

CHAPTER I

1855

But whosoever chooseth the life to come and directeth his endeavour towards the same, being also a true believer, the endeavour of these shall be acceptable unto God.—*Al Koran.*

THE winter came with its succession of storms of some days' duration, leaving two or three feet of snow on the ground. On January the 7th, my friend Dr. Sim, with Robert Dick, a Scotch farmer's wandering son, came and accompanied me to the summit of the Mount of Olives. It was interesting on looking eastward to notice that just below Bethany the snow ceased, and did not appear again until far over the Jordan, the range twenty miles distant, where it formed a horizontal line, above which all the mountains of Moab and Nebo, as far as eye could reach, were white. On returning to my house Sim playfully pretended to snowball the landlady's two boys, who nestled like chickens under their mother's skirts, quite cowed by the unwelcome winter. With snow gone, on the highest roof of Sim's house, I finished the clouds and sky of my picture, defying the bitter cold and wind of this exposed studio. On my return in the evening I found that the elder of the boys was ill in bed, and the old Bethlehem cook as she deposited the dinner on the table, uttered pious ejaculations about him, I knew that she herself was the mother of an idle and selfish

son, she asked me about my mother, repeating, "Poor mother, poor mother! why do you leave her?" As the week went by, the parents' anxiety increased, and on my return home, entering the sick-room I found two good Prussian sisters come to nurse, and the doctor with the missionary were just taking leave, offering commonplace consolations to the mother, which led me to see that the case was really alarming. I referred to Dr. Sim's wish to see the patient, and hoped that he might be brought on the morrow; the woman clutched at my words. The evening was a sad one. I had my pen work to do, but ere retiring I went again to see the boy, and cheered the anxious mother as well as I could, asking that I might be told if in the night I could do anything. I slept with far-away thoughts, when suddenly my senses were aroused by a turmoil of confusion and a battering at the door. In distracted tones I heard the mother's words, "Oh, Mr. Hunt, Mr. Hunt, he is dead—he is dead—he is dead," and behind all was the voice of the Bethlehem woman uttering her death screech. Hurriedly I jumped up, and in the darkness snatched on my clothes. When I opened the door the poor woman was being led back to the chamber by her husband and the nurses. She took me to the bedside and showed her dead son, appealing to me with a mother's pride to say that he was beautiful. I sat up till dawn making a portrait of the boy for the comfort of the family.

With the sky of "The Scapegoat" completed I had now to finish the skeleton camel sketched in at Oosdoom, from one found near Jerusalem. My first hope was to complete the picture in time to send it to London for the Royal Academy, but owing to the delay in finding the third suitable goat, this had become impossible and the work was still incomplete at Easter when many English visitors arrived. Some brought introductions to me, and meeting congenial company was a pleasant relief to the vexations of my daily work.

While the city was more cheerful than usual, Lord

Napier and Ettrick, with Lady Napier and her young sons, arrived, and Frederic Lockwood, whom I had known at Cairo, came over to meet his sister. I delayed their visit to my studio in order that the "Azazeel" should be nearer completion, and when I had the pleasure of showing them my work, their discriminating and cultivated judgment was of pleasant service to me, after I had been for so long removed from the opportunity of artistic opinion.

An ancient quarry which penetrated under the city had been recently discovered. The Mahomedans were very jealous about it, and forbade entrance, but Cayley, the eccentric traveller, Brindley Nixon, and other young Englishmen were anxious to see it, and Sim and I undertook to conduct them. Graham lent us his tower on Olivet for the night. In the afternoon we left the city by separate gates, and waited at a distance until the last belated wayfarers had re-entered the walls, and the guards had shut the heavy doors upon themselves. The country around was by that time quite abandoned, and we made the necessary circuit to the Damascus gate, cautiously creeping close up to the foundations, beyond sight of the city ramparts, in order to reach the opening to the cave. It was not difficult to remove a stone or two put there to seal up the entrance, and one by one we crept in. After about eight feet of level rock there was a drop of the same extent; inside we lit our candles and waited for the whole party to descend. We proceeded, touching the quarried rock with our left hands; following along we came to chambers where the quality of the stone had tempted the ancient masons to extend their operations. In parts water dripped from the roof into pools, where the splashed surface of the rock was glazed and rounded; the blocks lying about had all been worked into measure and form, as the Bible describes the stones of the Temple to have been. Some of these had been discarded and left on the ground, presumably because of a discovered flaw. While most of us were examining a

