

**The following information is from the perspectives of a Christian lady that traveled to the Holy Land in the mid 1800's. A Samaritan-Israelite did not write the opinions sited in the following book and this information is for research usage and typical reading. The bottom of this web page contains further information supplied by the copyist that was not contained in the book.**

## **Mary Eliza Rogers and her Brother Edward Thomas Rogers**

Photos from <http://home.cogeco.ca/~gstephenson1/>

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### **Domestic Life in Palestine**

**By Mary Eliza Rogers**

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#### **CHAPTER X. FROM ARRABEH TO NABLUS**

ALL the little boys went with me into the divan, where my brother sat, surrounded by effendis and young men of Abdul Hady family. He had dismissed the guide who conducted us to Arrabeh, and decided to travel without one. We were safer alone. It might have compromised us to have in our party any one who had been engaged in the late skirmishes, or who belonged to a fraction.

It was pouring with rain when we started; but the sun shone now and then, tracing vivid rainbows in the clouds. The undulating highlands which we traversed reminded me of the Sussex downs; while beyond them bare rocks and rugged slopes appeared. Far away on the right, the Mediterranean could be seen, between grayish-blue hills. Occasionally we passed quite an English-looking bank of grass and wild flowers; and wherever the poterium spinosum grew, it sheltered the sweetwilliam, the Chinese pink, and the forget-me-not. We rode over a large, well-cultivated plain, and met two horsemen, who courteously exchanged salutations with us, and then said, "What is the news?" and "Whence do you come?"

Rain fell heavily, as we rode on to a steep ridge, which commanded a view of the fortress of Senur. It stands on the summit of a seemingly-inaccessible hill, of conical form. The road down the southern side of the ridge was so very difficult and dangerous for horses, that we, and even the Arabs, dismounted, and the animals were unwillingly dragged or urged along. We made our way cautiously, stepping, and sliding slabs of rock; sometimes (page 257) walking in the midst of a water-course, with the shallow but increasing stream rushing round our feet. We paused for a minute or two in a narrow valley, and stood in the shelter of a low, deserted hut, made of tree-branches and stones. Then, with difficulty, we mounted the hill, and reached Senur. The inhabitants will not willingly make the approach to their town more easy while the country is subject to civil war.

We found the gates of the town closed; but, after a parley with the sentinels, we were admitted. It was just midday. I was tired, giddy, and wet. We were led into a large, vaulted, smoke-blackened hall, on the ground-floor of the castle. About fifty men rose, wrapped their heavy cloaks around them, and left the

place as we entered. A carpet was spread for us in a deep, wide window-seat. I poured the water from the brim of my hat, and gladly threw off my cloak, and took a cup of hot coffee. In the mean time, another resting-place was made ready for us. Ibrahim Jerrar and his brother, the chiefs of the town, conducted us across the castle-yard, up a steep, uncovered stone stairway, into an open court. As we crossed the threshold of a vaulted chamber, in the highest part of the castle, they said, "Be welcome, and take your rest." Mats, and carpets, and cushions had been newly spread on the ground. The window of this room commanded a view of a small fertile plain, almost inclosed by hills, but which could be easily approached from the south-west by a narrow valley or pass. In time of war its dark vista is always carefully watched by the people of Senur.

A lunch of bread, fried eggs, goat's-milk cheese, and olives was brought in, and placed on a round wooden tray raised a few inches from the ground. Serving men poured water over our hands. When lunch was cleared away, and coffee and pipes wetn round, an earnest conversation commenced between the Jerrars and my brother, while three or four men sat by, silently smoking and listening. I rested apart from them on a cushioned carpet, watching the (page 258) animated group. I had never in the East seen any men so tall, well-proportioned, and handsome as the two Jerrars. Their large, loose, white and brown cloaks hung in graceful folds, and their red and yellow silk shawl head-dresses shaded bright, clear countenances, with classically-regular, yet very expressive features. My brother said to me in English, "If you have an opportunity, by all means take the likeness of our host, Ibrahim. He is the most celebrated man in this district, both as regards courage, daring, and energy; his family for many generations have been renowned for strength, vigor, and manly beauty. But," he added, "do not let him or any of the others see you sketching him, for he is quite as superstitious as he is handsome."

The men were all so earnestly engaged in smoking, talking, or listening, that, by writing and drawing by turns, I succeeded in securing the portrait without exciting observation.

Ibrahim Jerrar took me to his harem. It was in the most central and secure part of the castle, and consisted of three rooms, opening into a square court. He introduced me to his three wives, and gave them directions to welcome me as a sister, and then left me with them, while he conducted my brother over the town. The women greeted me and stared at me with unconcealed wonder. They were more simple, frank, and innocent-looking than any Arab women I had seen. They were young and rather fair, stout and ruddy, and cheerful and bright as happy children. They belonged to the peasant class. Their long, open dresses, or pelisses, were of soft crimson and white striped silk. Large silver coins encircled their faces, and a row of small gold coins crossed their foreheads, like a fillet, to bind down their thick black hair, which was cut short in front and combed straight down, meeting their arched eyebrows, quite hiding their foreheads. Their eyes were large and their chins and chests were dotted with tattooed stars. (Page 259) They and their children, and their white-washed matted room, looked fresh, and clean, and pleasant.

I found that the handsomest, healthiest, and strongest girls are always sought for as brides for the Jerrars- that the health, strength, and beauty of which they are so proud, may be perpetuated in the family. I never heard of a Jerrar who could read or write, or even sign his name. On the other hand, many of the men of the Abdul Hady family are well educated, and set a high value on *book* learning; and the ladies of Arrabeh are somewhat polished, and look very different to the simple rustic women of Senur. I made a sketch of the head of one of the wives while I tried to lead them into conversation, but I could not "bring them out." When I spoke they only looked wonderingly at me, laughed shyly at each other, or uttered some set phrase embodying a compliment or prayer.

While I was resting and smoking a narghile which they had prepared for me, I was suddenly called to rejoin my brother. I found that the young man who was set to watch the south-western approach to Senur, had just given notice that he could see a body of Turkish cavalry issuing from the narrow valley into the plain below. Ibrahim Jerrar told us that he knew that they were sent by Kamil Pasha to search the town- to see if there were any Bedouins concealed there, ready to assist the people of Senur in case of a siege. He added decidedly, "I have given my word of honor that there are no Bedouins within these walls. We are all peasants. *No one shall live to pass through these gates, who attempts to enter with an armed force, to examine the town.*"

My brother reasoned with him. Ibrahim declared that he would receive the commander of the approaching party peacefully, and with honor and courtesy, *if he came alone*; but if *he approached with*

*his soldiers the gates would be closed against him.* The hurrying to and fro in the narrow streets showed that preparations for resistance were being made. My brother said to me, "I am perfectly satisfied (Page 260) that there are no Bedouins in the town. Have you courage to go down with me alone into the plain, that I may speak to the cavalry officer, and prevent of possible a useless and unequal conflict?" I did not hesitate for an instant. So we mounted, and, as quickly as we could, we rode down the hill, quite unattended, while the people on the embattled walls and house-tops, and at the guarded gate, watched and directed us, wishing us "Godspeed." We were soon nearly half-way across the plain, and there encountered the advancing soldiers. When we were within speaking distance, we stopped suddenly, facing them. They were on the point of dividing to pass on each side of us, but my brother held up his hand energetically, and said, speaking as one having authority, "*Halt!*" and immediately they stood still. Then he called to the colonel, saying he desired to speak with him, and, keeping up his attitude of assured authority, said, "O Colonel! You are going to Senur in the name of his Excellency Kamil Pasha. The answer to the message of which you are the bearer will be '*No.*' Go yourself quietly and peaceably, and obtain that answer from the town. But if you allow your men to advance one step nearer to it, you will be answerable for the consequences."

The Colonel unhesitatingly prepared to obey, leaving his little detachment in the plain, with orders to await his return. We rode slowly backward and forward among the wondering Turkish soldiers, who galloped round and round us, performing feats of horsemanship for our amusement. A black man, who seemed to be the Colonel's especial attendant, played on a triangle, and made fantastic movements with his turbaned head.

