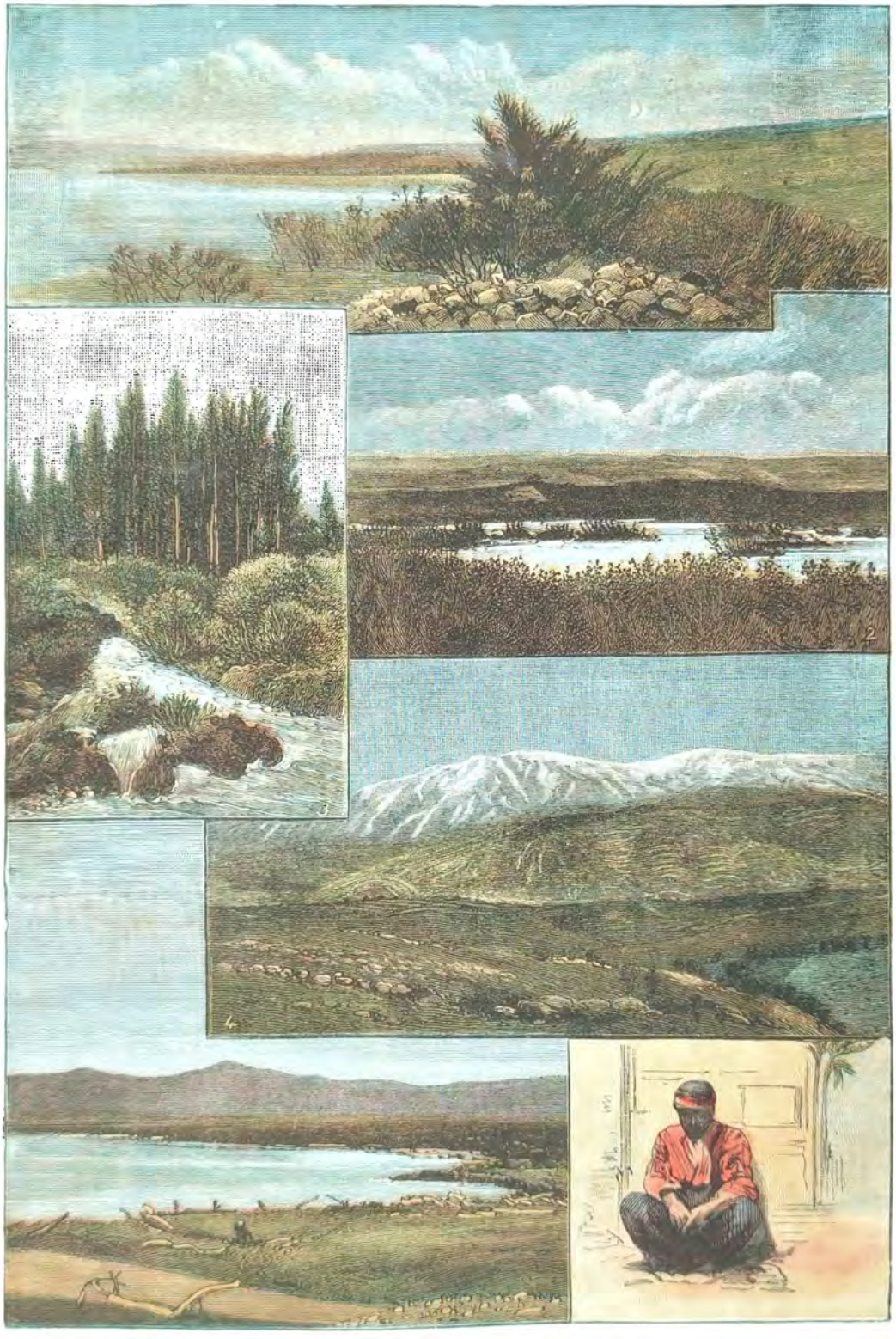
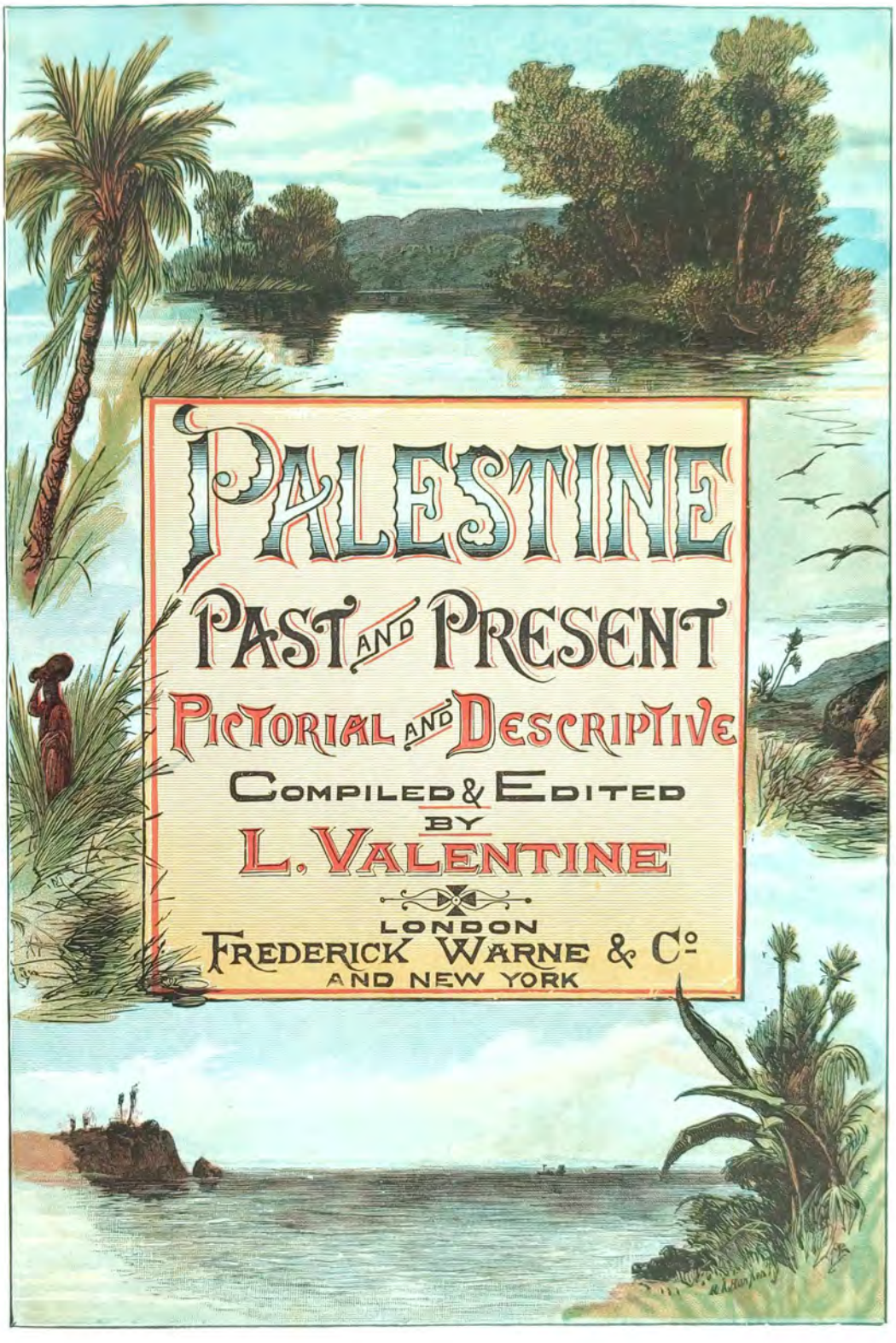
PALESTINE
PAST AND PRESENT



VIEWS ON THE RIVER JORDAN.


PALESTINE
PAST AND PRESENT
PICTORIAL AND DESCRIPTIVE
COMPILED & EDITED
BY
L. VALENTINE
LONDON
FREDERICK WARNE & Co
AND NEW YORK

PALESTINE

PAST AND PRESENT

PICTORIAL AND DESCRIPTIVE

Compiled and Edited

By L. VALENTINE

AUTHOR OF "PICTURESQUE ENGLAND" ETC

ILLUSTRATED WITH UPWARDS OF ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY WOOD ENGRAVINGS AND A SERIES OF FULL-PAGE COLOURED PLATES



LONDON

FREDERICK WARNE & CO

AND NEW YORK

Butler & Tanner,
The Selwood Printing Works,
Frome, and London.

PREFACE

IN compiling and editing this volume, a great number of works, written both by early and modern travellers, have been consulted. The identification by the Palestine Exploration Society of places mentioned in the Scriptures has been followed, and we are indebted to Mr. Murray's excellent "Handbook to Syria and Palestine" for the facts that the beautiful scarcophagus discovered at Sidon has been identified as the tomb of Alexander the Great; and that a machine capable of raising the immense stones used by ancient builders has been found at Salkhat. We have also to return our best thanks to those friends who have assisted us by giving us information as to the present state of the Holy Land, in which a new era has been opened by the construction of railways—here described and illustrated.

An American friend has also favoured us with a copy of one of the Tell el Amarna Tablets, recently discovered amidst the ruins of the palace of Amenophis II., and containing letters written in cuneiform characters, from the King of Jerusalem to Pharaoh, in the time of Joshua, for which we now thank him.





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INTRODUCTION



INTRODUCTION.

THE DESERT ROAD TO PALESTINE.

SOME account of the journey of the Israelites to Palestine, after their exodus from Egypt, seems natural and necessary in a volume that aims at a description of the Holy Land, past and present. The names of the places visited during that pilgrimage which are mentioned in the Bible have given the clue by which their sites have been identified, and the objections of cavillers and infidels completely refuted. Indeed, the greatest boon that explorers and travellers have bestowed on Christendom is the extraordinary confirmation that their labours have given to the truth of the Scriptures, and the light thrown by them on many difficult passages in the Bible.

Many mistaken identities have been shown and corrected, amongst them the spot at which the children of Israel miraculously crossed the Red Sea.

We have ourselves stood at Suez by the sea where it was then believed the tribes made their miraculous passage, and the memory of the sunshiny, smiling waters, and the distant shore, still lingers; and we half regret that science and a better reading of the Bible make it needful to believe that the spot was not here, but further up the land; in fact, that it was somewhere near Lake Timsah. For geology shows that the Red Sea, or Sea of Weeds, formerly went much further north, as far as the present Lake Timsah, but that, the land rising, the waters retreated, and left only lakes of brackish water, where the Suez Canal now runs.

The Bible tells us that "the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot . . . beside children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks, and herds, even very much cattle."[1] . . . "And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not by the way of the land of the Philistines"—the shortest way—"although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt."

The fugitives would indeed have seen war there for the first time, opposed to the best troops of Egypt, for the fortress was strongly garrisoned.

[1] Exodus xii. 37, 38.

"They reach the district of Succoth and camp within its limits, to the west. of Pithom. There is no more likely place for this encampment than the neighbourhood of Kassassin, where there is abundance of forage and water. . . They continued their march on the following day, and encamped at Etham on the eastern end of Wâdy Tumilât. . . . So the route of the Israelites must have been near the present town of Ismailia, at the head of Lake Timsah."[1]

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, that they turn back and encamp before Pi-hahiroth, between Migdol and the sea, before Baal-zephon: over against it shall ye encamp by the sea. And Pharaoh will say of the children of Israel, They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in. And I will harden Pharaoh's heart, and he shall follow after them; and I will get me honour upon Pharaoh, and upon all his host; and the Egyptians shall know that I am the Lord. And they did so."[2]

The host were led by a pillar of cloud by day; at night it was a fiery column.

As soon as Pharaoh's pursuing host approached the tribes, the cloudy pillar moved between them and the Egyptians, to whom it must have appeared like a fog. The Israelites were however in great danger, and they murmured at Moses, saying, "Because there were no graves in Egypt, hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?"

Moses bade them not fear, but to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord![3] The pillar of cloud was darkness to Pharaoh's host, but light to Israel all night; "and the one came not near the other." And God told Moses to stretch his rod over the sea, and as he did so, the messenger and servant of God, the east wind, blew so strongly all night that the sea was driven back and divided. "And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and their left." Their steps were followed by the Egyptians, who were, no doubt, misled by the gloom of the cloudy pillar, and scarcely saw where they were. And "the Lord looked forth upon the host of the Egyptians through the pillar of fire and of cloud, and discomfited the host of the Egyptians. And He took off"—some ancient versions read 'bound'—"their chariot wheels, that they drave them heavily: so that the Egyptians said, Let us flee from the face of Israel, for the Lord fighteth for them against the Egyptians."

But it was too late. God bade Moses again stretch his hand over the sea,

[1] Sir J. W. Dawson, "Egypt and Syria," p. 59.

[2] Exodus xiv. 1–4. (R.V.)

[3] Exodus xiv. 11–14, 22.

and as he obeyed, the sea rushed back in its strength. "When the morning appeared," and the king and host of Egypt found themselves in the midst of the waters, they turned, and endeavoured to regain the shore, but it was in vain. The waters covered them; not one was left. The children of Israel from the opposite shore saw this strange and awful vindication of the power of the Almighty.

Egyptian records contain no account of this terrible catastrophe; they record only victories, but there is one testimony, silent, but plainly to be understood. The coffin of Pharaoh Meneptah is empty. Of all his dynasty his mummy only is wanting. The case is empty.

There is nothing militating against the Scriptures in this new discovery of the place where the crossing was effected. The Bible does not tell us where Pihahiroth was; it might have been near Lake Timsah, or at the end of the Gulf of Suez, where the Straits of Jubal begin; the sea then extending to where the lake now stands.

Wherever they crossed we may be sure that it was by miracle—a miracle never forgotten by the nation, nor by the eastern world.

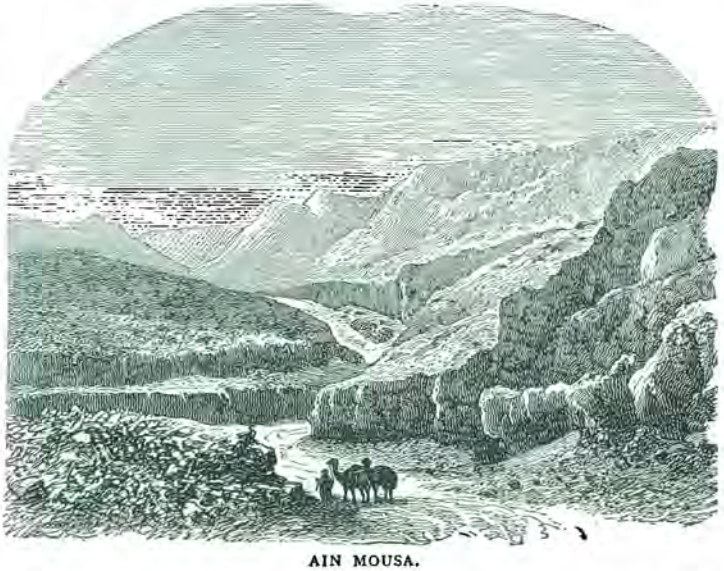
They crossed, and Pharaoh perished, and then they are found in the wilderness of Shur. Modern discoverers tell us that *Shur* means a wall, and that Etham is equivalent to it, meaning a fortification. They had landed just beyond the great wall that had been built to protect Egypt from the incursions of the wild inhabitants of the desert.

Professor Palmer thought that the reason this wilderness was called "of the wall," was because the long escarpments of the Jebels er Rahah and El Tîh were exactly like walls. Mr. Ebers and Brugsch Bey prove, however, from Egyptian inscriptions and papyri, that the wall had a more literal meaning, and that Shur or Etham (the names are identical in sense, one meaning wall, the other fortification) was really the wilderness near the great wall of Egypt.

They went three days, and found no water, reaching then the springs of Marah. Here the water was bitter, and the Israelites again murmured against Moses, and said, "What shall we drink?" Moses, as he always did, appealed at once to God, and the Lord told him to cast the branch of a tree that He showed him into the waters, and they were instantly made sweet. These waters are called now the Wells of Moses. They are springs, not wells, and there are about a dozen of them. The Ordnance Survey party examined the water. The largest spring is still a little salt and bitter; the others, though brackish, are drinkable. What the healing tree was we do not know, though trees certainly grow on the oasis. The spot identified as Marah, is now called 'Ain Haw-wârah.

Twenty miles from the Wells of Moses is the Wâdy Sudur, memorable as the scene of the murder of Professor Palmer, Captain Gill, and Lieutenant Charrington, by Arabi's people; an event that excited the deepest feelings of regret in England. This valley is sometimes flooded by streams descending from the Tîh mountains, the southern boundary of Palestine.

The Israelites pursued their way through the desert to Elim, an oasis of twelve springs of water and seventy palm trees. Wâdy Gharandel has been identified as the Elim of the Exodus. It is still a delightful valley, with pasture near it. The Israelites encamped by the waters and rested here for a month; for they did not leave the spot till the fifteenth day of the second month after departing out of the land of Egypt.



AIN MOUSA.

The rest must have been welcome to the wanderers. No doubt the Israelites would have rejoiced in the beauty of Elim. A stream now runs through the wâdy, and there are still many palm trees growing here—especially the date palm, the dates of which are very fine. Each tree has an owner, who pays a tax on its produce to the Egyptian government.

The peninsula of Sinai, in which the Israelites now were, is triangular in shape, and is bounded on the north by the Tîh plateau, of which we shall speak by-and-by—a wall-like escarpment. On the west it has the Gulf of Suez; on the east the Gulf of Akâbah. In extent it is about equal to a large English county. It is a mountainous region, but on the western and south-western parts low and isolated, with plateaux on the top. The mountains are beautifully coloured.

From Wâdy Gharandei northwards the country is smooth and level, but a desert.

"And they removed from Elim, and encamped by the Red Sea." [1]

Two roads presented themselves to the Israelites—the Wâdy Gharandel, in which they were, or the Wâdy Taiyibeh. But Gharandel was impassable further on; therefore they must have taken Wâdy Taiyibeh. There was another reason why they diverged to the sea-coast. The Egyptians had some turquoise and copper mines on the peninsula, and the miners were guarded by Egyptian



OASIS IN DESERT.

soldiers, who would not have let the fugitives pass. Cavillers at Holy Scripture have mentioned these mines as a reason for doubting the passage of Israel through the Sinai peninsula. Had they known or understood the account in Numbers xxxiii. they would have seen that they were avoided: "And they journeyed from the Red Sea, and pitched (their tents) in the wilderness of Sin."

Here hunger was added to thirst. Probably they still had water in their skin bottles, but their flour was exhausted; and the people as usual murmured against

[1] Num. xxxiii. 10.

Moses and against Aaron in the wilderness, and said to them, "Would that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, when we did eat bread to the full; for ye have brought us forth into this wilderness to kill this whole assembly with hunger."

God, still mercifully bearing with their slavish selfishness and want of faith, sent them grain (manna) from heaven. They were to gather it early, enough for one day; but on the day preceding the Sabbath they were to gather double the quantity. On that day it would keep to the next, on any other day it became bad.



WILDERNESS OF SIN.

This Manna is described as a small white grain, like coriander seed, and its taste like wafers made with honey. It is remarkable that personal exertion is still required from them, even when miraculously fed; and we see from this account that the Sabbath was still kept by Adam's descendants.

The glory of the Lord then appeared in the cloud, and God ordered Moses to tell the people that at even they should have flesh to eat, and in the morning bread.

And accordingly in the evening quails came up and covered the camp.

Mr. Harper has identified the wilderness of Sin with the great plain of El Markhâ, and has made some very striking remarks on the gift of quails.

"The manna," he says, "was to come in the morning when the dew that lay was gone up; the quails in the evening. The point of the miracle of quails lies, I think, in this: quails migrate at night in Egypt. I have often noted this. When expecting quails at the time of their usual migrations, I have walked over a lentil field late in the evening with my dogs, and found none. Next morning, at dawn, before sunrise, I have gone over the same field, and the quails rose at every step." [1]

"And the Israelites journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, and pitched in Dophkah; and they journeyed from Dophkah and pitched in Alush."

Dophkah and Alush are not identified. Two days would bring the Israelites to Wâdy Feirân. This last place is supposed to be Rephidim.

It is a fine wâdy with a high cliff at either end. But there was no water in it then, nor is there now. The Israelites found also that the nearest oases and wells were strongly defended by the Amalekites, and they were compelled to halt, thirsty and weary, on the borders of the plain, while a short distance beyond it was water. Here they again murmured against Moses, as they had done from the first, and said, "Wherefore hast thou brought us out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?"

God's mercy answered their murmurs with a miracle. Moses was commanded to strike the rock, and instantly the living water poured forth from it.

Mr. Harper says, "It is a significant fact that in the Wâdy Feirân, immediately before the part of the valley where the fertility commences, I discovered a rock which Arab tradition regards as the site of the miracle. This rock, which *has never before been noticed by travellers*, is called Hesy el Khattatîn, and is surrounded by heaps of pebbles placed upon every available stone in the immediate neighbourhood. These are accounted for as follows: 'When the children of Israel sat down by the miraculous stream and rested, after their thirst was quenched, they amused themselves by throwing pebbles upon the surrounding pieces of rock.'

"This has passed into a custom, which the Arabs of the present day keep up in memory of the event. It is supposed especially to propitiate Moses, and any one having a sick friend, throws a pebble in his name, with the assurance of speedy relief." [2]

[1] "The Bible and Modern Discoveries," pp. 125–126.

[2] "Desert of the Exodus."

Some people have objected to Wâdy Feirân being considered Rephidim, on account of the Sinaitic writing on the rocks at Wâdy Mukatteb, which were supposed to have been made by the Israelites. They are found all over the peninsula, and there are thousands of them ; but Professor Palmer, Mr. Harper, and all authorities do not think the Israelites inscribed them. They have been thought to be Christian, because there are crosses in them ; but the cross was a heathen symbol long before it was used by Christians. It was established as a Christian sign by Constantine the Great. There are no crosses on the tombs of the catacombs for the first three centuries. It is therefore impossible to say who inscribed the Sinaitic rocks.



MOUNT SERBÂL.

From this wâdy the magnificent Jebel Serbâl rises in great majesty, and is supposed by some to be the Holy Mountain.

Feirân was one of the towns of the Amalekites, and the ruins of this town and others with towers, aqueducts and rock tombs are still found near it and on the mountains round it.

The valley long believed to be the site of Rephidim, now called El Ledja, is in the very highest part of the Sinai group, between the two peaks of Mount Mûsa, regarded as Sinai, and Mount St. Catherine, which is identified with Horeb. Here, however, the Israelites would have been sure to find water, and the miracle would be unnecessary.

There is a rock here which the monks of the convent and some of the Arabs say was the one struck by Moses. It is an insulated rock of granite, with apertures upon its surface. They are twenty in number, and run in nearly a straight line round three sides of the stone, and are for the most part ten or twelve inches long, two or three inches broad, and one or two inches deep. This is Burckhardt's account, who adds: "Every observer must be convinced on the slightest observation, that most of these fissures are the work of art, but three or four perhaps are natural, and these may first have drawn the attention of the monks to the stone, and induced them to call it the rock of the miraculous supply of water. Besides, the marks of art are evident in the holes themselves, the spaces between them have been chiselled, so as to make it appear that the stone had been worn in those parts by the action of the water, though it cannot be doubted that if water had flowed from the fissures it must generally have taken quite a different direction." This rock was shown as the real one in the fifteenth century; therefore, if the marks were meant to deceive, they are a very old deception. The present monks quite believe in the rock, and the Arabs put offerings of grass in the fissures, Burckhardt says, "to the memory of Moses, in the same way as they place grass on the graves of their saints, because grass is to them the most precious gift of nature."

Mr. Harper's discovery of the rock appears quite conclusively to settle the site of Rephidim.

Whilst they dwelt near the miraculous spring, the Amalekites, alarmed no doubt by the close proximity of so large a force, and tempted by the cattle of the strangers, attacked the Israelites. Moses at once ordered Joshua to collect men and oppose the foe.

The first battle of the Israelites was then fought. Fancy can easily picture the scene. The broad valley full of the contending hosts; the aged but majestic prophet and leader seated on a rock from whence he could survey the fight, his arms raised to heaven in prayer, supported, however, by Aaron and Hur, lest from physical exhaustion they should fall; for when they fell, Amalek prevailed; whilst they were raised, Israel—a visible token to show the inexperienced soldiers of Israel that the Lord of Hosts was their Leader and Captain. Many an eye must have turned to that group on the rock, and imbibed fresh courage from it. Hur is thought by some to have been the husband of Miriam, by others the son of Moses. That he was of great importance in the host we may be certain; for when Moses went up Mount Sinai to receive the tables of the law, he desired that Aaron and Hur should be consulted in all difficulties during his absence.

But the battle was won when the sun went down.

Soon after, the tribes, unopposed, moved on from Rephidim to Sinai, and on the fifteenth of the third month after their departure from Egypt they reached it.

The spot chosen by them for their encampment was, Professor Palmer says, "the plain of Er Rahah." "And there Israel camped before the mount."

The two most elevated summits or peaks of the central group of the Sinai range are, Mount St. Catherine and the Mount of Moses. The former, called locally Jebel Katarina, is identified as the Horeb of Scripture; the latter, Jebel Mûsa, with Sinai.

There are two other conspicuous mountains in the Horeb range, and one of them, the Mount Serbâl, must have been the first seen by the Israelites. Burckhardt believes that pilgrims (before the sixth century) visited it as the real Mount of God.

Dr. Kitto, by a number of excellent arguments, proves that the whole range of mountains and the district round them were called Horeb, Sinai being one of the group. "Thus," he says, "the Israelites are said to have 'made a calf in Horeb' (Ps. cvi. 19), certainly not in a mountain, but in the wilderness of Sinai, while Moses was in the mountain."

He also is inclined to think Serbâl is really Sinai, as it meets all the requirements of the description of it, having a large open plain at its foot, and many springs of water.

The reader is referred for the clever discussion on the three mountains to the notes in Dr. Kitto's Edition of the Bible, pp. 162, 163.

Jebel Mûsa is, however, the Sinai ascended by pilgrims at the present time. The summit is reached by regular steps cut in the rock. They are said to number 1,400, but they have been much damaged by time and the winter torrents.

The ascent is very steep, and takes nearly two hours, not reckoning the pauses for rest. Two-thirds up the steps there is "a small plain, where a tall cypress tree grows beside a stone tank. Here there is a little chapel dedicated to the Virgin, and looking back, one can perceive the forsaken monastery of St. Elias, erected on the spot where it was believed Elijah's cave was when the great and strong wind rent the mountains and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; and after the wind an earthquake, and after the earthquake a fire—and then "a still, small voice."

It is singular, too, that local tradition assigns the same spot to the speaking of God to Moses.

Hence, a very steep ascent leads to the summit, on which is a church, the

object of Christian pilgrimages. There is a poor mosque on a little corner peak, about thirty paces distant; it is frequented by Moslem pilgrims from many lands, and much visited by the Arabs of the peninsula. The Arabs believe that the tables of the Ten Commandments are hidden under the floor of the church. They greatly revere this mountain, as they believe that



ASCENT TO JEBEL MUSA.

the rain of Horeb is under the control of Moses, and that he can give or withhold it.

Mr. Caine, in "Letters from the East," is struck by a difficulty which has been found by other writers, about this site. He says, "What occasions no small surprise at first, is the small number of plains, valleys, or open places

where the children of Israel could have stood conveniently to behold the glory on the mount. One generally places in imagination round Sinai extensive plains or sandy deserts, where the camp of the host was placed, where the families of Israel stood at the door of their tents, and the line was drawn round the mountain, which no one might break through on pain of death. But it is not thus: save the valley by which we approached Sinai, about half a mile wide and a few miles in length, and a small plain we afterwards passed through, with a rocky hill in the middle, there appear to be few open places around the mount. We did not, however, examine it on all sides. On putting the question to the superior of the convent where he imagined the Israelites stood: 'Everywhere,' he replied, waving his hand about, 'in the ravines, the valleys, as well as the plains.'"

The neighbouring peak is called Jebel Katerina, from a tradition that St. Catherine's body was brought there by angels after her martyrdom. She was, according to the Golden Legend, a Cypriote queen or princess, who, when urged to marry, said she would only wed one born of a virgin mother, stainless and pure, and whose crest was a blood-red cross. Then in a dream the Virgin appeared to her, and she was united to her Saviour; for whom, when she had been taught to know Him better, she suffered martyrdom on the wheel. Then angels bore her body to the Mount of God.

She is commemorated, also, in the name of the Greek convent which is at the foot of the mountain. This mountain is much higher than Jebel Mûsa. Burckhardt gives the following description of it: "From this elevated peak a very extensive view opened before us, and the direction of the different surrounding chains of mountains could be distinctly traced. The upper nucleus of Sinai, composed almost entirely of granite, forms a rocky wilderness of an irregular circular shape, intersected by many narrow valleys, and from thirty to forty miles in diameter. It contains the highest mountains of the peninsula, whose shaggy and pointed peaks, and steep and ragged sides, render it clearly distinguishable from all the rest of the country in view. It is upon this highest region of the peninsula that the fertile valleys are found, that produce fruit trees: they are principally to the west and south-west of the convent, at three or four hours' distance. Water, too, is always found in plenty in this district, on which account it is the place of refuge of all the Bedouins when the low country is parched up."

Of the two mountains, St. Catherine's has the greater number of valleys round it. It stands nearly in the centre of the desert of Sinai, as defined by Burckhardt.

This traveller also ascended Mount Serbâl, the ascent of which he described as very difficult, though there are traces of a path and steps. Burckhardt tells us that he walked over sharp rocks till he came to the almost perpendicular side of the upper Serbâl; up which he climbed by a narrow and dangerous cleft. It takes four hours to ascend to the lowest summit of the mountain. This lower summit has five peaks rising from it; lofty cones seen very far off.

Burckhardt ascended the highest peak, the one to the east; he had to achieve this feat bare-footed, frequently to crawl; and had he not occasionally found a few shrubs to grasp, he could not have succeeded in reaching the top. Here he found a platform of fifty paces in circumference, on which was a heap of loose stones forming a circle. At a few paces below its summit, large insulated blocks of stone hang, as if about to rush down, and where they present a smooth surface, inscriptions are seen, the greater part of which are illegible. Between some of these masses there are small caves, having their walls covered with inscriptions like those on the boulders. These inscriptions, and others in the valley leading from the base of Serbâl to Wâdy Feirân, and the ruined path and steps, inclined Burckhardt to think that it was this mountain which was once believed to be the one that Moses ascended to receive the tables of the Law. For the present Jebel Mûsa was not identified as "Sinai" till the convent was built in the sixth century; until that period Serbâl was the place of pilgrimage.

But the Sinai Survey Exploration, who took accurate surveys of both Jebel Mûsa and Jebel Serbâl, have decided that Jebel Mûsa is the true Mount of God. Mr. Caine acknowledges that he did not see every side of the mountain; if he had, he would have perceived a vast plain where the Israelites could have stood, lying before the other side of Jebel Mûsa. This height, a stern, majestic mass of rock, may well, as Josephus says, have been regarded with awe "from the rumour that God dwelt there." It is called Ras Sufsâfeh—the Willow Peak; the great plain below it is called Er Râhah. The grandeur of its first appearance from the mouth of Wâdy ed Deir is remarkable and solemnly impressive.

In the valley approaching Sinai is the hill where Aaron is said to have set up the golden calf, probably a relapse into the idolatry of Egypt, the worship of Apis. At the foot of the mountains is the convent of St. Catherine. It was built by the Empress Helena, according to tradition, and was dedicated originally to the Transfiguration; but after the miraculous translation of St. Catherine's body here, it was named after the saint, whose name was also given to the neighbouring mountain.

There is a lovely garden before the monastery, with cypress and poplars, olive and almond trees growing in it. It is a very ancient-looking building, strongly built and castellated, with a massive wall of granite facing the valley. Travellers used formerly to be drawn up into the convent through a wicket, but they are now admitted by a side door. The windows are high up in the lofty walls. There is a larger and arched chief portal, but it is now blocked up. A large iron gate leads into the courtyard. A small wicket gate of massive iron admits the monks and their guests into the building. Every precaution has been taken for safety, but the hills overlooking the monastery command it.

There is a buttress tower built or restored by Kleber, when stationed here during Napoleon's invasion of Palestine; in some niches near it the Arabs often burn incense as an offering to Elijah, whom they greatly venerate.

The church is a fine building decorated with curious paintings; but the most remarkable part of it is the Chapel of the Burning Bush, an oratory at the east of the church. An altar, covered with beautifully chased silver, stands on the spot where the Burning Bush was supposed to have stood; and the lamps over it are never extinguished. Above the altar is a very small window, through which it is said the sunlight only sends one ray in all the year. This is said to dart from a cleft in the rock, which is marked outside by a wooden cross. There is an Arab legend attached to it. The tablets of the Law, it says, which Moses had received from God, were left on the mountain. While they were there a miracle occurred. It rained for forty days and forty nights. Natives of Hampshire will be reminded of St. Swithin. The monks, ascribing the miracle to the tablets, brought them down and built them into the wall of the church, leaving this tiny aperture, through which they could be shown when they wished for rain. Then they open the window, and the magic tablets instantly cause it to fall. This chapel or oratory can only be entered barefooted.

The convent is much frequented by Russian pilgrims, who are some of the most devout of those who visit the place.

It is most picturesquely situated. On the left is the great Jebel ed Deir; on the right, the shoulder of the Jebel Mûsa block of mountains, and in an opening between them the green summit of Jebel Moneijah is seen. The monks have, as we have said, a large garden; in the centre of it is the crypt where they are buried. There is a library, and some valuable MSS. are in it; amongst them the "Codex Aureus," which Professor Palmer examined while staying at the convent. "It is," he says, "a beautifully written copy of the four Gospels, containing illuminated portraits of the Evangelists and other



THE MOUNTAINS AND CONVENT OF SINAI.

sacred personages. It is attributed to the Emperor Theodosius, the colophon giving the date and transcriber's name in the abbreviated uncial characters."

The Bedouins believe that the convent is under the immediate protection of Allah, and that any attempt to injure or rob it would bring down speedy vengeance on the culprit. They think that the vast treasures of the monks are under the care of mysterious powers, and that any one entering the subterranean chamber in which these riches are kept would be instantly struck dead. The cross is supposed to be a charm which will ever protect the inmates of the Convent of St. Catherine; and they look up at it, as it rises above the walls, with a certain awe and fear.

The Arabs of Sinai are very poor; but some of them have negro slaves, who do all menial work for them, and take care of the camels and herds. The dress of these Arabs, like that of most other tribes, is a shirt with long open sleeves, fastened by a girdle of leather round the waist, and over this is worn the 'abba, or long robe, of camel's or goat's hair. They do not wear the kefiyeh, or gay handkerchief, worn by the Palestine tribes, over their head, but a turban or a fez.

The women are veiled, tattoo their chins, and plait their hair into a kind of horn in front. The unmarried girls tie across their forehead a piece of red cloth, with mother-of-pearl pendants hanging from it.

In Wâdy Lejah there is a monastery dedicated to the forty martyrs of Cappadocia, and called the Arbain. Spirits are said to haunt the spot and sing. It is a resting-place for pilgrims who are going to ascend Jebel Katarina.

Near this valley are some of the stone rings or circles seen so often in Palestine.

Jebel Katarina has been thought the highest peak in the Sinai range; but the observations of the Sinai Survey Expedition show that, though it is a few feet higher than Umm Shomer (its rival in supposed height), Jebel Zebir is higher than either of them. But Katarina is the finer mountain, "being composed of one huge block of porphyry." The ascent is steep and difficult; but the traveller is repaid by a magnificent prospect from the summit. The scenery is almost wholly of mountains of varying forms and shades of colour. The green summit of Jebel Musa, the darker one of Jebel ed Deir, the great rock of the Ras Sufsâfeh; the narrow gorge of the Nagb Hawa. Towards the south lies the plain of El Ga'ah, with the Gulf of Suez, and there is a dim vision of Jebel 'Akrab on the African coast, the other side of the Arabian Gulf. In fact, the view stretches over nearly all the Sinaitic peninsula.

It was from Sinai that the Law was proclaimed to the listening and terri-

fied tribes, after God had descended with thunders and lightnings in a thick cloud on the mount, and an earthquake. "And mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire: and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." [1]

"The earth shook, the heavens also dropped at the presence of God; even Sinai itself was moved at the presence of God, the God of Israel."

In the neighbourhod of Sinai are many of the great stone circles to be



ENGRAVED ROCKS.

found all over Europe and Asia, resembling those called Druidical in Britain; they are found near the strange beehive huts, which were human dwellings. Some of the circles measure a hundred feet in diameter. In the centre is a great heap of boulders. On these being removed, a cist was found, containing a human skeleton doubled up and buried, so that the head and knees met. Both these circles and the huts are called by the Arabs "nawâmîs," or mosquito houses, "their tradition being that the children of Israel built them as a shelter

[1] Exod. xix. 18.

from a plague of mosquitos which had been sent against them by Heaven as a punishment for their rebellion and sins."[1]

There are small enclosures also in the circles, showing, by the burnt earth and charcoal in them, that sacrifices were offered here; of course to the dead.

The desert at that time must have been able to support a large population; in fact, it is generally supposed that the peninsula was much more fertile even in the time of Moses than it is now. The constant cutting down of trees has caused the want of water, as it always does; and this destruction still continues throughout not only Sinai but Palestine, where trees most precious to the country are cut down for charcoal.

Before we leave Sinai we must say something of the inscriptions on the rocks, of which we have spoken in the account of Serbâl. They are in Wâdy Mukatteb, the Valley of the Inscriptions. It is a broad, open valley. On one side are low hills; on the other, a few fine mountains. From the low hills a mass of broken rock has here and there slipped down, and it is on the smooth pieces of these rocks that the inscriptions are found. They are mere scratches on the rock, Professor Palmer tells us, "names, with rude figures of men and animals. The language of some of them is the Semitic or Aramean, once common through the East; it was closely related to the Hebrew, and must have been used by very early people. It is very much the same as the Nabathean (that is, Idumean) inscriptions found in Petra and Central Syria."

"It is not true," says Professor Palmer, "that they are found in inaccessible places high up on the rock, nor do we ever meet with them unless there is some pleasant shade or convenient camping ground close by.

"They are probably, therefore, much the same inscriptions that English tourists of the not very highly educated class are fond of putting on places they have visited. It may be in the distant future that Tom, Dick and Harry may have left marks that will exercise the wits of future antiquarians.

"Serbâl, which served as a beacon tower, and consequently became a secular place of gathering, has many inscriptions; but Sinai's hallowed chapels and confessional archways are without a trace of them."[2] Nor would our Cockney tourists, we think, so far forget the sanctity of the place as to inscribe their names on St. Paul's or Westminster Abbey, much less *here*, though we have read with pain lately that American tourists to the Holy Land fire at the time-honoured relics of Baalbek, to bring down pieces of the carving to carry home. At least Englishmen never did anything like this; it seems like robbing Time itself.

[1] "Desert of the Exodus," p. 141. [2] p. 192.

After this decision of Professor Palmer, we may, we think, relinquish all idea that the inscriptions have any reference to the Israelites of the Exodus.

Near the old Egyptian mines there are some really remarkable tablets, resembling those by the Dog River, near Beyrout. They are wonderful carvings, recording the might and conquests of the Pharaohs; and the sculptures make them intelligible to every one. Here, in bas relief, are Pharaohs slaying captives; prisoners taken in war marching away from their homes; priests presenting offerings to hawk-headed gods; on the background, hieroglyphics.

But we are quite sure that the Israelites did not come by this route. They avoided it, and went by Wâdy Taiyîbeh.

After a residence of ten months in the wilderness of Sinai, the children of Israel again marched onwards, now in perfect order, each tribe under its own banner, summoned to start by the silver trumpets, setting out and encamping with a prayer from Moses.

Their first halting-place was Kibroth-Hattaavah, where the people, lusting for flesh, again received a miraculous supply of quails, to show them that God had still power to feed His people in the wilderness; but to show also that they might not be faithless and ungrateful with impunity, a terrible pestilence punished them, and they left many a corpse in the place, named from their discontent and its punishment, Kibroth-Hattaavah, the graves of lust.

They journeyed from Kibroth-Hattaavah unto Hazeroth, and abode in Hazeroth.[1] This is identified as 'Ain Huderah, which is a day's journey from Kibroth-Hattaavah, but Professor Palmer thinks that he has identified the site of Hazeroth at Erweis el Ebeirig, where he found traces of an encampment and many graves. An Arab tradition says that a Hajj caravan pitched its tents here, and was afterwards lost in the desert.

The Israelites journeyed slowly on from Hazeroth, and pitched in the wilderness of Paran. But they had rested, if even for a short time, at many stations, most of which are still unknown, before they reached the latter place. They had been to Ezion Gaber at the head of the Elanitic gulf, and took the route by the 'Akabah, not entering the Tîh by any of the southern passes. Heshmonah, six stations before Ezion Gaber, has been identified as the Heshmon which is said in Joshua to be one of "the uttermost cities of the tribe of the children of Judah towards the coast of Edom southwards,"[2] southwards being the Negeb. It was undoubtedly in the 'Azazimeh mountains, of which we shall speak by-and-by, and it shows, Professor Palmer thought, that the road taken by

[1] Num. xi. 35. [2] Josh. xv. 21.



DEATH IN THE WILDERNESS.

the children of Israel was that which skirts the south-western extremity of Jebel Magrâh. Supposing this is correct, the wilderness of Zin or Sin would be the south-east corner of the desert of El Tîh, between 'Akbah and the head of Wâdy Garaiyeh.

It was from Kadesh (Ain Gadîs), in the wilderness of Paran or of Zin, that Moses, by the command of God, sent twelve men to spy out the Land of Canaan, and said unto them, "Get you up this way southward, and go up into the mountain."

Many attempts were made in vain to find the site of Kadesh Barnea. Dr. Robinson thought he had succeeded, but it was found that he had been mistaken. The Rev. John Rowlands was the discoverer of the true Kadesh Barnea. He found it in the oasis called 'Ain Kadîs, the Arabic form of Kadesh.

Here there is a copious stream of pure living water. Mr. Rowlands cites, as proofs of its being the true site, that "it lies at the foot of the mountains of the Amorites." (Moses says, in Deuteronomy i. 19, "We journeyed from Horeb, and went through all the great and terrible wilderness, which ye saw by the way, to the hill country of the Amorites, as the Lord our God commanded us; and we came to Kadesh Barnea.") It is near the entrance into the Promised Land, by the Beer-lahai-roi well, "which is the only easy entrance from the desert to the east of Jebel Hâlal, and most probably the entrance to which the Hebrews were conducted from Sinai towards the Land of Promise.

"A good road leads to this place, all the way from Sinai. A grand road, still wider, I was told, by broad wâdies, goes from Ain Kadîs to Mount Hor."[1]

The site was lost for a time, but was re-discovered by an American traveller, Dr. Trumbull, who gives, in his "Kadesh Barnea," a delightful account of it.

"It was a marvellous sight," he writes. "Out of the barren and desolate stretch of the burning desert waste, we had come with magical suddenness into an oasis of verdure and beauty, unlooked for, and hardly conceivable in such a region. A carpet of grass covered the ground. Fig-trees laden with fruit, nearly ripe enough for eating, were along the shelter of the southern hillside. Shrubs and flowers showed themselves in variety and profusion. Running water gurgled under the waving grass. We had seen nothing like it since leaving Wâdy Feirân."

Mr. Rowlands and Dr. Trumbull both describe the hill of bare solid rock that rises above it, "a spur of the mountains."

Dr. Trumbull's two wells, lined from the bottom "with time-worn limestone bricks"; two marble troughs for cattle to drink, and "a basin, or pool, larger

[1] "Appendix to Robinson's Researches."

than either of the wells," show how plentiful water is there. Bees hummed and birds sang in it. The plain, also, is of great extent; for here Chedorlaomer and his army halted, before he entered the Tîh. He and the allied kings had smitten the Rephaim in Ashteroth Karnaim (in the Hauran; identified by Laurence Oliphant at Tell Asterah), and the Zuzim in Ham, and the Emim in Shaveh Kiriathaim, and the Horites in Mount Seir, unto El Paran, "which is by the wilderness." El Paran is thought by Dr. Kitto to be a town on Mount Mûsa "And they returned from Paran and came to En-mishpat, the same is Kadesh." Here the tribes rested for many days, waiting for the return of the spies whom Moses had sent forth.

At length the spies returned with their discouraging report of the race of giants, the cities fenced and very great, and the people strong. It was true the land was fertile and beautiful, "flowing with milk and honey," but the nations in it were too great for the Israelites to dare to attack them; moreover, it was "a land that ate up its inhabitants." These men had gone north as far as the entering in of Hamath, Cœle-Syria; they had returned the whole length of the land, and were terrified at what they had seen. We read elsewhere that God had "sent the hornet before them"—a plague of hornets on the Amorites. Was this what the spies meant when they said the land destroyed its inhabitants?

The report utterly discouraged the people. "They lifted up their voice and cried, and the people wept that night." Caleb had vainly told them that the report was false and cowardly. The next day the whole congregation confronted Moses and Aaron, and murmured against them, declaring that they had far better have stayed in Egypt. Human nature (no doubt by a merciful dispensation of Providence) forgets rapidly the past evils of life. These people had forgotten utterly the miseries of their period of slavery; they remembered only the pleasant food of Egypt, and they said, "Let us make a captain, and return into Egypt." Moses and Aaron, overwhelmed, fell on their faces before the congregation. Joshua and Caleb venture between them and the Israelites, beseeching the latter not to believe the other spies. They urged that the people of the land had lost the defence of the Almighty, and that God would help to defeat them. The multitude answered by endeavouring to stone them. But the glory of the Lord appeared, and all were hushed before it. For their rebellion God then inflicted on them the terrible sentence, that they should wander in the wilderness as many years as the spies had spent days in Canaan, and that none of that generation of rebels should enter the Promised Land. They were ordered to turn back and get into the wilderness "by the way of the Red

Sea." But, always perverse, the Israelites, or at least a portion of them, then insisted on marching into the recently dreaded land; their determination influenced, perhaps, by the death of the ten false spies.

Moses refused to lead them; and the ark of God remained in the Tabernacle.

But they presumed to go up to the top of the mountain, into Et Tîh.

Then the Amalekite and the Canaanites that dwelt in the mountain came down and smote them, and beat them even unto Hormah.

Hormah is the same name as Zephath, and Professor Palmer has identified Zephath with Sebaita, in the southern part of the Tîh. The pass was commanded by a fort called El Meshrifeh; the words Hormah, Zephath, Sebaita, and Meshrifeh being, the Professor tells us, the three first equivalent to each other in orthography, and the last in significance, all meaning a tower or building upon an eminence. There is an Arab tradition of a war between the two peoples who, before their time, held the fort of El Meshrifeh and the town of Sebaita. It is possible this may be a confused memory of the contest between the Canaanites and the Israelites at this period. Driven back, they could do nothing but obey. And from this moment the wanderings begin, aimless, dreary, and hopeless, except for the very young.

Professor Palmer shows, in his "Desert of the Exodus," the space in which these wanderings took place. "The whole of the mountain district in the north-east of Et Tîh was in the hands of their enemies; the road by Gaza and Philistia was still more strongly barred against them; and to have crossed Wady el 'Arish would have brought them into Egyptian territory; they were therefore confined to the desert south and south-west of the Azazimeh mountains, that is, 'the wilderness of Zin, which is Kadesh.' They would, however, have free access to the Sinaitic peninsula, especially to the north-east corner of it. This country, although of no considerable extent, supports even at the present day a large Bedawin population; and there is no difficulty in supposing that, at a time when we know it must have been more fertile, it was capable of supporting even so large a host as that of the Israelites. Their flocks and herds would afford them ample means of subsistence, as do those of the Arabs of the present day, whom they undoubtedly resembled in their mode of life."

But the Arabs find that they can spend money, and no doubt the Israelites could also. They came rich in jewels and gold from Egypt, and they offered to pay for everything they ate and drank, if Edom or Moab would allow them to march through their land. They—as the Arabs do—made long halts, resting by springs and in valleys. In Numbers, chapter xxxiii., there is a long list of these

resting places or stations. Only those marked by some event need be noticed; the list of mere names would be tedious.

It was while the children of Israel were in the wilderness that the rebellion of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram took place, and the earthquake swallowed them up. The next day the people, according to their usual custom, murmured; indeed, openly accused Moses and Aaron of having killed the people of the Lord. God sent a plague amongst them as a punishment, and it was only stayed by Aaron's standing between the dead and the living with his censer of incense.

The miraculous budding of Aaron's rod, as a token that God chose him for His high priest, took place at this time.

An interval of thirty-seven years elapsed before we again read of any great event in the history of the Exodus. Meantime the tribes, like their forefather Abraham—but not with his blessed hope—wandered in the wilderness. They rested sometimes no doubt for a long time, "many days," according to the Hebrew idiom. And during that time God taught Moses the law. The tabernacle was with them from the time they left Sinai; and they were doubtless instructed by the daily services and the teaching of Moses. The young, who were by-and-by to enter the Promised Land, must have been especial objects of his care. The old died off; the new generation, reared in the free Bedouin life, and no doubt trained in arms by that good soldier Joshua, were grown to strong manhood, Once more their wandering footsteps are guided to the wilderness of Zin, of which the wilderness of Kadesh formed undoubtedly part; as both did also of El Paran.

Here Miriam died and was buried.

And it is a proof that this Kadesh was the wilderness, and *not* the oasis, that there was no water, and, as usual, the Israelites, who were certainly a most superlatively stupid people, again murmur against Moses and Aaron, and lament over the pomegranates and water of Egypt.

Again an undeserved mercy is given them. God commands Moses to *speak* to a rock that should give forth its waters to them.

But this time the anger of the gentle Moses—whose patience was superhuman—broke forth. He had been told to speak to this rock. He strikes it twice in anger, and there was something like self-assertion in his words, "Must we bring you water out of this rock?" As if he would have said: "Again and again have you rebelled, and we have helped you"—thus not ascribing the many mercies shown them to Jehovah, but to themselves. Such a sin was certainly a very grave one.

The displeasure of God was roused against the brothers, and He said,

"Because ye believed Me not, to sanctify Me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore ye shall not bring this congregation into the land which I have given them. This is the water of Meribah"—of strife. Moses grieved deeply over this sentence.

"And he sent messengers from Kadesh unto the king of Edom, Thus saith thy brother Israel, Thou knowest all the travel that hath befallen us: how our fathers went down into Egypt, and we have dwelt in Egypt a long time; and the Egyptians vexed us, and our fathers: and when we cried unto the Lord, He heard our voice, and sent an angel, and hath brought us forth out of Egypt:

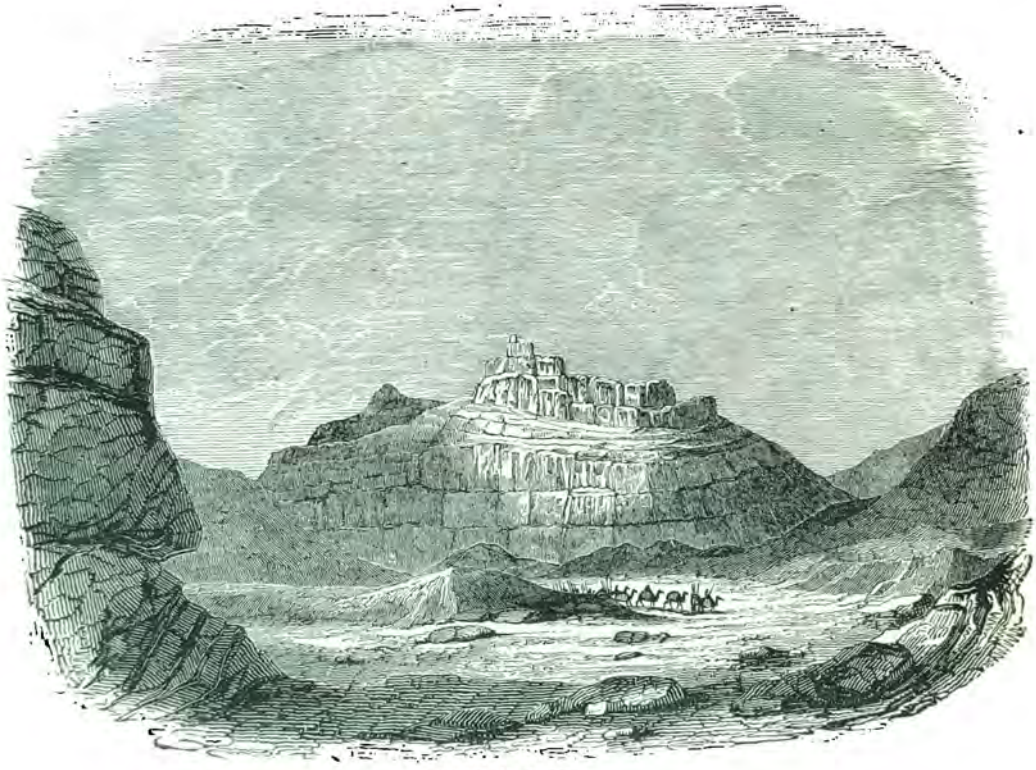


JOKTEEL, IN WADY MUSA.

and, behold, we are in Kadesh, a city in the uttermost of thy border: let us pass, I pray thee, through thy country: we will not pass through the fields, or through the vineyards, neither will we drink of the water of the wells; we will go by the king's high way, we will not turn to the right hand nor to the left, until we have passed thy borders." But Edom refused, and after a little further expostulation,—an offer to pay for anything used,—Israel turned back and marched southwards.

Great difficulties have been made about Kadesh; its discovery has probably set these at rest.

And the children of Israel, whom God had forbidden to fight with Edom, or to force a way through his land, journeyed from Kadesh, and came to Mount Hor. The site of Hor has been disputed, and Moderah fixed on as the place where Aaron died; but, as Dr. Kitto says, local traditions and topographical probabilities concur in indentifying this Mount Hor with the high mountain which rises conspicuously above the surrounding hills in the vicinity of Petra, the ancient capital of the Edomites or Nabatheans, which is in a valley Wâdy Mûsa, that cuts the range of Sëir about half-way between the Gulf of Akabah and the Dead Sea, but rather nearer to the former than the latter.



AARON'S TOMB.

This mountain is of very difficult and steep ascent, rude steps and niches being cut in the rock to help the traveller. Here Moses and Eleazar, by God's command, accompanied Aaron to the top of the mount, where Moses took off his brother's sacerdotal robes to put them on Eleazar his son, for the high priest's service and life were about to close. And Aaron died there on the top of the mount, and Moses and Eleazar came down from it sorrowfully. Aaron was buried there, and the Israelites mourned for him thirty days.

The supposed tomb of Aaron is enclosed by a small modern building,

crowned with a cupola. The tomb is at the further end of the building as one enters, behind two folding leaves of an iron grating. The monument is about three feet high, patched together with fragments of stone and marble, and covered with a ragged pall. On the walls near the tomb are suspended beads, bits of cloth, leather and yarn, with paras and similar things left as votive offerings by the Arabs. There is a grotto or vault beneath, but with nothing remarkable in it.

The Arabs offer the sacrifice of a goat to Aaron on Mount Hor. They call him Haroun, the Arabic for Aaron.

But here again we are met by a contradiction of the site, both in the Scriptures and in the Explorers' opinions. In Deuteronomy we read (chap. x. 6), "The children of Israel took their journey from Beeroth of the children of Jaakan to *Mosera:* there Aaron died . . . and Eleazar his son ministered in the priest's office in his stead." By Mosera, Mount Hor is evidently meant.

Within a day's march of the recently discovered Kadesh Barnea, there is a remarkable mountain called Moderah. It stands on the boundaries—"the coast"—of Edom, close also to the boundaries of Canaan and the wilderness of Paran. This mountain the Explorers think may be the Mount Hor, where Aaron died, the word Hor simply meaning "the mountain." But it is not the Mount Hor of tradition, where Aaron's tomb is yet believed to stand.

Arad, king of the Canaanites, attacked them here, and took some of them prisoners. The tribes made a vow that they would avenge this injury on the Canaanites, and in after times they did so, utterly destroying their cities. Leaving Mount Hor they retraced their steps to the Red Sea, "to compass the land of Edom." Edom is a strange and remarkable country; a land of rock dwellings and temples. It was called Petra by the Greeks, and retains that name; it was formerly named Idumea. Parts of the country are of great beauty; there are valleys in it as lovely as any in Palestine; but it is a country as difficult to penetrate into at the present time as it was in the days of Moses, for the Arabs guard it jealously from strangers. It was the home originally of Esau, to which he finally retired after the death of Isaac, leaving the tents of the patriarchs and the promise of Canaan to Jacob.

The Talmud gives a rather curious account of this final settlement between the brothers, in which (if it be true) Esau's want of faith is again shown. It may amuse our readers to glance over it.

"Isaac died, and Jacob and Esau wept together for their father. They carried his body to the cave of Machpelah, which is in Hebron, and all the kings of Canaan followed with the mourners in the funeral train of Isaac. He

was buried with great reverence, even as if he had been a king; his children mourned for him twelve months, and the kings of Canaan lamented sorely for thirty days.

"Isaac bequeathed his cattle and all his possessions to his two sons.

"Esau said then to Jacob, 'Behold, this which our father has left us must be divided into two portions, then I will select my share.'

"Jacob divided all his father's possessions into two portions in the presence of Esau and his sons, and then addressing his brother said:



ROCKY VALLEY.

"'Take unto thyself both these portions which thou seest before thee. Behold, the God of Heaven and Earth spoke unto our ancestors, Abraham and Isaac, saying, "Unto thy seed will I give this land as an everlasting possession." Now, all that our father left is before thee; if thou desirest the promised possession, the land of Canaan, take it, and this other wealth shall be mine; or if thou desirest these two portions, be it as it is pleasing in thy eyes, and the land of Canaan shall be the share for me and mine.'

"Before Esau replied and made his choice, he sought Nebaioth, the son of Ishmael, who was in that country, and asked his advice as to the selection.

"Nebaioth answered:

"'Behold the Canaanites are now living in the land in peace and safety; at present it is theirs; let Jacob believe that he may inherit it some day; take thou the substance, the personal wealth of thy father.'

"Esau followed this advice, and taking the personal substance, he gave Jacob for his portion the land of Canaan from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates, also the cave of Machpelah, in Hebron, which Abraham purchased from Ephron for a burying-place. Jacob took it as a burying-place for himself and his seed for ever. Jacob drew up a deed and recorded all the particulars of the contract, which was duly witnessed and sealed. The following is the expression of the same:

"'The land of Canaan and all the cities which it contains,—the Hittites, the Hivites, the Jebusites, the Amorites, the Perizzites, and all the seven nations, from the river of Egypt to the river Euphrates; the city of Hebron, which is *Kiriath arbah*, and the cave which is in it. All this hath Jacob bought with money from his brother Esau, as a possession to him and an inheritance to his sons and their descendants for ever.'

"Jacob put this deed in an earthen vessel, that it might be kept safely, and gave the same as a charge to his children.

"Esau took what his father had left and parted from his brother Jacob, as it is written:

"'And Esau took his wives, and his sons, and his daughters, and all the persons of his house, and his cattle and his beasts, and all his substance which he had got in the land of Canaan, and went into another country from the face of his brother Jacob' (Gen. xxxvii. 6). He went with all his possessions to the land of Sëir, and never returned to Canaan, which became an inheritance unto Israel for everlasting," though in after years Herod the Great, an Idumean Prince, reigned over the descendants of Jacob.

There seems to have always existed an unfriendly feeling between Esau's descendants and Jacob's. David conquered Edom, and it remained a vassal state of Judah for some years; but the old enmity seemed never to be forgotten.

Had the king of Edom allowed the tribes a passage through his land they would have had an easy path to Canaan; but, as we see, they were refused, and turned back. "And the soul of the people was much discouraged because of the way."[1] They were journeying "from Mount Hor by the way of the Red Sea"—that is down the Wâdy-el-Arabah towards the head of the Gulf of 'Akabah. Besides the bitter disappointment of being turned back when on the very

[1] Num. xxi. 4.

threshold of the Promised Land, the cheerless aspect of the country, after Kadesh Barnea, must have naturally depressed them. The Wâdy-el-Arabah (Elath), though the natural road to the north and south of the Red Sea, is as sterile and barren as the desert, though small bushy tufts that grow here and there in the sand retain for some time a little of the verdure that they gain during the rainy season. It is, in fact, rather worse than the desert, being to an extent beyond the latitude of Mount Hor a shifting surface of loose sand, not level according to common ideas of deserts, but uneven, rising in hillocks and ridges not pleasant



ELATH.

to traverse. These sands appear to have been blown here from the shores of the Red Sea by the southerly winds.

Travellers here complain, as the Israelites did, of the want of water. The trial to so large a host of the want of it must have been terrible, but they had been so often miraculously relieved, that their want of faith was extraordinary. Again came the murmurs and regrets for Egypt, not this time, apparently, addressed to Moses, but speaking amongst themselves, against God and against Moses. But God heard them, and the answer came with the very creature that

best represents the sting, of an evil and blasphemous tongue, which poisons as the viper does.

"And the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and much people of Israel died." [1]

The people seem to have understood the punishment; they repented—their punishments generally answered the end intended by God—and they came and confessed their sin to Moses, and entreated him to pray for them. "And Moses prayed for the people."



EDOM AND MOUNT SEIR IN THE DISTANCE.

God ordered him then to make a brazen serpent, to place it upon a pole, and set it up amongst the people; and whoever looked on it, when bitten, should be healed. And Moses obeyed Him; the serpent was set up, and whosoever would look towards it was saved. Thus only the most obdurate unbelievers would perish. The desert where this serpent was erected is very hot, as well as bare of vegetation; and dangerous snakes are common in it. It is near Ezion Geber—now Wâdy Ghadyân.

[1] Num. xxi: 6.

And the children of Israel set forward, and pitched in Oboth (Num. xxi. 10). On their arrival somewhere near the head of the Elanitic Gulf, the Israelites must have turned to the east. Such an opening occurs in Mount Seir, a little to the south of Ezion Geber, where Burckhardt observed from the opposite coast that the mountains are very much lower than more to the northward. In proceeding through it they must have come on the great elevated plains traversed now by the Hajj to Mecca.



PETRA.

After proceeding in this direction for a long but undetermined period, the Divine command came: "Ye have compassed this mountain long enough: turn ye northward."[1] They were to pass along the eastern border of Edom. The western, which the ill-will of the Edomites closed against them, was strong with its rocky barriers, the eastern was comparatively weak; moreover, God promised that He would send the fear of them on the Edomites. But the Lord warns them

[1] Deut. ii. 3, 4, 5.

that they are not therefore to attack or injure Edom, for He had given it to their brethren the children of Esau. They were to buy food and water from them, which the Edomites would be glad to sell them when they saw that they had no evil intentions against them.

The great pilgrim caravan to Mecca is in like manner supplied with food by the Arabs of this neighbourhood, who meet the pilgrims on the Hajj route; and the money they thus make is sufficient to support them the rest of the year. As we have before observed, the Israelites had money as well as cattle, and no doubt, during the forty years they must occasionally have had dealings with the Midianitish tribes roving like themselves. But this would not have been considerable, for God fed them, and their shoes and clothes waxed not old during the forty years of the wanderings.

Of the stations mentioned here and in chap. iii., Zalmonah, Punon, Oboth, and Ije Abarim are on the borders of Moab.

Professor Palmer thinks that Zalmonah, Punon, and Oboth are identical with the three stations on the Darb el Hajj, viz., 'Alem Maan, 'Ane'zeh, and El Ahsa; "indeed," he says, "there is some slight etymological connection between the first two, but not sufficient to enable us to speak with any certainty. Ije Abarim, however, is defined with sufficient precision in the text as lying in the desert to the east of Moab.

The brook Zared, he thinks, many be either the Seil Garâhi, or Wâdy 'Ain Feranji, south of Kerak. The name Zared means *Willow*, and is in Arabic Sufsafeh, the name of a small valley which unites with Wâdy 'Ain Feranji.

The Israelites were forbidden to touch the land of Moab, therefore they skirted its eastern side and went through the wilderness of Moab to the river Arnon. They could not cross the river here, for the descent would have been too great for the caravan, amongst which we know from Scripture they had wheeled carriages, "covered waggons." The part of the country they had now reached is a very high tableland above the valley through which the river flows. Its depth, according to Canon Tristram, is 2,150 feet, and its width three miles. The Israelites must have travelled on through the wilderness and crossed much farther eastwards. The Arnon is now called El Mojib. It divides the province of Belka from that of Kerak, as it formerly divided the kingdoms of Moab and the Amorites. The principal source of this stream is at a short distance north-east from Katrane, a station of the Hajj, or pilgrim caravan. From its source its direction is north north-west for about half its course; it then inclines west by north to the Dead Sea, into which it falls near the north-east part of the lake, having run for fifty miles through the country east

of Jordan. Burckhardt, who saw it near the spot where the Israelites first beheld it, says: "The view which the Mojib presents is very striking; from the bottom, where the river runs through a narrow strip of verdant level about forty yards across, the steep barren banks rise to a great height, covered with immense blocks of stone, which have rolled down from the upper strata, so that when viewed from above, the valley looks like a deep chasm formed by some tremendous convulsion of the earth, into which there seems no possibility of descending to the bottom. The distance from the edge of the precipice to the opposite one is about two miles in a straight line."[1] He was thirty-five minutes making his difficult way to the valley of the river, and says that in all his travels he never met with such intense heat as he suffered from there. It was July, and the rays of the burning sun were reflected from the rocks. The road crosses the valley at this place, where there stands the single arch of a bridge believed by Dr. McMichael to have been an ancient Roman construction, as a Roman causeway about fifteen feet broad, and formerly well paved, begins here. It runs up the mountain, and goes as far as Rabbah.

And from the stream of the brooks "that goeth down to the dwelling of Ar," they went down to Beer, that is the well where the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, "Gather the people together, and I will give them water."

It would seem from the following verses that Moses directed the princes and nobles of the people to dig with their staves over a certain spot, and there the water was found, deep, and fresh, and pure. Thence they marched to Mattanah, which is the Wâdy Waleh, where there is a brook and rude stone heaps.

From Mattanah they went to Nahaliel (the valley of God), where are the hot and cold springs of Callirhoe. This valley, called the valley of the Zerka, is one of the most lovely and picturesque places in the Holy Land; the many coloured rocks shut in a fertile vale, with a fresh stream flowing through it; trees and flowers; hot springs and fresh and rapid streams of cold water. Above it are groups of menhirs and dolmens. From Nahaliel they proceeded to Bamoth, which is also covered with these rude stone monuments; and next to Dibon, another station, where of late years the Moabite stone was found. Their way was now a straight course to Mount Pisgah, "which looketh toward Jeshimon, that is the wilderness."

From Pisgah Moses sent messengers to Sihon, king of the Amorites, who had conquered and held part of Moab, saying, "Let me pass through thy land: we will not turn into the fields, or into the vineyards; we will not drink of the

[1] "Travels in Syria," p. 372.

waters of the well: but we will go along by the king's high way, until we be past thy borders." [1]

Sihon at once discourteously refused, and gathered his army together to oppose their passage; "and he came to Jahaz, and fought against Israel."

He was entirely defeated and slain, and Israel took possession of his land—the first conquest of the nation. Sihon's kingdom extended from the Arnon to the Yabbok or Jabbok, now called the Zerka, the Crocodile River, and comprised the whole land between the two rivers; that which the Amorites of yore had taken from Moab. Beyond the Jabbok the tribes might not extend their conquests, for it bounded the land of the Ammonites, and Israel was forbidden to fight against the children of Esau and Lot—Edom, Moab, and Ammon. But they took all the cities of the Amorites and dwelt in them, "in Heshbon and in all the villages thereof." "For Heshbon was the city of Sihon the king of the Amorites, who had fought against the former king of Moab, and taken all his land out of his hand, even unto Arnon." [2]

Heshbon stood on a vast tableland; to the west the hill rose a little, to the east there was a slight depression. In the centre of this depression is a small hill, entirely isolated, with a stream running past it. From the heaps of ruin on it, it is believed that the city of Heshbon stood on this acclivity.

In 1882 Major Conder and Captain Mantell thoroughly examined these ruins. They report that Heshbon consists only of shapeless mounds, of hewn stones, and broken pillars of a later date than the original ruins.

A good view is to be had here of the great Belka plateau, and from a high point west of the ruins the valley of the Jordan can be seen.

On this hill the explorers found the oldest stone monuments yet discovered in Syria. Cromlechs and cairns, especially stone circles, are here of great size, some constructed with moderate-sized stones; others (especially one found by Captain Mantell) with huge boulders and smaller stones. All are placed facing the east. There are caves and rock-cut chambers also, the latter evidently tombs.

Flint instruments,—used in the stone age, have been found on the flat ground.

"And Moses sent to spy out Jazer, and the Israelites took its villages, and drave out the Amorites."

Then, by God's command, they turned and went up by the way of Bashan. Og was one of the last of the giants, a man of immense height, strength, and courage. He probably despised these tribes of the desert, feeling confident in

[1] Num. xxi. 22. [2] Num. xxi.

his own strength and in his walled cities. But God told Moses not to fear him, for He, the Lord, would give Og into the hand of the Israelites.

Now, Moses tells us, the "space (the time) in which we came from Kadesh Barnea over the brook Zered was thirty and eight years, until the generations of the men of war were wasted out from among the host, as the Lord sware unto them." It seems from this verse that only the fighting men were to die in the wilderness. The new generation, trained in the desert, were strong and courageous. Og met them in battle at Edrei; but the victory remained with the Israelites, who smote him, his sons and all his people; none was left of Og's house. And they took his cities, threescore cities of high walls and bars, besides many undefended. Moses says in Deuteronomy: "We took the land that was on this side Jordan" (the east), "from the river of Arnon unto mount Hermon; (which Hermon the Sidonians call Sirion; and the Amorites call Shenir;) all the cities of the plain, and all Gilead, and all Bashan, unto Salchah and Edrei, cities of the kingdom of Og in Bashan. For only Og king of Bashan remained of the remnant of the giants; behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbath of the children of Ammon? nine cubits was the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it."[1]

If this was Og's height it must have been nearly fourteen feet. The conquests of Moses and Joshua were indeed considerable!

The stone ruins in Bashan are very remarkable; and some are described as of great size. Many are hollowed out of rocks; all are of basalt (a black rock) except in one or two instances; even the doors, shutters, drains, and roof being of massive stone. But the greater number of these dwellings are of moderate size; probably only the royal family were of the stature of the giants. Of Edrei and Salchah, now Salkhad, we shall speak hereafter.

Moses divided the conquered country between two and a half of the tribes, the pastoral ones, who, looking eagerly on the fertile plains, rich with vegetation, and on the verdant tree-crowned heights of the land beyond Jordan, entreated Moses to let them settle there. He disliked the idea of dividing the nation; and when he finally complied with their request, it was only on condition that they accompanied their brethren across the Jordan, and aided them in their battles with the Canaanites.

Meantime the tribes encamped in the "plains of Moab"—those which Sihon had taken from Moab—"on this side Jordan by (opposite to) Jericho." They were on the plain of Abel Shittim (now called Kefrein), the Meadow of the Acacias, where those trees still grow.

[1] Deut. iii. 8–11.

The camp extended on the north to Beth-Jeshimoth. Balak, alarmed at the sight of the thousands of Israel, sends for Balaam to curse or "bewitch," and bring ill-luck on the strangers. This extraordinary man dwelt in Mesopotamia, on "the river of his people," who must have been the Ammonites, since the Euphrates was their river. He was a prophet of the Lord—an instrument to do God's will—yet an avaricious and greedy man. But from the lips of an enemy of His people, God intended to let the heathen learn how blessed His people are; how impossible it is for man to harm those in whom God "finds no iniquity." And this Balaam thoroughly understood himself, and no doubt for a great reward gave Balak the fatal advice that caused so much woe to Israel. But from his inspired lips came also the promise of the Saviour—the Star—the Sent.

Balak brought Balaam first to the high places of Baal, where Chemosh also was worshipped. This first place was Bamoth Baal—a bare hill-top; the next place to which the prophet was taken was the field of Zophim, now Jal'at es Sufa; the third, Peor, now Minyeh. The story of Balak and Balaam is noticed further on; but here we will just speak of the places mentioned in his prophecies, as belonging to the topography of the country at that time.

Jeshimon was on the plains of the land of Moab, and was given afterwards to Reuben. It is thought that it might be the same as the town called Bethsimuth by Eusebius, and described by him as lying east of the Jordan, about ten miles south of Jericho. Jeshimon is called Beth-Jeshimoth in Numbers xxxiii. 49.

The Kenites dwelt in a high rock, which Balaam could see from Peor. Asshur was Assyria. Chittim is a much disputed place, but it is generally supposed to represent Europe. Then the prophecy is clearly fulfilled. Israel *did* smite Edom, Moab, and Amalek. But the nation, with the Kenites, were to be led away captive by Assyria; and ships should come from Greece and Rome. The Eastern empires also should and did perish.

Balaam's advice was given voluntarily, as his prophecy was involuntary; it was that Balak should send the beautiful women of Moab and Midian to lure the Israelites into idolatry. The snare succeeded. In the lovely groves of acacia near Peor, the two nations met, and Israel was persuaded to join in the idolatrous worship of Moab. "The people did eat and drink" with them at the sacrifices, and bowed down before Baal-Peor.

"They joined themselves to Baal-Peor," says the Psalmist," and ate the sacrifices to the dead." As we have seen, it is more than probable that in the circles of stone previously described, sacrifices to the dead were offered; and this spot is full of such circles and of cromlechs. No doubt the hills of Moab at this place

were a stronghold of idolatry. Baal was the sun; his altars would face east; Chemosh is generally said to have been the Moabitish Mars, and judging from the Moabite Stone he seems to have been indeed the God of War. Peor was equivalent to the Egyptian Khem or Set. Venus was the wife of Peor.

A plague followed this dereliction of Israel from the worship of Jehovah, and the dying and the dead filled the groves of Chemosh. The pestilence was stayed by the action of Phinehas, the son of the high priest, who killed an Israelite, with a Midianitish woman whom he had brought into the camp. The man was a prince of the tribe of Simeon; the woman a Midianitish princess. The Midianites had united with the Moabites in the endeavour to lead the children of Israel into idolatry. Now God commands them to "avenge Israel on the Midianites." Moses selects a thousand warriors from each tribe, and these twelve thousand men were sent out under Phinehas the priest, "with the trumpet to blow in his hand." The Midianites were defeated; five kings or sheikhs were killed, and, fighting with them, the wicked prophet Balaam. The Israelites burned all the cities of Midian, destroyed all the males, and many of the women, by the order of Moses; the rest of the captives were, of course, slaves, and the Israelites also took much spoil of cattle and flocks.

Then the people, by God's order, were numbered; and the soldiers brought oblations to God.

We have now a few more names in the division of the land to the Reubenites, Gadites, and Manassehites; the mention of the towns they claimed.[1] JAZER is thought to be the eastern part of the country, between the Arnon and Jabbok. Dr. Kitto thinks it a district; Laurence Oliphant thought he had found the town of Jazer. Eusebius and Jerome place Jazer fifteen miles from Heshbon, and ten miles west of Rabbath Ammon (Ammân). Burckhardt thinks that Jazer may be placed at a fine spring, called 'Ain Hazier, in a narrow valley to the south of Salt; since we read of "the waters of Jazer." This spring turns several mills, and empties itself into the Wâdy Shoeb. Near it are the ruins of a very large town, judging of its size by the foundations of buildings and heaps of stones.[2] It is also nearly in the spot indicated by Eusebius and Jerome. Of Ataroth and Dibon we have spoken.

NIMRAH is also called Nimrim. There is on the little river Shoeb, near where it falls into the Jordan, a city called Nymrein, which is probably on the site of this town.

ELEALEH is supposed by Burckhardt to be now represented by the ruins of a place called El Aal. Aal, in Arabic, means "the high," as Elealeh also

[1] Num. xxxii. 3, 4.

[2] "Travels in Syria," p. 356.

does, and the ruins are on the summit of a hill of some height. There are remains of a well-built wall that surrounded the city, and among the ruins are a number of large cisterns, and the foundations of houses. It is always mentioned in connection with Heshbon, from which it was only a mile distant, Eusebius tells us ; just the distance of El Aal.

SHEOBAM is also called Shibmah and Sibmah. Jerome says it was not more than five hundred paces distant from Heshbon, with which the prophets generally mention it. It was famous for its vineyards.

NEBO may have been a town near the mountain Nebo.

Baal Meon, or BEON, probably a place where Baal was worshipped. Its site seems marked by the name Myoun given to some ruins two miles south-east of Heshbon. The Moabites had possession of it after the captivity. Ezekiel mentions it with Baal-Jeshimon, and Kiriathaim as frontier cities of Moab, and the glory of the country.[1]

"The children of Gad built Dibon, and Ataroth, and Aroer, and Atroth-shophan and Jazer, and Jogbehah, and Beth Nimrah, and Beth-Haran, fenced cities." AROER was on the bank of the river Arnon; Ar'air is in its place. Atroth-Shophan is probably Zephon. BETHHARAN, Eusebius and Jerome tell us, was rebuilt by Herod the Great, and called Livias, in honour of Livia, the wife of Augustus. D'Anville places it twenty-five miles south of the Jabbok, but it is not a certain site, we believe.

KIRIATHAIM is said by Eusebius and Jerome to be ten miles west of Madeba.

Moses, ever desirous to arrange the future of his people, now fixes on the first three cities of refuge, to which he who had accidentally slain a man should flee for safety from the blood-feud—the avenger of blood. Here he was to be tried before the congregation. If it was a murder he would be given up to justice ; if not, he must remain within the city till the death of the high priest—outside it, the avenger of blood might slay him with impunity.

"Then Moses appointed three cities of refuge, on this side Jordan, towards the sun rising: namely, Bezer in the wilderness, in the plain country, of the Reubenites; Ramoth in Gilead, of the Gadites; and Golan in Bashan, of the Manassites."

BEZER has been identified by Professor Palmer in ruins about two miles south-west of Dibon. Ramoth in Gilead has been thought to be Es Salt, but Major Conder does not agree with this identification.

Dr. Merrill thinks Ramoth-Gilead was the present Jerash; the ancient

[1] Ezek. xxv. 9.

Gerasa. He says it would be especially suitable for a city of refuge, because it was on one of the main routes that could be kept open (see Deut. xix. 3). Chariots could be used here also, and they could not at Es Salt. We must recollect that Jehu came from Ramoth Gilead, driving furiously. Ramoth was opposite to Shechem, as Jerash is now.

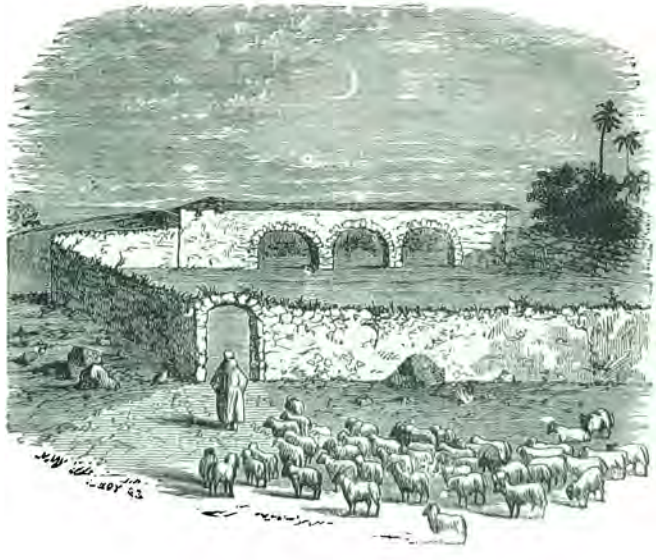
GOLAN, in Bashan, was the third city. The American Survey party fix the site at Wâdy 'Allân.

Moses is now desired by God to go up Mount Pisgah to die; but first he is permitted to see the Promised Land. He has previously arranged the affairs of his nation, appointing Joshua (so long his minister) as his successor. Then he ascends the mount, dies, and is buried by the angels of God. "No man knoweth of his sepulchre to this day."

With the death of Moses we close the story of the Exodus. Joshua was now to lead the nation into the long promised land, and henceforward history treats of the Israelites, not as wandering tribes, but as a nation.

The Jordan is severed before them as the Red Sea was for their forefathers, and they encamp at Gilgal, named thus—a circle—because the stones taken out of Jordan were placed there. The site and name have been recovered by Major Conder.

Manna now ceased; the passover was eaten, and the Exodus closed in Palestine.





VIEW ON THE JORDAN.

Palestine, Past and Present.

THE sacred charm that has hung over Palestine, from the days when our Lord trod its soil, has not ceased, during nineteen centuries, to draw the thoughts and affections of men to the country emphatically and truly called the Holy Land.

Pilgrims, Crusaders, Travellers, Explorers have, during that long period, devoted their best powers to the task of identifying the spots hallowed in the past; the subject never wearies, for on the plains of Palestine the Past and Present meet. Religion, history, romance still haunt its hills and vales and rivers. It was the land chosen by the Almighty to keep the faith in the One God alight, when all the earth seemed sunk in darkness; to be a Pharos, as it were, placed in the centre of the then known world, between the gloomy superstitions of Asia and Egypt and the graceful idolatry of Greece; close also to the shores of that Great Sea which washed the coasts of the three continents.

Palestine is a beautiful land of hills and plains and streams, still retaining its climate and its ancient fertility, though the land is not cultivated as it ought to be. Its forests are gone, its ancient cities often in ruins; but it retains still its olive groves, and the orange, the pomegranate, the peach, and the almond tree still fill its air with fragrance, while its vast plains are enamelled with the loveliest flowers—the scarlet anemone, the narcissus, the lychnis, the blue forget-me-not, and many other blossoms.

The Holy Land is shut in on the north by the mountains of Lebanon, Anti-Lebanon, and Hermon. On the east it is bounded by the Arabian desert; on the west by the Mediterranean; on the south by Idumea and the desert of Tih. In extent it is about double the area of Wales.

A mountain range runs down the centre of the country, the hills of Samaria and Judah; Carmel rises above the sea in the north-west; Lebanon's highest peaks extend to Tyre, where they are intersected by the Litâny River; Anti-Lebanon rises from the plain of Hamah, runs parallel with Lebanon, and gains its greatest elevation at Mount Hermon, where it is 9,000 feet above the sea. This ridge continues to run due south, by the eastern bank of the river Jordan, and passes through Gilead and Moab to the mountains of Edom. Another range, east of the Sea of Galilee, divides the Haurân from the desert. One of this range is "the hill of Bashan" of the Psalms—"a high hill is the hill of Bashan." It is now known by the name of Jebel-ed-Druse. Tabor is a small, rounded, and isolated hill; the Mount of Olives, and the hill of Sion, are those associated with the holiest memories.

The plains of Palestine are those of Esdraelon; of Acre, at the foot of Carmel; and of Sharon, which covers the whole of the land once possessed by the Philistines, extending from Gaza to Mount Carmel.

There is a very curious depression in the centre of Palestine. From the plain of Hûleh, which is 200 feet above the Mediterranean, there is a rapid fall to the Sea of Galilee, which is 670 feet below the level of the sea. From this point the Ghor or valley of the Jordan continually falls, till at the Dead Sea it is more than 1,300 feet lower than the Mediterranean. The Dead Sea is, therefore, the lowest spot known on earth.

From thence the valley rises again, till it passes between the mountains of Edom and the desert of Tih.

The rivers of Palestine are most of them torrents in winter and dry water-courses in summer. The chief river is the Jordan, hallowed as the stream in which our Lord was baptized. It rises at the west base of Hermon at Wâdy-el-Teim. At Tell-el-Kadi (Dan) and at Baniâs two other streams meet it, and the river, thus increased, flows the whole length of the country from north to south in picturesque windings, till it reaches, and is lost in, the Dead Sea.

The Litâny, which is rather a Syrian than a Palestine river, rises near Baalbec, passes through a grand gorge in the ridge of the Lebanon, and falls into the Mediterranean, a few miles north of Tyre.

The Wady-Zerka, or Blue river, crosses the plain of Sharon, a little to the south of Carmel. Amongst its marshes the crocodile has till quite lately been found. Mr. Macgregor believed that he saw one of these reptiles when in his canoe on the Kishon; but Canon Tristram's Arab brought him one, twelve feet long, from the Zerka. There is a tradition that a sheikh imported the crocodile to this river from the Nile, intending to induce his brother to enter the stream that he might perish in the monster's jaws; but by a just retribution, the destined victim escaped, and the intended fratricide became its prey. The marshes of the Zerka are a good retreat for these great reptiles. The Chronicles of the Crusades mention the crocodile as existing in the Blue river in their days.

The Belus, now called the Nahr Na'amân, is a small stream rising at the base of Tell Kurdâneh, in the plain of Acre, and falling into the Mediterranean. On its banks the Phœnician mariners are said to have discovered glass, and found out how it could be manufactured.

The Kishon, the scene of the defeat of the Canaanites under Sisera, rises in the plain of Esdraelon from springs near Jezreel and Lejjûn. These fountains form a deep broad stream, which creeps slowly through a great marsh to the sea. It is swollen by the great winter rains to a

deep and dangerous torrent, and is always difficult to pass. It is full of historic memories. Here the battle of Deborah and Barak was fought; here, on its banks, the priests of Baal were slain after Elijah's sacrifice on Carmel. The Kishon is now called the Mukûtta. The delta formed at the mouth of the river where it enters the sea is planted with the finest grove of palm trees in the country.

The Owely, a fine stream, rises in the fountains of Barûk, near those of the Damur. It flows though a picturesque ravine for fourteen or fifteen miles, and unites with a branch from the south in a lovely vale called Merj-Bisry. Thence it takes its way



THE RIVER KISHON.

through fine gorges till it plunges down a precipice, 240 feet in depth and quite perpendicular, at Jezzîn.

Under the cascade the famous Druse chief, Fakhr-el-Dîn, took refuge in a cave from the soldiers of the Sultan, after his long rebellion against the Porte. He held out in this cave till it was sapped from below; and, it is said, smoked quietly till the chisel of the sappers appeared through the rug on which he sat. He built the bridge of a single arch, which still spans the Owely. Fakhr-el-Dîn was taken to Constantinople, and executed there in 1635.

There are many other less important streams and brooks to be noticed further on.

THE ORIGINAL INHABITANTS OF PALESTINE.

THE original inhabitants of Palestine were the Rephaim, or giants, men of extraordinary stature; their chief town was Ashteroth Karnaim, where they were defeated by Chedorlaomer, king of Elam, in the days of Abraham. Moses tells us in Deuteronomy ii. 20, that Moab was accounted "a land of giants: giants dwelt there in the old time; and the Ammonites called them Zamzummims" (in the margin Zuzims); "a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims; but the Lord destroyed them before them (the Ammonites); and they succeeded them, and dwelt in their stead."

These giants lingered long in the land. Og, the king of Bashan, was one of them; and a remnant remained till the days of David, in the family of Goliath. After David had defeated the Ammonites, we are told, in 1 Chronicles xx. 4–8, "There arose war at Gezer with the Philistines; at which time Sibbechai the Hushathite slew Sippai, that was of the children of the giant: and they were subdued.

"And there was war again with the Philistines; and Elhanan the son of Jair slew Lahmi the brother of Goliath the Gittite, whose spear's staff was like a weaver's beam.

"And yet again there was war at Gath, where was a man of great stature, whose fingers and toes were four and twenty, six on each hand, and six on each foot: and he also was the son of the giant.

"But when he defied Israel, Jonathan the son of Shimea David's brother slew him.

"These were born unto the giant in Gath; and they fell by the hand of David, and by the hand of his servants."

It is probable that traditions of these giants have caused the extraordinary graves east of the Jordan assigned to Noah and Seth, which are nearly thirty feet in length.

The Anakim, or sons of Anak, were also of gigantic height; by their side the terrified spies, sent into Canaan by Joshua, declared they were "as grasshoppers." Caleb and Joshua, however, were not dismayed at the sight of the giants; and, on entering the Promised Land, Caleb, to whom their land had been assigned, destroyed many of them (assisted by the tribe of Judah), and took Kirjath-Arba from them.

By the time of Abraham these races had been invaded and partly conquered by the descendants of Ham's son Canaan, from whom the various invading tribes were called Canaanites. Of these the chief tribes were the Amorites, "whose iniquity," God told Abraham, "was not yet full" when the Lord promised to give the land to His most faithful servant.

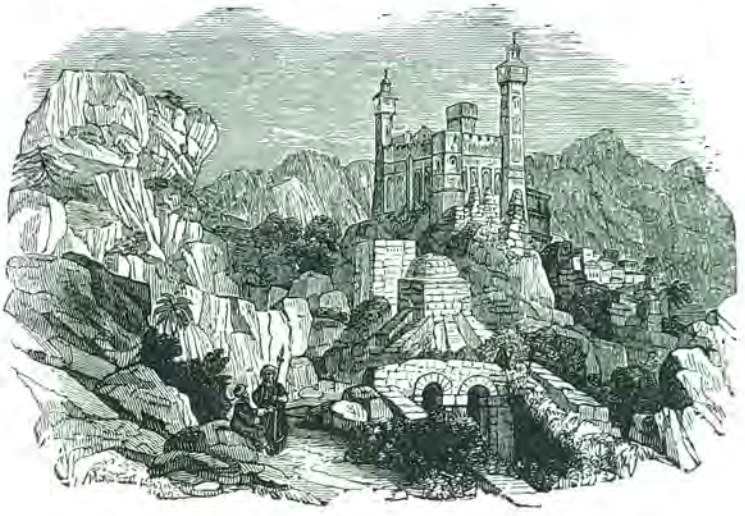
The prophet Amos thus describes this gigantic tribe in God's own words addressed to His people: "Yet destroyed I the Amorite before thee, whose height was like the height of the cedars, and he was strong as the oaks."

The Phœnicians and the Philistines occupied the sea coasts. The Hittites were a powerful nation; indeed, they formed a great empire, as recent discoveries have taught us. A large colony had passed into Canaan. They were the descendants of Heth; of these Sidon settled in the north of Canaan, and Heth in the southern parts near Hebron. We read that when Sarah was dead at Hebron, Abraham entreated the sons of Heth to let

him purchase a burying place for her, to which they readily consented, and "Abraham stood up and bowed himself to *the people of the land*, even to the children of Heth."

The Philistines are thought by some Oriental scholars to have been a branch of the Hittites, a Mongolian people; but Calmet believed that Crete was Caphtor, from which the Philistines are said to have come.

"And the Avims which dwelt in Hazerim, even unto Azzah, the Caphtorims, that came forth out of Caphtor, destroyed them, and dwelt in their stead." (Deut. ii. 23.) The Philistines are called also Cherethites or Cherethim. "I will stretch out my hand upon the Philistines, and I will cut off the Cherethims." (Ezek. xxv. 16.) Zephaniah says, "Woe unto the inhabitants of the sea coasts, the nation of the Cherethites." That Caphtor was Crete was most probable, for the arms, manners, and gods of the Cretans and Philistines were the same. Dagon was, in Crete, Dictimus; and it is possible that Beelzebub, the fly-god, was honoured in memory of the bees that fed Jupiter on Mount Ida. The country of



HEBRON.

the Philistines was long held by the Pharaohs.

It has also been thought that Caphtor was in Egypt, and that the Philistines were a race of Egyptians: the present inhabitants of ancient Philistia are of a very different type from the natives of the other parts of Palestine.

The wickedness of the descendants of Ham—more especially of the Amorites—was great, and though time was given them for repentance, and Abraham moved about amongst them, and they heard his words and witnessed his sacrifices to the One God, they were irreclaimable; still the land was left to them for nearly four hundred years more, because "their iniquity was," in Abraham's day, "not yet full."

Og of Bashan, and Sihon of Heshbon, were Amorites—chiefs of the ruling tribe to the south-west of Judea. The Amalekites inhabited the southern desert, and, like the Ammonites, were condemned, for their sins, to destruction. The Jebusites possessed Salem (Jerusalem) till the days of David.

Canaan was won by the sword from these tribes by the Israelites under Joshua, though they were never entirely extirpated. The nation continued to possess the Promised Land till the Babylonish captivity; but though Cyrus restored the Jews to

their own land, and they rebuilt their city and temple, Palestine was still only a province of the Persian Empire, governed by a Satrap, resident at Damascus. The Jewish High Priest was, however, his deputy at Jerusalem, and the people were comparatively free.

Palestine, on the fall of the Persian Empire, was taken by Alexander the Great. Then it was under the Ptolemies, and the Seleucidæ, but was delivered from the latter by Judas Maccabæus and his brethren. Conquered by the Romans, it remained a province of that empire till, on the Jews rebelling, the city of Jerusalem was destroyed by Titus. Under the Byzantine Empire the land became Christian. But it was invaded and conquered by the Turks; became again (in a degree) Christian under the Crusaders; a Moslem state under the Saracens, and is now a province of Turkey.

JAFFA.



IT was from the north that the early Crusaders first saw Jaffa (or Joppa), and we think it is the best and pleasantest point of view of this picturesque town. It was from the north that our lion-hearted Richard came, marching from Acre to his conquest of it, and that his fleet sailed into its dangerous roadstead.

Even as travellers do now, the Crusaders no doubt looked with glad, admiring eyes on the beautifully situated city, rising from the shore up its hill, and set in a living girdle of palms, pomegranates, orange groves, apricot and almond trees—a mass of bloom—filling the air with fragrance. What other town in all the world can boast of such traditional antiquity as Jaffa? Pliny declared that it had stood there by the blue sea before the Deluge. It was here that tradition says Noah built his ark; and when the waters had retreated from its groves, Japhet rebuilt it!

A classical legend also belongs to its ancient record. It was here that the Ethiopian princess Andromeda was chained to a rock by order of the Oracle, because she had boasted that her marvellous beauty surpassed that of Juno and the Nereides. Neptune sent a sea monster to devour her; but Perseus, in his flight from slaying the Gorgon (whose head he fortunately had in his hand), saw her, turned the monster to stone by presenting Medusa's head to it, and set free the lovely princess. Strabo gravely asserted that, in his time, the marks of Andromeda's chain were plainly visible on the rock at Joppa, and that the skeleton of the sea monster (long kept at Joppa) had been brought to Rome by Scaurus, the first Roman Prefect of Palestine, and there exhibited. M. Clermont Ganneau has written an interesting pamphlet, entitled "Horus and St. George," in which he traces the connection between Perseus and St. George, and suggests that the story of the chaining of Andromeda belongs not to Jaffa but to Arsûf, the ancient Apollonia. He shows that Perseus is the Greek form of the Phœnician Reseph—Reseph was the Egyptian Horus—called Apollo by the Greeks. Apollonia thus takes its name from the sun-god, and probably he, under the name of Reseph, was

worshipped there. (Palestine Exploration Memoirs, ii. 138 140.)

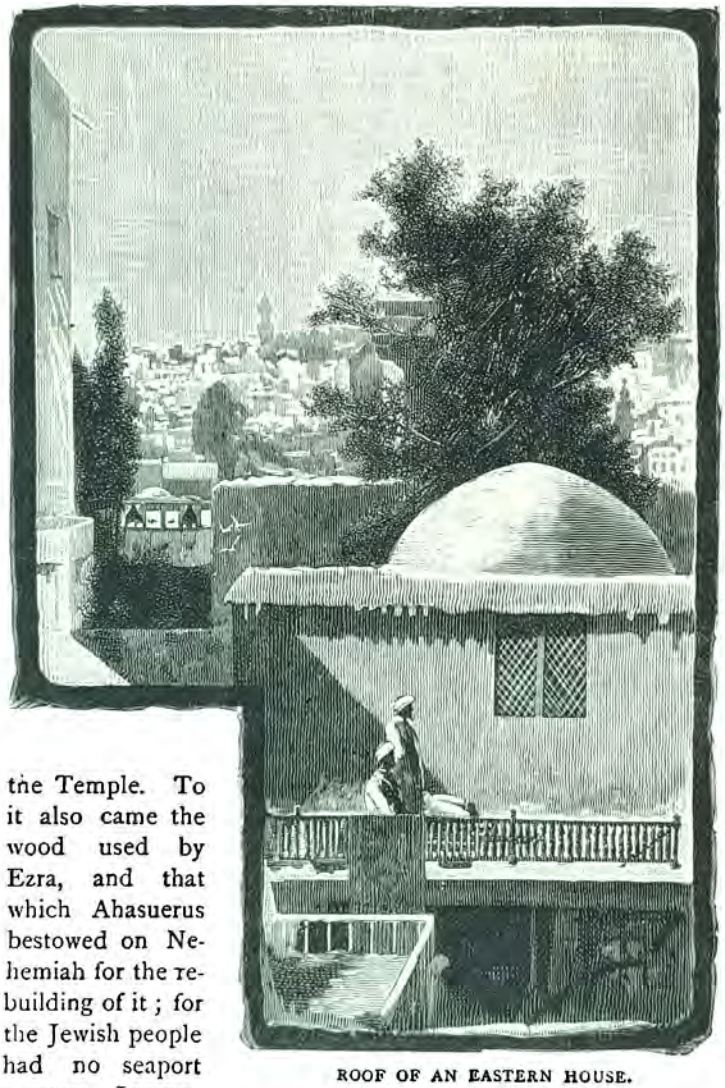
Dr. Thomson mentions, as if inclined to agree with them, that "Reland and others" had an idea that Andromeda's story originated in that of Jonah and the fish, which might have been carried to Greece by the seamen of Tarshish.



JAFFA FROM THE NORTH.

But this can scarcely have been possible, for the seamen, even if they saw Jonah swallowed by the whale, could not have seen his return to the earth; and Andromeda must have been well known as a royal princess of great beauty, to have obtained a place, with her parents, amidst the constellations.

We come to facts when we reach the Bible record of Jonah's flight to and from Joppa, and his fate in the neighbouring waters; and to the landing of the timber sent by Hiram, king of Tyre, to Solomon, for the Temple. To it also came the wood used by Ezra, and that which Ahasuerus bestowed on Nehemiah for the rebuilding of it; for the Jewish people had no seaport except Joppa. Simon Maccabeus took it after it had been lost to them "for a harbour and entrance to the isles of the sea" (1 Macc. 14); but it is only a harbour suited to the small craft of that period; it is now a mere roadstead, and not a very safe one for our ships.

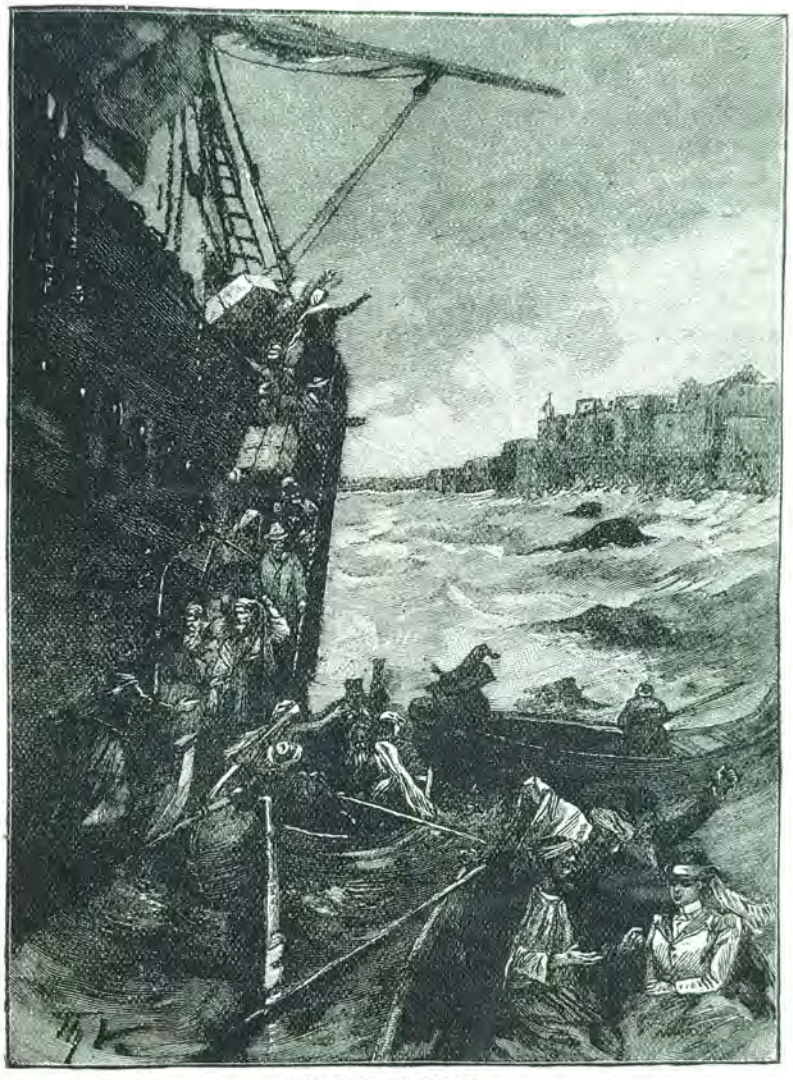


ROOF OF AN EASTERN HOUSE.

As we have said, Jaffa is beautiful from the sea, with its flat-roofed, dome-covered houses, its feathery palms, and its lovely groves. On the east of the town is the great plain of Sharon, the most extensive in Palestine, for it covers now the whole land that was once the Philistines'. Behind the town the hills of Samaria and Judah rise in the distance, running from north to south, blue-tinted and shadowy. Josephus ascribes the real foundation of Joppa to the Phœnicians. It was given by Joshua to the tribe of Dan, which thus ran into Philistia.

Jaffa is associated with the most important event of the Gentile world. It was on the flat roof of Simon the tanner's dwelling that St. Peter had gone to pray, when the Almighty (instructing him by a dream) raised the veil that hung over all nations, and admitted the Gentiles to the Church of Christ. The house, or its supposed site, is still shown near the lighthouse, and is held sacred by Moslems as well as Christians. Its flat top is exactly like that on which St. Peter prayed. The roof is, in fact, the most enjoyable part of an Eastern house. Here only can the dwellers in one see the sun, or breathe the fresh air. On the roof, also, they dry their figs, raisins, or

wheat. Thus, under the stalks of flax, drying on the roof, Rahab hid the spies of Joshua. (Josh. ii. 6.) In Deuteronomy xxii. 8, Moses gave directions as to the mode of securing the safety of those who sat on the roof: "When thou buildest a new house, thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence." The Moslems build very high battlements, or



LANDING AT JAFFA.

parapets, to keep their women unseen. Flights of steps descend from the roof to the inner court. We are able from personal experience to say how delightful such a housetop is. On one we have watched the stars and planets, and comprehended how the Ghebirs or Parsees might have been led to worship the host of heaven, gazing from the housetop on the midnight sky.

It was at Joppa that St. Peter raised Tabitha to life.

Beautiful as Jaffa is from the sea, one feels considerably disillusionized on landing. The streets are narrow, crooked, and

dirty, and thronged with people from every land in the world; every costume and type of face is to be seen, as at Gibraltar. The open shops exhibit artisans making lamps, lanterns, tin pots, and other vessels. But if the streets are not inviting, the orchards surrounding the ancient town make up for them. They are exquisitely beautiful; orange groves, lemons, pomegranates scent the air, and make the plain beautiful, and the trade of Jaffa in fruit is now considerable. No oranges can equal the flavour of those of Jaffa.

There are remains of fortifications at this town, which was once a stronghold, and under the Maccabees was one of the chief defences of the coast. The Emperor Vespasian destroyed it, because it had become a nest of pirates. But it rose again—as it has ever done—from its ashes, and long after, it was taken by Godfrey de Bouillon, and retaken by Saladin, who again destroyed its fortifications. Richard Cœur de Lion captured the town, and laid the foundation of the present ramparts.

The landing at Jaffa is very dangerous at any time, and especially when the sea is at all rough. Geoffrey de Vinsauf, the chronicler, who was with our king at the time, tells us that three weeks after leaving Acre, "the army remained outside the walls of Joppa, and refreshed themselves with abundance of fruits, figs, grapes, pomegranates, and citrons, produced by the country round; when, lo! the fleet of King Richard, with other vessels that accompanied the army, and went to and fro between Joppa and Acre, brought us necessaries, much to the annoyance of the Turks, because they could not prevent them." It was while the English were at Joppa that a chivalrous act of loyalty saved the lion-hearted king from being taken by the Moslems.

Richard went out one day hawking with a small escort. Fatigued by a long ride, he dismounted and threw himself on the turf to rest, where he fell asleep, surrounded by his followers. The sound of advancing horses startled him from his repose, and he sprang like lightning on his bay Cyprian horse. The Saracens, seeing a sleeping knight, who was evidently a leader, had hoped to take him prisoner easily; but the king, drawing his sword, attacked them so furiously that they pretended flight, and so drew him on to a place where another body of Moslems lay in ambush. In a moment Richard and his followers were surrounded; and though he fought bravely, his death or captivity appeared inevitable, when one of his companions, William de Pratelles, called out to his men in Arabic to follow *him*—the "Melech Ric," or "King Richard"; and the Saracens at once left Richard, whom they had closely surrounded, and attacked de Pratelles, whom they took prisoner. Then, satisfied with their precious capture—for King Richard was thought by them to be almost invincible—they drew off, and carried their captive to their own army. The king, before he left Palestine, ransomed with ten noble Moslem captives his faithful knight.

The Arabs sacked Jaffa in 1722; the Mamelukes in 1775, and Buonaparte in 1799, when it was the scene of two tragedies. It is as well, perhaps, to give Bourrienne's account of the first.

"On the 4th of March," he writes, "we commenced the siege of Jaffa. That paltry place, which, to round a sentence, was pompously styled the ancient Joppa, held out only to the 6th of March, when it was taken by storm and given up to pillage. The massacre was horrible. General Buonaparte sent his aides-de-camp, Beauharnais and Croisier, to appease the fury of the soldiers as much as possible, to observe what was passing, and to report to him. They learned that a considerable part of the garrison had retired into some vast buildings, a sort of caravanserai, which formed a large inclosed court. Beauharnais and Croisier, who were distinguished by wearing the aide-de-camp scarf on their arms, proceeded to that place. The Arnauts and Albanians, of whom these refugees were almost entirely

composed, cried from the windows that they were willing to surrender upon an assurance that they would be exempted from the massacre to which the town was doomed; if not, they threatened to fire on the aides-de-camp, and to defend themselves to the last extremity. The two officers thought that they ought to accede to the proposition, notwithstanding the decree of death which had been pronounced against the whole garrison, in consequence of the town being taken by storm. I was walking with General Buonaparte in front of his tent, when he saw this multitude of men approaching, and before he even saw his aides-de-camp, he said to me, in a tone of profound sorrow, 'What do they wish me to do with these men? Have I food for them?—ships to convey them to Egypt or France?'

"After their arrival, and the explanations which the General-in-chief demanded, and listened to with anger, Eugène and Croisier received the most severe reprimand for their conduct. But the deed was done. Four thousand men were there. . . . The council assembled. . . . Should they be sent into Egypt? Could it be done? To do so it would be necessary to send with them a numerous escort, which would too much weaken our little army in an enemy's country. How, besides, could they and the escort be supported till they reached Cairo, having no provisions to give them on setting out, and their route being through a hostile territory which we had exhausted? . . . Should they be embarked? Where were the ships? All our optical instruments directed over the sea could not descry a single friendly sail. Buonaparte, I affirm, would have regarded such an event as a real favour of fortune. It was, and I am glad to have to say it, this sole idea, this sole hope, which made him brave for three days the murmurs of his army.

"The order for shooting the prisoners was given and executed on the 10th of March. . . . Many of the unfortunate creatures composing the smaller division, which was fired on close to the sea-coast, at some distance from the other column, succeeded in swimming to some reefs of rock out of the reach of musket-shot. The soldiers rested their muskets on the sand, and to induce the prisoners to return employed the Egyptian signs of reconciliation in use in the country. They came back; but as they advanced they were killed, and disappeared among the waves."

On Buonaparte's return from the fruitless siege of Acre, the second tragedy of Jaffa occurred. He had the fortifications of the town blown up, and then proceeded to the hospital, where were many wounded soldiers, and some infected with the plague. His belief was that it would be more merciful to poison them with opium than to leave them exposed to the cruelty of the Turks. Bourrienne speaks of this shameful circumstance as "a dreadful but unavoidable misfortune."

Nevertheless, the fact has been denied; was denied by Napoleon himself at St. Helena. In the Armenian Orthodox Convent is the plague gallery, where these men were either put to death or left to die. After their cruelty and treachery at this miserable town, one can feel no sympathy with the French soldiers, but 400 prisoners of war also shared their fate.

In one of the gardens near Jaffa, close to the fountain of Abu Nebbût, tradition places Tabitha's house, where St. Peter raised her to life. Leaving the orange groves on the east, the plain of Sharon, the most extensive and beautiful plain in Palestine, lies before us. It stretches away in verdant meadows and golden corn fields, with clumps of trees and a half-ruined village. In the distance is the blue summit of Carmel; to the east the hills of Samaria and Judah.

Across this lovely plain came St. Peter, on his mission of healing to Tabitha, and St. Paul was guarded by Roman soldiers, across it from Antipatris to Cæsarea. Spurs of the hills of Judah run out into the

plain, crowned with trees or ruined buildings.

The fertility of the Sharon plain, and of the suburbs of Jaffa, are accounted for by the fact that there is water to be found at a moderate depth everywhere on them; and the water is raised by Persian wheels. The wheel, or as the natives call it na'ura, is thus made: "A wide cog-wheel is carried round horizontally by a mule with a sweep, this turns a larger one perpendicularly, which is directly above the mouth of the well. Over this revolve two rough hawsers, or thick ropes, made of twigs and branches twisted together, and upon them are fastened small jars or wooden buckets. One side descends while the other rises, carrying the small buckets with them, those descending empty, those ascending full; and as they pass over the top, they discharge into a trough which conveys the water to the cistern. The length of these hawsers and the number of the buckets depend, of course, upon the depth of the well, for the buckets are fastened on the hawser about two feet apart. The depth of wells in Jaffa varies from ten to forty feet. If the mule turns the wheel rapidly, which he rarely does, a bucket with two gallons of water will be carried over the top of it and be discharged into the trough every second. . . . The hawser is made of twigs, generally of myrtle branches, not only because it is cheap and easily plaited by the gardener himself, but because its extreme roughness prevents it from slipping on the wheel, as an ordinary rope would do, and thus fail to carry up the loaded buckets." (Dr. Thomson, "The Land and the Book," p. 516.)

The Railway.

THE journey to Jerusalem from Jaffa is considerably shortened by the new railway, by which we may reach the Holy City in three and a half hours.

The stations are at Ludd, the ancient Lydda, at Ramleh, 'Ain Sejed, Deir 'Abân, and Bitter, ending at Jerusalem.

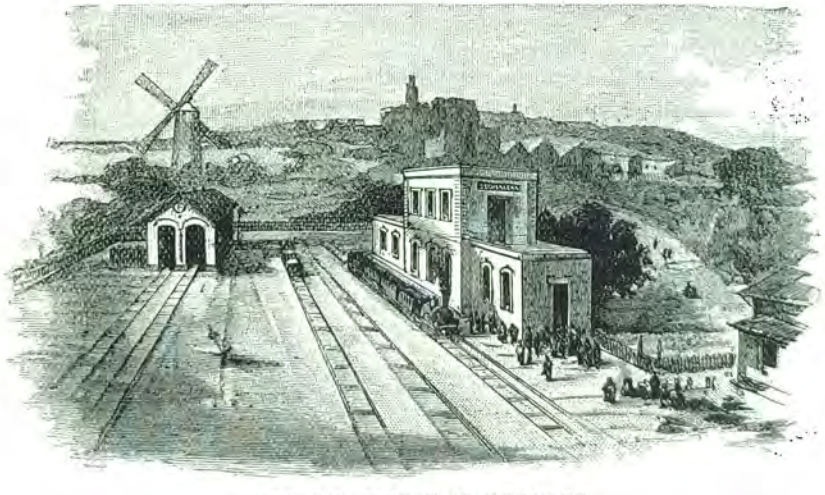
Of course this journey does not admit of seeing much of the country passed through, but an account of the principal places that have stations will follow here, and they may be visited by rail afterwards if desired.

The railway is fifty-four miles in length. It starts near the sea to the north of Jaffa. To avoid injuring the beautiful orange groves the line runs first to the south and then south-eastward; then, crossing some water-courses (dry in summer), it enters the lovely verdure-clad plain of Sharon, dotted with daisies, scarlet anemones, and lilies. The first station reached is Ludd; the station is near the mosque and ancient church. Ramleh is the next station. (Of these places ample descriptions follow.) The approach to Ramleh is shown by the tall white tower rising above the town. The next station, 'Ain Sejed, supplies abundance of water from a spring it possesses. Many historic sites are in view round this place: Gezer, the pass of Bethhoron, and several others. The fourth station on the line is Deir 'Abân. Here the ascent to Jerusalem begins, and the train runs through the great valley of Sorek, the scene of Samson's irregular warfare against the Philistines. It was to burn the Philistines' great fields of wheat in Sharon that he sent out



THE RAILWAY STATION AT JAFFA.

three hundred foxes with torches tied to their tails. These animals are still abundant on the plain and in the valley of Sorek, which is broad and rich, and lies between limestone cliffs, from the crevices of which the mountain ash and juniper spring, with here and there a dwarf oak. Bitter is the next station: it is the ancient Bether, mentioned further on. Here are great vegetable gardens, which supply Jerusalem, and thence are carried large supplies of water to the city, where that element is



RAILWAY STATION AT JERUSALEM.

scarce. The remainder of the journey is through the Wady-el-Werd—the valley of roses—where acres of that lovely flower are cultivated :—

"'Tis roses, roses everywhere."

The air is filled with their perfume.

The next spot of interest is the valley of Rephaim or of the giants, once occupied by the giant sons of Anak, down which is the road to Bethlehem. Then Olivet comes in sight, and the Russian Church outside Jerusalem. Passing by the Seven Ruins, we enter the Jerusalem station, which is a mile from the city.

The line was opened on September 26th, 1892; the construction of it is due entirely to France.



LYDDA, NOW LUDD.

LUDD.

LUDD is nearly twelve miles from Jaffa, and two and a half miles from Ramleh. The road to it is a wide avenue bordered with orange groves, enclosed by great hedges of prickly pear, and by apricot trees, palms, walnut, and sycamore. The

ground is red sand. The village is very picturesque; it stands on an eminence surrounded by olive groves, while tall graceful palms rise amidst the houses.

St. George was born at Lydda. He suffered martyrdom in Nicomedia during the persecution of Diocletian towards the close of the third century. His body was brought back to his native place, in the reign of Justinian, and a church was erected to his memory. The Saracens took Lydda in the eighth century; but though they destroyed the town, they spared the church of St. George; on the approach of the Crusaders, however, they razed it to the ground. The church was



THE CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE, LYDDA.

rebuilt, and the town was made the see of a Latin bishop, and remains so to the present day. Less than a hundred years afterwards it was again destroyed by Saladin. The Crusaders then took the town, and King Richard Cœur de Lion is said to have rebuilt the church, sacred to his country's patron saint. It is a fine building, 150 feet long, and consisted originally of six bays; two bays are restored, and the nave and north aisle are now a Greek Church; the remaining four bays are used as the court of a mosque; the side chapel of St. James (which formerly was in the south) being now also a mosque. In the crypt of the church is the tomb of St. George, reverenced both by Christians and Moslems. The material of which the

Church of St. George is built is a pale yellow rock, taken from quarries on the road to Jerusalem. This stone takes a high polish, is hard and durable.

From the hill country of Samaria St. Peter came down to visit the saints that were in Lydda. "And there he found a certain man named Æneas, which had kept his bed eight years, for he was palsied. And Peter said to him, Æneas, Jesus Christ healeth thee; arise, and make thy bed; and straightway he arose, and all that dwelt at Lydda and in Sharon saw him, and they turned to the Lord." It was natural that, hearing of this miracle, the friends of Dorcas should send to St. Peter to ask him to come to her aid when she was lying dangerously ill.

RAMLEH AND GEZER.

THE town of Ramleh is eleven and a half miles from Jaffa. It is a busy town; the buildings better and the streets wider and cleaner than in most Eastern cities. It has a magnificent tower of great height, called the White Tower, which can be seen everywhere on the Sharon plain. It stands about a quarter of a mile from the town on the west, surrounded by the ruins of a mosque, but is itself isolated. It is square and beautifully built, the angles are supported by slender buttresses, and it tapers by smaller and smaller storeys upward to a height of 120 feet. A winding staircase, with pointed windows in its walls, leads to the top and opens into an external stone gallery; the view from this is very fine; to the north is seen Mount Carmel, the villages and olive groves of the plain, the distant sea; the mountains of Samaria, and Lydda, now Ludd, with its mosque. To the south-east, over the olive groves of Ramleh, rises Tel Jezar, the site of the ancient Gezer; Sharon, Jaffa, and the Mediterranean are seen on the west. The Tower is called by the Arabs el-Kusr-el-Arb'ain, or the tower of "The Forty"—the companions of the Prophet. In the middle of the court is a building 26 feet square, and on each side of it are vaults supported by columns; one of these vaults is the shrine of the forty companions. On the south and east of the court are the remains of a colonnade with pointed arches. On the south these are double. Near them is a block of marble with an Arabic inscription, stating that the whole mosque was built by Sultan Bibars, who took Jaffa and Ramleh in 1266.

Close to Ramleh the Crusaders fought a great battle, in which the Counts de Blois and de Bourgoyne fell, and the Count de Bourges and Conrad were taken prisoners. Baldwin escaped by hiding in the long grass, and thus reached the town, where he was saved by an Arab Emir.

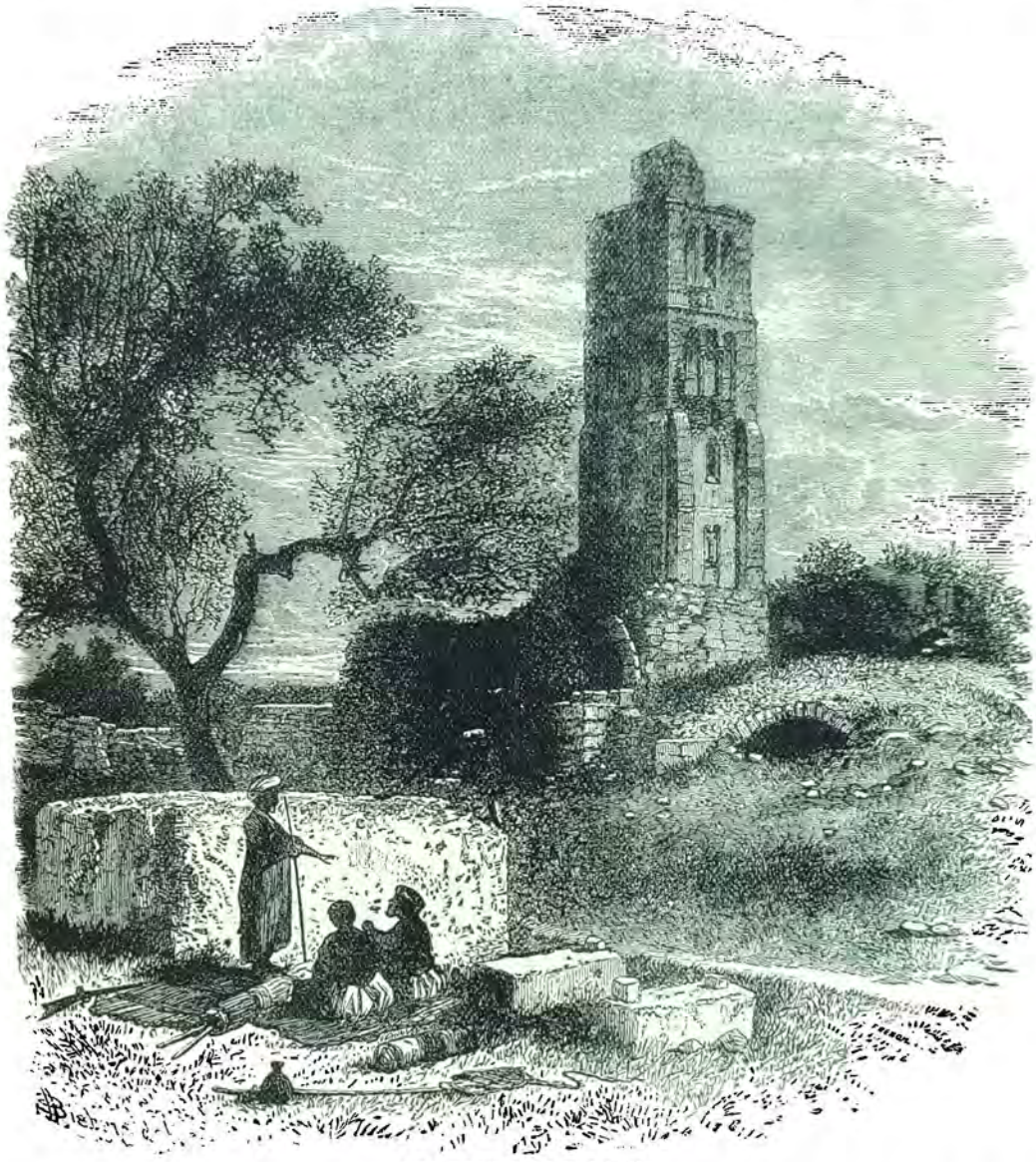
It was at Ramleh, then occupied by the Crusaders, that at a great festival they chose St. George for their patron saint.

The fortress of Ramleh was razed to the earth by Saladin's orders upon the approach of Richard Cœur de Lion; until that time it had had a fortified wall, and twelve gates. In 1204 it surrendered to the Crusaders, but in 1266 it was retaken by the Moslems, after having been sixty-two years in possession of the Christians.

The olive groves round Ramleh are very productive.

There are three mosques in the town;

the largest was originally a church built by the Crusaders and dedicated to St. John. There is a Latin monastery, the Terra Santa, the church of which is said to have been built on the site of the house of Nicodemus; and there is a Greek monastery. At the convent of the Santa Terra (a monastery of Spanish and Italian Fran-



THE TOWER OF RAMLEH.

ciscans), hospitality is given when the hotels are full. Ramleh once possessed a castle.

About two miles to the right of Ramleh we meet the first Tell in our path. A tell is partly natural, partly artificial; it is really a hill, but the top has been levelled and made a plateau, the earth removed being poured down the sides, so as to make three of them precipitous, and to

render the tell inaccessible except from one side. The Arabic name of this tell is Jezar, and on its summit stood the royal city of Gezer, one of the most ancient towns of Palestine, being of importance at the time when Joshua entered Canaan, for we read, in Joshua x. 33, that when the leader of the Israelites besieged Lachish, "Horam, King of Gezer" came up to help it; "and Joshua smote him and his people until he had left him none remaining." Gezer was allotted to the tribe of Ephraim, but they never succeeded in driving the Philistines out of it. It was captured by the Pharaoh of Egypt whose daughter Solomon married, and was made a portion of her dowry. The valiant Maccabee, John Hyrcanus, kept his army there. The discovery of this site was made by M. Clermont-Ganneau, and some very interesting excavations were carried out here by the Palestine Exploration Survey. The main part of the ancient site extends 1,800 feet in length and 200 feet in breadth on the top of the tell. At the west end is the tomb or *wely* of a Moslem Saint, sheikh Mohammed-el-Jezari; at the other or eastern end is a raised area of 200 feet in extent. The terrace walls are formed of large blocks of unhewn stone. Near the *wely* is a village belonging to Messrs. Bergheim, the bankers of Jerusalem. A quantity of ancient rock cuttings were discovered here; amongst them were twenty-two wine-presses and some tombs. The rock has been extensively quarried, and there is a large cave in the hill, south of the tell, called Mughâret Jâeibah; some tombs are near it.

M. Clermont-Ganneau found three rock-cut inscriptions here, and one was found by Dr. Chaplin. Two were bilingual, in Hebrew and Greek, and the Hebrew word for Gezer was clearly deciphered. (See about the explorations here, "Palestine Explorations Memoirs," II. 429–440.) Tell Jezar, or Gezer, was known as Gazara in the time of the Maccabees.

'Ain Shems.

'AIN SHEMS is on the site of the ancient Bethshemesh, to which the kine bore the ark of God after it had been four months in the cities of the Philistines. They had taken it in battle with Eli's sons, and placed it as a trophy before Dagon, their god; but the next morning they found the statue lying before the ark, fallen from its pedestal. Then God sent a plague upon the people, and they resolved to return the ark to the Hebrews. To see if the meaning of the strange events that had occurred was that they should restore it, they sent it on a cart drawn by kine, whose calves were left behind in Philistia. The animals took of their own accord the road to Bethshemesh, and stopped in the town. The ark was taken from the cart by the people, and the kine offered up as a sacrifice to the God of Israel. The ruins of Bethshemesh stand on the point of a low ridge between two valleys, the Wady es-Surâr and that which comes down from Yarmûk. Up the first of these valleys is the path by which the heaven-directed kine came from Ekron, and in the lower valley the Israelites were reaping when they saw the kine-conducted

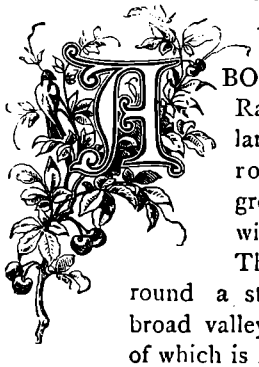
cart (1 Sam. vi. 7, 15.) It was a city of the priests of the tribe of Judah. (Josh. xv. 10; xxi. 16.)

Here a battle was fought between Judah and Israel. Amaziah, king of Judah, sent a defiance to Jehoash, king of Israel—"and Jehoash the king of Israel sent to Amaziah king of Judah, saying, 'The thistle that was in Lebanon sent to the cedar that was in Lebanon, saying, Give thy daughter to my son to wife: and there passed by a wild beast that was in Lebanon, and trod down the thistle. Thou hast indeed smitten Edom, and thine heart hath lifted thee up: glory *of this*, and tarry at home: for why shouldest thou meddle to thy hurt, that thou shouldest fall, even thou, and Judah with thee.' But Amaziah would not hear. Therefore Jehoash, king of Israel, went up; and he and Amaziah, King of Judah, looked one another in the face at Bethshemesh, which belongeth to Judah. And Judah was put to the worse before Israel; and they fled, every man, to their tents. And Jehoash, King of Israel, took Amaziah, King of Judah, . . . at Bethshemesh." (2 Kings xiii. 8–13.)

The Philistines conquered the town in the reign of Ahaz.

BITTIR is the Bethir where Barchochebas, "the Son of a Star," as he called himself, fought with, and was defeated by the Romans. It is finely situated on a rock, and is a natural fortification, with precipices on all sides but one, where a narrow causeway connects it with the ridge of hills.

THE VALLEY OF AJALON.



ABOUT six miles from Ramleh is Kubâb, a large village, surrounded by olive groves and gardens with cactus hedges. The road hence winds round a steep descent to a broad valley, the Arabic name of which is Merj Ibn' Amîr. It is the valley of Ajalon.

It lies within the low hills which are called Shephelah, and it is now called Yâlô, but it has been identified as the Ajalon of Joshua. "The hill sides and slopes are striped with horizontal and parallel marks, which at first look like rock strata. But they prove to be the marks of ruined terraces. Here was that terraced cultivation which once supplied the agricultural wealth of Palestine. Here were once the vineyards, the fig orchards, the olive groves. But during the distresses of many centuries the stone walls of the terraces fell out of repair, the masonry dropped away piecemeal, the fertile soil which had been thus sustained was loosened, the descending rains washed away the earth with the dilapidated stones, and so the garden culture disappeared. Now the fragments still preserving some of their original lines, the choked up cisterns, the stumps of aged trees, are all that remain as traces of the skill and industry that abounded here." (Sir Richard Temple's "Palestine.")

The valley is, however, consecrated by the memory of a miracle. The Gibeonites, by a stratagem, had made peace with Joshua and his host of invaders, and though on discovery of the trick he had made them hewers of wood and drawers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord, he was bound to protect these serfs. Gibeon was a royal city, greater than Ai, and therefore its adhesion or rather submission to Joshua provoked the

wrath of Adonizedek, king of Jerusalem. He determined to attack Gibeon, and punish its people for making peace with the invaders. He called on four neighbouring kings to assist him, and, uniting their forces, they encamped against Gibeon, and made war on it. "And the men of Gibeon sent unto Joshua to the camp to Gilgal, saying, Slack not thy hand from thy servants; come up to us quickly, and save us, and help us: for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the hill country are gathered together against us. So Joshua went up from Gilgal, he, and all the people of war with him, and all the mighty men of valour." And the Lord said unto Joshua, "Fear them not; for I have delivered them into thy hands; there shall not a man of them stand before thee." Joshua, therefore came upon them suddenly, for he went up from Gilgal all the night. And the Lord discomfited them before Israel, and he slew them with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased them by the way of the ascent of Beth-horon, and smote them to Azekah, and unto Makkedah. And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, while they were in the going down of Beth-horon, that the LORD cast down great stones from heaven upon them, unto Azekah, and they died; they were more which died with the hailstones than they whom the children of Israel slew with the sword.

"Then spake Joshua unto the LORD in the day when the LORD delivered up the Amorites before the children of Israel, and he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, Moon, in the valley of Ajalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed, until the nation had avenged themselves of their enemies.

"Is not this written in the book of Jasher? And the sun stayed in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day. And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the LORD hearkened to the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel." (Josh. x. 6–15, Revised Version.)

About nine miles from Ramleh is Latrôn, which is just halfway from Jaffa to Jerusalem. It is by tradition the birthplace of the penitent thief, but there is no proof of the truth of the assertion. The village commands the road to Jerusalem from the sea-coast and the road descends from here into a valley, crosses a torrent-bed, passes Bir Eyûb—the well of Job—and thus gains the entrance to the mountain range of Judah.

The ascent of the pass is by a steep and long gradient, between rocky banks and terraced hills, with here and there clumps of wild olive trees. This glen is called Wâdy Ali, from the shrine or ruined mosque of the saint Imam' Ali, whose tomb is near Jaffa; it is situated halfway up and is overshadowed by a magnificent tree. Near the head of the pass the village of Saris is seen on the top of a hill to the right. From this height, where the road turns to the left, there is a most wonderful view over hill and dale, the plain of Sharon, and the distant sea. Descending through fields and olive groves the village of Kuryet-el-'Anab—"the village of grapes"—appears on the right bank of a well-cultivated vale which leads to Wâdy Ghoreb or the Raven's Valley. It was notorious once as a robbers' hold—that of a family named Abu Ghôsh, who during the earlier part of the present century were the terror of the neighbourhood; but their brigandage was put an end to by Ibrahim Pasha in 1830.

The ruins of the church of St. Jeremiah are in the valley at the foot of the village. They are thought to be the finest specimen of the Crusaders' building in Palestine. The length of the church is ninety feet, the width at the west end sixty-eight. The walls are eight feet thick, the lower part of the west wall is twelve feet thick. The total height of the church, including the crypt, which is seventeen feet high, is seventy feet. The nave has a clerestory and there is a beautiful, almost semi-

circular west window in it. It is supposed to have been built about 1140, from the mason's marks on the stones, but as the church is not mentioned in any chronicle of the Crusades, the date is, of course, doubtful.

Sôba, on the top of a high conical peak, is a very ancient town. There are some picturesque ruins in the valley—the remains of an old convent of the Crusaders. The Arabs say that a certain Philistine king had his summer palace here, and his winter house at Latrôn. He had an extremely beloved daughter for whom he built a palace here in the valley at Khurbet Ikbâla, where the ruins of the convent are. They add that this princess used to communicate with her father when he was living on the height above by means of a wire stretched from the one palace to the other.

ASCALON.

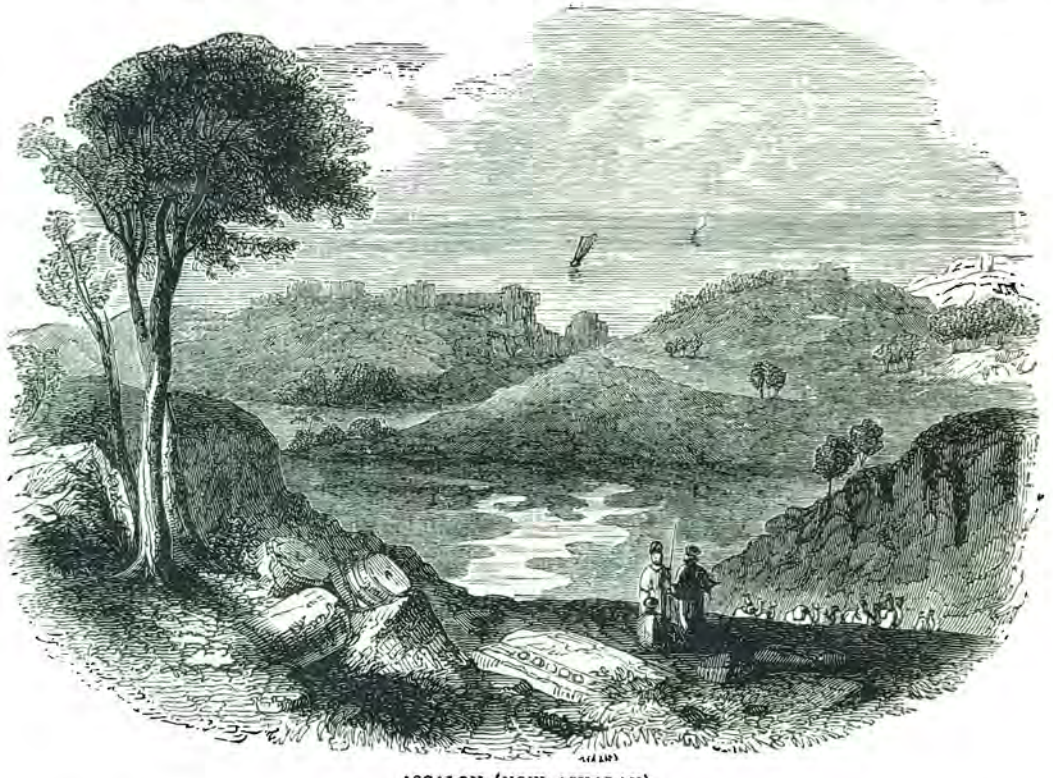
ASHKELON, as the Hebrew prophets name Ascalon, was the chief of the five cities ruled over by the Philistines. Joshua assigned it to the tribe of Judah; but the Philistines, as every reader of the history of Israel knows, were the bravest of warriors, and though they lost the city for a short time, they soon regained it, and never again yielded it to the invaders of Palestine.

As a strong maritime city it was a most desirable possession for the conquerors of Canaan; and after the death of Alexander the Great it became the scene of many contests between the Ptolemies and the Seleucidæ, alternately lost and won by both. Under the government of Herod the Great it prospered. He built in it porticoes, baths, and fountains, and a palace which he allowed his sister—the detestable Salome—to occupy; ever infatuated with the woman to whose arts he sacrificed the unhappy Mariamne. He strongly fortified the place.

In the seventh century, under Byzantine rule, Ascalon was made a Bishop's see. M. Guérin in 1854 explored the ruins of Ascalon, and discovered within the amphitheatre (for the city was bounded by a hilly ridge which formed an irregular amphitheatre round it) the apse and outside walls of a Byzantine church; two upright walls to the south-east of it, and vaults from which he was told a subterranean passage led to the seashore. He also found a great circular hole, which he identified as the fountain of Bîr-Abraham-il-Khalil, mentioned by Benjamin of Tudela, who asserted that it had been dug by the Philistines. This is probable, as there were traditions of a lake or large piece of water there, sacred to the Oriental Venus, who in Philistia was worshipped, not as Astarte, but as Derceto, and whose statue, unlike the glorious Greek one, was not that of a beautiful woman but of a kind of mermaid, a fish with a woman's head—the feminine counterpart of Dagon. In the fountain sacred fish were said to have been kept.

In 1153 Ascalon was taken by the Crusaders; and when Rabbi Benjamin visited it in 1163 it was a large and handsome city, and a great centre of trade, owing to its situation and nearness to Egypt. To the Crusaders it was of great value as a strong fortress, a bulwark against their Moslem foes of the south.

Whilst our King Richard of the Lion-heart was at Acre, and eagerly desirous of proceeding at once to Jerusalem, his wish was opposed by the Knights Templars, to whose experience he was compelled reluctantly to yield. They urged that Ascalon, in the hands of Saladin, was a great danger; and that it would be necessary first to seize the seaport by which succour could be brought to the Moslems. As we have seen, he yielded; marched to Jaffa and there defeated the troops of Saladin. The Sultan hurried to Ascalon. He saw its value to the Crusaders, and reluctantly, and with bitter regret, he destroyed the walls and fortifications of the town. The conquering English came shortly afterwards to the deserted city, and at once set about rebuilding the walls, which ran along the ridge we have mentioned. At each



ASCALON (NOW ASKALAN).

angle of them they erected a strong tower, whose names Geoffrey de Vinsauf gives us—The Maidens' Tower; the Admiral's; the Bedouin's; the Bloody Tower; the Tower of Shields. Now they are utter ruins, but the remains show how high and thick were the walls built by Cœur de Lion; fragments are on the south-east and west sides; they are built of small stones bound together with broken columns of the walls that Saladin had thrown down.

The chronicler gives rather a mournful account of Richard's residence here, worried as he was by the French, and irritated by fever and mosquitoes. But his energy under all circumstances never flagged; he took and rebuilt the fortress of Darum, a little further south, and fortified the other strong places near him. The Explorers of Palestine have identified every spot named in Vinsauf's Itinerary.

North of Jaffa, on the Sharon plain, they found the oak wood through which the English Crusaders marched from Acre to

Jaffa in 1191 A.D., attacked constantly by the Moslem archers.

Gazing over Ascalon as it is now, we are struck by the fulfilment of those terrible prophecies which Israel's seers pronounced against her.

"The Lord," said Jeremiah, apostrophising God's sword, "hath given it (His sword) a charge against Ashkelon, and against the seashore; there hath He appointed it."

God, speaking by the mouth of Amos, declares, "I will cut off the inhabitant from Ashdod, and *him that holdeth the sceptre from Ashkelon*"; and Zephaniah declares, "Ashkelon shall be a desolation."

And desolate it truly is! The prophecy against it and "the seashore" is striking, for sand is burying Ascalon. It rolls in here as it does in some places in Cornwall, where towns have been buried by it; and it is said to advance a yard every year on this part of the coast of Palestine. In some places it has blown and rolled in for a distance of five miles.

There is one redeeming feature in this desolation. The amphitheatre of Ascalon is filled with orchards, amongst which are seen the lovely blossoms of the apple, and the sycamore that bears the dark blue fig. But the maritime city of the great sea is left—as God had doomed it—desolate.

GAZA, NOW GHUZZEH.

OF the five royal cities of the Philistines, Ascalon, as we have seen, is desolate, Ekron and Ashdod are mere villages, hedged round with prickly pear; the site of Gath is uncertain; Gaza alone remains an important place with a large population of Moslems, and more than a thousand Christians.

It is a very ancient city, and was governed by a race of giants when the spies entered Canaan: a remnant of the Anakims.

"There was none of the Anakims left in the land of the children of Israel: only in Gaza, in Gath, and in Ashdod, there remained." (Josh. xi. 21, 22.) The tribe of Judah took Gaza, but the Philistines soon recovered it, and remained throughout their history the most determined and dangerous foes of Israel, frequently conquering and cruelly oppressing them. For forty years the Israelites had suffered under their tyranny, when Samson was raised up to deliver them, by his feats of supernatural strength. It was here, after Delilah had betrayed him, that he was imprisoned and compelled to grind in the mill. He was reduced to

"Grind in brazen fetters under task,
* * * * *
Eyeless in Gaza, at the mill with slaves,
* * * * *
Can this be he
That heroic, that renowned, irresistible Samson,
Who tore the lion as the lion tears the kid?
Ran on embattled armies clad in iron,
* * * * *
In scorn of their proud arms and warlike tools;
Spurned them to death by troops? The bold Ascalonite
Fled from his lion ramp; old warriors turned
Their plated backs under his heel,
Or grovelling, soiled their crested helmets in the dust.
* * * * *
Then by main force pulled up, and on his shoulders bore,

The gates of Azza,* post and massy bar
Up to the hill by Hebron, seat of giants old.

'Tis scarcely to be wondered at that the Philistines were glad to revenge on the champion of Israel the insults and injuries he had heaped on them. He had slain many and many of them, he had burned up their harvests, for it was across the plain of Sharon that he had sent the foxes to carry death and famine with their blazing torches. But Gaza was destined to feel the full power of the Israelite. Every one knows how in Dagon's temple, where he was brought, blind (and they thought helpless), to make them sport, he drew the whole building down on them and himself.

Gaza was besieged and captured by Alexander the Great. Its walls were so massive—reared perhaps by the Anakim—that the engineering skill of Greece was



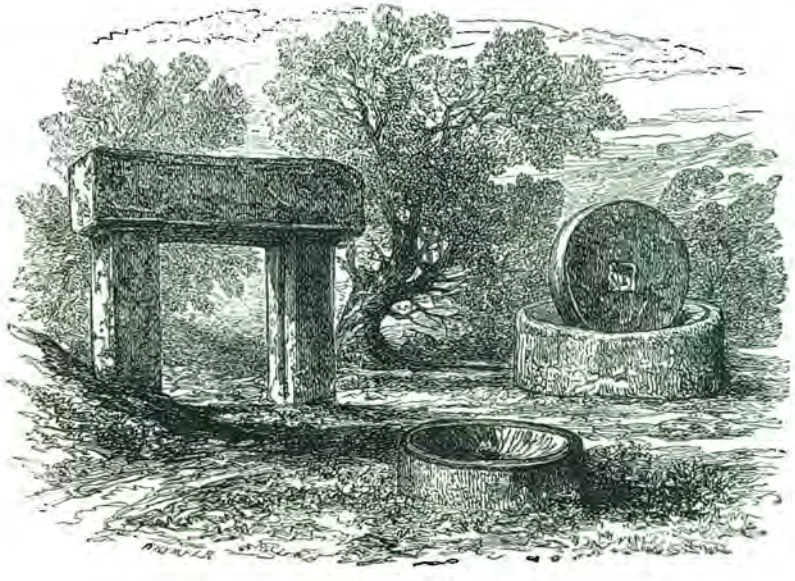
GAZA.

vain against them. Every effort was made by the besiegers, but the besieged made a sortie, burnt the engines, drove off the besiegers, and were only driven back by Alexander himself and his bravest troops. In this fight the king was severely wounded. He nearly died, but during his recovery the engines he had used at the siege of Tyre were sent to him, and the city was taken. The garrison fought bravely, and all had fallen ere the place was entered by the Macedonians. Like Ascalon it was the scene of much fighting after the Greek hero's death. The Egyptians required its possession, as the key of Palestine; and the Syrians because it was the key of Egypt. The Empress Eudosia sent money to Archbishop Porphyry, to build a grand Christian church in it. It is probably now the great mosque. In 634 the Moslems conquered and took Gaza. The

* Gaza.

Crusaders found it deserted, and in 1152 they built a fortress on the hill, and entrusted the care of it to the Templars. Towards the close of the twelfth century, the Arabs retook it, and now, of course, it belongs to the Turks.

Gaza is built partly on a hill, partly in the valleys to the north and south of it. There are now no walls, but the places where its ancient walls and gates stood are shown. One site bears the name of Samson, and is said to be that of the gates he carried off. There is a tomb to his honour near the same spot at the east of the city. The wells of Gaza are very deep, and the water good; the climate also is cool, and the town is healthy. It has a considerable trade in soap, which is carried over the desert to Cairo. It has also a good trade with Europe in wheat, barley, and sesamum shipped mostly from Jaffa, and the olive groves around it are very extensive. The sand which has buried so much of Ascalon gains also on this part of



OLIVE PRESS.

the coast and has swept over Majuma, the little seaport of Gaza. The dunes form quite a wall between the town and the sea.

We cannot leave the olive groves of Ramleh, Ludd, Ascalon, and the neighbourhood, without saying a few words about the tree consecrated to peace and fertility. Our thoughts at once recur to the dove of Noah and the olive leaf, and the memory of this earliest story of the bird is recalled by our hearing all day the soft sweet cooing of the doves, who build their nests in these peaceful shades, which when gently stirred by the breeze look like waves of a silvery grey; for the leaves of the olive resemble those of the willow, and are white underneath. The tree prefers a rocky soil, and likes to grow in the clefts of rocks; it withers if the soil is altogether soft mould. The olive-flowers grow in bunches, and are white as snow; but the tree throws off many of them as superfluous. Job alludes to this when he says, "He shall cast his flower as the olive." The tree is of slow growth, and bears no berries for the first six years, nor is there a good crop till it is ten or fifteen years old. The harvesting of olives is peculiar. Early in the autumn many of the berries drop off the tree

weighed down by their rich oil. They remain where they fell for some time, protected from thieves by a watchman. At last, the governor of the district issues a proclamation that all who have olive trees are to go and gather up the fallen berries. There are several of these gatherings commanded. In November the watchmen are removed, and the people crowd into the groves to shake the trees and bring down the last gathering of the remaining fruit. A few berries are generally left on the branches, which are gleaned by the poorest people. A single olive tree yields from ten to fifteen gallons of oil, consequently a man who possesses many of them is rich. The oil is used for lamps, and for cooking. Soap is also made from it, for which, no doubt, olive oil is used at Gaza.

There are frequent allusions to this especial gift to Palestine in the Holy Scriptures. The prophet Jeremiah compares the people or Church of God to it. "The Lord called Thy name," he says, "a green olive tree, fair with goodly fruit." As a punishment on His rebellious people, God, by the mouth of Moses, tells the nation, "Thou shalt have olive trees throughout all thy borders, but thou shalt not anoint thyself with the oil; for thine olive shall cast its fruit." The good man in the Psalms is said to be "like a green olive tree in the house of God." Palestine is described by Moses as "a land of vines and *olive trees*, of oil and honey. St. Paul compares the Gentile and Jewish Churches to a wild and cultivated olive tree, the Gentile Church, or wild olive tree, being grafted on the good olive tree—the ancient Church of God. (Rom. xi. 17.) There is a difference between the wild and cultivated olive tree. The cultivated tree is of moderate height, the trunk knotty, the bark smooth and of an ash colour; its wood is yellowish. Of the leaves we have already spoken, and of the bunches of white flowers. The olive berry is first green, then pale, and, when quite ripe, black. The wild olive is in every respect smaller than the cultivated one.

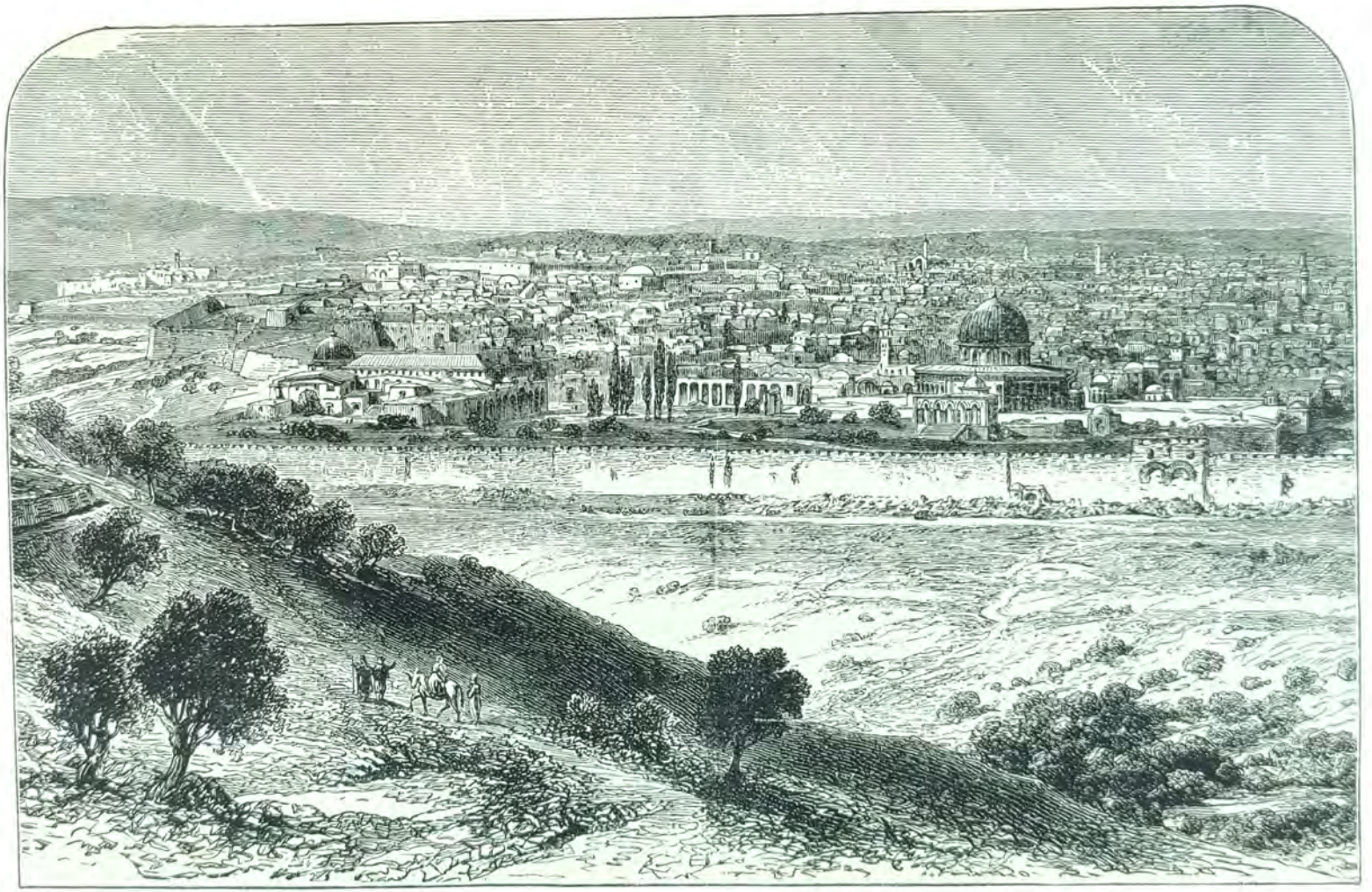
JERUSALEM.

