

flung down their foliage, and fertilized the soil.

Wild flowers and grasses have clothed the barren rocks; the desert has blossomed as the rose.

The very dust has been quickened by the mould of ages.

Armies have fought upon its plains and the blood of man and beast bursts forth in the beauty of its scarlet poppies. For twenty centuries it has been lying a virgin earth under the fierce caress of an ardent sun and the breath of Orient winds. The grapes hang purple in the western light, the olives grow dusky green in the slant of the sun; apricot, pomegranate and orange give forth their blossoms to the wooing air, harvests lie golden under the noontide haze. In every fold of its mysterious mountains, the snow-hooded heights of Hermon and the darkling blue of Tabor; in every crease of its lonely valleys, pool-filled Baca and smoke-laden Tophet; in every bed of its deepening streams, by the shores of blue Galilee and Jordan's banks, in rock and river, where the dead lie buried and the living toil and die, the land, full of wonder and the witchery of buried ages, where the ghosts of old days and the footsteps of prophet, priest and king go by together; the land where the rose of Sharon and the lily of the valley still bloom, where Bethlehem's roofs still shine white as in the days of the Incarnation, where