



DR. TORRANCE

[Photo, Lafayette

Frontispiece]

# A GALILEE DOCTOR

BEING A SKETCH OF THE CAREER  
OF DR. D. W. TORRANCE  
OF TIBERIAS

BY

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## FOREWORD

THE career of the first Christian physician to heal and teach on the shores of the Lake of Galilee, in the scenes most closely associated with the ministry of Jesus, cannot fail to possess some points of interest. Like all missionary memoirs it is a story of heroic struggle and perseverance, but, unlike others, it possesses little glamour of visible achievement. Now, as of old, it would seem, Jesus is not without honour save in the district in which He lived and founded the Christian faith. The Sea of Galilee Mission was established thirty-nine years ago, and the intervening period has been filled in with medical, educational, and evangelistic service of the most strenuous kind: the results may, therefore, appear meagre after so great an expenditure of effort, but the real significance of the situation will be learnt from the narrative. In addition to throwing light on the peculiarly difficult nature of missionary work amongst Jews and Moslems, it traces the development of the events which have led up to the present political position in Palestine.



## THE STORY IN BRIEF

*“ Come ye after Me.”*



*“ And His fame went throughout all Syria : and they brought unto Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases and torments, and those which were possessed with devils, and those which were lunatick, and those that had the palsy ; and He healed them.”*



*“ Master, we have toiled all the night, and have taken nothing : nevertheless, at Thy word——”*



*“ To what purpose is this waste ? ” . . .*

*“ Why trouble ye ? She hath wrought a good work upon Me.”*



*“ Well done, good and faithful servant.”*

## PART ONE

### I. A FAMOUS TOUR

1839

THIS story of yesterday and to-day in Palestine has its real beginning in the early part of the nineteenth century, when a noble pity for the Jewish race moved a number of earnest men and women in Scotland to do what little they could to ameliorate its condition. One of the chief of these was Mr. Robert Wodrow, a Glasgow merchant, great-grandson of the historian of the Scottish Church. One devout lady, Mrs. Smith of Dunesk, a daughter of Henry Erskine and sister of the Earl of Buchan, was so influenced that she went to Dr. Moody Stuart, of the Church of Scotland, and placed £100 in his hands.

“Put that into the bank for the mission for the conversion of the Jews,” she said.

“But, madam,” he replied, “there is no such mission; nor has the subject ever been mooted in the General Assembly.”

“Then let it remain in the bank until the Church takes the matter up.”

When the Doctor handed the money to the banker the latter said :

“I do not receive money for an object which has no present or prospective existence,”

After talking it over he finally remarked :

“ Very well ; we never refuse money, and I will accept it on deposit.”

Shortly afterwards, in 1838, the Church of Scotland considered the matter, and in the belief that all social and political good would come to the Jews if they accepted Christ, its scheme of help assumed the form of working for their conversion. A “ Committee for the Conversion of the Jews ” was instituted, charged at first with the simple duty of collecting information and expending any contributions that might be sent in.

Various motives, no doubt, influenced those who took an active part in the movement. Then, as now, a certain number of curious minds were attracted by fanciful theories associated with the promises and prophecies of Scripture and the destiny of Israel ; there were many who believed that it was a primary duty of the Church to bring the scattered “ people of God ” to Christ ; others again were animated simply by a humanitarian impulse ; while not a few were convinced that if the Jews were converted to Christianity and rightly situated in the world, they would, by the force of their special genius, constitute a tremendous power for righteousness and progress.

At the best, however, the work of the Committee appealed only to a limited circle. The majority of persons had no love for the Jew, and any appeal on his behalf left them cold : where it was not received with indifference it evoked derision. Even among prominent members of the Church the Committee was looked upon as a

body of cranks, and tolerated with a kind of amused contempt. "He has a strange notion," one said of Dr. Keith; "he believes in the conversion of the Jews!"

In the eyes of average Church members the Jew was a caricature of a man, a shambling, dirty creature, unsocial, a seller of old clothes, a money-lender, a fanatic, and at the back of their mind was a feeling that he deserved his fate. Had not his race crucified Christ, and was it not suffering just retribution for its iniquity, as its own law declared that evil-doers inevitably do, from generation to generation? They knew nothing of its modern history, that great and terrible romance, perhaps the most terrible of all time, which is not yet finished, or of the conditions that had forced it to become what it was; they did not realize the fact that it was the bitter persecution and repression to which it had been subjected that had kept it in social and religious isolation, and had given it the character which they condemned. For what is called the Jewish problem has been created by Christians; it is the result of their maltreatment of the race for centuries.

Amongst those more than ordinarily interested in the subject was the Rev. Robert Murray M'Cheyne of St. Peter's, Dundee, whose name and influence still linger like a fragrance in the quieter byways of Scotland. His health had given way under the intensity of his ministry, and he was advised to go abroad. He was recruiting in Edinburgh, the source of anxiety to his friends, when one day Dr. Robert Candlish met Dr. Moody Stuart

in the street and said, "Don't you think we might send M'Cheyne to Palestine? He could inquire into the Jewish situation and its possibilities." Dr. Stuart cordially assented, and M'Cheyne was asked if he would go. "Palestine—the Holy Land!"—he had never dreamed that so romantic a privilege would come within his reach. He agreed with joy. The idea developed and ultimately A Mission of Inquiry to Palestine and Eastern Europe was arranged, the delegates consisting of M'Cheyne, his great friend, the Rev. Andrew A. Bonar, and two experienced Churchmen, Dr. Keith, minister of St. Cyrus—in place of Mr. Wodrow, whose health forbade him accepting the task—and Professor Black of Aberdeen. The party set out on their travels in April 1839.

To the Christian world then, Palestine was practically an unknown land. Part of the Ottoman Empire, it had for three centuries been misruled by the Turks until it had become the mere skeleton of a country. The sole purpose of the administration was to exact the utmost possible taxation out of the unhappy population, who had no inducement to exert themselves and no interest in developing and conserving the resources of the land. All its old prosperity had vanished. It had been peeled of most of its soil, and was largely a waste of stones; here and there was an oasis of fertility, but there was no general vital growth; upon its bare surface the hot sunshine beat without relief; and from end to end there lay upon it an absolute quiet like the rigid calm of death.

The dominant party in the country were,

naturally, the Turkish officials, whose only duty was to collect the Government imposts and transmit them to Constantinople. They were comparatively few in number, and were in the position of caretakers rather than of permanent occupants: they sat lightly to the land and were regarded as foreign tax-gatherers and oppressors whose tenure might cease at any time. It was a common saying amongst them that they had to earn three fortunes while in office: one to pay for their position, one to pacify their superiors when accused of mal-administration, and one to purchase a new post. They earned these fortunes by means of "bakhshish," a recognized system of commission or fees in the business life of the East.

The bulk of the population called themselves Arabs because they spoke Arabic, but the name was misleading. Although the Arab conquest of the land brought a new religion, it did not to any extent change the type and character of the inhabitants; in the main they continued descendants of the Israelitish occupants formed by the union of Hebrews and Canaanites. From time to time, however, other elements came in and modified the general strain; and one could still find, in fair faces, pink cheeks, and blue eyes, traces of the Crusaders.

Whether Moslems or Christians, they could be divided broadly into two great classes: within the walled towns lived the effendiyeh, or landowners, and the business and professional men, more or less educated and prosperous; and in the unwalled villages of rude mud houses the settled peasantry

or fellahin, who, while industrious and frugal, were superstitious to the last degree. Outside the pale of town and village existence roamed the nomadic bedouin, of pure Arab origin, with their flocks and herds, wanderers amongst the silent plains and desert wastes, grossly ignorant according to European standards, yet possessing native nobility of character and a virile intellect.

The number of Jews was small—not more than twelve thousand at the outside—and they were confined to the large centres, the holy cities of Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias, and Safed. All had emigrated back from Europe and Northern Africa, for Palestine had never ceased to be of intense interest to the race. It was their spiritual fatherland; their hearts turned to it with an overmastering longing, such a longing as that expressed by a twelfth-century Rabbi for Jerusalem :

*“ Oh, city of the world : thou fair one in holy magnificence,  
In the far Western regions I am longing, yearning after thee ;  
Oh for an eagle’s wings, then would I fly to thee  
And not rest till I had moistened thy dust with my tears ! ”*

Many Jews in all parts of the world faced the long and perilous journey in order to visit one or other of the famous tombs or to die on the sacred soil. Throughout Jewry it was a dream that the land would yet be restored to them. How that would come about they could not conceive, but they hoped that somehow or other in God’s providence the way would open up for them to go back and possess it.

Difficult to reach, it was more difficult to travel

in: outside the towns and the villages only a nominal authority was exercised, and lawlessness went unchecked. Kinglake's *Eöthen* gives a picture of the uncertainties and the discomforts attending a tour in it. No minister of the Church of Scotland had previously paid it a visit, so that the journey of the four deputies was considered a notable achievement.

While making their way up from Egypt through the desert, Dr. Black had a fall from his camel which affected his health, and when Jerusalem was reached, he and Dr. Keith, exhausted by the toil and the heat, decided to leave the further exploration of the country to the younger men, and to return home by easy stages across the Continent. At Budapest, Hungary, both fell ill, and Dr. Keith was so far gone that bearers were in attendance at the hotel to carry out his body. He was cared for by Maria Dorothea, wife of the Archduke Joseph, uncle of the Emperor of Austria and Palatine of Hungary; she was a princess of the house of Würtemberg and a Protestant, and during the Doctor's convalescence she interested him in the spiritual condition of her adopted land, and promised her protection to any mission that might be established.

Meantime Bonar and M'Cheyne carried on their tour; they visited Safed and Tiberias, and on their return published a *Narrative* of their wanderings. Glowing with light and colour, vivid in descriptive detail, and relating every scene and incident to Biblical story, it created profound interest not only in Scotland but far beyond its



borders ; it made Palestine, what it had never been, a real region to Christian people, and it set in motion forces that are unspent at this day.

Missionaries already in the country had dilated warningly on the strong opposition being encountered, but both travellers were enthusiastic as to the possibilities of carrying on a mission. In their opinion no other section of Jewry presented so promising a field. It was the heart of the Jewish world ; in some mysterious way every event that occurred was quickly known in other countries ; as M'Cheyne wrote to a friend, " One stroke here will be worth twenty in another land." Of all the districts they had seen, they were most drawn to Galilee. It was the one which Christ loved and frequented : it was the chief scene of His ministry, and the cradle of the Christian religion. And of all spots in Galilee, Safed, far up on the cool heights and overlooking the Lake, seemed to be the most favourable centre for beginning operations ; it was, indeed, the best situation in Palestine. Tiberias, the only town on the hot Lake shore, might, they thought, be made a winter station.

In the Church of Scotland the effect of the report was immediate : it was resolved to make work amongst the Jews thenceforward one of the great missionary schemes of the Church. By a strange twist in events, however, it was not Palestine that secured the first station but Hungary. " That fall in the desert," said Mr. Bonar, " opened to us the gates of Budapest." The conversations of Dr. Black with the Archduchess led to the dispatch of a missionary there, and the interest which the work

aroused pushed Palestine into the background. One of the early workers at Budapest was the famous " Rabbi " Duncan, and amongst the first converts were the equally well-known Adolph Saphir and Dr. Alfred Edersheim, author of that notable work *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah*.

At the Disruption of the Church of Scotland in 1843 the Jewish missionaries joined the new body, the Church of Scotland Free, and the work abroad went on without interruption. New spheres were opened in various parts of Europe, and Budapest developed and became an important centre and one of the greatest Jewish mission fields in the world. Palestine was forgotten save by a few, one of whom was Mrs. Smith of Dunesk, who left £500 for the mission in the sure belief that it would yet be established. Other organizations entered Galilee. The London Society for promoting Christianity amongst the Jews—commonly known as the London Jews Society, and more recently as the Church Missions to Jews—opened a station at Safed and held it, with varying fortune, until 1852, when the difficulty of carrying on the work in the face of the fanaticism of the Jews caused it to be abandoned. Nazareth, a town which, like Bethlehem, contained no Jews, was occupied for general evangelistic purposes by the Church Missionary Society; by the Edinburgh Medical Mission Society—a world-famous association providing students with training and experience for the mission field—which established a medical mission; and, lastly, by an English orphanage for girls (handed over later to the Church Missionary Society); all in addition to the operations

of the Eastern Churches, which, here as elsewhere, were buying up land and erecting buildings on sites supposed to be connected with New Testament incidents.

But the region immediately encircling the Lake of Galilee remained outside the sphere of Protestant influence. No society had been tempted by the historical associations to begin evangelistic work there ; nor had any Christian physician sought to follow in the footsteps of Jesus on the shores of the Lake ; from the standpoint of medical service the district was still virgin ground. It was waiting for the pioneer who would have the faith and courage to break through its isolation and conquer the formidable obstacles which the situation presented.

And he, meanwhile, in a country far distant, was being fashioned and trained for the task.

## II. " TORRANCE'S BOY "

1862-78

NATURE does at times seem to aim consciously at the production of men and women who are to fulfil particular tasks in the world. In the ancestry of David Watt Torrance can be noted the commingling of qualities which, centring in him, fitted him specially for the work he was to undertake. Of his immediate forbears, the Rev. Robert Torrance, his paternal grandfather, was the first minister of the Associate, or Auld Licht, congrega-

tion in Airdrie, Lanark, and a scholar noted for his classical attainments, who brought to the manse, as his wife, the robust daughter of a farmer. His mother's father was David Watt, an Edinburgh engraver, and a friend of Sir Walter Scott ; one of her brothers was a well-known member of some of the Standing Committees of the Free Church. His own father, Thomas Torrance, was a surgeon, and an elder, and his mother possessed musical and artistic ability. The Church, Medicine, and Art thus contributed to the influences which moulded his early thought and character, and helped to determine his career, whilst the wholesome country blood in his veins imparted to him that hardy strength which enabled him to endure what a less virile frame would never have stood.

The Rev. Robert Torrance was something of a character, if he can be judged from the numerous anecdotes related of him. A strict Sabbatarian, he would lecture his congregation in forcible and homely style on the sin of breaking the Fourth Commandment, and was especially hard on his juvenile hearers who indulged in the heinous practice of bird-nesting on Sunday. Once when praying for more favourable weather for the crops he said, “ For Thou, O Lord, knowest that the corn on Shotts Hill is as green as leek tails.” His wife is still remembered as “ a saintly woman.”

His son, Thomas Torrance, was born at Airdrie in 1809, and studied medicine at the Universities of St. Andrews and Glasgow. After graduating he set up in practice in Graham Street in his native town, and there David Watt Torrance was born on

6th November 1862, one of the youngest of a large family.

Airdrie is on the direct road between Glasgow and Edinburgh, and in the old coaching days the coaches passed along Graham Street, which is part of the highway, and stopped at the Royal Hotel, near the surgery. The inhabitants always considered that had the river Clyde passed through the burgh, the town would have been the site of the second city of the Empire instead of Glasgow. Originally a centre of hand-loom weaving, it rose to prosperity on the discovery of coal and black-band ironstone, but in David's childhood days mining had greatly diminished in importance, and other industries were taking its place, though coal pits continued to be worked in the vicinity. There is still much unworked coal beneath the town, a fact demonstrated during the miners' strike some years ago, when householders had merely to go into their back gardens and dig down a few feet to obtain all the supplies they required.

Dr. Torrance was a skilful surgeon and oculist, and his kind and sympathetic manner made him popular both among his townsmen and the colliers in the neighbourhood. He entered largely into the public life of the town, was a Justice of the Peace, and for a time Town Councillor and Burgh Treasurer, and became an enthusiastic Freemason. A series of lectures on health which he organized gave rise to the Mechanics' Institute, of which he was the first President. In 1859 he joined the Rifle Volunteers, and was later made Assistant Surgeon to the battalion. He was an elder in Broomknoll

Church, of which his father had been minister, but Mrs. Torrance went to the Free West Church, and the children accompanied her there. Holding numerous professional offices the Doctor was one of the busiest of men and could not spare time to attend to the indoor training of the children, but he encouraged and guided their recreation, teaching them to fly kites, play cricket and football, and ride ; and later supplied them with gymnasium equipment. One of David's earliest recollections was of being placed on his father's pony. From the first he was a lover of the open, and of all outdoor pursuits.

It was the mother who moulded the spiritual nature of the children. Intelligent, kind, and gracious, she created an atmosphere in which they grew up good without being conscious of the process. Discipline was enforced, and unquestioning obedience was exacted ; they were trained indeed in Spartan fashion ; but behind the order and restraint were the love and service of a mother. Her teaching did not vary from the standard of the time. David was nourished on traditional lines, and being of an impressionable nature was often affected by the childish visions he had of sin and judgment and hell. One night, when he was little more than three years old, he awoke in terror out of a dream, leapt from his bed, and rushed to his mother, crying, “ Mother, mother ! The last day is coming, and I am a bad boy ! ”

Some scenes in his early days he has never forgotten. One was of the Sunday evening gatherings by the fire—the father, tired but interested, in

the arm-chair at one side ; on the other the mother, bent over a book, the children lying anywhere and anyhow on the rug and floor, listening to the sympathetic voice that had the power to make them laugh or cry. Always when she ceased there was a chorus of " More ! more ! " and for hours the reading would go on, the children wandering in fancy through enchanted regions or obtaining fascinating visions of men and nature beyond their doors. Many books of travel, adventure, biography, and history were gone through in the course of the years : a favourite volume was Dr. Livingstone's *Travels*, which has thrilled so many hearts and influenced so many lives. David's eager spirit was often on fire with tales of heroism and devotion ; and he would seize a book, steal into the quiet of the study, and putting his feet up and the volume on his knee, would read and read, and dream long dreams.

The love of medicine was in the boy's blood, and there was never any doubt as to his career. As a child he delighted to rise early in order to light his father's fire, and do little tasks for him. He carried court plaster in his pocket, and if any accident occurred he was usually first on the spot. One Sunday, word came to the surgery that some excursionists had been precipitated over a bridge two miles out, and that a number had been injured and two horses killed. David was due at the Sunday school, but he started out instantly for the scene, and knowing all the short cuts across the fields, was there before his father, who was astonished to find him assisting the victims. On

another occasion, when a railway collision occurred, he was in the thick of the confusion helping the doctors. They all knew him as “Torrance’s boy,” and would pick him up on their way to a case. It was a bitter grief to him that when he was down with measles, Mr. Jackson, the minister of the Free West Church, died suddenly in the pulpit, and he was not there to see! Ere he reached his teens he was assisting his father in the dispensary, and was present at post-mortem examinations. With the daring of youth, he sometimes thought the work of the doctors was clumsily done. He was, however, somewhat humiliated once when a play was being given in connection with the school. His part was that of a doctor. When he was examining the pulse of the patient he lifted the wrong hand, whereupon the visiting teacher of elocution, Mr. Moffat (father of the well-known dramatist), exclaimed, “Dear me, boy; *you* will never be a doctor.”

One of his grand-uncles, Robert Watt, who lived in Airdrie, took a great interest in Sunday schools, and established a ragged school class in the town. Through his influence David became what he called a “Sunday-school boy,” going to the ragged-school class in the morning and the ordinary class in the Free West Church in the afternoon, and never finding attendance tiresome. According to his own testimony, however, the Sunday school exercised little effect on his life. He absorbed a certain amount of information, but his spiritual nature was untouched. At both schools, the Shorter Catechism was given a supreme place, but



to David its teaching was incomprehensible : its sole interest to him lay in its stately language, which sounded in his ears like the roll of organ music. To this day he thinks it a mistake to give young minds their first knowledge of spiritual truths in a medium so strange and unintelligible. It was his mother who continued to stimulate his higher nature and show him by example and precept the beauty of holiness. " She it was," he always said, " who made me a Christian ; she influenced me far more than anyone I ever knew."

He also owed much to his minister, the Rev. J. A. George, M.A., the successor to the Mr. Jackson who died suddenly in the pulpit. When the incident occurred Mr. George was acting as Chaplain to the Forces at Gibraltar, and in his leisure time smuggling Bibles into Spain. One day, sitting on a rock, he took out a newspaper in which he saw a notice of the death. He breathed a prayer for the congregation so suddenly bereaved. Shortly afterwards he was called to the charge. Torrance always regarded him as his " spiritual father." His teaching was complementary to that given in the home ; it was simple, loving, human, and in the sunshine of it the lad's heart expanded more than it would have done under a system of forced instruction. Mr. George recalls how his bright eager face and curly head always attracted him in the classes, and how when he asked a question it was invariably David who was ready first with the answer.

At the Academy, where he obtained all his schooling, he was not a specially studious boy, but

being quick and intelligent he never experienced any difficulty with his lessons ; they were learnt almost at a glance, and then off he would go to the large playing field in front of the School or to choir practice—for he inherited the musical ability of his mother—or to his bench of tools. That the instruction given was thorough, was demonstrated by the fact that his comrades, like himself, passed on to honourable careers.<sup>1</sup>

### III. STUDENT DAYS

1878-84

WHEN David was sixteen years of age his father died, and as the older sons were already at work in Glasgow, Mrs. Torrance removed there in the belief that she would be better able to carry on the home and continue the education of the other children. Young as he was, David sat at once for the preliminary examination in Medicine, and, passing in all the subjects, began his studies at the University. He was determined not to be a burden on his mother, and while attending the classes, he tutored other students in Arts and accepted a position in the Public Dispensary. Unluckily the hour for starting work there synchronized with the

<sup>1</sup> Amongst his surviving companions are W. Malcolm, M.B.E., Director of Education for the County of Lanark ; ex-Provost J. Knox ; Hon. Sheriff-Substitute of Lanarkshire ; ex-Provost J. Orr ; and Rev. David Frew, D.D., Urr.

time when a University class finished, but sitting near the door of the classroom he flew out the moment the lecture terminated and raced along to the Dispensary.

He toiled hard, and at times the struggle was severe, but he had other interests which relieved the strain and kept his mind fresh; he played football, worked with his hands, and attended the Church and University choirs. Looking back in after-life to this period, he mourned the opportunities he had lost of acquiring a more general knowledge of literature. He was too young then, however, to be aware of its value as an element in his intellectual equipment. Later, when his mind broadened, and he began to hunger for wider culture, the pressure of his daily activities prevented him gratifying his longing as fully as he wished to do.

He was fortunate again in his minister, the Rev. J. M. Sloan of Anderston Free Church, who had the gift of attracting young men and an intuitive insight into their character and needs. The elders were also a fine body and interested in the young people of the congregation. So excellent always were the debates at the Literary Society that Torrance preferred to attend them rather than the meetings of the Dialectic Society at the University.

His spiritual nature continued to develop normally in this congenial atmosphere until a talk with a fellow-student brought him up against the problem of conversion. For the first time he realized that there was a technical method of salvation, and he thought it his duty to go through the process. In the gladness of the experience he

went about telling every one that he was converted—every one except his mother. Several lapses from the perfection of conduct he had been promised brought unhappiness, and he gradually returned to his ordinary attitude of mind. No mechanical change of life was necessary in his case ; he had been born into the life of the spirit through his mother's love and piety, and the course of his aspiration and action had been, from the beginning, definitely in the right direction. His mother was still his guiding star, drawing him upward towards the highest and best. When he joined the Church, she sat beside him at his first Communion and cried softly in her joy. He became a teacher in the Sunday school, took part in the various activities of the congregation, and exercised an inspiring influence on the young people. Forty years after, there came to him, with a contribution for his work, a letter from the superintendent of a Sunday school in Glasgow, which gives a glimpse of these days :

“ Do you remember boys who, in your student days, lived at West Garden Street, Glasgow, whom you patiently used to help with their lessons—boys who often tried your patience sorely ? Do you remember these young rascals coaxing you out to teach them how to ride a high bicycle, and how one of them fell off on his head ? Do you remember taking us out to your house and showing us, among other things, a skull, and going with us a botanical expedition to Possil Marsh ? Little did you think how, in spite of fun and frolic, these boys were being influenced by you for life. Both my brother and I are in the King's service trying to do our bit for Him.”

Towards the close of his student days, Mr. Sloan met him one day in the hall of the church and said :

“Davie, have you ever thought of being a medical missionary?”

The lad looked inquiringly at him for a moment. “Yes,” he replied. “I have thought of that amongst other things.”

“Then I gather you are not sure?”

“Yes. I want to use my life to the best purpose, but I don’t know yet what I am best fitted for.”

Mr. Sloan considered.

“Well,” he said, “come home with me and have a talk.”

They discussed the matter at length.

“What I don’t want to do,” remarked Torrance, “is to put medicine on the level of a money-making business—to use it merely as the means of piling up wealth. I don’t want to make the earning of money my principal aim. What I have in my mind is some salaried appointment where I could do good without the thought of money influencing me. I would be willing to do anything and go anywhere if I were only sure it were the right thing for me.”

Mr. Sloan then came to the point. “The Jewish Mission Committee of the Free Church are looking out for a Medical Missionary for their station at Constantinople—would you not go through to Edinburgh and see the Secretary?”

Torrance had no more knowledge of the Jews than the average member of the community, and was not specially interested in them. In his mind they merely formed part of the general missionary problem. The claims of the ordinary heathen world appealed to him more strongly, but he was

willing to consider any branch of the work, and ready to obey the Divine call when it should come to him. He decided to go to Edinburgh.

The position, he found, involved the running of a dispensary, and in his state of mind then, the idea of selling medicines was repugnant to him. "I am afraid the thing will not suit me," he said.

The Secretary, who had looked him up and down, replied, "No, I quite agree; you are far too young."

Torrance was conscious enough of his youthful appearance. He was but twenty when, in 1883, after being amongst the first in all the classes, he passed his final examination. As he could not graduate until he was twenty-one, he filled in the interval as assistant to a Glasgow doctor. That he might look older and graver, he bought a silk hat and a surtout coat, but despite these dignified habiliments his patients thought him ridiculously young.

After graduating, he applied for the position of a ship's surgeon, and joined the *Bolivia* of the Anchor Line. On the passage down the Clyde, a violent shock nearly threw him out of his berth: the steamer had run on some obstruction, and, severely holed, was beginning to sink. The passengers were taken off, and Torrance was transferred to the *Anchoria*, in which he made the voyage to New York. In the midst of sight-seeing there, he received a letter from Dr. J. Hood Wilson vice-convener of the Jewish Mission Committee, who had just returned from a visit to Palestine, and was keen for mission work being begun in

Galilee. He had heard of Torrance as a promising student who might decide for medical service abroad. "Do not," he wrote, "be lured by the attractive openings for America; come and see the Committee before you make any plans for the future."

On landing in Scotland, Torrance found that the talk in the Church was all of the Jews. There had been a recrudescence of violent persecution in Russia, accompanied by atrocities and massacres which had sent a thrill of horror through Western communities. Refugees flying from the scene were being assisted by their wealthy co-religionists, and many were settling in other lands. A large number were flocking to Safed, in Palestine, and the time seemed opportune for starting a medical mission there. With this in mind, several of the leading members of the Jewish Mission Committee of the Free Church asked Torrance to meet them. After explaining the situation, they asked him:

"Are you prepared to go out there and undertake the work?"

"I cannot answer on the spur of the moment," he replied. "I have never heard of Safed and know nothing about it. I will need to hunt up some information and think over the matter. Besides, I have had no breathing-time yet, and I feel my professional ignorance. I don't know enough. I want Infirmary experience, and I want also to go to Vienna."

Aware of his brilliant attainments and his skill, already demonstrated, as a surgeon, his interrogators liked his modesty and respected his desire to perfect his medical education. In view of the

information which they had just received, that the Church Missions to Jews intended to reoccupy Safed, they thought it would be expedient first to make a survey of the field, and if Torrance were sent out for the purpose he would gain a practical knowledge of the conditions and might be attracted by the opportunities presented.

“ Will you go out to Galilee as our deputy and study the matter on the spot ? ” they inquired.

He could not conceal his astonishment—they were asking a youth who was entirely without experience to investigate a difficult situation and decide a Church question of vital importance.

“ That,” he replied quietly, “ is not possible. It would not do for me to go alone.”

“ Would you go along with Mr. Sloan ? ”

“ No—it would not be fair : he would influence me : his mind would dominate mine. How could I go against his opinion ? ”

“ Wells of Pollokshields,” some one suggested ; “ would he do ? ”

Dr. Wells was a seasoned traveller and one whose judgment could be relied on.

“ Certainly,” replied Torrance.

The name of Dr. Laidlaw, Superintendent of the Glasgow Medical Mission, and a trained medical missionary, was added ; and as there was no time to lose if the travelling season in Palestine were to be utilized, all arrangements were made by telegraph, and on 25th February 1884, a few days after the meeting, the party set out. Dr. Torrance’s kit consisted simply of a knapsack and a hold-all.



## IV. PROSPECTING

1884

ON board the steamer in the Mediterranean was a Jew to whom the party introduced themselves. Torrance studied him with peculiar interest. In appearance and manner he was unlike the type with which the popular mind was obsessed. He was very friendly, and discussed the position of his race and its beliefs with frank sincerity. Two fundamental principles, he said, governed his people: faith in God, and an obligation to obey the moral law. Christ, in his view, was inspired, and had accomplished untold good by disseminating a truer knowledge of God. "After all," he declared, "there is not much difference between us; we are brothers who look at matters from different standpoints, but essentially we occupy the same ground." Torrance listened to his quiet and assured statements with mixed feelings. For the first time he began to realize what mission work among the Jews would mean; obviously the line of approach to them would have to be of an altogether different character from that adopted in the case of heathen races.

He saw Egypt with a shock of surprise. Here, close to Europe, was a world utterly unlike the dingy and conventional civilization to which he had been accustomed. This land, bathed in brilliant sunshine, with its horizons fretted by dome and minaret, and with its people in picturesque

Oriental costume, the men in blue-and-white robes and scarlet turban, driving camels or tilling the level fields; the women, veiled and mysterious, with water jars gracefully poised on their shoulders—it took him into one of the dream regions of his childhood: it was a vision of conditions that seemed to belong to a period thousands of years in the past.

The travellers proceeded to Cairo, visited the bazaars and the Pyramids, and from Port Said went on by steamer to Jaffa, where they landed on 9th March. Next day at sunrise they set out by carriage for the hill country of Judea, crossing the arable plains where peasantry in cotton shirts or goatskin sacks were working with wooden ploughs drawn by camels, and began to climb the tremendous natural glacis guarding the height on which Jerusalem is built. As they wound their way up the wilderness of rocks they noticed on the slopes traces of terraces that had once borne a wealth of vines and olives, but were now part of the ruined waste. The only note of colour in the grey desolation was an occasional tree vividly green in the sunshine or a cluster of scarlet anemones or poppies.

When they reached Jerusalem, that “city of stone in a land of iron with a sky of brass,” they had only fleeting glimpses of its outward aspects as they prepared to leave for the north the same afternoon. They decided to travel on foot, and at the hotel a dragoman, or guide, was engaged to accompany them. Their baggage was piled upon a donkey which seemed overburdened with the

load. "We cannot allow that," said Dr. Laidlaw, whose sympathies were aroused on behalf of the animal. "My dear sir," replied the hotel-keeper, "you go on, and before you are away an hour you will see the man on the top of the donkey as well!" Which proved to be the case.

They discovered that walking over the rough backbone of Judea was more strenuous work than they had imagined. There was no shade, the fierce sun beat mercilessly down, the reflection from the white track was blinding. When the mist came down early in the evening they were glad to rest for the night at the Christian village of Ramallah. With less enthusiasm they set out next morning, traversing a land teeming with historical associations—it was as if they were walking through the Bible—but, footsore and weary, and consumed with thirst, their one idea as they trudged along was to see the end of their journey. Even Jacob's Well and Joseph's Tomb at the foot of Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal failed to interest them, for there between the two hills lay Nablous (Shechem) and a lodging for the night. Stumbling in the dark through narrow and filthy thoroughfares they found the house of the Church Missionary Society's agent, and knocked him up. He was suspicious and wary, and had to be assured of their goodwill and identity before he would open the door.

All three next morning rebelled against continuing the journey on foot, but as no horses could be procured they had to be content with donkeys. Before the day was over they came to the conclusion that donkey-riding was no improvement on

walking. They arrived at Jenin dead beat. The only accommodation was a native hut, the door of which, being without a lock, they barricaded with their baggage. But their real enemies were within in the shape of hordes of insects. A sleepless night was well on its way when a noise outside attracted their attention. If it signified robbers they had nothing but umbrellas with which to defend themselves. Peremptory knocking and a demand for admittance roused their wrath. "Who are you?" they cried. "The police; we want to see your passports." "What they really want," remarked an experienced member of the party, "is bakhshîsh," which turned out to be correct.

They were early astir, and, after crossing the wide plain of Esdraelon, they climbed the stony track which led to Nazareth. As they came to the Virgin's Well, situated on the highway leading through the town, a boy cantered up to them. "Are you Dr. Wells?" he asked, looking from one to the other. "We are," was the prompt and hopeful reply. "Dr. Vartan expects you up at his house." Dr. Vartan had been the agent of the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society since 1866. "Where is it?" they inquired. The boy pointed up to the high ridge to a house which overlooked the town as a pulpit overlooks a congregation. When they reached it they found their troubles at an end.

Dr. Vartan was by birth an Armenian though a naturalized British subject, and had married a cousin of Dr. Stewart of Lovedale, the daughter of a Perthshire minister. "Their home," it is said,

“ was one of the most beautiful any man is privileged to enter. The traditional hospitality of the Scottish Highlands blended with that of the ancient Orient. It was natural for younger missionaries in the country to turn thither in weariness and sickness, and many there are who can never forget the gracious and kindly care so richly lavished upon them.” In this atmosphere of comfort and peace the travellers rested for several days. Dr. Vartan would not hear of the tour being continued under the old conditions. He organized a caravan and commissariat, and when they left on horseback he and a colporteur accompanied them.

They visited the coast, inspected Haifa and Acre, and turned inland over a little-frequented road to Safed. One evening they arrived at a little old-world village, where they found a number of peasant Jews who could scarcely be distinguished from the ordinary fellahin. They were received by the sheikh, who provided them with accommodation.

It was soon noised abroad that “ English doctors ” had arrived, and, towards sunset, came the sick and suffering, the halt and blind, the deaf and dumb—an eager crowd hastening along the streets and over the flat roofs, and filling the little apartment and the precincts of the building. The doctors first cleared the room, allowing only the Jewish rabbi and two Greek priests to remain, and then attended to the patients. “ It was like the story of Christ,” said Dr. Torrance. “ We could not put our hands on them as He did, but we did what we could.” To him the scene was an extraordinary demonstration of the need for medical

missions. "If this is a sample of what prevails, there must be a tremendous mass of sickness and suffering in the land." It was the first incident that had touched his professional sympathy, and it made a profound impression on his imagination.

Five hours' rough climbing brought them to Safed. The streets were indescribably filthy; they waded through a slough of muck right up to the doors of the British and French Consuls, who were Jews. When they expressed their feelings on the subject to the Turkish Governor of the town, he replied, "What can be done with people who carry home fish and flesh in their pockets or in their hats upon their heads!" The travellers were sickened at what they saw in the Jewish hospital, which was full of old, ragged exiles from many countries who had come there to die, and they turned from it in disgust.

Next day they rode down a precipitous stone gully to a colony at the base, established by Jewish refugees from Rumania, and then through tracts of wild flowers and grass growing as high as the horses' heads, to the ruins of Chorazin, hidden amongst rank vegetation, and on to Capernaum on the lakeside, a mass of sculptured masonry lying amidst a tangled confusion of thistles, nettles, and wild mustard. In all the wide landscape they saw only a number of black tents, some boys herding goats, and a few tattooed bedouin women. No road indicated the way along the shore, but they picked out a track to the reputed site of Bethsaida, where they found a few families and an old boat, and proceeded through weeds and thorny bush across

the plain of Gennesaret. While the weather was perfect and the Lake a vision of beauty, the silence was oppressive ; not a sound broke the brooding stillness. In the shadow of the cliffs as the hills advanced again to the shore, they came to the modern Magdala, a wretched settlement of mud huts ; and a few miles farther south they entered Tiberias.

This town, second only to Jerusalem in the estimation of the Jews, proved to be hot, insanitary, and overcrowded. "The filth," said Dr. Torrance, "could scarcely be described." Hurried visits were paid to the various points of interest in the vicinity, including the medicinal hot-spring baths and the region on the east side of the Lake. Everywhere patients came crowding to them. In Tiberias, Torrance estimated that there was more work than ten doctors could get through ; it was the neediest spot he had seen. "If," he said, "one wishes to alleviate misery and sow happiness in the world, this is the place for him." The rabbis said they would be glad to have a hakîm, or doctor, the nearest whom they could call being Dr. Vartan, at Nazareth, fifteen miles away in the hills.

Riding back under more comfortable conditions to Jerusalem, the party had a consultation with the English missionaries there. The staff of the Church Missions to Jews did not favour a second mission in Safed. Nor would they recommend Tiberias ; no missionary, they declared, would be able to exist long in such a tropical furnace. The deputation was invited to visit Hebron, which, it was suggested, might prove a suitable and convenient

sphere for a Scottish Mission ; and accordingly they travelled to the town. In the Jewish inn in which they put up, one room and one bed were allotted to the three. The bed fell to Torrance, who spent the night in purgatorial unrest. But the others were no better off. Dr. Laidlaw rose from his mat, placed two chairs together, and lay on these for the remainder of the night.

After visiting Bethlehem, Bethany, the Dead Sea, and Jericho, the party returned to Jaffa, and here Dr. Torrance parted company from the others and proceeded home by Alexandria and Rome.

At Paris he found a letter offering him the position of House Surgeon in Glasgow Infirmary, one of the prizes of the profession, and wrote accepting it. He entered on his duties immediately on reaching Scotland.

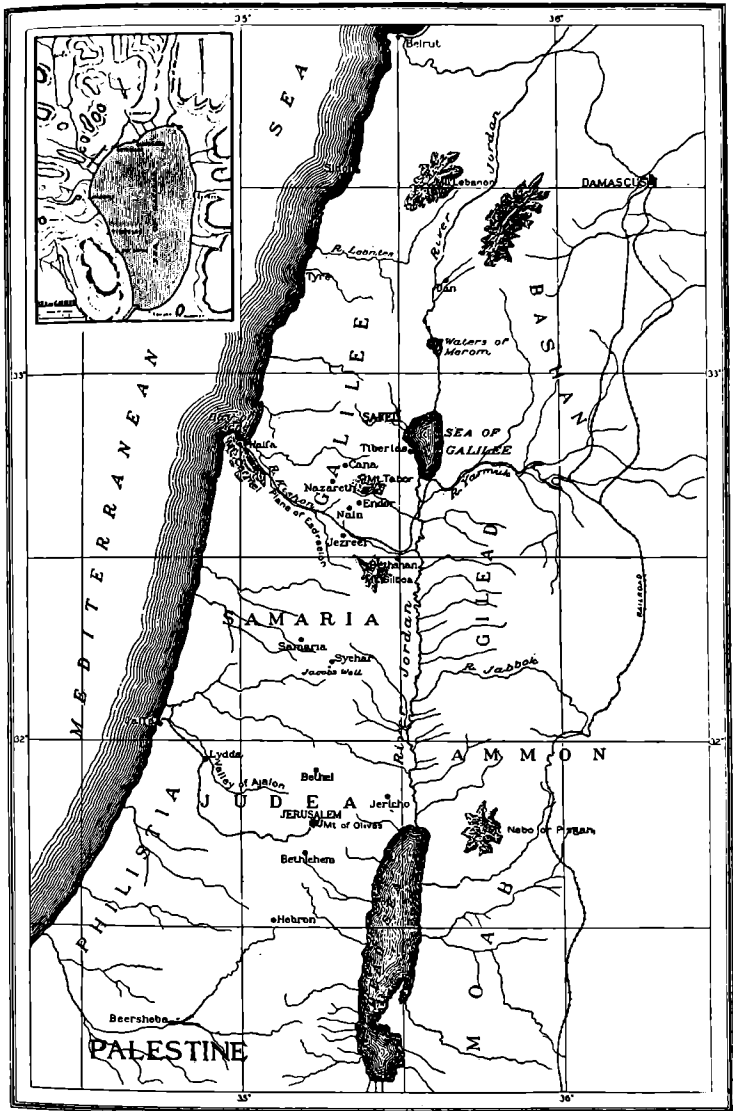
The brief reports of the deputies, supplemented by their speeches in the General Assembly of 1884—Dr. Torrance must have been one of the youngest speakers who had ever faced that body—showed that Palestine had become even a more promising field than it was in 1839. They estimated the Jewish population to be now not less than forty thousand, and it was steadily increasing. There was no doubt that it was the beginning of a movement which would result in the recolonization of the land. Agricultural settlements were being established, and a new group of liberal Jews had appeared, whose aim was to introduce modern education and throw off the irritating trammels of rabbinism. "This is the body," said Dr. Laidlaw with prophetic



insight, "which will evolve the dominant Jew of the future." Such a movement would probably lead to rationalism, but an inquiring, enlightened rationalism was, he believed, more hopeful than a death-like adherence to tradition, and it would give the Christian faith an opportunity it had not hitherto possessed.

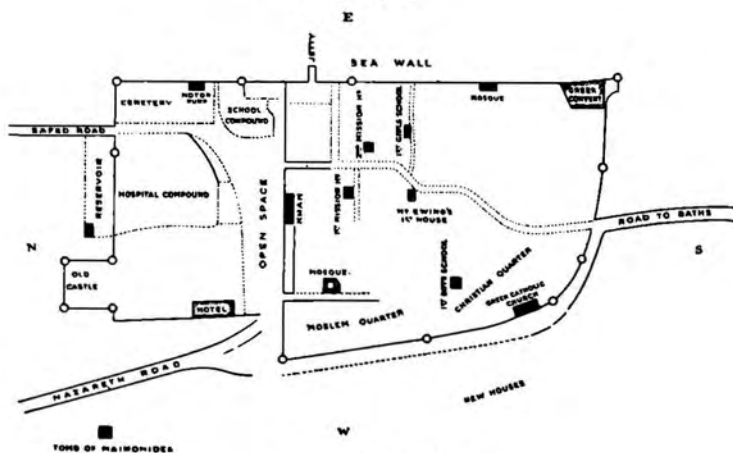
Jerusalem was ruled out—"probably no other city of the same size," they stated, "is so abundantly provided with orphanages, hospitals, free medical dispensaries, and all sorts of charities." So also was Hebron, not only because of its contiguity to Jerusalem, to which it was a natural appendage, but because the number of Jews in it was comparatively small, the majority of the population being Moslems. Safed was a favourable though difficult field, but it had been reoccupied by the Church Missions to Jews. On the whole, Tiberias presented the best possibilities. "We were informed," they said, "that a missionary would probably be better received by the Jews there than by others in Palestine." Unfortunately the heat of summer in the town was so exhausting that for three or four months in every year European missionaries would require to live in the hills. Their work also would be found exacting; there was probably no harder service for Christian activity to undertake, and the Church would have to guard against expecting immediate results.

The Church quietly and confidently accepted the call to the work, and on the Jewish night of the General Assembly, the "Sea of Galilee Medical Mission" was inaugurated.



