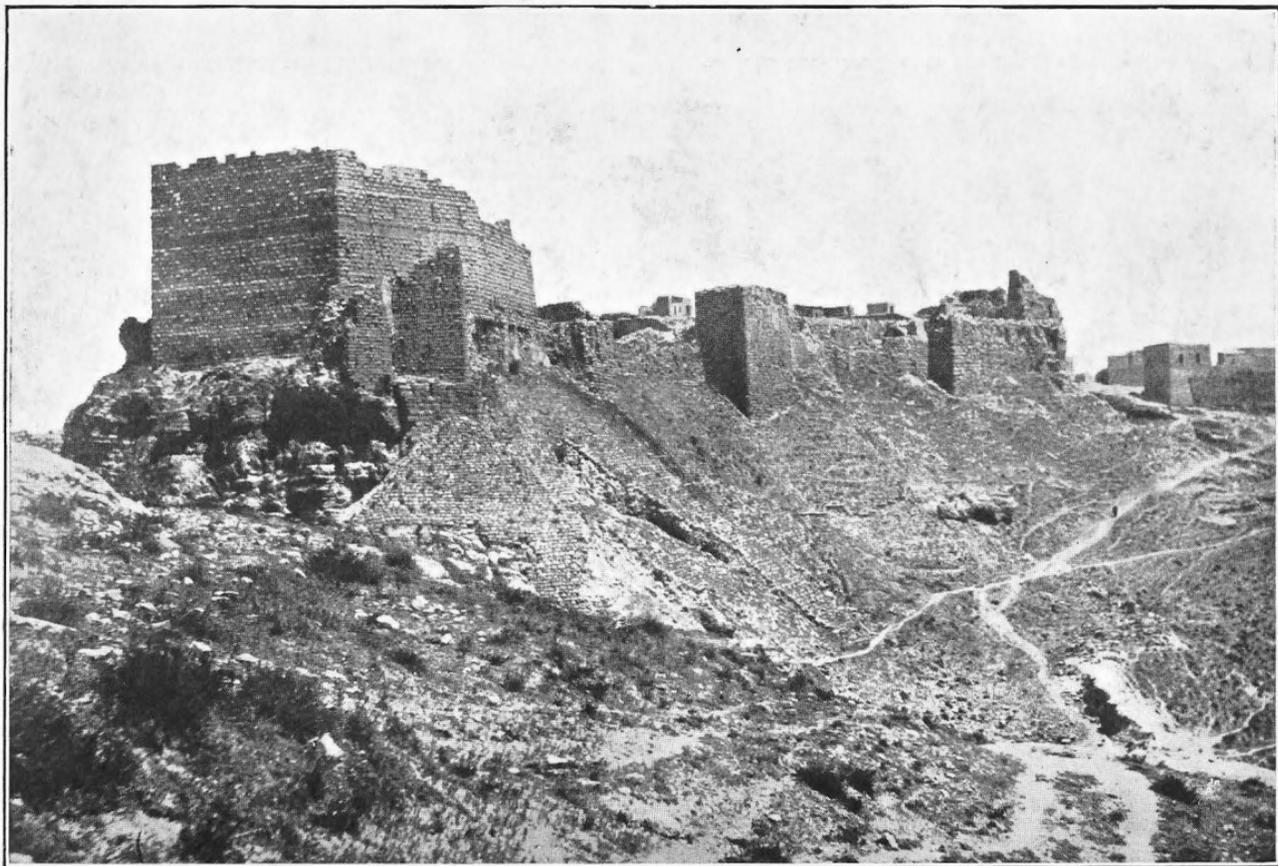


Photo by]

Old Moabitish castle, afterwards occupied by the Crusaders, at Kerak. Inside this old fortress the Turks defended themselves, and for twelve days kept the Arabs at bay, in December, 1910

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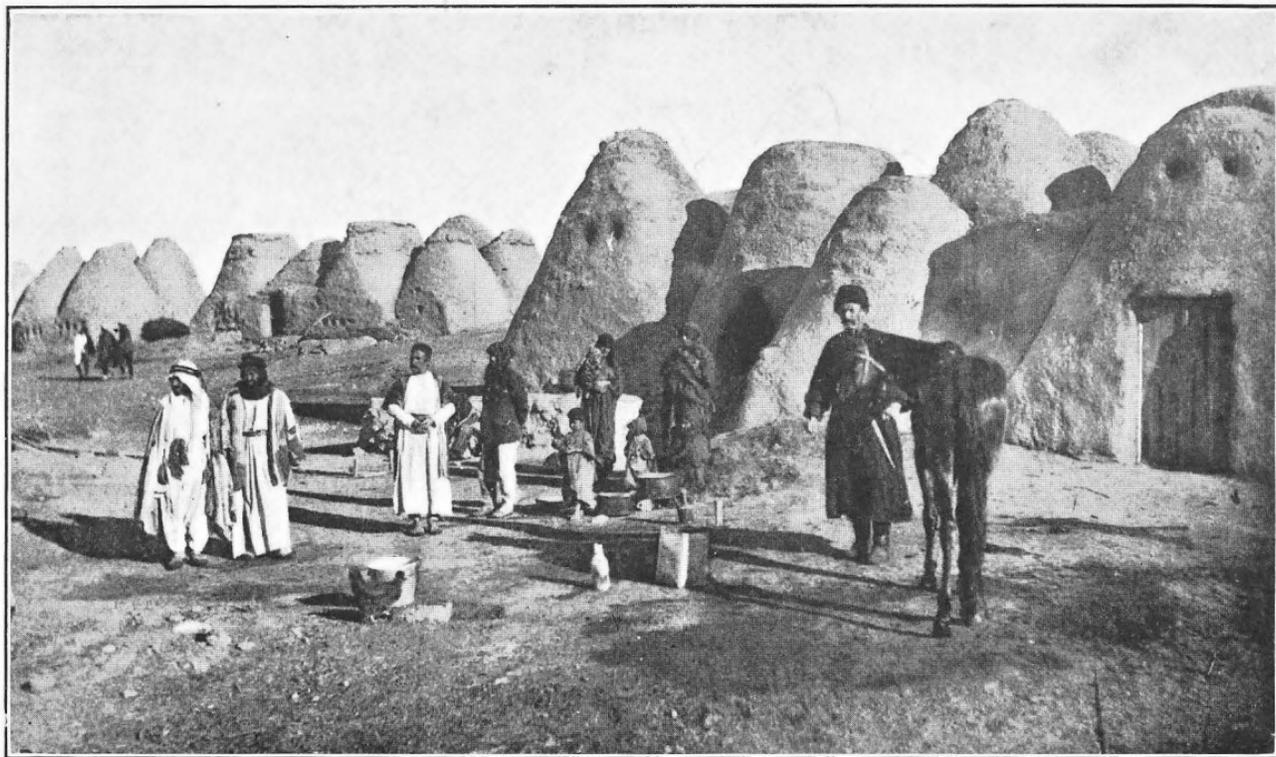


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A typical village of Northern Syria, in the neighbourhood of Aleppo. The beehive houses are made of sun-dried bricks

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of the patriarch when distressed for the welfare of his son, " O that Ishmael might live before Thee " (Gen. xvii. 18).

Only by the preaching of the Gospel to the Arabs, which leads to a knowledge of, and faith in, Jesus Christ, can such come about.

CHAPTER XVI

SOME HOME ITINERATING EXPERIENCES

WHEN a missionary returns from his field of service on furlough, a goodly portion of the time that should be given to rest is taken up with deputation work. As yet, the Church has not learned to give its support to missionary work, without hearing from the returned and oftentimes worn-out worker what he and his associates on the field are doing. This entails a goodly amount of physical labour on the part of the returned missionary, which ought not to be required of him, especially as the channels of information nowadays are many and various; and with the regular issue of illustrated magazines, annual reports, circular letters, and lantern lectures, the missionary-supporting public should be well informed as to operations, successes, and the needs of the field, without requiring the presence of worn and weary workers to stir up enthusiasm and encourage to further giving. But, alas! too many who profess to be interested in missions, are like the man whose friend asked him to accompany him to hear a returned missionary speak, but was refused with the following words: "I never go to missionary meetings now, for no missionaries who have been eaten or killed, return to tell about it, as they did in former years." The desire for exciting addresses is what many supporters of missions crave, and the missionary who cannot interest his audience with such is not thought much of.

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In spite of the physical demands made by deputation work on the missionary, he, on his side, gets some recompense by the various experiences and people he meets with as he goes from place to place, and should he be an independent missionary, free to visit all denominations, those experiences are multiplied, and it is as such that some of the incidents to be related in this chapter have been met with. For various reasons I refrain from naming all the cities and towns in which these experiences occurred, or the names of those connected with them; suffice to relate them as they happened, and as most of my engagements are made by writing, the reader will readily understand that sometimes it is impossible to prevent misunderstandings or mistakes.

On one occasion I was invited to preach missionary anniversary sermons at a place in Staffordshire, thinking that the church to be served was a small one in some country town or village.

In due time I arrived at the station by the train arranged for me, and was met by a genial and portly gentleman, accompanied by his footman, who I learned was to be my host. Outside the station, a carriage and pair awaited us, and I was driven in state to a fine residence on the outskirts of the town. From my reception so far I surmised that I was in for a bigger thing than I had anticipated, but greater things were ahead.

Soon after my arrival at my host's home, a bell summoned me to late dinner, and in a spacious dining-room I was faced with a company of ladies and gentlemen, in low-neck dresses, and swallow-tail coats, evidently invited to meet the preacher of the morrow.

Dinner passed off all right, and in due time I was left alone with my host, who was not long in broaching the subject of my visit. The pith of what he said was :

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“Our church is the leading nonconformist place of worship in town, and the congregation a large and fashionable one. It has been our custom for years to have the President of the Conference to preach for us on our missionary anniversary, but having heard you give an address, I persuaded our church officers to break the rule and invite you, as I thought you would give satisfaction. I hope you will fulfil my expectations, and that the services of the morrow will be a success. I noticed that you did not dress for dinner, but I trust that you have a clerical costume to preach in, otherwise I fear our people will be disappointed.” I replied that I had no better suit than what I wore—a black tweed—such as students wear, which I thought would make little difference to the service, and as blessing came from God through man, I quite expected that the coming day would be a good one.

The morning of Sunday was all that could be desired as regards weather. After breakfast I was told that the carriage would be ready at ten o'clock to drive me to church, but as my custom has always been not to ride on Sunday except when absolutely obliged, I said I would walk, and receiving directions as to the whereabouts of the building, I in due time reached it. My host, who rode, reached the church before me, and had coached the assembled officers about the preacher, so when I entered the vestry and met the formidables of the church, my reception was somewhat a cold one, and I felt doubt and disappointment in every handshake, and heard it in most of the remarks made.

On entering the pulpit I found myself face to face with a large congregation gathered in a well-appointed building. I must confess that my reception in the vestry had not been helpful to me as the messenger of the day, especially as no prayer for blessing on the service preceded our going into the church, and on

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rising to give out the opening hymn, my knees shook under me from nervousness, an experience never encountered before that morning or since. Whilst the hymn was being sung, I quietly claimed help from on high, but I did not really grasp my audience until half way through the service, although all nervousness had passed away. Breaking aside to speak to the children in the congregation, I said a few words to them from the words, "Create in me a clean heart, O God," and during my remarks used the following illustration to explain to the bairns what a clean heart meant. A little girl had been talked to by a minister about having a clean heart, and was told to ask God to make her pure in word and thought, as a help to having a clean heart. When she knelt down to say her evening prayer at her mother's knee, she added to her usual petition these words: "O God, make me pure, very pure, God, pure, pure, absolutely pure, like Cadbury's cocoa, God." This illustration gripped young and adults alike, and from that time I felt I had the sympathy of the congregation.

My text that morning was from Ezra x. 4, "Arise, for this matter belongeth unto thee, we also will be with thee: be of good courage, and do it." Using these words from a missionary standpoint, the message was blest, and, I felt, appreciated by the hearers, and at the close of the service I found the officials in better mood than before, for the service had been a good one, the congregation pleased, and above all, from an official view, the collection ahead of the morning service a year before when the President of the Conference had occupied the pulpit. The evening service was also an all-round success, with another increased collection, and my host was in high glee because the missionary he had introduced had served them well, and all were well pleased.

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I spoke on the Arab and his need the following evening, and at the close of the meeting, in company with the officials and my host, was told that the collections from all services were £30 ahead of the preceding year. Thus "strength was made perfect in weakness," and what seemed to some to promise a failure became a success and blessing.

Another experience, of quite a different nature, came to me whilst the guest of a rich man in Lancashire, whither I had gone to conduct missionary services. Again I was met at the station by host and footman, and driven in state to my temporary home. After dinner, and conversation with my host, I was shown to my room, whither my kit bag and suit case had preceded me, and on turning on the light I was surprised to see all the contents of my bags laid out in order on a table. But what a variety, for any reader who has travelled from place to place, day after day, knows what an accumulation one gets in one's bags and is unable to be clear of it until home or lodging is reached. I made short work of the exhibition by sweeping it all back into my bags, and had hardly closed them when there was a knock on my door. To a "Come in," a man-servant in livery appeared, and on my asking him what he wanted, he said, "I am come to put you to bed, sir." I told him I was able to put myself to bed, and needed no assistance, as I was unaccustomed to being served in that way. He said, "It is my work, sir, to help put guests to bed, and if master hears that I fail in doing my duty, he will be angry." I told him not to fear, for if the master said anything I would make it right, and as far as I was concerned, whilst I was in the house, he might have a holiday. Ere leaving the room he asked, "Should he come and dress me in the morning?" to which I replied, "No, I would manage for myself," after which

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he reluctantly left me, and for the remainder of my stay in the house—five days—I was left in peace as regards being put to bed.

Now for an experience in connexion with a rich church. An engagement was made for me to visit a large, popular and rich church in the north of London, especially to plead the cause of the Arabs of the Bawdee, and to receive an offering for the work. The time at my disposal at the church was to be divided between an oral and lantern lecture, as that was thought the best way to interest the audience. Some time before the hour announced for the lecture to commence, the space allotted for the audience was filled; curtains that shut off a goodly part of the building were thrown back, and the additional space thus provided soon filled also. The officials were surprised at so large an attendance, and said that no missionary meeting or lecture had been so well attended for a long time. The chairman of the evening, in the absence of the pastor, was one of the secretaries of a certain Missionary Society, who said, or did, little till the lecture was finished. He then made some kind and complimentary remarks about what had been said and shown about the Arabs, their life and need, and then proceeded to address the audience in something like the following words :

“ I will take this first opportunity of telling this audience, as a part of our constituents, what our committee decided at a meeting this afternoon, about the heavy debt that rests upon the Society. It was decided, after much discussion, to ask the churches that contribute to our missionary funds, to make special gifts of five pounds, or less, to help lighten the debt, and prevent any withdrawal of missionaries, or hindrance to the work on the field. After hearing this most interesting lecture, it seems a good time for this audience to do something towards meeting the resolution of the Mis-

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sionary Committee, and I now urge you to make a good collection either with five pound notes, cash, or promises, so that this church may have the credit of being the first to contribute towards reducing the debt of the Society."

The chairman's remarks carried the day, and a goodly collection made for his committee, but no thought was turned toward the cause for which the lecture had been given, and with thanks to the missionary for his lecture, and wishes for success in his work, the audience dispersed, leaving the lecturer to pack up his slides, and return to his lodgings, minus his bus and train-fare, to wonder how men in high places can treat returned missionaries in the way described.

A few days later the writer called at the residence of the pastor of the church, with the hope of getting some sympathy, and perhaps recompense from the church, for the unfortunate treatment or mistake at the lecture; but the popular man was too busy in his study to see the missionary, and the missionary was not of sufficient importance to be granted an interview. There the experience ended, and I never learned if the action of the chairman on the evening of the lecture was intentional, or a mistake, but I did learn not to be elated or expect great things when appointed to serve rich and popular churches.

Egremont, in Cheshire, was another place where I had rather an amusing experience, which ended as happily as it began. On turning up at the place appointed for me, I found myself the guest of a Quaker. I soon found out that my host was large-hearted and sympathetic toward any work that tended to the salvation of souls, so much so, that for many years he had been an active worker in the Salvation Army, even to wearing the uniform, but had withdrawn owing to failing health. My host informed me that I was to serve a congregation

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of Friends on the morrow, Sunday, but all would be well, and I should be under no restrictions.

On Sunday morning we went to the Meeting House, where a goodly congregation was assembled, and the service proceeded, and all went well till the end. My host was very kind in introducing me to the friends and members of the congregation, and I noticed that he always spoke of me as "one of us," which evidently puzzled some of the friends, for I had not used the "thee and thou," so peculiar to Quaker phraseology. At last one of the members asked my host in an undertone, what he meant by "one of us," as it was very plain I was no Quaker. The reply was, "Are you not a Christian, my brother?" "Yes," said the inquiring member. "So is our guest this day, and because he is a Christian like ourselves, he is 'one of us.'" Some rather enjoyed the joke, if such it may be called; the stricter members were rather shocked at my intrusion into their midst, but all passed off well, and I was made to feel whilst among them, that I really was "one of us."

My host was highly amused because after my address in the evening, and after a short time of silence—usual in Quaker meetings, I suppose—I rose and said, "We will close the service by singing the Doxology, 'Praise God from whom all blessings flow,' " to which the assembly responded by rising and singing it heartily to the tune of Old Hundredth. No comments were made, but my host said that such a thing had not occurred in their congregation for many years.

On the following Monday evening, I gave a lantern lecture on Jerusalem, and at the close was asked by the chairman if I would answer him a question about the site of Calvary. I did so, which led to other questions. At last a member in the rear of the audience rose and asked me, "Could I tell him who, or where, the lost ten tribes were?" My reply was, "I am too

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interested in tribes that are known and found, to trouble my head about those that are lost." My questioner then said, "If you will come to my house in the morning I will tell you who and where the lost ten tribes are." To that I replied, "If you know who and where they are, they are no longer lost, and should not be named thus, because they are found and known." My answer pleased the crowd, and quieted my inquisitive questioner, who, I was told, was a rabid Anglo-Israelite.

One thing I, as a public speaker, have learnt as I have gone from place to place, is to be ready to give an answer that will not offend to any question put to me, as other experiences will show, and my Quaker audience was pleased because I did not show any resentment at being asked so far-fetched a question in connexion with a lecture on Jerusalem. My visit to the Quaker community made some friends for the Arab Mission, and frequent letters and occasional contributions did not let me forget that they had received me as "one of us."

The next incident to be recorded befell me in the south of London, whither I had gone to speak at a missionary meeting, and where the audience was largely composed of ladies. In the course of my remarks I spoke of the accumulation of unused things in the majority of homes, which, if carefully looked over, might be given to, or sold for, missionary purposes, instead of lying useless and unprofitable year after year.

At the close of the meeting a lady came to me and said, "Your remarks about accumulated useless materials were quite new to me; if you will call on me in the morning, I think you will be well repaid by what I have decided to give you for your mission." Giving me her address, and fixing the time for my visit,

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she left me wondering what gift was to come my way as a help to evangelizing the Arabs of the Bawdee.

Next morning found me on the way to the home appointed, "expecting to receive something," like the lame man lying at the Beautiful Gate of the temple. I was kindly received by the lady who had bidden me come to her, and after a short conversation was informed that the gift to be devoted to mission work was in an upper room of the house, whither we proceeded. An upper room it certainly was, for it was none other than the garret, where in due time we arrived, our number having been increased by the addition of the domestic of the house, who followed us at the bidding of her mistress. On reaching the garret the domestic was set to move numerous laid-aside things, which eventually revealed a goodly pile of old newspapers, the accumulation of many years. Pointing to the piled-up heap of paper the lady said, "I have no use for those old papers, so have decided to give them to, and for, the Lord's work, so you can have them to use as you like." I must confess that I was at a loss to know what to say so as not to give offence, or hinder further decisions of giving for missionary work, so said, "As I am continually on the move addressing meetings in different places, and have no settled home in England, it would be very difficult for me to take the papers," and suggested that the lady sell them to some local grocer or butcher, and send what they realized to the secretary of the Society I represented, to be used for the work among the Arabs. What I said was coldly received, as evidently the would-be giver expected me to pick up the papers, carry them away, and thus relieve her of further trouble. She said she would do what she could, which resulted in nothing, as after I left her, I heard no more of the papers, or if ever they were sold, and for all I know they are in the garret till this day.

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Alas ! how like many others this woman was, willing to give to the Lord and His work that for which she had no use, but not willing to make any sacrifice, or take any little trouble. If the evangelization of non-Christian peoples depended on such as these, how slow and discouraging would be the work, and how few the workers to face the need !

Derby, whether a city or town I quite forget, will always be remembered by me as a place of two experiences occurring on the same forenoon. I had gone thither to fill engagements on two succeeding evenings, and had been given the names of two prominent citizens on whom to call, with the hope of getting them interested in the work among the Arabs. The friend who gave me the names assured me that I should find both men in full sympathy with missionary work, and without a doubt each one would give me substantial help, as both were well to do, one being a banker, and the other the head of an old-established grocery firm.

After the first meeting I was accosted by an elderly gentleman, who told me how interested he had been in what I had said about the Arabs and my life and work among them. Giving me his card, he asked me to call on him at ten o'clock next morning, at his office at the bank. Thus my way to the banker was opened. Next day at 10 a.m., I was at the banker's office. He complimented me on my promptness, and then asked me endless questions about my work and needs. After a half-hour it was suggested that I should accompany my questioner on a short walk, so out we went, and were soon standing in front of an Episcopal church. The banker told me that quite recently he had restored the church, at a cost of several thousand pounds, how many I now forget. From the church he took me to other buildings and sites, and at each told me how many thousands this or that had cost, or was to cost him.

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In due time we returned to the bank, myself wondering why all this information as to the liberality of this worthy citizen to his native place. Soon after our return my *pro tem.* friend again assured me of his interest and sympathy in my work, but also of his inability to help me because of the many local calls that came daily to him. Politely he wished me success and a "Good morning," and thus ended my hope of help from the Derby banker.

As I had time before dinner I decided to call on the other worthy Derbyite, whose place of business was not far from the bank. I went thither cheerfully, expectantly, and with faith for some success, for I had been told that I should find the grocer citizen a good Christian man, by whom I should have a cordial reception and sympathetic hearing. On reaching the shop I sent in my card, but the grocer was engaged in his office, so I had to wait for an interview. After a time he appeared, but did not ask for me, so I approached him saying, "Excuse me, are you Mr. — ?" "Yes," he replied, loudly, snappishly and angrily, "but I want to see no more of your sort; I have been bothered enough this morning by others, and cannot see any more. Good day," and turning his back on me re-entered his office, slamming the door behind him.

I was so surprised that I asked one of the assistants if that was the head of the firm, to which he answered in the affirmative, after which I left the shop and returned to my temporary home. I sat down, and wrote a polite note to the grocer, first apologising for intruding on him during business hours, and then telling him who encouraged me to call on him, with many assurances that I should find him a most cordial and Christian gentleman, but evidently I had struck the wrong man, judging from the short and snappy way I was treated. This I mailed, expecting that would be the last I should

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see or hear of the Derby grocer, and with the posted letter ended my hopes of help from other citizens of that place.

On the evening of that day I was to lecture at the Y.M.C.A., and in due time arrived there some fifteen minutes before the time announced for the commencement of the lecture. The first thing I learned from the secretary was, that the local magnate advertised to preside had just telephoned that he was unable to be present, but, said the secretary, "I am in communication with Mr. ———, the grocer, for he is the best one I know of to fill the gap." In a few minutes the grocer sent the message that he would take the chair, but as the notice was short he would be late in arriving. Late he was, so late, that the secretary opened the way for me with some explanatory remarks, and then left me to fill the rest of the time in semi-darkness, for it was a lantern lecture.

Sometime during the evening the grocer citizen arrived, and at the end of the lecture, in semi-darkness, said a few words to the audience, then disappeared. No reference was made to the affair of the morning, neither did the grocer deem it necessary to make my acquaintance.

Some days later, the friend whose guest I was wrote me that she had spoken to her fellow-citizen about the matter, and he said that for the time I was in the shop, he quite forgot my waiting for him, and when I spoke to him he must have taken me for a commercial traveller, hence his brusque remarks.

I learned two things that morning at Derby ; first, not to be too sharp in replying when addressed by strangers (for missionaries on deputation have many trials along that line), and secondly the truth of Psalm cxlvi. 3, "Put not your trust in princes, nor in the son of man, in whom there is no help"; words proved

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true at Derby that morning, and many times since.

Not all the experiences to be related occurred in England, others of a different nature befell me during two visits I made to the States across the Atlantic.

Ere recounting some of the experiences that befell me in the United States, it will be well for me to mention a few things that impressed me which differ from those of our own country, England. First, the almost universal custom in the churches of asking questions after an address, especially if the speaker is a stranger. Secondly, the readiness of the American people to hear of and see things that pertain to other lands, especially those parts connected with Bible and ancient history. Thirdly, the kindly appreciation of the American audience, if what they hear and see pleases them, expressed by coming to the speaker and thanking him for the sermon, address or lecture, as the case may be. Fourthly, the almost entire absence in most homes of all intoxicating drinks, even in those of the wealthy and worldly, also the very few ministers and evangelists who smoke tobacco. Lastly, the spirit of independence, prominent in all classes of the community, both young, middle-aged, and old alike. Work is esteemed honourable, and no shame or disgrace attaches to anything honestly gotten or done, of which I will give two widely differing instances.

I was once the guest of a Baptist minister near Boston, Mass., who was in charge of a wealthy congregation, and consequently had a good salary, as well as some private income. On the evening of my arrival at his home, I was of course introduced to his family, which was a large one, and was told that one, a youth of seventeen, was absent but would be in for supper. When assembled for the evening meal, I remarked on the absent member, and was told that he was out selling newspapers, a statement that seemed strange to me

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about a rich minister's son. When alone with my host, I asked him the meaning of his son selling papers, and was told that the lad wanted a bicycle, and was earning the money to buy one by selling evening newspapers on a good round that he had worked up among friends. His father told me that he was willing to buy the machine for his son, but the lad preferred to wait until he had earned the money, and could pay for it himself. A good sample of American boy independence.

The other instance occurred when I was in company, as his guest, of a New England millionaire. I had met him by arrangement at his city office, and by train we went to the suburban station near where he lived. At the station a carriage and pair awaited us, but my host told the coachman that we should walk to the house, so that he need not wait on us. On our way we stopped at a general store, where my rich friend purchased two large bags of fruit which he asked me to carry, whilst he loaded himself with a shovel and a sprinkling-can for use in his garden. The storekeeper offered to send the purchases home, but the offer was refused, with thanks and some such remark as this, "What is my own, bought and paid for, I am not ashamed to carry home," so with our purchases we walked the length of the town until we reached a stately home isolated in splendid grounds. It was a good object lesson to me, and typical of the average business man of America.

But now for experiences that befell me in some of my visitations to churches of different denominations.

One Sunday evening I had spoken on my work among the Arabs to a large Baptist congregation. It was not the first time I had addressed them, so was known at the church. At the close of my address, an elderly man rose and said, "Pastor, I have heard our brother speak several times, but as yet have failed to discover to what denomination he belongs; I suppose

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he would not mind telling us ? ” The pastor, a genial gentleman, asked me to reply to the inquirer, so on the spur of the moment I said, “ I have been so much among the different Churches of England and America, that I seem to myself to have become an International, Interdenominational Baptized Methodist,” a statement that gave general satisfaction, especially to the aged inquirer, who fired his last shot by saying, “ As you have both the water and the fire, you are all right, and I hope you will visit us again.”

At a general meeting held in Chicago, I was suddenly dropped on to answer an unusual question, by a man who was a crank on the subject on which he asked me. Again I had spoken on the need of the Arab, and had barely taken my seat after speaking, when up jumped a man and said, “ Mr. Chairman, I should like to ask the speaker a question.” Consent was given, and I was asked, “ Have you taken the Lord for your Healer ? ” The question was so far from the object of the meeting, and the subjects of the addresses, that not only myself, but the audience were surprised at the intrusion, but my answer was ready and brief, for I said, “ My friend, many years ago I took the Lord for my Keeper, and He has kept me so well, that there has been no need for healing.” The answer silenced the crank, and pleased the audience, and for the meetings that followed I was left in peace, although the inquisitive seeker after arguments was present at them all.

I was once appointed to speak at a church in Providence, R. I., the arrangement having been made by a Baptist minister. On arrival at the house of the pastor with whom I was to sup ere the evening service, I discovered that my *pro tem.* host was the clergyman of a ritualistic church, and he a wearer of robes like a priest. I said nothing about my denominational connexion, and in due time we arrived at the church for evening

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service, when, finding that I was slow to don episcopal robes, the question arose as to my Church connexion. Although the clergyman was High Church, he was large-hearted, and was willing to lend me a surplice, but I suggested that my Bedouin costume would cover all outward shortcomings on my part, if it would be agreeable for me to wear it. "Just the thing," said the clergyman, "and the people will think you are a foreign bishop." So I donned the long-sleeved white cotton shirt, and over it the camel's hair outer garment, also the head dress of the Bawdee, and with the clergyman went to the vestry where the choir awaited us, was told my place in the processional, and started out with the rest on a march round the church, eventually landing in the bishop's chair on one side of the chancel. I must confess to feeling something of a hypocrite as I paraded the church, but I did it to save my friend any confusion, and all passed off well.

When the time came for me to speak I went to the lectern, and not to the pulpit, a thing which pleased the clergyman, did me no harm, and raised no questions, as I began my address by saying that I preferred to speak from the reading desk, as it seemed to be nearer the congregation. On bidding the clergyman good night, at the close of the service, he said, "If you have learnt nothing else on the mission field, you have learnt to adapt yourself to circumstances, and I thank you for 'filling the bill' so well this evening, without causing any questions among the congregation or church officials."

That night I had one of the worst bilious attacks ever known by me, and I know not whether to blame the clergyman's supper, the temporary bishop's robes, or any seeming deception of the ignorant hearers, if either were the cause of the seeming punishment.

The shortest address I ever made was at a missionary

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meeting in Philadelphia. I was the last speaker on the list and was supposed to have twenty minutes, but the preceding speakers so trespassed on time, that when my turn came my twenty minutes had been taken by others. The leader of the meeting, in introducing me, said, "I must ask the last speaker to make his address very brief." All I said was, "I regret that my time has been taken by others, but I am glad of the opportunity of giving you my address. It is 690 8th Avenue, New York City, and all letters sent there will reach me safely."

With this I sat down, and the meeting closed on a disappointed audience, for the need of the Arab and the call of the Bawdee was a new subject, and many were anxious to hear from a new field. My address was remembered by some, and quite a few invitations by post resulted, and friends were made for Ishmael.