The detachment consisted of only seventy horsemen, and they would soon have been sacrificed if they had come into collision with the men of Senur, and no object would have been gained. After a short delay, the Colonel returned quite satisfied, and rejoined his men. At the same time our servants and attendants came down to us with the luggage, and we pursued our journey toward Nablus, which (Page 261) is about fifteen miles due south of Senur. We were preceded by the soldiers. We rode for a little while in company with the Colonel, who told us that Kamil Pasha had determined to destroy Senur, and had offered a reward of thirty thousand paisters for the head of Ibrahim Jerrar. When we reached the entrance to the narrow valley, our military escort took leave of us, and we soon lost sight of the soldiers. They galloped along one after the other recklessly, over rocks and bushwood, spurring their horses with the edges of their shovel-shaped stirrups.

The incidents, from the moment when "the young man who kept the watch" first perceived the horsemen issuing from the narrow valley, till they took leave of us, did not occupy half an hour, though it seemed a much longer space of time.

My brother explained to me that he had no real authority to interfere as he had done in this case. He acted not officially, but individually, feeling that principles of humanity, and our somewhat critical position, justified him. It was singular that we had been the well received guests of the heads of the two great rival fractions of the district, within a few hours, and had thus gained much important information.

Hills and valleys, rain and sunshine, checkered our way till, at about sunset, we reached the olive-groves of Nablus. Although I was wet, and cold, and tired, all my energy and delight returned when the beautiful valley between Mount Ebal and Mount Gerizim, and the well-built town of Nablus were in sight, with glimpses of the distant sea, where the sun was going down. I was surprised to see a quantity of mistletoe on the olive-trees. The great gates, which were on the point of being closed, were thrown back for us, and we rode through dark arcades and narrow streets to the house of Ody Azam, the British Consul's agent. There we were comfortably entertained, for our host, who could speak a little English, was accustomed to receive European travelers. His house, indeed, was a kind (Page 262) of hotel, and his wife and niece quickly made ready their most their most cozy room for me. Our arrival was soon announced, and visitors thronged the large divan all the evening, for my brother was well known in Nablus. Priest Amran, of the Samaritan community, came, speaking with earnest gratitude of the kindness of the English people, and of the English Government.

Kamil Pasha- who had been my host at Hebron- sent an Effendi to convoy his salutations to us, and a number of Turkish officials followed. I knew the Effendi very well. He was a Christian, and the first of his creed who had been raised to the rank of Effendi in the Jerusalem Council. I said to him, "Tell me, O

most honorable, is it true that his Excellency Kamil Pasha has offered a reward of thirty thousand piaster for the head of Ibrahim, the chief of Senur?" He answered, "Even so, most excellent lady!" I then said, "Will your honor salute the Pasha in my name, and inform him that I have the head of the chief, Ibrahim Jerrar, in my possession?" The guests who were present stared, and even my brother was taken by surprise. The Effendi said, "Are you throwing dust in our eyes? Is my lady laughing at the Pasha's beard?" I said again, "Let his excellency know that I have in my possession a head which he desires to obtain." I spoke in a seemingly-serious tone, and would give no further explanation. The people were evidently as much amused as they were puzzled.

The next morning, after a perfect rest, I rose and was called into the divan, where the Effendi awaited me. Kamil Pasha had sent him to greet me, and had authorized him to receive from my hands the head of the rebel chief. I said, "Where is the purse of piasters, O your honor?" He replied, "The piasters are not with me, O my lady!" I answered, "Then I can not give you the head." So he went away and presently returned with the Pasha's page, who carried a large round tray of hot canifi, a sweetmeat made of vermicelli, baked with butter, sugar, almonds, walnuts, (Page 263) and spices. The Pasha had ordered it to be brought to me. A number of people whose curiosity had been excited came to see the issue, and to partake of their favorite dish.

The Effendi graciously placed the dish before me, and, after a general washing of hands, all present partook of it. I was asked if I would inform them where the head was. I said, "It is in my potmanteau in the opposite room." Then the Effendi said, "Will you show it to us, O gracious lady?" A glance from my brother induced me to comply, so I fetched the drawing, and the men, on seeing it, cried out immediately, "Ibrahim!" "It is Ibrahim Jerrar!" "It is Ibrahim of Senur!" "O work of God!" The gravest and most stately-looking of our guests seemed thoroughly to enjoy the joke. They went away to explain the mystery to Kamil Pasha, who afterward called to see me and the portrait, which he asked me to allow him to keep. I said, "With pleasure, your excellency, if you will consent to regard it as the *real head* and *the only head* of Ibrahim Jerrar, and act accordingly." His excellency laughingly declined to do this, so I have kept my sketch, which he, however, seemed rather unwilling to part with. He examined it carefully, and held it in his hand for a long time, but I would not alter my conditions. However, another drawing which he selected from my folio, I gave to him. He and his suite went away apparently very much amused.

We found Nablus and its neighborhood in a very unsettled state. It was exceedingly difficult to convey letters from this district. Postmen were constantly waylaid and robbed. My brother, who was directed to write every second day to Her Britannic Majesty's Consul at Jerusalem, employed special messengers. They were several times attacked, and were severely beaten when they attempted to preserve the dispatches and letters intrusted to their care.

This is always the case in Syria during civil war. Intriguing officers, and the leaders of the contending factions, do not like their proceedings to be reported to head-quarters, (page 264) and they generally endeavor to mislead the European Consuls. My brother spent several hours every day at Kamil Pasha's encampment, and accompanied his excellency when he visited the neighboring villages.

In the mean time I was rarely left alone. I was visited at all hours by Moslems, Christians, and Samaritans; the latter people interested me greatly. Priest Amran, a cheerful, shrewd-looking, well-informed man, between forty and fifty years of age, used to hear me read Arabic every morning. He gave me an interesting account of his little community, whose numbers amounted to only one hundred and ninety-six. (Footnote: According to Wilson's account, they numbered one hundred and fifty in the year 1843.) He said that there was great difficulty sometimes in arranging suitable marriages among them, for they never intermarry with strangers. The priest is always consulted on the subject; and as he or his aged father, Selameh, alone have power to celebrate a marriage, none can take place without their consent. He said, "At the present moment the marriageable men are more numerous than the marriageable girls. Our girls are all young, and I am very much troubled about it."

As an instance, he explained to me that Yakub esh Shellabi, whose visit to England may be remembered by some readers, had been betrothed to Zora while she was yet a child. Yakub was in England when Zora was marriageable; Amran did not permit her to wait for him, but married her to Habib, a widower, who had one little girl, named Anithe. She was seven years old, and was to be given to Yakub in the place of

Zora, who was now here step-mother. He said, "This marriage has caused me great anxiety and much trouble."

Another man, who was only thirty, and for whom a girl could not be found, had married a widow fifty years of age, and he was now trying to persuade Priest Amran to allow him to put her away, that he might be betrothed to the priest's daughter, who was about eleven. He said, (Page 265) "Nearly all our girls are promised before they can speak and are married when they are eleven or twelve."

Priest Amran took me one day to the Samaritan quarter. It is an irregular cluster of two-story houses, in the most crowded part of the town. We passed through whitewashed passages, and ascended a crooked, uncovered, steep stone stairway, leading into an open court, where a large, glossy-leaved lemon-tree grew close to an arched door, through which we passed, after 'putting off' our shoes, I found that I was in the synagogue. It is a simple, unadorned, vaulted building, in rather a dilapidated state. Amran introduced me to the chief, his aged father, "Selameh"- he who, in 1808, corresponded with Baron de Sacy. He received me very courteously. After a short conversation about Yakub esh Shallabi, he said, "I am very old, but I shall die in peace, thanking God that he has let me live to see my people under the protection of the English Government." He said this in allusion to the fact that Lord Clarendon had sent instructions to the Consuls resident in Palestine, expressing the interest which Her Britannic Majesty's Government takes in the Samaritans, and directly them to afford, in case of need, such protection as may be proper toward Turkish subjects. His Excellency Lord Stratford de Redcliffe had also been instructed to use his good offices with the Porte in favor of the Samaritan community. A mat was spread on the stone floor, and there I rested, listening to the slowly and earnestly-uttered words of the aged priest. He wore a loose blue cloth robe, lined with crimson, over a yellow and red-striped satin kumbaz, which is made like a dressing-gown. His large turban and his long beard were white.

