

THE CENTURION

PART I LETTERS

I

GALILEE

CAIUS OPPIUS TO TULLIUS

FOR more than ten months, I have commanded the little garrison of Magdala in Galilee and, without forgetting either Rome or my dear friend Tullius, I begin to find this far away country, which had at first appeared one of exile, both interesting and agreeable.

We occupy a fortress built upon a rocky cliff, on the border of a very beautiful lake which the Galileans call the Sea of Genezareth. At the foot of the fortress lies a little village which slopes down towards the lake. On the neighboring heights are terraced orange trees and vineyards, together with several villas belonging to rich Jews and Greek merchants. Along the strand lie the barques of the fishermen. They are beautiful when in the morning they take their flight to