

THE IMMOVABLE EAST.

By PHILIP G. BALDENSPERGER, Esq.

(Continued from p. 170.)

(*q*) THE carpenter or joiner (*najjār*) in a country which, like Palestine, has not enough wood for big constructions, is called upon to make small articles only—doors, windows, cradles, low tables, small chairs, chests for the women, and the like. The short Caramanian boards of *Katrānī* wood used to be imported from Asia Minor by Mersina. Now long, broad boards are imported from Trieste, Marseilles, and Sweden; they are usually a softer wood than the Caramanian. Wood in general is called *khaṣāb*; *‘aṣāh* (عصا) “the stick,” is the only trace of the Hebrew *‘ēṣ*, which is used for wood in general. Wood in small twigs or small branches is called *ḥaṭāb*; from the same root is derived the “hewers of wood” (*ḥōtēbē ‘ēsim*) of Jeremiah (xlvii, 22). A board is called *lōḥ*, with which we may compare the Hebrew *lāḥ*—*e.g.*, Cant. viii, 9 (“a board of cedar”).

To the Arabian joiner the most indispensable tool is the adze, which is called *ḡaddām* in Palestine, but in Egypt *maḡshūt*. This instrument was used before the introduction of the European plane, which is called *fārot*.¹ The soft European wood cannot be so easily smoothed with the plane as with the adze. The saw is called *munshar*, the Hebrew term being *massōr* (Isaiah x, 15). The awl is a very different instrument to the European one; it is called variously *mekdah* and *barīmet* in Palestine, and *nithkāb* or *kharbar* in Egypt. The handle resembles a whip, the leather strap of which is twisted once round the movable wooden handle of the iron borer, and the *fiddling*, so to speak, drives the borer into the wood.² The hammer is called *shākāsh*, *matrakat*, or *medkat*. The *ḡaddām*, however, is mostly used for this purpose.³

¹ The Hebrew term is *maḡšū‘ōth* (in the plural) which occurs only in Isaiah xlv, 13 (E.V. “planes”).

² The Hebrew verb for “to bore” is *ndkāb*—*e.g.*, of a hole in a chest (2 Kings xii, 9 [10]).

³ The chief Hebrew terms are *maḡḡābah* (Jer. x, 4), used also by joiners, stone-masons, and smiths (1 Kings vi, 7; Isaiah xliii, 12); and *paṭṭīsh* (Isaiah xli, 7; Jer. xxiii, 29). [From the former of these words the name “Maccabee” has been frequently, though not perhaps correctly, derived.—ED.]

The pincers are called *kummâshat* or *kalbutain*. They are not mentioned in the Bible, though some translate *mô'asâd* (מֹאסָד, Isaiah xliv, 12) by "tongs"; the word, perhaps, means rather a vice. The vice is called *mekbas* or *melzamet*, and is employed by both the joiner and the smith.¹ The file (*mebradd*) is naturally a very necessary instrument. It was, doubtless, known to the Israelites, but it is very uncertain whether it is to be found in 1 Sam. xiii, 21. The whole passage is very obscure and difficult. The square is called *zâwîet*. The nails now in use are of two kinds: those of home manufacture, *masâmîr balady*, and the European nails, *masâmîr 'ûbret*.²

The joiner makes wooden locks and keys, *sukarat* (from a root "to shut"), and *neftâh* (from a root "to open"). The turner and engraver, called *kharrâz*, is sometimes a joiner also, as both work in wood.

(r) The weaver (*hâ'ik*) is well known, not only in towns but also in the villages, where especially the mantles ('*aba*, pl. '*uby*) are made and sold to the fellahîn, yet by far the greater number of them are imported, many from Syria; the dark blue ones, called *shâlet*, on the other hand, come from Egypt. In the Jewish colony of Jahûdiyeh, in the plains of Sharon, I saw a Russian-Polish Jew who was a weaver of the '*aba*. Cotton was also woven in times past, and the strong home-made *khâm* was much appreciated, until at length the English calico superseded them in the market of Palestine. The Indian muslin (*baft hindy* or *shâsh*) is generally used for the turbans of the literati and Imams.