He directed my attention to the veil of the temple. It was a square curtain of white damask linen, ornamented with *appliqué* work; that is, pieces of red, purple, and green linen were sewed on to it, forming a beautiful pattern of conventional ornament. He supposed it to be six or seven hundred years old, but I imagine that it is the (Page 266) work of the sixteenth century. After I had copied the design of the veil carefully Priest Amran drew it aside, and revealed a deep recess, where the rolls of the law are kept. Then his father rose, and with trembling hands brought out the celebrated copy of the Tora or Pentateuch, which is said to have been written by Abishua, the son of Phinhas, the son of Eleazar, who was the son of Aaron. It was kept in a cylindrical silver-gilt case, which opens on two sets of hinges, and on its red satin cover Hebrew inscriptions are embroidered with gold thread. At my request Selameh sat down for a little while, holding it in his hands, that I might sketch it and him. When he had carefully returned this precious roll to its place, he showed me several later copies of the Pentateuch-some in the Samaritan, others in the Arabic character; A printed collection of psalms or hymns; several commentaries from the Exodus to the time of Mohammed; and a very curious manuscript, called the Book of Joshua, which begins with the account of the journeyings of the company of spies who were sent into the promised land by Moses, and concludes with the fabulous stories of the life of Alexander. This seems to be rather a favorite book. It is written in Arabic, but the proper names and certain words are in the Samaritan characters. It is said to be of Syriac and not of Hebrew characters. I brought a copy of this remarkable work to England.

A number of the neighbors came into the synagogue to see me, and to invite me to their houses, and fair little children crowded round. I took leave of the aged Priest Selameh, and he gave me his patriarchal blessing. Then I went with Priest Amran to call on Habib and his wife Zora, who had been the betrothed of Yakub esh Shellabi. I was led into a large, low, but very airy room, with raised divans, nicely carpeted and cushioned, on two sides of it. Mats and rugs on the stone floor made the place look comfortable, and a red brass-hinged box, a rudely-(Page 267)carved red cradle, ornamental corner cupboards, and painted wooden shelves, with rows of green drinking-glasses ranged upon them, relieved the whitewashed walls.

Habib, to whom I had been previously introduced, welcomed me with courteous gravity. His pretty little motherless daughter, Anithe, came forward promptly to greet me; but Zora, the young wife, seemed unwilling to appear. Priest Amran told me that she was purposely hiding. Habib went out into the court of the house, and when he reentered his wife followed him with seeming reluctance; she looked embarrassed and sad, and returned my salutations sullenly. She was rather handsome, and was decked as a bride; she

wore full trousers and a tight jacket. Her chest was very much exposed, and painted or tattooed bright-blue; her gold necklace or collar was large and massive, and several coins were attached to it; her head-dress was adorned with red and yellow everlasting flowers, and folds of blue crape; her hands and feet, which were naked, were so delicately and artistically stained with henna, that she looked as if she had fine lace mittens and sandals on. She made me some lemonade, while Anithe brought me a narghile'.

Many women came in; among them was Yakub esh Shellabi's mother. She said impetuously, "How long shall I wait for my son Yakub and not see him? Why does he stay so long away from his country and his people? Why did you leave him in England, O lady? I shall die and never see him again." I answered, "Be comforted; your son will return to you and give you joy." Zora seemed troubled at the mention of his name, and left the room; but Habib smiled a smile of self-congratulation, and asked if I thought that Yakub would return in time to claim his little daughter. The child evidently quite understood how affairs had been arranged, but did not display the slightest interest or emotion. While the other girls and women who were present asked with curiosity and volubility all sorts of questions about Yakub, and (Page 268) were highly amused with the account I gave them of his reception in England, little Anithe maintained a quiet and dignified reserve, which I suppose, according to Samaritan etiquette, was very praiseworthy and becoming.

Zora did not reenter the room; but when I passed through the court, on my way to the house of a neighbor, I saw her with her mother engaged in cooking. She had been crying, and on seeing me she hastily ran into a storeroom and disappeared. Amran said, "She is not quite reconciled yet to the new arrangement; but her husband is good and well off, and she will soon be happy."

I visited three other houses, all of the same character as Habib's, but his was the most comfortably furnished. On the whole, I was very favorably impressed with the appearance of the Samaritan community. The men were generally handsome, tall, healthy-looking, and intelligent, but very few of them could read or write. The women are modest, and the children very pretty and thoughtful, yet full of life and activity. I am told that the Samaritans live to a great age, and generally escape the epidemics which break out occasionally in Nablus. Perhaps this is owing to the simplicity of their lives, and their scrupulous cleanliness. They observe the ceremonial laws of Moses with fidelity. Three times a year they go in solemn procession to the summit of Gerizim, repeating portions of the law as they ascend, and they still proudly proclaim to pilgrims and travelers, "Our fathers worshipped in this mountain." The mountain is now called "Jebel-el-Tor."

They do not receive any part of the Bible, except the Pentateuch. They say that the other books are forgeries, and they regard the seventeenth chapter of the Second Book of Kings as a cruel calumny, originating with their enemies the Jews. The Jews, on the other hand, declare that this portion of the Bible is rejected by the Samaritans, simply because it records their true history and testifies against them.

The Samaritans declare themselves to be children of (Page 269) Manasseh and Ephraim, and their priest is said to be lineally descended from the branch of the tribe of Levi, by whom their services have been conducted throughout all generations. Priest Amran explained this to me, and then said, "Alas, I have no son! I have no son to whom to teach the holy language, no son to assist me in the services, no son to inherit the priesthood. God forbid that I should be the last of my race, and leave my people without a priest!"

It was a cause of bitter sorrow to the Samaritans when, some time ago, the last male representative of the Aaronic family died; for he was the last of their hereditary high-priests- the last to offer sacrifices for them. They are obliged now to limit their ministrations to such services as may legally be performed by Priest Amran and his father, who represent the tribe of Levi, of whom it is written, that the Lord spoke unto Moses, saying, "Present them before Aaron the priest, that they may minister unto him. And they shall keep his charge, and the charge of the whole congregation, before the tabernacle of the congregation, to do the service of the tabernacle." (See Num. iii, 5, etc.) And again shalt put upon Aaron the holy garments, and anoint him and sanctify him; and thou shalt anoint his sons, and their anointing shall surely be an everlasting priesthood throughout all generations." And unto Aaron God said, "Ye shall keep the charge of the sanctuary, and the charge of the altar; and thy brethren the Levites [such as Amran and his father] shall keep the charge of all the tabernacle: only they shall not come nigh the vessels of the sanctuary and the altar, that neither they, nor ye also, die." (See Num. xviii.)

With these verses before me, and knowing the charging of the Samaritans, their belief in the true descent of their priests, their implicit faith in the Divine inspiration of the Tora, and their consequent reliance on the efficacy of ceremonial services, I can well imagine their desolation when (Page 270) they buried the last of the anointed sons of Aaron, and were left without a high-priest to minister for them. With the house of Aaron the celebration of the highest offices of their religion ceased. No sacrifices can be offered now, and there is no one "to make atonement for the people."

During the days of unleavened bread the Samaritans live in tents, on the mountain near to the ruins of their ancient temple. "On the fifteenth day of the first month," the whole congregation, men women, and children, except such as are ceremonially unclean, being assembled, the priest stands forth on a mound, and reads, in a most solemn and impressive voice, the animated description of the Exodus.

In a trench, ten feet long by two feet wide, previously prepared by laborers, a fire is kindled, and two cauldrons of water are placed over it. A round pit is dug, in the form of a well; and it is heated to serve as an oven. The lambs are brought, in sufficiency for the whole community. Seven is now the usual number. At sunset, seven men, in white dresses, take each a lamb before him, and at the utterance of a particular word in the service appointed for the day, all seven lambs are slain at the same instant. Every member of the congregation then dips his hand in the blood of the dying victims, and besmears his forehead with it. Boiling water from the cauldrons is poured over the fleece, which causes the wool to leave the skin without much difficulty. It is plucked off with great nicety. The bodies of the lambs are examined, lest there be any blemish. The right shoulder and the hamstrings are cut off and thrown on the heap of offal to be burnt with the wool. The seven bodies are then spitted, and forced into the hot bake oven. A trelliswork is then placed over the top of the oven, which is covered with grass and mud, to keep in all the heat. A few hours after sunset they are withdrawn, and the Samaritans, each "with his lions girt and a staff in his hand," eat hastily and greedily of the food thus prepared. The scraps of meat, (Page 271) wool, and bone are carefully sought for, and burnt on the heap, that not a morsel may remain. My brother has twice been present at the celebration of the Feast of the Passover, and from him I obtained the above description.

The Feast of Tabernacles is also kept "in this mountain." It happens in the early part of the Autumn, when tent-life is very pleasant and refreshing. The people "take the branches of goodly trees," such as the evergreen oak and the arbutus, and they "make booths," roofing them with interlacing willows, pliant palm fronds, and boughs of the glossy-leaved citron and lemon trees, with the green fruit hanging from them in clusters. For seven days the people dwell there, rejoicing and giving thanks to God.

