

Extracts.

BETHLEHEM.

A traveller in Palestine treads upon "hallowed ground;" but the shrines he visits, and the high places he reverences are not associated with those memories which in other lands awaken his interest. The red battle field, the old mossy tower, and the battlemented wall do not recall the names of those who were great captains in their day, and upon whom partial Time has bestowed something of the heroic. He does not tread in the track of some invincible phalanx led by a ruthless conqueror, or wend his way towards the birthplace of some great poet or astute statesman. Not that Palestine is without its traditions of war and warriors, of sages and bards, but that they are swallowed up in an all absorbing history; and the pilgrim's mind is steadily fixed upon one sublime remembrance, his heart is touched by one sacred passion, and it is in the spirit of hope and faith he pursues his pilgrimage.

And not with other feelings than those of joy and hope. For it is not to the sorrowful height of Calvary, with its memories of human crime and human hardness; that we turn; but to the holy places of Bethlehem, where, eighteen hundred and sixty four years ago, the Divine Love first became visible in human form to human eyes. Ah, that solemn Christmas night, when the Star travelled onward through the wondering heavens until it rested over the lowly roof, and streamed in through the casement, of the house of Joseph of Arimathea! The writer, recently turning over the pages of the "Dictionnaire Encyclopedique," chanced upon an allusion to Bethlehem which seemed to him most admirable from its simple brevity. The passage runs as follows:—"Bethleem, petite ville de la Palestine, ou naquit dans une creche, et au milieu de la nuit, Jesus Christ."—where *was born, in a manger, and at midnight, Jesus Christ!* In these words, few but significant, is summed up the history of the human race.

The memorable town which witnessed the birth of David, as well as of him whom the son of Jesse dimly foreshadowed, stands favourably distinguished among the cities of Palestine for its external beauty and internal cleanliness. An accurate observer tells us that "the houses, even the meanest, are all roofed; and these small cupolas abound which give to the towns and the houses of the Holy Land an air of comfort, and even of importance, in strong contrast with the dreariness of the uniform flat roofs, or oftener roofless mud walls, of Egypt. Bethlehem is inhabited mostly by Christians, Roman Catholic and Greek. There is but one small mosque; few Mohammedans; no Jews. The dress of the Christian women here is singularly graceful and becoming; probably little varied in fashion from those of Naomi and her daughter-in-law, who came unto her, and said, thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." The young women wear a light veil, or rather hood, not covering the features like the Turkish or Egyptian cimar, but descending on each side of the face, closed across the bosom, and showing the front of a low but handsome head-dress, usually composed of strings of silver coins plaited in among the hair and hanging down below the chin as a sort of necklace. The mothers and old women wear a longer and darker robe."

Bethlehem has its historical, no less than its scriptural, associations. Here the Emperor Hadrian, earnest in his attempt to root out "the new heresy," and to desecrate its holiest places, raised a statue and a shrine to Adonis, and ordained a series of splendid ceremonies. The statue, according to Jerome and Eusebius, was destroyed, some seventy years later, by the Empress Helena, mother of the great Constantine, who erected over the spot wherein the Saviour, it is supposed, was born a splendid church, dedicated to St. Catherine, which is still extant. Here, too, the devout Eusebius and the eloquent Jerome taught and practised the Christian faith.

At the easternmost extremity of the town, says Lord Nugent, in his "Lands Classical and Sacred," on the edge of a steep rock overhanging a plain of several miles in extent, stands the Franciscan Convent of the Nativity, containing within its precincts what is said to be the place where the Saviour was born into this world. It is spacious, and surrounded with lofty walls. The principal gate is small and low, with a strong iron door; and the whole building closely resembles a fortress. Within it stands St. Helena's Church, which has many points of similarity with the Church of St. Paul at Rome. The arched roof—said to be fashioned out of the cedarwood of Lebanon—rests upon two double rows of twenty-eight tall Corinthian pillars of marble; and the walls are adorned with gorgeous, if not particularly artistic, paintings and mosaics.

Beneath it, in a subterranean chapel, is the place where the Nativity was accomplished, marked by a star of silver on the pavement and the inscription, *He de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est* (Here, of the Virgin Mary, Jesus Christ was born); and the "presepio," where of old "the manger" rested, now represented by an alabaster trough, "inclosed within a shrine hung with blue silk, and embroidered with silver." Lamps of gold and silver, and plates of glittering metals, cast a radiance upon the walls and pavement of these hallowed sanctuaries.

Opposite the shrine of the manger is the chapel which marks the spot where the Magi and the wise men of the east deposited their offerings and worshipped the God-child. And in the same

crypt are the chapel and tomb of Santa Paula and Santa Eustachia, two illustrious Roman ladies, who, in the third century, established in the sacred town a convent of nuns. Here, lay repose the remains of Jerome and Eusebius, contiguous to the cave wherein Jerome lived for nearly fifty years, and translated into Latin the inspired pages of the New Testament.

There are other things, to interest traveller in Bethlehem and its vicinity—the mountain passes of Engedi; the field of the Shepherds, where they abode on the memorable night; the tomb of Rachel, who was "buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Jerusalem;" the village of Rama, where there was "a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning;" for Rachel bewailed her children; the fountain whence three mighty men of Judah drew water for the longing David;—these must command the reverence of all to whom the pure religion of Christ is not a vanity and a sound.—*Ibid.* London News.

