



NATIVE TYPES IN MODERN PALESTINE.

Jewish Life in Palestine in the Time of Christ.

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THERE is no reason to suppose that the dwellings of peasants and artisans were different from those seen in the towns and villages of Palestine in the present day. Let us look at such a house as that in which Mary and Joseph brought up the child Jesus. It is not built with stones or bricks, but only with mud dried in the sun, and externally it looks like a square block of earth, it may be with green grass growing on the roof. We can understand how it would be possible for a thief to dig through and steal from a house thus built. There is no chimney. Fires are rarely lit; but when the weather is cold a charcoal brazier may be laid on the floor.

There is no window. All the day-light that is to be had comes in through the open door. The strong sun-light of the East makes the most of the smallest chink, and the gloom of a windowless house is much less there—where, too, no one wishes to shut the door to keep out the cold air—than it would be under the fall smoke that envelopes London. For all that, the light must have been greatly obscured; and we are not greatly surprised to learn that the woman, who had lost a piece of silver, needed to light a lamp before she could look for it. Nor are we to be surprised at her having to sweep the floor before she could find it—for the floor is only trodden earth, often thick with dust and refuse.

Practically, the house consists of one chamber; but there is an alcove at the further end, where part of the family sleep. It is likely enough that the house is built against a hill, and if so, a cave may be utilized for this purpose. A raised platform, approached by three or four roughly-hewn steps, constitutes the women's portion of the dwelling.

Domestic utensils are but few. All-important is the mill—consisting of two stones, the upper one having handles attached to it, with which the two women, who sit facing one another, with the mill between them, turn it. A bushel is an article of furniture which one is always to look for. Thus Christ speaks of "the bushel." Turned upside down it serves as a table while the family squat round it at their homely meal. When the lamp is lit this may be conveniently placed on the bushel—it would be a mistake, Christ says, to reverse the action, and put the lamp under it. The lamp is a little earthen vessel, with a spout for the wick to come out at, a hole in the middle for the oil to be poured through, and a handle at the back.

in his early days. Through these streets there would pass a busy traffic.

In the present day, wheeled vehicles are unknown in Palestine, excepting on the road from Jaffa to Jerusalem. The broken, rocky paths would not admit the roughest waggon to travel over them. But things were better in the old, more civilized days. Wealthy men rode about in their chariots; and carts, drawn by oxen, were in use. But wheels were never employed in the East, as freely as with us; and beasts of burden were employed to carry goods on their backs.

It is a singular fact, that the camel is the only one referred to in the New Testament, for it must have been much in use, not only for conveying merchandise across the desert, but for carrying goods between the towns and villages of Palestine. The ox and the ass were the more common domestic animals of the agricultural classes. Wealthy men drove about in carriages drawn by horses. Other persons rode on asses—the Syrian ass being a strong, brisk little animal, though not regarded so highly as the noble Arabian horse.

Dress—most people in the streets were on foot, and probably dressed much as they are dressed in the present day. A little baby would be put into light swaddling clothes. When liberated from this painful constriction, he might be seen in a state of complete nudity, sitting astride his mother's shoulder, a safe vantage ground from which to survey the brisk crowd with infantine merriment. A little older, the child runs about and plays in the street, clad in a single garment—a sort of long shirt, with short sleeves, and open at the chest. He has no shoes.

The dress of a man is richer, and more various. He wears a large cloak about his shoulders, of striped colours—the commonest being brown and white. When he is travelling he gathers it about him—the loose folds above the girdle serving as a large pocket. Beneath the cloak is a close-fitting, long tunic, with sleeves—often of bright colours—blue, yellow, red. The humbler classes are more often clad in blue, or blue and white colours. It is likely that our Lord's tunic was blue. Beneath the tunic a shirt was sometimes worn. The priests wore trousers down to their feet. The coverings of the feet were of two kinds—shoes and sandals. On the head was a shawl, bound with cord, and falling back on the shoulders.

Pictures representing Christ bare-headed must be false. Under the fierce Syrian sun, everybody must protect himself against sunstroke. Therefore, we must imagine that our God wore one of these shawl-like head-dresses—perhaps a silk one, of

If Joseph's workshop were like a carpenter's shop in Nazareth at the present day, it would be a square room, open on one side to the street, and quite flush with the pathway, so that passers-by could watch the young apprentice as he drove the saw and plane, and fashioned the ploughs and yokes, of which Justin Martyr speaks. Here he would often be called into conversation with the talkative loiterers, to whom—as to most Eastern people—time is of no value. Thus he would be an observer of men in the street of Nazareth even

bright colours—yellow predominant—the present of one of his devoted wealthy followers.

The dress of the women was like that of the men, excepting that it was more ample, and that a veil was commonly worn over the face. A Jewish woman was freer in this respect than a Mohammedan woman is at the present day. She could unveil her countenance when she pleased, without being considered immodest; but she could also veil it when she pleased. An attempt to remove a woman's veil was always a gross insult.

Under Sealed Orders.

OUT she swung from her moorings
And over the harbour bar;
As the moon was slowly rising
She faded from sight afar,
And we traced her gleaming canvas
By the twinkling evening star.

None knew the port she sailed for,
Nor whither her cruise would be;
Her future course was shrouded
In silence and mystery;
She was sailing beneath "sealed orders,"
To be opened out at sea.

Some souls, cut off from moorings,
Go drifting into the night,
Darkness before and around them,
With scarce a glimmer of light:
They are acting beneath "sealed orders,"
And sailing by faith, not sight.

Keeping the line of duty
Through good and evil report,
They shall ride the storms out safely
Be the passage long or short;
For the ship that carries God's orders
Shall anchor at last in port.

Tell it to Others.

A PROFESSOR in one of our principal colleges was noted among his fellow-teachers for his habit of addressing privately the young men in his care upon the subject of their personal relations to Christ.

"Do they not resent your appeals as an impertinence?" asked one of his fellow-professors.

"No," was the reply. "Nothing is of such interest to any man as his own soul and its condition. He will never resent words of warning or comfort if they are prompted by genuine feeling."

"When I was a young man," he added, "I felt as you do. My wife's cousin, a young fellow not yet of age, lived in our house for six months. My dread of meddling was such that I never asked him to be present at family worship, or spoke to him on the subject of religion. He fell into the company of a wild set, and was rapidly going to the bad. When I reasoned with him, I spoke of Christ."

"Do you call yourself a Christian?" he asked, assuming an astonished look.

"I hope so," I replied.

"But you are not. If you were, He must be your best friend. Yet I have lived in your house for six months and you have never once named His name to me. No, he is nothing to you."

"I never have forgotten the rebuke."

The superintendent of London police told an American visitor to Scotland Yard lately that when a noted criminal was visited before his execution by a clergyman he listened to the story of Jesus and his suffering upon the cross in silence and then, springing to his feet, said, "Is this true? He came to save men like me?"

"And you sit here quietly! If I believe that story and were free I would walk barefoot over the world but I would tell it to every living man."

Even the great truths of religion grow hackneyed to our impatient ears and trivial minds.