Sometimes the Samaritans, to their great distress, have been obliged to celebrate their festivals elsewhere, and in secret, owing to the fanaticism and persecuting spirit of the Moslems of Nablus. But Priest Amran said, "Now that the English word has been spoken for us, we shall no longer fear; and notwithstanding the civil war, the Pascal lamb will this year be slain on the mountain where our fathers worshipped. The time is near at hand, O lady! Tarry with us till the Passover, and we will make a pleasant tent for you on the mountain, that you, with the Consul, may witness the celebration of the festival and eat of our unleavened bread."

Most of the Samaritan women came to see me in my private room at the hotel. Yakub esh Shellabi's sister, a fine girl- very like her brother- came several times, and Zora grew somewhat sociable. I could plainly see, by her manners and by her few words, that she was angry with herself and with her absent betrothed, and still more angry that she had not been permitted to await his return. She even seemed embittered against the English people, as if they had lured Yakub away from her, and I did not wonder that this marriage had given Priest Amran "much trouble." The women do not hide their faces from men of their own (Page 272) community, but they veil themselves closely in the streets and in the presence of strangers.

They were generally very simply dresses, in trowsers and jackets and jackets of Manchester prints and colored muslin head-kerchiefs and veils. When out of doors, they shrouded themselves in large white cotton sheets, and though the former were faded and the latter patched their poorest garments looked clean. I saw very little jewelry, except on the head-dresses of the most recently-married women. They nearly all, however, wore glass bracelets; and some of the children had anklets made of tinkling silver bells. The girls had a few small coins sewed to the edges of their red tarbushes, just in front.

The Samaritans seem really to represent on family. The people look to the hereditary priest as their father and divinely-appointed guide, and he apparently knows the history and character of every member of the community. He is king, magistrate, physician, teacher, counselor, and friend to all. It struck me very forcibly that the Samaritans are not animated with any religious emotion of feeling, though they certainly venerate their theological system and all that is connected with it, especially the site of the ancient temple on the mountain where their fathers worshiped. They attach great importance to ceremonial and especially to sanitary laws relating to marriage, to food, and to ablutions. They observe the Sabbath-day strickly, in a material sense, but without the slightest sign of spiritual devotion. Their services are noisy and seemingly irreverent.

They do not avoid friendly or commercial intercourse with strangers, though they will not intermarry with them. The few native Protestants in Nablus are on a very intimate footing with the Samaritans; and native Greek Christians, and many Moslems, are on good terms with them. But their Jewish neighbors do not like them at all. They accuse them of heresy and even of idolatry, and avoid them as much as possible, saying that they are worshippers of (Page 273) pigeons! This is a very anciently-founded calumny. The Samaritans, on the other hand, declare that the Jews neglect the Law of Moses, and have departed from purity of life and worship, and follow the Talmud. They date their separation from the Jews from the time of Eli the priest, whom they regard as a usurper, for he was not of the priestly family of Eleazer, but a descendant of Ithamar, the fourth son of Aaron.

In 1842 the Samaritans were cruelly persecuted because they would not embrace the Moslem faith, and the Mohammedan Ulemas threatened to murder the whole of their community, on the plea that they had no religion, not even believing in one of the five inspired books, which are: 1. Law of Moses; 2. New Testament; 3. The Psalms; 4. The Prophets; and 5. The Koran. A sect which acknowledges the inspiration of any one of these five books is legally tolerated by the Mohammedans. This being known to the Samaritans, they endeavored to prove their belief in the Pentateuch; but the Mohammedans, not being acquainted with the holy language and characters in which it was written, disbelieved them. They then applied to the Chief Rabbi of the Jews in Jerusalem- a recognized representative and head of the Jewish faith- who gave them a written declaration, certifying, "That the Samaritan people is a branch of the children of Israel, who acknowledge the truth of the Tora"- that is, the Pentateuch. This document, accompanied with presents, put an end to the persecution for a time. I mention this merely to show in what light the Samaritans are regarded by the superior and learned Jews.

Those who knew Yakub esh Shellabi in England will perhaps like to hear something about him. He is the only Samaritan who ever traveled so far west. He returned to his people in the Autumn of 1856, and soon reaccustomed himself to the simple yet active life of the Samaritans. he advised Priest Amran to establish a school, and oblige all the children of the community, both girls and boys, to (Page 274) attend it regularly, that all of the rising generation might be taught to read and write Arabic, and to cast accounts. Yakub much regretted that he was unable to do either, and was too old to learn. I am told that this school has been established, and is called the Shellabi School, in memory of Yakub's visit to England, where he had learned to set a very high value on book-learning.

He did not, after all, marry Anithe. She was not old enough to be his bride immediately on his return, and another arrangement was consequently made, as the following curious specimen of Oriental correspondence will show. It was a reply to an inquiry concerning Yakub, and is a true and literal translation of a letter from Priest Amran to E.T. Rogers, Esq., Her Britannic majesty's Vice-Consul, Haifa:

"To the perfection of energy, the most virtuous, and unsubornable, the presence of the most praiseworthy brother Khawadja Rogers, the illustrious. May God Almighty lengthen his days! Amen.

"After heart-felt prayers for your preservation, I beg to inform you that I was honored by your bountiful letter, dated the 17<sup>th</sup> of June, of Western calculation, collectively with Daud Tannus, (Footnote: The principle member of the native Protestant congregation in Nablus.) and we read with pleasure of your preservation, and we thanked the Almighty, who hath vouchsafed that you should think of us. Your sweet slip [a postscript] which was inclosed in said letter I have read. I find that you ask me whether Yakub esh Shallabi is married or not. My Lord, he has been married ever since last year to a very pretty partner, who is exceedingly good. Her name is Shemseh [Sunny]; and last Thursday, the first day of Western July, she



gave birth to a male child, who resembles the moon, and they have called his name Emin [Faithful]. Please God that this may happen in like manner to you. I have given you this glad tidings, which is all that is necessary in petitioning you to honor me by (Page 275) letting me know all that I can do to serve you, and God lengthen your days! My Lord, your petitioner, [signed and sealed,] Amran, the Priest. Written in Nablus, 9<sup>th</sup> July, Western year, 1858.”

Another child has been born to Yakub, and I have heard him speak proudly, lovingly, and tenderly of his little ones, and of his young wife Shemseh, and of the flourishing Samaritan day-school.

A few days after my arrival after my arrival in Nablus, I was sitting in the divan at the hotel, with a company of Samaritans, Greek priests, and Protestant Arabs, when a very poor Moslem woman forced her way into the room, notwithstanding that the kawass and servants at the door endeavored to prevent her entrance. She cried out, “Make way! I must speak to the English lady, the Consul’s sister.” I said, “Let her speak.”

She was almost shrouded in an old blue-and-white check linen sheet, of native manufacture. She was very aged, and tottered across the room to me, and then partly drew aside her thick cotton veil, and kissed my head and my hands violently and impetuously, beseeching me to intercede for her son, who had been imprisoned for insulting and striking our kawass in the bazaar.

She said, “I am a widow, and the offender is my only son, my sole support. Speak for him, for my sake. Speak for him, for the sake of the mother of your brother. Speak for him that he may be set free!”

She kneeled down, and tried to kiss my feet, and embraced my knees imploringly. I raised her up, saying, “Go now in peace. I will speak to the Consul about your son.”

She went rejoicing, and cried aloud, “The gates of the prison are thrown open! The offender, my son, is already free; for the English word is spoken!”

I made inquires about the prisoner, and, for my “word’s sake,” my brother applied for his release, and before sunset he was free. (Page 276)

He came in the evening, with his mother, to thank me for he had heard that I had spoken a good word for him. He had been flogged, but looked very submissive, and well pleased at his unexpected and sudden release. When the doors of the Turkish prison are closed, they are not readily opened, except with a golden key; and this man knew that his friends were too poor to offer an efficient bribe.

He said to me, “O my protectress, in memory of your intercession, I will seek occasion at all times to render service to you, and, for your sake, to all English people.” I replied, “Take care of your mother, and try to live peaceably with all men.”

They went away, murmuring blessings. When, a few weeks afterward, the Protestants of Nablus were cruelly attacked by the Moslems, this man proved himself a staunch friend to them. For Protestants are regarded as English *protégés*, even as the Latins are looked upon as French, and the Greeks as Russian subjects.

