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**WE CHANGED OUR MINDS ABOUT BEING WILLING TO SAIL
PAST—See page 31.**

THE SHIP-DWELLERS

A STORY OF A HAPPY CRUISE

BY
ALBERT BIGELOW PAINE

AUTHOR OF
"FROM VAN-DWELLER TO COMMUTER"
"THE TENT-DWELLERS" ETC.

WITH ILLUSTRATIONS FROM
DRAWINGS BY THOMAS FOGARTY
AND FROM PHOTOGRAPHS



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TO
MARK TWAIN
HERO OF MY CHILDHOOD
INSPIRATION OF MY YOUTH
FRIEND OF THESE LATER YEARS

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THE SHIP-DWELLERS

"The grand object of all travel is to see the shores of the Mediterranean."

—DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[Pg 1]



THE BOOK, AND THE DREAM

It was a long time ago—far back in another century—that my father brought home from the village, one evening, a brand-new book. There were not so many books in those days, and this was a fine big one, with black and gilt covers, and such a lot of pictures!

I was at an age to claim things. I said the book was *my* book, and, later, petitioned my father to establish that claim. (I remember we were climbing through the bars at the time, having driven the cows to the further pasture.)

My father was kindly disposed, but conservative; that was his habit. He said that I might look at the book—that I might even read it, some day, when I was old enough, and I think he added that privately I might call it mine—a privilege which provided as well for any claim I might have on the moon. [Pg 2]

I don't think these permissions altogether satisfied me. I was already in the second reader, and the lust of individual ownership was upon me. Besides, this was a *New Pilgrim's Progress*. We had respect in our house for the old *Pilgrim's Progress*, and I had been encouraged to search its pages. I had read it, or read at it, for a good while, and my claim of ownership in that direction had never been disputed. Now, here was a brand-new one, and the pictures in it looked most attractive. I was especially enamoured of the frontispiece, "The Pilgrim's Vision," showing the "Innocents" on their way "abroad," standing on the deck of the *Quaker City* and gazing at Bible pictures in the sky.

I do not remember how the question of ownership settled itself. I do remember how the book that winter became the nucleus of our family circle, and how night after night my mother read aloud from it while the rest of us listened, and often the others laughed.



**TO ME IT WAS ALL TRUE, ALL ROMANCE—ALL
POETRY**

I did not laugh—not then. In the first place, I would not, in those days, laugh at any *Pilgrim's Progress*, especially at a new one, and then I had not arrived at the point of sophistication where a joke, a literary joke, registers. To me it was all true, all romance—all poetry—the story of those happy voyagers who sailed in a ship of dreams to lands beyond the sunrise, where men with turbans, long flowing garments and Bible whiskers rode on camels; where ruined columns rose in a desert that was once a city; where the Sphinx and the Pyramids looked out over the sands that had drifted about them long and long before the Wise Men of the East had seen the Star rise over Bethlehem. [Pg 3]

In the big, bleak farm-house on the wide, bleak Illinois prairie I looked into the open fire and dreamed. Some day, somehow, I would see those distant lands. I would sail away on that ship with "Dan" and "Jack" and "The Doctor" to the Far East; I would visit Damascus and Jerusalem, and pitch my camp on the borders of the Nile. Very likely I should decide to remain there and live happy ever after.

How the dreams of youth stretch down the years, and fade, and change! Only this one did not fade, and I thought it did not change. I learned to laugh with the others, by-and-by, but the romance and the poetry of the pilgrimage did not grow dim. The argonauts of the *Quaker City* sailed always in a halo of romance to harbors of the forgotten days. As often as I picked up the book the dream was fresh and new, though realization seemed ever further and still further ahead. [Pg 4]

Then all at once, there, just within reach, it lay. There was no reason why, in some measure at least, I should not follow the track of those old first "Innocents Abroad." Of course, I was dreaming again—only, this time, perhaps, I could make the dream come true.

I began to read advertisements. I found that a good many ship-loads of "Pilgrims" had followed that first little band to the Orient—that the first "ocean picnic" steamer, which set sail in June forty-two years before, had started a fashion in sea excursioning which had changed only in details. Ocean picnics to the Mediterranean were made in winter now, and the vessels used for them were fully eight times as big as the old *Quaker City*, which had been a side-wheel steamer, and grand, no doubt, for her period, with a register proudly advertised at eighteen hundred tons! Itineraries, too, varied more or less, but Greece, Egypt, and the Holy Land were still names to conjure with. Advertisements of cruises were plentiful, and literature on the subject was luminous and exciting. A small table by my bed became gorgeous with prospectuses in blue and gold and crimson sunset dyes. The Sphinx, the Pyramids, and prows of stately vessels looked out

from many covers and became backgrounds for lofty, dark-blue camels and dusky men of fantastic dress. Often I woke in the night and lit my lamp and consulted these things. When I went to the city I made the lives of various agents miserable with my inquiries. It was hard—it was nerve-racking to decide. But on one of these occasions I overheard the casual remark that the S. S. *Grosser Kurfürst* would set out on her cruise to the Orient with two tons of dressed chicken and four thousand bottles of champagne.

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I hesitated no longer. Dear me, my dream had changed, then, after all! Such things had not in the least concerned the boy who had looked into the open fire, and pictured a pilgrimage to Damascus and Jerusalem, and a camp on the borders of the Nile.

My remembrance of the next few days is hazy—that is, it is kaleidoscopic. I recall doing a good many things in a hurry and receiving a good deal of advice. Also the impression that everybody in the world except myself had been everywhere in the world, and that presently they were all going again, and that I should find them, no doubt, strewn all the way from Gibraltar to Jerusalem, when I had been persuading myself that in the places I had intended to visit I should meet only the fantastic stranger. Suddenly it was two days before sailing. Then it was the day before sailing. Then it was sailing day!

Perhaps it was the hurry and stress of those last days; perhaps it is the feeling natural to such a proximity. I do not know. But I do know that during those final flying hours, when I was looking across the very threshold of realization, the old fascination faded, and if somebody had only suggested a good reason for my staying at home, I would have stayed there, and I would have given that person something valuable, besides. But nobody did it. Not a soul was thoughtful enough to hint that I was either needed or desired in my native land, and I was too modest to mention it myself.

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There had been rain, but it was bright enough that February morning of departure—just a bit squally along the west. What a gay crowd there was at the pier and on the vessel! I thought all of New York must be going. That was a mistake—they were mostly visitors, as I discovered later. It would average three visitors to one passenger, I should think. I had more than that—twice as many. I am not boasting—they came mainly to be sure that I got aboard and stayed there, and to see that I didn't lose most of my things. They knew me and what I would be likely to do, alone. They wanted to steer me to the right state-room and distribute my traps. Then they could put me in charge of Providence and the deck-steward, and wash their hands of me, and feel that whatever happened they had done their duty and were not to blame.

So I had six, as I say, and we worked our way through, among the passengers and visitors, who seemed all to be talking and laughing at once or pawing over mail and packages heaped upon the cabin table. I didn't feel like laughing and talking, and I wasn't interested in the mail. Almost everybody in the world that meant anything to me was in my crowd, and they were going away, presently, to leave me on this big ship, among strangers, bound for the strange lands. My long dream of the Orient dwindled to a decrepit thing.

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But presently we found my state-room, and it was gratifying. I was impressed with its regal furnishings. After all, there were compensations in a habitation like that. Besides, there were always the two tons of dressed chicken and those thousands of champagne. I became more cheerful.

Only, I wish the ship people wouldn't find it necessary to blow their whistle so loud and suddenly to send one's friends ashore. There is no chance to carry off somebody—somebody you would enjoy having along. They blow that thing until it shivers the very marrow of one's soul.

How the visitors do crowd ashore! A word—a last kiss—a "God bless you"—your own are gone presently—you are left merely standing there, abandoned, marooned, deserted—feeling somehow that it's all wrong, and that something ought to be done about it. Why don't those people hurry? You want to get away now; you want it over with.

A familiar figure fights its way up the gang-plank, breasting the shoreward tide. Your pulse jumps—they are going to take you home, after all. But no, he only comes to tell you that *your* six will be at a certain place near the end of the dock, where you can see them, and wave to them.

You push to the ship's side for a place at the rail. The last visitors are straggling off now, even to the final official. Then somewhere somebody does something that slackens the cables, the remaining gang-plank is dragged away. That whistle again, and then a band—our band—turns loose a perfect storm of music.

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We are going! We are going! We have dropped away from the pier and are gliding past the rows of upturned faces, the lines of frantic handkerchiefs. Yes, oh yes, we are going—there is no turning back now, no changing of one's mind again. All the cares of work, the claims of home—they cannot reach us any more. Those waiting at the pier's end to wave as we pass—whatever life holds for me is centred there, and I am leaving it all behind. There they are, now! Wave! Wave! Oh, I did not know it would be like this! I did not suppose that I might—need another handkerchief!

The smoke of a tug drifts between— I have lost them. No, there they are again, still waving. That white spot—that is a little furry coat—such a little furry coat and getting so far off, and so blurry. My glass—if I can only get hold of myself enough to see through it. Yes, there they are! Oh, those wretched boats to drift in and shut that baby figure away! Now they are gone, but I cannot find

her again. The smoke, the mist, and a sudden drift of snow have swept between. I have lost the direction— I don't know where to look any more. It is all over—we are off—we are going out to sea!

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II

IN THE TRACK OF THE INNOCENTS

We are through luncheon; we have left Sandy Hook, and the shores have dropped behind the western horizon. It was a noble luncheon we sat down to as we crossed the lower bay. One stopped at the serving-table to admire an exhibition like that. Banked up in splendid pyramids as for a World's Fair display, garnished and embroidered and fringed with every inviting trick of decoration, it was a spectacle to take one's breath and make him resolve to consume it all. One felt that he could recover a good deal on a luncheon like that, but I think the most of us recovered too much. I am sure, now, that I did—a good deal too much—and that my selections were not the best—not for the beginning of a strange, new life at sea.

Then there was Laura—Laura, age fourteen, whose place at the table is next to mine, and a rather sturdy young person; I think she also considered the bill of fare too casually. She ventured the information that this was her second voyage, that the first had been a short trip on a smaller vessel, and that she had been seasick. She did not intend to be seasick on a fine, big steamer like this, and I could tell by the liberality with which she stowed away the satisfying German provender that she had enjoyed an early and light breakfast, followed by brisk exercise in getting to the ship. The tables were gay with flowers; the company looked happy, handsome, and well-dressed; the music was inspiring. Friends left behind seemed suddenly very far away. We had become a little world all to ourselves—most of us strangers to one another, but thrown in a narrow compass here and likely to remain associates for weeks, even months. What a big, jolly picnic it was, after all!

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Outside it was bleak and squally, but no matter. The air was fine and salt and invigorating. The old *Quaker City* had been held by storm at anchor in the lower bay. We were already down the Narrows and heading straight for the open sea. Land presently lost its detail and became a dark outline. That, too, sank lower and became grayer and fell back into the mist.

I remembered that certain travellers had displayed strong emotions on seeing their native land disappear. I had none—none of any consequence. I had symptoms, though, and I recognized them. Like Laura, aged fourteen, I had taken a shorter voyage on a poorer ship, and I had decided that this would be different. I had engaged a steamer-chair, and soon after luncheon I thought I would take a cigar and a book on Italy and come out here and sit in it—in the chair, of course—and smoke and think and look out to sea. But when I got to the door of my state-room and felt the great vessel take a slow, curious side-step and caught a faint whiff of linoleum and varnish from the newly renovated cabin, I decided to forego the cigar and guide-book and take a volume on mind cure instead.

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It seems a good ship, though, and I feel that we shall all learn to be proud of her, in time. In a little prospectus pamphlet I have here I find some of her measurements and capacities, and I have been comparing them with those of the *Quaker City*, the first steamer to set out on this Oriental cruise. If she were travelling along beside us to-day I suppose she would look like a private yacht. She must have had trouble with a sea like this. She was little more than two hundred feet long, I believe, and, as already mentioned, her tonnage was registered at eighteen hundred. The figures set down in the prospectus for this vessel are a good deal bigger than those, but they are still too modest. The figures quote her as being a trifle less than six hundred feet long, but I can see in both directions from where I sit, and I am satisfied that it would take me hours to get either to her bow or stern. I don't believe I could do it in that time. I am convinced that it is at least half a mile to my state-room.

The prospectus is correct, however, in one item. It says that the *Kurfürst* has a displacement of twenty-two thousand tons. That is handsome, and it is not too much; I realized that some moments ago. When I felt our noble vessel "sashay" in her slow majestic fashion toward Cuba, and then pause to revolve the matter a little, and after concluding to sink, suddenly set out in a long, slow, upward slide for the moon, I knew that her displacement was all that is claimed for it,

and I prepared for the worst; so did Laura, and started for her state-room suddenly....

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Later: I don't know how many of our party went down to dinner. I know one that did not go. The music is good, but I can hear it very well from where I am. No doubt the dinner is good, too, but I am satisfied to give it absent treatment.

There is a full-blown Scientist in the next room. She keeps saying "Mind is all. Mind is all. This is nothing. This is—this is just—" after which, the Earthquake.

What an amazing ocean it is to be able to toss this mighty ship about in such a way! I suppose there is no hope of her sinking. No hope!



SOMEBODY SENT ME A BASKET OF FRUIT

Somebody sent me a basket of fruit. I vaguely wonder what it is like, and if I shall ever know? I suppose there are men who could untie that paper and look at it. I could stand in awe of a man like that. I could—

However, it is no matter; there is no such man.

But it was bright next morning, though a heavy sea was still running. I was by no means perfectly happy, but I struggled on deck quite early, and found company. A stout youngish man was marching round and round vigorously as if the number of laps he might achieve was vital. He fetched up suddenly as I stepped on deck. He spoke with quick energy.

"Look here," he said, earnestly, "perhaps you can tell me; it's important, and I want to know: is a seasick man better off if he walks or sits still? I'm seasick. I confess it, fully. My interior economy is all disqualified, and I want advice. Now tell me, *is* a seasick man better off when he walks or when he sits still?"

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I gave it up, and the Diplomat (we learned later that he was connected with the consular service) passed to the next possible source of information. I heard him propounding his inquiries several times during the morning as new arrivals appeared on deck.

He was the most honest man on the ship. The rest of us did not confess that we were seasick. We had a bad cold or rheumatism or dyspepsia or locomotorataxia or pleurisy—all sorts of things—but we were not seasick. It was remarkable what a floating hospital of miscellaneous complaints the ship had become, and how suddenly they all disappeared that afternoon when the sea went down.

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It was Lincoln's Birthday, and, inspired by the lively appearance of the deck, a kindly promoter of entertainment went among the passengers inviting them to take part in some sort of simple exercises for the evening. Our pleasure excursion seemed really to have begun now, and walking leisurely around the promenade-deck one could get a fair impression of our company and cast the horoscope. They were a fair average of Americans, on the whole, with a heavy percentage of foreign faces, mostly German. Referring to the passenger-list, one discovered that we hailed from many States; but when I drifted into the German purlieus of that register and found such prefixes as Herr Regierungs-präsident a. D., and Frau Regierungs-präsident a. D., and looking further discovered Herr Kommerzienrat, Herr Oberpräsidialrat von, and a few more high-power explosives like that, I said, "This is not an excursion, after all; it is a court assembly." I did not know in the least what these titles meant, but I was uneasy. I had the feeling that the owner of any one of them could nod to the executioner and dismiss me permanently from the ship. The

interpreter came along just then. He said:

"Do not excite yourself. They are not so dangerous as they look. It is only as one would say, 'Mr. and Mrs. Councilman of the third ward Jones, or Mr. Mayor of Oshkosh Smith, or Mrs. Commissioner of highways Brown.' It is pure decoration; nothing fatal will occur." I felt better then, and set out to identify some of the owners of this furniture. It was as the interpreter had said—there was no danger. A man with a six-story title could hardly be distinguished from the rest of his countrymen except when he tried to sign it. But a thing like that must be valuable in Germany; otherwise he would not go to the trouble and expense of lugging such a burden around on a trip like this, when one usually wants to travel light.

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The ship gave us a surprise that night, and it was worth while. When we got to the dining-room we found it decorated with the interwoven colors of two nations; the tables likewise radiant, and there were menus with the picture of Abraham Lincoln outside. We were far out in the blackness of the ocean now, but here was as brilliant a spot as you would find at Sherry's or Delmonico's, and a little company gathered from the world's end to do honor to the pioneer boy of Kentucky. I think many of us there had never observed Lincoln's Birthday before, and it was fitting enough that we should begin at such a time and place. I know we all rose and joined in *America* and the *Star-Spangled Banner* at the close, and we are not likely to forget that mid-ocean celebration of the birth of America's greatest, gentlest hero.

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III

DAYS AT SEA

We have settled down into a pleasant routine of lazy life. Most of us are regularly on deck now, though one sees new faces daily.

We have taken up such amusements as please us—reading, games, gossip, diaries, picture-puzzles, and there are even one or two mild flirtations discoverable. In the "booze-bazaar" (the Diplomat's name for the smoking-room) the Reprobates find solace in pleasant mixtures and droll stories, while they win one another's money at diverting games. They are an attractive lot—the Reprobates. One can hardly tear himself away from them. Only the odors of the smoking-room are not quite attractive, as yet. I am no longer seasick—at least, not definitely so; but I still say "Mind is all" as I pass through the smoking-room.



THEY ARE AN ATTRACTIVE LOT—THE REPROBATES

We are getting well acquainted, too, for the brief period of time we have been together. It does not seem brief, however. That bleak day of departure in North River is already far back in the past—as far back as if it belonged to another period, which indeed it does. We are becoming acquainted, as I say. We are rapidly finding out one another's names; whether we are married, single, or divorced—and why; what, if anything, we do when we are at home; how we happened to come on this trip; and a great deal of useful information—useful on a ship like this, where the voyage is to be a long one and associations more or less continuous. We form into little groups and discuss these things—our own affairs first—then presently we shift the personnel of our groups and discuss each other, and are happy and satisfied, and feel that the cruise is a success.

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There are not many young people on the ship—a condition which would seem to have prevailed on these long ocean excursions since the first Oriental pilgrimage, forty-two years ago. I suppose the prospects of several months on one ship, with sight-seeing in Egypt and the Holy Land, do not look attractive enough to the average young person who is thinking of gayer things. One can be gay enough on shipboard, however, where there is a good band of music; a quarter-deck to dance on; nooks on the sun-deck to flirt in; promenades and shuffleboard, with full dress every night for dinner. No need to have an idle time on an excursion like this if one doesn't want it; which most of us do, however, because we are no longer entirely young, and just loaf around and talk of unimportant things and pretend to read up on the places we are going to see.

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We need to do that. What we don't know about history and geography on this ship would sink it. Most of us who have been to school, even if it is a good while ago, keep sort of mental pictures of the hemispheres, and preserve the sound of certain old familiar names. We live under the impression that this is knowledge, and it passes well enough for that until a time comes like this when particular places on the map are to be visited and particular associations are to be recalled.

Then, of course, we start in to classify and distinguish, and suddenly find that there is scarcely anything to classify and less still to distinguish. I am morally certain that there are not ten of us on this vessel who could tell with certainty the difference between Deucalion and Deuteronomy, or between the Pillars of Hercules and the Golden Horn. The brightest man on the ship this morning asked if Algiers was in Egypt or Spain, and a dashing high-school girl wanted to know if Greece were not a part of Asia Minor.

We shall all know better when we are through with this trip. We shall be wonders in the matter of knowledge, and we shall get it from first hands. We shall no longer confuse Upper and Lower Egypt, or a peristyle with a stadium. We are going to know about these things. That is why we are here.

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In the matter of our amusements, picture-puzzles seem to be in the lead. They are fascinating things, once one gets the habit. They sell them on this ship, and nearly everybody has one or more. The tables in the forward cabin are full of them, and after dinner there is a group around each table pawing over the pieces in a rapt way or offering advice to whoever happens to be setting them. Certain of our middle-aged ladies in particular find comfort in the picture-puzzles, and sit all day in their steamer-chairs with the pieces on a large pasteboard cover, shifting and trying and fitting them into place. One wonders what blessing those old *Quaker City* pilgrims had that took the place of the fascinating picture-puzzle.

We are getting south now, and the weather is much warmer. The sun is bright, too, and a little rainbow travels with the ship, just over the port screw. When the water is fairly quiet the decks are really gay. New faces still appear, however. Every little while there is a fresh arrival, as it were; a fluttering out from some inner tangle of sea magic and darkness, just as a butterfly might emerge from a cocoon. Some of them do not stay. We run into a cross-sea or a swell, or something, and they disappear again, and their places at the table remain vacant. The Diplomat continues his fight and his inquiries. Every little while one may hear him ask: "Is it better for a seasick man to walk or to sit down?" The Diplomat never denies his condition. "Oh, Lord, I'm seasick!" he says. "I'd be sick on a duck-pond. I'd be sick if the ship were tied to the dock. I'd be sick if anybody told me I was on a ship. Say, what is a fellow like that to do, anyway? And here I am bound for Jerusalem!"

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Down here the water is very blue. We might be sailing on a great tub of indigo. One imagines that to take up a glass of it would be to dip up pure ultra-marine. I mentioned this to the Diplomat.

"Yes," he said, "it is a cracker-jack of an ocean, but I don't care for it just now."

But what a lonely ocean it is! Not a vessel, not a sail, not a column of smoke on the horizon!

We are officially German on this ship, and the language prevails. Our passenger-list shows that we are fully half German, I believe, and of course all the officers and stewards are of that race. The consequence is that everybody on the ship, almost, speaks or tries to speak the language. Persons one would never suspect of such a thing do it, and some of them pretty well, too. Even I got reckless and shameless, and from a long-buried past produced a few German remarks of my own. They were only about ten-carat assay, but they were accepted at par. I remember an old and very dear German man in America who once said to me, speaking of his crops, "Der early corn, he iss all right; aber der late corn, she's bad!"

My German is not as good as his English, but you'd think it was better, the serious way these stewards accept it. They recognize the quality—they have many cargoes of the same brand.

We have two exceedingly pretty girls on this ship—one of them as amiable, as gentle, as lovely in every way as she is pretty. The other—well, she is pretty enough in all conscience, and she may be amiable—I wouldn't want to be unfair in my estimate—but if she is, she has a genius for concealing it from the rest of the passengers. Her chief characteristic besides her comeliness seems to be a conviction that she has made a mistake in coming with such a crowd.

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GAVE HIM THE "ICY MITT"

We can't domesticate that girl—she won't mix with us. The poor old Promoter, one of the kindest creatures alive, approached her with an invitation to read aloud a small selection for the little Lincoln memorial he was preparing. She declined chillily—gave him the "icy mitt," the Diplomat said.

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"I nevah do anything on shipboahd," she declared, and ignored his apologies.

She spends most of her time disposed in a ravishing fashion in a steamer-chair, reading a novel or letting the volume drop listlessly at her side, with one of her dainty fingers between the pages to mark the place, while her spirit lives in other worlds than ours. The Promoter says she is cold and frigidly beautiful—a winter landscape. But then the Promoter is a simple, forgiving soul. I think she is just flitter and frosting—just a Christmas-card. A ship like this is democratic—it has to be. We are all just people here.

It is also cosmopolitan—it has to be that, too, with a crowd like ours. This Sunday evening affords an example of what I mean. In the dining-room forward there are religious exercises—prayers and a song service under the direction of the Promoter—a repetition, no doubt, of the very excellent programme given this morning. Far aft, on the quarter-deck, a dance is in progress, under the direction, I believe, of our German contingent; while amidships, in the "booze-bazaar," the Reprobates and their Godless friends are engaged in revelry, probably under the direction of Satan. The ship is very long, and the entertainments do not conflict or compete. One may select whatever best accords with his taste and morals, or, if he likes variety, he may divide his time. Everything is running wide open as this luminous speck of life—a small, self-constituted world—goes throbbing through the dark.

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IV

WE BECOME HISTORY

We had been four days at sea, boring our way into the sunrise at the rate of three hundred and sixty miles a day, when we met the "Great Sight"—the American fleet of sixteen ships of war returning from its cruise around the world.

It had been rumored among us when we left New York that there was a possibility of such a meeting. It was only a possibility, of course, for even a fleet is a mere speck on a wide waste of ocean, and with engines on both sides driving at full speed the chances of intersection were small.

So we went about figuring and speculating and worrying the officers, who were more anxious over the matter than we were, but conservative, nevertheless. We only learned, therefore, or rather we guessed, I think, that our Marconi flash was travelling out beyond the horizon, and the loneliest sea imaginable, trying to find an answering spark.

During the afternoon of the Sunday previously mentioned a sentence on the blackboard, the first official word, announced, with a German flavor, that it was "not quite impossible" that the

meeting would occur next morning, and this we took to mean that wireless communication had been established, though we were not further informed.

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There was a wild gale during the night and a heavy sea running at daybreak, but the sky was clear. A few stragglers were at early breakfast when, all at once, a roll of drums and a burst of martial music brought us to our feet.

We did not need any one to tell us what it meant. "The fleet!" came to every man's lips, and a moment later we were on deck. Not only those in the dining-room came. Sick or well, bundled together somehow, from every opening our excursionists staggered forth, and, climbing to the sun-deck, looked out across the bridge to where the sunrise had just filled the morning sky. There they were—far, faint, and blurred at first, but presently outlined clear—stretched across the glowing east, lifting and tossing out of the morning, our sixteen noble vessels on their homeward way!

At that moment I think there was not one on our ship who did not feel that whatever might come, now, the cruise was a success. Foreign lands would bring us grand sights, no doubt, but nothing that could equal this. We realized that, fully, and whispered our good-fortune to one another as we gazed out upon that spectacle of a lifetime.

Viewed across our bow, the vessels appeared to form a continuous straight line, but they divided into two sections as they came on, eight vessels in each, and passed in column formation. In a little while we were close to them—they were just under our starboard bow—their upper decks black with men turned out in our honor. We waved to them and our band played, but we did not cheer. We were too much impressed to be noisy, nor could we have made our voices heard across that wild shouting sea. So we only looked, and waved, and perhaps wiped our eyes, and some of us tried to photograph them.

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They passed in perfect formation. Heavy seas broke over them, and every billow seemed to sweep their decks, but their lines varied not a point and the separating distances remained unchanged. So perfect was the alignment that each column became a single vessel when they had left us behind.

It was over, all too soon. Straight as an arrow those two noble lines pierced the western horizon, passed through it, and were gone. We went below then, to find chairs flying, crockery smashing, and state-rooms in a wreck. It was the rough day of the trip, but we declared that we did not mind it at all. By wireless we thanked Admiral Sperry, and wished him safe arrival home. Then presently he returned thanks, and good wishes for our journey in distant lands.

We meant to vote resolutions of gratitude to our captain that night at dinner for his skill in finding the fleet. But it was our rough day, as I have mentioned, and nobody was there to do it—at least, there was not enough for a real, first-class, able-bodied resolution. We did it next evening—that is, to-night. Between the asparagus and the pheasant we told him some of the nice things we thought of him, and ended up by drinking his health, standing, and by giving a great "Hoch soil er leben!" in real German fashion.

We were vain and set up, and why not? Had we not been the first Americans to give our fleet welcome home? We felt that we had become almost history.

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V

INTRODUCING THE REPROBATES

We are a week at sea now, and have been making our courtesy to the sunrise half an hour earlier every morning. That is to say, we have gained three hours and a half, and when the first bugle blows for half-past seven, and commands us to get up and muss around and be ready for the next bugle half an hour later, it means in the well-regulated civilized country we've left behind that it's just four o'clock, and time to turn over and settle down and really enjoy life. The result is you swear at the bugler, when you ought to love him for the trouble he takes to get you up in time for breakfast.

After breakfast, the deck. It is good to walk around and around the promenade these fine mornings down here, even though the sea keeps billowy and the horizon line lifts and falls with its majestic swing. You are no longer disturbed by it. Your body has adapted itself to the motion, and sways like an inverted pendulum. You feel that you have your sea-legs almost as well as the stewards, and this makes you proud and showy before the other passengers. It is February, but it is not cold down in this violet, semi-tropic sea. The air is fresh enough, but it is soft and gratifying, and one almost imagines that he can smell flowers in it. Perhaps it is a fact, too, for we are not far from land now; we shall reach Madeira to-morrow morning.

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Yet somehow the thought of land is not exciting. I do not believe any of us are eager for it. We are quite restored now, even the Diplomat, and the days on shipboard are serene and pleasantly satisfying.

So many happy things go to make up the day. It is refreshing to play shuffleboard on the after

deck with Laura, age fourteen, and her companion, the only other girl of her age on board. It is inspiring to hear the band play every morning at ten when one is not too close to the strenuous music. I suppose beating a bass drum and cymbals makes muscle, and the man does not realize how strong he is. It is diverting to drift into the smoking-room—now that I do not mind its fragrance any more—and watch the Apostle (so christened because of his name and general build and inspired look) winning money from the Colonel at piquet, while the Horse Doctor discusses the philosophies of life in a manner at least pleasing to the unregenerates.

I should add, I suppose, that the Horse Doctor is not really that by profession, but having been dubbed so one day by his fellow-Reprobates, the Apostle and the Colonel, his cheerful reply: "Yes, I expect to be taken for one—travelling, as I do, with a couple of asses," fixed the title for him permanently. We enjoy the Reprobates. They are so ingenuous in their morals, and are corrupting the smoking-room in such a frank, unrestricted way. We enjoy their arguments too, they are so free and personal. We disapprove of the Reprobates, but we love them because we are human and born in sin, and they stand for all things we would like to do—if we dared.

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It is inviting and comfortable almost anywhere on the ship these days. It is good just to sit in the sun and dream; to lean over the rail and watch the little rainbow that travels with us, the white lace that the ship makes in its majestic sweep, to wander back to the stern and follow the interminable wake of the screw as it stretches back beyond the horizon line. Then there is the sunset; it was wonderful to-night. The air was perfectly clear, the sun a red disk going down cleanly cut into the sea. Laura and I saw it from amidships, looking out across the high stern of the vessel that sank now below the horizon, then lifted into the sky. Even the chief engineer and the ship's doctor came out to look at it, and told us to watch for the green sun which would appear the instant after setting. Later—after dinner, I mean—we danced.

They have put a stout awning over the quarter-deck and strung a lot of electric globes there so that when the music is going and the illumination is turned on, the place is gay and pretty and cosey, and those of us who have not danced for twenty years of more begin to sit up straighter when the music starts, and presently we forget that all is vanity and life a sorry mess at best, and look about for a partner, and there on the wide, lifting, falling quarter-deck caper away the years. It is not so much wonder, then, that the prospect of land does not arouse any feverish interest. We are willing to go right on sailing for a while and not bother about land at all.

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VI

A LAND OF HEART'S DESIRE

It was a mistake, however, to be indifferent to Madeira. We are no longer so. Whatever enthusiasm we lacked beforehand we have acquired now. Of all fair, jewelled islands of the sea, it is the particular gem. Not one of us on this ship but has made up his mind to go to Madeira again some day, and to stay there and live happy ever after; or, if not during life, to try to exchange a corner of heaven for it when he dies.

We knew nothing about Madeira except what the little prospectus told us, and the day before arrival we began to look up guide-book information on the subject. There was not much of this on the ship; I suspect that there is not much anywhere. Madeira was known to the Phœnicians, of course, that race of people who knew everything, went everywhere, built all the first cities, invented all the arts, named everything, and then perished. I ought to be sorry that they perished, I suppose, but I'm not. I've heard enough of that tribe on this ship.

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The Patriarch is stuffed full of Phœnician statistics, and to touch any line of historical discussion in his hearing is like tripping over a cord attached to a spring gun. He is as fatal as an Irishman I once knew who was perfectly adorable until some question of race came up. Then it was time to stand from under. According to Malone there was originally but one race—the Irish. All the early saints were Irish; so was Abraham; so was Noah; so was Adam; so was—but that is far enough back. I remember hearing him tell one night how, in a later day, when Alexander the Great set out to conquer Asia, he first sent emissaries to make peace with Ireland as a precaution against

being attacked in the rear.

But I am beginning to wander. There is no trace of the Phœnicians, I believe, on Madeira to-day, and the early history of the island is mainly mythical. When ancient Mediterranean sailors went exploring a little into the Atlantic and saw its purple form rise on the horizon they decided that it must be the mouth of hell, or at all events the abode of evil creatures, and hastily turned back. One account says that in the course of time a gentleman named Taxicab—probably the inventor of the vehicle later known by that name—and his companion were shipwrecked on Madeira and set up a monument in celebration of the event. I don't know what became of Taxicab and his friend or the monument, but about the same time it was discovered again by a Portuguese named Zargo, who set it afire as a means of clearing the land of its splendid forests and kept the fires going for seven years.^[1]

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Zargo's devastation began about five hundred years ago, and the island has required all those centuries for recovery. It may be added that he believed Madeira to be the lost Atlantis, though a point of land thirty miles long and fifteen miles wide could hardly be more than a splinter of that vanished continent. More likely Madeira and the fragmentary islets about it formed that mythical Ultima Thule referred to by Ulysses, when, according to Tennyson, he said:

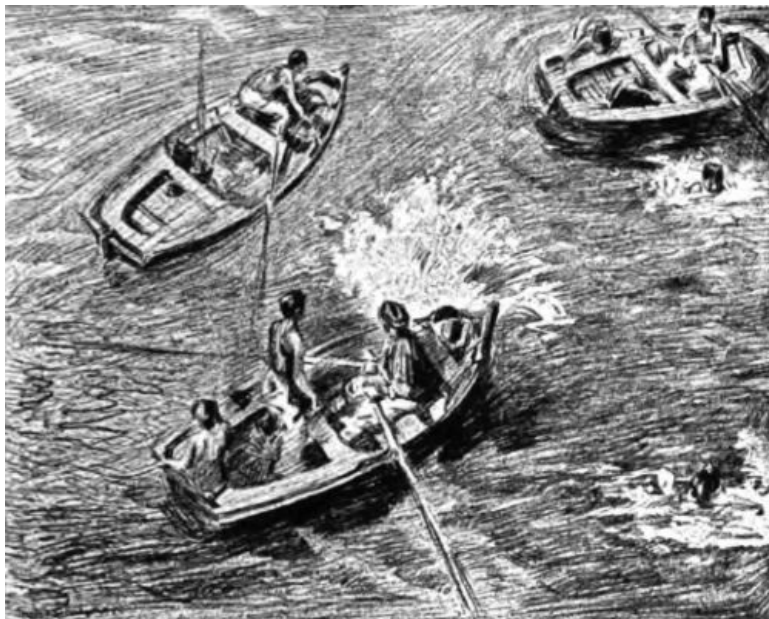
"My purpose holds
To sail beyond the sunset and the baths
Of all the western stars, until I die.
It may be that the gulfs will wash us down:
It may be we shall touch the Happy Isles,
And see the great Achilles whom we knew."

Perhaps Madeira was indeed a home of gods and favored spirits in the olden days. It would have been a suitable place. When we drew near enough to see its terraced hills—lofty hills they are, some of them in the interior rising to a point six thousand feet above the sea—and to make out the tiny houses nestling like white and tinted shells against the green, we changed our minds about being willing to sail past without stopping, and when at last we swung slowly into the Harbor of Funchal we felt somehow that we had come upon an island enchantment in the middle of the sea.

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For everything was so marvellous in its beauty: the green hills, terraced almost to the very top; the gorges between, the little fairy city just where the hills flow into the sea. With glasses one could make out flowering vines on many of the walls. Even with the naked eye, somebody presently discovered a great purple mass, part way up the hillside. The glass showed it to be a house almost covered with bougainvillea—our first vision of this lavish and splendid flower of the Mediterranean.

As we drew in and came to anchor, we saw descending upon us a fleet of small, curious boats, filled with half-naked men. We prepared for the worst, but they merely wanted us to throw coins over in the liquid azure which they call water in this country, whereupon their divers would try to intercept the said coins somewhere between the top and bottom of the sea. We didn't believe they could do it, which was poor judgment on our part.



THEY COULD DIVE LIKE SEALS

If those amphibians did not always get the coins, they generally did. They could see them perfectly in that amazing water, and they could dive like seals. Some of the divers were mere children—poor, lean creatures who stood up in their boats and shouted and implored and swung their arms in a wild invitation to us to fling our money overboard. They did not want small money—at least, not very small money—they declined to dive for pennies. Perhaps they could only distinguish the gleam of the white metal. Let a nickel or a dime be tossed over and two or three were after it in a flash, while a vehement outbreak of Portuguese from all the rest entreated still further largess. It was really a good show, and being the first of its kind, we enjoyed it.

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We had to go ashore in boats, and the water was not smooth. It was not entirely easy to get into the landing-boats, and it was still less easy to get out at the stairs which ascended to the stone piers. Every billow would throw the little boats six or eight feet into the air, and one had to be pretty careful to step just at the right instant or he would leave one foot on a high step and the other in the boat, far below. Several of our best passengers were dismembered in that way.

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Once on shore, the enchantment took hold of us again. It was so sunny and bright and the streets were so attractive—all paved with small black cobbles, set in the neatest and most careful fashion. Our conveyances were waiting just at the end of the pier, and they were, I believe, the most curious conveyances in the world. They were not carriages or carts or wheeled vehicles of any sort, but sleds—here in a land of eternal summer—sleds with enclosed tops, and drawn by oxen.

Their drivers were grave, whiskered men who motioned us to get in; after which we started, and they began greasing the runners as we went along. They did this by putting a grease-soaked rag in front of a runner now and then and driving over it.

I don't think an American would do it that way. He would take a barrel of soft soap and a broom and lubricate the whole street. Their way is neater, and about as effective, I suppose; besides, when they have been doing it another three hundred years or so, they will have some grease on these streets, too. Already one may see indications of it here and there.

Our course was uphill, and we ascended along a panorama of sunny life and tinted flower-hung walls to the outskirts of that neatest and most charming of cities—continuously expressing our delight in the general attractiveness of everything: the wonderfully laid streets; the really beautiful sidewalks of very tiny vari-colored cobbles all set in perfect mosaic patterns; the glow and bloom of summer everywhere. We admired even the persistent little beggars who ran along on both sides of the sleds, throwing camellias into our laps, crying out, "Penny! Penny!" their one English word—hopping, dancing, beseeching, and refusing to be comforted.

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We gave to the first of these tormentors, but it was not a good way to get rid of them. It was like putting out molasses to satisfy a few flies. A dozen more were around us, going on in a most disturbing manner. Our driver finally dispersed them by making some terrific motions with his whip-handle.

We were at the outskirts at last, but only at the beginning of the real climb. A funicular railway takes one up farther, and presently we are ascending straight to Paradise, it seemed to us, by a way that led through a perfect wilderness of beauty—flower, foliage, and waving green, with tiny stucco houses set in tangled gardens and slopes of cane—while below and beyond lay the city and the harbor and our ship at anchor on the violet sea.

Would we be so enchanted with the magic of this Happy Isle if it were not our first landing after a long winter voyage, which if not stormy was at all events not entirely smooth? Perhaps not, yet I think there are certain essentials of beauty and charm that are fundamental. The things we dream of and do not believe exist; the things that an artist will paint now and then when he forgets that the world is just a place to live and toil and die in, and not really to be happy in at all. But those things are all here in Madeira, and when we learned that nobody ever gets sick here, and that everybody gets well of everything he happens to have when he comes, we said: "Never mind going on; send the ship home, or sink it; we will abide here and roam no more."

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At the end of the funicular there was still more hill to climb, and one could either do it afoot or be carried up in a hammock. Most of us young people did it afoot, allowing enfeebled men of eighteen and twenty the comfort of the hammocks. As they passed us we commented on their luxury, and made it otherwise interesting for them. It was pleasant enough walking and there was a good deal to see. The foliage was interesting, ranging as it did from the palm of the tropics to the pine of the northern forests. You can raise anything in Madeira, except money—there is not much of that, and things are cheap accordingly. No doubt it is the same in heaven, but I am getting ahead of my story.

We lunched at the top, in a hotel that was once a convent and still has iron-barred windows, but before luncheon we walked out for the view to a little platform which seems when you step out on it to be hanging in the air, so that you involuntarily hesitate and reach for something firm. All the distance you have climbed in the ox-sleds, by the funicular, and afoot drops away perpendicularly at your feet, and you are looking down, straight down, and still down, to what seem fairy tree-tops and a wonderful picture valley through which a tumbling ribbon of water goes foaming to the sea. It is the most sudden and dramatic bit of scenery I know.

We had delicious strawberries at our luncheon—strawberries that required no sugar—and a good many other kinds of fruit—some of which we could identify and some of which the Reprobates discussed in their usual unrestrained fashion, calling one another names that were at once descriptive and suited to the subject in hand. There were pomegranates and guavas and comquats and loquats; also there was Madeira wine, of course, and hereafter I am going to know something about native wines in the lands we visit before I begin business—that is, wholesale business. But never mind—let it go; it is a good deal like sherry, only it tastes better, and the Reprobates said—but as I mentioned before, let it go—it really does not matter now.

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We descended that long, paved, greased hill in toboggans that are nice, comfortable baskets on runners. They hold two and three, according to size, and you get in and two men take you in hand, and away you go. You go, too. A distance of two miles has been made in three minutes in those things. I don't think we went as fast as that, but it was plenty fast enough for the wild delight of it, and if I had money enough and time enough I would go there and slide and slide away the eternal summer days.

It was a swift panorama of flower and sunlit wall and distant sea—the soft air rushing by. Now and then we would whirl past a carrier—a

brown, bent man with one of those great sleds on his shoulders, toiling with it up the long, steep hill. They were marvellously picturesque, those carriers, but I wish they wouldn't do it. It takes some of the joy out of the slide to feel that somebody is going to carry your toboggan up the hill on his back.

We shot out on the level at last, and started on a little tour of the town. Laura and I wandered away alone, and stopped at little shops, and tried to transact business, and finally bought a clay water-jug for a hundred and twenty reis, which is to say sixpence, which is to say twelve cents. Money in Madeira is calculated in reis, just as it is in the Azores, and the sound of the word suddenly recalled the visit of the *Quaker City* "Pilgrims" to those islands, and the memory of Blucher's disastrous dinner-party.

But they will take anything that looks like money in Madeira, rather than miss a trade, and when a person who has been accustomed to calculating dollars and cents is suddenly confronted with problems of reis and pence and shillings and half-crowns and francs, he goes to pieces on his money tables and wonders why a universal currency would not be a good thing.

All the streets in Madeira have that dainty cobble paving, and all the sidewalks are laid in the exquisite mosaic which makes it a joy to follow them. The keynote of the island is invitation. Even a jail we saw is of a sort to make crime attractive. I hasten to add that we examined only the outside.

We were adopted by a guide presently—a boy whose only English was the statement that he could speak it—and were directed quietly but firmly toward places where things are sold. We tried to impress upon him in such languages as we could think of that we did not want to buy anything, and that we did not care much for a guide, anyway. We said we wanted to see bougainvillea—a lot of bougainvillea, in a great mass together, as we had seen it from the ship. He nodded excitedly and led us away, but it was only to a place where they sold embroideries which we did not care for, though they were cheap enough, dear knows, as everything is cheap here—everything native at least.

When our guide grasped the fact at last that we did not want to do any buying, he became sad, weakened gradually, dropped behind, accepted a penny, and turned us over to another guide of the same sort. We wandered about Funchal in that way until it was time to embark, adopted by one guide after another, and abandoned to our fate when they realized that we were not worth anything in the way of commissions from the merchants and very little in any form. We did get a guide at last who knew where the bougainvillea house was, but it was too late then to go to it. It did not matter; there were flowers enough everywhere and bougainvillea on many walls.

The place did not lose its charm with close acquaintance. It seemed entirely unspoiled. We saw no suggestion of modern architecture or European innovation—no blot anywhere, except a single motor-car—the only one, I believe, in Funchal. There is but one fly in the ointment of Madeira comfort—the beggars. They begin to beg before they can walk, and they call, "Penny! Penny!" before they can lisp the sacred name of "Mamma." However, one good thing has come of our experience with them. They have prepared us for beggars elsewhere. We are hardened, now—at least, we think we are. The savor of pity has gone out of us.

But I was speaking of architecture. Without knowing anything on the subject, I should say that the architecture of Madeira is a mixture of Spanish and Moorish, like that of Mexico. Only it is better than anything in Mexico. From the ship, the stucco, tile-roofed city is flawless; and as we steam away, and night comes down and lights break out and become a jewelled necklace along the water's edge, our one regret is that we are leaving it all behind.

Good-bye to Madeira—a gentle place, a lovely place—a place to live and die in.



**TWO MEN TAKE YOU IN HAND AND
AWAY YOU GO**

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DID A SORT OF FANDAROLE

VII

A DAY TO OURSELVES

We had another full day at sea, after Madeira—a day of reflection and reminiscence, for each of us had some special joy to recall. Perhaps that of the Diplomat was as picturesque as any. He told it to me privately, but a thing like that should not be allowed to remain concealed forever; besides, the young lady is in darkest Germany now and does not know English, anyway. That last-named fact was responsible for the incident.

The Diplomat had just landed at the bottom of the slide, he said, when two of our party—Americans—came along with a bright-faced and quite stylish-looking German girl who was not having a very good time because they knew no German and she no English. It was clearly a case for the Diplomat, who is an unattached person, full of the joy of travel and familiar with all languages, living and dead.

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He had not been presented to the young German person on the ship, but he had seen her now and again in company with an older, rather plain-looking woman, very likely her maid. No doubt the young woman was a countess, or a baroness, or at all events a person of station and importance. Politely enough he proffered his services as escort, was accepted, and the two set out gayly to enjoy the halcyon Madeira afternoon.

She was a most sociable companion, the Diplomat said, ready for anything that resembled a good time. They visited places of interest; they dropped into little shops; he bought flowers for her; they had refreshments here and there—dainty dishes and pleasant Madeira wines—keeping up, meantime, their merry German clatter. They became quite gay, in fact, and whenever they met any of the ship party, which they did frequently enough, the Diplomat, as he confessed to me, became rather vain and showy—set his hat on one side and did a sort of fandarole, accompanying his step with operatic German airs. At such moments she even took his hand and entered into the spirit of the occasion.

Altogether it was a charming experience, and they were both sorry when it was time to return to the ship. Arriving there they were met by the older, plain-looking woman, who greeted his companion with words that were pleasant enough, gentle enough, but which partook of the nature of a command. Then it dawned upon the Diplomat; it was not the older, plain-looking woman who was the maid!

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"I would have done it just the same," he explained to me in a dark corner of the deck, after dinner, "just the same, of course, being a gentleman, only under the circumstances I might have cut out the cakewalk and the music."

A ship is a curious place altogether; a place of narrow limits and close contact, yet full of subterranean depths from which surprises may develop at any moment. The Chief Engineer, to whom I sit next at meals, often quotes meditatively,

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"A ship it is a funny thing,
It sails upon the sea—"

The Chief does not recall the rest of the stanza, but we all admit the truth of what he does remember. Ship life on the whole

is not like other life; ship characteristics do not altogether resemble those on land.

Take the "Porpoise," for instance. I have no doubt that the Porpoise on land is a most excellent and industrious business man, more or less absorbed in the daily round of his ventures—a happy-hearted contented Hebrew person, fairly quiet (it doesn't seem possible, but I am willing to believe it), on the whole a good citizen, satisfied if his name appears now and then in the local paper, when he gets in some new line of goods or makes an improvement on his home.

But on shipboard the Porpoise is just—a porpoise. He is fat, as his name implies, and describes revolutions of the ship, blowing constantly. At no time of day and in no part of the ship will you be safe from the Porpoise. He is from an interior town—an unimportant town, by its census and location, but it has become important on this vessel.

He has instructed us upon other subjects, too. Nothing is too complicated, or too deep, or too abstruse for the Porpoise. He will attack any question at sight, and he will puff and spout and describe circles and wallow in his oratory, and follow his audience about until he has swept the deck clean. Yet we love that Porpoise, in spite of everything. He is so happy and harmless and gentle. It is only because he is on a ship that he is a bore.

Also, we love the "Mill." The Mill is a woman—a good woman—one of the kindest souls on earth, I suspect, and her mouth is her warrant for her name. It goes all the time, but it does not deal with important things. Indeed, nothing is too unimportant for her hopper, and she grinds exceeding small. Just now, for an hour or so, she has been explaining that she did not sleep very well last night, and minutely cataloguing the reasons why. She will keep it up for another hour, and then if somebody hasn't dropped her overboard she will dig up something else of equal value and go right on, refreshed and rejoicing in the consciousness of well-doing.

The Mill would not act this way at home—she would not have time. It is only because she is on a ship where everybody is idle and irresponsible and "different," and likely to be peculiar. As Laura, age fourteen, said to me to-day—paraphrasing the words of the old Quaker spinster to her sister, "I think everybody on this ship is peculiar except thee and me, and sometimes I think *thee* is a little peculiar." That expresses the situation, and on the whole we enjoy it. We are like the little boy whose reputation for being a strange child did not interfere with his happiness. "Gee, ain't it great to be crazy!" was his favorite remark, and whatever we may be on this ship, we are content with the conditions, and would not change them, even if we could.



THEN IT DAWNED UPON THE DIPLOMAT

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VIII

OUT OF THE SUNRISE

I have seen the shores of Africa and Spain! The bath steward came very early, this morning—earlier than usual. He had his reasons, but I had forgotten and was sleepy, so I said "No," and tried to doze again. Then all at once from the deck there arose a swell of music—rich, triumphant music—an orchestration of "Holy, Holy, Holy"—such a strain as one might expect to hear if the eternal gates should swing ajar. I remembered, then; it was Sunday morning—but there was something more. Land! The land that lies on the other side of the ocean!

In a moment I was at my port-hole, which is on the starboard side. We had changed our course and were bearing more to the north. Directly in front of me the sun was rising. The east was a mass of glowing outlines—golden clouds and hill-tops mingled. It was the Orient—that is what it was—the Far East; the sun rising over Africa! Something got hold of me then—I hardly know what. Certainly I was not unhappy; but then it was all so sudden and spectacular, and I had waited for it so long.

I do not remember how I got dressed; only for a moment at a time could I drag myself away from that port-hole. The sun rose higher—the outlines of Morocco became more distinct, but they did

not lose their wonder of color—their glory of purple and gold. I realized now that the prospectuses had not exaggerated the splendor of the East, even on their gorgeous covers—that they could not do so if they tried. By the time I was on deck we were running close enough to the lofty shores to make out villages here and there and hill-top towers—the habitation and the watch-towers of the Moors. How eagerly and minutely one scanned these with the glass to distinguish the first sign of Oriental life—to get a glimpse of the reality of what had so long been but a romance and a dream. It was those people who had conquered Spain and built the Alhambra.

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What was going on inside those curious flat-topped houses and those towers? Marvellous matters, no doubt, that had to do with nargileh and magic and scimiters and flying carpets and scarcely imperceptible nods to the executioner who always hovered among the draperies in the background. The Reprobates appeared and declared there was no romance anywhere in sight and never had been in that direction; that Morocco was just a place of wretched government and miserable people whose chief industries were laziness and crime. There are moments when I would be willing for this ship to sink to properly punish the Reprobates.

The Diplomat was better. He said there was as much romance and magic over there as ever, and more executioners; and the Diplomat knows. We would pass Ceuta, the African Pillar of Hercules, before long, he told us. The other pillar was the Rock of Gibraltar, which lay still farther ahead.

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We went over to the other side of the ship presently, for we were overlooking the Bay of Trafalgar, where a little more than a hundred years ago Horatio Nelson died, after convincing the combined navies of France and Spain that it required something besides numbers to win a victory. Nelson went into that fight with thirty-two vessels, little and big, against forty of the combined fleets. He hoisted the signal, "England expects every man to do his duty," and every man did it. One half of the combined fleets struck their colors, and the rest made off, or sank, and with them went Napoleon Bonaparte's scheme for invading England.

We looked out on the placid water, laughing in the Sunday morning sunlight, and tried to imagine those vanished fleets—stately ships of the line with their banks of guns; smart frigates and rakish cutters—all that splendid concourse of black hull and towering canvas, and then the boom and the flash of guns—the conflict and the glory of that morning so long ago. This much was real, and it was romance; not even the Reprobates could brush away the bloom.

The captain came by and pointed ahead to Tarifa, where the Barbary pirates a long time ago levied tribute on the merchants and added the word "tariff" to the dictionary. Their old castle has fallen into ruin, but the old industry still thrives, under the same name. Then we went back to starboard again for a look at Tangier, where, alas, we were not to land, because Algiers had been provided for us instead.



BUT NOW GIBRALTAR, THE CROUCHING LION OF TRAFALGAR, HAD RISEN FROM THE SEA

But now Gibraltar, the crouching lion of Trafalgar, had risen from the sea. The English call it "The Rock," and that is just what it looks like—a big boulder shaped like a sleeping lion—its head toward Spain, its tail toward Africa. I think most persons have an idea that the Rock lies lengthwise, east and west—I know I thought so. Instead it lies north and south, and is really a stone finger pointed by Spain toward the African coast. It is Great Britain's pride—it has cost enough for her to be proud of it—and is her chief stronghold.

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About it are gathered her warships of to-day—dark, low-browed fighters like our own—any one of them able to send to the bottom a whole fleet like Nelson's and the combined fleets besides.

They look quiet enough, ugly enough, and drowsy enough, now. So does Gibraltar, but it is just as well, perhaps, not to twist the Lion's tail. We had no intention of doing so, and I don't see why they were so afraid of us. They wouldn't let us visit their shooting-galleries—the galleries where they keep their big guns, I mean; they wouldn't let us climb the Rock on the outside; they wouldn't even let us visit an old Moorish castle which stands about half-way up. Perhaps they thought we would spike their guns, or steal the castle, or blow up the Rock with infernal machines.

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They did let us take carriages and drive along the main streets of the city, through a park or two and out to Europa Point, I think that was the place. We were interested, but not enthusiastic. After Madeira, one does not go mad over the beauties of Gibraltar. The vehicles were funny little affairs—Spanish, I suppose; the driver spoke the English of Gibraltar—an English which nobody outside of Gibraltar, and only a few people there, can understand; the road was good; the flowers

—bluebells, yellow daisies, dandelions and heliotrope—all wild—were profuse and lavishly in bloom everywhere along the way. Had we come direct to Gibraltar, we should have raved over these things like enough, and we did rave a little, but it was a sort of placid ecstasy. Military hospitals and barracks and officers' quarters are not the kind of scenery to excite this crowd.

It was different, though, when we got to Europa Point. There, on one side rose the great Rock abruptly from the sea, while before us stretched the Mediterranean, all blue and emerald and iridescent, like a great fire-opal in the sun. It was our first glimpse of the water along whose shores began the history and the religions of more than half the world. "The grand object of all travel is to see the shores of the Mediterranean," said Dr. Johnson, and there were some of us who not until that moment, I think, fully grasped the fact that this object, this dream of a lifetime, was about to be accomplished.

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The Patriarch forgot the Phœnicians for a little and began to talk about Athens and of Mars Hill from which St. Paul had preached, though he added presently that it was quite certain St. Paul's grandfather had been a Phœnician; the Diplomat quoted something about his soul being "far away sailing on the Vesuvian Bay"; the Porpoise began to meditate audibly how far it was in a straight line to Jerusalem; the Mill ground a quiet little grist about flannels she expected to wear in Egypt; even the Reprobates were subdued and thoughtful in the face of this watery theatre that had held the drama of the ancient world.