MAP OF PALESTINE, WITH LAKE INSET

# TIBERIAS



PLAN OF TIBERIAS



DISTANT VIEW OF TIBERIAS

The Committee, however, had not yet secured their missionary. They had been pressing Torrance to accept the appointment, and he had been reading up the subject of missions to the Jews and studying the general Jewish situation. But he was still undecided, and was undergoing an experience which comes to most men in their lives. He was enduring his temptation in the wilderness. There was strong family opposition to the Palestine plan, which meant burying himself in obscurity, and he was urged to employ his exceptional ability in a sphere where it would be recognized and adequately rewarded. His own inclination was to do this ; he was conscious of lacking professional knowledge and experience ; he desired to study in the medical schools of the Continent ; he had the natural ambition to make the utmost of whatever gifts he possessed, and he felt within him the power to achieve success and fame. So, from the high mountain of his imagination he saw the Kingdom that might be his and the glory of it.

On the other hand, he had seen Palestine ; and, worn-out and burnt-up land though it was, it possessed in its very loneliness and desolation a quality of beauty and a fascination which drew him like a spell. Greater than the appeal of the country, however, was that of its people with their untended ills and hopeless suffering. He felt that the poorer and more degraded they were, the greater was their need of healing and love. He thought, too, of the honour of being the first Christian physician to walk in the footsteps of Jesus round the Galilean Lake, and of the

possibility of building the first Christian hospital on its shore.

The matter was not long in doubt: he surrendered to the higher service, and signified his choice. He was appointed to Tiberias in June 1884, and, completing his term at the Infirmary, he sailed on 2nd December from Liverpool.

## V. NAZARETH

1884-85

His journey on this occasion was not without adventure. After studying Jewish and Moslem missions in Egypt—a field in which he became deeply interested—he took steamer to Haifa. At Jaffa he went ashore to view the town. As the boatman was rowing him back he was surprised to see the vessel moving out to sea. No attention was paid to his signals, and he returned to the jetty with nothing but a waterproof in his possession. Sending a telegram to the Vice-Consul at Haifa to have his luggage brought on shore there, he went to the hotel in the German colony and arranged for a horse to be ready for him at three o'clock next morning. His anxiety made his slumber light, and when the hour passed and no call came, he rose and sought out the muleteer who was to accompany him. “I want something to eat,” he said. The man knew but little English, and the Doctor had by signs to indicate his need. “All sleeping,” was

the response. "Bread, then : bring me bread," the Doctor demanded, and the man went off to forage. He returned with two small cakes. The Doctor looked at them with disgust. "Bring me a dozen," he said.

The journey to Haifa usually took two days, but the Doctor was determined to be there that night. A tedious and fatiguing ride along a broken track and sandy plains and through malarious swamps brought them to Cæsarea, the once magnificent seaport, now a wretched settlement of refugee aliens. Farther on they reached a river inlet which was too deep to ford. A search along the banks revealed a fisherman, who guided them across at a part where the water came up to the chin of the little muleteer. Late at night they arrived at Haifa, half-dead from weariness, hunger, and thirst. Riding straight to the residence of the Vice-Consul the Doctor knocked loudly and long, but the household was asleep and there was no response. When he returned in the morning it was to find that the telegram he had dispatched had never arrived. His baggage had gone on farther up the coast with the steamer. Being in no mood to remain in Haifa, he secured a carriage and proceeded across the plains and over the hills to Nazareth, where, destitute though he was, he received a warm welcome from Dr. and Mrs. Vartan. Until his boxes arrived some weeks later they provided for all his needs.

Discussing the situation with his hosts he came to the conclusion that it would be impracticable to begin work at Tiberias before he had acquired

some knowledge of Arabic, the language of the country ; it was therefore decided that he should meantime remain at Nazareth as Dr. Vartan's assistant. It was not easy to procure a teacher ; education was not common in those days ; and the only man available was a Bible-reader who had never been at school, was ignorant of grammar, and could not even speak correctly. With him the Doctor began regular lessons.

The six months he spent in Nazareth was a period of apprenticeship without which he could never have achieved the success he did. He was associated with one who knew the country and the people intimately, and was proficient in many branches of his profession. To a newcomer ignorant of the East and its subtleties the experienced guidance and counsel of such a man as Dr. Vartan was priceless. To watch his methods and note his faith and courage and perseverance was an education and an inspiration. Torrance was profoundly impressed with the manner in which he fought the authorities and overcame his difficulties. For he had more than the ordinary share of trouble. Although a naturalized British subject, he came under the Turkish law, which deals with men according to their nationality. Property had also to be held in the name of an individual and not of an organization, for no combination was allowed, and he, and not the Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society, was responsible for the mission premises. The Turks were opposing his work, and their hostility had culminated in their taking over the house and ground at an absurdly low valuation.

Dr. Torrance admired his forbearance and patience and sought to interest the Committee in Scotland in his case.

Nazareth, where Jesus spent the greater part of His life, contained much to interest the Doctor. The town itself was unclean, the streets were narrow and crooked, those leading up the hillsides being merely deep watercourses, but from the ridges that circled it about, wonderful views could be obtained of far-stretching country rich in Biblical associations. Always the eye would be caught by some outstanding feature: now the snow cap of Mount Hermon, now the dome of Mount Tabor, now the green plain of Esdraelon, now the white houses of Safed, now the gleam of silver sea. The people were not without attractive qualities: many were handsome, the women especially so, and the boys and girls, with their clear brown skin and bright eyes and frank smile, won their way easily to the Doctor's heart.

Owing to the number of missionary agencies in Nazareth a small European circle existed in it. The representative of the Church Missionary Society, the Rev. James Huber, had already spent twenty-five years in the town and built up a prosperous Church. One of his daughters was a bright and attractive girl named Lydia. Born in the country, acquainted with the language, and accustomed to the modes of thought and habits of the people, she took a warm and practical interest in the mission work. With her Dr. Torrance inevitably came much in contact, and the result was a foregone conclusion; in due time the friendship culminated in their betrothal.



The Doctor desired to increase his knowledge of the country before settling down, and the opportunity to do so came in an unexpected way. The Edinburgh Medical Missionary Society had also a mission at Damascus in charge of Dr. Mackinnon, a missionary of exceptional force of character and ability. One day he turned up at Nazareth, and he and Dr. Torrance proving to be kindred spirits, became very close friends. It was arranged that when he returned to Damascus Torrance should accompany him. They set off on horseback, with pack-animals carrying their beds and pots and pans. On the way they endeavoured to climb Mount Hermon. For hours they tramped amongst the snowfields, a white desolation save for the presence of an occasional bear or fox. Night overtook them. On returning they were unable to find their horses, and had to look for them with lighted matches. When they reached the village at the foot of the mountain they learnt that a search-party had been sent out after them.

Next night they reached the mansion of a Druze sheikh of princely rank. He was delighted to see them, and entertained them with the hospitality for which the race is noted, fussing over them and regaling them with all manner of food. Two doctors in the house—he could not let the opportunity pass. Both he and his wife ate recklessly, and in the middle of the night the doctors were roused from their sleep to find two patients urgently requiring their attention !

Further going was slow on account both of the rocky and precipitous character of the bridle-path

and the need for exercising vigilance against robber bands who infested the district, but progress was easier when they reached the middle plain of Syria, where the grass was as soft as velvet, and the path stretched onwards like a white ribbon. An Arab khan afforded them shelter for the night, but not rest, for the filth was too malodorous, and the insects too numerous for comfort. Damascus, the eternal city of the plains, with its kaleidoscopic life, its beauty of surroundings, and its vigorous missions, fascinated Torrance, and he was loth to leave it. Along with Mackinnon he travelled across the Lebanon range to Beyrout, and after studying the activities of the great American College there, he returned alone to Nazareth.

The tour had been a valuable experience from the linguistic point of view. Syria is a polyglot region, and as he had Latin as a basis, and knew French and German, he could have managed very well, but his aim was to acquire a colloquial familiarity with Arabic, and he forced himself to speak it on every possible occasion, so that he considerably extended his acquaintance with the language.

The friendship thus begun with Dr. Mackinnon continued to be one of the joys of his life, and it influenced him in minor ways. Up to this time he had never smoked, but noting how Mackinnon was welcomed everywhere because he belonged to the fellowship of smokers, he took to the habit and became as much addicted to it as his friend.

Anxious now to make a beginning in Tiberias, he paid a visit to the town with Dr. Vartan to

prospect for quarters. The public health was exceedingly bad, but as he tramped through the overcrowded and insanitary slums his wonder was that life was maintained at all. Nothing was said about settling in the town, but some rumour of his intention had evidently reached the ears of the influential men, for they came and begged him earnestly to remain. It was, however, the misery of the poor that drew out his compassion and made him long to be at work.

There was some difficulty in securing the tenancy of a house, and it was only through Dr. Vartan's influence and wise and patient handling of the authorities that the matter was settled. Towards the end of 1885 he was installed and left to his own devices. For the first time he was in immediate contact with the people to whom he had been sent as a missionary.

## VI. " HIS OWN CITY "

1885

THE scene of his life service was a town which was notable on account of both its situation and its romantic history. Tiberias lies in the deepest natural trench on the earth's surface. As the Jordan flows down this trench from the base of Mount Hermon, it enters and fills a hollow in the Galilee region; this is the Lake of Galilee, the surface of which is 680 feet below the level of

the Mediterranean. It is of small dimensions, only 13 miles long and about 7 miles at its greatest width, and in spring, when the hillsides around are green, resembles a quiet Scottish loch. But the climate is more than tropical in its character, the temperature often rising in summer to 110° Fahr. and even 117° in the shade. Yet looking up from the lakeside one can sometimes see snow falling on the Safed hills, and for a large part of the year can gaze upon it as it lies thick upon the slopes of Hermon.

Tiberias, on the edge of the western shore, is now the only town on the Lake. It dates from at least the early years of the Christian era; it was either founded or rebuilt by Herod Antipas, ruler of Galilee, who called it after the Emperor in whose favour he basked. He probably chose the site on account of a basaltic crag which projected from the hillside behind, and formed an ideal situation for a fort to command it. While clearing the ground for the foundations, a burial-place was disturbed, a circumstance which in the eyes of the Jews rendered it unclean, and prevented the orthodox from living in it. The first citizens therefore were largely foreigners. On the black rock dominating it, Herod built his castle and palace.

The town was completed and occupied previous to Jesus beginning His ministry. Because there is no mention of it in the New Testament in connection with Him, it is commonly believed that He never entered it, though one cannot be certain of this. After the destruction of Jerusalem by the Romans,

a singular reversal of Jewish opinion occurred in regard to it. From being despised by the proud exponents of the law, it developed into their favourite resort. In it were established the Sanhedrin and a great University, and it became the religious centre of the race. Here the laws and traditions were collected and codified as the Mishna ; here also the Jerusalem Talmud was completed. In the reign of Constantine the first Christian Church was erected in it ; in the seventh century it was taken by the Arabs, was for a time restored to Christendom by the Crusaders, who built the castle which still stands, in ruins, and in the twelfth century was repossessed by the Arabs. When the Turks conquered the land in the sixteenth century it ceased to be a resort of the Jews, but was classed as holy and placed on the level of Jerusalem, Hebron, and Safed.

Later, the city, or the part of it that was left, was gradually reoccupied by the Jews, most of them old men from Northern Africa and Europe who came to die in it in the belief that if buried there they would have the honour of greeting the Messiah when He appeared. According to the accepted tradition He would rise from the Lake, land at Tiberias, and establish His throne at Safed, which explained the saying that while it was good to die in Safed it was better to be buried at Tiberias. The famed sulphurous baths also drew many Jews to the spot, while the graves of the renowned rabbis became places of annual pilgrimage.

The modern town was a huddle of buildings jammed close against the Lake, the line of houses

there dipping directly into the water ; on the landward side it was enclosed by a wall except where the latter had been shattered by an earthquake in 1837. The streets were merely narrow lanes, roughly cobbled with basalt blocks, down the centre of which ran a depression for rain and sewage, and so irregular in plan and broken up by narrower passages and alleys that they were as labyrinthine as a rabbit warren. In the main thoroughfares the buildings were two or three storeys high, and along the basement were situated the shops, little box-like compartments raised about a foot from the ground and open in front.

Through these crooked avenues surged the tide of Tiberias life. Here could be seen the Turkish official, the rich effendi, the merchant, the religious devotee, the muleteer, the washerwoman ; pallid men in long silk gowns and fur caps, or quaintly cut coats and wideawake hats, with lovelocks hanging down their cheeks ; tall, muscular men with dark flushed skin in black cloaks of goats' hair and white cotton skirts drawn together by a leathern girdle which supported a knife and pistol, head-dress of yellow cloth that flowed down their back and shoulders and was kept on by a rope of twisted camel's hair, and on their feet sandals of various shapes ; men wearing what looked like elaborate gaudily-coloured dressing-gowns ; men with sleeveless waistcoat and zouave jacket and loose pantaloons gathered in at the ankles ; men in white tunics and full sack coat, on their head a turban or red cloth fez or tarbush with black silk tassel, and on their feet red leather

shoes ; men in military dress ; men in smart modern suits, and men in tatters : women, too, in long robes of dark blue cotton ; others in a blue tunic with wide sleeves and girdle of red cloth and red head-dress, with a row of coins across the brow ; women in black flowing veils ; women unveiled, their faces and hands tattooed in blue ; women with dark eyes darkened more deeply by antimony ; women with complexions startlingly pale, women wrapped in the most beautiful fabrics and accompanied by attendants, and women in a single rag—all jostling one another, talking, gesticulating, bargaining, or moving in dignified silence.

It was a life exposed and public. Here was a man being shaved in a corner of the street ; here was a shoemaker busily at work with half a dozen swarthy men watching him ; next him was a tinsmith with his own circle ; a little crowd listened to a seller of cloth as he ripped off samples and cajoled a simple-minded peasant ; here was a café open to the street where men sat and smoked long Oriental pipes ; here was a butcher cutting out sinews from the meat brought to him by customers ; here was a shopman asleep on his mat with his stock of oranges and potatoes about him ; here was another writing a letter in Arabic for a desert Arab who stood, with his camel, beside him.

It was a picturesque scene, but these people did not know they looked picturesque : they knew only that they were struggling and suffering and sorrowing like the rest of humanity. Beneath the brightness and quaintness of the costumes, and behind the chaffering of the market-place, there

existed the sordidness, the care, the anxiety common to all the sons and daughters of the world. An old Jew with sad eyes passed along, passed a number of men playing cards outside a shop, passed a girl in deep black crouching in a corner sobbing, passed children romping and shouting—it was the same human nature that could be found everywhere; only here, perhaps, it was on a more primitive level. It was life lived in squalor, dirt, ignorance; and touched occasionally with a brutality that was not far from savagery.

Yet a life not without the hunger for higher things and a homage to what was holy. For there, hidden in obscure quarters, were the synagogues; and there, less modestly situated, was the native Christian Church; and there, central in the town, was the Moslem mosque with its white dome gleaming high above the houses, and its tall minaret from which came floating down to the people the wailing cry of the muezzin :

*Allāhu akbar* (repeated thrice), *ashadu an la ilaha illa-llāh*, *ashadu an Mohammada rasūl-ullāh* (repeated twice), *ḥayya 'ala-ṣṣalāh* (repeated twice).

“Allah is great : I bear witness that there is no deity but Allah, I bear witness that Mohammad is the apostle of Allah : hasten to prayer.”

## VII. A PAUPER GHETTO

WHAT the exact population of Tiberias was no one knew, but the Jews estimated the number of their race at about 3500, while the Moslems claimed



1500, and the Christians a few hundred. Between five and six thousand persons were penned into a space hardly capable of holding half that number.

The Jews were divided into two well-defined parties, the Sephardim and the Ashkenazim, who might be regarded as the liberal and conservative elements in the body. The Sephardim were of the stock of Western Jews, or those who came originally from Spain and Northern Africa, and who, having been in contact with fairly free and unrestrained conditions, were active and tolerant. The Ashkenazim hailed from the congested districts of Eastern Europe :

“ They lived in narrow lanes and streets obscure,  
Ghetto and Judenstrasse, in mirk and mire,  
Taught in the school of patience to endure  
The life of anguish and the death of fire.  
Anathema ! Maranatha ! was the cry  
That rang from town to town, from street to street ;  
At every gate the cursed Mordecai  
Was mocked and jeered and spurned by Christian feet.”

They possessed the ghetto mind—narrow, ignorant, bigoted — and the sickly and cowed appearance developed by the crushing slum conditions to which they had been subjected. Christians they hated with a bitter hatred as their oppressors who had made their life a misery. They could not look with favour on a religion presented to them by a sect whose hands were red with the blood of their people.

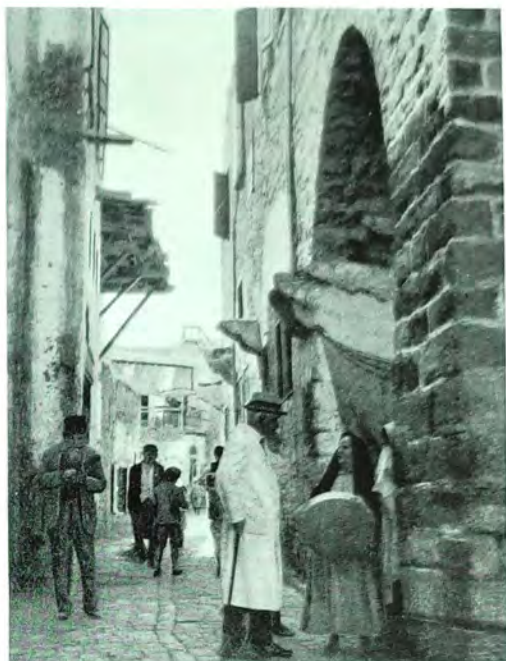
These Jews were regarded as, in a sense, delegates or representatives of the race throughout the world. They were “ holy men,” faithful to the

ideals and traditions of the faith, who had come to study the law and pray and carry out in their fullness the rules and regulations which it was difficult and often impossible to observe in alien communities, and then to die and be buried in the soil of the sacred land. They were doing what every true Jew would have liked to do, but which was impracticable for the vast majority to do, except vicariously by supporting those who did. This was necessary, for Palestine was economically so backward that it was impossible for all the Jews to earn a living. The bulk of them were abjectly poor. Some engaged in shoemaking, carpentry, and trading; one or two were muleteers, and the remainder depended entirely on the sympathy and charity of their co-religionists elsewhere. The latter entertained the idea that God would be propitiated by the piety of their fellows in the Holy Land, and willingly contributed to their maintenance. Throughout Jewry a well-organized scheme of collecting money for them was in operation; practically every Jew had a box in his house with "Great Alms for Palestine" written on it. Associations existed in most Jewish centres for receiving and remitting the funds, and sometimes a town contributed solely for its own people who had emigrated. When the money arrived in Palestine it came into the hands of the rabbis, by whom it was "divided out" monthly to the people; hence it was called the "khalukah." At this period the total sum received amounted to about £50,000 annually, but it served only to supply the crusts of life to the recipients.

The rabbis naturally exercised great power over those who received the dole, as they could always use it as a lever or weapon in the exercise of discipline. The result of the system, however, was to pauperize the people, for they had no inducement to work when they were able to eke out an existence on charity. Labour, indeed, came to be looked upon as undignified and even degrading—a view which the rabbis did nothing to remove, since the praying Jew was an amenable Jew. The Jew who followed his native genius, engaged in commerce, and made a success of it, was independent of the khalukah, and less hampered by fear of rabbinical censure in all his religious relations.

The Doctor realized that this parasitical system would prove the most difficult obstacle in his path. How could a Jew change over to Christianity so long as he was subject to such bondage? If he made a public profession and was excommunicated and shut out of the distribution of alms, as he would undoubtedly be, how would he be able to support himself? He would either have to be dependent on the Mission or emigrate to countries where he could earn his livelihood. The conditions did not augur well for the success of the evangelistic work if that success were to be measured by the number of open conversions.

At first sight the Jews did not impress the Doctor as a lovable people; they seemed effeminate, neurotic, and slovenly in appearance and habit; but he made large allowances for men who had been so long tortured by civilization, and were so greatly isolated from all healthy and progressive influences,



DR. TORRANCE STANDING AT THE ENTRANCE TO  
HIS FIRST HOUSE



THE FAMOUS MEDICINAL BATHS AND THE TOMB BEYOND



DR. TORRANCE IN ARAB DRESS

and decided to be patient and to study them carefully before coming to a judgment on their character and their attitude to Christianity. He discovered that they were friendly to the British, and even looked to them as the Power that would some day be the means of restoring Israel to its ancient home. Some regarded it as significant that Cyprus had recently come into possession of the British, for from the heights of that island could be seen the Syrian hills. Britain was the first Christian nation to overlook the country.

These Tiberias Jews were typical of the race in general throughout Palestine, but there was another class entering the country which was destined to have a remarkable influence on its fortunes. It is curious how the brutal actions of humanity often lead to unexpected results for good. The Jew-baiting, the mob-violence and outrages, the bloodshed and the destruction of property in Russia which caused, from time to time, the flight of the Jewish victims, resulted in a number of them seeking refuge in Palestine. It was not from a religious motive that they came, but in order to earn a livelihood. Here and there they formed little agricultural colonies, helped in many cases by wealthy members of the race, principally by Baron Edmond de Rothschild, and cultivated oranges, the vine, olives, and other products. Several were established in Galilee. The conditions were, however, against them; the settlers were mostly from towns, and knew little of agriculture; they had difficulty in adjusting themselves to so strange an environment, and the Turks were

rapacious. They continued to require financial support and were therefore in much the same position as the recipients of the khalukah. For their benefit an experimental school was started at Jaffa by the Alliance Israélite Universelle, an organization established in Paris in 1860 with the object of safeguarding Jewish interests and of promoting secular education in countries where Jews congregated. Poor as they were, these settlements were little oases of civilization in surroundings that were barbarous and barren.

The Moslem population of Tiberias was more approachable than the Jews, but formed the least educated and least intelligent part of the community. They were courteous and hospitable, especially the effendis, or more wealthy members, but they were invincibly self-sufficient in matters of religion. Of the various types, however, the Doctor was least impressed with the native Christians, though they possessed some education and occupied all the positions in the telegraph and postal departments. These belonged to the Greek Church—"Orthodox Greeks"—and to the Roman Catholic, or "Latin" Church, to which were affiliated various Oriental Churches such as the Greek Catholic, the Syrian Catholic, and the Armenian Catholic Church. As a whole these Christian Churches were corrupt and superstitious. The priests were often illiterate and degraded; their chief duty was not the care or cure of souls, but the management of the hospices, shrines, and other buildings associated with their religion, and attendance at the endless formal ceremonies and processions carried on in

a spirit of coarse materialism. Both Jews and Moslems regarded Christianity, as they knew it, as infinitely inferior to their own faith : it seemed to them little better than heathenism.

Several languages and many dialects were spoken in the town. Turkish was the tongue of the official class ; Arabic was in general use, and the only one understood by the majority of the native-bred ; the Jews employed Yiddish, based on Low German, with a sprinkling of Hebrew, Polish, and Spanish words.

Outwardly amicable and orderly, the various elements in the community were in reality separated in their social relations by unbridgeable gulfs. Says Dr. Alexander Paterson :

“ It was this age-long incompatibility, this irreconcilable enmity, that was more potent for evil than any other single factor, and harder to be dealt with than any other obstacle to mission work. The Moslem and Christian hated the Jew for denying and slaying the Messiah, the Christ. The Moslem and Jew hated the Christian for worshipping three gods. The Jew and the Christian hated the Moslem for his arrogance and fanaticism and oppression, from which they never felt safe. Of course, they commonly existed in an armed truce ; life otherwise were impossible. But an anniversary or an indiscreet word, an unequal deal in business, or a false report, and their passions were in full cry, too often the cry for blood. Here is a household tale. A Moslem and Christian and Jew agreed to offer each a petition to heaven. The Moslem, ‘ May as many Christians perish as sacrifices are slaughtered at Mecca at the pilgrimage ! ’ The Christian, ‘ May as many Moslems perish as Easter eggs are consumed at Jerusalem ! ’ The Jew, ‘ O Lord, answer their petitions ! ’ ”

It was an extraordinarily difficult situation which Dr. Torrance was facing—a much more



complex and unhopeful one than he had imagined. He had not come to a comparatively simple people like the Africans, whose only faith was animism, but to races who already possessed highly developed systems of religious thought. He had come "to the Jew first," and it was the Jew who had risen nearest to God and had given the world Christianity. The Moslem, for his part, considered that Moham-medanism was superior both to Judaism and to Christianity. The Doctor's task, therefore, was not to provide lamps where none existed or even to exchange new lamps for old, but to create the conviction that the old were incomplete and to show how they could be perfected. As Professor Delitzsch said: "The object of the Free Church Mission is to present a correct conception of Christianity, the Christianity of Christ of the New Testament, and to enable those who listen to judge and decide for themselves."

Reason, Service, Love, these three were the talismans which the Doctor called to his aid—but the greatest of these was Love.

## PART TWO

### I. OPPOSITION

1885-86

THE house which the Doctor had rented belonged to one of the rabbis. It was situated in the heart of the town, off a narrow lane, the buildings on each side of which were so tall that the passage had the character of a tunnel. Entrance was through a large archway into a courtyard from which a flight of steps led to the leewan, or veranda, and consulting-room; another stair led to the living-rooms in the upper part. The whole building was of the gimcrack order and shabby in the extreme. One side was tumbling down, and had been patched with scraps of tin and wood. The windows were unshuttered, and the sun beat in and made the rooms as fiery as a furnace. When rain fell the roof leaked, the atmosphere became steamy and damp, and mould gathered on the Doctor's clothes and other belongings.

But he was young, life was an adventure, and the difficulties of his position added zest to his day. He ignored the discomforts and became absorbed in his work. As yet he was without medicines; the stock he had ordered was detained at

Trieste, but he discovered some old drugs in the town and he bought some Epsom salts and castor oil, and he had his pocket case of instruments. The best instrument he possessed, however, was his own hand : what has been described as the ideal surgeon's hand, "strong, supple, smooth, with sensitive finger-tips." His touch seemed to have power and healing. The wonder of it passed from mouth to mouth, and patients began to pour into the courtyard. It made no difference to him what creed they professed ; he was a missionary to the Jews, but he could not say to a Christian, "I cannot see you," or to a Moslem, "You are not a Jew." Christianity was a world-religion, and made no account of race or sect, so in the spirit of Paul he was a Jew to the Jews, an Arab to the Arabs, all things to all men, that he might save some. Every one who came was tended with the same care and kindness. Although a man of mystery to them, they instinctively knew that he was one to trust, and his whimsical eyes and gentle humour put them at their ease.

There was more than the touch of the physician in his ministrations. He read and spoke of One who was the healer of souls, and many, listening to his broken Arabic, seemed to obtain a glimpse of something beautiful and appealing. Others, orthodox Jews, were startled, and put their fingers into their ears that they might not hear what he said. Their talk of the matter reached the rabbis. They, too, were startled. Then the hakîm was also a Christian missionary ! The satisfaction with which they regarded his presence turned sour :

suspicion and resentment took the place of their former cordiality, they wanted no proselytizer in their midst to steal the people from the faith, and orders were issued that he should be boycotted and driven from the town. In a Jewish paper published in Jerusalem a notice was inserted asking a physician of their own race to settle in Tiberias. The number of Jewish patients fell off.

But it was hard for the sick and their friends to watch Moslems and Christians pass into the courtyard and know that healing was within reach, and yet be debarred from taking advantage of it. One of the special traits of the Jews is their love for their children, and rather than see the little ones suffer, many a mother dared the wrath of the rabbis. Again and again the door of the waiting-room was burst open and a distracted woman rushed in, crying: "Doctor, my child! my child!" The Doctor could never resist such an appeal, and letting other matters stand, he would accompany the parent to her home and attend to the patient. This happened so often that it became difficult for him to meet all the calls, but by and by there was no need, for it broke the boycott.

Then the terrors of ecclesiastical law were evoked against the delinquents; solemn khērems, literally "bans," were pronounced in connection with the dispensary, and for a time these dread anathemas did their work. But love again conquered fear, and first children, and then adults, crept along the dark alleys to consult the doctor. The hearts of women grew soft towards him, because of his tenderness and skill; they gathered

about him with their little ones as the women of old gathered about Jesus, and began to speak of him among themselves as "Our David." One day when out riding, his horse slipped, and he was thrown into a large cavity ; a number of Jewesses who witnessed the accident rushed to his assistance, exhibited the utmost concern, and treated him in the kindest way. It was a trifling incident, but it indicated the place he was taking in their regard.

The watchful rabbis then unsheathed their most potent weapon. From all who disobeyed, the khalukah was withheld. The grim alternative was starvation, and this was worse than sickness. Again the dispensary was deserted by the Jews. With unflinching patience and good humour the Doctor met the situation ; he had the more time to visit people in their homes and become acquainted with their family life and the conditions in which they lived.

The majority of families lived in one-roomed houses, many in cellars underground, the furniture consisting of a few mats, some divans round the walls, cooking utensils, and a charcoal stove. During the day the bedding was piled up in a recess ; at night it was spread on the floor, and the family retired without undressing. The conditions, in short, were no better than those in an African hut ; in some respects they were worse. Ventilation was unknown, and the atmosphere was heavy with noisome odours of which the occupants appeared to be unconscious. The Doctor found Jews lying calmly in their beds with their Talmud beside them, and repeating their prayers, while

at every breath they were inhaling poison. Possibly they had been so long habituated to such conditions that they were immune. Superstition partly accounted for their closing up every chink ; they believed that evil spirits would obtain access to the room if the windows were left open.

The morning diet consisted chiefly of bread and olives ; in the evening all endeavoured to have a cooked meal, if possible, and olive oil, or a species of boiled butter, was used in preparing it. The Doctor's first impression was that many of the people were underfed, and the cases that came to him bore this out.

Malarial fevers and dysentery were, he found, the commonest ailments ; of infectious diseases there were, so far, no trace. " It will be a sad day," he wrote, with unconscious foreboding, " when any of them make their appearance." Although the birth-rate appeared to be high, the mortality amongst children was very great. Women suffered greatly, and he longed for a maternity hospital. One of the things that roused his professional wrath was the crowding of neighbours into the birth-room to watch how the foreign doctor worked. He would send for a bucket of water and throw the contents over them, or literally whip them out of the room.

" It is difficult to imagine a more insanitary town," he wrote. There was no system of sewage ; the cesspools attached to the houses were seldom or never cleaned out, and a sickening odour choked one at every turn. No wells or cisterns existed ; they were not required, for the Lake was fresh, and

as it lapped one side of the town, every housewife was able to draw what she needed from the beach at the foot of one or other of the streets that ran down to its edge. Here were ash-heaps and dung-hills, here the drainage of the town found an outlet, and here men and boys bathed all day long, so that close inshore the water was impure and unfit for drinking. The Doctor himself used a small filter which he had brought with him, but as a rule he refrained from taking any liquid except tea and coffee. It was not always easy for him to do so, and invariably after drinking of polluted supplies he suffered.

He was better able to control his food. Most of this at first he obtained from home, as he was unable to procure anything better than boiled rice, eggs, leban or sour milk, fish from the Lake, and unpalatable bread. But he had noticed that the Vartans did not despise native food, — which, however, they had properly cooked,—and believing that it would be an advantage to be able to live on local diet, especially on tours, he gradually worked up a knowledge of the common products, and became accustomed to eating them. The Spartan fashion in which he had been brought up made this a matter of no difficulty ; wherever he accepted hospitality, he took what was given him, and, no matter how much he disliked it, he made no sign of discomfort.

No missionary lived more simply ; he had only the bare necessities of life about him, and his clothing was severely workmanlike. He did his own washing and much of his own cleaning, and

felt happier than if it had been left to an inefficient servant. "After all," he said, "I am out to work, and do the best I can in every way."

As the winter season advanced, the condition of the house became deplorable. The soaked mortar fell out and the roof let in the rain so badly that he was obliged to fasten up a sheet to keep himself dry. He complained to the landlord, who had contracted to maintain the premises in repair, but the rabbi declined to do anything. Perhaps he was affected by a curious report that had become current; a white dove had been seen sitting on the roof of the building, and this was declared to be the spirit of his father come back to mourn over the letting of the house to a deceiver of the people. In any case, it was clear that he desired to get quit of his bargain and his tenant. The Doctor was all the more resolute to hold on. It was now that his manual work in the old days proved useful; he took off his coat and executed the repairs himself, making a better job of the matter than the half-trained local tradesman would have done.

## II. COMEDY OF THE CUSTOM-HOUSE

1886

OPPOSITION of a different character came from the Turkish officials. Chiefly Moslems, they subsisted largely on bakhshîsh. They never obtained sufficient salary to live upon, and they charged



"fees" to all who required their services. In their own view the system was perfectly proper; in Western eyes it was pure blackmail. Where foreigners were concerned it probably was. They were regarded as legitimate prey to be fleeced, and all officials were adepts in the art of raising obstacles in order to be bribed to remove them. Courteous and tolerant whenever there was any prospect of financial advantage to themselves, they became instantly hostile if their right to bakhshîsh was challenged. The Doctor was well aware of the hold the practice had upon the community, but determined to fight it and resist all attempts to intimidate and harass him.

He thought he might smooth his way by cultivating relations with the Governor, and made a formal call. He was received with every mark of goodwill, and the visit was returned. On this occasion the Governor brought the conversation round to tape-worms, of all subjects in the world, and soon the two were discussing the life-history of these intestinal parasites. To the Doctor's exposition of their habits the Governor listened with deep attention, and thanked him warmly for the information. The Doctor, wishing to express his indebtedness for the visit, said, with hand on heart, "*Ana mejnûn kethîr*," which may be rendered, "I'm a great fool," instead of "*Ana memnûn kethîr*," "I'm greatly obliged"! The Governor bowed gravely, but the dragoman turned away to hide a smile.

Inquiries then began to be made into the character of the Doctor's work. The question was

raised whether he had the right to practise in Turkish territory since he was not in possession of a Turkish diploma, and there being no offering of bakhshîsh, he was refused the usual immunity from Customs duties on medical stores. It was over this matter that the first trial of strength occurred. When the bulk of his boxes arrived, he went down to Haifa to take them out of the Custom-House, a place of evil notoriety, in the unsavoury atmosphere of which nerves were often unstrung and health lost. Lacking a firman, or permit from the Sultan, he was received as an individual without standing. The old Turk in charge, who stood with a number of Arab underlings about him, assumed a strictly official manner.

“ Yes, your boxes are here,” he admitted, “ but they must be examined.”

“ Oh, but I have invoices for everything,” said the Doctor.

“ Invoices ! God destroy your house ! Don't you know that invoices can be cooked ? Every box must be opened.”

“ When will you begin ? ” asked the Doctor.

“ Come to-morrow morning.”

Next day the Doctor put in an appearance.

“ I am ready to attend the examination of my boxes,” he intimated.

The Turk looked up leisurely. “ Ah, yes. But we must have a doctor to look at the drugs.”

“ Well, get one.”

“ Unfortunately the Government doctor is not in town ; he is on duty in the country.”

“ When will he be here ? ”

“ To-morrow, no doubt ; call to-morrow morning.”

The next day he asked, “ Well, is the doctor here ? ”

“ No ; he is not back yet.”

“ What is to be done ? ”

“ Call to-morrow morning.”

“ Look here,” said the Doctor impatiently, “ I have left my work in Tiberias and come to procure my medicines and am willing to pay the duty. I am staying at an hotel, spending money ; and lives may be lost through your delay. I shall have a counter-claim against you for damages.”

The Turk regarded him compassionately.

“ Call to-morrow morning,” he replied.

The Doctor called.

“ Have you got your man ? ” he inquired, not very hopefully now.

“ No ; but there is a little Jewish watchmaker who was once in a chemist’s shop—he may do.”

“ Then get hold of him.”

By and by the Jew arrived and the work began. They came upon some bottles of coloured liquids.

“ Ah ! What are these ? ” the Turk demanded.

“ I suppose,” said the Doctor wearily, “ they are what they are labelled.”

The Turk seized one of the bottles. “ It looks like brandy,” he remarked, and, extracting the cork, smelt the contents. The Jew meantime had been deciphering the labels and, recognizing some of the names, pronounced them to be drugs.

A large bottle was uncovered, and the Doctor’s eyes twinkled.

“ What is this ? ”

“ Open it and see—is it not your business to find out ? ”

The Jew started back as if he had received a shock. It was a bottle of ammonia.

They came to a barrel of Epsom salts which puzzled them for a time. Was it an explosive ? Some charcoal fire was sent for to test whether it was saltpetre. Then an iron rod was obtained and poked into the stuff to discover whether it hid cartridges.

This was followed by the examination of a package containing insect powder. They took it to be mustard, and one tasted it and quickly spat it out. “ That’s not mustard at any rate,” he muttered.

And so the comedy went on for three days, and the Doctor, resigned at last to the process, sat and played a tin whistle which had come along with some miscellaneous goods. The assistants grew so tired of the business and so hopeless of bakhshîsh that when they reached the cases of surgical instruments they valued them at random and finished their task.

The Doctor handed over the amount of the duty, and asked for a receipt.

“ Call to-morrow.”

At the ominous words his heart sank. Was he beginning the play all over again ?

“ I must have a receipt and I won’t give bakhshîsh,” he said obstinately.

“ Call to-morrow.”

Next day he obtained a carriage, picked up Mrs.

Vartan, who had been in town, and called at the Custom-House.

“ My receipt ? ” he asked.

“ Call to-morrow.”

“ But I am on my way back ; my carriage is waiting. It won't take you two minutes to give me my discharge.”

They were placid and immovable, and in an angry mood he returned to the carriage and poured out his feelings to Mrs. Vartan.

“ My dear fellow,” she said, amused at his wrath, “ go back and give them their bakhshîsh and have done with it. These fellows don't get their salaries—you will be really paying them for their work.”

He took her advice and handed the officials £5. They were all smiles and courtesy, and in a few minutes he had his receipt.

“ Now,” he said grimly, “ I want to talk to you. You are the most incompetent set of men I have ever seen. Your valuation of my goods is all wrong ; here are my invoices which you would not look at. You will see that you have charged fifty per cent. less than the amount you should have done. Now are you not fools ? ”

They beamed upon him. “ Go in peace,” they said, “ and next time send both the invoices and the bakhshîsh.”

Possessing now an adequate supply of medicines, he opened a dispensary, and in a short time the courtyard was again filled with patients, five-sixths of whom were Jews of many nationalities, and one-sixth Moslems and nominal Christians. Even

with the help of a native assistant he was unable to attend to all. He began to undertake serious operations, and was impressed with the opportunities that crowded upon him ; the whole field of surgery was open for the exercise of his skill. With the success that attended his cases, the people grew increasingly confident of his powers, and he, himself, felt a joy and exhilaration in the work. " I am thankful," he wrote, " that the Committee chose me to labour in Tiberias. I am full of hope about the future. . . . The charm of the work is that the old, old story is *new* to the hearer."

The occasional travellers who appeared at Tiberias at this time were greatly struck by his earnestness and devotion. " He seems to be thoroughly happy in his work," wrote one. " I cannot help admiring his courage and hopefulness in spite of the difficulties with which he has to contend." Long afterwards, looking back, he himself declared, " Those early days stand out as among the happiest in my life."

### III. VIEWING THE LAND

1886

THE Doctor, however, was human, and the depressing conditions in which he worked, combined with the loneliness of his position, sometimes affected his spirits. Whenever he could steal away he took his New Testament, Geikie's *Life of Christ* and

Baedeker's *Palestine*, and climbed the hillsides overlooking the town and the Lake ; and there in solitude he studied the scenes associated with the ministry of the Physician in whose footsteps he was treading, and obtained the spiritual reinforcement which sent him back strengthened for his task.

It was early spring, when the country was arrayed in all its glory. Save for some dark outcrops of rock here and there, the land was covered with a veil of green. It was not the vivid green of grass, for there is no short sweet grass in Palestine, except in gardens, but the duller green of weeds that grew tall and rank. On the plains and hillsides splashes of yellow, scarlet, and white indicated where the flowers grew in mass—the “ lilies of the field,” as beautiful now as they appeared to Jesus. No living thing moved in the wide landscape save where, far up among the heights, a flock of black goats sought pasture ; no sound broke the hush upon the land save the faint call of the goat-herd. It was the passionless tranquillity, the stillness, that again impressed the Doctor. And the Lake was as quiet as the land which circled it and was reflected in its calm green waters. One small sailing-boat, gliding with almost imperceptible motion close in-shore, merely accentuated the loneliness of its appearance. In the face of that solemn silence, the wonderful pageant of the past seemed like a fantasy of imagination ; to recall the events of it was like recalling the dim scenes in a half-forgotten dream. Few countries that are barren and desolate possess a history, but this one had been for centuries throbbing with intense life, and had witnessed

marvellous occurrences that had again and again changed the course of human destiny. And in the words of a French writer, " Upon that rocky Syrian soil blossomed the lily of the valley whose fragrance after nineteen centuries still perfumes the world."

It took an effort to picture water and land as they were when Jesus looked upon them—the hillsides covered with woods and groves of fruit trees, and the plains with crops and gardens ; the shore lined almost continuously with populous towns, the Lake alive with fleets of sails. Josephus gives a glowing account of the beauty and productiveness of the region ; and no incident could better depict the activity on the Lake than that singular stratagem by which, not long after Jesus was crucified, the Jewish warrior himself recaptured the rebel city of Tiberias. Josephus was at Taricheæ, a centre of industry at the south end of the Lake :

" In the first place he ordered the gates of Taricheæ to be shut that nobody might go out and inform those of Tiberias ; he then got together all the ships that were upon the Lake, which were found to be two hundred and thirty, and in each of them he put no more than four mariners. So he sailed to Tiberias with haste, and kept at such a distance from the city that it was not easy for the people to see the vessels, and ordered that the empty vessels should float up and down there, while himself, who had only seven of his guards with him and these unarmed also, went so near as to be seen ; but when his adversaries saw him from the walls they were so astonished that they supposed all the ships were full of armed men, and threw down their arms, and by signals of intercession they besought him to spare the city. . . . He took all their senate, consisting of six hundred persons and about two hundred of the populace, and carried them away to Taricheæ. . . . And thus he recovered Tiberias again with empty ships and seven of his guard."



And now it was forsaken, forlorn, devitalized, the mere ghost of a land.

Almost the entire Lake was visible from the Doctor's point of view. Immediately below was a narrow plain. On the left, the ground rose gently and widely in a kind of valley until it hid the north-east corner ; up this ascent the track to Nazareth deviously wandered. Midway on the shore line was a dark half-circle close against the water—the town of Tiberias, flat and featureless save for the dome and minaret of the Mosque, the broken battlements of Tancred's castle, and a palm or two. It seemed but a speck in the wide wall-less spaces of waste land that lay outside it. To the south was some irregular ground with granite columns lying prone or projecting from the earth, indicating the site of the old capital at the base of the bluff on which stood the castle and palace of Herod Antipas. There it was, some think, that the daughter of Herodias danced and demanded the head of John the Baptist. It is still known as *Qasr bint el-Melek*—"Palace of the king's daughter."

Beyond, on the foreshore, white roofs indicated the medicinal baths where the little rivulets of hot water gushed from the earth and ran down into the Lake as they had done through all the changes of the ages ; beside them the tomb of Rabbi Meyer, the celebrated Talmudist, the scene of a yearly pilgrimage ; and then desolate slopes to the foot of the Lake. Fretting the shore-line there appeared the mud houses of a little Moslem village called Samakh. High above, on the south-east horizon of hills, he could see the

ruins of Gadara where Greek civilization held sway ; and, coming north, the ruins of Gamala on a ridge in the middle of a gorge up which ran a track to Damascus. Almost directly opposite, a brown scar indicated the scene where Jesus cured the two demoniacs and the swine ran down " the steep place " into the Lake. On the ragged profile of the sky-line groves of olives marked Aphek, where the children of Israel, in number like " two little flocks of kids," defeated the Syrians who " filled the country."