I had some very interesting conversations with the Arab schoolmaster of the little community of Protestants at Nablus. He is a native of Nazareth, about thirty years of age, the uncle of our coffee-boy and pipe-bearer, Yusef, described in a former chapter. He was educated at the Diocesan School, Jerusalem, and there learned to speak English pretty freely. His foreign accent, peculiar idioms, and Orientally-constructed phrases, amused me exceedingly. He seemed delighted to have an opportunity of talking English. He was very anxious to be made acquainted with the rules of domestic life in England, and especially the customs and laws relating to betrothals, weddings, divorces, and the settlement of property. I satisfied him on these points as well as I could, and he, in return, gave me an account of his marriage. I will repeat it, as nearly as possible in his own words, which I noted down on Sunday, March 2d, the day on which he related it to me.

“I shall make you see how, in this country, marriages (Page 277) are made. Perhaps your English customs are not quite good in this matter, and our customs also are not good. It is better that we take from you a little, and that you also take some teachings from us. I went, four years ago, to Nasirah, my town, for my espousals. All knew that I went to look for a girl. I had no father; I had no mother. I went to the house of my aunt, the sister of my father, and said, ‘O my aunt, search for me a girl, that I may be espoused quickly.’ And she said, ‘Be at rest, O my son! I know a good girl for you; I shall speak for her.’ Then my heart was heavy, because I must not seek and see her for myself; and I said, ‘O my aunt! How

can I do this thing and not see her? Perhaps her eyes are bad; perhaps she has manners not good. I must see her. Hide me that I may see her.' My aunt was much afraid; but she loved me, and she said, 'Make your heart strong; *I will cheat her for you.*'

"So she went out and sought for the girl she wished to take for my wife. She was the child of our neighbor; and when she found her she said, 'My daughter, I seek you. Come with me to my house. Let us work together. I have a thing to show you.' Then I stood where she must come that way. Her face had no veil. She did not know that I was hid. She was a little while working and talking with my aunt. I saw that she was beautiful and fair; she was eleven of age. She spoke well and softly, and her words were good words; and my heart went out of myself to her. In a little while she came by where I stood, and she saw that I was looking on her with power. Then her face came very red, and she ran home very fast to her mother, and my aunt also went to her. And the girl cried and said, 'O mother! They cheat me-they cheat me!' Her mother gave her comfort, and said, 'Be at rest, O my daughter! Now that he has seen you, he will wish you for his wife; he will take you.' But the girl was full of anger, and said again, 'It is not good that they cheat me.'(page 278)

My aunt came to me, and told me of her anger and her grief, and said, 'It is better not to speak any more of this, and we will find another girl.' But my heart had gone forth to this one, and I could not think of another. So I went to the Greek priest and told him the whole matter. And then the priest went to the father of the girl, but the father said, 'Not so; I have two larger girls; they must not be left; they must make their espousals before this little one.' Then I said to the priest, 'Speak for me again, that I may have that little one.' So the father made a writing, and I put my seal on it, and agreed to give him much silks, and cottons, and soap for this daughter- more of all these things than he would make me give for the larger daughters; for he knew my heart was gone out from me. I saw her again, for not quite one minute, when the espousals were made and witnessed. Then my aunt made a room ready for me in her house, and many men came to eat with me there a good feast. And many women went to eat with the girl in the house of her father, and danced before her, and sang songs of rejoicing. And all people knew that we were espoused; but I might not see her again.

"Then I went to Nablus. And, after a year, four men, with horses, went for me from this town to Nasirah, and they brought her, and then immediately we were married."

He introduced his young wife and her infant son to me. She was very bright and cheerful-looking, with a high color, and dark eyes. She said that Nasirah was a much better town than Nablus for Christians to dwell in.

The Protestant congregation of Nablus was founded by Dr. Bowen, the late lamented Bishop of Sierra Leone. He established a loom there, and gave the people an opportunity of working. He paid them for their labor, taught them many useful arts, and afterward, by degrees, gave the religious instruction. He was a great favorite with all classes, and many of the Greek Catholics declared themselves Protestants. (Page 279)

Since Dr. Bowen's departure, the community has been very fluctuating, and sometimes quite dispersed. When I attended their service in the school-room, there were about twenty men and thirty boys present. A dozen women sat in an adjoining room, looking in and listening at an open arched window. They were all closely veiled. The service was well conducted by Michael Kwarre, a native teacher. The Gospel was read by a boy, only twelve years of age, in a clear though very monotonous voice. The responses were made most energetically.

M. Zeller, a German, had recently been appointed by Bishop Gohat to take charge of the community, and he was eagerly studying Arabic, that he might commence his missionary labors. He kindly left his lonely study, now and then, to explore Nablus and its neighborhood with me.

One morning we walked through the stony, arched, narrow, tortuous streets, out at the nearest gate, and rose on to the raised road or terrace, which nearly encircles the town. He led me to the hill beyond the burial-ground, whence I could see the whole extent of Nablus, with its mosques and minarets, its dark archways and colonnades, and the gardens of lemons and oranges around. Then we climbed a steep and stony path, to see an ancient fountain and a reservoir formed of a sarcophagus, where closely-veiled women were washing their tattered garments. A group of men were leisurely building up the broken stone

wall of the water-course. They were working with clumsy-looking tools, and each man had a gun slung over his shoulder.

We followed the course of the duct, which conveys water from the fountain along the terraces round the town. The stones of the aqueduct were moss-grown, and between them bright juicy leaves of the most vivid green had sprung up. At short intervals there were square apertures, through which we could see the running limpid water, in a frame-work of maiden-hair and other ferns, and white (Page 280) and lilac blossoms. We came to a large square ancient pool, or reservoir, well filled and in good repair, near to the governor's new residence, which is the handsomest dwelling-house I had seen in Palestine. It is built of well-hewn fine limestone, and enriched with marble pavements, columns, and arches. Mahmoud Bek Abdul Hady designed it himself.

We reentered the town, and paused before the portal of the mosque. It was originally the entrance to a Christian church, as the design plainly shows. The clustered columns, the rich-foliated and varied capitals, the deep, dental, and zigzag moldings of the pointed arch, are of Siculo-Norman character. While we were carefully examining the details, signs were made to us- rather roughly- by some of the guardians of the mosque, that we were approaching too near to their place of worship, and lingering there too long; so we retired, and traversed the bazaars. The shops were well stocked, and busy with buyers and sellers. There were small arcades especially devoted to the sale of tobacco; others were filled with the refreshing odor of green lemons, oranges, citrons, and shaddocks. The bazaars for vegetables and prepared food were rather difficult to pass though; they were thronged with Turkish soldiers from the Pasha's camp, who were seeking their midday rations. Some of them were carrying large metal dishes, containing a medley of chopped vegetables, or deep earthenware plates, filled with pease-pudding, garnished with slices of lemon floating in the oil; others hurried through the crowd with bowels of steaming soup before them, which very effectually cleared way. There seemed to be no friendly feeling between soldiers and the townspeople. Angry voices and loud cries surrounded us, and in several cases blows were exchanged before a bargain was settled. The long, narrow bazaar where dried fruits, olives, rice, butter, and cheese were sold, led us to the entrance of an important mosque, the exterior of which is rich in relics of Christian art of the twelfth century. After pausing (Page 281) before it for a few minutes, we made our way down a street almost blocked up by camels, and thence passed into the principle bazaar, the finest arcade in Palestine. It is rather wider and much more lofty than the Lowther Arcade, and about five or six times as long. Here European goods are displayed, such as Manchester prints, Sheffield cutlery, beads, and French bijouterie, very small mirrors, Bohemian glass-bottles for narghile's, Swiss headkerchiefs, in imitation of the Constantinople mundils, crockery-ware, and china coffee-cups. But the brightest shops are those in which Damascus and Aleppo silks, and embroidered jackets and tarbushes from Stamboul, appear, with stores of Turkish pipes, amber rosaries, and bracelets from Hebron. On the low shop-counters the turbaned salesmen squat in the midst of the gay wares, and they smoke and gossip, stroke their beards, and finger their rosaries from early in the morning till sunset.

An opening in the middle of this arcade led us into an extensive khan, well planned, but so out of repair as to be almost useless. It is an uncovered square space, inclosed by a two-storied range of buildings. The ground-floor is well adapted for lodging camels and other beasts of burden, but the upper chambers are so dilapidated that they afford but little shelter. We mounted a broken stone stairway, and with difficulty reached the terraced roof, which commands a good view of the town.

