

THE
GOLDEN HORN;
AND
SKETCHES IN
ASIA MINOR, EGYPT, SYRIA,
AND
THE HAURAN.

BY
CHARLES JAMES MONK, M.A.
TRIN. COL. CAM.

IN TWO VOLUMES.
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DASHOOR—MEMPHIS—SAKKARA—ABOÓSEÉR—THE SPHINX — THE
GREAT PYRAMIDS OF GEEZEH.

THE Pyramids of Egypt have been fertile sources of conjecture to both ancient and modern historians: the accounts given by them of their origin and of the objects of their construction are far from satisfactory; but vague as are their surmises, they nevertheless demand our attention, and present us with sufficient data to enable us to form our own opinions on the marvels of the Memphite nome. According to Herodotus, the founder of the great pyramid of Geezeh, Cheops, was a cruel and tyrannical ruler. “He closed all

the temples and forbade the Egyptians to perform sacrifices; after which he made them all work for him. Some were employed in the quarries of the Arabian hills, to cut stones, to drag them down to the river, and to put them into boats, others being stationed on the opposite shore to receive them and drag them to the Libyan hills; and the hundred thousand men thus employed were relieved by an equal number every three months. Of the time passed in this arduous undertaking, ten years were taken up with the construction of the causeway for the transport of the stones,—a work scarcely less wonderful,” he observes, “in my opinion, than the pyramid itself: for it has five stadia in length, four hundred cubits in breadth, and the highest part is three hundred and two cubits, while the whole is constructed of polished stones sculptured with the figures of animals. Those ten years were occupied exclusively in the causeway, independently of the time spent in levelling the hill on which the pyramids stand, and in making the subterraneous chambers intended for his tomb, in an island formed by the waters of the Nile, which he conducted thither by a canal. The building of the pyramid itself occupied

twenty years. It is square, each face measuring eight hundred feet in length, and the same in height. The greater part is of polished stones, most carefully put together, no one of which is less than thirty feet long.

“This pyramid was built in steps, and as the work proceeded, the stones were raised from the ground by means of machines made of short pieces of wood. When a block had been brought to the first tier, it was placed in a machine there, and so on from tier to tier by a succession of similar machines, there being as many machines as tiers of stones, or perhaps one served for the purpose, being moved from tier to tier as each stone was taken up. I mention this, because I have heard both stated. When completed in this manner, they proceeded to make out the form of the pyramid, beginning at the top, and thence downwards to the lowest tier. On the pyramid was engraved in Egyptian characters the sum expended in supplying the workmen with *raphanus*, onions, and garlick; and he who interpreted the inscription told me, as I remember well, that it amounted to 1,600 talents, (200,000*l.*) If that be true, how much more must have been expended on the iron

tools, the food, and clothing of the workmen, employing as they did all the time above mentioned in the work itself, without taking into account the time spent in cutting and transporting the stones, and making the subterraneous chambers, which must have been considerable."

Herodotus goes on to mention an incredible story about a smaller pyramid having been built by the daughter of Cheops, each side of which is a hundred and fifty feet in length.

"After a reign of fifty years according to Egyptian chronologers Cheops died, and was succeeded by his brother Cephren, who followed the example of his predecessor in building a pyramid, but inferior in size to that of his brother. I measured them both. It has neither subterraneous chambers, nor any canal flowing into it from the Nile, like the other, where the tomb of its founder is placed in an island, surrounded by water. The lowest tier of this pyramid is of Ethiopian stone of various colours. It is forty feet smaller than the great pyramid. Both are built on the same hill, which is about one hundred feet high. I was likewise informed that Cephren reigned fifty-six years, so that the

Egyptians were overwhelmed for one hundred and six years with every kind of oppression, and the temples continued to be closed during the whole time. Indeed they have such an aversion for the memory of these two princes, that they will not even mention their names, and for this reason they call the pyramids after the shepherd Philition, who at the time of their erection used to feed his flocks near this spot.

“After Cephren, Mycerinus son of Cheops, according to the statement of the priests, ascended the throne. He also built a pyramid, much smaller than that of his father; it is square, each of its sides measuring two hundred and eighty feet, and it is made half way up with Ethiopian stone. Disapproving of the conduct of his father, he ordered the temples to be opened, and permitted the people, who had been oppressed by a long series of cruelties, to return to their work, and to their religious duties; and administering justice with great equity, he was looked upon by the Egyptians as superior to all the kings who had ever ruled the country.”

Diodorus gives a somewhat similar account of the construction of the three great pyramids, and

in reference to that built by Mycerinus, states that he died previous to its completion. "Each side was made three hundred feet long at the base, with a casing of black stone, similar to that called Thebaïc, as far as the fifteenth tier, the rest being completed with stone of the same quality as the other pyramids. Though inferior in size to the other, it is superior in its style of building, and in the quality of the stone."

Strabo speaks of the two great pyramids being reckoned among the wonders of the world. "They are both," he says, "a stadium in height, of a square figure, and their height is little more than the breadth of the sides; but one is larger than the other. Near the centre of the sides is a stone, which can be taken out, from which a passage leads into the tomb."

Pliny regards them as "an idle and silly display of royal wealth. For some state the reason of their erection to have been either to deprive successors or ambitious competitors of the money, or to prevent the people becoming idle. Nor was this vanity confined to one person, and the traces of many begun and left unfinished may still be seen." "The main question of all," he remarks,

"is how they contrived to raise such immense masses of stone to such an enormous height."

This question we have already seen satisfactorily answered by Herodotus, while Pliny contents himself with merely quoting two absurd conjectures on the part of later writers, some of whom suppose that mounds, composed of nitre and salt, were gradually formed as the work advanced, and were afterwards dissolved by the water of the river as soon as it was finished; while others imagine that bridges were made of mud bricks, which, when the work was completed, were used to build private houses. These stories are evidently given by Pliny, not because he believed them to be probable, but on account of their utter absurdity.

He seems to take a pleasure in dealing with the marvellous, and in ridiculing much in Egyptian history that to a more impartial mind would have afforded ground for further inquiry, while he seasons his work with the most improbable speculations of Greek antiquaries. An instance of the indifference with which he regarded the great works in this country occurs in a dry sententious passage, where he characterises that most beneficial and practical work, Lake Moeris, in the Fýóom,

as "a vast ditch of which the Egyptians make as much parade as if it were one of the wonders of the world."

After enumerating several pyramids in the Arsinoite and Memphite nomes, and among others the three larger ones, which have filled the whole world with their renown, he proceeds to say, "Before them is the Sphinx, even more wonderful, and having the appearance of a local deity of the neighbouring people. They suppose King Amasis was buried within it, and that the whole was brought to the place where it now stands, though in reality it is cut out of the natural rock, and worked smooth. The circumference of the monster's head is 102 feet across the forehead, its length is 143, and its height from the belly to the highest point of the head 63 feet."

The author of "The Nile Boat" observes that the pyramids have been regarded as erected for every conceivable and inconceivable purpose that could be imagined by superstitious awe, by erudition groping without data in the dark, or reasoning upon the scanty and suspicious evidence of Grecian writers. The more recent discoveries of Champollion, of Colonel Howard Vyse, and others, have removed much of the mystery in

which their history was enveloped; and we may now safely pronounce them to be a series of royal mausolea, forming the most magnificent and striking necropolis in the world.

A bright sunny morning ushered in the new year; and a most inviting walk lay before us, through fields of corn, of clover and beans, with here and there, at the distance of about two miles from one another, villages almost hidden by the palms that surrounded them, or perched on the summit of a mound of considerable extent, marking the site of an ancient town. Part of the way lay across a large tract of ground, from which the inundation had only lately receded, and the plough was still at work. The land was intersected by ditches filled with water, across which we had to leap. A little beyond this ground, at a distance of about six miles from the river, stands Hárám el Kedáb, or the false pyramid, perfectly isolated and alone in its grandeur. It is so called from the erroneous idea that its base is merely rock, and not part of the structure. It is square, and consists of three or four tiers of limestone built one above another, the lower tiers being buried in sand and in the accumulation of stones broken in fragments from the sides of this pyramid by the

Turks. It may be from 200 to 230 feet in height. That which appears to be the middle story or degree is considerably higher than the one above or below. Towards its centre the outer stones have a rough appearance, and project from the smooth surface to a height of eighteen or twenty feet. This is also the case in the lower degrees; but on the whole the surface is beautifully polished, and the blocks have been fitted together with surprising accuracy and precision. It is built at an angle of about 75° . This fine monument has been greatly injured by the Turks, who have turned it into a quarry: but it seems to have withstood all their efforts, since the injury done on the northern side has not in the least affected the other sides or the stability of the pyramid itself.

On returning to Soweh we sailed down to Shobuk, twenty-one miles above Cairo, where we arrived late the same evening, intending to visit the pyramids of Dashoor and Sakkára, and Mitrahenny, the site of ancient Memphis, on the morrow. An English and an American boat that we passed on their way up the river, returned our salute of three guns.

The canals and ditches that intersect the land

between the river and the Libyan desert were still more than half full of water; one of the former through which I waded was nearly fifty yards across, with the water almost up to my middle; but as two or three damsels, who dwelt in the village beyond, appeared nothing loth to walk through it, I felt constrained to follow their example, instead of walking a mile and a half out of my road to a bridge. I must have presented a strange appearance to the Arabs in my European dress, my trowsers turned up to no purpose above the knee, my gun in the right hand above my shoulder, a pair of shoes in the left, (for the mud alone reached half way up my legs, so that I should inevitably have lost one or both of my shoes, had I worn them,) the tails of my coat floating behind me on the surface of the water, while I was slipping and sliding about in the mud, and withal receiving instructions, scarcely a word of which I could understand, concerning certain spots to be visited or avoided near the middle of the canal, from a good-natured peasant girl, who waited till I was safely landed on the opposite bank, before she commenced her passage with a considerable bundle on her head. I could not help

envying the damsel her single loose robe, which offered no impediments in walking through the water, and required so little trouble in raising or lowering it according to the depth of mud and water.

The distance from Shobuk to the first, the brick pyramid of Dashoor, is about five miles, but by the route we were constrained to take it could scarcely have been less than seven. It is situated about half a mile from the verge of cultivation, which is bounded by a pretty picturesque little grove of acanthus, apparently cultivated with great care; and beneath it the green sward afforded rich pasturage to the best looking flock of sheep that we have seen in Egypt. We commenced by ascending the brick pyramid, which presents to the eye a vast, crude, and shapeless mass. The bricks contain an unusual quantity of chopped straw. They have been baked and hardened by the sun; and like all those of ancient date, as well as those of the present day used in the construction of the houses of the peasantry, simply resemble clods of peat or dried earth. From the summit of this pyramid are distinguishable *eighteen* other pyramids, including the great ones of Geezeh, not to

mention several smaller ones in their vicinity, which were visible through a telescope. The second, or southernmost pyramid, is of considerable size and height, and is remarkable from the circumstance of its summit, or about three-eighths of the structure, having been constructed at a different angle from the lower part. The lower angle is 54° , the upper is 43° . It gives a singular and not very pleasing appearance to the pyramid. The angle was probably depressed in order to complete the work more speedily; for according to the original plan its dimensions would have been considerably greater. We commenced the ascent at the south-western corner. The view from the summit over the desert as far as the Libyan hills, with the pyramids scattered in the foreground, and to the right the rich plain at our feet with the Nile flowing through the midst of it, and the distant city of Cairo just visible in the distance, was very fine and imposing. According to my measurement, for the accuracy of which I will not *vouch*, this pyramid is 320 feet in height, originally about 334 feet, for the apex has been broken and cast down. The length of the side, (it being, as far as it is possible to judge,

a perfect square,) at the base is 614 feet. It is cased in sandstone, the surface of which has received a good polish. The stones used in its construction are not laid horizontally, but incline at a considerable angle to the surface of the ground and slope inwards. To the south of this in its immediate vicinity is a small brick pyramid, supposed by Colonel Vyse to have been originally 181 feet square, and 106 high. The southernmost brick pyramid, he says, was 342 feet six inches square, and 267 feet six inches high, of which only 156 feet now remain. That to the north, which once bore an inscription engraved on stone, and affixed to it by King Asychis, as Herodotus informs us, was 350 feet square, and 315 feet six inches high, now reduced to ninety feet. The inscription was as follows: "Do not despise me, when compared to the stone pyramids; I am as superior to them as Jupiter to the other gods. For men plunging poles into a lake, and collecting the mud thus extracted, formed it into bricks of which they made me."

Round the great pyramid there has been a circuit wall, probably built of limestone, as I inferred from the white line, which plainly marks the posi-

tion of the wall; the whole of it, however, has been carried away. The northernmost pyramid of Dashoor is 126 feet high, and about 184 feet square. It is situated nearly a mile from the others. The entire coating, which was of limestone, has been carried away or broken; fragments lie scattered around. In all probability it has served as a quarry for building some of the palaces and mosques of Cairo. The under surface is a species of sandstone, of an inferior quality to that of the southern pyramid. It has a more pleasing appearance than the other, especially from a distance, since the same angle is preserved throughout.

It was too late when we returned to our boat to visit Sakkára and Mitrahenny the same afternoon, so we dropped down the river about a couple of miles, in order to be ready to start early the next morning in search of the site and remains of the mighty Memphis. Alas! where are they now to be found? Strabo, in speaking of that city says, "Near to the pyramids is Memphis, the royal residence of the Egyptians, distant three schoenes from the Delta. It has a temple of Apis, who is the same as Osiris. Here the bull Apis is kept in an enclosure, and treated as a

god . . . His temple is close to that of Hephæstus, (Pthah,) which is very magnificent, both in size and other respects. Before the dromos lies a colossus of a single stone; and in this space it is customary to have bull fights, the animals being trained for the purpose by persons who are like the breeders of horses, and having fought together, the reward is adjudged to the victor. At Memphis is also a temple of Venus, supposed to be a Greek goddess The city is large and populous, next to Alexandria in size, and like that, filled with foreign residents. Before it are some lakes; but the palaces, situated once on an elevated spot, and reaching down to the lower part of the city, are now ruined and deserted. Contiguous are the grove and lake."

"The taking of Memphis by the Persians, under Cambyzes," observes Wilkinson, "was the first blow received by this ancient city, which continued to be the capital of the lower country until the wealth of Alexandria had raised its importance to such a point, that Thebes and Memphis gradually decreased in size and opulence; and in the time of the Romans Memphis held a secondary rank, and Thebes had ceased to be

a city. Memphis still continued to enjoy some consequence, even at the time of the Arab invasion; and though its ancient palace was a ruin, the Governor of Egypt, John Mecaukes, still resided in the city, and it was here that he concluded a treaty with the invaders, after they had succeeded in taking the strong Roman fortress at Babylon. The wealth, as well as the inhabitants of Memphis, soon passed to the new Arab city of Fostát, and the capital of Lower Egypt in a few years ceased to exist. The blocks of stone of its ruined monuments were taken to build modern edifices; and we find Pococke, a hundred years ago, expressing his astonishment that the position of Memphis should be entirely unknown. Modern discoveries have ascertained its site; but we are surprised to find so few remains of this vast city."

A few hundred yards from the western bank of the Nile is the modern village of Mitrahenny and a long range of extensive mounds, covered with palm-trees, and extending for nearly a mile in the direction of the pyramids of Sakkára. Some broken fragments of granite columns arrested our attention for a few moments, as we rode over the site of Memphis, but there was

nought beside the *admonitus loci* to give them any particular interest in our eyes. A little further on towards the extremity of the lake, then almost filled with water, we came to the fine colossal statue of Remeses the Great lying on its face, which, at the period of our visit, had some feet of water around it in the pit, where it was found by Signor Caviglia and Mr. Sloane, who presented it to the British Museum, on the condition of its being removed to England. Part of the placid countenance of the monarch was however visible; the whole is in excellent preservation, and the expression of the features is remarkably beautiful. The royal oval is sculptured on his side, and in the centre. A figure of his daughter is represented at his side, reaching a little above his knee. The colossus was originally in a standing position, and measured forty-two feet six inches in height. It was broken a little above the feet in its fall. Can this be the statue of Sesostris mentioned by Herodotus as standing before the temple of Hephæstus? It is of exceedingly hard limestone, and has not suffered from remaining so long underground. The back of the column, against which the statue leaned, must have pro-

truded above the ground, and has in consequence been much hacked, leaving the surface very rough. A few yards to the north is a small granite column, nearly buried in the alluvial soil, with a square capital, having on each side the head of Isis, very perfect.

A ride of three miles, the last over the sands of the desert, brought us to the principal pyramid of Sakkára, which disappointed me not a little, as I had formed a grander idea of it the preceding day at Dashoor than subsequent inspection seemed to warrant. This pyramid is of sandstone, built in six stories or degrees, about 350 feet long at the base on the north and south sides, and 390 on the east and west. The stories incline slightly inwards. The exterior coating has been stripped off from the surface. The remains of several buildings and some small pyramids are in its immediate vicinity, the whole having once been surrounded by a walled enclosure. In the neighbourhood of the great pyramid are numerous ibis mummy pits, in which the sacred birds have been stowed away in long earthen pots, mostly crumbling into dust. A party of workmen were engaged clearing away the sand from one of

these pits, preparatory to opening it. They were employed by some person residing at Cairo. It was built of stones, cemented with mortar, differing in this respect from the pyramids, where no mortar has been used, although the stones have been fitted together with admirable precision. In all directions bones and mummy-cloths as well as the skulls of men and animals lay scattered around, and the sand for more than two miles between the pyramids of Sakkára and Aboóseér was slightly whitened with small bleached fragments of bones. As we were seated at lunch beneath the shade cast upon us by the pyramid, a reptile, resembling a crocodile in miniature, with an enormous head, but less than a foot in length, crept out from below the stone which served us as a table. The guides pronounced it to be venomous, so we dispatched it with all convenient haste, the fragments of stone around affording ready weapons. There is a second rough pyramid to the north-east of the other, but it merely resembles a great heap of stones.

We rode across the desert to the pyramids of Aboóseér, distant about two miles and a half. They are three in number, and built in degrees. We had plenty of time on hand, and were in

no hurry to return to the boat; otherwise these pyramids will not repay the trouble of going any distance out of the way to pay them a visit. They are formed of sandstone, and the exterior coating has been removed. We returned to Mitrahenny by a more northerly road, on a high causeway, built as a defence against the inundation. In the vicinity of the modern village, we found a few more granite blocks, one of which bore the oval of Osirtasen III., of the 17th dynasty, which ruled in Lower Egypt during the seventeenth century B.C., in the time of Joseph.

Our last night on the Nile, in the comfortable boat that had for so many weeks been our home, was spent in the immediate vicinity of Geezeh and the celebrated egg-ovens, which were not at work during our stay at Cairo, nearly opposite to the Island of Rhoda and old Cairo, and not far from the spot where we moored our boat on the evening of the 31st of October; when we were setting forth with somewhat exalted notions respecting the wonders of Egypt that lay before us, though fortunately our expectations were not doomed to be disappointed.

Soon after sunrise, on the 4th of January, the

boatman, whom we had despatched to Old Cairo, returned with donkeys; and as soon as they were ferried across, we started for the Great Pyramids of Geezeh. A ride of an hour and three quarters brought us to the celebrated Sphinx, which has been so often described by travellers that I shall only remark that, although the features have been greatly injured, the nose broken, and the face nearly flattened, there still remains sufficient to show that, notwithstanding its enormous size, it was not deficient in beauty. It lies in a hollow to the south-east of the great pyramid, and the greater part of it is buried in sand. Several Greek exvotos, or dedicatory inscriptions, were cut upon its paws, and others on its right face to Ares, Harpocrates, and Hermes. In the area in front of it was a small altar, which has been entirely buried in the accumulated sand of ages. "The deification of the Sphinx," observes Wilkinson, "is singular, because that fanciful animal is always found to be an emblematic representation of the king, the union of intellect and physical force; and is of common occurrence in that character on the monuments of early and recent Pharaonic periods."

I had been somewhat disappointed at the size of the pyramids, even when within a few hundred yards of them ; and it was not until I stood immediately below them that their full size and extraordinary grandeur and magnificence burst upon me. Then, and not till then, did I fully realize the preconceived notions I had formed of those stupendous monuments, which have filled the world with their fame, and seem likely to maintain their celebrity so long as the world itself exists.

I began by ascending the first, commonly known by the name of the pyramid of Cheops. Several Arabs proffered their assistance. I declined, however, and in less than nine minutes, I found myself on its summit. The immensity of the mass of stones upon which I was standing is difficult to picture to the mind ; while, on the other hand, the impressions once received will not easily be effaced from the memory. During half an hour I enjoyed the fine prospect around me, with Cephren's pyramid, scarcely less than the one upon which I stood, immediately behind ; and it was with regret that I commenced the descent, after standing on the summit of the highest struc-

ture in existence that has been raised by the hands of man. It is four hundred and sixty feet nine inches in height, and when entire, with its apex, was full twenty feet higher. The length of each face was seven hundred and fifty-six feet, twenty-four feet being allowed for the outer casing stones, all of which have long since been taken away for the erection of mosques and other buildings at Cairo, during the reigns of the Caliphs. The area on which it stands is nearly the same as that of Lincoln's Inn Fields; the latter, however, has a slight advantage. Incredible as it may seem, the solid contents of this pyramid have been calculated at no less than eighty-five millions of cubic feet.

Having lighted a couple of bougies, and taking two guides with me, I entered the passage on the northern face of the pyramid leading to the two principal chambers. For some time we had to ascend, and I found the polished granite pavement so slippery as to make it necessary to take off my shoes, to enable me to preserve my equilibrium. The king's chamber, the principal apartment in the pyramid, is thirty-four feet by seventeen feet six inches, and about nineteen in height. It is built entirely of granite, the roof being formed by large

blocks of the same material resting upon the side walls. At the upper end is a large sarcophagus of red granite. In this as well as in the other principal chamber that we visited are long tubes formed in the walls, and coming down from the exterior of the pyramid in a slanting direction for the purpose of admitting fresh air into the apartment. Contrary to our general experience in the inner chambers of Egyptian temples and tombs, we found it to be perfectly good and wholesome in the centre of these mighty monuments. There are five other chambers above, only to be reached by means of ladders.

The second pyramid, of Cephren, was about 453 feet in height, allowing rather more than six feet for the fallen apex. The base was 707 feet in length, allowing seventeen feet for the casing stones that have been removed from the greater part of the pyramid. From the summit, however, it is still cased for some way downwards with polished stones, like the pyramid at Dashoor; but from a distance it presents a singular and rather unpleasing appearance, while the overhanging casing stones render the ascent somewhat difficult. The passages leading into this pyramid are formed

entirely of granite, and slant downwards. They lead only to one main chamber, where is a sarcophagus sunk in the floor.

The third pyramid, of Mycerinus, or Mencheres, as his name appears in hieroglyphics, has three principal chambers, and six smaller ones, evidently intended to hold sarcophagi. The entrance to this pyramid was opened by Colonel Howard Vyse. The roof of one of the chambers is pointed, while the huge granite blocks incline at a very acute angle to one another. Not one of them has fallen or been displaced. By an upper passage we found our way to the top of this roof, and discovered that it was a second or false ceiling, the upper one being flat, and consisting of immense blocks of granite, simply laid across from wall to wall. In this chamber was found a stone sarcophagus, which was, unfortunately, lost on its way to England, the vessel having gone down at sea; but the wooden coffin, with the name of the king which it contained within it, is now in the British Museum; where there is also a mummy, found in the passage of this pyramid, lying between two large stones. The present height of the pyramid is 203 feet, and its base, 333 feet.

On the south side of this are three smaller pyramids, which some writers have supposed to have been built by these kings as mausolea for their wives in the vicinity of their own. In the centre one is the name of the king Mencheres, painted on a stone in the roof of the chamber, the same that occurs on the wooden coffin above mentioned that was brought from the third pyramid to the British Museum.

I cannot conclude this chapter without adding a few words in praise of our boatmen on the Nile. It has never been my fortune to take up a volume of travels in Egypt in which the rais and crew have not been represented as a worthless set of fellows, on no account to be trusted, upon whom kindness was thrown away, while the fear alone of the bastinado, and sometimes not even that, could keep them at their work, or under any sort of restraint. Such is their general character, as it has gone forth to the world. I feel greater pleasure, therefore, in offering my testimony in their favour, having had the good fortune to meet with a rais, who had been for eleven years in the service of the same master, whose real worth and steady conduct at a time, when our worthless dragoman endeavoured

to seduce the men from their duty, merited our highest encomiums. I cannot give a better proof of the good behaviour of the Arab boatmen than by stating that on no one occasion during the whole voyage were we called upon to reprimand or to inflict the slightest punishment upon any individual in the crew.

The following statistics connected with the voyage may prove of some interest to those who intend to spend a winter in the delightful climate of Egypt.

Time of sailing and towing the boat from Cairo to Wady Halfeh (second cataract), fifteen days eight hours.

