

Easter Gladness.

BY M. L. W.

I would like to grow like the lily fair,
And prove in that beautiful way,
My joy that the blessed Lord of all
Is risen this Easter day
For the lily can offer its purest bloom,
And sweeten the air with its rich perfume,
On his resurrection day.

Christ loved the lilies that bloom in the field,
And grows on the hillside fair,
And bids his children remember, too,
That we are much more his care,
So I will lift up my cheerful face,
And smile in the sad world's darkest place,
My Easter gladness to share.

And I will say to his waiting friends,
"He is risen from the dead,"
And to all the world the glorious news
Of his resurrection spread;
And sweeter than fragrance of lilies shall be,
My Easter message of joy to thee,
He is risen, as he said.

CAESAREA-PHILIPPI

BY THE EDITOR.

(To illustrate the Sunday-school Lesson.)

Two hours' ride from Dan, over a rugged road, and a climb of five hundred feet, brought us to the most picturesque camp we found in Palestine. It was on the banks of a rushing stream on the outskirts of the town of Banias, the ancient Caesarea-Philippi, the chief source of the Jordan. The shattered towers and broken walls of the ancient town were of peculiar picturesqueness. The approach to our camp was through the gate in an old wall, shown on this page. The round objects in the wall are sections of ancient columns built into its structure. On the site of a bold cliff is a great grotto from which gushes



BRIDGE AND GATEWAY AT BANIAS, CAESAREA-PHILIPPI

out strong and clear the infant Jordan, a stream fifty feet in width. This fountain is described by Josephus as descending to an immeasurable depth. For unknown ages this wild glen, the source of this noble stream, has been a sacred shrine from Phoenician and classic times. Here the Greeks had the temple to their god Pan, whence the classic name of Panium, corrupted to the modern Banias. Over this fountain Herod the Great built a temple in honour of Augustus. This was probably the "Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon under Mount Hermon" (Joshua 11:17). We entered the grotto and tried to decipher the well-nigh obliterated Greek inscriptions on the tablets shown in the first cut on this page. All we could make out were some references to the priest of Pan. The domed structure on the cliff is the church of St. George. An ancient moat with ruined walls surrounds the town. In the gardens and narrow alleys may be seen shattered columns of the temples and palaces of Caesarea-Philippi.

THE SCENE OF CHRIST'S TEACHING.

Special interest is given the town from its being the northern limit of our Lord's journeys in Palestine, and on this noble terrace, in full view of the stately architecture of the Roman city, our Lord held that memorable conversation with his disciples, recorded in the sixteenth chapter of Matthew, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" ending in the affirmation which has become the watchword of the Church of Rome, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

The ruins of Caesarea-Philippi have



THE GROTTA AND SHRINE OF PAN, AT THE SOURCE OF THE JORDAN.

crumbled almost into nothingness. Instead of the splendid palace of Herod Philip, we see the flat-roofed, mud-walled houses of the squalid modern Moslem town. But that church founded upon the immovable rock, Jesus Christ, the true Corner-stone, has been built up in every land. The consensus of the best opinion on the subject is that on one of the peaks of Hermon, near Caesarea-Philippi, the Master led his three disciples "into an high mountain apart, and was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light." This glorious mountain, the grandest in Palestine, was surely a fitting place for such a sublime epiphany.

CRUSADERS' CASTLE.

A thousand feet above the town towers the famous castle of Banias, or Es-Subelbab, one of the most majestic ruins in the world. We rode up the steep hillside through olive groves and wheat fields for over an hour, and then left our horses for a scramble up the rocky cliffs and broken battlements into the castle. I was completely astounded at the extent, magnificence and strength of this huge structure. It impressed me as being more than twice as large as the famous castles of Heidelberg or Edinburgh. It is perched on an isolated cliff 1,500 feet above Banias, and is one thousand feet long, and about

three hundred feet in width. Dr. Merrill affirms that it exhibits the work of every period, from the early Phoenician to the time of the Crusaders. The walls, of immense thickness, rise one hundred feet, while beneath, for six hundred, sink the almost perpendicular sides of the cliff, and for nine hundred more slope abruptly to the fountain of Banias.

At the eastern end of the castle is the acropolis or citadel, 150 feet higher, with a wall and a moat of its own of immense strength, a castle within a castle, as described by Josephus. Great arched cisterns and stone chambers could contain an inexhaustible supply of water, grain and other stores. We climbed to a lofty turret where rested, high in air, a bell-shaped monolith which rang sonorously when struck. A long, dark stairway penetrates far down into the heart of the mountain, and, the Arabs assert, reaches the springs of Banias two miles distant. This, however, seems incredible. A broad, winding road once led down to the plain beneath. This is now badly shattered. The view into the tremendous gorge below was one of the most impressive we have ever seen, while the distance stretched the long slope of the fertile plain of Huleh, laced all over with flashing streams, and to the north the Heights of Hermon, and the hills of Naphtali. Small wonder that the Danite spies exclaimed of the plain of Huleh, with its rich pastures, its countless herds of buffalo, its clouds of wildfowl of every wing, "It is very good, a place where there is no want of anything that is in the earth."

It was with the utmost reluctance that I could tear myself away from this majestic scene. Long after the rest of our party had gone I lingered behind, and mused amid the solitudes of this venerable castle once resonant with the tread of Crusading and Moslem knights, and perchance with the rude clash of Roman or Phoenician arms. At length another



RUINS OF CASTLE NEAR BANIAS, CAESAREA-PHILIPPI

group of tourists climbed the cliff and conveyed the somewhat peremptory message from the Judge, that if I did not promptly return they were to throw me over the battlements. Dark clouds were lowering in the sky. The wind rose, and moaned through the crannied vaults and shattered walls, and sighed and whispered amid the olive groves below, and rain began to fall. I therefore surrendered at discretion, scrambled down the cliff, and, mounting my faithful Naaman, galloped down the slope, narrowly escaping the fate of Absalom amid the low-branching olives. We dried off before our charcoal fire, and a good dinner soon made us all right. But all night long the rain poured down and the gusty wind seemed determined to prostrate our tents. All this was an ill omen for our ride next day over the shoulder of Mount Hermon.

Some people seem to believe the way to reform the saloon tiger is to surfeit him with the blood of victims.

Believers in temperance principles should put them into practice. A very considerable portion of the lop-sidedness of the world is caused by the people who are long on profession but short on practice.

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