Beyond that high horizon he saw in imagination the spacious tableland of the Hauran, the rolling wheat and barley fields with the rude peasant villages, the waste wild tracts inhabited by the wandering bedouin with their camels, sheep, and goats, the mountains, one of the seats of the singular Druze race ; and beyond these, and stretching away into the illimitable spaces of the East, the mysterious desert out of which had come that strange militant religion that had threatened to conquer the world and was still as aggressive, as menacing, as implacable as ever. In all that vast region there was scarcely an agency of the Christian faith. The vision might well have daunted the most confident and courageous of missionary pioneers. But, " If God wills," said the Doctor to himself, " I will be over there yet."

To the north-east a cut in the hills denoted the Jordan valley, and spanning it, and rising slightly above it, shone the snowclad dome of Mount Hermon. It was so distant that it did not dominate the landscape, and would hardly have been dis-

tinguishable from the general contour had it not been for its dazzling cap which perpetually caught and drew the eye. Below it, and above the Lake, was Chorazin, with Capernaum and Bethsaida on the shore at the foot of undulating slopes, which on the west rose gradually into the lofty Safed heights. Safed itself was visible as a gleam of white, a city set on a hill, which was never hidden save by passing cloud-drifts. More westward still were the great masses of Upper Galilee culminating in the Jebel Jermak peak, the highest mountain in Palestine this side of the Jordan.

Immediately on his left, but invisible on account of the rising ground, lay the once marvellously fertile plain of Gennesaret, now a melancholy weed-waste, and Magdala, a wretched bunch of mud hovels lining the beach. And behind him, over the top of the hill, lay the spot where the last of the Christian crusaders met Saladin and his Moslem regiments, and, encompassed by fire and smoke and heat, suffered a defeat which decided the fate of the country for centuries.

It was at these times of quiet study and meditation in places apart that the Doctor felt to the full the wonder of his experience. He was living where Jesus had lived and founded the religion that had revolutionized the world—was following His example,—if ever so far behind,—was in contact with the same human nature that He had appealed to, was witnessing the scenes that had illustrated His teaching, and meeting exactly the same difficulties and discouragements that had shadowed His career. And he felt thrilled at the honour that had

fallen to him. The life and the work and the surroundings might become familiar and even commonplace, but there could never come a time when he would not regard it as a privilege to walk in the very footsteps of His Saviour and, like Him, "go about doing good."

#### IV. A FIERY FURNACE

1886

THE spring passed, the colour on the hills faded, every trace of vegetation vanished, and the land became seared and bare, as bare as the streets of a city. The air grew sultry and oppressive, then scorching like the breath of an oven; for months the shade temperature was over 100° Fahr., and it often went up as high as 110° and even, occasionally, higher. During the day it was not possible to walk much about in the sun, and the pulse of life beat languidly. At night the atmosphere remained hot and stifling, and the Doctor tossed about in a vain endeavour to sleep, and at last took up his bed and laid it on the housetop. The conditions reminded him of the Turkish baths in Glasgow, and he was inclined to believe his servant, who declared that the water "boiled beautifully" because it required so little fire! Then the sirocco blew from the desert like the blast from a blazing furnace and shrivelled what vitality was left. He went on as best he could attending the sick and plying

the surgeon's knife, but he realized that, however healthy and agreeable the climate was in winter and spring, it was clearly unsafe for Europeans to remain in the town during the three or four hottest months.

Although he had been told of the enervating climate, he had not paid much attention to the matter. Like most readers of the New Testament, he had little idea of the physical character of the home country of Jesus. "Strange," he said once, "that no mention is made in the Gospels of the great heat in which Christ carried on His work." Now the knowledge came to him with the shock of an unpleasant surprise. He was one of the type of active men who are never happy except when busily at work, and an interregnum of three idle months was what he had not contemplated. Already he was planning to fill these up with other work.

He was also sketching out the mission of the future. A medical missionary was merely a forerunner, opening up the way for the evangelist and the teacher; and he therefore pointed out that, in addition to himself, a clerical colleague, a native evangelist, and an educational staff were needed, and also a Bible depot or a literature-distributing agency. Without these the station would not be properly equipped. Education, he saw, was urgently necessary in order to improve the low moral tone of the town. Few of the inhabitants were literate, and of the women not one knew the alphabet: the latter had no ambition except to secure enough to eat and to become brides. Only the Greek Catholic Church had a school, and that a poor apology for one, there being but ten boy

scholars ; the Jews and Moslems had none. Nothing whatever was done for the welfare of the girls of any class ; they had no occupation, and refused domestic work. It was a community which did not even drift, it lay stagnant, like a pool in the remote backwater of some great stream, without purpose, without progress. Mentally its people were asleep ; they were content if only they managed to meet from day to day the elementary needs of the body.

There was no lack of support in Scotland for the Doctor's proposals. The interest in the Mission was widespread, for it had a touch of romance that appealed to the Christian imagination, and many minds were thinking of the young "man of Galilee" who was struggling with the exceptional difficulties of the field. To his delight his own sister offered to come out as a voluntary worker among the girls. The Glasgow Ladies' Jewish Association, a society with a long and honourable record, decided to take up this special service, and so began an active connection with Galilee which continues to this day and has been an element of incalculable value in the work of the Mission. It appointed as its first agent, Miss Fenton, a trained missionary teacher with experience in Turkey. At the same time the Jewish Mission Committee sought for a young ordained man to share the burden of the work. With such developments in prospect the Doctor determined to shift to a better house, and secured one on a lease for five years, with an arrangement that enabled him to build additional rooms.

As the season advanced he suffered from the heat : dysentery and fever seized him, and he had finally to take to his bed, where he lay for a time delirious. A visitor passing up to Nazareth informed Dr. Vartan, who rode down to his assistance. There was only a bridle-path between the two towns, and Dr. Vartan could do nothing but place him on his horse in front of himself and hold him there all the way to Nazareth. The journey was by night, and proved an experience which neither of the men would have cared to repeat. So ill was the Doctor that a report of his death—hopefully anticipated by some of the Jews who opposed him—was spread about, but under Mrs. Vartan's motherly care he was nursed back to health.

On his recovery he went on to Damascus to relieve Dr. Mackinnon, while the latter was in Scotland, and spent two months at the summer station of Bludân, where he studied Arabic with the village schoolmaster, and treated over a thousand medical cases. In September he returned by Beyrout and Jaffa, where he met his sister and Miss Fenton and convoyed them to Nazareth. Leaving the latter there, he proceeded in October with his sister to Tiberias. The warmth of his reception from the common people surprised him. He saw smiling faces and uplifted hats on every hand, and the children ran after him and kissed his hand.

With Miss Torrance in charge of the domestic sphere, life ran more smoothly, and his strength was doubled, though the house accommodation left much to be desired. As the new upper rooms were not ready he slept in the basement, an old

structure with rotten floors, the haunt of rats, snakes, scorpions, centipedes, and other creatures. "I am sure," he would say to his sister, "that there are a million bugs in that room." All his scraping and probing and disinfecting failed to dislodge the pests. When he had contrived to secure tolerable conditions there would be an invasion of fleas or flies, for both of which Tiberias was notorious, for surrounded as the building was by native houses it was not possible to create a clean oasis in the desert of filth.

As he had now the aid of a young native man as dispenser and a Scripture reader, the work went on with vigour. By the end of the year 1886 as many as 647 patients had been attended to, 539 of whom were Jews—many of these being seen in their homes. The Baths, which he frequently visited, undoubtedly assisted to spread his fame, as they had spread the fame of Jesus. Large numbers of Jews flocked to them from Jerusalem, Hebron, Jaffa, and Safed, and from abroad, and remained for weeks, not only undergoing the water cure but also praying in the synagogue in the hope of receiving help from the spirit of Rabbi Meyer. Many of the patients receiving no benefit from the Baths stole into the Doctor's consulting-room, and furnished him with abundance of material for the study of human nature. One was a Russian Jew called Moses, as odd a character as any described by Zangwill. His ailment was an enlarged liver which was something of a medical curiosity, and he had been successively in most of the principal hospitals of Europe. As a result he had a knowledge



of many languages ; English he spoke fairly well. Knowing the virtue of the Baths he had come, as a sort of last resort, to try their efficacy, and hearing of the foreign hakîm and his magical skill he decided to consult him. So impressed was he by the personality of the Doctor that he begged to be taken on as a servant. The Doctor agreed, and treated him medically so well that his health greatly improved. His gratitude was unbounded, and few more faithful attendants ever served a master. Having seen so much of hospital life he was familiar with the routine of a Doctor's work and proved of the utmost assistance. He acted as doorkeeper and guarded the Doctor from interruption and intrusion. When friends of patients flew to the house by day or night they were met by Moses, who ascertained the exact nature of the case, and if necessary escorted the Doctor through the filthy streets to the spot, and dealt with the crowds in the sick-room.

He was as tender-hearted a man as one could find. In his leisure time he haunted the byways of the town, hunting up all who were ill, whether Jew or Moslem, and reported them to the Doctor. As a perquisite he was given the odds and ends of the house food that were only fit to be thrown away—crusts of bread, market parings, used tea-leaves, and so on, and these he carefully kept and conveyed to poverty-stricken homes in the town. Even animals and birds had a place in his heart, and all the cats and dogs knew him and came to him as to a friend. He had compassion even on the creatures that tormented the missionary. When the heat

was, as he put it, "boilin'," he said, "The fleas, pore tings, dies!" His goodness was not on the surface, for there was no artificiality in his nature; it was the expression of his simple and sincere spirit, and had its root in love of God and of man.

He was absolutely devoted to the Doctor. On one occasion when the latter was ill he sat beside him day and night, watchful, ready, unwearied. To obtain cooler air the Doctor lay on the broad window-sill, and during the sleepless hours he would engage Moses in talk and study the curious aspects of Jewish mentality that opened up before him. Moses had a remarkable knowledge of the Bible and had an unshakable faith in the unalterable character of the law, but he could not distinguish between what was law and what was merely tradition. One of the comforts of his religious life was the making of vows; it was an anodyne which seemed to soothe him, and he would frequently resort to the synagogue at the Baths to restore his soul with prayer and the sacrifices of a humble and contrite heart.

When he left, after twelve years of incomparable service, the Doctor missed him more than he cared to acknowledge.

## V. THE APOSTATE

1887

IN strong contrast to the torrid heat of the summer the weather became very cold, the temperature falling on occasion as low as 43° and producing a

crop of new ailments such as chills and bronchitis. If the streets were sewers in summer they were quagmires during the winter rains, and the Doctor found it extremely difficult to move about. "In some places," he wrote, "I would need a horse to drag me through the accumulation of mud and filth."

When Miss Fenton arrived with a native assistant whom she had secured, a beginning was made with educational work among girls. The rabbis, however, were opposed to any developments beyond medical work, and when the school was opened with a large attendance of Jewish girls, the fight with official Judaism began. Khērems were sent down from Jerusalem banning those who countenanced the institution, and all the Jewesses vanished, leaving only a few Moslems and Christians. Miss Fenton was not dismayed, it was no new experience to her ; but the Doctor felt keenly the averted looks and distant demeanour of the townspeople who had hitherto been so friendly.

This incident proved the wisdom of the missionary statesmen of the Church in pioneering the campaign in Galilee with a medical mission ; it was the one Christian agency which the ignorance and fanaticism of the East would tolerate, and it opened doors which would otherwise have remained closed, and modified or eliminated opposition that seemed at first implacable. One striking illustration of this occurred in these days. A rabbi whose hostility to the mission was peculiarly virulent had a daughter-in-law suffering from a deranged mind. She was taken to the Synagogue of Rabbi Meyer

at the Baths and kept within the iron railing of the tomb in the hope that the good spirit of the old miracle worker might drive out the demon. No improvement being effected, the husband became impatient and sought the advice of Dr. Torrance, whose rational treatment soon restored her to her right mind. The result was not lost on the rabbi, and when he fell ill with an inflamed throat he coveted the Doctor's skill but was too proud to send for him. One morning, when he was almost suffocating, the son, the husband of the woman who had been cured, rushed frantically to the mission house and dragged the Doctor to the patient. Immediate relief was given and a complete cure followed. The rabbi was won; no man could have been more grateful, and he never afterwards opposed the Mission.

But it was the fundamental purpose of the Doctor to commend Christ, and he felt that despite the pressing claims of the dispensary and the calls of the sick in the town he must make a beginning of some sort with the evangelistic work.

He found that the Jews had no idea of sin in the Christian sense and therefore felt no need for redemption. Their religion was based on the original Divine law as defined and codified throughout the centuries by the rabbis: it consisted of the strict observance of a multitude of rules bearing on every aspect of their lives. A knowledge of these could not be obtained without prolonged study, and many spent their days and nights in endeavouring to master and obey them, but, ordinarily, they relied on the rabbis to keep them

right. They found a sense of satisfaction in thus patiently and loyally bearing the burden of these minute regulations, and no doubt it reacted on their worship, but it did not bring them into a personal relation with God. To them sin meant the breaking of any of the rules laid upon them, and their punishment was not so much alienation from God as alienation from their fellows and the synagogue with all its associations and social implications. It was the same external religion which Jesus encountered and combated, but intensified a hundredfold by centuries of rabbinical development and custom.

The Doctor's aim was to convince them that sin was a reality, that disease was, in a sense, a proof of it, and that there was mercy and healing with God, and so gradually to lead up to the purpose and power of the Saviour of humanity. For them specially, therefore, he began a service in Arabic every Wednesday and Sunday evening in his house. But not a single Jew put in an appearance; only a few Greek Christians attended, and he foresaw the stern and difficult task which an ordained missionary would face when he arrived. Open evangelism, the frontal attack, seemed in the meantime to be a forlorn hope. He fell back on what always tells with every race, the daily example of a life lived in the spirit of Jesus, and the quiet, kind word spoken to individuals.

Literature he found a promising agent. The leaflet or booklet reached mind and heart when other means failed. A Jew who would not listen to teaching or preaching, or did so only under

protest, would carry away, hidden beneath his cloak, a tract or New Testament, and read it in secret, for possession of Christian books was a crime punishable with the severest penalties. Young and old were accessible in this way. One aged rabbi whom the Doctor visited asked for a New Testament, read it carefully, and died with it beneath his head. It was reported amongst his neighbours that he had been a secret Christian disciple; they buried his body, but burned the book that had led him astray. The ordinary magic-lantern was also a useful instrument in the Doctor's hands. When he stretched the sheet on the wall of the house, the news spread like wild-fire, and in a trice people were pouring into the court and scrambling over walls and roofs to secure the best view-points.

But increasingly he realized the need for a colleague to grapple with the evangelistic work; it was not possible for him, with his hands more than full, to attend to it properly. In response to a strong appeal which the Jewish Mission Committee issued, one of the ablest of the students in the Free Church College of Glasgow offered himself. When the Doctor heard the name, Ewing, he recalled it as that of a young man whom he had met and had pleasant recollections of, and was delighted with the intelligence. He recommended that he be sent for preparatory training to the Institutium Judaicum at Leipzig, conducted by Dr. Delitzsch, and the suggestion was carried out.

At Breslau, Mr. Ewing came across a Jew named

Solomon Goldenberg, who had become a Christian and had just been baptized. He was pronounced "far gone in consumption," with only a short time to live if he remained in Germany. Mr. Ewing thought he would suit the Galilee climate and the Tiberias work, and urged him to offer his services to the Mission. Taking the advice literally, he scraped together sufficient money and started off for Palestine, where one night he appeared at the Doctor's house. Although not well educated, he possessed an intimate knowledge of Jewish life and literature, and seemed of a modest and kindly nature, and the Doctor provided him with board and a small salary.

As the first Jew in Tiberias professing Christianity, his advent created an intense sensation and commotion. But for the protection afforded by the Doctor it would have gone hard with him; as it was, whenever he appeared in the streets, the fanatical Jews denounced him and drew up the skirts of their robes and stood aside as he passed. They called him "an apostate who had been bought," for they could not bring themselves to believe that he was sincere. The rabbis forbade anyone to speak to him; he was denied admission to Jewish houses, and he walked, like a leper, alone and shunned.

He fell back on assisting the Doctor at the dispensary, and little by little his Christ-like character won respect and wore down hostility; then not a few were eager to meet him and discuss his position in the hope that he might be induced to return to the religion of his fathers.

## VI. THE CITY ON THE HILL

1887

FOR the hot months of 1887 the Doctor went to Safed. Although not mentioned in the Bible, and therefore not so familiar to the Christian mind attracted only by Biblical names, this town was in many ways as interesting as any in Syria. It was the largest in Galilee, and contained a population of twenty-five thousand, of whom from twelve to fifteen thousand were Jews, eight thousand Moslems, and the remainder Christians. The three quarters were ranged like a collar on the slopes and eminences round a central hill which was crowned with the white limestone ruins of a Crusaders' castle.

Safed became a Jewish city later than Tiberias. When the Jews were expelled from Spain, many secured a refuge in Salonica, but finding themselves too confined, they dispatched agents to Palestine to spy out a possible place of settlement. Safed was fixed upon, and thither emigrated a company of educated and well-to-do members of the race. The community became noted for learning and piety, and the town was for nearly two centuries the literary centre of Jewry where the sacred literature was printed.

Some of the most famous men in Hebrew story were buried in its vicinity—Hillel, "the teacher of Jesus," his rival Shammai, Joseph Karo, and Simeon ben Yochai. To the grave of the last



at Meiron came, every year, Jews from all quarters of the globe, and weird scenes were enacted. A great bonfire was prepared, silks, rags, and jewels were thrown upon it, and the whole was drenched with oil. The privilege of lighting the fire was sold to the highest bidder. Intoxicating drink was to be had for the asking, and under its influence the crowd engaged in dancing and shrieking. When the fire blazed up, boys, young men, and grey-beards, all gesticulated and whooped like savages. The revelry was kept up all night.

In later years the population of the town was augmented by Ashkenazim refugees from Rumania and Russia, who were wholly supported by the khalukah. Rigidly orthodox, they employed their time in praying, reading, and meditating on the law, and their seclusion from the main lines of traffic and travel only served to ossify their habits. It was of them that Laurence Oliphant wrote: "They are a set of useless bigots who combine superstitious observance with immoral practice. They are bitterly hostile to schools, and agree with those western Jews who consider that any scheme for developing the material resources of Palestine by means of Jewish industry is fantastic and visionary." Racial and religious fanaticism was exceedingly strong in the town, and the quarrels between the various communities often ended in bloodshed. When Lord (then Lieutenant) Kitchener was engaged on the survey of Galilee, he was attacked by the Moslems, and several of his party were severely wounded.

The only house which the Doctor was able to

hire was in the Moslem quarter. His object had been to study and rest, but, moved by the amount of suffering about him, he found himself entering instead on hard, earnest work for which fortunately he obtained the strength. Sending for his dispensary attendant and his Scripture reader, he began regular dispensary work, and attended all who came, irrespective of religion. Moslems were naturally in the majority, and he was amazed at the opportunities afforded of reaching them ; they even admitted him to their harems to attend sick wives, and nothing impressed him so much with the value of medical missionary work as this fact. He found them rude, ignorant, and superstitious, and absolutely untouched by Christianity. The Jews also freely came to him, laying aside their suspicion and dislike, and learnt that the religion of Christ was the essence of kindness and love. During his stay, he treated 423 Moslems, 124 Jews, 71 Christians, and 3 Druzes, and there was not one who went away without some higher thought in his mind or word of comfort in his heart.

This experience suggested that summer quarters might be established at Safed. No other locality would suit so well as a health resort for the Tiberias workers. The town was the only place on the hills where houses could be obtained ; it was about 4000 feet above the Lake, and the climate was pure and bracing, and it could be reached within five hours by riding. The track, it was true, was merely a faint trail over the roughest of rocky surfaces, but when once its intricacies were mastered, it was fairly negotiable, so that frequent visits

could be paid to Tiberias. The Doctor was also convinced that the needs of the town could not be left unmet. Such spiritual destitution and bodily suffering could not be allowed to exist in the vicinity of the Mission without some effort being made to relieve them. There was no fear of encroaching on the sphere of the Church Missions to Jews, the aim of which was to minister only to the Jewish section of the population. The Free Church Medical Mission was wider in its scope: it recognized no line of demarcation between religions, and treated Jews and Gentiles alike, so long as the love and saving power of Christ was taught. Even amongst the Jews there was work sufficient for more than one mission.

## VII. A DIFFICULT AUDIENCE

1887-88

A PROMISING start was made in Tiberias at the beginning of the winter 1887-88. When the school was opened over fifty girls put in an appearance, and, being in love with their teacher and their lessons, maintained a perfect attendance. Occasionally Miss Fenton would have an uninvited audience of women from the town and villages, curious to see what was going on. It was admitted that the girls were improving both in their character and their demeanour; they could even, it was said, be distinguished in the

streets by their bright looks and smart and tidy appearance.

The dispensary was now regularly open on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays to all comers, and on the alternate days only for special cases. The Doctor was profoundly sorry for the women, who suffered so much, and until his idea of a special department for their treatment could be realized, he began a clinic for them on Thursdays which was largely attended, Jewesses being in the majority.

The question of charging fees had been occupying his mind. His impression of the community was that of a pack of wolves ready to prey on any charitable institution established in their midst, and he wished from the first to make it a principle of the Mission not to pauperize the people but to train them in the grace of independence and self-respect. This would also prevent the enemies of the Mission accusing him of enticing away the adherents of other faiths by giving free treatment. Dr. Vartan was at one with him in his determination, and he therefore began to charge a penny or twopence for medicines and a larger amount when he was called out to any who were too proud to visit the dispensary in person. Though there were many remonstrances the scheme worked well and justified his belief in their capacity to pay.

Shortly after sunrise patients would begin to appear, often fighting to obtain early admittance, and by nine o'clock the leewan—which had been turned into a waiting-room—was crowded as well

as the courtyard outside and all other available space. To all a numbered paper was given, on which was written their name and age, space being left for the prescription and notes of the case. This, which they retained, served as a ticket of admission so long as it was kept clean.

When the Doctor came on the scene he read a few verses from the Bible and gave a short address. This was the feature of attendance which all classes found most unpalatable. But the Doctor made it known that it was an essential part of his work and that all who objected to it could stay away. "I am not going to bribe you with free treatment," he said, "and I must hold the little service, as my religion tells me to do, and you can come or not as you like. I am not sailing under any false colours." They liked his straightforward candour, and the majority soon became accustomed to the process of running the gauntlet, while the others who still objected called him in to their homes.

In some ways it was a difficult service. The Doctor spoke simply and clearly, often pausing to ask if they understood, and his illustrations were always taken from the everyday scenes with which they were familiar. But he had the consciousness that he was working against time. Here were from forty to a hundred restless patients, many of them suffering, and their minds occupied with their bodily condition ; some believed he was talking blasphemy, others could not understand what he was saying. He would often be interrupted : " Oh, Doctor, don't be long," a woman would cry out ; or " Oh, Doctor, when will you be done ? I

have an awful pain inside !” Occasionally a tall Arab from the desert spaces would rise and stretch himself, wrap his loose cloak about him, and stroll outside and, after a mouthful or two of fresh air, stroll leisurely in again. All were obviously relieved when he finished. Yet he was there to teach the good news from God, and no better opportunity was to his hand. That the service was not unprofitable he often learnt in the town, where his addresses created interest and were discussed in workshop and market. He found also that the Jews who passed through the waiting-room became less prejudiced and were readier than their fellows to enter into religious conversation.

When the service concluded a bell rang, and the patients passed into the consulting-room in the order of their numbers, and thence into a passage, where they received their medicine from the native dispenser, and made their exit through a separate door. Meanwhile Goldenberg was looking after the Bible depot and reading-room, off the leewan, talking to the Polish Jews who did not understand Arabic, and distributing literature. His task was often a thankless one ; some scoffed and cursed him, some listened in stony indifference, others went out to avoid him.

The majority of patients suffered from medical ailments, but there was a large number of minor operations, and not a few surgical cases had to be performed under the disadvantage of inadequate accommodation and equipment. Very common were wounds and broken bones—the result of highway robbery and assault in the neighbourhood,

which sometimes proved fatal. Remarkable cures were effected which made the Doctor thankfully exclaim, "God answers prayer." There was, for instance, a case of a young boy, the grandson of an Arab chief, who, after a severe operation, recovered in two days. Such was a miracle in the eyes of the people and, being noised abroad, increased the stream of patients. He began to be accounted a magician, and he mingled trembling with his gratitude, for let a few deaths occur and his reputation would be gone; he would be hounded out of the town, and all prospect of mission work would be at an end. But no fatalities occurred, and his position was strengthened week by week.

Calls came frequently from the villages and bedouin encampments, and to these he trudged on foot, toiling over the hot, trackless land, unconscious of hardship, anxious only to deepen the hold of the Mission on the people. Occasionally the summons was from a greater distance. One of the earliest was from an upland village on the opposite side of the Lake. A woman who had benefited by treatment at Tiberias had a relapse and was unable to travel. Dressed in Arab costume, which he frequently assumed in order to attract less attention, the Doctor rode to the lower Jordan, forded it, and ascended the hills to the little Moslem settlement of mud houses, where he arrived at sunset. After examining the patient and partaking of the family supper of a mess of pottage, he squatted with the men and women round the wood fire, as much of an Arab in appearance as themselves, and talked to them of the Good Physician who used to walk

about the shores of the Lake below. They knew nothing of Him and were greatly interested.

When, exhausted and wearied, he begged to be allowed to retire, they spread a mattress, pillow, and quilt beside the fire. He endeavoured to sleep, but what with the smoke, the fleas, the snoring of the men, and the smell of the sheep in the room, he found it impossible.

After midnight some women who were sitting with the patient, thinking the Doctor slumbered, began to talk about him in low tones. "Did you hear how he spoke to you?" the patient said. "That is how he speaks to the people in Tiberias—he speaks to the women as if they were men. Down there they don't regard it as wrong to do such and such things." Having visited the Girls' School she had learned some of the "strange words" they taught there. She "knew them," she said, "off by heart." "What are they?" the watchers asked. "God have mercy on me a sinner," she answered. They groped after the meaning of the phrase, and the patient showed that she had some dim idea of its significance. Tears came into the Doctor's eyes as he lay and listened.

## VIII. THE PROCESS OF BUYING LAND

1888

THE need for hospital accommodation was daily becoming more urgent. There were cases which



the Doctor could not treat in the consulting-room, and operations which would have required his continued supervision. One day Moses appeared with a story that an old Moslem lay dying beside the Mosque. The Doctor went with him down a narrow lane, the middle of which was an open sewer, and entered a rude hut. The man lay on the damp ground on a rotten mat, at his head was a broken water-jar; his sores were black with flies, and he was moaning and calling for water. Friendless and hopelessly ill he had been left to die in the very shadow of the Mosque where men worshipped Allah the All-Merciful. Everything that was possible was done by the Christian physician to ease his sufferings, which were, however, soon over.

Shortly afterwards a black Moslem slave crawled into the dispensary and was treated for a disease brought on by exposure and destitution. He returned on several occasions and was then missed. The Doctor found him in the Mosque unable to move, and starving. As he was homeless, the Doctor, recalling the fate of the other Moslem, had him conveyed to the house, where a bed was made up in the depot room, Miss Torrance and Miss Fenton nursing him by turns. A simple operation relieved him, but he was too weak to rally. He listened intently to the story of Jesus told him in all tenderness and simplicity, and ere he died at midnight, he was repeating the words, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin," as if striving to fathom the comfort in their meaning. He was the first in-patient of the Mission.

Another case was that of an old blind Jewess upon whom the Doctor performed an operation for cataract in her home. He took every precaution to ensure that the room should be kept clean and sweet, but one day he found that the husband had shut the door and windows and had been cooking food on the fire ; the place was full of smoke, and the woman's eyes were ruined. The next case of the kind he treated in his own house with complete success.

But he came to the conclusion that the sooner hospital accommodation was secured, the better it would be for the patients and his own reputation. More satisfactory arrangements were also necessary for housing the staff, and there grew up in his mind a scheme for a complete suite of buildings commensurate with the importance which, he was convinced, the work was going to assume. The real difficulty was to secure a site in the congested town. He looked longingly at the great vacant tracts outside. No one was allowed to build there ; but in any case, in the lawless condition of the country, it would not be wise to be isolated. Of necessity the Mission premises must be within the walls.

Only one spot seemed suitable for the purpose. On the north side of the town the ground rose, and where it adjoined the boundary and immediately below the ruined pile of the Crusaders' castle, there was some waste land with a couple of ruined rooms and a single olive tree. Although a fine site, and commanding a view of the Lake, no one would live on it, probably because of its rocky character

and its contiguity to the open country. It belonged to the mufti, who was the local religious head of the Moslems and their official representative in all relations with the Government, a well-educated man of charming manners. The Doctor had coveted this piece of ground from the time of his arrival, but he was careful to avoid mentioning the fact, especially to the mufti, who often visited him, for to have done so would have been to lose it. His patience was rewarded. One day the mufti began to talk of the land, and offered to sell it to the Doctor.

“Come and have a look at it,” he said.

The Doctor, seemingly indifferent, accompanied him to the spot.

“What is your price?” he asked.

“Seventy-five napoleons.”

“What about that piece down where the palms are?” indicating another plot on the edge of the beach.

“I will sell that too for another seventy-five.”

“Ah, well, I’ll think about it,” said the Doctor, repressing his eagerness. He allowed two or three days to pass. Although he had no authority from the Jewish Mission Committee to purchase, the matter was too important to admit of delay, and feeling sure that his action would be endorsed, he went to the mufti and agreed to take both, half the amount to be paid down, and the other half within a month, on the understanding that the official registration, giving validity to the Moslem deed, would be to hand by that time. The Registration Officer stated that the matter would have to be

referred to higher departments at Acre. This was done, but no answer came. The Doctor knew that bakhshish was expected, but he had set his face against the practice, and resolved to stand firm. The month passed ; he paid the money and took possession, the mufti honourably fulfilling his part of the contract. Then the Doctor received an anonymous letter which said that if he would come with £50 to the registration office he would receive his title. This was evidently written by an underling with the connivance of his superior officer, both of whom would share the amount.

The Doctor's Scottish blood was roused. He travelled to Beyrout, the seat of the wilayet under which Tiberias was administered, saw the Vice-Consul, and obtained an introduction to the Wali or chief government official, and to him told his story. The Wali shrugged his shoulders, no doubt asking himself why this troublesome hakîm could not conform to the custom of the country.

“ Well,” he said aloud, “ I will have to obtain authority from Constantinople. I will send a telegram.”

The Doctor knew what kind of reply would be sent. There would be two : an open one, reading, “ You must not trouble the British ” ; and a private one, saying, “ Skin the wretched British.” Time passed. He made repeated inquiries, but was always informed that no answer had arrived ; and at last he said :

“ Look here ! I know your system, and I am quite willing to be reasonable and recompense

obligements, but this is blackmail, and I won't stand it."

"Go home, and I'll send another telegram and let you know," was the reply.

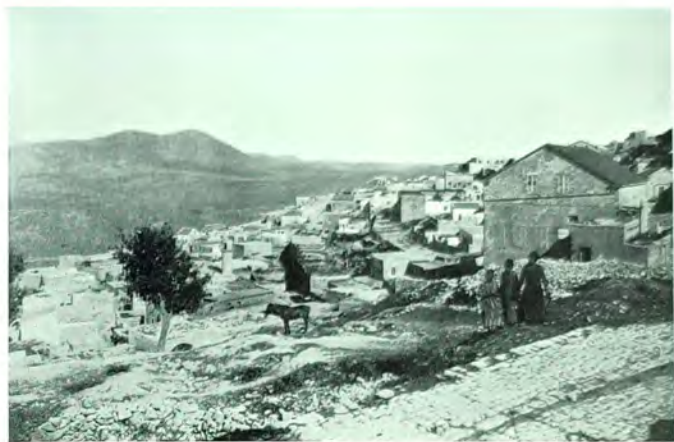
He returned to Tiberias uneasy as to the outcome. But Providence came to his aid. The Governor of the town became sick, called in the Doctor, and was carefully tended and restored to health. In his gratitude he listened sympathetically to the representations of one or two of the Doctor's native friends, and the title was secured without the payment of a single piastre.

The Doctor had, however, to sign a declaration that no hospital, school, or church would be erected on the ground without express permission from the Sublime Porte. Further, when receiving local permission to build two dwelling-houses, he had to sign an undertaking that they would not be converted into any of these institutions without sanction from Constantinople.

## IX. AT THE BACK OF BEYOND

1888

THE patients who came from the vast uplands of trans-Jordania, drawn by tales of the foreign wonder-worker, awakened in the Doctor a desire to see that region for himself. One day three dromedaries appeared outside the house, and three



SAFED: THE JEWISH QUARTER



SOME PATIENTS OF THE EARLY DAYS



A TIBERIAS JEW STUDYING THE TALMUD IN THE  
SYNAGOGUE

This was a snapshot taken in evening light



A TYPICAL TIBERIAS JEW

Arabs entered. They were a father, who was blind, and his two sons. The case was hopeless.

“But I am not a specialist in eyes,” the Doctor said, as he gave them coffee, “and as you have come so far, you should go to the British Ophthalmic Hospital in Jerusalem.”

“God forbid!” they replied. “We know you, and we do not know the doctor in Jerusalem. If you say nothing can be done, then nothing can be done. Farewell.”

“Peace go with you,” said the Doctor. And mounting their dromedaries they rode away.

Many of these Ishmaelite patients, on leaving, begged him to come and see them in their homes, and he would jocularly remark that as there was no law where they dwelt, his life would not be safe. “By the beard of Mohammed,” they swore, “not a hair of your head will be injured; you will be received and honoured as a distinguished guest.”

The idea fell in with his inclination, but what hindered him at first was the necessity of keeping closely to his daily routine. When he responded to a call from a far-off village it meant that he was attending to one patient and disappointing a score or more of others at the consulting-rooms; and he was jealous of the good name of the Mission. He felt like a mother who was nursing a child that could not be left; and as there was no one to take his place, he stuck to his post.

But in the spring at the time of Passover, when the Jews forsook the consulting-rooms in the



fear that leaven might be amongst the medicines, he took his tent and a mule loaded with medical paraphernalia and set out for some spot on the Lake or hills where Arabs were numerous. A favourite spot was the plain on which, it was said, the five thousand were fed. Another was the mouth of the Jordan, where the water flowed into the Lake between level tracts of weed and black sand.

Notable occasions were those when he vaccinated the people. Small-pox was always raging in one region or other, and the people were apt to become panic-stricken when it broke out in their vicinity. They knew of inoculation and practised it, but the Doctor introduced the vaccine method. At first they were suspicious and hung back, and the difficulty was to secure a patient, but after one had received the treatment, his task was to prevent them mobbing him in their eagerness to undergo it. He never came across a conscientious objector ; if he had chosen to become a wandering vaccinator he would have had a free pass through the length and breadth of Arabia and a living to boot.

It was when the heat rendered work impossible and the town activities closed down, that he took his tent and medical equipment and went farther afield into the wilderness east of the Jordan. On the way he would spend a night at Gadara (Um Keis), 1300 feet above sea-level, pitching his tent beside the old Græco-Roman theatre and temples. Many of the people lived in the underground rock-cut tombs, and even slept in the sarcophagi. Then

he would make his way slowly to other villages and encampments, keeping always on the outskirts, away from the filth and smells. Many of the districts were populous, and at one place he saw as many as 20,000 camels. In nearly every village he found a Jew from Tiberias, in a little shop, or peddling, exposed to great hardships, and running the risk of assault and robbery, the local Moslem Governors being both bigoted and unscrupulous. At a few of the nearer centres, Christian communities of the Greek Orthodox Church existed, but of an extremely debased type.

Gradually he reached the outskirts of civilization and passed into the desert region. His fame had preceded him, and he was invariably welcomed and hospitably entertained. "Don't shackle your horses," said one sheikh<sup>1</sup> to him; "let them go and eat what they like, and if they are lost we will give you better ones." Camels would be sent to shift his tents and baggage to a stage farther on, and when he arrived he would find a feast ready and a crowd of patients awaiting him. He never charged these children of the desert for advice, but made them pay a nominal sum for the medicines, and if they were too poor to afford that, they brought eggs or chickens, butter or honey, sometimes a goat or lamb, and often barley for his horses. In this way he made tolerably sure that they would use the medicines, while he earned their respect as a professional man; other-

<sup>1</sup> Sheikh is, like rabbi, a term of honour. Among the wandering Arabs the headman is so called; so is the head of a village or a party. It literally means "old man."

wise they might have considered him wealthy, and a proper subject for spoliation. The medicines he gave, whenever possible, in the form of pills or tabloids, as spoons and cups varied so much in size that no definite dose could be prescribed.

He endeavoured to impart some rudimentary notion of hygiene and sanitary science, and as many were naturally intelligent, he found no difficulty in impressing them with the practical value of his teaching. One scorching day he sought shelter in the guest-room of a sheikh, who offered him coffee and water. The former he accepted, but he politely declined the latter on the ground that he only drank spring water. "Oh," said the sheikh, "heavenly water is better than earthly water." The Doctor discovered that the heavenly water had percolated through dunghills into a rock-cut cistern, and, while cool, was not colourless. "No wonder," he told the sheikh, "that diarrhœa, dysentery, and fever are endemic in your village. Bring your chief men." They gathered in the guest-room, and the Doctor delivered a homely health lecture on the thesis that cleanliness was next to godliness, and gave them directions how to carry out the principle in regard to potable water. The Moslem religion has a good deal to do with eating and drinking, and they took the preaching to heart, as a subsequent visit to the village proved. From this elementary platform the Doctor proceeded to higher issues, and spoke of clean language, clean thinking, clean living, and clean souls.

Ere he was awake in the mornings his tent would

be surrounded by a picturesque crowd impatient to see and consult the hakîm. He would come out and gaze at the throng and realize the hopelessness of giving detailed attention to every individual, and as many suffered from the same ailments, he sorted them out into classes and dealt with them wholesale. Everything was done in the public eye. As he treated one man, half a dozen suffering from the same complaint would hang on his words and follow his demonstration, and, beyond these, hundreds of others were intently watching and listening. By patiently explaining the causes and history of the diseases, he found that the patients took a more intelligent view of their condition, and were readier to follow his directions.

Surgery appealed more to them than medicine ; it was something they saw and understood ; and it was the Doctor's remarkable skill in operations which gained him a reputation that extended far into Arabia. Cases of a minor nature came in almost hourly ; those of a serious character he would only deal with, if acute ; others, that could wait, he sent to Tiberias. Occasionally he would use chloroform, to which they submitted without demur—Arabs as a rule abstain from all forms of alcohol—and the wonder of it never palled upon the onlookers. They would not, however, submit to amputation. "If a Moslem loses a limb," the Doctor was told, "he expects to be without it in the world to come."

He was as interested in their own medical methods as they were in his. Here are some of the curious facts he gathered :

They attribute disease to God, to devils, to the evil eye ; and as cures they pray, and wear hejabs (extracts from the Koran and devices written by some dervish and kept in a leathern pouch attached by a string to the neck or hair of head or to the wrist). Wandering doctors or holy men attempt to drive out the evil spirits and cure diseases by incantations, poundings (massage!), writing and tattooing on the body, as well as by various decoctions and plasters. Beads, bones, shells (for dropsy), alum and other salt crystals, the paws of a hyena and other animals, antique coins, etc., are worn as charms, and a good price is often paid for them. Special diets are often ordered ; for example, bread without salt and raisins for forty days. The actual cautery, by red-hot iron or smouldering rag, is the most popular remedy, being applied over the seat of pain in nearly every part of the body but chiefly over joints. The humoral theory of rheumatism, sciatica, etc., is carried out by the application of a pea over the cauterized point to keep the wound open and promote a flow of the evil humour for days, months, or even years. Setons, issues, acupuncture, counter-irritants, scarifying, venesection, and many of the methods of Avicenna were carried out by the Arabs. Special men are known as bone-setters. They make a special starch bandage with flour paste and white of egg spread on calico. They use reeds as splints, but seldom or never fix the approximate joints, or bandage the distal end of a limb, and by tightening the limb too much frequently produce gangrene. Compound fractures are usually fatal. Bleeding from wounds is stopped by the tourniquet, actual cautery, the application of coffee, ashes, red earth, etc., under a bandage. Wounds I have seen dressed with leaves, rags, skins ; and as application to gun-shot wounds I have seen both tar and treacle used.

Always when opportunity occurred he gave simple, natural talks on religion and the claims of Jesus of Nazareth, and they listened with attention. One night during a great drought he spoke in prayer of the anxiety of the people, and asked God to send rain and relieve their distress. A listener

was so impressed that next day he brought one of the sheikhs and a large number of his followers to hear the petition and join in it.

The magic lantern was a source of unbounded delight. One evening the women crowded in such numbers on the roof of a man's house that the timbers began to give way. As they were deaf to the owner's demands to descend, he pulled down the lantern sheet and carried it off. Another spot was found, and the exhibition proceeded undisturbed.

In his travels he came across a sheikh who had once been carried to the dispensary with a diseased leg; hopeless of recovering the use of it, he was amazed to find himself, later, walking back to his desert home. It was little wonder that he welcomed the Doctor with a grateful heart.

“ His leg continues well, and from the moment we arrived at his village until we left it he kept near us. He was anxious to serve us in every way possible. He brought us barley, a sheep, hens, eggs, and bread for food, and helped us as we attended to the sick. He had supper with us the evening we arrived, and, as usual, we had reading and prayer in Arabic afterwards. The chief men of the village calling *en masse* upon us just as we had finished, he told them what we had been doing, and begged me to tell them what I had been reading. I spent about two hours as I sat at the tent-door addressing a company inside and outside my tent. They had questions to ask, not in opposition, but simply for further explanation. Each morning and evening Hamad joined us in our reading, and on Sunday he was a long time with us. He already knew the Gospels fairly well, so we began the Acts together. He stopped his harvest-men from working the Sunday we were there. I avoided passing any remarks on Mohammed or the Koran, but I could see there was a struggle going on in his

mind, and he once said to me, ' Mohammed was a prophet, but he was not like Christ.' ”

This sheikh invited the Doctor to exhibit the magic lantern in the mosque, but he prudently declined the offer, for such an act might have been deeply resented and destroyed his influence. He held the meeting instead in the guest-house. On this occasion the pictures illustrated scenes in the life of Joseph. At the end the sheikh declared that several of the incidents had been missed out. This was true, and the Doctor found that he had been reading the Bible which had been given him in Tiberias. “ Then,” said the Doctor, “ *you* tell the people the whole story,” and to his surprise was informed that he had been reading from the Book to crowds of astonished hearers. “ A man like that,” remarked the Doctor, “ is not far from the Kingdom, but, humanly speaking, it would be impossible for him to profess Christianity and live in the land. He would get, unawares, a cup of coffee with a little arsenic in it, and die what would be called a ‘ natural ’ death.”

When the long day's work was over the Doctor would sit in the cool of the brilliant nights and talk with his bedouin visitors—men who dressed and lived and toiled as in the days of Abraham—and see deep into their hearts. He found, what did not surprise him, that below the veneer of race and religion and ignorance and fanaticism, the encrustation of ages of isolation, their real nature was little different from that of other peoples more advanced in the scale of civilization.