When we reentered the arcade, we heard ourselves unexpectedly addressed by name, and, turning round, we saw Ody Azam, my host, in his little shop, selling pens, pencils, and paper, and Birmingham wares. He said that the Arabs wondered how it was that I could walk freely and unveiled in public places, adding, "Our women do not enter bazaars; it would be a shame for them."

The chief productions of Nablus are cotton, olive-oil, and soap. The latter is made in large quantities, and sold throughout Palestine; it is grayish-white and makes a good lather. The oil of Nablus is famous for its clearness and (Page 282) purity. The neighborhood is rich in vineyards and fig-gardens, and all 'precious fruits brought forth by the sun.' The people are much attached to their town, and are very proud of it. They seem to think there is no place in the world to equal it.

When I returned to the hotel I found a turbaned stranger waiting to see the Vic-Consul. He introduced himself to me as Sheikh Mussa. He wore a loose olive-colored cloth robe, bordered with sable fur, and a

purple and drab striped satin under-dress, and purple cloth pelisse. He said he had heard that I make faces on paper, and that, if I liked, I might take his portrait, on the condition that I would tell the Consul in Jerusalem that he had not interfered in the late intrigues. I answered, "I should like to take his portrait; but how can I tell that which I do not know, and how can I know that you have not taken no part in these troubles?" "Nevertheless," he replied, "take my portrait, and show it to the Consul, Mr. Finn, and I shall find favor with him." He sat for an hour, with his rosary and pipe in his hands, most patiently, and then went away. Shortly afterward Mahmoud bek Abdul Hady, the Governor, came in with my brother. The former, whom I had seen several times, asked me many questions about my visit to his relations at Arrabeh. I showed him the sketches I had made there. He invited me to go to his new house, saying that his wives had expressed a wish to see me; but he added, "If you take their portraits, you must promise not to show them to anyone in this country. You may show them in England to your friends and to the Queen, but it would be a shame for me that men in this land should see the faces of my women." I gave my promise, and he said, "It is well; the English word is spoken. Come at sunset and you shall find welcome." He said, "I found greater pleasure at Arrabeh or Senur better?" I said, "I found greater pleasure at Arrabeh, and I hope very much to see again the friends who received me there so (Page 283) kindly." He said, "God be praised that Arrabeh has found favor with you!"

Then he went away, and at sunset my brother accompanied me to his house. Two kawasses and lantern-bearers led the way. We were conducted into a vast open court, paved with marble, and the governor came out to meet us, and led me into the divan, or reception-hall, where a number of Moslem gentlemen were assembled. They rose from the raised divans, which were ranged on three sides of the room, and stood still till my brother and myself had taken the places prepared for us on the chief divan. The governor arranged an embroidered cushion for me, and sat by my side, and then said to the standing guests, "Itfuddal"- a word of wide significance, corresponding with the Italian "*favorisca*," and meaning, in this instance, "*Be seated*."

The room was very lofty. The white walls were ornamented with blue arabesque borders, painted in fresco. The arched windows and large doorway were of Saracenic form. A part of the floor was raised a few inches, to form a dias, and was spread with handsome carpets, and in the center stood a tall brass candelabrum supporting an oil lamp. In the lower part of the room a number of servants waited. They were the attendants and lantern-bearers of the several guests. Richly-dressed Abyssinian slaves handed round the coffee, flavored with ambergris, and others carried silver trays of sweetmeats. A costly narghile', the mouthpiece of which was set with diamonds and sapphires, was brought for me.

I expected to be conducted only to the harem, and was rather taken by surprise on being ushered into the midst of this company. I did not venture, in the presence of men, to speak to Mahmoud Bek about his wives, for it is not considered delicate to do so, and my brother could on no account allude to the object of my visit. I waited impatiently for a long time, hoping that a messenger would come for me.

In the mean time an interesting discussion on civilization (Page 284) and life in towns and villages and tents was carried on. Our host showed us a plan for the completion of his house, and asked my advise about the interior decorations and details. He had evidently a strong natural taste and talent for architectural construction, and was a good judge of building materials. He told me that he could judge whether stone was of a durable nature or not, by its taste. I have often seen an Arab touch newly-quarried stone with the tip of his tongue, and I suppose that he could by this means ascertain its quality. There are some fine quarries in Palestine, but the stone generally preferred by builders is that which is brought from the ruins of some ancient building, and which has already stood the test of centuries.

More than an hour passed, and still I had no summons to the harem. I said to Mahmoud softly, "I came to-night in consequence of your especial invitation;" he answered, "I am greatly honored by your presence, O my lady! You have given me great pleasure, and I have profited by your words and your counsel- this room, which no woman has ever before entered, is yours."

A special messenger from the Pasha came to seek my brother, and we took leave of Mahmoud Bek. He attended us to the outer door with much deference and a great many compliments, but he did not make the slightest effort to detain me to visit his harem. I suppose he was afraid that I should "reveal the secrets of his prison-house," or on consideration he may have thought it actually dangerous for any of his ladies to have their portraits taken. It was rumored that he had recently married a very beautiful girl, and that in

his establishment there were some fair young slaves from Constantinople. The fact was, I believe, I had answered his many questions about my sojourn at Arrabeh rather too unreservedly, and had unwisely showed him the portrait of his cousin Saleh's pretty wife Helweh. I was always on my guard afterward under similar circumstances. This governor, Mahmoud Bek, was an elderly man with a long gray beard. He was full of energy and enterprise, (Page 285) and appeared clever, penetrating, and shrewd, but obstinate and tyrannical, and was the head of a very troublesome faction.

The next morning Sheikh Mussa came that I might finish his portrait. He said, "They are idiots and 'majnuni' who believe that a man is in danger of losing his soul if a resemblance of him be made on paper with lines of a pencil point- but it is not well to make him of wood or to carve him in stone." He added, "In this land there is much ignorance and folly, but we must hold our peace, for if we speak the thoughts of our hearts to fools they will say, 'It is your folly and not ours- we are wise- ye are fools who doubt our wisdom.' Thus the wise hold their peace and the foolish ones of the earth are made proud and strong in their folly. Thus it is decreed."

The afternoon was especially bright and balmy, and my brother spared time to ride out with me in company with M. Zeller and a few Protestant Arabs. We passed out of the town at the east gate and went down the Nablus valley in a south-easterly direction, with Mount Ebal on our left and Mount Gerizim, nearer to us, on our right; the former looked rather rugged and bare, but the latter was here and there clothed with trees and herbage. Pointing to a tree growing far above us, Ody Azam said, "That old olive-tree is the largest in the whole country; its trunk is so thick, that if four tall men joined hands, they could not entirely embrace it."

We crossed and recrossed winding streams and artificial water-courses, in the gardens and cultivated fields of the winding valley. After half an hour's ride we paused and alighted by an isolated and fallen granite column, half buried in the earth, at the foot of Mount Gerizim. Near to it was a pit, almost filled up with rubbish and earth, and encircled with large hewn stones- "Now, Jacob's well was there." My brother drew my attention to it saying, "It was to show you this choked-up fountain that I brought you here to-day; for Jews, Samaritans, Christians, and (Page 286) Moslems all agree in associating the name of the Patriarch Jacob with this spot. To Christians it is especially interesting as the scene of Christ's interview with the woman of Samaria, when 'He being wearied with his journey *from Judea* sat thus by the well *at midday* while his disciples went *up the valley* into the city to buy meat,' And we are now sitting under the shadow of Gerizim, of which the woman spoke when she said, 'Sir, our fathers worshiped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.' And from this well-side Christ's memorable answer was given- 'God is a spirit and in truth.'"

The outlines of the surrounding hills were sharply defined against a sky intensely blue; the large village called Tulluzah, supposed to be the ancient and "comely Tirzah," half-way up Mount Ebal, was pointed out to me. Its houses were scarcely distinguishable from the masses of rock and the great stone boulders on the rugged slopes. Terraced vineyards and fine olive-groves nearly encircle the village and mark its limits.

Flourishing fruit gardens and groves skirt the base of the mountains, and groups of evergreen oaks stand here and there. The plain and the valley were vividly green with wheat and barley, beans and lentils. Bright wild flowers garnished the low stone walls or landmarks between them. It was the 5<sup>th</sup> of March, and we could consequently say, "There are yet two months and then cometh the harvest." It must have been earlier in the Spring when Christ beheld this landscape and said to his disciples, "Lift up your eyes and look upon the fields." He spoke figuratively- but these very fields suggested the figure.

