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TO MY HUSBAND MICHAEL

stood stiffly at the salute, while the bugles rang out and the Union Jack was furled. Thus the final curtain rang down on the British rule which had been so gallantly ushered in thirty years earlier, when Allenby's army came marching in from the south. The Mandate had ended, to use T. S. Eliot's words, 'not with a bang but a whimper'.

Haifa is built like a three-decker sandwich. The lower town contains the dock area and the business centre; up the slopes is the Hadar ha-Carmel (the Pride of the Carmel); and at the top is Har ha-Carmel (Mount Carmel). The quickest way from 'downtown' to the suburbs on top of the Carmel is by the Carmelit, Haifa's tilted underground railway, which whirls you up at a preposterous angle in less than ten minutes, starting from Paris Square (so named in honour of the French Company that built it).

The main business thoroughfare, running in the reclaimed area adjoining the harbour, used to be known as Kingsway, but has been renamed Derech ha-Atzmaut (Independence Road). Its seaward side is a row of four-storey buildings in uniform design, containing shops on the pavement level and above them the business and shipping offices. There is nothing uniform about the landward side, where modern bookstores and shops are jumbled with Oriental cafés and untidy workshops. The street crowd is a colourful and amiable mixture of seamen off the ships, port officials and dock porters, young men and women in trim naval uniform, businessmen parleying over endless cups of Turkish coffee or glasses of lemon tea, tourists, Arabs, and Druzes in flowing robes, and khaki-clad kibbutzniks hurrying from the bus station with the inevitable ancient briefcases in their hands.

The railway station is at the southern end of the street, and beyond that the road to Tel Aviv goes through an area of modern apartment houses for workers. Two prominent buildings on the seaward side at the Dagon grain silo and the huge Government Hospital, to the south of which are the Bat Galim and Carmel bathing beaches. The silo is the tallest building in Israel and one of the most beautiful. It is worth visiting, for the view from the top and for its small exhibition tracing the history of wheat and flour in the Holy Land from Biblical times. Another interesting

exhibition is that of model boats of all ages in the Nautical Museum in the Sailors Home near the railway station.

From the station, Carmel Avenue sweeps up through the old German Colony, with its solidly-built gabled houses, many of them still bearing inscriptions above their doors in old Gothic letters. Pross' Restaurant, which dates back to the last century, still provides a good and substantial meal. The former German residents of this quarter, descendants of the original Templar settlers, were deported by the British authorities as enemy aliens at the beginning of World War II and have never come back. (A number of them now live in Australia.)

Hadar ha-Carmel has rather steep and congested streets, but it is pleasant to stroll along Herzl Street and to have coffee and wonderful pastries at one of its pavement cafés, which have a Viennese air about them.

The handsome City Hall on Bialik Street houses in one wing a gallery of modern art and an archaeological museum, which should be visited for its Roman and Byzantine exhibition, mainly from Caesarea, and for a noteworthy collection of ancient local coins. From the Memorial Garden in front, one looks down upon the harbour. The two old Turkish cannon standing here are a survival of a fort that once guarded the town.

High up on the mountainside stands the most arresting object in Haifa, the white marble Bahai Shrine, with its gleaming golden dome. The whole slope below it right down to the German Colony is a terraced Persian Garden, through which there ascends a marble stairway lined by cypress trees. The garden is being continued upward behind the shrine, so that the whole effect will be that of a woven Persian carpet spread down the mountainside from top to bottom. To one side of the domed building is another one modelled on the Greek Parthenon, to house their museum and archives.

The Bahai faith, a recent offshoot of Islam, upholds the unity of God and takes its inspiration from the Old and New Testaments as well as the Koran. It has no priesthood but attempts to adapt basic religious truths to modern needs. Haifa is the world centre of the sect, which now has several million adherents scattered over many countries, including a large number in the United States. (There is a fine Bahai Temple near Chicago.) The

faith was founded in 1844 in Persia by Mirza Ali Muhammed, who called himself El Bab (The Gate). He was put to death by the Persian authorities, and is now interred in the Haifa Shrine. The main religious leader was Baha-Ullah (The Glory of God), who was banished from Persia and imprisoned for twenty-four years in Acre Jail, where he wrote the 'Scriptures' of the Bahai faith.