## X. CURSES

1888-89

MR. EWING, who was accompanied by his wife, arrived in 1888. In all mission fields it is the appearance and conduct of a missionary which excite interest rather than what he says, and the newcomer was scrutinized with keen interest. The impression he made was that of a big man in every way ; he was tall and muscular in body, and robust in mind and spirit—a type which the townspeople respected and the roving bedouin loved. He won all by the buoyancy of his nature, his quick sympathy, and his patience and reasonableness. Thoroughly evangelical he was anxious to be at work, and began at once with an interpreter, but it was not surprising that he felt, as he said, like “ a muzzled lion.” There was something, however, in his trained and cultured voice, ringing through the still air, which of itself arrested attention and drew listeners from the courts and roofs around. A special aptitude for Arabic soon carried him over the initial difficulty of the language.

He was much impressed by the hold which Dr. Torrance had gained on the people. “ Whatever they may think of the motives of those who sent him here,” he wrote, “ the Doctor himself is certainly one of the most popular men in the town. There is no mistake about his intentions, for he makes no secret of his real purpose, but he is so obviously their friend, and so straightforward in



his work, that the most suspicious are led to trust him."

As the Doctor had anticipated, the new direct attack on the religious convictions of the people aroused bitter opposition. Jews and Catholics were at one in resenting the development, and khērems were thundered from both the synagogue and the church. Time after time the preacher at his meetings was faced by rows of empty benches. He was not discouraged; hostility was better than indifference, and there were minor indications that the work was telling. One Sunday when the priest in the Greek church had pronounced the solemn words, "Let the curse of God rest on all who attend Mr. Ewing's meetings!" a boy shouted from the door, "Cursed be every one who does *not* attend Mr. Ewing's meetings!" It was the fact that the congregation was more amused than terrified that made the incident significant. With the Christians, indeed, the fear of censure never lasted long.

Even the Jews took risks. They would come and stand outside and listen, so that when charged with disloyalty they could swear in true legalistic fashion that they were not at the meeting. But on the whole the rabbinical power was too strong to be antagonized, and now and again a case would occur which showed what would happen if one went too far. An orphan boy, attracted by the sweetness of the new teaching, talked secretly with Goldenberg, who passed him on to Mr. Ewing. The fact becoming known, his relatives secured him, punished him severely, and left

him bound hand and foot for some days, with but the barest allowance of food, and then sent him to Jerusalem to be beyond the reach of the missionary's influence.

The girls' school promised so well that a building was hired in the Jewish quarter to accommodate it, Miss Fenton's quarters being an old synagogue. Like the evangelistic meetings, however, it came under the ban of the Greek authorities. "It is better," the priest said, "that the girls should grow up ignorant and bad than that they should come under the influence of the Protestant women." All the Greek girls vanished from the school, but in this case the authorities had to reckon with the mothers; these had been so pleased with the change in the character and development of their daughters that they protested in a body and the prohibition was withdrawn. The Jewish girls were more of an uncertain quantity: loving the school and the Bible lesson and hymn-singing, they learnt more than their parents desired, and now one and now another would be absent for a time, or be taken away permanently. The Moslem pupils were the most regular in attendance, although new officials with a zeal for the faith would often create difficulties. On one occasion a rival school was attempted, but the girls came to Miss Fenton and said, "We learn nothing at our school, and we are far behind the Mission girls." One who persisted in attending the Mission school was severely beaten.

As there were usually over sixty scholars in the schoolroom the scene was a lively one, but those

who witnessed the cheerful, well-ordered activity and recalled the wild and untrained condition of the girls a few years previously declared that Miss Fenton had achieved a miracle.

It was not surprising that the more thoughtful townspeople wished a similar school for boys. This was a more difficult problem. Little store was set on girls by any of the religious communities, but boys were a different proposition. Amongst the Jews it was the boys on whom devolved the sacred duty of handing down the beliefs of their fathers, and they were jealously guarded against all heretical influences. Mr. Ewing felt that everything depended on the wideness of the curriculum and the quality and thoroughness of the teaching; the education would have to be made so good that the people would simply be forced to take advantage of it. If Hebrew were included as a subject the Jews would be specially attracted.

The feeling grew; several small boys were actually sent to Miss Fenton in anticipation of a school being opened; and then a deputation from the Christian population asked the missionaries formally to establish one. They guaranteed an attendance of twenty-one boys, and agreed to submit to any conditions that might be imposed. Mr. Ewing plainly indicated that if the school were opened he would be bound to teach religious truth as he knew it. The deputation shrugged its shoulders. "For ourselves," was the reply, "we are satisfied with our religion, but the boys will be free to judge for themselves." "What does the

priest think of it?" he asked, turning to that dignitary. The priest's reply was unexpected. "They may become angels if they like!" he said.

Simultaneously in Scotland an assistant-school-master, Mr. W. M. Christie, offered himself for the work. He had a natural aptitude for languages, and already knew Hebrew well, and the Committee appointed him to organize and conduct the educational side of the Mission. Like Mr. Ewing, he was sent to Leipzig for a special course of instruction, and, along with Mrs. Christie, travelled out by Syria, where he remained for a time to study Arabic. On entering the country he had the customary annoyance at the Customs House. When a hymn-book was found in his baggage it was challenged because it contained "Hold the Fort." "We Turks," he was told, "do not allow people to hold forts in this country."

The missionaries had now to consider a further problem. If the scholars were influenced to become Christians, what of their relation to their fellows? The path from Judaism to Christianity was as difficult as that traversed by the hero of the *Pilgrim's Progress*. It would not be possible for a convert to exist as a unit in the Jewish community; even if his life were not endangered he would be excommunicated and ostracized, and would be unable to earn a livelihood. Salvation meant starvation. The remedy was to start industrial and agricultural departments in which the boys could be taught and trained to be economically independent. There were great possibilities in the country. To the north of the town was the rich

plain of Gennesaret waiting to be cultivated, while the Lake teemed with fish which energy might make the basis of a profitable trade.

It happened that one of the visitors to Galilee at this time was John Stephen, well known in shipping circles, whose practical mind was impressed with the advantage which the fishing scheme would be to the Mission. He agreed at his own expense to place a fishing-boat, with the necessary gear, on the Lake. Everything in such a country naturally depended on the freedom of action secured from a Government which was inimical to any progress that did not put money into its own purse. For some years a modest living was earned by the men employed. Other fishermen, however, resented what they thought unfair competition and made matters difficult. Government exactions were heavy. Perhaps more skilful hands would have commanded greater results. As it was, the earnings were absorbed by wages and repairs, and with the wearing out of the craft and tackle the enterprise came to an end.

Another gift to the mission was made through the efforts of Mr. J. R. Miller, a member of the Jewish Mission Committee, a sailing-boat, called the *Clyde*, being subscribed for by the yachtsmen of the Clyde, while a punt named the *Kelvin* was added by a number of ladies in Glasgow and the west. The transport of both from Haifa to Tiberias on two waggons, each drawn by four horses, caused much excitement, the people turning out all along the route to inspect and discuss them. They became the talk of Tiberias because of their

fine lines and finish, and there were crowds down to watch them being launched. It was November, and heavy rains were falling, but in a fair interval the Doctor and Mr. Ewing rowed the *Kelvin* out, the little craft cutting the water in a way which excited the admiration of the spectators. The trial trip of the *Clyde*—flying a blue flag, worked by Mrs. Vartan—took place later, when the Doctor received a call from the Baths. A number of townspeople, including the Governor's daughters, accompanied him, and all were delighted with the swift passage.

The *Clyde* became known as the Doctor's vessel, and there was no more welcome sight to the people along the shores of the Lake. The scenes reminded him of those connected with the ministry of Jesus. One day he sailed her to Magdala, and after addressing those who gathered round he attended to their ailments. Down the hillside came a donkey bearing an old blind man suffering from senile cataract. He was led to the Doctor through the crowd of spectators, who laughed at the idea of a cure being effected. After some temporary treatment the Doctor asked him to come to the dispensary at Tiberias, which he did. So successful was the operation that the patient found his own way back to his astonished friends. "What did he do to you?" they asked eagerly in the manner of the men of old. "How opened he your eyes?" And after the same manner he replied, "One thing only I know, that whereas I was blind now I see. . . . If this man were not of God he could do nothing."

## XI. IN PERIL ON THE LAKE

THE Lake was usually a scene of tranquil beauty, but occasionally, as in Christ's day, a sudden and severe storm would break upon it ; the waves would dash against the shore-wall and come swirling over into the garden, the high wind would uproot the trees and damage the roofs, the soaking rain would create havoc among the town houses, scores of which would collapse, the inmates seeking shelter in the mosque and synagogue and in the Mission premises. Both the *Clyde* and *Kelvin* were anchored off the sea-wall, and were reached by swimming, and occasionally during one of these gales they would break adrift. Early one morning the Doctor was roused from sleep with the tidings that the *Kelvin* was away from her moorings and was being dashed against the wall. A strong and skilful swimmer, he plunged into the water and with great difficulty secured the little craft.

Shortly afterwards he and Mr. Ewing had an exciting adventure, which the latter thus vividly describes :

“ The storm had raged all night with increasing strength. Torrential rain, gathered in roaring cataracts, rushed down the mountain-slopes, ploughing up the roads and gouging out great trenches in the softer soil. Our earthen roofs were severely tried, and not all stood the test. The plash of muddy water from the ceiling of your bedroom is a comfortless thing. The dawn brought temporary cessation of rain ; the mountains east and west of the sea appeared to support a canopy of threatening cloud, blown about by the wind ; while far and wide the crested billows rolled, driven eastward by the fury of the tempest.



TIBERIAS

The Mission Buildings are on the high ground to the left





A BEDOUIN TENT



THE HILL OVERLOOKING TIBERIAS ON WHICH HEROD'S CASTLE  
WAS BUILT

With the first light of dawn came a panting messenger from the shore with tidings that our small boat, the *Kelvin*, had broken from her moorings and disappeared. After serious consultation, Torrance and I resolved to set out in the *Clyde*, which, fast held by her anchor, still proudly breasted the waves, in search of the missing craft. The doctor made his way through the troubled waters and brought her to shore.

“Then our difficulties began. To manage the boat in such a sea a third hand was absolutely necessary. One fisherman after another, tempted by the assurance of generous pay, agreed to venture; but after a glimpse of the sea from the shore, with one consent they turned sadly, but resolutely, away. To go out in such weather, they declared, was to court *maut fi'lbahr*, ‘death in the sea.’ We determined to go ourselves. At the last moment one, Mukhayil by name, not bolder than the rest, but more devoted to us, stepped forward. Convinced though he was that the enterprise meant almost certain disaster, he could not let us face the peril alone. The doctor and he rowed, I grasped the tiller, and the brave little vessel shot out from the shore. A lugubrious crowd had gathered meantime, and many lamentable voices, drifting down the wind, brought us the comforting assurance that we should never return alive. The company soon climbed the roofs whence their eyes strained seaward, wistfully wondering if they should witness our calamity.

“The storm blew from the west, so the waters close to the shore were troubled chiefly by the reflux surge. Toiling outward, we passed beyond the shelter of the mountains and encountered the full fury of the blast upon the open sea. Oars were shipped, the mast was stepped, and despite the entreaties of our Arab friend the big lug-sail was hoisted. The canvas filled, bellied out, and strained upon the mast. Instantly the little craft leapt forward over the billows. To the eyes on shore she seemed literally to fly.

“As we neared the middle of the Lake the hurricane grew in violence. It is safe to say that never before or since has a like speed been made by a sailing-boat on the Sea of Galilee. Mukhayil crouched, a woebegone figure, between the thwarts. The doctor held the sail-ropes with a loop round the belaying-pin. Even thus the pressure of the sail threatened to wrench it

from his hands ; so he fixed it with a knot. The perils of our position were now plain enough. The *Clyde* had been designed by skilful craftsmen who, however, were ignorant of the conditions prevailing on our little sea. She was too round of bottom, and, with the spread of canvas she carried, liable to capsize in a squall. Our ballast was water in barrels fitted for the purpose. As long as the wind remained steadily behind us, however tempestuous, we might hope to weather the gale. But any sudden veering might precipitate our doom. Something like this happened.

“ We were about the middle of the sea. The storm was at its height. In a moment the wind dropped ; the sail flapped loosely, and we lay tossing on the boiling waters. A furious squall from the east burst upon us. It swung the sail round. Torrance just eluded a blow from the bottom spar as it flashed to port, the end of it grazing my left eyebrow. The knot held the rope fast, and the boat heeled over. In a twinkling the water was rushing in over the gunwale, and a moment or two would have sufficed to swamp us. The grey bundle between the thwarts suddenly sprang to life and loosened the cord at the foot of the mast. The boom slid down. The sail collapsed. The boat at once righted herself and we began to breathe again. It was with a thrill of horror that the incident was seen by the gazers from the roofs.

“ Torrance and I grasped the oars and tried to keep the boat in front of the wind, which had now resumed its original direction, hoping that it would drive us towards the eastern shore. Progress, however, was alike slow and painful. We decided to hoist the sail once more. Mukhayil fell on his knees and implored us to desist. But what were we to do ? If the wind held there was greater danger of upsetting without the sail than with it ; and anyway death from exposure would be worse than death by drowning. So up went the sail, and in an incredibly short time we found ourselves approaching the steeps to the north of Gamala. The waves were breaking wildly on the shore. We might not go too close. No sign of the missing *Kelvin* could we descry. We lowered the sail, shipped the mast, and threw out the anchor. It was a sandy bottom ; the anchor dragged. We tried to guide the boat so as to run her, bow on, upon a stretch of sand. But we had not reckoned on the force

of the waves. They swung her round into a trough, then, lifting her bodily, hurled her out on the sandbank, where she landed, mouth downward, with the three of us, by some miracle, safe alongside.

“They were three anxious men who consulted there as to the next move. Mukhayil’s suggestion that we should walk home round the shore seemed to us a counsel of despair. It might possibly be safe; it would certainly be humiliating. Finally we put our strength to it, set the boat upon her keel, and in the teeth of the breakers ran her again into the sea. We were ourselves up to the armpits before we thought it safe to scramble on board. By Herculean efforts with the oars we got her out a little way from the shore and some distance southward, where we found bottom on which the anchor held. But swinging at anchor in such a storm has few attractions, especially when the miseries of *mal de mer* are added. Up came the anchor, and at the first stroke of the oars sickness disappeared.

“We found the *Kelvin* to the south of Gamala, stranded on a bit of sandy beach hardly longer than herself, with reaches of jagged rock and stones on either hand, backed by thorns and oleander bushes. On any other spot in the neighbourhood she would have been broken to matchwood. She had suffered considerable damage as it was, but seemed quite worth salvaging. After strenuous work, with the stout oars of the *Clyde* for levers, we got her once more afloat. Now arose a serious problem. Could we hope to tow this water-logged craft against the wind across a seven-mile breadth of stormy sea? Our experience thus far had been too much for Mukhayil, who could give little further help. It did not look promising; but we could see nothing else to do. Torrance and I settled down to the oars and just doggedly pulled away. The wind compelled us to make a detour to the south-west, greatly lengthening our journey. We were still far from land when night dropped her sable curtain over the storm-tossed waters, leaving us only the scarcely visible outline of a mountain top against the sky by which to steer our course.

“The reappearance of our sail after apparent disaster brought no great comfort to the watchers in Tiberias. We quickly passed beyond their sight in the dimness of the storm, and they had little doubt that we would perish amid the uproar of waters

on the eastern coast. Many remained on the outlook ; but as the hurricane lasted all day and no trace of us had been seen when darkness fell, their worst fears seemed to be confirmed. A tin of petroleum was taken to a lofty roof and set on fire. A bright flame shot far up, splitting the black canopy of night. It was a forlorn hope ; but if by some strange chance we still survived it might help to guide us home.

“ By this time we were making better progress in the comparative shelter of the western hills, and were not so very far away. We could see distinctly the black figures of our friends silhouetted against the glare as they moved between us and the flame. Torrance bent his finger, placed it in his mouth, and gave vent to a wild whistle which was well known as the Doctor's call. It pierced the clamour of the tempest and fell on their ears with startling effect—almost like a voice from the dead. A great shout reached us across the intervening gloom ; and a welcome of unrestrained enthusiasm greeted us as we stepped ashore at the old city wall. Weary beyond utterance were our bodies, but a sense of triumph in having achieved our object sustained our spirits. For although the little *Kelvin* never quite recovered from the results of her great dash for freedom, she long continued to serve as a useful auxiliary to her big sister, the *Clyde*.

“ I am afraid that the experienced fishermen of Tiberias—certainly Mukhayil—thought our enterprise more reckless than brave. Looking back after an interval of thirty years I am half inclined to agree with them ! ”

## XII. A FIERCE CAMPAIGN

1889-90

WHEN, in 1889, the Doctor's furlough was due, five years after he had entered on his task, the way became clear for his going home by the advent of a Syrian who was able to take his place.

Dr. Selim Daoud was the son of a well-to-do merchant in Damascus who, proud of his boy's intelligence, sent him to school and college at Beyrout, where he proved one of the cleverest of students. After graduating in medicine he proceeded to Edinburgh for post-graduate work. It was a harsh change from the sunny climate of Syria, and he rebelled at the dull skies. His landlady, with characteristic Scottish carefulness, was continually pulling down the blind in his room, and he was as constantly pulling it up. "But you will spoil my carpet," she protested. "My dear woman," he replied, "this is my sun from Damascus and I want to see him! If your carpet gets spoiled I will give you a new one." He came under the influence of a young man, a member of the Y.M.C.A., and was converted and joined the communion of the Free Church.

On returning to Damascus he was associated for a time with Dr. Mackinnon, and he then agreed to act as locum-tenens for Dr. Torrance. The latter found him to be a Christian of an exceedingly fine type: gentle and bright and high souled, a musician, yet devoted to science, one of the most promising natives on the Syrian horizon. His character and knowledge of the language and people made him an ideal substitute for the Doctor, who left for home with an easy mind. In March, accompanied by a cavalcade from the town, he and Miss Torrance—returning after her term of voluntary service—rode up the winding path through a veil of rain, and on the summit were sped on their way with the stately salutations of the East.

The Doctor was in time for the General Assembly. It was the Jubilee year of the Jewish Mission, and to signalize the occasion a special fund was inaugurated, for the purpose, amongst others, of securing the necessary buildings at Tiberias. Dr. Andrew Bonar, the sole survivor of the famous Mission of Inquiry in 1839, was present on the Jewish night, and it was a coincidence that Dr. Torrance should be there to tell how that dream which he and M'Cheyne had dreamt half a century before had materialized on the shores of the Lake of Galilee. When he had last addressed the Assembly, he said, there had not been a single worker in the field ; now there were ten, and the future was full of hope. A prediction he uttered almost startled his audience. " I make bold to say that Tiberias will some day become one of the most valuable and most important winter resorts in the world "—an allusion to the medical value and commercial possibilities of the hot springs. He had always a greater idea of the capabilities of Palestine than most people. " The Jordan valley," he would say, " will yet be a gold mine ; the Dead Sea will be a live sea by and by." But it was not on these grounds that he appealed for new mission buildings ; he dwelt on the suffering of the people and on the need for healthy homes for the missionaries. " We are living in native houses ; our devoted lady teacher has been seriously ill owing to the insanitary state of the dwelling."

The Committee had plans and estimates prepared, and word was sent out to Mr. Ewing to begin the houses for the missionaries and teacher

and the dispensary. It was the first outcome of the Jubilee Fund.

The Doctor's satisfaction was marred by cabled news that Dr. Selim Daoud had been drowned in the Lake. He and Mr. Ewing had gone down from Safed to Tiberias on a visit. The night was hot, and before turning in Dr. Selim, who was an expert swimmer, went out in a small boat to bathe. He was seized with cramp and sank. When the man in charge of the boat reached the spot he could not be seen. All that night and next day and the following night search was made for the body, which was eventually found close to the wall of the town. Seldom had Tiberias seen such a funeral. The Governor, the officials, and the Jewish, Moslem, and Christian populations, followed the coffin as, preceded by soldiers, it was taken to the cemetery. When Mr. Ewing paid the searchers, Mukhayil, who had worked harder than any, said, "No, no, I cannot take any money. Dr. Selim was my brother," and turned away in tears.

The vacant position was filled by Dr. Khalil Sa'adi, also a graduate of Beyrout College, who was *ibn Arab*, of Arabian blood, which was a recommendation to the people, and he made a good beginning. "But," wrote Mr. Ewing, "Dr. Torrance's face will be a welcome sight to many in Tiberias." In the circumstances the Committee thought it would be well for Torrance to curtail his furlough, and arranged that he should spend the following summer in Scotland. The Doctor cheerfully agreed, and after being ordained an elder he



left in October, and within a few weeks was again in the midst of his duties.

The medical work of the winter was exceptionally heavy, though chiefly confined to the people of the town on account of severe weather and interrupted communications. As many as a hundred patients per day, chiefly Jews, passed through his hands, but he was never able to treat all who came. When the strain lessened he took advantage of the presence of an assistant to make an extended tour of the villages beyond the Jordan, where he found the customary smiling welcome. The weather proved cold and damp, and dengue was raging, and when he returned he suffered repeatedly from the fever. A visit to Gaza, on the desert highway to Egypt, where Mr. Huber was now stationed, restored his strength.

The house of the clerical missionary, a massive stone structure, spacious and cool, with windows fitted with wire gauze as a protection against mosquitoes, being finished, was occupied by Mr. Ewing, who declared enthusiastically that the situation was unequalled in Palestine—as, for beauty and interest, it undoubtedly was. The roof commanded almost a complete sweep of the whole Lake and surrounding district; every spot that the eye rested upon was associated with some imperishable memory, and below was the flat-roofed town which now seemed a place apart. As the finest building on the lakeside, the house was long an object of attraction to the inhabitants; many of the rabbis paid it a visit, and it was eyed with a curious and respectful interest by the men and women of the desert.

Evangelistic work went on as usual ; a Sunday school was started and flourished ; and the Scripture readers found readier entrance into the homes of the people, where they came across many instances of the inadequacy of the Jewish legalistic faith to sustain the sick and the dying.

One aged Jew said to Goldenberg, " My dear friend, I must journey hence."

" Whither ? " said Goldenberg.

" Thither, where all men must go."

" You fear the journey ? "

" Assuredly, since I know not if I have sufficient for the costs of such a journey."

" Have you not kept the law, since you are thus afraid ? "

" Certainly I have kept the laws, but who knows if I have rightly fulfilled them all ? "

The educational side of the work gave the greatest encouragement. Miss Fenton's girls' school was the most popular institution in the town. When a pupils' exhibition was held, and the parents heard their daughters recite and sing, they declared they were " too clever." " We must put blue beads on them," they added, " to charm away the evil eye." Pointing to the rows of alert, clean, and tidy girls, Miss Fenton said to a visitor, " These a short time ago were unwashed, unkempt, ragged children playing about the streets."

The Doctor himself took every occasion to pay informal visits to the people. There was nothing that he more enjoyed. Moses, who knew every passage and house in the town, was his guide, and led him to many a curious experience. The

people were always cordial in their welcome, but regarded him as a doctor, and immediately brought some bodily ailment to his notice. "No, no," he would say, "I am not a hakîm just now. I am just a man like yourself. Let us talk." Then with a reference to the Talmud on the table he would work the conversation round to religious topics, and a discussion would follow. To verify a statement his Hebrew Bible would come out, and he would ask them to turn to the 53rd chapter of Isaiah or the 31st chapter of Jeremiah. Sometimes he got them to read the story of the Passion Week, which would amaze them greatly, since they had never heard of that dark tragedy in the history of their race. Earnest, simple-minded people he found many to be, and he learnt to put himself in their place and consider what he would have been if he had occupied their position and possessed only the religious knowledge which their leaders allowed them to acquire.

Moses would finish up with a visit to the synagogue, which was a kind of common home or club, the daily resort of the pious, the library in which they read the sacred books, the school of the rabbis, and often the shelter of the sick who were friendless. Not infrequently he would be called to see a patient there.

Safed was not forgotten. The Doctor and Mr. Ewing had many discussions on the subject of opening a station there, and finally the latter drew up a scheme on which they had agreed, and this obtaining the sanction of the Committee, work was begun on an organized basis. The outlook seemed

peculiarly hopeless. Opposition to Christianity was exceedingly violent at this time owing to the inflow of Russian refugees, whose stories of suffering and misery, endured at the hands of the Christians, roused the strong resentment of their compatriots. Nevertheless the missionaries went forward in faith. Property was bought along a level plot which had once formed the moat of the Crusaders' castle, and here were established the mission house and dispensary. Miss Fenton, whose health had been affected by the insanitary conditions in Tiberias, made Safed her headquarters for a time, and laid the foundations of a girls' school which promised, if unmolested, to be one of the most influential agencies at work in Galilee. To this institution came, as head teacher, Amina Faris, a native of the Lebanon, who had been educated in a German school at Beyrout, and could talk German well. Crowds of eager scholars flocked to the school, attracted mainly by the prospect of learning English.

When Mr. Christie arrived to take charge of the educational and evangelistic work, he opened a boys' school and a night school, and added French and Turkish to attract the Moslems. Such activities alarmed the Jews, as an article in a local newspaper showed :

“ Our young men are gathered together, to the number of tens, to the mission house, to learn English. Behold, we see that the days are coming when a new generation shall arise, when the sons and daughters of our town shall be in the hands of the Mission. From her cup shall our descendants drink, of her bread they shall eat, and with her clothing shall they cover themselves, and on her law shall they meditate. Now judge ye of our humiliation, of our shame and our disgrace. And ye

shepherds of our flock, set your hearts to these words. Assemble yourselves together, take counsel not with khērcms and curses, but with a real means of repairing this evil. Ask the Baron (Rothschild) that he shall make his boys' school into an industrial school. Strengthen yourselves to ask him, seek it of him while yet there is time. Do not allow men of good character to apply to you the words of our great prophet—' Woe to the sheep of Israel ! the sheep you pasture not, the sheep which has gone astray you have not turned back, the lost ones you have not sought ; they are scattered without a shepherd, and they are become food to every beast of the field.' "

Recovering from its first surprise at these developments, official Safed shook off its sloth and started a campaign which turned out to be the fiercest which the missionaries had yet encountered. All the ultra-conservative elements in Safed, Jewish, Moslem, and Christian, rose in their strength and, aided and abetted by the Government, smote the work with all the weapons at their disposal. The parents were threatened with the terrors of spiritual retribution, and the children with physical punishment, the khalukah doles were withheld, nuns went from house to house disseminating false reports about the Mission—telling the sick, for instance, that their illness was due to the girls and boys being under the influence of Protestants ; permission was given to the ill-disposed to throw stones at the schoolhouses and the teachers—" the personal insolence the teacher of the girls' school has had to endure," wrote Mr. Christie, " baffles description." For a time the schools were practically deserted, and the Hebrew journals of the country contained glowing accounts of the success of the campaign. But the longing

for knowledge is not so easily stifled, and gradually, as the storm subsided, the pupils ventured back. Many of the girls reached their school before dawn and remained until after sunset, when they could slip unobserved away.

### XIII. SECURING A FIRMAN

1890-91

“ I WONDER,” wrote the Doctor, “ what medical men at home would think if they knew that we excise the elbow of a man and treat the case as an outdoor patient? This, of course, is the result of absolute necessity.” Serious operative cases were coming to the dispensary in increasing numbers, and he began to allow patients to lie on the floor of the waiting-room in order to have them under constant supervision.

One day a pale and emaciated Moslem woman with a diseased bone in her leg was carried in from a distant village. So offensive was the odour from the wound—it had been cauterized with red-hot irons, and was gangrenous—that the other patients protested, and put her out of the waiting-room. The Doctor entertained very little hope of her recovery, but promised to see her every day and do what he could if she managed to secure a room in the town. She sought in vain; no one would receive her on account of the smell from the wound, and she was supposed to be dying. Even the

khans and stables would give her no shelter. Carried on the back of her mother she returned exhausted to the dispensary, and begged to be allowed to lie under the archway and die in peace. This was too much for the Doctor. A word to Moses, who was standing by, all sympathy, sent him off to the chief rabbi, who was then a patient, and he returned with the tidings that a little room and kitchen of his own could be rented for the purpose. Here an operation was performed, the diseased bone was removed, grafts of skin were placed over the wound, and the woman returned to her home singing the praises of the wonderful doctor who had brought her back to life. Her husband received her as one from the dead.

The room in which she had lain was about 16 feet square, and the Doctor divided it into three compartments, and began his hospital—a Jewish woman, who spoke Arabic and the Yiddish jargon, acting as nurse, cook, and cleaner. As many as eight patients would occupy it at a time, Jew, Moslem, and Christian all associating together and forgetting for the nonce their differences of thought and custom. They brought their own belongings, and, when cured, took up their beds and walked.

In that little native house miracles of healing were effected. Three of the first patients were blind and they left with their sight restored. One of them, a bedouin from the East, kissed the hand of the Doctor and said he would carry a white flag through the country, and tell every one what God had done for him at Tiberias. The incident

was so common that the Doctor forgot it, but not long afterwards came a lamb from the desert as a gift from the man who had been blind and could now see. Another patient was a lame boy who came on crutches and was made to walk.

This embryo hospital the Doctor supported entirely out of the fees paid by the patients and by contributions from friends, but it was obvious that it was only a makeshift and would not long meet the needs of the situation. The country was beginning to shake off its age-long stupor. Jews were buying land and establishing colonies. An hotel had been opened in Tiberias, and visitors were passing through in greater numbers ; the site of Capernaum had been bought by the Franciscans, and Bethsaida by a German Roman Catholic society ; railways were being constructed, and one was projected from the coast to the Lake.

Conscious of this stirring of the dry bones, the Doctor was impatient to possess a large and well-equipped hospital to meet the requirements that would arise. He realized the difficulties in the way. At this time the Turkish authorities were making one of their spasmodic efforts to restrain the activities of the missionaries, and were putting into operation the law which required that a firman should be obtained from the Sublime Porte at Constantinople before school or church or hospital could be erected. An order was issued that all schools except those carried on under the authority of a firman were to be closed, but through the action of the British Embassy this was suspended for the time being.



It was not an opportune moment for obtaining concessions, but the Doctor was never afraid of obstacles. He went to the Governor of the town and asked his advice as to how he should proceed in the matter. Too timorous to move himself, that official urged the Doctor to negotiate directly with Constantinople. "Which means," remarked the Doctor whimsically, "that I have to beard the lion in his den. Well, I will do it."

He took the postponed half of his furlough that summer (1890), was married in June, in Anderson Free Church, Glasgow, to Miss Huber, and returned by Constantinople. The head of the Free Church Jewish Mission there was Dr. Hannington, a man of high character who was on the best of terms with the British and Turkish officials. One of the chief men in the Embassy was Mr.—afterwards Sir—Adam S. J. Block, who had formerly been vice-consul at Beyrout, and, through him, the Doctor obtained the promise of an introduction to Sir William White, the Ambassador. "First," said Mr. Block, "write out your application saying you have got the land, have been working so long, are going to erect a perfectly equipped hospital, and so on." This the Doctor did, being careful to state that the hospital would not be erected near a Moslem mosque or graves, and would not overlook any spot frequented by Moslem women, and making the application, according to Turkish law, on behalf of "Mr. Chairman of the Jewish Mission of the Free Church of Scotland."

When he called again Mr. Block said, "Now

we'll send up your card and your introduction and see what happens."

The Ambassador at once sent for the Doctor.

"Get him interested," said Mr. Block. "Tell him all about the Jews and Palestine and everything. He can do much if you get him on the right side."

"Well, sir," was the Ambassador's greeting. "What is it? What do you want?"

The Doctor made the utmost of his opportunity, and succeeded in arousing his attention and interest. He was dismissed at last with "All right! Send up Block."

When Mr. Block returned it was with a gratified smile. "You seem to have managed it; come back to-morrow."

The words had a painfully familiar sound to the Doctor, but he reflected that he was dealing with British officials who kept their word. On the morrow he was told that everything was satisfactory, and there was nothing for him to do but to get home.

After obtaining the Turkish diploma of Doctor of Medicine, and visiting Vienna and the mission station at Budapest, he reached Tiberias, half hoping to find the firman awaiting him, but nothing had been heard of it. Knowing how matters go to sleep in Turkey if vigorous action is not maintained, he wrote once a week to Dr. Hannington urging him to keep at the Embassy. By and by the local Governor—another new man, who was a patient, and friendly with the Doctor—intimated that the application had come through for com-

ment and he would see that a favourable reply was sent. Several influential natives also made representations in his favour to Constantinople, but the weeks passed, and he was sometimes in despair.

The delay was, in reality, ministering to the best interests of the Mission. As planned, the hospital was to be erected on the ground which the Doctor had first acquired ; the site was the best possible then, but a large sum had to be earmarked for raising the foundation to the level of the roadway. There was another piece adjoining the clerical missionary's house on which the Doctor had long cast a longing eye ; it was lower and would provide an ideal situation for the hospital, while the cost would be less as the foundation surface was of rock, and a quarry could be opened within the area purchased. But there was no hope of securing it as it was public ground and used by travellers as a camping-place.

Amongst the visitors to Tiberias was a Turkish military official, the agent for the Sultan's private property in the district. He came to the Mission, was agreeably surprised to see the new dwelling-house, so spacious and clean and cool. " I should like to build one like that," he said, " and live in Tiberias. I shall buy this place next to yours." He had but to mention his wish for the authorities to hasten to gratify it ; the ground was transferred to him for a nominal sum and with the best title-deeds. Becoming a patient of the Doctor, he grew friendly to the Mission. For some obscure reason, however, he relinquished the idea of living in the town, and offered the ground to the Doctor for

one hundred Turkish pounds. It seemed a miracle ! The Doctor was not in possession of so much money, and had to hunt round to collect the amount, and the title-deeds were actually handed to him before the sum was paid over. This was in 1891, and he lost no time in communicating the fact to the Committee. The plans for the hospital—which were drawn up by Mr. Campbell Douglas of Glasgow as a gift to the Mission—were altered, and the necessary changes were effected in the application for the firman.

At last came a welcome note from the town officials that the firman had arrived ; with all due reverence—for the Sultan's signature is sacred in the eyes of his subjects—they passed over the document, and the Doctor was justifiably proud that it had not cost him a piastre in bakhshîsh. In virtue of its possession he was able to import goods for the hospital work free of duty.

#### XIV. THE FIRES OF PERSECUTION

1891-92

So far the resistance to the activities of the Mission had been mainly passive with an occasional outburst from the official and more orthodox sections of the various communities. The missionaries hardly dared to think what would happen when one of the numerous inquirers made open profession of conversion to Christianity. On the whole, neither

Jews nor Moslems cared much what views their young people held so long as they kept within the pale of their own faiths. But it was certain that when they evinced an inclination towards the religion of the Christians the forces of persecution would be unleashed. Already reports were coming in of secret floggings and stonings, and by and by incidents occurred which were ominous of what was in store for converts.

In the Safed day school the Moslem boys proved quick and apt pupils. One, the only son of poor parents, a half-starved lad of sixteen, was particularly good at his lessons and was a diligent student of the Bible. The Moslem officials, hearing of this, took him forcibly from the school and imprisoned his father. The boy, with a courage beyond his years, refused to be intimidated, and returned to the school. On Sunday he openly carried his Bible and hymn-book to the Sunday school, and in the sacred month of Ramadan he refused to fast.

Action against the school was taken by the officials, who objected even to the teaching of geography because the text-books made out that the entire world did not belong to the Sultan. They raised a false charge against the native teacher who was giving excellent service to the Mission. Two Moslems bore evidence against him, and in a country where a Moslem word is accepted in preference to that of ten Christians the charge was sustained, and he was imprisoned and the school closed. A little bakhshîsh would have settled the matter, but the demands of the officials were sternly

resisted, and it was only through Consular intervention that his release was ultimately effected.

In the evening school, Mr. Christie taught young men languages, comparative religion, and other subjects. As he was exceptionally well fitted for the task of reaching the minds and hearts of the pupils, the classes were popular. One young Jew, a clever lad and a good Hebrew scholar, was so convinced of the claims of Jesus as the Messiah that he openly admitted his faith in Christianity. Immediately the Jewish community was in full cry after him. They suppressed his voice, but did not shake his conviction. The commotion was so serious that Mr. Christie and Mr. Ewing arranged to send him out of the country, and gave him a letter to Dr. Torrance, who was then at Nazareth. The Doctor managed to get him to Jaffa, where, however, he was arrested on a charge of theft. He was taken back to Safed and imprisoned. When released he succeeded in making his way to America.

These were but preliminary skirmishes: the next case was of a more serious character. The scene was Tiberias. One of the young men who frequented Mr. Ewing's house on the Jewish Sabbath was Ephraim, the head teacher in a rabbinical school. He was foremost in the controversial discussions which took place, was exceedingly bitter in spirit, and was regarded as the champion of the orthodox in their opposition to the Christian faith. Now and again his wife and children came under the healing ministry of Dr. Torrance, and when he himself fell ill he was treated with the kindness and care which took no

cognizance of religious views. Being of a thoughtful and inquiring nature he sought to probe the motive underlying so selfless a service, and he and the Doctor had many talks. He began to read the New Testament in Hebrew, and was profoundly moved by the personality and teaching of the Man of Galilee. The Doctor passed him on to Mr. Ewing.

The latter tells how one evening at sunset Ephraim walked into his study and, taking off his tarbush, or fez, an act of unusual courtesy, said, "I am minded to be a Christian." With deep feeling he described the struggle that had been going on within him; between a growing conviction of the incomplete nature of Judaism and a realization of the truth of Christianity; between a longing to surrender himself to Christ and his loyalty to the ancient faith of his race. Tenderly and wisely Mr. Ewing dealt with him, and it was arranged that he should undergo a course of instruction at a quiet hour of the evening.

The regular visits to the missionary's study aroused suspicion, and a watch was set on his movements. He was about to come to the deciding point when he was charged by the rabbis with apostasy. Not denying his purpose, he was suspended from his position as schoolmaster and subjected to a pitiless storm of persecution. His resolution remained unshaken. Then his wife and children pled with him, and outwardly he took his place again among his people, but in his heart he never changed. When the Jewish feasts were due he started off for Nazareth, but the rabbis,

shrewdly suspecting that it was a plan to avoid taking part in the ceremonies, raised a hostile crowd, which followed him and forced him to return to the town.

Then he disappeared from the knowledge of the missionaries. Afterwards it became known that a false accusation of theft had been brought against him, and that he had been confined in a filthy cell and suffered unspeakable degradation. His resolution and his spirit remaining unbroken, he was flogged and starved, a punishment which injured his health for life. Still he was true to his convictions. Condemned as a traitor and repudiated by his wife and family, he was secretly removed from the town to a Jewish colony at the Waters of Merom (Lake Huleh), and his name was blotted out of the remembrance of his friends and companions.

“Many months later,” writes Mr. Ewing, “one of the missionaries riding in the Upper Jordan valley saw a forlorn figure bending to his task in the field, under a hot sun, and was surprised on nearer approach to find it none other than Ephraim. He was greatly changed. The hardships he had endured had left their marks upon his frame, and the lines had deepened on his weather-beaten features; but there was a light of eager welcome in his eyes. In answer to questions he told briefly of his experiences. But these things had not moved him. Nothing daunted, he held on his way. Return to Tiberias was then impossible. For self-support he willingly endured the weariness of unwonted toil in the service of the stranger, until



it should please God to make his duty plain. He stood among the furrows waving a genial farewell to his departing friend ; then, heartened by the interview, he bent afresh to his labour."

Not long afterwards Ephraim turned up at Nazareth, the light of a great purpose in his eyes, and was there baptized by the missionaries. A new peace and dignity of soul came to him. Finding his way to Jerusalem, he accepted and carried on humble but useful work in connection with a Bible Depôt, and there he lived his days, standing every test and enduring with steadfast courage the trials and difficulties of his lot.

It was the first real shock of the opposing forces. Christianity, seemingly so slight and intangible a power, had won against the organized might of Judaism.

The suffering had not all been on the side of the convert. "Get thee out of thy country and from thy kindred and from thy father's house" was a terrible sentence, but it was also hard for the missionaries to witness the severing of the strong and tender ties of family affection. Yet they could not but do what they did. They were obeying the command of Christ, and they remembered that He had said, "Think not that I have come to send peace on earth. I have come not to send peace but a sword: for I have come to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against her mother and the daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law, and a man's foes shall be they of his own household." They were witnessing His teaching working out amidst the harsh realities of life.

It was the case of Ephraim that induced Dr. Torrance to bring the matter of an industrial institution formally before the Jewish Mission Committee. He pointed out that a Jew became an outcast the moment he moved towards Christianity. Were the missionaries to be responsible for turning home-loving, affectionate men into "wandering Jews" when there was a means by which they could be retained in the district to be a witness and a strength to the Christian faith? In an institution they would be taught to earn their bread and be independent of the rabbis and the khalukah.

The Committee sympathized with the proposal, but the general feeling was that an enterprise of the kind could not rightly be a charge on their funds. The decision was a disappointment to the Doctor and the staff, for they knew of several intelligent Jews who were ready to make open profession but were deterred by fear of the boycott to which they would be subjected and the impossibility of making good their economic position without some outside help.

## XV. THE FIRST BAPTISM

1892-96

THE first deaths on a pioneer mission station have a peculiar touch of pathos; they hallow the ground and, to use the old Scottish word, they thirl the missionaries and the Church to the enterprise. Twin sons were born to Dr. Torrance; one died

after nine months and was laid in a corner of the garden next the Lake, and the second a month later. The infant daughter of Mr. Ewing also passed away, and was followed by a daughter of the native schoolmaster. The shadow fell more deeply still when Mrs. Ewing succumbed. A child of Mr. Christie then died in Safed, and as the Mission possessed no land there, and not even so much could be obtained as to bury the little body, it was conveyed to Tiberias and laid beside the others on the lakeside.

While the Doctor was mourning his loss a notable company of visitors gathered at the station, one of the number being the Rev. Dr. Wells, his former travelling companion, now Convener of the Jewish Mission Committee. A communion service was held, eight ministers—five of the Free Church, two Episcopalians, and one United Presbyterian—taking part. Of the twenty-seven communicants, seven were Palestinians—three men and four women. At the evening Arabic service six of the ministers spoke, through an interpreter, to the little congregation. Deputations of the chief men of the town, magistrates, rabbis, and priests, came to express their thanks to the Church in Scotland for sending out Dr. Torrance and Mr. Ewing, and to point out that the Doctor was doing the work of two men. The visitors, however, saw this for themselves. After travelling in trans-Jordania with Mr. Ewing, Dr. Wells returned to the town to find three patients who had come from one of the villages they had visited—a distance of 50 miles—for treatment.

Mr. Ewing retired from the field in 1893 and was missed by all classes, and not least by Dr. Torrance.<sup>1</sup>

Another distinguished student of Glasgow College, the Rev. John Soutar, M.A., offered to take his place, and was appointed. As eager to begin as Mr. Ewing, he also used an interpreter, but found it a sorry business; it was a "caged eagle" that he felt like. Having heard so much of the unwillingness of the Jews to listen to Christian teaching, he was surprised to find those at Tiberias ready not only to hear him but to argue points of mutual interest.

