

Merchants, Peddlers, Stores and Bazars of the Holy City



In the Grain Market

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JERUSALEM—(Special Correspondence to The Bee.)—If you would be cheated out of your eye teeth, come to Jerusalem. Its bazars are filled with tricksters and traders, and it has its usurers and money changers as in the days of the Savior. The people prey upon the pilgrims and tourists. Their main object is to get gain, and they work the holiness of the Holy City for all it is worth. They sell candles which if burnt in the Church of the Sepulcher will carry away your sins in their smoke; and rosaries upon which if you count your prayers you may be sure of their ascending to heaven.

The Jesuit and the Bethlehemite.

The rosary business is one of the chief of Jerusalem. The beads are cut out in great quantities at Bethlehem and are shipped abroad by the millions. They are sent to the Holy City for sale, and there are some stores which have nothing else except perhaps crucifixes and collection plates.

The merchants who sell rosaries are often great rascals, and I know one, a Bethlehemite, who has just received a lesson which he is not likely soon to forget. The man's rosary store is situated down Christian street, but far from the place where you turn in to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. His lesson came from a Jesuit priest who lives in Chicago, and who is just now starting home. The holy father, had come into the shop to buy some rosaries to carry back to his friends. He had picked out a half dozen beautiful ones, and had paid the price without bargaining. As the storekeeper wrapped up his purchase, he looked at him out of the tail of his eye and saw him slip the rosaries he had selected under the counter and put some cheaper ones in their place. The Jesuit said nothing, but he took up several beautiful carvings representing the crucifixion and ascension, each of which was worth about twice the amount of the rosaries he had picked out. Handing these to the man, he told him to wrap them in paper, and upon this being done he took both parcels and started out of the store. The Bethlehemite merchant ran after him, and told him he had not paid for the carvings. The father replied:

"My friend, I saw you change those rosaries and give me the cheaper ones and you may consider this a judgment of God upon you for cheating. I shall keep these carvings and if you do not immediately return to your store I will report you to the Mohammedan courts."

The man saw he was caught and let the priest go.

The Candle Sellers.

Another large business is the selling of candles. Jerusalem is full of shrines, and the pilgrims buy candles to burn at the holy places. They set them up at the score or more sacred spots in the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and at the stations along the Via Dolorosa where Christ walked on his way to Golgotha. They carry them to the Mount of Olives and to the Garden of Gethsemane. Some buy several candles for each shrine, and the richer purchase those of enormous size and of many colors. Some of the candles are of the size of your finger and others are as big as a man's leg. I have told you of the one as large around as a flour barrel which was held at the customs house in Jaffa and found to be filled with dynamite bombs. That was sent by some of the discontents among the priests of the Holy Sepulcher who hoped to blow their enemies, now in charge, out of existence, and did not care how many others they murdered.

I have been in Jerusalem at Easter time and have seen the miracle of the holy fire as performed by the Greeks.

It is at that season that the chief candle selling goes on. The pilgrims who are here by the tens of thousands buy great bunches of candles to take into the church, and light them from the fire. They can be then blown out and if lighted again at their altars at home will preserve them from harm, and I am not sure but that they believe they will take them to heaven. This holy fire is supposed to have come down from heaven and to blaze inside the chapel of the Holy Sepulcher, where is supposed to be the tomb in which our Savior was laid. There are holes in the walls of the sepulcher and the candles are thrust through them to one of the Greek priests, who stands within. He lights them and then passes them out. From these lights other candles are lighted and within a few moments after the fire appears the thousands of pilgrims in the church have their candles ignited. As soon as they set the light, they rush forth holding their hands around the blaze, endeavoring to carry the burning candles to their homes in Jerusalem.

The Bazars and Their Caves.

But come with me for a walk through the bazars of Jerusalem. We are in a network of vaulted tunnels, walled on each side with cavetto shops, and filled with a crowd of Syrians, Bedouins, Armenians, Jews and the other strange characters of this part of the east. The arched tunnel is lighted only by holes in the roof. The shops have neither windows nor doors. They



Peddlers with Cauliflowers

seem to have been cut out of the walls, and the largest of them is not more than fifteen or twenty feet deep. Some are so narrow you can stand at the front and reach both walls with your hands, and none is much higher than your head. Nevertheless each is a store, and it is walled with shelves filled with goods. There is only enough room outside the shelves for the merchant to sit, and the customers must stand in the street as they shop.

Cobblers and Tanners.

