

lehem, where Jesus was born; a short distance east of Jerusalem, across a valley, is the *Mount of Olives*, to which he went so frequently; about two miles east is *Bethany*, where the family lived that he loved. In the hilly country of the north is *Nazareth*, where he spent his early life; and about twenty miles east of Nazareth is the *Sea of Galilee*, which was the scene of many of his noted miracles.

ARABIA.

680. Arabia is an extensive country on the east of the Red Sea. A large portion of it is a parched desert land, with here and there a fertile spot, called an *oasis*. The most useful tree on the borders of the deserts is the date-palm. Its fruit,

called dates, is much used for food. The southern part of Arabia, which is very hot, and has heavy rains at certain seasons, yields the best coffee in the world. Here also are forests of spice and gum trees.

681. The desert in which the Israelites wandered for forty years, and *Mount Sinai*, where God gave the commandments to Moses, are in the north-west of Arabia.

682. Many of the inhabitants of Arabia are roving shepherds, whose property consists in camels, horses, and other animals. Arabian horses are swift and handsome, and an Arab is said to love his horse as much as his wife and children. The shepherds often quarrel with each other about



684. A CARAVAN CROSSING THE DESERT TO MECCA.

their pasture-lands and wells of water, as the servants of Abraham and Lot quarrelled long ago.

683. That part of Arabia which borders on the Red Sea belongs to Turkey. It has two noted cities—*Mecca*, the birth-place of Mohammed, and *Medina*, the place where he was buried.

684. Every year thousands of Mohammedan pilgrims visit Mecca. These superstitious people believe that a pilgrimage to this city will secure the forgiveness of all their sins. There is a large mosque or Mohammedan temple in Mecca containing a black stone, which Mohammedans think very holy, and

which is said to be worn quite smooth from being kissed so frequently. Only Mohammedans are allowed to enter the temple. Some persons, however, curious to know what sort of a place it is, have pretended to be Mohammedans, and thus have gained admittance.

PERSIA.

685. Persia lies between the Caspian Sea and the Persian Gulf. A large part of the country is