The Panorama Road intersects the Bahai Garden above the shrine and winds up to the top of the Carmel, with a more breathtaking view opening up at each dizzy curve. Looking down from this vantage point, one gets a clear idea of the planned development of the Haifa Bay area between Haifa city and Acre. It now contains a number of Israel's major industrial plants, surrounded by housing projects for workers and immigrants set in green belts. The plain was known as the Emek Zevulun, after the seafaring tribe of Israel settled in this part of the country in the period of the Judges. (Their emblem was a galley with a square sail and banks of oars.) The silted mouths of two small rivers, the Kishon and the Na'aman, had turned the area into a malarial swamp, until it was drained and reclaimed by Jewish settlers thirty years ago.

The most conspicuous plant in this Haifa Bay area is the oil refinery, with its two giant concrete cooling-vats, fretwork metal superstructure, and shiny tanks. The refinery has had a chequered history. It was completed in 1939, with an annual refining capacity of four million tons. The crude oil reached it through a thousand-kilometre pipe-line across the desert from the oil fields in northern Iraq, and also by tankers from Tripoli and Syria and through the Suez Canal. But in 1948, when Israel was proclaimed, these transit routes were blocked by the Arabs. The refinery lay idle for several years until it resumed working at one-quarter capacity (just enough to meet Israel's local needs) with the crude oil brought all the way from the Caribbean. In 1959 the British owners sold the plant outright to the Israel Government, which is restoring its full capacity to refine gasoline, kerosene, diesel oil, fuel oil, and bitumen. An important petro-chemical industry is being developed from the waste products of oil refining.

Israel is now a modest operator in all stages of the oil business - production at Heletz in the south, the oil pipe-line from Eilat,

refining at Haifa, and sea transportation in the three large tankers it has purchased.

Among the other enterprises concentrated in the industrial zone are the power station, the twenty-million-dollar compound of 'Fertilizers and Chemicals', the Nesher Cement Company, the Kaiser-Illin Automobile Assembly Plant, the Ata Textile Works (the biggest in the country), Shemen Oil (mainly soaps and detergents), the Koor steel plant (which includes rolling mills, a foundry, and a steel-pipe factory), and the Phoenicia Glass Works (so called because the Phoenicians are supposed to have invented glass-making here). The steel, glass, and cement plants are part of the industrial complex belonging to the Histadrut (Labour Federation).

MOUNT CARMEL

There can be few more attractive residential districts anywhere than Har ha-Carmel, the top of the Carmel range. It is an area of ridges and woody ravines, sunlit boulders and pine-trees, summer breezes, and glorious views of the Mediterranean and the Galilee highlands, with the white cap of Mount Hermon floating over the eastern horizon on a clear day. The heavy dew keeps this a verdant oasis even in the dry, hot summer, and the very name 'Carmel' (which means the Vineyard of the Lord) suggests the blend of fertility and religion which belongs to this mountain. From earliest times mystery shrouded the habitation of the Carmel. Its high places held the altars of strange gods and its hidden places the sanctuaries of fugitives and hermits.

And though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence;

Amos ix. 3.

Above all these broods over it the memory of that fierce old man of God, Elijah, and his war against idolatry.

The Bible tells us, in the First Book of Kings, that after a three-year drought which God had sent to punish King Ahab and the Israelites for their pagan cult, the Prophet Elijah gathered together on Mount Carmel 450 priests of Baal and 2,000 priests of Astarte and proved by a miracle that their gods did not exist. Elijah built an altar for sacrifice as did the other priests, but Baal did not come to the altar dedicated to him, whereas God sent a

fire which burnt up the sacrifice placed there by Elijah. As a result of this miracle the people turned to the true God and all the idolatrous priests were put to death. Then, in answer to Elijah's prayer, came rain in abundance. The place where this miracle was performed is traditionally identified with El Muhraka (the place of burning), eleven miles from Haifa, as the crow flies. The spot where the pagan priests were then put to death is by tradition identified with Tel el-Kuassis (the mount of the priest), at a bend in the River Kishon.