"Reft of thy friends, amid thy foes forlorn,
Mourn, widowed queen, forgotten Zion mourn!
* * * * *
Where now thy pomp, which kings with envy viewed?
Where now thy might, which all those kings subdued?
No martial myriads muster at thy gate;
No suppliant nations in thy temple wait;
No prophet bards, thy glittering courts among,
Wake the full lyre, and swell the tide of song."

—*Heber.*

JERUSALEM, the Holy City of Christendom, is called by the Moslems also El-Kuds esh-Sherif—"the holy, the noble."

Ancient Jerusalem was no doubt built on separate hills, but the ravines between them have been so filled up by the ruins made by its many sieges, that now it appears to stand on a mountain plateau, surrounded, east, south, and west, by deep valleys and lofty hills, and divided by the Tyropæan valley, which runs with a curve from the north-east to the south-west, and which sinks into the Kedron valley just before it meets that of Hinnom, at the awful spot called "Tophet" in Scripture, where the horrid rites of Moloch were celebrated, and infants were placed in the red-hot brazen



JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

arms of the idol. The two great valleys of Kedron and Hinnom nearly encompass the city. The Kedron valley runs on the east side, that of Hinnom south and west.

The divisions of the city are Zion and Akra on the western side, Moriah and Bezetha on the eastern, and Ophel, south of Moriah. Akra is not mentioned in the Bible, probably it was included in Sion. Bezetha was not known before the Captivity; it was then probably a new portion, and is mentioned only by Josephus. Ophel, mentioned in the Book of Chronicles and by Nehemiah, is now outside the city. Akra is inhabited by Europeans and native Christians; Sion by Armenians and Jews; Moriah and Bezetha by Moslems.

Separated from Mount Zion by the Tyropœan valley is Mount Moriah, where stood the Temple; where now stands the famous Moslem shrine, "The Dome of the Rock."

Ophel is a rocky ridge jutting out from Mount Moriah towards the south. The top of the hill is wide, but it descends rapidly till its last cliff overhangs the Pool of



JERUSALEM.

Siloam. This hill is cut into terraces as that of Zion has been, and is planted with olives and fig and other trees. Jotham repaired the walls of Ophel, and about fifty years afterwards Manasseh fortified the place and built a strong wall. Nehemiah, on the return from the Captivity, rebuilt it, and Ophel was by him given as a residence to the Nethinims, or Temple servants. The foundations of this wall, from the south-east angle of the Haram (Mount Moriah), were discovered by Sir Charles Warren. They run as far as the Pool of Siloam.

Bezetha is not mentioned in Scripture. It was a new portion of the city built after the return from the Captivity, on the ridge north of Moriah, extending from the Birket Israel to near Jeremiah's Grotto on the road to Jericho.

The name of Mount Zion has been familiar to us from our childhood, and is full of memories of David, Solomon, and many another king of Judah. We learned in early life that it was from this town "Salem" the mysterious King Melchisedek came to meet and bless Abraham; but now the explorers of the Holy Land think that Salem was not here but near Shechem, at a village now called Salim. The ancient name of Jerusalem was Jebus, but in the

time of Joshua it was Jerusalem, and its king was evidently a leading chief or sheikh, for it was he who summoned the four other kings to go up and attack Gibeon, because the Gibeonites had made peace with the invaders. They were defeated there, fled, and hid in a cave at Makkedah. They were betrayed to Joshua, who had them taken out and hanged on five trees. Their bodies were returned to the cave, which became their tomb.*

But Jerusalem was not taken, though its king had fallen. It continued in the hands of the Jebusites till David attacked it. The Jebusites, confident in their strong fortress on its steep and almost inaccessible hill, defied him. Then came the opportunity of the brave, though wicked, Joab. "And David said, Whoso smiteth the Jebusites first shall be chief and captain" (2 Sam. v. 8). And Joab, the son of David's sister Zeruiah, went up first, and was made chief. The king dwelling henceforth in the stronghold, it was called the city of David. "A high hill is the hill of Zion." Its western and southern sides rise steeply from the valley of Hinnom, a grand and imposing situation for a city. It stands 300 feet above the valley, and is 500 feet higher at the junction of the two valleys at Tophet. On the east the mount descends gently to the Tyropæan valley towards the south; northwards the descent is steeper, till opposite the south-west angle of the Haram, the wall towers above a precipice three hundred feet high.

Of Mount Moriah we shall speak further on.

The greatest building in Zion is the so-called Tower of David, a strong fortress which commands the city, and in which is part of the Turkish garrison. It has four towers—one is that of Hippicus, built by Herod the Great, and named in honour of his friend; the tower of Mariamne; the tower of Phasael, Herod's brother; and the tower of David. These towers are not thought to be of ancient date, but to have been built by the Saracens from old materials. Hippicus's tower, it is thought, may perhaps date from Herod's time, judging from the massive foundations.

* It is singular that, in a cave at Makkedah, Major Conder found *five* loculi, roughly scooped out of its sides, in which of course bodies had once rested

WALLS AND GATES OF JERUSALEM.

THE walls of Jerusalem are nearly quadrangular, facing the north, south, east, and west. The Sultan Suleiman built them in 1542 on the site of the old walls, from the ruins of which he found materials for them. They are nearly two miles and a half in circuit.

The gates are the Jaffa or Hebron Gate on the west, on the highest part of Akra, and in the wall close by is the ancient tower of Hippicus, built by Herod the Great. This is sometimes called the Tower of David. At a short distance inside this gate is Hezekiah's Pool. It was on this reservoir that Hezekiah depended for water during the siege by Sennacherib, when he had stopped the outer pool of Gihon. The Jaffa Gate is very picturesque; it is deeply recessed on the old wall, and

behind it are the great towers of the citadel, and the great old tower, as we have said, close by it. The Arabs call the gate Bâb el Khalil.

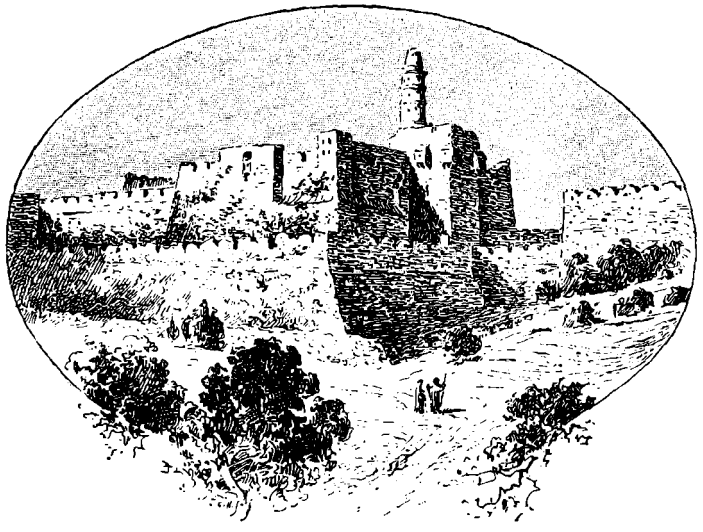
The New Gate near the north-west angle of the walls has not long been re-opened.

Zion Gate, called by the natives the gate of the prophet David, is a plain portal with a pointed arch. On each side of it is an ornamental niche. It is on the ridge of Zion between the Armenian convent and Tomb of David.

There is a space of unoccupied ground inside this gate, where a few wretched huts have been put up for lepers. These unhappy people sit on the ground, and beg of all who pass; it is the only place in Jerusalem where they are permitted to remain.

Herod's Gate, or the Gate of Flowers, is midway between the Damascus Gate and the north-east angle of the city. It is now walled up.

The gate of the Moors, or the Dung Gate, is on the south side, near the Tyropœan valley. It is small, and generally only



THE JAFFA GATE, JERUSALEM.

open on Friday. Below it is Barclay's Gate.

The Damascus Gate is the most highly ornamented of the gates of Jerusalem. Its battlements, small projecting turrets, and machicolations, render it highly picturesque. The Arabs call it Bâb el-Amûd, or the Gate of the Column. From it runs the road to Samaria, Galilee, and Damascus.

Sir Charles Wilson says of the Damascus Gate: "There is a large accumulation of rubbish in the neighbourhood of the gate, almost concealing the remains of an old entrance, over which the present one is built. . . . The old arch is semi-circular, and built of large, plainly-chiselled stones; and from its appearance and position would seem to be of great age."

More recent excavations have brought to light foundations of massive walls and a tower.

This was the gate at which the Roman eagles first appeared at the last fatal siege. Here, also, the Romans attacked the city. It is possible that the ruins seen here were those caused by this attack of the legions.

The Haram has eleven modern gates, three on the north and eight on the west. The south wall is divided into three sections by the Triple and Double Gates. The Triple is 300 feet from the south-east angle, and the Double the same distance

from the south-west corner. The ground rises from the south-east or Pinnacle angle of the wall to the Triple Gate; thence to the south-west angle it is nearly level. At the Double Gate the wall's foundations are 40 feet beneath the ground.

The Single Gate is closed up; it opened into the rooms called Solomon's Stables.

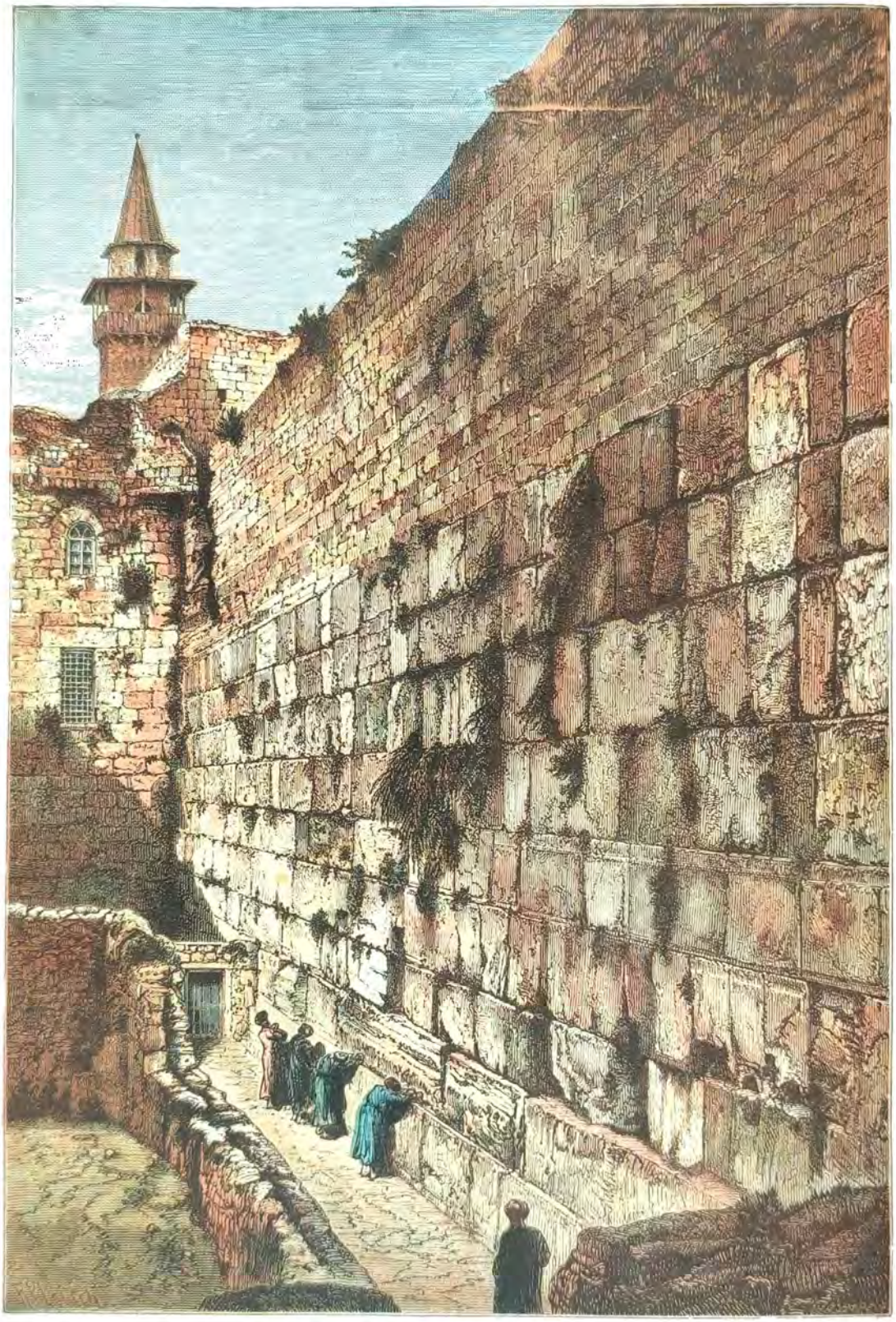
The Triple Gate is west of the Single Gate. It opens into Solomon's Stables beneath the Haram area, and is supposed to have been built in the reign of the emperor Justinian. The gateways are each thirteen feet wide, and have semicircular arches outside. The city wall joins the Haram wall at right angles at the Double Gate, which has a section of an arch, resembling the style of the Golden Gate. Just under this is a small grated window, which allows the spectator to see the long passage (an



THE DAMASCUS GATE OF JERUSALEM.

inclined plane) and flight of steps leading to the Haram.

The Golden Gate is supposed to have been made much later than any of the others. It is in the centre of the east wall of the Haram, or old Temple Gate, in a projection fifty-five feet long and five feet wide, and rises above the general level of the walls. On the front of this tower or porch, over the double portal, are two semi-circular arches highly decorated; Corinthian capitals support them, and spring like corbels from the wall. It is not a very ancient gate, but it stands on the foundations of an old gateway. The interior architecture is mixed. In the centre are two square marble columns with debased Ionic capitals, and on a line with these, at the west and east ends, are pilasters of limestone with Composite capitals. From these rise groined arches supporting the roof, in which are four low domes, and two drums supporting domes. The length of the interior of the porch is sixty-three feet, and the breadth



THE WAILING PLACE OF THE JEWS, JERUSALEM.

thirty-two and a half feet. The date of the Golden Gate is uncertain. It is walled up on the east side, as the Turks have a prophecy that they will keep possession of Jerusalem as long as it is closed; but that their conqueror will ride in at this gate, and then the Crescent will fall. The gate is therefore carefully watched, and it is not easy for travellers to gain admission to the interior of it.

The Palestine explorers made excavations near this gate, and discovered that at this spot the Haram wall extends below the surface outside to a depth of from thirty to forty feet.*

At the south-east angle the wall stands at the very edge of the deep ravine. The present wall is nearly eighty feet high. Its lower and ancient section has four layers of bevelled stones of about three feet six inches high; some of the corner stones are twenty feet long, seven feet broad, and six feet high. The excavations of the English explorers reached the foundation of the wall, which rests upon the rock at a depth of seventy-seven feet. This part is built of huge stones, hewn quite smooth and drafted. There are large vermillion and incised marks on them. Mr. Deutsch says: "They do not represent any inscription; they are Phœnician. I consider them to be partly letters, partly numerals, and partly mason's or quarry signs. Some of them are recognisable at once as well-known Phœnician characters; others, hitherto unknown in Phœnician epigraphy, I had the rare satisfaction of being able to identify on undoubted Phœnician structures in Syria." Josephus tells us that in Herod's time a lofty tower stood here. He says of it: "If any one looked from the top of the battlements down both these altitudes, he would feel giddy, while his sight could not reach to such an immense depth." From the summit to the bottom of the ravine below is about 300 feet. This is supposed to have been the site of the Pinnacle of the Temple, mentioned in our Lord's temptation.

There are fine architectural views of this wall, with copies of the Phœnician characters in the great work of the Palestine Exploration Fund.

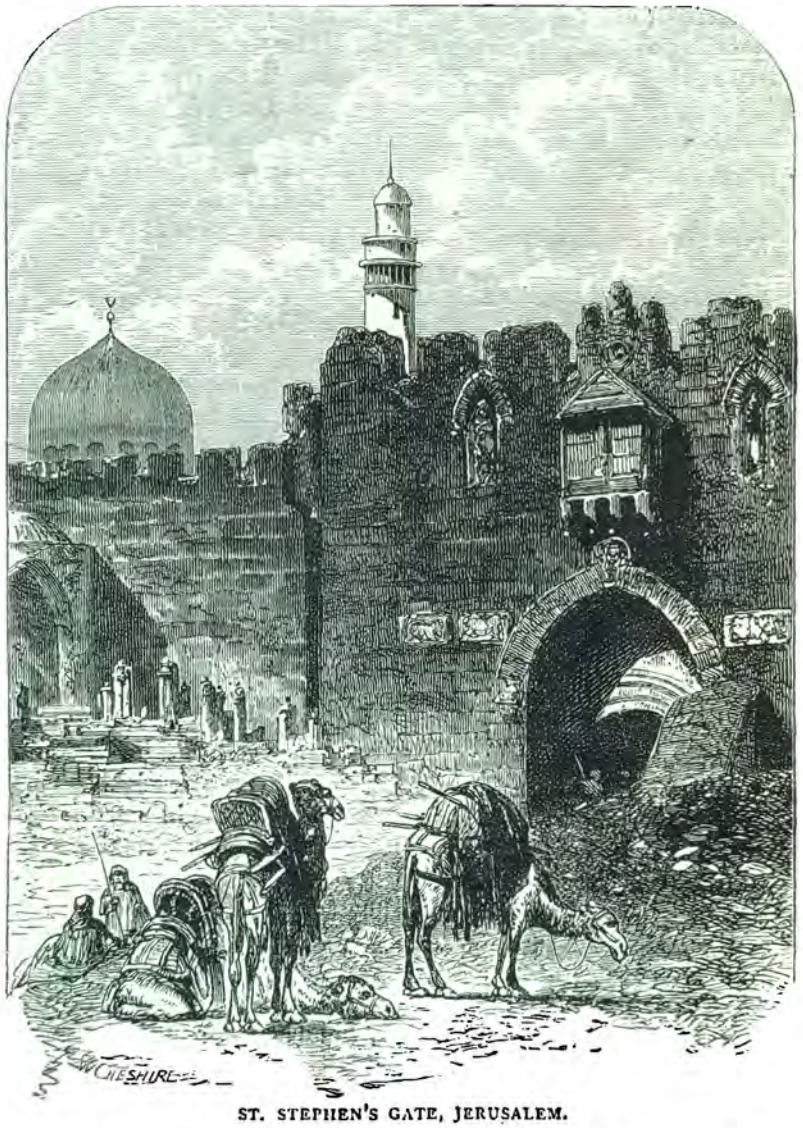
The south-west angle of the Haram wall is even more interesting than the south-east. The stones are larger. One corner stone measures thirty-eight feet, by nearly four in height. The excavations of the English explorers proved that the southern wall of the Haram was built ninety feet beneath the present surface of the ground; and that the south-western angle was founded on the rock, at a depth of sixty feet. While excavating this spot, they came across a signet bearing, in the most ancient Hebrew letters, the name, "Haggai, son of Shebna."

An interesting discovery was made here also through the suggestion of the late Dr. Robinson, the American explorer. He was the first to observe three courses of solid masonry, projecting from the wall at about forty feet from the angle. They evidently were the place from which an arch had sprung, and he thought it possible that it might have formed part of a bridge connecting Sion with the Temple by spanning the Tyropæan valley. His suspicion was correct. On excavating here Sir Charles Warren found the foundations of the first pier forty-two feet below and from the spring of the arch. Between the pier and the wall he found the fallen stones of the arch. It must have been forty-two feet in span, and five of them would suffice to cross the valley. The bridge was fifty-one feet wide, and its height above the bottom of the ravine a hundred and twenty feet. Josephus says that a bridge connected the Upper town or Sion with the Temple, and was broken down when Pompey besieged Jerusalem. Twenty feet below the old pavement on which the ruins of the arch lay, Sir Charles Warren discovered a still older bridge, probably existing long before the time of Herod.

North from Robinson's Arch, in a little

* "Palestine Exploration Memoirs," pp. 141–146.

court 270 feet from the south-west angle of the Haram Wall, is Barclay's Gate, called formerly the Prophet's Gate. Above it is the Moors' Gate. This last is four feet lower than the Haram level, and the ground outside it is twenty-one feet lower still, a ramp leading up to the gate on vaults. Barclay's Gate opens into a subterranean passage. The excavations here discovered a viaduct which formerly led across the valley to this



ST. STEPHEN'S GATE, JERUSALEM.

gate, at a height of twenty-seven feet above the ground at that period.

St. Stephen's Gate, or, as the native Christians call it, "the gate of our Lady Mary," is on the east side of the city. The former name was given it from a tradition (not authenticated) that St. Stephen suffered martyrdom outside it, on the path leading to Gethsemane. It is a plain portal, and has a pointed arch, not a Saracenic semi-circular one: it has also two lions meeting each other, on each side of the porch roughly

sculptured. But it is hallowed by the belief that at this entrance, though not beneath this same gateway, our Blessed Lord must have many times entered Jerusalem, for the roads from Olivet, Bethany and Jericho meet at this spot; and it seems most likely that when new walls were erected the spaces of the old gates were retained.* Not far from this gate is a square tower which, from the enormous stones in the lower courses of it, is supposed to have been built before the time of Herod the Great. It was one of the towers of the fortress of Antonia designed to defend the Temple, and was afterwards the quarters of the Roman soldiers. It had in it the judgment hall of Pilate.

The Palestine Exploration has, by excavating, ascertained that the foundations of this tower are on a rock at the depth of a hundred feet below the present surface of the ground. The whole of this depth has been filled up with ruins. Phœnician letters in red paint were found on some of the foundation stones.

Perhaps the most interesting and touching part of the Haram walls is that called the "Jews' Place of Wailing." It is by the lofty wall of the Haram, the lower portion of which is extremely ancient.

Here every Friday, at three o'clock, the Jews gather to bewail their lost country and fallen Temple. In this place only may they approach the sacred spot. They mourn sincerely and bitterly; men and women, the aged, and little children, and at certain times they chant the following Litany:—

Rabbi. On account of the palace laid waste.

People. We sit solitary and mourn.

Rabbi. For the walls that are overthrown.

People. We sit solitary and mourn.

Rabbi. For our glory that is departed.

People. We sit solitary and mourn.

Rabbi. For the Temple that is destroyed.

People. We sit solitary and mourn

Rabbi. For our great men who are dead.

People. We sit solitary and mourn.

Rabbi. For the precious stones that are burned.

People. We sit solitary and mourn.

Rabbi. For our priests who have fallen.

People. We sit solitary and mourn.

Rabbi. For our kings who have despised Him.

People. We sit solitary and mourn.

Rabbi. We pray Thee have mercy on Sion.

People. Gather together the children of Jerusalem.

Rabbi. Haste Thee, Redeemer of Sion.

People. Speak to the heart of Jerusalem.

Rabbi. May the kingdom soon return to Sion.

People. Comfort those who mourn over Jerusalem.

There are other chants of the same character. The mourners give every token of grief; rock to and fro, sob and weep and kiss the stones. There is something awful in the thought that this national wailing is uttered on the day and at the hour when their terrible crime was consummated, and they had slain the Lord of Glory.

How sincerely we pity them; for in the fine lines of Cowper,—

> "Where dwelt in ancient day
> A people planted, watered, blest as they?
> Let Egypt's plagues and Canaan's woes proclaim
> The favours poured upon the Jewish name.
> * * * * *
> Theirs were the prophets, theirs the priestly call,
> And theirs, by birth, the Saviour of us all."

Close by the wailing place was the site of the palace of the Maccabees. In this house Herod was staying when Pilate sent our Lord before him.

The Mahkama or Court House extends ninety feet along the Haram Wall north of the Wailing Place. There are vaults under-

* This is confirmed from the colossal monolithic jambs of a much older gate remaining, and still to be seen, in the inside of the Golden Gate.

neath it which are entered by an opening through a garden walled off from the Wailing Place. Here is the pool el-Burâk, seventeen feet lower than the vaults. For twenty-five feet it has a segmental arch of good masonry seventeen feet span. On this the wall of the Mahkama is built. The next eight feet are covered by another and inferior arch, and the remainder of the pool is roofed over by a semicircular arch which was discovered by Sir C. Wilson, and is therefore called Wilson's Arch. It extends from an ancient aqueduct called the Great Causeway to the Sanctuary Wall, and is thought to have been erected in the third century after Christ. The street from the Damascus Gate to the Moors' Gate passed under Wilson's Arch in the middle ages. The spring of this arch is four feet higher than that of Robinson's Arch. To the west of it a series of vaults were discovered in 1868. A long passage runs to the south of them under the street leading to the Bâb es Silsileh or Gate of the Chain. This is called the Secret Passage, and is believed to be a portion of a subterranean passage which connected the citadel with the Temple. A very ancient hall was discovered amongst the vaults. Its south-east corner is eighty-four feet from the Haram Wall, and part of its south end lies under the Street of the Chain. It was originally only twenty feet long, but ten feet four inches have been added to its south end, evidently made for the Secret Passage to pass over. The walls are eighteen feet high and four feet thick, and are evidently of very great antiquity. This is believed to be the oldest building discovered in Jerusalem. It is possible that the wall of the Jews' Wailing Place belonged to Solomon's Temple, and as the masonry of the hall is of the same date it may have been one of the wise king's council chambers. The Secret Passage and the vaults might have been buildings of the time of Herod, for the Passage is of Roman construction.*

About 250 feet from the Haram Wall, and close to the Secret Passage, a small vaulted chamber was discovered, 13½ feet below the Secret Passage. It led into another, at the east end of which a doorway opened into a narrow passage. These rooms are thought to have been guard-rooms to the postern of the first city wall, and are therefore very ancient.

A small portal, called the "Gate of the Rain," the gate "Bâb-el-Kotonîn," the "Iron Gate," and the "Gate of the Inspector," are also belonging to the Haram. A hundred and sixty feet north of the Gate of the Inspector, and beneath the "Palace Gate" an ancient wall is visible, where an aqueduct that ran from the twin Pools ends. One more gateway, called Bâb el-Ghawanimeh, opens on a higher level into the Haram, near the minaret Kalawûn, close to the residence of the Pasha, which stands on the site of Pontius Pilate's house.

* See "Palestine Exploration Memoirs," pp. 187–209 and Murray's "Handbook."



MOUNT MORIAH AND THE HARAM.

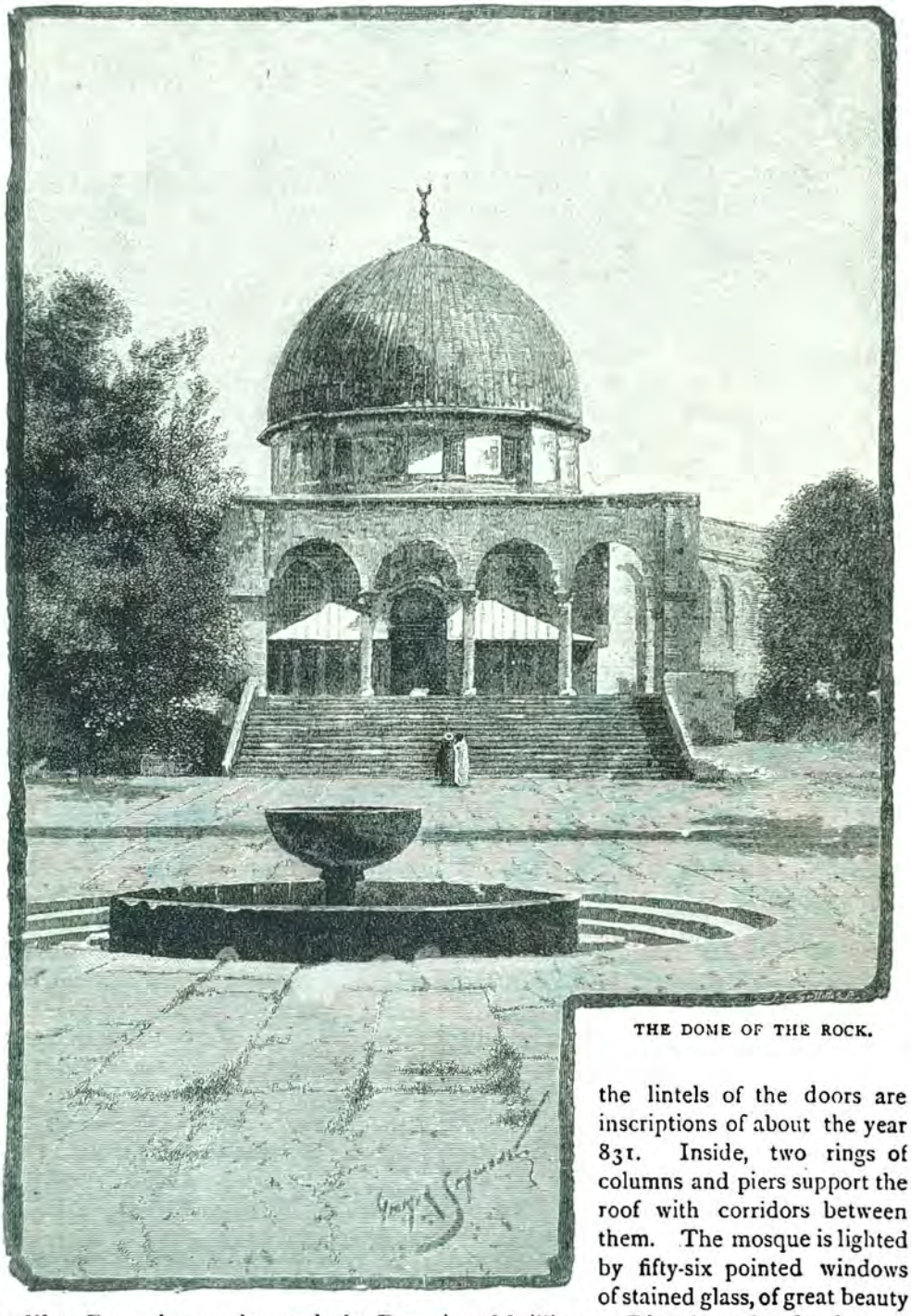
MOUNT MORIAH rises perpendicularly from the bottom of the Kedron Valley to a height of more than 200 feet. It is supposed to have been the spot on which Abraham offered his son to God, though Mount Gerizim has disputed the honour of being thus hallowed. It is certain, however, that it was the spot on which David stood when he beheld the Angel of Death stretching his sword over Jerusalem, and by his prayer stayed its fall. Here, in memory of God's mercy, he erected an altar on the threshing-floor of Araunah, the Jebusite, and on the spot thus consecrated Solomon built the first Temple.

On the summit of the Mount, which is supported by colossal walls, is the great platform of the Jewish Temple, now the Moslem Haram, *i.e.* "Noble Sanctuary." It is thirty-five acres in extent, and studded with beautiful buildings. The platform is supposed to be unequalled. "I have seen," says Dr. Porter in his, "Jerusalem, Bethany, and Bethlehem," "the platform of the Temple of the Sun at Palmyra, I have seen the Stylobate of Baalbek, and I have seen the Acropolis of Athens; but the Temple platform of Jerusalem is grander than any of them."

It has been abundantly proved from the measurements given in the Jewish Talmud, in Josephus, and by tradition, that the great shrine of the Dome of the Rock, "Kubbet es-Sakhrah," stands on the site occupied by the temples of Solomon and Herod.

The Temple stood on a raised platform: perhaps the elevated one on which the Dome stands may cover exactly the same site. It is ten feet above the level ground, and it is ascended by steps; three flights of steps from the west, two from the south, and one from the east. On the top of the steps are beautiful arcades, where the Moslems believe souls will be weighed at the Day of Judgment. The tradition is, that the Khalif Omar, after taking Jerusalem, asked the patriarch where Solomon's Temple had stood; the patriarch took him to Moriah, where nothing was then to be seen but rubbish. The Khalif ordered it to be cleared, and it is said worked at removing the rubbish with his own hands; then he commenced the shrine on the rock. It was completed by the Khalif Abd-el-Melek about 686, or so, at least, run the inscriptions on the walls.

To the east of the shrine is an octagonal building called the Dome of the Chain; it is also called the Dome of Judgment, or David's Chair, for here, it is said, he had his seat of judgment. The Moslems think that the Dome of the Chain was the model on which the Dome of the Rock was built. It is possible, but the Dome of the Rock is three times the size of the Dome of the Chain. It (the Dome of the Rock) is an octagon, and a perfect gem of architectural beauty; encaustic tiles cover the whole exterior of the shrine, and glow and glitter in the sunlight. Over the windows and round the cornice are broad borderings of Arabic texts, beautifully illuminated. The dome has a golden crescent above it; each of its eight sides measures sixty-seven feet. Four doors, each facing a cardinal point, admit visitors to the interior, which is a hundred and forty-eight feet in diameter; the dome is sixty-six. The principal door is on the south; it has a portico, with small marble columns; the other entrances have marble porches; that on the west is called



THE DOME OF THE ROCK.

the West Door, that on the north the Door of Paradise, and that of the east the Door of the Chain, from the dome near it. On the lintels of the doors are inscriptions of about the year 831. Inside, two rings of columns and piers support the roof with corridors between them. The mosque is lighted by fifty-six pointed windows of stained glass, of great beauty and brilliancy. Directly under the dome is the extreme point or crown—a naked point of rock—of Mount Moriah. It rises about

six feet above the floor, and is about sixty feet long and forty-five wide, and is guarded by a railing. On the south-west corner of it is shown the footprint of Mahomet, and near that the handprint of Gabriel. According to the Moslem legend the rock was rising with Mahomet as he ascended from the earth, but the angel laid his hand on it, and retained it in its place. By the Báb el Jenneh is a large piece of jasper, into which the Prophet hammered nails of gold, to show the time the world was to last. He put in nineteen, each nail representing a century. At the end of each hundred years a nail comes out and fastens itself into Allah's throne. We are not aware of the number of nails still left, but we shall soon reach the 20th century.

On the south-east side of the sacred point of rock is a flight of steps, leading to a chamber or cave beneath, about six feet high. The Mussulman guide explains that the small altars and niches he shows here are dedicated to Abraham, David, Solomon, and Jesus; here also, they say, Araunah and his sons hid from the destroying angel. David and Solomon have marble altars; Elijah one of stone. In the centre of the roof of this chamber is an aperture piercing through to the room above, and just under it on the floor is a marble slab, covering a deep cavity. If one listens here, a sound as of rushing water is heard. The guide calls this place the Well of Souls; others say the waters of Paradise run below. It is supposed by Sir C. Warren that the opening was connected with the sewers, and that the blood and refuse from the altar-sacrifices in the old temple times, were carried off by this opening; and as it is believed that the altar of burnt-offerings was placed here, the supposition is probably correct.

The interior of this mosque is extremely beautiful; in the dim light falling from painted windows are seen exquisite marbles, costly mosaics, and gilding everywhere, The Cufic inscription gives the date of the building 688, but a forgery has been committed; the name Abd-el-Melek has been erased, and Ma'Môn substituted. However, Ma'Môn did (in 831) restore the building.

The woodwork of the cupola was erected by Houssein, the son of the Druse prophet Khalif Hakim. The Crusaders made the building into a Christian church in 1112, and called it Templum Domini. Much of the carved woodwork has been ascribed to these Christian warriors, who also decorated the interior walls with frescoes, which Saladin, when he took the city in 1187, covered with marble slabs; he also removed the altar.

The Crusaders made it a Christian church. Part of it was given by Baldwin II. to the Knights Templars, so called from its name, the Porch of the Temple. The interior is a basilica of seven aisles. The architecture is mixed, and the arches of different elevations.

The Mosque el Aksa, or, "the distant mosque," was so called with regard to its distance from Mecca.

The most ancient part of it is the remains of a basilica, dedicated to the Virgin by the Emperor Justinian, about the middle of the sixth century. It was converted into a mosque by the Moslems, when they had conquered Jerusalem.

A magnificent carved wooden pulpit, made in Damascus, and brought here by Saladin, stands to the right of the south steps of the platform.

Amongst the beautiful buildings on the Haram are the Dome of Solomon, near the northern end, where he is said to have offered up the prayer of dedication of the Temple, and the Dome of Elias.

To the east of the Dome of the Rock is the beautiful octagonal building called the Dome of the Chain, of which we have already spoken.

There is a curious Moslem legend attached to it. Over this spot, it says, was suspended a chain from heaven, which was the test of truth. A witness on a trial grasped the chain while he spoke. If his

evidence were true, no change in the chain took place; but if it were false, a link dropped from it. A Moslem accused a Jew of not having paid some money owing to him. The Jew asked the Moslem to hold his staff, while he grasped the chain; then he swore that he *had* paid his creditor. The chain remaining whole appeared to testify to the Jew's truth. The Moslem, after giving back his staff to the Jew, seized the chain in his turn, and swore that he had *not* been paid. The chain was immediately drawn back into heaven, for the Jew's money was in the hollow staff, and while the Moslem held it he had been paid; thus both had sworn falsely, the Jew consciously, the Moslem innocently.

Our readers will doubtless remember the incident of the staff in the history of Sancho Panza's government of his island. Had Cervantes heard the legend while a captive to the Moslems?

Facing the "Gate of the Chain" is a small but richly ornamented cupola, called the Dome of Moses. It was built in 1269. Beyond it is a wall supporting the west side of the central platform.

To the north of the gate are cloisters dating from the fourteenth century. Here are the dervish colleges and schools, and along the space between the cloisters and the platform are prayer stations. To the right of the steps, at the north-west corner of the raised platform, is a cupola called the Dome of St. George, and close by it is the Dome of the Spirits. Europeans are not allowed to enter this mosque, because the face of the rock shows beneath it, and they may not look on that sacred object. On the north-west of the Kubbet-es-Sakhrah is the Dome of Mahomet. Here Mahomet began, it is said, his flight by night heavenwards. It was reared in 1200. The flight of steps to the south of it is said to occupy the site of the Holy of Holies. Below the steps is a lovely fountain. The east side of the Haram is full of trees—cypresses, fig trees, and olives, but there are a few prayer niches and a mosque called Solomon's Throne, because the great king is said to have been found dead on this spot. To visit this mosque is a favourite pilgrimage of the Moslems.

At the north-west of the Haram stand the barracks, which are on the site of the Castle of Antonia; for, according to Josephus, Antonia stood at the north-west corner of the temple enclosure (the present Haram), to be its fortress and defence. It was a square building, with towers at the four corners, and a large central tower; it was a palace, also, with passages leading to the Temple colonnades. It was higher than the Temple, as the present barracks are also higher than the mosque. The Palestine Explorers fix the castle at this place on the site of an ancient tower built by Hyrcanus. Pilate's house overlooks the Temple area. Along the north side of the Haram, as far as the north-east angle, is an immense reservoir, 360 feet long, 126 feet wide, and 80 feet deep. It is called the Birket Israel. Its east and west walls are of the natural rock; its north and south of masonry. The pool is filled with rubbish to a height of fifty feet. The bottom has, however, been seen at one point. It is covered with a layer of very hard concrete, $16\frac{1}{2}$ inches deep, and on the top of that $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches of strong cement. The south wall of the reservoir is against, or forms, the north wall of the Haram. Two vaulted passages of masonry, running parallel, open into the west end of the pool. These vaults are nearly filled up with rubbish, and houses are built above them. The masonry of the pool at the east end is forty-five feet thick. Two conduits lead out of the east end, one of which seems to have been the original outlet to the pool. It was discovered by the Palestine Exploring Survey in 1869, while they were driving a gallery along the supposed Tower of Antonia at the east side ("P.E. Mem. Jerusalem," pp. 124–126).

Josephus has given us a description of the Temple of Solomon, which is fully borne out by the excavations of the explorers of Palestine. The Jewish historian

says: "The king laid the foundations very deep in the earth, and the materials were strong stones, and such as would resist the force of time; these were to unite themselves to the earth, and become a basis and sure foundation for the superstructure that was to be erected over it; they were to be so strong in order to sustain with ease those vast superstructures and precious ornaments, whose own weight was to be not less than the weight of those other high and heavy buildings which the king designed to be very ornamental and magnificent. They erected its entire body quite up to the roof of white stone; its height was sixty cubits, and its length was the same,



SITE OF SOLOMON'S TEMPLE.

and its breadth twenty. There was another building erected over it, equal to it in its measures; so that the entire altitude of the Temple was a hundred and twenty cubits. Its front was to the east. As to the porch, they built it before the Temple; its length was twenty cubits, and it was so ordered that it might agree with the breadth of the house; it had twelve cubits in latitude, and its height was raised as high as a hundred and twenty cubits. He also built round about the Temple thirty small rooms, which might include the whole Temple by their closeness one to another, and by their number and outward position round it. He also made passages through them, that they might

come into one through another. Every one of these rooms had five cubits in breadth and the same in length, but in height twenty. Above these were other rooms, and others above them, equal both in their measures and number; so that these reached to a height equal to the lower part of the house; the upper part had no buildings on it. The roof that was over the house was of cedar; and truly every one of these rooms had a roof of its own that was not connected with the other rooms; but for the other parts, there was a covered roof common to them all, and built with very long beams that passed through the rest, and through the whole building, so that the middle walls, being strengthened by the same beams of timber, might be thereby made firmer; but as for that part of the roof that was under the beams, it was made of the same materials, and was all made smooth, and had ornaments proper for roofs and plates of gold nailed on them; and as he inclosed the walls with boards of cedar, so he fixed on them plates of gold, which had sculptures upon them, so that the whole Temple shined and dazzled the eyes of such as entered, by the splendour of the gold that was on every side of them. Now the whole structure of the Temple was made with great skill of polished stones, and those laid together so very harmoniously and smoothly, that there appeared to the spectators no sign of any hammer or other instrument of architecture, but as if, without any use of them, the entire materials had united themselves together, that the agreement of one part with another seemed rather to have been natural than to have arisen from the force of the tools upon them." This was almost the case, for we read in 1 Kings vi. 7, "There was neither hammer, nor axe, nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was building."

Sir Walter Scott suggested this fact to Bishop Heber, then a youth, for his prize poem of "Palestine," and thus gave birth to the following beautiful lines.

"In awful state
The Temple reared its everlasting gate.
No workman's steel, no pond'rous axes rung,
Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric sprung.
Majestic silence! then the harp awoke,
The cymbal clanged, the deep-voiced trumpet spoke;
And Salem spread her suppliant arms abroad,
Viewed the descending flame and blessed the present God."

This glorious edifice stood in the Court of the Priests, which only they and their assistant Levites might enter. "He, also," says Josephus, "built beyond this court a temple, the figure of which was that of a quadrangle, and erected for it great and broad cloisters; this was entered into by very high gates, each of which had its front exposed to one of the four winds, and were shut by golden doors. Into this temple all the people entered that were distinguished from the rest by being pure and observant of the laws." As the first court was called that of the Priests, so this court was called the Inner Court. "But he made that temple (court) which was beyond this a wonderful one indeed, and such as exceeds all description in words. . . . For when he had filled up great valleys with earth, which, on account of their immense depth, could not be looked on when you bended down to see them, without pain, and had elevated the ground four hundred cubits, he made it to be on a level with the top of the mountain on which the Temple was built, and by this means the outmost temple which was exposed to the air, was even with the Temple itself. He encompassed this, also, with a building of a double row of cloisters, which stood on high upon pillars of native stones, while the roofs were of cedar and were polished in a manner proper for such high roofs, but he made the doors of this temple of silver." This was the Court of the Gentiles.

Josephus's description of the first Temple shows clearly that the Haram is on the site of it. It was Solomon who made that magnificent platform by levelling thus the hill. Of the glorious ark in the Holy of

Holies, of the candlesticks, the table of shewbread, the altar of incense, the brazen sea, we have no room for detailed description. The doors of cedar overlaid with gold, the veils of blue and purple and scarlet, and the brightest and softest of linen, the floor laid with plates of gold, must have been extremely magnificent.

One regrets to remember that it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and the golden cups and vessels carried to Babylon. These last, however, were restored by Cyrus.

HEROD'S TEMPLE.

THE Temple built by Solomon is thus fully described by Josephus. Undoubtedly it occupied the summit of Mount Moriah; and when Herod built the second Temple he did so over the same site that the first had occupied.

Herod's Temple had also three courts. The Court of the Priests included the temple shrine and the altar of burnt offering. Only the priests and the Levites might enter it. Another court surrounded it, and was itself shut in by a highly ornamented balustrade. Tablets were hung outside it, threatening the penalty of death to any one who ventured within the sacred precincts. One of these tablets was discovered by M. Clermont Ganneau in 1871, bearing on it this inscription :—

"No stranger is to enter within the balustrade round the Temple and enclosure. Whoever is caught will have himself to thank for his death, which will ensue." (See "P. E. Memoirs, Jerusalem," pp. 423, 424.)

Within this balustrade, guarded by a threat of death, fourteen steps led to a terrace which encircled the wall of the Inner Court, to which five steps more ascended. Within this Inner Court was the Priests' Court and the Temple itself, exactly as in Solomon's Temple. The Grand Colonnade, running round the Outer Court—the Court of the Gentiles—was peculiar to Herod's Temple. It was from this court that the Lord Jesus drove out the moneychangers, and those who sold doves, etc. Into it opened four gates. The colonnade on the south side was very magnificent; it had four rows of columns instead of two, and they were monoliths of white marble with Corinthian capitals. The cedar roof was exquisitely carved. It was called Herod's Cloister. Each of the side aisles between the columns was thirty feet wide and fifty feet high. The centre aisle was forty-five feet wide and one hundred high. With its noble cloisters and airy pinnacles the second temple must have been a grand object from Sion, which faced it, with the deep valley between. It was a tradition of Palestine that while the Temple was building there was no rain by day; the showers fell by night, but never hindered the building. Herod built also the Tower of Antonia, named after the famous Triumvir, Mark Antony, who was his friend. Josephus says there was a secret passage from Antonia to the inner temple by its eastern gate.

The second Temple greatly exceeded the first in glory as the prophet had foretold, for it was honoured by the presence of the Son of God Himself. Our Lord was borne into the Temple by His parents when the Virgin offered the turtle doves

according to the Law, and Simeon hailed the Lord's Christ in the Holy Infant. Again at twelve years old He is found in it, conversing with the Pharisees and Doctors of the Law, "both hearing them and asking them questions." That He was often in it afterwards, that within its courts much of His Divine teaching was given, we all know. It was here He dismissed the woman accused by the priests and saved her from stoning. He twice purified it from buying and selling, by driving the merchants and moneychangers from its outer court, and it was here that the sweet voices of childhood, on the day of His triumph, sang "Hosanna to the Son of David."



THE VIA DOLOROSA.

It is gone utterly. "Not one stone of it is left upon another"; not a vestige remains above ground of those *great* stones of which our Lord spoke, and the fate of which He foretold. Titus himself could not save the Temple from the flames; nor could the efforts of Julian the Apostate rebuild it.

Only rubbish remained on Mount Moriah when Omar built the Dome of the Rock.

The Via Dolorosa commences from the Palace of Pilate, now the Governor's *Serai*, from the side opposite to that looking into the Haram. On the left are two arches—very old—raised where the Scala Santa, or Holy Staircase, leading to the Judgment Hall stood. It was removed to the Basilica of St. John Lateran, by Constantine. The Empress Helena removed the steps to Rome, but the arches remain. On the right or opposite side of the street is the Church of the Flagellation, the spot where tradition says our Lord was scourged.

A little further west the Via Dolorosa is spanned by the Ecce Homo Arch. Here our Lord stood, clothed in purple, crowned with thorns, and with a reed for a sceptre, while Pilate—perhaps hoping to rouse the pity of the Jews by the spectacle,—cried to them "Behold the Man!" Only part of the arch is seen; the other portion of it is built into the convent chapel of Ecce Homo, which belongs to the convent of the Sisters of Sion. Behind the altar of this chapel is a Roman arch. In the part of the arch spanning the street is a tiny oratory, with double windows facing east and west.

Beneath the convent of the Sisters of Sion is a crypt, and also large cisterns hewn in the rock. Descending an easy slope, the traveller sees the Austrian Hospice on the right. In the street leading from the Damascus Gate the spot is passed where our Lord, exhausted by the night's suffering, wounded and bleeding from the fearful Roman scourging, fainted beneath the burden of His cross,

and the spot where He met and greeted His mother. At the bottom of the street is a large house with an arch; it is the traditional house of Dives; a corner to the left has been fixed on as the place where Lazarus lay.

Then ascending the hill to the right, the spot where our Lord fell the second time under the cross is reached, and next the house of St. Veronica, the Jewess who, pitying the Saviour's sufferings, gave Him her veil to wipe His face. The attention was rewarded by the Divine Sufferer leaving the impress of His countenance upon it, according to the tradition of the Latins.

At the corner of the French Consulate is the supposed site of the Wandering Jew's house. The legend says that our Lord passed this house in His agonised walk, and requested the bootmaker who owned it to let Him rest on the bench before his shop, "For I suffer," said the Lord. "I also suffer," said the man; "move on, move on." Our Lord looked at him, and said, "I go; but thou shalt move on even to the end of time." The judgment fell on him, and he is said still to be wearily walking the earth, bearing pestilence with him as he passes.

The Via Dolorosa merits its name in truth; for it bears an air of gloom and sadness as if haunted by those awful memories which have hallowed it. A succession of archways throw it into deep shadow even when parts are illumined by the noonday sun. This succession of light and shade makes the street very picturesque.

The streets of Jerusalem are all narrow and ill-paved, and mostly they are very dirty. Two of the main streets, running at right angles to each other, divide Jerusalem into four quarters. These are, David Street, and Damascus or Sion Street. David Street runs from the Jaffa Gate on the west to the Temple area on the east. Sion Street runs from the Damascus Gate on the north to a little eastward of Sion Gate on the south.

Christian Street runs northward from David Street through the Christian quarter, and passes the Greek convent and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. In the middle of this street on the right hand a narrow passage and a flight of steps lead to the front of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre. Palmer or Pilgrim Street leads to the chief entrance of the church.

The houses of the town are generally poor and out of repair, but better days are, we hope, coming to Zion with her largely increased population.

"Remember the Holy Sepulchre" was the cry heard in many an English town and village when the English Crusaders were starting on the second Crusade. And in truth the *real* sepulchre of our Lord would be one of the holiest spots on earth, could it be certainly fixed on. That the present church, for which so much Christian blood was shed, *is* the true one, has been gravely and reasonably disputed. Jerusalem was destroyed after its awful siege by Titus; the Christians who must have known the spot where the body of the Lord had rested, had fled to Pella. Adrian rebuilt the city in 132, and the Jews took and occupied it for a short time, but it was retaken by Rome, and continued a city subject to her, and the memory of the holy places seemed to have perished. No mention of the Lord's sepulchre can be found, till Eusebius, in the Life of Constantine, says it had become lost in "darkness and oblivion." It was left for the mother of Constantine the Great, the Empress Helena—a British lady—to seek for the site of our Lord's grave. Already of great age, she came to Palestine to search for it, but no human lips could give her the desired information. Then, guided by a vision, she is said to have discovered the spot where three crosses were buried—that of our Lord and of the two thieves. This discovery is called "the Invention of the Cross." Guided by his mother's visions, Constantine built a Basilica on the spot, completing it in 335 A.D. Some ruins still exist of it in the Church of the

Sepulchre. It was destroyed two hundred and eighty-one years afterwards by Khosroes II., King of Persia. Two years afterwards a monk, who became afterwards Patriarch of Jerusalem, built some oratories near the spot. These were destroyed by Khalif Hâkim, the prophet of the Druses, in 1010, but some small chapels were built there afterwards, which the Crusaders found standing, and included in the great cathedral they built here. The buildings left by the Crusaders remained till the beginning of the present century. But in 1808 it was in great part burned down; the tower, the western façade, and chapel of Helena, the aisle round the church, and the buildings of the Latins or Roman Catholics were saved.

After a great deal of difficulty the Porte permitted the church to be rebuilt, and it was completed and consecrated in 1810. This is the present church.

The road to the church by Pilgrim or Palmer Street contains shops for candles, rosaries, etc.

A paved quadrangle is entered by a



CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

flight of steps. Under this court, the excavations of the Explorers have discovered a crypt of great antiquity with circular arches. On the west are two chapels built before the Crusades. One of them, now closed, is dedicated to St. James, the brother of our Lord. The other was originally the Chapel of the Holy Trinity; it is now the parish church of the Greeks, and is called the Church of the Ointment Bearers, and the Church of the Forty Martyrs. On the basement storey of the great tower is a small chapel dedicated to St. John. On the opposite side of the court are some modern buildings into which doors open. They consist of a Greek convent, an Armenian church, dedicated to St. John, and a Coptic chapel dedicated to St. Michael and All Angels.

On the north side of the court is the church's southern façade. It is of pointed Romanesque architecture, heavy but picturesque. It has a double door with detached shafts supporting architraves on which rich sculptures represent our Lord's Entry into Jerusalem. Over these are arches. Over the door are two exactly similar windows. On the left stands all that remains of a massive campanile, once five storeys high but now cut down to three.

A moslem guard of officers and soldiers is stationed immediately within the church, to keep the Christian sects from strife and bloodshed! A disgraceful proof of how little these so-called Christians understand the teaching of their Divine Master.

The first object one sees, on entering the church by the principal door, is the stone of anointing, a large slab of red marble with rows of lights over it. Beneath it is the real stone on which it is said the body of our Lord was anointed. A few yards to the left is a little cage of iron, where the Virgin and the women stood whilst the anointing proceeded.

The chief part of the church is the



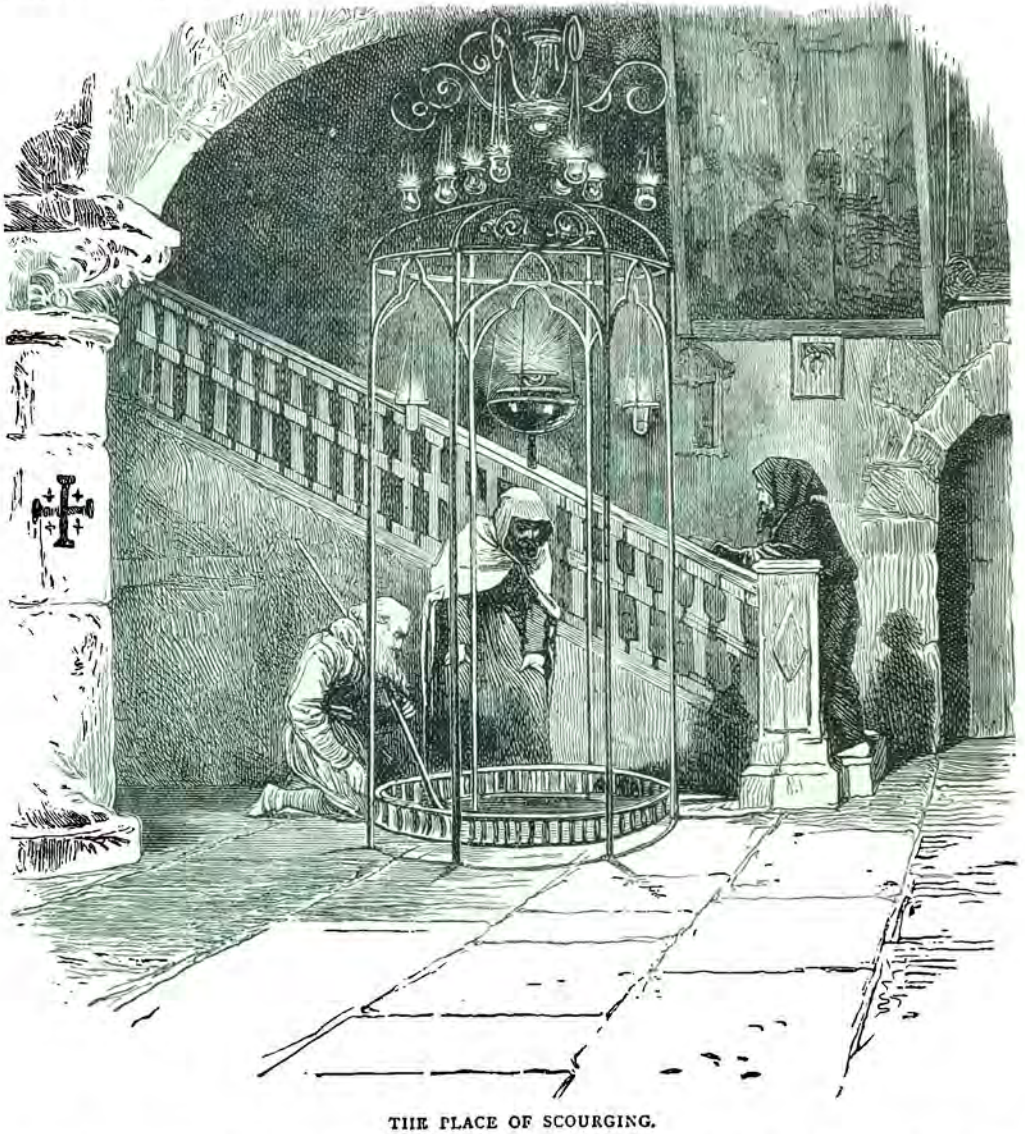
CAVE UNDER THE CHURCH.

Rotunda, which has a dome over it, open at the top. Beneath is the Holy Sepulchre; a small building, resembling a tiny church, in white marble, much ornamented and with a crown-shaped cupola over it. It contains two small rooms: the first is the Chapel of the Angel, and marks the spot where the angel sat after he had rolled away the stone from the tomb.

The next room is the Holy Sepulchre itself. It is a vault six feet by seven with a domed roof supported by short marble pillars. A raised slab of white marble fills the whole of the right side of it. Over it hang forty lamps of gold and silver, kept constantly burning. The Rotunda and the Sepulchre belong to all the churches—Latin, Greek, Armenian, Coptic and Jacobite alike.

There are thirty-two other holy places

gathered here under one roof. Golgotha, a very gorgeous chapel; the Church of the Apparition, where our Lord appeared after His Resurrection to the Virgin Mary. The Place of Scourging; the Chapel of Mockery; the Chapel of the Invention (of the Cross), etc., etc. In the Chapel of the Apparition accepted candidates are still invested with the order of St. John of Jerusalem, the order of the Knights Hospitallers, the most



THE PLACE OF SCOURGING.

heroic and excellent of the orders of chivalry. The aspirant must be a Catholic and of noble birth. During the ceremony he puts on the sword and spurs of Godfrey de Bouillon, the first Christian king of Jerusalem; these relics are kept in the sacristy of the church. They are undoubtedly genuine, and are shown to any one who wishes to see them.

Inside the Chapel of Adam were once the tombs of this gallant crusader and of his brother Baldwin, who succeeded him.

They have been both destroyed. In this chapel is also shown the tomb of Melchizedek. Adam was supposed to have been buried beneath the spot on which the Cross of Christ was raised!

Of the ceremony of the Holy Fire of the Greeks, we have not space nor need to speak; a good account of it is given in Major Conder's "Tent Work," chapter ii.

The remains of the Muristân are near the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, in the street of the Tanners; it was the Hospital of St. John, built by the Knights Hospitallers, the worthiest of the ecclesiastical orders of knighthood. Only the eastern half has, as yet, been excavated; and this part was presented by the Sultan to the King of Prussia. A double Gothic door, with a round arch on which the signs of the Zodiac are represented, leads into the former hospital.

The Emperor of Germany has had his portion cleared, and the excavations have discovered the Church of Santa Maria Maggiore, and the abbey attached to it. The Chapel of St. John is not yet excavated.

Some Italian merchants trading to the Levant, obtained leave from the Khalif of Egypt to build a house for the reception of pilgrims to Jerusalem, in 1048. They turned it into a hospital, and were hence called Hospitallers. The military Order was founded in 1099. In 1119 the Knights defeated the Turks at Antioch.

The last effort to retain Palestine was made by the Knights of St. John, who, when all seemed lost, took refuge in Acre and valiantly defended it. In 1290 they were defeated and driven out by the Moslem hordes. They sailed to Cyprus, where King John gave them the town of Limisso. In 1310 they took Rhodes, from whence they kept up constant warfare with the Turks. Finally, Charles V. bestowed the island of Malta on them; where their palace and their beautiful Church of St. John are still evidences of their culture, and the fortifications that remain of their military skill.

In this quarter of Jerusalem are the church and school of the English Mission, and an English Ophthalmic Hospital is established; a great boon in a country where ophthalmia is prevalent.

All the Bible tells us of the locality of our Lord's crucifixion is that He suffered "*without the gate*," and at a "place called *Golgotha—the place of a skull*." "The discovery of part of the second wall (of Jerusalem) in 1886," says Major Conder, in his admirable work entitled "Palestine," "shows pretty clearly that the line which—guided by the rock levels—I drew in 1878, nearly coinciding with Dr. Robinson's line, is correct, and that the traditional site was thus in the time of our Lord *within* the city walls. For the last half-century this view has been very generally held, but there was no agreement as to the true site. I was enabled, however, through the help of Dr. Chaplin, the resident physician, to investigate the ancient Jewish tradition still extant among the older resident Jews, which places the "house of stoning," or place of execution, at the remarkable knoll just outside the Damascus Gate, north of the city. There are several reasons, which I have detailed in other publications, for thinking that this hillock is the probable site of Calvary. When General Gordon was residing at Jerusalem, he adopted this idea very strongly, and it has thus become familiar to many in England. The bare and stony swell breaks down on the south side into a precipice, over which, according to the Talmud, those doomed to be stoned were thrown, and on the summit they were afterwards crucified, according to the same accounts. The hillock stands conspicuous in a sort of natural amphitheatre, being thus fitted for a spectacle seen by great multitudes. The neighbourhood has always apparently been regarded as of evil omen, and a Moslem writer says that men may not pass over the plateau beside it at night for fear of evil spirits. Close to this same spot also the earliest Christian tradition pointed out the scene of the stoning of Stephen ("Pales-

tine," by Major C. R. Conder, D.C.S., R.E., pp. 30, 31.)

The true tomb of Christ is, we believe, found to the west of Jeremiah's Grotto. The tomb that is here, and may have been the tomb of Christ, has been occupied, but was never finished. It is Herodian in appearance; it was made for a rich Jew. It has had only one tenant, and it was an object of reverence to the early Christians, and is surrounded by Christian tombs. There is a frescoed cross and sacred monograms faintly traced on the east wall. They are evidently of the first century. It stands in a garden, and there is a space in it, supposed to have been used for a Christian altar. There are the remains here of a Christian church, and down some steps we find Christian tombs, on which are Greek inscriptions. On one of these is "Buried with his Lord"; another has been translated, "To Nonus and Onesimus, Deacons



GOLGOTHA.

of the Church of the Witness of the Resurrection of Christ."

The church is supposed to have been that described as the Church of St. Stephen. The place has been shown by plaster casts, taken from accurate measurements, to be exactly the shape of a skull. Hence its name Golgotha.

In an inner cave of the grotto of the Prophet Jeremiah it was traditionally said that he hid himself in King Jehoiakim's time. "Then," said the princes unto Baruch, "Go, hide thee, thou and Jeremiah; and let no man know where ye be. . . . And the king commanded Jerahmeel, the king's son, and Seraiah, the son of Azriel, and Shelemiah, the son of Abdeel, to take Baruch the scribe and Jeremiah the prophet; but the Lord hid them." Jer. xxxvi. 19, 26.

The space outside the cave called the Grotto of Jeremiah is supposed to be the spot where St. Stephen was stoned, as it was the place of public execution.

On the south brow of the Hill of Zion is the Tomb of David. It is outside the modern walls, and is united with the build-

ing called the Cœnaculum, the house in which tradition places the chamber of the Lord's Supper. This also is said to be the room where the apostles assembled after our Lord's resurrection, and where the Holy Ghost descended in fiery tongues on the twelve at Pentecost; here the Virgin lived, and St. Stephen was buried. The room is a large cold apartment of stone, fifty or sixty feet long by thirty broad. At its eastern end is a chancel; at the south side a *Mirab* or praying place for Moslems.

No Christian is permitted to enter the Tomb of David; even Jews are excluded, though Sir Moses Montefiore was allowed to approach the iron railing and look in; but he might not enter it. It is a Moslem mosque, held more sacred than the mosque of Omar — the Dome of the Rock. The tomb was known in the days of the Crusaders, and a small church built in the fourth century once stood by it.



TOMB OF DAVID.

Rabbi Benjamin, of Tudela, when at Jerusalem visited the sepulchre of David, and tells the following strange story about it: "This place," he says, "is at present hardly to be recognised. Fifteen years ago (he wrote in 1162) one of the walls of the place of worship on Mount Zion fell down, and the patriarch commanded the priest to repair it. He ordered stones to be taken from the original wall of Sion for that purpose, and twenty workmen were hired, at stated wages, who broke stones from the very foundations of the walls of Sion. Two of these labourers, who were intimate friends, upon a certain day treated one another, and repaired to their work after their friendly meal. The overseer accused them of dilatoriness, but they answered that they would still perform their day's work, and would employ thereupon the time while their fellow-labourers were at meals. They then continued to break out stones, until, happening to meet with one which formed the mouth of a cavern, they agreed to enter it in search of treasure, and they proceeded until they reached a large hall, supported by pillars of marble, encrusted with gold and silver, and before which stood a table with a golden sceptre and crown. This was the sepulchre of David, king of Israel, to the left of which they saw that of Solomon in a similar state, and so on the sepulchres of all the kings of Judah who were buried there. They further saw chests locked up, the contents of which nobody knew, and were on the point of entering the hall, when a blast of wind, like a storm, issued forth from the mouth of the cavern, so strong that it threw them down almost lifeless on the ground. There they lay until evening, when another wind rushed forth, from which they heard a voice like that of a man calling aloud, 'Get up, and go forth from this place.' The men rushed out full of fear, and proceeded to the patriarch to report what had happened to them. This ecclesiastic summoned into his presence Rabbi Abraham el Constantini, a pious ascetic, one of the mourners of the downfall of Jerusalem,* and caused the two labourers to repeat what they had previously reported. Abraham thereupon informed the patriarch that they had discovered the sepulchres of the house of David and of the kings of Judah.

"The following morning the labourers were

* The wailers by the Temple wall.

sent for again, but they were found stretched on their beds, and still full of fear. They declared that they would not attempt to go again to the cave, as it was not God's will to discover it to any one. The patriarch ordered the place to be walled up, so as to hide it effectually from every one unto the present day. The above mentioned Rabbi Abraham told me this."

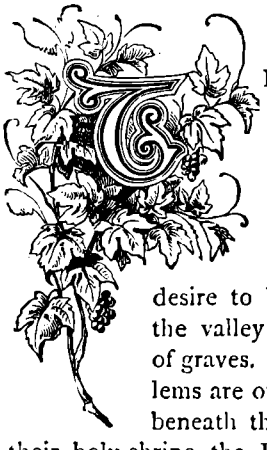
Josephus tells us that Hyrcanus, during the siege of Jerusalem by Antiochus Pius, opened David's sepulchre and took out of it three thousand talents.

Of Herod's similar attempt to rob the tomb, Josephus gives us this singular account:—

"As for Herod, he had spent vast sums about the cities, both without and within his own kingdom; and as he had before heard that Hyrcanus, who had been king before him, had opened David's sepulchre and taken out of it three thousand talents of silver, and that there was a much greater number left behind, and indeed enough to suffice for his wants, he had a great while an intention to make the attempt, and at this time he opened the sepulchre by night and went into it, and endeavoured that it should not be at all known in the city, but took only his most faithful friends with him. As for any money, he found none, as Hyrcanus had done, but that furniture of gold and those precious goods that were laid up there; all which he took away. However, he had a great desire to make a more diligent search, and to go farther in, even as far as the very bodies of David and Solomon, where two of his guards were slain by a flame that burst out upon those who went in, as the report was. So he was terribly frightened, and went out and built a propitiatory monument of that fright he had been in, and this of white stone, at the mouth of the sepulchre, and that at a great expense also."

Buried treasure, supernaturally defended, has in all ages been the tradition of sepulchres.

THE KEDRON VALLEY, OR VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT.



THE Jews call this valley the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and believe that it will be the scene of the Last Judgment. On this account they desire to be buried in it, and the valley is consequently full of graves. Those of the Moslems are on the western slopes beneath the Haram wall, near their holy shrine, the Dome of the Rock, while the Jews are buried on the eastern—on the side of Olivet. The Kedron valley begins a short distance (1¼ mile) north-west of the Damascus Gate. Here it is broad, but shallow, but it deepens as it advances eastward to the south. It runs straight towards Jerusalem for about half a mile, then it turns round to the east, crossed by the Damascus road. It continues its eastern course for a short distance, then it turns south and widens. Here it is crossed by the road to Anathoth and Michmash. As it goes south it grows narrower and deeper. Opposite St. Stephen's Gate it is a hundred feet deep and four hundred wide. From St. Stephen's Gate a zigzag path from the gate crosses the valley, and leads to the Mount of Olives. Below the bridge the valley narrows. Here is the brook Kedron,

merely a dry, stony bed in summer. On the left is a group of rock-cut tombs, those of Absalom, Zechariah, and St. James. After passing on for 500 yards we come to the Fountain of the Virgin, which is thought to be the same as Enrogel, in a deep cave on the right.

Siloam is near.

The brook Kedron's name recalls many Scriptural scenes; the most pathetic, perhaps, being David's flight from Absalom across it with his followers. As the Gittites were about to go over it the king said to Ittai, their chief, "Wherefore goest thou also with us? return and abide with the king;"—he already deems Absalom victorious—"for thou art a stranger, and also an exile; return to thine own place. Whereas thou camest but yesterday, should I this day make thee go up and down with us, seeing I go whither I may? Return thou, and take back thy brethren; mercy and truth be with thee." But Ittai, as generous as the king, refused to leave him, and passed over with all his men and all his little ones. "And all the country wept with a loud voice."

To Shimei—it was a name of doom. He cursed his king and threw stones at him when the king fled from Absalom, and though David had forgiven him, Solomon insisted on his constant residence in Jerusalem, in his own house; he was too disloyal and too dangerous to be permitted to enjoy perfect freedom. "Build thee a house," said the king, "in Jerusalem, and dwell there, and go not forth thence any whither. For on the day thou goest out, and *passest over the brook Kidron*, know thou for certain that thou shalt surely die. Thy blood shall be upon thine own head." Shimei broke his promise to obey the royal order, and suffered death for his fatal crossing of the Kedron.

Also Asa, King of Judah, removed his mother, Maacah, from being queen, because she had made an abominable image for an Asherah, "and Asa cut down her image and made dust of it, and burnt it at the brook Kidron." When the Temple was cleaned out in the days of Hezekiah, the Levites carried the refuse, and all that was remaining of the old idolatry, to Kedron, and threw it into the brook. They cast the altar of incense to false gods also into the defiled stream. But the Kedron was purified, and has a holy memory, since our Lord crossed it on His way to the Garden of Gethsemane. The natives call the valley, Wâdy en Nar, or Valley of Fire; the native Christians call it, "The Valley of my Lady Mary."

It was by the brook Kedron that King Josiah burnt the Asherah, or images of the sun and planets, with which his criminal predecessors had defiled the house of God. "And he brought out the Asherah from the house of the Lord, without Jerusalem, and he burned it at the brook Kidron, and stamped it small as powder."

In this valley are, as we have said above, the tombs (or supposed tombs) of Absalom, Zechariah, and St. James. We know from the Bible that the bad and beautiful Absalom, when taken from the oak where he hung, was cast into a deep pit in the forest, and they raised over him a very great heap of stones. "Now Absalom in his life-time had taken and reared up for himself a pillar, which is in the King's Dale: for he said, I have no son to keep my name in remembrance; and he called the pillar after his own name: and it is called Absalom's monument unto this day" (2 Sam. xviii. 18, 19). If Absalom's Pillar stood here, it must have been altered, built upon, or replaced by a monument. The tomb resembles the monuments at Petra, and is, perhaps, a building of Herod's days. The lower part is a monolith—might this be part of the original pillar? The upper part is of masonry. Mr. Willis thus describes it: "The square has a pilaster at each angle, and a quarter column attached to it; and also, two half columns between; these have Ionic capitals, and sustain an entablature of a singularly mixed character. Its frieze and architecture are Doric,

and have triglyphs and guttæ." Above this is an Egyptian cornice; these are all carved out of the solid rock, a passage about eight feet wide being left round it. "The cube is finished above by two layers of large stones, above which is a cylinder of three more



TOMBS IN THE VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT.

layers with projecting cable mouldings. The whole is completed by a concave pyramid with a tuft of palm leaves. The height of the monument is about fifty-five feet. There is a small chamber in the lower part of it, with recesses on the north

and west side." Stones thrown by the Jews at the tomb of Absalom have gathered round it.

To the north-east of Absalom's pillar is the tomb of Jehoshaphat. Only the pediment remains now. There are five chambers inside it, one of which is thought to have been used as a Christian church. Here, in 1848, a MS. Hebrew Pentateuch roll was found. To the south of these tombs are those of St. James and Zechariah. The former is opposite to the south-east angle of the Haram, which is said to be the spot from which the Jews hurled St. James. The sepulchre has a porch eighteen feet wide by nine feet deep. There are four chambers inside the tomb; a passage from the vestibule leads to the tomb of Zecharias.

The tomb of Zechariah is a cubical monolith cut out of the solid rock, which had been cut away from it, leaving a passage clear round it. It is ornamented like the tomb of Absalom.

The valley of Hinnom was thought to have in it, nearly opposite to the Jaffa Gate, the Upper Pool of Gihon; but the Palestine explorers rather identify as the Upper Pool of Gihon the Virgin's Fountain in the centre of the Ophel Hill. Here it (the valley) turns southwards, and about three hundred yards below it is crossed by the arched aqueduct from Solomon's Pools. When the valley turns to the east it rapidly grows more shallow, especially as it passes south of Mount Zion, which rises high above it. There is a hill here on the south side of the valley which is of picturesque broken cliffs, adorned with a few olive trees. There are some rock-cut tombs in it, but not of any importance. It bears the ominous name of the Hill of Evil Counsel, but is now called Jebel Abu Tor.

In this valley was Tophet, the spot where the children were made pass through the fire to Moloch.

"Moloch, horrid king, besmeared with blood
Of human sacrifice and parents' tears,
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children's cries unheard, that passed through fire
To his grim idol, in the pleasant vale of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna called the type of hell."

It was here also that when—

"The Assyrian came down like the wolf on the fold,"

the angel of the Lord slew them in the night, the breath of the pestilence passing over them.

POOLS AND AQUEDUCTS.

LIKE most oriental cities Jerusalem has numerous cisterns in which water is preserved. Most houses in the modern city have these reservoirs, with a small aperture at the top to catch the rains in winter.

The ancient city was supplied with water by excellent aqueducts. The chief one came from Solomon's Pools, winding along the hillside by Bethlehem, to the Birket es Sultân, near which it crossed the valley on nine low arches, and passing round the south brow of Zion Hill, it entered the city on that side above the Tyropœan Valley. Here the aqueduct was partly hewn in the rock, partly supported by masonry at the side of the cliff. Then it went along the line of David Street and entered the Haram at the Gate of the Chain, close outside of which is a large reservoir.

The water is now cut off by the town of Bethlehem, and the aqueduct no longer supplies Jerusalem. The aqueducts were repaired by Pontius Pilate; in 1300, by Sultan Nasr Mohammed, and also, in this century, by a Turkish Pasha. This aqueduct is called the Low Level aqueduct, to distinguish it from the High Level one, which comes from the hills beyond Hebron and Bethlehem. It crossed the valley near Rachel's tomb in a tube of perforated blocks of stone cemented together. From this point it can no longer be traced.

There were an immense number of aqueducts that supplied the Holy City with water; in 1867, under the Single Gate to the south of the Haram, one was discovered. This has been called "The



SOLOMON'S POOLS.

Great Passage," and is believed to have carried off the blood and water from the Altar of Sacrifice in the Temple. Two other upper and lower passages have been discovered under the Triple Gate. It has been thought that they were used for flushing the Great Passage.

Another aqueduct was discovered near Robinson's Arch, leading to the Haram wall, where it branched off to the north and south. It was traced north to Barclay's Gate, where it ended in a cistern.

There is a lower aqueduct beneath it, which is supposed to be older than the foundations of the Temple wall.*

Many other aqueducts have been discovered near and in Jerusalem.

Under the Temple area are many cis-

* Murray's Handbook.

terns and reservoirs for water. A great part of the Haram is hollowed out underneath into vast caves and cisterns.*

The largest of these is called the Great Sea (or by the natives the "Black Well"). It is a fine cavern, approached from the south by a narrow staircase. A conduit enters the tank from the east. There is a small circular chamber a little to the north.

This cistern can hold more than two million gallons of water.

Another great cistern is found under the Mosque of Aksa, and is commonly known as the Well of the Leaf, about which there is the following singular Moslem tradition. Mohammed once said that a faithful disciple of his should enter Paradise walking.

In the days of the Khalif Omar a number of pilgrims came to pray at the Dome of the Rock. One of them went to this well for water. His bucket fell to the bottom. He went down after it, and saw a door at the side of the well standing open, through which he could see the most lovely gardens. He walked out of the door and through arcades of roses, under trees bending with golden fruit, and listened to the murmur of rills and the dash of fountains. Surely this he thought must be the lost Paradise! Reluctantly the pilgrim left it; first, however, plucking a leaf, and putting it behind his ear.

The story was repeated to the Governor of the city; and he sent his servants at once, under the guidance of the pilgrim, to find the bowers of bliss. But no door and no gardens could be found.

The Governor wrote to the Khalif to ask what he should do with the lying pilgrim. But Omar answered that he had probably spoken the truth; for the prophet had foretold that one of his disciples should enter Paradise on foot. The prediction was evidently fulfilled, but they might test it. The leaf from Paradise could not fade. Let them keep it, and after a time examine it. If the tale were true, the leaf would be fresh and unfading; if false, it would be withered and dead. The leaf stood the test. It did not fade; and henceforth the spring became holy, and was called the Well of the Leaf. The tank of this cistern is forty-two feet deep, and the roof is supported by a pillar, cut from the rock, in the centre.

There is a large cistern in the south-east corner of the Haram. It has an entrance by a flight of steps at its east end, and a manhole on its west. It has a semi-circular vaulted roof, and is called the Well of the Pomegranate.

Sir Charles Warren thought that the north-west end of this tank was immediately under the altar of Solomon's Temple, and Major Conder thought the manhole must have been just outside the Water Gate.

The water for these reservoirs came chiefly from the Pools of Solomon, which are on the Hebron road.

These Pools consist of three reservoirs, partly built of large hewn stones, and partly of a hollowing out of the rock. They are arranged thus: the bottom of each pool is higher than the top of the one next below it; thus the greatest quantity of water is collected.

By the side of the upper pool is a building, partly castle, partly khan, of Saracenic architecture, and a short distance from it, to the west, is a little vaulted chamber over the Spring 'Ain Sâleh, which supplies water to the pools. Three other springs also feed them: 'Ain 'Atân to the south-east; 'Ain Farûjeh, beneath the pools, and a nameless spring inside the old castle. The high-level aqueduct also conducted water to them.

Of the great antiquity of these reservoirs there can be no doubt. They are admirable proofs of the wealth and ingenuity of the wise king.

The other supplies of water to the cisterns were found at the reservoirs by the Damascus Gate, and the rain-fall in the Temple Courts

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The Pool of Hezekiah.



HE Pool of Hezekiah is near the Jaffa Gate, and just south of the great Greek convent. It is an immense reservoir, two hundred and fifty feet long and one hundred and fifty wide. It is now called Birket el Hammam. From a terrace at the north-west corner of this Pool there is a fine view of Jerusalem. The pool is supplied with water by a small aqueduct from the Birket Mamilla, or upper pool of Gihon.

The Virgin's Fountain.



HE only spring of Jerusalem is the "Fountain of the Virgin," which rises in a deep cave at the foot of Ophel, in the valley of the Kedron, under the Temple walls. The Moslems call it the "Mother of Steps," on account of the two flights of steps that lead down to it. The masonry lining the sides of the cave is very ancient.

This spring is the En Rogel of the Old Testament; but Major Conder believes it to be the Pool of Bethesda, mentioned by St. John as the scene of the healing of the Cripple, for the water has an intermittent flow. This peculiarity gave rise to the legend that a dragon lies at the bottom of the fountain. When he is awake he stops the water; when he sleeps, it flows.

St. John tells us "that an angel of the Lord went down at certain seasons and troubled the water"; whoever then stepped in first was healed of any infirmity. It had five porches, in which the sick and suffering lay to await the rising of the waters.

From the back of the cave or rock chamber of the Virgin's Fountain a very narrow passage runs south, under the Ophel hill, for about the third of a mile, to the Pool of Siloam. It is a channel for the fountain, but owing to the intermittent flow of the water it is at times clear; at others, however, when the water rises, it rushes down the channel and fills it, in some places, up to the roof. As the flow takes place at uncertain intervals, and cannot be reckoned on, the exploration of the tunnel is very dangerous; nevertheless, it has been explored by Dr. Robinson, Sir Charles Wilson, Sir Charles Warren, Major Conder, and others.

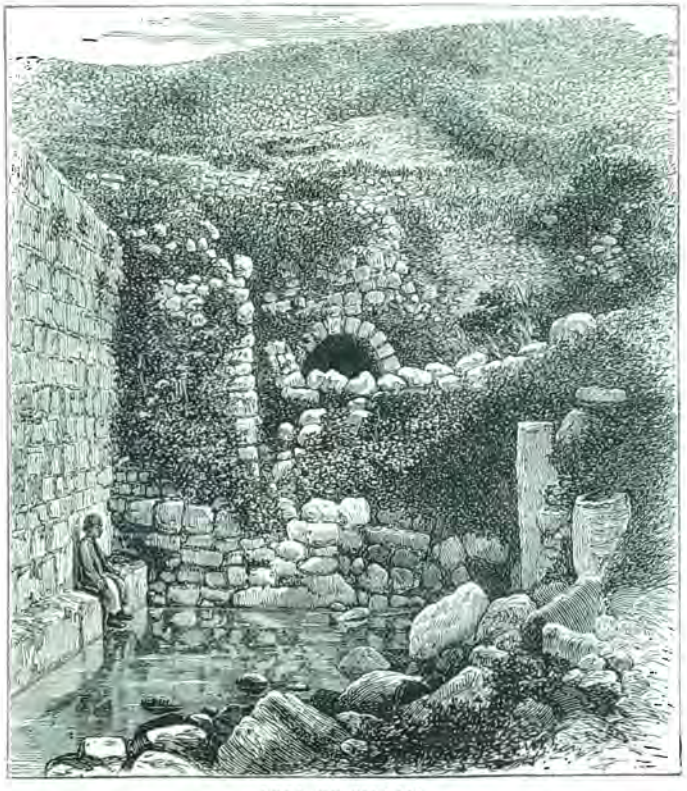
Dr. Robinson was in some peril in it, and has given us an interesting account of his adventure. He and his fellow-traveller, Dr. Eli Smith, put on aquatic costumes, took candles and matches, and entered the channel. At first they could walk erect, but in a short time the passage became lower, and they had to crawl on their hands and knees. At last even kneeling became impossible, and they could only proceed by lying at full length and dragging themselves along by their elbows. Whilst they were thus circumstanced they heard suddenly the murmur of approaching water.



POOL OF HEZEKIAH, JERUSALEM.

It must have been a moment of intense anxiety, but happily, as the water came on, it did not reach the roof of the rock by a few inches; they had, however, the greatest difficulty in finding breathing room, and had little hope of escaping death by drowning or suffocation, when they perceived the water gradually sinking. At last it fell entirely, and they continued their laborious progress. Very thankfully, we may be sure, they saw the light at the end of the winding passage, and issued from the tunnel through an arched opening on the pool of Siloam.

At this very spot, in 1880, a Jewish boy found an inscription on the rock, and aware of the anxiety of the Palestine explorers to find inscriptions, he at once



POOL OF SILOAM.

informed them of it. Several copies of it were made, but the first accurate one published in Europe was sent home by Major Conder.

The inscription has no date, but the form of the "beautifully-chiselled letters" made it plain to the explorers that it must have been written in the reign of Hezekiah, a little less than 700 years before Christ. It recorded the making of the tunnel, which was begun at both ends. "The workmen," Major Conder tells us, "heard the sound of the picks of the other party in the bowels of the hill, and called to their fellows. Thus guided, they advanced and broke through, the two tunnels proving to be only a few feet out of line." To see if they could discover any more inscriptions, and to find, if possible, the spot where the workmen met, Major Conder and his companions, Lieutenant Mantell and Mr. G. Armstrong, explored the

tunnel, dragging with them a chain, and taking compass angles, "which were entered in a wet note-book by the light of a candle, often put out by the water." They suffered "from bites of leeches and want of air," and risked the danger of the rise of the water, from which this time they escaped.*

The dangerous exploration was achieved a second time, but at considerable risk. We advise our readers to look at the account of it given by Major Conder, in his book entitled "Palestine."

As ordinary people cannot penetrate this singular passage, it is usual to walk from the Virgin's Fountain to the Pool of Siloam. The road is down the Kedron Valley to cornfields dotted with trees, where the Tyropæan Valley joins the Kedron. These fields are the site of the King's Gardens, of which Nehemiah speaks. Across the Tyropæan, on an old embankment, stands (or stood) an ancient mulberry tree, fast falling to decay, a few years ago. It is said to mark the spot where the prophet Isaiah was sawn asunder by order of Manasseh, and was called Isaiah's Tree.

* Conder's "Palestine," p. 29.

Turning to the right and passing a cliff, the traveller ascends the bank and stands by the Pool of Siloam. It is a large reservoir built in with rough but not very ancient stones. At the back of the picture of it is the arch which is at the entrance of the tunnel already described.

It was here that the blind man, obeying our Lord's command, washed his eyes, and "came seeing." The words, "Go, wash in the pool of Siloam," have immortalised its waters. Of the identity of its site there is no doubt, Josephus has so accurately described it, and Jerome speaks of the intermittent flow of its waters.

Directly facing the Pool of Siloam is Aceldama—the field of blood—purchased by the priests with the price of blood, that the traitor Judas had cast at their feet. Here is a great square building, half excavated from the rock, half built of massive stones. It is twenty feet deep, and is a vast charnel house, the floor of which is covered with mouldering bones. This has been identified as the site of the Aceldama ever since the fourth century, and the clay of the soil confirms the belief that it was indeed the potters' field "used to bury strangers in."

On the Road to Bethany.

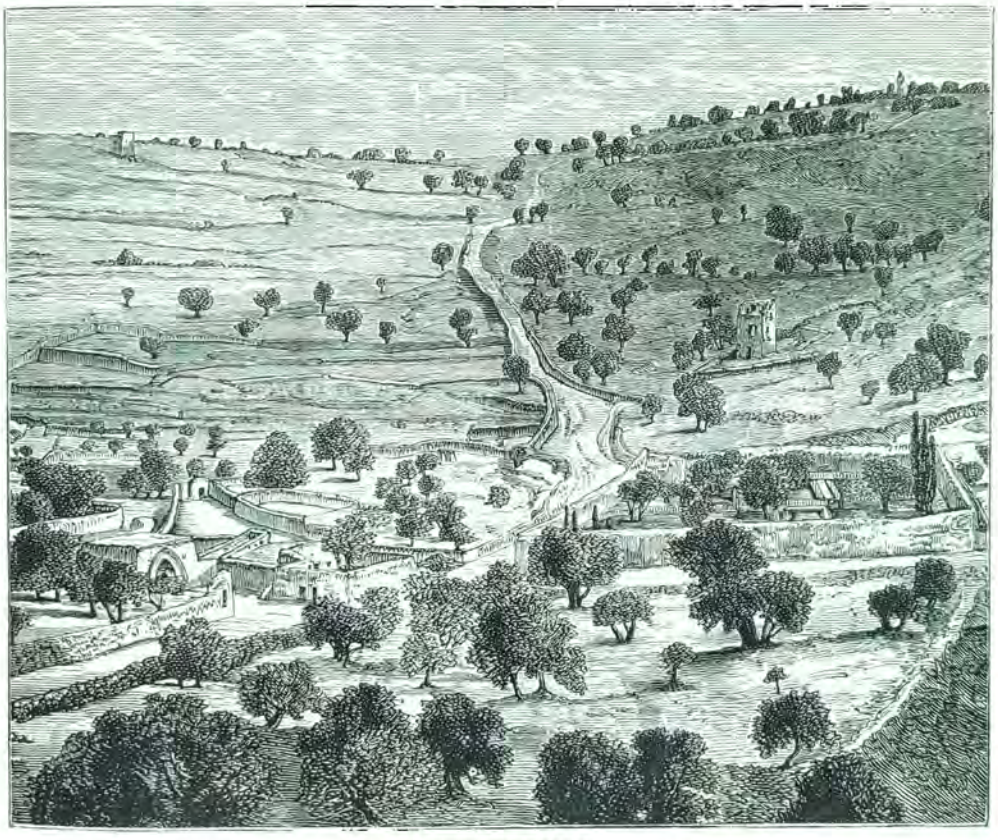
THE road to Bethany from Jerusalem is not without interest of its own. About a hundred yards before we reach St. Stephen's Gate, from whence we must issue, is the Church of St. Anne, the mother of the Virgin. It was built by the Crusaders in the early years of the twelfth century, the old Gothic façade and lancet windows fixing its date fairly well. The church is in the form of a cross, with the chancel slightly out of the straight line with the nave. William of Tyre calls it the "House of Anna," where three or four poor sisters resided. It was soon afterwards made a Benedictine nunnery, and in it Baldwin made his Armenian wife take the veil; endowing the house richly at the same time. The Empress Helena removed the bones of St. Anne to Constantinople from this church. It now belongs to France, having been given by the Sultan to Napoleon III.

On the other side of the bridge a church

marks the spot supposed to be the tomb of the Virgin Mary; it is extremely picturesque.

The façade, worn and grey, rises only a short distance from the ground on Olivet. Low pillars support a large arch that reaches to the coping ; an inner arch completes it. Then there is a square entablature, and an arched doorway. Sixty steps within it lead down to the gloomy, rugged cave, which has been partly remodelled. It is lighted by lamps and by the gleam of daylight that falls down the steps, and this "dim religious light" is very impressive, as it falls on the golden ornaments of the shrine and the three altars.

Here is an empty tomb, said to have



MOUNT OF OLIVES.

been occupied by the body of the Virgin till her Assumption. The chapel was built by Melisinda, the wife of King Fulke, in 1161, and the cavern is said to contain also the tombs of the Virgin's parents, and that of her husband, Joseph, according to Jewish custom, when the sepulchre of a family consisted of many tombs in a cave, cave burial being the first practised and long retained in the East. The Jews had no coffins then ; the body was anointed with oil and spices, and wrapped in rolls of linen, then it was laid on the kind of shelf on which it rested.

Leaving this picturesque chapel, we ascend the slope of Olivet for about ninety yards. Then the road branches off to the right, and in an angle of three roads lies the holiest spot in Palestine.



GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

THIS garden was surely the scene of the most terrible anguish that has ever been borne by man. For here the God-Man bore the sorrows and sins of a world, and sweat drops of blood in that awful struggle to endure and save. The spot is one of the holiest on earth.

The Garden now belongs to the Latin convent, and they have laid out flower-beds and gravel walks, and put flower-pots beneath one of the oldest olive trees. And these olive trees are the chief interest of the Garden. There are seven of them—very, very old; their decaying trunks supported by earth and stones. They cannot, however, be the trees beneath whose shadow the Agony was suffered, for Titus had those trees cut down by his soldiers during his siege of Jerusalem. The present olive trees must, therefore, be their descendants.

The present name of Gethsemane is Jesmanea. The Franciscans take care of the Garden and keep it in perfect order, and full of flowers; but it would, we think, be more impressive and conducive to religious thought if it were left with only the olives to cast their melancholy shadow over it.

Our Lord, when on earth, passed many hours on the Mount and in this garden or olive grove. We read in the Gospels continually of Jesus going to the Mount of Olives. "And they went," says St. John, "every man unto his own house; but Jesus went unto the Mount of Olives." St. Luke tells us of another time. "In the day time He was teaching in the Temple; and at night He went out, and abode in the Mount that is called the Mount of Olives." And most probably it was in this garden that He rested, for St John, speaking of the night of the Passion, says, "When Jesus had

spoken these words, He went forth with His disciples over the brook Kidron, where was a garden, into which He entered, Himself and His disciples. Now Judas also, which betrayed Him, knew the place, *for Jesus ofttimes resorted thither with His disciples.*" (St. John, xviii. 1, 2.)

This garden, St. Matthew and St. Mark tell us, was called Gethsemane. Here our Blessed Lord no doubt taught His disciples; here He rested and prayed; a whole night of communion with His Father on the mountain top in Galilee was His wont; perhaps He found that commune here, when His weary day in Jerusalem closed; here He suffered and submitted, here the tender angel comforted Him.

"Surely the Lord is in this place," cried



JERUSALEM FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

Jacob at Bethel. We may echo his words in Gethsemane.

"Dear sacred haunts of glory and of woe,
Help us one hour, to trace His musings high and low.

One heart-ennobling hour! It may not be:
Th' unearthly thoughts have passed from earth away,
And fast as evening sunbeams from the sea
Thy footsteps all in Sion's deep decay
Were blotted from the holy ground: yet dear
Is every stone of hers; for Thou wast surely here.

There is a spot within this sacred dale
That felt Thee kneeling—touched Thy prostrate brow:
One Angel knows it. O might prayer avail
To win that knowledge; sure each holy vow
Less quickly from th' unstable soul would fade,
Offered where Christ in agony was laid.

Might tear of ours once mingle with the blood
That from His aching brow by moonlight fell,
Over the mournful joy our thoughts would brood,
Till they had framed within a guardian spell,
To chase repining fancies as they rise,
Like birds of evil wing to mar our sacrifice.

So dreams the heart self-flattering, fondly dreams:—
Else, wherefore, when the bitter waves o'erflow
Miss we the light, Gethsemane, that streams
From thy dear name, where in his page of woe
It shines, a pale, kind star in winter's sky?
Who vainly reads it there, in vain had seen Him die."

Three roads lead from Gethsemane up the Mount of Olives; up the most northerly David is supposed to have fled when he left Jerusalem to Absalom; when pausing on the summit, he looked back sadly at his lost capital, more pained, no doubt, by the cruel rebellion of his beloved son than by the loss of his kingdom.

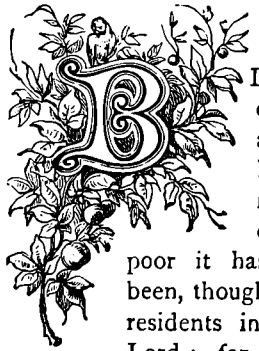
The middle path, passing the Russian church, leads to the village of Kefr et-Tûr, where is the Church of the Ascension.

Four chapels have been built on this spot. One by the Empress Helena; a small one by Modestus; one built by the Crusaders in 1130; this was destroyed in the sixteenth century, and the present church was built in 1834. It is a small octagon, standing in a paved court. In it is shown the rock with a natural hollow in it, quite unlike the shape of a foot, but which is asserted to be the footprint of our Saviour. The church is connected with a mosque, under the care of a dervish.

The view from the summit of the Mount of Olives is very fine. Jerusalem is best seen from it. The valleys that surround it, its walls, the Dome of the Rock, the mosque El Aksa, the narrow, zigzag streets, are all lying before us. But there is another and very different view to the eastwards. Olivet stands on the verge of the desert. The "wilderness of Judea" lies below in a succession of naked hills and jagged cliffs of limestone. Here glaring white, there sullen grey, with shadowy ravines, till at last the desert hills drop suddenly into the deep valley of the Jordan, beyond which rises the mountain range of Petrea—the ancient hills of Moab and Gilead. This wilderness was the scene of the Temptation, and through it is the road leading from Jerusalem to Jericho.

At the top of Olivet the Crusaders under Godfrey de Bouillon gazed upon the Holy City before attacking it; and chanted Litanies, after which Peter the Hermit preached to them.

BETHANY.



BETHANY is a poor, desolate village. Its ancient name has been supposed to mean the "House of Poverty," and poor it has probably always been, though with some well-off residents in the time of our Lord; for Mary and Martha cannot have been very poor, or they could not have entertained our Lord and the Twelve; and Simon, the Leper, at whose house Mary broke the box of costly ointment to anoint our Lord's feet, was evidently well off. The ointment, too, proves that Mary did not lack means. That it was always a singularly quiet and lonely place we can well believe. It is in a rocky glen; the wilderness lies in front of it; the steep side of the mount rises at the back.

Bethany is now named el-Azarîyeh, the Arabic rendering of Lazarus, who thus seems to have his name preserved in his native place among the infidels as it is embalmed for ever in the pages of Holy Writ.

The sites of the events of our Lord's life which occurred here are pointed out. The house of the sisters and Lazarus, where our Lord was so often a guest; where He

spent every night of His last week on earth (except that of His agony) is shown; the house of Simon, the restored Leper, and the tomb of Lazarus. The last is a deep vault, partly excavated in the rock, partly lined with stones, which do not appear to be ancient. The tomb is in the centre of the village, and is reverenced both by Christians and Moslems. The remains of an old convent are seen above the village, and the ruins of a square tower called the "Castle of Lazarus." Why it is so named is not known.

From Bethany the Saviour proceeded on His way to Jerusalem for His last Passover. The news of the raising of Lazarus had reached the city, and when they knew that the life-giving Prophet had again arrived at Bethany, they were eager to acknowledge Him as their King, to lead Him in triumph into Jerusalem.

There is a deep ravine on the side of Olivet soon after leaving Bethany, and here is supposed to be the village of Bethphage to which our Lord sent His disciples to bring to Him the ass and the colt. They



BETHANY.

were brought at once, and the disciples made a saddle of their outer garments for their Master to sit on. With palms and cries of triumph, with garments spread in His path, the Lord Jesus approached Jerusalem. The height is gained from which we still see Jerusalem at its best—Moriah and its Temple, Zion, the Palace of Herod, the lofty tower of Hippicus. But when Jesus came near, when all the beauty of the Jerusalem of that time was spread before Him, He wept over it. He foresaw the dreadful fate that impended over the rebellious city.

It was through the Golden Gate that the Lord Jesus entered Jerusalem and proceeded to the Temple, and since that time a prophecy of Ezekiel's has been literally fulfilled, and is surely one of the many unconscious utterances of prophecy which may be accepted as evidence of the Divinity of our Lord.

Ezekiel was brought in vision to the land of Israel, and was shown by the radiant angel the plan and buildings of the New Jerusalem that should be re-erected after the Captivity. "And he (the angel) brought me to the gate, even the gate that looketh towards the east: and, behold, the glory of the God of Israel came from the way of

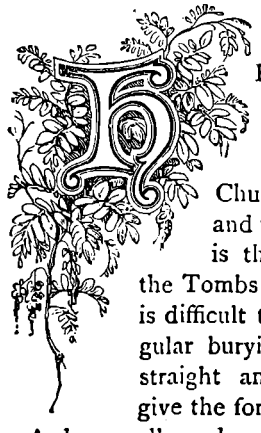
the east: and His voice was like the noise of many waters: and the earth shined with His glory." (Ezek. xliii. 1, 2.)

* * *

"Then he brought me back the way of the outer gate of the Sanctuary which looketh towards the east; and it was shut. And the Lord said unto me, This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, neither shall any man enter in by it; for the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut."

Prophecies are often said to be of double fulfilment. The glory of the Lord had passed through the eastern gate of the Sanctuary before the eyes of Ezekiel in vision; but the Lord Himself passed through it on the day of His triumphal entry into Jerusalem. And now it is closed, as God had foretold, and has been closed for more than 700 years by the Moslems. In the Crusaders' time it was opened twice a year, once on Palm Sunday, the day of our Lord's triumphant entry into Jerusalem, and on the 14th of September, in memory of the Emperor Heraclius bringing back the true Cross from the Persian War, and bearing it, through this gate, on his shoulders. This festival was called the Exaltation of the Cross.

The Tombs of the Prophets and the Judges.



HIGH on the south-east side of Olivet, between the foot-path leading to the Church of the Ascension and the road to Bethany, is the catacomb called the Tombs of the Prophets. It is difficult to describe this singular burying place, to which straight and curved galleries give the form of a quadrant.

A long gallery descends into a circular chamber about 24 feet in diameter, and 10 feet high, from which run three passages. At the end of them is a gallery, which forms the quadrant, and contains twenty-four recesses, of which the first and seventh are tunnels, leading to two inner chambers, one unfinished. A small gallery, concentric with this, intersects the passages midway, and a fourth passage connects the two galleries. Greek and Hebrew inscriptions are seen here. Some of the recesses have crosses over them, and were probably used as Christian tombs. The Mount of Offence is also full of small sepulchres, but used to contain bones, for hither the scattered Jews brought the bones of their ancestors from distant lands to be buried in the sacred soil of Jerusalem.

On the road to Neby Samwil (Samuel's Tomb) are the tombs of the Judges or the Sanhedrim. The entrance faces west, and the vestibule in front of them is highly ornamented. The architrave is surmounted by a pediment, with flowers and tracery round a torch. It has also a torch at each angle. A door in the back wall of the vestibule leads into a room about twenty feet square and eight feet high.

On the north side are seven *loculi*, seven feet deep, perpendicular to the side of the room. Above these are arched recesses, probably for the reception of sarcophagi. Doors on the south and east lead to small

rooms which have three long niches, perpendicular to their three sides, the fourth side has the door in it. Over each of the *loculi* is an arched recess. There are more than seventy places for the reception of corpses in this strange catacomb.

They can be seen only by the aid of candles or torches.

The Tomb of Queen Helena.



To the south-east of the Tombs of the Judges is one of the most remarkable of these catacombs. It was formerly called the Tombs of the Kings, but Dr. Robinson identified it as the monument of Helena, Queen of Adiabene, in Kurdistan.

She was the best-beloved wife of Monobazus, king of that country, and of all his sons he loved her youngest son best. This partiality roused the jealousy of the boy's brothers, and the king—well aware how dangerous such feelings might become to his favourite—sent his Izates with costly gifts to Abennerig, King of Charax-Spasini, entreating him to protect his son. Abennerig generously accepted the charge committed to him; grew much attached to the young exile, married him to his daughter, and bestowed a country yielding large revenues upon him.

There came a Jewish merchant to Charax-Spasini, who, while selling his wares to the Harem ladies, spoke to them of the God of Israel. Many were thus taught to cast away their idols, and through his wife Izates received the knowledge, and adopted the faith of the true God—Jehovah.

Monobazus, meantime, declining in health and age, yearned to see his banished son again, and sent for him. Izates obeyed the summons, taking with him the Jewish merchant. To his great joy, he found that his mother Helena had also abjured idolatry, and believed in the God of Israel. Monobazus received his son with the greatest joy and affection, and bestowed on him a province named Carræ, which was famous for producing amomum in great quantities. "There are also in it," Josephus tells us, "the remains of the ark in which Noah escaped the Deluge, and it is still shown to strangers." Carræ must therefore have been very near Ararat.

Izates dwelt in his new possession till his father's death. By the wise policy of his mother, Queen Helena, he succeeded to the crown as his father had wished; for on the king's decease she called together the nobles of the kingdom, reminded them of her dead husband's wish, and then said, "However, I await your determination, for happy is he who receives a kingdom not from a single person only, but from the willing suffrages of the many." Izates was at once declared king, and the nobles would fain, for his security, have slain his brethren, but Queen Helena would not permit it, but made his brother Monobazus regent till Izates arrived.

Izates's faith was embraced by his brethren, and though its profession exposed him and his family to great perils, and even to invasion from more powerful sovereigns, the Lord—even in an almost miraculous manner—delivered him from the King of Parthia and his domestic foes.

When Helena saw her son peacefully reigning—beloved and admired by all men

—she asked him to let her go to Jerusalem to worship God in His own temple. Izates was delighted to permit her departure, arranging for her safety on the way, and giving her a great deal of money.

But the scene which met the queen's eyes on her first entrance to the city was extremely distressing. The famine foretold by Agabus (Acts xi. 28) had fallen on Jerusalem. Gaunt forms, and despairing faces, and the cry of hungry children, met her; the people were dying for want of food. Their guest did not hesitate a moment in acting. She sent some of her servants at once to Alexandria to buy a large quantity of corn, giving them the



THE TOMB OF HELENA.

money for it; others she dispatched to Cyprus to purchase a cargo of dried figs. As soon as this food arrived, Helena distributed it to those who were in want. She sent also to tell Izates of the state of the city, and he at once sent large sums of money to the principal men in Jerusalem.

It is to the honour of the Jewish nation that they were not ungrateful to their benefactress. Helena dwelt amongst them, beloved and venerated, for some time, and, as we know, sleeps in death in the Promised Land.

Izates died when he had reigned twenty-four years, directing that his brother Monobazus, also a son of Helena, should succeed him on the throne. Helena was in great grief at the loss of her dutiful and noble



BETHLEHEM.

son. She hastened back to Adiabene, where she did not long survive Izates.

"Monobazus II. sent her bones, as well as those of his brother, to Jerusalem, and gave orders that they should be buried at the pyramids which their mother had erected; they were three in number, and distant not more than three furlongs from the city of Jerusalem." Eusebius mentions these pillars in his Ecclesiastical History.

The grave of Helena, or rather the catacomb of her family, is in an olive grove about half a mile north of the Damascus Gate.

A broad trench hewn in the rock to the depth of eighteen feet is entered by descending an inclined plane; then a very low doorway leads to a vast court ninety-two feet long, eighty-seven broad, and twenty deep. The sides of rock are hewn quite smooth. On the western side is a vestibule that must once have been magnificent. The front has a deep frieze and cornice, on which are carved flowers, fruit, triglyphs and foliage. The vestibule was originally supported by two columns, and they, as well as the pilasters at the corners, were of the Corinthian order. The frieze is now much injured.

The entrance to the tomb is at the southern end of the vestibule, and the rolling stone that formerly closed the portal is still there. The opening is, as usual, very small, considerably below the floor of the vestibule.

The first room is an ante-chamber, nineteen feet by eighteen and a half; its walls are the smoothed solid rock. On one side are two low doors leading to small chambers, and on another a door leading into another room. From this chamber a staircase leads to an inner chamber.

These small rooms have *loculi* running out of them. In an under chamber sarcophagi of white marble once stood, richly carved with flowers and wreaths. One of them contained an Aramaic inscription, in the first line of which the words "Sara Meleka" (Queen Sara) have been deciphered. It may probably have been the queen's native name.

Helena prepared her sepulchre in her lifetime. Dr. Thomson says, "The whole series of tombs indicates the hand of royalty and the labour of years"; but he does not ascribe them to Helena.

The marble sarcophagi were taken away by M. de Saulcy, and placed in the Louvre Museum.

The great stones that closed the sepulchre were very curiously arranged; one had to be rolled away up an inclined plane; another could be slid behind the wall along a concealed groove; an inner door opened on a pivot and shut by its own weight. This will not open from the inside, therefore should it fall to when any explorer is within it, he would be entombed alive, unless he had left a companion outside it.



The Road to Bethlehem.



In leaving Jerusalem for Bethlehem, we shall be treading the very pathway by which the Magi went to offer homage to the new-born King. The way is by the Jaffa Gate. A descent over stony ground conducts the traveller to the valley of Rephaim, or "the Giants." It is about a mile in length, and closes in a glen full of roses. There is a strange mediæval legend of the rose having originated in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem. We give it from Sir John Maundeville (1322).

"Between (Bethlehem) and the church," he says, "is the field Floridus, that is to say, the field flourished; for a fair maiden was blamed with wrong and slandered, . . . for which cause she was condemned to be burnt in that place; and as the fire began to burn about her, she made her prayer to our Lord, that, as truly she was not guilty, He would, by His merciful grace, help her, and make it known to all men. And when she had thus said, she entered into the fire, and immediately the fire was extinguished, and the faggots that were burning became red rose bushes, and those that were not kindled became white rose bushes, full of roses, and these the first rose trees, both white and red, that ever any man saw. And thus was this maiden saved by the grace of God. And therefore is that field called the field that God flourished, for it was full of roses."

In the plain of Rephaim is a well, about which there is another tradition. It is said that the Magi set forth to Bethlehem without the guiding star, which would have served Herod as well as themselves. But when they reached this well, and stooped down to draw water from it, they suddenly saw the herald star mirrored in it, and rose to recognise it in the sky, and follow its certain leading to the spot where the infant Christ was to receive their homage.

When Elijah had had the four hundred prophets of Jezebel slain by the river Kishon, and afterwards ran back with Ahab through the welcome storm to Jezreel, she sent a messenger to him, saying, "So let the gods do to me, and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time." And when he heard that, Elijah fled for his life and came to Beersheba, and left his servant there. But he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and sat down under a juniper tree, weary with his great struggle, and with his late extraordinary exertions, and so sad that he prayed to God to take his life. But sleep stole upon him instead of death, and he lay under the tree till an angel's touch awoke him.

An apocryphal tradition places the spot where Elijah slept on his way to Beersheba here, and there is a depression in the smooth rock, marking the spot where the weary prophet lay. Of course there is not much faith to be put in such a tale, and, in fact, the convent of Mar Elias was built by a bishop Elias. It was called by his name, and thus the legend of the prophet's sleep on the spot no doubt originated.

The road from the convent winds around the end of a wild valley, and then reaches a large and flourishing village named Beit Jâla. It is surrounded by vineyards and olive groves. There are buildings here belonging to the Protestant Missionary Societies; there is also a palace of the Latin Patriarch, and both Greek and Latin churches. Beit Jâla is Zelzah, and is

mentioned by Samuel when he sent Saul away after anointing him. He says, "When thou art departed from me to-day then shalt thou find two men by Rachel's sepulchre, in the border of Benjamin at Zelzah; and they will say unto thee, the asses which thou wentest to seek are found."

Rachel's Tomb, from which one gets a



CONVENT OF ELIJAH, NEAR BETHLEHEM.

view of Bethlehem, is allowed by Christians, Moslems, and Jews alike to be on the exact site of the early sepulchre, which is probably a cave below it. It is a plain Saracenic building, with a low dome, and is not ancient. It is square, with a court on the east. The court is covered; and has a double-window on the east, and a window

and prayer niche on the south. It and the dome-covered part are of the same size, twenty-three feet square. It is used as a place of prayer by the Moslems. The inner chambers are locked, and the key is in the hands of the Jews, who assemble to pray here every Friday. At a short distance from the tomb are a few remains or ruins called Ramah. The spot has not been identified, and is perhaps only a guide's invention, but it is probable that such a place did exist there. The name Ramah means a place on a hill. There are many Ramahs in Palestine, and there must have been one here, since it is named as the place of sorrow by the Prophet Jeremiah. "In Ramah was there a voice heard, lamentation and weeping, and great mourning; Rachel weeping for her children and would not be comforted because they are not." (Jer. xxxi. 15.)

Here we know from Scripture the beloved Rachel died before she reached her husband's home, naming her infant



RACHEL'S TOMB.

Benoni, "the son of my sorrow," and here Jacob buried her and set a pillar over her grave. It was the omen of a far greater sorrow; of that when by Herod's orders the babes of Bethlehem were slain, in his vain effort to destroy the infant Messiah. Joy and sorrow both have left their memories to Bethlehem. Joy that the Son of God took our nature upon Him within her walls; sorrow for the Innocents, His unconscious martyrs.

Bethlehem stands on a narrow ridge, running out from the central range of the hills of Judah, to the eastward. On the north and south it descends in terraced slopes to deep glens. On the east is a broad reach of table-land.

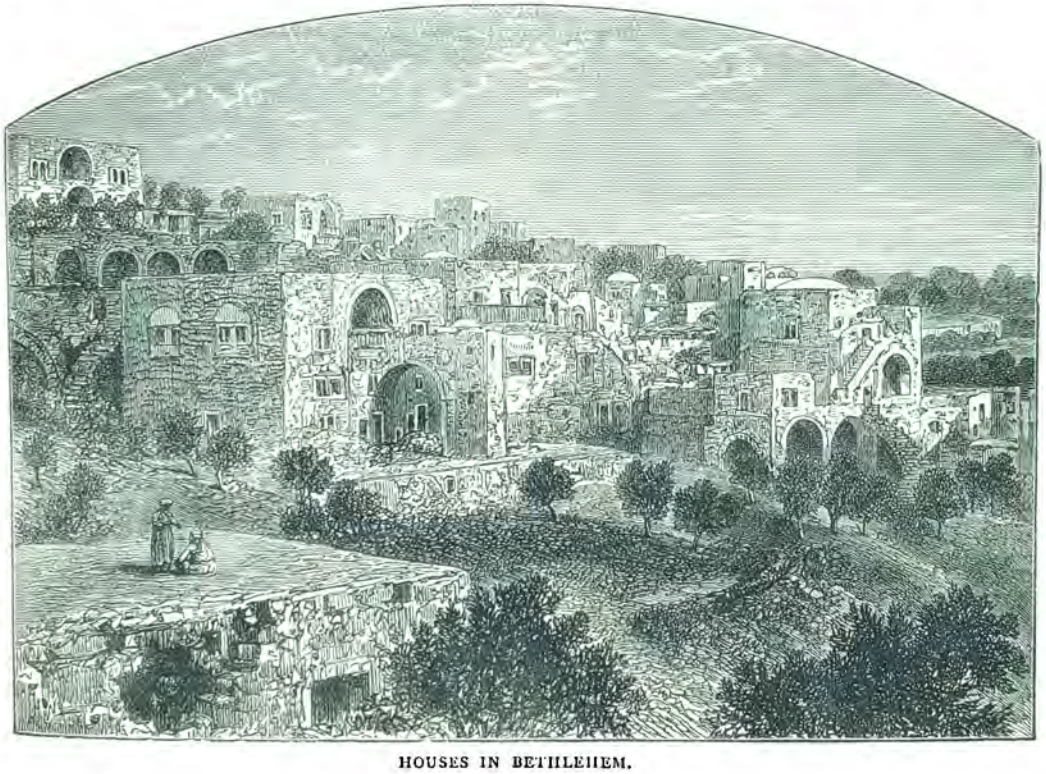
The terraces are full of vineyards, and have groups of olive trees here and there; they are cut in the rocks as regularly as steps of stairs. On the table-land of the east ridge, separated from the village by an esplanade, is the immense building—looking like a feudal castle—which contains the Church of the Nativity, and three convents; Latin, Greek, and Armenian.

The view from this ridge of Bethlehem is very striking; it includes the wilderness of Judea, the Jordan Valley, and the Dead Sea, while beyond, north and south, stretch the blue mountains of Moab.

Of how many events always fresh in men's memories has Bethlehem been the scene! Here, in its rich wheat-fields, Ruth gleaned during the harvest of Boaz.

"She stood breast high amidst the corn
Flushed by the golden light of morn,
Like the sweetheart of the sun
Who many a burning kiss has won."

And in the gate of the town the strange ceremony of the nearest kinsman drawing off his shoe, gave the fair Moabitish maiden to Boaz for a wife; and she became the great-grandmother of David. Here David's father dwelt, and sent for him at



HOUSES IN BETHLEHEM.

Samuel's request, that the prophet might anoint the shepherd-boy king of Israel.

How the warrior David longed for the water of the "well of Bethlehem which was by the gate," and how at the risk of life his three brave followers brought it to him; and how he poured on the ground, as a libation, the water bought at the risk of human life, as too precious to be drunk, every one knows. The well is there still; and we can see the road the warriors had to traverse from the cave of Adullam to the spot, up the ravine, through the vineyards, and then to the Philistine guard-house, ere they gained it. How they must have loved their gallant young leader to peril life thus for his whim.

It was on the hills of Bethlehem that the shepherds, watching their flocks by night—to guard them, as David had done, from the beasts of prey—saw the light of heaven, and heard angelic voices proclaim the glory of the birth that night, in the city of Bethlehem, of Christ the Lord. "Peace

and good-will" floated in divine music over the hills of Palestine, and (save when cruel Herod murdered the Innocents) peace *has* rested on Bethlehem. It is at this present day a Christian town; its fields are fruitful; its vineyards productive; the Lord's birthplace is prosperous indeed. Its inhabitants are gifted with personal beauty. The women, lovely and majestic, dress in a long blue under-garment with sleeves; over it a sleeveless jacket of scarlet; and they wear a head dress of white calico over a frame folded beneath the petticoat at the back. Green is the turf of Bethlehem; its gardens, its olive-groves, and its vineyards fruitful. The ground is enamelled with flowers; the lovely scarlet anemone, blue pimpernel, pink lychnis, red valerians, paint the soil of beautiful and blessed Bethlehem.

The massive building of the united convents is of extraordinary strength. The walls are of great height, the windows and doors small, as they might be needed for defence.

The men of Bethlehem are strong, brave, and able to hold their own against all odds. They are also very industrious, and the pretty souvenirs made there are well known everywhere in Europe.

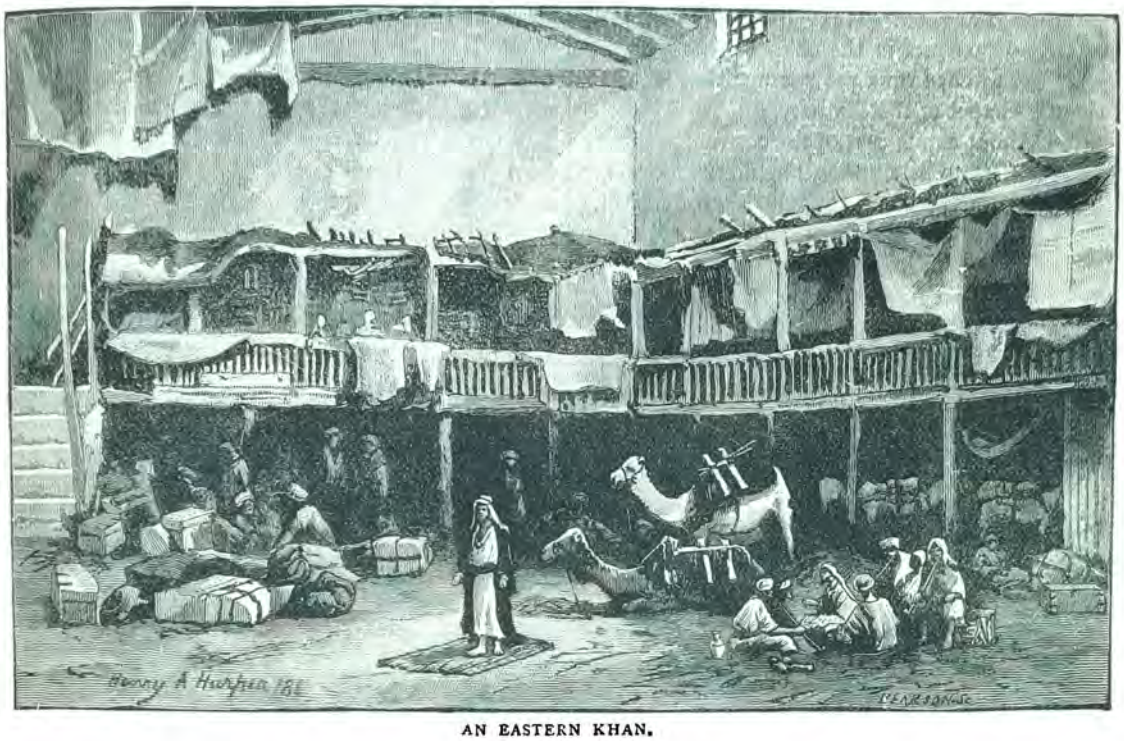
The Church of the Nativity is a basilica built by the Empress Helena in 327 A.D. It is the oldest remaining ecclesiastical building in the world, and is 120 feet long by 110 wide. The entrance door is very low, the vestibule gloomy. The church is divided into a nave and four aisles by Corinthian pillars; these are all of the age of Constantine, as are the clerestory windows. On the clerestory wall are the remains of some frescoes put up by the Greek Emperor, Manuel Comnenos, 1143. They are of the ancestors of Christ; the principal Councils; figures of angels between the windows;—a frieze of foliage, and a second frieze at the top of all.

In the church is an ancient stone font with a Greek inscription.

The choir is shut off from the nave by a dead wall, erected in 1842. It has apses on the north, south, and east, and is divided into two chapels, one for the Greeks, the other for the Armenians. From each of these chapels a staircase leads to the Grotto of the Nativity, and one runs down also from the Latin Church of St. Katherine on the north side of the choir. The Greeks also have an altar in the east apse, and their choir is behind it.

The Grotto and Study of St. Jerome.

By a narrow, winding, subterranean passage from St. Katherine's Chapel one reaches the Grotto and study of St. Jerome. It is a small square vault, hewn in the rock with a raised dais round the sides scooped out of the stone. On the eastern side is an altar; above it a picture of St. Jerome, and the tame lion at his feet watching him write. It was in this rock study that St. Jerome translated the Bible into Latin. This translation is the Vulgate, the Bible received and used by the Church of Rome.



AN EASTERN KHAN.

THE GROTTO OF THE NATIVITY.

THIS grotto, honoured ever since the second century after Christ as the birthplace of the Lord, is a vault hewn in the rock, thirty-eight feet long by eleven broad.

At the east end is a semicircular apse, where on a marble slab fixed in the pavement, with a silver star in the centre, are these words: HIC DE VIRGINE MARIA, JESUS CHRISTUS NATUS EST.

A trough of marble marks the place where the manger stood. We have the testimony of Jerome, who lived at Bethlehem, and came here shortly after the erection of the basilica, that it was built upon the site of the Bethlehem Khan where Mary and Joseph vainly sought shelter and rest. For the positions of eastern khans or inns on the caravan roads never changed, but were to be found in the same place century after century. Justin Martyr, in the second century, affirmed that the stable of the Bethlehem Khan was a rock-cut cave. He, Justin Martyr, was born at Nablûs and educated in Palestine, and he says that our Lord was born "in a grotto" at Bethlehem. This sacred site appears therefore to be certainly identified.

In the Church of the Nativity, to which we must now return, there is on the east side, behind a column, an altar said to mark the spot where the Holy Innocents were buried.

A painting over it represents the scene of their slaughter. Next to this chapel of the Innocents is the chapel of St. Joseph, from whence runs the passage that leads to the chapel of the Nativity.

About a mile east of the convent is shown the Grotto where the shepherds watched their flocks and the angels descended with their Christmas hymn. Not far off is the village where it is said the shepherds resided.

Bethlehem was in the hands of the Philistines, at the period of the adventure of the Well. David's great warriors Joab, Asahel, and Abishai were from Bethlehem, as well as himself, being the sons of his sister Zeruiah. The Crusaders stayed at Bethlehem before the siege of Jerusalem, the natives having invited them.

The town was created a bishopric by the Pope at the request of Baldwin I.



ENTRANCE TO CAVE OF KHUREITÛN.

The site of the cave of Adullam has been fixed in two different localities. To our own mind the older identified cave seems much more likely to have been the true one. But accepting the opinions of the Palestine explorers, who confirmed the identification made first by M. Clermont Ganneau, we give the name of the cave that was once thought to be David's refuge, as Khureitûn, not Adullam. Descending a savage ravine running down from the neighbourhood of Bethlehem for about five miles, and taking a very steep path or rather narrow ledge on which a fragment of rock bars the way, the entrance is reached. Only one person at a time can go through the narrow passage, which leads into a small cave. A winding gallery, thirty feet long, runs from it to the great cave. This is a hundred and twenty feet long and varies from thirty to forty-five feet in breadth. It has a high arched roof of the natural rock. The cave can only be seen by the light of candles or torches. In the

dim light it is very impressive, and five narrow passages run from it in every direction, but all soon terminate in the rocky sides except one. Part of the way up this last passage is a pit, ten feet deep; beyond this is another long narrow passage which grows gradually lower and lower till those who pass through it have to crawl. Another large chamber seems to end the caves, but the Arabs say that they run underground to Tekoa.

A hundred yards above the cave, in a cleft in the rock, stand the ruins of a square tower, and foundations of some other part of the building — massive hewn stones. They are the remains of a monastery.

THE CAVE OF ADULLAM.

THE more newly identified site of the cave of Adullam is in one of the foot hills on the side of the valley of Elah, the scene of David's victory over Goliath. Joshua gives a list of towns in conjunction with Adullam (the town) as "in the valley, Eshtaol and Zoreah and Ashnah . . . Jarmuth, *Adullam*, Socoh and Azekah."

The sites of these towns are within a few miles of this place. 'Aid el-Ma is the present name for Adullam.

The north side of the hills in the valley are full of caves, and near a wely named after Sheikh Madh-Kûr is a cave larger than the others; though Major Conder says "it is a small one, blackened by the smoke of many fires, and scooped in the side of a low hill on which are remains of a former town or village."

Surely this is less likely to be the cave David selected than that of Khureitûn. In the new site he would have been dangerously near his enemies, the Philistines. The cave could easily have been discovered and entered. But in Khureitûn he would have been amongst his friends, his own tribe, the shepherd warriors who had known him from boyhood. A sentinel from the top of the cliff could have warned him of approaching foes. The path, and the entrance too, could be defended almost single-handed; and the great cave would have accommodated the band of 400 outlaws, and the kindred who were with him. To that place his parents could easily have gone down to him. From thence he could—as he did—send them safely to his kindred in Moab, the family of Ruth, to be safe with the King of Moab till all danger for them and him was over.

Might there not have been a town of Adullam and a cave of the same name far from each other?

THE ROAD TO HEBRON.

SOLOMON'S Pools are on the road to Hebron, but we have already described them. Thence the road ascends a long and steep hill, alternately bare and rocky, and decked with lovely flowers. There is nothing very interesting in it till we reach a wayside spring called *'Ain edh-Dhirweh*, or the Fountain of the Eunuch, where, according to tradition, St. Philip baptized the officer of Queen Candace of Ethiopia.

On the hill above the fountain is a ruined tower called Beit Sûr, it marks the site of the ancient Beth-Zur. The place was of great importance in the days of the Maccabees, as a frontier town on the borders of Edom.

Near Beit Sûr is the mosque of Neby Yunis, dedicated to the prophet Jonah.

The ridge on which Jerusalem stands, and which is 2,500 feet above the level of the sea, rises gradually towards Hebron till at the minaret of Neby-Yunis, the mosque of Jonah, it attains the height of 3,343 feet above the Mediterranean. To the east is the village of Hulhûl. Tradition has named this spot as that which contains the tomb of Gad the prophet. There are numerous rock tombs about this place. Rameh, the next noticeable hill, is the highest point in South Palestine; it is 3,346 feet above the sea-level. Its name generally is Ramet el-Khalîl, or Abraham's Hill, for we are now approaching the spots associated with the life of the Great Hebrew.

There are some massive ruins here, the foundations, it is believed, of a basilica built by Constantine the Great, who believed it to be the site of Abraham's Oak. In an angle formed by the walls of the ruins is a fine well. Other ruins are scattered near, with fragments of mosaic pavement and massive stones.

The view from the top of the hill of Rameh is extremely fine, extending over the hill country of Judah, and affording a glimpse of the Mediterranean.

The site believed by Constantine to be that of Abraham's Oak is disputed. A large oak, said to be a descendant of the oak of Mamre, is still standing in a most picturesque spot about a mile and a half distant from Abraham's hill.

It is a fine tree of great age, and may probably stand on the same spot as the oak of Abraham did. It is called Ballûtet Sebta or the Oak of Rest.

Near it the Russians have erected a large, white hospice for the accommodation of pilgrims.

It was under the shade of a grove of oaks that the patriarch pitched his tent after Lot had forsaken him for the Cities of the Plain. It must have then been a peaceful home. Ishmael, a boy of about twelve, played about the tents with the animals, or lay at rest beneath the trees, while Hagar, now submissive and angel-taught, watched him from the curtains of the women's tent, or as she went on some errand for the haughty and stately Sarah.

And we read how when Abraham was sitting at his tent door in the heat of the day, "the LORD appeared to him by the oaks of Mamre." The Patriarch must have been lost in thought, for three men, or rather three angels, stood over against him before he raised his eyes, and saw them. Then he ran to meet them, and bowing to the Greatest of them, begged Him to accept the hospitality of his tent.

The story needs not repetition, it is one of the best known in the Bible. The promise of a son and the date of his birth were

then revealed to him; and as he accompanied the angels when they left, he heard the doom of Sodom, and interceded for the guilty city.

Very many years after Abraham's time, 135 years after the Blessing of the World had come and died for our transgressions, a dreadful scene took place beneath this hallowed oak.

A false Messiah, Barchocobas, had risen and defied the power of Rome. He had shut himself up in Bethel, and there the Roman armies for a long time besieged him in vain. At last the place was taken by assault. Numbers were massacred, and thousands of prisoners were made. These unhappy Jews, travel-stained, weary and despairing, were brought beneath Abraham's



ABRAHAM'S OAK.

Oak, and there sold as slaves to heathen masters; destined to be carried from the land they loved, and to be at the mercy of those who, if they pleased, could crucify their slaves, or feed their carp with them.

The judgment of God had fallen on their nation, and they drank the dregs of degradation beneath the oak which had sheltered the Father of their race. That knowledge must have added to their misery

HEBRON.

EVENING in the Vale of Mamre gives its greatest beauty to the ancient city of Hebron.

How old it is, and how full of associations with our earliest thoughts and knowledge! Hebron was built seven years before Zoan in Egypt. Near it Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob spent great part of their lives—Isaac the whole of his—and they and their wives are buried there in the cave of Machpelah.

The country changed during the long thraldom of their descendants in Egypt. The friends and allies of Abraham, from whom he purchased a grave, had been succeeded at Hebron by the Anakim, or giants. We read in Numbers xiii. that the spies, sent by Moses to examine the Promised Land, went to Hebron, and found Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai, of the children of Anak there; no doubt three gigantic sheiks. "It was the time of the first ripe grapes, and the spies came unto the Valley of Eshcol, and cut down from thence a bunch with one cluster of grapes, and they bare it upon a staff between two; they brought also of the pomegranates and of the figs. That place was called the Valley of Eshcol"—a cluster—"because of the cluster which the children of Israel cut down from thence. And they returned from spying out the land, at the end of forty days. And they went, and came to Moses and to Aaron and to all the congregation of the children of Israel, unto the wilderness of Paran, to Kedesh; and brought back word unto them, and unto all the congregation, and shewed them the fruit of the land. And they told him, and said, 'We came unto the land whither thou sentest us, and surely it floweth with milk and honey; and this is the fruit of it. Howbeit the people that dwell in the land are strong, and the cities are fenced and very great, and moreover we saw the children of Anak there. Amalek dwelleth in the land of the South; and the Hittite, and the Jebusite and the Amorite dwell in the mountains, and the Canaanite dwelleth by the sea, and along by the side of Jordan." . . . "We were in our own sight as grasshoppers, and so we were in their sight."

When at length Joshua led the Israelites into the Promised Land, forty years afterwards, Hoham, King of Hebron, was one of the five kings who fought against Gibeon, and whom Joshua defeated and slew. Of the spies, as we know, only Joshua and Caleb were suffered to live and enter the land again, and to Caleb was given the fields and villages belonging to Hebron—and no doubt the Vale of Eshcol—after he had gallantly driven out the Anakim. The city itself (Kirjath-Arba was its ancient name) was afterwards given to the Levites as "a city of refuge for the man-slayer."

There were six of these cities of refuge—or sanctuaries—needed in a wild, unsettled age. If a man killed another "unwittingly"—unconsciously and involuntarily—he might flee to one of these six cities for refuge from the vengeance which the family or tribe of the victim would otherwise inflict; and he would be safe there (after the event had been inquired into and his innocence from murder established); but he would have to remain in the city till the death of the High Priest, and if he quitted his refuge previously, the avenger of blood might slay him beyond the walls. So strict was the guard placed by God over human life.

When David was chosen king by the tribe of Judah, he fixed his residence at Hebron. Abner, the uncle of Saul, had set up Ishbosheth, one of Saul's sons, as king

of the other tribes, and there was constant war between the men of Judah and the men of Israel. One day Joab, David's cousin and general, met the troops of Ishbosheth by the pool of Gibeon ; the king's party on one side of the pool, the Abnerites on the other. Abner proposed a combat between chosen men on both sides, and twelve of each band were selected. They slew each other, and then the battle became general ; Abner, defeated, fled. He was pursued by Asahel, Joab's brother, who was swift of foot as a wild roe. Abner, brought to bay, entreated Asahel to "take some other man's armour," for, if he killed him, "how should he hold up his face to Joab." The old ties of friendship still bound him in the midst of civil strife. But Asahel persisted in his attack, and in self-defence Abner killed him.

Abner, however, soon after resolved to abandon the cause of Ishbosheth, who had quarrelled with him, and persuaded the eleven tribes to accept David as king of the nation. To settle terms between them and the king, Abner came to Hebron, saw David, arranged matters with him, was feasted, and departed in peace. Joab was at the time out on a foray. On his return he heard, with furious anger, that Abner, who had slain his brother, had been received and had made peace with the king. He remonstrated with David, and then, to assure his revenge, sent messengers after Abner, begging him to return. They found him at about a mile's distance from the city, by the well Tirah—now called 'Ain Sâreh—and brought him back with them. Joab received him with treacherous kindness, but while conversing with him apart, stabbed him mortally.

David's anger at this cruel murder was very great ; he severely reproached Joab, but he had no power to punish him. Revenge was the wild justice of the people, and Joab had but avenged a brother's death.

Followed by the tears and lamentations of David and his people, Abner was buried at Hebron, the king himself following the bier, probably with tender recollections of the man who had first brought him before Saul when, as a youth, he defied Goliath.

After the funeral, the king spoke to his servants these bitter and pathetic words :

"Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel ? And I am this day weak, though anointed king ; and these men, the sons of Zeruiah, be too hard for me. The Lord reward the wicked doer according to his wickedness."

After reigning seven years and a half in Hebron, David, who had then taken Jerusalem, made that city the royal residence and capital of his kingdom.

Hebron was rebuilt on the return of the people from the Babylonish captivity ; soon after it was taken by the Idumeans, but was finally restored to Israel by Judas Maccabeus.

The Crusaders gained possession of Hebron, and made it a bishop's see. In 1187 the Moslems, however, re-took the town, and have kept it ever since, regarding it as a place of peculiar sanctity.

Hebron is well-built ; the houses are of two storeys, and have flattened domes, as those of Jaffa, Ramleh, Gaza, and other southern towns.

The immense pools here are very ancient. Furthest down the valley is the largest ; it is called the "King's Pool," and is a hundred and thirty-three feet square, and about twenty-two feet deep. The upper pool is eighty-five feet by fifty-five, and nineteen feet deep. Some steps lead down to the water from the corners, and people are constantly drawing water here.

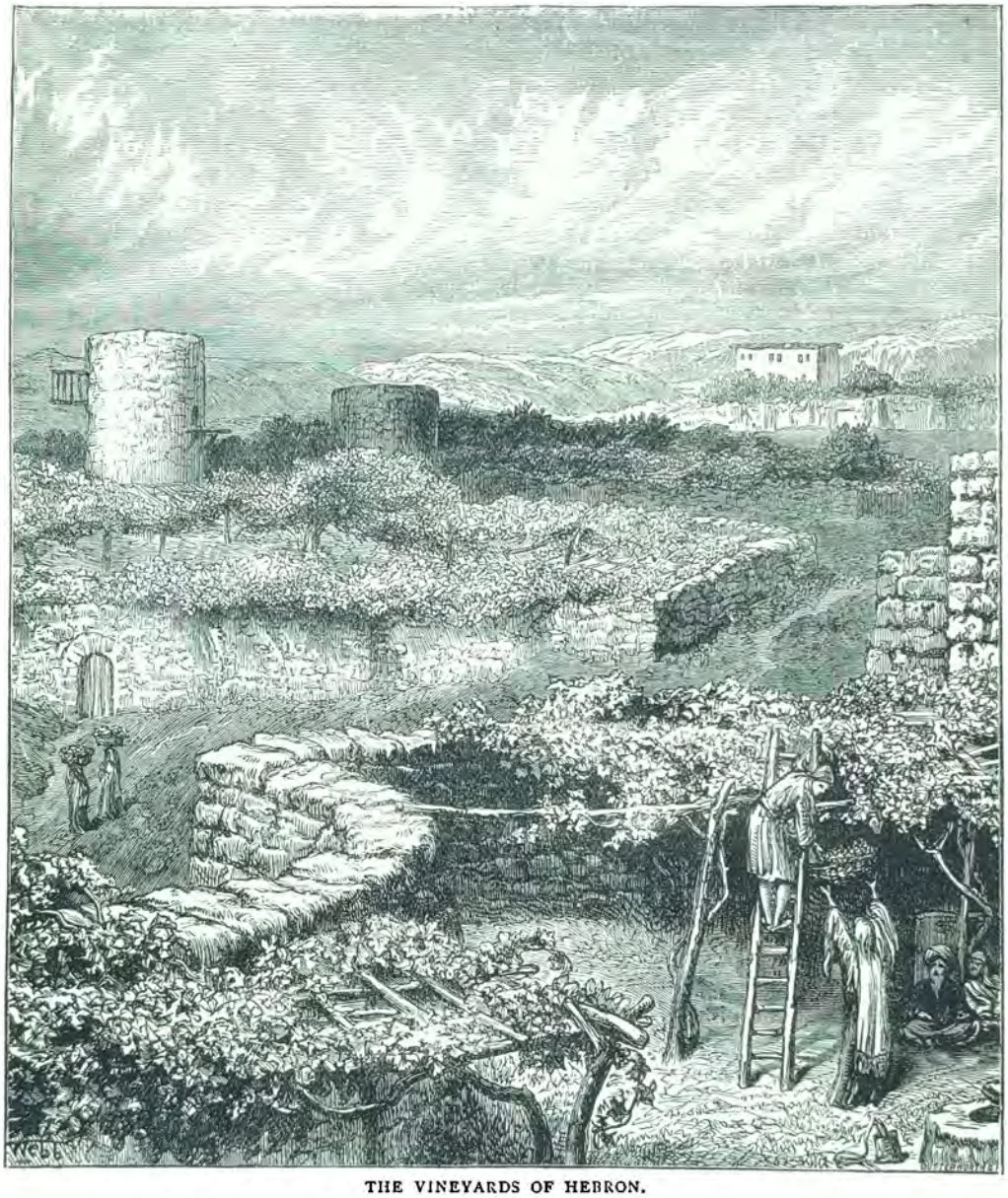
The vineyards of Hebron were ancient and well known in the days of Moses. They exist still, and cover the hill-sides for a long distance to the west and north-west of the town.

There are also grapes, olives, and figs around the city, and also—more carefully cultivated — apricots, pomegranates, quinces, apples, pears and plums.

The flower of the pomegranate is beautiful, and of a brilliant scarlet or orange red ;

the fruit is much liked, though we confess we do not share the general liking for the pretty little red grains that look so like red currants.

Hebron is one of the four holy cities of the Jews, but the Moslems—here a most fanatical and jealous population—never allow them to enter the town; however, at a



THE VINEYARDS OF HEBRON.

part of the exterior wall, where the natural rock is visible, they gather and kiss it, as they are wont to do at the Wailing Place at Jerusalem.

Besides the two great ancient pools already spoken of, there are twenty-five fountains and springs near Hebron.

There is a very old Jewish cemetery on

the north side of the hill, west of the town, which contains a great number of tombs. Here are the traditional sepulchres of Ruth and Jesse, of Abner and of Ishbosheth the son of Saul. Near this graveyard is a fine spring, in a vault roofed with masonry, and reached by steps, where tradition says Adam and Eve concealed themselves after



WOMEN AT A WELL NEAR HEBRON.

their banishment from Eden. A little farther off the spot is pointed out where Cain is said to have killed his brother!

The people of Hebron manufacture skin water bottles and glass bracelets; and they carry on a trade in wool brought here by the Bedouin Arabs.

Without a native guide no European may venture to enter Hebron, as, alone, he might be injured or insulted.

THE CAVE OF MACHPELAH.

THE Haram or sanctuary of Hebron covers the cave of Machpelah, where Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Leah are buried. We all know well how the Patriarch mourned for his wife, and how he purchased from the Hittites a piece of land for her grave, the only portion of the Promised Land he ever possessed.

The Haram of Hebron resembles the Haram at Jerusalem, on Mount Moriah, on a small scale. It is an oblong enclosure, the walls of which are supposed to have been built by Herod the Great. They enclose a church and court yard, built over the cave-tombs; the church has been turned into a mosque.

This mosque is so jealously guarded that few have ever passed beyond the exterior staircase; but in 1881 Major Conder accompanied the late Duke of Clarence and the Duke of York into it; the two young princes being under the guidance of Sir Charles Wilson. The Major was consequently enabled to make the only complete plan of the place in existence. A full account of the exploration is given in the "Palestine Exploration Memoirs," iii. 333–336.

The outer walls enclose a quadrangle 197 feet long by 111 feet wide. The walls, like those of the Jerusalem Haram, are 8½ feet thick; the old wall is about forty feet high, and on the top of it is a modern wall with battlements plastered and whitewashed. On the north, south and east is a wall of more modern masonry, forming passages with two flights of steps. The gates leading to the steps are at the west and south ends of the south-west side—the four corners of the walls point to the four cardinal points—and both gates lead by passages to a doorway on the north-east side, by which only the interior of the Haram can be entered. The church or mosque is in the south-east of the enclosure, three of its walls being part of the ancient outer ones. It is divided into a nave and two aisles of nearly equal width, and has three bays, of 25 feet, 30 and 15 feet. The total length of the church is seventy feet, and the breadth ninety-three feet. There is a clerestory with three windows on each side, above the nave, and a low-pitched gable at the north-west end; in it there is a large window with a slightly pointed arch, and a round window above it is outside the roof of the nave, which has a ridge lower than the top of the gable. The roof inside is slightly pointed, with flat-ribbed groins. The roofs over the aisles are nearly flat.

"The nave is supported by four large piers with clustered columns, and capitals curved with thick leaves and mediæval volutes."

The church is now, as we have said, a mosque, and in the centre of the south-east wall a prayer recess has been made. It is flanked by slender pillars with Gothic capitals, and by two wax torches. Above it is a window of stained glass. The Moslem pulpit stands on the right of the recess, and resembles the one in the Mosque of Aksa. It was given to the Mosque by Saladin in 1187. There is a reading platform, as is usual in all mosques.[1]

A Greek inscription in the east corner of the north-east aisle is supposed to be of the time of Justinian. It is an invocation to Abraham to bless those who set it there.

[1] Murray's Handbook.

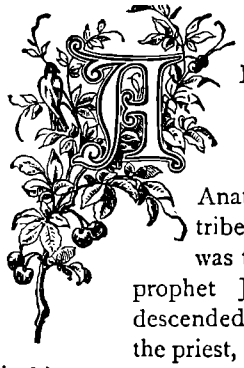
The caves are beneath the stone flags of the floor, and are never opened.

We give the following account of the tombs from Major Conder's "Palestine."

"Six cenotaphs, like Moslem tombs, covered with rich embroidered cloths, stand in the enclosure—two inside the church, . . . two in chapels beside the porch of the same, and two in buildings against the opposite rampart walls. It is not, however, supposed, even by Moslems, that these are the real tombs; they only mark supposed sites of tombs beneath the floor . . . In the floor of the mosque there are two entrances closed by flag stones, which are said to lead down by steps into the rock-cut caves. No Moslem would dare to enter this sacred cavern, where, as they say, Isaac would await and slay them, while Jewish legends tell that Eliezer of Damascus stands at the door to watch the repose of Abraham asleep in the arms of Sarah. There is, however, a hole in the floor, which pierces the roof of a square chamber, lighted by a silver lamp suspended from the mouth of the hole.

"Into this well-mouth we thrust our heads, and the lamp was lowered almost to the floor. Here I saw clearly that in one wall of the chamber a small square door exists, just like those of rock-cut tombs all through Palestine. There is thus probably a real tomb under the mosque, and the chamber is apparently an outer porch to this tomb. The floor was covered to some depth with sheets of paper, evidently the accumulations of many years. These papers are petitions to Abraham, which pious Moslems drop through the hole, and thus leave lying at the door of his sepulchre." ("Palestine," pp. 33, 34). See also "Memoirs of the Survey," Vol. III.

ʾANATHOTH.



ABOUT three miles and a quarter north-east of Jerusalem is 'Anâta, the ancient Anathoth, a town of the tribe of Benjamin. It was the birthplace of the prophet Jeremiah, who was descended from that Abiathar the priest, who joined Adonijah in his attempt to seize the crown of Israel before David's death. Solomon, on his accession, banished him in consequence to his own town Anathoth, but spared his life, because he had been faithful to David during Absalom's rebellion, and had carried the Ark of God before the afflicted king. This banishment of Abiathar "fulfilled the word of the Lord that He spake concerning the house of Eli in Shiloh"; that for his sins in regard to the over-indulgence of his sons, the priest's office should be taken from his family, of which Abiathar was a member.

The men of Anathoth once threatened the life of the prophet Jeremiah by a treacherous conspiracy, but God Himself revealed his danger to the seer and saved him.

Through Anathoth the army of Sennacherib passed on its way to Jerusalem.

To the west of the village there are ruins of a building that had colonnades, probably an ancient church. Only three pillar bases and a fragment of mosaic pavement remain.

The view from 'Anâta is very fine. A road over a deep valley leads from it to a ridge on which stands Hizmeh.

MÛKHMÂS, THE ANCIENT MICHMASH.

A NARROW but very deep gorge, with lofty cliffs on each side, picturesque and romantic, was the scene of one of those brave actions by which the heroes of Judea exhibited that remarkable combination of faith and valour that distinguished them.

Jonathan, the son of Saul, is one of the most perfect of the characters of Scripture. Affectionate, tender, generous, and perfectly unselfish, he was capable of an ideal friendship, willing to resign a crown to the valiant youth to whom his soul was knit, "with a love passing the love of women." But the young hero achieved a feat worthy of the most daring Paladin before he knew the son of Jesse; before David, by his gallant slaying of Goliath, had won his sympathy. Jonathan must have been very young at the time, for his father Saul was only thirty-two at the period of the exploit (1 Sam. xiii. 1).

