

of sand between the waters is so narrow and of such an easily permeated material—loose sand with here and there detached slabs of conglomerate formed of shells and sand, bound together by the decomposition of the lime in the shells by moisture—that one cannot doubt that water is supplied to the Lake by infiltration from the Mediterranean, as well as by natural inlets. Now if this be the case, the lake would never be dry, never merit the term *desséché*; although it might at times be rather a bog than a lake.

Investigators of the route taken by the Israelites after the catastrophe which overtook their pursuers, will henceforth have to take into account the arguments of the anonymous author of "The Hebrew Migration from Egypt," who endeavours, and that with considerable force, to prove that Mount Sinai is not in the "Siniatic" Peninsula at all, but in the neighbourhood of Mount Hor. In this connection I may state that the range of mountains to the South of Serbonis called by the Bedaween Hâleh (?Halal) were described to me by the Suarka Sheik Arâdeh as possessing springs and abounding in fine pasturage. If then the Israelites were on the way from Pi-hariroth to Mount Hor, they might have passed through Jebel Hâleh, and would there have found sufficient pasturage for their flocks and herds, which they could scarcely have done amidst the arid and burning defiles of the tract generally received as Sinai. This point, and the exact meaning of the expression Yam Sûph in connection with the Wilderness in the later Sacred Books, deserve careful investigation.

NOTE.—The sketch map which accompanied my previous paper on my journey from Sâh to El Arîsh makes no pretensions to minute accuracy, and is intended only as a rough approximation to the places indicated.

LIFE, HABITS, AND CUSTOMS OF THE FELLAHIN OF PALESTINE.* By Rev. F. A. KLEIN.

(From the *Zeitschrift of the German Palestine Exploration Society*.)

THE present inhabitants of Palestine (that is to say the sons of the soil, may be divided into three tolerably distinct classes:

- I. The inhabitants of the large towns (*madanî*, pl. *madanije*.)
- II. The villagers (*fellâh*, pl. *fellahin*, peasants, agriculturists, from *falah*, he cultivates, tills the land).
- III. The Bedawin (*bedawi*, dwellers in the desert), who consider them-

* Herr F. A. Klein (the discoverer of the Moabite stone) no longer lives in Palestine, but he had 26 years' experience of life in the Holy Land, and in his position of pastor of the Protestant Arab community—which he held for five years in Nazareth and the rest of the time at Jerusalem—he found many opportunities of holding familiar intercourse with the Fellahin.

selves the veritable Arabs, and proudly call themselves (and are sometimes called) *el 'arab*.

In their language, dress and the style of their dwellings, as well as in their customs and general mode of life, these three classes are sufficiently distinct, one from another, to enable those who have any knowledge of them to distinguish almost at the first glance or after hearing them speak a few words, the *Fellahin* from the *Madanije*, and both from the *Bedawin*.

Of course there are individuals of each class, in whom one finds modifications with regard to intelligence, civilization and mode of life. And between particular towns, villages or Bedawin tribes, we find more or less difference of character, language and dress. The *Näbuluser*, for instance, is the representative of a somewhat silly and ignorant type, and his way of making the sch into s (saying *sems* for *schems-sun*) and his drawing pronunciation of the final syllables (*ane mä suftööös* instead of *ana mä schuftösch*) gives rise to many jokes at his expense. Again the characteristic of the people of Jaffa is, that they throw themselves heart and soul into trade; money-making is their religion. The poor of Jerusalem are *da'watschije*, the technical term for those who pray for the preservation of the Sultan and his Kingdom. In the holy places many high masses are celebrated both by Mahometans and Christians. Most of the Christians who are not attached to religious communities have become poor, and with a few notable exceptions, have lost all feelings of honour or independence of spirit, and seem to have no energy for earnest work. With regard to the villagers many are proverbial thieves and impostors as, for instance, the inhabitants of Bethany and Lifta, near Jerusalem; others are restless and quarrelsome like the people of Râm Allah; others again are complete blockheads like those of Beit Jala, both of which places are near Jerusalem. At Jifneh we find a village with quiet, honest, industrious people, and quite near at Râm Allah are a set of cheats, thieves, and robbers—who give the police and magistrates no end of trouble. Again at Bethlehem we find a particularly industrious, intelligent class of people who are both ingenious and enterprising, whilst scarcely half an hour's journey carries us to Beit Jala, where they are dull and boorish, and show plainly by their mode of speaking that they are of a rougher stock than the more polished Bethlehemites. The Nazarenes are fine, high-spirited people, with very independent natures; there you hear more vigorous language, with the gutturals more clearly sounded, than anywhere else in Palestine.