The smallest collection I ever received came from a week evening service in a Methodist church in the State of Illinois. My theme had been the Arab and his need, and after the address the pastor announced an offering for the work. The plates were passed and brought to the platform, but one only contained anything, and that was a nickel—twopence halfpenny, or five cents. I know not why it was so small, but I am sure the pastor told the truth when apologising for so meagre an offering, for he said, "My people are bad givers, they have never been trained along those lines." The offering proved his word, and it is to be hoped was the cause of some teaching on giving, and a larger liberality for any that followed me.

The smallest audience I was called to face was in a New England Congregational Church. Arriving at the town appointed I went to the address of the pastor with whom the fixture had been made, but learned that he was out of town. Being single, he was in lodgings,

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and had left no word of my coming, or made any arrangements for my entertainment, so I went to an hotel and rested until time for evening service. On arrival at the church I found it to be a large and well-furnished building, lighted up evidently in expectation of a large gathering ; but when the time came for commencing the service, the audience consisted of the janitor and myself. We waited patiently for half an hour but no one put in an appearance, so by mutual agreement the meeting was dismissed, lights put out, and " Good nights " exchanged. I slept at the hotel that night, and left early next morning for another appointment. I never heard why no one came to church that night, for the pastor left my letter to him on the subject unanswered ; all I know is that I was out of pocket my travelling fare and hotel bill. Fortunately experiences like this one are rare, and might probably be traced to some misunderstanding or neglect on the side of the pastor.

Not many on deputation work turn aside into a turnip field to get a meal, and then give two addresses on the strength given by the turnips, but such was my experience once. Arrangements had been made for me to speak at a church, as I thought, in St. Paul's, Minn. To reach the place necessitated travelling all Saturday night, and the train was due to arrive at 7 a.m., at which time I was to be met by the pastor of the church. A breakdown during the night made the train three hours late, so it was ten o'clock when we arrived at the station. No one awaited me, so I asked the station-master to direct me to the appointed church. He asked me if I expected to be met by the Rev. ——. I said, " Yes." He told me the rev. gentleman was there at 7 a.m., to meet me, but on hearing that the train would be some hours late, had gone away without leaving any word for me on arrival.

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I learned that the church I was appointed to was a country one, some one hour's walk distant. I left my bag at the station, and taking only my Bedouin costume, set out to walk to the church. For a full hour I walked, but saw no signs of a church or even village. Eventually I met a farm labourer who told me the place I was seeking was yet an hour's walk away, so on I went determined to reach it now I had set out to do so. By this time it was quite noon, and as I had had no breakfast, the inner man began to remind me of a vacancy which needed filling. On one side of the road I traversed was a field of turnips, so on the principle of Deuteronomy xxiii. verses 24, 25: "When thou comest into thy neighbour's vineyard, then thou mayest eat grapes thy fill at thine own pleasure; but thou shalt not put any in thy vessel. When thou comest into the standing corn of thy neighbour, then thou mayest pluck the ears with thine hand; but thou shalt not move a sickle unto thy neighbour's standing corn,"— I turned aside, pulled some turnips, peeled them, and breakfasted and dined off them, accompanied with first-class appetite sauce. Then on I went, until at last I saw in the distance the spire of a church, and then the words of Newton came true—

"As when the weary traveller gains,
The height of some o'erlooking hill,
His heart revives, if 'cross the plains
He eyes his home, though distant still."

The sight of the church spire revived my heart and body with the hope of soon reaching my destination, but such was not to be yet. Ere reaching the church I came to cross-roads, and as I reached them, a one-horse rig appeared driven by a single individual, which turned out to be the pastor who had expected me to serve him that Sunday. He pulled up on seeing me, and by mutual recognition we knew each other. I got

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into the rig, and as we rode I learned that the preacher was off to an afternoon service, to face what he thought a disappointed congregation, as he did in the morning, for he had well advertised my coming. A goodly audience awaited us, but few of them knew how near I had come to missing them, or on what a cold hard meal I had dined.

Directly after the service we set off for another church, in which I spoke, again on the strength of the turnips, for there was no time for eating between services. My fast was not broken until late that night when we reached the pastor's home, by the side of the luring steeple, and as I write, many years after, the hot coffee, pumpkin pie, and mashed potatoes, prepared by the pastor's wife for supper, are still a pleasant memory and a delightful picture in my eyes. Needless to say, the pastor had quite given up expecting me, and to make some amends for disappointing the morning congregation, news was circulated through the district that a lecture would be given on the Monday evening, to which a goodly and appreciative audience gathered.

The visit was a profitable one for the Arab Mission, for friends were made who for years have helped by prayer, gift, and sympathy, and who frequently in letters refer to my meal off the turnips, and only blame me for keeping quiet on the subject, instead of asking for something decent to eat before going into the pulpit to plead the need of others, when my own must have been a constant reminder to me.

I have already referred to the custom in America of asking questions of the speaker, and as I write my mind goes back to a service after which I was asked a most unusual question. The place was Mount Hermon, near Northfield, Mass., where are the training homes founded by the late D. L. Moody. I had addressed the male students one Sunday morning, and at the close of the

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address was plied with questions by many of the youths in the audience. One inquirer rose and asked: Could the speaker inform him if it was true that a camel had a bag in its inside in which it carried spare water? The speaker replied: "I have never been inside a live camel, so cannot say whether it has a water bag or not." The answer caused a general laugh, and the inquiring youth was left to continue his speculations as to the water arrangements of the ship of the desert.

As to unexpected calls to fill other men's places, I have had quite a few, two only of which I will record. I was spending a Sunday with a Presbyterian minister near Philadelphia. It was a free day for me, for I had no engagements. It was the day on which missionary services were to be held and special addresses given, previous to taking the annual missionary offering on the Sunday following. The church was a large, rich and fashionable one, and two prominent and popular men had been announced as speakers for morning and evening. The evening speaker was one of the secretaries of the Presbyterian Missionary Society, who had just returned from a world tour of the Society's mission stations, so great things were expected of him. The morning service was well attended and a good one, and of course the evening speaker announced, with elaborate and luring inducements to come and hear the renowned traveller. Whilst at lunch with the pastor and his wife, a telegram was handed in saying that the evening speaker was indisposed and could not keep his appointment. The pastor looked at me and said, "Forder, it is up to you to take the evening service." I protested, urging that the pastor should fill his own pulpit; but there was no escape, so it was resolved to keep the telegram a secret until evening service. The first to know of the disappointment were the church officials who were gathered in the vestry to meet the

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big man, ere he went into the pulpit. The pastor told them there was nothing else for it but to put me in the vacancy, and of course they agreed, as they—the officials—could produce no one else.

My appearance in the pulpit was a surprise to the congregation, which was a large one, in expectation of hearing the newly-returned traveller. I was not a stranger to many of those assembled, for I had lectured at the church on a previous occasion, but never occupied their pulpit. A few words from the pastor explained the situation and my presence in the pulpit, and with that as preface the service proceeded. In my address I took a survey of the non-Christian world and our duty toward it, founding my remarks, if I remember right, on Isaiah xxi. 1: "The burden (R.V., oracle) of the desert of the sea," especially referring to Mohammedanism, which started in Arabia, the land to which the foregoing Scripture refers.

It would ill become me to make remarks on my own doings, suffice to say that pastor and people were both pleased with the service, for a practical commencement of the future offering was made that evening after the service by a member who had never given to Foreign Missions promising to send the pastor a cheque for one hundred dollars, £20, the next morning, ere he started on a long journey to Europe. A telegram sent me eight days later by the pastor, said, "Offering fifteen hundred dollars in advance of last year, thanks to your services." £300 increase was indeed encouraging, and the news was helpful to the missionary in assuring him that God had blessed his services, called for at so short notice, and under seemingly disadvantageous circumstances.

The second unexpected call came from a Boston pastor late one Sunday afternoon over the 'phone. I was in my room in the suburbs of that New England

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city, quite intending to have a rest for the remainder of the day, as I had no evening engagement. The message over the 'phone first inquired if I was at home, then a request to speak with me. The speaker was a Baptist minister, in whose church I had spoken some months before. He asked me to come over to him at once, as he wanted me for something special ; he also said I was to sup with him.

As time was short, and the distance a good one, I started at once, and reached my friend's house just as supper was being served. In a few words I learnt that it was missionary day at the church, in preparation for the annual offering on the Sunday following ; that at the morning service the congregation had been badly disappointed, for the advertised speaker was an old-time and experienced missionary from Central Africa, from whom all expected an interesting account of his work, the natives, their customs, religion and need, but instead of doing as expected, he gave out a text, and attempted to preach, but failed. The consequence was, as I have already stated, a disappointed congregation, and a poor outlook for the anticipated offering.

The speaker for the evening was to have been the pastor himself, but he had sent for me to take the service with the special request for a real missionary address, in the hope of saving the situation. I could not refuse the request, and as missionaries are generally expected to be ready for all calls on them, I went into the church, was briefly introduced by the pastor, and took the service, my theme being the people of the Bawdee, their religion, customs, and need. The notice was a short one, and the service a long one, for the congregation was interested, and for an hour and a half listened to my story of life, work and experiences among the Arabs, working in items as to religion, customs, and

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need. In return for my service at so short notice, the pastor put in a good word for me with his ministerial brethren, so that for a time I had quite a run of engagements in the interest of the Bedouin, and made many friends for my work.

At this point I may say, that it has always been my custom to accept every request and invitation for service that came to me, without stipulation as to recompense, fee, or payment. Many times I have served for nothing, but more often have proved that "the labourer is worthy of his hire," and that the average congregation is always ready to help if the appeal is put to them in the right way by their pastor or leader. I hope the day will never come when I shall set a price on my services either in the cause of Missions, or Christian work of any kind.

One more experience must be added to this already too-long chapter, which befell me in Canada on my first and only visit to the city of Toronto, and which opened unfortunately but finished up successfully.

I had been invited to speak at a missionary meeting in connection with the World's Sunday School Convention, held in Toronto, in July, 1909.

I travelled from Boston to Toronto, via Niagara Falls, with the chairman of the committee, and others in an official capacity, reaching Toronto two days before the opening of the Convention. It was evening when we reached the city, and as I was delayed for a short time in the Customs, the others had preceded me to the King Edward Hotel, and had been allotted their rooms. On my reaching the hotel, and applying for my location, I was told that I must go to the locating committee which was to be found sitting at a church away in the suburbs of the city. An electric car took me, after a long ride, to the church, where I found a

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young woman sitting in the vestry, who represented the locating committee. On telling her who I was, and what I wanted, she informed me that she had nothing to do with the location of speakers, only delegates, also that no allotments could be occupied till the following evening. She kindly gave me the names of some boarding houses in the neighbourhood where possibly I might find accommodation.

My search for a lodging was a tiresome, long and fruitless one, for in expectation of the coming crowd, all to whom I applied had let their rooms. Just before midnight I found a kindly disposed woman, who, to save me further wandering, offered to sleep me, for the night only, on a couch in her sitting-room, so having settled with her, I went to an open-all-night restaurant and had a well-earned supper. Whilst eating, my eye caught sight of a public telephone, to which I went, dropped in my nickel— $2\frac{1}{2}d.$, and was soon in touch with the King Edward Hotel. My request to speak with the chairman of the committee, who had brought me to the city, was replied to by saying that he and all others connected with the Convention were in bed. I then sent word that, as my message was urgent, the chairman must be awakened and speak with me, and after a wait of a few minutes, the chairman's voice came over the 'phone, asking who wanted him, and what for? I soon told him who wanted him, and added, "I am leaving for New York by an early morning train, so shall not be present to speak at the Convention as advertised." A surprised voice asked me, "Why?" and my reply was, "Had I known that I was to walk the streets of Toronto till midnight seeking for lodgings, I never should have come to the city, and as I could find none I had decided to leave for New York, and catch a steamer sailing for England." A reply asked me to "come to the hotel early next

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morning ere leaving the city, and——” Then the connexion was cut off.

Next day early I was at the hotel, and on sending my card upstairs, was soon politely requested to follow a servant to the suite of rooms occupied by the chairman. He received me very graciously, made apologies for the treatment I had received, and begged me to alter my mind about leaving. I told him that I was surprised that I had been treated thus, and asked if the big prominent speakers at the Convention were to be served the same. In reply I was told that they were all to be entertained at the expense of the Convention at the hotel. Then I asked why a difference had been made with me ; if I was thought good enough to speak at the Convention, was I not good enough to be treated as others ? My question was avoided, with assurances of better consideration, which ended in my being entertained at the hotel like others whilst serving the Convention, so my intended departure was delayed.

One of the great men advertised to speak at the Convention was John Wanamaker, the millionaire philanthropist and merchant of Philadelphia, and the great enthusiast and supporter of Sunday school work and interests. He was announced to address three gatherings of young people on the same afternoon, in different churches, and at different hours, being rapidly transferred from one church to the other in a powerful motor car. On the morning of the day on which the great J. W. was advertised to speak, a telegram was received saying he could not fill his engagement. The reason given for his absence has gone from my memory ; needless to say the telegram was a surprise, and caused a speedy and special gathering of the committee to consider what should be done, and who should fill the big man's shoes. It was too late to call off the advertised gatherings, neither was it advisable to do so, for

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these three meetings were especially for the Sunday school scholars of Toronto, and was practically their share of the Convention. Many names were suggested at the Committee meeting, but none were acceptable. At last some one suggested the missionary from the Bawdee as the one to address the three gatherings, which suggestion was finally settled on.

As I was about to enter the dining-room for lunch that day, the chairman's secretary conveyed to me the decision of the committee, with a request that I would be ready to start directly after lunch, in the car which would be waiting for me at the hotel door. I was also requested to wear my Bedouin costume. There was neither time nor opportunity to refuse the request, so I ate a hearty lunch, donned my Bawdee dress, and in due time appeared before the three audiences that had gathered in expectation of seeing and hearing the great Sunday-school leader of the American Continent.

I worded my addresses to suit the audiences, telling of the boys and girls of the Bawdee, their life, treatment and need, and concluded by showing how Biblical my costume was, and how unchanged the customs and dress of the people of Bible lands. The afternoon was such a full and hurried one, that I remember little but the rush and hurry necessary to fill the engagements. Whether or not the audiences appreciated the intrusion of the missionary in place of the advertised speaker, I know not ; all I know is I did my best, and I hope inspired some interest.

The meeting for which I had been especially engaged was the last of the Convention and was to be on missionary lines. It was held in Massey Hall, which was crowded with an audience of some six thousand people. The list of speakers was a long one, each one being allotted twenty minutes, and strictly requested not to make any allusion to money, needs or finance in

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their addresses. My turn was last but one on the list, and if I remember right I was the only foreign missionary present. The speaker that preceded me was a coloured man from the South, a fluent, flowery, captivating speaker, and one who had accompanied Roosevelt in his assault on San Juan hill, a circumstance he worked into his address to great advantage, and to the satisfaction of the large audience. This flowery son of the South so captivated his hearers, that those sitting near me on the platform began to sympathise with me, saying that after such an address I should hardly get a hearing, what a pity I had not spoken before him, and such like, all of which might have discouraged me, had I been relying on myself for any success. Seeing how matters were going drove me quietly to ask help from above, and my request was fully met. The coloured speaker encroached on my time seven minutes, and was forcibly restrained from taking more by the chairman ringing him down. On announcing me, the chairman audibly requested me to keep my time minus seven minutes, thus reducing me to thirteen minutes. In that time, clad in my Bedouin costume, I presented the need of Ishmael, not to the excited, cheering audience of a few minutes before, but to one so attentive, interested, and impressed, that the ticking of the clock was the only thing heard during the brief pauses I made for breath. A half-minute before time I stopped, and had scarcely taken my seat, when a man in the upper gallery rose and shouted, "Mr Chairman, our Sunday school will give fifty dollars—£10—to this man's work." Others followed in like strain, so that the programme was broken into, until the secretary had received gifts and promises amounting to about seven hundred dollars—about £140—for the work in the Bawdee. It was a good final to an experience that began unfortunately, and one that proved that a simple presentation of the

Some Home Itinerating Experiences

need of Ishmael made in faith and reliance on God for results, can be acceptable and blest, in spite of excitement, discouragement, and seeming failure.

In concluding this recital of some of my experiences on deputation work, I would again remind the reader that I take no credit or praise to myself for any blessing that has followed my services; I owe it all to God, "whose I am, and whom I serve," in answer to prayer, and simple reliance on Him to use me to His honour and glory, in stirring up interest on behalf of Ishmael and the non-Christian world.

CHAPTER XVII

EXPERIENCES ON THE FIELD

IN a former chapter I have stated that rough and dangerous experiences are almost things of the past, and were confined largely to my early days on the field, but occasionally, on new ground, a rough handling is still experienced. Such, however, of late years have been few, so there is not much to relate along these lines. This is a cause for thankfulness rather than regret, for it is a proof that the presence of the missionary in the district in which he serves is acknowledged, acceptable and recognized.

One incident only comes to my mind, in which life seemed uncertain, and in which there was cause for taking joyfully the spoiling of one's goods. It occurred whilst journeying in the hill country of Gilead, east of the Jordan, and whilst going from one village to another. I was accompanied by one man, the owner of the two donkeys that carried my goods and self.

We were proceeding through a long valley when two rough-looking fellows came down on us; each was armed with a gun and club, the latter hanging from their belts so as to give freedom to both hands to use the guns. They pulled me off my donkey, and gave me to understand that any resistance on my part would soon be silenced, and having settled with me thus, they silenced my companion, who was cursing and shouting whilst trying to get away with the donkeys, by hitting him on the head and back with their

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guns, which treatment quickly subdued him. The loads were pulled off the donkeys, opened up and rifled, my clothes and few necessaries laid on one side in a heap, and the Scriptures and a few other things thrown aside as useless. Then my turn came. Whilst one fellow stood over me with his gun, the other rifled my person, taking from me my knife, watch, pencil, compass, and bag of money. He was determined not to miss anything if he could help it, for he felt my clothing all over, and even examined my boots which he made me take off. But in his examination of me he was kept from putting his hand on a small pouch that was on my belt, and which had worked itself to the small of my back, and in which were fourteen gold pieces. They took from my man's person such few articles of clothing as pleased them, and driving off the donkeys left us to collect the scattered books, etc., and to wonder how to proceed.

But we were not left in peace very long—only some five minutes—for the fellows returned, bent on more plunder.

During their short absence, I slipped the money pouch off my belt, and hid it in the middle of a bunch of thistles, putting a flat stone by their side to distinguish them from other bunches, for I had anticipated the return of the robbers. Hardly had I hidden the pouch than they appeared, and each taking one of us dragged us up the hill-side, to the rear of a huge rock in which was a cave. Hidden thus from passers-by, the robbers had us at their mercy. They said they wanted more money than what was in the bag, and accused me of having gold about me. I told them to search all my clothing, which they did, stripping me until only my shirt was left on me. Of course they found nothing, so they allowed me to dress, and made me sit down, whilst they commenced to divide the spoil.

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Suddenly they stopped, seized their clubs, and rising, made as though they would club us, all the while cursing and threatening us because of the lack of gold. Then they worked again on the spoil, having thrown their clubs on the ground, one of which was within easy reach of my hand. The temptation came to me to grip the club, hit the nearest fellow on the head, and then attack the other, and so regain what had been taken from us, and I was about to grasp the club, when a voice seemed to say to me, "The servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men" (2 Tim. ii. 24), so that I was compelled to withdraw my hand and resist the temptation.

A minute later the robbers jumped up, each with his spoil in his arms or bosom, and said, "Take your donkeys and be gone; we thought to kill you and hide your bodies; but go your way, and don't tell any one what has befallen you."

We needed no second bidding, and driving our steeds before us, made off down the hill, hastily loaded our remaining goods, regained the hidden pouch, which I hid in the nosebag between the chaff, and went on our way, with aching bones, lightened loads, and fearful minds, but thankful for spared lives and an unstolen pouch, the latter necessary to provide the needful for the remainder of my journey, which was not yet near its end. Needless to say, none of the stolen things were regained, for it would have been unwise for me to make enemies of the tribe to which the robbers belonged, which would have resulted had I complained to the Government, for they would have punished the chiefs in the hope of getting the robbers. I regretted losing my watch, for it was a good one and a present, and such gifts are rare in the life of a missionary, but as already said was thankful to have escaped with my life, and a whole skin.

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Of quite a different nature was an experience, if such it may be called, that came my way in the North Arabian oasis of Kaf. I may have recorded it in earlier writings, I cannot remember, but for the sake of new readers it will bear repeating.

My presence in this little-visited island of the Bawdee was a wonderment to all, especially the youths and boys, who had not as yet travelled far beyond the shadows cast by the palms of the oasis. By the adult population I was left unmolested or unnoticed whenever I sought the shade of the plantations, or the cool breezes of the evening hour, but the younger members of the community followed me incessantly, so that their constant presence became a nuisance to me, as it deprived me of all privacy.

One day, as I was starting out on a short walk, the usual crowd of followers began to gather, increasing as they followed me, with remarks, curses and shoutings that were neither complimentary, nor deserving nor acceptable. I well remember turning into a narrow lane between the palm groves, the crowd of yelling youths not far in the rear, when it suddenly occurred to me to give them a scare. Turning round on them, I put my hand to my mouth and took out my upper plate of artificial teeth, and flourishing it before them shouted, "Begone, all of you, or I will throw my teeth at you." It sufficed to rout them, for away they went, some falling over others in their haste to get away, and myself behind them shouting at them as they ran. Needless to tell, I had the lane and the rest of my walk to myself, but my unusual action had become the talk of the small settlement, so that for days there were frequent requests from the adult members of the oasis, to see me remove in one piece, what they had always considered an immovable part of the anatomy of the human race.

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For the rest of my stay in the oasis I had freedom from my youthful tormentors, and if any did happen to come my way, it was with subdued looks, for probably they thought me an uncanny creature, although in the same form as themselves, but able to do a thing never thought possible by them. The men of the oasis enjoyed the trick I played on the youths and boys of their families, and instead of severing us, the fun of the thing served to make us more friendly and drew us closer together.

Two illustrations as to how the Bawdee lures those born and bred in it, came to me quite recently.

I was about to enter the monastery at the foot of Sinai, when I was accosted with "Good afternoon, sir," in English. So surprised was I to hear my own language in that out-of-the-way place, that I was compelled to stop and look about me, and soon discovered who had greeted me. It was an old, half-naked, sunburnt, partly blind Arab, who in good English told me that the greater part of his life had been spent in sailing the seas in British ships. He had visited almost every important port in the world, and had earned good money. Suddenly a desire came on him to return to the region of his early years, so deserting his ship at Suez he made his way to the recesses of Sinai; for, said he, in bidding me good-bye, "England is a good country, and the English people the best I have met in my travels, but no land is like the desert, or no people like my own, so I mean to finish my days here."

On another occasion I was waiting for the Mecca train at the desert station of Māān, due about 8 p.m. All unexpectedly a voice out of the darkness said, "Good evening, Mr." I responded, and was soon conversing in good English with an Arab of the desert who for years had been an engine-stoker on the Midland

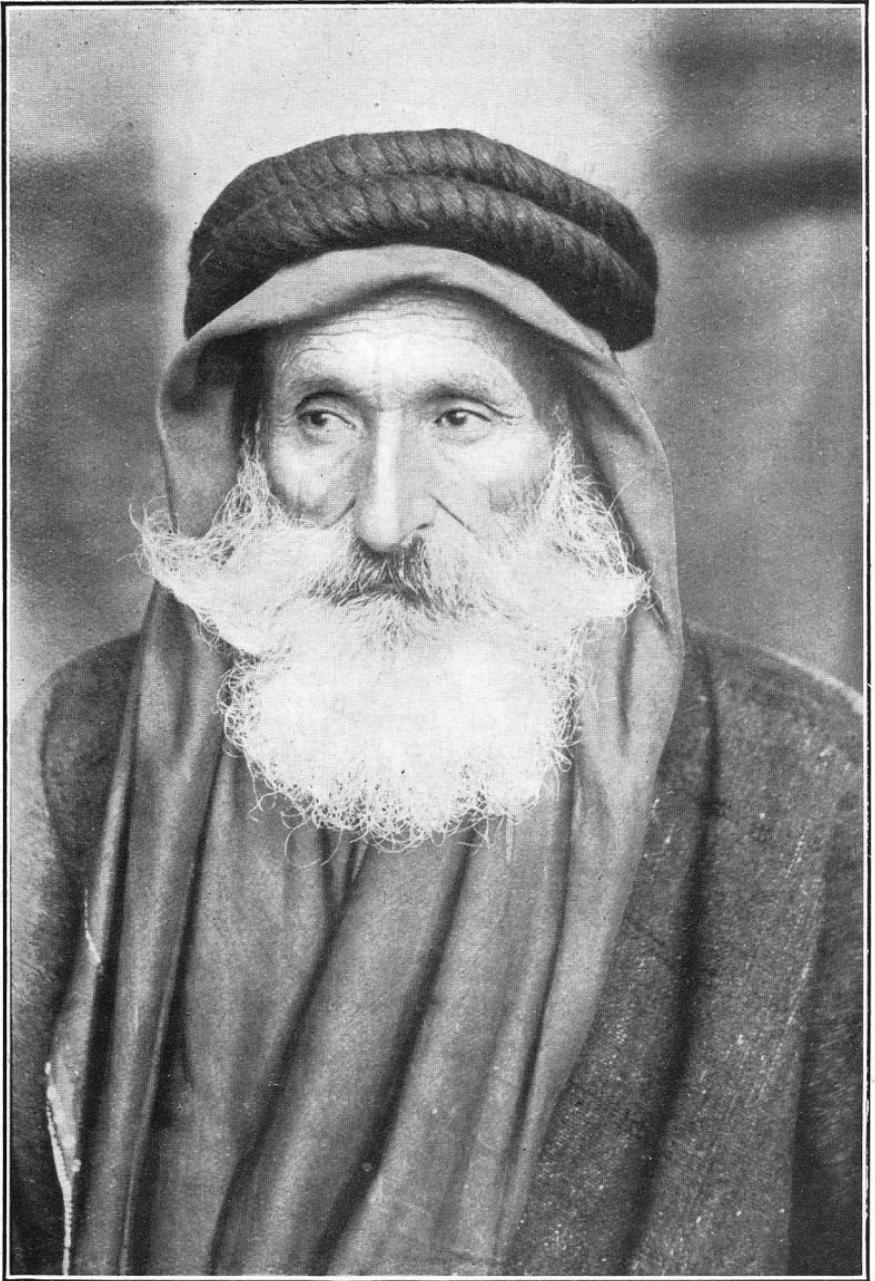


Photo by]

Sheikh Khaleel, a Christian chief of Moab. He has settled many quarrels and disputes among his own and neighbouring tribes

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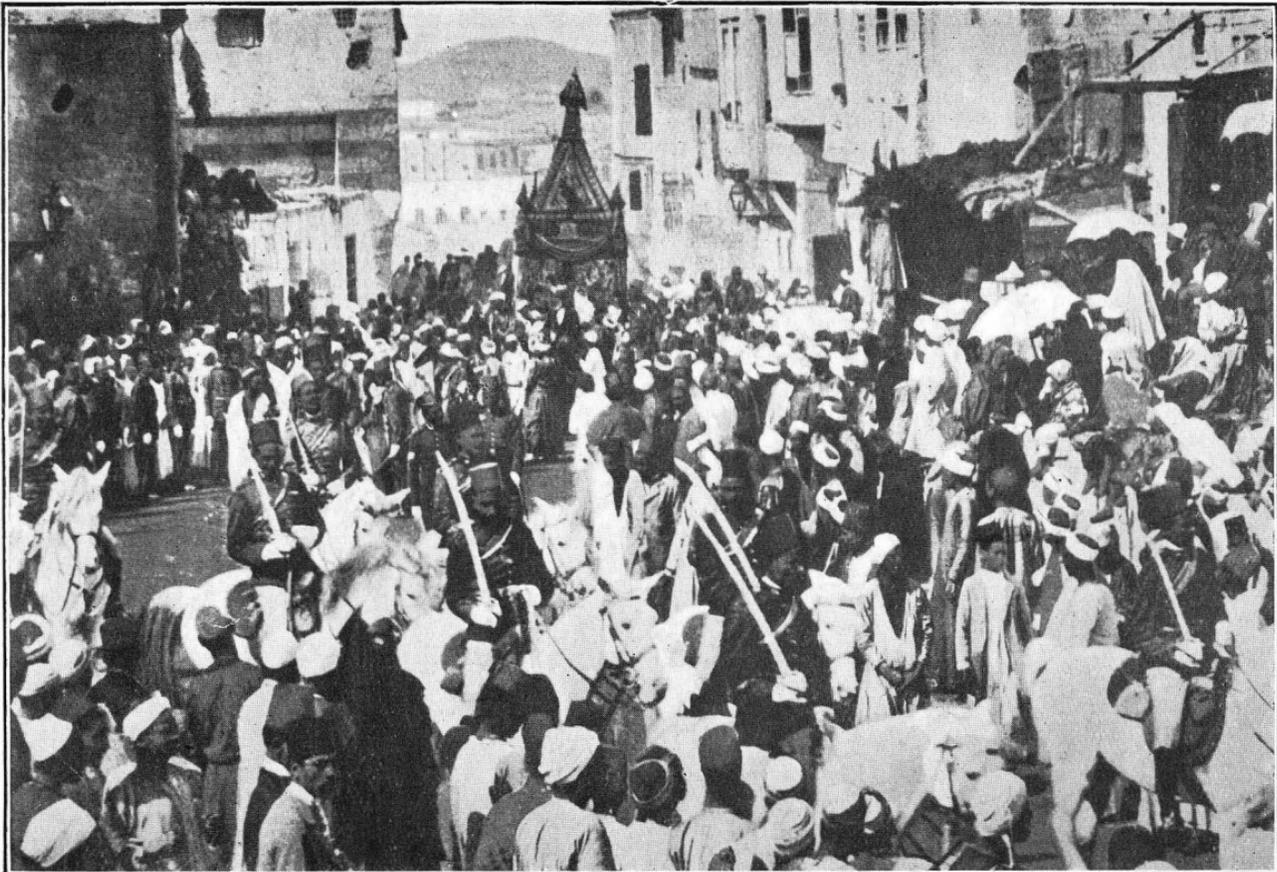


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Pilgrims leaving Damascus for Mecca, with the Holy Carpet. The occasion is kept as a general holiday and is a red-letter day to those who make the journey

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Railway, and was well informed as to the principal towns of England. In conversation with him I learned that he had committed a murder in London, and having hidden for a time in the slums of the East End, at last escaped capture by sailing on a collier to Port Said. From there he made his way to his own tribe that are usually found camping in the country between Māān and Petra. He said, in glowing terms, "For earning money England is the country, but for a free life there is no place like the desert; and besides, here no one asks any questions as to the past." He also told me that he knew where a valuable and extensive treasure was buried, and tried his best to persuade me into going partners with him in unearthing it. But I was not to be lured into the wilderness on such a wild-goose chase, by such a cosmopolitan make-up as my informer, so finding I was rather a hard nut to crack, he bade me a "Good night," and disappeared in the darkness. He had brought with him two things from the land in which he had worked for years, viz., England: first, a large vocabulary of foul language, which he used freely; secondly, a taste and longing for spirits, for more than once he asked me, "Have you any drink, brandy or whisky, in your luggage?" to which I was glad to be able to answer, "No."

