Five minutes walk brought me to the Police Headquarters, and we started the passport rigmarole again. The NCO on duty was walking round the garden in mufti, but as soon as we got inside he turned a few pages back in the passport, and silently pointed to the necessary stamp. He added the one for reporting to the police, and said what he thought of his Samaritan colleagues. He showed me on his desk map the way to the British consulate - I wanted to change my departure time by two days. There seemed to be nobody at home, but while I was waiting some of the Ambassadorial staff came past in a car, and they found the janitor. He didn't know Mr. Dawson's phone number, but said that one of the junior staff was going to meet him that evening, and would take a note. I asked where to find the messenger, and the caretaker thought that he was staying in Orient House ! He was indeed, and we had tea together in the lounge while I scribbled a letter, phrased in such terms that no one who had not received previous correspondence in the matter would guess that I was planning to cross the forbidden border. I just had time to visit the Post Office and send a card home; then it was five o'clock, and time to go for the Amman taxi. It was strange to find all the shops and offices open on the Sunday, but Friday is the Moslem holiday; it was stranger to see the familiar blue boxes with "Air Mail" on them, but strangest of all to be charged only 4½d. for postage.

It was clouding over again, but the sun was warm enough even although it was now hidden; the whole day would be described as 'overcast', but there were patches of sun which made the white buildings glow and dazzle sufficiently to warrant sun-glasses. The taxi was ready to go, and we ran round the tank-traps and up to Bethany, from which we saw the Dead Sea; quickly we dropped down the corridor to emptiness, with the smooth, convex, lumps rising on either side as we fell. The road, after diving steadily downward, began to rise, and we stopped on the crest of the ridge at the Inn of the Good Samaritan. It was only a routine police check, and by now I had grown to expect and accept these prying faces at the window every twenty miles or so. We plunged on and down. The air was hot and still; it may have been a psychological trick, but the heat seemed to become more oppressive, and the country rougher, as we passed the "Sea Level" notice. The hills have a last fling, and then suddenly we were out on a plain as flat as a pancake , sloping very gently towards the middle, and covered with that ghastly shroud of salt. We turned to the north, and dashed along beside the solid wall of the Judaean mountains, with the long horizontal outline of the purple hills of Moab facing them fourteen miles away. We cruised along the intervening gash at a steady 85, and after we had kept this up for many miles I realised how deceptive the distances are. Flocks grazed. There are many camels. The crops beside the arid channels sprang up to a couple of feet; a stream coming from the hills to the left was only a trickle, but the Valley of Achor contained enough to make Jericho a luxuriant garden. Again, see next Friday for a fuller

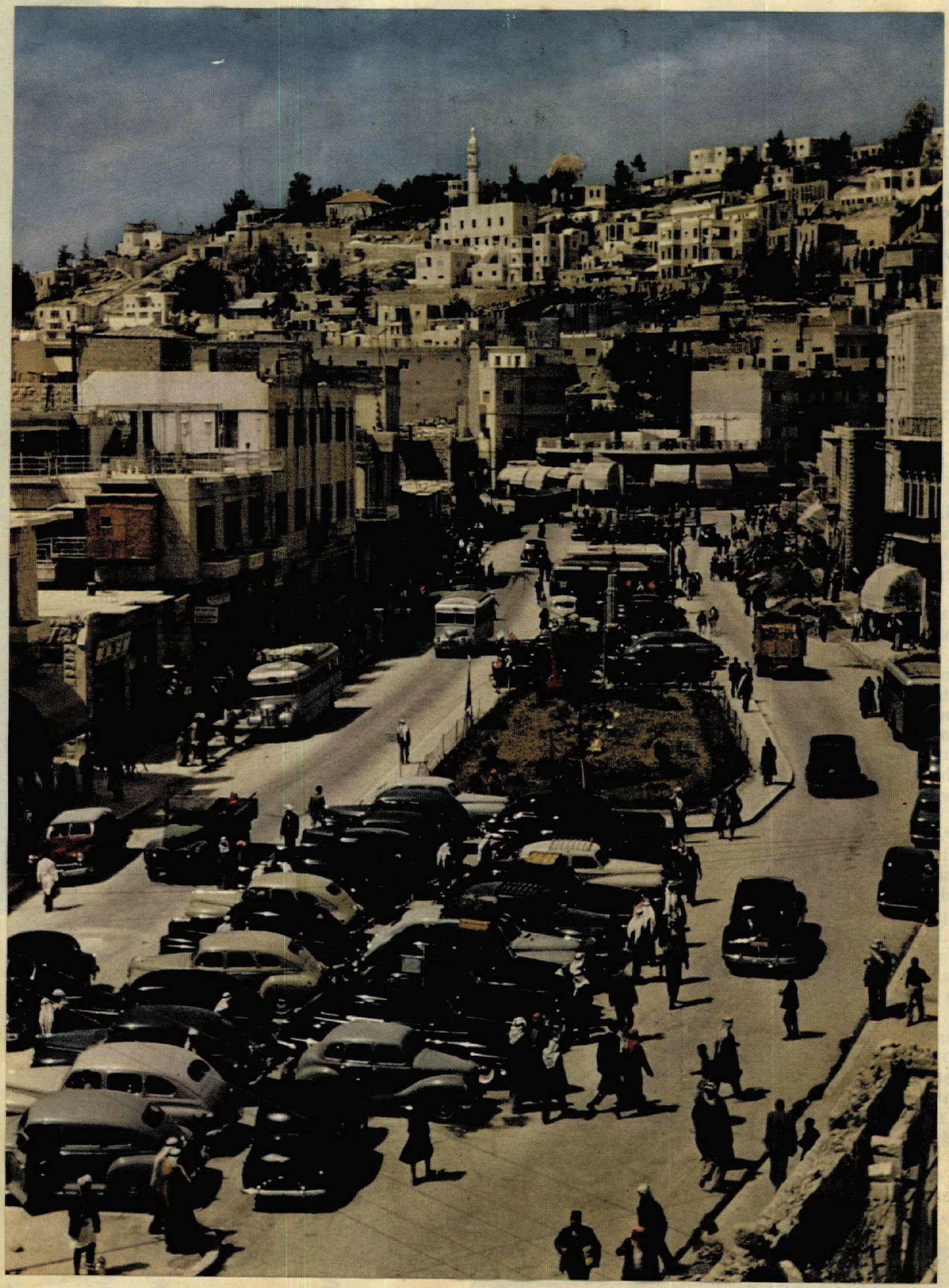
description. It was growing dark, and powerful electric street lamps lit up the double tarmac carriageway and clean pavements. The little concrete irrigation channels spread the green area for a fair distance around the city.

The plain appears to continue flat after Jericho, but that is only because you are looking edgeways at it - there are really great gaps in it. Suddenly we fall into one of these, and find ourselves in another plain fifty feet below the level of the other. The one above is of approximately equal area with this one, and is maintained by the hard tops keeping the lid on a layer of not very distinct strata. Suddenly we are out of these, and in the midst of typical mid-Scotland countryside, green and solid and tangled; but palms betray its nationality, and soon Allenby Bridge appears through them. The Jordan by moonlight was mysterious, tantalising, and inviting. Then we were climbing into Trans-jordan in the dark.

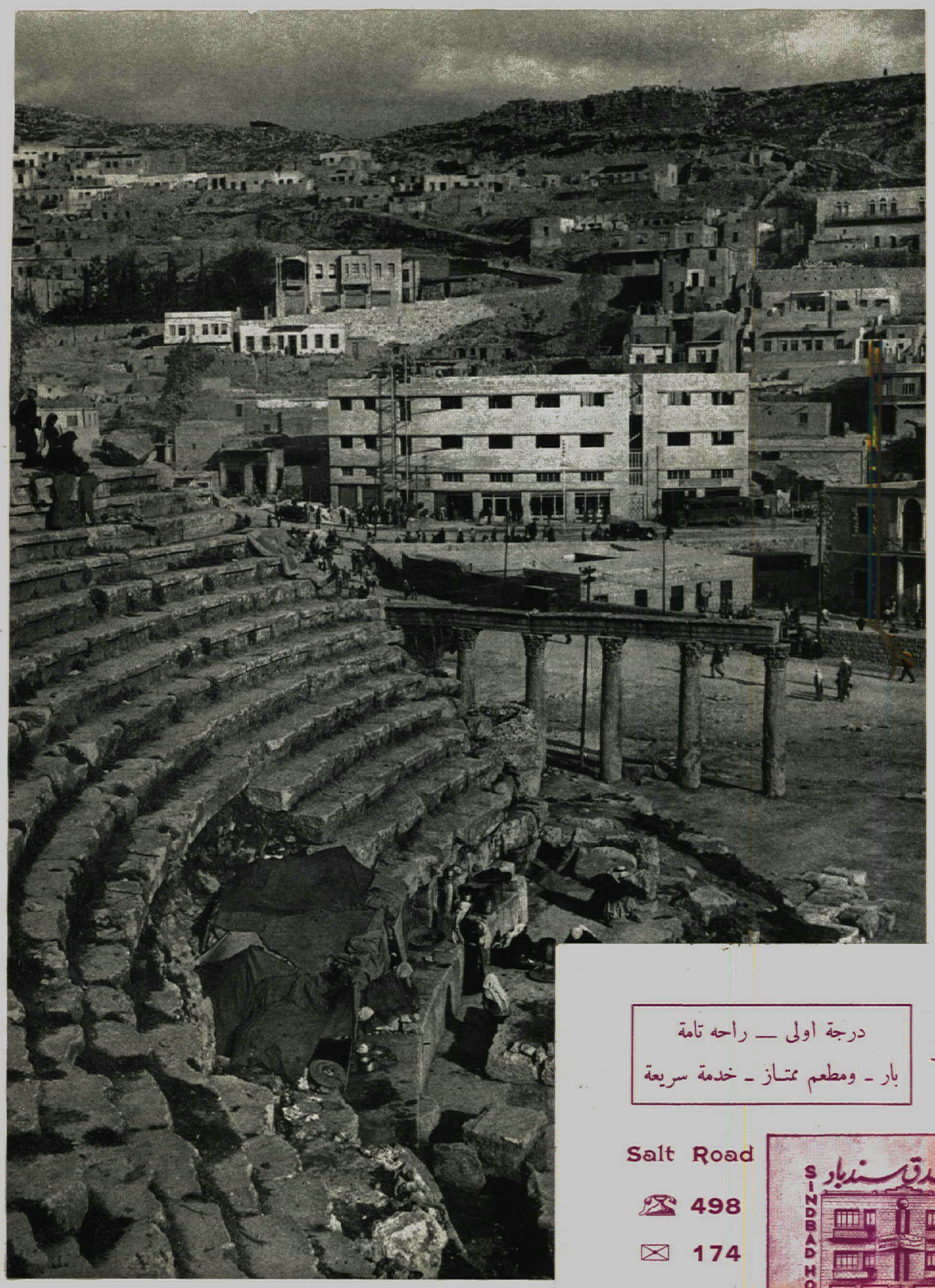
We reached the taxi-stance in Amman a little before eight, and just across the road I saw a stair leading to the Sinbad Hotel; I was still burdened only with a handful of personal effects, so I could reconnoitre without committing myself. Investigation showed it to be a very fine place, not flattered by its outside appearance; there were lounges and halls worthy of a marble front. I booked a plain little room for eight shillings, and went up to my former residence to see if the Satos had arrived. They were at dinner, so I went down to their table and had coffee with them; my bag was still with the porter, so I left it with them and arranged to call back in the morning about 0800. Mr. Sato came back to the Sinbad with me, and we went for a stroll round the town. He came up to my room, and seemed sorry that he was spending pounds up at the Philadelphia Hotel when he could have had a perfectly adequate bed for a few shillings here. It was then my turn to accompany him, and I walked half way back along the main street before we parted. I was feeling ready for something to eat, and watching the Satos in the Philadelphia had spoiled my appetite for native food, let alone bread and oranges. I bought a large tin of peaches, and a small one of ideal milk, which I smuggled up to my bedroom. All subsequent operations had to be done with my pocket screwdriver, but it served well for everything except spooning condensed milk, and I made a most satisfactory meal out of the larger of the two tins. Half I put aside in the empty water jug for breakfast. Next I washed all my nylon - the first since Aleppo - which was rather inconvenient since the rest of my things were half a mile away. Then came a tragedy; the door of my room which opened onto the corridor - there was one at each end - was slightly warped, and the push which I gave it made a hole the size of a football in the frosted glass panelling. No one seemed to notice the crash, so I hung the ubiquitous cloth bag over the scar - it just covered it - swept up the glass on the floor, and went to sleep.

MONDAY, 30th MARCH

Woke at 0530, and read in bed for about an hour. Along the



Main Street of Amman, the Capital of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan



Amphitheatre, Amman.

Arab Refugees squat where the
Roman Gladiators dueled

corridor was a shower which emitted tepid water, so Amman gets the credit of providing me with two baths within a week. A porter appeared at my room, and tacitly swept the remainder of the glass into a pail; I demonstrated what had happened, and he nodded and went away. At 0745 I went down to pay the bill, which I expected would include something for a new window, but they must have been insured, or else kind-hearted, because they asked only the price of the bed. On the way to the hotel I stopped at a cafe up a stair for some breakfast, but the service was so slow that I cancelled the egg and took a cup of tea and a sandwich. It was an enormous place, almost empty, with the atmosphere of an army mess; they took so long that I was afraid of being late for the Satos, and hurried away when the clock reached eight. On the way, the man in front of me in the crowded street upset one of the many barrows of trinkets which stand along the pavements to attract tourists, and there was cascade of jewelry as if a sack of peas had been spilled in the gutter; the owner, whose back had been turned, started to shout for the culprit to be brought back, and so, much as I would have liked to admire the glittering heap, I deemed it wiser to disappear in case I was implicated. It must have been at least two days work to sort the trinkets and redecorate the barrow. Somewhere I must have taken a wrong turning, because the road didn't end at the Philadelphia Hotel as it should have done, so I offered one of the every-ready taxi men 2/- to take me there; to my surprise he accepted with hardly any bargaining, and we arrived just as the Satos were ready to leave.

The road to Petra runs due south for over a hundred miles; there are two routes, parallel to each other, about twenty miles apart, the easterly one accompanied by the railway which Lawrence and his Arabs blew up so regularly. We were to follow the westerly one down, partly to pass through Tafile and partly because the scenery is better, and to return by the other. The whole area is one of high moorland, falling precipitously to the Dead Sea on the west, and rolling off, with no intervening barrier, to the great Arabian plateau on the east. It was the Children of Israel's last experience of the desert before they entered their heritage; the west road is a transitional stage between desert and fertility, but the east is the real thing.

We set off at 0830, with Mr. Sato driving the station-waggon, Hami, the student from Aleppo in the middle, and myself on the left of the front seat. In the second were his wife, Genevieve, Teddy, aged two, and Miss Bright, the college secretary and commercial teacher. The rear seat was piled with luggage. We climbed up onto a flattish plain which goes rolling for miles, mostly green, but a little rocky on the tops of the slopes. Twice we crossed the Hedjaz Railway, and then began to edge to the west. The road was quite good, and we kept up a steady forty mph; one of the spare petrol cans in the back must have been leaking, and the air reeked so badly of benzine that we stopped to investigate in case we all disappeared in a cloud of sand. We seemed to be rising gradually, while away to the right the land fell away, presumably to the Dead Sea; but during all the journey over the table-land there was no outlook westward across the sea, because the plateau rises a little and shuts out all the view. There were a number of hillocks, and somewhere out there were the immortal mountains of Nebo and Pisgah; they are nearly as high as Ben Nevis, but do not look it from this side, because they are simply projections of the Moab Plateau, and you ride from it onto them without experiencing any difference of level. It is literally true that from the summit of Mount Nebo you can see the whole of Palestine; you lose the view to the east, but to the west the headland collapses into space, and from below, or from across the Jordan, they rise for three or four thousand feet to stand out like separate mountains. This is undoubtably

the last view which Moses had, from "the head of Pisgah, which looketh down or over upon the face of Jeshimon", and where he was buried.

To the left was a line of gentle hummocks, appearantly of rock, and higher ground was to be seen away through the gaps. Round about is nearly flat plain, all ploughed, and with a faint coat of green. "Sometimes we go down into a depression, just a little one, and for a moment there are humps all round us; then it's flat again, a gentle roll three or four miles across, lovely land, stoneless and rich and deep, deep red. Sometimes it is ten miles across, good land, and we can reach 60 on the good road. Reach the top of a hillock, and there is a magnificent sweep of green in front of you; when you get down among it, the crop is almost imperceptible, but it still looks green on the opposite slope. I think that it's wheat, just coming up. Away to both sides is the same." There were camels on the horizon, and camels near at hand; the silliest sight was camels drawing the plough. They were so absurdly large compared to the diminutive ploughs, and had a sullen and supercilious look as if ploughing was beneath their dignity.

Down one slope, gently, up another, and then the same again. As we came over one after about twenty miles, we saw MADABA on the next ridge, with a red tiled Church and a new mosque, although it is said to have been a Christian community entirely from the earliest times. The long cobbled street is full of signs of the outside world - steel shutters on the shops, tins of food and Princess Cookers for sale. The new road has brought them well into contact with the outside world. The houses are of white limestone, with the gaps filled in with mud. The road is under construction, and we have to run along the caked earth beside it for over a mile; the new road is a strip of tarmac, laid on a broken stone foundation, just wide enough for one car. Some day this road will be old, and future tourists will remark the introduction of a double road; it is as well to have a good route through the desert at this point, as it would be invaluable in the event of trouble in the South. After leaving Madaba, a broad rich valley stretches for about five miles to the east, ending in a long low ridge of uniform height, mostly cultivated right over the top. Dead ahead there are mountains on the horizon, but all round the land is ploughed, and mostly green. To the right, the western edge of the plateau is brought nearer by the valley of the Zarga, and seems to terminate in a line of humps a couple of miles away; a gentle valley separates us from these hills, which are themselves all green.

Twenty-six miles (by the milometer) from Amman, the country changed for the worse. My notes read: " It gets rougher, more rise and fall, mounds and hollows more accentuated; stonier on tops of hills, just the valleys and the bottom of the ravines cultivated. The general trend of the country is North - South, but there are a number of transverse valleys running down westward to the Sea. I should really rescribe it as no worse than 'undulating'. There are a great many camels. We turn into the sun, and see the land lumpy for many miles all around. It becomes more and more arid. It is really a dissected pene-plain with little pimples which stand a few feet above the rest - but seen from a little above it is very dissected, not unlike the other side of the Jordan. It gets more like its pictures, up and down so much that it is easy to lose the idea of the pene-plain; these bleak hills might be found in Scotland, except that sideways on it is definitely a pene-plain. The valleys are pretty steep, Devil's Beef Tubs (or, rather, my distorted idea of it) falling down on both sides."

