

MY MUSEUM OF EASTERN CURIOS.

By MRS. BRIGHTWEN, Author of "Rambles with Nature Students," etc.

PART I.
INTRODUCTION.

MANY years have passed since I first began to form a little collection of all kinds of objects from the East that in any way tended to throw light upon subjects referred to in the Holy Bible.

By degrees this collection has become not a little useful in enabling me to deliver simple lectures on Palestine and its inhabitants to the poor people of all classes who come to visit my place in the summer and autumn months.

Much as they delight in rambling about the gardens and woods, they have grown accustomed to look forward to an hour in the museum as one of the chief attractions of the day. Thus I have to play my part as lecturer, and, ranging fifty or sixty people around the large centre table where the Eastern curios are placed, I take up one thing after another and endeavour to explain, in very simple language, the history and use of each article, and its bearing upon Bible texts.

The climate of the Holy Land and the habits and manners of its inhabitants differ so much from those of our own country that many words and expressions in Scripture bear a special meaning in that connection, which it is not easy to understand unless we know something of Eastern life.

In the following chapters I shall try to explain the various articles in my museum, as though I were speaking to a group of youthful listeners engaged in examining my collection for the first time.

I have obtained these objects from Jerusalem, Damascus, Egypt, and other places. I have learned their characteristics and purpose from persons who have travelled much in the East, and from books in which trustworthy information is to be found.

I shall be rejoiced if these chapters lead to a better understanding of God's precious Word, and a deepened interest in reading it.

May they prove a means of inciting many young readers to further study of the Biblical themes to which they offer a slight material illustration.

PHYLACTERIES.

WHEN our Lord was speaking of the hypocrisy of the Scribes and Pharisees, He used these words: "All their works they do to be seen of men: they make broad their phylacteries, and enlarge the borders of their garments" (St. Matt. xxiii. 5).



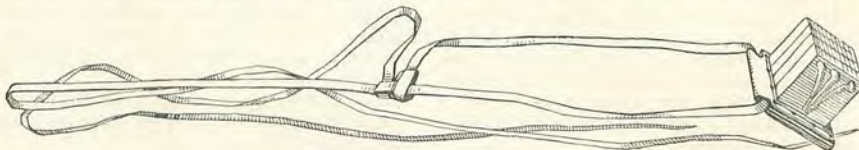
A JEW WEARING PHYLACTERY.

In the drawing we see a Jew wearing a phylactery on his forehead.*

To understand what the word "phylactery" means we must turn to a passage in Deut. vi. 6, where Moses tells the Israelites about the reverence with which they should hear and

Leather thongs were attached to the frontlet, by which it was fastened upon the forehead.

In the arm-phylactery the box is not divided into parts, but inside it is placed one piece of parchment containing the appointed



FOREHEAD PHYLACTERY.

obey God's Holy Word: "These words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes."

Now the spiritual meaning of these directions was, that those addressed should love God's written Word, and lay up its truths in their hearts and minds, so that whatever they did or wherever they were, they should be guided by it and have its precepts as continually before them as if they were really written on their foreheads and on their hands. And these precepts were not meant for the Jews only, for surely thus ought it to be with Christians to-day.

The Word of God hidden in the heart, flowing out in loving instruction to the children and in holy conversation in the bosom of the family, shining out in all the activities of daily life, so that all who come within the home circle may see that the Word of God is the standard for each and all in everything.

This is doubtless what Moses intended the people to understand when he spoke of binding texts from their holy Law as a sign upon their hands, and having them as frontlets between their eyes, and writing them upon the door-posts and gates of their houses. Some writers have thought that the command was only intended to be obeyed spiritually. However that may be, it is known that some time after the Jewish people returned from Babylon they began the wearing of frontlets and arm phylacteries.

The making of these leather cases was considered a sacred calling, and only certain persons were allowed the privilege.

The term phylactery comes from a Greek word meaning an amulet or charm against misfortune.

Certain verses from the Law were written in very small Hebrew letters upon four pieces of parchment, and these were placed in a square leather case with four divisions. The little parchments were folded and placed in the cells, tightly packed with hairs from one of the clean animals mentioned in the Law (see Deut. xiv. 4-6).

The box was then placed on three thicknesses of leather to form the base which rests upon the forehead, and these pieces are stitched to the box with twelve stitches, to represent the twelve tribes, three on each side. Instead of thread, fine sinews from the foot of a clean animal were beaten into a proper fineness and passed through.

* Sketched from a Jew seen in Jerusalem some years ago.

verses of Scripture written in four columns. These smaller cases were tied upon the left arm near the heart.

Phylacteries are worn by every pious Jew of the age of thirteen and upwards on every weekday in the year before morning prayer, this being considered a fulfilment of the law of Moses.

Our Lord did not condemn the practice of wearing these frontlets, but He, Who could read all hearts, knew that many of the Pharisees who wore extra large phylacteries and laid claim to great sanctity of character sought by this outward profession to hide their evil conduct in daily life. They therefore drew upon themselves His stern rebuke, "Ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity" (St. Matt. xxiii. 28).

The Hebrew word *Mezuzah* means a door-post, and is the name given to the small round wooden case containing the appointed verses from Deuteronomy which is affixed to the right hand post of every door in a Jewish house.

The pious Jew touches the *Mezuzah* whenever he passes it, and, kissing his two fingers, repeats in Hebrew Psalm cxxi. 8, "The Lord shall preserve thy going out."

The following verses are those invariably placed in phylacteries:—"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates" (Deut. vi. 4, 9).

"And it shall come to pass, if ye shall hearken diligently unto My commandments which I command you this day, to love the Lord your God, and to serve Him with all your heart and with all your soul, that your days may be multiplied, and the days of your children, in the land which the Lord swore unto your fathers to give them, as the days of heaven upon the earth" (Deut. xi. 13, 21).

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Thou shalt therefore keep this ordinance in his season from year to year" (Exodus xiii. 1, 10).

"And it shall be when the Lord shall bring thee into the land of the Canaanites, as He swore unto thee and to thy fathers, and shall give it thee. And it shall be for a token upon thine hand, and for frontlets between thine eyes: for by strength of hand the Lord brought us out of Egypt" (Exodus xiii. 11, 16).

The raised figure on the outside of the case

WALL
PHYLAC-
TERY.

is the Hebrew letter Shin, the initial letter of "Shaddai," Almighty.

THE CROWN OF THORNS.

"All the land shall become briars and thorns" (Is. vii. 24).

THE prophecy which is quoted above seems to have been remarkably fulfilled in the Holy Land.

There are, I believe, about twenty different Hebrew words descriptive of thorny, prickly shrubs, which are used in the Bible.

Some of these words can be identified as applicable to well-known trees and plants growing in Palestine at the present time; in other cases commentators differ as to the special shrubs these names are intended to indicate.

I am tempted to insert the following extract since it gives such a vivid picture of the perils of travelling amongst the thorny trees of the East.

"The mimosas, or thorn-trees, which are most common in the Soudan provinces, are mere bushes, seldom exceeding sixteen feet in height. They spread out towards the top like mushrooms, but the branches commence within two feet of the ground. These are armed with thorns in the shape of fish-hooks, which they resemble in sharpness and strength. A jungle composed of such bushes is impenetrable to any animals but elephants, the rhinoceros and buffaloes, and should the clothes of a man become entangled in the thorns, either they must give way or he must remain a prisoner.

"The camel is very fond of the young leaf of the mimosa, and when the first green leaves appear he is a most tiresome animal to ride. Every bush tempts him from the path, and then it is a perpetual fight between the rider and his beast throughout a journey. Sir Samuel Baker thus relates his experience when his camel charged a mimosa bush:—

"A magnificent specimen of mimosa, with a wide-spreading head in the young glory of green leaf, tempted my hungry camel during our march. The animal was determined to get a mouthful of leaves from it, and I was equally determined that it should keep to the straight path.

"After some strong remonstrance upon my part, the perverse beast shook its ugly head, gave a roar, and started off in full trot straight at the thorny bush. I had not the slightest control over the animal, and it charged the bush with the mad intention of rushing either through or beneath it.

"To my disgust I saw that the wide-spreading branches were just high enough to permit

the back of the camel to pass underneath them. There was no time for further consideration. I dropped my head and covered it with my arms, and the next moment I was on my back half-stunned by the fall.

"The camel-saddle lay upon the ground. My rifle, that had been slung behind, my coffee-pot, the water-skin, which had burst in its contact with the thorns, and a host of other impedimenta, lay around me on the ground in all directions.

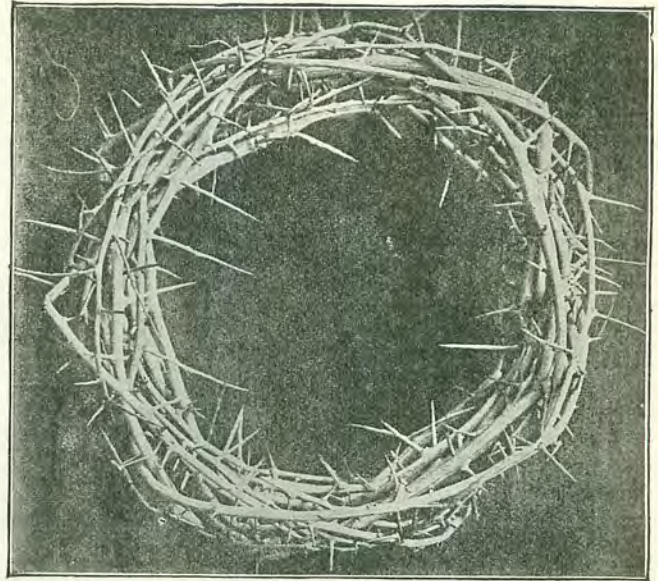
"I was as nearly naked as I could be. A few rags held together, but my shirt was gone with the exception of some shreds that adhered to my arms. I was streaming with blood, and looked much more as though I had been clawed by a leopard than as having simply charged a bush.

"The camel had fallen down with the shock after I had been swept off by the thorny branches. To this day I have the marks of the scratching."

There seems little doubt that the crown of thorns worn by our Lord at His crucifixion was formed of the thorny twigs of the tree known as the "Christ's thorn" (*Zizyphus spina Christi*), called by the Arabs "Nebk." It appears to vary in size from a low-growing shrub to a widely-spreading tree thirty or forty feet in height, according to the situation in which it is found. It grows throughout the Holy Land in wet and dry places alike. Its thorns are truly formidable, those I have measured on the crown of thorns in my museum being fully two and a half inches in length. The boughs when first gathered must have been very pliable, since they are plaited and intertwined so as to form a perfect circle, a crown such as we so often see represented in paintings of our Lord by the old masters.

We can hardly look upon the thorny wreath of *Zizyphus* without thinking of the undercurrent of meaning suggested by it.

Adam's sin at the beginning of the world's history led to his sentence of retribution.



CROWN OF ZIZYPHUS THORN.

Henceforth man was to labour in order to obtain his food from the ground, and out of it thorns and thistles were to spring, and, thus connected as they are with the entrance of sin into the world, thorns have ever been its emblem and also that of the desolation caused by sin.

In Isaiah's prophecy against Idumea, we read, "Thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof" (Isaiah xxxiv. 13).

On the other hand when the glorious future of God's people is predicted by the same prophet and he would describe the removal of the curse which had rested upon the earth, he says, "Instead of the thorn shall come up the fir-tree, and instead of the briar shall come up the myrtle-tree" (Isaiah lv. 13).

We see then how appropriate is the symbolism conveyed by the fact that our Blessed Lord as our sin-bearer was crowned with the emblem of sin.

He Who knew no sin was made sin for us, that we, by simple faith in that wondrous sacrifice, might one day wear a crown of glory.

Shall we not then think of these precious lessons even as we pass by the thorn-trees in our own country, and let them sometimes remind us of this instructive parable in nature.

(To be continued.)

VARIETIES.

HOW TO PRACTISE MUSIC.

Leschetizky, the teacher who taught Paderewski, says that the number of hours that should be spent in daily practice depends very much upon the pupil's power of concentrating her mind upon what her fingers are doing.

"Don't practise so many hours," he is always saying, "but use your brains more while you are practising. Learn to listen to what you are playing—to listen! How few there are who know how to listen!"

SIGNS OF COURAGE.—The greatest courage is shown in bearing persecution, in not answering when you are reviled, and in forgiving when anyone has done you an injury.

SHE KNEW LITTLE ABOUT GARDENING.

Mr. Newgarden (on his return home): "Why, Mary, what in all the world are you doing? You look tired to death."

Mrs. Newgarden: "I am absolutely exhausted! I have been all day planting these grass seeds, and have only done about three yards. The seeds are so awfully small!"

TAKING UP THE CROSS.—To take up the Cross of Christ is no great action done once for all; it consists in the continual practice of small duties which are distasteful to us.

FORGIVENESS.—Humanity is never more beautiful than when praying for forgiveness or else when engaged in forgiving another.

WHAT IS A STEWARD?

Teacher: "Johnny, can you tell me what is meant by 'steward'?"

Johnny: "A steward is a man who doesn't mind his own business."

Teacher: "Where did you get that idea?"

Johnny: "Well, I looked it up in the dictionary, and it said, 'A man who attends to the affairs of others.'"

FOR WORKING GIRLS.—The working girl who is afraid of doing more than she is paid for is generally the one who hangs round the foot of the ladder.

HUMILITY.—Usually the older we grow the poorer the opinion we have of ourselves.

MY MUSEUM OF EASTERN CURIOS.

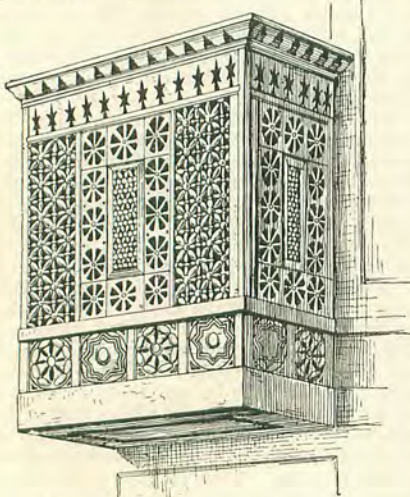
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PART II.

LATTICE WINDOWS.

LATTICE windows are much used in warm Eastern countries.

The window frequently projects from the wall of the building, and is formed of very ornamental woodwork, small laths crossing and intertwining so as to form beautiful patterns.



LATTICE WINDOW.

Portions of the lattice are so hinged that they may be opened or shut at pleasure.

The object of this kind of window is to keep the rooms cool by letting in the air while keeping out the direct rays of the sun. They were made in this way long before glass was invented, and as fashions do not change in the East as they do with us, these lattice windows are still in use, this drawing having been made only a few years since by a relative of mine who spent some years in the East and carefully studied all these subjects.

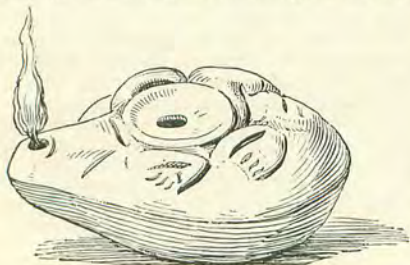
The window when closed with the lattice allowed a person inside to see out while he himself could not be seen.

The expression is used in the Song of Solomon: "Behold, he standeth behind our wall, he looketh forth at the windows, showing himself through the lattice" (Cant. ii. 9).

Also in the book of Judges (v. 28) we read, "The mother of Sisera looked out at a window, and cried through the lattice, Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?"

LAMPS.

THE English words "candle" and "candlestick," which we meet with in our Bible reading, are somewhat misleading, as in most



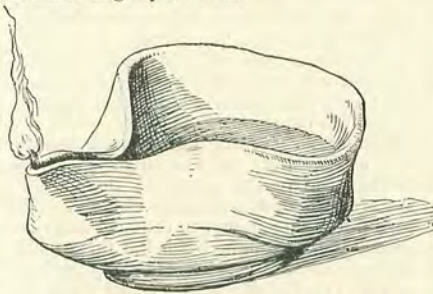
EASTERN LAMP OF BAKED CLAY.

cases we should substitute the words "lamp" and "lampstand," the usual mode of lighting Jewish houses being, in ancient times as well as now, by means of very simple lamps filled with olive-oil.

The seven-branched candlestick in the Tabernacle was in reality a golden stand, supporting on each of its branches a lamp containing a wick, which was fed by pure olive-oil (Ex. xxvii. 20).

The lamps which have been found in the Palestine excavations are much the same in form as those in use in the Holy Land at the present day. These are usually made of clay, either burnt or sun-dried, and of such simple construction that one could be made in a few minutes with a piece of ordinary clay moulded into a cup and then pinched in at one side to form a place for the wick.

A lamp found by Sir Charles Warren in an aqueduct he was exploring in Jerusalem far down below the surface, where it must have lain probably since the days of King Solomon, is almost exactly identical in shape with one in my possession. It is made of burnt clay, having an opening through which to pour the oil, and a second hole, through which are drawn the flax fibres which form the wick. If the oil-supply becomes exhausted, the wick sends out a disagreeable smell, and unless the lamp be replenished, of course the light goes out. This enables us to understand the meaning of the verse, "A bruised reed shall He not break, and the smoking flax" (dimly burning, margin) "shall He not quench" (Is. xlii. 3), for it teaches us in a figure that, though the sinner's desire after good may be but as a feeble spark, the merciful Saviour will not despise but foster it until the heart is lighted up by His Holy Spirit and is enabled to shine brightly for Him.



EASTERN LAMP OF SUN-DRIED CLAY.

These little clay lamps hold but a small quantity of oil, hence arose the distress of the unwise virgins who had neglected to refill their lamps and could not in the night obtain a fresh supply.

In the houses of the village people in Palestine (called the Fellaheen) these lamps are in constant use. They are placed on a bracket against the wall or on a lampstand, called in the English Bible a candlestick, which is simply an upright piece of wood about a yard high resting on three feet; this is easily moved about, and can be placed on the floor wherever the light is required.

Our Lord refers to this lampstand in St. Matt. v. 15.

The Fellaheen keep one of these small lamps burning in their houses all night under the belief that a light tends to keep off evil spirits.

If no light is observed in a dwelling it is taken as a sign that the house is empty, and bearing in mind this fact, that light is to an Eastern a token of gladness, and darkness a

sign of desolation, such verses as the following will be invested with deeper meaning when we meet with them in our Bible reading:—

Job xviii. 5, 6; xxi. 17; xxix. 3. Prov. xiii. 9. Isaiah xiii. 10; xxx. 26. Jer. xxv. 10. Micah vii. 8, 9. Rev. xxi. 23, 24.

MILLSTONES.

FROM the earliest times in which man has used bread as an article of food, he must have employed some means for bruising or crushing the corn of which bread is made.

Mills and mortars are mentioned in the account of the preparation of the manna, in the book of Numbers (xi. 8.) "The people went about, and gathered it, and ground it in mills, or beat it in a mortar."



WOMAN GRINDING AT MILL.

Eastern mills generally consist of two stones circular in shape, fitting smoothly together. The lower stone is fastened into the ground or floor, and the upper one placed upon it could be lifted off or whirled round as occasion required. The grinding was usually done by two women or slaves.

We read of the last of the plagues of Egypt—the death of the first-born—falling equally upon the eldest child of the king upon his throne, and the child "of the maid-servant that is behind the mill" (Exodus xi. 5); and Samson, as a prisoner of war, in his misery and blindness "did grind in the prison house" (Judges xvi. 21). It was so usually women's work that it was looked upon as a degradation when men were made to do it, as in Lamentations v. 13, where one of the results of the miseries that had come upon Jerusalem was that "they took the young men to grind."