But enough of experiences, or the reader will weary of their sameness, and other subjects must occupy the remaining chapters of this book.

CHAPTER XVIII

ISLAM AND ITS EVERYDAY REQUIREMENTS AND WORKINGS

ISLAM, the latest of man-made religions, the greatest antagonist of the Christian religion, and the sedative of millions, how little understood by the average everyday man and woman, hence the need for this simple treatise on so important a subject.

Neither time nor ability permits any elaborate study of this Oriental and non-elevating system. Thousands of its devotees have spent, and are spending, years in the study of it, but few after long years of deep research can say with an honest heart that they have fathomed its meaning, or understood its teaching, and how shall those of another sphere both of environment, training and religion, ever be supposed to attain to any understanding of all that the desert-born system claims of its followers? Hence this study must of necessity be brief, elementary, and simple.

In order to secure an intelligent understanding of this system of Islam, which has in its grip some 230 millions of adherents, I propose dividing the subject into three parts, under the following headings.

- 1st, How, when, and from where Islam came.
 - 2nd, Its primary teachings and requirements.
 - 3rd, Where it fails, in comparison with Christianity.
- First, How did Islam originate?

In order to answer this question we must go back some thirteen hundred years, and find out the state of

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the country from which this so-called religion came. Islam owes its origin and first start to the energy and persistence of one man, who to his activity added cruelty, force and deception. Islam came as did and do all great movements, after a time of opposition, fighting, loss of life, and persecution. Once started it speedily found its way, and gained adherents in many lands, and like many another movement it at last found its level, and has continued its existence with occasional revivals and setbacks, but after thirteen hundred years it is as vigorous as it ever was, and as already stated, has become the greatest antagonist of the Christian religion.

The date assigned to the birth of Islam is usually given as A.D. 622, that being the year when its founder, with his few adherents, commenced in real earnest to establish himself and set up the new faith. But one must go back some fifty years in order to get at the original start of this latest of religious systems, and note the birth of a boy in the desert-bound city of Mecca, some forty miles east of the Red Sea.

If Arab folklore is to be believed, wonderful things occurred at the birth of this child, foreshadowing the coming of events never before conceived by man. For twelve years these supernatural revelations took place, but little heed was given to them by the one to whom they are all supposed to relate.

Left early an orphan, and for years cared for by a foster-mother whose home was a Bedouin tent in the desert, and later accustomed to the simplicity of an ordinary home under the roof of his uncle, this destined leader of men had little opportunity of preparing for so active a future, and how, when, and where Islam started must be sought elsewhere than in Mecca or the home in the desert.

The religion of Islam really started in a monastery of

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Nestorian monks at Bosrah in Bashan. There the destined overturner of affairs and religion in Arabia received his first lessons that eventually evolved into Islam. Mecca, at the time of Mohammed's birth and early years, was nothing more than a hotbed of heathendom. Kaaba then, as now, the centre of attraction, was nothing more than a heathen temple, full of idols, many of them representing the deities and saints of outside nations. According to an Arab legend the Kaaba was constructed in heaven 2000 years before the creation of the world, and Adam erected a replica on earth exactly below the spot its perfect model occupies in heaven. At the flood it was destroyed, and God is said to have instructed Abraham to journey from Syria to rebuild it with the help of Hagar and Ishmael.

At Mecca yearly festivals were held to which many of the Arab tribes came, and if history is to be believed, practices and doings were carried on and even encouraged which were a disgrace to any heathen people. The religion of the Meccans, in fact, all Arabians of pure blood, was that of the worship of heavenly bodies, although there are some evidences that at one time they, like other nations, worshipped God, but knowledge of Him had been lost and He was superseded by the heavenly bodies. The worship of stones was also common among the Meccans, probably introduced by the Jews, for stone worship is referred to by both Isaiah and Jeremiah (see Isa. xxxvii. 19, and Jer. ii. 27), and the black stone in the Kaaba is a perpetuation of the stone worship of Arabia. Added to the worship of the heavenly bodies, and that of stones, was a form of Christianity and Judaism, both corrupt and debased, so that the environment of the future prophet of Arabia, as regards religious influences, was complicated, erroneous, and wrong.

Over against the foregoing, Mohammed set the teach-

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ing and beliefs of the monks of Bashan, which largely consisted in a belief of Jehovah as the one and only God, the Creator of the universe, and the controller of the same, as well as the affairs of man, and man should worship Him, and him only, for there was none other that claimed obedience, and even the heavenly bodies were subject to Him, for He was their creator. There is nothing in history to lead us to believe that the monks gave New Testament instruction to the youth who paid them periodical visits, and during his short stay among them gleaned information and instruction which led him to overturn the beliefs of the Arabians, and to instal Islam in its place.

Thus, compared with surrounding nations and peoples, Arabia was behind the times, for the Jews had their prophet and lawgiver Moses, the Christians looked to Jesus and had their writings, the Persians quoted Zoroaster, and even Abyssinia was a kingdom owing allegiance to the Gospel. Every nation had its revelation and its book. Arabia had none at all, no open vision, no prophet, nothing certain, only a conglomeration of heathen beliefs, practices and ceremonies.

Arabia was but a tangle of tribes and clans with hardly any cohesion at all. Most of the tribes and clans were at enmity with each other, each clan was a law to itself, a separate unit, and the law of the blood-feud tyrannized everywhere. Mohammed could not but contrast all this with the definiteness and order of the political and social, as well as religious organizations, which he had seen in his short travels into Syria, and the plan was worked over in his youthful mind to commence a crusade against the doings of his people, especially along religious lines.

With a keen foresight Mohammed saw that there was much that he could bring forward to support his cause and induce the Arabs to accept his claims. At the

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bottom of all the error in Arabia there was some truth, for all the workings of God in Arabia had not been lost sight of, and traditions and folklore abounded, on which to build a new faith with God as its head. Long centuries before, Job's history had been written in Arabia, and Moses had spent forty years of his life there, leading the life of a Bedouin, tending the flocks of his father-in-law, and Jethro, high priest of Midian as he was, had prepared and offered burnt-offerings and sacrifices for the one true God, at the same time confessing, "Now I know that the Lord is greater than all gods" (Ex. xviii. 11). The Queen of Sheba must have circulated news of the one true God and of the blessings that had come from Him on the king whom she had visited in the land of the Hebrews. And Mohammed saw that with all this to work upon there was a good possibility of resuscitating the belief in God as the one supreme Deity, and he was not wrong.

Added to the above there were two other elements common to the people which became valuable assets in Mohammed's future schemes—a common ancestry giving them a very marked national sentiment and patriotism, and a common language with only slight variations in dialect.

On the foregoing Mohammed began his crusade, beginning when young in years to speak against the idolatry and corrupt practices allowed at Mecca, and at the same time telling the Meccans and others that the heavenly bodies and other objects worshipped by them had no claim for worship or adoration, but such ought to be given to Him who created and upheld them, and as he preached his one theme was, "No Deity but God."

Like all reformers, Mohammed at once had his opponents, and persecution, opposition and isolation soon beset him. But the seeds of a reformation had been

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sown, and although as yet there was no sign of harvest, still encouragements came in due time, in spite of being forced to leave his native town, and settle in the town of Medina, some two hundred miles north, from which the crusade extended to all quarters, and where in a few years this reformer of the desert died. Who would have thought that this simple youth, born and reared in the desert, would mightily affect the destiny and history of the human race, that he was to become the founder of a system that after twelve hundred years would hold 230 millions in its grip, or that his name, coupled with the Almighty, would be invoked by prayer and proclaimed from ten thousand minarets in the great and populous continents of the East? Yet such is the case, for at the call, "There is no God but God, and Mohammed is the Apostle of God," the devotees of Islam raise their hands and eyes heavenward, and mutter, "Truly, there is no God but God, and Mohammed is His messenger."

Thus I have tried to show how, when and from where Islam came.

How it came, through persistency, corruption, persecution, opposition, and some backing of truth.

When it came—at a time when Judaism was corrupt, Christianity lax, debased, and failing to fulfil its mission to man, and at a time when the people on whom it got its strongest hold were steeped in idolatry, superstition, debauchery, and error.

Whence it came—originally from the teaching of a few monks, and, later, from the meditations, energy, and faithfulness to what he believed true, of a youth born and brought up in the solitude of the Arabian desert.

Thus partial truth triumphed over complete error, and a nation given over to the worship of a thousand deities and idols, won to the worship of the true God,

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and it is not going too far to say, that had Mohammed had as much solid teaching about Christianity and the New Testament, as he received about the unity of the one true God, he might have won for the Gospel not only Arabia, but the greater part of the Eastern world, whereas he left them with a system with some savouring of truth in it, and a larger savouring of error, which makes it all the more difficult to counteract, than if it were all error. There is no doubt that at the commencement of his crusade Mohammed was very sincere in his advocating of God as the one and only true Deity, but alas ! like many another reformer and leader of men and affairs, when he became popular he proclaimed himself the apostle and messenger of him whom he advocated, and in order to insist on his claims, and subjection to his demands, resorted to oppression, cruelty, and even to the murder of those who opposed him.

We must secondly consider the primary teachings and requirements of Islam, and these being legion cannot all be dealt with. When the adherents of Islam themselves admit that it is impossible to live up to all the demands made on them by their religion, it is not to be wondered at that in the space allotted to this chapter I cannot fathom the depths of this system, so the daily teachings and requirements of the system must suffice.

First, the teaching of Islam.

For its foundation, what millions have believed, and do believe, in spite of what Islam advocated when first instituted, "No God but God," and although Mohammedan tradition teaches ninety-nine names of God, only two are heard daily, as the call sounds forth for prayer, "God is one, and God is great." These tower above and almost overshadow all else that the Moslem knows of God, they fill his mind until God becomes to him but little more than an unlovable and loveless despot. He

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is a God above him, not with him, and certainly not in him. Of the ninety and nine names ascribed to God, not one calls him Father, nor does one of the ninety and nine refer to him as lovable. The Merciful is again and again used of him in the Koran, and is frequently on the lips of his followers, but it is the mercy of a despot and not that of a loving Father or one interested in all our affairs.

The God of the Moslem is one who has the absolute control of man's will, so that do what he may, be it right or wrong, it was all ordered of God. Listen to the teaching of the Koran, "God misleadeth whom He willeth, and guideth aright whom He willeth" (Surah 74); and again, "As for man we have firmly fixed his fate about his neck" (Surah 17); so that with such teaching man becomes only a machine without any will, turned and moved at the will of a superior being who controls him entirely.

The God of the Moslem is not known as Father, Friend, Comforter, Guide, or any such designation, and among all the ninety-nine names given to him, there is not one that would attract the penitent, the broken-hearted, or the sinner.

God can be appeased or propitiated by good deeds and faithful conduct, but with these it is doubtful if at the last he will be favourable to his own, and no people leave this world with more uncertainty as to the future than those who proclaim with their dying breath, "There is no God but God!" Next to the faith in God as the only Deity, comes faith in the angels, of whom there are four specially set apart from the myriads of the heavenly host, these being Gabriel, the angel of revelations, Michael, the champion who fights the battles of the faithful, Azrael, the angel of death, and Israfeel, who holds the commission to sound the trumpet on the day of resurrection. The third article

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in the faith of the Moslem is that of belief in the Koran as the final revelation of God to man, sent through the prophet Mohammed. The contents of the Koran are supposed to suffice for all time—" We have sent down unto thee the book of the Koran, for an explication of everything necessary both as to faith and practice, a direction, and mercy, and good tidings " (Surah 16). The Koran is made up of 113 chapters or suras, and is supposed to have been given to Mohammed during the periods of retirement in a cave near Mecca. Originally these revelations were inscribed on dried leaves, blade bones of animals, bleached boards, and such like material, and being perishable it is not likely that they long survived the Prophet, and the Koran as now accepted is a collection of the sayings, writings, and teachings as they were gathered from those who had either in their memory or in some other way preserved them.

The Koran is a book of foolish errors, as, for instance, Miriam the sister of Moses becomes Miriam the mother of Jesus, although there were two thousand years between them. Adam, Abraham, Moses, Samuel, David, and all the Old Testament worthies and prophets, are claimed as Moslems, although the religion of Islam came many centuries after they had lived. The Koran bears frequent testimony to the Scriptures, and exhorts the followers of Islam to accept and read them. " God sent down the Tourah and the Gospel for the guidance of mankind " (Surah 3), is only one of many such passages found in the Koran, but in order to get out of following the teachings of the Bible, the Moslems assert that Christians have altered the books to suit themselves, and in so doing have obliterated all that referred to Mohammed and his mission.

No reader of the Koran must hold the book lower than the waist, neither are Jews nor Christians allowed to possess or read the book, neither must the book be

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translated or printed in any other language than that in which it originally existed, viz., Arabic.

The fourth article of faith is that in the prophets, of whom there are more than two hundred thousand, and all of them of course Moslems. Only six are supereminent, as having brought new laws and revelations to mankind, each one abrogating those previously delivered, so that in substance the Koran annuls all other revelations, even those of Moses and Christ.

The six supereminent prophets are, Adam, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Jesus, Mohammed, the last the most important because the latest revelation from God to man, and the beginner of a new dispensation.

In some respects Christ is better than Mohammed, in that he was sinless, for he was born of a virgin, a fact firmly believed by all followers of Islam. That he worked miracles is admitted, but his death is denied, as emphatically taught in the Koran—"They have said, Verily we have slain Christ Jesus the son of Mary, the apostle of God: yet they slew him not, neither crucified him, but he was represented by one in his likeness: They did not really kill him, but God took him up unto himself" (Surah 4).

In this teaching about Christ, Islam robs the world of its only hope for the future, and of God's remedy for sin, and gives nothing in its place. Take away the atonement made by Christ on Calvary and what is left to the Christian? and the lack of any remedy for sin is where Islam fails, and Mohammed with all his complex system of religion missed the mark by not incorporating in it some remedy for sin and its consequences, and at the same time by denying in his writings and teachings the death of Christ, robbed the world of Islam of the only God-appointed way of approach to him, and means of redemption. Any religion that fails to provide a remedy for sin, fails to satisfy its adherents, and in

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making this provision Christianity excels all others.

That Christ will return again to earth is a belief held by all Moslems, and that he will in co-operation with Mohammed judge the world is also a strong point in their religion ; but Mohammed, being God's latest revelation to man, is to have the pre-eminence in things, even to appointing those who are to enter Paradise.

These four are the pillars of the religion.

Faith in God, in the angels, in the Koran, and in the Prophets, and added to these are four articles of religious practice, viz., prayer, almsgiving, fasting and pilgrimage.

Most important of these four is prayer. The Caliph Omar said, " Prayer carries us half way to God " ; if such is the case then why pray ? for most petitioners when offering a petition want to reach the one addressed, but in spite of the saying of the worthy Caliph, Moslems pray.

Prayers must be said five times daily, before sunrise, noon, afternoon, sunset, and two hours later. Prayer may be said in any mosque or clean place, the face to be turned toward Mecca, and the face, hands, arms, and feet must be well washed ere praying ; no regard need be paid to a cleansed heart or life before addressing the Almighty. If water is not obtainable for washing it is quite permissible to rub the prescribed parts with sand or earth, this being counted equivalent to cleansing with water. The instructions are very minute about these washings, and cannot be gone into here, but they are all carefully observed by the Faithful.

The hour of prayer is announced by men called Muezzim, or Inviters ; these are frequently blind, so that from their exalted positions on the balconies of the minarets, they need not see the women who usually spend much of their time on the flat roofs of the houses, so common in Oriental cities and towns. The call to

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prayer runs as follows, " There is no God but God, God is great, there is no God but God, and Mohammed is His messenger, come to prayer, for there is no God but God, and Mohammed is His messenger," In the morning the words, " prayer is better than sleep," are added, and at other times, " prayer is better than work or eating."

Friday is the great day for prayers, then the devotees of Islam gather in their mosques for united prayer, and listen to the weekly sermon delivered by the religious head of the community. Friday was generally held sacred by Orientals, as they believe that man was created on that day. The Sabceans consecrated Friday to Astarte or Venus, and Mohammed adopted it as his Sabbath, chiefly to vary it from the Saturday of the Jews and Sunday of the Christians. It is a mistake to state, as is frequently done, that women never pray, for they do, but they are never allowed to mix with the men, and are exhorted to fold their arms on their bosoms and not stretch them out as do the men. In many Moslem homes the women are as faithful in their prayers as are the men. Second in religious practice comes almsgiving. Again let me quote the Caliph Omar,—“ Prayer carries us half-way to God ; Alms procure us admission to God,” hence almsgiving plays a large part in the religion of the Moslem. There are two kinds of alms prescribed by the religion, one called Zecat, like tithes in the Christian Church, and given either in money, wares, cattle, corn or fruit, and the other, voluntary gifts termed Sadakat, which are made at the discretion of the giver. Every Moslem is enjoined, in one way or the other, to dispense a tenth of his revenue in relief of the indigent and distressed. Fasting is the third article of religious practice, but in later years this has had little hold on the more intelligent followers of Islam. In each year for

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thirty days, during the month known as Ruma-
than, the true believer is to abstain rigorously, from
the rising of the sun till the setting of the same, from
all that pertains to meat or drink, or anything that
gratifies either physical, sensual, or mental desires.

This fast for thirty days is to commemorate the
month during which Mohammed retired from the world
and sought refuge in a cave, during which time the
Koran was delivered to him. Between sunset and sun-
rise the world of Islam is at liberty to go to the utmost
excesses, and this is carried so far that most of those
who fast during the day are unable to do much else
because of the excesses of the night. Naturally, at
such a time, business is suspended, and few go far
from home unless obliged to do so.

There are other fasts of a minor nature which a
sincere Moslem keeps, but as education, enlighten-
ment, and Western civilization advance into the ranks
of Islam, these fasts are looked upon as unnecessary,
and are allowed to pass without attention.

Again the Caliph Omar must be quoted to complete
what he thought about the three foregoing practices
of religion—"Prayer carries us half-way to God, alms
procure us admission, and fasting brings us to the door
of his palace." Thus, according to the teaching of
Islam, in order to approach the God whom they wor-
ship, prayer, fasting and almsgiving must be strictly
observed. Alas, judging from the millions, few will
ever approach their God, if approach to the Creator
and Preserver of man is only obtainable on the above
terms.

Pilgrimage is the fourth practical duty binding on
Moslems, and every true follower of the Arabian prophet
is enjoined to make the journey to Mecca in person, or
by proxy, for in Surat 3 of the Koran it says, "Verily
the first house appointed unto men to worship in was

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that which is in Mecca, blessed, and a direction to all creatures. Therein are manifest signs, and whosoever entereth therein shall be safe. And it is a duty toward God, incumbent on those who are able to go thither, to visit this house." There are many such-like passages. Pilgrimage is incumbent only on persons of mature age, sound intellect, and who are able to provide for their families during their absence, and before the pilgrim leaves his home he is obliged to arrange all his affairs as if he were never to return.

In later years, owing to the opening of the Hedjaz railway, the pilgrimage has become such an easy and comparatively inexpensive matter, that there is not such merit attached to it as there was when the dangers, fatigues, and hardships of the long desert journey had to be faced, and even now, in spite of the railway and steamships, very strict Moslems prefer to make the desert journey because of the extra merit which they think will come to them by so doing. On arrival in the vicinity of Mecca, the pilgrim, be he rich or poor, of high or low degree, puts aside his ordinary clothes, and dons the Irham, a simple white cotton cloth which folds round the loins and over the neck and shoulder leaving the head uncovered, but umbrellas are allowed as a protection against the heat and scorching sun of the Meccan desert. From this time on until the end of the ceremonies, a period of some ten days, the pilgrim must abstain from all bad language, quarrels or acts of violence, neither must he take the life of any insect or vermin that might trouble him, if such is possible with an Oriental, but his mind must be given up entirely to the one thing, attendance on the services and ceremonies, also visitations at the Kaaba and elsewhere. Usually some 200,000 pilgrims attend Mecca at the time of pilgrimage, and be it noted that among this vast throng, none proclaims himself better than his fellow, but all

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clad alike, with one belief, and one purpose, they gather to obey the commands of one man, whom they believe to be their leader. What an object lesson for the world of Christendom with its divisions and dissensions!

The doings at Mecca during the days the pilgrims tarry there are too many and varied to detail here, in fact, in a book like this such a record would be out of place, suffice it to say that after having made the pilgrimage, the pilgrim is ever after respected by his fellows, and is entitled to the title Haj, i.e., Pilgrim.

Any Moslem who faithfully fulfils the four practices of religion as stated in the foregoing is deemed worthy of Paradise, and no matter what manner of life he has led, and leads, his attention to the commands of the Prophet will count for more than all the evil he commits though he live a thousand years. This is men's way of inducing men to follow them and their teaching; how very different to the teaching of the Man of Galilee and of Him who spared not His only Son!

The forgiveness of sins is a subject not taught in the Koran. Why should it be, if God is Merciful, and man is helpless as regards all he does and says? Are not all his doings ordered by the Almighty, and being so what can poor man do to overturn the decrees of God? No Mohammedan considers himself a sinner, hence there is no need for repentance or a remedy for sin. In fact, as already stated, the teaching of Islam makes man a machine, without a will to do as he pleases, and thus all the responsibility is thrown on God, and man is at liberty to excuse himself for any excesses, wrong doings, or even crimes that he commits.

Islam claims much more for its adherents than what has been stated in the foregoing, but for the details of this religious system, the would-be learner must betake himself to some of the many books written on the subject and read for himself what is required of the one

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who has been born in Islam, or has embraced it later, and then decide for himself if it is in any way to be compared with the teachings and precepts of the religion against which it sets itself.

In the third and last place, we have now to consider where Islam fails when compared with Christianity.

First and foremost, Islam fails just where Christianity succeeds, in that it provides no remedy for sin, but leaves man in doubt as to the future life, which all Moslems agree follows this life. I have seen many Moslems die, but never yet saw or heard of one that passed away with what we call perfect peace, for the very reason that he had no satisfaction as to the future, whereas those who trust in the finished work and atonement of Christ have no doubts as to the future, having already in this life inherited Eternal Life. It may be excused Mohammed that he did not include this great theme of the forgiveness of sins in his religion, for the probability is that he was ignorant of it himself, and in denying the death of Christ, as already alluded to, he took away the pith and kernel, as well as the foundation, of all that God has provided for sinful man in and through Christ Jesus. Here is seen the difference between a God-made and man-made religion.

Islam fails as regards its attitude to those who do not accept its teachings and requirements. Christianity says, "Love your enemies, pray for them who despitefully use you." Islam teaches over and over again in the Koran, "Kill, destroy, torture, those who are unbelievers," and the history of the past few decades has proved how ready the followers of Islam are to carry out such commands.

Islam fails in that it teaches that what has been written in the Koran is good enough and sufficient for all future time, but history proves that the teachings of

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the Koran are not suited to the present time ; it might have done for the dwellers in the desert thirteen hundred years ago, but over against the advance of civilization, and the demands of an enlightened and educated age, it fails to meet the demand. Hence, as few in the Occident realize, the great difficulty of working changes in an Empire controlled by those who lay claim to descent from the Prophet. It is easy to make laws, and to set up a constitution, but far more difficult to carry them and it into execution, hence the failure of the so-called Turkish constitution, for the Young Turk found that the fanaticism of the Old Turk was stronger than all the desire for reforms of the larger hearted and more enlightened young men, who had had much of their education and training in Christian institutions, although they had confined their allegiance to Islam, as regards outward appearances and name.

It might well be stated, without fear of contradiction, that love, as known and understood by Christians, is unknown in the religion of Islam, and in this Islam fails when duty towards one's neighbour is considered. In Christian countries all that is done under the name and influence of love, is missing in Moslem lands. Where are the hospitals, orphanages, asylums, infirmaries, free dispensaries, soup kitchens and such-like institutions for the poor and destitute ? In Moslem lands they are conspicuous by their absence, and where found they only exist in opposition to some such institution set up and kept going by some Christian missionary society, and then in many cases not supported, but either shut up altogether or only existing in name. Where a Moslem hospital is sustained, more often than not the nurses, doctors and other attendants are frequently Christians, many of whom are voluntary workers. Talk with any Moslem about this, and the chances are you will be told in a roundabout way, what practically amounts to this,

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“ God appoints sickness, makes orphans, causes madness, and all else that happens to man, why should we interfere with the doings of the Almighty and thus frustrate His plans ? ” Thus all responsibility to one’s neighbour is shifted and thrown on God. Whereas Christianity says, “ Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself,” Islam says, “ Look after number one, and lay no hands on what God allows to happen to your neighbour,” and this shifting of responsibility may largely account for the cruelty, neglect, and poverty, so common in lands where Islam rules. Islam fails in its hold upon nations as well as in its hold and influence on individuals. It cannot be denied, that wherever Islam extends its sway a change, not for the better, comes over man and even country. A raw heathen does not consider himself superior to every other being on earth, but a Moslem looks with disdain on either Christian or Jew. The heathen do not set themselves out to oppose the spread of Christianity, but Islam goes out of its way to block the advance of the only system that elevates man.

No teaching among heathen races goes so far, or is so violent in its use of language, as does Islam in advocating the punishment and extermination of all who will not believe as they do, or swear allegiance to their Prophet. Wherever the messengers of Islam have gone, and their teaching accepted, deterioration at once sets in, both as regards the people, their land and industries. In many lands before the advent of Islam, divorce, polygamy, wrong to and hatred of neighbour, self-righteousness, and the disregard of women, were unknown, but with the incoming of such a system that encourages such things it can only be expected that man should not improve. And here again Islam fails where Christianity succeeds.

This criticism of Islam would be incomplete were I

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not to mention another phase of the failure of Islam, and that is in its treatment of women, making them the slaves of men and the means whereby they may gratify their sensual desires. Home life, such as is known in the Occident, is unknown in Moslem lands, and any wife is always in danger of being divorced from her husband for the smallest offence, and not reinstated until having married another man. But be it said to the credit of Moslems, divorce is not as common among them as with the Jews.

Children are encouraged to insult and abuse their mothers, and are praised for so doing. It is not long since that the following incident was observed in Egypt. A small boy was playing with his companions on a street in Cairo; his mother came from a house near by, and called the child, asking him to go to a near by shop and get something for her. He turned on her with these words, "You daughter of a dog, go yourself, I want to play here," and with a stick he had in his hands he hit at his mother and drove her into the house. The boy's father came up at the time, saw and heard what the boy had done, and patting him on his head commended him for his treatment of his mother. Observance of the Fifth Commandment is a thing unknown where Islam rules. Slavery, the thing that Christian nations have shed blood over, and paid out large sums of money to subdue, is encouraged by Islam. Wherever Islam has gone slavery has followed in its trail, and those who in the past, and even now, carry on the slave business, are all Moslems. Slaves, male and female, Moslem, Jew, Christian, or heathen, may be bought and sold like cattle, and young females are in demand at high prices in all Moslem lands. It is no secret in the Orient or Moslem lands, that at Mecca, during the pilgrimage, there is a large slave market, and many go annually for the sole purpose of buying slaves

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to sell in other lands at good profits. In contrast compare what Christianity does for others. It serves them in love, rebukes them by its teachings, and seeks to convince them of their sin against God. Education cares for the coming generations, industrial missions encourage and help work and manual labour, and hospitals alleviate suffering by their work of healing.

The deepest reason for the difference between Islam and Christianity is, that Islam is a religion of force and helplessness, whereas Christianity one of love and responsibility. Love can educate, force but discipline. Love fosters, maintains and develops the life of the individual, community, and nation ; force tramples it under foot and annihilates it. Love begins with what is simple and has patience to wait for results ; force works by violence, quenching and killing all spiritual life.

This then is Islam, man made, man conceived, man propagated, man supported, originated by an Arab who, forsaking idols, believed in God utterly. Through his persistence Islam spread until it had claimed the Mediterranean lands and the sites of many ancient empires, and established itself as the ruling force of the world. To-day it dominates one seventh of mankind, and moves on to fresh conquests. In its march it has settled like a deadly and chilling blight on many nations, paralyzing the moral and spiritual life of man. The only one of the great religions to come after Christianity, the only one that denies the truth of Christianity, the only one that has in the past signally defeated Christianity, the only one that disputes the world with Christianity, and the only one that disputes the right and power of the Cross to conquer and reign. It denies the Christ of God, it denies the best in man, it denies to man the remedy for sin, and gives him nothing in its place. Give the world over to Islam and man's highest vision and hopes are gone for ever.

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In another Eastern land, and 1200 years before Mohammed, there lived another Prophet. The country he loved was in a sore strait. Two mighty kingdoms, one on either side, were driving their highways across it, and threatening to overwhelm it. The very religion which had been the secret of its greatness was challenged and endangered. Men's hearts were full of fear, but to one man was given a vision of hope. He alone among his people pierced the dark clouds that overcast the sky, and saw the light, and believed with all his soul in the vision that he saw, the vision of the kingdom that should be, the rule of righteousness and joy and peace, whose ensign should be "Holiness to the Lord." And, seeing the future till to him it was present, he worded it thus:

"Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given, and the government shall be upon His shoulder, and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the increase of His government there shall be no end, to establish it and to uphold it with judgment and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever."

Later in years, six hundred centuries ere Islam saw the light, another voice sounded through the earth speaking of Him against whom Islam has pitched itself, and saying, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord and of His Christ, and He shall reign for ever and ever." Therefore let us hold fast to the ever-conquering one, encouraged by being enabled to see even in our day, "the kingdoms of this world becoming the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ," in spite of the advances and opposition of Islam.

CHAPTER XIX

LIFE IN THE BAWDEE, HOW AFFECTED BY ISLAM

NO mention of the Bedouin can be made without Islam protruding itself on the mind, for Islam having sprung from among the land of the Bedouin the two seem to have become inseparable, and in this chapter the subject has to be considered, How does Islam affect the Bedouin in his home life? Ere considering the main part of this subject it seems necessary to learn who the Bedouin are, and whence came they, also to know something of their environment, otherwise a comparison will be useless.

The Bedouin are all Arabs, but all Arabs are not Bedouin. Much as the Jews may dislike to admit it, the Bedouin are their cousins, for as the Jews came from Abraham through Isaac and Jacob, so the Arabs came from Abraham through Ishmael, and also through Esau who married the daughter of Ishmael. In a marvellous way the Arabs, including the Bedouin, have all through their history been fulfilling the old prophecy of the son of Ishmael, "He shall be as a wild ass among men, his hand shall be against every man, and every man's hand against him, and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren." How better could we describe the Arab of to-day, or the Bedouin of the sandy desert?

