

## CHAPTER XI

1869-1874

When any pilgrims disembark here, interpreters and other officers of the Sultan instantly hasten to ascertain their numbers, to serve them as guides, and to receive in the name of their master the customary tribute.—BERTRANDON DE LA BROQUIÈRE.

Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary, the brother of James, and Josés, and of Juda, and Simon? and are not his sisters here with us?  
—ST. MARK.

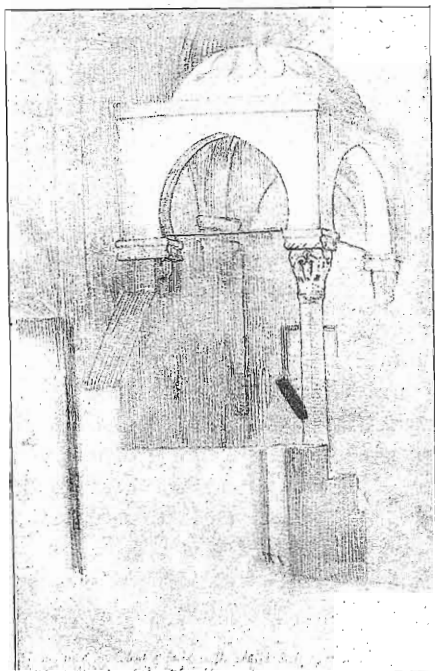
I FELT sad when all the shores, the plain, and the mountains of Syria came again in sight, for I recalled familiar faces that were absent, some for ever gone.

Strolling in one of the back streets of the city I suddenly confronted an Arab whom I recognised as though I had seen him but yesterday. He was mate of the Arab boat in which we journeyed from Damietta in 1854. "Welcome, my master," he cried, and before I had made reply, he added, "How is the khowagha Seddon?" and it seemed for a moment as though time had made no mark, till I replied, "He is dead."

Had I been able years before to carry out my intention of returning to Jerusalem, I should have painted the subject of Jesus reading in the synagogue the prophecies of the Messiah out of the book of Isaiah, and announcing their fulfilment in Himself; the amazement and indignation of the elders, together with the loving suspense of those who better understood Him, a subject not yet treated, and one

I had studied patiently. I deferred undertaking this subject, as a room suited for the painting of it could not then be obtained. In its place I was affected by the consideration of interests of the early Church disregarded in later times, and I believed that a picture of Jesus engaged in His humbler duties, anterior to Messianic work, was calculated to make the world realise more fully the value of His example in the perfection of His human life. I engaged myself, therefore, upon developing a design bringing out what St. Mark, more than the other evangelists, makes apparent in his words, "Is not this the carpenter?" The Virgin's faith well-nigh failed her as to her early hopes of the glorious and splendid career, which she, with all persons of the Jewish faith at the time, believed to belong to the reign of the Messiah. His teaching of non-resistance as the means of overcoming the Prince of this world, and the sending out of His most trusted disciples, two by two, like beggars, to preach this doctrine in all the cities and villages of Judea, induced the brothers to conclude that He was "beside himself," and they used this argument with the mother to destroy her exalted hopes. It was therefore justifiable to imagine that the doubt suggested by the brothers' appeal, that Jesus should be put into "close custody," as the only means of saving Him from the otherwise inevitable catastrophe, had been anticipated in anxious hours as she watched Him day after day toiling like other men as the labourer "who waiteth for his shadow," uttering words which could only be interpreted as discouragement of her immediate and temporal ambition for her Son and her Nation. Through all their fallen fortunes (like impoverished nobles) she would have retained the Magi's princely gifts, and for better safety she would have left them under her Son's care, so that at the end of the day, when safe from intrusion, she would have joined her loved one at His toil, and opened the casket of her treasure to reassure herself that the gifts brought by the wise men were a reality, not

the baseless fabric of a vision. She would see that there they lay, the golden crown, the royal sceptre, and the censer for His enthronement. Thus she would have been for the time confirmed in her hopes. Such were my imaginings, and I saw Him stepping over the plank at which He had been working, when the sun had reached



W. H. H.

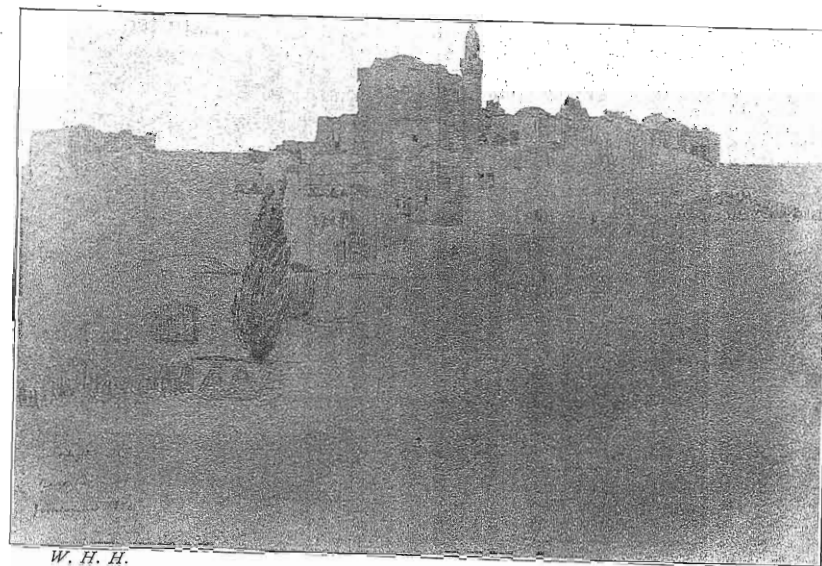
SENACULUM.

the horizon, and recognising that the end of the day's labour had come, stretching His weary frame to relieve the long-felt tension, while murmuring a prayer to His heavenly Father. The sun at this moment projected His shadow on the wall, and the tool-rack accentuated the resemblance to that of a crucified man. At the moment of the revival of His mother's trust the shadow attracted

her over-anxious gaze, and awoke the presentiment of the anguish she was doomed to suffer.

After the record by St. Mark that Christ at the beginning of His mission was "the carpenter," no one but Justin Martyr had dwelt upon this fact; and I felt its importance.

For this picture I obtained a house in an elevated



W. H. H.

JERUSALEM BY TWILIGHT.

part of the city. After much search, with the aid of Mr. Bergheim, the banker's son, I found a house known as "Dar Berruk Dar"; a large stable occupied the ground floor, the living house was reached by a flight of steps, the rooms and servants' offices encircled the courtyard, above these were other rooms and the open roof. The house had a weird reputation, not diminished by the fact that the last tenant had been the consul of the hapless Maximilian, who had been for the time enacting the part of emperor in Mexico; it was in

the Mahomedan quarter, and the neighbours said that in the reception room there had stood "an idol" of the emperor, the full size of life; they added that one day all were dismayed to find that the house was abandoned, and that this was soon accounted for by the news that the consul's master had been executed. No debts were paid, the house being left with but few contents, but "the idol" had disappeared. All men spoke of the place as being under an evil spell, and haunted, for it had been built, they said, by its original proprietor with the sweat and tears of the widows and fatherless. With the agreement that I might enlarge certain windows I took it for three years.