Though quite half an hour's walk from the town, this well must have been a favorite place of resort of the children of Israel, from the time when he gave it to them, and drank thereof himself, and his children, and his cattle. When the woman of Samaria said to Christ, "Sir, the well (Page 287) is deep," she spoke truly. It is a circular shaft cut out of the solid rock, and when it was measured a few years ago it was found to be seventy-five feet deep, and yet the true bottom of the well was not then reached on account of the accumulation of mud. Yakub esh Shellabi, when a boy, was let down into this well, and I have often heard him describe his descent. An account of it was published in a little book called, "Notices of the Modern Samaritans, illustrated by incidents in the life of Yakub esh Shellabi, gathered from him and translated by Mr. E.T. Rogers"- my brother. I will give the extract which records the circumstance, for I

do not suppose that any one living has ever been down that well except Yakub. He was exactly twelve years old at the time.

“In the year 1941, a Scotch gentleman, named Dr. Wilson, arrived in Nablus, and made great inquiries for Jacob’s Well, and having found out the exact spot, he hired ten strong men and myself to accompany him thither; and in passing through the bazaar he purchased four camel ropes. I could not understand all this preparation, but on arriving at the mouth of the well I soon discovered the reason. It appeared that one of the Scotch missionaries (the Rev. Andrew Bonar, of Callace) had some years ago dropped his Bible into the well, which Dr. Wilson was now so anxious to extricate. The men were soon set to work to remove the huge stones from the mouth of the well, and I was chosen, as being of light weight, to be lowered down for the search.

“I was much afraid at first; however, I consented, upon some consolatory words, and pecuniary persuasion, and a promise to take me to England made by Dr. Wilson. The rope was therefore tied round my waist, and I swung round- having no means of steadying myself- till I was quite giddy and faint from the impurity of the air. The four camels ropes were joined together, and still I had not reached the bottom; two shawls, which composed the turbans of two Samaritans who were with us, were then tied to the (Page 288) end of the rope, and by that means I lighted safely, but much frightened and overcome. The bottom of the well was muddy, but no water was there at this time, as the spring was dry. Dr. Wilson had given me two beautiful white candles and a small box of sticks. The sticks were for the purpose of making a light. This was the first introduction of Lucifer matches into Nablus. I had seen Dr. Wilson make use of one, up above in the open air, and was much surprised; but now, down in this dark place, upon striking the end of one against the rough side of the box, I was amazed at the report and ignition, and made up my mind not to waste any, but to keep the box carefully in my pocket, and I thought that this box alone would fully compensate for my trouble in coming down. I had been told to remove all the stones from the east, and to place them westward, and then to return them to their original position, and to place in the east those from the west; and in executing the latter command, I found a dirty little book, about six inches long by four inches broad, and three-quarters of an inch thick. Dr. Wilson shouter down from the mouth of the well several times, ‘Have you found it?’ The same answer, ‘No,’ was continued for some time. ‘This could not be the book,’ I thought, ‘for the recovery of which he had expected so much labor and money; and yet it might be, if it were a book of necromancy for guiding him to hidden treasures.’ When Dr. Wilson heard that I had found something, he caused me to be hauled up, and welcomed me and my treasure, which I felt almost ashamed to give him; yet he was much delighted, patting me on my back, and paying all the men as well as myself very handsomely.

“He wrapped the Bible in a handkerchief, and deposited it in his breast-pocket most carefully. It was currently believed that this was a book of necromancy, just as it had struck me in the well.”

After lingering for some time by the well-side, we rode (Page 289) across the fields to the center of the mouth of the valley, where, nearly due north of the well, there is a square space, surrounded by high, plastered, whitewashed stone walls. We dismounted, and, passing one by one through a narrow opening, we stood within the inclosure. In the center is a clumsy-looking tomb, about three feet high and six feet long. The top terminates in a bluntly-pointed ridge. At the head and at the foot a rude stone pillar, the same hight as the tomb, is set up on the floor. There are many niches in the walls for small lamps, and they are lighted during certain festivals, and by devotees on particular occasions. The walls are almost covered with inscriptions in Hebrew, Samaritan, and Arabic; some, which were deeply engraved, seem to have been written more than two hundred years ago. Modern European travelers, too, have left their names there. This is supposed to be the tomb of Joseph. It is recorded that when he was on his death-bed he exacted a promise from his sons that they would carry him into the land given to Abraham and his seed forever. So, when he died, “they embalmed him, and put him in a coffin in Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem, for an hundred pieces of silver: and it became the inheritance of the children of Joseph.” A vine was trailing over the northern wall, and I gathered a few of its tender leaves and tendrils; and the wild campion, white and red, flourished round the tomb.

We then rode toward Nablus up the middle of the valley. Clouds were gathering in the west over the sea, all tinged with ruddy golden light from the spot where the Feast of the Passover is kept and the Pascal

Lamb slain. As we approached the town we saw a large concourse of Moslem boys playing at hockey, or some similar game, on a board, smooth plot ground just outside the (Page 290) eastern gate; and while we paused to watch the skillful players we heard shouts, and screams, and war-cries from within the walls. We hastened in, and found that a sudden excitement had seized the Moslems in one quarter of the town. We inquired the cause, and were told by a Moslem that the news had arrived that the surrounding villages were up in arms and preparing to attack Nablus. This we found afterward was an impromptu fabrication to deceive us; the real cause of the uproar was a report that a Christian had killed, injured, or insulted a Moslem.

Fortunately the false impression was removed before any mischief was done; but the loud, angry voices of the groups of men, and even women, in the street, convinced me for the first time of the hazardous position of Christians when the fanaticism of the lower class of Moslems is fully aroused. We rode unmolested through the gathering crowds, not suspecting that a general massacre of the Christians was actually being proposed. We did not understand the facts of the case till we reached the hotel, when the tumult had quite subsided, in consequence of the discovery that it was a Christian and not a Moslem who had been slightly injured. I could see that a trifling provocation, real or imaginary, might at any moment lead to bloodshed; yet I did not entertain any fears for myself or for my brother. I felt perfectly safe there without well knowing why. A party of Moslem gentlemen spent the evening with us, and seemingly, though not avowedly, they did all in their power to remove any unfavorable impression which I might have received from witnessing the momentary excitement at sunset.

On the following day, the 6<sup>th</sup> of March, we called on Michael Kaware, the native Protestant catechist and teacher. His brother was the Prussian Consular Agent, and his father, Samaan Kaware, and his friends, received us very cordially, in a small but pretty vaulted chamber, with low, carpeted, and cushioned divans on three sides. A large shallow dish, containing at least two hundred (Page 291) bunches of freshly-gathered blue violets, stood on a low stool in the center of the matted floor, and filled the air with their pleasant odor. I expressed my admiration of these flowers to Samaan, and he said, "Lady, I will bring you a sweeter and more precious flower." He went away, and presently returned with his little granddaughter, Zahra, which signifies flower, held lovingly in his arms. She was a pretty child of about four years of age, but as serious and composed as a woman. She wore smooth, ruby-colored glass bracelets on her wrists, which had been put on many months before, and were now too small to pass over her chubby little hands.

These glass bracelets are often obliged to be carefully broken before they can be removed from the arms of young children, for they are simple rings of various colors, and made without any fastening.

I asked Zahra where the violets grew. She said, "They came up out of the ground under the lemon-trees, for the ladies. They come only now, they are not there always."

I said, "What do the ladies do with the violets?" "The ladies put them in their head-dresses, and are glad, because they have a sweet smell." But one of the guests said, "The little one has not yet learned that these flowers are dried in the sun, and then used for making tea for those who are sick of fever."

As we left the house, one said to us, "Come into the garden where the violets grow." We followed him, and sent into a spacious inclosure, where lemon citron, orange, and quince trees made a pleasant shade, and apple and almond trees were full in blossoms. The ground was completely carpeted with the clustering heart-shaped leaves of the violet, and sprinkled with its blue blossoms. I have seen them in our own wild-wood walks, crowding lovingly together in groups, or springing up round the trunks of ancient trees, but I never saw such a profusion of these sweet flowers as I did then in that Nablus garden. We could not move a step without crushing the tender leaves (Page 292) beneath our feet. We were led into the center of the garden, where a very large square pool or reservoir had been made, with a stone parapet round it. On the south side there was a pleasant vaulted stone chamber, with a wide-spreading archway opening close on to the edge of the pool. Here carpets and cushions were spread, and coffee and pipes, sherbets, and fruit and flowers were brought for us.