large door nearly finished, which was fresh as if of recent work, we were dismayed at hearing the loud explosion of some firearm in our rear, the noise of which reverberated alarmingly through all the hollows of the cavern. It turned out that a pistol had been fired with extreme thoughtlessness by one of our company, "merely for fun." How far it could be heard by the inmates of houses above our heads we never knew, but although we could believe that they would be more afraid than ourselves, we became anxious lest our place of exit should be obstructed.

When the quarry had been first entered, on its discovery by a shepherd, the skeleton of some unfortunate explorer had been found, who had evidently sought the means of escape in vain. After our exit we went to Graham's tower, where we had supper and found sleeping accommodation.

Sir Moses Montefiore came early in the spring on a charitable mission. While he was encamped outside the Jaffa Gate I wrote to him concerning the misinterpretation of my innocent object as a painter by the Jews and their Rabbis, and I begged that he would explain my purpose, and induce the Rabbis to remove the interdict which prevented the more orderly minded Jews from coming to me. Mr. Sebag Montefiore saw me on the subject, and promised attention to the question. Mr. Frederic D. Mocatta arriving rather later, I urged the point with him also; his knowledge of art and artists enabled him to understand my difficulties the better, so now I had improved prospect for "The Temple" picture, when I could be free again to work on it.

It had been a vexation to me during its progress to have no opportunity of seeing the distant slope of the northern Olivet from the platform of Moriah, which came into the background of the picture. Since the days when Godfrey de Bouillon, with his crusaders, were chased from Jerusalem, no Christian, except in disguise or by stratagem,

at a risk of very probable death, had ever entered its precincts. Montefiore had indeed quite recently been admitted, and his entrance was not so shocking to the sons of Ishmael as to his own brethren. The Rabbis had pronounced against the part which their benevolent visitor had taken in availing himself of the opportunity, because, it not being now known which was the spot covered by the Holy of Holies, he, not being the High Priest, might have offended in treading on the proscribed ground. I had envied him and his followers, for I still felt the possibility of getting in myself was as far off as ever.

Early in April, however, the Duke of Brabant, the heir-apparent of Belgium, arrived in Jerusalem, and it was whispered that the very enlightened and francophile Pasha of the day was making great efforts to gratify the Duke's interest in the place. The Prince had been provided with a firman to enter the Mosque area, yet it was probable, as with many previous travellers coming from Constantinople, that His Highness would be told it would be fatal to the lives of all who attempted to act on the Sultan's favour; but gossip had not much to indulge in, and soon it was said that the Duke would be privileged to enter the Harem. I called on the Consul, and pleaded that if it were so, the English residents ought also to pass the sacred gates. He told me that this was generally felt, and that he was watching to secure the opportunity. On the Saturday of the Greek Easter, he sent me word to hold myself in readiness that afternoon. Earlier in the day I had witnessed the ceremony of the Miracle of the Sacred Fire in the Church of the Sepulchre.

This year no Russian pilgrims were present, yet the building was crowded with strangers, male and female, from Greece, Armenia, Egypt, and Abyssinia; in fact, in this respect the occasion was like the ancient feast of Pentecost, bringing strangers from all parts, and such resemblance was undoubtedly in mind when the original

form of this ceremony was instituted, for it is on record that an artificial dove descended through the opening of the dome, carrying the fire with it into the sepulchral shrine. Curzon in his *Monasteries of the Levant* describes his experiences in 1834, when three hundred people were killed in the disorderly crush. Kinglake was there the next year, who treats of it in his most graphic manner, and Dean Stanley was a witness of the scene in 1854, a year before my own visit.