Shipping Intelligence.

PORT OF HALIFAX.

ARRIVED.

Saturday, Dec. 17.

Steamer Franconia, Nickerson, P. E. Island, produce—to J. F. Phelan; Briggs, Gentle Annie, Pitts, New York, genl. cargo—to B. Wier, & Co; Mary, Murphy, Ponce—to D. Cronan; Schrs. Dot, McKimmon, Yarmouth, shore cod—to T. Bolton; Twin Sons, Forrest, Boston, ballast—to Halls & Creed; Comet, Lang, Boston,—to S. A. White & Co; O'Kallona, Cape Breton, bound to Boston; Topsy, Ballard, P. E. Island,—to A. McLeod & Co; Wild Rover, Lunenburg, Gloucester, bound to Newfoundland; Villager, Watt, Sheet Harbor—Wm. Chisholm; William Taylor, Martin, Sheet Harbor—to Wm. Chisholm; Brig. Frank W. Hall, Cadiz,—to G. C. Harvey.

Sunday, Dec. 18.

Brigs. Paleon, Wilson, Trinidad—to J. T. Wainwright & Co; Magna Chara, returned from sea-billed by the late gale; Leader, Terrio, Sydney, coal—to Master; Squando, Sullivan, Cape Breton, fish—to Master; Mary Ann, Cann, Louisburg, fish—to order; Ellen, Shellmott, P. E. Island, produce—to Master; William & Mary, Philpot, P. E. Island, produce—to Master; Samuel Jones, Delancey, Margaree, fish—to Master; Experiment, Mulrooney, P. E. Island, produce—to Master; Snow Squall, Chasson, Margaree, fish—to Master; Gazelle, Swain, P. E. Island, produce—to Master; W. D. Smith, Grant, P. E. Island, produce—to Master; Evergreen, Johnson, P. E. Island, produce—to Master; Pictou Packet, Woodin, Pictou, coal—to Master; Charlotte, Condon, Sydney, coal—to Master;

Monday, Dec. 19.

Schr. Prince Consort, —, Margaree Bay.

Tuesday, Dec. 20.

Brigt. Rooper, LeVasche, Sydney, coal—to Master; Schrs. Mary, Laundry, Aricht, fish—to S. Strong & Co; C. W. Wright, Dickson, Canso, mackerel—to J. F. Phelan; Maria, Murdoch, St. Marys, fish—to J. Balceco; Rifle, Balcon, Sheet Harbor, lumber—to Geo. H. Starr & Co; Mary Joseph, Robinson, P. E. Island, out—to Halls & Creed; Mary, Leary, P. E. Island, produce—to Esso & Co;

Wednesday Dec. 21.

Steamer, Old Dominion, Page, Nassau, 7 days ballast—to G. C. Harvey; Africa, Stone, Liverpool G. B. via Queensdown—to S. Cunard & Co; Brig. Watchman, New York—to S. A. White & Co.

Thursday, Dec. 22.

Danish Brig. Mathilda, Vieper, Bermuda, Sugar and Molasses—to G. C. Harvey.

Friday, Dec. 23.

Schrs. Mary Jane, Hopkine, Tangier—to R. L. & W. A. Hart; Foam, Lassel, Tangier—to R. L. & W. Hart.

PORT OF HALIFAX.

CLEARED.

Saturday Dec. 17.

Brigs. Brisk, Payne, Glasgow—by J. S. Creighton & Son; Sarah, Mundy, B. W. Indies—by Salter & Twining; Mayflower, Gerrior, Arichat—by Master; Ellen, Bondrot, River Bourgeois—by Master; Lady Seymour, Smith, Liverpool, N. S.—by A. H. Crowe; Tyno, —, Liverpool—by R. J. & W. Hart; Maria Luisa, Rogers, Arichat—by Master; Steamer, Franconia, Nickerson, Boston,—by J. F. Phelan.

Monday, Dec. 19.

Schr. Victor, Thompson, P. E. Island; Fleetwood, McDonald, Belfast Me; Caronella, Sullis, Digby; Bana Fide, Amiro, Publico; Harkaway, Smith, Bermuda.

Tuesday, Dec. 20.

Brigs. Gem, Crook, Fen West Indies, fish etc—by G. H. Starr & Co; Starlight, McDonald, Baltimore, fish etc—by J. C. Allison; Schr. Good Intent, Burke, Mainland, genl. cargo—by Jas. Butler; Sparkler, Embree, Canso,—by R. J. & W. Hart; Progress, D'Entremont, Publico—by Master; Mary, Petipas, Arichat—by W. K. Reynolds; Lady Dundas, Larway, Arichat,—by P. Power & Co; Brig. Africa, Sherring, Nassau—by A. Pillsbury.

Wednesday Dec. 21.

Schrs. Oscar (Am) Mallock, Indian Island, N. B. genl. cargo—by Salter & Twining and others; John Loughlan, Livingston, Baddeck, genl. cargo—by D. H. Pitts and others.

Thursday, Dec. 22.

R. M. Steamers, Africa, Anderson, Boston—by S. Cunard & Co; Delta, Gulliford, Newfoundland—by S. Cunard & Co.

Summary.

The following names are appearing in the press, and are fair to be taken as evidence of the fact that all this is not a dream.

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