This is the beau-ideal of the Oriental afternoon enjoyment- a lulling narghile in an arched recess, near to a pool or stream of sparkling water- in the midst of a fruit garden, carpeted with violets, in the Spring- with white ever-lasting flowers in the Summer and Autumn. These delights are the chief subjects of many of the modern Arab songs and poems.

Before sunset we traversed the town from one end to the other, and went to the house of Daud Tannus, the chief member of the Protestant community in Nablus, where we had been invited to dine. We were led up a crooked, open stone stairway, to an irregular uneven court, into which several rooms and a kitchen opened. In the later the mistress of the house and women-servants were busy in the midst of savory odors. They stood in the wide doorway, half hiding their faces, and looking shyly at us as we passed to the guest-chamber. Monthly roses and carnations in full blossom, planted in large, broken, red-clay water-jars, turned upside down, stood on each side of the entrance steps. The room was large, though not lofty-raised divans covered with Manchester prints were on three sides of it, and a musketo-curtained bed on the other. Fifteen of our Nablus friends were assembled there to meet us, and among them M. Zeller, but no women appeared.

While we were seated on the divan, one of the guests said to me in broken English, "Your friendship with your brother, the Consul, has already become a proverb in this city." "How so?" I inquired. He explained: "To-day I heard people angrily talking and crying near my house, (Page 293) and they made a great noise, and I rose and went to the door of my house, and a man named Yusef came that way, and I said, 'What was the reason of that noise?' and he replied, 'Only two women disputing and fighting; but they have now made peace, and they have sworn to each other a friendship like unto the friendship of the English Consul and his sister!'" I said, "Is it then in this land reckoned a strange thing that a brother and sister should be great friends?"

Another guest, a thoughtful and intelligent man, to whom my question was repeated in Arabic, replied, "People in this country are naturally surprised that you can journey with the Consul, share his pursuits and the dangers to which he may be exposed, and be really and truly his companion. It is a thing not understood here, where the education of men and women differs so greatly, and where brothers and sisters see but little of each other after their childhood, except when the father of the family dies- for then the eldest son becomes the guardian of his widowed mother and of his brothers and sisters. But the latter are married early, and then he has no more charge concerning them. Our women marvel greatly among themselves that you have left your country and your home to travel with the Consul, while your parents are yet living, and they conclude that you must have a strong friendship for each other."

And a third spoke and said, "Thou hast spoken truly, yet let it be known also to our English sister, that our women and girls rejoice greatly when they have many brothers, and it is their pride and delight to hear their friends say, 'Happy art thou, O sister of seven men; may they soon be married, and may you live to see their children's children!' And it is said that a woman sometimes regards the life of her brother as more precious than her own, or than that of her husband, or her son."

"When Ibrahim Pasha, the son of Mehemet Ali, ruled in Palestine, he sent men into all the towns and villages to (Page 294) gather together a large army. Then a certain woman of Sefurieh sought Ibrahim Pasha at 'Akka, and came into his presence, bowing herself before him, and said, 'O my lord, look with pity on thy servant, and hear my prayers. A little while ago there were three men in my house- my husband, my brother, and my eldest son. But now, behold, they all have been carried away to serve in your army, and I am left with my little ones without a protector; I pray you grant liberty to one of these men, that he may remain at home.'

"And Ibrahim had pity on her, and said, 'O woman! Do you ask for your husband, for your son, or for your brother?'

"She said, 'O my lord, give me my brother!' and he answered, 'How is this, O woman- do you prefer a brother to a husband or a son?'

"The woman, who was renowned for her wit and readiness of speech, replied in an impromptu rhyme:

"If it be God's will that my husband perish in your service,  
I am still a woman, and God may lead me to another husband.  
If on the battle-field my first-born son should fall,  
I have still my younger ones who will in God's time be like unto him,  
But, O my lord, if my brother should be slain,  
I am without remedy- for my father is dead and my mother is old,  
And where should I look for another brother?'



“And Ibrahim was much pleased with the words of the woman, and said, ‘O woman! Happy above many is thy brother; he shall be free for thy words’ sake, and thy husband and son shall be free also.’ Then the woman could not speak for joy and gladness. And Ibrahim said, ‘Go in peace- but let it not be known that I have spoken with you this day.’

“Then she arose and went her way to her village, trusting in the promise of the Pasha. After three days, her husband, and son, and brother returned to her, saying, ‘We are free from service, by order of the Pasha, but this matter is a mystery to us.’ And all the neighbors marveled greatly. But the woman held her peace, and this story (Page 295) did not become known till Ibrahim’s departure from ‘Akka, after the overthrow of the Egyptian Government in Syria, in 1840.”

Several similar anecdotes were related while preparations for dinner were being made. A large circular tray was brought in, and placed on a stand, raised about six inches from the floor, in the middle of the room. Our kawass, and the servants and attendants of the guests, acted as waiters. They bustled backward and forward across the court, from the door of the kitchen to the table, which was soon covered with steaming, yellow mounds of rice, crowned with limbs of fowls and morsels of lamb. A large wooden bowl- containing a medley of rice, minced mutton, raisins, pine-seeds, and butter- stood in the center, and was surrounded by plates of vegetables.

After water had been poured on our hands, we gathered round the board, and took our places, in Oriental fashion, on the floor. A damask napkin, about half a yard wide and ten yards long, was passed round in front of the assembled guests, and rested on their knees. Its gold-embroidered and fringed ends met where I was seated, between our host, Daud Tannus, and my brother. Flat cakes, or loaves of bread, were distributed, and we ate in primitive style, for neither knives, nor forks, nor spoons appeared. Deep impressions were soon made in the mounds of rice, and by degrees the dishes were carried away, and replaced by others, containing sweet starch and creams, stewed apricots, and preserves.

We left the table, one after the other, and performed the customary ablutions in due order. When we had reseated ourselves on the divan, coffee and pipes were served, and lambs were lighted. The table was carried out into the open court, and two or three bowls of rice being added to the dishes we had left, the numerous attendants and servants of the house took their evening meal there together by lantern-light, forming a study for a Rembrandt.

I went into an adjoining room for a few minutes, to see (Page 296) the ladies of the house, and the neighbors who were with them. They received me very kindly, but with a little shyness. One said to me, “I hope you made a good dinner- we have nothing here fit to offer you- we are only simple people, and can not serve you as we should like to do.” I said, “I very much enjoyed that which your hands- peace be onto them- prepared so nicely; but I should have enjoyed it still more if you, O my sisters, had eaten with us.” They seemed quite amused at the idea, and some of them blushed and laughed heartily. One of the elder woman said seriously, “It is not our custom, O my daughter, to eat with men- it would be a shame for us.” And a young girl exclaimed, “O lady, the bread and meat would choke us, if we took it in the midst of a company of men.” I took leave of the women, and returned to the divan, and at about eight o’clock the guests separated, for genuine Oriental dinner-parties are never late entertainments.

Daud Tannus gathered his finest roses and carnations for us, and we walked home through the narrow streets, attended by lantern-bearers and several friends.

In the mean time, preparations had been made for my journey to Jerusalem. The Consul, Mr. Finn, had sent his Hebrew dragoman and his head kawass to fetch me, that my brother might be free to follow Kamil Pasha, without anxiety, wherever he might go. It was expected that the Pasha would visit all the rebellious villages, and perhaps besiege some of them, in which case he might be absent from Nablus for many days. Under these circumstances, I had no alternative, and immediately made ready for the starting early on the morrow.

Till a late hour, friends and neighbors, of all sects and classes, came in to take leave of me, and to wish me a prosperous and safe journey. The Moslems especially marveled that I could venture to travel so far without my brother. They said, “May God make a straight path for you on his earth!” (Page 297) **Chapter XI, From Nablus to Jerusalem.**

..... I breakfasted early, but it was half-past eight o’clock before the horses and riders were all ready. Then after taking leave of my good-natured hostess, I mounted and rode through the

streets of Nablus with a few friends, who had arranged to accompany me a short distance on the way. Priest Amran, the Samaritan, who walked by my side, with his hand on the neck of my good horse, exclaimed, "Passover is nigh at hand, and you will not be with us on the mountain- this is a grief to us, for our hearts had been made glad with the thought that you (page 298) would be with us, and now, behold, our hope is departed from us."

I told him how sincerely I regretted leaving Nablus so soon. Then he pronounced a prayer and a blessing for me, and went his way.....

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