There are several religious institutions on the Carmel associated with Elijah, such as the Carmelite Monastery on the French Carmel; another small Carmelite Monastery at El Muhraka at the south-eastern end of the range (where the prophet defeated the priests of Baal); and a big cavern at the foot of the promontory overlooking Haifa, which is a sacred shrine for all three religions. Jewish tradition regards it as the place where Elijah took refuge from the wrath of the Israel king he had castigated; Christians call it 'The School of the Prophet', because Elijah is thought to have taught his disciples in it; and the Moslems have officially made the cave a mosque dedicated to Elijah.

The main built-up area of Har ha-Carmel radiates out from the Merkaz (centre), with its bus station and its neat shops and cafés. On a bright morning it is pleasant to ramble on foot through the public parks, or past the villas and summer boarding-houses, framed in flowering shrubs. The Merkaz, and near-by garden suburbs like Ahuza and Neve Sha'anán, have a well-ordered and relaxed feeling, and one is grateful that this beautiful setting of hill and sea has not been ruined by unplanned jerry-building.

A fifteen-minute drive along one of the winding mountain roads brings one to Technion City, the campus of the Haifa Institute of Technology of Israel, set in 750 acres of pine forest. The old Technion buildings down in Hadar ha-Carmel were erected fifty years ago, in the pseudo-Oriental style then in vogue. Such a school was an ambitious undertaking in those early days before World War I, when the Turks still ruled the land. Its founding was marked by a fierce controversy: whether scientific and technical subjects should be taught in German or could be attempted in the newly-revived Hebrew tongue. Today Hebrew is the accepted medium for the Technion's lectures on such themes as aerodynamics and electronics. The new campus, high

up on its mountain site, has impressive functional buildings for its lecture halls and laboratories, a beautiful auditorium named after Sir Winston Churchill by its English donors, and students' hostels with split-level bedroom-studies ingeniously adapted to the slope.

The Technion has an enrolment of 3,600 full-time students, and runs part-time refresher courses in a number of cities. It turns out about 600 graduates a year in general science, engineering in various branches – civil, electrical, chemical, mechanical, hydraulic, and aeronautical – and architecture.

The *Carmelite Monastery*, on top of the jutting promontory of the Western (or French) Carmel, has behind it nearly eight centuries of history. The Order to which it belongs started here on the Carmel, and obtained its official charter in 1212, with Elijah as its patron saint. The original thirteenth-century monastery stood in the ravine of Wadi es-Sejah (Valley of the Martyrs), just west of Central Carmel. It was destroyed by the Saracens after the fall of Crusader Acre, and the monks were put to the sword. Its rock chapel can still be visited. Though the Carmelites developed into one of the most powerful monastic Orders in Christendom, they did not regain a foothold on Mount Carmel till 1691, when they rebuilt their monastery with the permission of the Turkish Governor of Acre. This was destroyed again by the Turks after Napoleon abandoned the siege of Acre in 1799, and the sick and wounded French soldiers in the monastery were killed together with the monks who were tending them. After this second disaster, it is not surprising that the present monastery was constructed like a fortress and located at a spot chosen with an eye to defence. Across the road from the monastery is the old lighthouse building appropriately called *Stella Maris* (Star of the Sea), which now houses Israel's naval headquarters.

From the suburb of *Ahuza* on Mount Carmel, it is a wonderful drive south-eastward through the pinewoods on the top of the range to the kibbutz of *Beit Oren*. From here the road descends through a rugged defile to the coastal highway, passing the forest of *Ya'arot ha-Carmel*. The many caves which pit the rock-faces along the road have held strange tenants in their time, from stone-age men to Byzantine hermits.