The incessant daily noise of grinding came to be inseparably associated with the very existence of the family, and the ceasing of this sound was the sign of utter desolation in a town or city.

We read in Jeremiah, "I will take from them the voice of mirth, and the voice of gladness . . . the sound of the millstones, and the light of the candle, and this whole land shall be a desolation" (Jer. xxv. 10). And in the book of Revelation it is one of the signs of the fall of Babylon that "The sound of the millstone shall be heard no more at all in thee" (Rev. xviii. 22).

In the figurative description of the gradual approach of death, and decay of all the natural powers which is given in Eccles. xii., the allusion, "the grinders shall cease because they are few . . . and the sound of the grinding is low," probably refers to the teeth by which we grind and prepare our food for digestion becoming few and weak, and to Eastern people it would convey a very familiar lesson.

On account of the indispensable necessity of keeping the mill at work while there was a family to be maintained, the law was laid down

that "no man shall take the nether or the upper millstone to pledge; for he taketh a man's life to pledge" (Deut. xxiv. 6).

Even at the present day two women sit at the mill both having hold of the handle, and mutually aiding each other by alternately pulling it to and pushing it from them. Hence the meaning of our Lord's words in St. Matt. xxiv. 41. "Two women shall be grinding at the mill" (or "grinding together" as in St. Luke xvii. 35); "one shall be taken and the other left."

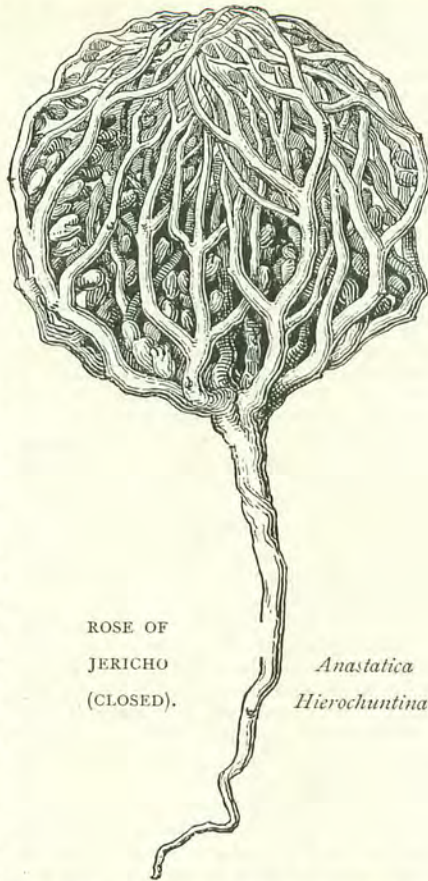
While the stone is being turned by the right hand, the women use the left hand to pour in fresh supplies of corn, while the bran and flour escape from the sides of the mill.

THE ROSE OF JERICHO.

THIS name seems to have been applied rather incorrectly to several plants unconnected with the Holy Land.

There are three, however, which, though differing widely from each other botanically, are alike in their curious hygrometric properties, and they are each known as the Rose of Jericho.

Anastatica Hierochuntina is a curious little cruciferous plant with hard dry branches and a taproot. After the flowering time the leaves fall off and the plant curls up into a ball. In this condition it looks like a piece of basket-work rather than a plant. The wind, sweeping over the sandy wastes where it is found, uproots the plant and drives it along the surface of the ground, rolling it over and over until it is stayed by some obstacle. When



ROSE OF
JERICHO
(CLOSED).

*Anastatica
Hierochuntina.*

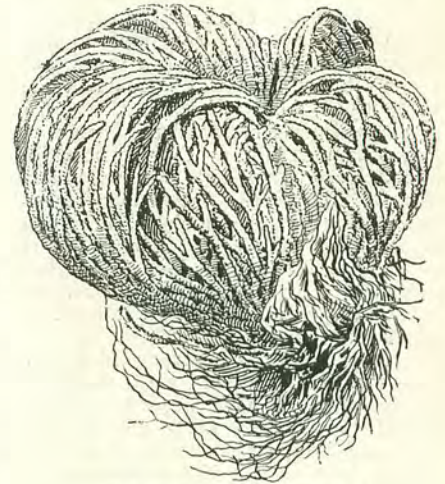
of leafage, the delicate sprays all radiating from the centre and lying flat like a saucer.

This plant is also known as Rose of Jericho and the "rolling thing," and I cannot say to which plant the titles rightly belong.

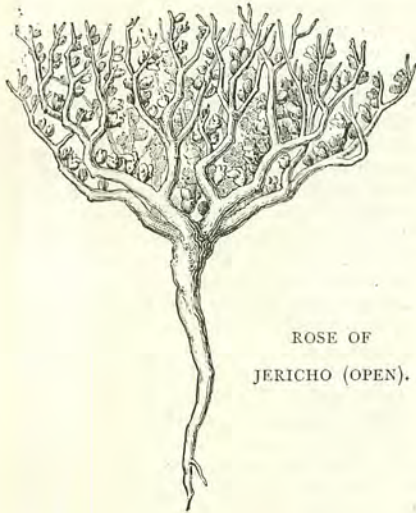
The capsule of *Mesembryanthemum Edule* and that of a small composite flower found in Palestine, each possess the curious property of opening out like a hard woody flower when placed in water.

This hygrometric property points to the kind of climate to which the plants are adapted. During months of scorching heat the capsules are tightly closed, keeping the seeds in safety until the rains descend, and then the moisture unlocks the caskets and the seeds fall out and find the soil prepared for their reception.

(To be continued.)



Selaginella Hygrometrica.



ROSE OF
JERICHO (OPEN).

the rainy season begins, the woody branches unfold, the seeds fall into the ground and germinate, and the plant grows up, to be in its turn uprooted and driven about by the wind.

Such an apparently dead thing reviving and sowing its seeds, has led to the name of Resurrection Plant being given to this Crucifer, and also it is supposed by some writers to be the "rolling thing" alluded to in Isaiah xvii. 13 (margin, "thistle down").

Besides this *Anastatica* I have a specimen of a kind of *Selaginella (Hygrometrica)* which possesses exactly the same properties. Year after year it has remained on my museum shelf rolled up, brown and dry, and yet if I were to place it in a basin of water overnight, I could surprise my young friends by showing them, next morning, a brilliantly green mass



CLOSED.



OPEN.

Mesembryanthemum Edule.

MORE ABOUT PEGGY.

By MRS. GEORGE DE HORNE VAIZEY.

CHAPTER IV.

THE next two weeks passed away all too quickly. The latter part of the voyage had been chill and stormy, so that when Marseilles was reached, Hector Darcy was seized with a conviction that it would be injudicious for him to risk the dangers of an English spring, and that wisdom pointed out a preliminary sojourn in the sunny south. This being the case, it was only natural that he should betake himself to the hotel

where his friends the Savilles were located, and so make a convenient fourth in their excursions. It would have been difficult to find a pleasanter party with whom to travel, for father, mother and daughter were all in holiday mood, rejoicing in the prospect of home, and a reunion with that redoubtable "Arthur," whose exploits and excellences were detailed a dozen times a day. They were so happy together, moreover, and there was so friendly an understanding between them that they

made an agreeable contrast to those numerous family parties who reduce a stranger to a condition of misery by their mutual bickerings. So far from labouring under the impression that any manners were good enough for the members of their own family, the Saville trio were even more punctiliously courteous to each other than to strangers, and that despite the fact that parents and child were on terms of much greater intimacy than is usual in such relationships.

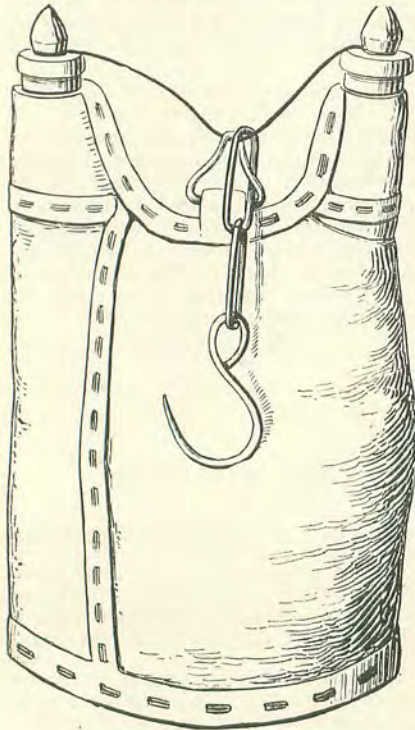
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PART III.
EASTERN BOTTLES.

THESE leathern bottles for holding milk, water and wine are in constant use in Palestine.

They are usually made of goats' skins



SKIN BOTTLE.

tanned by a strong infusion of oak bark. The skin is used whole, being drawn off the body of the animal after cutting off its head and feet, the opening thus made being afterwards sewn up.

The skins of oxen will hold about sixty gallons of water, and one of these slung on each side of a camel forms a rather heavy load. An Eastern writer says, "Who that has studied Scripture does not feel a thrill of

delight as he watches a string of camels walking past him, associated as they are with so many Scripture narratives and allusions?"

Singular creatures they are, gaunt-looking and yet graceful, for they have a grace of their own. As each broad foot is lifted up the animal sways his long neck and looks down with solemn cautiousness, while his large, beautiful, dark eye turns from one side to another with an expression which is almost human in its intelligence.

The heavy skins of Nile water hung with hair ropes to his steep sides make a "squishing" sound with the jolting motion which is quite refreshing on a hot dusty day, and the progress of the long file of animals is marked by the drops which escape from the older and more leaky vessels.

Often one little boy will guide a whole string of camels, and the docile creatures patiently follow a master who does not reach so high as their knees.

One cannot go far in an Eastern street without meeting a water-carrier going along with his skin bottle on his shoulder, and very striking it is to listen to his simple cry, "The gift of God, the gift of God."

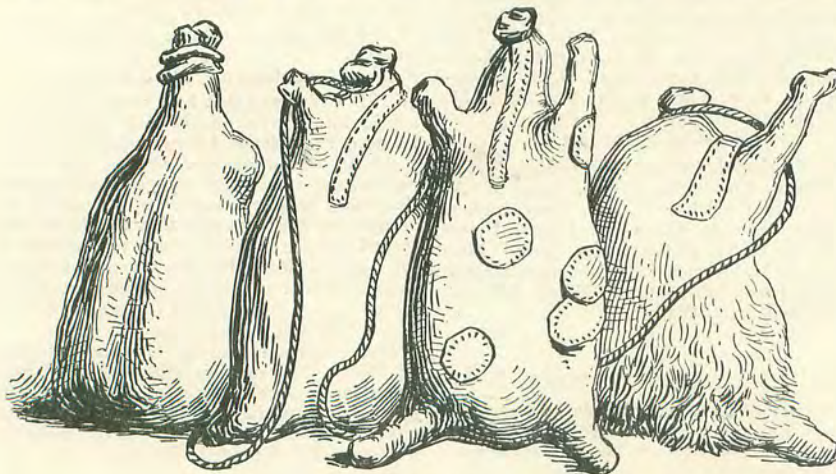
It is impossible to hear this cry without thinking of the Lord's words to the woman of Samaria: "If thou knewest the gift of God, and Who it is that saith to thee, Give Me to drink; thou wouldst have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water."

"It is very likely that water, so invaluable and so often scarce in hot countries, was in those days spoken of, as now, as the gift of God, to denote its preciousness; if so, the expression would be exceedingly forcible to the woman, and full of meaning."—*Miss Whately*.

Not unfrequently a rich man in the East will buy up the whole stock of a water-carrier, and then send him through the city crying, "The gift of God quite free; who will take the gift of God?" How this again reminds us of the freeness of the gift of Salvation.

Leathern bottles of smaller size made of kid's skin are frequently mentioned in Scripture. Such would be the bottle of water which Abraham laid on the shoulders of Hagar when he sent her away on her journey, and the bottle of milk opened by Jael for the refreshment of Sisera.

When not in use, these wine-skins are hung



SKIN BOTTLES.

up on a peg in the house or tent, and when the Psalmist says, "I am become like a bottle in the smoke" (Psalm cxix. 83), he doubtless refers to the black shrivelled appearance of these bottles when old and dried by constant exposure to the smoke which fills the Arab tents, they having no aperture but the door by which the smoke can escape.

The writer of Psalm cxix., where this verse occurs, evidently meant that sorrow and trial had made him look worn and aged and shrivelled like one of these old skin bottles, or as a poet writes, "Like wine-skin in the smoke my heart is sere and dried."



WATER-SELLER.

A verse in St. Matthew ix. is made much more clear in the Revised New Testament by the word "wine-skin" being used instead of "bottle."

If any fermentation were produced in the liquor contained in an old leathern bottle it would probably burst, and hence our Lord explains the danger of imposing hard precepts on persons unable to bear them by the following comparison: "Neither do men put new wine into old wine-skins: else the skins burst, and the wine is spilled; but they put new wine into fresh wine-skins, and both are preserved" (St. Matt. ix. 17).

The skins, as you see, when split or rent, were mended by a new piece sewn in, or by tying up the hole with a piece of string.

Other kinds of bottles were used in the East. The cruse of water which David is said to have taken from beneath Saul's bolster (1 Samuel xxvi. 12) was probably an earthen bottle enclosed in a wicker basket, such as are still used by travellers and others.

The common earthen jar, called a goolah, is made of sun-dried clay; one special place of its manufacture is at Ballasee on the Nile. Great rafts filled with these jars go up and down the river to supply the needs of the villagers. Such fragile jars are easily broken, and fragments of them may be seen strewn around the villages.

In the evening the young children are sent with a "sherd," or piece of one of these jars, to fetch some hot ashes from the baker's oven wherewith to light a fire to cook the evening meal. In Isaiah xxx. 14 the expression refers

to complete desolation, not a "sherd" left to fetch ashes in.

The earthen pitchers are made of all sizes and shapes, and are used by the women to bring water from the wells.

That office was so exclusively women's work that when our Lord wished to guide his disciples to the one who should give the use of his room for the passover feast, He said, "Behold, when ye are entered into the city, there shall a *man* meet you, bearing a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he entereth in" (St. Luke xxii. 10).

The lady who told me what I am now stating said that in all the seventeen years she had lived in the Holy Land, she had never seen such a thing as a man carrying a pitcher of water; the disciples therefore could not fail to know by this sign the one they were to speak to.

There is a well just outside the southern gate of Bethlehem called the well of David, and it is supposed to be that from which his mighty men drew the water of which he wished to drink. There the women from the city with their tall jars draw the water from the well and return carrying their pitchers on their heads.

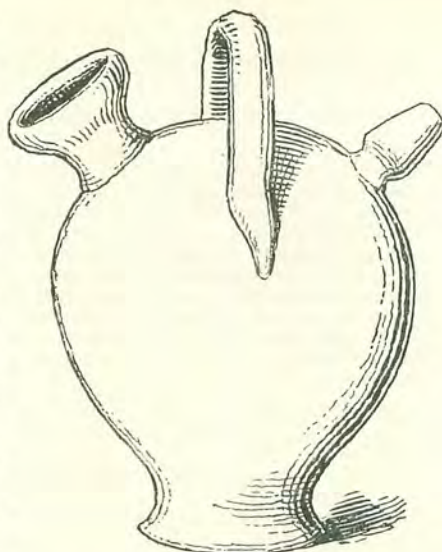
Large flocks of goats are kept in the country, and these afford an abundant supply of the skins for bottles.

At Hebron there is one place where thousands of these skins may be seen in the process of being prepared for use.

Drinking water is kept cool and fresh in porous earthen jars with two openings. Eastern people are so afraid of infection that they will not let their lips touch the vessel. When they are drinking, they hold up the jar and pour the water into their open



GOOLAH JAR.



DRINKING VESSEL.

mouths. I saw this done by eight Lebanon Jews who spent a long day at the Grove some years ago, and from them I learned the reason of this particular custom.

TYRIAN PURPLE.

A LITTLE murex shell lies before me on the table. It is a shell without any special beauty to attract a careless eye or rivet the attention, and yet it has a past history full of interest and worthy of careful investigation.

Two species of murex (*Murex Trunculus* and *Murex Brandaris*) and a shell called *Purpura Hemastoma* yielded the famous Tyrian purple with which the Roman Emperor's robes were dyed.

From the murex a dark-blue colour was obtained, and from the purpura a tint approaching to scarlet; by mixing the two colours the imperial purple was produced.

As each mollusc yielded but a drop or two of the colouring matter, the process of pounding the shells and preparing the dye was elaborate and tedious; this was the cause of the extravagant price of the wool when dyed and ready for the weaver.

Strabo, the Greek historian, speaks of the wealth derived by the Tyrians from the manufacture of the far-famed purple, but the secret has now been lost, and Tyre no longer sends forth the "blue and purple" wares mentioned by the prophet Ezekiel (Ezekiel xxvii. 7), although there are still to be traced upon the Tyrian shores rock-

hewn basins filled up with a breccia of crushed murex shells.

This subject has directed our thoughts to Rome and Tyre, and we can hardly fail also to remember Lydia of Thyatira, the "seller of purple," of whom we read in Acts xvi.

Lydia's trade was carried on between the Roman colony of Philippi, where she resided and was apparently a woman of wealth and position, and the inland town of Thyatira in Asia Minor.

This latter place seems to have been always connected with the dyeing trade, perhaps because the water possesses certain qualities required for the purpose.

The crimson fez caps so much worn in the East are still chiefly dyed and manufactured at Thyatira.

In God's providence Lydia was brought to Philippi to receive such spiritual blessing as she little dreamed of when starting on her accustomed journey from her native city.

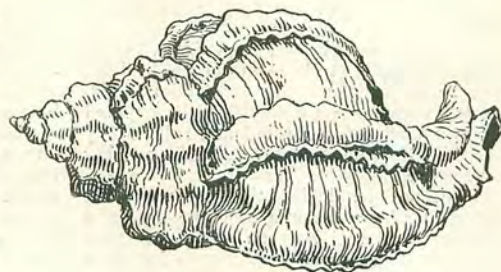
We read of Lydia as being one who "worshipped God," and on the Sabbath day she sought the company of other godly women, and met with them in a booth by a river-side "where prayer was wont to be made." There St. Paul entered and spoke the message of pardon through a crucified Saviour. To Lydia's heart the words came with Divine power; she received baptism, and then invited the Apostles to be her guests.

Doubtless Lydia carried back the Gospel message to her native town, and may therefore have been its first missionary teacher.

In the course of years Thyatira must have become a Christian centre since we read in the book of Revelation that one of the messages to the churches in Asia was to the angel or bishop of the church at Thyatira.

Now we see how much of historical interest is linked with our little murex shell, and much more might be added, but I hope that these few facts will lead to profitable study of many points which have only been lightly touched upon.

(To be continued.)



MUREX SHELL.

VARIETIES.

PRUDENCE IN OUR BEHAVIOUR.—Be not too hasty in believing every word, nor the suggestions of every spirit; but consider coolly and leisurely, and make a conscience of giving your credit with due caution. Men are much more prone—the greater is the pity—both to speak and believe ill than well of their neighbours. This is our infirmity and unhappiness; but a good man will consider and make allowances for it. And the effect of this consideration will be, the suspending his assent, and neither believing all he hears nor officiously reporting all he believes.
Thomas à Kempis.