These bazars are classified, one business being devoted to each. There is a shoemaker's bazar where scores of cobblers are working. At the entrance to each cavetto shop two shoemakers sit, with untanned calfskin aprons tight about them, sewing away. Between them on a block of wood, an olive tree stump it may be, rests a slab of white marble. This is the shoemaker's bench, upon which they pound the wet leather soft with what looks like a brass paper weight. It is as big around as a tumbler and of about the same height, tapering from the top to the bottom.

The shoes are all made with needle and thread. The soles are of camel hide and the uppers of kid or goatskin. These are the common shoes of the peasant, selling for from 20 cents to \$1 per pair, according to size. As I watched the cobblers I asked as to their wages, and was told they received from 40 to 60 cents for laboring from sunrise to sunset.

In another street tanners are working, using oil cans to make pots and pans. Their shops are not much bigger than cupboards, and the workmen are long-bearded men in fez caps and gowns.

The Grain Market.

Farther on is the grain market, consisting of many great vaulted chambers, one or more of which belong to each merchant. The vaults are filled with piles of wheat, corn, barley, oats and millet spread out on the floor. The grain is sold by measure. I saw a Bedouin



A Tinner at Work



A Street in Jerusalem



A Jerusalem Bakery.

Much of the grain of the Holy City is ground at home, and a great deal of that of Palestine is turned into flour by hand mills. Some flour is imported and some is ground in mills run by camels or donkeys. In baking bread the dough is kneaded at home and brought in great lumps to the public ovens. These are to be found in almost every street. They are cavetto vaults, running down below the street level. At the back of each vault is the oven, with a sort of well before its open door. In the well stands the baker, with a long paddle in his hand, upon which he puts in and takes out the loaves. I have seen many bakeries of this kind. The fuel used is olive wood, and the oven floor is marked out in blocks, so that the baking of each family is put on a separate block. The loaves are about an inch thick and of the size of a tea plate. They have a hole in the center. The baker makes them from the dough, bakes them, and returns them hot from the oven to the customer. He receives 2 cents for each half-dozen loaves, or he may instead take a toll of one loaf for each dozen. Before starting

the baking he greases the floor of the oven with olive oil.

The reason for these public bakeries is the great cost of fuel. The Arabs have a proverb showing that such baking is the cheapest. This reads: "Send your bread to the oven or the baker even though he should eat the half of it."

I frequently see boys carrying dough to these bakeries, or bread home from them. They use trays which they bear on their heads. Ancient Jerusalem had its Bakers' street, for we read that Zedekiah, the King, put the prophet Jeremiah into the court of the prison and commanded that they "should give him daily a piece of bread out of the Bakers' street."

Delicious With Salad.

During my stay in Jerusalem I have enjoyed the salad which is served at the hotel with an olive dressing. This is a land of olives and the oil is delicious. It is as clear as honey and has a tint like the green of chartreuse. I say I have enjoyed it, but I doubt that I will enjoy it hereafter. Why? I have seen how it is made. Come with me to an oil mill which is kept just off David street, not more than a stone's throw or so from the pool of Hezekiah. It consists of a cave which is half stable, half mill. In the stable section are stalls for horses, donkeys and camels, which are eating chocolate brown cakes from stone manglers. These cakes are made of the refuse of the olives after the oil is squeezed out. They are said to be fattening.

On the other side of the cave stands a stone ledge about as high as my waist from the floor. This ledge has a hole in its center and is as big around as a flour barrel. Within it, his clothes tied up to his waist, is a barefooted, barelegged Ethiopian, who is treading the oil out of crushed olives. His face shines like polished ebony and the white drops of sweat stand upon his bare back and legs. I peeped over the edge into the well where he is standing. A linen cloth has been laid on the mixture, and he is tramping the ground olives, so that their juice goes into the cloth. As it becomes saturated he wrings the oil out into a red clay basin, whence it is poured into jars to be strained for the market.

Farther back in the cave is the mill for grinding the olives. It is much like the bark mill of a tannery, the wheel being turned by an ungainly camel hitched to a bar. I understand that wine made in the Holy Land is still trodden out with the feet.

At the Jaffa Gate.

But let us go to market at the Jaffa gate and see what the people have brought in from the country for sale. There are scores of women with baskets of vegetables before them. They have lettuce and eggplants and beautiful cauliflowers with heads as white as snow. They have lemons and oranges from Jaffa and apples and pears from the highlands of Judea. Many of the sellers are Bethlehem girls, with high hats and fair faces, and among the buyers are fierce

Bedouins from the desert, their heads bound round with ropes. Many of the men have guns in their hands, for no one thinks of traveling far over Palestine unarmed. There are Syrians and Jews and Russian pilgrims who are buying supplies for the hospice, called Little Russia, which lies outside the city. Here are many people selling beads, although the most of the bead sellers are about the church of the Holy Sepulcher. The beads are of glass and they come from Hebron, not far from the cave which is Abraham's tomb. Hebron is the chief town of South Palestine, and is a manufacturing center. It makes lamps and bottles as well as glass trinkets and glass beads, which are sold all over the Holy Land.