At 4 P.M. I presented myself at the appointed place for entrance to the Mosque, and found the secretary nearly alone. The company increased by ones and twos, and the Pasha had just counted twenty-one when our Consul arrived with a train of some thirty English subjects, clergy with their wives, and other ladies connected with mission work. Very obvious was the bewilderment of the Pasha, but his politeness was equal to the need. When he left the apartment time after time, and returned with no show of having advanced matters, I was inclined to suspect that he had as poor an estimate as I had of the interest which the majority of the crowd were likely to take in the features of the Mosque, and that he would therefore consider that the risk should not be incurred, and that it might be wise to delay action until advancing darkness should render our entrance into the sacred place impossible.

During this time it transpired that the Pasha was intent upon the success of a summons issued to all the dervishes of the Mosque to assemble in a chamber of the Hareem to discuss a point of great moment, which had to be considered by the highest authorities. Thinking it was the question of admitting the Belgian prince which had to be debated, they thronged into the building to utter their loudest protests. Delays arose in making certain that all the dervishes were assembled, and then the doors were locked, and a company of soldiers posted outside for an hour to turn the council-chamber into a prison.

After this precaution, the Duke of Brabant and his suite advanced, and we were bidden to follow; passing a few courts belonging to the house, we emerged from a dark passage into the great area which includes the site of the ancient Temple.

It was a moment in life to make one's heart stir as the door was turned on its hinges, and the way into this long-dreamed-of, much-longed-for, yet ever-forbidden sanctum was at last declared to be open to us.

On my first arrival in Jerusalem, wandering alone, I had entered the gates by mistake, but before I had realised my position I was set upon by one, then by two blacks, and threatened by an approaching crowd of wild and dark Indians and Africans, from whom I escaped by a hasty retreat. Now the place was empty, and I gazed with boundless delight on the beautiful combination of marble architecture, mellowed by the sun of ages, of mossy-like cypresses, and Persian slabs of jewel hues; but at once I was told that no one must linger. At the foot of the steps we were ordered to take off our boots; wearing Turkish shoes, I had no difficulty, but many were unprepared; and it was one of the grim mockeries of fate that at such a moment ladies and gentlemen should intensify the hideousness of modern costume by hobbling about in lacerated stockings, carrying Wellington boots and fashionable shoes in their hands. Unfortunately the Royal Duke gave no sign of caring for the wonders about him; he sometimes glanced to right or left as the guide referred to different objects, but never once did he pause from his swift march around the Mosque As Sakreh or through Al Aksa to dwell on any object, nor did he turn aside to examine anything out of the direct line of the prescribed route; an Arab in Westminster Abbey would not have been more supremely superior. When Sim and I ran off to look at the interior of the Beautiful Gate, we were quickly summoned back by a messenger, with a caution that it would be imprudent to go alone, in the face of possible danger from dervishes who had evaded

imprisonment. We pleaded that we were armed, and would take the chance, but the Pasha still objected, and we had to abandon our hope. I left with my curiosity only increased. On emerging from the gate to *Via Dolorosa* we saw a body of Moslems in the street, who glared with hatred such as only religious rancour can inspire, but they allowed us to disperse in peace.