The weaver was indispensable to the Israelites, who wove their own clothes, as strange clothes were forbidden. The weaver Aholiab, of the tribe of Dan (Ex. xxxv, 34, 35), who furnished fine curtains (Ex. xxvi, 1-14) for the tabernacle, must have learned his trade in Egypt. There are several references to weaving in the Bible (Ex. xxxvi, 8; Job vii, 6, &c.).

The merchant, in a general sense, is called *tâjir*, but the cloth merchant or draper, who sells mantles, all kinds of calico, muslin, cloth, velvet, &c., exclusively, is called *khawâja*—the word commonly employed before a name, and now equivalent to "Mr."

¹ The Hebrew in Isaiah xliv, 12 (*see* above) might mean, therefore, the iron in the vice; and in Jer. x, 3, the preposition could equally well be rendered by "in" and not "with."

² Cf. the Hebrew term *masmêreth* (1 Chron. xxii, 3).

This has not always been so, the real honorary title being *Sayid* (*Said*) in cases where there is no other already in existence. *Khawāja* was applied to any one who was well clothed and of independent means, and as the cloth merchant has little to do but to sit on his elevated seat and handle stuff, the name passed over to Europeans and to the Arab Christians, and is now in use everywhere; Effendi being more commonly reserved for Moslems and government *employés*.

(s) The oil and soap manufacturers (*ṣabbān* and *ṣawābīnī*) always carry on their trade in one huge building, which is to be found in all Palestinian towns. Inside the building are immense cisterns to receive the oil, and stables to hold many animals are behind the oil presses. There is but one exit, the great gate, behind which the master of the establishment squats before an iron safe, controlling the movements and the going in and coming out of his establishment. Oil is brought from the surrounding villages, and as the distance may be too far to go home again the same day, the men and animals have free lodgings in the establishment. Everyone who has visited or lived at Jerusalem knows the immense ash-hills north of the city, near the tombs of Queen Helene ("tombs of the Kings"), the refuse of the ancient soap factories. At the present day the industry flourishes more particularly in such olive-grown centres as Gaza, Lydda, Ramleh, and especially Nâblus. The owners are very rich, some even are reputed millionaires. Second-class oil—that is, oil which has been lying in the olive mills for months on the floor in the olives waiting to be pressed, or simply the badly-pressed refuse of olives—is used in the manufacture of soap. The owners are not always to be recognised, as they often appear in workmen's dress, and sleep at night by the gate guarding the safe in which is stored their wealth. All kinds of gold and silver coins are hoarded: English, French, Russian, and Turkish pounds, "each after its kind," as well as the Medjidies and other Turkish silver money.

It is in the olive regions that the wealthiest people are generally to be found; they are not so much farmers as manufacturers. They have a bad name for their avarice, perhaps wrongly, for it is hard to tell the difference between a miser and one who economises earnestly. It is related that a rich Nâblus oil merchant found a dead mouse in his oil cistern one day; unfortunately it was seen by others, and the oil accordingly declared unclean; as

the case was being brought before the judge, the owner quickly swallowed the mouse, and no proof being forthcoming, he denied having seen a mouse, and thus saved hundreds of measures of oil, which, according to Mohammedan law, would have been unclean.

An equally miserly Christian soap manufacturer and money-lender of Ramleh—so the story goes—was out in a village collecting money some time back in the seventies of the eighteenth century. To get rid of him the wily fellahin accused him of having “cursed the religion.” In those days this crime was considered as deserving capital punishment. He was arrested and brought to Jerusalem, tried, and found guilty—thanks to the slyness of an official who had received a present—of having cursed the religion of the fellahin only. He was therefore condemned to three years’ banishment at Aleppo. “Cursing the religion” led to many judicial errors and abuses—for how could a Christian accused by a Mohammedan prove his innocence? a believer never lies—accordingly the penalty has had to be revised, and it is no longer considered a capital crime.

