

ARAB AND DRUZE AT HOME

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Arab and Druze at Home by William Ewing

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WILLIAM EWING

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DRUZE AT HOME**



ARAB SHEIKH

(Photo. The Photochrome Co., Ltd.)

ARAB AND DRUZE AT HOME

A RECORD OF TRAVEL
AND INTERCOURSE WITH THE PEOPLES
EAST OF THE JORDAN

BY
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FIVE YEARS RESIDENT AT TIBERIAS

THIRTY-ONE ILLUSTRATIONS AND MAP

LONDON: T. C. & E. C. JACK
16 HENRIETTA STREET W.C.
AND EDINBURGH
1907

TO
MY FATHER





TIBERIAS FROM THE SEA

FOREWORD

THE number of books published regarding Palestine proves the exhaustless fascination of the subject. Most of them, however, deal with Western Palestine; and even of this, beyond the districts traversed by the annual stream of tourists, comparatively little is heard.

The lands beyond the Jordan are seldom visited. For the ordinary sight-seer the difficulties and dangers are considerable; but these almost entirely vanish before one who can speak the language and is able to mingle freely with the people.

This book is an attempt to lift a little way the veil which still so largely obscures that region, in spite of its great and splendid history; where picturesque and beautiful scenery, the crumbling memorials of grey antiquity, and the life of villager and nomad to-day, cast a mysterious spell upon the spirit.

While the information given in the following pages is woven round the narrative of a single journey, it is the outcome of frequent travel and familiar intercourse with the peoples both east and west of Jordan.

ARAB AND DRUZE AT HOME

During a residence of over five years in Palestine the writer was privileged often, quite alone or with a single native attendant, to visit the peasantry and the *Beduw*, to share the shelter of mud hut and goat's-hair tent, to enjoy their abounding hospitality and friendly converse in the *medāfy*, on the house-top, and around the camp-fire in the wilderness.

What is here related regarding these strange but deeply interesting peoples was either learned from their own lips or verified in converse with them.

The author offers his tribute of affection and gratitude to the memory of Dr. H. Clay Trumbull of Philadelphia, U.S.A., surely the most generous and friendly of editors, who first moved him to write on Oriental subjects.

For many of the photographs taken on the journey he is indebted to his companions in travel, Rev. J. Calder Macphail, D.D., Edinburgh, and Dr. Mackinnon of Damascus; for others, to Dr. Paterson of Hebron and to the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund. He also gratefully acknowledges assistance received from the Rev. J. E. H. Thomson, D.D., and Oliphant Smeaton, Esq., M.A., F.S.A., Edinburgh.

EDINBURGH, December 1906.