AN EARLY START.—"Six is the age at which would-be pianists should begin serious work," says the great teacher, Leschetizky, the Viennese master of music, from whom Paderewski learned to perfect his art.

GOING AMONGST THE HEATHEN.—A clergyman recently announced that during the coming week he was going on a mission among the heathen. His parishioners, who remonstrated, were comforted by the explanation that he was not going to leave town.

SOURCES OF FORTUNE.—What appear to be calamities are often sources of fortune.

QUARRELLING AND SULKING.—A quarrel is less damaging than a sulk to all parties concerned.

A GENTLEMAN'S PLACE TO OPEN THE DOOR.

Tommy has been making a study of etiquette. When his little sister was opening the door to leave the nursery he pulled her back by the hair and elbowed her out of the way.

"Don't you know, you ignorant little girl," said he indignantly, "that it is a gentleman's place to open the door for a lady."

MY MUSEUM OF EASTERN CURIOS.

By MRS. BRIGHTWEN, Author of "Rambles with Nature Students," etc.

PART IV.

THE OLIVE TREE.

"The Lord called thy name, A green olive tree, fair, and of goodly fruit" (Jer. xi. 16).

THOSE trees and plants which were chosen by our Blessed Lord to convey lessons of truth to His listeners seem to be for ever consecrated to holiest uses. Their names suggest the thoughts with which they were linked in olden times, and still, to reverent minds,



OLIVE SPRAY.

they are speaking in parables. It is thus with the olive tree. The many interesting allusions to it in the Bible, and all that we hear of its beauty and varied uses from those who have travelled in Palestine, tend to make us regard the tree with special interest.

We are first reminded of that evening when the dove returned to the ark, and "in her mouth was an olive leaf plucked off," a token to those within the ark that the waters were abating from off the earth, and for ever after to be the symbol of peace.

Many associations tend to make the olive a specially interesting tree.

We must notice first its great usefulness. In Eastern countries its value to the poor is very great.

Its bright little oval-shaped berry, though at first strangers do not like the taste, is a favourite article of food with the natives of Syria, and often a poor man's only meal is bread and olives. He goes forth to his work in the field at early dawn or sets out on a journey with no other provision than olives and some small thin loaves of bread, and with these he is contented.

The pure clear oil, too, which they mix with so much of their cooked food, is from the pressed fruit of the olive.

The trees are planted in groves, each tree or group of trees belonging to a different owner.

Late in the autumn the berries begin to drop and are allowed to remain on the ground until a proclamation is made by the governor of the town that all who have olive trees are to go and pick up what has fallen; then a busy scene begins. The boys often climb the trees and beat down the fruit with sticks; the men on ladders do the same, while the

women and children gather the fruit into baskets and heaps ready for carrying home. It is easy to see how a few berries on the topmost bough, as described by Isaiah (xvii. 6) would come to be left, and one is reminded of the merciful command in Deut. xxiv. 20: "When thou beatest thine olive tree, thou shalt not go over the boughs again: it shall be for the stranger, for the fatherless, and for the widow."

The few remaining berries are afterwards gleaned by the very poor who have no trees of their own, and by industry they gather enough to keep a lamp in their habitation during the dismal winter nights and to cook their mess of pottage and herbs.

This labour of gathering the olives is much disliked by the people; it is tedious work, and you may always get rid of beggars at that time of year by saying, "I will give you work in the olive-yards."

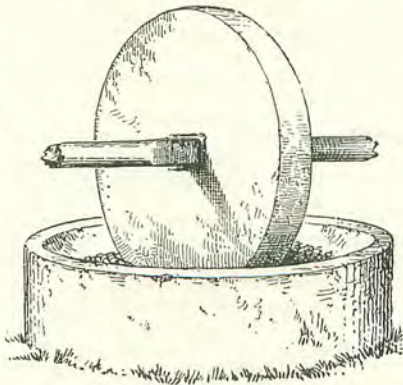
The fruit is often shaken off the trees, and when the rainy season has set in, or moist snow is falling, it is indeed trying for the gatherer; he is compelled to go under the trees and shake down an artificial storm of rain, snow and olives. No matter how piercing the wind or how biting the frost, the work must go on from early dawn to dark night, and then the weary labourer must carry on his aching back a heavy load of dripping berries two or three miles up the mountain to his home.

To obtain the oil the olives are placed in a circular stone basin and ground to a pulp by rolling a large stone wheel over them, the mass is then put into small straw or rush baskets, which are placed one upon another between two upright posts, and by the pressure of a screw in a beam above, the oil is pressed out.

These presses with their basins, troughs and gutters were sometimes hewn out of solid rock, so that it literally "poured out rivers of oil," as mentioned by Job (xxix. 6) when speaking of his days of prosperity.

These oil-presses may still be seen near the city of Tyre where they remain as perfect as they were many centuries ago, the trees which supplied the oil having been long since destroyed.

We read in Lev. xxiv. 2 that the Israelites were to bring for the service of the tabernacle



OLIVE PRESS.

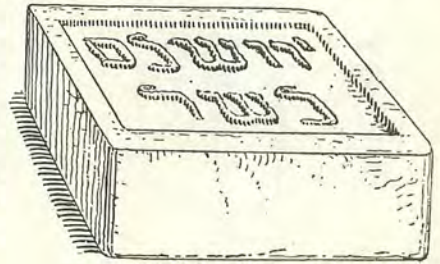
"pure oil olive beaten for the light, to cause the lamps to burn continually." As we think of the seven-branched candlestick of beaten gold and its seven lamps fed with oil from the beaten olives, we are reminded of our blessed Lord, Who was typified by the golden

candlestick, Who was "bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed."

The wood of the olive is valuable. The doors and posts of Solomon's Temple were made of it, and so were the figures of the cherubim (1 Kings vi. 23, 32). It is a close-grained timber, something like box-wood, and is much used in Italy for cabinet-making.

When the best of the oil has been pressed out of the berries, the remainder is used to make soap.

There are many soap factories in Jerusalem, and it is to the owners of these that the poor peasants take their refuse oil, hoping to obtain money enough to clear off their debts, but they are sadly oppressed and often have to pledge the produce of their trees, year after



OLIVE-OIL SOAP.

year, to pay the heavy taxes levied upon them.

In Palestine the olive tree blossoms in June, and may then be seen literally weighed down with the profusion of its greenish white flowers; the slightest breeze, however, causes multitudes of the blossoms to fall off, much in the way that our English wych-elm strews the ground in spring with its pale green bracts, but still, when autumn arrives, the olive tree is usually well laden with its useful fruit.

"The tree is of slow growth, and the husbandman must have long patience, for the crop is not worth much until the tree is ten or fifteen years old, but then the labour of the olive is extremely profitable, and it will continue to yield fruit to extreme old age. So long as there is a fragment remaining, though the tree externally looks dry as a post, yet does it continue to yield its oily berries, and for twenty generations the owners gather fruit from the faithful old patriarch."*

Large trees will yield from ten to fifteen gallons of oil, but if they are to be thus fruitful, grafting must be carefully carried out and must be done in the right way. This is, to graft the good olive upon a wild tree; then the good will conquer the wild; if the process is the other way it will not succeed—it is, as St. Paul says, "contrary to nature" (Romans xi. 17-24). He argues in the eleventh chapter of Romans that if God has done this with the Gentile church, grafting it upon the Jewish like the wild olive upon the good, which is against nature, much more can He graft in again the good which is according to nature. That is, He can bring in again the Jews, the original people of God, when the time comes, and cause them to be once more joined to His Church on earth, there to flourish and bring forth fruit to life eternal.

"The olive, when aged and decayed, is surrounded by vigorous young stems which

* *The Land and the Book*, p. 55.

spring from the root of the venerable parent. They seem to uphold, protect and embrace it. We may even fancy that they now bear that load of fruit which would otherwise be demanded of the feeble parent, and thus throw light on a passage of scripture in Psa. cxxviii. 3 which says, 'Thy children shall be like olive plants round about thy table.' Thus do good and affectionate children gather round the table of the righteous; each contributes something to the welfare of the whole, and each is found doing his part to support and comfort the declining days of the beloved parents who may before long be taken from them."*

There are olive trees still standing in the garden of Gethsemane, of which a traveller (Miss Bremer) says, "I have never seen any tree which has so much of the human physiognomy as these very ancient olives.

* *The Land and the Book*, p. 57.

There are here two or three especially which one cannot look at without being affected by the strong cleft stems, partly twisted, partly furrowed and marked as if by deep thought and tears," and Ruskin dwells on "the hoary dimness of their delicate foliage, subdued and faint of hue as if the ashes of Gethsemane agony had been cast on them for ever."

The prophet Hosea, speaking of repentant Israel, says, "His beauty shall be as the olive," and those who have wandered through olive groves in Palestine speak of the fresh look of the ever-green leaves which are of a dark peculiar tint, and under the passing breeze the uppermost leaves turn round and show the fine silvery hue of the inside.

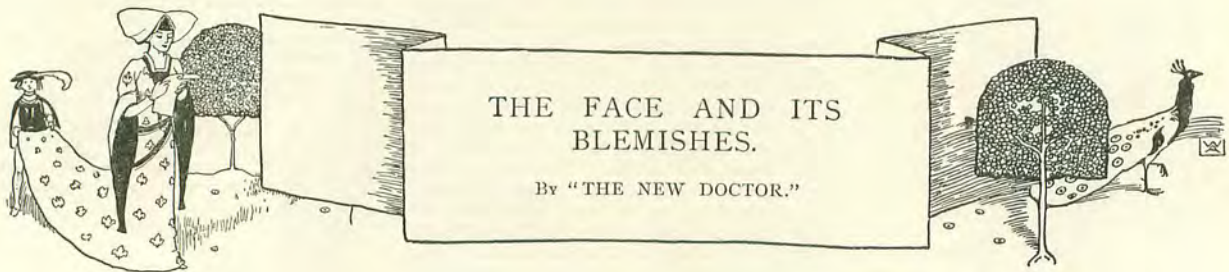
The fantastic way in which the trunk and branches twist and interlace is very conspicuous in old trees. The stems thus present a honey-combed, latticed appearance, and attain an almost incredible size.

"In the island of St. Maura, three large olive trees, each eight feet in girth, are growing within the compass of one living bark, so that the girth of the whole group, which is to all intents and purposes a single tree, is nearly forty feet."*

These facts about the olive tree give it a special interest; and should not we who have been planted in the garden of the Lord endeavour, like green and fertile olive trees, to bear fruit to God's glory whilst we live on earth? so that having finished our course and kept the faith, we may, like the olive stems, be made pillars in the heavenly temple, each in his appointed place (Rev. iii. 12), having the name of God written on our foreheads, and knowing to our endless joy that we shall "go no more out."

(To be continued.)

* *Ansted's Ionian Islands*, p. 49.



PART III.

THE most important of all the blemishes of the complexion is undoubtedly acne. The cause of nearly all pimples and spots on the face, acne is an affection which gives trouble and annoyance to nearly everyone.

Acne is an affection of the sebaceous glands, and to fully understand its causes and treatment we must briefly review the functions of the sebaceous glands themselves.

By the side of each hair root, two small glands are situated. These glands secrete a thick oil, not unlike very thick cream in appearance. This oil, which is the natural grease of the hair, is necessary to maintain the hair in health, and to prevent it from splitting. The secretion is called *sebum*, and the glands which secrete the sebum are called the sebaceous glands.

We have before told you that the face is covered with fine hairs. Each of these hairs has two sebaceous glands to oil it. Now, when a child has passed her fifteenth year and is on the threshold of adult life, the hairs on her face take on a rapid growth, and in this comparatively sudden growth the sebaceous glands share. If all went well, the glands would increase in regular ratio with the hairs, and there would be no acne spots on the face. But everything goes well but seldom, for extremely few persons pass from fourteen to twenty-five without developing, at all events, one acne spot.

The beginning of trouble is that in one gland the sebum dries over the entrance and converts the gland into a closed sac. The gland still continues to secrete, for all the glands in the body will go on working till they are destroyed. The gland still works and still secretes sebum, but the latter cannot get out, and so collects in the gland and gradually distends it.

Upon the surface the distended gland shows but as a small white body about as big as a pin's head, and is called a "miliun," or "whitehead." If the miliun be squeezed between the fingers, the mass of dried sebum

which is plugging the mouth of the gland is forced out, and the white semi-solid secretion follows in a long worm-like thread. This has given rise to the idea that the sebum is really a worm, and whiteheads are frequently called skin worms, especially in advertisements for quack remedies.

The miliun or whitehead is therefore the beginning of acne. The condition may stop here; the miliun may be squeezed out, or the plug which closes its orifice may be accidentally displaced, and the gland will then return to its normal condition. But usually other changes occur before long. The plug of dried secretion which is filling up the entrance may become infected with one of the colour-producing bacteria and become blackened. The spot is now called a "blackhead" or "comedone."

There is a wide-spread belief in the public mind that comedones only occur on the faces of persons who do not wash themselves sufficiently. This is a thoroughly false doctrine; there is no doubt that the colouring of the blackhead is neither dirt, nor is it due to dirt; it is the product of the growth of certain organisms.

Like the miliun, the blackhead may be squeezed out either by accident or design, and the gland may return to the normal condition, or it may go on to a further stage of the affection of acne.

If a miliun or a comedone is left alone and is neither squeezed out nor inoculated with germs, it will continue to grow indefinitely and in time may form an immense tumour. Such a tumour is called a sebaceous cyst—that is, a hollow growth filled with sebum. By the public these growths are called "wens." They are exceedingly common, especially on the head and back. They may grow to an immense size, equal to the head of a child in bulk. They are frequently multiple.

But another calamity may overtake a miliun or comedone, which, though less annoying to the possessor than a sebaceous cyst, is more detrimental to the sebaceous gland, for it usually ends by destroying it altogether. The sebaceous gland, being full of sebum and

having its mouth plugged, readily becomes attacked by micro-organisms which convert the gland into a small abscess or acne pustule.

Wherever you squeeze out a miliun or a comedone, a small round hole is left which is distinctly visible to the naked eye. This hole is the dilated mouth of the gland and will gradually get smaller as the gland itself returns to the normal condition. From this dilated mouth the secretion runs away in large quantities, and gives the skin a greasy appearance when wet and a scaliness when dry. This abnormal secretion will also stop after a short time.

Whenever a miliun or comedone is attacked by organisms it is rapidly converted into a small abscess. The matter from the abscess is either squeezed out or else opens of itself, and the whole gland is extruded. A scar is invariably left wherever an acne pustule has been. The matter from any pustule is of a highly infective character, and one small acne spot contains sufficient organisms to inoculate every sebaceous gland in the body. This is the true explanation of the well-observed fact that pustules on the face so frequently recur.

Having briefly glanced at the essential points in the pathology of acne, let us now turn our attention to the consideration of the causes and clinical history of the condition.

Acne is a disease of the sebaceous glands, and therefore we should expect it to manifest itself in those places where the sebaceous glands are most numerous, and at that time of life when they are most physiologically active.

Acne is far more common on the face than elsewhere, yet it is certainly not on the face, but on the head, that the sebaceous glands are most numerous. But acne is decidedly most common at that time of life when the sebaceous glands of the face are most active.

In both sexes, at about the age of fifteen the hairs on the face, which before were insignificant, suddenly start to grow with great vigour. The sebaceous glands have to keep pace with the hairs, so that it is at that period when acne is most frequent. And as the

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PART V.

WRITING MATERIALS.

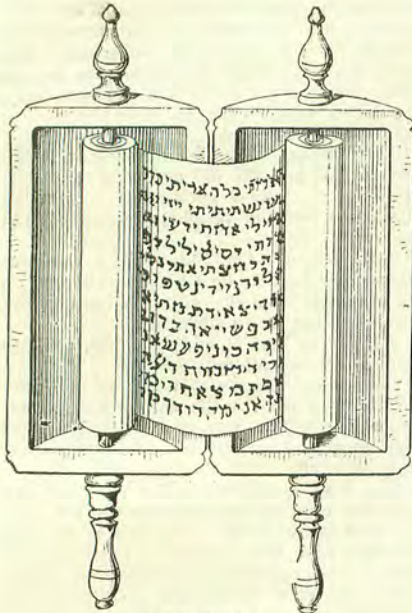
I BELIEVE I am correct in saying that there is no allusion to writing in the Old Testament until the time of Moses. Then we read that the Lord said to Moses, "Write this for a memorial in a book" (Exodus xvii. 14).

Also we find that each king of Israel was commanded to write a copy of the Law of Moses (the first five books of the Bible) for his own special use, for he was "to read therein all the days of his life" (Deut. xvii. 19).

Deborah the prophetess in her song of triumph speaks of those who "handle the pen of the writer" (Judges v. 14).

The first material used to write upon seems to have been leather made from goat-skins dyed and prepared until they were smooth enough for the purpose.

Dr. Buchanan found in India an old copy of the Law of Moses written on a roll of leather fifteen feet long, and some of the rolls even a hundred feet in length.

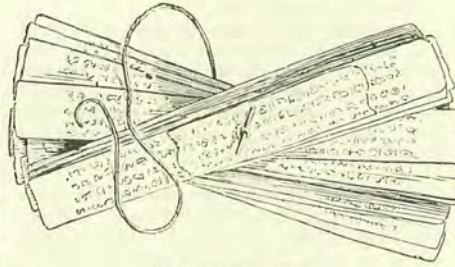


BOOK-ROLL.

When we read as in the second chapter of Ezekiel of a roll of a book written within and without (verse 10), we must bear in mind the very different form of books in those days. You began to read at the end by unfolding, and you continued to read and unfold until at last you came to the stick to which the roll was attached, then you turned the parchment round and continued to read on the other side of the roll, folding it gradually up until you had read the whole—thus it was written within and without.

Many years later a more delicate kind of leather was made from the skins of sheep. There was a manufactory for preparing these skins at Pergamos, from which the material took its name of Pergament or Parchment. In St. Paul's second epistle to Timothy he says, "Bring with thee the books but especially the parchments" (2 Timothy iv. 13).

The next material that was used for writing upon was a kind of reed which used to grow on the banks of the Nile river, but it is seldom found there now.



PALM-LEAF BOOK.

The plant is called Papyrus—from which our word paper is derived; it grows to a height of sixteen or more feet, and has a triangular green stem full of white pith, and this can, with great care, be cut into thin layers or sheets, and these, laid one over the other and pressed together, sized, and polished with a steel implement, formed a kind of paper which could be written upon either with ink or a sharp pointed style.

These sheets were also formed into rolls many yards in length, and such rolls are frequently found to this day in Egyptian tombs.

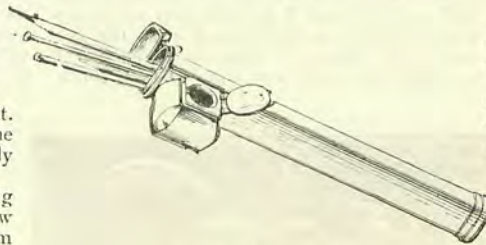
You will remember the command given to Jeremiah, "Take thee a roll of a book, and write therein all the words that I have spoken" (Jeremiah xxxvi. 2), and the message thus written so greatly offended the king, to whom it was read, that he cut up the roll with a penknife and burnt it in the fire.

These written rolls would be injured by damp unless carefully protected, as we gather from a passage in Jeremiah (xxxii. 14). After the prophet has bought and paid for a piece of land he tells Baruch, his scribe, to put the two receipts "in an earthen vessel that they may continue many days."