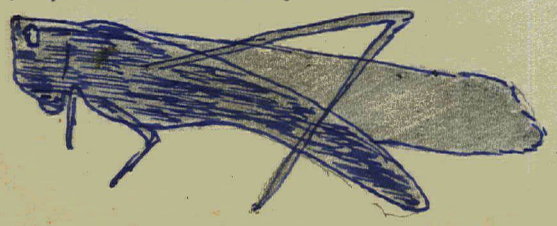
Thus it continues until the milometer reads 34 miles from Amman, and then we go down into the first of the really big transverse valleys, draining off the high plateau into the Dead Sea. Its modern name is the Wadi Waleh, and it does not seem to have any Scriptural importance. It was my first glimpse of the kind of country in which the Israelites are usually pictured during their years in the desert. The hillsides are bare and speckled with rough shrubs, the terrain arid, conical, and steep; as we descended the huge gorge which suddenly appeared in front of us, the ridges of the harder limestone stood out very conspicuously amid their weaker brethern, and the only living thing in sight was the odd Bedouin padding through the dust of ages. At the bottom is a gorge, its edges close enough together to be bridged, containing at this season only a trickle of water, which produced a green splash on either side of it. All we could see, as it wandered through the burning desert of the valley floor and away behind a twist in the gorge, was this serpentine stretch of rough grass, showing up in contrast the dwarfed bushes as poor imitations of the real thing. The old road - a mere cart-track - was being replaced by one which was not much better as regards surface, but which was at least following the line of a modern hill road, and which had graceful curves instead of hair-pin bends; the old one was undoubtedly the shortest way for a donkey, and the new the more practical for a car. When we reached the bottom, the construction gang were engaged in the transition, with the result that there was a bridge without a road leading to it, and two roads without a bridge; we splashed through the six inches of water, where a frog sat happily in the blazing heat. The sun had not yet made an appearance from behind the heavy layer of clouds, but even as it was I have every sympathy with the Children of Israel for enduring it for forty years. Tributaries come down at right angles, and the road follows one of them back up to the plateau; we soon reached the top, and could look sideways into the grotesque, knife-like valley of the little tributary far below us to the right, layer upon layer of rock, with a green peeping through which will become parched brown later. Both these valleys are huge erosions considering the small volume of water they have now - they look, and are, great scars hacked out of the level land. They were bad enough in a car, but to the wandering tribes they must have been terrifying obstacles. Professor Blaiklock suggested that these are the 'rock' on which the wise man built; the wadies run between towering walls of rock, and are a natural highway between the cliffs; they are a mile or more wide, smooth, sandy, flat, scrub-covered, and are a natural highway for caravans. But the wise man would be prepared for the cloud-burst on the distant hills which would cause a raging torrent for an hour or so, and would build on the cliff rather than on the false foundation of the trade route.

Suddenly we are up on the peneplain again, with the gorge forgotten as quickly as it appeared. Again, much of it is cultivated, but a really green patch means that we are approaching a village, built where there is water. The shattered valley has no counterpart up here, where all the tops seem level again, and there is plain on all sides. On the ridge in front there appeared a town, and it is thrilling to think that these little hamlets are immortalised by being mentioned in the Old Testament. This one is Dhiban, which scarcely conceals the Dibon of Numbers Thirteen, at which the Israelites halted after leaving Egypt; we dip down into a hollow with the plain, and then rise up to what is now a Moslem town. The fairly solid stone houses are the same brown colour as the dull hillsides behind them. Over the top and down we go, but the country is really no more than undulating. There was no excellent road like this three and a half thousand years ago, but I am sure that the black sheep and goats grazed in herds in very much the same way then, and that the camel-trains made the same attractive picture on the skyline as they do to-day. There are

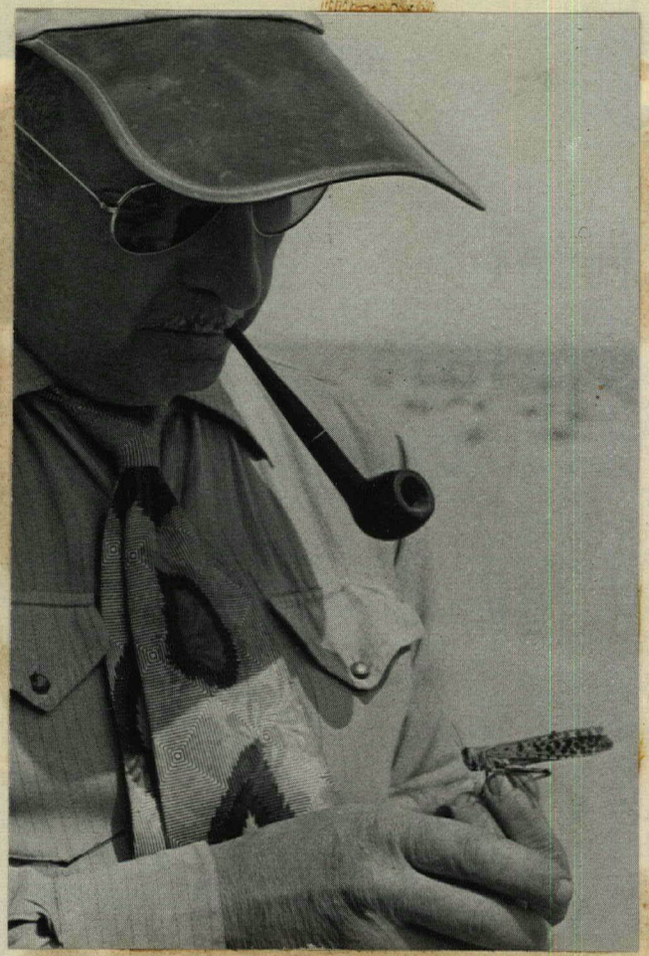
reminders of Moses all the way down the road; already we have passed El Al which, as Elealah, is mentioned twice in the Pentateuch, Heshbon which is mentioned eight times as often, Medeba which occurs once, and there have been several others on the horizon. How eager they must have been to reach their promised land, while imprisoned in this sun-blistered dustbin.

After 42 miles we reached the mighty river Arnon, known in Arabic as the Wady Mojib; it is an enormous trench across the plateau of Moab, about 1700 feet deep, two miles broad from cliff-edge to cliff-edge, but only about 40 yards wide at the floor along which the stream winds. You see at once why the political boundary of Eastern Palestine has generally lain here and not further south; it is terrific, precipitous; as you come from the north, there is a sudden gap in the earth, which was smooth one minute and just is not there the next. The opposite side is the same height again, just a continuation of the plateau three thousand yards away; the side, crinkled because of the rivulets which have run down it, drops straight like a curtain opposite for a thousand feet. We crept to the edge in low gear, and at once were on the road down; it was steep, with long sweeping curves, and one slip would have meant a drop of 600 feet, followed by a roll of 600 more. There was not a blade of grass to be seen anywhere, except along the stream at the bottom; it was like pictures of the Grand Canyon, except absolutely arid, just a great gash across the country. The photograph gives quite a good impression, although there were no houses at all - not even a tent; this photo is of the Brook Cherith, which is of similar construction, but is included for want of a good one of the Arnon. Again, the horizontal strata show clearly, and sometimes protrude; black volcanic layers alternate with the yellow limestone, which gleams white in the bright light, even 'though the sun is still in hiding.

At this point we ran into a large swarm of locusts, which flew round the car in their thousands; I tried to get a photo of them, but they were milling around so much that I kept on putting off in the hope of a better picture until they were gone. My first three impressions of them were of surprise - firstly at their large size, secondly at their double row of wings (I had imagined that they were monoplanes) , and thirdly at their tawny golden colour. Their actual size is →



Locusts were known to the Jews as a curse and a blessing. They were almost the only exception among the whole class of insects that were clean and permitted as food. We find in the Bible not only frequent passing references to them, but also graphic descriptions of their habits, wonderfully true to nature, and taken from actual observation. They belong to an order called 'Orthoptera', or straight-winged insects, possessing four wings, the anterior of which are narrow and parchment-like, the posterior broad and transparent. Their mouths are furnished so that they can eat the leaves of any kind of plant; they have strong, long hind legs, "Legs above their feet to leap withal". Their flight is always determined by the wind; and since they always fly with it, their course sometimes terminates in an absolutely barren desert or in the sea. The people gather them in large quantities, eating them roasted, or preserving them in a dried state for future consumption; they form a most nutritious diet - so I'm told, although I have no intention of trying to find out first hand. As we neared the bottom of the valley they grew fewer and fewer, and I don't ever remember seeing a live one again - not even on the other side. The eighth plague had passed quickly.

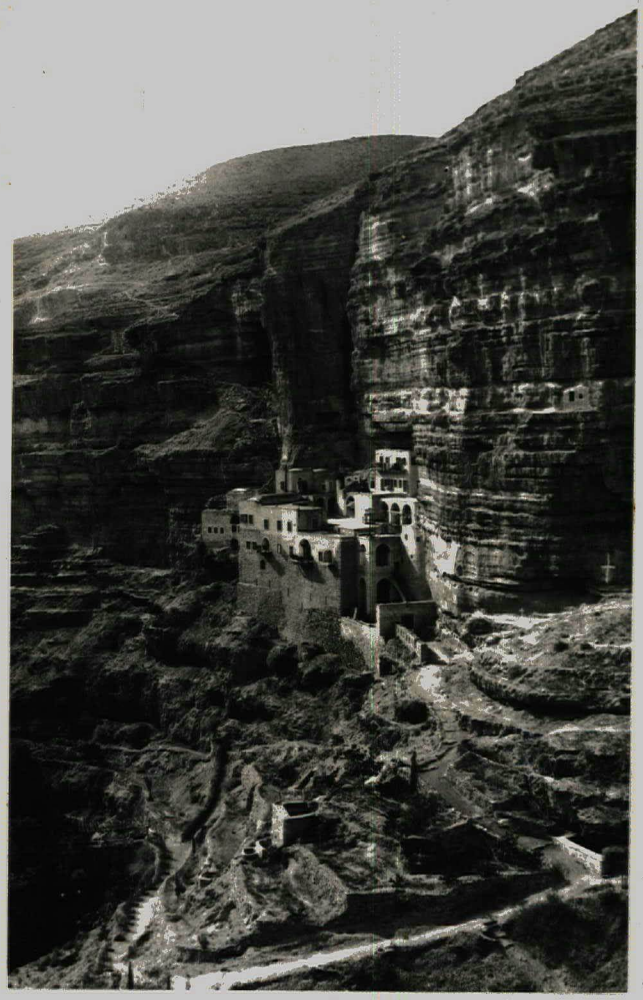


A locust.

In the desert, the soldiers wear keffiyeh instead of spiked helmets. Some wear them open, and others closed.

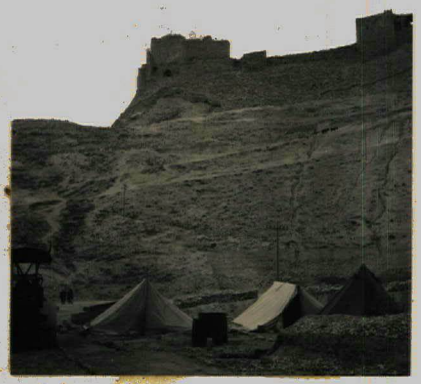
Wild strawberry in the desert.

The Castle of Kerak (opposite)



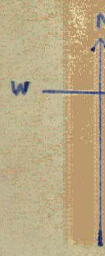
The sides of the Valley of the River Arnon.

The floor of the Valley of the River Arnon.



El Kerak

AMMAN to PETRA and BACK



South by WEST (Road)

North by EAST (Railway)

1st night at TAFILE

2nd night at MA'AN

Scale 1·750,000

N.B. Most of the rivers shown were almost dry, on the way South.

Down and down, round and round, for over half an hour we crept at never more than ten mph; always the road fell away as steeply as it dared amid the barren and speckled hillsides. In the great heat of the bottom, beside the river, we stopped at a little cafe built of tents and bamboo canes. The stream creates luxuriant growth as it meanders round the scattered boulders, but, much as we admired it, when we saw that the water for the cafe was just drawn straight out and served neat, we turned instead to our supply in the car. We did have a cup of coffee, but declined the glass of water which always accompanies it and which, I think, is the best part of it. The valley doesn't look nearly so impressive from the bottom as it did from the top, and the photo doesn't look anything special. There was a moslem saying his mid-morning prayers on his rug just beside the car, and I got the camera with the intention of including him in the picture, but then I thought that it might not be the proper thing to do, and took the floor of the valley looking west along the river instead; at least it shows some of the bushes which speckle the slopes and relieve them of an absolutely barren appearance. We eat cake, and enjoyed the heat; even although there was no blue sky to be seen the metalwork of the car was too hot to touch with comfort.

We splashed through the stream, stalled in it, and then began the grind up the other side of the valley. Round, up, round, up, up, fighting all the way up the gleaming rocky ledge which is carved right out of the rock. Near the top, a thousand feet straight above the cafe, we stopped to give the engine a rest, and when we opened the radiator to fill it up, a fountain of steam and boiling water shot up for fully half a minute. Then onto a sandy, flattish plateau, much the same as the one we left not two miles away, but more than a couple of hours before. Looking back after half a mile it is difficult to remember that there is a gorge so near at hand-- it is so sharply cut that it seems smoothed over. The road led for many miles over small undulations which were bare and yet fertile, as the crops were just appearing, with far horizons broken by slight hills and ridges, falling on the right to the Dead Sea. To the left the plain went so far that it was lost in the mist of distance, and while it looked no more than rolling I had no doubt that there was many gorges hidden away somewhere in the middle-distance. In front, too, it was great flat steppe-land as far as I could see. Sheep, goats, camels, and road construction gangs provided a living touch among the unbounded field of corn. Odd villages of flat stone are the centres of population, each supported by ploughed fields for many miles around, and animals grazing. The villages themselves, on the occasional hump amid the immense fertile plateau, are built of limestone with a little volcanic rock in the walls not making a very good pattern. One of these, which we passed about eleven miles after the Arnon valley, is mentioned five times by Moses as 'Ar of Moab', and is now called Rabba.

Sixty-six miles from Amman we stopped beside the road to have lunch. There was sufficient wind to make the primus blow, so we rolled rocks around it and while the others unpacked the baskets I made nescafe. It was mainly sandwiches and fruit, as water was short and there wasn't time to cook any more than beveridges - tea and coffee, which tasted much the same. We used the remainder of the water to wash up, as far as it went, and just had to wipe the rest. Mr. Seto took our photo during the closing stages; my little bag looks comfortingly small at the back of the station-waggon compared to the mounds of luggage around it; the primus is at the extreme right, and I have borrowd one of the stones to sit on. It shows how rocky the ground really is, when we found rocks of that size in the midst of a fertile belt within sight of a town. As we started again we approached another village set on a hillock, but this one had more

than ruins - it had an agricultural college, and tractors crawled round the fields like great yellow snails. From here we went up into slightly more barren land, with the tops of the rolls outcropping, but there was nowhere loose stone in any great quantity; it is vaguely like the Yorkshire moors, except that too much of it is cultivated. Away to the east, across a broad sandy depression, there appeared to be a parallel ridge to this one. It got rougher around us. Suddenly, to the right, was KERAK, about twenty-two miles from the Arnon. It is set in the midst of higher hills like the foresight blade of a service rifle, with a steep valley separating it from its taller neighbours; it stands up like Edinburgh Castle, with the citadel on the the left, a minaret on the right, and the hills falling behind it to the Dead Sea. We turned to the left, away from it, then swung back down into a great fertile bowl, six miles in diameter, all ploughed and good; we crossed the stream which is the southern boundary of the bowl, took a sharp bend to the right, and ran back to the city with a knife-like gorge just under the off-side window. We passed to the south of the city, looking at it across the great gorge cut round its east side; from there I took the enlarged photo. We followed the road, twisting and winding until we passed almost underneath the castle walls, a sheer three hundred feet above; from there I took the other photo.

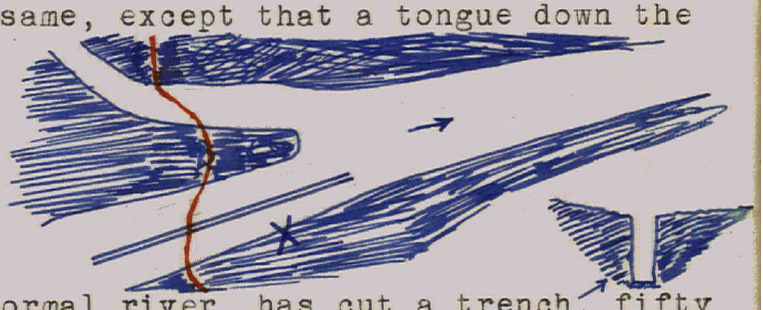
Kir of Moab, as Isaiah and others called Kerak, was known in Of times as an impregnable fortress; its main attraction nowadays is the great Crusader castle, built in the twelfth century, and now in a state of extreme decay. The present grey bastions and tall wall are a relic of the Crusaders, who used the town as a centre from which to raid the rich caravan route from Egypt and Arabia to Syria through Petra. One look at the terrible gorges which guard the fortress on all sides explains why Saladin could never drive out the knights, by using force of arms, and had to besiege it for five years to remove the Lord of Kerak, Renault de Chatillon.

We continued past the south end of the castle, and up the parched valley, barren, and with fairly steep sides, back onto the plateau. At the top of the valley we looked down on both sides to fairly steep hollows, pretty rough and stoney, but nevertheless ploughed. The road is very, very bad - the sort of thing we would describe as a cart-track, but with enough potholes and loose stone on the surface to qualify for transfer to the Isle of Mull. Soon the land flattened out on top again, but still it was rocky, always with stone lying about, and gently undulating. As we run more east than south it continues dry, and looks difficult to cultivate. It's barren and poor looking for land which has to be ploughed, as most of it is. A Ford station-waggon came bumping towards us, and we drew into the rough grass verge to let it past, since there was room for only one on the 'Road'. As it came nearer we saw that it carried a Maryland registration number, and at the same time they saw that we in the Chev. had a New Jersey plate. Naturally they stopped as they drew level, and the drivers exchanged views on the road; they had come down by the east route, and thought that it was worse than this one ! Then the driver of the Ford, Mr. Hill, said to Mr. Seto that he had been at College with him, and there, on the edge of the Arabian desert, they discussed old times as casually as if they had met again on their campus. They were on their way back from Petra, and were sleeping in the car, as a pile of bedding on which two children reclined clearly showed.

Shortly afterwards, 83 miles from Amman, we stopped for water at the little village of Moteh, and a crowd of idlers soon gathered as soon as the car stopped; Mr. Seto tried his beginner's Arabic on them, and they brought water - probably from the pump - but we didn't feel like drinking very much of it. The fact that they survived after drinking it was not very certain proof, and we certainly didn't give any of it to Teddy.. It was a typical village, with the road running between a cluster of stone and mud houses, a patch of green covering the bare earth yard, and quite a few men hanging about doing nothing, and doing it rather well. It all had a sleepy, primitive look, as if prosperity had never been heard of; probably they talk about the visit of the Crusaders still, because I doubt if anything of importance has happened since. A mile further on we passed the same thing on a slightly larger scale, in the shape of El Mazar. After that we went up and up, and the land began to be cultivated again, still gently undulating. A three domed mosque, white,yellow,and green respectively, commemorates three soldiers, but I couldn't find out what it was that they had done to deserve this monument. In the town the women are the only sign that the world has changed in the last hundred years - they carry the water from the wells in petrol tins, as is now very common throughout Palestine. The shepherds still carry guns as they tend their flocks in the fields - presumably in case they have to spend the night out, as the daytime seems innocuous enough.

The broad, almost flat, plain is tending to be sparse only on the tops of the distant hills, but as a whole was suffering from drought; in the first three months of the year there had been less than the usual 40 cms. of rain, and that is quite serious in a predominantly agricultural region. We reached the top of a rise, and in front, as far as the eye could see, was a peneplain with a lot of little loose stone all over the fields, which lose themselves in distance, in the desert to the east. Neat stone villages. Huge and gentle plains, dry and stoney. Flocks of black sheep. At times, going downhill, we reached the dizzy speed of thirty miles per hour.

At ninety-two miles we reached another wadi, running across our path to the Dead Sea. It was so like the last one, although of course on a smaller scale, that I decided at the time it was redundant to repeat the barren description; it is almost the same, except that a tongue down the middle complicated matters, thus:



I thought that it was called the 'Hishe', but the latest map labels the 'Zerea', and an older one the 'Hessi'; at any rate, they are so few and far between that we must all be thinking about the same thing. But the river at the bottom, instead of running along the surface like a normal river, has cut a trench, fifty feet deep and no more than six wide, out of a fault in the rock which looked like lava. We crossed by a very short bridge, and looked straight down the most astonishing phenominum; it must be an engineers' dream, but a geologists' nightmare. At 'X' a volcanic plug rose sheer and blank, like a chimney, at least a third as high again as the surrounding limestone cliffs. On the way out of the valley we had a blow-out in the rear tire, and took about ten minutes to change it. It was surprising what hidden beauties that wady contained, once we stopped to listen to them. Up in the hillside a shepherd was playing a lively melody on a pipe of some kind, running up and down the scales like a character from Horace's Muses, and I wished I could have found him. There were wild flowers in the grass, and waters singing in the stream, and the whole place was completely

different from the outside of the car. As evening approached it was no longer hot, in the derogatory sense, but warm in the nice meaning of the word. I would have liked to stay and explore the music of the valley, as one likes to linger in the country on a summer evening before returning to the town; or, in this case, the semi-desert. I couldn't help compare it, not unfavourably, with the topography and beauty of Black Valley near Killarney in Ireland, where, exactly a year before, at the same time of the day, I stopped to mend a puncture in the front tyre of my bicycle; there too is a quiet hollow which improves when you are forced to make its closer acquaintance.