If all the Christian visitors to the Mosque that day had felt the respect for Mahomedans which the sight of their reverent conservation had awakened in me, and if the sons of Hagar assembled at its doors had then been able to read the feelings inscribed on our hearts, their attitude towards us would scarcely have been other than brotherly pride in such hospitality as all followers of the prophet of Mecca are enjoined to exercise. From the day that Abraham met Melchisedek, this spot has been the theatre of events which have struck deepest roots in the life of humanity. It has been the sanctuary where God's word had been proclaimed to Jew, Christian, and Moslem. Had the Jews still possessed it, there would have been signs of bloody sacrifice. Had any sect of Christians possessed it, the place would have been desecrated either by tinselled dolls and tawdry pictures, as in the Church of the Sepulchre, or else by the ugliness, emptiness, and class vulgarity of the Anglican and Prussian worship, as found in the city of Jerusalem. In the case of the Moslem there was not an unsightly nor a shocking object in the whole area, it was guarded, fearfully and lovingly, and it seemed a temple so purified from the pollution of perversity that involuntarily the text, "Here will I take my rest for ever," rang in my ears. The past, so many pasts, stood about, even the very immediate present was a mystery and a wonder; it was an epoch at least in a life, and an hour even in the world's history, the moving of the index to a turning-point. The Osmanli sands were running fast, and the hour-glass would soon be turned; but I felt that the sons of Hagar had been appointed for a great purpose, to

keep the place sacred until the sons of Sarah should be sufficiently purified by long-suffering to take it again into their charge.

But I had not attained my object. I had not been able to make even the slightest scribble of the landscape for my picture. I had, however, gained the distinct knowledge that the only point from which it could be obtained was the roof of the "Mosque of the Rock," which would be about the right height above the plateau of the Court of the Israelites. That I should ever be able to mount upon this, unless it might be in the guise of a workman, seemed quite out of hope, and only Moslems were employed in the reparation of the roof.

Photographs and exhaustive discussions have now made familiar to the world the startling unlikeness of the outside and the inside of the Mosque As Sakreh. Remark upon the evidence pointing to its having once been a Christian church, which its interior suggested to me, a resident in Jerusalem said, "I see you are a convert to Mr. Fergusson's theory." I had not then heard of the architectural critic's conclusions, drawn from examination of drawings made under extraordinary circumstances by Catherwood and Bonomi.

In May all the pleasant English company went away together, for the Consul had the opportunity of visiting Gerash, which was not always open to travellers, and the chance was eagerly seized by those who made that place a fresh stage on their journey. The temptation was great for me to join them, but the time for my work was too precious to spare, and a discovery I had made did much to decide the question for me. The gun which I had carried on my saddle, and which had often served me in good stead, was cracked in the stock. The opening could scarcely be seen, and was not yet in danger of causing disruption, but when it was fired the strain dipped the barrel enough to make it hit low. A much more serious and troubling discovery was, that the revolver, on the efficacy of which my life had more than

once depended, had reverted to its old fault of getting fixed in the lock. I put it by for a few days in order to take it myself to the ill-fated Frederic, but circumstances had hindered me from getting to his shop before it was closed for the evening. When supper was over I therefore called my landlord and said, "I want you to go to Frederic and deliver my pistol; explain to him yourself that it is loaded and cannot be fired off because of the defect for which I first sent it to him. He returned it repaired, but with the spring so weak that it only occasionally exploded. He must now put it into proper working condition at any cost, for a pistol that cannot be trusted is worse than useless. Explain that I know he is clever, and quite capable of curing the fault."

My landlord was a philosopher who at all times strove to enforce consideration for the weaknesses of others. "Vell, vell, yas! ve most 'ave patience. Frederic, poor fellow! he unhappy. I go to Frederic, I say, vy for you not marry, plenty nice gals 'ere now, you are von ov us, you av goot busness, vy not take vife. Vot"—and here he shrugged his shoulders commiseratingly—" 'e say, 'I stay 'ere only to die like my vrent die, an' den wot my vife do?' He tocht in 'ed, pooh fellow!" "I know, I know, Max, but mind you give him my message, and take care that no one touches the pistol but yourself, till you deliver it into his hands with the caution that it is loaded," said I.

The next morning Max, who was as conscientious as he was proud of his proficiency in English, assured me he had acquitted himself of his commission scrupulously. He said Frederic had listened attentively, and pleaded that before the spring was too slack, now too tight; there ought to be a new strong one, but he had not liked to put me to the expense of this before, now he would spare no pains. He was too busy for a day or two to attend to it, however, and would not take it in hand until he could finish it properly.