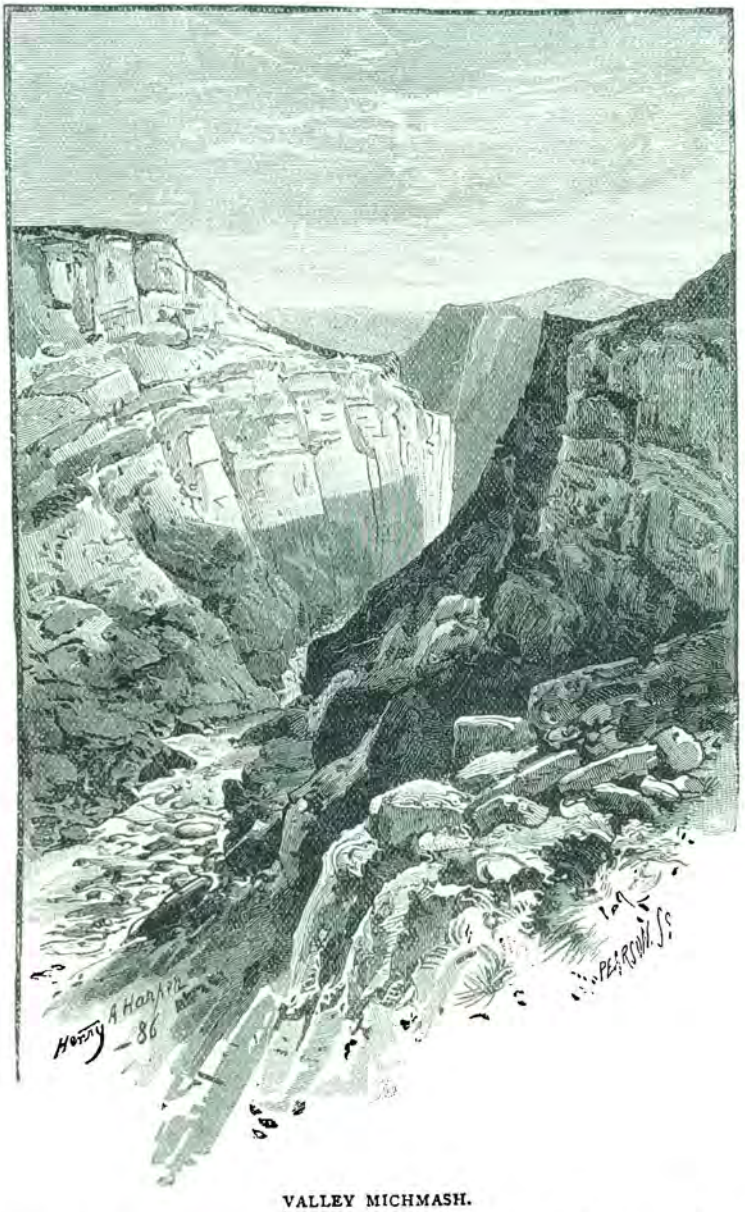
The Philistines had seized on several Israelitish towns and villages, and amongst others had garrisoned Geba, a town of Benjamin, on the opposite crag to the great cliffs of Michmash. Between the two places—Geba and Michmash—was a deep ravine, now called Wâdy es Suweinît. It has been supposed that Geba was Gibeah of Saul, the home of the new king; if so, we can understand Jonathan's attack on it, being the first action of the war with the Philistines. The youth drove out the invaders, and delivered Geba from them. The discomfited garrison bore the tale of their defeat, no doubt, to the cities of their nation, for "the Philistines heard of it." Saul, two years after his accession, had enrolled an army of three thousand chosen men, whom he retained with him at Gilgal. Encouraged by Jonathan's success, he blew the trumpet throughout the land, calling the nation to war; and the people responded by gathering themselves together after their king at Gilgal. The Philistines, enraged at Jonathan's success, instantly raised an army of thirty thousand chariots, six thousand horsemen, and infantry "as the sand that is on the sea-shore for multitude," and with this host they marched up and encamped eastward of Beth-aven.

The Israelites, unused to war, were dismayed at this great army. Those at Gilgal "followed Saul trembling," the story tells us, while some of the people fled over Jordan; some hid in caves and thickets, in rocks and holes and cisterns. Samuel, however, had promised his presence, and the king, eagerly expecting his arrival, grew impatient, and intruding into the priestly office of the prophet, offered a sacrifice himself to God. We all know that he thus incurred the anger of the Lord, and the sentence that his crown should pass to one worthier than himself.

After pronouncing this sentence Samuel proceeded to Gibeah of Benjamin, which must have been close to Geba—we think this chapter of Samuel proves that the places were not identical—and he was followed thither by Saul with his six hundred men, the only force to oppose the Philistine army; and these men were actually without spear or sword, and must have been armed only with ox-goads—rather formidable weapons, however rude—with forks and axes. Only Saul and Jonathan possessed armour.

Meantime, the enemy at Beth-aven had divided his forces into three companies. One had taken the way that led to Ophrah;

the second went to Beth-horon; the third to Michmash—the hills that looked over the valley of Zeboim. "Now it fell upon a day," says the Bible narrative, "that Jonathan, the son of Saul, said unto the young man that bare his armour, 'Come and let us go over to the Philistines' garrison that is on yonder side.'" He did not



VALLEY MICHMASH.

tell his father of his intention; and Saul, who was dwelling in the uttermost parts of Gibeah under a pomegranate tree, knew nothing of his son's intended act of mad valour. "And between the passes, by which Jonathan sought to go over to the Philistines' garrison, there was a rocky crag on the one side, and a rocky crag on the

other side. . . . The one crag rose up to the north in front of Michmash, and the other on the south in the front of Geba."

Then Jonathan, reminding his armour-bearer that "there is no restraint to the Lord to save by many or few," proposed a sign to guide their actions. If when the Philistines saw them, they cried, "Tarry until we come to you," then they would retreat; but if they said, "Come up unto us," then they would proceed, taking it as a sign that God had delivered the Philistines into his (Jonathan's) hands.

The armour-bearer was exactly of his young prince's mind, and they commenced scaling the terrible cliffs, Jonathan leading. Just before they reached the summit they were seen by the Philistines, who said scornfully, "The Hebrews are coming out of the holes in which they hid themselves," and they cried, "Come up to us and we will show you a thing."—It was the sign desired.

Climbing upon their hands and feet the young men reached the top, sprang up, and Jonathan at once furiously attacked them, his armour-bearer valiantly seconding him, till they had slain "about twenty men within as it were half a furrow's length, in an acre of ground."

Then came to their aid the mighty force of an earthquake. The camp, the fields, the great rocks trembled, with that awful "trembling of God" that is so terrible to bear.

Saul, from Gibeah, beheld the Philistines in a great tumult, flying from their encampments, and at once calling his followers together, pursued and engaged them. The Hebrews appeared now everywhere, springing from every cave and bush to join his army, and the invaders fled to Beth-aven, and afterwards to their own land.

The Michmash, or Mûkhmâs of to-day, is a squalid village, though it must have been a strong fortress, for the ruins about it are extremely massive, and there are fragments of columns, and two large rock-hewn cisterns. But decayed as it now is, it has been immortalised by an act of patriotic valour, and the glory of Michmash is preserved in the eternal annals.

Geba, where Saul's six hundred were encamped, retains its name in Jeba. It is now a small village with very poor inhabitants. It has remaining in it, however, a square tower, massive and of great antiquity, and also a building thought to be a small church. There is a fine view from Jeba of the valley of the Jordan. But the place is very desolate; there is not a tree or shrub near it, and the ridge on which it stands is bare. From the tower nine ruined towns and villages can be seen.

The people of this neighbourhood are very wild and savage, treacherous and cowardly.





MIZPEH.

NEBY SAMWIL. MIZPEH.

NEBY SAMWIL is the highest peak of southern Palestine; its ascent is through terraced vineyards and rocky projections. The village has a mosque and minaret, from which there is a magnificent view.

It was from this height that Richard Cœur de Lion stood in sight of Jerusalem, and, covering his eyes with his shield, exclaimed, "O Lord God, let me not see Thy Holy City, if I may not rescue it from the unbelievers."

Dr. Robinson has identified Neby Samwil with the Mizpeh of Benjamin, the spot where the Israelites assembled to vow vengeance against the tribe of Benjamin for their great crime. Here the prophet Samuel, after whom the place is now named, summoned Israel to assemble to make war upon the Philistines, who, when they heard of that threatening assemblage, marched up to confront it, and for a time dismayed the Israelites. Samuel, in answer to their request for his prayers, offered up the sacrifice of a lamb, and besought God's aid. The Lord answered by a tremendous thunder and lightning storm, and the Philistines were discomfited by the soldiers of Israel, who, no doubt, seeing that God fought for them, received new confidence and courage. They pursued the fugitives

till they came to Bethcar. Then Samuel, in memory of that deliverance, set up a stone between Mizpeh and Shen, and called the name of it "Ebenezer," that is "the stone of help."

Their victory was this time complete. The cities of Israel were restored to the nation, and the Philistines came no more into the land all the days of Samuel. At Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpeh, Samuel henceforward judged the nation. Here, also, the people were assembled to receive from the prophet's hands their first king.

After the division of Solomon's kingdom, Mizpeh became a frontier fortress between Judah and Israel. When Judah had been carried away to Babylon, Gedaliah, who had been made governor by Nebuchadnezzar, resided here, and was killed here by the insurgent Jews, led by Ishmael.

The men of Mizpeh assisted in building the second temple.

Four hundred feet below Mizpeh is Gibeon, now called El Jîb. To the west of it is Beth-horon now called Beth-Ur.

By a stratagem the Gibeonites had made an alliance with Joshua, pretending to be strangers from another land. The deception was of course discovered, and the Gibeonites were made hewers of wood and drawers of water for the Israelites.

The Amorites assembled against them, as we have already seen, five kings, and they sent for aid to Joshua. How he defeated and slew them in Beth-Horon and the valley of Ajalon we know.

It was at Gibeon that Solomon had the vision by which he was allowed his choice of wisdom, and received the promise from God of power and riches in addition.

SHILOH.

SHILOH was for three hundred years the sacred town of the Israelites; for there, during that time, stood the Tabernacle with the Ark of God. It was on the plain of Shiloh that the twelve tribes had their lands assigned to them by Joshua, and here the great national festival was yearly celebrated; when, on one occasion, the rape of the Sabines was forestalled and acted, on perhaps a smaller scale. For a great crime, the tribe of Benjamin had been cut off from associating with their brethren, and the other tribes had pronounced a curse on any man who should give his daughter as a wife to a son of Benjamin. But, after a time, peace was made between the defenders of the Rock Rimmon and their brethren, and then the eleven tribes regretted their rash vow. To avoid breaking the letter of it, the elders suggested that at the annual festival held at Shiloh, "which is on the north of Bethel," the story says, "on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah,"—thus marking its site for ever, —the young men of Benjamin should hide in the vineyards; and when the maidens danced the solemn dances appointed, they should rush in and every one bear off a bride to his home.

"The children of Benjamin did so, and took them wives, according to their number, of those that danced."

At that time the hill-sides round the plain of Shiloh were doubtless terraced with vines, and dotted with houses of the Priests and Levites. Now it is a small irregular plain, over which shapeless ruins

are scattered; a bare, uninteresting spot as far as natural beauty goes, but full of associations with our earliest knowledge. There are, however, a few patches of cultivation on it; and two buildings, one of which has apparently been first a Jewish synagogue, next a Byzantine church (four pillars of which remain inside it), and next, part of a mosque, which is built on to it and dedicated to the forty companions of the Prophet.

At the north end of the plain is a rocky platform, with other terraces below it, on a rounded tell, on which it has been thought the Tabernacle stood. Just at the foot of this tell, beneath a great, but withered oak, stands a ruined mosque, called the "Mosque of the Servants of God." It has an outer staircase to the roof, but is not very interesting, except, perhaps, as Major Conder has suggested, its name marks the traditional site of the Tabernacle.

To the Tabernacle at Shiloh Hannah brought the infant Samuel, and it was within it that the voice of God called the little prophet. From Shiloh the impious sons of Eli took the ark and lost it to the Philistines, and here Eli died and is buried. From the time the Ark was lost, and never returned to Shiloh, the place declined, the worshippers of God going henceforward to Kirjath-Jearim, where the Ark remained for twenty years.

"The Lord," says the psalmist, "forsook the Tabernacle of Shiloh, the tent which He placed among men." It was destroyed by fire and sword, and its name became a synonym for utter destruction.

Lebonah is now called Lubbân. It is a village lying in a hollow, with an old caravanserai and many caves near it. At this spot the great road to Shechem is regained, Shiloh standing out of the direct route.

BETHEL, NOW BEITÎN.

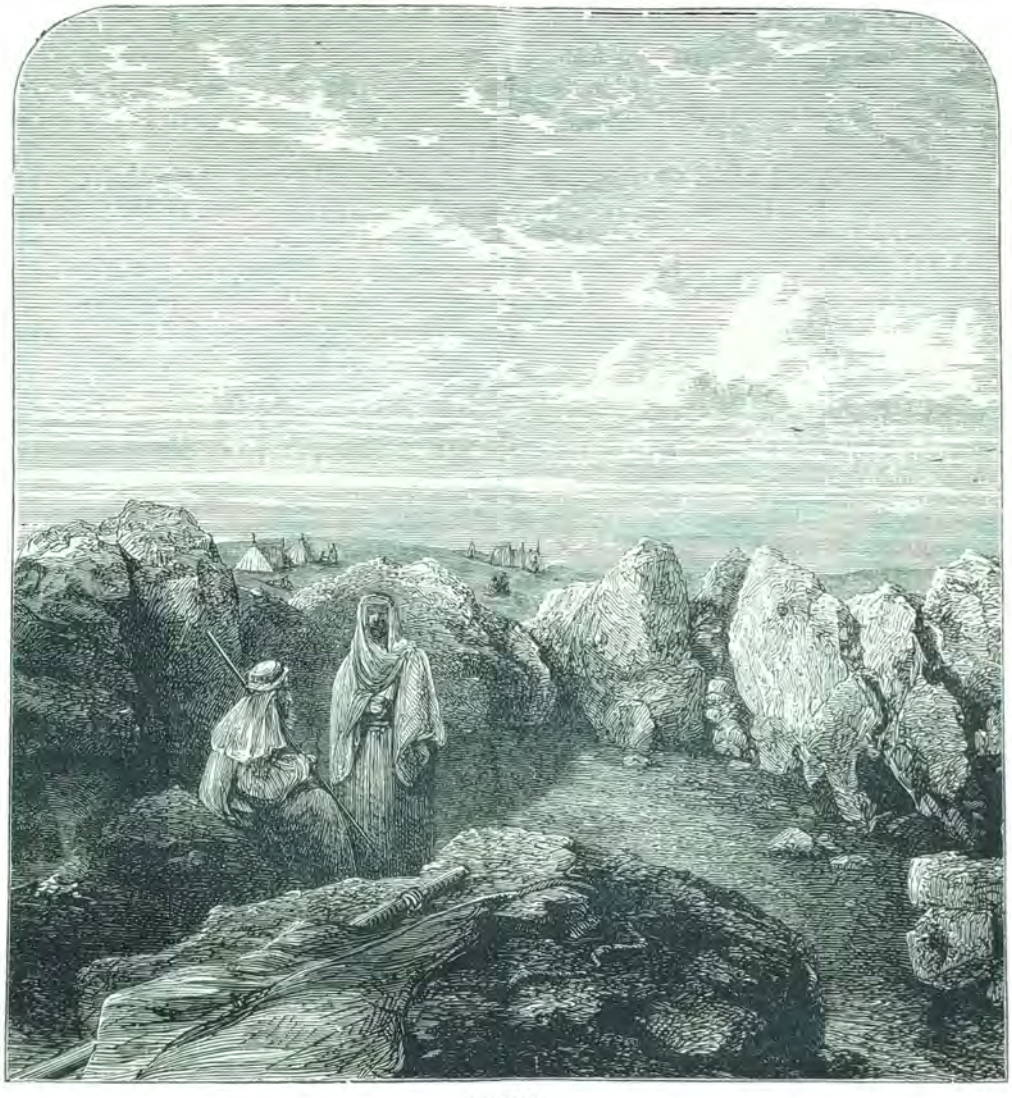
ON the central ridge of the mountains of Samaria and Judah (the watershed of the country), are the village, ruins and stones of Bethel. It stands on a point of the hills, between two valleys that unite beneath it. The sides of the hills are strewn with huge boulders; on the eastern side they form great stone circles, resembling those in our own country, but not as regularly formed or as high as those of Stonehenge. That they are of very great antiquity there is no doubt; probably they belonged to a period preceding the conquest of the country by Joshua. They are very curious; perhaps places of sacrifice, or for the gathering of the nation; indeed, we know, from the Scriptures, that the tribes of Israel gathered here to ask counsel of God (Judges xx. 18, 26, 31). Did they meet in these ancient heathen circles? No one knows. But it was here that Jacob, an exile from his home, and coming late to this strange realm of rock, lay within one of these circles, taking a stone for his pillow.

The approach to Bethel is, of course, by an ascent, the village being on a high point of rock, or rather on its shelving sides, and it is very picturesque, for in the centre of the line of the ridge is an old tower, a remainder from a monastery built by the Crusaders, who also erected a church over the supposed site where Jacob slept and dreamed of heaven.

On the north, west, and south of this

point of rock the dwellings of the residents, poor and squalid as they are, and their little patches of cultivation, enliven the masses of boulders scattered everywhere, for Bethel is indeed "stony."

The village is on the western side of the central ridge, and stands on the site of the ancient town of Luz, of which Bethel was the sanctuary. It is a poor and squalid place; yet, from its situation, is picturesque.



BETHEL.

The ruins are not of much importance. Sir Charles Wilson says that they consist "of numerous foundations and broken walls of no great height"; but that there "may be ruins of churches or public buildings among the enclosures."

Even without its associations, Bethel would, however, repay a visit, on account of the magnificent view it commands from the housetops or the tower.

Gazing northwards, the beholder sees the rocky heights which separated Benjamin

from Ephraim. The "Rock Rimmon," abrupt and bold, of a lightish grey, where the tribe of Benjamin, flying from the just wrath of their countrymen, defended themselves valiantly. There, too, is Ai, a steep cone crowned by the ruins of an ancient citadel, the scene of Achan's crime and of Joshua's victory over the Canaanites.

The hill of Ophrah rises majestically, its summit covered with ruins, believed to have been the town of Ephraim to which our Lord withdrew after the raising of Lazarus. In the extreme south can be seen the summit of Olivet, and the domes of Moriah and of Zion. To the south and south-west are Gibeon, Gibeah and Jeba; to the east, the Jordan valley; to the west, just a glimpse of the Mediterranean.

Beitîn has a double spring of water, surrounded by a large reservoir, two of the



MOUNT EPHRAIM.

walls of which are still standing. Doubtless the spring and reservoir are of great antiquity.

It was the second spot in Canaan where Abraham pitched his tents. At Shechem, under the oak of Moreh, he first rested, received again the promise of the land being given him; and raised an altar to the Lord. "And he removed from thence unto the mountain on the east of Bethel, and pitched his tent, having Bethel on the west and Ai on the east, and there he builded an altar unto the Lord, and called upon the name of the Lord." On account of a famine the Patriarch went into Egypt; but he returned after a time to Bethel, "unto the place of the altar, that he had made there at the first." But both he and Lot were now very rich, and their cattle very numerous. Their servants quarrelled; of the danger of such strife, —the Canaanite and Perizzite being still in the land—Abraham must have been quite conscious. He therefore wisely suggested

separation, and from this height Lot surveyed the land as far as Zoar, and chose for himself the beautiful Plain of the Jordan.

It was on this lonely hill-side, as we have said, that Jacob, fleeing from his brother's vengeance, slept, with a stone for his pillow —just such a boulder as those of the circles we look on—and saw heaven open, and the angels of God descend and ascend on the ladder that seemed to touch the earth. Awaking from his glorious dream, he took the stone that had been his pillow, set it up for a pillar, and poured oil on the top; "And he called the place 'Bethel,'" that is, the House of God; but the name of that city was, originally, Luz.

On his return from his residence with Laban, Jacob built an altar on this spot.

Rebekah's nurse, Deborah, was buried under an oak below Bethel.

Bethel was a town capable of sending forth warriors when Joshua conquered Canaan; for in the list of the kings of the land, whom he destroyed, is the name of the "King of Bethel." Of course these kinglets could not have been more than sheiks, or chiefs of the towns named; but the places they ruled must have had a certain importance.

Bethel was taken by the Ephraimites through the treachery of one of its men. Spies were sent by the tribe to Bethel. They addressed a man who came forth from the city, asked him to show them the entrance to it, and promised to deal kindly with him if he would. Either from fear or stupidity he complied. The Israelites, thus aided, "smote the city with the edge of the sword," but spared the man and his family. He went into the land of the Hittites, built a city, and called it by the name of the one he had betrayed—another Luz.

Bethel became, in time, of great importance. Samuel made it one of the places where he judged the people; and, when the tribes were divided into two separate kingdoms, it was the key to both.

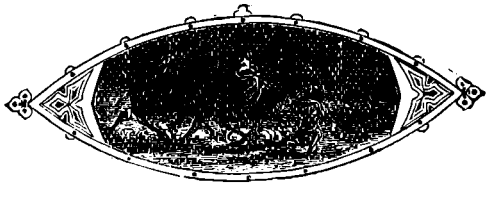
Here Jeroboam set up his golden calves, and near it the prophet who reproved him, and was deceived, perished—killed by a lion.

Through Bethel Elijah and Elisha passed to the scene of the former's translation into heaven, and the sons of the prophets—for there was a school for them at Bethel—came to Elisha, and said to him, "Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day?" And, doubtless, awed and saddened, the prophet answered, "Yea, I know it; hold ye your peace."

The Israelitish priest sent by the King of Assyria to teach the religion of their new country to the heathens settled by him in the land of Israel, dwelt at Bethel.

In the time of the Maccabees the King of Syria fortified Bethel; and when, long afterwards, it was taken by Vespasian, on his march to Jerusalem, it was still an important place.

It dwindled to a miserable village as the years went on; but, probably, recovered some degree of its former position under the Crusaders, as they erected a tower and a church here, the ruins of which remain.





VALLEY OF SHECHEM, WITH MOUNTS EBAL AND GERIZIM.

THE ROAD TO NABLÛS.

THE road from Lebonah to Shechem is a long, winding, and stony ascent; but, on reaching the crest of the ridge of hills, a magnificent prospect lies before us—a plain, seven miles in length and two in width, painted a tender green by the rising crops; bounded on the eastern side by a dark line of low hills, with projections, here and there, from them; and on the western by other heights, higher than those on the east, but rugged and bare, Mount Gerizim rising above them, and the whole picture shut in by the snowy height of Hermon, the noblest mountain of the Holy Land.

This is the Plain of the Mukhnah. It has a great claim on our interest, for it has been hallowed by the footsteps of our Blessed Lord and His disciples—it was the road they trod on their way from Galilee to Jerusalem.

A steep descent from the hill crest leads to the south end of the Mukhnah—"a camp"—probably so called because there the Israelites encamped, when they assembled at Shechem. The Mukhnah is called the Plain of Moreh in Genesis xii. 6, and by modern explorers.

On the north side of this plain, at the entrance to the Vale of Shechem, is Jacob's Well.

There is no doubt as to the identity of this well, dug by Jacob on land bought "from the sons of Hamor, the father of Shechem," from whom the place takes its name; but the water in it has greatly diminished, as it gets dried up and choked with stones.

But to Christians the well is a hallowed

spot, because here our Lord, weary and needing refreshment, sat to rest at the hour of noon, while His apostles went to buy food in the city. There a woman of Sychar came to draw water, and found the Divine traveller. The Lord asks her for water. She is astonished that a Jew should crave aught of a Samaritan, so bitter was the hatred between the people. The conversation that followed we all know too well to need its repetition here. But it was noticeable that it took place within sight of the Temple "on this mountain"—Gerizim—where the Samaritans worshipped, but which Hyrcanus had made a ruin.

Even now the words, "God is a spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth," seem to become audible to those who gaze on the Holy Well.

The mouth of it is a massive stone, with a circular opening in it. It stands thirteen inches above a limestone pavement, and above it is a ruined vault; there are other ruins near it, of a church built over it by the Christians of the fourth century.

A short distance from the Well is Joseph's Tomb, venerated both by Moslems, Jews, and Christians. It is an ordinary Syrian monument, near a small ruined mosque. There is a pedestal with a shallow cup on the top of it, placed at the head, and a similar one at the foot of the grave. Major Conder was told that the Jews and Samaritans offer burnt offerings on these pillars, of silk scarfs, etc. Turning from the tomb to the west, the Vale of Shechem opens before us. But before we speak of Nablûs—the ancient Shechem, the Roman Neapolis—we must give some account of the two remarkable mountains that rise on each side of it.

The twin mountains of Ebal and Gerizim rise majestically from the central ridge of Palestine. They face each other, and are joined together at their base by a ridge of the form described as a saddle.

On that saddle is the town of Nablûs, on the site of the ancient city of Neapolis—the "New City."

At the foot of Ebal is an ancient olive grove, and up its sides the prickly pear grows abundantly. Gerizim has caves in its sides, but is richer in vegetation, though Ebal has the sunshine; Gerizim faces north. Up the nullahs in its sides, however, are fruitful orchards of orange, pomegranate, and fig-trees. On the summit a Mahometan chapel marks the site of the Samaritan temple which Hyrcanus destroyed. The site was afterwards used for a Christian church.

The acoustic property of this mountain has been tested, and found to be extraordinary. "A single voice," says Canon Tristram, "might be heard by many thousands, shut in and conveyed by the enclosing hills. In the early morning we could not only see a man driving his ass down the path on Mount Ebal, but could hear every word he uttered as he urged it on; and in order to test the matter more certainly, on a subsequent occasion, two of our party stationed themselves on opposite sides of the valley, and with perfect ease recited the commandments antiphonally" ("The Land of Israel," pp. 148, 149).

The ascent of Gerizim is long and steep, but the toil is well repaid, for the spot is full of interest. On the height to the south-west of Nablûs is a spring named Râs-el-'Ain, a favourite place of resort for the people of the town, who meet here to smoke narghîlehs and drink coffee; and from this place commences the rather trying and fatiguing climb up the mountain.

There is a broad plateau near the summit, cultivated here and there; and about a hundred and fifty feet below it is the spot where the Samaritan sacrifice of the Passover is offered. On its eastern side is an enclosure surrounded by stones, in the midst of which is a trough filled with the ashes and burnt bones that are the remains of the Paschal lambs. In a circular pit close by the lambs are dressed.

There is a good description of the Samaritan Passover in Mr. Murray's "Hand-

book of Palestine" (p. 158), to which we refer the reader. It is kept, however, we may observe, in strict accordance with the Mosaic law.

On the top of the mountain are the ruins of a Byzantine church, begun by the Emperor Zeno and finished by Justinian. It is surrounded by a fortress, with towers at the four corners of its walls, and a central one on the south wall. A large reservoir is on the north side of it. These ruins are said to stand on the site of Sanballat's temple.

The twelve stones which Joshua commanded the tribes to bring from the bottom of Jordan, and which he set up at Gilgal, as a memorial of their miraculous passage across the river, are here placed on the ground and shown to travellers. Here also is a rock, resembling in its position



EBAL AND GERIZIM.

and supposed holiness the "Rock" of the Jerusalem Haram. It has a cave or well behind it, perhaps to receive the blood of the sacrifices.

The view from the summit of Mount Gerizim is magnificent. Hermon rises in snowy majesty beyond Tabor and Gilboa and the hills of Galilee. Beyond Jordan can be distinguished Bashan-Ajlan and Gilead, and the faint and far-off hills of Moab. On the left the Mediterranean and Carmel, Cæsarea and Joppa. Straight below is the plain of Moreh. The mountains of Ephraim are round the spot, and very rich and beautiful are the valleys of Joseph's descendants.

Mount Ebal is three hundred feet higher than Gerizim. On its summit are a number of circles of massive stone, and on the highest part is an enclosure, measuring

ninety-two feet square, with walls twenty feet thick, built of unhewn stones without mortar. There are small rooms in the thickness of the walls, and a cistern within the building. It was probably a fortress, as a projection of four feet at the opposite ends of the wall seems to speak of defence.

These mountains are full of associations.

Here Joshua built an altar on Mount Ebal, of unhewn stones, after the conquest of Ai, and offered on it sacrifices to the Lord.

And he wrote then upon the stones a copy of the Law of Moses, in the presence of the children of Israel. And all Israel, "their elders, officers, and their judges, stood on this side the ark and on that side, before the Levites, which bare the ark of the Covenant of the Lord, as well the stranger as the home-born; half of them in front of Mount Gerizim, and half of them in front of Mount Ebal." He read the law to them, the blessing and the curse, and thus every one — women, and little ones, and strangers—learnt them.

A second and very touching gathering took place on Gerizim and Ebal, just before Joshua's death. Once more the tribes were gathered on the twin mountains, once more they heard the voice of the leader who had brought them into Canaan—a venerable man of more than a hundred years of age. They stood on each side of the valley, men, women, and children, and listened, while every ear caught the words that encouraged, blessed, or threatened. He recapitulated the wonderful story of the birth and rescue of his nation, and called on them to decide whether they would serve the God of Israel, or the gods of the Amorites. And the people answered, "God forbid that we should forsake the Lord, to serve other gods." Joshua reminded them of the difficulty of serving so great and so good a God, but they were unanimous in crying, "Nay, but we will serve the Lord"

"And Joshua wrote these words in the book of the Law of God; and he took a great stone, and set it up there under the oak that was by the Sanctuary of the Lord."

To this day that pillar probably exists, for at the base of Mount Gerizim is a recess in the rock called by the Moslems, "the Pillar," where, they say, a column still stands. The pillar is held so sacred by the Mahometans that they do not permit any Giaour to enter it.

Two hundred years passed by. That and many other generations had been gathered to their fathers. Israel had forgotten the vow on Gerizim, and had served Baal and Ashtoreth instead of Jehovah. Again and again had they repented and been delivered—recently by Gideon.

Gideon had seventy legal sons, and one illegitimate son by a woman of Shechem; this son, named Abimelech, after Gideon's death persuaded the Shechemites to accept him as their king; and he put all his brethren to death, except the youngest, Jotham, who escaped, and appears to have concealed himself in the caves of Gerizim.

The Shechemites assembled in the valley between the twin mountains to make Abimelech king. Suddenly the solemnity was interrupted by the sudden appearance of a youth on the side of Gerizim, who lifted up his voice, and cried, "Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you." It was Jotham who thus confronted his cruel brother and his allies, and spoke, here, the first parable on record.

"The trees," so Jotham spoke, "went forth on a time to anoint a king over them. And they said unto the olive tree, 'Reign thou over us.' But the olive tree said to them, 'Should I leave my fatness wherewith by me they honour God and man and go to wave to and fro over the trees?' And the trees said to the fig-tree, 'Come thou and reign over us.' But the fig-tree said unto them, 'Should I leave my sweetness and my good fruit, and go to wave to and fro over the trees?' And the trees said unto the vine, 'Come thou and reign

over us.' And the vine said unto them, 'Should I leave my wine which cheereth God and man, and go to wave to and fro over the trees?' Then said all the trees unto the bramble, 'Come thou and reign over us.' And the bramble said unto the trees, 'If in truth ye anoint me king over you, then put your trust in my shadow, and if not, let fire come out of the bramble and devour the cedars of Lebanon.' Now, therefore, if ye have dealt truly and uprightly in that ye have made Abimelech king, and if ye have dealt well with Jerubbaal and his house, and have done unto him according to the deserving of his hands (for my father fought for you, and adventured his life, and delivered you out of the hand of Midian, and ye are risen against my father's house this day, and have slain his sons, three score and ten persons upon one stone, and have made Abimelech, the son of his maid-servant, king over the men of Shechem, because he is your brother), if ye then have dealt truly and uprightly with Jerubbaal and with his house this day, then rejoice ye in Abimelech, and let him also rejoice in you; but if not, let fire come out from Abimelech and devour the men of Shechem and the house of Millo; and let fire come out from the men of Shechem and from the house of Millo, and devour Abimelech."

After the delivery of this bitter parable, which was almost a prophecy, Jotham fled. His voice had been heard by the nation clearly, if not as effectually, as Joshua's had of old; and as he spoke, his eyes must have rested on olive and fig and vine, and on the worthless bramble in the fissures of the rock.





NABLÛS.

NABLÛS.

NABLÛS is a large and beautiful stone-built town standing in a well-watered gorge; there are eighty springs in and near it, and it is full of gardens, vine-yards, olive-yards, and fig trees. Above it rise Ebal's barren slopes on the north, and Gerizim's on the south.

The inhabitants of Nablûs are extremely fanatical, and bigoted to Moslemism; the chief buildings of the town are mosques. One which is called "the Great mosque" was once a Christian church. It has a beautiful Gothic gateway painted red, white, and blue. There is a Samaritan synagogue still, but it is only a whitewashed room, with a dome, and a recess called Mizbah, where MSS., which are believed to be extremely ancient, are kept. This recess is a square of five feet, and is generally concealed by a veil.

The streets of Nablûs are narrow, many are vaulted over, and in winter the brooks frequently overflow and rush over the pavements with a loud noise; then, of course, it is difficult to traverse them. But the mulberry, orange, and pomegranate grow amongst the houses, scenting the air, and thousands of birds sing in the town itself, as well as in the beautiful valley. From the sides of Ebal and Gerizim fall the purest and sweetest springs in fresh rills, and the inmates of Nablûs have every physical advantage and beauty in their city.

In this exquisite valley, Abraham (or Abram as he was then called) first pitched his tent in the Promised Land. Here, in a vision, it was promised to him. Shechem

must, therefore, be the oldest town of which any written record remains, and it must, consequently, be four thousand and more years old.

Near it Jacob pitched his tents and built his well; and his sons avenged Dinah by treacherously slaying the whole male population of Shechem. Here Jacob hid the idols that Rachel had brought from Haran beneath an oak; to this sweet and rich valley Joseph came in search of his brethren who had gone on to Dothan; and here Rehoboam was crowned, and lost ten tribes of his subjects by foolish words of tyrannical despotism.

Shechem belonged to the Samaritans after the Captivity.

During the empire of Vespasian, Shechem was rebuilt and named Neapolis, "the new city," and little more was heard of it till



MOUNT HERMON FROM GERIZIM.

the time of the First Crusade, when Tancred gained possession of it. It had been sacked by the Saracens in 1154, and the same fate awaited it in 1187. An earthquake occurred here in 1202, and the Christians recaptured it forty years afterwards, but soon after they again lost it. It was almost destroyed by the great earthquake of 1837. Ibrahim Pasha attacked and sacked the town in the same year.

Nablûs has great soap works, and its oil is thought the best in Syria.

The Samaritans, who still remain in Nablûs, are gradually dying out. They still keep the Passover, and are rigid and bigoted observers of the Jewish Law. After the death of our Lord they rebelled four times against the Romans. Their first revolt was in the prefecture of Pilate, whose cruelty in suppressing it led to his disgrace at Rome. They revolted, also, when Vespasian was emperor—when Severus reigned—and finally under Justinian, when they also attacked the Christians;

they were nearly annihilated by the punishment they thus incurred. Their remnants migrated; but a few remained, and during the present (19th) century they had a synagogue at Gaza. The Protestant Mission has a school at Nablûs.



SAMARIA.

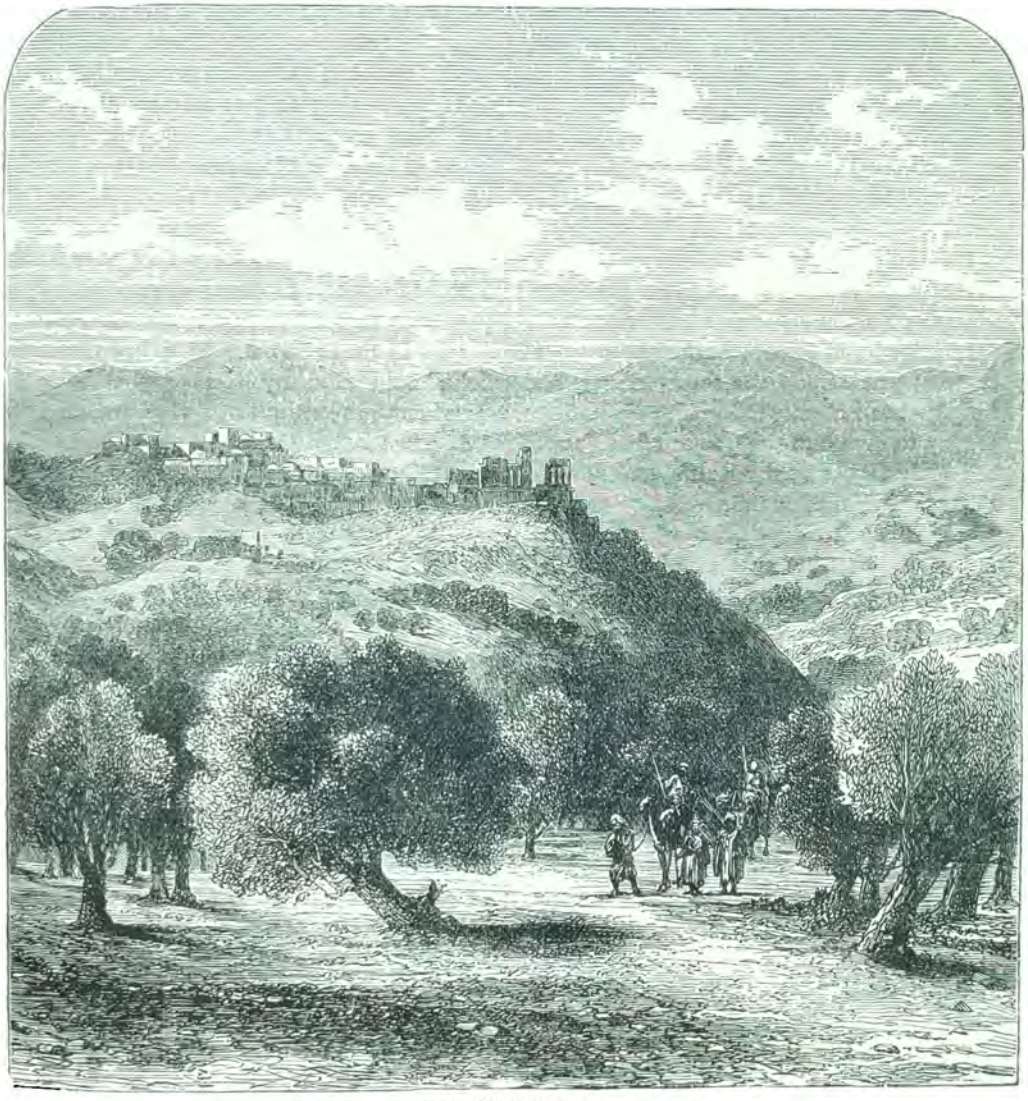
SAMARIA, NOW SEBASTIYEH.

FROM Nablûs to Samaria the road passes through a picturesque valley, rich with luxuriant vegetation; then, turning to the right, it proceeds straight to Samaria.

On the ascent to the village of Sebastiyeh, a large pool or reservoir is seen, which is supposed to have been that pool of Samaria in which Ahab's bloodstained chariot was washed after his return, wounded to death, from Ramoth Gilead, and where dogs licked his blood.

The hill of Samaria rises to the height of six hundred feet, with a long, flat plateau on the top, and is a remarkably fine site for a capital city. In the centre of a basin almost surrounded by hills, it stands entirely isolated on three sides—the north, south, and west; but on the east a flat narrow ridge, or saddle, runs out about two hundred feet below the top of the hill it could, however, have been easily defended in case of attack. We know that Samaria was several times surrounded by the armies of besieging foes, and that twice she was delivered by God, once miraculously. We can see how her position enabled her enemies thus to encircle her; but she must

have been a very strong city to have defended herself as long as she did, at the time of the terrible famine. The hill of Samaria is terraced, and the terraces are supported by stones from the ancient buildings; these terraces have olive, fig trees and vines growing on them, and broken columns lie amongst the verdure. Groves of olives and single trees adorn the hill, and a perfect forest of olive trees is at its base.



HILL OF SAMARIA.

But where the Samaria of Ahab and the Sebaste of Herod stood, there are now no habitations but those of the poor village of Sebastîyeh, whose houses, however, are less sordid in appearance than might be expected, being in great part built of the grand, ruined masonry left on the hill. A knoll rises above the plateau to the west of the village, and the view from it is one of the finest in Palestine. East of the village is

the ruin of a Christian church, built by the Crusaders in 1150 and 1180 over the traditional grave of John the Baptist. The walls remain, and the altar recess is nearly perfect, but the roof is entirely gone. The west door has a pointed arch, and the windows, of which there are nine, have rounded arches. Over the crypt is a dome, under which, reached by a steep flight of steps, is the tomb of St. John the Baptist.

Tradition says that it was at Samaria (not at Machærus) that Herod Antipas swore his rash oath to Salome, and put the Baptist to death.

St. Philip preached the Gospel to the Samaritans, and they received the word gladly; so willingly that St. Peter and St. John joined him there; and their success was so great that Simon the sorcerer, who had hitherto been blindly followed, offered them money to give him the power of conferring the Holy Ghost by the laying on of hands. St. Peter indignantly reproved him with the words, "Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought to obtain the gift of God with money."

On the summit of the hill are some remarkable Herodian remains. "Higher up," says Canon Tristram, in "Bible Places," "long streets of columns in different directions, some fallen, some broken, some half-buried, but very many standing perfect, show the extent and splendour of Herod's city. There are also gateways and a triumphant arch standing."

A double avenue of Corinthian columns are yet to be traced. Dr. Porter has informed us that the colonnade runs eastward in a straight line for nearly a thousand feet, and then curves round to the left, following the sweep of the hill for about three thousand feet. In the western section sixty of the columns are standing, but without capitals, and deeply sunk in the soil. Twenty more are counted at intervals eastward, and many are lying on the ground amongst the olive trees and on the terraces. They were, as we have said, a double avenue, fifty feet apart. The shafts of these columns are sixteen feet high and two feet in diameter. They taper towards the top.

On the north-east side of the Hill of Samaria, standing on a plateau levelled in the side of the hill, is a quadrangle of columns five hundred and forty feet in length from east to west and a hundred and eighty feet wide. There must have been a hundred and seventy columns when the quadrangle was first erected. Just below these columns the hill has been excavated in the form of an amphitheatre, which probably existed there in Herod's days.

These ruins are all that remain of Sebaste; Samaria had long before vanished. The fulfilment of prophecy is strikingly apparent on this hill of ruins.

"I will make Samaria as a heap of the field," said God by His prophet Micah, "and as the plantings of a vineyard, and *I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley*"—most literally fulfilled!—"and I will discover the foundations thereof."

In Samaria most of the crimes of Jezebel and her weak and wicked husband were committed. And it was just as Ahab had raised on this hill a temple to Baal, and made an Asterah, that he was confronted by the stern and wild figure of Elijah the Tishbite with the threat of the ensuing drought on his lips.

Not long after, Benhadad, King of Syria, gathered a great host with horses and chariots, and, accompanied by thirty-two kings, besieged Samaria; but by the advice of a prophet of the Lord, Ahab sent out the young men of the princes of the provinces, who surprised Benhadad and his allies when feasting and drinking, and defeated them. A second time Syria was defeated by Israel, and then, three years after the horrible crime of Naboth's murder at Jezreel, the king of Israel resolved, in his turn, to make war on Benhadad, and rescue Ramoth Gilead from the Syrians' hands. Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, had come to visit him, and it was on this hill, outside the gate of Samaria, that the striking scene occurred of the two kings, each on his throne,

arrayed in his royal robes, sitting and listening to the prophets of Baal who prophesied before them, one wearing on his head horns of iron, and prophesying complete success to the kings. Then suddenly, at Jehoshaphat's request, a grave and solemn man advances—Micaiah, a prophet of the LORD—who tells them of the awful vision he had had, of God sending forth a lying spirit to deceive the king who wished to be deceived, who loved falsehood rather than truth; and how he had seen Israel scattered on the mountains "as sheep that had no shepherd." Very soon was the prophecy fulfilled, and Ahab's bloodstained chariot washed in the pool of Samaria.

The city continued the capital of Israel till the ten tribes were carried away captive after it had stood another siege. The colonists placed in the land by Tiglath Pileser preferred Shechem as a capital.

One as wicked as Ahab himself restored Samaria seven hundred years afterwards—the terrible Herod the Great. It was the scene of his crimes and also of his awful remorse. Samaria received its first name, Semareon, from Semer, the man who sold the hill to King Omri. The Greeks called it Samaria. Herod re-named it Sebaste.

The Idumean prince made Samaria a strong fortress for his personal defence, and adorned it with fine buildings; hither he



SAMARIA.—STREET OF COLUMNS.

brought his beautiful wife, Mariamne, the Asmonean princess. Herod, fearful of a rival in her young brother, murdered him at Jericho, and his jealousy induced him afterwards to leave directions with his uncle Joseph to kill Mariamne if he (Herod) did not return from visiting Anthony (whose summons he was obliged to obey), and who might probably put him to death. Joseph unwisely revealed this order to the women of the king's household, and Mariamne heard of it, and also of her brother's murder. She bitterly reproached Herod on his return, and roused his terrible anger. His sister and mother fanned the flame, and he was at length induced to slay his wife—the mother of his sons

"But," writes Josephus, "when she was once dead the king's affections for her were kindled in a more outrageous manner than before." He had been wildly, passionately in love with her from the first; "but at this time," continues the historian, "his love to Mariamne seemed to seize him in such a peculiar manner as looked like divine vengeance upon him for the taking away her life; for he would frequently call for her, and frequently lament her . . . he was so far conquered by his passion that he would order his servants to call for Mariamne as if she were still alive and could still hear them." There is something like madness in the tyrant's grief, and it is singular, and awfully suggestive, that the

only good and human feeling he ever had should prove "an instrument to scourge him."

Nevertheless, as her sons (educated at Rome) resented her murder, he had them brought to Sebaste and there strangled—thus completing the measure of his crimes. The dark figures of Ahab and Herod have left gloomy memories on the Hill of Samaria.

On the Road to Jericho.

THE BROOK CHERITH, NOW CALLED THE WADY KELT.

THROUGH a tremendous gorge between the hills,—one of the most picturesque ravines in Palestine,—flows the Kelt, identified by Dr. Robinson as the Brook Cherith. It is for a great part of the year a murmuring, silver stream, flowing between banks of oleander and strips of canes, through the narrow glen, which is just wide enough for it to pass. The ravine itself is 500 feet deep, and on its north bank a Greek monastery rests on the side of the precipice, which is almost perpendicular from the top to the bottom. In such a solitude, the prophet Elijah may well have found safety from the vengeance of Ahab, and been supplied with water during the great drought. According to Jerome and Eusebius, the Cherith was *not* here, but was east of the Jordan, in the prophet's own country—Gilead. Dr. Robinson's idea of its position, however, appears to us to be the more probable.

Cherith was within easy reach of Samaria, and surely a safe hiding place; for besides its natural solitude the precipice is pierced by caverns that are almost inaccessible. There is a fact, also, stated in Murray's Handbook, that appears to us to confirm Dr. Robinson's supposition. The district, the author says, "was inhabited, then, as now, by nomadic tribes, who were doubtless known as Orebim, from the hill itself," (the hill Oreb which was near); "from these Orebim Elijah obtained his daily supplies of food; and as *Orebim* signifies in English 'ravens,' the Authorised Version (of the Scriptures) makes it appear that birds of that tribe brought the prophet his food." If this were so, it is clear that Elijah sought refuge in this very place; but the Revised Version gives the same translation; doubtless because it has been the belief of the whole Church for so long a time. But they give "the brook Cherith that is *before* Jordan," not "*beyond* Jordan," and thus confirm Dr. Robinson's opinion.

One likes to think of the prophet in such a sublime solitude, with the ravens, eagles, and vultures soaring over it, as they do even now. Whether fed by birds of prey or savage Arabs, he was undoubtedly sustained there by the miraculous intervention of God.

The aqueduct over the Cherith is not of any great antiquity; most of the aque ducts here, we are told, were built by the Crusaders.

Supposing that the Kelt was not the Brook Cherith, and that it was east of the Jordan, then the Wady Ajlûn appears to be the probable site. Its lower course is called

Fakarith, which is thought to resemble Cherith in sound on Arabic lips.

From the spot where the road winds down from the top of the gorge a view of great beauty presents itself. A bright green forest lies below; beyond it the plain, —brown and arid,—that divides it from the Jordan. Then farther off still are the



THE WADY KELT.

plains of Moab, and above them a long range of hills, Pisgah being one of them, but as yet unseen. To the south is the Dead Sea; to the north, Mount Quarantania; a ruined chapel on its summit marking the supposed spot where our Lord's Temptation took place. The descent leads into the valley of Achor where Achan was stoned for stealing and concealing forbidden spoil.

The road leads hence across the Kelt, and skirts a very green oasis which represents now the formerly rich groves of Jericho; it passes on to the spring called by the Arabs Ain-Sultân, and by Christians Elisha's Fountain, the waters of which were healed by the prophet. Stone-strewn mounds and broken pottery are scattered round it; for it is close to the site of the ancient Jericho.

There is a mound on the spot where the city stood before Joshua destroyed it; it (the mound) rises in two points or heads from twenty to thirty feet above the spring, and on and around it are heaps of ruins.

To the west of this tell are some ruined sugar-mills of the Crusaders, from which the Knights of the Sepulchre are said to have obtained £5,000 a year. There is a small vaulted building, south of it, of about the same period.

This is the first of the three ruined cities of Jericho, and must in Joshua's time have been of great importance, as it was the key of the passes from the Jordan Valley to the mountains of Judea.

JERICHO.

THE Jericho of Joshua was destroyed, and a curse was pronounced by him against the man who should rebuild it. "Cursed," said the Leader of Israel, "be the man before the Lord, that riseth up and buildeth this city of Jericho; with the loss of his firstborn shall he lay the foundation thereof, and with the loss of his youngest son shall he set up the gates of it."

It appears extraordinary that any father should have risked losing his children for the purpose of building a city; but unbelievers have existed in all ages, and of these was Hiel, the Bethelite. Only a rich man could build a city, even in those early times, therefore this Bethelite must have been a rich, probably a powerful, man of his own tribe and district. He resolved on defying the old prophecy; and encouraged perhaps by Ahab, in whose time the fatal deed occurred, he laid the foundations of a second Jericho, near, but not on the site of the old one. As he laid the foundation of it, his first-born son Abarim died; still unbelieving, he continued the accursed work, and as he set up the gates his youngest son Segub died, "according," says the chronicler, "to the word of the Lord, which He spake by the hand of Joshua, the son of Nun." The unhappy father placed his new town in a strong position commanding the entrance of the hill country of Judea. Mounds and ruins, a reservoir and aqueducts, towers, and many other ruins of a rich and important city, mark the site of the Jericho thus built. To Christians the spot is of great interest, from its soil having been trodden by the blessed feet of our Lord. Approaching Jericho, He called Zaccheus from his watch on the sycamore fig tree, and honoured him by remaining in his house as a guest. At the gate of Jericho sat blind Bartimeus begging, till he was called to Jesus to receive the gift of sight; another blind man had the same wonderful boon bestowed on him at the same place.

Besides the ancient Canaanitish Jericho and the Jericho built under a curse, there was a mediæval Jericho, on the banks of the Kelt. It is now a wretched village,



SITE OF ANCIENT JERICHO.

called Eriha, surrounded by thickets of thorn trees and consisting only of mud huts and black Arab tents. To the south of it is a square tower with a courtyard, dating probably from the time of the Crusaders. Not far from it is the Russian hospital. Canon Tristram has given us the best and most interesting account of Jericho and its neighbourhood. His great knowledge as a naturalist is shown in his delightful volume, "The Land of Israel"; and one of the most interesting of his descriptions of the birds of Palestine is given in his account of Jericho. He writes: "In zoology Jericho surpassed our most sanguine expectations. It added twenty-five species to our list of birds collected in the tour, and nearly every one of them rare and valuable kinds. The bulbul, or Palestine nightingale, positively swarms, almost every tree being inhabited by a pair and the thickets re-echoing with their music; the comical and grotesque looking "hopping thrush," as we have named the *Craterpous chalybeus*, jumps and spreads his long tail in every glade; the gorgeous Indian blue kingfisher (*Alcyon smyrnensis*) perches solemnly over the little rivulet; the Egyptian turtle-dove inhabits the highest trees;



THE ROAD FROM JERUSALEM TO JERICHO.

and various little warblers of Indian or Abyssinian affinity skulk in the thickets." . . . "But beyond all others, Jericho is the home of the lovely little sun-bird (*Cinnyris osea, Bp.*), hitherto only known in Europe by Antinori's unique specimen, though mentioned by Lynch, De Saulcy, and others as a humming bird, and not much larger than most of that tribe, measuring $4\frac{1}{2}$ inches in length. It has a long, slender, and very curved bill, all the back a brilliant metallic green, the throat metallic blue, and the breast metallic purple, with a tuft of rich red, orange and yellow feathers at each shoulder (the auxiliary plume), which he puffs out as he hops in the trees, paying his addresses to his modestly clad brown green mate."

Jericho, "the city of palm trees," has lost its palms, but it is rich still in plants and flowers.

The palm has been changed for the zizyphus spina Christi, the long pointed thorns of which are very strong. Canon Tristram says: "No one can approach it with impunity, unless clad in leather, and in three days the whole party were in rags from passing through the thickets."

In the Jericho that he had adorned with splendid buildings, Herod the Great committed his first recorded murder, and in it he died, a victim to remorse and anguish. He had married, as we have said, the Asmonean Princess Mariamne, one of the most beautiful of women, and took her as his bride to Jericho. He was king of Judea by the grace of Rome; the Asmoneans were heirs of the native royal house. As Henry the Seventh of England's sole right to the crown was his being the husband of Elizabeth of York, so Herod might hope to found some claim on Mariamne's right; but she had a young brother, gifted with personal beauty, and the courage and talents of his race. Herod, jealous of his popularity and fearing him as a rival to the throne, invited him to Jericho. One very hot evening, he led his guest to the fish-ponds, where his servants and acquaintances were swimming, and proposed bathing. Aristobulus went into the water, and was at once surrounded by Herod's assassins, who dipped him while he was swimming, as if in rude sport; and, as the darkness of the evening closed in, held him beneath the water till he was suffocated. His death was, of course, represented to his sister as accidental.

Thus perished the last of the Asmonean princes.

As a king, it is probable that Herod fully deserved the name of Great from the Jews, for he raised Judæa to a pitch of prosperity it had not attained before, since the days of Solomon. He built, or nearly built, the Second Temple at Jerusalem. In Cæsarea he gave the nation a seaport by forming a harbour, and there was scarcely a town of importance that he did not either rebuild, or adorn with noble edifices. He built Antipatris in memory of his father; he rebuilt Jericho itself, beside its great fountain.

Jericho, in his days, was famous for its honey and balsam; and Herod farmed them from Cleopatra, to whom Mark Antony had given them.

A terrible disease came, as if to avenge the tortures he had inflicted, on this cruel despot; and he suffered frightfully, both mentally and physically.

Burning with internal fever, he bathed in the warm baths of Calirrhoe, near the Dead Sea. Then he returned to Jericho, and sent for his sister Salome. "I shall die soon," he said to her, "so great are my pains; but that which principally grieves me is that I shall die unlamented." He had previously summoned all the chief men of the nation to Jericho, and had them shut up in the hippodrome; he now ordered Salome to put them to death as soon as he died; thus endeavouring to secure a national mourning!

Five days after having put his son Antipater to death, this monster died at Jericho.

In the time of our Lord the road to Jericho was infested by robbers, and at the present time the lawless Arabs are quite as



THORN TREE.

willing, if the opportunity offered, to pillage the wayfarer.

On a hill near the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, there is a ruined Khan, called *Khan el-Ahmar*, or the Red Inn. It is of Saracenic architecture, but is said to be on the site of the inn to which the Samaritan carried the wounded traveller.

The Frank Mountain Herodium.

AFTER speaking of the death of Herod it seems natural to mention the place where he was buried, though it is not near Jericho.

It was at Herodium, now known as Jebel Fureîdis, *i.e.*, "Little Paradise," and also as the Frank Mountain, a remarkable hill, cone-shape, with a flat summit and artificially scooped sides, situated near the Wady Urtas. It is 400 feet high, and 290 feet in diameter at the top, round which run the remains of a circular wall, five feet thick. Inside it is another wall of the same thickness. There is a space eighteen feet wide between the walls. On this inner wall, nearly facing the four cardinal points, are three semi-circular towers; and one circular on the east which is higher than the others. In this inclosure Herod's body was laid. A few stone-steps and a ruined tower on the slope, and many ruins at the base of the hill are all that remain of the palace and the grave of Herod the Great.

The Crusaders, it is said, after the capture of Jerusalem, garrisoned the hill, and thus it obtained the name of the Frank Mountain, but there is no proof of the truth of this tradition beyond the account given by a writer of the fifteenth century named Felix Fabri.

Mount Quarantania.

MOUNT QUARANTANIA, a mass of tawny, reddish-coloured rock, rises behind the site of Jericho. Its sides are scooped, and along the side of the mountain are long rows of dark spots. These mark the cave-cells of the hermits who have at various times in past centuries, and in the present, chosen their dwelling in the Mount of Temptation. For Quarantania—a name derived from "forty" in Italian—signifies that on this mountain Our Lord underwent the Temptations of Satan.

"A pathless desert, dusk with horrid shades,
The way He came not having marked, return
Was difficult, by human steps untrod;
And He still on was led, but with such thoughts
Accompanied, of things past and to come
Lodged in His breast, as well might recommend
Such solitude before choicest society.
Full forty days He passed, whether on hill
Sometimes, anon on shady vale, each night
Under the covert of some ancient oak
Or cedar, to defend Him from the dew,
Or harboured in one cave, is not revealed;
Nor tasted human food, nor hunger felt,
Till those days ended; hungered then at last,
Among wild beasts; they at His sight grew mild,
Nor sleeping, Him nor waking harmed; His walk
The fiery serpent fled and noxious worm;
The lion and fierce tiger glared aloof."—MILTON.

It is not quite certain whether Mount Quarantania is really the spot sanctified by

the Temptation; it depends on where Bethabara was placed. The traditional site of the Baptist's baptizing, is at the ford, east of Jordan, where Israel crossed from Moab to Gilgal, "but," writes Major Conder, "the distance from this spot to Cana of Galilee is so great that it is impossible to reconcile this tradition with the New Testament accounts."

He thinks that the spot was in the "Upper part of the Jordan valley, where the highway from Galilee crosses over to Bashan, where, gay with flowers and carpeted with grass, the plain, dotted with stunted palms extends between the basalt heights, crowned by the Crusading castle of Beauvoir, and the long slopes round Pella, the home of the early Ebionites, who fled from the destruction of Jerusalem and formed a quiet Christian community in the wilderness where John had baptized."

Mount Quarantania is therefore probably an imaginative site, but it has been in a manner hallowed by the residence in its caves of prophets and Christian saints, monks, and ascetics. A few of the latter still dwell there, and are improving and enlarging the cells.

There is a ruined church at its highest peak. From this point the view is very fine. At the base of the mountain, below our feet are thickets, and groves, and green herbage. In the distance are the blue hills of Moab. The ruins, arches, vaults, and little broken aqueducts visible on the plain, are the remains of old Jericho.

There is a cane-shaded rill at the base of Mount Quarantania or Kuruntil which conducts the water of the fountain of 'Ain Dûk almost to 'Ain Sultan. 'Ain Dûk is a cold water spring; 'Ain Sultan is warm; the former spring gushes out in quantities from under the roots of an enormous dôm tree; there are large fresh-water shells of great size there, and numbers of frogs. The waters of the two fountains, 'Ain Sultan, and 'Ain Dûk, fertilize all the surrounding land.

Of the caves in the side of Quarantania Canon Tristram, who examined them for, we believe, the first time, gives a most interesting account in his "Land of Israel," to which we must refer the reader.

THE SOURCES OF THE JORDAN.

THE Jordan is fed by the three great fountains that rise at the foot of Hermon. The largest of these is called El Leddan at Tell el-Kady; the next is Banias; the third the beautiful river Hasbâny, the permanent source of which is Hasbeiya, eighteen miles north of Tell el-Kadi. The torrents from Wady-et-Teim augment its size in the rainy season.

The fountains of Derdara in Merj Aiun and the Ruahiny also add to the sources of the Jordan, as do those of Blata and El Mellahah. The Jordan is thus supplied with water by great permanent springs. It overflows its banks in March, the time of harvest, as well as in the winter. The overflow of Jordan was ascertained personally by Canon Tristram and Dr. Thompson, though it was for a time disputed.

The cavern from which the river formerly rushed was dedicated to the god Pan, and several Greek inscriptions and niches on the face of the rock still tell of the old idolatry.

A little Moslem chapel dedicated to El Khudr, the "green one" who drank the water of life, is built close to the cavern, and on the rocks are the inscriptions mentioned above.

Tell el-Kâdi is the site of the ancient town of Dan, and the most northern point of ancient Palestine. The original town here was Laish, belonging to the Phœnicians. How it came to be possessed by Dan, we are thus told in Judges, 18–1, etc., Revised Version.

"And in those days the Tribe of the Danites sought them an inheritance to dwell in, for unto that day their inheritance had not fallen unto them, among the tribes of Israel. And the children of Dan sent of their family five men, from their whole number, men of valour from Zorah and from Eshtaol to spy out the land and to search it."

The tribe had already a territory bordering on the plain of Sharon, but it was not large enough for them. They do not seem to have asked any direction from the High Priest and Ark, then in Shiloh, but sent the spies out on their own responsibility. These men sought hospitality at the house of Micah, a man of Mount Ephraim, who had made and worshipped graven images; who had "a houseful of gods," and had secured a wandering young Levite to be his priest.

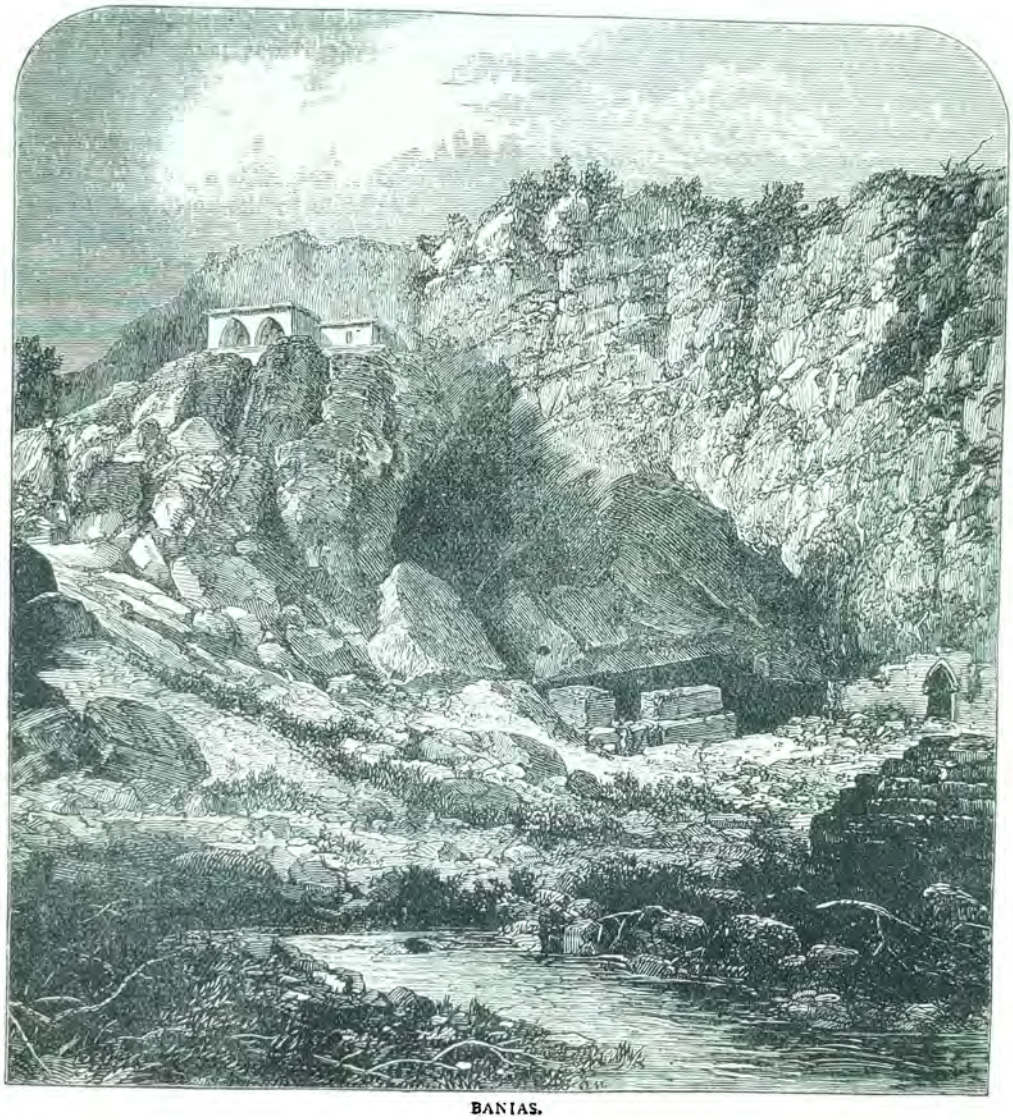
To this false priest the Danites applied to know whether God favoured their enterprise. He assured them, at once, that God "was their way," and with this assurance they departed, and came to Laish, a spot of great fertility and beauty. Delighted with the situation, and the riches of the land, the spies hastened back with a strong recommendation to their tribe to attack Laish, for it had no governor, they said, was too far from Zidon to receive help from it, and in short, its people "had no dealings with any man."

Six hundred chosen men of Dan at once marched north; stopped at Micah's house; robbed him of his gods, and enticed away his priest (from whom they had received such a desirable oracle), then they marched on Laish. Unable to defend their town, its indolent and careless inhabitants perished by the sword, and Laish was burnt to the ground. A new town, that of Dan, soon rose on its ashes, and the tribe settled there, and set up in it the idolatrous worship of Micah, which lingered in the place till the Captivity.

Here, many years afterwards, Jeroboam set up one of his golden calves.

On the higher part of the mound, to the south, according to tradition, stood the temple of the Golden Calf. The ruins and heaps of ruins that mark the site of ancient Dan, show that it was a large city. Olive groves and thickets of oak, slope down from it to a wide plain on the edge of which is a flat-topped mound of rock, covered with thickets. From this mound gushes an immense fountain, which is, according to Dr. Robinson, the largest single one in the world. It is the Leddan.

On the eastern side of the mound, overhanging a bright stream, are a fine oak and a very large terebinth, growing side by side. On the branches of these trees hang all sorts of rags and rubbish, no doubt offerings to the trees or for charms; the custom once prevailed in England.



BANIAS.

BANIAS.

ONE of the loveliest spots on earth is the upper plain of the Jordan, where the sacred waters have their birth. A bridge spans the river Hasbâny, an impetuous mountain torrent, of the most vivid blue, which dashes over great boulders, between its rocky walls. The banks are edged, and the stream overhung, with the oleanders that flourish best by "the water courses." Thickets of myrtle, Oriental planes and reeds, garlanded with honeysuckle, clematis, and wild roses adorn it; and the night-

ingales' song and other bird-music bursts from the trees in notes that are heard above the rush of the waters.

A short ascent from here, and we stand in the village of Banias, a squalid place, but in a magnificent situation; cliffs, ruins, cascades, torrents and trees are round and about it—an assemblage of every beauty of nature. Behind the village is a great natural cavern, the roof of which has fallen in. Masses of broken rock fill up the entrance to it, from which in former ages the river rushed, we are told, in a grand cascade, but now it makes its way through the rocks and *débris*, seemingly at length bursting forth from the earth. It is at once a great river, and dashes on over a rocky bed, beneath overhanging oleanders, past the scattered ruins, and is soon joined by the stream from Tell el-Kâdi.

Nestling at the foot of Hermon, which raises its snowy height 1,500 feet above it, with ruins of grand Roman fortifications, and the fine castle of Es-Subeibeh on the peak of Hermon above it, much grandeur is united at Banias with the softest beauty.

Kulat es-Subeibeh is a noble castle. It is one of those erected to protect the northern frontier of Palestine; they are placed almost in a line with each other, and we shall speak of them further on when we have to mention Kulat Kurn and Shukif. These castles have an ancient Phœnician foundation of bevelled stones, Roman, Crusading, and Saracenic arches, and are supposed to have been also garrisoned by various nations. It is thought that they were first Phœnician strongholds, then Jewish, and next Crusading and Saracenic fortresses. The fosse here is rockhewn; there are some halls and corridors quite perfect, and the cisterns still contain plenty of water. The inner citadel at the east end has still several rooms and vaults in good preservation, and is a strong fortification. The entrance to the castle is difficult; a steep, narrow path along the south side of the rock leads into a square tower opening on a rocky courtyard. The castle appears almost impregnable, but has been taken both by Christians and Moslems. In 1165, it was taken by Noureddin. It has not been used or inhabited since the seventeenth century.

The view from the castle is very fine; another noble castle, that of Kul'at esh-Shukif, is visible to the north-west of Subeibeh.

Banias was founded by a Greek colony and named Paneas, from their god Pan, whose shrine was probably in the cavern, the roof of which has now fallen in.

Herod changed the name to Cæsarea in honour of Augustus; and Philip the tetrarch, to distinguish it from the Cæsarea on the sea coast, added Philippi to it.

Our Lord visited this neighbourhood, and probably it was in sight of the great Banias rock that Peter acknowledged His Master's Divinity.

"Now, when Jesus came into the coast of Cæsarea Philippi, He asked His disciples saying, Whom do men say that the Son of Man is? And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, but whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered, and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the Living God. And Jesus answered, and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."

Dean Stanley thought that the great rock overhanging the source of the Jordan may have suggested the illustration of the "rock,"—but the name Peter, previously given, already signified it.

Modern exploration, and reference to the Holy Scriptures, have fixed on Mount Hermon as the scene of the Transfiguration of our Lord. One only path leads up the mountain from Banias, and at the latter

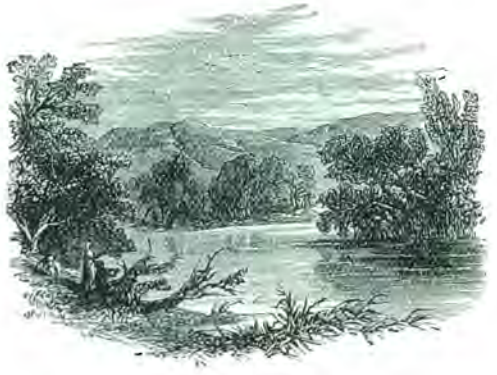
place, when Jesus descended from the Mount, He is believed to have healed the demoniac boy.

It was at Cæsarea Philippi, when preparing to go to Jerusalem for the last time, that He forewarned His disciples of His approaching death by crucifixion.

One likes to think of our Lord as gazing on this lovely source of the Jordan; on the snow-crowned Hermon; and the rocks, and trees, and flowers. Surely He found disciples here; men who gladly listened to the Word of Life.

He was the true Pan or God of Nature, at whose birth there came across the Grecian sea that strange wail, "Pan is dead." Nay, but born, if Pan were Nature, for her Creator had come to redeem her.

Banias is a quiet village, well ordered, having a native policeman, a Kadi or magistrate, and a Sheik. It is one of the most interesting spots in Palestine.



ON THE JORDAN



STREAMLETS OF THE JORDAN.

THE JORDAN.

FROM the source of the Jordan at Banias to its fall into the Dead Sea is about 104 miles, about half the length of the Thames. In its whole length it has a fall of about 2,300 feet, of which a fall of 1,700 feet occurs in the first twenty-seven miles, or from Banias to the Sea of Galilee. It therefore falls about sixty-three feet a mile in its upper course and eight feet to the mile lower down. The course of the Jordan is very winding.

The Ghôr or deep depression through which it runs is exceedingly curious.

The Palestine Survey considers that a violent collapse of the Jordan valley, south of the Sea of Galilee, took place at a comparatively late geological period, and that a volcanic shock and great change occurred afterwards. There are proofs that the Dead Sea extended much farther north than it does now, for distinct beaches have been traced on the sides of the cliffs over-

hanging the Ghôr; one is at the height of six hundred feet, another two hundred feet up; then one at the height of a hundred feet, and another thirty feet above the valley; these beaches, which look like terraces, extend more and more inland. The last and highest of them is found five miles north of the present village of Jericho. The plain of Jericho must, therefore, have once formed a part of the Dead Sea. Geologists think that the Dead Sea was reduced to its present size before the Age of Man, and that it is therefore unlikely that the Cities of the Plain can be beneath it. The plain of Jericho is the broadest part of the valley of the Jordan. It is shut in on the east and west by barren ridges, and has, down its centre, a deep crevasse. Northward the ridges, east and west, nearly meet, and to the south the hills along each side of the Dead Sea extend in bold promontories. From the western ridge, mount Quarantania projects. The height of this range of hills is from 1,000 to 2,000 feet. The eastern ridge is lower and less steep where it touches the plain, but farther back the hills are very high. The valley is ten miles broad and was once so fertile that it was described as a "divine region"; it is now not cultivated, but is covered with a thin, nitrous crust, which yields under one's feet. The Crusaders cultivated the sugar-cane on the plain of Jericho and had sugar mills near the old town.

The banks of the Jordan are bordered with oleander, tamarind, willow and reeds, forming jungles in which the leopard and wild boar find shelter; in other places they are park-like with a gentle beauty, where the stream grows calm and even sluggish but when fullest it is an impetuous river, its waters yellow and muddy.

There is a yearly ceremony of a singular kind performed in Jordan. On the Monday in Easter week, thousands of pilgrims from every Christian land assemble at the fords of Jordan, to bathe in the sacred river. They come in procession. At their head marches the Turkish governor of Jerusalem, or his deputy, with an escort of zapteehs; they bivouac on the site of Gilgal. Before the first peep of day they cross the plain and plunge into the river; the old and young, men and women together, take this singular bath as a religious duty, to fulfil which, perhaps, they have come many a weary mile. They believe that its fulfilment will bring them a blessing, and, cheered by their faith, they return after their bath to Jerusalem.

It was at this spot at Gilgal that the Israelites crossed the Jordan to take possession of the Promised Land. Here they rested some time and kept their first Passover in Palestine. From it they could see the whole of the Jordan valley. Kurn Sartabeh rose in shadowy grandeur in the north; the 'Osh el-Ghoreb, or "Raven's Nest," was in the foreground; to the west Quarantania, with the summit of Jebel Nijmi (the Star mountain) rising behind it. Jericho then stood where 'Ain es-Sultân now is. It was here that Joshua met the mysterious and holy being who declared that he was "Captain of the Lord's Host," and gave instructions to Joshua as to the miraculous manner in which he was to take Jericho. Here the Tabernacle was set up, and remained till it was carried to Shiloh; here Saul was elected king, and afterwards lost his kingdom by presumptuous disobedience. Here the tribes of Judah and Benjamin came to welcome David home from exile; and Elisha is thought to have healed the poisoned pottage.

The lofty and grim-looking mountain Kurn Sartabeh, is seen not only from Gilgal, but the whole way from Jericho. Its height is 2,400 feet above the valley of the Jordan, and its summit is a symmetrical cone 270 feet high. On the top there are the ruins of a fortress of the Crusaders, and there are many caves in the sides of the mountain. An aqueduct, winding down the hill, leads to reservoirs cut in the rock. A wall surrounds the ruined tower of which

about eighteen feet high of the walls are still standing.

On Kurn Sartabeh, in the old Jewish days, a great beacon fire was lighted at every new moon to announce its birth to the tribes east of the Jordan. For at the new moon the Mosaic Law required them to add to the daily sacrifices two bulls, seven lambs of the first year, and a kid of the goats for the expiation of sins committed through ignorance.

There are the ruins of aqueducts at various places near the Jordan, which (as those across the Kelt), are believed to have been built by the Crusaders, who erected churches, castles, mills, and aqueducts.

Mount Hermon.

MOUNT HERMON, the background to nearly every beautiful view in Palestine, rises 9,200 feet above the level of the sea. It is most wild and picturesque, and its silver crest contrasts well with the bright green foliage near the Druse villages on its sides, where terraces on the rock bear the graceful drooping vines. Pines, oak, and hedges of wild roses grow on it nearly up to where the snows glitter, and where bears and leopards find shelter. In all ages Hermon was "a religious centre, a sacred mountain." The Amorite name for it was "Shenir," the Sidonians called it "Sirion," the former word signifying "breastplate," the latter "white or snowy."

The Romans covered the sides of Hermon with little temples, explored by Sir Charles Warren and Major Conder.

There are some singular remains on the top of Hermon. A sharp point of the rock has been surrounded by cut stones, inside which the explorers found a quantity of ashes. Probably these were the remains of a beacon or sacrificial fire. Close to them is a cave hewn in the rock, its roof supported by a rocky pillar. "Three steps lead down into the cave, and the rock above has been levelled, perhaps as the floor of a building. . . . The names of Antar and Nimrod are connected with various buildings on Hermon, and the remains on the top are called 'the Castle of the Youths' by the shepherds" (Major Conder's "Palestine," p. 130).

It is difficult to guess what connection there can be between Nimrod and Antar. A monarch who was a mighty hunter is placed in conjunction with a great Arabian poet. But in some way both were evidently honoured on Mount Hermon.

The Druses inhabit Hermon. They are a fine race of men, tall and strong, and the women are delicately beautiful.

The religion of the Druses is not actually known.

It allows them to accept the faith of those who rule them. To a Christian they speak of his religion with respect and acquiescence; to the Moslem they are Mahometans.

They are, however, believed to be Moslem dissenters of especial tolerance, and their chief tenet is that the mad Khalif Hakim, who lived in the eleventh century, was the last Incarnation of the Godhead.

They are said to have united the Gnostic heresy to the Moslem belief.

Hermon must henceforth be sacred to Christians as Tabor once was, since the

Transfiguration has been thought to have taken place on it.

To stand on its summit where our Lord assumed a portion of His glory, and where He gave us assurance of immortality by the appearance of Elijah and Moses, is indeed a privilege; for most blessed was that revelation to man, who knew then so little of the world beyond the grave. Elijah came in the flesh, for he was translated; but Moses had been dead and buried, yet he lived again and talked with his Redeemer. He stood in the Promised Land that he had but seen from Mount Nebo, and both he and the prophet were interested in the Divine work of redemption; for they talked to our Lord of His death, "that He should accomplish at Jerusalem."

Blessed indeed is that Mount on which the Lord of Life and His ransomed ones appeared to the disciples.

There is a prophecy of good omen for Hermon. "Tabor and Hermon," says the inspired Psalmist, "shall rejoice in Thy name."

Brotherly love is said to be "Like the dew of Hermon that cometh down upon the mountains of Zion" (Psalm cxxxiii. 3).

"Look from the top of Arnana, from the top of
Senir, even Hermon,
From the lions' dens,
From the mountains of the leopards,"

sings Solomon to his bride.

The lower slopes of Hermon are of sandstone, above they are of fossilized limestone.

From the summit of Hermon we can see the Lake of Gennesaret and the Horns of Hattin, famous for the fatal battle that lost Palestine to the Christians. The chain of the Safed Mountains can be perceived as far as the Ladder of Tyre, the ravine through which the Litâny river flows. Belfort Castle on its northern slope, and Tyre with its seaboard and Carmel can be seen in the far distance. On the east is the Syrian desert, reaching to Euphrates, and the white minarets and houses of Damascus shine out amidst their gardens of greenery. To the south-east is Bashan with its ruined cities. To the west the Lebanon, stretching out to the Mediterranean. On the north Sunnîn and its valleys.

DOTHAN.

THE valley of Dothan has been identified on the road from Samaria to the Plain of Esdraelon. The hills that shut it in, are bare and stony at the summits, but at their foot and up the ascent are olive groves, so thick that they might be called a forest. In the valley itself they also grow in masses, and through them runs a streamlet, the source of their fertility. In the centre of the valley there is a Tell or large mound, which is thought to be all that remains of the town of Dothan, called in 2 Kings vi. 14 "a city."

How well we know the name of this place! It is amongst the memories of our childhood. We remember how when Joseph sought his brethren in Shechem he was sent on to Dothan; where, in even richer pastures than the former fertile plain, the sons of Jacob fed their flocks. And how cruelly he was received we know. It was here, more than 4,800 years ago, that the merchants, journeying from Damascus to Egypt, purchased the young Joseph from his brethren, and here they dipped his envied gar-

ment in the blood of a kid to deceive his father. In those days wild beasts haunted the forests round Dothan, and Jacob was, therefore, easily persuaded that Joseph had been killed by one.

In the town that was once here, Elisha the prophet dwelt in the reign of Joram. It was here that the king of Syria, finding Elisha forewarned the king of Israel of his plots to seize him, sent horses, chariots, and a great host to carry off the prophet, and they came by night and compassed the city about. "And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold a host encompassed the city, both with horses and chariots, and his servant said unto him, Alas! my master, how shall we do?" The prophet answered, "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." And Elisha prayed, "Lord, I pray Thee, open his eyes that he may see." And the young man suddenly beheld that the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. At his request God smote the Syrians with mental blindness. They did not recognise the prophet, who, offering to lead them to Elisha, brought them himself to Samaria, to the king, but ordered him not to slay them, but to treat them with royal hospitality.

Looking at the solitary Tell and the thick olive woods bending their grey summits to the breeze, it is difficult to bring before our mental vision the ancient town, surrounded, in the valley, by the chariots and horsemen of Syria, and above, on the mount round the prophet, the celestial host of Heaven. The glory has indeed departed from Israel!

The neighbourhood of Dothan was the part of the country most visited by the two great prophets Elijah and Elisha. Dothan, the heights of Carmel, the plain of Esdraelon, must often have seen the awful figure of Elijah, and the venerable one of Elisha. Here many of their miracles were worked. Elisha was the counsellor of his king, as well as his safeguard, and when he died, or rather was dying, king Joash mourned over him in the emphatic words, "My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof!" *i.e.* her greatest defence.

The hills, shutting in the valley, have in them rock-cut, bottle-shaped cisterns, doubtless as many pits as in the days of Joseph. There is nothing now remarkable in angel-visited Dothan, but its olive woods these strange cisterns, and two wells, one called "The Well of the Pit," the other with a water-trough. The name Dothan means "Two wells."

JENIN, THE ANCIENT ENGANNIM,

AND FÛLEH.

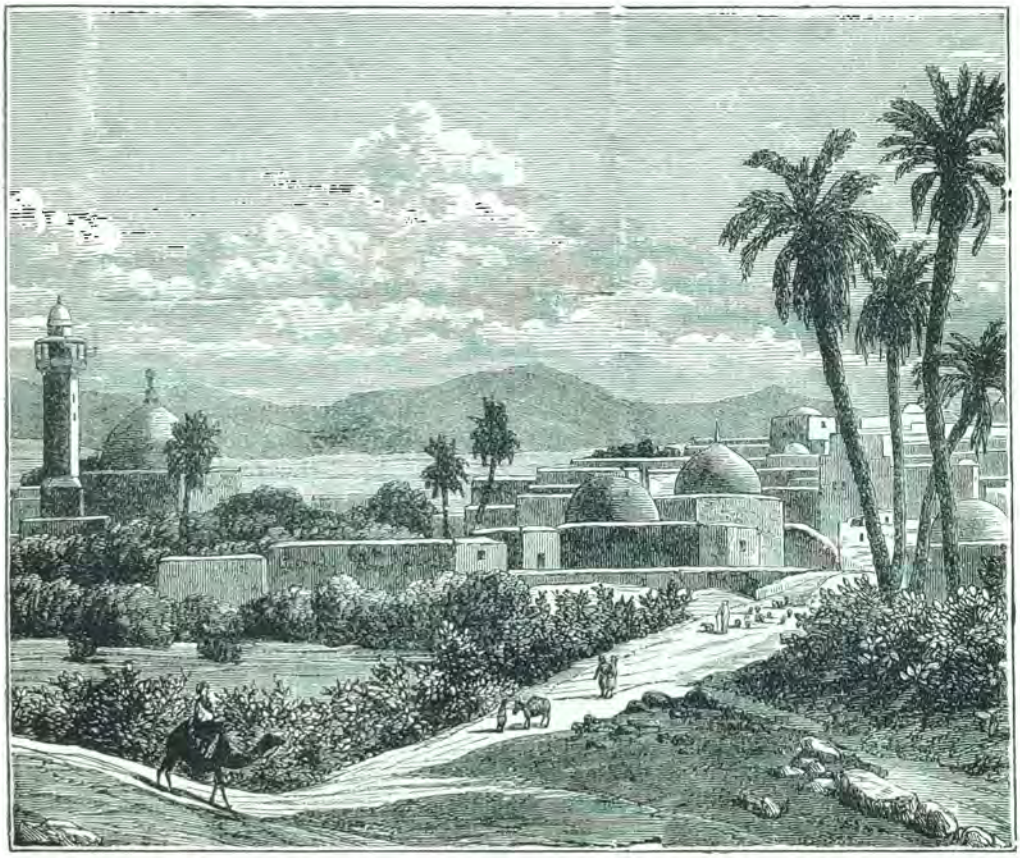
JENIN is one of the oldest villages in Palestine. It stands at the entrance of the pass that opens into the Plain of Esdraelon, and was made by Joshua a Levitical city, belonging to the tribe of Issachar; Josephus calls it Ginœa. It was on the border-line dividing Galilee from Samaria. The old name "Engannim" meant "Fountain Gardens," and in the present day it still merits the name, for though, no doubt, the gardens of antiquity were far finer than the present ones, the latter are still flourishing with fruit trees and palms; the palm growing in few other places in Palestine in the present day. The situation of Jenîn is beautiful. The water of springs on the hills, behind the gardens, is brought by an aqueduct to a

stone reservoir in the centre of the town. This reservoir was built by 'Abd el-Hâdy, Mudir of Acre, in the early part of the nineteenth century.

The inhabitants of Jenîn are almost entirely Mahometans, and very fanatical.

To the north of the town is a mosque, named 'Ezz-Eddin, which has a large dome and a minaret. The town is very neatly built, and many of the houses have domed roofs. There was once a Christian church here, but it was destroyed, and the mosque is probably built on its site. At the top of the hill, south of the town, are the traces of a Roman camp

Ten miles from Jenîn is the village of



JENIN, THE ANCIENT ENGANNIM.

Fûleh, where the Crusaders had a noble castle, called the *Castellum Fabæ*, "Bean Castle," Fûleh also means Bean. It belonged to the Templars and the Knights Hospitallers jointly.

After the battle of the Horns of Hattîn, Saladin captured and destroyed it. A ruined fosse, the remains of a wall, and a few foundations are all that are left of it.

Fûleh, however, has more modern claims on our interest. It was the scene of the "Battle of Mount Tabor," April 16th, 1799, where General Kleber, and a small body of Napoleon's troops defended themselves heroically against a strong force of Turks and Syrians.

Kleber formed his men into a compact square, placed his guns at the corners of it, as our troops were formed in the Soudan, and thus presented an inpenetrable rock of

resistance to twenty-six thousand Moslems, of whom thirteen thousand were cavalry.

At noon Napoleon himself arrived with a reinforcement of six hundred men. He attacked the enemy on the flanks and in the rear, while Kleber was then able to assume the offensive. The Moslems were panic-stricken by the sudden attack and fled.

But Kishon had overflowed its banks, even as it did in the time of Sisera, and Junot won his fame by driving the Moslems into the swamps, from which they could not extricate themselves, and were mown down by grape-shot of the French artillery. Many also were drowned. It seems as if the plain of Esdraelon was destined to be the battle-field of great captains.

The Plain of Esdraelon.

THIS magnificent plain is twenty miles long, and ten broad, and occupies two hundred square miles. It is nearly on a level with the Mediterranean on the west, but is separated from the sea-coast by a range of low hills. On the east it rises gradually till it is several hundred feet above the depression of the Jordan, forming a plateau above it. On the north side the hills of Nazareth shut it in. Among them is the Mount of Precipitation, from which, tradition says, the Nazarenes meant to cast our Lord; but it is quite unlikely that they should have taken Him thus far when Nazareth is surrounded by precipitous cliffs, a fall from which would be quite as dangerous.

The heights of Manasseh bound the plain on the south, and were the bulwarks of Central Palestine, for the passes through them are so narrow that they could be easily defended. In the book of Judith we read that when Holofernes, with the army of Assyria was approaching, the High Priest wrote to the citizens of Bethulia "charging them to keep the passages of the hill country; for by them was an entrance into Judea, and it was easy to stop them that would come up because the passage was strait for two men at the most." And the path would be commanded from the hills. The people of Bethulia obeyed, and were besieged by the Assyrians, when Judith, by the murder of Holofernes, delivered the country.

The plain is of surpassing beauty, its extent, its verdure, its hills are all most strikingly picturesque. Standing out on it are the two remarkable mountains Tabor and Hermon. They appear as if separate and solitary, but are in reality connected by the low range of hills on the east of the plain. The heights of Gilboa, famous in Jewish story, rise also above it. Esdraelon is well watered. The chief river flowing across it being the Kishon, which passes also across the plain of Acre, when it has made its way through the hills.

This glorious plain is remarkable as a famous battle-field. Here Thothmes III. fought with and conquered the allied Canaanites on his way to Damascus, before the invasion of the country by Joshua. Thothmes has left a list of the spoil, taken at that time, which shows how rich and civilized the nations were then.[1] This battle

[1] See Major Conder's "Palestine," p. 8.

took place near Megiddo, the site of which has been identified by the Palestine explorers at Khurbet el-Mujedd'a, at the foot of Mount Gilboa, "just where the valley of Jezreel opens on the Jordan plain, south-east of Bethshean." Mujedd'a has only a mound to mark the site of the town; but the Palestine explorers discovered below the earth three springs that could, and probably did, supply a great city with water. Here, descending from Gilboa, the heroic Deborah and her general drove back and destroyed the great army of Jabin, king of Canaan, by whom the country had been enslaved; and Sisera's iron chariots perished in the swamps of the Kishon, B.C., 1245.

Here, near Jezreel, Gideon, by a clever stratagem, struck the Midianites with panic, and pursued them in their flight, B.C., 1205.



PLAIN OF ESDRAELON.

The fatal battle of Gilboa, in which Saul and Jonathan were defeated, took place, B.C., 1055.

At Megiddo, Josiah, king of Judah, as the ally of the Assyrians, fought the Egyptians on their march to Assyria, and fell in the battle mortally wounded.

In the north-east corner of Esdraelon is a volcanic cone, named Nebi Dhahy, from a shrine on its summit dedicated to a Moslem hero, "whose bones," Major Conder tells us in "Palestine," "were brought hither by his dog from the Kishon."

It was here that Shalmaneser defeated for the last time the army of Israel on his victorious march to Samaria.

At Hattîn, the Crusaders were defeated by Saladin; and the Christian power in Palestine did not survive this final misfortune.

At Fûleh, also, was fought the battle of Mount Tabor, in which Kleber and Junot

won fame by withstanding a large Turkish army with only a small body of troops till relieved by Napoleon, A.D. 1799, as we have already said.

Famous for these warlike memories, the Plain of Esdraelon is, also, remarkable as the richest land in Western Palestine; but it was long subject to raids from the Beni Sukhr Arabs, who never allowed the fellahîn to remain at peace, or to gather their harvests unmolested. The peasants cultivated their ground armed; even an eastern ox-goad being a formidable weapon. But this trouble has been partly surmounted by a Greek banker who, in 1872, settled here, and soon possessed some of the finest land in Palestine. He has cultivated it profitably, we learn from Mr. Oliphant. Still, ten years after this enterprising man appeared on the plain, it was raided by the Sakk'r Bedouins, the strongest tribe west of the Jordan. In 1882 they made a raid on Esdraelon, and drove off all the cattle on the plain; but we hear that these raids have ceased since the Porte has used resolute means of suppressing them.

NAIN.

THIS scene of one of the most touching of our Lord's miracles, is now only a small and poor village. The ruins around it, however, prove that it was once a city of considerable size. This has been doubted by the explorers, who think "a gate" might mean simply the entrance to the village; but Canon Tristram considers that, "the ruined heaps and traces of walls prove that it was of considerable extent, and that it was a *walled* town, and therefore with gates, according to the Gospel narrative."

On the site of an ancient Christian church, erected over the supposed spot where our Lord's voice awoke the dead, there now stands a mosque, called by the Arabs, "Mukam Sidna 'Aisa," that is, "the Shrine of Jesus Christ."

To the east of the village is an ancient burying-ground; in fact, the chief remains of the past at Nain are tombs; as if to preserve the memory of that act of wondrous power which compelled Death to release his hold. But there is, also, an old fountain, and water is always spoken of as "living," at the west of the village, with a square cistern arched over with massive masonry, evidently of great antiquity; it may have supplied Nain even in the time of our Lord. A subterranean aqueduct conducts the water from the hills to the reservoir.

One can scarcely stand on the plain at Nain and listen to the sighing of the breeze, and watch the light shadows stealing over the green sward, without thinking of the sweet hymn of Bishop Heber, that has so often floated through the country churches of England.

"Wake not, O mother! sounds of lamentation!
Weep not, O widow! weep not hopelessly!
Strong is His arm, the Bringer of Salvation,
Strong is the Word of God to succour thee.

Bear forth the cold corpse—slowly, slowly bear him;
Hide his pale features with the sable pall;
Chide not the sad one wildly weeping near him,
Widowed and childless, she has lost her all.

Why pause the mourners? Who forbids our weeping?
Who the dark pomp of sorrow has delayed?
'Set down the bier—he is not dead, but sleeping;
Young man, arise!'—He spake, and was obeyed.

Change then, O sad one, grief to exultation,
Worship and fall before Messiah's knee.
Strong was His arm, the Bringer of Salvation,
Strong was the Word of God to succour thee."

There is a remarkable view of Hermon and Tabor from Nain. The rounded base of the latter, of a rich green with shades of grey, contrasting with the lofty and glittering Hermon, crowned with its diadem of snow.



VIEW OF THE SITE OF NAIN.

ENDOR.

A WEIRD memory haunts the miserable modern village (if village it can be called) of Endor. Saul was encamped at the foot of Gilboa; the host of the Philistines were gathered on the opposite hill, Little Hermon, and at Shunem. Miserable and anxious about the issue of the approaching battle (for the Sacred Oracle was mute), the unhappy monarch resolved to consult the famous Witch of Endor. At extreme risk he passed round Little Hermon and the Philistine encampment, taking a wide circuit, and reached Endor safely. Every one knows how the witch herself was alarmed and surprised at the appearance of Samuel, and how the king must have shuddered at the prophet's words of doom: "To-morrow, thou and thy sons shall be with me."

In front of one of the many caves on this hillside there are some stones stand-

ing by a natural formation, resembling a Druidical circle. It is possible that the witch may have performed her incantations here in the silence and darkness of night. The huts of Endor are mere mud porches to caves in the hillside, in which the people chiefly live. They are miserable, poor, ragged, and dirty, and in appearance many of the old crones who curse the infidels would suit the character of the witch.

Byron has given a terrible sketch of the scene in the witch's cave, and of the prophet's appearance :—

"Earth yawned; he stood the centre of a cloud;
Light changed its hue, retiring from his shroud.
Death stood all glassy in his fixèd eye,
His hand was withered, and his veins were dry;
His foot, in bony whiteness, glittered there,
Shrunken and sinewless, and ghastly bare;
From lips that moved not, and unbreathing frame,
Like caverned winds, the hollow accents came.
Saul saw, and fell to earth as falls the oak,
At once, and blasted by the thunder stroke.
Why is my sleep disquieted?
Who is he that calls the dead?
Is it thou, O king? Behold,
Bloodless are these limbs and cold;
Such are mine; and such shall be
Thine to-morrow when with me.
Ere the coming day is done,
Such shalt thou be, such thy son.
Fare thee well, but for a day,
Then we mix our mouldering clay.
Thou, thy race, lie pale and low,
Pierced by shafts of many a bow;
And the falchion by thy side,
To thy heart thy hand shall guide;
Crownless, breathless, headless fall,
Son and sire, the house of Saul."

GILBOA.



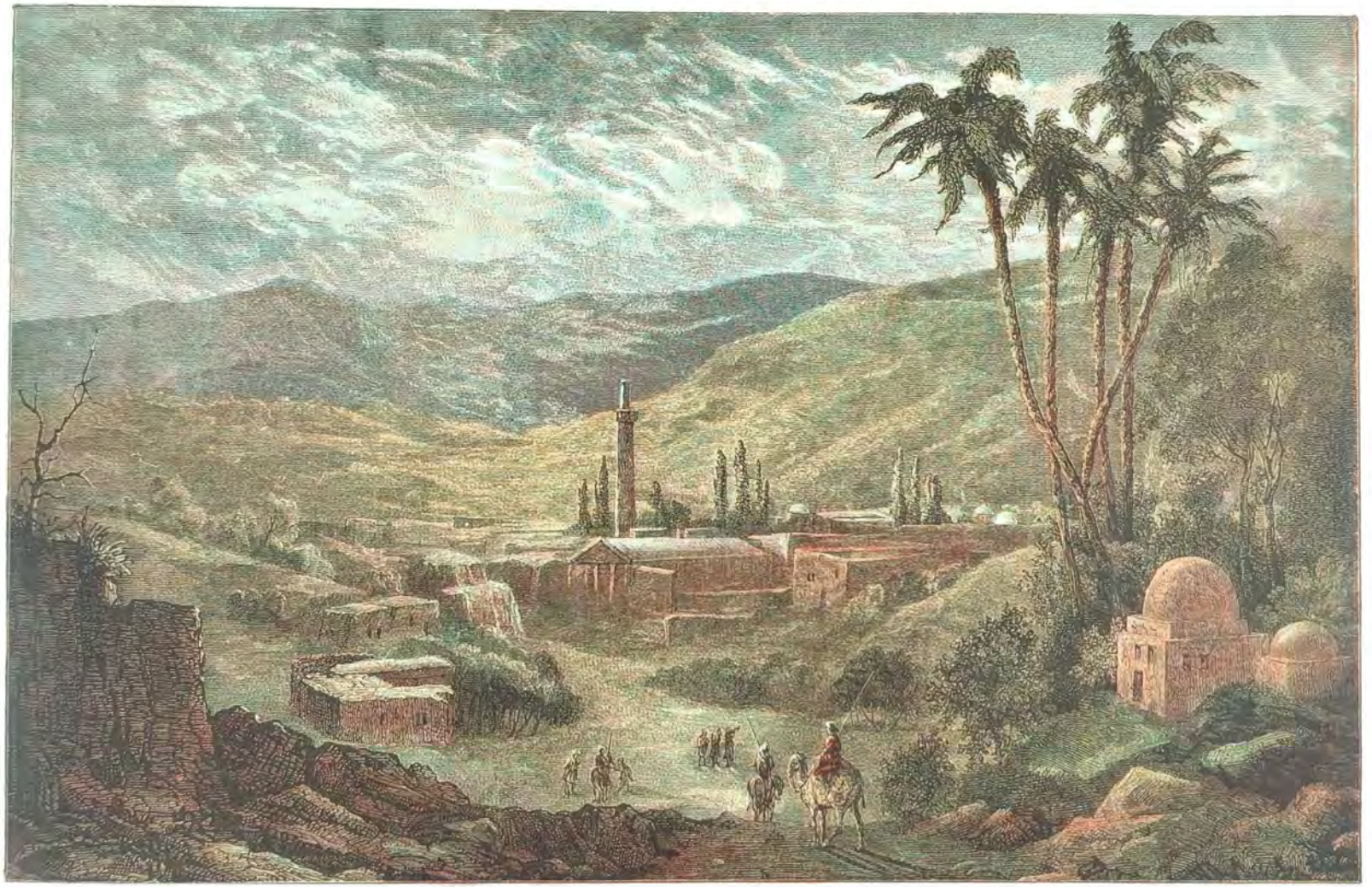
COMPARED with the other hills on the Plain of Esdraelon, Gilboa is barren-looking, and gives one an impression of melancholy. It is eight miles long, extending from Jelbon to Zer'ain, and six miles broad, from Beit Kâd to Mujedd'a. It has several summits with intervening ravines of greater or less depth, but the highest peak is 1,698 feet above the level of the sea.

"Wheat and barley grow on the more gentle slopes, and on the plateau; clumps of olives and figs, hedges of cactus surrounding gardens, and, where man has not seized upon the soil, wild grass and brushwood; at other points naked rock; such is this mountain." (Guérin.) The range of Gilboa forms part of the watershed between the river Kishon and the Jordan. One stream feeds the Kishon, and a rill, a few yards off, falls to the Wady Bireh and the Jordan.

Gilboa has many historical associations. Here Deborah ordered Barak to gather the warriors of Naphtali to defy Jabin and his general Sisera. Here the Israelites gained a complete victory. But it is chiefly the fate of Saul and his generous son, Jonathan, that gives a sad and solemn interest to Gilboa.

The morning after his interview with the witch, the battle with the Philistines commenced. The Israelites were utterly defeated, and the Philistines pursued them up the mountain.

Saul's sons were slain, and he was alone with his armour-bearer. He besought the soldier to kill him; but the armour-bearer refused, and Saul fell on his own sword. Then his armour-bearer, seeing the



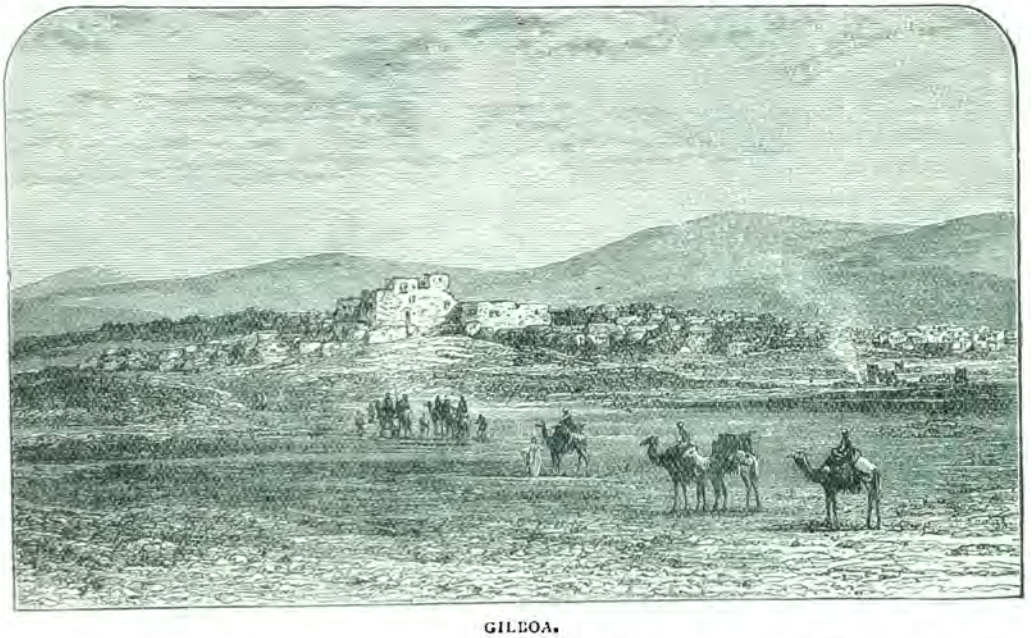
CHURCH OF THE ANNUNCIATION, NAZARETH.

king dead, also committed suicide. Here an Amalekite found them, took Saul's crown and bracelet, and bore them to David as proofs of the truth of his assertion that he had slain Saul. (2 Sam. i. 10.)

His reward for slaying the king was death, and David and his followers wept and mourned for the fallen king and princes.

The exquisite elegy of the warrior poet over his sovereign, and his friend Jonathan at once recurs to us. "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places: how are the mighty fallen! Tell it not in Gath, publish it not in the streets of Askelon. * * * Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shields of the mighty were vilely cast away."

The Philistines found the body of Saul on the following morning, and, cutting off his head, sent it to the land of the Philistines; and stripping off his armour, they put it in the temple of Ashtoreth. And they nailed his body and those of his sons to the wall of Beth-shan.



GILBOA.

But when the men of Jabesh Gilead, whom Saul had once aided in their need, heard of the insult put on his corpse, they went by night—"The valiant men"—for it was a dangerous enterprise, removed the bodies from the wall, carried them to Jabesh, burnt them there, and buried their bones under a tree.

SAUL'S SONG BEFORE HIS LAST BATTLE.

Warriors and chiefs! Should the shaft or the sword
Pierce me, in leading the host of the Lord,
Heed not the corse, though a king's, in your path,
Bury your steel in the bosoms of Gath.

Thou who art bearing my buckler and bow,
Should the soldiers of Saul look away from the foe,
Stretch me that moment in blood at thy feet;
Mine be the doom which they dared not to meet.

Farewell to others, but never we part,
Heir to my royalty, Son of my heart!
Bright is the diadem, boundless the sway,
Or kingly the death which awaits us to-day."

—BYRON.

SOLÂM, THE ANCIENT SHUNEM.

SHUNEM is rather a prosperous village, being well supplied with water, the great need of the country. There is, however, but one good stone house in it, and it is difficult to picture to one's self the ease and well-being of the Shunammite, who built a chamber on the wall "for the prophet who so often came thither from Carmel—the mountain that faced the village."

From a point of the mountain, Elisha probably saw her riding across the plain in the burning sunshine of harvest, to implore his aid for her little son, struck down in the harvest field by a sunstroke.

The occasion was one which brought a miracle before the people, for Elisha, by his intercession, raised the boy to life.

The changes in the Holy Land are greatly impressed on our minds by the difference between the mud villages of to-day and the pleasant and even wealthy towns of which we read in the Bible. There are modern dwellings at Shunem, built on the mounds of ruins, but no distinct remains of the old town can be seen, unless they are beneath these mounds.

The story of the good and hospitable woman and the devoted mother is one of the most charming in the old Scriptures. One almost forgives Gehazi his covetousness when one knows how his words restored the Shunammite to her inheritance, lost by her seven years' absence in Philistia.

She had left her home by the prophet's advice to escape a seven years' famine, and, on her return, found that her house and land had been confiscated. She came to appeal to the king for its return, and it so happened that she came at a fortunate moment. The monarch was talking to Gehazi, by whose advice Elisha had prayed that the Shunammite might have a son; he was asking the prophet's servant to tell him all the wonderful things Elisha had done. And, just as he was relating to the king how the prophet had raised the dead child, the Shunammite (now a widow), came to beseech her sovereign to let her lands be restored to her. Gehazi at once said, "This, O king, is the woman, and this her son, whom Elisha restored to life." The king questioned the Shunammite, and she told him her whole story: the gift from God of her son, his death, and his being recalled to life by the prophet. And the king, touched by her tale, had her land restored to her, and all the fruits of the field, from the time she had left it till her return, given back.





IN THE PLAIN OF JEZREEL.

JEZREEL, ZER'AIN.

A POOR village, marked but by one solitary watch-tower, stands on the ridge of a gentle slope, overlooking the Valley of Jezreel. It is all that remains of Ahab's splendid city of Jezreel. A fountain of the same name springs from the base of Mount Gilboa near it. The modern name of Jezreel is Zer'ain.

This part of the plain of Esdraelon has been more particularly the battlefield of its people. It was here that Gideon drove the Midianites from their encampment, and pursued them along the hills.

Near these water-springs was the tent of Saul before the fatal battle of Gilboa, and near the fountain was the vineyard of Naboth, the inheritance from his fathers, for which he was murdered.

Joram, king of Israel, had been wounded by the Syrians in a battle with Hazael, and was lying to be healed of his wounds at Jezreel; Ahaziah, king of Judah (his nephew on his mother's side), came to Jezreel to visit him.

It was probably while the kings were conversing that the watchman, who stood on the high watch-tower—probably the present tower is on its site—saw a large body of armed men advancing by the road that leads to and from Ramoth Gilead. The watchman at once bore these tidings to

the kings. Two messengers were sent to ask the company's business, but did not return; and the watchman added to this strange intelligence that the driving of the leader was like that of Jehu, "for he drove furiously."

Joram at once ordered his chariot, and, bravely rising from his couch of suffering, set out, accompanied by Ahaziah, to meet Jehu, each king driving in his own chariot. The kings met Jehu in the vineyards, "in the portion of Naboth the Jezreelite." Did no memory of the prophet's words recur to Joram? Perhaps he had never heard of them. But Jehu, who had been one of Ahab's guards at the time Elijah met him, had not forgotten them. To Joram's question, "Is it peace, Jehu?" the answer was a negative. There could be no peace where Jezebel was. Joram turned his chariot, crying, "Treachery, O Ahaziah!" and both kings fled. But Jehu drew a bow with his full strength, and shot Joram through the back to the heart. When Ahaziah saw his uncle fall, he fled by the way of the garden house; vainly, however, for he was pursued and wounded mortally, at the ascent to Gur—now Kara. He reached Megiddo, and died there.

The scene of Jehu's entrance into Jezreel, and the scornful question of Jezebel (that prototype of Shakespeare's Lady Macbeth), are so vividly painted by the sacred historian that we seem to see the whole tragedy.

The village of to-day is a very humble one; stacks of fuel and manure-heaps give the cottages an untidy look. But the soil is good and well watered, and it would be an excellent position for a modern town. Behind it are seen, on the east, the mountains north of Ramoth Gilead, which is on the other side of the Jordan. On the right is Gilboa, on the left the base of Little Hermon.

NAZARETH.

ON the slope of a lovely basin formed by fourteen hills stands the present town of Nazareth. But it is not the Nazareth in which our Lord dwelt in childhood and in youth; that stood above the present town, and not a fragment of it remains. The town of to-day is built on the slope of the hill, and forms a kind of amphitheatre. It was doubtless to the brow of the hill, on the side of which modern Nazareth is built, that the Nazarene mob dragged our Lord to cast Him from it.

Modern Nazareth has, however, many buildings recording the events that happened in the old town, the sites being, however, very apocryphal. There are "Mary's kitchen," Joseph's workshop," "the table of Christ," "the synagogue in which He read and was rejected," "the Mount of Precipitation, and even the spot where the Virgin wept when her Blessed Son was taken to the brow of the hill to be cast down!" The exact site of the Annunciation, etc. "Mary's well" is, however, the only site which is certain, and of interest to Englishmen. It is about five minutes' walk from the town, and has always been the fountain used by the people; in fact, there is no other. An ancient conduit leads water from the hills to it. It has six or seven taps over a trough-like platform, where the female inhabitants wash their children and their clothes. Taps at the

other side supply the men and horses with water, and the children and women come daily to fill their pitchers from them. There is no doubt that the Blessed Virgin and her Son have often come to this well, and one can imagine the calm and holy loveliness of her who was "blessed amongst women," and the infantine grace of the Holy Child as they stood by the fountain of Nazareth.

The hills round the town must also have been trodden by the feet of our Lord; and doubtless He who drew holy teachings from the sparrows and the lily, gazed on His own creation with approving eyes from these heights.

Nazareth was just such a spot as one would desire to be the home of a teacher and reformer of mankind. It was utterly secluded, very little known, and bore so bad a character that it was not sought as a residence.

In the rough, rude Galilean inhabitants our Lord saw human nature in its worst aspect. "Can any good," asked the scornful Pharisees, "come out of Nazareth?" He who was to teach men goodness, must in His early manhood have seen much of the evil that was common in His time and country. He would know what needed cure and healing better than if He had dwelt in childhood and youth in the city-home of the Pharisee.

Nazareth must always be to the Christian the most interesting spot on earth, for in it He dwelt who was to save Mankind, the spotless, holy Son of God. His righteous spirit must have been vexed by the conduct of His countrymen, and, doubtless, His pure example and His spoken words of warning made His thirty years of seclusion a period of blessing for many at Nazareth.

One may read His moral influence over the town in the rancorous jealousy of the Pharisees, when He declared who He was, in the synagogue. They knew Him well; "Jesus, the son of Joseph." Had He not already shamed them by the silent testimony of a life without blame?

Had it not been His wont to read and expound the Scriptures on the Sabbath day?

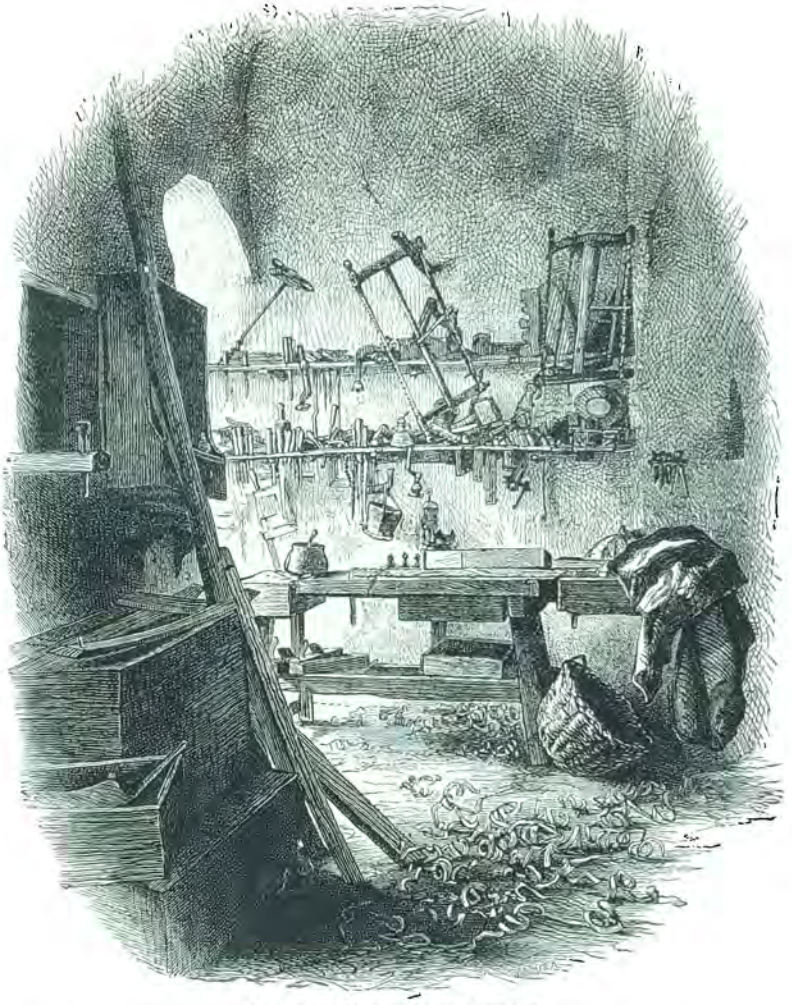
But this day it was different. He applied the prediction of Isaiah to Himself; thus declaring Himself to be the Messiah. Their scornful "Is not this Joseph's son?" referred, no doubt, to the humble station of the speaker.

The life of Jesus at Nazareth was one of lowly toil. It was in such a shop as that represented in our picture on the next page that He worked with His supposed father. There is a very old tradition that Joseph being old, and never very skilful, made some work he was doing crooked, one side plank being longer than the other, and that our Lord, seeing the poor father's distress at it, took the short end of the piece of wood and pulling it, it became of the same length as the other. This absurd tradition, and the stories in the apocryphal gospels have all been invented by men. The only recorded incident in the holy life of Jesus before He began His public teaching is the account of His conversation with the doctors in the Temple. That He had evinced miraculous power we may infer from the Virgin's appeal to Him at the marriage of Cana in Galilee, but that that power had never been exhibited except in His home, we may be sure, since Jesus, in the synagogue, declared that He had done no miracle there, though He had in Capernaum, giving as a reason, "A prophet has no honour in his own country." Incensed to murderous anger, the priests and Pharisees dragged Him out of the city and "led Him to the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might throw Him down headlong. But He, passing through the midst of them, went His way."

The Mount of Precipitation is shown at a little distance from the present Nazareth, and a small ruin nearer the spot is said to be where ancient Nazareth stood. It is a bold cliff overhanging the plain of Esdraelon, a fall from which would be

fatal. The prospect from it is extremely grand.

Nazareth is divided into three parts. On the south and south-west is the Latin division, in which is a monastery of Franciscans, that includes the Church of the Annunciation. It was built in 1730. The high altar is not placed, according to ecclesiastical custom, in the east, but on the south, to face north, on account of the Grotto of the Virgin which lies beneath it. A flight of good steps leads down to the



CARPENTER'S SHOP, NAZARETH.

Grotto. The vestibule of it is called the "Chapel of the Angel." It has a passage down the centre, on each side of which is an altar: that on the right dedicated to St. Joachim, the father of the Virgin; and that on the left to the angel Gabriel. The chapel within it is entirely rock-cut, and is divided in two; the outer part is the Chapel of the Annunciation, with an altar to the north; the inner, entered by a door to the right of the altar, is the Chapel of St. Joseph; here there is an altar on the south side. A very old pillar shaft of red granite hangs down from the roof of the

Chapel of the Annunciation, and is said to be miraculously suspended over the spot where the angel Gabriel kneeled to the Virgin! From the Chapel of St. Joseph, rock-cut steps lead to a cavern, called Mary's kitchen.

The monks have a hospice opposite their monastery; at the back of the hospice is the Franciscan convent.

To the west of it, at the top of a narrow street, stands the English Church of the Church Missionary Society, with the clergyman's house near it. West of the market place is the Latin Church of Mensa Christi.

The Greek portion of the town commences on the north of the market place, where there is an ancient church, said to be the old synagogue where our Lord preached. A new church has been built by the side of it. There is a Russian hospice, a palace of the Greek bishop, and a Greek church in this quarter of the town.

The Moslem portion has a mosque, a Serai, and the Mufti's house. In this quarter also the Roman Catholics have built a church, called "Joseph's workshop."

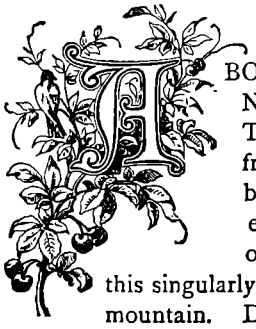
High up on the hill stands the Orphanage for girls, built in 1875 by the Society for the Promotion of Female Education in the East, who also support it. It has done much good since its establishment. It is conducted by ladies, and deserves to be liberally supported. The Sisters of Nazareth have a dispensary in the town, and there is a medical mission.

Nazareth has no other interest than that attaching to it as the home of Christ in His youth. It is not mentioned in Scripture till the time when Jesus was taken to dwell there, and there is no other kind of interest attaching to it now.

So long did the Nazarenes despise their great prophet and teacher that we do not read of any Christian inhabitants in Nazareth till the days of Constantine the Great; and no Christian pilgrims visited it for five hundred years after the birth of the Lord. In the seventh century two churches were built in it: one by the fountain, where the present Greek church stands, and one on the supposed site of Mary's house, now the Latin Convent, the fathers of which (the Franciscans) are warmly spoken of (with reason) by all travellers.

During the first Crusade, and after the capture of Jerusalem, Tancred of Otranto —Tasso's Tancred—was given the province of Galilee, and built and endowed a church at Nazareth. In 1263, it was destroyed by that victorious and destructive Sultan Bibars. In 1620 the Franciscans got permission from Fakr Eddin to rebuild it. Beneath it they show the Grotto of the Annunciation just described, a wholly imaginary sanctuary, as Mary's home was in the old town, far above the present one.

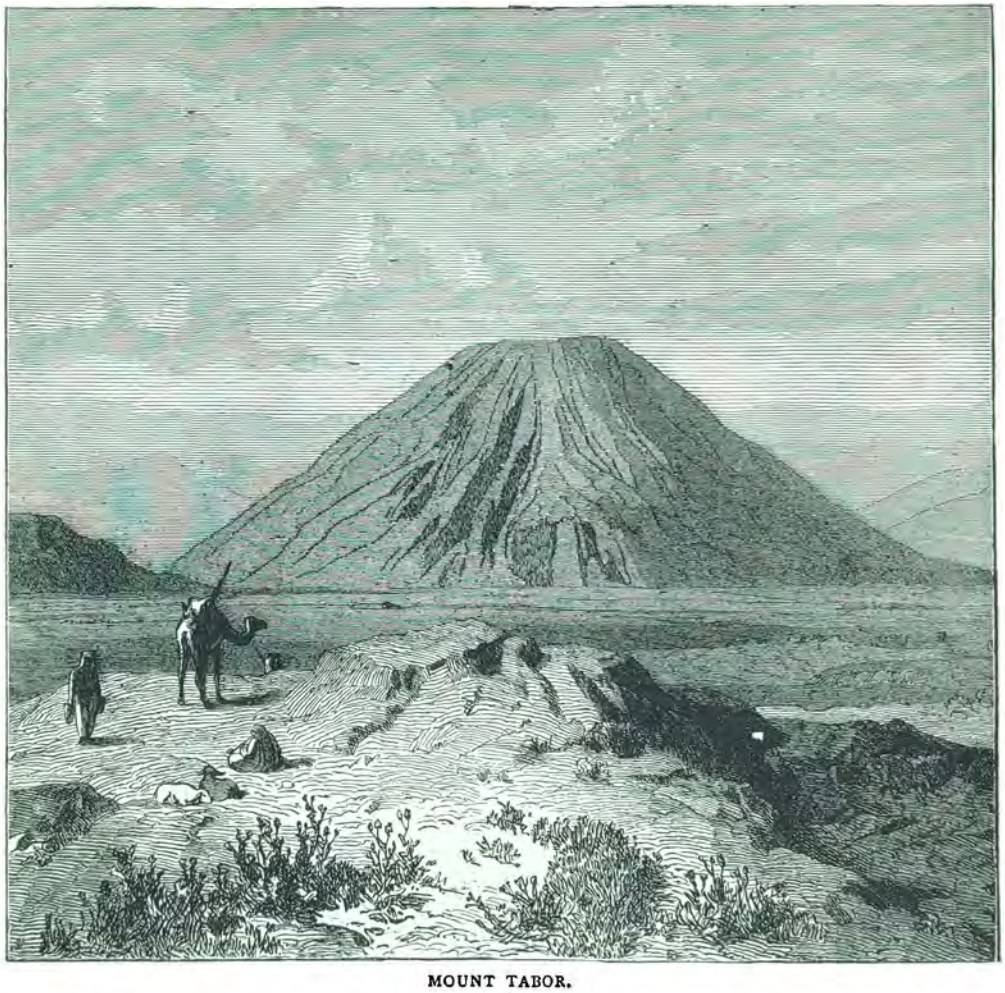
TABOR.



ABOUT five miles from Nazareth is Mount Tabor. A descent from the town is made by a winding valley ending in a forest of oaks at the base of this singularly shaped and isolated mountain. Dr. Thomson made the height of Tabor above the sea level 1,800 feet. The hill is very steep, and can only be ascended on horseback on the north-western side. The road there winds up to the top through a forest of oak and terebinth, mingled with the deliciously scented syringa. There is a level plateau on the summit, with a ruined wall round it, with towers; inside this inclosure are two

convent hospices, one of the Greek, the other of the Latin Church, both ever ready to offer courteous hospitality to travellers. Each of these convents claims to be built over the very spot where Our Lord was transfigured; but as we have before said, the explorers of Palestine have shown from Scripture and all local probability that Hermon itself was the most probable mountain on which that great event took place.

There are fine ruins of an ancient church on Tabor that had three aisles and three chapels, in memory of the three tabernacles



MOUNT TABOR.

that St. Peter wished to erect. It belonged to a monastery founded and endowed for the monks of Cluny by Tancred. There are the remains of three ancient churches on Tabor, built, we are told, in the sixth century.

After the final defeat of the Crusaders, at Hattîn, Saladin destroyed all the Christian buildings on Tabor. El Melek el 'Adel built a fortress on the site of one of them which had been partially restored. This fortress was destroyed by Sultan Bibars in 1263.

The ruins of many ages and many nations are on the top of Tabor; Canaanitish (for a town was here when Joshua

entered Canaan), Jewish, Roman, Christian, and Saracenic—a mass of shattered walls, towns, and churches. It was on Tabor that Deborah and Barak assembled the warriors of Naphtali and Zebulun by God's command to fight against Sisera, the captain of Jabin, king of Canaan. Ten thousand men gathered on the mountain ready for war. The news of this revolt of the conquered nation reached Sisera, and he at once assembled a great army to quell it. He had nine hundred chariots of iron, and all the people were with him from Harosheth of the Gentiles to the river Kishon. The battle was won by the Israelites, and the soft, muddy soil or marsh, and the waters of the river Kishon engulfed or swept away the chariots of iron when they were once in flight, for the Lord had sent a terrific storm to the aid of His chosen host. To this Deborah undoubtedly alludes in her magnificent Ode on the victory, by that "ancient river, the river Kishon." The whole battlefield of Deborah and Barak can be seen from Tabor.

The southern side of Tabor is of nearly bare limestone. The mountain is best seen from the great plain of Esdraelon, which is below, gazing from the part lying between Tabor and Endor.

The view from Tabor is extremely fine. The plain stretching below, covered with flowers and verdure, and of many rich colours, has been aptly described by Dr. Thomson as "one vast carpet thrown back to the hills of Samaria and the foot of Carmel." Near the summit the Mediterranean can be seen, and the Sea of Galilee.

SEPPHORIS—DIO CÆSAREA—SEFFÛRIEH.

THIS once important town, about five miles to the north-west of Nazareth, stands on a conspicuous hill, and occupies the site of a succession of ancient cities. It was rebuilt by Herod Antipas, and called by the Romans Dio Cæsarea. It is mentioned by Josephus, who himself saved it by a stratagem from entire destruction, to which it was doomed by the fierce Galileans. It had invited the Romans to send a garrison to protect it. Before its request was complied with, however, Josephus (it was during the war with the Romans) assaulted and took it. The Galileans, his soldiers, who hated the people of the city, were bent on destroying it by fire. They refused to listen to the remonstrances of Josephus, and he had to spread a report that the Romans had arrived on the other side of the town before they would desist. It was afterwards burnt down by the Arabian King Aretas.

A hundred and eighty years after Christ, it was the finest city in Palestine, and the seat of the Sanhedrim. Coins were struck with its name, and it was the See of a Christian bishop. Tradition declares it to have been the home of Joachim and Anna, the parents of the Virgin Mary who is said to have been born here. It was a place of importance in the time of the Crusades, and here the Crusaders (who had been called on by Guy of Lusignan to help him

recover Jerusalem from Saladin) assembled. From hence they started on the eve of the fatal battle of Hattîn. Had they remained in Sepphoris, the Sultan would have found great difficulty in taking so strong a place as it then was, and the whole course of events in Palestine would have been changed. The town, by fortification and position, was difficult of assault, and the Crusaders had a castle there of extraordinary strength. Seffûrieh was well supplied with water by an aqueduct from 'Ain-ed-Jimran, between el-Meshhed and 'Ain Mahil, which ran for four miles along the side of the hill, and had a fall of nearly 700 feet; it was partly subterranean, partly rock-cut and of masonry. The water was received into immense reservoirs, which have been examined and described by the Palestine explorers. How the unfortunate warriors, at the battle that was lost by thirst (Hattîn), must have longed for the abundant fountains of Seffûrieh.

Seffûrieh is now a large and prosperous village. It is admirably situated nearly half-way between Tiberias and Acre, with the fertile plain of Bûttauf on the north, the vale of Tûran on the east, and on the south, west, and north-west most magnificent oak glades extending for miles. On the hill above the village stands the ruined castle. Its lower storey is still perfect, and so is the south-west wall of the upper storey. The walls are twelve feet thick. On entering the castle, steps from the left ascend as far as the south-west corner, whence a staircase once led to the upper storey. It is now broken and unsafe. The door is in the south wall; it is seven feet high and four feet broad, and is covered with a flat lintel. Above it is a Gothic arch, but there is no stone carving or architectural ornamentation worth mentioning.

Only the south-west corner and staircase remain, it is said, of the Crusaders' castle. The whole building, with that exception, was reconstructed by Ahmed, son of Dhahr el 'Amr in 1751. There are three sarcophagi built into the castle walls.

The church of St. Anne, dedicated to the Virgin's mother, is in the north part of the village. Only ruins of it remain—the apse with its roof, and two granite shafts—and these ruins are surrounded by mud hovels. The church is believed to date from the twelfth century, and was of course built by the Crusaders.

To the east of the village, on the top of the hill, are some tombs said to be Roman.

A fine pass in the hills to the west of Seffûrieh connects the plain of el-Buttauf with the plain of the Kishon. It is called Wâdy-el-Melek, or the King's Valley. The people of the town are very bigoted.

JOTAPATA.

JOTAPATA, now called Jefât, famous for its heroic defence against the Romans, is on the rock of Jefât, a high spur in the mountains north of the Bûttauf plain. It was first identified by Mr. Schultz as the site of the renowned fortress. It is about two miles west of Kânâ. The path runs through the Wady Jefât, and could be passed only in single file by soldiers, agreeing perfectly with Josephus's description of it. The sides and ravines are covered with thick oak coppices. No ruins of fortifications remain on the hill, but there are foundations of a tower on the north where Josephus built one, and had his cisterns for rain-water.

"Jotapata," writes the historian, [1] "is almost all of it built on a precipice, having on all the other sides of it, every way, valleys immensely deep and steep, insomuch that those who would look down, would have their sight fail them before it reaches the bottom. It is only to be come at on the north side where the utmost part of the city is built on the mountain, as it ends obliquely at a plain." This mountain Josephus had encompassed with a wall when he fortified the city, that its top might not be capable of being seized upon by the enemies. "The city is covered all round with other mountains, and can no way be seen till a man comes first upon it."

Either by the raising of the ground by accumulated earth, or the falling of the summit of the hill, these "precipices" no longer exist; but the aspect of a place in nearly nineteen hundred years may be expected to be greatly changed, and the truth of Josephus's account seems to be confirmed by the time Vespasian spent in taking the fortress.

The Roman general attacked it on the only practicable part of the wall with a hundred and sixty engines for throwing stones, darts, and lances, while the Arabian archers kept up a deadly discharge of arrows, so that the Jews could not appear on the walls,—but they made sallies in small bodies, pulled away the hurdles that covered the workmen, and killed them; afterwards carting away the banks of earth they were constructing, and burning the wood and hurdles, "till at length Vespasian perceived that the intervals there were between the works were of disadvantage to him, for those spaces of ground afforded the Jews a place for assaulting the Romans. So he united the hurdles and at the same time joined one part of the army to the other, which prevented the private excursions of the Jews." Thus the bank was raised; but as it rose Josephus ordered the wall to be built higher; and that the workmen might be protected from the stones, darts, and fire, he ordered them to stretch before them raw hides of oxen newly killed, which yielding and hollowing might receive the stones; and from which the darts would slide, whilst the fire would be quenched by their moisture. Thus defended, the Jews built their wall twenty cubits higher. Josephus also raised towers on it.

Vespasian, after a long and vain attack, resolved to starve the fortress into a surrender, and lay close to the place, without attacking it.

The besieged had plenty of food; they would not starve, but the want of water threatened them with dreadful sufferings. Their cisterns were only supplied by rain, and none was to be then expected, for it was summer. The water was therefore doled out to them by measure, and Vespasian perceived it and hoped, in consequence, for speedy success; but he was deceived by Josephus's hanging wet cloths over the walls, so wet that the water ran down the stones. The Romans then, had recourse to an immense battering ram, and the wall shook with its blows; but again the ingenuity of the Jewish leader rendered the Roman skill vain. He hung bags of chaff wherever the battering-ram was directed, which deadened its blows; but with hooks on long poles the Romans cut the sacks down, and the ram at last made a breach in the wall. An assault was then ordered; but the Jews received the assailants with streams of boiling oil, which penetrated into their armour, causing them exquisite pain, and rendering the ladders slippery.

The siege and the defence thus continued for forty-seven days; then the town was surprised in the night by Titus, and all its male defenders were slain, twelve hundred women and children being taken captives. Forty thousand men had perished during the siege.

Josephus, when all was lost, concealed himself with about forty others, but was

[1] "Wars of the Jews," B. 3-7-7.

finally induced to surrender himself to Vespasian at the entreaty of a Roman friend of his own.

Vespasian ordered the fortress and village or town of Jotapata to be entirely demolished, and the fortifications to be burnt down. "Thus was Jotapata taken in the thirteenth year of the reign of Nero," says Josephus.

Of the following adventures of the Jewish leader we have not space to tell.

The summit of the hill of Jotapata is bare rock, with no ruins on it except some old cisterns; but on the neck of land that connects it with the northern mountains are a few ruins of former buildings. The sides of the rock are full of caves of all sizes.



BEISAN.

BETHSHAN, NOW BEISAN

(THE ANCIENT SCYTHOPOLIS).

BETHSHAN stands on a height of more than three hundred feet above the valley of the Jordan. It is now called Beisan. It was also the ancient Scythopolis, the capital of the Decapolis, and the only one of the "ten cities" that was west of the Jordan. It was a prosperous and important town, well watered by its own three springs and by streams from the large sources at the base of Mount Gilboa. It is now only a poor and mean village, inhabited by an Egyptian colony, placed there by Ibrahîm Pasha in 1840. They are a very low, degraded race of people, poor and ignorant and dirty; but of late the Turkish government has built some handsome public offices there, and the village will probably improve.

As we have said, it was to Bethshan that the Philistines bore the bodies of Saul and his sons after the battle of Gilboa, sending his head to the temple of Dagon, and his armour to the temple of Ashtoreth, which was probably at Bethshan, for the city seems to have belonged to the Philistines at that time, or rather, probably to their allies the Canaanites. The town was in that division of the land which had been assigned to Zebulun; nevertheless it had been allotted by Joshua to the tribe of Manasseh. It does not seem to have been wrested from the original inhabitants for a long period. It is, however, mentioned in 1 Kings iv. 12 as part of the district allotted to Solomon's purveyors.

In the days of Judas Maccabæus the town was called Scythopolis, and was again a heathen town.

Pompey conquered it on his march from Damascus to Jerusalem; but after he had taken Jerusalem he restored Scythopolis to its own inhabitants, and set it, as well as many other cities, free.

In revenge for the massacre of the Jews at Cæsarea by the Romans (during the war with that people), the Jews assailed and took many of the towns and villages of the Syrians, and amongst them attacked Scythopolis.

The Jews in the city joined the heathen inhabitants and fought against their own nation, showing themselves so zealous in the Gentiles' cause that the people of Scythopolis suspected them of treacherous designs. They therefore required them, as a test of their fidelity to the Syrians, to remove with their families from the city into a grove outside the walls. The Jews complied; they were suffered to remain quietly in their new abode for two days, but on the third night, while they slept in fancied security, their treacherous allies stole on them and murdered them all, to the number of thirteen thousand. Amongst these unhappy people was a young man named Simon, who, after a pathetic address to the men of Scythopolis, killed his whole family with his own hand, and slew himself rather than fall by the sword of his enemies.

In the fourth century after Christ, Scythopolis, then a Christian town, was made the see of a bishop, who represented his Church at the Council of Nice.

That Scythopolis must have been a town of importance and wealth, the ruins about it testify, justifying the Roman name for it, the "City of Palaces."

These ruins are divided into three parts by the two principal streams (four streams run through the village) that unite at the north-east corner of the old walls above a ruined bridge. In the southern division are the village, the hippodrome, the theatre, a ruined mosque, and ancient walls. The central portion has in it the great tell where the citadel once stood, on the wall of which the bodies of Saul and his sons were hanged.

The northern portion incloses the ruins of a magnificent church, cemeteries, baths, and an ancient fortress. Around all these three collections of ruins the ancient wall can be easily traced.

The hippodrome is almost entirely buried, but it was 280 feet long from west to east, and 152 feet broad. It was an oblong building with semi-circular ends, and was inclosed by a bank nine feet high. The seats around it are in tiers two feet broad and one and a half high; they are of white marble. The hippodrome was entered by a gate in its eastern wall. The base of a pillar, two feet in diameter, was found at the west end.

The theatre, or El Akûd ("the vaults"), is on the north of the hippodrome. It is considered the most perfect of all the ruins of Roman work in the country. In shape it was a third more than a semi-circle.

There is no doubt that this theatre was the scene of the cruel sports of the amphitheatres, for here a number of Christians were martyred during the reign of Julian the Apostate. There are still cages where the wild beasts were confined, and marks of the sockets for the bars that restrained them. Isby, Mungles, Dr. Robinson, and

M. Guérin have spoken of the oval recesses and "the low and narrow passages" found in this theatre; they were made, it is supposed, to increase sound in it by repercussion. The spring close by the theatre—its name is 'Ain el Mel'ab, "the Spring of the Theatre"—may have supplied the water for the *naumachiæ* or naval combats that sometimes alternated with gladiator shows and "the Christians to the Lions." There are vaults of black basalt below the marble seats, which probably gave the ruins their name.

The mosque to the south-east of the theatre is thought to have been a Christian church. Over the Praying Place is an inscription stating that the mosque was built in 806.

Tell el Hosn, "the Mount of the Citadel," is a tall natural hill scarped at the sides. It must have been a very strong fortress. A wall surrounded the plateau at the summit, and the foundations of the gate can still be seen. The view from this tell is extremely fine. From it can be discerned the valley of Jezreel and the whole valley of the Jordan which it dominates. On the east of the Jordan one catches a glimpse of Pella where the Christians of Jerusalem found refuge when they saw the Roman eagles approaching. On the heights above is the grand castle of the Crusaders, Beauvoir or Kul'at el-Rabûd as it is now called; and to the north-east is the ford of BETHABARA, Makhâdet 'Abârah. There are many ruins at the foot of the tell, and a fine vault with a semi-circular tunnel roof is at its base.

The Hammâm or Hot Bath stands to the north-east of the Tell, close to a smaller mound, on which is a ruined fort. To the south-east of the bath are many ancient rock-cut tombs, the cemeteries of the ancient town.

Some gardeners digging in a garden of the Sultan at Beisan came upon the remains of a magnificent church. Amongst the ruins disinterred were twenty-four Corinthian capitals, twenty-five pillar bases, and twenty-seven columns, all of pure white marble finely chiselled.

Not far from the Tell is the street of columns, which can be traced nearly the whole way round the base of the hill.

Scythopolis was the birthplace of Basilides, the chief of the Egyptian Gnostics. This heretic appears to have followers of his tenets still, amongst the Druses of the Lebanon; for he taught that it was lawful for men to conceal their religion in times of danger, and to partake of the idol feasts of the Gentiles. His religious tenets were very extraordinary, but we cannot here discuss them.

Cyril, Patriarch of Alexandria, the persecutor and murderer of Hypatia, was also born at Scythopolis.

Bethshan signifies the house of ivory, otherwise the dwelling of sheep. In the time of Eusebius and St. Jerome it was a considerable city, though then known as Scythopolis, or the city of the Scythians (as the Septuagint translated it), those people having at one time invaded Palestine, and probably taken Bethshan, but the old name has been nearly restored in Beisan.

BETHABARA OR MAKHÂDET 'ABÂRAH.

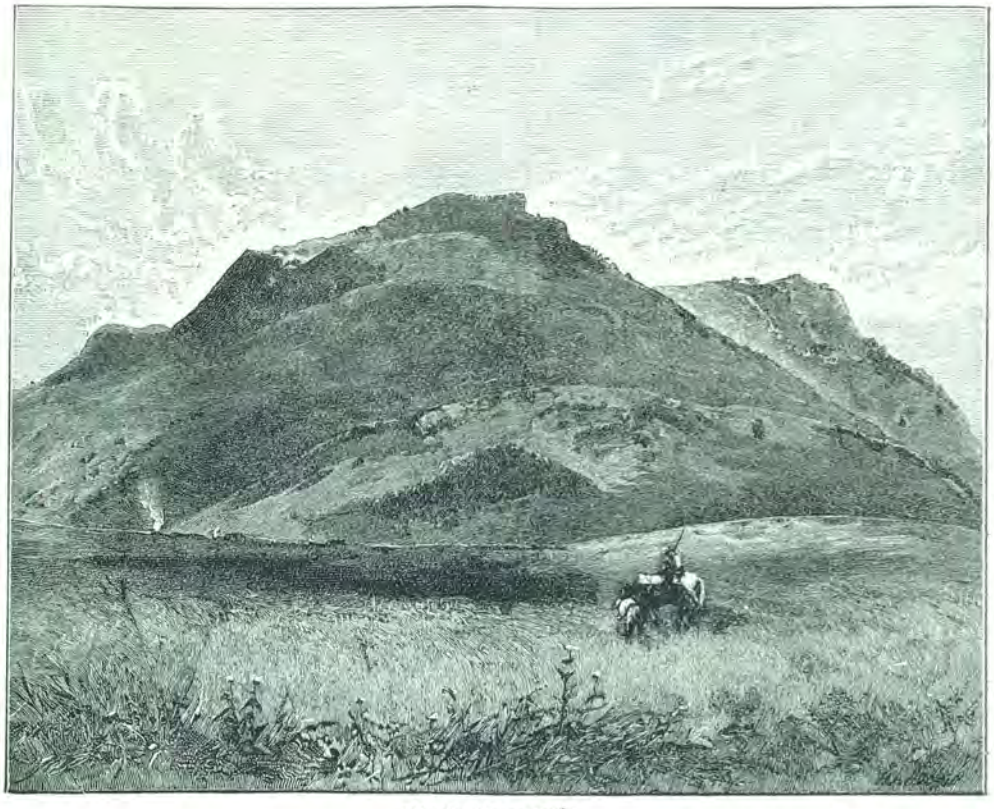
WHILST from the Tell of Beisan we can view the ford called Makhâdet 'Abârah, we will speak of the probability, almost certainty, of its being the Bethabara where Gideon waited to cut off the retreat of the Midianites across the Jordan; and where, long afterwards, the Baptist called his nation to repentance. The very view on which we gaze from the Tell of Beisan proves the identity of the spot with the Biblical one of Gideon's pursuit of the Midianites. We can see the places passed by the latter in their panic-stricken flight.

"The well of Harod" is now 'Ain Jalûd, east of Jezreel; the "Hill of Moreh" now "Jebel ed Dahi"; "Beth Shittah" is now the village of Shutta. Tellûl ez-Zahrah is probably the site of Zererath. Abelmea is perhaps Ibleam, now Khurbet Yebla. Beyond, an old ruin marks the site of Tabbath, now called Taiyibeh. All these sites are visible, and we can see how the invaders in their flight reached the Jordan and were met and defeated at Bethabara. Here their two princes, Oreb and Zeeb were taken prisoners and slain afterwards, near or at Jericho.

The traditional site of our Lord's baptism was from the fourth century believed to be at the ford east of Jordan, where Joshua crossed to Gilgal; but, Major Conder tells us, "the distance from this spot to Cana of Galilee is so great that it is impossible to reconcile this tradition with the New Testament account. . . . There is, as before said, no strong reason for accepting this traditional site for Bethabara. Some of the earliest MSS. of the Gospel read Bethania for Bethabara; but Origen disputed this reading, and Bethania is probably the later form of the Hebrew word Bashan. Bethabara is found at least in the Codex Ephraemi (C), and Origen says that nearly all the copies of the gospel in his time had this reading. It would seem then probable that the scene is to be laid, not in the lower, but in the upper part of the Jordan valley, where the highway from Galilee crosses over to Bashan, where, gay with flowers and carpeted with grass, the plain, dotted with stunted palms, extends between the basalt heights crowned by the Castle of Beauvoir and the long slopes round Pella, the home of the early Ebionites who fled from the destruction of Jerusalem and formed a quiet Christian community in the wilderness where John had baptized" ("Palestine," p. 75).

We may, therefore, with confidence, gaze on this ford as the spot where the Baptism of Jesus took place, and where the heavenly testimony to His Divinity was given by the Voice and the Dove. We may imagine we see the prophet John, Elijah-like, in his rude garment, with his stern, majestic features softened as he gazes on the gentle Saviour, who is, he knows, perfectly sinless —for in the flesh Jesus was the kinsman of John and must have been well known to him. Yet with this intimate knowledge, John protests against the Son of Mary needing any repentance. The gentle explanation follows:—"Suffer it to be so now; for so it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness." The example must be given; it is followed by the recognition from God the Father, "This is My Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

Bethabara signifies the house of passage.



HORNS OF HATTÎN.

THE HORNS OF HATTÎN.

A FATAL name this for the Crusaders. A hill, 1,200 feet above the Mediterranean, and 1,800 feet above the Lake of Gennesaret bears that name. It stands on the ridge of the descent leading to the Lake of Gennesaret, on the east side of the Bûttauf plain, and is often called (according to tradition) the Mount of the Beatitudes, for it was here most probably that our Lord ascended to preach, as never man preached before that time.

Guy of Lusignan, with the Crusaders whom he had gathered round him, had remained with his army by the fountains of Sepphoris for many months. The Moslems had taken Banias and defeated the Master of the Templars near Tiberias. To have remained where he was would have been the wisest policy, the best generalship; but the Crusaders had grown impatient of their enforced idleness, and urged the dethroned king to march out against the infidels.

Raymond of Tripoli, though his wife was in besieged Tiberias, gave different and far wiser counsel. "Between this place and Tiberias," he said, "there is not a drop of water. We shall die of thirst ere we reach

the town." But the ill advice of the Templars—the evil genius of the Crusaders—prevailed, the army marched out on the 1st of June, 1187, across a plain without a single stream or well.

The Saracens had water behind their encampment.

The Arabs and Kurds encountered in their light dress and arms the heavily-clad and exhausted knights. A summer sun poured down its rays upon the heads of the helmeted warriors, and the troops were mad with thirst. The army parted and fell away in search of some stream or well, and the rest threw down their arms and begged for water. But a hundred and fifty knights, the very flower of Christian chivalry, encircled the Royal Standard on the Horns of Hattîn, and after a gallant but vain resistance were taken prisoners. The sagacious and valiant Raymond, however, cut his way through the Saracens, and escaped to Tyre. With him were also Balian of Ibelin and his followers.

Renaud of Chatillon, the lord of Kerak by the Dead Sea, was amongst the captives. He had caused the war by treacherously attacking a Moslem caravan during a period of truce, and, moreover, he had been a constant and dangerous enemy to the Mahometans.

After the battle, he and king Guy were both in the Sultan's tent, and Saladin ordered sherbet for the king. Guy, after drinking, handed the cup to Renaud; "*Thou* hast given him drink, not *I*," said Saladin, ominously, for had *he* done so, the hospitality of the East would have ensured Renaud's life.

The Sultan offered him, however, a choice. "Would he become a Mussulman, or die?" He of course chose death, and was executed.

This battle closed the Christian rule in Palestine. It had begun when the Crusaders under Godfrey took Jerusalem and established a Christian kingdom, and it had lasted a hundred and ninety years, from 1101 to 1291, closing only when Acre and Athlit were surrendered. The kings of Jerusalem were Godfrey, who refused to wear a crown where his Saviour had worn a crown of thorns; Baldwin and his brother, Baldwin de Burgh, Fulke, Baldwin III., Almeric, Baldwin IV., who was a leper, Baldwin V., and Guy de Lusignan. Then came the heiresses of the crown, in whose right their husbands claimed it; Isabel married three times, 1. to Conrad; 2. Henry Count of Champagne; 3. Almeric de Lusignan. Mary married to John of Brienne; Violante married to the Emperor Frederick of Germany.

The dissensions amongst the Christians were more fatal to the Christian kingdom of Jerusalem than even the arms of Saladin; and unhappily dissensions among the Christians of Palestine still injure and disgrace the cause of Christ. Except Godfrey, Tancred, and Robert of Normandy, the first Crusaders were ambitious and selfish men; and in the second Crusade the envy of Philip of France thwarted the efforts of our Richard Cœur de Lion, and lost Guy his bravest champion. It is not by Christian rivalries and jealousies that the Holy Land can be won for Christ, but by practising Christian virtues.



CANA IN GALILEE.

GALILEE.

GALILEE, pronounced by the natives Jalil, is, next to Bethlehem and Jerusalem, the most interesting part of the Holy Land; for its soil was frequently, almost daily, trodden by the footsteps of our Lord. He dwelt amidst its people, and many of His greatest miracles were performed here. "The people that walked in darkness have seen a great light; they that dwelt in the land of the shadow of death, upon them hath the light shined" (Isaiah ix. 2). The Galileans dwelling on the northern border of Israel, distant from the capital, and exposed to frequent raids and invasions from the Gentiles, were a rougher people than those of Central Palestine; wilder, and more savage and uncivilized in Isaiah's day; their accent even differed from that of Jerusalem, probably as the accent of Yorkshire does from that of London.

In Galilee were the tribes Zebulun, Naphtali, Issachar, and Asher by the sea. Galilee is first mentioned in Joshua, where Kadesh-Naphtali is said to be in Galilee. This town was near "The Waters of Merom," now Lake Hulêh.

After Solomon had finished building the temple and his own house (in which Hiram, king of Tyre, had greatly aided him, by supplying timber of cedar, fir-trees, and gold), the Jewish king gave to his friend "twenty cities in Galilee." But when Hiram saw them, he was displeased with them; he called them Cabul, or "worthless," and remonstrated with Solomon. Probably these towns must have been near Hiram's city of Tyre. Whether Solomon satisfied him with a better gift, we are not told.

Josephus divides Galilee into Upper and Lower. The Upper has a watershed on the west near the Jordan, 2,800 feet above the level of the sea, and Mount Jermûk near the Mediterranean. Lower Galilee is the remainder of the land, including the plain of Esdraelon, and lying between

the Mediterranean and the basin of the Jordan—twenty miles in extent from west to east.

On the road from Nazareth to Tiberias is Reineh, which has been supposed to be the ancient Cana, as there is a spring called 'Ain Kâna close to it (see Major Conder's "Tent Work"), but there are two other sites, each claiming to be the true one: these are Khurbet Kâna, just above the Bûttauf plain, mere ruins; and Kefr Kenna, a prosperous village a little farther on; it is prettily situated on the side of a vale; it has some ruins of ancient buildings, and some good modern ones. It is surrounded by beautiful pomegranate orchards. The pomegranate is thought as lucky at a native wedding as rice is with us. There is a lovely spring close by the village. Clarke, who passed through Kefr Kenna in 1801, says: "About a quarter of a mile before we enter the village is a spring of delicious limpid water, close to the road whence all the water is taken for the supply of the village." It may interest our readers to hear what Willibard, a pilgrim of 722, tells us of Kâna:—"Having recommended themselves to the Lord, they proceeded to the town of Cana, where our Lord turned the water into wine. A large church stands there, and near the altar is still preserved one of the six vessels which our Lord commanded to fill with water, to be turned into wine, and the travellers drank wine out of it." If Kefr Kenna is really Cana of Galilee, the water drawn at the immortal marriage feast must have been taken from this fountain, for the village has no other. There is a Latin convent in this place.