With respect to the Bedawin, the tribe of Bene Sakr look with sovereign contempt on the tribe of Taamireh and also on the Ghawarineh of the Jordan Valley, partly because they are somewhat deficient in the manly feeling and courage which they themselves possess, but more especially because they do a certain amount of agricultural work, and this the true Bedawin consider a real degradation.

Although, as we have already said, the three classes may be pretty

distinctly divided from one another, there are many places which combine more than one element. Thus there are some towns in which, although a civilized mode of life prevails, you will find so large an admixture of the Fellahin element that you can only describe it as half a town, half a Fellahin domain. Gaza belongs to this category. On the other hand, in many of the large and prosperous villages like Bethlehem or Nazareth—(which in spite of its 5,000 inhabitants is only a large village of the Fellahin class) we find a good many of the higher elements of metropolitan civilization, and in such places the mode of life is very different to that of the Mahometan or poorer villages.

As a mixture of Fellahin and Bedawin, we may mention the people beyond Jordan in Jebel Ajlûn and in the Belka, amongst whom with a little of the town and Fellahin element one finds, both in language and customs, a great deal that is of Bedawin origin. Especially in Kerak, for there nearly all the Christian families live in tents all through the summer. It is only during the winter that they return to their dwellings and live like Fellahin. The women of this part of the country, whether Christian or Mahometan, are scarcely distinguishable from those of the Bedawin.

The town people naturally consider that they have reached the *ne plus ultra* of civilization, and pity the stupid, boorish Fellah. The very name has become a term of reproach, and is used to describe a stupid, uneducated man. The Fellah accepts his position quite good humouredly and acknowledges his want of polish; his naive excuse for any mistakes or stupid tricks is simply: *Mâni fellâh?* Am I not a Fellâh? But the true Bedawi looks down upon both Townsfolk and Fellahin; springing on his noble steed he feels himself one of the lords of creation, and gazing from his tent over the wide-spreading plain, he asserts his superiority over these miserable dwellers in houses.

The Fellahin villages vary according to the wealth of their inhabitants and the building materials which the neighbourhood can produce. In the mountain districts most of the houses are of stone, which is easily obtainable. In well-to-do villages you often see a number of fine buildings, with large yards for the cattle, which are enclosed by strong, high walls: The dwellings are large and lofty with thick walls, and the vaulted rooms rest on very massive pillars; the builder cares little for beauty of style or even symmetry, his one idea is strength and durability; one seldom finds neat edges, good arches or correct angles; it seems that the love of the beautiful is no more developed in the present inhabitants of Palestine than it was amongst the ancient Hebrews. Nevertheless, in the richer villages, especially in the Nâbulus mountains, one often comes across houses, belonging to Sheikhs or other persons of importance, which are built with a certain amount of taste, and have balconies, galleries and flat roofs, and well decorated doors and windows. Proverbs and the date of building (*tarîkh*) are placed over the door, or somewhere on the walls; great sums are often spent on their erection, and a Sheikh's house has more the appearance of an impregnable fortress than

of an ordinary dwelling place. Such buildings were a necessity in the old days when their inmates were exposed to constant feuds between the different villages, and were always subject to sudden attacks. When the people are poor, they erect four walls of roughly cut stone built with mortar or perhaps only clay. These are roofed with trunks of trees, branches and faggots, over which they put a layer of earth about a foot deep and well stamped down. The whole is then overlaid with a mixture of clay and straw which soon hardens in the sun; the roof is sloped to allow the rain to run off. As a rule such a roof is strengthened before the winter with a cylinder. Where this precaution is neglected the rain soaks through to the layer of earth and makes it so heavy that should the supporting rafters be at all rotten, the whole roof falls through. After a long spell of rainy weather this not unfrequently happens and causes bad accidents. In the villages near the sea, where planks can easily be got, the upper rooms and roofs are often built of wood, and are made waterproof by a facing of cement, a mixture of lime, ashes and small flints.

In the great plains (round Gaza, Jafa and 'Akko) the Fellahin build their houses, or rather huts, of sun-dried bricks.

As a rule the villages are built either on the summit or slope of a hill, so that they may remain dry in the rainy season, during which many of the plains become impassable bogs, and also to protect them from the attacks of the Bedawin, who are far more formidable enemies on the plains than among the hills.