As we re-started, there followed one of the occasions on which I wished that I had the cine camera. A camel was on the road in front of us, presumably out to graze, and when he saw a car coming he set off at a fast trot in the same direction as we were going. We stopped and he stopped; we started again, and he started again. The hill on one side, and the slope on the other prevented his leaving the road, so we decided to drive to the nearest accessible exit for him. We went for a quarter of a mile, at a good 20 mph, with the camel swaying along thirty yards in front, a perfect motion picture in the evening sunlight; it was a real study in animal genetics to watch him move both starboard legs, shift his balance to that side, and then bring both port legs forward in front of the others; at the rate he was going, the average passenger would have been airsick. Shortly he burst through the shrubbery, and ploughed his way back through the scrub to join his mate, who was tailing behind. Most interesting. Soon we were up and out of the wady, and back onto the plateau, which was the same as before.

At about 1800 we reached yet another of these divots in the earth's surface, this time the wady Feifa. It is not a very deep one, and as we dropped down the north side we saw the town of TAFILE built round a spur on the south-west opposite; from a distance it seemed to be made of solid flat houses running up the hillside, and we approached it through the wonderful crop of olives and silver-grey fig trees which rise to meet it from the valley floor. This was the home town of Hami, the student with us, and we drove to his house, which was glued onto the edge of rock, with a view right down the wady, over the trees. He has eight brothers and eight sisters, and the whole family is of importance and authority in the Arab world. The father was some kind of government minister; in Tafile, the eldest brother is the mayor, another is the school-master; tomorrow we were to meet the one who is district governor of Wadi Musa; and one of the sisters is married to the head of the post office in Maan. How many others are in distinguished positions we didn't manage to find out by asking indirect questions.

We carried our possessions up to the house, and assembled in the drawing room; we thought it strange that none of the large family should put in an appearance when guests arrived, and then we realised that it was because there were women in the room. As soon as Mrs. Seto and Miss Bright left, and went to their bedroom, the brothers appeared to drink coffee with us. Their greeting, and everything about them, spoke of the Bedouin breeding; they touched their heads and breasts and bade us welcome. They were dressed in loose lounge suits, with white keffiyeh, and walked like kings. The mayor was exceedingly handsome, with a fine strong face, dark skin, and flashing eyes and teeth, a man to be proud of. His brother, the schoolmaster was gentler and softer in outline, kinder in disposition; the real Arab despises everyone of lesser breed, but the elder brother moreso. He re-entered with a pot of coffee, and a tray with little

cups, into which he poured a teaspoonful of strong bitter coffee. Hami whispered that we must drink three of these to be polite, and then as many more as we wanted. I drank the tiny sip, and the servant poured another into my cup - it barely covered the bottom of the tiny cup. I drank that, and tried to like it. He went on pouring it out in small medecine-like doses, and I retired with the score at five. Mr. Sato went on and on, making polite remarks about it all the time; we too murmered how good it was, for the Arab loves his coffee, which he makes himself - it is one of the men's few household jobs. He pounds the berries in a mortar, and then adds a bitter herb, with the result that the unsweetened result bears no resemblance to coffee as we know it. After that we had cups of coffee in the Turkish style, and the small cups in which it is served, which usually look so minute to western eyes, seemed like tankards by comparison. We sat and talked while dusk fell over the valley under the windows, until at 1900 we were summoned to an enormous dinner, spread out before us on the table from the first course to the last. Most of it was unfamiliar, but there was chicken, and rice, and bread, water, etc., which we could place. The family served us - the only time which a mayor has stood behind me to keep my plate filled, and taken the dirty dishes away. He told us that one of his sisters had cooked the meal, but of course we could not complement her personally on its excellence.

We then returned to the lounge for more of these rediculous formal cups of coffee, and this time we all stopped at three; it is bitter, far worse than molten unsweetened chocolate, and was not really a pleasure - but on the other hand it did us no harm, and was one way of expressing our thanks for the hospitality. Then followed real tea, in glasses, and over it we discussed politics, Russia, royalty, telephones, education, and a wide variety of topics about which the Arabs are interested. It was a wild and windy night, with rain in the air, blustering from the west; we went out onto the balcony over the valley, and our hosts showed us the lights of Israel away in the distance in the same way as one might point across no-man's land to the watchfires of an invading enemy. They seemed most anxious that we should all see the lights; they said that there were a great many things went across the unguarded border at this point which never saw a customs house. There was no lighting in the bedrooms other than by candle, so when Hami went, I went with him; there was an English grammer by the bed - appearantly the younger generation had been moved out to make room for the guests - and after learning a few things which I had never thought about before - such as spelling rules - I fell soundly asleep and didn't hear Hami come in a short time later. To save correcting the last sentence I may add that the room was also lit by lamps once we got organised, and it was rather like many a highland farmhouse, including the Aladdin in the drawing room. This and the house in Aleppo seemed typical of the furniture arrangement - padded seats all round the wall, either attached or rows of chairs, with a large table and a few larger chairs in the middle; I don't remember any visable means of heating either room, although there must be something in the winter, because I was glad enough to have several blankets on this so-called spring night. By now I was almost used to sleeping with the windows tight shut, but you can't very well suggest anything else to a fellow when you've already deprived him of his bed and made him sleep on the floor.

TUESDAY, MARCH 31st.

TUESDAY, 31st MARCH

I was awakened by Hami getting up at 0645, and he said that breakfast would be served as soon as we were ready. We passed through the dining room on our way to the tap, and the sister who was laying the table immediately turned her back and left the room - although I think that all the time she would have liked a look at the strangers. When we assembled, we were first of all served with a cup of Turkish coffee, and then sat down to a normal breakfast with eggs and toast, as well as a few other things which weren't so normal, like goats' milk, olives in oil, and margarine of uncertain origin. The car had to be reloaded where it stood, on the narrow ledge underneath the house, and there were more eyes watching than we knew, as doors standing ajar revealed. We stopped in the village to buy for ourselves the flowing Bedouin head-veil, the keffiyeh, and the two black cords of twisted hair, the agaal. There were any number of unpaid assistants in the shop, who tried several on us until they, and we, were satisfied. One of them had a cousin or something studying in London, and another in Cornwall, and although I explained that I lived four hundred miles away, he insisted on giving me their addresses. There were bales of cloth of all colours stacked all round the little shop, and Mr. Seto chose a pure white keffiyeh, which is the lighter summer wear, while I took the black and white one which most of them were still wearing, the summer appearantly not having arrived yet. Although they had not yet been washed, and so were a bit stiff, we put them on as we went out to the car, feeling like horses in blinkers. With the milometer at 120, and the clock at 0830, we climbed up over the tongue of the wadi on which Tafile is built, and left behind for ever the place where Lawrence fought his one and only battle, and which the Children of Israel likewise visited only once. It was near the town of Tophel, Moses records in the first verse of his last book, that they spent the end of their fortieth year in the wilderness, and I was interested to see that Young describes it as 'in the wilderness of Sinai'; if they came to many places like this I don't see what they had to complain about.

As we dropped over the other side of the tongue, the sky was bright, with sun above us and cloud away over the depression to the west; I had the feeling that we were not quite on the plateau, and for a long time there was usually high ground to the left. We seemed to be running along just where the wady began to cut in, and the road was accordingly up and down, up, over a spur, down into the top of a wadi, up again, and into the next, all of them falling roughly away to the marshy ground below the Dead Sea. The land is dry, but fairly well cultivated on the whole, although there are always rocks outcropping all round, and the earth, which is ploughed where possible, has many stones. There is a little green just beginning to show through, while the uncultivated ground is covered with clumps like heather, oleander I think, perfectly spaced, and at this point rather dry. Inside half-acre dry stane dykes, vegetables are being cultivated for the Tafile market. The road isn't too bad, fairly smooth mud with a number of rocks making progress slow. The land is fairly flat and smooth now, but it is barren and dry. There is always some rock around somewhere. Soon we pass Boseira, which comes into six OT books, and which, as Jeremiah prophesied, has become a curse and a desolation. Then on and on, keeping just a little to the west of Israel's route north.

After sixteen miles we hit some really rugged country, among the highest in Trans-jordan; down the wady is a wild, rocky gorge, with jagged rocks shattering the contours. Beside the road are small boulders of volcanic rock, which give the clue to the rough country-side; at several points the ground can be the result only of volcanic activity. Above the general level plugs stand out, black and alone; looking down to the right is ridge upon ridge of volcanic rock. We then turn into the sun, and see that this is the point where the plain drops off to the west, which accounts for the break-up of the surface; the ends of the wadys cut in and leave ragged fingers of plain pointing west, while the plateau behind continues their level, flat and cultivated, going on and on into the distance. We follow the unending flatness, and reach the startling speed of 40. The east road is like this all the way, and the west one, although longer, repays by its scenery the extra length of the way. Up on top here the little clumps of vegetation get greener as we go on, and look like a well-ordered vegetable plot, ten miles square. It is perhaps truer to say that it appears flat, looking away into the distance, while little hollows appear as you pass and then seem to have disappeared when you glance back from the car. Fourteen miles after this paragraph began the dragons' teeth hills are still towering down to the right.

We passed Shobek somewhere round here; it is supposed to have a Crusaders' castle equal in magnificence to that of El Kerak, but it must have hidden itself behind a mirage as we passed, for we saw nothing of it. Then we dropped down a bit out of the mountain range, with sandy hills dropping lumpily all around. It was like many another valley in any part of the world, except drier than most, sandy-sided but not steep, only sharpish, with an odd oasis of green in the arid waste. Similar monotonous country continued for many a mile, until at 1215 we burst on the deep, sharp, precipitous, and rocky Wadi Musa - a fertile valley enlivened by the stream which popular legend says sprang forth when Moses struck the rock. Moses is the hero of many stories in these parts, and the Wadi Moussa, which is the life of Petra, takes its present name from him. I had previously noticed a tall steep plug of rock rising sheer above everything else, and a twist in the wady shows that <u>this</u> is Petra - it stands revealed across the valleys, with a front doorstep of limestone, and then the unique black shadows of volcanic crags. The surrounding landscape ends sharply at the foot of these hills, and there is no gradual blending of one into the other; they stand distinct, apart, and I gazed at them in the way a stranger might look at the Forth Bridge, suddenly revealed round a corner, and bearing no relation to the surroundings. As if across a safety pit at the zoo, stand these fretted, jagged, mountains, dark blue and purple, rising straight up from the plain, and dead, lifeless, as if belonging to another world. And inside this grotesque block, somewhere through the shadows of a million crevices, is the mysterious city of Petra.

THE CITY OF PETRA is only mentioned twice in the OT by name, but has greater importance as the capital city of the Kingdom of Edom, which figures frequently in the ancient literature of many peoples. Selah is the Biblical name, but it was an integral part of Edom, and many references to the district must be made to include the capital. The earliest historical mention of Edom as a country is, as might be expected, from Egypt, whose people delighted to record every incident of their own period. The actual history of Petra itself in early times is lost, as is the early history of all those places whose inhabitants had little civilization and no knowledge of writing. The earliest Biblical mention is in second Kings 14, but the first recorded tradition is also in the Bible, in Numbers 24:21; the 'rock' (Heb. sela, cf Gk. petra) has been conclusively identified with Petra, and if, as many people suppose,

Balaam the prophet was the same person as Bela, the king of Edom, it is not surprising that he should know the site well, as it was part of his own kingdom. The Kenites he mentions were the descendents of Cain, tillers of the soil as opposed to the Habil (Abel) or shepherds. Petra seems then to have been a place of refuge, a spot where a defeated tribe could hide in its innumerable caves until they gathered strength. Here too the women and the children could remain with the flocks, safely hidden, while the men raided the fertile lands of Canaan across the wide stretch of the Wady Arabah.

The whole history of Petra shows a strangely monotonous regularity of change. Each people to whom it has belonged has come up from Arabia, has pushed out the previous owners, has occupied it for a time, and has in turn been pushed out by a new and hardier tribe of desert-dwellers. The first record shows the Kenites in possession, followed by the Horites, of whom little is known beyond what is said in Deuteronomy 2:21. After them came the Edomites, the children of Esau, and here consecutive history begins, but it is the history of Edom in its dealings with the Israelites, and Petra is mentioned only as part of the Edomite territory. Edom is constantly mentioned in the Bible, but naturally the record there is concerned more with the defeats of the Edomites than with their victories. It is noticeable that Israel never despised Edom as they did Moab; they were always an enemy to be respected, as is seen when Moses sent messengers to the king of Edom asking permission for his forces to pass through to the attack on Canaan. Edom did precisely what Belgium did at the beginning of the First War, refused to give passage to an invading force which wished to attack a power friendly to herself; Edom's strength was too great to permit of an invasion, and Israel had to go by 'the coasts of Edom', and never forgot the snub. The two were never at peace together for long, but there is no record of Edom from the days of Moses until the reign of Saul, who tried without success to crush them. But David crushed them utterly, and it was not until the reign of Jehoram that they regained their independence by revolt; they had to fight to keep it, and the war between the two kingdoms ends with an appalling massacre, outstanding even in the blood-stained annals of Judah, when Amaziah, the king of Judah, took those left alive after the battle and 'cast them down from the top of the rock (in Petra), that they all were broken in pieces'. But Judah's bolt was shot, and in Ahaz's reign ' the Edomites had come and smitten Judah, and carried away captives.' Ahaz appealed to Assyria for help, and the Assyrian king came with his army and reduced Edom to a tributary state. It is fairly certain, however, that the ports of the Gulf of Aqaba and their wealth of trade were the real reason for this, because Edom was not in itself a wealthy possession, not so worth while as the fertile country on the west of the Jordan; yet over and over again the Assyrian kings sent their armies to reduce Edom to submission. The last record of the Edomites in Petra is when they joined a confederacy to rebel against Nebuchadrezzar, and suffered diasaster which filled Transjordan with broken men flying for their lives. The depopulation of Palestine which followed was the opportunity of Edom; the people flocked in and took possession of the unoccupied and fertile lands of southern Judea. The reason for this was not really the inducement of the empty land, but was history repeating itself - pressure was being exerted on them from the east by the Nabataeans

The date of the Nabataean invasion was probably about the beginning of the sixth century before Christ; whether it was peaceful, or whether the Edomites were driven out at the point of the sword is unknown. The newcomers were of the same race as the Edomites, for both seem to have claimed descent from Ishmael. They were known as a herdsman tribe as early as the time of Isaiah (60:7), but although they began

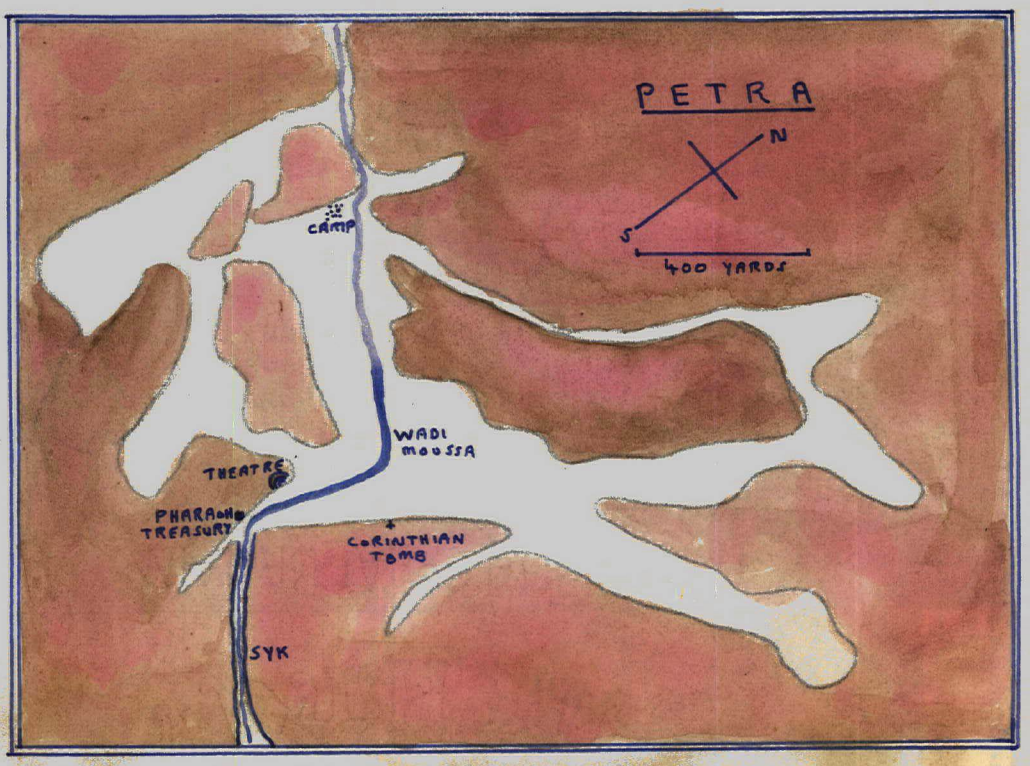
as shepherds, the Nabataeans were endowed with a genius for trade. As they were also camel drivers as well as shepherds, they probably began their commercial career as carriers of the goods from the trading ports of the Gulf of Aqaba across the desert to Beersheba or Damascus. But it is obvious that they were not mere caravaners, for they were already in possession of Petra at the end of the fourth century, and a hundred years later were sufficiently strong to attack the ships from the east which were bringing goods to the Egyptian ports. The story of the Nabataeans begins with the Assyrian records, but there is no consecutive history; it has to be pieced together from the fragments of uninterested authors. But, belonging to this period, Petra is of the greatest interest archaeologically, for it tells of that rather obscure period when Rome was coming to power. The remains of Jerash and Amman belong to the time when Rome was reigning supreme in Transjordan, and are evidences of her wealth and power; but Petra began to decay when, under the Pax Romana, the Nabataean protection of the carrying trade became obsolete and effete. The necessity for protecting the caravans ceased, and all the ports of the Mediterranean coast being free, the trade was not now confined to Gaza. Petra died of inanation as the trade was diverted into easier channels, and no doubt the astute Nabataeans followed it. The last king, Rabel, ruled from 71 to 106 A.D., and then the country became a Roman province. Palmyra rose as a rival to Petra, and Petra sank into an obscurity from which it is only now rising again. During the centuries that it was lost to the knowledge of Europe it seems to have reverted to its early use as a refuge for broken tribes who could seek safety behind its sheltering rocks and its gloomy caves.

Before we had grown accustomed to this incredible fretwork of volcanic eruption, we had run down to the prosperous and fertile village of Wady Moussa (not to be confused with the valley of the same name). It is a beautiful little patch of cultivation, all terraced fields and orchards and greenery. The water supply is perennial, and the village is practically self supporting as far as food is concerned, as the fields produce grain of all kinds and the orchards have figs and other fruits. The houses are quite presentable as these things go, but the streets are narrow paths of mud between the high walls which shut in each house, and, as usual, the majority of the population seems to do nothing. We dropped down with a twisting motion from a position where all the flat roofs were spread out before us until we were right down among them. We drove to the house of yet another of Hami's brothers, who is the District Governor; a mud wall was all to be seen, but we stepped through into the usual courtyard with the rooms opening off it, and a pump in the corner. He had everything arranged, and asked whether we would like to have dinner with him now or on our return; not anticipating the delay, we thought that it would be a good idea to stoke up first, and said now. He sent orders for the banquet to be prepared, and we settled down to drink glasses of tea in the cool of his office, for the sun was hot in the sheltered village.