Where the vale of Kefr Kenna unites with the plain of Tûran to the west of Kefr Kenna, on the summit of a hill, is el Meshhed, on the site of Gath Hepher, the birthplace of the prophet Jonah. His tomb is shown on a hill a little to the south of Meshhed. This valley is the boundary between Zebulun and Asher.





LAKE OF GALILEE.

THE LAKE OF GALILEE.

IT is scarcely possible to describe the feelings of solemn awe and tenderness with which one gazes on the lake of Galilee. How still its waters! How the stars shine in them! How hushed the air is! Many and many a time the Lord Jesus has gazed on that sea at this hour. On it also His Divine footsteps have rested; though *then* the winds had raised its waters, storm-driven, and the little vessel bearing His disciples toiled vainly with the waves. Then Christ commanded the roaring winds and rushing waves to be still, and they obeyed. Here the first miraculous draught of fishes was given when Peter was called to follow the Lord as a "fisher of men." Here, in the faint light of the dawning, the apostles saw on the shore the form of their Risen Lord. The whole lake is full of the most holy memories, and of tender remembrance of all the Saviour did for us; of His life of toil-

some teaching, and gentle patience; of the sufferings borne for us; of the certainty, given by His appearance on the very borders of this lake, of our own Resurrection.

Who can think of Jesus in Galilee without emotion? We seem nearer to Him, here by the sea He trod, than in any church at Jerusalem or Bethlehem, for here we can picture Him present,—

> "When rippling wave and dashing oar
> Our midnight chant attend,
> Or whispering palm leaves from the shore,
> With midnight silence blend."

Morning is as beautiful over this enchanted lake as moonlight was. How the waves



BOAT ON GALILEE.

then ripple and break into smiles! surely *they* remember their Creator's presence on them! For many a year there were no little ships on the water, no fishermen mending their nets by the shore. The reason was that no Arabs will trust themselves on the sea; they have a deadly fear of it. Nothing would make them even cross the lake in a boat, they would far rather travel all the way round its shores. Nor will the Arabs of the inland fish. Only those who have lived by the Mediterranean will hold a rod, and even they do not care for fishing. There are, however, now, many boats on the lake; and there are boats for hire at the hotel; thus we still see

boats there, but not many fishing boats, unless the boatmen throw their nets for "Musht" while the tourists are exploring the shores.

The view from the steep hill above Tiberias is beautiful. Nearly the whole of the lake of Galilee can be seen from Hattîn; to the east are cliffs and the plateau of the Hauran, and in the distance the Hill of Bashan. On the north-east are the cones of the Jaulân; on the north-west the Safed range. The cliffs above Magdala (of Wady Hamân) are very bold and fine, and so are those south of Tiberias, on the west shore.

The lake lies in a basin (formed probably by volcanic agency) six hundred feet lower than the Mediterranean. It is pear-shaped; the round end being at the north, the small end at the south, and it is twelve miles in length, and eight across at its widest part, from Mejdel to Wady Semak. The bluest, generally the calmest of lakes, it is surrounded by a low, green girdle, and by picturesque hills—snowy Hermon in the distance.

The lake is chiefly fed by the Jordan, but also by the great fountains of Fûlîyeh, el-Mudowera, 'Ain et Tîny, and Tabiga; and in winter from the Wadies of Haman, er-Rŭbŭdiyeh, 'Amud, and Leimŭn from the west and north-west; and Sulam, Tellaiyeh, Jermaiah, Shŭkaiyif, and Semak on the east. During the rainy season an immense quantity of water is thus poured into the lake, and it rises accordingly, particularly at the south end, the outlet of the Jordan. The water is sweet and good, and there are excellent and abundant fish in it.

Never had any other sea or lake so many names. It has been called the sea of Chinnereth, the lake of Tiberias, of Galilee, of Gennesaret, and it is now called by the Arabs Bahr Tabariyyeh.

It is the middle one of the three great basins of the Jordan.

Josephus has left us such an excellent description of this lake, and of the sources of its chief feeder, the Jordan, that we insert it here.

"Now this lake of Genesareth is so called from the country adjoining to it. Its breadth is forty furlongs, and its length one hundred and forty; its waters are sweet, and very agreeable for drinking, for they are finer than the thick waters of other fens; the lake is also pure, and on every side ends directly at the shores and at the sand; it is also of a temperate nature when you draw it up, and of a more gentle nature than river or fountain water, and yet always cooler than one could expect in so diffuse a place as this is. Now when this water is kept in the open air, it is as cold as that snow which the country people are accustomed to make by night in summer."

Had they thus early the art of making artificial ice or snow? It appears so. To resume Josephus.

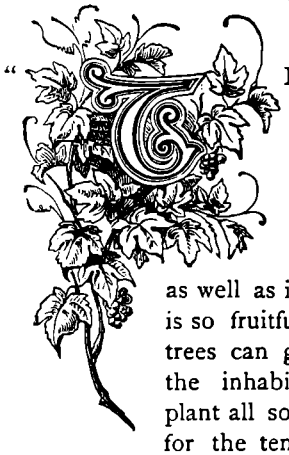
"There are several kinds of fish in it (the lake), different both to the taste and the sight from those elsewhere. It is divided into two parts by the river Jordan. Now Panium (Banias) is thought to be the fountain of Jordan, but in reality it is carried thither after an occult manner from the place called Phiala: this place lies as you go up to Trachonitis, and is a hundred and twenty furlongs from Cæsarea, and is not far out of the road on the right hand; and, indeed, it hath its name of Phiala (vial or bowl), very justly, from the roundness of its circumference, as being round like a wheel; its water continues always up to its edges without either sinking or running over; and as this origin of Jordan was formerly not known, it was discovered so to be when Philip was tetrarch of Trachonitis; for he had chaff thrown into Phiala, and it was found at Panium, where the ancients thought the fountain head of the river was, whither it had been therefore carried. Now Jordan's visible stream arises from this cavern, and divides the marshes and fens of the lake Semechonitis; when it hath run another hundred

and twenty furlongs, it first passes by the city Julias, and then passes through the middle of the lake of Genesareth, after which it runs a long way over a desert, and then makes its exit into the lake Asphaltitis." We know now that Phiala is not one of the sources of Jordan.

One dislikes greatly to think of the Galilean Sea as the scene of a dreadful sea-fight, but this once occurred there. Titus had taken the town of Taricheæ, and Vespasian determined to pursue on the lake those who had escaped from the town in ships. The Romans speedily built some vessels and launched them on the lake, and the most dreadful of sea-fights followed, for the Jews were utterly unable to defend themselves. Their ships were too small to contend with the Romans; but they did the best they could. They sailed round the Roman galleys and threw stones at them, but with very little effect against their enemies' armour. The shores of the lake were in the hands of their foes; those who landed in despair were instantly slain; on the lake the scene was one too horrible to describe. The Jews were simply massacred.

This hideous cruelty took place before the siege of Gamala, which, with Gischala alone of the towns of Galilee, refused to submit to the conquerors.

The Plain of Gennesaret and the Towns round the Lake.



"THE country that lies over against this lake hath the same name of Genesareth" writes Josephus; "its nature is wonderful as well as its beauty; its soil is so fruitful that all sorts of trees can grow upon it, and the inhabitants accordingly plant all sorts of trees there, for the temper of the air is so well mixed that it agrees very well with these several sorts; particularly walnuts, which require the coldest air, flourish there in vast plenty; there are palm trees also which grow best in hot air; fig trees also and olives grow near them which yet require an air that is more temperate. One may call this place the ambition of nature, where it forces those plants that are naturally enemies to one another to agree together; it is a happy contention of the seasons, as if every one of them laid claim to this country, for it not only nourishes different sorts of autumnal fruit beyond men's expectations, but preserves them a great while; it supplies men with the principal fruits, with grapes and figs continually during ten months of the year, and the rest of the fruits, as they become ripe together, through the whole year; for besides the good temperature of the air it is also watered from a most fertile fountain. The people of the country call it Caphurnium. Some have thought it to be a vein of the Nile, because it produces the Coracin fish as well as that lake does which is near to Alexandria."

Such was Gennesaret in the past; what is it in the present?

A green marshy plain, with no city on it; only the mud hovels of Mejdel but still

fertile. The lilies of the plain and a few tulips embellish the plain, but the flower which chiefly covers it is the red anemone, and a small blue iris which is very brilliant in colour. There are beautiful butterflies soaring over them, greatly resembling our own winged insects.

On a corner of the mountain overlooking this place we can hear with great distinctness words spoken half a mile away.

Besides the tower at Mejdel and a few walls at Khan Minyêh the only remains worth noticing on or near the plain are those of a fountain called 'Ain Mudowerah at the western extremity of it. The plain is also watered by several streams that make it rather marshy.

The basin of 'Ain Mudowerah, or the Round Fountain, is singular. The fountain is in the centre of a reservoir of about a hundred feet in diameter, the encircling walls being about eight feet high. The water gushes through a small aperture at the east side, over stones covered with black shells. It is joined by other streamlets and flows down to the lake in a deep channel with oleanders at the side of it. The water is warm and the basin swarms with fish, amongst which is the catfish, only to be found here and in the Nile. Above the basin the blue and red kingfisher watches for prey. Wild fig trees and the pink flowers of the oleander hang over the basin.

There are no other ruins near and no tradition, even local, explains what this relic is. Fountains far up Wady Haman irrigate the south-western part of the plain. The streams from Rûbûdîyeh water the western side. Toward the north-west the Nahr 'Amûd and the Leimûny from above Safed cross the plain to the lake, and formerly the north-eastern part was watered by the great fountains of Tabiga.

Gennesaret is now called el-Ghuweir or the Little Ghor.

A ruined Khan lies under the west cliff, known for centuries as Khan Minyêh. This has been thought to be the site of Capernaum, but it is not likely that it is.

The only inhabited spot in this lonely plain is the miserable collection of huts (with the ruins of a tower) that are called Mejdel. There are ruined foundations and heaps of rubbish around it. But it is the spot hallowed by the birth of the woman out of whom Jesus cast seven devils, and to whom He appeared first after His Resurrection—Mary Magdalene, for this is the site of Magdala, from which she took her name. It consists now of only a few huts and these ruins, with green bushes between it and the lake, and one solitary palm tree.

As the birthplace of the Magdalene it will always have an interest for us, for her memory is immortalised in the Gospels as a pardoned sinner and a Christian saint. She had been forgiven much, and she loved much. Her name is for ever associated with the Resurrection of our Lord.

As we proceed northwards up the plain of Gennesaret, we see on the left side a break in the mountains with a road running between them; this is the road that leads to Nazareth and Tabor, or from them to the lake. The sides of this mountain-pass are perpendicular and full of caves.

In Herod the Great's time, these caves were full of robbers. Resolved to destroy them, he sent a troop of horsemen and three companies of foot-soldiers against them, near a village called Arbela. At first Herod's left wing gave way, but he retrieved the day and pursued the party he had attacked to the river Jordan. Those who escaped, however, took refuge in the caves. "These caves," says Josephus, "were exceedingly abrupt, and in their middle were no other than precipices, with certain entrances into the caves and those caves were encompassed by sharp rocks, and in these did the robbers lie concealed with all their families about them; but the king caused certain chests to be made in order to destroy them, and to be hung down, bound about with iron chains, by an engine from the top of the mountain, it being not possible to get up to them by

reason of the sharp ascent of the mountains, nor to get down to them from above. Now these chests were filled with armed men, who had long hooks in their hands, by which they might pull out such as resisted them, and then tumble them down and kill them by so doing. But the letting the chests down proved to be a matter of great danger, because of the vast depth they were to be let down, although they had their provision in the chests themselves; but when the chests were let down, and not one of those in the mouths of the caves durst come near them, but lay still out of fear, some of the armed men put on their armour and by both their hands took hold of the chain by which the chests were let down, and went into the mouths of the caves, because they fretted that such delay was made by the robbers not daring to come out of the caves; and when they were at any of those mouths, they first killed many of those that were in the mouths with their darts, and afterwards pulled those to them that resisted them with their hooks, and tumbled them down the precipices; and afterwards went into the caves and killed many more, and then went into their chests again and lay still there. But upon this terror seized the rest when they heard the lamentations that were made, and they despaired of escaping; however, when the night came on, that put an end to the whole work, and as the king proclaimed pardon by an herald to such as delivered themselves up to him, many accepted the offer.

"The same method of assault was made use of the next day; and they went farther, and got into baskets to fight them, and fought them at their doors, and sent fire among them, and set their caves on fire, for there was a great deal of combustible matter within them. . . . By these means all these caves were subdued entirely."

This is surely one of the most strange and romantic of tales of robbers.

The rock galleries of the robbers' hold are still to be seen by those who choose to climb to them. Canon Tristram has accomplished this feat, and gives us an excellent account of them.

"Long galleries," he says, "wind backwards and forwards in the cliff's side, their walls being built of dressed stone, flush with the precipice, and often opening into spacious chambers. Tier after tier rise one after another, with projecting windows, connected by narrow staircases, carried sometimes upon arches, and in the upper portions rarely broken away. In many of the upper chambers to which we were let down the dust of ages had accumulated, undisturbed by any foot save that of the birds of the air."[1] This savage chasm is called Wady Haman; the ruins of Arbela cover the height above. The Arabs give the name of Kul 'at Ibn Ma'ân to these caverns. Josephus afterwards fortified them during the war with the Romans, for seeing that he could not disarm the robbers, he took them into his army, allowing them pay.

[1] "The Land of Israel," p. 438.



TIBERIAS.

TIBERIAS.

FROM Hattîn the Sea of Galilee can be seen. It is a calm, tranquil blue sea generally; and the land round it is richly wooded. By an easy descent from the mountain Tiberias is reached; it is now a small Turkish town, called Tabariyeh, partly fortified on the side nearest the lake, seen from which it is rather picturesque; but the streets are poor, narrow, and extremely dirty, with a few minarets and mosques here and there amongst them. There is a Latin monastery at the northern end of the town overlooking the sea, and in the same direction are the ruins of a castle.

The Jews consider Tiberias as one of their four holy towns, the other three being Jerusalem, Hebron, and Safed.

The ruins of ancient Tiberias lie to the south of the present town, which was much injured by the earthquake of 1837.

There are hot baths called the Hammân, or Emmaus, about three quarters of an hour distance from Tiberias at the south end of the small plain by the shore. Four springs supply these baths; they are salt and bitter and have a strong smell of sulphur. Their temperature is 144° Fahr., and they are thought to be curative for rheumatism, debility and leprosy. It requires some courage to enter them, after the motley groups that bathe in them, for people from all parts of the country and with all sorts of complaints

use them. The building over the north spring was erected by Ibrahîm Pasha in 1833 A.D. On the way to the baths the columns and ruins of ancient Tiberias are passed, and tombs cut in the rock. The first bath is on the borders of the lake; it has a fine white marble basin, and is surrounded by columns of marble supporting a cupola; there are little rooms round the basin. Pliny mentions these waters, which were known and used in his day.

The town contains four thousand Jews, and there is a mission to them here from the Free Church of Scotland. Medical, educational, and evangelical Tiberias is on the site of the city of Rakkath.

The Roman Tiberias was built by Herod Antipas, and named by him after the Emperor Tiberius, A.D. 16. It became the capital of Galilee for a time, and Josephus, who had a great deal to do with the town, fortified it. It submitted without opposition to Vespasian.

After the destruction of Jerusalem, those who had escaped of the Sanhedrim settled at Tiberias, after trying first Jamnia and Sepphoris. In the reign of Constantine the Great it became a Christian city and a bishop's see. Justinian rebuilt the walls. But it was taken by Khosroes, King of Persia in 614, by Omar in 637, and by Tancred with his Crusaders, during the first Crusade. After the battle of Hattîn, Saladin took possession of it.

The ruins of old Tiberias run along the shore for a distance of two miles, and extend to the mountain to the west, which rises a thousand feet, almost overhanging the ruins. In it are many large caves. These were no doubt formerly inhabited. One is sixty feet long, another seventy-five. A terrace has been cut in the rock in front of each, but it is difficult and dangerous to climb up to them, for they are nearly inaccessible.

One of these caves is extremely singular; steam issues from the entrance, and inside it is a natural steam-bath—what wonder is *not* possessed by Palestine? This cave is near the top of the north side of the citadel-hill of old Tiberias, some distance from the hot baths below. A zigzag wall, on which were towers, runs up the rock. There are columns and carved work amidst the ruins, and old cisterns are seen, but nothing of any great importance.





SITE OF CAPERNAUM.

CAPERNAUM AND CHORAZIN.

TWO places claim to be the site of ancient Capernaum, Khan Minyeh close by 'Ain et Tîny, or the "Fountain of the Fig"—and Tell Hum. Dr. Robinson thought the former was the right spot, but local tradition both amongst Jews and Moslems, as well as every other circumstance, points to Tell Hum, which is accepted by the Explorers as the true site. 'Ain et Tîny was supposed by Dr. Robinson to be the fountain "called Capernaum," that Josephus said watered the plain of Gennesaret; but from its position 'Ain et Tîny could not water the plain, for it issues close to the lake, and on a level with it; while there is a very large, strong and full fountain at the spring of Tabighah (which is believed by Dr. Thomson [1] to have been a suburb of Capernaum). These springs are about a mile from Tell Hum, which is north of the Sea of Galilee, and about the middle of the broad end of it. The largest of them is surrounded by an octagonal reservoir, into which the water is raised and conducted by an artificial channel to the plain of Gennesaret. A German Roman Catholic colony has established itself at Tabighah. The bay here is well sheltered by hills and bluffs, and there is a smooth sandy beach. Ruins extend all the way from 'Ain Tabighah to

[1] "The Land and the Book," p. 355.

Tell Hum, and heaps of lava boulders also cover the shore. At Tell Hum there are the remains of an ancient synagogue and a tomb. Some of the pedestals of the synagogue remain *in situ*, but the columns and walls are on the ground. The fallen capitals are Corinthian and there were epistylia, resting on the columns. It is called the White Synagogue, for the walls were built of limestone blocks, well-dressed, and there are remains of a heavy cornice and frieze. The outside seems to have been decorated with pilasters. On the east side a square building had been added; its exterior was also decorated with pilasters. Amongst fragments of cornices, capitals, etc., there is a lintel having on it a carving representing David's seal, and a pot of manna. One large stone has something like a vessel carved on it. It must have been a very fine building of Roman architecture, and the columns and capitals are of a beautiful marble, quarries of which exist to the north-west of Tell Hum; some of the cornices and other fragments were also of a beautiful rose-coloured marble. The houses were nearly all built of perfectly black basalt, rudely cut. The Arabs, who haunt the lake have made a few huts with the ruins, but these will probably soon be left tenantless again.

There is no doubt that Capernaum must in the time of our Lord have been a noble town. That it was the city in which Jesus resided at intervals, we learn from Scripture; but also, we know, that it was in no home of His own that He dwelt there, for "the Son of Man had not where to lay His head." It is probable that He stayed in the house of Peter.

Our Lord had only just finished His Sermon on the Hill of Hattîn, and descended from the Mount of Beatitudes, with the multitude who had listened to Him, and probably others who joined them below (for we read "great multitudes" were following Him), when a leper came and knelt before Him saying, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." This was actually an acknowledgment of our Lord's power of performing miracles, for human skill availed (and avails) nothing against that dread disease. "And Jesus put forth His hand and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean, and immediately his leprosy was cleansed."

"And as Jesus was entering into Capernaum, there met Him a centurion, beseeching Him, and saying, Lord, my servant lieth at home, sick of the palsy, grievously tormented." The Lord offers to "come and heal him." Probably the centurion's house was not far off, but the faith and humility of the Roman convert speak at once; he is not worthy that Jesus should come under his roof. "Speak the word only," he says, "and my servant shall be healed." His faith receives its due reward of commendation from him whose praise is eternal happiness; and his servant is healed. This centurion had built a synagogue here. Is it not most probable that we now look on its ruins?

Then, entering Peter's house, our Lord healed Peter's mother-in-law of a fever, and she arose and ministered unto them. But that wonderful day was not yet ended. "When even was come they brought to Him many possessed by devils, and who were sick, and He healed them all." How weary His bodily nature must have been after such hours of exertion of the Divine power! Is there not some allusion to this in the Evangelist's quoting (as he remembered that day) Isaiah's prophecy, "Himself took our infirmities and bare our sicknesses."

Christ's ministrations were doubtless impeded by the great multitudes that now gathered round Him; for He gave commandment to depart to the other side of the sea. It was then that in answer to a Scribe who wished to follow Him, He said, "Foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man hath not where to lay His head."

The Lord and His disciples enter a ship and sail from the shore. A great tempest

raging round them does not disturb the slumbers of the Son of God. They have to wake Him to ask Him to save them, and He does; for He rose and rebuked the winds and the sea with "Peace, be still." and there was a great calm. And the disciples marvelled, saying, "What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey Him?"

It was in Capernaum also that He healed the sick of the palsy, and the woman who touched His garment; raised Jairus's daughter from the dead, and, as He left the house, gave sight to two blind men. He taught in the synagogue on the Sabbath, and in it cast an unclean spirit out of a man. On another Sabbath day He restored a withered arm in the same place. It may have been in this very synagogue. Here also He taught by parables, from the ship, which was brought into one of the creeks close by the city, of which there are many, and from it was delivered the parables of the sower and the mustard seed. In fact Capernaum heard more of our Lord's teaching, and saw more of His miracles than any other place. But it had all the vices of a great Roman city; teaching and miracles had little effect on men given up to greed and to pleasure, and our Lord finally pronounced on it the doom which, when we gaze on these ruins, we see so fearfully fulfilled. "Thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell; for if the mighty works which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained unto this day."

At the north end of the ruins of Tell Hum is a tomb, which is called the "Tomb of Nahum." If this is really the Tomb of the prophet Nahum, it may have given its name to Capernaum; which was originally Capher Nahum, the village of Nahum.

To the north of Tell Hum at a distance of about two miles in a wild gorge, are the ruins of Chorazin, now called Kerâzeh. They cover as large an area as those of Capernaum. The buildings are of black basalt, great blocks of which lie about; there is the ruin of a large synagogue and many of the houses are still perfect. Sir Charles Wilson settled the locality of Chorazin, and discovered the aqueduct from 'Ain Tabighah to the Plain of Gennesaret Chorazin was included in the prophecy against Capernaum and Bethsaida, and the fulfilment of its fate is recorded by these stones.

BETHSAIDA, GERGESA, AND TARICHEA

(TELL KELAT).

THE plain of el-Batiheh, fertile and well watered by perennial streams, and placed in a similar position on the north-east side of the lake that Gennesaret occupies on the north-west, is inhabited chiefly by Arabs. It has gardens of cucumbers and melons which Burckhardt says ripen earlier than any others.

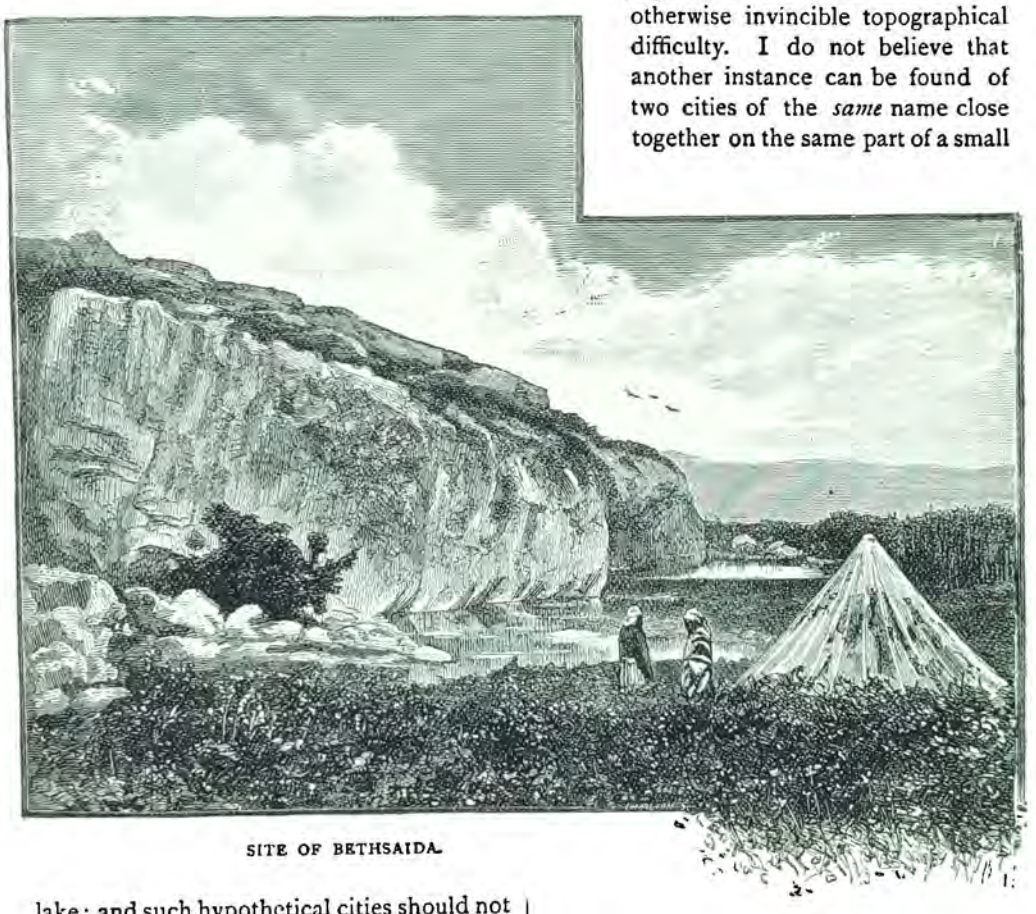
At the end of this plain is a bold headland covered with grass, the spot where, tradition says, the five thousand were miraculously fed. It is still, as it was then, "a desert place," far from human habitation, and some little distance also from Bethsaida Julias itself.

The editor of Murray's Handbook thinks

that there were two Bethsaidas, and that Tabighah may have been the Bethsaida where the three Apostles were born. But what then becomes of Josephus's "Fountain of Capernaum?" He also thinks that the site of Bethsaida-Julias was at Ms'aidîeh on the plain of el-Batîheh.

We will give Dr. Thomson's opinion as to these two Bethsaidas.

"I am of opinion that the invention of a second Bethsaida is wholly unnecessary. Reland, who first started the idea, confesses that he has no authority for it, but merely resorts to it as an *ultimatum refugium*, a last resort to solve an otherwise invincible topographical difficulty. I do not believe that another instance can be found of two cities of the *same* name close together on the same part of a small



SITE OF BETHSAIDA.

lake; and such hypothetical cities should not be created without absolute necessity,"—nor ever, we think—"and no such absolute necessity exists in this case. All admit that there was a Bethsaida at the entrance of the Jordan into the lake. . . . Any city built at the mouth of the Jordan would almost necessarily have part of its houses on the west bank of the stream; and this would be literally, and geographically within the territory of Galilee.

"Peter, Andrew and Philip were born there, and would be mentioned as Galileans. And further, I think it highly probable that the whole city on both banks of the river was ordinarily attached to Galilee, and that one object that Philip the Tetrarch had in rebuilding the part of the east side and changing its name was to detach it entirely from its former relations, and establish his own right over it. I believe, therefore, that there was but *one*

Bethsaida at the head of the lake, and that it was at the mouth of the Jordan." [1]

We may, if Dr. Thomson is right, accept the portion of Bethsaida Julias on the *west* side of the Jordan, where it enters the lake of Galilee, as the birthplace of three of the Apostles, and the scene of many of the incidents in the life of our Lord.

Philip the Tetrarch greatly improved the city, and it probably grew prosperous and wealthy in his time; but it had rejected the Saviour, and He prophesied "woe" to it, a prophecy which has been entirely fulfilled. Of its grandeur nothing now remains but heaps of rubbish.

The west side of the Jordan as it enters the lake is covered with fellahin huts—the fellahin are of course the *resident* peasantry —in many cases Arabs. On the east are the black tents of the Bedouins. The Jordan is a muddy stream here and rather turbid.

The supposed site of the ancient Julias, a mile back from the stream, is now occupied by a very wretched Ghawârnieh village amongst heaps of black basalt stones; none of them can be recognised as having once belonged to a building, nor is there any trace of the sumptuous tomb in which Philip the Tetrarch was buried. The same "woe" pronounced on Bethsaida has fallen on Bethsaida-Julias; nothing of it remains.

Kersa or Gersa, as it is now called, has been fixed on as the spot where Gergesa stood, and where our Lord healed the two demoniacs, and permitted the demons to go into the herd of swine.

The traces of walls can be distinguished still, and judging from them, Gergesa was not a large town, though it had suburbs of some extent. It is very near the shore, and a very high and steep mountain rises above it, in which are many rock-tombs.

Everything here tallies with the account in the Gospels. In some of these tombs the demoniacs may have concealed themselves and come out and attacked the people, "so that no man could pass by that way." And over the steep hillside, which, at this spot falls close to the lake, the terrified swine must have rushed madly, incited, perhaps, to do so by the malignant spirits, who thus sought to retain their power, as in fact they did, for the Gadarenes or Gergesenes—Gergesa was a town in a district of Gadara—were so alarmed and no doubt grieved at losing their swine, that they besought Jesus to depart from their coasts, thus putting from them the Giver of Eternal Life. Our Lord complied with their request, but refused to permit the now sane and grateful demoniac to follow Him in the boat as he wished. He—the restored maniac—was bidden by Christ to "return to his own house and to his friends, and to *tell them* how great things the Lord had done for him, and how He had had mercy on him." Thus,—though, at their request, He left the Gergesenes,—in His mercy He left a witness of Himself amidst them, and that witness "went his way, and published throughout the whole city and in Decapolis what great things Jesus had done for him; and all men marvelled." (St. Matt. viii. 28–34; St. Mark v. 1–20; St. Luke viii. 28.)

The Jordan issues from the south-west corner of the sea of Galilee, and commanding this exit are the Tells of Kerak. North of them is the site of the ancient Tarichea, a place famous for having witnessed the only sea-fight of the Jews. We have already described this conflict in the account of the sea of Galilee. We must add here that Josephus once collected two hundred and thirty ships at this spot to attack Tiberias. The ships must have been small, but Tarichea was famous for boat-building. In the harbour here, too, the boats could take refuge from the sudden and severe storms to which the lake was subject.

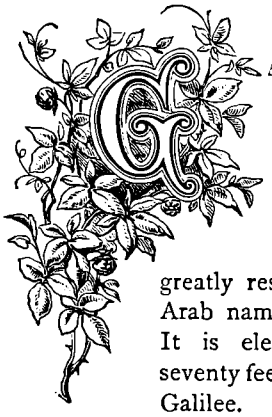
The river here is about three hundred feet broad. It was crossed once by a bridge of ten arches, called Jisr el-Kûnâtur. The arches are now mere ruins,

[1] "The Land and the Book," p. 374.

broken in pieces; they lie at the bottom of the stream.

The only bridge still available is that of Jisr el-Mujamia, but it is some distance down the river. This part of the Jordan Valley is inhabited entirely by the Arabs. There is not a village except in ruins till we reach Jericho.

GAMALA.



GAMALA (a word meaning the hump of a camel) was rightly given; for the isolated and lofty promontory on which it stood greatly resembles one. Its Arab name is Kûl'aet Husn. It is eleven hundred and seventy feet above the lake of Galilee.

The strong ramparts and broken columns of Gamala remain now, as they were left after its brave but vain defence against the great Romans, Vespasian and Titus. It has never been repaired since the siege, and the ruins have not been taken away for other buildings; they are, therefore intact, and we can see in it what was the Jewish mode of fortification in that long-past time.

It was an enormously strong fortress, no doubt, and from its almost impregnable position believed that it could not be taken, and defied the power of Rome.

But Vespasian removed his camp from Emmaus, or Hamath, the warm baths near Tiberias (which had surrendered to the Romans) and came to Gamala with his forces. He seized upon "the mountain which was over it," Josephus tells us, and the legions fortified their camp there. While some were thus occupied Vespasian cast up banks at the bottom of the hill, at the eastern part of the fortress where the highest tower was, "where the fifteenth legion pitched their camp; while the fifth legion did duty over against the city, and the tenth legion filled up the ditches and valleys." King Agrippa was with the Romans,and approached the walls to speak to the Jews who were standing on them, to persuade them to surrender; but they refused to listen to him, and one of the slingers threw a stone at him which hit him on the elbow. The Romans were very indignant at this treatment of their mediator, and hurried on their work. As soon as the banks were made, they ran up the machines, but Chares and Joseph, who were the leaders of the Jewish garrison brought their armed men out on the wall and for a time drove off those who were bringing the machines, but when the Romans threw darts and stones at them they withdrew into the city. The Romans' battering rams soon beat down a portion of the wall, and the soldiers poured into the fortress, with "a mighty sound of trumpets and noise of armour, and the shouts of the soldiers." The Jews bravely defended themselves; and the Roman soldiers who had entered were "so overborne by the greater multitude of the peoples who beat them on every side, that they were obliged to run into the upper parts of the city." But they were driven down again to the lower part, a place narrow and difficult, where the Jews killed many of them.

As the Romans were then between their own advancing troops, who were forcing their way forward, and the Jews who fought against them from above, they rushed into

the houses of the besieged. But these houses were very slight, and built one above another upon the almost perpendicular slope of the hill.

The weight of the body of soldiers who now filled them was more than they could bear, and they fell suddenly; "and when one house fell, it shook down a great many of those that were under it." The Romans went down the height with the ruins numbers had their limbs broken; many were killed by the fall, and by the ruins coming on them; a greater number were suffocated by the dust that arose from these ruins. Those, too, who were pressing forward "stumbled in the sharp and narrow streets and were perpetually tumbling down," the Jews then killing them with stones, with which the very ruins supplied them. And they took the arms of the slain Romans and used the swords against their adversaries. Escape was very difficult. Vespasian was deeply affected at the fate of his soldiers and forgot to take care of his own preservation. He went up gradually to the upper parts of the city, before he was aware, and was left in great danger, for even his son Titus was not then with him. But the gallant general and those that were with him, making a covering of their shields, sustained firmly all the attacks of their enemies, and without turning his back to them he retired from the city. But there was a centurion whose name was Gallus, who, during this disorder crept privately with ten other soldiers into one of the houses, and overheard the inhabitants talking at supper about what they intended to do against the Romans, and the Syrians their allies. The man was a Syrian himself, and those that were with him were Syrians. In the night he came out of his hiding-place and with his companions killed the whole family and escaped to the Roman camp.

The people of Gamala continued to defend the fortress till the two and twentieth day of the month, when three soldiers of the fifteenth legion, about the morning watch, got under a high tower and undermined it without making any noise, nor did the guard perceive them. When they had rolled away five of its strongest stones they hurriedly left it; the tower almost immediately fell with a great noise crushing the guards within it. Great fear fell on the people of the town. Joseph as he fled over the broken wall was killed by a dart, and Chares, the other leader who was ill, was killed by the fear caused by the fall of the tower.

Titus now returned, and the terrible siege was soon over. He took two hundred chosen horsemen and some foot soldiers with him and entered the city noiselessly.

The people soon perceived their danger and hurried to the citadel, which was on a great height, very rocky and difficult of access, and very full of people. It was encompassed also with precipices,—very deep ones are still to be seen there—"and the Jews killed many of their assailants by darts and rolling large stones down on them, while they were so high themselves that the enemy's darts could scarcely reach them."

"However," says Josephus, evidently acknowledging the Divine displeasure against his nation, "there arose such a divine storm against them as was instrumental to their destruction; this (hurricane) carried the Roman darts upon them and made those which they threw return back and drive them obliquely away from them; nor could the Jews indeed stand on their precipices, by reason of the violence of the wind, having nothing that was stable to stand upon, nor could they see those that were ascending up to them; so the Romans surrounded" and slew them. Despairing of escape the Jews then threw their wives and children down the precipices into the valley beneath. Never was such a scene at the end of a siege. The Romans killed four thousand men, women, and children —even infants, but five thousand threw themselves over the precipices. Of all the city, only two women who had hidden themselves, survived. These were the

granddaughters of Jacimus, who had been a general of Agrippa's.

Josephus, from whom this account is taken, was a spectator of the siege, as he was with the Roman troops who had taken him after the destruction of Jotapata.

Thus fell Gamala on the 23rd of October, A.D. 69. The citadel was surrounded, as can be seen, by a strong wall on the very brink of the precipices, and in some places arches had to be thrown from cliff to cliff to ensure the foundation. The citadel was nearly a mile and a half in circuit. The tower in the centre was probably the largest of all. Near it a synagogue must have stood. Columns of Egyptian granite lie about the ground; more than twenty are lying here, and there are some Corinthian capitals cut in black basalt; there are also remains of cisterns. How the columns of granite could have been raised to such a height is a puzzle.

Gamala is the most perfect ruin in Palestine, and the story of its fearful siege gives it a sad, weird interest. It was in the days of Josephus the capital of Gaulanitis.

On the north of Gamala is a fortified rock called Nkeib, with some ancient ruins on its summit. About two miles to the east is Fîk, a large village on the top of a mountain, the site of the destruction of Benhadad's army. His ministers had persuaded him that the God of Israel was a God of the hills only, not of the plains; that He fought for the Israelites on the hills, but would not fight for them on the lowlands. Thus persuaded, the king removed the royal commanders of his troops and placed captains in their place, assembled an immense army and led it up to the plain before Aphek. The Israelitish army was gathered together before them, but it was so small that "the children of Israel were like two little flocks of kids," but the Syrians filled the country.

A prophet brought a message from God to the camp of Israel; he told them that because the Syrians thought Jehovah a God of the hills and not of the plains, the Lord would deliver into their hands this great multitude. The Divine promise was kept; the little army of Israel defeated Benhadad's forces and slew a hundred thousand men. The rest fled to Aphek, but here a wall fell on the twenty-seven thousand men left, and buried them beneath it. It has been supposed that an earthquake caused this tremendous fall of the fortifications.

The ruins at Fîk are tolerably perfect, and they have a good many Cufic inscriptions on them.

SAFED.

SAFED, placed on the slope of a hill several thousand feet above the sea, is visible all round the lake at a great distance. The ascent to it begins at a lovely wayside fountain at the foot of the mountain, and winds round and round to a gorge green with olive trees and pomegranates. Safed is supposed to be "the city set on a hill, that cannot be hid," which suggested to our Lord the illustration in His Sermon on the Mount. It would be, indeed, a striking object from the Mount of the Beatitudes.

On the summit of the mountain are the ruins of a fine castle which was built by Fulke, king of Jerusalem, in 1140. Saladin took it after the battle of Hattîn. In 1240 it was again taken by the Christians, and the Teutonic Knights rebuilt it. In 1266 Bibars took it. It is surrounded by a moat.

The town is large; it surrounds the ruins, and overhangs the mountain on all sides. It is divided into three quarters, inhabited by Moslems and Jews. The Moslems of Safed are especially bigoted and fanatical; the Jews are of a high class, and very hospitable.

The Castle of Safed was surrendered, at the downfall of the Christian power, to the Moslems on capitulation, but the Saracens broke their word disgracefully, and murdered the whole garrison. In the sixteenth century, the Jews who resided in Safed were noted for learning and riches. They had many schools and synagogues.

But the New Year's day of 1837 brought a fearful calamity on Safed. A dreadful earthquake shook the castle down, and all the houses on the steepest side of the mountain. They were the homes of the Jews, who were buried under them. Many were killed at once, others buried alive were dug out mangled and starved from having been five days without food. Their synagogues, schools, etc., were all destroyed.

The neighbourhood of Safed is highly cultivated, and is beautiful with olive groves and gardens; numerous cattle graze on the verdure spreading around it. The view from the summit is magnificent, reaching from near Beisan to Carmel; the plain of Esdraelon, the sea of Galilee, Hattîn, Samaria, and the valley of the Jordan, the Jaulân and the Haurân stretching to the Arabian desert, are all lying before the spectator. The town of Safed itself is outstretched beneath like a map of houses and streets.

The outside of the houses in Safed are squalid and dirty; but the interiors of the Jewish houses are remarkably clean and tidy. Canon Tristram tells us that Safed has "the smallest paper currency in the world," having bank-notes of the value of *2d.* and *1d.*

CARMEL.

THIS beautiful mountain, or rather range of mountains, so long seen in the distance, is the southern boundary of the plain of Esdraelon. This especial mount stands on a promontory extending into the Mediterranean, with the plain of Sharon on the south, and Haifa and Acre north of it. On its summit is the Convent of Mar Elyas.

Carmel is one of a range thirty-four miles in length, and greatly diversified by valleys, hills, gorges, caves, and recesses, in which in former ages, and it may be in the present day, hiding-places that are most difficult of discovery were and are to be found. At one time, too, Carmel was covered with magnificent forests, but they are gradually disappearing, cut down to supply the charcoal burners with fuel. A terrible loss to Palestine is the gradual destruction of her woodlands, which the Porte in vain endeavours to prevent.

The chief interest of Carmel, however, is its having been the scene of the awful contest between Elijah and the priests of Baal, and the spot where this wonderful scene took place has been, we think, quite certainly discovered.

At a little distance from the top of Carmel is a level plateau, in the form of an amphitheatre, strewn with stones that are the ruins of an altar, and having on the left,

at the upper part of the amphitheatre, an ancient fountain overshadowed by beautiful trees. A square stone reservoir receives from it the coldest and purest of water, which is abundant. This reservoir is eight feet deep, and is well shaded from the sun. Some old steps that formerly led down to it can still be seen here and there. The spring is said to be perennial, though Dr. Thomson believed that it would not have been full after three years without rain. But Canon Tristram ("Land of Israel," p. 115) proved that it is (at least now) perennial, by observing the molluscs in it, which would only be found in a perennial spring. This amphitheatre is called El-Mohrakah, the place of burning or sacrifice, for it was here that Elijah had his contest with the priests of Baal.

It was on this plateau that the prophet



PROMONTORY OF MOUNT CARMEL, FROM THE SEA.

gathered all Israel and its king to be witnesses of the power of Jehovah. Here, all day, the priests of Baal offered sacrifices, and cried to their Sun-god to hear and answer them; for the test the prophet had proposed to show who was the true God was, that He should answer by fire. How intense, how dreadful must have been the anxiety of the priests of Baal as the sun moved majestically onwards, and there was no answer to their agonized prayer! no voice, no sign, no heed taken. And then their enemy—that solitary, stately Tishbite, in his rude dress, and with his awful eyes full of scorn, mocks them. "Cry aloud! perhaps he is on a journey; perhaps he sleeps!" They cut and gash themselves with knives, but in vain. At last the Baal-god sank in the crimson west. It was the hour of the enemy's sacrifice, and the prophet of the Lord arose, repaired the broken-down altar, at which Jehovah had

once been worshipped, with twelve stones —one for each tribe of Israel, had the sacrifice laid on the altar, soaked it with water, the trench round it was filled also, and then he called on JEHOVAH to send fire from heaven. It came; the bright arrow of the Almighty darted on the sacrifice, set fire to it, and even licked up the water in the trench round it.

The people saw and acknowledged the true God: "Jehovah, He is the God! He is the God!" the echoes of Carmel ring with the cry of a people. And then the priests of Baal were led to Kishon, by the prophet's order, to be slaughtered; while cruel Ahab seats himself at a repast prepared from the sacrifice, and Elijah bends in prayer to God for rain. All creeds believe this is the exact spot where the fire of God fell on the altar, and all reverence it.

Vespasian, some of whose bloodstained victories we have already seen, paused here when entering the Holy Land, and offered to the unknown God (who was making him His instrument to punish the Jews) a sacrifice—"on a mountain," says Tacitus, "known by the name of Carmel, on the top of which a God is worshipped, under no other title than that of the place . . . without a temple or even a statue. An altar is erected in the open-air, and there adoration is made to the presiding deity." It may have been actually on Elijah's altar that the brave Roman offered his sacrifice to Jehovah.

Near the foot of the hill is a mound called Tell Kasis (the hill of the priests), probably the tomb of the miserable priests of Baal.

The Kishon flows immediately below the plateau along the plain, and is called Nahr el-Mukatta (the river of slaughter), because here Jezebel's priests were slain by Elijah's order.

One of the most interesting spots on Carmel is the Valley of the Martyrs, the spot where the first monastery was built on the mountain. There had long been an "Order of the Blessed Virgin Mary of Mount Carmel," but the members of it did not dwell under the same roof; they were scattered ascetics, living in caverns, and resorting for worship to the shrine which had been erected on the hill. But towards the close of the twelfth century the Vicar-general of the Order, Father Brocard, resolved to gather the hermits into a monastery. His plan was sanctioned by the Patriarch of Jerusalem, then living at Acre, as the Pope's Legate, and the convent was built in a lovely gorge, where an abundant supply of water could be obtained from a spring named after the prophet Elijah.

This was the first monastery built on Mount Carmel, and it was in it that St. Louis, king of France, when shipwrecked near the spot, was received and hospitably entertained by the monks. The Royal Crusader afterwards enabled them to build a monastery on the site of the present one, and to found the Carmelite Order; for a sad fate had befallen the hospitable monks.

In 1238 the Moslems rushed down on the peaceful monastery, and massacred them all in this valley, not leaving one alive. They then dragged their bodies to Elijah's spring and threw them into the reservoir.

A steep path leads up to the ruin of this monastery, which is concealed by an enormous wall that runs across the gorge. Here in the pathway are petrified twigs and branches. The other side of the wall is a large cavern supported by a pillar cut in the solid rock and having rock-mangers cut round it.

Above this cave is the crystal spring of Elijah, overshadowed by fig trees. It first fills a rock basin, then runs into another stone-cut reservoir, and thence is led by a channel cut in the rock to the monastery, one small room of which alone remains.

On the top of the hill above the ruins is the supposed garden of stone-melons, called the garden of Elijah, who is said to have thus transformed the fruit of a man who refused to give him one when he asked for it. The man, to avoid complying with

his request, answered, "they are not melons, but stones." "Let them remain stones," said the prophet; and stones they remain. This sounds like one of Grimm's fairy tales, but it is a real monastic legend.

The monks, aided by St. Louis, as we have said, built a monastery on the summit. It continued long, and in it Napoleon placed his wounded soldiers during the siege of Acre. But when he marched away and the ships of England were gone, the Turks came down, massacred the wounded French soldiers and partially destroyed the second monastery. The monks having left it, it became a ruin.

Five years afterwards Father Jules du St. Sauveur ventured back and found the remains of the murdered men, which he hid in a cave till they could be buried properly; but for twenty-seven years this remained impossible.

The present convent of Mar Elyas is a



MONASTERY ON MOUNT CARMEL.

massive square building erected on the site of the old one. It was begun by Jean Baptist in 1826, and completed in 1853.

A pyramid surmounted by a cross with an inscription, stating that it marks the resting-place of the bones of the French soldiers, stands in the centre of a garden in front of the main terrace. The chapel is in the centre of the building, and is covered with a dome; the top of the cupola is 550 feet above the level of the sea.

From the roof there is a magnificent view. Below lies the broad bay and green plain of Acre, the city forming the further end of the crescent round the bay. Beyond is the white headland of the Ladder of Tyre; above this rises the snowy heights of Lebanon. The hills of Galilee are to the east. To the south is the plain of Sharon; a headland with a ruined castle, is Athlit, the Pilgrims' Castle of the Crusaders—"Castellum Peregrinorum." Beyond it is another low mound and a fragment of an old tower. This is Tantura, the ancient Dor. Further still are the ruins of Cæsarea.

There are many rock-cut winepresses on

Carmel, and some large cisterns, and also some "silos" or ancient granaries for concealing or keeping grain.

These are holes in the earth in which the owner places his wheat or barley, perhaps after winnowing it in the winepress, as Gideon did, out of sight of prying eyes; it is then covered with long grass and a slight layer of earth. These pits are sometimes dangerous to riders, as a horse stepping into one is necessarily thrown down.

In 1872 some discoveries were made on Carmel by Major Conder and his party; they were of the ruins of a small synagogue, and a tomb with a Hebrew inscription, a very unusual thing on a Jewish tomb. The name it bore was "Eleazar bar Azariah." The letters were "ancient and peculiar," and were cut over the tomb door. They had been at first painted red.

Inscribed tombs, Major Conder tells us, are almost unknown in Palestine, only five have been as yet discovered. The tomb is the south side of Carmel.

The synagogue on Carmel was less perfect than the Galilean synagogues which are interesting ruins, and have been visited and excavated by Sir Charles Wilson.[1]

The synagogues are long buildings divided into aisles by rows of pillars; at the doorway are two double columns.

The entrance is at the south, the Jews having a superstition (still existing also amongst Christians) that the north is unlucky; hence probably, too, the old English custom of setting aside the north part of the churchyard as a burial place for criminals. Every synagogue had a gallery for the women, who were always placed in a balcony, and screened from view. Here they joined in parts of the prayers. We remember being told once that the service for the men has in it these words: "We thank Thee, O Lord, that we were not born women." The women answer with fervent humility, "We thank Thee, O Lord, that Thou hast created us as we are."

[1] "Palestine," by Major Conder.

The country round Carmel is inhabited chiefly by the Metâwileh, Moslem dissenters. They think that Ali, the son-in-law of Mahomet, was his successor in the prophetic office; their faith is that of the Persian Mahometans. They are supposed to have emigrated from Persia, and settled in Upper Galilee, and at Tyre, where they form the greater part of the population. They resemble in character the Bedouins of the plain of Acre, and are unscrupulous robbers. The Kurds to the north of the plain of Sharon are equally dishonest, therefore the neighbourhood is a dangerous one. The Metâwileh detest the Turks and regard the Shah as their spiritual chief, not the Padishah. They used to be exceedingly intolerant, but they have greatly improved in this respect.

Carmel formerly had nineteen villages on it; it has now only two, seventeen having been destroyed since the days of Ibrahim Pasha, whose strong rule was succeeded by utter lawlessness. The Metâwileh and Kurds actually drove out the inhabitants by continual robbery, and they left their homes, now in heaps of ruins, from pure starvation. Esfia, a Druse and Christian village, escaped destruction by a brave defence, and by paying a tribute to the great Chief Aghyle Agha for his protection. It is the most southerly of all the Druse settlements. Olive oil and honey are the articles in which the people of Esfia deal; and they have also vineyards on the hill-terraces.

The inhabitants of these Carmel villages are tall and handsome, and the women remarkable for beauty. Though poor, they generally possess two or three gold bracelets, and their houses are clean, in which respect the Christians everywhere in Palestine surpass the natives; though they, also, share their sitting-room or kitchen with the cows and donkeys.

The other village, Dalieh, is even more beautifully situated. It is sheltered by a part of the mountain on the north, east, and south, and has the Mediterranean to the west. To the west of the village overlook-

ing the sea is the house built and formerly occupied by Lawrence Oliphant. There is a marble monument to his first wife at Dalieh.

There are many wild animals haunting the recesses of the Carmel range: leopards, wolves, wild boars, jackals, and roebucks.

The flowers are very lovely and cover whole sides of the mountain with the scarlet of the anemones, and the blue of the iris.

On the sides of Carmel, round the Carmelite convent, are many hermits' grottoes. Nearly at the base of the hill, between Tell es-Samak and Haifa is a celebrated chamber cut in the solid rock; it is called El-Khudr, a title given by the people to Elijah, and is supposed to have been one of the Schools of the Prophet.

On the summit of Mount Carmel is the Latin hospice; it consists of a small chapel to the left, and to the right three sleeping chambers for pilgrims. Stone steps lead to the top of the hospice, from whence the view is very magnificent and extensive.

It is said that Pythagoras spent some time on Mount Carmel, which amongst both Greeks and Romans had a reputation for sanctity.

HAIFA.

HAIFA is situated at the south-eastern extremity of the beach that borders the bay of Acre, between an overhanging cliff (on which are the ruins of an old castle) and the sea.

The present modern town is about a century old. A pasha of Acre punished the inhabitants of old Haifa, who had rebelled against him, by razing the town to the ground, and transporting the rebels to the spot where modern Haifa now stands; on the cliff above he built a castle to control them, and erected a wall round their dwellings which they were not allowed to pass. At his death the castle and wall were let go to decay, the prisoners were free, and the people of New Haifa cultivated the surrounding land eastward as far as the Kishon.

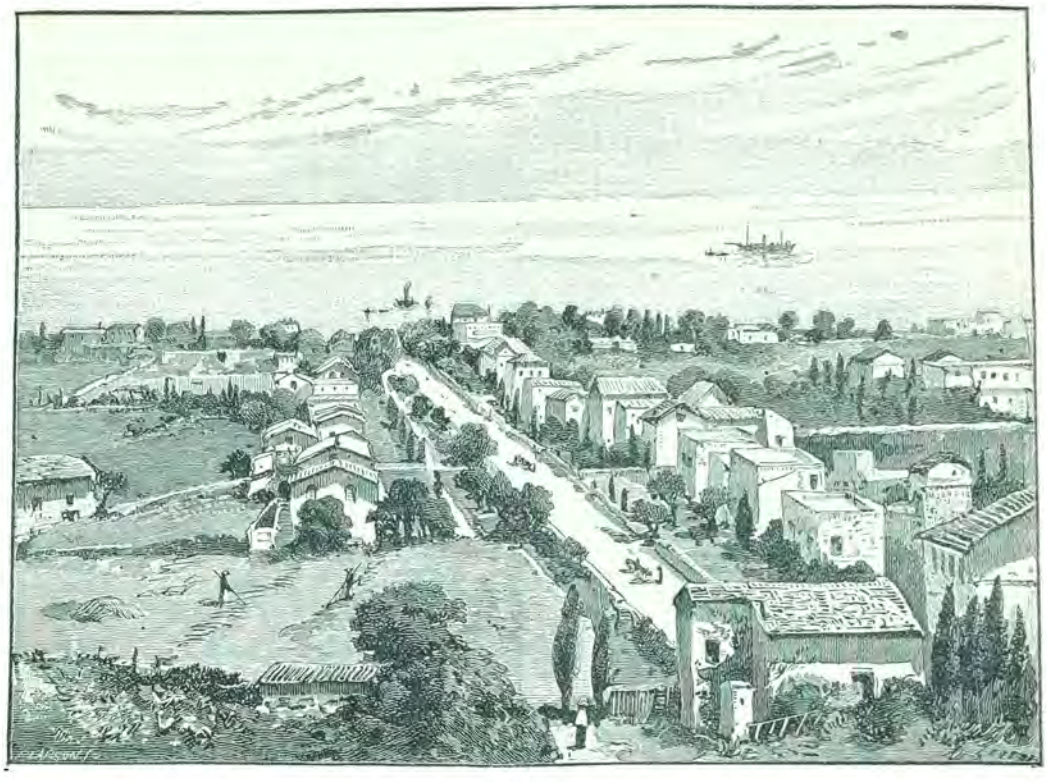
The Temple Society colonists, have been the real makers of modern Haifa, for they have cleansed and paved it, and built good houses of white limestone — quarries of which abound near it. It was, before the arrival of the colony, a mere, dirty, Arab village. But now, it is a busy, thriving town, one of the grain exporting ports of Palestine, and no doubt when the Carmel-Damascus railway opens, it will grow to a city of importance as the station will be here. Running straight from the beach upwards for about a hundred feet to the base of Carmel, is the first good street of Haifa. On each side of it is a pavement bordered by a double row of shady trees; and the houses are of white stone with tiled roofs, each surrounded by its garden, with a text in German over every doorway. Another street runs parallel to it, not quite so wide, but the town has greatly developed of late in every direction. There is an hotel, a small English Church, bankers and consulates, and two doctors, and there is a postal and telegraph service. The rocky sides of Carmel have been cut into terraces to the summit, and vines are cultivated on them; along the lower slopes are thick groves of olives.

On the plain to the west, which is bounded on two sides by the sea and on

one by the mountain, are traces of the old town of Haifa, called by the Crusaders Cayphas. In fact it has been called by many names. The Arabs designate it Haifa; the French call it Caiffa, as do many of our explorers; the Germans write it Kaifa.

It was besieged and taken by storm by Tancred the Crusader, (Tasso's Tancred) in 1100 A.D. There is a massive ruin of sea-wall and the marks of an old fort here even now.

It may not be uninteresting to say something here of the colonists, who were the real makers of Haifa. The colony was one sent out by the "Temple Society," founded by Professor Christopher Hoffman of Würtemburg, who was a Lutheran minister



HAIFA.

and principal of the College of Crischona near Basle in Switzerland. He conceived the idea that the Lutheran Church needed reform, since it so feebly opposed the sceptical opinions of the people of Germany, a scepticism which he believed proceeded from the failure of the members of the Lutheran Church to act up to their professions of Christianity. His opinions brought him into collision with the Lutheran clergy, and he was expelled from their body, taking with him, nevertheless, a great number of followers.

He established a sort of colony of persons holding his opinions at Würtemburg, where efforts were made to live up to the high standard set by our Lord. To this highly laudable desire to live a purely Christian life, he added some singular ideas of his own. He believed that the Second Advent of Christ was near, and in 1867 held a meeting of his followers, the number

of which had greatly increased both in Europe and America, and by them and him it was decided that the central point of the Church should be fixed in Palestine, because it was there that the Second Advent might be expected shortly to take place, and there a pure Church, acting entirely on His words, ought to be ready to receive its Lord.

In 1868 in pursuance of this decision, the colony of the Temple Society was established at Haifa. Contending with extraordinary difficulties,—for they could not speak Arabic, they were unused to the climate, and were regarded jealously by the natives,—they nevertheless were completely successful. Their industry and honesty have wonderfully impressed the Arabs round them, who have adopted their modes of agriculture, and have grown to like and respect the Germans. They have built a town, made roads, and introduced carts and carriages; pure goodness, and acting on our Lord's precepts have enabled them to be the real makers of the town which will assuredly be the greatest port in Palestine.[1]

The population of Haifa consists of Mahometans, Roman Catholics and Latins, the orthodox Greek Church and Greek Catholics or Melchites. These last, who are very numerous, differ from the Greek Church as to the procession of the Holy Spirit of which they take the Latin view. They believe in purgatory, keep Lent, and acknowledge the papal supremacy; but mass is celebrated in Arabic. They take the Sacrament in both kinds, and their priests may be married men, though they must not marry after ordination.[2]

During the siege of Acre by Richard I. and the Crusaders, old Haifa was besieged also, and was levelled with the ground; thus Cœur de Lion when he reached it after Acre had been taken, was compelled to remain in tents, where he was attacked by a fever that kept him four weeks at Haifa.

[1] "Haifa," by Lawrence Oliphant.

[2] For its sects the reader is also referred to Lawrence Oliphant's "Haifa."

THE CARMEL-DAMASCUS RAILWAY.

CARMEL will soon become well known to western people, since from Haifa, at its northern base, now runs the Carmel-Damascus railway.

The line traverses the left bank of the historic Kishon, and crosses the equally famous plain of Esdraelon, running through the valley of Jezreel along the lower ground. It crosses the river Jordan within sight of Bethshan.

The bridge over the Jordan is thrown from one rock on the west side to an equally solid one on the eastern bank, and it is supported in the middle of the stream by a large rock on which it rests.

Taking the eastern shore of the sea of Galilee, it proceeds to the great Haurân platform—the ancient Bashan. Thence by an easy gradient it crosses the plain of Damascus, running by the eastern base of Mount Hermon to the southern gate of the city.



ACRE.

ACRE.

ACRE, better known to us of modern times as St. Jean d'Acre, bears also the names of Accho and 'Akka. It was of old known as "the key of Palestine," for the only entrance to the Holy Land from the north was over the narrow pass of the Ladder of Tyre, and across the plain of Acre.

When it bore the name of Accho it was one of the cities allotted to the tribe of Asher by Joshua, but that tribe never succeeded in taking it from the Canaanites, to whom it originally belonged. In the New Testament we meet with it as Ptolemais, where St. Paul stayed a day. "And when we had finished the voyage from Tyre," says St. Luke, "we arrived at Ptolemais, and we saluted the brethren and abode with them one day. And on the morrow we departed and came unto Cæsarea."

This, and the mention of Accho in Judges, are the only instances in which Acre is named in the Scriptures. In profane history its name has a frequent place, for few towns have ever suffered so many sieges. Simon Maccabæus endeavoured vainly to take it from the Syrians; Alexander Janneus also failed; but it shortly afterwards submitted to the first Cleopatra. Long afterwards, in 1099, Baldwin I., king of Jerusalem, besieged it in vain; but four years afterwards, with the assistance of the Genoese fleet, he took it. It remained in the hands of the Crusaders for eighty-four

years, but was then taken by Saladin, after the fatal battle of Hattîn, fought by Guy de Lusignan (on the false advice of the Grand Master of the Templars), on a spot where it was impossible to find water, and where Raymond, Count of Tripoli, vainly besought him not to give battle. In this contest the Sacred Standard, made of the wood of the True Cross, was borne by the bishop of *Ptolemais* (Acre), who was killed in the heat of the battle, and the cross was taken. Saladin, after the battle, took Ptolemais in two days; but he permitted the inhabitants to retire from the town with their most valuable property. The Christian churches in Ptolemais he converted into mosques. He shortly afterwards took Jerusalem. Saladin did not release Guy de Lusignan after the battle of Hattîn, but kept him for some time in chains; at length he set him free, making him first swear that he would renounce his crown of Jerusalem, and return to Europe. Guy was, however, no sooner free, than he made his bishops absolve him from his oath; but for some time after wandered about his former kingdom, attended only by a few adherents. At last he resolved to draw attention to his desolate condition by undertaking some enterprise that would allure Crusaders to his banner. And this enterprise was the siege of Acre, or Ptolemais, which had continued ever since the battle of Hattîn, in the hands of Saladin.

Guy had chosen the best time for his attempt. The loss of the Holy Sepulchre, for which so much Christian blood had been shed, had roused all Europe, and every nation of Christendom, was prepared to fly to the rescue of Jerusalem.

Guy had only 9,000 men when he began the siege of Ptolemais, but in an exceedingly short time ship after ship brought additional warriors, until 80,000 Crusaders were attacking the town of Acre; whilst Cœur de Lion and Philippe Augustus were still preparing for their departure, to begin the second Crusade. But Saladin, who had despised the Christians, was now alarmed. He gathered a great army at Damascus, crossed the Anti-Libanus and the mountains of Galilee, and encamped not far from Ptolemais. Thus the besiegers found themselves besieged in their trenches.

It was in this position that king Philip of France found them when he landed with his followers; nor had he made any progress with the siege when the ships of England, bearing Richard Cœur de Lion, appeared in the bay.

The landing of king Richard at Acre, is graphically described by Geoffrey de Vinsauf, a spectator of it. "The earth," he says, "was shaken by the acclamations of the exulting Christians. The people testified their joy by shouts of welcome, and the clang of trumpets. . . . No pen can sufficiently describe the joy of the people on the king's arrival, nor tongue detail it. The very calmness of the night was thought to smile upon them with a purer air; the trumpets clanged, horns sounded, and the shrill intonations of the pipe, and the deeper notes of the timbrel and harp struck upon the ear; and soothing symphonies were heard like various voices blended in one; and there was not a man who did not, after his own fashion, indulge in joy and praise. . . . As a further proof of the exultation of their hearts, and to illumine the darkness of the night, wax torches and flaming lights sparkled in profusion, so that night seemed to be usurped by the brightness of day, and the Turks thought the whole valley was on fire."

Unluckily both Richard and the king of France, Philip, were both ill and unable personally to attack the town, but they recovered; the king of France first, and he employed machines and petrariæ against the walls, by which at length he shook the tower "Malediction," and broke down part of the walls.

Richard had also powerful machines; one of which, the chronicler tells us, killed twelve men with one stone. But the Turks continually destroyed the machines with

Greek fire; thus they burnt the king of France's ingenious device called "a cat."

King Richard also assaulted the walls, and, tradition says, beat in one of the gates with his battle-axe; this tradition Sir Walter Scott used in Ivanhoe, where the Black Knight (Richard) beats in the portal of Torquilstone; but there is no truth in this story.

The attacks, night and day, on the city, the great loss amongst its defenders, and the likelihood of its being taken in the end by assault, induced Saladin, whose army had kept up an incessant attack on the Crusaders' trenches to permit the town to capitulate. The chief men of the city then went to the kings, and through their interpreters, offered to surrender the city unconditionally to the Crusaders, to give up the true Cross taken at the battle of Hattîn, and to restore to them two thousand noble captives, and five hundred men-at-arms, "if they would allow the Turks to depart," paying for their ransom 200,000 Saracenic talents. As security for the performance of these conditions they offered hostages.

The kings, on consideration, resolved to grant these terms; the hostages, the noblest in the city, were sent, and in the space of one month the Cross was to be delivered with the captives whom Saladin was engaged to gather out of his dominions.

The two kings entered the town (after the Saracens, with calm, brave demeanour had left it) with loud acclamations, "glorifying God and giving Him thanks."

The city was equally divided between the two nations; they also equally divided the arms, provisions and captives; Philip of France had for his residence the palace of the Templars; king Richard the royal palace, to which he sent his bride Berengaria and the other queen, with their damsels.

But the peace between the kings was not lasting; Philip favoured the pretensions of Conrad of Montferrat to the crown of Jerusalem; Richard those of the brave and unfortunate Guy of Lusignan. They were for a time reconciled; but Philip, tired of the war from which he derived no personal benefit, and seeing himself eclipsed by the splendid valour and liberality of the king of England, returned home. It was in Acre also that Richard made a deadly enemy of Leopold, Duke of Austria, from whose vengeance he afterwards suffered so severely. Philip, however, left for the crusade a large body of French soldiers under the Duke of Burgundy.

Richard, after Philip's departure, repaired the walls of Acre, and soon after left the city, ordering his army to proceed by land and sea to Ascalon. The siege had cost the crusaders the loss of 6 archbishops, 12 bishops, 40 earls, 500 barons and 300,000 soldiers; after its conquest they re-named it St Jean d'Acre.

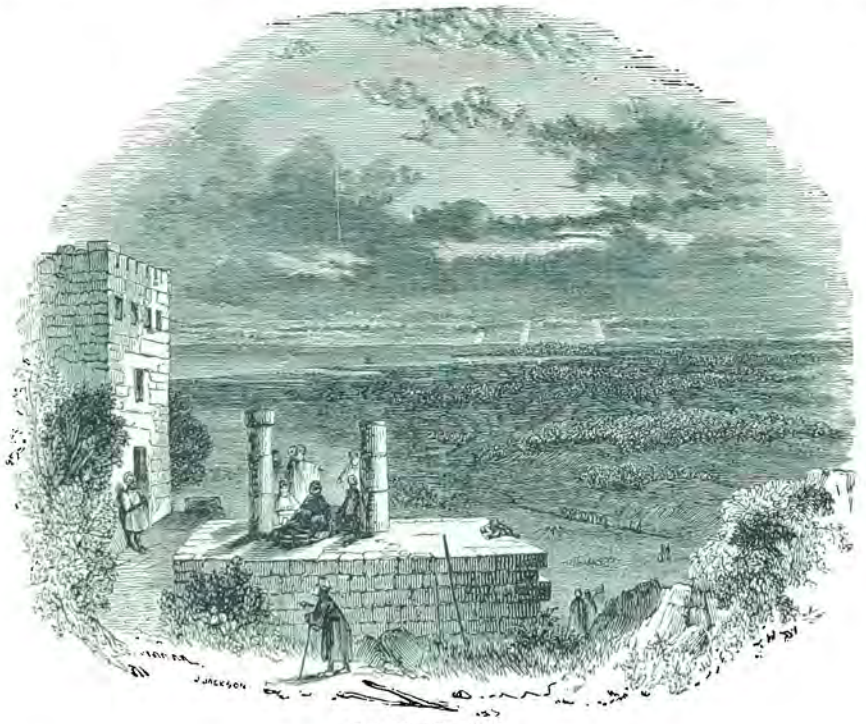
Acre was (except Athlit) the last place held by the Crusaders in Palestine. Its next siege, the success of which might have changed the face of the world, was that undertaken by Napoleon I., when he was seeking to found an empire in the East.

He said to Bourrienne, "This wretched place has cost me a number of men and wasted much time . . . If I succeed as I expect, I shall find in the town the Pasha's treasures, and arms for three hundred thousand men. I will stir up and arm the people of Syria . . . I shall march on Damascus and Aleppo . . . I shall arrive at Constantinople with large masses of soldiers. I shall overturn the Turkish empire and found in the east a new and grand empire which will fix my place in the records of posterity."

We may see in these words the importance of Acre (St. Jean d'Acre) at that time. But Napoleon had to reckon with a captive who had escaped from his prison to "mar his destiny," as he himself said—Sir Sidney Smith was defending Acre. The town was so gallantly protected by the English seamen that Napoleon lost three thousand men before it; and despairing utterly of success, he raised the siege on the 20th of May, 1799, and in the silence and secrecy of night retreated, having the day before sent on

the sick and wounded. The retreat itself was not without note; the French had to march three leagues along the shore, exposed to the fire of the English ships lying in the roads of Carmel. Acre had saved Europe and Asia from the thrall of a conqueror.

Acre and its harbour had been at that time greatly improved and restored by Djezzar Pasha, a man of great ability, but of the most ferocious cruelty, from which he obtained his name of El Djezzar (the butcher), his real name being Ahmed; Clarke says of this Pasha: "He was his own minister, treasurer and secretary, and not unfrequently both judge and executioner. Of his attendants some were without a nose, others without an arm, with one ear or one eye; *marked* men as he termed them." He put to death seven of his wives with his own hand. But under his rule Acre became one of the chief cities of the sea-



RUINS AT ACRE.

coast. It owed him a splendid mosque, a covered bazaar, an aqueduct, and strong fortifications.

Acre was besieged in 1831–2 by Ibrahim Pasha, who took it; and in 1840 it was attacked by the combined fleets of England, Austria and Turkey assembled against Ibrahim. During the siege the powder magazine exploded from the effects of a shot, and two thousand Egyptian soldiers perished; the greater part of the buildings of the town were also destroyed. It was taken by the combined fleets, and Ibrahim lost his power in Syria.

Acre is no longer a strong city, its ramparts are shattered and bristle only with old and badly-mounted guns. There is only a single gate into Acre on the land side and that is close to the water. It is a squalid and miserable place. The grand mosque built by Djezzar was battered to pieces by the English cannon in 1840; many of the balls are still lying about. Every house facing the sea shows marks of

that terrible bombardment. In one part of the town are the tombs of the English officers. One, that of Major Oldfield, killed in a sortie against Napoleon's troops; the other, of an officer who fell at the last assault.

Accho, Acre, St. Jean d'Acre, 'Akka—how many names this town has had, and every one has been distinguished. It was, as we have said, the last hold of the crusaders in Palestine; in it the Knights of St. John (who by the way took their names from St. Jean d'Acre) were massacred, and here, as we have seen, Sir Sidney Smith "marred the destiny" of Napoleon.

There is very little of historical interest remaining in Acre, but the place is shown —at the north-west salient of the outer wall —where the English tower stood, guarded by the troops of Richard Cœur de Lion, whose glorious reputation seems never to wane in the East.

The mosque of Djezzar Pasha is even now one of the finest in Palestine. It stands in a large square, surrounded by vaulted galleries supported by ancient columns, the capitals of which were probably brought from Tyre or Cæsarea. Palms, cypresses and other trees grow in this court, and amongst them are white marble tombs, two being those of Djezzar, and Sulieman Pasha. The town has three other mosques in it, and four Christian churches. There is a fine Khan near the port, called Khan el Aurid on account of its columns; the galleries round it being supported by pillars of red and grey granite, with capitals of various orders, probably brought from ancient ruins. The hospital was almost entirely built by the Crusaders. It has large subterranean magazines, and a great court with palms and fig trees in it; under the ramparts, also, there are vaults built by the Crusaders, and used as gunpowder magazines. It was during the siege in 1840 that one of these blew up and destroyed sixteen hundred Egyptian soldiers, besides camels, asses, and cows.

Some French cannon taken from a ship captured at sea by Sir Sidney Smith, and brought by him here, are still on the ramparts.

A short distance from the city is a tumulus called Napoleon's Hill, because he had his tent here during the siege of Acre; it was the spot on which Richard Cœur de Lion also had his when besieging the town. Near it is the celebrated fountain or well for which Saladin and the English king fought. In the centre of its massive masonry a fig tree grows.

Acre was in the lot of Issachar, and the blessing Moses pronounced on that tribe in Deuteronomy xxxiii. 19, before Joshua had fixed its locality, is a remarkable one, looking at its boundaries. "They shall suck of the abundance of the seas and of treasures hid in the sands." Canon Tristram suggests that "the treasure hid in the sands" may be explained by the glassy treasure of the sand of the Belus," where, as we have elsewhere said, glass was found and the conditions of its manufacture were discovered by the Phœnicians, who made it a valuable article of merchandize.

ʿATHLIT.

THE road to Athlit from Carmel is either by the shore or by a way leading along the base of the Carmel range, on the left hand. The mountain here is perforated with caves once the abode of hermits.

Passing the village of El Tireh and an insignificant ruin called El Dustrey, a corruption of "Les Detroits," the road skirts a rocky ridge varying from twenty to fifty feet in height, dividing the plain from the sea beach. It is of limestone, and runs for many miles down the coast. Here and there are fissures in it by which the winter streams go down to the Mediterranean.

An artificial causeway has been cut through it, which leads to the ruins of Athlit. At the entrance, holes in the rock on both sides show that the passage could be closed and barricaded. The cutting is sixty or eighty yards in length, and deep ruts of chariot wheels can still be seen in it. Steps are cut occasionally in the rock, leading to the top of the ridge which has been fortified.

At the end of this cutting is a sandy plain, and on it a fragment of wall eighty feet high, sixteen feet thick, and thirty-five yards long. It is a hundred and twenty feet above the sea, and is a landmark for seamen. It must have been part of the outer wall of a great building, for high up on the wall inside are the springs of three pointed arches, resting on corbels carved as human heads, a man's head with a beard, another with curling hair; between them a cantaliver with lilies carved on it.

The square promontory on which Athlit stands is washed on three sides by the sea, and rises precipitously to a height of fifty or sixty feet.

Amongst the ruins, in the area, is an Arab settlement of the most squalid kind—wretched huts built amongst the strong fine ruins.

To the right of the promontory is a wall perforated with three arches, it is the sole remnant of the banqueting-hall of the old fortress.

There are splendid vaults in the rock, six in number, opening from a square of five hundred feet by three hundred; they are of varying sizes from three hundred feet long to fifty, and twenty-five or thirty feet in height. On a ledge of rock is a stupendous sea-wall still standing to a height of about fifty feet.

Athlit has served as a quarry, from which stone has been taken for the repair of walls and building of mosques for several centuries, but the remains are still fine and most picturesque; the most so, it is believed, to be found in Western Palestine.

The name of the original town on this fine promontory has never been discovered, but there is no doubt that a strong fortress stood here at the time of the first crusade, and that it was taken by the Crusaders. It was called Castellum Peregrinorum (the Pilgrims' Castle) by them, because it was the usual landing place of pilgrims to Jerusalem. There can still be seen, when the sea is calm, the traces of a jetty under water on the north side of Athlit.

There is no mention of any town or fortress here in the Bible, and from the massive bevelled stones it has been imagined that it might have been a Phœnician building. But it belonged undoubtedly later to the Jews, for in it Barcochebas held out long against the Romans. It was the last possession of the Jewish nation, lost to them in 130 A.D.

It became a fortress of the Crusaders, and was garrisoned by the Templars, who made it their stronghold, and restored it in 1218. They found during the work some strange coins, a proof of the extreme antiquity of the place even then. It defended itself bravely against Sultan Bibars; nor was it abandoned by the Crusaders till after the fall of Acre. Then, utterly defeated elsewhere, the Red Cross Knights retired from their grand and picturesque fortress in 1291. It was destroyed afterwards by the Sultan Melik el Ashraf. It is sometimes spoken of in the chronicles of the Crusaders as Petra Incisa from the cutting in the rock through which entrance is gained to it.

TANTÛRAH.

BETWEEN Athlit and Cæsarea is Tantûrah, a village on the coast—a miserable collection of hovels amidst the ruins of the old town of Dor, one of the cities given to the half tribe of Manasseh. The tribe were unable to drive the Canaanites out of Dor; but when it had gained a firm footing in the land it made the Canaanites pay tribute to it.

Dor was once a prosperous town, with a good trade, but it was besieged and partly destroyed during the Syrian wars; the Roman general, Gabinius, restored the town and harbour, and it was afterwards admired for its architectural beauty.

There are remaining the ruins of a tower built by the Crusaders; a portion of the wall that formed the corner of the fortress; and the foundations of another corner. There are the remains of a staircase in the wall on the south side, and on the east wall there is a pointed arch. It stands on a mound of ruins, and is some feet above the level of the sea. There are the ruins of a colonnade near the sea, and of a causeway, nine granite columns of which still existed some few years ago.

There are some curious rock-tombs here amidst the ruins. A chamber with twelve *kokim* in it is found between the ruins of the tower and the village.

There are quicksands off the coast here, as Napoleon's army found to their cost on the retreat from Acre. Here he remained for a day, on his sad march from that city.

"We reached Tentoura (Tantûrah)," says Bourrienne, "on the 20th of May, when a most oppressive heat prevailed. We had nothing to sleep on but the parched and burning sand; on our left lay a hostile sea; our losses in wounded and sick were already considerable since we left Acre, and there was nothing consolatory in the future. The truly afflicting condition in which the remains of an army called triumphant were plunged, produced, as might well be expected, a corresponding condition on the mind of the general-in-chief. Scarcely had he entered Tentoura, when he ordered his tent to be pitched. He then called me, and with a mind occupied by the calamities of our situation, dictated an order that every one should march on foot; and that all the horses, mules, and camels should be given up to the wounded, the sick, and the infected who had been removed, and who still showed signs of life. . . . The remains of our heavy artillery were lost in the moving sands of Tentoura from the want of horses, the small number that remained being employed in more indispensable services. The soldiers seemed to forget their own

sufferings, plunged in grief at the loss of those bronze guns, often the instruments of their triumphs, and which had made Europe tremble."

The people of Tantûrah were for a long time considered dangerous robbers, but of late years their character appears to have improved.

CÆSAREA.

THESE ruins have a strong interest for Christians, for here dwelt Cornelius, the Roman Centurion, whose "prayers and alms came up for a memorial before God," and caused an angel to be sent to him to tell him where to seek for further aid; and by his admission to the Church of Christ the gospel was sent to the Gentiles. Peter on the house-top at Joppa is taught by a dream what God intends him to do, and goes down to Cæsarea with the messengers of Cornelius.

The centurion, who waited for him, had called together his kinsmen and near friends; Peter was accompanied by some of the Christians of Joppa. While Peter was still on the threshold Cornelius hastened to meet him, fell down at his feet and worshipped him, but St. Peter raised him, saying, "Stand up; I myself also am a man." The apostle then entered, and addressing the people presents, said, "You know that the law of the Jews does not permit them to associate with men of another nation, or to go to their houses; but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean. Therefore I came to you, and ask for what intent ye have sent for me."

Cornelius related the angelic vision, and the apostle perceiving that God meant to admit the Gentiles to His Church, at once proceeded to tell them the story of Redemption, and even as he spoke the Holy Ghost fell on the assembled Gentiles, and they spoke with tongues and magnified God—perhaps in the Hebrew language, not the common tongue of Syria. Then Peter commanded that they should be baptized, and thus Cornelius and his family and friends entered together the Church of Christ. And they prayed the apostle to remain with them a few days.

This scene may well have immortalized the name of Cæsarea. It was also visited by St. Paul, or rather he was brought and imprisoned here. The chief Roman captain at Jerusalem learning from St. Paul's nephew that the Jews intended to murder Paul, then his captive, sent him off at once by night to Cæsarea. Felix was governor of the city at the time, and at first was inclined to favour Paul; he left him in charge of a centurion, and desired him to let Paul's friends and acquaintances see him. When his wife, Drusilla, who was a Jewess, arrived, he sent for Paul, and heard him preach, but put him off with, "When I have a more convenient season, I will send for thee." Constantly hoping that Paul, who was evidently one of the most learned, and probably one of the richest of the Jews, would give him money to release him, he often sent for him, and communed with him, but no money being forthcoming, he did not free him. Thus two years of captivity for the apostle went by till Felix was superseded by Porcius Festus. Accused again by the Jews before Festus, he appealed to Cæsar.

And then king Agrippa and Bernice came to Cæsarea to visit Festus, and at Agrippa's request, Paul was brought before them and delivered that wonderful oration, which has been, in all after times, considered a masterpiece of oratory.

"Almost," said the king, who heard it, "thou persuadest me to be a Christian."



RUINS OF CÆSAREA.

They decided that he might have been set at liberty had he not appealed to Cæsar.

It was from Cæsarea that he embarked for Italy a prisoner, to be heard at Rome by Cæsar himself. But for two whole years he had been a captive in Cæsarea; probably, however, he had been able to do good by preaching Christ to those who were freely admitted to him, but pining for liberty as his eyes rested on the blue sea.

At Cæsarea lived Philip and his four daughters, all engaged in teaching the gospel of Christ.

Seventeen or eighteen years before this time, Herod Antipas, who had mocked our Lord, met here his dreadful death. In the theatre,—the site of which can be still traced,—he received the ambassadors from Tyre and Sidon who came seeking peace. Herod was attired in royal robes and glittering jewels, and made them an oration. The degraded people shouted, "It is the voice of a god and not of a man," "and immediately the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten of worms and gave up the ghost." He was willing, evidently, to receive homage as a divinity, as his masters the Roman Emperors did; but he knew better than they did, how wicked such a claim was.

In the streets of Cæsarea, in consequence of a dispute between the Greek population and the Jews, 20,000 Jews were massacred, their fate provoking the war between the Jews and Romans, which terminated in the destruction of Jerusalem.

When the Crusaders took the city, long years afterwards, they found in it the vase of green crystal, said to have contained the Holy Grail.

The remains of Herod's town consist of the walls, theatre, mole, temples, hippodrome, and aqueducts. The line of the walls can be traced either by ruins of the wall, or by mounds of sand and earth collected over them. A sea-wall is also visible from the north-west corner. The walls extend from a jetty to the south of the town to the mole on the sea-shore. Two aqueducts supplied water to the town.

The theatre where Herod received his death-stroke, stood at the south-west, and was made afterwards a fortress. The hippodrome is a sunken space surrounded by a high bank and situated at the south-east turn of the Roman wall. The banks or mound are twenty feet higher than the floor of the hippodrome.

The mole was a long reef that ran a hundred and sixty yards out into the sea.

The Temple dedicated to Cæsar stood on a height near the harbour, and was of white stone.

These are the ruins of Herod's famous city; it may interest our readers to peruse Josephus's account of what it was when first erected by him, in order to unite him more closely to the Roman world, which thus saw itself reproduced in the east.

Cæsarea was built by Herod the Great on the site of Strato's tower. It was a fine city built chiefly of white stone and adorned with splendid palaces and large buildings. "And what was the greatest and most laborious work of all," says Josephus, "he adorned it with a harbour, that was always free from the waves of the sea. Its largeness was not less than the Pyræum at Athens; and had towards the city a double station for the ships. It was of excellent workmanship, and this was the more remarkable for its being built in a place that of itself was not suitable to such noble structures, but was to be brought to perfection by materials from other places, and at very great expense. This city is situated between Joppa and Dora (Tantûrah) which are less maritime cities and not fit for havens, on account of the impetuous south winds that beat upon them, which, rolling the sands that come from the sea against the shores,"—we have seen the truth of this statement at Askelon,—"do not admit of ships lying in their station; but the merchants are generally there forced to ride at their anchors in the sea itself. So Herod endeavoured to rectify this inconvenience, and laid out such a compass towards the land as might be sufficient for a haven wherein the great ships might lie in safety; and this he effected by letting down vast stones of above fifty feet in length, and not less than eighteen in breadth, and nine in depth into twenty fathoms deep. . . . This mole which he built by the seaside was two hundred feet wide, the half of which was opposed to the current of the waves, so as

to keep off those waves which were wont to break upon them, and so was called Procymatia or first breaker of the waves; but the other half had upon it a wall, with several towers, the largest of which was named Drusus, and was a work of great excellence, and had its name from Drusus, the son-in-law of Cæsar, who died young. There were also a great number of arches where the mariners dwelt; there was also before them a quay which ran round the entire haven and was a most agreeable walk, . . . but the entrance or mouth of the port was made on the north quarter, on which side was the stillest of the winds of all in this place, and the basis of the whole circuit on the left hand, as you enter the port, supported a round turret, which was made very strong, in order to resist the greatest waves; while on the right hand as you enter, stood two vast stones, and those, each of them, larger than the turret which was over against them; these stood upright and were joined together.

"A temple was erected on an elevation in the city which was seen far out at sea, and had in it two statues—one of Rome and one of Cæsar. The city was called Cæsarea. The very subterranean vaults and cellars were as well built as the dwellings above ground, and some of them ran down to the sea. An excellent drain ran obliquely by them all. Herod built also a theatre and amphitheatre to the great disgust of the Jewish people."

The Crusaders, after they had taken Cæsarea, erected walls, a castle, a cathedral and church; enclosing about one-tenth of the Roman circuit, or about thirty acres. The space walled in is nearly rectangular; the walls are of small stones, set in hard cement and are about nine feet thick; they had a great number of buttresses and there was a covered way behind the walls. In the middle of the north wall was a tower; in the south wall a gate; on the east a lower postern to the main entrance.

The wall of the Crusaders, inclosing their fortress, rises from a moat about forty feet wide, but now so full of rubbish that it is not more than five or six feet deep.

The castle is built with a keep two storeys high, a tower at the end of the reef and an outer fortification south. The north wall, washed by the sea, is in fairly good preservation. The castle is built on a long narrow reef or breakwater which runs a hundred and sixty yards into the sea, forming the south side of the harbour. The northern side is formed by a mole or jetty two hundred feet long, composed of great columns lying side by side. Some of our readers may have seen the logs that in former days lay off the Common Hard at Portsea—even thus are arranged (only deeper and not over a large surface) the sixty or seventy granite columns that form the mole of Cæsarea.

These columns have also been used to thorough-bind the walls from which their ends project like cannon. Herod's magnificent city must have been full of granite columns; they are especially used for the walls of the castle and dungeon, built out to sea on the reef.

The cathedral stood east of the castle. It consisted of a nave and two aisles with three apses on the east. Only four buttresses remain of this once grand building.

Cæsarea in 95 A.D. was the seat of an archbishopric, and a council was held here. Eusebius was archbishop from 315 to 318; it is said that he was born here.

In 638 Abu Obeida took Cæsarea and the Moslems retained possession of it till it was taken by Godfrey de Bouillon's brother, Baldwin I., in 1102. Saladin reconquered it in 1187, but it was taken again by the Crusaders in 1191. They found it deserted and desolate; the walls and towers had been destroyed by order of Saladin. But St. Louis of France in 1251 marched from Acre to Cæsarea, and had the walls and fortifications which the Saracens had destroyed repaired. During this work, which occupied a whole year, no attack was made on the good king of France

by the Saracens, nor did they attempt to take Acre, in which St. Louis had left only a few men-at-arms. Whilst the king was at Cæsarea he was joined by a knight called Sir Elenars de Seningaan, who with his people *hunted lions* in the neighbourhood. Therefore that animal must still have existed in Palestine as late as 1250 A.D., for it is not likely that De Joinville, who relates the incident, would have taken a leopard for a lion: the former we know still haunts the recesses of Hermon and Carmel and the wilder parts of the country.

St. Louis seems to have done much good for Palestine. He re-built Sajecte with high walls and towers; he thoroughly repaired Cæsarea and Jaffa, and strengthened Acre with high walls and towers.

In 1265 Cæsarea was taken by Sultan Bibars, who entirely destroyed its fortifications, though the garrison escaped at night by sea.

The ruins of Cæsarea have been much injured by the Bosnian colony, settled there of late years, building their houses with its great white stones and putting them even amidst the ruins. This colony is formed by the Moslem aristocracy of Bosnia and Herzegovina, who, when those provinces were ceded to Austria in 1883, withdrew from them, preferring to dwell under the sway of the Sultan. They were wealthy, and it seemed probable that they would succeed as a colony, but the malarious climate of the place has nearly destroyed them; yet in the ten years they have been there they have done much to spoil the grand ruins of Herod's city by the sea.

The Zerka river runs north of Cæsarea. It was called the Crocodile River by the Crusaders, and deserved its name, as crocodiles were then, and are now, found in it.

Near Cæsarea is a very flourishing Jewish colony supported chiefly by the Rothschild family. They were at first very greatly assisted by Mr. Lawrence Oliphant, having been sent out to Haifa by the Central Colonization Society of Roumania in 1882.

Between Athlit and Tantûrah is the village of Kefr Lâm on the top of the rocky ridge that protected those places in former times, and where are the extensive quarries from which probably the material for building them was taken. Close to the village is a square tower in a strong position; in fact, this was one of the resting-places of Richard Cœur de Lion's army, which they called, by some strange mistake, Capernaum. Even then, however, it was merely a spot strewed with ruins, scarcely allowing spaces for the tents.

Close to Kefr Lâm is Surafend, also situated on a hill. It has, however, orchards of fig trees round it, and on the plain below are many palm trees.

ʿARSÛF.

ON the road from Cæsarea to Arsûf by the sea-shore is a village called Mukhâlid, famous for producing great quantities of water-melons, which appear to grow freely amongst sand; these fruits are exported by the villagers from Abu Zabura, a small port near it. There are some ruins here of a Crusader's tower, rather resembling those of Cæsarea. Here the army of Cœur de Lion encamped on the banks of a salt creek close to the "Salt River," now called Nahr Iskanderûneh.

Arsûf is the ancient Apollonia. It was named after Apollonius, son of Thraseas, who was Governor of Cœle-Syria for Seleucus Antipater. The Romans rebuilt it in 57 B.C., and it must have been a strong fortress, for it defied all the efforts of Godfrey de Bouillon and Raymond of Toulouse to take it. Baldwin I. afterwards besieged it successfully. The district surrounding Arsûf was, in the Middle Ages, one great forest of oaks, and from it the Crusaders sought wood for their engines of war. It is the enchanted wood of Tasso.

During the whole of Cœur de Lion's march from Acre to Jaffa, he was followed and continually attacked by Saladin's army till they entered this great forest.

Thirty thousand men were then marching under the Banner of the Cross, in five divisions; the Templars led the van, the Knights of St. John brought up the rear. Every night when the army halted, the heralds of the different camps cried out three times, and the cry was re-echoed by the troops, "Help for the Holy Sepulchre."

But Saladin was always at their land-side and annoyed and harassed them with incessant attacks. The king would not break the strict order of his march to attack the foe, for Saladin's army was much more numerous than his own, and he wisely marched in close squares. But the Knights of St. John in the rear were at last so cruelly attacked that they became indignant at receiving blows without rushing on their assailants, and begged Richard to let them charge. He refused; but two knights, losing their patience utterly, broke from their square and charged the Moslems. The whole body of knights followed, and rushed furiously on their assailants. Richard, seeing the battle had begun, and unable to resist rushing into it, galloped to the aid of the knights, opening a path for himself everywhere with his tremendous battle-axe which sent every foe down before it. He had caused it to be forged by the best armourers in England before he departed for the Holy War, and twenty pounds of steel were wrought into the head of it, that "he might break with these the Saracens' bones." The fight grew stern and terrible; in the thickest of it was seen the king of England, crying, "St. George! St. George!" and levelling all around him with his fearful battle-axe. His Englishmen followed him gallantly, and the great Saracen army at length broke and fled. Saladin had lost seven thousand men and thirty-two Emirs. The fields were strewed with booty, the chroniclers tell us, and Saladin hurrying from the field, and unable to defend his towns, destroyed their fortifications.

But the greatest of Richard's battles was that fought near Jaffa. It was his last in Palestine, and so grandly did he fight that Saphardin, Saladin's brother, was so enchanted with his valour that, seeing him

dismounted, he sent two magnificent horses to him on which Richard fought till night closed in and the day was won. This victory was thought one of the most remarkable for generalship as well as for personal valour on Richard's part. His name became a word of fear in Palestine. "This tremendous name," says Gibbon, "was employed by the Syrian mothers to silence their infants; and if a horse suddenly started from the way, his rider was wont to exclaim, 'Dost thou think King Richard is in that bush?'"

As a result of the battle near Arsûf, the Crusaders retained possession of the town. It remained in their hands, and when St. Louis visited it in 1251 he repaired the fortifications.

In 1265 it was taken by Sultan Bibars, after a gallant resistance, which so impressed the mind of the victorious Moslem that he erected a mosque near Arsûf, and named it after the defender of the town, 'Ali Ibn 'Aleim—calling it El-Haram 'Ali Ibn 'Aleim.

Sand and dust have buried the greater part of the foundations of Arsûf, which after its capture by Bibars was never again inhabited. There are remains of a postern on the east side with projecting piers for a drawbridge. On the south there was another gateway leading down to a spring by the sea-shore. The keep dominated the harbour, which was 300 feet long and 120 feet broad. On the south is a well-preserved jetty.

The remains of the forest of Arsûf are still to be seen in a woodland dotted with fine old oak trees; but otherwise the Arsûf of the Crusaders has nothing left but the memory of what it has been, and of the brave host that visited it under king Richard.

ANTIPATRIS, NOW RAS EL-'AIN, KEFR-SABA.

RAS EL-'AIN is the undoubted site of Antipatris.

On this hill stood originally a town called Chabarzaba, and as the position was a very strong one, King Alexander Janneus waited there to defend his kingdom against Antiochus Dionysius.[1] For this purpose he dug a deep ditch, beginning at Chabarzaba to the sea by Joppa, "on which part only his (Antiochus's) army could be brought against him." He, also, built a wall, and erected wooden towers and intermediate redoubts.

But Antiochus burned these defences and marched past them into Arabia. Here he fell in battle with Aretas, king of Arabia.

The old town of Chabarzaba was in a state of decay by the time Herod the Great's reign began, and the Idumean prince, who was devotedly fond of his father, Antipater, rebuilt it as a monument to his father's memory, and named it after him, Antipatris.

It was situated, Josephus tells us, "on the finest plain in the kingdom, which had rivers and trees in abundance."

The river here is the 'Aûjeh, the springs of which are most abundant, more copious

[1] The fifth son of Antiochus Grypus, and brother of Philip and Demetrius Eucerus. He is styled on coins Antiochus Epiphanes Dionysius.—Josephus, *Anls.*, 14, 15, 1.

even than those of the Jordan at Tell el-Kadi.

We meet with the name of Antipatris in the New Testament. When the Roman chief captain Claudius Lysias had been informed by St. Paul's nephew of the Jews' plot to waylay and murder the apostle, he sent him off at once with a letter to Felix the governor at Cæsarea. He was despatched with a strong Roman guard in the darkness of night over the hill-country to Antipatris. Here they left him the next morning, the horsemen with him being considered as sufficient escort across the Sharon plain.

Felix saw the prisoner, learned that he came from Cilicia, and commanded him to be kept in Herod's palace till his accusers arrived.

The next remarkable person whose name is connected with Antipatris is Vespasian, the Roman general, who had been engaged in subduing Galilee. He was at Cæsarea when the tidings reached him of the Roman troubles on the death of Nero, and of the succession of Vitellius. He was of course desirous of returning to Rome soon, and he hastened to garrison the towns and villages, and to rebuild many of the cities left waste. He went to Antipatris, stayed there for two or three days, and then proceeded on a march of devastation.

At Cæsarea, to which he ultimately returned, he was proclaimed Emperor by the soldiers, and leaving the war to be finished by Titus his son, he returned to Italy.

The ruins of the castle of Mirabel, built by the Crusaders, stands on a great mound at Ras el-'Ain; the outside walls remain very perfect. There are four towers in them, one at each corner. Three of them are square, and one octagonal. There is also a gateway, but the ruin is a mere shell.

ELEUTHEROPOLIS, NOW BEIT JIBRIN,

THE BETHOGABRA OF THE GREEKS AND LATINS.

THE identification of Beit Jibrin with the site of Eleutheropolis is due to the ability of Dr. Robinson and Mr. Smith, whose care and skill in the process of discovery were remarkable. The details of it are given in their "Researches."

It must once have been a place of great importance, for Eusebius and St. Jerome made it the central station from which they measured the position, direction, and distance of various places, by means of which many sacred sites have been found. Dr. Robinson thought that near Deir Dubban may have been the site of Gath, which still remains doubtful, but Dr. Thomson believes that Beit Jibrin is *on* the site of Gath, as Khurbet Get—the ruins of Gath—is the name of one of the heaps of rubbish west of the castle of Beit Jibrin. "Both the Hebrew word Bethogabra, and the Arabic Beit Jibrin," says Dr. Thomson, "may be rendered the house of giants—which reminds us of Goliath of Gath and his family."

But this identification is disputed. Some think that Gath is near Sarafend; others identify it with a village called Geath, thirty-six miles from Jaffa, on a hill north-east of the plain. Benjamin of Tudela (1163) writes: "Six parasangs bring us

to Cæsarea, the *Gath of the Philistines of Scripture.* This city is very elegant and beautiful, situated on the sea-shore, and was built by King Herod, who called it Cæsarea in honour of the Emperor, or Cæsar."

Another suggestion is that Eleutheropolis is on the site of an old Hebrew city called Beth Gubrin. It has also been thought to be Seir, which was a chief city of the Horites, or "dwellers in caves." This seems the most probable conjecture, as the spot is rife with wonderful caverns.

There are fourteen of these remarkable caves, each with a separate name. Of these El Kheil deserves particular attention. A wide and broad passage leads into it, which has two recesses in it and three doors—one at the end and one on each side. The door at the end leads into a large cavern divided into four sections with



RUIN AT BEIT JIBRIN.

domed roofs. Pillars cut from the rock support them. Through the left-hand doorway another passage leads to a great domed cavern, in which is an arched recess with recesses round it.

The door to the right opens into another passage with a vaulted roof. A frieze cut in bas-relief runs along the sides of this one, which opens into a series of caverns. These must surely have belonged to a nation of Troglodytes.

There are other caves; niches for lamps are found in some of them.

In a few of the caves are ancient Jewish tombs.

The crosses and Christian inscriptions in the caves prove that they were also used by the Crusaders. At present the largest cavern is given up to goats, and is very dark and dirty.

Beit Jibrin is charmingly situated in a green valley with low hills round it on the

south and east, and with a plain on the north and west. The ruins on the spot are extensive, and extremely massive; such stones as these are found only in the walls of the ancient Temple or in the Mosque at Hebron. They are of a character to prove that it is a very ancient, and was once a fine city.

The castle of Beit Jibrin was in a fortified inclosure, the great ruined wall of which still remains, in some places several feet high. It is built of massive, square, uncemented stones, and must be of great age. Within it is the ruin of the castle, the gateway of which bears the inscription, A. H. 958, by our chronology 1551 A.D. But probably it was then only repaired, as its stones appear to be as old as those in the walls. The enclosure is 600 feet square.

The whole is a mass of ruins. The houses of the village which adjoins the inclosure are some of them well built, but a few of the villagers live in a row of vaults running along the walls, inside the inclosure.

The caverns are chiefly in the wady that runs up south by east, and in which is the ruined church called Mar Hannah (St. Anne), who is traditionally said to have been born here. Dr. Robinson has given a very full account of these caves.

Eusebius mentions this place by its Greek name, Eleutheropolis or the Free city. In his time it was the seat of a bishopric, and the capital of a province. It was, however, a fine city long before that period.

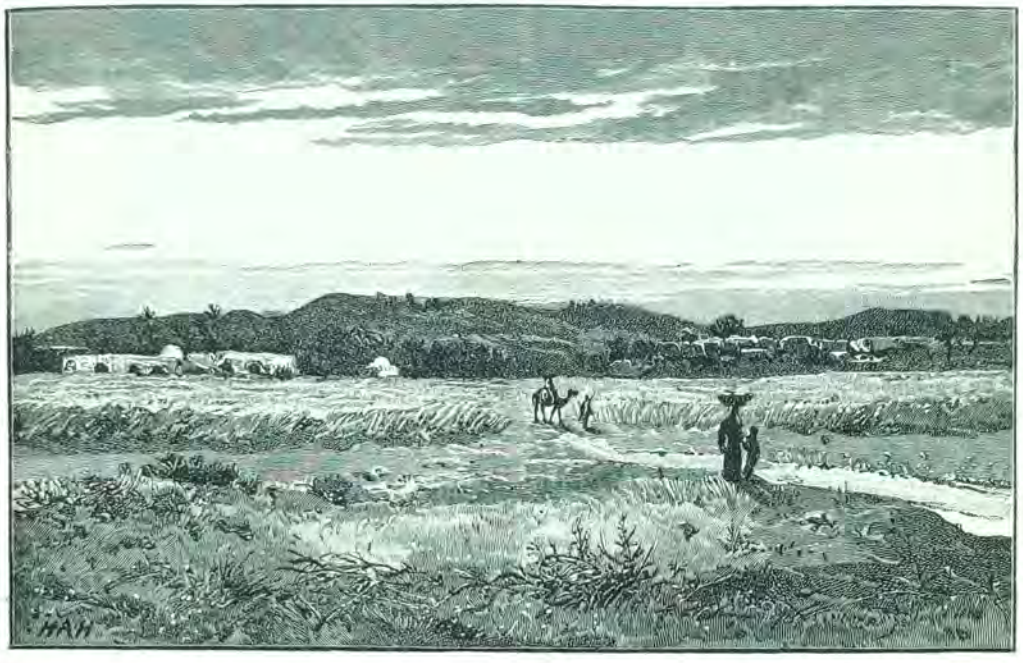
The chroniclers of the Crusade call it Gibelin, and King Fulke of Anjou, is said to have erected a castle here; more probably he repaired the ancient one.

South-west of Beit Jibrin are the ruins of Khurbet Mer'ash the site of Mareshah; the valley of Zephathah is now called Wady el-Afranj.

It was in this lovely valley that Asa, king of Judah, fought a successful battle against great odds with Zerah, the Ethiopian, who invaded the kingdom with an army of a thousand thousand men (a million), and three hundred chariots. "Asa went out to meet him with a little more than half his numbers, and they set the battle in array in the valley of Zephathah, at Mareshah." And Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, "Lord, there is none beside Thee to help between the mighty and him that hath no strength; help us, O Lord our God, for we rely on Thee, and in Thy Name are we come against this multitude. O Lord, Thou art our God; let not man prevail against Thee." So the Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa and before Judah, and the Ethiopians fled. And Asa and the people that were with him pursued them unto Gezar; and there fell of the Ethiopians so many that they could not recover themselves, for they were destroyed before the Lord and before His hosts. The army of Asa carried away very much booty. And they smote all the cities round about Gezar, for the fear of the Lord came upon them, and they spoiled all the cities, for there was much spoil in them. They smote also the tents of cattle, and carried away sheep in abundance, and camels, and returned to Jerusalem."

Beit Jibrin is not far from Zorah, the birthplace of Samson, and his dwelling is said to be still in existence in the mountain village above 'Ain Shemsh.

The town was taken by Saladin after he had recaptured Askalon in 1187. It was, however, retaken by Cœur de Lion, and remained for fifty years in the hands of the Crusaders. It was ultimately taken by Bibars, and has ever since remained under the sway of the Moslems. A strong fortress and important town then soon became only a village.



ASHDOD.

ASHDOD—AZOTUS—ESDUD.

THE famous Philistine city, Ashdod, now called Esdud, is only a village containing a few stone houses and more mud huts. It stands on the side of a low hill, which is commanded by one a little higher, and has round and above it thick hedges of prickly pear. These hedges grow over thick stone walls. The sands of the sea are advancing on Esdud, as they have all along this part of the coast: every year, little by little, the cultivated land is buried by it.

Ashdod has nothing to interest us in the present; or, at least, very little. Only an ancient sarcophagus, used apparently for a giant, for it is seven feet long; but it is carved with garlands and long bunches of grapes; and a ruined khan, inside which is a court, with long galleries, chambers and magazines; that is all. But still one looks on it with melancholy interest when one remembers that it was once the chief city of Syria; "the great city" Herodotus calls it. In his time it was alive with traders and merchants and mariners; and so well fortified that it sustained the longest siege on record; beside it those of Troy and Tyre cannot be named.

In the battle fought by Eli's wicked sons against the Philistines, and deservedly lost by them, the Ark of God was taken and the triumphant conquerors sent it as a trophy to their "great city" Ashdod, where it was deposited of course in the temple of Dagon, their God.

But the next morning, when the priests opened the temple, they found that Dagon had fallen from his pedestal and lay prostrate before the Ark. Amazement and grief was felt, but the idol was replaced, doubtless more firmly; and yet next day a worse fate had fallen on it, the head, hands and feet were cut off and were cast on the threshold; only the "fishy part of Dagon" was left.

A dreadful pestilence then fell on the town, and the inhabitants refused to keep the Ark, to which they ascribed their illness, and sent it on to Gath. A great destruction followed it there, and Gath, also fearing it, sent it on to Ekron. For seven months the Philistines suffered, and at length, as we know, the Ark was sent back to Israel and received at Bethshemesh.

Uzziah, king of Judah, made war against the Philistines; "broke down the wall of Gath, and the wall of Jabneh, and the *wall of Ashdod*, and built cities round Ashdod and amongst the Philistines," for this king, afterwards a leper, was a brave and successful warrior, and a good sovereign till, in disobedience to God's law, he took on himself the priestly office of burning incense in the Temple.

It was at this very time, it may be just before Uzziah took the town, that the prophet Amos was desired by God to tell the Philistines that the Lord would "cut off the inhabitants from Ashdod." About fifty years afterwards, in 711 B.C., Sargon, king of Assyria, sent his commander-in-chief against Ashdod, which he took, and carried off all its inhabitants to Assyria. The king of Ashdod, Jaman, managed to escape with his wife, sons, and daughters, and took refuge with the Ethiopian king. But this prince basely betrayed his guest and sent him back to the Assyrians, thus fulfilling the words of Isaiah, "They shall be dismayed and ashamed because of Ethiopia, their expectation." Bound hand and foot in iron chains, king Jaman was sent to Assyria. His treasures had already been seized and his palace destroyed. A colony of Assyrians replaced the Philistine inhabitants, the town was rebuilt and strongly fortified, and incorporated in the Assyrian Empire.

The next invader was Psammetichus, and he actually besieged Ashdod, Herodotus tells, for twenty-nine years!

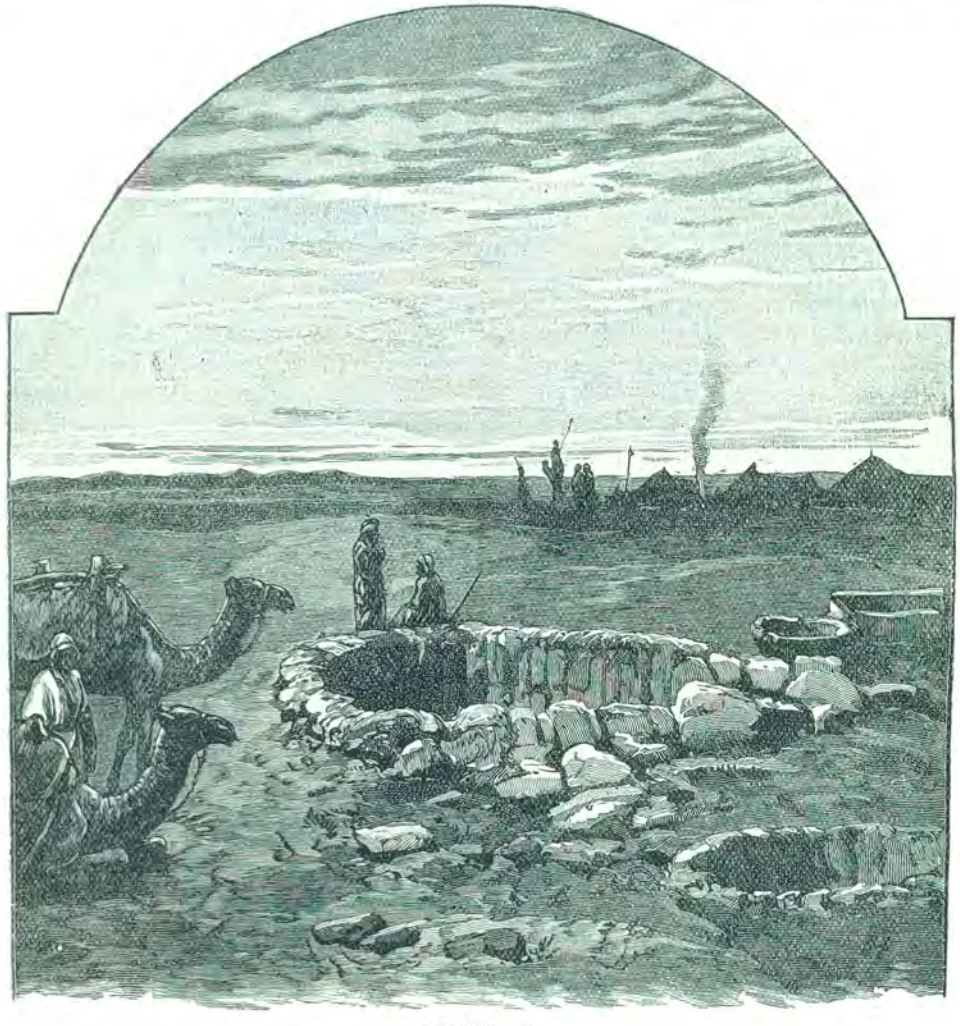
In the days of the Maccabees, King Alexander left Apollonius Dares, governor of Cœle-Syria, "who, coming to Jamnia," says Josephus, "sent a challenge to Jonathan, the High Priest," to meet him in battle on the plain. Jonathan, very angry, selected ten thousand of his best soldiers, and, with his brother Simon, went over to Joppa. A battle ensued there, in which, in spite of a treacherous ambush of Apollonius, Jonathan was victorious and pursued the flying enemy to Ashdod. Many were slain; the rest in despair sought refuge in the temple of Dagon. But Jonathan took the city at the first onset, and burnt it and its dependent villages; not sparing even the temple of Dagon, which he burnt, slaying the refugees with it. The city was rebuilt, long after, by order of Gabinius, the Roman governor of Syria. It became one of Herod the Great's towns, and was left, at his death, to Salome, his sister.

In the days of our Lord the town was known as Azotus; and it was here that Philip was found after the baptism of Queen Candace's minister.

Azotus, during the period of the Byzantine Empire, was made a bishopric.

The Plain, on which stood the cities of the Philistines, is one of the best districts in Palestine for growing wheat.

Ashdod has some fine sycamore trees; the fig sycamore, the fruit of which grows in clusters on the trunk of the tree. It is like a fig in shape, but it is striped green and white, and it is not nearly so pleasant to the taste; it must be cut open two or three days before it is ripe to extract the bitter juice from it. The branches are horizontal and very strong. It was into one of these trees that the little man Zaccheus mounted that he might be able to see our Lord.



BEERSHEBA.

THE NEGEB AND ITS TOWNS.

GERAR, BEERSHEBA, REHOBOTH.

THE plain of the Philistines merges on the south into the plateau called the Negeb or "dry." Here were Beersheba, Rehoboth, and Gerar.

It was on this plateau that Abram fixed for a time his tents. It was here that Sarah, jealous of Hagar, whom she had given to Abram as a wife, treated her harshly, and the poor Egyptian fled from her mistress. She was found in her desolation and sorrow by an angel, at a fountain. Professor Palmer thought he had identified this fountain with a place called 'Ain el-Muweileh. The Arabs call one of the wells "Hagar's well," and a rock-chamber or cave near

is called "Hagar's house." The angel counsels patience and submission to Hagar, comforts her with the hope of a son, and she returns to her mistress, and Ishmael is born. She had named the well Beer-Lahai-roi, "the well of the Living One who seeth me." Years pass on. Abraham dwells in his tents in Mamre, where the angels visit him, promise him the speedy birth of a son, and tell him of the intended destruction of Sodom and Gomorrah. After that terrible event the Patriarch moves towards the south. He dwelt between Kadesh and Shur and sojourned in Gerar—a Philistine town north-west of Beersheba, and ruled over by Abimelech its king. Gerar has been identified as Umm el-Jerrâr. The valley is about 200 yards wide. But there are no wells there now, only cisterns.

Abimelech, thinking that Sarah was Abraham's sister, sent and took her into his harem—a remarkable incident when we consider her great age—but God warned him in a dream that she was Abraham's wife and he restored her to her husband, "reproaching him for his deceit, and saying that they were a righteous nation." Moreover, he was most friendly, and said to Abraham, "Behold my land is before thee; dwell where it pleaseth thee," and he gave the Patriarch many gifts.

Some little time after, the king of Gerar and his captain Phicol spoke to Abraham and proposed a firm alliance between them. Their servants had quarrelled about a well, but of this Abimelech knew nothing till the Patriarch told him. The two great sheiks there made a covenant of friendship. Abraham gave to Abimelech sheep and oxen and especially seven ewe lambs, which he begged Abimelech to take as a witness that he (Abraham) had digged the well—*i.e.* that it was his. It was in fact purchasing it from him. Abraham called the well and the place Beersheba—"the well of the oath"—because he and Abimelech had there sworn amity. And Abraham planted a tamarisk in Beersheba, and called there on the name of the Lord, the everlasting God. It was from Beersheba that Abraham had to take that dreadful journey of three days, with the beloved and only son whom he was (he believed) to sacrifice to God. His agony of paternal love must have struggled with his devotion to his God; but it would not have appeared so strange a demand from God to him as it does to us, for he had been used to hear of human sacrifices, common among the heathens. "And on the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and beheld the place afar off." This is thought a sufficient proof by all the chief explorers, that the intended sacrifice was offered on Mount Moriah—not at Shechem—and it appears conclusive, as Abraham could not have seen Mount Gerizim on the third day of his journey.

After God has accepted his intention, Abraham and his son return to Beersheba. Sarah soon after died in Hebron (Kirjath Arba), and Abraham, as the scene is so graphically described in Genesis, purchased for her grave the cave of Machpelah from the people of Heth.

It was from Beersheba that Abraham sent his steward to get a wife for Isaac, from his own kindred; and Isaac awaited her (and he was living with Abraham) near Beer-Lahai-roi, poor Hagar's well.

The Negeb remains much as it was in the time of Abraham, as to its occupation. As in his day, the greater part of the country belongs to native proprietors, for not a foot of land was Abraham's but a grave; and thus the soil of the whole land is generally occupied in the present day. But Beersheba and the country round it were then free grazing-grounds, on which (as soon as he was beyond the limits of Gerar), Isaac could dig wells at his own will; so it is in the present day; the Negeb and the desert around it, are free to the wandering Arabs to pasture their flocks. The soil of the plain consists of soft white marl and chalk in low ridges, with little watercourses and still supports many flocks

and herds of the nomads. On the east it falls into the desert of Judea and on the south to the wilderness of Paran and Sinai. It has many wells still existing in it; those of Beersheba are the largest and best. The fountain by which the angel found Hagar, after she had fled from Sarah's severity, and that she named "Beer-Lahai-roi, or the well of the Living One that seeth me," is between Kadesh and Bered.

There are now no traces of trees at Beersheba. Abraham, after interchanging vows of friendship with Abimelech, planted, as we have said, a terebinth, or terebinth-grove, we are told in Genesis, by "the well of the oath," but now not a tree is to be seen; they are in fact cut down everywhere for fuel.

Beersheba is now called Bîres-Sebâ. Professor Palmer found two wells filled with water, one dry, and traces of four others. Major Conder says that the depth of the large well is forty-five feet, lined with rings of masonry to the depth of twenty-eight feet, and he found that the masonry was not *very* ancient. Fifteen courses down he found a stone with "505—A.H." inscribed on it, showing that the well had been at least restored in the twelfth century. The Beersheba wells are built of fine solid masonry, but they are unprotected, as there is no wall or parapet round them, and the stones are worn down the edge by the ropes that the Arabs use to draw water. There are no ropes or buckets or pitchers on the spot; every one who requires water brings his or her rope (more often women draw it) and pitcher.

Round the wells are rude stone troughs into which water is poured for the cattle. The water drawing is enlivened by songs from the Arabs, and the groups of women, men, and cattle round the wells in their graceful costume and with the sheep and camels near, patiently waiting, while the sun of Syria sinks in the west, form a subject meet for the pencil of a great artist. The atmosphere and light in Palestine are peculiarly beautiful, and but few of our painters have succeeded in rendering its pure transparency and wonderful colouring.

Of the immense value of wells in such a land as Palestine we who dwell in humid England can have very little idea. Without water man dies and vegetation perishes, and he who is at the expense and trouble of digging a well in the East is justly considered a benefactor by the people. To fill up the wells is to reduce the country that possesses them to a desert.

No doubt in the days of Abraham the Negeb was much better populated. Wells drew people round them, and the remains of foundations show that there was a large population here in former days. Professor Palmer found in the south, still standing, stone houses eight feet or seven feet in diameter, and built in a circular form.

Abraham probably died at Beersheba, as he was buried with Sarah in the cave of Machpelah.

GERAR.

AFTER Abraham's death "Isaac abode near Beer-Lahai-roi," and there his sons Esau and Jacob were born and grew to manhood. Isaac seems to have been a remarkably quiet man, moving very little from the spot he had made his home.

Just after Esau had sold his birthright for a mess of pottage a famine drove Isaac and his family to Gerar; God forbade him to go into Egypt, and there was, as we know, a covenant of friendship between Abraham's family and Abimelech's. Here he fell into the same sin that Abraham had committed—falsehood. He said—in fear that the people would kill him for her sake—that Rebecca was his sister. But this Abimelech, probably the son of Abraham's friend—discovered the deceit, and reproached Isaac for it. The lawlessness of the age could alone palliate so grievous a falsehood for which the Gentile chiefs justly reproved both father and son.

And Isaac sowed in that land, protected by Abimelech, who forbade any one to touch the man or woman, and his crops returned a hundredfold.

"And the man waxed great, and grew more and more till he waxed very great; and he had possessions of flocks and herds and a great household, and the Philistines envied him."

"And Abimelech said to Isaac, 'Go from us, for thou art much mightier than we.'"

No doubt, surprised and hurt, the gentle son of Abraham departed in silence from the hitherto friendly city, and encamping in the valley or wady of Gerar, dwelt there.

The Philistines had stopped up all the wells that Abraham had dug. Isaac determined to restore them, and his servants, digging in the valley, found a well of springing water; but the herdsmen of Gerar strove with Isaac's herdsmen, saying, "The water is ours." And he called the name of the well *Esek* (contention), because they contended with him. Nevertheless he yielded, and his "servants digged another well, but the Philistines strove for that also, and he called the name of it *Sitnah* (enmity). And he removed from thence, and digged another well, and for that they strove not, and he called the name of it *Rehoboth* (room)." And he went up thence again to Beersheba. Here God appeared to him in the night, and gave him the same promises that had formerly been bestowed on Abraham. Isaac, greatly impressed by his vision, built an altar there, offered sacrifices, and called upon the Name of the Lord, and his servants again digged a well.

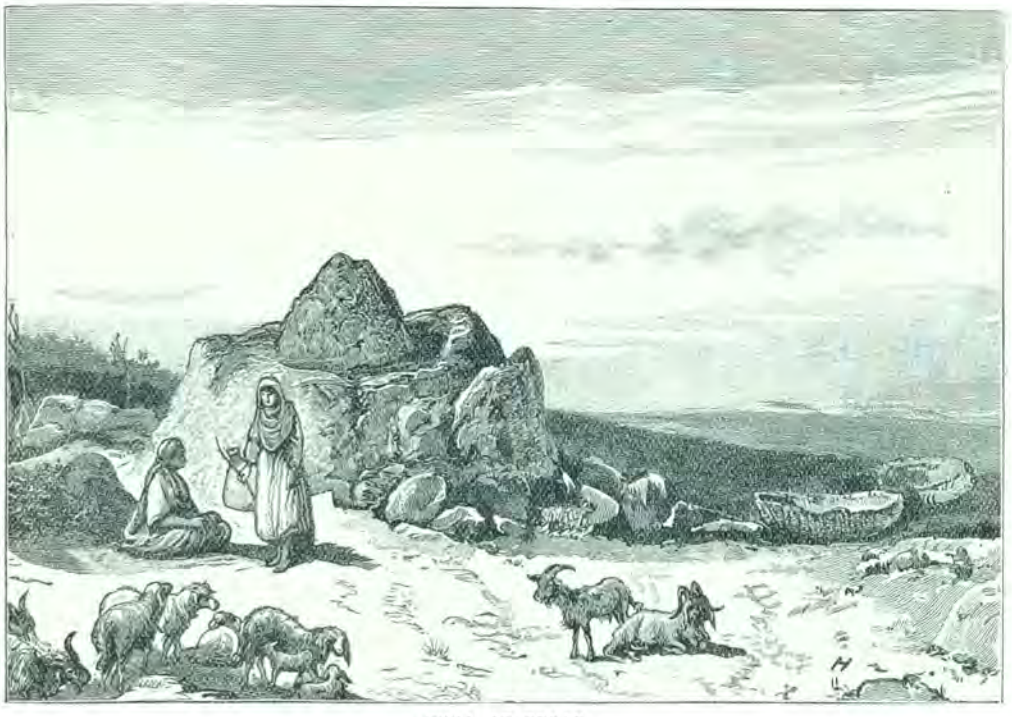
Then Abimelech came to visit him from Gerar, bringing with him Ahuzzath, his friend, and Phicol, the captain of his host. Isaac must have been greatly surprised at seeing his uncivil host and his attendants, for he asked them, "Wherefore are ye come unto me, seeing ye hate me, and have sent me away from you?" And they said, "We saw plainly that the Lord was with thee, and we said, Let there now be an oath betwixt us, even between us and thee; and let us make a covenant with thee; that thou wilt do us no hurt, as we have not touched thee, and as we have done unto thee nothing but good, and have sent thee away in peace; thou art now the blessed of the Lord."

Isaac was easily persuaded of their friendly feelings and good intentions. He made them a feast, and they did eat and drink. And they rose up betimes in the morning, and sware one to another, and Isaac sent them away, and they departed

from him in peace. And it came to pass the same day that Isaac's servants came and told him concerning the well that they had digged, and said unto him, "We have found water." And he called it Sheba; therefore the name of it is Beersheba to this day."

The very same oath had been taken between Abraham and Abimelech at this same spot. Abimelech was accompanied by the same persons, or perhaps persons of the same name—the name, it may be, of their office. There was probably a succession of Abimelechs, as there was of Pharaohs, and their officers held the same places by the same names. Thus the events of Abraham's life were repeated in his son's, and both, by their covenant with this king of Gerar, gave the name of Beersheba to the well or two wells where these covenants were made.

It was from Beersheba that Jacob fled



WELL AT GERAR.

after he had robbed his brother of his blessing, and Beersheba was the last spot in Palestine on which the old man's eyes rested before he went down into Egypt.

Beersheba was at first given to Judah when the tribes divided the Promised Land, but afterwards Simeon had it. It became the southern boundary mark of the land; "from Dan to Beersheba," was the manner of describing the whole land. When the nation divided into two kingdoms, Judah extended from Beersheba to the mountains of Ephraim.

Samuel in his old age made his sons judges over Israel placing two of them at Beersheba. "Now the name of his firstborn was Joel, and the name of his second Abijah: they were judges in Beersheba." (1 Sam. viii. 1). There must therefore have been a town there and a population.

From Beersheba, Ahaziah, king of Judah chose his queen, Zibiah, no doubt a beautiful maiden, but destined to a sad fate in

that palace where Jezebel's daughter, Athaliah, reigned.

When her son Ahaziah's death was made known to Athaliah, she rose and killed all the children of the royal nurseries. Only one was saved, and he was the son of this Beersheba maiden, little Jehoash or Joash. He was saved by the courage and tenderness of his aunt Jehosheba, who drew him, undoubtedly wounded and believed to have been slain, from the poor little dead infants, and hid him in the Temple. He was afterwards at seven years old proclaimed king, and Athaliah was slain. Did Queen Zibiah learn of the safety of her child? Did she live to see him reign, or were the mothers slain by Athaliah when she destroyed the children? One would like to know.

We must not forget to mention that the Romans, when masters of Palestine, had a fortress and garrison at Beersheba.

The Desert of the Negeb.

THE country of the Negeb is a rolling plain, covered in spring by lovely wild flowers, but very desolate, and inhabited only by the wandering Arabs.

In the desert of El Tih many miles to the south, Professor Palmer saw ancient stone houses in perfect preservation. They were about eight or seven feet wide, and circular in form, with oval tops, small doors with lintels and doorposts. In one of these he found an arrow-head and some small shells. Near these dwellings are some stone circles. Deep wells are round them, with troughs for the animals to drink, and walls of stone with prickly bushes over them, speak still of defence. That Christianity once prevailed in the Negeb, is proved by the number of ruins of Christian churches remaining there. There is a cave also cut in the rock fifty miles south of Beersheba, which was evidently used as a Christian church, judging from the crosses in its walls; and opposite is another cave. Probably there were many hermits in the Negeb. The hills in the south are covered with ruins, and the valleys are full for miles of stone-heaps, called grape-mounds, over which vines are trained. Hill and valley diversify the Negeb. Professor Palmer thought it began about fifty miles south of Beersheba, but there are signs of occupation of the land further still.

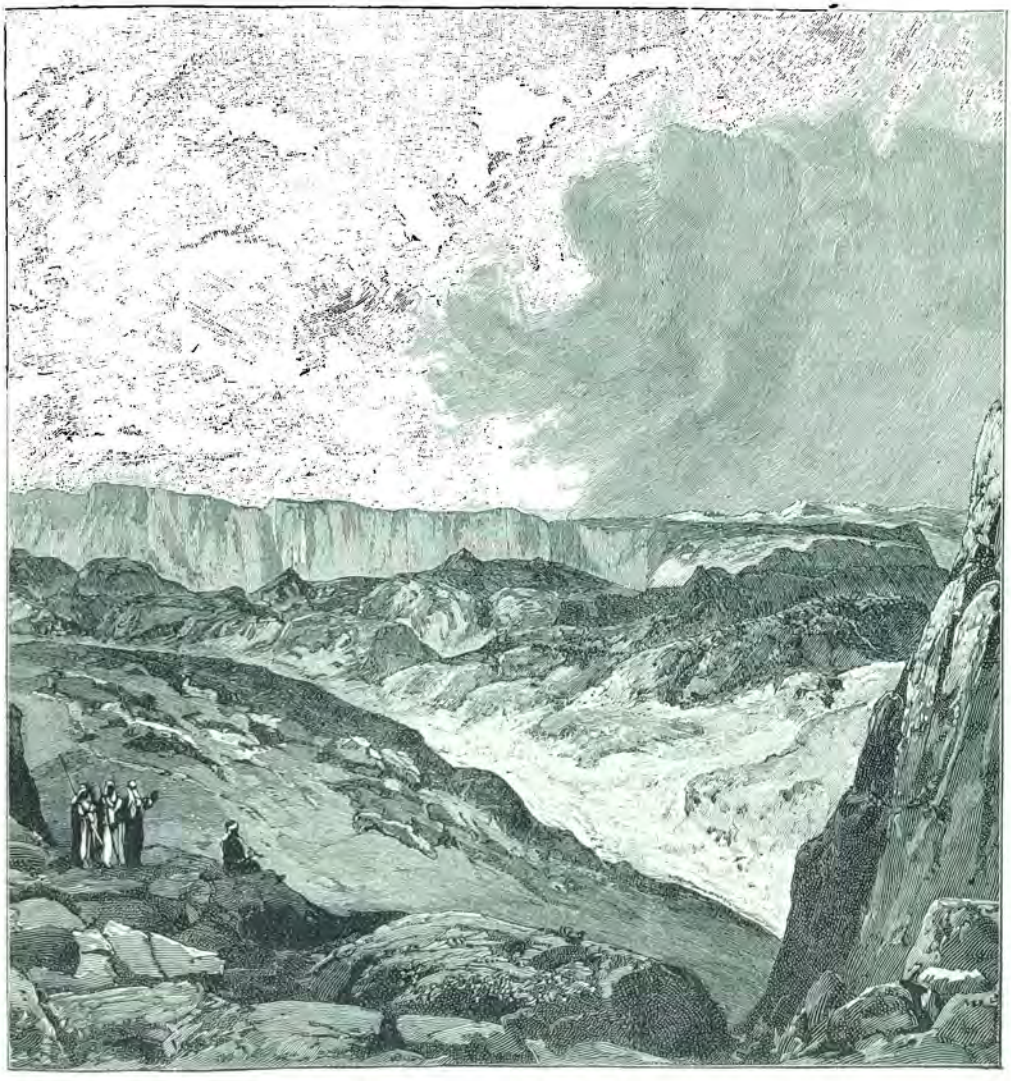
But leaving the desert, let us go to Dhâheriyeh, which stands on the site of the ancient Debir.

Now the name of Debir aforementioned was Kiriath Sepher.

It seems to have been a well-defended city, and difficult to take, for Caleb—in the true spirit of mediæval chivalry,—offers his daughter as the prize of the hero who takes it.

His nephew, Othniel, the son of his youngest brother, achieved this deed of *dering-do*, and claimed his cousin-bride, for whose sake, probably, he had fought and won. Caleb gave him his daughter—Achsah. Her dowry was in this Negeb, and she saw that it might prove a dry and fruitless land, so as soon as she became the inmate of Othniel's tent, she urged him to ask for a field where there was water. But Othniel was perhaps, too modest to ask his

uncle for more than that clever and beautiful daughter. Achsah at once mounts her ass, and goes to her father's house. Caleb sees her alighting, and asks her, "What wouldst thou?" And she said to him, "Give me a blessing, for thou hast set me in the land of the south; give me also springs of water," and Caleb gave her the upper springs and the lower springs. A well-dowered damsel must Achsah have been!



THE APPROACH TO THE NEGEB.

The town was afterwards made one of the Levitical cities, and a city of refuge. In return for its being taken from them, there is no doubt that Othniel and his wife were liberally recompensed, as Caleb himself was, when Hebron was taken for a Levitical city.

Dhâheriyeh, the ancient Debir, is situated south-west of Hebron.

The modern village is built almost wholly of old buildings, probably the remains of ancient Debir.

In the centre of it is a ruin of massive

masonry, evidently of very great antiquity, three arched rooms of it still remain, and there are ruins of arches in every corner.

MAON, the remains of an ancient town, to the west of a hill a hundred feet high, was one of the cities of Judah; in the wilderness near it David dwelt when he was hunted from place to place by Saul. An invasion of the Philistines alone saved him at one time from being taken. Here lived Nabal, the churlish husband of Abigail.

There are the foundations of a ruined house in Maon, twenty feet square, massive, and no doubt very ancient, and there are caves and cisterns also.

The wanderings of David were all in this neighbourhood. After his tender and true friend Jonathan had warned him of Saul's fell purpose against him, David fled to Nob, a city of the priests. Shafat is thought to be on the site of Nob. Here he ate the shew-bread, and received from Abimelech, the high priest, the sword of Goliath, which he had formerly consecrated in the house of God. Now it is his only weapon. After receiving it he fled to Gath. But Doeg, an Edomite, had seen him at Nob, and carried tidings of him to the king.

Meantime David fled to Gath, but being recognised as the slayer of the Philistines, he feigned madness. The people of Gath might well think that he *was* mad, for it seemed the action of a madman to go voluntarily into the midst of his foes. And David feigned lunacy well. It was a certain protection; for no Eastern man would harm a lunatic, who is supposed to be under the especial protection of God.

Then David escaped to Adullam. Of the two possibilities of its site we have already spoken (see pp. 77 and 78). Here his parents and brothers joined him, and six hundred discontented or outlawed men; for the rule of Saul was tyrannical, and many fled from it.

He soon after took his parents to Moab for security; he was, we must remember, the great-grandson of Ruth the Moabitess, and thus had some claim on her countrymen. She may indeed have been of the royal house. He did not himself remain in Moab, he returned to Judah.

Saul meantime had heard of the aid given by the priests of Nob to David; summoned them before him, and ordered them to be executed. Doeg only would venture to obey this wicked command, Saul then seized Nob, and put every one and everything in it to death; only one priest escaped, who fled to David.

The city of Keilah was attacked by the Philistines; David and his band hastened to its assistance and drove them off.

The site of Keilah has been identified at Khurbet Kîla, a ruined village seven miles from Beit Jibrin. Saul heard of this brave deed and threatened to surround the town; the ungrateful inhabitants at once resolved to give David up to him, but he had departed with his followers to the desert of Judah,—the wilderness of Ziph. It is now called the "Desert of the Wanderings." All this wild, desolate tract has been identified as much as possible, and there is still a ruined mound called Tell Zif.

The Palestine explorers have pointed out that the Hebrew word translated "wood" in 1 Sam. xxiii. 14–24 is *Khoresh*, and they tell us that a mile and a half south of Tell ez-Zif, to the left of the road from Kurmul, there are some ruins still named Khoreisa, which they believe mark the exact spot where David concealed himself. There are several caves round the place.[1]

Ziph was one of the cities fortified by Rehoboam. There is a quarry here and several tombs, one of which has a porch with two rock-cut piers. David composed the 54th Psalm while hiding himself in the cavern of Ziph.

Here Jonathan stole down to meet and encourage his friend. David was then in the long ridge of El Kolah, at Mount Hachilah, and the Ziphites designed to betray him to the king. But their late champion

[1] "P. E. Mem." 3, 312, 356.

flew to Maon in the wilderness of Paran. Maon's present name is Tell Mâin, and it is seven miles south of Hebron. It is on a conical hill with the ruin of a tower in the middle of the village.

It was in the wilderness of Engedi, to which for a time he fled, that David cut off a piece of Saul's robe, and for a time convinced him of his fidelity. David then returned to Maon, in which town lived Nabal and Abigail, wealthy people; the man descended from Caleb, but he was a churl and a fool.

Carmel, or, by its modern name, Kurmul, adjoins Maon on the north. In it great part of Nabal's property was situated. He had three thousand sheep and a thousand goats in Carmel, of which David and his band had been the protectors on the hills. And David, hearing that Nabal was shearing sheep in Carmel, sent ten of his young men to Nabal to remind him of the protection they had given to his flocks, and to ask him to give David's followers a portion of the feast. But Nabal—one can scarcely fancy that he was really a descendant of Caleb—answered only with insults, treating David as a runaway servant of Saul. David's anger was extreme, but Nabal's wife, Abigail, appeared as a peacemaker, and David was propitiated with gifts and by her gentle words. Nabal suddenly dies after the feast, and David marries Abigail. His first wife Michal had been given by Saul to another husband.

Perhaps the wealth of Abigail may have been of importance to the band generally.

Saul had been at Kurmul long ago when he came from the slaughter of the Amalekites, and set up a monument or shrine there in memory of his victory. (1 Sam. xv. 12.)

The Crusaders had their camp here in 1172. There are memorials that they once occupied the place, in the ruins of a castle and of two churches. The west and north walls of the castle are still standing to the height of twenty-four feet; they are seven feet thick, and in the thickness of the north wall is a staircase leading to the roof; the vault of the staircase is pointed, and the windows on the east side, though small and square outside, have pointed arched recesses inside. There are three of these windows in the east wall. There is a tower which stands in an area a hundred and seventy-nine feet long and seventy-three wide on a terrace with slopes covered with masonry; it seems to have been surrounded by a moat. To the north of the inclosure are the foundations of a round tower connected with the tower in the inclosure by a covered way.

To the north-east of the tower is a church, seventy-seven feet long and forty wide with apses fifteen feet broad. Pillar shafts lie here. The second church stood south of the tower, and was apparently a little smaller. Nothing remains of these churches but the foundations. A fine reservoir stands in the valley below Kurmul.

Once more Saul comes into this wilderness, still in pursuit of his detested subject, and is surprised asleep on Engedi by David and his cousin Abishai. His guards are sleeping round him. Close to the king stand his spear and a water-bottle, just as a sheik of to-day would have them. Abishai urges David to kill Saul, but he refuses to slay his king; he merely removes the spear and water-bottle, and then, on a mountain height, near but inaccessible, he shouts to Abner. They awake. Saul once more acknowledges David's loyalty and retires for a time from pursuing him.

Once more David sought a refuge in Gath. This time, convinced as the Philistines were of Saul's enmity to him, they received him civilly, and Achish gives to his guard the town of Ziklag, thought now to be "Asluj," south of Beersheba, or by Major Conder, Khirbet Zuheilikah, seventeen miles north-west of Beersheba, which appears to us also to be the true site.

Then war broke out between the Philistines and Saul, and David was threatened with the risk of refusing to fight against his countrymen. But the Lord again saves him. The lords of Philistia object to his

presence, and he and his men go back, right willingly, to Ziklag. But when they reached their home they found it bare and desolate.

The Amalekites had made a raid on the south, had smitten Ziklag and burned it with fire and carried off all its inhabitants —the women and children; they had slain no one, but gone their way with the captives and the cattle.

We do not wonder that David and his men when they realized their dreadful misfortunes, "wept till they had no more power to weep."

The followers of David were, however, not only sad, but unreasonably angry. "He had left the city unprotected," they murmured, "and this had come of it." They spoke at once of stoning him. Never had David been in greater peril! But he found courage by trusting simply in God. He sent for Abiathar, the priest who had fled to him from Nob, and asked of God what he should do. The Lord answered, "Pursue! thou shalt verily overtake the robbers, and shalt recover all."

David and four hundred men started in pursuit, leaving two hundred too faint to cross the brook Besor. On their way they rescued from death by starvation an Egyptian, who proved to be the servant of an Amalekite. His master, finding that he was too ill to proceed, had left him to die in the desert; and by doing thus he had given David a sure guide to pursue and find him; for having received an assurance of safety, the Egyptian led them to the very spot where the nobles were feasting and their captives weeping.

"And David smote them from the twilight even unto the evening of the next day, and there escaped not a man of them, save four hundred young men which rode upon camels, and escaped." David and his men recovered everything — wives, sons, daughters and cattle, and much more which the Amalekites had carried off from Philistia and Judah, and David sent magnificent presents of all the spoil that came to his share to those towns and people who had shown him kindness.

It was on his return from this rescue that he heard the sad story of the defeat of Judah, and of the death of Saul and Jonathan. It was here and at this time that the warrior prince composed that touching elegy which in pathos and tenderness is unrivalled. This was the last incident of David's residence in Ziklag. God, of whom he inquired, ordered him to go to Hebron, where, as we know, the men of Judah offered him their crown.

MASADA, NOW SEBBEH.

MASADA, the strong Jewish fortress that has left so sad a story, is now called Sebbeh. It stands on a rock seventeen hundred feet above the Dead Sea. Great ravines on the north and south separate it from the neighbouring mountains; a narrow neck of land alone unites it to them on the west. In a great measure, therefore, it is isolated. It rises above all the other hills, and projects greatly beyond the line of cliffs; a grand object with a terrible memory attached to it. The side of the rock by the Dead Sea is often quite perpendicular, sometimes to the height of nearly seven hundred feet. Its base is separated from the sea by sand and detritus to the width of two miles.

The ascent of the mountain is very difficult, except by the path on the face of the cliff beyond the ravine, on the north side. From it the top of the ridge west of the rock is gained; then by a short descent, the neck of land uniting it to the mountain range is reached. Thence the summit may be ascended, and the toil of ascent will be well rewarded by a most magnificent view from it. The Dead Sea—mysterious, awful—like no other spot on the known earth—lies in its deep depression below, and can be seen, from the fall of the Jordan into it, to the salt hills at the south. The mountains of Moab rise precipitously from the eastern shore, red and purple and shadowy.

On the plateau of Masada, which is nearly level, are remains of Herodian and Christian buildings. The gateway has a pointed arch, and faces south. In the opposite wall there are many niches. The inclosure, entered by this gate, is pear-shaped, and surrounded by ancient walls. Some of the masonry is massive, consisting of large rough stones; other portions are of smaller and well-dressed blocks. At the end of the inclosure are the walls of a block of buildings, three hundred and twenty feet long and ninety-six wide; but these walls are now only two or three feet high. There are long narrow passages in these ruins. There is a second block separated from this one by a lane, and it also has long parallel passages in it. At the northern angle of the inclosure there is a mound, and on it are the foundations of a tower.

The ruins of Herod's palace, described by Josephus, are on the left side, near the western entrance; it is a very large block of massive masonry; and there are the foundations of a semi-circular tower left, and many other ruins scattered about.

On the rock are also the remains of a Christian chapel and cave. The chapel is in the corner of a courtyard, facing the western entrance; on the west is a vestibule, and on the east an apse, the roof of which still remains, and is a half-dome. There are doors west and south, and on the north side are two windows. The interior has pieces of pottery cemented into the walls.

The cave is about one hundred and fifty yards from the chapel. There are two chambers in it, and on the wall of the outer room, some inscriptions in red paint and crosses show that it was used by Christians—perhaps it was the abode of the priest, who served the chapel.

The wall built by the Romans during the siege of Masada can be traced; it was three thousand yards long. On the north-east,

north, and north-west, it is built on the plain; on the west, south, and east, it runs along the brink of precipices. Two large Roman camps on the plateau are still almost perfect.

Jonathan Maccabeus, the brother of Judas, and the high priest, was the builder of the fortress of Masada; but it was probably then only a stronghold. Herod the Great, however, saw the advantages it



THE CELLS OF THE MONKS AT MAR SABA.

possessed for defence, and took the greatest pains to strengthen it.

Josephus gives the following account of Masada, which is an equally faithful one for the present day, except that the buildings are now ruins:—

"There was a rock," he says, "not small in circumference, and very high. It was encompassed by valleys of such vast depth downwards, that the eye could not reach their bottoms; they were abrupt, and such as no animal could walk upon, excepting

at two places of the rock, where it subsides, in order to afford a passage for ascent, though not without difficulty. Now, of the ways that lead up to it, one is that from the lake Asphaltites, towards the sunrising, and another on the west, where the ascent is easier; the one of these ways is called the Serpent, as resembling that animal in its narrowness and its perpetual windings, for it is broken off at the prominent precipices of the rock, and returns frequently into itself, and, lengthening again by little and little, hath much ado to proceed forward; and he that would walk along it must first go on one leg and then on the other; there is, also, nothing but destruction in case your feet slip, for on each side there is a vastly deep chasm and precipice, sufficient to quell the courage of everybody. . . . When a man hath gone along this way for thirty furlongs, the rest is the top of the hill,—not ending in a small point, but is no other than a plain, upon the highest part of the mountain. . . . King Herod built a wall, about the entire top of the hill, seven furlongs long. It was composed of white stone; its height was twelve and its breadth eight cubits; there were also erected on that wall thirty-eight towers, each of them fifty cubits high, out of which you might pass into lesser edifices, which were built on the inside, round the entire walls, for the king reserved the top of the hill, which was of a fat soil, and better mould than any valley, for agriculture, that such as committed themselves to this fortress for their preservation, might not even there be quite destitute of food, in case they should ever be in want of it from abroad. Moreover, he built a palace therein, at the western ascent"—the pile of ruins on the left hand, which meets the eye on the entrance to the inclosure,—"it was within and beneath the walls of the citadel, but inclined to its north side. Now the wall of this palace was very high and strong, and had at its four corners towers sixty cubits high. The furniture, also, of the edifices, and of the cloisters, and of the baths, was of great variety, and very costly, and these buildings were supported by pillars of single stones on every side; the walls, also, and the floors of the edifices, were paved with stones of several colours. He also had cut many and great pits, as reservoirs for water, out of the rocks, . . . and by this contrivance he endeavoured to have water for several uses, as if there had been fountains there."

Herod defended the road up the western side by a large and strong tower; the Serpent road was in itself impassable. Corn, wine, and oil were laid up in the fortress in immense quantities, as well as arms of all kinds. The king had in fact prepared this refuge for himself in case of a revolt of the Jews, or an attack from Antony, influenced by Cleopatra, who often, we are thus historically told, declared that she would have Herod's head.

"That Herod's head I'll have."—*Shakespeare.*

But the king never had need of Masada. It remained to be defended against the arms of Rome by the Sicarii or freebooters, a dangerous race of patriots, who abhorred the name of Rome, and treated those of their fellow countrymen who had submitted to the Romans as enemies. Jerusalem had fallen, and Herodium and Machœrus had surrendered since its fall, but still these enemies of Rome held the strongest fortress in Palestine with all its treasures. Imperial Rome never dreamed of submitting to defiance from the greatest or the meanest, and these Sicarii had been guilty of much bloodshed, and were implacable enemies of the empire; therefore the Procurator of Judea, Flavius Silva, laid siege to Masada.

The first act of the Roman general was to build a wall encircling the entire fortress, so that none of the besieged might escape; he set guards also round it. He then pitched his camp on the rock belonging to the fortress that made the nearest approach to the neighbouring mountain; for all food had to be brought to the army from a great distance, and water also, for there were no

fountains near them. Behind the tower "which secured the road that led to the palace and to the top of the hill from the west, there was a height of rock very broad and very prominent, but three hundred cubits beneath the highest part of Masada." It was called the White Promontory. It was the only place on which the Romans could raise banks, and here a solid bank of earth, two hundred cubits in height, was made by the soldiers; on it a still more elevated work of great stones, compacted together, was raised, fifty cubits high and broad. The war machines, devised first by Vespasian and afterwards by Titus, were then brought into use. There was a tower plated with iron and sixty cubits high, from which they threw darts and stones, and a great battering-ram which soon broke down a portion of the wall. But the Sicarii hastened to build within it another wall of beams of wood with earth between them, which was of course comparatively soft. When the ram played on it, it yielded and thus deadened the blow, which actually shook the materials more together and made the wall firmer.

Silva, seeing this, ordered the soldiers to throw a great number of flaming torches upon it, when the wood of course took fire. At first a north wind blew the flames back on the assailants, and they feared that their machines would be burnt; but, on a sudden, the wind veered right round to the south, and the fire, driven in, consumed the newly-built wall. The Romans, as evening fell, retired to their camp with joy, set a careful watch by the breach, and resolved to enter the fortress the next morning.

The Sicarii were commanded by a very brave but ferocious man, named Eleazar, who, seeing that no hope of saving the place remained, assembled the people and addressed them in two remarkable speeches, in which he proposed that since a long defence was impossible they should kill their wives and children to save them from being sold as slaves, and that then they should slay themselves. At first, natural feeling opposed this hideous proposal; but Eleazar again addressed them with fiery eloquence, and they were at last persuaded to follow his advice. It is a pitiful story; "the men tenderly embraced their wives, and took their little children in their arms, and gave the longest parting kisses to them with tears in their eyes. Then they killed them all, lay down by their beloved dead, and received their own death from one of ten who had been selected by lot to become their executioners. When these ten had slain them all, they drew lots to kill each other, and the one last left set fire to the palace and ran his sword into his own heart."

They died, believing that not a soul survived to be sold by the Romans; but they were mistaken. An old woman, and a relative of Eleazar, a woman superior to most women in prudence and learning, with five children, had concealed themselves in caverns under the ground, carrying water thither to drink.

The Romans found no opposition the next day; there was perfect silence, the palace was burning, but there was a terrible solitude. Amazed, they shouted loudly, and then the woman came forth and told her lamentable story.

At first her words were doubted, but entering the fortress the Roman soldiers stood horrified before the heaps of slain.

It may be well here to notice what an innumerable multitude of Jews were "sold" by the Romans during this war, because it was the fulfilment of God's threatening by Moses—that if they disobeyed His laws they should be "sold to their enemies for bondmen and bondwomen" (Deut. xxviii. 68), and also "that no man should buy them." In fact the sale of these slaves became difficult, because the market was overstocked, and at last they sold for little or nothing. Titus let many go wherever they pleased.

It is pleasant to know that Christians afterwards inhabited this fortress that had been a shambles; and that the voice of

prayer and praise rose on the air from the top of blood-stained Masada.

Here Masada is the well-known Greek convent of Mar Saba, clinging to the precipitous side of a steep mountain. It is very picturesquely situated, and is a collection of turrets, chambers, staircases, and caves, clustering above each other in the most extraordinary manner, and surrounded by a deep fosse; the walls are strengthened with enormous buttresses. The cells of the monks seem to merely hang to the rock, and look dreadfully dangerous.

The discipline in it is very severe. All the monks are under a vow never to taste flesh, and eggs are only allowed on Sundays. "On other days," Canon Tristram tells us, "the allowance is a small brown loaf, a dish of cabbage broth, a plate of olives, an onion, half an orange, a quarter of a lemon, six figs, and half a pint of wine for each brother during the twenty-four hours."