Except where natural surroundings of vineyards, olives or palm trees lend them a little beauty, the villages are very ugly and unromantic looking; no red tiles or green shutters—no cupolas or minarets break the monotony of the endless flat roofs. There are nothing but grey, meaningless houses which either look ruinous or else unfinished. The best buildings even have not so much as a parapet. The covering of cement makes them look like dull blocks of stone surmounted by mounds of earth, on which the grass grows in early spring, and on which sometimes one sees a goat grazing. The buildings are so much the colour of the surrounding ground that in the distance it is difficult to tell whether you are looking at a village or at a group of rocks. Perhaps the most wretched looking of all the villages are those on the great plains, which are built of bricks or even of mud. If, as sometimes happens, such a village is deserted by its inhabitants, a couple of centuries or less suffices to sweep away all trace of it, and unless it has contained wells or a large mill stone, there would be nothing left to testify to its former existence. This may be one reason why the sites of many places mentioned in the Bible can no longer be found. The Fellah cares little for light or air in his dwelling. He has no windows, for he could scarcely protect himself against the cold, rain, and sharp winds which windows would admit, seeing that the village carpenter (if one there be) has not mastered the mysteries of window sashes, and even finds a good deal of difficulty in putting up an ordinary door. Still the chief reason why the Fellah contents himself with so little air is from a fear of

night attacks, and from the necessity of being able to turn his house into a little fort in the event of a village war or of hostile assaults. In many villages (as for instance at Râm Allah) it is customary to steal to an enemy's house at night and shoot through any hole that can be found, in the hope that although the shot may not take effect, it will at all events startle and frighten the family. Provided the inmates do not sleep in a line with such an opening, these nightly visits cause more alarm than injury. By day the door is always open, it is against etiquette to close it, as they think it gives an impression that something is going on of which they are ashamed, or that they want to prevent the entrance of guests. Nor has the Fellah any need of much light unless he happens to be a weaver or shoemaker (and of these there are but few), for his life is passed in the open air ; either in the vineyards and fig gardens, or in the market-place or the thrashing floor, taking a siesta in the sun, smoking his pipe and discussing the news of the day with his favourite comrades. If he gets too hot or finds it wearisome, he goes to the inn (*madāfe*) which is sometimes town hall, casino and church (for the Mussulmen) all in one. He loves this out-door life, and only uses his close and unventilated dwelling as a safe place for his night's rest. Most of the houses have only one story, but well-to-do people, and especially the sheikhs, think a great deal of an upper floor where they can receive honoured guests, and where the host can remain with them and not be disturbed by the curiosity of callers or chance listeners. The walls are decorated and the floor cemented, and it is altogether better than the ground floor, to which not only all sorts of people, but even the cattle, have entrance. In the better houses there is generally a small terrace on the upper story, which is finished with a parapet (called a *hāzir* in Nazareth and also *umhawwata*) on which one has a good view and fresh air ; it is a pleasant resting place after the heat of the day. In the plains even the poorest huts have (lightly built) upper floors constructed of branches, mats, and leaves, where the inmates take refuge during the summer from the suffocating heat and from the vermin which make the lower stories almost uninhabitable. The stone which is most in use for building, everywhere except in the plains, is a kind of limestone, of which there are several varieties. The *ka'kūte*, a rather soft yellowish stone, is easy to work and can almost be cut with a knife when newly broken ; it hardens on exposure to the air, but is not durable, for it very easily breaks. On account of its lightness it is often employed in building upper stories to lessen the weight on the foundations, and also as a facing to doors and windows whenever decorations are required. A much more durable stone is the *malaki*, it is harder to work than *ka'kūte*, but it keeps its colour well and is of a good pure white ; the Fellahin generally use it for their better houses. The *jehūdī* or Jew's stone is exceedingly hard, and has been but little used for building purposes ; during the last few years, however, owing to a scarcity of material, it has been utilized in and about Jerusalem. Like the softer kinds it is cut in blocks, and the stonemasons of Bethlehem by the use of good tools and constant practice, have acquired a particular reputation for hewing it. It must have

been used in former times, for it is found in some of the oldest ruins, though only in unhewn blocks or in a very rough state. Round about Nazareth they use a porous limestone called *uārī*-firestone, on account of its not splitting when exposed to heat. It is therefore much employed in building ovens. They have also a very porous, light stone called '*akkād*. And latterly the *mizz hālu* (also a limestone) has been much used in Bethlehem and other parts; it is a beautiful stone but very hard to work. In the regions of the Jordan and around the lake of Tiberias and the Dead Sea, black basaltic stone is often used and this gives the villages rather a melancholy aspect. If there are any ruins in the neighbourhood the people gladly make use of them so that one often sees ancient capitals and portions of pillars set into the modern buildings. They make their mortar of lime mixed with sifted earth; but for cottages or huts, clay is thought sufficient. The first consideration in building a house is making the foundations secure; if possible they must be on a rock and for this purpose they not unfrequently dig as far below the ground as the house is high above it in order to give it a firm basis.

