

Horace had already written, in which Tacitus was to compose his histories, and Tertullian his sermons, and St. Augustine his expositions of Christian philosophy,—Latin, the sacred language of Europe for more than a thousand years.

Thus the command which was finally given by the risen Jesus on the Mount of Galilee, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature," appears, in the light of the preceding history, as the brilliant heavenly flower of long ages of development and preparation. Salvation was of the Jews; from them came the world's Savior, and with them was the highest and purest spiritual knowledge. But the stream of salvation was not narrowed to Judaism, or, if seemingly thus confined, it was only making ready for the wider diffusion of God's grace. His providence is like the River Abana, the modern Barada, the River of Damascus. High up among the perennial snows of the anti-Lebanon, a thousand little rills are born of the kisses of the sun, and roll their sparkling and musical waters down the sides of the great mountain-wall. These are mingled with torrents that rush from natural fountains, bursting from beneath the shelter of mighty rocks, or flowing from the bosom of some temple-covered cavern, all uniting in one narrow channel, along whose course a profuse and wonderful vegetation springs up, in striking contrast with the barrenness of the hill-sides through which it passes, willows, poplars, hawthorn, walnut, growing along this rushing volume of crystal water. Such was the spiritual and best life of old Judea as contrasted with the surrounding world; a river of water of life pouring down through the rocky wilderness of death. But, take your stand, as it was my privilege to do one April morning, upon some low spur of the anti-Lebanon, where you can watch the eastward rushing stream. Soon it leaves the last cleft in the mountain-wall, it touches the Plain of Damascus, and then spreads for thirty miles around, a wilderness of verdure that bursts on the view like a sapphire island floating in a desert sea. As far as the eye can reach, the fertilizing stream has covered the sand-wastes with an earthly paradise, and there on the horizon lies the crown jewel of the Orient, Damascus, the Queen of the East, embedded in roses and luxuriant in the wilderness of fruits, with minarets, like priestesses in prayer, stretching their white arms heavenward, while the mountain-born stream, cut now into seven channels, rolls beneath her streets its cooling tides which bathe the feet of little children in the precincts of many a sacred mosque, and gurgle in diamond fountains, feeding the roots of orange-trees in the courts of many a stately palace. So the stream of Providence, born of a thousand rills of mercy, which converged into the channel of Judaism, left that narrow river-bed at the command of Jesus to fertilize the desert world, rushing not eastward but every whither, through wider and fairer gardens than those of Damascus, while on the horizon ever appear the towers and shining walls of the