Oil and soap are exported into Egypt, where olives do not grow to any extent. The oil traffic between Egypt and Tyre has existed since the days of Ezekiel (Ezek. xxvii, 17). In early Israelitish days water—or, in winter, snow—alone was used for washing purposes. In later days, however, nitre and *bôrith* were employed (Jer. ii, 22; Mal. iii, 2). What was this *bôrith*? “Soap” (so it is translated) was not known. Either a plant of grey-white appearance, growing on the banks of the Jordan, used by the Bedawin, may be meant, or it is some cleansing mixture. The radical *b-r* means *clean* or *white*, and can thus refer to some *white* plant or any *clean* thing.

(t) The *mukâri*, also called *baghghâl*, is both owner and driver of horses and mules, and is a useful personage who in time past was quite indispensable to travellers in the East before the carriage roads were made. The inhabitants of Neby Dâûd, just outside the Gate of Zion, were formerly the *mukâris* of Jerusalem, but they have long ago ceased to be exclusively muleteers. In a caravan the *mukâri* is responsible for the food and lodging of the animals which are under his charge. Jaffa has also a considerable number of *mukâris*, and Ramleh and Lydd are essentially *mukâri* towns, though not for the conveyance of travellers, but of luggage and vegetables, which the Jerusalem *mukâris* never carry. Nowadays these *mukâris* are less frequently employed, except for long journeys, beyond Jordan,

south of Hebron, or north of Jerusalem. The German settlers run their carriages along the sea front from Gaza to Haifa on tracks in the sand, whilst inland the roads through the rocky and mountainous country are more difficult, and in spite of the great danger of the journey, are becoming more and more popular. The roads are very bad and the carriages high, so that they abound with broken carriages and unfortunate travellers, yet no modern traveller now hesitates to travel by this unsafe way. Fatalism finds its way everywhere.

The Armenian and North Syrian pilgrims, who formerly came to Jerusalem mounted on huge mules through the land from north to south, now all embark at the ports of Alexandretta and Lâdikîyeh (Laodicea), and the picturesque caravans with the suggestive tinkling of bells have disappeared. The pilgrimage of 15-20 days has now been reduced to a mere nothing—a day or two to the nearest harbour, a night or so in the steamer to Jaffa, and a few hours by rail to Jerusalem are sufficient to obtain the title of Haj (حج), which the Christians of the north, also, receive after a Jerusalem pilgrimage.

The vegetable *mukâri* barely earns enough for himself and his mule or donkey—for he rarely has more than one. About half a mejidi (= two shillings) for a load from Ramleh to Jerusalem is all he receives, and this entails a journey of 90 miles there and back, which he generally accomplishes in 24 hours. He rarely finds a load to take back with him, as Jerusalem exports are few and far between, and are generally sent by camel direct to Jaffa.

The *mukâris* of Ramleh and Lydd merit the palm of ignorance and stubbornness of all the inhabitants of Palestine—they can hardly calculate beyond their own immediate wants and those of their donkey, in whose company they pass almost all their lives. Ophthalmia has its seat in those towns, and at least 90 per cent. of the *mukâris* have defective eyesight. They are far removed from the bright, picturesque *mukâris* of bygone days, which are so fast disappearing now. These wore a short embroidered jacket, with long sleeves dangling over the arms, which were slit open on the lower side, and only covered the arms when hanging along the body. Their broad breeches and gaiters reached to the knees, and were all of the same thick coarse woollen cloth with black embroidery. Red shoes, a small woollen cap of the same pale yellow colour as the rest of his garb, and a tight turban completed

the sum and total of his dress. They resembled, but for the bright colours, the "kawasses" of the Consulates in the East.