Time of mooring the boat between Cairo and Wady Halfeh, twelve days eighteen hours.

Time of rowing and sailing from Wady Halfeh to Cairo, twelve days five hours.

Time of mooring the boat between Wady Halfeh and Cairo, twenty-four days nineteen hours.

Total voyage from Cairo to Wady Halfeh and back, sixty-five days two hours.

CHAPTER XII.

CAIRO.

ARRIVAL AT CAIRO—BAZAARS—SIGHTS OF CAIRO—THE NILOMETER
—SHOOBRA—HELIOPOLIS—MAHMOUD—PREPARATIONS FOR DE-
PARTURE—ESCORT OF BEDOUIN ARABS.

“DONKEY, Hawagee!” shouted vociferously the dusky troop of Cairene donkey-boys long ere the boat had reached the quay of the port of Boolak. A brisk canter through the avenue of sycamores brought us to the Suez gate of the city,* whence the race round the Esbekieh, or great square, between the ass and its driver, was far more amusing to the lookers-on than to the Hawagee, who was trying to maintain his balance upon the lofty pillion, that nearly eclipsed the little animal under him.

With what anxiety are letters opened! with what avidity are their contents devoured! what files of newspapers to be read! what wars and

* See Note A, at the end of the volume.

rumours of wars to be discussed! Still, though lowering the aspect, the elements at strife, and deep crimson tinging the horizon in which set the sun of 'Forty-Eight, the storm yet hovered around; France had indulged in no new revolution; but stranger far, Louis Napoleon Buonaparte was President of the French Republic, elected by a majority of some millions of votes over Dictator Cavaignac.

January is not the month, of all others, to spend in Cairo. Plash, plash, beats the rain against your windows, and when at last the sun bursts forth in all its strength, the poor donkey, so despised and ill-used in England, is the only resource in your peregrinations through the narrow and dirty streets of the capital. During my stay in Cairo, I struck up a great friendship with a Turk, who kept a miscellaneous shop for *seggâdehs* (prayer-carpets, or as we should call them, hearth-rugs), *fezzes*, amber mouthpieces, and every species of turban and girdle wherewith to entrap the unwary Frank. Scarcely a day passed that I did not pay a visit to his shop in the Turkish Soock (market), where he always welcomed me, and notwithstanding my noncompliance with the general practice of taking

off one's shoes and leaving them below, made me mount the raised floor of his cell and seat myself in oriental fashion on his carpet. The tobacco purse is drawn from his bosom and given to the boy, who fills a pipe, lights it, replaces the mouth-piece, and hands it to the guest. He then sends to the nearest coffee shop, and in less than a minute the *cavée* appears with two small coffee cups brim full of thick boiling coffee, while for the Frank sugar is provided. Sometimes a second cup is brought when the pipe is refilled. In this manner have I spent many an odd half hour, and seen more of eastern life and eastern manners in a short month, watching the different scenes in the bazaars and observing the passers-by, than I could have learnt under the guidance of an experienced dragoman in a year. My very small stock of Arabic was considerably increased by the force of circumstances in attempts at conversation with my Turkish friend; for I never visited him with a *laquais de place* or dragoman, for several obvious reasons; and in the end, I not only brought him considerable custom, but my friends were enabled to make their purchases at from fifteen to twenty per cent. cheaper than they could have done with a *laquais de place*,

hose per centage is not unfrequently one-fifth of the whole purchase-money. Buying and selling are here as at Stamboul very tedious operations, and require no small stock of patience on the part of the purchaser, particularly if he come fresh from England, with notions of a fixed price for every article. When asked the price of anything the shopkeeper generally demands about double the real value of the article; the customer offers, perhaps, a third of the sum named. This is of course refused, but the original demand is lowered; the customer then bids something more, and at length with the aid of a pipe and a cup or two of coffee a price is agreed upon and the purchase effected. A bargain of any importance is never concluded under half an hour, and sometimes days are required to arrive at the *justo milieu*, during which time a constant war of words is carried on with great apparent warmth and vehement gesticulation, but in spite of appearances with great good-humour on both sides. Many articles are brought into the bazaars by their owners and delivered to the *dellalin* or auctioneers, who perambulate the market and receive biddings, calling out the last offer. These auctions are carried on in so leisurely a way that there is no fear

of having an article thrust unexpectedly upon you. Amber mouth-pieces especially are often to be purchased in this manner at a very reasonable price.

I will not ask the reader to accompany me to the citadel, the scene of the final massacre of the Memlooks, to examine the spot where Emin Bey accomplished the most extraordinary leap on record, or to admire the new mosque of Mohammed Ali. I will leave the picturesque tombs of the caliphs on the eastern, and the sepulchres of the mighty Ibrahim and his kindred amid the domes of Imaan e' Shaffae on the southern side of the city, to the long train of mourners from the *hareem*, who visit the "city of the dead" each Friday, riding on the high asses of Barbary, and enveloped from head to foot in the face-veil which conceals the whole of the features except the eyes and reaches nearly to the feet, and in the *hab'arah* (a cloak of glossy black or white silk, according as the fair wearer is married or single), which effectually conceals the rest of the person. And now the ashes of Mohammed Ali are mingled with the dust. How are the mighty fallen! Egypt, once the pride of the whole earth, is in bondage with her children! Grievously has the land been bur-

dened during the last forty years, but her rulers were men. I would fain hope that a worse fate does not await the subjects of Abbas Pasha.

The island of Rhoda, opposite to Fostát, Old Cairo, is famous for the Nilometer, which consists of a graduated column in a square chamber, by means of which the daily rise of the river is ascertained, and the result proclaimed every morning, during the inundation, by criers in the different quarters of the capital. It is supposed to have been erected by Caliph Mamoon early in the ninth century of our era. As I observed in a previous chapter, the rise of the Nile, in the autumn of 1848, was so extraordinary as to cover the island and the gardens of Ibrahim Pasha with several feet of water. Before I proceed on my onward journeyings, I must not omit to bestow a passing word on the pretty orange gardens of Shoobra, where that fine venerable looking old man, with his long hoary beard, who passed in his carriage every morning through the Esbekieh, regardless of what was going on around him, used to dwell, until death at last gained the victory over the iron frame, which had long outlived the mind. The ride to Shoobra for nearly four miles is through a pleasant avenue of acacias

and sycamores, planted by Mohammed Ali; the gardens are open to European visitors, and are a favourite resort for the higher classes in Cairo. A magnificent fountain of enormous dimensions is surrounded by a handsome pagoda, with apartments furnished with every European as well as Eastern luxury. The fêtes held in these gardens may well rival those which have charmed our young imaginations as detailed in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. I shall only further notice the remains of a once famous place, Helio-
polis, the site of which is about seven or eight miles eastward of Cairo. The name of the modern village is Mataréeh. I was not a little disappointed at finding nothing but a single obelisk to mark the magnificence of that ancient city. It bears the ovals of Osirtasen I., who reigned more than seventeen hundred years before the Christian era. The perennial tree of the Virgin, and the petrified wood, in the vicinity of Mataréeh, are among the objects of curiosity which the traveller feels it his duty to visit; but in compassion for his readers, spares them the infliction of the dry details.

My preparations were at length completed for

my journey through the desert of Arabia Petræa, and the day fixed for my departure. I had not shown my wonted alacrity in making the necessary arrangements for my outfit, as the season was scarcely far enough advanced for traversing the desert of Sinai; my companion too was anxiously expecting letters by each mail, without which he could not leave Cairo; and last, though not least, I had met with so great a measure of kindness and hospitality from our Consul General and his brother, to whom my only recommendations were that I was a stranger and a fellow-countryman, that I felt loth to leave the world, civilization, friends, all behind me, and trust myself alone to the care of a few Bedouins in the solitary desert.

I narrowly escaped an irreparable loss by my fit of dilatoriness. One morning, soon after my arrival in Cairo, a thickset middle-aged Egyptian brought a parcel to my room which had been left for me at the hotel; his open smiling countenance and straightforward address attracted my notice. "Signore, lei ha bisogno d'un dragomano?" inquired the swarthy native, at the same time handing me a heap of papers, which he drew with great care out of his bosom; one or two of the signa-

tures to the testimonials arrested my attention. "Siete voi Mahmoud?" "Sì Signore." "Cognoscete dunque il Signor Warburton?" "Sicuro, Signore." I could scarcely believe that I was so fortunate as to find the well-known dragoman of the author of the "Crescent and the Cross" still disengaged. So after desiring him not to offer his services to any one without first speaking to me, I dismissed him for the nonce. Having fully satisfied myself on that score, and having received congratulations from my friends on my good fortune in engaging so experienced a successor to the unworthy Ali, I bethought myself two days after our interview of instituting a search for Mahmoud, who, however, was not forthcoming. As was my custom every morning after breakfast, I walked down to Shepherd's hotel, where several of my friends were staying and in vain sighing for the north wind to allow them to commence their voyage up the Nile; when, on entering the coffee-room, I found to my dismay Mahmoud in the very midst of a treaty with two Americans, who were arranging to start on the morrow for Thebes, return thence to Cairo, cross the short desert to Jerusalem, visit Nazareth, and ride through the Holy Land to

Beyrout, and embark on board the steamer for Smyrna—all in the short space of six weeks! Fortunately for me the Americans and Mahmoud could not understand one another; and as Shepherd was acting as interpreter, I explained the state of the case to him, and had the mistake rectified; for he had sent for Mahmoud under the impression that he was quite free, and, in the end, I believe, found a servant for the Americans, with whom they could communicate in their native tongue. For fear of losing my recovered treasure, I sent Mahmoud at once to my apartment, kept him in sight all the way, and lost no time in installing him in the office of dragoman. During my wanderings in the desert and throughout my Syrian tour, the never-failing good-humour and excellent qualities of this matchless dragoman in no small degree enhanced the pleasure of my travels, and left little to be desired in the invaluable possession of an honest and faithful Egyptian servant.

I will not try the patience of the reader with a long list of articles for desert use and consumption; suffice it to say, that tents, camels, provisions, and Nile water, were provided ere the eve

of departure. Our escort consisted of Tûr Arabs under the command of Sheikh Hossayne'Rehebbby, the chief of the Welad Sâeed tribe, whose headquarters are in the vicinity of Mount Sinai. The contract was signed and sealed with great formality at the British consulate, the number of camels fixed, and the price determined by a regular tariff; the only *casus belli*, or ground of discussion, (a *sine quâ non* with every Bedouin), which was left for arrangement among themselves, being the proportion which the several tribes of the Welad Sâeed, Rahâmee, and Eleykât were to bear in supplying the camels. I fixed my departure for the evening of the 30th of January, being obliged with sincere regret to leave my companion in the voyage of the Nile behind at Cairo, as the mail had arrived without the expected letters. The confusion incident on departure may be more easily imagined than described. I had left everything to Mahmoud, and all went on smoothly till they came to the last package. The stipulated number of camels were fairly laden, and quickly marched off, when it was discovered that a cwt. of hard biscuits remained to be stowed away! The strife of words that ensued beggars

description: bedlam broken loose could not have presented so extraordinary a scene. Mahmoud, having almost pledged his word for only five camels, felt his character at stake since I had consented to take six. Each party stamped and raved, and nearly exhausted their stock of vituperative expressions in virtuous indignation at the mutual charge of broken faith. Neither party would give way, the camels should be unloaded, and the Hawagee might stop where he was. We sat for some time in my room in the *Hotel d'Orient*, enjoying the scene below, but as matters instead of mending seemed to be growing worse, I called Mahmoud upstairs and quietly suggested that the cwt. of biscuits should be left behind. This determination on my part he communicated to the Arabs, and, at the moment, I really believe would have acted upon it, for he had grown warm in the dispute, and perhaps felt some little mortification at not having sooner gained his point. In my ignorance I supposed the Arabs would have been contented to leave the sack behind; for I had made up my mind not to submit to be bullied into hiring a seventh camel, infinitely preferring the loss of the biscuits, which in fact I had from

the first voted *de trop*. I patiently awaited the result of the message. But how shall I describe the electrifying effect of Mahmoud's announcement? *Ille regit dictis animos et temperat iras*. In an instant Sheikh Hossayn himself shouldered the sack, placed it on one of the spare camels, of which about a score had come to see their companions loaded, in the next moment was the picture of good humour, and sent word to the Hawagee that his camel was ready for him to mount. I heard not a word more of the biscuits, but I learnt a lesson to the effect that whatever might have been my intention of leaving them in Cairo, the Arabs could not enter into my views on that subject, but preferred taking such dainty food along with them into the desert.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE DESERT.

DEPARTURE FROM CAIRO—ROAD TO SUEZ—SUEZ—PASSAGE OF THE
ISRAELITES THROUGH THE RED SEA—AÏN MÛSA—THE DESERT—
WADY GHARUNDEL—HUMMÂN PHARÁOON—EL MURCKHAH—WADY
MAGHÁRA—WADY MOKATTUB—FEIRÂN—SERBÂL—TENTS OF THE
WELAD SĀEED—CONVENT OF ST. CATHERINE.

A LAST long farewell to Cairo and the valley of the Nile. I have bidden adieu to civilization, friends, and all the ties which bind one to society, and launched forth alone upon the uninviting desert. It is difficult to imagine a more complete change than that from the ease and luxuries of a boat on the Nile, surrounded with all the comforts of home, to the fatiguing and monotonous life in the desert. Dangers, to be sure, there are now few, if any, to encounter. The enterprise and determination of Burckhardt, Legh, Irby and Mangles, and other travellers, who overcame every difficulty, have opened for us a high road among the tribes of Arabia Petræa. There is something in the slow

rocking motion of the dromedary, which engenders a dreaminess, that pervades the whole system, and produces a change in the feelings and sympathies of the traveller, as complete as the striking one in the country through which he is passing from that which he has just left. True it is, a new page in the book of life is open before him, every line of which is full of interest, and carries him on to the contemplation of nature in her roughest but most unsullied garb.

The setting sun was already disappearing behind the citadel, when I rode through the Esbekíeh on a young dromedary that capered about to the imminent danger of my neck at the sound of the *saiiss'* whips, as they cleared the road for the carriages of their masters round the great square of Cairo. I was seated on an accumulation of pillows, saddle bags, and great coats, with a *seg-gádeh* on the top of all, which raised me above the pommel of the saddle to a height of nearly nine feet from the ground. Fortunately I kept my seat, and in less than an hour we reached the usual place of encampment a little to the east of the Caliphs' tombs at the foot of the red mountain. The young moon was already bright when we halted, and, as

the short twilight of the East quickly fades away, was the more welcome in starting with us on our journeyings through the desert. The tents were soon pitched, a charcoal fire lighted, and in an hour and a half dinner was announced by the indefatigable Mahmoud, by which time I had made myself perfectly comfortable in my new home.

The internal arrangements of my tent are soon described. A single pole in the centre supports the canvass, which is stretched with ten cords. Opposite to the entrance are placed a pair of Russian leather saddle-bags, containing my all. On the ground are spread two small common carpets; a mattress, unfolded upon a Macintosh sheet and covered with a seggádeh, forms a comfortable divan on the one side; a small table and camp stool occupy the other. A paper lamp is suspended from a pole near the centre. Behold the picture complete.

I had finished dinner, and was sipping my boiling coffee from a diminutive cup between the fragrant whiffs of the best Latakîyeh, inhaled through a cherrystick tchibouke, when a visitor was announced in the person of no less important an individual than Aboo Kalee, the Sheikh of the Tîyârah

Arabs, to whose care I was to be consigned at Nakhl. The Sheikh had arrived somewhat unexpectedly at Cairo; and the ostensible object of this visit was to obtain a few hundred piastres in advance for services to be performed *in futuro*. The Hawagee, however, was firm, and decidedly declined. After the usual civilities of tchiboukes and coffee, the Sheikh took his departure, but returned in the morning with the request of a loan of 200 piastres to buy corn and grain at Cairo. The terms of the agreement signed at the Consulate obliged me to pay Hossayn e' Rchebby 900 piastres in advance for the journey to Sinai, the remainder to be paid on our arrival at Nakhl, where we enter the territory of the Tiyârah Bedouins, of whom more anon. Suffice it to say that the wily Sheikh was for once outwitted by the experienced Mahmoud, and we parted at length with mutual professions of esteem.

Early in the morning the Tûr Arabs went into the city to purchase grain and provisions, so that we did not start till 10.50 A.M., when we took the route followed by the Indian mail (Derb el Hamra) towards Suez. The day was delightfully warm. Our caravan consisted of ten camels, and

about the same number of attendants, but some of the latter returned the following day. My goods had been distributed among six camels, or more properly speaking, dromedaries, while the rest carried corn and provisions for the tribe which was in the neighbourhood of Mount Sinai. The first carried two canteens and the kitchen ; the second, a couple of water-barrels, and a cafass containing thirty chickens ; a third, my saddle-bags and the tents ; a fourth, some dozen baskets of eggs, oranges, mishmish (dried apricots), rice, potatoes, &c., while high above all was squatted, in truly Oriental style, the plump round figure of Mahmoud, whose watchful eye surveyed the whole caravan, as he brought up the rear and entered into conversation with Hossayn, or amused the poor Bedouins with his stories of town life.

I have already described the equipment of my own dromedary. On the front pommel of the wooden pack-saddle were suspended two *zem-zemeëhs* (water-skins) for my private use, and a leathern pipe-case. On the pommel behind were slung a rifle and double-barrelled gun in their red leathern cases. The Sheikh bestrode the sixth dromedary, which carried in addition no incon-

siderable amount of charcoal, not to mention the aforesaid cwt. of biscuits. The motion of the dromedary is not so disagreeable as I had expected, but becomes fatiguing after a time, and affects more particularly the lower part of the back and spine, as the body naturally assumes a curved shape in endeavouring to keep time with the slow pace of the animal, not altogether unlike rowing, without, however, the advantage of a fulcrum to assist the rider in regaining the upright position. This fatigue insensibly wears away, as the traveller accustoms himself to sit cross-legged in Arab fashion, and supports his feet on the neck of the animal he is bestriding.

After continuing our slow progress for six hours, we came to a halt at 4.50 P.M., in Wady Ansûry, at a short distance from one of the Transit Company's stations. The tent was soon pitched, one of the tallest Arabs holding the pole, while Mahmoud drove in the pegs with surprising rapidity; in the meantime a fire was lighted, and the camels were allowed to wander in search of the prickly herbs that grow here and there in the wadies, or water-courses. In a little more than an hour they returned of their own free will, and

lying down formed a complete circle round the Bedouins' fire, in expectation of their allowance of beans. The two tribes of which my party consists encamped on different sides of Mahmoud's tent. The Welad Sāeed, and Rahâmee, forming part of the Sowálha, the principal tribe of the Târ Arabs, were on one side; the Eleykât on the other. My tent was about forty feet from that of my dragoman; so that I had a full view of the whole party, camels and all, forming a picturesque group in the open air. We passed during the day the whitened bones of many poor camels lying by the side of the road on the spot where they fell, as well as the carcasses of two horses but lately dead; one of which was being quietly discussed by three jackals, while the other had just fallen to the lot of the hungry vulture. Sheikh Hossayn, for I must drop the cacophonious E' Rehby, paid me a visit after dinner, and thanks to the lessons from my friend in the bazaars, we generally succeeded in making ourselves intelligible to each other, though we were occasionally obliged to summon Mahmoud to our assistance. Hossayn was the only person I ever met with in the East who did not care for smoking. His

weakness was coffee, and Mahmoud was too amiable not to indulge the old Sheikh, as far as prudence would permit.

I was up and dressed by 6 A.M. (*Feb. 1.*); but the Bedouins were difficult to arouse, and then their fire had to be kindled, and breakfast prepared; so that, in spite of all my endeavours to start at sunrise, we were not fairly off till 7.50 A.M. The wind had risen during the night, and was blowing fresh this morning from west-north-west. It increased during the day, so that I found a great coat and *bornos* (an Arab cloak) quite a luxury.

We continued to follow the road made by the Transit Company. Both yesterday and to-day we passed several specimens of petrified wood, lying by the roadside. Some were of considerable size, and have probably been washed down the wadies after an extraordinary fall of rain from the neighbourhood of Matareh, where is the celebrated petrified forest. In about two hours we entered an immense plain, across which we journeyed during the whole day. We met two small parties of Arabs, each numbering six camels, on their way back from Suez, and three men travelling on foot, with their zemzemehs slung round their necks.

About 4 P.M. we passed the Dâr el Humra, "the red house," the first station of the pilgrims on their way to Mecca, which is marked by a fine acacia tree, called Om e' Sharamet, "the mother of rags," standing alone in the midst of the wide desert. At 4.50 P.M. Mahmoud and I, who had trotted on in advance of the caravan, selected a spot slightly sheltered from the strong westerly gale, which, during the evening, almost threatened destruction to the tent, and shortly afterwards the rest of the party arrived, and the encampment was speedily formed. Owing to the late heavy rains, a considerable quantity of water was collected in large pools in the lower parts of the plain. The only living creatures that we saw during the day were three large vultures, numerous ravens, and a few small birds that appeared to be quite out of their element. The hills on our right and left receded far away, and for the first time I beheld the deceptive appearance of the mirage, sporting with the breeze, to which it seemed to owe its birth.

Mahmoud has proved himself to be a first-rate caterer, and no mean proficient in the art of cooking. His fowls are large and well fed, unlike their brethren throughout Egypt ; his dates are

excellent, his oranges sweet, the coffee true Mocha, his curries peerless, he attends to everything himself, is never for a moment at a loss, and prepares dinner with surprising rapidity. My beverage, as on the Nile, is brandy and water: one of the barrels is kept exclusively for my private consumption; the other is to be refilled for washing and culinary purposes as occasion requires, or opportunity permits. Tea proved a great luxury in the evening, and as I had long before ceased to take milk with it, I looked forward to the refreshing draught, after the long day's march, with an indescribable relish. A hard biscuit soaked in water, and slightly roasted, I found even preferable to Cairene bread at dinner. Soon after sunset the wind fell, when, as I was sitting in my tent writing, after dinner, I was suddenly aroused by the voice of Mahmoud exclaiming in no measured tones, and apparently growing very excited. I was not kept long in suspense at this unusual ebullition of feeling on the part of my dragoman. He had just been engaged in killing a chicken for the morrow's dinner, and placed it on the ground while he entered his tent: on returning in a few moments he found it had vanished. Suspicious of

a four-footed marauder were immediately raised; so I took my gun, and, by the light of the young moon, made the rounds of our camp. Within the circuit I had marked out I heard an undeniable sound of crunching bones. On approaching the spot whence the sound came, I saw a head and pair of eyes, and fired. A short angry howl was the only response, and the contents of the second barrel were lodged in the suspicious object. It turned over dead, and proved to be a fine jackal, who had seized the occasion of Mahmoud's back being turned to possess himself of so dainty a morsel, which proved too tempting to allow of its being carried away, or shared with his less daring friends in a place of safety. I was punished during the night by the dismal howling of a large pack of jackals, which, though I sallied forth against them, were discreet enough to keep at a respectable distance, or to retire at my approach.

Feb. 2.—The warmth of an Egyptian climate has not deserted us in the desert, as my daily register shows. This morning, at 5 o'clock, the mercury in the thermometer was at 50° Fah. At 4 p.m. 64° Fah.; at 9 p.m. 61° Fah. The wind, which had partially lulled during the night, broke

forth into a perfect hurricane from the south-west this morning. As we fortunately received its force nearly in our backs, it did us no harm, and seemed to affect the temperature of the air in a very slight degree. We met two camel litters, each borne between two camels, one before the other, and a few detached parties of Arabs. We started at 7 A.M. precisely, for though I rose before 5 o'clock and dressed by candlelight, the feeding the camels, packing up, and replacing the loads on the unwilling beasts, occupied two full hours; and, do what you will, you cannot induce an Arab to quit the fireside and his pipe, until the embers of both are nearly extinct, so that the loading the camels principally devolved upon Mahmoud and two lads, who were of great use to us during the journey. After quitting the great plain of El Mukrih about 11 A.M., the sandstone hills on the left began to close in upon us, and a high ridge on our right ran nearly parallel with our course, at a distance of about three miles. The name of the range is Mukrih el Weberah. I walked for an hour or two during the day. For the most part I ride somewhat in advance of the caravan, and read. I find the trot of the dromedary its easiest pace, but the

walk has ceased to be so fatiguing as I at first apprehended it would be. I can read for an hour at a time without difficulty, and then put away the book for half an hour, and recommence in the same manner. At 3.30 P.M. I selected a spot for our halt in Wady Emshâsh, with the high range of Djebel Atâkah to our backs, so as to shelter us tolerably from the wind, which however fell again about 7 P.M. I find Hossayn's after-dinner visits more and more agreeable, and when abstruse words are brought into play, Mahmoud is ever ready at hand to interpret them. Hossayn is a fine old Bedouin, has a dignified and easy manner, and speaks with interest and pleasure of the European travellers whom he has conducted through the desert. Among the number are M. Léon de Laborde, Lord Castlereagh, and others, to whom he desires his salaam. Many years ago, he tells me, he was engaged in this very valley (Wady Emshâsh) in a battle with another tribe, in which his party, numbering only eighty, gained a victory over 150. In recounting the deeds of his youth he speaks with great animation; and there is something so peculiarly honest and straightforward in the looks of the old Sheikh,

that your sympathies are at once enlisted in his favour, and you almost identify yourself with his national feelings and animosities. The latter, however, have nearly all passed away, and an universal peace reigns through the peninsula of Sinai.