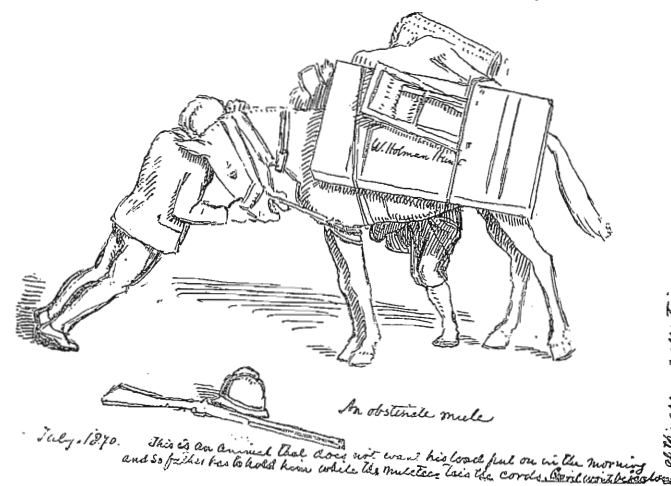
I could not settle how to overcome the difficulties of arranging the details of my picture, until I had made it my business to visit many native carpenters at work, and had been over to Bethlehem, and searched out the traditional tools, fast being abandoned for those of European form.

I was debarred from the use of a picturesque interior, as it was necessary to have a flat wall for background, but the one opportunity of outbalancing the oppression produced on the mind by the unlovely stone and mortared wall, was in the introduction of an open window immediately behind the Saviour.

I stayed many weeks at Bethlehem, where by the kindness of Miss Hoffmann, the temporary custodian of the German Mission House, I was able to work on the roof in uninterrupted sunlight.

Thus I could select the models for my picture from the inhabitants, and when a timid woman had hesitatingly posed for the Virgin opening the ivory chest, and no dreaded doom fell upon her, the most intelligent of the people were somewhat prepared to come at my subsequent summons to Jerusalem. On Saturday nights I returned to the City to see the progress made in the alterations to my house, and on Sunday nights I walked back to Bethlehem, where my tent was pitched in the Mission garden.

It happened that while I was thus pursuing the tenor of my ways, which were not always "even," Monsieur Lesseps, despite hindrances, which I feel shame in acknowledging often came from English politicians, had brought his Suez Canal to a triumphal completion. It was opened in the autumn of 1869, when all the courts of the civilised world were represented at the ceremony. I had been at Port Said on my journey out, and could not now leave my

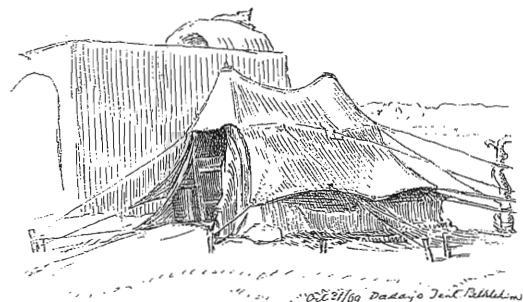


LETTER TO MY SON.

work, but I followed the news of the great event. I soon learned that the Crown Prince of Prussia was on his way from the new Mediterranean port to Syria, that he would enter by the short desert from Hebron, come on tour to Bethlehem, and rest for the mid-day meal at the German Mission.

I always began painting on the roof before sunrise, and there was no reason on the day appointed for the royal progress why I should not proceed as usual with my work, which was suspended at mid-day for three or four hours. I left my painting, therefore, as usual about ten o'clock, and walked out with my gun; game at

this hour did not present itself. But I had a book in my pocket, and with this I sat down on a rock, not forgetful of the fact that the German party would soon be traversing the road in view. After a time, looking southward, I saw, a mile away, ascending over the ridge which hid the Pools of Solomon, a party of about thirty European horsemen, with stragglers behind. The riders were all well mounted and of commanding stature, but even at the distance it was easy to distinguish the knightly Prince who formed the centre of the cavalcade, whose passing, peaceful as it was,

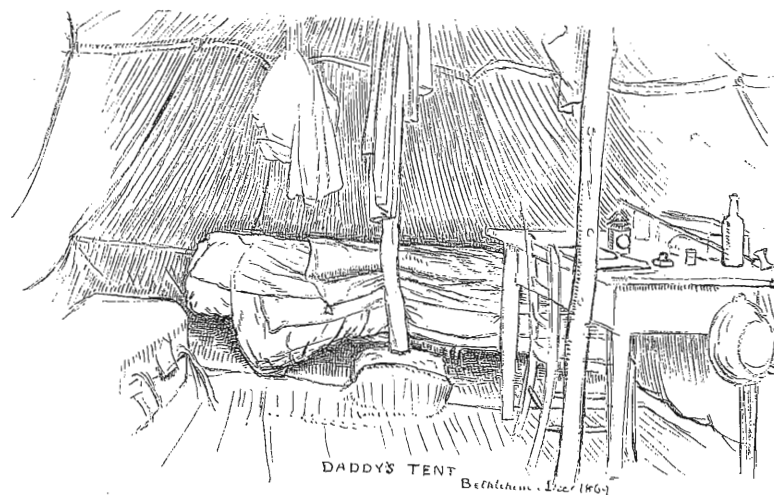


LETTER TO MY SON.

undoubtedly accentuated a new phase in the fate of this eventful country.

I did not return to the house until the royal guest and his retinue were at their breakfast. Learning that they were discussing this in a room on the first floor, I felt that I might reach my roof studio without other hindrance than that offered by the mother-of-pearl salesmen who flocked the steps. I was half-way up the stairs, and opposite the closed door of the apartment occupied by the royal party, when it was suddenly thrown open, and the Crown Prince emerged with Miss Hoffmann. He was engrossed in his talk with that admirable lady, and I stood against the wall making my obeisance, when the lady at once seized the opportunity of presenting me, explaining that I was the English artist, Mr. Holman

Hunt. The Prince immediately extended his hand, and with gracious readiness named some of my pictures, and inquired about the work that I was now engaged upon, asking in tones of sincere interest whether he could see it. I explained that to my regret my sketch was only just begun, and quite unintelligible. The Prince then said that still he hoped he should see it when it was finished, and after due acknowledgments I ascended to my