There are various texts which speak of writing on stone. In the book of Joshua we read (Joshua viii. 32), "He wrote there upon the stones a copy of the Law of Moses," and Job exclaims, "Oh that my words were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever" (Job xix. 24). That such sculptured writing is almost indestructible we have clear proof in the accounts that we read of rocks in Eastern countries which have writing upon them believed to be more than two thousand years old. It may have been that hot lead was poured into the letters of the inscription to render them more permanent.

The writing table mentioned in St. Luke i. 63 was probably a sheet or tablet of wood which had been covered with wax, and on which Zacharias would write with a sharp pointed piece of steel or iron. These wax table-books were used by the Greeks and Romans long after papyrus was invented.

In Ezekiel (ix. 2) we read of a man who had a writer's inkhorn by his side. How can we understand this? We do not carry ink in



WRITER'S INK-CASE.

that way, we keep it in an inkstand on the table, but in the East the writers, merchants and others carry, not horns, but a small brass inkholder and a pen stuck in their girdle, so that it may be ready when they transact their business in the open air, the gateway of the city being a place where important transactions were carried on, as we learn from the last chapter of the book of Ruth. Boaz stands in the gate of the city and calls ten of the elders of the city to be witnesses that he takes Ruth to be his wife.

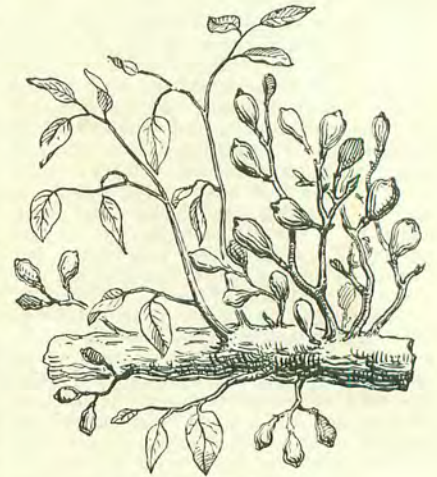
The writer in Ezekiel, with his inkhorn, is told to put a mark on the foreheads of certain people, and to do that he must have a pen such as the Eastern people use, made out of a reed which grows abundantly in their rivers.

I will mention one more material used for writing upon in the East. Where paper is scarce they are glad to use palm leaves to write on, with a style or sharp pointed piece of metal.

Children are also taught to read, in some parts of India, by having before them trays full of fine sand in which they form different letters and words with their fingers.

THE SYCOMORE TREE.

"I was an herdsman, and a gatherer of sycomore fruit."—Amos vii. 14.



Ficus Sycomorus.

THE sycomore (*Ficus sycomorus*) or fig-mulberry (from *sycon*, fig, and *moron*, mulberry) is, in Egypt and Palestine, a tree of great importance and very extensive use. Its leaves are heart-shaped, downy and fragrant, much resembling those of the true mulberry. The figs grow in a very unusual manner upon little sprigs which arise not from the branches but from the main trunk, and incisions are made in the stem to induce the growth of these fruitful boughs, upon which the figs cluster thickly like bunches of grapes.

The fruit has the appearance and scent of the ordinary fig, but it is of inferior quality, small in size, of a greenish-yellow colour, and mawkishly sweet and watery.

Before the fruit is quite ripe, a man ascends the tree and punctures or scrapes every fig with an iron instrument in order to let some of its acrid juice escape, and thus promote the speedy ripening and improve the flavour of the fruit. This was probably part of the occupation of the prophet Amos, whose work would be similar to that of Baalhanan, who was appointed by King David to be "over the olive trees and the

sycamore trees that were in the low plains" (1 Chron. xxvii. 28).

The tree has dark evergreen foliage somewhat like the English oak. It bears its produce at all seasons of the year, and is therefore invaluable to the poor, who think themselves well regaled when they have a piece of bread, a few sycamore figs, and a pitcher of water.

We can therefore well understand what a sore calamity it must have been when the plague of hail fell upon the Egyptians and "destroyed their sycamore trees with frost" (Ps. lxxviii. 47).

Although sycamore timber is spongy and of coarse grain, yet it is very durable and well adapted to building purposes. Mummy cases

made of it have continued sound for thousands of years, and from the quantity of this wood found in the tombs alone, it is evident that the tree must have been cultivated to a great extent in ancient times.

This fig-tree still grows abundantly in Egypt and attains an immense size; the branches spreading to a considerable distance form a circle of welcome shade, often as much as forty paces in diameter, so that a row of trees on one side of the road is sufficient to secure shadow. The inhabitants make great use of these sheltering trees, often turning them into summer lodgings for themselves or their servants.

The sycamore being a wayside tree, and dividing into huge branches quite near the ground, it was easy for Zaccheus to ascend a

little distance in order to see our Lord as He passed by.

It may be as well to explain that our English sycamore has no affinity whatever with the tree we are considering; it is really a species of maple—nor is it related to the sycamore of North America, which is the occidental plane or button-wood tree.

The sycamine tree mentioned by our Lord in St. Luke xvii. 6 is believed to be the black mulberry, a tree of slow growth forming a great stem and massive branches, such a tree as would not readily be "plucked up by the roots." This tree, the *morus nigra* of Persia, is often alluded to by travellers as still growing plentifully in the Holy Land.

(To be continued.)

LIFE'S TRIVIAL ROUND.

By ROSA NOUCHETTE CAREY, Author of "Nellie's Memories," "Mollie's Prince," etc.

CHAPTER XIX.

"SPEED THE PARTING GUEST."

"Those things that a man cannot amend in himself or others he ought to suffer patiently until God orders things otherwise."

Thomas à Kempis.



IT was on a fine afternoon late in October that we all gathered on the terrace to welcome the homecoming of the new mistress of Wildcroft.

It was not one of those golden days when the very air seems ripe and full of warm fragrance, as though nature is keeping in reserve some of her best and richest vintage. The frost fingers had already touched the oaks, and the yellow rain from the elms pattered ceaselessly in the sandy road. The breath of calm decay was over everything, and at Nutlands and Wildcroft blazing fires heralded in the long autumnal evenings. We had had a trying day with Miss Faith, and I was not surprised that Hope looked so pale and fagged.

Our fears had been verified. The pony-carriage that was to take her to Nutlands had only started half an hour before the travellers arrived. Most of the luggage had been sent the day before, and her books and ornaments were already in their places in the little drawing-room at Nutlands. Yet still Miss Faith wandered from room to room in search of some trifle she had overlooked—a bead mat that Nina had worked for her, or a little crayon sketch that Gordon had drawn.

In vain Hope reasoned with her. "What does it matter, Aunt Faith?" she said almost brusquely at last. "It is sure to turn up by-and-by, and then

Nina and I will run over with it. Nutlands is not America or India"—with an amused laugh, in which there was a faint tinge of contempt. But Miss Faith received this remark in bad part.

"Oh, you may laugh, Hope!" she returned in a peevish voice. "But it is no laughing matter to me, I assure you. I should have thought that under the circumstances you might have shown me a little more consideration and sympathy, but I suppose that I expect too much."

And then she wandered off on another quest, and Hope, half angry and half discomfited, came to me for consolation.

"Oh, Berrie, what is to be done?" she exclaimed. "If this goes on much longer Aunt Faith will drive us crazy. Why cannot people be unhappy in a reasonable sort of way. Aunt Faith seems to think we are all in a conspiracy against her, and that we do not care one bit what becomes of her, when I am so sorry for her, poor dear, that I am aching all over"—and here Hope's voice was decidedly choky. My darling had a warm heart, I knew that well.

"She knows all about that, dearie," I returned soothingly, "so you need not fret. Poor Miss Faith is not really cross, only she is so sore and troubled that she says sharp things without meaning them. I remember once when my dear mother had had a day of pain, and once or twice had spoken irritably to us, that she said to me when I bade her good night, 'Berrie, you must give me a temper powder to-night, and then perhaps I will be able to bear my troubles without vexing other people.' Well, we must just put up with Miss Faith to-day, for her poor nerves are all on edge, and a pleasant word is more than she has power to say." But all the same I blamed Miss Faith in my heart for her want of self-control. A grown-up woman had no right to behave like a fretful child who had been deprived of its toy.

I was hardening my heart against her, and making up my mind to say a salutary word, when I came upon her suddenly where I least expected her to be, in Mr. Mostyn's dressing-room.

She was standing before a beautiful portrait of his first wife. It had been taken in the first year of their married

life, when she was still a young bride, and though Hope had not inherited her mother's loveliness, the clear steadfast eyes that looked out of the canvas were alike in mother and daughter.

I thought she had heard my entrance, but I was mistaken, for she did not change her attitude, and she was talking to the picture in a strained, weak little voice of excessive emotion.

"Dear Flo, do you know about it all? Are you disappointed with Graham? You used to tell me that nothing he did was wrong in your eyes. So perhaps even this will be right. But I think—yes, I am sure that you are sorry for me. Life is so lonely, Flo—I am so tired of it all! Graham does not want me—no one wants me. How can they, when I grow more disagreeable every day? Why are women born if they have no place, no work, anywhere? Oh, I am wicked, dear, but it is so cruelly hard!" But here I crept on tip-toe to the door, and heard no more, for I dared not let her know that her miserable little monologue had been overheard.

Later in the afternoon I came upon her stealing like a grey little ghost through the upper rooms. She gave me a wan smile, but her eyelids were red and swollen.

"Don't scold me, Berrie," she pleaded, "but I have been into every room to bid it good-bye. This is the room where Gordon and Owen had the measles, and Flo and I nursed them. I stayed here six weeks, and then we all went to the seaside. Oh, it was such a happy time! She and Graham were so grateful to me! But I liked doing it. I used to tell them that I was glad of any excuse for getting away from Nutlands."

"Dear Miss Faith, it is nearly half-past five, and they will be here at six."

"Is it as late as that?"—and the poor thing turned quite pale. "Yes, I know. There is only Nina's room left, and I will follow you in a minute." But it was nearly a quarter of an hour before she came out on the terrace. I saw then that her nerves were giving way.

"Help me to get away quickly," she whispered. But she was trembling so that we almost lifted her into the pony-carriage.

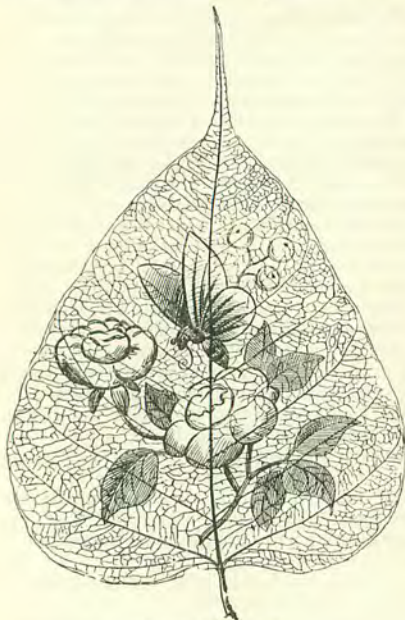
MY MUSEUM OF EASTERN CURIOS.

By MRS. BRIGHTWEN, Author of "Rambles with Nature Students," etc.

PART VI.

THE FIG-TREE (*Ficus Carica*).

THE fig-tree is one of those mentioned in Deut. viii. 8 as a special tree of Palestine, and it still affords its grateful fruit in abundance for the sustenance of the natives.

*Ficus Religiosa*.

LEAF SHOWING PAINTED DESIGN.

Mount Olivet was famous for these trees in olden times, and to sit under one's own vine and one's own fig-tree became a proverbial expression to denote peace and prosperity. Figs were amongst the fruits brought back from Canaan by the spies.

We read of Abigail presenting two hundred cakes of figs to King David; these would have been dried by exposure to the sun in the same way that grapes are dried, and called "raisins of the sun."

The fig abounds in sugar, and in the drying process some of this exudes and forms the white powder which we see on imported figs. The fruit is thus preserved in its own sugar, and can be stored as an article of food.

Figs were considered of such value by the Athenians that their exportation from Attica was prohibited. Those who informed against persons breaking this law were called *σκολοφάνται*, which signified tale-bearers about figs. These informers appear to have been specially disliked, for their name gave rise to the term sycophant, used for flatterers, imposters, and designing people generally.

The fig-tree lives to a great age. Specimens which were brought from Italy by Cardinal Pole in 1548 still exist in Lambeth Palace garden, and must therefore be nearly four hundred years old.

The importation of figs into England is about a thousand tons a year, and the fertility of the tree may be judged by the produce of one hundred trees at Tarring, in Sussex, where a hundred dozen figs are gathered daily during the summer months.

The flower of the fig is contained in the centre of the fruit, and is therefore only visible when the fig is cut open.

Often a month before the general crop is

ripe there will be found here and there some fruit matured, and these "firstripe figs" are highly prized; they fall readily from the stem, and are sweet and luscious. These are referred to in Nahum iii. 12, and in Isaiah xxviii. 4.

The earliest mention of the fig-tree in the Bible is in Gen. iii. 7.

There are sixty species of the genus *Ficus*; the three best-known kinds are the sycamore, the ordinary sweet fig, and the fig-tree of India (*Ficus Indica*), known as the banyan.

This tree is remarkable for the way in which its wide-spreading branches send down aerial stems, which, taking root when they reach the ground, form supports for the longer branches, and enable the tree to spread to an almost incredible extent.

There are banyan trees in India which are believed to be older than the Christian era. The most remarkable specimen is one still existing on the banks of the Nerbudda. It has three hundred main trunks, and the smaller ones exceed three thousand. Immense popular assemblies are sometimes gathered beneath this patriarchal fig-tree, and it has been known to shelter seven thousand people beneath its ample shadow.

The leaves of the banyan are nearly a foot long and about eight inches in width, and are by Milton supposed to have been the "fig-leaves" chosen by our first parents.

"So counsell'd he, and both together went
Into the thickest wood; there soon they
chose

The fig-tree; not that kind for fruit re-
nown'd,

But such as at this day, to Indians known,
In Malabar or Deccan spreads her arms,
Branching so broad and long, that in the
ground

The bended twigs take root, and daughters
grow

About the mother tree, a pillar'd shade
High over-arched, and echoing walks be-
tween;

There oft the Indian herdsman, shunning
heat,

Shelters in cool, and tends his pasturing
herds

At loopholes cut through thickest shade:
Those leaves

They gather'd, broad as Amazonian targe;
And with what skill they had, together
sew'd

To gird their waist;"

Paradise Lost, book ix.

The Hindoos are peculiarly fond of the banyan tree; they look upon it as an emblem of the Deity, from its long duration, its outstretching arms, and overshadowing beneficence; in fact they almost pay it divine honours, and

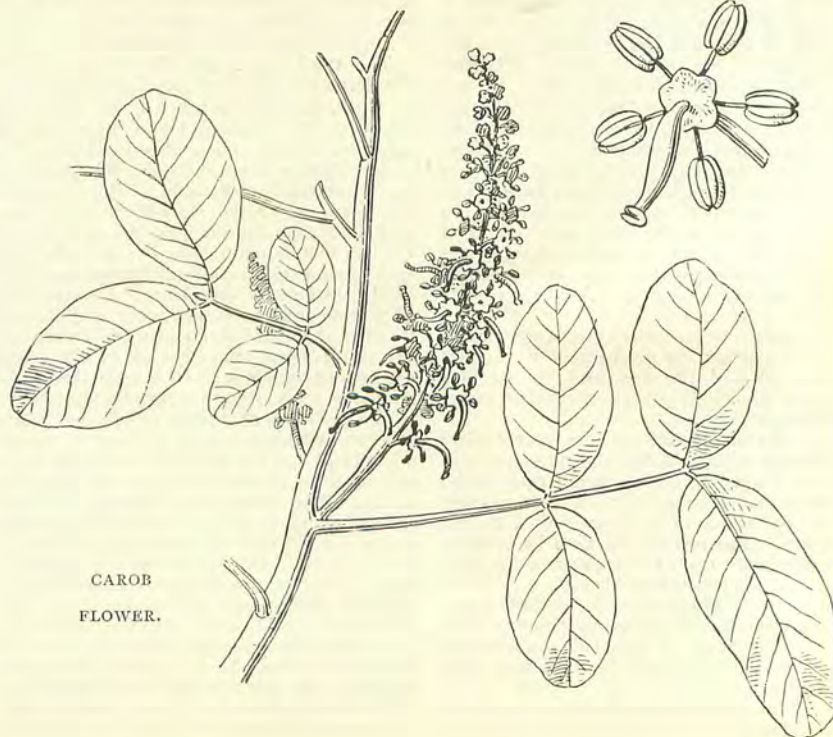
"Find a fane in every grove."

Near these trees the most esteemed pagodas are erected, under their shade the Brahmins spend their lives in religious solitude, and the natives of all castes and tribes are fond of recreating in the cool recesses and lovely vistas of this umbrageous canopy, impervious to the hottest beams of a tropical sun.

The huge branches are also the resort of green wood-pigeons, doves, peacocks, and many other birds; they are crowded with families of monkeys performing their antic tricks, and inhabited by fruit-eating bats of large size, measuring upwards of five feet from the extremity of one wing to the other.

This tree not only affords shelter but sustenance to its varied inhabitants, being covered amidst its bright foliage with small figs of a rich scarlet, which animals and birds alike find suitable to their tastes and requirements.

It is a remarkable fact that the banyan rarely germinates in the ground, but usually

CAROB
FLOWER.

in the crown of palm-trees, where the seed has been deposited by birds. When the banyan seed has once started, its roots are sent down to the ground, and as they descend they embrace and finally kill the nursing palm-tree.

One other fig-tree (*Ficus Religiosa*), the peepul of India, is also held in great veneration both in Ceylon and on the continent of India. In the Cingalese language it is called the "tree of Buddha." It was formerly held in such high esteem in the city of Kandy that the form of the leaves was only allowed to be painted on furniture employed exclusively for the use of the king.

The Chinese make skeletons of the leaves, which are heart-shaped, with a tapering point more than two inches long; these leaves they varnish and adorn with devices of flowers and birds.*

THE CAROB OR LOCUST-TREE. (*Ceratonia Siliqua*.)

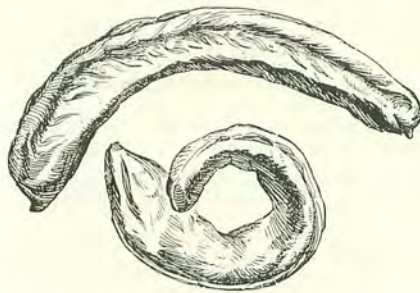
THIS handsome evergreen tree is much valued in Palestine for its welcome shade and useful fruit. It attains a height of twenty or thirty feet; its wood is of a pinkish colour, and when its racemes of red flowers have withered, the boughs are covered with an abundant crop of long, flat pods, brown and glossy, bent like a sickle or curled like a sheep's horn, whence comes the Greek name *κεράτιον*, horn-like husk.

Husks are only mentioned three times in the Bible. The first passage refers to grape-skins, which, with all else connected with the vine, might not be eaten by the Nazarite (Num. vi. 4).

* These peepul leaves may often be obtained for a few pence at Japanese warehouses in London.

The second instance refers to corn in the ear or husk* (2 Kings iv. 42), which is more likely to refer to Indian corn or maize than any of our English cereals. The husks mentioned in the well-known parable of the prodigal son are said by all writers to be the pods of the carob tree (St. Luke xv. 16).

The seed contained in the pod is small, varying but little in size. It is believed to be the original carat weight used by jewellers in weighing precious stones or pearls.