Just before Beit Oren, a narrow side road turns off to the two big Druze villages of *Isfiya* and *Daliyat el-Carmel*. The handsome

and dignified Druzes from the Carmel move easily around Haifa city and frequent its Oriental coffee-shops, the men distinguished by their big cavalry moustaches. Isfiya, which is mixed Druze and Christian-Arab, stands on the site of the ancient Jewish village of Huseifa. A piece of a mosaic synagogue floor has been dug up here, and depicts a pretty garland of yellow flowers surrounding the Hebrew inscription 'Shalom al Yisrael' (Peace be upon Israel); it is now in the Antiquities Museum in Jerusalem, and is reproduced in the design of the Israel one-pound note. At the end of the main street in Daliyat el-Carmel is the house occupied in the eighties of the last century by Laurence Olifant, an early English supporter of the Zionist ideal. The tomb of Mrs Olifant is in the village. Visitors to these clean and picturesque Druze villages can enjoy a friendly cup of Turkish coffee while they buy the gay basket-ware for which the Druze women are noted.

A few kilometres beyond the Druze villages, a stony track goes up to the top of *El Muhraka*, the promontory which marks the south-east end of the Carmel range. On this prominent hill-top, visible for many miles around, a small Carmelite monastery marks the spot where Elijah's famous contest with the pagan priests is supposed to have taken place, and a statue of the prophet on a lofty pedestal dominates the enclosure. If the bell on the gate produces a monk to let him in, the visitor who climbs on to the roof will get one of the most sweeping views in the country. Nearly fifteen hundred feet below he can see the little Kishon River, where the 'false prophets' were slain.

Nowhere else in the world can there be the same curious human mixture as upon the Carmel: Jewish suburbanites, kibbutzniks, Carmelite monks, Druzes, Christian-Arabs, Moslems, and Bahais – all living side by side among the lingering echoes of primitive cavemen, pagan altars, hermits, and Crusaders.

Haifa has one exquisite moment which every visitor should capture if he can. It is the sight from the top of the Carmel of a huge orange-red sun, sinking into the sea, while a spangled veil of lights is flung along the ancient coast, from the Ladder of Tyre to Caesarea.

13 · The Galilee

WESTERN GALILEE

Acre

Running out along the northern tip of the Bay, eight miles from Haifa, Acre forms a romantic frieze of bubble domes, minarets, Crusader sea-walls, and palm-trees, etched against sky and water.

No other place in Israel has had a more stirring history. Acre was a strategic prize from ancient times as a sheltered harbour astride the coastal route to Phoenicia across the Ladder of Tyre, a day's march to the north. History has recorded seventeen sieges of the city. As a Canaanite town it resisted capture by the Hebrews in the time of Joshua ('Neither did Asher drive out the inhabitants of Accho . . . – Judges i. 31); and more than a thousand years later, Simon Maccabeus also failed to take it. In the Hellenic period, it was renamed Ptolemais, and it is referred to by that name in the account of St Paul's journey to Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 7). But the most spectacular chapter in Acre's history was written by the Crusaders.

In 1104, after the First Crusade had secured Jerusalem, Baldwin the First carried Acre by a combined land and sea assault, with the aid of the Genoese fleet. Its commercial importance revived and it became known as St Jean d'Acre, in honour of the Order of the Knights of St John (the Hospitallers), whose headquarters were in the city. It fell to Saladin after he had wiped out the Crusader army at the Horns of Hittin near Tiberias; was recaptured by Richard the Lion-Heart of England; and remained the Crusader capital for a century, when its loss marked the end of the Latin Kingdom in the Holy Land.

In 1799, Napoleon's advance from Egypt around the eastern edge of the Mediterranean was blocked at Acre. After two months of unsuccessful siege, he withdrew, abandoned his whole Near-Eastern campaign, and returned to Europe. His defeat was

primarily due to British naval power, for Admiral Nelson destroyed his fleet in the Battle of the Nile, and Admiral Sir Sydney Smith captured his siege guns, which were on their way to Acre by sea.

