

VACATION DAYS IN PALESTINE

PICTURESQUE PEASANTS BID THE ALIEN WANDERER WELCOME IN THE FAMOUS VINEYARDS OF ANCIENT HEBRON.



PATRIARCHAL
MEN OF
HEBRON



A PEASANT FAMILY.



MEN OF HEBRON AT COFFEE
AND SMOKING



HEBRON.
THE ANCIENT OAK UNDER
WHICH ABRAHAM SAT IN
THE COOL OF THE DAY.

BY EVANGELINE BEN-OLIEL.
HEBRON, the home of the Patriarch Abraham, is a town of peculiar interest, both Biblical and archaeological, and because it was renowned for the historical vines of Kechoh. These still bear fruit larger than the ordinary grape found in any other part of the world.

The Moslem law commanded the peasant to bid the wanderer welcome into his vineyard to partake of his luscious fruit, and this law of hospitality is still practiced by the Arab fellahs of today, with the difference that today the expectation of "backsheesh" always accompanies the welcome.

Because of the fame of these grapes we were especially glad of the opportunity to visit the interesting city of Hebron, and with this intention we left Jerusalem early one morning for a short vacation. Riding past the cattle market on the steep road from the Jaffa gate, we passed by the little modern railway station and saw the American train whiz past the plodding camel ahead of us—the hitherto slow but sure burden-bearer of the Orient.

Half-way between Jerusalem and Bethlehem our attention was attracted by a white building, covered by a dome and surrounded by Mohammedan graves. This was the tomb of Rachel whom Jacob buried on his way to Bethlehem. The Mohammedans and Jews both consider this a sacred spot and visit the grave to mourn there and to lay treasures upon the tomb.

City Upon a Hill.

As we ascended the hills leading to Bethlehem the city looked very attractive and picturesque, built on a hill and surrounded by olive groves and vineyards beautifying its slopes, a typical "city set upon a hill."

Having left Bethlehem far behind us we were struck by one remarkable fact. This was the solitude of the barren hills and vales extending for miles between Jerusalem and Hebron. Absolute barrenness and desolation, with no sign of life, either animal or vegetable. No cry of beast broke the stillness of the deep valleys, and no human voice reached over the hills. At one point in the road we could gaze between the hills and over the stony valleys to the Dead Sea, and there at the boundary line of the Holy Land and Moab we saw the still waters sparkling in the sunlight. It was a magnificent view.

The greater part of the way we were surrounded by hills, one of which was especially interesting, for we discovered it to be honeycombed with ancient niches for cremation, a custom now abandoned. The natural beauty and fertility of the country is much greater near Hebron than around Jerusalem. But though the country here is attractive, its inhabitants are less so. Being farther removed from the great center of Palestine, the city of Jerusalem, into which flows all the civilization and the culture which pass through the Holy Land, the people in the south live a semi-barbarous and more dangerous life.

Dangerous Fanatics.

It seems strange that though Hebron was the seat of the earliest civilization in Palestine, today the inhabitants of the surrounding country are wild and fierce, and spend their days roaming about with their flocks, camels and asses, traveling from valley to valley in search of food, pitching their tents, just as their ancestors did 1900 years ago.

The large town of Hebron is very picturesque, situated at the foot of the hill in the fertile valley of Kechoh, the vineyards of which are renowned, and surrounded by fruit orchards and olive groves. Lying 2025 feet above the sea on this elevated hill, above the dry wilderness of Judea, and abundantly watered by numerous wells around the town, its cool breezes offer great attractions for summer and autumn visitors, who are weary of the heat and dry barrenness of the country round about Jerusalem. The distance is only 20 miles from the Holy City, or, according to Oriental reckoning, a five-hour ride.

The present Arabic name is Khalil, or "The Friend," because Abraham was named "the friend of God." It is a large, well-built town, of commanding appearance, and is mentioned in the scriptures four times.