CAROB PODS.

Besides these seeds the pod is full of sugary pulp, so that during the months of April and May, when the fruit is ripe, the children of the fellaheen hardly require any other food, since the pods contain starch, oil, sugar and other necessary elements for the support of life.

I possess a bunch of these carob pods amongst my Eastern curios. They appear much too hard and dry to be eatable, but I

* Indian corn cobs are protected by thirteen leafy coverings which may well be called a "husk."

am told that even these dry specimens, if they were soaked with honey, would become soft and almost like new fruit.

The Arabs all enjoy sweet food, and of many a man in Palestine it may be said his food is "locusts and wild honey."

It has often been debated whether the "locusts," on which John the Baptist partly subsisted, were the fruit of this tree or the well-known insects which appear in swarms at certain seasons of the year.

Although we know that locusts are used as an article of diet, yet the fact that the carob is frequently called in the East St. John's Bread, shows that it may have been the food of the Baptist.

"During the Peninsular war 'algaroba,' or carob-beans, formed the chief food of the British cavalry horses, and in Barbary they are given to mules and asses, who prefer them to oats."*

A special cattle food, much used in these days by our own farmers, consists mainly of carob-beans.

The pods can be obtained from corn-dealers, and, as the seeds grow rapidly without heat, those who wish to have a tree of Palestine growing on their window-sill have only to plant one of the seeds in a pot and keep it watered, and in due time a young seedling carob will appear, which will grow for years if protected from frost in winter.

It may be well to mention that soaking the seed in warm water for twenty-four hours before sowing will hasten its germination.

When purchasing these beans it is needful to ask for "locusts," as they do not seem to be known in England under the name of carob-beans.

(To be continued.)

* From the *Imperial Bible Dictionary*.



THE GIRL'S OWN BIRTHDAY COMPETITION;

OR,

MOTTOES FOR US TO LIVE UNDER.

WHO ARE THE PRIZE-WINNERS AND CERTIFICATE-HOLDERS?

EXAMINERS: JAMES MASON AND THE EDITOR.

THE enthusiasm with which girls have entered on this competition may be inferred from the long list, which follows, of those whom skill and perseverance have crowned with success.

It is a pleasing proof of the high and important position which THE GIRL'S OWN PAPER continues to occupy, and of the good disposition and eagerness after self-improvement existing in our enormous circle of readers.

The papers received came from all parts of Great Britain and Ireland, every town of importance and many places of obscurity being represented. Our Colonial and foreign friends, too, were numerous, hailing from far distant lands all over the world: girls from India, Natal, Cape Colony, Canada, the West Indies,

Australia, the United States, France, Germany, Russia, Hungary, Roumania, Italy, Portugal, Holland, Turkey in Europe and Asia Minor.

* * * * *
That it was a competition thoroughly enjoyed by all who took part in it was clear. As we had said nothing forbidding the sending of letters with the papers, we had many gratifying communications giving evidence of this fact—kind and touching letters some of them were.

"You have done all us girls a good turn," writes one, "by starting this competition." "A very interesting as well as instructive competition," remarks another. "The nature of this competition," says a third, "appealed

to me from the first, but the pleasure and profit I have obtained in collecting these mottoes, have far exceeded my utmost expectations." A fourth testifies, "It has been such a delightful task." "I hope," says another girl, "you will have a similar competition very soon. I have so much enjoyed this one." And so on—all in the same strain.

* * * * *
Even—as we pointed out when proposing the competition—if a girl gained no prize and maybe not even a certificate, she was sure to obtain an advantage in some way. She would at the very least receive mental profit. "It will sharpen her wits," we said, "and provide her with a stock of good thoughts which—

MY MUSEUM OF EASTERN CURIOS.

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PART VII.

MANNA.

I MAKE no reference in this paper to the manna by which the Israelites were miraculously supported in the wilderness, about the nature of which we can now have no certain knowledge except from its description in Holy Scripture.

It may, however, be interesting to consider the nature of certain substances still known by the name of manna.



ASH-TREE MANNA.

Some years ago I formed a collection of various articles used to make medicines, such as the Peruvian barks that yield quinine, rhubarb-root, castor-oil seeds, colocynth, aloes, many kinds of gums and other substances.

These articles I arranged in a wall-case, and as the name and properties of each specimen are written beneath it, the collection is sometimes found instructive by those who visit my museum.

When buying specimens for this case a chemist happened to offer me "a piece of manna" to add to my collection; this led me to obtain information about the so-called manna as it is used at the present day.

A small tree known as the Manna Ash (*Fraxinus ornus*) growing in Italy, Hungary, Sicily, and other places yields a sweet sap which hardens into small lumps of sugary substance, this has an agreeable honey-like taste and is used as a laxative for infants.

The process of obtaining the sap is similar to that adopted in America in the manufacture of maple sugar.

In the neighbourhood of Castelamare the manna-ash is cultivated in plantations called



MANNA LICHEN.



MANNA BREAD.

Frassinetti, and when the trees are mature enough, incisions are made in the bark through which the sap flows out. It gradually hardens and is gathered in pieces shaped somewhat like stalactites, which are laid on shelves to dry ready for exportation.

The bunches of white feathery flowers produced by the manna-ash render it much more ornamental than the English species, although in leafage and manner of growth the two trees are otherwise much alike.

Fraxinus ornus was introduced into England in 1730 by Dr. Uvedale.

When planted in a sheltered situation the tree attains a height of twenty to thirty feet; it flowers in May and ripens its fruit in October.

In some countries such trees as the tamarisk, oak, larch, willow and other trees yield sweet substances either as exudations from the stem or forming in scales upon the leaves. Such products are also called manna and have occasionally been imported as such, but, though prized and eaten by the natives of the countries where such products are found, these kinds of manna do not seem to possess the useful properties of the manna-ash.

There is also a lichen which is believed to possess many points of resemblance to the miraculous manna of Scripture.

This is found growing over a very wide region in Asia and Africa and appears upon fragments of stone as a greyish yellow crust, dry and wrinkled; when broken the inside is white.

The powerful winds which sweep over the desolate plains where this lichen is found readily uproot it and whirl it into the air, whence it descends in such quantities that it has been discovered lying several inches deep upon the ground.

The fact that sheep devoured it greedily suggested the possibility that it had nutritive qualities, and, ground into a kind of coarse flour, the natives of many places are glad to make use of it as an addition to their daily food.

This edible lichen is known as *Lecanora esculenta* and another allied species *Lecanora tartarea* is imported in large quantities from Sweden to form the colouring matter, called litmus, from which the cloths that Dutch cheeses are wrapped in receive their deep-blue dye.

An Australian tree, *Eucalyptus viminalis*, exudes crumbs of an edible manna which is very sweet, and is used in commerce to produce opaque drops of what is sold as "honey-manna" or "mellitose."

MANDRAKE (*Mandragora Vernalis*).

So many strange superstitions appear to have gathered around this plant, even as far back as Biblical times, that I almost shrink from writing upon it amongst my Eastern subjects.

I am led to do so, however, from the fact that I possess a growing specimen of this rare plant, and, in spite of the frosty nights of

February, it is now producing its flowers, so that I can, at any rate, describe its outward appearance.

In Palestine the mandrake leaves are said to be about a foot long and four inches wide, but our colder climate so checks its development that, growing in a garden bed, it looks but little larger than a well-grown primrose. It much resembles that plant also in its general appearance, since all the leaves spring from the centre, and the short-stalked flowers rise from the middle of the rosette of leaves.

Its bell-shaped flowers are of a pale greenish colour, have a five-cleft tubular corolla* and five pale purple sepals. The blossoms appear to open but one at a time and are succeeded by a large yellow berry or "apple" possessing highly poisonous qualities.

My specimen of the mandrake is the one which flowers in spring and ripens about the time of the Eastern harvest.

The other species, *autumnalis*, is described as being a very handsome plant with rich blue flowers and wavy leaves



MANDRAKE.

Dioscorides, a famous Greek physician who lived in the first century and wrote many volumes on the medical properties of plants, says that the root of the mandrake steeped in wine was given to patients who had to undergo surgical operations, as it acted as an anæsthetic and produced insensibility to pain.

Pliny and other writers state that it was used also as an antidote for snake-bites.

It is easy to understand that the mandrake root may possess these sedative qualities since it is closely allied to the henbane, which, under the name of belladonna, is in constant use as a valuable medicine at the present day.

One cannot help marvelling at the credulity with which the stories about this plant appear to have been received in olden days.

Because it possessed a long taproot which was often forked and bore some faint

* Botanically called *gamopetalous*.

resemblance to the human form, the mandrake was credited with supernatural powers.

"Mark how the mandrake wears
His human feet, his human hands."
Langhorne's "Bee-flower."

It was also said to shriek when torn out of the ground.

"Or teach me where that wondrous mandrake grows
Whose magic root, torn from the earth with groans
At midnight hour, can scare the fiends away,
And make the mind prolific in its fancies."
Longfellow's "Spanish Student."

And doubtless charlatans were not slow to foster these beliefs in order that they might impose upon the fears of the ignorant for their own evil ends.

This plant is not often found now in the south of Palestine, but upon Mount Tabor, some valleys in Nazareth, and to the south of Hebron it still grows abundantly.

BEDS.

I HAVE spoken of the beds laid upon the house-rafts. Now our idea of beds is so entirely different from those used in hot countries that we may well be puzzled to understand some verses where they are spoken of.

A bed in Palestine is nothing more than a rug or small mattress which can be easily rolled up, as you see in the drawing. It was therefore perfectly easy for the palsied man,



AN EASTERN BED.

when he was cured, to obey the Lord's command, "Take up thy bed, and go unto thine house" (St. Matt. ix. 6), and St. Luke tells us he "took up that whereon he lay and departed to his own house" (St. Luke v. 25).

These mattresses were sometimes spread on shelves fixed to the walls of a room and raised a foot or more from the ground. These may have been the kind of beds used by Ahab and Hezekiah, for of the former we read that in his vexation at the refusal of Naboth to sell him his vineyard, "he laid him down upon his bed and turned away his face" (1 Kings xxi. 4). And Hezekiah in his trouble "turned his face toward the wall and prayed unto the Lord" (Isa. xxxviii. 2).

Some large rooms have a raised platform at one end on which the beds or mattresses are laid with various shaped cushions. In such a room a father and his family might all lie down for their nightly rest as in the parable in St. Luke xi. 7, where he replies to his friend, "Trouble me not: the door is now shut, and my children are with me in bed."

Several verses speak of a couch or framework on which the bed was sometimes laid, and of this kind must have been the bedstead of iron used by Og, the giant King of Bashan (Deut. iii. 11).

A verse in Exodus refers to the custom of using the outer garment as a bed or covering for the night, showing how little is required for this purpose in a hot country. "If thou at all take thy neighbour's raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down: for that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep?" (Exod. xxii. 26, 27).

(To be continued.)

LADY DYE'S REPARATION.

By SARAH DOUDNEY.

CHAPTER IV.

THURSTAN, as the train bore him back to London, had no need of a paper to while the time away. He sat alone in a compartment with his hat off, letting the cool air blow freely about his head. He wanted to think, soberly and seriously, about this extraordinary feeling which swayed him like a reed. The uncommon personality of Angelique had bewitched him; she possessed something unique, something indescribable, which no other girl of his acquaintance could claim. He liked her none the less because her aunt was inclined to play the dragon. Difficulty is always stimulating to a lover, and Thurstan, for the first time in his life, had actually fallen very deeply into love.

Should he tell his mother everything? No; a thousand times no! If he took her into his confidence, he knew exactly what would occur. In her next private talk with Lady Winstoke his secret would be drawn out of her by the force of that masterful woman. Lady Winstoke, he was sure, was capable of proceeding to extremities. He pictured her rushing down to Narrowfield to interview the innocent Angelique, and warn Miss Ray against his dangerous attentions. He decided to tell the little mother a soothing tale to account for his absence.

He did not see her until late in the day, and then there was a half-reproachful look in her soft brown eyes which touched him.

"You can't think how I missed you at breakfast, dear boy," said she. "But an old woman mustn't expect to tie a young man with her apron-strings."

"You know I sha'n't wander far away from you," he said. "I always turn up again, don't I?"

"Yes, dear." And then a slightly anxious expression came into her sweet face. "This is Friday. Well, you will spend Sunday with me, won't you? It is Whit-Sunday, and Dye has a holiday, so she is coming with her mother to lunch."

The old song! How he hated this absurd plotting and scheming which could only end in disappointment and failure! For an instant he lost his self-control.

"They always bore me. I detest meeting them," he said in an angry tone.

Lady Bona drew a long breath, and the brown eyes widened with sudden alarm.

"I am sorry that you detest my friends," she said quietly. "You need not meet them, Thurstan dear, if they bore you so much."

Her lip quivered; and he stooped to kiss her.

"What a brute I am!" he cried. "Little mother, I'll do anything to please you. Don't be afraid that I shan't behave decently on Sunday."

She put up a delicate hand and patted his cheek affectionately, but the sunny calm was gone from her face.

"I am not afraid that you will be unlike yourself," she answered. "You have always been the best of boys to me."

"And you have been the best of mothers. You wondered what had become of me this morning, didn't you? Well, I ran down into the country, and took a look at Amy Severne's grave."

He looked her straight in the face as he spoke; and she looked back at him with a puzzled air.

"Amy Severne! Have I ever heard of her?" she asked.

"I think you have. She was the wife of poor Severne the artist, who died a month or two ago. Just at the last he begged Norton and me to look after her grave, you know; he was quite anxious about it, poor chap. One doesn't want to forget the wishes of the dead."

He was still looking at her, waiting, as it seemed, to answer any question that she might care to ask. His face was serious; there was a firm set of the lips which made him look two or three years older.

"No; you could not forget such a wish," said she, slowly and thoughtfully.

"I remember that Mr. Norton told me something about that poor young wife. She was ill, and her husband sent her into the country to recover, but she died. The Severnes didn't know anything about the marriage, I suppose. I think Mr. Norton said that she was not in their position at all. It was a most touching story."

"She was certainly not on a level

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PART VIII.

THE MIGRATORY LOCUST
(*Pachetylus Migratorius*).

THE locust, that insect of which we read so often in Scripture, still continues to be a grievous plague in many parts of the world. Whole provinces are rendered bare and desolate in the space of a few days after the appearance of the hordes of locusts. The sky is darkened by their countless numbers, and, after their destructive work is ended and they have devoured every green leaf and blade of grass, their dead bodies lie in heaps upon the ground, corrupting the air and often causing fatal attacks of pestilence.

A few stray locusts, driven by some untoward wind, occasionally visit our own shores. One such specimen was picked up near Worthing and sent to me alive, some years ago. With great interest I watched the creature eating the grass with which I supplied it. It held each blade between its fore feet and then its great jaws set to work, and very quickly leaf after leaf disappeared. I could well realise the havoc that would be wrought in a field of growing corn by a flight of these devouring insects.

It is recorded that in 1748 a swarm of locusts alighted at Bristol and so devastated the oaks, elms and other trees that their branches were left absolutely bare. It was a gala time for the rooks, for they did good service in clearing away the destructive insects. Again in 1845, 1846 and 1847 locust swarms appeared in Yorkshire and also near London.

I had a tantalising experience one summer, when staying at Woodhall Spa, in Lincolnshire. Whilst strolling over some waste land, looking for wild flowers, suddenly a locust rose out of the grass close to my feet, spread its great glistening wings and flew away in a moment quite beyond my reach. I watched its undulating flight for several hundred yards, and I even tried to follow it, but I saw that it flew over a hedge at last into a private garden, where I did not like to intrude. It was interesting to have caught even this hasty glimpse of such a rare visitant.

The wings of my dried locust measure five inches across when expanded, and the one I saw flying must have been fully as large, for it looked like a small bird.

The straight flight of the locust is so entirely unlike the zigzag of the dragon-fly or any other insect that there could be no mistake as to its being a stray specimen of the migratory locust. The ordinary colour of this insect is a greenish brown mottled with darker tints. No doubt they vary according to climate, for some specimens sent to me from the Cape of Good Hope have pink under-wings. The eggs of the migratory locust are about the size and shape of rice grains, and are laid in masses here and there in the ground. The country people are often employed to collect and burn these eggs in the hope of staying the impending plague.

Several species of locusts are amongst the "flying, creeping" creatures, pronounced to be "clean" by the law of Moses, and they still form a common article of food for the poor in many countries. In some places the locusts are dried and then ground into a kind of meal, of which cakes are made and baked like bread. An Algerine journal gives a recipe for locust croquets served with wine sauce. Animals eat dried locusts greedily; advantage is therefore taken of the arrival of a swarm of these insects, and sacks are quickly filled and the

contents dried and salted so as to be laid up in store as cattle food.

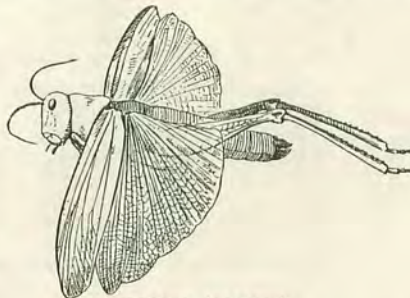
The characteristics of the locusts are vividly described by the prophet Joel. Under the name of the "army" (Joel ii. 11, 20) one of these terrible visitations is shadowed forth; "a day of darkness" refers to the light being obscured by the locust clouds, which travellers say sometimes extend a mile in length and



LOCUST (WALKING.)

half a mile in breadth. "A fire devoureth before them" (Joel ii. 3). This describes the bare appearance of the fields after their ravages, as though flames had burnt up every green thing—a fertile plain, beautiful as a garden, being left as barren as a wilderness. Even trees are not spared (Joel i. 7); the bark is devoured, and only ghastly white branches remain. I have a tree branch thus barked by rabbits, which I keep in my museum to illustrate this verse. Joel ii. 4: there may be two reasons for comparing locusts to horses: their great speed and orderly arrangement, and also their possessing a certain resemblance to a horse's head, for which reason the Italians call them *cavalletta*.

Joel ii. 5 alludes to the great noise of their clattering wing-cases. The sound is compared to the rumbling of chariots, the roaring of fire, and the noise of battle. To some extent I can confirm this, for when visiting a garden in Normandy I heard a sound like a watchman's rattle and something scarlet whizzed past me. I carefully sought for the insect that made the sound, but only after a long search I discovered that the noise was made by a kind of grasshopper, having lovely scarlet under-wings, which appeared only in flight, and on alighting a pair of earth-coloured wing-cases instantly covered and concealed the bright tint of these under-wings. The noise made by a comparatively small insect gave one some idea of the fearful sound which heralds the locust swarms.



LOCUST (FLYING.)

Joel ii. 6 forcibly portrays the sorrow of a ruined people. This is touchingly described by an eye-witness.* "At the extremity of the field I saw the husbandmen bending over their staves and gazing with hopeless eyes upon the host of death, which swept like a destroying angel over the land, and consigned to ruin all the prospects of the year, for wherever that

column winged its flight beneath its withering influence the golden glories of the harvest perished, and the leafy honours of the forest disappeared. There stood those ruined men, silent and motionless, overwhelmed with the magnitude of their calamity, yet conscious of their utter inability to control it."

Those who have watched the progress of a locust swarm confirm the accuracy of the prophet's description in Joel ii. 7 of the straightforward march of the terrible army. It has thus been described by a traveller in Palestine.* "When the head of the mighty column came in contact with the palace of the Emeer Assaad, the locusts did not take the trouble to wheel round the corners, but climbed the walls like men of war and marched over the top of it. So when they reached the house of Dr. Van Dyck, in spite of all his efforts to prevent it, a living stream rolled right over the roof."