We drove back to the town, separated, and wandered about where fancy led us. Laura and I had a little business with the American consul, who is an example of what an American consul ought to be: a gentleman who is a consul by profession and not by party favor, being the third Sprague in line who has held the post. Through him we met a most interesting person, one who brought us in direct contact, as it were, with that old first party of Pilgrims to make the Oriental cruise. Michael Beñunes was his name, guide and courier to Mark Twain and his party, forty-two years ago.

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Beñunes must have been a handsome creature in those days; he is a handsome creature still—tall, finely featured, with flowing black hair—carrying his sixty-five years as lightly as wind-flowers—gay, voluble, enthusiastic—ready for the future, glorying in the past. He took us to a coffee-house and entertained us, and held us enthralled for an hour or more with his tide of eloquence and information. He told us of the trip he had made through Spain with the "Innocents"; of many other trips in lands near and far. He told us of the things in Gibraltar we had not seen—of the galleries and the monkey-pit; also, of the wonderful monkeys themselves who inhabit the Rock and are intelligent almost beyond belief—who refrain from speaking English only because they are afraid of having red coats and caps put on them and being made into soldiers.

Gibraltar was once a part of Africa, according to tradition, and the monkeys remained on the Rock when the separation took place. But guides know that a subterranean passage from the bottomless monkey-pit connects the Rock with Africa to this day; also that the monkeys travel back and forth through it and keep posted on warfare and new inventions, in preparation for a time when they shall be ready to regain their lost empire, and that sometimes at dusk, if one lies hidden and remains very quiet, he may overhear them discuss these things, as in the failing twilight they "walk together, holding each other's tails."

We could have listened all night to Beñunes, for he made the old time and still older traditions real to us. And perhaps Beñunes would have talked all night, for he declared—and we believed him—that he could talk for five hours without a break. Naturally I expected to pay the score in the coffee-house and to make some special acknowledgment to Beñunes for his time. Not at all; he called the waiter with a flourish, threw down more than enough money and told him to keep the change, regretting volubly that we could not partake further of his hospitality. We should have the freedom of the city—of everything—he said, when we came again. Ah me! I suspect there is only one Beñunes, and that he belongs to a time which will soon vanish away.



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WE COULD HAVE LISTENED ALL NIGHT TO BEÑUNES

We went through the town—almost a closed town, because it was Sunday, and not an inviting town, I think, at best. Here and there were narrow streets that wound up or down, yet were only mildly seductive. But it is a cosmopolitan town—the most cosmopolitan town on earth, perhaps. Every kind of money is in use there—every language is spoken.

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"Picture postals twelve for a quarter!" was the American cry that greeted us at every turn. If we had been English it would have been "twelve for a shilling," or if German "*zwölf für ein Mark*," no doubt. They do not mistake nationalities in Gibraltar—they have all kinds to study from. Moors we saw—black, barelegged, and gayly attired—a taste of the Orient we were about to enter—and if there were any nationalities we did not see in this motley-thronged Mediterranean gateway I do not recall them now. We bought a few postal cards, and two fans with bull-fights on them, but unlike the *Quaker City* "Pilgrims" we bought no gloves.

I did look at certain stylish young creatures who passed now and then, and wondered if one of them might not be the bewitching saleslady who had sold those gloves. And then I remembered: she would not be young and bewitching any more; she would be carrying the burden and the record of many years. Unlike the first "Pilgrims," too, we did not hear the story of the "Queen's Chair." That was worn out, at last, and exists to-day only in the guide-books. We drove over to Spanish Town by and by, but it was still less inviting over there, so we drove back, passed out through the great gates which close every evening at sunset, and waited at the pier for the little tender, for it was near evening and we were through with Gibraltar—ready for the comfort of the ship.

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It is a curious place—a place of a day's interest for the traveller—of enormous interest to the military world. For two hundred years it has been maintained with English blood and treasure, until it has become the most costly jewel of that lavish kingdom. There are those to-day—Englishmen—who say it is not worth the price—that it is no longer worth any price—and they advocate returning it to Spain. No army could take it, and no army wants to take it—nothing could be gained by taking it any more. But it is one of England's precious traditions, and it will take another two hundred years of vast maintenance before England will let that tradition go.

There were papers on the tender, London and Paris journals, but the only American news was that Congress had been advised against tinkering with the tariff. That did not interest us. Had we not been face to face with the headquarters of tariff that very morning, and heard the story of how that noble industry was born? This later item was mere detail.

Back on the ship, looking at the lion couchant while the twilight falls and the lights come out along its base. There is no harshness now. The lion's skin has become velvet—it is a veritable lion asleep among fireflies. We lift anchor and steam slowly into the Mediterranean. The lion loses its form, becomes a dark wedge, the thin edge toward Spain. Night deepens as we creep farther around; the wedge shortens, contracts to a cone, a pyramid—the level sea changes to a desert. The feeling somehow grows that Africa has reclaimed its own—the Lion of England has become a pyramid of the sands.

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IX

EARLY MEDITERRANEAN EXPERIENCES

Our first day in the Mediterranean was without a flaw. It was a quiet, sunlit day—just pleasantly warm—the ship steady as a rock on that luminous, level sea. No wonder the ancients did not want to leave these placid tides and venture out upon the dark tossing Atlantic which they could see foaming just beyond the Pillars of Hercules. No wonder they peopled those hungry wastes with monsters and evil spirits. Here, on this tranquil sea, there were no unfamiliar dangers. The summer shores that shut them in held all their world—a golden world of romance wherein gods mingled with the affairs of men; where fauns and hamadryads flitted through the groves; where nereids and tritons sported along the waves.

We have all day and night to get to Algiers—now less than three hundred miles away—so we are just loafing along making wide circles—"to test the compass," one of the officers said a while ago. I did not know they had to test compasses, and I'm rather doubtful about the matter, still. I suspect that officer is enjoying himself quietly at our expense. I suspect it, because he is the same officer who told the Credulous One the other day when the ship was rolling heavily, that the jarring, beating sound we heard every now and then was made by the ship running over whales. The noise was really made by the screw lifting out of the water, and pounding the surface with its blades, but the Credulous One, who is a trusting soul—a stout lady of middle age and gentle spirit—believed the whale story and repeated it around the ship. She said how many whales there must be down here, and pitied them whenever she heard that cruel sound.

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That officer came along again, a moment ago, and told us that the mountains nearest are called the Sierra de Gata, which sounds true. Somewhere beyond them lies Grenada and the Alhambra, and there, too, is the old, old city of Cordova, capital of the Moorish kings, and for three hundred years one of the greatest centres of commerce in the world. But these things are only history. What we care for on a day like this is invention—romance—and remembering that somewhere beyond that snowy rim Don Quixote and Sancho wandered through the fields of fancy and the woods of dream makes us wish that we might anchor along those shores and follow that vagrant quest.

I drifted into the smoking-room and mentioned these things to the Reprobates, but they did not seem interested. They had the place all to themselves and the Doctor was dozing in one corner—

between naps administering philosophy to the Colonel and the Apostle, who were engaged in their everlasting game of piquet. He roused up when I came in to deal out a few comforting remarks.

"What do they care for scenery, or romance," he said, "or anything else except to gamble all day? All you've got to do is to look at them to get an inventory of their characters. Just look at the Colonel for instance; did you ever see a better picture of Captain Kidd? Made his money out of publishing the Bible without reading it and thinks he must go to the Holy Land now to square himself. And the Apostle, there—look at him! Look at his shape—why, he's likely to blow up, any time. Some people think these are patients of mine. Nice advertisement, a pair like that!"

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I thought the Doctor a trifle hard on his fellow-Reprobates. I thought the Colonel rather handsome, and I had seen him studying his guide-book more than once. As for the Apostle, I said that I never really felt that he was about to blow up; that appearances were often deceitful and very likely there was no immediate danger.

They were not inclined to be sociable—the Colonel and the Apostle. They merely intimated that we might go away, preferably to a place not down on the ship's itinerary, and kept on with their eternal game.

It is curious, the fascination of that game, piquet—still more curious how anybody can ever learn to play it. In fact nobody ever does learn it. There are no rules—no discoverable rules. It is purely an inspirational game, if one may judge from this exhibition of it. After the cards are dealt out, the Colonel picks up his hand, jerks his hat a little lower over his eyes, skins through his assortment, and says "Huh!" At the same time the Apostle puts on his holiest look—chin up, eye drooped, bland and child-like—examines his collection, and says, "Goddlemighty!"

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Then they play—that is, they go through the motions. The Colonel puts down a handful of cards and says "Eight." The Apostle never looks at them, but puts down a bigger handful of his own and says "Eleven." Then the Colonel puts down another lot and says "Fourteen." Then the Apostle lays down the balance of his stock and the Colonel says, "Hell, Joe," and they set down some figures. When they are through, the Colonel owes the Apostle seven dollars.

Yes, it is a curious game, and would make the Colonel a pauper in time, if nature did not provide other means of adjustment. After the Apostle has his winnings comfortably put away and settled into place, the Colonel takes out a new five-dollar gold piece, regards it thoughtfully, turns it over, reads the date, and comments on its beauty. Then suddenly he slaps it down on the table under his hand.

"Match you, Joe," he says, "match you for five!"

But the Apostle is wary. He smiles benignly while he turns his face from temptation.

"No you don't," he says, "never again."

The Colonel slaps the coin down again, quite smartly.

"Just once, Joe," he wheedles; "just once, for luck!"

The Apostle strokes his chubby, child-like countenance with the tips of his fingers, still looking away—his eyes turned heavenward.

"I won't do it, I tell you. No, now go on away. I told you yesterday I wouldn't match you again—ever."

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"Just once, Joe—just this one time."

"I won't do it."

The Apostle's attitude is still resolute, but there is a note of weakening in his voice and his hand is working almost imperceptibly toward his pocket.

"Just once more, Joe, just for five dollars—one turn."

The Apostle's hand is in his pocket.

"Now, I tell you," he says, "I'll match you this one time, and never again."

"All right, Joe, just this one time, for luck; come on, now."

The coins go down together, and when they are uncovered the Colonel takes both, always. Then the Apostle jerks up his cap, jams it on, and starts for the deck.

"Hold on, Joe; just once more—just for luck."

"You go to hell, will you?"

This is the programme daily with but slight variation. Sometimes the Apostle wins less than seven dollars—sometimes he loses more than five; but he always does win at piquet and he always does lose at matching. Thus do the unseen forces preserve the balance of exchange.

We crossed over and came in sight of the mountains of Algeria during the afternoon, and all the rest of this halcyon day we skirted the African shore, while Laura and I and two other juveniles kept a game of shuffleboard going on the after deck. To-night there is to be another grand dinner

X

THE DIVERTING STORY OF ALGIERS

This is a voyage of happy mornings. It was morning—just sunrise—when we met the American fleet homeward bound; it was morning when we caught the first glimpse of Madeira and steamed into the harbor of Funchal; the shores of Morocco—our first glimpse of the Orient—came out of the sunrise, and it was just sunrise this morning when I looked out of my port-hole on the blue harbor and terraced architecture of Algiers. And the harbor of Algiers *is* blue, and the terraced architecture is white, or creamy, and behind it are the hills of vivid green. And there are palms and cypress-trees, and bougainvillea and other climbing vines. Viewed from the ship it is a picture city, and framed in the port-hole it became a landscape miniature of wondrous radiance and vivid hues.

One of our passengers, a happy-hearted, elderly Hebrew soul, came along the promenade just outside my state-room and surveyed the vision through his glass. Presently he was joined by his comfortable, good-natured wife.

"Vat you get me up so early for, Sol?" she said.

He handed her his glass, his whole face alive with joy of the moment—fairly radiant it was.

"I yust couldn't help it!" he said. "Dot sunrising and dot harbor and dot city all make such a beautiful sight." [Pg 63]

A beautiful sight it was, and it had the added charm of being our first near approach to the Orient. For Algiers is still the Orient, though it has been a French colony for nearly a hundred years. The Orient and the Occident have met here, and the Occident has conquered, but the Orient is the Orient still, and will be so long as a vestige of it remains.

The story of Algiers, like that of every Mediterranean country, has been a motley one, and bloody enough, of course. The Romans held it for nearly five hundred years; the Vandals followed them, and these in turn were ousted by the Arabs, about the year 700 A.D. Blood flowed during each of these changes, and betweentimes. There was always blood—rivers of it—lakes of it—this harbor has been red with it time and again.

It did not stop flowing with the Arabian conquest—not by any means. Those Arabs were barbarians and robbers—Bedouins on land and pirates on the sea. They were the friends of no nation or people, and when business was dull outside, they would break out among themselves and indulge in pillage and slaughter at home for mere pastime. About the time Columbus was discovering America they were joined by the Moors and Jews who were being driven out of Spain and who decided to take up piracy as a regular business.

Piratic industry, combined with slavery, flourished for a matter of four centuries after that; then Commodore Decatur with a handful of little vessels met the Algerian fleet off Carthage on the 20th of June, 1815. Decatur was a good hand with pirates. He went to work on that fleet and when he got through there wasn't enough of it left to capture a banana-boat. Then he appeared before Algiers and sent a note to the Dey demanding the immediate release of all Americans in slavery. The Dey replied that as a mere matter of form he hoped the American commander would agree to sending a small annual tribute of powder. [Pg 64]

"If you take the powder you must take the balls with it," was Decatur's reply, and thus the young American republic, then only about thirty years old, was first to break down the monstrous institutions of piracy and enslavement which for more than a thousand years had furnished Algerian revenues.

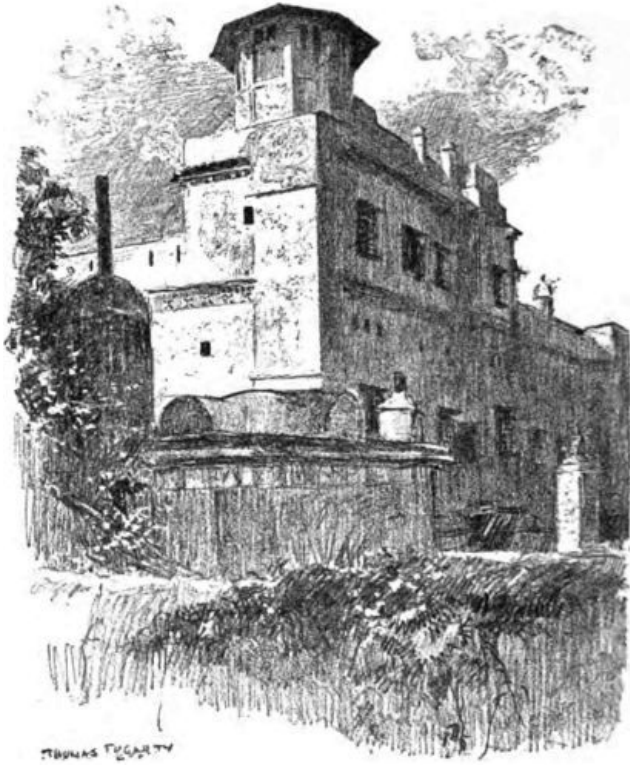
One Hussein (history does not mention his other name, but it was probably Ali Ben) was the last Dey of Algiers, and his memory is not a credit to his country's story. He was cruel and insolent; also, careless in his statements.

Piracy under A. B. Hussein flourished with a good deal of its old vigor, though I believe he was rather careful about plundering American vessels. Hussein was also a usurer and the principal creditor of some Jewish merchants who had a claim against France. The claim was in litigation, and Hussein, becoming impatient, demanded payment from the French king. As France had been the principal sufferer from Hussein's pirates, it was not likely that the king would notice this demand. Soon after, in the Dey's palace, the Kasba, at a court function the Dey asked of the French consul why his master had remained silent. [Pg 65]

"The King of France does not correspond with the Dey of Algiers," was the haughty reply, whereupon Hussein struck the consul on the cheek with his fan, and said a lot of unpleasant things of both king and consul.

That was the downfall of Algiers. A blockade was established by the French, and three years later

the French army of invasion marched in. Fifteen hundred guns, seventeen ships of war, and fifty million francs fell into the hands of France, as spoil of war. Algiers was no longer the terror of the seas. Over six hundred thousand Christian people had suffered the horrors of Algerian bondage, but with that July day, 1830, came the end of this barbarism, since which time Algiers has acquired a new habit—the habit of jumping at the crack of the French whip.



"THAT IS THE KASBA"

I may say here in passing that we were to hear a good deal of that incident of the Dey, the French consul, and the fan. It was in the guide-books in various forms, and as soon as I got dressed and on deck one of our conductors—himself a former resident of Algiers—approached me with:

"Do you see that tower up there on the hill-top? That is the Kasba. It was in that tower that Hussein, the last Dey of Algiers, struck the French consul three times on the cheek with his fan—an act which led to the conquest of Algiers by France."

I looked at the tower with greatly renewed interest, and brought it up close to me with my glass. Then he pointed out other features of the city, fair and beautiful in the light of morning: the mosque; the governor's palace; the Arab quarter; the villas of wealthy Algerines. He drifted away, then, and the Diplomat approached. He also had been in Algiers once before. He said:

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"Do you see that tower there on the hill-top? That is the Kasba. It was in that tower that Hussein, the last Dey of Algiers, struck the French consul three times on the cheek with his fan—an act which led to the conquest of Algiers by France."

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He went away, and I looked over the ship's side at the piratical-looking boatmen who were gathering to the attack. They were a picturesque lot—their costumes purely Oriental—their bare feet encased in shoes right out of the *Arabian Nights* pictures. I was just turning to remark these things to one of the Reprobates, the Colonel, when he said:

"Do you see that tower up there on the hill-top?"

"Colonel," I said, "you've been reading your guide-book, and I saw you the other day with a book called *Innocents Abroad*."

He looked a little dazed.

"Well," he said, "what of it?"

"Nothing; only that tower seems to be another 'Queen's Chair.' I've been to it several times in the guide-book myself, and I've already had it twice served up by hand. Let's don't talk about it any more, until we've been ashore and had a look at it."

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ONE DOES NOT HURRY THE ORIENT—ONE WAITS ON

WE ENTER THE ORIENT

We went ashore, in boats to the dock, then we stepped over some things, and under some things and walked through the custom-house (they don't seem to bother us at these places) and there were our carriages (very grand carriages—quite different from the little cramped jiggle-wagons of Gibraltar) all drawn up and waiting. And forthwith we found ourselves in the midst of the Orient and the Occident—a busy, multitudinous life, pressing about us, crowding up to our carriages to sell us postal cards and gaudy trinkets, babbling away in mongrel French and other motley and confused tongues.

What a grand exhibition it was to us who had come up out of the Western Ocean, only half believing that such scenes as this—throngings of sun-baked people in fantastic dress—could still exist anywhere in the world! We were willing to sit there and look at them, and I kept my camera going feverishly, being filled with a sort of fear, I suppose, that there were no other such pictures on earth and I must catch them now or never.

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We were willing to linger, but not too long. We got our first lesson in Oriental deliberation right there. Guides had been arranged for and we must wait for them before we could start the procession. They did not come promptly. Nothing comes promptly in the Orient. *One does not hurry the Orient—one waits on it.* That is a maxim I struck out on the anvil, white-hot, that first hour in Algiers, and I am satisfied it is not subject to change. The sun poured down on us; the turbaned, burnoused, barefooted selling-men rallied more vociferously; the Reprobates invented new forms of profanity to fit Eastern conditions, and still the guides did not come.

We watched some workmen storing grain in warehouses built under the fine esplanade that flanks the water-front, and the picture they made consoled us for a time. They were Arabs of one tribe or another and they wore a motley dress. All had some kind of what seemed cumbersome head-gear—a turban or a folded shawl, or perhaps an old gunny-sack made into a sort of hood with a long cape that draped down behind. A few of them had on thick European coats over their other paraphernalia.

We wondered why they should dress in this voluminous fashion in such a climate, and then we decided that the wisdom of the East had prompted the protection of that head-gear and general assortment of wardrobe against the blazing sun. Our guides came drifting in by and by, wholly unexcited and only dreamily interested in our presence, and the procession moved. Then we ascended to the streets above—beautiful streets, and if it were not for the Oriental costumes and faces everywhere we might have been in France.

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French soldiers were discoverable all about; French groups were chatting and drinking coffee and other beverages at open-air cafés; fine French equipages rolled by with ladies and gentlemen in fashionable French dress. Being carnival-time, the streets were decorated with banners and festoons in the French colors. But for the intermixture of fezzes and turbans and the long-flowing garments of the East we would have said, "After all, this is not the Orient, it is France."

But French Algiers, "gay, beautiful, and modern as Paris itself" (the guide-book expression), is, after all, only the outer bulwark, or rather the ornate frame of the picture it encloses. That picture when you are fairly in the heart of it is as purely Oriental I believe as anything in the world to-day, and cannot have changed much since Mohammedanism came into power there a thousand years ago. But I am getting ahead too fast. We did not penetrate the heart of Algiers at once—only the outer edges.

We drove to our first mosque—a typical white-domed affair, plastered on the outside, and we fought our way through the beggars who got in front of us and behind us and about us, demanding "*sou-penny*" at least it sounded like that—a sort of French-English combination, I suppose, which probably has been found to work well enough to warrant its general adoption.

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We thought we had seen beggars at Madeira, and had become hardened to them. We *had* become hardened toward the beggars, but not to our own offerings. One can only stand about so much punishment—then he surrenders. It is easier and quicker to give a sou-penny, or a dozen of them, than it is to be bedevilled and besmirched and bewildered by these tatterdemalion Arabs who grab and cling and obstruct until one doesn't know whether he is in Algiers or Altoona, and wishes only to find relief and sanctuary. Evidently sight-seeing in the East has not become less strenuous since the days when the "Innocents" made their pilgrimage in these waters.

We found temporary sanctuary in the mosque, but it was not such as one would wish to adopt permanently. It was a bare, unkempt place, and they made us put on very objectionable slippers before we could step on their sacred carpets. This is the first mosque we have seen, so of course I am not a purist in the matter of mosques yet, but I am wondering if it takes dirt and tatters to make a rug sacred, and if half a dozen mangy, hungry-looking Arab priests inspire the regular attendants in a place like that with religious fervor.

They inspired me only with a desire to get back to the beggars, where I could pay sou-pennies for the privilege of looking at the variegated humanity and of breathing the open air. The guide-book

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says this is a poor mosque, but that is gratuitous information; I could have told that myself as soon as I looked at it. Anybody could.

We went through some markets after that, and saw some new kinds of flowers and fruit and fish, but they did not matter. I knew there were better things than these in Algiers, and I was impatient to get to them. I begrudged the time, too, that we put in on some public buildings, though a down-town palace of Ali Ben Hussein, the final Dey of Algiers—a gaudy wedding-cake affair, all fluting and frosting—was not without interest, especially when we found that the late Hussein had kept his seven wives there. It was a comparatively old building, built in Barbarossa times, the guide said, and now used only on certain official occasions. It is not in good taste, I imagine, even from the Oriental standpoint.

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But what we wanted, some of us at least, was to get out of these show-places and into the shops—the native shops that we could see stretching down the little side-streets. We could discover perfectly marvellous baskets and jugs and queer things of every sort fairly stuffing these little native selling-places, and there were always fascinating groups in those side-streets, besides men with big copper water-jars on their shoulders that looked a thousand years old—the jars, I mean—all battered and dented and polished by the mutations of the passing years.

I wanted one of those jars. I would have given more for one of those jars than for the mosque, including all the sacred rugs and the holy men, or for the palace of A. B. Hussein, and Hussein himself, with his seven wives thrown in for good measure. No, I withdraw that last item. I would not make a quick decision like that in the matter of the wives. I would like to look them over first. But, dear me, I forgot—they have been dead a long, long time, so let the offer stand. That is to say, I did want the jar and I was willing to do without the other things. There was no good opportunity for investment just then, and when I discussed the situation with Laura, who was in the carriage with me, she did not encourage any side-adventures. She was right, I suppose, for we were mostly on the move. We went clattering away through some pleasing parks, presently, and our drivers, who were French, cracked their whips at the Algerine rabble and would have run them down, I believe, with great willingness, and could have done so, perhaps, without fear of penalty. Certainly French soldiers are immune to retribution in Algiers. We saw evidence of that, and I would have resented their conduct more, if I had not remembered those days not so long ago of piracy and bondage, and realized that these same people might be murdering and enslaving yet but for the ever-ready whip of France.



MARVELLOUS BASKETS AND QUEER THINGS

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WE DID NOT CARE MUCH FOR PARKS

From one of the parks we saw above us an old, ruined, vine-covered citadel. Could we go up there? we asked; we did not care much for parks. Yes, we could go up there—all in good time. One does not hurry the Orient—one waits on it. We did go up there, all in good time, and then we found it was the Kasba, the same where had occurred the incident which had brought about the fall of Algiers.

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They did not show us the room where that historic spark had been kindled, but they did tell us the story again, and they showed us a view of the city and the harbor and the Atlas Mountains with snow on them, and one of our party asked if those mountains were in Spain. I would

have been willing to watch that view for the rest of the day had we had time. We did not have time. We were to lunch somewhere by and by, and meantime we were to go through the very heart, the very heart of hearts, of Algiers.

That is to say, the Arab quarter—the inner circle of circles where, so far as discoverable, French domination has not yet laid its hand. We left the carriages at a point somewhere below the Kasba, passed through an arch in a dead wall—an opening so low that the tallest of us had to stoop (it was a "needle's eye," no doubt)—and there we were. At one step we had come from a mingling of East and West to that which was eternally East with no hint or suggestion of contact with any outside world.

I should say the streets would average six to eight feet wide, all leading down hill. They were winding streets, some of them dim, and each a succession of stone steps and grades that meander down and down into a stranger labyrinth of life than I had ever dreamed of.

How weak any attempt to tell of that life seems! The plastered, blind-eyed houses with their mysterious entrances and narrow dusky stairways leading to what dark and sinister occupancy; the narrow streets bending off here and there that one might follow, who could say whither; the silent, drowsing, strangely garbed humanity that regarded us only with a vague scornful interest and did not even offer to beg; the low dim coffee-houses before which men sat drinking and contemplating—so inattentive to the moment's event that one might believe they had sat always thus, sipping and contemplating, and would so sit through time—how can I convey to the reader even a faint reflection of that unreal, half-awake world or conjure again the spell which, beholding it for the first time, one is bound to feel?

Everywhere was humanity which belonged only to the East—had always belonged there—had remained unchanged in feature and dress and mode of life since the beginning. The prophets looked and dressed just as these people look and dress, and their cities were as this city, built into steep hillsides, with streets a few feet wide, shops six feet square or less, the dreaming shopkeeper in easy reach of every article of his paltry trade.

I do not think it is a very clean place. Of course the matter of being clean is more or less a comparative condition, and what one nation or one family considers clean another nation or family might not be satisfied with at all. But judged by any standards I have happened to meet heretofore I should say the Arab quarter of Algiers was not overclean.

But it was picturesque. In whatever direction you looked was a picture. It was like nature untouched by civilization—it could not be unpicturesque if it tried. It was, in fact, just that—nature unspoiled by what we choose to call civilization because it means bustle, responsibility, office hours, and, now and then, clean clothes. And being nature, even the dirt was not unbeautiful.

Somebody has defined dirt as matter out of place. It was not out of place here. Nor rags. Some of these creatures were literally a mass of rags—rag upon rag—sewed on, tacked on, tied on, hung on—but they were fascinating. What is the use trying to convey all the marvel of it in words? One must see for himself to realize, and even then he will believe he has been dreaming as soon as he turns away.

In a little recess, about half-way down the hill, heeding nothing—wholly lost in reverie it would seem—sat two venerable, turbaned men. They had long beards and their faces were fine and dignified. These were holy men, the guides told us, and very sacred. I did not understand just why they were holy—a mere trip to Mecca would hardly have made them as holy as that, I should think—and nobody seemed to know the answer when I asked about it. Then I asked if I might photograph them, but I could see by the way our guide grabbed at something firm to sustain himself that it would be just as well not to press the suggestion.

I was not entirely subdued, however, and pretty soon hunted up further trouble. A boy came along with one of the copper water-jars—a small one—probably children's size. I made a dive for him and proposed buying it; that is, I held out money and reached for the jar. He probably thought I wanted a drink, and handed it to me, little suspecting my base design. But when he saw me admiring the jar itself and discussing it with Laura, who was waiting rather impatiently while our party was drifting away, he reached for it himself, and my money did not seem to impress him.

Now I suspect that those jars are not for sale. This one had a sort of brass seal with a number and certain cryptic words on it which would suggest some kind of record. As likely as not those jars are all licensed, and for that boy to have parted with his would have landed us both in a donjon keep. I don't know in the least what a donjon keep is, but it sounds like a place to put people for a good while, and I had no time then for experimental knowledge. Our friends had already turned a corner when we started on and we hurried to catch up, not knowing whether or



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THOMAS HEARNY

**ETERNALLY EAST
WITH NO HINT OF THE
OUTSIDE WORLD**

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not we should ever find them again.

We came upon them at last peering into an Arab school. The teacher, who wore a turban, sat cross-legged on a raised dais, and the boys, who wore fezzes—there were no girls—were grouped on either side—on a rug—their pointed shoes standing in a row along the floor. They were reciting in a chorus from some large cards—the Koran, according to the guide—and it made a queer clatter.

It must have struck their dinner-hour, just then, for suddenly they all rose, and each in turn made an obeisance to the teacher, kissed his hand, slipped on a pair of little pointed shoes and swarmed out just as any school-boy in any land might do. Only they were not so noisy or impudent. They were rather grave, and their curiosity concerning us was not of a frantic kind. They were training for the life of contemplation, no doubt; perhaps even to be holy men.

We passed little recesses where artisans of all kinds were at work with crude implements on what seemed unimportant things. We passed a cubby-hole where a man was writing letters in the curious Arabic characters for men who squatted about and waited their turn. We saw the pettiest merchants in the world—men with half a dozen little heaps of fruit and vegetables on the ground, not more than three or four poor-looking items in each heap. In a land where fruit and vegetables are the most plentiful of all products, a whole stock in trade like that could not be worth above three or four cents. I wonder what sort of a change they make when they sell only a part of one of those pitiful heaps.

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We were at the foot of the hill and out of that delightful Arab quarter all too soon. But we could not stay. Our carriages were waiting there, and we were in and off and going gaily through very beautiful streets to reach the hotel where we were to lunch.

Neither shall I dwell on the governor's palace which we visited, though it is set in a fair garden; nor on the museum, with the exception of just one thing. That one item is, I believe, unique in the world's list of curiosities. It is a plaster cast of the martyr Geronimo in the agony of death. The Algerines put Geronimo alive into a soft mass of concrete which presently hardened into a block, and was built into a fort. This was in 1569, and about forty years later a Spanish writer described the event and told exactly how that particular block could be located.

The fort stood for nearly three hundred years. Then in 1853 it was torn down, the block was identified and broken open, and an almost perfect mould of the dead martyr was found within. They filled the mould with plaster, and the result—a wonderful cast—lies there in the museum today, his face down as he died, hands and feet bound and straining, head twisted to one side in the supreme torture of that terrible martyrdom. It is a gruesome, fascinating thing, and you go back to look at it more than once, and you slip out between times for a breath of fresh air.

Remembering the story and looking at that straining figure, you realize a little of the need he must have known, and your lungs contract and you smother and hurry out to the sky and sun and God-given oxygen of life. He could not have lived long, but every second of consciousness must have been an eternity of horror, for there is no such thing as time except as to mode of measurement, and a measurement such as that would compass ages unthinkable. If I lived in Algiers and at any time should sprout a little bud of discontent with the present state of affairs—a little sympathy with the subjugated population—I would go and take a look at Geronimo, and forthwith all the discontent and the sympathy would pass away, and I would come out gloating in the fact that France can crack the whip and that we of the West can ride them down.

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We drove through the suburbs, the most beautiful suburbs I have ever seen in any country, and here and there beggars sprang up by the roadside and pursued us up hill and down, though we were going helter-skelter with fine horses over perfect roads. How these children could keep up with us I shall never know, or how a girl of not more than ten could carry a big baby and run full speed down hill, crying out "*Sou-penny*" at every step, never stumbling or falling behind. Of course, nobody could stand that. We flung her sou-pennies and she gathered them up like lightning and was after the rear carriages, unsatisfied and unabated in speed.

We passed a little lake with two frogs in it. They called to us, but they spoke only French or Algerian, so we did not catch the point of their remarks.

And now we drove home—that is, back to the fine streets near the water-front where we were to leave the carriages and wander about for a while, at will. That was a wild, splendid drive. We were all principals in a gorgeous procession that went dashing down boulevards and through villages, our drivers cracking their whips at the scattering people who woke up long enough to make a fairly spry dash for safety.

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Oh, but it was grand! The open barouches, the racing teams, the cracking whips! Let the Arab horde have a care. They sank unoffending vessels; they reddened the sea with blood; they enslaved thousands; they martyred Geronimo. Let the whips crack—drive us fast over them!

Still, I wasn't quite so savage as I sound. I didn't really wish to damage any of those Orientals. I only wanted to feel that I could do it and not have to pay a fine—not a big fine—and I invented the idea of taking a lot of those cheap Arabs to America for automobilists to use up, and save money.

When we got back to town, while the others were nosing about the shops, I slipped away and went up into the Arab quarter again, alone. It was toward evening now, and it was twilight in

there, and there was such a lot of humanity among which I could not see a single European face or dress. I realized that I was absolutely alone in that weird place and that these people had no love for the "Christian Dog."

I do not think I was afraid, but I thought of these things, and wondered how many years would be likely to pass before anybody would get a trace of what had become of me, if anything did become of me, and what that thing would be likely to be. Something free and handsome, no doubt—something with hot skewers and boiling oil in it, or perhaps soft concrete.

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Still, I couldn't decide to turn back, not yet. If the place had been interesting by daylight, it was doubly so, now, in the dusk, with the noiseless, hooded figures slipping by; the silent coffee-drinkers in the half gloom—leaning over now and then, to whisper a little gossip, maybe, but usually abstracted, indifferent. What could they ever have to gossip about anyway? They had no affairs. Their affairs all ended long ago.

I came to an open place by and by, a tiny square which proved to be a kind of second-hand market-place. I altered all my standards of economy there in a few minutes. They were selling things that the poorest family of the East Side of New York would pitch into the garbage-barrel. Broken bottles, tin cans, wretched bits of clothing, cracked clay water-jars that only cost a few cents new. I had bought a new one myself as I came along for eight cents. I began to feel a deep regret that I had not waited.

Adjoining the market was a gaming-place and coffee-house combined. Men squatting on the ground in the dusk played dominoes and chess wordlessly, never looking up, only sipping their coffee now and then, wholly indifferent to time and change and death and the hereafter. I could have watched them longer, but it would really be dark presently, and one must reach the ship by a certain hour. One could hardly get lost in the Arab quarter, for any downhill stair takes you toward the sea, but I did not know by which I had come, so I took the first one and started down.

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I walked pretty rapidly, and I looked over my shoulder now and then, because—well, never mind, I looked over my shoulder—and I would have been glad to see anything that looked like a Christian. Presently I felt that somebody was following me. I took a casual look and made up my mind that it was true. There were quantities of smoking, drinking people all about, but I didn't feel any safer for that. I stepped aside presently and stood still to let him pass. He did pass—a sinister looking Arab—but when I started on he stepped aside too, and got behind me again.

So I stopped and let him pass once more, and then it wasn't necessary to manoeuvre again, for a few yards ahead the narrow Arab defile flowed into the lighter French thoroughfare. He was only a pick-pocket, perhaps—there are said to be a good many in Algiers—but he was not a pleasant-looking person, and I did not care to cultivate him at nightfall in that dim, time-forgotten place.

I picked up some friends in the French quarter, and Laura and I drifted toward the ship, pressed by a gay crowd of merry-makers. It was carnival-time, as before mentioned, and the air was full of confetti, and the open-air cafés were crowded with persons of both sexes and every nation, drinking, smoking, and chattering, the air reeking with tobacco and the fumes of absinthe. Everywhere were the red and blue soldiers of France—Chasseurs d'Afrique and Zouaves—everywhere the fashionable French costumes—everywhere the French tongue. And amid that fashion and gayety of the West the fez and the turban and the long flowing robe of the Orient mingled silently, while here and there little groups of elderly, dignified sons of the desert stood in quiet corners, observing and thinking long thoughts. And this is the Algiers of to-day—the West dominant—the East a memory and a dream.

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XII

WE TOUCH AT GENOA

We lost some of our passengers—the wrong ones—at Algiers. They wanted to linger awhile in that lovely place, and no one could blame them. Only I wish that next time we are to lose passengers I might make the selection. I would pick, for instance—no, on the whole, I am not the one to do it. I am fond of all of our people. They are peculiar, most of them, as mentioned before—all of them, I believe, except me—but thinking it over I cannot decide on a single one that I would be willing to spare. Even the Porpoise— But we have grown to love the Porpoise, and the news that we are to lose him at Genoa saddens me.

We were pitched from Algiers to Genoa—not all at one pitch, though we should have liked that better. A gale came up out of the north and, great ship as the *Kurfürst* is, we stood alternately on our hind feet and our fore feet all the way over—two nights and a day—while the roar and howl of the wind were appalling. We changed our minds about the placid, dreamy disposition of the Mediterranean; also, about sunny Italy.

When the second morning came we were still a good way outside the harbor of Genoa, in the grip of such a norther and blizzard as tears through the Texas Panhandle and leaves dead cattle in its wake. Sunny Italy indeed! The hills back of Genoa, when we could make them out at last, were white with snow. To go out on deck was to breast the penetrating, stinging beat of the storm.

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But I stood it awhile to get an impression of the harbor. It is no harbor at all, but simply a little corner of open sea, partly enclosed by breakwaters that measurably protect vessels from heavy seas, when one can get through the entrance. With our mighty engines and powerful machinery we were beating and wallowing around the entrance for as much as two hours, I should think, before we could get inside. You could stow that harbor of Genoa anywhere along the New York City water-front, shipping and all, and then you would need to employ a tug-boat captain to find it for you. It is hard to understand how Genoa obtained her maritime importance in the old days.

(I have just referred to the guide-book. It says: "The magnificent harbor of Genoa was the cause of the mediæval prosperity of the city," and adds that it is about two miles in diameter. Very well; I take it all back. I was merely judging from observation. It has led me into trouble before.)

We were only to touch at Genoa; some more of our passengers were to leave us, and we were to take on the European contingent there. It was not expected that there would be much sight-seeing, especially on such a day, but some of us went ashore nevertheless. Laura, age fourteen, and I were among those who went. We set out alone, were captured immediately by a guide, repelled him, and temporarily escaped. It was a mistake, however; we discovered soon that a guide would have been better on this bitter, buffeting day.

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We had no idea where to go, and when we spoke to people about it, they replied in some dialect of Mulberry Street that ought not to be permitted at large. Laura tried her French on them presently, but with no visible effect, though it had worked pretty well in Algiers. Then I discovered a German sign, over a restaurant or something, and I said I would get information there.

I had faith in my German since my practice on the stewards, and I went into the place hopefully. What I wanted to ask was "Where is Cook's?" the first question that every tourist wants to ask when he finds himself lost and cold and hungry in a strange land. But being lost and cold and hungry confused me, I suppose, and I got mixed in my adverbs, and when the sentence came out it somehow started with "*Warum*" instead of "*Wo*" so instead of asking "Where is Cook's?" I had asked "Why is Cook's?" a question which I could have answered myself if I had only known I had asked it.

But I didn't realize, and kept on asking it, with a little more emphasis each time, while the landlord and the groups about the tables began to edge away and to reach for something handy and solid to use on a crazy man. I backed out then, and by the time I was outside I realized my slight error in the choice of words. I did not go back to correct my inquiry. I merely told Laura that those people in there did not seem very intelligent, and that was true, or they would have known that anybody is likely to say "why" when he means "where," especially in German.

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There are too many languages in the world, anyway. There is nothing so hopeless as to hunt for information in a place where not a soul understands your language, and where you can't speak a word of his. The first man at your very side may have all the information you need right at his tongue's end, but it might as well be buried in a cellar so far as you are concerned.

I am in deep sympathy with the people who invented Volapuk, and are trying to invent Esperanto. I never thought much about it before, but since I've been to Genoa I know I believe in those things. Only, I wish they'd adopt English as the universal speech. I find it plenty good enough.

Laura and I made our way uphill and climbed some stairways, met a *gendarme*, got what seemed to be information, climbed down again, and met a man with a fish-net full of bread—caught in some back alley, from the looks of it. Then we followed a car-track a while along the deserted street, past black, desolate-looking houses, and were cold and discouraged and desperate, when suddenly, right out of heaven, came that guide, who had been following us all the time, of course, and realized that the psychological moment had come.

We could have fallen on his neck for pure joy. Everything became all right, then. He could understand what we said, and we could understand what he said; we tried him repeatedly and he could do it every time. That was joy and occupation enough at first. Then we asked him "Where was Cook's?" and he knew that too. It was wonderful.

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We grew to love that guide like a brother. It's marvellous how soon and fondly you can learn to love a rescuer like that when you are a stranger in a strange land and have been sinking helplessly in a sea of unknown words.

He was a good soul, too; attentive without being officious, anxious to show us as much as possible in the brief space of our visit. He led us through the narrow, cleft-like streets of the old city; he pointed out the birthplace of Columbus and portions of the old city wall; he conducted us to the Hotel de Ville (the old Fieschi Palace), where we decided to have luncheon; he led us back to the ship at last, and trusted me while I went aboard to get the five *lira* of his charge.

Whatever the Genoese guides were in the old days, this one was a jewel. If I had any voice in the matter Genoa would inscribe a tablet to a man like that and put his bones in a silver box and label them "St. John the Baptist" instead of the set of St. John bones they now have in the Cathedral of St. Lorenzo, which he pointed out to us.

But the Cathedral itself was interesting enough. It was built in the ninth century, and is the first church we have seen that has interested us. In it Laura noticed again the absence of seats; for they kneel, on this side of the water, and know not the comfort of pews.

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We passed palaces galore in Genoa, but we had only time to glance in, except at the Fieschi, where we lunched, and later were shown the rooms where the famous conspiracy took place. I don't know what the conspiracy was, but the guide-book speaks of it as "the famous conspiracy," so everybody but me will know just which one is meant. It probably concerned the Ghibellines and the Guelphs, and had strangling in it and poison—three kinds, slow, medium, and swift—these features being usually identified with the early Italian school.

The dim, mysterious streets of Genoa interested us—many of the houses frescoed outside—and the old city gates, dating back to the crusade; also some English signs, one of which said:

DINNER 3 LIRA, WINE ENCLOSED,

and another:

MILK FOR SALE, OR TO LET.

I am in favor of these people learning English, but not too well. The picturesque standard of those signs is about right.

Our new passengers were crowding aboard the ship when we returned. They were a polyglot assortment, English, German, French, Hungarian—a happy-looking lot, certainly, and eager for the housing and comfort of the ship. But one dear old soul, a German music-master—any one could tell that at first glance—was in no hurry for the cabin. He had been looking forward to that trip. Perhaps this was his first sight of the sea and shipping and all the things he had wanted so long. He came to where I was looking over the rail, his head bare, his white hair blowing in the wind. He looked at me anxiously.

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"Haben Sie Deutsch?" he asked.

I confessed that I still had a small broken assortment of German on hand, such as it was. He pointed excitedly to a vessel lying near us—a ship with an undecipherable name in the Greek character.

"Greek," he said, "it is Greek—a vessel from Greece!"

He was deeply moved. To him that vessel—a rather poor, grimy affair—with its name in the characters of Homer and Æschylus was a thing to make his blood leap and his eyes grow moist, because to him it meant the marvel and story of a land made visible—the first breath of realization of what before had just been a golden dream. I had been thinking of those things, too. We did not mind the cold, and stood looking down at the Greek vessel while we sailed away.

But a change has come over the spirit of our ship. It is a good ship still, with a goodly company—only it is not the same. We lost some worthy people in Genoa and we took on this European invasion. It is educational, and here in the smoking-room I could pick up all the languages I need so much if I were willing to listen and had an ear for such things. I could pick up customs, too. It is after dinner, and the smoking-room is crowded with mingled races of both sexes, who have come in for their coffee and their cigarettes, their gossip and their games. Over there in one corner is a French group—Parisian, without doubt—the women are certainly that, otherwise they could not chatter and handle their cigarettes in that dainty way—and they are going-on and waving their hands and turning their eyes to heaven in the interest and ecstasy of their enjoyment. Games do not interest them—they are in themselves sufficient diversion to one another.

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It is different with a group of Germans at the next table; they have settled down to cards—pinochle, likely enough—and they are playing it soberly—as soberly as that other group who are absorbed in chess. At still another table a game of poker is being organized, and from that direction comes the beloved American tongue, carrying such words as "What's the blue chips worth?" "Shall we play jack-pots?" "Does the dealer ante?" and in these familiar echoes I recognize the voices of friends.

The centre of the smoking-room is different. The tables there are filled with a variegated lot of men and women, all talking together, each pursuing a different subject—each speaking a language of his own. Every nation of Europe, I should think, is represented there—it is a sort of lingual congress in open session.

The Reprobates no longer own the smoking-room. They are huddled off in a corner over their game of piquet, and they have a sort of cowed, helpless look. Only now and then I can see the Colonel jerk his hat a bit lower and hear him say, "Hell, Joe!" as the Apostle lay down his final cards. Then I recognize that we are still here and somewhat in evidence, though our atmosphere is not the same.

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That couldn't be expected. When you have set out with a crowd of pleasure-seeking irresponsibles, gathered up at random, and have become a bit of the amalgamation which takes place in two weeks' mixing, you somehow feel that a certain unity has resulted from the process and you are reluctant about seeing it disturbed. You feel a personal loss in every face that goes—a personal grievance in every stranger that intrudes.

The ship's family has become a sort of club. It has formed itself into groups and has discussed its

members individually and collectively. It has found out their business and perhaps some of the hopes and ambitions—even some of the sorrows—of each member. Then, suddenly, here is a new group of people that breaks in. You know nothing about them—they know nothing about you. They are good people, and you will learn to like some of them—perhaps all of them—in time. Yet you regard them doubtfully. Rearrangement is never easy, and amalgamation will be slow.

Oh, well, it is ever thus, and it is the very evanescence of things that makes them worth while. That old crowd of ours would have grown deadly tired of one another if there hadn't been always the prospect and imminence of change. And, anyhow, this is far more picturesque, and we are sailing to-night before the wind, over a smooth sea, for Malta, and it has grown warm outside and the lights of Corsica are on our starboard bow.

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XIII

MALTA, A LAND OF YESTERDAY

We came a long way around from Algiers to "Malta and its dependencies," the little group of islands which lies between Sicily and the African coast. We have spent two days at sea, meantime, but they were rather profitable days, for when one goes capering among marvels, as we do ashore, he needs these ship days to get his impressions sorted out and filed for reference.

We were in the harbor of Valetta, Malta, when we woke this morning—a rather dull morning—and a whole felucca of boats—flotilla, I mean—had appeared in the offing to take us ashore. At least, I suppose they were in the offing— I'm going to look that word up, by and by, in the ship dictionary, and see what it means. They have different boats in each of the places we have visited—every country preserving its native pattern. These at Malta are a sort of gondola with a piece sticking up at each end—for ornament, probably—I have been unable to figure out any use for the feature.

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We leaned over the rail, watching them and admiring the boatmen while we tried to recognize the native language. The Diplomat came along and informed us that it was Arabic, mixed with Italian, the former heavily predominating. The Arabs had once occupied the island for two hundred and twenty years, he said, and left their language, their architecture, and their customs. He had been trying his Arabic on some natives who had come aboard and they could almost understand it.

The Patriarch, who had been early on deck, came up full of enthusiasm. There was a Phœnician temple in Malta which he was dying to visit. It was the first real footprint, thus far, of his favorite tribe, and though we have learned to restrain the Patriarch when he unlimbers on Phœnicians, we let him get off this time, softened, perhaps, by the thought of the ruined temple.

The Phœnicians had, of course, been the first settlers of Malta, he told us, thirty-five hundred years ago, when Rome had not been heard of and Greece was mere mythology; after which preliminary the Patriarch really got down to business.

"We are told by Sanchuniathon," he said, "in the Phoinikika, which was not only a cosmogony but a necrological diptych, translated into Greek by Philo of Byblus, with commentary by Porphyry and preserved by Eusebius in fragmentary form, that the Phœnicians laid the foundations of the world's arts, sciences, and religions, though the real character of their own faith has been but imperfectly expiscated. We are told—"

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The Horse-Doctor laid his hand reverently but firmly on the Patriarch's arm.

"General," he said (the Patriarch's ship title is General)—"General, we all love you, and we all respect your years and your learning. We will stand almost anything from you, even the Phœnicians; but don't crowd us, General—don't take advantage of our good-nature. We'll try to put up with Sanchuniathon and Porphyry and those other old dubs, but when you turned loose that word 'expiscated' I nearly lost control of myself and threw you overboard."

The bugle blew the summons to go ashore. Amidst a clatter of Maltese we descended into the

boats and started for the quay. Sitting thus low down upon the water, one could get an idea of the little shut-in harbor, one of the deepest and finest in the world. We could not see its outlet, or the open water, for the place is like a jug, and the sides are high and steep. They are all fortified, too, and looking up through the gloomy morning at the grim bastions and things, the place loomed sombre enough and did not invite enthusiasm. It was too much like Gibraltar in its atmosphere, which was not surprising, for it is an English stronghold—the second in importance in these waters. Gibraltar is the gateway, Malta is the citadel of the Mediterranean, and England to-day commands both.

But Malta has had a more picturesque history than Gibraltar. Its story has been not unlike that of Algiers, and many nations have fought for it and shed blood and romance along its shores, and on all the lands about. We touched mythology, too, here, for the first time; and Bible history. Long ago, even before the Phœnicians, the Cyclops—a race of one-eyed giants—owned Malta, and here Calypso, daughter of Atlas, lived and enchanted Ulysses when he happened along this way and was shipwrecked on the "wooded island of Ogygia, far apart from men."

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I am glad they do not call it that any more. It is hard to say Ogygia, and it is no longer a wooded isle. It is little more than a rock, in fact, covered with a thin, fertile soil, and there are hardly any trees to be discovered anywhere. But there were bowers and groves in Ulysses' time, and Calypso wooed him among the greenery and in a cave which is pointed out to this day. She promised him immortality if he would forget his wife and native land, and marry her, but Ulysses postponed his decision, and after a seven-year sample of the matrimony concluded he didn't care for perpetual existence on those terms.

Calypso bore him two sons, and when he sailed away died of grief. Ulysses returned to Penelope, but he was disqualified for the simple life of Ithaca, and after he had slain her insolent suitors and told everybody about his travels he longed to go sailing away again to other adventures and islands, and Calypsos, perhaps, "beyond the baths of all the western stars." Such was life even then.

The Biblical interest of Malta concerns a shipwreck, too. St. Paul on his way to Italy to preach the gospel was caught in a great tempest, the Euroclydon, which continued for fourteen days. Acts xxvii, xxviii contain the story, which is very interesting and beautiful.

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Here is a brief summary.

"And when the ship was caught, and could not bear up in the wind, we let her drive....

"And when neither sun nor stars in many days appeared, and no small tempest lay upon us, all hope that we should be saved was taken away."

Paul comforted them and told how an angel had stood by him, assuring him that he, Paul, would appear before Cæsar and that all with him would be saved. "Howbeit, we must be cast upon a certain island."

The island was Melita (*i.e.*, Malta), and "falling into a place where two seas met, they ran the ship aground."

There were two hundred and sixteen souls in the vessel, and all got to land somehow.

"And the barbarous people showed us no little kindness: for they kindled a fire and received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold."

Paul remained three months in Malta and preached the gospel and performed miracles there, which is a better record than Ulysses made. He also banished the poison snakes, it is said. It was the Euroclydon that swept the trees from Malta, and nineteen hundred years have not repaired the ravage of that storm.

Gods, Phœnicians, Greeks, Carthaginians, Romans, Arabs, Normans, Germans, Spanish, Knights of Jerusalem, French, and English have all battled for Malta because of its position as a stronghold, a watch-tower between the eastern and western seas. All of them have fortified it more or less, until to-day it is a sort of museum of military works, occupied and abandoned.

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After the Gods, the Phœnicians were the first occupants, and with all due deference to the Patriarch, they were skedaddling out of Canaan at the time, because Joshua was transacting a little business in warfare which convinced them that it was time to grow up with new countries farther west. The Knights of Jerusalem—also known as the Knights of St. John and the Knights of Rhodes—were the last romantic inheritors. The Knights were originally hospital nurses who looked after pilgrims that went to visit the Holy Sepulchre, nearly a thousand years ago. They became great soldiers in time: knightly crusaders with sacred vows of chastity and service to the Lord. Charles V. of Spain gave them the Island of Malta, and they became the Knights of Malta henceforth. They did not maintain their vows by and by, but became profligates and even pirates. Meantime they had rendered mighty service to the Mediterranean and the world at large.

They prevented the terrible Turk from overrunning and possessing all Europe. Under John de la Valette, the famous Grand Master, Malta stood a Turkish siege that lasted four months, with continuous assault and heavy bombardments. The Turks gave it up at last and sailed away, after a loss of over twenty thousand men.

Only seven thousand Maltese and two hundred and sixty knights were killed, and it is said that before he died each knight had anywhere from fifty to a hundred dead Turks to his credit. It must have been hard to kill a knight in those days. I suppose they wore consecrated armor and talismans, and were strengthened by special benedictions. And this all happened in 1565, after which La Valette decided to build a city, and on the 28th of March, 1566, laid the corner-stone of Valetta, our anchorage.

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It is a curious place and interesting. When we landed at the quay our vehicles were waiting for us, and these were our first entertainment. They resembled the little affairs of Gibraltar, but were more absurd, I think. They had funny canopy tops—square parasol things with fancy edges—and there was no room inside for a tall man with knees. I was only partly in my conveyance, and I would have been willing to have been out of it altogether, only we were going up a steep hill and I couldn't get out without damage to something or somebody. Then we passed through some gates and entered the city.

I don't think any of us had any clear idea of what Malta was like. It is another of those places that every one has heard of and nobody knows about. We all knew about Maltese cats because we had cats more or less Maltese at home, and we had heard of the Knights of Malta and of Maltese lace. But some of us thought Malta was a city on the north shore of Africa and the rest of us believed it to be an island in the Persian Gulf.^[2]

However, these slight inaccuracies do not disturb us any more. We have learned to accept places where and as we find them, without undue surprise. If we should awake some morning in a strange harbor and be told that it was Sheol, we would merely say:

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"Oh yes, certainly; we knew it was down here somewhere. When can we go ashore?"

Then we would set out sight-seeing and shopping without further remark, some of us still serene in the conviction that it was an African seaport, the rest believing it to be an island in the Persian Gulf.

But there were no Maltese cats in Malta—not that I saw, and no knights, I think. What did strike us first was a herd of goats, goatesses I mean, being driven along from house to house and supplying milk. They were the mildest-eyed, most inoffensive little creatures in the world, and can carry more milk for their size than any other mammal, unless I am a poor judge. They did not seem to be under any restraint, but they never wandered far away from their master. They nibbled and loafed along, and were ready for business at call. They seemed much more reliable than any cows of my acquaintance.

But presently I forgot the goats, for a woman came along—several women—and they wore a black head-gear of alpaca or silk, a cross between a sunbonnet and a nun's veil—hooped out on one side and looped in on the other—a curious head-gear, but not a bad setting for a handsome face. And those ladies had handsome faces—rich, oval faces, with lustrous eyes—and the faldette (they call it that) made a background that melted into their wealth of atramentous hair.