Hebron is one of the four holy cities



A MOHAMMEDAN FEAST DAY.

of Islam, equal with Mecca, Medina and Jerusalem, and to the Jews it is also one of the quartet of sacred towns with Jerusalem, Safed and Tiberias.

The rocky hills encircling the town are covered with olive trees, and their slopes are beautifully terraced. One can see from what little remains how well cultivated and utilized the land was in ancient days for the terraces run almost to the top, and fruits and vegetables of all kinds are growing in every available niche.

Picturesque Scenes.

The streets of Hebron are filled with interesting and peculiar sights to Western eyes. The principal shopping street is a narrow tunnel covered by a long canopy of canvas, rendering it dark, with only occasional glimmers of light from the openings in the archways. These stores are only closets raised above the level of the street. The owner sits crosslegged in the center of the store, smoking a narghile. On the shelves around him lie the goods close to his hand in order that he can display them to the buyer without rising. The purchaser stands in the narrow street, which has no sidewalks, and runs the risk of getting jolted by the boxes on the backs of the donkeys rushing past while he bargains at great length with the merchant. The wares of silk and embroidery are exquisitely beautiful.

The Mohammedans made many rude niches about the hills in our company being so bold as to leave their faces uncovered in a public street and laughed merrily at the sight of gloves covering our hands when our faces were bare. Their own women passed through heavily veiled and entirely covered from head to foot, considering it a shame to let any man see their features.

On the site of David's royal palace a tannery now stands, and this is one of the great industries of Hebron. In this tannery goat skins are prepared for use as water bottles. It is interesting to watch this Arab industry. The skins, still covered with hair, are half tanned, then sewn up and filled with water and the apertures carefully pitched. They are left in the open air for several days and covered with a strong decoction of tannin. Water is pumped into them to keep them from shrinking.

The other industry is pottery, and glass work for lamps and ornaments, chiefly bracelets, which are sent to Jerusalem for sale.

The natives of Hebron also prepare raisins for the Jerusalem market from the large quantities of grapes which grow in their vineyards, or they make a kind of syrup for the drinking of wine is against the Mohammedan religion.

In the center of the town is a pool

of water 133 feet square, which furnishes Hebron with its water supply. This is the pool over which David hanged the murderers of Ishbosheth.

Abraham's Oak.

The site of Abraham's oak is a subject of interest and dispute. Some distance outside the city is a place called Ramleh, which is held by some to be the true site of ancient Mamre, where Abraham sat at the door of his tent and was visited by angels. But the oak has long since vanished. Here are interesting remains of a basilica of Constantine's day. Some of the stones lying here are 150 feet long. The large and well-built well seems to be of very ancient date and is believed by many to have been built by Abraham. The stones are of immense proportions and highly polished. Remains of stone pillars suggest that there must have been at some time a stone canopy over this well to offer a shade and rest to the weary traveler in a dry land. As for 4000 years water has been drawn from this well the ropes to which the buckets were fastened have worn deep ridges into the hard limestone.

The other site, more generally accepted because of the existence of a very ancient oak tree, is that belonging to the Russian pilgrims, and a high watch tower. This oak is the most venerable tree in Palestine, excepting an olive tree in Gethsemane. Its trunk measures 30 feet in circumference and its crown divides itself

into four colossal branches, which, extending out, offer a broad shade. The Russians have inclosed the tree by a stone wall. The hill on which the oak and herpice stand is a mile and a half from Hebron and is one of the sacred sites in Palestine to the Russians.

Spending the night at the Russian Hospice one ascends to the flat roof at sunset and gazes on a lovely view of the town and the hills surrounding it. A patriarchal scene repeats itself, evening after evening at the foot of this hill, when a shepherd, seated on a camel, leads his flock home driving the donkeys before him. Some pretty maidens pass through the lanes barefoot, bearing on their heads piles of brush wood for kindling, or water pots filled at the nearest spring.