(u) The public crier receives different names according to the nature of his business. Thus, he may be simply *munádi* or *munabih* (منبأد), when he advertises anything or announces the loss of an object or an animal; or *dallál* or *zá'id* (أيد), when acting as auctioneer. The *munádi* is employed by anyone who wishes to make known some announcement, but a *beshlik* or so must be paid to the police before proceeding further. A man may have lost his grey donkey and will tell the crier to call it out. The announcement is as follows: "O good people, who pray to Mohammed, who has seen a green (grey) donkey?" (*Yá nás el-hálál. Yá má tasallú 'alla Mohanned. Min sháf ehmar akhdár?*) Then follow particulars, cut ears, pack-saddle, &c., ending up with: "The reward is a quarter of a *mejidi* and a piece of soap." (*Walhalawán rubé' mejídi wa fatakat sabóny.*) This is repeated in different quarters of the town, especially where public gatherings are numerous, until the missing object is found, or an address is given where it is to be returned.

The public crier was known in Israel, when news had to be made known. The *kôrè* (קורע) was called upon to announce it either by the voice alone (Jer. ii, 2; Isaiah xl, 6, 9), or with a trumpet to gather the people before making known the tidings (Jer. iv, 5). So in the South of France the public crier summons people with the trumpet before he reads.

The *dallál* (auctioneer) carries the object high in his hands so that everyone may see it, and walks up and down the street, calling out the offer anyone may have made. This practice may have been introduced by the Spanish Jews, for instead of using the Arabic words for the first, second, and third bid, he says *una*, '*ala una* (one), '*aku due* (two), and '*ala tre* (three). Animals for sale by auction are also led up and down the street, and their qualities praised, and so forth. Mohammedans or Christians are sometimes employed, though the auctioneer is more often one of the Sephardim Jews.

(v) The cotton-carder (*halláj*) is generally an Algerian Jew, who carries about with him his big bow and wooden mallet to card the cotton and to make old covers, in which art he is a past master. The covers are very thick, stuffed with cotton between two pieces of white calico for the lower part, and print of very bright colours for

the upper part. This is called *lehâf*, and is to be kept distinct from the thin and simple grey wool blanket (*herâm*). The thick *lehâf* is perhaps similar to that used by Jael, Heber's wife, to cover the fugitive Sisera when he came to her tent (Judges iv, 18, *sēmâkâh*). The grey blankets take their name from their being taken to Mecca and used in the religious rites (*ihrâm*). If the Hebrew *marbad* (Prov. vii, 16 ; xxx, 22) may be derived from its grey colour (Ar. Δ), it is possible that the Israelite women wore such garments in their homes. The carders have also shops where the cotton, white as snow, may be seen piled up in huge baskets, ready for sale. The carder also goes calling round at the houses, cards the cotton in the courtyard, and makes the fresh covers in a very short time.

(w) The *ṭarbûsh-ironer* (*kawî*) has a small shop and several irons (*kâleb*), always ready on the fire to iron the red caps of Turkish introduction. The more conservative shopkeepers and workmen have not as yet adopted the elegant Turkish cap, but hold fast to the old round form which is known as Tunisian and never needs ironing. The Turkish *ṭarbûsh* is worn by all civil and military officials as well as by native Christians. With this cap there is a graceful black silk tassel with woven separate threads, which it is fashionable to lengthen or shorten, according to the wearer's fancy, so that it may either be seen dangling wildly, or hanging quietly down the side of the cap. Most turban wearers, however, have kept the old style of North African *ṭarbûsh* with its fleecy blue silken tassel, but some have substituted the Turkish cap, and elegantly wind a snowy white muslin turban of reduced dimensions round the head. The Armenians, who till lately had not the right to wear the red *ṭarbûsh* (on account of its being a sacred colour) but had a black one without tassel, have now also adopted "everybody's" style, so a man's nationality is no longer so easily distinguished by his outward appearance. Strange clothing (*cf.* Zeph. i, 8) was never in favour, and, with the exception of Beirût, Jerusalem and Jaffa are the most progressive towns of Syria. The ironer is generally a seller of tobacco also, though since it has become a monopoly only tobacconists are now allowed to sell it. Formerly the tobacco, *tutun* (the Turkish name) was hung up in strings, and cut fine or coarse, according to the taste of the buyer, on the cutting machine ; but now that it is put up in packets these machines are forbidden—at least openly.