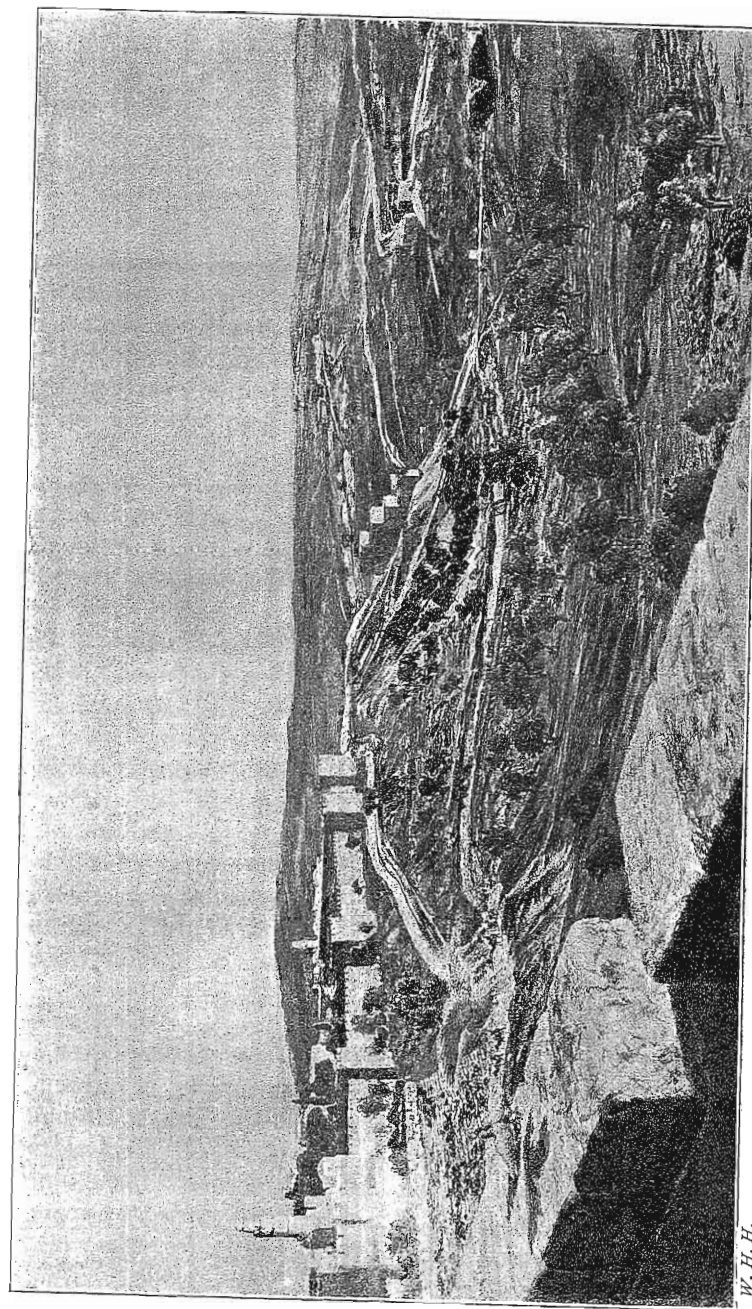
DADDY'S TENT  
Bethlehem. 1862

LETTER TO MY SON.

roof. When after a short interval I descended, I found a crowd of vendors of native things extending to the landing outside the royal rooms, who all appealed to me to recommend them to notice. This, of course, I declined to do, but I saw, standing quietly, a Latin priest named Don Boldeno. I had often before spoken with him, and when he appealed to me for a presentation I felt that his claims were quite exceptional. Inviting him to follow me, I re-ascended through the clamorous crowd, and went forward to the table, where, apologising for a possibly unpardonable intrusion, I introduced

the good priest, saying that I was not myself a Romanist, but insisted upon the particular benevolence of his work, which was to receive abandoned infants and children, to nurse them, educate them sensibly, teach them a trade, and start them in life—Jews, Christians, and Moslems alike.

“Where is this Home?” asked the Prince. The priest raised his hand, and pointed through the window, over an intervening mound, to where the roof of the building could be seen. The Prince’s reply was, “Let us see the house,” and he promptly left the room with the priest. Once out-of-doors, with long legs he strode towards the dusty mound; the priest joined me in recommending His Royal Highness to follow a cleaner though slightly more circuitous route; with some hesitation, he consented to do this, and I remained behind watching the two, Don Boldeno with effort keeping close to his royal leader, until they disappeared together into what may be called a true “Christian Refuge.” I saw no more, but I learnt that the Crown Prince was greatly satisfied with the evidence of true zeal in the management of the charity, and showed his appreciation by leaving a royal contribution behind him. The Prince set forth with his following, and continued his journey to Jerusalem, where he was received with becoming state, and the Pasha announced that he was commissioned by the Sultan to hand over the Hospital of St. John to the Prince for Germany. It was anciently occupied by the Templars, but since desecrated to the ignoble purpose of a tanner’s yard. Miss Hoffmann was my informant of all that happened, as also of a visit to another charitable institution (German and Protestant this time), which formed a striking sequel to that at Bethlehem. The Prince was called upon to inspect a home for the training of young converted Jews. He expressed some impatience as he was conducted to the house through long, narrow, and tortuous lanes. On his arrival his first inquiry was for a glass of cold water. When it was brought, holding it up to the light, he



VIEW OF ZION AND POOL OF GICHON.

W. H. H.

exclaimed to the manager, with stern military promptitude, "Do you call that smeared and dirty glass fit to drink from?"

"Pray, pardon me, your Royal Highness," stammered the confused overseer, "we were not apprized that your Royal Highness's visit would be so early."

"I did not ask you, sir, if the glass was fit for *me*, the Crown Prince, to drink from, I asked you whether it was fit for *any* one to use, for nobody should be asked to drink a glass of water unfit for a prince," thundered his visitor. The next moment the Prince's eyes made a hasty survey of the room, and he asked whether under the bed was a fitting place for a pair of dirty jack-boots which lay there. "Bring them out," he said. One of the attendants darted to the spot and lugged at the boots; but the royal mandate was not so easily obeyed, for there proved to be a pair of legs inside those boots, and to those lower limbs a reluctant body was attached, and a face showing but little desire for a royal introduction. The wretched man had been employed in the room, when, hearing the steps of the august party, he had hurriedly crept under the bed, hoping that by remaining quiet he might escape observation. The Crown Prince's indignation was unmistakable. "I have been told, sir," he said, turning to the disconcerted head of the establishment, "that you were once in the Prussian army, and I am not at all sure that I shall not have you reported and removed from the post you now fill with so little credit." At this the Prince turned his back, leaving no golden coins behind him, I was told.

When all was ready at my house in the "City of Visions," Mr. Samuel Bergheim, who had kindly taken the trouble to superintend the buildings during my absence, inquired of me whether I would allow him to invite a certain company of Moslem necromancers to hold an incantation ceremony in one of my rooms. Their object would be nothing less than to raise the form of a departed friend known to the circle, who, after a formula by the

arch magician, would appear seated in a chair left vacant for the *revenant* from the other world. Being thus seated, he would reply to any questions put to him, and any one of the company might approach and satisfy themselves of the actuality of the presence by touching it, taking its hand, or feeling its raiment.

I assured my friend that to put to the test such



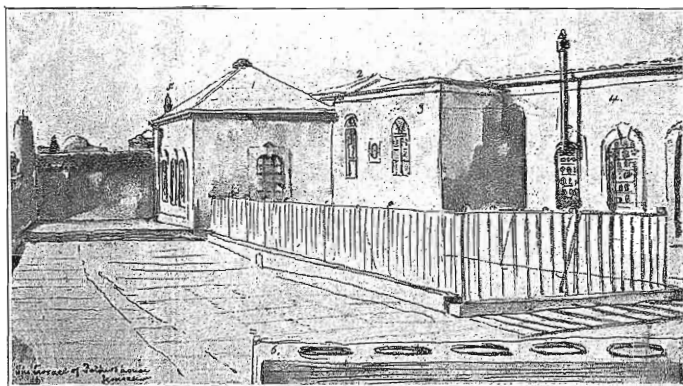
Howaghet Hanna in his first suit

A NEW CONVERT (FROM LETTER TO MY SON, 1869).

pretensions would be of the greatest interest to me, but it was desirable to understand more exactly the characters of the people concerned in the business.

I learned that the spiritualistic believers comprised a secret society; that when spoken to about their practices they would at first avow utter ignorance of what was meant, but on persevering, their interlocutor would ultimately end in persuading them to accept the invitation to hold an incantation at my house, which was

well known to them, and would be regarded as eminently suitable for the purpose. As to further conditions, my friend added that the head magician, with all seated around him, would begin by burning aromatic herbs in a chafing dish; he would then call upon "Shaitan," as the arch and successful withstander of the tyrant Almighty, to grant them the desired favour of the return to their company of some departed friend, and that in gratitude for "Shaitan's" concession they would ever after be his devoted servants.



ROOF OF MY HOUSE AT JERUSALEM.

Said I, "They would not include us, I assume?"

"Yes," my friend replied, "they would not proceed unless all joined in it."

I have been blamed since for regarding this condition as a fatal objection to my prosecution of the investigation, but I could find no alternative, and therefore my contribution to the Eastern belief in supernatural dealings goes no farther than to show that such belief still exists. Mr. Bergheim afterwards published a full narrative of his own experience of the power of a celebrated dervish in the Lebanon.