The succeeding verses speak of the locusts entering in at the windows. This they could easily do, as open lattice-work is used in the East instead of glass. In verse 20 allusion is made to the pestilential odour resulting from the immense masses of dead and dying locusts lying in a state of decomposition. Even if the insects are driven by the wind far out to sea, there is no escape from their evil odour, since they float upon the surface and are at length thrown by the tide in heaps upon the shore.

It is not easy to understand many of the figurative expressions used by the prophet Joel, unless we know something about locusts and their habits. I can but hope my readers may find that the foregoing explanations will throw some light upon difficult passages in the book of Joel, and that these may tend to make the prophecy more interesting and instructive.

VILLAGE DWELLINGS IN THE EAST.

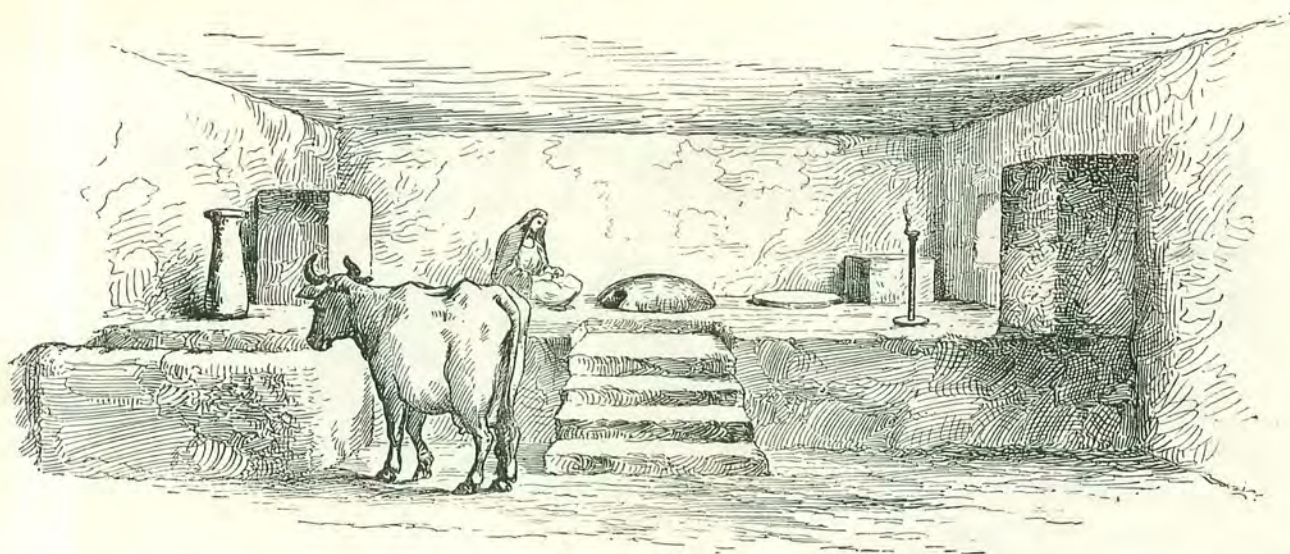
THE fellahen or villagers in Palestine live in small flat-roofed houses, which, to our ideas, present every kind of discomfort.

The Rev. James Neil thus graphically describes these dwellings.† "With us rooms have chimneys, and the fires for warming and cooking purposes are lighted in fireplaces below the chimney-flues. But in ordinary Eastern houses there are no chimneys, and in all the village houses the fireplace is on the stone floor in the middle of their one room. Logs of wood are the only fuel used for heating purposes, but they cook their food with dried cow-dung.

"The sole provision made for carrying away the smoke is a number of holes over the door of the room communicating with the outer air, and the casements of the tiny windows, which are generally unglazed, though in the cold weather these latter are closed with rude shutters. Green wood has often to be burnt on this primitive hearth, and the pungent smoke arising from such fires is most distressing to the nostrils, throat and eyes of the occupants of the room. Hence the allusion in the Bible to the terrible annoyance caused by smoke, especially when, as in very cold weather these wood fires have to be kept burning all day (Prov. x. 26, Isa. lxxv. 5). The blackened state of the ceiling—never more than seven feet high—may well be imagined.

"In almost all village houses more than one

* *The Land and the Book.*† *Pictured Palestine* (Nisbet & Co.).* *Portugal and Galicia*, by Lord Carnarvon.



EASTERN INTERIOR.

third of the single apartment of which it consists is given up to the oxen, the ass, the horse or the mule, if the owner is rich enough to possess any of the latter. In the winter, especially if it be wet, the householder's animals pass the night here. The rest of the room is on a raised dais, approached by three or four stone steps. This is where the family live, for it forms their dining-room, bedroom, and kitchen all in one.

"A clay rounded oven, some three feet deep, is sunk in the middle of the raised part of the

room, so that its ball-like head, with a large, round aperture at one side, rises just above the earthen floor. The fuel used for this oven is always the wild grass and rough herbage growing round the village. Here, after the bread is baked, the mouth of the oven being closed by a stone slab, a low table is placed with a large coverlid upon it. Round this the family sit for their meals, and at night during the winter, they sleep on their thin mattresses, which are so laid on the floor as to bring all their feet near the oven."

My model of an Eastern house shows the raised dais, the manger for the cattle, the small unglazed window, the mill for grinding corn, the clothes-chest made of sun-dried clay, and the lamp-stand, which in such low-pitched dark dwellings must be of essential use. Against the outside wall is the flight of stairs leading to the flat house-roof, on which in the hot season the family spend the night, glad to obtain fresh air and a measure of coolness after the burning heat of the day.

(To be continued.)

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

MEDICAL.

MAY.—There is in the public mind a deeply-rooted idea that a murmur over the heart necessarily means that the valves are diseased, and that the person has an incurable disease of the heart. This is absolutely untrue. Murmurs are extremely frequent in the hearts of persons who are not suffering from valvular disease. Murmurs do not occur in health, but in simple anæmia occur the loudest murmurs that are ever heard. Your symptoms can all be referred to gastric ulcer; they are due to the stomach, not to the heart. The condition of heart which you describe is that met with in nearly all cases of gastric ulcer. True organic disease of the heart in young persons is practically invariably due to acute rheumatism.

THE MOTHER OF A SOLDIER.—It is early days yet to say anything definite about the new preventive treatment for typhoid fever. The idea of inoculating persons exposed to infectious diseases against their becoming infected is not new. Vaccination was the first real triumph of preventive medicine; and it is to be hoped that now that we understand what infection is and what produces immunity to disease, other ways of preventing disease may be discovered. As regards the so-called vaccination against typhoid, all that can be said is that the results so far are extremely gratifying. In one regiment in India, in which all the soldiers were immunised, the number of cases of typhoid fever was extremely low, far lower than it had been for many years. Judging from the clinical aspect of the disease, it is doubtful if immunity against typhoid lasts for life. We cannot even form a guess how long the immunity lasts, but it is probably over three years. There is absolutely no danger in the inoculation. Of course, until it has been tried for some time longer, we must look upon the proceeding as a pure experiment, but an experiment which all modern medicine tells us should be successful, and one which, as far as it has gone, has not belied the great faith that has been put upon it. Were we going to India, we should be inoculated against typhoid without delay.

SHEILA.—We have just published an account of the cause and treatment of acne. The subject is one which we have frequently discussed in this column.

ELLA.—Evening papers are desperately fond of new cures and new theories of cancer! The subject is one in which the public is deeply interested, and so it is not wonderful that it appears so frequently when news is short. The theory that you read as "new" is as old as the hills, and was taught many, many years ago. It is no theory that cancer is a downgrowth of cells through their basement membrane. It is a fact, but it in no way touches the cause of this terrible malady. Everything points to cancer being the reaction of the body against an organism, and we have no doubt that in a few years this, which is still a theory, will become a recognised fact. A disease caused by micro-organisms is a disease for which a rational treatment may be discovered, for it is a disease which can be studied, and which can be appreciated by the human mind. Most diseases which are not infectious are absolutely beyond our powers either to understand or to cure.

VIOLET.—You can do nothing to alter the prominence of your ears. Leave your ears alone, and above all beware of quacks, for prominent ears are a common excuse for those gentry to fleece their victims. For your hands, you might try a little gentle massage. Rub your fingers for ten minutes twice a day, and see if that improves them. Always rub upwards towards the hand.

HOLLY.—Use a spray for your throat of menthol dissolved in paroline (1 in 8). The spray is best used every morning and evening. Pastilles or lozenges of rhatany and black currant, or menthol, may also help to relieve you. For dandruff, wash your head in solution of borax, and rub a very little sulphur ointment into the scalp. You need not touch the hair with the ointment. It is good to use a hard hair-brush, and to use it frequently.

IVY.—Certainly not! Baths are good at all times of the day. People usually bathe in the morning or the evening for convenience. The morning bath has an advantage of being more refreshing; the evening bath has an advantage in producing sleep.

SCRUTLETTAILS.—Bathe your feet twice daily in warm water to which a little borax has been added. Do not wear tight-fitting boots for longer than you can help, and change your stockings frequently. No, not with any certainty.

FREDA.—We advise you to have your eyes seen to by an oculist. Possibly the refraction is not correct.

A FOND MOTHER.—There is no sight more unwelcome to a physician than a fat baby, for so often does it mean that the child's health has been deliberately sacrificed by the endeavours of the mother to improve it. The vendors of patent foods for infants are responsible for a great deal of infant mortality. We do not say that foods for infants are bad, if properly used for the right cases, but they are capable of doing so much harm that they have become a plague to civilisation. "Dr. Mammion's Patent Food" is advertised by a picture of a fine, fat, rickety baby. A young mother comes along, sees the advertisement, admires the picture of the fat baby, goes home and feeds her child upon Dr. Mammion's food to make her fat. And she succeeds. Her baby becomes a shapeless mass of fat and as rickety as possible. We have not the objection to the unfortunate babies as "thin as a lath," which have been starved ever since they were born, that we have to the fine, fat, rickety child; for, in truth, the former is the better specimen, and stands more chance of living to maturity. If you give babies infants' food at all, and we strongly dissuade you from doing anything of the kind, you must not give it until the children have cut at least two teeth. Foods for infants are mainly farinaceous, and babies cannot digest farinaceous food until they have cut at least two teeth.

MERCIA.—The most common cause of one hip being higher than the other is that one leg is shorter than the other. It is quite a rare thing for both legs to be of equal length, differences of an eighth, or even of a third, of an inch in the length of the two limbs being not at all uncommon. When one leg is shorter than its fellow the hip on that side drops, so as to enable both feet to touch the ground. It is drooping of the hip causes a slight amount of curvature of the backbone.

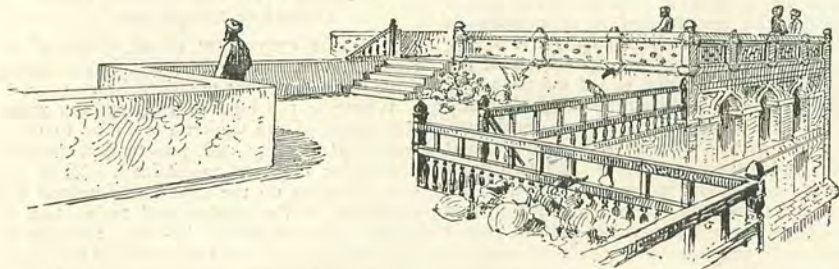
MABEL FLORENCE.—Anæmia is a name given to any condition in which the blood is deficient. It is a generic term, applied equally to the bloodlessness after excessive bleeding, or that of the last stage of cancer. Chlorosis is a special kind of anæmia, which is met with almost exclusively in young women. Chlorosis is the form of anæmia which yields most readily to treatment, and it can practically always be cured by iron. The indentation of the tongue by the teeth is frequently present in anæmia and some forms of dyspepsia.

MY MUSEUM OF EASTERN CURIOS.

By MRS. BRIGHTWEN, Author of "Rambles with Nature Students," etc.

PART IX.
HOUSE-ROOFS.

HOUSE-ROOFS in the East are almost invariably flat, and have a low wall built round the edge. This is what is meant by the verse in Deut. xxii. 8. "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence."



In such a dry climate as Palestine, where rain does not fall for many months, this kind of roof is useful and pleasant: in the evening it is a cool resort for the inmates of the house, where they can take exercise and eat their evening meal. In hot weather it is the coolest place to spread the mats on which the natives sleep, and there they pass the night and obtain what little air may be stirring.

An outside staircase leads from the housetop to the street, or into a court in the middle of the house, and thus we can understand our Lord's directions in St. Mark xiii. 15, that when the Roman army should be seen coming to besiege Jerusalem, the Christians were not to lose a moment in escaping. "Let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take anything out of his house."

The flat roof was often used as a place for prayer: Peter, for instance, at Joppa "went up upon the housetop to pray," and there saw the vision which taught him that the Gentiles were to be admitted into the Church (Acts x. 9).

In the Old Testament we read that star-worship went on upon the housetops. In Zeph. i. 4, 5, we read, "I will cut off them that worship the host of heaven upon the housetops."

Public proclamations were made from the roofs of houses.

Our Lord says, "What ye hear in the ear, that preach ye upon the housetops" (St. Matt. x. 27).

On any alarm of fire all the people would instantly rush up to the flat roof to see where the fire had broken out and if their own house was in any danger.

This throws light on a verse in Isaiah, where the prophet says to the people of Jerusalem, "What aileth thee now, that thou art wholly gone up to the housetops?" (Isaiah xxii. 1).

These house-roofs were made useful in many ways: various kinds of fruits, such as figs and grapes, also corn and flax, would be laid there in the sun to dry and mature. You will remember that Rahab brought the two spies to the roof of her house, "and hid them with the stalks of flax which she had laid in order upon the roof" (Joshua ii. 6).

A lady who knows Eastern countries well* says, "These roofs were usually in a great

state of litter, even though the mistress would sometimes take a palm-branch and make a clearance of dust and rubbish once in a while."

One thing never seemed cleared away, and that was the heap of old broken pitchers and pots that were thrown in one corner. This heap makes a favourite roosting-place for pigeons; and this lady saw a flock of them fly out suddenly from the broken crockery and dart up into the air in the bright glow of the

stand Isaiah's simile. Speaking of a people who were easily vanquished, he says they were "as the grass on the housetops, and as corn blasted before it be grown up" (Isaiah xxxvii. 27); and in Psalm cxxix. the writer prays that the enemies of Israel may be "as the grass upon the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up."

It is no uncommon sight to see a goat or two browsing on the sweet young stalks of grass which they find on the housetops.

Those villages which are mostly built of mud-dried bricks are wretched-looking places, and if deserted, owing to poverty or war, in the course of years they fall into utter ruin, and at last nothing is left to show where the village once existed. This is one reason why the sites of many places mentioned in the Bible cannot now be identified.

HORNS AND VEILS.

NEARLY twenty times in the Old Testament, and once in the New Testament, the word "horn" is mentioned in a figurative sense, and no doubt it is used as an emblem of power, for the principal defence and greatest strength of many animals is in their horns.

Moses compares Joseph to a young bullock, and says that "his horns are like the horns of unicorns" (Deut. xxxiii. 17), that is, Joseph's

setting sun, their outspread wings looking like yellow gold, and then as they wheeled round and were seen against the light they appeared as if turned into molten silver, most of them being pure white or dove-coloured. Now we can understand a beautiful verse in Psalm lxxviii. 13, in which Israel is compared to a dove which has thus flown from its roosting-place. "Though ye have lien among the pots, yet shall ye be as the wings of a dove covered with silver, and her feathers with yellow gold."

The Israelites were to keep the Feast of Tabernacles by forming booths of tree-branches on the tops of their houses, and there they were to live for seven days once in the year to remind them of the years in which they dwelt in tents when they were brought out of Egypt (Neh. viii. 16; Lev. xxiii. 40, 42); and to this day the Jews in London and elsewhere continue to obey this command, and form some kind of tent or booth, though of course it cannot be on the house-roof as in their native land.

The houses throughout the East are low, having generally a ground floor only, or one upper storey.

They are sometimes built of bricks made of mud, and only dried in the sun, not burnt in a kiln as ours are, and in other places they are constructed of stones cemented with mortar or clay.

The rooms are arranged round a paved court in the centre; this court is called in Arabic "the middle of the house," literally answering to the expression "in the midst."

It is customary to fix cords from the battlement-walls of the flat roofs across this open court and stretch canvas coverings to act as a shelter from the intense heat of the sun. In such a place as this, possibly, our Saviour was teaching crowds of people when the friends of the paralytic man, finding no other way to bring the sick man into our Lord's presence, carried him by the outside stairs up to the roof, drew aside the canvas covering, and then let him down into the court where Jesus was (St. Luke v. 19).

The roof flooring is made of flat beams covered with a strong coat of plaster, or more often a layer of earth a foot thick pressed flat with a roller.

After the rainy season the heat of the sun would cause any chance seeds of grass or corn to spring up rapidly and as quickly die away, scorched by the heat; and thus we under-



ENGLISH LADY IN THE DRESS OF A BETHLEHEM PEASANT.

* Miss Whately.

strength and power shall be very great; and in Psalm cxxxii. 17 the expression, "I will make the horn of David to bud," means, I will make his power and glory to flourish and increase.

To "exalt the horn," an expression often occurring in the poetic and prophetic parts of the Bible, means to advance in power, honour, and dominion; to defile it in the dust is a figure drawn from the condition of a dying ox or stag, whose horns are covered with earth and dust in falling to the ground, and the expression signifies defeat, disgrace, and death.

There is, however, another application of the word "horn"; it is an ornament still worn by the women in the East who live on or near Mount Lebanon. These Druse women long ago began to wear a small projecting piece of metal or a gilded buffalo's horn in order to keep their veils a little off their faces. By degrees the tantours, as they are called, have kept increasing in size until now they may often be seen more than twelve inches in length. These "horns" are hollow tubes somewhat like trumpets, made in various metals and sometimes adorned with precious stones; the broad end measures three inches across, the tube tapering to an inch and a half at the smaller end. As a rule only married women are allowed the privilege of wearing these remarkable ornaments. They are fastened on the head by silken cords, which end in tassels hanging down the back. Although the tantour rests on a pad, its weight often causes a painful wound; yet it

is hardly ever put off, it is even worn at night, and when needful a hole is made in the tent-covering, through which a lady can put her horn when space is limited.

We smile at the folly of these ladies in keeping up such an absurd fashion, but let us



EASTERN VEIL.

take care that we are not led into even worse evils; tight lacing, high-heeled shoes, and many other fashionable follies have brought years of ill-health and pain into many a bright young life, even though men of science and

physicians have done, and still do, their utmost to warn their patients of the evils wrought by such customs.

It is thought by some writers that the expression in Psalm lxxv. 5, "Lift not up your horn on high: speak not with a stiff neck," refers to this custom of wearing a silver horn on the forehead. We can well understand that bearing such a weight on the brow would lead the wearer to hold the head in a stiff unnatural position and give a very undesirable effect of pride and haughtiness, even though it might arise from no worse motive than the endeavour to keep the horn from falling off.

Eastern veils are of many kinds, and vary in material and form according to climate and custom. Some are made of printed muslin so thin as scarcely to conceal the features, others are so thick as to require an open space of network to allow for respiration. One of our pictures shows a closely-veiled Turkish lady, and, when out of doors, the Palestine women also carefully cover their faces, only allowing their eyes to be seen.