This is a very necessary precaution; not only do the heavily built buildings require something to rest on, but the heavy rains in the winter bring a force of water that sinks into the ground for several feet and softens everything: a foundation only of earth would soon give way, and the building collapse.

The erection of a new house is always a great event in the village; the man about to build it thinks of nothing else. As soon as the plans are drawn and the foundations commenced, he sits down beside his architect, foreman, and builder (one and the same person) and calmly smoking his pipe, follows the whole process with the greatest interest, occasionally signifying his approval by giving advice or urging on the work. When it is a Sheikh's or some other village potentate's house which is being built, the celebrities of the place, priests, elders, etc., join him in order to show their interest in the important event. On these occasions there is a great deal of chatter, smoking, and drinking of coffee; the builder is praised or advised; the boys, girls, and women run about with baskets and little wooden trays carrying away rubbish and returning with mortar. An overseer, armed with a stick, marches round and brings up the idlers, giving them gentle reminders with his cane. After a long spell of work, or when the heat is very oppressive, their energy sometimes fails; they then enliven themselves with a song. Some one starts them by singing a few bars, and then they all join in, the subject is often very nonsensical, but when it refers to the splendid *backsheesh* or the good feast which they expect at the completion of the work, it always causes great merriment. The builder, as long as the work is in progress, is a person of great importance, and is treated with the greatest respect by his employer, even if this latter is a Mussulman, and the builder a Christian. A cup of black coffee is frequently offered him, to keep him in a good humour during the heat of the day, and this attention always pleases him. It is astonishing to notice how the Arab labourer will work from sunrise to sunset,

exposed to the most fearful heat, only resting an hour and a half at mid-day, and taking scarcely any nourishment save the cup of black coffee, which he considers the best of all refreshments when hot and tired.

When the house has progressed as far as the roof, that is to say when the side walls are up, and the framework and first covering of the roof is ready, all the village assembles to assist at its completion. Then follows much running to and fro and screaming and singing enough to drive any one wild. Some prepare the mortar; the boys, girls, and women hand it to the builder, and men bring up the stones. The builder places stone after stone, filling them in with mortar, and gasping with hurry and excitement; the children yell, the men sing choruses and the women join in the *zaghārūt*, until the solemn moment arrives when the last stone is about to be put on. Then the builder pauses and prepares to complete the work in a becoming manner, a youth with a loud voice announces that the crowning point has been reached.

The builder then makes a sign to the owner that all is finished, and this latter covers him with a mantle of honour (a black and silver embroidered *abā*) and hands him his *backsheesh*. After which the whole company falls to and devour a feast of meat, rice, and bread, and then depart highly delighted with their work and its reward. I have often witnessed such scenes in Nazareth and the neighbouring villages. Where the people are lucky enough to possess a newspaper or journal, a leading article enlarges upon the important event, and hands it down to posterity.

Every well arranged house possesses a bakehouse, for with the Arabs bread is really the staff of life. If the poor people have only corn enough (or even *dura*, a kind of millet) to make their bread, they consider themselves well off. All other food, even meal, they regard as a sort of vegetable, which they can do without. Many houses have their own bakehouse, but sometimes one has to answer for several families. It is generally a hut built of stone and clay, and scarcely high enough to stand upright in. The most important part of the oven is a platter or tray made of clay; it measures about 20 inches across; its surface is covered with small flints, and it has a closely fitting cover of the same material with a long handle. When they are about to bake, the cover is put on, and a lot of dried manure is heaped above it and set fire to; after a few hours, the whole thing is thoroughly heated; the ashes are then removed, the cover raised, and the dough laid upon the glowing flints in thin layers (something like pancakes), which very soon bake. When the baking is over the shelf is again covered up, the ashes are replaced, and more fuel is added so that the oven may be kept hot. As the bakehouse is generally warm, a Fellah often creeps in in cold weather to warm himself or to take a nap. It matters not to him that his clothes become somewhat scented by the odours of the peculiar fuel. He cares as little for that as he does for the jeers of his superiors. A little while ago during very cold weather, a mother put one of her young children into a bakehouse to warm it. She laid it on a mat and left it, but when she returned to fetch it, she found it dead and half baked, as the oven had become too hot.