Take the picture drawn by Jeremiah in chap. xlix. vers. 28, 29, 31. "Arise, go up to Kedar. Their tents and their flocks shall they take away: they shall take

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to themselves their curtains (or tents), and all their vessels and their camels. Arise, get you up to a nation that is at ease, that dwelleth without care, which have neither gates nor bars, which dwell alone."

That was the state of the Bedouin a millennium before Mohammed, and that was how he found them, and experienced life among them. Now, thirteen hundred years later, the picture has not changed, for customs and ways of men in the East alter but little, and when they do it is slowly. The Bedouin, all through history, have clung to the wandering and warlike habits of their father Ishmael, and follow the same rude, natural mode of life which has always existed in Arabia and lands where they roam.

The wild ass among men, independent, haughty, hater of towns, dweller in the wilderness, untamable,—it is a description that stirs the blood. The wild Bedouin rove through boundless deserts in wild and unfettered freedom, despising a civilized life, scorning its comforts, proud and haughty in mien and character, the one untamable race of all the world. And it is this people we are to consider, and endeavour to find out how Islam affects them in their home and everyday life.

Before proceeding with the subject it will be well to consider what is the difference between the Arab and the Bedouin, since all Arabs are not of the latter class. As has already been stated, both classes came from the stock of Abraham, through Ishmael, and of the twelve sons born to the latter the two eldest, Nebaioth and Kedar, are probably responsible for the divisions in their descendants.

The descendants of Nebaioth became dwellers in towns and villages, those of Kedar became dwellers in tents of hair, which were pitched in the Bawdi, a high-class Arabic word meaning desert, hence the dwellers

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in the Bawdi were designated Bawdiween, from which we get our word Bedouin. This double mode of life is mentioned early in the Old Testament, and according to the R.V. reads thus, "These are the sons of Ishmael, and these are their names, by their villages, and by their encampments" (Gen. xxv. 16).

So that in reality the Bedouin, although he is an Arab, is, by being a dweller in a tent, a distinct part of the Arab nation, whereas the dweller in the town is nothing more than an Arab.

The Bedouin with his black tent, his camels, and his herds of sheep and goats, camps unthinkingly on many sacred sites. Bethlehem, Nazareth, Capernaum, and even under the shadow of Calvary are all marked by the ashes of the camp fires of these wanderers from the desert. Along the Euphrates valley and amid the ruins of Babylon and Nineveh, the camps of Kedar are to be found where for centuries the Bedouin have known of the ancients who lived in the land, and of the patriarchs who tended their flocks on the same plains.

With such surroundings and with a history steeped in sacred lore, none would feel free to assert that the Bedouin are anything but a religious nation, and that every action and phase of their daily life are strongly impregnated with religious feeling and sentiment. But putting aside all the history that preceded the advent of Islam, it would be natural to expect that since Mohammed instituted his system of Islam in the land of the Bedouin, and since the first to accept him as Prophet and to follow his dictates were numerous tribes of Bedouin, they of all peoples would be the most zealous and even fanatical in the cause of him whom they still accept as "the messenger of God," and in whose name they swear. But the Arab proverb is true, "The torch burns lowest nearest the stump," and so it is with the Bedouin; those who are of the land from which Islam

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came are less in earnest than others in lands far removed from the birthplace of their religion, and one has to observe very carefully the inner life of the Bedouin to find out how, if at all, the religion of Islam affects him in his daily life. Outwardly one would say the Bedouin is an irreligious being. Although the name of God is continually on his lips it does not mean that he follows the directions of the Koran or the precepts of the Prophet; far from it, for a large majority of the Bedouin, beyond knowing the name Mohammed, know nothing else, nor are acquainted with his history. In fact, a Bedouin once said to me, "We hear of Mohammed, but know not whether it refers to a camel, donkey, or man." How can such a people be religious, without any to train or instruct them in the tenets of their religion?

But to any that tarry in the tents of Kedar, and keenly watch the life of the dwellers therein, and have even the slightest knowledge of the Koran, with its multiplicity of teaching as to the observance of home life, they are bound to confess that the daily life of the restless children of the Bawdi is strongly controlled by the religion which sprang into existence from their midst, although they themselves are not conscious that they are being controlled and ruled by the precepts of their so-called prophet. It is in some of these daily doings that I wish to show how the religion of Islam controls the Bedouin, although I am strongly inclined to think that before Islam saw the light the same social laws were largely in use among them, having been gathered from the Hebrews who for centuries had mixed with their cousins the Bedouin, so that it is not saying too much to assert that the life of the Bedouin is largely controlled by the laws given on Sinai, but resuscitated with the advent of Islam.

The Bedouin, as all know, lives in a movable home,

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which being interpreted literally, means, a house of hair, because it is made of goat's hair, which is spun and woven by the women. In Scripture these movable homes are known as the tents of Kedar. They are, almost without exception, black, and here again Scripture verifies their ancient character, for in the Song of Solomon i. 5, we read, "Black, as the tents of Kedar."

In this primitive and movable abode the Bedouin spends his life with his wives, children, and servants, to say nothing about a continuous company of visitors, and here comes in the first and most interesting phase of their life, which is universally admitted to be a part of their existence, viz., hospitality to strangers and visitors. The Bedouin chief likes if possible to be at home in the late afternoon in order to welcome any that may turn aside to spend the night under the shelter and protection of his tent. The host is better pleased if his guest turns up early, so that a decent supper may be prepared for him, for the Arab proverb says, "The evening guest is without supper," meaning that having come late there has been no time to prepare a good meal for him.

Guests, by Bedouin custom, are entitled to three days' hospitality, during which time they are supposed to finish any business that may have brought them to the camp, or to have rested sufficiently to enable them to go on their way. To offer payment, or even presents in payment, for entertainment is to insult the host, for he says and believes that the guest comes in the place of God, and who would refuse to entertain the Almighty who gives them all they have?

Once in a Bedouin tent as guest, the visitor is absolutely safe from interference or robbery, and no host would like to have his name sullied by having it said that his guest lost anything whilst under his tent, and such is rarely the case. Should anything be missing it

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generally happens that it has been carried off by a child and is quickly restored on being missed. Even enemies and murderers are safe whilst guests, although they may be in the tent of a hostile people, and the action of Jael toward Sisera, viewed from a native standpoint, was wrong and despicable, seeing he was her guest. To many this hospitality is a heavy burden as regards expense, and one is made to wonder why the Bedouin are willing to be taxed to such an extent. The answer has been given that necessity demands it, and in a measure such is the case, but back of that there is another reason, which is, that all unknown to the host he is carrying out the commands of his religion by entertaining his guests, although he is unconscious of it.

A Moslem, well versed in the teaching of the Koran, would refer you to Surah 4, and recite to you the following—"Show kindness to your neighbour, and also your neighbour who is a stranger, and the traveller," so that in the matter of hospitality the religion of Islam influences the life of the Bedouin, although, as already stated, he is not conscious of it.

One cannot travel much in the Orient without noticing that as people meet each other on the roads they usually speak as they pass, even though they be utter strangers to each other. It is the custom for the greater number to salute the lesser, and after salutation there is no fear of mischief in the way of attack or robbery, but if your salutation is not returned, be on the look out for a speedy appearance of those recently passed.

The most common salutation is, "Salaam-a-layk," i.e., "Peace be to you," and the answer, "Alayk-es-salaam," i.e., "To you be peace." Frequently other and more extravagant salutations are used as time permits, and many a beautiful and unexpected answer is given to some question put in an offhand way. On

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one occasion I was riding toward the Jordan from the East ; it had been raining hard for hours, and the way was heavy with mud which increased as I neared the river. When in the tangle of trees and tall grass that is so abundant on either side of the river I met a solitary Arab coming toward me. His cotton shirt was wet through, his legs covered with mud from wading through the quagmire on the river's banks, and the rain was still coming down in torrents. When we met I saluted him in the usual manner, and he returned the salutation, and then feeling that I should say something else, I asked, " Is the river far away," although I knew it was only some hundred yards beyond me but hidden by the trees. In a moment he said, " The mercy of God is nearer," which conveyed the idea that the river was not far away, just as God's goodness was near to us in that storm.

It might be said that these salutations and pleasing answers are the sole result of custom, and are necessary in order to know who is friendly and who otherwise, and such is the case, but back of that comes the influence of the religion, and the teaching of the Koran about this phase of the outdoor life and travel of the Bedouin. Surah 4 teaches as follows, " When ye are saluted with a salutation, salute the person with a better salutation, or at least return the same, for God taketh an account of all things." The Koran nowhere teaches that the Moslem must not return the salutation of the Christian or Jew ; that is the teaching of the ignorant and fanatic and not of the religion, and is only put into practice by some who are bitter against those not of their own faith.

It is also customary when arriving at a Bedouin tent, and before entering, to salute those inside, and not to enter until the invitation has been extended to you, which is always forthcoming. This is reasonable, for it

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may be that some inside the tent, especially that part given up to the women, are not dressed sufficiently, or are otherwise so engaged as not to be at liberty to receive visitors, and to intrude without notice would be a breach of etiquette, as well as embarrassing to both parties. For this phase of life the Koran makes provision, and all unconscious of the origin of this custom the Bedouin faithfully observes the same, "O, true believers, enter not any house, (or tent,) until ye have asked leave, and have saluted the family thereof, this is better for you, peradventure ye will be admonished" (Surah xxiv.).

The absence of all intoxicating liquor among the Bedouin is one of the striking features of their daily life, and it is not too much to state that the descendants of Ishmael, on the Kedar side, are perhaps the only nation that strictly abstain from strong drink. But such is the case, and this is all the more remarkable when it is remembered that in most every land the natives make some drink that intoxicates, and especially in lands where the palm flourishes, but in the land of the Bedouin, where the palm abounds and thrives, no drink is made or consumed. One of the things held against the Jew and Christian by the Bedouin is the fact that they indulge in strong drink that intoxicates, and speaking personally, one of the things that has given me acceptance with the Bedouin is that when they ask me, "Do you drink the forbidden?" I am able to answer, "No."

For considerably over twenty years I have sojourned in Bedouin tents; but during all those years I have never seen intoxicating liquor in one of them, and, of course, it is never offered to guests. This entire absence of wine, liquor, and all strong drink, is due to the teaching of Islam, and here it is well to state that many of the Bedouin know that their Prophet and Book strictly condemn and forbid the use of intoxicating

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and fermenting drink, and consequently they abstain from such in obedience to the commands of their religion. Two quotations from the Koran must suffice to substantiate the above statement : " They will ask thee concerning wine. In it there is great sin, and also some things of use unto men, but their sinfulness is greater than their use " (Surah 2). Again, in Surah 5 : " O, true believers, surely wine, lots and images (carved pieces with which to play chess), are an abomination of the work of Satan, therefore avoid them that ye may prosper. Satan seeketh to sow dissension among you by means of wine and lots, and to divert you from remembering God, and from prayer ; will ye not therefore abstain from them ? "

Some commentators on the Koran go as far as to insist that the Prophet put a ban even on smoking, insisting that it came under the category of things that stimulate, intoxicate, and divert men from God, hence the Wahabis of the central and eastern provinces of Arabia tolerate no smoking and are hard on all who indulge in the habit.

Thus total abstinence among the Bedouin is not due to the fact that no intoxicating liquor is made among them or imported into their land, but to the influence of their religion, and would to God that religionists of all creeds in all lands were as faithful in the observance of the teaching of their religion along these lines !

A question frequently asked me as I come into contact with people from, and in, different lands is this, " What is the moral standard among the Bedouin ? " and I am always pleased to be able to reply, " Of the highest standard," for such is indeed the case. Morals among the Arabs, and especially the Bedouin, are carefully guarded and the protection of the women and girls is zealously attended to.

The chastity of virgins, also that of married women,

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is an important thing to the Bedouin, and the man and woman who bring disgrace upon their tribe or family are dealt with in a quick and final manner, by being put to death as soon as their offence is known and substantiated before the chiefs of the tribe and members of the families concerned. During my long life among the Bedouin I have only known one instance of immorality among them, that of a married man going off with a married woman, and being with her two nights only. They were followed, brought back to their own clan, and in public both shot dead. That is how the Bedouin deal with such cases, and the effect is good, as it stops such cases from becoming general.

The Koran is very emphatic along these lines, and after the licentiousness practised at Mecca prior to Islam came a revolution which has continued to the present time, and which might well be copied by peoples in lands where civilization has made greater strides than it has among the Bedouin. Listen to one quotation from the Koran in Surah 5 concerning this phase of Bedouin life, "Ye are allowed to marry free women, living chastely with them, neither committing fornication, nor taking them for concubines." This controls the life of the Bedouin, and guards the women of the desert from those evils so common in other lands. Again let the Koran speak as it so often does in the defence of the morals of the followers of Islam, and especially those who are in danger of being led astray. "Compel not your maids to prostitute themselves if they be willing to live chastely, that ye may seek the casual advantage of this present life, but whoever shall compel them thereto, verily God will be gracious and merciful to such women after their compulsion" (Surah 24). The influence of such teaching is not to be ignored in the life among the Bedouin, for it keeps up a standard of morality which otherwise would not exist.

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The question of marriage and divorce among the Bedouin is one that often occupies the mind of the intelligent observer, and one that is much misunderstood and misstated. And in these matters the influence of Islam controls to a very large degree. According to the teaching of Mohammedanism, the adherent of Islam is allowed to take to himself four wives. This is plainly stated in the Surah entitled Women, number 5—"Take in marriage of such women as please you, two, or three, or four, and not more." Although the religion allows up to four wives, few of the Bedouin have more than two, and many have only one, and it must not be thought that with the advent of wife number two, number one is dismissed, and that Mrs. number four means the dismissal of numbers one, two, or three; not at all, for the religion is as emphatic about divorce as it is about morality and marriage, and only for specific reasons can a Bedouin send away his wife and free himself from all future responsibility concerning her.

The Koran in its commands and teaching about divorce is more on the side of the woman than that of the man, making provision for her in case she should be dismissed from her home, and to prevent her becoming homeless or destitute, and even after a younger and more capable wife is brought to the tent, the elder woman is not turned out as useless, but allowed to keep her place in the family, and at times to sit with the men in that part of the tent set aside for guests and the male members of the camp. Wives among the Bedouin are expensive adjuncts to their homes, having to be bought at high prices, and it frequently happens that a man is in debt for many years for the wife of his home. Should he for any reason wish to divorce her, it is made difficult because he must not take from her anything that he has given her, or that she has obtained of his inheritance through her cleverness, persuasion, or flattery. This is

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the law of the religion, and is binding on the man, and goes a long way in influencing matters as regards matrimonial life and happiness. Another phase of life in the desert is the respect which is paid to the women, and this is especially noticeable when it is considered that the weaker sex are usually the burden bearers of the family. But insults to women are practically unknown among the Bedouin, and care is given that their privacy is not intruded upon, or at certain times in their days of feasting, rejoicing or sorrowing they are not interfered with by outsiders or even males of their own community. This may be traced to the influence of the religious teaching of their prophet, and would be cited by one informed in the Koran, for he would quote you Surah 4, "Fear God, by whom ye beseech one another, and respect women who have borne you, for God is watching over you." And in other Surahs like instructions are written. It is also to be said to the credit of the Bedouin that they are very kind and thoughtful to their aged parents and all old relations or friends. And continual thought is being exercised on behalf of the aged; sons are especially respectful and thoughtful of their aged fathers and mothers, and will sacrifice their own comforts so that their parents may not be in need or neglected. Among such a semi-civilized people as the Bedouin this naturally would not be expected, but again the influence of the religion is traceable, and finds expression in the kindness shown to those of advanced years. Surah 17 exhorts as follows, "Show kindness unto your parents, whether the one of them or both of them attain to old age, neither reproach them, but speak respectfully to them, and submit to behave humbly towards them, out of tender affection, and say, 'O Lord have mercy on them both, as they nursed me when I was little.'" Or in Surah 46, "We have commanded man to show kindness to his

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parents, his mother beareth him in her womb with pain, and bringeth him forth with pain."

What has been said thus far has been largely in connexion with the home and family life of the Bedouin, and the tendency is to pronounce the desert ranger a good fellow. But it must not be forgotten that there is another side to his life, viz., that of the outer world and his connexion with the community, neighbouring tribes, and even outside nations, and did space permit it would be of interest to follow him in his dealings with others who are not connected with him either by blood or tribal ties. We can only mention a few of the injunctions given in the Koran which all unconsciously influence him, for good or bad, when dealing with his fellow-man.

Forgiveness for wrong done to a person is a thing practically unknown in the desert, and long years may elapse ere opportunity occurs to requite the wrong, but it is never forgotten and must be revenged. Many an evil deed, done apparently without a cause, may be traced to something done one or more generations back, but always kept in mind until avenged, and it is not thought too hard a thing to make a long journey, undergo hardships, or run risks in order to revenge a wrong done either to an individual or one of his kin. No man is considered such if he allows a wrong to remain unrevenged, and he is always liable to be ridiculed and taunted for his cowardice, and when brave men are needed for special occasions, this one will be overlooked and left at home, as useless, or lacking in courage. And who will condemn the Bedouin for such action, when their religion says, "Whoever shall take vengeance equal to the injury which hath been done him, and shall afterwards be unjustly treated, verily God will assist him, for God is merciful and ready to forgive."

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How different from the teaching of the New Testament, and how different in its consequences, for the life of the Bedouin is one of continuous fear, consequent on his action as encouraged by his religion, and respect for it. Life taken, even by accident, must be revenged by another life, and this kind of thing carried on year after year so robs tribes and communities of their males that it frequently becomes a matter of serious import to them. It is not long since two tribes of Bedouin, east of the Jordan, which were at bitter enmity with each other because of the carrying out of continuous revenge, saw that if that continued much longer there would be no one left to wreak vengeance on. So the chiefs called a truce, and made arrangements to meet and confer as to what could be done to make peace.

At the conference one thing after another was advanced as sufficient to establish peace, but none of the schemes or propositions mentioned were of sufficient weight to atone for the blood that had been spilt and the lives that had been lost, and over against it all the religion taught that revenge was proper and allowable. After all proposals had failed, and the conferring parties were about to leave each other, it was proposed that the only way that revenge could be satisfied, and peace established between them was for each of the head chiefs on either side to give their eldest sons as sacrifices to atone for all the blood spilt and lives lost on both sides without respect as to who was right or wrong. This was a hard test, but the matter was so serious, and the outlook for the males so very uncertain, that at last, but very reluctantly, the chiefs consented to the sacrificing of their eldest sons, and at a given time on a given day they were brought forth and, in the presence of the men of each tribe, shot. Thus atonement for the past was made, but the future must care for itself, and work itself out influenced by a religion that controls the lives,

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doings, and actions of 230 millions of human beings held as in a vice.

To the uninformed on the system of Islam, one would suggest that it would pay the Bedouin to be careful in his doings, so as not to be liable to the revenge of his fellow-man, but talk like this to the Bedouin himself, and he would complacently, and with uplifted hands, tell you that he is not his own master, neither is he responsible for what he does, but that the God he worships is the one that makes him do the wrong whether he likes it or no. No amount of persuasion to the contrary would convince him otherwise, and if he could not explain why, and appealed to the priest of his clan, or the teacher in his camp, the latter would advance the teaching of the religion and the influence it exerts, and quote as follows, "If good befall thee it is from God, but if evil they say, This is from thee, O Mohammed, say, All is from God whatsoever good and whatsoever evil, and God is sufficient witness thereof" (Surah 4).

In a former chapter I tried to show how Islam takes away man's free will and responsibility, and here in this phase of his life the fact stands out that with such teaching as advanced in the above quotation, nothing else but dissatisfaction can ever be expected from such a system which makes it easy for man to commit wrong and even sin against the commands of God, and then to free himself of all blame or responsibility by throwing the entire blame on his Creator, and consoling himself with the fact that, "God is merciful."

There is one command in the Koran which has done more to influence life among the Bedouin than perhaps any other, that is, in those parts where the command is put into execution; I refer to the command that refers to the thief. Surah 5: "If a man or a woman steal, cut off their hands, in return for that which they have committed; this is an exemplary punishment appointed

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by God, and God is mighty and wise." Some may say that such a cruel command would never be obeyed, but it is, and where put into execution the crime of stealing is practically unknown, for in the domains of Ibn Rashid in Nejed, and Eastern Arabia, the life of the one who inclines to stealing is largely influenced by this phase of religion, and stealing is rare, for the loss of one or both hands, even to-day, is the punishment for such an offence. Were the injunctions of Islam put into practice in all lands where Islam reigns, life and property would be safe, whereas now nothing is secure from the thief, who rarely is traced, and if so seldom brought to justice, especially if he be a Moslem.

It has frequently been noted and called attention to how lax the subjects of Islam are in sympathy toward each other, and especially to those outside of their own creed; the latter is not to be wondered at, but to neglect to help or sympathise with their own religionists is a thing that one is made to consider. Some would say that the Moslem considers that all that befalls man comes from God, hence it would be out of place to interfere, and so he keeps his help and sympathy to himself instead of sharing it with any that may be in trouble. That is true from one standpoint of the system of Islam, but there is another reason why sympathy is scarce, and practical help forthcoming at times of need, and that is one quotation uttered by Mohammed and recorded in Surah 35, and which reads as follows: "A soul burdened shall not bear the burden of another, and if a heavy burdened soul call on another to bear part of his burden, no part thereof shall be borne by the person who shall be called on, although he be ever so nearly related." How different to the Word of God in its effect on needy human nature, and how unlike the teaching of the Apostle Paul, "Bear ye one another's burdens."

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The influence of such a precept in the religion of Islam is manifest in the hard nature of all its adherents, for lack of sympathy such as advocated by the New Testament, and brotherly help as taught by Christ and the Apostles, is all too conspicuous by its absence in the ranks of Islam.

The witness plays a very important part in the life and doings of the children of the desert, and especially is his service valuable as most of the Bedouin are illiterate, consequently signatures on paper are of little use to them, whereas the word or witness of a neighbour, friend or relation is something tangible, obtainable, and generally reliable. In transactions of every nature witnesses are needed, for where most men tell the truth by mistake, the sayings and doings of individuals must be established in the presence and mouth of one or more witnesses. Naturally we suppose that the insecurity of life has made the necessity of the witness, also the lack of anything in the way of written or printed documents, and such no doubt was originally the case, although as far back as the institution of the Mosaic law man was protected by witnesses, and such a system has never been abrogated, but continues in all lands where ignorance prevails, and faith in one's fellow is lacking. But the Bedouin backs up his action by the Koran and the injunctions of his Prophet, and will readily quote you Surah 2, and say, "Take witnesses when ye sell one to another, and if ye be on a journey and find no writer let pledges be taken, and conceal not the testimony."

The safety of an accused person is in the witnesses his accuser is able to bring against him, and throughout Islam no one, especially a Moslem, is condemned or punished without the necessary witness of his guilt.

There are two things connected with the killing and eating of animals for food that are strictly observed by

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the Bedouin and which no doubt had their origin before the teaching of the Koran and its influence had spread to the tents and camps of the desert. There can hardly be any doubt that these precepts came to Islam through Judaism.

No animal that dies is considered fit for food, and it frequently happens that when the Bedouin have sheep, goats, or camels that become ill so that they are likely to die, they will kill them so that they may eat the flesh, whereas if the beast died with the blood in its body it would only serve as food for the dogs or wild beasts. The owner would then not only be the loser of his animal, but also of a good feast of flesh—an important thing to one who is not infrequently obliged to leave the dish with an appetite far from satisfied.

Then, too, another law of the religion influences the action of all those who kill flesh for food, and ere shedding the blood of the victim the name of God must be invoked, otherwise the action will not be complete, and, to the imagination, the food not as tasty. Therefore, as the slayer stands over his victim, knife in hand, he says in solemn tones, "In the name of God, the Merciful and Compassionate," and then kills his victim. Even in this one thing, small in itself, but important to the Bedouin, he is influenced by what has come down to him through thirteen hundred years, and the Koranic exhortation, "He hath forbidden you to eat that on which any other name but God's hath been invoked," Surah 2 prompts him to mutter the words which precede every prayer uttered and every action attempted. Thus it will be gathered that, although the Bedouin is not outwardly a religious man, judged by his acts of prayer and worship, yet his everyday life is largely influenced by the religion which nominally he bears, and in some directions that influence is for good, and in others for bad, so that the system instituted more

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than a millennium ago, and still holding in its grip the children of the wilderness and desert, has its effect on the doings, and in the lives of its devotees although unknown to them. In conclusion let me mention one more phase of life which is influenced by the religion of Islam, and this perhaps is the saddest of all, and in every respect contrary to the will and desires of the Creator whom Moslem, Christian and Jew alike worship. I mean the lack of hope for the pardon and forgiveness of sin ere they pass from this world into the next.

I have frequently alluded to the fact that the Moslem religion makes no provision for the forgiveness of sin. Neither is any remedy provided for it; thus when a Bedouin comes to die he is of all men the most miserable, and I have never known one pass away with the assurance that he is at peace with his Maker because of sin pardoned and forgiven.

The general teaching of Islam tends to make man consider himself entirely at the mercy of God as regards the future, and if this were not so, there is one passage in his sacred book that would suffice to scatter all his hopes of forgiveness from a merciful Creator. I refer to Surah 4: "Verily repentance will be accepted with God, from those who do evil ignorantly, but no repentance shall be accepted from those who do evil until the time when death presenteth itself unto them, and he saith, Verily I repent now; for them we have prepared a grievous punishment." Comforting words for a poor, repentant, sin-stricken sinner to leave this world with, or to have said to him as he anticipates his exodus into the unknown! But such is Islam, and with such teaching permeating the life of its people what need is there to expect mercy from Him whose name, as the Merciful One, is on their lips every hour of their lives. The Bedouin are a people influenced by their religion, but irreligious in their lives,

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Their need is the simple teaching of Him who said, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me, and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light" (Matt. xi. 28-30).

The teaching of Islam, after 1300 years, has left the Bedouin little better than it found them, perhaps worse; give them the same period of the influences of Christianity, and it is not too much to assert that Psalm lxxii. 9 would be a reality and, "They that dwell in the dreary desert (*lit.*) bow before Him, and His enemies lick the dust."

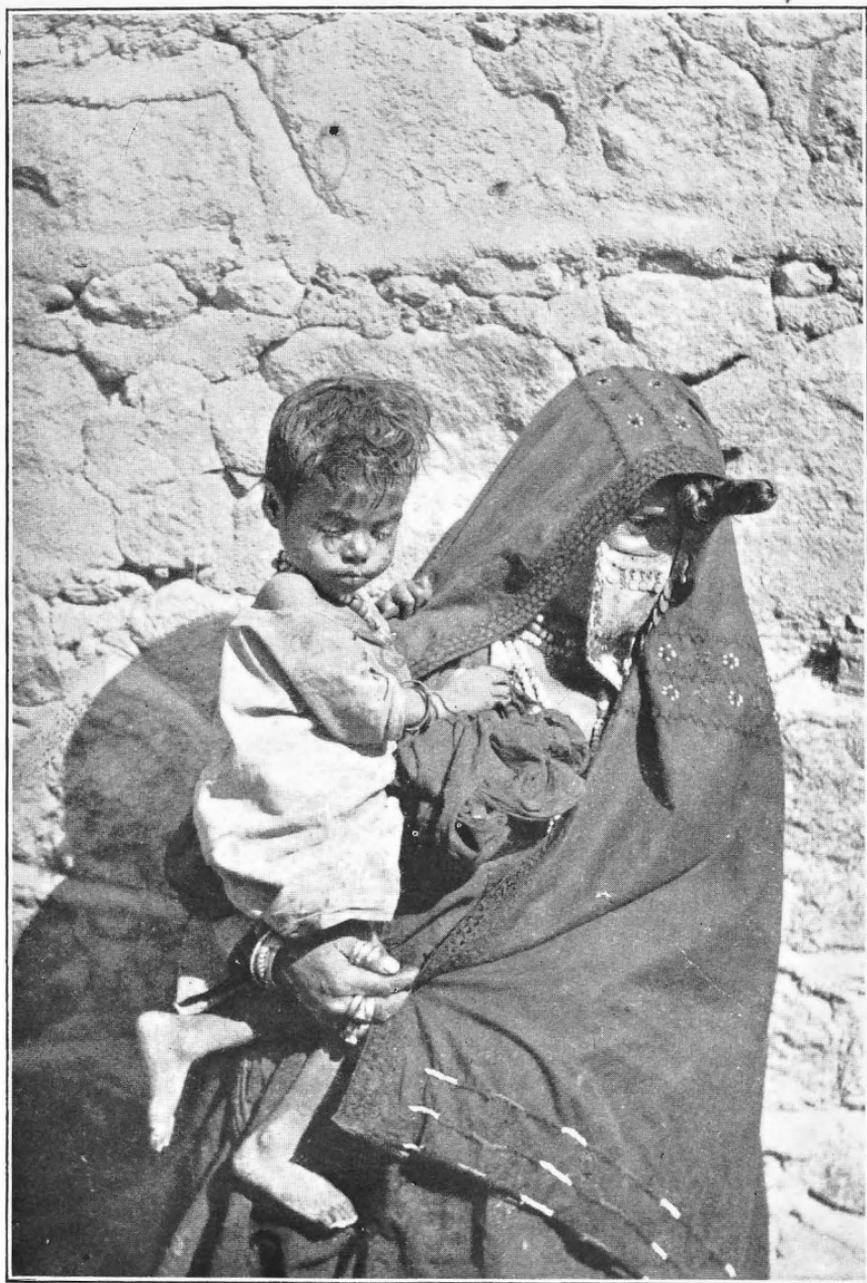


Photo by [A. FORDER]
A woman of the Sinai desert. Note the peculiar horn on the forehead that keeps the veil off the face.



Photo by]

[A. FORDER

A school of Arab boys in the Bawdee. They prefer the warmth of the sun to the cool of the schoolroom

CHAPTER XX

PALESTINE PEASANT LIFE, AND HOW AFFECTED BY ISLAM

THE peasants of Palestine, who are they, and whence come they? This is the question frequently asked by those interested in their life and welfare. Such a study is fascinating and instructive, and well repays the time one gives to it, but in this chapter space does not allow of going into the pedigree of those who form the staple part of the population of the Holy Land and lands adjoining, so a few words must suffice. Every reader of the Old Testament knows that before the advent of the Messiah the land of Palestine was inhabited by a mixed population, which continued largely until the occupation of the land by the Saracens. This mixture was made up of Jews, Romans, remnants of the Canaanites and other tribes that were in the land before the Hebrews, and aliens from many lands. With the coming in of the Saracens, who were mostly Arabs, the older inhabitants of the land, such as the Canaanites and others, were gradually absorbed by the Ishmaelite, whilst the Jew and Roman gradually withdrew or were driven from the country. So that the peasant of Palestine is a mixture of Ishmaelite and Canaanite, and has come to be known as the Syrian. With the incoming of the Saracen, most of the peasant population were made by force to accept Islam, and it is from this standpoint that we are to consider their

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life and belief, for the majority of the fellaheen of the Holy Land are followers of the Arabian Prophet.