"Ah," said Max, "he quite mad, poor fellow! 'e 'ang

id op, bak shob"; by which I understood that he had put it safely by for the present.

On a previous Sunday there had been an overflow of water at Beir Yoab, and all the people of Jerusalem had gone out to see it, some with keen enthusiasm because it seemed like the return of the promised *early rain* which they said had been withheld since the destruction of the Temple. I walked with Dr. Sim in the midst of the throng, and we met Frederic all alone at St. Stephen's Gate; he smiled pleasantly but sadly to our salutation. We knew no German and he knew no English, so we exchanged a few words in Arabic and separated.

The evening after my message to Frederic, I called on Sim to choose the wild goat's skull for my picture; he had a large collection of such things. He told me that he had just come back from seeing poor Frederic, who had been shot by his apprentice in his own shop! Sim had extracted the bullet, which was just under the cellular tissue, opposite to the point where it had entered. He hoped from the small size of the bullet that it had not traversed the body, but travelled round as bullets partly spent occasionally do. The wound could not be further examined, and it was desirable to leave the patient undisturbed. Frederic, it seemed, had been working at an anvil in the front of the shop, the apprentice came in, while the master, who was steadily filing, became apprehensive that the fool was at some mischief, and turning quickly, said, "You are not touching that loaded pistol?" The boy in his fright nervously pulled the trigger, and the bullet struck the master in the side. He fell down on the floor, the noise attracted a crowd, who came in and surrounded him. He groaned, "Ah, I am paid now. I knew it would come to this." Waving the people aside, he cried, "I am going away to die," and jumped up to run through the street up a steep lane into the door of the German Hospice, where he threw himself on to a bed, and there the doctor had seen him.

From Sim's favourable opinion I encouraged the idea

that the man was not wounded to death; but on the morrow—fourteen months after the death of his friend—the lot had fallen upon him also.

It was my accursed revolver that had brought about this dire tragedy. I tell such stories not in support of any theory, but because they claim record as strange personal experience. There are people in Jerusalem now who remember Frederic with sorrow, and who wonder what became of the loved maiden in Germany who was to have been his wife.

Although the Exhibition date was past, I was working hard to finish "The Scapegoat" and send it away to Mr. Combe. I trusted that possibly among the patrons of art who had expressed a wish to have some picture of mine one might be found to purchase it, and so make me more at ease and free to prolong my stay; in any case, it would relieve the dejection I often felt at having brought none of my works to completion. My time was, however, seriously taxed in consequence of a contention I was drawn into with the Bishop about the character of one of the Arab converts. I will say no more on this subject, but should any wish to know of the business, they may learn all particulars from a pamphlet which I published after my return to England.¹ Yet, lest the story should be taken as a proof that I look with any feeling of disrespect upon English Missions, let me say that the circumstances were altogether exceptional.

Early in the summer of this year two regiments of soldiers were sent up to quell disturbances caused by the fellahin. It was not alone the outbreak against the government near Hebron, of which, at the request of the Consul, I had made a report, but in the western hills in the neighbourhood of Betir the sheiks were fighting for the mere pleasure of fighting and delight in bloodshed, and one indeed deservedly acquired for his cruelty the name of "butcher." The newly arrived soldiers were encamped upon the slopes of the Pool of Gihon, and thus

¹ Bishop Gobat, in re *Hannah Hadoob*. Masters, New Bond Street.

it seemed as though indirect pressure alone was to be used against the fellahin; travellers were, under this military influence, enabled to use the roads in greater safety; perhaps it was this that brought the Prussian Quarantine doctor from Hebron to Jerusalem. Seeing him riding with the Prussian Consul as I was going out of the Jaffa Gate to enjoy the evening air after a fatiguing day's painting, it seemed to me that he had not seen me, so I deferred accosting him. It was a mistake which I often regretted later, for on the morrow he had returned home, and in a few weeks he committed suicide.

