

- heavy rain torrents all night accompanied by high winds.
- 8th—Walked through the town—the oldest existing in the world. Ate some Passover Bread. Conducted by the Sheikh, who accompanied Canon Tristram, to the top of "Abraham's Kitchen" and saw down the stair case. The Jews Post Office is at the main entrance. Fanaticism has to this day guarded the Patriarchal Cave of Machpelah and kept it sealed from the enquiring spirit of the 19th century. Visited the Oak of Abraham on Russian property, 32 feet in circumference, dividing into four large branches at the height of 19 feet, forming a circle of 95 paces—a tree of great age. Arrived Bethlehem 7 p.m., quarters in the Latin Monastery, attended by a robust and obliging Franciscan. Our window, facing the court, secured by iron bars. Bethlehem wine light in colour, having a mild sharpness.
- 9th—Palm Sunday. The main portion of the Church of the Nativity, the most ancient Christian edifice, erected by Helena 327. The gilded mosaics of 1180 much faded and out of repair. The Grotto of St. Jerome truly interesting. The Turkish Guard with fixed bayonet standing near the officiating priest, be he Armenian, Greek, or Latin, in this reputed spot of the nativity, suggests a volume of thought. The *præsepium* or manger I have seen in the Chapel Sta. Maria Maggiore, in Rome, restored by Pius IX, and selected by His Holiness for his last resting place. Died in our tent 6 p.m., overlooking the Shepherd's Field. Slept in the Monastery on the urgent request of the Superior.
- 10th—Breakfast 7:30 a.m. in the refectory. 8:30 a.m. rode out to Solomon's Pools, through the Wady Artas tracing the original aqueduct. A belt of fertility between two sterile ridges, where are gardens of peach and other trees and vegetable gardens. A European colony has existed here since 1849. Joined at Bethlehem by our guard, a nephew of the Sheikh of Abu Dis, having some military dash about him. Two additional attendants mounted for the baggage guard. Lunched under shade of an olive tree. Arrived Mar Saba 4 p.m., tents in readiness. Our letter from the Greek Patriarch obtained us water from the fortress Monastery in the bleak wilderness. Women are rigidly excluded, not to mar concord, for even the lion and St. Saba came to terms.
- 11th—Breakfast 5:30 a.m. Mounted 6:30 a.m. for the Dead Sea and the Jordan. Occasional peeps of the Dead Sea and its banks; scenery wild, paths narrow and rugged. Excursions, when made in the opposite direction, more gloomy. Dismounted at the Dead Sea, tasted the water, salt and bitter. Jerusalem is 3,697 feet above the Dead Sea and 2,494 above the Mediterranean. Crossing to the Jordan, the ground was as so much broken pottery. Reached the Greek bathing place 12:30 p.m., rested for lunch two hours and washed our hands and faces in the far famed stream—drinking also. The banks are fringed with tamar trees and willows. Rode over in two hours across the El Ghôr to the Ain-es-Sultan, called the Pools of Elisha, from the Prophet having healed the waters with salt. Our tents ready. Thermometer in our tents 83° F. Four other parties, one French, numbering 25 with 60 animals and attendants. Er Riha, the modern Jericho, is a group of squalid hovels holding sixty families. The large tower called the Castle of Zachæus, said to stand on the site of his house, probably erected as a defence against the Bedouins. The site of ancient Jericho lies at the foot of the hill of the Karantel, in the

caverns of which several hermits still pass the Lenten season, for here, since the Crusades, the temptation has been localized. Our guard visited Neby Musa, saying, if he did not go, he must divorce his wife, a favourite phrase when duty compels.

- 12th—Breakfast 5:30 a.m. Mounted 6:45 a.m. and by continuous riding reached Mount Zion, Jerusalem, 11:45 a.m. Beautiful sunrise on the Mountains of Moab. Met a number of pilgrims en route to Neby Musa, the tomb of Moses, placed by the Mohammedans this side Jordan. The Wady-el-Kelt, a sublime ravine nearly 500 feet, is supposed to answer to the "brook Cherith, that is before Jordan," where Elijah was fed by ravens. The old path being in this valley, the peril of the "certain man" in the parable may readily be supposed. At Hadzur Khan, half way, an old ruin is taken for the Inn where the good Samaritan lodged. The ascent thence to El Azariyeh is steep and the road not so good as the previous portion. It is, however, the best road in Palestine, having been improved by a Roumanian lady at a cost of £2000, but requires much more still.
- 14th—Good Friday. Christ Church 11 a.m. Bishop Gobat, aged 78, preached a long sermon, looking well; rather weak lungs however. Heard the impressive lamentations, Jew's Wailing Place. Church of the Sepulchre lighted for tenebræ.
- 15th—Visit to the Haram Ash Sherif. Cavasse from the British Consulate and soldier from the Turkish Guard, explored the whole platform, descending into Solomon's Stables, where the rubbish heaps shew the labours of the Palestine Exploration Fund. The Moslems regard Jerusalem as the holiest of all places after Mecca. Entered by the Cotton Gate, departed by the Babel Asbat, passing the Birket Israil—Pool of Bethesda—out by St. Stephen's Gate to the Chapel of the Grotto of the Virgin, where the Virgin's tomb and those of her parents and Joseph are shewn. Visited the Convent of the Sisters of Zion, whose chapel covers the "Ecce Homo" arch. In the porch is a curious stone monolith found in the excavation. In the cellar is to be seen one of the greatest curiosities in Jerusalem, a fragment of old Roman pavement, the only piece discovered. The caverns below have been partially explored. "Underground Jerusalem" has much more of interest than the surface of the present crust. In the afternoon rode out to Neby Samwil, where stood the ancient tower of Mizpeh, the famous city of Benjamin. From the minaret of the ruined mosque (3000 feet) the finest view in Southern Palestine, from the Mediterranean to the blue mountains of the Valley of the Jordan, as far South as Bethlehem, and to the North the Hill of Ramallah. An Armenian banker paid four thousand pounds for the "Greek fire" emitted to-day!
- 16th—Easter Day. Christ's Church 10 a.m. Archdeacon Anson of England preached. 4:15 p.m. joined our conveyance outside the Jaffa Gate, and with a parting salutation "bon voyage" from an ecclesiastical dignitary, started for Jaffa. In three hours reached the Restaurant des Moines de Judée; rested one hour and half, and reached Ramleh, clear night, 11 p.m. Bohnenberger's Inn, lattice windows without glass, no locks or latches.
- 17th—Left for Jaffa 7 a.m., arriving at the Jerusalem Hotel 9 a.m. Visited the house of Simon the Tanner, ascending to the house top. In the court is an old stone trough. Miss Arnott's school, from the top new school had a distant view of Hermon. Embarked 5:30 p.m. Messageries Maritimes *Nic.*