Unlike the Bedouin, the peasant is better versed in the teaching of his religion, hence it is only to be expected that his doings and beliefs will be more influenced, that is consciously, than those of his blood relation of the desert. His contact with a form of government, largely controlled by the religion, as well as some amount of religious teaching, both whilst young and in later years, has made the peasant conversant with the Koran, and he is able to quote what is necessary to substantiate most of what he does and advocates.

One has not to be long in contact with the peasant to find out that his feeling toward other religions is one of scorn, enmity, and opposition. This comes in a measure from ignorance of the teaching of Christianity, but largely by reason of the teaching of the Koran, which is taught very rigorously by the Moslem priests who are located in the villages, most of whom are ignorant of all else but their own religion. Of course with their ignorance comes fanaticism, which makes them advance those teachings from the Koran that create hatred against other creeds. The unshakable faith of the peasant in his religion is not to be wondered at when such words as the following are constantly being rehearsed in his hearing in the mosque: "Who-soever believeth not in God and his apostle, and the book which he hath caused to descend to his apostle, and the last day, surely erreth in a wide mistake" (Surah 4), and none but those who are accepters of Mohammed, and believers in the Koran as God's revelation to man through Mohammed, are of the true faith and religion. Hence the scorn and opposition toward those of other beliefs.

So bitter is this hatred and scorn of other religions,

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and those who follow them, that it is no secret that any that apostatise from Islam are given no quarter until in some way or other their lives have paid for the apostasy, this being the main reason why so few Mohammedans come out and accept Christianity. Those who take the lives of any that leave the faith of Islam and embrace any other religion, justify themselves by so doing by quoting the Koran; neither is it counted as murder to him who kills one that has departed from the religion of his fathers and friends. For the religion exhorts thus: "Slay not the soul which God hath forbidden you, unless for a just cause" (Surah 17), the just cause in this case being apostasy, for murder is allowable for three things, apostasy, murder and adultery, although a pardon or compromise is more frequently arranged as regards murder and adultery, but for apostasy never. Hence the slowness of a Moslem to accept any other religion than his own. Another thing noticeable among the peasants is their disinclination to make strong friendship with Christians, and especially with Jews; the dislike to the latter is especially strong and deep seated, this coming primarily from the teaching of the Koran and permeating all the religion. But why the Jews more than any other? Because of their treatment of Jesus, for whom the peasant has the greatest respect, Christ coming next to Mohammed in importance to the peasant.

Speaking of Jesus in Surah 3, the Koran says, "And the Jews devised a stratagem against him," meaning that they had laid plans to take away his life. In Surah 4, speaking of the Scriptures the Koran says, "Of the Jews there are some who pervert words from their places," so that the peasant has a twofold reason for hatred against the Jew—first, for his action toward Jesus, and, second, for altering the Scriptures. Hence his reluctance in making friends with the Hebrews.

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And the same feeling exists towards the Christian. Reasons for this attitude could easily be given, but it must suffice to show how the religion influences this phase of life, and hinders the peasant from having for his friends those whom he admits are in many respects better than himself, and again the Koran must be quoted, for is not this the foundation of all that the peasant builds his life and action on ?

“ O, true believers, contract not an intimate friendship with any beside yourselves, they will not fail to corrupt you,” Surah 3, and again in Surah 5, “ O, true believers, take not the Jews or Christians for your friends, they are friends the one to the other, but whoso among you taketh them for his friends, he is surely one of them ; verily God directeth not unjust people.”

Such injunctions could be multiplied, in some the Christians and Jews are called infidels and unbelievers, and such teaching is responsible for the peasant having so little real faith in the Jew or Christian as his friend. When war breaks out against any power under the dominion of Islam it is especially noticeable how ready the people are to contribute towards the cost and propagation of the same, especially if the enemy is Christian, as in the recent wars between Turkey and Italy, and the Balkan States. At such times, the ignorant peasant is worked upon by the religious head of the village, and encouraged to give his money toward the waging of the war against the enemy of God, as the foe is called, and he is promised on the strength of the Koran, to receive again whatever he gives, for God has given His word through the Prophet, “ Whatsoever ye shall spend in the defence of the religion of God, it shall be repaid unto you, and ye shall not be treated unjustly ” (Surah 8).

But there is a stronger inducement to take up the cause of Islam against the enemy, and one that appeals

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with much force to the peasant, for when a war is proclaimed, for instance against Turkey, it is not looked upon as a fighting against the Empire from a national standpoint, but as an attacking of the religion, and when you touch anyone as regards his religion, you touch a tender place, and at once he is on the defensive.

So it is with the peasant, for is not the government founded on the Koran? And is not the Koran the guide of the Faithful? And at such times its teaching is not to be ignored, for to attack the religion is to start a fire burning, kindled and kept burning by religious zeal and backing, which it is hard to extinguish.

“Fight for the religion of God against those who fight against you” (Surah 2). “Whosoever fighteth for the religion of God, whether he be slain, or be victorious, we will surely give him a true reward” (Surah 4).

“Fight against those who believe not in God nor the last day.”

“O, true believers, defend God’s true religion with your substance, and in your own persons” (Surah 62).

These are a few of the encouragements that are sounded in the ears of the peasant when war is proclaimed against his government, and those who are in the line of battle, and have to face the foe remember what instructions their religion gives them, when opportunity comes to carry them into execution. “When ye encounter the unbelievers, strike off their heads, until ye have made a great slaughter among them: until the war shall have laid down its arms” (Surah 47). Again, “O, true believers, when ye meet the unbelievers marching in great numbers against you, turn not your backs upon them, for whoso shall turn his back unto them on that day, unless he turneth aside to the fight, shall draw on himself the indignation of God,

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and his abode shall be hell, an ill journey shall it be thither" (Surah 8).

The peasant, usually an ignorant man, goes into battle with such teaching; is it any wonder that they fight, and have so often been victorious? Surely it must be admitted that the peasant is influenced by his religion as he hears the rumour of war and the call to fight the enemy.

But other phases of life must be considered.

Who on looking at the remains of some ancient piece of statuary or fine carving has not regretted the mutilation of what once made the relic perfect, and how many a likeness carved in stone has been destroyed by the peasant on its being discovered. How is it to be accounted for? Why did the peasants of Wady Moosa (Petra), destroy a fine life-sized statue carved in marble, with its inscription at the foot, and rest not until its fragments were ground into powder? And what causes such vandalism in all lands where the peasant of Islam holds sway? Answer, the influence of the religion. For just as Islam is hard on many other things seemingly innocent, so is it hard in its condemnation of images and anything that pertains to the representation of anything human.

The prominence of idols at Mecca at the time of the institution of Islam, was no doubt the cause of the severe denunciation in the Koran of all images and anything that pertained thereto, and this teaching is so full of threats against all who have anything to do with images, that it has permeated and influenced the life of the peasant to the extent of his smashing in pieces, and utterly destroying, anything that comes in his way, of all that savours of imagery or human form. One quotation from the Koran will suffice to show how the peasant is encouraged to avoid all contact with images. "O, true believers, surely images are an

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abomination of the work of Satan, therefore avoid them, that ye may prosper" (Surah 5).

Al Beidawi, the great Arab commentator on the Koran, insists that the word images here used refers to the idols worshipped in Mecca and elsewhere, but other commentators insist that Mohammed meant the carved figures used by the Arabs when playing chess, such as men, elephants, horses, etc., so that the majority of Moslems refuse to play with such, and in most lands where the Koran rules, such games are played with plain pieces of wood and ivory. Hence the aversion of the peasant to likenesses and images, and the great and universal hatred to the camera by ignorant and fanatical natives.

The counting of time, hours, days and feasts are all regulated by the sun and moon, in a different way from that of the Western world, for the sun and moon play a very important part in the making of plans, the fixing of times and appointments, and the regulating of affairs.

For instance, Occidentals speak of Sunday night, but that to a peasant would mean the Saturday night to us, commencing with sunset on Saturday, for his night precedes the day, whereas our day precedes the night. For this he may be entitled to right, for Genesis declares, "The evening and the morning were the first day," c. i. v. 5, so that the fellah or peasant is at least Scriptural in placing his night before his day. Then, too, appointments are made by the light of the moon, meaning its age, and the hour of the sun, and Western ideas as to time are as perplexing to the peasant as his way of reckoning is to us, and whereas many a one in the Western world is at a loss to know how time is reckoned, the peasant's knowledge is influenced by the teaching of his religion, and one versed in the Koran will quote Surah 6, and say, "God causeth the morning to appear, and hath ordained the night for rest, and the

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sun and the moon for the computing of time." So the sun and moon not only serve the peasant as warmth and light, but also as watch and clock.

Whilst on this topic, it might be of interest to mention what the peasants think of shooting stars, of which lots are seen in the clear atmosphere of Oriental nights. For even such movements of the heavenly bodies are not ignored by the Koran, and a reason given for the same, which influences the mind of the peasant along such lines, no matter what the most learned of astronomers might tell him to the contrary. The folklore of the peasant teaches that Satan, having been expelled from Paradise, is always trying to re-enter by force, and is continually approaching the sky with the object of listening to what is being said in heaven, or as the peasant terms it, Paradise.

On his approach certain angels throw stars at him and this is their theory of the shooting star, influenced by the teaching of the religion through the Koran in Surah 15, entitled Al Hejr. "We have placed the twelve signs in the heavens, and have set them out in various figures, for the observation of spectators, and we guard them from every devil, driven away with stones; except him who listeneth by stealth, at whom a visible flame is darted." Hence the belief that shooting stars are being thrown at the devil as he nears the skies.

The self-righteousness of the peasant is one thing that impresses those who have close contact with him. Accuse him of being a sinner, and it is resented by all who can claim non-committal of the seven things which by Mohammed were counted as sin, viz., idolatry, murder, falsely accusing women of adultery, wasting the substance of orphans, taking of usury, desertion in a religious expedition or war, and disobedience to parents.

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Outside of these nothing is reckoned as sin ; all else that savours of wrong-doing comes under the designation of faults, and for these there is hope, yea, even promise of remission, so that man need not worry as to what he does outside of the seven great offences mentioned above. One verse in Surah 4 of the Koran influences all the doings of the peasant and even encourages the committing of smaller offences with a gracious promise, " If ye turn aside from the grievous sins of those which ye are forbidden to commit, we will cleanse you from your smaller faults, and will introduce you into Paradise with an honourable entry." Is it any wonder that with such an influence at work in the life of the peasant he does not consider himself a sinner, and looks with pity and scorn on the one who acknowledges his sin and finds the remedy in what the peasant considers an error and falsehood, namely, the atonement made by Christ in His death on the cross. If there were nothing like the forestated influence at work in the life of the peasant to make him think himself sinless, the belief that all his doings are ordered by God would suffice to free him from all responsibility of wrong-doing, and thus becoming a sinner, for such teaching has a tremendous influence in his life, and in some things is a blessing, as it enables him to take his misfortunes with complacency and without grumbling, for he is helpless to prevent or alter matters.

Therefore if the sin of murder is committed, the murderer is not to be blamed, for the slain could never have died had not God decreed it thus, verified by the teaching of the religion, " No soul can die unless by the permission of God, according to what is written in the book containing the determinations of all things:" (Surah 3). Thus a murderer says that God was responsible for what he did, and ordered that he should kill the man, for it was thus ordained. Every circum-

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stance in the peasant's life is thus influenced by this phase of the religion, Fatalism, and who dare say otherwise, for is it not written, "The fate of every man have we bound about his neck, and we will produce unto him on the day of resurrection, a book wherein his actions are recorded, it shall be offered unto him, and the angels shall say unto him, Read thy book, thy own soul will be a sufficient accounting against thee that day" (Surah 17).

With such an influence permeating a man's life where does responsibility come in? Man becomes a will-less machine, and has to abide by, and even tolerate, all that comes to him in life, for to interfere with the decrees of the Creator, and alter either his own affairs, or those of others, is to trespass into the doings of God, and put him, the peasant, in danger of hell fire. As long as such an influence works in the life of a people, no nation can take the place ordained for it in the world, for it is incapable of doing its duty to its citizens, and that is where the failure of Islam comes in.

The fasts of the peasant, although not as numerous as those of Christian communities, have a great hold on him, especially the fast of Rumathan, and as inquiries are frequent about the month in which night is turned into day and vice versa, it might be helpful to state on what grounds the one inclined to religion abstains from all food and drink throughout the entire day, be it summer or winter.

No other fast of the peasant is so influenced by his religion as the fast of Rumathan. The strict Moslems will not even crack an ear of corn between their teeth, or taste a drop of fluid, or even smoke, for fear of transgressing the religious law. On one occasion I was crossing a desert that took ten days to get over. We had been without water for several days, when at last we came across a spring, but it was the month of

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Rumathan, and there were still some two hours to sunset, but, badly as the Arabs wanted to try whether the water was sweet or bitter, not one would break his fast to decide the matter, and I, being a Christian, was called to settle the point by tasting the liquid for which all were longing.

The Koran influences nearly every action of the fast of Rumathan, even as to the time of beginning to eat, and leaving off also. Surah 2 makes it plain to the most ignorant that in "The month of Rumathan ye shall fast, therefore earnestly desire that which God ordaineth you, and eat and drink, until ye can plainly distinguish a white thread from a black thread by the daybreak, then keep the fast until night, and be constantly present in the places of worship." The influence of the religion coming through thirteen hundred years is what disorganizes the affairs of men during Rumathan in lands where Islam rules.

In conclusion, let us look at the home and family life of the peasant, and see if any influence of the religion works there, as well as in the outer affairs of his being.

The peasant of Palestine is frequently accused of unkindness to his wife or wives, as the case may be; this is generally based on the visible fact that he obliges her to work, which she certainly does, and many a home is the better off for the continuous labours of the one, who with her offspring oftentimes on her shoulder, or on her back, makes the journey to the market to dispose of her wares. But this is custom, and under the conditions existing in Palestine is a necessity, for oftentimes the man is engaged at other work, which hinders him from attending market.

It is not too bold a statement to make that in the home life of the peasant cruelty to the woman is rare, and any man that is unkind to his wife is looked down upon

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by his neighbours, and to beat a woman, which is very unusual, is to become a scorn to the community. When the women are ill and unable to do their daily tasks, the men are solicitous for their care, and many men will walk long distances to a doctor, to get medicine for his sick wife or child.

The peasant, like his neighbour, the Bedouin, has regard for the women of his community, and, generally speaking, treats them kindly, although on the surface it appears that they are badly treated, because they have to take their share of manual work. Like many a woman of the Occident, the peasant woman has her pin money, gained from certain produce which she claims as her own, such as eggs, fowls, and certain fruits and vegetables, and the men never ask from their wives the money gained by the selling of these.

This kindly treatment of the weaker sex may also be traced to the influence of the religion, and owes its origin to the Koran, for Mohammed in his writings makes many allusions to the care that must be bestowed on women. "Be kind toward women, and fear to wrong them, turn not from a wife with all manner of aversion, nor leave her like one in suspense, if ye agree and fear to abuse your wives God is gracious and merciful" (Surah 4).

Many such passages exhort the peasant of Islam to a kindly consideration of his women. But some may ask, if this kindness to women is general, why are women veiled in so many parts of the lands, such as Hebron, Nablous, and villages all about them? The answer is a simple one, and may be given in a few words, showing again how the religion influences even this phase of peasant life. The Koran in Surah 24 gives the following instruction as regards women, "Speak unto the believing women, that they restrain their eyes, and preserve their modesty, and let them throw their veils over their

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bosoms ; ” this and other such-like passages are responsible for the veiling of the face and neck by many of the peasant women.

It is not to be thought that the peasant never quarrels with his wife, or vice versa, for as in all communities, so in peasant quarters, quarrels do take place, and frequently the wife will leave her home and take refuge in that of a neighbour, or, if near, will go to her father's house. In this case there is no law to compel the woman to return to her husband, but it becomes the business of the neighbours, influenced by the religion, to effect a compromise about the trouble, and make peace, so that the woman is induced to return again to her husband. Mohammed, with his insight into human nature, and his acquaintance with home life with a plurality of wives, made provision for such happenings, and ordained thus, “ If ye fear a breach between husband and wife, send a judge out of his family, and a judge out of her family, and if they shall desire a reconciliation, God will cause them to agree, for God is knowing and wise ” (Surah 4). With the authority of the Koran behind them, neighbours do as they are bid, and many a quarrel is smoothed over to the satisfaction of all parties.

Kindness to orphans is another phase of peasant life which is worthy of mention, for when a man dies and leaves behind him children, they are considered orphans, and as such have a claim on the sympathy and help of the community or village. Influenced by the religion no family would refuse food, shelter, or assistance to children thus bereaved, and many a peasant family adds to its numbers, by caring for some who have been left orphans. And to the category of orphan, is added that of the beggar, for only destitute and helpless people give themselves up to walking the country, in search of food and shelter ; such is the idea of the pea-

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sant. "Oppress not the orphan, neither repulse the beggar," is the teaching of the Koran in Surah 93, and Islam teaches in another place that "Surely they who devour the possessions of orphans unjustly, shall swallow down nothing but fire into their bellies, and shall broil in raging flames" (Surah 4). Orphans and beggars [therefore owe a debt to Islam, for the influence that leads those better off to care for and help them.

There is much in the foregoing that might lead the alien to Islam to admire the religion, and to say "leave alone a people that have such a system to influence and control their lives." But there are two sides to everything, and the life of the peasant has a side that makes it uncertain, dangerous, restless, and unsatisfactory. One thing only can be named, the influence of which permeates the daily doings of those inclined to evil, of whom there are not a few, and whose doings frequently become a danger to the whole community. I refer to the law of retaliation, or avenging wrong done.

I have frequently seen olive trees, fig trees, fields of grain, and such like, damaged or mutilated, in return for some wrong done to a family, community or individual. If the mutilation settled the matter, there might be some cause for thanks, but unfortunately, it has to be repaid by the injured parties, and so goes on from generation to generation. Thus it frequently happens, that the people of a village not more than a mile distant from another village, will be at bitter enmity over some harm done to them generations back, and which has been revenged many times, but has not brought about a settlement. This state of affairs may be traced to the teaching of the religion, and the influence exercised thereby, for the words of the Prophet, at such a time, are rehearsed in the ears of the injured ones, and they are reminded that Surah 2 says, "O true believers, the law of retaliation is ordained you."

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And that suffices to justify the peasant for all the harm he can do, or trouble he can give, in return for what he or some of his have suffered in the past.

Like the Bedouin, the peasant needs the influences of Christianity, and until the precepts of the Gospel influence his life, it will remain an unsatisfactory basis. But, when the teaching of another influences his life, and he hears the voice of Him, whom second to Mohammed he reveres, saying through the Word, "I say unto you, Love your enemies, do good to them which hate you ; bless them which curse you, and pray for them which despitefully use you," then, life for him will be worth living.

CHAPTER XXI

HAGAR IN THE WILDERNESS

THE morning broke. Light stole upon the clouds
With a strange beauty. Earth received again
Its garment of a thousand dyes ; and leaves
And delicate blossoms, and the painted flowers,
And everything that bendeth to the dew
And stirreth with the daylight, lifted up
Its beauty to the breath of that sweet morn.

All things are dark to sorrow ; and the light,
And loveliness, and fragrant air, were sad
To the dejected Hagar. The moist earth
Was pouring odours from its spicy pores,
And the young birds were singing, as if life
Were a new thing to them ; but, oh ! it came
Upon her heart like discord, and she felt
How cruelly it tries a broken heart
To see a mirth in anything it loves.
She stood at Abraham's tent. Her lips were pressed
Till the blood started ; and the wandering veins
Of her transparent forehead were swelled out,
As if her pride would burst them. Her dark eye
Was clear and tearless, and the light of heaven,
Which made its language legible, shot back
From her long lashes, as it had been flame.
Her noble boy stood by her, with his hand
Clasped in her own, and his round, delicate feet,
Scarce trained to balance on the tented floor,

Hagar in the Wilderness

Sandalled for journeying. He had looked up
Into his mother's face, until he caught
The spirit there, and his young heart was swelling
Beneath his dimpled bosom, and his form
Straightened up proudly in his tiny wrath,
As if his light proportions would have swelled,
Had they but matched his spirit, to the man.

Why bends the patriarch as he cometh now
Upon his staff so wearily? His beard
Is low upon his breast, and on his high brow,
So written with the converse of his God,
Beareth the swollen vein of agony.

His lip is quivering, and his wonted step
Of vigour is not there; and though the morn
Is passing fair and beautiful, he breathes
Its freshness as it were a pestilence.

Oh! man may bear with suffering—his heart
Is a strong thing, and rodlike in the grasp
Of pain, that wrings mortality; but tear
One chord affection clings to, part one tie
That binds him to a woman's delicate love,
And his great spirit yieldeth like a reed.

He gave to her the water and the bread,
But spoke no word, and trusted not himself
To look upon her face, but laid his hand
In silent blessing on the fair-haired boy,
And left her to her lot of loneliness.

Should Hagar weep? May slighted woman turn,
And as a vine the oak had shaken off,
Bend lightly to her leaning trust again?
O, no! by all her loveliness, by all
That makes life poetry and beauty, no!
Make her a slave; steal from her rosy cheek
By needless jealousies; let the last star
Leave her a watcher by your couch of pain;

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Wrong her by petulance, suspicion, all
That makes her cup a bitterness—yet give
One evidence of love, and earth has not
An emblem of devotedness like hers.
But, O! estrange her once—it boots not how—
By wrong or silence, anything that tells
A change has come upon your tenderness—
And there is not a high thing out of heaven
Her pride o'ermastereth not.

She went her way with a strong step and slow ;
Her pressed lip arched, and her clear eye undimmed,
As it had been a diamond, and her form
Borne proudly up, as if her heart breathed through.
Her child kept on in silence, though she pressed
His hand till it was pained, for he had caught,
As I have said, her spirit, and the seed
Of a stern nation had been breathed upon.

The morning passed, and Asia's sun rode up
In the clear heaven, and every beam was heat.
The cattle of the hills were in the shade,
And the bright plumage of the Orient lay
On beating bosoms in her spicy trees.
It was an hour of rest ; but Hagar found
No shelter in the wilderness, and on
She kept her weary way, until the boy
Hung down his head, and opened his parched lips
For water ; but she could not give it him.
She laid him down beneath the sultry sky—
For it was better than the close, hot breath
Of the thick pines—and tried to comfort him ;
But he was sore athirst, and his blue eyes
Were dim and bloodshot, and he could not know
Why God denied him water in the wild.
She sat a little longer, and he grew
Ghastly and faint, as if he would have died.

Hagar in the Wilderness

It was too much for her. She lifted him,
And bore him further on, and laid his head
Beneath the shadow of a desert shrub ;
And, shrouding up her face, she went away,
And sat to watch where he could see her not,
Till he should die ; and, watching him, she mourned :
“ God stay thee in thine agony, my boy !
I cannot see thee die ; I cannot brook
 Upon thy brow to look,
And see death settle on my cradle joy.
How have I drunk the light of thy blue eye !
 And could I see thee die ?

“ I did not dream of this when thou wert straying,
Like an unbound gazelle, among the flowers ;
 Or wearing rosy hours,
By the rich gush of water-sources playing,
Then sinking weary to thy smiling sleep,
 So beautiful and deep.

“ O, no ! and when I watched by thee the while,
And saw thy bright lip curling in thy dream,
 And thought of the dark stream
In my own land of Egypt, the far Nile,
How prayed I that my fathers' land might be
 An heritage for thee !

“ And now the grave for its cold breast hath won thee,
And thy white, delicate limbs the earth will press,
 And O ! my last caress
Must feel thee cold, for a chill hand is on thee.
How can I leave my boy, so pillowed there
 Upon his clustering hair ! ”

She stood beside the well her God had given
To gush in that deep wilderness, and bathed

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The forehead of her child until he laughed
In his reviving happiness, and lisped
His infant thought of gladness at the sight
Of the cool plashing of his mother's hand.

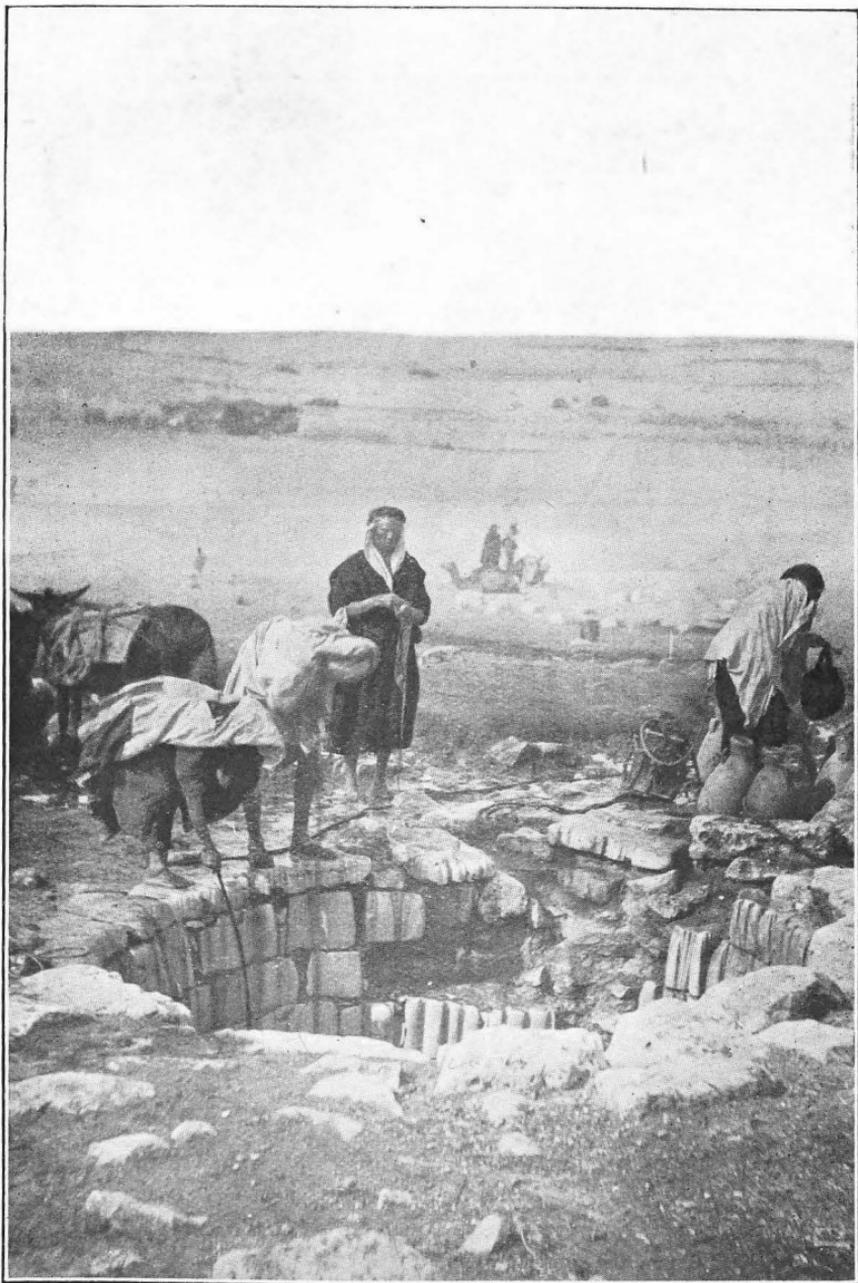


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Hagar's Well, six hours east of Beersheba, an important watering-place of the Arabs

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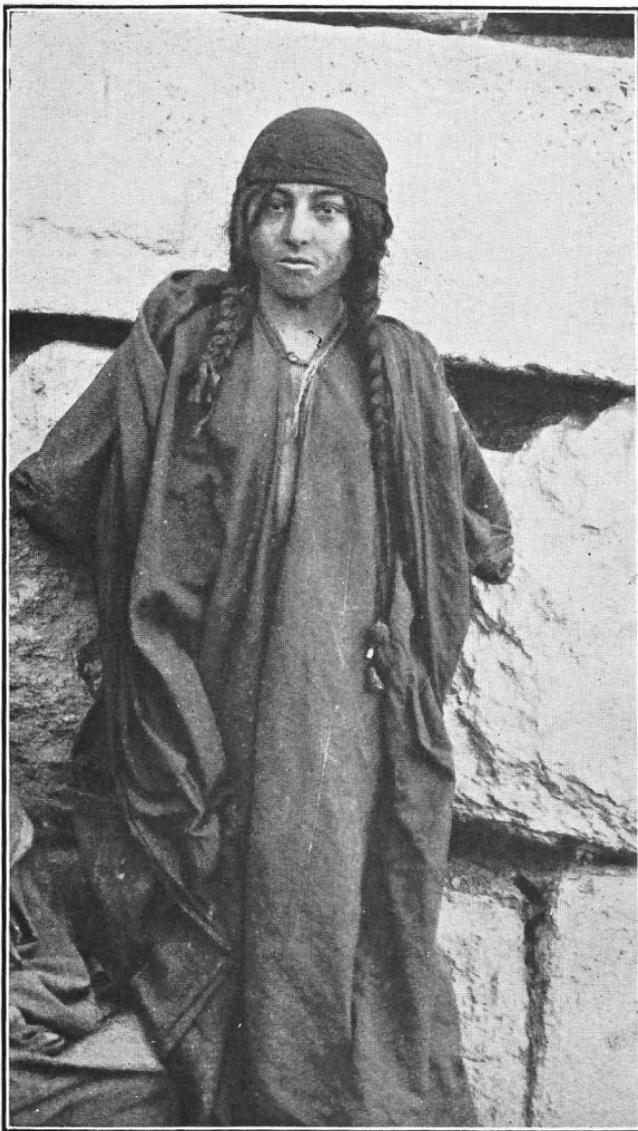


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Ahmence, a heroine of the Bawdee

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CHAPTER XXII

AHMENEE : OR, TRUE TO HER NAME

A BEDOUIN TRAGEDY, FROM FACTS TOLD ROUND THE CAMP
FIRE IN AN ARAB TENT

IN front of a tent, belonging to one of the many camps hidden away in the hill country of Moab, on a large stone, sat Nimr of the Nimat tribe of Arabs, playing his arababa, i.e., native fiddle. He was a frequent and welcome visitor to the camp, for he could tell a good story, sing a good song, and extract wonderful music from his one-stringed instrument. Besides, he frequently brought news as to the doings in other camps, and by neighbouring tribes, for he was one of those who in civilized lands would be called a ne'er-do-well, and spent his time in idleness instead of work. He was well named, for Nimr in Arabic means tiger, and he was typical of that beast ; outwardly pleasing in appearance, but inwardly a dangerous foe.