Feb. 3.—We started this morning with the sun at 7 A.M., and proceeded past the fortress of Ajrûd, the second station of the Mecca pilgrims, situate a little to the right of the road to Suez. It contains a well of brackish water, 250 feet deep. The morning was perfectly calm, and during the day we had little, if any, wind.

At 8.30 A.M. Suez appeared in sight, distant seemingly about an hour's march. After proceeding for nearly two hours at our usual pace of two miles and three-quarters to three miles an hour, I sent off Hossayn with the caravan round the head of the gulf; and taking Mahmoud and two of our Arabs with me, set off at a good round trot on my dromedary, passed Bîr Suweis, the well of Suez, and arrived at length at the receding town at 11.20 A.M., which was distant nearly four hours' march from the spot where it first broke upon our view. We had accomplished the journey

between Cairo and Suez in twenty-seven hours; or, allowing two caravan hours for the last increase of speed, in twenty-eight, instead of thirty-two hours, as reckoned by Wilkinson and Robinson.

● I was hardly prepared to find Suez so good a town; for excepting only Siout, it is incomparably superior to any place in Upper Egypt. Having walked through the bazaars with Mahmoud, and purchased half a sheep and a fresh supply of charcoal, I took a turn along the busy quays, whilst Mahmoud made himself known to his brother, who was a waiter in the English hotel. A great number of small vessels, with only a single mast, for the coasting trade in the Red Sea, were at anchor in the harbour. The steamer, with the Indian passengers and mail, was expected that evening or on the following day, and active preparations were being made for their transit to Cairo. The town of Suez is situated on a promontory lying between the natural head of the gulf, and the narrow arm that runs up northward, which the Israelites are supposed to have crossed in their passage through the Red Sea. Not a vestige of a tree or shrub exists in the neighbourhood, vegetation is at a standstill, and Suez owes its present

importance and size entirely to the link which it forms in the great chain of communication between Great Britain and her Indian empire. The modern town of Suez appears to have been built in the first half of the sixteenth century. The early Arabian writers speak only of Kolzum, which Abulfeda, at the beginning of the fourteenth century, describes as a small city. Subsequent travellers mention a fortress or castle near the foot of the mountain of Suez, probably Djebel Atâkah, at the end of the gulf, where was a landing place, to which spices and wares were brought from Et-Tûr, in the Sinaitic peninsula, and thence carried to Cairo and Alexandria. It has always been a place for building fleets, for which the timber and materials have been brought across the desert on camels from the Nile. During the Crusades Saladin built a fleet at Kolzum to be employed against the Christians, who had attacked Ailah.

In the time of Niebuhr Suez was still unenclosed; there are now walls on three sides, falling rapidly into decay, while to the N.E. it is open to the sea. The houses are built of bricks dried in the sun; the principal buildings being the

governor's palace, three or four mosques, and several khâns, built on the same plan as college courts in our universities. Robinson states the number of Mussulman inhabitants to be 1,200, with 150 Christians of the Greek Church.

There are few inducements to a traveller to make a long halt at Suez; if he arrive towards nightfall at the town, let him pitch his tent *outside* the walls, and send on the caravan at sunrise the next morning; he will not be long in following in its track. Soon after leaving Suez we met a long caravan of camels, very different in size and strength from our light dromedaries, winding across the gulf about two miles north of the town, and marching in single file, on their way from Gaza, with soap, oil, and candles, to Cairo. The tide being out we crossed the gulf at the same spot instead of making a long *détour* round its extremity, and so were enabled to rejoin our party about 4 P.M., and finally reached Aîn Mûsa, the wells of Moses, and halted there for the night at 5.10 P.M., after a march of above ten hours.

Let us pause for a few moments, and consider the ground we have just been treading, the ford by which we have crossed the Red Sea, and the grand

and imposing form of Djebel Atâka, "the Mount of Deliverance," behind which the setting sun has just withdrawn his fierce rays. Can we picture to our minds the events of that awful night, when the people of the Lord, numbering more than two million souls, hemmed in on every side—on their left and in front the sea, to their right Djebel Atâka, behind them the host of Pharaoh—felt their hearts die away within them through fear, and murmured against Moses for bringing them forth from the land of Egypt? "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord, which he will show to you to-day: for the Egyptians whom ye have seen to-day, ye shall see them again no more for ever. The Lord shall fight for you, and ye shall hold your peace." At the command of the Lord, Moses stretched out his rod over the sea; "and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground: and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left. And the Egyptians pursued, and went in after them to the midst of the sea, even all Pharaoh's

horses, his chariots, and his horsemen. And in the morning watch the Lord troubled the host of the Egyptians, and took off the wheels of their chariots, so that they drave them heavily:" again, at the command of the Lord, "Moses stretched forth his hand over the sea, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared; and the Egyptians fled against it; and the Lord overthrew the Egyptians in the midst of the sea. And the waters returned, and covered the chariots, and the horsemen, and all the host of Pharaoh that came into the sea after them; there remained not so much as one of them."

In endeavouring to fix upon the spot where the Israelites passed through the Red Sea there are two main points to be considered, which if satisfactorily explained, seem to me to afford conclusive evidence on the subject. I am mainly indebted to Dr. Robinson for the following elucidation of this much *vexata quæstio*. The points to which I allude are the means by which the miraculous deliverance was effected, and the time during which the passage took place. Through-

by natural means, supernaturally applied. Such was the case with the miracle in question. "The Lord caused the sea to go out *by a strong east wind.*" The Hebrew word signifying the east wind is said to include any wind from the eastern quarter; and a strong north-east wind acting upon an ebb tide, would have the effect of driving out the waters from the narrow arm of the sea above Suez, while the more northern part of the arm, which was much broader and deeper than at present, would remain covered with water; so that the waters would be a wall to the Israelites on the right hand and on the left. It may be remarked that in no other part of the gulf could a wind blowing from the east produce this effect; and this circumstance forms one ground for negating the theory that the passage took place lower down the gulf, at Wady Tawârik.

The second main point, the *time* during which the passage was effected, affords still stronger testimony in favour of the supposition that the Israelites crossed the arm of the gulf above Suez. "The Lord caused the sea to go back all that night, and the sea returned to his strength when the morning appeared." If then the Israelites went

into the sea about the middle watch, and if we suppose the extraordinary ebb to have been produced by natural means, so that it would scarcely be possible for the sea to have become dry land until the east wind had prevailed for a considerable time, they would all have commenced the passage some time before the morning watch, two hours later; for at that time "the Lord troubled the Egyptians, and took off their chariot wheels, so that they drave them heavily." The vast body of the Israelites, if we allow a line of a thousand abreast, would cover a space of more than half a mile in breadth and a mile in length, besides their flocks and herds, even very much cattle. In two hours this vast body could not have passed over much more than three miles: the oblique direction which the Israelites must have taken, if they crossed the sea above Suez, would be nearly three miles: the breadth of the sea opposite to Wady Tawârik is twelve geographical miles, or a whole day's journey, which circumstance must be fatal to the theory of their having crossed there, for when the morning appeared the waters returned and overwhelmed the Egyptians.

To the supposition that the passage took place

above Suez it has been objected, that the depth of the water was not sufficient to drown the whole host of Pharaoh, inasmuch as there are now considerable shoals there, over, which caravans can pass at low water. It must, however, be borne in mind that the sea was formerly both wider and deeper in this spot, that vessels passed up the arm of the gulf to the canal, which formed a direct communication by water with the Nile; and besides this, the flow of the sea after an extraordinary ebb would cause the waters to rise many feet above the natural level. Are we not likewise to suppose from the words in the song of Moses, that the wind was changed, and served to bring back the waters with greater force upon the doomed Egyptians? "Thou didst blow with thy wind, and the sea covered them: they sank like lead in the mighty waters."

"So Moses brought Israel from the Red sea, and they went out into the wilderness of Shur; and they went three days in the wilderness, and found no water."

Throughout the peninsula the water, scarce as it is, has generally a brackish taste: this the children of Israel were probably able to remove by

the method which they were taught at Marah, for there are no further complaints of bitter water. But the question suggests itself; how could more than two million persons have procured water for themselves and cattle, unless we are to assume that water was anciently far more plentiful in the peninsula than at present? For days together we did not pass a single spring that would have sufficed to fill a dozen water-casks, and yet the season had been an unusually wet one.

Âin Mûsa is a perfect little gem in the desert: near the principal spring are three fine palm-trees, which ten years ago constituted the only ornament to the place. There are now two or three flourishing gardens, protected from the sands by reed fences, with a comfortable white villa in the centre of one of them—a summer retreat, as Mahmoud tells me, of the English and French consular agents at Suez. The water in these fountains is dark-coloured and bitter; small mounds have been formed round them by the sand that is raised by the bubbling water, but beyond the few wild palm-trees in their vicinity there is no spontaneous vegetation occasioned by their overflow, and the water after running for a short distance is lost in the sand.

These wells are situated somewhat less than a mile from the gulf, and about three or four miles below Suez, with the high range of Djebel Atâkah rising in bold outline against the western sky on the opposite shore, and sand-hills and desert all around. The presence of the moon in the midst of the desert gives additional interest to the strangeness of my situation, and lends her light to conduct me back again after my evening rambles away from the encampment. I have now passed from Africa into Asia, in about the same time that I took to cross over the Bosphorus from Europe into Asia. Time certainly does not hang heavily on my hands in the desert: from morning to night I am busily employed, and scarcely find the want of a companion till the social hour after dinner, when tchiboukes and coffee make their appearance, the door of the tent is shut, and after reviewing the events of the day, my thoughts recur to the many happy evenings that I have spent in our boat on the Nile—*Et hæc olim meminisse jurabit.*

Feb. 4.—The mercury in my thermometer standing at 40° Fahrenheit this morning, it was no easy matter to induce the Bedouins to shake off their

drowsiness and assist Mahmoud in packing up the tents, and in making the necessary preparations for a start. It was consequently 7.25 A. M. before we fairly left Aîn Mûsa. One of our Arabs carries a *corbous*, a stick about four feet long with a crook at the top, cut in a peculiar form, and bearing an exact resemblance to those borne by the deities as represented in the paintings and sculptures in the temples of Upper Egypt and Nubia. About 10 A. M., as I was approaching Wady Reiyâneh, I saw a party advancing in the distance. I rode up to them, and recognised two of my friends who were on their way from Mount Sinai to Suez, where they intended to lay in a fresh stock of provisions, and then proceed to Gaza and Hebron. We had but a short quarter of an hour for conversation; it was, however, invaluable to me: the accounts that I received of Wady Feirân induced me to take that route instead of the upper road, and to visit Sarbout el Khadem on my way to Nakhl. I was amply rewarded for so doing. On my arrival at Jerusalem a month later I found, to my great regret, that one of the friends whom I met near Aîn Mûsa had been taken dangerously ill the following day, at only a few hours' distance

from Suez, was with difficulty carried back to that place, and was at length obliged to return to Cairo and England without accomplishing his visit to the Holy Land.

It was a heavenly day. The gulf to our right, stretching out its dark waters beneath Atâkah, lay undisturbed by a single ripple. I felt at length that I was truly in the desert: there were no longer Haj stations and Transit hotels, no more telegraphs appearing at stated intervals to remind one of the world that we were leaving behind. All around was a wide waste, with nought save a few low stunted desert shrubs that afford a scanty subsistence to the camels, who, as soon as they are released from their burdens, wander through the wadies in search of the scattered herbage, and return in about an hour to the encampment for their regular feed of beans. It is amusing to see some one of them, that has chanced to wander further than the rest, when he finds that his companions are homeward bound, set off in a canter with his long neck stretched out to its utmost length, and commence frisking like a young colt, while his huge ungainly shape assumes the most extraordinary attitudes.

I changed my dromedary to-day for Mahmoud's, which, though it grunts too much to be pleasant, has easy paces, and is far better than the venerable animal which nearly broke down with me as I was crossing the ford yesterday above Suez. At 4.40 P.M., after a fatiguing march of nine hours and a quarter, we halted in Wady Sûdr, which, like all the watercourses of any size, runs in a south-westerly direction towards the gulf. The ground over which we passed to-day was rough and gravelly. About an hour and a half's march from Wady Sûdr lies Wady Wardân, which Robinson erroneously places in his book and map between Sûdr and Gharundel. One of our Bedouins returned towards Cairo to-day, with a camel which Mahmoud tells me he had brought thus far in the hope of my engaging it for the journey; the packages that it carried have been transferred to Hosayn's camel, which feels a considerable difference in the weight of the biscuit-sack of happy memory—to the Arabs, I mean.

By dint of early rising and unusual exertions we started on the 5th at 6.50 A.M., some eight or ten minutes before sunrise, which was preceded by a dazzling stream of light before the orb itself

appeared above the horizon. We were an hour and a quarter in crossing Wady Sûdr and then proceeded across the plain till midday, when the features of the desert completely changed, and we found ourselves ascending narrow passes and limestone rocks, among which we journeyed on a hard gravelly road, covered with flints, during the rest of the day. We caught occasional glimpses of the Suez gulf. The sun was much obscured by flitting clouds, while the wind blew steadily from the north-west, and occasionally with considerable violence. Soon after entering the passes between the limestone rocks I made a slight *détour* to the fountain Hawárah, not more than eight or nine feet in diameter, and less than three feet deep. My camel drank freely of the water, but the Arab who was with me pronounced it to be brackish. On its banks are two low bushy palm-trees, presenting a relief to the eye in the dreary desert. At 2.45 p.m. we came to Wady Gharundel, the largest and most considerable wady in this part of the peninsula. A great and rapid stream of water must have passed down it during the winter, as the depth of the watercourse and the broad bed sufficiently testify. It is filled with small trees and

shrubs, including the acacia, the tamarisk or *tūrfa*, and a few scattered palm-trees of meagre growth. There was abundance of brackish water in the wady, but Hossayn was anxious to proceed to Wady Wuseit, where are some dozen palms of fair proportions, round a spring of sweet water, in order to water the camels and fill the skins this evening. The road from Wady Gharundel was more uneven and rocky than that which we had passed over in the morning; and at this point the mountainous region of the peninsula of Sinai may be said to commence. We encamped in Wuseit about 5 P.M. after a march of more than ten hours.

Feb. 6.—I broke my thermometer this morning; *item*, my camp-stool, and made an additional crack in my watch-glass. After these slight mishaps, and a bad night's rest, owing to a blustering boisterous north-west wind, I did not feel inclined to take any very active part in superintending the packing department. The consequence was, we did not start till 7.45 A.M. The camels were watered last night for the first time since leaving Cairo. Our road lay through Wady Kuweiseh, with Djebel Hummâm, "the mountain of the hot springs," to our right, which stretches

along the shore, and presents a rocky and precipitous front of limestone interspersed with dark flints. The hot springs, called Hummâm Pharaón, "baths of Pharaoh," are impregnated with sulphur, and are situated on the western side of Djebel Hummâm, nearly on a level with the sea, at the foot of the mountain. The temperature of the largest is 157° Fah. Our course thus far from Aîn Mûsa had been nearly south-east. On entering Wady Shubeikeh, we followed the course of the wady towards the sea in a south-westerly direction for an hour and a half, till we came to a spot where its different branches meet, whence comes the name Shubeikeh, "net." As we were winding slowly through this rocky wady, studded here and there with a few shrubs and acacias, I was surprised by the appearance of a pair of pigeons, both of which I was fortunate enough to kill, to the great delight of the Arabs, as well as to my own, as they made an agreeable addition to my usual desert dinner the following day. This watercourse winds very much, and is in some parts eight feet deep. At 11.30 A.M. we came to the junction of this wady with Wady Humr and Wady Et-Taïyebah, where

shorter one turning to the left by Wady Humr and Sarbout el Khadem, the lower and easier one passing down Wady Et-Taïyebah to the sea-shore. I had already decided upon taking the lower route. Wady Et-Taïyebah runs from east to west, and is enclosed between high limestone rocks, that obstruct the view on either side. Proceeding along it for about two hours we came to the sea, which was very rough at the time, the north-west wind blowing a gale. After marching due south for an hour and a half along the shore and across a sandy plain with the usual shrubs of the wadies growing in it, we wound round a precipitous rock jutting out into the sea. As the tide was low, only the feet of our camels were immersed in the water, though the waves occasionally rose as high as the animals' knees. After proceeding round the rocks for an hour or so we struck across a small plain, and reached Wady Murckhah at 4.30 P.M. The fountain of El Murckhah, near the foot of the mountains, is one of the principal watering places of the Arabs: the water is said to be bitter, and as we had filled our skins the previous evening we did not visit it; but I went with one of the Arabs in search of gazelles, which are said to frequent the

valley, inasmuch as it is well furnished with verdure, and abounds with the larger species of shrubs. We walked about a mile up the valley, but did not find any recent tracks to induce us to proceed further in our search. My tent does not prove air-tight in the face of a strong wind blowing directly on land; for we were obliged to encamp near the mouth of the wady, in an unusually exposed situation. The wind, however, was not cold; and the evening, as usual, most lovely, while the scenery around us exceeded in stately grandeur any thing that I had yet beheld in the desert. It is not easy to describe the feelings of awe and rapture that take possession of the mind when the traveller stands alone, a wanderer in the heart of the wilderness: the solemn hour, the dark shadowy mountains, the moon-lit desert, a deep sense of solitude and isolation from friends, and those he loves, the recollection of the wanderings of the Israelites on the spot whereon he stands, combine in creating in the mind a new train of ideas, the contemplation of which produces thoughtfulness and melancholy.

The moon was full last night; and towards morning the wind lulled, and for some hours there

was a perfect calm. I rose at four o'clock, and started at 5.45, A.M., travelling by moonlight across the great plain of El Murckhah, through which the Israelites must have journeyed on their way to Sinai, after leaving their encampment at Elim, where were twelve wells of water and three-score and ten palm-trees. Leipsius has fixed the position of Elim at the mouth of Wady Shubeikeh or Et-Taïyebah, to which opinion I incline rather than to that of Robinson, who suggests Wady Wuseit, as the latter would have been too small for so great a multitude. "And they took their journey from Elim, and all the congregation of the children of Israel came into the Wilderness of Sin, which is between Elim and Sinai." The Desert of Sin extends almost to the extremity of the peninsula, with a greater or less breadth along the sea-coast from El Murckhah. Below Et-Tûr it takes the name of El Kâa in its broadest part. The Israelites may have approached Sinai by several different routes, the principal of which are by Wady Shelayl and Wady Mokattub, or lower down the plain by the mouth of Wady Feirân.

Before we quitted the plain, the sun rose with

dazzling splendour, and almost at the same instant the moon set on the opposite side of the gulf, which at this spot is about seventeen or eighteen miles broad. The air became much cooler, and the north-west breeze began to sigh. On entering Wady Shelayl, placed between high limestone rocks, the features of the country underwent an entire change. The flat uninteresting desert gave place to the bold romantic scenery of a mountainous district, filled with precipitous rocks of various colours and strata. High above all was an immense vein of copper, near the summit of the mountain, the dark lurid colour of which presented a strong contrast to the limestone rocks around.

Our road lay through Wady Maghára, "the valley of the grottoes," wherein there are several tablets, bearing among other sculptures a portrait of Cheops, the founder of the Great Pyramid, about which there seems to exist some mystery, as the Arabs persist in declaring that there are no grottoes or sculptures in this Wady, and would fain make the traveller believe that it takes its name in the same manner as *lucus a non lucendo*. The author of "Forty Days in the Desert" gives an amusing account of a fatiguing

but successful search that he made for the aforesaid *maghára*. He appears to have met with no small amount of opposition on the part of the Bedouins in prosecuting his search, who endeavoured to turn him from his purpose by reiterated exclamations of “*Maghára mafeesh*” (“There are no grottoes”).)

“The principal tablet,” says Mr. Bartlett, “is in far better preservation than the rest, owing, apparently, to the shelter of the adjacent piece of rock. It stands at some height from the ground beneath; and there is no doubt was accessible by a path from the mouth of the cavern, which was probably the entrance to the copper-mine, once worked by a colony of Egyptians, like that in the neighbourhood of Sarbout el Khadem. It represents the conquest of the surrounding country by an early Egyptian king, whose name appears on the cartouche, or oval: the word “Tau,” hieroglyphically written by the hand, bird, and crowns on each side of the principal actor, signifying mountain lands; and the conqueror’s title, Lord of Battles, given (or gifted) with life for ever, appearing in the other emblems. The three figures are different personifications of the same hero, and

it is remarkable that the centre one bears the *double crown*, i.e. of the upper and lower Egyptian kingdoms, proving that Thebes at this early period was under the Memphian monarchs. Some part is defaced, but might possibly be made out by a good Egyptian scholar on closer examination."

"On a line with this are others, but far more broken and decayed. The first represents Suphis, Chofo, or Kneph Chofo, also in the act of beating down an enemy; while Thoth, the god of writing, stands by with a dog-headed sceptre. In the left-hand corner, above the king, was what I conjecture to be an eagle, much defaced, significative of providence; the title on the left of the cartouche is 'Priest.' Beyond the intervening partition, on which are some defaced hieroglyphics, is another tablet, with a cartouche of a king, and similar hieroglyphic titles. The cartouche of Suphis is the same as that in the Great Pyramid, of which he was the builder."

Besides these there are other tablets, on which the sculptures are less distinct, but which would well repay an antiquary for the trouble of examining and deciphering them. Hossayn, who showed these tablets to M. de Laborde, is well

acquainted with their position, and volunteered himself to guide me to them. They are the only sculptures of the kind besides those at Sarbout el Khadem.

After passing through a small plain the valley suddenly contracted, and we were soon hemmed in by rocks on every side. The path continued up a steep ascent, which in some parts was so narrow that the water-barrels were in imminent danger of being stove in between the rocks: as it was, at a sharp turn the saddle-bags, containing my all, had the misfortune to tumble off the camel, but happily escaped falling over the precipice. One of the zemzemeûhs quietly disposed of all its valuable contents on the ground on this occasion, but fortunately the sweet water of the Nile still holds out in one of the barrels; we soon re-arranged the load, and met with no more mishaps.

On reaching the summit we came out upon Wady Mokattub (*ketâbeh*, writing), the rocks in which are covered with rude drawings of animals and other inscriptions, widely different from the highly finished sculptures of Egyptian art. They are very numerous throughout this valley, but none of them are deeply cut, or executed with the

slightest degree of skill. They consist of horses and horsemen, with several attempts at camels and divers nondescript animals. For above a century the Sinaitic inscriptions have attracted the attention of learned men; the first theory, that they were the work of the Israelites during their wanderings in the wilderness, has long since been exploded; who the writers were is by no means apparent, though it is most probable that they were early Christian pilgrims, from the repeated crosses that are found in many of the inscriptions. The earliest mention of them is made by Cosmas, about A.D. 530, who supposed them to be the work of the ancient Hebrews. Subsequent travellers have examined and taken copies of many of the inscriptions, but, though the characters bear a striking resemblance to the Cufic, none of the learned palæographers up to the present time have been able to determine the language in which they are written. Strange as it appears, supposing these inscriptions to have been written by Christian pilgrims on their way from Egypt to Mount Sinai in the third or fourth century of the Christian era, all tradition respecting their origin and the language in which they were written was lost in the early

part of the sixth century. Cosmas says, certain Jews, who had read them, explained them to him as noting "the journey of such a one, out of such a tribe, in such a year and month," much in the manner of modern travellers. Professor Beer, of Leipsic, has with infinite labour some few years ago deciphered these writings, but without being able in any one instance to discover a date. He declares the Sinaitic inscriptions to belong to a distinct and independent alphabet, some of the letters being wholly peculiar, while others have a remarkable affinity with the Palmyrene and Cufic, and pronounces them to be of Christian origin—the work of pilgrims on their way to Sinai.

We encamped at 3.15 P.M., after a march of nine hours and a half, at the back of a crumbling sandstone hill, which separates Wady Mokattub from a rugged path leading into Wady Feirân. Although we are high among the mountains, I have not perceived any change in the temperature since leaving the plain. A vast quantity of rain must have fallen this winter, but it has all flowed down to the sea or been absorbed in the ground, for not a drop of water do we find anywhere except at the perennial springs and wells,

which are few and far between. The Bedouins have their own zemzemeëhs, but they are very lazy, and will not give themselves the trouble of going out of their way to fill them with water, as they imagine that I have plenty for myself and for them too in the casks. Mahmoud of course keeps the keys of the latter, but I have made no objections to his supplying them occasionally, provided only that one cask containing the Nile water be kept exclusively for my own use. This evening we were obliged to give a decided refusal to the request of the Arabs, as our own stock was getting low, and a spring in the hills was distant only an hour from the spot where we made our early halt. At length one of the Arabs reluctantly took a camel with some skins, and brought back a supply of fresh water, albeit somewhat muddy.

