

Palestine and Its Transformation. By Ellsworth Huntington, Assistant Professor of Geography in Yale University. With Illustrations. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. \$2.

Professor Huntington describes the land of Palestine entirely from the scientific standpoint. His book is based on materials gathered during an extended visit to Syria two years ago. While not a mere record of that expedition it embodies many of his experiences and is enriched by his acute observations. The author has a theory in regard to the climatic changes in Western Asia, upon which he brings his Palestinian studies to bear with a good deal of elaboration and illustration. He believes that much of the history of the countries there has been materially affected by the "pulsatory" climatic changes, and he holds that



ROCK THEATER AND TOMBS AT PETRA.
From "Palestine and Its Transformation."

the present impoverished condition of the populations around the Jordan territory is not due to ignorance, laziness or bad government, but to lack of proper rainfall. He sustains his contention with a wealth of pertinent archeological and historical as well as geographical material. If it can be shown—and his arguments are weighty if not wholly convincing—that Petra and Palmyra have become depopulated because of failing water supply within the cities and surrounding countries, it will be necessary to revise some historical estimates as well as some plans for the regeneration of the land sacred to Jew and Christian. The occasional light thrown on Biblical questions, as in the suggested site of ancient Sodom, is all the more grateful because incidental.