

THE HOLY LAND.

BALDWINVILLE, Galilee, Sept., '67.

This morning, during breakfast, the usual assemblage of squalid humanity sat patiently without the charmed circle of the camp, and waited for such crumbs as pity might bestow upon their misery. There were old and young, brown-skinned and yellow. Some of the men were tall and stalwart, for one sees nowhere such splendid looking men as here in the East, but all the women and children looked worn and sad, and distressed with hunger. They reminded me much of Indians, did these people. They had but little clothing, but such as they had was fanciful in character and fantastic in arrangement. Any little absurd gewgaw or jimcrack they had they disposed in such a way as to make it attract attention most readily. They sat in silence, and with tireless patience watched our every motion with that vile, uncomplaining impoliteness which is so truly Indian, and which makes a white man so nervous and uncomfortable and savage that he wants to exterminate the whole tribe.

These people about us had other peculiarities, which I have noticed in the noble red man, too; they carried passengers in their hair, they were infested with fleas, and the dirt had oaked on them till it amounted to bark.

The little children were in a pitiable condition—they all had sore eyes, and where otherwise afflicted in various ways. They say that hardly a native child in all the East is free from sore eyes, and that thousands of them go blind of one eye or both every year. I think this must be so, for I see plenty of blind people every day, and I don't remember seeing any children that hadn't sore eyes. And, would you suppose that an American mother could sit for an hour, with her child in her arms, and let a thousand flies roost upon its eyes all that time undisturbed? I see that every day. It makes my flesh creep. Yesterday we met a woman riding on a little jackass, and she had a child in her arms; honestly, I thought the child had goggles on as we approached, and I wondered how its mother could afford so much style. But when we drew near, we saw that the goggles were nothing but a camp-meeting of flies assembled around each of the child's eyes, and at the same time there was a detachment prospecting its nose. The flies were happy, the child was contented, and so the mother did not interfere.

As soon as the tribe found out that we had a doctor in our crowd, they began to flock in from all quarters. Dr. B., in the charity of his nature, had taken a child from a woman that sat near by, and put some sort of a wash upon its diseased eyes. That woman went off and started the whole nation, and you ought to have seen them swarm! The lame, the halt, the blind, the leprous—all the distempers that are bred of dirt and iniquity, were represented in the congress in ten minutes, and still they came! Every woman that had a sick baby brought it along, and every woman that hadn't, borrowed one. What reverent and what worshipping looks they bent upon that dread, mysterious Power, the Doctor! They watched him take his phials out; they watched him measure the particles of white powder; they watched him add drops of one precious liquid, and drops of another; they lost not the slightest movement; their eyes were riveted upon him with a fascination that nothing could distract. I believe they thought he was gifted like a god. When each individual got his portion of medicine, his eyes were radiant with joy—notwithstanding by nature they are a thankless and impatient race—and upon his face was written the unquestioning faith that nothing on earth could prevent the patient from getting well now.

Christ knew how to preach to these simple, childish, ignorant, superstitious, disease-tortured vagabonds; he healed the sick. They flocked to our poor human doctor this morning when the fame of what he had done to the sick child went abroad in the land, and they worshipped him with their eyes while they did not know as yet whether there was virtue in his simples or not. The ancestors of these—people precisely like them in color, dress, manners, customs, ignorance, simplicity—flocked in vast multitudes after Christ, and when they saw him make the afflicted whole with a word, it is no wonder they worshipped him. No wonder his deeds were the talk of the nation; no wonder that the multitudes that followed Him were so great that at one time—30 miles from

here—they had to let a man pass down through the roof because no approach could be made to the door; no wonder His audiences were so great at Galilee that he had to preach from a ship removed a little distance from the shore; no wonder that even in the desert places about Bethsaida, 5,000 invaded His solitude and He had to feed them by a miracle or else see them suffer for their confiding faith and devotion; no wonder when there was a great commotion in a city in those days, one neighbor explained it to another in words to this effect: "They say that Jesus of Nazareth is come!"

He healed the sick. If a man would have crowds to attend him all the day long, let him come to Palestine and do likewise.

Well, as I was saying, the doctor distributed medicine as long as he had any to distribute, and his reputation is mighty in Galilee this day. Among his patients was the child of the Sheikh's daughter—for even this poor, ragged handful of sores and sin has its royal Sheikh—a poor old devil that looked as if he would look more at home in a poor-house than in the Chief Magistracy of this tribe of hopeless, shirtless savages. The princess—I mean the Sheikh's daughter—was only 13 or 14 years old, and had a very sweet face and a pretty one. She was the only Syrian female we had seen yet who was not so sinfully ugly that she couldn't smile after 10 o'clock Saturday night without breaking the Sabbath. Her child was a hard lot, though—there wasn't enough of it to make a pie, and the poor little thing looked so pleadingly up at all who came near it (as if it had an idea that now was its chance or never), that we were filled with compassion which was genuine and not put on.

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