

which furnished Solomon with one of his grandest poetical figures of speech, is supposed to have grown (Songs of Solomon, ii. 1). Over this flowery plain Prophets and Apostles have often trod. Myriads of Crusaders have here felt their hearts swell with wild enthusiasm. As the great plain is today it reminds one of the word of God: "The earth mourneth and languisheth; Lebanon is ashamed and hewn down; Sharon is like a wilderness" (Isaiah 33, 9.) But in seeing this, how joyful it is to remember, at the same time, that there still is hope for the desolate places. "The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad; the excellency of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God." (Isaiah xxxv, 1,2).

I was contemplating these truths as I rode out from Jaffa in company with Brother Smart one day at the beginning of this month, in order to visit Haifa. On the route between these two cities but few objects of interest are found to common tourists except what remains of the once celebrated town of Caesarea. One drives through the thrifty little German colony of Sarona, and then, after a little while, crosses the largest river on the plain. At this time of the year, owing to an unusual scarcity of rain, one could cross the river on foot, jumping from rock to rock. But in the late spring, when river and brooks are full of water, it is quite deep. However, the donkeys, horses and camels usually wade it, with riders in the saddles.

A great object of interest to me was the Jewish colony, a little farther on, called *Phelach Tikveh*, "the Door of Hope." We halted at this place for an hour and a half, and had a good opportunity to look round the streets, though a falling shower of rain did not contribute to the pleasure. Like the rest of the Jewish colonies, this "Door of Hope" presented an inviting appearance. A great well or cistern in the entrance to the colony, from the interior of which water was constantly drawn by a blindfolded mule, working an ingenious but rudely constructed pump, was a prominent feature of the establishment. The water was good, and even the surrounding Bedouins, whose tents were seen in picturesque groups at a distance on the plains, seemed to appreciate its qualities. I conclude this from the fact that dark, bare-armed damsels were constantly seen coming to fill their big jars at the well; and it was interesting to see representatives of the two brother nations, the Jews and the Arabs, in unity and peace, enjoy the refreshing gift of Nature. Water always was, and probably always will be, a precious thing in Palestine.

From *Phelach Tikveh* we drove on over the plain, passing the ruins of Arsuf, an interesting edifice, imposing even in its destroyed condition. From the explanations given by the driver, who, by the way, was a young Jew from Jaffa, I gathered that this is the place by Josephus mentioned as Apollonia. The driver told me that here was fought the last battle between the Jews and

the Romans, but he evidently mixed history up a little, referring rather to the battle between the armies of Saladin and Coeur de Lion, in the year 1191. Round these ruins Bedouins swarm, ignorant, probably, of the fact that they are treading on the dust of immortal heroes. Buffaloes are seen feeding in the adjacent marshes.

Now the road continues through a fertile land. We pass several villages, all quite diminutive. The boys congregate as our vehicle approaches, and a shower of rocks and pebbles are thrown at us. Some of these missiles hit the wagon, and make our friend the Jew feel like pronouncing a blessing upon the little sinners. One of my fellow passengers, an Arab, jumps out and offers to take up the battle single-handed against the whole mob. He advances a few steps with rapid strides, and sends a few rocks into the ranks of the attacking army. A panic ensues. The said army, bare-foot, etc., runs howling, each man his own way, to find shelter in the village. Our valiant defender, the Arab, resumes his seat in the wagon and triumphantly we, that is our horses, trudged along. Never was a more uneven battle fought except at Thermopylae. The battle of Narva—where each Swede fought against ten Russians—was nothing compared to this.

The place of interest on this road is, as already intimated, Caesarea, now called Kaisaiyeh. Its vast ruins now serve mainly as quarries. Building rocks are constantly carried away from here and used for building up other places. Thus, many of the elegant new edifices of Jaffa are made up of rocks from the fallen palaces of the Herodian city.

Caesarea was built by Herod the Great, who spared no pains nor expense in its erection. This monarch is celebrated for his great architectural enterprises. In Jerusalem he built a theatre, an amphitheatre, a royal palace and commenced the restoration of the temple. The old capital of the kingdom of the ten tribes, Samaria, he reconstructed and gave it a new name, Sebaste, and Tyre, Sidon, Beiruth, Damascus, Antiochia, and even Athen, were by him ornamented with monumental edifices. Caesarea was an important city on the road between Egypt and Phoenicia. A Herod, with an eye open to the advantages of the situation, did all he could to secure its prosperity, and succeeded so well that some time after his death, Caesarea was the chief town in Palestine. It was the residence of Festus and Felix, and other Roman governors, but since the time of the crusades the place has gradually sunk into insignificance and ruin. Its inhabitants at present consist chiefly of a small number of Bosnians, who have made their residence here and built a few small houses.

What a subject for reflection is here! A traveler may conjure up before his mind the pomp and splendor of the Roman city in its days of glory, when port and streets were alive with commerce, and its temples and palaces gay with fest-

ivity, its citadel filled with invincible legions of the proud Roman army—and now see ruins upon ruins! *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

In the New Testament, Caesarea is often referred to. Paul once, in order to escape the persecutions of the Jews in Damascus, was let down by the brethren from a wall and hurried off to Caesarea, where he found a vessel to take him to his native town, Tarsus, (Acts 9; 30.) Here dwelt Cornelius the Roman centurion, who together with his family was the first heathen convert to Christianity, and who would not have been baptized at all, unless God had taught Peter in a vision not to count any man unclean on account of his birth (Acts 10: 11). Here dwelt Philip the Evangelist, who was the father of four daughters, all virgins, who had the gift of prophesying (Acts 21: 8-16). Again we find Paul here, guarded by two hundred soldiers, and "horsemen three-score-and-ten and spear men two hundred," come here in order to be tried before Felix, the governor, on a charge, no doubt, of being a conspirator against the State (Acts 23). And here on this occasion the great Apostle preached his memorable sermon to Felix, on righteousness, temperance, and judgment, at which the governor trembled in his very soul; a fact easily understood if we remember that, according to Josephus, this same governor who was to try a righteous servant of God, was himself living in adultery with Drusilla, the wife of the late King of Edessa. But, is not the world always like itself?

But I must come back again to our journey. We had left Jaffa at 7 o'clock a.m. We arrived in Samaria at 10 o'clock p. m., our resting place for the night.

Samaria is another Jewish colony, founded by "the Baron," as Rothschild is here generally called by the Jews. I was told that this colony now has about five hundred inhabitants, and although it is only six years old, the progress is everywhere visible, and its future prosperity seems secured. It is true the colony has still to be supported from the outside, and the baron is sending every month the wherewithal to cultivate soil, build houses and make general improvements. The people have been employed in agriculture to a great extent, but as this is deemed less profitable than the culture of the vine, this will now be the chief employment of the colonists. One feature is well worth mentioning. The baron has erected agricultural schools, where young men receive scientific instruction pertaining to agriculture particularly. Recently the best instructed young men, seven in number, were selected in one of these schools, and assisted to found a colony of their own a couple of hours from Samaria. I had the pleasure of conversing with one of these young men, and it was gratifying to note the expressions of patriotism and confidence in the work he expressed as he pointed to a little group of neat houses between some hills, saying: "That is our own colony."