Feb. 8.—Up at 3.45 A.M., and notwithstanding the threatening appearance of the clouds, started at 5.40 A.M., commencing with a steep ascent for a mile and a half to the watershed, whence a rapid descent over a rugged road brought us to Wady Feirân, incomparably the finest valley in the peninsula. The first aspect of Djebel Serbâl

rising with bare and jagged peaks high above the surrounding district was very striking, while the grandeur of its position in the midst of far inferior ridges makes it appear more imposing and considerably higher than any other mountain in the peninsula. The sun rose as we approached the summit of the pass, and disclosed a grand but desolate scene around us, while an unusual flood of light streaming forth from beneath the dark clouds betokened rough weather. The summits of Serlâl were white with snow. The wind was high from the E. and S.E. throughout the day, and we had constant showers with an occasional hail-storm till noon. The rocks on either side of Wady Feirân tower almost perpendicularly to an immense height, and present a bare though picturesque appearance, with bold and rugged outlines through its whole length. I killed a couple of pigeons and saw a few others, which were too wild to let me approach within shot of them. For five hours we journeyed slowly up the course of the valley shut in between lofty ridges, while those unchanging features of the desert were everywhere around us, which for some days had thrown a spell over the mental faculties and made the slightest exertion

a fatigue. The slow and rocking motion of the dromedary, as it paces noiselessly along, tends to produce that state of reverie which, whether the predominant feeling be that of pleasure or of pain, has a certain fascination that is not readily or willingly shaken off. I was somewhat startled and aroused from the listlessness into which I had fallen, by the report of my own gun reverberating with loud echoes through the valley, but I had again relapsed into that half-dreamy state when the memory recalls events long passed by and almost forgotten, and conjures up to the imagination faces and things that once were familiar, and now, in the midst of the unbroken silence and solitude of the wilderness, present themselves as food for deep and sober meditation. The novelty of desert life soon passes away: the lively prattle of the Arab boys, delighted at the prospect of returning to the freedom of their native air, ceases so soon as the last mosques of E' Musr grow dim in the distance; even the plaintive cry of the poor camel when he kneels down to receive his load grows familiar to the ear, and in a short time is scarcely heeded; while that most energetic and active dragoman, Mahmoud, is perched aloft on

the old dromedary that I rejected, blowing a cloud from his short tchibouke, and for hours together does not utter a single syllable. So great an influence have external impressions upon the senses and the mind of man.

But to proceed. An extraordinary change awaited us; on a sudden at a turn in the valley a welcome sight burst upon us. Groves of palms and fruit-trees interspersed with huts built of stone and crude bricks, with a stream of water pure as crystal running through the midst, proclaimed the village of Feirân. It seemed to be the work of enchantment, so fresh and green did this oasis appear in the heart of the dreary wilderness. There are many thousand palm-trees on either side of the clear sweet stream, from which I drank a copious draught, that seemed at the time to be the most delicious I had ever tasted. We passed the ruins of the old convent on an elevated spot to our right, while the remains of a large village are scattered here and there beneath the rocks; the habitations of the Djebelîyeh, or Bedouins of the mountains, who cultivate a little corn and other produce in the gardens, are extremely small and destitute of every comfort that

obtains in a civilized country. During the date season they come down from their fastnesses in the mountains, but at other periods a very small number of fellaheen remain in the valley to attend to the cultivation of the gardens, and pay the Bedouins a yearly tribute in dates. Besides the palm-groves there are a few pomegranate and fig-trees.

Having filled the barrels and zemzemeëhs we looked about for a convenient and sheltered spot whereon to pitch the tents, for a violent storm burst upon Serbâl about 1.20. P.M., and threatened us with a speedy drenching. We had in fact scarcely pitched my tent beneath a palm-grove at the junction of Wady Aleyât, (leading to Serbâl,) with Wady Feinân, when the rain descended with tropical violence, and continued during the greater part of the afternoon, occasionally penetrating in large drops through the canvass of the tent. I found the large double sheet of Macintosh invaluable, as a *substratum* as well as a coverlet for my bed and divan.

The night was cold and stormy: on rising in the morning the aspect was far from cheering, but about 8 A.M. the weather cleared a little, and in less than an hour we were braving the elements

and leaving the riches of Feirân and the thickets of green tūrfa, the favourite food of the patient camel, behind us. Another shrub to which the camel is exceedingly partial bears the name of Rhims, and abounds in Wady Feirân. The hills and valleys were white with snow and hail this morning, and it was long ere the sun, which soon burst forth in all his splendour, was able to melt the little icy globules in the wadies.

In the present state of the weather the ascent of Djebel Serbâl was plainly impracticable. At the best of times it is extremely difficult and even dangerous, but Burckhardt and other travellers have accomplished it in safety, and seated themselves on the summit of one of those conical peaks, which from the valley beneath appear to be inaccessible to the foot of man. Leipsius has pronounced Serbâl to be the "Mount of God," where Moses received the two tables of testimony, and beheld the glory of the Lord. Although some of his arguments in favour of the probable selection of Feirân, where was an abundant supply of water and natural advantages not to be overlooked in the desert, are plausible enough, still the single fact that the mountain is shut out from

view by the rocks of Wady Feirân, and that there is no open space whence a great multitude could behold the descent of the Lord upon the Mount, is sufficient to overthrow his theory; whereas in front of Djebel Mûsa is the vast extended plain of Er-Râhah, and the broad Wady of Esh-Sheikh, capable of containing the whole congregation of Israel, from which the lightnings and the thick cloud upon the Mount would have been visible, and the Mount itself approachable, unless bounds had been set round, and the people forbidden to approach and touch it.

“ And the Lord came down upon Mount Sinai, on the top of the Mount.

“ And the glory of the Lord abode upon Mount Sinai, and the cloud covered it six days: and the seventh day He called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud.

“ And the sight of the glory of the Lord was like devouring fire on the top of the Mount in the eyes of the children of Israel.”

On entering Wady Esh-Sheikh we beheld Djebel Mûsa, the mountain of Moses, and, need I say, the true Sinai before us.

At 1 o'clock we arrived at the encampment of the

Welad Sāeed, quietly ensconced behind the rocks in a small tributary wady to the left of Esh-Sheikh. The tribe numbered about twenty tents, two of which belonged to Hossayn. His family consists of a couple of wives, three daughters, and one little son named Durweesh. After taking coffee and a pipe in the tent of his elder wife, I went on an excursion with one of the Arabs in the neighbourhood; and on my return dined with Hossayn, who had in the mean time killed a sheep for me. The mutton was very tender, and capitally dressed. His youngest daughter had the most lovely black eyes imaginable. She was an amusing child about seven or eight years of age. He presented me after dinner with a large skin of preserved dates, which were delicious, and lasted me during a great part of my Syrian tour. In return I gave him some gunpowder, and needles and thread for his harcem.

Faithful and honest in his dealings with travellers, Hossayn has invariably gained the goodwill and regard of those whom he has conducted through the desert of Sinai. M. de Laborde, who travelled with him one-and-twenty years before, says: "An excellent warrior and hunter, and re-

nowned for his generous hospitality, he united in himself all the qualities which render a Bedouin respectable; especially those of so much importance to the traveller, unimpeachable integrity, discretion which always deserved to be confided in, and what is very rare, genuine fidelity."

Sheikh Mûsa, who is travelling with an American, came in this afternoon; he states that they left Sinai this morning, and are encamped on the other side of the mountain range in Wady Solâf, on their way to Nakhl and Petra. Both the traveller and his dragoman occupy one and the same tent. A subsequent meeting with the same parties at Hebron brought the swarthy Egyptian under my particular notice. The impression left upon my mind was that a night wi' Mohammed would not be altogether desirable. Even Mahmoud, when he heard of it, stood aghast with astonishment: but *de gustibus*, as we used to say at Eton.

The accounts from the convent are quite freezing; but I have hitherto contrived to keep myself pretty warm, notwithstanding the fall of snow. Icicles nearly a foot long are hanging from the rocks in the wady. I pity the poor Bedouins in

their ragged tents, through which the cold blast sweeps in frequent gusts from the mountains. Our arrival was celebrated by a grand feast, given by Hossayn after my dinner, to which Mahmoud was of course invited, and the festivities were kept up to an unusually late hour. I contributed an oka ($2\frac{3}{4}$ lbs.) of tobacco, which is perhaps the most welcome present that can be made to these rude sons of the desert.

Feb. 10.—No easy task to arouse the Arabs this morning: in fact, after a long search Hossayn was the only one forthcoming; so I started with him at 8 A.M. at a good round trot, intending to go by the nearest road across the mountains to Sinai, and left Mahmoud to follow with the luggage by the more circuitous but easier route through Wady Esh-Sheikh. We had not proceeded a hundred yards, when Hossayn's camel fell with him, and as the animal was trotting I feared the consequences might be serious. He got up immediately and remounted as though nothing had happened. For three hours our way was pretty smooth till we approached the foot of Djebel el Haweit, where we fell in with one of the Arabs belonging to the Convent, who was bringing fish from Tûr for the

monks of St. Catherine. We now dismounted and commenced a toilsome ascent, rendered worse by the melting snow under our feet. The heat of the sun was somewhat oppressive. The snow-clad mountains and bare perpendicular rocks on every side imparted a grandeur to the scene. About midday we came in sight of Horeb, which had before been hidden from us by intervening rocks. In the little Wady Esh-Shu'eib, between Horeb and Djebel e'Deir, stands the Convent of St. Catherine with walled gardens in front. At 1 P.M. we were gladdened by the sight of its walls as we came out upon the raised plain of Er-Râhah in front of Sinai, at a distance of a mile and a half from the convent. My first impression was that of disappointment. The mountain did not appear so high as I had expected; the convent looked mean and small, but I was completely deceived by the distance, and quite overlooked the fact of our laborious ascent to the table-land of Er-Râhah, which is between 4,000 and 5,000 feet above the sea. To the right in front of Horeb are two gardens about a mile from the convent. As we approached, and the size of the little fortress with its walled garden in front became apparent, my

disappointment wore off, and gave place to feelings of unmixed gratification at approaching the spot which has been hallowed in my mind from my earliest childhood.

On our arrival beneath the entrance, which is at a height of nearly thirty feet from the ground, I sent up the letter, that I had received from the branch convent at Cairo, by a cord let down to receive it, and in a few minutes a strong rope was lowered, by which I was hoisted up into the convent with my feet dangling in the air; and when on a level with the door I was received into the arms of one of the monks, who placed me in safety on the landing-place. As we quitted the plain of Er-Râhah the pleasing sounds of the convent bell calling to afternoon prayers had broken upon my ears, and proclaimed the worship of Jehovah in the heart of the desert; and as I drew nigh and stood upon the walls, and beheld the little city around and beneath me, and called to mind the history of the spot whereon it stands, I felt fully repaid for all the labour and toil of my journey through the wilderness. The monks were for the most part in the church, but a lay-brother received me with great kindness and courtesy, and installed me in

one of the comfortable chambers set apart for visitors. Three sides of the room were occupied by divans of the most luxurious description. Coffee, dates, and a spirit distilled from the date, better known as 'rhaki, were set before me; and in less than an hour a repast of rice and poached eggs was served up. Just as I had finished the superior came to welcome me, a man sixty-four years of age, as he afterwards informed me, whose cheerful placid countenance and engaging manners left a pleasing impression upon my mind. After a few phrases in modern Greek he took his departure, and an aged brother, who spoke a little Italian, came and conversed with me. Mahmoud made his appearance with the rest of the caravan at 5.25 P.M., four hours after my arrival. The luggage was speedily hoisted by the windlass through the convent window, and my dragoman was soon as much at home as in an hotel at Cairo. The convent is a complete fortress, with battlements, towers, cannons; and every requisite for standing a siege. In shape it is an irregular quadrangle, 245 French feet long by 204 broad, inclosed by high walls formed of large blocks of granite. The space within the walls is cut up into a number of small courts,

with here and there a solitary cypress or other tree of stunted growth, while vines are trained along the sides of the buildings. In the centre is the great church, and close beside it is a large mosque with a towering minaret, the loftiest object within the convent: the latter has, however, been disused for some centuries, but it shows the policy or tolerance of former tenants of the convent, and proves that Sinai was formerly a place of attraction for Moslem pilgrims. The pond in the garden was covered with ice of considerable thickness, and the cold was very great during the afternoon, while the bright warm rays of the sun were hidden behind Horeb, leaving the convent below in deep shade, and shone with tantalizing splendour upon the western side of Djebel e' Deir, "the mountain of the convent." A great crowd of the Djebelîyeh, or Mountain Arabs, collected beneath the walls to receive the usual backsheesh of twenty paras, or five farthings, for each camel in the Hawagee's train.

The route which I had taken by Wady Feirân is considerably longer than that by Wady Humr and Sarbout el Khadem, accomplished by Robinson in ninety-five hours and a half, or six hours and a

half longer than my journey round by the shores of the Red Sea to Sinai.

The following time-table was accurately kept, and may be relied upon:—

	Hours.
From Cairo to Wady Emshâsh	23½
Wady Emshâsh (by Suez) to Aîn Mûsa	10¼
Aîn Mûsa to Wady Sûdr	9¼
Wady Sûdr to Wady Wuseit	10¼
Wady Wuseit to Wady Murekhah	8¾
Wady Murekhah to Wady Mokattub	9½
Wady Mokattub to Feirân	8
Feirân to Wady esh-Sheikh (tents of the Welad Sâeed)	4
Wady esh-Sheikh to Sinai	5½
	89 hours.

CHAPTER XIV.

SINAI — HOREB — THE MOUNT OF MOSES — THE ARCHIMANDRITE —
DEPARTURE — SARBOUT EL KHADEM — ET-TIH — WADY EL ARISH —
NAKHL — ABOO KALER — TÎYÂRAH ARABS — CHANGE OF ROUTE —
EBODA — ELUSA — BEERSHEBA — MOUNTAINS OF JUDAH — DETHERRI-
YEH — HEBRON.

February 11. SUNDAY—The sound of the Convent bell aroused me at midnight from my first sleep, and brought so forcibly to my mind the strangeness of my situation, and the *admonitio loci*, that it was long before I relapsed into a broken and uneasy slumber. As I had expressed a desire to the lay-brother, who attends upon strangers, to assist at the service in the great church this morning, as soon as the bell ceased at eight o'clock he came to conduct me through the mazes of the convent to the church of St. Catherine, where I found the service on the point of commencing, the superior and four other priests, together with a few of the lay-brothers, being present. The number of monks at Sinai was twenty-

two. Some of the brothers were of a great age, two of them considerably over ninety years. The service, including the high mass, with the usual rituals of the Greek Church, occupied an hour and a quarter. At its conclusion bread was broken, and distributed to all present, by the officiating priest, who wore a cope and richly embroidered robes.

Immediately after, the Superior, Archimandrites Kerillos, came up and offered to show me the relics and other objects of interest in the sacred edifice. The church is divided into a nave and aisles by a double row of columns with Corinthian capitals; the floor is of inlaid marble. Numerous silver lamps and ostrich's eggs are suspended from the ceiling; and the whole building is handsomely though not gorgeously decorated. The relics of St. Catherine, to whom the church is dedicated, and the mosaic of the Metamorphosis, with the portraits of the Emperor Justinian and his wife Theodora, are behind the handsome richly gilt screen; the latter are above the altar. Behind the altar is a small chapel, over the spot where the burning bush is supposed to have stood: it is marked with an elaborately wrought plate of silver. On entering this chapel we took off our shoes: the

ground whereon we stood is esteemed most holy. On the altar are several MS. copies of the Gospels; two in particular are curiously illuminated. Portraits of the Virgin and Child, and of different Saints, amongst whom St. George is conspicuous in his encounter with the dragon, are hung around the walls of the church. Most of them are of undoubted antiquity, as is evident from their quaintness and the decided ignorance of all the elementary rules of the art of drawing displayed in their execution.

The good father now went to his breakfast, and I to mine. About 10.30 A.M. I left the Convent by a low dark passage and still lower portal, with one of the lay brothers and Mahmoud, to visit the summit of Djebel Mûsa. One of the Djebelîyeh, the serfs of the convent, carried our provisions, and a second my great coat. Several Arab boys followed us throughout the day. The ascent commences from the small door of the convent out of which we crept. The snow and ice upon the mountain had rendered the ascent not only very difficult and fatiguing, but somewhat hazardous; but as I never sank much *below* my middle in the snow, I did not despair of reaching the summit;

and the sliding on the ice-bound rocks was principally confined to poor Mahmoud, who, as a true-born son of Egypt, protested most emphatically against ice and snow in general, and that of Mount Sinai in particular, as being both unpleasant and in his opinion very much out of place.

The first spot at which we stopped on Horeb was a small well of delicious water, which communicates its valuable contents to the convent. The second stage is marked by a small chapel "della Madonna" with a miserable picture in front of the neglected altar. The legend attached to this spot is thus related by Robinson.

"In former days the monks were so annoyed with fleas, and had so few pilgrims, that they determined to abandon the convent. They all went in procession to make their last visit to the holy places of the mountain; and when near the top, the Virgin suddenly appeared to them, bidding them not to depart, for pilgrims should never fail, fleas should disappear, and the plague should never visit them. At the same time that they thus saw the Virgin higher up the mountain, she appeared also to the Ikonomos on this spot. When the monks returned home, they found a caravan of

pilgrims actually arrived; the plague has never since been here; and (according to them) fleas do not exist in the convent; though in this latter particular," adds Robinson, "our own experience did not exactly justify so unconditional a praise of the Virgin."

A toilsome ascent brought us to the two gates, one at either extremity of a narrow rocky pass, where a priest was formerly stationed to confess pilgrims, and through which travellers relate that no Jew could pass: and soon after we came to the fine tall cypress-tree close to the wells and the chapel of Elijah and Elisha. It is situated in a small plain or tract of table-land that separates Horeb from Djebel Mûsa, which now towered above our heads. From this plain a path descends to E'Deir el Arbaîn, "the Convent of the Forty," which derives its name from the circumstance that the Bedouins once took it by surprise and massacred the forty monks who dwelt in it. It has long been deserted and is quite ruinous, though the garden is still cultivated by the serfs of the convent.

At this point the red granite of Horeb changes to the dark grey granite of the Mountain of Moses. I reached the summit of the latter about one

o'clock, and was shown the rock in which Moses was hidden, while the glory of the Lord passed by. A small chapel and a mosque crown the summit of the mountain. The view towards the north and north-east extends as far as the Gulf of Akabah, but on the south-west it is confined by the higher mountain of St. Catherine, which rises nearly 1,000 feet above Djebel Mûsa. Below in the valley of El-Leja on the western side is shown the rock that Moses struck in Horeb, and from which water came out in the sight of all Israel. We made a substantial repast on the summit, and having lighted a fire of sticks which we brought with us, were regaled with the luxury of a cup of coffee. Our fare consisted of dates, bread and cheese, and date brandy, to keep out the cold amid the snow. I gave the lay-brother who accompanied me a cigar, which he smoked with a degree of relish not to be imagined by those to whom the fragrant weed is a common luxury. In descending the mountain one of the Arab boys cleared away the snow from the print of the foot of Mahomet's camel impressed in the hard granite, when the prophet performed the miracle of riding up to the top of Djebel Mûsa. There were wonderful

camels in those days. The Djebelîyeh are Moslems, but they were formerly Christians. Mahmoud refused to kiss the print of the foot, alleging as an excuse, that he had already done so before. "Temò dunque, Mahmoud, che non siete un buon Mussulmano." "Come, Signore? fa un freddo terribile quest' oggi; non voglio baciare la neve;" was the reply, which evidently came from the heart of the Egyptian, who was longing for the warm climate and broiling sun of his own country. This was either his fourth or fifth ascent, and he certainly did not much relish it, but his never-failing cheerfulness and good-humour bore up against all the fatigues and difficulties of the mountain. I returned to the convent about four o'clock, and lost no time in putting on dry clothing.

As I was walking with the Archimandrite this afternoon on the flat roof of the convent, I endeavoured to gain from him something of his history; for he seemed to be a man of superior mind and intelligence to the brethren over whom he is placed. Unfortunately he spoke only Greek and Russian, so that I could glean but little from his conversation. Though I was forced to reply in the negative to his question of *ὁμιλεῖς ῥωμαικὰ*,

still he talked on, and I made out as much as I could of his Romaic. He has been for the last ten years in Russia, and knows Constantinople well. He was sent to Sinai about two months ago by the branch convent at Cairo, which manages all the temporal concerns of the convent of St. Catherine. An exception is made in favour of this establishment in the export duties at Cairo, and corn and grain are sent duty-free across the desert to the monks at Sinai.

Feb. 12.—Snow fell heavily during the whole day and prevented me from walking further than the long gallery extending in front of the strangers' apartments. One of the lay-brothers, who contrives to talk Italian, came this morning to conduct me over the convent. We first paid a visit to the library, where I spent an hour examining the collection with the librarian, a man of some education and refinement, but seemingly content to spend the best years of his life immured within the walls of a convent in the far-away desert. Two other monks joined us, and a strange medley of languages ensued, for there is not one of the fraternity who can carry on a conversation in any other than his native tongue. The collection of

books is small, but an antiquarian or book-collector would perhaps pronounce it to be a valuable one. There are several curious and beautiful MS. copies of the Old and New Testaments richly gilt and illuminated. Many of the early Fathers have found their way to the shelves: they were mostly printed at Venice in the last century. A few copies of the Bible, presented by the Bible Society, and now and then by a traveller, are pointed out by the monks, but they remain and will remain unread on the dusty shelves.

There are said to be four-and-twenty chapels within the precincts of the convent. I cannot affirm the truth of this report from personal inspection of them all, but I visited more than half that number, and among others two dedicated to St. John, and one to St. George, who is represented on horseback, in a picture, with a silver breastplate nailed upon it; and two at least besides the great church are dedicated to St. Catherine, the patron saint of the convent. At the upper end of the refectory is a quaint representation of the Day of Judgment, but it will not quite bear comparison with that in the Sistine Chapel. There is a small pulpit facing the long table, from which the junior priest reads a homily during meal-time.

The Superior came this afternoon with the aged brother who took me over the convent, and paid me a long visit in my comfortable apartment. He informed me that he was sixty-four years of age, and though he has not yet been here two months, he looks forward to ending his days at Sinai. He is hale and strong, and appears nearly ten years younger than he professes to be. His manners are very pleasing and gentlemanly, and he is a man of considerable information and knowledge of the world. He conversed much about Stamboul and the Turkish empire and the Turks, and afterwards touched upon European subjects, and the unsettled state of the nations of Europe. He was anxious to gain information concerning the different sects of dissenters in the British Isles, and expressed no small astonishment at the great number of heresies which prevail in our country, and have been the means of dividing the Protestant Church into so many parties. After taking his departure the good father sent me a present of a skin of dates, for which the convent at Sinai is celebrated.

Feb. 13.—The snow-storm of yesterday has deterred my Bedouin guides from leaving their tents, so that I am obliged to remain a prisoner at the convent. The brother *Bowab* (*Anglicè* Porter,)

conducted me through several chapels that I had not yet seen, but there was nothing in them to deserve notice. We next paid a visit to the garden, passing down a flight of steps into a dark subterranean passage beneath the northern wall of the convent. The garden lies along the western slope of Horeb, and is surrounded by high walls; it is planted in terraces with fruit-trees and tall poplars looking very cheerless with their branches white with snow. In the summer it must be a charming retreat for the monks, who are supplied therefrom with vegetables, besides an abundance of pears, apricots, pomegranates, almonds, figs, apples, olives, mulberries, and grapes, all of which are said to be excellent. Not a bad catalogue for the desert! There is a large and deep pond on the side nearest to the convent, which was completely frozen over; water is the one thing requisite, while nature does her part with surprising vigour and productiveness.

We found the Archimandrite, and several of the monks assisting at a service in a chapel near the charnel-house in the garden. After this was over, I entered the sepulchre, in which are collected in separate chambers the skulls and bones of the

priests and monks who have died at Sinai. The skulls are laid in a heap together, and the members are ranged round the chamber in order : first the arms, next the legs, then the ribs, and so on. After the brother has been dead four years, his bones are brought into these vaults, and disposed in one or other of them according as he was a priest or a layman. The bodies of the Archbishops, which are always brought here, are not mixed with the rest, but repose in small wooden boxes in the sacerdotal chamber. They are all uncovered, and a small stone is placed in each with a short epitaph written upon it. My guide seemed to be wonderfully light-hearted in this abode of death.