There is here a strange cave-chapel, in which, the Canon tells us, there are piled the skulls of 10,000 martyrs.

The life of a monk in this convent, without books (for it seems the library is locked up, in consequence of some visitor having robbed it of a work), and with no occupation save the services of the church (though happily they are frequent), must be a kind of living death. The monks make pets of birds, of foxes, and even of a wolf, who come regularly to get a morsel of their scanty fare.

ENGEDI—HAZAZON-TAMAR.

'AIN JIDY.

ENGEDI—"Spring of the kid—the rock of the wild goats," was originally called Hazazon-Tamar, or "The pruning of the Palms"; it is now named 'Ain Jidy, the fountain of the goat. Its first name, Hazazon-Tamar, was probably given to it because its inhabitants used to take out the heart of a bunch of palm leaves for food; it is a most delicate vegetable, and is eaten in India in this manner at the present day.

The plateau of Engedi is 610 feet above the Dead Sea, and 1,340 feet below the top of the precipice. On a terrace projecting outwards from the cliff is a fine spring gushing out from under a large boulder.

The plain of Engedi slopes upwards from the sea to the foot of the cliffs for about half a mile. Two little streams cross it; but the 'Ain Jidy, the true fountain, is the one on the terrace, which dances in silvery threads of water down the hillside, dashing over the crags amidst bushes of acacia and mimosa, till it reaches the plain across which it runs in a straight line to the sea. There is a ruined mill near the spring; below is a mound called Tell el-Jurn.

Here in the middle of the plain are the ruins of one of the most ancient cities of Palestine, Hazazon-Tamar. It had existed long before Abraham's time, and about the period of his entrance into Canaan it was in possession of the tall and stately Amorites. It was then, no doubt, as lovely a place as in the days of Solomon. The large, but not massive stones, broken and weather-beaten now, were then, undoubtedly, parts of the buildings of temples or houses; the hillsides were cut into terraces, still to be seen, on which grew abundant and graceful vines, the purple bunches hanging from them; the camphire, or, as

the Revised Version calls it, the henna flowers, grew there, making the air fragrant. The henna is a plant eight or ten feet high, with clusters of yellow and white blossoms, very fragrant. Its leaves also are made into a paste for dyeing the hands and nails pink.

Suddenly an armed band rushed down upon the town. Four kings, Amraphel, king of Shinar; Arioch, king of Ellasar; Chedorlaomer, king of Elam; and Tidal, king of Goiim (R.V.), had made a successful raid on the giants at Ashteroth-Karnaim, on the Zuzim in Ham, and the Emim in Shaveh-Kiriathaim, and the Horites in their Mount Seir, "unto El Paran, which is by the wilderness." Then they returned, laden no doubt with spoil and captives, and "smote the country of the Amalekites, and the Amorites, that dwelt in Hazazon-Tamar."

But they were destined not to pass through the land unopposed. The Five



SITE OF ENGEDI.

Cities of the Plain had been subject to Chedorlaomer for twelve years, but in the thirteenth they had rebelled. The king's raid was made a year after they had thrown off his yoke, and we may feel sure that when Chedorlaomer descended on Hazazon-Tamar he intended to proceed to Sodom and Gomorrah to punish the revolters. But the Kings of the Five Cities came to meet him, and "set the battle in array against the kings in the vale of Siddim." They were, however, defeated by the four kings of the east, and fled. "Now the Vale of Siddim was full of slime-pits, and the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah fled and fell therein; they that escaped fled to the mountains." These slime-pits are still to be found north of the Dead Sea, or at least a soft sticky soil very unpleasant to walk on. The four kings then took all the goods

and provisions in Sodom and Gomorrah, carrying off also Lot and his property, and marched northwards as far as Dan.

But Abram, to rescue his nephew, pursued them with his own three hundred and eighteen armed servants, and his friends, the princes or sheiks Aner, Eshcol and Mamre; surprised them in the night, smote them and "pursued them to Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus."

Does not this story make it appear most likely that Sodom and the other four towns, were *north* of the Dead Sea? Had they been *south*, the kings must have turned back from Hazazon-Tamar; as the story is told, the march seems plain and straight.

But the site is the subject of much controversy, and by many the south is thought to have been the place where the doomed cities once existed. We shall speak of them again further on.

It was to Engedi that David fled from Saul, as we have already said; and it was in a cave of the sheepcots that he might have slain the king, had not duty and loyalty restrained him. But he cut off a piece of the king's robe to show him how completely he (Saul) had been in his power. Yet even for this act did David's heart smite him for his irreverence to his sovereign.

It was to Hazazon-Tamar (Engedi) that the hosts of Moab and Ammon came when they invaded Judah, in the reign of Jehoshaphat. But in answer to Jehoshaphat's earnest prayer they were defeated, though by the inhabitants of Mount Seir, and the warriors of Judah came to the watch-tower of the wilderness only to look on a field heaped with the slain.

The flowers of Engedi were of such supreme beauty in the days of Solomon, that in his song he says,—

"My beloved is to me as a cluster of henna flowers
In the vineyards of Engedi."

(Song of Solomon, R.V., i. 14.) Josephus and Pliny both speak of its palm groves and balsam trees; but neither palm nor balsam trees are found there now.

The spot is picturesque still; and if the terraces were planted with vines again and gardens cultivated, it would soon renew all its pristine beauty; but there are now only a few acacias, a single tamarisk, and a few bushes, with the "Apple of Sodom" for fruit. This is the "'Osher" of the Arabs.

It hangs in clusters of three or four together, and when ripe is a smooth yellow fruit, soft to the touch, but, if pressed, it bursts with a crack, and inside it, is only a half-open pod with a row of small seeds in it, and a few silky filaments.

There is a singular prophecy in Ezekiel of waters that should flow to the Akabah, and of the healing of the sea; and "it shall come to pass," he wrote, "that fishers shall stand by it; from Engedi even unto En Eglaim shall be a place for the spreading of nets; their fish shall be after their kind, as the fish of the great sea, exceeding many." With this prophecy we must close our account of Engedi.

The Dead Sea.

SEEN so often before from many heights, and even from Jerusalem itself, the traveller who stands at length by the Dead Sea cannot help feeling awe and a certain surprise, for there is nothing like it elsewhere on the earth. How such an extreme depression could have been caused has exercised the minds of writers and geologists; but Canon Tristram and M. Lartet have told us the most that we know about the formation of this remarkable sea.

It is stated by M. Lartet that the great depression of the Jordan valley, including this sea, must have occurred at that era of physical convulsion which threw up the mountain chains of Syria. He thinks that at a very remote geological period a fracture took place in the upper strata, extending from north to south. In consequence of the unequal strength of the strata the western side fell downwards, causing the abrupt dip on the western side, and the great depression of the valley of the Jordan, while the eastern side remained in its place. He found that deposits of great depth had accumulated in the valley of the Jordan since its formation, analogous to those still forming at the bottom of the Dead Sea. They show that the valley must once have been under water.

Canon Tristram says on this subject: "We see that at a remote period, long prior to the marl deposits below, there must have been a mighty fluviatile and aqueous force in operation for a period almost inconceivable. The whole surrounding region must have become dry land before the close of the Eocene period, there being no fossils of a subsequent date anywhere detected in the country. . . . Then followed the great volcanic period of the north, when the Lejah smoked with the fires of a hundred boiling craters, and the liquid masses poured in red torrents down the upper valley as far as the Lake of Gennesaret. Meanwhile the concomitant earthquakes rent and shook the central districts. The subterranean fires, which poured forth their rivers of basalt over the north, drew their fuel from beneath this gulf, and at this period possibly the ridge of Akabah was gradually rising by the same forces, and interrupting the continuity of the sea. . . . As Akabah slowly rose, by a compensating action the Ghor gradually sank, until a vast oblong lake was formed stretching up the Akabah for twenty miles south of the present shores of the Dead Sea, and extending northwards up the Aulon or Jordan plains, perhaps nearly to Kurn Surtabeh. Over this surface the sun's rays soon produced an evaporation which more than counter-balanced the supply from the feeders of the basin; and as the waters subsided the chalky sediment registered on the hillsides their gradual diminution from the terrace which at the south end rests against the inclosing barriers at a height of 320 feet in the Wâdy Mahawat, up to that chalk and marl in the Ghor above Jericho, which is deposited a few feet deep on the surface of the plain."

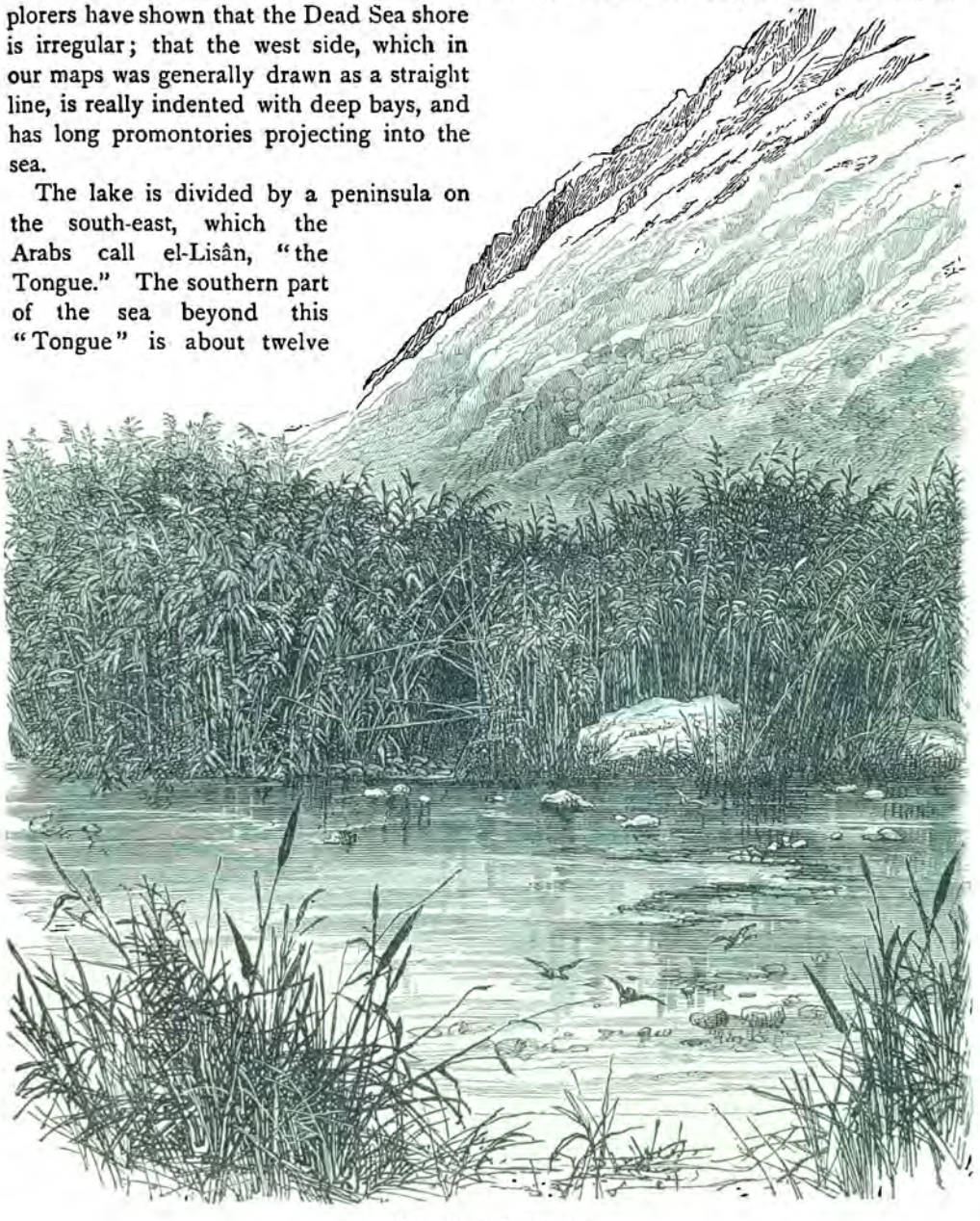
The Dead Sea is inclosed on the east and west by exceedingly high mountains; on the north it is bounded by the plain of Jericho, and thence receives the waters of the Jordan. On the south are the salt hills known as Jebel 'Usdûm, or the "Mountain of Sodom"; beyond them the desert.

The cliffs that border the Dead Sea are of white, yellow, or grey limestone, and in many places rise direct from the lake itself,

not leaving even a narrow footpath at their base.

The investigations of the Palestine explorers have shown that the Dead Sea shore is irregular; that the west side, which in our maps was generally drawn as a straight line, is really indented with deep bays, and has long promontories projecting into the sea.

The lake is divided by a peninsula on the south-east, which the Arabs call el-Lisân, "the Tongue." The southern part of the sea beyond this "Tongue" is about twelve feet deep at its deepest parts. Between el-Lisân and the west shore it is thirteen feet; but the northern part is much deeper,



ON THE DEAD SEA.

its greatest depth being 1,308 feet between 'Ain el-Trâbeh and the river Arnon (Wady Mojib).

There is a ford across from el-Lisân to the mainland, and one from Wady Mahawât south-east of the "Tongue."

The water of the Dead or Salt Sea is extremely salt, and its specific gravity so great that no swimmer can sink in it. It is by no means pleasant to bathe in, and its waters sometimes produce a rash on the skin. Near the Dead Sea are the Waters of Callirhoë, in which Herod the Great bathed, hoping vainly for a cure of his terrible disease. At this place are copious springs of warm water which run into the lake.

The beach of the lake presents a curious spectacle of trunks of trees thrown about in every possible position. Stripped of every atom of bark, these trunks have quite a ghastly appearance, and must long have laid on the Dead Sea shore, judging from the number of palms (some uprooted) that are amongst these skeletons, for very few palms have grown for many years in Palestine. Perhaps they washed down the Jordan from Jericho, the "City of Palm Trees," in the

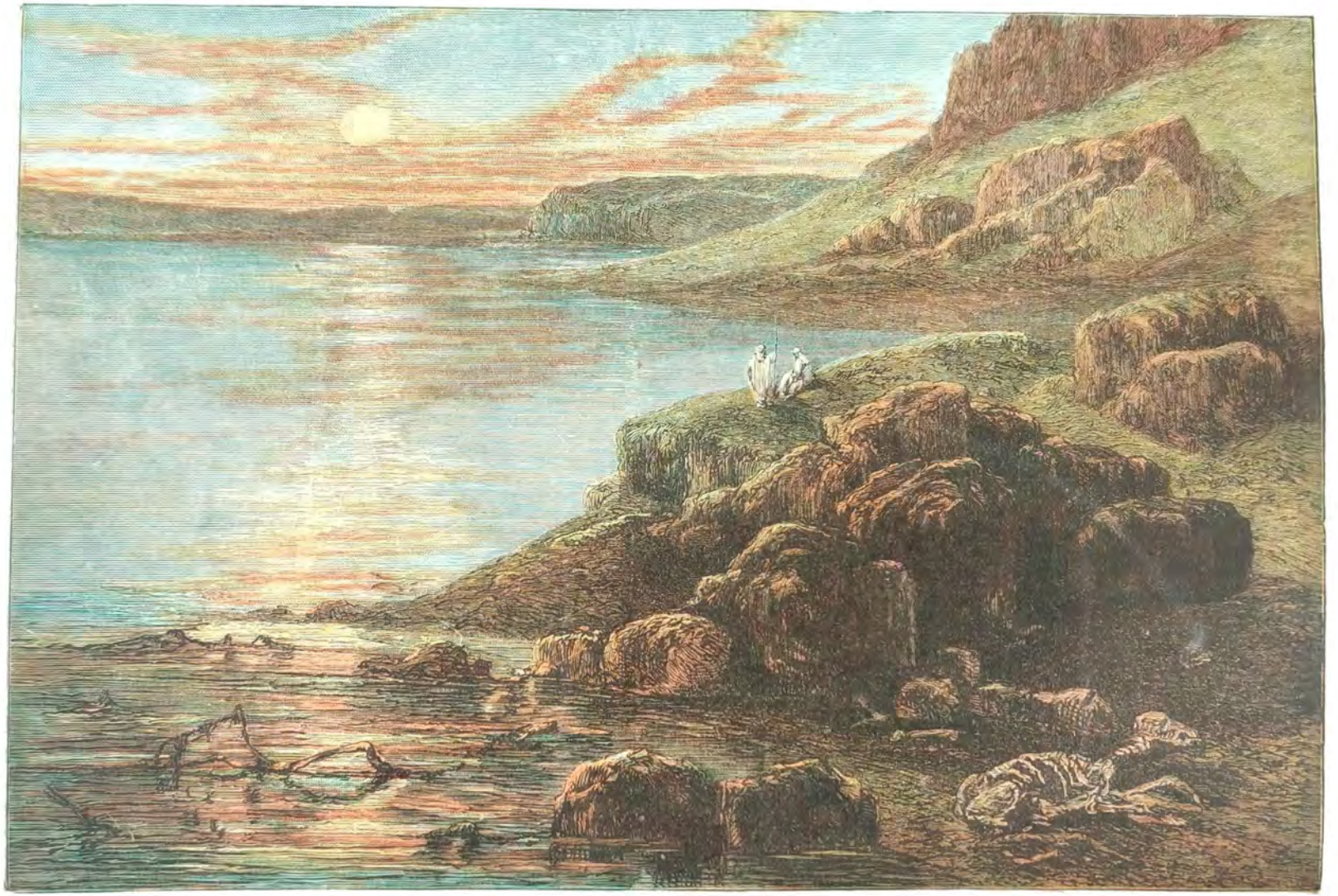


THE DEAD SEA.

time of Roman invasion. Beneath them, when green and fruitful, our Lord may have walked. They are quite saturated with salt, and if lighted give out only a blue flame. Pieces of lava and lumps of sulphur and bitumen cover the shore, and tiny morsels of sulphur are mixed with the sand.

The lake is fed by many streams. The Jordan pours into it 6,000,000 tons of water daily. Three streams, amongst them the Arnon, fall into it from the eastern side; one on the south, and the small stream from Engedi on the west, with many salt and hot springs, as those from Callirhoë.

The chief of these is the Jordan, of which we have an interesting account from Lieutenant Lynch, of the American Navy, who with some brother officers made the descent of the Jordan from the Lake of Galilee to the Dead Sea, and has given us an admirable description of his voyage. "The boat," he tells us, "had little need to be propelled, for the current carried them along at the rate of from four to six knots



THE DEAD SEA.

an hour. It (the river) curved and twisted north, south, east and west, turning in the short space of half an hour to every point of the compass." . . .

"Here and there were spots of solemn beauty. The numerous birds sang with a music strange and manifold; the willow branches floated from the trees like tresses; and creeping mosses and clambering weeds, with a multitude of white and silvery little flowers looked out from among them; and the cliff swallow wheeled over the falls, or went at his own wild will, darting through the arched vistas, shadowed and shaped by the meeting foliage on the banks; and above all, yet attuned to all, was the music of the river, gushing with a sound like that of shawms and cymbals."

The voyage in a straight line would have been sixty-five miles from the Sea of Galilee —the whole length of the river being, *in a straight line*, 104 miles; but its windings are so many that the voyage must have been more than three times as long.

Neither man nor animal could cross the river where it enters the lake; it rushes along just there over a muddy plain with driftwood embedded in it. No vegetation is seen for a little while before reaching the sea, but close to it there is a little herbage and even flowers.

Though such a quantity of water is poured into the sea, it only rises a few feet in winter above its level; for the evaporation from it is extreme, and is caused by the tropical heat of the shut-in and depressed waters. In consequence a thick mist covers the lake after sunset, and the air is always moist and warm. At any spot where a warm or cold fresh stream runs into the lake, verdure is seen even close to the banks. But of itself it renders the land sterile and desolate.

About three miles north of Engedi are strong hot sulphur springs that bubble up from the gravel. They run into the lake, and considerably raise its temperature.

The exact dimensions of the Dead Sea were for some time uncertain, being differently estimated by different travellers; but Lieutenant Lynch's survey in 1848 settled all doubts. The length of it from its northern to its southern extremity is forty-six miles; its greatest breadth (its width, of course, varying) is ten or eleven miles.

In the middle ages the wildest stories about this strange and awful region prevailed. It was supposed that the vapour proceeding from its waters was so injurious and destructive of animal life, that if birds only flew over the lake they would fall dead into it. Maundrell was perhaps the first who contradicted these traditions. He says: "It is a common tradition that birds attempting to fly over this sea drop dead into it, and that no fish nor other sort of animal can endure these deadly waters. The former report I saw actually confuted, by several birds flying about and over the sea without receiving any visible harm; the latter also I have some reason to suspect as false, having observed among the pebbles on the shore two or three shells of fish resembling oyster shells. These were cast up by the waves at two hours' distance from the mouth of Jordan—which I mention lest it should be suspected that they might be brought into the sea that way."—"*Journey from Aleppo to Jerusalem*," *by Henry Maundrell*, 1697.

Recent exploration assures us that Maundrell's shell-fish could not have come from the sea itself, as no fish will live in it; those brought down by the Jordan dying the moment they enter the lake.

The range of hills at the south of the Dead Sea, of which we have already spoken, —the Jebel 'Usdûm—are enormous masses of rock-salt, with a crown of gypsum and chalk. They run from west to east, and are from three to four hundred feet high, with sharp little peaks and ridges at the top. They are much broken and distorted, and, here and there, where harder portions have kept their place, while the adjoining mountain has melted or worn off, are pillars of salt standing erect and alone, one of

which bears amongst the Arabs the name of "Lot's Wife."[1]

Most of our readers will have seen Holman Hunt's picture of the "Scapegoat." In it he has faithfully portrayed this portion of the surroundings of the Dead Sea, and from his fine painting we may form a perfect idea of this scene of awful desolation.

The finest view of the Dead Sea is perhaps obtained from the cliffs at the north-west, where the Jordan enters it. The lake looks like a sheet of silver sparkling in the light; grand mountains bound it on the west and east, and from the white or yellow heights of the west the eye wanders to the red mountain of Moab on the east.

The chief historical fact associated with this sea is the terrible destruction of the Wicked Cities of the Plain. Their sites have been much contested; yet, we think, that it is quite clear that they were situated at the north end of it.

Abraham and Lot, standing on one of the hills of stony Bethel, could see Zoar, the Dead Sea, and the rich plain north of it. It has been proved by explorers that there is only one hill from which this much can be seen, and that the southern part of the sea is entirely hidden by the mountain of Engedi. The view was lovely. The Hebrew's eyes rested on a plain rich in magnificent pastures, with clumps of fine trees, silver streamlets and a glorious river. It seemed to him like the Garden of the Lord for beauty and fertility. He chose it at once, and drove his flocks and herds thither. But they and he were swept soon after from the plain by the hosts of Chedorlaomer, and carried away captive. Rescued by Abraham, he then seems to have gone to live within the city of Sodom itself. But the home he had chosen was one where, we are told, his righteous soul was vexed by the wickedness of his neighbours. Why he did not return to his tent-life we do not hear. He was hurried off by the warning and friendly angels who even then had to take his hand and draw him out of this abode of sin. He owed his safety a second time to the kinsman he had forsaken; it was Abraham's wonderful prayer that saved him. Yet he does not think of entirely leaving the place, he intercedes for little Zoar, and is permitted to go there. He had seen Zoar from the hill of Bethel, therefore it must be north, but it was close to Sodom, for between dawn and sunrise he entered it with his daughters.

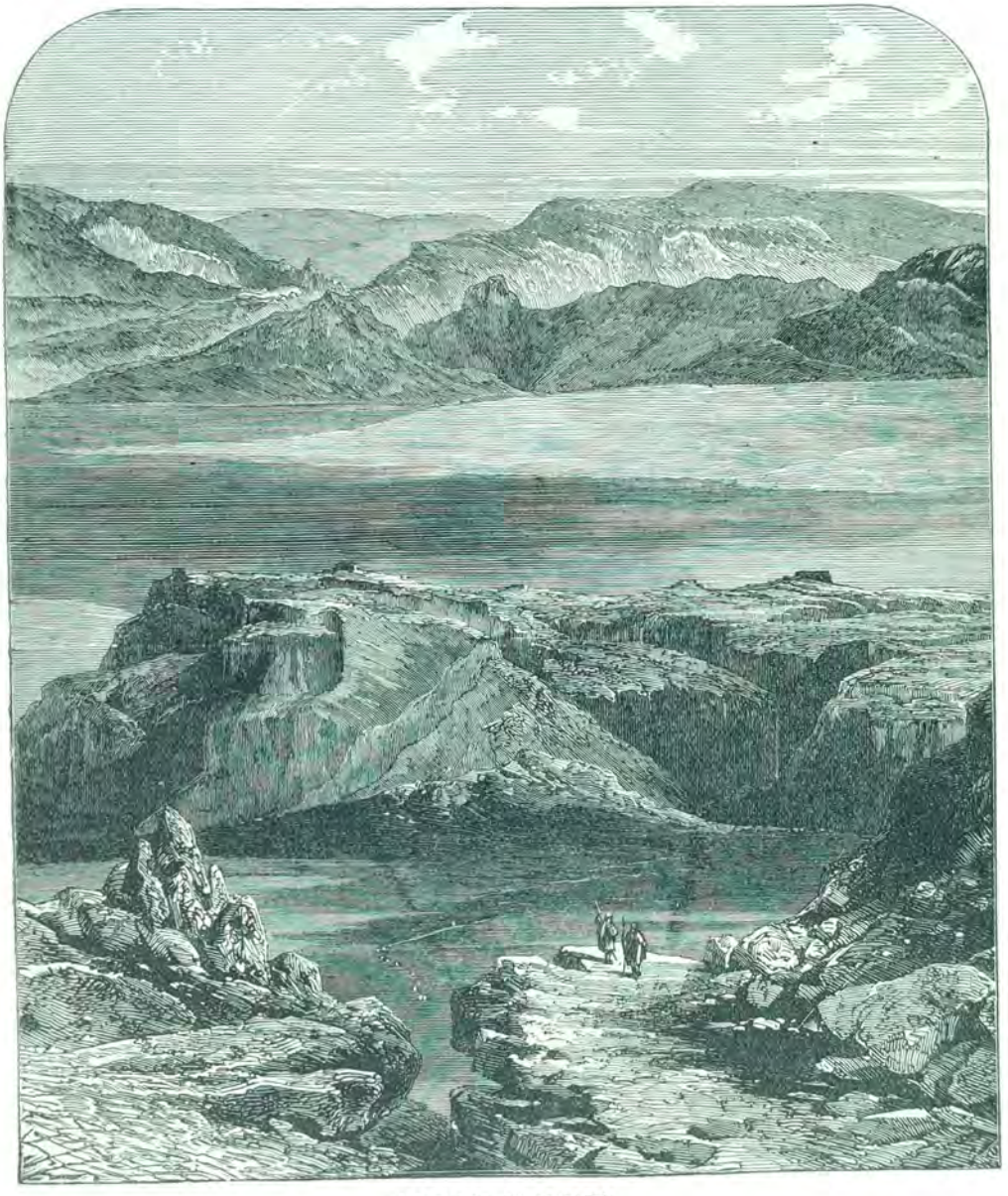
At the north of the sea there are five mounds, the mark, as we have seen, of ruined towns; these may be the remains of the doomed cities, for we have no authority from the Bible for supposing that they were swallowed up or buried under the sea according to old tradition. Their walls would be cemented by bitumen, which they used as mortar, and the ground and rocks around them were of the most inflammable materials. A flash of lightning, and no doubt the storm was fearful, would easily set fire to the cities, and the fire from God consumed them to ashes.

There is no mention of earthquake, of which we read in other places, and St. Peter speaks of the Cities of the Plain not as swallowed up but as reduced to ashes.

We must again quote Maundrell, who had been taught to believe that the cities were under the sea. "Being desirous," he says, "to see the remains (if there are any) of those cities anciently situated in this place, and made so dreadful an example of the divine vengeance, I diligently surveyed the waters as far as my eye could reach; but neither could I discern any heaps of ruins, nor any *smoke ascending above the surface of the water*, as is usually described in the writings and maps of geographers. But yet I must not omit

[1] The Arabs also call the sea itself "Bahr Lout"—that is the Sea of Lot. In the Middle Ages the pillar mentioned was really believed to be "Lot's Wife." Benjamin of Tudela says, "Two parasangs from the sea stands the salt pillar into which Lot's wife was metamorphosed, and although the sheep continually lick it, the pillar grows again and remains in the same state."

what was confidently attested to me by the father guardian, and the procurator of Jerusalem, both men in years and seemingly not destitute either of sense or probity, viz., that they had once actually seen one of these ruins; that it was so near the shore, and the waters so shallow at that time, that they, together with some French-



DEAD SEA AT MASADA.

men, went to it, and found there several pillars and other fragments of buildings." The writer naïvely adds: "The cause of our being deprived of this sight was, I suppose, the height of the water." But it is quite possible that ruins might be brought down by the Jordan in the course of the centuries of decay, and have been

washed to the shore. We are not told at which end of the sea they may have been seen.

The southern end of the sea must always have been bounded by the salt mountains and by the salt marshes and plains that surround them. The scene is, as we have said, a scene of the most awful desolation, even like a land accursed, and it is this appearance that probably suggested it as the scene of the destruction of the cities.

West of Mar Saba is the high mountain-top called the Watch Tower, El-Muntar. It is a bare, brown hill with steep slopes broken only by precipices; it was, in Major Conder's opinion, a place famous for a peculiarity of the Israelitish religion.

God's law had ordered that a goat should be taken, that the High Priest should lay his hand on its head and thus place on it all the sins of the nation; it was then to be sent by the hand of a fit man into the wilderness to perish.

But it so chanced in later times that one of these doomed animals found its way back from the desert to Jerusalem. It was naturally thought to be a very evil omen, and, in order that the sin-laden animal might really perish, it was decreed that it should be thrown from the top of a high steep hill, by which it would be killed before it reached the bottom.

It was driven out of Jerusalem on the Sabbath; and as the law limited the Sabbath journey to two thousand cubits, a booth was erected at that distance to represent the home of the "fit man" who took it. If he just ate and drank in it, it represented his home, and he could start afresh for another Sabbath day's journey. Ten of these booths were required for the distance between the selected hill and the Temple; that is about six and a half miles. The hill named the Watch Tower is just at this distance, and there is a well close to it called Bir es-Suk, the name given by the Israelites to the hill of the Scapegoat. Here, therefore, we may conclude this singular sacrifice was offered. The Hebrews called the district Hidoodim; it is now known as Hadeidûn.

The creature was thus sent into the wilderness, for Jeshimon seen from the hill-top is a wilderness of the most hideous desolation.

The Arabs who are found on the shores and in the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea, are the Ta'âmireh; but Arabs of the Rashâyideh, a very small clan, are almost stationary at Engedi, and are half fellahin, cultivating a portion of the soil in the spring.

Skirting the base of the peak called Ras esh-Shukf, a height which stands 2,520 feet above the sea, the traveller's road lies over the tableland of Husâsah, a bleak and desolate journey, without any water except rain-water.

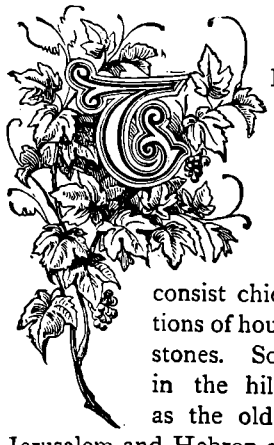
After a ride of some hours the traveller comes to the Valley of the Staircase, Wady Derajeh. It is a ravine a hundred feet deep, the banks very rugged, and the descent difficult. It is a continuation of Wady Kureitûn. Then comes Wady Ta'âmireh, the territory of the tribe we have already mentioned; a road from it branches to the right leading to the pass of Nukb et Trâbeh, down which we should find, on the margin of the sea, a fountain of the same name. Canon Tristram walked hence to Engedi, mapping the coast line, a difficult and even dangerous task, except for a very active, steady-headed person. Proceeding from 'Ain et Trâbeh along the coast, we come to 'Ain Ghuweir.

Thence the way follows the edge of the sea till it reaches the entrance to Wady en Nar, and ascends Râs-Feshkhah. Near its entrance Wady en Nar is joined by Wady 'Amriyeh; here is a great projecting cliff called Tubk 'Amriyeh.

Major Conder thinks that 'Amriyeh is radically indentical with Gomorrah. There is a copious and perennial spring here, and both Major Conder and M. de Saulcy fix the site of Gomorrah here.

A road, which may be reached from a ridge above Engedi, leads to Tekoa, a town which we have not yet mentioned.

TEKOA-TEKÛA.



TEKOA is now a mere ruin on the top of a hill 2,600 feet above the sea. The ruins cover four or five acres on the hill, and consist chiefly of the foundations of houses built of squared stones. Some of these, lying in the hillside, are bevelled as the old Jewish stones at Jerusalem and Hebron are.

There is also the ruin of a castle that once commanded the town; the remains of a Greek Church, and fragments of its columns; and a baptismal font of rose-coloured limestone. There are also numerous rock-cisterns. It was in Tekoa that the woman dwelt whose renown for wisdom induced Joab to seek her out as his emissary for reconciling the king to Absalom.

Dressed in mourning, at the instigation of Joab, the woman of Tekoa came before David, and throwing herself at his feet,cried, Help, O king! And the king said, What aileth thee? She answered, Of a truth I am a widow-woman, and my husband is dead. And thy handmaid had twin sons, and they two strove together in the field, but the one smote the other and killed him. And behold, the whole family is risen against thine handmaid, and they said, Deliver him who smote his brother, that we may kill him for the life of his brother that he slew, and so destroy the heir also; thus shall they quench my coal that is left, and shall leave to my husband neither name nor remembrance upon the face of the earth. And the king said to the woman, Go to thine house, and I will give charge concerning thee." The woman continues to urge that her son might be protected from the avenger of blood, and the king promised that not a hair of his head should be hurt. Then she turns, as she had purposed, on David, and says, "In speaking this word the king is as one which is guilty, in that the king doth not fetch home again *his* banished one. For we must needs die, and are as water spilt on the ground which cannot be gathered up again; neither doth God take away life, but deviseth means, that he that is banished be not an outcast from Him."

The king perceived that his people wished his reconciliation with his son, and permitted Absalom to return to Jerusalem.

Tekoa was fortified by Rehoboam, anxious, no doubt (as we find he fortified other towns), to defend it and them against Jeroboam.

Amos, the prophet, whose prophecy was given in the days of Uzziah, king of Judah, and Jeroboam, the son of Joash, king of Israel, "two years before the earthquake," was amongst the herdsmen of Tekoa when the prophetic spirit of God fell on him. Whether he was born here we do not know, but it is probable that he was, for the inhabitants of Tekoa were chiefly herdsmen, as they are to this day.

It was to Tekoa that the Maccabee brothers, Jonathan, Simon and John fled from Bacchides, the Syrian general, after the gallant Judas Maccabeus was slain. John, who had been sent by his brothers south of the Dead Sea to arrange a treaty with the Nabatheans, was cut off and taken prisoner by the Ammonites from across Jordan. Simon and Jonathan remained at Tekoa, and here an opportunity offered itself for revenging the fate of John. It was told them that the Ammonite leader, who had seized their brother, was about to give his daughter in marriage to a great

man who dwelt west of Jordan. The wedding was to be a splendid affair. The bride was to be led from her home by a grand retinue, as befitted her rank; for her father was a great Canaanitish Prince. Jonathan and Simon hearing all the details of the bride's intended progress, hid themselves in the mountains to intercept it. They watched a long train of camels and mules laden with much spoil go by; and then the bridegroom came to meet them, with his friends and kindred, "with timbrels and instruments of music." The processions joined and marched on together. But now Jonathan and his followers burst from their ambush and fiercely attacked the bridal party. Many of them he slew; the others fled into the mountains. The procession was broken up, and Jonathan took great spoils. "Thus was the marriage



TEKOA.

turned into mourning and the noise of their melody into lamentation."[1]

A savage and unchivalrous revenge, of which we hope brave Judas would not have been guilty.

The district between Mar Saba and Urtas is very desolate. Here David, in his boyhood and youth, kept his sheep. It was here that he fought the lion and the bear, then and for many a century afterwards common beasts of prey in Palestine.

El Saba, the founder of the monastery of Mar Saba, established a monastery here.

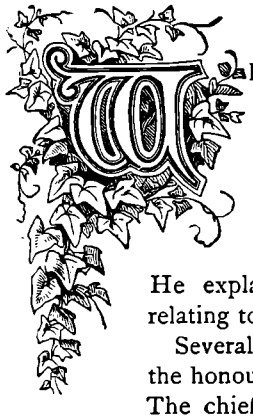
The population of Tekoa was Christian at the time of the First Crusade, and helped the Crusaders in the first siege of Jerusalem. In 1144 Queen Melisinda exchanged Tekoa, which had been settled on her, with the Canons of the Holy Sepulchre, for property at Bethany.

[1] 1 Macc. ix. 35–41.

Finally the village was taken by the Turks, and the inhabitants murdered; since that time it has not been occupied, though a few people sometimes take shelter here in the caves. The view from Tekoa is very fine, comprising the wilderness of Judah, Bethlehem, and Jericho.

Jerome says that the tomb of Amos was shown to him at Tekoa, though the prophet had died in 789 B.C.

EMMAUS, KIRJATH-JEARIM, AND 'AIN-KARIM.



WE have not yet spoken of the spot so memorable for the appearance of our Risen Lord to the two disciples with whom He walked, and to whom He explained the Scriptures relating to Himself.

Several places have claimed the honour of being on its site. The chief of these is Amwas, slightly north-west from Jerusalem, which was long its traditionary site; but it is too far from Jerusalem to be considered "a Sabbath day's journey," being twenty miles from the Holy City. Josephus says that "Emmaus, if it be interpreted, may be rendered "a warm bath useful for healing." Amwas was celebrated in early Christian times for possessing such a spring, and for this cause and with a likeness in the name, obtained the dignity of the Biblical site.

Major Conder, however, thinks that he has identified Emmaus in a ruin called Khamasa, about three miles and a half south-east of Atab. The distance of this spot from Jerusalem is exactly that given by St. Luke and Josephus.

The valley in which this ruin was found is full of shady gardens, with groves of orange and lemon trees, and copious springs to water them. A Roman road from Jerusalem passed close by it.

It would be within the walk from Jerusalem and back that, as we know from St. Luke, was taken by Cleopas and his companion; for as soon as they had recognised who it was that had walked with them "they rose up that very hour and returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven gathered together and them that were with them," so the night could not have been far advanced.

Cowper's relation of this wonderful event is worth reading here:—

"It happened on a solemn eventide,
Soon after He that was our Surety died,
Two bosom friends each pensively inclined,
The scene of all those sorrows left behind,
Sought their own village, busied as they went
In musings worthy of the great event.
They spake of Him they loved, of Him whose life,
Though blameless, had incurred perpetual strife,
Whose deeds had left, in spite of hostile arts,
A deep memorial graven in their hearts.
The recollection like a vein of ore
The farther traced, enriched them still the more;
They thought Him, and they justly thought Him, One
Sent to do more than He appeared to have done;
To exalt a people, and to place them high
Above all else, and wondered He should die.
Ere yet they brought their journey to an end,
A stranger joined them, courteous as a friend,
And asked them with a kind, engaging air,
What their affliction was and begged a share.
Informed, He gathered up the broken thread,
And, truth and wisdom gracing all He said,
Explained, illustrated, and searched so well
The tender theme on which they chose to dwell,
That, reaching home, 'The night,' they said, 'is
near,

We must not now be parted ; sojourn here."—
The new acquaintance soon became a guest,
And made so welcome at their simple feast,
He blessed the bread, but vanished at the word,
And left them both exclaiming, ''Twas the Lord !
Did not our hearts feel all He deigned to say?
Did they not burn within us by the way? '
Now theirs was converse such as it behoves
Man to maintain and such as God approves."

Kolonieh, a village about two miles north of 'Ain Karim has also been supposed to be on the site of the New Testament Emmaus. The reason for the assumption was, that Vespasian settled a number of his veteran soldiers "at Emmaus," and he did so here; but he may also have installed them at Khamasa. The Talmud says that the village was called Kolonieh, because it was a "colonia," a place free from taxes.

The village is on the side of a hill, green patches of crops surrounding it. The valley approaching it is lovely with springs flowing from the hillside.

It is a charming spot, and one would like to think that the favoured disciples really walked down the beautiful valley with their Risen and tender Saviour in the sweet eventide. But in all respects, Major Conder's identification of Khamasa seems the right one.

In this portion of the land, the Palestine surveyors think they have also identified another famous site—that of Kirjath, Jearim, which Major Conder thinks is on the spot where there is a heap of ruins called Khurbet Erma. It is four miles east of Bethshemesh ('Ain Shems), but high up above it, being a thousand feet above the sea level.

The ruins are on a bold point of rock, running out from the southern slope, while a platform of rock rises in the centre above the olive trees near it; these ruins look very much like the remains of an ancient town, the walls showing marks of mortar. On the south is a great cistern covered with a large, old, hollowed stone. To the east is a rock-cut wine-press. If this is Kirjath-Jearim, the Ark was carried from Bethshemesh hither, and it was from here that David carried it, with all befitting reverence and pomp, towards Jerusalem; but the fate of Uzzah who died for putting his hand—perhaps irreverently—on the Ark, alarmed him, and he turned aside and placed it in the house of Obed-Edom, the Gittite. Was he a relative of David's faithful Ittai?

And the Ark of the Lord remained in the house of Obed-Edom the Gittite three months; and the Lord blessed Obed-Edom and all his house. Then David, reassured, brought it to Jerusalem.

'AIN KARIM lies in a spot where several valleys meet. The hills round them are sprinkled with groups of houses or small hamlets, and the slopes are covered with olive groves. The valleys are very fertile, thanks to the Franciscan Community which has been established here for some centuries; they have taught the fellahin by example and precept, and in consequence the valleys are green and smiling. The Order was settled here because the spot was believed to be the home of Zacharias and Elizabeth, the parents of the Baptist. There is a well dedicated to these holy persons, and a fine spring, "the spring of the Virgin Mary," to which there is a descent by two flights of steps, through the arches, standing alone, of an old church. There are other old walls here, but new houses have been built in the village.

The Monastery dedicated to St. John the Baptist is on a low hill and is inclosed in a strong castellated wall.

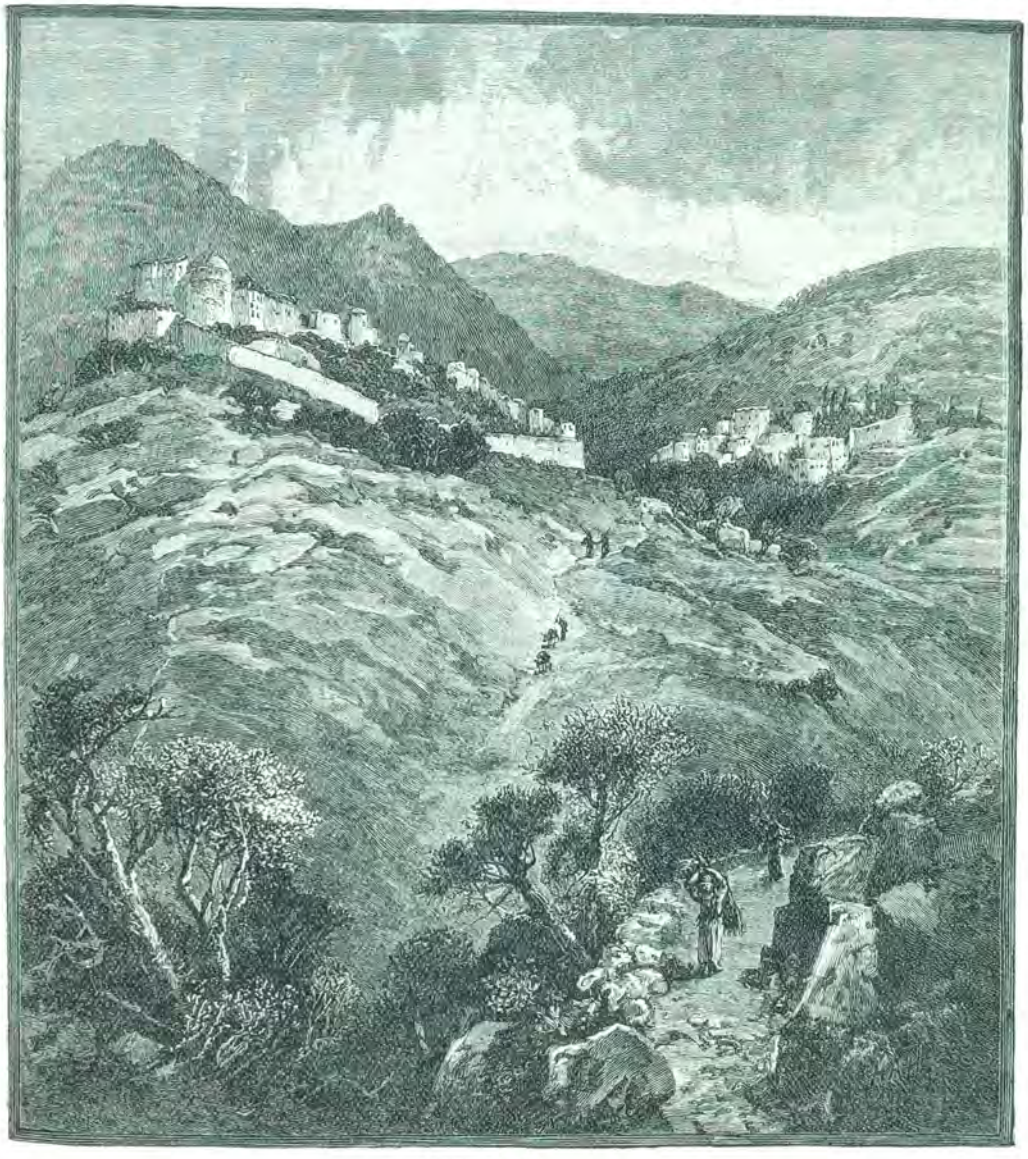
The church is called "the Magnificat," and beneath it is the grotto where St. John was said to have been born. It has a domed roof.

The spot was regained from the Moslems by Louis XIV., for the Franciscans, and rebuilt and well repaired by him.

Separated from the chapel by a ravine is another chapel built on the supposed site of Elizabeth's house, where the Virgin visited

her. This is certainly the "hill country," and there is not much doubt about its having been the place of the Baptist's birth, though of course it was not in the neighbouring desert that he commenced his public ministry.

Of the early life of the Baptist we know even less than we do of the childhood and



'AIN KARIM.

early life of his Divine Master. But one cannot doubt that Mary, who stayed for three months with her cousin Elizabeth on that visit, must have taken her son to see the priest's family afterwards; and that the perfect excellence of the Holy Child must have been well known to John; for when Jesus came to be baptized, he at first refused, saying, "I have need to be baptized of Thee, and comest Thou to

me?" It was of our Lord's private life that he spoke, for the public life of Jesus had not yet begun.

It was, however, in a smiling valley amidst hills, and vales, and groves, that the childhood of the great ascetic was passed, and it was, as it were, in opposition to his habits and the comfort of the priest's household that he departed to the other side of Jordan and lived on locusts and wild honey. Locusts were a food allowed to the Jews by the Mosaic Law; and they are still eaten in many parts of the East, and wild honey was then, as now, abundant; not the less it was rough fare—that of the poorest of the people, and the Forestaller's life was one of utter self-denial. The Latins call the place *St. Jean du Désert.*

JOSHUA'S TOMB.

IBNEH is thought by many to be on the site of Timnath-Heres, "the portion of the sun," previously called Timnath Serah, "the portion of abundance," and it is here that, from the fact of the place possessing a tomb of some consequence, and that it has been a tradition of the Christian Church for many centuries, the tomb of Joshua is supposed to be.

Timnath-Serah, in the hill country of Ephraim, was given to Joshua by the Israelites, after the distribution of the land was ended, at his own request, and "he built the city and dwelt therein." And we are told, in the 24th chapter of Joshua, that he was buried on the border of his inheritance in Timnath-Serah, which is in "the hill country of Ephraim, on the north of the mountain of Gaash."

It is clear that Timnath-Serah was the burial-place of Joshua. The only doubt is where the place was situated—at Tîbneh or at Kefr Hâris, nine miles south of Nablûs. The doubt cannot be decided. But that some very great personage was buried here there is no doubt. A magnificent oak, said to be the largest tree in Palestine, which grows west of the tomb has been named by the people Sheik et-Teim, or "the Chief Servant of God," probably from the belief that Joshua, who so well merited the name, was here buried.

It is also believed to be the site of an important town mentioned by Joshua, Thimnathah.

The ruins here stand on a tell, two hundred yards from east to west, and a hundred from north to south. The old Roman road runs by the south base of the tell, and the deep valley of Wady Reiya on the north. There is a low hill, with rock-cut tombs in it, on the other side of the Roman road. It is a portion of an ancient graveyard, and the tomb situated the furthest west has been identified as Joshua's. There is a porch of some size in front of it, and a pier of rock. The façade inside has more than two hundred niches for holding lamps, and the smoke has blackened them. A small doorway leads into a chamber of twelve or thirteen feet square with a stone-bench running along the side and back walls. It is only six feet high, and on each of the walls are fine fan-shaped *kokim*, with arched roofs. A passage opening from the back wall leads to an inner room at the end of which is one *koka* only. This room is strangely shaped, being much wider in front than at the back.

Guérin is quite certain that this is really the Hebrew leader's tomb, but both Jews and Samaritans think that Kefr Hâris is the place.

Two miles beyond this town is a large Christian village named 'Abûd. It is in a prosperous condition, and possesses a very old church and the remains of four other churches. But 'Abûd is chiefly remarkable for its tombs, which are almost like those of the judges at Jerusalem. There are nine of them, described by the Palestine Exploration Survey (Mem., ii. 361–364). They extend along a terrace at the base of the rocks, and are very large and ornate. They are called Mokât 'a 'Abûd, or the quarries of 'Abûd.

Dr. Sandreczki, of Jerusalem, thinks that the Thimnatha mentioned by Josephus may have been situated here.

THE TOMB OF THE MACCABEES.

IN 1869 a German traveller, Dr. Sandreczki, pointed out Midieh, a mountain village six miles east of Lydda, as the probable site of Modin, the native city of the Maccabees, and where they were buried. Its site had previously been believed to be identical with Soba or Latron, on the road from Ramleh to Jerusalem. The latter, in the fifteenth century, was thought to be certainly the town of the Maccabees, and a church to their memory had been built there long before that period. But it seems to have been a mistaken site.

Midieh is a village of mud and stone houses, with a small olive grove below it on the north. It is on the top of a hill, separated from other hills by valleys on three sides. On a knoll on the summit are some rock-cut tombs, but these are not supposed to be the sepulchre of the Maccabees. M. Guérin found ruins which he thinks answer to the account of the Modin monument, close to the village, on the top of a hill rising more than seven hundred feet above the plain, north of the village. The foundation walls of a great rectangular building were discovered by digging, and it was found to contain cells for burial inside it, hewn in the rock. Some bones were actually found in them.

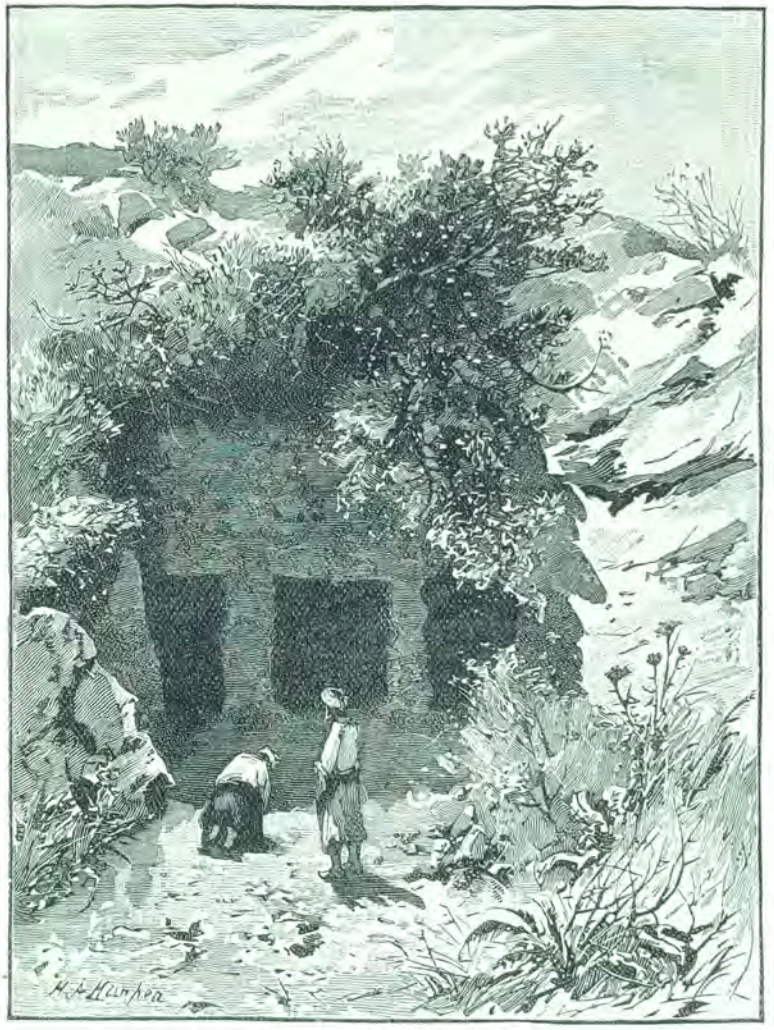
A German architect, Herr Mauss, declares that these burial-places are seven, and answer to the number of the Maccabees. Could it be possible that these were the bones of that heroic family? Simon, the last of the five brethren, erected a monument to them.

"Then," says the First Book of Maccabees, "sent Simon and took the bones of Jonathan, his brother, and buried them in Modin, the city of his fathers. . . . Simon also built a monument upon the sepulchre of his father and his brethren, and raised it aloft to the sight, with hewn stones behind and before. Moreover, he set up seven pyramids, one against another, for his father, and his mother, and his four brethren; and in these he made cunning devices, about the which he set great pillars, and upon the pillars he made all their armour for a perpetual memory, and by the armour ships carved, that they might be seen of all that sail on the sea. This is the sepulchre that he made at Modin."

Midieh appears to answer to this de-

scription as to position, for it can be seen from the sea; and the mark of where a pyramid has been erected has been found.

The memory of the Maccabees ought not to have perished out of the land, for a more heroic and patriotic family never lived. The father, Mattathias, a priest of the sons of Joarib, withstood with his sons and brethren the order of Antiochus to sacrifice to idols. The cruelties and oppressions of Antiochus Epiphanes in Judea are well known. His army had fortified



TOMB OF THE MACCABEES.

Jerusalem with a "great and strong wall, and with mighty towers, and made it a stronghold for them," and they carried thither the spoils of the towns they had destroyed. They shed innocent blood on every side in the holy city, and "the inhabitants of Jerusalem fled because of them: whereupon the city was made a habitation of strangers, and became strange to those who were born in her, and her own children left her." Burnt towns, hideous massacres, infants hanged round their mothers' necks, called on the nation for resistance, and when Mattathias spoke

defiance the people re-echoed his words. He died, and his greater son, Judas, took his place, his brethren willingly giving the leadership to him.

His first battle was with Apollonius, who "gathered together the Gentiles, and a great host out of Samaria, to fight against Israel. The victory remained with the Jewish champion, who killed the Syrian general, and took possession of his sword, which he wore ever afterwards, and used against the enemies of his country.

Now when Seron, a prince of the army of Syria, heard that Judas had "a company of the faithful to go out with him to war, he resolved to make himself a name by fighting him. He assembled a very large army, 'a mighty host,' and marched to the going up of Beth-horon. Judas had advanced to meet him with a small company, who, when they saw the great host coming to meet them, said to Judas, 'How shall we be able, being so few, to fight against so great a multitude, and so strong, seeing that we are ready to faint with fasting all this day?' Judas answered, 'It is no hard matter for many to be shut up in the hands of a few; and with the God of heaven it is all one to deliver with a great multitude or a small company: for the victory of battle standeth not in the multitude of an host; but strength cometh from heaven. They come against us in much pride and iniquity, to destroy us and our wives and children, and to spoil us; but we fight for our lives and our laws. Wherefore the Lord Himself will overthrow them before our faces; and as for you, be ye not afraid of them.'

"As soon as he had ceased speaking he commanded his troops to charge, and rushing suddenly and with desperate valour on the Syrian army, it was defeated utterly and fled. It was on the very spot where Joshua had pursued the Canaanitish army 'from the going down of Beth-horon unto the plain' that Judas pursued the army of Seron. Eight hundred of his soldiers were slain, the rest 'fled into the land of the Philistines.'"

When the news of Seron's defeat reached Antiochus Eupator, he was furious with anger. He raised immediately a large army, and placed it under the command of Lysias, a nobleman whom he could entirely trust. Lysias first despatched Ptolemy, the son of Dorymenes, Nicanor, and Gorgias into Palestine with forty thousand foot soldiers and seven thousand cavalry, "to destroy the land; and they pitched their camp by Emmaus in the plain country."

So certain did their victory appear to be that slave-merchants came to the host with much gold to buy the defeated children of Israel.

The people were not, however, dismayed. They held a solemn fast, read in the Book of the Law, and prayed fervently for aid from heaven. Then Judas marshalled his troops. He made captains of thousands and of hundreds, of fifties and of tens; but he retained only willing warriors; he sent home the betrothed men, those engaged in building or planting, and those who expressed fear; reminding us of our own fifth Harry, who, before he embarked for Agincourt, did much the same, including, by a tenderer touch than the Jews, "every widow's only son."

The camp of Judas pitched south of Emmaus. Gorgias laid a plot to attack and destroy the Jews in the night; but Judas heard of it, and vacated his camp quietly; and when Gorgias gained the Jewish tents in the darkness he found them empty. He fancied the army had fled, and pursued them to the mountains; but the morning light showed Judas on the plain with three thousand men, and the trumpets of Israel rang out their defiance. The remainder of Gorgias's army attacked them at once, but were defeated and driven off, pursued to Gazera, the plain of Idumea, Azotus, and Jamnia.

The pursuers, returning from the mountain, saw that their host had been defeated, and that the Jews were burning their tents. They fled at once, leaving Judas victor.

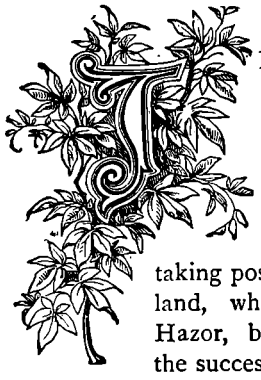
The interval of peace that followed was

employed by the pious Maccabees in cleansing the Temple sanctuary, rebuilding the desecrated altar, and replacing the holy things. Then solemn sacrifices were offered once more in His Temple to Jehovah.

A number of battles followed. In the one with Lysias, which came immediately after the defeat of Gorgias, the Jews believed that an angel of God in a white habit, and with a gold lance, led them to victory.

But the end came at last. Judas fell in battle. All but eight hundred of his soldiers had left him in a panic, but he ventured with this small number to confront the immense army led by Bacchides, and fell gallantly fighting. His brother Jonathan succeeded him; both he and Simon had valiantly fought throughout this struggle for freedom to worship God, and he proved, when in power, a wise ruler of the people.

HAZOR IDENTIFIED WITH HARRAR, AND HAROSHETH OF THE GENTILES.



ERICHO and Ai had fallen; the five kings of Central Palestine had perished in their conflict with the Israelites, who were taking possession of the whole land, when Jabin, king of Hazor, becoming alarmed at the success of the invaders, resolved to oppose their progress northward. But they had shown themselves formidable foes, therefore the king—a prudent man, as his name signifies, formed a league, calling other kings to his standard. He sent messengers to Jobab, king of Madon, a place which has been identified with Madên, near Hattîn, west of the sea of Galilee; to the king of Shimron—now called Semunieh, a small village west of Nazareth, where there are ruins still to be seen, and on the east of it a small hill, scarped on the eastern side, and with the traces of a wall on its summit; here are heaps of rubbish, and the ruins of a Christian church. The hill commands the plain, and may once have been a strong position—even a fortified city—for the spies told Moses how the walls of the Canaanitish towns "towered to heaven," and were very strongly defended.

Another of the kings called to arms by Jabin was the king of Achshaph. Achshaph is a village now called Kefr Yasif, six miles north-east of Acre. There are no ruins here, only rock-cut cisterns. Jabin sent likewise to the kings that were on the north of the mountains, and of the plains south of Chinneroth, the Sea of Galilee, and to the borders of Dor, now Tanturah, on the west; to the Canaanite of the east and on the west, to the Amorite, the Hittite, the Perizzite and the Jebusite in the mountains, and to the Hivite under Hermon, in the land of Mizpeh—the great plain west of Mount Hermon, where Baalbek afterwards stood.

This strong league was to be opposed to the strange tribes that had come from the Desert. These sheikhs or kinglets were, as we have learned recently, subject princes rendering fealty to Pharaoh; by no means uncivilized savages, but possessed of all the arts and luxuries of the age.

The country Joshua conquered was full

of walled cities and temples, kings, soldiers, and artisans; to it traders brought the gems and gold of other lands, the embroidered robes of Babylon—one of Achan's fatal temptations,—implements, arms and armour, horses and chariots, of which the Israelites had great fear.

A strong confederacy this; and well might Joshua marvel how he could withstand it!

"And they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the seashore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many.

"And when all these kings were met together, they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom, to fight against Israel."[1]

Josephus contradicts the exact words of the text. He says the army was encamped at Beeroth, not far from Kades in Galilee. But we feel sure that the author of the Book of Joshua knew what he wrote, and was well-informed of facts, without even referring to inspiration. There is a plain at the south-east of the Waters of Merom, now Lake Hûleh. It was not, probably, a good place for the army to give battle in, but that is just what probably happened. Jabin was a bad general, and chose a bad position.

Joshua is told by God not to fear, for that the heathen army would be given into his hand.

"To-morrow about this time," said the Lord, "I will deliver them up all slain before Israel; and thou shalt hough their horses, and burn their chariots with fire."

"This time," was probably the night, and Joshua, falling with suddenness on the great host, badly placed and ill-commanded, surprised and entirely defeated them. They fled in three directions: one body north-west to Zidon; another to Misrephoth-Maim,—the smelting pits by the waters; the third party to Mizpeh, west of Hermon. They were slain, chased, driven away. The horses were killed; the chariots burned. On his return from the pursuit, Joshua took Hazor and burnt it with fire, but the cities "on their mounds" (that were not fortified is probably meant) he left. The kings and their cities were all utterly destroyed.

This battle completed the Conquest of Canaan. Sir Charles Wilson has identified Hazor, or rather its ruins, with those of Harrar, on the summit of a hill about a mile back from the west side of Lake Hûleh. Major Conder thinks the site is to be found in Haderah, about three miles further inland in nearly the same direction.

The ruins at Harrar must, however, be those of some great ancient town of about the date of Hazor. The top of the hill is still partly surrounded by a strong wall, once flanked by great square towers, the wall and towers being built of massive blocks of rudely-hewn stone, without cement.

There are heavy polygonal masses of ruins in many places, and the whole presents a picture of a ruined fortress of the days that have long been past; and yet they are probably *not* the ruins of the first Hazor, for it was afterwards rebuilt, and another Jabin inhabited it.

It may not be amiss to mention here the records that have been recently discovered in Egypt of Joshua's invasion of Palestine, written by the other side, but which tend to confirm the Scriptural account of the Hebrew conquest.

In 1887, there were found in the ruins of Amenophis IV.'s palace, at about one hundred and eighty miles from Cairo, the Tell el-Amarna tablets of clay, on which, in cuneiform characters, the officials of the king of Egypt in different parts of his empire, kept him informed of events, or appealed to him for help. These letters were from Amorites, Phœnicians, Philistines, and Canaanites, and were written about 1480 before Christ. Amongst them were some from Adonizedek, king of Jerusalem.

In them we see the other side of the

[1] Josh. xi. 1–6.

shield; the story of the vanquished Canaanites.

It appears that at that period the kings of Canaan were vassals of Pharaoh. King Adonizedek sends one very long letter about the invasion of the Hebrew tribes. It tells of defeat and of rebellion, and he adds:— "To the King my Lord is mourning thus, Adonizedek, thy servant. They have prevailed: they have taken the fortress of Jericho. Behold, as for me, my father is not, and my army is not. The tribe that has ground me in this place is very rebellious to the king. The same is gathering near me for the house of my father. . . . I say to the Paka, resident of the king my Lord, 'Why is the land in slavery to the chief of the Abiri (Hebrews)?' and the rulers fear the end. . . . The Hebrew chiefs plunder all the king's land."

Another tablet relates that Gibeon has joined the Hebrews. "The king's land," he writes, "rebels to the chief of the Hebrews and now against this capital city U-ru-sa-lim (Jerusalem)." He begs for Egyptian soldiers, for his army has failed; he has sent away his princesses; "these people from Mount Seir have ruined the country." He speaks of Lachish, and begs that ships may be sent to the coast.

Then follows, we presume as an excuse for his defeats, these remarkable words:— "Lo, the king my Lord will be just to me, because these chiefs are SORCERERS." What else could this helpless king think them, remembering how Jericho's walls fell at the blast of the Hebrew trumpets? "They have caused the destruction of the city of Ajalon. Truly we are leaving the city (Jerusalem); the chiefs of the garrison have left, without an order through the wastings of this fellow whom I fear."

It is supposed that this letter was written after the defeat at Ajalon, perhaps in the cave of Makkedah, where the five kings had taken refuge, and were hiding themselves. It is observed that the clay of this tablet is different from the others.

There is much more than we have given, but we trust the reader will by-and-by learn something of these tablets from their decipherers.

There is one, we must add, from a lady — Basmath is her name — relating the troubles of the land. She speaks of her husband's death, and says she has taken refuge in a town on the Plain of Esdraelon.

There are many other letters, but some are much defaced, and the tablets broken; they are in Cairo, Berlin, and London. One cannot help pitying these people, but if they had not been nearly destroyed, they would have gradually made the world all evil; and they were evidently very effete and helpless, judging even from this poor king's wailings.

And though the will of God has been so manifested to us in His Word, that we seem to understand the judgment that fell on them, the fate of Britain (probably from the same cause) was much like that of Canaan, when the Saxons exterminated all the British, save those who took refuge in the Welsh mountains. In like manner a remnant of the Canaanites were left, and several of our travellers have thought that their descendants still dwell in the north of Palestine.[1]

There are, of course, other events recorded in the tablets; they are, the conquest of Damascus by the Hittites; that of Phœnicia by the Amorites; as well as that of Canaan by Joshua.

It appears that Rameses the Second, the oppressor of the Israelites, waged long war with the Hittites, who ruled Syria to the borders of Egypt. Rameses boasts of victory; but he withdrew his troops from Canaan, and left only tributary sheikhs (or kings); and his successor does not appear to have had any troops to spare. Many

[1] The account of the Egyptian Tablets we have given, is from notes written to a friend by Mr. Harper, the artist who has best reproduced the lovely sky and atmospheric colouring peculiar to the Holy Land. We must hope for a more perfect statement of this very ancient correspondence from his own pen.

were, we know, lost with Pharaoh in the Red Sea.

The accompanying illustration will give our readers a good idea of the tablets on which the Canaanitish king and his contemporaries wrote.

The second Jabin mentioned in the Bible fully avenged the previous defeat of Hazor by mightily oppressing the Israelites for twenty years. He is called king of Canaan; his father had been only king of Hazor, but this man, ruling a century and a half later, was much stronger; he had nine hundred chariots of iron, and the captain of his host was Sisera, of Harosheth of the Gentiles.

The Israelites had brought this trouble on themselves by forsaking and disobeying their Heavenly Father, and He thus recalls them to Himself by suffering. They repent



PART OF A LETTER IN CUNEIFORM CHARACTERS ON A CLAY TABLET.

This tablet was copied from the original by the Rev. Dr. T. W. Kretschmann, of Chestnut Hill, near Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States, using a metallic "stylus" of a peculiar form, made by Randolph Clay, enabling both the horizontal and perpendicular wedges to be readily and easily imprinted. This tablet is made of a highly micaceous clay, having, when dry and unfired, a lustrous satin-like surface of a light sandal-wood colour. Dr. Kretschmann has devoted special attention to contract tablets on which he is an authority. With the view of avoiding possible confusion, Dr. Kretschmann makes his copies either larger or smaller than the originals, inscribing in cuneiform the fact that they are modern imitations.

and cry unto the Lord for pardon, and their prayer is mercifully heard.

Israel, at the time, was ruled by a woman, a prophetess, named Deborah. Inspired by God, she sent for Barak out of Kedesh-Naphtali, and told him that God meant him to assemble the warriors of the north of Palestine—which appears to have been the part conquered and oppressed by Jabin—on Mount Tabor, to fight for their freedom. How he consented to go if the prophetess accompanied him, we know; and how Sisera came up with the nine hundred war-chariots, to be defeated and driven down into the Kishon; from thence to escape and die by the treacherous hand of a woman.[1]

[1] It is said that the "leben" or sour goat's milk that Jael gave her guest is soporific; it, of course, overpowered him, and rendered her crime easy.

"Harosheth of the Gentiles," the abode of Sisera, still survives as El-Harthiyeh, a village on the Kishon, about eight miles from Megiddo, and a great double mound near El-Harthiyeh, just where the Kishon reaches Carmel, was the fortress that Sisera erected to overawe the plain.

It was from the lattice of this fortress or tower that Deborah pictured the unhappy mother of Sisera looking over the plain and crying, "Why tarry the wheels of his chariot?" Then her wise ladies answer, and she does so herself, "Have they not sped? Have they not divided the prey?" etc.[1] Surely this lady must have made herself very hateful to the Israelites, since Deborah could thus rejoice at her sorrow!

Of course, the extermination of the wicked heathen nations, who would otherwise have corrupted the world, was right, as it was ordained by God; but the story is a very sad one.

From that day the hand of the children of Israel prospered and prevailed against Jabin, the king of Canaan, until they had destroyed Jabin, king of Canaan, who, like the king that Joshua defeated and slew, dwelt at Hazor. And the land had rest forty years.

As we have before said, Major Conder thinks that not Harrar but Hadireh (the name is an exact Arabic equivalent for the word), is the site of Hazor. If so, Jabin had chosen a good stronghold, for it is "a dark, bare, rocky hillock, near the flat, fertile plateau of Kadesh Naphthali, above the steep slopes which run eastwards to Jordan."

Kadesh Naphthali, the home of Barak, was situated four miles north-west of El-Hûleh, on a hill rising from a fine plain of the same name; but no traces of the city can now be found. There are, however, some interesting ruins of the Roman period; and it has a good spring, and fig and olive trees are round it. Kadesh was one of the oldest, and probably one of the most important cities of old Canaan, as it is mentioned in the list of towns conquered by Thothmes III., 1,600 years before Christ. It was very near Hazor.

[1] Judges v. 28–31.

ABEL-BETH-MAACAH, NOW ABIL.

THE village of Abil, formerly called Abel-Beth-maacah, was so celebrated for the wisdom of its inhabitants that "you should surely ask counsel at Abel," passed into a proverb. It was of such importance that it was styled "a city and a mother in Israel." It is pleasant to find that this wise race accepted the religion of Christ, and that it is now a Christian village.

Abel-Beth-maacah is famous also for having put an end to a civil war. When David returned after his flight from Absalom, he was met at Gilgal by the tribe of Judah and half the people of Israel who had hastened to welcome their king home

This readiness of Judah gave offence to the ten tribes. The men of Israel angrily demanded of David, "Why have our brethren, the men of Judah, stolen thee away, and have brought the king and his household and all David's men with him across Jordan?"

They had not forgotten that Judah had been David's kingdom before they had come under his sceptre; and they were jealous

of any especial favour being shown to his first subjects. The men of Judah, in answer, claimed David as next of kin to them, and the matter grew to a quarrel. There happened to be there a rebellious Benjamite, named Sheba. Judah and Benjamin were so united that it seems strange that Sheba should have joined the men of Israel, and incited them to rebellion; but he appears to have delighted in mischief, and to have been a man of bad character—"a man of Belial," the Bible calls him. This man seized his opportunity, blew a trumpet, and incited the tribes to rebellion, saying, "We have no part in David: to your tents, O Israel," which was the cry of revolt. The Israelites foolishly followed for a time this agitator, and David perceived that a rebellion even more dangerous than Absalom's might be expected.

He had pardoned Amasa, the general of Absalom's army, and now sent him to crush Sheba's rebellion; for David was still extremely angry with Joab for Absalom's death, and therefore put Amasa in his place. Amasa, however, proceeded so slowly—probably no one caring to follow the recent rebel—that David, seeing the danger of delay, ordered Abishai to take all the household troops, and pursue Sheba, "lest he should take him fenced cities," and give greater trouble.

At the great stone in Gibeon Abishai, who had been joined by his brother Joab without David's knowledge, met the dilatory Amasa. Joab had no idea of being superseded in his rank of commander-in-chief of David's armies, but he saluted Amasa with apparent friendship, saying, "Art thou in health, my brother? And he took Amasa by the beard with the right hand as if to kiss him." Amasa did not perceive or took no heed of the naked sword that Joab held in his hand. In a moment Joab struck him in the side, and appears to have cut him nearly in two. He fell dead on the road, and the murderer coolly went on with Abishai, all bathed in blood, from his girdle to his sandals, as David told Solomon, leaving the corpse of Amasa in the road, a hideous spectacle. One of Joab's men remained standing beside the blood-stained body, and said to all who came to the spot, "He that favoureth Joab, and he who is for David, let him go after Joab."

But the soldiers who came to that fatal spot paused, when they saw the dead Amasa in the highway, no doubt shocked and horrified. The man, perceiving this, removed the body of the unfortunate general into a field near at hand, and cast a cloth over him.

Then, unknowing of the crime, the men who came afterwards followed their old leader Joab. He sought Sheba vainly, however, through all the tribes of Israel, who had apparently deserted him, for some of them went in pursuit of him with Joab, and at last they found him in Abel-Beth-maacah, which they at once besieged. They raised a bank against it and battered the walls.

Then cried a wise woman from the walls, "Hear, hear; say, I pray you, unto Joab, Come near hither, that I may speak with thee."

"And when he was come near unto her, the woman said, Art thou Joab? And he answered, I am he. Then she said unto him, Hear the words of thine handmaid. Then she spake, saying, They were wont to speak in old time, saying, They shall surely seek counsel at Abel: and so they ended the matter. I am one of them that are peaceable and faithful in Israel: thou seekest to destroy a city and a mother in Israel: why wilt thou swallow up the inheritance of the Lord?

"And Joab answered and said, Far be it from me, that I should swallow up or destroy. The matter is not so: but a man of Mount Ephraim, Sheba, the son of Bichri, hath lifted up his hand against the king, even against David: deliver him only, and I will depart from the city. And the woman said unto Joab, Behold, his head shall be thrown to thee over the wall.

"Then the woman went unto all the

people in her wisdom." No doubt she explained the real state of the case; told them that immunity was promised to all except Sheba, and persuaded them to yield up the traitor; "and they cut off the head of Sheba, and cast it out to Joab." And Joab blew a trumpet and the siege was raised.

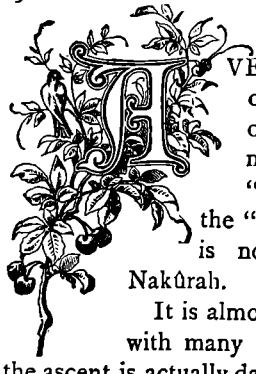
Joab returned to Jerusalem to the king. How David must have loathed the sight of him! But he was powerless against him. He had once used the murderer as his tool, when he ordered him to get Uriah killed, and he had never been free from his diabolical power since. Abner had been murdered; Absalom had been killed; now Amasa; and yet we read that "Joab was over all the host of Israel." No wonder that the old king on his death-bed warned his son against Joab, who indeed had long deserved death.

The wise woman probably prevented a civil war. But these Israelitish heroines are not pleasing characters. They seem to have been unsexed and savage. Jael is treacherous and cruel; Deborah pitiless; Judith an absolute murderess. Women under the Christian law are a different race.

Abel-Beth-maacah was taken in the days of Pekah, king of Israel, by Tiglath Pileser, king of Assyria, who at the same time took Kadesh and Hazor, Gilead and Galilee, all the land of Naphtali, and carried them captive to Assyria.

It is thought that this city may be also the Abel-Main which, long before Tiglath Pileser's invasion, had been taken by Benhadad, king of Syria, who had been bribed by king Asa to break his league with Baasha, king of Israel, because Baasha was building Ramah to shut in Judah and dominate it with a strong fortress. For this act Asa was severely reproved by a prophet of the Lord.

THE LADDER OF TYRE, NOW RAS-EN-NAKÛRAH.



EVERY steep and high cliff on the sea-shore of Palestine was named by the Romans "Scala Tyriorum," the "Ladder of Tyre;" it is now called Râs-en-Nakûrah.

It is almost a ladder of rock, with many rungs wanting, and the ascent is actually dangerous, as the path or steps are in the side of a cliff, in some places without the slightest baluster or parapet to screen the ascending traveller from the abyss below, where the sea dashes at its foot. The view from the summit is naturally magnificent; of the south and east nothing can be seen but the great curve of the shore, and Tyre on the west; the shore and sands curving again to Sidon lie below; while to the north tower Jebel Sunnin and Hermon.

The cliffs above are covered with myrtles, arbutus, maiden-hair fern, and many eastern shrubs.

This Pass has many historic memories, for by it came the chief invaders of Palestine. Over it marched Pul, Tiglath Pileser, Shalmaneser, Sennacherib, the Assyrian kings. Rameses II. crossed it on his road to conquest, and finally, across it came the most admirable of conquerors, Alexander the Great.

On the north side is an old ruined tower, called the Tower of the Escort. Here the road to Tyre runs by the sea-coast, sometimes nearer to the waves, sometimes further inland. The whole way is strewn with ruins and heaps of stones, marking the site of

many ruined towns, and showing how flourishing this coast once was. A bridge over a stream leads to Iskanderûneh, once believed to be the site of (and called) "Alexander's tent," where he had encamped, says tradition, when besieging Tyre.

At a short distance from Iskanderûneh is the "White Cape," up which the road runs. It is very dangerous, for the path-way without rail or parapet runs close to the edge of a precipice at the foot of which the sea beats. The path is not more than three feet wide. At the top of the cliff is a watch-tower, used as a guard-house for Turkish soldiers. The descent brings the traveller to Ras el 'Ain, the site of old Tyre, now a collection of large and ancient fountains.

TYRE, NOW SUR.

MODERN Tyre bears again its earliest name—a name from which that of Syria is derived, proving thus how ancient the city must be. Isaiah says of Tyre, "Is this your joyous city, whose antiquity is of ancient days, the crowning city, whose merchants are princes, whose traffickers are the honourable of the earth?" A wonderfully true description of ancient Tyre! Herodotus says that it was founded 2,300 years before his time. William of Tyre says it was founded by "Tyras, who was the seventh son of Japhet, the son of Noah." But there is no doubt that Tyre was really founded by Sidon, though it very soon became the greater city.

Tyre was justly called the "Queen of the Seas," for she boasted of having invented navigation and taught men how to make long voyages on the ocean. Phœnician mariners were found everywhere, even in that Ultima Thule, our own Cornwall. Its inhabitants were extremely intelligent; they had seen much more of the world than the other people of the earth had, and they had learned courtesy to strangers, whom they welcomed to their shores.

Tyre was often besieged. Shalmaneser of Assyria attempted to take it, and besieged it for five years, but in vain; Nebuchadnezzar besieged it for thirteen years, during which his troops suffered incredible hardships. Before the city was reduced to the last extremity the inhabitants retired with all their treasures to an isle half a mile from the shore; therefore, when Nebuchadnezzar and his army entered the town, they found nothing of any value in it.

After the king's return to Babylon the Tyrians built a new city on their island, the name and glory of which extinguished the remembrance of the old, which became a mere village, with the name only of ancient Tyre. Nevertheless the people of the mainland had been conquered by Nebuchadnezzar, and for seventy years the new Tyre was not fully free or perfect. Then, according to Isaiah's prophecy, they at last obtained possession of their ancient privileges, and might elect a king of their own. Isaiah's words were: "It shall come to pass, after the end of seventy years, that the Lord will visit Tyre, and she shall return to her hire." Darius thus favoured her for the assistance she had lent him against the Ionians.

The city was highly prosperous when Alexander the Great approached it. The Tyrians at once sent presents to him and his army, but when he wished to enter their

city to sacrifice to Hercules, they refused his request. He at once besieged Tyre; he wanted their fleet, which was in the hands of Darius. The difficulties of this siege were unparalleled: but the resolution of Alexander met them all. He actually made a causeway (once destroyed by the sea, but rebuilt) from the mainland to the island. The Carthaginians had promised to help Tyre; now they sent ambassadors to say that they could not, for the Syracusans were laying waste their lands. The Tyrians excused them, and sending their women and children to Carthage, prepared to endure the worst. Their defence was valiant and wonderful, but it was vain.



TYRE.

Alexander took the city, and, enraged at its long and wearying resistance, ordered all the inhabitants to be put to death, and the city to be burned. But the Sidonian soldiers, who had entered the city with the Macedonian troops, saved many; and their ships, which lay off the city, privately took numbers on board, and conveyed them to Sidon. Thus, 15,000 were preserved. Alexander, however, caused 2,000 men to be crucified along the seashore, to terrify the surrounding people, besides permitting his soldiers to slaughter 6,000 men in the city when it was entered.

Thus, the threatenings uttered against Tyre by the Hebrew prophets were fulfilled.

But after a time, those who had fled returned and rebuilt the city on its island; the women and children also coming home from Carthage; but their fleet was lost. Eighteen years afterwards, Tyre was besieged and taken by Antigonus.

Tyre had partially recovered from her many sieges, when in 638 it was taken by the Moslems. The people were, however, spared, on condition that "they built no new churches, rang no bells, did not ride on horseback, or insult the Mahometan religion." Tyre was re-taken by the Christians in 1124, and here Conrad of Montferrat, just as Richard Cœur de Lion had consented to name him king of Jerusalem, was murdered by two emissaries of the Old Man of the Mountain, the chief of the assassins.

In 1291 the Moslems took Tyre and utterly destroyed it, leaving only heaps of stones, which have been removed since, for the purposes of building in Acre and Sidon.

The site of the ancient Tyre on the mainland is now called Râs el-'Ain. It is three miles away from the island city. It stands back a little from the road, and is now a desolate but picturesque spot, noticeable for the copious springs gushing out of the ground, and the large reservoirs that receive their waters. These reservoirs are still perfect, and from them once ran a fine aqueduct on stone arches, of which there are still remains to be traced for more than two miles. No doubt they supplied Tyre. The water is now only used for turning mills, and then passes through gardens to the sea. There are several reservoirs and two aqueducts still in use. One of these comes from the two largest reservoirs, and runs to Tyre; the other, a small one, goes south.

Tyre is, as we have said, three miles distant from this spot. It is a wretched place, the streets ankle-deep in mud, and full of bad smells. A few very narrow bazaars, wattled over with sticks and palm-leaves, represent the trade of the once great commercial city. The houses are miserable hovels without windows, built amidst fallen columns of porphyry and great pieces of granite. It is the filthiest of cities. Its navy is gone; only a few fishing-boats remain in its harbour, and the fishermen spread their nets on the walls, which are mere ruins. The walls commence at a tower called the Tower of the Algerines, and once ran along the east side of Tyre, but they are now buried in sand. On the west and south they can still be traced, and parts of the great sea-wall on the northern side remain; but it is not very ancient, having only one large stone of the size of those in the Haram walls at Jerusalem, the masonry being composed of the stones and shafts of the old ruins.

The northern harbour is small now, and the southern one quite filled up with sand and silt; for quite a quarter of a mile out to sea the waves flow over flat rocks, on which are huddled in utter confusion heaps of broken columns, blackened by the salt water.

The cathedral of Tyre, once the finest church in Syria, is now an utter ruin; and the Moslems have built their mud hovels in all its corners. The wall of the eastern part and the apses remain, and part of the west wall. Some fine columns of red granite lie in the interior, with shattered capitals of white marble near them, and a broken font. The cathedral, of which these ruins are all that remain, was built by the Crusaders on the site of the first cathedral, which was erected by Paulinus, who was its bishop; and the sermon preached at the consecration of the church in 323 A.D. was delivered by Eusebius. William of Tyre, the chronicler of the Crusades, was archbishop of Tyre, and here the crusading Emperor Barbarossa, who was drowned in the Cydnus, is buried. The action of the sea in 1890 laid bare some shops buried for centuries.

The causeway of Alexander made the island into a promontory, united to the mainland by an isthmus. The largest part of the causeway lies to the east of the pro-

jecting angle, and the wind has driven upon it quantities of sand.

Dr. Thomson has given us an account of the discovery made in his time by some workmen quarrying for stone for the government barracks at Beyrout. They came upon a large floor a few feet below the surface of the ground; ten feet farther they came on a beautiful marble pavement among a mass of ruined columns. "I went down," he says, "and groped about amid these prostrate columns, and found the bases of some still in their original positions—part of what was once a superb temple. One fragment of verd-antique was particularly beautiful. In an adjoining quarry they had just turned out a marble statue of a female figure, full sized, modestly robed and in admirable preservation. May not this be the site and remains of the famous temple of Belus, or of Jupiter Olympus, both mentioned by Dios; or of Astarte, or Hercules, described by Menander? It is the centre and the highest part of the island, and must have been very conspicuous from the sea. . . . This collection of columns and marble floors was again covered up by the quarriers in their search for available stone."

Everybody knows that Tyre was famous for its purple dye, which was extracted from the little shellfish, Murex, still to be found on the beach of Sidon and in the bay of Acre.

Homer speaks of

> "Belts
> That rich with Tyrian dye refulgent glowed."

Therefore this dyeing of Tyre must be of great antiquity.

The names of some of the kings of Tyre are in the Bible, especially Hiram's. He appears to have been one of her greatest, if not her greatest king. He was the friend and ally of both David and Solomon, and supplied not only the cedar and fir for the Temple, but skilful workmen and architects to make use of it. No doubt also the Tyrian dyes of blue and scarlet were used for the magnificent veil and curtains.

The whole art of Phœnicia was thus placed at Solomon's disposal. As the wood the king of Tyre sent grew on the mountains, it is clear that his rule extended far over Lebanon, and it is supposed by Dr. Thomson, as far south as the bay of Acre.

The other Phœnician monarch mentioned was Ethbaal, king of the Sidonians, the father of Jezebel, whom Ahab married—a union which brought nothing but sin and misery on both the king and people; for she introduced the worship of Baal and Astarte.

Tyre early received the Gospel, for St. Paul had evidently many friends and disciples there.

"We sailed," wrote St. Luke in the Acts of the Apostles, "unto Syria, and landed at Tyre; for there the ship was to unlade her burden. And having found the disciples, we tarried there seven days: and these said to Paul through the Spirit, that he should not set foot in Jerusalem. And when it came to pass that we had accomplished the days, we departed and went on our journey, and they all, with wives and children, brought us on our way, till we were out of the city: and kneeling down on the beach, we prayed, and bade each other farewell and we went on board the ship, but they returned home again." This touching picture of the early Christians parting from the apostle whom they loved, and might never hope to see again, is the memory we would retain of Tyre.

Six miles to the south-east of Tyre is an extremely ancient monument, said by tradition to be the tomb of Hiram, king of Tyre. It is on the side of a hill on the direct road to Safed from Tyre. It is formed of enormous stones. The base consists of two tiers of stones, each thirteen feet long, eight feet eight inches broad, and three feet thick. Above these is one stone fifteen feet long, ten broad, and three feet four inches thick; it overlaps the under tiers. Then comes an immense stone, shorter but deeper: it is the sarcophagus and lid. The whole monument is twenty-one feet high. There is perhaps no other like it in the world, and

it is quite probable that it may have been reared in the age of Solomon. The sarcophagus itself is twelve feet two inches long, and seven feet nine inches wide. The lid has a ridge all along it, high in the centre.

On the north side of the monument two flights of rough steps lead to an artificial cavern.

In the valley to the south is a cemetery, and on the left another great tomb on a mound; it is called the "Tomb of Hiram's mother." The situation of Hiram's tomb is beautiful, and commands a fine prospect. The neighbouring village of Henaweih is built out of the ruins of the palaces and other buildings, that were once on this spot.

There are some curious sculptures on the rocks at the south side of the ravine, which descends from the village of Kanah, less



RUINS ON THE COAST OF TYRE.

than two miles south-east of the Tomb of Hiram.

On the shore at a little distance from Tyre there is a solitary column rising in the wilderness. It has strewn around it a number of ruins. Evidently there was once in Roman times a Phœnician or Jewish city here, of which not even a tradition remains. The natives say that Alexander encamped here while besieging Tyre; but there is no real authority for this old tradition. The column is of the Doric order and quite perfect, and beside it are several broken ones, but with their lower part still standing, while many more lie on the earth. Some colonnade must have stood here, for on one side there are seven ruined shafts in a row, at equal distances from each other. There is a courtyard of a mansion remaining, with a marble fountain in the centre of it.

A piece of tesselated Roman pavement is seen a little farther on, very nearly perfect, and near it is another courtyard with the marble vase of a fountain in it. There are also the massive stone pillars of a gateway standing, and near them, prostrate on the ground, a monolith. From this spot a paved road runs to the eastward; it has on it the ruts of chariot wheels. A large piece of wall farther on is built of immense undressed stones, not laid in courses but simply fitted in.

The scene is one of sad desolation, and one wonders who and what they were, who once had these courtyards, and stood by the plashing fountains. Their name has perished, unless the column speaks of the name that history has immortalized—that of Alexander the Great.

Five and a half miles from Tyre, on the road to Sidon, is the Nahr-el-Kâsimîyeh. This river comes next in size to the Jordan. Its highest source is in the ruins of Baalbek, and it drains the land between the ranges of the Lebanon and Antilibanus.

It is also called the Litâny, and in ancient days "the Syrian river" *par excellence*. Its modern name means "Dividing," as Jordan does "Descending," and it is supposed to mark the borders of the tribe of Asher. Here is the Black Plain—Abu el-Aswad, through which flows the Black river. They take their names probably from the black mire of the plain. The ford is below the arch of a Roman bridge, and it must be looked for carefully, as there are quicksands at the mouth of the river.

Some shapeless ruins, once a large cemetery, are passed, and El Khudr (Sarepta) is reached. On crossing the river we are soon at Kul'at-esh-Shukif—Belfort, the fine old Crusaders' castle. This magnificent fortress is supposed to have many predecessors, as the place commands the pass from Tyre and Sidon to Damascus and the Hûleh. But the present ruin was built by the Crusaders.

The stronghold immediately preceding it belonged to the Druse Emir Shehab Eddin, was taken from him in 1139 by King Fulke, and given to the lord (or possessor) of Sidon, who no doubt rebuilt it, for in forty years it had gained reputation as a Christian stronghold.

In 1192 Saladin took it and sent its defender, the Count of Sidon, in chains to Damascus.

In 1240 the Crusaders made a treaty with the prince of Damascus, by which they regained Belfort. The Knights Templar bought it, and retained it for a long time.

In 1268, however, it was stormed by Sultan Bibars, who took the castle.

Belfort is divided into two portions; the lower one is on a terrace on the very verge of a terrible precipice; the upper, on the summit of the mountain, is the strongest part, and may be called its citadel; it is 2,200 feet above the level of the sea. A glorious place to have lived in! Deep cut rock-moats protected it wherever it was assailable. A narrow pathway cut in the rock led to the entrance which was on the south. It opened into the lower court of the castle, and through a *place d'armes* round to a long vaulted chamber, from whence stairs led to the upper part of the castle.

The entrance is now over ruins, and up a winding staircase; at the north-west angle of the building there is a tower.

On the west of the upper platform is a massive square keep, from the top of which the Templar guard might have seen for miles the approach of foes.

Opposite to the keep is a vaulted room, divided into two portions with three windows. It is supposed by the natives to have been the church, and may have been a chapel or oratory of the Templars. The view from Belfort is magnificent. To the north is Lebanon; north-east the valley of the Beka'a, the ancient Celesyria; east is Hermon and the grand sister castle of Banias; to the north are the mountains of Kadesh Naphtali.

The Litâny rushes along a deep chasm a

thousand feet below, then bends suddenly two miles south, and flows west to the Mediterranean.

On the top of a ridge south of the castle on a platform stood the town that was certain to grow up under the protection of the castle. It is to be hoped that the Templars treated the native population well, but the hope is a faint one, so strong was the prejudice against the unbelievers—the followers of Mahomet. Belfort can be seen from the Castle of Banias.



SEA-COAST BETWEEN TYRE AND SIDON.

SAREPTA,

ANCIENTLY ZAREPHATH, NOW SURAFEND. ARABIC, EL KHUDR.

SAREPTA, the Zarephath of Elijah's time, stands no longer where he found it. After the fall of the kingdom of the Crusaders, it suffered so much from the Moslems, and also from the plundering Arabs, that, for security of life and property, the villagers carried the stones of their houses up a steep hill, about a mile and half or two miles back; where their descendants still dwell, away from their rich fertile plain, and on the bare rock, where only goats can find pasture.

The widow of Zarephath is one of the most pleasing characters in Scripture. God told the prophet that He had "commanded her to feed him"; but the command was not a spoken one to her; it was only an influence on her heart; and she knew not, when she kindly complied with Elijah's request that she would get him a cup of water, that it was the great Israelitish prophet who craved this small service at her hands. As she was going he called to her, saying, "Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thine hand." The bread of that day was no doubt similar to the Arab cakes of the present, which are soft and roll up. Then came the confession of her poverty. "As the Lord thy God liveth"—she was, we see, a believer in Jehovah—"I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruse: and, behold, I am getting two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it, and die." So sore was the famine.

Then Elijah bids her make a little cake for him *first*, and then for her and her son, adding, "For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain on the earth." It was a hard test of generosity and faith; but the woman at once obeyed. She brought the cake, and received Elijah as her guest, and she and her house and the prophet "did eat many days"—a whole year, the margin says, and the meal and oil did not diminish. During those "many days" how much the Gentile woman must have learned from the prophet of the one only God. It is clear that she had gained from him a higher moral standard, and felt that her past life had not been as good as it ought; for when her son was taken ill, and "there was no breath in him," she reproached Elijah with "What have I to do with thee, O thou man of God? Art thou come unto me to call my sin to remembrance, and to slay my son?"

"And he said unto her, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her bosom, and carried him up to a loft, where he abode, and laid him on his bed." The word translated here loft, means the "alliyeh," or small room raised on the roof, which was, and is still, the guest chamber of better class houses in Palestine; such a room as the Shunammite woman built for Elisha afterwards. Elijah prayed earnestly, and used every means he could for the restoration of the child, and the Lord heard him, and the boy revived. Then Elijah carried him down to his mother, saying, "See, thy son liveth." And the woman said, "Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that the word of the Lord in thy mouth is truth."

A little wely, once a Christian church, marks the apocryphal but traditional spot where our Lord rested when a suppliant from Tyre kneeled before him—the Syro-Phœnician woman, whose faith, wonderful humility, and ready wit earned the praise of her Divine Lord. The Gentiles may be proud of these women.

While the Crusaders held Palestine, Sarepta was the see of a Roman Catholic bishopric, and a chapel was erected on the traditional site of the widow's house. It was, as we have said, after their retirement from the Holy Land in the thirteenth century, that the inhabitants took refuge on the hill.

There are ruins on the shore, and also on the headland to the west. If they belonged to ancient Zarephath, it must have been a considerable town, with walls, since Elijah met the woman *at the gate*.

The Arabs call Surafend El Khudr, the Arabic name for Elijah. Several streams are crossed on the road from Sarepta to Sidon. One is the Nahr ez Zaherâni, or "Flowery River," which well deserves its name. Then comes the Wady Meshun. Next, the ford of Nahr es-Sanik, above which, on a promontory, is a ruined temple. From this spot there is a most extensive and beautiful prospect. Close to the river is a curious old stone, having inscribed on it the names of two Roman Emperors—Septimius Severus and Pertinax Arabicus.



SIDON.

SIDON, NOW SAIDA.

SIDON is one of the oldest cities in the world. Josephus tells us that it was built by Zidon, the eldest son of Canaan, and named after him. "And the border of the Canaanite," writes Moses in Genesis x. 19, "was from Zidon, as thou goest toward Gerar, unto Gaza; as thou goest toward Sodom and Gomorrah and Admah and Zeboim, unto Lasha."

As early as Homer—indeed, as early as the Trojan Wars — the Sidonians were famous for their skill in embroidery, in the arts and in commerce. Homer sings:—

"The Phrygian queen to her rich wardrobe went,
Where treasured odours breathed a costly scent.
There lay the vestures of no vulgar art,
Sidonian maids embroidered every part,
Whom from soft *Sidon* youthful Paris bore
With Helen touching at the Tyrian shore.
Here as the queen revolved with careful eyes
The various textures and the various dyes,
She chose a veil that shone superior far,
And glowed refulgent as the morning star."

Thence also came Menelaus's

"Silver bowl, whose costly margins shine,
Enchased with gold; this valued gift be thine;
To me this present of Vulcanian frame
From Sidon's hospitable monarch came;
To thee we now consign the precious load,
The pride of kings and labour of a god."

In the Odyssey also the city and its commerce is mentioned by Ulysses.

"Freighted, it seems, with toys of every sort,
A ship of Sidon anchored in our port.

* * * *

An artist to my father's palace came
With gold and amber chains, elaborate frame;
Each female mind the glittering links employ,
They turn, review and cheapen every toy."

From Homer we also learn that the

Trojans robbed the Sidonian mariners of their costly robes, embroidered by Sidonian maidens, to present them as an offering to Minerva. According to Strabo, the Sidonians were great astronomers, and, as we know, the first people who studied and practised navigation.

Her merchants sailed over every sea, bringing wealth to her from all lands. She grew great; her walls were high, her harbour was crowded with vessels, and caravans brought to her the treasures of the East. To live "after the manner of the Sidonians" was to live quiet and secure (Judges xviii. 7). Joshua, who called her Great Zidon, did not attack her, and the defeated Canaanites of the Waters of Merom, flying to her for refuge, found safety within her gates. She built strong cities,—Beirŭt, Gebal, Arvad, Accho (Acre), Dor, and, above all, Tyre. She had colonies in Greece, Africa, and Spain.

But she had reached the height of her glory, and her decline began. Shalmanezer, king of Assyria, took Sidon in 720 B.C.; but she was not entirely crushed by the Assyrians.

Darius Ochus, of Persia, was to cause her absolute destruction. The King of Sidon was a coward, and Mentor, who was in the city with Greek troops, shared the monarch's dread of resisting the immense Persian army of 300,000 infantry and 30,000 horse, Sidon being not as well fitted for defence as "her daughter Tyre." These men entered into secret negotiations with Ochus. They offered to surrender the city to him, and assist him against Egypt.

The Sidonians had set fire to their ships on the approach of the Persians, in order to make the people defend the town to the last, by taking from them their means of flight.

Seeing themselves betrayed, and grown desperate,—for all means of escape were gone—the Sidonians shut themselves up in their houses, and setting them on fire, perished thus with their whole families. These people were so rich that the gold and silver melted in the flames of the city were in such quantities that Ochus sold the cinders for a large sum of money. The traitor king received from the Persian, his due reward for the betrayal—death.

After Ochus had returned to Persia, the citizens who, by being absent, had escaped the massacre, returned and rebuilt the city, which was again prosperous when Alexander the Great appeared before it. The town at once opened its gates to him with delight. He was their avenger on the Persians!

Strato, their king, was in favour of Darius. Alexander therefore dethroned him, and told Hephæstion to elect any Sidonian he pleased as king. The favourite offered the crown to two young brothers of noble birth, in whose house he was quartered. They both refused it, saying that by the law of their country only one of the blood royal could succeed to the crown. They knew of one who was of this descent, but he was so poor that he gained his bread by day-labour in a garden. It was, they said, his integrity that had reduced him thus. They went in search of him, and found him weeding. When he had heard why they came, he thought they were jesting, but against his will they dressed him in a purple robe embroidered with gold, and brought him to the palace. Alexander wished to see him, and on his introduction to his presence asked him with what frame of mind he had borne his poverty, for his air and mien were royal. "Would to the gods," replied Abdolonymus, "that I may bear this crown with equal patience. These hands have procured me all I desired, and whilst I possessed nothing I wanted nothing."

Alexander was greatly pleased by this reply. He confirmed Abdolonymus in the kingdom, gave him Strato's rich furniture, and part of the Persian plunder, and annexed some neighbouring provinces to his dominions.

Sidon was taken afterwards alternately by the Seleucidæ and the Ptolomies, Alex-

ander's successors; and during the Crusades it was four times taken and dismantled.

The town, after the Crusaders' departure, lay long deserted, but in the seventeenth century the great Druse Sheikh, Fakr-ed-Din, built a palace here, and brought the trade of Damascus from Aleppo to Sidon. He also encouraged French merchants to visit the town.

The modern city Saida is situated on a promontory, from which a ridge of rock runs out, curving round to the north and running parallel with the town, thus shutting in the harbour, the entrance being commanded by a half-ruined, but still fine, tower. The streets of Sidon are narrow, and generally vaulted over.

The town is surrounded by the most beautiful gardens and orchards. Lemons, oranges, pomegranates, every delicious fruit and lovely flower, may be found in them, and one can scarcely walk through their delightful paths without thinking of the princely young gardener, who passed from them to a crown. We need scarcely say that these beautiful gardens are abundantly watered by numerous channels, amongst them by the Owely river.

The old tower at the entrance to the harbour is connected with the city by a bridge of several arches. The fortress has broken shafts of polished granite and marble built into its walls.

On the outer ridge of rocks are some very interesting remains. The jagged rocks in the sea are full of huge stones, of ancient arches, carved doorways, and masses of shapeless masonry of immense size. They form, with the broken columns, a breastwork against the sea, but all are honeycombed by the waves. The harbour must have been for that age a large one, larger, than in its earliest days, Sidon might have required; for the mariners of Homer's day, as we know, drew their ships up on the beach when at Troy, and surrounded them with a defensive wall.

There is not much to interest travellers in the town, but some great discoveries have been made in the neighbourhood among the tombs. In 1855 a remarkable sarcophagus was disinterred in a field about a mile from Sidon. There was a Phœnician inscription upon it, and by that it was discovered to be the sarcophagus of Ashmanezer or Esmunazar, a Sidonian king of great renown, who lived in the fourth century before Christ. This sarcophagus is now in the Louvre. The lid had on it a likeness of the dead, according to the fashion of the Egyptians. The face, larger than life, has a low forehead, almond-shaped, projecting eyes, a broad, flat nose, thick lips, a small chin, and ears standing out from the head. A beard hangs from his chin, and a bird sits on each shoulder. The expression of the face is good and amiable. Dr. Thomson saw it as soon as it was disinterred, and sent a copy of the inscription to Professor Dietrich. He published a translation of it, with an elaborate critique. The learned of many lands have tried their skill on it. The translation we give is by Professor Oppert and by Renan, and reads thus:—

"In the month of Bul, in the fourteenth year of the reign of King Esmunazar, King of the Sidonians, son of King Tabnit, King of the Sidonians, King Esmunazar, King of the Sidonians, spoke, saying,—

"I am snatched away before my time; my spirit has disappeared like the day, and since then I am silent; since then I became mute; and I am lying in this coffin, and in this tomb the place which I have built.

"O reader! I adjure every one, either of royal race or of lower birth, not to open my sepulchre to seek after treasures, for there are none hidden here with me; let no one move my coffin out of its place, nor disturb me in this my last bed, by laying another coffin over mine. If men command thee to do so, do not listen to them, for the punishment shall be: every man of royal race, or of common birth, who shall open this sarcophagus, or who shall carry it away, or shall disturb me in it, he shall

have no burial with the dead, he shall not be laid in a tomb, nor leave behind him any son or posterity, for the holy gods will extirpate them.

"Thou, whoever (thou art who mayst) be king (after me), command those over whom thou mayst reign to cut off any, whether members of the royal race or common men, who remove the lid of this sarcophagus, or take it away; command them also to cut off even the offspring of such men, whether royal or common. Let there be no root to them to strike downwards, no fruit to shoot upwards, nor any living being (to perpetuate their memory) under the sun.

"For I am to be pitied: snatched away before my time, the son of the flood of days, disappearing like the light, from the time I became voiceless and silent.

"For I, Esmunazar, King of the Sidonians, son of King Tabnit, King of the Sidonians, and grandson of King Esmunazar, King of the Sidonians,

"And my mother, Amastarte, the priestess of Astarte, our mistress, the Queen, the daughter of Esmunazar, King of the Sidonians;

"And it was we who built the temple of the gods, and the temple of Ashtaroth, in the seaside Sidon, and placed there the image of the Ashtaroth, and we built the temple of Eshmun,

"And it was we who built the temples of the gods of the Sidonians, in the seaside Sidon—the temple of Baal of Sidon, and the temple of Astarte, who bears the name of this Baal (that is, Astarte Peni Baal).

"The Lord of kings gave us Dora and Joppa, with the fertile corn lands in the plain of Sharon, and added it to the territory of our land that it may belong to the Sidonians for ever.

"O reader, I adjure every man of royal race, and every common man, not to open my coffin, or deface its lid, or disturb me in this, my last bed, or carry away the sarcophagus in which I rest.

"Whoever does, let the holy gods extirpate them and their offspring for ever, whether they be men of the royal race or men of the common crowd."

There is something awful in these imprecations of the dead, reminding us somewhat of our own Shakspeare's—

"Cursed be he who moves my bones."

If those who first found Esmunazar's sarcophagus could have read them, would they have been deterred from touching it?

Dr. Geikie, in his delightful volume of "The Holy Land and the Bible," first noticed that a singular conjunction of circumstances points to a strange fulfilment of the poor king's apparently vain threats. The Duke de Luynes bought the sarcophagus, and presented it to the French nation. He fell in the war between Austria and Italy in 1859, and his only son was also killed there. Napoleon III., who accepted the gift for France, and had it brought to Paris, lost his empire, and died in England, an exile; his only son was slain by the Zulus in Africa. Thus they have died and their posterity.

It would, of course, be acknowledging, foolishly and wickedly, that Baal was a real god to believe that the curses of poor King Esmunazar have really produced an effect, but the coincidence is a very singular one at least.

A still more important *trouvaille* was found in 1887. A rich Moslem residing at Sidon, where he possessed a great deal of property, found, when digging at a place about a mile north-east of Sidon, a quadrangular pit, the four faces of which pointed exactly to the four points of the compass. On each side was found an opening, which led into a rock tomb. In the east chamber were two sarcophagi, one quite plain, the other ornamented with sculptures. A portico of eighteen recesses, separated by Ionic columns, ran entirely round the coffin. In each recess was the figure of a weeping woman in Greek costume. The lid was beautifully carved, representing a funeral procession. Inside

the sarcophagus were found female bones, and seven dogs' heads. In the south chamber were two sarcophagi, one of plain black marble, the other of white marble beautifully carved. The lid of the coffin was vaulted, and at the ends were two Greek winged sphinxes, with graceful heads. On the sarcophagus itself were carved two four-horsed chariots driven by Amazons. The horses are most wonderfully carved, of the best possible art. On the other side was a boar hunt in alto-relief.

The west chamber contained only one sarcophagus; it was mummy-shaped, and had no great interest attached to it. This chamber, however, led into an inner tomb, larger than the others. In it were four sarcophagi, three exactly alike, of pure marble, in the form of Greek temples; the fourth was the largest and most splendid. It has been identified as that of Alexander the Great. It is perfectly beautiful. The carving is exquisite, and the colours on it are as fresh as at first. Tyrian purple and Lebanon yellow harmonise on it, and the carving is most delicate and minute. The sculptures are in alto-relievo, and are evidently intended to represent peace and war. Two sides are occupied by a battle scene, the other two by a hunt. The figures are Greeks and Persians. The lid is also extremely beautiful. Such a sarcophagus was worthy of the great Macedonian, who carried everywhere, at his spear's point, the art, the culture, the humanity and courtesy of Greece.

In the north chamber of the hero's grave are two plain sarcophagi; but the room opens into two other chambers, east and west. The one on the west contains four white marble sarcophagi, one of which represents the death of an Assyrian prince (his nationality is recognised by the head-dress).

In another chamber was found a sarcophagus of black stone of singular form. It contained a long tress of hair and some teeth (were they false teeth?), female bones, a royal circlet of gold, a golden girdle, and a plank of sycamore.

Another pit near the royal mausoleum has been opened, and a sarcophagus disinterred, bearing an inscription which identifies it as the tomb of Tabnites, priest of Astarte. He was, also, King of Sidon, father of the Esmunazar whose tomb was the first found. The mummy of the king, partially preserved, was in it. Lamps, alabaster vases, etc., were found in some of these tombs, and have been all sent to Constantinople.

Treasure has also been found at Sidon. Some workmen, digging about sixty years ago, found a number of copper jars full of gold coins of Alexander and his father, Philip; this must have been buried by the Macedonians more than 2,000 years ago.

Sidon was famous, as Tyre also was, for the purple dye that was thought the appropriate hue for the robes of kings. It was obtained from the murex, a shell-fish found there in great quantities on the shore. They are nearly extinct now at Sidon, but sometimes a storm throws up masses of the pointed twisted shells once so precious.

DAMASCUS.

DAMASCUS must once have been a glorious city. It is one of the oldest in the world. We read of it very early in Genesis. Abraham, we are told, pursued the kings who had carried Lot and his family away "unto Hobah, which is on the left hand of Damascus." Evidently Damascus was then a well-known city, as the position of Hobah is fixed by it. Afterwards, Abraham's faithful steward is named as Eliezer of Damascus; in the New Version as, "Dammesek Eliezer."

Damascus is still the largest town in Syria; once the capital of a great empire under the dynasty of the Omeiyades, it is even now the political capital of Eastern Syria, under a Governor General or Wali. It is the headquarters of the Turkish soldiers in Syria, the Commander-in-chief being called the Seraskier.

The old town is surrounded by its ancient walls. Outside it, is a very long portion which runs out for two miles, and is called the Meidân; it ends in the Bawwabât Allah (the Gate of God), through which the Hajj, or procession of pilgrims to Mecca, goes on its pilgrimage. The Meidân extends westward for a mile and southward two miles. It is a broad road, winding at first, but then straight, and lined with houses, that appear in decay; but appearances are especially deceitful in Damascus, for the mean-looking, mud-built house is frequently splendid within. A narrow, dirty passage will suddenly open into a marble courtyard, with a fountain in the centre; the yard surrounded by lemon, orange, myrtle trees, and jessamine; and inside the house itself will be splendid rooms adorned with lovely arabesques, inlaid sandal wood, and ebony, gilding, and carpets that are priceless. The fact is, that under the oppressive government of the Ottomans it is dangerous to show what one possesses; our readers will remember the apartments of Isaac of York in Ivanhoe; the Jews acting in a similar manner from fear in England then, as they do in the East now.

Damascus is divided into three quarters —the Jewish is the southern part; the Moslem the northern, and much the largest part; the Christians the eastern. The Moslem quarter is clean, the Christians' dirty, the Jews' filthy.

The best streets are those in which are the serai or barracks, the government buildings, and the British consulate, the horse market, and the street leading to the Meidân. The other streets are narrow and dark, but picturesque, and each has a fountain in it. The streets in the bazaar are a network of narrow, dirty alleys; so narrow that two people can scarcely pass each other.

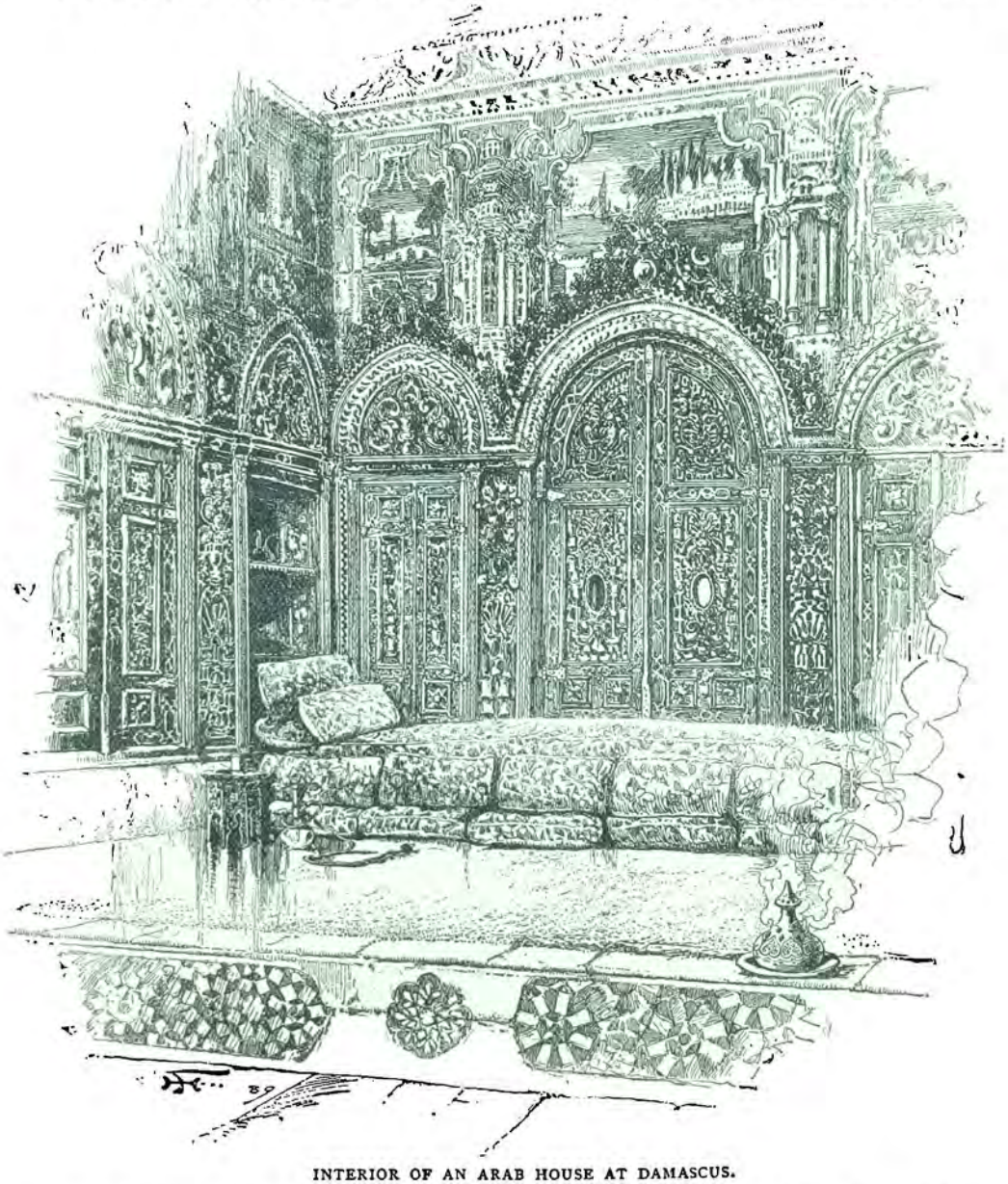
But in all the streets of the city one comes on picturesque "bits"; and old khans, mosques, portions of stone carving, and sculpture, and ancient architecture, show what a beautiful city Damascus once was.

The "street called Straight" to which God sent Ananias to baptize Saul, extends in a direct line from east to west almost entirely through the city. On the north side of its eastern end is the Christian quarter of the town; on the southern side of it is the Jewish quarter. In the Jews' quarter are the Armenian Convent, the Greek Catholic Church, and the Syrian Church; in the Christian are the British Syrian Schools, the Mission House of the Society for the Conversion of the Jews, the

Lazarist and Latin Convents, the Greek Church, and the pretended House of Ananias, an old cave fitted up as a chapel.

The houses are very irregularly arranged, and are, as we have said, generally mean-looking outside, and are covered with lattice work, and barred.

We must try and describe an interior. A



INTERIOR OF AN ARAB HOUSE AT DAMASCUS.

narrow, winding, dark passage leads to the marble court, fountain, and lovely trees that perfume the air. The Liwan is a raised room of three sides, the fourth open into the court, its floor raised, with Persian carpets laid here and there, divans running round the sides, and niches in the walls filled with plants. The floor and wainscot

are (in the best houses) inlaid with ebony, sandal wood, mother of pearl, and gold. The windows of the other rooms are of stained glass. The house runs round two sides of the court; the other two sides are sometimes a long terrace, or they have galleries or balconies full of flowers.

Lady Burton, in her charming "Inner Life of Syria," has drawn a perfect picture of the scene presented in the streets of Damascus. "Strings of laden camels, and the delul, or dromedary, with gaudy trappings; the Circassians and Anatolians; the wild Bedowin Shaykhs; the fat, oily, cunning, money-making Jew; the warlike-looking Druse; the rough Kurd; the sleek, fawning, frightened Christian; the grave, sinister Moslem; the wiry Persian; the soft Hindu, the waddling Turk; the quiet, deep-looking Afghan; the dark and burly Algerian; every costume of Asia; every sect of religion; all talking different tongues, all bringing their wares to sell or coming to buy; every tongue, every race, jostling one another and struggling through the strings of mules, camels, donkeys, and thoroughbred mares, with gaudy trappings, led by their Sais. The Kawwâses swaggering before and behind their consul calling out 'Zahr'ak' and 'Darb,' or 'make way'; two or three good-humoured Englishmen in shooting jackets trying to race their small donkeys through the mass to the amusement and wonder of the grave, dignified Oriental." [1]

The water-carrier passes, with his leather bottle or great jar; men sit behind a basket full of thin cakes, made rich with butter and sweet syrup, and sprinkled like Jews' bread with anise seed or sesame, crying, "God is the nourisher, buy my bread;" donkey-boys, and beggars, make up the other occupants of the streets of Damascus. In the bazaars, we may add, carpenters at work, squatting outside their shops; dyers, with little vats just inside but in view; silversmiths and coppersmiths hammering. All trades work in the street, in fact, life is nearly passed in the open air; only the women are shut up.

The bazaars are so arranged that all of the same trade are together. Their shops are open stalls, of course; the shopman sits in a corner, and sometimes reads the Koran, or the men are at work at their manufacture of articles for sale. There are booksellers' shops, mercers', shoemakers', tailors', silversmiths'; and stalls for pipes, tobacco, spices, and perfumes, oriental wares of all kinds, and an old clothes bazaar, where the clothes are sold by a kind of auction.

The old walls of Damascus are very interesting; they are constructed of the immense stones used by builders in the early ages of the world. In some places they have houses built on the top of them. It was from one of these, no doubt, that St. Paul was let down in a basket to the outside of the town. The great thickness of the outer walls permitted these dwellings to be raised on them. In such a house, no doubt, Rahab lived.

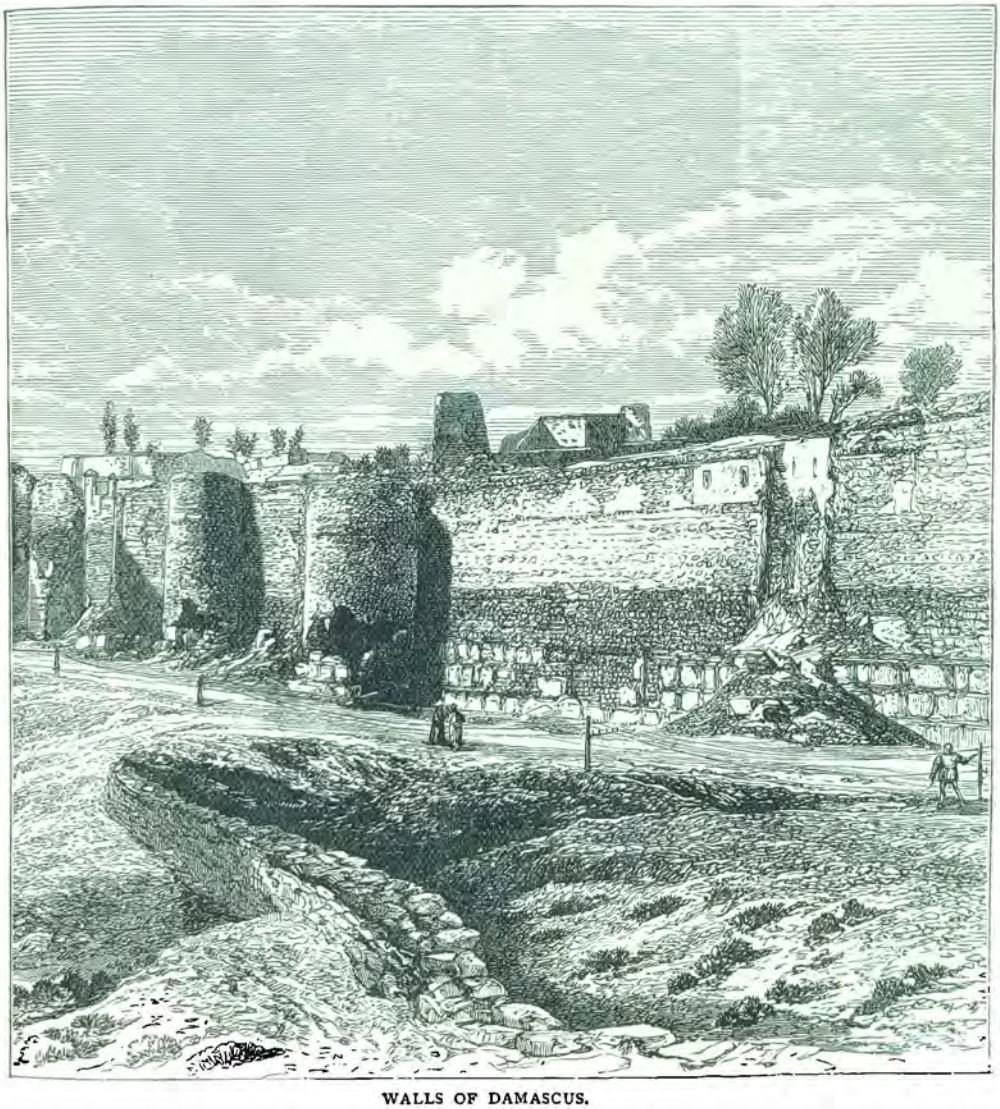
There are thirteen gates in the walls of Damascus, which are closed at sunset. The doors of the inner divisions of Moslems, Jews, and Christians are also shut and locked. The gates are the Bâb Sherki —the eastern gate; the Bâb es Sagher (the little gate), to the south; Bâb el Jabyah; the Bâb el Hadid (the iron gate); the Bâb Faraj (the gate of joy); the Bâb Faradis (the gate of paradise), leading to the gardens; the Bâb es Salaam (gate of peace), on the north; the Bâb Tûma (Thomas's gate); and the Bâb Kisam; it was near this gate that St. Paul is said to have escaped. It has been closed for the last seven centuries. Bâb es Salihîyyah and Bawwabat shut off the Meidân. The Bâb el Berid and Bâb Jayrun are gates of the great mosque.

The remains of the citadel of Damascus are only a large quadrangular building, some towers and walls, encompassed by a deep moat which is filled from the river Barada, the ancient Abana.

[1] "Inner Life of Syria," p. 35.

The walls are still perfect, and at the corners are twelve projecting towers, the upper stories overhanging the lower ones. The gateway, which is at the west, has four very ancient columns, but the castle has no roof, and is a mere shell.

The Great Mosque is close to the bazaars, and by a door leading out of the Booksellers' Bazaar the grand court of the mosque is entered. Slippers are hired and put on in this bazaar—a mosque can only be entered by the wearer of slippers or by



WALLS OF DAMASCUS.

bare feet—before passing through the gateway. The courtyard is surrounded by cloisters, resting on pillars of marble, granite, and limestone. In the centre of the courtyard is a fountain covered by a dome, called the "Dome of the Fountain;" it is of the most exquisite workmanship. Here the Mahomedans perform their ceremonial washings—about which they are very careful.

There is another remarkable dome in the grand courtyard to the west of the

fountain called the "Dome of the Treasure," which is said to be full of valuable manuscripts—but it is kept always closed. To the east of the fountain is another dome, called the Dome of the Hours, used, it is said, for astronomical studies.

The mosque is on the south side of the courtyard; it is a fine structure in the form of a basilica. It consists of a nave and two side aisles, divided by two rows of columns. In the centre is a dome over an octagonal foundation, with small round arched windows in it; below is the prayer niche. The floor of the mosque is covered with mats and rugs of great value.

There is a gilded mausoleum in the mosque, which the Moslems say is over a cave in which is the head of John the Baptist in a gold casket. This is a mere fiction of course.

There is much fine wood and stone carving in the mosque, and a great number of mihrabs, or praying places, on each side of which stands a great candle, with an Arabic inscription on it, and parchment scrolls, having words from the Koran on them. Brass lamps also hang in front of each.

The mosque stands on the site of a very large and magnificent heathen temple, the broken columns of which can be traced in the bazaars. This temple was destroyed by the Emperor Theodosius, and on its ruins his son Arcadius built a Christian church, dedicated to St. John the Baptist. For three hundred years it was a Christian cathedral.

After the conquest of the city by the Saracens, the Christians were allowed to keep half of it for their services, the Moslems having the other half; but in Walid's time (the sixth Khalif of the Omeiyades), no Christian was allowed to enter it again.

On the southern outside wall of the mosque there is still remaining a Greek inscription, which can be seen from the roof of the Silversmiths' Bazaar; this is the translation of it, "Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and Thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."

The mosque has three minarets. "The Minaret of the Bride" is the most ancient, having been built by Khalif Walid; the "Minaret of Jesus" is immensely high. Here the Moslems say that our Lord will descend, and then, entering the mosque, will judge the world. The third minaret is very beautiful, and from it a good view is obtained of Damascus. We perceive here how the city is surrounded by gardens and greenery; what a lovely oasis it is on the verge of the desert, and how the bright Abana (the Barada) rushes along between the houses.

The mosque is left by the Bâb-el-Jeirun. The gates were named from the sons of Ad, the son of Uz, who was the grandson of Shem. Their father is said to have built two towers for his sons on this spot, so the gates were named after the brothers. Near this gate is a shrine containing an urn with the ashes of Hassan and Houssein, the grandsons of Mahomet. The sacred room has in it a copy of the Koran in a chest, a number of ostrich eggs, and a print of the Ka'aba. The gates are made of brass, sixty feet high and a foot thick.

Not far from the mosque is Saladin's tomb, a very handsome monument. In the Moslem cemetery, outside the Bâb es Sagher gate, are the tombs of the great Moawiyeh, the founder of the Omeiyade dynasty, three of Mohammed's wives, and his grandchild Fatima.

There are two leper hospitals in Damascus, and one is said to be built over the house of Naaman, close outside the Bab Sherki gate.

Mark Twain says of Damascus, "Go back as far as you will into the vague past there is always a Damascus. . . . To Damascus years are only moments, decades are only flitting trifles of time; she measures time not by days, months, and years, but by the empires she has seen rise and prosper and crumble to ruin. She is a type of immortality. She saw the founda-

tions of Ba'albek, and Thebes, and Ephesus laid. She saw these villages grow into mighty cities, and amaze the world with their grandeur, and she has lived to see them desolate, deserted, and given over to the bats and owls. She saw the Israelitish empire exalted, and she saw it annihilated. She saw Greece rise and flourish for two thousand years and die. In her old age she saw Rome built; she saw it overshadow the world with its power; she saw it perish. . . . Damascus has seen all that ever occurred upon earth and still she lives. She has looked upon the dry bones of a thousand empires, and will see the tombs of a thousand more before she dies. Though another claims the name, old Damascus is, by right, the Eternal City."

Benhadad (son of Hadad) was the name of several kings of Syria who reigned in Damascus, and were frequently at war with Israel. In Ahab's miserable reign we read twice of Benhadad besieging Samaria. Both times he was driven off, and finally fell in Aphek, as we already know. But his successor, Hazael, was more formidable. Elisha had, for some reason, gone to Damascus; and Benhadad, who was at the time ill, sent his chief officer, Hazael, with a costly present of every good thing in Damascus—forty camels' burden—to the great prophet of Israel, to ask if he should recover of his disease. Elisha answered "That the king might recover, but that God had shown him that his death was near." And the prophet wept. Hazael, asking the reason of his tears, is told that it is because Elisha knew how Hazael would cruelly oppress the people of Israel. Hazael indignantly denies that he could be so cruel, but the prophet sadly answers, "God hath shown me that thou shalt be king over Syria."

The prophecy was almost immediately fulfilled. Hazael murdered his royal master, and took the crown. He was a man of talent and energy, and raised Syria and Damascus to a height of prosperity not known to them before, proving also a determined and remorselessly cruel enemy of the Israelites.

In 732, Damascus was taken by Tiglath Pileser, king of Assyria, and never again recovered the independence it had preserved for 1450 years.

In 333, Damascus was taken by Alexander the Great; afterwards the Ptolemies possessed it.

A hundred years before Christ, the kingdom of the Seleucidæ was divided between Antiochus Cyzicenus and his brother Grypus. The latter prince made Damascus his capital. Demetrius Eucæurus, king of Damascus, defeated Alexander Janneus, king of the Jews, on the plain of Shechem. Four years afterwards Aretas, king of Arabia, took it, and twenty years afterwards Pompey captured it. The Roman pro-consul preferred Antioch as a residence, and it took the place of Damascus as capital of Syria for a time.

Herod Agrippa having divorced his wife, the daughter of Aretas, king of Arabia, the latter king marched across Gaulanitis and seized Damascus, A.D. 37. He appointed a governor for it, and it was at this time that St. Paul—whose conversion had taken place on his road to Damascus just before, and who had in that city received his sight and been baptized by Ananias,—preached "Christ in the synagogue, that He was the Son of God."

The Jews were infuriated. They had expected to find a persecutor of the "new sect," as they called it, in him, and, behold, he preached in its favour! They resolved to kill him, and watched the gates night and day to intercept him. But the disciples knew their plot, and took the apostle by night and let him down by the wall in a basket.

Damascus became in the reign of Trajan a provincial city.

It was early Christianized, and in 325 its bishop, with seven of his suffragans, was present at the Council of Nice.

In 634, Damascus was taken by the Moslems, who were everywhere conquerors,

and the first Khalif of the Omeiyades made it the capital of his empire, which extended from the Atlantic to the Indus. The sultans of this dynasty adorned the city with fine buildings, but it passed under the powers of many of the Moslem tribes till it fell to the Seljuks.

The crusaders several times besieged Damascus, but they did not succeed in taking it.

Nûreddin took it in 1153, and Saladin succeeded to its possession.

It was captured in 1260 by the Mongols, but was retaken by Sultan Bibars.

In 1399, the notorious Tamerlane besieged it, and after its conquest made it suffer the worst calamities of the vanquished. Its wealth was seized, its palaces burnt, its valuable libraries were destroyed. The most dreadful barbarities were perpetrated on its unhappy inhabitants.

Finally, in 1500, the city fell into the hands of the Turks, under Sultan Selim, and they still retain it.

Damascus has always been a remarkably bigoted and fanatical city. This was proved in 1860, when, on the 9th, 10th, and 11th of July, the rabble, incited by the bigoted Moslems rose against the Christians, broke into their quarter, and massacred 8,000, wounding and injuring many more. They destroyed twelve churches, many monasteries, and four thousand houses; a more shocking scene of slaughter can scarcely be imagined. It was most horrible. The dead were afterwards put into a square building, with only a door and holes for air in it, outside the city, and left there. We have been told that at one time it resembled the awful prison of Cawnpore. Many of those who escaped died afterwards from fright, privation, and grief. One poor child, who escaped, had her hands so dreadfully cut that she could never again do any work. The misery and horror are indescribable. The European powers, however, intervened, and as the outbreak had been preceded by a massacre of Druses in the Lebanon, they agreed with Turkey that the Governor there should be a Christian; and that toleration should be exercised towards the Christians of Damascus. The enmity between the Moslems and the survivors of their cruelty is still very bitter, and might break out at any moment.

It is to be hoped that the much greater intercourse with Europeans, which will result from the new railway between Beyrout and Damascus, may soften and subdue these feelings.

The railway between the prosperous port and Damascus crosses the Lebanon at an altitude of 5,000 feet. A tunnel on the summit will prevent the accumulation of snow. Out of a total length of a hundred and fifty kilometres, only forty-five are on level ground, and 24 per cent. of the line is on the cog system, like the Righi railway in Switzerland.

The Company mean to make a branch line to Mezarib, to tap the grain country east of the Jordan; but the Haifa-Damascus line will absorb the greater part of the grain traffic, which will doubtless continue to follow the ancient road across the plain of Esdraelon.

The Lebanon line is principally meant for passenger traffic and the produce of the district through which it passes. The silk industry is already expanding, and there are now about eighty-six silk-spinning mills in the Lebanon. The silk of Damascus will soon perhaps regain its ancient reputation

BAALBEK.

THE road from Damascus to Baalbek winds along the banks of the Barada (the ancient Abana), frequently crossing the stream, which flows through a ravine shaded by poplars, mulberry trees, and pines, while the outline of the inclosing hills is most picturesque. The ascent of the mountain region in which it rises is steep, and consequently the stream falls rapidly, forming in one spot a fine cascade, and foaming over the rocks in its course.

On the left of the Barada, at a village called Souk Wâdy Barada, there are some ruins of the ancient town of Abila, the capital of Abilene, of which we read in St. Luke iii. 1. Lysanias was tetrarch, when Pontius Pilate was Governor of Judea, and St. John the Baptist commenced his ministry; Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and Philip, of Trachonitis. They are at the entrance to a lovely recess, surrounded by forests and rocks, and watered by the rushing stream.

The ancient city was founded by Lysanias, the son of Ptolemy, king of Chalcis. The Lysanias of St. Luke was not the same person. The founder of Abila was murdered at the instigation of Cleopatra. The second Lysanias was succeeded (by the appointment of Claudius) by Agrippa, on whom the Emperor bestowed the tetrarchy of Philip and Batanea, adding to it Trachonitis with Abila, "which last," Josephus says, "had been the tetrarchy of Lysanias."

These ruins consist of hewn stones and fragments of columns, and on the opposite side of the river there are many more remains of a once fine city.

On the mountain side a road, twelve feet wide, has been cut, and tablets on the rocks inform us that it was cut by order of the Emperors Marcus Aurelius, and Lucius Verus, and by direction of Julius Verus, Legate of Syria, at the expense of the inhabitants of Abilene. It ends at the edge of a cliff, and the stones of the viaduct to which it led lie scattered below. Below the road is an aqueduct, partly tunnelled in the rock.

Above the village, on a high peak, is a building believed by the Moslems to be the Tomb of Abel, after whose name they say Lysanias called his city.

On this route to Baalbek is also Zebedani, renowned throughout Syria for its apples.

Passing the source of the Barada, the road winds up the lofty Anti-Lebanon (called by the Arabs Jebel esh-Shurky), whence the traveller beholds the magnificent valley of the Bekaa—the Cœle-Syria of ancient days—below him. It is a plain, six or eight miles across, in a north and south direction, between the mountain-chains of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. The northern portion is called Belad-Baalbek, the district of Baalbek; the southern half is the Bekaa, or the Cleft. In former days it was highly cultivated, but now there are too few people to use all the rich land, and only portions of it are planted; still, there are many places bearing golden grain; and vineyards are also cultivated on it. Descending, we find that the road runs along the base of the mountains, which are sometimes very grand and picturesque.

The enormous pillars of this ancient city are seen afar off for a great distance, as they are on raised ground. There is a peculiarity in the atmosphere of Syria which, from its transparent clearness, makes distant objects appear quite close, and as we advance they seem to retire before us, in rather a provoking manner.

The ruins are to the west of the modern village, and near the base of the eastern mountains. Rows of pillars, apparently

slender and graceful, tower up to a great height, having Corinthian capitals most exquisitely and delicately carved. But they are the deceptions of wonderful proportion, being, in fact, so immense in girth, that two men cannot make their arms meet round a column, and the capitals, apparently so light and delicate, are really more than seven feet across; but the great height causes the deception, for, with the mouldings below, the columns are seventy-six feet high. Over a great space of ground, are fragments of the same huge pillars, some whole ones, and architraves and plinths of gigantic size, with enormous hewn stones.

The Arabs have made a fortress of the ruins and call them Kul'at Baalbek, or the Acropolis of Baalbek. At the east end is the great Temple of the Sun; the façade of the great portico is here, and a flight of steps once led to it, for the platform of the temple is twenty feet above the ground. The steps have been removed by the Arabs, but traces of them are clearly distinguishable. In the Arab wall here can be seen the bases of twelve columns, which were once in front of the portico, and on two of which are Latin inscriptions much defaced. They have been deciphered, however, by M. de Saulcy, and signify that a certain chief of the First Antonian Legion, named Aurelius Antonius Longinus, had, at his own expense, and by his free will, overlaiden two brazen columns with gold, as an offering to the great gods of Heliopolis (Baalbek), that they might keep in safety his lord, the emperor Antoninus Pius, and the emperor's mother, Julia Augusta.

The deciphering these required much cleverness, but it was done not only by M. de Saulcy, but by other explorers, by supplying erasures and breaks. It is strange to read, after such an abyss of time intervening, that this worthy soldier was so liberal and so loyal to his emperor, as to offer his gods gifts "for the safety" of Antoninus and the empress.

The portico leads into a hexagonal court, which is 200 feet across. Here are there great doorways opening into the great court of the temple, which is 370 feet long from north to south, and 314 feet wide, from east to west. Around its sides are recesses and chambers, probably the cells of the priests. Before these stood rows of pillars; but they have all fallen, and lie scattered about. The court was never roofed. All the recesses and chambers were most richly decorated.

In the middle of the court is a round platform, which probably had on it the altar for sacrifices in heathen days. Constantine erected a basilica in this court, which was, of course, not roofed. The chief temple, stood close to this court. The six great columns, seen long before reaching Heliopolis, are all that is left of no doubt a magnificent peristyle. Nineteen of the beautiful columns stood on each side of the intended temple, and ten at each end. The six columns remaining are seventy-five feet in height, including base and capital, and the entablature over them make the height eighty-nine feet; their diameter is seven feet three inches at the base. The shafts are formed of only three large blocks; the base is of one block, the capital of one, and the entablature, uniting the column at the top, is of one solid stone.

The magnificent platform on which the Temple stood, and which was colossal, was much higher than the great court, and measured 300 feet from east to west, and 240 from north to south; it stood (as the six great columns now stand) fifty feet above the plain.

This magnificent temple, the most celebrated fane in the ancient world, was erected on the site of the Phœnician temple to Baal—the sun—and thus gave name to the place, Baalbek, or Heliopolis.

Another temple, dedicated to Jupiter, stands on a platform to the south of the Temple of the Sun, but is lower. Its architecture is wonderful, and it is remarkably well preserved. Though smaller than the Great Temple, it is 227 feet by 117, and is consequently large in itself. It faces

east, and had a portico reached by steps, with an inner row of six fluted columns, and two others west of them. In the style of the other temple, this one had a peristyle of fifteen splendid pillars on each side, east to west, and eight at each end from north to south. The height of the columns was sixty-five feet, including base and capital, their diameter at the base, six feet three inches, at the top, five feet eight inches. Over the peristyle was an entablature twelve feet wide, connected with the walls of the cella by enormous slabs of stone; above it was a richly carved cornice. The ceiling, formed by the slabs, was extremely fine; the slabs were divided into spaces, hexagonal or diamond shaped, and in each was a figure of a god or goddess, carved in high relief.

This beautiful temple is much ruined and defaced. What it was, is of course known by the fragments lying below. Of the forty-two columns, sixteen only remain *in situ*.

The great portal of the temple is nearly concealed from view by fallen stones. It is twenty-one feet wide and forty-two feet high, and it has a carved border all round it of fruit, flowers and vine-leaves. On the lintel are little figures holding bunches of grapes. Above it is a frieze of scroll-work and acanthus. The portal finishes with a rich cornice. Three large blocks of stone formed the lintel; one became displaced by an earthquake, and for a very long time hung down as if about to fall, threatening to kill, if it did so, any unlucky person beneath it. The late Sir Richard Burton, when consul at Damascus, requested the Turks to have it supported, and they complied, but erected a very ugly shaft, on which it rests, and which conceals the celebrated eagle with a *caduceus* in his talons, and long twisted garlands in his beak; the ends of the garlands were held by genii, one of which remains well preserved.

The interior of the temple is very finely decorated, and is divided into a nave and a sanctuary. The latter was higher than the nave, and no doubt an image of Jupiter stood in it. In fact, a statue, twelve feet high, which stood on a dais in this temple is now at Constantinople. There are finely carved niches, no doubt for statues, and everywhere, round the niches, on the wall, and in every place, are carvings of flowers, fruit, acorns, etc. Some of the niches, however, have never been finished. In the old times, each niche had a statue with two pillars, one on each side. The side walls have each seven fluted pilasters, with Corinthian capitals very finely carved; above are a frieze and a fine cornice.

This temple was the favourite shrine of the people; here they came to consult the oracle, and received its replies; actually given from the mouth of the idol itself. It was managed thus: a large statue of Jupiter stood in the temple; it was hollow inside, and was entered by a subterranean passage under the sanctuary. The entrance and staircase to this subterranean passage can still be seen. It was by a secret doorway in a chamber in the south wall. Entering the hollow statue the priests could give out any oracles—often wise and sensible—that they pleased, while the worshippers thought that Jupiter himself answered them. Theodosius, it is said, converted this temple into a Christian church. By a staircase north of the entrance the visitor may ascend to the summit of the temple, from which the interior can be well seen.

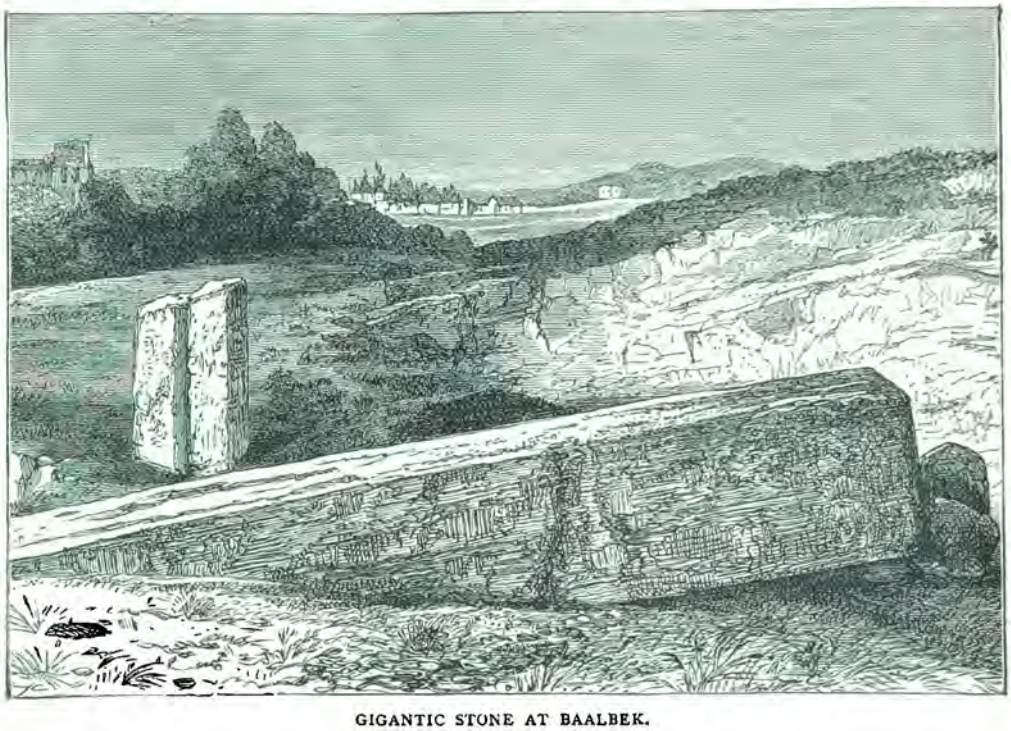
To the east of the Temple of Jupiter is the Saracen citadel. Some distance to the south-east we find the Temple of Venus, a little circular building of great beauty, but not as massive as the others.

It is surrounded by a peristyle of six columns, each twenty-six feet high and nine round, with very finely carved Corinthian capitals. The columns are nine feet distant from the wall of the *cella*, and the entablature above them is of concave semi-circles, which are very graceful and effective. A column has been left out from the peristyle for the doorway. The outside wall is decorated with pilasters and niches, and a

beautiful frieze. The doorway consisted of three great blocks of stone, but the upper one has fallen in. The temple had originally a domed roof, but it has fallen in; the walls also are ruinous. In the niches were originally statues of the nymphs of the goddess, and in the middle of the temple a statue of Venus herself.

The Greek Church converted this temple into a Christian Church, dedicated to St. Barbe, and on the east side of the wall is a fresco of a Greek cross inside a circle.

One of the greatest wonders of the world is the enormous wall of the original temple to Baal—the Phœnician one. Six gigantic blocks of stone, each thirty feet long and thirteen broad, clamped together with iron, lie on a foundation of smaller stones, but even these last are very large. The stones are so well cut and firmly placed together, without cement, that the point of a gold shirtpin will not pass between them. On the top of all—and the wall is twenty feet high—are three enormous blocks of stone



GIGANTIC STONE AT BAALBEK.

sixty-four, sixty-three-and-a-half and sixty-three feet long, and in height thirteen feet.[1]

Above this wonderful wall the Arabs have built a fortification, of a mixture of fragments of the old buildings. To the north of the acropolis is another wall of gigantic stones, alike in position and size to the six great stones that support the three enormous blocks.

One of the blocks has a doorway pierced through it, which leads into an open space full of fragments of columns and stones, all of immense size. In the quarries lies one of these enormous stones, which can be easily measured, and gives us some idea of the size ordinarily quarried, and also squared and polished for the buildings. It is sixty-nine feet long, and fourteen by seventeen broad and deep. Dr. Thomson says that "three respectable rooms might be made in it, leaving partition walls of three feet thick!"

[1] Dr. Robinson's measurements.

There were indeed giant builders in the days when this great stone was hewed.

The ruins are all that remain to tell us what the city was like that once stood here; its modern successor—how poor a one!—is the chief town however of the district of Baalbek in the Wilayet of Damascus. Baalbek is 3,680 feet above the level of the sea.

The Greek Catholics have a bishop here, and the Maronites an archbishop; and there are three Christian churches and six schools. There is also a Moslem mosque, at which the Mahometans hold a yearly festival.

The Turks have built barracks on the old ramparts.

All sorts of traditions are attached to Baalbek. Some say that it was the first city built by Cain—the Enoch of the 4th of Genesis. Others say that Solomon built it. Some that it was founded by some Egyptian priests, who here built a temple to the Sun; and from the massiveness of the buildings, and the resemblance of the temple to those of Egypt, this seems very likely. It is, however, certain that the Phœnicians built a temple to Baal here. Their massive work is always distinguishable. Julius Cæsar placed in Heliopolis a Roman colony; and towards the end of the second century after Christ, Antoninus Pius built the temple of Jupiter.

Human sacrifices were offered in the great Temple at the chief festivals of the heathens, and here Christians suffered martyrdom in the time of Diocletian. Theodosius destroyed its idols and idol-worship, and it became a Christian town.

It suffered much from Saracens, Crusaders, and earthquakes, and though it has been nearly four centuries under Turkish rule, it has, during that time, been the scene of constant feuds between Druses and Moslems.

Baalbek has been identified by Dr. Thomson as the *Baal-Gad* of the Bible.

Speaking after Joshua's defeat of Jabin, king of Hazor, of all that Joshua had done, the Bible tells us that he "took all that land, the hill country, and all the South, and all the land of Goshen" (in Palestine), "and the lowland, and the Arabah and the hill country of Israel and the lowland of the same, from Mount Halak, that goeth up to Seir, even unto Baal-gad in the valley of Lebanon under Mount Hermon."

In the 13th chapter God tells Joshua that much land yet remained to be possessed; among others, "All Lebanon, toward the sunrising, from Baal-gad under mount Hermon unto the entering in of Hamath. . . . Them will I drive out from before the children of Israel: only allot thou it unto Israel for an inheritance, as I have commanded thee."

Dr. Thomson says, "That it is in *the* valley of Lebanon cannot be questioned; that it is under Hermon is equally certain; and that it is at or on the road to the 'entrance into Hamath,' my explorations in that direction have fully satisfied my own mind."[1]

If this were so, Solomon must have ruled over Baalbek, and perhaps built the earlier temple. The voice of Mahometan tradition declares that the temple was built by Suleyman Ben Daoud. Solomon always used great stones—*vide* the temple walls and in Hebron—and he may have built this wonderful Temple of the Sun.

