

him out of the grotto twice. S. Sabas at last thought that some settlement must be made so he said to him, "We are both creatures of the same Creator; but since I am the reasonable being it is but just that you should cede your place to me." The king of beasts saw the force of the argument and from that time forth occupied a corner of the cave by himself. The monks will show you the very spot if you ask them and that will no doubt remove your scepticism if you have any. Then there are three other caves far apart from one another where three hermits of the sixth century lived, Xenophon, Arcadius and John; who used to salute each other every morning from the cave-mouths but remained too far apart to speak.

Perhaps the most interesting Monk of Mar Saba was S. John Damascene who lived here in the eighth century. Although he was a poet the Superior to try his humility did not allow him to write anything at all, and afterwards set him to do some of the most menial duties in the convent. His ready obedience bought for him permission to exercise his talent, and soon he had composed some of the most beautiful hymns used in the Greek Liturgies. We ought to be grateful to him, for he wrote "The Day of Resurrection, Earth tell it out Abroad!" and I don't know how we could well do without that hymn at Eastertide I shall always like it better now that I know that it came from the clefts and crags of Mar Saba.—Upon what scenes has the moon looked down since then? Many a prayerful Saint and many a pillaging soldier. The last time the Monastery was sacked was in 1834. Since that they have had peace, for the Russians now keep a watchful eye upon the home of the Saints they reverence.—But we really must climb up to our cell or we shall not make the early start to-morrow. Besides that we have nine hours in the saddle before us.

Next morning we left bright and early, a picturesque cavalcade in spite of the tourists' sombre western garb; for at our head rode a handsome Bedouin Sheikh, wrapped in a cloak with broad stripes of black and white and a sword at his side, and next to him upon a spirited Arabian came our blue-clad dragoman, his head encircled by a rich eastern handkerchief of yellow silk striped and tasselled, his saddle and harness decked with many colours; while behind us followed a tall Maltese servant in a long white linen garment with a coloured girdle and bright head-gear; and a donkey-boy in red and blue seated crosswise upon the baggage and water-skins all piled upon a poor little donkey. Thus we began our advance towards the Dead Sea, as it lay in all its calm beauty before us reflecting from its light blue surface the green valleys and rugged mountains of Moab towards the sunrise. It looked but a stone's-throw from us, yet we had before us a twelve miles' ride and a descent of some eighteen hundred feet before we reached its shore at noon to rest upon our journey. There were many things as we went through the land to charm and to teach us; many things to think of at the Jordan fords, many things at

Jericho, at Bethany, on Olivet and about the Holy City; but I don't think any of them, or anything that we have since met with can ever dim the memory of that moonlight night in the old Convent of the Kidron valley.

When you go to Palestine take care not to miss it. You will say, I think, that it is well worth the trouble of getting there.

IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

In the February number of the North American Review, three articles appeared bearing on this subject. The first, by the Marquis of Lorne, is strongly in favour of a closer connection between England and her Colonies. The second is an able essay by Mr. Alex. Pirie, who very fairly states the advantages which might accrue to Canada in the event of her taking up a position of full independence, or if she formed part of a Union of the whole North American Continent. Finally we have some half-dozen lines from the pen of Sir John A. Macdonald, with which he curtly dismisses the question as beyond the range of practical politics. There is always the danger, however, of so-called "practical politics" becoming synonymous with "party politics," in which case nothing more soul-destroying could be imagined. Surely a statesman's duty is something higher than merely to wait cap in hand till the People have formed their opinions for better or for worse, and then servilely to carry out their sovereign behests. A true politician with the real welfare of his country at heart would not satisfy his conscience by the manipulation of the petty questions of party politics alone, without regarding the future prospects of the nation, and where needful, warning and preparing the people under his charge for any changes that may be in store.

Now, to any one who has studied the history and development of nations, or who has any appreciation for the remarkable growths of national feeling in our own times, it should be evident that the question of Imperial Federation affects the most vital interests of the English Empire. The present relations between the mother country and the colonies can not last for ever, however agreeable and beneficial they may be at present. Sooner or later the decision will have to be made, whether the colonies are to be firmly established as integral parts of the Empire by giving them a fair representation in an Imperial Parliament, or whether an amicable separation of the constituent portions of the realm should take place. No doubt we colonists are well pleased just now to bask at our ease beneath Britannia's aegis, especially as we do not have to pay for the privilege. But every enthusiastic colonist should look forward to the time,—perhaps not so far distant after all,—when Canada and Australia, New Zealand and South Africa, (and possibly even India), shall be important enough, and educated enough, to emerge from a position of "dependence," and shall be entitled to cast their votes in matters which concern the general weal of