In the midst of these changes the Doctor went on with his work. As many as a hundred patients per day continued to visit the dispensary. It was a strain on his patience and strength, and he had to struggle against the temptation to be satisfied with superficial diagnoses and wholesale treatment. The picture of him toiling in his primitive hospital touched sympathetic hearts in Scotland, and donations came out which enabled him to take a further step; he hired an old hotel in the town, and fitted it up with wards for men and women, and an operating room, and here he housed the more urgent surgical cases. The rooms were fairly serviceable so long as the sun shone, but during the rains each became a shower bath, and it was impossible to keep the patients dry. Many a long

<sup>1</sup> He was not lost to the cause, for after settling in Scotland he devoted his time to the Jewish work of the Church, was Convener of the Jewish Mission Committee for a term, manifested his scholarship in a number of important works, and was honoured with the degree of D.D. from Glasgow University.

and anxious hour he passed in these cramped wards, performing delicate operations, watching critical cases, and exercising the most vigilant care in order to ensure success. It was remarkable that with so large a number of operations he had never any mishap.

Towards the end of 1893 he was glad to welcome Dr. George Wilson, a nephew of the Rev. Dr. Wilson of the Barclay Church, Edinburgh, who had volunteered to help him for a year on the same salary as a native assistant. For a time, until Dr. Wilson took charge of Safed, the position was easier.

Educational work generally was entering on a new phase. Stimulated mainly by the example of the Mission, Jews and Moslems started institutions of their own, and compelled their children to attend them, with the result that the number of Mission pupils sensibly decreased. The Catholics began to give grants of money to the parents and clothing to the scholars. Teachers in the Mission schools never knew what to expect. Often not a single pupil would turn up. Then one by one the boys and girls would trickle back, and parents, realizing the superior character of the Mission teaching and training, would endeavour to excuse or hide their truancy from the ecclesiastical authorities.

The physical environment of Safed seemed more favourable to intellectual development than that of Tiberias. In its spring-like climate the mind was more alert and energetic, and the young people, both Moslems and Jews, were brighter and more intelligent than those in the tropical valley of the Jordan, although the isolation of the

town told heavily against enlightenment. Among the adult population a certain number were always on the side of tolerance and progress. Many of the Jews chafed against rabbinical rule, and at this time were leading an informal movement for a less rigid religious and social code.

It was Mr. Christie's fortune to take advantage of this spirit and to be the inspirer of the young men who came to his evening class. He continued to lead many to the verge of belief, though the majority drew back "for fear of the Jews." One of the number was James Cohen. He was born in 1873 in Russia, where his early years were darkened by persecution and suffering. At the age of eleven he was sent to a rabbinical school, and, two years later, emigrated with his father to Safed, where he continued his studies until 1890, when he entered Baron Rothschild's school and acquired a knowledge of French. Then he was selected to work as an apprentice gardener in a Rothschild colony, at the Waters of Merom. While there he paid occasional visits to Safed, attended the evening classes, and came under the influence of Mr. Christie and Mr. Soutar, who presented him with a copy of the New Testament in Hebrew. He read it through, and was angry with himself for having done so, as it unsettled his belief, hitherto unshaken, in the traditional law. In order to be able to refute its teaching he studied it again thoroughly, but the result was still more disastrous to his own faith. He became convinced of the truth, believed in Christ, and accepted Him whom he had previously despised and hated.

The change which the event made in his char-

acter and life was so marked that suspicion was aroused ; he was interrogated by the rabbis, and his replies were so compromising that he was dismissed from his post. Some time afterwards he sought an interview with Mr. Soutar, and after a long talk, which lasted late into the night, he confessed his conversion and asked for baptism. The missionaries, always reluctant to grant this without prolonged probation, kept him for nearly a year under instruction and thoroughly tested his sincerity. On New Year's Day 1895 he made an earnest appeal to be received, and on 10th February was baptized by Mr. Soutar at Tiberias.

The event caused a profound impression in Jewry. "In the bygone week," said a local Hebrew newspaper, "there apostatized a young man from among the sons of our city, and there is no one that inquireth or seeketh after him." Secretly many of his companions admired his act of courage and sacrifice, and would have liked to have followed his example, but flinched from the ordeal of forsaking friends and running the gauntlet of persecution.

Cohen suffered much at the hands of the Jews. After being given temporary employment by the Mission, he was sent to Aleppo, and on his return in 1896 took charge of the Bible Dépôt and acted as colporteur, and, in addition to his Hebrew, Yiddish, and French, acquired a more fluent use of English and Arabic. He was one of the finest types of Hebrew-Christians, a man of pure and simple character and childlike faith, unselfish, good-tempered, and courageous. Neither aggressive

nor argumentative, though as clever as any rabbi, he attracted people by his gentle persuasiveness. Prayer and love were the two forces of his life. Money had no attraction for him ; he had wealthy connections, but he never rose above the most modest style of living. In time he won the respect of every class of the community, and became a great spiritual power in the district.

As a result of this conversion, the question of the economic support of those who threw in their lot with the Christians was again discussed. Every missionary urged the establishment of an industrial colony. "If we cannot give a Jew work," wrote Mr. Soutar, "in asking him to become a Christian we are asking him to starve." "It is not an easy problem," the Doctor said. "We want to keep the converts in the Mission district in order that their lives may influence others, but we do not want to make paupers of them." Mr. Christie pointed out that some of his young men had been dismissed from their employment for attending his night school. Many had gone elsewhere to obtain work, but others remained and visited him in his house as often as they dared. This secret procedure, however, he felt was bad for themselves and for the Mission ; it involved the practice of deceit and hypocrisy, and he did not think it right for their connection with the Mission to be brought about in this way.

The Jewish Mission Committee were all sympathy, and fully realized the difficulties of the situation, but the conviction still prevailed that it did not come within the province of the Church to



adventure on such a business development, and it was suggested that a company of laymen might take the matter up.

## XVI. OPENING OF THE HOSPITAL

1894-96

It was a happy day for the Doctor when he saw the hospital, which was to embody the spirit of the Great Healer of humanity, complete and ready for occupation. About the same time his own house, as large, commodious, and airy as the clerical missionary's, was also finished. Both developments marked a notable advance in the history of the station. At last the missionaries were adequately housed in hygienic surroundings, and at last the medical work would be carried on with something like comfort alike to doctor and patients.

The three massive structures formed the finest and most prominent objects round the Lake shore. They stood almost in line at a slight elevation ; the first and lowest, next the town, was the hospital ; that in the centre was the Doctor's house ; and the third, close to the boundary wall, was the manse of the clerical missionary. All were of stone, had flat roofs, front verandas and balconies, and marble floors, and gave the impression of great strength combined with airy spaciousness. The ground sloped down to the shore-wall, but unfortunately the road leading out of the town cut

the lower part in two, requiring the construction of two walls and two gates.

The Doctor's ideal was sixty beds, but practical considerations reduced the number to twenty-four and six cots, and it was a testimony to the interest felt in the Mission in Scotland that nearly all these found supporters at a cost of £20 per bed and £10 per cot per annum.

A few desperate cases were taken in some weeks before the building was finished, but the formal opening took place on 1st January 1894. It was a red-letter day in the history of Tiberias. The Doctor invited the officials and principal men of the town to the function, which, he diplomatically intimated, was held "under the shadow of His Majesty the Sultan."

Into the upper balcony, which was decorated with olive and orange branches and Turkish flags, came the Governor, a dark-bearded man dressed in sombre black and red fez; the kadi, or judge, in a long sable robe and white turban; the mufti, or religious head of the Moslems, also in white turban; the Greek Catholic priest in black with high, round headpiece; patriarchal-looking Jews with flowing grizzly beards and side locks; and other guests in variegated costumes. They sat facing a conspicuous object on the wall, which looked like a framed picture—it was the firman with the royal signature and seal.

A hymn was sung in Arabic, and then Dr. Torrance, speaking with his usual pointedness, said:

"Christ enjoined upon His followers to go into

all the world and heal the sick and preach His gospel. We, as His followers, and in obedience to His command, have erected this hospital. I am sure you will all agree with me when I say there is but one God. If, therefore, there is but one God, we ought all to be one people. The best way to be one people is to love each other and help one another. When can we do this better than in times of sickness? Those who are sick will find here love and sympathy and help irrespective of race or creed. Mr. Soutar will voice our thankfulness to God for this institution, and although you will not understand his words you will know what are the feelings he is expressing."

The Governor, who seemed to enjoy his part, was presented with a silver key, and, walking to the door of the men's ward, he unlocked and threw it open with a flourish. Mrs. Torrance opened the women's ward. The audience rose, the Turks bowed their heads and raised their hands, and the mufti repeated the official prayer for the Sultan.

Next came ornate speeches from the chief men, who praised the Scottish Committee and Dr. Torrance for their goodness in erecting so splendid a hospital for the healing of the people.

Tea, coffee, and cake were handed round and friendly conversations engaged in. Then an inspection of the wards was made.

There was not one who left without expressing to the Doctor his gratitude and goodwill. No purely religious function could have drawn them thus together; only the ministry of healing accom-

plished the miracle, providing another illustration of the value of a medical mission.

All the beds were occupied from the beginning ; during the first few months 61 patients were admitted, 35 being Jews, 13 Moslems, and 13 Christians. The earliest case treated proved of some interest. When the patient, a Greek Christian named Yakoob, arrived he stated that he came from a little village between Safed and Nazareth. Instantly the Doctor recalled that about a year previously, while Mr. and Mrs. Christie were travelling over the lonely paths in that region, they were attacked and robbed by the villagers. Because of this the Doctor took extra care of the patient, who was suffering from an ulcerous leg, and was in a state of extreme emaciation. A younger brother who accompanied him was also half starved, undergrown, and weak, and developed pneumonia. Both recovered and grew strong and vigorous. The men from the village who came to visit them were amazed at the transformation, and assured the Doctor and his fellow-missionaries that they need never again fear to travel over their hills.

In the internal organization of the hospital the Doctor had to employ people differing in race and creed. A separate kitchen and cook were provided for the Jews, and another cook and kitchen for the Moslems and Christians. His man-of-all-work was a Jew ; the day nurse was a Christian, an orphan girl who knew Arabic and German ; the night nurse was a Jewess.

The employment of women as nurses was a

revolutionary step in Tiberias, and the experiment was considered doubtful by the townspeople. But the Doctor secured an experienced matron from Jerusalem in the person of Miss Agnes Donaldson, who knew Arabic and had both skill and tact. Some unpleasantness occurred, but her good-humour and firmness gradually won favour for the new régime. Occasionally an ignorant man would ask her pointedly why she was not married ; was it because no one would have her ?

One day a patient who had been blinded by a blow poured forth a torrent of foul language, and Miss Donaldson complained to the Doctor, who wishing to set an example to the whole ward declared that he would not have such speech in the hospital, and all who were guilty of it must leave. The blind man was astonished ; he was utterly unconscious of transgressing. " I drank in that with my mother's milk," he said. " Then," grimly replied the Doctor, " you will go and drink something else," and he dismissed him from the hospital. The incident caused some stir, but it effected a salutary change, and a fortnight later the delinquent returned penitent, paid a fine, and begged to be taken in again. " If," he said, " I say anything disrespectful to the nurses I give you leave to cut out my tongue ! " " Very well," the Doctor answered, " I agree." No patient after that kept a more careful guard over his speech, and he also became the vigilant censor of the others. The nurses received blessings, and the curses were reserved for womenfolk at home.

It was not to be expected that the Jews with all

their friendliness would quietly acquiesce in the progress of the Mission. Pamphlets describing the hospital were circulated over Europe, and appeals were made for funds to erect a rival institution. From time to time Dr. Torrance found Jewish doctors practising in the town; to him it was a matter for rejoicing; he cultivated the friendship of those who came, and never hesitated to call them into consultation. As a rule they were open-minded and well-meaning, and he had long discussions with them on religious matters. He invariably discovered that any undercurrent of bitterness in their nature was due to the treatment which their race was receiving at the hands of the continental "Christians," but he seldom failed to make them realize and admit the wide differences that existed between the various types of organized Christianity. They never remained long in the town, and it was significant that the number of Jewish patients at the hospital never lessened because of their presence.

The hospital was barely in working order when Mrs. Torrance died in giving birth to a daughter. It was a severe loss both to the Doctor and the Mission, for she was comrade as well as wife, shared in all his work, and was a favourite in the wards. The Doctor was left with a young son, Herbert, and this infant girl, Lydia; and as he had passed through much private sorrow he was given a furlough home, Dr. Wilson taking his place in the hospital.

While in Scotland in 1895 he did his utmost to increase the interest in the Mission, and brought

prominently before the Church the need for enlarging its scope. In a letter in the *Monthly Record* he described the situation, pointing out, as M'Cheyne and Bonar in their day had done, that Palestine was the heart of Israel, and the most important centre in the world for intensive mission work among the Jews. His chief object, however, was to plead for an industrial institution as auxiliary to the evangelistic side. Always practical, he suggested that one or two Christian craftsmen, cabinetmakers, tinsmiths, mother-of-pearl engravers, leather-makers, or furriers, might go to Galilee and ply their trade, employing as apprentices or workmen inquirers and converts who were being boycotted, as a German joiner, unconnected with any mission, had already done in Safed. He also brought out the exceptional suitability of Safed for mission work. It should, he said, be made the chief educational centre for boys and girls, and there should be established in it a boarding-school and orphanage. "Safed is our educational battlefield. It is the healthiest Jewish centre in Galilee. We could never think of erecting an orphanage in Tiberias which would have to be vacated for three months or more in the summer."

These matters he also emphasized in the General Assembly of 1895. "The speech of the Jewish evening," says the chronicler of the proceedings, "was Dr. Torrance's. He had a tale to tell, and told it with a liveliness and graphic power which made the great audience hang from first to last upon his lips."

Recognizing the strategic value of Safed, the

Jewish Mission Committee, maintaining its reputation for enterprise, decided to make the town the centre of the educational operations of the Mission; more buildings and lots of land were acquired, and the work was organized on larger lines. At the same time the Church Missions to Jews strengthened its hold of the district by the erection of a first-class hospital. Needless to say, the staffs of the two Missions worked cordially hand in hand in their common service.

At this point Miss Fenton resigned; and then Mr. Christie left to take up an appointment at Aleppo in connection with the Presbyterian Church of England, but one well qualified took his place in the person of the Rev. (afterwards Dr.) J. E. H. Thomson, B.D. Both he and his wife, who undertook the charge of the Girls' School, were honorary workers. As they were members of the United Presbyterian Church, and Mr. Soutar's salary was paid by that body, there was here, as in other fields, a fine manifestation of that brotherly spirit which was soon to find its culmination in the union of the two Churches.

While Dr. Torrance was in Scotland the Committee proposed that, in order to increase his usefulness on the field, he should be ordained as a missionary. It was not the first time that the matter had been mooted, but he had always considered that, although the crowning joy of his work was to teach the Gospel, the needs of the Mission demanded not one missionary with a double qualification, but two with separate qualifications. On this occasion he expressed the same opinion; he



felt that his gift was that of a medical missionary pure and simple, and that the great medical needs of the people justified him in this attitude. In his humility, also, he thought himself unworthy of the honour. But he finally agreed on the understanding that he should continue to work as hitherto, and that he should only be called upon to exercise the special functions of a minister in cases of emergency. He was ordained by the Presbytery of Glasgow and left Scotland again in October 1895.

For some months the hospital had been closed on account of the illness of Dr. Wilson, and on reaching Tiberias he learnt how it was appreciated. There was a clamant demand for beds, and, during the following two months, eighty-one cases were admitted, thirty-nine of which involved operations requiring the administration of chloroform. The hospital could not hold all the patients, and a number were housed in odd rooms, such as the carpenter's shop and the store. But whenever a need appeared it was not long in being met. A lady in Scotland gifted a sum of money for a shelter; and later a commodious building with an archway was built as an entrance to the hospital grounds, and here overflow patients and their friends found accommodation.

The grounds were beginning to look clothed. Both of the plots formed by the intersection of the road had been terraced and converted into gardens, and lemon, orange, apple, eucalyptus, and other trees had been added to the palms already there. The greenery and rock crevices were a haunt of snakes. The Doctor calculated that there were five

venomous and twenty-seven non-venomous kinds in the country, one, a venomous nocturnal species, being large enough to swallow a hare. Those in the gardens developed the habit of climbing the trees in search of nests, and were often shot by the staff. The Doctor had frequent encounters with the creatures, for they came into the house during the night. His plan was to remain perfectly still, and they usually made off without molesting him. It must have taken some nerve to keep quiet when, as happened on one occasion, he awoke to see a snake 6 feet above him in the timbers ; yet he not only did so, but went off to sleep again with the snake still there.

In 1895 Miss Eleanor A. Durie, a daughter of Mr. Thomas Durie of Port Said, and born in Java, was appointed by the Jewish Mission Committee head nurse of the hospital. She proved so attractive as well as so capable, that in August of the following year the Doctor carried her off to Beyrout, where they were married, and the home that had been so desolate was once more presided over by a loving and sympathetic nature.

## XVII. A SPIRITUAL CLINIC

1896

WHILE the hospital presented to the Doctor an inexhaustible field for professional study, it also provided him with exceptional opportunities for

studying the human soul as it was fashioned by the moulds of Judaism, Islam, and Eastern Christianity. It was a spiritual clinic where he came in contact with many strange types of thought and belief.

In the course of the years, thousands of Jews passed through the wards, and all came under his quiet and keen observation, until in time there was nothing that he did not know about their inner life. They were religionists without religion; moralists without spiritual sensibility. What Paul wrote of them was still true: they had a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. Ignorant of God's righteousness, they established their own righteousness, unaware that Christ was the end of the law. In practice their faith was legalized formalism, traditionalism, ceremonialism, which, in the course of centuries, had hardened and encased them to such an extent that their souls seemed to be lost in impenetrable rock. Though many were intellectual and clever, no members of the race could have been more bigoted; it was, indeed, their bigotry that had drawn them to the shores of the sacred sea, and naturally the children born and brought up in so isolated an environment continued in the thoughts and ways of their fathers. Humanly speaking, it appeared as if it were impossible to reach and influence them.

Their reading was confined exclusively to the Talmud; it was their chief ambition to know it intimately and to act on it as interpreted by the rabbis, whom they regarded as endowed with super-human wisdom. They would rather follow the directions of some learned commentator than consult

the Old Testament and form their own judgment on the facts. They were, in short, mental parasites as dependent on others for their spiritual nourishment as they were for their food. Their worship was a matter of form ; they confessed as much to the Doctor ; and this explained the strange irreverence they exhibited in their religious services.

It was curious that they should be so ignorant of the historic basis of their religion, and should have left the scientific study of the Old Testament to Christian investigators and become so completely obsessed by a vast flood of secondary literature amongst which they groped pathetically for spiritual satisfaction. But if their knowledge of the Old Testament was meagre, their ignorance of any other religion save their own was colossal, and the Doctor realized the truth of the statement that multitudes of Jews knew as little of Christ as the savage tribes of Central Africa. Many admitted that they were unaware what Christianity was, and what relation it had to their own hoped-for Messiah. "How did it arise?" they would ask. "What has been its history up to the present?" "Have any Jews accepted it yet?" When enlightened on these points they would inquire why the law of Moses was not being obeyed, and why the customs observed in the past had been abandoned? They were puzzled by the death of Christ. "If," they said, "Jesus was the true Messiah, why did God allow Him to be killed?"

No Jew was hopeless, and fanaticism the Doctor did not mind, for that, if transmuted by Christianity, would make devoted disciples of Christ, but

he found the old patients extraordinarily difficult. They suffered from a kind of mental paralysis, a fossilized lethargy, which it seemed well-nigh impossible to galvanize into active interest. When discussing religious subjects with him, they would proceed slowly until they faced some difficulty, and then they would shrug their shoulders and remain as passive as statues. They believed because they believed; the law was final and unalterable; and no argument would move them. Yet that they carried away some new thoughts was clear from the fact that in shop and market they would repeat and discuss what they had heard.

Occasionally one more intelligent than the others would quicken the Doctor's attention. To speak to him, to watch the words sinking into his mind, to see the light dawning on his face as if a curtain had been drawn back, was ample reward for all his patience. There was a lithographer who printed Gospel texts for the walls, and on leaving, said, "I would like to be a Christian, but it would mean that I would lose my living and my wife and children." Another, who arrived with a well-thumbed Torah with Hebrew and Chaldaic in parallel columns, accepted a copy of the New Testament, laid the Torah aside, and began to read the Gospel story. Often at nights, when he could not sleep, he would be found poring over the pages, and once the nurse on duty heard him reading aloud to the Jewish patients beside him. She stopped and listened, and heard the words, "And thou shalt call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins." One old Jew found the truth, rejoiced in it openly

because he would never again live amongst his fellows, and died with the words of the 23rd Psalm on his lips.

The Moslem patients naturally did not represent the highest type of Mohammedan thought ; they were as fanatical as the Jews, but the majority were more ignorant of the world, and, as a result of the conditions of their lives, even more bound to their religion. To them God, or Allah, while more real than He was to the Jews, was a Being infinitely removed from their practical life, and their relation to Him was divorced from the practice of morality as the Christian knew it. The people would say that their religion was, like their clothes, loose and easy, as compared with the religion of the Christians, which, like *their* clothes, was tight and uncomfortable. Their law tolerated infidels who did not trespass on the sacred essentials of their faith, but visited with death any who ran counter to these. They had the same lack of a sense of sin as the Jews and the same reliance on formal prayer. Many looked upon the theology of Christianity as silly and even blasphemous, and they could not understand the missionaries and their selfless lives or the relation between their practical goodness and the religious ideas that seemed to inspire them. They readily attended the services and listened courteously to what was said, but it was not easy to guess what was going on behind their dark gleaming eyes.

The bedouin often manifested interest in the strange new thoughts that came to them with a sweetness like the scent of a green oasis in the

desert ; but if they exhibited undue attraction for the Christian faith, they incurred the suspicion of their co-religionists, and conversion meant death. They must have been influenced by what they heard in the hospital, but if so they kept it to themselves. The Doctor had a great liking for these stalwart nomads of the desert. "They are men who are men," he said. "Like our Scottish borderers, a fighting race."

As a rule the native Christian patients were poor in character and many were as superstitious as the fellahin. This, perhaps, was not surprising, for many of their priests were little better than themselves. One patient, a Greek priest from Cana, was utterly illiterate and extremely coarse in thought and language. His wife, a quiet, attractive woman, who stood patiently by his side, was cursed day and night, the invective extending even to her grandfather and most distant relations. Yet he was regarded and revered as a holy man. It was difficult to influence these Christians, who were so satisfied with their own type of religion that they wanted nothing better.

The Doctor was interested in watching the change effected on the patients by a stay in the free atmosphere of the hospital. Gradually the aloofness wore off, creeds were pushed into the background, and the simple human man appeared in all his attractiveness. Jews and Moslems and Christians fraternized on a level of common tolerance. As the Doctor went his rounds he would smile to see a Greek Christian and a Moslem from trans-Jordania emptying their food into one dish

on a chair beside their beds and eating out of it like brothers.

With the men patients, even with the most insularly bigoted, it was always possible for him to get into touch at some point ; they would listen and ask questions and discuss even while they disapproved ; but when he went into the women's ward he felt as if he were facing the dark and fathomless night. They were not only conservative, ignorant, and superstitious, but incurious, a fact due to their position in the system of life. The womenkind both of the Jews and Moslems had no concern with religion—it was not their province ; but while Jewesses occupied a proper place in the family and were kindly treated, the Moslem women were regarded as inferior creatures, and were down-trodden, spiritless, and resigned to their lot. “ Yes,” said the Doctor, “ the women are the most difficult to catch, but when caught and they are told the Gospel message simply and clearly, it appeals to them in all its beauty and truth.” They responded also more quickly than the men to the love and sympathy which pervaded all the service of the hospital. Here is one story told by the Doctor at this time which is typical of many others :

“ In the hinterland of Morocco, amid the desert, there is an oasis called Taflet, where a colony of the scattered race of Jews is to be found. There, fifty-six years ago, Johara, daughter of David, a Jewess, at present lying in the ‘ Sympathy bed ’ in the hospital, was born. At the age of ten she was married ; and she lived amongst the vicissitudes of that wild and backward land a fairly happy life. Though they may have almost no education, the Jews have always their feasts and fasts recalling to them their fatherland, which inspires in the heart of many a



Jew the desire to return thither. In Tiberias there are 300 Jews from that out-of-the-way district of Tafilat.

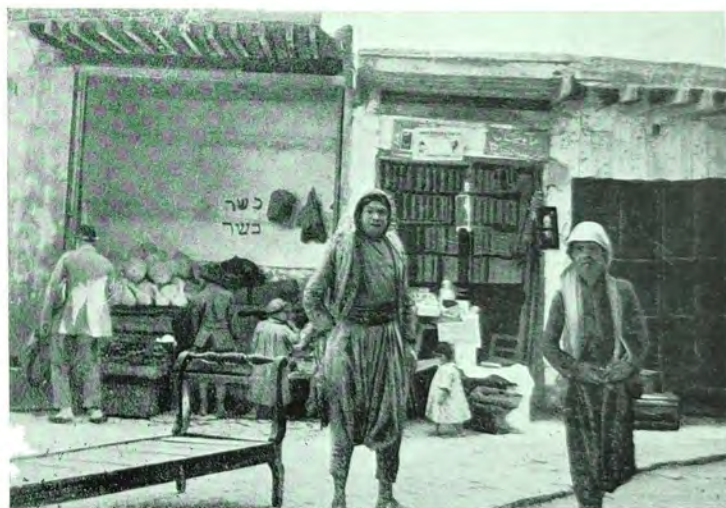
"Johara, with her husband, his brother, and others, started for Palestine six years ago. A twelve days' journey took them to Tangier. There they embarked on a ship for Alexandria. At Alexandria Johara's husband died, but she continued the journey with the party. While disembarking at Haifa roadstead in stormy weather, the row-boat bringing them to shore was capsized; the passengers were thrown into the water, all their belongings lost, and several of them were drowned. Johara and her brother-in-law were amongst the number saved.

"Eventually they reached Tiberias, penniless and in rags. Here, being childless and a widow, she demanded her right to become her brother-in-law's wife; but he refused, and she publicly took off his shoe and spat and beat him in the face. The poor woman had then to try and earn her own living, none wishing to marry such a woman. She hired a little cellar at one shilling per month from a Jewess, who only a short time ago left the 'Skelmorlie' bed after a successful operation. Johara bought white wool, washed, cleaned, carded, and spun it, and then sold it to the rabbis for the manufacture of 'fringes' for the Jewish talliths. By this means she made about two shillings per week, and managed to keep body and soul together, but it was a poor body that clung to the spirit. She came with fever and debility several times to our out-patient department before we took her into the hospital. There we discovered she was suffering from tubercular disease of the abdomen. An exploratory operation was performed, when the condition was found to be hopeless.

"Poor Johara! We were very sorry for her, with no friends, and no one caring for her, for her brother-in-law died in the hospital a year ago. So we have determined to keep her as a permanent patient till her end. Wonderful, however, to relate, her pain has gone, and she is so happy and contented and grateful that one is almost tempted to think that she is improving. She told me her story as I sat by her bedside to-night. The dull, hopeless expression she wore when she came in a month ago was all gone, and she smiled and almost laughed when I said I would bring her her implements and get her to spin me some wool when she got a little stronger."



**MOSLEM WOMAN CARRYING WATER FROM THE LAKE**  
This photograph shows the clear, strong light characteristic of Palestine



**TIBERIAS SHOPS**



**MOONLIGHT ON THE LAKE**

A photograph taken by Dr. Herbert Torrance : exposure 1 hour 20 minutes



**DR. TORRANCE WALKING ON THE PLAIN WHERE THE 5000 ARE SUPPOSED TO HAVE BEEN FED**

The accumulated result of the Doctor's experience was to confirm his impression that it was essential to lift the Jewish and Moslem minds out of the stupor of their environment and to train them to think for themselves. This, he was satisfied, was one of the functions being performed by the hospital. It brought the patients into contact with higher conceptions of the religious life as no other agency could have done. It stirred their interest, gave them a wider vision that made them realize the forces at work in other lands and among other races, supplied them with an historic sense. In many insensible ways it prepared their minds for utilizing the Christian school; it was the forerunner and handmaid also of the Christian evangelist.

## PART THREE

### I. THE JEWISH DREAM

1897

WHILE the Mission was taking definite and permanent shape and becoming more and more a powerful centre of Christian influence, events were occurring in Palestine which were profoundly affecting the prospects of all missionary work. The Jewish reoccupation of the land was entering on a new phase and one more worthy of the practical genius of the race.

The khalukah system had made the country a Jewish poorhouse. So long as the charitable doles lasted there was no probability of the recipients taking a share in its economic development and becoming self-supporting. Baron Rothschild's scheme of colonies had been no improvement on the system but only another form of it. So much money was poured into the hands of the colonists that they were able to employ Arabs to perform the necessary work, while they themselves remained in idleness. Without the backing of the personal application and labour which were essential to success, the undertakings proved unremunerative and were only maintained by the financial contri-

butions from abroad. The whole khalukah system was debasing ; it has since been described by the Jews themselves as having been a negative and destructive factor in their connection with Palestine.

The emancipation of the people from their bonds was undoubtedly due, in the first instance, to the work of the missionary agencies. To counter-balance their activities the Alliance Israélite Universelle extended its educational work in Palestine, opening schools for boys and girls wherever the Jews congregated in any numbers. The element of charity, however, continued to operate, as the children were induced to attend by the provision of free dinners and supplies of clothes several times a year. Not that the British mission schools were innocent of such gifts. Clothing, for instance, was sent out from England and Scotland, and judiciously distributed, while meals were also occasionally provided ; but these were not used as bribes to draw pupils. More reliance was placed on the character and efficiency of the teaching, and it was this which continued to make the schools popular long after the Alliance Israélite institutions began. There was no doubt in the minds of the missionaries, however, that the latter would eventually rival, if not excel, them in educational equipment and staffing.

No plan existed then in the mind of the Alliance to relate this cultural effort to any scheme having for its aim the national occupation of Palestine ; it was purely an internal racial movement carried on as part of its philanthropic work throughout the

world. The colonies remained scattered and isolated with comparatively little interconnection, and there seemed no prospect of any widespread settlement and economic development. But the general Jewish situation was rapidly changing. The influences which had been making for disintegration and assimilation were stayed. The congestion and social conditions in the ghettos of Eastern Europe were so frightful, the political pressure so unbearable, that it became clear to leaders of the race that some relief would have to be found in emigration on a large scale. The Dreyfus case did what persecution always achieved—it drew the Jews together, revived their solidarity, and set them dreaming of a national home. There was a remarkable development of the national historic consciousness which found an embodiment in the magnetic personality of Dr. Theodor Herzl, who came forward with a definite scheme for the establishment of a Jewish State. Though there was nothing new in the idea, his little book created an immense sensation throughout Jewry. Many influential Jews opposed the project, but Herzl persevered and prevailed, and at the first Zionist Congress, at Basle, in 1897, it was decided, amidst scenes of great enthusiasm, to work for the creation of a publicly recognized, legally secured home in Palestine. The movement was not essentially religious in character—it was more of a racial and social uprising; but out of it developed political Zionism.

Calm reflection brought out wide differences of opinion on the subject. Some Jews advocated

an autonomous State, others only a cultural centre. One party was keen for the home being in Palestine, another objected to this plan because the land would not support a nation, and it would be difficult, if not impossible, to secure it. Others proposed richer regions, and as not a few governments sympathized with their aspirations, offers of tracts of territory in Uganda, Mexico, South America, the Congo, and Australia were made to them. Some of these were, after investigation, declined, others were accepted ; but experimental settlements ended in failure.

Meanwhile in Palestine itself the Jews were quietly making progress. The keen business sense of the race came into operation. In 1899 the Jewish Colonization Association took over the management of the colonies and changed the whole system. Instead of the colonists living a parasitic life on Rothschild benefactions they were now assisted to become self-supporting. The land was divided among them, each obtained a certain number of acres for building and cultivation, and was provided with a loan which had to be repaid in a given time. To every colony was allotted a school and a pharmacy. The conditions of tenure obliged the settlers to work hard. They were not now princes but peasants, no longer the "Baron's children," but independent toilers who had to earn their livelihood by the sweat of their brow. They began to import modern implements from Canada, Britain, and Germany—in one of the colonies on the shore of the Lake of Galilee could be found more than one reaper and binder of the latest pattern.



The land responded to their efforts and became more productive.

Agents of the Association went over the country, noting with scientific eye the possibilities of the soil, and bought up tracts that seemed suitable for their purpose. New colonies were established, and young men, many fresh from Europe, were placed in them. Nearly every one married. The settlements became centres of wholesome, vigorous life in which racial exclusiveness and religious intolerance were much less marked than in the towns. At the same time the Alliance was training boys and girls in technical schools and model farms, preparatory to settling them on the land.

The attitude of the Turks, the masters of the land, to these developments was one of alternate indifference and active opposition. They banned the sale of property to Jews; but property nevertheless was sold. The entrance of a Jew into the country was prohibited; but individuals would manage to land and lose themselves in the slums of the holy cities or pose as old residents. The police were always on the outlook for these newcomers who were a gold mine to them. If they paid bakhshîsh all was well; if not, they were threatened with deportation. Generally, so long as the settled communities exercised the grace of humility, and were meek and inoffensive, they were let alone.

Dr. Torrance had a shrewd idea as to whither all this was tending. He wrote: "We do not think it likely that a Jewish kingdom will be established, but if present restrictions on the entrance of Jews

and the purchase of land were removed, it would soon in larger measure be owned and occupied by this ancient race, who would not consider it a disgrace but an honour to till the land of their fathers. That this may occur is not at all unlikely, and thus Palestine may be looked upon strategically as an important field for mission work, far beyond what might be considered were the present Jewish population alone taken into account."

## II. AMONGST THE ARABS

1897-1900

THE work of the Mission went quietly on. "There is so much sickness, pain, sin, and misery around," wrote the Doctor, "that one is constantly planning and thinking of what more can be done for their alleviation." As much was due to bad housing and sanitary conditions, he repeatedly urged the Government to provide a pure water-supply and some sort of sewage system; but, apart from the fact that there was no money for public purposes, the officials were blind to the necessity for such measures. In the Mission compound a force-pump had been installed to drive the water from the Lake up to the cisterns of the various buildings. A mule was the motive-power employed for many years, but was eventually replaced by a motor-engine. The Doctor often declared that the mule had been the best missionary in Palestine.

There was never any rest for the Doctor. How he contrived to accomplish all he did, even with native assistance, was a mystery. "He is shamefully overworked" a visitor wrote at this time. In 1900 the number of in-patients was 296—115 Jews, 130 Moslems, and 51 Christians; in the dispensary the total number of attendances for consultations and dressings was 15,334; 10,460 prescriptions were dispensed; and about 1000 visits were paid to patients in their homes. The fees amounted to £111, a large sum considering the extent to which the principle of bakhshîsh ruled the mind of the natives and the fact that the Jewish doctors gave free treatment.

Many of the results achieved were marvellous. The Doctor himself attributed them to the better accommodation and equipment and the efficiency of the nursing, but much was due to his own skill and care. When critical cases were in the wards he would not take time for meals. He could not rest at night or go to sleep, but would rise and visit the hospital to reassure himself about the condition of the patients. It was, at any rate, to him that the patients attributed their recovery. They would kiss his hand when he entered the wards; women would even kneel and kiss his feet, and in the street little children would run after him to express their gratitude in the same graceful way. Old patients would send him sheep, goats, oil, raisins, butter, and other gifts.

His fame continued to extend. A fourth of the patients were strangers, chiefly Arabs from the great stretches of Arabia to the east and south;

they came on camels, horses, donkeys, and even on the backs of friends. Many brought their tents and belongings and camped outside the hospital. One bedouin, with swarthy complexion, piercing dark eyes, and coil of black hair, named Derwish, the son of a sheikh, had suffered much at the hands of native practitioners, and was operated on. As he lay very ill the father and brothers appeared, great stalwart fellows, in picturesque dress, and armed with swords and pistols. When the father saw the care and solicitude bestowed on his son he stepped forward and said to the Doctor, "This shows love and fear of God." Asking them to be seated beside the cot the Doctor spoke to them simply and clearly of Christ's love for man, and every now and then they nodded in approval. They presented him with some gold, and invited him to visit them and bring his friends. "Even if a hundred came you shall be welcome." "Praise be to God and to you who have cured me," was the patient's farewell words as he left for his desert home.

People would travel for three or four days merely to see the Doctor for five minutes; and what showed the confidence felt in his powers was the increasing number of patients sent by other doctors from beyond the Jordan, from the Jewish colonies, and from towns in distant parts of Palestine and beyond. The Tiberias hospital was now as renowned as the Tiberias baths.

"There is, of course," wrote Mr. Soutar, "a certain attraction in Tiberias. Dr. Torrance is known far and wide as a very skilful hakîm, and is

celebrated as such in a very wide district. For instance, recently there came an Arab from Central Arabia, over thirty days' journey. Somehow or other, in that far country, he had heard of Dr. Torrance. On another occasion, a member of a bedouin tribe arrived from the back of the desert, and a very curious specimen he was. He had never seen a house with a stair, and his admiration when he saw our hospital was unbounded. All he could say was 'Mashallah!' (It is God's will). For a long time he could not be persuaded to go upstairs, but ultimately they got him to attempt it on his hands and feet."

The Doctor was asked to do the most extraordinary operations. One fellah suffering from dyspepsia begged him to cut out his stomach and clean it. Their faith in him was boundless. Fathers would bring their sons and daughters and leave them saying, "They are in your hands—do with them what you will." They had confidence in his slightest word. Cases of insanity were considered to be due to demoniacal possession, and the friends of a patient would go away rejoicing when told by the Doctor that he was not afflicted with a devil.

Camp work was carried on whenever other duties permitted. Of one of his short excursions to the bedouin on the farther lakeside he wrote: "I saw from fifty to sixty patients each day, and performed several minor operations. I had opportunities to address these poor people several times daily, and told them as much as I could of the life and spirit of our Lord. I was never in the slightest

danger, and was all along treated as a friend and with honour. How I wish we could establish branches in all the villages and encampments round the Lake."

On one occasion on a desert journey he found war going on between two tribes. When it became known that "Trance" was in the vicinity hostilities ceased, and members of both parties visited his tent for treatment and medicine. Side by side they sat, also, and listened to the gospel of peace. Of a more distant tour he gives this glimpse:

"At El Husn I spent several days camping on the threshing-floor. My tent was surrounded with patients so that I had to request the use of a large room, which was readily granted by a Moslem, an old patient. There I sat for five or six hours at a stretch attending to patients and addressing audiences of fifty or sixty. I was invited to meals at all the principal houses. I was afraid if I visited Irbid, the seat of Government, that the Governor might send me back bag and baggage to Tiberias, missionaries—and all Europeans—being forbidden in this region, so I sent the camp on before me, and meanwhile with medicine in saddle-bags visited the Moslem village of Eidun. Here the Sheikh entertained me at lunch and kept me busy attending the sick. Then he sent a horseman with me to Irbid. At Irbid I was pleasantly surprised to find that my tents had been pitched on the castle hill adjoining the Government offices, and that chairs had been brought from there for my use. Amongst the patients were the children of the Governor.

"At Tell esh-Shehab I was entertained as guest by the renowned family of Hasheesh, the most wealthy, bigoted, and influential people in the Jolan district. When riding to the place I got entangled in a ravine, and might have met with a nasty accident had not a horseman noticed my mistake and galloped to the other side of the ravine and directed me how to cross. This turned out to be Derwish, my old patient, the Sheikh's eldest son. I found him and his father as grateful as ever. For three days I had clinics with Gospel addresses, and

left with an invitation to come again next year. I believe I am the first Christian who has preached the Gospel in this fanatical stronghold of Mohammedanism.

“ I visited the Jewish colonies of Sahem el-Jolan, finding there less than a score of Jews, as the Government strenuously opposes the settlement of Jews or Europeans east of the Jordan. I was entertained by the Administrator, who thought I was travelling for pleasure ; but I explained the medical missionary aspect of my work, and so was able to introduce the subject of the Gospel of Christ.”

The Doctor, it will be seen, never forgot that his principal aim was to win men and women to Christ. He would sail under no false colours, and was fearless in carrying out his commission. Most of the sheikhs he visited knew well what his purpose was, but were disarmed by his brotherly qualities as well as by his skill. They would endeavour, however, to avoid the ordeal of visiting the Mission hospital, and beg to be healed at once in their camps and villages. One old sheikh complained that he had some chest trouble, and wished the Doctor to cure him then and there.

“ I cannot do anything now,” the Doctor said ; “ but if you come to the dispensary at Tiberias I will gladly do what I can for you.”

The Arab insisted on immediate treatment.

“ Suppose now,” replied the Doctor, “ that I was riding along your pasture grounds and a shoe came off my horse’s foot, and you were not far off with your cattle, and I rode up to you and asked you to put on the shoe, you would be willing to help me. But if I asked you to do it at once you would say, would you not, ‘ I have neither hammer nor nails here, but come along with me to my tent, and

I will do it for you ? ' I would never insist on your doing it on the spot, would I ? ' "

" No. "

" Well, you come to my dispensary at Tiberias. "

" And will you cure me if I do ? ' "

" Yes, if God wills. "

The Arab bowed low at the sacred name and said he would come, knowing full well that if he went, he would have to hear about the foreign religion, and, who knows, might be disturbed in soul.

The hospital was still the chief evangelizing agency. Daily prayers were held by the nurses ; the evangelist and Biblewoman moved about and read to the patients or spoke to them in a simple way ; on Sunday mornings there was an Arabic service, conducted, as a rule, by the clerical missionary, for all the patients able to attend : they were taken or carried to the out-patients' hall, where they rested on rugs and pillows—and in the afternoon the Doctor held a service in the hospital. Every morning, after the workers had prayers together, a short service was held in the waiting-hall of the dispensary. This the Doctor conducted on Mondays, using the address he had given the previous day in the wards, and on other days it was taken by his colleague or the evangelist. The latter afterwards spoke and read with those who were waiting their turn.

No compulsion whatever was exercised to ensure attendance or attention at the services ; they were part of the routine of a Christian institution. Both in- and out-patients were free to



do as they chose. In the hospital all could perform their devotions in their own way ; the Moslem could read his Koran and the Jew his prayer-book. But as a rule only the most fanatical absented themselves from the ward meetings, the others welcoming the little break and fresh interest in their lives. It was a curious assemblage, and the behaviour was not what a home preacher would have desired. There were often audible criticisms of what was said ; sometimes an irritable Jew would make a disparaging remark when the name of Jesus was mentioned, or the comment would be by way of commendation.

The Doctor entertained no illusions about the value of formal addresses ; he believed more in quiet personal dealing. Often at night, even when worn out and wearied, he would go over to the hospital and move around and engage in talk with the patients. He knew that if he went in an official way it would be difficult to pierce their armour, but going as a simple human being like one of themselves he found them disarmed and approachable and as responsive as he could wish. " Well," he would say to one after joking with him, " what was the Biblewoman saying to you to-day ? " There would be no reply, and an appeal would be made to the occupants of the other beds. Some one would be sure to remember, and a discussion would ensue. In this way he sought to deepen the transitory impression made, and few left the hospital without a more or less permanent picture of Christ and Christianity.

Yet the visible lack of result was often very

depressing, and it needed the eternal spirit of hope within him to lighten his way along what seemed an endlessly barren track.