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We have not seen handsome native women before, but they are plentiful enough here. None of them are really bad-looking, and every other one is a beauty, by my standards.

We were well up into the city now, and could see what the place was like. The streets were not over-wide, and the houses had an Oriental look, with their stuccoed walls and their projecting Arab windows. They were full of people and donkeys—very small donkeys with great pack baskets of vegetables and other merchandise—but we could not well observe these things because of the beggars and bootblacks and would-be guides, besides all the sellers of postal cards and trinkets.

It was worse than Madeira, worse than Gibraltar, worse even than Algiers. England ought to be ashamed of herself to permit, in one of her possessions, such lavish and ostentatious poverty as exists in Malta. When we got out of the carriages we were overwhelmed. They stormed around us; they separated us; they fought over us; they were ready to devour us piecemeal. Some of us escaped into shops—some into the museum—some into St. John's Cathedral, which was across the way.

Laura and I were among the last named, and we drew a long breath as we slipped into that magnificent place. We rejoiced a little too soon, however, for a second later we were nabbed by a guide, and there was no escape. We couldn't make a row in a church, especially as services were going on; at least, we didn't think it safe to try.

It is a magnificent church—the most elaborately decorated, I believe, in all Europe. Grand Master John L'Eveque de la Cassar, at his own expense, put up the building, and all Europe contributed to its wealth and splendor. Its spacious floor is one vast mosaic of memorial tablets to dead heroes. There are four hundred richly inlaid slabs, each bearing a coat of arms and inscriptions in colors. They are wonderfully beautiful; no other church in the world has such a floor. Napoleon Bonaparte, who was a greater vandal than a soldier, allowed his troops to rifle St. John's when he took possession of Malta in 1798. But there are riches enough there now and apparently Napoleon did not deface the edifice itself.

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The upper part of the Cathedral can only be comprehended in the single word "gorgeous." To attempt to put into sentences any impressions of its lavish ceiling and decorations and furnishings would be to cheapen a thing which, though ornate, is not cheap and does not look so.

There are paintings by Correggio and other Italian masters, and rare sacred statuary, and there is a solid silver altar rail which Napoleon did not carry off because a thoughtful priest quickly gave it a coat of lampblack when he heard the soldiers coming.

The original keys of Jerusalem and several other holy places are said to be in one of the chapels, and in another is a thorn from the Saviour's crown, the stones with which St. Stephen was martyred, and some apostolic bones. These things are as likely to be here as anywhere, and one of the right hands of John the Baptist, encased in a gold glove, was here when Napoleon came. Napoleon took up the hand and slipped off a magnificent diamond ring from one of the fingers. Then he slipped the ring on his own finger and tossed the hand aside.

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"Keep the carrion," he said.

They hate the memory of Napoleon in Malta to this day.

The ceiling of the church is a mass of gold and color, and there are chapels along the sides, each trying to outdo the next in splendor. I am going to stop description right here, for I could do nothing with the details.

I have mentioned that services were in progress, but it did not seem to interfere with our sight-seeing. It would in America, but it doesn't in Malta. There was chanting around the altar, and there were worshippers kneeling all about, but our guide led us among them and over them as if they had not existed. It seemed curious to us that he could do this, that we could follow him unmolested. We tried to get up some feeling of delicacy in the matter, and to make some show of reluctance, but he led us and drove us along relentlessly, and did not seem to fear the consequences.

We got outside at last and were nailed by a frowsy man who wanted to sell one grimy postal card of the Chapel of Bones. We didn't want the card, but we said he might take us to the chapel if he knew the way. Nothing so good as that ever came into his life before. From a mendicant seller of one wretched card, worth a penny at most, he had suddenly blossomed into the guide of two American tourists. The card disappeared. With head erect he led the way as one having received knighthood.

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Our crowd was waiting admission outside the chapel and we did not need our guide any more. But that didn't matter—he needed us. He accepted his salary to date, but he did not accept his discharge. We went into the Chapel of Bones, which is a rather grewsome place, with a lot of decorations made out of bleached human remnants—not a pleasant spot in which to linger—and when we came out again there was our guide, ready to take us in hand. We resisted feebly, but surrendered. We didn't care for the regular programme and wanted to wander away, anyhow. He suggested that we go to the Governor's palace and armory, so we went there.

The armory was worth while. It was full of armor of the departed knights and of old arms of every sort. We think breech-loading guns are modern, but we saw them there from the sixteenth century—long, deadly-looking weapons—and there were rope guns; also little mortars not more than three or four inches deep—mere toys—a stout man with a pile of rocks would be more effective, I should think.

We saw the trumpet, too, that led La Valette to victory in 1565, and some precious documents—among them the Grant of Malta made by Charles V. to the knights, 1530. These were interesting things and we lingered there until within a minute of noon, when we went out into the grounds to see the great bronze clock on the Governor's palace strike twelve.

And all the rest of our party had collected in the grounds of the Governor's palace, and pretty soon the Governor came out and made us a little speech of welcome and invited us to luncheon on the lawn, with cold chicken and ices and nice fizzy drinks. No, that was not what happened—not exactly. Our crowd was not there, and we did not see the Governor and we were not invited to picnic on the lawn. Otherwise the statement is correct. We did go out into the grounds, and we did see the clock strike. The other things are what we thought should happen, and they would have happened if we had received our just deserts.

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Well, then, those things did not materialize, but our guide did. He would always materialize, so long as we stayed in Malta. So we re-engaged him and signified that we wanted food. He led us away to what seemed to be a hotel, but the clerk, who did not speak English, regarded us doubtfully. Then the landlord came. He had a supply of English but no food. No one is fed at a hotel in Malta who has not ordered in advance. At least, that is what he said, and we went away, sorrowing.

We were not alone. A crowd had collected while we were inside—a crowd of the would-be guides and already beggars, with sellers and torments of various kinds. We were assailed as soon as we touched the street, and our guide, who was not very robust, was not entirely able to protect us from them. He did steer us to a restaurant, however, a decent enough little place, and on the steps outside they disputed for us and wrangled over us and divided us up while we ate. It was like the powers getting ready to dismember China.

We laid out our programme for the afternoon. We wanted to get some Maltese lace, and to make a little side trip by rail to Citta Vecchia (the old city) which two native gentlemen at our table told us would give us a good idea of the country. Then we paid our bill, had a battle with a bootblack who had surreptitiously been polishing my shoes, fought our way through the barbarians without,

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and finally escaped by sheer flight, our guide at our heels.

We told him that we wanted lace. Ah, a smile that was like morning overspread his face. He took us to a large shop, where we found some of our friends already negotiating, but we did not linger. We said we wanted to find a little shop—a place where it was made. He led us to another bazaar. Again we said, "No, a little shop—a *very* little shop, on a back street."



**TWO BENT, WRINKLED WOMEN WEAVING
LACE OUTSIDE THE DOOR**

Clearly he was disappointed. He did find one for us, however, a tiny place in an alley, with two bent, wrinkled women weaving lace outside the door.

How their deft fingers made those little bobbins fly, and what beautiful stuff it was, creamy white silk in the most wonderful patterns and stitches. They showed us their stock eagerly, and they had masses of it. Then we bargained and cheapened and haggled, in the approved fashion we have picked up along the way, and went off at last with our purchases, everybody happy—they because they would have taken less, we because we would have given more. Only our guide was a bit solemn. I suppose his commission was modest enough in a place like that.

He took us to the railway-station—the only railway in Malta. Then I made a discovery: we had no current coin of the realm and the railway would take only English money. No matter. We had discharged our guide three times and paid him each separate time. He was a capitalist now, and he promptly advanced the needed funds. We were grateful, and invited him to go along. But he said "No," that he would remain at the station until our return.

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He was faithful, you see, and he trusted us. Besides, we couldn't escape. There was only that one road and train. We took our seats in an open car, on account of the scenery. We didn't know it was third-class till later, but we didn't mind that. What we did mind was plunging into a thick, black, choking tunnel as soon as we started; then another and another. This was scenery with a vengeance.

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We were out at last, and in a different world. Whatever was modern in Malta had been left behind. This was wholly Eastern—Syrian—a piece out of the Holy Land, if the pictures tell us the truth. Everywhere were the one-story, flat-topped architecture and the olive-trees of the Holy Land pictures; everywhere stony fields and myriads of stone walls.

At a bound we had come from what was only a few hundred years ago, mingled with to-day, to what was a few thousand years ago, mingled with nothing modern whatever. There is no touch of English dominion here, or French, or Italian. This might be Syrian or Moorish; it might be, and *is* Maltese.

We saw men ploughing with a single cow and a crooked stick in a manner that has prevailed here always. We mentioned the matter to our railway-conductor, who was a sociable person and had not much to do.

"You are from America," he said.

"Yes, we are from America."

"And do they use different ploughs there?"

He spoke the English of the colonies, and it seemed incredible that he should not know about these things. We broke it to him as gently as possible that we did not plough with a crooked stick in America, but with such ploughs as were used in England. However, that meant nothing to him, as he had never been off the island of Malta in his life. His name was Carina, he told us, and his parents and grandparents before him had been born on the island. Still, I think he must have had English or Irish pigment in that red hair of his. His English was perfect, though he spoke the Maltese, too, of course.

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He became our guide as we went along, willing and generous with his information, though more interested, I thought, in the questions he modestly asked us, now and then. His whole environment—all his traditions—had been confined to that little sea-encircled space of old, old town, and older, much older country.

He would like to come to America, he confessed, and I wondered, if some day he should steam up New York harbor and look upon that piled architecture, and then should step ashore and find

himself amidst its whirl of traffic, he would not be even more impressed by it than we were with his tiny forgotten island here to the south of Sicily.

We passed little stations, now and then, with pretty stone and marble station-houses, but with no villages of any consequence, and came to Citta Vecchia, which the Arabs called Medina, formerly the capital of the island. It is a very ancient place, set upon a hill and bastioned round with walls that are too high to scale, and were once impregnable. It has stood many an assault—many a long-protracted siege. To-day it is a place of crumbling ruins and deserted streets—a mediæval dream.

It was raining when we got back to Valetta, and our faithful guide hurried us toward the boat-landing by a short way, for we were anxious to get home now. Every few yards we were assailed by hackmen and beggars, and by boatmen as soon as we reached the pier. He kept us intact, however, and got us into our own boat, received the rest of his fortune—enough to set him up for life, by Maltese standards—waved us good-bye, and we were being navigated across the wide, rainy waste toward our steamer, which seemed to fill one side of that little harbor.

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What a joy to be on deck again and in the cosey cabin, drinking hot tea and talking over our adventures and purchases with our fellow-wanderers. The ship is home, rest, comfort—a world apart. We are weighing anchor now, and working our course out of the bottle-neck, to sea. It is a narrow opening—a native pilot directs us through it and leaves the ship only at the gateway. Then we sail through and out into the darkening sky where a storm is gathering—the green billows catching the dusk purple on their tips, the gulls white as they breast the rising wind.

We gather on the after deck to say good-bye to Malta. Wall upon wall, terrace upon terrace it rises from the sea—heaped and piled back against the hills—as old, as quaint, as unchanged as it was a thousand years ago. Viewed in this spectral half-light it might be any one of the ancient cities. Ephesus, Antioch, Tyre—it suggests all those names, and we speak of these things in low voices, awed by the spectacle of gathering night and storm.

Then, as the picture fades, we return to the lighted cabins, where it is gay and cheerful and modern, while there in the dark behind, that old curious island life still goes on; those curious shut-in people are gathering in their houses; the day, with its cares, its worries, and its hopes is closing in on that tiny speck, set in that dark and lonely sea.

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XIV

A SUNDAY AT SEA

We are in classic waters now. All this bleak Sunday we have been steaming over the Ionian Sea, crossed so long ago by Ulysses when he went exploring; crossed and recrossed a hundred times by the galleyed fleets of Rome. We have followed the exact course, perhaps, of those old triremes with their piled-up banks of oars, when they sailed away to conquer the East, also when they returned loaded down with captives and piled high with treasure.

A little while ago Cythera was on our port bow, the island where Aphrodite was born of wind and wave, and presently set out to make trouble among the human family. She and her son Cupid, who has always been too busy to grow up, have a good deal to answer for, and they are still at their mischief, and will be, no doubt, so long as men are brave and women fair.

However, they seemed to have overlooked this ship. There is only one love-affair discoverable, and even that is of such a mild academic variety that it is doubtful whether that tricky jade Venus and her dimpled son had any concern in the matter. It is rather a case of Diana's hunting, I suspect, and not a love-affair at all.

I have mentioned that this is Sunday, but I acquired this knowledge from the calendar. One would never guess it from the aspect of this ship and its company. We made a pretty good attempt at Sabbath observance the first Sunday out, and we did something in that line a week later. But then we struck Genoa, where we lost the Promoter and took on this European influx of languages, and now Sunday is the same as Friday or Tuesday or any other day, and it would take an expert to tell the difference.

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I do not blame it all to the Europeans. They are a good lot, I believe, some of them I am sure are, and we have taken to them amazingly. They did teach us a few new diversions, but we were ready for instruction and the Reprobates would have corrupted us anyhow, so it is no matter. The new-comers only stimulated our education and added variety to our progress. But they did make it bad for Sunday—the old-fashioned Sunday, such as we had the first week out.

Not that our "pilgrims" are a bad lot—not by any means. They do whoop it up pretty lively in the booze-bazaar now and then, and even a number of our American ladies have developed a weakness for that congenial corner of the ship. But everything is p. p., which is *Kurfürst* for perfectly proper, and on this particular Sunday you could not scrape up enough real sin on this ship to interest Satan five minutes.

Even the Reprobates are not entirely abandoned, and only three different parties have been

removed from their table in the dining-saloon by request—request of the parties, that is—said parties being accustomed to the simpler life—pleasant diversions of the home circle, as it were—and not to the sparkle and the flow of good-fellowship on the high seas, with the *bon mot* of the Horse-Doctor, the repartee of the Colonel, and the placid expletive of the Apostle which the rest of us are depraved enough to adore.

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The Apostle, by-the-way, is going to Jerusalem. He has been there before, which he does not offer as a reason for going again, for he found no comfort there, and he is unable to furnish the Doctor with a sane reason why any one should ever want to go there, even once. I suspect that when the sale of tickets for the side trips began the Apostle, in his innocence, feared that there might not be enough to go around, and thought that he had better secure one in case of accident. I suspect this from his manner of urging the Doctor to secure one for himself.

"You'll be too late, if you're not careful," he said. "You'd better go right up and get your ticket now."

The Doctor was not alarmed. "Don't worry, Joe," he said. "You're booked for Jerusalem, all right enough. I'll get mine when I decide to go."

"But suppose you decide to go after the party is made up?"

The Doctor stroked his chin. "Hell-of-a-note if I can't go ashore and buy a ticket for Jerusalem," he said, which had not occurred to the Apostle, who immediately remembered that he didn't want to go to Jerusalem anyway, had never wanted to go, and had vowed, before, he would never go again.

However, he will go, because the Colonel is going; and the Colonel is going because, as the Doctor still insists, he made his money by publishing Bibles without reading them, which I think doubtful—not doubtful that he did not read them, but that he is going to the Holy Land in consequence. I think he is going because he knows the Apostle is going—and the Doctor, and the game of piquet. Those are reasons enough for the Colonel. He is ready at a moment's notice to follow that combination around the world.

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But if we no longer have services on these sea Sundays we have other features. The Music-Master plays for us, if encouraged, and he gave us a lecture this afternoon. It was on ancient music, or art, or archæology, I am not sure which. I listened attentively and I am pretty sure it was one of those things. He is a delightful old soul and his German is the best I ever heard. If I could have about ten years' steady practice, twelve hours a day, I think I could understand some of it.

The "Widow" entertains us too. She belongs to the Genoa contingent, and is one of those European polyglots who speak every continental language and make a fair attempt at English. It is her naïveté and unflinching good-nature that divert us. She approached one of our American ladies who wears black.

"You a widow, not?" she said.

"Oh no, I am not a widow."

"Ah, then mebbe you yus' divorce, like me."

We get along well with the Europeans. Our captain tells us he has never seen the nations mix more harmoniously, which means that we are a good lot, altogether, which is fortunate enough.

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But I am prone to run on about the ship and our travellers and forget graver things; I ought to be writing about Greece, I suppose, and of the wonders we are going to see, to-morrow, in Athens. I would do it, only I haven't read the guide-book yet, and then I have a notion that Greece has been done before. The old *Quaker City* was quarantined and did not land her people in Greece (except two parties who went by night), and the "Innocents" furnishes only that fine description of the Acropolis by moonlight.

But a good many other excursionists have landed there, and most of them have told about it, in one way and another. Now it is my turn, but I shall wait. I have already waited a long time for Athens— I do not need to begin the story just yet. Instead I have come out here on deck to look across to Peloponnesus, which has risen out of the sea, a long gray shore, our first sight of the mainland where heroes battled and mythology was born.

I expected the shores of Greece would look like that—bleak, barren, and forbidding. I don't know why, but that was my thought—perhaps because the nation itself has lost the glory of its ancient days. The Music-Master is looking at it too. It means more to him than to most of us, I imagine. As he looks over to that gray shore he is seeing in his vision a land where there was once a Golden Age, when the groves sang with Orpheus and the reeds with Pan, while nymphs sported in hidden pools or tripped lightly in the dappled shade.

To-morrow he will go mad, I think, for we shall anchor at Athens, in the Bay of Phaleron.

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A PORT OF MISSING DREAMS

There were low voices on the deck, just outside my port-hole. I realized that it was morning then; also that the light was coming in and that we were lying at anchor. I was up by that time. It was just at the first sunrising, and the stretch of water between the ship and the shore had turned a pinkish hue. Beyond it were some buildings, and above the buildings, catching the first glint of day on its structured heights, rose a stately hill.

The Amiable Girl (I have mentioned her before, I believe) and a companion were leaning over the ship's rail, trying to distinguish outlines, blended in the vague morning light. The Amiable Girl was peering through a binocular, and I caught the words "Parthenon" and "Caryatides"; then to her companion, "Take the glass."

Which the other girl did, and, after gazing steadily for a moment, said:

"Yes! Oh yes, indeed— I can see them now, quite distinctly!"

And then, even with my naked eye, I could make out certain details of that historic summit we have travelled so far to see. Three miles away, perhaps, the Acropolis arose directly in front of us—its columned crown beginning to glow and burn in answer to the old, old friend that has awakened it to glory, morning after morning, century after century, for a full twenty-three hundred years.

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The light came fast now, and with my glass I could bring the hill-top near. I could make out the Parthenon—also the Temple of Victory, I thought, and those marble women who have seen races pass and nations crumble, and religions fade back into fable and the realm of shades. It was all aglow, presently—a vision! So many wonderful mornings, we have had, but none like this. Nor can there be so many lives that hold in them a sunrise on the Acropolis from the Bay of Phaleron.

I lost no time in getting on deck, but it seemed that everybody was there ahead of me. They were strung along the rail, and each one had his glass, or his neighbor's, and was pointing and discoursing and argufying and having a beautiful time. The Diplomat was holding forth on the similarity of modern and ancient Greek, and was threatening to use the latter on the first victim that came within range. The Patriarch, who is religious when he happens to think about it, was trying to find Mars Hill, where St. Paul preached; the Credulous One was pointing out to everybody Lykabetos Hill as Mt. Ararat (information obtained from the Horse-Doctor), while the Apostle and the Colonel were quarrelling fiercely over a subject which neither of them knew anything about—the rise of Christianity in Greece.

I got into a row myself, presently, with one of the boys, just because I happened to make some little classical allusion— I have forgotten what it was now, and I didn't seem to know much about it then, from what he said. We were all stirred up with knowledge, brought face to face with history, as we were, and bound to unload it on somebody. Only the Music-Master wasn't. A little apart from any group, he stood clutching the rail, his face shining with a light that was not all of the morning, gazing in silence at his hill of dreams.

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We went ashore in boats that had pretty Greek rugs in them, and took a little train on which all the cars were smoking-cars (there are no other kind in Greece), and we looked out the windows trying to imagine we were really in Greece where once the gods dwelt; where Homer sang and Achilles fought; where the first Argonauts set sail for the Golden Fleece. I wish we could have met those voyagers before they started. They wouldn't have needed to go then. They could have taken the Golden Fleece off of this crowd if they had anything to sell in that Argosy of theirs, and their descendants are going to do it yet. I know from the conversation that is going on behind me. The Mill and a lot of her boon companions are doing the talking, and it is not of the classic ruins we are about to see, but of the lace they bought in Malta and Gibraltar, and of the embroidery they are going to buy in Greece.

Our chariots were waiting at the station—carriages, I mean, nice modern ones—and we were started in a minute, and suddenly there was the Theseum, the best preserved of Greek ruins, I believe, right in front of us, though we did not stop for it then. But it was startling—that old, discolored temple standing there unenclosed, unprotected, unregarded in the busy midst of modern surroundings.

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We went swinging away down a fine street, staring at Greek signs and new types of faces; the occasional native costume; the little panniered donkeys lost in their loads of fruit. I was in a carriage with Laura and the Diplomat, and the Diplomat translated Greek signs, rejoicing to find that he could make out some of the words; also that he could get a rise out of the driver when he spoke to him, though it wasn't certain whether the driver, who was a very large person in a big blue coat (we christened him the Blue Elephant), was talking to him of the horse, and we were all equally pleased, whichever it was.

The Acropolis was in sight from points here and there, but we did not visit it yet. Instead, we turned into a fine boulevard, anchored for a time at the corner of a park, waiting for guides, perhaps, then went swinging down by the royal gardens and the white marble palace of the king.

It is King George First now, a worthy successor to the rulers of that elder day when Greek art and poetry and national prosperity set a standard for the world. Athens was a pretty poor place when King George came to the throne in 1863. He was only eighteen years old, then—the country was bankrupt, the throne had gone begging. In *Innocents Abroad* Mark Twain says:

"It was offered to one of Victoria's sons, and afterwards to various other younger sons of royalty who had no thrones and were out of business, but they all had the charity to decline the dreary honor, and was laid out in a natural hollow by Lycurgus, before Christ over three hundred years, and was rebuilt something less than five hundred years later by the Averof of that day, Herodes Atticus, whose body was buried there. Then came the tumble and crumble of European glory; the place fell into ruin, was covered with débris, and lay forgotten or disregarded for a thousand years; after which, King George took up the matter, and dug out the remains as soon as he could get money for the job."

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That was Averof's inspiration. Without it he would most likely have spent his money in Alexandria, where he made it. Certainly without King George to point the way the progress of Athens would have been a sorry straggle instead of a stately march.



WE LOOKED ACROSS THE ENTRANCE AND THERE ROSE THE ACROPOLIS, HIGH AGAINST THE BLUE

The stadium seats fifty thousand, and has held half as many more when crowded. In the revived Olympic games in 1896 the Greeks won twelve prizes, the Americans followed with eleven, France carried off three, and the English one. That was a good record for the Americans, and we didn't fail to mention it, though I think most of us were thinking of those older games, won and lost here under this placid sky, and of the crowds that had sat here and shouted themselves hoarse as the victors turned the goal. Then, standing high on the marble seats, we looked across the entrance, and there rose the Acropolis, lifted high against the blue, just as those old spectators had seen it so long ago. Through half-closed lashes we re-created it in gleaming pentelican and so gazed upon a vision, the vision they had seen.

It was hard to leave that place. It would have been harder, if it had not been for the guide we had. He insisted on talking in some language which nobody recognized, and which upon inquiry I was surprised to find was English. He had learned it overnight, it having been discovered that the guide engaged for our party had been detained—probably in jail—for the same offence. Still our sample would have done better if he had sat up later. As it was he knew just two words. He would swing his arms and point to something and begin, "You see—!" The rest required a mind-reader. The German guide was better—much better. I haven't a perfect ear for German, but I concluded to join that party.



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HE WOULD SWING HIS ARMS AND BEGIN, "YOU SEE—!" THE REST REQUIRED A MIND-READER

It was not far to the Temple of Jupiter—the group of fifteen Corinthian columns which are all that remain of what Aristotle called "a work of despotic grandeur." It must have been that. There were originally one hundred and four of these columns, each nearly sixty feet high and more than five and a half feet in diameter. Try to imagine that, if you can!

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Think of the largest elm-tree you know; its trunk will not be as thick as that, nor as high, but it will give you a tangible idea. Then try to imagine one hundred and four marble pillars of that size, the side extending in double row the length of a city block, and the ends in triple row a little less than half as far—pure-white and fluted, crowned with capitals of acanthus leaves, and you will form some vague idea of what Aristotle meant. We cramped our necks and strained our eyes,

gazing at the beautiful remnant of that vast structure, but we did not realize the full magnitude of it until we came near a fallen column and stood beside it and stepped its length. Even then it was hard to believe that each of the graceful group still standing was of such size as this.

Peisistratos the tyrant began this temple and picked the location, said to be the spot where the last waters of the Deluge disappeared. It was to be dedicated to Deucalion, the founder of the new race of mortals, and the low ground was filled up and made level and bulwarked round with a stone substructure, as good to-day as when it was finished, twenty-five hundred years ago.

Peisistratos did not get the temple done. He died when it was only fairly under way, and his sons did not remain in power long enough to carry out his plans. He was a tyrant, though a gentle one, ambitious and fond of all lovely things. He had his faults, but they were mainly lovable ones, and he fostered a cultivation which within a century would make Athens the architectural garden of the world.

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The example of Peisistratos was followed lavishly during the next hundred years, but his own splendid temple was overlooked. Perhaps Pericles did not like the location and preferred to spend his money on the Acropolis, where it would make a better showing. I don't know. I know it was left untouched for nearly four hundred years, and then the work was carried on by Antiochus of Syria, who constructed it on a grand scale. But it killed Antiochus, too, and then it waited another three hundred years for the Emperor Hadrian to come along, about 174 A.D., and complete it, and renew it, and dedicate it to Jupiter Olympus, whose reign by that time was nearly over.

Never mind who built it, now, or what creed was consecrated there. The glory of the Golden Age rises on the hill above us, but I think one can meet nothing more impressive than this in all Greece.

Hadrian's arch is just beyond the Temple of Jupiter, and we drove through it on our way to the Acropolis. It is not a very big arch, nor is it very impressive. I don't think Hadrian built it himself or it wouldn't have been like that. It looks as if it had been built by an economical successor.

However, it is complimentary enough. On the side toward what was then the new part of Athens, called Hadrianople, is an inscription in Greek which says "This is the City of Hadrian, and not of Theseus," and on the side toward the Acropolis, "This is the old city of Theseus." And old it was, for the newest temples on the Acropolis had been built six hundred years even then.

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It was only a little way to the foot of the Acropolis and the Theatre of Dionysus. We have visited no place where I wished so much to linger. This was the theatre of Greece in her Golden Age. Here Æschylus and Euripides had their first nights—or days, perhaps, for I believe they were mostly matinees—and Sophocles, too, and here it was that the naughty Aristophanes burlesqued them with his biting parodies. Here it was they competed for prizes, and tried to be friends though playwrights, and abused the manager when they got into a corner together, and abused the actors openly, and vowed that some day they would build a theatre of their own where they could present their own plays in their own way, and where their suppressed manuscripts could get a hearing.

Perhaps history does not record these things, but it does not need to. I know a good many playwrights and managers and actors, and I know that human nature has not changed in twenty-four hundred years. I know that the old, old war was going on then, just as it is now, and will continue to go on so long as there are such things as proscenium and auditorium, box-office, gallery, and reserved seats.

I took one of the last named—a beautiful marble chair in the front row, just below the plinth where once the throne of Hadrian sat—a chair with an inscription which told that in the old days it was reserved for a priest or dignitary—and I looked across the marble floor where the chorus did its rhythmic march, and beyond to the marble stage-front with its classic reliefs and the figure of Silenus whose bowed shoulders have so long been the support of dramatic art. The marble floor—they called it the Orchestra then—is no longer perfect, and grass and flowers push their way up between the slabs. The reliefs are headless and scarred, but the slabs are still the same the chorus trod, the place is still a theatre, and one has but to close his eyes a little to fill it with forms vague and shadowy indeed, as ghosts are likely to be, but realities none the less. Our party had moved along now to other things, and Laura and I lingered for the play.

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It was much better than our theatres at home. There was no dazzle of lights, no close air or smell of gas, and there was plenty of room for one to put his feet. However, the play I did not care for so much as the chorus. The acting was heavy and stilted, I thought, and declamatory. I was inclined to throw a piece of the theatre at the leading man.

But the chorus! Why, the very words "Greek Chorus" have something in them that rouses and thrills, and I know, now, the reason why. In movement, in voice, in costume it was pure poetry. I would have applied for a position in the chorus myself, but Laura suddenly announced that the show was over and that everybody but us had gone long ago.

If I had lived in that elder day I should have gone mainly to the plays of Aristophanes. They were gay and full of good things, and they were rare, too, and poetic, even though they were not always more than skin deep. That was deep enough for some of his contemporaries. Deep enough for the popocrat Cleon, who tried to deprive Aristophanes of his citizenship, in revenge.

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Aristophanes wrote a play that acted like a mustard-plaster on Cleon. It made him howl and



I WOULD HAVE APPLIED FOR A POSITION IN THE CHORUS MYSELF

little theatre which Herodes Atticus built in memory of his wife.

Two thousand years ago Cicero wrote home from Athens: "Wherever we walk is history." We realize that here at the base of the Acropolis. From the Theatre of Dionysus to the Spring of Æsculapius is only a step. From the Spring to the Sanctuary of Isis is another step; from the Sanctuary to the Odeon of Herodes is a moment's walk; the Pnyx—the people's forum—is a stone's-throw away, and the Hill of Mars. All about, and everywhere, great events have trod one upon the other; mighty mobs have been aroused by oratory; mighty armies have rallied to the assault; a hundred battles have drenched the place with blood. And above all this rises the Acropolis, the crowning glory.

We postponed the Acropolis until after luncheon. There would have been further riot and bloodshed on this consecrated ground had our conductor proposed to attempt it then. Our Argonauts are a fairly well-behaved lot and fond of antiquities, even though they giggle at the guide now and then, but they are human, too, and have the best appetites I ever saw. They would leave the Acropolis for luncheon, even though they knew an earthquake would destroy it before they could get back.

We did stop briefly at the Pnyx hill—the gathering-place of the Athenians—and stood on the rostrum cut from the living rock—the "Bema" from which Demosthenes harangued the populace.

As usual Laura, age fourteen, and I got behind the party. We stood on the Bema and took turns addressing the multitude, until we came near being left altogether by the Diplomat and the Blue Elephant, who finally whirled us away in a wild gallop to the hotel, which, thanks to Jupiter and all the Olympian synod, we reached in time.

We made a new guide arrangement in the afternoon. It was discovered that the guide for the German party could handle English, too, so we doubled up and he talked to us first in one language, then in the other, and those of us who knew a little of both caught it going and coming. Perhaps his English was not the best, but I confess I adored it. He lisped a little, and his voice—droning, plaintive, and pathetic—was full of the sorrow that goes with a waning glory and a vanished day. We named him Lykabettos because somehow he looked like that, and then, too, he towered above us as he talked.

So long as I draw breath that afternoon on the Acropolis will live before me as a sunlit dream. I shall see it always in the tranquil light of an afternoon in spring when the distant hills are turning green and forming pictures everywhere between mellowed columns and down ruined aisles. Always I shall wander there with Laura, and resting on the steps of the Parthenon I shall hear the

caper and sweat and bring libel suits. Whereupon Aristophanes wrote another, and when he could get no actor to take the leading part—that of Cleon—he took it himself, and Cleon went to see it and wore out his teeth on tenpenny nails during the performance. Yes, I should have had a weakness for Aristophanes in those days, though I wish he might have omitted that tragic satire which twenty years later was to send Socrates the hemlock cup.

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We climbed the hill a little way to a grotto and drank of the spring of Æsculapius and all our diseases passed away. It only cost a penny or two, and was the cheapest doctor bill I ever paid. I never saw a healthier lot than our party when they came out of the grotto and started for the Odeon—the



TOOK TURNS ADDRESSING THE MULTITUDE

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sad and gentle voice of Lykabettos recounting the tale of its glory and decline. I shall hear him say:

"Zen Pericles he gazzer all ze moany zat was collect for ze army and he bring it here. But Pericles he use it to make all zese beautiful temple, and by and by when ze war come zere was no moany for ze army, so zay could not win."

Lykabettos' eyes wander mournfully in the direction of Sparta, whence the desolation had come. Then a little later, pointing up to a rare section of frieze—the rest missing—!

"Zat did not fall down, but stay zere, always ze same—ze honly piece zat Lord Elgin could not take away," and so on and on, through that long sweet afternoon.

I shall not attempt the story of the Acropolis here. The tale of that old citadel which later became literally the pinnacle of Greek architecture already fills volumes. I do not think Lykabettos was altogether just to Pericles, however, or to Lord Elgin, for that matter. True, Pericles did complete the Parthenon and otherwise beautify the Acropolis, and in a general way he was for architecture rather than war.

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But I do not find that he ever exhausted the public treasury on those temples, and I do find where his war policy was disregarded when disregard meant defeat. Still, if there had been more money and fewer temples on the Acropolis, the result of any policy might have been different, and there is something pathetically gratifying in the thought that in the end Athens laid down military supremacy as the price of her marble crown.

As for Lord Elgin, it may be, as is said, that he did carry off a carload or so of the beautiful things when he had obtained from the Government (it was Turkish then) permission to remove a few pieces. But it may be added that the things he removed were wholly uncared for at that time and were being mutilated and appropriated by vandals who, but for Elgin, might have robbed the world of them altogether. As it is, they are safe in the British Museum, though I think they should be restored to Greece in this her day of reincarnation.

We stood before the Temple of Victory and gazed out on the Bay of Salamis, where victory was won. We entered the Erechtheum, built on the sacred spot where Athena victoriously battled with Poseidon for the possession of Athens, and we stood in reverential awe before the marble women that have upheld her portico so long. We crossed the relic-strewn space and visited the Acropolis museum, but it was chilly and lifeless, and I did not care for the classified, fragmentary things. Then we entered the little enclosure known as Belvedere and gazed down on the Athens of to-day.

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If anybody doubts that modern Athens is beautiful, let him go to that spot and look down through the evening light and behold a marble vision such as the world nowhere else presents. Whatever ancient Athens may have been, it would hardly surpass this in beauty, and if Pericles could stand here to-day and gaze down upon the new city which has arisen to preserve his treasures, I think he would be satisfied.

When the others had gone to visit the Hill of Mars, Laura and I wandered back to the Parthenon, followed its silent corridors, and saw it all again to our hearts' content. And when our eyes were tired, we rested them by looking out between the columns to the hills, Hymettus and Pentelicus, glorified in the evening light, wearing always their "violet crown."

They are unchanged. Races may come and go, temples may rise and totter and crumble into dust. The old, old days that we so prize and honor—they are only yesterdays to the hills. The last fragment of these temples will be gone by and by—the last memory of their glory—but the hills will be still young and wearing their violet crown, still turning green in the breath of a Grecian spring.

Down through that splendid entrance, the Propylæa, at last, for it was growing late. We had intended climbing the Hill of Mars, where St. Paul preached, but we could see it plainly in the sunset light and there was no need to labor up the stairs. I think it was about this time of the day when St. Paul preached there. He had been wandering about Athens, among the temples, on a sort of tour of observation, making a remark occasionally—of criticism, perhaps—disputing with the Jews in the synagogue, and now and again in the market-place. The story, told in the seventeenth chapter of Acts, begins:

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"Then certain philosophers of the Epicureans and of the Stoicks encountered him. And some said, 'What will this babbler say?' Other some, 'He seemeth to be a setter forth of strange gods,' because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection."

They brought St. Paul here to the Areopagus, that is, to Mars Hill, where in ancient days an open-air court was held, a court of supreme jurisdiction in cases of life and death. But it would seem that the court had degenerated in St. Paul's time to a place of gossip and wrangle. "For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or hear some new thing."

Paul rose up before the assembly and made his famous utterance beginning, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious." It was a fearless, wonderful sermon he delivered, and I like to think that it was just at the hour when we saw the hill; just at the evening-time, with the sunset glory on his face. Paul closed his remarks with a reference to the

"And when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked: and others said, 'We will hear thee again of the matter.'"

Which they did, for that was nineteen hundred years ago, and the churches of Greece to-day still ring with St. Paul's doctrine. We climbed into our waiting carriages, and turning saw the Acropolis in the sunset, as we had seen it in the sunrise that now seemed ages ago—which indeed it was, for we had been travelling backward and forward since then through the long millennial years.

I wanted to see Athens by night, and after dinner I slipped away and bribed a couple of boatmen who were hovering about the ship to take me ashore. It was not so far, but the wind and tide had kicked up a heavy sea and I confess I was sorry I started. Every time we slid down one wave I was certain we were going straight through the next, and I think the boatmen had some such idea, for they prayed steadily and crossed themselves whenever safety permitted.

We arrived, however, and I took the little train for the Theseus station. I wanted to get a near view of the temple and I thought night would be a good time. I would have walked there but I did not quite know the way. So I got into a carriage and said "Theseum," and the driver took me to a beer-saloon. It was a cheerful enough temple, but it was not classic. When I had seen it sufficiently, I got into the carriage and said "Theseum" again, and he took me to a theatre. The theatre was not classic, either, being of about the average Bowery type. So I got into the carriage and said "Theseum" again, and he took me to a graveyard. It didn't seem a good time to visit graveyards. I only looked through the gate a little and got back into the carriage and said the magic word once more and was hauled off to a blazing hotel.

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That wouldn't do either. These might be, and doubtless were, all Theseums, but they were that in name only. What I wanted was the sure-enough, only original Theseum, set down in the guide-book as the best-preserved temple of the ancient Greek world. I explained this to a man in the hotel who explained it to my driver and we were off, down a beautiful marble business street, all closed and shuttered, for Athens being a capital is a quiet place after nightfall—as quiet as Washington, almost.

We were in front of the old temple soon. It was fairly dark there and nobody about. There was a dog barking somewhere, but I did not mind that. Dogs are not especially modern, and this one might be the three-headed Cerberus for all I knew or cared. What I wanted was to see the old temple when other people had gone to bed and the shadows had shut away the less-fortunate near-by architecture. They had done that now; the old temple might be amidst its earliest surroundings so far as I could see.

I walked up and down among its graceful Doric columns and stepped its measurements, and found it over a hundred feet long and nearly fifty wide; then I sat down on the step and listened to Cerberus bark—he had all three heads going at once now—and tried to imagine the life that had gathered there when this old fane was new. It is one of the temples of that brief golden period when all Athens burst into architectural flower. It was dedicated to Theseus and Hercules, and perhaps to a few other heroes and demi-gods and goddesses that they happened to think of when they laid the corner-stone.

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One story has it that it was built on the spot where the Marathon runner fell dead, after telling in a word his news of victory. I like to believe that this is true. I like to reassemble the crowds here—the anxious faces waiting for the earliest returns from that momentous struggle which would decide the fate of Greece. I like to picture that panting, white-faced runner as he dashes in among them and utters his single glad cry as his soul goes out, and I like to believe that this temple, dedicated to other heroes, was established here in his memory.

But for Marathon there would have been no Golden Age—no Pericles, no Parthenon, no splendid constellation of names that need not be repeated here. The victory of Marathon was the first great check to a Persian invasion that would have Orientalized not only Greece, but all Europe. So it is proper that a temple should be built on the spot where that great news was told, and proper, too, that of all the temples of that halcyon time this should remain the most perfect through the years.

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XVI

ATHENS THAT IS

On the road that leads from the old market-place, up past the Theseum to the Acropolis, there is a record of a humble but interesting sort. On the lower corner block of an old stone house, facing the highway, are three inscriptions. Two of them have been partly erased, but the third is quite legible, and one who knows Greek can read plainly a description of the property in metes and bounds and the original Greek word for "hypothecated," followed by "1000 drachmas."

It is a "live" mortgage, that is what it is, and it has been clinging to that property and piling up interest for more than two thousand years. The two half-obliterated inscriptions above it were once mortgages, too, but they were paid some time, and cancelled by erasure. The third one has never been satisfied, and would hold, like enough, in a court of law.

The owner of the property wrestled with that mortgage, I suppose, and struggled along, and died at last without paying it. Or perhaps the great war came, with upheaval and dissolution of things in general. Anyway, it was never paid, but has stayed there century after century, compounding interest, until to-day the increment of that original thousand drachmas would redeem Greece.

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I was half a mind to look up the heirs of that old money-lender and buy their claim and begin their suit. Think of being involved in a tangle that has been stringing along through twenty-three centuries, and would tie up yesterday, to-day, and forever in a hard knot! I would have done it, I think, only that it might take another twenty-three centuries to settle it, and I was afraid the ship wouldn't wait.

If there is any one who still does not believe that modern Athens is beautiful and a credit to her ancient name, let him visit as we did her modern temples. We had passed the ancient market entrance, the Tower of the Winds, and other of the old landmarks, when suddenly we turned into a wonderful boulevard, and drove by or visited, one after another, the New Academy, the University, the National Library, the Gallery of Fine Arts, and the National Museum. If Pericles were alive to-day he would approve of those buildings and add them to his collection.

All the old classic grace and beauty have been preserved in the same pure-white pentelican marble, of which it is estimated that there is enough to last any city five thousand years. Corinthian, Ionic, and Doric columns that might have come from the Acropolis itself—and did, in design—adorn and support these new edifices as they did the old, and lend their ineffable glory to the rehabilitation of Greece.

We have learned, by-the-way, to distinguish the kinds of columns. They were all just Greek to us at first, but we know them now. When we see a column with acanthus leaves on the capital we know it is Corinthian, because we remember the story of the girl of Corinth who planted acanthus on her lover's grave and put a hollow tile around it for protection. Some of the leaves came up outside of the tile by and by, and a young architect came along and got his idea for the Corinthian capital.

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We know the Ionic, too, because it looks like its initial—a capital "I" with a little curly top—and we say "I" is for Ionic; and we can tell the Doric, because it's the only one that doesn't suggest anything particular to remember it by. It's worth coming to Greece to learn these things. We should never have learned them at home—never in the world. We should not have had any reason for wanting to learn them.

We got tired of the Museum—Laura, age fourteen, and I—we were too young and frivolous for such things, though they are wonderful enough, I am sure. But then museums we have always with us, while a day in Athens is a fleeting thing. We wanted to take one of our private side-excursions, and we tried to communicate this fact to the Blue Elephant, who was our driver to-day, as yesterday.

It was no light matter. He nodded and smiled when we indicated that we wanted to leave the procession and go it on our own hook, but he did not move. We had already made up our minds that he was subject to fits, or was just plain crazy, for more than once he had suddenly broke away from the party and whirled us around side-streets for a dozen blocks or so to something not down on the programme, rejoining the procession in some unexpected place.

But whatever may have induced his impulses then, nothing seemed to stir his ambition for adventure now. I gesticulated and produced money; I summoned the Diplomat to tackle him in his best Xenophan, but it was no use. I got the guide at last, and then there was an exciting harangue that looked as if it might end in blood. I suppose our man thought he wouldn't get his full pay if he deserted the ship crowd. He must have been convinced, finally, for he leaped upon the box, and away we went in a wild race for the shops and by-streets where we had begged the guide to let us go.

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We had explained that we wanted some bags—some little embroidered bags, such as we had seen earlier in the day when we could not stop. The Blue Elephant understood now and took us to where there were bags—many bags. The whole street was lined with bags and other embroideries, and the Greeks turned out to give us a welcome.

It is said that one Greek is equal to three Turks, and I believe it. The poorest Greek we saw was too much for two Americans, and we were beset and besieged and literally borne down and swamped by a rising tide of bags. We bought at many prices and in many places; we piled the carriage full and fled away at last when they were going to dump upon us a collection of costumes and firearms and draperies that would have required a flat-car.

We were breathing easier when the Blue Elephant pulled us into another narrow street, and behold! it was another street of bags. Dear me! how could we explain that we had enough bags and wanted to see other things? I would almost have given four hundred dollars to have been able to tell him that I wanted to visit the old Byzantine structure we had passed that morning—the one with all the little shoemakers down-stairs—but the thing was impossible. I must buy some more bags, there was no help for it. So I did buy some more, and I picked out a place where a

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man spoke enough English to give the Blue Elephant a fresh start, which brought us at last to the old Byzantine building and the little shoemakers.

Then we saw the street of a hundred clanking sounds—anyway we called it that, for they made all kinds of copper vessels in there—and we got out and told the Blue Elephant to wait, for the place was very narrow; but we couldn't lose him, seeing he was always on our heels, ready to whirl us away somewhere, anywhere, in his crazy, fitty fashion. We had to let him do it, now, for we had used up all the interpreters we could find; besides, we didn't care, any more.

Still, when it got to be near luncheon-time we did begin to wonder where the party had gone. It did not matter greatly, we could lunch anywhere, but we were curious to know whether we should ever see them or the ship again, and when we mentioned the matter to the Blue Elephant he merely grinned and whipped up his horses and capered across another square. But presently I realized that some sort of procession was passing and that he had turned into it. Then it was all just like dreams I've had, for it was our own procession, and we were calmly going along in it, and right away were being personally conducted through a remarkable church where the king and queen go, and sit in golden chairs. Alice in Wonderland could hardly have had a more surprising adventure.

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Our party being free after luncheon, Laura and I engaged Lykabettos on our own account and drove out to the Bay of Salamis, where Xerxes made his great mistake in the matter of fleets.

Perhaps Lykabettos had taken a fancy to us, for he engaged a carriage that had been awarded a prize last year in the games, he said, and the team with it. We believed Lykabettos—anybody would—and anyway it was a beautiful outfit, and we cantered away over a fine road, past wayside shrines, past little huts and houses, past a little memorial that marks the place on a hill where Xerxes placed his silver-footed throne so that he might sit comfortably and watch the enemy's ships go down. Only, the programme didn't work out that way, Lykabettos said:

"Zen Xerxes he pretty soon see zat it was not ze Greek ship zat sink, and he mus' run pretty quick or he will be capture; and hees ship zay try to escape, and he not take away hees army from zat little island you see over zere; zay stay zere and are all massacre by ze Greek—by ze men and ze women, too, who have watch ze battle from here and go over and kill zem."

The little island Lykabettos pointed out was Psyttalleia, and the flower of Persia perished there. It was a tiny bit of barren land then, and it is to-day. The hills around Salamis are barren, too, covered only with a gray weed like the sage-brush of Nevada, and stunted groves of scrubby pine and ground cedar—referred to by Lykabettos as "ze forest."

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We came to the tiny hamlet on the water's side, a collection of two or three huts, and Lykabettos engaged a lateen-sailed lugger (I should call it that, though its name was probably something else), and with a fresh wind half-ahead we billowed over the blue waters of Salamis, where twenty-five hundred years ago the Persian ships went down. It was a cloudy afternoon and there was a stormy feeling in the sky. It seemed just the time to be there, and there was nothing to dispel the illusion of imminent battle that was in the air.

I was perfectly sure, and so was Laura, that the Persian fleet was likely at any moment to round the point and land troops on Pysttalleia; also that the Greek fleet was hiding somewhere in the Bay of Eleusis, and that there were going to be very disagreeable happenings there in a few minutes. There was a hut where we landed on the Island of Salamis and a girl making lace at the front door. She might have been there twenty-five hundred years ago, as well as not—perhaps was—and saw the great victory.

We sailed back then, crossing again the exact spot where the battle raged, and drove home through the gathering evening, while Lykabettos recounted in that sad voice of his the history of ancient days. We are on the ship now, with anchor weighed, looking to the Farther East. Athens with its temples and its traditions drops below the horizon. Darkness and silence once more claim the birthplace of gods and heroes as we slip out of these quiet waters and head for the Ægean Sea.

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XVII

INTO THE DARDANELLES

We saw but little of the Isles of Greece. It was night and we were tired after a hard day; most of us, I think, turned in early. Now and then a light—a far tiny speck—appeared in one quarter or another—probably a signal beacon; that was all.

But in the morning—it was soon after breakfast—a gray bank rose up out of the sea, and the word went round that it was Asia. That was a strange thing for a boy who had been brought up on the prairies of the Middle West—to look across the bow and see Asia coming up out of the sea. It brought back a small, one-room, white district schoolhouse, dropped down on the bleak, level

prairie, and geography-class of three, standing in a row and singing to the tune of *Old Dan Tucker* the rhymes of the continents:

"Asia sixteen millions,
The largest of the five grand divisions."

It was not much of a rhyme, nor much of a tune, but there was a swing in the way we did it which fixed those facts for life. They came back now, and I had to get hold of myself a little to realize that this was the same Asia with all those square miles—the land of the Arabian Nights, of the apostles and the patriarchs—the wonderful country I had one day hoped to see. And presently we were off the Plains of Troy, passing near where the ships of the Greeks lay anchored, all of which seemed very wonderful, too, I thought. We were in the Dardanelles, then, following the path of those first Argonauts who set sail with Jason, and of that later band who set out in the *Quaker City*, forty-two years ago. No lack of history and tradition and old association here.

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But how one's information does go to seed; all of us knew something, but none of us knew much. Not one of us knew positively whether the Hellespont was the same as the Dardanelles or as the Bosphorus, and when, with the help of the guide-book, we decided that it was the former, we fell into other luminous debates as to where Leander swam it when he was courting Hero and where Xerxes built his bridge. The captain said that both these things took place at Abydos, which he pointed out to us, and then we were in trouble right away again as to whether this was the Abydos of Lord Byron's poem, or merely another town by the same name. At all events it was not much of a place.

On the whole, the shores of the Dardanelles are mostly barren and uninteresting, with small towns here and there and fortifications. At one place some men came out in a boat and went through the formality of letting us enter the country. It did not seem much of a permission; I could have given it myself. But I suppose we had to have theirs; otherwise they might have reached us with some kind of a gun.

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We entered the Sea of Marmora, passed a barren island or two; then the shores fell back beyond the horizon, and most of us put in the rest of the day pretending to read up on Constantinople. It was dark when we dropped anchor in the mouth of the Bosphorus, and we were at dinner—a gala dinner, after which we danced. A third of the way around the world to the westward, in a country called America, a new President would be inaugurated to-morrow, and in the quiet dusk of our anchorage, with the scattered lights of Asia blinking across from one side and a shadowy, mysterious grove and a fairy-lighted city on the other, we celebrated that great occasion in the West and our arrival at the foremost mart of the East by dancing before Stamboul.

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That should have ended our day, but when we were about to break up, a boat-load or two of uniformed officials with distinctly Oriental faces and fezzes came aboard and opened business in the after cabin, going through our passports. Then for an hour or so there was most extraordinary medley of confused tongues. We had all our own kinds going at once and several varieties of Constantinoplese besides. And what an amazing performance it was, altogether—something not to be equalled anywhere else on the earth, I imagine, unless in Russia—a sufficient commentary on the progress and enlightenment of these two laggard nations.



**ONE'S AGE, STATED ON OATH, GOES WITH A
PASSPORT**

Curious how some of our ladies hesitate about showing their passports. One's age, stated on oath, goes with a passport.

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XVIII

A CITY OF ILLUSION

I suppose there is no more beautiful city from the outside and no more disheartening city from the inside than Constantinople. From the outside it is all fairyland and enchantment; from the inside it is all grime and wretchedness. Viewed from the entrance of the Bosphorus, through the haze of morning, it is a vision. Viewed from a carriage driven through the streets it becomes a nightmare. If one only might see it as we did—at sunrise, with the minarets and domes lifting from the foliage, all aglow with the magic of morning—and then sail away from that dream spectacle, his hunger unsatisfied, he would hold at least one supreme illusion in his heart.

For that is what it is—just an illusion—the most superb fantasy in the whole world. We left anchorage soon after sunrise and moved over abreast of Galata a little below the bridge that crosses the Golden Horn and connects this part of Constantinople with Stamboul. We are lying now full length against the street, abreast of it, where all day long a soiled, disordered life goes on. It is a perpetual show, but hardly a pleasing one. It is besmirched and raucous; it is wretched.

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Hawkers, guides, beggars, porters weave in and out and mingle vociferously. To leave the ship is to be assailed on every side. Across the street is a row of coffee-houses where unholy music and singing keep up most of the time. Also, there are dogs, scores of them—a wolfish breed—and they are seldom silent. This is the reverse of the picture. As the outside is fairyland, so this is inferno.

We battled our way to our carriages and drove across the bridge to Stamboul. Perhaps it would be better there. But that was a mistake—it was worse. We entered some narrow, thronging streets—a sort of general market, I should say—that fairly reeked with offal. We saw presently that nearly everybody wore rubbers, or stilted shoes—wooden sandal things, with two or three inches of heel and sole—and we understood why; it was to lift them out of the filth. I have had dreams where, whichever way I turned, lay ordure and corruption, with no way out on any side. Such dreams were hardly worse than this. A passenger of our party—a lady—said afterwards:

"When we drove through those streets I felt as if I had died and gone to hell."

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Yet on the whole, I think hell would be cleaner. I am sure it would not smell so. I have no special preference for brimstone, but I would have welcomed it as we drove through those Constantinople streets.

I know what they smell like; I can describe it exactly: they smell like a garbage-can. Not the average garbage-can—fairly fresh and leading the busy life—but an old, opulent, tired garbage-can—one that has been filled up and overlooked, in August. Now and then at home a can like that gets into the garbage-wagon, and when that wagon comes along the street on a still summer morning it arrests attention. I have seen strong men turn pale and lovely women totter when that can went by.

It would have no distinction in Constantinople. The whole city is just one vast garbage-can, and old—so old—why, for a thousand years or more they have been throwing stuff into the streets for the dogs to eat up, and the dogs can't eat some things, and so—

Never mind; enough is enough; but if ever I get home, and if ever I want to recall vividly this vision of the East, I shall close my eyes when that garbage-wagon drives by, and once more the panorama—panorama, I mean—of these thronging streets will unfold; I shall be transported once more to the heart of this busy city; I shall see again all the outlandish dress, all the strange faces, all the mosques and minarets, all the magic of the Orient, and I shall say, "This is it—this is the spicy East—this is Constantinople—Allah is indeed good!"

It was at the entrance of the mosque of St. Sophia—a filthy entrance through a sort of an alley—that we heard our first cry of "Baksheesh!"—a plaintive cry from a pretty, pathetic little girl who clung to us, and called it over and over like the cry of a soul being dragged to perdition—"Bak-she-e-e-sh! Bak-sh-e-e-sh!" a long-drawn-out wail. Not one of us who would not have given her freely had we not known that to do so would be to touch off the cyclone—the cloud of vultures hovering on the outskirts. One's heart grows hard in the East; it has to.

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At the door of the mosque there was a group of creatures who put slippers on us and made a pretence of tying the wretched things. They didn't do it, of course, and one had to slide and skate and straddle to keep from losing them—which thing would be a fearful desecration—we being "Christian dogs." The Apostle in those slippers, skating and straddling and puffing his way through St. Sophia's was worth coming far to see.

It is a mighty place, a grand place, but it has been described too often for me to attempt the details here. It is very, very old, and they have some candles there ten feet high and ten inches through (they look exactly like smooth marble columns and make the place very holy), and there are some good rugs on the floor. Several of our party who are interested in such things agreed that the rugs are valuable, though they are laid crooked, as they all point toward Mecca, whereas the mosque, originally a Christian church, stands with the points of the compass.