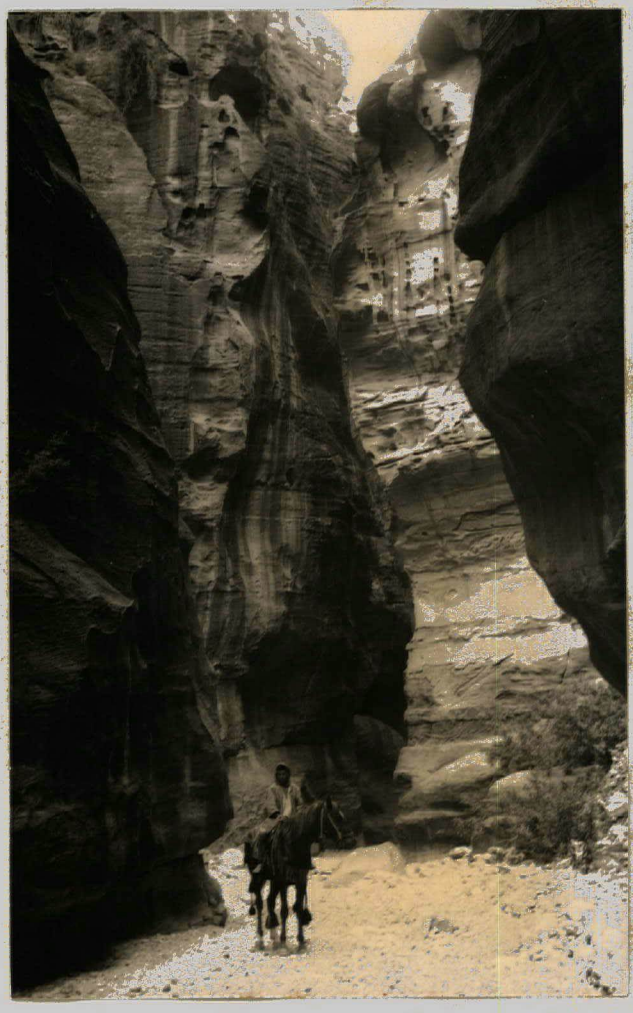
DINNER IS SERVED ! We went into the dining room, and sat down round the communal dish, which was an enormous flat platter, at least six feet in circumference; it was piled to a height of four inches with rice soaked in melted butter, very yellow, and on top of that was the carcase of a whole sheep, boiled, which had just been slain and cleaned. The head lay open with the brain exposed, and the whole liver in one piece; the jaws were open and the teeth showing. There was also brown bread just out of the oven, and water. It was all obviously timed for our benefit, and no wonder we had had to wait a bit for it; when we had finished, the less fortunate, who do not get their meals fitted into their timetable, would get the remains to scrape. Following our host's example we fell to, and tried to copy his easy way of eating; he seized a mouthful of hot and dripping rice with his right hand, rolled it into a ball with his four

fingers, dug his thumb underneath it and flicked the lot into his mouth. The melted butter ran between his fingers, and he tore as much meat as he wanted off the bone; a handful of brain and liver went into his mouth, and then he held another handful out to me, while all around the diners were treating the food in the way we treat Christmas crackers. It all has to be done with the right hand, for the left is considered unclean and to use it would be terrible barbarism; also, it is good manners to eat with ravenous haste, and this proved my undoing. It was easy to tear and devour meat with one hand, but my progress with the rice must have been too slow, because the servant brought a large spoon which he gave to me with a sympathetic smile; with it I eat about three square inches of rice from immediately in front of me at top speed with a pretence of being starving - as I was, but it is not usually essential to politeness to appear so - and thoroughly enjoyed it. The meal was soon over, for we had been eating at top speed like hungry wolves, and we went outside to hold out our hands while a servant poured warm water over them from a long-necked pot, washing off the butter and rice. Then we were ready to visit Petra, and, donning our headsquares, went out to collect our horses.

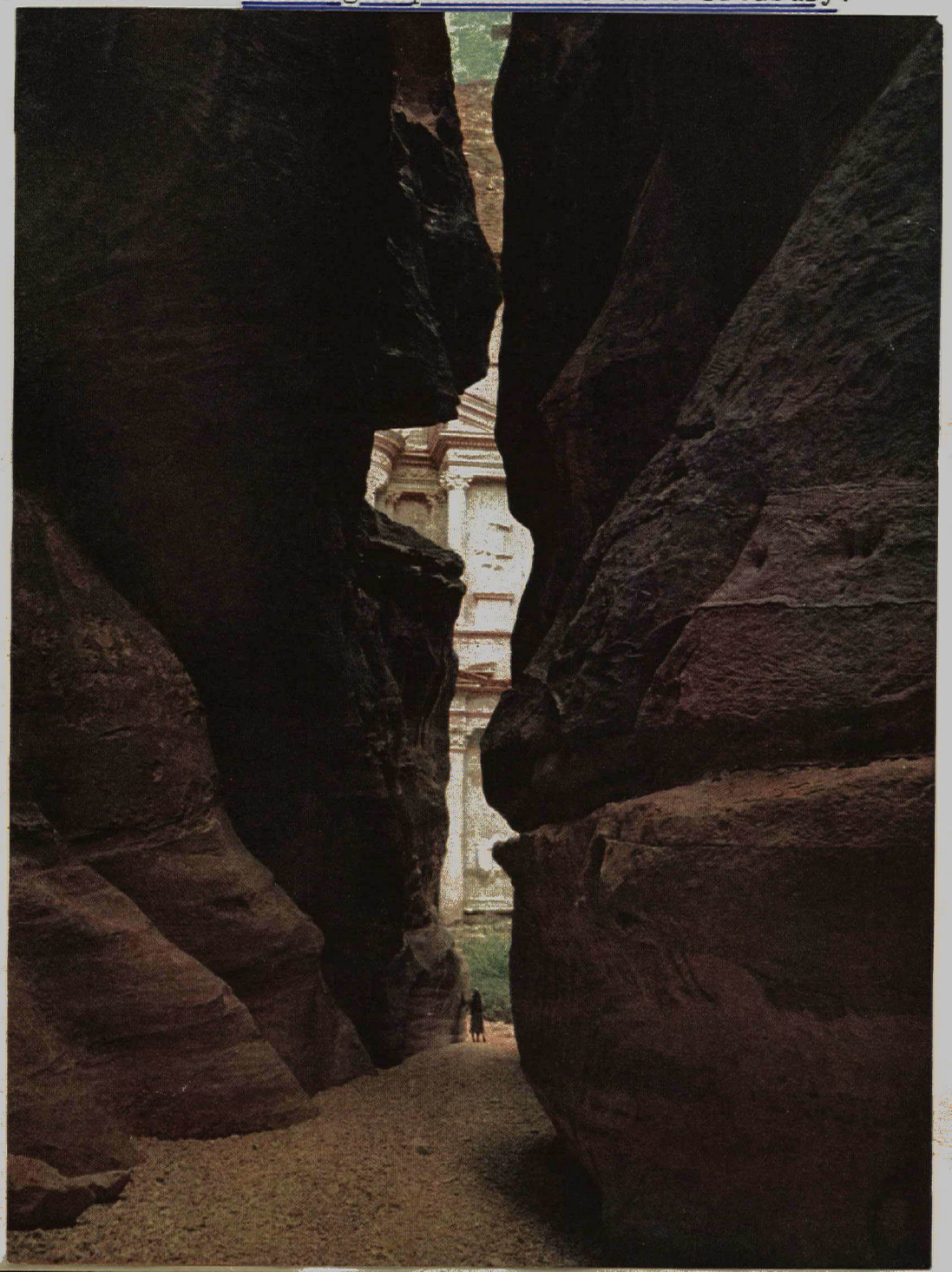
Outside, in the road, were half a dozen animals which were hired as horses, but were really only a few bones with a skin stretched over them; also included in the bargain was a little Arab boy, dressed in cheap European clothes, whose function was to hold the rein (note the singular), but certainly not to hold the horse in. Going out we were very sedate, the main reason being that the stirrup was too short, and the boy did not say a great deal. The horse was reasonably spirited, considering its bony appearance, as we started. The road leads steeply down from the village to the Wady Moussa, where the stream has cut through the valley. From there, till it has passed through the whole length of Petra and out to the other side, the watercourse runs beside the path or is the path itself. It's about three miles into Petra, and you can walk as quickly as the so-called horses, but it was a novelty to ride. Once down into the valley, it is smooth going, and for about a mile the path follows the river only approximately; Petra owed its importance to the Wady, which provided a road into the secluded valley. At the end of the mile we are into the outskirts of Petra, great limestone rocks riddled with caves, in some of which people are living. In front is a great barrier of precipitous rocky hills, in the midst of which is Petra. The limestone is a dreary dull yellowish-white colour, and bars the road with unscalable cliffs, and there does not seem to be a crack in their sides through which even a mouse could creep; but here and there is an introduction to the ornate rock carving inside. A right-turn of the watercourse-cum-road appears to lead into a blind alley with high rocky walls in front and on each side; then a cleft in the barrier appears on the left. This is the eastern approach, the entrance to the Syk.



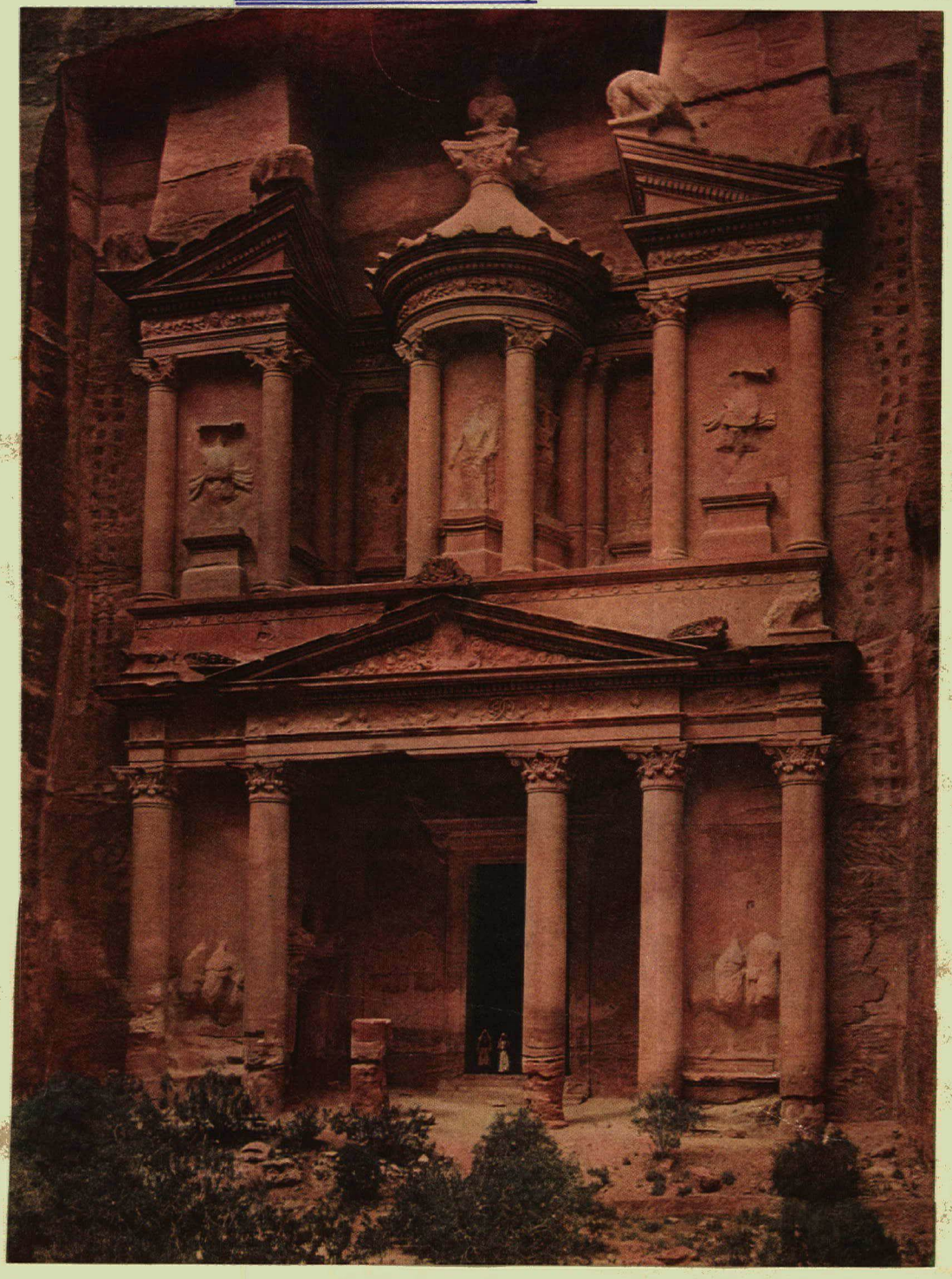
Though the Syk is now the usual entrance to the City, it is a common mistake to say that it is the only one; there is one from the west, a difficult one from the north, and another path from Wady Moussa. One of the chief reasons for entering by the Syk is that one gets the startling introduction of suddenly coming face to face with Pharaoh's Temple. The Syk is no more than a cleft in the mountains; it is partly natural, possibly caused originally by earthquake and then water-worn, but it is also partly artificial. The gorge is about a mile and a quarter in length, and is so narrow at times that you can almost - though not quite - touch both sides at once. These photos show the middle, at one of the wider points, and the west end, seen from the Temple.



The cliffs rise to not less than 100 feet at the Wady Moussa end, but as the tops remain about the same height and the road descends fairly rapidly the sides of the gorge reach 300 feet at the Petra end, where the square photo overleaf was taken. The sides are precipitous, and in places appear to overhang the path, which gives the unpleasing effect that they may come down on one's head. The floor is now nothing but pebbles, brought down and rolled smooth by the action of the floods; but at one time it was paved with large limestone flags which are occasionally laid bare by the stream. It was a long way through, and sometimes the cliffs seemed to meet overhead and give the impression of a tunnel; the Syk winds in a curious fashion, and is accompanied on the left side by a water-channel cut at man height. The Syk proper ends abruptly in a transverses gorge which it meets almost at right angles, and which contains Pharaoh's Treasure House. Consequently a sudden turn of the path shows a narrow opening between the cliffs, and through it one obtains the first glimpse of Pharaoh's Treasury.



It is so close to the end of the Syk that you cannot see the whole of the Temple until you are out of the gorge; then you are too near to get the top and bottom in the viewfinder of the Rolleiflex at the same time. Like most of the monuments in Petra, it is not built in the usual sense of the word but is carved from the face of the sandstone as a cameo is carved. It didn't look to me as big as the photos would suggest, but that may be because they include no more than the Temple, and in reality it is only part of a cliff which towers above it. Here for the first time was a colour which justified 'rose-red'; nearly everyone differs in his description of the colour of Petra, but the best comparison I could make was "the colour of a flower pot". The easiest mistake to make is to call the colours 'bright', but that is poetic licence because they are all shades of the dull brownish-red Nubian sandstone; many lyrical descriptions will insist that brown rock is rose-red because they are given by people who have been told that that is the colour of Petra. Pharaoh's Treasury is one of the three outstanding



the sand storms. Some of the rock-cut temples are perfect, their pillars round and firm, their decoration clear-cut; but a similar temple on the weathered side of the cliffs is melted away, its decoration smoothed to invisibility and its columns thin and eaten by the wind. In the tombs and caves the people still live, but as a rule the rock dwellings are on too large a scale for comfort. We wandered into the forecourt of this Tomb, and it was large and drafty, like an empty banqueting hall.

We scrambled down the steep rocks which are the east wall of Petra, and the horses were waiting at the bottom, with the little Arab boys. The floor of the valley, where the city once stood, is rough and arid, covered with enormous oleander bushes not yet in flower. We rode along the course of the Wady, just visible in the small photo, to the camp, and on the way passed the British Ambassador to Jordan and his retinue, who were on the way out. There was a cluster of tents round a marquee, the accomodation maintained by the Philadelphia Hotel for their tours, for those who do not like to spend the night in a cave; the Ambassador, we learned, had started off in a tent, but the wind had blown so much sand on top of him that he had moved to a cave. At the camp we stopped for a break before returning, and had drinks of lemonade in the visitors' tent. The post cards which they sell are so hopeless that I didn't buy one. We hung around until everyone was refreshed, and I picked up a typical piece of rose-red rock, although it is a little bit more than typical of some. I traded horses with someone who complained that her stirrups were too long, and my guide insisted in sticking to me rather than to the horse with which he started. This horse was also white, but was a slow creature, and we soon fell behind the others; the boy, who spoke excellent English, kept up a steady chatter, and kept asking to be allowed to carry all my things.

The clouds had been growing steadily darker for some time, and just as the others reached the Syk - I was about 100 yards behind - it began to rain with a vengeance. I was the only one with a coat, so the others shouted that they were going to gallop on. Sometimes my old nag managed to trot, but that soon relapsed into a walk again. I wanted the boy to come up behind, because he looked about as underfed as the horse, and had to run to keep up; but he insisted that he was alright. It was gloomy going through the Syk in the semi-dark, and I could understand why Arabs who have to come through after the sun has gone down like to shout and make a lot of noise. Once we were through the Syk the full force of the rain descended in torrents, a real tropical thunderstorm with vivid flashes of lightning. The sheets of water were too much for the Arab boy, who of course had no coat, and he disappeared into one of the caves with which the rocks outside are riddled; we were not supposed to tip them, but he had been so good that I gave him a couple of shillings. This brought a cry from an even smaller companion who seemed to have deserted one of the horses in front to seek shelter, so I gave him a little too. The path was well marked by many feet, but the horse determined to cut away to the right at a small junction. I turned him back, which was no easy feat with only one rein, but he insisted; I pulled him to the left, and he went right round in a circle until he was back facing up the side track. As I had never before tried to control an Arab horse in the middle of a desert in a thunderstorm, and as he presumably was used to it, I decided to give

him his way, thinking that he ought to know if it was a shortcut. But in a few minutes I realised that he was stupid as well as slow; we had turned right before crossing the Wady, and so were going to end up on the opposite side of to the village. I tried to turn him, but he would have his own way, until we were level with the village but separated from it by a steep sided ravine some seventy feet deep. Here I took over; the rain had stopped as suddenly as it had started, but the muddy paths were slippery, so I decided to control operations from the ground. The sides of the valley were terraced, and the terraces were connected here and there, so I towed the animal by its halter along one, down, along to the next step in the ladder, and so on until we reached the stream. It was reluctant to cross, but its wishes had caused enough trouble so I pulled it over and we started to zig-zag up the other side. Progress was not very fast, but a native happened to be going up to the village and between us we towed the horse through the environs of mud walls and brick houses, past dripping courtyards with newly made drains pushing their way, until we came to the Governors' office; someone I had never seen before appeared and indicated that he wanted to take over the tow-line, so I gave it to him somewhat reluctantly - it was nice to come home by an unorthodox route. There was a fire burning in the office, round which the others were drying off; inevitably, a glass of tea was served.

It was dark before we set off for Maan, and we had to refuse pressing invitations to stay the night in Wady Moussa; I wonder where you would get if you accepted all the invitations which Arabs give. There seems to be no limit to their hospitality, and they mean it too. The brother from here decided to pop over and see his sister - where we were going - so there were now six grown ups in the car; I moved into the back seat, and Hami and his brother squeezed in in front. The road rises through open uplands, fertile in the valley, and the surface in the main isn't bad; at times the road is not clearly differentiated from the surrounding desert, but that doesn't matter very much because the two are nearly the same. We didn't pass a single car all the way, and covered the twenty-five miles to Maan in an hour and a half. What we did pass was the spring 'Ain Moussa, which Moses is credited with having produced by striking the rock.