### III. LIGHTS AND SHADOWS

1900-1901

WHILE the prejudice against the missionaries themselves was sensibly lessening, the opposition to Christian schools and services continued to grow and receive practical expression. What the Doctor had anticipated was realized. An Alliance School for boys was established in Tiberias, and the greater number of Jewish pupils were swept into its classrooms. Moslems and Catholics were also more vigilant, and more drastic in their treatment of those who disobeyed orders. Attendances depended on incidental factors beyond the control of the teachers. If an anti-Christian mood seized the community the benches reflected its intensity. If some high Moslem dignitary visited the Baths he would hear of the educational effort of the Christians and ban it. If a Government or ecclesiastical official fell ill and was successfully treated by the Doctor the opposition waned, so that sometimes the teachers were tempted to pray that certain men might have severe indigestion or break their legs. Indeed, if it had not been for the presence of the hospital and the influence of the Doctor it would have gone hard with the educational work.



THE MISSION HOSPITAL AND HOUSES FROM THE LAKE



A SUDDEN STORM ON THE LAKE  
The waves dashing over the Mission wall into the garden



WOMEN PATIENTS



VILLAGER AND BEDOUIN AT THE HOSPITAL

Although the difficulties were heartbreaking the schools were kept up to the highest pitch of efficiency, and many parents, recognizing their superior influence, persisted in taking advantage of them. A few of the boys passed on for higher education to Sidon, and their careers there were the best testimony to the excellence of the training they had received. Some of these pupils were Christian in everything but name. One or two, indeed, were baptized after leaving Tiberias. The case of a Moslem lad was typical. Had he declared himself a Christian in Tiberias he would have been quickly put out of the way; the ceremony was delayed until he was out of Palestine, and then he was sent to Egypt. Such cases were, naturally, not mentioned in the official reports sent to Scotland.

The evening classes were well attended by Jewish, Moslem, and Christian lads. One winter a Hebrew school was attempted for the sake of the Jewish boys who required to know the language and read the Torah before a certain age. Mr. Soutar could have had an attendance of fifty, but fearing to excite the opposition of the rabbis he restricted the number to twenty. The class was held in the hospital. One night two learned Jews stalked in and eyed the gathering, and next day a khērem was out. The students sent word that they would be unable to come to the hospital again, but if the class were held in the school they would attend. This was arranged. Then the teacher, a young Jewish rabbi who had attended the evening classes, was summoned before the Beth-din or

House of Judgment, and threatened with the loss of his khalukah if he persisted in his course. A man of independent character, he refused to be intimidated, and lost his dole. Not a few of the people, and even some of the rabbis, regarded this official action as harsh, and uncalled-for in the circumstances.

The Girls' School had developed into one of the largest and most successful in the country. Early marriages continually drained it of the elder girls, but there was compensation for this in the appearance of daughters of the earlier pupils, who were eager for their children to obtain the same advantages which they had enjoyed. These newcomers, so bright and trustful, offered a strong contrast to others who were strangers to the school. Some of the latter had been taught in their homes to fear the name of Jesus, and when they came to utter it in their classes they turned pale and trembled.

Many of the scholars were secret disciples. One, a sweet and refined girl of gentle and modest manners, had been taught by her parents to be an expert dancer. Whenever they had guests her father ordered her to appear and entertain them. She disliked the performances, and often fled and hid with her teachers in order to escape the evil surroundings of her home. Another confessed to her mother that she was a Christian, and was removed and severely punished.

Similar cases occurred from time to time, and an agitation arose in favour of the establishment of an Alliance School for Girls. The movement was successful, and when the School was opened all but

three of the eighty little Jewesses vanished from the Mission institution, the character of which was completely altered. The native mistress was heart-broken and could scarcely speak for tears. But new and better premises were secured, and the curriculum was revised and improved, and once more parents were found who valued the education and influence of the school, and risked much to have their daughters taught in it.

The evangelistic work was carried on with a faith and resolution which nothing could daunt. "Well," said an American visitor, "and how many conversions have you per week, per month, per year? And would you mind showing me the latest figures?" For such an attitude the Doctor had only scorn. "Many conversions—of a kind—could be got for £5 a head," he said, "but it is a thing to be thankful for that missionaries do not countenance such a policy. Conversions may be few, but the best results are not those that can be put down in statistics."

One of the best adjuncts of the work was the Bible Depôt, which had the largest sale of Bibles and Christian literature in the country outside of Jerusalem. One-third of the total issue was in Hebrew, the remainder in English, French, German, Arabic, Greek (modern), Russian, Judeo-German, and Judeo-Polish. The Russian portions were disposed of amongst the Russian pilgrims who visited Tiberias each spring. Mr. Cohen, the colporteur, was now acting as evangelist in the place of Mr. Goldenberg, who had followed Mr. Christie to Aleppo, and was at the same time, through the

kindness of two Edinburgh ladies, attending the American Theological Seminary in the Lebanon, where he proved a diligent and able student. The old feeling against him had largely disappeared, for, with all their bigotry, the Jews respect character and courage ; and he was the only Jew within the experience of the missionaries who got on equally well with all classes in the community. Even his father, formerly so bitter, had softened towards him. He was a patient in Safed hospital, and perhaps this was a way of showing his gratitude for all Dr. Wilson's care and attention.

The same lights and shadows passed over the work at Safed. At one time Dr. Wilson had the unpleasant experience of being mobbed by Jews of the baser sort, reprimanded by the Moslem officials, and cursed by the Christians, but there was also much to encourage him. Of his consultations, which reached 1400 per annum, 1000 were Jewish. His medical skill smoothed the situation for Mr. Thomson, whose linguistic knowledge and rabbinical lore won him a high position in the eyes of the Jews. But the difficulties were immense. The Girls' School, under Mrs. Thomson's charge, was banned by Moslems and Jews alike. An order that no Moslem girl should attend was rigorously enforced for a time, a soldier standing at the door and taking down the names of those who put in an appearance. The Jewish girls were watched and intercepted ; some arrived at the school two hours ahead of the time ; others dodged the sentinels, and slipped unobserved into the playground. Parents were fined and imprisoned. Even the



baker was afraid to deliver the daily bread. One girl was bastinadoed but, with unshaken courage, returned to school next day. Nothing could break their spirits. The majority were poor and wretchedly clad, yet on the cold winter mornings they would brave the rain and the snow and arrive in their thin dresses soaked to the skin, and had to be dried one by one at the fire. It was Safed missionaries especially who were grateful for the clothing sent out year by year by the ladies in Scotland; it enabled them to keep the children warm, and it saved many a young life.

The evening school experienced the same adventurous fortune. Guards prowled round the building and sought to prevent the lads from entering, but they managed to attend. Disappointment was expressed in Scotland when it was stated in the annual report that twenty-nine out of the sixty-six students had left Safed, but this was in reality a tribute to the influence of the school. It indicated that these young men had been so affected by the teaching they had received that they had determined to leave the cramped surroundings where they were prisoners of tradition and ate the bread of idleness and go out into the wider world and live a life of religious freedom. Many emigrated to America, others made their way to the Transvaal; one went to London, where he was baptized; another found a situation in Edinburgh, and sent out part of his first wages as a contribution towards the evangelist's salary. If they had remained they would have been in the same predicament as Paul at

Damascus ; like him, though in a less dramatic way, they chose to escape from the machinations of the rabbis.

With all this resistance to the work it was curious how friendly the personal relations of the officials and the missionaries were. The latter were invited to all functions given by the Governor. At one dinner there were present several Moslems, a Greek Christian, an American, a Protestant Syrian, two Greek Church Syrians, two Roman Catholics, a Christian Jew, a Rationalist Jew, an English Episcopalian, and a Scots Presbyterian.

After several years' service Dr. and Mrs. Thomson retired, for health reasons, and Miss Elizabeth Jones of Glasgow was appointed to succeed Mrs. Thomson as honorary superintendent of the Girls' School. Adding a bright and loving disposition to her intellectual qualities, she made an ideal mother-mistress for the girls, and the school continued to progress. It was at this time that the various local Ladies' Societies in Scotland, which helped the Jewish Mission work of the Church by providing the teaching staff in the Girls' Schools, were amalgamated as the Women's Jewish Missionary Association. The ladies of this Committee were as heroic a band as the workers in the field ; they were constantly facing, in Palestine and elsewhere, what were dark, difficult, and discouraging situations, but they held hopefully on, resolute and resourceful, and thankful for the slightest indications of increasing interest and success.

On his next furlough Dr. Torrance proceeded

to New York as the representative of the Sea of Galilee Mission at the International Missionary Conference, where, announcing himself as the first medical missionary on the shores of the Sea of Galilee, he said, with justifiable pride, "I have the honour of having a model missionary hospital, and I also have the honour to labour for a Committee who have never refused one request I have made." He spoke again at the General Assembly, "giving his audience," says the report of the proceedings, "a graphic description of the work of the Mission, to which they listened with rapt attention. It is impossible to give the reader any impression of the freshness and vivacity with which he presented the story." He also dwelt with great frankness on the disappointments connected with the work, and concluded with an emphatic corroboration of what a previous speaker had said as to the need of some kind of industrial institution for those who were kept back from the Christian faith through fear of forfeiting their means of subsistence.

The representations on the latter point at last bore fruit. An inquiry was set on foot by the Jewish Mission Committee, who ascertained the views of eight different Churches and Societies working amongst Jews. The opinion was practically unanimous in favour of such work, and it was significant that those who had already experienced its value were strongest in their commendation. A few replies were qualified, but this was because in the localities in which the missionaries were stationed, such as Budapest, London, and Liverpool, no necessity existed for assisting converts ;

they had not, as a rule, to face economic persecution, and could in any case find ways of earning a livelihood. The Committee, therefore, felt justified in considering the proposal as desirable and practicable, and the General Assembly gave them authority to proceed.

Simultaneously with the Union of the Free Church with the United Presbyterian Church in 1900, an important development took place in the Palestinian field. In Hebron, a city holy alike to Jews and Moslems, where Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah are said to lie buried beneath the Moslem mosque which covers the cave of Machpelah, the Mildmay Mission had been carrying on work among both peoples, their agent being Dr. Paterson, who had previously been stationed at Aden, Southern Arabia, a mission of the Free Church. He was a man singularly gifted, had great force of character and an intimate knowledge of Arabic, and had become a powerful influence over a wide region. Mr. John Martineau, a member of the Church of England, was so interested in the work he was doing, that he offered him £5300 for the erection of a hospital and its equipment. The Mildmay Mission did not see its way to accept the increased responsibility, and Dr. Paterson proposed that the United Free Church should take over the whole work. To this the donor agreed, and the offer was accepted by the Church. The arrangement added a picturesque but extremely difficult sphere to the stations of the Jewish Mission Committee. It was too far south to be related in any way to the Galilee Mission, but Dr. Torrance

frequently visited it and exchanged notes with Dr. Paterson, for whose great qualities he had the most unqualified admiration.

#### IV. TERRIBLE WEEKS

1902

“AMONG both the Jews and Moslems,” wrote Mr. Soutar in the early part of 1902, “there is unusual unrest as if some convulsion or other event were expected. The American missionaries expect an outbreak of Moslem fanaticism against the Christians. That this will come sooner or later I believe, but I am not prepared to say that it is at hand. Whatever happens may God enable us to do or to suffer His will.”

This was a curious premonition, for not many months later, Tiberias experienced a convulsion the effects of which were as terrible as those of the great earthquake in 1837.

Cholera was endemic over a wide area of the East, its existence being due to the insanitary state of the houses and villages, and to the pilgrimages to Mecca, which carried the disease germs far and wide. After lurking for some years in Asia Minor, Damascus and the Hauran were affected, but the authorities in Palestine imposed a military quarantine of so strict a character that the country was saved from infection. This was all that was considered necessary; it was never realized that the

most effective precaution was to keep the domestic conditions clean and sweet.

The fear of a visitation hung over the Doctor like a perpetual menace ; he was for ever at the officials warning them of the possibility, and urging them to take up the matter of public hygiene. They shrugged their shoulders. " It is in God's hands," they said.

The disease invaded Palestine from Egypt. It appeared at Gaza in September, but the authorities refused to acknowledge its existence, called it by other names, and allowed people to die at the rate of thirty per day. Some Arabs of the district proceeding to Lydd to work at the olive harvest carried the germs with them. When cases occurred there, the inhabitants hid the fact, and it raged unchecked. Hebron became affected and then Jaffa.

Dr. Torrance was anxious and impatient to be doing something, but the local officials continued apathetic. From the roof of his house he looked down on the town, a veritable ghetto, and thought of what would happen if the worst came.

The worst did come suddenly and violently. On 24th October he was called out to a case, and diagnosed cholera. He notified the Government, and a guard was stationed round the house. It was too late. Other cases occurred, and panic seized the people. The Government went to pieces. Its only resource was the soldiery, and these were placed outside the walls to act as a cordon. In their wild excitement the people endeavoured to break through, and were driven back and bottled

up. They began to die like flies at the blast of winter. Strong men and women succumbed in a few hours. The bodies lay in the houses until the neighbours were compelled by the stench to remove them. For a time they were thrown outside the walls and left unburied.

The Doctor stopped the clinic and closed the hospital, retaining, however, the patients already there, and devoted himself day and night to the work of relief. His figure, dressed in white overall, was seen everywhere; he visited the stricken, succoured the destitute, advised the officials on the measures to be taken. Mr. Soutar was at Safed, and feeling it to be his duty to be with his colleague, he came down with his family. The Doctor, fearing trouble with the cordon at Magdala, went out there to meet him. When Mr. Soutar approached, the soldiers raised their rifles and threatened to shoot if he came nearer. "If you do," ominously remarked the Doctor, lifting his own gun, "I also will shoot." It took some time to convince them that their real duty was to prevent affected people from leaving instead of keeping an unaffected individual from entering.

Mr. Soutar found that the Doctor was working at high pressure. "It would be difficult," he wrote, "to praise his work too highly. If only he were backed up by the Government, there would be hope of checking the disease."

But the Government was hopeless. To disinfect the town it procured a single gallon of crude carbolic! Telling the Governor that the Lake water was the greatest source of infection, the

Doctor appealed to him to place a guard along the beach. The guard was set, but in a few hours had disappeared. Finding a gun, the Doctor took possession of it and carried it off. On another occasion he discovered the soldiers allowing women to draw water, because the latter had given them bakhshîsh in the shape of cigarettes. Again he noticed some figures at a distance surreptitiously taking water, and told a guard to fire his gun to warn them. Some time afterwards a formal communication came from the military headquarters at Acre, inquiring if he had ordered the soldier to fire. His reply was, "Certainly. What was the gun for?"

At last he selected a part of the shore where the water was clear and unpolluted. "Let this be the spot," he said, "where the people draw their supplies, and let it be strictly guarded." A guard was requisitioned and given injunctions to prevent the water being contaminated. Shortly afterwards the Doctor went to the place and found no guard. At that moment a woman arrived with a jar on her shoulder to draw water. Under her arm she carried the clothes of a man who had just died of cholera which she was going to wash at the same spot. The Doctor was so vexed that he marched her off to the Governor and related the circumstance and showed him the clothes. There was no prison for women, and, five minutes afterwards, she was set free without even a word of reprimand.

With such minds it was impossible to deal. Along with Mr. Soutar the Doctor organized a public distribution of boiled water. Two large



boilers in which tea was made for Russian pilgrims were secured and erected in front of the hospitals, and here the poor of the town obtained free supplies. Yet so ignorant and fatalistic were some of the Moslems that they continued to drink the foul water and to die. By and by the available fuel ran out. The Governor telegraphed to headquarters at Acre, and the Doctor to various consuls for more, but none arrived, and after the olive trees on the Mission grounds had been cut down and used, the provision of pure water ceased. A supply of medicines for the hospital was held up at the coast, and the only reply the Doctor received to his representations was that "the duties of a consul-general were not those of a forwarding agent." It was not until the epidemic was over that they appeared.

On the Doctor's advice the cordon was extended, and the people allowed to camp on the fields and hillsides where there were springs. Only a few cases of cholera occurred there, but a virulent form of malaria prevailed.

In the second week a German from Haifa, who had been the contractor for the hospital, was taken ill. The Doctor fought for his life, but he died twenty-four hours after he was attacked. That day Mrs. Torrance wrote to Miss Vartan at Nazareth: "We are well and are leaving ourselves in God's hands." Finishing the note, she went to the roof of the house and watched for her husband's return from the funeral of the German. He saw her standing there silhouetted against the sunset light. She came to meet him. "David," she

said quietly, "I think I must have got it." He took her in his arms and carried her up to her room. A new nurse, Miss Johnstone, had managed to enter the town before the cordon was established, and the Doctor and she nursed the patient. Nothing that skill and thought and tenderness could do was left undone, but after a day's suffering she died, and was laid to rest at sunset in the little corner cemetery. She was the only victim in the Mission compound, and the only one throughout the epidemic who was buried in a coffin.

How she had been infected was a mystery. Brave and busy she had been, cheering and encouraging and advising every one about her. She had attended to the disinfection of the Doctor's clothes, and was scrupulously careful to carry out the precautions he enjoined. His own view was that the infection was due to the thoughtlessness of the servants. One of the men had left to nurse his wife, who had taken the disease, and, coming back to the house for food, another servant supplied him with rice in a pot which he carried away, and later returned. On hearing of this, Mrs. Torrance took the pot and scoured it thoroughly with her own hands, and in the process had apparently been infected.

To the Doctor, who had already known so much sorrow, the blow was a severe one, but he bore it with fortitude for the sake of the keen eyes that were watching him. There had been a pitiful revelation of weakness and cowardice amongst the populace, especially amongst the Moslems, for many

of the Jews exhibited a noble devotion and courage, and he felt that Christianity was on its trial. "The whole community, Jews, Moslems, and Christians," wrote Mr. Soutar, "confess that there must be something worth having in a religion which enables one to bear so manfully and cheerfully so heavy a burden."

Tiberias remained completely isolated, the only means of communication allowed with the outside world being the telegraphic message, and even that was a tedious process. Governors of other towns refused to have dealings with the town in any way whatever. No provisions entered, and food began to be at famine prices. It was absolutely necessary for the missionaries to obtain supplies, and letters were written to the friends at Nazareth, given into a trusty hand, and smuggled through the cordon at night. They were left secretly and silently on the outskirts of Nazareth, the messenger slipping back again without coming into contact with anyone. In this way the situation was made known and help secured. The Vartans also made arrangements to pitch quarantine tents on the hills in case Mrs. Soutar and her five children were sent out of the doomed town.

The people began to starve, and an appeal for assistance was telegraphed to Scotland; it was promptly responded to, and the money which was cabled back did much to relieve the hunger and distress for the destitute widows and orphans.

The epidemic ceased as suddenly and mysteriously as it had come. In the course of a month the

town had literally been decimated, 600 out of the 6000 inhabitants having died, while 1400 succumbed in the district around. There was scarcely a family which had not lost one or more members of its circle. A few of the infected escaped to Safed, but the disease did not spread in that lofty town. It travelled into Northern Syria, attacked Damascus and Aleppo, and swept off a large proportion of the populations.

“During these trying weeks,” wrote Mr. Soutar, “the Doctor and his native assistant showed untiring devotion and rendered magnificent service. . . . It is not Torrance’s way to speak or write about his work. It was done as a matter of course, quietly, effectively, without self-glorification. One feels angry sometimes as one reads of highly coloured reports of the work done in other places, knowing that not a tenth part of what is done in Tiberias is ever actually represented to the Church.” Mr. Soutar himself was the right hand of the Doctor throughout and a tower of strength and comfort. The morale of the rest of the staff was perfect ; they went about their duties with a quiet, cool courage, “which has left,” wrote the Doctor, “a lasting impression on the minds and hearts of the people.”

Even the Mission children rose to the occasion. While the town was in a frenzy of excitement and fear the little ones played quietly in the garden facing the Lake, not unconscious of the grim tragedy going on so near, but trusting in the love and care encompassing their lives.

## V. PERSONALITIES

1903-1908

AFTER the strain of this experience the Doctor went on furlough, and returned with a brilliant young graduate of Edinburgh University, Dr. Ernest Muir, who had volunteered to help him for at least a year. Ere the year was up he was invalided home, and the Doctor fell back on a native assistant.<sup>1</sup>

Another disappointment was the retiral of Dr. Wilson from Safed after a devoted service of twelve years. But a blow which staggered the Doctor was the death of Mr. Soutar in December 1905. He had been a beloved colleague upon whose quiet courage, calm strength, sane judgment, and chivalrous heart he had continually leaned. By his writings Mr. Soutar had made the various aspects of the Mission well known to the Church in Scotland, and his loss was a serious set-back. His successor was the Rev. Thomas Steele, M.A., B.D., another distinguished student of Glasgow College. On being appointed, a well-known minister of the Church said to him, "So you are going out to that vile spot Tiberias. Why, it is no fit place for any man to live." "It was rather hard on me," remarked Mr. Steele, "seeing I was taking out a young wife. But Dr. Torrance has been

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Muir entered the Foreign Mission service of the Church and gained a reputation in India for his investigations into the causation and treatment of leprosy.

there for twenty-five years, and he and others are labouring to make the place less vile. Why should not I do the same?" When he arrived at Tiberias in 1907 with Dr. Torrance, who had been again on furlough, he wrote: "What impressed me most of all was the eagerness of the people to see Dr. Torrance back. I have since learned of his extraordinary reputation. A Jew said to me, 'All Tiberias is glad now that the Doctor is here.'"

A year later Mr. Steele was invalided home. Then followed an interregnum of some years during which Dr. Torrance bore the whole administrative burden of the Mission on his shoulders. He prayed for a clerical colleague—not necessarily a clever preacher, but a man full of Christian love and faith and sanctified common sense who would take a special interest in the schools.

He was not, however, without competent subordinate help. "It would be difficult," he wrote, "to find a more capable, whole-hearted, or happier staff." Amongst them also, unfortunately, there was a lack of continuity. Miss Johnston, the experienced matron, retired after seven years' service, and was succeeded by Miss Major, a fully qualified nurse from a Liverpool Infirmary, who was the personification of energy, capability, and good sense. Miss Jones, the honorary superintendent of the Girls' School, Safed, had now the assistance of Miss Gwladys Jones, and both, entering heart and soul into the work, made the school renowned throughout Palestine. The headmistress of the Girls' School at Tiberias was Miss Marie Bleiker, a sister of Nurse Frieda of the hospital.

Frieda Bleiker was a Swiss girl. She had acted for a time as assistant housekeeper, and after probation as a nurse had gone to Germany for more complete training. On her return she was placed in charge of the out-patient department. Quiet, unobtrusive, efficient, and thorough, she won the confidence of the Doctor to such an extent that he had no hesitation in leaving her in full control. He was never tired of praising her ability. "She is doing splendid work," he wrote. "She has won the confidence and affection of the patients, young and old, whose wounds and sores and eyes she dresses and attends to skilfully and carefully; to her the little children with eye troubles come most willingly of their own accord and frequently endure painful treatment most bravely and uncomplainingly. She knows all the languages, and is very tactful in commending the Saviour to these people. She attends and dresses patients in their own homes. She is a fine, steady, methodical worker, ready for all emergencies in any department, and is indeed our 'right hand man.'"

The native probationers, who varied in number from four to six, formed a band of most useful workers. They came from various parts of Syria and Armenia, and had the clear olive skin, the refined gentle appearance, and the intelligent expression which characterize the girls of these regions. All were keen in their work and conscientious in discharging their duties. On completing their training they had no difficulty in securing responsible and remunerative employ-

ment elsewhere, their residence in Tiberias Hospital being sufficient guarantee of their worth.

James Cohen, still the only fruit of the Mission publicly acknowledged, had grown from strength to strength, and become indispensable to the Doctor. In addition to his general work as evangelist he taught the evening classes and conducted the Arabic service. He had also continued in charge of the Bible Depôt, where he spent several hours each day, and acted as colporteur, visiting the Jewish colonies, and the camps of Russian pilgrims who annually invaded Galilee. This work continued to be one of the most important activities of the Mission. In 1906 Cohen estimated that he had sold or given away about five thousand copies of the Scriptures in twelve different languages during the eleven years of his connection with the book-room. His experience proved that there was nothing like the Bible for opening the minds of men and women to the truth. In his eyes it wrought wonders, softening the hearts of the hardest Jews, and changing their views regarding religion. "What is that key hanging round your neck?" he asked lightly of a young Jew. "I suppose it is the key of your treasury?" "Yes," was the reply; "it is the key of the box in which I keep the New Testament you gave me." The National Bible Society of Scotland, which performs an incomparable service for Christ throughout the world, helped to support the colportage work, and thus had a direct share in the Mission.

There are personalities who exercise influence ;



there are others whose influence is not exercised, and yet is all-pervading. There is the rushing wind and there is the quiet sunlight. The work of Amina Faris was of the latter sort. After teaching in Safed for six years her health had failed and she was taken by Mrs. Thomson to Scotland, where she was ill for nearly a year. On returning she lived in Nazareth, but Dr. Torrance, believing that Tiberias would suit her better, brought her to the hospital, where she began to attend in the waiting-hall and visit the patients, her knowledge of the various dialects standing her in good stead. She also sewed for the hospital and made dresses for the nurses, and gradually became a general help to both patients and staff. Without fuss or force, with nothing but her gentle charm, her goodness, and her clear sensible mind, she was the friend and counsellor and helper of all. The eyes of the patients brightened as they saw her approach ; her modesty and humility disarmed the fiercest heart ; none took offence at her loving efforts to bring them into the kingdom of peace. She was, what her name signified, " a faithful knight."

If Sister Frieda was the Doctor's right hand, Isaac was his shadow—" faithful Isaac Rosenblum, who buys the provisions, acts as male nurse, steward, dispensary attendant, and general help." Isaac was a Jew. He was born in Russia, was never at school, and left the country with his parents when thirteen years old. Many a country he saw and many a vicissitude he suffered in Africa, Egypt, and Abyssinia ere he reached Tiberias with his father, a poor and broken man. The latter was

attracted, like many another wanderer, to the Doctor, and died in hospital. On one occasion when the khalukah doles dwindled to vanishing point many of the young Jews were forced to work, and Isaac begged the Doctor to engage him. He was taken on, and from performing menial tasks, such as scouring floors, he worked his way up into being the Doctor's capable attendant. Offered large wages by an institution in Jerusalem, he went there for a time, but returned saying, "Please take me back ; you can give me what you like, but I will not stay with these God-forsaken people." No task came amiss to him ; he would work from dawn to midnight ; he was always ready at the Doctor's call. A short, sturdy man with a fine strong face, grave and purposeful in expression, and wearing a beard, he might easily have been taken for a Scot. As a Jew he was a link between the Doctor and his co-religionists in the town, and was invaluable in a hundred different ways.

Another indispensable factotum was Mohamad, a Moslem, who looked after the grounds, the water-engine, and all the outdoor work.

The Mission station with its imposing buildings, its trim gardens, its appearance of dignity and refinement, and the busy well-ordered life going on within and about formed a scene which visitors, emerging from the desolation and dirt of the land, saw with frank delight and even wonder, and filled them with admiration for the man who had brought it into being. The Rev. Dr. Kelman tells something of the deep impression that was made upon him :

“ Dr. Torrance has lived and wrought amid conditions such as no man who had not seen can possibly imagine. Among these conditions, where it seems absolutely impossible to have any success, he has fought his fight. He has won his fight, and to-day it is due to him, and others like him, that the name of Christ is becoming an imperial power throughout the East.

“ Those who know Dr. Torrance will appreciate the situation when they imagine him, of all men, set down in the midst of all this natural and human unhealthiness. The embodiment of keen, brisk, healthy humanity, his very presence brings a blessing with it. We sailed with him to the north end of the Lake, saw his wonderful power with the natives, as he joked with the Mohammedan boatmen, and kept them in good humour. We felt his power even more strongly as he moved about the wards of his hospital, followed by the eyes of forty patients, to every one of whom he evidently stood for hope and healing. That week he had performed some thirty chloroform operations, and had attended two or three hundred outdoor patients. The sheikh of Nain was there, to be operated on next day, and a poor beggar girl, who had been burnt almost to death and was now recovering. Most of the patients gathered for morning worship in the largest ward, and there, in reverent silence, grey-bearded Jews, stalwart Moslems, Arabs from the East, little curly-haired children from the city, listened to the great story of the love of God and the healing grace of Jesus Christ.

“ There is no part of a scene like this which impresses one more than its gracious help for women. In every part of the land their hard lot moves one's pity. In the fields, women toil all day in the burning sun. By the wells they gather, erect and stately of carriage ; in every village they sit in the foul streets, engaged in the filthiest of labour. Here, in the hospital, they are women again. Simple and merry, grateful for all kindness, and quick of eye and hand, they will return to their hard life with at least the memory of something better. The pictures on the walls, the clean and sweet rooms, the spotless linen, the kindly touches, the good fellowship of friends—all these have spoken to their hearts, and the message will not be forgotten.

“ We camped one evening outside the walls of an Arab city. Next morning we mounted, and rode into the ‘ city ’ in search of Greek and Roman inscriptions. A crowd followed us,

expostulating and protesting that there were none to be found there. Certainly none were found, and we had almost given up hope of finding any, when the name of 'Hakim Torrance' suddenly changed suspicion to a royal welcome. Within a few minutes we found ourselves the guests of the great man of the city, who set us on carpets round his hearth in the public hall of audience, and served us with coffee and fair words. Finally he led us out and in among the houses of his people, showing us all the inscribed stones of the city, and begging us to remain with him as his guests."

And in his book, *The Holy Land*, which gives so vivid a picture of the country, he shows how profoundly he was moved by the sight of the Mission stations. "They are spots of brightness in a very grey landscape; the only thing that turns pity into hope in Palestine is the Mission work that is being done there. No one can see that work without being filled with an altogether new enthusiasm for missions. Across the sea one believes in them as a part of Christian duty and custom. On the spot one thanks God for them as almost unearthly revelations of sweetness and cleanness, abundance, power to bless, and Christian love in a loveless land. . . . It is in this field that one can look with confidence for the resurrection of Syria."

## VI. REVOLUTION

1905-1908

IN 1905 the silence of the Lake of Galilee was broken by the whistle of a locomotive. The

Turkish Government Railway from Haifa to Damascus touched the foot of the Lake, where a station was established at the Moslem mud village of Samakh. A small steamer built at Constantinople, manned by a captain, two engineers, and six sailors, and capable of carrying from thirty to forty passengers, was placed on the Lake—the first that had ever ploughed its waters—and ran between the station and Tiberias, which was thus brought into intimate connection with the coast and trans-Jordan regions tapped by the main line to Medina. The pulse of life began to beat more quickly in the district; visitors to the hot baths increased in numbers; and there was a notable expansion of Jewish activity. The Colonization Association continued to buy up the good land in the neighbourhood of Tiberias and establish colonies, and roads began to be constructed by the colonists to facilitate their operations.

A rough census of the town at this time showed that there were 5700 Jews, 2000 Moslems, of whom 300 were strangers and visitors, and 300 Christians—a total population of 8000, which was a much higher figure than the Doctor had imagined.

At the same time there was an outward movement. Greater contact with the world roused the young men of the town and villages from their contented stupor; they grew restless and dissatisfied with the narrowness of their environment, and became ambitious to get on and make money. Large numbers emigrated to the British Colonies and America. As some acquaintance with English was essential for life abroad, the evening classes

of the Mission, now conducted by Mr. Cohen, were extremely popular. It was an opportunity for the evangelist, of which he made the most, and none of his pupils left the town without some knowledge of the supreme secret of true success and happiness. The Jewish colonists naturally sought to discourage their young men from leaving the country, and with this object only Hebrew was taught at their schools.

The Doctor could not regard the developments going on without wishing that his old dream might be realized—that industrial and agricultural work might be attached to the Mission. For a time it seemed as if the thing would come about. In Scotland, a Scottish Mission Industries Co. Ltd. had been formed inside the Church to carry on industrial concerns in India as auxiliary to the ordinary mission work, and it was hoped that its activities would extend to other fields. When the Jewish Mission Committee used its influence with the Company on behalf of Galilee, it was indicated that what was wanted was some definite scheme which might be considered and taken up if practicable.

The Doctor had many native friends who were warm supporters of the Mission. Through some of these he heard of a tempting proposition. A large tract of land, about 2 square miles in area, the south-western half of the plain of Gennesaret along the Lake shore, was available if he cared to secure it to help on his work ; it might, they thought, be profitably developed, and not only help to run the hospital, but eventually pay all its expenses. This was an important consideration, for prices

had gone up of recent years, in some cases three hundred per cent. It was offered to him for £2900.

A splendid vision came to the Doctor. He knew what the Church Missions to Jews had accomplished in connection with their magnificent mission in Jerusalem ; how hundreds of Jewish inquirers and converts had learned trades in their House of Industry, and been able to earn an honourable livelihood as printers, bookbinders, carpenters, carvers, and olive-woodwork craftsmen, and how the women were not forgotten ; he also knew what had been done at Sidon, and he was aware of the great industrial institutions of his own Church at Lovedale and Livingstonia ; and he saw no reason why an enterprise on the same scale should not be established on the shores of the Galilean Lake and meet with a like success, and thus demonstrate to the Jews that Christianity was not a mere matter of form, but a practical power in everyday life.

He wrote at once to Dr. Ewing, and the matter was taken up by the Scottish Mission Industries Co., which formed an associated company to acquire and develop the land. It was proposed to begin with ordinary crops, wheat, barley, lentils, and maize, and with vegetables such as potatoes, melons, cucumbers, and tomatoes, and by degrees to establish vineries and orchards of orange, lemon, citron, apricot, mulberry, and date-palm trees, and to introduce fishing and silkworm industries. No difficulty was found in obtaining sufficient subscribers.

The Doctor was anxious to secure the property at once, for it was being sought after by the Franciscans, who were offering a larger price. A certain limit of time was given him, and if he had been a free agent he would have made the purchase on his own behalf; but he was obliged to wait on the business being put through in Scotland. The Church crisis was then occupying the attention of those interested in the project; they were uncertain as to the demands that might be made upon them in that connection, and they hesitated to commit themselves. When at last word came that the purchase money had been sent to a law agent at Beyrout, who would pay it over on the titles being found valid, the time limit had expired and the territory had passed into the hands of the Roman Catholics. They sold it later to the Jews for three times the amount, and it is now the scene of a flourishing colony, and one of the most valuable sections of land in Galilee.

The Doctor's disappointment was very great, and he had little heart for a time to pursue the matter; but he never ceased to point out the importance of industrial and agricultural work as a factor in the conversion of the people.

The interest occasioned by the various developments in the public life of the country was small compared with the excitement created in 1908 by the revolution in Constantinople and the proclamation of a reformed constitution for the Ottoman Empire, carrying with it political equality irrespective of race or creed. "There is to be freedom of speech, freedom of the press, religious



freedom," wrote Dr. Torrance. "The very thought of such things a year ago seemed impossible. It is a modern miracle, the work of God."

The young Turk party owed far more to the work of the missionaries in the Empire than they realized. It was the influence of the mission stations, and the Christian colleges and schools, that had raised the general level of intelligence and taught the community to appreciate not only the material benefits of civilization, but also the moral and spiritual qualities associated with it. Since the Jews believed that the new conditions would bring nearer the time when the country would be freely opened up to them, they, too, were indebted to the leavening of thought that had made the change possible.

The population of Tiberias went wild with delight. In the public squares the Doctor saw Jews dancing with Moslems and Christians. Were they not now all equal and brothers? and could they not do what they liked in social and religious life? As the Doctor looked on he wondered if the ideals of the young Turks would be realized in practice. The changes opened up many possibilities for missionary work. But he had misgivings, and the result justified his fears. There was no moral or spiritual backbone in the movement, which occasioned great social unrest and unsettlement of thought. A notable lessening of religious custom was observed; intemperance increased amongst the Moslems, licence and lawlessness became common, and robbery and murder were frequent in the country districts. Never

before had the Doctor to deal with so many stabbing and gun and revolver shot cases. The universal conscription law, also, was unpopular, and many Jews and Christians emigrated to escape enlistment.

But it takes many dynamic changes to alter the fundamental attitude of the East, and the people gradually fell back into their normal condition, to be agitated later by an attempt on the part of the Government to impose taxation and disarmament. Civil war raged for a time in the Hauran ; the railway track was torn up, officials killed, and stations looted. During the process of disarming the people it was noticed that a heavy mortality took place ; the funerals indeed became so numerous that the authorities grew suspicious and examined a coffin. It contained modern rifles !

When the turn of Tiberias came, five hundred soldiers isolated the town, and the inhabitants trembled, but they obediently brought out their arms and piled them high in the public squares. Never was seen such a collection of ancient weapons. All passed off quietly, and the military departed—then the people at their leisure unearthed the Mausers and Martinis which they had hidden under the ground. It was not surprising that gunshot wounds continued to be treated at the hospital.

On one occasion the Doctor encountered an excise officer who interrogated him and endeavoured to seize his gun. The Doctor resisted. “ You know me,” he said ; “ come to the hospital. I am not a shepherd.” As a rule he was not molested

on his journeys, though accidents sometimes happened. Once, returning from Nazareth with Mohammad, he rode up to a party of horsemen who were on their way back from the coast with the proceeds of some money transaction. Evidently believing they were being attacked, one raised his gun and was about to shoot the Doctor when Mohammad threw up his arms and shouted, "We are friends; don't fire!" The others also shouted, and the man wavered and lowered his weapon. When he recognized the Doctor he was more afraid than before, and abjectly sorry. The Doctor's courage was well known. Once he was asked by Arabs, by whom he was "held up," "Why are you not frightened?" "Because," he said, "I am going to do a good deed." "Ah, that is true; if you had been going to steal you would have fled."

Having, as they thought, made the country safe, the Government allowed buildings to be erected outside the towns—a reform of first-class importance. Tiberias began to break its bonds and to expand. One of the first plots of land bought was a piece to the north of the Mission Hospital, on higher ground, on which Sisters of the Roman Communion erected a large boarding and day school and an orphanage, and staffed the institution with European ladies. These Sisters were occasional patients of the Doctor, and were friendly with him and the nurses. "Scotland must be a land of saints," one gratefully observed—an embarrassing reputation, since the Scots felt they had to live up to it.

## VII. SCHOOL DIFFICULTIES

1908

THE Mission ceased to be an isolated centre of beneficent influence in the town ; other agencies, stimulated by its example, came into the field. Two Jewish physicians were in practice, and a third was employed in the colonies. Though officially opposed to the Doctor, they were personally his friends and sought him in consultation, and referred patients to the hospital for operations. He welcomed their help as he did that of every one on the side of what was right and progressive, and only wished that the Moslems and Christians had also competent doctors of their own.

No rival development, unfortunately, seemed able to ease his work. Two thousand patients per month flocked to the Mission—more than he could attend or see—and the numbers went on increasing instead of diminishing. From the far deserts they came, as stories of his skill passed from tribe to tribe. To many in these distant regions his personality had become invested with mysterious qualities, and they thought of him with awe. One day some Arabs brought a patient. When the Doctor was examining him, one turned to Sister Frieda and said eagerly, “ We want to see ‘ Trance.’ ” She replied, “ This is Dr. Torrance.” They looked startled and gazed at him in wonder.

“ How do you know ‘ Trance ’ ? ” she asked them.

“ We hear of him everywhere in the desert that there is no one like him. We are glad we have seen him.”

A woman arrived from the extreme north. “ But why didn't you go to Safed ? ” she was asked. “ I don't know the doctor there, but Dr. Torrance we all know.”

The Doctor did not disdain to use whatever means came to his hand to increase his influence. A visitor tells of an Arab who had come for a serious operation, and was in rather a despondent frame of mind. The Doctor started a gramophone, which had been a gift from Scotland, and when the patient heard the music his spirits rose. “ He got up and began to dance and caper—a wild-looking creature in his nightgown—and the prospect of a successful operation was multiplied tenfold.”

One feature of the work was a tribute to his wise and patient handling of the people. The majority were extremely poor, the Jews being constantly on the verge of starvation ; it was indeed often necessary to supply them with food and money. Yet he had trained all so well to be willing to help themselves that the annual income of the Mission from fees now amounted to over £300. “ It is almost incredible,” he said, “ that such a sum should be raised in Tiberias.” The fees were now a necessary charge, since it was only fair to the other medical practitioners in the town that they should not be handicapped by an institution providing entirely free treatment.

It was notable that the patients who gave him the most trouble were not the poor but the wealthy.

From a village came a woman with her boy, who was operated on. She was destitute, but from her head-dress she took out a coin worth a sixpence and placed it in the hospital box. From the same village came a sheikh. "Well," said the Doctor, "what are you able to pay?" "Oh, the same as other people—a sixpence!" "That," replied the Doctor smiling, "is surely too much for you to pay; you had better go to the native surgeon; he will operate for less." The sheikh caught the sarcasm and said truculently, "I thought the work here was the work of God." "Quite so, and what are you going to put into His box?" "I have no money." "Well, I cannot operate until you bring a proper fee." By a subterfuge the man managed to enter the hospital, and was being put under chloroform when it was discovered that he had paid nothing. The Doctor was ruthless; he ordered him out, and only operated on him when he produced the fee he was quite capable of giving.

On another occasion an Arab brought a woman who, he said, had been picked up by him on the road. "Is she your wife?" the Doctor asked pointedly. He denied it emphatically, but the suspicion remained. The woman seemed too frightened to open her lips, and the Doctor went out and made inquiries and discovered that she was indeed one of his wives. Returning, he said the treatment would take some time, and he would have to pay so much. "What is she to me?" the man cried, and began to curse. The Doctor procured a short whip, laid it across his back,

opened the door, and ejected him. Some time afterwards he was visiting patients in a village and felt something like a dog at his heels. Turning, he saw the man he had chastened endeavouring to kiss his feet. "I thought," he said humbly, "it was a poor hospital. Will you take her in?" "Yes," the Doctor responded; "but you won't get her out again until the fee is paid!" Which it was.

"The centre of the Mission at present," he wrote at this time, "is the hospital and its dispensary, not the schools or churches, but to be efficient as a Christianizing agency the medical workers should not be overwhelmed with their work as they now are. The calls are more than we can undertake; most of the patients hear the gospel message; doctors and nurses do what they can, but we feel the lack of non-medical, sympathetic, and tactful workers to speak to individuals or groups while they are being treated. We are all burdened with the strain of the feeling of disappointment that so much is left undone."

He felt also that the Church public at home were expecting larger results and were unaware of the difficulties that had to be overcome. But Dr. Hastings, who was then the wise and large-hearted convener, made the position clear. "The work we are doing," he said, "is essentially preparatory work. It needs patience; and if we are not prepared to exercise patience the sooner we retire from it the better. It is part of the burden laid on our missionaries that they are called to sow rather than to reap. They have to learn to labour

and to wait, and they require all the sympathy that we can give them.”

It was the educational work that was chiefly affected by the new conditions. The Alliance Israélite schools were developing with remarkable rapidity. In Tiberias they had now an average attendance of 500 pupils as compared with 130 in both the Mission schools. French was the language used, with Hebrew and Arabic as special subjects. Nothing was left undone to attract the children. The buildings were well equipped; the staff was highly trained, there were free dinners, books, boots, and clothing, and in some cases a gratuity was actually given. The Mission schools could not compete with this lavish scale of expenditure, though during severe winters, when prices were high and food scarce, the pupils were still provided with dinner. As the spirit of independence was conspicuous by its absence in Tiberias, no hurt was done either to parents or pupils by this occasional act of grace.