It has been built and rebuilt a good many times. The Emperor Justinian was its last great builder, and he robbed the ruins of Ephesus and Baalbec of certain precious columns for his purpose. On Christmas Day, 537 A.D., he finished and dedicated his work. Altogether he had spent five million

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dollars on the undertaking and had nearly bankrupted the empire. Nine hundred years later the Turks captured Constantinople, and Mohammed II., with drawn sword, rode into St. Sophia's and made the bloody handprint which remains the Moslem ruler's sign-manual to this day. They showed us the print, but I don't think it is the same one. It may be, but I don't think so—unless Mohammed was riding a camel.

Some kind of ceremony was in progress when we arrived, but as usual in such places, we did not mind. We went right in just the same, and our guides, too, and we talked and pointed and did what we could to break up the services. Old turbaned sons of the Prophet were kneeling and bowing and praying here and there, and were a good deal in the way. Sometimes we fell over them, but we were charitably disposed and did not kick them—at least, I didn't, and I don't think any of the party did. We might kick a dog—kick at him, I mean—if we tripped over one, but we do not kick a Moslem—not a live one. We only take his picture and step on him and muss him up, and make a few notes and go.

I have been wondering what would happen to a party of tourists—Moslems, for instance—who broke into an American church during services, with guides to point and explain, and stared at the people who were saying their prayers, and talked them over as if they were wax figures. An American congregation would be annoyed by a mob like that, and would remove it and put it in the calaboose. But then such things wouldn't happen in America. We have cowed our foreign visitors. Besides, there is nothing in an American church that a foreigner would care to see.

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We went to other mosques: to Suleiman, to Ahmed, to the "Pigeon" mosque with its gentle birds that come in clouds to be fed, but there is a good deal of sameness in these splendid edifices. Not that they are alike, but they seem alike, with their mellow lights, their alcoves and sacred sanctuaries; their gigantic wax candles; their little Turkeys—Turkish boys, I mean—rocking and singing the Koran, learning to be priests. And everywhere, whether it be prayer-time or not, there were old bearded men prostrated in worship or bowed in contemplation. Quite frequently we sat down on these praying men to rest a little, but they were too absorbed to notice it.

There were no women in the mosques. The men supply the souls and the religion for the Turkish household. A woman has no use for a soul in Turkey. She wouldn't know what to do with it, and it would only make her trouble. She is allowed to pretend she has one, however, and to go to mosque now and then, just as we allow children to play "store" or "keeping-house." But it's make believe. She really hasn't any soul—everybody knows that.

Constantinople is full of landmarks that perpetuate some memory—usually a bloody one—of the Janizaries. Every little while our guide would say, "This is where the Janizaries conquered the forces of Abdullah VI.," or "This is where the Janizaries overthrew and assassinated Mahmoud I.," or "This is where the Janizaries attacked the forces of His Sacred Majesty Bismillah II.," and everybody would say, "Oh, yes, of course," and we would go on.

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I said, "Oh yes, of course," with the others, which made it hard, later on, when I had worked up some curiosity on the subject, to ask who in the deuce the Janizaries were, anyway, and why they had been allowed to do all these bloody things unreprieved.

By and by we came to a place where the guide said that eight thousand of them had perished in the flames, and added that fifteen thousand more had been executed and twenty thousand banished. And we all said, "Oh yes, of course," again, and this time I meant it, for I thought that was about what would be likely to happen to persons with Janizary habits. Then I made a memorandum to look up that tribe when I got back to the ship.

I have done so, now. The Janizaries were a body of military police, organized about 1330, originally of young Christians compelled to become Moslems. They became a powerful and terrible body, by and by, and conducted matters with a high hand. They were a wild, impetuous horde, and five hundred years of their history is full of assassinations of sultans and general ravage and bloodshed. In time they became a great deal more dangerous to Turkey than her enemies, but it was not until 1826 that a sultan, Mahmoud II., managed to arouse other portions of his army to that pitch of fanatical zeal which has made Janizaries exceedingly scarce ever since. I think our guide is a Janizary—he has the look—but I have decided not to mention the matter.

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We skated through mosques and the tombs of sultans and their wives most of the day, appraising the rugs and shawls and general *bric-à-brac*, and dropped into a museum—the best one, so far, in my opinion. They have a sarcophagus of Alexander there—that is, it was made for Alexander, though it is said he never slept in it, which is too bad, if true, for it is the most beautiful thing in the world—regarded by experts as the finest existing specimen of Greek art. We lingered a long time about that exquisite gem—long for us—and bought photographs of it when we came away. Then we set out for the Long Street of Smells, crossed the Galata bridge, and were at the ship—home.

We have only made a beginning of Constantinople, for we are to be here several days. But if it is all like to-day I could do with less of it. I have got enough of that smell to last a good while, and of the pandemonium that reigns in this disordered aggregation of thoroughfares, humanity and buildings—this weird phantasmagoria miscalled a city. Through my port-hole, now—I am on the street side—there comes the most devilish concatenation of sounds: dogs barking and yelping, barbaric singing, wild mandolin music, all mingled with the cries of the hawkers and street arabs, and when I reflect that this is the real inwardness of that wonder dream we saw at sunrise, I am

XIX

THE TURK AND SOME OF HIS PHASES

If one wants to get a fair idea of the mixed population of Constantinople, when the city's phantasmagoric life is in full swing, he may walk slowly across the Galata bridge, or he may stand still and watch the kaleidoscope revolve. Every costume, every color and kind of fabric, every type of Oriental will be represented there. It is a wild fancy-dress parade let loose—only that most of the bizarre costumes are rather dingy and have the look of belonging to their wearers, which is less likely to be so on an artificial occasion.

The red fez predominates as to head-gear, and sanguinary waves of them go by. But there is every manner of turban, too, and the different kinds are interesting. Some of them are bound with rope or cord; some with twisted horsehair (those are Bedouins, I believe); some are wound with white muslin—these are worn by priests—and some are wound or bound with green, which indicates that the wearer is a descendant of Mohammed himself—that is, a "Son of the Prophet." The Prophet seems to have a good many descendants—not so many as Israel had in the same length of time, but still an industrious showing.

One might suppose that these wearers of the green turban would be marked for special honor, and perhaps they are, but by no means are they all men of leisure. I saw one "wearer of the green" tooling a tram to the Seven Towers, and another son of the Prophet—a venerable man—bowed beneath a great box until his white beard and the rear elevation of his trousers nearly dragged in the dust.

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I think, by-the-way, I am more interested in the Turkish trousers than in any other article of national dress. They are rather short as to leg, but what they lack in length they make up in width and general amplitude. There is enough goods in the average pair of Turkish trousers to make a whole suit of clothes with material left for repairs. They are ridiculous enough from the front and the rear, but I rather like a side view best. The long after-part has such a drooping pendulous swing to it, and one gets the full value of the outline in profile and can calculate just what portion of it is occupied by the owner, and can lose himself in speculation as to what the rest is for. I like freedom and comfort well enough, too, in my clothes, but I would not be willing to sacrifice in the length of my trousers for the sake of that laundry-bag effect in the rear. I can admire it, though, and I do, often.

At the Stamboul end of the Galata bridge is the most picturesque group, I believe, in the Orient. A coffee-house is there, and in front of it all the picture types of the East are gathered, with not a single Caucasian face or dress. When I used to look at the gorgeously extravagant costumes and the flowing beards and patriarchal faces of the paintings and illustrations of the East, I said: "No, they do not really exist. They may have done so once, but not to-day. I have seen the Indian of my own country in his native sage-brush. And he is no longer the Indian of the pictures. His dress is adulterated with ready-made trousers and a straw hat; his face is mixed in color and feature; with the Orient it must be the same."

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I was mistaken. All the picture people are collected here, and more than picture ever saw. No sober imagination could conceive the scene at the end of the Galata bridge. To present it a painter would have to inebriate himself, spill his colors all about the place and wind up with the jimjams. What do these people do there? They indulge in keyeff. There is no English word for keyeff—no word in any language, probably, except Turkish. It is not done in any other language. Keyeff is a condition of pure enjoyment, unimpaired even by thought. Over his coffee and nargileh the Turk will sit for hours in a thought-vacancy which the Western mind can comprehend no more than it can grasp the fourth dimension. It



KEYEFF

is not contemplation—that would require mental exercise. It is absence of thought—utter absence of effort—oblivion—the condition for which the Western mind requires chloroform.

From the end of the Galata bridge the thronged streets diverge, and into these a motley

procession flows. Men of every calling under the sun—merchants, clerks, mechanics, laborers, peddlers, beggars, bandits—all men—or nearly all, for the Mohammedan woman mostly bides at home.

It is just as well that she does, if one may judge from the samples. She is not interesting, I think. She may be, but my opinion is the other way. She dresses in a sort of domino, usually of dingy goods, her feet and ankles showing disreputable stockings and shoes. Even the richest silk garments, when worn by women—those one sees on the street—have a way of revealing disgusting foot-gear and hosiery. No, the Mohammedan woman is not interesting and she has no soul. I believe the Prophet decided that, and I agree with him. If she had one—a real feminine soul—she would be more particular about these details. [Pg 161]

The Turk is a dingy person altogether, and his city is unholy in its squalor. Yet the religion of these people commands cleanliness. Only the command was not clear enough as to terms. The Prophet bade his followers to be as cleanly as possible. There was latitude in an order like that, and they have been widening it ever since. I don't believe they are as "clean as possible." They pray five times a day, and they wash before prayer, but they wash too little and pray too much for the best results. I mean so far as outward appearance is concerned. Very likely their souls are perfect.

At all events they are sober. The Prophet commanded abstinence, and I saw no drunkenness. There are no saloons in Constantinople. One may buy "brandy-sticks"—canes with long glass phials concealed in them and a tiny glass for tipping—though I suspect these are sold mostly to visitors.

You are in the business part of Constantinople as soon as you leave the bridge—in the markets and shops, and presently in the bazaars. The streets are only a few feet wide, and are swarming with men and beasts of burden, yet carriages dash through, and the population falls out of the way, cursing the "Christian dogs," no doubt, in the case of tourists. Yet let a carriage but stop and there is eager attention on every hand—a lavish willingness to serve, to dance attendance, to grovel, to do anything that will bring return. [Pg 162]

The excursionist, in fact, presently gets an idea that these people are conducting a sort of continuous entertainment for his benefit—a permanent World's Fair Midway Plaisance, as it were, where curious wares and sights are arranged for his special diversion. He is hardly to be blamed for this notion. He sees every native ready to jump to serve him—to leave everything else for his pleasure. The shopkeeper will let a native customer wait and fume till doomsday as long as the tourist is even a prospect. The native piastre is nothing to him when American gold is in sight. That is what he lives for by day and dreams of by night. He will sweat for it, lie for it, steal for it, die for it. It is his life, his hope, his salvation. He will give everything but his immortal soul for the gold of the West, and he would give that too, if it would bring anything.

Most places along the Mediterranean deal in mixed moneys, but compared with Constantinople the financial problem elsewhere is simple. Here the traveller's pocket is a medley of francs, lire, crowns, piastres, drachmas, marks, and American coins of various denominations. He tries feebly to keep track of table values, but it is no use. The crafty shopkeepers, who have all the world's monetary lore at their fingertips, rob him every time they make change, and the more he tries to figure the more muddled he gets, until he actually can't calculate the coin of his own realm. [Pg 163]

As for Turkish money, in my opinion it is worth nothing whatever. It is mostly a lot of tinware and plated stuff, and the plating is worn off, and the hieroglyphics, and it was never anything more than a lot of silly medals in the beginning. Whenever I get any of it I work it off on beggars as quickly as possible for baksheesh, and I always feel guilty, and look the other way and sing a little to forget.

Nobody really knows what any of those Turkish metallic coins are supposed to be worth. One of them will pay for a shine, but then the shine isn't worth anything, either, so that is no basis of value. There is actually no legal tender in Turkey. How could there be, with a make-believe money like that?

Speaking of bootblacks, they all sit in a row at the other end of the Galata bridge, and they go to sleep over your shoes and pretend to work on them and take off the polish you gave them yourself in the morning. They have curious-looking boxes, and their work is as nearly useless as any effort, if it is that, I have ever known.

I have been trying for a page or two to say something more about the streets of Constantinople, and now I've forgotten what it was I wanted to say. Most of them are not streets at all, in fact, but alleys, wretched alleys—some of them roofed over—and as you drive through them your face gets all out of shape trying to fit itself to the sights and smells. I remember now; I wanted to mention the donkeys—the poor, patient little beasts of burden that plod through those thoroughfares, weighed down with great loads of brick and dirt and wood and every sort of heavy thing, enough to make a camel sway-backed, I should think. They are the gentlest creatures alive, and the most imposed upon. If Mohammed provided a heaven for the donkeys, I hope it isn't the one the Turks go to. [Pg 164]

Then there are the fountains—that is, the public watering-places. They are nearly all carved in relief and belong to an earlier period, when art here was worth something. Here and there is a modern one—gaudy, tinsel, wretched.

But one has to stop a minute to remember that these old streets are not always occupied by the turbans and fezzes of the unspeakable Turk. Constantinople was Greek in the beginning, founded away back, six hundred years or more B.C., and named Byzantium, after one Byzas, its founder. The colony had started to settle several miles farther up the Golden Horn, when a crow came along and carried off a piece of their sacrificial meat. They were mad at first; but when they found he had dropped it over on Bosphorus Point they concluded to take his judgment and settle there instead.

Then came a good many changes. Persians and Greeks held the place by turns, and by and by it was allied to Rome. The Christian Emperor Constantine made it his capital about 328 A.D. and called it New Rome. But the people wouldn't have that title. Constantine had rebuilt the city, and they insisted on giving it his name. So Constantinople it became and remained—the names Galata, Pera, Stamboul, and Skutari (accent on the "Sku") being merely divisions, the last-named on the Asiatic side.

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It was not until eleven hundred years after Constantine that the Turkomans swarmed in and possessed themselves of what had become a tottering empire. So the Turkish occupation is comparatively recent—only since 1453.

Still, that is a good while ago, when one considers what has been done elsewhere. Christopher Columbus was playing marbles in Genoa, or helping his father comb wool, then. America was a place of wigwams—a habitation of Indian tribes. We have done a good deal in the four and a half centuries since—more than the Turk will do in four and a half million years. The Turk is not an express train. He is not even a slow freight. He is not a train at all, but an old caboose on the hind end of day before yesterday. By the way, I know now why these old cities have still older cities buried under them. They never clean the streets, and a city gets entirely covered up at last with dirt.

I have been wanting to speak of the dogs of Constantinople ever since I began this chapter. They have been always in my mind, but I wanted to work off my ill-nature, first, on the Turk. For I have another feeling for the dogs—a friendly feeling—a sympathetic feeling—an affectionate feeling.

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Every morning at four o'clock the dogs of Constantinople turn their faces toward Mecca and howl their heartbreak to the sky. At least, I suppose they turn toward Mecca—that being the general habit here when one has anything official to give out. I know they howl and bark and make such a disturbance as is heard nowhere else on earth. In America, two or three dogs will keep a neighborhood awake, but imagine a vast city of dogs all barking at once—forty or fifty dogs to the block, counting the four sides! Do you think you could sleep during that morning orison? If you could, then you are sound-proof.

I have said that I have an affection for the dogs, but not at that hour. It develops later, when things have quieted down, and I have had breakfast and am considering them over the ship's side. There is a band of them owns this section of the water-front, and they are worth studying.

They are not as unsightly and as wretched as I expected to find them. Life for them is not a path of roses, but neither is it a trail of absolute privation. They live on refuse, and there is plenty of refuse. They are in fair condition, therefore, as to flesh, and they do not look particularly unhappy, though they are dirty enough, and sometimes mangy and moth-eaten and tufty; but then the Turks themselves are all of these things, and why should the dogs be otherwise?

The type of these dogs impresses me. They have reverted to the original pattern—they are wolf-dogs. They vary only in color—usually some tone of grizzly gray—and not widely in that. They have returned to race—to the old wild breed that made his bed in the grass and revolved three times before he was ready to lie down. One might expect them to be ugly and dangerous, but they are not. They are the kindest, gentlest members of the dog family notwithstanding the harsh treatment they receive, and the most intelligent. No one really human can study them without sympathy and admiration.

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I have watched these dogs a good deal since we came here, and a lady of Constantinople, the wife of a foreign minister, has added largely to my information on the subject.

They are quite wonderful in many ways. They have divided themselves into groups or squads, and their territory into districts, with borders exactly defined. They know just about how much substance each district will supply and the squads are not allowed to grow. There is a captain to each of these companies, and his rule is absolute. When the garbage from each house is brought out and dumped into the street, he oversees the distribution and keeps order. He keeps it, too. There is no fighting and very little discord, unless some outlaw dog from a neighboring group attempts to make an incursion. Then there is a wild outbreak, and if the dog escapes undamaged he is lucky.

The captain of a group is a sultan with the power of life and death over his subjects. When puppies come along he designates the few—the very few—that are to live, and one mother nurses several of the reduced litters—the different mothers taking turns. When a dog gets too old to be useful in the strenuous round—when he is no longer valuable to the band—he is systematically put out of the way by starvation. A day comes when the captain issues some kind of an edict that he is no longer to have food. From that moment, until his death, not a morsel passes his lips. With

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longing eyes he looks at the others eating, but he makes no attempt to join them. Now and again a bit of something falls his way. The temptation is too strong—he reaches toward the morsel. The captain, who overlooks nothing, gives a low growl. The dying creature shrinks back without a murmur. He knows the law. Perhaps he, too, was once a captain.

The minister's wife told me that she had tried to feed one of those dying dogs, but that even when the food was placed in front of him he would only look pleadingly at the captain and refuse to touch it. She brought him inside, at last, where he was no longer under that deadly surveillance. He ate then, but lived only a little while. Perhaps it was too late; perhaps the decree was not to be disobeyed, even there.

As a rule, it is unwise to show kindness or the least attention to these dogs, she said. The slightest word or notice unlocks such a store-house of gratitude and heart-hunger in those poor creatures that one can never venture near that neighborhood again without being fairly overwhelmed with devotion. Speak a word to one of them and he will desert his companions and follow you for miles.

The minister's wife told how once a male member of her household had shown some mark of attention to one of the dogs of their neighborhood group. A day or two later she set out for a walk, carrying her parasol, holding it downward. Suddenly she felt it taken from her hand. Looking down, she saw a dog walking by her side, carrying it. It was the favored animal, trying to make return to any one who came out of that heavenly house.

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She told me how in the winter the dogs pile up in pyramids to keep warm, and how those underneath, when they have smothered as long as they can, will work out and get to the top of the heap and let the others have a chance to get warm and smothered too.

Once, when some excavations were going on in her neighborhood the dogs of several bands, made kin by a vigorous touch of nature, cold, had packed themselves into a sort of tunnel which the workmen had made. One dog who had come a little late was left outside. He made one or two efforts to get a position, but it was no use. He reflected upon the situation and presently set up a loud barking. That was too much for those other dogs. They came tumbling out to see what had happened, but before they had a chance to find out, the late arrival had slipped quietly in and established himself in the warmest place.

Once a pasha visited a certain neighborhood in Pera, and the dogs kept him awake. In his irritation he issued an order that the dogs of that environment should be killed. The order was carried out, and for a day and a night there was silence there. But then the word had gone forth that a section of rich territory had been vacated, and there was a rush for it that was like the occupation of the Oklahoma strip.

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There was trouble, too, in establishing the claim and electing officers. No such excitement and commotion and general riot had ever been known in that street before. It lasted two days and nights. Then everything was peaceable enough. Captains had fought their way to a scarred and limping victory. Claims had been duly surveyed and distributed. The pasha had retired permanently from the neighborhood.

It is against the law for the ordinary citizen to kill one of the dogs. They are scavengers, and the law protects them. One may kick and beat and scald and maim them, and the Turk has a habit of doing these things; but he must not kill them—not unless he is a pasha. And, after all, the dogs own Constantinople—the pariah dogs, I mean; there are few of the other kind. One seldom sees a pet dog on the streets. The pariah dogs do not care for him. They do not attack him, they merely set up a racket which throws that pet dog into a fever and fills him with an abiding love of home. But I am dwelling too long on this subject. I enjoy writing about these wonderful dogs. They interest me.

Perhaps the "Young Turks" will improve Constantinople. Already they have made the streets safer; perhaps they will make them cleaner. Also, they may improve the Turkish postal service. That would be a good place to begin, I should think. Constantinople has a native post-office, but it isn't worth anything. Anybody who wants a letter to arrive sends it through one of the foreign post-offices, of which each European nation supports one on its own account. To trust a letter to the Turkish post-office is to bid it a permanent good-bye. The officials will open it for money first, and soak off the stamp afterward. If you inquire about it, they will tell you it was probably seditious and destroyed by the sultan's orders. Perhaps that will not be so any more. The sultan's late force of twenty thousand spies has been disbanded, and things to-day are on a much more liberal basis. Two royal princes came aboard our vessel to-day, unattended except by an old marshal—something which has never happened here before.

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These princes have been virtually in prison all their lives. Until very recently they had never left the palace except under guard. They had never been aboard a vessel until they came aboard the *Kurfürst*, and though grown men, they were like children in their manner and their curiosity. They had never seen a type-writer. They had never seen a steam-engine. Our chief engineer took them down among the machinery and they were delighted. They greeted everybody, saluted everybody, and drove away at last in their open victoria drawn by two white horses, with no outriders, no guards, no attendants of any kind except the old marshal—a thing which only a little while ago would not have been dreamed of as possible.

Perhaps there is hope for Turkey, after all.

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ABDUL HAMID GOES TO PRAYER

It was on our second day in Constantinople that we saw the Selamlik—that is, the Sultan Abdul Hamid II. on his way to prayer. It was Friday, which is the Mohammedan Sunday, and the sultan, according to his custom, went to the mosque in state. The ceremony was, in fact, a grand military review, with twenty-five thousand soldiers drawn up on the hillside surrounding the royal mosque, and many bands of music; the whole gay and resplendent with the varied uniforms of different brigades, the trappings of high officials, the flutter of waving banners, the splendor of royal cortége—all the fuss and fanfare of this fallen king.^[3]

For Abdul Hamid is no longer monarch except by sufferance. A tyrant who in his time has ordered the massacre of thousands; has imprisoned and slain members of his own family; has sent a multitude to the Bosphorus and into exile; has maintained in this enlightened day a court and a rule of the Middle Ages—he is only a figurehead now, likely to be removed at a moment's warning.

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The Young Turk is in the saddle. Hamid's force of twenty thousand spies has been disbanded. Men-of-war lie in the Bosphorus just under Yildiz, ready to open fire on that royal palace at the first sign of any disturbance there. The tottering old man is still allowed his royal guard, his harem, and this weekly ceremonial and display to keep up a semblance of imperial power. But he is only a make-believe king; the people know that, and he knows it, too, best of all.

We had special invitations from the palace and a special enclosure from which to view the ceremony. We had cakes, too, and sherbet served while we waited—by the sultan's orders, it was said—but I didn't take any. I thought Abdul might have heard I didn't care for him and put poison in mine. That would be like him.

I was tempted, though, for we had driven a long way through the blinding dust. It was hot there, and we had to stand up and keep on standing up while all that great review got together and arranged and rearranged itself; while officials and black Nubian eunuchs, those sexless slaves of the harem, ran up and down, and men sanded the track—that is, the road over which his majesty was to drive—and did a hundred other things to consume time.

One does not hurry the Orient—one waits on it. That is a useful maxim—I'm glad I invented it. I said it over about a hundred times while we stood there waiting for Abdul Hamid, who was dallying with certain favorites, like as not, and remembering us not at all.

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It was worth seeing, though. Brigade after brigade swung by to the weird music of their bands—billow after billow of brown, red, and blue uniforms. The hillside became a perfect storm of fezzes; the tide of spectators rose till its waves touched the housetops.

Still we waited and watched the clock on the mosque. Nobody can tell time by a Turkish clock, but there was some comfort in watching it. Presently an informing person at my side explained that Turkish chronology is run on an altogether different basis from ours. There are only three hundred and fifty-four days in a Turkish year, he said, which makes the seasons run out a good deal faster, so that it is usually about year after next in Turkey; but as it is only about day before yesterday by the clock, the balance is kept fairly even.

He was a very entertaining person. Referring to the music, he said that once the sultan's special brass band had played before him so pleasingly that he ordered all their instruments filled with gold, which was well enough, except for the piccolo-player, who said: "Sire, I am left out of this reward." "Never mind," said the sultan, "your turn will come." And it did, next day, for the band played so badly that the sultan roared out: "Ram all their instruments down their throats," which was impossible, of course, except in the case of the piccolo-player.

My entertainer said that formerly cameras were allowed at the Selamlik, but that an incident occurred which resulted in prohibiting cameras and all suspicious articles. He said that a gentleman engaged a carriage for the Selamlik, and explained to the driver that he had invented a wonderful new camera—one that would take pictures in all the colors—and instructed him just how to work the machine.

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The gentleman had to make a train, he said, and couldn't wait for the sultan to arrive, but if the driver would press the button when the sultan reached a certain place the picture would take, after which the driver could bring the camera to the Pera Palace Hotel on a certain day and get a hundred piastres, a sum larger than the driver had ever owned at one time. Then the gentleman left in a good deal of a hurry, and the driver told all the other drivers about his good-fortune while they waited; and by and by, when the sultan came, and got just to the place where the gentleman had said, the driver pressed the button, and blew a hole seventy-five feet wide and thirty feet deep right on that spot, and it rained drivers and horses and fezzes and things for seven minutes. It didn't damage the sultan any, but it gave him a permanent distaste for cameras and other suspicious objects.

Laura, age fourteen, who had been listening to the story, said:

"Did they do anything to the driver who did it?"

"Yes; they gathered him up in a cigar box and gave him a funeral. No, the man didn't call for the camera."

I am sorry I have kept the reader waiting for the Selamlik, but the sultan is to blame. One may not hurry a sultan, and one must fill in the time, somehow.

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Some carriages go by at last, and enter the mosque enclosure, but they do not contain the sultan, only some of his favorite wives, with those long black eunuchs running behind. Then there is a carriage with a little boy in it—the sultan's favorite son, it is said—the most beautiful child I ever saw.

A blare of trumpets—all the bayonets straight up—a gleaming forest of them. Oh, what a bad time to fall out of a balloon!

A shout from the troops—a huzzah, timed and perfunctory, but general. Then men in uniform, walking ahead; a carriage with a splendid driver; a pale, bearded, hook-nosed old man with a tired, rather vacant face. Here and there he touches his forehead and his lips with his fingers, waving the imperial salute. For a moment every eye of that vast concourse is upon him—he is the one important bauble of that splendid setting. Then he has passed between the gates and is gone.

Thus it was that Sultan Abdul Hamid attended mosque. It seemed a good deal of fuss to make over an old man going to prayer.

We drove from the Selamlik to the Dancing Dervishes. I have always heard of them and now I have seen them. I am not sorry to have it over.

Their headquarters are in a weather-beaten-frame-barn of a place, and we stood outside for a long time before the doors were open. Inside it was hot and close and crowded, and everybody twisted this way and that and stood up on things to get a look. I held two women together on one chair—they were standing up—and I expected to give out any minute and turn loose a disaster that would break up the show. There wasn't anything to see, either; not a thing, for hours.

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We were in a sort of circular gallery and the dancing-floor was below. We could see squatted there a ring of men—a dozen or so bowed, solemn, abstracted high priests in gowns of different colors and tall fezzes. These were the dervishes, no doubt, but they didn't do anything—not a thing—and we didn't care to stare at them and at the dancing-floor and the rest of the suffering audience forever.

Then we noticed in our gallery a little reserved section with some more abstracted men in gowns and fezzes, and after a long time—as much as a thousand years, I should think—there was an almost imperceptible movement in this reserved compartment, and one of the elect produced some kind of reed and began to blow a strain that must have been born when the woods were temples and the winds were priests—it was so weirdly, mournfully entrancing. I could have listened to that music and forgotten all the world if I hadn't been busy holding those two women on that chair.

The perspiration ran down and my joints petrified while that music droned on and on. Then there was another diversion: a man got up and began to sing. I don't know why they picked that particular man—certainly not for his voice. It was Oriental singing—a sort of chanting monotone in a nasal pitch. Yet there was something wild and seductive about it—something mystical—and I liked it well enough. Only I didn't want it to go on forever, situated as I was. I wanted the dancing to begin, and pretty soon, too. It didn't, however. Nothing begins soon in the Orient.

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But by-and-by, when that songster had wailed for as much as a week, those high priests on the dancing-floor began to show signs of life. They moved a little; they got up; they went through some slow evolutions—to limber themselves, perhaps—then they began to whirl.

The dance is a religious rite, and it is supposed to represent the planets revolving about the sun. The dancers serve an apprenticeship of one thousand and one days, and they can whirl and keep on whirling forever without getting dizzy. The central figure, who represents the sun, has had the most practice, no doubt, for he revolves just twice as fast as the planets, who are ranged in two circles around him. His performance is really wonderful. I did not think so much of the others, except as to their ability to stand upright. I thought I could revolve as fast as they did, myself, and I would have given four dollars for a little freedom just then to try it.

Would that constellation never run down? The satellites whirled on and on, and the high priest in the middle either got faster or I imagined it. Then at last they stopped—just stopped—that was all; only I let go of those two women then and clawed my way to fresh air.

We went to the bazaars after that. There is where the *Kurfürster* finds real bliss. He may talk learnedly of historic sites and rave over superb ruins and mosques and such things, when you drag him in carriages to see them. But only say the word bazaar to him and he will walk three miles to find it. To price the curious things of the East; to barter and beat down; to walk away and come back a dozen times; to buy at last at a third of the asking price—such is the passion that presently gets hold of the irresponsible tourist who lives on one ship and has a permanent

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state-room for his things.

You should see some of those state-rooms! Jars, costumes, baskets, rugs, draperies, statuary—piled everywhere, hung everywhere, stowed everywhere—why, we could combine the stuff on this ship and open a floating bazaar that would be the wonder of the world.

The bazaars of Constantinople are crowded together and roofed over, and there are narrow streets and labyrinthine lanes. One can buy anything there—anything Eastern: ornaments, inlaid work, silks, curious weapons, picture postals (what *did* those *Quaker City* pilgrims do without them?), all the wares of the Orient—he can get a good deal for a little if he is patient and unyielding—and he will be cheated every time he makes change. Never mind; one's experience is always worth something, and this particular tariff is not likely to be high.

We bought several things in Constantinople, but we did not buy any confections. The atmosphere did not seem suited to bonbons, and the places where such things were sold did not look inviting. Laura inspected the assortment and decided that the best Turkish Delight is made in America, and that Broadway is plenty far enough east for nougat. In one bazaar they had a marvellous collection of royal jewels: swords with incrustated handles; caskets "worth a king's ransom"—simply a mass of rubies, emeralds, and diamonds—half a barrel of such things, at least, but we didn't buy any of those goods, either. We would have done so, of course, only they were not for sale.

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We called at the bazaar of Far-away Moses, but he wasn't there. He died only a little while ago, and has gone to that grand bazaar of delight which the Mohammedans have selected as their heaven.

As usual, Laura and I were the last to leave. We were still pulling over some things when our driver, whom we call Suleiman because he has such a holy, villanous look, came suddenly to the entrance, waving frantically. We started then and piled into our carriage. The rest of our party were already off, and we set out helter-skelter after them, Suleiman probably believing that the ship had its anchors up ready to sail.

We were doing very well when right in front of a great arch one of our horses fell down. We had a crowd in a minute, and as it was getting dusk I can't say that I liked the situation. But Suleiman got the horse on his feet somehow, and we pushed along and once more entered that diabolical Street of Smells. It had been bad day by day, but nothing to what it was now. There were no lights, except an oil-lamp here and there; the place was swarming with humanity and dogs, general vileness permeating everything. The woman who thought she had died and gone to hell could be certain of it here.

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It seemed that we would never get out of that street. We had to go slower, and the horrible gully was eternal in its length. How far ahead our party was we did not know. We were entirely alone in that unholy neighborhood with our faithful Suleiman, who looked like a cutthroat, anyhow. I wished he didn't look like that, and Laura said quietly that she never expected to see the light of another dawn.

Bumpety-bump—bark, howl, clatter, darkness, stench—rolling and pitching through that mess, and then, heavenly sight—a vision of lights, water, the end of the Galata bridge!

We made our way through the evening jam and the wild bedlam at the other end, crossing a crimson tide of fezzes, to reach the one clean place we have seen in Constantinople—that is, the ship. The ship is clean—too clean, we think, when we hear them scrubbing and mopping and thumping the decks at four o'clock in the morning, just about dog-howling time. Which brings me to a specimen of our ship German—American German—produced by a gentle soul named Fosdick, of Ohio. He used it on the steward after being kept awake by the ship-cleaning. This is what he said:

"Vas in damnation is das noise? How can I schlaff mit das hellge-fired donner-wetter going on oben mine head?"

That is the sort of thing we can do when we get really stirred up. It is effective, too. There was no unseemly noise this morning.

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XXI

LOOKING DOWN ON YILDIZ

Heretofore, during our stay here, whenever any one happened to mention the less attractive aspects of Constantinople, I have said:

"Yes, the city is pretty bad, but I'll wager the country is a dream. Remember Algiers and her suburban villas? It will be the same here."

I do not say that any more, now that we have been to the country. We went over to Skutari (Asiatic Constantinople) this morning, and took carriages to Bulgurlu Mountain, which overlooks all the city and a vast stretch of country. It is a good view, but it should be, considering what it

costs to get there—in wear and tear, I mean.

Of all villanous roads, those outside Skutari are the most depraved. They are not roads at all, but just washes and wallows and ditches and stone gullies. I have seen bad roads in Virginia—roads surveyed by George Washington, and never touched since—but they were a dream of luxury as compared with these of Turkey. Our carriages billowed and bobbed and pitched and humped themselves until I got out and walked to keep from being lamed for life.

And then the houses—the villas I had expected to see; dear me, how can I picture those cheap, ugly, unpainted, overdecorated architectural crimes? They are wooden and belong to the jig-saw period gone mad. They suggest an owner who has been too busy saving money for a home to acquire any taste; who has spent his savings for lumber and trimmings and has nothing left for paint. Still, he managed to reserve enough to put iron bars on his windows—that is, on part of the house—the harem—every man becoming his own jailer, as it were. I remarked:

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"I suppose that is to keep the neighbors from stealing their wives."

But the Horse-Doctor—wiser and more observant—said:

"No, it is to keep a neighbor from breaking in and leaving another."

Standing on the top of Bulgurlu—looking down on the Bosphorus and the royal palaces—the wife of a foreign minister told us something of the history that has been written there:

When Abdul Aziz, in 1876, became Abdul "as was"^[4] (his veins were opened with a penknife, I believe), one Murad, his nephew, an educated and travelled prince, came into power. But Murad was for progress—bridges and railroads—so Murad retired to Cheragan Palace, where for thirty-two years he sat at a window and looked out on a world in which he had no part, while Abdul Hamid II. reigned in his stead. Murad was wise and gentle, and did not reproach Abdul, who came to him now and again for advice concerning matters of state.

But Murad was fond of watching the people from his window—excursion parties such as ours, and the like—and these in turn used to look up at Murad's window; which things in time came to Abdul Hamid's ears. Then Abdul decided that this indulgence was not good for Murad—nor for the people. Thirty-two years was already too long for that sort of thing. So Murad's face disappeared from the window, and it was given out that he had died—the bulletin did not say what of, but merely mentioned that it had been a "general death"—that is to say, a natural death, under the circumstances—the kind of death a retired Sultan is likely to die. And Abdul mourned for Murad many days, and gave him a costly funeral.

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That was Abdul's way. He was always a good brother—always a generous soul—according to a guide-book published in Constantinople during the time when there were twenty thousand secret agents inspecting such things. The author of that book wanted those twenty thousand secret agents to tell Abdul how good and gentle the book said he was; otherwise, the modest and humble Abdul might not remember. Besides, that author did not wish to disappear from among his friends and be sewed up in a sack and dropped into the Bosphorus some quiet evening. But I wander— I always wander.

Abdul Hamid is said to be affectionate with his family—all his family—and quick—very quick—that is to say, impulsive. He is a crack shot, too, and keeps pistols on his dressing-table. One day he saw one of his little sons—or it may have been one of his little daughters (it isn't always easy to tell them apart, when they are so plentiful and dress a good deal alike), but anyway this was a favorite of Abdul's—he saw this child handling one of his pistols, perhaps playfully pointing it in his direction.

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Hamid didn't tell the child to put the weapon down, and then lecture him. No, he couldn't scold the child, he was too impulsive for that—and quick, as I have mentioned. He drew a revolver of his own and shot the child dead. There were rumors of plots floating around the palace just then, and Hamid wasn't taking any chances. It must have made his heart bleed to have to punish the child in that sudden way.

But by-and-by the times were out of joint for sultans. A spirit of discontent was spreading—there was a cry for freer government. Enver Bey and Niazi Bey, those two young officers whose names are being perpetuated by male babies in every Turkish household, disguised themselves as newsboys or bootblacks, and going among the people of the streets whispered the gospel of freedom. Then one day came the upheaval of which all the world has read. Abdul Hamid one morning, looking out of his window in Yildiz Palace, saw, lying in the Bosphorus just below, the men-of-war which all the years of his reign had been turning to rust and wormwood in the Golden Horn.

Abdul did not believe it at first. He thought he was just having one of those bad dreams that had pestered him now and then since spies and massacres had become unpopular. He pinched himself and rubbed his eyes, but the ships stayed there. Then he sent for the Grand Vizier. (At least, I suppose it was the Grand Vizier—that is what a sultan generally sends for in a case like that.) When he arrived the Sultan was fingering his artillery and looking dangerous.

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"What in h— that is, Allah be praised, but why, sirrah, are those ships lying down there?" he roared.

The G. V. was not full of vain knowledge.

"I—I really don't know, Your Majesty," he said, soothingly. "I will go and see."

He was standing near the door and dodged as he went out. He did not come back. When he had inquired about the ships he decided not to seek Abdul himself, but to send a man—a cheap man—to tell him about it. This was just a dull fellow with not much politeness and no imagination.

"The ships are there by the order of the Minister of Marine, Your Majesty," he said.

Abdul was so astonished that he forgot to slay the fellow.

"Bring the Minister of Marine!" he gasped, when at last he could catch his breath.

The Minister of Marine came—a new minister—one of the Young Turk Party. He was polite, but not upset by the Sultan's emotion. When Abdul demanded the reason why the old ships had been refurbished up and brought down into the Bosphorus, he replied that they were there by his orders, and added:

"We think they look better there, Your Majesty, as in the old days."

"But, by the beard of the Prophet, I will not have them there! Take them away!"

"Your Majesty, it grieves me to seem discourteous, not to say rude, but those ships are to remain at their present anchorage. It grieves me still further to appear to be firm, not to say harsh, but if there is any show of resistance in this neighborhood they have orders to open fire on Your Majesty's palace."

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Abdul took a chair and sat down. His jaw dropped, and he looked at the Minister of Marine a good while without seeming to see him. Then he got up and tottered over to the window and gazed out on those ships lying just below, on the Bosphorus. By-and-by, he went to a little ornamental table and took a pen and some paper and wrote an order in this wise:

Owing to my declining years and my great burdens of responsibility, it is my wish that in future all matters pertaining to the army and navy be under the supervision of the Secretary of War and the Minister of Marine.

ABDUL HAMID, KAHN II.
Son of the Prophet—Shadow of

God, etc., etc.

At all events, that was the purport of it. In reality, it was a succession of wriggly marks which only a Moslem could read. Never mind, it was a graceful surrender.

There is a wonderful old Moslem cemetery near Bulgurlu—one of the largest in the world and the most thickly planted. It is favored by Moslems because it is on the side of the city nearest Mecca, and they are lying there three deep and have overflowed into the roads and byways. Their curiously shaped and elaborately carved headstones stand as thick as grain—some of them crowned with fezzes—some with suns—all of them covered with emblems and poetry and passages from the Koran. They are tumbled this way and that; they are lying everywhere along the road; they have been built into the wayside walls.

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I wanted to carry away one of those tombstones—one of the old ones—and I would have done it if I had known enough Moslem to corrupt the driver. A thing like that would be worth it—adding to one's collection, I mean. The palace was full of great cypresses, too—tall, funereal trees—wonderfully impressive and beautiful.

We drove back to Skutari and there saw our driver Suleiman for the last time. I had already tipped him at the end of each day, but I suppose he expected something rather unusual as a farewell token. Unfortunately, I was low in fractional currency. I scraped together all I had left—a few piastres—and handed them to him and turned quickly away. There came a sudden explosion as of a bomb. I did not look to see what it was—I knew. It was the bursting of Suleiman's heart.

Up the Golden Horn in the afternoon, as far as the Sweet Waters of Europe. It is a beautiful sail, and there is a mosque where the ceremony of conferring the sword on a new Sultan is performed; also, a fine view across the Sweet Waters, with Jewish graveyards whitening the distant hills. But there was nothing of special remark—we being a little tired of the place by this time—except the homecoming.

**I WANTED TO CARRY AWAY ONE
OF THOSE TOMBSTONES**

There were *caiques* lying about the little steamer-landing when we were ready to return, and Laura and I decided to take one of these down the Horn to the ship. The *caique* is a curiously shaped canoe-sort of a craft, and you have to get in carefully and sit still. But once in and seated, it moves as silently and smoothly as a gliding star.

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It was sunset, and the Golden Horn was true to its name. Ships at anchor, barges drifting up and down, were aglow with the sheen of evening—the water a tawny, molten flood, the still atmosphere like an impalpable dust of gold. *Caiques* carrying merchants to their homes somewhere along the upper shores were burnished with the aureate hue. Domes and minarets caught and reflected the wonder of it—the Galata bridge ahead of us had become such a span as might link the shores of the River of Peace.

Once more Constantinople was a dream of Paradise—a vision of enchantment—a city of illusion.

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XXII

EPHESUS: THE CITY THAT WAS

Like Oriental harbors generally, Smyrna from the sea has a magic charm. When we slowly sailed down a long reach of water between quiet hills and saw the ancient city rising from the morning mist, we had somehow a feeling that we had reached a hitherto undiscovered port—a mirage, perhaps, of some necromancer's spell.

We landed, found our train, and went joggling away through the spring landscape, following the old highway that from time immemorial has led from Ephesus to Smyrna—the highway which long ago St. Paul travelled, and St. John, too, no doubt, and the Virgin Mary and Mary Magdalen. For all these journeyed between Ephesus and Smyrna in their time, and the ancient road would be crowded with countless camel trains and laden donkeys then; also with the wheeled vehicles of that period—cars and chariots and cages of wild animals for the games—and there would be elephants, too, gaudily caparisoned, carrying some rich potentate of the East and his retinue—a governor, perhaps, or a king. It was a mighty thoroughfare in those older days and may be still, though it is no longer crowded, and we did not notice any kings.

We did notice some Reprobates—the ones we have always with us. They sat just across the aisle, engaged in their usual edifying discussion as to the identity of the historic sites we were supposed to be passing. Finally they got into a particularly illuminating dispute as to the period of St. Paul's life and ministrations. It began by the Apostle (our Apostle) casually remarking that St. Paul had lived about twenty-one hundred years ago.

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It was a mild remark—innocent enough in its trifling inaccuracy of two or three centuries—but it disturbed the Colonel, who has fallen into the guide-book habit, and is set up with the knowledge thereof.

"Look here," he said, "if I knew as little as you do about such things I'd restrain the desire to give out information before company."

The Apostle was undisturbed by this sarcasm. He folded his hands across his comfortable forward elevation and smiled in his angel way.

"Oh, you think so," he said placidly. "Well, you think like a camel's hump. You never heard of St. Paul till you started on this trip. I used to study about him at Sunday-school when a mere child."

"Yes, you did! as a child! Why, you old lobscause" (lobscause is an article on the *Kurfürst* bill of fare) "you never saw the inside of a Sunday-school. You heard somebody last night say something about twenty-one hundred years ago, and with your genius for getting facts mixed you saddled that date on St. Paul."

The Colonel turned for corroboration to the Horse-Doctor, who regarded critically the outlines of the Apostle, which for convenience required an entire seat; then, speaking thoughtfully:

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"It isn't worth while to notice the remarks of a person who looks like that. Why, he's all malformed. He'll probably explode before we reach Ephesus."

I felt sorry for the Apostle, and was going over to sit with him, only there wasn't room, and just then somebody noticed a camel train—the first we have seen—huge creatures heavily loaded and plodding along on the old highway. This made a diversion. Then there was another camel train, and another. Then came a string of donkeys—all laden with the wares of the East going to Smyrna. The lagging Oriental day was awake; the old road was still alive, after all.

Like the first "Innocents," we had brought a carload or so of donkeys—four-legged donkeys—from Smyrna, and I think they were the same ones, from their looks. They were aged and patchy, and they filled the bill in other ways. They wrung our hearts with their sad, patient faces and their decrepitude, and they exasperated us with their indifference to our desires.

I suppose excursion parties look pretty much alike, and that the *Quaker City* pilgrims forty-two

years ago looked a good deal like ours as we strung away down the valley toward the ancient city. I hope they did not look any worse than ours. To see long-legged men and stout ladies perched on the backs of those tiny asses, in rickety saddles that feel as if they would slip (and do slip if one is not careful), may be diverting enough, but it is not pretty. If the donkey stays in the middle of the narrow, worn pathway, it is very well; but if he goes to experimenting and wandering off over the rocks, then look out. You can't steer him with the single remnant of rope on his halter (he has no bridle), and he pitches a good deal when he gets off his course. Being a tall person, I was closed up like a grasshopper, and felt fearfully top-heavy. Laura, age fourteen, kept behind me—commenting on my appearance and praying for my overthrow.

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It was a good way to the ruins—the main ruins—though in reality there were ruins everywhere: old mosques, gray with age and half-buried in the soil—a thousand years old, but young compared with the more ancient city; crumbling Roman aqueducts leading away to the mountains—old even before the mosques were built, but still new when Ephesus was already hoary with antiquity; broken columns sticking everywhere out of the weeds and grass—scarred, crumbling, and moss-grown, though still not of that first, far, unrecorded period.

But by-and-by we came to mighty walls of stone—huge abutments rising from the marshy plain—and these were really old. The Phœnicians may have laid them in some far-off time, but tradition goes still farther back and declares they were laid by giants—the one-eyed kind, the Cyclops—when all this marsh was sea. These huge abutments were piers in that ancient day. A blue harbor washed them, and the merchant ships of mighty Ephesus lay alongside and loaded for every port.

That was a long time ago. Nobody can say when these stone piers were built, but Diana and Apollo were both born in Ephesus, and there was probably a city here even then. What we know is that by the beginning of the Christian era Ephesus was a metropolis with a temple so amazing, a theatre so vast and a library so beautiful that we stand amid the desolation to-day, helplessly trying to reconstruct the proportions of a community which could require these things; could build them and then vanish utterly, leaving not a living trace behind.

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For nobody to-day lives in Ephesus—not a soul. A wandering shepherd may build his camp-fire here, or an Arab who is tilling a bit of ground; but his home will be in Ayasaluk, several miles away, not here. Once the greatest port of trade in western Asia, Ephesus is voiceless and vacant now, except when a party like ours comes to disturb its solitude and trample among its forlorn glories.

There is no lack of knowledge concerning certain of the structures here—the more recent ones, we may call them, though they were built two thousand years ago. There are descriptions everywhere, and some of them are as cleanly cut to-day as they were when the tool left them. This library was built in honor of Augustus Cæsar and Livia, and it must have been a veritable marble vision. Here in its corners the old students sat and pored over books and precious documents that filled these crumbling recesses and the long-vanished shelves. St. Paul doubtless came here to study during the three years of his residence, and before him St. John, for he wrote his gospel in Ephesus, and would be likely to seek out the place of books. And Mary would walk with him to the door sometimes, I think, and Mary of Magdala, for these three passed their final days in Ephesus, and would be drawn close together by their sacred bond.

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The great theatre where St. Paul battled with the wild beasts stands just across the way. It seated twenty-five thousand, and its stone benches stretch upward to the sky. The steep marble flight that carries you from tier to tier is there to-day exactly as when troops of fair ladies and handsome beaux climbed up and still up to find their places from which to look down on the play or the gladiatorial combat or the massacre of the Christians in the arena below.

These old theatres were built in a semicircle dug out of the mountain-side, so that the seats were solid against the ground and rose one above the other with the slope of the hill, which gave everybody a good view. There were no columns to interfere with one's vision, for there was no roof to be supported, except, perhaps, over the stage, but the top seats were so remote from the arena and the proscenium that the players must have seemed miniatures. Yet even above these there was still mountain-side, and little boys who could not get money for an entrance fee or carry water to the animals for a ticket sat up in that far perch, no doubt, and looked down and shouted at the show.

Laura and I, who, as usual, had dropped behind the party, climbed far up among the seats and tried to imagine we had come to the afternoon performance—had come early, not to miss any of it. But it was difficult, even when we shut our eyes. Weeds and grass grew everywhere in the crevices; dandelions bloomed and briars tangled where sat the beaux and belles of twenty centuries ago. Just here at our feet the mobs of Demetrius the silversmith gathered, crying, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians!" because the religion of St. Paul was spoiling their trade for miniature temples. Down there in the arena Paul did battle with the beasts, very likely as punishment. This is the spot—these are the very benches—but we cannot see the picture: we cannot wake the tread of the vanished years.

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Behind the arena are the columns that support the stage, and back of these are the dressing-rooms, their marble walls as solid and perfect to-day as when the ancient players dallied and gossiped there. At one end is a dark, cave-like place where we thought the wild beasts might have been kept. I stood at the entrance and Laura made my picture, but she complained that I did not look fierce enough for her purpose.

On another slope of the hill a smaller theatre, the Odeon, has recently been uncovered. A gem of beauty it was, and much of its wonder is still preserved. Here the singers of a forgotten time gave forth their melody to a group of music-lovers, gathered in this close circle of seats that not a note or shading might be lost.



**ALL THE PLAINS AND SLOPES OF THE OLD CITY
WITH ITS WHITE FRAGMENTS AND POOR RUINED
HARBOR LAY AT OUR FEET**

**Note.—In this picture the theatre where St. Paul fought
is in the foreground; the library just beyond, the
market-place to the right. Bits of water show where the
harbor once lay.**

We passed around this dainty playhouse, across a little wheat-field that some peasant has planted against its very walls, on up the hill, scrambling along steep declivities over its brow, and, behold! we came out high above the great theatre on the other side, and all the plain and slopes of the old city, with its white fragments and its poor ruined harbor, lay at our feet. Earthquakes shook the city down and filled up the splendid harbor. If the harbor had been spared the city would have been rebuilt. Instead, the harbor is a marsh, the city a memory.

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From where we stood we could survey the sweep of the vanished city. We could look across into the library and the market-place and follow a marble road—its white blocks worn smooth by a million treading feet—where it stretched away toward the sea. And once more we tried to conjure the vision of the past—to close our eyes and reproduce the vanished day. And once more we failed. We could glimpse a picture, we could construct a city, but it was never quite that city—never quite in that place. Our harbor with its white sails and thronging wharves was never quite that harbor—our crowded streets were never quite those streets. Here were just ruins—always ruins—they could never have been anything but ruins. Perhaps our imaginations were not in good working order.

We descended again into the great theatre, for it fascinated us, nearly breaking our necks where vines and briars tangled, pausing every other minute to rest and consider and dream. Pawing over a heap of rubbish—odd bits of carving, inscriptions, and the like—the place is a treasure-trove of such things—I found a little marble torso of a female figure. Head and arms and the lower part of the body all gone, but what remained was exquisite beyond words—a gem, even though rubbish, in Ephesus.

Now, of course, the reader is an honest person. He would have said, as I did: "No, it does not matter, rubbish or no rubbish, it is not mine. It belongs to the government—I cannot steal. Besides, there is Laura, age fourteen: I cannot set her a bad example. Also, there are the police. No, my conscience is perfect; I cannot do it."

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I know the reader would have reflected thus, and so did I, as stated. Then I found I could crowd it into my inside coat-pocket, and that by cramming my handkerchief carefully on top of it, it did not distress me so much, especially when I gave it a little support with my forearm, to make it swing in a natural way. But when I remembered that the *Quaker City* pilgrims had been searched on leaving Ephesus, my conscience began to harass me again, though not enough as yet to make me disgorge.

Our party had all trailed back to the hotel when we got to our donkeys, and it was beginning to sprinkle rain. The sky was overcast and a quiet had settled among the ruins. When our donkey-driver gave me a sharp look I began to suffer. I thought he was a spy, and had his eye on that pocket. I recalled now that I had always had a tender conscience; it seemed unwise to torture it in this way.

I began to think of ways to ease it. I thought five francs might do it, so far as our donkey-boy was concerned. But then there was the official search at the other end; that, of course, would be a public matter, and the five francs would be wasted. I was almost persuaded to drop the little

torso quietly by the roadside—it discomfited me so.

We rode along rather quietly, and I spoke improvingly to Laura of how St. Paul had travelled over this very road when he was making his good fight, and of several other saints and their works, and how Ephesus had probably been destroyed because of its sinfulness. Near a crumbling arch a flock of sheep grazed, herded by a shepherd who had been there when the apostles came—at least his cape had, and his hat—and everything about him was Biblical and holylike, and so were the gentle rain and the donkeys, and I said how sweet and soothing it all was; after which I began to reflect on what would be proper to do if anything resembling an emergency should conclude our peaceful ride. I decided that, as we had just come from Smyrna, I had bought the bit of heathen marble on the way to the station. That was simple and straightforward, and I felt a good deal strengthened as I practised it over and tried it on Laura as we rode along. The *Kurfürsters* had been with me and would stand by the statement—any *Kurfürster* would do that whether he flocked with the forward-cabin crowd or the unregenerates of the booze-bazaar. I felt reassured and whistled a little, and then from the roadside a man rose up and said something sharp to our donkey-driver. It was sudden, and I suppose I did jump a little, but I was ready for him.

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"No," I said, "I didn't steal it. I bought it in Smyrna on the way to the train. I can prove it by Laura here, and the other passengers. We are incorruptible. Go in peace."

But it was wasted. This creature had business only with our donkey-driver and his tobacco. He didn't understand a word I said.

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We rode amid a very garden of fragmentary ruins. Precious blocks of fluted marble, rich with carving and inscriptions, lay everywhere. We were confronted by gems of sculpture and graven history at every turn. Yet here I was, suffering over a little scrap the size of one's fist. No conscience should be as sensitive as that.

Suddenly a regular bundle of firearms—a human arsenal—stepped out of a shed into the middle of the road and began a harangue. I could feel my hair turning gray.

"You are wholly in error," I said. "I bought it in Smyrna. All the passengers saw me. Still, I will give it up if you say so."

But that was wasted, too. He only took the rest of our driver's tobacco and let us pass. We met a little puny calf next, standing shrunken and forlorn in the drizzle, but not too shrunken and friendless to have a string of blue beads around his neck to avert the evil eye. I was inclined to take them away from him and put them on myself.

We were opposite the Temple of Diana by this time—all that is left of what was once one of the seven wonders of the world. It is only some broken stones sinking into a marsh now, but it was a marvel in its time, and I remembered how one Herostratus, ages ago, had fired it to perpetuate his name—also how the Ephesians had snuffed out Herostratus, and issued a decree that his name should never again be mentioned on pain of severe punishment; which was a mistake, of course, for it advertised Herostratus into the coveted immortality. I wonder what kind of a mistake the Ephesians would make when they found that bit of marble on my person, and what kind of advertising I would get.