One of Hami's sisters is married to the head of the Post Office in Maan, and it was with them that we were to spend the night. We were greeted as usual with coffee, and as soon as we were ready sat down to a large dinner, served in Western fashion, but consisting of food which has never yet found its way into western restaurants. The dining room was joined by an arch to the kitchen, and all we saw of the sister was a pair of hands putting caldrons through the curtain. It began to rain hard, and the road outside was turned into a sea of muddy clay, which stuck to our shoes like glue. The lightning flashes were tremendous, and we stood and watched them lighting up the whole sky like a neon sign; the thunder cracked like a whip up to fifteen seconds later. The house was roughly four rooms facing each other in twos, with an open concrete court between the blocks, and the whole surrounded by a wall. Since the other houses were the same, the street looked like two walls, between which was six inches of clay and water; the idea was not to venture off the concrete, but somebody had to go out to the car. When the dining room was cleared Mr. Seto, Hami, and myself went to sleep in it; we wanted to be up at 0600, so as to get away as soon as the petrol station opened. But man only proposes. All night the rain bucketed down.

WEDNESDAY, 1st. APRIL

A fine April Fool's trick - it was still raining hard when we woke up; and this trick would not stop at noon - there was obviously no hope of getting away for several days. We tried to move the car from the morass outside the house to the nearest concrete road, and that was a major operation, so we could imagine what the desert would be like; the chains soon worked themselves off, and it needed two men pushing to get up the slightest rise. Of course the Arabs were not in the least perturbed; "bukrah" they said, and "bukrah" (tomorrow) seems to be their favourite word. Mr. Seto came back covered in clinging mud, and we sat down to have coffee, followed by breakfast - eggs, bread, and all the usual oily accompaniments. After that we were just beginning to make ourselves comfortable for the day, when an aeroplane with R.A.F. markings flew low over the house, and landed nearby. We rang up the various authorities to find out what it was doing, and, having found it was for the Ambassador, rang to see if there was any room for one more. The secretary said that it held only five - which I doubted very much - and that the rest of the staff were going to put their cars on a goods train, which was scheduled to leave at 1000, and sit in them. Subsequently we learned that the plane too became stuck in the mud and couldn't get off again that day, hence the presence of the Ambassador on the train. I was very anxious to reach Jerusalem that night, because I planned to leave Jordan on Friday, and the Setos wanted to press on too, so we decided to go to the station and see what was happening. Loading was a mucky business, because the car was now on the road and we had to carry everything across at least an acre of clay; by the time I had made three trips my shoes looked more like snow-shoes. The sister joined in the general confusion, and although she never came very near to us it was obvious that she was like the others - of outstanding character; she was handsome rather than beautiful, but it was nice to know that the higher class included some women who would be consideded beautiful in the West. As we left, she broke right through all the barriers of prejudice and stood with her husband at the door to say good-bye.

We stopped at a store, and while I went to buy fruit Mr. Seto turned the car. I was back before he was, and when he came splashing through the puddles he said just to hang onto the running board until the station. But it wasn't just round the corner as we thought, and we left the town and drove for a mile or two through a real desert of sand dunes. It was a fine prelude to the yachting season; there were just a few drops of rain in the air, and as we raced at 40 into the wind my oilskin was whipping up and down as in the best of the autumn races. There was so much mud in the car that I was probably cleaner outside, and it was pleasant to get onto the station compound and scrape great lumps of it off. There were quite a few buildings, because this is the terminus of the line; a big 2-8-2- was doing its own shunting and eventually it brought a flat car into the platform. The natives were clueless as to how to load the cars on sideways, and after they had bungled for about twenty minutes one of the ambassadorial staff got them organised; it was a fine demonstraion of why Britain planted colonies. While this was happening I wandered up to the engine and asked the driver if he could use another fireman for the day; he started to ask me questions, and pointed to various bits of the controls, asking what they were. It was so rediculous, because the engine was built in Glasgow and so all the controls were labelled in English, with the result that even if I hadn't known - which fortunately I did - I could just have read them. He seemed satisfied, and said he would give me a hurl. It was just as well he didn't want me to do all the fireman's

duties, because oil-burners were not on the curriculum at Longmoor. Mr. Seto decided that he would like to put his car on the train as well, so we clattered off into the marshalling yards to find another flat. He had the unpleasant task of twisting his waggon over the steel plates with a mob of waving porters giving different and superflous advice. Then we took the two flat cars and attached then to the rest of the train; that having been done, the ambassador decided that he wanted to face the other way, so we trundled the whole lot off to a turntable and dealt with the two separately. When that was done, and the train made up again, the real fireman opened the burner wide, the driver opened the throttle no more than usual but this time he locked it open, and with no ceremony we set off for Amman. Time: 1130. There were eight of us on the footplate, including the Ambassador's two drivers complete with revolvers. The little engine driver had been warming some vegetables for his lunch, and he passed them round, straight from the stoke-hole door; they tasted like cabbage, and were excellent. The narrow guage made the going fairly rough, with a top speed of about 40; the Darlington (not Glasgow) built engine cruised very nicely at "drift", with a little more to get up the hills. The throttle was never more than half open all the way. The line stretched like a black thread for miles ahead across the desert, and everything was so desolate that it looked like an intruder.

The Fireman ↓ and Driver →

The desert scenery was interesting and boring at the same time. As we left Maan we ran through hilly sand dunes for a bit, and then out into dead flat country for a long time. It kept reminding me of an enormous tennis court, the black ash kind, after a week-end's heavy and continuous rain. Normally the "Black Desert", as it is known, would be as dry as tinder, rolling in stony nakedness for its 2500 sq. miles. It has well been called the "Flint Beach", as it is almost level, with little ups and downs, each rise being the same height as the one behind it and the one beyond Everywhere, as far as the eye can reach, is strewn with black stones or yellow-brown sand, the former being in shelves a little higher like layers of tarmac. Mostly the stones are pebbles, but some are large enough to be dignified with the name of boulders; some are of black basalt, but the vast majority

are of limestone darkened by wind and rain and scorching sun to a horrible blackness. The Children of Israel passed this way, and for sheer monotony and desolation this dismal plain must just about have finished them. It was the higher black shelves which looked like tennis courts, for the sandy areas, which are normally scarred with empty wadys, were covered by torrents of water. The slope of the country is to the west, away from the trackless sand and rock and shingle of Arabia Deserta toward the Dead Sea. So all the water which had fallen out there was queuing up for the few culverts under the railway embankment, and tracing ever-changing patterns in the pliable desert; torrents to the right poured under us in orderly rivers to join the floods on the left. Between the highways, pools lay about on ocean beds of black basalt pebbles, which looked all the same size, smoothed and shaped by storms which have raged undisturbed since Moses left his footprints. This is probably among the lonliest railway lines on earth, and the bare land runs to far horizons broken only by slight hills and ridges.

The road which normally accompanies the railway had in many places disappeared under the avalanche of water, for it is no more than the tracks made by previous cars. There was not a living soul in sight, so it was with surprise that we saw a figure standing beside tha track waving; there being no particular hurry, we stopped, and found it was Major Sanderson, whom I had met in the Philadelphia and again in Petra. He had set out that morning to try and pass by the east road, but had struck a stone while crossing one of the new rivers and before he could reverse the wheels had sunk and the engine been flooded. A few minutes later his wife appeared at the gallop, and they were taken into the Ambassadors' car. Sure enough, a few moments after we started, we saw a green Land Rover immersed to the top of the engine, with a trailer skewed round sideways, and the Arab guide waving from the front seat. We took the Major to the next station where he was to wait until the water had subsided and then get something to pull the car out.

Every three quarters of an hour or so we came to a small concrete station building, a police post, and three or four walled houses. There are nine stops at these on the route, and between two of them I went in the Setos' car, but for the rest of the way I stayed on the footplate. The fireman had little to do except turn a handle, so we sat on upturned buckets and talked. He invited me to spend the night with him in Amman, but I said that I really wanted to reach Jerusalem that night; he was married, with five children, and didn't like it, and gave me a discourse on its evils. For hours we pounded on, and the weather gradually cleared. At one of the longer stops - for water - I took the photos, the larger showing the two ambassadorial cars as well as the typical desert scene. At another stop we loaded an American family, friends of the Setos, who had started out for Petra on the east road and been caught in the storm. It was an even longer time than at Maan to load, because the station master took control and would listen to advice from nobody, although there was an obviously easy solution by moving the train two feet.

At three o'clock it began to get hilly, and by four we were climbing fairly hard; the hills are fairly rounded, and we followed natural cuttings. Most of the timw we were beside the road, and sometimes it seemed just to stop at the gorge of a wady and pick up again on the opposite cliff, leaving the motorist to find the best way across. By six o'clock we were right up in the hills, and for the first time in the day there were signs of cultivation. The sky had cleared and the sunset away over the hills of Moab was glorious, the wild mountains throwing back a crimson glow. As darkness fell the driver switched on the powerful headlight, and it cut a path for us; but the track wound so much that the lamp, which was fixed, was more

often than not lighting up the embankment or the fields away to one side instead of the track. For the last two hours, as we ran into and above the foothills, green fields and animals decorated the low hills, and if it had been lighter we would have seen the birds and the flowers as well. It was a long steep drop into Amman, with a safety stop half way down and brakes on all the time, but we stopped in the marshalling yard at 1930. There was a bit of delay until the flats were detached from the train and put in a siding; there seemed to be no one responsible for doing it, and the crew of the engine disappeared as soon as the wheels had stopped turning. During the wait I went up to a greengrocers' shop above the station and bought some biscuits and oranges, which we shared while the cars were being edged back onto the platform. We drove straight to the Philadelphia Hotel, because Mrs. Seto wanted a cup of coffee before starting out for Jerusalem. Mr. Seto and I felt too grubby to go into such a place, as we were caked with brown mud, greasy with oil, and covered in dust, so we waited in the car for what seemed an eternity. I think that if I hadn't assured them that it was a first class road all the way to Jerusalem they would have stayed the night there, despite having booked in the American Colony.

We left Amman at 2145, with a fairly bright moon and a nice night; it was, as always, warm in the Jordan valley. I was the only one who had been over the road before, so I was supposed to know all about it tell them when there was a bad corner. Mr. Seto was very tired, having done all the driving for three days, but he insisted that if he kept smoking he would stay awake; I hoped so, because we were running down that very twisty road to Jericho, with a sheer drop of six hundred feet on one side all the way. He had to drive fairly fast if we were going to get to Jerusalem before the hotels closed, and did very well considering it was all strange to him. The Jordan valley was cooler than during the day, and seemed ghostly and frightening in the dark, with its sepulchral shroud of salt mysterious in the darkness. The yellow street lamps of Jericho were as incongruous as the Queensferry Road would be in the Sahara Desert, and the town might have been a suburb of Glasgow. Up we went, looking forward to seeing the City by moonlight, and suddenly Zion was there - lying ashen and grey in the full moon of Easter, an impressive sight but one which sends a shiver down your spine. We could see all the houses quite clearly, and the walls especially stood out; it looked harsh and uncompromising, and as stubborn as the rock on which it is built. The Satos dropped me at Orient House, and went on to the Colony which is just round the corner; at the time I thought that the House was a very nice hotel, but I attributed that to the subjective contrast with some of the places in which I had stayed; it was not until afterwards that I learned that it is the best and most expensive hotel in Arab Jerusalem. The night porter was waiting for me, and took me up to a single room; this was a pleasant surprise, as I was expecting to pay for a double one - I didn't know then that they had just removed one of the beds. Surrounded by the luxury of hot water, clean sheets, curtains and a carpet, I fell immediately sound asleep.

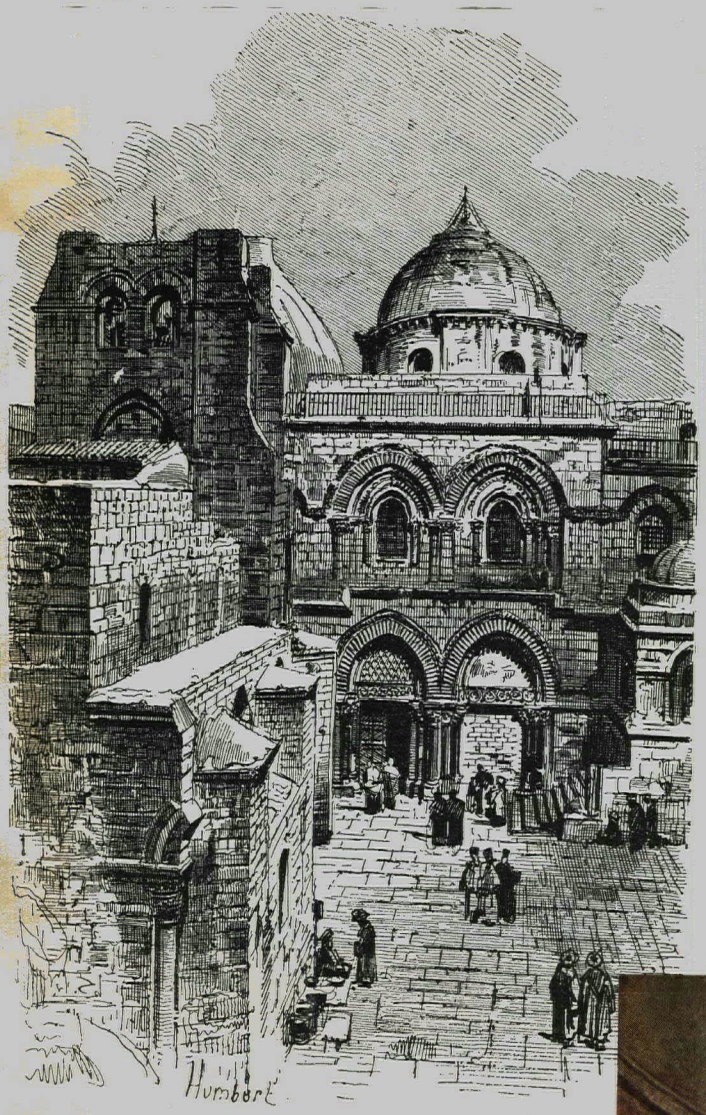
THURSDAY, 2nd APRIL

To awake in Jerusalem on the morning before Easter was very wonderful, and especially because it was a bright sun which woke me, shining through the trees which framed the window. After removing two days' beard in cold water, I went down to an excellent dining-room for a very good breakfast, an orange, a poached egg, coffee and toast. It was then 0930, so I walked over to the British Consulate and arranged with a Mr. Hay to cross the border on the Sunday; it is not nearly such an uncommon thing to do as people would try to make you believe - there were quite a few tourists doing the same thing, and all the forms were printed, showing quite openly that it is a recognised journey. When it was all O.K.'d I felt much happier; it was nice to know that the Arabs were going to let me out - the only thing now was whether the Jews would let me in.

Then I set off for the first time to explore the City of God. Most sight-see-ers, both those who have written books in the past (including Morton) and those whom I met in hotels and in the streets, seem almost proud to say that they get hopelessly lost in Jerusalem; perhaps it is the fashionable thing to boast about, but I could never understand why they should lose their way at all. There was plenty of excuse for Morton, but he has left for all after-comers such a perfect map that to become confused with it in your hand is simply impossible. It was my guide and stay all the time, and it was merely a question of first right and second left on his scetch-map to bring me right to the very spot I wanted. The first place I wanted to visit was the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, because I knew that it would get busier and busier as Easter drew nearer. By holding "In the Steps of the Master" in an inverted position and doing exactly what the map indicated, I was soon there. The road leads down the hill from Orient House and the Consulate, through the Damascus Gate

and into the streets of the old city. Streets is flattery; they are narrow lanes, descending in a series of steps, with a line of booths on each side. No motor car will ever get inside the walls of Jerusalem, and goods are carried by donkeys which half-fill the narrow alleys, already packed with people of all nationalities, shapes and sizes. At the gates the main trade is for the tourist, but as I went down the Souk I came to the real native shopping centre. In the hot

Outside Damascus Gate



Basilica of the Holy Sepulchre.

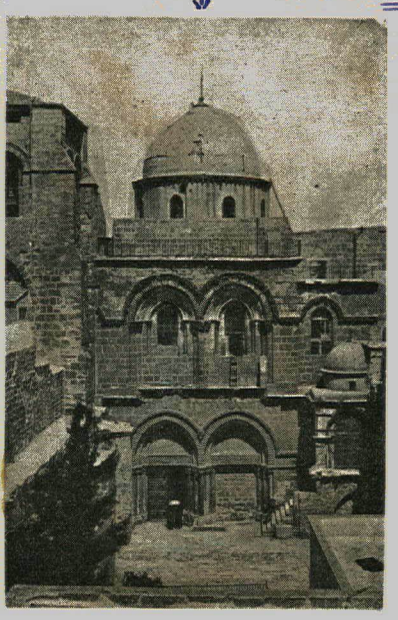
The Holy Sepulchre

morning sun the shopkeepers who should have been attending to business were sitting dreamily, waiting for somebody to come to them. This man, typical of the street merchant, was selling pigeons and smoking a hookah.

I followed the Souk to the Via Dolorosa

and followed it to the

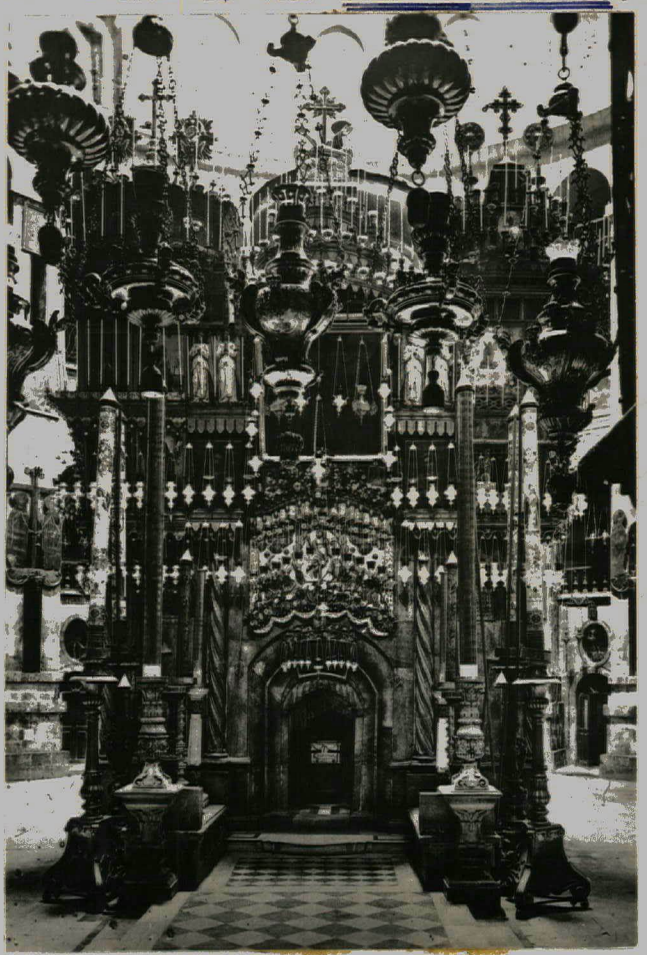
Church of the Holy Sepulchre, which was temporarily shored-up.



(When I revisited it the next day, there was a procession entering the Basilica, carrying a large wooden Cross.)

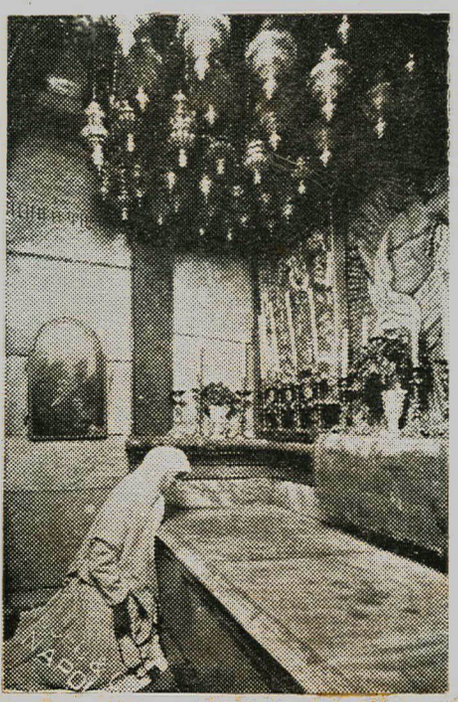
The inside is exceedingly complex, and requires weeks for a proper study, for it is a confusing conglomeration of 37 churches, chapels and shrines, all so-called 'holy places', many palpably puerile and absurd, and all open to grave question as regards their authenticity. After crossing the open courtyard - filled with dealers in articles de piete who are fit descendents of those who made the Temple a house of merchandise - and entering the massive door, you are faced with the Stone of Unction. This is not even the tradional one, which is buried beneath the slab placed there in 1818, but this fact does not stop thousands of pilgrims reverently kissing it.