The large veil worn by the women of Bethlehem throws light upon those verses in the book of Ruth where Boaz measures six measures of barley into Ruth's veil; a large, strong cloth of this kind would easily hold the corn.

The cloth is worn gracefully thrown over the head and folded round the shoulders, making a very picturesque costume.

(To be continued.)

LADY DYE'S REPARATION.

By SARAH DOUDNEY.

CHAPTER XIII.



THE dress which Angelique meant to wear in the evening required more than an hour's work. It was not finished when the bell rang for luncheon.

When the meal was over she went up again to the solitude of her little room to sew in peace. Each girl at the College had a room of her own, small, and neat as the cell of a bee. Angelique's narrow window overlooked a bit of rough grey wall

which divided the house from the out-buildings, and often, when she raised her eyes from her work, she let her gaze rest upon the crumbling masonry. The builders had departed long ago, but the stones they had built up still clung firmly together; and ivy and fern and slender grasses decked them with the wild beauty of untrained things.

Angelique knew that her room belonged to the oldest part of the house, which had once been a monastery. Here, where a modern maiden plied her needle, and dreamed her dreams, a

monk had waged the spiritual combat, and won, perchance, the interior peace. The girl, smiling to herself as she twisted some ribbon into a graceful knot, did not guess that for her, too, a spiritual combat was close at hand. She was thinking about the turquoise necklet which would so soon be hers; how well it would look with the soft frills on her bodice! How charmingly it would rest on the dainty neck, which had the creamy whiteness of a fresh orange-flower! Lady Dye's complexion was dazzling, as everyone admitted, of course; but—

Angelique put down the ribbon and let her glance wander towards a small looking-glass. A soft colour touched the delicate oval face; the deep-blue eyes shone like stars. After all, life was sweet, and the world is full of infinite possibilities when one is young. Wonderful things happen sometimes; those whom we think we have lost for ever are given back; the hope that seemed dead has a sudden resurrection. She recollected herself with a start. Time was creeping on; five o'clock would come upon the idle dreamer un-awares. In a minute or two the knot of ribbon was fastened on the right spot; there was a stitch set here and there; a gentle shaking out of chiffon frills, and then the task was done.

Angelique laid the dress carefully upon her little bed, stood erect for a moment, and pushed back the soft dark rings from her forehead. She was rather

tired of sewing; the fresh air would revive her. Her wreath was safe in the cool moss under the thorn tree, and Mrs. Grain would be returning now to the cottage. She wanted to know if the old woman had sold her sprays of lilies.

Someone, who watched stealthily, saw the slight figure passing along the garden-paths. If Dye had felt inclined to repent, she could have done it at this moment; but she would not. The lily-wreath lay in a basket in her own room, ready to be brought out when the hour came for bestowing the prize. And that hour was not far distant. The turret clock had struck four. Her heart throbbed with excitement and fear; it was an audacious thing that she was going to do, and she might have presumed too much on Angelique's meekness. Well, if the worm were to turn it would have to be crushed. Dye had not the slightest intention of giving up the necklet.

Angelique, tripping lightly across the stepping-stones, began again to sing her little song. It was a delicious, dreamy afternoon of early summer, when the air had all the stillness of autumn, and all the freshness of spring. Young leaves, newly unfurled, drank in the sunshine; the lights were so varied, and the shadows so delicate, that no painter's pencil could ever reproduce their exquisite beauty. As the girl descended the turf steps in the side of the dell, she seemed to plunge into a maze of sweet green things; the place was full

MY MUSEUM OF EASTERN CURIOS.

By MRS. BRIGHTWEN, Author of "Rambles with Nature Students," etc.

PART X.
TARES AND WHEAT.

"His enemy came and sowed tares among the wheat" (St. Matt. xiii. 25).

I HAVE had our English tare and the so-called tare of Scripture drawn side by side that it may be seen at a glance how entirely dissimilar they are. The vetch or tare, which is so extensively grown by farmers as a fodder-plant, affords valuable and nutritious food for domestic animals.

Being a flowering plant and not a grass, it can never be mistaken for wheat at any stage of its growth. We shall therefore entirely miss the teaching of our Lord's parable unless we know something about the appearance of the particular tares to which the parable alludes.

In some parts of England a noxious grass called Bearded Darnel is occasionally found. Happily it is not very common in this country, but in the East it grows abundantly and is widely distributed. It is a kind of rye-grass (*Lolium Temulentum*), having a broad-bladed leaf closely resembling the wheat amongst which it is sometimes found, and from which it cannot be distinguished in an early stage of growth.

I can speak from actual knowledge, as I have this Bearded Darnel and wheat growing side by side in my garden, and before the flower stems appear, the good and evil plants look so exactly alike, that only the label enables me to discriminate between them.

All accounts appear to agree as to the deleterious nature of this our only poisonous grass.

Eating the seeds produces severe sickness followed by convulsions and even by death. Animals also suffer from the poison and experience much distress from the irritation caused by the sharply-spiked seeds.

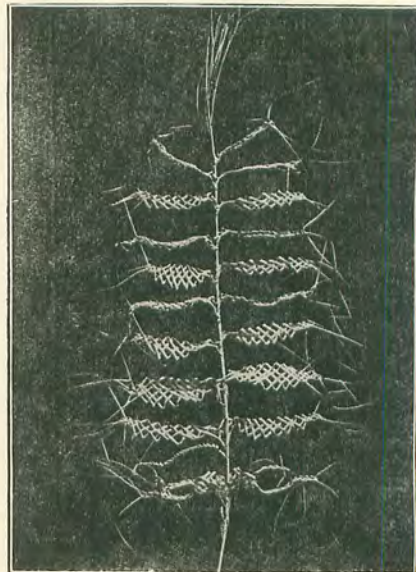
We can now understand how the tares represent those who, in making a false profession of religion, mingle with God's people and deceive many who can only judge by outward appearance.

Although, however, the "wheat and the tares are allowed to grow together" for a time, the solemn sentence will one day go forth: "Gather ye together first the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them: but gather the wheat into my barn" (St. Matt. xiii. 30).

THE DATE-PALM
(*Phœnix Dactylifera*).

ALTHOUGH the stately date-palm is still to be seen in many places in the Holy Land, it is now more the tree of Egypt and Africa than of Palestine. It forms delightful groves upon the banks of the Nile, and travellers speak of the curious appearance of these palm forests at the time of the inundation, when water surrounds the trees, and small boats can be rowed beneath the spreading branches.

The tree reaches a height of eighty or ninety feet, and continues to bear its fruit for several



PLAITED PALM BRANCH.

hundred years. This palm is dioecious, and both male and female trees send out masses of lovely blossom in early spring. Out of its crown of leaves, the male tree bears a pale green sheath about a foot and a half long, this gradually opens and a shower of white sweetly-scented blossoms hang down from slender footstalks.

The sprays of yellowish brown flowers upon the other tree, when fertilised by pollen from the scented blossoms, soon begin to wither, and as they fall off the young dates are seen, first a pale green, then ripening to golden yellow, red, or purplish black according to the variety.

Each cluster of fruit is as heavy as a man can lift, and a single tree will bear as many as eight or ten of these bunches. A date-palm begins to bear fruit when about ten years old, and as it is such a long-lived tree it would be possible for a single tree to have borne several tons of dates in its lifetime.

A fan-palm in my conservatory blossomed this year, and I shall not soon forget the imposing effect of its grand masses of ivory-tinted flowers. The Arab is said to have three hundred and sixty names, and as many uses, for this valuable tree. The huts of the poorer classes are constructed of its leaves, the fibre surrounding the bases of their stalks is used for making ropes and coarse cloth, the stalks themselves for making crates, baskets, brooms, walking-sticks, and other articles, the wood of the stem being used for building purposes.

The young green leaves (forming the heart of the tree) are cooked as a vegetable, and the sap forms an intoxicating beverage; this is obtained by making an incision in the stem of the tree when, for about a fortnight, the sap oozes out at the rate of three or four quarts daily, then the tree gradually dries up, and perishes.

African mothers find the great woody spathe which contains the palm-blossom a most convenient bath for their children. It resembles an oval cup about two yards long; it is therefore capable of holding sufficient water for the purpose.

The gathering of the fruit is performed by a man with a loop of strong cord fastened round his own waist and the stem of the palm, by



means of which, and by stepping on the projections of the old leaf-stalks, he is enabled to climb to the top of the tree, and cut off the huge branches whole.

The poor inhabitants of Egypt, Arabia, and Persia subsist largely upon dates,* either the new fruit (for two months of the year) or date paste—the last year's growth pressed into baskets and dried in the sun—during the other ten months. As this is often the only food to be had in the desert, we can understand that when Nebuchadnezzar fought against Egypt, the conquest was mainly ensured by the destruction of the numerous date-forests with which the country abounded (Jer. xlvi. 13, 22, 23).

The date-harvest is as eagerly expected by the Arabs as the wheat crop is by those who live in western lands. They reverence a tree which is of such value in their everyday life, and quote a saying of their prophet Mohammed: "Honour your maternal aunt the date-palm; for she was created in Paradise of the same earth from which Adam was made."

Truly the Arab may well be grateful to a tree which "thrives in the sandy waste, draws sustenance from brackish water, fatal to almost every other plant, preserves its freshness when all around it decays and withers under the burning rays of the sun, and resists the tempests which bow its flexible crest but cannot tear up its solidly-planted roots."

Dr. Bonar says, "These palm-roots are unlike any others, and are peculiarly fitted to absorb every drop of moisture that the sand contains; they consist of long fleshy strings or ropes, shooting straight down into the soil in numbers quite beyond our reckoning, and extending over a large circle."

Date-sugar is made by simply boiling the sap until it granulates and becomes solid; that which I have in my museum exactly resembles ordinary moist sugar both in colour and taste. Even date-stones, dry and hard as they appear, can be made use of, since when ground they afford nutritious food for camels.

The leaves of this palm are furnished with very sharp points which can inflict a painful prick, but when quite young they are of a pale yellow green; in this state they are used in the Coptic festival of Palm Sunday.

"At Bordighera † thousands of palms are grown to supply the demand for their leaves at Easter. The outer fronds are tied up with hazel twigs so as to bleach the inner ones. These cream or straw-coloured leaves are plaited or woven into the most complicated and wonderful patterns."

Miss Whately describes the way in which the palm foliage varies with the colouring of the atmosphere. "Now a deep purple seems the hue of those boughs that scarcely move in the calm evening air, now again they are of a golden green, a little later of a bluish tint, and then rose or crimson, as the setting sun casts its glow over the distant grove, a beauti-



GATHERING DATES.

ful emblem of the true Christian character which glories in deriving its beauty from above and reflecting in some faint degree that Light which came into the world."

From the custom of bringing home this sacred branch in the Middle Ages, the pilgrim to Palestine acquired the name of "Palmer," and in remembrance of our Lord's triumphal entry into Jerusalem the leaves are still borne in Greek and Romish processions on Palm Sunday.

The branches strewn before our Lord as He entered Jerusalem remind us that this tree has ever been a sign of victory and rejoicing, and

in olden days the Jews sent a golden branch of palm-tree to the kings of Syria as a kind of tribute or present.

Since the palm-tree is used in Scripture as a figure of the righteous (Psa. xcii. 12), it is interesting to notice that the vital organs of the tree are situated in the leafy plume that crowns their summits.

If the head of the tree is cut off it dies. This remarkable feature sets forth very forcibly the believer's dependence for life upon union with Christ, his Divine Head (1 Cor. xi. 3, Col. ii. 19).

(To be continued.)

* I believe the only reference to dates in Scripture is in the margin of 2 Chron. xxxi. 5.

† *Riviera Nature Notes.*



MY MUSEUM OF EASTERN CURIOS.

By Mrs. BRIGHTWEN, Author of "Rambles With Nature Students," etc.

PART XI.

THE POMEGRANATE
(*Punica Granatum*).

FOR more than twenty years past a pomegranate has flourished in my garden. It has required only the slight protection of a few pine-branches to shelter it successfully from



POMEGRANATE FLOWER.

winter frosts. It was planted as a small shrub in an angle of the south wall of the house, and now that it has attained the height of eighteen feet, it clothes one side of the dining-room window with a mass of vivid greenery. Our cold climate will not admit of its maturing fruit, but each year the tree produces a few of its exquisite scarlet buds and flowers which appear in August and frequently remain upon the pink-tinged twigs until after the leaves have turned to a golden yellow, and have even begun to form a richly-coloured carpet beneath the tree.

The pomegranate is a native of Persia and is cultivated throughout the tropics. The tree appears to have been brought from Carthage by the Romans; its Latin name refers to the bright pink grains or seeds of which the fruit consists.

Very early in Scripture history we read of the golden bells and pomegranates which adorned the high priest's robe (Ex. xxviii. 33).



POMEGRANATE FRUIT.

When the spies explored the land of Canaan they brought pomegranates as well as grapes from the fertile valleys of Eshcol (Num. xiii. 23).

We may perceive that instead of its being only a shrub as with us, in Palestine the pomegranate becomes a well-grown tree, since we read that King Saul when in Gibeah "tarrised under a pomegranate tree" (1 Sam. xiv. 2).

The juice of the fruit is much esteemed in the East as a cooling beverage, and is alluded to by King Solomon (Cant. viii. 2).

The rind of the fruit is used in the preparation of Morocco leather, and being powerfully astringent it is put to various medicinal uses in Eastern countries.

A pomegranate fruit, if slowly and thoroughly dried before the fire, will retain its shape and colour, and can then be placed amongst our Palestine specimens.

A PALESTINE SLING.

The sling appears to have been one of the most ancient weapons used in warfare.



EASTERN SLING.

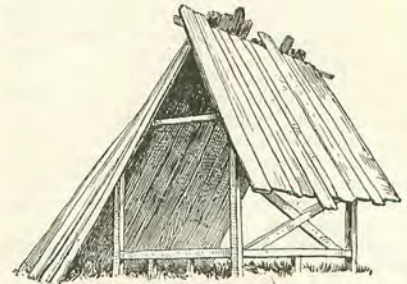
As far back as 1400 B.C. we read in the book of Judges of "seven hundred chosen men left-handed; every one could sling stones at an hair-breadth and not miss" (Judges xx. 16).

Pliny ascribes the invention of slings to the Phœnicians.

The mounted slingers in the Grecian armies appear to have used formidable pellets of lead weighing as much as three or four ounces instead of stones, and their slings had three instead of two cords.

The slingers usually preceded the army, and began the battle by their showers of stones or lead pellets.

In a country like Palestine, where stones exist in abundance and deep valleys and gorges must often have separated opposing armies, this kind of weapon would have been of essential service.



PALESTINE WATCHER'S LODGE.

The toy slings used by lads in our own country consist of a piece of leather to which two long pieces of string are attached, but my Palestine sling, although similar in size and shape, is formed of strong woollen cords woven together, with plaited strings of the same material, probably camel's hair from its grey colour and extreme toughness.

Dr. Thomson speaks of these slings being used at the present day by young boys living on Mount Hermon. "The lads collect on opposite sides of a gorge and fight desperate battles with their slings."

"They chase one another from cliff to cliff, as in real warfare, until one of the parties gives way and retreats up the mountain."

"I have seen the air almost darkened by their ringing, whizzing pebbles, and so many accidents occur that the authorities have often to interfere to abolish this rude sport."

Eastern shepherds would naturally have constant practice with the sling in defending their flocks from the attacks of wild animals. Hence would arise David's dexterity and success in slaying Goliath, yet we must not fail to observe how from first to last David rightly ascribes his victory over the giant to God's power exerted on His servant's behalf (1 Sam. xvii. 37, 45, 46, 47).

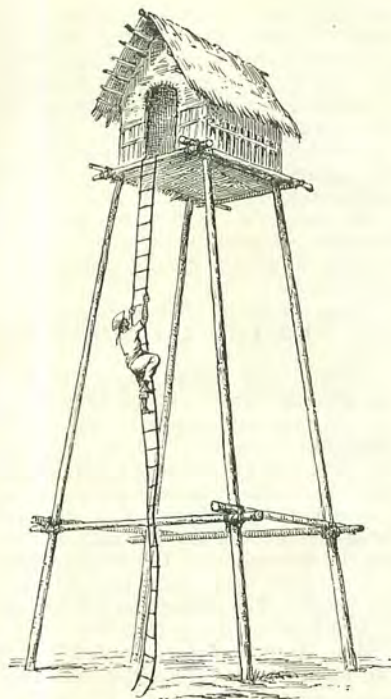
A LODGE IN A GARDEN OF CUCUMBERS.

SOME knowledge of Eastern life and climate is needed to enable us to understand the reference in the first chapter of the prophet Isaiah to "a lodge in a garden of cucumbers."

We, with our cooler climate, are forced to rear this plant in greenhouses or frames, but in the East the cucumber either grows wild or is cultivated in fields.



BOOTH IN AN INDIAN CORNFIELD.



COREAN BOOTH.

Being a crop attractive to jackals and other animals, these fields are guarded by a watchman who lives in a rude sort of booth or hut from which he can sling stones at the marauders.

These booths are variously constructed. In Palestine they usually consist of four upright poles connected by cross-pieces upon which boards are laid so as to form a sloping roof.

The same plan is followed in Corea, where the booth is raised to such an elevation that the watcher has to reach his shelter by means of a rope ladder. These Corean huts are for the protection of fields of the pumpkin, a food-plant in great request with both rich and poor in Eastern countries.

The cornfields in India are the resort of endless species of birds as well as animals, and shelters of the kind shown in the drawing are essentially necessary to protect the watchman from the heat of the tropical sun whilst he shouts at and stones away the flocks of hungry birds.

All these are but temporary structures easily removed when the crops are gathered in, leaving only a few bare poles to show where they have been.

This is the lesson to be learned from the simile used by the prophet Isaiah (Isa. i. 8).

He sees in vision the once favoured people of Judah and Jerusalem ruined and desolate, carried away captive and reaping the punishment due to their idolatry and ingratitude. To an Eastern the comparison would be very forcible, since he would have been from his youth accustomed to see the remains of the field shelters, the few ragged poles and broken branches which marked the former site of the keepers' booths, and the words of the prophecy would thus be brought vividly before him, teaching the spiritual lesson the prophet intended to convey.

THE ALABASTER BOX OF OINTMENT.

THE precious ointment of spikenard which was so much prized in the East was usually stored in a cylindrical alabaster vase with a narrow neck and lip at one end.

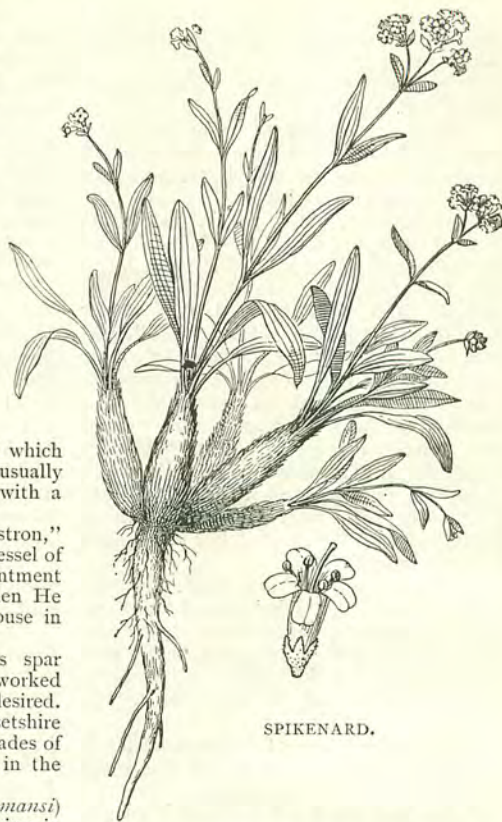
Such a vase was called an "alabastron," and there is little doubt but that a vessel of this kind contained the precious ointment used by Mary to anoint our Lord when He was sitting at the feast in Simon's house in Bethany (John xii. 3, 5).