The house was indeed a gaunt one, and my servants

lived on the floor below me. Gabriel, the Abyssinian servant who marketed for me, was a handsome fellow; he had shining and beautiful teeth, and his eyes flashed the more from his dark skin. My cook, Miriam El "Megnoona," was an old Bethlehemite. As I sat up hours after them, the wind whistled whenever the air was disturbed, and in thunderstorms the reverberation from the hills carried awe with it; at night the windows

JERUSALEM  
DADDY GOING TO TAKE POSSESSION  
OF HIS NEW HOUSE Oct 1860

LETTER TO MY SON.

rattled as though beset with angry spirits. With the bursting open of the casements the lamp would be extinguished, and in darkness I would traverse the intervening chambers to my bedroom, either to sleep or to re-kindle my lamp. One night, when no such turmoil of the elements was astir, I distinctly heard a noise advancing up the steps. Snatching up a candle I went to meet it. Half-way down I was confronted by a company of rats, who stood there defying me until I hurled something at them, on which they scampered away as if astonished at the cruelty of the oppressor. Among these intruders

were serpents also. I shot some, and a charmer who had had his attention directed to one tormenting a mother pigeon on my wall, came and captured it. At times scorpions and centipedes crawling over stiff paper in my bedroom woke me up, and these alone would account for much of the ghostly reputation of the house. As a set-off the wind brought with it many pleasant odours, and the hills from which they came were



*25 Oct. 1869*  
Daddy, Well now supposing I were to engage you, in what capacity would you propose to serve me - My Guardian? As Guard. I'll, about the City

LETTER TO MY CHILD.

delightful to look upon from my upper casements There were but one or two roofs of houses to the west which rivalled mine in height, and a minaret shot up close by. The sky in the zenith was so clear, that in summer throughout the day Venus was often visible, and at night the whole Temple area could be seen as Titus saw it from the same spot, when it was without the city. To walk up and down in the cool, and glory that at last I had got back to work on an Eastern subject, brought peace to my soul, although the reflection how far short of my erewhile roseate

hope my state was, often drove me indoors to my solitary work.

For my large picture, I found it necessary to have two wooden houses constructed on the roof, to ride on rollers, one open to the horizontal beams of the sun, so as to get the correct light and shade on my model; this was wheeled into place in the afternoon, to catch the glow of the setting sun. The other hut was to shade myself and my picture, and this also was movable. When I had, by



LETTER TO MY CHILD.

some months' steady work, advanced my picture to a point at which I could judge of my requirements for the window outlook, the proper season had come to find a landscape at Nazareth yet fresh in verdure, so I set out on a four days' journey towards the north. Arrived at Nazareth I encamped below the town, and ascended each morning to the eminence on which the ancient city had been built. Thence I had an enchanting view of the valley fields cultivated by Nazarene farmers, and of its flanking hills reaching to "Gebel el Cowis," the Hill of Precipitation, evidently so named from its conspicuously abrupt descent into the plain of Jezreel. On the great lower plain stretched the patchwork squares of cultivation

under the slope of Tabor, continuing to the hills of Gilboa and Dothan, and these branched out into the swelling heights of Samaria, as well as the extended range of Carmel, bounding on the south Jezreel, Megiddo, and the lowland where ran "that ancient river the Kishon"—the plain where flowed the blood of so many warriors of alien races who have shaped the course of history. As I sat quietly at work, I could hear the younger members of a house and garden higher up on the hill cheerfully contending at play, and occasionally I turned and saw some grown girls appearing and disappearing on a swing. They were continually shouting a pean, with loud tongue dividing the strains into verses. After a time I listened and discovered that their song was:—

One has come to the town,  
A khowagha he,  
With horses and mules and asses,  
And so we shout the song of festivity.

Muleteers and ass drivers and servants  
Has he brought,  
He is encamped in the lower vale,  
And so we shout the song of festivity.

In the night well guarded  
Sleeps he,  
With sentinels around his tent,  
And so we shout the song of festivity.

Robbers and beasts of prey,  
And jackals of the night,  
Fear to come nigh,  
And so we shout the song of festivity.

Each morn he mounts to the hill  
With many colours and pens,  
And writes till eve, brightening his white board,  
And we shout the song of festivity.

From the Holy City he has come,  
Yea, and even far beyond the sea,  
And so we shout the song of festivity.

Will he go away again,  
Or will he take our welcome?  
While we shout the song of festivity.

The girls had probably talked to my attendants, and furnished with news, seldom varied in this quiet place, they had improvised this song on traditional lines, but they made no effort to satisfy their curiosity by coming out to see my work.

One Sunday morning I mounted my horse, and, with servant behind, rode out to Cana of Galilee. Nazareth has been compared to an open rosebud; it was interesting to see how deeply the road that took us out of the hollow had been worn by the feet of generations since first it received the form on which the comparison was based. We passed through villages and fields with trees bearing fruit already ripe and plentiful. To judge from the company round the well-cisterns, with laughing girls carrying on their heads large jars of water, there seemed reason to conclude that it was at the time a happy neighbourhood. Our animals were served by playful loiterers at every stage; when we reached the village we were assured that a stone house, now made into a Greek church, was the identical building where Christ had attended the bridal feast and turned the water into wine. The ceremony of the baptism of two babes was going on; the christening was a most complicated one. One child, not so robust as the other, gave up its protests before it was half unpaganised, but the evil spirit in the other protested to the end with lusty lungs, and it seemed as though all its previous appreciation of parental authority had been destroyed before the priest had finished his task. After this the whole company went away, and I was allowed to examine the simple building, behind the altar as well as in front of it.

An emotion of great sadness possessed me. Spite of all reason, I felt as though I had come to see a friend, and was disappointed that he was not there and could not be found. I left the house and village sorrowfully, as one does who has failed in an earnest desire. When, after several days, I had obtained the materials for my background, I returned to Jerusalem and resumed my work.

Captain Luard, the friend whom I had left in Italy, had accepted my invitation to stay with me a month or two on his return journey to India, about the beginning of June, I received a telegram to say that he would arrive at Jaffa by the next steamer, and he asked me to meet him at the seaport. Accordingly I started before daybreak, and arrived at Jaffa by noon. The French steamer arrived and anchored in the roadstead, and I took a boat and went out to the ship. On finding my friend I asked him, "Tell me, is it war or peace?"

He put his finger to his lips, saying, "Come into my cabin." There he whispered, "It is war; but the good people of the ship are so excited that it is well not to speak of it at all before them. A German happens to have been my fellow-passenger, and he used to appear at the table in the saloon at meal times; but the French officers made such demonstrations of the determination of France to overrun Germany and humble it to the dust, that he in prudence had his meals alone." My friend, however, conversed with him in the night on unfrequented parts of the ship, when he declared that in Germany this war had been foreseen for years; that they knew the actual condition of the French army to be so inferior to its declared efficiency, and the German army to have been prepared so carefully for the contest that he had no doubt France would find itself in a very pitiable condition.

We rode up to Jerusalem, carrying the news with us. It was a sorrowful year in every way. There had been a very insufficient fall of rain in the winter, the land had suffered from drought and most of the cisterns were empty. Children went from door to door, empty cup in hand, beseeching in God's name a drink of water. Attempts had been made to track underground cisterns, and two important channels on the northern side of the Mosque had been discovered; but these, owing to the choking up of soil, had only a

few pools of worthless water in them, and the clearing out of the channels was forbidden by the French consul, who descended with his suite and claimed it for his Empire. It was natural that the opening of the Suez Canal was said to have drawn all the water away from this hill country, certainly before the rainy season had passed, it was tantalising to watch heavy clouds come up from

*This is the portrait of a woman of the name of Miriam, who once visited a friend in the country of the Jews. She was then a young girl, and her features were so fresh and bright that she was called 'the girl of the hill'.*



MIRIAM, MY COOK (PAGE 285).

the sea and pause as if to discharge their contents on the watershed of the country, then dissipate themselves into quickly dissolved shreds. I was fortunate in having a sufficient supply of water and to spare in my own wells.