It was not only the Jews that the Mission was provoking to enterprise. Both the Moslems and Christians were doing their best to organize and run schools of their own, though not always with success. On one occasion a Catholic Bishop who visited the town reprimanded parents for sending their children to the Protestant School. “We have chosen the school where they are taught best,” they said. “Nonsense; your judgment is mistaken,” he replied. “We can prove that it is not,” they asserted confidently. A number of boys from the respective schools were obtained and submitted



by the Bishop to a searching examination. To his discomfiture the Mission-taught lads came off with flying colours and the Catholic pupils were covered with shame.

The children in the Jewish schools belonged to the less fanatical Sephardim section of the community. The Ashkenazim, considering that the influence of the teaching tended to undermine the orthodox faith—with which belief Dr. Torrance agreed—declined to patronize them. The education given was thoroughly good, but it was secular; it enlightened and broadened the minds of the pupils, but it was loosening the bonds of the Talmud and substituting materialism for theism. Schools to suit their own purpose were, therefore, started by the Ashkenazim, with Hebrew as the sole language, but they were somewhat primitive and nourished the exclusive and narrow spirit of the race.

In addition to the disadvantages under which the Mission schools had to labour they struggled against a disability not experienced by their rivals. Each of the latter appealed to a different class of pupil and could, therefore, concentrate and specialize on subjects. In the Mission schools were boys and girls of all creeds, and each creed had to be catered for in some separate way. Religious fasts and feasts were also perpetually occurring, and, as they came at different times in the different bodies, it was impossible to secure either regular or simultaneous attendance. This was so great an evil in Safed that Dr. Torrance, impressed with the difficulty, proposed to have schools for the Jews

alone which would be in line with the policy of the Church, though they could not neglect the Moslems and Christians, unless they asked some society which worked amongst these to come in and take up the work.

Another problem forcing itself on the notice of the missionaries was the difficulty of making a permanent impression on the boys and girls so long as they went back to their squalid environment, where the good effected in the school was often undone by the evil influences surrounding them. To the Doctor's mind the only way of securing the children for life was to start boarding-schools and orphanages to which day-schools might be attached. Miss Jones was experimenting in this direction with a number of tiny children.

Despite all the drawbacks, the Mission schools with their broad curriculum and high moral tone held their own. In Safed they were now alone in the field, as in view of the erection of a large hospital and dispensary by the Church Missions to Jews the medical side of the work had been abandoned. The boys' school was under Mas'ūd Qorbân, a capable native educationist, who also carried on the Bible Depôt and the Sunday services. The girls' school was by general consent, official and unofficial, one of the best in Palestine. Nevertheless, the satisfaction of the teachers was always mixed with anxiety, for the slightest untoward incident would create a scare and empty the benches. "They are very uncertain treasures," said Miss Jones of the scholars. On one occasion the Jews gave out that their sacred books foretold an earth-

quake, and straightway the Jewish population and many of the Moslems and Christians left their houses carrying their beds, kettles, and pots, and camped in the open. At night the rumble of thunder was heard, and a learned rabbi declared that the earthquake was in the heavens! The alarm lasted about a week, and then the school resumed its normal activity.

The usual interruptions and disturbances over the religious difficulty continued to recur. These often puzzled the children. "Why do our parents object to us reading the New Testament?" they would ask. One little Jewess remarked to Miss Gwladys Jones, "Why am I not allowed to sing at home? My mother says I am not to love Jesus. I am only to love God." The situation was simpler for the Moslem girls, for they were not taught anything at all in their homes.

These dark-eyed girls of Galilee were very affectionate and winning, and possessed marvellous memories, but their thinking faculty had never been trained, and it was difficult to get them to grasp the meaning of what they learned. Miss Gwladys Jones often recalled the advice she had received on taking up the work: "Go on sowing, have patience, much patience, and do not expect to see fruit." It was true that there was no result in the shape of Christian discipleship, but many of the girls were Christian in all but name, while they were developing those qualities which make for capable and attractive womanhood.

## VIII. "DEAD TIRED"

1908-12

"THE work is very hard, and so is the field, and one is apt to become engrossed in the dry detail of our daily duties, but we keep pegging away."

So the Doctor summed up what was his yearly task. He was never satisfied with what he had achieved; he was always planning some development of the work; buying plots of ground to safeguard the amenity of the hospital, erecting new structures such as isolation rooms, wash-houses, and tanks, or improving the grounds. Now and again an epidemic would interrupt the regular work, as when small-pox occurred and carried off three hundred victims, or when dengue fever swept through the town, and laid low every member of the Mission staff. The hospital was always full to overflowing, and crowds of eager out-patients filled the dispensary hall. They were seen only on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, until 1 p.m.; minor operations and visits to patients in their homes occupied the afternoons; the alternate days were devoted to hospital cases and operations. The Doctor's old cry of inability to cope with the tide of human ills was repeated again and again, and he would add, "Oh, for power to take advantage of such opportunities!" Once in an address to outgoing missionaries he had said: "Beware of taking too many patients. I have seen medical missionaries not having time to tell the patients

to sit down and take off their coats. How can anyone, if he is taking more cases than he can attend to, do good work? If the work is worth doing, it is worth doing well. No quack work in medical work.” But when faced with the tragedy of suffering in the mass, when crowds of men and women appealed to him for relief, what course could he adopt? He had either to steel his heart and turn away, or do what he could, however superficially, to ease their pain. He was too sympathetic to take the sterner course.

In January 1908 he was married to Miss E. W. Curtiss, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Curtiss of Hartford, Connecticut, and a sister of a well-known American writer. It was a happy union, and it made the tea-table corner of the veranda more attractive than ever to the American tourists who passed through in increasing numbers every spring.

Later in the year, while performing an operation on a poor woman, he pricked a finger of his left hand; during the night he was awakened by a severe pain, and rose and went to the hospital, disinfected the puncture, and incised it. Next day he went on with his work, but during an operation had to leave in a fainting condition. Dr. Scrimgeour (who was assisting Dr. Vartan at Nazareth, and succeeded him when he died in December) was brought down, and placed him under chloroform, and made more incisions. The Doctor had no recollection of what occurred after that, until, a week later, he found himself in bed helplessly weak. A fortnight among the pine-woods of Mount Carmel brought him back to strength.

The continuous strain began to tell even on his wonderful vitality ; what had to be done was now utterly beyond his power to do. All the staff were working at high pressure. Even the presence of another European medical man would not, he saw, appreciably relieve the situation. He came to the conclusion that the only solution would be to stem the flow of trans-Jordanian patients by establishing a well-equipped medical mission in the Hauran or Druze Mountains, or both, and most earnestly he recommended the plan to the Jewish Mission Committee, though with a doubt as to their financial ability to undertake it. The doubt was justified. Jewish mission work was not so popular in the Church as it had been, and it took every particle of energy and generalship on the part of the officials to raise the funds for the ordinary services. They looked at both sides of every shilling subscribed until they felt like skinflints.

In 1909 the Doctor broke down, but the summer vacation and the rest in the hills again restored him. What did him more good than the change was the arrival of the Rev. S. H. Semple, B.A. of Dublin and B.D of London, as clerical colleague. Mr. Semple had taken his theological course at New College, Edinburgh, and had been in charge of the Colonial Church at Lahore, India. To scholarly attainments and a deep interest in Semitic studies he added a love and knowledge of science and a leaning towards educational work, and was therefore eminently qualified for the task before him.

So reinforced the Doctor faced the future with unabated enthusiasm. " It is a great privilege

to have charge of such a work,” he wrote, “ and to have such noble help from every assistant and worker.” All the visitors at this time spoke in praise of the hospital. The Governor of Acre came and “ rendered thanks to its founders in the name of humanity ” on behalf of the natives ; and the *Kaim-makâm* or Governor of Tiberias wrote : “ I offer my thanks to the clever Dr. Torrance and to the clever English nation for their good enterprise.”

He was much cheered also by the kindness shown him on completing his twenty-fifth year in Tiberias. The event was celebrated by a communion service, and, on the following day, by a public reception, which was attended by over a hundred Jews, Moslems, and Christians. Mr. Semple presided, and addresses and speeches were given by representatives of every section of the community. First came an address from the Doctor’s Jewish friends, which is given entire as a specimen of Oriental phraseology :

“ In honour of the respected, distinguished, and illustrious physician whose name is known by praise, Dr. David Watt Torrance. May his name be for ever !

“ What an honoured day ! the day on which we are privileged to bring to light our thoughts, to uncover the hidden things of our hearts, which we have long desired to utter before thee ; the feelings of our heart that are full of gratitude and blessings for the fitting return of thy distinguished deeds in the science of medicine : that thou dost cure without price the poor of our city at thy splendid hospital, to which all that enter are cured, and leave, by God’s help, healthy and sound, happy and rejoicing, and full of satisfaction, pleasure, and goodwill, respect and lasting esteem ! Yes, now is the fitting time to

speak ; the jubilee ! the day when there are completed twenty-five years of thy labour in our city, Tiberias.

“ With the full desire of our souls we come with uplifted hands to present to thee, honourable, esteemed, and excellent Sir, a tribute of our thanks and blessings and praise ; as is fitting and due to thy labour, we would honour thy favour and goodness.

“ Blessed art thou, illustrious physician, because thou hast acquired for thyself a good name to honour and to glory, in all the holy cities in general, and in our city in particular ; in a high way. We desire that thou continue at thy great work ; with width of understanding and thy might of genius in the science of medicine. And may He that dwelleth in the heavens give thee strength and power for long days and years ! As a mark of gratitude and thankfulness we present our poor offering, hoping it will be acceptable to thee.”

The gift was a silver cup with a Hebrew inscription. Then the Greek Catholic priest, on behalf of the native Christian community, gave a fervent address and presented a silver plate. “ We lift up our heads in supplication,” he said, “ that you may be kept a fruitful sower of benevolence and well-doing and a refuge to afflicted humanity.”

Next came the head priest of the Greek Orthodox Church, who presented a picture frame and another address. A spokesman from the Ashkenazim Jews, and one from the Sephardim Jews, voiced the sentiments of their co-religionists. The Moslem representatives then stepped forward, and said in Arabic :

“ O honourable, venerable, respected, able, erudite !

“ The buttresses of a nation are upheld by one of its citizens, who raised it to the highest pinnacle of glory, just as another would hurl it down to the lowest depth. Any people who do not recognize the worth of its men nor reward the merit of



their deeds is despicable indeed, unworthy of mention or honour.

“ You, sir, have spent a quarter of a century amongst us, during which time you have done the Turkish nation a remarkable service worthy of thanks ; always disregarding difficulties and inconveniences, and curing thousands of the people. What language shall we use to praise your merciful and famous deeds ? for praise to you is indeed of little avail. We are assembled here, people of divers creeds and sects, to confess, with one consent, your goodness, and to take part in celebrating your jubilee. You have spent twenty-five years serving our country with inestimable services which must be recorded with the ink of praise and gratitude. You have spent this period treating the sick, supporting the poor, lightening the woes of the afflicted, and comforting the broken-hearted. It is of such as you that Job has said, ‘ You are eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, and father to the orphans ! ’ Who, describing your deeds, does not halt, stammer, and tremble ?

“ Should I cease to recount your good deeds, then would the stones of the hospital proclaim them, which (the hospital) is the chief witness to what I have said. Therefore I abridge my address, avowing my shortcoming, and ask God to grant you return of this day that you may still serve this land.”

A member of the Young Turks Society proceeded to deliver a glowing speech in French, and a pastor of the German Catholic Mission at et-Tâbigha added his eulogies.

Mr. Cohen made the presentation of the gifts from the staff, Miss Major handing them over, while Mr. Semple read an illuminated address from the Committee in Scotland, which was also translated into Arabic.

Overwhelmed by so much kind and generous appreciation of his services, the Doctor could only make a brief reply. He spoke of his early days in the town and the years that had passed since then,

and recalled those who had helped him, the devotion of one, the friendship of another, the counsel and encouragement of many belonging to other faiths, the sympathy and liberal help of Christian men and women in Scotland. But it was God who had led him in a wonderful way and given him the strength to overcome all the difficulties and trials, and to Him must be all the praise, and to Him they must look to crown the years with His blessing.

Mrs. Torrance became unwell, an infant son died, and the Doctor himself was again on the point of breaking down, and was at last compelled to apply for earlier furlough. "Sister Frieda," he wrote, "will, single-handed, manage to attend to the nursing during my absence, with the assistance of the native nurses." Well aware of the pressure at which he was living, the Jewish Mission Committee were anxious to secure him relief, and finally arranged that Dr. David Yellowlees should take his place for a year.

At the same time, in 1911, two deputies were sent out to report on the stations, one being Dr. Ewing, then the Convener of the Committee, and the other the Rev. S. Matheson, M.A., a prominent member. It was the first time that official representatives of the Committee had visited the Mission, and Dr. Torrance, welcoming this interest and sympathy in the work and workers, met them eagerly with plans for extension and development. The hospital was now too small for ordinary requirements; better ventilation was essential—during the summer the temperature had risen to

118° F. in the shade ; during the winter it fell to 33° F. He was keen to realize his dream of a maternity department, and to establish a ward for sick tourists, and he urged the need for a modern system of drainage, and for electric lighting and other improvements.

The deputies were greatly impressed by the phenomenal success of the medical work and its evangelistic value, but they were distressed by the condition of the other aspects of the Mission. Both evangelistic and educational sides had been seriously understaffed ; they had, in fact, been literally starved, and they would have to be greatly developed and placed on a footing of equality with the medical work. In their opinion the only hope of missionary success lay in providing a thoroughly up-to-date school education. Nothing but sheer ignorance lay at the bottom of the opposition, prejudice, and hatred of the people ; and mental enlightenment would have to be considered as important an evangelistic agency as healing. They were confirmed in their view by the example of the Safed Girls' School, which was properly graded from the kindergarten department upwards, and was attracting pupils from all classes ; it had then 110 scholars, 66 being Moslem, 24 Jewesses, and 20 Christians, and all credit was given to the teachers for its success. But the general conclusion of the deputies was that in view of the increased and increasing efficiency of rival institutions the Mission schools would either have to be given up or reorganized on a more modern basis. The imitators had reached and outstripped

their models, and the models would have to set a new standard.

All this the Doctor had been pressing on the Committee, and it was satisfactory to have the situation realized and strongly presented to the Church in Scotland. In a more hopeful spirit, but, as he said, "dead tired," he left on furlough. No sooner, however, was he home than he began itinerating and addressing meetings in the interests of the Mission. At the General Assembly, when Dr. Wells was Moderator, he gave one of the racy speeches which always fascinated his audiences. He told how, since he had first addressed the Assembly, a quarter of a million people had visited the out-patient department in Tiberias, and that since the hospital had been opened, about 5000 had been treated and had the Gospel preached to them. He intimated that he had quite a long list of "wants," at which there was laughter. "Oh," he said, "I have no fear of getting them! But I do wish that in connection with the extension scheme I could have a maternity hospital. I have seen such misery and distress that it has been laid on my heart to plead for it at this time." The result was a cheque for £1000 from an appreciative listener towards a maternity department.

After visiting New England, the home of Mrs. Torrance, he returned to Tiberias in 1912, and threw himself with renewed zest into the work. Late in the year an outbreak of cholera occurred, the conditions being reminiscent of the horrors of 1902. Having been carefully studying the subject, he was able to save many lives by new methods of



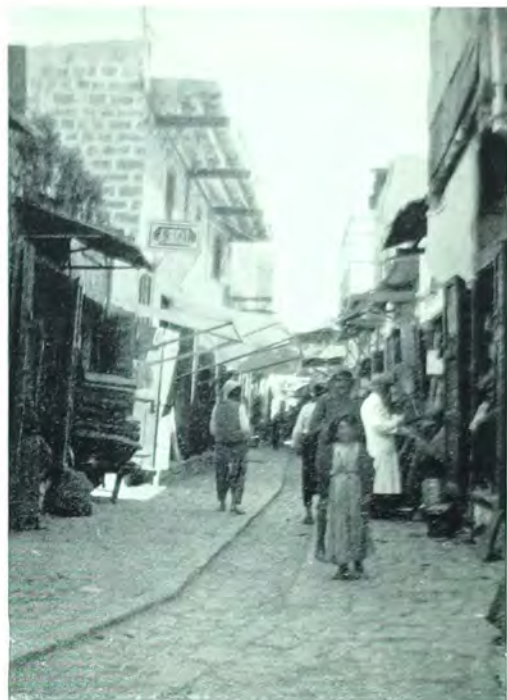
MISS VARTAN  
MOHAMMAD

MISS FARIS

SISTER FRIEDA  
ISAAC



A TIBERIAS STREET AFTER THE WAR



DR. TORRANCE (IN WHITE OVERALL) TALKING TO  
THE TRADES PEOPLE

treatment. The authorities also were more amenable to reason and willing to follow his directions. At his request they sent round a bellman to reassure the people and tell them to eat only food that had been boiled or roasted, and water that had gone “ through the fire.” They obeyed like children, and only a hundred of those who were attacked succumbed, and they belonged to the poorest class, who were badly nourished. To arrest the disease amongst that class, and also to relieve the distress, a soup kitchen was established and kept going all winter. Of all the recipients the native Christians were the most ungrateful ; too proud to come to the hospital themselves, they would actually send messages asking the missionaries to deliver the food at their houses.

This visitation was but an incident in a life of incessant toil. The difficulty in the medical department was to restrict the number of patients. For the nine months of 1912 there were 385 in-patients and 12,956 attendances in the out-patient department, where the Doctor performed 184 operations unaided except with the help of the nurses. High fees for attendance and medicine had no effect ; in one week in 1913 the receipts from this source were over £40, while the income for the year amounted to £650, the largest, so far, in the history of the Mission.

It was a striking proof of the value placed on the Doctor’s work, not only by the people but by his professional brethren, for they continued to send him all their serious cases.

## IX. THE ADVANCE OF THE JEW

1912-14

THE chief theme of interest during these years was the remarkable advance being made by the Jews in trade and commerce along the coast and throughout the interior. "In spite of difficulties which, however, are diminishing," wrote Dr. Torrance, "they are increasing in numbers; they are obtaining possession of more and more land; they are most eager for education; they are foremost in modern methods of agriculture and general culture, and it seems as if ere long the strongest power in Palestine will be Jewish again. Moslems and Christians are emigrating from Palestine, while Jews are emigrating into it." Every shop and house in Tiberias that was for sale passed into their hands, as well as much of the land in the vicinity.

With the utmost energy they were erecting hospitals and adding to their schools and developing their efficiency. Hebrew was taught as a principal subject and a living tongue—the language, in accordance with the Zionist programme, being now in everyday use. The completeness and thoroughness of the education given, combined with the claims of racial loyalty and solidarity, swept practically every Jewish child into the schools. In Tiberias there was still a remnant who attended the various small Talmudic schools, but even in this conservative backwater the spirit of change manifested itself, and all were combined into one



strong Talmud Torah institution in opposition to those established by the Alliance.

The example of the Jews continued to react on the other sections of the population. Hitherto indifferent to the position of women, the Moham-medans were beginning to realize the importance of the mother's influence on the character of the race, and were opening schools for girls, and in the absence of trained teachers were actually appointing those educated in the Mission schools. In Safed the Mission school was too strong to attack or be affected by threats and curses, but a Moslem school was started in opposition. It was significant that of Arabic Bibles and portions of Scripture disposed of in Tiberias in 1910, no fewer than eighty per cent. were sold to the Moslems.

The Jewish Mission Committee, as well as the missionaries on the spot, were now alive to the situation and knew how to meet it, but they were hampered by lack of funds. Less interest continued to be taken throughout the Church in the work, and the annual income was still falling. This was inexplicable in face of what was being done in Budapest, Constantinople, and Palestine. The indifference was possibly due to lack of knowledge; the great bulk of the members knew nothing of the gallant fight going on in these centres, or of the fascination and possibilities of the service. But the Committee did their best with the means at their disposal.

Miss Major left the hospital to marry Mr. Semple. She had done good work. One of her self-imposed duties in the evenings for several

years had been to instruct the Syrian nurses in their profession, and as a result the first certificates of efficiency given by the hospital had been presented to three of the probationers. These girls were now leaving the hospital and taking up positions on an equality with British trained nurses. Mrs. Semple continued her interest in the women and girls. One of the drawbacks of the work was the fact that when patients or pupils returned to their homes, they had no occupation to relieve the monotony of their lives or to enable them to earn a position of independence. Some did lace-work, and, by toiling from morning till night, were able to earn on an average about 5s. per week. Mrs. Semple held a class weekly, at which she taught them the finer and more profitable class of work, and endeavoured to bring some brightness and sweetness into their lives. This was a service for which the women were grateful, and its success indicated its possibilities as an agency of the Mission.

To fill the vacant post, the Committee secured Miss Reid, who had been an honorary nurse at Hebron ; it was not long before her fine character exercised a marked influence on both the patients and the staff. Like others, she felt attracted by the picturesque oddity of the people :

“ They are accustomed to wear charms of different kinds to keep off the ‘ evil eye.’ One woman asked for a Christian charm, for which she was willing to pay 6s. 8d. Another asked me to beat her with the Bible to cure her ! We had one Moslem man in the hospital for a long time, Job by name, who was strongly averse at first to hear about the Christian religion.

Gradually, however, his attitude changed, and shortly before he died he asked to have something about Jesus read to him, and when the story of the Crucifixion was told him slowly and distinctly, he said softly, 'Yes, I have sinned, but He is merciful.' More than one has told us afterwards that they prayed to Jesus before their operation and they believed that He did help them."

Additional help came in the person of one in whom the Doctor had a special interest, Miss J. R. George, a daughter of the Rev. J. A. George, the minister to whom he had owed so much in his younger days. She had an aptitude for languages, and her Arabic instructor declared that she was the best pupil he had ever taught.

And then came to the Girls' School at Tiberias, Miss A. G. Irvine, L.L.A., the first professionally qualified European headmistress. Capable and courageous, and possessing initiative and organizing ability, she began to revolutionize the conditions, and the Doctor, watching, rejoiced and knew that all was well. She began with a roll attendance of one hundred and seventeen pupils, but there was not a single Jewess among them. She found all extremely bright and attractive, without the shy and self-conscious manners of Scottish schoolgirls. But their absolute indifference to punctuality or regularity of attendance tried her sorely, while she was often taken aback by the interruptions that occurred. A woman would come and take away her daughter to carry the bread to the public oven; another would send for her girl to come and nurse her father while she went shopping; another would hastily bring a screaming infant to be com-

forted by his sister ; a father would appear with new shoes and take out his two children to the doorstep to fit these on.

Meanwhile Mr. Semple was quietly reorganizing the Boys' School. Happily he conceived the idea of introducing courses in elementary science, which proved so attractive that he secured a supply of scientific apparatus and chemicals and illustrated his teaching with experiments, in which the boys took part. It was the first time that such a line of instruction had been given in a Palestine school, and it turned the thoughts of the pupils towards new directions of service in the future. These changes so strengthened the educational side of the work that the schools flourished in spite of the formidable opposition, and proved that, provided the standard of efficiency were maintained, they could hold their own and continue to act as Christian agencies.

The purely evangelistic aspect of the Mission was as ever the most baffling problem. "The soil," wrote the Doctor, "is hard and stony and thorny, almost beyond imagination. We have to overcome the legal and ceremonial mind of the Jews, the proud satisfaction of the Moslem, and the sickening superstition of the Oriental Christian, and an absence of a sense of sin on the part of all."

Miss Faris, the Biblewoman, often came across illustrations of these traits. Once, for instance, she asked a bedouin woman :

"Are you a sinner?"—"No," indignantly, "I am not a sinner."

"Do you tell lies?"—"Sometimes."

“ Do you curse ? ”—“ Yes, many times.”

“ Swear ? ”—“ Very often.”

“ Steal ? ”—“ Well, sometimes—olives.”

“ Hate ? quarrel ? ”—“ Oh yes, very often.”

“ Well, all that is sin.”—“ That is sin ? ”

“ Yes ; now are you not a sinner ? ”—“ God knows ! ”

Another patient thought that prayer was inefficacious unless Miss Faris knelt beside her bed ; one was satisfied if a Bible was put under her pillow. In a dim sort of way the women believed in God and prayer and fasting, but had no clear understanding of anything. “ And the girls ? ” Miss Faris was once asked. “ Ah ! ” and she sighed ; “ the girls are as ignorant as animals.”

So far outward results had been negligible, but none could tell how the leaven was working under the surface. The nurses often saw momentary glimpses of mind and heart working towards the light. Miss Faris knew that the Gospel story appealed to the women, knew also that not a few came to trust in Jesus. They would not openly say so unless they were dying. One who suffered much with infinite patience only revealed her secret as she was passing away.

“ Amongst our hospital services and addresses,” wrote Mr. Semple, “ that which affords most interest and is to all seeming most effective, is the Ward Service (on the Sunday afternoon in particular) which the Doctor himself conducts. The patients, one and all, place their complete confidence in his medical skill ; and when he turns for a while from the care of their bodies to speak to them

concerning themselves, he can have no more interested audience. Frequently in an undertone, frequently outspoken, we hear a running commentary kept up as the speaker leads the thought onward and upward to Christ, then there is a sudden silence indicative of dissent or unwilling assent to what is urged ; now and then a muttered ' true ' is heard from some tired sufferer. Therefore we trust and pray."

It was felt more than ever that the absence of village evangelism was a serious defect in the work. Patients from the hospital and pupils from the schools returned to their homes in the town and villages, where the influence gained over them was lost. They required to be followed up and reinforced in their impulse to lead a new life, but there was none save Cohen suited for the work, and he was busy with other duties. After seven years' patient service, he was ordained in 1912 as *Qasis* or pastor, and as a mark of the Committee's appreciation, he was invited to spend a furlough in Scotland. This gratified a long-cherished desire, and he felt greatly honoured when he was asked to address the General Assembly. He did so in English—the English, he intimated, that he had learned at the Mission class in Safed. He, too, made an appeal for a House of Industry where the inquirers might find employment.

On returning, his position in the eyes of the town people was much improved, and he had unrivalled opportunities of meeting and talking to the Jews both in the waiting-room and by the wayside. One day he encountered an Ashkenazi member of the

race in the market, who stopped him. "I am just returning from the rabbi," he said. "And what business had you with him?" asked Cohen. "A diet problem," replied the man, and described it. "Now how would you have solved that?" "Trepha" (unlawful or forbidden), Cohen promptly replied, giving him the reason and the reference to the code of laws. The Jew looked at him admiringly. "That is exactly how the rabbi solved it. What a pity you are not a rabbi!" "Don't trouble with such trifles," was the reply; "seek the truth in Jesus; He explains and fulfils the law." Not long afterwards the Jew appeared, and bought the New Testament.

Another day he heard one Jew say to another, "The problem is solved; the food may be eaten." He asked what had gone wrong, and was told that a woman had cooked in a pot set apart for milk-food some soup made with meat. The pot was placed beside two others containing respectively meat and potatoes, and all three pots had been stirred with one spoon. Had the three dinners been made unfit to be eaten? Appeal on this solemn question had to be made to the rabbi, who, ascertaining that five days had elapsed since the first pot had been used for cooking milk-food, decreed that, according to the law, the food might be eaten, and the offending first pot must be broken. "Was he right?" added the Jew, with a desire to test Mr. Cohen's knowledge. "The rabbi's decision was correct according to the code on the subject in question," was the reply, "but the rabbi ought to have something better to tell the people, something

more satisfying to the reason, more nourishing to your souls."

What Cohen liked most was his Bible class of young Jews at night; he felt that there he was handing on the good he had himself received twenty years before at Safed. What the extent of his influence was, no one could estimate. His pupils were scattered throughout the world; they were in England, America, Australia, and South Africa, and the impulse that had sent them abroad and shaped their lives was derived largely from the Galilee Mission.

The Jewish colonies had much to do with quickening the life of the country. In strong contrast to the bloodless town Jews, the settlers were manly, self-reliant, and enterprising. They were industrious tillers of the soil, cultivating wheat, cotton, and other products, constructing roads, building bridges, and generally creating civilized conditions in the districts which they occupied. They had come to Palestine, not so much from religious motives as for political and economic reasons, and brought with them that breath of scepticism which had never yet chilled the orthodox atmosphere of the Holy Cities. All were more or less tinged with the spirit of rationalism, and many had apparently lost faith in the law and tradition. But they had a keen appreciation of education, and there was a school in every colony. The moral tone in the settlements also was high; they were the only places in Palestine where there was no crime; for over thirty years not a single case had been reported from them.



The patients who came to Tiberias hospital were always ready to discuss matters of religious belief, and they told the Doctor that he and the other missionaries would be welcomed in their midst. This opened up a new field, and regular visitation of the colonies became a feature of the work. With all their openness of mind, however, the settlers were loyal to the thought and customs of their race, and it was difficult to make an impression upon them. At the Waters of Merom, Cohen, as an old worker, was always an object of much interest. Strenuous efforts were made to induce him to recant, but he was too firmly rooted in the truth to be affected by either blandishment or threat.

The teachers in their schools were well-educated and thoroughly trained, and had a wide knowledge of affairs. "Why don't you set your own house in order?" they would say to the missionaries. "Have we ever persecuted your faith?" One, a Russian lady, exclaimed, "Evangelists are you? Well, why not evangelize the Christians?"

"But, madam," was the mild reply, "all good Christians condemn religious persecution and intolerance."

It was the common indictment, and the sting of the words lay in their truth. The sum of Cohen's experience was expressed in one sentence: "The Jews interpret Christ and Christianity not in the light of the New Testament, but as they see it practised in the lives of Christians." As Dr. Alfred Edersheim, the Budapest convert, also said, "That which I hated was not Christianity. What

I hated—what most Jews have learned to hate—was the unjust treatment, the insult, the oppression which the Christian meted out to the Jew.”

The year 1914 found the Doctor still without an assistant; no qualified man could be found either in Syria or Scotland. He was in indifferent health, and was wrestling alone with a paralysing amount of medical work, attending to endless practical details, planning extensions and installing the new sanitation, electric lighting, and other features which had been approved of by the Committee. One could not but be impressed with the difficulty of the situation as well as the resolution and courage with which it was met. “I have never read braver documents than these,” said Dr. (now Professor) A. B. Macaulay in the General Assembly, alluding to the reports from the field at this time.

The strain of the ordinary work was accentuated by the demands of a daily stream of tourists, who not only often required professional assistance but accommodation as well, since “there was no room for them in the inn.” It was not that the Doctor was not glad to meet them, but being usually without an assistant it was difficult to combine social duties with his medical and administrative work. The time set apart for visitors was the tea-hour, when they would gather on the veranda and enjoy a talk with the Doctor and admire the beautiful view of the Lake and Mount Hermon. Many a distinguished personage had sat there during the long years. Princes who were now on thrones, Dukes and Earls, Ambassadors, financiers, million-

aires, authors, politicians, men and women of every class and type, had listened to the Doctor's exposition of the features of the landscape, for few had a more intimate knowledge of their sacred associations. Many he accompanied to the various scenes of interest, and to have him was to possess a passport to the favour and hospitality of the people. Some of his visitors gave donations to the work; others, like Miss Helen Gould, endowed beds in the hospital; the majority passed on, leaving no practical expression of interest, but carrying with them, as did all, a profound admiration for the beneficent service being done, and for those who were doing it. "Not easy work is done there," wrote Professor Dalman. "Romantic ideas about service in the Holy Land soon fade under the burning sun of a shadowless country. Only whole-hearted faith enables men to work with fevered veins and aching head."

This year amongst the visitors were Lord and Lady Bryce and Mr. Morgenthau, the American Ambassador to Turkey, who was a Jew. During their stay a party of American students passed through and proceeded to walk to Mount Tabor. One was shot at and wounded by bedouin shepherds, who had demanded bakhshîsh. While some went forward to secure help, two returned to Tiberias, leaving the wounded man with a companion. Dr. Torrance informed the Governor, and as he himself was busy with the clinic, Mr. Semple set out with a donkey and stretcher. The Doctor followed later. Next day they came upon the two men, amongst a waste of rocks and thistles, struggling towards

Tiberias. With them was a bedouin woman who had practically saved the wounded man's life by attending to him during the night and bringing him food and milk. The Governor seized her, forced her arms behind her back and twisted them until she screamed with pain, his object being to extract a confession from her regarding the assailants. She insisted that she knew nothing of the shooting and had come by accident upon the men. When the hospital was reached the Doctor extracted the bullet, and the patient made a good recovery. The fact that the American Ambassador was in the town spurred the police to action, and they rounded up all the bedouin in the countryside, and put as many into prison as the building could hold.

Lord Bryce showed his usual alert inquiring mind, and questioned the Doctor closely regarding the country and its problems. They had a long discussion on missions, in which Mr. Morgenthau took part. The Doctor was struck by the latter's broad and sympathetic outlook. After they had talked for a time on the various faiths, the Ambassador remarked, "We all want to get to the same goal. It is just like going up Mount Tabor. We want to get to the top. You are going up one side ; we are going up the other. As long as we maintain our ambition, and as long as our eyes are directed to the summit, we shall all meet there in time." Both Lord Bryce and Mr. Morgenthau paid a high tribute to the value of the work which the Doctor was doing, and the latter thanked him specially for the aid he was rendering his co-religionists.

“Riding up the steep hills which mount westward from the Sea of Galilee,” writes Dr. Bliss in *The Development of Palestine Exploration*, “I met, one morning in spring, a poor Arab walking beside a donkey which carried his sick wife. He called me to stop; he seized my bridle: ‘Did I know of one who healed at Tiberias? Was he wise? Was he kind? Would he cure the woman?’ As I rode on towards Nazareth, having reassured the man, I fell to thinking that just such a scene might have been enacted on that very road in the days of Him in Whose name the missionary doctor at Tiberias ministers to the suffering to-day. Far down every road leading to the Sea of Galilee there flocked men and women bearing the sick, half in doubt, half in hope that One Who healed, Whom they knew only by hearing, might be gracious to them also.”

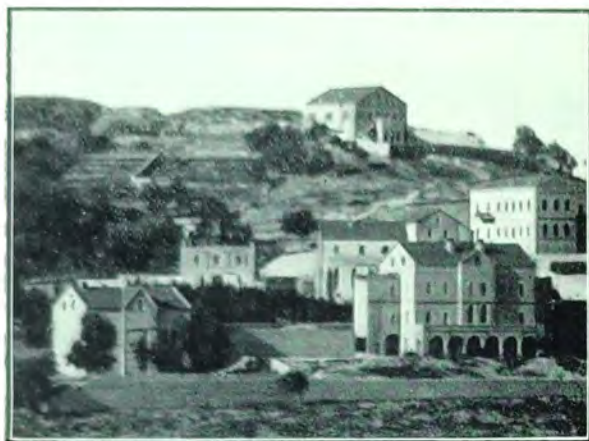
In May the Doctor wrote: “The work is now quite beyond me,” and when the hospital was closed for the hot months he was “dead beat.” But the affairs of the Mission and of Palestine and of the whole world were soon to be thrown into the great melting-pot of the war, and the Doctor’s troubles, like the troubles of every one, were to be engulfed in the seething cauldron, and for a time forgotten.



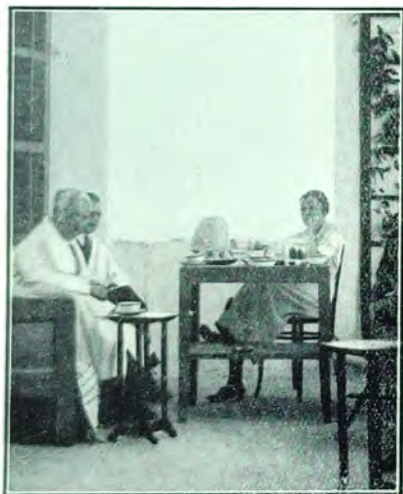
PATIENT AND BABY



THE EXPLOSIONS OF BRITISH SHELLS WATCHED BY SISTER FRIEDA AT EL ARISH



THE NEW PROPERTIES AT SAFED



AFTERNOON TEA ON THE VERANDAH  
Mount Hermon, snow-capped, lies in the  
distance, but is too far away to be visible  
in the photograph

## PART FOUR

### I. TRAGEDY

1914-17

THE constitutional régime in the Ottoman Empire had brought no improvement in the public condition of the country. The war, first with Italy and then with the Balkan States, ending in humiliation, had impoverished the people, and Palestine was not the least wretched and discontented of the provinces. Business was stagnant, the price of food and labour high, and so unpopular were the military service regulations that the best youth of the country were stealing away overseas to escape being drafted into the army. The flame of fanaticism flared up here and there, and rumour was rife of possible risings against foreigners and especially the Christians.

While Turkey was being defeated in the field she was playing a dubious game in international politics. Britain and Germany were courting her favour at Constantinople, and as success swayed now to one side, now to the other, those living in the country could observe visible evidence of the process. In Palestine it became clear finally that Germany had out-manceuvred Britain. German



engineers began to overrun the land. German officers took charge of the army and introduced European methods of training. Dr. Torrance met all manner of Germans in Tiberias, and there was no mistaking their attitude. It was that of men in possession. It became well known that preparations had been made for possible emergencies. To every town and village had come secret orders which were to be made public only when notification was sent from headquarters, to the effect that every man between twenty-four and forty, able to bear arms, was immediately to present himself at the nearest military depôt with ten days' provisions.

When Germany began hostilities martial law was proclaimed throughout Palestine, and the forces were mobilized. Three of the hospital staff at Tiberias, the dispenser, Mohammad, and the porter, were swept off. Weeping and wailing were heard on every side. The banks closed and no money was available. As the Doctor had just paid in his quarterly remittance he was left without funds; but friendly Jews lent him money, and provided fodder for his horse. Word came from the coast that the steamship service was disorganized, and the cost of imported goods became prohibitive. From the cheers that greeted the news of the German victories it was not difficult to know which side the populace favoured. Still the Doctor was hopeful that Turkey would not be involved in the conflict.

On 7th August the closing exhibition of the Girls' School at Safed was being held, and the

company were enjoying the hospitality of Miss Jones in the garden, when Dr. Torrance was handed a telegram from the Consul-General, intimating that a state of war had existed between Britain and Germany since the 4th. "We were overawed by the news," he wrote. Mobilization went on. Thousands of men were kept hanging about the depôts waiting enrolment, their food became exhausted, and there were no fresh supplies. Horses, mules, provisions, clothes began to be ruthlessly commandeered from every town and village. Work stopped, distress prevailed, hunger and starvation ravaged Tiberias. After taking stock the Doctor calculated that he would be able to hold on for at least a month. He was alone, Mr. Semple and Miss Irvine being on furlough, and his family at Safed with Miss Jones and Miss Gwladys Jones. Miss George and Sister Frieda were at Bludân, near Damascus, where the former had been studying the language, but they were now hastening back to Tiberias.

On 28th August Dr. Anderson of the Church Missions to Jews received orders from London to return immediately, and left. On 7th September a special messenger reached Dr. Torrance, with a strong recommendation from the Consul-General to follow his example. Although he had kept the Committee in Scotland in touch with what was happening, no reply came to his cables, and gathering together his party—Mrs. Torrance, three children and nurse, Miss Jones, Miss Gwladys Jones, and Miss George—he made preparations for leaving. This was not easy, for the townspeople

had learned to lean on his sympathy and judgment, and they gave him no peace, coming to him by day and night for advice and assistance on all sorts of matters. But he fixed up the necessary salaries, arranged for a supply of provisions until November, gave directions for the reopening of the schools whatever happened, appointed Sister Frieda to carry on the medical work as far as possible, and gave her the keys of the buildings. Being a Swiss subject she would be exempt from molestation in the event of Turkey taking part in the struggle, and she had an aunt, a German lady, Mrs. Mueller, in Nazareth, with whom she could, if need be, find protection.

But so sure was the Doctor that Turkey would find it to her advantage to side with the Allies, and that he would shortly be back, that he packed only a handbag, and left all his belongings—his clothes, his manuscripts, the valuable articles he had collected during his stay in the country, including a cabinet of rare coins, and gold and silver objects.

The party travelled lightly, and after considerable trouble and anxiety succeeded in reaching Haifa, Port Said, and England.

With his insatiable appetite for work the Doctor at once took a position in Glasgow Western Infirmary; but when Turkey cast in her lot with Germany and Austria he applied to the Scottish Command for a commission in the R.A.M.C. He was above military age and there was delay. Growing impatient he went direct to the War Office in London and offered his services. The officials were delighted to see him, and within a few days

he was directed to proceed to Scottish Headquarters, where he received a commission as Lieutenant, and became Resident Officer in command of Oakbank War Hospital, containing 250 beds. The work was as exacting as that in Tiberias, and, to him, very sad. Fortunately he was near the little home which had been established in Glasgow. These, however, were sombre years for every one, and do not bear recalling. One bright incident was the graduation, in 1916, as M.B., Ch.B., of his son Herbert, a distinguished student, who also received a commission in the R.A.M.C.

The Doctor's thoughts dwelt unceasingly upon Tiberias. What was happening there? From time to time scraps of intelligence filtered through. After being left alone, Sister Frieda carried on the out-patient department, attending to as many as 120 cases a day, performing minor operations, and in the afternoon visiting midwifery patients in the town. The authorities seized the school-house and turned it into a Moslem school. Then the military appeared at the hospital and, in spite of her protests, relieved her of the keys and took possession. They forbade her even to go to her own quarters or remove a single article, and turned her out as she was. The hotel in the town was run by Germans, Mr. and Mrs. Grossman, who had the kindest of hearts, and were friends of the Mission and helpful neighbours of the Doctor and the staff. To them she went, and they provided her with a room and made her comfortable.

Undismayed by her experience she opened a

clinic in the rear of the Bible Dépôt, to which patients flocked to the number of 250 a day. She made many attempts to obtain her belongings from the hospital, but was unsuccessful until she lodged a complaint with the Commander at Nazareth, when she was allowed to take away only what she could claim as her own. Her little store of money running done, she was penniless. "I don't know," she said afterwards, "what would have become of me if it had not been for the Grossmans, who helped me in all my difficulties. The distress in the town was very great; it was a mystery how the poor got their daily bread, and I could do so little to relieve them." Locusts had ravaged the country, and there were no vegetables or fruit coming into the market.

In July 1915 she went to Nazareth, where she lived with her aunt. Mrs. Mueller's name will long be honoured by Galilee missionaries. She had considerable influence, and being a woman of spirit and courage she fought many a battle on behalf of British interests.

Dr. Scrimgeour, who had taken his family to Egypt, found it impossible to return, and his two nurses, who had courageously resolved to remain, were commandeered by the Turks to attend to their sick and wounded. They were befriended by Mrs. Mueller and Sister Frieda. Both were earnest and devoted missionaries: one, Miss Croft, died before the end of the war; and the other, Miss Johncock, in 1920. Sister Frieda also worked in the Turkish hospitals; they were full, and the conditions were deplorable. As she was unable to live

on her pay of 16s. per month, she asked that she might be transferred to the Turkish-German base of operations against Egypt, and was sent to Beer-sheba ; thence she was commandeered for tent work at el-Arîsh, a little mud-town amongst the sands on the desert track. It was within the fighting zone ; there was constant shell-fire, bombing by aeroplanes, and rattle of machine guns, and, in addition to these nerve-racking factors, she was the object of suspicion and dislike to German nurses who, knowing she had been in a Scottish hospital, regarded her as a spy. " It does not matter to me whom I nurse," she protested to the German officers when she was turned away from the British patients. They agreed with her, and treated her with all courtesy. Conditions grew worse ; both food and water were scarce and bad, and she was attacked by typhus. Medical supplies were scanty—most of them had been looted by the Turks from mission hospitals, including that at Tiberias, and sent down in bulk, with the result that army doctors received boxes of microscopes and gynæcological instruments for the care of the wounded soldiers ! She struggled heroically on, but her nervous system broke down under the terrible strain and hardship, and she was sent back to Nazareth, and then to Damascus and finally to Germany, where she remained a year before proceeding to Switzerland.

