

the end of each a lump of mud to weight it. Some of the beads reached to the waists. The women, not having beads to amuse themselves with, were tattooed extensively. Tattooing usually commenced at the age of seven, and might be completed at the age of 12 to 14, which was the time for marriage. Beautiful patterns were used, and the tattooing was done in raised cuts. Sometimes a husband, when he was displeased with his wife, cut off all the raised pieces, and the women could not appear in public again; she was not received into society until she was re-tattooed. He saw one of their weddings, which was very curious. The festivities lasted several days. A ring was formed of the natives, two men with big drums being in the middle. The drums were played and the people round danced. The bride was brought out, dressed in feathers and other finery, to the shoulders of two or three women; she was taken into the middle of the ring, and was jumped up and down on the shoulders of the women. The bride threw shells and beads about, for which there was a scramble, as the possession of them was supposed to confer luck. Ultimately the husband came into the ring, and putting the bride under his arm carried her off. [Laughter.] The means of communication was by drum signals. They had a call on the drum for everybody's name, and could ask questions and convey intelligence over hundreds of miles, and receive answers almost immediately. In war messages were constantly sent enormous distances to bring up reinforcements or to stop their coming. The mass of the people lived in huts on dry land, but there were one or two exceptions to this. He saw two lakes on which people were living in huts. In one case the people had covered over the long grass growing in the water with earth, and on that had built their huts; in the other the huts were built on piles. The language of the country belonged to the same broad family which stretched across the large belt of Africa traversed by him, and the grammar was on the same principles as the grammar of the Swahili.—*London Times.*

Historical Position of Palestine.

The position of Palestine on the map of the world has fitted it and successive peoples for a remarkable place in history. Here is a little country, with only eight thousand square miles, or two thousand less than our State of Vermont, which, if we measure it by the scope of its history, the remote antiquity of its literature, and the great forces it has started into irresistible movement, we must place among the foremost in the ancient family of nations. It is practically the meeting place of three continents—Africa, Asia and Europe. If Belgium is the "cockpit of Europe," where many of the chief battles of modern times have been fought, Palestine holds the same relation to the ancient world. Her plain of Esdraelon has been the battle-ground of nations and civilizations from Abraham's day to Napoleon Bonaparte's. This little country was the pathway of the nations on land, while on the sea it was her Phœnicia which planted colonies all around the shores of the Mediterranean, creating Carthage, rival of Rome, and used to send her ships as far north as Britain. There is something, akin to magnetism in this wonderful little land. It gave a main measure of historical importance, and, indeed, of immortality, to every people and land touched. Take from our knowledge of Egyptian history all we have learned from the Mosaic narrative, and there will be a marvelous diminution of the fund. It is only where Assyria in an early day got into relations with Syria that we get something of a definite knowledge of that great Oriental power. We find Rawlinson, in his *Monarchies*, and Wilkinson, in his *Manners and Customs of the Egyptians*, constantly appealing to the leaning on the Scripture history, in order to treat the subject in consecutive form. It is Palestine that brings all great ancient countries within our vision. It is our best telescope for a view of the remote past. We read the fortunes of other peoples through her. Of right she did not possess a Greek language. It was foisted upon her through Alexander's conquest, and yet so carefully did she

learn the new tongue that it became the receptacle for the new faith from Him of Nazareth, and the medium of its communication to the remotest shores known to men. Palestine long resisted Rome, and finally suffered destruction through Titus. Her acres and faith were bartered like a piece of merchandise, and were, in turn, owned by Canaanite, Jew, Assyrian, Greek, Syrian, Maccabean, and Roman. But in three centuries we find Bethlehem supplanting Rome. Christianity held the sceptre on the Seven Hills, and paganism became a thing of the country village, or *pagus*.—*Dr. J. F. Hurst, in Harper's Magazine for December.*

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