We lived retired lives, scarcely meeting the community under English protection. One difficulty that I had with my subject was that while the model was of the bronzed complexion that I required, after two days' burning of the sun he had become red, and this was

succeeded by the chocolate colour of the Central Indian. In consequence I could not proceed until he had been covered up for a month, but the drapery I was able to work at in the intervals.

The habit of Orientals to sit cross-legged from infancy tends to destroy the delicate form of the men's lower limbs; from this cause I had some difficulty in satisfying myself in the painting of the figure, which occasioned many undoings of my work.

As the season wore on and the weather became too wild for painting on the roof, I was able in my studio to turn my attention to accessories. Luard had intended to try his hand at painting a subject, but on coming to close quarters with it he felt the need of materials procurable only from Europe, and so waiting, reading, and following other interests, his time passed away. Our only intercourse was at meals and after supper when we walked on the roof, and he told me many a stirring tale of his experiences in the Indian Mutiny and the China War. His father had been at Waterloo, and had been an amateur artist; his brother John, our close friend, had died at an early age.

When he had left and I was again alone, the winter had passed and spring had returned. I was anxious to avoid a repetition of my troubles with the over-bronzed colour of my model, and I determined to make the best of my time before the sun grew too fierce. It was necessary for me to be on the alert throughout the night to observe whether the sky was clear and promising a fine sunrise, in which case I awoke my Abyssinian, arranged my materials for working, and when the sun was getting near the horizon, I had the Bethlehem man, who slept in my house, awakened, and I eagerly blocked out my work.

It was often very cold in my shaded painting hut, while the man in his shed felt the burning heat. After a quarter of an hour without leisure to glance at the sky,

I felt confident in the satisfactory promise of my morning's preparation, but suddenly the light would often be obscured, and I found that the mist out of the valleys had gathered into a thick cloud, and that this rose up at a corresponding altitude with the sun, completely concealing its rays for



STUDY FOR FIG TREE.

two or three hours. At this point the work had not progressed far enough for its completion at sunset. With my system of painting, if I left it, it would have prevented me from making a happier preparation on the morrow; there was no choice therefore but to wipe it all out and wait for a new morning; but the same experience was followed day after day and week

after week, and this was the more disastrous, because at each fresh posing the man's skin again became darkened. It was indeed now, as it so often seemed, that Nature was jealous and abhorred the imitation of herself, appointing Fate to stand on the watch to frustrate all attempts at representing her. My man, although tall enough, was objectionably spare and wanting in richness of line. I had hoped to correct these defects sufficiently, but about this time certain large photographs of antique figures sent by my friend Luard, even with all allowance made for the Oriental character of my figure, reminded me by their greater fulness of form that my eye had become so far accustomed to the leanness of Syrians that I was in danger of finishing the figure of Christ without the comeliness of proportion it was my object to give. I was determined, therefore, to look out for a better developed model. I had not yet found any one from whom I could study the head, but, wandering through the lanes of Bethlehem, I came upon a man of singularly noble form and beauty of expression. He agreed to sit to me, and I found him undoubtedly the most truthful, honest, and dignified servant I ever met in Syria. He was a staunch member of the Greek Church; his name Jarius Hasboon. From this man I was able to paint the head and modify the figure.

The loneliness of my life in this second visit to Syria was so great a contrast to what I had planned it should be, that oftentimes I pitied myself. There were no companions with whom to have converse, and I felt what disadvantage it was to have no friendly eye to comment on my painting, nor any other works of art to refresh me. I often felt, while enjoying my work to the full, how foolish were the axioms of those modern social reformers who would have it that the labour of an artist is one of continuous enjoyment. Had they seen me sometimes in the quiet hours when alone, they would have been encouraged in the condemnation of my efforts, as altogether proving the want of that artistic self-confidence they so much admire.

To work on settled lines, to give a Greek, a Michael Angelesque, a Titianesque, or any other traditional complexion to a design, may to many seem wiser, as in such a course stepping-stones will be found as assured conductors at every pass. I do not here dispute such proposition, but certainly to make a new idea intelligible and acceptable is an undertaking beset with pitfalls, and the effort to arrive finally at one's goal is often far beyond estimate of the danger of failure to be encountered.

Each evening, returning after sundown from my constitutional and ascending the steep hill of Bezeeta leading to my house, I passed a café held in a large hall, which I had more than once entered, at the instance of the master, to examine the large masonry of its walls and a stout column with capital of early post-Christian date at the farther side of the building; its fellow pillars were covered up in late stonework. In the dusk the chamber was arranged for the entertainment of Moslem husbands who there enjoyed repose from the wrangles of their numerous "houri" wives. As I passed by, the interior was lighted with candles and lamps, the ground was neatly swept, and stools were placed for the assembling guests, while inside was a higher seat for the reciter. It was usual as I passed for the café keeper and some of his visitors to invite me courteously to join them, but I felt constrained politely to decline and pass on after interchange of compliment. The evening meal was prepared for me on my return, but when I had partaken of this I paced the roof to enjoy the cool air, the moon's soothing light or the boundless maze of stars, and view of the mosque area sacred as for all time. The silence was broken by the monotonous intonation of a chanter at the café, and when his droning was ended a many-mouthed chorus began which sang the praises of Antar (converted to *Islam* many centuries after his death), or of other champions against the infidel like Mokmah, who trod his scores of enemies under his feet. As the music ceased, the chant continued the theme until the chorus began again, completing the delight of the Mahomedan

company. The alternating song continued inspiringly, so that step by step one's blood danced with the Arab destroyers rather than with the overthrown infidel who had fought for the Christian faith. In exchanging the reign of the olive branch for that of the sword, the religion of Mohammed followed no exceptional rule.

Before the story-teller had concluded his tale, the Kutib muezzin in the contiguous minaret appeared in the gallery and acclaimed in trumpet notes, "Allah illa Allah ou Mahmoud il rasoul Allah." The piercing notes extended far over house-tops, mosques, Temple platform, castle towers, and walls, surging out to the mountains beyond like a strong tidal wave, so that I was led to ponder on the time when Omar first made the change which built minarets and mosques in the place of Christian churches, because the worshippers in these last were self-condemned in their luxury and corruption as unfit to witness to the simple creed of Christ. The religion of the Messiah was in that age proved to be too sublime for this world, and Mohammed came to substitute one more within the reach of humanity. Even now, in the city where the only prophet endowed with the "soul of God"<sup>1</sup> had sealed His teaching with His blood, it was a question whether Mohammed's verdict had yet ceased to be true.

One late afternoon when working from my model, intent upon the rendering of the sunset tone, the man suddenly withdrew his raised arms and with an ejaculation retreated from the shed, pointing towards the west. Turning in that direction, I saw at the highest point of a house a hundred yards away, a bevy of women, looking steadily in our direction. As they saw me start up they shouted, "Why does your man, O effendi, stand all the afternoon with his arms stretched out like an idol?" They were evidently in good humour, and one in talking let her veil blow aside, by which it was easy to perceive that she was beautiful. I answered that I was

<sup>1</sup> Thus the educated Moslem designates Christ.

making a picture of him, that it was convenient to me for him to stand thus, and that I had not known before that



STUDY FOR HEAD OF CHRIST.

the angles of the wall had any platform below on which people could stand and see us at work.