The soldiers after a month's encampment removed for a few weeks to the Pools of Solomon; and, when the fellahin were quite off their guard one night, they struck their tents, and surprised the insurgent villages about Hebron, slaughtering and burning to the content of the Ottoman heart.

I had no contribution at the Academy Exhibition, and I had told my English correspondents that I might suddenly give up further attempts in Syria and return, but I had a great desire to know of the treatment of our School this year, thinking that the election of Millais might be a mark of more favourable feeling. A letter from him enlightened me painfully on this point; a few extracts will explain the disillusion. It also gives some reference to his approaching marriage.

LANGHAM CHAMBERS, LANGHAM PLACE,
LONDON, May 22, 1855.

MY DEAR OLD FRIEND—All the hurry and excitement of the R.A. is over, and yet I find myself delaying until it is absolutely necessary that I should tell you first that next month, please God, I shall be a *married man*. What think you of this? You must have partly expected this, and will not be knocked down by this sudden announcement. I have let the time slip by me so fast that I am at a loss what to tell you first. . . . I have gone so far as to take a place near her family at Perth for the autumn, and I leave this in a fortnight's time, when to return I don't know. . . . Lear has been here just this moment telling me of your letter he has

received. Collins also received one. When you come back, you must come and see me. I am afraid I shall not be in London to receive you when you arrive. . . . *Apropos* of work, my picture ("The Fireman") this year has been blackguarded more than ever; altogether the cabal is stronger than ever against every good thing—such injustice and felonious abomination has never been known before. Fancy A——, B——, and old Satyr C—— as hangers. Collins above the line in the Octagon, Martineau at the top of the Architectural . . . my picture against the door of the middle room. The very mentioning of these disgraceful facts incenses me so that I begin to tremble. I almost dropped down in a fit from rage in a row I had with the three hangers, in which I forgot all restraint and shook my fist in their faces, calling them every conceivable name of abuse. It is too long a story to relate now, but they wanted to lift my picture up, after I had got permission to have it lowered three inches, and tilted forward so that it might be seen, which was hardly the case as it was first hung. Oh! they are felons—no better than many a tethered convict—so let them pass. The Exhibition you will see, so there is no need of any mention of it. William I never see scarcely, as he lives down at Kingston. I am going to be married so quietly that none of my family come to the wedding. Good gracious, fancy me married, my old boy. . . . It is quite impossible to foresee the end of anything we undertake. Every day I see greater reason to be tolerant in judging others. We cannot reckon upon ourselves for the safe guidance of a single project. But I must not fill this letter with truisms. I am very anxious about this change in my life, as you may imagine, therefore you must forgive me if this letter is full of it. . . . If I omit to tell you anything of interest you may afterwards find out, it will be from forgetfulness. . . . Wilkie Collins is here and sends greeting. To-morrow is the Derby Day. Last Epsom I went too, we went together with Mike—you remember. . . . You must pray for me, my dear old friend. . . . I feel the want of you more than ever, and art wants you home; it is impossible to fight single-handed, and the R.A. is too great a consideration to lose sight of, with all its position, with the public wealth and ability to help good art. When Lady Chantrey dies, the Academy will have funds at its disposal for the purchase *yearly* of the best living works, and all this should be in *our* hands. In my contest with the hangers I said I would give up my associateship if they dared to move my picture, which so frightened them, I suppose, that they didn't touch it afterwards. *I want you back again* to talk over this matter of Exhibition. I am almost indifferent about these things now, and yet I think it a duty, for other poor fellows like Brown

(whose three pictures were rejected), Anthony, Seddon *were turned out* also.—Ever affectionately yours,

JOHN EVERETT MILLAIS.

Miss Mary Rogers had come to Jerusalem with her brother, the future Consul of Damascus, and she gave me the London art news. One most important item was the appearance of a new artist, with a large picture representing the procession of Cimabue's pictures through the streets of Florence. The artist's name was Leighton, and the work was strikingly admirable, independent of the fact that it was his first exhibited original composition; his father had allowed him to paint it on condition that if not successful he should finally relinquish art. This picture was in great favour with artists, and the Queen secured the young painter's future success by buying it for £500.