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We were almost to the little hotel now, and, lo! right at the gates we were confronted by a file of men with muskets. Here it was, then, at last. My moral joints turned to water.

"I didn't do it, gentlemen," I said. "I am without a flaw. It was Laura—you can see for yourself she looks guilty."

But they did not search Laura. They did not even search me. They merely looked us over and talked about us in strange tongues. We reached the shelter of the hotel and the comfort of food in safety. Neither did they inspect us at the station, and as we glided back to Smyrna I impressed upon Laura the value of keeping one's conscience clear, and how one is always rewarded with torsos and things for pursuing a straightforward, simple course through life.

I suppose a man could take away marble from Ephesus to-day by the wagon-load if he had any place to take it to. Nobody is excavating there—nobody seems to care for it, and never was such a mine of relics under the sun. At Ayasaluk, the Arab village, priceless treasures of carving and inscription look out at you from the wall of every peasant's hut and stable—from the tumbling stone fences that divide their fields. Wonderful columns stick out of every bank and heap of earth. Precious marbles and porphyry mingle with the very macadam of the roads. Rare pieces are sold around the hotel for a few piastres.

Remember, a mighty marble city perished here. Earthquakes shook it down, shattered the walls of its temples, overthrew the statuary, tumbled the inscriptions in the dust. The ages have spread a layer of earth upon the ruin, but only partially covered it. Just beneath the shallow plough of the peasant lie riches uncountable for the nation that shall bring them to the light of day. Historical societies dig a little here and there, and have done noble work. But their means run low before they can make any real beginning on the mighty task. Ephesus is still a buried city.

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The day will come when Ephesus will be restored to her former greatness. It will take an earthquake to do it, but the spirit of prophecy is upon me and I foresee that earthquake. The future is very long—I am in no hurry—fulfilment may take its time. I merely want to get my prophecy in now and registered, so when the event comes along I shall get proper credit. Some day an earthquake will strike Ephesus again; the bottom will drop out of that swamp and make it

a harbor once more; ships will sail in as in the old days, and Ephesus, like Athens, will renew her glory.

Back to Smyrna—a modern city and beautiful from any high vantage, with its red-tiled roofs, its domes and minarets, its graceful cypress-trees, its picture hillsides, and its cobalt sky. It is clean, too, compared with Constantinople. To be sure, Smyrna has its ruins and its historic interest, with the tomb of Polycarp the martyr, who was Bishop of Smyrna in the second century, and died for his faith at the age of eighty-six. He was burned on a hill just outside the city on the Ephesus road, and his tomb, guarded by two noble cypresses, overlooks the sea.

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But it is busy, bustling Smyrna that, after Ephesus, most attracted us. It is more truly the Orient than anything we have seen. Fully as picturesque as Constantinople in costume, it is brighter, fresher, healthier-looking, and, more than all, its crowded streets are perpetually full of mighty camel trains swinging in from the deeper East, loaded with all the wares and fabrics of our dreams. Those camels are monstrously large—twice the size of any circus camels that come to America, and with their great panniers they fill an Oriental street from side to side.

They move, too, and other things had better keep out of the way when a camel train heaves in sight if they want to remain undamaged. I was examining some things outside of a bazaar when suddenly I thought I had been hit by a planet. I thought so because of the positive manner of my disaster and the number of constellations I saw. But it was only one side of a loaded camel that had annihilated me, and the camel was moving straight ahead without the slightest notion that anything had interfered with its progress.

It hadn't, as a matter of fact. Nothing short of a stone wall interrupts a camel—a Smyrna camel—when he's out for business and under a full head of steam. Vehicles and other things turn down another street when there is a camel train coming. You may squat down, as these Orientals do, and get below the danger line, for a camel is not likely to step on you, but his load is another matter—you must look out for that yourself.

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I was fascinated by the camel trains; they are a part of the East I hardly expected to find. I thought their day was about over. Nothing of the sort. The camel trains, in fact, own Smyrna, and give it its commercial importance. They bring the great bulk of merchandise—rugs, mattings, nuts, dried fruits, spices, and all the rare native handiwork from far dim interiors that railroads will not reach in a hundred years. They come swinging out of Kurdistan—from Ispahan and from Khiva; they cross the burning desert of Kara Koom.

A camel train can run cheaper than the railway kind. A railway requires coal and wood for fuel. A camel would like those things also. But he is not particular—he will accept whatever comes along. He will eat anything a goat can, and he would eat the goat, too, if permitted—horns and all. Consequently, he arrives at Smyrna fit and well fed, ready for the thousand miles or so of return trip at a moment's notice.

They run these camel trains in sections—about six camels in each. An Arab mounted on a donkey that wears a string of blue beads for luck leads each section, and the forward camel wears against his shoulder a bell. It is a musical compound affair—one bell inside the other with a blue bead in the last one to keep off the evil eye. I had already acquired some of the blue strings of donkey beads, and I made up my mind now to have a camel bell.

By-and-by, at the entrance of a bazaar, I saw one. It was an old one—worn with years of chafing against the shoulder muscle of many a camel that had followed the long track from the heart of Asia over swamp and steep and across burning sands. At the base of the outer bell was a band of Arabic characters—prayers, no doubt, from the Koran, for the safety of the caravan. I would never leave Smyrna without that bell.

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However, one must be cautious. I gave it an indifferent jingle as I passed in and began to examine other things. A murmuring, insinuating Moslem was at my elbow pushing forward the gaudy bits of embroidery and cheaply chased weapons in which I pretended an interest. I dallied and priced, and he grew weary and discouraged. Finally, hesitating at the doorway, I touched the bell again, scarcely noticing it.

"How much?"

"Sixtin franc—very chip."

My impulse was to fling the money at him and grab the treasure before he changed his mind. But we do not do these things—not any more—we have acquired education. Besides, we have grown professionally proud of our bargains.

"Ho! Sixteen francs! You mean six francs— I give you five."

"No—no—sixtin franc—sixtin! What you think? Here—fine!" He had the precious thing down and was jingling it. Its music fairly enthralled me. But I refused to take it in my hands—if I did I should surrender. "See," he continued, pointing to the inscription. "Oh, be-eautiful. Here, fiftin franc—three dollar!"

He pushed it toward me. I pretended to be interested in a wretchedly new and cheaply woven

rug. I had to, to keep steadfast. I waved him off.

"No—no; five francs—no more!"

He hung up the bell and I started to go. He seized it and ran after me.

"Here, mister—fourtin franc—give me!"

"Five francs!—no more."

"No, no, mister—twelve franc—las' price—ver' las' price. Here, see!"

He jingled the bell a little. If he did that once more I was gone at any price.

"*Five francs*," I said, with heavy decision. "I'll give you five francs for it—no more."

I faced resolutely around—as resolutely as I could—and pretended really to start.

"Here, mister—*ten franc—ten!* Mister—mister!"

He followed me, but fortunately he had hung up the bell and couldn't jingle it. I was at least two steps away.

"Eight franc, mister—please—I lose money—I make nothing—mister—seven! seven franc!"

"Five—five francs." I called it back over my shoulder—indifferently.

"Mister! mister! Six! six franc!"

Confound him! He got hold of that bell again and gave it a jingle. I handed him the six francs. If he had only left it alone, I think I could have held out.

Still, as I look at it now, hanging here in my state-room, and think of the long lonely nights and the days of sun and storm it has seen, of the far journeys it has travelled in its weary way down the years to me, I do not so much mind that final franc after all.

XXIII

INTO SYRIA

I picked up a cold that rainy day at Ephesus. Not an ordinary sniffing cold, but a wrenching, racking cold that made every bone and every tooth jump, and set my eyes to throbbing like the ship's engines. I felt sure I was going to die when we arrived in the harbor of Beirut, and decided that it would be better to die on deck; so I crawled out and dressed, and crept into a steamer-chair, and tried to appreciate the beautiful city that had arisen out of the sea—the upper gateway to Syria.

The Patriarch came along, highly elate. This was where he belonged; this was home; this was Phœnicia itself! Fifteen hundred years B.C. Beirut had been a great Phœnician seaport, he said, and most of the rare handiwork mentioned in ancient history and mythology had been wrought in this neighborhood. The silver vase of Achilles, the garment which Hecuba gave to Minerva, and the gold-edged bowl of Telemachus were all Phœnician, according to the Patriarch, who hinted that he rather hoped to find some such things at Beirut; also some of the celebrated Phoinus, or purple dye, which gave the tribe its name. I said no doubt he would, and, being sick and suffering, added that he might dye himself dead for all I cared, which was a poor joke—besides being an afterthought, when the Patriarch was well out of range.

I had no idea of going ashore. I was miserably sorry, too, for I was stuffed with guide-book knowledge about Baalbec and Damascus, and had looked forward to that side-trip from the beginning. I knew how Moses felt on Mount Pisgah now, and I was getting so sorry for myself I could hardly stand it, when suddenly the bugle blew the sharp call, "All ashore!" Laura, age fourteen, came racing down the deck, and before I knew it I had my bag—packed the night before—and was going down the ship's ladder into a boat, quarrelling meantime with one of the Reprobates as to whether Beirut was the Berothai of the Old Testament, where David smote Hadadezer and took "exceeding much brass," or the Berytus of the Roman conquest. It was of no consequence, but it gave life a new purpose, for I wanted to prove that he was wrong. Wherefore I forgot I was going to die, and presently we were ashore and in a railway-station where there was a contiguous little train ready to start for Baalbec and Damascus, with a lot of men selling oranges, of which Laura and I bought a basketful for a franc, climbed aboard, the bell rang—and the funeral was postponed.

The road followed the sea for a distance, and led through fields of flowers. I had never seen wildflowers like those. They were the crimson anemone mingled riotously with a gorgeous yellow flower—I did not learn its name. The ground was literally massed with them. Never was such a prodigality of bloom.

From Beirut to Baalbec is only about sixty miles; but it takes pretty much all day to get there, for the Lebanon Mountains lie between, and this is a deliberate land. We did not mind. There was

plenty to see all along, and our leisurely train gave us ample time.

There were the little stations, where we stopped anywhere from five to fifteen minutes, and got out and mingled with the curious rural life; there were the hills, that had little soil on them, but were terraced and fruitful—some of them to the very summit; there was the old Damascus road, winding with us, or above us, or below us—the road over which Abraham may have travelled, and Adam, too, for that matter, and Eve, when they were sent out of their happy garden. Eden lay not far from here, and the exiles would be likely to come this way, I think. We saw plenty of groups that might have been Abraham and his household, or any of the patriarchs. I did not notice any that suggested Adam and Eve.

The road had another interest for me. Forty-two years ago, before the railroad came this way, the *Quaker City* pilgrims toiled up through the summer heat, setting out on the "long trip" through the full length of Palestine. Nobody makes it in summer now. Few make it at all, except by rail and in carriages, with good hostelries at the end of every stage. Still, I am glad those first pilgrims made it, or we should not have had that wonderful picture of Syrian summer-time, nor of "Jericho" and "Baalbec." Those two horses are worth knowing—in literature—and I tried to imagine that little early party of excursionists climbing the steep path to Palestine on their sorry nags.

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It is warm in Syria, even now, but we were not too warm, riding; besides, we were going steadily uphill, and by-and-by somebody pointed out a white streak along the mountain-top, and it was snow. Then, after a long time, we got to a place where the vegetation was very scanty and there were no more terraced hills, but only barren peaks and sand, where the wind blew cold and colder, and presently the snow lay right along our way. We had reached the highest point then—five thousand feet above the sea. In five hours we had come thirty-six miles—thirty-five in length and one straight up in the air. Somebody said:

"Look, there is Mount Hermon!"

And, sure enough, away to the south, though nigh upon us it seemed—so close that one might put out his hand and touch it, almost—there rose a stately, snow-clad elevation which, once seen, dominated the barren landscape. It was so pure white against the blue—so impressive in its massive dignity—the eye followed it across every vista, longed for it when immediate peaks rose between, welcomed it when time after time it rose grandly into view.

With an altitude of between nine and ten thousand feet, Mount Hermon is the highest mountain in Syria, I believe—certainly the most important. The Bible is full of it. The Amorites and the Hivites, and most of the other tribes that Joshua buried or persuaded to go away, had their lands under Mount Hermon (all of them in sight of it), and that grand old hill looked down on Joshua's slaughter of men and women and little children, and perhaps thought it a puny performance to be undertaken in the name, and by the direction, of God.

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Joshua established Mount Hermon as the northern boundary of Palestine, and from whatever point the Israelite turned his face northward, he saw its white summit against the blue. It became symbolic of grandeur, stability, purity, and peace. It was to one of its three peaks that Christ came when, with Peter, James, and John, He withdrew to "an high mountain apart" for the Transfiguration. So it became sanctified as a sort of holy judgment-seat.^[5]

Down the Lebanon slope and across the valley to Reyak, a Syrian village in the sand, at the foot of the Anti-Lebanon range. Reyak is the parting of the ways—the railways—that lead to Damascus and Baalbec, and there is a lunch-room there—a good one by Turkish standards. It was our first complete introduction to Turkish food—that is a diet of nuts, dates, oranges, and curious meat and vegetable preparations—and I ate a good deal for a dying man. Then I went outside to look at the population, and wonder what these people, who scratch a living out of the sand and stone barrens, would do in a fertile country like America. They would consider it heaven, I thought.

At the end of the station sat a drowsy, stoutish man in semi-European dress, holding a few pairs of coarse home-knit socks, evidently for sale. I stopped and talked to him. He spoke English very well, and when he told me his story I marvelled.

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He had been in America; in Brooklyn; had carried on business there—something in Syrian merchandise—and had done very well. He had married there—a Syrian woman; his children were born there—Americans. Then one day he had sold out and brought them all to this flat-topped mud village in the Syrian sand. Why had he done it? Well, he could hardly tell; he had wanted to see Syria again—he could think of no other reason. No, his wife did not like it, nor the children—not at all.

He pointed out his mud hut a little way from the station, and I could not blame them. He would go back some day—yes, certainly. Meantime, his wife is earning money for the trip by knitting the coarse socks which he sells around the station at Reyak at a few piastres a pair.

Our train was about ready to start for Baalbec, and I was lingering over a little collection of relics which a blind pedler offered, when I felt a hand on my shoulder and heard my name called. I turned and was face to face with the artist Jules Gurin, of New York. I had known nothing of his presence in Syria, he had known nothing of our coming. He was going in one direction, I in another. In this remote waste our lines had crossed. He was so glad to see me—he thought I had a supply of cigars. I never saw a man's enthusiasm die so suddenly as his did when I told him how I had been sick that morning and forgotten them.

XXIV

THE HOUSE THAT CAIN BUILT

It was well along in the afternoon when we reached Baalbec, and drove through a cloud of dust to a hotel which stands in a mud village near the ruins. Long before we arrived we could make out massive remnants of what was once a wonder of the world, and remains no less so to-day. We could distinguish sections of the vast wall, and, towering high above them, the six columns of the Temple of the Sun.

I knew those six columns. I had carried a picture of them in my mind ever since that winter so long ago when the old first edition of the *New Pilgrim's Progress* became familiar in our household. I know they were seventy-five feet high and eight feet through, and had blocks of stone on the top of them as big as our old-fashioned parlor at home; also, that they were probably erected by giants. Those items had made an impression that had lasted. Now, here they were, outlined against the sky, in full view and perfectly familiar, but never in the world could they be as big as the book said. Why, these were as slender and graceful as fairy architecture! I recalled that there were some big stones to see, stones laid by Cain and his giants when the world was new. Perhaps they would not be so very big, after all. I had a feeling that we ought to hurry.

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We did hurry—Laura and I. We did not wait for the party, but set out straight for the ruins, through narrow streets and byways, with beggars at our heels. By-and-by we came to a rushing brook, and just beyond it were the temple walls.

I remembered now. There had been a wonderful garden outside the temples in the old days, and this stream had made it richly verdant and beautiful. There was no garden any more. Only some grass and bushes, such as will gather about an oasis.

They would not let us into the temple enclosure until our party came, so we wandered around the outer walls and gazed up at cornices and capitals and entablatures as beautiful, we thought, as any we had seen at Athens. Then the party arrived, and there was a gatekeeper to let us in.

It would take a man in perfect health to carry away even an approximate impression of Baalbec. Trying to remember now, I seem to have spent the afternoon in some amazing delirium of tumbling walls and ruined colonnades; of heaped and piled fragments; of scarred and defaced sculpture; of Titanic masonry flung about by the fury of angry gods. Athens had been a mellowed and hallowed dream of the past; Ephesus a vast suggestion of ancient greatness buried and overgrown; Baalbec was a wild agony of destruction and desecration crying out to the sky.



FROM THE TIME OF ADAM BAALBEC BECAME A PLACE OF ALTARS

It is a colossal object-lesson in what religions can do when they try. Nobody really knows who began to build temples here, but from the time of Adam Baalbec became a place of altars. Before history began it was already a splendid Syrian city, associated with the names of Cain, Nimrod, and Abraham, and it may have been Cain himself who raised the first altar here when he made that offering for which the Lord "had not respect." More likely, however—and this is the Arab belief—it was the city of refuge built by Cain, whose fear must have been very large if one may judge from the size of the materials used.

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Cain could not fail to build a temple, however. He would try to ease the punishment which he declared was greater than he could bear, and with burnt offering and architecture would seek to propitiate an angry God. How long the worship inaugurated by him lasted we can only surmise—to the flood, maybe—but the Phœnicians came next, and set up temples to their Gods, whoever they were, and after the Phœnicians came Solomon, who built a temple to a sort of compromise god by the name of Baal—a deity left over by the Phœnicians and adapted to Judean needs and ceremonies—hence the name, Baalbec. Solomon built the temple to Baal to satisfy certain of his heathen wives, and he made the place a strong city to rival Damascus—the latter having refused

to acknowledge his reign.

After Solomon, the Romans. Two hundred years or so after Christ—in the twilight of their glory and their gods—the Romans under Elagabalus brought the glory of Grecian architecture to Baalbec, named the place Heliopolis, and set up temples that were—and are—the wonder of the world.

What satisfactory gods they must have been to deserve temples such as these—each shrine a marvel of size and beauty—more splendid even than those of the Acropolis of Athens in their lavish magnificence! This carved doorway to the Temple of Jupiter; this frieze of the Temple of Bacchus; these towering six columns of the Temple of the Sun; still holding their matchless Corinthian capitals and amazing entablature to the sky—where else will one find their equals, and what must they have been in their prime, when these scarred remnants can still overpower the world!

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It was another religion that brought ruin here—early Christianity—presently followed by early Mohammedanism—each burning with vandalic zeal. It was the good Emperor Constantine that first upset the Roman gods and their temples. Then Theodosius came along and pulled down the great structures, and out of the pieces built a church that was an architectural failure. Then all the early Christians in the neighborhood took a hand in pulling down and overturning; hacking away at the heathen sculpture and tracery—climbing high up the walls to scar and disfigure—to obliterate anything resembling a face. Then pretty soon the early Mohammedans came along and carried on the good work, and now and then an earthquake took a hand, until by-and-by the place became the ghastly storm of destruction it appears to-day.

I was ill when I saw Baalbec. My flesh was burning and my pulse throbbing with fever. Perhaps my vision was distorted and the nightmare seemed worse than it really is, but as I stood in that field of mutilation and disorder, gazing along its wrecked and insulted glory, and through tumbling arch and ruined door caught vistas of fertile and snow-capped hill, I seemed to see a vision of what it had been in the day of its perfection. Also, I felt an itch to meet one or two of those early enthusiasts—some night in a back alley when they were not looking for me and I had a piece of scantling—I felt a sick man's craving, as it were, to undertake a little damage and disfiguration on my own account. Oh, well, it's all in the eternal story. Religions established these temples; religions pulled them down. The followers of one faith have always regarded as heathen those which preceded them. There lies a long time ahead. Will the next religion restore Baalbec or complete its desolation?

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Some little Syrian girls beset Laura on the way back to the hotel and tried to sell her some bead embroidery which it seems they make in a mission-school established here by the English. One of them—a little brown madonna of about ten—could speak English quite well. Laura asked her name.

"Name Mary," she said.

"But that's an English name."

She trotted along silently, thinking; then said:

"No, Syria—Mary Syria name."

Sure enough, we had forgotten. The first Mary had indeed been Syrian, and I imagined her, now, a child—brown, barefoot and beautiful, like this Mary, with the same pathetic eyes. Laura—young, fair-skinned and pink-cheeked—was a marvel to these children. They followed her to the door, and when she could not buy all their stock in trade they insisted on making her presents, and one of them—little Mary—begged to be taken to America.

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We saw the celebrated "big stones" next morning. Several of them are built into the lower tiers of the enclosing temple wall, and three of these—the largest ones—measure each from sixty-two to sixty-four feet long and are thirteen feet thick! They rest upon stones somewhat thicker, but shorter—stones about the size of a two-story cottage—and these in turn rest on masonry still less gigantic. Evidently it was the intention of the builders to increase the size of their material as they went higher, and the big block still in the quarry carries out that idea.

Authorities differ as to when these big stones were laid, and how. Some claim that they were put here by the Romans, because they find Greek axe-marks on the ones below them. But then I found American jack-knife marks on them too, and the names of certain of my countrymen, which proves nothing except that these puny people had been there and left their measurement. If these monster stones had been laid by the Romans only two thousand years ago, we should have had some knowledge of the means by which they were transported and lifted into place. There is no such record, and nowhere else at least did the Romans ever attempt structure of such gigantic proportions. That is precisely the word, "gigantic," for there were giants in the days when these stones were laid—stones that could have been there six thousand years as well as two thousand, being of such material as forms the foundations of the world.

If Cain did any building at Baalbec, he did it here. He did not finish the work, it would seem, or at least not in these proportions. Perhaps his giants deserted him—struck, as we say to-day. Perhaps the hands of men were no longer against him and the need of this mighty bulwark about his place of refuge ceased. At all events, the first stone hewn out for the next layer stands in the quarry still.

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We drove over there. It was half a mile away, at least—possibly a mile, down hill and rather rough going. The stones we saw in the wall were brought up that road. The one standing in the quarry had been lifted and started a little, and would have been on its way presently, if the strike, or the amnesty, had not interfered.

It is seventy-two feet long and seventeen feet thick. Try to think of a plain box building, a barn or a store-house, say, of that size, then mentally convert it into a solid block of stone. Mark Twain likens it to two freight-cars placed end to end, but *it is also as high and as wide. Eight freight-cars set four and four* would just about express it! Think of that! Think of moving a stone of that size!

It is squared and dressed and ready to be taken to the temple wall. It will never be taken there. Perhaps that last item is gratuitous information, but at least it is authentic. We have no means of moving that stone half a mile up a rough hill in these puny times, and the speculations as to how Cain did it have been mainly hazy and random—quite random.

One writer suggests that such stones were "rolled up an inclined plane of earth prepared for the purpose." I should love to see a stone like that rolled. I'd travel all the way to Baalbec again for the sight, and they could prepare the inclined plane any way they pleased. An Oriental authority declares that these stones were moved and laid by the demon Echmoudi, which is better than the rolling idea. I confess a weakness for Echmoudi, but I fear hard cold science will frown him out of court.

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It has taken an Englishman to lead the way to light. He says that Cain employed mastodons to do his moving. Now we are on the way to truth, but we must go further—a good deal further. Cain did employ mastodons, but only for his light work. Even mastodons would balk at pulling stones like these. Cain would use brontosaurus for such work as that. There were plenty of them loafing about, and I can imagine nothing more impressive than Cain standing on a handy elevation overlooking his force of giants and a sixteen-span brontosaurus team yanking a stone as big as a bonded warehouse up Baalbec hill.

Truly, there is no reason why those monster stones should not have been quarried a million or so years ago and moved by the vast animal creatures of that period. We have biblical authority for the giants, and I have seen a brontosaurus in the New York Museum that seemed to go with stones of about that size. Think of any force the Romans could summon rolling a three-million-pound square stone up an inclined plane. Preposterous! The brontosaurus's the thing.

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XXV

GOING DOWN TO DAMASCUS

There is a good deal of country, mainly desert, between Baalbec and Damascus, and a good many barren hills. Crossing the Anti-Lebanon mountains there is a little of water and soil and much red, rocky waste. Here and there a guide pointed out a hill where Cain killed Abel—not always the same hill, but no matter, it was a hill in this neighborhood; any one of them would make a good place. Occasionally the train passed a squalid village, perched on a lonely shelf—a single roof stretching over most of the houses—the inhabitants scarcely visible. We wondered where they got their sustenance. They were shepherds, perhaps, but where did their flocks feed?

Across the divide, between snow-capped hills, and suddenly we are face to face with green banks and the orchard bloom of spring. We have reached the Abana, the river which all the ages has flowed down to Damascus with its gift of eternal youth. For as the desert defends, so the river sustains Damascus, and the banks of the Abana (they call it the Barada now) are just a garden—the Garden of Eden, if old tales be true.

It is not hard to believe that tradition here, at this season. Peach, apricot, almond, and plum fairly sing with blossom; birch and sycamore blend a cadence of tender green; the red earth from which Adam was created (and which his name signifies) forms an abundant underchord. If we could linger a little by these pleasant waters we might learn the lilt of the tree of life—its whisper of the forbidden fruit.

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We are among our older traditions here—the beginnings of the race. We have returned after devious wanderings. These people whom we see leading donkeys and riding camels, tending their flocks and bathing in the Abana, they are our relatives—sons and daughters of Adam. Only, they did not move away. They stayed on the old place, as it were, and preserved the family traditions, and customs. I am moved to get out and call them "cousin" and embrace them, and thank them for not trailing off after the false gods and frivolities of the West.

The road that winds by the Abana is full of pictures. The story of the Old Testament—the New, too, for that matter—is dramatized here in a manner and a setting that would discourage the artificial stage. Not a group but might have stepped out of the Bible pages. This man leading a little donkey—a woman riding it—their garb and circumstance the immutable investment of the East: so the patriarchs journeyed; so, two thousand years later, Joseph and Mary travelled into Egypt. No change, you see, in all that time—no change in the two thousand years that have followed—no change in the two thousand years that lie



**SO THE PATRIARCHS
JOURNEYED; SO, TWO
THOUSAND YEARS LATER,
JOSEPH AND MARY TRAVELLED
INTO EGYPT**

behold, we have reached the heart and
than history, yet forever young.

ahead. Wonderful, changeless East! How frivolous we seem in comparison—always racing after some new pattern of head-gear or drapery! How can we hope to establish any individuality, any nationality, any artistic stability when we have so little fixed foundation in what, more than any other one thing, becomes a part of the man himself—his clothing?

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These hills are interesting. Some of them have verdure on them, and I can fancy Abraham pasturing his flocks on them, and with little Isaac chasing calves through the dews of Hermon. It would not be the "dews of Hermon," but I like the sound of that phrase. I believe history does not mention that Abraham and Isaac chased calves. No matter; anybody that keeps flocks has to chase calves now and then, and he has to get his little boy to help him. So Abraham must sometimes have called Isaac quite early in the morning to "go and head off that calf," just as my father used to call me, and I can imagine how they raced up and down and sweat and panted, and how they said uncomplimentary things about the calf and his family, and declared that there was nothing on earth that could make a person so mad as a fool calf, anyhow.

Travel on the highway has increased—more camels, more donkeys, more patriarchs with their families and flocks. Merchandise trains follow close, one behind the other. Dust rises in a fog and settles on the wayside vegetation. Here and there on the hillsides are villas and entertainment gardens.

A widening of the valley, an expanse of green and bloom, mingled with domes and minarets; a slowing down of speed, a shouting of porters through the sunlit dust, and wonder of the East, Damascus, the imperishable—older

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XXVI

THE "PEARL OF THE EAST"

It is the oldest city in the world. It is the oldest locality mentioned in the Bible, if the Garden of Eden theory be true. I suspect that Noah's flood washed away the garden, and that his grandson, Uz, wanted to commemorate the site by building a city there. At all events, Uz built Damascus, according to Josephus, and he could not have picked a better location than this wide, level plain, watered by these beautiful living streams. That was about 2400 B.C., which means that Damascus was already an old city—five hundred years old, or more—when Abraham overtook Chedorlaomer, King of Elam—Tidal, King of Nations, and two other kings—these four having captured Abraham's nephew, Lot, "who dwelt in Sodom, and his goods, and departed."

A matter of four kings did not disturb Abraham. He had a better combination than that. He armed his trained servants, three hundred and eighteen in number, "born in his own house," and went after those kings and "smote them and pursued them unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus, rescued Lot and brought back the goods."

That is the first Bible mention of Damascus, and it was no doubt a goodly city, even then. After that it appears, time and again, in both the scriptures, and one never fails to feel its importance in the world's story. Five hundred years after Abraham, Thothmes III. thought it worth while to cross over from Egypt to conquer Damascus, and after still another five hundred years King David ravaged the country round about and set up a garrison here. Those were not frequent changes. Damascus does not do things frequently or without reflection. I believe the Medes came next, and after them the Romans, and then, quite recently—recently for Damascus, I mean—only thirteen hundred years ago—the Mohammedans took the place and have held it ever since.

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And Damascus herself has remained unchanged. Other cities have risen and prospered and perished even from memory. They did not matter to Damascus. Nothing matters to Damascus. It may have altered its appearance a trifle now and then, but not materially. It is the same Damascus that Abraham knew and that David conquered. I can see both of these old fellows any time I look out of my hotel window; also, the three hundred and eighteen servants born in Abraham's household—all the tableau of the ancient city that has remained forever young.

"Though old as history itself, thou art as fresh as the breath of spring, blooming as thine own rosebud, and fragrant as thine own orange-flower, O Damascus, pearl of the East!"

We are at the Grande Hotel Victoria. All these hotels are "Grande" something or other. A box shanty ten by fifteen is likely to be called "Grande Hotel de France." However, the Victoria is grand, rather, and quite Oriental in its general atmosphere. The rooms are clean, too, and the Turkish pictures amusing. Furthermore, our rooms look across the river—the soul of Damascus—the water in which Eve first saw her sweet reflected form, if tradition holds. Its banks are bordered by a great thoroughfare now, where against a background of peach-bloom and minaret an eternal panorama flows by. Camel trains from Bagdad and the far depths of Persia; mule trains from the Holy Land; donkey trains from nowhere in particular; soldiers with bands playing weird music; groups of Arabs mounted on splendid horses—dark men with long guns, their burnouses flying in the wind. One might sit here forever and drift out of time, out of space, in the fabric of the never-ending story.

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Being late in the afternoon, with no programme, Laura and I set out to seek adventure, were immediately adopted by a guide, and steered toward the bazaars. We crossed a public square near the hotel where there were all sorts and conditions of jackasses—some of them mounted by men, others loaded with every merchandise under the sun. We saw our first unruly donkey just then—a very small donkey mounted by a very fat son of the prophet with a vast turban and beard. It being the Mohammedan Sunday (Friday), he had very likely been to the mosque and to market, and was going home. He had a very large bush broom under his arm, and it may have been this article thrashing up and down on the donkey's flank that made him restive. At all events, he was cavorting about (the donkey, I mean) in a most unseemly fashion for one bestridden by so grave a burden, and Mustapha Mohammed—they are all named that—was bent forward in a ball, uttering what Laura thought might be quotations from the Koran. We did not see what happened. They were still gyrating and spinning when we were caught up by the crowd and swept into the bazaar.

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The Grande Bazaar of Damascus excels anything we have seen. It is bigger and better and cleaner than the bazaar of Constantinople, and a hundred—no, a million—times more inviting. No Christian could eat anything in a Constantinople market-place. The very thought of it gags me now as I write, while here in Damascus, Laura and I were having confections almost immediately—and lemonade cooled with snow brought on the backs of camels from the Lebanon mountain-tops. Mark Twain speaks of the place as being filthy. I think they must have cleaned up a good deal since then; besides, that was midsummer. I would not like to say that the place is speckless, but for the Orient it was clean, and the general bouquet was not disturbing. Also, I had a safer feeling in Damascus. I did not feel that if I stepped into a side-street I would immediately be dragged down and robbed. I did not feel as if I were a lost soul in a bedlam of demons.

We noticed other things. The little booths, one after another, were filled with the most beautiful wares—such wares as we have seen nowhere else—but the drowsy merchants sat cross-legged in meditation, smoking their nargileh or reading their prayers, and did not ask us to buy. If we stopped to look at their goods they hardly noticed us. If we priced them they answered our guide in Arabic monosyllables. Here and there a Jew with a more pretentious stock would solicit custom in the old way of Israel, but the Arab was silent, indifferent, disinterested. Clearly it was his preference that we pass by as quickly as possible. His goods were not for such as us. I did manage to add to my collection of donkey-beads, and would have bought more if Laura had not suggested that they probably thought I was buying them to wear myself. At the book-booth they even would not let us touch the volumes displayed for sale.

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Another thing I have noticed: there are no beggars here—none worth while. Now and then, perhaps, somebody half extends a timid hand, but on the whole there is a marked absence of begging. Damascus does not beg from the Christian.

It is a weird, wonderful place, that bazaar. It covers an endless space, if one may judge from its labyrinthine interior. Everywhere they stretch away, the dim arcades, flimsily roofed with glass and matting and bark, fading into vague Oriental vistas of flitting figures and magic outlines. Here in the main thoroughfare a marvellous life goes on. The space is wide, and there are masses of people moving to and fro, mingled with donkeys and camels, and even carriages that dash recklessly through; and there is a constant cry of this thing and that thing from the donkey-boys and the pedlers of nuts and bread and insipid sweetened drinks. Some of the pedling people clatter little brass cymbals as they walk up and down, and repeat over and over some words which our guide said were something between a prayer and a song, probably as old as the language.^[6] And the vendors of drinks carry their stock in trade in a goat-skin, or maybe in a pigskin, which is not a pretty thing to look at—all black and hairy and wet, with distended legs sticking out like something drowned. We didn't buy any of those drinks. We thought they might be clean enough, but we were no longer thirsty.

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All sorts of things are incorporated in this bazaar: old dwelling-houses; columns of old temples; stairways beginning anywhere, leading nowhere; mosques—the limitless roof of merchandise has stretched out and enveloped these things. To attempt a detailed description of the place would be unwise. One may only generalize this vast hive of tiny tradesmen and tiny trades. All the curious merchants and wares we have seen pictured for a lifetime are gathered here. It is indeed the Grande Bazaar—the emporium of the East.

The street we followed came to an end by-and-by at a great court open to the sky. It was a magnificent enclosure, and I was quite willing to enter it. I did not do so, however. I had my foot raised to step over the low barrier, when there was a warning cry and a brown hand pushed me back. Our guide had dropped a step behind. He came hurrying up now, and explained that this

was the court of the Great Mosque. We must have special permission to enter. We would come with the party to-morrow.

The place impressed me more than any mosque we have seen—not for its beauty, though it is beautiful, but because of its vastness, its open sky, and its stone floor, polished like glass by the bare and stockinged feet that have slipped over it for centuries. We could not enter, but we were allowed to watch those who came as they removed their shoes and stepped over into the court to pray. When you realize that the enclosure is as big as two or three city squares, and that the stones, only fairly smooth in the beginning, reflect like a mirror now, you will form some idea of the feet and knees and hands that have pressed them, and realize something of the fervor of the Damascus faith.

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We left the bazaar by a different way, and our guide got lost getting us back to the hotel. I didn't blame him, though—anybody could get lost in those tangled streets. We were in a hopeless muddle, for it was getting dark, when down at the far end of a narrow defile Laura got a glimpse of a building which she said was like one opposite our hotel. So we went to look for it, and it was the same building. Then our guide found the hotel for us, and we paid him, and everything was all right. He didn't know anything about the city, I believe, but was otherwise a perfect guide.

Following, we put in a busy two days in Damascus—a marvellous two days, I thought. Our carriages were at the hotel next morning, and I want to say here that of all the carriages and horses we have seen, those of Damascus are far and away the best. The horses are simply beautiful creatures and in perfect condition. Even those kept for hire are superb animals with skins of velvet. They are Arabian, of course, and I can believe, now, that the Arab loves his horse, for I have never seen finer animals, not even on Fifth Avenue. I can understand, too, why the QUAKER CITY pilgrims—ambling into Damascus on those old, blind, halt and spavined Beirut nags—made their entry by night.

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And these Damascus horses go. Their drivers may love them, but they make them hurry. They crack their whips, and we go racing through the streets like mad. However deliberate the East may be in most things, it is swift enough in the matter of driving.

I don't care for it. It keeps me watching all the time to see what kind of an Arab we are going to kill, and I miss a good many sights. We went through that crowded thoroughfare of the Grande Bazaar at a rate which fairly was homicidal. Certainly if those drowsy shopkeepers did not hate Christians enough before, they do now.

We drove to the Grande Mosque, and we had to put on slippers, of course, to enter even the outer court. It is nearly a quarter of a mile long, and we slid and straddled across that vast marble skating-rink, pausing at a little pavilion—the Dome of the Treasury—where they keep some venerable books—the oldest books in the world, I believe, and so sacred that nobody ever sees them. Then we entered the Grande Mosque itself—still known as the Church of St. John the Divine.

For, like the temples of Baalbec and otherwheres, the Grande Mosque of Damascus has sheltered a variety of religious doctrines. It was the Temple of Rimmon, first, god of the Syrians. The Romans, who conquered and templed the world, came next, and built here, as they always built, in magnificence and pride, with architecture stolen from the Greeks. After the Romans, the early Christians under Constantine and Theodosius, who for some reason did not destroy, as was their habit, but only adapted the great temple to their needs. The son of Theodosius made some improvements, and above the south door left a Christian inscription which stands to this day.

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When, in 634 A.D., Damascus fell, the church was at first divided between Mohammedan and Christian worshippers—the two entering by the same gate. They were not so far asunder in those days—not farther, I think, than some of our present-day Christian sects—so called. Seventy years later the strife became bitter, and the followers of Mohammed claimed it all. The Caliph entered the church with guards, smashed the Christian images, and set up emblems of the new faith. Then he lavished quantities of money, making the place as splendid as possible, until it was more beautiful even than St. Sophia's. Sixteen years ago it was badly damaged by fire, but now it has been restored—by Christian workmen, Habib said. Habib, I should add, is our party guide—a Christian Syrian, educated in a college at Beirut—a quite wonderful person of many languages.

The mosque interior is the most beautiful place we have seen. Its ceiling, its windows, its mosaic walls, its rugs—all overwhelming in exquisite workmanship and prodigality of design. The pictures I have dreamed of Aladdin's palace grow dim in this enchanted place. No wonder the faithful linger here on their way to and from Mecca; for after the long desert stages it is like a vision of that lavish paradise which their generous prophet has provided. They are all about—prostrating themselves with many genuflections and murmurings—and we step on them as little as possible, but they are a good deal in the way. The place holds ten or twelve thousand of them every Friday, Habib said.

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Habib, by-the-way, has small respect for the Moslem. Also, he does not seem to fear consequences, which I confess I do, being in the very stronghold of fanaticism, and remembering that some five thousand Christians were suddenly and violently destroyed in Damascus not so many years ago. We were in front of a very marvellous mosaic shrine, and Habib beckoned us to come closer to admire its exquisite workmanship. A devotee was prostrated in the little alcove, bowing and praying in the usual rhythmic way. We surrounded him, but were inclined to hold a little aloof.

"Closer, closer!" urged Habib. "You must see it!"

We crowded up and entangled the praying person, who became aware of our presence and turned up his face helplessly. Then he pressed it again to the floor, and tried to go on with his murmurings. It was no use. Habib jostled him, waved his pointing stick over his head, tapped the ornamentation within an inch of his nose. We were told to step up and examine the work closely—to touch it, smell of it. Clearly Habib regarded that devotee no more than if he had been a mile removed instead of being actually against us. The poor pious pilgrim stole another look at us, this way and that, slipped a notch in his prayers, gathered himself and tried again, let go a whole distich, quavered in his attempt to make himself heard, cast another appealing glance at the *Kurfürsters*, broke through, and fled. This is not an exaggeration, but an actual happening. In America there would have been trouble.

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"He is nothing," said Habib, when I seemed disturbed. "He is only an Arab." Still, he was praying to Habib's God.

Many persons do not realize, I believe, that Christianity and Mohammedanism differ mainly in their Messiah. The Jew furnished the Moslem as well as the Christian with a God, patriarchs, and prophets—the Old Testament being common to all. The Moslem goes further than the Jew, for he accepts parts of the New Testament. He recognizes John the Baptist as a holy messenger, even claiming to have his head in this very church, in a shrine which we saw, though I could see that Habib thought the relic apocryphal. Furthermore, the Moslem accepts Christ! To him, Christ is only a lesser prophet than Mohammed, but still a great being—an emissary of God—and on this same mosque is the Minaret of Jesus, where, one day, as they believe, he will stand to judge the world. On the other hand, the average Christian believes that Mohammed was merely a fraud, and it is this difference of opinion that has reddened the East with blood. I am moved to set down this paragraph of rather general information for the reason that it contains some things which I suppose others to be as ignorant of as I was—things which seem to me interesting.

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We did see one old book, by-the-way—fifteen hundred years old, Habib said, and a member of our party asked if it was printed on a press; though that is nothing—I have done worse myself. Then we ascended the Minaret of the Bride for the view. We climbed and climbed, and got hot, and shaky in the knees, but the view repaid us. There was Damascus spread out in its beauty; its marble courts, its domes and minarets and painted houses—a magic city in the midst of a garden of bloom. Certainly this is fairyland—a mirage whose fragile fabric may vanish in a breath. Oh, our time is all too short! One must have long and long to look upon the East—it has taken so long to build!

We went to Saladin's tomb, and that is authoritative, though I confess that I could not realize, as we stood in that narrow building and viewed the catafalque in the centre, that the mighty Saracen hero of romance rested there. For me, he belongs only in tales of enchantment and fierce deeds, and not in that quiet place. I remembered that his sword was so sharp that a feather pillow dropped on its edge would fall on either side. Perhaps they have the sword there, and possibly the pillow to prove it, but I did not see them.

A Turkish school turned out to look at us and smile. We looked and smiled back, and everybody was satisfied. It is certain that we look more strange to them than they do to us, now. I know this, for when I stop anywhere and look over our party, here amid the turbans and fezzes and long flowing garments of the Orient, I can see for myself that it is really our party that looks queer and fantastic and out of place—not these people at all.

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It is natural that one should realize this in Damascus, for Damascus is the great reality—the unchanged and changeless. Algiers was a framed picture; Constantinople was a world's Midway—a sort of masquerade, prepared for our benefit. Here it is different. No longer the country and the people constitute the show, but ourselves. One presently discovers that he is artificial—an alien, a discord—that he has no place here. These others are the eternal verities; their clothes are the real clothes—not ours, that change fashion with every year and season. One is tempted to abjure all the fanfare and flourish of his so-called progress—to strip off his ridiculous garments and customs and fall in with the long steady rhythm of the ages.

Only, you don't do it. You discover objections to such a course. I could name some of them if I wanted to. Never mind; you couldn't do it anyway. You have been hurrying and sweating and capering about and wearing your funny clothes and singing in false keys too long. You cannot immediately put on the garb of the ages, and lock step with the swing of a thousand years.

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XXVII

FOOTPRINTS OF PAUL

We entered the "street which is called Straight," and came to the house of Judas, where St. Paul lodged when he was led blind into Damascus, trembling and astonished of the Lord. His name was Saul, and he had been on his way to Damascus to persecute the Christians, by the authority of Rome. The story is in the ninth chapter of Acts, and is too familiar to repeat here. I believe, though, most of us thought the house of Judas had some connection with the unfaithful disciple of

that name, until Habib enlightened us. Habib said that this was another Judas—a good man—well-to-do for his time. The Street called Straight runs through the Grande Bazaar, and the house of Judas is in the very midst of that dim aggregation of trades. It is roofless and unoccupied, but it is kept clean and whitewashed, and its stone walls will stand for another two thousand years.

Next to the birth and crucifixion of the Saviour, the most important event in the story of Christianity happened there. It seemed strange and dream-like to be standing in the house of St. Paul's conversion—a place which heretofore had seemed to exist only in the thin leaves and fine print of our Sunday-school days—and I found myself wondering which corner of the house St. Paul occupied, just where he sat at table, and a number of such things. Then I noticed the drifting throngs outside, passing and repassing or idling drowsily, who did not seem to know that it was St. Paul's house, and paid no attention to it at all.

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At the house of Ananias, which came next, Habib was slow in arriving, and the Horse-Doctor gave us a preliminary lecture.

"This," he said, "is the house of Ananias, once fed by the ravens. Later, through being a trifle careless with the truth, he became the founder and charter member of a club which in the United States of America still bears his name. Still later he was struck by lightning for deceiving his mother-in-law, Saphira, who perished at the same time to furnish a Scripture example that the innocent must suffer with the guilty (see Deuteronomy xi. 16): This is the spot where Ananias fell. That stone marks the spot where his mother-in-law stood. The hole in the roof was made by the lightning when it came through. We will now pass on to the next—"

That was good enough gospel for our party if Habib had only let it alone. He came in just then and interrupted. He said:

"This is the house of Ananias—called St. Ananias, to distinguish him from a liar by the same name. That Ananias and his wife, Saphira, fell dead at the feet of St. Peter because of falsehood, a warning to those who trifle with the truth to-day. St. Ananias was a good man, who restored St. Paul's sight and instructed him in the Christian doctrine."

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We naturally avoided the Doctor for a time after that. His neighborhood seemed dangerous.

The house of Ananias is below ground, and was probably used as a hiding-place in a day when it was not safe for an active and busy Christian to be at large. Such periods have not been unusual in Damascus. St. Paul preached Christianity openly, but not for long; for the Jews "took counsel to kill him," and watched the gate to see that he did not get away.

"Then the disciples took him by night, and let him down the wall in a basket."

We drove to the outer wall, and came to the place and the window where Paul is said to have been let down. It *might* have happened there; the wall is Roman, and the window above it could have been there in St. Paul's day. I prefer to believe it is the real window, though I have reason to think they show another one sometimes.

Habib said we were to visit some of the handsome residences of Damascus. We were eager for that. From the Minaret of the Bride we had looked down upon those marble courts and gay façades, and had been fascinated. We drove back into the city, through narrow mud-walled streets, forbidding and not overclean. When these alleys had become so narrow and disheartening that we could travel only with discomfort, we stopped at a wretched entrance and were told to get out. Certainly this was never the portal to any respectable residence. But we were mistaken. The Damascus house is built from the inside out. It is mud and unseemly disrepute without, but it is fairyland within. Every pretentious house is built on the same plan, and has a marble court, with a fountain or pool, and some peach or apricot or orange trees. On one side of the court is the front of the house. It has a high entrance, and rooms to the right and to the left—rooms that have a raised floor at one end (that is where the rich rugs are) and very high ceilings—forty feet high, some of them—decorated with elaborate designs. In the first house the round writhing rafters were exposed, and the decoration on them made them look exactly like snakes. The Apostle took one look and fled, and I confess I did not care for them much myself. The rest of the house was divided into rooms of many kinds, and there was running water, and a bath. We visited another house, different only in details. Some of the occupants were at home here—women-folks who seemed glad to see us, and showed us about eagerly. A tourist party from far-off America is a diversion to them, no doubt.

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Then we went to still another house. We saw at once that it was a grander place than the two already visited, and we were simply bewildered at the abundance of the graven brass and inlaid furniture, rich rugs and general bric-à-brac, that filled a great reception-room. Suddenly servants in Turkish dress appeared with trays of liqueurs—two kinds, orange and violet—urging us to partake of the precious stuff, without stint. Also, there were trays of rare coffee and dainty sweetmeats, and we were invited to sit in the priceless chairs and to handle the wonderful things to our hearts' content. We were amazed, stunned. Oriental hospitality could go no further. Then in some subtle manner—I don't remember how the information was conveyed, but it must have been delicately, Orientally done—we learned that all this brass, all these marvellous things, were for sale!

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Did we buy them? Did we! David did not take more brass from Hadadezer than we carried out of that Damascus residence, which was simply an annex to a great brass and mosaic factory, as we discovered later. Perhaps those strange liqueurs got into

our enthusiasm; certainly I have never seen our party so liberal—so little inclined to haggle and hammer down.

But the things themselves were worth while. The most beautiful brass in the world is made in Damascus, and it is made in that factory.

They took us in where the work was going on. I expected to see machinery. Nothing of the sort—not a single machine anywhere. Every stage of the work is performed by hand—done in the most primitive way, by workmen sitting on the ground, shaping some artistic form, or with a simple graving-tool working out an intricate design. Many of the workers were mere children—girls, most of them—some of them not over seven or eight years old, yet even these were producing work which would cause many an "arts and crafts" young lady in America to pale with envy. They get a few cents a day. The skilled workers, whose deft fingers and trained vision produce the exquisite silver inlay designs, get as much as a shilling. No wonder our people did not haggle. The things were cheap, and they knew it.

In a wareroom in the same factory I noticed that one of the walls was stone, and looked like Roman masonry; also that in it were the outlines of two high arches, walled up. I asked Habib about it.

"Those," he said, "are two of the entrances to the Street called Straight. We are outside of the wall here; this house is built against it. The Straight street had three entrances in the old days. Those two have long been closed."

It always gives me a curious sensation to realize that actual people are living and following their daily occupations in the midst of associations like these. I can't get used to it at all.

To them, however, it is nothing. The fact that they sleep and wake and pursue their drowsy round in places hallowed by tradition; that the house which sheltered St. Paul stands in the midst of their murmuring bazaar; that one side of this wareroom is the wall of the ancient city, the actual end of the Street called Straight; that every step they take is on historic ground, sacred to at least three religions—this to me marvellous condition is to them not strange at all.

It is not that they do not realize the existence of these things: they do—at least, most of them do—and honor and preserve their landmarks. But that a column against which they dream and smoke may be one of the very columns against which St. Paul leaned as he groped his blind way down the Street called Straight is to them not a matter for wonder, or even comment.

I am beginning to understand their point of view—even to envy it. I do not envy some of the things they have—some of their customs—but their serenity of habit, their security of place in the stately march of time, their establishment of race and religion—one must envy these things when he considers them here, apart from that environment which we call civilized—the whirl which we call progress.

I do not think I shall turn Moslem. The doctrine has attractive features, both here and hereafter; but I would not like to undertake the Koran at my time of life. I can, however, and I do, pay the tribute of respect to the sun-baked land and sun-browned race that have given birth to three of the world's great religions, even though they have not unnaturally claimed their last invention as their best and held it as their own.



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**URGING US TO PARTAKE OF THE
PRECIOUS STUFF, WITHOUT
STINT**

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XXVIII

DISCONTENTED PILGRIMS

We entered the remaining portal of the Street called Straight and drove to the Grand Bazaar. We were in a buying fever by this time, and plunged into a regular debauch of bargain and purchase. We were all a little weary when we reached the hotel. We came in carrying our brass and other loot, and dropped down on the first divan, letting our bundles fall where they listed.

I thought the Apostle looked particularly solemn. Being a weighty person, jouncing all day in a carriage and walking through brass bazaars and fez bazaars and silk bazaars and rug bazaars and silver bazaars and leather bazaars and saddle bazaars, and at least two hundred and seven other bazaars, had told on him. When I spoke cheerfully he merely grunted and reached for something in a glass which, if it tasted as it smelled, was not calculated to improve his temper. When I sat down beside him he did not seem over cordial.



**ASKED HIM IF HE WOULDN'T
EXECUTE A LITTLE COMMISSION
FOR ME IN THE BAZAARS**

Then, quite casually, I asked him if he wouldn't execute a little commission for me in the bazaars; there were a few trifles I had overlooked: another coffee-set, for instance—something for a friend at home; I had faith in his (the Apostle's) taste.

It seemed a reasonable request, and I made it politely enough, but the Apostle became suddenly violent. He said:

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"Damn the bazaars! I'm full of brass and Oriental rugs and bric-à-brac. I never want to hear of a bazaar again. I want to give away the junk I've already bought, and get back to the ship." Which we knew he didn't mean, for he had put in weary hours acquiring those things, inspired with a large generosity for loved ones at home.

The Colonel came drifting along just then—unruffled, debonair—apparently unwearied by the day's round. Nothing disturbs the Colonel. If he should outwear the century, he would still be as blithe of speech and manner as he is to-day at—dear me, how old is the Colonel? Is he thirty? Is he fifty? He might be either of those ages or at any mile-post between.

He stood now, looking down at the Apostle and his cup of poison. Then, with a coaxing smile:

"Match you, Joe—my plunder against yours—just once."

The Apostle looked up with a perfectly divine sneer.

"Yes, you will— I think I see myself!"

The Colonel slapped a coin on the table briskly.

"Come on, Joe—we never matched for bric-à-brac before. Let's be game—just this time."

What was the use? The Apostle resisted—at first violently, then feebly—then he matched—and lost.

For a moment he could hardly realize the extent of his disaster. Then he reached for the mixture in front of him, swallowed it, gagged, and choked alarmingly. When he could get his voice, he said:

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"I'm the hellfiredest fool in Syria. I walked four hundred miles to buy those things."

The Horse-Doctor regarded him thoughtfully.

"You always interest me," he said. "I don't know whether it's your shape or your mental habits. Both are so peculiar."

After which we left the Apostle—that is, we stood from under and went in to dinner.

The Apostle is a good traveller, however—all the Reprobates are. They take things as they find them, which cannot be said for all of our people. One wonders what some of them expected in Damascus—probably steamer fare and New York hotel accommodations. I judge this from their remarks.

As a matter of fact, we are at the best hotel in Damascus, and the hotel people are racking their bodies and risking their souls to give us the best they know. A traveller cannot get better than the best—even in heaven. Travelling alone in any strange land, he is more likely to get the worst. Yet the real traveller will make the best of what he finds, and do better when he finds he can. But these malcontents of ours have been pampered and spoiled by that steamer until they expect nothing short of perfection—their kind of perfection—wherever they set foot. They are so disturbed over the fact that the bill-of-fare is unusual and not adjusted to their tastes that they are not enjoying the sights, and want to clear out, forthwith. They have been in Damascus a little more than a day; they want to go now. This old race has stood it five thousand years or more. These ship-dwellers can't stand it two days without complaint. I don't want to be severe, but such travellers tire me. I suppose the bill-of-fare in heaven won't please them. I hope not, if I'm invited to remain there—any length of time, I mean.

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The rest of us are having great enjoyment. We like everything, and we eat most of it. There are any number of dried fruits and nuts and fine juicy oranges always on the table, strung down the centre—its full length. And even if the meats are a bit queer, they are by no means bad. We whoop up the bill-of-fare, and go through it forward and backward and diagonally, working from both ends toward the centre, and back again if we feel like it. We have fruit and nuts piled by our plates and on our plates all through the meal. We don't get tired of Damascus. We could stay here

and start a famine. What *will* these grumblers do in heaven, where very likely there isn't a single dish they ever heard of before?

In the matter of wines, however, I am conservative. You see, Mohammed forbade the use of spirituous beverages by the faithful, and liquor forms no part of their long, symphonic rhyme. They don't drink it themselves; they only make it for visitors.

It would require no command of the Prophet to make me abstain from it. I have tried their vintage. I tried one brand called the "Wine of Ephesus." The name conjured visions; so did the wine, but they were not the same visions. The name suggested banquets in marble halls, where gentlemen and ladies of the old days reclined on rich divans and were served by slaves on bended knee. The wine itself—the taste of it, I mean—suggested a combination of hard cider and kerosene, with a hurry call for the doctor. [Pg 252]

I was coy about the wines of the East after that, but by-and-by I tried another brand—a different color with a different name. This time it was "Nectar of Heliopolis." They had curious ideas of nectar in Heliopolis. Still, it was better than the Wine of Ephesus. Hair-oil is always better than kerosene in a mixture like that—but not much better. The flavor did not invite debauch.