I contrived the best I could to avoid further curiosity and continued my painting; I should not have noted the trifling incident, but within a month one evening when at supper I heard most distressing sounds of lamentation, the inconsolable grievings as of a child, but the voice was that of a man. I asked my servant the cause of the low lament, and he told me it was the mourning of the effendi, my neighbour, for the loss of the most beautiful of his wives. All my fellow-residents on the height of Bezeeta were demonstrative in their feelings over domestic fortunes, and it was according to common experience that, a few days later, I heard loud *tom-toms* being beaten and the sound of lutes, together with strident cries of rejoicing stinging the evening air. I remarked to my man that the noisy rejoicings must be particularly painful to my effendi neighbour. The reply was, "No, the rejoicings are for his wedding with a new bride."

In the intervals of my task I sometimes reflected upon the relinquished subject of the "Flight into Egypt"; and pondering on the history given by St. Matthew, the notion came to me that since the little playmates of Jesus had been a vicarious sacrifice, they would in their spiritual life be still constant in their love for the forlorn but Heaven-defended family. Having become interested in this idea, while embodying it on a canvas I took occasion to make an expedition to the Philistine Plain towards Gaza, to get characteristic materials for the landscape. Mr. Samuel Bergheim was my companion. At Gaza a handsome group of trees over a water-wheel recommended itself as most suitable to my background. The moon happened to be at the full when we arrived, and I used the opportunity by staying up some nights until I had painted the trees with the figures. We returned by way of Ascalon, Gath, and Ashdod, and struck the Jaffa road near the Wady. A native from the sea-coast told me that there was an Englishman in the hotel who was at the point of death. I could do nothing alone, but on arrival at Jerusalem

I saw the excellent Dr. Chaplin. The etiquette of the profession forbade that he should go without an appeal from some friend, but he agreed that I could take upon me this character. We were to go on the morrow, but in the afternoon a telegram came saying that the case was most urgent. At the same time came news of robbery and murder on the road, and the Pasha insisted that we should have two soldiers as guards. We started before sunset, our soldiers were lazy and lagged behind,



*Father.  
Sunday turning the night into day -  
Feb 17-18. 1870*

LETTER TO MY CHILD.

till we were out of patience and rode on to Latrone. On our right we were called to by a group of fellalien running towards us and charging us to stop, encouragingly adding that we should not fear. While trotting on we joked them that they were so slow we could not spare time for the pleasure of their interview, and that advancing night reminded us of the long journey before us. We tantalised them by keeping far out of their reach. At the ascent of the hill, wishing them good-bye, we spurred our horses and cantered up the road; within a mile we were on the crest of the hill,

in view of the plain in front, when suddenly we were faced by a mounted body of murderous-looking villains armed with weapons of many fashions. We took up our position with a prickly-pear hedge behind us, while the sheik asked us whether we were without guards. We confessed that our soldiers were too slow for us, and that we were well armed, and quite prepared to defend ourselves. After other inquiries and our candid replies, they drew aside and left the road open to us, which we cautiously pursued and came to Ramleh Convent, where we alighted for refreshment of welcome coffee and wholesome bread and fruit. On remounting we cantered and trotted in turn to the German hotel.

We reached this about two A.M.; it was shut up and dark, and we had to knock for half an hour, when the landlord opened and explained that the patient had been taken away to a hospital in the town. We elected to go on foot, for the chance of getting in, while there was yet hope of saving the sinking man. At the city gate we heard the sentinel inside marching up and down. We knocked, telling him that we as doctors had come to see a sick man in the town; for half an hour he imperturbably walked up and down and denied admission to us, but because of our importunity he ended by opening the gate.

At first, our object seemed a hopeless one, but the doctor knew the German quarter, and we groped our way to it. One window showed sign of light, we knocked at the door, and the answering German told us that the Englishman was there; being admitted, we ascended to the sick-room. Certainly the sight of the patient gave small indication of life, but the laboured breathing was thought a sign that the fire was still within, a very smouldering one indeed.

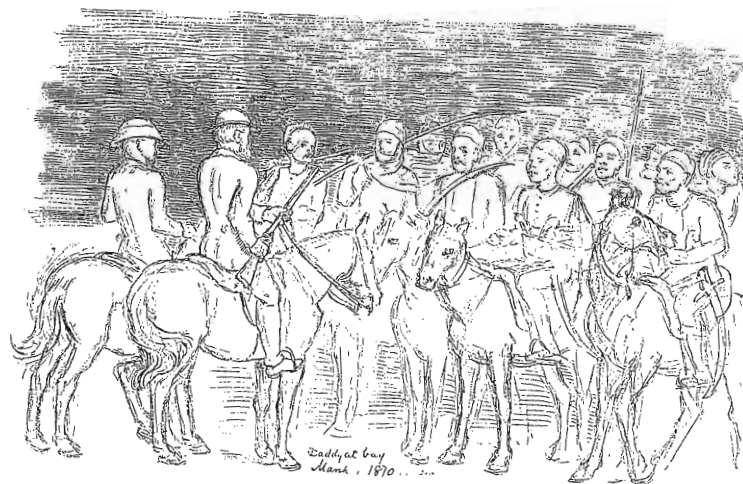
The doctor began inquiries as to the hours of the recurrent attacks. One, perhaps the last, would come in about two hours, he said. He concocted a strong potion, and left this with the intelligent master and mistress to be given at the critical moment.

We then felt justified in going back to much-needed sleep.

After breakfast we returned to the hospital, and to our relief found that the Englishman had successfully thrown off the dreaded fits and was doing well.

We stayed in Jaffa a second day, leaving the patient safe, although unable to talk.

The doctor steadfastly refused my proffered fee.



LETTER TO MY CHILD.

Eventually the Englishman recovered, came to the hotel at Jerusalem, and went out shooting in the neighbourhood; but he called neither upon the doctor nor myself, so that we concluded he did not know how he had been brought back to life.

Before the next winter was "over and gone" fever came upon me, perhaps because of my restlessness at nights to see what chance promised for my morning's work. Dr. Chaplin attended me and brought me past the crisis of my illness, which proved to be gastric fever of a dangerous character. My servants, with true Oriental

fatalism, shrugged their shoulders to inquirers, saying, "God will provide," or "God knows," "If it be His will that the Moallim should die, nothing can save him, while if God ordains the M'sowah should recover, he will get up again." They lived on a floor below me, across a courtyard, and piously left me alone. The feeble clapping of my hands could not be heard, so I rarely could get my medicine, and only very uncertainly my food. The doctor then brought me a kind invitation to come and stay with his family, and this quite set me on my legs again.

Being most anxious to finish my work from the tall model before the spring came to an end, one Saturday night I detained Ezaak an hour beyond sunset, and sent him to walk the dark six miles to Bethlehem that he might spend the Sunday with his family, giving him strict injunctions to come back on the Sunday night to be ready for early Monday's work. On the Sunday I took a ride along the southern road, and on the plain of Rephaim I met Ezaak, who assured me that he was going on to my house in the city. After another mile or so I turned my horse's head round and went back to sup with Dr. Chaplin; my handsome Abyssinian "Gabriel" was there waiting upon me, and when he heard me saying that I must be up before the sun to-morrow to work from my Bethlehem man, he bent down and whispered to me that Ezaak was in prison for a murder that he had committed on Saturday night.

"No," I said, "I have just met him on the plain, and sent him on to the house."

"Yes," he returned, "but coming in by the Jaffa Gate he was recognised and seized by the police."

Thereupon I wrote a note, saying that I felt sure it must be a mistake, and that it was important that he should be released at once unless the case were very serious. The reply was that he could not be liberated.