While I was completing my picture of "The Scapegoat," for the first time in the history of Turkish rule cannons were fired for a Christian monarch, on the 24th of May, Queen Victoria's birthday. The European ladies, hearing that my picture would soon be sent to England, now came in little groups to see it. One of these expressed a strong wish that some sound and practical landscape painter could come and help me with wise counsel as to the finishing of it. Afterwards I heard that her commiseration had been stimulated by the perusal of an article in a London paper brought to her by a neighbour, wherein I was held up as a proverb of artistic extravagance. On 15th June the work was finished, and put into its case. I rose early, and Sim, Graham, and I sallied out of the Jaffa Gate at 4.30 A.M. Sim, after two years' service in the Mission, was leaving and going as army surgeon to the Crimea. He had made himself deeply loved and valued, and many of the grateful people accompanied us a mile or two on the road to take leave of him. I went to Jaffa with paint-box packed up, so that if I saw need, I might put further finishing touches on

the picture before shipping it. The ride was delightful. Graham lent me his clever *rhowam*-paced pony, and Sim had an Arab which he was taking with him by sea, and as the third of our party was well mounted, we careered across the cornfields, many of which were cut, while others were being reaped. The trusty Issa meanwhile could be left with the baggage. It was high time I had such change, for I was far from well. The rest of two hours at the Ramla Convent with the cheery old monks delighted our hearts. We arrived at Jaffa in the afternoon, when all seemed careless peace with the retiring sun, and as I, with the Consul's help, passed my picture through the customs and took it on board, I felt cut off from the cause of many galling anxieties, and trusted future issues to gentle Providence.

I had intended to stay with Graham a few days at the seaport, but the next afternoon Issa, his servant, who was deeply concerned in the proceedings conducted by the Bishop to which I have lately referred, came to me with news gained from later arrivals that caused him deep concern, and I offered to ride back to Jerusalem with him in the night, which he eagerly accepted. On my return I sat down before my "Temple" picture to take stock of its condition and of my prospects, improved by the intermediation of my friendly Hebrew advocates, Sir Moses Montefiore and F. D. Mocatta, and at once took steps to recommence work. I felt it wise, until I could gain these advantages, to apply myself to painting those parts of "The Lantern Maker's Courtship" which I had not completed in Cairo.

Graham soon returned from Jaffa with health restored, and I frequently accepted his invitation in the hot summer to sleep in the refreshing air on Olivet. The window of this tower overlooked the valley of Jehoshaphat, Gethsemane, and all the slopes of the city, and a good telescope was mounted on the sill. On moonlight nights, while my friend read aloud a kind of literature for which I cared little, I could sit at the open window



THE LANTERN MAKER'S COURTSHIP.

resting my brow against its cool lintel, and turn my eyes upon the traces left by the successive masters of the city since the days of Solomon, and upon the land so little changed since its history was first written upon it.

No scene on earth could offer more for reflection. Many elements were wanting to satisfy the fullest sense of beauty, yet there was a solemn silence extending throughout the region, with centres of mystic suggestion that enchanted the eye, while the mind was enthralled by the thought that this spot had been the standing-place from which in turn the leading nations of the world had been addressed as from heaven itself. Walls, towers, domes, minarets, and vacant spaces in succession made my regard wander across the wide prospect, and in and out of its intricate features. Lying there under full moonlight, the calm picture appeared as formed in mother-of-pearl, with rare points glinting among the opalescent hues. There were no street lamps in any part of the town; all the bazaars were closed. Most good men were in their homes. Open casements revealed inner lights with families sitting at their last meal of the day; and elsewhere through perforated walls could be seen small companies on the roofs enjoying the cool night. Towering above the houses were the crowns of palm trees distributed among the courtyards inside the protecting walls. Afar, high up, nearly screened by buildings, were the Armenian gardens occupying the locality of Herod's Park and of the house of the High Priest, and there still slept a group of huge fir trees, one of which spread its sheltering branches around a delicate arboreal spire of cypress. Groves of olives were on southern Zion, and to the north of the walls was another plantation, amidst which was a massive sycamore near to a tower with weird associations. These sombre trees mapped out the blanched limestone buildings and surfaces into intelligible forms and helped to frame the ancient ramparts. The cupola of the Church of the Sepulchre with the adjoining tower stood in the heart of