Just before sunset he was invited to take supper with the owner of the tent, instead of eating from the public dish in the guest tent provided for visitors to the camp. After supper, coffee was served, and in due time a third cup offered to Nimr, an intimation to him without words, in the customary way, that his presence in the camp was dangerous to himself, and that he had better get away whilst he had the opportunity. Shortly after Nimr rose, quietly left the tent, and disappeared in the

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darkness, making for his own camp under cover of night.

But from where came danger? The camp so suddenly left by Nimr was one belonging to the Beni Hamideh tribe of Arabs, who are usually found pitched between the valleys Waly and Mojib. They are a quiet and numerous tribe, and as they are more powerful than others about them they are frequently called upon to mediate between and settle the quarrels of their neighbours.

Shortly before Nimr entered the tent in which he was to sup, two Arabs mounted on camels rode up to the guest tent, and were received by the men sitting about the fire, among whom was Nimr's temporary host. The new-comers were men from the Kirshan Arabs, who are usually found on the plains east of the old pilgrim road to Mecca. They are a small but brave tribe, notorious for their raiding proclivities, and their utter disregard for life, hence they have many enemies and few friends. It was from these two newly arrived guests that danger came to Nimr, for between his tribe and theirs was a long and deadly blood feud, and had Nimr lingered in the camp, and his presence become known to the Kirshan men, he might never have seen his camp again. Nimr's host that evening was present when the two guests arrived, and knowing whence they came, kindly intimated to Nimr by the third cup of coffee that his exodus was advisable, which intimation, as already stated, was speedily acted upon.

After Nimr's exodus, his host returned to the guest tent, to learn why the two visitors had come among them, and to hear any news that they had brought. He was not long in gleaning that the two men had been sent by their sheikhs—chiefs—to ask Sheikh Khaleel, the head of the Hamideh tribe, to request the presence of the Nimat chiefs at a conference to be held in the

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tent of Sheikh Khaleel, to confer with the Kirshan sheikhs on a matter of importance to both sides. If they agreed to the meeting, a truce of a month would be given, so that there would be no danger to either party.

This was the business of the two guests, and they requested Sheikh Khaleel to send the message to the Nimat on the next day, so that they might take back a reply to those who had sent them, and as the Nimat were not far away, it would be possible to send to them, and get their reply, within the three days allowable to Arab guests, and thus no encroachment would be made on the prescribed hospitality customary in Bedouin camps.

Early next day a messenger was sent to inform the Nimat chiefs of the request of their enemies, which in due time was done. The message caused some surprise in the camp of the Nimat, and after much talking and discussion, the chiefs agreed to the meeting, leaving it with the Hamideh sheikh to let them know the day of the gathering.

Among those interested in the news brought so unexpectedly to them, was the only daughter of one of the most prosperous men in the camp, a girl of some eighteen summers, named Ahmenee, i.e., the Faithful One.

She was a general favourite in the camp, and being an only daughter had learned well the duties that fall to the females in Bedouin tents, so that she was looked upon as a good acquisition by the young men of the tribe, among whom Nimr was foremost in his advances, but with little encouragement. To tell the truth at once, Ahmenee's heart was elsewhere, and her love and life pledged to another, a youth in the camp of the Kirshan, named Mansoor, i.e., the Victorious, where her life, until three years ago, had been passed. About that time her father had quarrelled with the Kirshan chiefs,

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and leaving them had claimed the protection of the Nimat, pitching his tent in their camp. But Mansoor had not been forgotten by the companion of his early years, for Ahmenee and he were of the same age, and as children had played in the same tents, early learning to love each other.

Since Ahmenee's coming among the Nimat, Mansoor had paid her many visits, his coming to the camp, from the enemy, being tolerated for Ahmenee's sake. He had also made it convenient to meet her frequently in the wilderness, as she was carrying home a huge load of brush for fuel, and love for her had induced him to carry the load, although it was against custom. At one of these wilderness meetings Mansoor had successfully pleaded his cause with Ahmenee, and she had promised that her heart and love should be his even until death.

As Ahmenee was at a marriageable age, she had already been asked for by some youths in the tribe, among whom was Nimr, but had refused all suggestions made to her by her father, much to the chagrin of the youths about her. Thus when Ahmenee heard of the suggestion of the Kirshan chiefs she was all excitement to know what it meant, and if Mansoor had any place in their intended proposals, for it had been arranged that on the night of the next full moon Ahmenee was to become the bride of her lover.

On the forenoon of the third day the messenger sent to the Nimat returned to Sheikh Khaleel and informed him and his two guests of their willingness to come to the conference, and ere the visitors left the camp it was arranged that the gathering of the chiefs should take place on the first day of the coming month, six days later on. Needless to say there was much speculation as to the purpose of the coming gathering, for none but the Kirshan headmen knew.

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After the noon on the day appointed, the sheikhs of the opposing tribes began to arrive in the Hamideh camp, and by sunset quite a goodly company had collected, mostly old and experienced men. Several sheep paid the price of the assembled guests, and an abundant supper was served, after which coffee and pipes were much in demand. When Sheikh Khaleel had seen to the comfort of his guests, and had taken his place among them, an elderly man of the Kirshan, named Theebe—i.e., the Wolf—spoke thus to their host : “ Khaleel, may your evening be good, and God lengthen your age, and spare to you your children. For many years the Nimat and ourselves have had blood between us, so that many of our men are missing from their tents, and if this continues soon there will be no men left in either tribe. Truly, blood demands blood, and every life a life, but I grieve to see the men go so fast. I am old, and my time short ; but ere I die I desire to see peace between us and our enemies, and am not without hope that we present may see some way to making peace. If you, as our host, can suggest some way to settle our quarrel, do so, and God will grant you a good reward.”

This opening speech was received with silence, and the smokers pulled hard at their pipes, as they stared vacantly at the fire in their midst. At last the leader of the Nimat broke the silence by saying, “ We have lost many men, and blood calls for blood.” A second said, “ Two sons of mine were killed on the same day ; what can atone for that but blood ? ” In a like strain spoke many, but without any suggestion as to how the gulf could be bridged, so at last it was decided to put off any decision till morning, meanwhile each man was to “ inquire of his thoughts.”

Early next day the question was reopened ; many spoke without saying much, and at last an appeal was

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made to their host for his opinion. The old sheikh, after many flattering and flowery opening sentences, at last said, "It is a hard and fast custom among us that blood only pays for blood. I know that much blood has been shed between you, and I would that money or kind could pay its price. But alas! all our money and cattle will not satisfy the demands required on both your sides. Many words are vain, for I know that nothing but blood will settle this business. My thought is, that a man from each side shall be slain before your eyes, and the blood shed atone for all the past."

After a long silence Theebe said, "Who shall be slain, and how?" a question that none cared to answer. Again Sheikh Khaleel spoke, saying, "Gather your men on your return, cast lots, and he whom God fates let him die, for each one must eat his fate."

Then one of the Nimat asked, "How shall the lot be cast, the blood be shed, and when?" a question that caused many suggestions, but without any settlement being come to. At last one of the Kirshan spoke and said, "Put a marked stone among others in a nosebag, and let him who takes it out die." Another said, "Let the doomed ones fight it out," but no one favoured this. Then spoke Sheikh Khaleel again: "Let the price of the blood between you be paid on the night of the coming full moon, and those on whom the fate falls ride alone until they greet each other on the west side of the ruin of Um-Rasas. From behind those walls let death come from rifles fired by men in hiding, so that none will know by whom the blood was shed that shall make peace between you."

To this, after much deliberation, all agreed, and ere leaving for their camps it was decided that six men chosen from each side, supplied at the last minute with rifles loaded with blank and ball cartridges, should take their places behind the ruined wall, to send forth

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the death that should make peace between the two tribes. It was also agreed that those slain be left untouched by their friends or relations, until the sunrise of the next day after their death.

When the purpose and decisions of the assembled chiefs reached the camps of both the Kirshan and Nimat, there was much excitement and speculation as to who would have to pay the price of the blood between the tribes, and none was more interested in the happenings of the next few days than Ahmenee. Many thought the Kirshan had gone too far in desiring peace, others considered the decisions hasty and foolish, some said that the long enmity would still continue and increase ; but none suggested a reversal of the decision, as Arabs always follow the commands of their chiefs.

As all were anxious to know whom Kismet—fate—would choose as the victims of the full moon, the Nimat decided to cast lots on the fifth night of the moon. That evening all the men of the Nimat assembled in the camp of their chief for the choosing of the fatal stone. During the day scores of pebbles had been gathered, and after supper in the presence of the men, one pebble was striped with charcoal, dropped into a nosebag and mixed with the others.

One by one the men took out a stone, and midst silence examined it for the charcoal stripe, and then with a sigh threw it from them. The choosing went on for some time, the bag was getting lighter, and the pebbles fewer, when Nimr, in his usual light-hearted manner, came forward to “try his luck,” as he laughingly said. In went his hand, and with a “Bismillah,” i.e., “In the name of God,” and a good rattling of the pebbles, he soon took out his stone, and on examining it by the light of the fire saw that it was the charcoal-marked one which was to decide who was to die with the full moon. The silence that followed the choosing

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of the stone by Nimr, was broken by an old man saying, "Haste is from Satan, but a long spirit (patience) from the Merciful One," an Arab proverb often quoted after hasty and unfortunate action. After the falling of the lot Nimr disappeared from the crowded guest-tent, leaving his fellow-tribesmen to discuss the only topics that occupied their minds—the peacemaking of the coming full moon, and speculation as to the falling of the lot among the Kirshan.

Two days later news reached the Nimat, through some Hamideh men, that Kismet—fate—had chosen Mansoor from among the Kirshan, as her victim on full-moon night. When the news was brought to the camp, the women of the chief were churning butter in their goat-skin churns, in the part of the tent adjoining the "shig," or place especially set apart for the entertainment of guests. As only a strip of tent cloth separates the two apartments, the women heard of the lot casting among the Kirshan, and on whom it had fallen. The news travelled quickly round the camp until it reached the abode of Ahmenee. When the information reached thus far, Ahmenee was behind the tent weaving goat's-hair cloth, and although intent on her work, she quickly heard the wagging of the women's tongues inside, and soon learned the purport of the subdued conversation. Of course the mention of the word Mansoor caused her many heart flutterings, until at last curiosity compelled her to leave off weaving, and join the women in the tent. From them she learnt the truth about her lover, and be it said to her credit that instead of giving way to shrieking and crying, as most would have done, she composed herself and soon returned to her weaving. Needless to say, her mind was not set upon her work, but on schemes whereby her lover might escape the fate that was to be his in so short a time. Plan after plan was formed for the escape, or deliverance of Mah-

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soor, but all Ahmenee's castles-in-the-air were unworkable, and she finally concluded that as there was no escape for her lover from the death that Fate had chosen for him, she too would die on the same night, and thus keep her pledge to her lover not to marry another but him. But how could she time her own death without taking her own life? That was the question that came to her as she worked and pondered.

As the days lessened toward the full moon, the excitement, speculation, tension and talking increased in the camps interested. One question of importance had to be settled, and it was this, "Would peace between the tribes be made if the victims of the lot were only wounded, and not killed, or one killed and the other spared?" A difficult question truly, which was decided in one way only, by another appeal to Sheikh Khaleel, whose solution was a real native one. As Allah—God—had decreed each man's lot, none could alter it, and if it was His will that peace be made, He would see that both victims were killed. After what seemed weary waiting the night of the full moon at length came round.

On the day previous Mansoor had seen Ahmenee in the wilderness, had heard of her determination to die with him, and her repeated protestations against continuing to survive him, all of which he endeavoured to persuade her against, but in vain. In the camp of the Nimat it was decided to give their representative a hearty send off in the shape of a good supper, consisting of all the tasty and toothsome things that a Bedouin camp could provide. The khateeb—i.e., priest—of the camp suggested that as Nimr was so soon to enter paradise, and as a peace sacrifice would be received by the virgins of that abode of the Faithful, that his last meal on earth should be served and attended by the maidens of the camp, whilst others sang his praises

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whilst he supped. This proposal, which was accepted as timely, wise and suitable, was well received and agreed to, and was acted upon in good shape to the satisfaction of all. None was more intent on serving Nimr than Ahmenee, the object of his many attentions, and she outdid all the maidens of the camp by singing alone a self-composed song into which she worked all his virtues, accomplishments and future destiny, finishing up by requesting him as a favour, to drink a glass of sweet liquid which she had prepared with her own hands, which he did.

After supper, and some four hours before midnight, Nimr mounted his horse, and amid the wailing and shrieking of the women set out for the rendezvous of death. A few of his intimate male friends accompanied him for a short distance, and then left him to continue his ride alone. In the camp of the Kirshan there had been a sullen silence since the falling of the lot on Mansoor. At his request there had been no expressions of regret or sorrow because of the lot Fate had chosen for him, and on the last day allotted to him he requested that none follow him from the camp, also that no demonstrations of grief be made on his account, for, said he, "What is written (decreed) must come to pass, and every one must eat his fate."

Soon after moonrise he mounted a young horse, and armed with spear and rifle, set out on his last ride toward the ruin of Um-Rasas. Shortly before midnight two riders coming from different directions approached the ruin behind whose wall twelve men awaited their coming. Each man had been given a rifle on reaching the ruin, and made to swear by the beard of the Prophet, and the Koran, that he would not examine its contents; also, that as soon as the volley was fired, that was to shed the peacemaking blood, he would return to his camp.

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Amid the silence of night, and in the full light of the moon, the riders came nearer and nearer to each other. When some fifty yards apart, the rider, minus gun and spear, was made to start and look about, by the sudden howl of a jackal from behind a huge stone, which sounded weird and deathlike. When the riders came alongside each other, hands were extended in greeting, and "Salaam-a—" i.e., Peace to—broken into by the crack of rifles, so that the salutation was never finished, although it lacked only one word to complete it. So precise had been the firing of the volley, and so good the aiming, that seemingly at the same moment each rider fell from his steed within a few feet of each other, and the last thing the firing party saw as they left the ruin was one animal galloping away as fast as possible from the scene of death and the other standing like a statue over its fallen rider.

Early in the morning, from the camps of the Kirshan and the Nimat, men and women set out to claim their slain. The women in each party sang their dirges for the dead, as they occasionally tore their faces and breasts with their finger nails, causing the blood to flow freely, whilst the men looked on and listened in silence. The first party to reach the place of death was the Nimat, and they were quick to discover that the solitary sentinel standing by the bodies was from their camp, but not the one on which Nimr had set out on his night ride.

Soon the Kirshan party arrived, and together they approached the silent heap before them, the only sound that broke the silence being the voices of the wailers, and the thud, thud, thud, of their feet as they danced around in a circle on the hard ground.

The Kirshan were the first to pull aside their dead offering, for by his clothing and weapons Mansoor was easily discerned, but the Nimat were slow in laying

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hands on their dead, and in silence stood looking at the strange form before them. Strange indeed it was; for from under the large "abba," i.e., camel-hair cloak, could be seen protruding the blue material of a woman's dress, and the bare cold feet were too small to be those of a man. Not a man moved or spoke, until one more impatient than his fellows, went to the body, stooped down and exposed the face, and then exclaimed, "It's Ahmenee, daughter of Fellah," "It's Ahmenee, daughter of Fellah," much to the astonishment of all present. He was not mistaken, for sure enough, it was the body of Mansoor's to-be-bridè, who had been killed by a bullet that went in behind one ear, and came out at the other, whilst her lover's body had been pierced by five bullets, thus making them partners in death instead of partners for life, as arranged by their respective families.

With the unlooked-for revelation the women ceased their wailing and came near to see for themselves if what the men said was true, and on seeing that it was they withdrew and sat under the ruined wall to speculate as to how Ahmenee had been killed instead of Nimr, a subject that also puzzled the men, and that could not be explained by either the father or brother of the dead girl, who were among the party.

A conference of both parties on the spot decided that the bodies be buried where they fell, in one grave, instead of taking them to the usual burial grounds of each tribe, which were a long way off. Men were sent to the nearest camp to beg the loan of a pot to heat water in, a pickaxe and a hoe, whilst the women set about gathering fuel. By the time the grave was dug and the bodies washed, the sun was fast going westward, and ere it had set a huge pile of stones had been erected over the grave in which the bodies lay, to prevent the jackals and hyenas from getting at the dead.

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It was with heavy hearts and puzzled minds that both parties set out for their camps, for both the slain were favourites among their own clans. The women were too much engaged in talking and speculating to wail as they returned, and the men were dumb, for the disappearance of Nimr and the finding of the dead Ahmenee were more than they could account for. On reaching the camp the wonderment of the Nimat was not lessened on learning that Nimr had not returned, neither were there any tidings of him, or of how Ahmenee came to be the peace-offering instead of the one Fate had chosen. Few slept that night, for in every tent the adults were too excited and puzzled to want to sleep ; and all were anxious for a solution of the mystery that had come among them.

Soon after sunrise on the following day the camp was moved to another pitch, and scarcely had the last tent been set up on the new ground, when a horseman was seen approaching, which soon was recognized as the missing Nimr. As he dismounted from his horse, and entered the tent that to him was home, he had more the look of a drunken man than one in his senses, for he staggered as he entered, and his face was of a strange yellow hue, with a stare of vacancy in his eyes. Soon the men and women of the camp crowded in and about the tent, for all were keen on hearing what Nimr had to tell, and what light he could throw on the mystery, and the death of Ahmenee instead of himself. When he had drunk coffee, broken his fast, and in some measure regained himself and his senses, he told the assembled Arabs all he knew, and in silence, amazement, and sorrow they listened as he spoke. What he told was somewhat as follows.

After he had left the camp for the rendezvous of death, an intense drowsiness came over him which increased so fast that it was difficult for him to keep

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in the saddle. At last he dismounted in the hope of keeping awake, but the desire to sleep could not be shaken off by walking, and on coming to a place where he knew of a cave, he turned aside, intending to have a nap, and then hurry on to Um-Rasas. Hardly had he tethered his horse to a stone in the cave, than he fell asleep, and continued thus until the dawn of the day on which the camp moved. On awaking he found every thing but his abba, i.e., large cloak. His patient horse greeted him with a neigh, as though asking why she had been given so long a fast. When thoroughly awake he rode as fast as possible to Um-Rasas, and the newly raised heap of stones told him that the peace sacrifice had been slain, and he was spared. Then he returned to the place where he thought the camp was, to find it had moved to the new pitch where, as already stated, he duly arrived. This was all he had to tell, and then amid the silence that continued he heard who had died in his place.

The men and women were not long in solving the mystery after what Nimr had told them, and it was generally agreed that when Nimr consented to drink the glass of sweet liquid from the hands of Ahmenee, that he also imbibed a heavy and poisonous sedative. Such was easily obtainable from a herb common to the district, and well known to all. This would account for the drowsiness, long sleep, and stupor which had overtaken Nimr. Then it was concluded that Ahmenee had followed him on her father's mare, had seen him turn aside to the cave, had taken from him his abba whilst he slept, and thus disguised had ridden to greet, and die with, her lover as determined by her.

Bit by bit the general conclusion was confirmed, for one swore to seeing Ahmenee drying the sedative herb over the fire, another to knowing that she intended to be absent from her family that night, and another to



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[A. FORDER

The Willy-el-Toom, an important and much visited shrine on the Moab plateau. Note the variety of things deposited about the shrine for safe keeping by the saint

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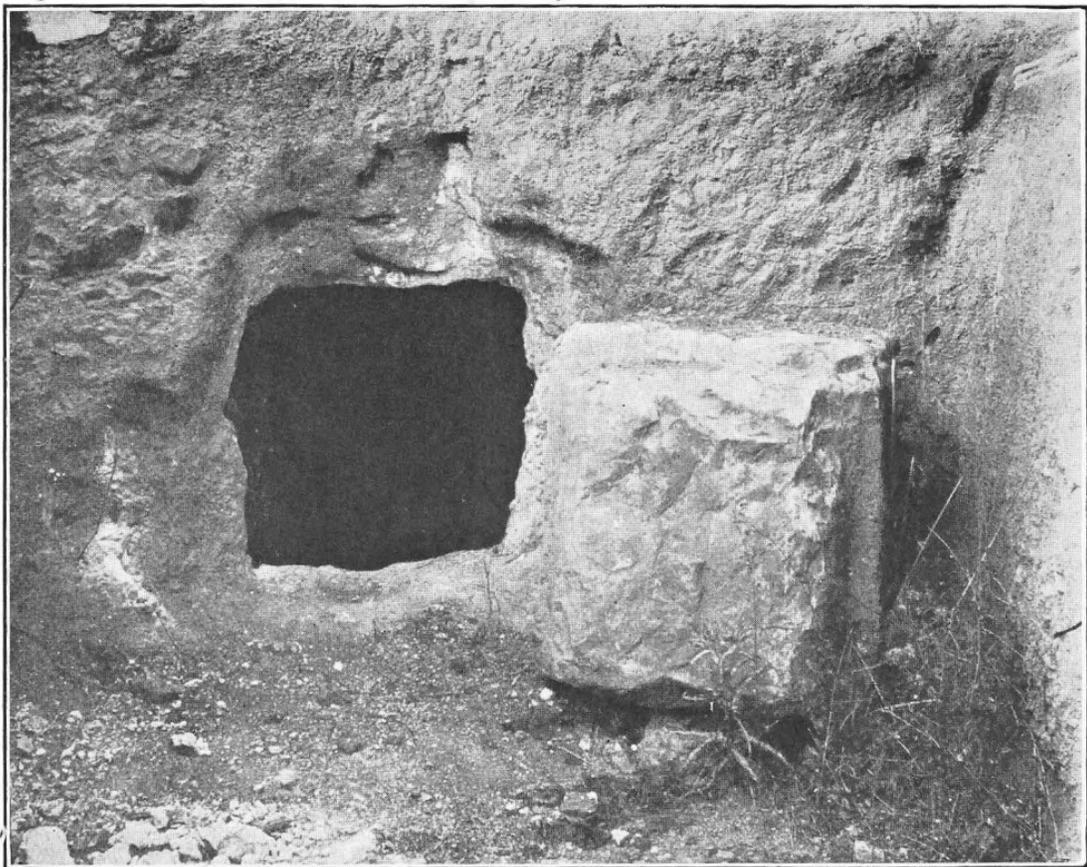


Photo by]

“ A large cave entered through a small square hole ”

[A. FORDER

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seeing her lead away her father's mare, but as most Arabs keep their own counsel none interfered with the girl's doings.

After several months the Kirshan and Nimat families of the peace victims agreed to build something solid over their grave, so together they erected a huge structure of stone, which is kept white as snow by occasional lime-washing. This has now become an annual place of resort for both tribes, and is known as Willy-et-Towm—i.e., the shrine of the twins, or pair.

Thither go the maidens of the Nimat to bewail the death of Ahmenee, and about the same shrine gather the relations of Mansoor to lament his loss, most of them being females, for among the Bedouin the active side of mourning is performed by the women and girls. The annual visitation to the Willy-et-Towm is almost a repetition of an Old Testament celebration recorded in Judges xi. 40 : "The daughters of Israel went yearly to lament the daughter of Jephthah the Gileadite four days in a year," so slow are Orientals in changing their customs.

The blood of the slain lovers sufficed to atone for the long enmity and lives lost between the two tribes concerned, and for several years peace has been maintained between them. The white shrine, typical of the innocence and purity of those it covers, serves as a continual reminder to both parties of the price paid to end the long enmity that had existed between them, and a warning against a renewal of the strife settled in so drastic and tragic a fashion.

CHAPTER XXIII

LOVE *VERSUS* CUSTOM

A STORY OF THE BAWDEE, FOUNDED UPON FACTS, TOLD TO THE
AUTHOR ROUND THE FIRE IN A BEDOUIN TENT

TWO Bedouin sat alone and silent in the guest tent of one of the camps pitched on the uplands of the Sinai Peninsula. One of the men was middle-aged, poor but influential, but Allah had dealt hardly with him in not giving him any sons. His name was Saleh, and although poor was much respected by the tribe of which he was a sheikh. The other man was younger in years, and from a neighbouring tribe, and he had come to see Sheikh Saleh on business both personal and important. At last the visitor, whose name was Mustafa, said to his host, "Saleh, you know that you are much in debt to me for money I have lent you, and for cattle and grain you have taken from me, also there is the debt you incurred with my father, and now that he is dead comes to me. I know that misfortune has followed you for many years, and that you are poor, and unable to pay the debts, so I am come to propose to you a way by which all that is between us can be paid, and you become free."

Whilst Mustafa spoke, Saleh pulled hard at his pipe, and puffed out clouds of smoke, for he was in no mood to pay his debts, and wondered what his visitor had in mind, or wanted of him. So he simply said, "I am poor and cannot pay you now, you must

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wait till after harvest, or till the lambs and kids be born." Said Mustafa, "I want neither grain, nor lambs nor kids, praise be to Allah I am rich, what I want is your daughter Lulu; give her to me as my bride and I will give you the debt instead of the usual dowry."

The men talked for some time about the matter, and were helped in their deliberations and conclusions by several others who had come in and were sitting round the fire. They pointed out to Saleh that his visitor was only acting according to custom by asking for his daughter, and that the plan he proposed was a good and easy one for paying the debt, for what he asked for was only a girl, that later on might become the bride of some poor Bedouin, or flockless shepherd, and from whom no dowry could be expected, so they advised their chief to give his girl to Mustafa, and be free of her and the heavy debt both at the same time.

At last Saleh consented and it was arranged that Mustafa should come for his bride after ten days, and then in the presence of witnesses give a paper in writing freeing Saleh from all past obligations. So according to custom Lulu was promised to one unknown to her and much older, and as the business had been settled before witnesses there was no revoking it.

Now Lulu, a girl of some fifteen summers, was the only child of Saleh, whose wife had died two years before. She was not only her father's favourite, but was also the pet and pride of all in the camp. She could saddle and ride a horse as well as any man, load a camel as well as any Arab, milk the goats as quickly as any woman, and drive a bargain as profitably as any Bedouin, she was well domesticated and managed the daily affairs of her father as well as any wife. In all dances she was clever, and in singing her voice was always heard. She was the desire of many hearts, and

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many of the youths of the camp had hopes that some day Lulu would be theirs. But her father had been in no hurry to part with her, for she was the joy of his life, his trusted housekeeper and faithful treasurer. So it was a matter of surprise to all when they heard that Lulu was to be given to satisfy the greedy desire of Mustafa, to go as payment for old debts, and to have no visible dowry, the joy of every Bedouin bride.

When Lulu heard from the women what her fate was to be, she went to the guest tent, and before the men of the camp told her father that she would never wed Mustafa, and that the plan he had agreed to for paying his debts would never come off. Said Lulu in a high tone, "I will die before I will be the wife of that man; when I marry I will make my own choice, and marry one from among my own people"; then she returned to the woman's part of the tent and was soon busy with mind as well as body.

Mustafa had heard the declaration made by Lulu, but her father had told him to take no notice of what she had said, but to come at the appointed time and claim his bride, so he left the camp quite thinking that Lulu was his, and congratulating himself on the clever way that he had secured her by foregoing a debt which he knew would never be paid.

In the camp where Lulu lived there was a youth named Tofeek, who had been born about the same time. These two had played together as children, together they had cared for the lambs and kids, and, when older, had tended the sheep and goats. When Lulu went to gather fuel Tofeek was usually near to help her carry the heavy load, and when no eye saw him he would carry the weighty skins of water for her from the spring. Among the people of the camp it was generally understood that some day Lulu would be the bride of Tofeek, and the latter even thought so himself. In

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fact, between the two there was real love, although neither had ever spoken of such a thing; they were happy in their friendship, and were content to wait Allah's time for them to become one. Hence all the more wonder of the Arabs when they heard that Lulu was to go to an outsider, and not to Tofeek.

On the day that Mustafa had made his bargain with Lulu's father, Tofeek had gone off to Suez with two camels laden with wool, which he was to deliver to a merchant in that town, so he was ignorant of the fact that the companion of his short life was to be given to another and that all his hopes about her would soon come to naught.

According to custom, preparations for Lulu's wedding were commenced. The young men indulged in sword dances every night, and the women sang the praises of Lulu and her intended bridegroom. The bridal dress was being made by the clever needlewomen of the camp, and others did crude embroidery on the future bride's veil, so in their way many were busy. But Lulu cared little for the preparation or games, she was busy in another way, thinking how she could escape becoming the wife of Mustafa and upset all her father's plans. To run away was easy, but it meant being brought back again in the near future to the fate planned for her; to hide was easy, but hunger and thirst would compel her to come out from her hiding place; and there only seemed one way of escape for her, and that was to kill herself. But how was she to take her own life except in cold blood, and when and how could she do it? The more she thought of it, the more she determined to free herself from perpetual bondage at the hands of Mustafa. If only Tofeek were near, he would in some way rescue her from her impending fate, but, alas! he was far away, and she was left to her own devices.

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Lulu took no interest whatever in the preparations for her wedding, which the women attributed to coyness and maidenly behaviour, but little did they think that her silence was due to the constant thought as to how she could easiest, and without being seen, destroy herself.

On the third day before the coming of Mustafa to the wedding, Lulu took her axe and rope and went off to gather fuel. She had not gone far from the camp when she met a party of gypsies, who asked her, "Is there a camp near, for we are workers in iron, and seek to make a living, and among us are women skilled in drugs, who can heal the sick, relieve the sightless, and give renewed life to the aged!" Lulu told them of the camp's nearness, and assured them that work in abundance waited for both ironsmiths and doctors. So each parted and went their several ways, but fuel gathering that day was hard and slow work for Lulu, and she returned with a light load to her tent.

The words of the gypsies, "Women skilled in drugs," had impressed her, and she thought, "Cannot I buy from them some poison, and with it do away with myself?" and she decided to try. So in the evening she made her way to the gypsies' tent, and from one of the women received, in exchange for some flour, two pills which she was told would act quickly and surely. She made the excuse that she wanted to poison an old dog, and asked for pills as they could easily be hidden in some dough or meat, and quickly swallowed by the intended victim. "Now," thought Lulu, "my days are numbered; Mustafa will be robbed of his bride, my father's debt remain unpaid, and last, but worst of all, Tofeek my beloved never know how and why I died, but in our case love must rule and custom for once be abused." And she began to weep at the thought of it all, and especially at being parted for ever from her lover.