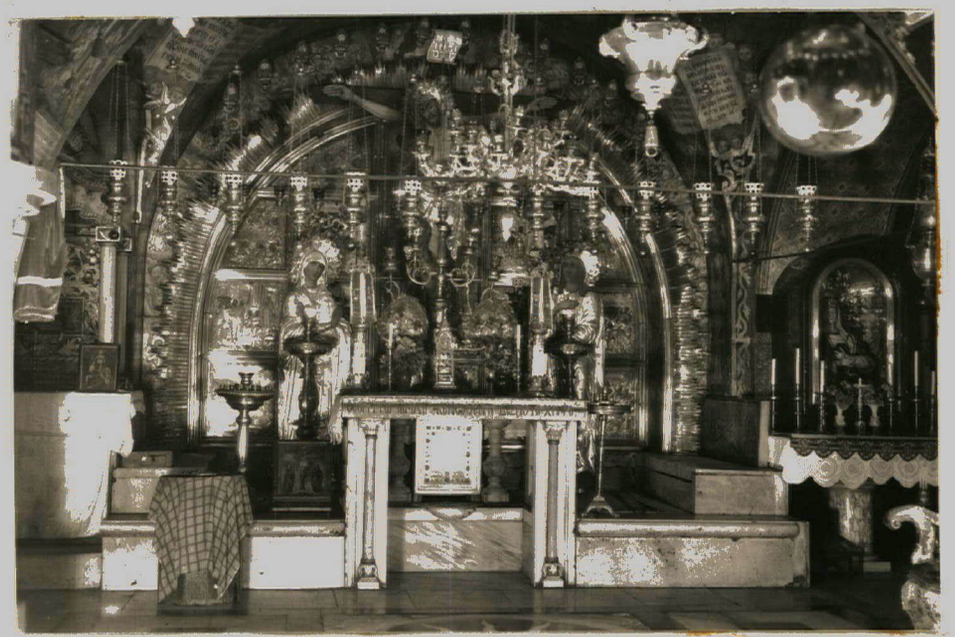
The next place to which one comes is the Tomb of Christ.



There was a tremendous crowd in the Rotunda, the ugly modern dome which has been erected around and over the Tomb; it is the common property of ~~of~~ the six churches who hold the rest of the Holy Sepulchre, and they have certain established rights to have processions there and to celebrate mass on stated occasions. By great good fortune I found a place at the back where I could see excellently. There was a Latin procession ending with High Mass in front of the Tomb just about to enter the Rotunda, which is very delapidated because each sect guards their rights so jealously that repair is difficult; the position has become so bad that the whole inside is now shored up with unsightly iron girgers. The Latin Procession entered beside me. Following the four man guard (see later) was a large mens' choir, singing, then a smaller boys' one, then the High Priest under a brilliant yellow awning, and lastly some nuns, followed by four of the Arab Legion, almost as picturesque in thier spiked helmets, to keep the crowd back.

But it was the four gentlemen at the head of the Latin procession who seemed most interesting to me; they might have been part of Pontius Pilate's bodyguard. With their pikes they banged in harmony on the floor every two paces, with faces as solem as pokers. From time to time the leader of the choir turned round and, like a presenter, started his group singing; the little choir boys were looking decidedly bored with it all by now - this had been going on since 0700. Three times they circled the Tomb, and then went out again while workmen hurriedly dismantled the magnificent and glittering alter of beaten gold which had been erected over the entrance to the Tomb; no Coronation accessories ever shone like the golden symbols here. When it was all tucked away, the Procession returned to form up as a choir opposite the door, and the Priest, covered by his awning and half-hidden behind a heavy smoke screen of incense, took off his outer vestments to enter the Tomb for a few minutes. After they had gone away again we were allowed up to the entrance to the Tomb, but were not allowed in; this was all the more pity, because of the hundreds who wanted admittance the sway of the crowd had brought me right up to the very front. We looked through the low door into a crypt-like chapel, six feet square, lined with marble; on the right hand is a cracked slab of marble five feet long; from the roof of the tiny cell hang lamps which belong in various proportions to the Greek, Latin, Armenian and Coptic Churches, who all, along with some Protestants, believe this the Tomb of Christ. The next place you come to is Calvary.





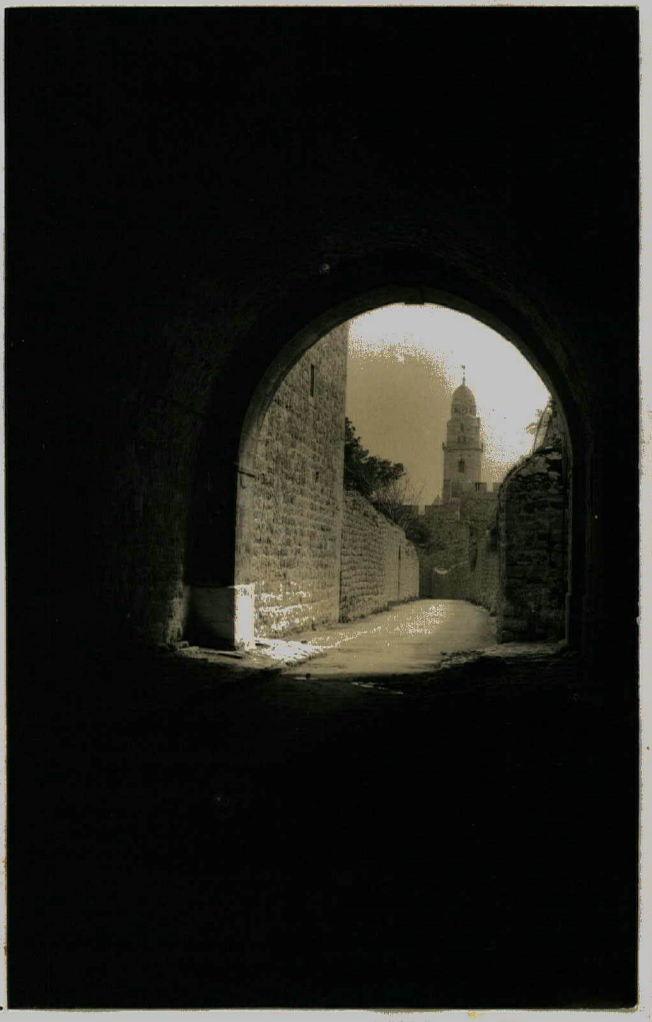
The tomb is badly mutilated by the Churches, but Calvary is worse; the former aspect of the place has been obliterated for ever beneath the suffocating trappings of piety, but it is going too far to tell gullable pilgrims that these marks gave the "hill" the name of "Skull", I found there only one place which I could commend, and that was the nearby Chapel of the Nailing to the Cross; the mosaic there is so lifelike that it makes you shudder, and I was glad to turn away. It was strange to find, amid all this pomp and hypocracy, something which gave real glimpse of the true Calvary, which was rough and cruel, not glittering and soft.

My plan from then on was to wander round the City with a map, and try and cover it all systematically by a process of elimination. This proved highly successful, although it did not leave much time for studying the more famous places. The question of where to begin was solved for me - I wanted to take my watch to the jeweller whom Mrs. Lambie had recommended at the Jaffa Gate, so the course was south-south-west. On the way I passed Hezekiah's Pool, no longer used for storing water, and now an unofficial garbage heap. I walked right round it twice without finding any way in, so I asked the owner of one of the properties which the map showed as backing onto it. He led me through a pitch black junk yard, down some filthy, slimy steps, and there beneath us lay the rubbish dump that was once the Pool. I scrambled down - for it is now nearly empty - and joined a goat, a few scraggy hens and a starving cat at the water's edge. The whole place reeked, so after I had taken two photos I was not sorry to depart via the muddy tunnel by which I had entered.

The jeweller took my watch after examining it, and astonished me by saying that it would be ready in the afternoon; years of watch-repairers in this country had spoiled me. The Jaffa Gate, beside which he has his tiny shop, is now the border of the no-mans land, and is therefore shut, barred, and guarded. Immediately next to it is the Citadel, also known as the Tower of David, tho' it is really a relic of Herod; as it is by nature military I was not sure if either Jews or Arabs would be very pleased to have photos taken of it, but there seemed to be no one to object, and it is of too great historical importance to neglect. The great tower

is one of the few relics of the time of Christ; the huge yellow stones of David's tower existed in the Jerusalem of the Crucifixion, and those of the base appear to be the same to-day. From there I walked due south to the Sion Gate; the border runs along the wall here, so the gate is blocked up and guarded. Peeping over the wall, but in "enemy" territory, is the Church of the Dormition, which I wanted to photograph, if only because there is a gaping shell hole in the dome. There was consternation in the guard house when I poked my head in the door, and they leapt off their seats to throw me out; by pointing to the wall, and my camera, and by making spiralling motions with my hand, I conveyed my wish to climb up the wall and take a photo, but there was nothing doing. I pointed to my camera, and the soldier pointed to his gun, a .303; we understood each other perfectly. But there is a tunnel in the narrow lane

which leads from the Citadel, and I noticed that people passing through were invisible from both ends when in the middle, so as I passed back on the way to lunch I got my photo of the south wall and the Church of the Dormition. The wall unfortunately hides the House of Caiphas, which is between it and the Church, and the Tomb of David, which is beyond the latter. The area is not normally open to the public, as it is a military zone, and I most regretfully had to refuse an offer of a special pass a few days later; but I felt that I had my souvenier anyway. From the Sion Gate I walked along the south wall of the City as far as the Dung Gate. This was a place where hostities raged, and these ruins were a Jewish Synagogue before the War. The path in the photo is excellent as showing a modern street within the city walls; the Temple just shows on the right side.

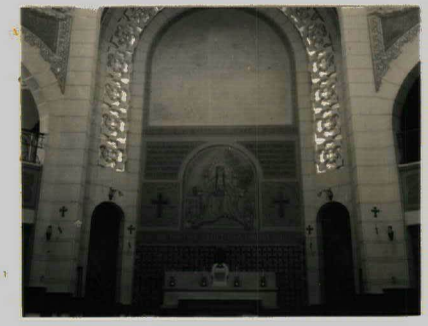


Legendary site of dwelling of Virgin Mary after Crucifix.

Between the Sion Gate and the Dung Gate the path swings away from the wall for about fifty yards, and it is just where it begins to do so that I climbed onto the sentry walk, which runs all the way round, and photoed the View of the Mount of Ascension from the South Wall at the Sion Gate.

The corner of the Temple Area just comes in on the left. The walls of Jerusalem are very interesting and important, her old armour and shield in the many times of trouble. You are always conscious of them, because you are either inside or outside, and there is a tremendous difference. Inside is all dark lanes, high blank walls, and jumbled buildings erected to the glory of God, and you are subconsciously aware of a feeling of imprisonment; outside is modern, open and bright, commercial and non-religious, and you can nearly always see the high city wall, thinking that it clasps the city in its brown stone arms as if trying to shield it from the modern world. Except for a few yards at the Jaffa Gate, the old city lies encircled by its wall as it has been since earliest times, and it now goes down up to eighty feet below the present earth level; the sentry walk is about a yard wide, and runs on a rampart on the inside, but much of it is now "military". This green bank is the only patch of grass I saw within the town; I am very fond of this picture, as it shows so much that isn't there. I went outside the old city through the well preserved Dung Gate, which overlooks the Kedron valley and the City of David. I had no particular plans, but was still trying to cover the city systematically, so I decided to wander along the valley-side as far as I could go (the border was near) and then down to the bottom, along, and back to the Gate; and that, I thought, would have to do for the south-west corner. It was during this unplanned tour that I was struck by the beauty of a building which I identified as the Church of St. Pierre en Gallicante, and decided to investigate. Thus it was by accident that I came upon what I would unhesitatingly say was the most beautiful thing which I saw on the whole tour. I found no reference to the little Church in any of the books, and none of the other tourists seemed to have heard of it, but

the Sanctuaire de Saint Pierre en Gallicante has a simple beauty which I saw nowhere else. It claims to be "undoubtably" built over the House of Caiphas, and is the traditional place of the "casting into the pit" of Psalm 87:3. It was also the place, a typewritten notice says, where the apostles were imprisoned in Acts 4:3 and 5:18-40, but it was already made sacred by the presence of Christ. The outside walls are brilliant with gorgeous mosaics, with colours which sparkled blue and green in the sunlight, with Biblical texts illustrated, the narritive being, as throughout the Church in French. The inside is even more wonderful, perfectly circular and domed, entirely covered with brilliant blue mosaics of Bible scenes except for the unfinished panel; the genius who created the inside of the Upper Church died before completing the task, and as a memorial to him they left his work as it stood, with this little bit unfinished. I sat down in the completely empty pews and just gazed at the glowing splendour and beautiful simplicity of the cleanest and lovliest Church I have ever seen. There are no priests intoning, no incense smoke screens in the air, and the alters are not offensive but rather inspire worship. Downstairs there is a Crypt similarly decorated, built over the rough rock. Below that is the Deep Dungeon in which they say Christ was imprisoned between the trial and Crucifixion, and beside that the Apostles' prison, with the holes in the rock where they tied men who were being flogged. The rope appearantly came vertically up, and horizontally out of the sockets. It is all solid rock, hard, uninviting, and cold.

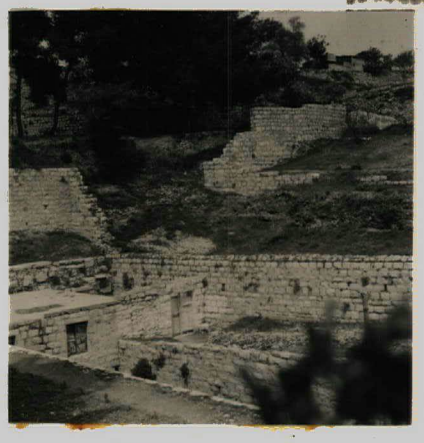


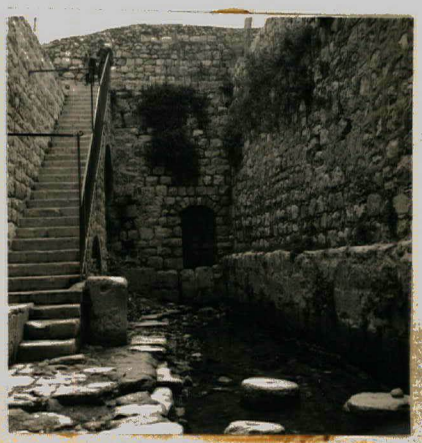
From the dungeon I climbed right up to the top of the tower and let myself out onto the roof; the view is right over the Valley of Hinnom to the Apostles Cave, including the village of Siloam and the field of Blood. There was not so much to see up the hill, with the great yellow wall shutting out half of heaven. I went back down to the Upper Church, and, like the boy who ran away to Scotland, stood in my shoes and I wondered; the French have excelled themselves in creating this truely beautiful building. I met a party of French tourists, and they invited me to join them that afternoon for a walk up the Via Dolorosa; they had their three days in the City planned in almost the same way as ours were in Paris, and were on the way to lunch in the hospice connected with the Church. I went over with them to buy some photos, and was sorely tempted to stay with them, so friendly was the atmosphere; but, as with all large parties, things moved slowly and they looked as if they would take at least an hour for lunch. I was sorry that I did not meet them again, for the French make good travelling companions. The hospice is for pilgrims, not necessarily of that particular faith, and of course was very crowded.

From there I dropped down past the Church to the village in the valley foot, and from the west approached the Pool of Siloam. →

The Pool of Siloam

I was not, and still am not, convinced that this is really the Pool of Siloam, but all the natives insisted that it was, so I could not very well ask them to take me anywhere else. As I approached the clump of trees and buildings seen in the enlargement, there appeared a





narrow slit in the ground, with steps leading down to a trickle of water. Where are the lilies ? Is there no shady rill ? I was not at all sure that this is the place. A devout Moslem was saying his noon prayers on a rug on the little strip of concrete beside the pool as I went down. The water trickles out of the blackness of Hezekiah's tunnel, meanders gently across the exposed space, and disappears down a drain at the far end. I'll never be able to sing that hymn properly again. As one o'clock was drawing near I went back up the hillside, through the Dung Gate, and round by the Sion gate to get my photo of the Church of the Dormition; then through the Souk and up to Orient House for an excellent western lunch, again with fruit.

My one aim after lunch was Gordon's Calvery, and I set off immediately for it. I walked up the dusty lane, with the 10ft stone wall on the right, until I came to the little green door with "Here is the tomb wherein the body of our Lord was laid. I am the Ressurection and the Life." in white paint. I rang the bell, and Mrs. May answered; Mr. May, the warden, was just passing with a party, on his way from the view of Skull Hill to the Winepress. Sitting patiently waiting for his clients was Maurice J. Saad, "Tourists' Guide and Contractor in the Holy Land", who had been so helpful when I arrived, and he gave me one of his watery smiles. Mr. May, who might have been welcoming people to a London missionary meeting, had a large party of American Christians who were giving as good as they got. The Winepress, which they reached just as I joined them, is very old and now ten feet below ground level. It had filled with water in the recent rains and one of the gardeners was busy bailing it out with a bucket.

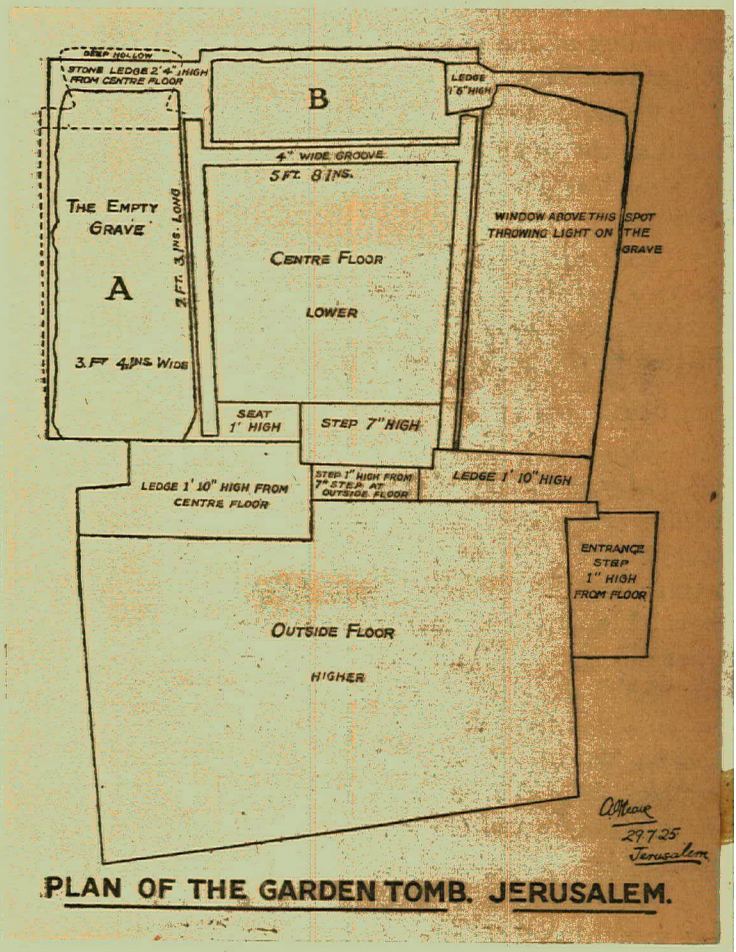
The company moved on to the GARDEN TOMB. These photos should be looked at in the sequence of a figure S. We passed through the luxuriance of the garden until the tomb lay below us

as if the rock face were the backcloth of a stage. The cliff is about 20feet high, and throws back the sun off its yellow limestone face, while the bushy shrubs are like a mop of curly hair on its brow. The open forecourt contains relics of the Crusader Churches which stood on the site, and the back is terraced for seats to be used at services. There are two cisterns here, and in the stone floor a baptismal font six feet by six, aligned so as to face the door. Many things point to this being regarded as a holy place; the niches are said to be those cut by Hadrian when he desecrated Christian places by setting up statues of Venus and Jupiter, and the foot-

(Unconnected) Only the hardiest of plants can grow in earth which is full of old buildings, but palm, pine, cypress, rosemary, jasemine, vine, ruscus and wormwood do, while spring brings out the almond, pomegranate, jonquil and narcissus too.

print in the stone threshold was a deep one long before recent times. The door has been enlarged a little; as a rule the openings of tombs were not made much larger than was necessary to allow the passage of the bier about three to four feet high and two feet wide. The entrance here seems to have been about three and a half feet high and two and a half feet wide; on the left the jamb is strictly perpendicular for its lower three and a half feet , then the upper foot or more declines slightly from the vertical, and it is obvious that this alteration was made at a later date. A circular stone of four to six feet would have closed the old doorway. The masonry at the side was inserted shortly after the Tomb was excavated, and may replace a bit broken down when, and if, Sulahadin used it as a stable about 1187.

