



Beyrout, Feb<sup>y</sup> March 1884

1884

The steamer - one of the Austrian line - wh. takes us off this eve as in sight.

My dearest Annie

We have been travelling hard for the past month so that correspondence has been almost suspended. I managed to write to you from Jerusalem. I had hoped to write to a few other friends who I thought wd value a letter because it was written from that interesting city, but I found it impossible. Mrs Carpenter, Mrs Peepath, Miss Lum & Will were on this list so if you will be so good as to mention good intentions with love & regret that I c'd not carry them into effect. We had one week of rough & rainy weather at the begining of our tour in Palestine & in the first of our three days trip to Jericho & the Dead Sea I never was so thoroughly wet in my life. The road to Jericho is rocky & precipitous beyond what I c'd make you understand & at places the water runs over them like a torrent.



making them so slippery for the feet  
of the horses that it until we reached the  
Plain of Jericho about 5. in the afternoon  
it was an long tension of our nerves.  
We were to have had lunch out of the  
Judean hills but the rain fell so heavily  
that the Emir's (Amir: Consul) who accompanied  
us proposed to eat something without dismount-  
ing, our dragoman however knew of a Cave  
& proposed to go to it, when we reached it  
19. natives men had already sheltered in it  
& had a smouldering fire of the Camel thorn  
in the Centre but they received us with  
great courtesy offered us the best places  
& made a great crackling blaze with  
more of the thorn & blinding us with smoke.  
As you have seen us standing & storming  
before this fire with picturesque groups of these  
wild men, in many varieties of turbans & loose  
garments, & finally squatting down on the  
floor eating Cold Chicken & oranges without  
plates or forks no Arabian eat. I describe  
anything more weird or unlikely. We had  
an order from some high official in  
Jerusalem desiring the monks in the Brook



3 Content at Jericho to allow us to lodge  
with them (as the <sup>weather</sup> was too unsettled to  
camp out) to our dismay they wd not  
take us in. They excused themselves on  
the score of painting & house cleaning. Our  
dragoman was greatly disconcerted & rode  
off furiously to find a place of shelter for  
us. He found two Russian sisters who  
kept house for their old father willing  
to take us in so we picked our way  
through mire & mud to a little house  
plastered <sup>partially</sup> with mud. On the first  
floor were two rooms on the second  
a room & a passage way. The room  
had a narrow divan, running around  
three sides of it, a small deal table in  
the middle & (later) chairs were added &  
in this room Cook's man soon served  
a sumptuous dinner of wh. we partook dressed  
in our flannel dressing-gowns. Mr. Merrill  
& I ~~sat~~ slept on the divan in our wet  
clothes & Mr. Merrill & Jaffe slept in the passage.  
Next day we started early for the Jordan &  
the Dead Sea wearing our wet dresses but  
the day was fine & soon in that low en-



4 closed valley we had heat enough to expose,  
we returned to our Clean quarters by sun-  
set, again enjoyed an ample dinner & the  
third day retraced our steps to Jerusalem in  
good spirits, <sup>fine weather</sup> & none the worse for our  
sitting. The rest of our stay was devoted  
to the City & its environs & we shall have  
much to describe & be able I hope to speak  
more clearly about many things in the Scriptures  
for our delightful visit to Palestine. We  
had a quiet re-embarkation at Jaffa  
& a smooth voyage to Beirut. where we  
were met by Dr. Dennis — one of the American  
missionaries, who in conjunction with Dr  
Parr had invited us in such a kind &  
pressing way to be their guests while here  
that we had accepted their invitation. The  
two houses are quite near Jaffa & are with  
the Paro & Iva with the Dennis. but had  
to tell Dr. P., who greeted us so warmly on our  
arrival, & who being a scientific man & intelligent  
interested in geology & prepared to take a holiday  
to accompany Jaffa to places of interest in the  
neighbourhood had to go to bed a few hours  
after our arrival & we have since seen