The next morning instead of painting I had to hurry off to see the Pasha; he had gone to do honour at a

ceremony in the Armenian Church. I followed on his footsteps, but found the church full of pilgrims, so that I saw it would require particular influence to get through them. I sent my card by a functionary to the Pasha, and in return his secretary came to me. I explained at once that I did not want the course of justice interfered with, but that unless my man had been guilty of some atrocious crime, I should be glad to have him liberated in the interim, and would incur responsibility for him.

The secretary immediately said, "Then are you the English artist painting a large picture of a Bethlehem man and woman?"

"Yes," I said.

"Oh," he replied, "the Pasha has been talking to me about it, and has been wanting me to come and visit you to know when he may see the picture."

I said it would be better to wait a little, till I had got it quite finished, when I would invite him to do me the honour of seeing it. "But," I asked, "what about the man?"

"Oh, I will write you an order for his liberation."

I interrupted, "If he has been really guilty of murder."

"Oh! no matter, no matter, take this." And so I went away armed with "An Order of Release."

On the way I remembered terrible stories that had been told me about Ezaak's youth, and how he had once with some other wild spirits broken into the Church of the Nativity and stolen the gold and jewels from the Byzantine pictures of the Virgin and Child on the altar, and how he had been the terror of the neighbourhood on the roads for a time. I had not believed these stories, although some dames of the city had shaken their heads at me, saying they could not understand how I could venture to have him sleeping in my house, and go out with him on long rides to remote regions.

I had indeed always found him a very intelligent

fellow, and I had perfect confidence in his trustworthiness. When I arrived at the prison I was admitted into a large courtyard full of Bethlehemites, with many of their mothers and wives sitting beside them looking woebegone and weeping, who at sight of me all clamoured that I would get their respective relatives released, to which appeals, however, I had to declare my powerlessness. The head of the police, asking many questions as to why I wanted Ezaak, then said he would see if he could be got off, and quickly left me.

Waiting unconscionably long, I sent again; when the official came I reminded him that the Pasha's order must be obeyed at once.

"Yes," he said, "but there are many expenses, and till these are met I cannot get the prison door open."

This statement made it clear why there were so many prisoners on this one charge, so I took from my pocket a sovereign. Almost immediately Ezaak came up to me and we sallied forth into Christian Street. When out of hearing, I accosted him with reproof for his riotous behaviour, saying, "I have used my influence on this occasion, Ezaak, but I am not very comfortable at having done so, and I must tell you that if you indulge your bloodthirsty disposition while in my service, I will not again attempt to protect you."

"But I have done nothing, ya Khowagha."

"Nonsense," I interrupted him. "I don't know exactly what the facts are, but I have heard that there was a fight on Saturday evening at Bethlehem and there were two men killed, and you are accused of having had something to do with it; unless there had been some foundation for the charge why should they have apprehended you?"

His argument was conclusive. "I suppose, ya Moallim, you had to pay the head policeman, notwithstanding the strength of the Pasha's order, and I had also to give him all the money I had. There was a fight at Bethlehem on Saturday afternoon, but you will remember I did not leave your house till past six, and did not arrive home

till about eight; this was four hours after the disturbance, but the Turkish police made it an occasion for seizing every Bethlehemite who came into Jerusalem, and few of them will escape until they have sold up every scrap of property belonging to their families." Then he kissed my hand for my favour to him, and I admitted that he had justified himself, which later became even more apparent.

Slowly I brought my picture to a conclusion. I could not forget my promise to show the picture, ere it left Jaffa, to the Pasha and several other dignitaries and Europeans dwelling in the place. Miss Hoffmann, whose permanent post was in Jerusalem as superintendent of an institution for the employment of divorced Jewesses, kindly consented to sit in my reception room and watch that the conditions I imposed should not be infringed by native visitors if I were out of the way.

Before seven in the morning the Pasha and his staff arrived, and it was of interest to me to hear and explain the particular enigmas that presented themselves to their uninitiated minds. With ejaculated compliments they stayed awhile, not leaving before the Greek party with the Patriarch had arrived, and these also appeared much interested. I asked the Patriarch whether they did not read the phrase in St. Mark as meaning that Christ was himself a carpenter, and he unhesitatingly said that τέκτων, the word in the Gospel, undoubtedly meant that occupation.

Going backwards and forwards to my packing between these visits, I heard an extraordinary hubbub coming from below. "What is that noise?" I asked of Gabriel.

He replied, with a great sense of importance, "It is the little shopkeepers, masons, and work-people of the neighbourhood, who, seeing the Pasha's party and the Patriarch's coming and going from the house, have knocked to know whether there is not something to see, adding that they would like to come up with the others. I have explained it is not for people like them, it is only to great personages that the picture is shown, but they are

still waiting and blocking up the streets, so that the invited effendis can scarcely get to the door."

I ordered my man to go down to the crowd and say that I could not allow them to come in and interfere with the convenience of my invited guests, but that if they would divide themselves into twenties at a time, they might all come up in turn, under promise to move away where my friends were to be accommodated, and in this way the room was filled continually till late in the evening.

Once I was sent for, with the message that a man particularly wished to see me before he left. He was a mason, dusty and splashed with lime-wash, as were his companions. With great courtesy he spoke: "Ya Effendi, you have done us a great kindness in allowing us to see your picture. We had only before known such pictures as those in the Church of the Sepulchre, but we had heard of Frank paintings and had often desired to see them, so this opportunity is more enjoyed by us than perhaps you can easily understand. We shall always remember it with thanks, but we want you to do us one more favour; the lady here will not allow us to step over the cord to go up and touch the picture, although we promise not to do it any harm. Now, while you are here you can see us, and we beg permission to go and put our fingers on it."

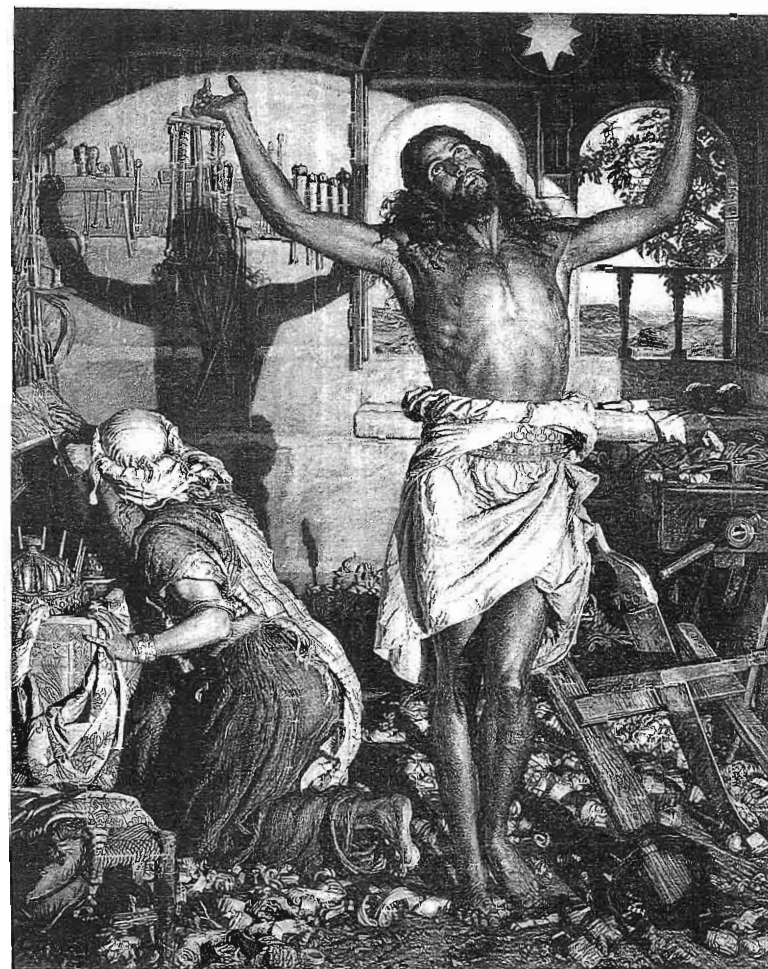
"No," I said, "that cannot be; it would get soiled; the more because some of the paint is scarcely dry. But what can be your object in wishing to touch it?" I said.