On my return to the convent, the Archimandrite went with me to the apartments set apart for the Archbishop, in which there is a small private chapel, much like the rest. The rooms must once have been comfortable, but time has long since tarnished the furniture. I was shown a copy of the Psalterion, written by a woman on six duodecimo leaves; it is beautifully written, but from the extreme smallness of type, wholly illegible. The book of the four Evangelists, written by the Em-

peror Theodosius in golden letters, and illustrated by him with portraits of our Lord, the Virgin, and the Evangelists, is the gem of the whole convent collection. Every letter is formed with the greatest pains, and the text is large and good. The Superior was anxious to let me know that this volume was rarely shown. The compliment could not carry much weight with it, as he had been there but two months, and visitors are not numerous at Sinai. In a lumber-room in the Archbishop's apartments are two half-length portraits, said to have been brought from Rome more than a century ago. I was much struck with one of them, a portrait of a K. G., wearing the blue ribbon of St. George, whose features bore a striking resemblance to those of the great Duke of Marlborough.

After dinner I was let down by the windlass and rope from the convent window, and walked over the plain of Er-Râhah, beyond Wady Esh-Sheikh, and satisfied myself that it must have been the spot where Israel was assembled, while Moses was in the Mount. Several Arab boys followed me, and we climbed over a low wall into the garden to the right of the plain, which is now

quite neglected, though abounding in fruit-trees. While I was sitting there, one of the young Djebelîyeh cut a "corbous," exactly similar to those we have already noticed in the ancient tombs of Egypt. On my return I met some of my camels, and mounting one of them, rode back to the convent, where I found Hossayn already arrived. The Archimandrite was waiting for me above, and was highly amused at seeing me suspended in mid-air while undergoing the process of being hoisted up into the fortress. We walked on the walls for some time, till at length he was fairly driven in by the cold. The sun disappears behind Mount Sinai about three o'clock, though it does not set till nearly six. In the evening I went with a young Russian servant, whom he had brought with him, to take leave of the Superior. He sent for the old monk who speaks Italian, to act as interpreter. Some wine (a rare luxury!) and rhabâtlakoom, a well-known Turkish sweetmeat, were brought; meanwhile we sat and conversed for an hour. When the time for parting arrived, I took leave with feelings of regret and sadness; for during my brief sojourn in the convent I had conceived a sincere regard and esteem

for the good father, whose kindness to me I could only repay with thanks. He seemed much pleased with a present of some candles that I was able to spare out of my stock. I likewise left a few dollars *πρὸς τὰν ἐκκλᾶσίαν*. On leaving the room he embraced me fervently, and gave me the kiss of peace on both cheeks, at the same time promising to pray for me, that I might have a safe and prosperous journey. The following was a great day at the convent, during which the monks were engaged for seven hours in the church. The service began at two A.M., and continued without intermission till six A.M., in commemoration of Simeon taking our Saviour in his arms in the temple.

Feb. 14.—Notwithstanding an early breakfast, I did not start till eight o'clock, for the Djebelîyeh, of whom six are admitted at a time to perform the menial offices in the convent, were very slow in lowering each separate package by the windlass. I had paid liberally for the supplies furnished to me by the cook and baker, and made some present to every person who had done me the smallest service; and I believe one and all were perfectly satisfied, with the solitary exception of the porter,

who thought fit to demand a dollar over and above a handsome present I had already made him. He even threatened to detain some of my property unless I complied with his demand. A timely threat of a visit to the Superior soon brought lay-brother "Bowab" to his senses, and the Djebelîyeh were allowed to conclude the operation of the windlass. I mention this circumstance, as some of my friends met with a like opposition from the same individual, to his cost in that instance, as they went immediately to the Superior, whose reprimand had, I am sorry to say, little effect upon his subsequent behaviour. Mahmoud has an insuperable objection to being lowered by a rope, and sought his exit, as he had made his entrance, by an underground passage in a distant corner of the convent.

Leaving Wady Shu'eib, in which the convent is situated, we turned sharp round to the right, and continued to march during the day in Wady Esh-Sheikh, by the same route that Mahmoud had taken on his way to the convent. I walked for six hours in advance of the caravan, and at 3.50 P.M., we encamped near the tents of the Welad Sāeed. As I was roaming about the hills before dinner, I met two women of the tribe, who began

to chatter with the Hawagee with none of the usual restraint or shyness of Moslem women, though unfortunately he could make out but little of their ἔπειτα πτερόεντα.

Feb. 15.—We started at 7.40 A.M. and even then left Hossayn behind, for I could not find it in my heart to interrupt his adieus to his young wife. I walked on for half an hour, and then sat down and waited for the arrival of the caravan, which shortly made its appearance, but, to my dismay, the camel with the water-barrels and all my live stock was missing. I sent back my dragoman, who returned in an hour with Hossayn, and the intelligence that the Arab who had charge of the *moīyeh* (water) had gone round by another route. Our caravan was increased by an addition of several camels, more or less loaded, from the Welad Sāeed tribe. I mounted a fresh dromedary to-day, the seventh I have tried since leaving Cairo, and found it more tractable than most of them, as it went forward or remained in the rear as I pleased, without uttering the usual piteous cries that resound through the still desert. One young *gem'mel* that I rode used to throw itself down and grunt like a pig, after trotting a little way in front of the rest, evidently

alarmed at the idea of parting from its companions. It played me the same trick twice, and, by good fortune, I was not thrown on either occasion, but the risk was too great to venture my neck a third time in endeavouring to break in a restive dromedary.

Our road lay through Wady Berâh, and Wady Buruk, on the upper route to Sinai. The latter valley is filled with *débris* of granite and porphyry, which made the road rough and difficult, as well as painful to the soft feet of the camels. The acacias in this valley were finer and larger trees than we have met with elsewhere in the peninsula, and, with few exceptions, in Egypt. The *colocynthus*, *handal*, abounds in Wady Buruk, the fruit of which is very like that of the occhra in the desert sands of the Nile valley. The plant itself is a species of creeper which, before the fruit ripens, becomes quite brown, and appears to die away in the ungenial soil of the desert, while the fruit presents a beautiful and tempting appearance to the eye, resembling a large round lemon, or a fine mellow apple. Within is nothing but a hard kernel, divided into four parts, which, after a time, turns into mere dust. It is better known by the name of the apple of Sodom.

From Sinai to Wady Mureikh, where we halted for the night at 4.50 P. M., the high peaked rocks, below which we marched, are for the most part streaked with a broad strip of dark grüstein, running east and west throughout their entire length. It is remarkable from its singular appearance, unlike that of ordinary strata, as it is at right angles to the surface of the earth, instead of running parallel to it.

Feb. 16.—I started at 7.20 A. M. with Sheikh Hossayn for Sarbout El Khadem, which lies considerably westward of the road to Nakhl, having directed Mahmoud to proceed to Wady Arachne, near the foot of Djebel et-Tîh, the principal mountain range in Arabia Deserta, which we are to cross to-morrow. After an hour and a half's ride, we dismounted and walked down a steep hill, at the bottom of which we left our dromedaries with a Bedouin, and commenced the ascent of Sarbout El Khadem. In three quarters of an hour we reached the summit, after scrambling up the side of the rock as quickly as the loose stones and the steepness of the ascent would allow. The elevated spot whereon we stood, has probably been the site of a hypæthral temple, filled with and surrounded

by numerous slabs of stone, placed upright, and covered with hieroglyphical inscriptions, and a few figures of ancient Egyptian deities, amongst whom the most conspicuous is Athor, her face appearing on the capitals of several broken columns, like those at Dendera and elsewhere in the Sāeed. The person of Athor is represented receiving offerings on the upper part of many of the stone tablets. The temple was, therefore, I presume, dedicated to Athor, and as the ovals of Osirtasen I. and of other monarchs appear on several of the stones, it has been suggested that those royal personages may have made a pilgrimage to this temple, and severally erected a tablet commemorative of the event. The object of having a large burial-ground so far in the interior of the desert requires some explanation, which may perhaps be afforded to us when the inscriptions have been carefully deciphered and translated by some enterprising Egyptologist, who may, by his researches, be enabled to set the question of its purport at rest. Many of the tablets are wholly uninjured by time or weather, while others are lying in broken fragments with their inscriptions entirely obliterated. The traveller should not fail to visit Sarbout El Khadem :

he will be amply repaid for the fatigue and trouble of the ascent by the interesting remains of this ancient cemetery. Hossayn was looking for turquoises, whilst I was examining "the old stones," as he called all ancient sculptures, and in less than an hour had found four or five, some of which I have had polished since my return, and find them to be of a good quality. We were thirty-five minutes in reaching our dromedaries, which were waiting for us below. Crossing the plain that lay between Djebel et-Tîh and Sarbout El Khadem, we arrived at our encampment in Wady Arachne at 2.30 P.M. after a caravan-march of only six hours. Having seen the recent traces of several gazelles, I took my rifle and went with one of the Bedouins in search of them. I was again doomed to disappointment; in vain did I examine every likely spot through my telescope; I had been three weeks in the desert, and had not seen a single gazelle. We returned at sunset from our unsuccessful search, and found an Arab question being debated before the Sheikh, whose decision was of course final. After our departure this morning, the Bedouins fell out, each tribe declaring that it was not their turn to carry the baggage. To put an

end to the dispute, Mahmoud was obliged to pay down a certain number of piastres to the Eleykát, who consented to take the baggage on those terms, leaving Sheikh Hossayn to settle the matter in the evening, which he did, after much hot discussion, to the discomfiture of these same Eleykát, who, consequently, were obliged to refund. Two camels returned to the tribe this morning, their owners having gained the sum of twenty piastres (four shillings) apiece, with which they were perfectly contented. Mahmoud takes great interest in finding out, and informing me what proportion each of the three tribes bears in supplying the camels. One tribe has one and one-fifth of a camel, the second, two and three-fifths; the third, two and one-fifth: thus a caravan of a dozen camels accompanies me, while I pay for only half that number.

Feb. 17.—We started at 6.15 A.M. and in an hour commenced the ascent of Djebel et-Tîh, which we surmounted in an hour and a quarter, and were rewarded with a magnificent view over a great part of the peninsula, as well as of the Gulf of Suez and the mountains on the African coast. This was the last spot from which I beheld Djebel Serbâl and the whole Sinai range,

still white with snow. We were leaving the lofty mountains and deep rocky wadies behind us: a boundless desert prospect was stretched before us. Though at a very great height above the sea we have no snow, but the wadies bear the marks of recent rains, and in Wady et-Tîh we halted for half an hour to fill our barrels with the rain-water that remains in the hollows of the rocks. Lower down the wady we came to some considerable reservoirs of fresh water, which will soon be dried up by the intense heat of the sun during the day. After mounting to the summit of the Tîh range we came out upon an immense plain at the same elevation as the mountain itself. The desert Èt-Tîh extends northward as far as the mountainous region of Idumæa, and is bounded on the east by Djebel el Ojmeh, and on the west by the lower range of Djebel er-Râhah extending to the head of the Gulf of Suez. In the afternoon we entered Wady el Arish, the longest wady in the peninsula, which reaches northward for ten days' journey over a distance of 230 or 240 miles to the shores of the Mediterranean at El Arish. It abounds with every description of desert shrub and especially with the tūrfa, whereon the small

shining drops of manna are found, though in very inconsiderable quantities. We halted at 3.40 P.M. after a long and fatiguing day's march.

Feb. 18.—A calm morning with light flitting clouds and a south-west wind, that brought rain in the evening. Our course lay nearly due north along the banks of Wady el Arish; the vast level plain of Et-Tîh was bounded on the north-east and south-west by high limestone ranges. About 3 P.M. we passed through an opening between the mountains, and re-entered the wady, which was green with little patches of tûrfa and other shrubs. Encamped at 4.20 P.M. at some distance from water, which one of the Arabs was sent to fetch. To-day we passed some flocks of sheep and goats belonging to the Tîyârah Bedouins, under whose protection I am to place myself to-morrow at Nakhl. Fortunately for us, there is plenty of fuel in the wady, as the charcoal that I purchased at Sinai is of the worst possible description. Mishmish (dried apricots) stewed with rice are a great luxury in the desert: my supplies hold out very well: not one of my fowls has died, and twelve still remain. A good stock of potatoes should be laid in at Cairo, where they are excellent: otherwise the

traveller will feel the want of vegetables, when he is reduced to hard biscuit and rice for many days together. I saw several rabbits to-day, but was not able to get a shot at any of them.

Feb. 19.—We left our encampment at 7 A.M. and bearing a little to the north-west continued our route till 2 P.M., when we arrived at the fortress of Nakhl, on the Haj route from Suez to Akabah. The old castle has been built in the midst of a cold bleak plain for the protection of the Mecca pilgrims. Some twenty soldiers reside in it, and a small village has grown up in the immediate vicinity of the walls. I gave my Tûr Arabs a sheep besides a handful of piastres to each. To Sheikh Hossayn I gave a hundred and sixty piastres over and above the stipulated price for the camels and escort, with which he professed himself to be contented. I mention these minor details, as they may be of service to travellers who, like myself, travel alone in the desert. Aboo Kalee came to welcome us, and promised to have camels and an escort ready for an early start on the morrow. The afternoon turned out wretchedly cold and wet, and for the first time in my desert wanderings, I heartily wished myself back at

Cairo, or safely housed in the Holy City. Having wrapped myself up in great coats and a bornoos over all, I gave myself up to the consoling influence of a tchibouke and the sixth book of the *Æneid*. In the evening Aboo Kalee came to announce that all would be ready by the morning, and received 120 piastres in advance, 20 for each camel. The wind continued boisterous during the night, and the rain tried hard to penetrate my tent, with some trifling degree of success.

Feb. 20. — The wind still blew a gale from the south-west, and during the day we had occasional showers of rain. Of all the amicable disputes that I ever heard, one assisted in by a score of Bedouins is beyond comparison the most exciting and noisy. For four mortal hours this morning were my ears regaled with a dire strife of words, carried on in front of my tent, about the division of 600 piastres to be paid for the journey between Nakhl and Petra. Aboo Kalee, contrary to the agreement, declined accompanying me, and much delay was occasioned in selecting a substitute: one and all declared they would send a camel with the Hawagee, and so on till my stock of patience was nearly exhausted. Hossayn was

frequently applied to as mediator, and not in vain was his decision given. I certainly was growing very tired, and not a little annoyed at a delay which seemed wholly unreasonable, according to my European notions. Even Mahmoud's eloquence was unheeded; so at length I began to look upon the whole affair as a good joke, and was beginning to count how many days my provisions would hold out with strict economy at Nakhel, when all at once the conclave broke up, and everything was satisfactorily arranged by 11 A. M., save and except that the Hawagee must either ride or pay for two dromedaries for his private use and convenience. Having sent off the baggage, I paid Aboo Kalee the remainder of the stipulated price to Petra, 700 piastres, including 100 for himself, which were to have secured his personal services according to the Cairene compact. I had now fully learnt the character of this wily Bedouin, and would recommend travellers to be on their guard in any dealings they may have with him. Having taken leave of Hossayn, and given him a letter to be delivered at the consulate at Cairo containing despatches for England, which, I may here add, arrived at their destination in twenty-five days, I was allowed to

depart after much wrangling on a single dromedary, and soon overtook the caravan wending its way slowly across the plain in a north-easterly direction amidst whirlwinds of dust and sand. We encamped at 4.15 P.M. in a small wady, after a most disagreeable march of five hours and a quarter. Our party consists of eight camels, Aboo Kalee's substitute, who is not even dignified with the title of Sheikh, and five Arabs. The latter seem to do just what they please, and have reduced poor Mahmoud to a state of utter despair before we have been four-and-twenty hours in company with them.

Feb. 21.—The entire absence of all control over our Bedouin guides, and their extreme dilatoriness, have in great measure induced me to alter my plans. It appears to be the practice of the Tîyârah Arabs to turn out their camels to feed a little before sunrise: the animals wander in every direction in search of food, while the Bedouins sit still and let any one catch them who can! One of the Tîyârah tribe arrived late last night at our encampment, having just returned from accompanying three Englishmen by Wady Mûsa to Hebron, and informed us that they had seven days'

quarantine at the latter place. These circumstances, combined with the desire of seeing the most interesting places in Syria and the Holy Land within a limited time, as well as the daily increasing monotony and loneliness of desert travelling, induced me to forego my journey to Wady Mûsa with little regret at the time, so thoroughly did I distrust the Bedouins under whose protection I had placed myself; neither have I had reason to repent of my decision, whereby I escaped the clutches of the thievish Sheikh of Petra and his tribe, who are in confederacy with the above-mentioned Aboo Kalee.

By dint of great exertion on the part of my dragoman we started at 9 A.M.! whereupon I informed the would-be Sheikh, Salim, that I had changed my plans and should go direct to El Khalîl (Hebron) by Dhyherîyeh, at the same time making the Bedouins a free gift of a hundred piastres to be divided amongst them. After the usual amount of grumbling we changed our route to a north-westerly direction in order to regain the direct road from Nakhl to Hebron. We were delayed nearly half an hour by one of the camels breaking down, so that its load had to be shared

by one of the supernumeraries. The heat during the middle of the day was excessive, and the mirage unusually distinct, extending far and near throughout the plain. The day was almost calm, with a gentle breeze from the north. To make up for our late start we did not encamp till 5 P.M., though the Bedouins were not altogether pleased with a march of eight hours.

Feb. 22.—I have hourly cause to regret the departure of Sheikh Hossayn and the Târ Arabs. My present guides are obstinate, disobliging, dilatory beyond endurance, and everlasting squabblers. One of the worst of them is a son of Aboo Kalee. I was kept awake the greater part of the night by a wrangle amongst them as to who was entitled to the lion's share of my present, for which I did not even receive thanks. In the morning, Mahmoud informed me that it all turned upon the point of allowing Salim to keep the extra piastre after each had received sixteen and a half for his share! Of course I do my best to be on good terms with them all, but my poor dragoman is terribly put out by the "bestie," as he calls them. I shot a rabbit to-day in Wady el Arish, which was as large as a full-grown hare, and Mahmoud at his own parti-

cular request dressed it in vinegar, having brought a bottle expressly for that purpose, and I am bound to say that I never tasted one better cooked. We started at 7.45 A.M., and marched along Wady el Arish through small plains with sandhills rising here and there to a height of 200 or 300 feet, so as to destroy the monotonous appearance of the desert, till 5 P.M., when we halted at the junction of Wady el Arish with Wady esh-Shureif.

Feb. 23.—One of the Tîyârah wanted to return this morning with his camel to Nakhl after having received his full amount of pay to Dhyherîyeh; the consequence of which was that he and Salim had a long dispute, that delayed our departure till 8.35 A.M., and ended in the Bedouin refusing to refund sixty piastres and finally deciding to proceed with the rest. The wadies that we passed to-day were quite green, and bore marks of recent heavy rains. In one we found a considerable quantity of water. Another was partially cultivated, while the corn was about six inches above the ground. The greater part of the territory between Nakhl and El Khalîl is occupied by the Tîyârah Arabs, many of whose flocks we have passed, as well as one or two small encampments.

They are the largest and most powerful tribe in the peninsula. We encamped at 5.10 P.M., and were soon visited by a party of five Bedouins of the same tribe as my guides, who invited them to spend the night with them, through fear, as they alleged, of reprisals on the part of a poor persecuted tribe, named Azazmeh, who were nearly extirpated and entirely ruined by the Tîyârah some six years before. They are at peace now; but as we were in a strip of the desert nominally belonging to them, and the Tîyârah retain all their camels and flocks, the Azazmeh, according to Bedouin law and usage, would be perfectly justified in shooting a Tîyârah, if an opportunity presented itself. The men remained on the alert during the greater part of the night, and seemed to place great reliance on the two rusty matchlocks belonging to the party, which were carefully primed and loaded with ball.

Feb. 24.—I shot a few desert partridges soon after starting this morning: they were very wild and packed, and rarely let me come within shot of them. I must have seen nearly 300 in less than two hours, and with a dog I might have made a fair bag. The caravan started at 7.40 A.M. our

road lying through an undulating plain, crossed by green wadies, in a north-easterly direction, until the approach of a heavy shower brought us to a halt at 3.30 P.M. in a sheltered spot near El Abdeh, where there are remains of a fortress and a church on a rocky ridge rising nearly a hundred feet above the plain below, the supposed site of the ancient Eboda, mentioned by Ptolemy. . Towards sunset the weather cleared, and soon after the young moon set with a glorious but watery halo around her.

Feb. 25.—The morning was wet and stormy, and the wind blew with great violence from the southwest. We started at a quarter past eight o'clock, and as I had completely enveloped myself in a sheet of Macintosh fourteen feet in length by five in breadth, I was able to brave the elements with impunity, though the wind tried hard to deprive me of my treasure. After marching for four hours and three quarters, we were forced to give in; whereupon we pitched our tents with some difficulty in a rocky wady, as the cold was too great for the Arabs to bear, and the rain was falling fast, with occasional hail-storms. We had scarcely concluded our operations, and set our tents in order, when the sun burst forth, and the afternoon turned

out bright and beautiful; the wind continued as high as ever, and sorely tried the tent-ropes and pegs, but about sunset a light shower or two fell, and the wind ceased soon after, and we had a calm and fine night. It was the Sunday before Lent. I was not sorry to have a few quiet hours in the afternoon to myself in my tent.

Feb. 26.—The sun rose this morning in a cloudless sky, and we started at 7.40 A.M. and travelled for three hours through the same mountainous country over which we have passed during the two preceding days. A low stunted shrub, of the heather genus, obtains throughout this district, and is a great favourite with the camels, as well as a source of considerable loss of time during a day's march, as they browse nearly all the way with little intermission. We passed the site of the ancient city of Elusa this morning, now called by the Arabs El Khulasah, where there is a small well, surrounded with stone drinking-troughs for watering the camels and flocks. As we proceeded, the rocks and sand ceased, and the country began to wear the cheerful aspect of cultivation. In Wady Mur-tubeh, a broad watercourse, green with vegetation, we passed a considerable number of camels, and

several flocks of sheep with long fleeces. At 1 o'clock we arrived at the wells of Bir es-Sebâ (Beersheba), where Abraham and the patriarchs often dwelt, and where they came to water their flocks. The great desert of Arabia Petræa is now left behind. The solitude of the wilderness is changed for scenes of far deeper interest, as we approach the hallowed city wherein the great work of Redemption was wrought by the Saviour of the world. The wells are small, but strongly built, with solid masonry. "The larger," says Robinson, "is twelve feet and a half in diameter, and forty-four and a half deep to the surface of the water, sixteen feet of which at the bottom is excavated in the solid rock. The other well lies fifty-five rods west-south-west, and is five feet in diameter, and forty-two feet deep. The water in both is pure and sweet, and in great abundance, the finest, indeed, we had found since leaving Sinai."

How many associations are connected with this spot, the extreme border of Palestine, which extended from Dan to Beersheba! This very well was in all probability dug by Abraham, who set out from hence with Isaac to Mount Moriah, to

offer him up as a sacrifice to the Lord. From Beersheba Jacob fled to Padan Aran, after having supplanted Esau in his birthright and blessing. Here he offered sacrifices to the God of his father Isaac, when setting out for Egypt to visit his son Joseph. At this place Samuel, in his old age, made his sons, Joel and Abiah, judges over Israel; and hither Elijah fled, when Jezebel threatened to take away his life, whence he wandered forth into the wilderness, and in the bitterness of his soul requested for himself that he might die. And he lay down and slept under a juniper-tree, (türfa,) when the Angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and bade him arise and eat. On the strength of that food Elijah went forty days and forty nights unto Horeb, the Mount of God.

Our course for the last four days has been north-north-east. We now struck across a broad tract of plain, parts of which were green with corn; but the whole might easily be brought into cultivation, as the soil appears to be excellent. The great amount of rain that has fallen this year has covered the ground with grass and herbs. During the last two days we have seen a great many lizards. A species of scarlet anemone was

very common here, and is one of the prettiest desert flowers we have met with. After traversing this plain for nearly three hours, which is intersected with deep water-courses, formed, or at least deepened, during the late rainy season, we came to a low range of hills, the commencement of the mountains of Judah. Turning sharp round to the left, we entered a small wady, which, like most of those that we traversed to-day, contains abundance of water. Continuing our course along it for a quarter of an hour, we halted for the night at 4.40 P.M. Around us was a herd of forty or five-and-forty camels, feeding on the hills in our immediate vicinity. The evenings are generally warm, while the mornings are fresh, but not cold. The moon is still quite young, only four or five days old, but it sheds a subdued light over the dark hills after the short twilight has passed away; it reminds me, too, that I have now been for a lunar month journeying in the Desert.