It is to be hoped, if he did, that it was to Jehovah; but we know that he built an altar to Chemosh, and so cannot be sure.

Major Conder and Lieutenant Mantell, in their passage through Baalbek, discovered a Greek inscription "painted in red in a chamber behind the north apse of the Church built by Theodosius."

[1] "The Land and the Book," p. 233.



CEDARS OF MOUNT LEBANON.

The Cedars of Lebanon.

FROM Baalbek, it is well to proceed to the famous Cedars of Lebanon. The road leads slightly to the north-west across the Plain, and a solitary column, nearly sixty feet high, is seen standing quite alone; it is called the "Column of the Girls," a singular name for it, for these columns are generally supposed to have been used by the followers of St. Simon Stylites, who, as every one knows, lived on the top of one.

At a miserable little hamlet called Deir-el-Ahmar, at the foot of Lebanon, the ascent begins, and winds through vales and rocks till it reaches a small fountain at the base of the bare slopes. The ascent

to the summit is very steep and wearisome, for it is 7,500 feet above the sea.

From the high point at length reached the most glorious view is obtained. To the north the highest peak of Lebanon, Jebel Mukhmel, 10,500 feet above the sea, rises in solemn grandeur, and below lies the great valley—the Bekaa.

From this summit begins the descent to the Cedars, which, from the mountain height, look only like a green spot. Winding paths down the mountain sides descend for a distance of more than two thousand feet to the part of Lebanon on which the celebrated trees grow. It is a height of white limestone, on which their cones and leaves have fallen during the ages, and formed a soil.

The Cedars are magnificent! Some of them are of great age, one being forty feet in circumference.

Of these ancient and kingly trees only about nine remain; there are in all but three hundred and fifty cedars in the whole grove, and not the slightest care is taken of them. Goats browse on the young shoots, and the monks cut branches down for fuel.

There is a Maronite Chapel in the grove, and a yearly festival is held there, when, fires being wanted, the poor cedars are made feed them with their branches. The Bible poets and prophets have immortalised the Cedars of Lebanon, but in their day the upper slopes of the mountains were covered with vast forests of these trees, from which King Hiram of Tyre supplied Solomon with wood for the Temple.

Some American missionaries, about fifty years ago, counted the concentric circles for a few inches into the bark of the, then, oldest cedar, and that data, they asserted, fixed its age at three thousand five hundred years!

The wood, bark, cones, and even leaves of the cedar are full of resin, and the heart of the wood has the much admired red colour; the exterior wood is much paler. It is very durable timber, and is admirably adapted for building purposes. The branches grow out horizontally from the trunk, and the cones are beautiful. It was cedar that was most used in the construction of the Temple, and the beauty and strength of the trees supplied numerous images to the Hebrew poets and prophets.

"The righteous," sings David, "shall grow like a cedar of Lebanon!" "Behold," says Ezekiel, "the Assyrian was a cedar in Lebanon with fair branches, and with a shadowing shroud, and of an high stature; and his top was among the thick boughs." "The Amorite, whose height was like the height of the cedars," said the Lord, through His prophet Amos. There are no cedars in the World like these renowned trees of Lebanon.

Not only Solomon, but the other Eastern monarchs obtained cedar from the Lebanon forests; and "in the middle ages the private houses in Syria were ceiled with cedar."[1] It is not surprising that the forests disappeared, especially as forestry was scarcely known then.

[1] "Palestine." By Major Conder.

THE LEBANON.

THESE glorious mountains, the northern boundary of Palestine, are beautiful in form and picturesque in detail, especially the western slopes, where deep gorges of ruddy sandstone are shaded by noble pines and other trees, while terraces planted with graceful vines climb to high ridges.

On the eastern slopes their appearance is very different. They are still picturesque, but with a wilder and more rugged beauty. They tower, grey limestone with only a few stunted trees on them, in awful grandeur. The reason of this difference in the hills is that the western slopes meet the soft breezes from the Mediterranean, and the moisture of the vapour carried inland by the wind, while the eastern slopes, on the contrary, are exposed to the hot blast from the Syrian deserts, which dries and withers vegetation. The Anti-Lebanon suffers from the desert winds also, because the higher Lebanon keeps the fresh sea breeze from it. The vine, however, grows well on the Anti-Lebanon heights, and they are more picturesque in outline than the Lebanon. The heights of the Anti-Lebanon, like the eastern slopes of Lebanon, are grey and stony. It is in these mountains that many rivers have their rise.

The true source of the Orontes is here. The Dog river rises in caves in the Lebanon; and further north, near the monastery of St. George, rises the famous Sabbatic river, which Pliny declared flowed for six days, and rested on the Sabbath! Its Arabic name is Nahr es Sebta. The fact is, that this river springs from a pool in one of the caves of which the Lebanon is full, and at intervals, between four and seven days, a noise is heard in the mountains, and then torrents of water pour from the cavern down into the valley. The Litâny rises near Baalbek, and flows down a grand gorge to the sea.

The western slopes of the Lebanon fall abruptly to the Mediterranean, leaving only a narrow strip of land or beach, which leads over the rugged promontories extending from the hillsides into the sea. The climate of the Lebanon is excellent; the breezes from the sea, the pure atmosphere of the heights, and the abundant water supply, keep the people who dwell on it in perfect health, and they are a strong, energetic race.

The Anti-Lebanon range runs out to Hermon, dividing the plain of Damascus from the Bekaa; on the north it sinks lower, and the Bekaa opens out into the Desert of Palmyra.

In the Lebanon dwelt, during the middle ages, the famous Sheikh el Jebel, or Old Man of the Mountain, the head of the Assassins; a sect founded in the eleventh century. The disciples of the "Old Man," we are told, were permitted to see and enjoy for a few days the pleasures of a magnificent garden, which they were led to believe was the Paradise they would inherit on condition of blind obedience to the Sheikh; who ordered the death of any person he chose, and the order was implicitly obeyed by his disciples. The readers of the "Talisman" will remember the fictitious attack on Cœur de Lion. Conrad of Montferrat, at the very time he was rejoicing at receiving the crown of Jerusalem from Richard I., was mortally wounded by the Assassins, by order of their Sheikh. Raymond of Tripoli suffered the same fate. In 1172 our own Prince Edward's life was attempted at Acre, when, according to tradition, Queen Eleanor sucked the poison from the wound (one wishes this were true!). In 1174 the Assassins endeavoured to kill Saladin. Many other princes had been their victims. They were a power in the land; they numbered 40,000, and their Sheikh made

alliances with princes, and owned ten castles above Tortosa, and the land round them. But Holagan Khan, the grandson of the celebrated Zingis Khan, attacked, and nearly extirpated them. They were not however, entirely destroyed till 1280, when the Mamelukes succeeded in ridding the world of them. They are still represented by a sect called Ismailiyeh, but of course they do not follow out the ancient habit of assassination. Some writers consider that the Metawileh are their descendants. The Ismailiyeh have a few villages on the eastern slopes of the mountains and



THE MOUNTAINS OF LEBANON.

the castle of Masyad on the mountains west of Hamah.

The Druses are, however, the chief sect in the Lebanon, and in fact its noblest inhabitants. Their homes were originally in the mountains of South Lebanon, but they have migrated to the east of the Hauran, to Galilee and Carmel, and to the neighbourhood of Aleppo. They have produced one hero, the famous Fakreddin, before mentioned, who made himself and his people rulers of the whole country, from Acre to Damascus, and from Carmel to Aleppo.

The Maronites, also dwellers in the Lebanon, are a very old sect, but they have joined the Church of Rome—called the

Latin Church in Palestine—except in two practices, which the Roman Church permits them to retain. Their Liturgy is in the Syrian language; and the priests may be married men.

In 1860 the Lebanon was thrown into great agitation and trouble by an outbreak between the Maronites and Druses, in which there was a massacre of the latter. This outbreak led to the massacre at Damascus, and the horrors committed caused the interference of the European Powers, which resulted in a joint guarantee for the protection of these people. A Christian governor was established in the Lebanon, a constitution settled, with a taxation of one shilling a head; a mounted police; and a coach-road was made over the mountain.

The Lebanon is consequently happy and prosperous; covered with vineyards, on terraces cut in the mountain sides, and with lovely gardens.

Northern Lebanon does not come exactly under modern Palestine, but Riblah is mentioned as one of the border towns of the Holy Land in Numbers xxxiv. 11: "And the border shall go down from Shepham to Riblah, on the east side of Ain." It was at Riblah that Jehoahaz, king of Judah, the evil son of good Josiah who fell at Megiddo, was seized by Pharoah Necho and put in bands, "that he might not reign in Jerusalem"; and the Egyptian king put the land to a tribute of a hundred talents of silver, and a talent of gold. He made Jehoahaz's brother, Eliakim, king instead, changing his name to Jehoiakim, and took his captive, Jehoahaz, into Egypt with him, where he died.

But Jehoiakim did evil in the sight of the Lord, as his fathers had done, sacrificing to idols; and Nebuchadnezzar came up against him, and Jehoiakim—apparently without opposition—became his servant for three years: then he rebelled. Bands of robbers, Chaldeans, Syrians, Moabites, and Ammonites, came up against Jerusalem; for Nebuchadnezzar was fighting with the king of Egypt, whom he finally conquered at Carchemish. Probably it was the hope that Nebuchadnezzar would be defeated in this war that induced Jehoiakim to rebel. But the king of Babylon sent an army at once to begin the siege of Jerusalem in which, after Pharoah's defeat, he came up and joined. At his mere appearance the rebellion was over. The nation surrendered. Nebuchadnezzar bound the king in fetters, and carried him off to Babylon.

And with the king and his family he also took the golden vessels out of the house of the Lord, carried them to Babylon, and put them in the temple of his god.

The king of Babylon then set up Jehoiakim's little son, Jehoiachin (a child of eight years), as vassal king. But even this infant did evil in the sight of the Lord; therefore, when a year had expired, Nebuchadnezzar sent for the child, who had only reigned three months, and had him brought to Babylon, with the remaining vessels of the Temple, making his elder brother, Zedekiah, who was twenty-one, king in his place. At the end of eleven years Zedekiah also rebelled against the king of Babylon, in spite of a most solemn oath of obedience that he had taken in the name of God. He had done many wicked and cruel things; and not he only, but the chief of the priests and the people had transgressed greatly after the abominations of the heathen. They even polluted the Temple of God with the horrid rites of idolatry. (See Ezek. viii. 9–16.)

Nebuchadnezzar was the instrument to avenge the insulted Majesty of Heaven. He besieged Jerusalem again. It held out against him for nearly two years; then famine raged within it, and a breach being made in the walls king Zedekiah escaped and fled. But he was pursued, taken on the plain of Jericho, and brought to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah.

There a dreadful doom awaited the perjured king. His two sons were slain in his presence, and then his eyes were put out. Pictures at Babylon show him kneeling, with his hands tied behind his back, while the executioner holds the two pronged in-

strument with which, when it was red hot, the victim's eyes were to be put out.

The general of the king of Babylon was then sent to burn the Temple and all the great buildings and houses in Jerusalem. The people were nearly all carried away captive to Babylon. The priests and officers of Zedekiah were brought to Riblah to the king, and there put to death.

Over the remnant left, the very poorest peasants, he made Gedaliah, a good man, governor, but he was, as we know, murdered by the Jews at Mizpeh.

Thus began at Riblah the seventy years' captivity.

Riblah, the scene of the torture of the last king of Judah, is on the right bank of the Orontes, thirty miles north-east of Baalbek. Some few houses and the ruins of a church remain. The ruined town is three thousand years old.

Very early in the world's history the Hittites had founded a kingdom in Northern Syria. Their first opponent appears to have been Thothmes I., of Egypt, who reigned about 1700 years before Christ. But the best known incident of those ancient times is the fact that Thothmes III., who conquered Palestine in 1600 B.C., advanced northwards and crossed the Euphrates.

He made a list—still recorded at Karnak—of 218 towns in Syria and Aram that he had taken. Amongst them were *Hamath* and Aleppo. Seven years afterwards he attacked Kadesh, and cut dowr the trees by it. At his death the Hittites however recovered their independence, and became a great empire.

These mountains are certainly the highest in Palestine. Mount Hermon, the hill sung of by Hebrew poets and prophets, is generally given as their highest point. This is, however, a mistake; it is really nearly two thousand feet lower than the very highest summit of the range, but it is far more remarkable and prominent. We have already given a brief account of this sacred mountain, since we had to relate how modern research and observation have bestowed on Hermon the glory of having been the scene of the Transfiguration of our Lord.

At the foot of Hermon, on the road to the Hauran, are many extinct volcanoes.

THE ROAD TO PALMYRA.

FOR this long and difficult journey preparations are usually made at Damascus. The Consul must be requested to ask for a guard from the Turkish authorities, and the usual staff of a camp must be provided; camels or dromedaries, sometimes horses in good number, tents, etc., etc.—a camp, in fact, for the desert.

The road through the suburbs of Damascus is charming, passing through a verdant girdle of groves and gardens, that set the lovely oasis like a gem in green enamel; orange groves and orchards scent the air. But by-and-by the road leads northward, skirting the base of a barren peak. At the top of this pass are a few columns and heaps of stones. At last the desert plain is reached, stretching to the horizon, and bounded on the north by the mountains. At Kuteifeh, the travellers leave the Aleppo road, and, passing a village and an aqueduct, reach Je'rûd, the capital of a province and residence of an Agha, or border chieftain. This is a large, clean village, with some good houses, and the inhabitants cultivate the soil, and appear prosperous. A ride across the plain leads to Atneh. This is the last place at which to obtain water till the

travellers reach Karyatein. The servants and escort therefore fill their leather bottles, and let the animals enjoy drinking it. The road, after leaving Je'rûd, becomes very desolate; there is not a single tree, but occasionally a few ruins appear of castles and khans, built, no doubt, when Palmyra was a great and prosperous city.

Karyatein has a Turkish governor and garrison. The former generally supplies a guard of soldiers to travellers arriving here, as the road is dangerous, the desert being infested by Arab robbers—the 'Anazeh tribe. They go out marauding in bodies of six hundred or more, and attack travellers with long lances in rest, and the wildest and most horrible cries. A raid of this kind is called a *Ghazu*. They will rob a poor, wayfaring man as readily as rich tourists, and have frequently added murder to robbery.

Karyatein is on an oasis between the mountains. There is a Catholic chapel there, and a mosque. The people of the village are, however, very poor. The Turkish soldiers rob and oppress them; and should there be no garrison, the Arabs would come down and carry off their grain and cattle. The doors in their houses are mere holes, too small for a man to enter upright, and impossible to be passed by more than one at a time. A single stooping intruder might be easily shot, or otherwise killed, so their narrowness is not a bad means of defence.

It is usual to encamp on the west of this village, and it may amuse the reader who has not been in the East, to read a description of a camp in the desert.

The tents are pitched by a well, if possible, but there is only one on this road. The mattresses and blankets are spread; the horses are picketed about, the camels are lying down, eating, or merely resting; on a tripod a kettle boils, and the servants are cooking out of sight, or busily moving about. The men attending to the animals give an air of great animation to the scene, while the travellers sit outside, on a rug spread on the sand, and enjoy the rest and the sweet evening air of the desert, and hear the jackals howling round the camp, hungry, and smelling food.

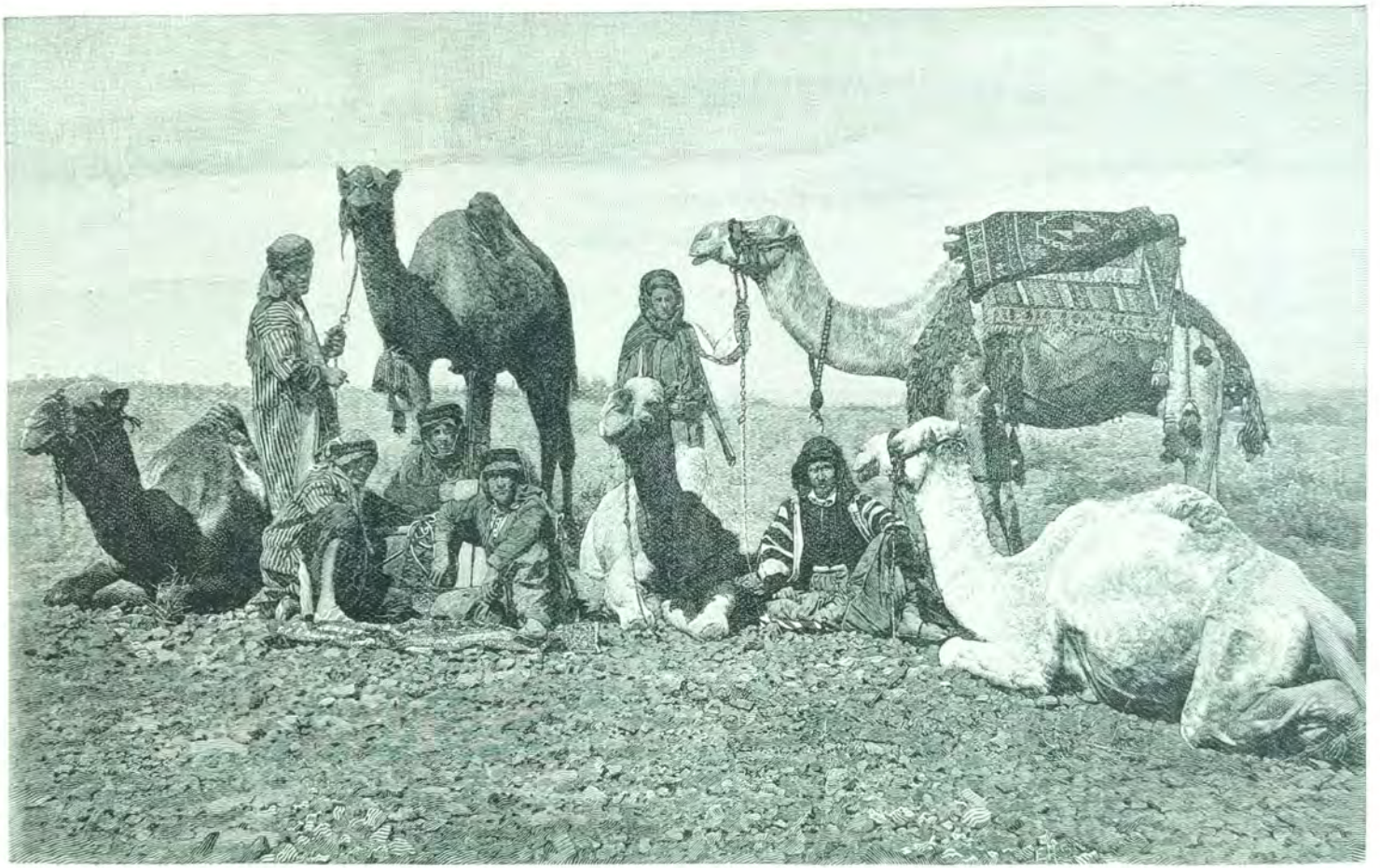
A guard is kept, of course, at night, and sometimes it is wiser to sleep dressed, with arms by the side, when the tribes are restless or at war with each other.

It is often bitterly cold at dawn, but early rising on such an expedition is imperative. All are up by daybreak; the breakfast is eaten, the animals fed and watered, the tents are struck, the things packed, and the baggage animals loaded. Then the party starts. After the village of Karyatein, there is only the desert between the travellers and Palmyra. A vast stretch of sand, without a tree or house; not a flat, rippled surface like the yellow sea-sand, but rising in hillocks occasionally like waves of the sea in a fresh breeze, or even in a storm.

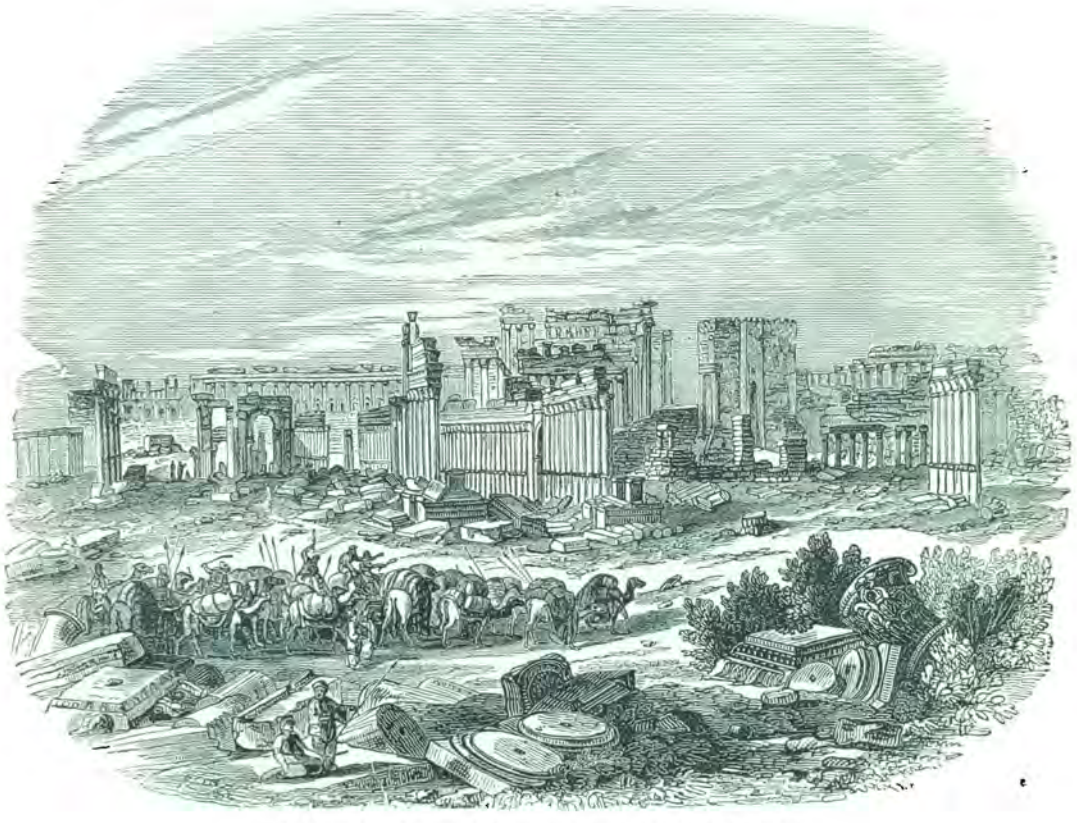
In fact, if an ocean, ruffled by a gale of wind into great waves, were suddenly petrified, it would resemble the desert plain. The monotony of the view is sometimes broken by the mirage, one of the wonders of the desert. We saw one first in the Egyptian desert, and could well have believed that it was a real lake, surrounded by trees and ancient temples, had we not been told that it was but a sun-painting on the sand.

On the Palmyra desert it is of green fields, and trees, and water. It is in the desert also that one hears "the airy tongues that syllable men's names," and which, if followed, lead the deceived person from his party into the desert, where he would probably be lost. Kinglake distinctly heard church bells when he was there.

An old castle is seen, of course a mere ruin; and by-and-by a ruined Khan, much infested with snakes. Thence the road proceeds till the Valley of the Tombs is entered, on the sides of which are tall square towers of eighty feet in height, and the four sides each thirty feet wide. These are the tombs of Palmyra—a sad, but not inappropriate entrance to the great city of the dead.



A GROUP OF TRAVELLERS IN THE SYRIAN DESERT.



PALMYRA. GENERAL VIEW OF THE PRINCIPAL RUINS.

PALMYRA.

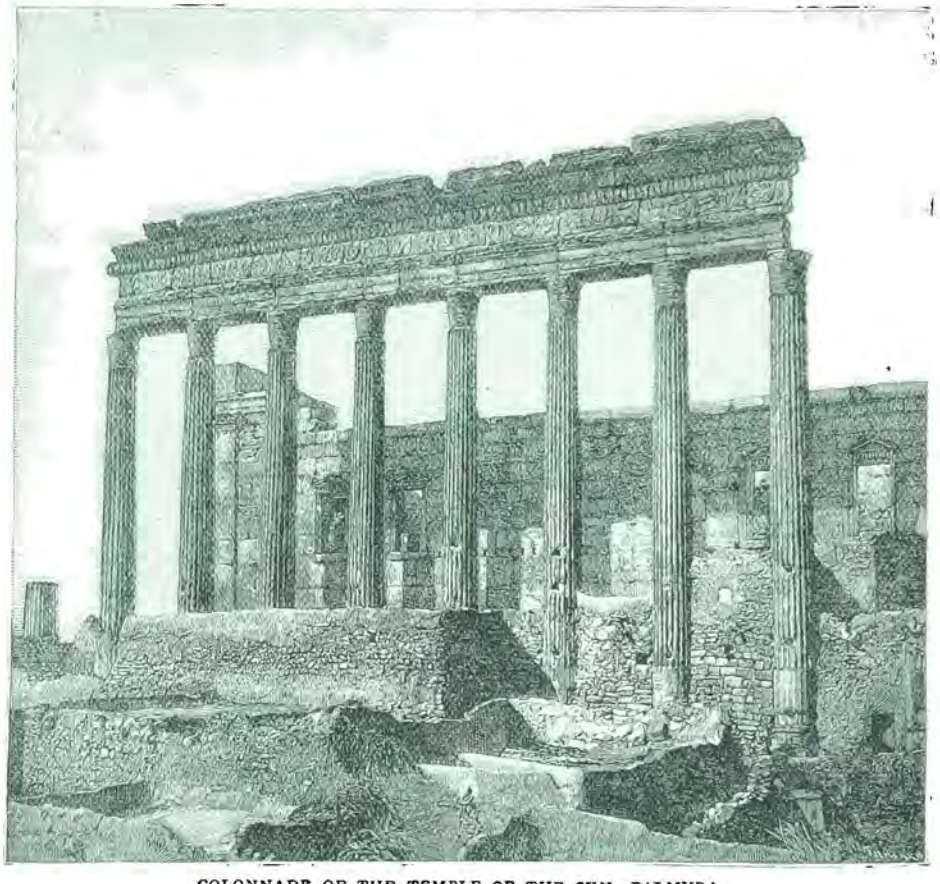
THE effect of the first appearance of Palmyra is magical. After the dreary monotony of the desert, it is extraordinary to behold magnificent columns, gateways, and broken arches rising suddenly from the yellow sands of the desert.

Of all this quantity of ruins, the Temple of the Sun (of Baal) is the most remarkable.

It is surrounded by a wall seventy feet high, and with a base beginning ten feet up the wall, and projecting from it twenty feet. Inside is a court 740 feet square. A range of pilasters, supporting a frieze and cornice, remains almost perfect. The chief entrance is on the west side, through a triple gateway, which once had a portico of ten columns, now gone. A flight of extremely wide steps led up to it; the Corinthian columns now lie shattered near it. Round the interior there was a double colonnade, with three rows of grand pillars, each of which had a bracket for a statue. Almost a hundred remain *in situ*, many with entablatures. It is supposed that originally

there must have been four hundred columns in the colonnade. In the centre of the court, on a platform, stood the Temple itself. It was surrounded by a row of columns sixty-four feet high. Originally they had bronze capitals, but these are gone. An entablature ran round them, ornamented with finely-carved fruit and flowers in festoons, supported at intervals by winged genii. The doorway stands between two columns, and opposite to it is the entrance to the *cella*. This portal is very beautiful. On the ceiling is a spread eagle, with genii on each side of it. The roof is gone, and the interior of the temple has been ruined by a mosque built there.

The walls are in good preservation, and in the west and east are windows with



COLONNADE OF THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN, PALMYRA.

pilasters between them. It is difficult to examine the Temple of the Sun, because it is full of mud hovels.

Five other ruined temples remain, of great interest, but none equal in beauty to this temple. About two hundred yards from the temple court the great colonnade begins. Here are the remains of a magnificent triumphal arch.

Between this arch and the temple a column of enormous proportions lies on the ground.

The colonnade was of one centre avenue and two side ones, which extended the whole length of the city, from south-east to north-west. The centre avenue was bordered by a double row of columns, fifty-seven feet high. There were about seven



ARCH OF TRIUMPH AT PALMYRA.

hundred and fifty in all. A hundred and fifty are still *in situ;* a great number are lying on the ground. A single row of columns edged the side avenues. Probably Zenobia's chariot or her horse often passed proudly up the centre avenue, and pedestrians from many lands used the side avenues. There is a bracket half-way up each column for a statue. How magnificent it must have been we can conceive, and even now the columns take a new grace from decay. The colonnade was crossed in the middle by another street, and here there are four square piers, and at the end of every street was a temple. Inscriptions have been examined which show that the great colonnade was built before 238 A.D.

Near its west end, on the lower slope of the hill, are some ruined buildings ascribed to Diocletian, in an inscription discovered by Messrs. Wood and Dawkins.

We have mentioned the tombs in the approach to Palmyra. We must give some slight detail of them. A handsome portal admits to them. They are four storeys high, and each storey contains *loculi*, in which embalmed bodies were laid and sealed up. The chambers have stuccoed and painted ceilings, and over the doors are rows of busts, perhaps of the dead buried there. There are a hundred of these tombs all round the city, in the plain and on the hills; but they are very ruinous, and Sir Richard and Lady Burton, when they visited Palmyra, discovered many bones and skulls in caves and places they dug up and explored. The three most interesting of these towers are Kusr el-Azba, Kusr el-Arûs and Kusr ez-Zeineh. They were probably the tombs of the aristocratic families of Palmyra, as there is also a Necropolis in the plains.

There is a castle of much later date, not far from the end of the great colonnade, on a hill; but it is of difficult access, as the drawbridge is gone, and the moat is deep and wide. If the summit can be gained the whole of Palmyra is seen by a bird's eye view from it.

Palmyra, probably, originated in the large and beautiful oasis found almost in the centre of the road taken by caravans from the East. It had and has abundant fountains, and takes its name from its splendid palm trees, Tadmor and Palmyra both signifying the same. Here Solomon's merchants rested from the dry and scorching desert; here, no doubt, a great khan was erected, and Solomon, who evidently delighted in building, improved it into a town. In 34 A.D. Mark Antony endeavoured to take the Desert City, but was obliged to raise the siege; but Gibbon tells us that in Trajan's time it became a possession of Rome. But its great distance and position in the desert preserved for it almost complete liberty, and it was practically a Republic, governed by a Senate elected by the people, as their inscriptions still tell us. A.D. 260, Odenathus, a Palmyrene general, took Mesopotamia from the Persians, and was proclaimed king. He had married a lady of royal race, and one of the most beautiful and gifted women that the world has ever seen—Zenobia, a descendant of Cleopatra. She was a brilliant dark beauty, devoted to her husband, whose life she fully shared, hunting wild beasts with him, and as fearless and clever as she was lovely. Odenathus was murdered by his nephew, Mæconius, in revenge for a slight punishment, at Emesa (now Homs), in 267. But the people conferred his crown on Zenobia, who had at once avenged his death on the murderer.

She conquered, within a short space of time, Egypt, Asia Minor, Syria and Mesopotamia, and ruled her empire wisely and well for five years. All the arts and luxuries of Rome were to be found in Palmyra. Its queen possessed all its culture. She could speak the Greek, Latin, Syriac and Egyptian languages, and had as her friend and instructor the celebrated critic and scholar, Longinus, who became—unhappily for him—her chief minister. She gave a refuge in her capital to persecuted Christians, and to Christian heretics, though she never

became a Christian herself, but continued worshipping the gods of her fathers.

At length she seems to have thought that she might be entirely free from even a nominal subjection to Rome. She dressed her sons in the Imperial purple, and showed them to her troops, and took for herself the title of Queen of the East. Aurelian, the man who had risen from a peasant to a Roman emperor, was not likely to allow her to defy the majesty of Rome. He marched at once into the East, and defeated her in two battles, one at Antioch, and the second and final one at Emesa. Zenobia retreated to Palmyra, where she boldly stood a siege.

"On his march over the sandy desert between Emesa and Palmyra the emperor was perpetually harassed by the Arabs; nor could he always defend his army, and especially his baggage, from these flying troops of active and daring robbers, who watched the moment of surprise, and eluded the slow pursuit of the legions."[1] This sounds like a description of the Arabs of the present day.

The emperor found the siege difficult. "The Roman people," he says in an original letter, "speak with contempt of the war which I am waging against a woman. They are ignorant both of the character and power of Zenobia. It is impossible to enumerate her warlike preparations of stones, of arrows, of every sort of missile weapons. Every part of the walls is provided with two or three ballista, and artificial fires are thrown from her military engines." But the resolution of Aurelian resulted in the defeat of the great queen. Probus, who had meantime conquered her Egyptian inheritance, joined Aurelian with his victorious troops, and Zenobia, seeing that the town must yield, fled on a swift dromedary, and had reached the banks of the Euphrates before she was overtaken and captured. The town surrendered, and was treated with great lenity.

[1] "Gibbon," vol. ii., p. 235.

In her adversity Zenobia failed to sustain her lofty character. She ascribed her obstinate defence, and the original offence she had given to Rome, to her minister's advice, and thus purchased life by the sacrifice of her honour. Longinus was condemned, in consequence, to death. "Without uttering a complaint," says Gibbon, "he calmly followed the executioner, pitying his unhappy mistress, and bestowing comfort on his afflicted friends."

Aurelian had crossed the Straits which separate Europe and Asia, when he heard that Palmyra had revolted, and murdered the governor and garrison he had left there. He marched back at once, entered the unhappy city, and put to death nearly all its inhabitants, old men and women, children and peasants, and destroyed a great part of the city, which never recovered from this crushing blow, but sank to an obscure town —a fortress—a mere village full of ruins, and was forgotten till some English travellers *discovered* the ruins at the end of the seventeenth century.

Zenobia walked in gold chains in Aurelian's triumph; afterwards she settled down in a villa Aurelian gave her on the banks of the Tiber.

It is a mere episode here, but we cannot refrain from mentioning in this place the other lady who gave Aurelian trouble—Victoria, Empress of Britain and Gaul *in reality*, though she set up puppet emperors, through whom she ruled. These were Marius and Tetrichus; the latter betrayed Victoria's plans to Aurelian, and suffered himself to be defeated. Victoria's life was shortened by this ingratitude of her dependant.

Benjamin of Tudela tells us that in his time Palmyra contained "Two thousand warlike Jews, who were at war with the Christians and with the Arabian subjects of Noureddin, and assisted their neighbours the Mahomedans." Now, the village of Palmyra consists of fifty wretched huts, and these are concealed in the Temple of the Sun from the predatory Arabs.



LAKE HULEH.

THE WATERS OF MEROM—LAKE HULEH.

IT was near the waters of Merom, as we have lately said, that Joshua won his final victory, and defeated Jabin, king of Hazor and his allies. They are now called Lake Huleh—Bahret el Huleh; and in the days of Josephus they had obtained the name of Lake Semachonitis. The lake is small, blue, and triangular, and is the first of the three basins of the Jordan.

The plain of the Huleh is a great swamp, lying very low. But there are many dry and firm places on it, which are cultivated, and are very fertile. On these the Arabs pitch their tents. It is bordered by a tangle of papyrus canes and thorny bushes. Of course the marsh is rife with insect life; Mosquitoes, spiders, scorpions, and snakes thrive in it, and at certain times in the year it is very malarious. Great numbers of crows also fly over and build in the thorns of the marsh, and their caw is in painful harmony with the dreary scene outside the lake. A mound on the marsh is called Tell Hay, the Hill of Snakes. There are pools near the marsh, in which buffaloes wallow, and here, or rather, on the lake, the pelican —that bird of the wilderness—is found. There are great clumps of the thorn-tree also, full of birds' nests; for every bird or

beast is safe in this swamp from man, since no one dares walk on the treacherous morass, and the thorny thickets are also impenetrable. Rising over the plain and visible afar off is a white-domed mazar or tomb, said to be that of the prophet Joshua. It is not a true site, but may probably have been placed there in memory of his victory over Jabin.

An impetuous torrent falls from the mountains very near the tomb.

The marsh ends in the plain of the Ard el-kheit. This spot is extremely fertile, and on it is a very fine fountain, called El Mellâhah. The water is tepid, and is full of fish, which come up into it from the lake. The fertility of this fine plain is of course due to the abundance of water in the immense pool, which is carried across to some mills. There are no houses on the plain, though there are traces of buildings. People fear to dwell on it, as the Bedouins often make raids there, and are a very rude and savage tribe.

It is impossible to get to the shore of Lake Huleh, except on the east side or south-western; for it is literally inpenetrable, being shut in by walls of papyrus, and swamps. No boat ever floated on Lake Huleh till Mr. Macgregor entered and inspected it in his canoe, the *Rob Roy*. He has given a very interesting account of it in his delightful book, "*Rob Roy* on the Jordan," and it seems from his account to be a lovely little lake, the resort of numberless water-fowl—amongst them of ducks and swans.

Papyrus was used in ancient Egypt, as paper is with us, for writing on, and when its growth failed in that country it was felt as a severe loss, the writers of the period having only parchment as its substitute. The failure of papyrus in Egypt was foretold by Isaiah: "Egypt shall be minished and dried up; the reeds and flags shall wither away."[1] In the A.V. it is "the *paper* reeds by the brooks shall wither."

The mode of using the reeds is said to have been as follows, differing slightly from the account given by recent travellers. The stem or trunk of the plant is triangular, and is composed of several layers or films placed over each other; these were peeled off and separated by a needle. They were then spread upon a wet table, to the length and breadth of the intended piece of paper. Over these slips they put some paste, or some of the muddy water of the Nile, a little warmed, on which they spread a second layer of strips. Then they let it dry in the sun. The Egyptians made as much use of this paper as the Japanese do of theirs; they made baskets, shoes, clothes, and little boats, as well as paper, of it. The Arabs of the present day make coarse mats for the walls and roofs of their huts of it, out of the papyrus or babeer reeds.

A very beautiful lily grows on the plain of Huleh, and is called the lily of Huleh.

A little over two miles from the end of Lake Huleh is the first bridge across the Jordan. It is of black basalt, has three arches, and no parapet. On the Huleh side is a round tower; on the other side of the river is a khan. The bridge is said by Schwartz to have been built by Baldwin IV., in 1112. It is called the Bridge of Jacob's Daughters.

The Huleh people cultivate rice here; it is the only place in Palestine where it grows. The rice is red, and swells extremely in cooking.

Dr. Thomson gives the following graphic sketch of Huleh:—"There lies the Huleh like a vast carpet, with patterns of every shade, and shape, and size, thrown down in Nature's most bewitching negligence, and laced all over with countless streams of liquid light. Those laughing brooks of the Huleh, in straight lines drawn and parallel, or retreating behind clumps of nodding shrubbery, in graceful curves, to tie up love-knots in sport; here weaving silver tissue into cunning complications, there expanding into full-faced mirrors.

There are some caves and rock tombs near Lake Huleh, now used as store places for grain, or for shelter for cattle.

[1] Isaiah xix. 6. R.V.

THE HAURÂN.

THIS part of Palestine is extremely interesting, and can be reached from Damascus. It is a large district, bounded on the north by the Wâdy-el-Ajam; on the west by the Haj Road, and south and east by the Syrian desert. It is divided into the Lejâh, the Nukrah, and the Jebel el-Druse.

The Haurân stretches southwards from Damascus for 70 miles.

The Lejâh is the Argob of Deuteronomy, the Trachonitis of St. Luke. It is one great sea of lava.

"Jair," Moses tells us in Deuteronomy, "the son of Manasseh took all the country of Argob unto the coasts of Geshuri and Maachathi; and called them after his own name, Bashan-havoth-Jair, unto this day." "Bashan is called the land of Giants."

Of this conquest of Jair, the lava bed occupies three hundred and fifty square miles, and rises above the surrounding plain to the height of nearly twenty feet. The edge is not even, but runs out into very irregular black points of rock, so smooth that it cannot be climbed. There are a few openings round this high edge, however, that have been cut to give admittance to the interior; but it is nearly everywhere impassable, and roads had to be cut through it to the towns. It is the strangest plain ever seen; like a sea of blackness, suddenly petrified, with waves that have risen, but are foamless. In cooling the lava has cracked and split in many places, which have opened, making deep chasms that cannot be crossed. It is also broken into hillocks, and between these are spots where there is soil, and of great fertility. Burckhardt says, "In the interior parts of the Lejâh the rocks are in many places cleft asunder, so that the whole hill appears shivered, and in the act of falling down. The layers are generally horizontal, from six to eight feet or more in thickness, sometimes covering the hills, and inclining to the curve, as appears from the fissures, which often traverse the rock from top to bottom."

There are caves here where robbers lurk.

Strabo says, speaking of the Lejâh, "Towards the part occupied by Arabians and Itureans, are mountains of difficult access, in which are caves extending to a great depth. One of them was large enough to contain four thousand robbers." William of Tyre also speaks of caves "not many miles from Tiberias," one of which was three stories high, that is three rooms were one above the other. It was fortified and garrisoned. Josephus tells us that "these robbers had no cities of their own, but only some receptacles and dens in the earth, and there they and their cattle lived in common together. However, they had made contrivances to get pools of water, and laid up corn in granaries for themselves, and were able to make great resistance by issuing out on the sudden against any that attacked them; for the entrances of their caves were narrow, in which but one could come in at a time, and the places within incredibly large, and made very wide; but the ground over their habitations was not very high,"—not like the Arbela Caves—"but rather a plain, while the rocks were all difficult to be entered upon, unless any one gets into the plain road by the guidance of another, for these roads are not straight, but have several revolutions."[1]

The Haurân mountains contain many

[1] Josephus, "Ant.," xv. 10. 1.

extinct volcanoes; and south of Mount Hermon there are more small ones.

A Roman road ran through this lava sea from north to south, and there are many ruined round towers to be seen along its site and elsewhere on the plain. It is extraordinary that people should have built cities in such a situation, but in the troubled ages of the world difficulty of access was a great recommendation to any place. The Lejâh was not waterless. On the contrary, there are copious living fountains there.

Musmieh, a ruined town, which covered an area of three miles, is the most important of the elder ruins. It is situated within the lava girdle, so that to reach it they had to cut a road through the great bed of lava. The position of this ancient city was very secure. It could be reached only by crossing the lava, for the rock fields round it were impassable. This road through the lava is paved, and also a large space in front of its ruined temple, which is thought one of the finest monuments of a past age in Bashan.

It is really a fine building. When built it was surrounded by columns.

The temple stands on a platform. A flight of six steps running across its entire front led to the temple portico, before which stood six Doric columns, three of which still remain *in situ*. On their pedestals, and on the architrave above them, inscriptions are found.

The temple was fifty feet broad, the depth seventy-four feet, the height forty. There were three entrances; one large, the others smaller. These have been walled in. There are several long inscriptions in this temple, one on the right of the entrance, another on the lintel above the entrance, and several others in different parts of the building. The interior is forty-six feet by forty-two, and there is a large apse opposite the entrance, above which is a most beautiful shell-shaped roof. The roof of the temple itself rested on four arches, supported by Corinthian columns. These are ornamented with carved wreaths round the columns. The roof has fallen in, but the columns are standing, and are about thirty feet high.

The inscriptions here are numerous and important. They belong to the Emperors Marcus Aurelius, Lucius Aurelius Verus, Commodus, Septimius Severus and Alexander Severus, from 151 to 235 A.D. Parts of two Roman legions were stationed here. There is a remarkable decree of Saturninus, which we take, with the above description, from Dr. Merrill's excellent "East of Jordan."

"Julius Saturninus to the people of Phaena, in the metropolis of Trachon, greeting:—If any one, soldier or private person, forcibly quarter himself on you, let me know it, and you shall have justice done you; for neither do you owe any contribution to strangers, nor, since you have a public house, can you be compelled to receive strangers into your dwellings. This, my decree, put up in a place within your metropolis, that no one may plead ignorance."

This inscription proves that the Lejah was the Traconitis of Philip, of Luke iii. 1. Here, also, we see the very early institution of houses for travellers—khans.

A journey of two hours from Musmieh brings the traveller to Brak or Burak, which has been identified with the city of Constantia, the seat of a bishopric. Solemus, its bishop, was present at the Council of Chalcedon, 451 A.D.

There are many crosses and Christian symbols on the buildings. But this episcopal city was built wholly of stone. Mr. Macgregor, of *Rob Roy* fame, visited Brak, and found hospitality at the house of the Sheikh. He describes it as built wholly of massive stones, not a bit of wood or lead enters into its construction. His bedroom was ceiled with mighty stones supported by stone brackets and beams. His window shutter was of stone, the drain pipes were of stone—nothing but stone had been used.

The appearance of the towns are generally the same. "Every house is built of

black basalt, with which the country abounds. Many of the houses are in so perfect a state that they might be inhabited again to-morrow, and indeed two or three of the Druse families will leave the large towns, and form a new community in one of these long deserted places. All they have to do is to take possession; they have not even the trouble of making a door, for they find stone doors already hung. At present the Druse population is far too small for the country; only a very small portion of the soil is cultivated." [1] The inhabitants of Burak were supplied with water chiefly by their tanks and cisterns; indeed, the name of the town means cisterns, or reservoirs.

Burak is at the extreme north end of the lava bed, and beyond it the plain is wide and fertile. Some distance east of the town is Wady Liwa, a winter stream, which flows from Jebel Haurân, runs along the border of the Lejah, and finally falls into the lake or marsh of Heijaneh.

With regard to the antiquity of the Haurân towns, the Rev. W. Wright, speaking of the houses of Burak, says, "they seem to stand on a mound of black earth, while, in reality, they are built on the foundations of houses of a more remote antiquity. I descended in one place to a depth of sixteen or eighteen feet to see some pottery lately discovered, and I found the walls at that depth formed of enormous undressed and unsquared stones, unlike the stones of the superstructure, which are smaller in size, and have been better prepared for the walls."

Edhr'a or Zora, the Edrei of Og's kingdom, is a large town three or four miles round, and is entirely within the Lejah. The road to it is actually excavated in the rock. This place claims to be the second city in greatness of Og, king of Bashan. The last theory in regard to its claims is found in Keil and Delitzsch's Commentary of Numbers xxi. 33–35. "There were two towns in Bashan of the name of Edrei; one of them is mentioned in Deuteronomy i. 4, and in Joshua xii. 4, with Ashtaroth as a second residence of King Og, and corresponds to Dra'a."

"The other Edrei, which is mentioned in Deuteronomy iii. 10 as the north-western frontier of Bashan, was farther towards the north, and is still to be seen in the ruins of Zorah or Edhra."

Dr. Merrill thinks, however, that judging from the ruins Edhr'a is the more important place. There is still existing there a Christian church, dedicated to St. George. It was built by a citizen of Zorava, to whom St. George appeared, and in gratitude for the honour done him by the saint, "John, the son of Diomed" built this church.

"Like the Cathedral of Bozrah, which was built at the same epoch, it has the form of an octagon inscribed in a square plan. Eight columns support the cupola, which is surmounted on the outside by an open gallery. At the four corners of the church are small chapels, and on one side a large chapel projected in the square." [1]

Kunawat, is the Kenath mentioned in 1 Chronicles ii. 33: "Kenath and the villages thereof, even three-score cities." This is just the case with Kunawat; it is surrounded by towns. The Wâdy Kunawat is a deep ravine between perpendicular rocks; it was guarded by a castle, of large bevelled stones. There is to the east of this old castle a Roman tower, like the round towers in the Lejah.

There are great numbers of ruins here, of castles, temples, churches, cathedral, theatre, baths, palaces, reservoirs, and splendid tombs, proving that it must have been a most important city. One of the temples of Kunawat is a most picturesque object as one approaches the city. It is what is called a "peripteral" temple, that is, one surrounded by columns; only a few of those which were here are standing. It (the temple) stands on a platform twelve feet from the ground, with vaults beneath it.

[1] Cyril G. Graham, "Explorations in the Desert."

[1] Waddington, No. 2498.

The portico faces east, and had a double row of six columns in each row; the bases have inscriptions.

There are several other towns possessing interesting ruins near Kunawat. At Salkhat—the ancient Salcah—there is a great castle built in the mouth of an extinct volcano. Its walls are from eighty to a hundred feet high. The crater forms a deep natural moat round it, which had to be crossed by a bridge to enter the castle. Salchad was one of the cities of Og, king of Bashan. His dominion extended (Deut. iii. 10) "unto Salcah." The view from the top of the castle is very fine.

At Salkhat, light has been lately thrown on a mystery which has perplexed many generations. How the enormous blocks of stone at Baalbek, at Palmyra, and in the Pyramids, could have been conveyed such distances and hoisted to such a great height, no one could explain. We seemed to be contented with the idea that "there were giants in those days."

But at Salkhat a discovery has been made which seems to explain the difficulty.

"The shattered remains of an ancient machine," we read in "*Murray's Handbook*" p. 336, "have been unearthed among the ruins. And in spite of the decaying wood and rusty iron of which it is made, it can be plainly perceived that it is a machine for hoisting and conveying enormous blocks of stone. The principle of the machine is very simple. It may be described," says our authority, "as a gigantic lever of the first order, the fulcrum of which is supported by a huge tripodal pedestal. The tripod and the beam were each composed of a great number of bundles of rough logs of wood, stout, strong, and seasoned, clamped firmly together by iron bands and rivets. It is evident that such a machine can be made as strong as possible by the simple addition of a sufficient number of these rough wooden beams, each secured to the others by these stout iron clamps. The tripod, when erect, must have been at least sixty feet high, and the length of each arm of the lever was not less than eighty feet. The lever worked on a pivot on the top of the tripodal support, and was so arranged that the arms had a horizontal as well as a vertical motion. At the end of one arm of the lever was a series of strong iron claws to catch the stone; at the end of the other an enormous cage. When the stone was required to be raised from the ground, this cage was simply filled with smaller stones, until their united weight counterbalanced the weight of the stone required to be raised. As soon as the stone was lifted the necessary height from the ground, it was pulled round horizontally into the required position, and lowered into its place by the simple expedient of removing the stones from the cage. Of course when once the stone was raised, the turning of it into the required position was simply a matter of sufficient horse or man-power, and that would be comparatively small. This ingenious but primitive machine solves the problem which has exercised the minds of many people, at least so far as regards any but stones of colossal size. It seems difficult, for example, to conceive that any such machine could have been constructed of sufficient strength to bear the overpowering weight of the Cyclopean stones of Baalbek. But there is no doubt that we have here a clue to the solution of the whole problem, and that a combination of such machines may have been so arranged as to meet the difficulty presented even by the Baalbek stones."

A Cyclopean machine, undoubtedly! How, at a very great height, were the stones removed from the basket? Could an opening be made by a rope or by the machine?

The taste of these giants was decidedly in harmony with their stature; but they seem to have been more clever than they were supposed to be; for it must have been a tradition of their dulness that led to their always being supposed to be stupid, in legends and fairy tales. It seems quite appropriate that this machine should have been found in the kingdom of Og.



COLUMNS AT BOZRAH.

Bozrah.

THERE were two or three Bozrahs. One was in Edom; the magnificent chapter of Isaiah returns to our mind at the name. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed (in the margin, crimsoned) garments from Bozrah?" *This* Bozrah has been identified with Buseireh.

Jeremiah speaks of a Bozrah among the cities of Moab. Whether the Moabites, driven from their own land by Amorites, and afterwards by Joshua, reached as far as this spot and settled here, is very doubtful, and even unlikely. If it is not the Bozrah of Jeremiah, it is not mentioned in the Scriptures.

In the time of the Emperor Trajan, Bozrah was raised into a Roman colony, and for many years afterwards it was one of the most prosperous cities of the East; a centre of commerce, the capital of Arabia, and in Christian times the seat of an archbishop. Its name then was Nova Trajana Bostra; its present one is Busrah. Here are the

finest and most picturesque ruins in the Haurân; it is, in fact, a completely wrecked city. The walls fallen and broken, the houses shattered — everything in ruins. Yet what a splendid city it must have been! The walls were nearly rectangular; two streets, running from east to west, and from north to south, intersected each other at right angles, near the centre. Here the chief buildings of Bostra were.

A temple is one of them. Only a fragment remains. That fragment has in it three ranges of niches. Two columns of the porch are still standing; they are forty feet high, and three feet in diameter. Their pedestals are of white marble; their capitals Corinthian. In front of this building, on the opposite side of the street, are four very fine Corinthian columns. These columns are quite perfect, but the architrave is gone.

There is a grand triumphal arch in the street, running westward from the temple. It is forty feet long by twenty feet broad, and is about forty feet high. It has a large central arch and two side ones. It is ornamented with pilasters, and between the arches are niches, where probably once stood statues. A Latin inscription informs us that it was raised in honour of Julius Julianus, Prefect of the First Parthian Philippine Legion.

This city possesses one of the oldest churches in the Haurân, built two years after the ancient one at Edhr'a; this latter dating from 510, while Bozrah's was built in 512. It is now called the Church of the Monk Boheira. It is circular inside, but is square outside. The chancel is supported by short Corinthian columns.

Three hundred yards from it is a great mosque, said to have been erected by the Khalif Omar. This is built of plunder from the noble edifices that preceded it. On the east side it has two rows of columns, and one row on each of the other sides. Seventeen of these are monoliths of white marble. On one is inscribed, "In the name of Christ, the Saviour." The other bears the date 383–489 A.D.

The Castle of Busrah is one of the largest in Palestine. Its foundations are of great bevelled stones, some fifteen, some twenty, some twenty-four feet in length. The outer walls are nearly perfect, and it has a moat which can be filled with water. It is outside the walls on the south side of the city. The gate also is perfect and in its place. It is studded with nails, and covered with iron plates. The interior consists of half-ruined courts, corridors, staircases, and vaults, all confused and ruined.

The most singular remains are, however, those of a large theatre in the centre of the castle. Round its upper platform ran a Doric colonnade. The upper tier of six benches is still perfect, as well as the arched vomitories underneath. On each side of the stage is a large chamber, the exterior ornamented with Doric pilasters resembling those in the colonnades.

The reservoirs and cisterns in Bozrah are remarkable. Under the castle are cisterns which would contain enough water to supply the garrison for ten years.

On the east of the city is a reservoir, 390 feet square, and fifteen deep still, though it is much choked up by *débris*. Another reservoir, south of the city, near the castle, is 530 feet long by 420 feet wide, and 20 feet deep. On the west of the city was even a larger reservoir, the wall of which still remains, and is 560 feet long.

The ruins are all of the black basalt of the Haurân, and consequently have a solemn appearance. The city was between four and five miles in circumference.

Bostra, as Busrah was called in Roman days, gave to the world at one period a new reckoning of time. The Bostrian Era commenced in 105 A.D., and was for several centuries used in the East.

When Christianity became the religion of the Empire of Constantine Bozrah was made a bishopric.

Here there came, some six hundred years after the birth of our Lord, a young camel-driver, trading for his employer, the widow

Khadijah, in the markets of the great commercial city. In Bostra there lived then a monk called (as the church now is), Boheira. The camel-driver and the monk became intimate, and from him the youth no doubt learned the principles of Christianity. That youth was Mahomet, or Mahommed. He married his employer, who was rich, and he became known soon after as the founder of a new faith. It is said that the monk, Boheira, went with him to Mecca, and assisted him in writing the Koran—or more truly in concocting it. Here, also, was the home of Beryllus, who fell into heresy, but was restored through the influence of Origen. He was a man of great learning, and an elegant writer, but unhappily founded a sect of heretics called Berythians.

In 632 Bozrah was besieged by the Moslem general Caled. The inhabitants were not unprepared, for the Arabs' constant attacks had trained them to the use of arms. Twelve thousand horsemen could at that period issue from the gates of Bozrah. The name signifies in the Syrian language "a strong tower of defence." They repulsed the first Moslem attack; indeed, the infidels would have been utterly defeated if Caled, their famous General, had not come to their aid. The next day the fight was renewed. "The Moslems performed their ablutions with sand instead of water, and the morning prayer was recited by Caled, before they mounted on horseback. Confident in their strength, the people of Bozrah threw open their gates, drew their forces into the plain, and swore to die in defence of their religion. But a religion of peace was incapable of withstanding the fanatic cry of "Fight, fight! Paradise! paradise!" that re-echoed in the ranks of the Saracens; and the uproar of the town, the ringing of bells, and the exclamations of the priests and monks, increased the dismay and disorder of the Christians. With the loss of two hundred and thirty men the Arabs remained masters of the field; and the ramparts of Bozrah, in expectation of human or Divine aid, were crowded with holy crosses and consecrated banners. The governor, Romanus, had recommended an early submission. Despised by the people, and degraded from his office, he still retained the desire and opportunity of revenge. In a nocturnal interview he informed the enemy of a subterraneous passage from his house under the wall of the city. The son of the Caliph, with a hundred volunteers, were committed to the faith of this new ally, and their successful intrepidity gave an easy entrance for their companions. After Caled had improved the terms, the apostate avowed, in the presence of the people, his meritorious treason."[1] And at the same time adopted the faith of Islam.

Bozrah is only four days' march from Damascus, and from this conquest Caled went to besiege the chief city of Syria.

The ancient walls, on the ramparts of which the inhabitants saw the fight between the Moslems and their fellow-citizens, are broken and gone; one must pass through heaps of ruins under the grand but ruined columns to reach the Busrah of to-day.

Numerous and important inscriptions have been found here, especially by M. Waddington, and they may be found in his valuable work. Stones are being continually carried away from this place to build in others, and thus new inscriptions are frequently brought to light.

The Western Gate, or as the natives call it, "Bab-el-Hawa" (the Gate of the Wind), is a nearly perfect arch, with pilasters, and niches on it. It is at the end of the main street. Near the wall a large pedestal is inscribed to "Antonia Fortunatus, the devoted wife of Antonius Cæsar."

Bozrah had the honour of giving an Emperor to the Roman world in Philip, 245. He constituted his native city a metropolis, but it did not retain that rank after his death.

After the Moslem conquest the city

[1] Gibbon.

gradually lost its position as a commercial town, and declined. Now the place is almost uninhabited, only a few fellâhin remain amidst the ruins of the Bozrah of the past.

Dama is now the capital of the Lejah, as Musmieh was of old. It is a large village with a good population. There are no fountains, but each house has a cistern for collecting rain water.

Es Salt.

SALT is a flourishing town, with shops of native and imported manufactures in it. There is a Turkish garrison, the city having voluntarily submitted to the Porte, in return for which roads have been made and a ferry across the Jordan has been established. It was formerly an independent town, governed by a native council, but no doubt it suffered greatly from the raids of the Arabs, and is glad of military protection. It stands on a high spur of the mountain, and above it is an old castle, still in good preservation.

The houses cluster up the side of the hill from the base to the summit. There are two good springs, one running from a cave at the side of the hill, the other on the opposite hill.

There are very many Christians at Es Salt. There is a Greek monastery, a Church Mission from the English Missionary Society, and several good schools. A Kaimakam resides here. Salt is 2,740 feet above the level of the sea; the hillsides are covered with magnificent vineyards, and the grapes are of unusual size and excellence. It is the chief emporium for trade in the east of Palestine.

Through the magnificent vineyards and terraces a pathway leads up the hill Neby Osh'a, which rises on the north of the town to a height of a thousand feet. The view from the summit is superb. The whole course of the Jordan, from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea, can be seen flashing and glittering in the sunshine as it rushes on its way. Gerizim, Ebal, Tabor, Gilboa, and Carmel, are visible. To the south the mountains of Moab shut in the view, but amongst them are Nebo and Pisgah. Hermon rises on the north, with the castle of Kul'at er Rabud.

Major Conder thinks that the name Hosea, which means God the Saviour, may be connected with Penuel (the manifestation of God), and that here Jacob wrestled with the angel, and received his new name of Israel. "And Jacob called the name of the place Peniel" (that, is "the face of God"), "for, said he, I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" (Gen. xxxii. 30). He recognised our Lord in the appearance of man.

The Arabs ascribe the name of the mountain to the prophet Hosea being buried here; a shrine or tomb, said to be his, is in a hollow near the top of the hill.

This mountain and the whole district round is covered with oaks, terebinths, and pines, the remnant of the great forest of Gilead.

The Decapolis.

WE have already spoken of the only city of the Decapolis on the west of Jordan — Scythopolis —now Beisan; we must now describe some of those on the eastern side, beginning with Gadara, now called Umm Keis. The village stands on a spur of the hills above the gorge of the Yarmuk and Wâdy Araba. It is 1,500 feet above the valley.

The town must have been one of wealth and importance, for the plain is covered with ruins of beautiful buildings.

The principal street can still be traced by fragments of the columns that formed its great colonnade. Columns of marble, granite, and basalt, are strewn in broken fragments everywhere.

The city was built on the top of a hill, and had a very fine view. The plan on which it was built was a division into three parts. On the west end of the ridge private houses stood; then there was an open space; beyond this were the public buildings, temples, and the theatres; the third division, still further east, was a City of Tombs. One hour's ride east of the ruins are the remains of a great temple; between it and the town are hundreds and hundreds of tombs.

A Roman road runs east for half a mile; it is finely paved with large blocks of basalt, and the ruts which mark the way of the chariots in old days are distinctly visible. It was bordered by a long colonnade; a few bases of columns are still standing, and the columns themselves lie on the wayside. Near the centre is a great heap of *débris*, amongst it several Corinthian capitals. A group of oak trees grows amongst the ruins. The street at length reaches the smaller of the two theatres mentioned. It is well preserved, the vomitoria, dens for wild beasts, stairs above and below, are all there, solidly and admirably built. The amphitheatre was open on one side, and the people in it could see before them also the beautiful picture of the Sea of Galilee, and its shores, and the landscape beyond it. The street continues in a straight line to the second theatre. It is on the side of a rock, and the seats overhang each other, it is so steep. The upper seats are forty feet high.

The city of the Dead, as one writer has called the tombs of Gadara, is in a dell. All over it are strewn sarcophagi and sarcophagus lids, beautifully sculptured with flowers, wreaths, and figures. All these lids are of the same shape, pyramidical, with two square holes at each side by which they were fastened to the sarcophagus.

On some of the tomb-doors, which are scattered about, bands, great round nail-heads, knockers, and handles, are carved. The knockers are of all sorts of shapes, as, a finger pointing, a circle, etc., etc.

There are innumerable caves here, and they are used by the Arabs as dwellings or stables when they camp here; they, probably, put out the sarcophagi on the plain to get possession of the rock-tombs.

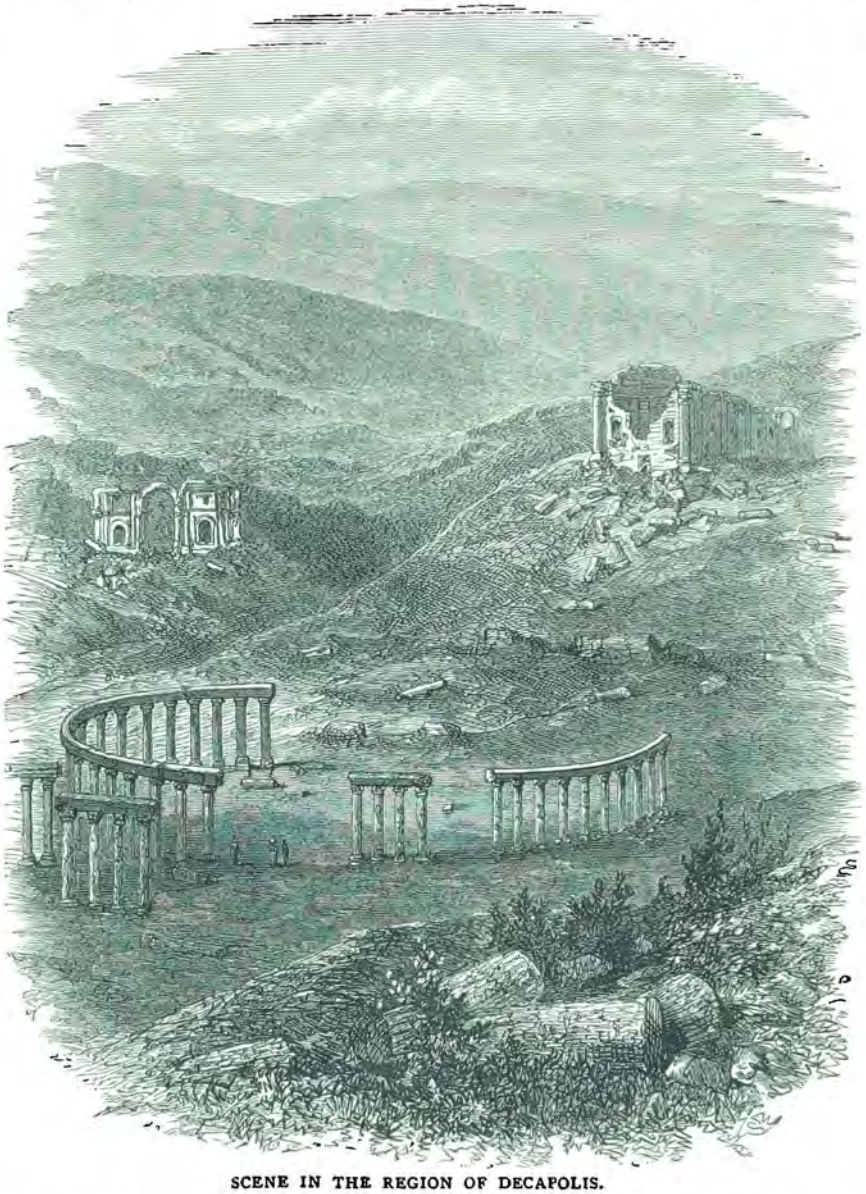
Umm Keis, once Gadara, gave name to a whole district. It was not the scene, as we have before said, of the miracle of the madmen healed; that took place at Kersa or Gersa.

Dr. Thomson says that St. Mark and St. Luke, writing for Gentiles and Jews who did not live in the land, gave the name of the district Gadara; while St. Matthew, writing for those who knew the country well, gave the name of the small town of Gergesa.

The first historical event connected with

Gadara was its capture by Antiochus the Great, B.C. 218, but it was re-captured from the Syrians by Alexander Janneus,[1] after a siege of nearly a year.

The city was destroyed during the internal wars of the Jews, and was rebuilt by Pompey at the request of Demetrius, a freedman of whom he was fond, and who



SCENE IN THE REGION OF DECAPOLIS.

was a Gadarene by birth. Gabinius made Gadara the seat of one of the five councils that he appointed, each to rule over a district.

Gadara, rebuilt and doubtless favoured by the Romans, was soon again prosperous, but when Vespasian entered Galilee, and marched through it to its borders, he took Gadara with great ease, for it was defended

[1] Josephus, "Wars," I. iv. 1.

only by old men and youths. The Romans put them all to death, and set fire not only to the city itself but to all the villas and small cities round it. Some of them had happily been deserted, but out of others he carried a number into captivity to be sold as slaves.[1]

During the period of the Byzantine empire Gadara was made a bishopric.

Not far from Gadara are the hot sulphur springs mentioned by Eusebius as the Baths of Amatha. They are enormous baths, large enough to swim in, very hot; and their steam rising high above them shows where they are long before they are reached. There are nine of them in the gorge of the Yarmuk river, chiefly on the north side.

The descent from Gadara is into a most beautiful stretch of country. The sterile and even awful Lejah is far off; below is Bashan, and it is a scene of boundless forests of oaks, and brooks fringed with lovely oleanders.

The cattle also are magnificent, the bulls of Bashan still deserving their ancient renown.

[1] Josephus, "Wars," III. vii. 1.

GERASA, NOW JERASH.

JERASH, the ancient Gerasa, is on a tributary of the Jabbok (now called the Zerka, or blue river), the boundary between the territories of Og, king of Bashan, and Sihon, king of the Amorites.

The ruins of this once magnificent city are the most numerous and the most beautiful on the east of Jordan. "The labyrinth of ruins burst upon us at once," writes Canon Tristram,[1] "as we rose over a little slope, the features of which first caught the eye being the great amphitheatre on one side and the Temple of the Sun on the other."

Approaching Gerasa from the south, however, we come first to the Triumphal Arch. It has a central and two side arches. The architecture is very florid. There were four columns; these are (at least the lower part of them) decorated with foliage. Passing through this arch we come on a great circus, in which sea-fights used to be exhibited. The conduits which conveyed the water to it still remain. This building is, however, only circular at its northern end. About three hundred yards from the arch is the south gate, which, like the arch, has a triple entrance.

On the top of a steep mound on the left is the South Temple. It had a peristyle and a portico of columns, which have been thrown down, probably by earthquakes; only one remains standing.

In front of the temple there is a fine open space with columns surrounding it; it is generally called the Forum. Fifty-seven columns still stand, and most of them have the entablature. They are of the Ionic order.

The Great Theatre is on the west of this temple. There are twenty-eight rows of benches for seats, divided into two tiers by a passage.

THE STREET OF COLUMNS. It seems to have been the fashion at the period when these towns were built to make for each a colonnade. These columns differ very much in height; and when a tall pillar is next to a short one the entablature

[1] "Land of Israel," 550.

rests on a bracket in the shaft of the high one. A street crosses this colonnade at right angles, and here are four masses of stone, probably the pedestals of statues.

In the centre of the city is an avenue lined with columns running at right angles to the street, and leading into an enclosed area, round which are ranges of columns, even of them still standing with their entablature. This seems to have been the road to the Temple of the Sun.

THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN. The façade is tolerably preserved. The temple was built in 138–161 by Antoninus Pius; at least so an inscription has declared. Eleven of its columns are standing, though two have lost their capitals. They are forty-five feet high and five feet in diameter. The temple



JERASH, THE ANCIENT GERASA.

stands on a platform raised five or six feet above the ground. It was peripteral, but the columns of the peristyle are gone, except two on each side near the portico. Of the portico five columns of the two rows in front of it remain, and four columns of the second row. The temple stands in a great court formerly surrounded by a double colonnade. Two of these columns are still standing and the bases of others. An inscription declares that this temple was dedicated to the sun.

The Bath is very fine. It is a large, strong building with massive walls and vaulted roofs.

There are also the ruins of the Cathedral. It is the only great building on the east of the river, but only a fragment of it remains—an arched doorway and a single column.

The enormous number of perfect or ruined columns in this city prove how superb it must at one time have been. Their shafts in the sunshine appear of a rich yellowish pink colour. The collection of ruins would take days to thoroughly inspect. Gerash is probably the most perfect Roman city left to us. The streets remain; the "High Street," just a double row of columns on each side of the pavement, is a mile in length, passing the temple and the palace in succession. Side streets cross if at right angles. There are upwards of twenty principal ruins, all worth close inspection. In fact, though inferior in massiveness and antiquity to Baalbek and Palmyra, it equals them in the number and perfection of its ruins.

Jerash, under its ancient name of Gerasa, was identified by Dr. Porter as Mahanaim, but the true site of that city seems not to be fully ascertained.

The name of this town meets us in Josephus in his account of the reign of King Alexander Janneus, who, he says, "having subdued Pella, directed his march to the city of Gerasa, *lured by the treasures of Theodorus*, and, having hemmed in the garrison by a triple wall of circumvallation, carried the place by assault, B.C. 85."

This Theodorus, the son of Zeno, must have been a man of immense wealth and great power; for his father, Zeno, after Alexander had taken Amalthus ("belonging to the inhabitants above Jordan where Theodorus kept his chief treasure"), fell on the Jews unexpectedly, slew 10,000 of them, and seized Alexander's baggage. Zeno must undoubtedly have been a great sheikh or chief of the people "above Jordan." At least it is clear that Gerasa was not a Roman town. But when Rome had added Syria to her empire, this part of the country became a favourite place for her colonization. She built ten cities, endowed them with peculiar privileges, and named them the Decapolis. They have been thus enumerated:—

Scythopolis, now Beisan.
Gerasa, now Jerash.
Gadara, now Umm Keis.
Hippo, now Khurbet Sûsiyeh.
Pella, now Fahil.
Philadelphia, now 'Amman.
Canatha, now Kunawât.
Capitolias, now Beit er-Râs.
Dion, now Eidûn.
Abila, now Abil.

Of these Gerasa was next in importance to Scythopolis, which was the largest of the Decapolis.

It was burnt by the Jews in revenge for the massacre of the Jews at Cæsarea; but it was rebuilt; and was destroyed a second time by Vespasian's General, Annius, who killed a thousand young men found in the city, and set fire to it.

Again it rose from its ruins, and it appears by the inscriptions found in it that the Antonines built its temples, columns, and amphitheatre. The ruins are all Roman.

The Decapolis existed in the time of our Lord, and in it He performed one of His great miracles. He found greater faith amongst the Gentiles than in his own country. On the borders of Tyre and Sidon He had healed by a word the Syro-Phœnician woman's daughter; then He passed through the almost equally heathen coasts of Decapolis.

"And," says St. Mark, "they bring unto Him one that was deaf, and had an impediment in his speech; and they beseech Him to put His hand upon him. And He took him aside from the multitude, and put His fingers into his ears, and touched his tongue; and looking up to heaven He sighed, and said unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. And straightway his ears were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plain."

And then came the acknowledgment that the Jews had failed to give our Lord, "He hath done all things well."

Keble has so delightful a poem on this miracle, that we are tempted to give it here:—

The Son of God in doing good
  Was fain to look to Heaven and sigh ;
And shall the heirs of sinful blood
  Seek joy unmixed in charity ?
God will not let Love's work impart
Full solace, lest it steal the heart ;
Be thou content in tears to sow,
Blessing, like Jesus, in thy woe.

He looked to Heaven and sadly sighed—
  What saw my gracious Saviour there ?
With fear and anguish to divide
  The joy of Heaven-accepted prayer ?
So o'er the bed where Lazarus slept
He to His Father groaned and wept :
What saw He mournful in that grave,
Knowing Himself so strong to save ?

O'erwhelming thoughts of pain and grief
  Over His sinking spirit sweep—
"What boots it gathering one lost leaf
  Out of yon sere and withered heap,
Where souls and bodies, hopes and joys,
All that earth owns or sin destroys,
Under the spurning hoof are cast,
Or tossing in th' autumnal blast ?"

The deaf may hear the Saviour's voice,
  The fettered tongue its chain may break ;
But the deaf heart, the dumb by choice,
  The laggard soul that will not wake,
The guilt that scorns to be forgiven ;—
These baffle e'en the spells of Heaven ;
In thought of these, His brows benign
Not even in healing cloudless shine.

No eye but His might ever bear
  To gaze all down that drear abyss,
Because none ever saw so clear
  The shore beyond of endless bliss :
The giddy waves so restless hurled,
The vexed pulse of this feverish world,
He views and counts with steady sight,
Used to behold the Infinite.

But that in such communion high
  He hath a fount of strength within,
Sure His meek heart would break and die,
  O'erburthened by His brethren's sin ;
Weak eyes on darkness dare not gaze,
It dazzles like the noonday blaze ;
But He who sees God's face may brook
On the true face of Sin to look.

What, then, shall wretched sinners do,
  When in their last, their hopeless day,
Sin, as it is, shall meet their view,
  God turn His face for aye away ?
Lord, by Thy sad and earnest eye,
When Thou didst look to heaven and sigh ;
Thy voice, that with a word could chase
The dumb, deaf spirit from his place ;

As Thou hast touched our ears, and taught
  Our tongues to speak Thy praises plain,
Quell Thou each thankless, godless thought
  That would make fast our bonds again
From worldly strife, from mirth unblest,
Drowning Thy music in the breast ;
From foul reproach, from thrilling fears,
Preserve, good Lord, Thy servants' ears !

From idle words, that restless throng
  And haunt our hearts when we would pray,
From Pride's false chime, and jarring wrong,
  Seal Thou my lips, and guard the way ;
For Thou hast sworn, that every ear,
Willing or loth, Thy trump shall hear,
And every tongue unchainèd be
To own no hope, no God, but Thee.

RABBATH-'AMMON,

PHILADELPHIA, NOW 'AMMÂN.

THE city of 'Ammân, the ancient Rabbath-Ammon, is situated in a valley between two mountains. It was the chief city of the Ammonites, who possessed the semicircular tract of mountains enclosed by the Jabbok, and extending from Rabbah on the south to the ford to Gerasa; they also possessed the plain eastward. The Ammonites descended from Lot, and were consequently of the same race as the Israelites. They and their kindred, the Moabites, drove out the gigantic aborigines of the east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan, and took their land; but were themselves driven from part of this territory, the Amorites seizing the plateau between Heshbon and the Jabbok. The Israelites were forbidden by God to take the land of the Ammonites on their road to the Promised Land.

We read, that after defeating the gigantic Og, king of Bashan, they deposited his enormous iron bedstead at Rabbath-Ammon.

We next hear of this town when its king, Hanun, brought on a war with the Israelites by insulting David's ambassadors, who had been sent by the Israelitish king to condole with him on his father's death. Nahash, king of Ammon, had shown kindness to David, and he really regretted his death, and wished to be friends with his son. But the princes of Ammon persuaded their evidently foolish king that the envoys were spies, who designed to discover a way to take the city of Rabbah. Hanun, enraged, had the messengers seized, half of their beard shaved off, and their long robes cut very short—the grossest insult he could offer to the king of Israel and his people.

The Ammonites well knew that it could not be forgiven; they, therefore, forestalling David's vengeance, hired troops from the Syrians of Beth-rehob and the Syrians of Zobah, "twenty thousand foot soldiers; from the king of Maacah a thousand, and from the men of Tob twelve thousand," and at once marched against Judea. But Joab defeated them, and finally Rabbath was besieged and taken. Its crown was remarkably splendid, and it was reserved by David for himself.

It was while Joab was besieging Rabbath Ammon that David sent and told him, privately, to place Uriah in the front of the battle, and leave him to be slain by the foe. Joab obeyed; but from that hour he became David's master, not the least of the severe punishments that followed the cruel and wicked act of the king.

We are told in the Authorised Version of the Bible that David punished the Ammonites with singular cruelty, but the margin of the Revised Version gives us hopes that it was not so; by the smallest possible change "under" becomes "to," and the passage reads thus:—

"And he brought forth the people that were therein, and put them *to* saws, and *to* harrows of iron, and *to* axes of iron, and *made them labour at* the brick-kiln."

This *must* be the right translation; where could the Israelites find enough harrows to tear up the inhabitants of a great city? and why should David thus belie his general character? One does not like to think of the poor Ammonites thus suffering, though the folly and insolence of their king had provoked the war.

When the two kingdoms of Israel and

Judah had been carried away captive, the Ammonites regained their freedom.

Rabbath-Ammon fell into the hands of the Egyptians during the wars of Alexander's successors, and in it the army of Ptolemy Philopater was besieged by Antiochus the Great in 218 B.C. The garrison held out, as the citadel had done, so long before, against Joab. The town must have been very strong, and it did not yield till a prisoner revealed to the enemy a secret communication with a water supply outside the walls; this was at once stopped up, and the water cut off. Major Conder has discovered both the water and the secret passage during his explorations at 'Ammân. "There is," he says, "a great cavern in the hill on the north of the citadel, evidently once used as a reservoir for water, the stream which supplied the lower town being at some distance from the Acropolis. In the side of this cavern, high up near the entrance, I found a very narrow passage running away in the direction of the citadel walls. I pursued it as far as possible, but it is choked at the end before emerging above ground. This cave probably contained the water supply on which the Egyptian-Greek forces depended in their struggle against the Syrian-Greek forces of Antiochus." A delightful and very clever discovery.

But the Egyptian kings had still an eye on Rabbath-Ammon.

In the third century before our Lord's birth Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, rebuilt 'Ammân, and gave it the name of Philadelphia. By this appellation it is often mentioned by Greek and Latin writers as one of the Decapolis cities.

When Rome became Christian, Rabbath-Ammon, or rather Philadelphia, then a Roman city, became a bishopric. It continued a prosperous city till Syria was conquered by the Saracens. Since then it has fallen into desolation and decay; a weird and melancholy place, yet showing by its ruins how great Philadelphia had been. For these ruins are all Roman, except, perhaps, the citadel, which held out so long after Joab had taken the City of Waters.

Close to the edge of the river stand the walls of a large Basilica; the apse and side aisles are perfect, and the walls were covered with frescoes. There are numbers of holes in the inner walls, which are thought to have been made by small hooks arranged to support the plaster or some more costly material with which the stone was covered.[1] Dr. Merrill obtained several specimens of these copper hooks. "They are in the shape," he says, "of a nail, or, more frequently, flat pieces of copper, two or three inches long, three-quarters of an inch wide, and one-eighth of an inch thick. Where iron was used it has for the most part decayed. . . . The pieces of copper were generally wedged in with bits of flint or marble."

The apse is at the south-east, not the east; probably because on the day of the saint to whom it was dedicated, the sun rose at that point; it being a usual custom to thus place the altar when the church was dedicated to a saint. The pillars of the aisles were Ionic; they now strew the floor; they are of white marble; some of cipolino, and one of polished granite. The east end faces the river, and is of great height and strength. Very close to the Basilica is a church, still larger. The walls are perfect, as well as a tall and narrow tower at the north end, where a staircase up it is, also, intact. This is supposed to have been the minaret, when the Moslems held the town.

On a line with the Basilica are the ruins of a very large building, probably a defensive work, facing the river; it consists of two great round bastions, with a flat curtain wall between them, built of the enormous bevelled stones of the pre-Roman period. There is a heavy postern with four arches, one rising above the other. Inside, the building is quite a ruin, except the east wall, a portion of which still spans by a semi-circular arch the bed of a torrent that

[1] Dr. Merrill, "East of Jordan," p. 400.

falls into the river. This wall has niches in it, and many pilasters and Corinthian friezes. There is one large bay niche in the centre. Probably statues occupied the niches. There is no trace of a roof, but there is an arcade supported by enormous columns, the shafts of three or four of which are still standing.

Further down the stream a semi-circular bridge is still perfect over it, and once united the highway to the great theatre with the building described. The plain widens again between the river and the citadel, and on the left are the ruins of a very fine Corinthian temple, having on it races of Egyptian design. The adytum of the temple and the richly sculptured frieze are nearly perfect. On its west side are three doorways; the centre one richly decorated in the later Egyptian style. Monoliths of great size remain inside it.

Across the river is a large open space of the colonnade, in which are eleven columns; eight with Corinthian capitals rise erect.

At the further end of this colonnade was the Odeum, or smaller of the two theatres that 'Amman possessed. The wall round it is almost entire, but the inside is full of ruins of broken columns; still the tiers of seats and the stage can be traced.

The Grand Theatre, one of the largest and most magnificent buildings in Syria, is partly excavated in the southern hill. The arena was forty-five paces in diameter. Above it was a crescent of forty-three tiers of seats, with the portico behind them. It must have been a very magnificent theatre, and it has been found by actual experiment that the words uttered on its stage could be heard distinctly all over the area. A Circassian colony has been settled here by the Sultan, and have taken up their abode in the great theatre, or its passages and recesses.

The hill on which the Citadel stands is in parts inaccessible. It is divided into two platforms: the first, oblong, and reaching to the northern extremity of the hill, with its ruined walls remaining; the second was much higher, several acres in extent, quite flat, and nearly square. It is covered with ruins. Enormous columns lie on it, and beyond the *débris* is a round stone reservoir with stone steps winding inside it.

South of the reservoir is a building which Major Conder identifies as a Sassanian or early Arab building. "It is a square structure," he tells us, "with a central court and four deep alcoves under arched roofs, one on each side of the court. This arrangement is exactly that of some ruined buildings of the Sassanian age in Persia." No sculpture of living things, he tells us, are found in the rich details of its stone tracery. According, of course, to Moslem law, which requires that no representation of an animal shall be made, he thinks that the building may have been erected by Persian architects for one of the early Moslem Khalifs of Damascus; or by Khosroes, while he possessed Syria, as a summer kiosk.

The panelling and scrolling on the walls are very beautiful.

To the west of the citadel, on the slope of a hill, are a fine group of dolmens. On the south-west is a semi-dolmen, standing alone. These are, of course, its most ancient ruins. There are about twenty of them.

On the hills to the west and north are some magnificent menhirs. It has been thought that the bedstead of Og may be under the demi-dolmen, the top stone of which measures exactly nine cubits in length, and we read in Deut. iii. 11, "Behold, his bedstead was a bedstead of iron; is it not in Rabbah of the children of Ammon? Nine cubits is the length thereof, and four cubits the breadth of it."

There are magnificent tower-tombs all round this city — towers of well-cut masonry; within them sarcophagi. These tombs resemble those at Palmyra, and are singular, inasmuch as the common mode of burial in Western Palestine is in rock-cut tombs.

These tomb-towers were protected by the Government. A sarcophagus was carved

and prepared to be ready for the death of any member of the family, and if any one was illicitly buried in it, those who had taken possession of it were severely punished, by a curse on such violation of a sepulchre, and by a heavy fine to be paid to the State. The tomb-towers, of course, belonged to noble and wealthy families, and their number here show how many patricians must in those days have inhabited Rabbath-Ammon.

Desolate as the city now is, the abundance of water still remains, and attracts the shepherds and flocks roaming over the plains. The sheep find shelter in the ruined palaces and temples, and recall the prophecy denounced against Rabbath-Ammon, —"I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couching place for flocks: and ye shall know that I am the Lord" (Ezek. xxv. 5).

It has been literally fulfilled.

PELLA, NOW TUBUKAT FAHIL.



PELLA, now called Tubukat el-Fahil, stands on a natural terrace 1,000 feet above the Jordan, on the stream called Jirm el-Môz. Its ruins are extensive, and it must have been delightfully situated. There is a large fountain, once surrounded by handsome buildings, some of whose columns are still to be seen; they are forty-three inches in diameter, and must have been proportionally high. There is a high hill to the south of the fountain, on the top of which are also ruins.

On a hill east of the town are the ruins of a church, and in front of it the remains of a very large one.

The hills round Pella are full of tombs, some of which have been opened. All round the ground was strewed with sarcophagi. Some of these tombs are very large. The door of one, seen by Dr. Merrill, was more than a yard wide, five feet high, and seven and a half inches thick; there were three loculi in it. Some were large and high, and had niches in the wall for lamps; columns, cut in the solid rock, support the ceilings.

It was Dr. Robinson who fixed on Fahil as the site of the ancient Pella. Many others had been suggested for it: Sûf, Mazarib, and Irbid; but everything goes to prove that the site selected by the American traveller is the true one. Ritter, on the authority of Ptolemy, the geographer, states that Pella was five geographical miles south-east of Scythopolis (Beisan); this would bring us to Fahil.

Both Eusebius and Jerome refer to Pella, and lead us to infer that there was a road from it to Jerash (Gerasa).

In the time of Florus, when the cruel massacres of the Jews had roused the nation to an equally cruel retaliation, the avenging force took the cities of the Romans in their order as they stood, and attacked Philadelphia (Rabbath Ammon), Gerasa, Pella, and Scythopolis.[1] Supposing that there was a main road between Pella and Gerasa, that is exactly the route and order that the Jewish avengers would take.

It is stated by Polybius that Antiochus,

[1] Josephus, "Wars," ii. 18.

after taking Scythopolis, crossed the Jordan and took Pella (Hist. v. 70, 71); thus proving that after Scythopolis it was the next important town to take.

There was a province as well as a city of the name; and it was governed by Pheroras, a brother of Herod the Great,[1] and later on by Herod Antipas, who governed it and Galilee. Our readers may remember that our Lord lived in Herod's jurisdiction.

To Christians Pella is extremely interesting, as our Lord visited it and remained some time in the Decapolis, worked many miracles, and was followed by great multitudes.

It is possible that our Lord, when He visited the Perea, would follow the high road to the hot springs of the Yarmuk, and thence to Gadara, above them. He went through the Decapolis, of which Pella was one of the chief.

It was in Perea that the seventy disciples were sent to preach the Gospel to the Jews who dwelt there; and they were most successful in their mission, for they returned again with joy, saying, "Lord, even the devils are subject to us through Thy name."[2]

It was in Bashan, of which Perea was a province, that the Gospel found its earliest reception. At that time the country, now a land of ruins, was full of rich and splendid cities, and a large population; and in the first centuries after Christ it became the stronghold of Christianity.

It was to Pella that the Christians fled when they saw the Roman eagles approaching and shutting in Jerusalem. It was when Cestius, the Roman general, suddenly, and for no rational reason, drew back from the siege, as if seized with a Divine panic (for nothing more ill-judged could have been done), that the Christians, still remaining within the walls, stole out and took the way to Pella. We know that the conduct of Cestius, which so puzzled Josephus, was, indeed, directed by God to give the Christians an opportunity of escape when they saw "the abomination of desolation" set up in the holy places.

Seventy years afterwards, when Hadrian rebuilt Jerusalem after its *second* capture, and changed its name to Ælia, then the Christians, who had gradually returned to the holy city, again took refuge in Pella.

There is a delightful passage in Dr. Merrill's "East of Jordan" on this subject.

"These circumstances prove nothing with regard to Christ's visiting the place; still there must have been a reason why the Christians resorted thither, and it cannot be rash to suppose that our Lord had been there before them, and that His preaching met with favour and success. He saw the storms that were coming upon His country in the first and second Jewish wars with Rome, 66–70 and 130–134 A.D., and the trials to which His followers would be exposed; and His forethought may have extended even to providing an asylum for them when these devastating tempests should burst upon the land."[1]

It has been suggested that Pella may have been erected by the veteran soldiers of Alexander the Great, some of whom were left in the land, and also settled here when the Seleucidæ ruled the land; that they named their new home Pella, after Pella in Macedon. The first time its name appears in history is the account of its capture by Antiochus the Great, in 218 B.C.

Alexander Janneus afterwards destroyed it because its inhabitants refused to conform to the Jewish faith, or rather rites.

Pompey recovered it and restored it to its native inhabitants, and it became the head of a toparchy.

After the conversion of the Roman Empire to Christianity, Pella was made a bishopric; and in the seventh century a decisive battle was fought here between the Greeks and Moslems, in which it is said 80,000 Greeks were left dead upon the field.

[1] "Antiq." xv. 10. 3.
[2] Luke x. 1, 17.

[1] "East of the Jordan," p. 463.

From that time Pella was abandoned by its inhabitants, and has fallen to decay. But the ruins remaining are those of the Byzantines.

Very near Fahil there is a remarkable natural bridge and a hot spring. Its temperature is 103°. The bridge is thirty feet wide, and about 100 feet high, and nearly three hundred long; its single arch is thirty feet high, formed, unaided by man, by the rock itself. This spring and bridge were discovered by Dr. Merrill.

Pella was of sufficient importance to coin money for itself. Coins of it still remain. It can be plainly seen across the Jordan. The Arabs say its real name is Fella, and as they have no P in their language, it is probably another name for Pella.

ARBELA, NOW IRBID.

ARBELA, now Irbid, is mentioned by Eusebius as a city of Gilead in the district of Pella, beyond the Jordan. The huts of Irbid are clustered round the base of a low hill or mound. On it are the walls, partially standing, of a ruined fortress. Shafts of columns are scattered about, and many other ruins of the architecture of long past ages. The mound on which the city stood is artificial; it is not a hundred feet high, and is partially faced on the east side by a wall composed of the most enormous blocks of stone. The wall is about a hundred yards long, and in the highest part of it the great stones are built up to the height of thirty feet. Some of these stones are eighteen feet long, from three to five high, and eight or ten broad. There is a ruined tower at an angle of the wall, from the top of which there is a very fine view. To the east and north-east stretch the plains of the Haurân, golden with thickly waving corn, the Jebel Druse towering above them; to the south are the mountains of Ajlun, covered to their summits with magnificent forests.

The village of Irbid is the seat of government for the province of Ajlun; but the houses appear to be only one degree better than the caves in which the giants lived, for they are partly excavated from the side of the hill, with part outside built of massive blocks of dolerite; the roofs are flat and covered with clay, and on them the people generally sit. The peasants' dwelling is generally a room excavated in the hill, with a front of immense blocks of stone; the framework of the door carved stone. The door formerly turned on a stone hinge.

In this part of the country the giants of the early ages dwelt, "and the Ammonites called them Zamzummims; a people great, and many, and tall, as the Anakims."[1] It was "the coast of Og, king of Bashan," the last perhaps of this strange nation, "who had threescore great cities fenced with gates and brazen bars."[2] The Ghasanide Arabs invaded and seized this country after the Christian era, and seem to have imitated the giants in their mode of domestic architecture. The greater part of the population at Irbid are Moslems, but there are a few Christians, and there is a school, for it makes some attempts at civilization. It has a kaimakam and a garrison, or at least the magistrate has an infantry regiment at his command.

There are many dolmens in Gilead. They consist of four stones, three of which form the sides, and the fourth the table or roof over them. The horizontal slab on

[1] Deut. ii. 20, 21.
[2] 1 Kings iv. 13.

the top of the three stones is often ten or twelve feet long, and six or seven broad, while the side slabs are about three feet high. We shall have to speak, farther on, about these singular and universal monuments.

Somewhere in this neighbourhood was Mahanaim. Canon Tristram thought it might be at Birket Maneh.

It has been suggested that Jacob had his vision of God on Neby Osh'a. Dr. Porter and Mr. Grove are of this opinion, but Mr. Laurence Oliphant thinks that this mountain would have been entirely out of Jacob's way on his return from Mesopotamia. "Jebel Osh'a," he says, "is a south-west mountain of Gilead, but Jacob would have struck the range at its north-eastern extremity, not very far from which Birket Maneh is situated. Before reaching it, however, Laban overtakes him on a mound which he names Galeed or Mizpeh. After leaving Maneh he goes in a southerly direction, and crosses the Jabbok, upon the southern bank of which he meets his brother Esau. He is, even then, half a day's journey to the north of Jebel Osh'a, which cannot, therefore, be the Mizpeh where he raises the stone of witness."

Mr. Oliphant thinks, therefore, that Canon Tristram was right. The true site of Mahanaim is, however, open to doubt; but we may be sure that it was in this part of Gilead.

As Jacob, after parting from Laban, went his way, he was encouraged by a glorious vision of the angels of God meeting him. Disturbed and anxious as he was as to his meeting with Esau, to whom he had sent messengers, it must have been a great encouragement to him to see his Divine protectors. He must also then have known that his sin of deception was forgiven, and his faith recognised. He called the place Mahanaim, that is, "two hosts," for it was not only his own host that was with him, but the invisible host of the Lord. Then he met and was reconciled to his brother, and had the extraordinary vision of the Lord wrestling with him. "And Jacob called the name of that place Peniel—that is 'the face of God,'—for, he said, I have seen God face to face."

MAHANAIM.



AHANAIM is named in the roll of the frontier towns of Gad and Manasseh. It was one of the Levitical cities, and was on the extreme southern border of Bashan, which came up to the mountains of Gilead.[1] The Birket Maneh is situated on the lower spurs of these mountains.

Ishbosheth was crowned here by Abner, and when David fled from his rebellious son Absalom, it was in Mahanaim, then a large, important, and sacred city, that he took refuge; and here an Ammonite chief, Shobi, and Machir, the son of Ammiel, and Barzillai, the Gileadite, brought to him all kinds of food and articles of furniture, while the valiant tribe of Gad, no doubt, joined his army, as they had been his bravest followers at Ziklag. Absalom had crossed the Jordan, and a battle took place in one of the woods of Gilead, not far from Mahanaim, in which Absalom was caught

[1] "Land of Gilead," p. 151.

by his hair in an oak tree, and murdered, where he hung, by Joab. The grief of David we know.

Solomon made Mahanaim one of his store cities. After his time it is no more mentioned. But at Birket Maneh there are the remains of a large city, found there by Canon Tristram, and such we know Mahanaim was. It is, however, still a doubtful site.

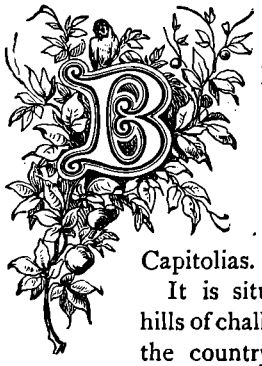
ʿABÎLA, NOW ʿABÎL.



ABÎL is north of Irbid, and is another of the Decapolis cities. Eusebius mentions it as "Abila the wine-bearing, twelve miles east of Gadara." Laurence Oliphant thought it identical with Abel Ceramim, or "the place of the Vineyards," mentioned in Judges as the scene of the defeat of the Ammonites by Jephthah, whom it is said he smote from "Aroer, even till thou come to Minith, even twenty cities, and *unto the place of the vineyards*, with a very great slaughter." Abila was one of the episcopal cities of Palestine, and was captured by Antiochus the Great in 218, at the same time that he took Pella and Gadara.

It had entirely disappeared, and was discovered by Seetzen in 1805. At that time the town had long been deserted, but the ruins there fully attested its former splendour. Beautiful remains of the ancient walls, numbers of arches and columns of marble, basalt, and grey granite were found. Outside the walls was a still greater number of columns, two of which were of very great size; he conjectured therefore that a large temple must formerly have stood there.

CAPITOLIAS, NOW BEIT ER-RAS. DION AND HIPPOS.



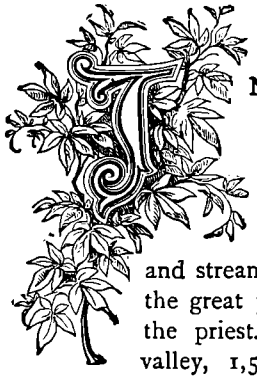
EIT ER-RAS is another of the ten cities. It was one of great importance in its day, when it bore the name of Capitolias.

It is situated on three low hills of chalk and limestone, and the country round it is fairly well cultivated, growing good wheat and lentils. Here are the ruins of a fine temple. It was approached from the east by a colonnade, more than two hundred yards long, of basalt columns. Only the bases of these remain, but their fragments cover the ground. A carved archway, one of the entrances to the temple, is still standing. Near it is an excavation of great extent, opening out of which are large vaulted chambers, which are now occupied as dwellings by the peasants, who pen their flocks in some of them and

live in others. On the west of the temple are the ruins of an aqueduct and bath. There is also a very large subterranean ruin, with fine arches. Inscriptions found here are chiefly Nabathean. There is a large double village called Eidun with ancient ruins near El-Husn, the chief village of the district of Beni 'Obeid, which is believed to be on the site of Dion, another town of the Decapolis.

Hippos, the remaining city of the ten, has been identified by M. Clermont Ganneau with Khurbet Sûsîyeh, ruins between El-Husn and Fik, east of the Sea of Galilee.

'Arak El-Emir.



In one of the most beautiful parts of the borders of Moab—which is everywhere beautiful with trees and flowers and streams—are the ruins of the great palace of Hyrcanus, the priest. It is in a deep valley, 1,500 feet above the level of the sea.

"The ride from Ain Mahis to Arak el-Emir was more beautiful than anything we had yet seen in Gilead," writes Laurence Oliphant, "though from the first, the scenery of the country generally had so far surpassed our expectations that we ceased to be surprised at anything. Except where now and then a gorge commenced, where the combination of rock and wood was most picturesque, and where the ground was carpeted with anemones, cyclamens, asphodels, iris, and many flowering shrubs, we rode knee-deep through the long, rich, sweet grass, abundantly studded with oak and terebinth trees."

The valley in which the palace stood is called Wâdy es-Sîr. The ancient name for it was Tyrus.

Hyrcanus was great-grandson to Simon the Just, chief of the Sanhedrim, in the time of Alexander the Great, and the son of Joseph. He was at enmity with his brothers, and withdrawing himself from them, he came to this sequestered spot, and built a castle, or fortress, or palace, for himself, from which he went on raids against the Arabs, or Nabathean tribes, whom he treated with great cruelty. Here he remained, much in the position of the barons or castellans of our King Stephen's time, ruling all the neighbourhood for seven years. But on the accession of Antiochus Epiphanes to the throne of the Seleucidæ, and his approach to Palestine, he became alarmed, lest that sovereign should call him to account for his deeds, and committed suicide here in 176 B.C.

A portion of the wall of this fortress survives; it is built of enormous blocks of stone, on the verge of a steep hill, which descends precipitously to the Wady Seir, where a stream flows. The stones were twenty feet long, and from three to four in breadth and height. From the back of a great terrace that he made, there arose an amphitheatre of cliffs, excavated into apartments, stables, and storehouses. A roadway, five or six hundred yards long, and edged with large blocks of stone, leads from the terrace to the Kasr el Abd, or Castle of the Slave. A causeway over the remains of a moat, and a gateway, built of enormous blocks of stone, form the entrance to this fortress. Only a part of the wall is standing. The top course had rude sculptures of lions on it. The pillars of the colonnade once in front of it are broken in

fragments, and lie around. Josephus gives us the following description of this stronghold.

"Hyrcanus erected a strong castle, and built it entirely of white stone to the very roof, and had animals of a prodigious magnitude engraved upon it." (They are still to be seen in the ruins.) "He also drew around it a great and deep canal of water (a wide moat). He also made caves of many furlongs in length, by hollowing the rock that was over against him; and then he made large rooms in it—some for feasting, and some for sleeping and living in. He introduced, also, a vast quantity of waters, which ran along it, and which were very delightful and ornamental in the court. But still he made the entrances at the mouths of the caves so narrow that no more than one person could enter by them at once. And the reason why he built them after that manner was a good one. It was for his own preservation, lest he should be besieged by his brethren, and run the hazard of being caught by them. Moreover, he built courts of greater magnitude than ordinary, which he adorned with vastly large gardens, and when he had brought the place to this state, he named it Tyre. This place is between Arabia and Judea, beyond Jordan, not far from the country of Heshbon."

Hyrcanus lived about 180 B.C., and these ruins are the only specimens of the architecture of the Asmonean age.

M. de Saulcy thinks that Tyrus was originally an Ammonite temple, which Hyrcanus utilised and adorned with columns which are of a much later age than that of the colossal walls.

Over the door of one of the apartments is an inscription, but only of five letters, and not all of the same alphabet; two of them being Phœnician, and three Aramaic. Major Conder thinks that the word is 'Adniah, and that it is a greeting or welcome to a guest, as "Salve" was with the Romans. Perhaps, therefore, this room was a banqueting hall.

In the upper row of caves Hyrcanus had a stable hewn out of the rock, with stone mangers for a hundred horses.

Gilead is a wonderfully fine country, both picturesque and fertile. It extends from the river Yarmuk on the north, to the valley of Heshbon on the south, which makes it about sixty miles long, and it is about twenty broad. It possesses, as we have seen, some magnificent ruins.

AN UNDERGROUND CITY.

MAZARIB is the great rendezvous of pilgrims going to Mecca, and is therefore a very lively, busy place. The Haj, as the pilgrim caravan is called, leaves Damascus within a week or ten days after the Lesser Beiram, which follows the great fast of Ramadan.

It was once a very magnificent affair, two thousand people often travelling it; but now it has been diminished, very considerably, by the pilgrims going by the Suez Canal. They start quite a brilliant crowd of pilgrims from Damascus. Of this an excellent account is to be found in Lady Burton's "Inner Life in Syria." Then the gay costumes are fresh and unsoiled, and they are in happy spirits; but they complete all their preparations at Mazarib. There is a large khan in which they

can lodge; they can obtain as much water as they need from the large pond here, which is constantly fed by springs from the bottom of the small lake itself. From this place begins the pilgrimage across the desert. There is a good account of the Haj in "East of Jordan."

In journeying south from Mazarib, the road runs at some little distance from Dra'a, famous for being the locality of the wonderful subterranean city.

Dra'a itself is built over two cities; a Roman town is the last on which it is built, for in many places its walls, with the masons' marks on them, appear; but under this excavations have proved that there existed one still older, in which bevelled stones were used, as in ancient Jewish buildings.

These, however, are nothing extraordinary, for many cities are built over ancient predecessors. It is the underground city entirely excavated from the rocks that is so wonderful. Very few Europeans have visited it. We give the following description of it from Dr. J. G. Wetzstein's "Reisebericht über Ha'aran und die Trachonen," first printed by Dr. Merrill in "East of Jordan," though found also in L. Oliphant's "Land of Gilead."

"I visited," he says, "old Edrei, the subterranean labyrinthine residence of King Og, on the east side of the Zumle hills. Two sons of the sheikh of the village, one fourteen and the other sixteen years of age, accompanied me. We took with us a box of matches and two candles. After we had gone down the slope for some distance, we came to a dozen rooms for straw; the passage became gradually smaller, until at last we were compelled to lie down flat and creep along. This extremely difficult and uncomfortable process lasted for about eight minutes, when we were obliged to jump down a steep wall of several feet in height. Here I noticed that the younger of my two attendants had remained behind, being afraid to follow us; but probably it was more from fear of the unknown European than of the dark and winding passages before us. We now found ourselves in a broad street, which had dwellings on both sides of it, whose height and width left nothing to be desired. The temperature was mild, the air free from unpleasant odours, and I felt not the slightest difficulty in breathing. Farther along, there were several cross streets, and my guide called my attention to a *rôsen* (a window or hole in the ceiling for air), which, like three others that I saw afterwards, was closed up from above. Soon after, we came to a market-place, where for a long distance on both sides of a pretty broad street, there were numerous shops in the walls, exactly in the style of the *dûkkan* (*i.e.*, shops) that are seen in the Syrian cities. After a while we turned into a side street, where a great hall, whose roof was supported by four pillars, attracted my attention. The roof, or ceiling, was formed of a single slab of jasper, perfectly smooth, and of immense size, in which I could not perceive the slightest crack; the rooms, for the most part, had no supports; the doors were often made of a single square stone, and here and there I noticed also fallen columns.

"After we had passed several more cross alleys, or streets, and before we had reached the middle of this subterranean city, my attendant's light went out. As he was lighting it again by mine, it occurred to me that possibly both our lights might be put out, and I asked the boy if he had the matches. 'No,' he replied, 'my brother has them.'

"'Could you find your way back if both our lights should be put out?'

"'Impossible!' he replied.

"For a moment I began to feel alarmed in this under-world, and urged an immediate return. Without much difficulty we got back to the market-place, and from there the youngster knew the way well enough. Thus, after a sojourn of more than one hour and a half in this labyrinth, I greeted again the light of day."

It is an amusing fact, that when the Crusaders made an attack on Bozrah, and had to let down buckets into the cisterns to draw water, the bucket was instantly detached by some beings below. The more superstitious ascribed this to magic, and the malice of fiends; the others suspected secret foes. It is thought now that the inhabitants of the underground cities had also ways of reaching the cisterns.

It must have been in periods of terrible peril to life and liberty that such cities were built: but we have something like it in England. The Reigate caves are undoubtedly partly artificial, and from the rough carvings on some of the rock walls, show that it was in times of deadly peril that the caves were inhabited. They are said to run under ground for eight miles, and the one in the best order, where it is said Magna Charta was concocted, is really comfortably dry, the floor of silver sand, and full of large and airy passages, and one open space; far inferior, however, to the caves of Palestine, and not to be compared with her buried cities.

As we have before said, there are underground passages and rooms at Beit er-Ras.

In a time when defeat by an enemy meant slavery or extermination, such refuges must have been of immense value. It is dreadful to read in past history of the great sacrifice of human life in the wars then so frequent. Professor Freeman, in his "Norman Conquest," remarks that one visible and important first effect of Christianity was that there were no more wars of extermination after its adoption by the nations.

Tob, Taiyibeh.

GILEAD'S HERO.

GILEAD has given birth to a hero and a prophet. The first of these is Jephthah. He was the son of Gilead, the grandson of Manasseh, but his mother was not Gilead's wife. The chief's legal wife also had sons; and when they grew up they drove Jephthah out of the house in which his father had brought him up, saying, "Thou shalt not inherit in our father's house, for thou art the son of another woman." "Then Jephthah fled from his brethren, and dwelt in the land of Tob." The name of this place exists as Taiyibeh, which means in Arabic "good," as Tob did in Hebrew. It is about thirteen miles south-east of the Sea of Galilee; beyond it are the mountains of Moab and Gilead. From it can be perceived through a cleft in the hills the course of the Wady Zerka, the ancient river Jabbok. North of it is the ravine of Ajlun, above which, faintly distinguishable, is the lofty fortress of Rubad.

Taiyibeh was a place of great importance even in the time of the Crusaders. On the top of its hill are the ruins of a fortress of theirs, consisting of a ruined outer wall, vaulted chambers, and an inner keep, and the north-east angle of a tower, still standing, which is twelve feet high; but modern houses have covered great part of the site of the ancient building. There is a large cistern with a tunnelled vault.

There are many rock-cut cisterns also on all sides of the village; a reservoir and

several winepresses have been cut in the rock, and there are rock-cut tombs. One of these has a fine archway excavated in the rock, above it is a double Latin cross in bas-relief. The tomb consists of two chambers, the inner one contains nine kokim. It was once a Jewish and (judging from the cross) afterwards a Christian tomb. The Latin and Greek churches here are modern.

The banished Jephthah took refuge in this town during his exile from his native land, and became the leader of a band, apparently of freebooters—"vain fellows" they are called. And soon the banished brother became renowned for his valour.

"And it came to pass that after a while, that the children of Ammon made war against Israel." Then the elders of Gilead went to fetch Jephthah out of the land of Tob, and said to him, "Come and be our chief, that we may fight with the children of Ammon. And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, Did ye not hate me, and drive me out of my father's house? And why are ye come unto me now when ye are in distress?" They replied that the distress they were in compelled them to apply to him; and that if he would lead them against their oppressors, he should be chief over all the inhabitants of Gilead. "And Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead, If ye bring me home again to fight with the children of Ammon, and the Lord deliver them before me, shall I be your head?" And the elders took a solemn oath that he should be their chief, and he (and no doubt his band) accompanied them back to Gilead. Here he ruled the Gileadites at Mizpeh.

There was a Mizpeh of Gilead, as well as a Mizpeh in Moab, and another near Hermon. But this one is defined as Mizpeh of Gilead, where Jephthah "spoke all his words," *i.e.* gave his orders or ruled. Mizpeh means a watch-tower; and Dr. Merrill thinks this one was nothing less than the fortress of Kulat er-Rubad, which commands a wonderful view. It stands 4,500 feet above the Jordan, and is said to have been built by the Crusaders.

There is a drawbridge remaining over a now dry moat, cut out of the rock; and the castle is entered by an archway, from which the portcullis is gone. A winding passage, with rooms on each side of it, and a flight of stairs lead to the courtyard. From the courtyard, stairs then lead up the great keep from which there is an unequalled view over the whole Jordan valley.

It is a very strong and massive castle, and must have been nearly impregnable. There is an Arabic inscription on the walls stating that it was built by Saladin; but, more probably, he took it from the Crusaders and strengthened it. Of course no castle may have been here in Jephthah's time, but the view from the hill would still have been extraordinary.

Jephthah sent messengers at once to the King of Ammon, asking for what reason he made war on Israel. The reply was that Israel had taken the land of the Ammonites on their way into Canaan, and demanding its restitution. This was an untrue statement, as God had forbidden the Israelites to touch Ammon. Jephthah at once sends again and relates the true story. Israel had avoided both Moab and Ammon; and had sent to request a passage through Sihon, king of the Amorites' territory. It was refused; Sihon fought with Israel, was defeated, and the land of the Amorites became theirs. If this was what the king meant by "his lands," they certainly would not give them up. They had had Heshbon and her towns three hundred years; they meant to keep it. He tells the king to be content with what his god Chemosh bestowed on him. If he was not, he was wrong; and Jephthah adds, "the Lord, the Judge, be judge this day between the children of Israel and the children of Ammon." But the king persisted in his demand.

The chief of Gilead resolved, now, to accept the war forced on him. "The Spirit of the Lord came upon Jephthah,"

and "he passed over Gilead and Manasseh, and passed over Mizpeh of Gilead, and from Mizpeh of Gilead he passed over to the children of Ammon." Before he left his home, however, Jephthah uttered his rash vow, that if God gave him the victory he would sacrifice to Jehovah the first thing that he met coming out of his house on his return—it should be a burnt offering.

The Ammonites were utterly defeated, and twenty of their cities were taken. Jephthah, having freed his country, returned victorious. "And, behold, his daughter came out to meet him with timbrels and with dances: and she was his only child; beside her he had neither son nor daughter."

Jephthah, in an agony of grief, rent his clothes, and told her of his fatal vow. The maiden is as brave and pious as her father. She strengthens him in his resolution to keep his promise. "My father, thou hast opened thy mouth unto the Lord; do unto me according to that which hath proceeded out of thy mouth; forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance for thee of thine enemies." Brave, patriotic, and devoted was this daughter of heroic Jephthah. Did he really sacrifice her? It is incredible that he should have done so. And her request for two months "to bewail her virginity" seems the clue to the story. She was doomed to remain unmarried; to have no hope, as every other Hebrew woman had, of being the mother of the Messiah; and Jephthah's agony would be because in her his name and family must perish.

God had strictly forbidden human sacrifices; they were "an abomination to Him." So religious a man as Jephthah appears to have been, would never have disobeyed the law—at his own cost, too.

St. Paul would not have praised Jephthah's faith if it had led him to disobey God's commandments.

The event took place about seven years after the intended sacrifice of Iphigenia, by her father; she, too, was snatched from the altar to be made a priestess of Diana. The Greeks could not imagine that even heathen gods would permit such a sacrilege as a daughter to die by her father's hand.

Elijah was also a Gileadite. Josephus tells us he was a native of Thesbon, a country (or district) in Gilead. Of the miracles he did we know even the details; and also his disappearance from the earth, and being carried in the flesh to heaven. In these her sons Gilead might well glory.

Gilead is a beautiful land, one of the loveliest portions of Palestine. "Its gushing waters, its hanging forests, its rocky gorges, its productive gardens, its fair maidens, its grand old castles, its delightful climate, all combine to invest this valley (the valley of Ajlun), in the heart of Gilead, with an unrivalled charm.[1]

This lovely valley is very near the Castle of Kulat er-Rubad, and its village is well built and well inhabited. Only a few of its inhabitants are Moslems; the rest are Christians. There is a Kaimakan here, who formerly inhabited the castle.

The tribe of Gad, living on the mountains of Gilead and the Haurân, and being exposed with the other tribe and a half to the attacks of the Arabs and other eastern people, were men of great valour. We are told in Chronicles [2] that when David was a fugitive from Saul, and dwelling at Ziklag, "Of the Gadites there separated themselves unto David, to the hold in the wilderness, mighty men of valour, men trained for war that could handle shield and spear; whose faces were like the faces of lions, and they were swift as roes on the mountains."

[1] "Land of Gilead," p. 18.

[2] 1 Chronicles xii. 8.



MOUNTAINS OF MOAB.

ABEL-SHITTIM.

ABEL-SHITTIM, on the plain east of the Jordan, is five miles wide, and is the last spot east of Jordan on which the Israelites encamped before they crossed the river. It extends from Wady Nimrîn on the north to the foot of the Moab hills at the north-east corner of the Dead Sea on the south. The Arabs name it Seisaban. On this plain are several tells, most of them with ruins on them. On the plain very near a tell called Tell Kefrein, on which are many ruins, there are an immense number of dolmens. We may as well preface the following remarks by saying that dolmens are monuments of stone; two or more stones supporting a flat stone table, the table slightly leaning at one end; menhirs are single stones, erect or in groups, circles, or alignments; these, with stone circles, disc stones, and cup hollows are all to be found in Moab in great numbers. They are, however, found everywhere, those curious monuments of the past. Our own Stonehenge, and Avebury, in Kent, the circle and menhir at Place Farm, Wiltshire, under which a corpse was found, Kit's Cotty house near the Medway, the greystone by the Tweed, the stones in

Brittany, and all over Europe and Asia, show us how universal these strange, rough monuments were. On the plain of Moab more than 300 have been examined and counted in a space of two miles in extent. On one hillock there is a circular enclosure with dolmens and a fallen menhir eleven feet long. It is supposed that they were connected with the worship of Chemosh, who was the especial god of Moab.

In fact Moab, according to its lights, was a very devout country, the home and centre of Chemosh worship, the most hateful kind of idolatry, since it demanded human sacrifices, no doubt also offered in Druidical days at our Stonehenge; and many a babe —a favourite offering to Chemosh—may have died on these dolmens, though generally, as he was a flame god, they were burnt offerings.

It is horrible to think that Solomon, so devoted as he was to the worship of God in his early youth, should have actually introduced this hideous worship into Jerusalem, where it remained in the valley of Tophet till Josiah abolished it.

It was on the plain of Shittim, amidst the groves of Chemosh or Baal Peor, that the women of Moab lured the children of Israel into this terrible cult.

Tell Ramah is on the left bank of Wâdy Hesban, and is the site of Beth-Aram, a city of Gad. Between the tells here there is another great group of dolmens. Tell Ektanu has been identified by Dr. Merrill as Zoar. He says:

"On the Shittim plain, at the north-east corner of the Dead Sea, there are five important sites, Tell Kefrein, Tell er Ramah, Tell el-Hamman, Tell Ektanu, and Suweimeh. Tell Nimrîn, being some miles farther to the north, is not reckoned in this list; to these should be added Tell esh Shaghûr. This name occurs several times in different parts of the country, and is said to mean a rough, rocky place. It is one-fourth of a mile or a little more from Tell er Ramah, and on the north side of the stream coming down to Wady Hesban. Among this group Tell Ektanu deserves particular notice, both on account of its position and name. The mound is south of Wady Hesban, and nearer the mountains of Moab than any of the others. If the intention of Lot was to flee to these mountains, and he stopped in the 'little city' for lack of time to go further, this would be the only suitable place of those mounds, that now are covered with ruins. The ruins of this mound appear to be of great age."

The ruins of this supposed Zoar are remarkable. There is a ruined building on its summit two hundred feet in length from east to west, with an entrance on the east side. Its foundation stones are very large, but the smaller stones above them have fallen to atoms. Major Conder and Mr. Birch, however, fix the site of the city Zoar at Tell Shaghûr.

Tell er Ramah was rebuilt by Herod Antipas, who called it Julias (or Livias) in honour of Livia, the wife of Augustus Cæsar. There are large and living streams here, and the towns were well placed.

Between Tell el Hamman and Tell Ektanu there is a large group of fine dolmens. Here the table-stone is pointed, with sloping sides, which is perplexing, as they could scarcely, if of this shape, have been altars.

Mount Nebo.

THIS is one of the most memorable spots on earth; for here died, alone with God, the man who was the Almighty's instrument in rescuing from slavery the nation whom He had chosen, from whom the Lord Jesus should descend on the virgin mother's side. The true and zealous servant of God was, at a hundred and twenty years of age, to pass from earth, before he could see the fruit of his labours. For one impatient word the meekest man on earth was forbidden to enter the Promised Land. But his Lord permitted him to look on its loveliness from Nebo, before he closed his eyes on earth to open them on the beatific vision; and hereafter he was to stand on its fairest mountain with the Son of God Himself.

The exact spot whence Moses gazed is unknown, but Nebo is a site about which there is no dispute. The name belongs to a knoll "with traces of a ring of dolmens on it." Major Conder first observed them. It is a flat summit with a narrow ridge running out west between Heshbon and Medeba; on this ridge a height rises—the highest peak of all—called Siaghah; this is Pisgah. Below, on the north, are the "Springs of Moses," as the Arabs call a stream that flows through a picturesque valley and falls over the cliff into a flowery and fern-decked hollow. These springs were called the Baths of Moses in the Middle Ages. It was supposed that they cured leprosy.

The ascent to the ridge from the north is called Tal'at es-Sufa, or ascent of Ziph. Major Conder thinks that Sufa is Zophim, and the "Field of Zophim," the field close to the cairn of Nebo. The view from the highest point is very extensive. From it all the hill country of Judea, all Samaria, and Lower Galilee can be seen, to Tabor and the hill of Belvoir. Jebel Osh'a hides the Sea of Galilee. The northern part of the Dead Sea is seen, Bethlehem, Jerusalem, Ebal, and Gerizim, and the white cone of Kurn Sartabeh; in fact, all that the Bible says Moses saw. "The land of Gilead towards Dan, Naphtali, Ephraim, and Manasseh; all the land of Judah, towards the utmost sea, the southern hills, the plain of Jericho."[1]

The future home of his people thus seen, Moses closed his eyes in death. Jewish tradition says that the meaning of the words in Deuteronomy is that Moses died by the kiss of the Lord. A lovely tradition! "And He buried him in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor: but no man knoweth of his sepulchre to this day."

Lady Burton relates a pretty legend told her by the Arabs about the death of Moses, of which this is the end: "He saw four angels, in the form of men, scooping out a room in a hill as white as snow. 'What are you doing?' he asked. 'We are ordered by our King,' they replied, 'to prepare a room in which to shut His most precious treasure, and this is why we have retired to the desert. Our task is nearly finished, and we are to wait till the precious freight arrives. It cannot be long!' The sun was hot, the cavern looked cool. Moses entered it, and sat down on a bench at the further end. One of the angels offered him an apple; as soon as he had eaten it, he fell asleep in death. The angels carried his soul to God and closed the cave!"[2]

The Jewish tradition of the Divine kiss is, however, much more beautiful.

[1] Deut. xxxiv. 1–3, A.V.

[2] See Lady Burton's "Inner Life of Syria."

The so-called tomb of Moses is at Neby Musa; it is in the centre of a building. The tomb is in a little room, and is covered with a green pall. The roof of the building has a triple dome. It is walled round, with buttresses on the wall and one arch, the commencement of several arches in a pavilion that runs all round it. A praying place—a Mihrab—occupies the place of a door. There is a sma minaret, and a courtyard with arches in its enclosure, like cloisters. It was once a khan. An outer wall shuts it in, and a massive iron door and chain secure the entrance. Of course this is not the real tomb—the place where God's angels buried Moses was never known.

"This was the truest warrior
That ever buckled sword;
This the most gifted poet
That ever breathed a word;
And never earth's philosopher
Traced with his golden pen,
On the deathless page, truths half so sage
As he wrote down for men.

And had he not high honour,—
The hill-side for a pall,
To lie in state while angels wait,
With stars for tapers tall,
And the dark rock-pines, like tossing plumes,
Over his bier to wave,
And God's own hand in that lonely land
To lay him in the grave?

In that strange grave without a name,
Whence his uncoffined clay
Shall break again, oh, wondrous thought!
Before the Judgment Day,
And stand with glory wrapt around
On the hills he never trod,
And speak of the strife that won our life
With the Incarnate Son of God.

O lonely grave in Moab's land!
O dark Beth-Peor's hill!
Speak to these curious hearts of ours,
And teach them to be still.
God hath His mysteries of grace,
Ways that we cannot tell;
He hides them deep, like the hidden sleep
Of him He loved so well." [1]

It was on Mount Nebo that we are told in Maccabees, the prophet Jeremiah hid in a cavern the Tabernacle, the Ark of the Covenant, and the Altar of Incense.[2]

[1] Mrs. Alexander's "Burial of Moses."
[2] 2 Maccabees xi. 4-7.

THE HIGH PLACES OF BAAL.

CLOSE to the height of Nebo is a perfect dolmen, and on the south slopes of the mountain, and below the field of Zophim, are several others, and a sacred stone circle. That all these were idolatrous erections there can be no doubt, and generally they were devoted to Baal. Our own Stonehenge proves this, for, undoubtedly, the opening due east is to admit the rays of the sun on the altar-stone, on the Baal feast of June 21st; when, if the day be fine, the rays fall directly on the stone, it might be supposed to light the flames of the sacrifice. We have seen it ourselves at noon on a June day.

The Israelites were now on Abel-Shittim, a large and rich oasis in the Jordan Valley. The king of Moab was alarmed. True, the people had gone out of their direct route to avoid touching Moab; but they had conquered his neighbours, Sihon and Og; might they not, by-and-by, make war on himself? He dared not openly attack them, because

he had seen how vain the valour of the giant king had been against them. But they did not worship his gods, so he hoped to enlist their sympathies on the side of Moab. All the nations knew Jehovah's name, though ignorant that He, and He only, was God. And Balak had heard that a prophet of Mesopotamia foretold things truly, and was a great magician. He therefore sent for Balaam, from Pethor, and, after some difficulties and two embassies, the prophet came.

Balak asks him to do an apparently easy thing—to curse, verbally, the people of Israel. Balaam doubts if he shall be allowed to do so; he knows that he cannot if God prevents; but he will try. Perhaps he half hoped that Chemosh might be strong enough to help him, or, perhaps, as he offered sacrifices to the seven planets who, his countrymen believed, guided and ordered the lives of men, that *they* would induce God to alter His decree.

Balak led him first to Bamoth Baal, south of Nebo. It is a "bare hill top"—all these places have been explored and identified by the Palestine explorers—and here he orders seven altars to be erected, and hence he gazed on the desert tribes below, who probably also stood looking up at those altars from which the blue lines of smoke ascended to heaven, and at the two dark figures standing beside them. But it was vain; Balaam could not curse, he was compelled to bless.

Balak, angry and disappointed, takes him to another height—the field of Zophim, now called Tal'at es-Sufa. As we have said before, it is on the Nebo ridge.

Close to it stands an immense dolmen, perfect and uninjured by time or the hand of man; there is also one on the west, but fallen; a great stone circle on the southern slope; another dolmen centre on the other side of the gorge. Still Balaam curses not, but blesses.

Then he is taken to the top of Peor, from whence the whole army of Israel could be seen.

Such a ridge the explorers found south of Bamoth Baal, on a point of rock running out to Minyeh. It was therefore a very wonderful fact that they found here *seven* monuments of huge stones in a line.

What confirmation of the truth of Scripture this is! For who else than this king and prophet could or would have placed those stone monuments here? The Arabs have not even a tradition about them, they are so very old; and, in the changeless East, they were not likely to have been touched in this lonely place.

Balaam, though he delivered the wonderful prophecy that afterwards probably brought the Magi to the feet of the Infant Christ (that of the Star), persisted in pleasing Balak rather than God. He gave him the awful advice to draw the Israelites into sin by the worship of Chemosh, and then he knew that Jehovah would withdraw His favour from them—a far worse curse this than a verbal one. His plan succeeded partially, but in the following battle he was himself slain.

We insert here the fine poem of Keble on this most picturesque event.

"Oh, for a sculptor's hand!
That thou might'st take thy stand,
Thy wild hair floating on the eastern breeze,
Thy tranced yet open gaze
Fixed on the desert haze
As one who deep in heaven some airy pageant sees.

In outline dim and vast,
Their fearful shadows cast
The giant forms of empires on their way
To ruin: one by one
They tower, and they are gone,
Yet in the prophet's soul the dreams of avarice stay.

No sun or star so bright
In all the world of light
That they should draw to Heaven his downward eye
He hears the Almighty's word,
He sees the angel's sword,
Yet low upon the earth his heart and treasure lie.

Lo! from yon argent field,
To him and us reveal'd,
One gentle Star glides down, on earth to dwell.
Chained as they are below,
Our eyes may see it glow,
And, as it mounts again, may track its brightness well.

To him it glared afar,
A token of wild war,
The banner of his Lord's victorious wrath:
But close to us it gleams,
Its soothing lustre streams
Around our home's green walls, and on our church-way path.

We in the tents abide,
Which he at distance eyed
Like goodly cedars by the waters spread;
While seven red altar-fires
Rose up in wavy spires,
Where on the mount he watched his sorceries dark and dread.

He watched till morning's ray
On lake and meadow lay,
And willow-shaded streams, that silent sweep
Around the bannered lines,
Where, by their several signs,
The desert-wearied tribes in sight of Canaan sleep.

He watched till knowledge came
Upon his soul like flame,
Not of those magic fires at random caught;
But true prophetic light
Flashed o'er him, high and bright,
Flashed once, and died away, and left his darkened thought.

And can he choose but fear,
Who feels his God so near,
That, when he fain would curse, his powerless tongue
In blessing only moves?
Alas! the world he loves
Too close around his heart her tangling veil hath flung.

Sceptre and Star Divine,
Who in Thine inmost shrine
Hast made us worshippers, O claim Thine own!
More than Thy seers we know—
O teach our love to grow
Up to Thy heavenly light, and reap what Thou hast sown."

KHAN MASHITA, MÂDEBA, CALLIRHOE, MACHÆRUS.

THE beautiful ruins of Khan Mashita were discovered by Sir Henry Layard, in 1839, and visited and very fully explored afterwards by Canon Tristram. They are the remains of a palace said to have been built by Khosroes II., king of Persia, who conquered Syria in 611 A.D. It is a square building with round towers at the corners and at the sides. The gateway has on each side octagonal bastions, with most exquisite carved work on them, in zigzags, of animals, fruit, and foliage. Winged lions, panthers, buffaloes and birds are admirably executed. There are inscriptions not as yet deciphered, though they are quite perfect. There is an open court and large rooms in the interior. The palace was not finished, probably because the king had more important matters to engross him. Khosroes had been restored to his kingdom (from which he had been driven) in 591 A.D.

After the murder of Maurice by Phocas, Khosroes, who owed much to the murdered emperor, declared war against the new emperor of the East, and commenced a campaign of victory, conquering Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and Asia Minor, and thus extending the dominion of Persia from the Euphrates to the Nile. In 622, however, his career was stopped by the Emperor Heraclius. He had captured Jerusalem and burned the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in 611, and carried off the

supposed true Cross. Heraclius defeated him and brought back to Jerusalem its Patriarch, who had been taken prisoner, and the true Cross. On this occasion the Golden Gate was opened to admit the emperor, who bore the Cross on his shoulders.

Khosroes fled after the great battle of Nineveh. Soon after he was seized and murdered by his son Siroes. The only trace of his conquest of Palestine is this palace.

Mâdeba is the site of Medeba, a city of the Moabites, taken by Joshua, and given to the Reubenites. It was on the east of Medeba that Joab defeated the Ammonites before he besieged them in 'Amman. Medeba was re-taken by the Moabites at the Captivity. It was denounced before then, however, by Isaiah in "the burden of Moab." "Moab howleth over Nebo and Medeba."

In the time of the Maccabees it was a strong fortress. A Roman road leads hence to Ma'in, another spot full of ruins covering the hillsides. Towards the south-west is the Wady Zerka Ma'in, or "the Valley of Blue Habitations"—a magnificent gorge; but there are only tombs to be seen in it. Thence a steep and difficult path leads to the hot springs of Callirhoe.

The top of the cliffs in this valley is two thousand five hundred feet above the Dead Sea, and the sides are precipitous. The scenery is extremely picturesque.

The south cliff is of black basalt and brown limestone, whilst the north cliff is broken into precipices of red, pink, purple, and yellow sandstone, contrasting "with gleaming chalk above and the rich green of palm groves below." The hot streams of Callirhoe flow from the northern slopes; they are ten in number, and their temperature varies from 110° to 140° F.; they are strong of sulphur. There is a main stream which forms occasionally pools covered with underwood, in which are numbers of fish; this stream flows from springs higher up the valley, and is of cold water.

Wady Zerka Ma'in is supposed to be the "Valley of God"—Nahaliel—mentioned in the Bible as a camping place of the tribes; and by others it is thought to be "the valley in the land of Moab over against Beth-Peor," where Moses was buried; for the ridge of Minyeh (identified with Beth Peor) is just north of the gorge. The springs are said to be good for rheumatism.

The bottom of the ravine is full of canes and palms, and palms rise in tufts on the hillside.

It was at these springs that Herod the Great sought the health and life he would never possess again. Major Conder tells us that the Arabs have a legend that a demon slave of Solomon found this spring.

On a projecting ledge from these hills are the ruins of MKHAUR, which extend over a great space. This spot is very interesting because here was Fort MACHÆRUS where, according to Josephus, St. John the Baptist was beheaded.

Josephus gives us the following account of the fortress of Machærus. "What was walled in," he says, "was itself a very rocky hill elevated to a very great height, which circumstance alone made it very hard to be subdued. It was also so contrived by nature that it could not be easily ascended; for it is, as it were, ditched about with such valleys on all sides, and to such a depth, that the eye cannot reach their bottoms, and such as are not easily to be passed over, and even such as it is impossible to fill up with earth; for that valley which cuts it on the west, extends to threescore furlongs, and did not end till it came to the lake Asphaltitis; on the same side it was, also, that Machærus had the tallest top of its hill elevated above the rest. But then for the valleys that lay on the north and south sides, although they are not so large as that already described, yet is it in like manner an impracticable thing to think of getting over them; and for the valley that lies at the east side, its depth is found to be no less than a hundred cubits. It

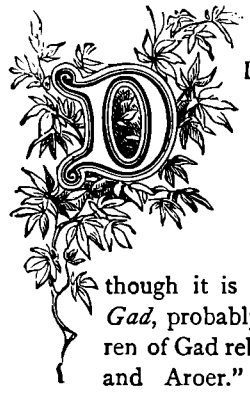
extends as far as a mountain that lies over against Machærus, with which it is bounded.

"Now when Alexander (Janneus) the king of the Jews, observed the nature of this place, he was the first who built a citadel here, which afterwards was demolished by Gabinius, when he made war upon Aristobulus. But when Herod came to be king, he thought the place to be worthy of the utmost regard and of being built upon in the firmest manner, and this especially because it lay so near to Arabia; for it is seated in a convenient place on that account, and hath a prospect toward that country. He therefore surrounded a large space of ground with walls and towers, and built a city there, out of which city there was a way that led up to the very citadel itself on the top of the mountain; nay, more than this, he built a wall round that top of the hill, and erected towers at the corners, of a hundred and sixty cubits high, in the middle of which place he built a palace, after a magnificent manner, wherein were large and beautiful edifices. He also made a great many reservoirs for the reception of water, that there might be plenty of it ready for all uses; and those in the properest places that were afforded him there. Thus did he, as it were, contend with the nature of the place, that he might exceed its natural strength and security (which yet itself made it hard to be taken) by those fortifications that were made by the hands of men. Moreover, he put a large quantity of darts and other machines of war into it, and contrived to get everything thither that might contribute to its inhabitants' security, under the longest siege possible.

"Now within this place there grew a sort of tree that deserves our wonder on account of its largeness, for it was no way inferior to any fig-tree whatsoever, either in height or in thickness, and the report is, that it had lasted ever since the times of Herod, and would probably have lasted much longer, had it not been cut down by those Jews who took possession of the place afterwards; but still in that valley which encompasses the city on the north side, there is a certain place called Baaras, which produces a root of the same name with itself; its colour is like to that of flame, and towards evening it sends forth a certain ray like lightning; it is not easily taken by such as would do it, but recedes from their hands. . . . It is only valuable on account of one virtue that it hath, that if it be only brought to sick persons it quickly drives away those called demons, which are no other than the spirits of the wicked, that enter into men that are alive and kill them unless they can obtain some help against them.[1] Here are also many eruptions of cold waters, and this not only in the places that lie lower and have their fountains near one another, but, what is still more wonderful, here is to be seen a certain cave hard by, whose cavity is not deep, but it is covered over by a rock that is prominent; above this rock there stand up two hills, but little distant one from the other, the one of which sends out a fountain that is cold, and the other sends out one that is hot; which waters, when they are mingled, together compose a most pleasant bath; they are medicinal indeed for other maladies, but especially good for strengthening the nerves. This place has also mines of sulphur and alum."

[1] This was the belief of the Jews in our Lord's time.

DIBON, NOW DHIBAN.



DIBON is now a heap of ruins. We first find its name in the Bible as one of the halting places of the Israelites on their way to Palestine, though it is there called Dibon-*Gad*, probably because the children of Gad rebuilt it "with Ataroth and Aroer." It is mentioned as a "high place" in Isaiah with Bajith.[1] It appears to have been the birthplace of Mesha, king of Moab, or of his father, since he says, on the Moabite stone, "I am Mesha, the son of Chemosh-Gad, king of Moab, the Dibonite."

David had conquered Moab long before. "He smote Moab," we read in Samuel, "and measured them with a line, casting them down to the ground; even with two lines measured he to put to death, and with one full line to keep alive. And so the Moabites became David's servants, and brought gifts."[2] The kings of Israel seem to have retained it, and received an immense tribute from it, for we read that "Mesha, king of Moab, was a sheepmaster, and rendered unto the king of Israel an hundred thousand lambs, and an hundred thousand rams, with the wool.

"But it came to pass, when Ahab was dead, that the king of Moab rebelled against the king of Israel. And King Jehoram sent to Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, saying, The king of Moab hath rebelled against me: wilt thou go with me against Moab to battle? And Jehoshaphat answered, I will go up: I am as thou art, my people as thy people, and my horses as thy horses.

"And he said, Which way shall we go up? And he answered, The way through the wilderness of Edom." The two kings marched together to Edom; the king of Edom, who was Judah's vassal, joined them; and the three sovereigns marched on, fetching a compass of seven days' journey through a barren and waterless country. They were suffering greatly, when "the king of Israel said, Alas! that the Lord hath called these three kings together, to deliver them into the hand of Moab!

"But Jehoshaphat said, Is there not here a prophet of the Lord, that we may enquire of the Lord by him?

"And one of the king of Israel's servants" —a worshipper no doubt of Jehovah—"said, Here is Elisha, the son of Shaphat, who poured water on the hands of Elijah," that is, who was his servant and disciple.

"And Jehoshaphat said, The word of the Lord is with him. So the king of Israel and Jehoshaphat and the king of Edom went down to him."

The prophet received Jehoram, the son of Ahab and Jezebel, with the words, "What have I to do with thee? get thee to the prophets of thy father, and to the prophets of thy mother." But the king of Israel deprecated the prophet's anger, and pleaded that the Lord had called three kings together to deliver them into the hand of Moab. "And Elisha said, As the Lord of hosts liveth, before whom I stand, surely, were it not that I regard the presence of Jehoshaphat, the king of Judah, I would not look toward thee, nor see thee."

For Jehoram worshipped the golden calves—not God! Then the prophet asked that a minstrel might be brought to him; he had been angry and excited, and his mind needed composing and calming. The minstrel came and played, and the spirit of the Lord came on Elisha. How often we

[1] Isaiah xv. 2.
[2] 2 Sam. viii. 2.

see in this history the power and value of God's gift of music!

"And Elisha said, Thus saith the Lord, Make this valley full of ditches. For thus saith the Lord, Ye shall not see wind, neither shall ye see rain; yet that valley shall be filled with water, that ye may drink, both ye, and your cattle, and your beasts.

"And this is but a light thing in the sight of the Lord: He will deliver the Moabites also into your hand. And ye shall smite every fenced city and every choice city, and shall fell every good tree, and stop all wells of water, and mar every good piece of land with stones.

"And it came to pass in the morning, when the meat offering was offered, that, behold, there came water by the way of Edom, and the country was filled with water.

"And when all the Moabites heard that the kings were come up to fight against them, they gathered all that were able to put on armour, and upward, and stood on the border," ready for defence.

"And they rose up early in the morning, and the sun shone upon the water, and the Moabites saw the water on the other side as red as blood:

"And they said, This is blood: the kings are surely slain, and they have smitten one another: now therefore, Moab, to the spoil!"

They hastened, no doubt in disorder, to plunder the camp of their enemies, but they met the warriors of Israel ready to receive them, and they were smitten, and fled before the combined hosts. But Israel pursued the fugitives even into Moab; and destroyed the cities, covered the land with stones, stopped up the wells, and cut down the good trees: "only in Kir-haraseth left they the stones thereof; howbeit the slingers went about, and smote it." In fact the fortress resisted them successfully. Mesha made a gallant resistance. He took seven hundred swordsmen, and strove to break through to the king of Edom; but he could not. Then in despair he took his eldest son, that should have reigned in his stead, and offered him for a burnt offering to Chemosh on the walls. There was great indignation against Israel, and at length the kings departed to their own land.

KERAK.

THE Kir-haraseth, or "Kir" of Moab the kings had vainly besieged is now called Kerak. It was the royal city of Moab, to which Mesha had retreated, and therefore it must have been on its walls that he offered his horrid sacrifice to Chemosh.

It is situated amidst mountains 3,070 feet above the sea; the precipice down which it looks on the Wady Kerak is 1,800 feet deep. It stands on a ridge projecting from the mountains, and entirely separated from it except by a mere neck of rock. Two valleys, from 1,000 to 1,350 feet, with scarped sides, are on the north and south of it; they unite about a mile to the west of the fortress.

Kerak is built on a triangular platform, 800 or 1,000 yards long on each face of the triangle. There were only two entrances to it, and both were through tunnels in the side of the cliff, leading to the platform of the town.

It was almost impregnable, for all paths to it were commanded by the fortress. There were great reservoirs and deep wells in the town, and springs in the valley below. Kerak is commanded, however, from the heights above, which are three hundred feet higher than the city, so that the garrison might suffer from darts and stones thrown from above.

Now we must relate the extraordinary discovery which has enabled us to read this story from the other side, King Mesha being the historian.

In 1868 the famous Moabite Stone was discovered at Dibon.

Its discoverer (the Rev. F. A. Klein) did not understand the Arab character, and in consequence of some misunderstanding, the Arabs resolved to destroy the stone rather than have it taken from them.

They lighted a fire under it, made it red hot, and then threw water on it, and smashed it to pieces.

But M. Ganneau had before this obtained a "squeeze" of it.

Some of the fragments were collected by some French explorers, others by the English, and in the end most of the pieces were found, but separately.

Dean Stanley, at a meeting of the Palestine Fund Committee, proposed that in the interests of Biblical knowledge the fragments belonging to the Palestine Fund should be given to the French Government, so that they might all be joined together, and the stone be set up in the Louvre. That resolution was acted on.

The probable date of the stone is 900 B.C. Count de Vogué thinks that it was inscribed in the second year of the reign of Ahaz. It is therefore older than Homer. The size of the stone is about three and a half feet by two feet. M. Clermont Ganneau and Dr. Ginsburg have thus translated it.

MOABITE STONE.

1. I am Mesha, son of Chemosh-Gad King of Moab, the Dibonite.

2. My father reigned over Moab thirty years, and I have reigned after my father.

3. And I have built this sanctuary for Chemosh in Karchah, a sanctuary of

4. Salvation, for he saved me from all aggressors, and made me look upon all my enemies with contempt.

5. Omri was king of Israel, and oppressed Moab during many days, and Chemosh was angry with his

6. Aggressions. His son succeeded him, and he also said, I will oppress Moab. In my days he said,

7. Let us go and I will see my desire upon him and his house, and Israel said, I shall destroy it for ever. Now Omri took

8. The Land of Medeba and occupied it in his day, and in the days of his son forty years, and Chemosh had mercy on it in my time,

9. And I built Baal-Meon, and made therein the ditch, and I built Kiriathaim,

10. And the men of Gad dwelt in the country of Ataroth from ancient times, and the king of Israel fortified Ataroth.

11. I assaulted the wall and captured it and killed all the warriors of the city

12. For the well-pleasing of Chemosh and Moab, and I removed from it all the spoil of it and offered it

13. Before Chemosh in Kirjath, and I placed therein the men of Siran and the men of Mochrath.

14. And Chemosh said to me, "Go take Nebo against Israel," and I

15. Went in the night and fought against it from the break of day till noon, and I took it.

16. And I killed in all seven thousand men, but I did not kill the women and

17. Maidens, for I devoted them to Ashtar-Chemosh, and I took from it

18. The vessels of Jehovah and I offered them before Chemosh; and the king of Israel fortified

19. Jahaz and occupied it when he made war against me, and Chemosh drove him out before me. And

20. I took from Moab two hundred men

in all, and placed them in Jahaz and took it

21. To annex it to Dibon. I built Karchah, the wall of the forest and the wall

22. Of the hills. I have built its gates and I have built its towers. I have

23. Built the palace of the king and I made the prisons for the criminals within

24. The wall, and there were no wells in the interior of the wall of Karchah. And I said to all the people

25. Make you every man a well in his house. And I dug the ditch for Karchah with the chosen men of

26. Israel. I built Aroer and I made the road across the Arnon.

27. I took Beth-Bamoth, for it was destroyed. I built Bezer, for it was cut down

28. By the armed men of Dibon, for all Dibon was now loyal. And I reigned

29. From Bikrah, which I added to my land, and I built

30. Beth-Gamul and Beth-Diblathaim and Beth-Baalmeon, and I placed there the poor

31. People of the land. And as to Horonaim the men of Edom dwelt therein on the descent from of old.

32. And Chemosh said to me, "Go down make war against Horonaim, and take it." And I assaulted it,

33. And took it, for Chemosh restored it in my days. Wherefore I made

34. . . . year . . . and I . .

The stone is here broken off.

It is a hundred and fifty years older than any other stone inscription, though, of course, the Tell Amarna clay tablets are older still. The next inscription on stone recovered was the one found in the passage to the Pool of Siloam, but that dates only from Hezekiah's reign ; the Moabite Stone is two hundred years older.

King Mesha's autobiography is intensely interesting, and he committed the memory of his brave deeds—for he seems really to have been a great warrior—to a material that was sure to last : it is on basalt.

Setting up stones was the fashion of the early ages of the world. We have all heard of the pillars of Seth. Jacob set up and anointed a boulder. The Arabs, Major Conder tells us, call the dolmens "Smeared Stones." Samuel set up a stone that he called his Ebenezer. They were afterwards forbidden, as incentives to idolatry, and were entirely, or almost entirely, removed from West Palestine by Hezekiah and Josiah, who took away the high places ; consequently not more than two, we believe, have been discovered in Judah or Galilee.

Kerak became a Crusader's fortress, and was possessed by Renaud de Châtillon, a fierce and treacherous man, whose breach of treaty caused the war in which Palestine was lost. He had had a Moslem caravan stopped and plundered while there was peace with Saladin, and the heroic Saracen, of course, resented the treason. We have already told how the Crusaders were defeated, and how the conqueror treated him.[1] He had been the most dangerous and unscrupulous enemy the Moslems had, having even advanced on and threatened Mecca.

[1] See p. 147.



ARAB TENT.

ARAB LIFE.

MOAB, Gilead, and Bashan are now known as the Haurân. Once a region covered with magnificent cities and prosperous towns, they are now almost deserted, wild tribes only journeying over them in search of pasture for their flocks. The settled fellahin have been driven by these tribes from their villages, now deserted, and the beautiful hills and woods and dales of Gilead, the rolling plains of Bashan, and the dolmen-crowned heights of Moab see only roving tribes of fighting robbers, who carry off the harvests if any venture in that wasted Eastern Palestine to sow them.

Yet what memories are attached to it! In Moab dwelt the faithful Ruth; here Moses died and was buried; in Gilead Jephthah and Elijah had their homes.

And now the plains and hills are only covered with the black tents of the Arabs. They are black because made of goat's hair of that colour.

These tents are always pitched in a large circle, in which their flocks or camels can find shelter.

The curtains of the tent fall sloping from the ridge to the ground. The chief's tent is much longer than the others; sometimes it is very long, and is supported by many poles. It is not higher than the other tents. A portion of it is set apart for the women and children. There is a large general apartment, and another, used to shelter lambs or kids.

Low raised circles of sticks and reeds, surrounded by stones, form the bedsteads, over which they spread their blankets. They seldom or never have a fire inside the tent, as in winter they move down to the hot parts of the country. The chief's tent is known (as it is in Africa) by a spear stuck erect before it.

When travelling they load their camels or donkeys with their possessions, which are tents, cooking utensils, rugs, mats, etc., etc.; the sheep are driven by the young children. The women bring all the water needed, collect the firewood, and generally do all the real work.

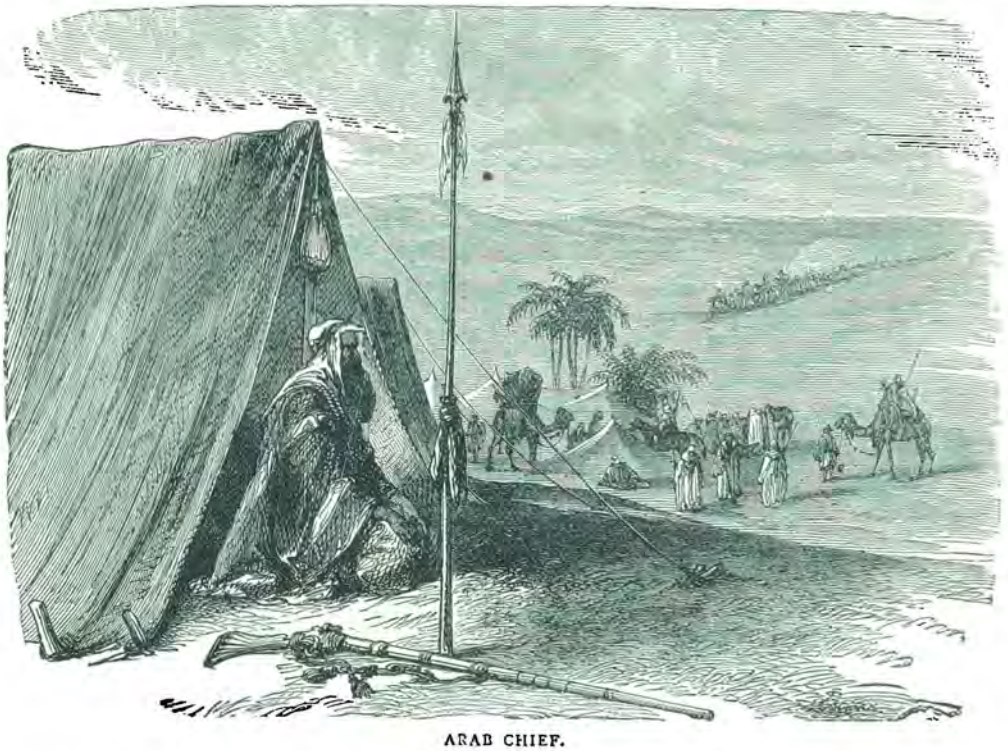
But the Arabs do not live by plunder alone. They raise sheep, horses, goats, and camels

for sale at Aleppo and Damascus; and they sow grain, leave it to grow as it may, but when harvested are very ready to sell it.

