

potamia). These countries are all celebrated in the records of the Holy Scriptures, both Old and New, and for that reason form a peculiarly interesting study. It also comprises all the western and part of the eastern divisions of Arabia.

The islands of *Cyprus* and *Rhodes*, in the Mediterranean, with *Mitylene*, *Scio*, *Samos*, and all the Asiatic islands of the Grecian Archipelago, belong to Turkey. Cyprus, however, is occupied and administered by Great Britain, under treaty with Turkey.

Asia Minor comprises the peninsula between the Black Sea and the Mediterranean. The greater part of the country consists of a high plateau, enclosed by the *Taurus Mountains* on the south, and the parallel range of the *Anti-Taurus* on the north, both extending close along the coast. The former are the highest, some of the peaks reaching to 13,000 feet in height.

The rivers, owing to the mountainous nature of the country, are naturally small and rapid, but are numerous, and many of them celebrated in ancient history. The principal are the *Kizil Irmak*, the ancient Halys, formerly the boundary between Lydia and Media; the *Sakaria*, flowing into the Black Sea; and the *Meander* and *Sarabat*, flowing into the Archipelago. There are several salt lakes in the interior.

The climate on the plains is hot and dry, but healthy, and in the mountain-lands cool and pleasant. The soil is fruitful, especially in the valleys, but much neglected. Grain, tobacco, cotton, and all southern fruits, such as figs, olives, grapes, and pomegranates, grow in abundance. The elevated parts of the country afford excellent pasturage to large flocks and herds of cattle. Along the shore of the Black Sea a dense forest covers the land.

The commerce of the country is chiefly in the hands of the Greeks, Armenians, and Jews. The people are chiefly Mohammedans, but a large number belong to the Greek and Armenian Churches. The population is about eleven millions.

Smyrna (150,000) is the chief commercial city of Asia Minor, and makes large exports of dried fruits. It is situated on a fine bay, and claims to have been the birthplace of Homer. *Scutari*, opposite Constantinople; *Brusa* (60,000), near the foot of Mount Olympus; *Kutayi* and *Angora*, on branches of the *Sakaria*, the latter celebrated for its silky-haired goats, are the most important towns; *Trebizond* (50,000) and *Sinope* are ports on the Black Sea; *Tokat* has copper mines and manufactures. *Tarsus*, celebrated as the birthplace of St. Paul, is on the southern coast, opposite the island of Cyprus.

Armenia lies to the east of Asia Minor, between it and the Russian Province of Transcaucasia, south of the Caucasus Mountains. It much resembles Asia Minor in physical features, climate, and productions, but is still more mountainous. The land of Eden is supposed to

have been in Armenia; and *Mount Ararat*, upon which the ark rested after the flood, is on the borders of Armenia, Persia, and Trans-Caucasia. It rises in two peaks, the highest being 17,112 feet high. The rivers *Euphrates* and *Tigris* rise in the mountains of Armenia, and flow southwards into the Persian Gulf; and the *Kur*, with its tributary the *Aras*, flows into the Caspian Sea.

Erzeroum (60,000), the largest city, is situated on an elevated plain, 6,000 feet high, near the source of the Euphrates.

Syria and Palestine.

Syria extends southwards from the Taurus Mountains, along the eastern shore of the Mediterranean, and includes also Palestine, or the Holy Land.

From the Taurus range the mountains of Lebanon stretch southwards in two parallel chains, called the *Libanus* and *Anti-Libanus*—the latter terminating in *Mount Hermon*, 9,381 feet high, its peak covered with snow for the greater part of the year. Between these ranges lies *Cœle-Syria*, or *Hollow Syria*. *Mount Carmel*, on the coast, forms a bold and lofty promontory to the south of the Bay of Acre. In the north, the river *Orontes* rises, and flows past Antioch into the Mediterranean. Near *Mount Hermon* are the sources of the *Jordan*, which flows southwards through the *Sea of Galilee*, or *Tiberias*, so celebrated for the stirring scenes which occurred there during the life of Our Lord upon earth. From this lake the *Jordan* flows into the *Dead Sea*, after a course, including many windings, of about 200 miles. The *Dead Sea* is a lake nine times saltier than the ocean, and is 1,300 feet below the level of the Mediterranean; and the *Jordan*, for the greater part of its course, is also below the level of the sea, being the only known instance of such an extraordinary depression. The mountains of Lebanon are continued southwards by the mountains of Palestine; and still farther by the mountains of *Seir*, terminated at the extremity of the peninsula at the head of the Red Sea by the *Sinaitic* group, on one of which Moses received the Ten Commandments. One of the same group is *Mount Horeb*, where Moses saw the burning bush. To the east of Jerusalem is the *Mount of Olives*, the favorite resort of our Saviour. To the east and south of Syria is a great sandy desert, extending into Arabia, and inhabited by wild and rapacious tribes of Arabs, who live by pasturing their flocks and by plunder.

The climate in the valleys is hot, and the soil is naturally rich, but it is poorly cultivated, and, owing to long neglect, has become sterile and barren. Grain, olives, figs, grapes, and pomegranates grow abundantly with but little labor, and the land would be literally a "land flowing with milk and honey," if its resources were developed.