Feb. 27.—The promise of a sheep if we arrived this evening at Hebron induced my guides, after sundry admonitions from Mahmoud, to rise early and exert themselves in loading the camels. We started before sunrise, and taking a north-easterly

direction, left the little wady in which we had passed the night, and began to ascend the Syrian hills. I took my gun and walked across the hills with one of the Bedouins in a direct line to Dhyherîyeh, the frontier village of Syria, while the caravan went round by the valleys. These hills reminded me strongly of the Highland mountains, covered as they were with bilhân, *spina santa*, a low shrub not unlike heather at a little distance, while the calling of the partridges on every side made the illusion more complete. On arriving at Dhyherîyeh I had an hour to wait for my party, during which time I visited an immense cave, capable of containing a large flock of sheep, and some extensive stone ruins on the summit of the hills both to the right and left of the wady. Mahmoud appeared with the baggage about ten o'clock, when I re-engaged the camels for a dollar apiece to take me on to Hebron.

Dhyherîyeh is a small modern village, situated in a commanding position on a hill, which guards the passes to Hebron on the southern side. As we drew near a mounted "Garde de Santé," as the horseman was ticketed, came out to meet us and conduct the whole party to his superior officer

at El Khalîl. He took his place at the head of the caravan, and warned all whom he met with a loud voice not to come in contact with us.

Leaving Dhyerîyeh to our left we commenced a steep and difficult ascent into the rich and fertile Wady el Khalîl, the sides of the hills from hence to Hebron being covered with evergreens and shrubs pleasant to the eye of one fresh from the desert: though I must confess that I found the wilderness far less arid and sandy than I had previously pictured it to my mind. This was doubtlessly in some degree owing to the exceeding raininess of the season. Cornfields succeeded one another in the broad valley, interspersed with rocks covered with prickly oaks, arbutus, olive-trees, and other shrubs. The road continued to wind over hills and through rocky passes, whilst all around wore the joyful appearance of early spring. Before reaching Hebron we passed through more than one large olive-grove, with fig-trees and vines planted in rows along the sides of the hills. At length after a march of five hours from Dhyerîyeh, we came in sight of El Khalîl stretched below us in a deep narrow valley running into the great wady which flows off into Wady es-Sebâ. The

burial-place of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob marked, as is supposed, by the white walls of El Haram, one of the most sacred spots in the estimation of the Mussulman, which no Christian may enter, was the first object to arrest my attention. Within this enclosure is a large building resembling a church: beneath is in all probability the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham purchased of the sons of Heth, in the field of Ephron, the son of Zohar the Hittite, which is before Mamre: there was Abraham buried and Sarah his wife.

At 3.45 p.m. we halted on the open space, part of which is a Moslem burial-ground, to the west of the town, of which it commands an admirable view. The chief of the quarantine, in the absence of the doctor at Gaza, allowed us to pitch our tents on the turf, and assigned us a guardiano and half a dozen soldiers. The old lazaretto was tumbling to pieces, and a new one was being erected at a stone's throw from my tent. I paid my Tîyârah Arabs, and gave them a sheep as I had promised; the next morning they took their departure with the "Garde de Santé" for their native desert. The quarantine regulations oblige me to remain here for seven days, the day of my arrival and that on

which I depart included. Here then the traveller lingers for a while on the spot which was once the residence of the Patriarchs, the capital of David, and for seven years the seat of his throne, before he proceeds to visit the scenes of the birth, and miracles, and sufferings of our Blessed Lord.

CHAPTER XV.

QUARANTINE AT HEBRON—THE SINDIÂN—THE POOLS OF HEBRON—
EL HARAM—MOSLEM BURIAL-GROUND—WOMEN OF THE PLACE—
BETHLEHEM—ARRIVAL AT JERUSALEM.

AFTER an undisturbed night's rest and a most refreshing sleep, I employed myself the next morning in setting my tent in order and preparing for a sojourn of six days at Hebron. Our departure is fixed for Monday, the 5th of March. The guardiano has taken up his quarters in my dragoman's tent, not at all to the contentment of the latter. On application to the chief functionary, I was allowed to take a walk this afternoon in company with the guardiano, my object being a visit to the great ilex, about the age of which so many theories have been propounded. Our way lay past two deep wells and a spring of living water, and through extensive vineyards, not yet in leaf, which are cultivated in a somewhat peculiar

manner. The vine, which is not more than eight or ten feet in length, is bent forward and supported upon two stakes, fixed in the ground, in the same manner as a pile of soldiers' muskets. Very little of the young wood is left, so that each plant cannot possibly bear more than five or six bunches of grapes, which have the reputation of being of the largest size and finest quality of any in Syria, and are generally dried for raisins. In all probability the vines were similarly trained when the spies sent by Moses visited the land. The olive-trees are unusually fine, and cover the sides of the hills. A walk of thirty-five minutes brought us to the oak-tree (Sindiân), decidedly the finest specimen of the ilex I ever beheld. Its trunk is in a perfect and undecayed state, is very large, and some six feet above the ground branches out into four huge limbs, which in their turn are subdivided into large spreading branches. It measures twenty-two feet and a half around the lower part, while the branches extend fifty feet from the trunk in one direction. It is in a green and flourishing condition. Of its age I can form no probable conjecture; but, notwithstanding its healthy appearance, it must have existed more

than the usual number of years or centuries allotted to the oak, to account for the growth of so much wood. In the sixteenth century this tree was mentioned by Belon * as a terebinth, and is described as such by travellers in the following century. It is not, however, a terebinth (butm); nor is there any large tree of that species near Hebron. Robinson supposes the terebinth of Abraham to have been nearer to Jerusalem; but it had already disappeared in the time of Jerome. Josephus places the terebinth of Mamre at only six stadia from Hebron.

March 1.—How beautiful is the clear pale blue sky of Asia! What a delicious climate, where one may live for months together encamped beneath the bright canopy of heaven! What quiet, and peace, and order reigns all around, and bespeaks the land of the Mussulman, the creature of fatalism! Theirs is a beautiful theory, but embodied it destroys the whole energy of man, and places a restraint upon every action of his life. Few positions have struck me as comparable in loveliness to the one now before me; its beauty and the fineness of the weather, and the hallowed asso-

* Belon, *Observat.* Paris, 1585, p. 324.

ciations of the spot, have almost reconciled me to the rigour of the quarantine regulations obliging me to spend a week at Hebron. The town is situated on the eastern slope of one of the many little hills which surround us on every side. It is divided into three parts, having (as it were) a small suburb to the north and another to the south just below the great pool (Es-Sultân), over which king David hanged the murderers of Ishbosheth. The houses are for the most part built with a small dome on the flat roof, which gives them a singular and rather pleasing appearance. My tent being pitched on the western slope of the rising ground opposite the city, I enjoy a fine view of the whole place, with the lofty walls of El Haram rising like a small fortress in the midst of it. The complete silence which reigns around us is only broken by the monotonous sound of the masons' tools in the new lazaretto, built like all the houses in Hebron of stone, and the occasional chaunt of the workmen, in which the voices of the men and boys blend harmoniously together. The incident of blasting a rock within the enclosure this afternoon created an extraordinary commotion among the *employés*.

The same afternoon, the eve of the Moslem Sabbath, (which is, however, far from being a day of rest,) the women of the place came out in long white dresses to the burial-ground, close to which we have taken up our position, and ranged themselves in family groups of three or four, and in one or two instances of ten or twelve, round the tombs on every side. It was the prettiest and most picturesque sight imaginable. No sounds of lamentation were heard; each had her own work and employment, to which, after a short prayer, she sat down, and in this manner they spent the whole afternoon, chatting together *sotto voce*. As I walked amongst them with the guardiano, I had an opportunity of observing their features, for the thin veil thrown gracefully over the head is the only covering to the pretty faces which lurked beneath, and which generally peeped out on one side or the other to catch a glimpse of the stranger. The thick black veil worn by the Egyptian women, and hanging down from the head nearly to the feet, no longer intrudes to give a repulsive look to the fair daughters of Asia. The white veil is either drawn closely over the face by the hand, or is allowed to fall down by the side of the head and

disclose the polished brow and prominent nose of the Syrian maiden. The children, who, in the meantime, were playing about and amusing themselves, seemed to me far prettier both in features and complexion than those more advanced in years. Some of the former were lovely little creatures, and their slight simple dress sat most becomingly upon their graceful figures. There were 200 or 300 women thus collected round the tombs of their relatives, which were generally marked by a circuit of a few stones. The shades of evening gathering fast around them scarce dispersed the whole of the silent troop.

Birket es-Sultân, the great pool of Hebron, situate at the southern extremity of the valley, is a fine large reservoir of water, measuring 133 feet on each side, and constructed entirely of large hewn stones well cemented together. Its depth is about twenty-two feet, and at the north-west and south-east corners are flights of steps leading down to it. The water was not deep at the period of my visit, eighteen steps being visible above its surface. That this was the original lower pool of Hebron, over which David hanged the murderers of Isbosheth, I entertain little doubt. The unspeakable blessing of

a large supply of water in a dry climate, and the necessity of keeping in constant repair a pool of this size within the circuit of the town itself, as well as its situation in the lower part of the valley, and the evidence it bears of high antiquity, are of themselves sufficient arguments to fix upon this as the pool mentioned in Scripture. At the north end of the town is a smaller pool, measuring eighty-five feet in length by fifty-five broad; its depth is about eighteen feet, about half of which was filled with water.

This afternoon the American who quitted the convent at Sinai the day before my arrival there, made his appearance at Hebron, and encamped at a short distance from us. He informed me that the Arabs of Wady Mûsa were "a band of savages and robbers of the most barefaced description;" adding, at the same time, that nothing but the expectation entertained there of my speedy arrival with *supplies* enabled him to escape out of their hands. Aboo Kalee's character stands forth in a very bad light. He desired Mohammed, the dragoman, to take half the sum mentioned in the Cairene agreement to be paid to the Sheikh of Wady Mûsa, and send him back the moiety of it,

although he had received one hundred piastres on his own account. This circumstance is sufficient to take away all confidence in the Sheikh of the Tîyârah, in whose favour as a Bedouin tribe I have not one word to say. On the whole, therefore, I rather congratulate myself on not having persevered in my intended route.

The doctor of the Quarantine, half French, half Italian, arrived this evening from Gaza, and paid me a very short visit, taking care to keep at a respectable distance. He is neither intelligent in his looks nor particularly engaging in his manners. Mohammed assures me that he began life by being a cook, and that he once travelled with him in that capacity, in the service of two Englishmen, though, if such were the case, it would be difficult to say how he could have risen to his present position as *hakim* (physician).

March 2.—Last night and again this morning the chaunt of the *Mooeddin*, calling the faithful to prayer, was prolonged beyond the usual time, to remind them of the Sabbath. The Mussulman seldom leaves his home or shop in the bazaars to repair to the mosque: he simply spreads his carpet, turns towards Mecca, and performs his devotions,

now standing, now kneeling, and frequently with his forehead bowed to the ground. The Moslems are a people of prayer. The poor man ceases from his labour or employment to pray. Five times a day does he turn to Allah, at which times he is more serious than ever in his demeanour, and is utterly regardless of every thing around him. I only once observed one of the Bedouins engaged at his devotions. At mid-day the workmen were dismissed from the lazaretto, and a deep silence reigned around. The last call to prayer is made an hour and a half after sunset. From the situation of Hebron in a valley surrounded on all sides by hills, the clear musical notes of the Mooeddin's voice, resounding through the stillness of night from the different minarets of the city, are heard at a considerable distance with the utmost distinctness. The city by moonlight, as it lies buried in rest, forms a most beautiful picture, while every object around tends to raise the soul to devotional feelings, and brings, as it were, to one's recollection the scenes from the sacred writings that have been stamped on the mind from earliest childhood.

Hebron was of old called the city of Abraham,

and the structure over the sepulchres of the Patriarchs obtained the name of the "Castle of Abraham." Now as Abraham was known among the Moslems by the appellation of El Khalîl, "The Friend," *i.e.* of God, the city itself has received the name of El Khalîl, by which alone it is now known.

This afternoon I skirted the southern extremity of the town and ascended the heights immediately above it on the eastern side, so as to arrive at the Great Haram without communicating with the inhabitants. On our way thither we passed a tanner's yard, in which there were nearly three hundred goats' skins dried and sewn up, to serve for carrying water, after undergoing the usual process necessary to make them supple and water-tight. A considerable trade is carried on here in water-skins, as well as in small glass lamps, which are sent in great numbers on camels to Cairo. After a long devious route we at length descended upon the outer wall of El Haram, and leaping over it entered an enclosure which turned out to be the roof of a subterranean mosque. A round tower with twelve windows, fortified with iron bars of considerable thickness, admits a dubious light into

the vaults below. The shape of this building is that of the Greek cross. The walls of the Haram itself are about two hundred feet long, by one hundred and ten broad, and fifty feet in height, and are built of polished stones, well riveted together. There are no windows in any part of these walls; and above the spot where I stood was a thin plastered wall erected by the jealous Mussulman to prevent any profane eye from obtaining a view of the interior: though I have reason to believe that the vaults into which I looked from the windows of the round tower are supposed to be the actual place of sepulchre of the Patriarchs, into which even the faithful are not permitted to enter.

Continuing our route on the side of the hill, we passed along the whole length of the city, containing at a conjecture between 5,000 and 6,000 inhabitants, (Robinson says it held 10,000 souls in 1838,) without one Christian among the number. The Jews are numerous. We now ascended the hill at the northern extremity of the suburb, before mentioned, which bears the name of Djebel Baylûn, the highest spot in the neighbourhood, whence I obtained a fine view over the town and the surrounding hills, as far as the distant eastern

range of mountains that skirt the shores of Bahr Lût, the Dead Sea. The fine old ilex on the road to Jaffa did not escape my observation. A steep descent brought us to a fountain of delicious water called Gash Gali, and the small pool lying due north of the town. After crossing the path, which had led us to the Sindiân, we commenced the ascent of the hill to the north-west of Hebron, left unvisited by Robinson, which some early travellers before the twelfth century have supposed to have been the site of ancient Hebron. On the summit is the burial-ground of the Jews, where huge blocks of rock mark the tombs of ages long gone by. These are laid in rows, but bear no inscriptions. On our way down the eastern side of the hill, immediately above the ground on which our tents were pitched, we came suddenly upon a large stone building, called by my guide "E' Deir el-Arbain," (the Convent of the Forty.) With respect to the date of its erection, he could only surmise that it was of the time of Abraham! in which piece of information he was readily confirmed on our return by the guardiano of the American traveller. Entering this building, which is of most substantial materials and construction,

I found several chambers, some of which have been used in times past as granaries, and are still furnished with a large stone for grinding corn. Among the *débris* was part of a column eight feet long, and about fifteen inches in diameter, without a capital or ought to lead to the discovery of its date. The building is of extraordinary strength and solidity, and from its position must have been almost impregnable. It is now surrounded and completely concealed on all sides by aged though strong and healthy olive-trees, which thrive wonderfully on the rocky ground where they have taken root.

We continued our descent by a path between low walls, formed of large stones, that have apparently been used for building purposes, as the great quantity of wrought blocks, lying about in all directions, cannot well be accounted for otherwise than by the supposition that a large village once existed on this hill. About half way down we came to a deep well, called Aîn Ghedîdy, to which two flights of steps descend, the top of the well being forty feet below the ground. It is arched over, and must have been constructed with great labour, and the skill of the workmen may be

presumed from the fact that not one stone in the round arches has shifted in the slightest degree from its place. It is of undoubted antiquity, since no traveller for many centuries has mentioned any village on this hill. The people of the place believe that its waters have the power of curing fevers. The sun had already set when I returned from making this interesting circuit of Hebron. The American gentleman who arrived yesterday has a new lodger in his tent, in the person of a guardiano, not to mention the lively little creatures that will soon become domesticated there, and help to complete the picture of "the happy family." Hebron is celebrated for its excellent mutton: I have never tasted any to be compared with it in Egypt, or, I may say, out of England.

The following morning I made the circuit of the hills to the south-west of the valley, among which I shot two or three partridges; but I saw nothing worthy of notice, the adjacent hills shutting out from view the surrounding country. In the afternoon a funeral took place close beside our encampment. The women were the first to arrive, marching in long array, and wearing blue dresses, over which hung a veil of white muslin, reaching

nearly to their feet, with an inner veil, either yellow or party-coloured, which is generally drawn close over the face. As they arrived they grouped themselves at twenty or thirty paces from the grave. After a short interval the approach of the funeral procession was announced by the sound of the chaunt for the dead, intoned by all who assisted at the ceremony. About fifty men accompanied the corpse, which was borne in the midst of them on a wooden bier, covered with a piece of embroidery. The body was laid close to the grave, while the greater part of the assistants collected in a large circle, at a distance of ten or twelve yards from it, and continued the same monotonous chaunt as before. As the body was being lowered into the grave, this was changed for a set of quick hurried exclamations, to which they all kept time by nodding their heads in a singular and almost ludicrous manner; as they proceeded the sound became more sharp and rapid, and finally ended in something very like a dog's snarl, while their heads continued moving with incredible rapidity. When the earth was thrown upon the body, and the grave closed, their heads began to grow more steady, the slower chaunt was resumed, and in a minute

or two the service was concluded. It lasted about a quarter of an hour, during which time the women stood at a little distance apart, in three or four groups. The men departed as soon as all was finished, and shortly after the wife of the deceased, quite a young woman, came forward with some of her female relatives, and sat over against the grave. The rest of the women then came up, one by one, and embraced her: she rose for an instant, as each approached, and then reseated herself. They next touched the hands of the females of the deceased's family, each party afterwards carrying their own to their lips, and then took their departure. The hareem of the defunct, who was, I hear, a very old man, left shortly after.

During the few days that I have remained almost unemployed in quarantine, I have had occasion twenty times a day to regret my inability to carry Hebron, its picturesque scenes and views, away with me in a sketch-book. The pencil of a sister would have been invaluable; whereas the pen can convey to absent friends but a faint notion of scenes and places which the traveller would enjoy the more, if he were able to impart to others that pleasure which he feels himself, though memory itself must

fail before the impressions so strongly graven on the mind can fade away or be blotted out.

The last day of my detention at Hebron was unusually sultry, the wind having veered round from the north-east to the south during the night; and occasional light clouds, driven before the wind, seemed to betoken stormy weather. Two hours before sunset the sky became overcast, and a heavy shower of rain fell, after which it cleared up, and the sun set with his usual brilliancy. Again to-day the women came out to the burial-ground and sat round the tombs, the greater number being collected round that of yesterday. Mounting the hill behind I seated myself a little below Aïn Ghedîdy, and examined this group through my telescope. The olive-trees concealed me from view, so that I was able to observe their proceedings at my leisure. After seating themselves they threw off the long white veil, and disclosed the yellow or party-coloured handkerchief mentioned above, which was thrown loosely over the head. The white veil was then carefully folded up, and laid aside, to be resumed on their departure. They then began to converse in whispers with their neighbours, while some few remained

silent and pensive, leaning with the chin upon their hands, and took no part in the conversation. They seemed to be met together not for prayer, but simply to do honour to the memory of the deceased. After remaining in this manner for more than two hours the rain sent them back to their homes.

The doctor came this evening to inquire my name and that of my dragoman to insert in a *teskéré*, which I must show before I can gain admittance into Jerusalem. I learnt from him that the cholera was still raging at Constantinople. A few days later I heard of the death of our newly-appointed Secretary of Embassy at Pera, Mr. Ashburnham, shortly after his arrival, of that malady.

March 5.—Soon after sunrise the chief officer of the quarantine came to give me the *teskéré* upon payment of the fees, which proved to be nearly two-thirds less than I had been led to expect by my dragoman, who had gleaned his information from the *guardiano*. The mist was so thick that I could not see clearly ten yards from the door of my tent. The camels now came, and with them my horse and a mule for Mahmoud. The latter

having disposed of the water-barrels to his satisfaction, we found two of the strong camels of Syria sufficient for our reduced baggage. Having arranged everything satisfactorily, I started off to take a last look at the Haram, and rode through the still empty bazaars of El Khalîl, the shops not yet being open, and then rejoined Mahmoud, who in the meantime had gone in advance with the camels.

It was now eight o'clock. The road to Jerusalem is rough and mountainous, and bears every appearance of having always been the highway from Hebron to the Holy City. It is in the main direct; though the occasional sharp turns in the rocks must have made it impassable for chariots. The path on leaving Hebron is paved, to the great annoyance of my horse, whose feet slipped in all directions over the round pebbles, worn smooth by long use. Our route lay through cultivated valleys in the midst of vineyards, and along the sides of hills, some of which were bleak and bare, while others were verdant with evergreens and olive-yards.

About eleven o'clock I met my friend C——, whom I had encountered near Aîn Mûsa, and learnt from

him the unfortunate illness of his companion, who, after remaining for a week at Suez, had been forced to return to Cairo. C—— was on his way to Hebron with a friend, who intended to visit Petra with a party of Russians, amongst whom was the Chief Archimandrite, travelling in the service of the Czar. The setting-in of cold and wet weather put a stop to that expedition; and, as fate would have it, I was destined to continue my tour in Syria with both of these gentlemen, whom I met quite accidentally on the road between Hebron and Jerusalem.

I now rode forward with a guide towards Bethlehem, which lies to the east of the road to Jerusalem, leaving Mahmoud to follow more leisurely with the baggage by the nearer path, direct to El Kuds, "the Holy City." In about an hour I came to an old Saracenic fortress, called Kulat el Burak, adjacent to which are the Pools of Solomon." These three great reservoirs rise one above another in the steep part of the valley, the bottom of the upper pools being respectively higher than the surface of the one immediately below. They bear marks of the highest antiquity, and are formed of large square stones, firmly

cemented together. Robinson gives the following measurements in English feet.

LOWER POOL.

Length 582 feet. Breadth $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{E. end 207 feet.} \\ \text{W. end 148 ,,} \end{array} \right.$
Depth at E. end 50 feet.

MIDDLE POOL.

Distance above Lower Pool 248 feet.
Length 423 feet. Breadth $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{E. end 250 feet.} \\ \text{W. end 160 ,,} \end{array} \right.$
Depth at E. end 39 feet.

UPPER POOL.

Distance above Middle Pool 160 feet.
Length 380 feet. Breadth $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{E. end 236 feet.} \\ \text{W. end 229 ,,} \end{array} \right.$
Depth at E. end 25 feet.

At 1.10 P.M. we came to Beit Lahm, "The House of Flesh," the Arabic name for Bethlehem, "the House of Bread," of the Jews. Before reaching the town, I had a foretaste of Syrian roads, for the path led up the face of a very steep rock, in which small holes had been hollowed for the feet of horses and mules. My horse ran up it with the activity of a cat, and I must have slipped off behind, if I had not taken a firm hold of the

animal's mane. The present inhabitants of Bethlehem are all Christians, the Moslem quarter having been destroyed by Ibrahim Pasha, in the rebellion of 1834, when the Bethlehemites took an active part against the Egyptian government. As I passed through the paved street, which clattered beneath my horse's iron-plated hoofs, a great part of the population turned out to look at the stranger, and amongst them I saw the first healthy-looking, chubby-faced children that I had met with in the East. Health and contentment dwelt in nearly every face around me.

On arriving at the gate of the convent, which, from its lofty situation on the summit of the hill, is conspicuous from afar, I found two or three boys standing near the entrance. They addressed me in good Italian, and proffered their services. Having signified my wishes to one of them, I dismounted and followed him to the cell of one of the monks, Abdullah, the curé of the place, to whom my kind friend, Dr. Roësor, physician to King Otho, had given me a letter of introduction. I found him busily employed at his bureau, which with a table and two small trunks formed the whole furniture of his cell. He is a native of

Bethlehem, about forty years of age, with a fine intellectual countenance, jet-black moustachios and beard, and may be pronounced decidedly handsome. He volunteered his services in conducting me over the Church of the Nativity, and took great pains in showing and explaining to me the holy places within it. The church itself was built by the Empress Helena, and is dedicated to St. Catherine: it is now parcelled out amongst the Greek, Latin, and Armenian monks, who inhabit the convent. Descending a flight of steps we entered the Cave of the Nativity, handsomely fitted up as a chapel, with rows of lamps suspended from the rocky ceiling, that shed a subdued light upon the rough irregular cavity, which tradition fixes upon as the identical spot where our blessed Redeemer was laid at his birth. Kneeling down we offered up a prayer, with praise and thanksgiving, to the Throne of Grace. My thoughts were far too much occupied to pay particular attention to the gold, and precious stones, and other rich offerings on the altar, but the Curé showed me the spot where the star, (in gold I believe,) was formerly fixed to commemorate the miraculous leading of the Magi. It was taken away some time

ago ; and, as might be expected, the Latin fraternity accuse the Greek of having committed this sacrilege, while the latter in their turn throw the odium of the theft upon their accusers. This most sacred spot is common to the three communities. I was shown divers cells and altars in and beneath which many holy men and women lie and are at rest ; among others St. Jeronimo and Sta. Paula ; but my heart was too full to allow me to listen attentively to the words of the good father. Casting aside all monkish legends and stories, one main fact is indisputable. This was the same Bethlehem of which the prophet Micah said, " But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall he come forth unto me that is to be ruler in Israel." In Bethlehem-judah was David born, the son of Jesse, an Ephrathite ; of the root of Jesse was born, in the city of David, the Sun of Righteousness, the Saviour of the world. Here then were the shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night when the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and the angel announced to them the birth of a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord, while the multitude of the heavenly host

praised God saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men."