And they have an alkali bush growing on the plains, which is useful for making soap, a prosperous trade in many of the western Palestine towns; this also they sell. They buy coffee, rice, sugar, gunpowder, spear-heads, and horseshoes and cotton cloth. These purchases are made from the proceeds of their cattle and other sales.

The trade in camels is a large one, for many are needed; and sheep are driven from Moab by thousands to the market at Jerusalem and other towns. Moab always has been a sheep-producing country; even Mesha was a sheepmaster.

But an Arab would not work on a farm! He despises manual labour, and thinks it beneath a warrior. They hire labourers for sowing and harvesting amongst the Christian fellahin. These people have all



ARAB CHIEF.

the labour, and receive in return a fourth part of the crop; their employers also protect them (while so employed) from all other tribes.

We have already described the strange storehouses under ground, in which grain is kept; cisterns and unused reservoirs are often used for the same purpose. The underground store places are very safe, as no one would perceive its covering of stones and weeds.

The Arabs have no forks or spoons; the meat is taken out of the dish with the hand or with a piece of Arab bread, which is thin, soft, and heavy. They are extremely hospitable. Burckhardt says, "Hospitality to strangers is characteristic of the Arabs, and of the people of the Haurân. A traveller may alight at any house he pleases; a mat will be immediately spread for him, coffee made, and a breakfast or dinner set before him."

But there are robbers amongst them, both highway and in tribes. A raid of Arabs will rob and sometimes murder travellers.

The Bedouins are all Mahometans, and are very fanatical.

There are numerous Arab tribes in Palestine. On the west side are the Hhawârah and Hinâdeh. These are friendly with the peasants, protect them from other tribes, and receive in return a certain portion of the harvests. The Sakk'r and Beni Sakk'r are on the East. The latter prevented Major Conder and his party from continuing the exploration of Moab, by letting the Turkish governor know that they were in the country; but they also delivered Canon Tristram from captivity at Kerak, that robber tribe being vassals of the Beni Sakk'r.

At Jericho are the Ghawârineh. These are robbers, who find a field for their predatory instincts on the road from Jericho to Jerusalem, robbing every one



ARAB ENCAMPMENT.

who has not paid them blackmail. They live in wretched mud huts with reed roofs.

The great and dangerous tribe of Ta'amireh are on the south and east of the Dead Sea. On the east are the Beni Hassan; many of the latter live by cattle stealing. Next come the Adwan, about Es Salt, Gerash, 'Ammân, and Heshbon. They are said to be of the "blue blood" of Arabia, and have a large number of cavalry They allow no one to pass through their district. They are the most perfidious of the Bedouin, and extremely avaricious. No European ever succeeded in passing through their land till the Duc de Luynes did so. After him Canon Tristram made the same excursion.

It is to be hoped that the greater communication with Europeans, which will be brought about by the railway from Carmel to Damascus, and the greater opening for the sale of their animals and wheat, may gradually bring the Arabs within the

sphere of civilization, or that some government, that of Turkey perhaps, may drive them back to the deserts, their native home, for which they seem to have been especially created; for with all the romantic fascination that they have exercised over European imagination, it is certain that no country can prosper where they are in their present wild state.

The Bedouin woman is one of the most hardly worked and degraded of her class. She waits like a slave on her husband. Lady Burton has given us an account of an Arab woman's day, which presents a true picture of her life of toilsome routine. She rises at day dawn, sometimes earlier, brings her husband soap and water, then cooks and waits on his breakfast, and gives him his Narghileh. Then he leaves the tent. When he returns she brings him coffee, sherbet and pipe, then his dinner. During it she stands and waits on him with arms crossed over her breast, and eyes humbly cast down. She dares not speak unless he speaks to her. Then, during the intervals of his absence, she must clean the tent, attend to the children, draw and carry water, break wood, milk the cows, feed the animals, dig the field, cut corn, make and bake the bread.

The Bedouin woman's dress is a long blue skirt with large hanging sleeves. Her long hair hangs down her back. Some of the Arab women tattoo their faces and lips. They wear a nose ring, like the wedding ring of the Hindoos, and any ornaments they can get, generally of glass bought in the towns.

The life is not, however, a quiet one. The tribes are often at war with each other, and at the announcement of an approaching foe the camp breaks up and the tribe marches quietly and quickly off. The warning of danger is given by the shepherds, who utter a Sihar or peculiar cry, as soon as they descry or learn that the enemy is coming.

There is one strange marriage rule. First cousins on the father's side marry. The eldest male cousin can claim his eldest female first cousin as his right. He will, however, let her marry some one else, if he does not want her; but he will expect a mare or some camels as a return for his complaisance.

Ruined Towns in Moab.

AROER, now Ar'air. It was here that Joab reluctantly began his task of numbering Israel. It is now a desolate spot, but very picturesque. The ruins are on the very brink of a precipice, over the Wady Môjib —the river Arnon. The valley lies below in a perfect chasm, deep enough, indeed, to justify some of Josephus's expressions about looking down precipices. It is said to be two thousand feet deep. Along the bottom a little stream runs, and it is therefore not without verdure.

The Arnon is a river of Biblical memories. It formed the boundary between the Amorites and Moabites, when the tribes of Israel encamped on its banks before their battle with Sihon. It was for a long time the boundary of the land of Israel, till, in fact, Omri conquered Moab. It is now called the Môjib, as we have said. It makes its way to the Dead Sea through a chasm in the rock about a hundred feet wide. Six miles south of the Arnon are the ruins of

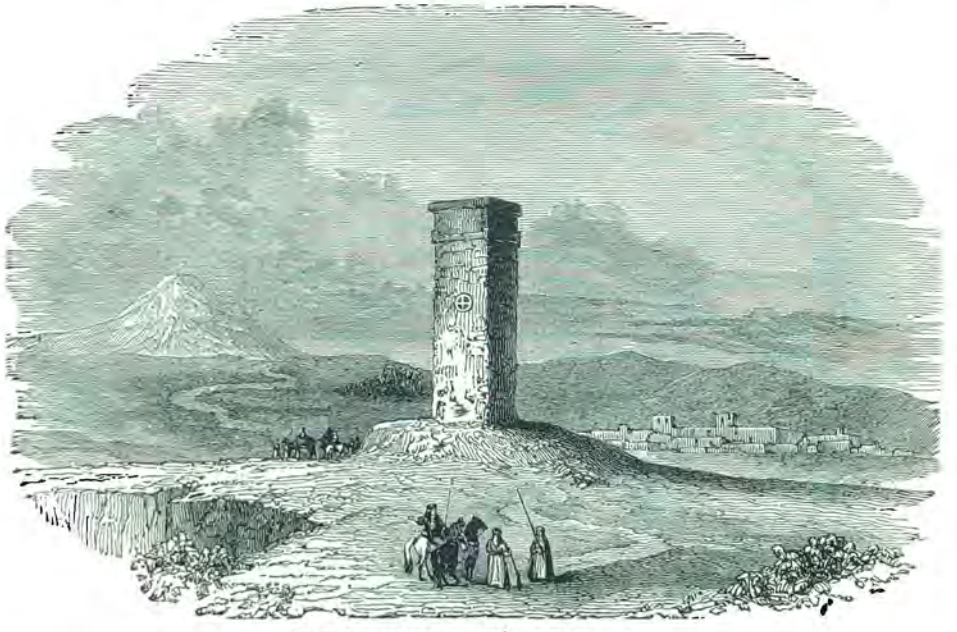
a temple, called Beit-el-Kurm, the House of the Vineyards.

This was a fine ruin, but not much now remains of it.

AR of Moab, now Rabba. Amongst the so-called proverbs or perhaps people's songs that existed before Moses approached the borders of the kingdom of the Amorites was the following song of triumph on Sihon's victory over Moab.

"Come ye to Heshbon !
Let the city of Sihon be built and established ;
For a fire is gone out of Heshbon,
A flame from the city of Sihon ;
It hath devoured Ar of Moab,
The lords of the high places of Arnon.
Woe to thee, Moab !
Thou art undone, O people of Chemosh ;
He hath given his sons as fugitives,
And his daughters into captivity,
Unto Sihon, king of the Amorites.
We have shot at them ; Heshbon is perished, even unto Dibon,
And we have laid waste even unto Nophah,
Which reacheth unto Medeba."

The Israelites repeated or sang Sihon's



THE CHRISTIAN LADY'S TOWER.

song of triumph, boasting proudly that they had conquered this warrior king.

Thus early, Ar, its chief city, was taken from Moab. From Sihon it passed, of course, to the Israelites, with all Sihon's dominions; and it was to recover some portion of it, which they also had lost to the Amorites, that Ammon made war on Israel in the time of Jephthah, and was defeated. That the Moabites regained it we know.

Isaiah uttered this prophecy against Ar : "In a night, Ar of Moab is laid waste and brought to nought."

This, of course, alluded to its destruction by an earthquake, and the prophecy was fulfilled in A.D. 315, when Ar of Moab was destroyed by an earthquake in the middle of the night. It was a Roman town, and after its rebuilding, of some importance ; it was then called Rabbath-Moab. The Greeks called it Areopolis, so naming it, we are told, from Ares, the Greek name for Mars. Was it possible, also, that the worship of Chemosh suggested the name ? for that horrid god was supposed to be Mars, under a Moabitish name. But horses, not

children, were sacrificed to the milder Greek deity.

There are traces of Roman ruins at Rabba, the remains of a temple, arches, vaults, and tanks.

After Pella had ceased to be the chief city of Palestina Tertia, Rabba was made the capital of the province. It was also a bishop's see. It has been for many centuries utterly desolate, its ruins only affording an occasional shelter to the flocks of the Arab shepherds.

UMM RASAS is a city of arches, though the name means "the Mother of Lead." It is one great mass of ruined houses, but they had generally arches over them, and the streets were arched over also, as some of the streets in Jerusalem are; and these strong, well-built arches still remain where they were placed so many centuries ago, and give a most picturesque appearance to the ruined town, light elegant arches rising over heaps of stones. There are also the ruins of three churches; one on the north-east of the town, another at south-east, and one on the eastern side. Every one of the three has a centre ruined apse, standing, but roofless; two have also the apses of the side aisles remaining.

There are the remains of walls, ruins of suburbs, tanks and cisterns, and at the north, a little distance from the town, a square tower, of no great size in breadth, and sadly cracked. Judging by the stones round it, it may have been of a church or temple. The column is called the Christian Lady's Tower, and Professor Palmer relates a legend about it, which reads like a story in the Arabian Nights, of its being erected to keep a youth in, who, it was foretold, would be eaten by a wild beast on his marriage. Of course the Kismet is fulfilled, as his bride proves to be a ghoul.

Nothing is known of this city of decorations, as we may call it, for the arches make it very picturesque. No one knows if it had an ancient name, or by whom it was founded. It is now a city strange and mysterious as those of the Arabian tales. (*See* Palmer's *Desert of the Exodus*, p. 499.)



THE YARMUK AND ASHTEROTH KARNAIM, NOW ASHTERAH.

LEAVING the ruined cities and fertile plains of Moab, retracing our way through beautiful Gilead, we pass to the plain of the Yarmuk. This plain has been the scene of great historic battles. Here Chedorlaomer defeated the giants; here Israel conquered Og, king of Bashan. Across it marched the armies of the Assyrians; and on the banks of the Yarmuk was fought, in A.D. 636, a most desperate battle, between the Greeks and Moslems. "On this occasion," writes Gibbon, "the public voice and the modesty of Abu Obeidah restored the command to the most deserving of the Moslems.[1] Caled assumed his station in the front; his colleague was posted in the rear, that the disorder of the fugitives might be checked by his venerable aspect and the sight of the yellow banner which Mahomet had displayed before the walls of Chaibar. The last line was occupied by the sister of Derar, with the Arabian women who had enlisted in this holy war, who were accustomed to wield the sword and the lance."

They were of the tribe of the Hamyarites, who derived their origin from the ancient Amalekites. "The exhortation of the generals was brief and forcible: 'Paradise is before you, hell in your rear.' Yet such was the weight of the Roman cavalry, that the right wing of the Arabs was broken and separated from the main body. Thrice did they retreat in disorder, and thrice were they driven back to the charge by the reproaches and blows of the women. In the intervals of action Abu Obeidah visited the tents of his brethren, prolonged their repose, by repeating at once the prayers of two different hours; bound up their wounds with his own hands, and administered the comfortable reflection, that the infidels partook of their sufferings without partaking of their reward. Four thousand and thirty of the Moslems were buried on the field of battle; and the skill of the Armenian archers enabled seven hundred to boast that they had lost an eye in that meritorious service. The veterans of the Syrian war acknowledged that it was the hardest and most doubtful of the days which they had seen. But it was likewise the most decisive. Many thousands of the Greeks and Syrians fell by the swords of the Arabs; many were slaughtered, after the defeat, in the woods and mountains; many, by mistaking the ford, were drowned in the waters of the Yermuk; and however the loss may be magnified, the Christian writers confess and bewail the punishment of their sins. Manuel, the Roman general, was either killed at Damascus or took refuge in the monastery of Mount Sinai. . . . After the battle of Yermuk (Yarmuk) the Roman army no longer appeared in the field, and the Saracens might securely choose among the fortified towns of Syria the first object of their attack."

It was decided by an appeal to the Khalif, who ordered them at once to besiege Jerusalem, a sacred city also in the eyes of Moslems.

The siege lasted four months. Then the patriarch Sophronius appeared on the walls and demanded a conference. He proposed in the name of the people a fair capitulation, with the extraordinary clause that the Khalif

[1] Caled, who was called the Sword of God.

himself should ratify the terms *in person*. Omar actually consented, and went to Jerusalem, where he began the foundations of the Shrine in the Rock, guided in his choice of locality by the patriarch.

Thus the battle of the Yarmuk decided the fate of Palestine; for it was only retained by the Crusaders for a period of a hundred years, and it was never, even then, wholly free from these earlier conquerors, who left their faith in Mahomet firmly established amongst the people.

The Yarmuk is the dividing river between Bashan and Gilead. It flows through a magnificent gorge, and is called by the Arabs Sheriăt el-Mandhúr, from the tribe of Arabs who pasture in its valley. It falls in a series of cascades into the immense gorges through which it winds, till it enters the Jordan below Gadara, and on one of its most magnificent gorges stands the village of Asherah, on a mound or Tell, seventy feet high. It is a most picturesque spot. "On one side is the gorge of the Yarmuk; on the other, the plain is cleft by a chasm, at the head of which is a small waterfall. On a high promontory projecting between the gorge and the chasm are the scattered and heaped stones of a city, which, in its only assailable point at the back, where the promontory joins the mainland, had three tiers of walls, very distinctly traceable now." The city must have been impregnable; and what a picturesque stronghold it must have been, with the Yarmuk rolling through the winding gorge five hundred feet below! The village of Tell Asherah had been visited only by Captain Newbold till Laurence Oliphant saw and described it; and the former traveller saw only the village on the Tell, not the ruins on the height.

Captain Newbold considered that the village of Asherah was probably the site of the ancient Ashteroth; and Mr. Oliphant thinks that the identification is correct.

But there was another Ashteroth mentioned in the Bible.

"Chedorlaomer and the kings with him smote the Rephaims in Ashteroth Karnaim"[1] (Karnaim meaning two peaks), probably referring to the crescent moon; but the city was also built on a mountain with two peaks.

Mr. Oliphant thought that the Tell Asherah which Captain Newbold identified with the site of Ashteroth was really that site; but he believed that the other Ashteroth—Ashteroth Karnaim—was on the promontory over the gorge of the Yarmuk.[2]

Ashteroth Karnaim is mentioned in Genesis, as taken by Chedorlaomer and the kings with him, who smote the Rephaim (giants) in it.

There is a Carnaim mentioned in the 1 Macc. v. 44, a city of Galaad, celebrated for its temple of Atargatis, and it is described in 2 Macc. xii., 21, as "a town hard to besiege and uneasy to come unto, by reason of the straitness of all the places."

Here Timotheus, the governor appointed by Antiochus, sent the women and children and "the other baggage" for protection, while, with a great army, he awaited an attack of Judas Maccabeus; but no sooner had the Jewish leader's band appeared in sight than the army of Timotheus fled in panic, "one running this way, another that way, so as that they were often hurt of their own men, and wounded with the points of their own swords" (2 Macc. xii. 22). Judas then marched on Carnion (Carnaim) and slew its garrison. In 1 Macc. v. 44 we are told that he destroyed the temple of Atargatis.

"The goddess Atargatis is represented on ancient coins with a fish's tail"—a sort of mermaid—and "was probably the feminine correlative of the god Dagon." Plutarch says "that some regarded her as Aphrodite, others as Here." Porter considered her as identical with Ashteroth.

Ashteroth, as goddess of the moon, must have been a representative of Diana, though in other respects a Syrian Venus.

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[1] Gen. xiv. 5.

[2] See Laurence Oliphant's "Land of Gilead," where the reasons for identifying Tell Asherah are given.

The two Ashteroths are seven miles apart. Ashteroth Karnaim was the city in which Og dwelt.[1] Eusebius described Ashteroth Karnaim as a "very large village beyond Jordan, in the province of Arabia, which is also called Batanea. Here, according to tradition, they fix the home of Job."

It was at Tell Asherah that Saladin called together the army of the Moslems, to avenge the broken truce with the Christians, and every contending faction of Arabs and Saracens were united by indignation at the bad faith of Count Renaud de Châtillon, of Kerak.

At the gathering at Tell Asherah the fate of the Crusaders was decided on; for it was followed by the battle of Hattin.

Seven miles distant from Tell Asherah is Sheik Sa'ad, declared by tradition to contain the tomb of Job.

[1] Deut. i. 4.

THE HOME OF JOB.

NAWA, the ancient Neve, is a place of great interest. Burckhardt says that it contains the ruins of temples and other public buildings, showing that it was a place of importance in former times. Arabs say it was the home of Job. An Arab geographer, Muhammed el Makdeshi, says in his geography: "And in Haurân and Batanea lie the villages of Job and his home. The first is Nawa, rich in wheat and other cereals." Ibn er Rabi, another Arab author, says: "To the prophets buried in the region of Damascus belongs also Job, and his tomb is near Nawa, in the district of Hauran."

The village of Sheikh Sa'ad is about a mile from the monastery of Job. It is a squalid village, built on a low, conical mound, and is inhabited by negroes.

The monastery has been converted into the house of the Mutessarif, or governor of the province. It is built round a court-yard, a quadrangle, in the centre of which the dwelling and offices of the governor are built, and a Christian church,—not of course, used by Christians—stands in it.

At the sides of the square are the barracks, depôts for stores, and apartments of officials.

The Arabs say that the monastery was built by the Jefnide king, Amr I., 180 years before Christ. It was bought by the Turkish Government for the Mutessarif, on account of the insanitary condition of Mezarib, formerly the seat of government, and there is, of course, a Turkish garrison here.

Tradition makes this spot the place where Job sat in his unspeakable grief.

Josephus says that "the Arameans, whom the Greeks call the Syrians, were descended from Aram. Uz, who was a son of Aram, settled Trachonitis and Damascus."

William of Tyre says that the Crusaders returning from the Haurûn wished to reconquer a place in the province of Suite," and that Bildad, Job's friend, came from it, and was called from its name, the Shuhite.

The Temain, who live in a village called Tema, are supposed to be the tribe of Eliphaz, the Temanite.

The tradition is most probably true. It never changes in the East, and a Jefnide king would not have built a monastery on the site unless he felt very sure that it had been the home of Job.

Dr. Porter tells us that the people of Suweideh (in the Haurân) say that Job was king of Batanæa, and the peasants still call the Jaulan the land of Job (Belad Eyub).

The negro Mohammedans of the Soudan and other parts of Africa make Job their especial saint, and his tomb is the sacred shrine, with a visit to which they close their pilgrimage. Here they wash in Job's fountain, and pray at his tomb; and meet a cordial welcome from the dwellers in the village, who are also negroes, chiefly slaves who have escaped or been set free, and who have settled here. Christians also venerate the tomb of the patient Job; though scarcely with the enthusiasm and devotion that St. Chrysostom describes. "Many pilgrims come from the ends of the earth to Arabia, in order to seek for the dunghill on which Job lay, and with rapture to kiss the ground where he suffered."

A tomb is called, as we have elsewhere said, a Makam, by the Mahometans. The tomb of Job is a small building with a white dome, and is very ancient. It is shared by a Moslem saint, Sa'ad. It is placed in a station surrounded by gardens in which is the house of the village sheikh, who is a negro. This dwelling has three small white cupolas.

Close by it is the "lavatory of our lord Job," an ordinary plunge bath cut in the rocks, and full of clear water. Over it is a small edifice, which appears extremely ancient.

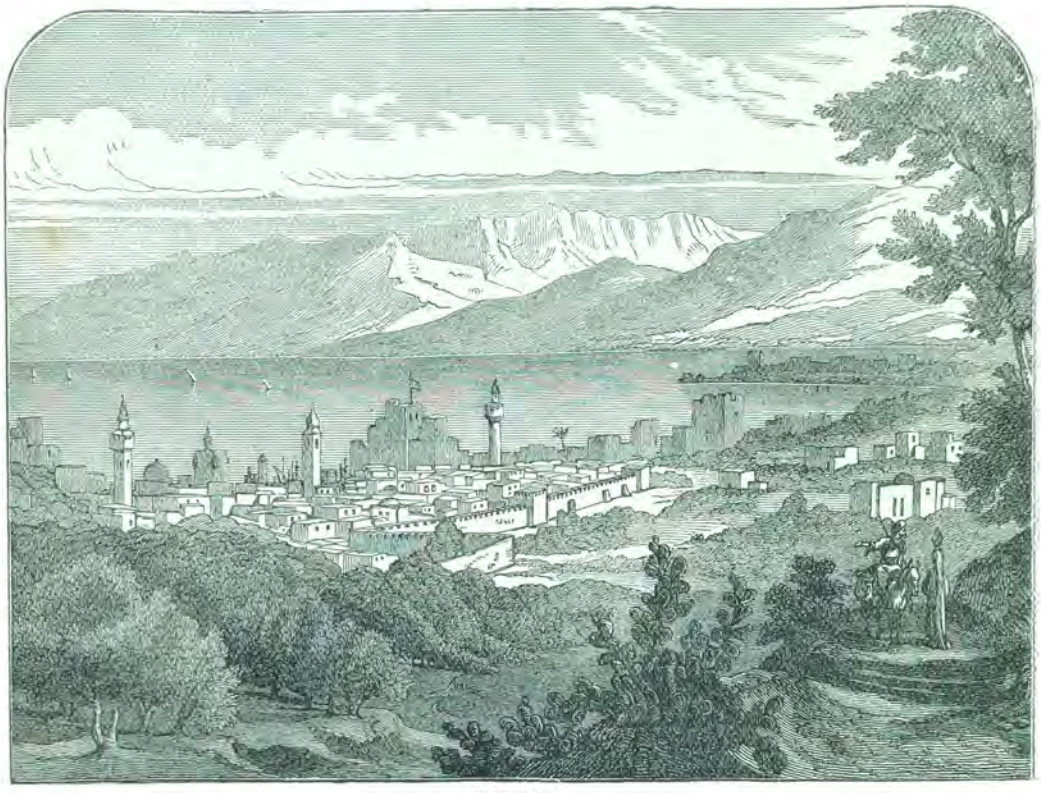
Both tomb and bath are at the foot of a mound about a hundred feet high, on which are the miserable huts of the negroes. The Arabs have a superstitious awe of Job's tomb. They therefore never plunder the negroes' gardens, or in any way molest them. At the top of the mound is an ancient building supported on nine arches. It was evidently once a church, as there is an old belfry; and there are aisles, etc., inside it. There are other traces of its having been previously a heathen temple, both Roman and Phœnician. It is a square edifice, and the roof is made of immense slabs of stone. In the centre of the building there is a monolith of black basalt. This is pointed out as the stone used by Job instead of a potsherd.

That Job was a great sheikh or prince, we cannot doubt; he had no equal in his own land; and in character was perfect as man can be. The book is a true picture of Eastern life, bordering on the desert. The Sabeans who drive off his herds, were doubtless a tribe resembling the Arabs in their wild and predatory life; the Chaldeans were then also apparently a tribe of raiders who went far in quest of prey, and who, hearing of the wealth of Job, were tempted to carry off his camels, animals of great value in the desert.

The allusions to the wild goats of the rock, to the wild ass of the desert, to the ostrich, to the eagles, are undoubtedly to animals well known to Job.

The unicorn (or rhinoceros), behemoth (the hippopotamus), leviathan (the crocodile), are spoken of by God to Job as to a man familiar with all of them; and probably at that time these animals might have been found in the land round his dwelling; or he would have heard from Eastern merchants of the river horse and the rhinoceros. He may have seen a crocodile in the Zerka, or Blue River, since they still exist there.

It really seems that one may quite accept the tradition that placed Job's home in the Jaulân.



BEYROUT.

BEYROUT.

BEYROUT stands on the point of a broad cape, and the town slopes gently towards the sea, which spreads in rippling blue before it. It is surrounded with trees and gardens on the land side, and appears as if shut in by the great mountains of Lebanon. The town has wide streets, public buildings, and good houses. It is the only Syrian town possessing a regular water supply, and the only place in Syria in which gas is used.

The town occupies the site of the ancient Berytus, and was a city of the Giblites, mentioned by Joshua, when, just before his death, he reminded the children of Israel that they had yet much land to subdue. Amongst it, he says, are "the land of the Giblites and all Lebanon toward the sunrise."[1] Of their ancient town we shall speak by-and-by. But Berytus was of small importance, since it is not mentioned till 140 B.C., when it was destroyed by Tryphon, who had usurped the government of Syria in the reign of Demetrius Nicanor. The Romans rebuilt it, and planted a colony of veteran soldiers in it.

It became, with the rest of Palestine, a city of Herod the Great, and here he

[1] Josh. xiii. 5.

caused his two sons to be tried and condemned.

Herod Agrippa, the grandson of Herod the Great and Mariamne, adorned the city with baths and theatres, and with a circus in which he held gladiator combats. Here also, Titus, after the destruction of Jerusalem, held the sports of the amphitheatre, and compelled the captive Jews, as he had also at Banias, to contend with each other and with beasts in the arena. Many of them perished in these combats, in which some would not defend themselves.

But the chief importance of Berytus to Rome was the silk trade, which in those days she practised, as it is hoped she may soon again. Berytus silk was of the very best, and the ladies of Rome especially patronised it.

In the third century after Christ Berytus became celebrated for learning, her fame attracting students from all parts of the world. Here Appion the martyr studied Greek. This reputation and the scholars who visited the city continued till, in the sixth century, Berytus was nearly destroyed by an earthquake, and her learned doctors of civil law and Greek literature fled for safety to Sidon.

In 635, soon after the battle of the Yarmuk, Beyrout was taken by the Moslems. It continued in their possession till Baldwin I., king of Jerusalem, took it and made it the seat of a Christian bishopric. After the battle of Hattin Saladin seized it, and it was retained by the Moslems, but was little better than a village till the Druse chief, of whom we have so often spoken, Fakredîn, restored it in 1625. Here he built a palace for himself, and is said to have planted afresh the pine forests that had been renowned in the Middle Ages.

It remained a Druse town till it was taken by Abdullah Pasha, the successor of Djezzar Pasha.

In 1840 it was bombarded by the English, who gave the town back to the Porte, ending thus Ibrahim Pasha's rebellion.

Beyrout is now a flourishing Levantine city, an important seaport, and is engaged in a good trade with most of the mercantile cities of Europe.

There are many educational institutions in Beyrout. The Syrian Protestant College was established by the state of New York in 1864. It consists of six buildings, situated on the promontory west of the city. These buildings consist of the Medical Hall, the Ada Dodge Memorial Hall for the preparatory department, the Observatory, the Assembly Hall, and the President's residence. The cost of its support is met entirely by its endowments and the students' fees, besides occasional gifts. Medicine, literature, science and languages are taught in it.

The Johanniter Hospital, founded by the Knights of St. John after the massacres of 1860, is on a commanding site not far from the College. The nursing is in the hands of the deaconesses of the order of Kaiserswerth.

There is a Theological Seminary attached to the College, and connected with the American Mission is the American Press.

The British Syrian Mission, founded by Mr. Bowen Thompson in 1860, is supported by contributions from England and Scotland. There are thirty schools, and many European and native teachers. There are many other schools of all denominations. The Prussian Deaconesses' Institution consists of an upper school for Europeans and natives who can pay, and of a lower school for orphan girls who are educated, boarded, clothed, and taught cooking and needlework.

There is also a Military Hospital, the Greek Orthodox Hospital, the French Hospital, and the Lazarist Hospital, under the Sœurs de Charité. The Jesuits have also a Medical College.

There are waterworks, the water being supplied by the Dog River, and gas-works by which the streets are lighted.

The American College has done much for the people. Most of the young men speak French and English, and many

thousands have left Beyrout for situations in the United States and South America.

There are twelve newspapers published in Beyrout in Turkish and Arabic, French and Arabic, and Arabic only. The Religious Tract Society publish a weekly illustrated paper—proofs of the rapid advance of Beyrout in civilization.

The town is oppressively hot in summer, but the climate is cool in winter. During the heat the Europeans and natives who can do so, seek refuge in places on the Lebanon.

The bazaars in Beyrout are not very interesting, much less so than those in Damascus, but probably the rapidly growing industry in silk will supply objects of purchase worth having by-and-by. There are of course a few sold at present.

The road to Damascus is really fine. It was made by the French, and indeed, most of the roads round Beyrout are very good.

The pine groves are beautiful, and the orchards, mulberry groves and gardens make the suburbs of the city delightful.

Within a couple of hours' drive from the town is the village of Antelias, which contains within its borders the Church of St. Elias, said to be the oldest church in the world; but it presents no signs of great antiquity.

This is on the way to the Nahr el Kelb, or Dog River, which flows into the Mediterranean by a gorge that is thought so majestic and wild that it is one of the "show places" of Beyrout. There is a new bridge over the river, and a fine old bridge of one arch, higher up. The ancient name of the river was Lycus, a wolf. The name came possibly from a rock resembling a wolf or dog, that was once seen there, but which has fallen to the foot of the cliff, where it lies half covered by the sea.

The natives of old times believed that it was a real animal transformed by magic or by the gods into a stone.

The spot is highly picturesque, and an excursion can be made to it from Beyrout. Rustem Pasha's Gardens are also well worth visiting.

THE SCULPTURES ON THE ROCK.

THE Sculptured Rocks, which have excited so much interest, are near the Dog River. Here the kingly conquerors of 3100, and of 703 B.C. have left records of their conquests and thanksgiving to their gods. But these sculptures have suffered so severely from time and exposure to the elements that it is well they were seen by clever archeologists before they quite vanished.

Dr. Lepsius saw them in 1845, and decided that three of them were tablets of the time of Rameses II., called Sesostris by the Greeks, the great conqueror, and also the oppressor of the Hebrews. The first, or southernmost, was, he says, dedicated to Ammon, the especial god of Thebes and Upper Egypt; the northern one to Phtha, the god of Memphis or Lower Egypt. The middle one was dedicated to Ra—the Sun, the chief of the Egyptian gods. "On the middle stelé," he says, "the inscription begins under the representation, with the date of the second Choiak of the fourth

year of Rameses's reign, that is, B.C. 1351." The "Ammon" tablet was either of the second or tenth year of Sesostris. The tablets probably refer to different victories.

Herodotus tells us that Sesostris left stelæ and figures as memorials of the extent of his conquests, and that he had seen some of these in Palestine.

These Egyptian sculptures alternate with Assyrian ones, which date more than six hundred years after Sesostris had thus returned thanks to his gods for his victory over the Hittites. The Assyrian tablets are also very much defaced; but the best preserved of all is the one on the same rock as the "Ammon" one.

It is rounded at the top, and the figure is plainly perceived in the long dress, curled and plaited beard and conical cap, so well known as the costume of the Assyrians. The left hand bent across the breast, holds a mace, the other is raised; over it are some symbolical figures. The tablet is nearly covered with a cuneiform inscription. This is said to be the tablet of Shalmaneser.

There are six of these Assyrian records. Sir Henry Layard thought that they were all the work of Sennacherib, whose army perished at Libnah; but it seems probable that the fashion set by Rameses, when once it was restored, was followed by all the Assyrian kings who conquered any part of Palestine and marched back by the sea-coast. There were five of these kings.

In chronological order the most ancient of the Assyrian sculptures which has been identified, is that of Tiglath Pileser.

Ahaz, king of Judah, who had actually passed one of his sons through the fires of Chemosh, was attacked by two foes at once —Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel. Distrusting the promises given him by Isaiah, he sent for aid to the greatest Eastern king of that day—Tiglath Pileser, king of Assyria, who had conquered most of the nations round him—offering to become his vassal, "his servant, and his son," if Tiglath- Pileser would help him against the two kings. He sent also, as a gift to Tiglath Pileser, the silver and the gold that was in the house of the Lord. The king of Assyria at once complied, and attacked Damascus, which drew Rezin from Jerusalem to protect his own capital. But he was defeated and slain by the Assyrians, and the people of Damascus were carried away captive to Kir, in Upper Media.

Ahaz went to Damascus to thank and pay his homage to Tiglath Pileser, adopted his god, and had an altar made after the fashion of one that he saw at Damascus, which he actually placed in the house of the Lord—in the Temple. In return for his deliverance Ahaz became for twelve years the vassal of Assyria.

Tiglath Pileser took from Israel also "Ijon, and Abel-beth-Maachah, Janoah, Kedesh, Hazor, Gilead, and Galilee; all the land of Naphthali, and carried the inhabitants away to Assyria.

Those who deciphered the tablet of this king tell us that Tiglath Pileser meant to carry back with him some of the wood of the Cedars of Lebanon to be used in the temple of his god.

Hoshea had rebelled against and slain Pekah, king of Israel, and refused the tribute to Assyria. This brought against him Shalmaneser, who took Samaria after a siege of three years, and carried off the remainder of the Ten Tribes. He was succeeded by Sennacherib, who demanded the tribute from Hezekiah that Ahaz had paid the young king of Judah. It was refused, and he came up to attack Jerusalem. The end of his expedition we all know.

Esarhaddon, his son, also marched into Palestine, and took Manasseh, king of Judah, prisoner. It is supposed that his sculptured figure is near one of Rameses II.; but all these sculptures are so defaced and faint that it is difficult to determine whom or what they represent.

On a low cliff to the right of the old bridge over the Dog River there is the following inscription in Latin:—

"The Imperator Cæsar Marcus Aurelius

Antoninus Pius, the illustrious august one, Parthicus Britannicus, Germanicus, Pontifex (of Rome), opened this road, the mountains overhanging the river Lycus having been cut to make it."

The tablet dates about 173 A.D., six years before the excellent emperor died.

There are two Greek inscriptions also on this road. One is now illegible; but when first it was discovered, it could be read, and was a statement that the road was made by a young Phœnician of Acre, afterwards Lord of Baalbek. The other inscription has not been deciphered.

One of the Egyptian tablets had become quite blank, and was used by the French to commemorate the presence of the French army in Palestine in 1860, when they came to stop the Druses massacring the Christians. It is already almost effaced. How eager men have always been for fame! These long-vanished warriors and kings have left most lasting records; and probably in the days when these great life-sized figures were cut, they usefully impressed the minds of the conquered people, and kept them in subjection to their distant ruler. "Looking back from our day," says Dr. Robinson, "the Assyrian tablets have continued to commemorate the progress of the Assyrian hosts for more than twenty-five centuries; while those of Egypt, if proceeding from Sesostris, have celebrated his prowess for thirty-one centuries."

At Hamath there were four immense stones containing inscriptions. They are now in Constantinople. One of them has two inscriptions—one on the end, another on the side. They are of the black basalt that appears to last for ever, and are so large that it took four oxen and fifty men a whole day to take one of them the distance of half a mile. Plaster casts of the inscriptions have been taken by the Rev. W. Wright and Mr. Green, in 1872, and are in the possession of the Palestine Exploration Society. They are supposed to be in the ancient Hittite language, which is not yet known.[1]

Hamath, in which they were found, is one of the most ancient cities in the world. It is at least 4,000 years old, as the Hamathite is mentioned in Genesis x. 18. It was, in the time of Moses, the capital of a kingdom bordering on Damascus on the south and Phœnicia on the west, including the whole valley of the Orontes. It is continually mentioned when reference is made to the northern border of the Holy Land.

"So they went in and spied out the land from the wilderness of Zin unto Rehob, to the entering in of Hamath." It was taken by Sennacherib. It received the name of Epiphania from Antiochus Epiphanes, but the ancient name has returned to it nearly in its modern name of Hamah. It still remains the see of a Greek bishop.

[1] See Special Papers of P. E. Survey.



THE NAHR IBRAHIM AND JEBEIL.

LEAVING Beyrout and the Dog River, the road follows the sea-coast to the little town of Jûneh, which has nothing in it worth inspection; and continues till the Nahr (river) Ibrahim is reached. This river was sacred to Adonis, and from him was called the Adonis River. It rises high in the Lebanon, in a scene of matchless beauty, of which Laurence Oliphant has given us a delightful description. "We found ourselves," he says, "on the lip of a bowl, from which the river issued through a gorge, and which was almost completely surrounded by sheer cliffs, varying in height from one to two thousand feet, their crevices filled with snow, and here and there a hardy pine clinging to the jutting crags. A couple of hundred feet below us the small circular area was a mass of vegetation, consisting chiefly of walnuts, oak, and juniper trees; while there were patches of cultivation appertaining to a squalid Metawaly village, just peeping out from under the foliage at the head of the gorge. By the side of the stream, near the base of the cliff, a clump of walnut trees indicated the site of the once celebrated temple" (to Venus), "and close to it was a picturesque bridge, from under which the torrent plunges in a mass of foam, and then precipitates itself in three cascades into the gorge below; but the most remarkable feature is the main source itself, which issues from a deep cavern in the side of the cliff by a fall of about forty feet. It is joined by two other smaller streams which also break their way out of the side of the rock at some height above its base, forming altogether a combination of springs so singular for situation, and surrounded by such a weird and fantastic natural formation, that it was no wonder it appealed to the æsthetic imagination of the votaries of Venus, and became the scene of a touching mythological episode." From thence the Adonis River, now the Nahr Ibrahim, hastens to the sea.

Hither the women of Gebal came, to mourn Adonis, or Tammuz; or, feigning to find him as an infant, rejoice in his second birth. And not only here, but in the very temple in Jerusalem, Ezekiel tells us this absurd custom was kept up. Milton writes of this worship in his list of fiends:—

> "Tammuz came next behind,
> Whose annual wound in Lebanon allured
> The Syrian damsels to lament his fate
> In amorous ditties all a summer's day;
> While smooth Adonis from his native rock
> Ran purple to the sea, supposed with blood
> Of Tammuz yearly wounded. The love tale
> Infected Sion's daughters with like heat,
> Whose wanton passions in the sacred porch
> Ezekiel saw."

The waters are really reddened by the mixture of soil in them.

We give this Syrian village—which never belonged to the Jews, though Joshua mentioned it as one of those which ought to be their northern border—because it founded Berytus (Beyrout). It was the Gebal of Joshua's time, the Byblos of the Greeks, to them a sacred city dedicated to the worship of Adonis and Osiris. The Giblites assisted Hiram, king of Tyre, in getting cedars to Jerusalem. Ezekiel, speaking of the power and splendour of Tyre, says: "The ancients of Gebal, and the wise men thereof, were in thee thy calkers." The ruins of the citadel and of the church of St. John here are comparatively modern for this ancient land, dating only from the Crusades.

The port, once a good one, has suffered from the invasion of sand all along this coast, and is now nearly choked up.

THE DRUSES.

THESE people are so much superior in character to the other inhabitants of Palestine, that they deserve a longer notice than the few words spoken of them in the account of Hermon. The part of the Lebanon they inhabit is remarkable for its beauty, and for the cultivation bestowed on it. The villages nestling amid tufts of fine trees, or clinging to the sides of the rock, present a very different appearance from those of the poor fellahin of western Palestine. The roofs of their dwellings are flat, but they are often supported by pillars, and rest on arches, which give them a peculiar but very pleasing appearance. The hillsides are carpeted with flowers, amongst which cyclamen grows abundantly. Anemones, asphodel, iris, and other flowers, and especially myrtle, scent the air; every inch of the soil is cultivated near the villages; the hillsides are terraced, and vines, mulberries, figs, and even grain, are raised on them. The mulberries are, of course, needed for the silk manufacture, which is the staple trade of the country. At the village of Shimlan, situated 3,000 feet above the sea-level, is one of their largest silk factories. They have unfortunately lost the silkworm, whose cocoon once made their silk preferred to that of all other lands, and have imported the insect from Japan. This is larger than the earlier silkworm, and its silk is inferior to that of the former one.

The Governor General of the Lebanon has for his summer residence a very fine mansion, indeed a palace, called Beteddin. It stands facing the town, and both are 3,000 feet above the sea. The palace is placed on a projecting hill, and has a large outer court or parade ground, barracks for 600 men, prisons, storehouses, etc., etc.

The court is surrounded by galleries, outside apartments, and a fountain plays in the centre of it. The palace is entered by another gateway, decorated with carving and arabesque work. It was built by the Emir Beshir, while he was the great chief of the Druses, and it is really a most beautiful dwelling.

The ceilings of the rooms are supported by light columns, the wainscottings are of marble, beautifully carved and bordered with arabesques and mosaic work. There are lovely terraces and gardens, and immensely large stables.

The story of the builder of this palace is worth telling. The Druses are divided into clans, as the Scotch Highlanders were, under more or less powerful chiefs, to whom they show devotion and fealty.

During the eighteenth century the two most powerful houses here were the Shehab and the Jumbelât. The Shehab are said to have come from the Haurân in the time of the Crusaders. Some people suppose that the Druses are the descendants of the Amalekites, and that they settled at Hasbe'ya, on the slopes of the Lebanon. About two hundred years ago they migrated to this part of the Lebanon, and being possessed of great ability and much influence, entered into the clan warfare always going on at that time. Therefore, in 1789, their chief, Emir Beshir, was chosen head Sheikh of the Druses.

At that time the Lebanon was almost independent; and the Maronites were too few to oppose them.

But the Emir had a dangerous rival in the Jumbelât family, Sheikh Beshir. For a time Emir Beshir kept on courteous terms with Sheikh Beshir, but meantime he was laying plans to secure his own supremacy.

This he did at last by seeking the alliance of Ibrahim Pasha in Egypt; this secured, he defied the rival chief. A battle between them ensued, and the Emir, aided by the Egyptians, won the day. Sheikh Beshir was taken prisoner, and sent to Acre, where he was strangled, and his property confiscated.

But the usual consequences followed the calling in foreign aid. The Egyptians were not willing to leave the Lebanon, and at once proceeded to disarm the Druses, some of whom still remained faithful to Sheikh Beshir, and hated the allies of the Emir. To check them, Ibrahim Pasha armed the Maronites (the Christians), while the Turks instigated the Druses to attack the Egyptians, and the allies of Turkey armed them.

The Emir Beshir remained faithful to Ibrahim all through the struggle between Turkey and her too powerful vassal, and when Ibrahim was conquered by England, the Emir was sent a prisoner of war to Malta.

Then the two peoples who had been thus set against each other, began a series of massacres till 1860, when the Damascus Massacre crowned that of the Druses over the Maronites, and Europe, horrified, intervened. The Emir dead, his widow sold Beteddin to the Sultan, and it became the residence of the Governor-General.

The Sheikh Beshir left two sons, who were then children. His property, as we have said, was confiscated, and after the massacres the family seemed likely to become extinct. But Lord Dufferin rescued them. He recovered some of the property of the Sheikh, who had been extremely rich, and he placed the boys under the care of the Consul-General. The youths grew up under British training; their property, well managed, has recovered from its losses, and now they are one of the wealthiest families of the Druses.

Since the massacres of 1860 there has been a great migration of Druses to the Haurân, which now is said to contain 80,000 of them. But they keep in constant communication with those of the Lebanon, and all are ready at any time—or at least that is their declaration—to fight for England.

The sons of the poor Sheikh own twenty villages, and have amongst their retainers 6,000 men, some of whom are Christians.

The Druse women are of a higher class than the Moslem—not, of course, to speak of the Arab. It is said that many of them are very learned, and they are admitted by the men to the secret religious meetings of the Ukkiel, which are held every Thursday evening in small buildings, scattered over the hills. These are called Khalwets. Here the Druses discuss politics, and the affairs of their people. They have secret signs of recognition, and are, in fact, a secret society; but no woman, though allowed to be present, has ever divulged any of their secrets.

In fact, to show how highly women are thought of by the Druses, in the eighteenth century there was a princess of the house of Ruslan, who governed part of the nation. Sitting behind a curtain, she heard and judged cases, and gave her people a high idea of her judgment and justice.

The women are not shut up as the Moslem women are. They are veiled, and only show one eye, but they mix freely with the outside world, talk to men without incurring the scandal that would attend such an action on the part of a Moslem woman, and walk out alone.

The Druses are extremely attached to the English; they look on them as brothers, and they have certainly much in common. Both races are athletic—can ride, shoot, and fight well, and they are honest. But the Druse is subtle, and has great power of concealment and deception, when he needs either; but his manner is perfect. He is a gentleman by instinct. He is tall and stalwart, and he has a good head, "though it runs up rather high at the back," large black eyes, black hair, straight eyebrows and nose, and a brown complexion. His dress is red jack-boots, pointed at the toe, woollen socks, green cloth baggy trousers, a brown waistcoat, buttoned up, a green

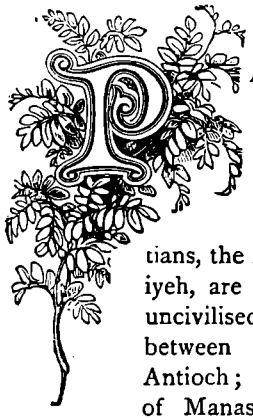
jacket, braided and slashed, and a large white turban. For out of doors, he wears a black Aba, or cloak, embroidered with gold, or a large fur-lined cloak, reaching to the ground.

The rooms in the house of a Druse have generally a flat ceiling, supported by tall, straight columns down the middle from the ceiling to the ground.

The dress of the Druse lady is pretty and picturesque. The long hair falls down the back, surmounted by a red fez and silken plaits; a black and gold skirt, showing the bosom; a black bodice, and broad, red belt; Turkish trousers of white linen, clasped at the ankles, a light black skirt over them. The veil is worn, leaving only one eye to be seen, and out of doors a long blue garment.

They are excellent wives and mothers, and keep their houses very clean and comfortable. Yet the power of divorce possessed by a Druse husband is remarkable. If, in a passion, or under any misunderstanding, he divorces his wife verbally, three times, she must go and return to her mother without any other external ceremony. But he must never speak to her again, nor even meet her, if it can be possibly helped. Often the husband regrets the hasty words spoken, but it is too late; he must abide by them.

THE ANSAIRIYEH.



PALESTINE is remarkable for the number of its sects, amongst which, as the Druses are the best after the Christians, the Ansairiyeh, or Ansariyeh, are the lowest and most uncivilised. They live chiefly between the Lebanon and Antioch; but in the half-tribe of Manasseh there are two villages of them—miserable, squalid places; narrow lanes with low stone walls running between courtyards, in which mud huts, with only a door and a hole for the smoke to escape, are found.

The best account of these people appears to be that of Laurence Oliphant, but very little is really known about them, though they are said to have lived in Palestine for 800 years, and their whole number there, and in the north of Syria, is 200,000.

They declare themselves to be the descendants of the old Canaanitish races, and the name Canaan, as a personal one, is still common amongst them. Is it a confirmation of this assertion that they mortally hate the Jews? The sect was founded by an old man called Nazar, who, according to William of Tyre, was imprisoned for spreading his tenets, but escaped, as he (Nazar) pretended, by a miracle. He was condemned to crucifixion, and was cast into a strong dungeon.

Happily for him, however, a servant maid of the governor, in whose house he was confined, pitied his age, and in the night stole the keys from under her master's pillow, while he lay in a drunken sleep, released the old man, and replaced the keys. The governor himself went to the dungeon the next morning, found his captive gone, and at once believed that he had been freed by a miracle. Nazar told his disciples that an angel had delivered him. Mr. Oliphant tells us that the Ansairiyeh are divided into four tribes; one worshipping the moon; another, the stars; the third, the air; the fourth, the

dawn. They also believe in the doctrine of the transmigration of souls.[1]

They treat women with great cruelty. Female children are beaten and ill used, and as soon as possible sold to a husband, as they frankly buy their wives. She is not allowed to be taught even their religion, and is in every way a slave.

Their sheikhs are numerous, and the fellahîn are mere slaves to them and to the mukkadameen, who possess all the land and houses. The Sheikhs profess to have the power of curing diseases, and are supported by land set apart for them. The life of any one who spoke against them would be in danger. They wear a white turban round their tarboosch.

The Mukkadameen exercise the chief authority, allowing a very small share of the produce of the land to the peasants. They perpetrate robberies and murders, or share the plunder of robbers; and if the Government is seeking for a thief or murderer, they give him refuge and assist his escape.

The Mukkadameen wear a tarboosch with a large heavy tassel, a girdle of silk, and are always fully armed.

As the Ansairiyeh believe that the soul leaves the body by the mouth, they are careful to keep it open, and in the case of criminals condemned to be hanged, they will beg, as a favour, that they may be impaled instead!

It is dangerous to attempt their conversion, and if one of them is converted he will, if possible, be murdered by his neighbours. Death also would be the punishment of any of the initiated who betrayed the secret of their religion. They worship at Mazars, or sacred tombs, of which they have a great many, where they perform secret rites.

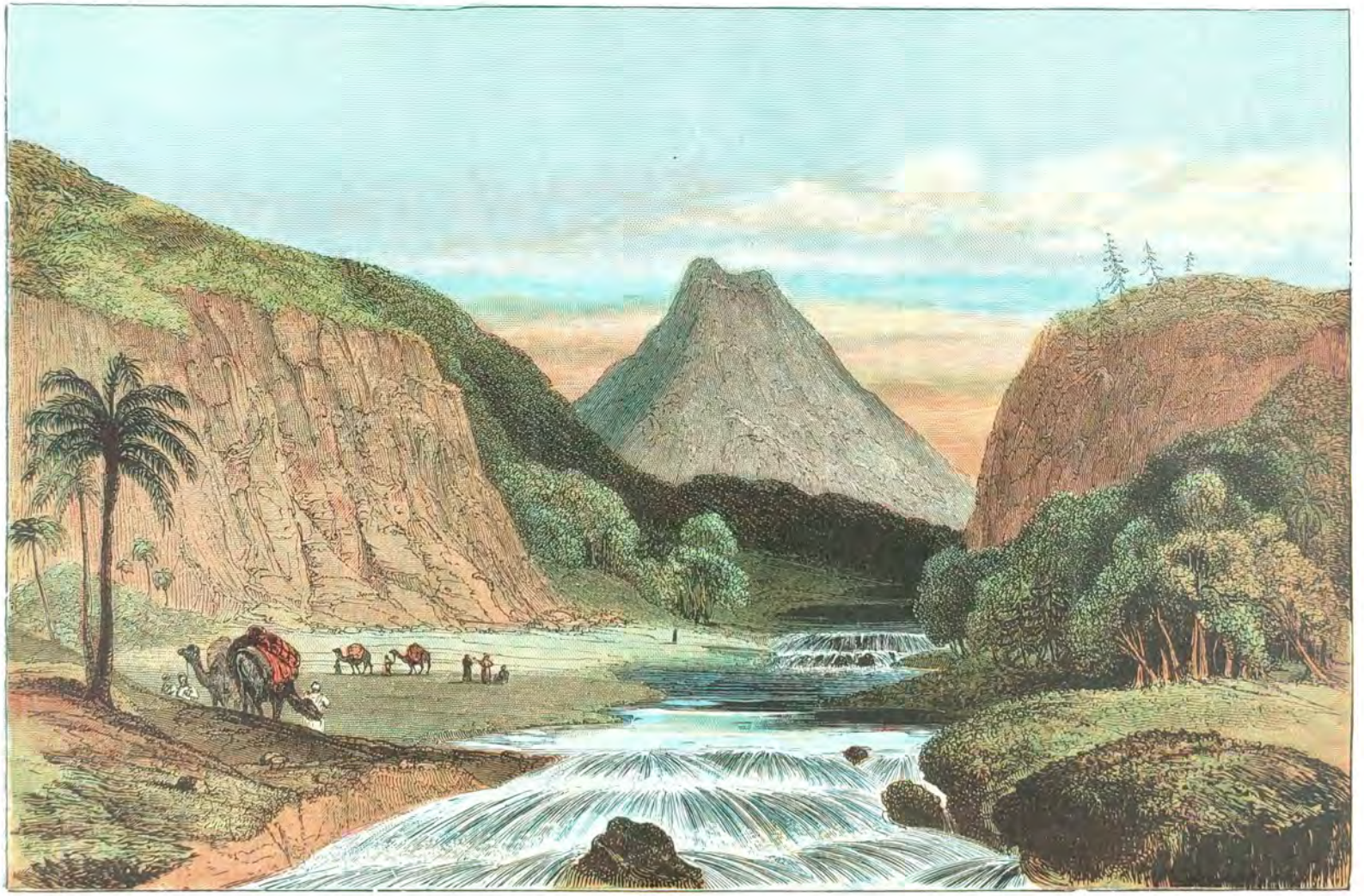
Worshipping at Mazars or tombs of saints, is very common, also with the Moslem peasantry. There are few mosques, except in towns, therefore the fellahîn know not much of Mahommedan tenets, and pray chiefly at saints' tombs.

The Ansairiyeh are also known by the name of Nusairîyeh.

In them we probably see the last of the Canaanites, and in their religion the last of the worship of Baal and Ashtaroth.

[1] See Laurence Oliphant's "Land of Gilead," for full account of these people, p. 34.





THE HILLS OF BASHAN.

JEBEL ED-DRUSE AND ITS TOWNS.

THE greater number of Druses are found now in the Haurân; the mountain once known as the Hill of Bashan being now called Jebel ed-Druse. By the Greeks the district was called Batanea, the translation of Bashan. The northern slope of the Jebel ed-Druse is fine land, but over it are scattered black rocks and stones. Round summits form its crest. Villages built of basalt are scattered up the ascent, and on the top of the hills in the distance.

Wheat is cultivated very successfully here, and is considered the finest in Palestine; but the scenery is very dreary, as there are no trees.

Hit is one of the principal villages of this mountain; the site is covered with ruins resembling those of Burak, but of a better construction; the doors are slightly ornamented with mouldings.

BATANÆA, now Bathanieh, is a small town on the slope of Jebel ed-Druse. It has been deserted for centuries, but the stone houses are still in perfect repair. The streets are well paved, and the court of one of the houses has stone folding doors. These, however, were not unusual with these workers in stone, as they are also found at Brak. A tower, forty feet high, square and still strong, stands by this court.

There is another tower like it, at the south end of the town. Josephus mentions Batanæa as having been given to Philip the Tetrarch by Tiberius Cæsar, with Trachonitis and Auranitis.

SACCÆA, now SHUKA, has a few inhabitants dwelling in its ancient houses, which are, however, surrounded with heaps of ruins. But the most remarkable object here is a tomb like those at Palmyra, which are unusual in Palestine. It is a square tower, smaller than the Palmyrene towers, as the sides are only twenty feet wide, and its height thirty feet. There is a door on the east side, and an inscription on a tablet over it, saying that the tomb was built by Bassos for himself and family, in "the year of the city," 70, alluding to Bostra, which we know had the honour of fixing an era of time, that was long in use in these provinces. The date by our era would be 176.

There are also ruins of a church, and of two temples. The church ruins have no traces of fine architecture. Of the temples one is standing in fair preservation, and the front is highly ornamented. A large stone lying on the ground contains an inscription in Greek, stating that Bishop Tiberinos built the church here in 263,—still the era of Bostra,—and dedicated it to the saints and martyrs, George and Sergius. An inscription in the wall of a house states that St. Theodorus dedicated a church here in 310 (Bostra date).

The heights are, in fact, full of ruined towns, which have left no especial memory; but SHUHBA is worth mentioning. The road to it is south-west from Shuka, across the Wady Nimreh. The town has apparently been destroyed by an earthquake, for the buildings are entirely thrown down. It was undoubtedly an important city once; having in the fashion of the colonnaded cities two fine wide streets, crossing each other in the middle of the town, and dividing it into quarters. At the point where the streets cross there are three pedestals still standing, and a fourth evidently gone, as its foundations show.

There are five Corinthian columns in the

main street running westward. They stand on a raised platform, and have on their shafts small pedestals for statues, fastened on like brackets. Opposite are the ruins, now almost hidden by *débris*, of another temple, which has a dome resting on thick pillars. The outside wall of a large theatre, ten feet thick, is still standing; and the stage, and many of the benches, of which there were thirteen rows, are all in existence. M. Waddington and the Count de Vogué identify this town with Philippopolis, one of the supposed cities of the Decapolis. If so—and they appear to be quite correct in their identification—it was built by the Emperor Philip the Arabian. This man had been a robber, and was the son of a brigand chief. He must have been a brave man, or he would not have exercised the influence he possessed over the soldiers; but his ambition made him faithless to his emperor, Gordian. He was a native of Bozra, in the Trachonitis, and at the time of his accession to the Roman Empire was about forty years of age.

The young emperor Gordian was murdered by the soldiers, near the conflux of the Euphrates with the little river Aboras, where a sepulchral monument was raised to his memory. Philip was raised to the empire by the votes of the soldiers. It is said, but it is rather doubtful, that Gordian was executed after the election, by order of Philip.

During the Arab's short reign he built a city in his native province, and called it by his own name, Philippopolis. Philip was either killed in battle, or was, after losing it, put to death at Verona, A.D. 249. He favoured the Christians. Origen addressed several letters of advice and friendship to him and to his wife and mother before the Arab soldier became emperor; and when he did, the Christians obtained a friend and protector, even if he were not himself a Christian.

It seems a confirmation of the identity of Shuhba with Philippopolis that out of ten inscriptions found here, seven belong to Philip or his family. And the city must have been worthy of an emperor's founding, for it was a fine one. It is a square facing the four cardinal points; the streets broad, the pavement even now smooth and perfect, and the Roman gateways almost entire. It appears to be a city dating from about Philip's time, for there are no ancient remains of the age of stone buildings, nor of the old Jewish bevelled stones.

In the sixth century a noble Arab family, claiming kindred with Mahommed himself, came here from Arabia, resided in the town for five hundred years, and the old Roman town was at last called after their name, instead of Philip's. They were named Shebah; the town was called Shuhba. But during Saladin's wars with Noureddin, the district and town were so troubled that they left it, and journeyed on to the Lebanon. The Emir Beshir, whose story we have just told, was a descendant of this family. The town is situated in the Wady Nimreh, and near it are two volcanoes, called Gharâras. The openings of the craters at the top can be seen, and there are fragments of lava lying on them.

Philippopolis was a bishop's see during the existence of the Byzantine Empire.

At the foot of the Jebel ed-Druse are the ruins of Suleim, which contain amongst them a beautiful temple. The broken masses show that its stones were decorated with fruit, flowers, and vine leaves in relief. The town is now inhabited by Druses, and is a prosperous place.

'Atil is a small town, now the residence of settled Arabs and Druses. It has a temple standing on a stylobate ten feet high. It has two Corinthian columns in front, on which are brackets for statues, and a beautifully sculptured door. On each side are niches with shell tops; fragments of statues lie round it. An inscription on the base of the corner pillar on the left of the temple tells us that this temple was built by the Emperor Antoninus Pius, in the fourteenth year of his reign. There is a portion left, also, of an arched window, and there are

inscriptions in the town in honour of the Emperors Caracalla and Geta. The fine Roman road from Damascus to Bozrah runs straight across the plain.

South of Atil is Suweideh, the capital of Jebel ed-Druse, once a great city, now dwindled to a village. It is on the summit and southern slope of the westward ridge, and along its northern side is the Wady Suweideh. Approached from the north, the columns and shattered walls are seen running in a line along the top of the ridge, and looking very picturesque. It was one of the finest cities of the Haurân, and had once a great basilica, and several large reservoirs. An inscription tells us that the Emperor Nerva Trajan built an aqueduct here, and a nymphæum. The inscriptions, in fact, go back to the days of Herod the Great.

On the northern bank of the ravine outside the town is a most singular monument, an inscription on which tells us that "Odainathos built it in memory of his wife, Khamrath." But why, as the monument was to a lady, did he carve between the columns coats of mail, shields, and helmets in relief? Was she of Amazonian renown, or had she been in any war, or done some heroic deed? The monument is square, measuring 36 feet, by 30 feet high. On each side six Doric semi-columns support a plain frieze and cornices, between the columns are the warlike emblems we have mentioned.

Count de Vogué says that Odainathos was a chief of the Arab tribe, Bene Samaideh, which settled here before the Christian era. The name of the tribe has been found in Greek inscriptions in the town.

Suweideh is a mass of shapeless ruins, which extend in a circuit for four miles. At the lower end of the main street is a square tower thirty feet high. Near it the Roman road runs from Damascus to Bozrah. There is a peristyle of Corinthian columns on the east of the town, and the walls of a large church are seen to the south. On the south-east of the town are many tower tombs.

Here the Turks and Druses fought several battles previous to 1860. On a slight elevation in the plain south-west of Suweideh, is 'Ary, a large village. From the roof of any of the high houses here a fine view is obtained. Dr. Merrill tells us that he saw from one of them forty ruined cities and towns scattered on the plain. 'Ary is now an important place, the residence of a powerful Druse chief.

In fact, all the towns here that are inhabited, have Druses for their population. They also dwell in the Lejah; and it is said that when Ibrahim Pasha came against them with a great army, 800 Druses in the lava plain beat him back, and obliged him to raise the siege.

To the east is Hebrân, standing on the point of a hill, projecting from the mountain-range. The old stone houses are still habitable, and some have been occupied by Druses. On a prominent cliff is a ruin that has been in turn a temple, a church, and a goat-pen. The portico has fallen; a low stone door opens into the interior. There is a large stone with an inscription recording the erection and dedication of the temple: "For the safety of the Cæsar. Tit. Ael. Adrian Antoninus."

M. Waddington found a Nabathean inscription here, giving the date of the erection of the gates in A.D. 47.

The view from Hebrân is magnificent. "Three Scripture sites are in view—Bozrah of Moab, Kerioth, and Salcah, and more than thirty towns can be counted."[1]

The district on the east of Jebel ed-Druse has only been explored by Burckhardt, Graham, De Vogué, and M. Waddington.

The towns they describe are very old; the houses entire, though deserted, but every part of them of stone, which does not seem to commend itself either to modern or mediæval taste; for they look as if no one had lived in them since the age of the giants. The gates of one town are ten feet high, and are of a single slab.

[1] Murray's *Handbook of Palestine.*

What a huge builder he must have been, who constructed them!

The highest peak of the mountain may be ascended from the town with the giant gates. It (the peak) is called El Kuleib (The little Heart), and is a cone-shaped hill rising from the top of the mountain ridge. Its eastern side is bare, and of a dull red colour. On the other part of the hill there are a few oak forests.

KHUBAB (anciently Ære) is a Christian village, and we feel glad that Christians have used these deserted houses, excellent as they are, and that they still use the stone doors, as strong as they were hundreds of years ago. The chief trade of the village is in basaltic mill-stones, which are carried by camels to the coast for export. One is a camel's load; consequently they are expensive.

On the west of Kubab is Sunamein (the Two Idols). This town has several square towers and houses, wholly of stone. There is, however, one limestone building (white of course, while basalt is nearly black), which has once been a church. It is in the Corinthian style, and is ornamented with much carving. There are the ruins of other temples near it. One, dedicated to the goddess of Good Fortune, was built in the reign of Severus, who is said in the inscription to have been a benefactor to the town of Ære. This place is on the road of the Hajj, or pilgimage to Mecca. The Hajj road from Mezarib to about ten miles south of Sunamein is the boundary between the Haurân and the Jaulân.

KESWEH is situated on the left bank of the ancient Pharpar, the present 'Awaj, which is here crossed by a bridge. This famous river, to which Naaman would not allow the Jordan to be compared, flows through a deep and winding glen, bordered by wheat fields and meadows, with many groves of poplars, and willows bending above it. The stream is deep and rapid. We remember how Mr. MacGregor went down it in the *Rob Roy* on his way to the Jordan. Two canals draw off its waters; one takes fertility to the Plain of Damascus, the other irrigates the plain of Khiyârah. There is a lovely view, as the town is left, down the vale of the 'Awaj. When the ridge of the Black Mountain is passed we shall see before us the city of Damascus, from whence the traveller generally departs on an expedition to the Haurân, Gilead, and Moab.



THE CUSTOMS OF PALESTINE.

MANY Biblical expressions and texts are explained by a knowledge of Eastern customs, more especially with regard to those of the Holy Land; for the changes that have occurred since the old times are extremely slight.

Marriages are arranged between the parents or elder brother of the bride and the bridegroom. The bride has no choice, and most frequently neither of the wedded pair see each other till the day of the marriage. The sole separate dowry of the wife is the coins she wears in her headdress, or any especial gift, such as one Lady Burton describes of a father clasping a girdle of diamonds round his daughter's waist on her marriage morning; "that," she says, "would be the lady's own separate property." Dr. Thomson tells us that it could never be sold to pay her husband's debts. "A man," he says, "may go to prison for a few piastres, while thousands glitter and jingle on the dress of his wife."

Of polygamy and its attendant evils we need not here speak.

A Moslem funeral is not very impressive, because there is little order in the procession; but the low sad chant in a monotone, "There is no God but God, and Mahomet is his prophet," is very plaintive and solemn. Women precede the funeral procession, tossing up their arms, waving handkerchiefs, and screaming. Then the procession forms a circle round the grave, and two choristers stand in the centre and sing a hymn. The words are only "Ya Allah, Ya Allah," beginning slowly, and growing faster and faster in a rapid growl. This continues till they are quite exhausted. One generally ends it by falling in a faint or convulsive fit, when he is supposed to be in a trance. There are regular hired women mourners, as in the old days, when Jeremiah said, "Consider ye, and call for the mourning women, that they may come; and let them make haste, and take up a wailing for us." Small holes are left at the head and foot of the grave for flowers, which the really mourning relatives place there before any great festival, or before their Sabbath, which is on Friday.

Great gatherings take place at funerals, and refreshments must be provided for all. These feasts are repeated at stated times during forty days; and on certain days presents of cooked food are sent to the friends of the family in the name of the dead man.

The customs of a Bedouin funeral are very remarkable. When an Arab dies, they kill his best ox or buffalo near where the body lies; they then cook it, and the whole tribe must go to this feast, and from it to the grave. Every one *must* eat of it, if only a mouthful. It is eaten to do some good —we know not what—to the dead. Even strangers happening to pass must taste of it. This custom must be observed even if the wife and orphans are left to starve.

The desire of Moslem women for children, and especially for sons, continues now, as it did in the old Hebrew days, when every wife hoped to be the mother of the Messiah. But they care only for sons; daughters are looked upon as a misfortune.

When a girl is born, the father refuses to see his child, and will not speak to the poor mother, and she is reproached, and the husband condoled with on the subject.

Lady Burton, who has drawn delightful

pictures of Moslem life in her "Inner life of Syria," was much pitied by her Harem friends because she was childless.

She mentions the following strange proof of the love for and value of sons, and thus confirms the following statement by Dr. Thomson:

"The father assumes the name of his first-born son. Tannûs, the father of the infant Besharah, for example, is no longer Tannûs, but *Abu* Besharah, and this not merely in common parlance, but in legal documents, and on all occasions. It is, in fact, no longer respectful to call him Tannûs. So, also, the mother is ever afterwards called *Em* Besharah, 'mother of Besharah.' And, still more absurd, when a man is married, and has no son, the world gives him one by a courtesy peculiarly Oriental, and then calls him by his supposed son's name."

A man never mentions his wife, and it is not proper to inquire after her.

There is a gospel parable of digging for hidden treasure, and one of the firm beliefs of the Palestine people is, that they may find treasure in the earth. The frequent wars have compelled people to bury their gold and jewels; earthquakes have swallowed up much money and precious stones. It is not therefore unlikely that such might be found, and the people are always hoping to come on it. They believe that the treasure is guarded by genii, called Daleels, and that Europeans have the secret of commanding their guidance; they fancy therefore that the travellers from Europe are in search of these treasures, and are consequently reluctant to show them to unexplored places. Of course the ancient arts of witchcraft, such as the witch of Endor practised, serpent-charming, etc., etc., are still found in the Holy Land. The belief in the evil eye exists, as it does everywhere in the East, but it is averted in a different way. We remember in India once admiring the beautiful little ankles and feet of a Hindoo infant seated on its mother's hip. The woman looked much distressed; we did not then know why, but the next day we saw her again, and the child's little ankles were bound round with rags, to prevent such a misfortune as admiration being bestowed on them and the evil eye blighting it. In Palestine the mother would have blown in its face or on its ankles, and repeated a charm.

The detection of thieves is also practised much in the same way everywhere in the East by an impression made on the credulity and fears of the guilty person. We have known one instance in which this was done by rice, and it is a common ordeal. The suspected thieves are ordered to take a mouthful of rice, keep it unswallowed, and then to return it to a plate. If the robber is among them, one mouthful of rice will be quite dry, while the others are wet. The robber thus ascertained never denies his guilt. It is thought that agitation and fear make the mouth dry, and this is the natural result.

The detection of snakes in a house and the charming them is also nearly universal; but they are not quite as clever in exhibiting them as the snake-charmers of the Deccan are. Snake-charming is alluded to in the Bible. "The deaf adder that stoppeth her ear, and will not hear the voice of the charmer, charming never so wisely."[1] And there is an awful threat in Jeremiah, "Behold, I will send serpents, cockatrices, among you, which will not be charmed, and they shall bite you, saith the Lord."[2]

All sects in Palestine wear charms of every kind, and fully believe in their efficacy. Some of these amulets are very pretty and ornamental, and may be seen in any shop in London where the cedar blocks and Bethlehem olive wood-work are sold. They hang these charms round their necks, round the necks of their children, and even round their horses' necks. They are supposed to avert misfortune and the evil eye, to turn aside bullets, and bring good luck.

Lucky and unlucky days are also believed

[1] Psalm lviii. 4, 5.
[2] Jeremiah viii. 17.

in and observed. Observing them is to be what the Bible calls "an observer of times," which, with divination, witchcraft, and consulting familiar spirits, it positively forbids.[1]

The Moslems of Palestine tattoo the hands and the forehead with words or signs supposed to be charms. The women often tattoo their lips.

The Jews were ordered to write out texts of Scripture—the law of God—and bind them for a sign upon their hands and as frontlets for their eyes. The Moslems and Bedouins obey this command, and wear the texts or sentences as charms in cases on their persons. The rich have gold cases, the poor, metal of some kind.

To send a letter without a seal on it is insulting; the open letter sent by Sanballat to Nehemiah was thus considered; every Moslem therefore wears a seal-ring, or has one in his purse or on his watch-chain.

The manner in which workmen *sit* at work is one of the peculiarities of Palestine, and indeed of the East generally. The washerwoman sits by the tub; the workman, if a carpenter, saws and planes, sitting on the ground or on the plank; thus, as one passes through the bazaars, one sees all the mechanics seated at work.

The necessity for cities of refuge is shown in the present day by the blood-feuds which exist amongst the people, who have no longer any sanctuary. It is one of the worst evils attending these feuds that if the murderer cannot be found or reached, the avengers have the right, by their savage custom, to kill any member of his family, and if there is none, any relation.

Compacts are therefore entered into with other tribes and families for defence. A man fleeing for life is safe if he can get to these allies, so far as they can defend him, or they send him on to more distant refuges. The association also helps pay the death penalty, which is sometimes accepted instead of the blood vengeance; but this is very rarely received.

[1] Deut. xviii. 10, 11.

The first time we saw a Moslem at his prayers was on the bridge of a Red Sea steamer, when a tall and very black Nubian, in the whitest of robes, began his devotions. First, he raised his hands to both sides of his face, with the palms outwards and said in Arabic, "Allah is great." Then he folded his arms on his girdle and repeated something in a low voice. We were told that it was a chapter of the Koran. Next he bent and put his hands on his knees, and repeated, "God most great," three times. He stood up and cried again, "God is great;" then he knelt down and bowed till his forehead rested on the bridge between his spread-out hands. What he said was indistinct; he rose to his knees, sank back on his heels, and continued praying softly; then he rose and came down to his business as pilot.

This ceremony is repeated several times. And it is this prayer, public and genuflectory, that we see constantly in Palestine. Wherever a rigid Moslem is he will kneel and pray at the exact hour fixed for prayer. Our pilot knelt on a square of woollen stuff, but on shore they put little Persian rugs on the ground, towards the south; or if in the desert, their cloak or aba, to kneel on.

It is on the housetop that the resident Moslems generally say their prayers, and to "enter into his closet and shut the door and pray to his Father in secret," would never enter into the mind of a Moslem. We read also in the New Testament of the Pharisees praying at the corners of the streets and in the market places, which led to such deep hypocrisy, and was forbidden His disciples by our Lord. That it may have the same evil effect on Mahometans is quite probable, but there is less chance of it when everybody—the whole nation—do the same, and it is not an assumption of especial sanctity by a few.

Prayer upon the housetop is mentioned in the Bible before Mahometanism existed. By the voice of the prophet Zephaniah

God threatened to cut off the remnant of Baal in Jerusalem, and them that worship the host of heaven *upon the housetops*." These must, of course, have been the star-worshipping Jews, who adopted the idolatry of Chaldea. St. Peter also went on the housetop to pray. There probably was no more privacy in an Eastern house at that time than there is now, except in the dwellings of the rich.

Still, as in the days of our Lord, the fellahîn of Palestine count time by "the first hour," "the second hour," "the third hour," counting time from sunset, even as they did then. In like manner they speak of the third day, the second day, etc.

Everything relating to agriculture still proceeds in the same manner as in the time of our Lord. The sower still sows by the wayside, on plains where there are stony places and thorns, as we see on Gennesaret. The plough is so light that a labourer can carry it home on his shoulder when his work is done, and it is still drawn by oxen. Farmers like to plough in company, and every labourer in places where Arabs are



HARVEST IN PALESTINE.

likely to raid has arms at hand. In fact, his goad is a formidable weapon; it is a strong pole, ten feet long, with a sharp iron point at one end, and an iron cut square at the end like a spud, at the other, by which the labourer can cut through weeds, thorns, etc., or any obstruction. Shamgar, one of the earlier judges, slew six hundred Philistines with this powerful weapon; we suppose at different times.

Reaping presents much the same scene as in the days of Boaz. Men, women, and children help, and gleaners still follow the reapers. The grain is gathered into very large bundles, well secured with strong rope. A camel kneels down, the rope is put over him with the bundles at each side. He rises with them, and takes them to the threshing-floor. Here he kneels again, the burden is removed, and the grain is scattered over the threshing-floor. These floors are placed round towns. They are in the open air; a large circle of smooth ground is surrounded or edged by stones; inside the farmer or labourer drives his oxen over the grain, to thresh it out, as in the days of

Moses. The oxen are fastened to the mowrej, which is a large slab with pieces of rough lava on the bottom of it; the driver stands on it to drive.

But in the present day the mowrej consists of low rollers, with sharp teeth like a saw; and there is a seat for the driver fastened over them. This was originally used in Egypt; the more common one in Palestine is the slab with the seat placed over it. The grain is thus shelled out, and is then heaped in a great mound in the centre of the threshing-floor. The chaff is separated from the wheat by tossing it in the air from a sieve; the grain falls to the ground, the chaff is blown away by the wind. Harvest is a very happy time; the people laugh, chat, and sing over it, often in chorus. The soil is fertile, and though the light plough makes only a shallow furrow, the return for the sowing is very good. With European methods a great deal of wheat might be obtained. The harvest on the plains begins in April and ends in June. On the hills it is later.

Sheep, especially those of Moab, have always abounded in Palestine. Job had 14,000, and Solomon, at the dedication of the Temple, sacrificed 120,000. Immense quantities, also, are brought from



OXEN TREADING OUT CORN.

the Euphrates. The shepherds are careful not to overdrive them, as, if they did, many would die. As we have known from childhood, the shepherd walks before his flocks, and they know his voice and follow him. The folds are built in with strong walls, near the towns, and the walls are crowned with sharp thorns to keep off wild animals. The wolf will not venture over these defences, but the nimr, or leopard, will; then the shepherd, like David of old, must come to the rescue of his charge. He is in the fold asleep; he awakes at the bark of his dog, and is at once ready with his strong "rod," an iron-headed shaft, to drive off or kill the wild beast; for night and day the shepherd of Palestine never leaves his flock.

As spring advances, the flocks are driven up to the hill ranges, and in summer their fold, or Marah, is only a hedge of tangled thorns.

But their shepherd looks carefully after them, supplying them with water when no brook or pool is near. In fact, no better or more perfect representative of devoted self-denying can be found than the shepherd of the Holy Land. The sheep are remarkable for possessing immensely large and heavy tails.

The mutton of the Palestine sheep is especially good, and the fat of the tail is

esteemed a great delicacy. It is rich and marrowy, and is never eaten alone, but is mixed up in many dishes with lean meat, and is employed in many ways as a substitute for butter or oil. It is used generally with boiled rice.

Thorns seem to be of great use in Palestine. Fires are almost always made of them, and the pot is boiled over them; they are the quickest of all fuel to light. Our readers may remember the Scripture illustration of the "crackling of thorns



A SYRIAN SHEPHERD.

under a pot." Thus we see that thorns were used for fuel in the days of Solomon.

The ox is too valuable a beast of burden to be killed for food; beef, therefore, is very rarely seen at their tables—we may say, never. Kid is common, and is very much like lamb. We have often thought, when eating kid, what a pity it is that English people do not rear goats, to use their kids at the table, as they do in the East. It would add another animal to the housekeeper's very limited list of butchers' meat.

Butter is made in a very singular manner in Palestine. A three-legged crotch is put

up; a bag or bottle made of the skin of a young buffalo is filled with milk; it is tied up to the tripod. Then the women shake it, and knead it, and pinch it till the butter "comes"; then they take it out, boil or melt it, and put it in bottles of goat skin. It is always soft and oily in summer, and, we think, very nasty; in winter, it is like candied honey.

Water, of course, must be carried by those who travel in the desert, or on ways where there are no springs or streams. The bottles in which it is put are made of the skin of either a goat or a kid. The reason skin-bottles are used is that glass, or even wood or pottery, would certainly be broken in placing the bottles on the camel, or in taking them off and replacing them; while metal would get so hot with the sun's rays that the water would never be cold, and would be, often, nearly boiling. Skin bottles also protect it from ants and other insects, which are a great trouble in the East. We have seen a cup of tea so



SKIN WATER-BOTTLES OF THE EAST.

full of flies that it could not be drunk. This, however, was at Suez, where Beelzebub, the god of flies, was worshipped in ancient days. But it is the same in the Eastern desert, which swarms with insects. We have seen the sand moved by them. The bottles are made by cutting off the head of the animal, and extracting the whole body by the neck; the thighs are left on, after being emptied and cleaned, for handles; the neck is the mouth of the bottle. To give a drink of water to a wayfarer is an act of charity. Our readers will remember the words, "He who giveth a cup of cold water in My name," etc.

We have spoken much of cisterns, and they are of so much importance in "a thirsty and dry land, where no water is," that they are quite worth enclosing, as they often are, when dedicated to the use of a village. They have, unfortunately, rather a habit of cracking, from sudden changes of temperature, and the prophet used "the broken cisterns" as a similitude of those

who put their trust in other than the Lord.

There are immense numbers of cisterns in Palestine, though most of those in the deserted cittes are now empty. Some of them are bottle shaped, and it has been thought that one of these dry cisterns at Dothan may have been the pit into which his brothers cast Joseph.

There is a town in the Haurân whose very name, Brat, means cisterns. They either caught the rain, or were supplied by aqueducts, of which there are many massive remains in the country.

The immense value of the element is continually alluded to in Scripture. Some of the most gracious promises of God refer to it. He says by Isaiah, "I will open



EASTERN CISTERN.

rivers on the bare heights, and fountains in the midst of the valleys; I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water.[1] "As cold water to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country."[2] We might give many more examples from the Bible.

[1] Isaiah xli. 18.
[2] Prov. xxv. 25.

Women grinding at the mill are still to be found in Palestine, in places where there are no mill streams. Two women sit opposite to each other; both hold the handle by which the upper stone is turned on the nether millstone; one has her right hand free, and throws the wheat through the hole in the middle of the stone. Only women are employed at this very hard

work; slaves or lowest servants are made grind at the mill, which is considered degrading work for men.

The social customs of the East are of course divided. The Harîm entertains its lady guests, the master of the household his male visitors.

At the dinner of a private Moslem a pretty polygonal stool or table[1] is placed in the sitting-room. On this a copper tray is placed, with the food on it. Bread and a cruse of water are by the side.

Or on formal occasions a servant hands the bread and water. Round this low table the guests seat themselves on cushions, or on the floor; the dinner varies, of course. Kid or mutton in kabobs; stews of the latter with rice, beans, or ground wheat, with sauces or soups, are served. Silver spoons are used now-a-days, but as yet no knives and forks, unless at the tables of rich people in Beyrout or Damascus, where semi-European ways are adopted. But these matters are rapidly changing in the East. The hands are always washed after a native dinner, by a servant pouring water over them.



WASHING HANDS IN THE EAST.

The hospitality of the East has not been exaggerated. They always give of their best. In the wilder parts an Arab will always kill a sheep or a kid, should an unexpected guest arrive, even as Abraham did. The carcase is at once stewed or roasted and served up, as was the food offered to the angels.

Something must also be said of the modes of salutation in the East. They differ greatly from those of the West, and are much more formal, and regulated by a certain etiquette. Different degrees of respect are shown, some of the most profound kind. To a Pasha or prince the Moslem prostrates himself, and puts his head close to the ground, between his hands. In the next reverential salutation the hands are placed on the knees, and the body bent forward, or the hands may be crossed on the breast, and the head bent low.

The ordinary salutation is to carry the hand taken to the beard or forehead; in a mere bow the right hand is laid on the heart, and the head slightly inclined.

The verbal salutations of persons who meet in the road or street are very formal and long, and there is a certain etiquette observed in them, the expressions being almost stereotyped and violently friendly and affectionate.

They kiss the hand of superiors, but touch the forehead and bow to equals. Relatives or long separated friends embrace and kiss on both cheeks, and generally on each shoulder.

When friends meet, they strike the tips of the fingers together.

The gate of an Eastern city is still a place of assembly for business or for chat. The

[1] Some of our readers may have seen these tables at the Rev. Mr. Banting's Lectures on Palestine.

Kâdy, or Turkish magistrate, often sits in it, though not always in the present day; but still it is a great place of gathering, even as it was in the days of Boaz and Ruth. All business in those days was concluded in the gate of the city.

The dress of the women of Palestine differs in different places; but we might say all (excepting the Harîms of rich men) wear their fortune round their face in the shape of coins. "My face is my fortune" has quite a different meaning there from that of the English nursery rhyme.

The weight they can thus carry is extraordinary. The face out of doors is never unveiled, and the whole figure is then enveloped in a loose cloak, the hood of which covers the face. In the house their



ORIENTAL MODES OF SALUTATION.

dress is picturesque. The cloak that covers the whole figure is of pure silk, and may be of any colour, black, or brilliant; black and gold is thought fit for a great lady; or a woman may wear a plain white sheet. The mandril is a white handkerchief, or is worked with flowers. It quite conceals the face.

The aba is a large loose square robe; when sheikhs wear it, of rich silk. The kufiyeh is a large coloured handkerchief of silk, or mixed silk and cotton. The

Arab wears this on his head, falling over the shoulders, and fastened on by a fillet of camel's hair. It keeps the sun off the face and neck.

The Eastern women are fond of gaudy colours, and delight in jewelry in the house. Their usual dress is too well known to need description.

The Pilgrimage to Mecca. We can scarcely conclude our description of the customs of Moslem Palestine without mentioning the Hajj, or Pilgrimage to Mecca. For many years it was one of the grandest shows in the East. The pilgrims bore with them the Sultan's offering to Mecca in a magnificent litter of green and gold, called



ORIENTAL FEMALE COSTUMES.

the Mahmal. It was drawn by a camel dedicated to the service, that went backwards and forwards to Mecca constantly, and was never put to any drudgery afterwards. The Turkish banner, the Sanjak, was borne over the Mahmal till it started for the desert. This pageant has, however, fallen off greatly, and is threatened with extinction, as Mecca can now be easily reached by sea.

The Pilgrimage must be a very trying journey for the poorer people. They suffer greatly, and many die on it; but, if they return safely, they are so much honoured by their neighbours that they think themselves well repaid for their sufferings.

THE CLIMATE AND NATURAL PRODUCTIONS OF PALESTINE.

THE Holy Land has almost every kind of climate, but generally it is warm. The top of Hermon is snow-clad, as are the near ranges of Lebanon, and here in winter it is very cold. In the valley of the Jordan the heat is tropical; on the sea-coast, though very warm, the climate is far cooler than in the valleys, and the climate east of Jordan is thought good. There are two rainy seasons, the first at intervals between November and January, and the latter beginning in April.

The extremes of temperature cause great variety in the natural productions of the country. The oak grows well on the hills of Gilead; the terebinth grows there also, as well as in the west of Jordan. The streams are bordered with oleanders; pines grow on the hills and on the sandy soils, cypress, poplar, acacia, arbutus, juniper, tamarisk, the kharub or locust tree, are all found there. The "husks" of this last tree were, and are, the food of swine, which the prodigal son in his hunger would fain have eaten. These so-called "husks" are —as given in the margin of the Revised Version of St. Luke 16th—pods of the kharub tree. "They are from six to ten inches long, and one broad, and are lined inside with a gelatinous substance not wholly unpleasant to the taste when thoroughly ripe."[1]

There are scarcely any swine in the holy land now, as the Moslems consider them unclean animals. They will not even touch a wild boar when they have killed it. They now grind up the pods of the kharub, and get a sort of treacle from them, used in making sweetmeats. The kharub is an evergreen; it is called the locust tree from people believing that it was the pods that St. John the Baptist ate. The wild pistachio (also cultivated for sale), the date, the banana, the fig-sycamore, a sycamore that has rather inferior figs growing on its trunk, with wide-spreading horizontal boughs, are common. It was in one of these sycamores that Zaccheus sat to await the coming of our Lord. The cedar on Lebanon, the lemon, true fig, the pomegranate, the almond, the the orange, the olive, grape-vines, and the sugar-cane which the Crusaders cultivated near Jericho and in other places, must not be omitted from our list.

Along the Jordan, and on the shores of the Dead Sea, indigo is cultivated.

The grain is wheat, barley, dhura, Indian corn, sesame, and a very excellent kind of lentil.

There are bitumen wells about three miles west of Hasbeiya, near the sources of the Jordan. They are in a rock of chalky marl, have been much worked, but are not exhausted. The quality of the bitumen differs a good deal. In some places it is very pure and clear, "like black amber," in others it is greasy, and is of a dirty looking black. The entire area in which they are found is only an acre in extent; the wells were sunk in very remote ages, and still yield abundantly.

North of these wells of Hasbeiya another mine has been opened.

Large masses of it are also found on the shores of the Dead Sea.

[1] Dr. Thomson's "The Land and the Book."

We first read of bitumen in Gen. x. 3, in the margin; it is called slime in the text (R.V.). The slime pits of Sodom were no doubt also wells of bitumen. It is still to be seen in the walls of the Bir-Nimroud.

The mineral melts easily, but when cold it is as brittle as glass; mixed with tar when melting, it becomes hard. In early times it used to be sold to the Egyptians for embalming purposes. Coal has been found near Beyrout. Rock salt is found near the Dead Sea.

The animals of Palestine are in the present day the leopard or nimr, the wild boar, the jackal (in great numbers), foxes, the wild goat, and the gazelle. Camels are



OAK AT TEBNEH.

numerous and very valuable, not only for travelling in deserts, but as a beast of burden, the load it carries being often quite incredible. The poor animal moans and complains sadly as it is piled on him; but he can really carry a very heavy burden, and if he is well treated, is obedient and docile. But camels can be very revengeful, and even retain the memory of wrongs done them. We have read somewhere that a camel who had been rather ill-treated, seeing the 'aba and other garments of his master, whom he hated, tore them to pieces; but after this vengeance, which he believed he had executed on his enemy, he became again docile and obedient. There

are also horses of the Arabian breeds; asses and mules of a superior kind, heavy-tailed sheep, and buffaloes. Oxen are used for agricultural labour, and buffaloes are found in the north, near Lake Huleh.

The birds are very numerous; there are the vulture, the griffon-vulture, the bittern (the haunter of ruins), the Syrian nightingale (the bulbul), the bustard, the chough, the chiffchaff, the chaffinch, the crane, the pelican, the swan, the falcon, the lark, the osprey, the owl, the dove, the swallow, the swift, etc., etc.—birds that fill the trees (even the thorn tree) with nests, and whose



LOADED CAMELS.

song fills the ambient air; not forgetting the sad coo of the dove and croak of the raven.

Falconry is still practised to the north of the Lebanon, and by the Arabs, and (strangely, we think) it is practised on the beautiful little gazelle. The Arabs have trained the bird, which alone can compete with the swiftness of the gazelle, to fasten on the forehead of the animal, and confuse and blind it by flapping its wings. Thus hindered in its flight, the hunter can take it.

Grey partridges are very abundant, and

the stork at certain seasons still visits Palestine, and goes on his pilgrimage to Mecca.

The eagle is also on the hills of Palestine, as he was when he furnished such fine imagery to the Hebrew poets.

In fact, the Bible animals, both beasts and birds, are still in the land, with the exception of the lion and the bear, which have disappeared.

Bees still make honey in rocks and trees, and often in great quantities, but the fellahîn also keep them in hives, of a very different form from ours. They are cylinders of basket-work, covered inside and outside with a plaster of mud, and are placed one over the other horizontally, and then roofed with thatch. The flowers render the Holy Land a bee-paradise, and the honey they make is still good and abundant.

The bees are never destroyed to take their honey. These curious cylinder hives open at each end; and are only closed with mud, having a small hole in the centre for the bees to go through. In due time the clay at one end is removed, and the honey is drawn out with a hook. The comb, that has young bees in it, is replaced.

There is a very pretty shrub belonging to the Holy Land, which grows along the banks of the river Zerka and in Moab. It is called the retem. Its flowers are small, and resemble the arbutus in colour and smell. It is not a tall shrub, but it has long twigs, loaded with blossoms.

No country, perhaps, has so varied a catalogue of animals and trees of all kinds as Palestine; in fact, the "infinite variety" of its gifts surprises any one who reflects on its size. But on this once favoured land everything in nature seems to have been bestowed. Volcanoes, plains of lava, hot springs, fertile plains, heights crowned with oaks, the olive and the vine, plains of salt, wells of bitumen, the beasts of many other lands, the birds of nearly all lands—everything seems given to this central country. Without leaving it, its people can behold or profit by all that other lands possess.

And this is why the Bible imagery is understood in all lands to which it is carried; and all nations can be taught by it. Here West and East seem to meet; and the spiritual children of Abraham can enter into and share David's songs of grief and rejoicing, as if they were songs of their own native land and people.

No wonder that so many nations strove to take this land of milk and honey—that Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks, Persians, and Romans, strove to gain it. Under any other government than its present one, it would be a gem of countries; but that has not been permitted. As the Scotch say, Palestine must "dree her weird" till her full punishment is completed. That it is near, we hope, for slowly but surely colonies are being established in her, that will cultivate her waste places and inhabit her solitudes.

Her own people are slowly "creeping back"; but we cannot hope for their full restoration till they can return as a Christian nation.

The Borders of Palestine.

SUDUD is on the site of Zedad, mentioned in Numbers xxxiv. 8 as one of the towns destined to be the northern boundary of the Land of Promise. "Ye shall point out your border unto the entrance of Hamath; and the goings forth of the border shall lead to Zedad; and the border shall go on to Ziphron, and the goings out of it shall be at Hazar-enan." The town is inhabited chiefly by Jacobites, another of the Palestine sects. They are separatists from the Greek Church, and were originally called Monophysites. They are a very ancient sect, and in the sixth century were dying out when Jacob Albardai, or Baradeus, restored and remodelled it. From that time they have been called, from his name, Jacobites. He was a poor monk, but of great genius, unwearied in toils and undaunted in danger; he travelled on foot all through the East, and spread his doctrines everywhere in it. He died Bishop of Edessa, A.D. 588. The Patriarch of the Jacobites generally resided at the Monastery of St. Ananias, but was often at other places.

As his government in the East was very extensive, he had a colleague who was called "Primate of the East," and whose doctrine and discipline are said to have been adopted by the Eastern Church beyond the Tigris. All the Patriarchs of Antioch—now head of the Armenian Church—assumed the name of Ignatius. Their differences of opinion and worship from all the other Christian communities is extremely difficult to comprehend, as it is caused by their belief that our Lord's nature, "though really one, yet is at the same time twofold and compound."[1] The Jacobites of the present day never reason or argue about their faith, and indeed, the lower class of the sect are said to be very ignorant.

The number of sects in the Holy Land excited the surprise of even mediæval travellers. Sir John Mandeville gives us a different, and certainly a pleasanter, account of this sect than Mosheim's, and one probably nearly correct — at least more reasonable. He says: "Some of these are called Jacobites, because St. James converted them and St. John baptised them. They say that a man shall make his confession only to God, and not to a man; for only to Him should man acknowledge himself guilty of all that he hath misdone; and God ordained not, nor ever devised, nor the prophets either, that one man should confess himself to another (as they say), but only to God; as Moses writeth in the Bible, and as David in the Psalter Book, 'I will confess to Thee, O Lord, in my whole heart'; and 'I acknowledge my sin unto Thee'; and 'Thou art my God, and I will confess to Thee'; and 'since the thoughts of man shall confess to Thee,' etc.; for they know all the Bible and the Psalter, and therefore allege they so the letter; but they allege not the authorities not in Latin but in their own language full openly; and say well that David and other prophets say it. Nevertheless St. Austin, St. Gregory, and St. Hilary say differently."

"There are others who are called Syrians, who hold the belief among us and the Greeks; and they all use beards as men of Greece do" (A.D. 1322), "and they make the sacrament of unleavened bread, and in their language they use the Saracenic letters,

[1] Mosheim.

but in their theological mysteries they use Greek letters; and they make their confession as the Jacobites do.

"There are others who are called Georgians, who were converted by St. George, and they worship him more than any other saint, and to him they cry for help, and they came out of the realm of Georgia. . . . There are others who are called Christians of the Girdle because they are all girt above, and there are others called Nestorians; and some are Arians, some Nubians, some of Greece, some of India, and some of Prester John's land."

We may see from this (not perhaps quite accurate account) that the sects in Palestine were as numerous in the Middle Ages as they are at present, though of these the Jacobites and Nestorians only survive.

Ziphron, now Zifrun, exists still as a village between Homs and Hamath. The next border town mentioned in Numbers is Hazar-enan.[1] Major Conder fixes its site at 'Ain-el-'Asy.[2] "And the border from the sea shall be Hazar-enan, the border of Damascus, and the north northward, and the border of Hamath. And this is the north side." Here the Orontes rises, called by the Arabs el-'Asy. The stream is soon joined by another branch from Lebweh. It then dashes through a deep rocky gorge on its northward way, sometimes breaking into rapids. Near a fountain in this chasm is a convent placed where the hermitage of Mâr Marûn was. The building is three hundred feet above the river; a gallery cut in the rock leads to cells of different sizes, cut in a precipice. The entrance is covered by a loop-holed wall.

Major Conder tells us that the true source of the Orontes is west of Baalbek; but that the main supply of water is here at 'Ain-el-'Asy.

The depth of the gorge through which it passes conceals it from the plain, but its voice is heard from below in a strange weird murmur. The river emerges on the plain near Riblah, already described, flows by Kadesh, Homs and Hamath to the marshy plain of El Omk, where it turns westwards.

When we consider the exactness and reliability of the topography of Moses, before entering the Promised Land, we can scarcely help feeling that this exact knowledge must have been divinely inspired. No border could have been better calculated to shut in and guard the Holy Land than this one, had the Israelites been able to retain it.

Within a ride from Damascus is Malula, one of the loveliest spots in Syria; it is on the site of the ancient Magluda. The entrance to it is by a chasm, that may almost be called a tunnel. Steep rock steps from the plain lead down to a passage not more than three feet wide; the rock rising two hundred feet on each side, and nearly meeting at the top, so as to show a mere line of sky. These side rocks are full of caves, and would be the haunt of Arab robbers were it east instead of north-west of Jordan.

The passage proceeds to a little distance; then comes another flight of steps cut in the rocks; but these lead upwards, and at the top the lovely village lies. It is built on the steep sides of an amphitheatre of rocks; the houses are placed one above the other, so that the roof of the one below forms the terrace or court of the one above, which opens on it. At the back of all of them the cliff rises to a height of two hundred feet. In front of the dwellings is a well-watered valley, in which are gardens full of flowers, fruit, and vegetables. A fountain from the side of the rock runs through and irrigates it.

To the north is another chasm, narrow and shut in, as the entrance one is. At its mouth is the Greek monastery of Mar Thecla. In this cave is a chapel built over the spot where St. Thecla was martyred. She is said to have been a disciple of St. Paul, who, persecuted by her heathen father, fled to this place to escape him. It ought to have been a secure hiding-place,

[1] Num. xxxiv. 9.
[2] Ezekiel xlvii. 17.

but it was not, as it proved; for she was pursued, found, and martyred. Her picture is placed above the niche said to contain her body, and the Greek inscription declares that she was the first female martyr, and contemporary with the apostles. She is, of course, a saint of the Greek Catholic Church.

At the end of the entrance passage is a monastery, also of the Greek Catholic Church, called Mar Serkis, celebrated for the wine made there.

All round this spot are rock tombs and caves once occupied by hermits. It is, and has always been, considered a place of great sanctity, and pilgrims resort here at the great festivals in great numbers.

The town is a Christian one, of the Greek Catholic Church; there are only two Moslem families in it. All the inhabitants and also those of the villages of Bakha and Jubadin, which are near Malula, speak the old Syriac language—that which was spoken by our Lord Himself, and in which He taught. It is a very musical tongue, and it is greatly to be regretted that it will soon be extinct, as it is not taught in their schools.

There are groves of pistachio nuts here; the place trades in them, and there are also vines—witness the monks' wine!—and sumach trees. The monastery is rich from the gifts of the pilgrims, who doubtless also aid in producing the prosperity of this beautiful place, where linger the last accents of the most blessed of languages—the one used by Christ. Magluda was not, however, a town of ancient Palestine.

PALESTINE UNDER DAVID AND SOLOMON.

THE promise given to Abraham by God was: "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates."

This promise was fulfilled in the days of David. It had been delayed because the nation had so long needed punishment and restraint for its grievous sins. Not otherwise could a people be set apart for the preservation of the knowledge of the true God. To have given them the control of Solomon's empire, won by David, would only have added another idolatrous empire to those already existing. But David had brought the ark up to Jerusalem, though he might not build the Temple. He had established a form of worship in accordance with the Law, and a solemn and musical ritual. The religion of the Jews was now settled and united to the State, and Solomon's magnificent Temple made their national worship known to the world.

David began his reign over the whole nation by taking Jerusalem. Part of the city had long been in possession of the Israelites, but the citadel of Zion was thought to be impregnable, and its garrison insultingly told David, that unless he took away the blind and the lame, he could not enter the city; meaning, probably, that if all its defenders were gone, it was still so strong that the blind and crippled could keep it.

And David said, "Whosoever getteth up

to the gutter and smiteth the Jebusites . . . he shall be chief captain." Joab, as we already know, took the stronghold, and became, to David's after sorrow, "chief captain." "The Gutter" is supposed to be the passage or shaft up which Sir Charles Warren and Sergeant Birtles went when exploring Jerusalem. It had been cut and carried down (probably by the Jebusites) to the spring now called Fountain of the Virgin; so that during a siege water might be obtained. Jerusalem from that time became the capital of Judah. Of course, ascending this shaft with soldiers was a very dangerous feat, and we are not told how Joab accomplished it.[1]

The Philistines, as soon as they heard of David's accession, came up to attack the king of Israel and harry the land; but David met and defeated them, and they fled in such haste, that they left their gods behind them, and the king burned them. The next year they came up again, and spread themselves over the Valley of Rephaim, in considerable numbers. The king consulted the oracle of God, and the Lord answered: "Thou shalt not go up; but fetch a compass behind them, and come upon them over against the mulberry trees. And let it be, when thou hearest the sound of a going in the tops of the mulberry trees, that then thou shalt bestir thyself: for then shall the Lord go out before thee, to smite the hosts of the Philistines." David obeyed, and attacked the enemy when he heard the rustling of the mulberry leaves, and the "Philistines were defeated from Geba to Gezer." Geba, a town of Benjamin, was north of Jerusalem —we have already spoken of it; Gezer was the town that M. Clermont Ganneau discovered. The space of land thus delivered from the Philistines extended from the hill country in the north to the lowlands of the west. He conquered Moab, and next defeated Hadarezer, or Hadadezer, king of Zobah. This king's dominions were of some extent; they reached from Zobah, near Damascus, to the river Euphrates.

The Orontes, now El-'Asy, ran through his territory. Here the city of Homs is, once Emesa, where Zenobia was defeated; and the upper part of the Beka'a is the entrance to Hamath, the northern limit of the land given to Israel. Here Solomon built store cities. It was afterwards lost, but Jeroboam retook it. Finally, it was taken by Assyria and Babylon.

The Syrians of Damascus came to aid Hadadezer, but were also conquered by David. The riches of the king of Zobah must have been great, for his servants' shields were of gold, and he had a thousand chariots, seven hundred horsemen, and twenty thousand infantry. David brought the gold shields to Jerusalem. Betah and Berothai, from which a rich spoil of brass was taken, were also towns of Hadadezer. Betah is called Tibhath in 1 Chronicles xviii. 8, and must have been near or in the Anti-Lebanon. Berothai is thought by some writers to be Beyrout, but there is no certainty of this identification, and it is much disputed. Toi, the king of Hamath, sends congratulations to David on his victory, for Hadadezer was his own enemy, and further offers him gifts of vessels of silver, gold and brass. Of Hamath, now Hamah, we have already given a brief account; it is a beautifully situated town on the two sides of the Orontes. The inscriptions found here by Burckhardt in 1810, and rediscovered by Sir Richard Burton and Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake, have also been mentioned. They are now known to be Hittite. King Toi must therefore have been a Hittite prince. Uzziah was a Hittite, and one of the bravest of David's captains. Thus we see the Promised Land was wholly given; even to the Euphrates.

It is not at all surprising that the extent of his kingdom should have excited the pride of the shepherd-king, and that when his domestic troubles had ceased, he should wish to know the exact number of his sub-

[1] See Sir Charles Warren's "Recovery of Jerusalem," pp. 244-248.

jects who were fighting men. Joab remonstrates, but afterwards obeys, and it occupies nine months and some days to take the census, if the word is allowable in this case. Joab began his work at Aroer, now Araîr, already mentioned, "near Jazer." The land of Jazer is spoken of also in Numbers as being very fertile. It must have been on the eastern border, and Mr. Oliphant thought he had found and identified the town, or rather its ruins. The river of Gad was, of course, the Arnon, on which Aroer stood, and its ruins still stand. Jazer is still a fertile district, and its western portion has some good forests of oak. It is a high plateau, and has two small lakes on it. It is only occupied now by the Bedouins. "And they came to Gilead, and to the land of Tahtim-hodshi." Gilead was a town as well as a district. Hosea says of it, "Gilead is a city of them that work iniquity; it is stained with blood." Tahtim-hodshi has not been identified, but the margin of the Authorised Version gives "the nether land newly inhabited." It may have been one of David's recently conquered towns in the north, at the foot of Lebanon.

Joab numbered all the fighting men, *i.e.* the men over twenty, who lived on the east of Jordan, at Aroer; Moab paid tribute, but would not be expected to send warriors to the army; and then he proceeded northwards, to Dan Jaan. The Survey suggest that this may have been Dânian, ruins of which are found four miles north of Achzib, between Tyre and Acre, but it seems more likely to have been Dan —now Tell el Kâdy.

They approached Zidon, but that city never belonged to Israel; neither did Tyre. The cities of the Hivites and Canaanites were probably those which are found in the north, on the borders of Lebanon, and in the regions once possessed by Jabin. Then they proceeded southwards to Beersheba.

The western coast was still occupied by Phœnicians and Philistines. But Joab, who detested his task, omitted to count both Levi and Benjamin, thinking perhaps thus to escape from the evil which he felt convinced would follow it.

All Eastern people, even in the present day, object to a census as "unlucky"; and it is difficult, we believe, to get exact returns, or at least it was, up to quite recently.

The number of fighting men was very considerable; old men, women and children were not numbered, but David knew now that he had a formidable reserve in addition to his standing army; but he repented of the pride that had led him to have this numbering undertaken almost as soon as it was completed.

It was to this realm, won by the sword of his father, that Solomon succeeded. Of his splendour and extensive rule the list of his store cities and the food provided for his household supplies us with some idea.

Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal; ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pasture, besides harts and roebucks, and fallow deer, and fatted fowls. To supply this royal table twelve officers were appointed, who each had to "make provision" for one month in the year. The names of the store cities, and their neighbourhood were:—Mount Ephraim, Mahaz, Shaalbim, Bethshemesh, Elon-beth-hanan, Arubboth, near Socoh, the land of Hepher, Dor, Taanach, Megiddo, Bethshean which is by Zarethan beneath Jezreel, from Bethshean to Abel-meholah, to the place beyond Jokmeam, Ben-geber in Ramoth Gilead, the towns of Jair, Argob and Bashan, threescore great cities with walls and brazen bars; Mahanaim, Naphtali, Asher and Bealoth, Issachar, Benjamin. The country of Sihon and Og of Bashan.

The town of Mahaz has not been identified; Shaalbim may possibly be a village named Selbit, but this is conjecture. Bethshemesh is 'Ain-Shems, a station on the railway from Jaffa to Jerusalem. Elon-beth-hanan is not thoroughly identified, but may be Beit Anan, a small village

Socoh is now Khirbet Shuweikeh, a cluster of ruins. "All the land of Hepher" possibly the portion given to the daughters of Hepher (Josh. xvii. 3). It seems to have been west of Jordan, judging by verses 5 and 6. "And there fell ten portions to Manasseh, beside the land of Gilead and Bashan, which were on the other side Jordan; because the daughters of Manasseh had an inheritance among his sons; and the rest of Manasseh's sons had the land of Gilead." These ladies were the daughters of Zelophehad, the son of Hepher, who boldly claimed and obtained their inheritance from Joshua. Dor is the present Tanturah, near Cæsarea, a seaside town. Megiddo is thought by Major Conder to be Khurbet el Mujedd'a. The site has been much discussed, however. Robinson placed it at Lej'jûn, the once famous city of Legio, and his opinion was followed by all other authorities, till Major Conder expressed and ably supported a different one. Taanach is now T'annuk. It was in Solomon's time a Levitical city belonging to the tribe of Manasseh. Zarethan, beneath Jezreel, is thought to be Tell Sarêm, but many authorities think it was at Tell el Zahrah, three miles west of Beisân (Bethshean). Of Bethshean we have spoken fully before. Abel-meholah is supposed to be Ibleam, identified with Khurbet Yebla, north of Bethshean. Jokmeam (R.V.) is supposed to have stood at the foot of Carmel, in the "Breezy land," where now is Tell Keimun. The towns of Jair, Argob, Bashan, Mahanaim, Naphtali, have been described already, and Asher, which had its boundary near Sidon.

These immense supplies, sent in monthly, and collected, no doubt, in the district, show how rich the country was, and what a magnificent court was kept by Solomon.

This was the period of Palestine's worldy glory and prosperity, which reads like some oriental fiction of grandeur and power. Gold, ivory, precious stones, valuable woods,—the tribute of the world was then paid to her king and capital.

"And Solomon reigned over all the kings from the river unto the land of the Philistines, to the border of Egypt."[1] And again: "He had dominion over all the region on this side the river, from Tiphsah, even to Azzah (another name for Gaza), over all the kings on this side the river."

Abraham had migrated by God's command from the Euphrates shore. He had probably a natural attachment to the mighty river, which had once flowed through the earthly Paradise, and must have rejoiced to think that by-and-by his family would reign over the country between it and the Jordan.

Tiphsah was on the western side of Euphrates; no doubt it was one of the great emporiums of Solomon's desert trade; for Babylon was on the river, and its markets must have been even then one of the best, if not the best, in the East. The "border of Egypt" was El 'Arish. It is a wady, and after rains have fallen, becomes a torrent.

The present boundary between Palestine and Egypt is midway between El 'Arish and Gaza.[2]

Solomon also endeavoured to give a navy to Palestine. David had conquered Edom, and that land had a port at the head of the Gulf of Akabah, called Ezion Geber. Hiram, his constant and generous friend, was ready to help him; and sent his own experienced sailors to teach the Israelites the craft of the sea. The navy brought great wealth and unknown luxuries into the country by traffic from abroad, and probably awoke the inherent love of trade that still distinguishes his people. But they never became a maritime nation, and at Solomon's death his great empire dissolved like a dream. Ten tribes left his son, his conquests were re-taken, though, till the reign of Jehoram, Edom continued a vassal of Judah's.

It then threw off the yoke. King Amaziah attempted to recover it, and in

[1] 1 Kings iv.

[2] Palestine Fund Quarterly Statement, October, 1886.

the Valley of Salt (the Arabah) he defeated the Edomites, took their capital city by assault, though it was thought impregnable, and changed its name from Sela to Joktheel. Edom is now known as Petra, and those of my readers who in their youth read Keith on Prophecy, may remember the engravings of the rock dwellings, and the strict fulfilment of the prophecies against Edom. It is now most difficult of access from the truculent character of the Bedouin, who frequent its ruins. Professor Palmer, however, saw it, and has described it graphically.

"The approach is by a narrow passage called the Sik, about two miles long, which winds through the mountain between high and precipitous cliffs. Emerging from this we come into a more open country, amongst limestone hills. . . . There are some rude stone houses, a running stream, and some corn fields, and then we come to the commencement of the rock-hewn tombs and dwellings of Petra.

"One excavation in the limestone is a temple with Corinthian columns. The scenery is romantic and beautiful. A narrow passage runs between high perpendicular cliffs of the richest hue. This Sik ravine is spanned by an arch, quite out of reach, which anciently carried an aqueduct from the heights above. Beneath your feet trickles a clear sparkling brook, and the whole entrance is filled with oleanders, while creepers hang in luxuriant green festoons from the walls. The more you advance the narrower and grander the gorge becomes. . . . Near the end of the Sik, at the point where it takes a short turn, you come suddenly upon the Khazneh, which in beauty of form and colouring surpasses all other tombs and temples. The façade is of a deep but delicate rose colour, and that of the uncut rock around it from every shade of red to chocolate."[1]

There is a street of dwellings where the ravine next entered opens; they are all cut out of the rock, as are also the temples and cisterns. At every place where they are required there are also staircases cut in the rock; and these dwellings looked down on a green valley full of the pink blossoms of the oleander. It ends in a narrow cleft, with a ruined temple on the hill.

The prophecies about Edom are indeed fulfilled. "O thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock," says the prophet Jeremiah, "that holdest the height of the hill: though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord. And Edom shall become an astonishment; every one that passeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gormorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall dwell there, neither shall any son of man sojourn therein."[2]

[1] "The Desert of the Exodus," vol. ii.
[2] Jeremiah xlix. 16–18 (R.V.).

EL-HARRAH.

EAST of the Jebel Haurân is part of that great desert which stretches to the Euphrates, but it is a region belonging to Palestine. It is called El-Harrah, and extends eastward for a distance which occupies five days to cross; from north to south it is a day and a half's journey. The name signifies "a region covered with burning stones," and it deserves its name, for it is covered with innumerable loose, black stones, rounded like boulders, and undoubtedly volcanic. Here and there are patches of clear ground, and here the tamarisk tree grows. Adjoining the Harrar on its northern border is the region of Es Safâh. Just before reaching this singular spot there is a perfect hill of ashes. Es Safâh itself, described as a "volcanic island, rising abruptly from the desert," [1] is at a distance of a day or a little more from Jebel-ed-Druse. It is a most unique and singular spot. "If we imagine," says Mr. Graham, "a vast quantity of molten metal to be confined in some vessel, and its surface violently agitated by some powerful agent, and while in that state suppose the mass suddenly to be cooled, then the appearance which the surface of the metal may be conceived to assume would probably be most nearly exemplified in the wild and savage aspect of the Safâh. It resembles no other formation that I am aware of, except the Lejah, and both these districts resemble more nearly the appearance presented to us by some of the volcanic regions in the moon than anything we have on our own globe." Like the Lejah it is difficult of access, through the wide fissures and seams that run through it; in the centre there is a line of conical hills from south to north.

On the eastern side are traces of an ancient road, with boulders placed at regular distances from each other inscribed with characters like those found on the Sinaitic rocks; these extend till the ruins of a town are reached, built entirely of white stones, and looking very pure and bright amidst the black rocks of the Safâh. Surely it must have been these black stones that suggested the city in the Arabian Nights and its transformed prince.

The Arabs call this town "the White Ruin"; it is built, like the so-called giant-cities in the Haurân, wholly of massive stone. There is also a large castle remaining, which seems to have been built by the Moslems. It lies on the edge of the Safâh, and there are the remains of four smaller towns further north.

From a hill called Tell Um-el-Jereed, one of the four hills within the north-east part of the Harrar, there can be seen the most perfect picture of desolation imaginable. It is a desert which extends the whole way to the Euphrates; there is not a tree, not a shrub. Who were the people who lived on its verge? If only the inscriptions on the stones could be deciphered we might learn a sad and perhaps tragical history.

There are a great many stones on this hill also, found by Mr. Graham, which have inscriptions on them, and generally the representation of some animal or object.

The inhabitants of the Harrar in the present day are chiefly Druses, who dwell in the old stone houses; but in winter the Safâh itself is inhabited, for the Arabs El-Jebel seek its plain for warmth, leaving it, however, as soon as summer comes, and the

[1] Mr. Graham's Explorations in the Desert east of the Haurân.

sun casts its scorching rays on the black stones.

To Mr. Graham we are also indebted for the discovery of another desert city, which does not, however, rival Palmyra. It is about sixteen miles south-west of Bozrah; but the distance is greater, comparatively, than that number of miles on good roads, as the way is across the desert, which is reached three miles south of Bozrah. Yet this desert is not one of sands; it is a great uncultivated plain, but rich of soil, and might be fertile if it could be cultivated; the Arab raids, however, make this impossible. There are the ruins of many small unknown towns scattered over its vast extent.

Mr. Graham says of Um el-Jemal—The strange name means "the mother of camels." "This is among the most perfect of the cities I have seen" (alluding to the cities of the Haurân). "It is surrounded by a high wall, forming a rectangle, which seems to enclose as much space as the walls of the modern Jerusalem. The streets are, many of them, paved; and I saw here what I do not think I saw anywhere else, open spaces within the city, such as we should call squares * * * The houses were, some of them, very large, consisting usually of three rooms on the ground floor and two on the first storey, the stairs being formed of large stones built into the house walls, and leading up outside. The doors were, as usual, of stone; sometimes these were folding doors, and some of them were highly ornamented."

Um el-Jemal has no columns and temples, as Gerash or Palmyra has; it had also no walls, but the houses so closely joined each other that they made a wall, as was no doubt often the case in Palestine. But there was a gate and a very handsome and highly-decorated one. It was broad, and was composed of four arches. The streets were broad, and two avenues went through the city from north to south, one of which was a hundred feet wide, and the other a hundred and fifty. Some of the houses are higher than Mr. Graham stated; they are three or four stories high. The rooms are large, and the roofs are supported by arches.

A group of houses is built round a large, open centre court, fifty feet or more square; the stairs outside lead to the upper stories.

It was a Christian city—at least during its latter years of habitation—but previously it had been a city of heathen Rome. M. Waddington has given an inscription found in it in honour of M. Aurelius Antoninus. There is another stating that the garrison were cavalry belonging to the 9th Dalmatian Horse, commanded by Julius, an officer attached to the Court of the Prince. Dr. Merrill, who has also visited and carefully inspected the town, tells us that on the four sides of a square tower, belonging to a large building that may have been a monastery, are several inscriptions in Greek; one taken from the 21st Psalm. "Others contain the names of Uriel, Gabriel, and Emmanuel." M. Waddington thinks these names were found in the Jewish books. Four angels supported the Throne of God—Uriel was the angel of the north, Gabriel of the east, and Raphael and Michael of the south and west. The name of Uriel is on the north tower; it is consequently placed under his protection. Gabriel's name is on the east front. The building was therefore under the protection of both these angels.

There is a Nabathean inscription, Dr. Merrill tells us, dedicating a monument to Dusares, a god once worshipped here. He was an Oriental Bacchus.

There is a large reservoir in the centre of the town, and smaller ones in different parts. The city has been identified as Beth Gamul—mentioned by Jeremiah.[1]

[1] Jer. xlviii. 23.

THE SOUTHERN BORDER OF PALESTINE.

THE southern border of Palestine, the desert of Tîh, has many Biblical memories attached to it. On the Negeb, in the north-east plateau the patriarchs dwelt and fed their flocks. Across it Jacob and his family started on their way to the land where the latter were destined to become bondsmen; and here, in the Desert of the Wanderings, the tribes of Israel spent many years; across it, too, the Virgin fled with her Holy Child. The name signifies the "Desert of the Wanderings." It is a plateau, and runs in the form of a wedge into the peninsula of Sinai. There is a high steep cliff on the south-west, and a gradual descent on the south-east. It is bounded by the Mediterranean and the hills of Judah on the north; on the east by the 'Arabah; on the west by the isthmus of Suez.

It is a monotonous and most dreary desert, with a few isolated mountain groups upon it.

In the centre of the Tîh is a fort garrisoned by Turkish soldiers, named Nakhl. It is here that the road to Gaza and Hebron branches off from the Hajj road to Mecca. The Tîh has scarcely any water; and when found, it can only be obtained by scraping small pits in the ground near the few springs, and baling it out with the hand. Of course the water is then very muddy, and must be let stand before it is drinkable.

The ground is hard and flinty, but brown and parched herbage is scattered over the surface, and in spring, after the winter rains, it becomes green. There is generally moisture underground in the wadies, which are the water-courses of the winter rains, and amidst the parched arid waste their courses, looking down from the hills, are marked by a streak of green.

The plateau is drained by the Wady el 'Arish, the "river of Egypt" mentioned in the Scriptures as the southern frontier of Palestine. It is probably called thus, because it is the only direct road thither; and it separated the dominions of the Pharaohs from the Holy Land.

The plateau Jebel el Magrâh is the chief point of interest in the Tîh. It is on the north-east, and commences at Jebel 'Araif, and extends northwards, descending by terraces to the Wâdy er Rakhmeh; the mountains of which separate it from Beersheba.

The southern part of Jebel el Magrâh is barren, and has few ruins in it, but there are many stone circles and cairns on the hills. The principal wadies are Hanein and El Abyadh on the western side, and Marreh on the eastern. In the Wadies Garaiyeh, Lussân, El'Ain and Muweilih, and the neighbourhood of Jebel 'Araif, the first signs appear of the early Amalekites, who occupied this part of the country at the time of the Exodus.

Professor Palmer, whose tragic death excited so much feeling in England, was the first to thoroughly explore the Tîh, and to him we are chiefly indebted for what is known of it and its inhabitants. On the edge of the plateau of Jebel 'Araif, he tells us, in a steep ravine, is situated 'Ain Gadis; and the wide open plain beneath it was no doubt, he thinks, the Wilderness of Kadesh, the starting-point of the forty years' wanderings.

The Arabs who inhabit the desert plateau are the 'Azâzimeh Bedouins —

one of the lowest in intellect and poorest of the Arab tribes. They are exceedingly jealous of strangers, suspecting Europeans of being sorcerers, of keeping away rain, and of wishing to take their country from them.

The central portion of the great desert is occupied by the Teyâhah, a large and powerful tribe of Arabs. They escort the Hajj to 'Akabah, on its way from Egypt to Mecca, and are the hereditary guides of the travellers who cross the desert to Palestine.

Their camels are their sole means of subsistence. They are great robbers, carrying off whenever they can the flocks and camels of their neighbours. They actually travel on camels to the east of the Haurân, and to Palmyra, to rob the 'Anazeh, one of the largest of the Bedouin tribes, of their camels. They frequently succeed, but the 'Anazeh often pursue and overtake them, and rescue their property.

These tribes, by their plundering habits, entirely prevent the cultivation of the country within their reach, and are thus actual desert-makers.

In the Tîh are found the quaint beehive huts which we have previously mentioned —scattered over the hillsides; they were probably the homes of the Amalekites, or of King Arad's Canaanites. From seven to ten feet high, and about eight feet wide, they are circular in form, with an oval top. The doors have lintel and door-posts, and are about two feet square.

The stones of which they are built have been smoothed, perhaps with other stones. A flint arrow head and some shells were found in one by Professor Palmer.

He tells us also that there are many traces of a primeval people on the hills round Muweilih—stone circles carefully made, cairns and small heaps of stones placed in regular order and distances from each other on the edge of the cliffs, "and always facing the east."

Here he found traces of a large and populous city, near which were abundant springs, while well-made paths run up the sides of the hills; and there were appearances of dams in the valley.

Wâdy Gaseimeh, the next place of ancient habitation after Muweilih, is one of a confluence of three wadies—itself, Wâdy el 'Ain, and Wady es Seram. Here is an open plain surrounded by low hills, the tops of which are covered with cairns and stone circles, and also with pillars of stone.

There are two remarkable caves here—one with pillars supporting the roof, the other merely a square cutting.

Here there are well-made paths on the hills, and dams in the valley; fields marked out, and stone remains on the crest of every hill.

Still barren and desolate, the desert of Tîh ends here, and the south of the Negeb is reached.

Here, in Wady Birein, vegetation in its fulness appears — grass, asphodel, flowers of all kinds, wells and great herds of cattle, goats and sheep on the hills, asses and horses feeding. Though the country has been gradually improving, the change is still very delightful when this wady is reached. But the stone period has not yet entirely disappeared. There is a very large and carefully constructed stone circle here also. Opposite to it are two wells.

Here the first proof that the Christian Church had once taken root in the Negeb appears. Amongst the ruins of El 'Aujeh is a church which, with a fort, stands on the summit of a low hill above the Wady Hanein.

Once this spot must have been highly cultivated; it is now a desert, but walls and terraces on every side tell the traveller what El 'Aujeh once was.

Part of the apses of the church, of which there are three, are still standing, and a few broken columns lie near them. So far, to the very verge of the wilderness, had the Church carried the banner of the cross. The sides of the hills are covered here with little heaps of black stones—the

mounds on which grape vines were trained in the old times.

At Wady el Abyadh is a ruined fort, called El Meshrifeh. It is a stronghold enclosed by walls at the top of a hill, and was defended by five large towers, three on the south, one on the east side, and one on the west, with bastions and escarpments down into the valley.

The rocks beneath the fort and behind the first escarpments are hollowed into caves. In front of the fort are three stone circles. The walls of a church are also found here.

In the Magrâh es Sebaita, which drains into Wady el Abyadh, are the ruins of a large town of the same name. It is well built, and contains three churches, a tower, and two reservoirs for water. Here, also, Christianity had been received and practised. Like the cities of the Lejâh, the houses are all of stone, no timber being used in building them; the beams are of stone, long and thick, and supported on the arches of the lower storey, these arches being three feet apart, and two feet wide, so that the roof was quite secure resting on them.

The great church is at the north end of the town. It had three apses and a side chapel; the walls of the centre apse are still standing to the height of thirty feet. The other churches are smaller, but built on the same plan, resembling the old Greek churches.

A tower about twenty feet square stands south of the church. This town and the fort of El Meshrifeh, discovered by Professor Palmer, in the same neighbourhood, are identified by him as the Zephath of the Bible. Zephath means the City of the Watch-Tower. He thinks the fort of Meshrifeh is "the ruin of the watch-tower," and the ruins of Sebaita those of the city.

In Judges[1] we read that Judah, who had to win his inheritance, asked the assistance of his brother Simeon, and the brothers "slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called Hormah." It was the place where the Israelites had been made prisoners in the days of Moses.

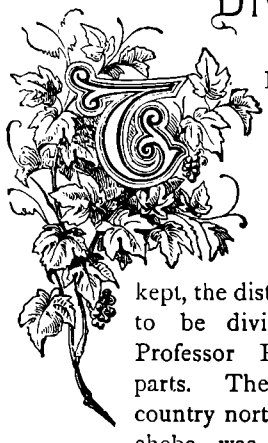
There is little more of interest in the south of the Negeb. Only a few more ruins, a well or two, and then the northern part is reached where the patriarchs dwelt and dug their wells—Beersheba.

But we have learned from the explorers of the Tîh that it was not always a wilderness in which Arabs sojourned; that it was cultivated; that it had great cities, and, above all, that even here the Christian faith was known and acknowledged by the erection of churches.

Why has it become an uncultivated waste? Because, no doubt, the Mahometan khalifs exterminated the Christians; the blood of martyrs has dyed these rocks, and then a weak government suffered the destroying Arab to take his place in the deserted towns; and ruin follows his footsteps. The Tîh cultivated, inhabited, and irrigated would be no longer a desert.

[1] Judges i. 17.

Divisions of the Negeb.



THE word Negeb in the Authorised Version of the Scriptures has generally been translated "south." If the right word were kept, the district would be found to be divided, according to Professor Palmer, into four parts. The first, in the low country north and west of Beersheba, was, he considers, the Negeb of the Cherethites, or Philistines, "south" being translated Negeb. The second, the hill country of Judah south of Hebron, would be the Negeb of Judah; the sites also of Ziph, Ma'in and Kurmel marked the Negeb of Caleb. The third—Tel Arad and its adjacent plains—form the Negeb of the Kenites, which extended to the end of the Dead Sea. The fourth portion would be the Negeb of Jerahmeel, bounded on the north by Wady Rakhmeh, and on the south by Wadies El Abyadh, Marreh and Maderah.

The first two divisions have been already described. The Kenites are first mentioned in the fifteenth chapter of Genesis, verses 18, 19. God says to Abraham, "Unto thy seed have I given this land, from the river of Egypt unto the great river, the river Euphrates: the Kenites, and the Kenizzites, and the Kadmonites."

This dominion over the Kenites proved a friendly one, for Jethro, the Kenite, the priest of Midian, was the father-in-law of Moses, and brought his wife and two sons to the lawgiver in the wilderness. He gave him also the wise advice that caused the institution of judges over thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens of the tribes. Jethro then returned to his own land. But a number of the Kenites went up afterwards with the Israelites into the Promised Land. In the first chapter of Judges, verse 16, we read that "The children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up out of the city of palm trees with the children of Judah into the wilderness of Judah, which lieth to the south of Arad," or Negeb of Arad.

Balaam, in his involuntary and inspired prophecy, tells us where was the actual dwelling-place of the tribe in his day. Gazing on their home, even as he spoke from Baal Peor, he says: "Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock. Nevertheless, the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry thee away captive."[1]

But though the tribe remained in its mountain city by the Dead Sea, many still dwelt amongst the Israelites. Jael, the wife of Heber, the Kenite, was willing to aid in their deliverance by a crime, and Saul, when sent to destroy the Amalekites, who dwelt in the neighbourhood of the Kenites, warned them to withdraw from the doomed nation, saying, "Go, depart, get you down from among the Amalekites, lest I destroy you with them: for ye showed kindness to all the children of Israel, when they came up out of Egypt. So the Kenites departed from among the Amalekites."[2]

We see from this chapter that the Amalekites dwelt on the mountains of the south, for Saul says, "Get you *down*." And we are told that after defeating Amalek, he pursued the Amalekites from Havilah "until thou comest to Shur, that is over against Egypt." And in 1 Sam. xxvii. 8 we are told that the Amalekites were of old the inhabitants "of the land as thou goest to Shur, even unto the land of Egypt."

Another and older nation dwelt in Jebel

[1] Num. xxiv. 21, 22.
[2] 1 Sam. xv. 6.

Magrâh; these were the Avim. In Deut. xi. 23 we read that the Avim dwelt in Hazerim, even unto Azza (Gaza). In Joshua xiii. 3, 4 the Avim are catalogued as the most southern of the tribes. Their country is therefore supposed to have been in the mountains of the 'Azazimeh.

Tell Arad, is the site of the city of "King Arad the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south," [1] and who, hearing that Israel came by the way of the spies, came out, attacked them, and took some of them prisoners. "And Israel vowed a vow unto the Lord, and said, If Thou wilt indeed deliver this people into my hand, then I will utterly destroy their cities.

"And the Lord hearkened to the voice of Israel, and delivered up the Canaanites; and they utterly destroyed them and their cities: and he called the name of the place Hormah."

The place is now only a white mound. At Keseifeh there are the ruins of many dilapidated buildings, and there is the circular apse of a small church, and two monolithic columns still standing, some broken columns lying about. There are also traces of a tesselated pavement, like a rude mosaic, found here, showing that civilized people once inhabited it.

The next town in this southern border is Tell Milh, the site of the ancient Moladah. All that remains here now are two wells at the foot of the hill. The masonry of both is fine, and they are surrounded by marble troughs, resembling those at Bir Seba (Beersheba). The Arabs have a tradition that Abraham dug the wells, and used to water his flocks here; and that his sheep-dogs wore collars of gold. Moladah must have been a large city, for the lower hills near the Tell are covered with ruins, and the foundations show its great extent.

Beyond a great open plain, called Johl el Ghûleh, is Wâdy 'Ararah, the Aroer of Judah, to which, because its inhabitants had treated him with great kindness, David sent a present of part of the spoil he had taken from the Amalekites, when he had pursued and punished them for their raid on Ziklag (1 Sam. xxx. 28).

At Wâdy Ararah the scenery changes. It rises in a cavern in the mountains called El Menjel, and then low hills and stony valleys once more appear.

The Wâdy el Abyadh and Wâdy Marreh take their rise in the highest part of the hills here. The first flows westward into the Wâdy êl Arish. The second passes through the eastern slope of the plateau, and flows through the 'Arabah to the Dead Sea. Wâdy Marreh is a grand and white valley, for the precipitous cliffs that rise on either side of it are of limestone. The valley is broad and level; the water in it undrinkable. At the head of Wâdy Marreh are the ruins of Abdeh, identified as the site of Eboda, situated on a promontory of rock that projects into the valley. The situation of all the towns in this part of the Negeb is similar—on projecting heights where the sides are steep and precipitous, and good defence might be made. The view from 'Abdeh is very extensive, over the Wâdies and low mountains.

The ruins are those of a fort and outbuildings, surrounded by a wall; a second enclosure, with which it communicated by a gateway, is on the south-east of it. A cross sculptured over one of the doors gives an idea that the town was Christian. Some of the walls still standing are fifteen feet high. To the west of the fort is a house which is not ruined, but well preserved. The place was strongly defended by its position and its walls, which are of well cut stones. The gateway is a semi-circular arch, well finished; there is an arch also in the wall. In the centre of the small fortress was a large reservoir. There are traces of former cultivation round the town, and grape-heaps. Professor Palmer considers that these ruins are on the site of Eboda; Dr. Robinson and others identified Eboda with El 'Aujeh. The discovery of the true site of Eboda was important, as it showed

[1] Num. xxi. 1.

the course that the ancient Roman road took through the 'Arabah to Petra. Professor Palmer thinks that 'Abdeh was a very important station, as the roads from Gaza to Petra and 'Akabah were here.

This road through the 'Azazimeh mountains descends to Petra or Edom, the land of Esau; a narrow mountainous country extending northward from the 'Arabah to Wâdy Kerak, the southern boundary of Moab.

There is matter for thought in the fact of such a large portion of a country, as that of which we have been speaking, being reduced to a mere land of ruins. It stands alone in the number of its lost cities, and is to all ages a visible confirmation of the truth of prophecy; preserved through the ages by the unchangeable character of the East, and the hindrances which a weak and despotic government oppose to any improvement.





NINEVEH IN RUINS.

THE INVADERS OF PALESTINE.

OF the earlier invaders of Palestine, after it had become the possession of the Jews, the Assyrians are the first named in Scripture. In 772 B.C. Pul is mentioned as invading Northern Palestine and taking Damascus. Little is known of this king; but Tiglath Pileser was the first king of any note who reigned at Nineveh after the destruction of the first Assyrian empire, when Sardanapalus (Byron's hero) burned himself, his wives, servants, and treasures on a funeral pile. The first empire was divided, Belesis obtaining Babylon. Tiglath Pileser restored Assyria in a great measure to its former renown. He put an end to the Syrian kingdom, conquering Rezin, and taking Damascus; took from Israel many towns, and put Ahaz, king of Judah (who had called him in as an ally), under a heavy tribute.

Shalmanezer, Tiglath Pileser's successor, was the conqueror and destroyer of the kingdom of Israel, leading the nation away captive, and placing them in Halah and Habor, by the river Golan (now the Kizzle

Ozan), which rises in Kurdistan, and flows near the Euphrates. Shalmanezer reigned fourteen years, and was succeeded by his son Sennacherib. In the fourteenth year of Hezekiah, king of Judah, Sennacherib marched into the country and took all the fenced cities of Judah. He was on his way to invade Egypt. From the earliest times the forces of Egypt and Assyria had marched through the land of Canaan by the road of the seashore, in their attacks on each other. Thothmes, king of Egypt, as we have before said, invaded and conquered Canaan, apparently because it was in his way, as it lay between him and the Hittites; but this was before the Israelites had gained the land. Sennacherib could not venture to leave Judah unsubdued on his flank.

Hezekiah sent a submissive message, and offered to pay him tribute. A heavy one was imposed on him, which he could only pay by cutting off the gold in Solomon's costly temple.

But this sacrifice was made in vain. Sennacherib was besieging Lachish, then a strong city. It had been restored and fortified by Rehoboam, rebuilt entirely by Jehoshaphat; a wall had been built round it by Ahaz, and Hezekiah, on hearing of the approach of the Assyrian army, had fortified it. The Palestine Exploration Survey fix the site of Lachish at Tell el Hesy, already noticed. The Assyrian king sent part of his army against Jerusalem, and his general insulted and threatened the king in the hearing of his people.[1] Hezekiah, in great distress, sent to Isaiah, and the prophet consoled him by a prophecy soon and signally fulfilled: "Thus saith the Lord, Be not afraid of the words which thou hast heard, with which the servants of the king of Assyria have blasphemed Me. Behold, I will send a blast upon him, and he shall hear a rumour, and shall return to his own land; and I will cause him to fall by the sword in his own land."

Sennacherib was then at Libnah—he had left Lachish. Libnah was a city near the sea-coast. It is believed that Arak el Menshiyeh is on its site, judging from its position relatively to Eglon and Lachish.[2]

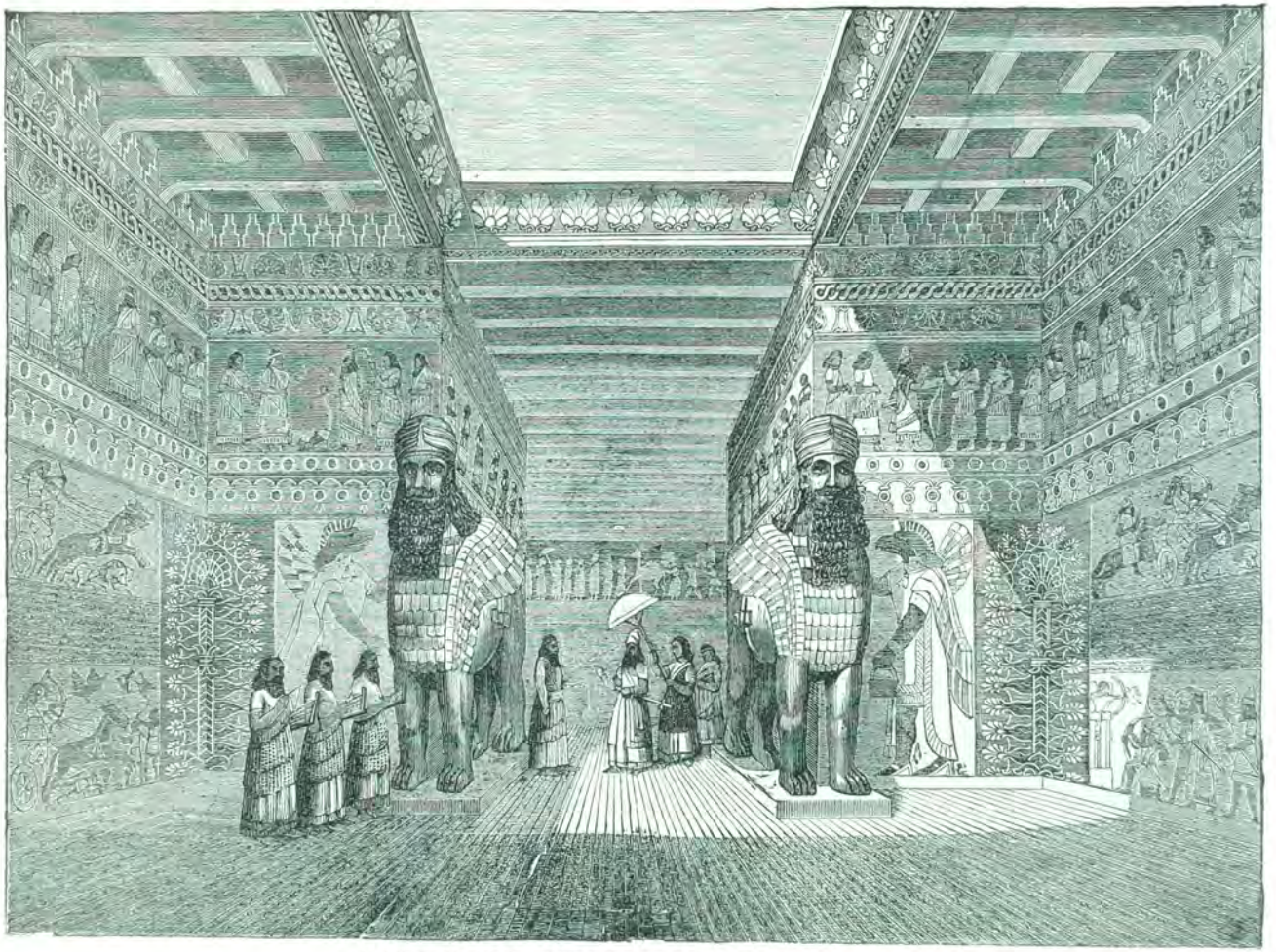
The word Libnah signifies "milk white," and the rocks and cliffs round Arak el Menshiyeh are limestone of remarkable whiteness. Here the host of Sennacherib lay when the angel of the Lord—the dreadful wind of the desert—killed in one night a hundred and eighty-five thousand men. Sennacherib, with the remains of his army, returned to Nineveh. He had probably "heard a rumour" of the projected rebellion of his sons, and therefore hastened back. They, probably dreading his anger in the future, slew him with the sword as he was worshipping in the temple of Nisroch his god, and they escaped into the land of Armenia, or Ararat, and Esarhaddon his son reigned in his stead.

Esarhaddon was a man of energy and a warrior. The royal family of Babylon had died out. There was an interregnum of eight years, full of troubles and commotions. Esarhaddon took advantage of them, and at this juncture made himself master of Babylon, and reigned over the united empire for thirteen years. He sent generals into Judah, who took Manasseh, the base and unworthy son of Hezekiah, prisoner. This man had had the prophet Isaiah sawn asunder. In his captivity he repented so sincerely that God permitted him to be released, and to resume his previous position in Judah. Esarhaddon, after a prosperous reign of thirty-nine years over Assyria, and thirteen over the united empire, died, and was succeeded by his son Saosduchinus, better known by the name of Nabuchodonoser I.

Tobit was still alive at this time, and dwelt with the other captives at Nineveh. He foretold the final destruction of Nineveh on account of its great wickedness, and advised his son to leave it. Nabuchodonoser

[1] 2 Kings xviii.

[2] Murray's "Hand-book of Palestine."



ASSYRIAN PALACE ACCORDING TO LAYARD'S DISCOVERIES.

defeated the king of the Medes in a pitched battle fought in the plain of Ragan, in the twelfth year of his reign. He took Ecbatana, the capital of Media, and returned triumphant to Nineveh.

It was immediately after this expedition that he sent his general Holofernes against Judea. Bethulia was besieged by him, but Judith, by a deception, obtained admission to his tent, and killed him.

Saracus succeeded, an effeminate and careless man. Nabopolossar, a Babylonian, and the general of his army, usurped part of his empire, and to sustain his uncertain power, made an alliance with Cyaxares, king of the Medes. With their united forces they besieged and took Nineveh, killed Saracus, and utterly destroyed his great city Nineveh, Babylon henceforth becoming the capital of the empire.

The Babylonians and Medes became so formidable that the fears of Egypt were awakened, and Pharaoh Necho, declaring war against them, marched towards the Euphrates, at the head of a powerful army. Probably because he had entered into some kind of alliance with Assyria, Josiah, king of Judah, endeavoured to intercept the Egyptian army at Megiddo. We have already said the site of this town is at Kurbet el Mujedd'a, and that nothing remains of it but a heap of ruins. Here the good Josiah was killed.

By his skill, patience, and intelligence Sir Henry Layard has resuscitated the remains of ancient Nineveh. On the banks of the Tigris were scattered immense heaps of earth, principally on the east side, opposite the modern city of Mosul. Little was it suspected for many and many an age, what these mounds concealed. The destruction of Nineveh had been so complete that Xenophon—who about 400 B.C. led the famous retreat of the Ten Thousand—spoke of it as a great deserted enclosure, when Tiphsah, Solomon's city on the Euphrates, was a flourishing town. Lucian, a Latin writer of the second century after Christ, a native of a city on the Euphrates, declared that Nineveh had entirely perished, that no vestige of it remained, and that no one knew where it had stood! The mounds which, however, according to tradition, marked the spot, were called Kouyunjik, and Nebbi-Yunus, or the so-called tomb of Jonah on the east bank of the Tigris; Nimrûd, about eighteen miles down the river; Karasules, about twelve miles north of Nimrûd; and Khorsabad, nearly the same distance north of Kouyunjik. These heaps formed the four corners of a rhomboid, the circumference of which was sixty miles—exactly the dimensions of the city described in Jonah, as of "three days' journey." Over this space were scattered many smaller mounds, and the country was strewn with bricks and old broken pottery. M. Botta, the French Consul residing at Mosul, first suspected that these mounds concealed ruins. He excavated in the Khorsabad mound, and uncovered a chamber lined with slabs of marble, on which were sculptured in relief, battles, sieges, processions, etc., with arrow-headed inscriptions. It was evident that the palace in which this room must once have been, had been burned, as the slabs were so calcined that they could scarcely be preserved long enough to allow the inscriptions on them to be copied before they crumbled into dust. In other chambers, however, the slabs were sufficiently perfect to be taken away; and in many cases they retained the colours in which they had been painted.

But in 1845 Sir Henry Layard made far greater discoveries. He excavated the great mound of Nimrûd, which is the farthest away from Khorsabad. Here he found monuments of far greater majesty of design, and of a severer style of execution; with peculiarities of costume which indicated a great difference of age between the disinterred palaces.

At Nimrûd were discovered, first, a palace near the north-west corner of the mound; then another palace at the south-west corner; one at the north-east; and

one in the centre. The north-east and central palaces were evidently the most ancient, as the one in the south-west corner had been built chiefly of slabs taken from them. The south-east corner was occupied by tombs, beneath which lay the remains of another palace.

The north-west and central palaces had not been subject to the action of fire, but the south-west palace had evidently been destroyed by it. This last palace is supposed by Mr. Ferguson to have been the one where Sardanapalus erected his funeral pile, for Sir H. Layard found the southern entrance almost blocked up by charcoal. Sir Henry Rawlinson (as also Sir H. Layard) has succeeded in the difficult task of reading the cuneiform characters in which the inscriptions on these ruins are written. The inscriptions are of the greatest possible interest in connection with the history of the Holy Land; for they are the original records kept by the Assyrian kings of their relations with the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and they fully confirm the truth of the inspired volumes.

"The king who built the palace of Khorsabad," wrote Sir Henry Rawlinson, "excavated by the French, is named *Sargina*, the Sargon of Isaiah. But he also bears in some inscriptions the name of Shalmanezer, by which title he was better known to the Jews. In the first year of his reign he came up against the city of Samaria and the tribes of the country of Beth-Homri (Omri being the name of the founder of Samaria).[1] He carried off into captivity 27,280 families, and settled in their places colonists brought from Babylonia, appointed prefects to administer the country, and imposed the same tribute that had been paid to former kings. The only tablet at Khorsabad which exhibits this conquest in any detail is unfortunately much mutilated." On a tablet which he set up towards the close of his reign, in the palace of the Sardanapalus at Nimrûd, he styles himself "Conquerer of the remote Judea."

[1] 1 Kings xvi. 16 et seq.

The story of Sennacherib is also told in the stone records of Assyria, and corresponds equally with the Bible account. We have in the British Museum a cylinder—Sir Henry Rawlinson tells us—on which is a tolerably perfect copy of the annals of Esarhaddon.

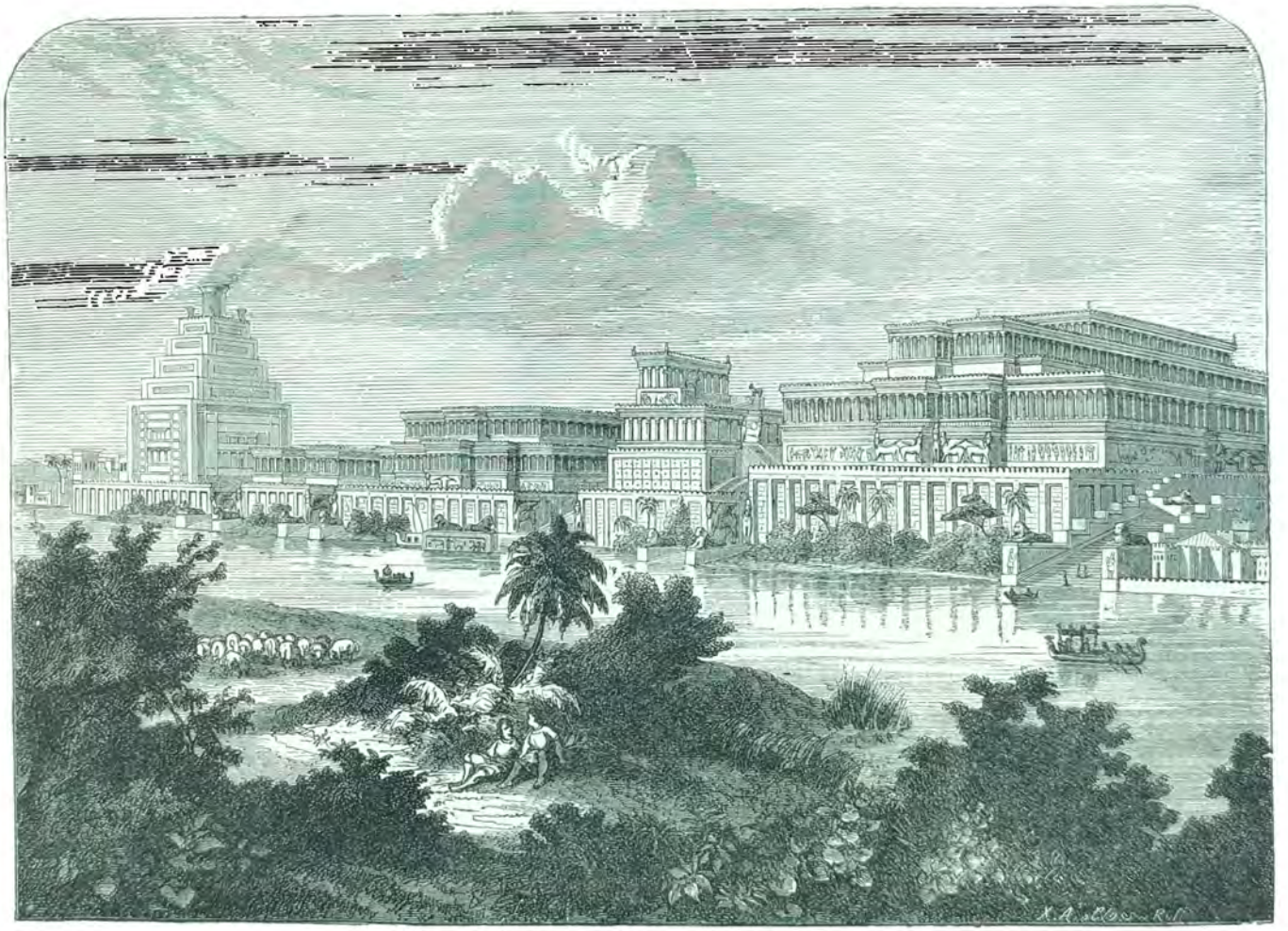
"One of the most interesting matters connected with this discovery of the identity of the Assyrian kings is, that in the bas-reliefs of Khorsabad and Kouyunjik we have representations by the chisel of contemporary artists of that Jerusalem which contained the Temple of Solomon."