Each of the larger villages are divided into quarters (*hārat*); these are named either from their position or after the chief families* who inhabit them. (*El-hāret el-fokā*, the upper part; *el-hāret et-sahtur*, the lower part.) For instance, in the village of Rām Allah there is the *hāret esch-shakara*, the quarter of the Schakara; and *hāret el-hadade*, quarter of the Hadade. Different families inhabiting the same village often have feuds which last for years, and whilst they continue all communication is cut off between the different quarters. Each side has its own inn, and if, as, for instance, in a Christian village, the church happens to be in the A quarter which is at enmity with the B quarter, perhaps for years no inhabitant of the latter will attend the service. If after a long time the quarrel is not made up, the quarter B will start a priest of their own, and perhaps build a church; this, I know, happened at Saijibeh (Ophra?) and thus all communication is cut off between the opposing parties. A common inn is generally a sign that the village is at peace, whereas two or three denote internal troubles. The villages only possess two public buildings, one for religious purposes, the church or mosque, and one for worldly use, viz., the *madāfe*, *mazul*, or inn.

In many villages there is the tomb of some holy man, which is called a *makām*; it is generally a little building with a cupola, and is surrounded by a few shady trees. In Mahometan villages the inn is often used as the mosque, and there you may not only find shelter and food and converse with the neighbours about local or political events, but you may also join in the prayers of the priests. The market-place (*sūk*) or Fruit Market in large villages, or the *bazaars* in smaller ones, are also places of resort where people meet to discuss the news of the day, and where the Fellah kills a portion of the time which so often hangs heavily on his hands. The internal arrangements of the Fellahin dwellings are very primitive. The room is divided into two parts, one of which is occupied by the cattle (oxen, donkeys and fowls), and the other, which is reached by a few steps, forms the living room of the family. On this principle the Fellah, when he closes his door at night, has all his possessions under one roof, and can more easily protect them. The living room has a cemented floor, and as the cattle are not admitted, it can be kept fairly clean. If a guest arrives the wife or daughter of the house has only to give the floor a hasty sweep and lay down a straw mat, or in the better families a carpet on which the visitor takes his seat. After a while when one has become accustomed to the dim light one feels curious to see how this strange reception room is furnished; a glance, however, suffices to show us that it contains nothing comfortable or artistic. There are perhaps several corn-bins, which the women make out of clay and straw. They open at the top for the grain to be shot in, and low down there is a small hole, stopped with a peg, through which the daily portion is taken out.

These bins generally stand a little out from the wall, leaving a useful

* *Hamū'e—Hamā'il.*

space for lumber and rubbish, which also forms a retreat for the female portions of the family. In one corner stands a large water butt called, like the bins, a *chabiye*, and made in the same manner; the water is ladled out with a little pitcher which also serves as a drinking mug. Where there is an attempt at anything a little more artistic, they have a little black earthenware mug ornamented with red designs, and made with a curved spout, from which (those who are experienced) allow the water to fall in a stream down their throat without touching it with their lips. We must not forget to mention another very important article, namely, the mill. For heating the room and for cooking or coffee roasting there is a sort of fireplace, without any proper aperture for letting out the smoke, which has to find its way through a small hole in the wall, after having blinded and nearly stifled the inmates. The chief advantage of this method of warming is that the walls of the room require neither paper nor paint, but soon acquire a fine brown or black surface. Over the fireplace or from some projection hangs a simple iron lamp* which is kept burning all through the night; only the very poorest of the Arabs sleep in darkness. The saying "Poor fellow! he sleeps in darkness," is equivalent to "Poor wretch, he hasn't a farthing to buy oil with!" A many-coloured chest contains the family wardrobe and the women's jewels, and is also the safest place for the bestowal of money, papers, and other valuables. Although most of them are now provided with a simple apparatus which causes a bell to ring if the lock be turned, it not unfrequently happens that thieves carry off these valuable chests by means of a night raid. A few iron and wooden vessels† are used for cooking utensils. A round mat, often very prettily made of red and black straw, and the work of the women, serves as table, tablecloth and dish; an iron pot, or in some villages a leather bottle or pail is used for fetching water.

Such are the simple necessities of the Fellaḥ's life, and having them he lives contentedly and happily in his native land.

(*To be continued*).

THE ORDERS FOR MUSICAL SERVICES AT HAMATH.

MANY thousands of stones, or tablets of metal, inscribed with catalogues of Royal hecatombs or humble pious names have come down to us from Egypt, Palestine, Greece, and Rome; but the four stone offerings from Hamath differ from them in many ways. These four tablets I can translate, and I affirm them to contain orders for musical services. When the

* (*Sirādsch*).

† *Batiye*, pl. *bawāti*.