In 1948, in the War of Independence, Acre surrendered to the Israelis, after a daring amphibious landing just north of the city.

The Turkish style dominates the architecture of the town. The Ottoman Governor at the end of the eighteenth century, Ahmed Jezzar Pasha (known as Ahmed the Butcher), tried to restore Acre's commercial importance and to make of it a 'little Constantinople'. He built the splendid Mosque of El Jezzar (the largest in Israel), using for the arcades marble columns brought from the Roman ruins of Caesarea farther down the coast. These arcades enclose three sides of a large, sunny courtyard, and behind them are small, domed cells for the scholarly. The courtyard is paved with worn flagstones, and trees and flowering shrubs spring up in the corners. Sundials give it charm and the fountains, gaiety. The Mosque closes off the fourth side of the square. The Ministry of Religions has painted it and restored the ancient inscriptions. The visitor who slips off his shoes and enters will find the proportions good, but the effect one of emptiness.

At the bottom of the stairs leading to the square is Ahmed Jezzar's fountain and next door, luxurious eighteenth-century steam-baths, modelled on those in Cairo, and used today as a municipal museum. Here the Turkish tiling forms an attractive background to the collection of medieval ceramics and archaeological fragments through which the tumultuous history of the city can be traced, and also to a series of tableaux showing Arab and Druze village life and costumes.

Most of the buildings in old Acre are squeezed together and threaded by narrow alleys, in which a rich assortment of communities amiably rub shoulders. The population includes nearly 5,000 Christian and Moslem Arabs and 20,000 Jewish immigrants from a score of different countries. New immigrant quarters have spread to the east, across the highway.

The chief meeting-place is the winding bazaar which crosses the Old City. Here Arab pottery jars jostle plastic cups and saucers, while in the metal-workers' street, European tin-smiths hammer out zinc buckets next door to Arab copper-smiths designing the traditional coffee urns. Little donkeys share with lorries the deliveries of fresh fruit and vegetables, and prices are settled in a

dozen different tongues. Travellers to Palestine in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries talked of the grain trade carried on in Acre, with 2,000 to 3,000 camels arriving daily in the season from Hauran (Syria). These have disappeared, and the trucks piled high with produce from the fertile Galilee have taken their place.

The most important Crusader monument is the Crypt of St John, in the Citadel, which has been excavated and the vaulted hall restored. The Citadel itself was the central prison of Palestine under the Mandate. In its dungeons were locked up captured members of the Jewish underground resistance movement, and tablets in the execution chamber record the names of those who were hanged. The novel and film *Exodus* recall the great 1947 jail-break of resistance fighters from the Acre prison. Here too are the cells where the Bahai apostles were imprisoned by the Turks half a century earlier. The Citadel, looking less grim after being repainted a soft pink colour, now serves as a Government psychiatric hospital.

The road down to the old port passes a number of Jezzar's cannon mounted on the sea-wall, and some captured French pieces that Sir Sydney Smith presented to him after the defeat of Bonaparte. The road ends at the port, now sanded up and shallow, with small fishing boats riding at anchor in the lee of a crumbling medieval tower.

Between Acre and the Lebanese border stretch twelve miles of fertile coastal plain. On some ancient maps this plain is called 'Asher', for in Biblical times it was part of the area allotted to the tribe of that name – though never fully occupied by it.

An avenue of eucalyptus trees just beyond the city limits of Acre marks the entrance to the Government Experimental Station, where a former Turkish Khan (caravan inn), with a spacious cobbled courtyard, now houses Israel's most important stud farm for horses and mules.

A mile to the west of it is the house and tomb of the Prophet and Founder of the Bahai Religion, Baha-Ullah, set in a beautiful flower garden. This is where he lived when he was released in 1892 after twenty-four years of imprisonment in Acre Jail. The house is preserved exactly as it was, and its furnishing is an odd blend of Victorian and Persian.

The dramatic stone aqueduct that runs parallel to the main road was built by Jezzar on the remains of an ancient Roman one, to