Much of this history of the Assyrian conquests had been doubted by cavillers at the Scripture, from the want of contemporary profane history, Sennacherib's name being only in the Bible; but the stone records, so long buried, fully attest the truth of the sacred story.

The story of the Captivity is so well known, as recorded in the Bible, that it is quite needless to do more than mention Nebuchadnezzar and his successors.

The magnificence of ancient Babylon was almost fabulous. It stood in a large flat plain, and had no natural defences. This may have been the reason why the walls were of such immense thickness and height. According to the ancient historians they were eighty-seven feet thick and three hundred and fifty feet high, built also of enormous stones cemented with bitumen. They encompassed the city, forming an exact square, each side of which is said to have been fifteen miles in length. Bitumen binds building much firmer and stronger than lime, and soon grows harder than the stones it unites.

These walls were surrounded outside with a vast ditch full of water, and lined throughout with bricks. On every side of this great square were twenty-five gates—a hundred in all—made of solid brass. Thus, when God by Isaiah promised Cyrus (then unborn) the conquest of Babylon, He told him that He would break in pieces before



ELEVATION OF AN ASSYRIAN PALACE, AFTER LAYARD.

him the gates of brass. Between every two of these gates were three towers, one at each corner of the square, and three towers between the last gate and the corner of the square. Each of these towers was ten feet higher than the walls. From each gate a street went in a straight line to the opposite gate; thus the streets crossed each other in the centre at right-angles—fifty streets, consequently, were in the town. Besides these there were four half streets that had houses on one side, and the wall on the other; they were each two hundred feet broad, the others were a hundred and fifty wide.[1]

By the streets crossing each other the town was divided into six hundred and seventy-six squares of two miles and a quarter in circumference.

The houses stood in these squares, detached from each other, three or four stories high, and highly decorated externally.



BABYLON INUNDATED.

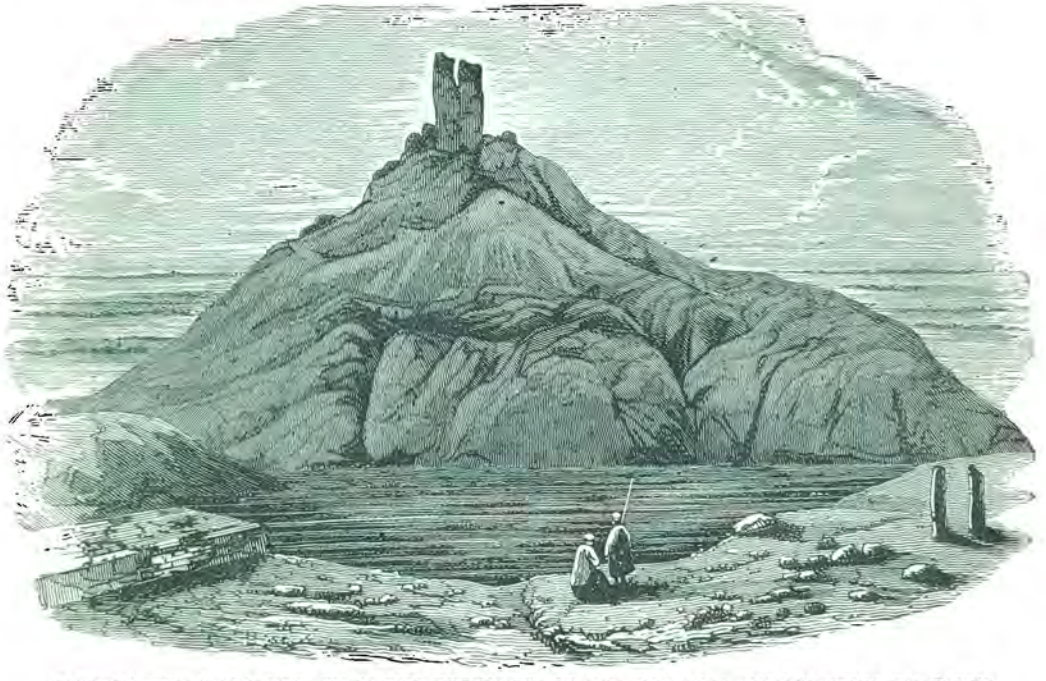
Quintus Curtius says in the centre of every square was a garden—much like our own town squares. A branch of the Euphrates ran right across the city from the north to the south side. On each side of the river was a quay, and a wall resembling the outer one. There was a magnificent bridge across the river: the arches were made of huge stones fastened together by chains of iron and melted lead.

The Euphrates, like the Nile, overflows its banks, when in June, July and August the snows on the mountains of Armenia melt. To prevent the damage the overflow might do the town, two canals were made, that carried the waters of the great river into the Tigris before the flood reached Babylon. Artificial banks were also raised of brick, cemented with bitumen, and they had also an artificial lake.

[1] Herod. l. i. c. 178–180. Diod. l. 2 95–96. Q. Curtius lv. 62.

The old palace stood on the east side of the river, and near it was the temple of Belus or Baal. The new palace stood on the west side, and was even larger than the older one. This palace was surrounded by three walls, with wide spaces between them, and they were embellished with "sculptures" of animals of all kinds. Amongst them was one of Semiramis on horseback, throwing a javelin at a leopard; and her husband Ninus piercing a lion.

In the new palace were the Hanging Gardens so celebrated by the Greeks. They were formed by large terraces raised one above another from the walls, supported by vast arches, one above another, and strengthened by a wall on every side, twenty-two feet thick. The ascent from one terrace to the other was by stairs ten feet wide. On the top of the arches were first laid large flat stones, sixteen feet long and four broad; over these was a layer of reeds mixed with a great deal of bitumen upon which were two rows of bricks



BABYLON.—BIRS NIMROUD, WITH THE EUPHRATES IN THE DISTANCE, OVERFLOWING ITS BANKS.

closely cemented together. The whole was covered with thick sheets of lead, on which was placed the mould for the garden. This flooring was contrived to keep the moisture of the mould from running away through the arches. The mould laid on it was so deep that forest trees would grow in it.

On the upper terraces an engine was placed, by which water was drawn up from the river to water the gardens. They were full of plants of all kinds, shrubs and flowers.

In the spaces between the arches on which the terraces rested were magnificent apartments, very light and having a splendid prospect. Amytis, the wife of Nebuchadnezzar, was the daughter of Astyages, the king of Media, and having been brought up amongst woods and meadows, longed for trees and flowers; and to please her Nebuchadnezzar caused these really wonderful gardens to be erected.

Another of the wonders of Babylon was the temple of Belus.

It consisted of eight towers built one above the other, decreasing gradually towards the top. Hence Strabo called it a pyramid. It was proved that this tower was much higher than the pyramids. And there is little or no doubt that it was the Tower of Babel itself—for it is built of bricks and bitumen, as the Scripture tells us the Tower of Babel was. It was full of the richest offerings to Baal, whose temple it was; and it stood till the time that Xerxes returned from Greece, when he partly destroyed it, and robbed it of its riches. Alexander, on his return from India, intended to rebuild it, and set a number of men at work to clear away the rubbish; but two months afterwards the great conqueror died, and the work was never resumed.

The tower, or rather its ruin, still remains, and is known as the Birs Nimroud.

Sir Robert Porter says in his Travels: "In my second visit to Birs Nimroud, my party suddenly halted, having descried several dark objects moving along the summit of the hill, which they construed into dismounted Arabs on the look-out. I took out my glass to examine, and soon distinguished that the causes of our alarm were two or three majestic lions, taking the air upon the heights of the pyramid."



RUINS NEAR BABYLON.

This has been the fate of the Tower of Confusion. It is the haunt of serpents, scorpions, and wild beasts, but left to be a standing witness to these latter ages of the mighty power of God, and the truth of His word.

Isaiah's prophecy against Babylon is so remarkable that it is truly worth recording, remembering that it was written in Hezekiah's reign. "Thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! the golden city ceased! . . . Thy pomp is brought down to the grave, and the noise of thy viols: *the worm is spread under thee, and the worms cover thee.* How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning!"[1]

[1] Isa. xiv. 4, 11, 12.

"And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees' excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation: neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the desert shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there." At the time this prophecy was spoken and written, Merodach-Baladan was ruler in Babylon; Nebuchadnezzar's great works then did not exist. Yet they are spoken of as present, and their future doom is foretold; the fulfilment of prophecy is before the eyes of the world.

The kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar passed to his son Evil Merodach, who released Jehoiachin, king of Judah, out of prison (where he had spent thirty-seven years), and received him as an equal and a friend. But generous as this appeared, Evil Merodach was a selfish voluptuary, and for this and other extravagances his relatives conspired against him and put him to death.

Two usurpers followed Nerglissar and Laborosoarchod. The first was slain in battle; the last murdered by his subjects. Evil Merodach's son now succeeded. His mother was the celebrated queen Nitocris, who raised many noble buildings in Babylon. She caused her own monument to be placed in the chief gate of the city, with an inscription begging her successors not to disturb her tomb for the treasures it contained. It remained untouched till the reign of Darius the Mede, who had it opened, but found no treasures in it, but a scroll bearing these words: "If thou wert not a most sordid, avaricious soul, thou wouldst not have disturbed the monument of the dead."

In the reign of Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel the prophet had won the king's favour by interpreting his dreams. He appears again on the eve of Belshazzar's fate to read the handwriting on the wall, and announce to the wicked king that "the Mede was at the gate, the Persian on his throne."

Darius is so united with Daniel's story that every one knows the chief events of his life; but he was a great and warlike king, and held the empire of Babylon with a strong hand.

He was succeeded by his nephew Cyrus, who continued the royal favour to Daniel, and on reading Isaiah's prophecy of him by name, before he was born, was induced to permit the restoration of the Jews to their own land, and to order the rebuilding of the Temple.

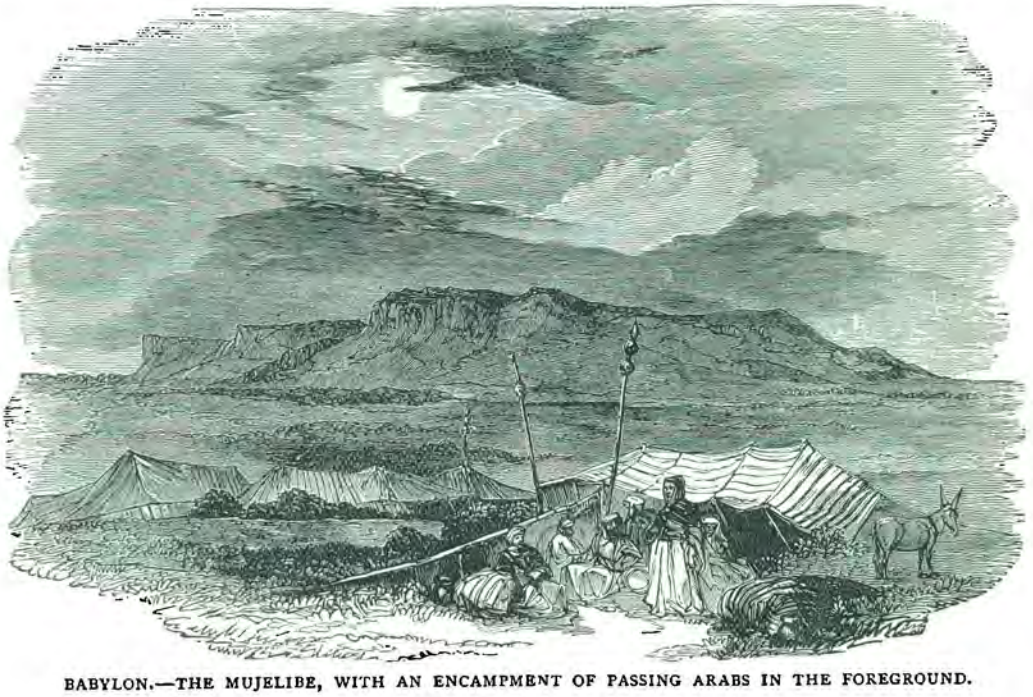
On the whole, the Persian kings were favourable to the Jews, though, of course, they required an oath of fealty from them, which Josephus tells us was faithfully kept.

Daniel had some of his wonderful historic visions at Susa, on the banks of the river Ulai. Susa, once a magnificent city, is now nothing but heaps of ruins. The site is believed to be Sus. Sir John Macdonald Kinneir describes them as very extensive, occupying a space of over twelve miles. They extend as far as the eastern bank of the Kerak—an immense space—between that river and the Abeyal, and like the ruins of Babylon, Ctesiphon, and Kufah, consist of hillocks of earth and rubbish, covered with broken pieces of brick and coloured tiles. The largest of these mounds stands at the distance of about three miles from the river Kerak. There are two of them. The first is quite a mile in circumference, and nearly a hundred feet high. The other is not quite so high, but double the circumference. These mounds bear some resemblance to the pyramidal heaps of Babylon, but instead of being made of brick, they are formed of clay and of pieces of tile with irregular layers of brick and mortar, five or six feet in thickness, to serve, as it were, a kind of prop to the mass. Large blocks of marble have been frequently found here by the Arabs, when digging for hidden treasure.

At the foot of the highest of the pyramids is the tomb of Daniel, a small and apparently modern building, erected on the spot where he is believed to be buried.

Sir John Kinneir adds to this account, which is given from him: "The city of Sus is now a gloomy wilderness, infested with lions, hyenas, and other beasts of prey."

Sir John Malcolm, in his History of Persia, thus describes the tomb of the great prophet. "It is a small building, but sufficient to shelter some dervishes, who watch the remains of the prophet, and are supported by the alms of pious pilgrims who visit the sepulchre. These dervishes are now the only inhabitants of Susa, and every species of wild beast roams at large over that spot, on which some of the proudest palaces ever raised by human art once stood." He thinks that nothing could have made the Moslems erect the tomb of Daniel but a belief that it was the real site of the prophet's sepulchre. His tomb in the Middle Ages was supposed to bring good fortune; and there is a curious account in Benjamin of Tudela's pilgrimage, of the inhabitants of Shushan fighting



BABYLON.—THE MUJELIBE, WITH AN ENCAMPMENT OF PASSING ARABS IN THE FOREGROUND.

for the coffin of Daniel, and Saugar, king of Persia, having it put into a glass case, and suspended from the bridge between the two divisions of the town. If there was any truth in this story, the site where the coffin was afterwards buried would probably be remembered and kept traditionally; but it has been much disputed.

The tomb of the prophet Ezekiel is also a place of pilgrimage for the Moslems and Jews in the present day. It is on the banks of the Euphrates; it is covered with a cupola, and is a very handsome building, said to have been built by Jehoiachin, king of Judah, after Evil-Merodach had released him from prison.

Babylon has for centuries been nothing but heaps of pyramidal ruins. In Benjamin of Tudela's time it extended over thirty miles, and was so infested by serpents and scorpions, that men feared to approach it.[1]

[1] Bohn's Early Travels in Palestine.

The next invader of Palestine was Alexander the Great. He took Tyre after a long siege, and then, angry at the refusal of the Jews to send reinforcements to his army there, marched on Jerusalem. The tradition preserved by Josephus is so interesting that one feels reluctant to hear it doubted, as it is (partially, at least), by Bishop Connop Thirlwall. The tradition is that Jaddua, the high priest at the time, had a dream, in which God commanded him to go out in procession with priests and Levites; the high priest and priests in their splendid sacerdotal vestments, the Levites and secular chiefs in pure white, and thus to meet the Greek conqueror, when God would give them deliverance.

Meantime the conqueror of Tyre and Gaza advanced on the Holy City. He had reached Mount Scopus when he was met by this stately procession. The greater part of the inhabitants had accompanied the priests, all in white robes. The scene must have been a highly picturesque one—the Syrian sun glittering on the brass helmets of the Greeks, and on the white robes of the Jews.

With Alexander came the Chaldeans, Phœnicians, and Samaritans, eager to witness the fall of the rival city, and the fate of their ancient enemies.

The high priest, of course, wore as usual when in his full vestments, the gold plate, with the awful name of God inscribed on it. As Alexander's eyes rested on him, he suddenly advanced to meet him, and bowed as in adoration before him, the bishop says, "like Attila, at the sight of Leo and his clergy, struck with pious awe." Parmenio went up to the king, and asked him why, when all others adored him, he should adore the high priest of the Jews. Alexander replied: 'I did not adore him, but his God; for I saw this very person in a dream, in this very habit, when I was at Dios, in Macedonia, who, when I was considering with myself how I might obtain the dominion of Asia, exhorted me to make no delay, but boldly to pass over the sea thither, for that he would conduct my army, and would give me the dominion over the Persians. Therefore, having seen this person in this habit, and remembering my vision, I believe that I lead this army under the Divine conduct, and shall therewith conquer Darius, and destroy the power of the Persians.'"

Convinced of the divinity of the Jews' God, Alexander went up to the Temple, and offered sacrifices according to the Jewish ritual, guided and directed by Jaddua. He honoured the priests with magnificent gifts, and granted the nation extraordinary privileges, which he denied to the envious, maglignant Samaritans.

This incident is not found either in Arrian or Curtius. "Arrian seems, indeed," says Bishop Thirlwall, "to contradict the main facts related by Josephus, for he says that after the fall of Tyre, all the cities of Palestine, except Gaza, submitted to the conqueror. If so, Alexander's appearance before Jerusalem cannot have been a threatening one; and the motive of his visit would seem to have been only the satisfaction of a natural curiosity. . . . But in other respects the story, notwithstanding the silence of the Greeks, is probably well founded. The respect paid by Alexander to the Jewish religion, and even the fiction of the dream, are perfectly consistent with his character and policy, if they do not stamp the narrative with an unquestionable mark of truth."

We cannot see why the bishop calls the dream a fiction. It was not stranger than those of Nebuchadnezzar, if as strange, and it is remarkable that those men who were evidently raised up to be God's instruments in the government of the world, had generally by dream, or some other means, a revelation of the Almighty. This was the case with Nebuchadnezzar and Constantine, the latter seeing the sign in heaven of the cross and motto. It seems irrational to accuse these princes of useless falsehood. They certainly could rule without dream or sign.

Alexander, after his act of worship, left Syria subject to Andromachus, who succeeded Parmenio in the government of Damascus.

We can scarcely call the Plotemies and Seleucidæ invaders, though they must have distracted and injured Palestine by their contests to obtain the country. Antiochus the Great seems to have succeeded, and this brought on, and was followed by, the despotism and cruelty of Antiochus Epiphanes.

The insults which this king offered to the God of Israel, his desecration of the Temple and cruelties to the Jews, called the Maccabees into the field, and they, by their valour and patriotism, restored the independence of their country.

Then succeeded the line of Asmonean princes, ending in Aristobulus, whom Pompey led in triumph in Rome; the last scions of their house being Mariamne and her young brother, murdered by Herod.

The next invader was Pompey the Great. He had a strong desire to carry his arms through Syria and Arabia; and entered Judea, taking many towns, and setting some free from the tyrants who oppressed them. He marched on Jerusalem, and once more the Jews saw the advance of the legions of a great European power from Mount Scopus. On the north, the city of Jerusalem was not so well fortified as on the other sides; but there a broad and deep ditch encompassed the city, and included within it the Temple, "which," says Josephus, "was itself encompassed about by a very strong wall." There were, as usual, dissensions within the walls of the town. Part of the people thought it would be wiser to surrender to Pompey. But he had their king, Aristobulus, in prison, and his (Aristobulus's) party within the walls insisted on defence, seized the Temple, and cut off the bridge which reached from it to the city. The others admitted the Roman army, and gave up the city and the king's palace to Pompey. Hyrcanus, who, as elder brother, claimed the crown Aristobulus had assumed, had joined Pompey, and assisted him on all occasions. Pompey pitched his camp within the wall, on the north side of Mount Moriah, where it was most practicable; but even on that side there were "great towers, and a ditch had been dug, and a deep valley begirt it round. On the parts towards the city were precipices, and the bridge by which Pompey had got in was broken down." The Romans besieged the Temple; and finding that the Jews would fight in self-defence on the Sabbath, but would not hinder the erecting of the besiegers' works on that day; from a strange superstition that the latter was not included in the permission to fight for life on the Sabbath, he took care not to suffer any attack on the seventh day, but spent it in making, unopposed, the engines of war, and raising the banks by which he would ultimately take the city.

The priests, meantime, were as punctual as ever in their ritual duties; twice a day they offered their usual sacrifices, with stones and darts falling amongst them, and killing many.

But a breach was at length made in the wall, and the Temple was taken, the priests being slain beside the altar they would not leave. Twelve thousand Jews were slain; very few Romans. And then Pompey entered the Temple, passing even into the Holy of Holies, where only the high priest might enter. The building was full of treasures: the golden table, the golden candlestick, the pouring vessels might well have tempted the greed or avarice of other men; not to speak also of the two thousand talents of sacred money. But Pompey was one of the noblest of the Romans. He reverenced all religions, and did not touch a single article in the Temple, leaving its treasures intact.

The next day he ordered the Temple to be cleansed, and that the offerings to God should be resumed. He restored the high priesthood to Hyrcanus, but made Jerusalem tributary to Rome; took away those cities of Cœle-Syria, which the Jews had

subdued, put them under the government of the Roman prefect, and confined the whole nation within its own bounds. The royal authority, which had gone with the priesthood in right of their family, was not restored. Leaving Scaurus with two Roman legions to govern the country, he returned to Rome, and Aristobulus, his younger son, and his two daughters walked in Pompey's triumph.

But the turbulent spirit of the Jews was certain to break out in the end.

They reached the climax of their wickedness in the crucifixion of our Lord, and the woe He had denounced on Jerusalem, and wept over as He gazed on the city, was slowly but surely approaching. The procurators placed over the country by Rome were oppressive, and often cruel; and the spirit of the nation chafed under their rule. A tumult arose in Cæsarea, which ended in a dreadful massacre of the Jews in that city, and the people, now roused to desperation, broke out in rebellion, and began that awful war which led to the ruin of their nation. Once more the Roman eagles appeared before Jerusalem, and the terrible siege that has no parallel in history began. It is too well known to need repetition. But, the Temple burned, —the city destroyed,—the nation scattered, —Palestine was no longer the country of the Jews.

It remained a province of the Roman or Byzantine empire till the rise of the Mahometan power.

And, as a province of Rome, it had cities of great importance and magnificence raised in it; especially east of the Jordan. During the Byzantine empire numbers of churches attested the spread of Christianity over the country.

But that empire was hastening to its decay. In 611 the Persians, under Khosroes II., invaded Syria, took Jerusalem, burnt the Temple, and led the patriarch away captive. Heraclius, however, defeated Khosroes, and brought back the patriarch to his city.

But the youth who had traded to Bozrah had by this time assumed the name of a prophet. When Heraclius returned in triumph from the Persian war, he was visited at Emesa by one of the ambassadors of Mahomet, who came to urge the acceptance of Islamism on the Emperor of the East. Heraclius courteously entertained the envoy, and this was sufficient to make the Arabs believe in the Christian emperor's conversion to the faith of Mahomet. But this idea soon vanished, and the murder of an envoy gave them a pretence for invading Palestine on the east of the Jordan.

The land was then covered with a line of forts, and the populous cities of Gerasa, Philadelphia, and Bozrah were strongly fortified; but Caled took Bozrah, as we have already related, and the Saracens next conquered Damascus.

At Yermuk, or Yarmuk (636), the forces of the emperor of the East encountered the Moslems. We have already described the battle and its result. The defeated Romans fell back on Jerusalem. The Saracens appealed to the khalif to ask if they should next march on Cæsarea or Jerusalem. The latter was a holy city in the eyes of the Moslems, as well as in those of the Christians. It had been "sanctified" to them "by the revelation of Moses, of Jesus, and of Mahomet himself." The forces of Abu Obeidah were ordered at once to besiege Jerusalem. The siege lasted four months, the attack and defence being equally brave. But the Christians were at length compelled to yield. The emperor's general had fled in the spring from a foolish superstition, which no doubt influenced the patriarch also. It was that Jerusalem should be taken by a man with three letters in his name, and the Khalif Omar's name in Arabic has but three; consequently, when Sophronius appeared on the walls, he came resolved only to surrender the city (according to the prophecy) to Omar himself.

After a vain attempt to dissuade the lieutentant of the khalif from his impious

enterprise, the patriarch proposed a fair capitulation, with a clause that the articles should be ratified by the authority and presence of Omar himself.

The question was debated in the Council of Medina. The sanctity of the place and Ali's advice persuaded the khalif to comply with the patriarch's request, and to go himself to Jerusalem. He (Omar) was at that time one of the greatest monarchs in the world; but his moderation, one might say his asceticism, was as great as if he had been reared in Sparta in her best days.

This invader came not with the pomp of an Assyrian or Babylonian king, nor with armoured and stately soldiers, such as those of Greece or Rome. He travelled on a red camel, with rough saddle bags on each side, one containing parched corn, the other dates. Before him hung his skin of water, behind him a wooden platter that served him as a dining-table. At night he slept beneath a tree, or in his tent; in the morning, looking towards Mecca, he performed his prayers.[1]

Wherever he halted, the people were invited, without distinction of rank, to partake of his homely fare. And his power was executed also in the administration of justice. He relieved the tributaries from extortion and cruelty, and reproved the luxury of his officers when they met him, "despoiling them of their rich silks, and dragging them in the dirt." When he came within sight of Jerusalem, he cried with a loud voice: "God is victorious! O Lord, give us an easy conquest." And pitching his tent of coarse hair, he calmly seated himself on the ground.

The terms of surrender were soon arranged. The Christians were to build no more churches; they should not set up crosses, nor ring church bells; Moslems journeying were to be entertained free of expense for three days—the law still amongst the Arabs; they should rise and stand before a Moslem; they should not use the Arabic language, sell wine, ride upon saddles, or bear arms. There were some other slight rules about wearing a peculiar dress, but nothing of any more importance, except that they were in no way to hinder or oppose the conversion of a Hebrew to Moslemism.

Conversing with the patriarch, Omar walked into the Holy City, the patriarch looking with secret scorn and horror at the Moslem in his coarse and soiled garments; and resenting in his heart the humiliating terms of the capitulation, he secretly muttered the words of Daniel: "The abomination of desolation is in the holy place."

Omar did not stay long in Jerusalem, but before he left, he selected the place on which he meant to build a mosque, choosing that spot on Mount Moriah where Mohammed was said to have flown upwards on his visit to paradise, leaving the mark of his foot on the rock. It was on the site of the ancient Temple.

Omar returned to Mecca, and sent Amr, his general, against Egypt in 640. He took Alexandria, then a very rich and prosperous commercial city. The next conquest of the Saracens was Persia. They besieged and took Sus, the ancient Shushan, where they arranged for the permanent preservation of the prophet Daniel's tomb. Then they marched to Persepolis, fought a fierce battle at Nevahend, and a second at Rei, which was final. The Moslems were triumphant, but Omar's life was cut short by the dagger of a slave.

On the whole, the Saracen rule in Palestine was a tolerant one, but the empire of the khalifs was declining. The revolution which transferred the sceptre of the Abbasides to the Fatimites was, however, a benefit rather than an injury to the Holy Land, though Haroun al Raschid, the greatest of the Abbasides, had been the friend and ally of the great Christian emperor Charlemagne, and was very tolerant.

The Fatimite khalifs were sensible of the importance of trade, and a sovereign residing in Egypt could exert more fully the power and justice of the throne over the

[1] Gibbon, p. 949.

emirs of Palestine ruling in their name. Pilgrims were permitted to visit the holy places in safety. But the third of these Fatimite khalifs was Hakem, of whom we have several times spoken. He pretended to be an incarnation of the Deity; his mysteries were performed in a mountain near Cairo, and he made many converts. He hated both the Jews and Christians, and persecuted both. In Jerusalem his mad impiety led him to demolish the Church of the Holy Sepulchre to its foundations, and he tried to destroy the cave from which it took its name. But afterwards he changed his mind, and had just signed an order for the rebuilding of the churches when he was assassinated by emissaries of his sister.

The succeeding khalifs resumed the ancient toleration, and pilgrims again resorted to the Holy Land.

The conversion of Hungary to Christianity opened a safe communication between Germany and Greece, and St. Stephen, "the apostle of his kingdom," relieved, and even conducted the Christians on their way. From Belgrade to Antioch they now travelled for fifteen hundred miles through a Christian empire. The zeal for pilgrimages increased, "and the roads," says Gibbon, "were covered with multitudes of either sex and of every rank, who professed their contempt of life so soon as they should have kissed the tomb of their Redeemer."

About thirty years before the first crusade the Archbishop of Mentz, with the bishops of Utrecht, Bamberg, and Ratisbon, undertook this journey, then a very fatiguing and difficult one, "from the Rhine to the Jordan," accompanied by seven thousand persons. At Constantinople the emperor received them hospitably, but they were attacked in Palestine by the wild Arabs, and were besieged in the village of Capernaum till they were rescued by the Fatimite emir. Ingulphus, a secretary of William the Conqueror, went on this pilgrimage. He observes that they sallied from Normandy thirty stout and well-appointed horsemen, but that they repassed the Alps, twenty miserable palmers, with the staff in their hand, and the wallet at their back. Pilgrimage under tolerant sovereigns was difficult, but still worse times were to come.

The Seljuk Turks were the next invaders of Palestine, a fierce, cruel people, scarcely civilized, though their sultan had adopted the arts and manners of Persia. For twenty years the Seljuk Turks reigned in Jerusalem.

We must look back a little to explain how these Seljuk Turks became sultans. Descended from the four sons of a chief named Seljuk, they had grown in numbers and in wealth of cattle and flocks. The khalifs had for some time had Turkish guards, who encouraged the migration of these tribes into the khalif's land; therefore the barrier of the Jaxartes was often violated. The great khalif, the one who first took the title of "sultan," Mahmud, the Gaznevide, foolishly permitted these emigrations, relying on them for supplying his armies with men.

His eyes were first opened to his error by a chief of the race of Seljuk, who dwelt in the territory of Bokhara. The sultan had inquired what supply of men he could furnish for military service. Ismael answered, "If you will send one of these arrows to our camp, fifty thousand of your servants will instantly mount on horseback."

"And if that number," continued Mahmud, "should not be sufficient?" "Send this second arrow to the horde of Balik, and you will find fifty thousand men." "But," said the Gaznevide, dissembling his anxiety, "if I should stand in need of the whole force of your kindred tribes?" "Despatch my bow," was the last reply of Ismael, "and as it is circulated round, the summons will be obeyed by two hundred thousand horse."

Mahmud, seriously alarmed, at once transported the most obnoxious tribes into the heart of Korassan, where they would be separated from their tribes by the river

Oxus, and enclosed on all sides by loyal cities. Mahmud was one of the most celebrated of the khalifs. He was the conqueror of India, and a patron of literature as it was then understood. Ferduhsi, the poet, lived in his reign; and there are many charming stories of this sultan's justice and goodness.

Masoud, his son, had to contend in the field with these shepherds who had become soldiers. Just, however, as he was about to gain the victory, his traitor soldiers fled, and the memorable day of Zendecan founded in Persia the destiny of the shepherd kings. The first sultan of the Seljuk tribes was Togrul Beg.

The successor of Togrul was Alp Arslan, whose name is familiar to all readers. He defeated the Romans themselves, and took Romanus Diogenes, the emperor, prisoner. But in the midst of his conquests he also was assassinated.

Melek Shah, his son, succeeded him. One of his lieutenants marched into Syria at the head of a powerful army and took Damascus, by famine and the sword. This soldier's name was Atsiz, but he was defeated in Egypt, and in his retreat he went to Palestine, invited the judge and notaries of Jerusalem to his camp, and had them executed, following up this crime with the massacre of three thousand inhabitants of Jerusalem. This cruelty was punished by the sultan Toucush, the brother of Malek Shah; but he retained the conquered towns, and the Seljuk Turks kept and held Jerusalem.

They were cruel and intolerant, hating Christians; and the pilgrims who, through endless peril, at length reached the gates of the Holy City, were shut out and perished, because they had no longer the money of which they had been robbed. The Turks dragged the patriarch by the hair along the pavement, and cast him into a dungeon, hoping to extort a ransom from the sympathy of his flock.

At the end of those twenty years of cruel oppression the Holy Sepulchre was visited by a hermit named Peter. He was treated extremely ill personally, and witnessed the hardships and cruelties to which the people and pilgrims were exposed. He spoke with the patriarch, received from him letters of credit and complaint, and returned to Europe, where he instantly laid the letters at the feet of the Roman Pontiff.

It was the preaching of this man that aroused all Europe to attempt the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre. The church had been rebuilt, after the death of Hakem, by the liberality of the Eastern emperor and the people, and Peter called on all Christendom to rescue it from the Infidels.

The preacher who appeared with this mission before the Council of Clemont was a small man; his "appearance was contemptible," but he possessed great eloquence. He was of gentle birth, and had served under the banner of the Count de Boulogne; but he had relinquished the sword and the world, and had become that afterwards renowned solitary, Peter the Hermit.

We must not omit to mention, before we close this chapter on the vicissitudes of Jerusalem, that during the Roman sway Julian the apostate made an attempt to restore the Temple in all its ancient glory.

The Church at Jerusalem was then wealthy, and is said by its prosperity to have excited the envy of Arian, and the apostate emperor hoped to prove, by the success of his undertaking, that prophecy was false and revelation untrue.

He determined to erect on the eminence of Mount Moriah a stately temple, which should surpass in splendour the Church of the Resurrection on the adjacent hill of Calvary; to establish an order of priests, and a numerous colony of Jews.

Julian had a friend named Alypius, a man severely just, who had shown great judgment in the civil administration of Britain. He gave him a commission to restore the Temple of Jerusalem to all its pristine beauty. Alypius was ready and eager

in his obedience, and the governor of Palestine was willing to lend useful aid. The Jews answered the emperor's call from all parts of the empire.

They assembled, triumphant and insolent, on the holy mountains of their forefathers' city, and the Christians had good reason to fear for their own safety, since their bitter enemies had returned. The desire of rebuilding their Temple has always been the ruling passion of the people of Israel. At this time they showed their joy and exultation by the rich bringing silver spades and pickaxes, and the women carrying off the rubbish in mantles of silk or purple embroideries. Every purse was opened, and every hand ready, and the commands of a great sovereign were to be executed by a whole people. But it was attempted in vain, and instead of shaking the faith of Christians, Julian has confirmed it by this very effort. Gibbon is unwilling to allow it, but there is abundant testimony that the work was prevented by supernatural means. It was described by Ambrose, bishop of Milan, in an epistle to the Emperor Theodosius; by Chrysostom, whose congregation at Antioch must have contained some amongst its elder members who would remember it; and by Gregory Nazianzen, who published his account of the miracle the same year, when any Jew could have contradicted it, but did not. He also asserted that the facts were not disputed by infidels, and this was confirmed by the unexceptionable testimony of Ammianus Marcellinus. This philosophic soldier, who was the friend of Julian, has recorded in his history of his own times the extraordinary obstacles which interrupted the work of restoration. This is what he says, translated by Gibbon:—

"Whilst Alypius, assisted by the governor of the province, urged with vigour and diligence the execution of the work, horrible balls of fire, breaking out near the foundations, with frequent and reiterated attacks, rendered the place from time to time inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen; and the victorious element continuing in this manner obstinately and resolutely bent, as it were, to drive them to a distance, the undertaking was abandoned."

Julian persecuted the Christians with much the same severity as the early Pagan emperors had. He made the clergy restore the temples of the gods, which had been destroyed; and if a Christian church had been built on the site of one, the church had to be removed before the temple could be built.

These and many similar edicts reduced the clergy to poverty. They were forbidden to teach in or to frequent the public schools; but the efforts of Julian to destroy the Christian Church were vain, opposed, as they were, by the enthusiasm and resolution of the vast multitudes who were now Christians. The emperor, six months after his attempt to restore the temple, was mortally wounded in a battle with the Persians, and was succeeded by the Christian Emperor Jovian, whose accession restored peace to the Church.

PILGRIMS AND CRUSADERS.

FROM very early times pilgrimages to the Holy Land and to the Holy Sepulchre were frequent, and some records of them have descended to us. We have already said that Eusebius and Jerome have left accounts of the country, very useful in studying the topography of Palestine. They both resided for a time at Bethlehem, where Jerome lived and translated the Scriptures in his quiet cell in the Grotto of the Nativity. His version was in Latin, and is the approved Catholic Bible—the Vulgate.

Eusebius preached at the consecration of Tyre Cathedral, and was a bishop of Palestine, and not only the aged Empress Helena, but other holy women also visited the scenes where their Saviour had lived and died. St. Paula and her daughter landed at Sidon about 385, visited the site hallowed by Elijah's presence and miracles at Sarepta, and journeyed on to Bethlehem, visiting Cæsarea, where she found a church on the site of Cornelius's house, and saw the dwelling of St. Philip and his daughters. She came to the Holy Sepulchre, or rather to the church built over the supposed site; knelt before the true Cross, and saw the column to which our Lord was bound, then placed as a support to the gallery of a church. The sepulchre of Lazarus and the house of the family of Bethany were shown her. On Mount Ephraim she saw the tombs of Joshua and Eleazar; and she prayed in the church over Jacob's Well, where our Lord had spoken with the woman of Samaria.

In the end St. Paula returned to Bethlehem, lived there in great sanctity, and was buried in the Church of the Nativity. We get, in these pilgrim records,[1] a good idea of what the Holy Land was under the Byzantine emperors.

The Bordeaux pilgrim[2] has given perhaps the first record of his pilgrimage. He lived at the same time as Eusebius, who constructed an Onomasticon—a sort of gazetteer of Palestine.

In the sixth century Theodorus wrote an account of the state of the country in his day. Procopius described Justinian's buildings there, which, as we have seen, were important, and about 530 Antoninus Martyr gave a full description of Western Palestine.

The Moslem conquest of Palestine in 635 did not preclude pilgrims from visiting the Holy Sepulchre. Omar was not only generous, he was thoughtful for Christians. When in Jerusalem he refused to pray inside the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, and knelt outside, telling the patriarch that he feared if he entered the church for prayer his example might be followed, and the church taken from them. Both he and his successors were tolerant, and for nearly the four hundred following years no human obstacle stood in the way of a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

The description given of Palestine by these early pilgrims is of a land fertile in wine, oil, honey and grain; and (before the Moslem sway) of churches on the holy sites, and of fairly populous and prosperous cities.

Many pilgrims visited it, and the Byzantine (Greek) Church flourished. Forsaking the Thebaid, hermits already began to occupy the caves of Quarantania and by the Dead Sea.

[1] Michaud's "History of the Crusades."

[2] Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, No 5., translated by Aubrey Stewart, M.A., annotated by Sir C. W. Wilson.

It was after the Moslem conquest that the French bishop Arculphus[1] made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, and afterwards landing in England, related his story to the Bishop of Iona, Adamnan, who took it down from the pilgrim's own lips. Bede quoted the account in his "Ecclesiastical History,"[2] and afterwards abridged Adamnan's MS. for the use of the Anglo-Saxons. Certainly it was (for England) the first Hand-book of Palestine; and this precursor of "Murray" is thought to have caused many pilgrims to leave their island home on a journey to the Holy Land.

Arculphus visited Hebron—at that time open to Christians—and saw the tombs of the patriarchs, and also (with them) the tomb of Adam. He says they are placed with the feet to the south and heads to the north; that each tomb is covered with a stone worked like the stones of a church, and of a white colour. The tomb of Adam is not far from theirs, at the extreme north. He also saw the graves of Sarah, Rebecca, and Leah, which were inferior to those of the patriarchs.

This account is very interesting in the present day, when such few and chary visits have been permitted to the sepulchre of Abraham. He asserts, also, that the trunk of the patriarch's oak—a mere stump, but still in the ground—was shown him inside a church built over it. He mentions the caves on Mount Olivet with the stone tables (? altars) that Dr. Clarke describes, and asserts that our Lord and His disciples resorted there.[3]

We can imagine how eagerly the monks of lonely Iona listened to the pilgrim's tale of places known to them through Holy Writ, and how welcome a pilgrim from the Holy Land was at every English fireside.

The first Anglo-Saxon pilgrim who recorded his pilgrimage to Palestine was Willibald, a native of Wessex, the son of the St. Richard whose festival is retained in our Prayer-Book Calendar on April 3rd. Willibald took his two sons and his daughter with him. The latter was afterwards well known as St Walpurgis.

Pilgrimages, as we have seen, became more frequent. In subsequent wars between the Greeks and Moslems the Emperor John Zimisces, who had been raised to the empire by his marriage with Theophania, the widow of Nicephorus Phocas (whom John had murdered), overran and conquered Syria, and opened the country to the pilgrims. But his conquests had a very brief continuance. As soon as he had returned to Constantinople, the fugitive Moslem princes came back and retook their cities. Their subjects gladly received them; they purified the churches, and overturned the statues of saints and martyrs. The Nestorians and Jacobites preferred a Moslem to an orthodox master, as more tolerant. Of all John Zimisces's rapid conquests, only Antioch, Cilicia and Cyprus remained attached to the Roman Empire.

The Fatimite khalifs of Egypt next possessed themselves of Palestine. These were tolerant to Christians.

The Seljuk Turks, under the famous AlpArslan, then appeared upon the scene. In 1071 they seized on Jerusalem, massacred the inhabitants, both Moslem and Christian, and defiled and plundered both mosques and churches. The pilgrims were worse off than ever The Fatimites recovered Palestine, but the cruelties to the pilgrims continued.

Europe was at length aroused by the voice of Peter the Hermit, as we have previously related.

None of the great sovereigns of Europe engaged in the first Crusade. William Rufus and Philip I. of France cared nothing for the Holy Land; the kings of Spain were already engaged with Moslems in Spain; the northern kingdoms did not respond to the call.

The first of the leaders of it in reputation

[1] Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, No. 10, translated and annotated by the Rev. J. R. Macpherson.

[2] Book 5, chaps. 15, 17.

[3] "Early Travels in Palestine," Bohn's Series.

and character was Godfrey de Bouillon. He was the descendant of Charlemagne in the female line, and his father was Count of Boulogne. In the service of Henry IV., Emperor of Germany, he had been the first to ascend the walls of Rome. A sickness had followed, and his remorse at having borne arms against the Pope determined him to attempt the rescue of the Holy Sepulchre. He was one of the purest and noblest of knights, free from ambition and self-seeking a well-fitted champion of a holy cause. He was accompanied by his brothers, Eustace the elder, and Baldwin the younger; neither of them at all equal in virtue to the excellent Godfrey. Robert of Normandy, the eldest son of William the Conqueror, accompanied the Crusaders, and by his conduct effaced much of the blame his indolence and levity had previously brought on him. Robert, Count of Flanders, was styled the Sword and Lance of the Crusade. Stephen, Count de Blois, was the most educated and eloquent of them. Raymond, Count of Thoulouse, was a veteran warrior, had fought against the Saracens in Spain, but was haughty, envious, and ambitious. Tarentum sent the son of Robert Guiscard, Bohemond, already a renowned soldier, but rather politic and ambitious than devout. He was accompanied by his cousin, Tancred of Otranto, immortalised by Tasso; a young warrior who was the very model of a Christian knight, *sans peur et sans reproche.* Such were the leaders (attended by an immense train of knights and nobles) who first assumed the Cross.

We have not space, nor would it suit our subject, to relate the dangers, difficulties, and adventures that beset the Crusaders on their march eastwards and through Constantinople. On the way, Baldwin founded the principality of Edessa, and left the host. There was much suffering in the army during the whole journey. At Antioch their expedition seemed hopeless; but the well-managed discovery of a supposed relic of great sanctity caused them to defeat the army of the Emir Kerboga, who besieged them in the town they had previously taken. Antioch was given to Bohemond; and the diminished host marched into Palestine. Egyptian ambassadors came to treat of peace, stating to the assembled chiefs that the Turks, who had been the oppressors of the Christians, were defeated and driven out of the country, and that it was restored to the Saracens, who had always given pilgrims a welcome, and had permitted them to have free access to the Holy Sepulchre. They declared that in consequence there was no longer a motive for war. The khalif also offered great and splendid gifts to the chiefs of the Crusade to induce them to make peace. But the knights replied that their vow obliged them to rescue the Holy Land and its capital, Jerusalem, from the power of Infidels, and they could admit of no treaty which had not the surrender of Jerusalem for its basis. Of course the envoys could not listen to these terms.

The Crusaders had numbered their warriors by hundreds of thousands when they started from Europe. They brought before Jerusalem only forty thousand men. Aladin, the lieutenant of the khalif, had nearly an equal number of defenders. The Christians were in want of water, of tents, and of military engines.

Jerusalem has been renowned for the number and importance of her sieges. The king of Babylon, and the Roman general, Titus, could only succeed in taking it after enormous losses and exertions. Tacitus says that the Jewish lawgivers had provided in that city for a perpetual state of hostility against the rest of mankind. But in the age of the Crusades the difficulty of taking it was diminished. The defences had been destroyed, and only imperfectly restored. Still it was, by situation, immensely strong, and the Saracens, if not possessed of the obstinate valour of the Jews, were a gallant race, and trained warriors.

A scene of wild enthusiasm ensued when

the Crusaders' eyes first fell upon the Holy City. They threw themselves on their knees, they shed passionate tears, and uttered devout prayers. They gazed first on the Holy City, as the Romans also had done, from Mount Scopus.

Godfrey de Bouillon erected his banner on the first swell of Mount Calvary. Tancred and the two Roberts continued the attacking line as far as St. Stephen's Gate; and Count Raymond established his camp, from the citadel to the foot of Mount Sion, which was not then included within the walls of the city. The Crusaders at first attempted to take the town by main force, and made a general assault on the walls, without engines, even without scaling ladders. They were beaten off with loss and dishonour. However, they bore their repulse with fortitude, and set about discovering supplies for their wants. The country lacked water and timber, and the soldiers of the Cross suffered dreadfully from thirst. They discovered, however, some beams of wood in a cave; then the enchanted grove of Tasso was found, and cut down, and by his energy and ability it was transported to the camp. Some Genoese workmen, whom they had found at Jaffa, made them some wooden turrets on wheels to command the walls. The first, under the command of Raymond of Thoulouse, was set on fire and consumed by the besieged.

The second engine, under the superintendence of Godfrey, was rolled up to the walls, where, as it overlooked the parapet, the archers in it soon cleared the rampart of defenders. They then dropped a drawbridge between the tower and the wall; the Crusaders poured over it, and obtained possession of the city.

On a Friday, at three o'clock in the afternoon—the day and hour of the Crucifixion—Godfrey de Bouillon stood victorious on the walls of Jerusalem. A terrible massacre followed. The Crusaders put to death 70,000 Moslems, and burned the Jews in their synagogue. Of all these Christian warriors only Tancred showed pity and generosity; Raymond, from policy, also granted a capitulation and safe conduct to the garrison of the citadel. After a massacre that lasted three days, the victors joined in a solemn procession to the Holy Sepulchre. With bare heads and feet they ascended Mount Calvary, while anthems of their priests rang out on the air.

They kissed the stone which they believed had closed the grave of the Lord; they sobbed; they shed tears of joy and penitence upon it. It is almost impossible to believe that men who felt thus should be so ignorant of the true spirit of their Master, and dare to offer thanks and praises to Him after an unprovoked massacre.

The country of Palestine followed the fate of Jerusalem, and the Crusaders at once determined to erect a Christian kingdom of the Latin Church in the land. The crown was offered to Robert of Normandy, and to Robert of Flanders, but both refused it. Norman Robert was then, as he believed, the heir of England; Robert of Flanders owed a duty to his people. The unanimous voice of the host then called on Godfrey to accept the dangerous crown. He consented to remain and defend the country, but he would accept no title but that of Defender and Baron of the Holy Sepulchre, and would assume no crown save one of thorns.

He was called on, only a fortnight afterwards, to defend his new charge against the Sultan of Egypt, who marched into Palestine to avenge the capture of his city. They met in the valley of Ascalon, where the Egyptians were entirely defeated, 1099. Godfrey hung up the sword and standard of the khalif before the Holy Sepulchre. Then his former comrades bade him farewell, and returned home, Godfrey only retaining with him the gallant Tancred, three hundred knights, and two thousand foot soldiers, for the defence of Palestine.

The kingdom of Jerusalem consisted only of Jerusalem and Jaffa, with about twenty villages and towns of the adjacent

country. Within this narrow space the Moslems were still lodged in strong castles, and the traders and pilgrims were exposed to daily hostility. But Godfrey and the two Baldwins, his brother and cousin, soon reduced them to obedience.

They conquered the cities of Laodicea, Tripoli, Tyre, and Ascalon, powerfully supported by the fleets of Venice, Genoa, Pisa, and Norway. Thus the range of sea-coast was opened again to Christian pilgrims.

Godfrey, having established his kingdom, proceeded to prepare a system of laws, called the Assize of Jerusalem, in which the constitution of the Latin kingdom was settled on the purest feudal principles. The new code, attested by the seals of the king and the patriarch, was placed in the Holy Sepulchre.

But this saintly king retained power and life for only a year after his election to the throne. He died in 1100.

He was succeeded by his brother Baldwin, and he was followed by his kinsman, Baldwin de Burgh.

After the two first Baldwins, the brother and cousin of Godfrey de Bouillon, whose kingdom was preserved by the discord existing between the Mahometan powers, the Turks and Fatimites (for both the khalifs and the sultans of Damascus were less zealous about their religion, than anxious to oppose each other), the crown of Jerusalem devolved by female succession on Melisinda, the daughter of the second Baldwin. Her husband was Fulke of Anjou, the father, by a former marriage, of Geoffrey Plantagenet, the husband of the Empress Maud, and the father of our Henry II. The two sons of Fulke and Melisinda succeeded.

Baldwin III. waged a not unsuccessful war against the Infidels.

Amaury, who succeeded him, was disgraced by his breach of treaties. An ambitious and avaricious man, he had accepted the pernicious maxim that no faith should be kept with the enemies of God. The Grand Master of the Templars encouraged him in this view, the Emperor of Constantinople promised aid, and in spite of treaties, Amaury marched into Egypt, which he meant to wrest from the Moslems. He reached the gates of Cairo. But the inhabitants set fire to the suburbs, which were the old city. Amaury was deceived by an insidious negotiation; he was unable to get his vessels over the cataracts of the Nile, and not wishing to encounter the Turks in the midst of a hostile country, the knights of Amaury, with their sovereign, returned to Palestine.

Amaury was succeeded by his son, Baldwin IV., but this poor prince was a leper—the disease was a fatal gift of the Crusades—and was unfit, both physically and mentally, for his position. His sister Sybilla, the mother of Baldwin V., was his natural heiress. She was a widow, and had married the handsome but unworthy Guy de Lusignan. Her child died under suspicious circumstances, and she crowned Guy, king of Jerusalem. Gibbon tells us that Guy's own brother, Jeffrey, when he knew that the husband of Sybilla was crowned, exclaimed: "Since they have made *him* a king, surely they should have made *me* a god." The choice of Sybilla excited hatred and contempt, and Raymond of Thoulouse, who had been excluded from the succession and the regency by Sybilla's marriage, entertained an implacable hatred to the king.

"Such," says Gibbon, "were now the guardians of the Holy City: a leper, a woman, a coward (Guy) and a traitor;" for Raymond was suspected of being on terms that were traitorous with the sultan.

Yet the Latin kingdom continued for twelve years longer; protected by the military orders, and by the distant engagements of their great enemy, the heroic Saladin. The rest of the story we have already told, in the accounts of Kerak, Hattin, and the siege of Acre. Our gallant Cœur de Lion, surrounded by jealous and treacherous enemies, failed to save the Crusaders' kingdom, nor could any of the

following six Crusades reconquer the city of Jerusalem, though a few towns on the coast were taken.

The Crusaders certainly did something for Palestine, as the ruins of their churches and castles still show us; they cultivated the sugar-cane. Ruins of their mills still exist, and some of the more modern aqueducts may be due to them. The natives of Palestine have still a traditionary idea of the great ability of the Crusaders; some of whose acts they ascribe to magic. They had many Christian subjects when their banner ceased to float over Jerusalem. The Christian villages found there now, are probably of their founding, and in some places the European type of features and blue eyes seem to show that descendants of the European soldiers exist still in Palestine. Pilgrimages had not ceased, and the story of the country was continued by the chroniclers, William of Tyre, Geoffrey de Vinsauf, and de Joinville, themselves Crusaders. In all there were seven Crusades, but none as successful as the first. Two of our bravest kings were Crusaders—Richard, whose exploits we have related in several places in this volume; and Edward, Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward I. Three French kings were also soldiers of the Cross—Philip Augustus, Louis VII., and Louis IX. It was during Louis IX.th's Crusade that the wife of an English knight, Sir Grimbald Pauncefort, sent her left hand to Palestine, as her husband's ransom, his captor having refused every other, and demanded that only. In fact, the Crusades were a source of many acted and fictitious romances, and the Crusaders brought back with them from the Holy Land many an oriental tale and legend, familiar in England now as household words.

There are Moslem records of the Holy Land as well as Christian. El Mukaddasi (985), and Nasír ì Khusrau, in 1047, describe the whole of Syria.[1]

[1] Palestine Pilgrims Text Society, No. 4, "El Mukaddasi," translated by Mr. Guy Le Strange, 1886. No. 9, "Nasír ì Khusrau," by same translator, 1888.

Foucher, of Chartres wrote a chronicle of the first Crusade. But William of Tyre is the great authority for the early history of the Latin kingdoms.

Bæwulf[1] visited Palestine in 1102: the Russian Abbot Daniel, in 1106.

There are, in fact, several Pilgrim Itineraries of Palestine of this period. Gibbon speaks with praise of Benjamin of Tudela. He was a Spanish Jew—a Rabbi, and his object in visiting Palestine was to discover how many Jews remained in the land once their own.

He also took an interest in the Lost Tribes, who at that period were believed by the Jews to exist in the kingdom of the Khozars in the Caucasus.[2]

Their fate has always been a subject of interest and inquiry. Some, we know, from the Bible, were placed in cities near the Euphrates.[3] Did the exiles of Judah and Israel meet there when afterwards Nebuchadnezzar carried Judah into captivity?

We know, at least, that some of the Ten Tribes returned to Jerusalem after their captivity, for Anna, the prophetess, who recognised the infant Christ, was "of the tribe of Asher." The fate of the greater number remained unknown.

When we were in India some years ago, a group of Beloochees were seen standing within the gates of Parell. They were nearly seven feet high, and so distinctly Jewish in feature, that we exclaimed, "What gigantic Jews!" "They are not Jews, but Beloochees," said a young aide-de-camp. "But you guessed rightly, I believe; they have Jewish faces, and they unite the practices of the Jewish law with their Moslem faith."

Surely here are some of the Ten Lost Tribes.

[1] See "Early Travels in Palestine," Bohn's Series.

[2] His itinerary was written in Hebrew, and translated, Gibbon tells us, by that marvellous boy Baratier. See also "Early Travels in Palestine," Bohn's Series.

[3] When Shalmaneser carried Israel into captivity, he placed the people in Halah and in Habor, on the river of Gozan, and in the cities of the Medes. Habor, now called Khabour, was on the river Gozan, which is near the Euphrates.

It has been thought that the Goths were also descendants of these exiles, and that the "Asgard" of their dreams and aspirations — the "city with palm trees" — was Jericho, of which they retained the memory; that Odin and his sons were wandering Israelites. Many people in England—one, indeed, of our own personal friends—believe that the Anglo-Saxons are the tribe of Ephraim, the "fruitful branch, that would run over the wall," *i.e.*, emigrate.

One most interesting of the earlier Chronicles of the Crusades, containing an account of the Holy City at the time it was conquered by Saladin, is that of Ernoul.[1]

The Chronicle of Geoffrey de Vinsauf (1189 to 1192) is a spirited record of the deeds of our own Cœur de Lion, and describes vividly the western coast from Haifa to Jaffa and Ascalon, and as far south as El Arish.

De Joinville gives the Crusade of St. Louis, and is perhaps one of the most popular of the chroniclers of the Crusades.

Marino Sanuto, a Venetian, published a description of Palestine in 1321. Sir John Mandeville was his contemporary, and wrote an account of his travels in the Holy Land, which became one of the most popular works of the fourteenth century.

[1] Palestine Pilgrims' Text Society, No. 8, translated from the old French by Major Conder, and annotated by him, with map of Jerusalem in 1187 A.D.

In 1432 Sir Bertrandon de la Brocquière, with other knights, made an adventurous journey through Palestine, Northern Syria, and Asia Minor.[1]

Maundrell's journey was made in 1697. It was in his time extremely dangerous to travel in the Holy Land.

The celebrated Burckhardt visited it in 1809–16, and died in the East before his enterprise was concluded. Buckingham followed, and Irby and Mangles in 1817. These adventurous travellers visited the country east of the Jordan, and their account of it is still valuable. The names of Thomson, Lynch, De Saulcy, Van de Velde, Williams, and Porter, are inseparably united to the name of the Holy Land.

But the first really scientific explorer was Dr. Robinson, the celebrated American, in 1838. De Vogué and Waddington's names are also memorable as describers of the Holy Land.

But the greatest of all the explorers of Palestine have been Sir Charles Wilson, Sir C. Warren, and Major Conder. Sir Richard Burton, Lady Burton, and Mr. Tyrwhitt Drake must be mentioned as those who brought the country and its people vividly before the English-speaking nations, and whose names must henceforth ever be associated with the holy name of the country of our Lord.

[1] See "Early Travels in Palestine," Bohn's Series.



A GLEAM OF PROSPERITY.

FOR a brief period the Christian power was restored in Palestine, in 1228. Frederick II., the grandson of Barbarossa, was the prince who achieved this success. At the age of twenty-one, and in obedience to his guardian, Pope Innocent III., he assumed the cross; the same vow was repeated at his royal and imperial coronations, and at his marriage with the heiress of Jerusalem. But as the emperor grew older he repented of the rash vow of his youth, and his ambition was set on restoring the Italian monarchy from Sicily to the Alps. The success of this project would have disestablished the popes in their secular dominion; and when the emperor had delayed fulfilling his vow for twelve years, they added threats to their entreaties that he would fix the time and place for his departure for Palestine.

He yielded; prepared a fleet of two hundred galleys and one hundred other vessels, to carry two thousand five hundred knights, with their horses and attendants, to the Holy Land. His vassals from Naples and Germany formed a powerful army, and it is said, but evidently with great exaggeration, that sixty thousand English crusaders accompanied him. But the inevitable slowness of preparation consumed the strength and small means of the poorer pilgrims, and the sultry summer of Calabria caused much illness and many deaths. At last the emperor sailed from Brundusium, with a fleet and army of forty thousand men, but he remained only three days at sea, and then returned under the plea of grievous illness.

For suspending his vow (for the Pope would not believe in his illness) the emperor was excommunicated by Gregory IX.; for presuming to fulfil his vow the next year, he was doubly excommunicated.

While he served under the banner of the Cross, a crusade was preached against himself in Italy. The clergy and military knights of Palestine were ordered to renounce his communion and disobey his commands; and the emperor was compelled to allow the orders of the camp to be issued in the name of God and the Christian Republic. Yet, unopposed, he entered Jerusalem. No priest would or dared crown him, so he took the crown from the altar of the Holy Sepulchre with his own hands. But the patriarch placed an interdict on the church that the presence of an excommunicated person had profaned.

But in spite of all opposition he succeeded in concluding a peace, to the advantage of the Christians, with the Mahometans, owing, perhaps, to the dissensions amongst themselves and their esteem for himself. He obtained from the Sultan the restitution of Jerusalem, of Bethlehem and Nazareth, of Tyre and Sidon. The Latins were allowed to inhabit and fortify the city, and equal freedom was granted to Moslems and Christians. So strong was the fanaticism of the age, that this toleration, given and accepted, was looked upon as a crime, as was also Frederick's courtesy to the Infidels.

Frederick left the city in peace and prosperity, receiving in return nothing but ingratitude.

Three years afterwards this peace and prosperity were ended by an irruption of savage tribes from the Caspians. The shepherds of the Caspian, the Carizmians, rushed into Syria. The Franks united

with the Moslem sultans of Aleppo, Hems, and Damascus, in an endeavour to drive them back; but nothing could stand against them. The military orders were almost exterminated, and the profanation of the Holy Sepulchre made them even regret the Saracens and Turks. The Carizmians were however defeated in this battle, in 1247.

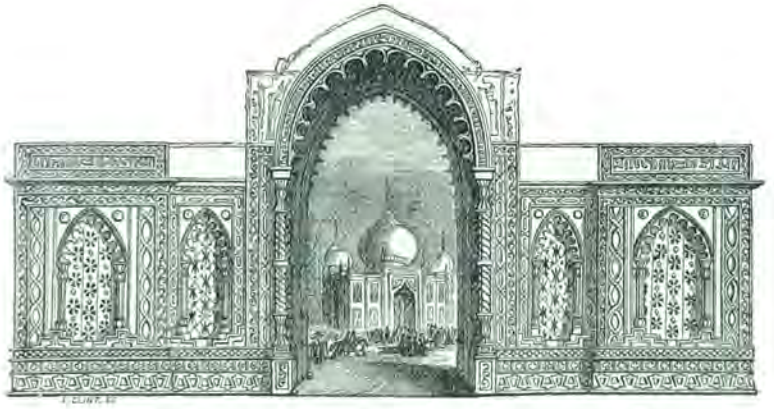
With regard to Palestine itself, there is little more to add.

Timour, or Tamerlane the Tartar, invaded Syria, and took Damascus, which had been bravely defended. By an act of base treachery he got admission into the city under colour of a truce, imposed on it a contribution of ten millions of gold, and then animated his troops to chastise the posterity of those who had approved the murder of the grandson of Mahomet some centuries ago. A general massacre ensued, the only persons spared being a family who gave honourable burial to the head of Hosein, and a colony of artificers whom he sent to Samarcand. He then had the town fired and reduced to ashes.

The losses and fatigues of his campaign prevented him from proceeding in his conquest of Palestine. He erected on the ruins of Bagdad, in memory of this war, a pyramid of ninety thousand heads!

The Ottoman Turks were the next who seized the unfortunate city of Jerusalem. Selim I., of whom we shall give some account in our next chapter, in 1516, made himself its master, and it has remained under the Ottoman power ever since—a neglected, oppressed province — its fertility unimproved, because whatever grain its harvests produce, is only an addition to the sum of the Turkish impositions; it is unprotected from the Arab incursions; and subject to a cruel conscription when Turkey is at war.

Evil days, indeed, have fallen on Palestine. When she will emerge from them, we cannot even guess. She is indeed "trodden down by the Gentiles"—and will be, doubtless, till her doom has been fully accomplished. But the day *will* come that the Holy Land shall be restored to her people, when they also have accepted Him whom she in her day rejected, and "the ransomed of the Lord return with singing to Sion."



PALESTINE UNDER HER LAST INVADERS.

THE Saracens were succeeded by the Mameluke sovereigns of Egypt. Berkouk conquered and ruled over Egypt. Syria, the Holy Land and Arabia. It was during the Mameluke sovereignty that Jerusalem gave a refuge to one of the most romantic personages of that period, Mahomet II.'s younger son, Prince Djem.

In 1453 the Ottoman Turks, under Mahomet II., had taken Constantinople, and established the kingdom of European Turkey. He left two sons, Bajazet and Djem. Bajazet had assured the crown to himself by bribing the Janissaries, who were gradually attaining in Constantinople the same power that the Prætorian Guards had wielded in imperial Rome. But Djem claimed the crown also, and a civil war ensued. The younger brother was defeated, fled for shelter to Jerusalem, and the Mameluke Sultan of Egypt generously protected him.

In 1482 Djem renewed the war, but was again defeated, and a fugitive. This time he sought refuge with the knights of St. John at Rhodes, with thirty followers. They received him with great honour; but, dreading the power of the Turk, who seems to have impressed the imaginations of the people of that period with almost panic fear, they sent him to one of their Commanderies in France, first receiving from him a written assurance of benefits that he would confer on the Order, should he ever succeed to the Porte. Bajazet had offered his brother the revenues of his former province if he would continue to live quietly at Jerusalem. Djem refused. Perhaps he knew that his brother would not let him live. The horrible practice of putting all possible claimants to the throne to death had become a common policy in the cruel house of Othman. Our readers will remember Shakespeare's allusion to it in the Second Part of "Henry IV.," where King Harry V. says to his brothers:

> "Brothers, you mix your sadness with some fear;
> This is the English, not the Turkish Court,
> Not Amurath an Amurath succeeds,
> But Harry, Harry."

The young prince was betrayed; D'Aubusson, the Master of the Order of St. John, sent envoys to Bajazet to tell him that his brother was with them. The Sultan at once offered to pay the knights 45,000 ducats yearly, ostensibly for the prince's support; in reality, that they might keep him prisoner. To their shame they accepted the money, and Djem was never again free.

The knights, by all kinds of artifices, kept their bargain. They detained the prince at Nice; they removed his followers from him; they imprisoned him (all under the guise of friendship) at Rousillon, at Puy, and at Sassenage. Here the lovely daughter of the lord of the Castle fell in love with the handsome young Turkish prince. But meantime the knights had built a tower seven stories high, in which they meant to keep him safely. Here he was imprisoned for years. In vain he appealed to the Christian princes and knights who visited him; in vain he endeavoured to escape. All Christendom was interested in his fate, and many stories were written about him by Frankish as well as Eastern writers.

The Master of the Knights of St. John actually obtained a large sum of money

from Djem's mother and wife "for the prince's use, as he was about to be set free," and kept it. At last Charles VIII. of France interfered, took Djem from the knights, and gave him in custody to the Pope Innocent III. But Bajazet's ambassador managed to see the Pope, "in order," he said, "to present him with certain holy relics from Jerusalem," and during the interview persuaded the Pontiff to accept the same income that the knights had received to detain Djem. The prince was therefore kept in captivity at the Vatican for three years. Then Innocent died, and the Pope elected was the wicked Alexander Borgia, the first Pope who ever sent an ambassador to the Ottoman Turks. That the embassy had some reference to Prince Djem we may be sure.

Charles VIII. invaded Italy, and in 1495 entered Rome. The Pope was then obliged to give up the prince to him; but it is said that Alexander VI., for a certain "consideration" received from Bajazet, actually had the noble young prince assassinated at Naples, some say by the poison the Pope habitually used for such purposes; others, that he employed Djem's barber to cut his face slightly with a poisoned razor. Whichever way it was done, Prince Djem died of a slow poison. His whole conduct during the long period of his captivity was marked by dignity, patience, and a firm adherence to his faith. Bajazet reclaimed his brother's body from the Christians, and he was buried with royal rites at Brusa.

Bajazet went to war with the Mameluke Sultan of Egypt and Syria, but was beaten, and had to yield three fortresses to him. In his son's reign, however, this defeat was avenged.

Selim I. deposed his father, who died broken-hearted; put his brothers and their children to death—one a little child—and then made war on Persia, and was successful. The Mamelukes, foreseeing an attack, sent an army to the north of Syria in 1516. Selim declared war with them at once, and the first battle was fought not far from Aleppo, August 24th, 1516. The Mamelukes were defeated, and the aged Sultan Ghawri died while trying to escape. The military dictators had to choose another ruler. They selected Touman Bey, a valiant chief, and resolved again to test the fortune of battle; but in the meantime Selim had occupied Aleppo, Damascus, and Jerusalem. The Mamelukes, however, resolved to defend the passage of the Desert, and sent a force to Gaza. Touman Bey remained with his army near Cairo.

Selim prepared to cross the Desert by procuring many thousands of camels, and loading them with water for his soldiers; then he began his march. The Turks crossed the desert in ten days, met and utterly defeated the Mamelukes at Ridania. Though they fought brilliantly, they were mowed down by Selim's artillery. Touman and a few of the horsemen escaped, but 25,000 Mamelukes had fallen.

Egypt and Syria now belonged to Turkey, and henceforward the Land of the Cross was ruled by the Crescent.

Napoleon, in 1799, crossed the same Desert that had seen the army of Selim, took Gaza, Jaffa, and besieged Acre, which was valiantly defended by Djezzar Pasha and the English. The Pasha of Damascus sent an army against the French invaders, but Napoleon and Kleber defeated it at the Battle of Mount Tabor. Of the raising of the siege of Acre, and retreat of the French, we have elsewhere spoken.

The next invasion was that of Ibrahim Pasha, the son of Mehemet Ali, Pasha of Egypt. The latter, a man of great ability and courage, believing that the Turkish Empire was verging to decay, resolved to found a dynasty of his own.

Navarino had destroyed the Turkish Fleet. He repaired the fleet that belonged to Egypt. Then he asked the Porte to grant him the Pashalics of Crete and Syria. Crete was given to him, Syria was refused.

Mehemet then contrived to make a quarrel with the Pasha of Acre, and sent his son Ibrahim to attack the city, the

acknowledged key to Palestine. The sceptre of Turkey was at that time held by Mahmoud II., an intelligent and worthy man, respected by England, who in vain desired his subjects to desist from their contest. Ibrahim attacked Acre with five men of war, several frigates, and an army of 40,000 men. He took the often besieged city on May 27th, 1832, and for seven years the Holy Land was under the firm sway of Ibrahim Pasha. The Sultan's armies were beaten in three battles, and in extreme anxiety (for such a rebel might probably attack Constantinople itself) he appealed to England. But England had let her navy and army starve for the sake of false economy, and she could not then help the Sultan. Russia did, however, and demanded in return an offensive and defensive alliance, and, by a secret article, that Turkey should, when required by the Czar, close the straits of the Dardanelles against the armed ships of every other foreign power.

Turkey seemed lost to the house of Othman; but Mahmoud was a man of firm character. He endeavoured to re-organise his army; he built ships; he tried to improve and arrange the national finances. When in 1839 he again appealed to England, aid was granted to him. But misfortune still pursued the unlucky Sultan. His admiral was a traitor, took his fleet to Alexandria, and gave it up to Mehemet Ali. Before this last, apparently fatal, news reached him, however, poor Sultan Mahmoud was dead.

He was succeeded by Abdul Medjîd. The great Powers now interfered; England, Russia, Prussia, and Austria demanded the submission of Mehemet Ali to his sovereign. It was refused. Then an English Fleet, under Admirals Stopford and Napier, appeared before Beyrout.

The town was bombarded, and taken August 29th, 1840. The Egyptian garrison was expelled. The Turkish troops that the English ships had brought were landed, and took possession of Beyrout.

But the chief incident of this war was the siege of Acre, which the English fleet took on the 3rd of November of the same year. Other fortresses soon fell, and the British sailors and the Turks, helped by the natives of Palestine, who detested Ibrahim, soon restored the province to Turkey.

The Porte still holds the Holy Land, and the government is not one under which the land, so long the scene of contending races, can improve.

Great efforts have, however, been made by Christendom. The spade has taken the place of the Crusader's sword—with what effect we shall see when the railways begin to open out the country, which, as we have said, can never prosper till the Arabs are either driven back to the Desert, or civilized, and taught to work honestly.

The Churches have also been doing much good work.

Beyrout appears likely to be a centre of civilization; of its schools and hospitals, we have already spoken.

In Jerusalem the Church Missionary Society has four schools, Bishop Gobat's Boarding School, Preparandi and Day Schools for boys and girls. The London Jews' Society have also four schools, two boarding schools for boys, and the same number for girls. The Germans have the Talitha Kumi Boarding School for girls, an orphanage and a day school.

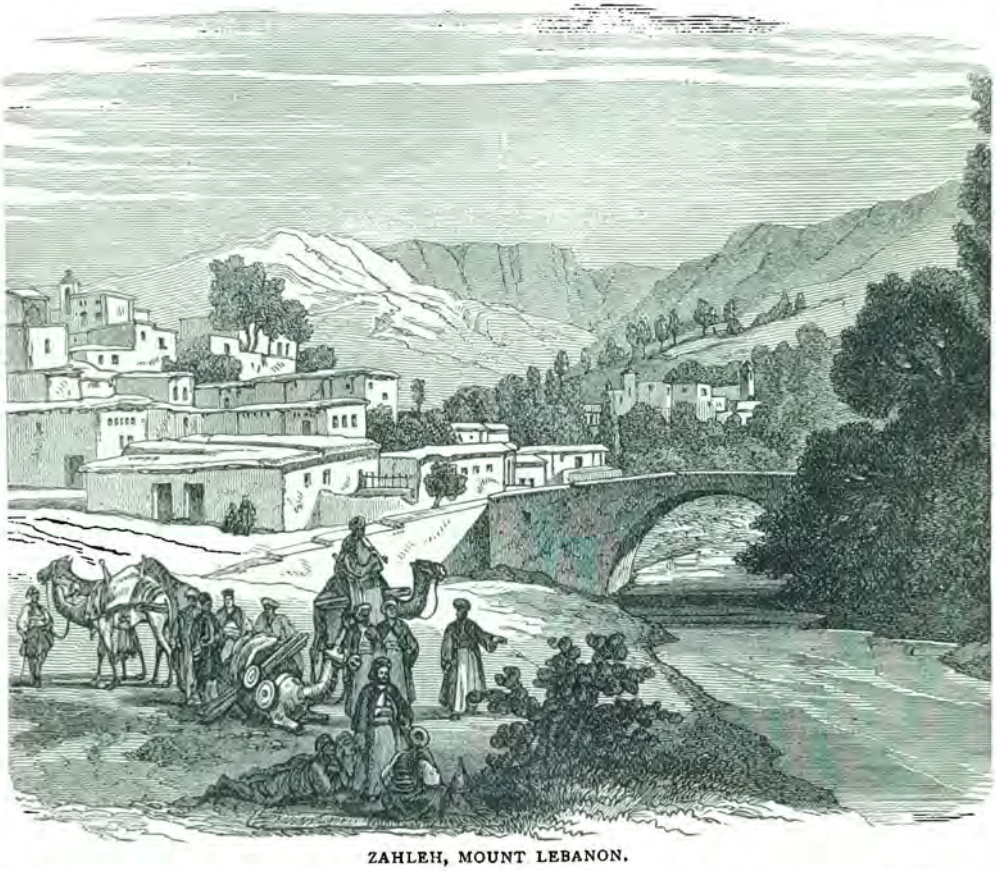
The German colonists have a school, the Greek Church two, and the Greek orthodox, one.

The Roman Catholics have the largest number. The Franciscans have two boarding schools, the Frères Chrétiens one, the Sisters of Joseph one, the Sisters of Zion a boarding and day school, St. Anne's School for boys, the Patriarchate School, the Ratisbon Boarding School for girls. The Armenians have three schools; the Jews have seven, and the Moslems eight.

There are also eight hospitals, two English, a French, a German, a Greek, a Russian, a Jewish, and a Turkish military hospital.

The most important is the British Ophthalmic Hospital of the Grand Priory of the Hospital of St. John of Jerusalem, in England. It is under the patronage of the Prince of Wales, and is of the greatest possible use in Palestine, where ophthalmia is so common and so terrible. It is open to all creeds, and is the greatest possible boon to the poor natives of the country. Twenty patients can be taken into it. One bed has been endowed by the Anglican Bishop in Jerusalem, another by the Orthodox Greek patriarch.

Zahleh, in the Lebanon, on the route to Baalbek from Beyrout, is also possessed of three schools belonging to the British Syrian Mission. The village is large and beautifully situated. It suffered greatly in



ZAHLEH, MOUNT LEBANON.

the massacres of 1860, and was burnt down, but the French rebuilt it. The houses have flat roofs, as the old ones had, but they are well built and clean. They stand on the slope of a hill in a sort of amphitheatre. In the valley the sound of living springs is heard, and groves of poplars grow in it. Up the hillsides of the deep, winding valley are vine terraces carefully cultivated.

The inhabitants of Zahleh are chiefly Maronites, with a few Protestants; for there is a station of the American Presbyterian Mission here, and one of the British Syrian Mission. The chief school at Zahleh is a very good one.

The Scotch Presbyterians have an excellent Medical Mission at Tiberias.

There is a school for girls at Jaffa, and an English hospital, and a branch of the Church Missionary Society.

At Nazareth there is a large school on the hill for girls—an orphanage. It was built in 1875, and is supported by the Society for the Promotion of Female Education in the East. There is also a branch of the Church Missionary Society here, a Medical Mission, and the Sisters of Nazareth have a dispensary. The constant application for help made to travellers is a convincing proof of the boon medical aid is to the poor natives.

At Damascus there are British Syrian Schools and two leper hospitals.

There are many convents in Palestine. In Jerusalem there are seven, and they have all something to interest one. One of the oldest is the Syriac Convent of St. Mark on Mount Zion. Amongst the relics exhibited here are the door at which St. Peter knocked when the angel had delivered him from Herod's prison, and the font in which the Virgin was baptized. The Armenian Convent, also on Mount Zion, is the largest in the city. It is dedicated to St. James, and the ancient episcopal chair used by the first Bishop of Jerusalem is shown there.

The Greek Orthodox Convent is by the side of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, with which it is connected by a passage. In this convent they have a folio copy of the Book of Job, dating from the twelfth century. There is also the Convent of St. Salvador, which belongs to the Latin Church, an Abyssinian convent, and a Coptic one. On the west of Jerusalem is the Convent of the Holy Cross, so named because the tree from which the cross was made was said to have grown here. The old legend, given elsewhere, asserts that it grew on Adam's grave, and was planted by Seth, being a branch of the tree of life from Paradise. The screen of the nave in the chapel is painted in compartments, representing the supposed history of the tree.

The English have a chapel next to their Bishop's house in Jerusalem, and the Church Missionary Society have a church outside the walls, dedicated to St. Paul.

The London Jews' Society have an admirable industrial workshop to the north of Jerusalem, on the road to Mount Scopus. They have also a shop in Jerusalem, in the square near the tomb of David, where olive-wood articles are sold. The church belonging to the Society is in the square, and is called "Christ Church."

The Jews in Palestine are not the people of the country, but merely residents or colonists who have come from foreign lands. The Sephardim Jews are the descendants of the Spanish Jews, driven out of Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella. They dispersed, but many came to their lost country, and settled in Jerusalem and the other holy cities. They are, of course, subjects of Turkey, but have free toleration, and their chief Rabbi has a seat in the Town Council of Jerusalem.

The Ashkenaz Jews are not recognised by the Sultan's Government. They are from Russia, Poland, Germany, and Roumania, and are divided into many sects. They have a Rabbi also. The Karaites are a district community. They do not accept the teaching of the Talmud.

The holy cities of the Jews are Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias, and Safed. Here all Jewish pilgrims resort. There are many Jewish colonies springing up in Palestine; chief among these is that of the Zimmarin Jews, on the hills behind Cæsarea; Ja'aûneh and its sister colonies, near Safed; Mishmar Ha-Yordan on the Watch of the Jordan, near Lake Hûleh, and the colonies on the Plain of Sharon, near Jaffa.

There are also colonies of Germans, of Russians, and of Circassians; and of Herzegovinians and Bosnians, at Cæsarea. The dream of Laurence Oliphant's later life was to bring European colonies east of the Jordan.

A gentleman who has recently returned from residing in Palestine tells us that there are now 40,000 Jews in and near the Holy City.

The Russian colony, church, and hospital near Jerusalem must not be forgotten; the church also on the Mount of Ascen-

sion. They have also a hospice near Abraham's Oak. In fact, Russia has a strong hold on Palestine, to which her subjects so often go in pilgrimage; and hoping, perhaps, to be heir of the Ottomans, she keeps her eye fixed on the Holy Land, which was considered the key to Egypt by the Egyptians of old time, and by the Moslems of Turkey. The Ottoman sultans thought the same, and invaded and held Palestine *for the sake* of keeping Egypt.

Under the Moslems it is not to be feared, but in the hands of a strong European power it might be a threat to Egypt again.

The restoration of the Jews would set matters right; but Providence does not so ordain it, till they shall believe in Him whom their fathers slew, and are willing to raise the Cross above the Crescent.

Will that day never come? Will they not acknowledge at last the Saviour, whose advent and whose judgments their own miserable history fulfils?

There is no need for them to wail by the Wall of Solomon if they will only acknowledge Him who waits to receive them.

Surely the prayer of the Christian Church should be earnest for the conversion of Israel, for, as St. Paul says, "If their fall is the riches of the world, and their loss the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fulness"!

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH IN PALESTINE.

WE can, of course, give here only a slight sketch of the early Church of Palestine. Its story is commenced in the Acts of the Apostles, where it is shown that Jerusalem was looked on as the Mother Church, and reference in all difficulties was made to her.

The first bishop of Jerusalem was James, surnamed the Less and the Just. He was the son of Cleophas, otherwise called Alpheus, and Mary, sister to the Blessed Virgin. He was consequently first cousin to our Lord. By other writers he is said to have been Joseph's son by a first marriage; he would then be half-brother to the Lord. He was surnamed the Just from the purity and integrity of his character. He is said to have been a Nazarite from his birth.

There are a few traditions preserved in the Latin Church of St. James the Less. It is said that when all the disciples forsook our Lord and fled, James the Just took refuge in a sepulchre, where he would be especially safe, as any Jew who touched a tomb was unclean for eight days. It was the grave, judging by the Hebrew inscription on it, of Hezis, a descendant of Aaron, and constructed before the birth of Christ. The Moslems call it the Divan of Pharaoh. It is said that when St. James heard that his Divine Master was crucified, he vowed that he would neither eat nor drink till the Lord rose from the dead, and appeared to him.[1]

[1] This tradition cannot be traced earlier than the fourteenth century.

We have certain authority—that of St. Paul—for the fact that our Lord did appear to St. James. Saint Paul says, our Lord "appeared to Cephas; then to the twelve; then He appeared to above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain until now, but some are fallen asleep; then He appeared to James."[1] The Church says it was on the eighth day after the resurrection that Christ appeared to the future Bishop of Jerusalem.

He was appointed bishop in 34 A.D., the office being conferred on him by the other apostles.

Eusebius and Epiphanius inform us that St. James from that time wore a plate of gold, with the name of God inscribed on it, upon his forehead, probably in imitation of the Jewish high priest.

At the time of St. Paul's conversion St. James's authority in the infant Church was acknowledged. He (St. Paul), after three years, went up, he says, to visit St. Peter, and stayed with him fifteen days. "But other of the apostles saw I none, save James, the Lord's brother."[2]

In the Council of Jerusalem, held in 51 A.D., St. James gave his vote last, and the result of the Council proceeded from it. The discussion was, as to whether the Gentile converts were to be required to keep the law of Moses. Certain of the Pharisees (we see they, also, had now come into the Church) said that it was needful, but the apostles were not quite decided. A council was called. St. Peter opposed it, and St. James gave his decision against imposing the ceremonial law on the Gentiles; the moral law was, of course, to be observed.

But in his own Church, consisting of Jewish converts, St. James required his people to remain under the law and to frequent the Temple services.

The progress made by the gospel alarmed the high priest Ananias, who had St. James and some of his disciples seized. But fearful that they should not get him condemned, the priests persuaded him to go with them to the pinnacle of the Temple, and there explain his opinions to the people. Jerusalem at the time was full of Jews, who had come up to keep the Passover; and who at once assembled beneath the spot. The aged apostle stood there in the presence of the multitude, and the Pharisees demanded, "Tell us, O Justus, what is the truth about this institution of the Crucified Jesus?"

St. James's voice came out clear and audible to all. "Why do ye inquire of Jesus, the Son of Man? He sits in heaven on the right hand of the Majesty on high, and will come again in the clouds of heaven."

Voices arose from beneath, crying, "Hosanna to the Son of David." Enraged at this unexpected response the priests rushed on the apostle and threw him headlong from the Temple; but he was not quite killed by the fall. He rose on his knees and prayed for his murderers, who instantly completed the martyrdom by stoning him. He died in the year 62. St. James the Less was the author of the Epistle of St. James in the New Testament. It is thought to have been written the year before the apostle's death. He was buried near the spot where he had been stoned, and his grave is still to be seen in the valley of the Kedron. It is one of four tombs, and the most striking of them. It is a room cut in the cliff's side; its front is a porch supported by Doric columns.

St. James was succeeded in the bishopric of Jerusalem by Symeon, the son of Cleophas, and the cousin of our Lord. He was not an apostle, but has been supposed to have belonged to the seventy disciples. The kinsmen of the Lord were held in great honour after His resurrection, and probably the relationship of Symeon to the Virgin Mary led to the honourable but dangerous office of Bishop of Jerusalem being conferred on him. After the murder of St. James a solemn assembly was held of the Church, to which the apostles, disciples, and

[1] 1 Cor. xv. 5-7.
[2] Gal. i. 19.

kindred of the Lord came, and there elected Symeon[1] into the place of James. Perhaps his age was one reason why he was chosen, for it was of the utmost importance that "they whose authority was to be looked up to should have been, if possible, eye-witnesses and hearers of our Lord Himself. For heresy was already rearing its hydra head in the Church."

A Christian named Thebuthis had hoped to be elected to the episcopal chair; being disappointed, he headed a heresy.

The Jewish Christian Church was the most afflicted of all the early Churches. It was subject to continual persecution by the Pharisees and priests, and its members were reduced to the greatest poverty. Symeon must have thankfully accepted the contributions of the Gentile Churches brought to Jerusalem by St. Paul for his necessitous flock. It must also have encouraged him to find that the gospel had spread so far, and brought forth charity and love. He saw in these gifts the fulfilment of prophecy, that the Gentiles should flock into the Church.

But though disturbed and troubled by this heresy, the Church was for a time left at peace from persecution. The Jews were already beginning to struggle with Rome; they were also divided amongst themselves, and had not time to think of the hitherto persecuted Christians. Terrible signs began to manifest themselves in the sky. A fiery sword hung above Jerusalem for a whole year.[2]

An awful comet, then looked on by all people as the sign of the fall of nations, was in the sky. The first signal of danger was given. The armies of Rome encompassed Jerusalem, while the Jews murdered each other in the streets; and in the Temple murderers were lodged. What scenes of horror must have been presented to the eyes of the aged bishop. At last a Divine oracle warned Symeon to flee with his flock to Pella.[1] A most singular interval of the blockade, of which we have before spoken, permitted the Christians to leave the doomed city; and they journeyed to Pella, where already a sister Church existed. Here they remained, and here they must have heard of the fulfilment of the Lord's words. Jerusalem was utterly destroyed, the Temple burned, and the nation dispersed. The great and terrible day of the Lord had come.

How long the Christians remained in Pella we do not know. They are not heard of as settled in Jerusalem again till the reign of Hadrian.

But we may suppose that they found their way back long before, for Epiphanius says that in Hadrian's time the Christians had a Church erected on the site of the upper chamber, to which the apostles retired after the Ascension.

The continued rebellions of the Jews, into which they were led by pretended Messiahs, had provoked the Roman emperors to seek out the family of David for extirpation. Some members of David's house had appeared before Domitian, but had not suffered, as he despised their poverty. But he at last resolved to extirpate the race to whom, he believed, the Jews looked for a leader, and Trajan approved of the same policy.

The Jews, never weary of persecuting the Christians, brought Symeon before the Tribunal of Atticus, the Governor of Syria, charging him with being of the seed of David, and a Christian. He was at that time a hundred and twenty years old.

In spite of his great age they put him to the most exquisite tortures for several days. He bore them with a fortitude that astonished the Governor. Unable, however, to make him deny his master, they finally crucified him.[2]

Within the next thirty years the aged bishop had thirteen successors; chosen

[1] Euseb. H. E., III. 11.
[2] Josephus, Wars, vi. 5, 3.

[1] Euseb. iii. 5.
[2] Euseb. H. E. 4. 5.

from Hadrian's time, from the Gentile converts. The first of these, Marcus of the Holy Sepulchre, was crucified together with a number of his flock in the presence of the Emperor Hadrian and his army.

Many miracles are said to have been wrought by Narcissus, the thirteenth bishop. Cassian was the seventeenth bishop of Jerusalem. Alexander, the thirty-fourth bishop, formed an excellent library, which was destroyed by the heathens. He was tortured and imprisoned at Cæsarea, where he died. The conversion of Constantine the Great gave peace to the Churches.

St. James the Just is said to have founded an order of devout women who lived with him in the Cænaculum, which may be considered the first Christian Church.

The Empress Helena, in her great old age, became one of the sisters of this order, which was called that of the Virgin Canonesses. She received the linen surplice and double cross from Macarius, the thirty-ninth bishop of Jerusalem.

The head of the Jewish Church took the title of Patriarch. The fifty-seventh Bishop of Jerusalem after St. James was the Patriarch Orestes. His flock was massacred, and he was led captive to Babylon, where he was put to death.

The Knights of the Holy Sepulchre claimed to have been founded by St. James.

John Noclerus says there were four orders in Jerusalem wearing the two-armed red cross—the Sepulchrans, the Knights of St. John, the Templars, and afterwards the Teutonic Order. "The first (the Sepulchrans) claim their descent from St. James, son of Alpheus, brother of our Lord. They wore on their dress a double cross of red silk."[1]

The Knights of the Holy Sepulchre were first known in England, in the reign of Henry I., who ordered the Bishop of Worcester to consecrate an altar at the Priory of the Sepulchre and a Cemetery for a burial-place for them, but Henry VIII. suppressed the Order.

The Nuns are, however, now established at New Hall, in Essex. They have lived there ever since 1800, Mr. MacEvoy, a Roman Catholic, having bought the hall and given it to them in 1799.

The Byzantine Church continued in Palestine for a very long time, till, in fact, the period of the Moslem Conquest. Its patriarch, in 635, was compelled to surrender the Holy City to the Khalif Omar.

The history of the Jewish Church is very vague for many years after the martyrdom of her first three bishops; but she had a long succession of bishops and patriarchs; and that for many centuries she was looked on as the mother church there is no doubt.

It is with sincere regret that every Christian must look on the dissensions between rival Churches and sects that now prevail in the Holy City, disgracing the religion that they profess. What would be the feelings of St. James or Symeon if they could look on the Greek fire and the violent quarrels of the sects calling themselves Christian?

The following list of the bishops of Jerusalem may be interesting to our readers. Its first bishop was, as we have said, St. James the Less, the apostle; its second, Symeon. After Symeon, Justus, who sat six years; Zacheus, four years; Tobias, four years; Benjamin, two years; John, two years; Matthias, two years; Philip, one year; Seneca, who sat four years; Justus, four years; Levi, two years; Ephrem, two years; Joseph, two years; Judas, two years.

These Bishops, as we may perceive, followed one another in very quick succession. This was no doubt owing to the turbulence of the Jewish nation, which induced the Romans to frequently punish them, and cut off all Jews, whether Christian or not. After the destruction of Jerusalem, the Gentiles were admitted not only to the Church of Jerusalem, but even into its episcopal chair.

The first Gentile bishop of Jerusalem was Marcus. He sat eight years; Cas-

[1] Lady Burton's "Inner Life of Syria," p. 359.

sianus, eight years; Publius, five years; Maximus, four years; Julianus, two years; Elias, two years; Capito, four years; Maximus, four years; Antoninus, five years; Valens, three years; Dulichianus, two years; Narcissus, four years. He was a man of great piety, and is said to have wrought miracles; but cruel aspersions were cast on him, and though God signally and miraculously vindicated his innocence, he could not bear the slander, and, leaving his Church, retired into the desert. During his absence Dius was chosen, and sat eight years. After him, Germanio, four years. Gordius had sat five years when Narcissus, as one from the dead, returned from his hermitage. The people instantly besieged him with earnest entreaties to resume his office. They highly reverenced him, both for his holy life and because God had taken signal vengeance on his accusers. In this second episcopate he continued ten years, and at the age of a hundred and twenty suffered martyrdom.

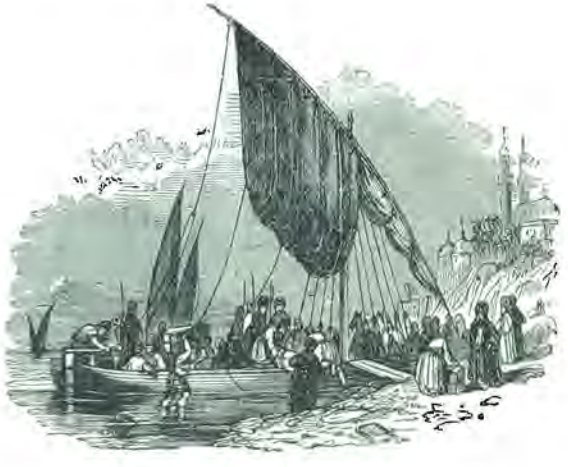
To relieve his great age of some portion of his work he had had Alexander appointed as his colleague.

Alexander, formerly bishop of Cappadocia, had come on a pilgrimage to the Holy Tomb, when he was thus selected by a revelation (we are told) from heaven. He was bishop after the martyrdom of Narcissus. He was an eminent confessor, and after an imprisonment of fifteen years he died in jail under the Decian persecution. He ordained the celebrated Origen. He was a great patron of learning, as well as a devout Christian (not always the case in those ages). He studiously preserved the records of his Church, and erected a library at Jerusalem which he furnished with the writings and epistles of the Churchmen of that period. Out of this treasury Eusebius borrowed a great part of his materials for compiling his history.

Mazabanes sat nine years; Hymenæus, twenty-three years; Zabdas, ten years; Hermon, nine years. Eusebius tells us that he was the last bishop of this see before the fatal persecution that raged in his time.

Macarius was ordained 315. He was present at the great Nicene Council, and sat for twenty years or more.

Bishops were succeeded by Patriarchs of the later empire. Of these we know that Khosroes II. carried one away into captivity when he took Jerusalem, and that the Emperor Heraclius rescued him. Another patriarch (as we have already related) surrendered the holy city to the Khalif Omar.



LEGENDS OF PALESTINE:

ARABIC, TALMUDIC, AND CHRISTIAN.

A LEGEND OF ABRAHAM.

THE legends belonging to the Holy Land are chiefly Jewish, though some few are undoubtedly Arab. Some of those belonging to Abraham and Solomon are amongst the most interesting.

As Abraham sat at his tent door at Beersheba, watching the sun sinking in the West, he saw a traveller wearily approaching; a man of about fifty years, worn and travel-stained, leaning on his staff. When the traveller reached the great Sheikh's door, he humbly asked for water. "Enter," said Abraham, "rest, and we will kill a kid and eat." The stranger entered the tent; the supper was soon on the board, and Abraham rose, and lifting his hand, said, "Let us praise the Lord." The stranger did not move. "Why do you not join in my praise?" asked Abraham. "Because I do not worship or believe in your God," was the reply. Abraham was very angry. "If you will not worship my God," he said, "you shall not stay under my tent. Go!"

Darkness was falling fast; outside stretched the dreary desert. The wanderer rose sadly and left the tent, not having tasted food.

A moment, and Abraham heard the still sweet voice, that was yet so awful, speaking, and he fell prostrate on the ground. "Abraham," said the Voice, "where is the stranger who asked hospitality of thee?" "Lord," replied Abraham, "he does not believe in Thee or worship Thee; therefore I have driven him forth." "What age was he?" asked the Voice. "About fifty years, Lord." "And though I have borne with him for fifty years, you cannot bear with him for one night," said the Voice reproachfully. Then all was silent. Abraham rose, followed his guest into the desert, found him cast down on the earth in despair, led him back with kindly words to his tent, gave him food, and then told the astonished stranger what had changed him.

The stranger bent his head and said, "Your God must be the true one."

SOLOMON AND THE ANGEL OF DEATH.

As Solomon was one day sitting alone in his garden of lilies, he saw a man hurriedly approaching him. "Great Solomon," he said, "I have dreamed that Azraël came for me, and found me here. Will you by your great power send me at once to Cashmere?" Solomon assented, spoke the words of power, and the stranger, whose name was Ahmed ben Isaac, disappeared. A minute or two afterwards Azraël, the Angel of Death appeared, and conversed for a short time with Solomon; then he said, "I must go, O Solomon."

"Whither?" asked the king.

"To Cashmere, whither I am sent for Ahmed ben Isaac."

Solomon bent his head reverentially. The stranger had gone to his doom.

ABOU BEN HASSAN is too well-known by Hunt's pretty poem to need repetition, though the legend is one of the best told by D'Herbelot.

SOLOMON AND THE JINNS.

SOLOMON'S power is remembered and believed in all over the East. When we were in India we heard of his having built Ghiznee for his son Afghan; it had one portion of the wall unfinished.

He employed on it the Jinns, whom he had also compelled to build Baalbek. But they would not work without an overseer, and the king was either obliged to leave them, or died, we forget which it was. But the people were sure that the Jinns would leave work if they knew that Solomon was not there; so they tied a figure, dressed like the king, on two posts, covered by his royal robes.

The Jinns seeing the king (as they believed) always there, continued their labours, till, the white ants having eaten away the posts, they one morning found the figure lying on its face on the grass. Perceiving then that the dreaded king was gone, they flew off, and the bastion remained unfinished.

ORAL TRADITION CONCERNING ADAM'S FUNERAL.

IT is a most confest tradition amongst the Eastern men (and St. Ephrem himself is very principal in the authority) that Adam was commanded by God (and left the same in charge to his posterity) that his dead body should be kept above ground till the fulness of time should come to commit it to *the middle of the earth*,[1] by a priest of the Most High God. For Adam prophesied this reason for it, that *there* should come the Redeemer of him and all his posterity. The priest who was to officiate at this funeral, they say, was Melchisedec, and that he buried this body at Salem, which might very well be the middle of the habitable earth then. Therefore (as they say) this body of Adam was embalmed, and transmitted from father to son, by a reverend and religious way of conveyance, till at last it was delivered up by Lamech into the hands of Noah; who, being well advised of that fashion of the old world, which was to worship God towards a certain place, and considering within himself that this could not be towards the right (which was the east), under the inconstancy and inconvenience of a ship, appointed the middle of the Ark for a place of prayer, and made it as holy as he could by the reverend presence of Adam's body.—*John Gregorie.*

[1] The ancients and writers of the Middle Ages believed that Palestine was the centre of the earth.

WHERE CAIN BUILT THE FIRST TOWN.

THE learned men of Syria, and several Oriental writers believe (and their opinion is supported by tradition) that our first parents, after their expulsion from Eden, lived in the Lebanon, and that the first city ever built was that which Cain raised in these mountains.

They are confirmed in this opinion by the general belief of the country that Abel was murdered at the foot of Anti-Lebanon, opposite to Damascus. They still show the place, marked by columns, three or four leagues from the city towards the road that leads to Baalbek. It was, they say, to this place that Cain, troubled by the horror of his crime, fled, "to the east of Eden," as the Scripture says; and here, they say, he built the first city.—*De la Roque.*

THE LEGEND OF CAIN'S DEATH.

ABOUT seven miles from Nazareth is a hill, called, in the Middle Ages, Mount Cain, because Lamech killed Cain there, by

shooting him with an arrow, according to the following tradition :—

Now as Lemech (Lamech) grew old, his eyes grew very dim, and finally all sight was taken from them, and Tubal-Cain, his son, led him by the hand when he walked abroad.

And it came to pass, when Tubal-Cain was still quite young, that he led his father into the fields to hunt, and he said to his father :

"Lo, yonder is a beast of prey; shoot thy arrow in that direction."

Lemech did as his son had spoken, and the arrow struck Cain, who was walking afar off, and killed him. Thus was Cain's blood shed, even as he had shed the blood of Abel his brother.

Now when Lemech and his son drew near and saw that instead of a beast of prey they had killed their progenitor Cain, Lemech trembled exceedingly and clapped his hands heavily together in surprise, grief, and fright. Being blind, he saw not his son, and struck the lad's head between his hands, killing him instantly. When his wives discovered what their husband had done, they upbraided and despised him. And he spoke to them, saying :

"Ada and Zillah, listen to my voice! Oh, wives of Lemech, give ear unto my speech! I have slain a man to my hurt, a child to my wounding, but not in cruelty or with design. Ye know that I am old and hoary, that my eyes are sightless; accidentally I did this thing to my own wounding and my own hurt."

Then his wives became reconciled to their husband, according to the advice of Adam.—*From the Talmud.*

THE LEGEND OF ABRAM IN THE FIERY FURNACE.

In the neighbourhood of the city they show you the place where Abram, by the command of Nimrod, was thrown into the fiery furnace, at the foot of the mountain, where the machine from which he was flung was constructed, and of which they pretend to point out some vestige to this day. Over the spring, which is said to have issued from the midst of the fire, a mosque is erected, with a large reservoir on the outside, into which the water runs; and in it are great numbers of fish, which will eat out of your hand; but no one is allowed to catch them. Adjoining to this mosque is the most beautiful garden I have ever seen in any part of the world.—*Abdul Kurreem.*

The Legend.

From his earliest childhood Abram was a lover of the Lord. God had granted him a wise heart, ready to comprehend and understand the majesty of the Eternal, and able to despise the vanity of idolatry.

When quite a child, beholding the brilliant splendour of the noonday sun and the reflected glory which it cast upon all objects around, he said, "Surely this brilliant light must be a god, to him will I render worship." And he worshipped the sun and prayed to it. But as the day lengthened the sun's brightness faded, the radiance which it cast upon the earth was lost in the lowering clouds of night, and as the twilight deepened the youth ceased his supplications, saying, "No, this cannot be a god. Where, then, can I find the Creator, He who made the heavens and the earth?" He looked towards the west, the south, the north, and to the east. The sun disappeared from his view, nature became enveloped in the pall of a past day. Then the moon rose, and when Abram saw it shining in the heavens, surrounded by its myriads of stars, he said, "Perhaps these are the gods who have created all things," and he uttered prayers to them. But when the morning dawned and the stars paled, and the moon faded into silvery whiteness, and was lost in the returning glory of the sun, Abram knew God, and

said, "There is a higher power, a Supreme Being, and these luminaries are but His servants, the work of His hands." From that day, even until the day of his death, Abram knew the Lord and walked in all His ways.

While Abram, the son of Therach, added daily to his wisdom and knowledge in the house of Noah, none knowing aught of his whereabouts, the subjects of King Nimrod, who then reigned in Babel, continued in their evil ways, despite of the warnings which they had received of the destruction of the wicked. And the servants of Nimrod called him Amraphel. Merdon, the son of Nimrod, was more unrighteous than his father, and even Therach, who still remained chief officer to the king, became a worshipper of idols. In his house he had twelve large images of wood and stone, a separate god for each month in the year, and to these he prayed and made obeisance.

When Abram was fifty years of age he left the house of his instructor, Noah, and returned to Therach, his father. He beheld the twelve idols occupying the places of honour in his father's house, and his soul waxed full of wrath, and he uttered a vow, saying:

"By the life of the Lord, if these images remain here three days longer, may the God who created me make me even such as they."

And Abram sought his father when he was surrounded by his officers, and he spoke to him, saying:

"Father, tell me, I pray, where I may find the God who created the heavens and the earth, thee, me, and all the people in the world."

And Therach answered:

"My son, the creator of all things is here with us in the house."

Then said Abram:

"Show him to me, my father."

And Therach led Abram into an inner apartment, and pointing to the twelve large idols and the many smaller ones, he said:

"These are the gods who created the heavens and the earth, thee, me, and all the people of the world."

Abram then sought his mother, saying:

"My mother, behold, my father has shown to me the gods who have created the earth and all that it contains; therefore, prepare for me, I pray thee, a kid for a sacrifice, that the gods of my father may partake of the same and receive it favourably."

Abram's mother did as her son had requested her, and Abram placed the food which she prepared before the idols; but none stretched forth a hand to eat.

Then Abram jested, and said, "Perchance 'tis not exactly to their taste, or mayhap the quantity appears stinted. I will prepare a larger offering, and strive to make it still more savoury."

Next day Abram requested his mother to prepare two kids with her greatest skill, and placing them before the idols, he watched with the same result as on the previous day.

Then Abram exclaimed:

"Woe to my father and to this evil generation; woe to those who incline their hearts to vanity and worship senseless images without the power to smell or eat, to see or hear. Mouths they have, but sounds they cannot utter; eyes they have, but lack all power to see; they have ears that cannot hear, hands that cannot move, and feet that cannot walk. Senseless as they are the men who wrought them; senseless all who trust in them, and bow before them."

And seizing an iron implement, he detroyed and broke with it all the images save one, into the hands of which he placed the iron which he had used.

The noise of this proceeding reached the ears of Therach, who hurried to the apartment, where he found the broken idols and the food which Abram had placed before them. In wrath and indignation he cried out unto his son, saying:

"What is this that thou hast done unto my gods?"

And Abram answered :

"I brought them savoury food, and behold they all grasped for it with eagerness at the same time, all save the largest one, who, annoyed and displeased with their greed, seized that iron which he holds, and destroyed them."

"False are thy words," answered Therach in anger. "Had these images the breath of life, that they could move and act as thou hast spoken? Did I not fashion them with my own hands? How, then, could the larger destroy the smaller ones?"

"Then why serve senseless, powerless gods?" replied Abram, "gods who can neither help thee in thy need nor hear thy supplications? Evil is it of thee and those who unite with thee to serve images of stone and wood, forgetting the Lord God who made the heaven and the earth and all that is therein. Ye bring guilt upon your souls, the same guilt for which your ancestors were punished by the waters of the flood. Cease, O my father, to serve such gods, lest evil fall upon thy soul and the souls of all thy family."

And seizing the iron from the hands of the remaining idol, he destroyed that also, before his father's eyes.

When Therach witnessed this deed of his son, he hastened before King Nimrod and denounced Abram, saying, "A son born to me fifty years ago has acted so and so; let him be brought before thee, I pray, for judgment."

When Abram was summoned before the king, Nimrod said to him:

"What is this that thou hast done unto thy father's gods?"

And Abram answered the king in the same words that he had spoken to his father. And when Nimrod replied:

"The large god had no strength nor power to do this thing," Abram continued, saying :

"Then wherefore serve him? Why cause thy subjects to follow in thy vain ways? Rather serve the great Lord of the world, who has power to do all things; who has the power to kill, the power to keep alive. Woe to thee, thou man of foolish heart. Turn from thy evil ways, serve Him in whose hands is thy life and the lives of all thy people, or die in reproach, thou and all who follow thee."

The king commanded his officers to seize Abram and lead him to confinement, and he remained in prison ten days. During this time Nimrod convened his council, and thus addressed his princes and his officers :

"Ye have heard of the deeds of Abram, the son of Therach. He has treated me with disrespect, and shown no dread of my power. Behold, he is in prison; therefore speak and tell me what punishment should be inflicted on this man, who has acted so audaciously before me."

And the counsellors replied:

"He who acts disrespectfully to the king should meet death upon the gallows; this man has done more; he is guilty of sacrilege, he has insulted our gods; therefore he should be burned to death. If it be pleasing to the king let a furnace be heated, day and night, and then let this Abram be cast therein."

This advice pleased the king, and he commanded such measures to be taken forthwith.

And when the furnace was heated to a great and consuming heat, all the officers assembled, and the people, both great and small, to witness the carrying out of the king's orders. The women, carrying their children with them, ascended to the roofs of their houses, and the men gathered in great numbers; but all stood afar off, for none dared approach the great heat to look into the furnace.

And it came to pass, when Abram was brought out from prison and the wise men and magicians beheld him, that they cried aloud unto Nimrod :

"Oh, king, we know this man! This is none other than the child, at whose birth, fifty years ago, one large star consumed four other stars. His father has mocked thee and played thee false in sending

another child in his stead, to be slain according to thy will."

When the king heard these words he grew fiercely angry, and ordered Therach to be immediately brought before him. And he said to Therach:

"Thou hast heard what these magicians have asserted. Tell me, now, have they spoken truly?"

And Therach, observing the great anger of the king, answered truly:

"It is as these wise men have spoken. I had compassion upon my child, and sent thee in his stead the child of one of my slaves."

"Who advised thee to this? Speak truly, and thou shalt live!" demanded Nimrod.

The king's manner terrified Therach, and he answered quickly, not knowing what he said, and altogether without foundation:

"Charan, my other son, advised me to the thing."

Now Charan was a man without strength of mind in faith, and undecided as to whether the idols of his father or the God of Abram deserved his worship. When Abram was cast in prison, Charan said in his heart, "Now will I see which God is powerful. If Abram prevails I will profess his faith, and if he perishes I will follow the leading of the king."

When Therach thus accused his son, Nimrod answered:

"Then Charan must suffer with Abram, and both thy sons be cast into the furnace."

And both Abram and Charan were brought before the king, and in the presence of all the inhabitants their robes were removed from them, their hands and feet were bound, and they were cast into the flaming furnace.

Now the heat of the fire was so great that the twelve men who cast them therein were consumed by it; yet God had compassion upon his servant Abram, and though the ropes which bound him were burned from off his limbs, he walked upright through the fire, unharmed. But Charan, his brother, whose heart was not the Lord's, met instantaneous death in the flames. And the servants of the king called out to their master:

"Behold, Abram walks unhurt through the flames, the ropes with which we bound him are consumed, yet he is uninjured."

The king refused to believe so wonderful a thing, and sent trusted officers to look into the furnace, and when they corroborated the words of their inferiors the king was lost in amazement, and commanded his officers to take Abram out of the fire. They were not able, however, to execute his order, for the forks of flame blazed in their faces, and they fled from the great heat.

And the king reproached them, saying ironically:

"Haste ye,—take Abram out, else he may die!"

But their second attempt was fruitless as the first, and in it eight men were burned to death.

Then the king called to Abram, saying:

"Servant of the God of Heaven, come forth from the fire and stand before me."

And Abram walked out of the fire and the furnace and stood before the king. And when the king saw that not even a hair of Abram's head was singed by the flame, he expressed wonder and amazement.

"The God of Heaven, in whom I trust," said Abram, "and in whose hand are all things, hath delivered me from the flames."

And the princes of the king bowed before Abram, but he said to them:

"Bow not to me, but to the great God of the Universe, who hath created you. Serve Him and walk in His ways; He is powerful to deliver and to save from death."

The king, too, looked on Abram with awe, and made him many valuable presents, and parted from him in peace.—*From the Talmud.*

THE LEGEND OF MOSES'S INFANCY.

ABOUT the time when Moses was three years old, Pharaoh sitting at his banquet table, with his queen upon his right, Bathia at his left, and his two sons, with Bi'lam and the princes of his realm about him, took Moses upon his lap. The child stretched forth his hand, and taking the royal crown from Pharaoh's head, placed it upon his own.

In this action the king and the people around him imagined they saw a meaning, and Pharaoh asked: "How shall this Hebrew boy be punished?"

Then said Bi'lam, the son of Be'or, the magician, "Think not, because the child is young, that he did this thing thoughtlessly. Remember, oh king, the dream which thy servant read for thee; the dream of the balances. The spirit of understanding is already implanted in this child, and to himself he takes thy kingdom. Such, my lord, hath ever been the way of his people, to trample down those who have dealt kindly with them, to deceitfully usurp the power of those who have reared and protected them. Abraham, their ancestor, deceived Pharaoh, saying of Sarah, his wife, 'She is my sister'; Isaac, his son, did the same thing; Jacob obtained surreptitiously the blessing which rightfully belonged to his brother; he travelled to Mesopotamia, married the daughters of his uncle, and fled with them secretly, taking large flocks and herds and immense possessions; the sons of Jacob sold their brother Joseph into slavery; he was afterwards exalted by thy ancestor and made second in Egypt, and when a famine came upon the land, he brought hither his father with all his family to feed upon its substance, while the Egyptians sold themselves for food; and now, my lord, this child arises to imitate their actions. He mocks thee, O king, thy elders and thy princes. Therefore, let his blood be spilled; for the future welfare of Egypt let this thing be done."

The king replied to the words of Bi'lam:

"We will call our judges together, and if they deem the child deserving of death he shall be executed."

When the judges and wise men assembled according to the order of the king, Jithro, the priest of Midian, came with them. The king related the child's action and the advice which Bi'lam had given him, requesting their opinions on the same.

Then said Jithro, desirous to preserve the child's life:

"If it be pleasing to the king, let two plates be placed before the child, one containing fire, the other gold. If the child stretches forth his hand to grasp the gold, we will know him to be an understanding being, and consider that he acted towards thee knowingly, deserving death. But if he grasps the fire, let his life be spared."

This advice met with the king's approval, and two plates, one containing gold, the other fire, were placed before the infant Moses. The child put forth his hand, and grasping the fire put it to his mouth, burn his tongue, and becoming thereafter "heavy of mouth and heavy of tongue," as mentioned in the Bible. Through this childish action the life of Moses was saved.—*From the Talmud.*

THE TRUE HEIR.

A WISE Israelite, dwelling some distance from Jerusalem, sent his son to the Holy City to complete his education. During the youth's absence the father was taken ill, and feeling that death was near, he made a will, leaving all his property to one of his slaves, on condition that he should allow the son to select any one article belonging to him that pleased him for an inheritance.

As soon as his master died, the slave, elated with his good fortune, hastened to Jerusalem, informed his late master's son of

what had taken place, and showed him the will.

The young man was surprised and grieved at the intelligence, and after the allotted time of mourning had expired, he began to seriously consider his situation. He went to his teacher, explained the circumstances to him, read him his father's will, and expressed himself bitterly on account of the disappointment of his reasonable hopes and expectations. He could think of nothing that he had done to offend his father, and was loud in his complaints of injustice.

"Stop," said his teacher; "thy father was a man of wisdom and a loving relative. This will is a proof of his good sense and far-sightedness. May his son prove as wise in his day."

"What!" exclaimed the young man. "I see no wisdom in his bestowal of his property upon a slave; no affection in this slight cast upon his only son."

"Listen," returned the teacher. "By his action thy father hath but secured thine inheritance to thee, if thou art wise enough to avail thyself of his meaning. Thus thought he when he felt the hand of death approaching, 'My son is away; when I am dead he will not be here to take charge of my affairs; my slaves will plunder my estate, and to gain time will even conceal my death from my son, and deprive me of the sweet savour of mourning.' To prevent these things he bequeathed his property to his slave, well knowing that the slave, believing in his apparent right, would give thee speedy information and take care of the effects, even as he has done."

"Well, and how does this benefit me?" impatiently interrupted the pupil.

"Ah!" replied the teacher, "wisdom I see rests not with the young. Dost thou not know that what a slave possesses belongs not to him but to his master? Has not thy father left thee the right to select one article of all his property for thine own? Choose the slave as thy portion, and by possessing him thou wilt recover all that was thy father's. Such was his wise and loving intention."

The young man did as he was advised, and gave the slave his freedom afterwards.

This story resembles that of the Count de St. Pol giving his rich serf to the impoverished knight, when the latter had declared that the Count had *nothing* to give his knightly vassal.

NOTHING WITHOUT ITS USE.

DAVID, King of Israel, was once lying upon his couch, and many thoughts were passing through his mind.

"Of what use in this world is the spider?" thought he; "it but increases the dust and dirt of the world, making places unsightly, and causing great annoyance."

Then he thought of an insane man:

"How unfortunate is such a being. I know that all things are ordained by God with reason and purpose, yet this is beyond my comprehension; why should men be born idiots, or grow insane?"

Then the mosquitoes annoyed him, and the king thought:

"What can the mosquito be good for? why was it created in the world? It but disturbs our comfort, and no one profits by its existence."

Yet King David lived to discover that these very insects, and the very condition of life that he deplored, were ordained for his own benefit.

When he fled from before Saul, David was captured in the land of the Philistines by the brothers of Goliath, who carried him before the king of Gath, and it was only by pretending idiocy that he escaped death, the king deeming it impossible that such a man could be the kingly David; as it is written: "And he disguised his reason before their eyes, and played the madman in their hands, and scribbled on the doors

of the gate, and let his spittle run down upon his beard" (1 Sam. xxi. 12–16).

Upon another occasion David hid himself in the cave of Adullam. After he had entered the cave it chanced that a spider spun a web over the opening or entrance. His pursuers passed that way, but thinking that no one could have entered the cave without destroying the spider's web, they continued on their way.

The mosquito also was of service to David when he entered the camp of Saul to secure the latter's weapon. While stooping near Abner, the sleeping man moved and placed his leg upon David's body. If he moved, he would awake Abner and meet death; if he remained in that position, morning would dawn and bring him death. He knew not what to do, when a mosquito alighted upon Abner's leg; he moved it quickly, and David escaped.—*The Talmud.*

THE REWARD OF FAITH.

THE Israelites were commanded to visit Jerusalem on three festivals. It happened upon one occasion that there was a scarcity of water in the city. One of the people called upon a certain nobleman who was the owner of three wells, and asked him for the use of the water which they contained, promising that they should be refilled by a stated date, and contracting in default of this to pay a certain large amount in silver as forfeit. The day came, there had been no rain, and the three wells were dry. In the morning the owner of the wells sent for the promised money. Nakdemon, the son of Gurion, the man who had undertaken this burden for his people's sake, replied, "The day is but begun; there is yet time."

He entered the Temple and prayed that God might send rain and save him all his fortune, which he had ventured. His prayer was answered. The clouds gathered and the rain fell. As he passed out of the Temple with a grateful heart, he was met by his creditor, who said:

"True, the rain has refilled my wells, but it is dark; the day has gone, and according to our agreement thou must still pay me the promised sum.

Once more Nakdemon prayed, and lo, the clouds lifted and the sinking sun smiled brightly on the spot where the men stood, showing that the sunlight of day was still there, though the rain-clouds had temporarily obscured its gleams.—*The Talmud.*

THE DESERT ISLAND.

A VERY wealthy man, who was of a benevolent disposition, desired to make his slave happy. He gave him, therefore, his freedom, and presented him with a shipload of merchandise.

"Go," said he, "sail to different countries; dispose of these goods, and that which thou mayest receive for them shall be thy own."

The slave sailed away upon the broad ocean, but before he had been long upon his voyage a storm overtook him; his ship was driven on a rock and went to pieces; all on board were lost, all save this slave, who swam to an island shore near by. Sad, despondent, with naught in the world, he traversed this island, until he approached a large and beautiful city; and many people approached him joyously, shouting. "Welcome! welcome! Long live the king!" They brought a rich carriage, and placing him therein, escorted him to a magnificent palace, where many servants gathered about him, clothing him in royal garments, addressing him as their sovereign, and expressing their obedience to his will.

The slave was amazed and dazzled, believing that he was dreaming, and all that he saw, heard, and experienced was mere passing fantasy. Becoming convinced

of the reality of his condition, he said to some men about him who appeared friendly:

"How is this? I cannot understand it. Why have you thus elevated and honoured a man whom you know not, a poor wanderer, whom you have never seen before, making him your ruler?"

"Sire," they replied, "this island is inhabited by spirits. Long since they prayed to God to send them yearly a son of man to reign over them, and He has answered their prayers. Yearly He sends them a man, whom they receive with honour and elevate to the throne: but his dignity and power end with the year. With its close his royal garments are taken from him; he is placed on board a ship, and carried to a vast and desolate island; where, unless he has previously been wise, and prepared for this day, he will find neither friend nor subject, and be obliged to pass a weary, lonely, miserable life. Then a new king is selected here, and so year follows year. The kings who preceded thee were careless and indifferent, enjoying their power to the full, and thinking not of the day when it should end. Be wiser thou; let our words find rest within thy heart."

The newly-made king listened attentively, and felt grieved that he should have lost even the time he had already missed for making preparations for his loss of power.

He addressed the wise spirit who had spoken, saying, "Advise me, O spirit of wisdom, how I may prepare for the days which will come upon me in the future."

"Naked thou camest to us, and naked thou wilt be sent to the desolate island of which I have told thee," replied the other. "At present thou art king, and mayst do as pleaseth thee; therefore send workmen to this island; let them build houses, till the ground, and plant trees. The barren soil will be changed into fruitful fields, people will journey there to live, and thou wilt have established a new kingdom for thyself, with subjects to welcome thee in gladness when thou shalt have lost thy power here. The year is short, the work is long; therefore be earnest and energetic."

The king followed this advice. He sent workmen and materials to the desolate island, and before the close of his temporary power it had become a pleasant and attractive spot. The rulers who had preceded him had anticipated the day when their power would close with dread, or smothered all thought of it in revelry; but the present king looked forward to it as a day of joy, when he should enter upon a career of permanent peace and happiness.

The day came; the freed slave, who had been made king, was deprived of his authority; with his power he lost his royal garments; naked he was placed upon a ship, and its sails set for the desolate island.

When he approached its shores, however, the people whom he had sent there came to meet him with music and great joy. They made him a prince among them, and he lived with them ever after in pleasantness and peace.

The wealthy man of kindly disposition is God, and the slave to whom He gave freedom is the soul which He gives to man. The island at which the slave arrives is the world; naked and weeping he appears to his parents, who are the inhabitants that greet him warmly and make him their king. The friends who tell him of the ways of the country are his "good inclinations." The year of his reign is his span of life, and the desolate island is the future world, for which he must prepare by good deeds, "the workmen and material," or else live lonely and desolate for ever.—*The Talmud.*

TRUTH.

WHEN God was about to create man the angels gathered about Him. Some of them

opening their lips exclaimed, "Create, O God, a being who shall praise Thee from earth, even as we in heaven sing Thy glory."

But others said:

"Hear us, Almighty King; create no more! The glorious harmony of the heavens which Thou hast sent to earth will be by man disturbed, destroyed."

Then silence fell upon the contesting hosts as the Angel of Mercy appeared before the throne of grace on bended knees.

Sweet was the voice which said entreatingly:

"O Father, create Thou man: make him in Thine own noble image. With heavenly pity will I fill his heart, with sympathy towards every living thing impress his being; through him will they find cause to praise Thee."

Then the Angel of Mercy ceased, and the Angel of Peace with tearful eyes spoke thus:

"O God, create him not! Thy peace he will disturb, the flow of blood will follow his coming. Confusion, horror, war will blot the earth, and Thou wilt no longer be pleased with it."

Then spoke in stern tones the Angel of Justice:

"And Thou wilt judge him, God; he shall be subject to my sway."

The Angel of Truth approached, saying:

"Cease! O God of Truth, with man Thou sendest falsehood to the earth."

Then all were silent, and out of the deep quietness the Divine words came:

"Thou, O Truth, shalt go to the earth with him, and yet remain a denizen of heaven; 'twixt heaven and earth to float, connecting link between the two."—*The Talmud.*

TRUST IN GOD.

[THE following Rabbinical story is evidently the original of Parnell's charming poem, "The Hermit," which is, however, a great improvement on the Jewish legend.]

Rabbi Jochanan, the son of Levi, fasted and prayed to the Lord that he might be permitted to gaze on the prophet Elijah, who had ascended alive to heaven. God granted his prayer, and Elijah appeared before him.

"Let me journey with thee in thy travels through the world," prayed the Rabbi to Elijah; "let me observe thy doings, and gain in wisdom and understanding."

"Nay," answered Elijah; "my actions thou couldst not understand; my doings would trouble thee, being beyond thy comprehension."

But still the Rabbi entreated.

"I will neither trouble nor question thee," he said; "only let me accompany thee on thy way."

"Come, then," said Elijah; "but let thy tongue be mute. With thy first question, thy first expression of astonishment, we must part."

So the two journeyed through the world together. They approached the house of a poor man, whose only treasure and means of support was a cow. As they came near, the man and his wife hastened to meet them, begged them to enter their cot, and eat and drink of the best they could afford, and to pass the night under their roof. This they did, receiving every attention from their poor but hospitable host and hostess. In the morning Elijah rose up early and prayed to God, and when he had finished his prayer, behold the cow belonging to the poor people dropped dead. Then the travellers continued on their journey.

Much was Rabbi Jochanan perplexed. "Not only did we neglect to pay them for their hospitality and generous services, but we have killed his cow"; and he said to Elijah, "Why didst thou kill the cow of this good man, who——"

"Peace," interrupted Elijah; "hear, see, and be silent! If I answer thy questions we must part."

And they continued on their way together.

Towards evening they arrived at a large and imposing mansion, the residence of a haughty and wealthy man. They were coldly received; a piece of bread and a glass of water were placed before them; but the master of the house did not welcome or speak to them, and they remained there during the night unnoticed. In the morning Elijah remarked that a wall of the house required repairing, and sending for a carpenter, he himself paid the money for the repair, as a return, he said, for the hospitality they had received.

Again was Rabbi Jochanan filled with wonder, but he said naught, and they proceeded on their journey.

As the shades of night were falling they entered a city which contained a large and imposing synagogue. As it was the time of the evening service they entered and were much pleased with the rich adornments, the velvet cushions, and gilded carvings of the interior. After the completion of the service, Elijah arose and called out aloud, "Who is here willing to feed and lodge two poor men this night?" None answered, and no respect was shown to the travelling strangers. In the morning, however, Elijah re-entered the synagogue, and shaking its members by the hands, he said, "I hope that you may all become presidents."

Next evening the two entered another city, when the *Shamas* (sexton) of the synagogue, came to meet them, and notifying the members of his congregation of the coming of two strangers, the best hotel of the place was opened to them, and all vied in showing them attention and honour.

In the morning, on parting with them, Elijah said, "May the Lord appoint over you but one president."

Jochanan could resist his curiosity no longer. "Tell me," said he to Elijah, "tell me the meaning of all these actions which I have witnessed. To those who have treated us coldly thou hast uttered good wishes; to those who have been gracious to us thou hast made no suitable return. Even though we must part, I pray thee explain to me the meaning of thy acts."

"Listen," said Elijah, "and learn to trust in God, even though thou canst not understand His ways. We first entered the house of the poor man, who treated us so kindly. Know that it had been decreed that on that very day his wife should die. I prayed unto the Lord that the cow might prove a redemption for her; God granted my prayers, and the woman was preserved unto her husband. The rich man, whom next we called up, treated us coldly, and I repaired his wall. I repaired it without a new foundation, without digging to the old one. Had he repaired it himself he would have dug, and thus have discovered a treasure which lies buried there, but which is now for ever lost to him. To the members of the synagogue who were inhospitable I said, 'May you all be presidents,' and where many rule there can be no peace; but to the others I said, 'May you have but one president;' with one leader no misunderstanding may arise. Now, if thou seest the wicked prospering, be not envious; if thou seest the righteous in poverty and trouble, be not doubtful of God's justice. The Lord is righteous, His judgments are all true; His eyes note all mankind, and none can say, 'What dost thou?'"

With these words Elijah disappeared, and Jochanan was left alone.—*The Talmud.*

HANNAH AND HER SEVEN SONS.

DURING the terrible times which followed the fall of the Holy City, Hannah and her seven sons were cast into prison.

According to their ages they were brought before the tyrant conqueror, and commanded to pay homage to him and his gods.

"God forbid," exclaimed the eldest lad, "that I should bow to thy image. Our commandments say to us, 'I am the Lord thy God;' to no other will I bow."

He was immediately led out to execution, and the same demand made of his brother, the second son.

"My brother bowed not," he answered, "nor will I."

"Wherefore not?" asked the tyrant.

"Because," replied the lad, "the first commandment of the Decalogue tells us, 'Thou shalt have no other God but Me.'"

His death immediately followed his brave words.

"My religion teaches me, 'Thou shalt worship no other God,' (Exod. xxxiv. 14), said the third son, "and I welcome the fate accorded to my brothers rather than bow to thee or thy images."

The same homage was demanded of the fourth son, but, brave and faithful as his brethren, he replied: "'He that sacrificeth unto any God save unto the Lord only'" (Exod. xxii. 19), and was slain pitilessly.

"'Hear, O Israel! the Lord our God, the Lord is One,'" exclaimed the fifth lad, yielding up his young life with the watch-word of Israel's hosts.

"Why art thou so obstinate?" was asked of the sixth brother, when he, too, was brought before the tyrant and scorned the propositions made him.

"'The Lord thy God is in the midst of thee, a mighty and terrible God'" (Deut. vii. 21), he said; and died for the principles he proclaimed.

Then the seventh and youngest boy was brought before the murderer of his relatives, who addressed him kindly, saying:

"My son, come bow before my gods."

And the child answered:

"God forbid! Our holy religion teaches us, 'Know therefore this day, and reflect in thy heart, that the Lord he is God, in the heavens above and on the earth beneath there is none else' (Deut. iv. 39). Never will we exchange our God for any other, neither will He exchange us for any other nation, for as it is written, 'Thou hast this day acknowledged the Lord' (Deut. xxvi. 17), so is it also written, 'And the Lord hath acknowledged thee this day, that thou art unto Him a peculiar people!"

Still the tyrant spoke smoothly, and with kind words.

"Thou art young," he said; "thou hast seen but little of the pleasures and joys of life, not as much as has fallen to the portion of thy brethren. Do as I wish thee, and thy future shall be bright and happy."

"The Lord will reign for ever and ever," said the lad; "thy nation and thy kingdom will be destroyed; thou art here to-day, to-morrow in the grave; to-day elevated, to-morrow lowly; but the most Holy One endures for ever."

"See," continued the other, "thy brothers lie slain before thee; their fate will be thine if thou refusest to do as I desire. See, I will cast my ring to the ground, stoop thou and pick it up; that I will consider allegiance to my gods."

"Thinkest thou that I fear thy threats?" returned the unterrified lad. "Why should I fear a human being more than the great God, the King of kings?"

"Where and what is thy God?" asked the oppressor. "Is there a God in the world?"

"Can there be a world without a Creator?" replied the youth. "Of thy gods 'tis said, 'Mouths they have, but speak not.' Of our God the Psalmist says, 'By the word of the Lord were the heavens made.' Thy gods have 'eyes, but see not,' but 'the eyes of the Lord run to and fro in the whole earth!' Thy gods have 'ears, but hear not,' but of our God 'tis written, 'The Lord hearkened and heard.' Of thy gods 'tis said, 'A nose they have, but smell not,' while our God 'smelled the sweet savour.' 'Hands have thy gods, but they touch not,' while our God says, 'My hand hath also founded the earth.' Of thy gods 'tis written, 'Feet they have, but walk not,' while Zachariah tells us of our God, 'His

feet will stand that day upon the mount of Olives.'"

Then said the cruel one:

"If thy God hath all these attributes, why does He not deliver thee from my power?"

The lad replied:

"He delivered Chananyah and his companions from the power of Nebuchadnezzar, but they were righteous men, and Nebuchadnezzar was a king deserving of seeing a miracle performed; but for me, alas, I am not worthy of redemption, neither art thou worthy of a demonstration of God's power."

"Let the lad be slain as were his brothers," commanded the tyrant.

Then spoke Hannah, the mother of the boys:

"Give me my child," she cried, "oh, cruel king, let me fold him in my arms ere thou destroyest his innocent young life."

She threw her arms around the lad, clasping him tightly to her bosom, and pressing her lips to his. "Take my life," she cried; "kill me first before my child."

"Nay," he answered, scoffingly, "I cannot do it, for thy own laws forbid; 'Whether it be ox or sheep, ye shall not kill it and its young in one day'" (Lev. xxviii.).

"Oh, woe to thee," replied the mother, "thou who art so particular to regard the laws." Then pressing her boy to her heart, "Go, my dear one," she said, "say to Abraham that my sacrifice hath exceeded his. He built one altar whereon to sacrifice Isaac; thy mother hath built seven altars, and sacrificed seven Isaacs in one day. He was but tempted; thy mother hath performed."

After the execution of her last son, Hannah became insane, and threw herself from her house-top. Where she fell, she expired.

Happy are ye, ye seven sons of Hannah; your portion in the future world was waiting for you. In faithfulness ye served your God, and with her children shall your mother rejoice for ever in the eternal world.—*The Talmud.*

THE LEGEND OF THE TRUE CROSS.

THE Cross of our Lord was made of four kinds of wood. The upright pole was made of cypress; the cross-piece of palm; the stock that was fixed in the earth was of cedar; and the tablet above His head, with the inscription, was of olive. The Christians of the Greek Church in the Middle Ages thought that the tree of the Cross was the same as that from which Adam ate the apple. They had a legend that Adam, being near death, and fearing it greatly, sent one of his sons to beg from the angel at the Gate of Paradise a branch or leaf of the tree of life. The son went, and the angelic guard gave him a branch. The son returned with it, but he was too late. Adam was dead. He planted it—who shall say it was not with some faint hope of his resurrection?—on his father's grave. It struck root, and grew into a great tree.

When the Deluge was threatened, Noah took this tree, and the bones of Adam that were found beneath it, into the Ark. After the waters had abated Noah divided these relics amongst his sons. The skull was Shem's share. He buried it in a mountain of Judea, called from thence Calvary, and Golgotha, the place of a skull. The tree was preserved through the ages by a remarkable Providence, and its wood formed the Cross on which Christ was crucified; and this Cross was erected where the tree stood, above the spot where Adam's skull was buried.

Thus "he that deserved death is present in and under the Cross; and He that repaired life, yea, that is life itself, is affixed to the Cross; the true concordance of life and death, of a sinless Saviour and sinful

man; whereby life is united to death, and Christ to Adam."—*From the second part of the Mumiah Treatise of Tentzclius, quoted by Southey.*

When the Queen of Sheba was on her way to Jerusalem, she had to cross certain beams laid by way of a bridge, but being illumined by the spirit of prophecy she turned, and saying "she would not put her feet upon that whereon the Saviour of the world was to suffer," she desired Solomon to remove the predestined timber.

THE LEGEND OF THE DEATH OF THE VIRGIN.

ONE day, as the Virgin sat weeping because she so greatly desired to see her Son, an angel appeared, and told her that within three days she should depart and see Him, and placed in her hand a celestial palm-branch, radiant with splendour, which he said was to be borne before her bier. Upon this she requested that all the apostles might be brought together to see her before she died. St. John was at that time preaching at Ephesus.

At the ninth hour, about noon, an earthquake shook the place, and in the sight of the astonished people he was enveloped in a cloud, and rapt away out of the pulpit, they knew not whither. He arrived at Jerusalem first of all the apostles, who, from different parts of the world, were transported in like manner; and the Virgin gave him the palm-branch, charged him with the care of her funeral, and especially that he would provide against all danger of the outrages the Jews were likely to offer to her corpse in their hatred for the Mother of our Lord. Other believers assembled, and when they were all sitting together on the third day, a sudden sleep came upon all except the apostles, in whose presence Christ appeared in glory, surrounded with angels. The Virgin prostrated herself, and adored Him, laid herself at His feet, and died. Christ then commended her soul to the archangel Michael, directed the apostles to conceal her body in the earth, and then the vision disappeared.

The body remained unchanged in colour or in beauty; it became fragrant, not sunken; a cloud in the shape of a cone descended and rested upon the bier; angels accompanied it, singing the obsequies; immense numbers gathered together, drawn by the heavenly voices. Jews attempted to insult the bier, but were struck by palsy and blindness, yet, on their repentance, miraculously restored. Finally, the body was interred at Gethsemane, in the spot which her Son had appointed. There the angels remained, singing for three days beside the grave; then they returned to heaven, taking the precious body with them. On the third day Thomas, doubting the Assumption, came to the grave to see and venerate the body; he found the sepulchre empty, retaining only the fragrance which was left there."—*Lightfoot, vol.* 8, *p.* 307–9, *from Melito, S. Metaphrastes Nicephor, etc., etc.*

SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT THE DOG RIVER.

"THIS stream is called the Dog River because formerly there stood on its bank a very high column, on which was a stone dog as big as a horse, of which the people relate a thousand extraordinary things. It was, they say, very useful to the province, for, as soon as an enemy had only a design of invading the land the dog barked incessantly. But column and dog have fallen into the river. The Emir Fakredëen had its head cut off, and sent it as a present to the Venetians; therefore only the body is left. I went to look at it from curiosity, as others have done. It lies on its back, and one can see that it had underneath a great square opening. That made me think

that it was hollow. It is probable that some prince had it made to deceive these naturally superstitious people. I have no doubt that the column, which must have been very large to support such a monstrous dog, was hollow also; so that if spies brought him bad news, the prince, to prepare and reconcile his people to it, caused the dog to bark. A man's voice coming from the bottom of the column would appear to an ignorant mob an infallible oracle descending from heaven, or rising from the darkness beneath."—*Voyage du Sœur Paul Lucas.*

PHARAOH'S BATH.

THE Arabs tell a thousand stories of certain hot waters in a grotto, which they call Pharaoh's Bath. Amongst others, that if you put four eggs in it you can take out but three, the evil spirit always keeping one for himself.

THE LEGEND OF ST. JAMES THE GREAT.

ST. JAMES THE GREAT was the second martyr of the Christian Hagiology in Jerusalem. Herod Agrippa had him arrested in order to render himself popular with the people. The apostle was cast into prison, and the sentence of death passed on him. As he was led forth to the place of martyrdom, his accuser before the tribunal (having been converted by the courage and constancy of the saint, during the trial, and by his eloquent defence) repented, and came and threw himself at the apostle's feet, entreating his forgiveness. St. James raised him up and embraced him. "Peace, my son," he said, "peace and the pardon of thy faults." Then the penitent boldly proclaimed himself a Christian, and both were beheaded at the same time.

The apostles, says the legend, took the saint's body on board a ship, without oars or a pilot, and left the winds to bear them where they would. In seven days they arrived at a port in Spain, where the ship grounded. The corpse was suddenly taken from them, and conveyed they knew not whither, while a bright light surrounded it. They were exceedingly troubled, but by-and-by an angel appeared, and showed them the spot where the saint's body lay, twelve miles from the sea. There was a rich and noble lady, named Luparia, residing near, on a great estate. The disciples entreated her to let them bury the saint within her land. But she treated them with scorn and curses, bidding them first ask leave of the king. They did so, but only to be driven from his presence with contumely. They returned to the spot, and by several miracles (one was destroying a dragon that infested the country) they converted Luparia to Christianity. She ordered her idols to be broken, the altars to be demolished, and the idol temple to be cleansed and purged, and she dedicated it to St. James, and he was placed in it. From this place, called Iria Flavia, the body was afterwards carried to Compostella, where great miracles were performed at his tomb, which became a favourite place of pilgrimage.

"This," says Dr. Cave, "is the sum of the account, call it romance or history, which I do not desire to impose any further upon the reader's faith than he shall find himself inclined to believe it."

THE LEGEND OF ST. JOHN THE DIVINE.

NICEPHORUS and St. Austin both relate the singular legend of the death of St. John. St. John, foreseeing that the close

of his life drew near, took the presbyters and ministers of the church of Ephesus and several of the faithful with him to a cemetery near, where he was wont to retire for meditation and prayer. Here he very earnestly commended the churches to the care of heaven. Then he commanded a grave to be dug. When it was ready, he solemnly took leave of the disciples and went down into it, bidding them put the gravestone on and fasten it, and the next day to come and raise it and look in. They obeyed; but found nothing within it the next morning but grave-clothes; the grave was empty.

The rumour that St. John was still alive spread, and several impostors took his name and professed to be the apostle. "Thus error, like circles in water, multiplies itself; some mistranslated verse of Scripture gives rise to a hundred fables founded on it."

The Arabic account of St. John's life contains a very different account of his death. He died and was buried, no one attending his funeral but his companion and deacon, whom he strictly charged before his death never to reveal the place of his sepulchre to any one, probably that they might not perform idolatrous rites at his tomb.

The Turks, however, think that they know his sepulchre, and show great veneration for it.

THE LEGEND OF SIMON MAGUS.

SIMON was born at Gitton, a village of Samaria, and was brought up in the arts of sorcery and divination. He was a man of great ability, and possibly possessed some knowledge of the laws of nature and some smatterings of science, for he is said to have obtained a great reputation as a magician, and evidently believed in his own power.

When the Apostles Peter and John were sent to Samaria, they found that this man had been baptized by Philip, with other believers. That his profession of belief in Christianity was false, we are told in the Scriptures. His aim had been to learn from the Christian teacher how to work the same kinds of miracles that Philip performed. But when he witnessed the power which the laying on of the apostles' hands conferred, and the wondrous gift of the Holy Spirit by which the recent converts could speak in other tongues, he sought the apostles and offered them a large sum if they would sell him this power. The apostles must have been as much astonished as horrified. St. Peter answered him, "Thy money perish with thee," telling him that he (Simon Magus) could have no part in such a gift, but that he was in a state that would bring on him the fearful wrath of God.

The magician was terrified; he saw the mighty power of the apostles, and their extreme anger at his proposal, and in alarm he besought them to pray for him, that none of these things might fall on him.

THE LEGEND.

There was no sincerity in this apparent repentance. When St. Peter came to Rome in the latter part of Nero's reign, he found Simon Magus in great favour with the emperor, and assuming the character of a deity. Justin Martyr says that Simon Magus was honoured as a god, and had a statue erected to him in the Insula Tiburina, between two bridges, with the inscription, "To Simon the holy god." He adds that the Samaritans and very many other nations worshipped him.

The ancient Fathers tell us that St. Peter at once and openly denounced the impostor. The power of both was soon to be exhibited to the people. According to the legend, a kinsman of the emperor had

died. St. Peter and Simon Magus were both summoned by his friends to raise the dead man to life.

Simon proposed that if he (Simon) should raise the dead, St. Peter should be put to death; if St. Peter succeeded, then that he (Simon) should suffer. The apostle accepted the conditions. The magician began his charms and incantations by the side of the corpse, which seemed to lift its hand. The people cried that the dead lived; but St. Peter besought them to send Magus from the bedside, as they would then see that the apparent movement was unreal. The magician was made to retire, and it was carefully ascertained that the man was still dead.

Then St. Peter, standing far from the bed, bade the dead arise "in the name of the Lord Jesus." The words were obeyed; the dead man arose, living and well. The people, convinced of the truth of the apostle, would have slain Magus, but St. Peter begged his life, and bade him go; it would be punishment enough for him, the apostle said, to see how the gospel kingdom increased and flourished.

In his anger and folly the defeated magician announced to the Romans that after the insults he had suffered he should not remain in Rome, but should fly back to heaven. He appointed a day on which they might witness this miracle. On it he went up to the Capitoline Mount and flung himself from it, spreading the artificial wings that he had made. But the wings, of course, failed him; he fell to the earth bruised and wounded, was carried to a neighbouring village, and soon after died of his injuries.

Nero is said to have been so enraged at the death of his magician that he committed St. Peter to the Mamertine prison, from whence he was soon after taken to execution.

THE LEGEND OF THE PROPHET SALEH.

THE prophet Saleh is said to have been of the tribe of Thamûd. Persecuted by his people, he fled to Palestine; the Thamûd pursued him and hamstrung his camel. The Arabs say that the animal is still living, and that its cry is heard by all who pass that way. If the camels of a caravan hear its voice, nothing will induce them to stir; they remain fixed to the spot, and will probably die. To prevent their hearing it, therefore, the caravan discharge firearms, beat drums, shout and clap their hands, making a dreadful noise.

Near the spot are the ruins of a great city, said to have been turned upside down by the command of God, in punishment of the disobedience of this tribe to the word of the Prophet, and here are also said to be the caves which they made in the mountains to shelter themselves from the Divine vengeance. Saleh was buried in the White Mosque at Ramleh.—*Abdul Kurreem.*

LEGEND OF MAHOMET IN THE CAVE.

MAHOMET, flying from his enemies, took refuge with his friend Abubeker in a cave. Here Abubeker's daughter brought them every evening intelligence and food. The Koreish (his foes) explored every haunt in the neighbourhood of the city. They arrived at the entrance of the cavern. A spider's web was across the entrance (this seems taken from the Talmud story of David), and close by it a pigeon had built its nest. They were convinced that no one could be within the cavern.

"We are only two," said Abubeker despairingly, as he heard them approaching.

"There is a third," replied Mahomet: "there is God."

THE MAHOMETAN LEGEND OF THE CAABA STONE.

SOME time after Ishmael's birth the Angel Gabriel appeared to Abraham, and told him that God commanded him to build a house upon the river to which Ishmael had given rise. In answer, Abraham represented that it was impossible for him to build any great structure in the midst of a desert, where there was nothing but sand. The angel assured him that he need not trouble about that, as God would provide. Accordingly Abraham had no sooner come to the place appointed by the angel than Mount Ararat forced out of its quarries a great number of stones which rolled down from the top of the mountain to the side of the little river, where he built a house, which has since been converted into a mosque, and is the same where the pilgrims of Mecca pay their devotions. The structure being finished, there remained one single stone, which began to speak and to complain that it had been so unfortunate as not to have been employed in building the walls of a prophet's house.

But Abraham consoled it by telling it that it should the rather rejoice to know that it would be hereafter in greater veneration than all the rest put together, and that all the faithful who came to that place should kiss it. This promise has been fulfilled, for it is the holy Caaba stone at Mecca, which has been kissed for so many ages that it is now quite black.

THE MAZIKEEN.

THE Jinns of the Arabs are the Mazikeen of the Jews. These spirits, supposed to be of pure fire, are nevertheless mortal, and adopt different forms of religion. There are Moslem and Jewish Jinns. To the former Mahomet preached, and they accepted his teaching; to the latter, Jewish teaching, or the presence of Jews among them, have made them followers of Moses. There are many stories of these spirits, who in some points resemble our fairies; one of these legends we think worth relating.

A certain learned Jewish physician was a great miser, and had saved much gold. But he never refused the aid of his skill to the poor; and it was one night, after he had returned weary from attending a poor woman, that just as he was about to eat his supper a man was ushered in, who craved his aid for a child at the point of death.

The Jewish doctor listened rather impatiently, but this messenger was urgent in his entreaties, and so, after drinking a cup of wine and eating a manchet, the physician yielded to his entreaties and went with him.

The night was dark, and the way the stranger led him was rough and wild. Often the old Jew fell and bruised himself, and he was thoroughly tired before he reached the mountains to which the stranger led him.

Here, however, the unknown paused and said that he must bandage the doctor's eyes. The latter remonstrated, and assured the man that he might trust to his promise to keep the visit secret if he desired it. He was compelled to submit to being bandaged, and then the stranger took his hand and led him on. He fancied that they had entered a cave. There were many at about the distance they had walked from Tiberias,—the caves of the famous robbers, perhaps; but they went down steps and up steps till he was thoroughly puzzled. At last the bandage was removed; he was by the bedside of a child, and close by sat a mother, weeping.

The Jew's instinctive love of his profession caused him to exert all his skill for the child, which had been injured by an accident, and before day dawned it was conscious, free from pain, and asleep.

The mother shed tears of gratitude, and, laying her hand on the Jew's arm, said, "I am not a Jinn, though you see me here.

I am a Jewish woman, taken from the earth by the power of the Jinns; and if you eat or drink in this place, or take any gift (only receiving your regular fee, of course), you will be kept here also, the slave of these spirits."

The stranger then entered, led the doctor into another room, and, showing him a heap of gold and silver on the table, bade him take as much as he pleased. It was a great temptation to the miser, but he resisted it; he took only his exact fee. The father of the child then led him to a room where a table stood covered with delicious food, but the Jew refused to eat. He said it was a fast, and that he should eat nothing till the next day. The stranger left him with the food for a time, but he did not touch it. Then the unknown returned, frowned when he saw the food untouched, and bade the doctor follow him. He led him to a room full of precious things, and begged him to take any that he liked. The Jew saw some bunches of keys hanging on the wall, and felt certain that one of them belonged to him. He asked for these only. With an angry exclamation the Jinn gave them, bandaged the Jew's eyes again, and led him home. As he reached his own doorway, the Jinn said, "Farewell," and left him. The doctor removed the bandage, unlocked his door, sighed, and thanked God that he was safe. But from that day he was a changed man. He hoarded no longer; he grew even generous; the poor blessed his liberality as well as his skill and kindness.

For he had seen of how little value gold and silver were compared with life and liberty, and he did not forget the lessons taught him by the Mazikeen. He knew from tradition that they would have had no power to take his keys had they not been those of a miser.

Henceforth he was the benefactor of the needy.

DISPERSION OF LANGUAGES.

THE Arabs believe that Adam talked Arabic in Paradise; on earth he forgot it, and began to speak "Hebrew, Syrian, Delikele" (?) and Persian, which languages were spoken till the Deluge, after which humanity was divided into seventy-two nations and as many languages. The first who invented new languages was Edris (Enoch), who first wrote books and bound them, and hid them in the pyramids. Ishmael restored the Arabic and Persian originally spoken in Paradise, and Esau made Turkish the language of the Tartars.



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