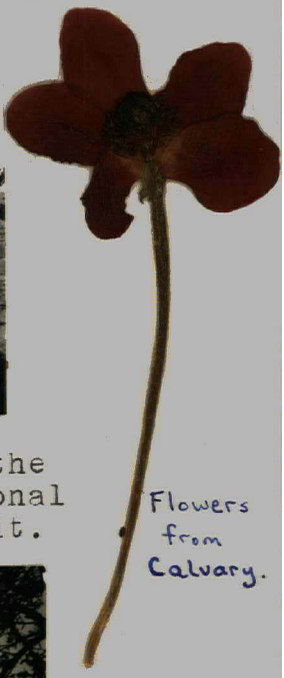
The door is like the door of a house, because the tomb is hewn out of perpendicular rock, and is a true sepulchre, not merely a cave. Inside, like outside, is yellow-white, with a streak of green here and there where some moss has caught on. It is a Jewish family tomb of the Herodian period; incidentally, who said that it was unfinished ? There is no ornamentation; the three graves or 'loculi' occupy three sides, and the vestibule the fourth. The vestibule was large enough to provide room for the bier and the visitors. The direction of the head was always to the east. Of over 400 similar tombs in Jerusalem, this is the only one which agrees with the gospel narrative in detail; in no other can you see in from the door as John did, and the stone partition wall prevented him seeing the napkin until Peter came and entered. The American airman with whom I had dinner was very impressed with the evidence for this being the true site, but as Mr. May said, in an attempt to interest him, "The disciples weren't interested where he lay (or they would have told us), but why."



PLAN OF THE GARDEN TOMB. JERUSALEM.

But He is now risen, and these pictures are of an EMPTY GRAVE.

We went back to look at Skull Hill, often called "Gordon's Calvary". The local Arabic name is El Heidemiyeh, or the Rent. Mr. May took me to the usual vantage-point in the Garden, surrounded by barbed wire, a relic of the Arab-Jewish war.



Flowers from Calvary.

Two days later I climbed up the hill, via the Moslem cemetary at the back, to the tree which marks the approximate spot of the traditional Jewish Beth-ha-Sekelah, or House of Stoning, and looked out from it.

This illustrates perfectly "outside the city wall" →, and shows the Damascus Gate, by which many now think the Lord came out. The branches are those of the tree in the small picture. The 150 yards to the city wall are now occupied by the Jericho Road and a garage, and spoil the traditional view from the wall out. This area was quarried, as Josephus tells us. From ← the side of Skull Hill, left of the Head, the Tomb can be seen thru the garden. The reason for quarrying the hill was not only to provide stone for the walls, but also to protect the city, for no military engineer would allow the main gate to be threatened

and dominated by a hill at its side. How the extraordinary face has been caused no one can say with any certainty; the vertical rifts appear to be earthquake cracks. As we walked back to the gate, Mr. May picked a sprig of green from a hedge of wormwood, the drug referred to in the Bible. The Garden is the quietest and most reverent spot in the whole of Jerusalem.

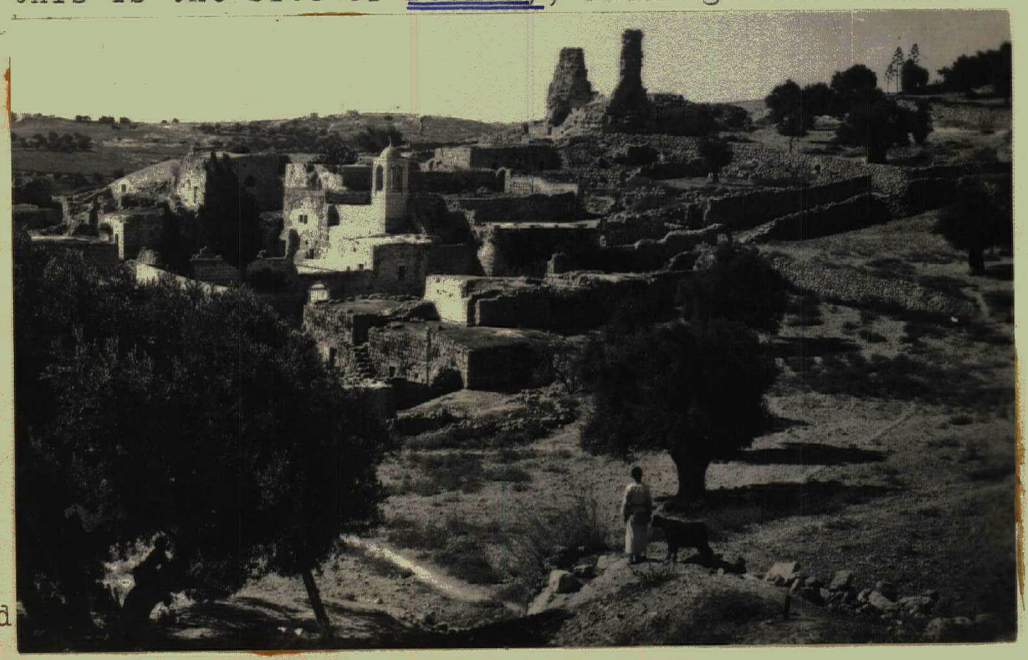
The Mays asked me to stay for tea, and he told me about his troubles. When he had come, 9 years ago, the Garden Tomb (Jerusalem) Association seemed to have denominational attachments, and it had been his desire to rid it of these; he thought that he had succeeded, by giving every Church in turn the right to speak at the services, and now that he was about to retire he was pleased that it was regarded more or less as inter, or un-denominational. He said that there were thousands of visitors every year, and sometimes hundreds a day at Easter. About 1645 I left to pick up my watch, and then wandered the length of the city along the Via Dolorosa. I repassed Hezekiah's Pool, about which I have now learned a little more. It is completely surrounded by houses, and the orthodox way to see it is to look through a window. It is about 80yards long by 40 wide, and used to be fifty feet longer on the north side. Formerly it was connected by an ancient aqueduct with Mamillah Pool which fed it; in the wet season it is full and in the dry it is empty. Its chief importance now is in tracing the course of the Second Wall, upon which so much depends. In the Bible we read how Hezekiah made a pool and brought water into the city, and how he stopped the water of the fountains of the city lest the enemy make use of them. Josephus mentions the pool, describing military operations by the Tenth Legion near to it during the seige by Titus. The plain inference is that the city's water supply was conserved inside the walls by Hezekiah.

I hoped to get into the Holy Sepulchre and the Tomb, but the great outer door was locked, and the watchman said that it would not open again until the morning. Then I went right down the Via Dolorosa, past the exterior Stations of the Cross, to the Church of Saint Anne which contains the Pool of Bethesda. It is very low down, all underground, and difficult to re-construct in imagination as being anything like the coloured picture which hangs on the Church wall. Beside hangs the appropriate passage of Scripture in approximately ninety languages, but there seemed to be no one to sell the post cards which were on display. I came back, and the photo appears with Saturday's pictures. I went down a flight of steps to a damp looking well affair, but it is archeological rather than picturesque. As the sun went down I left the city by St. Stephen's Gate, and wandered round to the Golden Gate of the Temple, now blocked up in an Arab attempt to prevent the second coming of Christ, who, tradition says, will return thru this Gate. The side of the hill down from the wall is here

a graveyard covered by countless thousands of Moslem tombs; their white stones shine like bones, because both Jews and Moslems believe that the last judgment will be held in the arid valley of Kedron, and wish to be first on the Resurrection morning. I walked along under the proud, hard, tawny wall, looking across to the bare rocky ridge of the Mount of Olives, which stands slightly higher than Jerusalem and therefore screens the city from the desert land that falls to the Dead Sea. At the Gate through which the Lord made his triumphal entry I turned and walked back in the gathering gloom, for the stony wilderness bleached white by thousands of gravestones which covers the sloping ground outside the wall is far from inviting in the dark. On the way back I stopped at the Queen of Sheba gift shop, and spent a most pleasant hour among their souveniers, eventually choosing a tapestry, a camel ink-stand, and a string of camels being led by a donkey. They all seemed rediculously cheap to me, especially after I had beaten him down five shillings on the carpet, but perhaps he had the last laugh after all because when he had given in with the expression of being robbed he presented me with some dried flowers as an 'extra' for being a good customer. I heartily recommend the shop as a well-stocked and reliable gift centre. After a good dinner with the American airman from Germany who was 'doing' the Near East at the rate of one country per two days, I retired grateful for a wonderful day, and slept the sleep of the just.

FRIDAY, 3rd APRIL

Easter dawned a fine day, very hot and not a cloud in the clear blue sky. I had a shower, a good breakfast, and was away by 0800. I took a taxi along the Jericho road to Bethany, the village of Martha and Mary. This is not one of the popular tourist places, and I was left to explore in peace. There is no doubt that this is the site of Bethany, although the actual houses which the guides are only too happy to show you cannot possibly be authentic. If this huddle of old stones is meant to be a village I would say that it is a ruin, but if it is meant to be a ruin I would say that it is well preserved



It was a change to have to look for a guide, but soon one came and showed me what is called the House of Martha and Mary, in which is a well preserved olive press of Crusader times. Several small boys of about fourteen, who spoke excellent English, attached themselves to me and tried to sell me a sling which they called "David's"; one selected a pebble and, whirling the sling round his head, suddenly shot the stone into the valley below. They followed me, reducing the price, up to the Tomb of Lazarus, where a terrible old white haired dwarf demanded money for admittance. I did not have sufficient left in Jordan currency, so I gave him about four times the value in some Lebanon notes I had left over; in return I got a tiny taper, and was allowed to descend. He tried to keep out the small boys, for whom he had no love, but since I had grossly overpaid him I felt I was entitled to insist that the one I liked most came with me. We went down, about 20 steps, and then turned and went under them to a tunnel leading to a small cavern hewn in the rock; this square tomb chamber is the traditional place from which Christ recalled Lazarus to life. The dark and dusty vestibule half way down used to be a Christian church, and one of the most hallowed and ancient of the holy places in Palestine, but now all that remains are the ruins of an alter. At a later date the Moslems seized it and turned it into a mosque which still stands above the tomb. From there the boy accompanied me to the House of Simon the Leper

from the top of which, against the light, I took this View of Bethany, looking east. There is no probability of the genuineness of these particular localities, except that somewhere on this pleasant hill they were situated. Bethany is pleasantly situated, has good water, and is surrounded by cultivated spots

and numerous fig, olive, almond, and carob trees; after coming from the Jordan valley it appears luxuriant and green by contrast.

I asked the boy to show me the path over the hill to the Mount of Olives, a track which the Lord must have known well, and he followed for a long way asking for more baksheesh. At last I shook him off, and plodded upward to the Mount of Ascension; it was a hot day, without a cloud in the sky, and the path was like a ribbon of dust across the fields. The first good view of the Church of the Ascension is from the Church where the Lord mounted the mule to begin his Triumphal Entry.

It was not very startling inside, but a little better than the average. From it I climbed slowly to the top of Mount Olivet, on the middle summit of which tradition fixes the crowning scene of His earthly life; this is in plain contradiction to the narrative of Luke, but St. Helena built the Church here, and many others were built by the Crusaders to memorialize particular events, such as the place where Christ is said to have taught his disciples the Lord's Prayer, and where he wept over Jerusalem. The district from which this photo is taken seems to be known as Bethphage. The hills are now barren and neglected, and a few scattered olive trees only are left to justify its name; the bare ridge of rock sloping up from the stricken-looking Kedron valley is rocky except where a few ploughed fields are terraced in the rock and upheld on the hill by breast high walls of limestone. In any other part of the world the Mount of Olives would seem bare and inhospitable, but in contrast to Jerusalem and the mountains by which it is surrounded it is peaceful and gracious. On the centre peak is the Russian Church of the Ascension, and an accompanying monastery, all now taken over by the Moslems. The Chapel Tower can be seen for miles around, and is a very useful landmark. I wandered round the vegetable garden for a bit trying to get far enough away to get a photo, and then let myself out of the wire gate, which seemed very heavily guarded by nuns.

As I left the Church I saw a Chevrolet station waggon which looked more than familiar, and sure enough the Setos were in the garden taking photos. They invited me to come with them down to Jericho and the Dead Sea in the afternoon, and I was very glad of the offer; it was also nice to know that my company had not been intolerable on the Petra trip, because if it had they would never have suggested any more. Through the patches of cultivation which are not very appearant on the Mount of Olives until you are among them, I dropped down the hillside with Jerusalem spread in front of me.

The wall facing is the east wall; the dome in the centre of the picture is the enormous Moslem mosque, the Dome of the Rock, which occupies the site of Soloman's temple. The projection below it is the Golden Gate, and St. Stephen's Gate, the Sheep Gate of the OT, is the blur to the right of that. The thousands of sheep required for sacrifices in the Temple were gathered outside it, and passed into Jerusalem this was. The corresponding view, from the City to the Mount of Olives, includes the Church of the Ascension on top, the Latin Garden of Gethsemane with the beautiful Church of All Nations at the bottom, with the Russian Church of St. Mary Magdalene just showing amid the thickest part of the trees which form the Russian Garden of Gethsemane. In the bottom left hand corner is the Tomb of the Virgin Mary. As I came down I passed 'Dominus Flevit', the spot where the Master wept over Jerusalem.

A crowd of small boys accompanied me all the way down, and the procession grew like a snowball; I didn't really mind them, but it was difficult to pause and think with them milling around. However, they proved useful

as unofficial guides, because they had guessed where I was going, and kept presenting me with buttonholes of wild flowers which were very nice in reasonable quantities. They waited for me outside the Russian Garden, but were gone when I came out of the Latin. As we came down the hill, the view of Jerusalem came more to our level,

and soon we arrived outside the part of the Garden of Gethsemane which is owned by the Russian Church. After quite a bit of ringing a keeper came to open the big iron barred gate. There is no evidence to prove, but no good reason to deny, the identity of the lower slopes of this 2724 feet above sea level hill with Gethsemane. As with Calvary, the Latin tradition is the strongest, but the other, in this case the Russian, is the nearer to what the original was. Time has not altered the place; to-day, as in the years of our Lord, it is the only place in which you can go to sit under a tree and forget the nervous tension of the city. There are rows upon rows of cool, shady trees, most of them cypress; all is quiet and striped with shadow. Through the screen of leaves there rises the onion-shaped domes of the ornate Church of St. Mary Magdalene. I passed on to the Garden kept by the Franciscans, which is very neatly laid out around the great Church, and looks more like an English rose-garden than the Russian. The main sight is eight majestic olive trees of tremendous girth, which are perhaps the oldest and certainly the most venerable trees in the world; they appear dead, and yet new shoots spring out of trunks which are propped up with ramparts of stone and stout wooden poles. Without doubt they are post-Titus in age, altho' they may have sprouted from the roots of the tree under which the Lord taught; one regards the friar who says such things with respect for the piety which makes him think so, but distaste for the principle which profits from it. With grace and reverence, and very good taste, the Franciscans have not altered the Garden except to make very beautiful flower beds among the ancient olive trees. I looked into the enormous Church which marks the place where Peter, James and John were told not to sleep and did, but it looked like the hundred and one other churches which I had seen recently so I didn't linger. The sun still beat down.

JERUSALEM from the air.

The Temple Area is on the right.

The Tomb-strewn Kidron Valley.

The Tomb of Absalom (see opposite), on the ~~right~~ left, was once believed to contain the grave of David's son. At the right are the Tomb of St. James and the pyramidal Tomb of Zachariah. Religious people who believe that the world will be judged in this valley want to be buried here so as to be first at the Resurrection.

On the other side of the road is the Church of the Dormition of the Lady Mary.

I went down the long flight of stairs into the pitch blackness which is lit only by candles, and turned right at the bottom to the gloomy tunnel which leads to a tiny crypt lit by oil lamps. It was all dark and unfriendly, with the mysterious yellow glow of the lights, and I felt that it was not very flattering to the Virgin. Coming up the endless broad stairway was about as pleasant as Orpheus leaving the Underworld; some other famous person is supposed to be buried on the other side of the huge vault at the bottom, but I forget who. Then, with a backward look over the olives to the Church of All Nations, I dropped away from the Jericho Road into the valley of Josaphat, and came to that remarkable mausolea which few people seriously consider to be the Tomb of Absalom. Archeologists are not agreed as to the dates of these curious cenotaphs, but they are usually attributed to the time of the Roman occupation. The lower part is a solid mass of rock about twenty feet square, and the pillar is crowned with a peculiar spire. The inside is blocked up with rubbish and with stones thrown in by those who like to display in this fashion their traditional hatred of David's ungrateful son. Behind this monument, partially obscured by it, is the Tomb of Jehoshaphat. A little further south are the Tombs of St. James and Zechariah, the first excavated in the face of the rock, and the other resembling in some degree that of Absalom. Another crowd of small boys accompanied me down to the Virgin's Fountain, so called because a 14th century legend says that the Virgin once washed the swaddling clothes of the Holy Infant in this spring. It is artificailly connected with the Pool of Siloam by a tunnel which King Hezekiah built when he was forced to contemplate a seige, and I watched the water disappearing into the darkness with only a slight desire to follow it. The winding tunnel is 1749 feet long, and ensured that there would be a supply of water inside the city even when the Assyrians occupied the outside.

I thought it as well to encourage the boys to stay with me, because they knew where the unmarked border lay, and we were getting very near it as we came to the Valley of Hinnom, or Ge Hinnom, or Gehenna, otherwise hell. The day before some Americans had been put in cold storage for crossing, and I wouldn't be surprised if the Jews would shoot at sight in these days of tension. We passed the Field of Blood, which Judas bought with his thirty pieces of silver, and came to Bir Aiyub, Job's Well. The connection with the Patriarch is quite fictitious and imaginary, and indeed explorers are not decided whether the well is ancient or of no later date than the 16th century, when it was known as Nehemiah's Well. It is an intermittent spring, about 125 feet, and overflows annually in January. At this point I thought that we had gone far enough, so we returned, by the Pool of Siloam, to the Dung Gate, where I said good-bye to my juvenile escort.