him since. He has had an attack  
 of pneumonia some days we have  
 never seen Mr. P. but now I am so  
 glad to be able to say that he is better  
 although not yet able to see anyone.  
 Meantime so many have shown us kind-  
 ness & we have had so many excursions  
 that we have been kept busy from  
 morn. till night. On Monday, the day we came,  
 we went over the College buildings & had  
 a ride along the cliffs as J. wished to see  
 the rocks. Tuesday Dr. Bliss - the Principal -  
 planned a longer excursion to some sand  
 quarries & provided us all with horses.  
 His wife has been in England for  
 the just six months. We tried to see  
 her while we were in London &  
 missed doing so as she happened to  
 be spending the day with Mrs. Charles  
 of Oshorbury Colts. Abbey. I now she is expected  
 home here Tuesday & we leave Monday. This  
 is why we are not at Dr. Bliss's house but  
 as you will hear he has accompanied us  
 everywhere & showed us the most devoted atten-  
 tion. He was in Canada & at our house



6 at the time of the Evangelical Alliance meeting  
in Montreal. His only daughter is married  
to a Mr. Hale a man of good Am. family  
& high culture who is a missionary away  
up in one of the valleys of the Lebanon  
mountains. On ~~Wednesday~~ <sup>Thursday</sup> my wife & I  
started at 8 A.M. to visit them - we went  
in a comfortable carriage over an excellent  
road 32 miles. Climbing around & up the  
mountains until we had reached 5000. 500.  
feet above the sea passing from the warm  
& advanced vegetation of Beirout to snow-  
capped mountain tops & passing through drifts  
from three to ten feet high, thick & misty  
clouds enveloping us till we began the  
descent into the plain of Jela. Agric. <sup>the</sup> ~~the~~  
part of this plain we had to leave the ~~main~~  
road & found horses awaiting us to take  
us over the rough mountain paths to the  
town of Bahleh - a place of twelve thousand  
inhabitants - & where the Hales live as ~~the~~  
central point of their labours. Here we were  
~~pleasantly~~ <sup>pleasantly</sup> welcomed by Mrs. H. a slight <sup>looking</sup> ~~looking~~  
pretty woman with three baby girls of her  
own. This house is a native one having a large



7 Central room with all the others opening  
from it & the roofs of these not less than 20 feet  
in height, but as tastefully & prettily furnished  
as any Amer: home. Both she & her husband  
are well educated, cultivated & as much gentle  
man & lady as any who move in good <sup>city</sup> society.  
We arrived at Zakk about five o'p. & dinner  
directly after noon tea was brought into the  
drawing room - dinner was served at 6.30.  
The children were nicely dressed & the eldest  
I shd think about 3½ a model old fashioned  
absolutist child. It was quite a treat to see  
the little folks & as I told Mary of my grand  
children she said "I shd like to send them  
a present". "I'll send them my doll jockey"  
that however was forgotten but next  
morn before we left she said "take my  
love to your grandchildren. So please deliv  
er it to the owners with grandma's own  
love added. There is a great deal that is  
encouraging & delightful to tell about the  
mission work here with its numerous branches  
but I must hurry on to my horse & set  
out on our return journey - the morn  
was a lovely one & as we began ascending



8 The Lebanon Mount Hermon burst upon  
our view, covered with pure unbroken  
snow. It was indeed beautiful surrounded  
by the more hills of the Anti Lebanon range  
at the foot of these <sup>the fertile</sup> green plain of Liba Syria, varying  
from nine to eleven miles wide, with the  
foreground of the Lebanon range all  
sharply defined in the clear mid high  
was a sight not to be forgotten; <sup>it is</sup> <sup>indeed</sup> =  
specially attractive. Scenes I think of the pharos  
they will give your artist eye & the keenest in  
heart you can take in all the lovely shades &  
lights that <sup>may</sup> escape me. The whole drive  
was a succession of lovely landscapes.  
Beirut itself is beautifully situated on  
the slope of a ridge, sloping towards  
the Mediterranean & is seen at a great  
distance on this Damascus road with  
many varieties of setting & foregrounds, but  
again we rattled through its streets to the  
highest & furthest point of the ridge where  
stand the College buildings & the houses  
of the three gentlemen whom I have already  
named, dinner was ready when we  
arrived as papa had arranged to give