On the road from Hebron to Jerusalem is a small Moslem wely or saint's tomb, erected over the spot where, it is supposed, Jacob buried and mourned for Rachel. About an hour's march from the city is the Greek convent of Mâr Elyâs, on the summit of the high ridge to the south of the plain of Rephaim, where I overtook my dragoman and the baggage. Winding round a hill about two miles from Jerusalem, the walls of Zion and the mosque of the Haram suddenly burst upon my view. The situation is admirably selected for a great city: it stands forth as a light set upon a hill, which shall not be hid. The sky, which had looked threatening for some hours, now became overcast, and dark clouds gathered thick behind Jerusalem; when suddenly the sun burst forth, and for a few minutes shed a strong light upon the white walls and the citadel to the left of the city, exhibiting a striking contrast to the black murky clouds in the background. The effect was sublime and beautiful. The sun soon disappeared, and as we entered the gate of Jerusalem, the rain began

to fall heavily. "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem : they shall prosper that love thee. Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces !" I dismounted and set foot in the Holy City. What an awful change from the time when the glory of the Lord dwelt in the Temple of Zion, now that the kingdom hath departed from Judah, and the land hath become a prey to the spoilers. Our way lay from the Jaffa gate, by which we had entered, through narrow dirty streets, past the Greek and Coptic convents, towards the Damascus gate, near to which the Maltese inn is situated in a dirty blind alley, where I found a room and lodging just in time to escape the heavy rain and thunder-storm which burst with tremendous violence over the city.

CHAPTER XVI.

JERUSALEM—HISTORICAL NOTICES—THE HOLY SEPULCHRE—MOSQUE
OF OMAR—JEWS' PLACE OF WAILING—THE MODERN CITY—GETH-
SEMANE—MOUNT OF OLIVES—KIDRON—SILOAM—VALLEY OF HIN-
NOM—BETHANY—JERICHO—THE JORDAN—THE DEAD SEA—NEBY
MÛSA.

“Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact
together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the
Lord, unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto
the name of the Lord.”

WHEN Israel came into the land of promise, and
according to the word of the Lord, that he spake
unto Moses, subdued the people and the nations
that dwelt therein, to the end that they might
receive the country for an inheritance, the strong-
holds of the land remained for a time unconquered.
“As for the Jebusites the inhabitants of Jerusalem,
the children of Israel could not drive them out;
but the Jebusites dwell with the children of Judah
at Jerusalem unto this day.”* Four hundred years

* Joshua xv. 63.

later king David* went to Jerusalem unto the Jebusites, and took the strong hold of Zion; the same is the city of David. At the close of his reign, when the anger of the Lord was kindled against Israel, and he moved David† to number the people, the wrathful indignation of the Lord broke forth in the grievous pestilence, which slew from Dan to Beersheba seventy thousand men. And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, the anger of the Lord turned and he stayed his hand: and the angel was by the threshing-place of Araunah the Jebusite, on the summit of Moriah. On this spot Solomon,‡ at the instance of his father David, built and dedicated his magnificent temple to the God of Israel. In the reign of Rehoboam, Shishak§ king of Egypt came up against Jerusalem and spoiled the city, and took away all the treasures of the house of the Lord. The revolt of the ten tribes, and the division of the kingdom, inflicted a severe blow upon the importance and splendour of the royal city, from which it never recovered. In the time of Solomon it had risen to extraordinary power

* 2 Sam. v. 6, 7.

† 2 Sam. xxiv. 1, 16.

‡ 1 Chron. xxii.

§ 1 Kings xiv. 25.

and greatness. The fame of its riches and of the magnificence of the temple and of the king's house reached into all lands. The number of chariots and horsemen far surpassed that in the time of David; while silver and gold became as stones in Jerusalem, and cedars as the sycamore-trees in the vale for abundance.*

Such was Jerusalem, strong and mighty, during the reign of Solomon. The land was filled with forts and fenced cities; and the kingdom was established in Judah.

In the time of Manasse† the Assyrians came up against Jerusalem, and took it, and carried away the king to Babylon. On his return from captivity, he built a wall without the city, on the west side of Gihon, in the valley, even to the entrance of the fish-gate, and compassed about Ophel, and raised it to a very great height. This second wall proved of no avail against the armies of Nabuchadnezzar, who completed the destruction of Jerusalem in the reign of Zedekiah, and burnt the house of the Lord, and the king's house, and all the houses of Jerusalem. On the return of

* 2 Chron. i. 15.

† 2 Chron. xxxiii. 11, 14.

the Israelites, the second temple was built, and dedicated in the presence of many of the priests and Levites, and the chiefs of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, so that there is little reason to doubt that the foundations were laid on the site of the temple of Solomon. The gates and the walls were rebuilt, and the breaches, made at the time of the siege, stopped, while Nehemiah states, that the number of the congregation, together with their servants, was more than 50,000 souls.* Now, he adds, the city was large and great; but the people were few therein, and the houses were not builded. The same circuit seems to have been observed, and Ophel, a district allotted to the Nethinims, the servants of the temple, lying between Moriah and Siloam, between the great valley of Jehoshaphat, at the foot of Mount Olivet on the east, and the valley of the Tyropœon, or Cheesemakers, on the west, was again enclosed; and mention is also made of the wall, extending past the pool of Siloam by the king's gardens, and of the stairs that go down from the City of David, or Zion, into the valley through which ran the brook Kidron.

* Nehem. vii. 66, 67.

In the days of Herod, Jerusalem was restored to more than its pristine splendour and magnificence; strong towers and fortresses were erected within the city; the whole was enclosed within three walls, except where inaccessible rocks and deep valleys rendered more than one unnecessary. At the zenith of its greatness and renown, it became the scene of Christ's ministry and miracles, the place of his sufferings and crucifixion. Herein was wrought the great work of Redemption: the Lamb was slain; the atonement made for the sins of all mankind; for he bare the sin of many, and was numbered with the transgressors. A fearful retribution was at hand. The picture which Josephus draws of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem presents a terrible succession of famine, disease, and slaughter. In a city capable of holding about 200,000 inhabitants were cooped up 2,000,000 souls, of whom, if we may credit the historian, 1,100,000 perished during the siege, while 97,000 were made captives.* The fearful denunciations of Ezekiel were literally fulfilled: "A third part of them shall die with the pestilence, and with famine shall they be consumed in

* Josephus, B. J. vi. 9. 3.

the midst of thee, and a third part shall fall by the sword round about thee; and I will scatter a third part into all the winds, and I will draw out a sword after them." * "The sword is without, and the pestilence and famine within. He that is in the field shall die with the sword; and he that is in the city, famine and pestilence shall devour him." † The destruction of the city and of the temple was complete; the latter was burnt with fire by the enraged Roman soldiery—there was not left one stone upon another that was not thrown down. Nothing except the towers of Hippicus, Phasaëlus, and Mariamne, built by Herod, with the western wall for the defence of the garrison, were left standing, as memorials of the strength of the fortifications, which had yielded to the Roman troops. Titus endeavoured in vain to save the temple: no human power could stay the work of conflagration: the burning edifice was doomed to destruction.

In the reign of the Emperor Adrian the city was rebuilt by a Roman colony sent out on the celebration of his *Vicennalia*, at the commencement of the twentieth year of his reign, and received the name

* Ezek. v, 12.

† Ezek. vii. 15.

of *Ælia*. The name of Jerusalem went entirely out of use, until the reign of Constantine, when, after his conversion to Christianity, the temples of the heathen were removed, the Holy Sepulchre discovered, and a place of worship erected above and around the Sepulchre A.D. 335. Helena, the mother of Constantine, visited Palestine, A.D. 326, and erected churches on the Mount of Olives and at Bethlehem, on the supposed spots of the ascension and nativity of our Lord.

In the year 614, the Holy City, which had become a resort for pilgrims from all countries, was taken by the Persians under Chosroes II.; the churches were thrown down, and that of the Holy Sepulchre burnt with fire, while thousands of the clergy, monks, and other inhabitants were slain, and the rest carried away into captivity. In a few years the place was retaken by the Emperor Heraclius, the churches were rebuilt, and the dominion of the Christians established for a brief season. A.D. 636 the army of Caliph Omar encamped before the walls of Jerusalem, and in the following year, after a long siege, during which the city was bravely defended by the patriarch Sophronius, the Caliph himself appeared and received possession

of the city on condition of sparing the lives, property, and churches of the inhabitants. The magnificent Mosque of Omar was forthwith built upon the site of the Jewish temple. During the following centuries the land was often torn with dissensions and wars among its Saracenic rulers, though occasionally the Christians were treated with great kindness and consideration; as in the reigns of Harûn Er-Raschîd and his immediate successors. The cruelty of the Egyptian Caliphs, who drove out the Saracens from Jerusalem, awakened the sympathies of Christian Europe. Again was the Church of the Holy Sepulchre destroyed, and a smaller one erected in its stead, as soon as the persecution ceased. The invasion and occupation of the Holy City by the Turcomans in the eleventh century was followed by the Crusades, which were the means of restoring the city for eighty-eight years to Christian dominion. During this time the walls of Adrian were repaired, and the fortifications strengthened.

When Saladin wrested Jerusalem from the hands of the Crusaders, A.D. 1187, he built new walls and cut deep trenches round the city. About forty years later the reigning Sultan of Damascus,

who had possession of Jerusalem, demolished all the towers and walls, except the tower of Hippicus and the enclosure of the mosque, from fear of the Christians becoming again masters of the place. The walls were rebuilt nearly upon the site of the former walls by Sultan Suleiman, A.H. 948, corresponding with A.D. 1542, as is recorded by several Arabic inscriptions upon various places in their circuit. They consist of large blocks of stone, cemented with mortar. The whole presents the appearance of a well-fortified town. Towers and battlements extend throughout their whole length; but the situation of the city surrounded by high hills would render it an insecure post against the tactics and operations of modern warfare. The walls vary from twenty to fifty feet in height, owing to the great inequalities of the ground in different parts.

The four principal gates are *Bâb el Khalîl*, "Gate of Hebron," or the Jaffa Gate, on the western side, near to which is the Tower of Hippicus, the most ancient building in the city; *Bâb el Amûd*, "Gate of the Pilgrims," or the Damascus Gate, on the north; *Bâb es-Subdt*, "Gate of the Tribes," or St. Stephen's Gate, on the east; and

Báb en-Neby Dáúd, "Gate of the prophet David," or the Gate of Zion, above the valley of Jehoshaphat on the south. Four smaller gates have been walled up, three of which bear the names among the Christians of the Gate of Herod, the Dung Gate, and the Golden Gate. The fourth, just below the southern wall of the mosque, near the angle formed by the junction of the walls with the enclosure round El Aksa, is not mentioned by early writers. The circuit of the modern walls is nearly two miles and a half in extent; in the palmy days of Jerusalem they could never have exceeded four miles. The principal streets run almost at right angles to each other; they are ill-paved and narrow, with a channel in the middle. One extends from the Jaffa Gate to the Mosque of Omar; a second from the Latin convent, lying to the left of the Jaffa Gate, along the *Via Dolorosa* to St. Stephen's gate. The main street from north to south extends from the Damascus Gate, eastward of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, through the Jews' quarter to the opposite walls near the Gate of Zion.

A short topographical description of the city will materially facilitate a right comprehension of

the holy places that present themselves for our consideration. To the north and north-east, between the Damascus and St. Stephen's Gates, extends the Hill of Bezetha, occupied by gardens and olive-yards, with but few dwellings, rather resembling a ruined village than a quarter of a great city. To the east is Moriah, occupied by the Mosques of Omar and El Aksa, both of which are enclosed within the same circuit walls. Separated from Moriah by the valley of the Tyropœon is the hill of Zion, rising abruptly from the valley of Hinnom, to the south of Jerusalem, and extending eastward to the citadel or Tower of Hippicus and the Jaffa Gate, in the vicinity of which are situated the English church and the Armenian convents, where, according to tradition, once stood the house of Caiaphas. On Zion are the wretched and comfortless abodes of the Jews, worse, far worse, in appearance than those of the Ghetto at Rome. To the north of Zion, with the valley of the Tyropœon intervening, is the hill of Akra, forming the north-western part of the city. In it are situated the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, the Latin, Greek and Coptic convents, and Birket el Hummâm, or the Pool of Hezekiah, as is inferred from

the circumstance of its great antiquity, and of its lying to the west of the city above the valley of Gihon. For "Hezekiah also stopped the upper water-course of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David."* A comparatively modern tradition has given to Akra the name of the Hill of Gihon.

The Church of the Holy Sepulchre has been so often and so accurately described, that I shall not attempt a fresh description of it. The paved court in front is worn with the feet of many pilgrims; here relics are sold, and the idle and curious among the population are wont to congregate. The church presents a handsome exterior of the florid style of Byzantine architecture: in the main it has a heavy, though imposing appearance, and is in keeping with the architecture of the age in which it was built. The door-keeper is a Mussulman, appointed by the government, who act as guardians of the Holy Sepulchre, and, without interfering with the religious observances of the different communions of Christians who worship within its sanctuary, preserve order therein, and enforce a due regard and reverence for the sanctity

* 2 Chron xxxii. 30.

of the supposed burial-place of our Lord. Without the Turks it is greatly to be feared that the dominant party would close the doors against a rival but less powerful communion. Passing the doorway, we stand at once beneath the central dome, which local traditions have fixed upon as the centre of the earth. In the midst is the sepulchre itself, enclosed in an oblong monument of white marble, ornamented with pilasters and cornice, and surmounted by a small cupola likewise of white marble. It was rebuilt by the Greek Church at an enormous cost in 1817. Within are two small chambers or sanctuaries, in the first of which is the stone whereon the angels were seated when they replied to the women, "He is not here, but is risen." In the second is the sepulchre, shut out from view by a block of white marble, while the whole is brilliantly lighted with gold and silver lamps, and an oppressive atmosphere of incense burning fills the chapel. A staircase cut in the rock leads to the top of Calvary, where are three holes in which the crosses are supposed to have stood. Tradition has thus placed the rock of Calvary, the place of execution, and the sepulchre in the garden of Joseph of Arimathæa, both of which

were outside the walls of Zion, at a distance of some forty paces from each other in the midst of the modern city, and both beneath the same roof. Near the entrance is likewise shown the stone whereon the body of our Lord was anointed for burial, and the fissure in the rock of Calvary caused by the earthquake at the time of the Crucifixion. To reconcile all these traditionary sites with the accounts given by the Evangelists, seems almost impossible ; and if all other difficulties could be removed, one insuperable objection remains, namely, that the wall which enclosed the Pool of Hezekiah must likewise have included the supposed sites of the Sepulchre and of Calvary within its circuit. The question of the possible or probable identity of the site ascribed to the Holy Sepulchre has been most fully and ably considered and discussed by Robinson,* who states that in spite of his previous prepossessions he was forced by every view, both topographical and historical, whether on the spot or in the closet, to the conclusion, "that the Golgotha and the tomb, now shown in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, are not upon the real places of the crucifixion and resurrection of our Lord."

* Robinson's Biblical Researches in Palestine, vol. ii. pp. 64—80.

The principal part of the Church is in the hands of the Greeks, who have had the bad taste to erect a painted wooden screen, and to cover it with indifferent pictures and tawdry ornaments. In a vault hewn in the rock beneath the gloomy chapel of Helena under Calvary, the three crosses were said to have been discovered by the royal pilgrim, with the tablet bearing the inscription written by Pilate. Tradition goes on to state that the miraculous recovery of a sick lady, at the approach of the true cross, proved incontestibly which was the cross of Christ.

Passing along the *Via Dolorosa*, we come to the enclosure of the mosques of Omar and El Aksa, surrounded by high bevelled walls, which shut out from view the ground whereon the temples of Solomon and Zerubbabel stood. The broad and extensive platform on the summit of Moriah is jealously guarded by the watchful eye of the Mussulman, while the tolerance which allows Christians to enter the mosques of Stamboul and E' Musr does not extend to the Holy City, the birthplace and cradle of that religion which is rapidly spreading throughout all the world. The eastern wall of this enclosure on the heights above

the brook Kidron, or valley of Jehoshaphat, forms part of the modern city walls, the lower part of which is built of huge blocks of stone from sixteen to twenty feet in length, and four or five in height. These in all probability formed part of the ancient walls of the Temple; they present a rough projecting surface, except near the edges, where they are cut smooth, or bevelled; the upper part of the walls is built of much smaller stones, evidently of later date, and perfectly smooth. On the western side of this enclosure, which bears the name of El Haram Esh-Sherîf, the great mosque or sacred enclosure, is a spot outside the walls known as the Jews' place of wailing, where the descendants of Jacob have purchased the privilege of drawing nigh to the site of their temple, and of offering up prayer to the God of their fathers on the mount which was hallowed by the presence of the glory of the Lord, and of bewailing their sins and the downfall of their nation. "This touching custom of the Jews," says Robinson,* "is not of modern origin. Benjamin of Tudela mentions it, as connected apparently with the same spot, in the twelfth century, and very probably the custom has come down from still earlier ages. After the cap-

* Robinson's Biblical Researches in Palestine, vol. i. p. 350.

ture of Jerusalem under Adrian, the Jews were excluded from the city, and it was not till the age of Constantine that they were permitted to approach, so as to behold Jerusalem from the neighbouring hills. At length they were allowed to enter the city once a-year, on the day on which it was taken by Titus, in order to wail over the ruins of the temple. But this privilege they were obliged to purchase of the Roman soldiers."

At the south-western extremity of this wall are the remains of a viaduct, which connected the temple on Moriah with the heights of Zion, extending across the valley of the Tyropœon. The immense size and manifest antiquity of the stonework around the area of the mosque has of old attracted the attention of travellers, who have generally referred it to the time of Jewish splendour, during the reign of Herod, who rebuilt the temple and the walls with costly magnificence; but the researches of Robinson a few years ago first brought to light the remains of this bridge, which affords a remarkable evidence of the identity of the enclosure of El Haram Esh-Sherîf with the area whereon the temple stood. Speaking of the arch which first arrested his notice, he goes on to say, "The courses of these immense stones, which seemed at

first to have sprung out of their places by some enormous violence, occupy, nevertheless, their original position; their external surface is hewn to a regular curve, and being fitted one upon another, they form the commencement or foot of an immense arch, which once sprung out from this western wall in a direction towards Mount Zion, across the valley of the Tyropœon. This arch could only have belonged to THE BRIDGE, which, according to Josephus, led from this part of the temple to the Xystus on Zion; and it proves incontestibly the antiquity of that portion of the wall from which it springs.*

The pious zeal of the early Christians, or perhaps the necessity of satisfying the pilgrims who flocked to the scenes of our Lord's teaching and sufferings, induced the monks to determine the stations along the *Via Dolorosa*. It is needless to say, that there is nothing striking or probable in them; all traces of the early local traditions were completely lost during the first ages of Christianity, when its professors were banished from the city for many years, so that the very site of the Holy Sepulchre and of Calvary can no longer be affirmed.

* Robinson's Biblical Researches in Palestine, vol. i. p. 325.

As I walked through the streets of Jerusalem, once "the joy of the whole earth," now the dirty and neglected capital of a Turkish pashalic, the literal fulfilment of the prophecies against the rebellious city presented itself everywhere before my eyes. For nearly eighteen centuries has a curse rested over the earthly Jerusalem. It has constantly been the scene of wars, of unheard-of sufferings and atrocious cruelties. During the reign of Mohammed Ali, the late Pasha of Egypt, Ibrahim wrested Syria from the power of the Sultan, and for a while the city of El Kuds became again the seat of war and of bloodshed. The mild sway of the Turk is now re-established within its walls, but poverty and wretchedness have made their abode on Zion, the highways lie waste, and the land is desolate ; even as our Saviour foresaw, when he came near, and beheld the city and wept over it, saying, " If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace ! but now they are hid from thine eyes."

Let us pass on without the walls. Leaving the city by the Damascus Gate, and turning to the right, we approached the Grotto of Jeremiah through a

field sown with wheat. It is situated on the face of a large isolated rock; the summit of which is covered with Moslem tombstones. Keeping close round the walls we came to St. Stephen's Gate, below which, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, is the so-called Tomb of the Virgin Mary; and a little to the south lies the Garden of Gethsemane, surrounded by a stone wall, and containing eight very large and aged olive-trees. Of the probability of the site I have little to say: it lies at the foot of the Mount of Olives; the trees are undoubtedly of great age; one of them measures twenty-one and a second twenty-four feet in girth; but we know that Titus at the time of the siege not only cut down all the trees in the vicinity of Jerusalem, but sent to a great distance for others; so that their identity with those beneath which our Saviour endured his agony, and prayed that, if it were possible, the bitter cup might pass from him, may fairly be doubted. This site was probably fixed upon at the same time as the other holy places in Jerusalem and Bethlehem, during the visit of Helena in the fourth century. Still, we were near, if not upon the spot where the traitor Judas betrayed his Master, who, as was his wont,

had gone forth with his disciples over the brook Kidron to the retired Garden of Gethsemane. Seating myself beneath the thick shade of the spreading branches of one of the largest olive-trees, the thoughts of that awful night, the eve of man's redemption, crowded fast upon my mind. Here the despised and rejected of men, the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, drank the bitter dregs of the cup of agony which was the forerunner of that meritorious cross and passion whereby alone we can be saved.

The brook Kidron no longer murmured past the garden; the bed was dry; while the vale through which its wintry torrent flows bears the name of the valley of Jehoshaphat, a valley regarded with awe and veneration alike by Christians, Jews, and Mahometans, as the place destined for the Last Judgment. The name signifies, *Jehovah judgeth*. The prophet Joel foreshows the judgments of God against the enemies of his people, alluding, as Robinson suggests, to the metaphorical meaning of the word Jehoshaphat.

“For, behold, in those days, and in that time, when I shall bring again the captivity of Judah and Jerusalem,

“ I will also gather all nations, and will bring them down into the valley of Jehoshaphat, and will plead with them there for my people and for my heritage Israel, whom they have scattered among the nations, and parted my land.

* * * * *

“ Multitudes, multitudes in the valley of decision : for the day of the Lord is near in the valley of decision.

“ The sun and the moon shall be darkened, and the stars shall withdraw their shining.

“ The Lord also shall roar out of Zion, and utter his voice from Jerusalem ; and the heavens and the earth shall shake : but the Lord will be the hope of his people, and the strength of the children of Israel.” *

A steep path led us up the side of the Mount of Olives, which is studded here and there, but not thickly, with olive-trees. From the Church of the Ascension on the summit is a fine view over the city, and a little further eastward, from a projecting mound, which is crowned with the tomb of some Moslem saint, is a magnificent prospect over the Jordan plain, the northern part of the Dead

* Joel iii.

Sea, and the high ridge of the mountains of Moab.

Returning by a more southern path, we passed through the Jewish cemetery, close to the tombs of Jehoshaphat, Absalom, and Zacharias. The flat tomb-stones are mostly covered with inscriptions. Proceeding along the valley of Jehoshaphat, which resembles a vast sepulchre, surrounded on every side with monuments and steep rocks pierced with sepulchral caves and grottoes, we came to the Fountain of the Virgin, called Aîn Um ed-Deraj, "Well of the mother of steps," on the western side of the brook Kidron. It lies considerably below the level of the valley, and is reached by two flights of steps. A subterranean passage, about a quarter of a mile in length, connects this fountain with

"Siloa's brook that flow'd
Fast by the oracle of God."

The flow through this channel is very irregular, so that the Fountain of Siloam is sometimes dry, while at other times the water bubbles up from beneath and flows over in a considerable stream. Eastward of the valley is the village of Selwân, the inhabitants of which resort much to this fountain, and the shepherds bring hither their flocks to drink.

A short distance beyond, and a little above the well of Nehemiah or Job, the valley of Hinnom meets the valley of Jehoshaphat; the latter continues to run southwards between the Mount of Offence and the Hill of Evil Council, where, it is supposed, the chief priests and the scribes and the elders of the people assembled together unto the palace of Caiaphas the high priest, and consulted how they might take Jesus by subtlety, and kill him. About a third of a mile from the junction of the two valleys, the course of the brook Kidron turns eastward and runs towards the Dead Sea.

We now entered the valley of Hinnom, or Gehenna, called to this day by the Arabs Wady Jehennam, where Manasseh caused his children to pass through the fire to

“Moloch, horrid king, besmear'd with blood
Of human sacrifice and parents' tears;
Though for the noise of drums and timbrels loud
Their children's cries unheard, that pass'd through fire
To his grim idol. Him the Ammonite
Worshipp'd in Rabba, and her watery plain,
In Argob, and in Basan, to the stream
Of utmost Arnon. Nor content with such
Audacious neighbourhood, the wisest heart
Of Solomon* he led by fraud to build

* “Then did Solomon build an high-place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem,

His temple right against the temple of God,
On that opprobrious hill; and made his grove
The pleasant valley of Hinnom, Tophet thence
And black Gehenna call'd, the type of Hell." *

This valley is connected throughout the Jewish history with the darkest and most abominable scenes of idolatry recorded in the Old Testament.