This is Sunday (the Christian Sunday), and I have been out for an early morning walk. I took the trolley that starts near the hotel. I did not care for a trolley excursion, but I wanted to see what a Damascus trolley is like and where it went. It isn't like anything in particular, and it didn't go anywhere—not while I was on it.

I noticed that it was divided into three sections, and I climbed into the front one. The conductor motioned to me, and I understood that I had made a wrong selection, somehow. A woman, veiled and bangled, climbed aboard just then, and I understood. I was in the women's section—a thing not allowed in Damascus. So I got back into the rear section, but that wouldn't do, either. The conductor was motioning again.

I comprehended at length. The rear compartment was second class. He wanted me to go in style. So I got into the middle compartment and gave him a tin medal, and got two or three similar ones in change, and sat there waiting for the procession to move. I waited a good while. There was an Arabic inscription on the back of the seats in front of me—in the place where, in America, it says, "Wait for the car to stop." I suppose it says, "Wait for the car to start" in Damascus. We did that. The conductor dozed. [Pg 253]

Now and then somebody climbed on, but the arrivals were infrequent. I wondered if we were waiting for a load. It would take a week to fill up, at that rate. I looked at my watch now and then. The others went to sleep. That is about the difference between the East and the West. The West counts the time; for the East it has no existence. Moments, hours, months mean nothing to the East. The word hurry is not of her language. She drives her horses fast, but merely for pleasure, not haste. She has constructed this trolley, but merely for style. It doesn't really serve any useful purpose.

We moved a little by-and-by, and I had hopes. They were premature. We crawled up in front of a coffee-house where a lot of turbans and fezzes were gathered outside, over tiny cups and hubble-bubble pipes; then we stopped. Our conductor and motorman got off and leaned against an almond-tree and began gossiping with friends. Finally coffee came out to them, and pipes, and they squatted down to smoke.

I finished my ride then; I shall always wonder where those other passengers thought they were going, and if they ever got there.

I followed down a narrow street, and came to a succession of tiny work-shops. It was then I discovered what a man's feet are for—that is, some uses I had not known before. They are to assist the hands in performing mechanical labor. All mechanics work barefooted here. They sit flat on the floor or ground, with their various appliances in front of them, and there is scarcely any operation in which the feet do not take part. I came to a turning-lathe—a whole row of turning-lathes—tiny, crude affairs, down on the ground, of course, driven back and forth with a bow and a string. The workman held the bow in one hand, while the other hand, assisted by the foot, guided the cutting tool. It would never occur to these workmen to put the lathe higher in the air and attach a treadle, leaving both hands free to guide the tool. [Pg 254]

Their sawing is the crudest process imaginable. They have no trestles or even saw-bucks. They have only a slanting stick stuck in the ground, and against this, with their feet and one hand, they hold the piece to be sawed, while the other hand runs the earliest saw ever made—the kind Noah used when he built the Ark. Sometimes a sawyer has a helper—a boy who pushes and pulls as the saw runs back and forth.

I bought a Sunday-morning paper. It does not resemble the sixty-four-page New York Sunday dailies. It consists of four small pages, printed in wriggly animalculæ and other aquaria, and contains news four years old—or four hundred, it does not matter. Possibly it denounces the sultan—it is proper to do that just now—but I think not. That would be too current. I think it is still denouncing Constantine. [Pg 255]

XXIX

DAMASCUS, THE GARDEN BEAUTIFUL

Later, we drove to the foot of Mohammed's Hill—the hill from which the Prophet looked down on the Pearl of the East and decided that as he could have only one paradise he would wait for the next. They have built a little tower to mark the spot where he rested, and we thought we would climb up there.

We didn't, however. The carriages could only go a little way beyond the city outskirts, and when we started to climb that blistering, barren hillside afoot we changed our minds rapidly. We had permission to go as high as we pleased, but it is of no value. Anybody could give it. Laura and I and a German newspaper man were the only ones who toiled up high enough to look down through the mystical haze on the vision Mohammed saw. Heavens! but it was hot up there! And this is March—early spring! How those *Quaker City* pilgrims stood it to travel across the Syrian desert in August I cannot imagine. In the *Innocents* I find this observation:

"The sun-flames shot down like shafts of fire that stream out of a blowpipe. The rays seemed to fall in a steady deluge on my head and pass downward like rain from a roof."

That is a white-hot description, but not too intense, I think, for Syrian summer-time.

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Another thing we noticed up there: Damascus is growing—in that direction at least. Older than history, the place is actually having a boom. All the houses out that way are new—mud-walled, but some of them quite pretentious. They have pushed out far beyond the gardens, across the barren plain, and they are climbing the still more barren slope. They stand there in the baking sun, unshaded as yet by any living thing. One pities the women shut up behind those tiny barred windows. These places will have gardens about them some day. Already their owners are scratching the earth with their crooked sticks, and they will plant and water and make the desert bloom.

Being free in the afternoon, Laura and I engaged Habib and a carriage and went adventuring on our own account. We let Habib manage the excursion, and I shall always remember it as a sweet, restful experience.

We visited a Moslem burying-ground first, and the tomb of Fatima—the original Fatima—Mohammed's beautiful daughter, who married a rival prophet, Ali, yet sleeps to-day with honor in a little mosque-like tomb. We passed a tree said to have been planted by the Mohammedan conqueror of Damascus nearly thirteen hundred years ago—an enormous tree, ten feet through or more—on one side a hollow which would hold a dozen men, standing.

Then at last we came to the gardens of Damascus, and got out and walked among the olive-trees and the peach and almond and apricot—most of them in riotous bloom. Summer cultivation had only just begun, and few workmen were about. Later the gardens will swarm with them, and they will be digging and irrigating, and afterward gathering the fruit, preserving and drying it, and sending it to market. Habib showed us the primitive methods of doing these things.

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How sweet and quiet and fragrant it was there among the flowering trees! In one place a little group of Syrian Christians were recreating (it being Sunday), playing some curious dulcimer instrument and singing a weird hymn.

We crossed the garden, and sat on the grass under the peach-bloom while Habib went for the carriage. Sitting there, we realized that the guide-book had been only fair to Damascus.

"For miles around it is a wilderness of gardens—gardens with roses among the tangled shrubberies, and with fruit on the branches overhead. Everywhere among the trees the murmur of unseen rivulets is heard."

That sounds like fairyland, but it is only Damascus—Damascus in June, when the fruit is ripening and the water-ways are full.

We drove out of Damascus altogether—far out across a fertile plain, to the slopes of the West Lebanon hills. Then turning, we watched the sun slip down the sky while Habib told us many things. Whatever there is to know, Habib knows, and to localities and landmarks he fitted stories and traditions which brought back all the old atmosphere and made this Damascus the Damascus of fable and dreams.

Habib pointed out landmarks near and far—minarets of the great mosque, the direction of Jerusalem, of Mecca; he showed us where the waters of Damascus rise and where they waste into the desert sands. To the westward was Mount Hermon; southward came the lands of Naphtali, and Bashan where the giant Og once reigned. All below us lay Palestine; Mount Hermon was the watch-tower, Damascus the capital of the North.

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Damascus in the sunset, its domes and minarets lifting above the lacing green! There is no more beautiful picture in the world than that. We turned to it again and again when every other interest had waned—the jewel, the "pearl set in emeralds," on the desert's edge. Laura and I will

always remember that Sunday evening vision of the old city, the things that Habib told us, and the drive home.

Next to the city itself I think the desert interested us. It begins just a little beyond Damascus, Habib said, and stretches the length of the Red Sea and to the Persian Gulf. A thousand miles down its length lies Mecca, to which pilgrims have journeyed for ages—a horde of them every year. There is a railway, now, as far as Tebook, but Mecca is still six hundred miles beyond. The great annual pilgrimages, made up of the faithful from all over Asia and portions of Europe and Africa, depart from Damascus, and those that survive it return after long months of wasting desert travel. Habib said that a great pilgrimage was returning now; the city was full of holy men.

Then he told us about the dromedary mail that crosses the desert from Damascus to Bagdad, like a through express. It is about five hundred miles across as the stork flies, but the dromedary is not disturbed by distance. He destroys it at the rate of fifteen miles an hour, and capers in fresh and smiling at the other end. Habib did not advise dromedary travel. It is very rough, he said. Nothing but an Arab trained to the business could stand it. Once an Englishman wanted to go through by the dromedary mail, and did go, though they implored him to travel in the regular way. He got through all right, but his liver and his heart had changed places, and it took three doctors seven days to rearrange his works.

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A multitude was pouring out of the city when we reached the gates—dwellers in the lands about. We entered and turned aside into quiet streets, the twilight gathering about mysterious doorways and in dim shops and stalls, where were bowed, turbaned men who never seemed to sell anything, or to want to sell anything—who barely noticed us as we passed through the Grand Bazaar, where it was getting dark, and all the drowsy merchants of all the drowsy merchandise were like still shadows that only moved a little to let us pass. Out again into streets that were full of dusk, and dim flitting figures and subdued sounds.

All at once I caught sight of a black stone jar hanging at the door of a very small and dusky booth. It was such a jar as is used in Damascus to-day for water—was used there in the time of Abraham.

"Habib!"

I had wanted one of the pots from the first. The carriage stops instantly.

"Habib! That black water-jar—a small one!"

I had meant to bargain for it myself, but Habib is ahead of me. He scorns to bargain for such a trifle, and with such a merchant. He merely seizes the jar, says a guttural word or two in whatever tongue the man knows, flings him a paltry coin, and is back in the carriage, directing our course along the darkening, narrow way.

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What a wonderful life the dark is bringing out! There, in front of that coffee-house, that row of men smoking nargileh—surely they are magicians, every one. "That silent group with shaven faces and snowy beards: who are they, Habib?"

"Mongolians," he says. "Pilgrims returning from Mecca. They live far over to the north of China, but still are followers of the Prophet." The scope of Islamism is wide—oh yes, very wide, and increasing. That group gathered at the fountain—their dress, their faces—

"Habib!"

The horses come up with a jerk.

"A copper water-jar, Habib! An old, old man is filling it—such a strange pattern"—

Habib is down instantly, and amid the crowd. Cautiously I follow. The old man is stooped, wrinkled, travel-worn. His robe and his turban are full of dust. He is listening to Habib and replying briefly.

Habib explains. The pilgrim is returning with it from Mecca; it is very old; he cannot part with it. My heart sinks; every word adds value to the treasure. Habib tries again, while I touch the ancient, curiously wrought jar lovingly. The pilgrim draws away. He will hardly allow me even this comfort.

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We return to the carriage sadly. The driver starts. Some one comes running behind, calling. Again we stop; a boy calls something to Habib.

"He will sell," Habib laughs, "and why not? He demands a napoleon. Of course you will not give it!"

Oh, coward heart! I cannot, after that. I have the napoleon and the desire, but I cannot appear a fool before Habib.

"No, it is too much. Drive on."

We dash forward; the East closes behind us; the opportunity is forever lost.

If one could only be brave at the instant! All my days shall I recall the group at the fountain: that bent, travel-stained pilgrim; that strangely fashioned water-pot which perhaps came down to him from patriarchal days. How many journeys to Mecca had it made; how many times had it

moistened the parching lips of some way-worn pilgrim dragging across the burning sand; how many times had it furnished water for absolution before the prayer in the desert! And all this could have been mine. For a paltry napoleon I could have had the talisman for my own—all the wonder of the East, its music, its mystery, its superstition; I could have fondled it and gazed on it and re-created each picture at a touch.

Oh, Habib, Habib, may the Prophet forgive you; for, alas, I never can!

At the station next morning a great horde of pilgrims were waiting for the train which would bear them to Beirut—Mongolians, many of them, who had been on the long, long, pilgrimage over land and sea. At Beirut, we were told, seven steamers were waiting to take them on the next stage of their homeward journey. What a weary way they had yet to travel!

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They were all loaded down with baggage. They had their bundles, clothing, quilts, water-bottles; and I wandered about among them vainly hoping to find my pilgrim of the copper pot. Hopeless, indeed. There were pots in plenty, but they were all new or unsightly things.

All the pilgrims were old men, for the Moslem, like most of the rest of us, puts off his spiritual climax until he has acquired his material account. He *has* to, in fact; for, even going the poorest way and mainly afoot, a journey of ten or twelve thousand miles across mountain and desert, wilderness and wave cannot be made without substance.

We took a goodly number of them on our train. Freight-cars crowded with them were attached behind, and we crawled across the mountains with that cargo of holy men, who poured out at every other station and prostrated themselves, facing Mecca, to pray for our destruction. At least, I suppose they did that. I know they made a most imposing spectacle at their devotions, and the Moslem would hardly overlook an enemy in such easy praying distance.

However, we crossed the steeps, skirted the precipices safely enough, and by-and-by a blue harbor lay below, and in it, like a fair picture, the ship—home. We had been gone less than a week—it seemed a year.

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XXX

WHERE PILGRIMS GATHER IN

At some time last night we crossed over the spot where the Lord stirred up a mighty tempest and a great fish to punish Jonah, and this morning at daybreak we were in the harbor of Jaffa, "the beautiful," from which port Jonah sailed on that remarkable cruise.

We were not the only ones there. Two other great excursion steamers lay at anchor, the *Arabic* and the *Moltke*, their decks filled with our fellow-countrymen, and I think the several parties of ship-dwellers took more interest in looking at one another, and in comparing the appearance of their respective vessels, than in the rare vision of Jaffa aglow with morning. Three ship-loads at once! It seemed like a good deal of an invasion to land on these sacred shores. But then we remembered how many invasions had landed at Jaffa—how Alexander and Titus had been there before us, besides all the crusades—so a modest scourge like ours would hardly matter. As for that military butcher, Napoleon, who a little more than a century ago murdered his way through this inoffending land, he shot four thousand Turkish prisoners here on the Jaffa sands, after accepting their surrender under guarantee of protection. We promised ourselves that we would do nothing like that. We might destroy a pedler now and then, or a baksheesh fiend; but four thousand, even of that breed, would be too heavy a contract.

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THE PATRIARCH KNEW ALL ABOUT JAFFA

The Patriarch knew all about Jaffa. It is one of his special landmarks, being the chief seaport of the Phoenicians, the one place they never really surrendered. A large share of the vast traffic that went in and out of Palestine in the old days went by Jaffa, and a great deal goes that way still. The cedarwood from Lebanon, used in Solomon's Temple, was brought by water to this port; the treasure and rich goods that went down to Jerusalem in the day of her ancient glory all came this way; her conquerors landed here. The blade and brand prepared for Jerusalem were tried experimentally on Jaffa. According to Josephus, eighty thousand of her inhabitants perished at one time. Yet Jaffa has survived. Her harbor, which is not really a harbor at all, but merely an anchorage, with a landing dangerous and uncertain, has still been sufficient to keep her the chief seaport of Judea.

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There is another reason for Jaffa's survival. Beyond her hills lie the sacred cities of Jerusalem and Bethlehem. The fields that knew Ruth and Benjamin and a man named Jesus lie also there. From Jaffa in every direction stretch lands made memorable by stories and traditions in which the God and the prophets of at least three religions are intimately concerned. So during long centuries Jaffa has been a holy gateway, and through its portals the tide of pilgrimage has never ceased to flow.

Some of us who were to put in full time in Egypt would have only a few days in the Holy Land, and we were off the ship presently, being pulled through the turquoise water by boatmen who sang a barbaric chorus as they bent over their huge, clumsy oars. Then we were ashore and in carriages, and in another moment were "jumping through Jaffa," as one of the party expressed it, in a way that made events and landmarks flit together like the spokes of a wheel.

We visited the tomb of Dorcas, whom Peter raised from the dead, though for some reason we did not feel a positive conviction that it was the very tomb—perhaps because we did not have time to get up a conviction—and we called at the house of Simon the Tanner. It was with Simon, "whose house is by the seaside," that Peter lodged when he had his "vision of tolerance," in which it was made known to him that "God is no respecter of persons, but only of righteousness." It is truly by the seaside, and there is an ancient tanner's vat in the court-yard. But I hope the place was cleaner when Peter lodged there than it is now. One had to step carefully, and, though it did not smell of a tanyard, it did of several other things. Many travellers, including Dean Stanley, have accepted this as the veritable house where Simon dwelt and St. Peter lodged. Those people ought to get together and have it cleaned up. I could believe in it then myself.

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Jaffa, as a whole, could stand the scrub-brush and the hose. It is not "the beautiful" from within. It is wretchedly unbeautiful, though just as we were getting ready to leave it we did have one genuine vision. From the enclosures of the Greek Church we looked across an interminable orange-grove, in which the trees seemed mere shrubs, but were literally massed with golden fruit—the whole blending away into tinted haze and towering palms. No blight, no vileness, no inodorous breath, but only the dreamlit mist and the laden trees—the Orient of our long ago.

One might reasonably suppose that, as often as parties like ours travel over the railway that potters along from Jaffa to Jerusalem, there would be no commotion, no controversy with the officials—that the guard would only need to come in and check up our tickets and let us go.

Nothing of the kind; every such departure as ours is a function, an occasion—an entirely new proposition, to be considered and threshed out in a separate and distinct fashion. Before we were fairly seated in the little coach provided, dark-skinned men came in one after another to look us over and get wildly excited—over our beauty, perhaps; I could discover nothing else unusual about us. They would wave their hands and carry on, first inside and then on the platform, where they would seem to settle it. When they had paid us several visits of this kind, they locked us in and went away, and we expected to start.

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Not at all; they came back presently and did it all over again, only louder. Then our dragoman appeared, and bloodshed seemed imminent. When they went away again he said it was nothing—just the usual business of getting started.

By-and-by some of us discovered that our bags had not been put on the train, so we drifted out to look for them. We found them here and there, with from two to seven miscreants battling over each as to which should have the piastre or two of baksheesh collectible for handing our things from the carriage to the train. Such is the manner of graft in the Holy Land. It lacks organization and does not command respect.

The station was a hot, thirsty place. We loaded up with baskets of oranges, the great, sweet, juicy oranges of Jaffa—the finest oranges in the world, I am sure—then we forgot all our delays and troubles, for we were moving out through the groves and gardens of the suburbs, entering the Plains of Sharon—"a fold for flocks, a fertile land, blossoming as the rose."

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That old phrase expresses it exactly. I have never seen a place that so completely conveyed the idea of fertility as those teeming, haze-haunted plains of Sharon. Level as a floor, the soil dark, loose, and loamy; here green with young wheat, there populous with labor—men and women, boys and girls, dressed in the old, old dress, tilling the fields in the old, old manner; flocks and herds tended by such shepherds as saw the Star rise over Bethlehem; girls carrying water-jars on

their heads; camel trains swinging across the horizon—a complete picture of primal husbandry, it was—a vast allegory of increase. I have seen agricultural and pastoral life on a large scale in America, where we do all of the things with machinery and many of them with steam, and would find it hard to plough with a camel and a crooked stick; but I have somehow never felt such a sense of tillage and production—of communing with mother earth and drawing life and sustenance from her bosom—as came to me there crossing the Plains of Sharon, the garden of Syria.

It is a goodly tract for that country—about fifty miles long and from six to fifteen wide. The tribes of Dan and Manasseh owned it in the old days, and to look out of the car-window at their descendants is to see those first families that Joshua settled there, for they have never changed.

Our dragoman began to point out sites and landmarks. Here was the Plain of Joshua, where Samson made firebrands of three hundred foxes and destroyed the standing corn of the Philistines. The tower ahead is at Ramleh, and was built by the crusaders nearly a thousand years ago—Ramleh being the Arimathea where lived Joseph, who provided the Saviour with a sepulchre. Also, it is said to be the place where in the days when Samuel judged Israel the Jews besought him for a king, and acquired Saul and the line of David and Solomon as a result. To the eastward lies the Valley of Ajalon, where Joshua stopped the astronomical clock for the only time in a million ages, that he might slaughter some remaining Amorites before dark.

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We are out of the Plains of Sharon by this time, running through a profitless-looking country, mostly rock and barren, hardly worth fighting over, it would seem. Yet there were plenty of people to be killed here in the old days, and as late as fifteen hundred years after Joshua the Roman Emperor Hadrian slaughtered so many Jews at Bittir (a place we shall pass presently) that the horses waded to their nostrils in blood, and a stone weighing several pounds was swept along by the ruby tide. The guide told us this, and said if we did not believe it he could produce the stone.

Landmarks fairly overlap one another. Here, at Hill Gezer, are the ruins of an ancient city presented to Solomon by one of his seven hundred fathers-in-law. Yonder at Ekron so much history has been made that a chapter would be required to record even a list of the events. Ekron was one of the important cities which Joshua did not capture, perhaps because he could not manage the solar system permanently. The whole route fairly bristles with Bible names, and we are variously affected. When we are shown the footprints of Joshua and Jacob and David and Solomon we are full of interest. When we recall that this is also the land of Phut and Cush and Buz and Jidlaph and Pildash we are moved almost to tears.

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For those last must have been worthy men. The Bible records nothing against them, which is more than can be said of the others named. Take Jacob, for instance. I have searched carefully, and I fail to find anything to his credit beyond the fact that he procreated the Lord's chosen people. I do find that he deceived his father, defrauded his brother, outmanœuvred his rascally father-in-law, and was a craven at last before Esau, who had been rewarded for his manhood and forgiveness and wrongs by being classed with the Ishmaelites, a name that carries with it a reproach to this day.

Then there is Solomon. We need not go into the matter of his thousand wives and pretty favorites. Long ago we condoned that trifling irregularity as incident to the period—related in some occult but perfectly reasonable way to great wisdom. No, the wives are all right—also the near-wives, we have swallowed those, too; but then there comes in his heresy, his idolatry—all those temples built to heathen gods when he had become magnificent and mighty and full of years. There was that altar which he set up to Moloch on the hill outside of Jerusalem (called to this day the Hill of Offence), an altar for the *sacrifice of children by fire*. Even Tiberius Cæsar and Nero did not go as far as that. I'm sorry, and I shall be damned for it, no doubt, but I think, on the whole, in the language of the Diplomat, I shall have to "pass Solomon up." Never mind about the other two. Joshua's record is good enough if one cares for a slayer of women and children, and David was a poet—a supreme poet, a divine poet—which accounts for a good deal. Still, he did not need to put the captured Moabites under saws and harrows of iron and make them walk through brick-kilns, as described in II. Samuel xii: 31, to be picturesque. Neither did he need to kill Uriah the Hittite in order to take his wife away from him. Uriah would probably have parted with her on easier terms.

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It is sad enough to reflect that the Bible, in its good, old, relentless way, found it necessary to record such things as these against our otherwise Sunday-school heroes and models. Nothing of the sort is set down against Buz and Cush and Phut and Pildash and Jidlaph. Very likely they were about perfect. I wish I knew where they sleep.

The nearer one approaches Jerusalem the more barren and unproductive becomes the country. There are olive-groves and there are cultivated fields, but there are more of flinty hillsides and rocky steps. The habitations are no longer collected in villages, in the Syrian fashion, but are scattered here and there, with wide sterile places between. There would seem to be not enough good land in any one place to support a village.

I suppose this is the very home of baksheesh. I know at every station mendicants, crippled and blind—always blind—come swarming about, holding up piteous hands and repeating endlessly the plaintive wail, "Baksheesh! bak-sheesh!" One's heart grows sick and hard by turns. There are moments when you long for the wealth of a Rockefeller to give all these people a financial standing, and there are moments when you long for a Gatling-gun to turn loose in their direction.

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We are only weak and human. We may pity the hungry fly ever so much, but we destroy him.

I think, by-the-way, some of these beggars only cry baksheesh from habit, and never expect to get anything. I think so, because here and there groups of them stand along the railway between stations, and hold out their hands, and voice the eternal refrain as we sweep by. It is hardly likely that any one ever flings anything out of a car-window. Pity becomes too sluggish in the East to get action as promptly as that.

It was toward evening when we ran into a rather modern little railway station, and were told that we were "there." We got out of the train then, and found ourselves in such a howling mob of humanity as I never dreamed could gather in this drowsy land. We were about the last party of the season, it seems, and the porters and beggars and cabmen and general riffraff were going to make the most of us. We were seized and dragged and torn and lifted—our dragoman could keep us together about as well as one cowboy could handle a stampeded herd. I have no distinct recollection of how we managed to reach the carriages, but the first words I heard after regaining consciousness were:

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"That pool down there is where Solomon was anointed king."

I began to take notice then. We were outside a range of lofty battlemented walls, approaching a wide gate flanked by an imposing tower that might belong to the Middle Ages. We looked down on the squalid pool of Gihon, and I tried to visualize the scene of Solomon's coronation there, which I confess I found difficult. Then we turned to the tower and the entrance to the Holy City.

We were entering Jerusalem by the Jaffa gate, and the tower was the Tower of David.

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XXXI

THE HOLY CITY

Thirty-nine hundred years ago it was called merely Salem, and was ruled over by Melchisedek, who feasted Abraham when he returned from punishing the four kings who carried off his nephew, Lot. Five hundred years later, when Joshua ravaged Canaan, the place was known as Jebusi, the stronghold of the Jebusites, a citadel "enthroned on a mountain fastness" which Joshua failed to conquer, in spite of the traditional promise to Israel. Its old name had been not altogether dropped, and the transition from Jebusi-salem to Jebu-salem and Jerusalem naturally followed.

It was four hundred years after Joshua's time that David brought the head of Goliath to Jerusalem, and fifteen years later, when he had become king, he took the "stronghold of Zion," smote the difficult Jebusite even to the blind and the lame, and named the place the City of David.

"And David said on that day, whosoever getteth up to the gutter and smiteth the Jebusites, and the lame and the blind, *that are* hated of David's soul, he shall be chief and captain."

That is not as cruel as it sounds. Those incapables had no doubt been after David for baksheesh, and he felt just that way. I would like to appoint a few chiefs and captains of Jerusalem on the same terms.

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But I digress. The Bible calls it a "fort," and it was probably not much more than that until David "built round about" and turned it into a city, the fame of which extended to Hiram, King of Tyre, who sent carpenters and masons and materials to David and built him a house. After which "David took him some more concubines and wives out of Jerusalem," brought up the Ark of the Covenant from Kirjath-jearim, and prepared to live happy ever after. The Ark was, of course, very sacred, and one Uzzah was struck dead on the way up from Kirjath for putting out his hand to save it when it was about to roll into a ditch.

It was with David that the glory of Jerusalem as a city began. Then came Solomon—David's second son by Uriah's wife—wise, masterful, and merciless, and Jerusalem became one of the magnificent cities of the world. Under Solomon the Hebrew race became more nearly a nation than ever before or since. Solomon completed the Temple begun by David on Mount Moriah; the Ark of the Covenant was duly installed. Judaism had acquired headquarters—Israel, organization, and a capital.

The fame of the great philosopher-poet-king spread to the ends of the earth. The mighty from many lands came to hear his wisdom and to gaze upon the magnificence of his court. The Queen of Sheba drifted in from her far sunlit kingdom with offerings of gold, spices, and precious stones. And "she communed with him of all that was in her heart." That was more than a thousand years before Christ. Greece had no history then. Rome had not been even considered. Culture and splendor were at high-tide in the Far East. It was the golden age of Jerusalem.

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The full tide must ebb, and the waning in Jerusalem began early. Solomon's reign was a failure at the end. Degenerating into a sensualist and an idolater, his enemies prevailed against him. The Lord "stirred up an adversary" in Hadad the Edomite, who had an old grudge. Also others, and

trouble followed. The nation was divided. Revolt, civil wars, and abounding iniquities dragged the people down. That which would come to Rome a thousand years later came now on a smaller scale to Israel. Egyptian and Arabian ravaged it by turns, and the Assyrian came down numerously. It became the habit of adjoining nations to go over and plunder and destroy Jerusalem.

Four hundred years after Solomon, Josiah undertook to rehabilitate the nation and restore its ancient faith. He pulled down the heathen altars which Solomon had constructed, "that no man might make his son or daughter pass through the fire to Moloch"; he drove out and destroyed the iniquitous priests; he burned the high places of pollution and stamped the powder in the dust.

It was too late. Josiah was presently slain in a battle with the Egyptians, and his son dropped back into the evil practices of his fathers. Nebuchadnezzar came then, and in one raid after another utterly destroyed Jerusalem, including the Temple and the Ark, and carried the inhabitants, to the last man, into a captivity which lasted seventy years. Then Nehemiah was allowed to return with a large following and rebuild the city. But its prosperity was never permanent. The Jews were never a governing nation. Discontented and factional, they invited conquest. Alexander came, and, later, Rome. Herod the Great renewed and beautified the city, and to court favor with the Jews rebuilt the Temple on a splendid scale. This was Jerusalem in its final glory. Seventy years later the Jews rebelled, and Titus destroyed the city so completely that it is said to have remained a barren waste without a single inhabitant for fifty years.

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To-day the city is divided into "quarters"—Christian, Jewish, Mohammedan, and Armenian. All worships are permitted, and the sacred relics—most of them—of whatever faith, are accessible to all. Such in scanty outline is the story of the Holy City. It has been besieged and burned and pulled down no less than sixteen times—totally destroyed and rebuilt at least eight times, and the very topography of its site has been changed by the accumulation of rubbish. Hillsides have disappeared. Where once were hollows are now mere depressions or flats. Most of the streets that Jesus and the prophets trod lie from thirty to a hundred feet below the present surface, and bear little relation even in direction to those of the present day. Yet certain sites and landmarks have been identified, while others are interesting for later reasons.

Hence, both to sceptic and believer, Jerusalem is still a shrine.

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XXXII

THE HOLY SEPULCHRE

We lost no time. Though it was twilight when we reached our hotel, we set out at once to visit the spot which for centuries was the most sacred in all Christendom—that holiest of holies which during two hundred years summoned to its rescue tide after tide of knightly crusaders, depleted the chivalry and changed the map of Europe—the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

This, at least, would be genuine in so far as it was the spot toward which the flower of knighthood marched—Godfrey of Bouillon, Richard of the Lion Heart, Ivanhoe, and all the rest—under the banner of the Cross, with the cry "God wills it" on their lips. We are eager to see that precious landmark.

It was only a little way—nothing is far in Jerusalem—and we walked. We left the narrow street in front of the hotel and entered some still narrower ones where there were tiny booths of the Oriental kind, and flickering lights, and curious, bent figures, and donkeys; also steps that we went up or down, generally down, which seemed strange when we were going to Calvary, because we had always thought Calvary a hill.

It was impressive, though. We were in Jerusalem, and if these were not the very streets that Jesus trod, surely they were not unlike them, for the people have not changed, nor their habits, nor their architecture—at least, not greatly—nor their needs. Whatever was their cry for baksheesh then, He must often have heard it, and their blind eyes and their withered limbs were such as He once paused to heal.

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I think we continued to descend gradually to the very door of the church. It did not seem quite like the entrance to a church, and, in reality, it is not altogether that; it is more a repository, a collection of sacred relics, a museum of scriptural history.

We paused a little outside while the guide—his name was something that meant St. George—told us briefly the story. Constantine's mother, the Empress Helena, he said, through a dream had located the site of the crucifixion and burial of the Saviour, whereupon Constantine, in 335 A.D., had erected some buildings to mark the place. The Persians destroyed these buildings by-and-by, but they were rebuilt. Then the Moslems set fire to the place; but again some chapels were set up, and these the conquering crusaders enclosed under one great roof. This was about the beginning of the twelfth century, and portions of the buildings still remain, though as late as 1808 there came a great fire which necessitated a general rebuilding, with several enlargements since, as the relics to be surrounded have increased.

We went inside then. The place is dimly lit—it is always lit, I believe, for it can never be very light

in there—and everywhere there seemed to be flitting processions of tapers, and of chanting, dark-robed priests. Just beyond the entrance we came to the first great relic—the Stone of Unction—the slab upon which the body of Christ was laid when it was taken down from the Cross. It is red, or looked red in that light, like a piece of Tennessee marble, and, though it is not smoothly cut, it is polished with the kisses of devout pilgrims who come far to pay this tribute, and to measure it, that their winding-sheets may be made the same size. Above it hang a number of lamps and candelabra, and with the worshippers kneeling and kissing and measuring, the spectacle was sufficiently impressive. Then, as we were about to go, our guide remembered that this was not the true Stone of Unction, but one like it, the real stone having been buried somewhere beneath it. The pilgrims did not know the difference, he said, and they used up a stone after a while, kissing and measuring it so much. Near to the stone is the Station of Mary, where she stood while the body of Jesus was being anointed, or perhaps where she stood watching the tomb—it is not certain which. At all events, it has been revealed by a vision that she stood there, and the place is marked and enclosed with a railing.

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We followed our guide deeper into the twinkling darkness, where the chanting processions were flickering to and fro, and presently stood directly beneath a dome, facing an ornate marble or alabaster structure, flanked and surrounded by elaborately wrought lamps and candlesticks—the Holy Sepulchre itself.

But I had to be told. I should never have guessed this to be the shrine of shrines, the receptacle of the gentle Nazarene who taught the doctrine of humility to mankind. And it is the same within. If a rock-hewn tomb is there, it is overlaid now with costly marbles; polished with kisses; bedewed with tears.

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We did not remain in the tomb long, Laura and I. Perhaps they would not have let us; but, in any case, we did not wish to linger. At Damascus, Laura had gone so far as to criticise the house of Judas, because it had been whitewashed since St. Paul lodged there. So it was not likely that a tomb which was not a tomb, but merely a fancy marble memorial, would inspire much enthusiasm. To us it contained no suggestion of the gentle Prince of Peace.

But at the entrance of the Sepulchre, facing us as we came out, there was a genuine thing. It was a woman kneeling, a peasant woman—of Russia, I suppose, from her dress. And she was not looking at us at all, but beyond us, through us, into that little glowing interior which to her was shining with the very light of the Lamb. I have never seen another face with an expression like that. It was fairly luminous with rapt adoration. Yes, she at least was genuine—an absolute embodiment of the worship that had led her along footsore and weary miles to kneel at last at the shrine of her faith.

I am not going to weary the reader with detailed description of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. It is a vast place, and contains most of the sacred relics and many of the sacred sites that have been identified since the zealous Queen Helena set the fashion of seeing visions and dreaming dreams. We made the tour of a number of the chapels of different religious denominations. They are not on good terms with one another, by-the-way, and require Mohammedan guards to keep them from fighting around the very Sepulchre itself. Then we descended some stairs to the Chapel of St. Helena, where there is an altar to the penitent thief, and another to Queen Helena, though I did not learn that she ever repented, or even reformed.

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They showed us where the Queen sat when, pursuing one of her visions, they were digging for the true Cross and found all three of them; and they told us how they identified the holy one by sending all three to the bedside of a noble lady who lay at the point of death. The first shown her made her a maniac; the second threw her into spasms; the third cured her instantly. The commemoration of this event is called in the calendar "The Invention of the Cross," which seems to convey the idea. I think it was in the Chapel of the Finding of the Cross that I bought a wax candle, and a prayer went with it, though whether it was for my soul or Queen Helena's I am not certain. It does not matter. I am willing Helena should have it, if she needs it, and I think she does.

We went on wandering around, and by-and-by we came to a chapel where the Crown of Thorns was made, and presently to a short column marking the Centre of the Earth, the spot from which the dust was taken that was used in making Adam. You see, it is necessary to double up on some of the landmarks or enlarge the church again.

You can climb a flight of stairs in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre and be told that you are on Calvary, and you are allowed to put your hand through the floor into the sockets where the crosses stood. We did not do it, however. We climbed the stairs, but a collection of priests were holding some kind of ceremony with candles and chanting, and we were not sufficiently impressed to wait.

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We did pause, as we came away, to note in the vestibule of the Holy Sepulchre the two holes through which on Easter Eve the Holy Fire is distributed to Christian pilgrims who assemble from all parts of the world. On this occasion the Fire Bishop enters the Sepulchre, and fire from heaven lights the candles on the altar. Then the Bishop, who is all alone in the Sepulchre, passes the Holy Fire out through these holes, in the form of a bundle of burning tapers, to priests. The pilgrims with unlighted tapers then rush and jam and scramble toward these dispensers of the sacred flame and pay any price demanded to have their candles speedily lighted. Usually a riot takes place, and the Mohammedan guards are required to prevent bloodshed.

In 1834 there occurred a riot over the Holy Fire which piled the dead five feet deep around the Sepulchre. Four or five hundred were killed, and corpses lay thick even on the Stone of Unction. It seems a useless sacrifice, when one thinks of it, but then the blood of five hundred is only a drop as compared with what the centuries have contributed to this revered shrine.

I want to be quite serious for a moment about the Church of the Holy Sepulchre—here in Jerusalem—now, while I am in the spirit of the thing.

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It is the biggest humbug in all Christendom. Of the scores of sites and relics enclosed within its walls, it is unlikely that a single one is genuine. With all respect to Queen Helena's talent for dreams, her knowledge of Scripture must have been sparing, or she would have located Calvary outside the walls of Jerusalem. This place is in the heart of the city—was always in the heart of the city, in spite of all gerrymandering to prove it otherwise; and it was more of a flat or a hollow in the time of Christ than it is now.

As for the other traditions and trumpery gathered in this ecclesiastical side-show, they are unworthy of critical attention. Probably not one in a million of the readers of *Innocents Abroad* but thought the finding of the Grave of Adam one of Mark Twain's jokes. Not at all; it is located here under Calvary, and the place from which came Adam's dust (the Centre of the World) is close by. Then there is that Stone of Unction, which every one of intelligence knows to be a fraud, and there is the stone which the angel rolled away, and Adam's skull—they have that, too.

It would seem that the human animal had exhausted his simian inheritance then. But no, he can never exhaust that—it is his one limitless gift. He has gone right on adding to his heap of bones and crockery, enlarging the museum from time to time to make room. And he will add more. The future is long, and it is only a question of time and faith when he will bring over the tombs of the patriarchs from Hebron, the Grotto of the Nativity from Bethlehem, the House of Judas from Damascus, and the Street that was called Straight. Oh, he can do it! A creature who can locate the Holy Sepulchre, the Grave of Adam, the Centre of the World, Mount Calvary, and fifty other historical sites all within the radius of a few feet, and find enough of his own kind to accept them, can do anything. As an insult to human intelligence and genuine Christian faith, I suppose this institution stands alone.

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Do the priests themselves, the beneficiaries, believe it? Perhaps—at least some of them do. There is nothing so dense, so sodden, so impenetrable as priestly superstition. Not a ray of reason can enter a mind darkened for a lifetime by ceremonials in which candles, chantings, swinging censers, and prostrations are regarded as worship. Could you produce any evidence that would appeal to the minds of those figures that march and countermarch, and carry tapers and chant among these frauds and fripperies of their faith? Hardly—they would not care for evidence. What they want is more superstition; more for themselves—more, always more, for their followers; the more superstition, the more power, the more baksheesh. They have no use for facts and testimony. They can create both to fit the need. Let any corner of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre become vacant, and immediately some prelate will dream that it is the true place where Balaam's Ass saw the angel with the flaming sword, and they will promptly consecrate the spot; then they will excavate and find the sword and a footprint of the angel, also a piece of the Ass, and they will make a saint of Balaam, and very likely of the Ass, and they will set up an altar and get a sign-painter to make a picture of the vision, and the people will contribute prayers and piastres, and yell baksheesh at every traveller to keep the high priests of Balaam in food and funds.

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Strange that we who regard the Mohammedan pilgrim with disdain or compassion, on his journey to Mecca and Medina, excuse or condone the existence of a shrine like this. The Prophet's birthplace and tomb are at least authentic, and it was his desire that his followers should visit them. They are acknowledging a fact. These people are supporting a fraud.

And then the pity of it! The remembering that it was for this trumpery thing those mighty crusades swept like a flame across Europe, robbed her of her chivalry, and desolated a million homes; for this that gallant knights put on their armor and rode away under the banner of the Cross, shouting, "God wills it!" For this that men have drenched more than one nation with blood and changed the map and history of the world!

True, one may not altogether regret the crusades. They made romance and the high achievement to be celebrated in picture and in song. It was fine, indeed, to ride away in shining mail in a vast army in which all were officers—splendid knights battling for glory in a cause. Aching hearts and forsaken homes were plentiful behind, yet even they reflected the glamour of romance, the fervor of a faith.

But there was one crusade in which there was neither romance nor glory—nothing except heartbreak and anguish, and the long torture of the years.

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That was the Children's Crusade—the crusade in which fanaticism spelled its last word—when a countless number of children of all ages, as young as seven some of them, flocked to the standard of a boy of seventeen and wandered off down through Europe, to faint and fall and die by hundreds and by thousands from hunger and heat and thirst—moaning and grieving unheeded among the stones and bushes—to reach the Mediterranean at last, a scattered remnant, there to be taken on board some vessels and sold into slavery in Algiers!

There was no glory, no triumph however imaginary, in that crusade; no romance, no glamour after the first day's march. It was only weariness and torture after that—only wretchedness and

the fevered cry for the comfort of a mother's arm. And all for the sake of this dime-museum of faith, this huge ecclesiastical joke. The pity of it, indeed! Here to-night, a stone's-throw away, my heart bleeds for those little weary feet struggling on and on, for those little fainting souls, moaning, grieving, trying to keep up, lying down at last to coax the blessed release of death, and I would like to stand here on the housetops of Jerusalem and cry out against this insult to the memory of One who, when He said, "Suffer little children to come unto me," could hardly have foreseen that His words would bear such bitter fruit.

I do not do it, however. I want to live to get home and print this thing, and have it graven on my tomb.

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XXXIII

TWO HOLY MOUNTAINS

We set out early next morning for Mount Moriah, the site of Solomon's temple and those that followed it.

It was really David's temple in the beginning, undertaken to avert a pestilence which he had selected from three punishments offered by the Lord because he, David, had presumed to number his people. A Hebrew census was a sin in those days, it would seem, and seventy thousand of the enrolled had already died when David saw an angel with a drawn sword—the usual armament of an angel—standing by the threshing-floor of Oman the Jebusite. Through Gad, his Soothsayer, David was commanded to set up an altar on that spot, to avert further calamity. Negotiations with Oman were at once begun, to the end that Oman parted with the site for "six hundred shekels of gold, by weight"; the threshing-floor was quickly replaced by an altar, and here, on the top of Mount Moriah—on the great boulder reputed to have been the sacrificial stone of Melchizedek—and of Abraham, who was said to have proffered Isaac here—King David made offering to the Lord, and was answered by fire from heaven on the newly erected altar. And the angel "put up his sword again into the sheath thereof."

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From that day the boulder on the top of Mount Moriah became the place of sacrifice—the great central shrine of the Jewish faith. David decided to build a temple there, and prepared for it abundantly, as became his high purpose. But because David had shed much blood, the Lord interfered and commanded him to turn the enterprise over to Solomon, "a man of rest." "He shall build an house for my name; and he shall be my son, and I will be his father; and I will establish the throne of his kingdom over Israel forever."

In the light of thoughtful Bible reading, it is not easy to see that Solomon was much of an improvement over David, in the long-run, and one cannot but notice the fact that the promise to establish his throne over Israel forever was not long maintained. But perhaps the Lord did not foresee how Solomon was going to turn out; besides, forever is a long time, and the Kingdom of Solomon may still prevail.

Solomon completed the temple in a manner that made it celebrated, even to this day. The "oracle, or holy room, which held the Ark of the Covenant, was overlaid within with pure gold," and the rest of the temple was in keeping with this dazzling chamber.

The temple was often pillaged during the troublous times that followed Solomon's reign, but it managed to stand till Nebuchadnezzar's conquest, four centuries later. It was twice rebuilt, the last time by Herod, on a scale of surpassing splendor. It was Herod's temple that Christ knew, and the work of beautifying and adding to it was going on during his entire lifetime. It was finished in 65 A.D., and five years later it went down in the general destruction, though Titus himself tried to preserve it.

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Most of what exists to-day are the remains of Herod's temple. The vast court, or temple area, occupies about one-sixth of all Jerusalem, and of the genuineness of this site there is no question. In the centre of it, where once the house of David and Solomon stood, stands the Dome of the Rock—also called the Mosque of Omar, though it is not really a mosque, and was not built by Omar. It is, in fact, a marvellous jewelled casket—the most beautiful piece of architecture in the world, it has been called—built for no other purpose than to hold the old sacrificial stone of Melchizedek and Abraham—a landmark revered alike by Moslem, Christian, and Jew.

One is bound to feel impressed in the presence of that old boulder, seamed and scarred by ages of sun and tempest; hacked for this purpose and that; gray with antiquity—the very corner-stone of three religions, upholding the traditions and the faith of four thousand years. There is nothing sham or tawdry about that. The building is splendid enough, but it is artistically beautiful, and the old rock itself—the genuine rock of ages—is as bare and rugged as when Isaac lay upon it bound, and the "chosen people" narrowly missed non-existence.

There is a railing around it; but you can look over or through as long as you like, and if one is of a reflective temperament he can look a long time. Among other things he will notice a number of small square holes, cut long ago to receive the ends of slender supports that upheld a royal canopy or screen, and he will see the conduits cut to carry off the blood of the sacrifice. To his mental vision these things will conjure pictures—a panorama of rites and ceremonials—of altar

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and incense, with all the splendid costume and blazonry of the Judean king. And, after these, sacrifices of another sort—the cry of battle and the clash of arms across this hoary relic, its conduits filled with a crimson tide that flowed without regard to ritual or priest.

Other pictures follow: the feast of the Passover, when Jerusalem was crowded with strangers, when the great outer court of the temple was filled with booths and pens of the sellers who offered sheep, goats, cattle, and even doves for the sacrifice; when the temple itself was crowded with throngs of eager worshippers who brought their sacrifices, with tithes to the priests, and were made clean.

Amid one such throng there is a boy of twelve years, who with His parents has come up to Jerusalem "after the custom of the feast." We think of them as quiet, simple people, those three from Nazareth, jostled by the crowds a good deal, and looking rather wonderingly on the curious sights of that great yearly event. They would work their way into the temple, by-and-by, and they would come here to the Rock, and perhaps the sad, deep-seeing eyes of that boy of twelve would look down the years to a day when in this same city it would be His blood that would flow at the hands of men.

I hope He did not see that far. But we know that light for Him lay somewhat on the path ahead, for when the feast was over, and His parents had set out for Nazareth, He lingered to mingle with the learned men, and He said to His parents when they came for Him, "Wist ye not that I must be about my father's business?" Among all those who thronged about this stone for a thousand years, somehow the gentle presence of that boy of twelve alone remains, unvanishing and clear.

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And what a mass of legends have heaped themselves upon this old landmark!—a groundwork of Jewish tradition—a layer of Christian imagery—an ever-thickening crust of Moslem whim and fantasy. A few of them are perhaps worth repeating. The Talmud, for instance, is authority for the belief that the Rock covers the mouth of an abyss wherein the waters of the Flood may be heard roaring. Another belief of the Jews held it as the centre and one of the foundations of the world. Of Jesus it is said that He discovered upon the Rock the great and unspeakable name of God (Shem), and was thereby enabled to work his miracles.

But the Moslem soars into fairyland when he comes in the neighborhood of this ancient relic. To him the Rock hangs suspended in mid-air, and would have followed Mohammed to heaven if the Angel Gabriel had not held fast to it. We saw the prints of Gabriel's fingers, which were about the size and formation of a two-inch auger. Another Moslem fancy is that the rock rests on a palm watered by a river of Paradise.

In the hollow beneath the Rock (probably an artificial grotto) there is believed to be a well, the Well of Souls, where spirits of the deceased assemble twice a week to pray. They regard it as also the mouth of hell, which I don't think can be true, or the souls would not come there—not if they could help it—not as often as twice a week, I mean.

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A print of Mohammed's head is also shown in the roof of the grotto, and I believe in that, because, being a tall man, when I raised up suddenly I made another just like it. But I am descending into trivialities, and the Rock is not trivial by any means. It has been there since the beginning, and it is likely to remain there until all religions are forgotten, and the world is dead, and all the stars are dark.

In front of the Dome of the Rock the sun was bright, and looking across the approach one gets a characteristic view of Jerusalem—its bubble-roofed houses and domes, its cypress and olive trees. I made a photograph of Laura, age fourteen, and a friend of hers, against that background, but they would have looked more "in the picture" in Syrian dress. I am not sure, however; some of our party have had themselves photographed in Syrian dress, which seemed to belong to most of them about as much as a baseball uniform might belong to a Bedouin—or a camel.



JERUSALEM—ITS BUBBLE-ROOFED HOUSES AND DOMES, ITS CYPRESS AND OLIVE TREES

We crossed over to the ancient mosque El-Aksa, also within the temple area, but it was only mildly interesting after the Dome of the Rock. Still, there were things worth noting. There were the two pillars, for instance, which stand so close together that only slender people could squeeze between them. Yet in an earlier time every pilgrim had to try, and those who succeeded were certain of Paradise. This made it humiliating for the others, and the impulse to train down for the test became so prevalent that stanchions were placed between the pillars a few years ago. We could only estimate our chances

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and give ourselves the benefit of the doubt.

Then there is the Well of the Leaf, which has a pretty story. It is a cistern under the mosque, and the water is very clear. Once, during the caliphate of Omar, a sheik came to this well for water, and his bucket slipped from his hands. He went down after it, and came to a mysterious door which, when he opened it, led into a beautiful garden. Enchanted, he lingered there and finally plucked a leaf to bring back as a token of what he had seen. The leaf never withered, and so a prophecy of Mohammed's that one of his followers should enter Paradise alive had been fulfilled.

I said I would go down and hunt for the door. But they said, "No"—that a good many had tried it without success. The cistern used to collect every year the pilgrims who went down to find that door; no one was permitted to try, now.

In one of the windows of the old mosque we saw a curious sight: a very aged and very black, withered man—Bedouin, I should say—reclining face down in the wide sill, poring over an ancient parchment book, patiently transcribing from it cabalistic passages on a black, charred board with a sharpened stick. The guide said he was a magician from somewhere in the dim interior; certainly he looked it.

From somewhere—it was probably from an opening in the wall near the Golden Gate—we looked eastward across the valley of Kedron toward the fair hillsides, which presently we were to visit.

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Immediately we set out for the Mount of Olives. We drove, and perhaps no party ever ascended that sacred hill on a fairer morning. The air was still, and there was a quiet Sunday feeling in the sunshine. In the distance there was a filmy, dreamy haze that gave just the touch of ideality to the picture.

The road that leads up Olivet is bordered by traditional landmarks, but we could not stop for them. It was enough to be on the road itself, following the dusty way the Son of Man and His disciples once knew so well. For this hill of fair olive-groves, overlooking Jerusalem, was their favorite resort, and it was their habit to come here to look down in contemplation on the holy city. It was here that the Master felt the shadow of coming events: the destruction of the city; the persecution and triumph of His followers; His own approaching tragedy. It was here that He gave them the parable of the Virgins, and of the Talents, and it was here that He came often at evening for rest and prayer, after the buffet and labor of the day. This is the road His feet so often trod—a well-kept road, with the olive-groves, now as then, sloping away on either side.

Here and there we turned to look down on Jerusalem, lying there bathed in the sunlit haze—a toy city, it seemed, with its little round-topped houses, its domes and minarets, its battlemented walls. How very small it was, indeed! Why, one could run its entire circuit without losing breath. It is, in fact, little more than half a mile across in any direction, and from a distance it becomes an exquisite jewel set amid barren hills.

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I am afraid I did not properly enjoy the summit of the Mount of Olives—its landmarks, I mean. The Russian and Greek and Latin churches have spoiled it with offensive architecture, and they have located and labelled exact sites in a way that destroys the reality of the events. They have framed in the precise spot where Jesus stood at the time of His ascension. It is a mistake to leave it there. It should be transferred to the Church of the Holy Sepulchre.

But the view eastward, looking down on the Jordan and the Dead Sea, with the mountains of Moab lying beyond, they cannot spoil or change. Down there on that spot, thirty-five hundred years ago, the chosen people camped and prepared for the ravage and conquest of this valley, this mountain, and the fair lands beyond, even to Mount Hermon and the westward sea. Over there, on "Nebo's lonely mountain," Moses looked down upon this land of vine and olive which he was never to enter, and being weary with the harassings of his stiff-necked people, lay down by the wayside and left them to work out their own turbulent future.

"And the angels of God upturned the sod
And laid the dead man there."

I have always loved those lines, and it was worth the voyage to remember them here, looking down from the Mount of Olives toward the spot where lies that unknown grave.

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XXXIV

THE LITTLE TOWN OF THE MANGER

It was afternoon when we drove to Bethlehem—a pleasant drive, though dusty withal. The road lies between grain-fields—fields where Ruth may have gleaned, and where the Son of Man may have stopped to gather corn. It gives one a curious feeling to remember that these fields are the same, and that for them through all the centuries seed-time and harvest have never failed. Nor have they changed—the walls, the laborers, the methods, the crops belong to any period that this country has known.

The convent of Elijah was pointed out to us, but it did not matter. Elijah never saw it—never heard of it. It is different, however, with a stone across the way from the entrance. Elijah went to

sleep on that stone, and slept so heavily that he left his imprint there, which remains to this day. We viewed that stone with interest; then we took most of it and went on.

In a little while we came to the tomb of Rachel. The small, mosque-like building that covers it is not very old, but the site is probably as well authenticated as any of that period. Jacob was on his way from Padan when she died, and he buried her by the roadside "when there was but a little way to come into Ephrath" (which is Bethlehem). He marked the grave with a pillar which the generations would not fail to point out, one to another, as the last resting-place of this mother in Israel who died that Benjamin might have life.

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Poor Rachel! Supplanted in her husband's love; denied long the natural heritage of woman; paying the supreme price at last, only to be left here by the wayside alone, outside the family tomb. All the others are gathered at Hebron in the Field of Machpelah, which Abraham bought from the children of Heth for Sarah's burial-place. Jacob, at the very last, made his sons swear that they would bury him at Hebron with the others. He remembered Rachel in her lonely grave, and spoke of her there, but did not ask that he be taken to lie by her side, or that she be laid with the others. He died as he had lived—self-seeking, unsympathetic—a commonplace old man.

Just outside of Bethlehem we were welcomed by a crowd of little baksheesh girls, of a better look and distinctly of a better way than the Jerusalem type. They ran along with the carriage and began a chant which, behold, was German, at least Germanesque:

"Oh, du Fröliche!
Oh, du Heilege!
Baksheesh! Baksheesh!"

I suppose "Oh, thou happy one; Oh, thou holy one," would be about the translation, with the wailing refrain at the end. I think we gave them something. I hope so; they are after us always, and we either give them or we don't, without much discrimination. You can't discriminate. They are all wretched and miserably needy. You give to get rid of them, or when pity clutches a little fiercer than usual at your heart.

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A CAMEL TRAIN LED THE WAY THROUGH THE GATES

So we were at the gates of Bethlehem—the little town whose name is familiar at the firesides of more than half the world—a name that always brings with it a feeling of bright stars and dim fields:

"Where shepherds
watched their flocks by night
All seated on the
ground,"

and of angel voices singing peace and goodwill. A camel-train led the way through the gates.

I suppose the city itself is not unlike Jerusalem in its general character, only somewhat cleaner, and less extensive. We went immediately to the place of the nativity, but before we could get to it we were seized and dragged and almost compelled to buy some of the mother-of-pearl beads and fancy things that are made just across the way. We escaped into the Church of the Nativity at last—an old, old church, desolate and neglected in its aspect, though sufficiently occupied with chanting and droning and candle-bearing acolytes. Yet it is better—oh, much better—than the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and it has a legitimate excuse. If Christ was born in a Bethlehem manger, as the gospel records, it is probable that He was born here. There are many reasons for believing that the grotto below this church was used as the inn stables in that time, and that the brief life which has laid its tender loveliness on so many lives had its beginning here.

