

heavenly host cleaving the blue sky and to hear again the blessed angels sing.

The Judge, Madame and Mr. Rorke rode back in the glorious moonlight to Jerusalem. Messrs. Lewis, Satterfield, Read and the writer determined to make a *detour* by way of the Convent of Mar Saba. We rose early and visited again the Church of the Nativity. In the gathering shadows of the evening twilight, relieved only by the twinkling tapers on the altar, it had looked exceedingly impressive; but in the gray light of the morning it had a bare, cold aspect, the faded frescoes and mosaics on the wall revealing more clearly the impairing hand of time. The Greek monastery near by has also its sacred cave, the "Milk Grotto," in which tradition avers the Holy Family once sought shelter or concealment. This place we also duly visited.

A few minutes' ride brought us to the shepherds' field where "came upon the midnight clear the glorious song of old." The ruins of the mediæval church of "Gloria in Excelsis" strew the ground, but shepherds still lead forth their flocks just as they did on that first Christmastide, and as the shepherd boy of Bethlehem did a thousand years before that.

We rode on though a wild hill-country of weird sterility and desolation, a few black tents of the Bedouins with their scattered flocks of sheep and goats being the only sign of life. Barren mountains, rugged slopes and yawning ravines, worn and weather-stained with the winters' storms and summer heat of ages, stretched around us, with, in the background, the ever-present purple cliffs of the mountains of Moab beyond the Dead Sea.

Along the hillside ran a narrow track scarce discernible on the smooth rock. While crossing the steep slope my horse's feet slipped and he was instantly scrambling up the rock like a cat up the roof of a house. Our athletic dragoman, Yusef (Joseph), who had been specially detailed to convoy us, was off his horse in a moment and had mine by the bridle, and by main force prevented horse and rider from sliding into the deep ravine.

These wild and rocky limestone-hills are honeycombed with caves, from time immemorial the hiding-places of bandits and outlaws. One of the largest of these, about five miles from Bethlehem, bears the traditional name of the Cave of Adullam. It is reached by a winding path on a narrow ledge of rock, having a fearful gorge below and a steep cliff above. The entrance is very narrow, and a handful of men might keep a whole army at bay. Inside is a large chamber, some sixty feet long and perhaps thirty or forty high. Within are other chambers with numerous ramifications, the entire length being over five