All down the slopes of the hill we see large vines, which recall to our minds the fact that the grapes of this locality are mentioned as far back as Biblical times.

"The Vile Cigarette Habit." Opinion by Judge B. E. Lindsey of Colorado Juvenile Court.

I have been in the Juvenile Court nearly ten years, and in that time I have had to deal with thousands and thousands of boys who have disgraced themselves and their parents, and who have brought sorrow and misery into their lives; and I do not know of any one habit that is more responsible for the troubles of these boys than the vile cigarette habit.

Advertised for a Wife

Actual Results From 48 Cents Paid The Sunday Oregonian.

THERE may be many readers of The Oregonian who have used its advertising columns and who would profit by doing so. This sketch gives the results of spending 48 cents, to which was added 22 cents for the postage on replies which were forwarded to the advertiser under Oregonian envelopes. The following appeared in the Weekly Oregonian of April 8 and the Sunday edition of the 11th:

WIDOWER—Backwoods farmer, would correspond with widow, about 50. F 190, Oregonian.

I received six answers, all apparently evoked by the advertisement in the Sunday Oregonian. One appeared to have been by a business man, apparently not for sport, but in the effort to do the lady it named a good turn. She proved to be a sensible, well-to-do widow, with her own farm and sons old enough to work it, a fairly good scholar and with no inclination to correspond with a widower. Another wrote from Portland: "I am kinda good cook and also a good house-

keeper. I own my own furniture, but no real estate. Hers was the only letter of the six first replies making reference to property. She made no reply to the answer sent her. A third wrote:

F 194, Oregonian—Dear Sir: Seeing your ad in the Sunday Paper I would like to correspond with a nice Farmer of Good Habits and a Man who would care to have a Nice Clean home and a Protestant as I am none myself you want a woman about 50 I am 50 so if you wish any thing further a Dress.

Number 4 wrote: F 198, Oregonian. I noticed your ad in Sunday Paper and will say in regards to same would be pleased to meet you if you will let me know when and where I can see you. I am a lonely widow and some what of a farmer my self if you would care to hear from me or see me please address.

This came from Number 5: Dear Sir, seeing your Ad in the paper thought I would answer it and if every thing is agreeable would like to correspond Am 55 last August have been a widow two years last August. Now will close hoping you will answer.

This came from the last of the six: Dear Sir: The words "Backwoods" in your advertisement caught my eye—and I thought for a novelty I would write you. Am a widow of 40 years—bright and intelligent—work for my living—and get along fine—I enjoy a hand of cards—play little on the piano—dance a little (when I get a chance) and enjoy a good book—I am as fine a housekeeper as you will find—holding one situation for over seven years. Now sir let me hear from you and should our correspondence prove of interest to both we may meet some day.

When replied to, all answered except the "kind good cook." The one referred to above as the fourth said she had been deserted by her husband three years before, he taking all their bank funds and disappearing. She made no mention of having secured a divorce. Correspondence was extended with the fifth and sixth above, and after personal interviews it appeared that both were good women, with excellent reputations, and likely, if they married, to make good homes. An engagement of marriage between No. 4 and the advertiser resulted. NAMEN.NON.

Cologne Cathedral Crumbling. Boston Herald.

People desirous of seeing Cologne's cathedral before it crumbles away should buy a round-trip ticket to Europe at once. This is the transition period. Every blessed thing is on the move or changing for the worse; therefore, why be surprised to hear of that precious cathedral's imminent end? From what is said, the great cathedral seems to have suffered from Cologne's growth as a metropolis. Traffic and bustle are mainly responsible for unsettling its foundations and causing the stones to disintegrate. Not age, but modernity is the structure's chief enemy. But new Germany cannot afford to neglect one of its greatest monuments; hence the Cathedral Renovation Society is now flying around to collect funds for a thorough repair of the building though it will take years and millions of dollars to put it in perfect condition. Meanwhile, let Americans make the most of it.