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We descended to the grotto and stood on the spot that is said to have heard His first infant cry. There is a silver star in the floor polished with kisses, and there are a lot of ornate lamps and other paltry things hanging about. It does not matter, I suppose, but I wish these professional religionists did not find such things necessary to stimulate their faith. Still one could shut his eyes and realize, or try to realize that he was standing in the place where the Light that has illumined a world struck its first feeble spark; where the impulse that for nineteen hundred years has swept across the nations in tides of war and peace first trembled into life—a wave of love in a mother's heart. As I say, the rest did not matter.

While the others were looking into the shops across the way, I wandered about the streets a little, the side streets, which in character cannot have changed much in nineteen hundred years. The people are poor, and there are many idlers. There are beggars, too; some of them very wretched—and leprous, I think. It seems a pity, here in the birthplace of Him who healed with a word.

We bought some of the Bethlehem beads. They will sell you a string a yard long for a franc, and they cut each bead separately from mother-of-pearl with the most primitive tools, and they shape

it and polish it and bore a hole in it, all by hand, and link it on a gimp wire. In America you could not get a single bead made in that way for less than double what they ask for a whole string. But, as I have said, they are very poor here—as poor as when they bestowed a Saviour on mankind.

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XXXV

THE SORROW OF THE CHOSEN—THE WAY OF THE CROSS

We had left Bethlehem and were back in Jerusalem, presently, on our way to the Jews' Wailing-place. I did not believe in it before I went. I was afraid it might be a sort of show-place, prepared for the occasion. I have changed my mind now. If there is one thing in Jerusalem absolutely genuine and directly linked with its ancient glories, it is the Jews' Wailing-place.

You approach it through a narrow lane—a sickening gantlet of misery. Near the entrance wretched crones, with the distaff and spindle of the Fates, sat in the dust, spinning what might have been the thread of sorrow. Along the way the beggars; not the ordinary vociferous beggars of Constantinople, of Smyrna, of Ephesus, even of Jaffa, but beggars such as the holy city alone can duplicate. Men and women who are only the veriest shreds of humanity, crouched in the dirt, reeking with filth and rags and vermin and sores, staring with blind and festering eyes, mumbling, moaning, and wailing out their eternal cry of baksheesh, often—if a woman—clutching some ghastly infant to a bare, scrawny breast. There was no loud demand for alms; it was only a muted chorus of pleading, the voice with which misery spells its last word. Some made no sound, nor gesture, even. They saw nothing, heard nothing, knew nothing—they were no longer alive—they had only not ceased to breathe and suffer. The spectacle made us gasp and want to cry out with the very horror of it.

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We were through the fearful gantlet at last, and went directly into the Jews' Wailing-place. There behold the most lamentable passage in the most tragic epic of all history—the frayed remnant of a once mighty race mourning for its fall. A few hours before, and but a few rods away, we had looked upon the evidences of its former greatness, its splendor and its glory—the place of King Solomon's temple when it sat as on the pinnacle of the world. Indeed, we were looking at it now, for this wall before which they bow in anguish is a portion of the mighty architecture for which they mourn. In the general destruction of Titus this imposing fragment remained, and to-day they bow before it and utter their sorrow in the most doleful grieving that ever fell on human ear. Along the wall they stand or kneel, and on rows of benches behind they gather thickly, reading from faded and tattered Hebrew Scriptures the "Lamentations," or chanting in chorus the saddest dirge the world has ever known.

"Because of the palace which is deserted—
We sit alone and weep.
Because of the temple which is destroyed,
Because of the walls which are broken down,
Because of our greatness which has departed,
Because of the precious stones of the temple ground to

powder,

Because of our priests who have erred and gone astray,
Because of our kings who have contemned God—
We sit alone and weep!"

It is no mere ceremony—no mock sorrow; it is the mingled wail of a fallen people. These Jews know as no others of their race can realize the depth of their fall, and they gather here to give it voice—a tonal and visual embodiment of despair. Even I, who am not of that race, felt all at once the deadly clutch of that vast grieving, and knew something of what a young Hebrew, a member of our party, felt when he turned sick and hurried from the spot.

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What other race has maintained an integrity of sorrow? What, for instance, does the blood of Imperial Rome care for its departed grandeur? It does not even recognize itself. What other nation has ever maintained racial integrity of any kind? But, then, these were a *chosen people!*

Chosen, why? Because they were a noble people? Hardly. Their own chronicles record them as a murmuring, rebellious, unstable race. Following the history of the chosen people from Jacob to Joshua, one is in a constant state of wonder at the divine selection. We may admit that God loved them, but we seek in vain for an excuse. In His last talk with Moses He declared that they would forsake Him, and that He in turn would forsake *them* and hide His face because of the evils they should do.

Moses, who knew them even better, distrusted them even more. "For I know that after my death ye will utterly corrupt yourselves," he said, almost with his latest breath. He told them that curses would befall them, and gave them a few sample curses, any one of which would lift the bark off of a tree. No wonder he was willing to lie down in Mount Nebo and be at peace.

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Yet they *are* a chosen people—a people apart—a race that remains a race, and does not perish. Chosen for what? To make a bitter example of what a race can do when it remains a race—how high it can rise and how low may become its estate

of misery? Remember, I am not considering the Jew as an individual; he is often noble as an individual; and it was a Jew who brought light into the world. I am considering a race—a race no worse than any other, and no better, but a *chosen* race; a race that without a ruler, without a nation, without a government—that outcast and despised of many nations has yet remained a unit through three thousand years. I am maintaining that only a chosen people could do that, and, without being able even to surmise the purpose, it is my humble opinion that the ages will show that purpose to have been good.



THE DEPTH OF THEIR FALL



THE WAY OF THE CROSS

(HOLY WEEK)

I have already inferred that the landmarks and localities of Jerusalem may be viewed with interest, but not too seriously. They have all associations, but most of them not the particular and sacred associations with which they are supposed to be identified. The majority of them were not located until Christ had been dead for a thousand years, and the means of locating them does not invite conviction. Inspiration located most of them, dreams the rest. That is to say, imagination. Whenever a priest or a dignitary wanted to distinguish himself he discovered something. He first made up his mind what he would like to discover, and then had an inspiration or a dream, and the thing was done. The eight Stations of the Cross, for instance, were never mentioned earlier than the twelfth century, and the Via Dolorosa, the Way of the Cross, was not so known until the fourteenth. Still, it must have been along some such street that the Man of Sorrow passed between the Garden and the Cross.

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We visited the Garden first. It was now late in the afternoon, and the sunlight had become tender and still and dream-like, and as we passed the traditional places—the house of Pilate, under the Ecce Homo arch, and the others, we had the feeling that it might have been on an evening like this that the Son of Man left the city, and with His disciples went down to Gethsemane to pray.

We were a very small party now—there were only four of us and the guide, for the others had become tired and were willing to let other things go. But if we were tired, we did not know it, and I shall always be glad of that fact.

At St. Stephen's gate (the tradition is that he was stoned there) we stopped to look down on Gethsemane. Perhaps it is not the real site, and perhaps the curious gilt-turreted church is not beautiful, but set there on the hillside amid the cypresses and venerable olive-trees, all aglow and agleam with the sunset, with the shadow of the dome of Omar creeping down upon it, there was about it a beauty of unreality that was positively supernatural. I was almost tempted not to go down there for fear of spoiling the illusion.

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We went, however, and the gnarled olive-trees, some of which are said to have been there at the time of Christ—and look it—were worth while. The garden as a whole, however, was less interesting than from above, and it was only the feeling that somewhere near here the Man who

would die on Calvary asked that the cup of sorrow might pass from Him which made us linger.

It was verging on twilight when we climbed to the city, and the others were for going to the hotel. But there was one more place I wanted to see. That was the hill outside of Jerusalem which the guide-books rather charily mention as "Gordon's Calvary," because General Gordon once visited it and accepted it as the true place of the Crucifixion. I knew that other thoughtful men had accepted it, too, and had favored a tomb not far away called the "Garden Tomb" as the true Sepulchre. I wanted to see these things and judge for myself. But two of our party and the guide spoke no English, and my Biblical German needed practice. There seemed to be no German word for Calvary, and when I ventured into details I floundered. Still, I must have struck a spark somewhere, for presently a light illumined our guide's face:

"Golgota! Das richtige Golgota" (the true Golgotha), he said, excitedly, and then I remembered that I should have said Golgotha, the "Place of the Skull," in the beginning.

We were away immediately, all of us, hurrying for the Damascus gate, beyond which it lay. It was not far—nothing is far in Jerusalem—and presently we were outside, at the wicket of a tiny garden—a sweet, orderly little place—where a pleasant German woman and a tall old Englishman with a spiritual face were letting us in. Then they led us to a little arbor, and directly—to a tomb, a real tomb, cut into the cliff overhanging the garden.

I do not know whether Jesus was laid in that tomb or not, and it is not likely that any one will ever know. But He *could* have been laid there, and it is not unlikely that He *was* laid there, for Golgotha—the hill that every unprejudiced visitor immediately accepts as the true Golgotha—overlooks this garden.



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THE TRUE GOLGOTHA—THE PLACE OF THE SKULL

(Notice the large eyes and mouth of the skull formed by cavities in the cliff. The place of execution is marked by the little heap of stones above.)

We could not ascend the hill—the Mohammedans no longer permit that—but we could go to the end of the garden and look up to the little heap of stones which marks the old place of stoning and of crucifixion. It was always the place of public execution. The Talmud refers to it, and the Jews of Jerusalem spit toward it to this day. We could make out the contour of the skull which gave it its name, and even the face, for in its rocky side ancient tombs and clefts formed the clearly distinguished features.

It is a hill; it is outside the walls; it is the traditional site of executions; it is the one natural place to which Jesus would have been taken for crucifixion. The Calvary in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre was *never* a hill; it was *never* outside the walls; it was *never* a traditional site for anything until Queen Helena began to dream.

Perhaps the reader may say, "With all the tales and traditions and disputes and doubts, what does it matter?" Perhaps it does not matter. Perhaps that old question of Pilate, "What is truth?" need not be answered.

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Yet somewhere amid the mass of conflation there follows a thread of fact. Sifting the testimony, it is difficult to deny that there once lived a man named Jesus—later, and perhaps then—known as the Christ; that He was of humble birth, and grew up to teach a doctrine of forgiveness and humility (a doctrine new to the Hebrew teachers of His day, whose religion consisted mainly of ceremonial forms); that He was able to heal the sick; that He had a following who, perhaps, hailed Him as their king; that it was because of these things that He was crucified on a hill outside of Jerusalem.

I think this is as far as general acknowledgment goes. The Scriptures declare more, the sceptic allows less; but the majority of mankind unite on the foregoing admissions. At all events, a great religion was founded on this man's life and death—a doctrine of gentleness when creeds are stripped away—and it is proper that such truth as can be established concerning the ground He trod, especially on that last dark day, should be recognized and made known. Of our little party of four there was not one who—standing there as the stars came out, and looking up at that hill outlined against the sky—did not feel a full and immediate conviction that this was indeed the spot where that last, supreme expiation was made, and that this sweet garden, guarded by these two gentle people, was the truer site for the Sepulchre which was "nigh at hand."

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AT THE MOUTH OF THE NILE

I am not a gifted person; I cannot write about existing places and things without seeing them, and I am afraid to steal from the guide-book—unintelligently, I mean. I have sometimes found the guide-book mistaken—not often, I admit, but too often to take chances. I should be struck with remorse if I should steal from the guide-book and then find that I had stolen a mistake. So I shall have to skip Galilee, Tiberias, Nazareth, and Hebron, for the reason that I could not visit those and include Egypt, too, by our schedule.

One *must* go to Egypt. If the "grand object of all travel is to visit the shores of the Mediterranean," then the grand climax of that tour is Egypt. One *must* take all the time there is for that amazing land, and any time will be too short, even though it be a lifetime.

The guide-book says that the arrival at Alexandria is not very impressive. I suppose a good deal depends on the day and the time of day and one's mental attitude. As usual with our arrivals, it was early morning, and everything was hazy and yellow-misty with sunrise. We were moving slowly, and the water was glassy still. Here and there across the yellow haze drifted a barge-like craft with a lateen-sail, or a slow moving boat, pulled by men in native dress. Then out of the mist across the port bow came the outline of a low-lying shore, and a shaft that rose, a vague pencil against the morning glow. The Diplomat was leaning on the rail at my side.

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"Egypt," he said, quietly. "That is a lighthouse—they call it a pharos, after the one that Ptolemy built; it must have stood about in the same direction."

Certainly that was not very dramatic, not actively so at least, but to me it was impressive; and stealing into that dream-like harbor, through the mellow quiet of the morning, I had the feeling that we were creeping up on the past—catching it asleep, as it were; that this was indeed the pharos of the Ptolemies—the harbor they had known.

I shall always remember Alexandria, Egypt. I shall always remember the railway station with its wild hallabaloo of Arab porters, who grab one's hand-baggage, make off with it, and sit on it in a secluded place until you race around and hunt it up and produce baksheesh for its return. You do not check baggage in Egypt, by the way; you register it, which means that you tell somebody about it, then try to convince yourself that it is all right and that some day you will see it again.

But I shall remember that station for another reason. When we had finally fought our way through to the train, and Laura and I had placed our things here and there in our compartment—in the racks and about—we realized that we were hot and thirsty, and I said I would slip back and get some oranges, seeing we had plenty of time.

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It was easy to do that—easy enough, I mean, for I no longer had anything for the Bedouins to grab. I got the oranges and paid a piastre apiece for them—about ten times what they were worth in Jaffa, and I had the usual difficulty making change—a detachment of interested Arabs looking on meanwhile. Then I started back, and was stopped by a guard who wanted to see my ticket. I felt for the flat leather case which I generally carry in my hip-pocket. It was gone!

If there had been anything resembling a chair there I should have sat down. As it was I took hold of the little railing, for my knees had a watery feeling which I felt was not to be trusted. That pocket-book contained my letter of credit; all my money, except a little change; my tickets, my character—everything that an unprotected stranger is likely to need in a strange land! When I got my breath I dived into all my pockets at once, then went through them categorically, as much as three times apiece. I had never realized I owned so many pockets or that they could be so empty, so useless.

Those Bedouins had done it, of course. I rushed back to the orange-man, and in a mixture of three languages which nobody, not even myself, could understand, explained my loss. He shrugged his shoulders in French, elevated his hands in Egyptian, and said "No can tell" in English. I glared around at the contiguous Bedouins, but they all looked disinterestedly guilty. In a mixed daze I went back to the guard, and crept through when he was attending to another passenger. I still held the bag of oranges, and handed them to Laura, who was quietly waiting, looking out the window at the passing show. Little did she guess my condition, and how could I tell her?

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It was quite by chance that I glanced up at the overhead rack where I had stowed our smaller packages. Ah me! The gates of bliss open wide will never be a more inspiring sight than what I saw there. There it lay—that precious pocket-book! In the disordered mental state of our arrival I had for some unguessed reason taken out my pocket-case and laid it there with the other items. It was safe—safe in every detail. The world suddenly became glorified. Those Bedouins were my brothers. I would have gone back and embraced them if the train had not begun to move.

Yes, I shall always remember Alexandria.

There is a continuous panorama between Alexandria and Cairo, absolutely fascinating to one who has not seen it before, and I wonder how it can ever grow old to any one. Almost immediately there was water—the Nile, or one of its canals—and stretching away, a dead level of green—lavish, luxurious, blossoming green—the delta-land of Lower Egypt, the richest garden in all the world. A network of irrigation; mud villages that might have been made by wasps; a low-dropping sky that met the level green—these made a background, and against it, along the raised road that follows the Nile, an endless procession passed.

A man riding a camel, leading another; a boy watering two buffaloes; an Arab walking, followed by his wife and a string of loaded donkeys; ditto camels; a cow grinding an old Egyptian water-mill that has been in use since Pharaoh's time; two men turning an Archimedes screw to lift the water to their fields—so the pictures whirl by. The Orient has become familiar to us, yet for some reason the atmosphere, the impression, is wholly different here, because—I cannot tell why—because this is Egypt, I suppose, and there is only one Egypt, a fact easier to realize than to explain.

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The day was well along when we reached Cairo and, after the usual battle with the Ishmaelites, drove to Shephard's Hotel. As there is only one Egypt, so there is only one Shephard's Hotel. There are other hotels as large and as lavish, with as fair gardens, perhaps, but I believe there is no other hotel on the planet where you can sit on a vast balmy terrace and look down on such a panorama of the nations—American, European, Asiatic, African—such a universal congress of pleasure as each winter assembles here. It would take a more riotous pen than mine to achieve a description of that mixture. If the reader can imagine a World's Fair Midway of every nationality and every costume and every language and mode of locomotion under the sun, and can see mingled with it all the dark-faced sellers of shawls and scarabs, and beads and relics, the picture will serve, and we will let it go at that.

And perhaps I may as well say here that Cairo is the wildest, freest place in Christendom. The confluence of Upper and Lower Egypt—the Delta and the Nile—here on the edge of the desert, it is the veritable jumping-off place where all conventions melt away. It is the neutral ground where East and West meet—each to adopt the special privilege and license of the other—madly to compete in lavishness of dress and the reckless joy of living. In the language of the Reprobates, "One gets his money's worth in Cairo, if he makes his headquarters at Shephard's and sits in the game." But he will require a certain capital to make good his ante. If I hadn't found that pocket-book at Alexandria I should have taken my meals with the Arabs in the back basement.

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The Arab, by-the-way, is the general servitor in the Egyptian hotel. You ring three times when you want him, and he is as picturesque and gentle a Bedouin as ever held up a camel train or slew a Christian to glorify his faith. He is naïve and noiseless, and whatever you ask him for he says "Yes," and if you ask him if he understands he says "Yes," and you will never know whether he does or not until you see what he brings. It does not help matters to talk loudly to the Arab. Volume of sound does not increase his lingual gifts, and spelling the article is likewise wasted effort. Ladies sometimes try that method. The trunk of one of our party had not reached her room—and she needed it.

"My trunk," she said to the Arab. "*You* know, trunk—t-r-u-n-k, trunk—yes, trunk, with my name on it—*you* know—n-a-m-e—my initials, I mean, *you* know—T. D.—T. D. on both ends."

The Arab did know "trunk"; the rest was mere embroidery.

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XXXVII

THE SMILE OF THE SPHINX

There was not much left of the afternoon when we reached Cairo, but some of us wandered off here and there to get the habit of the place, as it were. Laura and I came to a trolley-line presently, and found that it ran out to the Pyramids and Sphinx. We were rather shocked at the thought, but recovered and decided to steal a march on the others by slipping out there and having those old wonders all to ourselves, at sunset.

It is a long way. You pass through streets of many kinds and by houses of many sorts, and you cross the Nile and glide down an avenue of palms where there are glimpses of water—the infinite desert stretching away into the evening. Long before we reached them we saw the outlines of the three pyramids against the sky, and then we made out the Sphinx—that old group which is perhaps the most familiar picture that children know.

Yet, somehow, it could not be true that this was the reality of the pictures we had seen. The likeness was very great, certainly, but those pictures had represented something in a realm of books and romance—the unattainable land—while these were here; we were actually going to them, and in a trolley-car! It required all the spell of Egypt then—the palms, the desert, and the evening sky—to fit the reality into its old place in the hall of dreams.

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We had thought to have a quiet view, but this was a miscalculation. There is no such thing as a quiet view of the Pyramids. At any hour of the day or night you are immediately beset by beggars and fortune-tellers and would-be guides, and you are pulled and dragged and distracted by their importunities until you have lost all interest in your original purpose in a general desire to start a plague or a massacre that will wipe out the whole pestiferous crew. There is no hope, except in the employment of one or two of the guides—the strongest-looking ones, who will in a certain measure keep off the others—and you will have to engage donkeys, and perhaps have your fortune told. Otherwise these creatures will follow you and surround you, insisting that they want no money; that they only love you; that it makes them happy even to be near you; that they love all Americans; that, in short, for a shilling, just a shilling, and a baksheesh (a piastre), one little

baksheesh, they will become your guide, your slave, the dirt under your feet—"Ah, mister—ze Sphinkis, ze Pyramid, aevry-zing!" It is a disgrace to Egypt, and to England who is in charge here now, that such persecution is permitted in the shadow of one of the world's most revered and imposing ruins.

We engaged donkeys, at last, after there had been several fights over us, and set out up the road to the Great Pyramid, assailed every little way by bandits lying in wait. The Great Pyramid does not improve with close acquaintance. It has been too much damaged by time and criminal assault. It loses its clean-cut outlines as you come near and becomes little more than a stupendous heap of stones. I think we were a trifle disappointed with a close inspection, to tell the truth, for even the largest pictures do not give one quite the impression of the reality. It was as if we had been gazing at some marvellous painting, and then had walked up very near to see how the work was done.

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The charm came back as we rode off a little and turned to view it now and again in the evening light. The irregularities disappeared; the outlines became clean against the sky; I was no longer disappointed in that giant of architecture whose shadow (it lay now just at our feet) began marking time at a period when the world had no recorded history.



A VAST INDIFFERENCE TO ALL PUNY THINGS

Yet in one or two respects the reality differed from the dream. Usually stone grows gray with age and takes on moss and lichen—the mould of time. The Pyramids are entirely bare, and they are not gray. The stones might have been laid up yesterday so far as any vegetable increment is concerned, and their color is a tawny gold—luminous gold in the sunset, like the barren hills beyond. The daily sandblast of the desert will level these monuments in time, no doubt, but the last fragment in that remote age will still be bare and in color unchanged.

As with the Pyramids, our first impression of the Sphinx was one of disappointment. It seemed small to us. It is small compared with a pyramid, while the photographs give one another idea. The photographs are made with the Sphinkis (Sphinx, I mean—one falls so easily into the native speech) in the foreground, looking fully as big as the second-size pyramid and quite able to have the third-size pyramid for breakfast. Figures mean nothing in the face of a picture like that; you comprehend them, but you do not realize them—visualize them, perhaps I ought to say.

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So the Sphinx seemed small to us as we approached, and even when we were on the immediate brink of sand, gazing down upon it, its sixty-five feet of stature seemed reduced from the image in our minds.

But the Sphinx grows on one. As the light faded and the shadows softened its scarred features there came also a dignity and with it a feeling of immensity, of grandeur, a vast indifference to all puny things. And then—perhaps it was the light, perhaps it was because I stood at a particular angle, but certainly—standing just there, at that moment, I saw, or fancied I saw, about its serene lips the suggestion or beginning of a smile. The more I looked, the more certain of it I became, and when I spoke of it to Laura, she saw it, too. Yes, undoubtedly we had caught the Sphinx smiling—not outwardly, at least not openly, but quietly, quizzically—smiling inside as one might say. I could not understand it then, but later it came to me.

Back at the hotel, to-night, I thought it out. I remembered that the Sphinx had been there a long time; nobody knows how long, but *a very long time indeed*. I remembered that it had seen a number of things—a *very great number of things*. I remembered that it had seen one very curious thing, to wit:

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A long time ago, when a certain Pharaoh—we can only guess which Pharaoh—ruled over Egypt, it saw a young man who had been sold into bondage from Syria rise in the king's favor through certain dreams and become his chief counsellor, even "ruler over all the land of Egypt." It saw him in the height of his power and glory bring his family, who were Syrian shepherds, down from their barren hills and establish them in the favor of the Egyptian king. The Sphinx was old—a thousand years old, at least, even then—and, being wise, heard with certain curiosity their claim that they were a "chosen people," and thoughtfully watched them multiply through a few brief centuries into a band of servitors who, because of this tradition, held themselves a race apart, repeating tales of a land of promise which they would some day inherit. Then at last, during a

period of visitation, the Sphinx saw them escape, taking what they could lay their hands on, straggling away, with their families and their flocks, toward the Red Sea. The Sphinx heard nothing more of that tribe for about three thousand years.

Then an amazing thing happened. Among those who came to wonder at the Sphinx's age and mystery were some who repeated tales of that runaway band—tales magnified and embroidered almost beyond recognition—and, what was more curious, accepted them—not as such tales are usually accepted, with a heavy basis of discount—but as gospel; inspired truth; the foundation of a mighty religion; the word of God.

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Nor was that all. The Sphinx realized presently that not only were those old stories accepted as gospel by the descendants of the race themselves, but by a considerable number of the human race at large—accepted and debated in a most serious manner, even to the point of bloodshed.

Some details of this inspired chronology were wholly new to the Sphinx. It was interesting, for example, to hear that there had been three million of those people, and that before they started there had been a time when the Nile had been turned to blood—twice, in fact: once by the grace of God and once by magicians. The Sphinx did not remember a time when the Nile had turned to blood. In the five thousand years and more of its existence it had never heard of a magician who could produce that result. It was interesting, too, to learn that the Red Sea had opened a way for those people to cross, and that the hosts of Egypt, trying to follow them, had been swallowed up and drowned. This was wholly new. The Sphinx had been there and seen all that had happened, but she had somehow missed those things.

Not that the Sphinx was surprised at these embroideries. She had seen several mythologies created, and knew the general scale of enlargement and glorification. It was only when she saw strong, cultured, and enlightened nations still accepting the old Hebrew poem—with all its stately figures and exaggerations—as gospel; heard them actually trying to prove that a multitude as big as the census of Australia had marched out with its chattels and its flocks; heard them vow that the Red Sea had parted long enough to let this population pass through; heard them maintain that this vast assembly had found shade and refreshment on the other side by twelve wells of water and under seventy palm-trees: heard them tell how the sea behind them had suddenly rushed together and swallowed up all the Egyptian army (including the king himself, some said)—it was only when the Sphinx heard learned men argue these things as facts that a smile—scarcely perceptible, yet still a smile—began to grow behind the stone lips.

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That is the smile we saw to-night—a quiet smile, a gracious smile, a compassionate smile—and as it has grown so slowly, so it will not soon depart. For by-and-by, when these ages have passed, and with them their story and their gospels—when those old chronicles of the Jews have been relegated to the realm of mythology for a thousand years—there may come another band who will establish their traditions as God's holy word, and the Sphinx—still remaining, still observing, still looking across the encompassing sands to the sunrise—will smile, and dream old dreams.

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XXXVIII

WAYS THAT ARE EGYPTIAN

I wonder why we are always taken first to the mosques, or why, when our time is pretty limited, we are taken to them at all. Mosques are well enough, but when you have seen a pretty exhaustive line of them in Turkey and Syria, Egypt cannot furnish any very startling attractions in this field. For mosques are modern (anything less than a thousand years old is modern to us now), and Egypt is not a land of modern things. Besides, here in Cairo there are such a number of fascinating out-of-the-way corners which we are dying to see—unholy side-streets, picturesquely hidden nooks, and mysterious, shut-in life; besides all the bazaars—

Never mind; the mosques did have a certain interest, especially the mosque of Al-Azhar, which is nine hundred years old and built about a great court—an old mosque when America was still undiscovered—and the mosque of Hassan, "whose prayer will nevaire be accept," Abraham said (Abraham being our guide), "because when ze architect' have finish, ze Sultan Hassan have cut off hees han' so he cannot produce him again." Napoleon's first gun in Egypt hit a minaret of Hassan's mosque, it is said, and it has had bad luck generally, perhaps because of the cruel act of its royal builder. We were not even required to put on slippers to enter it, so it cannot be held in very great veneration. Then there is the mosque of Mohammed Ali, built within the last century and modern throughout, the only mosque in the world, I believe, to have electric lights!

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It was Mohammed Ali who settled the Mameluke problem in the conclusive way which sultans adopt at times. The Mamelukes were the Janizaries of Egypt, though fewer in number. Still, there were enough of them to make trouble and keep matters stirred up, and Ali grew tired of them. So did the public, according to our guide:

"Ali, he say to some people, 'You like get rid of zose Mameluke?' an' all ze people say, 'Yez, of course.' So Ali he make big dinner, an' ze Mameluke come an' eat, an' have fine, big time."

It was on the 1st of March, 1811, that Ali issued his general invitation to the Mameluke leaders to attend a function at the Citadel; and, after entertaining them hospitably, invited them to march

through a narrow passageway, which was suddenly closed at each end, while from above opened a musket-fire that presently concluded those Mamelukes—470 of them—with the exception of one man, who is said to have leaped his horse through a window down a hundred feet or so, where he "Jump from hees horse and run—run fas' to Jaffa!" which was natural enough.

There was only one trouble with that story. Abraham did not explain how this particular Mameluke came to have his horse at luncheon, and why, with or without horses, a number of those other Mamelukes did not follow him. Every Mameluke of my acquaintance would have gone through that window, mounted or otherwise, and without calculating the distance to the ground. However, Abraham showed us the passage and the place of the leap, and later the graves of the 470, all of which was certainly convincing. Following the removal of the leaders, a general burial of Mamelukes took place throughout Egypt, since which time members of that organization have been extremely hard to catch. It must have been Ali's neat solution of the Mameluke problem which fifteen years later was copied in Constantinople by Mahmoud II., when he disposed of the Janizaries.

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It was at the tomb of a distinguished pasha—a fine, inviting place—that we saw a small green piece of the robe of Abraham. It was incorporated in a very sacred rug, one of the twelve which Cairo, Constantinople, and Damascus contribute to Mecca each year. We asked how Abraham's robe could hold out this way, and his namesake shrugged and smiled:

"Oh, zay take little piece of ze real robe an' roll him 'roun' an' 'roun' wiz many piece of goods, an' zay become *all* ze robe of Abraham."

Thus does a thread leaven a whole wardrobe.

Laura and I escaped then. We did not care for any more tombs and mosques, and we did care a great deal for a street we had noticed where, squatted on the ground on both sides of it, their wares spread in the dust, were sellers of certain trinkets and jars which, though not of the past, had a fatal lure we could not all forget. Our driver was a black, scarred semi-Nubian who looked as if he had been through a fire, and had possibly five words of English. It does not matter—Menelek (so we named him) served us well, and will retain a place in my affections.

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We took the back track, and presently were in the street of small sellers, driving carefully, for there was barely room to pass between their displayed goods. Here and there we stooped to inspect, and we bought a water-jar for a piastre—an Egyptian piastre, which is really money and worth exactly five cents. Beyond the jars was a woman selling glass bracelets, such as the Arab women wear. I had wanted some of those from the beginning. I picked out a gay handful, and then discovered I had only a gold twenty-franc piece to pay with. The woman had never owned twenty francs, and no seller in the neighborhood could furnish the change. So I handed it to Menelek, who grinned and disappeared while we sat there in the carriage waiting.

I suppose he had to go miles in that neighborhood for as much change as that. I know we sat there in the sun and looked at all the curious things in all the assortments about us, over and over, and discussed them and wondered if Menelek would ever return. It became necessary at last that he should do so. No vehicle could pass us in that narrow thoroughfare, and in a string behind there was collecting as motley an assortment of curiosities as ever were gathered in a menagerie. There was a curious two-wheeled cart or dray, drawn by water-buffaloes, upon which a man had his collection of wives out for an airing; there was a camel loaded with huge water-jars until they projected out over the heads of the selling people; there was a load of hay drawn by a cow; there was a donkey train that reached back to the end of the street, and what lay beyond only Allah knew.

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The East is patient, but even the East has its limits. Presently we began to be interviewed by dark men—camel-drivers and the like—who had a way of flinging up their hands, while from behind came a rising tide of what I assumed to be imprecation.

We were calm—that is, we assured each other that we were calm—and we told them quite pleasantly how matters stood. The result was not encouraging. One Bedouin grabbed the bridle, and I was at the point of slaying him with my water-jar when at the same moment appeared a member of the Cairo police—one of those with a tall red fez—also Menelek, our long-lost Menelek, with the change, out of which there was baksheesh for the discontented drivers. Everything was all right then. We headed the procession. Behind us came the buffalo-cart—the wives, sandwiched fore and aft and smiling—the camel with his distended load of jars; the heaped-up little hay-wagon; the string of donkeys all in blue beads, with heaven knows what else trailing down the distance. All the curses were removed; all the drivers singing; traffic congestion in the East was over.

One of the first things we had noticed in Egypt was the curious brass spool affair which Arab women wear, suspended perpendicularly across the forehead, from the head-gear to the top of their veil. It extends from the nose upward, and has sharp, saw-like ridges on it, which look as if they would cut in. When we asked about these things, we were told that they were worn to avert the evil eye, also as a handy means by which the husband may correct any little indiscretion on the part of one of his wives. He merely has to tap that brass spool with his cane or broomstick, or whatever is handy, and it cuts in and neatly reminds the wearer that she is a woman and had better behave. Family discipline has matured in this ancient land.

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I explained to Menelek now, in some fashion, that I wanted one of those brass things; whereupon we entered the narrow and thronging thoroughfare of commerce—a gay place, with all sorts of

showy wares lavishly displayed—and went weaving in and out among the crowd to find it. Every other moment Menelek would shout something that sounded exactly like, "Oh, I *mean* it! Oh, I *mean* it!" which made us wonder *what* he meant in that emphatic way.

Then all at once he changed to, "Oh, I *schmell* it! Oh, I *schmell* it!"

"That's all right," we said; "so do we," for, though Cairo is cleaner than Constantinople, it was not over-sweet just there. But presently, when he changed again to, "Oh, I eat it! Oh, I eat it!" we drew the line. We said, "No, we do not go as far as that."

We have learned now that those calls are really "O-i-menuk, o-i-schmeluk," etc., and indicate that some one is to turn to the right or left, or simply get out of the way, as the case may be. We used them ourselves after that, which gave Menelek great joy.

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XXXIX

WHERE HISTORY BEGAN

When I glanced casually over the little heap of hand-bags that would accompany our party up the Nile—we were then waiting on the terrace of Shepheard's for the carriages—I noticed that my own did not appear to be of the number. I mentioned this to the guides, to the head-porter, to the clerk, to casual Bedouins in the hotel uniform, without arousing any active interest. Finally, I went on a still hunt on my own account. I found the missing bag out in the back area-way, with a Bedouin whom I had not seen before sitting on it, smoking dreamily and murmuring a song about lotus and moonlight and the spell of his lady's charms. Growing familiar with the habits of the country, I dispossessed him with my foot and marched back through the vast corridors carrying my bag myself. Still, I am sorry now I didn't contribute the baksheesh he expected. He was probably the cousin or brother or brother-in-law of one of my room servitors. They all have a line of those relatives, and they must live, I suppose, though it is difficult to imagine why.

There was a red glow in the sky when our train slipped out of the Cairo station toward Luxor. The Nile was red, too, and against this tide of evening were those curious sail-boats of Egypt that are like great pointed-winged butterflies, and the tall palms of the farther shore. By-and-by we began to run through mud villages that rose from the river among the palms, wonderfully picturesque in the gathering dusk. This was the Egypt of the pictures, the Egypt we have always known. No need to strain one's imagination to accept this reality. You are possessed, enveloped by it, and I cannot think that I enjoyed it any the less from seeing it through the window of a comfortable diner, with the knowledge that an equally comfortable, even if tiny, state-room was reserved in the car ahead. The back of a camel or deck of a dahabiyah would be more picturesque, certainly—more poetic—but those things require time, and there are drawbacks, too. Railway travel in Egypt is both swift and satisfactory. The accommodations differ somewhat from those of America, but not unpleasantly.

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We were a small party now. There were fewer than twenty of us—all English-speaking, except a young man who shared my apartment and was polite enough to pretend to understand my German.

It was a little after 5 A.M. when I heard him getting up. I inquired if there was "*Etwas los?*" which is the ship idiom for asking if anything had gone wrong. He said no, but that the sun would be upstanding directly, which brought me into similar action. One does not miss sunrises on the Nile, if one cares for sunrises anywhere. We hurried through our dressing and were out on the platform when the train drew up for water at Nag Hamadeh—a station like many others, surrounded by the green luxury of the Nile's fertile strip, with yellow desert and mountains pressing close on either hand. It was just before sunrise. The eastward sky was all resonant with ruddy tones—a stately overture of its coming. Uplifting palms, moveless in the morning air, broke the horizon line, while nearer lay the low village—compact and flat of roof—a vast, irregular hive built of that old material of Egypt, bricks without straw. Below it the Nile repeated the palms, the village, the swelling symphony of dawn. Only here and there was any sign of life. An Arab woman with a water-jar drowsed toward the river-bank; a camp of Bedouins with their camels and their tents were beginning to stir and kindle their morning fires. The railroad crosses the river here, and just as we were creeping out over the slow-moving flood the sun rose, and the orchestra of the sky broke into a majestic crescendo, as rare and radiant and splendid as it was when Memnon answered to its waking thrill and sang welcome to the day.

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The young man and I had forgotten each other, I think, for neither of us had spoken for some moments. Then we both spoke at once—"Wunderbar!" we said, "Wunderschon!" for I have trained myself to speak German even when strongly moved. Then with one impulse we looked at our watches. It was precisely six, and we remembered that it was the 22d of March—the equinox.

We stayed out there and saw the land awake—that old land which has awakened so many times and in so much the same fashion. Outside of its cities and its temples it cannot have changed greatly since the days of Rameses. It is still just a green, fertile thread of life, watered and tilled in the manner of fifty centuries ago. They had to drag us in to breakfast at last, for we would be at Luxor before long, four hundred and fifty miles from Cairo; that is, at ancient Thebes, where—

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though the place has lingered for our coming a good four thousand years—"ze train he have not time to wait."

We are in Thebes now, the "city of a hundred gateways and twenty thousand chariots of war." Homer called it that, though it was falling to ruin even then. Homer was a poet, but his statistics are believed to be correct enough in this instance, for Diodorus, who saw the ruins a little before the Christian era, states that there were a hundred war stables, each capable of holding two hundred horses, "the marks and signs of which," he says, "are visible to this day." Of its glory in general he adds: "There was no city under the sun so adorned with so many and stately monuments of gold and silver and ivory, and multitudes of colossi and obelisks cut out of entire stone." Still further along Diodorus adds, "There, they say, are the wonderful sepulchres of the ancient kings, which for state and grandeur far exceed all that posterity can attain unto at this day."

Coming from a historian familiar with Athens and Rome in the height of their splendor, this statement is worth considering. We have journeyed to Thebes to see the ruin of the mighty temples which Diodorus saw, and the colossi and the obelisks, and to visit the royal tombs of which he heard—now open to the light of day.

We had glimpses of these things at the very moment of our arrival. The Temple of Luxor (so called) is but a step from the hotel, and, waiting on the terrace for our donkeys, we looked across the Nile to the Colossi of Memnon, still rising from the wide plain where once a thronging city stood—still warming to the sunrise that has never failed in their thirty-five hundred years.

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We were in no hurry to leave that prospect, but our donkeys were ready presently, and a gallant lot indeed. The Luxor donkeys are the best in Egypt, we are told, and we believe it. They are a mad, racing breed—fat, unwearied, and strenuous—the pick of their species. They can gallop all day in the blazing sun, and the naked rascal that races behind, waving a stick and shouting, can keep up with them hour after hour when an American would drop dead in five minutes.

They are appropriately named, those donkeys. Mine was "Whiskey Straight," and he arrived accordingly. He was a gray, wild-headed animal, made of spring steel. We headed the procession that led away for the Temple of Karnak in a riotous stampede. Laura's donkey was "Whiskey and Soda"—a slightly milder proposition, but sufficient unto the day. I have never seen our ship-dwellers so unreserved in their general behavior, so "let loose," as it were, from anything that resembled convention, as when we went cavorting through that Arab settlement of "El-Uksur," where had been ancient Thebes. Beset with a mad, enjoying fear, our ladies—some of whom were no longer young and perhaps had never ridden before—broke into frantic and screaming prophecies of destruction, struggling to check their locomotion, their feet set straight ahead, skirts, scarfs, hats, hair streaming down the wind. It was no time for scenery—Egyptian scenery; we knew nothing, could attend to nothing, till at the towering entrance of the great Temple of Karnak we came to a sudden and confused halt.

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We dismounted there, shook ourselves together, and stared wonderingly up at those amazing walls whose relief carving and fresco tints the dry air of this rainless land has so miraculously preserved. And then presently we noticed that Gaddis, our guide for the Nile, had stepped quietly out before us, and with that placid smile he always wears had lifted his hand to the records of his ancestors.



SANCTUARY IN KARNAK

I want to speak a word just here of Gaddis. He is pure Copt, and the name "Copt" is from "Gypt"—that is, "Egypt"—the Copts being the direct descendants of the race that built ancient Thebes. His color is a clear, rich brown; his profile might be a part of these wall decorations. Then there are his eyes—mere dreamy slits, behind which he dwells in an age far removed from ours, while his lips wear always that ineffable smile which belongs only to Egypt, its sculpture and its people, the smile that regards with gentle contemplation—and compassion—all trivial things. Young in years, Gaddis is as old as these monuments in reflection and mental heritage—a part with them of a vanished day. And but for his fez and little European coat, which with the sash and figured skirt complete the dress of the Egyptian guide, Gaddis might truly have been plucked from these pictured walls. I should add that he reads the hieroglyphics and has all languages on his tongue—English, French, German—the Egyptian is born with these, I think; his voice is a drowsy hum that is pure music; his temper is as sweet and changeless as his smile.

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So much for Gaddis. He stood now with his

lifted hand directed to the panoramic story of the past; then, in slow, measured voice:

"Zis is ze great temple of Karnak—ze work of many king. Here you will see ze King Ram-e-ses II. wiz ze crown an' symbol of Upper an' Lower Egypt, making sacrifice of fruit and fowl an' all good sings to ze gawd Amm-Ra, in ze presence of Horus, ze hawk-headed sun-gawd, an' Anubis an' Osiris, ze gawd of ze under-worldid."

Thus it was our sight-seeing in Upper Egypt began.



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GADDIS

YOUNG IN YEARS. GADDIS IS AS OLD AS THESE MONUMENTS IN REFLECTION AND MENTAL HERITAGE—A PART WITH THEM OF A VANISHED DAY

XL

KARNAK AND LUXOR

The temple of Karnak cannot be described. The guide-books attempt it, but the result is only a maze of figures and detail for which the mind cares little. All the Greek temples on the Acropolis combined would make but a miniature showing by the side of Karnak. Most of the Egyptian kings, beginning as far back as 3000 B.C., had a hand in its building, and for above two thousand years it was in a state of construction, restoration, or repair. The result is an amazing succession of halls and columns, monoliths, and mighty walls—many of them tumbled and tumbling now, but enough standing to show what a race once flourished here. Long ago the road over which we came from Luxor was an avenue eighty feet wide and a mile and a half long, connecting the two great temples. It was faced on each side with ram-headed sphinxes only a few feet apart. Most of them are gone now, but the few mutilated specimens left prompt one's imagination of that mighty boulevard. The Karnak of that day, with its various enclosures, is said to have covered a thousand acres. The mind does not grasp that, any more than it comprehends the ages of its construction, the history it has seen. It is like trying to grasp the distance to the stars.

No one may say who began Karnak, but the Usertsens of the earliest Theban Dynasty had a hand in its building, and after them the other dynasties down to the Ptolemaic days. Thothmes III. and his aunt, the wonderful Queen Hatasu—the ablest woman of her time—were among its builders, and these two set up obelisks, erected pylons and vast columned halls. This was about 1600 B.C., when the glory of Egypt was at flood-tide. Two centuries later the mighty Seti I., whose mummied form sleeps to-day in the Museum at Cairo, began what is known as the great Hypostyle Hall, finished by his still mightier son, Rameses II., whose mummy likewise reposes in Cairo, father and son together. Rameses built other additions to Karnak, and crowded most of them with pictures and statues of himself and the sculptured glorification of his deeds. He was, in fact, not only the greatest king, but the greatest egotist the world has ever known, and in the end believed himself a god. It is said that he built more than seventy temples altogether, chiefly to hold his statues, and that he put his name on a number that had been built by his predecessors. It has been hinted that to his title of "The Great" the word "Advertiser" should have been added, and the fact that he is now on exhibition in a glass case must be a crowning gratification to him, if he knows it. It should be mentioned that Rameses II. is thought to be one of the oppressors of the Israelites, which may tend to arrange his period and personality in the Biblical mind.

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I am wandering away from the subject in hand. I want to talk about Karnak, and I find myself talking of kings. But, then, one *cannot* talk about Karnak—not intelligently. One must *see* Karnak, and he will believe himself dreaming all the time, and he will come away silent. The Romans

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came to Karnak when the Egyptians had finished with their building, and by-and-by the early Christians, who could always be depended upon to pull down and mutilate and destroy anything that was particularly magnificent. Our old friend, the good Queen Helena, arrived, and the temples of Egypt crumbled before the blight of her fanaticism. But I must change cars again. I get a little rabid when I take up Queen Helena and her tribe.

We followed Gaddis from arch to pylon, from enclosure to sanctuary—we passed down colonnades that one must see to believe. There are two kinds of columns in Egypt, by-the-way, the Lotus and the Papyrus—the former with a capital that opens out like a flaring bowl, the cup of the lotus-flower; the other with a capital that is more like an opening bud. The lotus symbolizes the Delta country, Lower Egypt; the papyrus stands for Upper Egypt, the country of the Nile, where we now are. Both are used in these temples, and here in Karnak there is a hall of Lotus columns—one hundred and thirty-four in number—twelve of them sixty feet high and twelve feet through!

That is the great Hypostyle Hall of Seti I., and I wish the English language were big enough, and I on sufficiently good terms with it to convey the overwhelming impression of that place. Try to conceive an architectural forest of the size of a city block, planted with sculptured and painted columns and filled with sunlight—the columns towering till they seem to touch the sky, and of such thickness that six men with extended arms, finger-tip to finger-tip, can barely span them round. The twelve mightier columns form a central avenue that simply dwarfs into insignificance any living thing that enters it. You suddenly become an insect when you stand between those columns and look up, and you have the feeling that you are likely to be stepped on. The rest of that colossal assembly stretch away on either side and are only a degree smaller. All are painted with the four colors of the Nile—mellow tones of blue, red, green and yellow, signifying high and low Nile, green fields and harvest—imperishable pigments as fresh and luminous under this sunlit sky as when they were laid there by artists who finished and put their brushes away more than three thousand years ago. How poor are mere words in the presence of this mighty reality which has outlived so many languages—will outlive all the puny languages that try to convey it now!

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Looking down the great central avenue of Seti's hall, we beheld at the end—standing as true to-day as when she placed it there—the graceful granite obelisk of Queen Hatasu.

"Set up in honor of father Amen," she relates in her inscription on the base. She adds that she covered the tip with copper that it might be seen at a great distance, and tells how the monolith and its mate (now lying broken near it) were hewn from the Assuan quarries and brought down the Nile to Thebes. I may say here that we did not read these inscriptions ourselves. We could do it, of course, if we had time, but Gaddis, who is at least five thousand years old, inside, is better at it than we could be in a brief period like that, so we depend on him a good deal. Gaddis can read anything. A bird without a head, followed by a pair of legs walking, a row of sawteeth, a picked chicken, a gum-drop and a comb, all done in careful outline, mean "Homage to the Horus of the two horizons" to Gaddis, though I have been unable as yet to see why.

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We went into the Hall, or Temple, of Khonsu, the moon-god, and here was a breath-taking collection of papyrus columns, short, thick, built to stand through the ages on the uncertain foundation of this alluvial plain. We passed into a sanctuary where the priests of Amen prepared the sacrifice, and Gaddis read the story on the walls, and pointed out for the twentieth time, perhaps, Horus, the hawk-headed god, and Hapi, his son, who has a dog head and can hardly be called handsome; also Anubis, the jackal-headed god of the Under World. We came to a temple with a wall upon which Seti recorded his victories over the forces of Syria, and pictured himself in the act of destroying an army single handed by gathering their long hair into a single twist preparatory to smiting off this combined multitude of heads at a blow. We follow Gaddis through long tumbling avenues and corridors of decorated walls; we climbed over fallen columns that prostrate were twice as high as our heads; we studied the records which those old kings, in ages when all the rest of the world was myth and fable set up to preserve the story of their deeds. And remember, all these columns and walls were not only completely covered with figures carved in relief, but tinted in those unfading colors, subdued, harmonious, and more beautiful than I can tell.

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I MADE A PICTURE OF THE FLY-BRUSH BRIGADE

How little and how feebly I seem to be writing about this stupendous ruin, yet I must conclude presently for lack of room. We went into the Ramesseum, a temple literally lined with heroic statues of Rameses, where I made a picture of the fly-brush brigade, as we call ourselves now, because in Upper Egypt a fly-brush is absolutely necessary not alone to comfort, but to very existence. The fly here is not the ordinary house variety, fairly coy and flirtatious if one has a newspaper or other impromptu weapon, retiring now and again to a safe place for contemplation; no, the Egyptian fly is different. He never retires and he is not in the least coy. He makes for you in a cloud, and it is only by continuous industry that you can beat him off at all. Furthermore, he begins business the instant he touches, and he has continuously the gift which our fly sometimes has on a sultry, muggy day—the art of sticking with his feet, which drives you frantic. So you buy a fly-brush the instant you land in Upper Egypt, and you keep it going constantly from dawn to dark. The flies retire then, for needed rest.



**ITS MAGNIFICENT PYLONS OR ENTRANCE WALLS ...
AND THEN ONCE MORE WE WERE ON THE DONKEYS**

We passed through another avenue of ram-headed sphinxes (some of the heads were gone) which Rameses built, and stood outside of the great temple of Amen, once called the "Throne of the World." Its magnificent pylons, or entrance walls, are one hundred and fifty feet high and three hundred broad. We ascended one of these for a general view of the vast field of ruin.

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Piled and tumbled and flung about lay the mighty efforts of a mighty race. At one place excavating was still going on, and a regiment of little boys were running back and forth with baskets of dirt on their heads, singing and sweating in the blazing sun, earning as much as two piastres (ten cents) a day. Men were working, too; they receive quite fancy sums—twenty cents a day, some of them.

Now that we were outside of the shaded temple and sanctuary enclosures our party was not very game. It was our first day in Upper Egypt, and the flies and the sun made a pretty deadly combination. We began to complain, and to long for the cool corridors and fizzy drinks and protecting screens of the hotel. We might have played golf or tennis in that sun, but seeing ruins was different, and we began to pray for the donkeys again. So Gaddis led us around by the Sacred Lake, where once the splendid ceremonials were performed—it is only a shallow pool now—and then once more we were on the donkeys, strung out in a crazy, shrieking stampede for the hotel. Gaddis rode near me. His donkey was a racer, too, but Gaddis did not laugh or cry out, or anything of the sort. He only wore that gentle serene smile, the smile of Egypt, observing trivial things.



**THE TEMPLE OF LUXOR ... ONCE MORE REFLECTING
ITS COLUMNS IN THE NILE**

In the afternoon we visited the Temple of Luxor, that beautiful structure which Amenophis III. built on the banks of the Nile. Luxor is Karnak on a smaller scale, though big enough in all conscience, and it is not all excavated yet. Débris had covered this temple to the very top, and it is not so long ago that a village was built on a level with the capitals of these columns. When M. Maspero, in 1883, began his work of excavation, the natives naturally protested against the uncovering of the "heathen" ruins at the expense of their mud huts. The work went on, however, and to-day a large part of the magnificent architecture stands revealed, once more reflecting its columns in the Nile.

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There is still a quantity of débris to be removed. One end of the Temple is full of it, and may remain so a good while. On top of this mass, some five hundred years ago, a Mohammedan mosque was built by the descendants of a saint named Abu Haggag, and sufficient of his family are left to this day to hold that mosque intact against all would-be excavators. However, the mosque itself begins to look pretty old. If the diggers keep encroaching, it may slide off into the Temple some day, saints and all.

Luxor, as a whole, is better preserved than Karnak. I suppose the heaped-up débris kept the columns in position during the last ten or a dozen centuries. I wish it had been there when the early Christian came along. Cambyses of Persia, who burned everything that would burn in Egypt, about 527 B.C., blackened the walls of this temple with fire, the marks of which show to this day, but he was nothing to the followers of Queen Helena. Even the guide-book, which is likely to be conservative in any comment that may touch upon the faith of its readers, says concerning the followers of Helena: "Not content with turning certain sections of it into churches, the more fanatical among them smashed statues, and disfigured bas-reliefs and wrecked shrines with characteristic savage and ignorant zeal."^[7]

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There ought to be a painting or a marble group somewhere entitled "Early Christian at Work"—a lean-faced, stringy-haired maniac with sledge, murdering a symbolized figure of Defenceless Art in the Far East. The early Christian is said to have destroyed forty-five thousand statues in Thebes in one day.

Still, those statues may not matter so much—they were probably all of Rameses the Great, and there are enough of him left. The Luxor Temple had them in all sizes, and of all materials, from granite to alabaster. Also some of "Mrs. Rameses," as Gaddis called her—no particular Mrs. Rameses—there having been several of her; just a sort of generic type of connubial happiness, I suppose. Mrs. Rameses, by the way, does not cut much figure in the statuary. She usually comes only about to the knee of the King, though she is life-size even then, for his own statues are colossal, ranging anywhere from fifteen to fifty feet high. That was to represent their difference in importance, of course, an idea which the women members of our party seemed to disapprove.^[8]

One of the statues of Rameses was found in a curious manner. A guide only a little while ago was lecturing to a party of tourists, while a young lady not far away was sketching a corner of the ruin. The sketcher stopped to listen to the guide's talk, and when he had finished said to the boy who was keeping the flies from her:

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"Go up on that heap of rubbish and see what that stone is."

It was the rubbish that slopes down from the old mosque. The boy climbed up, pulled away the trash, and uncovered the head of one of the most perfect Rameseses yet discovered.

Originally the Temple of Luxor was five hundred feet long, one hundred and eighty feet wide, and, as before mentioned, was connected with Karnak by a double row of ram-headed sphinxes. Amenophis III. built it about 1500 B.C., and it was regarded as the most beautiful of Egyptian temples. Then came his son, Amenophis IV., who, being a sun-worshipper after the manner of his Mesopotamian mother, cut away the name of the Egyptian god Amen and set up a new worship here. It was a brief innovation. The priests made it too hot for the Heretic King. He gave up the struggle after a time, went into the desert farther down the Nile, and built there a city and temples of his own. Then this temple was sacred to the old religion again. It remained so until Alexander came, cut his name here and there, and probably worshipped his own assortment of gods. Later came the Roman and the early Christian; still later the Mohammedan established ceremonies and reconstructed shrines.

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We had all the old sacrifices and processions and gods and victories over again in Luxor, including the picture story of the birth of Amenophis III., which depicts an immaculate conception; an annunciation; a visitation of wise men with gifts, executed about 1500 B.C.

After which we returned to the hotel; but when the sun was low in the west beyond the Nile and the air was getting balmy, I slipped back and sat in the old Temple in the quiet, and thought of a number of things. Then as the sun slipped below the verge, a figure stepped out on the minaret just over my head and began that weird thrilling chant which once heard will remain forever unforgotten, the cry of the East—"Allah il Allah," the Muezzin's call to prayer.

So it is still a place of worship. The voice of faith has reached down thirty-four centuries, and whatever the form, or the prophet, or the priest, it is all embodied there at evening and at morning in the cry, "There is no God but God."

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THE STILL VALLEY OF THE KINGS

It was early next morning when we crossed the Nile to the rhythm of a weird chorus which the boatmen sang to the beat of the oars. It is probably older than these temples, and the boatmen themselves do not know the meaning of the words, Gaddis said. One intones and the others answer, and it is in minor keys with a dying fall at the end, except now and then when a curious lifting note drops in, like a flash of light on the oars. Bound for the Valley of the Kings, the House of Hatasu, and the Colossi of Memnon, it seemed a fitting overture.

