



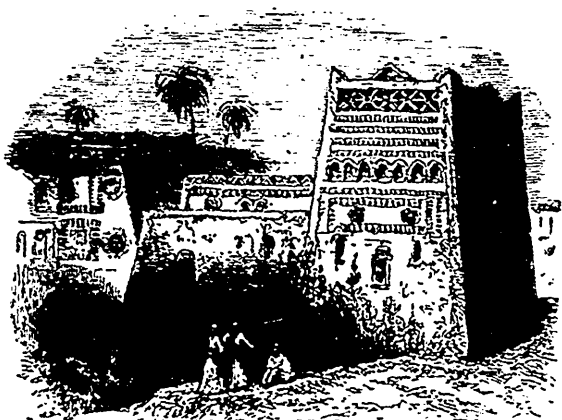
CAVE-DWELLINGS IN SOUTHERN PALESTINE.

like pre-historic man elsewhere, were largely cave-dwellers. It is doubtless true that in time of danger caves were resorted to as a refuge (1 Sam. xxiii. 29, and Judges vi. 2), and even excavated for dwellings. In the dry atmosphere of the East such dwellings in summer would be cool and not unpleasant, but in the winter rains they would be damp and comfortless. More than once in Egypt we took refuge in a cave to eat our lunch and found it a very pleasant resting-place. Several passages of Scripture refer to those who sought refuge in the "dens and caves of the earth."

Numerous caves of Palestine have evidently been used as habitations. Indeed, many hermits and fraternities of monks for fifteen hundred years have occupied the caves of En-gedi, where David dwelt when pursued by his enemies three thousand years ago. But this must always have been an unusual

mode of life. Even the splendid rock-hewn palaces and temples of the city of Petra were strikingly exceptional in their character.

Permanent dwellings are almost always above ground and usually in clustered groups. Except in the larger and wealthier towns and cities the material of the native houses is generally unburned, sun-dried brick, often with an intermixture of straw to give them coherency. Such bricks we saw the fellaheen in Egypt making in the fields just as they were made by the Israelites thirty-five centuries ago. Exodus i. 11, and v. 6-8. The Arab structures throughout the East are almost entirely of this sort. Indeed, amid the stately ruins of Egypt are many mounds of earthen brick formerly cased with stone. In the dry climate of that land it is marvellous how long such mounds will maintain their form. The use of this material explains the manner in which, under other circumstances, a town or city will disappear. Of the great city of Memphis, in the time of Moses the metropolis of Egypt, scarcely a vestige can now be found. The stones, save a few colossal statues, have been carried away for the building of later cities; and the earthen homes of the people,



FLAT-ROOFED HOUSES IN EGYPT.