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At last the tenth day arrived and with it Mustafa and some of his companions. Throughout the day racing and sword dances occupied the young men of the camp ; the elders sat with the visitors smoking their long pipes and drinking coffee. The women were busy making bread for the expectant guests and, later in the day, in cooking the animals slain for the evening feast. Lulu, dressed in bridal garments and hands and feet stained with henna, and hair shining and greasy with fat, was left fairly much alone, and free to do as she liked. She showed no interest in the games or cooking, neither did she eat any food or desire to speak with the girls or women who came and went, her mind was intent on one thing only, the taking of the two pills and in this way putting an end to herself. Remembering the words of the old woman who sold her the pills, "quickly and surely," she decided to swallow them about two hours before sunset, and thus cheat the bridegroom of his anticipated bride. About four o'clock, observed by none, she swallowed the pills and quietly awaited the result, but for two hours there was neither change nor feeling in her.

After sunset the supper was served, and being both liberal and tasty, men, women and children ate to the full, and left the dogs and cats to quarrel over the bones. Then came the cry, "Prepare the bridal camel." A snow-white camel was brought and made to kneel before the tent, the men and women busied themselves in decking the patient beast with carpets, coloured garments and soft cushions, and when all was ready, the call went forth—"Bring out the bride." But when the chosen women entered the tent, there was no bride there, only the bed and rug on which she had sat most of the day. When this was made known, it was concluded that Lulu had gone to another tent, but searching was useless and failed to find her, she had entirely

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disappeared, why, how, when and where none could tell. So the camel was stripped of its finery, and the tongues of all were busy discussing the disappearance of Lulu. Such a thing had never happened in the memory of the oldest present. Had not Lulu's silence been consent to the arrangement? Had she made any objections to the union, or murmured when dressed to meet the bridegroom? To all such questions there was only one answer, "No."

But what had become of Lulu? When all were busy decorating the camel, and finding that the pills had failed in their desired work, Lulu saw no escape but in flight, so lifting the side-cloth of the tent, she quickly passed under it, and commenced to run, whither, she cared not, anywhere to separate her from the hated Mustafa, and constantly the thought was with her, "Surely the pills will act soon." On in the darkness she ran. Sometimes she would stop to listen for the sound of voices, twice she put her ear to the ground to hear if the thud of horses' hoofs travelled toward her, but all was still and silent as the grave. Once the screech of some night bird startled her, and the sudden howl of a jackal near by frightened her so that she began to run again and did so for quite a time. Suddenly she tripped, by catching her bare and bleeding foot in some wild vine, and falling, disappeared through a large opening in the earth. She had fallen into a large cave, of which there are many in the wilderness, and fortunately for her had lighted on a heap of chaff, stored there by some of the Arabs. The fall shook her, and she fancied she felt drowsy and stupid, but in the dark she dared not move, and soon she was in a dead sleep, for the dose she had taken had had its effect, it being a strong sedative only, but not poisonous.

From the camp went out search parties on horseback and foot to look for the missing girl, but in the darkness

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found her not, and before daybreak all had returned except Mustafa, who continued riding and searching till the sun was high and hot, he not liking to be robbed of his bride, or to have his plans and desires thwarted.

But where was Tofeek all these eventful days, and why did he not return to the camp and his Lulu? He had reached Suez and delivered the wool to the trader, and then with the hope of finding others as travelling companions, had lingered in the town. But he soon wearied of being idle, so set out on the return journey alone. All went well for some days, when suddenly one afternoon there came on a heavy thunderstorm, which forced the youth to seek shelter. Being well acquainted with the country, and knowing of the cave, he hastened to it to find shelter for himself and his camels from the rain and wind.

Imagine his surprise, on entering the cave, at seeing in a heap on the chaff, the form of a female dressed in bridal garments, and his wonderment as he examined her closely and saw the face, at finding that it was his Lulu. He called her and shook her, patted her cheek and laid her flat on her back, but there was no response to his efforts, only the constant heaving of her breast told him she was not dead. He asked himself again and again, "What does it mean, my Lulu clad in wedding clothes, lying alone and senseless in a cave?" but nothing that he could recall could throw light on the mystery. Taking from off one of the camels a skin of water, he sprinkled the face of the sleeping girl, and even managed to get some of the water between her lips, and was soon rewarded for his efforts by seeing Lulu move and open her eyes. He spoke to her and called her by name, but only received a grunt in reply, but gradually consciousness returned and Lulu was able to tell him all she knew.

As the sun was setting, and the country wet and

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muddy from the heavy rain, Tofeek decided to stay the night in the cave, for they had food for themselves and fodder for the camels. Contrary to custom, Lulu allowed Tofeek to wait on and serve her, and as neither was in the humour to sleep they talked on far into the night. Only one thing troubled the lovers, fear lest they should be parted when they returned to the camp on the morrow. At last Tofeek spoke thus to Lulu : " My beloved, Allah has helped you to flee from Mustafa, and has brought us together here, it is our Kismet " —Fate—" and what is decreed must come about. In the camp of Khaleel not far from here is a khateeb— i.e., a native priest—let us go to him early in the morning, and for a few piastres let him make us man and wife." Said Lulu, " I am ready ; " so at daybreak they started, and ere the sun was high in the heavens, the man of letters had made them one by muttering over them the first chapter of the Koran. Then they set off for their own camp, both riding on the same camel, and as they neared the black tents the breeze carried the sound of a youth's voice singing, and as the words of the song became audible, the Arabs made out the song as follows :

" Ye Bedouin free, come sing it with glee,
That Lulu is found, that Lulu is free,
She ran from the foe, rather than with him go,
And now she is mine, and now she's with me.
For the khateeb made us one,
With piastres 'twas done ;
And together through life we will go,
So, ye Bedouin free, come and sing it with glee,
That Lulu is found, that Lulu's for me.

" The foe did his best, from me her to wrest,
But Fortune was kinder than he,
For with well-conceived plan, Lulu left all and ran,
Facing darkness, and danger and jan. (Evil spirits.)
Even custom she dared, and in guest-tent she flared,

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Saying—' Ne'er shall that man be to me,
So ye Bedouin free, come sing it with glee,
That Lulu still lives, and Lulu's with me.

" Was e'er love like this, was there ever such bliss ?
Did youth such a beauty e'er find ?
Swift dromedary go, let the world overflow
With the news that our Allah is kind.
Then again I will say, on this bright festal day,
That mine, she has conquered, no debt will she pay,
So sing it with glee, ye Bedouin free,
That Lulu's come back, and Lulu's with me."

The coming of the young couple caused much surprise and joy in the camp, and, contrary to custom, wedding festivities were indulged in after the couple were married, instead of before. Whilst the men raced and played games, and the women's tongues wagged, Mustafa, silent, sad and disappointed, mounted his mare and rode away to his own camp.

A year later Lulu presented Tofeek with a fine baby boy whom they named Mansoor—i.e., Conqueror—in remembrance of the fact that his mother had overturned custom, beaten and upset greed and craftiness, conquered her foe, and won her lover. Both Tofeek and Lulu live on, the former a sheikh among his tribe, the latter a dutiful wife, devoted daughter, and loving mother, all the result of daring to put love against custom, and the desires of nature against the usage of years.

CHAPTER XXIV

OUT-SCHEMED BY A WOMAN

A TALE OF THE DESERT

(This story gives a realistic idea of the dangers of conducting caravans to and from the centres of commerce in the Orient and also of the means and ways employed both by robbers and traders to circumvent each other in their schemes for the safe keeping or securing of treasure. The characters in the story are not imaginary persons, but acquaintances of the writer, and the places mentioned are well known to travellers east of the Jordan.)

UNDER a small tent pitched in a valley in Edom sat two men and a woman. The latter was the wife of one of the men, and sister to the other. Her name was Hafnee—i.e. handful—for she was small, clever, and of a very quick temper, so she was well named. She was childless, and would long ago have been divorced on that account, but her willingness to serve the men in dark deeds, and her quickness of thought and action, made her an acceptable and useful companion. Her husband's name was Fifan, and her brother's Bedr. Both had once been prosperous, but succeeding years of drought had killed their flocks, and caused the harvests to fail, so that they were in dire need for food, which could only be had for money, and their little store was exhausted. For some weeks they had talked over ways and means of eking out an existence during the summer before them, but all their talk came down to one word—money—for with-

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out it nothing could be bought or done. Money they must have, by fair or foul means, and the latter way seemed the only one open and possible to them.

On the day on which this story opens, the three had had a long, earnest and decisive talk, and now action lay before them if their wallets were to be filled and their food supply replenished. It was spring time, the season of the year when local traders journey to Beirut and Damascus to buy in goods for their shops, and as money, in payment for the same, has to be carried by the trader there are frequent robberies en route, and all sorts of schemes are adopted to circumvent the daring and skill of robbers. The trio had decided that the quickest and easiest way to get money was to waylay one of the small caravans on their way to the north, and somehow or other get from it the money intended for the purchase of merchandise. The woman was to make her way to the town of Shobek and linger around in the houses and shops there, and glean all she could about the leaving of a party and their plans for the journey. The men were to go to other places with the same object, and after twenty days they were to meet at the tomb of Solomon, and report what they had learned, and what the prospects for plunder were. Their small black tent was taken down, roped securely, and hung to the branch of a sacred tree, to secure it from interference by evil-minded people, or the damage caused by rodents and other vermin. Parting words were spoken, and the woman again and again assured that if she played false, or failed to bring good news, and turn up at the time and place appointed, she would be divorced for ever, and never again allowed to live under the black shelter that for so many years had been to her home. Said the men to her, "Do not forget to bring the snuff for we may need it, and a bag of it may mean to us a bag of gold."

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Then they went their several ways, intent on gleaning all they could about the possibilities of plunder in the near future.

We need not follow the men in their search for news, as they learned little to encourage them to hope for success in the near future, and when they met again they had little to report. The woman, in one day, reached Shobek, and made her way to the house of the richest and largest trader in the town, pretending that she was homeless, destitute, and ill, but willing to make herself useful about the house in return for her keep. Attached to the house was a shop in which a large and profitable business was carried on. Two brothers, Salim and Isa by name, owned the concern, and being straight and honest men were known in all the country between Shobek and Damascus. Hafnee soon made frequent visits to the shop on the pretence of getting something for the house, or of sweeping it, and as women are hourly visitors to shops no one noticed her coming or going. She was able to learn that the journey by the traders to Damascus would soon be made, but instead of quite a number going to make their purchases, the business was to be entrusted to one only, and that one Khowajah Isa, as he had the most experience of buying in the Oriental markets. The money in payment for the purchases was all to be entrusted to the same person, and amounted to several thousand pounds. Although the way was dangerous, there was an unwritten law that allowed such as Khowajah Isa to pass unmolested through the territory of the different tribes between Shobek and Damascus, safety being guaranteed by presents of coffee, clothing and money.

As the time for starting drew near many gatherings of the traders took place, at which Hafnee generally managed to be present, usually in hiding. She learned

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the probable date of the start, and she also got some idea of the route to be taken ; but most important of all she learned how the money was to be carried. The way arranged was, that the gold and silver coins should be sewn up in small bags, and these bags sewn up in one of the saddle-bags that are in daily use among the Arabs. One bag was to contain the small bags of money, and a second saddle-bag small bags of stones, so that if an attempt at robbery were made the robbers might in the rush take the stones, thinking by its weight that it was money. Hafnee took in all these plans quietly but carefully, and intended to make good use of them on her own account.

One evening, as the traders were gathered in the house of the two brothers having a talk about the journey to be made, Hafnee heard one of them say for the benefit of those soon to travel : “ If you meet suspicious looking fellows on the way don't appear anxious about what you have with you, stay and talk with them a few minutes, but see to it that the mule with the bags on it is kept moving on, thus you will put distance between the money and any robbers, and at night, when you put down to rest, keep the bag of stones near you as though to take good care of it, but the other put apart as though worthless. If robbers attack you they will make for what is nearest you and leave the other, I have tried it and frequently saved what I valued most.” Another than Hafnee heard this advice given and henceforth two were interested in the saddle-bags, for a youth named Zeid who hung about the place was present listening to all that was said and fostering within his heart a desire and determination to have the merchants' money.

On the day appointed the three met as agreed at the out-of-the-way shrine of Solomon. Hafnee was the second to arrive and found Fifan sitting at the foot of

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the long tomb waiting for her and Bedr. He was in no too pleasant a mood, for he was hungry, but on hearing what Hafnee had to tell he cheered up and began to talk over plans for getting the money of the merchants. Hafnee did not tell her companions the words of advice given by the traders about the bags, but kept that to herself, as she intended, unknown to them, to have a try for the money in opposition to them. She proposed to them that they should lie in wait for the coming caravan, and as it would have to cross the great gorge of Mojib, they would for certain pass the night by the stream in the bed of the valley. Then whilst the weary traders slept, her companions, who would be in hiding, could creep out, secure the bag of money, bury it in a hole ready dug, disappear from the place, and later on return to unearthing and carry off the booty. She proposed, too, that she be left out of the night's work as two were less likely to be seen than three. Both men agreed to all she had said, and praised her for what she had done and suggested, little thinking that she intended to out-scheme them and do them out of their anticipated riches.

A day later they separated, the men going to the gorge to await the coming of the caravan, and Hafnee pretending to make for a camp near by to await the return of her brother and husband. After two days of waiting the men saw the caravan coming down the southern side of the great gorge, and an hour before sunset it was resting by the stream in the valley. From their hiding place they saw the animals unloaded, and were careful to notice the two saddlebags, one of which was put by itself near the trader's coverings and other few belongings, and the other left by itself farther away. "See," said Fifan to his brother, "the bag we want is the one under the bedding, for that has the money in it or they would not be so careful of it. May it please

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Allah that we take it from them this night ; to Him be the praise.”

Now Hafnee had prepared for the men a saddlebag of stones exactly in appearance like that of the traders' that contained the money, and told them to substitute it for the bag they intended to steal, so that there would be less chance of discovering the robbery when the time came to reload the animals. She had also given them two bags of thin muslin containing snuff, with which to beat the eyes of the men and animals, and thus blind them, should they raise an alarm or show any resistance.

Soon after the men of the caravan had supped they went to sleep, and nothing was to be heard but the rushing of the water, and the grinding of the animals' teeth as they slowly crushed the barley given them for supper. Shortly before midnight Fifan said to his brother, “ Now is the time, for all are asleep ; but to make sure, let us throw a few stones among them ; if one is awake he will rise to find out from whence come the stones, and we must wait a time longer.” So a few stones were thrown among the sleepers, but there was no movement, and the two men agreed that they could safely make the attempt. Bedr shouldered the bag they had with them and quietly followed Fifan to where the bag they desired lay, and as the latter lifted and shouldered the supposed bag of money, the former quietly put down the bag he had, and then withdrew. In a few minutes the stolen bag was buried beneath the earth, and an hour later both men were far from the place, confident that their fortune was made, and plenty secured for a long time to come.

Little did the brothers think that from the shadow of a huge rock Hafnee was watching them, and inwardly chuckling at their success in securing a bag of stones for their long waiting and trouble, and also picturing to herself their surprise, anger and language when they

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found what they had secured. So far her plans had carried well, and her time was now come, so feeling sure that her companions were gone, and that the others still slept, she crept from her hiding place, and on hands and knees made for the seemingly neglected bag which lay by itself near some sacks of fodder. She reached within a yard or so of the coveted prize, when suddenly one of the pack animals whinnied, and sufficiently aroused one of the men as to make him partly raise himself and look around, at the same time saying in a loud voice, "Man Hatha,"—i.e., "Who is there?" but as he neither saw nor heard any movement he lay down again, covered his head, and soon slept.

Hafnee, who on hearing the pack animal whinny had lain full length on the ground, stayed in that position for fully five minutes, and then, feeling confident that all slept she raised herself and stood over the bag of money. It was as much as she could do to raise and shoulder it, for it was heavy, but she managed to do it and to struggle back to her hiding place. There she rested a few minutes and then shouldering her bag of stones, for she had prepared one also, she returned and put it down in the place of the bag she had taken. Then she hurried off with the money, walking as fast as the heavy bag would allow her. She made for an unused pit in the like of which the Arabs hide or store their grain, and on reaching it she dropped her bag into it, feeling that for the time being it was safe. Then she sprinkled some dust and earth over the bag, to make it appear like the inside of the pit should any inquisitive eyes peer into it, and then started for the camp she had recently left.

Now whilst Hafnee was hiding the bag she had secured, Zeid, who had become interested in the trader's movements, was active also, with the hope of getting rich

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quickly. He had followed the caravan as far as the stream, and having supped off some parched wheat, which he washed down with water which was plentiful, he went to sleep, for he was tired and weary with three long days walking. His plan was to make his attempt to get the bag an hour before dawn, for then it is darkest, and watchers and travellers generally sleep soundly. Thus Zeid, having slept all night, hidden among the oleanders by the side of the stream, neither saw nor knew that others had been busy before him. About the time he desired he rose, and having pulled himself together, and muttering a "Bismillah"—i.e., "In the name of God—" he made toward the sleeping company, and on hands and knees moved among them until he came upon one of the bags. Then pulling from his breast a knife he ripped open the bag and in a short time had filled his capacious bosom with small bags which he believed to be money. Then with one in each hand he hurried away, and was soon lengthening the distance between himself and the traders, by making his way down the valley toward the Dead Sea, where by the light of the dawn he hoped to find a hiding place where he could count his gains unobserved, and if he thought well hide them, and draw on them as necessity required. He found a place to his liking, but he did not find the contents of the bags to his liking, for to his disgust he found he had stolen stones instead of coin, and all his hopes and dreams of buying a bride and living happy ever after were dispelled, and with bitter curses on the traders he left the place, angry, weary and hungry, for he had been out-schemed.

When the trader company awoke, it was soon discovered that robbers had visited them during the night, but they congratulated themselves on having fooled them, and on having saved their money, which, to them, was still in the seemingly neglected bag lying

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by itself near the fodder bags. With many thanks to Allah for preserving them from evil and loss they loaded their beasts and left the place, little thinking that they had been done through the scheming of a woman, or that their money was behind them hidden in an unused grain pit. In due time the trader party reached Maza-reeb, where the horse of flesh was exchanged for the horse of iron, the latter in a few hours landing the trader in the emporium of the Orient. In a khan there he hired a room, and was glad to know that the dangers of the road were past, and as he put the heavy saddle-bag in one corner of the room, and covered his supposed wealth with his sheep-skin coat, he again praised Allah for causing the robbers to select stones instead of coins.

Imagine his surprise, anger, disgust and language a few days later, when, on opening the bag to meet some payment for goods bought, he found that he had brought stones to Damascus instead of money, and that he was minus the wherewithal to pay for his purchases, as well as those of his neighbours. He thought over his journey, puzzled and perplexed; he had no idea of attempt at robbery except the one at the waters of the Arnon, and there the robbers had chosen the wrong bag and found, like himself, stones instead of coin. Think as he would, he could come to no possible or satisfactory conclusion as to where the money was gone, or when it was taken.

Now we must go back to the scene of the robbery. After waiting three days Fifan and Bedr returned to the buried bag, unearthed it, took out the bag and opened it, but they soon discovered that a seeming transformation in its contents had come about, for they too found only stones instead of silver and gold as they anticipated. With an empty bag across their shoulders they returned to where they knew they could find Hafnee, but they had little to tell her, less to show her,

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and still less to say in answer to her many questions. Her persistency in asking them for her share of the plunder at last made her husband angry, and cursing her bitterly for fooling them, as he believed, he uttered the formula of divorce, and bid her begone from his sight for ever. She said little, and an hour or two later, owning only the blue dress that covered her, she slipped away whilst Fifan and her brother slept off their disappointment and anger.

The next day Hafnee was back in the bed of the gorge, and assuring herself that no one was watching her, she went to the unused grain pit. As it was near noon, and the sun about overhead, there was a good light in the pit, and as it was not deep or wide, all that was in it could be plainly seen. Hafnee's eyes soon detected that there had been no apparent interference with the inside, so she broke off a bough from an oleander tree, and using it as a brush commenced to sweep the bottom of the pit, and in so doing raised a cloud of dust which made her stop for a while. When it had cleared she peered into the pit again, hoping, as the result of her vigorous sweeping, to see some sign of the bag she had put there. But there was none, and repeated sweepings failed to reveal any. Weary and puzzled, she sat down to rest and think, and at last set to work again. This time she rolled big stones to the pit and let them fall in, and when a goodly number were piled one on another she dropped on to them and thus reached the bottom of the pit. Search as she would she could not find the bag, so at last in disgust at having lost her treasure, she climbed out again, and with anathemas and violent language she left the spot, to spend the remainder of her days wandering from camp to camp, a divorced woman, who having out-schemed others was at last out-schemed herself, but by no human being.

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When Hafnee threw the saddle-bag into the pit, its weight made it fall through the bottom ; for ants had undermined the ground, and permeated the earth so that it could not sustain the weight, and gave way, thus causing the bag of money to fall lower than intended and to remain hidden in the hollow made by the ants, and covered by a considerable depth of earth. Thus, though Hafnee out-schemed the traders, her own kith and kin, and Zeid as well, she was also out-schemed in a way little dreamed of by either robbers or robbed. The only thing to regret is that good money should be lying idle in an ant's hole, when it might be helping those to whom it belongs, or who need it.



Photo by]

Women of the Bawdee near Mān. Unlike many others, they wear a part of their dowry hanging from their waists

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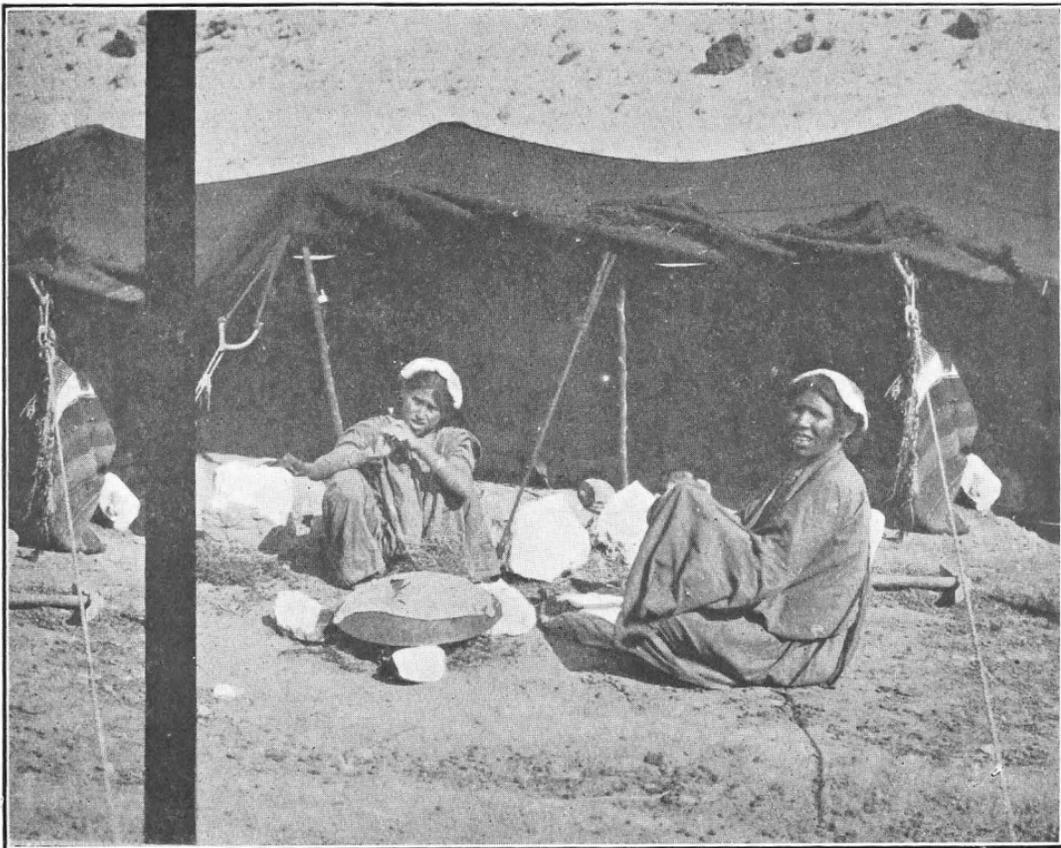


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Baking bread for a hasty meal

[A. FORDER

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CHAPTER XXV

THRICE LOST: A TALE OF BAWDEE WOMAN LIFE

The story which follows describes what is a common practice in the Orient, and shows the condition and status of women. Occidentals may be surprised to learn of a slave market in Mecca, but its presence testifies to the fact. With the annual pilgrimage from Syria and Egypt there are always some with gold with which to buy human flesh, and since the Koran allows the acquisition of slaves, there will always be those who will buy and sell. Buyers ask no questions and sellers give little information, enough that they meet the demand. The places, and sites named in the story are not imaginary, but real. If the reading of the story produces some spark of sympathy for the down-trodden women of the East, and a feeling of gratitude for the blessings of the West, the writing will not have been in vain, nor the time and labour lost.

TWO women sat in front of one of the black tents that composed a large encampment of the Ruwulla Arabs, a numerous tribe that wander between the Syrian Desert on the north and the large oasis of Jowf on the south. The women were baking bread to supply a hasty meal for some visitors who had turned aside to avoid the heat of the day, and who were resting in that part of the goat's-hair house set apart for guests.

As they baked the thin sheets of dough they talked, and being mother and daughter, and quite alone, they spoke freely to each other. Both women had much in common, they were both widows, having lost their husbands whilst out on ghuzzu—i.e., raiding. Both were childless—an unfortunate experience for Bedoun women—neither had any male relatives, and both were poor. They served as helpers in the family

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of the sheikh, and in return received their food, and once a year, a new dress and head-kerchief. Naturally their talk was sympathetic, and retrospective, and largely on family matters. The younger woman, whose name was Fatmi, had only recently become a widow, and although she had been married many years, like Hannah of old she "had no children," but Allah had been gracious to her, and now she was anticipating becoming a mother to a fatherless child. Said Fatmi to her mother, "If Allah gives me a living child, be it boy or girl, I will go with her to pray under the shadow of the Kaaba at Mecca, and if it be a girl she shall spend her days praying at the tomb of the Prophet in Medina, and never shall she be the slave of man, or do the work that should be done by animals. By the life of the Koran and the spirit of Mohammed, I swear this," and she concluded by kissing the palm of her right hand, and then patting the earth with it thrice, as if to seal the statement she had made.

In due time Fatmi gave birth to her first child, which was a girl, in consequence of which there was neither rejoicing nor congratulations; but the mother was pleased and looked upon her babe as a gift from Allah, to comfort, console, and compensate her for the recent loss of her husband.

The first thing Fatmi set eyes on, after the birth of her child, was the morning star that precedes the dawn, It shone clearly through a hole in the tent under which Fatmi lay, and seemed to have appeared just at that time in order to welcome the new-born babe. So the child was named Kokub, for it is a custom among the Bedouin to name children after the first thing seen by the mother after her deliverance, and the name seemed timely and appropriate, for the child came as a light into a dark life after a long night of darkness and disappointment, for Kokub means—The Morning Star.

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Although a girl, Kokub was precious to her mother, and rarely would she allow the child out of her sight, lest some harm should come to it, and as it was the only one she ever expected to have, she was all the more jealous of any one besides herself caring for it ; even the grandmother was scarcely permitted to have the child for long, lest, as the mother said, " the evil eye should strike it," for grannie's eyes were blue. When Fatmi went to gather fuel, or fill the water skins, the child was always taken with her, and thus spent many days of its early life in the crude sling on its mother's back, or hanging from a peg driven into the stones of some ruin or shrine. Many hours the mother spent admiring and playing with her God-given treasure, and her adoration of a girl caused many unkind remarks in the camp. Many a time when alone with her child she might be heard singing in a monotone some such song as follows, given as near as interpretation allows :

" O light of my eyes, and beloved of my heart,
Come late in life, no one shall us part ;
Dearer than ¹ Naga, the palm or ² Nejdeed,
Light of my eyes, thou art all now to me.

" 'Neath the sun's warming rays, we'll pass all our days,
And together repose 'neath the moon's soothing rays ;
For though long delayed, at last I now see
The light of my eyes, that's all now to me.

" The men claim the Naga and sleek Nejdeed,
The bairns hug the lambkins when tiny they be,
But none do I love, or none care to see,
But the light of my eyes that's all now to me.

" Together we'll roam far far from our home,
For ³ Kismet has freed us, and we are our own ;
Allah grant us this blessing, that none from me part
The light of my eyes, and the star of my heart."

Thus in the company of her only child Fatmi passed much of the time, her babe developing into a sturdy and

¹ Dromedary.

² Horse.

³ Fate.

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pretty girl. When the child was about six years of age her grandmother died. In her last hours she was attended by Fatmi only, and ere speech failed her she reminded her daughter of the oath she had taken and begged her to keep the vow made; also, when at the Kaaba, to pray Allah to be merciful to her, and to bring back with her some water from the well Zem-Zem to sprinkle on her grave, all of which Fatmi promised to do if Allah so willed it. Being only a woman, few mourned the death of Fatmi's mother, and soon she was forgotten.

One day Kokub, being now a big girl, went out early one morning to tend the lambs and kids, as is usual for the girls to do among the Ruwulla. But ere Kokub became a shepherdess, custom had to be conformed with, and the young girl branded with the Wusm, or special mark of the tribe. So with a hot iron the tribal mark was burned into her tender skin, so that henceforth by it she could be identified by the Wusm on her shoulder blade, and known as a Ruwulla girl. Thus branded she commenced life. When the late afternoon came and Kokub should have returned with her frolicsome charges, she failed to appear, and when the sun set and there were no signs of her some alarm was occasioned in the camp. Some youths set off in search of her, and soon returned with the lambs and kids, each one bleating loudly for its mother and its evening meal of milk; but Kokub was missing, and none could account for her absence.

The poor mother was much upset and distracted at the absence of her child, and could not rest whilst her Kokub was missing, so after supper she slipped away unnoticed and went out to search for the lost one.

Hour after hour she walked, occasionally she would call her child by name, but her voice faded away into the night, and there was no response, or sign of the child.

Daybreak came and found Fatmi still searching,

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and she was only induced to return to the camp by finding entangled in a clump of brush some shreds of blue calico, evidently caught there as some garment was dragged along the ground in the darkness. The find made the mother conclude that her child had been seized by some wild beast, dragged to its lair, and devoured, so with loud lamentations the bereaved woman returned to the camp to bewail her loss, in proof of which she showed the strip of blue calico which she affirmed was a part of Kokub's dress. Further searching failed to find the lost child, and it became generally believed that she had been eaten by some beast of the wilderness. In time Fatmi became reconciled to her loss, but clung affectionately to the strip of blue calico that remained to her of what was once her delight and treasure.

Several years passed, during which time the lonely woman served as usual in the sheikh's family, for said she frequently, "I have now only two things to live for, to be a servant and to fulfil my vow," for the doing of the latter was continually in her mind. One day the sheikh made known his intention of making the pilgrimage to Mecca, and of taking with him his eldest wife. Fatmi, on hearing this, saw that her opportunity had come, and after much begging and pleading the sheikh consented to her going, provided she could do so on her legs, for said he, "I have no camel to spare for her, neither can I afford to pay the hire of one," so Fatmi had to choose between walking or staying, and bravely she chose the former.