a lecture in the eve, in a very nice  
 hall connected with the mission, to  
 wh: the public as well as the students  
 were invited. I shd guess ~~between~~ two  
~~or~~ three hundred were present & amongst  
 these some ten native ladies who understood  
 English & so well educated as to be able to  
 follow a lecture on pre-historic Man. Pope  
 spoke particularly well & from what I have  
 since heard I believe was fully appreciated.  
 On Saturday he was wholly absorbed with  
 geological specimens at the College museum  
 & packing these he had himself Collected,  
 so Mr Dennis drove Eric & I to a number  
 of town places of interest & then to lunch  
 at Prof. Porter's, In the afternoon he again  
 called per us & drove us to the entrance  
 of the Arab Bazaars, through wh we had  
 to walk as they are two narrow per Carriages,  
 & there we spent two hours wrangling & huckstering  
 & succeeded in carrying off a silk scarf, a  
capac or handkerchief such as worn as tur  
 ban, two pointed muslin veils & some necktie  
 Eric also purchased a dress of tan coloured



silk. There is no such a thing as dark Col-  
 oured or black silks or I too sh<sup>d</sup> have  
 made a purchase, as I am sure the  
 strong pure silk they manufacture here  
 must be very durable, but after tan  
 or white the Colours are brighter than tulips.  
 It is quite a matter of surprise to me  
 that we do not meet with more  
 novelties, it is quite true what Feary says  
 that London has gathered together the  
 handicraft of all nations, that there  
 is nothing new under the sun that  
 is not made familiar to us there. Embroid-  
 er'd sofa Cushions & table Covers,  
 (as cheap as in London,) pilligree silks  
 ornaments, such as we have often  
 seen & gold embroidery (two dear for  
 us) are the staple Commodities of the  
 East.

Today we attended Presbyterian service at 11<sup>o</sup>  
 where a Congregation of about 250 were pre-  
 sent. In the afternoon papa & I went  
 to an Arabic service at the German hospital  
 This is usually conducted by Mr. Pratt who



is also Physician to the Hospital & one of the Professors in the Medical Department of the College. Today one of the younger men took his place. It is a fine building with well kept gardens around it & the same lofty ceilings that are in all the good houses here. It is managed by well-trained Reverend Sisters & it was most touching to see upwards of forty patients of various sexes & races, dressed in clean simple garments & listening attentively to Scripture truths. An orphanage is also managed by Sisters & in some way much the same Council had sent seven of their girls to sing hymns wh: they did remarkably well. Afterwards these girls, accompanied by one of the Sisters, came to Mrs. Potts & asked if she wd allow them to sing in this hall as a little tribute of sympathy & soothing to Mr. Pott. wh: she accepted, only allowing them to sing two hymns but it wd. weary him. In the evg. we went to a meeting in the College hall for the students. The attendance is voluntary & about 150 were present.



but all of these do not fully understand English, however papa gave them a good address & they seemed attentive. A few hymns & prayers by Mr. Semis concluded the ev. & now it is late & I must to bed. per tomorrow brings packing & moving off on our return journey home wards.

I shall hope for a minute or two to finish this but should I fail to get them you will pardon an abrupt conclusion. It will probably be two weeks before we have another opportunity to write as we are much disappointed to find that it takes full eleven days to get to Trieste & we have to go by three different steamers

Monday 11<sup>th</sup>

In acct. of Sat: I left out dinner at Mrs Semis's & a reception in our honour in the ev. I find E. has written to you & I fear our week is duplicated but it will be curious to have the same events from separate standpoints. & so I am much disappointed to be so near to Baalbek & Damascus & to have Syria without visiting them, but as papa has to read a paper at the Soc: Ser. in London on April 2<sup>d</sup> it will take steady travelling to reach by that date. We still entertain your proposition to remain beyond papa - my chief regret regret is that I had promised myself long talks with you, as the same at Metz, with the other children playing around & no reading Curio as this is up to be in Montreux. With love to Bernard, Elizabeth & all from  
your love  
Mather.