the city; wild growths spread over deserted spots, the remains of fallen buildings whose foundations were buried in their own ruins. The south-eastern corner of the square of the city was the Temple enclosure, whose history we know more continuously than that of any place on earth. Marble, alabaster, Persian tiles, and forms of early Byzantine design were beautified by the contrast of vegetation, deep and rich, fed by hidden waters at their roots. There the stately cypresses whispered together. The structures known as "The Dome of the Rock" and Al Aksa divided the mind as to the site of the Holy of Holies, for the dimensions of the ancient Temple area were not enough to include both buildings. As though patiently sleeping, they rested like palled shapes in a heavy dream, detached by moonlight and moonshade. Although the platform was an open stage from which the actors had departed, yet fancy would people it with their spirits. Prophets and fore-doomed martyrs stood arraigned there, delivering a direful message from heaven. With tardy repentance more pitiful, were those haunting the scene for mourned over memories of crimes towards the innocent; among them those who bewailed their bitterness towards the Son of Love Himself, for Gabatha lay there.

Beyond this enclosure I was attracted by the moving lantern of a cautious wayfarer; the flame taxed the sight as it hovered along, a very will-o'-the-wisp, through antiquated arches, threading receding streets, being blotted out now for a few seconds, now for a longer term, and anon as suddenly revealed. Occasionally home-seekers emerged from a door and stood still with a cluster of lights before taking leave of one another, and then they diverged and crept along different lines like the sparks on unextinguished tinder, reminding me of what I had watched entranced in childhood and called "Quakers going home from meeting"; there was fascination in the tracing of these

wandering lanterns. One bewitching jewel of light became to me a cherished possession, to be guarded with fear of its loss as it came nearer and disappeared within the belt of the hareem enclosure, and I seemed the poorer at its loss ; but it was not long before it appeared again within the sacred square itself, where in passing it gilded marble pillars and elaborated carvings, and flared upon capitals, architraves, and arches, until it halted at the door of the minaret. In a few minutes appeared the flutter of the same light in the gallery above, and when the lantern was put down, I knew another dear sign of life was to break out. The caller to prayer, with hands on the parapet towards our quarter, began his chant with a voice like a resonant bell across the homes of hidden men who at the sound bent in prayer and praise. The voice lingered and soared aloft ; it was the chant of the "Kuteb Mueddin," declaring itself emphatically in every fresh outburst, warbling, carolling, and exclaiming with ecstasy, till it expressed the fulness of thanksgiving and joy. It awakened the rapture with which I had heard the nightingale thrilling in his listening copse, and the dream grew dearer to my heart that the time was coming when there could be no soul on earth not altogether at peace with the Father of Love. The singer turned in his gallery to awaken sleepers in the south, the west, the north, and then again in the full east. From a further tower a second psalmist responded, increasing his voice, and there echoed around a refrain of melody, a strophe, and antistrophe, and as the chant swelled a fuller height of rhapsody was attained ; then by intervals the exalted strain slowly descended into a tender chorus and ceased, when the very deadness vibrated, consoling the yet unsatisfied and listening ears. Then all signs of restlessness took flight, the lights in turn became extinct, and the whole mountain of men, women, and children were at hush and rest, with nothing but the sound of barking dogs and screeches of marauding beasts of prey to be heard.

Turning my attention from the window, I heard Graham's enthusiastic droning as before, and when it closed my good friend asked if I had ever heard such an eloquent sermon, and I felt able to say "Never !"