On a given day the little party set out, and for a week or so all went well, Fatmi keeping up well with the camels. None of the party thought to offer her a ride ; she was a woman, and could walk. In time they reached the oasis of Jowf, and whether from fatigue, chill or bad water, Fatmi went down with fever, which

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necessitated her being left behind with some Arabs who had their humble home on the outskirts of the larger oasis.

In due time the fever abated, and Fatmi asked her newly-found friends how best she could proceed to Mecca. An old man, partly blind, suggested that she go to the old castle in the midst of the town, as there she would probably find some pilgrims or caravan going to the sacred city, and as they would travel slowly she could easily keep up with them. This she did, and on reaching the castle, which served as a khan, she soon learned that a party of men and women were leaving in a few days, so she lingered about the place intending to go with them, trusting to Allah to see her through. She noticed, as she lingered about the place, that some of the girls were largely deprived of their liberty, being forbidden to leave the place in which they were kept. She got into conversation with them and found out that some of the females were intended for sale in the slave market of Mecca, where, during the pilgrim season, they were in great demand at high prices. She noticed too that some of the younger girls were closely veiled, and scarcely ever showed their faces for fear of the men who kept close and constant watch over them, and that their clothing was partly city and partly village fashion.

One day Fatmi plucked up courage and asked the men if she might travel in their company to Mecca, and offered to serve them in any way on the journey. Reluctantly they agreed to her going with them, and were urgent in their commands to her not to speak to, or interfere with, any of the girls or women as they journeyed, for said one of the men, "Women ever were mischief makers, and corrupters of the young, and we want no foolish ideas put into the heads of our women and girls." So Fatmi promised to "keep her tongue

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between her teeth," and was grateful for the permission given, as it meant protection, guidance, provision and company for the desert journey to Mecca.

At last they started, the men riding camels, the women and girls walking. They made easy stages each day so as not to weaken or emaciate those intended for sale, for if they were to bring high prices they must arrive in good condition. At night the females were linked together with chains, so that Fatmi's services were then in demand, and opportunity given her to speak with the captives from whom she learned many things. Some told her that they had been bought from their relations, others had been enticed away by promises of good things to come, two or three confessed to having been stolen, and some of the youngest seemed to have little knowledge as to how they became the property of the men.

After they had been on the march for several days they came to one of those long narrow defiles so common in Northern Arabia, and in which is found growing the Seyal or Shittim tree. Those who know the nature of this desert tree, are aware that it is a dangerous enemy to all who go near it, because of its low branches and long thick thorns, which seem bent on harming all who approach it. When passing one of these trees one of the maidens became entangled in a hanging branch, and in trying to extricate herself tore her dress and received a deep and long scratch from the thorns on the branch. No one appeared to notice the incident but Fatmi, and when they stopped to rest from the noon heat, she was ready with her services in mending the torn garment and in washing the scratch, which had bled profusely. Imagine her surprise on exposing the shoulder, preparatory to washing the wound, at seeing the Wusm of the Ruwulla marked on the skin. Eagerly she looked at the mark, and as she looked she

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thought. She had heard of no Ruwulla girl being stolen ; had such a thing happened, the whole tribe would have heard of it, and turned out in force to run down the thieves, for the girls and women of the Bedouin are precious to them, although they are considered as belonging to a lower scale.

Fatmi washed the wound, and sewed up the rent in the dress, and no more was thought of the affair. But the Wusm on the girl's shoulder was not forgotten, and Fatmi's curiosity overcame the orders of the men, and at night she ventured to ask the girl about her past, and especially as to the Wusm. At first the girl evaded the questions, and gave as a reason for the brand, that she had been burned by some doctors to cure her of some illness that caused much pain in the back. But Fatmi was not to be put off thus, for hope had lighted in her mind a reminder of Kokub, who had disappeared so mysteriously and suddenly. But this could not be Kokub ; she was killed by a wild beast, in proof of which she had the strip of blue calico. This girl, too, was older and bigger than Kokub would have been had she lived, and her face and arms were tattooed as Kokub's never had been. But the Wusm was proof that the girl belonged to the Ruwulla Bedouin, and Fatmi was determined to find out something of her past.

One day, as they journeyed, these two lingered in the rear of the caravan, and Fatmi saw her chance of questioning the girl, but just as she was about to open fire on her, one of the men noticed how far behind they were, so halting his camel he waited till they came up with him, and then said, " Woman, you cursed one, make no plans with this girl for getting away from us, and you, girl, daughter of a dog, have a care how you act, for my Naga—camel—is swift, my aim sure, and my bullets deadly. Get you on with the other females,

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and you, woman, follow at my camel's heels, or, by Allah, you shall never see Mecca."

He then gave each a lashing with his long whip, and they were glad to escape more by quickly taking the places assigned them by their hard conductor. Thus for the time being Fatmi's hope of getting at the girl's past was frustrated.

CHAPTER XXVI

FOUND, BUT ONLY TO BE LOST AGAIN.

TWO days after what was told in the preceding chapter, the party of travellers came to a plantation of date palms, under the shade of which they sought shelter from the heat of the sun. As the simoom was blowing hard, the stifling air of the desert made the travellers drowsy, and soon most of them were sound asleep. Fatmi again saw an opportunity of engaging the girl in conversation, and quickly made use of it. Sitting down by her she first asked how the wound was, and was made heavy-hearted on being told that the lash of the whip had reopened it and caused it to bleed again, but for fear of the men and the whip she had said nothing about it. Fatmi then became bold and asked the girl of her past, pleading, as her right in asking and knowing, the Ruwulla Wusm, which she said was imprinted on her thigh, and which, to confirm, she showed the girl. Thus encouraged, the fearful captive promised to tell all she knew, on the condition that Fatmi did not tell the men, for they had threatened that if the girl at any time told of her past, that they would kill her, and she had no desire to die, for even to captives, especially the young, life is sweet.

What she told was much as follows : “ True, I am of the Ruwulla, but my life among them was short. Of a father I have no remembrance, but my mother was kind to me and loved me very much. One day I went out with the lambs and kids as usual, and late in the

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afternoon was seized by three men. They gagged and blindfolded me, and then putting me on a donkey made off with me, saying as we went, 'It is better for her to ride, as there will be no footprints to follow, for these Bedouin are devils at tracing marks in the sand.' I was taken to a camp of gypsies, and they took me to the Jowf, where I was sold to the men who are with us for sixty dollars. They call me Zarlee, because they say I am always angry, but my name at first was Kokub, and——"

But the narration was never finished, for Fatmi seized the maiden round the neck, and in loud tones exclaimed, "My girl, my girl, Kokub my beloved, thanks to Allah for giving you back to me! Now together we live and together we die." The delighted mother said no more, for a heavy blow on her shoulders caused her to cease speaking, and turning herself about she saw standing over them the cruel conductor of the party. He quickly took in what had happened, cursed the girl with bitter curses, and the mother more, and then in his frenzy drove the girl before him, raining blows on her all the time, until at last she fell exhausted. He then dragged her near to his camel and chained her to its leg.

All this time the other men looked on, not one forbade what was being done, for they were only "females," and must be kept under. The men were angry that Fatmi had got out of Kokub her past history, and threatened her that if she spoke to her again on the journey they would shoot her and thus be rid of her. The rest of the journey was made in silence as regards the mother and daughter; the former had to be content by having her near, and happy in the certainty that her Kokub lived.

On reaching Mecca, Fatmi was told to go her own way, and she was made lonely and sad by seeing Kokub,

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with the others, securely housed in one of the many inns that abound at Mecca, and to which she was forbidden entrance. Although the proper time for commencing the seven days of celebration had not come, Mecca was crowded with pilgrims, each intent on business, either religious or secular. Fatmi lost no time in going to the Kaaba and praying there, and then she bought a small vial of Zem-Zem water, paying for the same with some of her abundant black tresses. Then she passed her time in trying to see Kokub, but the porter at the inn door forbade her entrance. Daily, in company with an old woman who smoked a long pipe, she sat and watched for her daughter, but there was no sight of her, and it looked as if she had disappeared again.

One morning, as Fatmi was on her way to her watching place, she came to a wide and high doorway, through the small door of which many were passing in. At the entrance stood a man crying out with a loud voice, "Come, ye rich and seekers for brides, honour us by your presence, enter and see maidens for your sons, slaves for your families, concubines for your harems, and old hags to work for you." Fatmi heard and entered, lured in by some inward promptings which she could not resist. Passing down through a long narrow passage, she came out into a large court. Around this were numerous rooms, some of which she entered. In one she saw a few men seated around a table, evidently transacting business of importance; in another room she heard the chinking of money passing between two men, in a third she found a few women seated on the floor, each looking dejected and forsaken. In the last room she dared to enter she found a mixture of men in diverse costumes. Baghdad, Bombay, Damascus, Jerusalem, Cairo, and even far away Constantinople, each was represented in the crowd. Ranged along under the wall, some standing and some sitting, were about

Found, but only to be Lost again

ten girls, naked but for a loin cloth, and all plump and good looking. Some of the men were examining and handling the maidens as they would some animal they were about to purchase, and those to whom the girls belonged were not slow in sounding their virtues.

Fatmi's eyes soon saw Kokub amid the crowd. She was in the centre of a ring of men, who listened intently as a man praised her. "A real Bedouwee, born and bred in the desert, as pure as the water of Zem-Zem, and as virtuous as the black stone of the Kaaba. Her face like the full moon, breasts like pearls, hair finer than the Naga's, and blood as clean as any Nejidees'. Did you ever see a better at twelve years old, or one more suitable for bride, wife, slave or companion? No harem has her like, and few have the money to buy her." Ere the man had finished what he had to say Fatmi realized that her daughter was to be sold, that the place she was in was the slave market, that those about her were sellers and buyers of human beings, and that her Kokub was to be disposed of for money. Into the midst of the circle she rushed, so suddenly that none stopped her, and taking Kokub in her arms, pushed and carried her back to the wall, and then facing the astonished men she shouted, "She is my daughter, she is my daughter; who buys her buys me; where she goes I go; by the life of Arafat we are one, together we'll live and together we'll die."

Ere she had finished speaking rough hands pulled her away from Kokub's side, and a smack in the face silenced her. Then she heard a harsh voice saying, "Heed her not, the daughter of a dog, she is crazed, she lies, women such as her should stay with the beasts of the wilderness. Who will take her for a soldi (penny)?" Calling one or two men, the salesman ordered them to put the exasperated mother outside in the street and see to it that she did not get inside again. Sitting in

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the shade of a wall opposite, the distressed mother waited hour after hour in the hope of seeing her daughter, or of hearing what had befallen her, but she was not to be seen, neither did any give tidings of her even if they had been able to do so.

Tired, sad and hungry, Fatmi sought a place to sleep in that night, but no one had a place for a desolate, moneyless, forsaken daughter of the desert, and then again, she was "a woman," and in Mecca women serve for the pleasure of the Kaaba devotees, the slaves of families, or the drudges of the men.

That night she slept under the stars, supperless, coverless, friendless, childless, and hopeless, in the city that saw the birth of a religion which teaches its adherents to feed the hungry, help the poor, relieve the friendless, and give alms to the deserving.

Early in the morning Fatmi returned to the slave market, gained an entrance, but found the place empty of all but a few men who were clearing the court and rooms of the dust and rubbish left by the recent occupants. One of the men recognized Fatmi as the woman who had caused the scene on the day previous, and said to her, "Woman, if you would see that maiden of yours tarry not in Mecca, for she is not here; last night she left for Sham—i.e., Damascus—and by now is far away; follow her if you would longer nourish her, and may Allah grant you an easy journey." Heavy-hearted and puzzled, Fatmi left the place. In the street outside she met the salesman who lauded so vociferously the praises of Kokub the day before. Falling at his feet, she begged him, "in the name of the Kaaba, and by the life of the beard of the Prophet," to tell her where her daughter was. Thus appealed to, the man replied, "Woman, your daughter is sold, and by now far on her way to Cairo. By the life of Allah, she was a beauty, but the dog that bought her got her cheap, for

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all he gave was sixty liras English, and she was worth a hundred at least, but gold neither changes, nor gets older nor dies, as does human flesh ; so I let her go, for buyers were few and hard."

Damascus and Cairo—which was true ? One or other of the men had lied to her. Why should they tell her the truth ? She was only a forlorn woman, and who cared for either her or her daughter ? As she wended her way through the streets of the city she met the old woman of the pipe. To her she told all she knew and asked her advice, which was freely given, and was to the effect that Fatmi should consult one of the diviners in the city, who of a surety could tell her where her Kokub was gone.

Fatmi lost no time in following the advice given, and having told her story to the diviner asked her, "for the sake of Allah, and his Messenger," to tell her where she would find the missing girl, for surely Kokub was lost a second time. Pitying her condition, the diviner consulted her sand patches, tell-tale pebbles, and invisible spirits, and then muttering the word "Sham," bade the mother go, asking neither payment nor thanks.

There was no difficulty in finding travelling companions this time, for pilgrims by hundreds were returning to their homes in Syria, so Fatmi joined herself to a party which she heard was going to Sham, and which fortunately for her were kindly disposed, and in return for small services rendered to the harem she did not lack either food or covering the whole journey. Many nights they passed in Bedouin camps, which reminded Fatmi of the few happy years she had spent with her Kokub among the Ruwullah.

At last Damascus was reached, and on the outskirts of the city Fatmi bade good-bye to her kind companions. They pressed her to go with them to their

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home in the city, but she refused, preferring to have her liberty rather than the limitations of a guest, and she wanted to be free to search for her Kokub if she were to be found.

On reaching the river Abana she was lured to sit under the willows by its side, and listen to the music of its rushing waters, which were pleasant to see and hear after the barren and waterless stretches of the desert. The soft air and sound of the water made her drowsy, and soon she was asleep, and as she slept she dreamt. In her dream she saw a large door on which were three brass knockers in the shape of a hand. Through the door she entered and emerged into a large courtyard in the midst of which was a circular basin full of water. On the edge of the basin sat a girl, which the dreamer approached with the purpose of speaking to her, but before she uttered a word she awoke, and lo she was by the river's side. The Bedouin believe much in dreams, and Fatmi considered hers a good omen, so clasping her hands she said, "O Allah, you have given me a sign, if you care for me—a woman—lead me to my girl and give her back to me. Amen." After her prayer she went into the city, and that night supped and lodged in the women's apartment at the great mosque.

For many days the poor woman wandered the intricate streets of Damascus, always looking for the door she saw in her dream, but without success. One morning she confided her trouble to a woman near whom she slept in the mosque, and this new friend advised her to tell her trouble to Yah Yah and ask his help. So before starting out again she went to the shrine of Yah Yah—i.e., John the Baptist—told her trouble and asked his help. Comforted and encouraged, she set out on her search, this time going into a quarter of the city not yet searched by her. After walking some time she saw a wide-open door on which were three brass

Found, but only to be Lost again

hands that served as knockers, and inside an old doorkeeper fast asleep. Fatmi entered the doorway, and being barefooted she did not waken the sleeping watchman. She came into a court full of trees, passed through it and on into another, in the middle of which was a pool of water, and on its edge sat a young girl with her shoulder bare and her back to the silent gazer. Fatmi gazed indeed, and had good reason for so doing, for on the bared shoulder before her was the Ruwulla Wusm, clear and distinct, and across it the mark of a wound. Rushing forward she exclaimed, "Kokub, Kokub, thanks be to Allah," and once again mother and daughter were together.

Many days they passed in each other's company, and Kokub soon told of her sudden disappearance from Mecca. The day on which Fatmi made the scene in the slave market, Kokub was sold for one hundred and twenty English liras. The same evening after supper she left Mecca in company with her buyer, who was a man of influence in Damascus. Since her arrival in the city she had served in the harem, and had been kindly treated, but, said she, "My mother, I long for the desert, the black tents and the palms. Let the Damascenes have their city and its water, but give me the open air, the freedom and scent of the wilderness, and my mother again." The people of the house made no objections to mother and daughter meeting each day, but Kokub was forbidden to leave the women's quarters.

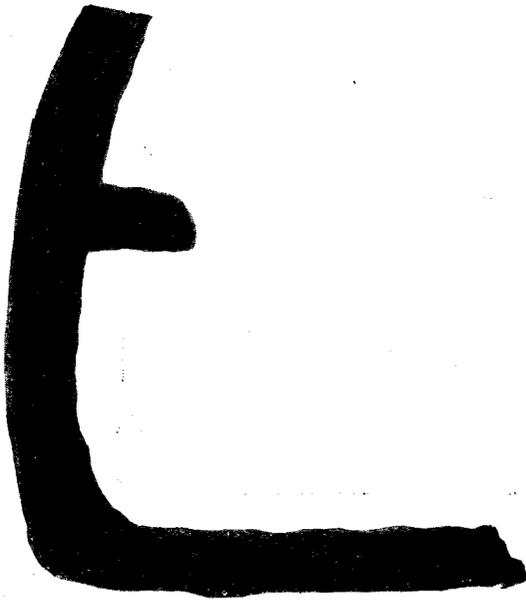
One day Fatmi went as usual to visit Kokub, but instead of an open door she found a closed one. She knocked repeatedly, but in vain, until at last a neighbour told her that the family had gone away the evening before, but to where she knew not. So for the third time Kokub was lost, and her mother could find no traces of her. Even the old doorkeeper, who had been sympathetic, had disappeared. Fatmi's short-

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lived joy having come to so abrupt an end, what more had she to do? So she set out for the Syrian desert again and after several days' walking came once again to the Ruwulla. She one day visited her mother's grave and poured on it the Zem-Zem water from Mecca, and having thus fulfilled her vow and promise as far as possible, she lived the rest of her days mourning for Kokub, who "by the decree of Allah," had been "Thrice Lost."

But what of Kokub? The man who bought her took her to Constantinople in company with his harem. There he made her a present to one of the officials from whom he desired a favour. Kokub, although forced to live a city life, constantly longed for the desert, and never forgot the mother from whom she was thrice separated, neither is she ashamed of her pedigree, and frequently may be heard singing some such words as these:

"The desert for me with its air pure and free;
Made by Allah for His own Bedowee;
City life may please some, but again give to me
The black tents, hairy Naga, and graceful palm tree."



EL WUSM

The tribal mark of the Ruwulla Arabs

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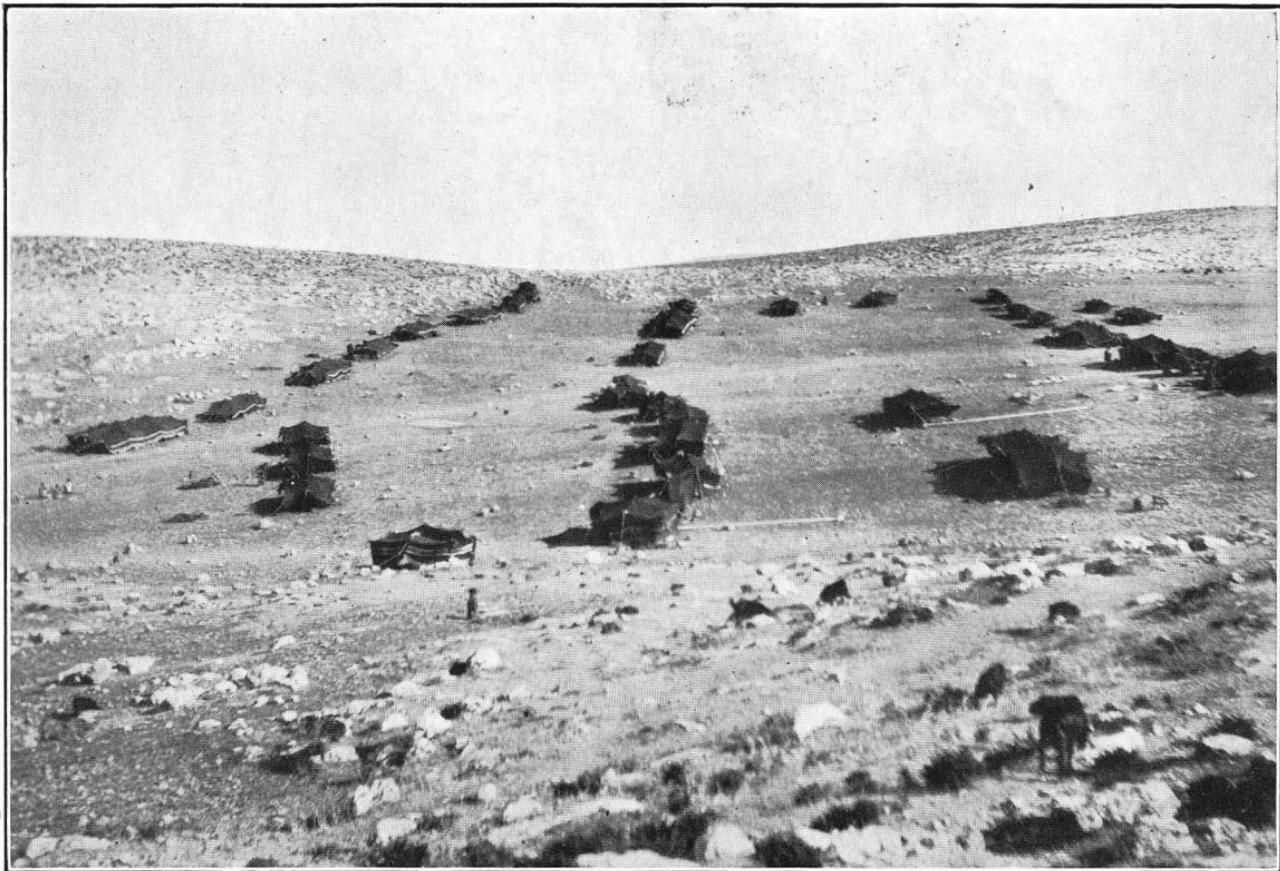


Photo by]

[A. FORDER

One of "the encampments that Kedar doth inhabit." A camp of goats' hair tents, the typical home of the Bawdee, "having neither gates nor bars" (Jeremiah xlix. 31)

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CHAPTER XXVII

LOOKS, DESIRES, NEEDS, POSSIBILITIES

“**L**IFT up your eyes, and look” (John iv. 35). Whilst writing the contents of this book there have been many breaks, during which the mind and thoughts have looked on the past and ahead to the future. Looking on the past gives reasons for thankfulness, because one has been permitted to carry the printed Word into so many hitherto untouched places, for so many open doors, and for a kindly welcome among all classes whether in city, town, village or camp—thankfulness that, for so many years, friends, many of them unknown, except by correspondence, have kindly and regularly supplied the needs for carrying on so quiet a work, and have not insisted on, or given hints for, elaborate reports or startling successes.

Looking back one is forced to be thankful for many years of good health, although lived under circumstances hard, trying, dangerous, and adverse to the physical make up of an Occidental—thankful that over so many large and varied districts, one has been able to preach the Gospel to so many who before had never heard that Jesus, the Son of God, died for them, thus becoming their Saviour. A look backward recalls the many good friends made in the Bawdee, some of whom have passed away, whilst the majority remain, and also the few who here and there have taken hold of the Truth presented to them, and in spite of opposi-

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tion, persecution, and ostracism have witnessed faithfully among their own people. A look back over past years recalls many who were once hostile, but now friendly, no small cause for thankfulness also. Lastly, a review of the past gives encouragement for the future, and leads on to enlarged desires to be "Always abounding in the work of the Lord" (I Cor. xv. 58). Space forbids recording all the desires of one's mind as the future is anticipated, hence only a few can be named. First and foremost comes the desire for a continuance of the prayers and practical sympathy of those interested in the work for Ishmael's evangelization, for these are valuable adjuncts in such an enterprise. Then comes the desire to take the Word and Message into new districts, where the greater part of the population are adherents of the Oriental churches, steeped in superstition, ignorance, saint worship and church observances, whilst the Truth is unknown to them, as their leaders are blind with spiritual blindness.

During my imprisonment I learned of large districts where I should be welcomed as a seller of the Word, or a witness to the Truth, which increased my desire to extend my efforts on behalf of the people of the Bawdee. A contemplation of the unknown, neglected, accessible and needy regions of the Bawdee, makes me desire to forge ahead and reach these for the first time, with the hope that the newly-broken ground, and the fresh information acquired, might lead and encourage others to follow and occupy the districts thus opened. The desire is also forced upon me that one result of the reading of these pages should be a large increase in those willing to co-operate with us on behalf of the Arabs, for as old friends and supporters pass away, it is necessary that others take their place, if the work is to continue, be established, and become fruitful in results for Him, whose we are, and whom we serve.

Looks, Desires, Needs, Possibilities

On the subject of needs one would be slow to write, were it not for the New Testament injunction to "Let your requests be made known" (Phil. iv. 6). Every reader knows that work of every kind has its needs, some more, some less than others. The work referred to in these pages on behalf of the people of the Bawdee also has its needs, but they are few, and will be mentioned only for the sake of any who may wish to help. Mention has already been made of the need of prayer. For this there is a continual need. Prayer for blessing on the work of the past, and for all future efforts, also that wisdom, patience, endurance and faith, may be given to all workers for and among the descendants of Ishmael. A need that some may like to supply is that of Arabic Scriptures, and good literature in the shape of religious leaflets, tracts, booklets, and books. For such there is a constant demand. These are usually sold at a very low price, far below cost, as experience has proved that reading matter that is bought is valued, appreciated, and cared for, more than that which is given free. The British and Foreign Bible Society and the American Press at Beirut both allow liberal discounts on all books and literature bought from them, so that a little money goes a long way when spent for this purpose.

Another need that comes up now and again in the course of the work, is that of a few drugs and medical supplies, with which to alleviate in some measure the sufferings of those met with whilst itinerating among the uncared-for people of the Bawdee. Many a friend has been made, and opposition broken down, by being able to help a sick or wounded person, by means of simple remedies supplied by friends in the home land, and as all appreciate help in trouble, mention is made here of the need of medical supplies, with the hope that some would count it a privilege to help in this line, whereas

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other ways of helping might not appeal to them. Of the constant needs of financial help I will not write, for all know that the need is a perpetual one, and that both work and worker cannot be sustained without the £ s. d. necessary abroad as well as at home. With the supply of needs assured the possibilities are many and varied. In a comparatively short time, as time counts, it would be possible to visit the untouched districts recently learned of, and give them the opportunity of buying Scriptures, as well as hearing the preached Word. With needs supplied, it would be possible to revisit again the many places already reached, and possibly supply for them settled and resident workers, instead of leaving them uncared for, except as regards an occasional visit. With needs supplied, the greatest possibility of all might be achieved in the salvation of souls, brought about by the Holy Spirit through the preaching of the Word, for left alone the people of the Bawdee must perish spiritually, because of their ignorance and helplessness, as says the Apostle Paul, "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. x. 14, 15).

If, after reading these pages, anyone wishes to know more about the work, he should write to me, care of the Publishers, Marshall Brothers, Ltd., 24-25 Paternoster Row, London, E.C.4.

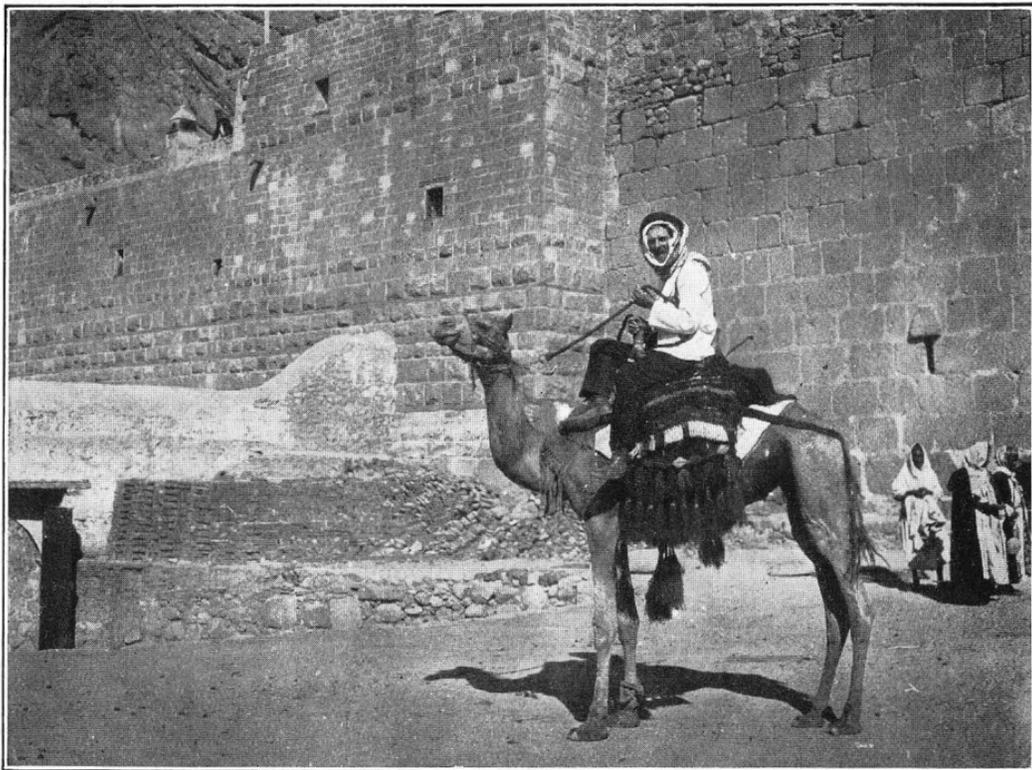


Photo by]

The writer outside St. Catherine's monastery ready for a tour in Sinai

[A. FORDER

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EL-BAWDEE

THERE'S a land far away, towards the break of
the day,
Where millions unnumbered do dwell,
Who with steed for a mate, and food luscious date,
Little care for the world's busy spell.
The news of the day, and those who oft stray
To wonder, and study and see,
Things by time overgrown, over there are unknown,
In the land that is named El-Bawdee.

In that land far away, towards the break of the day
There is much to allure and to please:
The warrior bold, who as head of his fold,
Waits the war call that comes with the breeze,
Maidens dusky and tall, lead forth from the stall,
Mare, camel and flocks to the lea,
And the palm that feeds all, as it waves seems to call,
To the land that is named El-Bawdee.

In that land far away towards the break of the day,
Where the mirage so oft leads astray,
Are millions who say that Islam is the way
To Paradise fair, where the Houries do play;
They're for those who will pray with the dawn's first
ray,
And at noon, and when sun's in the sea.
For five times in the day, sounds the call, "Come to
pray,"
In the land that is named El-Bawdee.

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That land far away towards the break of the day,
Is one 'mong the lands of the world,
And the Saviour said, "Go to all nations, and lo,
I am with you" till time shall be furled.
The Gospel so free was intended to be,
For Anglo, Negro and Chinee,
Indian, Jap, Greek and Jew, Arabs many or few,
In the land that is named El-Bawdee.

A. F.