"Well," he replied, "we want to feel what is the difference between the linen and the flesh, the sky and the shavings; we have seen it with our eyes, and we want to feel it with our hands."

"No," I said; "I will show you another unfinished picture, and you will see that there is no difference in the surface at all."

"Ah, but we want to touch the large finished one."

I had to be firm, although I am sure it must have seemed to him and his friends unkind, but then he



W. Holman Hunt. paint.

Swan Electric Engraving Co. &c.

*The Shadow of Death.*

importuned another favour, which he urged in the name of all his friends. It was that I should turn the picture round and show them the back.

"That also is impossible," I declared. "Don't you see it is arranged at the exact angle not to reflect the glitter of the window light upon its surface, and if I were to turn it round it would take long to put it right again, and other people who came would not be able to see it"; taking up a portable canvas I showed the back. "It is just like this, a mere framework of wood," I said.

"Yes, that may be," he returned, "but we should like to see the back of that one."

"But it could be of no interest to you," I said. At which the group seemed very dejected, till another spokesman stepped forward, saying :

"I think that I can convince you, O Moallim, why we ask this kindness ; we have been here twenty minutes looking at the front of the Messiah and the back of the Sit Miriam ; is it not natural that now we should wish to see the face of Sit Miriam and the back of the Christ?"

They were utterly unsatisfied with my explanations that they would not see what they wanted were the picture turned round. One tall and large-framed negress repeated her visits throughout the day ; towards the evening a well-informed critical member of the crowd addressed her, saying, "Do you know the M'sowah took three years about this picture?"

"Did he?" she said. "I can imagine that I might have worked at it for three years, and it would not have been done yet," which statement the crowd partly accepted.

Except one party of Latins, who came from Bethlehem, no others of the Roman community appeared among the throng of visitors. A day after, I inquired of an impartial person why this was, and heard that the papal dignitaries had decided that the representation of the Holy Virgin with the face hidden was denounced as a Protestant indignity to the Madonna, and they had forbidden all of their Church to come. They had posted

sentinels at the Jaffa Gate to caution their members from Bethlehem not to appear, and the party of three who came had remained ignorant of this interdict by coming through the Damascus Gate. I had indeed tried many arrangements in order that the Virgin's face should be shown, but I had rejected all, from conviction that nothing but the direct glance at the shadow gave the tragedy of the idea.

The war had shut up most routes across the Continent for a time, but I despatched my picture from Jaffa, *via* Gibraltar, and then took my own course to Trieste.

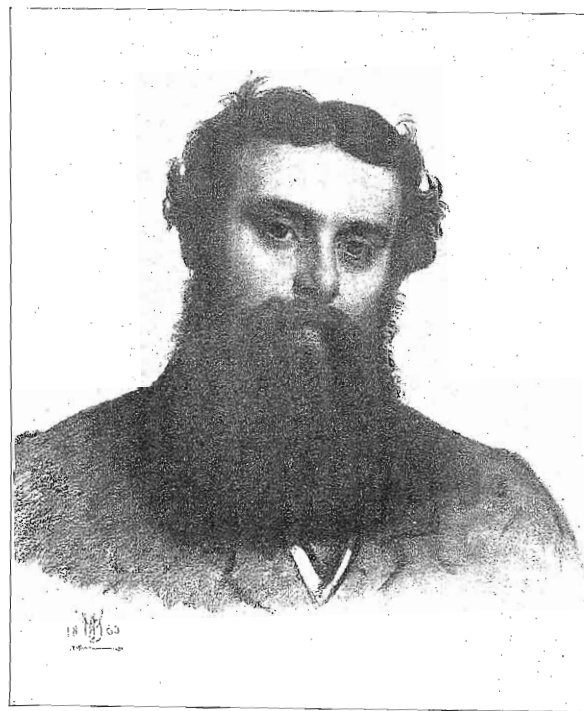
The Austrian Lloyd's boat was still engineered by the Englishman Thompson, who had been present at the battle of Lissa. He was the first to give an historical account in *The Times* when all Europe had been breathless with anxiety for more than a week to know the real issue of the fight. He explained to me the circumstances as we passed by the island in the Adriatic. Proceeding from Trieste, after a day's stay at Vienna, I found it practicable to proceed through France, and that Paris itself was open. Very lamentable it was to go through the cordon of ruins caused by the German siege, and still more in Paris to see the havoc wrought by the Communists.

When the picture arrived in London, large studios in those days being rare, it was difficult to find a vacant one of sufficient size, but Millais, with his wonted good-nature, made over his painting-room to me during his autumn holiday, commenting with frank but appreciative candour on the work which hitherto no other instructed eye had seen.

My return brought with it realisation of sorrow, caused by the recent death of Robert B. Martineau. He had of late been painting some excellent heads, and making several beautiful drawings full of dignity of style; his last occupation had been on a large picture representing a young girl in John's reign defending a poor Jew who was being insulted and maltreated by a "Christian" mob. This also in its design

and beginning and the parts finished had a similar largeness of style.

"The Last Day in the Old Home"<sup>1</sup> is now unfortunately terribly cracked in its principal parts; this is owing to an incorrigible habit he contracted of painting



W. H. H.

ROBERT B. MARTINEAU.

over and over again his yesterday's work while still wet. It was impossible to remedy the evil until it had got to its worst, or I would have restored it ere it was taken over by the Tate Gallery.

The sudden change of climate had made me ill, so I was unable to use my time profitably for the fastidious

<sup>1</sup> Now in the Tate Collection.

amendments which my rested eyes prompted me to make, and I had to engage another studio for six months. Winter fogs coming on delayed my work, and again I had to find accommodation. My old friend Burchett, the head master of the School of Design at Kensington, saved me from further search by inviting me to make use of his own painting-room.

When I had brought my work on "The Shadow of Death" to a conclusion, there was some hitch in the business arrangements concerning it. My good friend Sir Thomas Fairbairn came to my aid and negotiated the terms of its sale to Messrs. Agnew and Sons. Five thousand five hundred pounds were to be paid down for the large picture and for the first study, a similar sum to be received by me in the future. It was now required that I should make a quarter-size and elaborate copy for the use of the engraver. The original painting was exhibited for a long term in London, and then sent to Oxford. As in Jerusalem, the extreme Church party denounced it as blasphemous, altogether refusing to acknowledge that the record in St. Mark should be read as authority for representing Jesus Christ as Himself a carpenter, but the picture did not long remain there. When it was shown in the North it was hailed by artisans and other working men as a representation which excited their deepest interest, so that they came to the agent, asking him to receive subscriptions for the two-guinea print, week by week in instalments, that the idea might always be before them in their own homes. This was exactly what I most desired, the dutiful humility of Christ's life thus carrying its deepest lesson.

Elizabeth Thompson astonished the world in 1874 by her deeply interesting picture of "The Roll Call." It was a poetically selected incident from the tragedy of the battle-field, and while it was treated with unaffected naturalness, it was presented with such primal simplicity that to every one it bore a typical meaning of universal application. Her later paintings have increased respect for her accomplish-

ments as an artist, and as a portrayer of the terrible heroism of the battle-field. Some years before this, Briton Rivière claimed admiration for his exquisite graceful treatment of animals in a succession of pictures, amongst which were "His Only Friend," "Circe," and "Sympathy."