Jerusalem Chickens.

The cock which crew for St. Peter has many descendants. You may see some of them in this market. They are tied by the legs and lie on the stones. The Holy City has no law against crowing, and every family here keeps its own rooster. There are so many that the city resounds with their music, and about daybreak they start up a concert which murders sleep. I am living in the heart of Jerusalem. I might as well be in a barnyard. The cock concert begins with sunrise and keeps on until evening, when the donkeys and camels begin. The former utter brays stronger than that which spoke unto Balaam, and the latter whine and grumble all night. In addition to these noises, there are others which trouble the tourists. The people rise with the chickens and the stone steps re-echo their steps. The birds sing and the peddlers shout. At the same time the bells begin ringing to show it is day, and the trumpets of the Mohammedan soldiers in David's tower add to the din. One can easily sleep in a railroad depot or near a boiler factory, for the noises there are of one or two kinds and the ear comes to know them. Here there is a new sound every minute and a new smash every hour.

A Call on the Governor.

During my stay in Jerusalem I have called upon the governor and mayor. This city belongs to the Mohammedans and it takes two great powers to rule it. The governor is the executive and the mayor works upon him to keep the warring Christians in order. The governor is about 40 years of age. He is a fine looking man with a white face and brown eyes and hair. He dresses in European clothes, and wears a fez cap. He speaks French, and is not averse to talking about the situation in Palestine. He says that the new Turkish government has materially changed the conditions and that the people will be far better off than they were in the past. He expects that it will take some time to educate them so that they may govern themselves.

I asked his excellency whether travel was safe and whether individuals and parties could go about the Holy Land without danger. He replied that any one might go anywhere, but notwithstanding that I notice that he has taken the precaution to send a soldier with me on my expedition into the wilderness of Judea and beyond the Jordan.

The mayor is likewise confident as to the peaceful conditions, but I observe that every native traveler who goes toward the Jordan carries a gun, and I hear of frequent robberies and stories of men who fall among thieves. I have been privately advised to have weapons when I go off the main routes, and I am to pay for my guard to the Jordan.

How the Turks Hold the City.

After my talk with the mayor and governor I went through the municipal offices and visited the judges who are holding courts of one kind and another. The plaintiffs and defendants were Mohammedans, Christians and Jews and were of a half dozen races. The Mohammedans pass judgment on all. They have such the same piece that the Romans had when Christ lived, and they absolutely control everything in and about the Holy City. They hold the keys to the Church of the Sepulcher and open it as the Christians request. Otherwise, it is said, the Greeks, Armenians or Copts might hide the keys and keep the other sects out. At all great festivals at the tomb of our Savior there are Mohammedan soldiers on guard. They are stationed at the birthplace of Christ, and, indeed, at every spot that is sacred to Christians.

FRANK G. CARPENTER.

Oil Stills Troubled Waters

To the magical effect of oil on troubled waters officers and crew of the British steamship Carham, in Philadelphia from Santiago, Cuba, with iron ore, attribute their safe delivery from the recent West Indian hurricane that sent many a craft to its doom and caused great loss of life and property. Outwardly the vessel bore little evidence of the fury of the storm, but from the minds of Captain Jameson and his crew the memory of a three days' battle with wind and waves will never be eliminated.

The Carham was off the Bahama Islands when the hurricane swept up the coast and caught it. The tramp was prepared, with everything made fast. The wind blew 100 miles an hour and the steamship was like a chip in a millrace.

All the second day was like a nightmare to officers and crew. The vessel was absolutely helpless, and at

times it seemed as though it must succumb to the terrific pounding of the seas that beat upon its decks, ripping away stanchions and stays. The influx of the sea stove in port holes, bent rails and carried away all things movable about the decks. The vessel's smoke funnel was incumbered with salt, which was still visible when it reached its dock.

On the third day matters became so alarming it was feared the steamship was doomed. As a last resource oil was used in the hope of quieting the sea. A dozen or more bags filled with oil were hung over the sides of the vessel, and as the fluid trickled through the seams the effect was marvellous. Within an hour the oil had spread so as to form a circle around the steamship, and the mighty combbers that threatened to destroy the vessel were conquered.—Philadelphia Ledger