After changing some money at one of the many stalls - they give a better rate than the banks - I went to the Temple, because Friday is the day when when the Jews do most of the wailing at the Wailing Wall. The keeper at the door to the Temple Area reminded me that Friday is the Moslem Sunday, and no infidels were admitted to the Temple on the holy day - no doubt we would defile it. But the Jewish Wailing Wall is on the outside of the Temple, and can be visited at any time. For once the map let me down - the lanes just didn't lead to the right place; I asked at least half a dozen natives, but they didn't seem to know. At last another visitor took me to it - or was it it ? It certainly answered to the pictures I had seen, but where were the Jews to wail ? Slowly it dawned on me - there are no Jews in this part of Jerusalem now, and if there were it mightn't be the wisest thing - politically - to proclaim it publicly. The enormous wall was absolutely deserted; the narrow winding lane is straight for fifty yards along the tawny stretch of wall from whose cracks grow tufts

of grass and wild caper plants. The wall is about sixty feet high, and the lower courses are of blocks of brownish stone of tremendous size - one is sixteen and a half feet long by thirteen wide; this is believed to be the only fragment of the Temple wall which the soldiers of Titus did not destroy after the siege. Since the twelfth century, when the exterior wall was allotted to the Jews for a place of prayer, the Orthodox Jew has wailed, with renewed vigour on Fridays, for the departed glories of Israel; now for the first time he is silent. I turned the sharp corner and wended my way back through the lanes to the Damascus Gate, and up to the Hotel.

After a good though quick lunch - for it was almost time to meet the Setos - I packed in two minutes, and paid the bill; it was very reasonable, and they charged me for only a single room, although I had really been in a double. I nodded farewell to the shoe black at the door, who had looked so longingly at my dust-covered shoes each time I had come in and was always so disappointed to see them clean by my own hands when I went out again, for we had grown quite accustomed to smiling at each other. I reached the American Colony just as Mr. Seto was stowing the luggage in the back of the waggon, and we set off about 1400 for the Jericho Road and the Dead Sea. There was also in the back this time a Miss Ellis who was staying at the Colony, and again I found myself expected to act as guide. Fortuneately I remembered the road, although it was not difficult because there is only one road. It was roasting hot in the Jordan Valley, and we ran straight down and parked on the north shore of the Dead Sea. There was quite a crowd of natives

in bathing, but we restricted ourselves to paddling; the water is sparkling blue, and absolutely clear because no plants can grow in it. A little breeze covered the glassy surface with ripples just as it would Loch Lomond or Killarney; the scene outwards is like any other, with pleasure boats and bathers - ordinary bathers, not floating like corks as most books make out. But the scene inwards is different from any other; the shores are barren and scorched, and encrusted with salt. The grey banks are chemical ridden, and there is a smell of sulphur from the weird, twisted foothills, stained and tortured like the deposit at the bottom of a crucible. No tree grows on the banks, and it would be difficult to find a more desolate

region on the earth. The waters lap the beach of pebbles in oily little waves, but there are no shells; thousands of locusts which have made a forced landing at sea have been cast up mummified along the high water mark, and I selected four as souveniers. It was very pleasant by the lake-side, but we had to push on to Jericho.

The modern Jericho is about two miles from the Biblical "city of palm-trees" where Christ brought salvation to Zacchaeus and sight to Bartimaeus. We drove through the wide metalled streets with the busy stone shops on either side, intending to go as far as the Jordan, but decided that that would take too much time and turned back. The Setos were most anxious to point out to me lemon trees, which I had not seen before, and banana and orange trees which I had; when the car stopped, it was filled with the most beautiful aroma of fruit blossom, for Jericho is an oasis of green amid the dreadful desolation. The houses are set among expansive gardens of the most luxuriant tropical plants, as we saw more particularly when we stopped to visit a friend of the Satos who was working with the refugees under Point-4. A pedlar tried to sell us American chewing-gum while the car was stopped, but we were far more refreshed by a jug of water from the house. The critical accounts of modern Jericho in the older travel books are quite unjustified, because it now appears on the surface to be a delightfully planned and up to date town, with good stone buildings and electric lighting; all the streets through which we travelled were far better than Edinburgh's. With the social worker for a guide, we travelled north by car to the remains of Ancient Jericho. These are a huge mound of earth and stone on a level plain, behind which rises the mountain on which Joshua's spies sought refuge. The sun-caked mound rises to a height of about twenty or thirty feet, and from it archeologists have dug out the ruins of houses, streets, and a wall. I scrambled down a pit to ask one who was, regardless of the crowds, quietly tabulating her finds whether there were any recent discoveries of Biblical significance, and she said that she thought that they were now working on the real Jericho of the Bible, and that Professor Garstang's excavations on the other side of the road belonged to a different period ! Near where we left the car is Elisha's Fountain, which is said to be the one which the prophet healed with salt in 2 Kings 2:19.

As we stood by the excavations, some women came through the cornfields with clay water pots on their heads, and as they were the first I had seen at close quarters I tried to get a photo; but it was most unlikely that they would allow themselves to be taken, and by the time their backs were turned they were up-sun. It is always the women who do this, which explains the appearantly vague direction to the disciples to follow a man bearing a pitcher of water - a most unusual sight. As we joined the road again, we saw a crowd of women coming from the well, some with the shapely old jugs, but many with petrol cans; as they passed, I gratefully accepted the rare chance of photographing them, with the wonderful gardens of Jericho and the whole of the Jordan valley as a background. It is just possible to see the distant hills of Moab in the background. This picture was to get a wider circulation than I ever dreamed at time, when I was not very satisfied with it and, if it hadn't been for the time factor, I would have run on and laid another ambush further down the road. As it was, there was just time to rush back to Jerusalem where a taxi for Hebron was just leaving, and I finally said farewell to the Setos.

I reached Dr. Lambie's house about 1800, and there was a larger gathering of guests than previously, there now being a full house except for the shed which had been meant for Charles and myself. We had dinner at 1900, talked until 2100, and then I went downstairs to share a room with a pleasant Irishman who denounced Popery with great violence at the slightest opportunity. The electric generator was turned off at half past nine, which was an effective way of sounding 'lights out', and we were both glad to go to sleep early for a change.

SATURDAY, 4th APRIL

Breakfast was at 0700, so the house was well awake by 0630; there was, as usual, only cold water, but at least it came out of a tap - altho it went into a bucket. About 0800 I went down to the foot of the hill to wait for the bus to Jerusalem; after a few minutes a dreadful apology of a bus rolled along, and had no difficulty in stopping. It was a cross between a large station waggon and a small bus, and I was not the least surprised to read that a few days later one of them suddenly burst into

flame on the road when a petrol pipe burst. But the passengers - refugees from the near-by camp - were very nice and considerate; one got up and gave me his seat, and another took my fare - I knew how much it was, and he didn't take any more - and pushed his way thru the crowd round the driver-cum-conductor while we lurched along. The theory was that you came in by the front door and paid as you passed the driver, but when the bus was packed it was quite enough to get on first and worry about the rest later. I got off at Herod's Gate as we came into Jerusalem, and posted several cards at the Post Office; I was surprised how cheap it was to air-mail a heavy postcard home - d.

First of all I headed for the Temple Area, which is open to such non-believers as Christians only until 1130, and it is one of the "musts" of Jerusalem. Its proper name is al-Haram al-Sharif; "The August Sanctuary", and the whole area is sacred to Moslems. It is roughly a rectangle with roughly an area of 150,000 square yards, and covers the site of Soloman's great Temple; in these courtyards Jesus preached and from these gates He drove the hucksters who defiled Herod's Temple. But before even that, 'David built there an altar unto the Lord and offered burnt offerings'; perhaps it was the hill which Abraham ascended to slay Isaac. When Titus destroyed Herod's Temple, the enormous space left desolate seems to have embarrased even the Romans; then the Moslems came, and when the pilgrimage to Mecca was interrupted it was hoped to make the old Temple area of the Jews a rival of the Kaba - the vast space around the shrine was designed to hold such crowds as flock to Mecca. This, however, did not happen, but it still takes second place among the holy spots of Islam for it was from this rock that the Prophet Mahomet ascended into heaven on the back of his winged steed, "Lightning". The principal edifice of the Temple Area now is the Dome of the Rock on a raised platform in the middle.

I went to the gate, and was told to buy a ticket at the office before entering. There was a mob of people trying to do the same thing in a small room overlooking the Dome, but eventually I reached the desk and had various forms filled in in Arabic. In return for four shillings I received a guide-book which represented the admission ticket as well, and which contained a lot of not very interesting information about the Moslem ideas of what the Area stood for. I went in by the Bab-al-Silsileh gate, one of the seven that pierce the wall of the Temple, and found myself in a gigantic stone-paved park, as big as a school playground. The contrast with the narrow, noisy lanes on the other side of the wall is made all the greater by the silence and spaciousness of these acres of stone flags. The prophecy of the Lord that there shall not be left one stone upon another has been literally and fearfully fulfilled; the Jewish temple has disappeared, and the Moslems glory in the possession of the place. Mount Moriah is to Jerusalem what the Acropolis is to Athens. The Haram area is an artificial oblong plateau, paved with marble, 1530 x 1018 feet, and ornamented with fountains, cypresses and other trees, and enclosed by supporting walls. It is not difficult to replace the Moslem sanctuary by the Jewish temple in imagination, for this part has not been destroyed and rebuilt with the frequency of the rest of the city; it has descended to us essentially unchanged since the time of Christ.

I climbed the steps onto the base on which stands the Dome of the Rock. It is an octagonal building, each side measuring 67 feet, and is surmounted by a lofty dome with a gilt crescent. The whole structure, including the ten foot platform, is 170 feet high. As I approached I was given two enormous barge-like slippers, but I preferred to take off my shoes and carry them with me into the dim, carpeted dome. The soft inside is surrounded by stained glass windows of exquisite beauty, but all the centre is hidden by an intricate screen of metal-work; by entering a small door in the 'lift-gate', and peering in the streaky coloured light over a five foot wall, you can see the Top of Mount Moriah.

It looks as if the peak of the rugged hill is pushing its way through the floor; the naked, greyish limestone rises from one to six feet, and is 57 feet long by 43 wide. It is enclosed by an iron railing with arrow headed points and metallic candlesticks. At the side there is a crack, and the explanation is that when the Prophet ascended to Paradise the rock attempted to follow him, but was kept back from its native quarry - for it descended from heaven - by the angel Gabriel, who left his large hand-prints as a memorial of the miracle. Underneath is a sight which is slightly more credible - the hole cut in the rock which drained the blood of the sacrifices made on the Jewish alter of burnt offering and carried it into the valley of the Kedron. At one side of the rock a flight of steps goes down into a cavern underneath the rock itself, and there you can look up through the wide hole down which the entrails were

poured. The floor was beginning to feel cold to stockinged feet, and I wanted to push on, so I went out by the way I had come in, back into the blazing sunshine.

I walked to the south of the dome, and was going to take a picture of it when I found that the viewfinder of the camera had come unstuck inside and all was blackness; out came the invaluable screwdriver and I sat down beside the Feet-Washing Fountain to repair it. That having been done, I took the photo with the fountain and the elegant arch called Scales - because, according to tradition, the scales of judgment are to be suspended here - in the foreground. I didn't quite understand the purpose of the washing, but there were taps protruding outwards from the circular wall and men sat down on the steps to wash their feet; whether it is for ceremony or utility I didn't find out. Then I moved round to the east of there and took what I consider one of my best photos; the flat, stony grass is the 'Temple area', the second of the three Scales arcades is opposite the one I took before, and glittering in the sun in the background is the magnificent Dome of the Rock, which forces itself conspicuously into every picture of Jerusalem. The columns which support the gilded roof are of porphyry, breccia, and other tinted stones picked up by the Moslems from the ruins of Roman Jerusalem.

This ground look innocent enough from here, and who would guess that underneath it lie the enormous Stables of Soloman, a series of vaults erected on massive square pillars. After some delay in getting the door opened, we descended a flight of stone stairs in the south-east corner, and entered the huge crypt.

"Solomon had four thousand stalls for horses and chariots," says the Bible, "and twelve thousand horsemen." Although these present vaults, which uphold part of the Temple platform, appear to be Roman work of the time of Justinian, with certain later Arab reconstructions, they occupy the site of the famous underground Stables of Solomon. There are eighty-eight pillars ranged in fifteen rows supporting a heavily vaulted roof, and it is obvious from the bases of the pillars that much of the place is still many feet deep in ancient debris. This must also have been the way Queen Athalia, the daughter of Ahab and Jezebel, was thrust out to be murdered in order that the sanctuary should not be stained with her blood. The vaults are just to-day as they were when the Crusaders entered Jerusalem; they like Solomon used the vaults as stables, and small holes drilled in the angles of the pillars still show where the Crusaders chained their chargers.

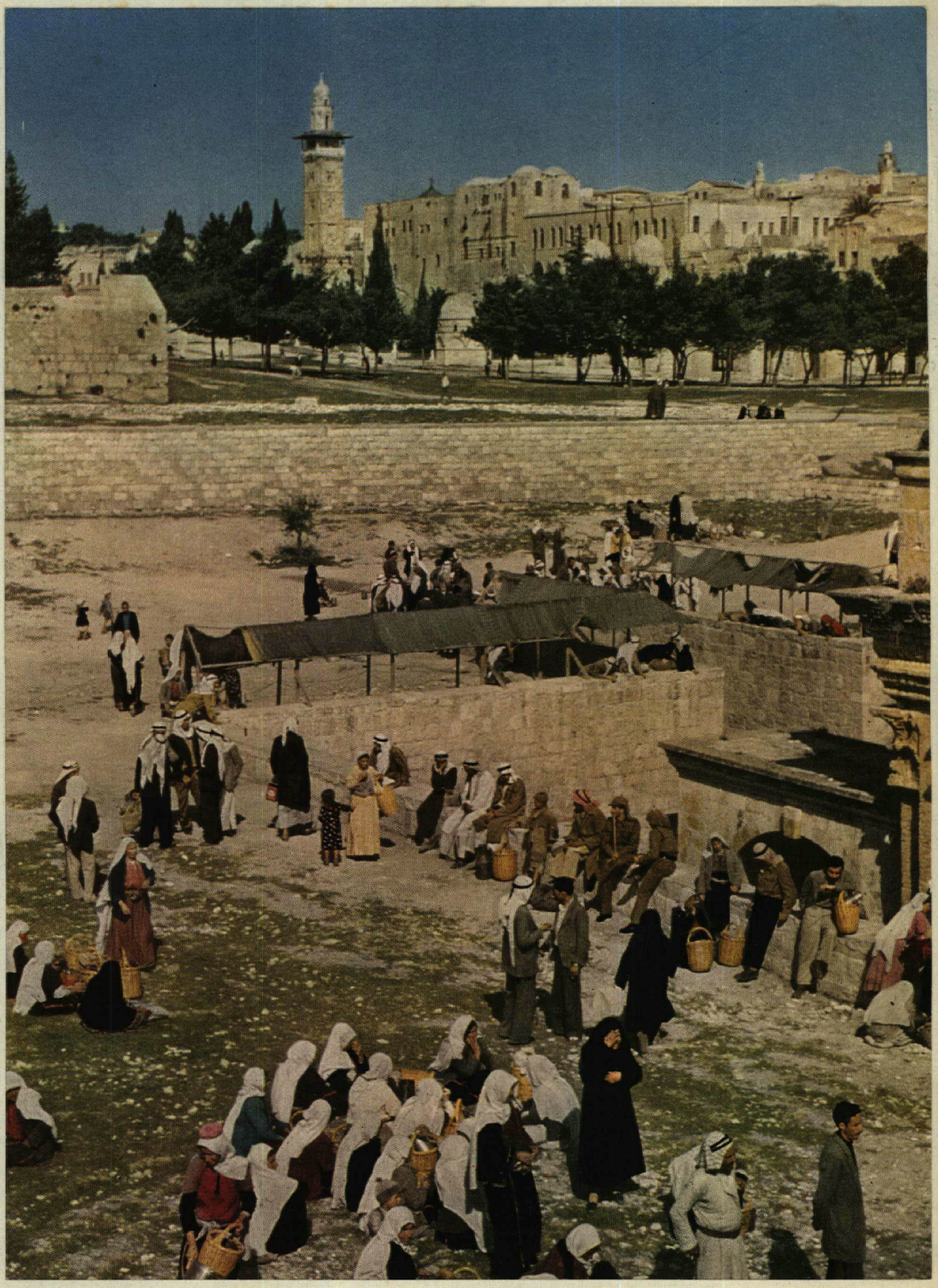
From there I walked northwards along the Temple Area, past the ornamental Golden Gate which was being used as a corn-dole for the refugees, to the Church of St. Anne and the Pool of Bethesda. The Church occupies the site of the mediaeval church of that name which was built over the Grotto of St. Anne to commemorate the traditional home of St. Anne and the birthplace of the Virgin Mary. It was given by the Sultan to Napoleon III on the conclusion of the Crimean war, and is now the property of the Order of the White Fathers. Though the building has been thoroughly repaired by the French, they have made no material alteration in the crusading church which replaced the old seventh-century one, and traces of its Saracenic occupation are still to be seen in an Arabic inscription over the doorway and the prayer-niche in the south wall. Attached to it is a most fascinating museum of Biblical objects, with all the animals, insects, plants, weapons, domestic utensils, and minerals mentioned in the Bible neatly laid out and labelled; I spent an hour there, and could have waited for several more without seeing all the exhibits. But I had come to see the Pool; it looked cheerier in the daylight, and the calm clear water down in the underground cave seemed to speak of age and dignity. I took a photo looking from the bottom of the steps down back up to ground level, but because I forgot to wind on the film the Pool of Bethesda is mixed with gambling-squares scratched on the stone floor of Pilate's Judgment Hall by the bored soldiers, the next place which I visited.

The Via Dolorosa is typical of the innumerable streets, alleys, and bazaars of Jerusalem, intersecting each other and many covered in by tunnels, while others are dark lanes appearantly bounded by high walls - for few of the houses have windows looking into the street. The lanes of Jerusalem are striped like a tiger; you pass perpet-

:ually from strips of sunlight into bands of shadow, and whether they are vaulted or open to the sky you are conscious of a feeling of imprisonment. To most visitors the Via Dolorosa is of supreme interest, for they are taught to believe it is the road on which Jesus carried the Cross; if we adopt the authenticity of this, we assume as proved the site of the Praetorium and allow that the walls of the Holy Sepulchre Church enshrine the true Calvary - two of the most disputed points in the whole range of the sacred sites contoversy. Whether it is the actual road or only a memorial to it does not matter to the average pilgrim, and generations of pilgrims have been helped by treading it, and do not care that the evidence for all fourteen stations of the Cross is historically slight and contradictory - indeed the tradition dates only from the beginning of the sixteenth century. I walked from the graceful Saracenic arch of the ancient Gate of St. Stephen - the path to the valley leads to the traditional spot of his death - to the first Station of the Cross, the place where Pilate said to the mob "Ecce homo ... Behold the Man", which is now commemorated by an Arch, here seen from the east but usually, as in the far picture, taken from the west. Just opposite it is the Church of the Scourging,

with the Latin text of Matthew's account of that dreadful event over the door. It is most unlikely that this site is authentic, but it is the Second Station of the Cross. Annexed to it is a convent, and I was told to apply there to see the actual pavement on which Pilate sat in judgment; I rang the bell, and a little girl of about fourteen opened the massive door. The whole place was a magnificent structure in marble, with many alters and shrines, but I did see a bit of what somebody has said was the original Roman pavement, and took the photo of the scratches in it which the soldiers used for dicing to while away the time. The girl chattered away like a parrot - it was all learned by heart, and I doubt if she understood it - in French, but I got the gist of the story, and managed to ask a few questions. She had cut her finger, and it was bleeding profously, but she didn't seem to dare ask for a bandage; I wasn't sure about a tip, but the Convent presumably expected something for their child-labour, so I gave her a couple of shillings, and judging by the magnificence of the colossal marble building quite a few other people have done so too. Stations Three to Seven are marked by plaques in the walls of the Via, but it is mercifully short - scarcely a thousand paces.

I followed it only as far as its junction with the Souk, and then branched right to go to Gordon's Calvary instead of following the via sacra to the more popular place of crucifixion. There I climbed to the tree which would stand where the Tree once stood, and looked



The Temple Area inside the Golden Gate being used as an Arab refugee corn-dole.