Alabaster is a kind of calcareous spar closely resembling marble; it is easily worked and carved into any form that may be desired.

A cliff near Minehead in Somersetshire contains pink alabaster of delicate shades of colour; that, however, which is found in the East is usually pure white.

The spikenard (*Nardostachys jatamansi*) is a singular-looking plant found growing in mountainous parts of India. It has a tap-root and its stems are so covered with shaggy black hair as to resemble the tails of ermines; hence its Sanscrit name of "jatamansi," meaning locks of hair.

The ointment made from this herb was not only highly fragrant but also curative; it is said to have saved the life of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius.



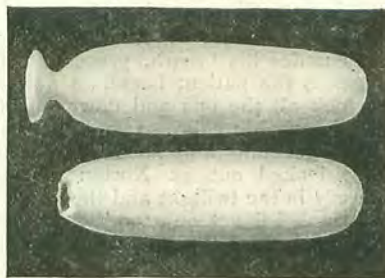
SPIKENARD.

We may suppose the ointment to have been poured into the alabaster vase and sealed up whilst it was warm and liquid; there it would congeal, and when required for use the end or lip of the vase had to be knocked off in order to permit the thick ointment to be poured out. This is what is meant in Scripture by the expression, "She brake the box."

We can form some idea of the value of this Indian perfume, as we read that its price was "three hundred pence," which, translated into our money, would amount to about nine pounds.

We must not fail to notice the spiritual lesson presented to us by Mary's offering. She did not withhold her most precious possession; it was offered to and accepted by Him Who can read the heart, and He saw that reverent love had prompted the gift. His commendation should be our encouragement to follow Mary's example, giving always of our best to Him Who counts nothing "wasted" that is the outcome of our heart's devotion to His service.

(To be concluded.)



ALABASTER BOXES.

LADY DYE'S REPARATION.

By SARAH DOUDNEY.

CHAPTER XVIII.

So there would be a woman at Pine Gate after all! That was Norton's first thought, but the second was not like unto it. This small creature, peeping out of her furs, had scarcely attained the dignity of womanhood. In height she was perhaps a trifle above five feet, and as lissom as a willow wand. Her face, quite distinguishable through a

thin veil, was almost the face of a child; the big eyes had an innocent, confiding look, and they were the tender blue of the dog-violet. Some light silky curls were visible under the velvet brim of her hat.

"I think you must be Mr. Norton," she said quietly. "Mrs. Millard expected you to arrive by this train."

"She must be Aunt Jane's railway-accident friend," thought he. "But I can't recall her name."

"I am Miss Ayre," said the girl, apparently reading his mind.

They gave up their tickets, and went out of the station to find an extraordinary conveyance awaiting them in the road. Cleeve, still sulky, came forward to explain its appearance.

"Our carriage, sir, is under repairs," he said, with dignity. "And this here concern is the only thing we could get with a cover on."

MY MUSEUM OF EASTERN CURIOS.

By Mrs. BRIGHTWEN, Author of "Rambles with Nature Students," etc.



FLOWER OF FAN-LEAVED PALM.

PART XII.

THE FAN-LEAVED PALM.

It is not often possible to obtain a glimpse of a palm-tree in full flower unless we have access to large conservatories or happen to visit the palm-house at Kew at the right season. The photograph I have had taken of one of my young fan-leaved palms (*Corypha Australis*) gives but a faint idea of the grandeur and beauty of its blossoms. The tree is a native of New Holland, and there, I believe, it attains a height of fifty feet, but happily my specimen is obliging enough to send out its buds from the centre stem at about nine feet from the ground so that the flowers are well within sight.

In the month of March these giant buds were thirteen inches long and eleven inches in circumference; they consisted of pale yellow sheathing leaf-bracts enclosing the future flowers, which gradually increased in size and expanded into beautiful golden-yellow masses of blossom, about two feet in length, adorning three sides of the fibrous palm trunk. The flowers of which the spike is composed are extremely minute; each contains a calyx, a three-petaled corolla and six stamens. It would be indeed difficult to count the number of flowers in each of the great racemes, but as I read that the date-palm is said to bear twelve thousand separate florets in one spray, and other species as many as two hundred thousand, I can well believe that this fan-leaved palm may have nearly as many in its massive blossoms. One or two examples will enable us to realise the magnificent size attained by some of the palm family.

In marshy regions in Ceylon the Talipot palm (which is also a species of *Corypha*) grows to a hundred feet in height, "one of its huge leaves being sufficiently broad to afford welcome shelter to as many as ten or twelve persons seated beneath it. The sago palm has a leaf so large that if one could be placed against the front of an ordinary house, its top would reach to the

second storey, and a man could easily climb up by means of its pinnate leaflets as by the rungs of a ladder."*

These leaves are sometimes alluded to in Scripture as branches (Lev. xxiii. 40), but strictly speaking a palm has usually no branches, since the leaves spring directly out of the central stem.

The grace and elegance of the palm-tree has led to the name Tamar (a palm) being given to Hebrew maidens. Absalom's sister and daughter and others in Scripture were so named. Indeed, the palm was so truly a symbol of Palestine that the well-known coin which commemorated the fall of Jerusalem represented the captive nation under the figure of a desolate woman sitting beneath a palm-tree.

It is a matter for regret that this noble tree is now so seldom to be seen in Palestine. There are no palms on Mount Olivet nor at Bethany, and the one specimen, which until lately existed at Jericho—once the city of palm-trees—has now perished.

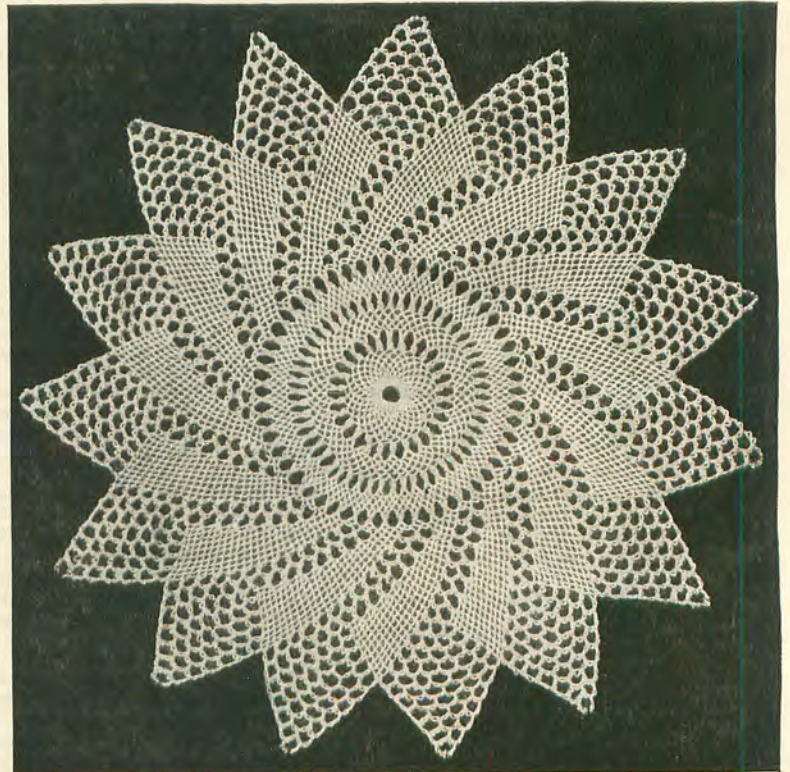
EASTERN NEEDLEWORK.†

VERY early in Biblical times we read of the employment of women in spinning, weaving, and embroidery. "Vestures of fine linen" in which Joseph was arrayed, and other passages speaking of the fine linen of Egypt, suggest ability in the use of the needle, even before the mention of women's work in connection with the tabernacle hangings.

"Appliqué seems to have been practised in Joseph's time, as the allusion to his coat of many colours is literally of many pieces. This kind of embroidery is

* *The Natural History of Plants*, by Anton Kerner von Marilann.

† For much of the information in this paper I am indebted to the kindness of Mrs. Finn, M.R.A.S., who for many years resided in the Holy Land. For further information on this subject reference can be made to her valuable article on "Mosaic and Embroidery in the Old Testament," published in the quarterly number of the *Palestine Exploration Fund* for July, 1890.



JAFFA NEEDLEWORK.

done in all parts of the East to ornament festival clothes in bold designs and lovely colours."

Men and women were alike employed in the ornamental work of the Tabernacle, for we read of Bezaleel and Aholiab, "Them hath He filled with wisdom of heart to work all manner of work of the engraver, and of the cunning workman and of the embroiderer," a distinction being drawn between the artificer and the designer (Ex. xxxv. 35).

The women are spoken of as being wise-hearted and willing, and bringing that which they had spun with their hands, of blue, purple, scarlet and fine linen.

The scarf shown in the photograph is a specimen, in my possession, of the exquisite work done in Asia Minor at the present day. It answers exactly to that alluded to by the prophetess Deborah, in her song of triumph, "A prey of divers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needlework on both sides" (Judges v. 30). This Eastern scarf is so delicately worked, in pale blue silk, that both sides are absolutely alike; no joining or fastening off of threads can be traced on either side.

"The very best embroidery of this kind is now worked by refugees who took shelter in Asia Minor after the Russo-Turkish war. These women weave the linen and cotton foundation material in hand-looms. The stuff is made about twenty inches in width, generally of a delicate cream colour, warp and woof being so exactly accurate that a pattern worked on it by counting the threads comes out mathematically correct. The silks used are of exquisite shades of colour, and as fine as a human hair.

"Just as we read in Exodus (xxxix. 3) that gold was beaten out and cut into wires for the purpose of embroidering the High Priest's garments, so now at the present time gold and silver thread is beaten out of pure metal and is made as fine as the silk, and worked in with it with lovely effect. Many of the patterns are very ancient and are hereditary in certain families. The pomegranate is one of the oldest designs, one so often used in the ornamentation of the Tabernacle and Temple.

"The tassels shown in the scarf drawing are turned and twisted out of the threads of the material, so that they never come off. There is also an exquisite little lace edge sometimes worked with the needle on the material as a finish instead of tassels."

Broidered work is several times mentioned in Ezekiel and other books of the Bible, in terms which show how much it was esteemed in ancient days.

The circular doyley is also made by the needle. The one figured came from Jaffa, but I possess others of very intricate and beautiful designs, the handiwork of poor women living on Mount Lebanon.

THE EASTERN POTTER.

THERE is, I think, something remarkably fascinating about the work of a potter. The vessel that is being made seems to be an absolute creation, taking its shape entirely at the will of its maker. The plastic clay grows before our eyes into "a thing of beauty," only



EASTERN SCARF.

needing the artist's skill and then the furnace to become a priceless ornament which may adorn a royal palace.

I shall not soon forget my visits to the Sèvres and Worcester potteries, where the manufacture of the finest works of art can be watched from the beginning to the end; but, after all, I think almost as much pleasure may be derived from visiting a humble village pottery, which is more easily accessible to everyone.

There is a very picturesque tiler in my own neighbourhood to which I delight to introduce my friends, in order that they may see the potter at his wheel. The old red-brick buildings with their moss-grown roofs and patriarchal elms, the heaps of broken pottery and rows of newly-baked tiles, make up a foreground full of glowing colour, contrasting

well with the blue distances which can be seen here and there between the tree-stems.

Here we can watch the exact counterpart of what the Prophet Jeremiah saw when he "went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels" (Jer. xviii. 3). The potter sits before a trough in which a circular piece of wood is kept whirling round horizontally, by means of a treadle worked by his foot.

The potter begins by picking up a soft lump of clay; he flings it on the revolving wheel, and dipping his hands in water from time to time, he smooths the mass into a rounded form. He then inserts his right hand into the centre of the clay, and forms a hole which steadily enlarges, and the sides, as they rise up, are kept in shape by a piece of wood held in the left hand. The pressure is continued inside the vessel, and the wooden tool smooths the outside until, in a few minutes, a flower-pot is formed with what seems magical rapidity. The rim is made by a momentary touch and a revolution of the wheel; a pattern is traced upon the pot by applying a small tool, then a piece of wire is used to detach the bottom of the pot from the wheel, and it is lifted on to a board where others like it are standing ready to be carried to the drying-shed and then eventually to the furnace to be baked. Another lump of clay is thrown upon the wheel, and so the potter goes on all day, making on an average, about fifty pots in an hour.

One day I was fortunate enough to witness an incident similar to that mentioned by the prophet (Jer. xviii. 4). A stone happening to be in the clay, which interfered with the shape of the vessel then being formed, the potter rolled up the half-made pot, threw it aside, and began upon a fresh lump of material. Nothing could have more vividly illustrated the power of the potter over the clay. One felt the force of St. Paul's simile in his Epistle



EASTERN POTTER.

to the Romans (ix. 20, 21), as well as the message of the Prophet Jeremiah, "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in Mine hand, O house of Israel" (Jer. xviii. 6).

The services of the Eastern potter are always in requisition for the Goulah jars used by the women for carrying water from the well. These are made of fragile burnt or sun-dried clay, and have therefore to be constantly replaced. The potter may be seen to-day in Palestine, sitting just as he sat in ancient times, at his wheel, fashioning the domestic vessels, whose shape is probably as unchanged as his own occupation.

In English potteries the clay is usually prepared in a circular pit, the mixing and kneading being partly carried out by horse-power; but in the East the potter treads his

clay, as we learn from a verse in Isaiah: "He shall come upon princes as upon mortar, and as the potter treadeth clay" (Isa. xli. 25). Even when the potter's vessel is broken and apparently useless, the fragments are collected and gathered into a heap ready to be crushed into powder. From this powder, when mixed with lime, a valuable kind of cement is made, which is much used for repairing cisterns, wells, and aqueducts, because it possesses the excellent property of hardening with age, until it becomes as hard as the rock to which it adheres.

In *Palestine Explored*, the Rev. J. Neil describes the manufacture of this cement, called in Arabic *Ihomrah*, and says that every autumn the fellahen may be found busily occupied in the Valley of Hinnom. They sit with a heap of this party-coloured broken pottery before them, pounding the fragments

with a stone-crusher, which they roll backwards and forwards over the pots herds until the whole is bruised finely enough for the required purpose. The writer expresses his belief that this is the process referred to in Isaiah xxx. 14 (Rev. Ver.): "And he shall break it as a potter's vessel is broken, breaking it in pieces without sparing; so that there shall not be found among the pieces thereof a sherd to take fire from the hearth or to take water withal out of the cistern."

The work of the potter suggests to a spiritual mind many precious lessons upon which I will not now enlarge; but I would suggest that whenever they have the opportunity, my young readers should visit a pottery and see for themselves what I have endeavoured to describe. May it be the desire of each one of us to become "a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use" (2 Tim. ii. 21).

THE MEDICAL SIDE OF ELECTRICITY.

By "THE NEW DOCTOR."



profession of all others in which the quack can reap handsome profits is the profession of medicine. For the medical quack is in an unusually fortunate position, which he has obtained partly by his own industry and partly by the help of the general public, the law, and even the medical profession itself. And of all the means which have been practised by medical quacks to fleece those who are foolish or ignorant enough to become their victims, none has proved such a mine of wealth as the "cure" of disease by electricity.

If we had been writing against quackery as a whole, we should scarcely have mentioned electricity at all, but should have confined our attention to the many dangerous poisons which are sold indiscriminately to the public under the name of patent medicines. For the person who lives by selling sham electrical apparatus to the believing public is only a criminal in so far as he fleeces his victims out of their cash; unlike the vendors of so many

patent medicines, he does not affect the health of the individuals on whom he practises. For most of the electrical appliances which are offered to the public are harmless and useless.

We say that these appliances are useless, and we base our assertion on two facts that cannot be gainsaid: first, they do not produce sufficient electricity to have the slightest effect upon the body, and secondly, because if they did produce electricity, the electricity produced would be no good.

"Electricity is life." How often do we see this above advertisements for patent belts, rings, corsets, boots, etc.! "Electricity is life." No statement could be more utterly false than this. Electricity is not life, nor are the processes of life at all like the phenomena of electricity, nor is the fundamental principle of life in any way to be compared with electricity.

Yet we must remember that this utterly false assertion did not originate from the quacks themselves, for they obtained it from a long forgotten chapter in the history of physiology, when that science was in its early infancy. For certain of the old physiologists believed that the phenomena of the central nervous system and the processes of the mind were the outcome of electrical force. We now know that this is untrue, although we can follow their reasoning much closer than they could themselves, because we possess a much greater knowledge of all departments of science. And the mistake which was made by those who believed that life was electricity, was the same mistake that has been made in every science at every age—the mistaking the effect for the cause.

The contraction of a muscle is a most elaborate phenomenon. It is associated with one of the most complex chemical reactions with which we are familiar, and by the discharge of physical energy in the forms of work, heat, sound and electricity. But the electricity which a muscle produces during its contraction is no more the cause of that contraction than is the sound or the heat which is produced at the same time—it is one of the by-products which result from the discharge of vital energy.

It is the same with all the processes of the mind and of the brain; they are all accompanied by elaborate chemical and physical conditions, but it is neither chemical nor physical force which produces them, but a force which we term vital energy, the nature of which is unknown.

That life is not electricity and that nervous impulses are not electrical impulses have been proved to the complete satisfaction of everybody by physiological experiment. We have told you that the quack electrical appliances are useless, for two reasons, that they do not generate sufficient electricity to penetrate the skin, and, even if they did, they would still be of no good. We will now detail to you the reasons on which we have based these two dogmatic statements.

The human skin offers a great resistance to the passage of electrical currents. The amount of resistance varies very greatly both in health and disease, but it is always considerable. To give you a practical example of the resistance of the skin to electricity we have just been trying a few simple experiments. An electrical battery which gives sufficient current to light a two candle-power incandescent lamp will not penetrate the skin. That is, a battery giving a current of eight volts will give sufficient electricity to light a small lamp, whereas the two terminals may be grasped by the hands without the least effect being produced.

The amount of electricity which is given off by alternating discs of copper and zinc is very small, many thousands of pairs of discs being required to produce any appreciable current at all. Most of the electrical appliances sold to the public consist of a few strips or discs of copper and zinc, and so although it cannot be said that they give no electrical current, it may be stated as an absolute fact that it requires the most sensitive instruments to demonstrate that there is any current, and that the current is many thousands of times too weak to have the slightest effect upon the human body.

The action of electricity upon the body is a peculiar and an ill-defined one, and as a life-giver or energiser or suchlike it is as useless as is anything else.

But although the introduction of electricity into medicine bred a whole host of quacks, it has nevertheless given us many valuable appliances to help us in the legitimate cure or relief of disease. The electrical currents, both constant and faradic, are the most valuable measures that we possess for the treatment of diseases of the nervous system. Many and many a case of hysterical disease has been cured by electrical treatment, and many of the far graver organic diseases of the nervous system are rendered far better by its application.

Then electricity has given us the electro-cautery, and the still more valuable means of