A more tragic fate befell Mr. Cohen. He was called to the army, but, as a pastor, gained exemption, and continued to carry on the evangelistic work of the Mission. Services were held in his house, and here he dispensed the communion to " two or

three" gathered in the name of Christ. The Jewish Mission Committee took infinite trouble to send him remittances, but he often found it difficult to make ends meet, and he began to engage in passport photography, which helped him a little. It proved, however, a fatal step. On some accusation in connection with a passport he was arrested, imprisoned, and tortured, being beaten on the face and on the soles of his feet until he became unconscious, but was finally acquitted of the charge. An innocent remark which he let fall later aroused fresh suspicion, and he was again arrested on a charge of espionage, imprisoned, sent to Nazareth for punishment, and then banished to Damascus. It says much for the kindness and loyalty of the Jews that they helped him in his extremity along with their co-religionists. He was last seen by a Scottish officer in Asia Minor tramping with other prisoners to Constantinople. Attacked by typhus, he died in a military hospital in Constantinople. It was a melancholy ending to a life of high courage and noble service.

Mohammad, who joined the army, proved physically unfit, and was sent to work on the roads beyond the Jordan. The doctors in the Mission buildings—for after being a Turkish Serai, or Government office, for a time, they were turned into war hospitals—learning that he knew how to run the motor-engine, sent for him. "If you cannot get away, desert," was the laconic message he received. He was able to return, and proved the most useful servant about the place.

Isaac suffered privations like others of his race.

During a typhus epidemic, the Turks waged war on the flowing locks of the Jews, and Isaac's neatly trimmed beard was cut off—an indignity which he greatly resented.

## II. THE JEWISH DAWN

1917

THE brilliant advance of the British troops from Egypt into Palestine formed one of the most dramatic developments of the war. It coincided with an announcement which was, to the Jews, wonderful and even startling in its solemn possibilities. Their age-long dream, that had seemed so hopeless of realization, appeared to be on the point of accomplishment. For some time it had been known to a few that the British Government was ready to take advantage of the turn of events in favour of the race, and on 2nd November 1917, Lord Balfour, on its behalf, addressed the following communication to Lord Rothschild :

“ His Majesty's Government view with favour the establishment in Palestine of a National Home for the Jewish people, and will use their best endeavours to facilitate the achievement of this object, it being clearly understood that nothing shall be done which may prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or the rights and political status enjoyed by the Jews in any other country.”

When, in the following month, Jerusalem was captured and General Allenby entered the Holy



City on foot, the Jews knew that the miracle had happened at last. Not the least gratifying feature of the campaign to them was the fact that Jewish battalions had taken part in the liberation of the land. It was notable, indeed, that men of various races and creeds—Britons (including Australians and New Zealanders), Indians, Arabs, Armenians, West Indian negroes, and Algerians formed that victorious army.

In the stress of exalted emotion occasioned by these events and the reaction after centuries of crushing misery, the Jews read larger meanings into the Declaration than it contained, and said and wrote many things which cool reflection showed to have been unwise. They mistook equal rights for sovereign privileges. They saw themselves in possession of Palestine, organizing a Jewish State and establishing their old customs and culture, forgetting for the moment that there was a very large population of natives, both Moslem and Christian, to be taken into account. This, it was true, was not the attitude of all Jews in Western lands. A considerable number there still viewed with distaste the creation of a separate Jewish nationality, believing that Judaism was merely a system of thought and did not necessitate segregation and isolation from the communities of the world. Nevertheless they, too, were grateful to the British Government for its generous action, for it had brought to an end the feeling that they were a homeless race; it had given them a charter of renationalization; it had provided them with an opportunity, if they cared to accept it, of building

up in their ancient land a racial centre of social and spiritual activity.

No section of the Christian community rejoiced more at the Declaration than the societies and missionaries working amongst the Jews, but they made sure that in the new dispensation all faiths would have equal rights and the fullest freedom, and that the missionary enterprise would have the same opportunity as it had hitherto enjoyed.

The Jewish Mission Committee of the United Free Church learnt first through the Foreign Office of the state of the Mission property in Galilee. All the buildings in Tiberias were in fair repair, but had been stripped bare. The Turks had looted all the medical stores and instruments, the hospital beds, the school equipment, and most of the furniture in the two dwelling-houses, along with every article of interest and value which the Doctor had collected during his sojourn in the land, and all his manuscripts and books. In Safed a road had been driven through the Mission, the houses had been despoiled, Mr. Semple's valuable library of books had been scattered and used for waste-paper and cigarettes, and all the furniture and clothing of the ladies had disappeared.

The social conditions of the country were found to be appalling. There had been a reign of terror. Thousands of Jews of British, French, and Russian nationality had been expelled, and their property confiscated; those who remained had been subjected to cruel persecution. Life came to a standstill; the fields were untilled; the colonies were ravaged; the woodlands were cut down. Large

numbers of people were starving ; parents sold their children in the streets for a shilling or two ; drought, visitations of locusts, epidemics of typhus and cholera added to the horror of the situation.

The British brought with them, like the Romans of old, order and law and a sense of the practical. At once the Military Administration entered on the gigantic task of resuscitating the country. It was literally a process of restoring the dead to life. The filthy cities were cleaned up and sanitary measures adopted ; a water-supply was provided ; broad, well-metalled roads began to intersect the land ; cultivators were granted loans ; commerce revived. In meeting the needs of the most necessitous the officials relied on the assistance of philanthropic agencies, and in this work the United Free Church took a large share.

The Rev. J. Macdonald Webster of Budapest was in Scotland at the time. Widely known as " Webster of Budapest," he was a missionary of exceptional ability with a profound knowledge of Eastern Europe and the Jewish problem, and an organizing faculty which carried to success whatever scheme he undertook. The fact that it was the Jews who were chiefly suffering in Palestine and in Europe suggested to him the idea of raising a fund for the double purpose of relieving the distress and of establishing the Mission work, and re-equipping the buildings after the war. Much sympathy was being expressed for the Jews, and the Jewish Mission Committee welcomed the proposal, and appointed Mr. Webster organizing secretary. The result was a special War Fund—the only

Church fund for Jewish relief—which in the end reached the remarkable total of £25,600.

Agents were dispatched to the various centres where the refugees had concentrated, first to Russia and Poland and later to Egypt and Palestine. These included several of the Jewish workers—Mr. Christie, Miss Gwladys Jones, Miss Irvine, and Miss Reid, who, undeterred by the dangers, administered relief to the stricken people. The assistance rendered and the kindness shown made a deep impression on the minds of the Jews.

When Dr. Milne Rae resigned the secretaryship of the Jewish Committee, which he had guided with much tact for many years, it was natural that Mr. Macdonald Webster should be appointed his successor. His advent marked the beginning of an era of energetic development and progress in the work.

### III. RECONSTRUCTION

1919-20

DR. TORRANCE—who now held the rank of Captain—had been fretting in Glasgow and grudging every hour that he was not in Galilee. He felt the damp winter cold keenly, and as soon as he was demobilized in the spring of 1919 he hastened out alone. Reaching Tiberias he stepped into the town in the darkness, secured a room in the hotel, and went out and prowled around to discover how

matters stood. His own house was occupied by the Military Governor, the minister's house was used as a post office, the school buildings were the Moslem Law Courts, and the hospital was in the hands of the American Zionist Medical Unit. He called on the Governor, and told him who he was, and said characteristically that he was coming to claim his property next day in order to start medical work again at once. But the British Army is a ponderous and slow-moving machine, and the Doctor was forced to begin elsewhere. He had the Moslems cleared out of the schoolhouse, secured a few chairs and a table, and opened an outpatient department. His name possessed all its old magic, and the people flocked about him, delighted to have their "King," as they called him, once more in their midst. None were more pleased than his Jewish friends. "Saint David is here!" was the slogan-cry that rang through the Jewish quarter of the town and the colonies in the vicinity. They noticed a difference in him, and some did not know him "until he smiled." But he soon picked up; the work renewed his vitality, and that restless energy which characterized him before the war returned along with the determination to restore the broken fortunes of the Mission.

By and by, through persevering effort, he managed to secure entry into the top story of his old house, and, backed by the Committee in Scotland, continued the process of pressure, but it was not until October that he was once more master of all the Mission buildings. He endeavoured to recover some of his scattered

belongings which he knew were in the town, but was not very successful. Once he was shown a photograph of a group in which one of the figures was wearing a suit of his best clothes ; it touched his sense of humour, and he was philosopher enough to make the best of the situation. The task of rebuilding the shattered fabric of the Mission was not an easy one, but gradually the staff was re-constituted, though not all the former members came back. Mr. Semple returned from his chaplaincy in the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, Sister Frieda came from Switzerland, Amina Faris, Isaac, and Mohammad took up their old duties. All had been shaken by their experiences, but were not less eager and devoted than formerly.

Several new appointments were made, one of which, that of Miss Vartan as Matron, pleased the Doctor exceedingly. She was the daughter of his old friend, Dr. Vartan, and proved as wise and as capable as her father. Arabic she spoke as fluently as English.

Then Dr. Mary M'Neill, who had been serving in the Scottish Women's hospital in Belgrade, came to assist him temporarily. When in Egypt on her way out she was told by Cairo practitioners that the Doctor was "the most beloved man in Palestine." "You are very fortunate to be going to Tiberias," said experienced fellow-travellers on the journey to Galilee, and when she came to the hospital by the Lake, "the most touchingly alluring sheet of water in the world," she realized the truth of the remarks.

"Various scenes recur to me," she writes, "as I look back

on these busy months. I see the Doctor in his consulting-room. A Jewish lady has come from Jerusalem expressly to have his opinion on her case ; a Christian priest has brought a company of sick villagers from the Hauran. Tall and handsome bedouin in picturesque garb arrive from the ' regions beyond the Jordan,' and when he has spoken to them, they prostrate themselves on the ground and kiss his feet, and then, clasping their hands and lifting their eyes, they say a prayer of thanksgiving for him.

" I recall a Sunday morning when a little Christian community has gathered in the hospital waiting-room. And in the communion service carried out according to the simple rites of the Scots Kirk participate two grateful patients, a priest of the Greek Orthodox Church and his deacon. In the afternoon a service is held in the wards. Miss Vartan plays the harmonium and leads the singing. The patients listen as the Doctor speaks quietly and simply to them. Little children, Moslem, Jewish, and Christian, cluster on the floor near him. They have learnt the Lord's Prayer and they repeat it together, ' Our Father which art in heaven.'

" I see him the friend and adviser of all sorts and conditions of men whom he has won by his skill and broad-minded and large-hearted charity—the gentle Franciscan brother at Capernaum, the poor Sisters in the adjacent convent, the Jewish rabbis in the town, the fanatical Moslems in the desert. He is the friend of all, and as a linguist can make himself understood by all. I have heard him talk in turn Arabic, Yiddish, French, and Italian to his patients.

" I see him acting as host to a number of young officers of an Indian regiment quartered near Tiberias. He has great social gifts, is very fond of music, can tune the piano, and sings well. These musical evenings relieved many a dull hour for these lonely officers."

He was so familiar and popular a figure in the country that in travelling with him one had to make up one's mind for endless stoppages and delays. Everywhere Jews, Moslems, and Christians would hail him or make themselves known in some way.

A walk in Jerusalem with him was a series of encounters and talks. He was a privileged visitor at all the holy places, because there was sure to be some one there who had been a patient. One day, as he entered the Mosque of Omar, an attendant became obsequious. He had been in the hospital, and so great was his faith in the Doctor's powers that he dragged forward his little boy and asked him to cure him. "How can I," said the Doctor, "unless I make a proper diagnosis? Can you, without eyes, shoot a bird?" "But God has given me the thought that you can cure him." "And," the Doctor countered, "God has given *me* the thought that you should consult Dr. —." At Jacob's Well he was welcomed by a priest, a stranger to him. "Ah, Doctor," the latter cried, "if it hadn't been for you I would have died!" Long years before he also had been in the hospital. Such incidents by the wayside were always happening. Even in Egypt he was recognized and gratefully thanked by patients who had gone to him from that country.

Dr. Mary M'Neill left, and the Doctor was again without a colleague. But his son, Dr. Herbert, now also M.D., could not think of him continuing to toil alone after a lifetime of service, and relinquishing, as his father himself had done, the sure prospect of a successful career at home, he went out to act as assistant in the hospital. His advent was not only a source of pride and pleasure to his father, but an event of importance to the people of Galilee. Would he possess the skill and other qualities of the Doctor? They observed him



closely, more closely than he knew, and were not long in reaching a conclusion. He had indeed the same alert mind, the same quick sympathy that was almost tender in its quality, and the same light yet firm touch which conveyed to the patients a sense of healing. Those who formerly would have no one but "Trance" and turned away if he were not available, began to give themselves into the hands of Dr. Herbert, though they made no secret of their preference for his father.

Children especially loved the slim young doctor with the kind, smiling eyes and the hands ever ready for theirs to slip into; they seemed to know instinctively that he suffered with their suffering, and was doing his utmost to make them well. He would fight for them where even his father had pronounced a verdict of death. One day he brought over to the Doctor at the house a boy from Nazareth. Dr. Torrance ran his fingers over the swollen face and neck. "Hopeless!" he said. "He will die." Dr. Herbert lingered restlessly, suggesting this and that, but his experienced father shook his head. "He will die within a month," he said. Dr. Herbert acquiesced sadly, and with a face that one did not like to see, took the boy by the hand and led him away. It was this intense human sympathy, combined with a gentle humour, that captured the popular heart.

What impressed the young doctor was the immense field that lay before a surgeon in Palestine. He saw cases in the first few months which, though they were not peculiar to the country, he had never witnessed before, and, in addition, he dealt with

some that he would not have come across in practice elsewhere. His father told him that he had treated surgical cases of a very rare type, such as probably would not occur more than once or twice in a run of ten thousand patients.

Another qualified nurse from Scotland, Miss Hazel Ferguson, daughter of a Formosan missionary, joined the staff, and by her cheerful and helpful nature added to the brightness of the institution, though she found that it was not easy always to be at one's best amidst such heat and with such a rush of work. "Last Tuesday," she wrote on one occasion, "the Doctor started at 7.30 a.m., so I was in before him—about 7.10. He did seven operations, finishing at 12.30 p.m. We were all quite limp and damp. That evening at 9 p.m., when I was on duty (as all the nurses were having their lecture from Dr. Herbert), I noticed the theatre thermometer registered 84° Fahr."

#### IV. THE CONFLICT OF ARAB AND JEW

1920-22

By the Treaty of Versailles, Britain was constituted the Mandatory Power over Palestine west of the Jordan. The military régime gave place to a civil administration in July 1920, and Sir Herbert Samuel, a Jew in whose wisdom, judgment, and impartiality all classes had the utmost confidence, was appointed High Commissioner and Com-

mander-in-Chief, and began a task which was unparalleled in the history of the Empire. The foundations of the new civilization had been laid, but he had to build up a social and economic life out of the most unpromising material ; he had to keep the peace between the fanatical adherents of three great religions ; and he had to conduct the public work of the country in three different languages, for Arabic, Hebrew, and English were now officially recognized. He could not have achieved much without the aid of the Jews who were coming into the country. In six months as many as ten thousand arrived, and the numbers were increasing every week. Palestine was beginning to throb with life and activity in a way it had not known for centuries. The old inhabitants were not a little dazed by what was going on.

A large number of the immigrants were well-to-do mechanics, merchants, and manufacturers who settled in the towns and went to work in the most thorough and scientific manner, erected shops, silicate brick factories, flour mills, cement factories, oil factories, and other businesses, which gave employment to thousands. Others started as watchmakers, carpenters, and weavers. Many found work in the colonies, or settlements, as they were now called. These agricultural centres were increasing in number and were developing mixed farming, market gardening, fruit-growing, and afforestation, and experimenting with breeds of cattle, poultry farming, tobacco planting, and the culture of silkworms. It was calculated that already upwards of four million pounds had been

poured into the country by Jewish public bodies apart from the money spent by private enterprise.

But the majority of the immigrants were a mixed class of young Jews and Jewesses, including University graduates and other well-educated persons, who came mainly from Eastern Europe; they were known as the halutzim, or "pioneers," and their object was to prepare the foundations of the future national home. Although the country was under-populated—the British estimate was 700,000, which was less than the province of Galilee had contained in the time of Christ—it could not, in its existing economic condition, absorb so large a number; and unused as they were to manual labour, they were put into camps and set to work on the construction of roads, buildings, bridges, telephone and telegraph services, and the sites for new towns—for it was found impossible to make anything of the old from a public health point of view, and already the new Jerusalem and the new Tiberias had been planned and begun, the latter being laid out about a mile higher up the slope than the Mission hospital, and overlooking the Lake of Galilee.

Sturdy in physique, self-reliant and buoyant, these pioneers toiled at their tasks without a murmur, and looked, despite their rough and dusty garments, the picture of wholesome and vigorous youth. Critics called them bolshevists, and they were regarded with disfavour by the older Jewish residents. Dr. Torrance laughed at the charge. "What is bolshevism?" he said. "It is the negation of constituted law and order. But these Jews, how-

ever revolutionary their ideas are in regard to orthodox Judaism, are loyal to their race, and their aim is national reconstruction and not the abolition of orderly society. They are going in largely for co-operation in industry, and that is not bolshevism. The Arabs do not, as a rule, combine, and they have not the same constructive sense as the Jews." Revelling in their freedom, full of idealism, enthusiastic in outlook, confident, energetic, and resolute, these young men and women formed an absolutely new class in the history of modern Jewry. The missionaries saw in them the nucleus of the future commonwealth of Jews.

This outburst of foreign activity would probably not have been resented by the native Arab population had it not been accompanied at the first by the declarations of the extreme Zionists, who wished to ride roughshod over the old-established conditions and create a Jewish State at once and by sheer force. The irritation and alarm caused by this attitude produced an agitation that culminated in riot and bloodshed. Sir Herbert Samuel took occasion to point out that the only Zionism which was practicable was that which safeguarded and promoted the well-being of the Arab population. The degree to which Jewish national aspirations could be fulfilled was conditioned by the rights of the existing inhabitants. He did not, however, conceal the determination of the British Government to satisfy the hopes of the Jews for a home which would possess all the national characteristics for which the Zionists longed.

As a first step towards self-government an Advisory Council was constituted of the unofficial members, of which four were Moslems, three Christians, and three Jews. It was a small beginning, but the Administration regarded it, rightly, as the germ of momentous developments. "We have in Palestine," said Sir Wyndham Deedes, C.M.G., D.S.O., the Civil Secretary, "the three great world religions — Christianity, Mohammedanism, and Judaism. If we can manage to get these three religions to live together we shall have taken the biggest step in the world towards a world peace. Our hope is that Palestine may become, in the course of time, a torch to lighten the rest of the world."

The Arab mind was in no wise reassured. Under the Turkish régime there had been no public opinion in Palestine ; few of the people read newspapers, and the pressure of organized thought was an unknown force. But with freedom the community seemed to awaken out of sleep ; every one was reading and expressing his views ; the Arabs, like other races, had become conscious of their national existence and rights. They found that they had a constitutional method of dealing with the situation, and a committee was formed to represent their case. Perhaps it was the voice of a small section of the population, the effendi class, but they had the backing of a considerable proportion of the ordinary inhabitants.

They brought to the notice of the British Government and people their claim that their position and interests had been overlooked. The country,

they maintained, belonged to the indigenous population, four-fifths of whom were Moslems and 77,000 Christians; the Jews had no claim to it save an antiquarian and sentimental one. They had no doubt whatever that the Zionists aimed ultimately at securing political control, and that in spite of all safeguards they would contrive to do so. To the contention that only the Jews, with their idealism, energy, science, and wealth, would be able to rehabilitate the country and make it prosperous, they answered that the Arabs had never had a fair chance, and that under the new conditions they would have the opportunity of successfully developing its economic resources.

A period of sharp controversy followed, during which feeling in Palestine continued to run high. The British Government had again to make the situation clear. It declared that the Jewish people were in Palestine as of right, and not on sufferance, and that they had been given the opportunity of reconstituting their national home there, but that there was no intention to make the country completely Jewish or to eliminate the Arab population and culture. No class of citizens would have an exceptional position, all would enjoy the full status of Palestinians—the generic name now being used to describe Arab and Jew alike. As soon as possible complete self-government would be introduced, and meanwhile a Legislative Council would be created, with a majority of elected members. Immigration would be restricted according to the capacity of the country to absorb the incomers—a provision which naturally affected

Jews only, since the country had no attraction for any other type of capitalist or worker.

The British Government, in short, held that the interests of the Arabs and the Jews were not antagonistic but complementary, and that for both a new era of prosperity and progress was beginning.

This was the position now being held by responsible Jews. The confusion resulting from the different views held by various sections of the race was clearing away. Many felt, with the Christians, that an exclusive Jewish nation based on rabbinical requirements would be an anachronism in these days of enlightenment, and would run counter to the evolutionary movement of humanity. They believed that there was room for both Jews and Gentiles, and that with goodwill and common sense both could live side by side, and by their co-operation contribute to the more rapid advancement of the country. The same attitude was adopted by the Zionist Congress, which pled for the dissipation of misunderstandings between the two Semitic peoples and the development of unity and mutual respect. And, later, in a manifesto to the Arabs the Jewish National Council of Palestine, in moving language, repudiated any intention of encroaching on the sacred rights of a people who were their own kindred, and asked them to regard the Jew as "a brother faithful in thought and deed, a staunch and unswerving ally, and a loyal and willing comrade" in the stupendous task of developing what was to both "the dear and holy motherland of Palestine."

Meanwhile the Administration was accomplish-



ing wonders in the way of reorganizing the civil life of the country. The cost was kept within the amount of the local revenues, yet oppressive taxes were withdrawn, the tobacco monopoly was abolished, a disciplined gendarmerie—largely composed of Jews—was organized—the public offices were overhauled, and bribery and bakhshish gave place to honest and efficient administration; railway, postal, and telephone facilities were developed; Moslem, Jewish, and Christian Courts were established; and public health, agricultural and education departments were all at work creating new conditions. If the process had been instantaneous it would have been called a miracle, but it was not less a miracle because it took years instead of moments. And it took years simply because the British followed their traditional line of policy and had scrupulous regard for local susceptibilities and customs.

After the ratification of the Mandate in 1922 an Order in Council guaranteed complete freedom of conscience and worship and absolute racial equality. The official Census, taken for electoral purposes, showed a population of 755,858 Moslems, 83,794 Jews, and 73,026 Christians.

## V. A NARROW ESCAPE

1920-22

ONE of the results of the new régime was to make Palestine apparently shrink in size. The old slow

method of travel always seemed to exaggerate its length and breadth, but with the construction of good roads and the introduction of motor-cars, and the linking up of the country by railway with Egypt, journeys that formerly took two or three days were now accomplished in a few hours.

The Doctor was one of those who, when the army of occupation was reduced, was able to buy a small car which, for the short time he had it, he found useful for his work. Its career ended in disaster. He was driving near Haifa with his wife, and came to a level crossing on the railway line. The car passed over the first rail, but stalled on the second. At the same moment, round a curve two hundred yards away, appeared what seemed, to their eyes, an enormous engine, with the driver on the outside attending to some of its parts. Quick as thought both the Doctor and Mrs. Torrance jumped out, and the Doctor began desperately to drag the car off the rails. His impression was that the train was a passenger one, and that if he did not clear the line many lives would be lost, and just as he threw himself at the task of saving life in the hospital, so he threw himself at this critical situation, regardless of self. The train was in reality a heavy ballast one, and as it was running on the down-grade, a collision was inevitable unless he succeeded in his frantic efforts. As the engine bore down upon him, Mrs. Torrance screamed to him to desist, but he held grimly on, and was caught in the impact, lifted into the air, and pitched many yards away into the sand. The car was carried two hundred yards down the line.

When Mrs. Torrance reached the Doctor he was bleeding and unconscious, and his clothes were torn and covered with dust. A Jew, who was driving along in a carriage and knew them, came to their assistance. When the Doctor recovered consciousness, a car was procured from Haifa, and he was conveyed to the town, where it was found that he had sustained no serious injury.

He returned to Tiberias in the course of a few days, but there was no doubt that the shock affected his constitution. Some months afterwards, in 1921, he rode up to Safed, taking seven and a half hours to the journey, and, on arriving, collapsed as he got off his horse. It was heart weakness, and for two months he was unable to leave the house. Afterwards he was obliged to take his work more easily, and to rely to a greater extent on his son, though his spirit and resolution remained unbroken. It was a great joy to him to receive news of his daughter Marjory's graduation in medicine. Lydia was already a graduate, so that with four doctors in the family it was sometimes uncertain which was being referred to.

It was obvious that the public developments would react on mission work in the country and that the various agencies would have to revise their policies and adapt them to the changing conditions. Medical service had been essential at the beginning ; no other type of work could have blazed a path in so ignorant and fanatical a field ; but with a modern Government taking charge of the country, and the ample provision of medical facilities by the Jewish associations, the Mission hospital and dispensary

were no longer so needful, though in Dr. Torrance's opinion they would still for long serve a useful function not only by assisting the conservation of public health, but in setting forth the practical side of Christian love and truth. "Mission hospitals will always be popular," he says, "because of the Christian nursing the patients receive. Somehow other institutions fail in this respect. There is something in the kindly Christian touch, the gracious Christian treatment of those who are suffering that is not got elsewhere." So he went on with the plans of the Committee. He was now living in the clerical house, and his old home being vacant, it was converted into a Women's and Children's Hospital, which was the realization of his old desire. So confident had he been that the scheme would materialize, that during his furloughs he had followed up special studies on the eye and other subjects by attending courses on women's diseases and maternity work. The hospital, which was the first of its kind in Palestine, was quickly occupied with patients, and although the labour entailed by day and night was very great, the staff had the satisfaction of saving many a life. A motor ambulance, which the Doctor asked for, was gifted by a lady in Scotland, and was the means of easing the suffering of patients conveyed from a distance. The fees received in 1922 amounted to the remarkable sum of £1700.

Nevertheless, he was conscious that more emphasis had now to be laid on education. Knowledge, the trained mind, the broader outlook, would do much to emancipate the Jews from their thralldom

to legal formalism, and the Moslems from their ignorant and fanatical self-sufficiency, and give Christianity its opportunity.

An incident which occurred at this time illustrated the need for enlightenment. The Doctor was aroused one night to go over and attend one of the little daughters of Mohammad who had been bitten by a snake while sleeping out of doors—there had been four deaths from snake-bites during the previous few months. She was treated successfully, but next day when Sister Frieda went down to Mohammad's house in the lower garden to see her, she found the place crowded with Moslem sheikhs who were giving the patient their sputum and other decoctions to swallow. The Doctor smiled grimly when he heard of it. Here was a servant of the hospital for over twenty-five years throwing overboard, without a moment's hesitation, all the medical and Christian training he had received in the Mission and becoming as barbarous as any of his Moslem friends.

Elementary education was now passing into the hands of the Government, who were establishing primary schools in every village; but as it had no funds for secondary institutions, it asked the continued assistance of the voluntary agencies in supplying the higher training, and the missions realized that they would have to adjust themselves to the situation.

And, finally, the Doctor felt more than ever the need for ordinary evangelism which, on account of the incessant demands for medical aid, he had never been able to develop. "It is not only institutions we need," he said, "but men at leisure

and able to be fishers of men." He believed that Hebrew and Arab Christians were the best suited for this work, Scottish missionaries requiring so much preliminary training in languages and in the complex questions affecting Jews and Moslems. Moreover, he maintained that the day for attacking in mass had not yet come ; it was the individual touch that was needed ; and to make that effectual, there would have to be provided an opportunity for inquirers to become independent of their religious and social environment.

The Jewish Mission Committee of the Church faced the new situation with high courage. Its Convener at this period fortunately was the Rev. John Hall, one of the most experienced leaders in the Church, a man of insight, patience, resolution, and judgment, who had made a special study of the Jewish question and was, besides, personally acquainted with the conditions in the various fields. He proceeded again to Palestine, with Mr. Macdonald Webster, the Secretary, Professor W. M. Macgregor, D.D., Sir John Cowan, and Miss Brown Douglas, members of the Committee. It was a new Commission of Inquiry, which reminded the Church of the original in 1839. They came to the conclusion that the isolated station of Hebron, which absorbed a large share of the funds and was practically a mission to the Moslems, should be given up and the work in Palestine concentrated in Galilee, that the educational side of the Mission should be developed under Mr. Semple's charge by the establishment of first-class schools or colleges for boys and girls at Safed, and that in addition to

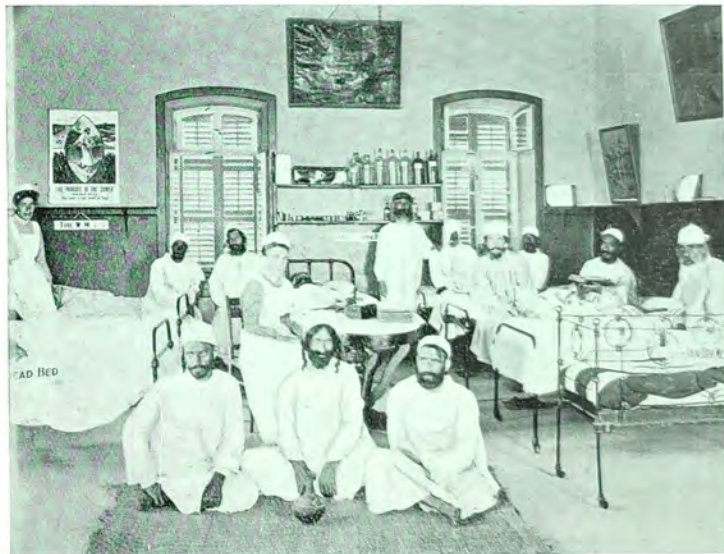
this institutional work, more attention should be given to widespread town and village evangelism. These recommendations were approved and given effect to. For the task of co-ordinating and developing the evangelistic side of the work, the choice fell on Mr. (now Doctor) Christie, who, since his return from Palestine, had been working as the Committee's agent amongst the Jewish population of Glasgow, and he returned rejoicing to the scene of his earlier service.

Simultaneously, in the mysterious development of events, the Church Missions to Jews, which had done so fine a work in Safed, resolved to evacuate the town in order to strengthen their stations in other fields. The series of buildings which they had erected—hospital, dispensary, dwelling-houses, and church—were among the finest in Palestine. They were built of white limestone on the hillside overlooking a wide valley to the north, and could easily be adapted to the various purposes of a large collegiate institution. They were offered to the Jewish Mission Committee for £20,000. It seemed a big venture, but the Committee had courage and faith, and after an independent valuation of the property had been made, they took the property over for £15,000.

At last, therefore, the dream of Bonar and M'Cheyne to make Safed a centre of Christian enlightenment for Northern Palestine was beginning to be realized.



THE STAFF OF THE HOSPITAL, 1923  
Dr. D. W. Torrance                      Dr. H. Torrance



SUNDAY SERVICE IN ONE OF THE WARDS





ON THE HILLS OF GALILEE  
A snapshot by the Author

## VI. A SUNDAY VIGNETTE

1922

ONE final picture. It is of a Sunday in 1922. In the cool of the early morning Dr. Herbert has taken horse for Safed, where he has a patient, and ere the family has gathered for prayers is already crossing the plain of Gennesaret.

The children seek their places, the youngest, a boy, curling himself up against his father on the couch, the girls clustering round the gentle mother. A hymn, "Jesus, holy, undefiled," is sung, and the Doctor reads a Galilee incident, retelling the story simply and asking questions. "Where did this happen?" "Right here," promptly responds the little one at his side. Happy children growing up in the scenes hallowed by their Saviour! A prayer—is it a prayer or just a slow, intimate talk with God?—and afterwards all join in the Lord's Prayer.

Then the family troop into the little breakfast-room, where the windows are closely wired to bar out the flies. Grace is chanted by all, some curious native foods are partaken, and the children scramble out into the compound to attend to their pets. . . .

The Arabic service is held in the waiting-hall of the hospital with its blue roof, grey walls, and red-tiled floor, and its deep windows which frame a charming vignette—a palm tree silhouetted against the shining water of the Lake and the green hills

on the opposite shore. A corner is screened off by canvas as a "dressings" room, and in front of this is a small table on which stand vases of blue daisies, white marguerites, and violets. Beside it is a harmonium, at which Miss Vartan sits. Forms ranged across the hall are occupied by patients in blue dressing-gowns; the nurses, refined and attractive, in grey-blue dress and white aprons and caps; and a few visitors, including a Jewish inquirer.

Presently the evangelist, a patient himself, enters and takes his place at the table—an elderly man, gentle and reverent, like some Scottish country minister, and with the sweetness on his face that comes from patient suffering. The 23rd Psalm is sung; it is the keynote also of the address, which is on the Good Shepherd. Sister Frieda sitting at the door, hearing a stir outside, goes out; it is the arrival of a "case," and a nurse is summoned and leaves. The service goes on. One of the audience in peasant head-dress prays, and the Doctor pronounces the benediction. The feeling imparted by the scene is one of sadness; the hymns are sung sadly, the expressions on the dark faces are sad; it all seems in harmony with the sadness of the country. . . .

The English service is held immediately afterwards in the little dining-hall in the Matron's quarters, an arched room looking out on the Lake. The sides and corners are filled in with broken columns, capitals, and carvings of old Galilee, half-hidden by maidenhair ferns, poppies, daisies, begonias, nasturtiums, and mimosa, and in the

mass of greenery stands a globe filled with goldfish. The audience on this occasion comprises the nurses, servants, and children, and two or three residents of the town—about twenty in all. The Doctor sits at the table throughout, and in a short address speaks on the foolish virgins whose lights went out, not through any deliberation but as the result of careless negligence passing into drowsiness, torpor, sleep. He shows his usual skill in selecting common illustrations: "If the water in your yard is never stirred, the green scum gathers on the top and it smells—so it is with the Christian life."

No touch of wind comes through the open doors and windows to cool the room; outside the sunshine blazes on land and water; through the hot stillness comes the soft wash of the waves on the beach, the distant hammering of a tinsmith in the town, the chirping of the sparrows on the house-top. The conditions breed languor, drowsiness, slumber; one realizes how in such a country Christians must make special efforts to keep their lights burning. . . .

In the afternoon comes the ward service in Arabic, conducted by the Doctor, the patients around him, some squatting on the spotless marble floor, others on forms and chairs or sitting up in their cots, men and women and children of many types—bedouin, fellahin, Jews and Jewesses—all quiet and patient, with eyes that never leave the Doctor's face. Now and again, in answer to a question, comes a general sigh or sign of acquiescence or a more emphatic response from some strong-minded individual. But what they are

thinking how they are being influenced—who can tell? . . .

In the deeper hush of the night, when the moonlight lies upon the Lake, a nurse bends over an old Jew whose hours are run. The lights are low in the ward and all the patients are asleep, but with an effort he turns and glances furtively towards the other beds, and then looks up with a smile into the compassionate face of the girl. She knows and whispers the one word "Jesus." He nods, his lips move. "Yes, I am a Christian at heart, and I am trusting in Jesus." Even as he speaks his breath fails and his spirit passes. . . .

Now as of old Jesus walks in Galilee, moving the hearts of the people and drawing them to Him and to peace of mind and body and to eternal rest.

## VII. "GOD'S RESERVES" <sup>1</sup>

1922

So the Galilee Doctor is left, after his thirty-nine years of toil, in happier times, amidst better conditions, and with most of his dreams for the work come true; respected by every class and creed, the value of his work officially recognized, and the honour of O.B.E. conferred upon him by His Majesty's Government in recognition of his great public services to the people of Palestine.

<sup>1</sup> An expression used by Mr. Edward, Scotland's first ordained Jewish missionary, to signify that Christian Jews are to be the evangelizers of the nations.

While he looked forward hopefully to the future, he did not lose sight of the fact that there were still uncertain elements in the situation. There was the possibility of political disturbance, since in the event of the Jewish power developing it was not likely that the Arabs would allow themselves to fall into a state of dependence ; there was the greater danger of a Pan-Islamic revival which would involve Palestine ; official Judaism might also begin the intensive cultivation of its faith, which would harden many against Christianity. But, on the whole, he believed that things generally would be more favourable for mission service and propaganda.

It was naturally the position and aims of the Jews which concerned him most. Those of the new type were placing nationalism before religion, and were more concerned with the present and the future than with the past ; but the mass still clung to their old ideals and customs and to the khalukah. The Doctor’s view, however, was that with the spread of education legal religion would cease to satisfy them, and become, as it was to others, a subject merely of archæological interest. Already they were beginning to be conscious of the unreality of it, and were groping after a truer and more liberal interpretation of spiritual verities. They seemed more disposed to study the New Testament, and he believed that with honest study of the claims of Christ, they would find in Him not, indeed, the political Messiah that had proved so hopeless an expectation throughout their history, but a spiritual Saviour who would satisfy their deepest needs.

Several factors, moreover, continued to sustain

their hereditary hostility to Christianity. The religion of the Christians as they had seen it and experienced it throughout the centuries was not a lovely or lovable thing ; to them it was the embodiment of passion, force, and oppression ; all the bitter suffering which they had endured as a race they attributed to its followers. And they still knew only of its low ideals and superstitious practices as exhibited in the communities of Palestine. These they regarded with a shudder, for although themselves ignorant and bigoted, they yet strove, according to their lights, for righteousness. On this point the Doctor could give his testimony. " I speak for Tiberias," he says, " and up to the outbreak of war. You could not find purer homes than those of the Jews. I know of no rivals to them except Christian homes—really Christian homes."

Again, the Jews, like the Moslems, could not understand the superiority of Christianity. In the matter of unity it seemed no better than their own or Islam, for it was also torn into opposing sects ; and if, in their heart-hunger for a living person and a personal deliverer, they turned to it, they were presented with a metaphysical plan of salvation and theological theories which were as forbidding as the Talmudic law. Why should they relinquish their own faith, which for three thousand years had been the guiding light of their race, for one that could not control the lives and actions of its disciples ?

There was, further, the undeniable fact that the Jew was still, in the eyes of Christians, an unpopular

figure, disliked for his national and personal characteristics, shunned in social life, and the subject of sneer and contemptuous reference in speech and books. “ Strange,” says Dr. Torrance. “ We take our sacred books from the Jews, we worship according to their system, we get our Saviour from them, our theology is largely based on the works of a Jew, yet Christendom turns on them, imprisons them in ghettos, and then condemns them for being what they are ! ” “ But the Jews killed Christ,” is the thought of many. It was official Judaism that sent Him to His death, and even so, He forgave all who were implicated ; but His followers, trampling on His spirit, have never forgiven the race, and in despising and rejecting it are, in folly and sin, on a level with the ecclesiastical leaders of old. Is it any wonder that the task of bringing the Jews to Christ in such a country as Palestine is a difficult one ? So long as this prejudice continues, how can they be expected to love and reverence Jesus of Nazareth ? Do Christians as a rule fall on the necks of those whom they regard as their enemies ?

It was a source of the greatest gratification to Dr. Torrance that he was the agent of a Church which, despite the lukewarmness of many of its members, neither ignored the Jew in its vision of Christ’s work nor neglected him in its range of practical service. Like other Christian bodies it was often blamed for worldly self-interest ; here, at least, was a fact which proved that it was governed by something higher than a feeling for popularity.

But the prejudice is passing. A nobler ethical spirit is beginning to rule the thoughts of men,



there is a wider recognition of the Divine significance and value of every human soul, and a growing sense of world brotherhood. This larger and finer view is embracing the Jews in its range ; after all, they are not animists or idolaters or atheists, but one of the most advanced and competent of peoples, with a genius for religion. The process, no doubt, will be hastened by the establishment of a national centre in Palestine. Scattered throughout the world and lost in every variety of community, with no land, as Byron put it, but the grave, they have had no united voice in the world's councils ; but once concentrated as a compact racial body, a central power in the world's great highway, they may become, as the Greeks were of old, a national and intellectual force to be taken into account, and will exact and receive the consideration and respect to which their position will entitle them.

But the supreme lesson of Dr. Torrance's long experience is that love alone will bring them to Christ. He began with that conviction and he is ending with it. The Jew is intensely human ; he is affectionate, with the home sense strongly developed, a man of concord and peace, and he responds readily to sympathy and kindness. Through love he can best be drawn to respond to the appeal of Christ. The work amongst Jews calls, of course, for the highest mental gifts. Their type of mind must be appreciated, and their language must be mastered. No one also can understand Judaism as it has been historically developed without a thorough knowledge of that vast religious literature which is its most precious

possession. To know the Jew one must know the Talmud as well as he knows the New Testament. But without love all one’s learning and service will profit nothing. Christians must present Christianity as Christ would present it. Then :

“ The fullness of the Gentiles come to light,  
The elder brother Jew will straight come in  
And mourn for that he had no sooner sight.”

Some of the opposition to Christian missions is probably due to the fear that the race will lose its identity if it relinquishes the characteristics of its faith ; and this may be one of the reasons why a national home is welcomed ; it is to be built to block out the vision of the Cross. Hence the need for a clear declaration of policy as to the aim of Christian effort. Christianity does not wish to take anything essential from the character of the Jewish faith, but to add to it, to complete it, to supply the keystone to what is unfinished. True Judaism and true Christianity are in reality not two faiths but one. A Jew who becomes a convert to Christianity does not cease to be a Jew, but glories in being a Christian Jew, loyal to all that is best in his race. Although many Christians do not like the idea of a Hebrew-Christian Church in Christian countries, such an institution would seem to be necessary in the special circumstances of Palestine, not only on account of the language but in order that the nationality of the members may be retained.

There is a danger that official Judaism may seek to draw some distinction between nation-

ality and religion, but if any new State that may be established is to be religiously isolated and self-contained, and the Christian Jew is to be excluded from its privileges, it will doom itself to decay and extinction. History shows that no nation can keep abreast of the world and the development of science and art by shutting itself up into a self-righteous and intolerant one-roomed state of mind. There is no reason why a Jewish Christian should not be a member of a Jewish State; he need be no more of a political danger than an orthodox Jew is in England or America. What other countries offer, the Jews cannot refuse. But all will be well if the modern spirit, which is making for tolerance and enlightenment, continues to prevail.

If, in the end, the Jews should become a Christian nation, a grander prospect would be opened up for them than if they were to circumscribe their influence by continuing a purely Judaic community. Such a consummation might be the beginning of a new era for humanity. Jews can best win Jews, and Jewry is so closely linked up, the strands of interest and loyalty are so interwoven, that a Christian Palestine—a Palestine with a soul—would ultimately affect every other country. They are also an Eastern race with a psychology fitting them to appeal to Eastern peoples; they are, therefore, the most suitable instrument to carry the Gospel to Moslems. Individuals have frequently shown what they can accomplish as Christian missionaries, and if they should become converted in the mass, Christendom may see a fresh and powerful influence

coming into operation in the interests of Christ and His Kingdom. Out of the Holy Land may issue again the idealism, enthusiasm, and strength which will revive and renew a world that has grown somewhat weary with its problems, with strivings that have proved futile, and with progress that has been unaccompanied by peace.

THE END