The donkeys were waiting on the other bank—the same we had used yesterday, fat and fresh as ever, and the same boys were there calling and gesticulating to their special charges of the day before. There are always a few more donkey-boys than is necessary, it seems, all of them wildly eager for the privilege of racing all day in the perishing sun, urging the donkeys and yelling for baksheesh at every jump—not that they expect to get it until the end of the day, but as a traditional part of the performance. The donkey-boy gets nothing, we are told, but what one is pleased to give him—the donkey hire going to the Sheik, who owns the donkeys and lets the boys get what they can. I would write a good deal about those half-naked, half-savage, tireless donkey-boys if permitted. They and their brothers, and their cousins even to the fourth remove, who come in like a charging army in the wild baksheesh skirmish at the end, interest me.

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Mounted, we led away in the usual stampede along canals and by lush green fields, across the fertile strip that borders the Nile. The green is rather wide here—as much as a mile, I should think, and it was pleasant going through the still morning if one kept well forward in the procession—in front of the dust that rose mightily behind us. Every little way where we slackened speed, detachments of sellers would charge from the roadside with trinkets, imitation scarabs, and images, but more notably with fragments (and these were genuine enough) of what long ago—as much as three or four thousand years, perhaps—had been human beings like ourselves. Remnants of mummies they were, quarried out of the barren hills where lie not only the kings but the millions who in the glory of Egypt lived and died in Thebes. The hills are full of them, Gaddis said, and unearthing them has become an industry.

It was rather grewsome at first to be offered such things—to have a head, or a hand, or a foot thrust up under your eyes, and with it an outstretched palm for payment. The prices demanded were not very high, and the owners, the present owners, would take less—a good deal less than the first quotation. A physician in our party bought a head—hard and black as old mahogany, with some bits of gold-leaf still sticking to it—for five francs, and I was offered a baby's hand (it had been soft and dimpled once—it was dark and withered now) for a shilling.

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We crossed the line which "divides the desert from the sown"—a sharp, perfectly distinguishable line in Egypt—and were in the sand, the sun getting high and blazing down, fairly drenching us with its flame. We thought it would be better when we entered the hills, but that was a mistake. It was worse, for there was not a particle of growing shade, not a blade of any green thing, and there seemed no breath of life in that stirless air.

Remember it never rains here; these hills have never known water since the Flood, but have been baking in this vast kiln for a million years. You will realize that it must be hot, then, but you will never know how hot until you go there. Here and there a rock leaned over a little and made a skimpy blue shadow, which we sidled into as we passed for a blessed instant of relief. We understood now the fuller meaning of that Bible phrase, "As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." This was a weary land with shadows far between. Now and then those astonishing donkeys broke into a gallop and stirred up a little scorching wind, the unflagging boys capering and shouting behind.

It seemed an endless way, up into these calcined hills to the Burial-place of Kings, but by-and-by there were traces of ruins and excavation, and we heard the throb of a dynamo on the quivering air. We dismounted then, and Gaddis led us up a burning little steep to what at first seemed a great tunnel into the mountain-side. How deep and cool and inviting it looked up there; we would go in, certainly. Was it really a tomb? No wonder those old kings looked forward to such a place.

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It was merely an entrance to a tomb—a tunnel, truly, and of such size that I believe two railway trains could enter it side by side and two more on top of them! I think most of us had the idea—I know I did—that we would go down ladders into these tombs, and that they would be earthy, cheerless places, more interesting than attractive.

They are the most beautiful places I ever saw. The entrances—vast, as I have stated—go directly in from the hillside; the rock floors are dry and clean, while the side-walls and the ceilings are simply a mass of such carving and color as the world nowhere else contains. An electric dynamo set up in a tomb that was never finished (that of Rameses XII., I believe) supplies illumination for these homes of the kingly dead, and as you follow deeper and deeper into the heart of the mountain your wonder grows at the inconceivable artistic effort and constructive labor that have been expended on those walls. Deeper, and still deeper, along a gradual decline that seems a veritable passage to the underworld. Here and there, at the side, are antechambers or avenues that lead away—we wonder whither.

Now and again Gaddis paused to explain the marvellous story of the walls—the progress of the

King to the underworld—his reception there, his triumphs, his life in general in that long valley of spirits which ran parallel with Egypt and was neither above nor below the level of the earth. It was this form and idea of the underworld that the shape of these tombs was intended to express, while their walls illustrate the happy future life of the King. Chapters from the "Book of the Underworld" (a sort of descriptive geography of the country) and from the "Book of the Dead" (a manual of general instruction as to customs and deportment in the new life) cover vast spaces. Here and there a design was not entirely worked out, but the sketch was traced in outline, which would indicate that perhaps the King died before his tomb (always a life-work) was complete.

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Now, realize: This gorgeous passage was nearly five hundred feet long, cut into the living rock, and opened into a vast pillared and vaulted chamber fully sixty feet long by forty wide and thirty high—the whole covered with splendid decorations that the dry air and protection have preserved as fresh and beautiful as the day they were finished so many centuries ago. This was the royal chamber, empty now, where in silent state King Seti I. once lay. We are a frivolous crowd, but we were awed into low-voiced wonder at the magnitude of this work, the mightiness of a people who could provide so overwhelmingly for their dead.

I do not remember how many such tombs we visited, but they were a good many, including those of Rameses I. and II., the father and the mighty son of Seti I., all three of whom now sleep in the Cairo Museum. Also the tomb of Rameses IX., one of the finest of the lot.

In some of the tombs the sarcophagi were still in place, but all are empty of occupants except one. This was the splendid tomb of Amenophis II., of the Eighteenth Dynasty, who lived in the glory of Egypt, 1600 B.C., a warrior who slew seven Syrian chiefs with his own hand. Gaddis had not told us what to expect in that tomb, and when we had followed through the long declining way to the royal chamber and beheld there, not an empty sarcophagus but a king asleep, we were struck to silence with that three thousand five hundred years of visible rest.

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The top of the sarcophagus is removed, and is replaced by heavy plate glass. Just over the sleeper's face there is a tiny electric globe, and I believe one could never tire of standing there and looking at that quiet visage, darkened by age, but beautiful in its dignity; unmoved, undisturbed by the storm and stress of the fretful years.

How long he has been asleep! The Israelites were still in bondage when he fell into that quiet doze, and for their exodus, a century or two later, he did not care. Hector and Achilles and Paris and the rest had not battled on the Plains of Troy; the gods still assembled on Mt. Olympus; Rome was not yet dreamed. He had been asleep nigh a thousand years when Romulus quit nursing the she-wolf to build the walls of a city which would one day rule the world. The rise, the conquest, the decline of that vast empire he never knew. When her armies swept the nations of the East and landed upon his own shores he did not stir in his sleep. The glory of Egypt ebbed away, but he did not care. Old religions perished; new gods and new prophets replaced the gods and prophets he had known—it mattered not to him, here in this quiet underworld. Through every change he lay here in peace, just as he lies to-day, so still, so fine in his kingly majesty—upon his face that soft electric glow which seems in no wise out of place, because it has come as all things come at last to him who waits.

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In a sort of anteroom near the royal chamber lie the mummies of three adherents of the King, each with a large hole in the skull and a large gash in the breast—royal slaves, no doubt, sent to bear their liege company. I remember one of them as having very long thick curly hair—a handsome fellow, I suppose; a favorite who could not, or would not, be left behind.

A number of other royal mummies were found in the Tomb of Amenophis II., so that at some period of upheaval it must have been used as a hiding-place for the regal dead, as was a cave across the mountains at Der al-Bahari. Perhaps those who secreted them here thought that a king who in life had slain seven chiefs with his own hand would make a potent guard. They were not mistaken. Through all the centuries the guests of that still house lay undisturbed.

We paused, though briefly—for it was fairly roasting outside—at the excavations of our countryman, Mr. Theodore M. Davis, who has brought to light so many priceless relics in this place; after which we bought an entire stock of oranges from an Arab who suddenly appeared from nowhere, sucked them ravenously, and set out, leading our donkeys up a broiling precipitous path over the mountains, for the house of Queen Hatasu, which lies at the base of the cliffs on the other side.

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It was not very far, I suppose, but it was strenuous and seemed miles. We were rewarded, however, when we reached the plateau of the mountain top. From the brink of the great cliff we could look out over the whole plain of Thebes, its villages and its ruins, its green cultivation and its blazing sands. Once it was a vast city—"the city of a hundred gates and twenty thousand chariots of war." Through its centre flowed the Nile, a very fountain of life, its one outlet to the world. To the east and the west lay Nature's surest fortifications, the dead hills and the encompassing sands. It is estimated that the city of Paris could stand on this level sweep and that Thebes overspread it all. As at Ephesus, we tried to re-create that vanished city, but we did not try long, for the mid-day sun was too frying hot.

So we descended to the rest-house of Der al-Bahari, where we created a famine in everything resembling refreshments, liquid or otherwise, in that wayside shelter. Then out on the piazza we swung our fly-brushes, beat off the sellers of things, and tried to assimilate our half-baked knowledge.

We were in a mixed state of temples and tombs and dynasties and localities—of sacrificial processions, and gods of the "Underworld." The sun had got into our heads, too, and some of the refreshments had been of strange color and curious brands. It is no wonder that we drifted into deliriums of verse. I have forgotten who had the first seizure, but from internal evidence it was probably Fosdick—Fosdick of Ohio. This is it:

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Queen Hatasu, of Timbuctoo,
She lived a busy life;
She fell in love with King Khufu,
And she became his wife.

She put him in a pyramid—
He put her in another,
And now four thousand years have gone
You can't tell one from tother.

I do remember how we tried to reason with the author; how we explained to him carefully that Hatasu, who was also called Hatshepset and certain other names, did not hail from Timbuctoo; also that King Khufu, alias Cheops, had been in his pyramid at least two thousand years, with fourteen dynasties on top of him, when that lady of the Nile was born. It was no use; he turned a glazed eye on us and said all periods looked alike to him, that art was long and life fleeting, that a trifle of two thousand years was as a few grains on the Egyptian sands of time. We saw, then, he was hopeless, but later he improved and seemed sorry. It did not matter; another member of the party had been taken with the poetic madness, and we gave room for his attack. It was of milder form, and mercifully short:

King Rameses, he strove to please,
And put his foes to flight;
To celebrate his victories
He toiled both day and night.

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He filled full threescore temples with
His statues vast and grim,
And some of Mrs. Rameses
Who wa'n't knee-high to him.

I don't know why a malady of this sort should fall upon our party. Such things never happened on the ship, but then Egypt is different, as I have said. There was one more outbreak before we got the germ destroyed:

Behold the halls of Seti I.,
And also Seti II.;
Likewise of old Amenhetep
And haughty Hatasu.

They lived in state, their days were great
And glided gayly by;
Sometimes they used to rail at fate,
The same as you and I.

Oh, Seti I., your race is run,
And also Seti II.,
And lizards sleep where ages creep
In the house of Hatasu.

It was time to check the tendency; it was getting serious.

We went up to the "House of Hatasu"—all that is left of it—a beautiful fragment of what was built by the great Queen as her Holy of Holies. It is unlike other temples we have seen, with its square columns; its beautiful open portico; its fine ceiling, still perfect in workmanship and coloring. Queen Hatasu had ideas of her own about building; also, her own architect. His name was Senmut, and his tomb, a mile from the temple, commands a view of it to this day.

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Hatasu once made a notable expedition to the lower east coast of Africa—to Punt, as it was called then, and she has recorded it on these walls. It shows the natives bringing valuable presents—woods, spices, gold, and the like—in exchange for glass beads and tin whistles, after the customary manner of such barter. A part of the relief shows the Prince of Punt and "Mrs. Punt," whose figure was certainly remarkable, followed by their family, all with hands raised in deference to the Egyptian Queen.

It was near here, in 1881, that the cave or pit was found containing the mummies of many kings, including Seti I., Rameses II., and others who had been stored here for safety. Arabs had been selling royal scarabs for some time, and the archæologists finally discovered the secret of their supply. It was a priceless find, and with the treasures of the tomb of Amenophis II., made the museum of Cairo the richest archæological depository in the world.

We put in the afternoon visiting temples, mostly of Rameses the Great, and looking at statues which he had caused to be erected of himself wherever there was room. I remember one colossal

granite figure of that self-sufficient king, lying prostrate on the sand now, estimated to weigh a thousand tons—which is to say two million pounds. That statue was sixty feet high when it stood upright, and it is cut like a gem. It was brought down from Assuan in one piece, by barge, as was the enormous granite base, which is thirty feet long, sixteen feet wide, and eight feet thick.

I remember, too, some sun-dried brick—brick made by the Israelites, maybe—with the imprint of Rameses still on them, uneffaced after thirty-three centuries. The sun bakes hard in Egypt; no other kiln is needed. I remember a temple of Rameses III. and a pictorial record of one of his victories. His soldiers had reported a killing of twelve thousand of the enemy; he said:

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"Go bring the evidence. If you have those dead men anywhere you can bring something to prove it."

So the army returned and got the right hands of their victims. The story is all cut there on the walls, and the hands are there too.

Rameses III. knew the custom inaugurated by his ancestor "The Great," of eliminating old names with new ones, and he took measures accordingly by cutting his own inscriptions deep. Some of them sink ten inches into the walls and will stay there a good while.

I had noticed one curious thing along the outer walls of all these old temples, to wit: row after row of smooth egg-shaped holes, ranging irregularly, one above the other, from the base upward—sometimes to the very top. It was as if they had been dug out by some animal or insect. I asked Gaddis, at last, what they were, and he told me this curious thing.

The childless Arab woman, he said, for ages had believed that some magic in these walls could make them fruitful, so had come and rubbed patiently with their fingers until they worked a few grains of the sandstone into a cup of water, which they drank with a prayer of hope. They had begun, he said, in that far-off time when the temples stood as clear of rubbish as they do to-day; and, as the years heaped up the débris, these anxious women had rubbed higher and higher up the walls until, with the drift of the ages, they had reached the very top. So there the record stands to-day, and when one realizes how little of that stone can be rubbed away with the finger-end; how comparatively few must have been the childless mothers, and then sees how innumerable and deep those holes are, he gets a sudden and comprehensive grasp of the vast stretch of time these walls stood tenantless, vanishing, and unregarded, save by those generations of barren women.

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We raced away for the Colossi of Memnon, where, I fear, we did not linger as long as was proper. It was growing late—we were very tired and were overfull of undigested story and tangled chronology. Also the scarab men and flies were especially bad just there. We were willing to take a bare look at that majestic pair who have watched the sun rise morning after morning while a great city vanished away from around them, and then go steaming away across the sands for the Nile and the cool rest of the hotel.

Such a time as we had settling with those donkey-boys—the old white-turbaned sheik, owner of the donkeys, squatting and smoking indifferently while the storm raged about him. But it was over at last, and the boatmen sang again—a quiet afterlude of that extraordinary day—and collected baksheesh on the farther shore.

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XLII

THE HIGHWAY OF EGYPT

There could hardly be a daintier boat than the *Memnon*. It just holds our party; it is as clean and speckless as possible, and there is an open deck the full width of the tiny steamer, with pretty rugs and lazy chairs, where we may lounge and drowse and dream and look out on the gently passing panorama of the Nile.

For we have left Luxor, and are floating in this peaceful fashion down to Cairo, resting in the delight of it, after those fierce temple-hunting, tomb-visiting days. Not that we are entirely through with temples and the like. Here and there we tie up to the bank, and go ashore and scamper away on donkeys to some tumbled ruin, but it is a diversion now, not a business, and we find such stops welcome. For the most part we spend our days just idling, and submitting to the spell of Egypt, which has encompassed us and possessed us as it will encompass and possess any one who has a trace of the old human tendency to drift and dream.

It has been said of Boston that it is less a locality than a state of mind. I wish *I* had said that—of Egypt. I will say it now, and without humor, for of this land it is so eminently true. A mere river-bank; a filament of green; a long slender lotus-stem, of which the Delta is the flower—*that* is Egypt. Remote—shut in by the desert and the dead hills—it is far less a country and a habitation than a psychological condition which all the mummied ages have been preparing—which the traveller from the earliest moment is bound to feel. It has lived so long! It had made and recorded its history when the rest of the world was dealing in nursery-tales! The glamour of that stately past has become the spell, the enchantment of to-day. The magic of the lotus grows more potent with the years.

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It is such a narrow land! Sometimes the lifeless hills close in on one side or the other to the water's edge. Nowhere is the fertile strip wide, for its fertility depends wholly on the water it receives from the Nile, and when that water is drawn up by hand with a goat-skin pail and a well-sweep—a *shaduf*, as they call it—it means that fields cannot be very extensive, even if there were room, which as a rule there is not.



**THINK OF WATERING A WHOLE
WHEAT-FIELD WITH A WELL-
SWEEP AND A PAIL**

Think of watering a whole wheat-field with a well-sweep and a pail! Furthermore, where the banks are high the water is sometimes lifted three times between the Nile and the surface, and much of it is wasted in transit. It is the oldest form of irrigation; the hieroglyphics show that it was in use in Egypt five thousand years ago. It is also still the most popular form in Upper Egypt. We saw a good many of the *sakkieh*—primitive and wasteful water-wheels propelled by a buffalo or a camel or a cow—and at rare intervals a windmill, where some Englishman has established a plantation, but it is the *shaduf* that largely predominates.

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The mud villages among the date-palms are unfailingly picturesque; the sail-boats of the Nile—*markab* they call them—drifting down upon us like great butterflies, have a charm not to be put in words; the life along the shores never loses its interest; the sun sets and the sun rises round the dreamy days with a marvel of color that seems each time more wonderful. Then there is the moonlight. But I must not speak of Egyptian moonlight or I shall lose my sense of proportion altogether, for it is like no other light that ever lay on sea or land.

We do not travel through the night, but anchor at dusk until daybreak. It is curious to reflect that one sees the entire country on a trip like this, if he rises early. We do rise early, most of us—though the cool nights (nights are always cool in Egypt) and the stillness are an inducement to sleep—and we are usually very hungry before breakfast comes along. One may have

coffee on the deck if he likes—the picturesque Arab will bring it joyfully, especially where there is a baksheesh at the end. It is good coffee, too, and the food is good; everything is good on the *Memnon* except the beverages and the cigars. The wine could be improved and the cigars could be thrown away. I paid a shilling for one that was as hard as a stick and crumbled to dust when I bit it. Never mind the flavor. That brand was called "The Scarab." It should have been named "The Mummy"—it had all the characteristics.

The pilot commands this boat—the captain merely conducts the excursion. The captain wears European dress and speaks English, but the pilot is Arab throughout—dark-faced, heavily turbaned, silent—watching the water like a sphinx. Now and then he makes a motion and says a word to the steersman at his side. Whenever we lie up or strike safe water he locates Mecca, prostrates himself, and prays. I should think his emotions would be conflicting at times. Doctrinally, of course, it is his duty to pray for the boat to sink and exterminate this crowd. Professionally, it is his duty to take us safely to Cairo. Poor old Abbas! how are you going to explain to the prophet by-and-by?

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We may not reach Cairo, however. The Nile is shallow at this season, and already we have scraped the sand more than once. It is a curious river—full of currents and shifting sand—the water getting scantier as you descend. That seemed strange to us until we realize that its entire flow comes from the far interior; that it has no feeding tributaries, while the steady evaporation, the irrigation, and the absorption of these burning sands constitute a heavy drain. It is hard to grasp a condition like that, or what this river means—has always meant—to the dwellers along its shores. Not alone an artery of life, it is life itself—water, food, clothing, cleanliness.

They don't take as much advantage of that last blessing as they should—nor of the next to the last. It is true that most of them have some semblance of clothing, but not all of them. In this interior Nile, as we may call the district between Luxor and Cairo, early principles to some extent still prevail. At first we saw boys—donkey-boys and the like—without any perceivable clothing, and more lately we have seen men—brown-skinned muscular creatures loading boats—utterly destitute of wardrobe. Yet, somehow, these things did not shock us—not greatly. They seemed to go with the sun, and the dead blue sky and the other scenery. A good deal depends on surroundings.

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Our stops were not all brief. We put in a full day at Abydos, where there is a splendid temple built by Seti I., and Rameses the Great (of course), and where the donkeys are as poor as they are

good in Luxor. Not that they were wretched in appearance, or ill-cared for, but they were a stiff-necked, unwilling breed. Mine had a way of stopping suddenly and facing about toward home. Twice I went over his head during these manœuvres, which the others thought entertaining.

But they had their troubles, too. The distance to the temple was long—eight miles, I should think—and part of the way the road was an embankment several feet high. Some of the donkeys seemed to think it amusing to suddenly decide to go down this embankment and make off over the desert. We were a scattering, disordered cavalcade, and what with the flies and distracting donkey-boys who were perpetually at one's side with "Mister, good donkey—fine donkey—baksheesh, mister," the trip was a memorable one. Once when my donkey, whose name was "Straight Flush" and should have been "Two-spot" got behind the party, I caught my attendant, not only twisting his tail, but biting it.

It was a good excursion, on the whole. We had luncheon in the great hall of the temple, and I could not help wondering who had held the first feast in that mighty place where we were holding the last, to date.

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We feel at home now in a temple, especially when we see the relief of our faithful Rameses, and of Osiris, king of the underworld, and his kind. We have become familiar and even disrespectful toward these great guardians of the past. This makes it hard on Gaddis at times; especially after luncheon, when we are in a sportive mood.

"Zis is ze temple of Rameses ze Great"—he begins.

"Ah, so it is—we suspected it all along."

"Here you will see hees seventy-two son—"

"Sure enough—our old friends."

"And hees fourteen wive."

"Happy man, but why a king and so few?"

"An' here all zose seventy-two son carry gift to Osiris—"

"King of the underworld—so they do, we would recognize that gang anywhere."

Truly, it is time we were giving up temples; we are no longer serious. But in this temple of Seti I., at Abydos, we sometimes forgot to jest. Frivolous and riotous as we have become, we were silent in the presence of one splendid decoration of Seti offering sacrifice before the sacred boat, and again where we confronted in a corridor that precious and beautiful relief carving, the Tablet of Egypt's Kings. The cartouche of every king down to Seti I. is there—with one exception: the name of Amenophis IV., the king who abandoned his faith and worshipped his mother's gods, has no place in that royal company. Otherwise the story is as complete as it is impressive, and I recognized something of what that document means to those of Egypt who know (like Gaddis), when I put out a finger to touch the exquisite work and he whispered, "No, please."

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What record will there be of our history thirty-five centuries from now? Not a book of all those printed to-day will last any considerable fraction of that period. A tablet like this sets one to wondering if we should not get an appropriation to preserve at least the skeleton of our chronology on plates of bronze to be stored in some deep vault safe from the ravages of fire and flood and earthquake.

We also stopped at Assuit, or Asyut, or Suit—I like these Egyptian names—you can spell them any way you please. Every one of them has all the spellings you can think of; you could not invent a new one if you tried. It is at Assuit they make the spangled shawls, and the natives flock down to the boat-landing to sell them. Gaddis had probably telegraphed ahead that a floating asylum of Americans was on the way and they had assembled accordingly. Long before we were in trading distance they began to dance about and gesticulate—the sheen of their fabrics blazing in the sun—crying the prices which they did not expect to get.

Some of our ladies were quite eager, and began to make offers when we were still many yards from shore. I suppose they thought the supply was limited. By the time we touched the landing the wildest trading was already going on. Shawls rolled in a ball were being flung aboard for examination, and flung back wildly with preposterous under-bids, only to come hurtling back again with a fierce protest of refusal. For a time it was a regular game of snowball and fireworks. There were canes to sell, too, and fly-whips—beautiful ivory-handled things. Commerce swelled to high tide. In the midst of the melée somebody happened to notice, what we had not seen before, another steamer lying a little way ahead—an English party, we were told—the ladies and gentlemen quietly reading or pityingly regarding our exhibition. I know, now, that the English have no sense of humor. Another American boat would have been in spasms of delight at our antics. Also, the Englishman's Egypt is not as ours, and he does not enjoy it as much. How could he, without loading up, as we did, with those wonderful Assuit shawls?

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Only one more stop along the Nile will I record. This was at Tell al-Amarna, where, in the desert a little beyond the green, lies all that is left of the city built by the heretic king, Amenophis IV., who abandoned Amen-Ra for the sun-worship of his Mesopotamia mother, Queen Thi.

It was a splendid granite city once, but it is all gone now. Only a little of the floor of the palace is left, Queen Thi's apartment, Gaddis said, but it held for us a curious interest. For it is painted, or

perhaps enamelled, in colors, and the decorations, still in a good state of preservation, are not Egyptian in design, but Syrian or Persian! The Princess who had left her land to marry an Egyptian king could not forsake her gods and her traditions, and that old floor remains to-day after thirty-five centuries to tell the story of her loyalty and her love.

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We should have made other stops, perhaps, but we met disaster. The Nile was low, as I have said, and a hundred miles below Cairo we awoke one morning to find our boat hard and fast aground. We had, in fact, grounded the evening before, and Abbas and his men had been working all night, putting out anchors and pulling on ropes, a picturesque group, to the chorus "Ali sah—ali ya seni—ali hoop!" which is an appeal to the god of the Nile, Gaddis said, in this case unavailing. We were there to stay for the summer, unless we took train to Cairo, so after breakfast Gaddis and I went ashore with Abraham, still semi-officially attached to our party, and walked three miles to the nearest railway station to see what might be done. It was a fine walk, even though a warm one, across the Egyptian fields, and I saw some papyrus plant and bought a distaff and spindle from a man who was sitting by the road spinning after the fashion of the earliest race of men.

It was Fachen that we reached, an Arab town to which tourists never come, and the donkeys we arranged for there, to carry our party from the shore landing to the station, were a nondescript lot without saddle or bridle—with no gear, in fact, except a remnant of rope tied around the neck. Then we walked back opposite the boat, another three miles, and sat on the bank, and sweat and waved our hands and called to those people, half a mile away in mid-stream, who for some reason could not see our signals.

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It was not uninteresting, though. The natives came to inspect us—an unusual opportunity for them—and some women came down to the Nile with great stone jars for water. Those jars must hold eight or ten gallons, and are heavy enough empty, yet those women will balance them on their heads and go stepping away chatting lightly, indifferent to their great burdens. They were barefooted and wore anklets which I wanted to buy, but Gaddis did not seem interested, and I could not transact a delicate business like that without careful interpretation.

Our people saw us at last and came for us in a boat. Then there was a bustle of preparation; a loading into the markab which we had engaged to take us ashore; a good-bye to our pretty, unfortunate little *Memnon*; a drifting down to the donkey landing, and a sorry-looking procession to the railway.

Our guides had difficulty settling with donkey-men, who, never having had tourists before, had engaged, no doubt, at their usual rates; then suddenly they had awakened to the idea that they were missing the chance of a fortune. The baksheesh we gave them must have opened their eyes. Probably they had never received so much at one time before. At all events, they came back for a new settlement, surrounded Gaddis and Abraham, and for a while we thought inferno had broken loose. Gaddis finally resorted to a stick, but Abraham, who is as big as a camel, first delivered an admonition, and then ran bodily upon the whole crowd and swept them like chaff from the platform.

The wait at Fachen was not overlong, but it became a trifle tedious after the novelty of the place had passed. We telegraphed Cairo of our coming, and Abraham entertained us with a few marvels to while away the time. He said that the stone used in building the pyramids had been brought across the Nile; that such stone was light like pumice-stone when quarried; that it floated across, and that the water it soaked up solidified and turned it into hard, heavy stone on the other side. The Credulous One believed this statement. He said the *Memnon* had grounded on a reef of crocodiles, at this season asleep, tucked up in the bed of the Nile. The Credulous One believed that, too. Several of the party did. He said that all telegrams in Egypt are sent in English, for the reason that the Arabic characters get tangled up in the wires. I believed that myself. He would have enlightened us further, only the train came just then.

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We had to change at Wasta, where it was night, and I shall never forget that fevered scene of Arab faces and flaring lamps, and heat, and thirst—the one hot night in Egypt—as we wandered about that Egyptian station waiting for the Cairo express. Suddenly we came upon another party of our ship-dwellers, whose boat, ahead of ours, had grounded too. Finding them there in that weird place was all like something in a fever. Then we were on the express at last, roaring away through the dust and dark and heat to Cairo—a flight out of Egypt so modern that one could imagine the gates of the dead centuries behind us rushing together with a bang.

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XLIII

OTHER WAYS THAT ARE EGYPTIAN

The Reprobates were at Shepheard's when we returned, enjoying Egypt thoroughly. Shepheard's is a good place in which to enjoy Egypt. Some of the sights there are quite wonderful, and American refreshments are connected with an electric bell.

The Reprobates had done Upper Egypt, however. They had done it in one day. They had left Cairo in the evening, telegraphing ahead for carriages to meet the train at Luxor, where they had arrived next morning. They had driven directly from the train to Karnak, from Karnak to the temple of Luxor, from Luxor to the hotel for luncheon. In the afternoon they had soared over to the Valley of the Kings; from the Kings they had dropped down on the House of Hatasu, the temples of Rameses and others; they had come coursing back by the Colossi of Memnon in time to catch the Cairo express, which landed them at Shepheard's about daybreak. The Reprobates had enjoyed Upper Egypt very much, though I could see they regretted the necessity of devoting all that time to it when Shepheard's still remained partially unexplored.

I had hardly landed in my room when a call-boy from the office came up to say that a police-officer was below, asking for me. For a moment I wondered a little feverishly what particular thing it was he wanted me for. Then the boy said, "Pyramid police," which brought a gleam of light. "Oh, why—yes, of course—show him up!"

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And now, while we are waiting for him, I am going to record a circumstance which I suppose a good many readers—especially those familiar with the East—may find it difficult to believe. Nevertheless, it is authentic and provable.

In Egypt, baksheesh is a national institution. Everybody takes it—every Egyptian, I mean; if I should begin by saying I had met an exception to this rule I could not expect any one who knows Cairo to read any further. This by-the-way.

It was during our first stop in Cairo, and we had been there a day or two before we made our official visit to the Pyramids and Sphinx. We went in carriages then, attended by two guides. For some reason, however, our protectors left us to shift pretty much for ourselves when we got there, and it was a pretty poor shift. The fortune-tellers and scarab-sellers and donkey-men and would-be guides swarmed about us and overran us and would not be appeased. When we repulsed them temporarily they rallied and broke over us in waves, and swept us here and there, until we became mere human flotsam and jetsam on that tossing Egyptian tide.

It was all like a curiously confused dream. Members of our party would suddenly turn up, and as suddenly disappear again: there would be moments of lull when we seemed about to collect, then, presto! without any apparent cause there would occur wild confusion and despair.

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It was no use. Laura and I wanted to go inside the Great Pyramid, and we did not want to climb it. It was impossible to do one, and it was about equally impossible not to do the other. Out of the confusion of things at last I remembered a young officer of the police, whom I had met riding home that first night on the trolley—a mere lad of nineteen or twenty, but a big fellow, who spoke excellent English and said he was Superintendent of the Pyramid Police. I decided now to see if this was true, and, if so, to ask his advice in our present difficulties.

I remembered that the police station was near the trolley terminus, and we gradually fought our way back there. Yes, there he was, at his desk, a handsome Soldierly figure in a tall red fez. He rose and bowed, remembering us immediately.

We would like to look about a little, I said, and to go inside the big Pyramid, but we preferred to be alive when we got through; also fairly decent as to appearance. Couldn't he pick us out a guard or two, who would keep the enemy in check, and see us through?

He bowed with easy grace.

"I will accompany you myself," he said.

Now, I already knew the custom of Egypt, and I began to make a hasty estimate of my ready money, wondering if I had sufficient for a baksheesh of this rank. It was by no means certain. However, there would be ship-dwellers about: I could borrow, perhaps.

I decided presently that whatever the duty imposed, it was worth it. With that big uniformed fellow at our side we were immune to all that hungry horde of Arab vultures. We walked through unscathed. Our protector procured the entrance tickets for us; he selected two strong men to push and pull us up the long, dark, glassy-slick passage that leads to the sepulchre of Khufu in the very heart of the Pyramid; he went with us himself into that still mysterious place, explaining in perfect English how five or six thousand years ago the sarcophagus of the great king was pushed up that incline; he showed us the mortises in the stone where uprights were set to hold the great granite coffin when the laborers stopped to rest. It was a weird experience in the cool, quiet darkness of that mightiest of tombs with the flaring candles and eager sure-footed Arabs; it seemed to belong in Rider Haggard's story of *She*. Then, after we had seen the old black sarcophagus, which is empty now, and had remained a little in that removed place, trying to imagine that we were really in the very centre of the big Pyramid, we made our way out again to light and the burning desert heat. I settled with our Arabs with little or no difficulty, which is worth something in itself, and when we had found a quiet place I thanked our guardian and tendered him what I thought a liberal honorarium—fairly liberal, even for America.

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He drew back a little.

"Oh no," he said, "I beg your pardon."

I had not made it large enough then. I glanced about for some of the party who would have funds.

"I am sorry," I began, "it is not more. I will—"

"I beg your pardon," he repeated, "but I could not accept anything for what is but my duty. I am only very glad to do what I may for you. I will do something more, if you wish." [Pg 374]

Then, of course, I knew it *must* be a dream, and that I would wake up presently in Sheppard's Hotel to find that we hadn't started for the Pyramids yet. Still, I would keep up the blessed trance a moment longer.

"You mean that you will not allow me to acknowledge your great favor to us?" I said in that polite manner for which our ship is justly famous.

"Not in money," he said. "The Government pays me a salary for my work and this is only part of my work. It has also given me pleasure."

I surreptitiously pinched myself in certain tender places to see if I couldn't wake up. It was no use. He persisted in his refusal, and presently produced an ancient corroded coin, Greek or Roman, such as is sometimes found among the *débris*.

"I should like to offer you this," he said. "I found it myself, so I am sure it is genuine."

Ah, this was the delicate opportunity.

"You will let me buy it, of course."

But no, he declined that, too. He wished us only to remember him, he insisted. He added:

"I have two scarabs at home; I should like to bring them to your hotel."

It was rather dazing. The seller of scarabs—genuine or imitation—will not let a prospective purchaser get out of sight. I wondered why we should be trusted in this unheard-of way; I also wondered what those two scarabs were likely to be worth. Could he come to-night? I asked; we should be sight-seeing to-morrow and leaving for Upper Egypt in the afternoon. [Pg 375]

But no, he would not be home in time. He would wait until we returned from Upper Egypt.

So it was we had parted, and in the tumult of sight-seeing up the Nile I had forgotten the matter altogether. Now, here he was. I counted up my spare currency, and waited.

He had on his best smile as he entered, also a brand-new uniform, and he certainly made a handsome figure. He inquired as to our sight-seeing up the Nile, then rather timidly he produced two of those little Egyptian gems—a scarab and an amulet, such as men and women of old Egypt wore, and took with them to their tombs.

"I got them from a man who took them from a mummy. They are genuine. I want to give them to you and the little lady," he said.

"But you must not *give* them to us—they are too valuable," I began.

He flushed and straightened up a little.

"But that is why I wish you to have them."

Now, of course, no one who knows Cairo can ever believe that story. Yet it all truly happened, precisely as I have set it down. He was just a young Egyptian who had attended school in Alexandria, and he spoke and wrote English, French, Italian, and the dialects of Arabic. The Egyptian acquires the lore of languages naturally, it would seem, but that this youth should acquire all those things, and such a standard of honor and generosity, here in a land where *baksheesh* is the native god, did seem amazing. When we left, he wrote down our address in the neatest possible hand, requesting permission to send us something more. [Pg 376]

NOTE.—As my reputation for truth is already gone I may as well add, a year later, that he has since sent two presents—some little funerary figures, and a beautiful ivory-handled fly-whip.

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XLIV

SAKKARA AND THE SACRED BULLS

One begins and finishes Egypt with Cairo. Starting with the Sphinx and Pyramids of the Fourth Dynasty, you work down through the Theban periods of the Upper Nile and then once more at Cairo, leap far back into the First period in a trip to Memphis, the earliest capital of Egypt, the beginning of all Egyptian things. After which, follows the Museum, for only after visiting localities and landmarks can that great climax be properly approached.

I think we were no longer very enthusiastic about ruins, but every one said we must go to

Sakkara. There was yet another very wonderful statue of Rameses there, they said, also the oldest pyramids ever built, and the Mausoleum of the Sacred Bulls. It would never do to miss them.

I am glad now that I did not miss them, but I remember the Memphis donkeys with unkindness. The farther down the Nile the worse the donkeys. We thought they had been bad at Abydos, but the Abydos donkeys were without sin compared with those of Sakkara. Mine was named "Sunrise," and I picked him for his beauty, always a dangerous asset. He was thoroughly depraved and had a gait like a steam-drill. The boat landed us at Bedrashen and I managed to survive as far as the colossal statue of Rameses, a prostrate marvel, and the site of the ancient city of Menes—capital of Egypt a good deal more than six thousand years ago—that is, before the world began, by gospel calculation. I was perfectly willing to stay there among the cooling palms and watch the little children gather camel-dung and pat it into cakes to dry for fuel, and I would have done it if I had known what was going to happen to me.

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It is a weary way across the desert to the pyramids and the tombs of those sacred bulls, but I was not informed of that. When I realized, it was too late. The rest of the party were far ahead of me beyond some hills, and I was alone in the desert with that long-eared disaster and a donkey-boy who stopped to talk with the children, beset by a plague of flies that would have brought Pharaoh to terms. It was useless to kick and hammer that donkey or to denounce the donkey-boy. Sunrise had long ago formulated his notions of speed, and the donkey-boy was simply a criminal in disguise. When we passed a mud village, at last, and a new brigade of flies joined those I had with me, I would have given any reasonable sum to have been at Cairo with the Reprobates, in the cool quiet of Shepheard's marble halls.

Beyond the village was just the sand waste, and not a soul of the party in sight. I didn't have the courage to go back, and hardly the courage to go on. I said I would lie down by the trail and die, and let them find me there and be sorry they had forsaken me in that pitiless way. Then for the sake of speed I got off and walked. It was heavy walking through the loose sand, with the sun blazing down.

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Presently I looked around for my escort. He was close at my heels—on the donkey's back. I said the most crushing things I could think of and displaced him. Then we settled down into the speed of a ram-headed sphinx again. Everything seemed utterly hopeless. It was useless to swear; I was too old to cry.

I don't know when we reached the first pyramid, but the party had been there and gone. I did not care for it much. It might be the oldest pyramid in the world, but it was rather a poor specimen, I thought, and could not make me forget my sorrow. I went on, and after a weary time came to the Tomb of Thi, who lived in the Fifth Dynasty and was in no way related to Queen Thi of Tell al-Amarna, who came along some two thousand years later. There was an Englishman and his guide there who told me about it, and it was worth seeing, certainly, with its relief frescoes over five thousand years old, though it is not such a tomb as those of the Upper Nile.

I overtook the party at the Tomb of the Sacred Bulls. By that time I had little enthusiasm for bulls; or for tombs, unless it was one I could use for Sunrise. The party had done the bulls, but when I got hold of Gaddis and laid my case before him, he said he would find me a new donkey and that the others would wait while we inspected the bulls. So everything was better then, and I was glad of the bulls, though I was still warm and resentful at Sunrise and his keeper, and even at Gaddis, who was innocent enough, Heaven knows.

In the tomb of the bulls everything unpleasant passed away. It was cool and dark in there, and we carried lights and wandered along those vast still corridors, which are simply astounding when one remembers their purpose.

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This Serapeum or Apis mausoleum is a vast succession of huge underground vaults and elaborate granite sarcophagi, which once contained all the Apis or Sacred Bulls of Memphis. The Apis was the product of an immaculate conception. Lightning descended from heaven upon a cow—any cow—and the Apis was the result. He was recognized by being black, with a triangular spot of white on his forehead and a figure of an eagle on his back. Furthermore, he had double hairs in his tail and a beetle on his tongue. It was recognized that only lightning could produce a bull like that, and no others were genuine, regardless of watchful circumstance.

Apis was about the most sacred of the whole synod of Egyptian beasts. Even the Hawk of Horus and the Jackal of Anubis had to retire to obscurity when Apis came along, mumbling and pawing up the dust. When he died there were very solemn ceremonies, and he was put into one of those polished granite sarcophagi, with a tablet on the walls relating the story of his life, and mentioning the King whose reign had been honored by this bellowing bovine aristocrat. Also they set up a special chapel over his tomb, and this series of chapels and tombs eventually solidified into a great temple with pylons approached by an avenue of sphinxes.

The Serapeum dates from about 1500 B.C. and continued in active use down to the time of the Ptolomies. The Egyptian Pantheon was breaking up then, and Apis was probably one of the first deities to go. A nation's gods fall into disrepute when they can no longer bring victory to a nation's arms, and a sacred bull who could not beat off Julius Cæsar would very likely be asked to resign.

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There are sixty-four vaults in the part of the Serapeum we visited, and twenty-four of them contain the granite sarcophagi. The sarcophagi are about thirteen feet long by eleven feet wide,

and eight high—that is to say, the size of an ordinary bedroom—and in each of these, mummified and in state, an Apis slept.

He is not there now. Only two of him were found when these galleries were opened in modern times. But I have seen Apis, for one of him sleeps now in a glass case in the Historical Library in New York City. I shall visit him again on my return, and view him with deeper interest and more respect since I have seen his tomb.

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XLV

A VISIT WITH RAMESES II.

I have never quite known just how it was I happened to be overlooked and deserted that next evening at the Museum. I remember walking miles through its wonderful galleries; I recollect standing before the rare group of Rameses and his queen—recently discovered and put in place—the most beautiful sculpture in Egypt; I recall that we visited the room of Mr. Theodore Davis and looked on all the curiously modern chairs and couches and the perfectly preserved chariot taken from the tombs opened in the Valley of the Kings; also the room where all the royal jewels are kept, marvellous necklaces and amulets, and every ornament that would delight a king or queen in any age; I have a confused impression of hundreds of bronze and thousands of clay figures taken from tombs; I know that, as a grand climax, we came at last to the gem of the vast collection, the room where Seti I., Rameses the Great, and the rest of the royal dead, found at Der al-Bahari, lie asleep. I remember, too, that I was tired then, monumentally tired in the thought that this was the last word in Egypt; that we were done; that there was no need of keeping up and alive for further endeavor—that only before us lay the sweet anticipation of rest.

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The others were tired, too, but they wanted to buy some things in the little salesroom downstairs, and were going, presently. They would come back and see the kings again, later. I said I would stay there and commune a little alone with the great Seti, and his royal son, who, in that dim long ago, had remembered himself so numerously along the Nile. They meant to come back, no doubt, the party, I mean; they claim now that the main museum was already closed when they had finished their purchases, and they supposed I had gone. It does not matter, I have forgiven them, whatever their sin.

It was pleasant and restful there, when they had left me. I dropped down on a little seat against the wall and looked at those still figures, father and son, kings, mighty warriors and temple-builders when the glory of Egypt was at full flood.

It was an impressive thought that those stately temples up the Nile, which men travel across the world to see, were built by these two; that the statues are their statues; that the battles and sacrifices depicted on a thousand walls were *their* battles and *their* sacrifices; that they loved and fought and conquered, and set up monuments in those far-off centuries when history was in its sunrise, yet lie here before us in person to-day, frail drift on the long tide of years.

And it was a solemn thought that their life story is forever done—that any life story can last but a little while. Tossed up out of the unexplored, one's feet some day touch the earth—the ancient earth that had been going on so long before we came. Then, for a few years, we bustle importantly up and down—fight battles and build temples, maybe—and all at once slip back into the uncharted waste, while the world—the ancient world—fights new battles, builds new temples, sends new ships across the sea, though we have part in it no more, no more—forever, and forever.

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Looking at those two, who in their brief sojourn had made and recorded some of the most ancient history we know, I recalled portions of their pictured story on the temple walls and tried to build a human semblance of their daily lives. Of course they were never troubled with petty things, I thought; economies, frivolities, small vanities, domestic irritations—these were modern. *They* had been as gods in the full panoply of a race divinely new. They had been—

But it was too much of an effort. I was too worn. I could only look at them, and envy the long nap they were having there under the glass in that still, pleasant room.

I was a good deal surprised, then, when I fancied I saw Rameses stir and appear a little restless in his sleep. It was even more interesting to see him presently slide away the glass and sit up. I thought there must be some mistake, and I was going to get an attendant, when he noticed me and seemed to guess my thought.

"It's all right," he said, "you needn't call any one. The place closed an hour ago and there is only a guard down-stairs, who is asleep by this time. It happens to be my night to reincarnate and I am glad you are here to keep me company. You can tell me a good deal, no doubt. These people here don't know anything." He waved a hand to the sleepers about him. "They are allowed only one night in a thousand years. The gods allow me a night in every century. I was always a favorite of the gods. It is fortunate you happened to stop with us to-night."

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"It *is* fortunate," I said. "I shall be envied by my race. I have just been trying to imagine something of your life and period. That is far more interesting than to-day. Tell me something

about it."

Rameses rested comfortably on the side of his case.

"Oh, well," he said, reflectively, "of course mine was a great period—a very great period. Egypt was never so great as it was under my rule. It was my rule that made it great—my policy, of course, and my vigorous action. I was always for progress and war. The histories you have of my period are poor things. They never did me justice, but it was my own fault, of course. I did not leave enough records of my work. I was always a modest man—too modest for my own good, everybody said that.

"I was religious, too, and built temples wherever there was room. It is said that I claimed temples that I did not build. Nonsense!—I built all the temples. I built Karnak; I built Luxor; I built Abou-Simbel; I built Abydos; I built the Pyramids; I built the Sphinx; I invented the sacred bulls; I was all there was to religion, in Egypt. I was all there was to *Egypt*. I was the whole thing. It is a pity I did not make a record of these things somewhere."

"There *are* a few statues of you," I suggested, "and inscriptions—they seem to imply—"

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"Ah yes," he said, "but not many. It was slow work carving those things. I could have had many more, if the workmen had been more industrious. But everything was slow, and very costly—very costly indeed—why, I spent a fortune on that temple of Karnak alone. You saw what I did there; those ram-headed sphinxes nearly bankrupted me. I had to cut down household expenses to finish them.

"Yes, my wife objected a good deal— I speak collectively, of course, signifying my domestic companionship—there were fourteen of her.

"She wanted jewelry—collectively—individually, too, for that matter—and it took such a lot to go around. You saw all those things in the next room. They were for her; they were for that matrimonial collection; I could never satisfy the female craving for such things. Why, I bought one round of necklaces that cost as much as a ram-headed sphinx. Still she was not satisfied. Then she was sorry afterward—collectively—and bought me a sphinx as a present—got it made cheap somewhere with her picture carved on the front of it. You may have noticed it—third on the right as you come out. I used it—I had to—but it was a joke. When wives buy things for their husbands it is quite often so.

"Oh yes, I was a great king, of course, and the greatest warrior the world has ever seen; but my path was not all roses. My wife—my household collection—wanted their statues placed by the side of mine. Individually! Think of what a figure I would have cut! It was a silly notion. What had they done to deserve statues? I did it, though—that is collectively—here and there. I embodied her in a single figure at my knee, as became her position. But she wasn't satisfied—collectively and individually she declared she amounted to as much as I did, and pointed at our seventy-two sons.

"No, I was never understood by that lot. I was never a hero in my own house. So I had to order another statue, putting her at my side. You saw it down-stairs. It is very beautiful, of course, and is a good likeness of her, collectively. She always made a good composite picture, but is it fair to me? She was never regarded in that important way, except by herself.

"Yes, it is very pleasant here—very indeed. The last time I was allowed to reincarnate, I was still in the cave at Der al-Bahari, where they stored us when Cambyses came along and raided Thebes. Cambyses burned a number of my temples. It was too bad. The cave was a poor place, but safe. My tomb was much pleasanter, though it was not as grand as I had intended it to be. I meant to have the finest tomb in the valley, but my contractor cheated me.

"The men who furnished the materials paid him large sums and gave me very poor returns. His name was Baksheesh, which is how the word originated, though it means several things now, I believe."

"How interesting!" I interrupted. "We would call that grafting in our country."

"Very likely; I didn't find out that he was grafting, as you say, until quite late, then I put him into a block of concrete and built him into a temple. He made a very good block; he is there yet. After that there was no trouble for a while."

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"I saw something of the kind at Algiers—one Geronimo," I began—



**GOT IT MADE CHEAP
SOMEWHERE WITH HER PICTURE
CARVED ON THE FRONT OF IT**

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"Later, three thousand years later. I originated the idea—it has been often adopted since. Those people along the Coast adopted a good many of my ideas, but they never get the value out of them. It put an end to baksheesh—graft as you call it—in Thebes, and it would be valuable to-day in Cairo, I should think. A wall around Cairo could be built in that way—there is enough material."

The King rested a little on his other arm, then continued:

"Speaking of my tomb. I am glad I am not there. I attract much more attention here than if I were on exhibition in that remote place. There's Amenophis II. I understand that he's very proud of the fact that he's the only king left in his tomb. I don't envy him at all. I have a hundred visitors where he has one. They are passing by me here in a string all day, and when they are your countrymen I can hear a good deal even through the thick glass. I find it more interesting to stay here in my case through the day, than to be stalking about the underworld, attending sacrifices to Anubis and those other gods. I was always fond of activity and progress."

"You keep up with your doings, then?"

"Well, not altogether. You see, I cannot go about in the upper world. I catch only a word of things from the tourists. I hear they have a new kind of boat on the Nile."

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"Yes, indeed," I said. "A boat that is run by steam—a mixture of fire and water—and is lit by electricity—a form of lightning."

I thought he would be excited over these things, and full of questions; but he only reflected a little and asked,

"What is the name of that boat?"

"Oh, there are many of them. The one I came down on was called the *Memnon*."

He sighed.

"There it is," he said, sadly. "I am discredited, you see. I suppose they couldn't name it 'Rameses the Great.'"

"Ah, but there is one of that name, too."

He brightened a little, but grew sad again.

"Only one?" he said.

"Do you think there should be more of that name?" I asked.

He sat up quite straight.

"In my time they would all have borne that great name," he said.

"And—ah, wouldn't that be a bit confusing?"

"Not at all. I have set up as many as a hundred statues in one temple—*all* of Rameses the Great. They were not at all confusing. You knew *all* of them immediately."

"True enough; and now I think of it, perhaps you have not heard that they have made your portrait as you lie here, and, by a magic process of ours, have placed it on a sort of papyrus tablet—a postal card we call it—and by another process have sent thousands of them over the world."

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He looked at me with eyes that penetrated my conscience.

"Is that statement true?" he asked, tremulously.

"It is—every word. Your portrait is as familiar to the world to-day as it was here in Egypt three thousand years ago."

The great peace that had rested on the king's face came back to it. The piercing eyes closed restfully, and he slipped back on his pillow.

"Then, after all, I am vindicated," he murmured. "I have not lived and died in vain."

A hand was resting on my shoulder. The sun was shining in, and a threatening guard was standing over me.

It was nothing. Five francs allayed his indignation. Five francs is a large baksheesh in Cairo, but I did not begrudge it, as matters stood.

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XLVI

THE LONG WAY HOME

We bade good-bye to Egypt that morning, and to Gaddis—whose name and memory will always mean Egypt to me—and were off for Alexandria, where the ship was waiting. That long-ago

dream of a visit to Damascus and Jerusalem, and of a camp on the Nile had been realized. Now it was over.

We were ready to go home—at least some of us were. There would be a stop at Naples, with Pompeii and Rome for those who cared for it, but even these great places would be tame after Egypt. They must be approached from another direction for that eager interest which properly belongs to an expedition of this kind. A number of our ship-dwellers had an eager interest—a large and growing interest—but it was for home, an interest that was multiplied each day by the square of the distance travelled.



SET OUT ON THE LONG, STEADY, ATLANTIC SWING

Not many of us were left when we had made our last touch on the Riviera, rounded the Rock, and set out on the long, steady, Atlantic swing. The Reprobates had gone *viâ* Monte Carlo to Paris. Others had drifted up through Europe to sail from Cherbourg. The Diplomat was still with us; also Fosdick of Ohio, and Laura, age fourteen, but only a score or two of the original muster could gather at the long table in the dining-room on the last night out of port, for a final look at one another, and to exchange the greetings and god-speeds for which there would be little time during the bustle of arrival. It was hardly an occasion; just a pleasant little meeting that even with jollification was not without sadness. One of the ship's poets offered some verses of good-bye, of which I recall these lines:

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"To-night, we are here who have stayed by the ship;
To-morrow, the harbor and anchor and slip—
The word of command for the gang-plank to fall—
The word that shall suddenly scatter us all—
Then all the King's horses and all the King's men
Could never collect us together again."

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That was a good while ago, nearly a year now, and already it seems as far back in the past as the days of Rameses; for, as I have said somewhere before, we have but a meagre conception of time. Indeed, I suspect there is no such thing as time. How can there be when one period is as long as another compared with eternity?

However, I do not compare with eternity, now. I compare with Egypt. I shall *always* compare with Egypt—everything else in the world. Other interests and other memories may fade and change, but Egypt, the real Egypt, the enchantment of that land, which is not a land, but a vast processional epic, will never change, and it will not grow dim. I may never visit it again, but I shall see it many times. I shall see the sunrise above the palms, flooding the mountains with amethyst and turning the sky to crimson gold. Again at sunset I shall sit in the vast temple of Luxor and hear once more the Muezzin's call to prayer. I shall race with Laura across the hot desert; I shall hear the cry of the donkey-boys and the scarab-sellers and the wail for baksheesh; I shall see our cavalcade scattering through the dust across the Libyan sands. And I shall wander once more among the tombs of the kings, and follow down the splendid passage where Amenophis lies with the repose of the ages on his benignant face. I shall recall other lands and other ages, too, but it is to Egypt that I shall turn after all the others have drifted by; to her

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temples and her tombs—her glories of the past made visible. Beyond the sands and the centuries they lie, but they are mine now, and neither thief nor beggar, nor importunate creditor, can ever take them away.

FOOTNOTES:

[1] By referring again to the German guide-book I find that the first gentleman's name was not Taxicab, but as that is nearer to what it looks like than anything that can be made out of the real name I will let it stand.

[2] There would seem to have been some sort of confusion of Malta with the city of Muscat. Perhaps the reader can figure out just what it was. It had something to do with domestic pets, I believe.

[3] Note—a year later.—The Selamlik here described was among the last of such occasions. A few weeks later, in April, 1909, Abdul Hamid regained a brief ascendancy, ordered the terrible massacres of Adana, and on April 27th was permanently dethroned. He was succeeded by his brother, Mehmed V., who attends mosque with little or no ceremony. Abdul meantime has retired to Salonica, where he is living quietly—as quietly as one may with seventeen favorite wives and the imminent prospect of assassination.

[4] Ship-joke.

[5] One tradition places the Transfiguration on Mount Tabor, but Tabor is fifty miles away whereas Cesarea Philippi, to which the little group descended, lies at the foot of Hermon.

[6] The pedler of bread cries, "O Allah who sustaineth us, send trade!" The pedler of beverages, "O cheer thine heart!"

[7] *Cook's Egypt*, page 562.

[8] At Abou Simbel there are sitting statues of Rameses the Great which, if standing erect, would be eighty-three feet tall.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE SHIP-DWELLERS: A STORY OF A HAPPY CRUISE ***

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