Tobacco is more generally known amongst the people as *dukhân*; i.e., smoke. There are different kinds of native tobacco: the *balady*, the *hassanbaki*, introduced by Hassan Bek; the *Abû Riha*, odoriferous, "father of smell," and so forth. Tobacco is grown in the Philistine towns and villages, and controlled by special employés. The leaves are hung together in long strings and exposed upon the flat house-roofs to dry before they are despatched. All Arabs smoke pipes, and in the towns cigarettes. A considerable trade by smuggling was carried on, therefore, as all Jerusalem gates, except the Jaffa Gate, were shut up by night; the whole space from Tancred's heights to the Zion's Gate, by the Damascus and St. Stephen's Gates, was virtually deserted by night. Fierce contests between Custom House officials and smugglers were carried on in and about the north-east corner of the town, and many curious, sometimes tragic, scenes happened. A renowned smuggler called on an official known for his zeal, and offered to show him a party of smugglers at work, provided he agreed to come alone, and then seize them at leisure. The bargain was accepted, a spot on the eastern wall indicated, and official and smuggler proceeded thither. The smuggler hailed his comrade in the dark night, and invited the official, who had kept silent, to descend by a rope. The latter agreed. Accordingly he let him down, but when he was halfway he said, "Now you are safe, you can see how we draw up the sacks of tobacco," thus faithfully keeping his promise to show him how they worked. When the operation was ended, the smugglers quietly trotted off with their wares, leaving the unfortunate official to meditate on the trustworthiness of smugglers. The official was rescued next day by the soldiers of St. Stephen's, who were informed by passers-by of what had happened. Pursuit of the smugglers was without avail. "I have neither seen nor heard" was the impudent answer to all inquiries.

Tobacco thieves in the plains have conceived an ingenious plan of stealing the long strings of leaves from the house-tops. The *hardûn*, the well-known Palestine stello-lizard, has very long claws and a hard scaly tail, and the thieves accordingly take several *hardûns* and bind a long thread to their tails and throw this strange fishing-tackle near the tobacco. The frightened lizard clutches wildly at the plants and the thief pulls all to him, thus noiselessly possessing himself of the desired weed, and goes off without awaking the owner. In this manner does the lizard unconsciously become the thief's helpmate.

Snuff (*sa'ud*) (سعود) is also sold and indulged in by all classes, especially elderly men and women, who also smoke the *arghileh*.¹ The *tombak*, or Persian tobacco, for the *arghileh* is sold in large yellow-brown leaves, and is crushed and rubbed in an iron sieve in the presence of the buyer. The *tombak* is carried about by *arghileh* smokers, and for five or ten paras the pipes in the coffee-houses are filled and loaned. Cigars of European make, though also sold by tobacconists, have not found much favour with the Arabs, who prefer the small cigarette, *sikâra* (سيكارا). Everyone knows how rich the Arabic language is in the most polite expressions. A smoker may offer his tobacco pouch with the word *deffâdal* (تفضل): "Do me the favour." After making the cigarette, the receiver will say 'âmer (عامر), "may it flourish" (*i.e.*, have always tobacco to offer), whereupon the giver will say *min khîrak* (من خيرك), "from your property, or liberality." The other will again answer, *khîr allah* (خير الله), "God's goods," and so forth. Then he will offer him a light and say *yekhsîk sharha* (يخفيك شرها), "may you be concealed from its (the fire's) evil," and the other replies *walâ takassî harha* (ولا تقاصى حرها), "neither may you tell (know) about its heat."

(To be continued.)

THE SITE OF THE CHURCH OF ST. MARY AT JERUSALEM, BUILT BY THE EMPEROR JUSTINIAN.

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(Continued from p. 257.)

WE now come to the period when the great Basilica of St. Mary was erected at Jerusalem by the Emperor Justinian in the first half of the sixth century. As I have already remarked, the idea of building this church was not due to the Emperor. It was suggested to him by St. Saba, one of the most renowned ecclesiastics of Palestine, whose name has been preserved in the title of the well-known monastery of Mar Saba, which stands on the road from

¹ See *Quarterly Statement*, p. 70.