

stood on the deck of the steamer that still Saturday evening, as the sun set over cosmopolitan, wide-spread, wicked Port Said, and we steamed out over the quiet sea. Egypt, the Land of Bondage, lay behind us in the sunset; Palestine, the Land of Promise, lay before us in the dawning. Meantime the stars came out and gladdened and glorified the night that lay between.

Early next morning, as I went on deck, we were in sight of Jaffa.

I have very little sympathy or respect for the man who could approach the Holy Land with other than feelings of deep interest and solemnity. It has been the theatre of such stirring events, it is connected, in its past history, so closely with Deity, on the one hand; and with everything that gives force and value to human conduct, and validity and certainty to human hopes and aspirations, on the other, that one cannot but feel, as he looks for the first time upon its shores, as if, like the Israelites of old, he had an inheritance in it, a portion and a right, in its sacred soil.

Some such feeling, at all events, seemed to stir in the minds of our company that Sabbath morning, as our steamship rapidly approached the land, and finally cast anchor a good distance from the shore, and lay rocking in the swell which was heaving increasingly in the stormy roadstead of Jaffa.

Let us glance a minute or two at the past history of the place. It is first mentioned, under the name of Japho, in the book of Joshua, as one of the boundaries of the tribe of Dan. It has always been the great port of Jerusalem, and hither came those great Phœnician flotillas by which Hiram king of Tyre sent the cedar for the first temple to be landed on its storm-smitten beach. Here also was the cedar for the second temple landed, when, under Zerubbabel, that splendid structure was rebuilt, and lying somewhere here at anchor rode the craft on which Jonah essayed to escape the divine call to a difficult mission, when fleeing from the presence of the Lord he came down to Joppa and found a ship bound to Tarshish.

This place, too, is noted in the patriotic and warlike history of the Maccabees, when, for the most part, it was under foreign rule; but was once attacked and its shipping burnt, by Judas Maccabeus, in reprisal for the persecution of its Jewish population by its foreign rulers.

It is an old city—one of the oldest in the world. Pliny mentioned it as being many hundred years old in his day, and states that then the chains which bound Andromeda to the rock were still to