"For the children of Judah have done evil in my sight, saith the Lord: they have set their abominations in the house which is called by my name, to pollute it.

"And they have built the high places of Tophet, which is in the valley of the son of Hinnom, to burn their sons and their daughters in the fire; which I commanded them not, neither came it into my heart.

"Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that it shall no more be called Tophet, nor the valley of the son of Hinnom, but the valley of slaughter: for they shall bury in Tophet, till there be no place."†

and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon."
1 Kings xi. 7.

* Milton, *Paradise Lost*, B. i. 392—405.

† Jeremiah vii. 30—32. See also Jeremiah xix. where the prophet foreshows the desolation of the Jews under the type of breaking a potter's vessel in the valley of the son of Hinnom.

Passing round the foot of Zion, we came to the lower pool of Gihon, near the upper end of which an aqueduct crosses the valley, which became gradually narrower as we approached the Jaffa Gate, situate not quite half-way between the lower and the upper pools of Gihon.

After two days almost incessant fall of snow, which entirely covered the city and the surrounding hills and valleys, a change of weather came with the full moon, and on the 9th of March I left the Damascus Gate at 10.30 A.M. on my way to the Jordan and the Dead Sea. Our escort consisted of four Arabs and two mukerîyeh or mule-drivers. Crossing the valley of Jehoshaphat and the channel of the brook Kidron by the stone bridge near the Virgin's Tomb, we left the Garden of Gethsemane to our left, and struck across the lower ridge of the Mount of Olives. Thence a gradual descent brought us to El Azirîyeh, (Bethany,) which lies on the eastern side of the mount, at a distance of nearly two miles from Jerusalem. It is at the present day a small and insignificant village: a deep vault is here shown as the tomb of El Azir (Lazarus). Our road now lay among the hills, from which we here and there caught a glimpse

of the rich plain of the Jordan beyond. The rocks over which we passed had holes cut in them for the feet of the horses and mules, and would be impassable to any but Syrian-bred animals. A deep narrow valley was beneath us on our right, the scenery around was wild and barren, while the occasional flushing of a few stray partridges, which flew across the valley to the opposite hills, was the only sign of life that we met with along our dreary path. About half-past four we came to the foot of the hills, and experienced a delightful change of climate from the frost and snows of Jerusalem. Turning northwards we proceeded along a fertile plain, through fields of wheat, barley, and maize, in a high state of cultivation, and soon reached Aïn es-Sultân, the Fountain of Elisha, which bubbles up from the foot of a high mound, overgrown with brushwood, and flows forth in a broad and rapid stream through the plain. I observed several small fish in its waters. This being the only fountain near Jericho, it is reasonable to suppose that it is the same spring of water to which Elisha went forth and cast in salt, and said, "Thus saith the Lord, I have healed these waters; there shall not be from thence any more death, or

barren land. So the waters were healed unto this day.* I can bear testimony to the pleasant taste and sweetness of the waters, which flow in many streamlets through the plain, over a tract of unusual verdure and fertility.

The village of Erîha, or Jericho, lies to the south-east of the fountain, and consists of little more than a collection of wretched houses or hovels, in the neighbourhood of an old fortress, occupied by a score of Turkish soldiers, where we arrived about half-past five, and were offered a resting-place for the night in the extensive stables among their horses. Declining this hospitable invitation, we rode on to the mud house of the Sheikh, which was scarcely more inviting in appearance; but as I had left my tent at Jerusalem in consequence of the bitterly cold weather that had set in for the three or four previous days, and the shades of evening were already beginning to close around us, I decided upon spreading my seggâdeh before the door of his cowhouse, with an awning of boughs above my head, while the sides of the porch were open to the weather. Fortunately, the difference of the

* 2 Kings ii. 21, 22.

temperature in this place and in Jerusalem was more than 20°. I was soon as comfortably established in my strange quarters as circumstances would permit; while a large crowd of fellaheen collected round a fire at a little distance from me, and observed with considerable interest and apparent surprise Mahmoud's manifold operations in the cooking department and his zeal in the service of the Hawagee, who underwent his share of scrutiny, and created a good deal of amusement by eating his dinner in European style. The Arabs, men as well as women, were quiet and well-behaved, merely looking on and enjoying the novelty of the scene. Many of the former spent the whole night round the fire, talking and smoking till break of day. The moon was brilliant, and the air by no means cold during the night, but became chilly at break of day, when the north wind began to sigh over the plain.

We started an hour and a half before sunrise, and repassing the swollen torrent, that we had crossed the previous evening, marched eastward towards the Jordan. The sky was overcast with clouds, which scarcely dispersed during the day, for the breeze died away as soon as the sun rose,

and the morning turned out sultry and oppressively hot. Cultivation soon ceased; all before us was desert and sand. Descending by regular degrees over vast tracts of dreary waste for two hours and a half, we came at length to a thicket, tenanted by wild boars, the marks of whose feet were very distinct in the mud, that had just been left dry after the late heavy rains. The prospect was so unpromising across the sandy desert, that I was scarcely prepared for the view which burst upon me on reaching the extremity of the plain, which terminated all at once in a precipitous cliff or sand-hill, immediately above the verdure-clad banks of the Jordan. Words cannot convey an idea of the marvellous change from the ground above, over which the curse still hangs, to the luxuriance and freshness along the winding banks and the deep valley of the river below, where vegetation held undisputed sway, and virgin thickets of Persian poplars and willows interlaced their branches, while the impervious cane-brakes afforded a secure retreat to the wild boar. The stream was strong and rapid, but the water was discoloured owing to the heavy rains, and in some parts was level with the bank. In I plunged, but

in vain did I strive to make way against the stream; the current was too powerful for me to attempt to swim across. One Arab followed my example, but he did not go beyond his depth, and held on by some withies growing on the banks.

After bathing in the Jordan I felt nowise disinclined for breakfast, which Mahmoud had in the meantime prepared, having spread my great sheet and seggádeh so as to form a comfortable divan. Reposing for awhile on the banks of that sacred stream in whose waters Christ was baptized, I had leisure to call to mind the events with which it is connected in sacred history. The passage of the Israelites over Jordan on dry ground right against Jericho, probably not far from the spot we were upon, where the channel is about forty yards across; the twelve stones set up for a testimony in Gilgal, in the east border of Jericho; the passage of Elijah and Elisha over Jordan, when the former smote the waters with his mantle, and they were divided hither and thither, so that they two went over on dry ground; and the return of Elisha in the same manner, when the spirit of Elijah, who had been carried up into heaven, rested upon him, and the waters again parted.

hither and thither, so that he passed over ;—these were associations which hallowed the spot whereon I stood ; how much more so then when I called to mind the baptism of the meek and lowly Jesus in the waters of the Jordan, when the heavens were opened and the Spirit of God descended like a dove and lighted upon him : and a voice was heard from heaven, saying, “ This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.”

Having cut several staves from the trees along the banks, and filled my zemzemeëhs with Jordan water, one bottle of which I brought safe to England, we remounted and rode by a somewhat circuitous route, in consequence of the deep channels hollowed out along the upper banks of the river by the recent torrents from the mountains, to the northern shore of the Dead Sea. The appearance of Bahr Lût, (the Sea of Lot,) lying between the lofty and precipitous mountains of Ammon and Moab on the east and the broken range of Judah on the west, was not unpleasing to the eye, as it lay unruffled by the slightest breath of wind, spread over a broad expanse, and reaching as far as the eye could see down the deep and desolate valley towards the promontory of Ghôr el Mez-

raah. There is nothing sad or deathlike, beyond the associations, in the Dead Sea; the waters are bright and sparkle in the sun's rays, and reflect all manner of prismatic colours when a gentle ripple steals over the surface. I felt none of the heaviness or depression so often spoken of by Eastern travellers, near the shores of the Dead Sea; neither was there an overpowering smell of sulphur or bitumen, notwithstanding the intense heat and sultriness of the day. The shores are lined with the trunks of trees that have been brought down the wadies by the winter torrents and washed ashore; they were mostly covered with an incrustation of salt, which the Bedouins come and collect at certain periods of the year. The colocynthus, or apple of Sodom, grows, but in no great quantities, in the plain to the north of the sea: as I have already stated, it is pleasant to look upon, and resembles a fine large orange, but bursts on the least pressure and presents a mere kernel, the rind being inflated with air.

The water is exceedingly bitter and nauseous, and leaves by far the most disagreeable taste in the mouth of any I have ever met with. I did not test its buoyant properties, after having bathed in

the Jordan, beyond dipping in my hand and arm, by which I satisfied myself sufficiently on that point, and escaped the pain of a more complete salting, (I might almost say, pickling;) for, as soon as the moisture was dry, I found the parts immersed covered with grains of salt, and experienced a painful feeling accompanied with considerable irritation of the skin, which lasted for some time. I filled a bottle protected with wicker-work, which I had brought for the express purpose, with water, near the north-western extremity of the sea, about two miles from the Jordan. Having brought it to England I submitted it to Mr. Herapath, who kindly undertook to analyze its contents. To him and to his son, Mr. Thornton John Herapath, I am greatly indebted for the following valuable contribution to scientific knowledge.

WATER OF THE DEAD SEA.

Specific gravity at 66° Fahrenheit, 1.17205; or about one-sixth greater than that of distilled water.

Solid matters contained in an imperial gallon;—

Chloride of Calcium	2014.213
Chloride of Magnesium	6417.848
Chloride of Potassium	998.757
Chloride of Sodium	9935.243
Chloride of Aluminum	45.897
Chloride of Manganese	4.921
Chloride of Iron	2.230
Hydrochlorate of Ammonia	4.922
Bromide of Magnesium	206.070
Iodide of Magnesium . (minute traces only)	
Sulphate of Magnesia (traces)	
Organic matters (Nitrogenous)	50.651
Carbonate of Lime (traces only)	
Sulphate of Lime	55.680
Bitumen (traces)	
Grains	<u>19736.432</u>

or in 10 lbs. of water 2 lbs. 13 oz. of salts.

From these results it will be seen that the water of the Dead Sea is not only extraordinary, from the great quantity of salts generally, but also, as Mr. Herapath observes, from the large proportion of bromide of magnesium, which is rather a rare constituent in water.

The shores of the Dead Sea are 3,500 feet lower than Jerusalem; the valley of the Jordan is called El Ghôr by the Arabs, from the sea of Tiberias to Bahr Lût, and the river is known by the name of Esh-Sherîah el Kebîr, "the great watering-place."

Traversing the plain for nearly an hour, which was filled with cane-brakes and thickets, inhabited by wild boars, we arrived about midday at the foot of the Mountains of Judah, which retire gradually from the northern extremity of the Salt Lake, and commenced a steep and rugged ascent on our way back to the Holy City. About 1 P.M. we reached Neby Mŭsa, the place where Moses is supposed to have been buried; now occupied by a large and handsome mosque, and surrounded by a small village. From this spot the whole way to Jerusalem presented a constant succession of steep ascents, varied with an occasional almost perpendicular descent, amid deep wadies high up in the mountains, the sides of which were clothed with a scanty herbage, on which many Arab flocks were feeding. The people bear a very bad character eastward of Jerusalem, and during the day we saw two or three suspicious-looking parties, whom our escort pronounced to be robbers—friends, of course, and of the same tribe as they were—but having already paid the proper amount of *black mail* I was allowed to pass without molestation. We entered Jerusalem by St. Stephen's Gate, at 5.50 P.M. a few minutes only before the gates

were shut for the night, when no fee would have gained me admittance before morning, after a most gratifying though fatiguing day's journey of more than thirteen hours. My horse had carried me well, and I was perfectly satisfied both with the mukerîyeh and the Bedouins who accompanied us.

CHAPTER XVII.

ENGLISH CHURCH AT JERUSALEM—DEPARTURE—LAST VIEW OF THE
HOLY CITY—TOMBS OF THE KINGS—NEBY SAMWÎL—GIDEON—
BETHEL—SHILOH—SHECHEM—GERIZIM—SAMARIA—JENÎN—
PLAIN OF ESDRAELON—NAZARETH—MOUNT TABOR—TIBERIAS—NE-
GOTIATIONS AT SHAMMAKH.

THE excursion to the Jordan and the Dead Sea generally comprises a visit to the convent of St. Sâba, situate on one side of the deep wady that flows from the brook Kidron to the Dead Sea. The rocky sides of this valley are represented as full of cells once tenanted by thousands of anchorites who accompanied St. Sâba into the wilderness in the fourth century, when ascetic seclusion was a passion. It had been my intention to have spent a night within the walls of the convent, but the continued snow and rain at Jerusalem had delayed my departure for Jericho until Friday, so that I had barely time to return to the Holy City on the eve of the Sabbath.

The English church at Jerusalem is a plain and neat structure, erected a few years ago, not far from the Jaffa (or Joppa) Gate. Bishop Gobat and two resident clergymen, Mr. Nicholayson and Mr. Ewald, officiated, and my friend C—— read the prayers, and in the afternoon preached. The congregation numbered about fifty persons.

The party of Russians have been obliged to give up their intended tour to Petra and the eastern shores of the Dead Sea, and returned on Saturday from Hebron, where they have been fairly snowed up for three or four days in company with my future companion P——, whom I encountered on my way to Bethlehem and Jerusalem. The latter having a great desire to explore the country east of the Jordan, and to penetrate, if possible, as far as the Syrian desert, and so reach Damascus by the interesting and rarely-visited way of the Hauraan, which so few travellers have been able to accomplish, we were speedily of accord to leave no means in our power untried that might enable us to visit the various places of interest beyond the valley of the Ghôr. We were each provided with a Firmaan from the Sublime Porte, which subsequently proved of the greatest possible value to

us. Two plans presented themselves for our consideration; either to take an escort of Arabs under the command of Abdel Assees, a Sheikh of the Adwaan, from Jerusalem, and cross the Jordan a little above Jericho, and proceed thence to Ammân, Es-Salt and Gerash; or to go direct to Nazareth and Tiberias, where we might obtain better information concerning the movements of the Benisucker and Adwaan tribes of Bedouins, who were at the time engaged in war, thereby rendering the expedition doubly hazardous, unless we were accompanied by a large escort, a very serious item in the expense of eastern travel, or were able to avoid those parts where the hostile tribes were encamped. I could not for an instant hesitate to choose the latter, as it was very improbable that I should be able to return to Jerusalem by Nazareth and Nabûlus, and the loss of time, which must have been incurred by visiting them before we started on our tour eastward of the Jordan, would have rendered it impossible for my companion to return to Jerusalem in time for the ceremonies of the holy week. We learnt subsequently that the belligerents were at that time in occupation of both Ammân and Es-Salt, so that

our labour would have been in vain, if we had adopted the first-named route, the only one, so far as I know, that has hitherto been taken by travellers beyond the Jordan.

Our preparations were soon completed. My tent and canteens were large enough for P—— and myself, while Mahmoud shared his tent, still retaining the exclusive right of cooking, with Nicola, a Greek servant, whom P—— had brought with him from Athens. Our party was further increased by C——, who accompanied us as far as Tiberias, where unfortunately he was obliged to leave us in order to proceed to Beyrout. A great discussion arose among the mukerîyeh about the number of quadrupeds that we should require. Through the judicious medium of a backsheesh to a gentleman-muleteer named Omar Bey, who was, by the way, the greatest rogue of the lot, though he wore gloves, and smoked his cigar, (an extraordinary luxury in the East,) with all the airs of a fine gentleman, I was in the end allowed to take only the number that I required, though a visit to the Pasha and the production of my credentials from the Porte were first necessary to bring the refractory mukerîyeh to any thing like reasonable

terms. The price of horses and mules varies from twelve to sixteen piastres a day, according to the season of the year, the price always increasing about Easter, when an influx of visitors is expected. No back fares should ever be paid, and when the traveller halts for a day, only half the stipulated sum is paid for each animal. Our whole party consisted of "T'laté Hawagat," four servants, five mukerîyeh, fourteen horses and mules, and four donkeys for the sole use and benefit of the mukerîyeh.

About midday on Monday the 12th of March P—— and I rode forth from Jerusalem by the Damascus Gate, and I bade a last farewell to Zion, as we turned and gazed upon the city of our God, upon the mountain of his holiness, of which the Psalmist exclaims: "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the Great King."* Zion is there, the Mount of Olives is unchanged, the walls and the bulwarks still denote a strong city; but the glory has departed from Judah, the curse has been pronounced, her palaces and her temple have long since been levelled with the

* Psalm xlviii. 2.

ground, and the disciples of a false prophet bear sway over the Holy City.

Proceeding at a rapid pace, we came in a few minutes to the Tombs of the Kings, situate a little to the right of the Nabûlus road, and surrounded with olive-groves. Having fastened our horses to a tree, we descended into a large sunkén court, apparently excavated in the rock, about ninety feet square, on the western side of which is the entrance to the sepulchre under a handsome portico formed in the face of the rock. Although the ornamental sculptures of fruit and flowers on the façade have been much defaced, and two columns which supported the portico have been destroyed, still enough remains to proclaim the original beauty of the sepulchre. It contains several chambers, but as we were unprovided with candles, we could not explore the interior. Robinson gives a full account of this sepulchre, which he believes to have been the tomb of Helena, though popular tradition has given it the name of the Tombs of the Kings. It reminded me strongly of the tombs in Egypt, and was the only specimen of the kind that I met with in Palestine.

We now turned our horses' heads towards the

high hill of Neby Samwîl, so called from being the supposed burial-place of the Prophet Samuel, distant about two hours from Jerusalem. We took a direct line across country, and in our way came within twenty yards of a gazelle, the first that I had seen in my travels. My companion dismounted and fired at it; but it was already bounding away and out of shot of a fowling-piece. Neby Samwîl is one of the highest and most commanding positions in this part of Palestine. On arriving at the summit we halted at the door of the church on the supposed site of the one built by the Empress Helena: it is now converted into a mosque. On the flat roof we found the Archimandrite, the chief bishop of the Greek Church in Russia, with his suite, in whose company P—— had started a few days back for Petra, as I have before mentioned. From the roof of the mosque there is a commanding view over the surrounding country, including Jaffa, Ramleh, (the ancient Arimathæa,) Jerusalem, the distant hills beyond the Jordan, and the Mediterranean sea; all of which were pointed out to me by the Archimandrite, while the more distant ones were discernible through a telescope. There is merely a small village on the

top of the hill, but there are undoubted remains of a town of some size, which, if the tradition be true, must be Ramathaim-zophim, or Ramah, the birth-place, residence, and burial-place of the prophet. Robinson * conjectures Neby Samwîl to be the site of Mizpeh, a city of Benjamin, where the tribes often assembled, where Samuel offered sacrifice and judged the people, where Saul was chosen king by lot, and where, under the Chaldeans, Gedaliah, the Governor, resided and was assassinated. After an attentive perusal of the passages in the First Book of Samuel, in which allusion is made to Ramah, particularly those relating to the visit of Saul to Samuel, when he was anointed king over Israel, and admitting the probability of the present site of Rachel's tomb, I cannot agree with the learned Doctor that there is any one circumstance decisive against the identity of Neby Samwîl with Ramah.

Having taken leave of the Archimandrite, who was returning to Jerusalem, we commenced an almost perpendicular descent on the north side of the hill, leaving the choice of a path entirely to our sure-

* Robinson's Biblical Researches in Palestine, vol. ii. 141, *et seq.*

footed beasts, which by no accident ever made a false step, and soon reached the wady below by a zigzag course in safety. Crossing the narrow valley which lies between Neby Samwîl and the hill of Gideon, we rode up to the village of El Jîb, the site of the ancient Gibeon, situate near the brow of the hill, a magnificent position for a great and royal city. The inhabitants had a forbidding look, and seemed inclined to resent the intrusion of two strangers into their village, so we passed on quickly through the narrow streets, and came out upon the north-western side of the hill, which rises with regular layers of limestone rock out of the plain. A ride of an hour and a half through a rich undulating tract of country cultivated with corn-fields, vineyards, and olive-groves, brought us to El Bîreh, (Beeroth) where we found our tents pitched near the fountain, awaiting our arrival. We had time before sunset to visit a large vaulted building within the village, in which were several perfect rows of columns, probably the crypt of an early church; the walls are still standing. A man of Safed joined himself to our party in the evening, and continued with us the next day and night, when he proceeded more rapidly on his homeward journey, having

gone to Jerusalem on some business connected with the Missionary at Safed, who he stated owed him some money, to request the interference of the bishop in his behalf.

We started at seven o'clock on the morning of the 13th of March, and proceeded with two of our servants to Beitân (Bethel), leaving the others to take the direct road with the baggage towards Nabûlus or Nablous. At Beitân, distant one hour from El Bîreh, we found the remains of a Greek church, and a large reservoir above 300 feet in length by 215 broad, in a dilapidated state, but containing two springs of water. Our road lay along the side of the hills and between narrow rocks, with walled gardens on either side cultivated with fig-trees and vines, and extensive olive-groves generally planted in the vicinity of the villages, while the young wheat was fast springing up around. On reaching Singîl we again quitted the road, and turning eastward descended into a deep wady, running about a mile from the direct path, whence a steep north-east ascent brought us to Seilân (Shiloh), situate on a high eminence, the spot where the tabernacle was set up after the Israelites had conquered the country. At a short

distance from the village is a deep well, where we found the women of the place coming to and fro to draw water. We halted near the mouth of the well, and took our lunch. It was past midday, and the weather was sultry and oppressive. As we were restarting, some men came up and offered to act as an escort as far as Nablous. We civilly declined the honour, but the men of Seiltān were not so easily to be repulsed, and, on our persisting, became insolent and followed us for some time; but after passing through the village, where we were pelted with stones, we mended our pace and saw no more of them. A very precipitous descent, which I question greatly whether any but Syrian horses could have accomplished without a fall, brought us to the village of Kurīyat, after passing which we had considerable difficulty in determining which was the right wady to take on our way to Nablous, as the information given by the people of the country can, strange to say, never be depended upon. We continued our course considerably to the eastward of the direct road across the hills, and at length came in sight of El Mukhna, the great plain of Nablous (Shechem), which lay extended before us. Crossing

the plain, which was in great measure cultivated, near the northern extremity we came to a small wely, whitewashed like all similar saints' tombs, and bearing the name of the tomb of Joseph. A little further on was Jacob's well, where we halted at the foot of Mount Gerizim for half an hour till the rest of our party came up.

As soon as Mahmoud arrived, who invariably brought up the rear, we reformed our cavalcade, and winding round the northern side of Gerizim, entered the valley in which Nablous is situated. A scene of unwonted luxuriance and verdure, with well-watered gardens and orchards abounding with every description of fruit-trees, here burst upon our view. Leaving Nablous to our left, we proceeded to a clump of trees on an eminence towards the southern side of the valley, where we pitched our tents above a spring of clear water that murmured pleasantly in its rocky bed. A march of more than ten hours had somewhat fatigued us, so after the usual pipe of contentment, or as a New Yorker describes it, "the pipe of philosophy," we betook ourselves early to bed, but not to rest, for throughout the livelong night the jackals and wolves kept up a long and piteous howling,

scarcely interrupted by the occasional discharge of firearms by our guards, whom we were obliged to engage to protect our lives and property. A great number of poor lepers, male and female, outcasts from the city and from the society of their fellow-creatures, surrounded our encampment, but the poor creatures dared not approach near to ask for alms. They presented a pitiful and heart-rending sight. On the northern side of the valley, immediately opposite to Gerizim, rises the high mountain of Ebal, grand in its desolation and sterility, the lower part being full of ancient sepulchres excavated in the rock.

Having sent the rest of our servants forward on the direct road to Jenîn, we took Nicola with us, and bore westward of the caravan road towards Sebustieh (Samaria). Leaving Mount Ebal to our right and Gerizim behind us, and crossing the rapid stream which flowed through the valley, and was fed by several cascades of considerable size, we commenced a steep ascent which led us past several small villages scattered about the side of the hills, from the summit of which we took a farewell look at Nablous and Gerizim, and the mountains of Ephraim. A long and difficult

descent brought us to Sebustieh, by far the finest and most beautiful situation for a city that I saw in Palestine. The round hill of Samaria stands isolated in the midst of a large plain, the greater part of which was green with wheat and maize. On reaching the summit we came to the ruined church built by Helena, which is the principal object in the place. The ruins are extensive, and at the same time well preserved. The eastern recess for the altar stands entire, and has been elegantly finished and ornamented with great architectural skill. The walls are nearly entire, and enclose a mosque of recent erection, as well as a wely, supposed to cover the tomb of St. John the Baptist. The inhabitants did not seem over-rejoiced to see us, but as we were well armed, and formed a strong party, they let us pass on unmolested. Round the foot of the hill are the remains of a magnificent colonnade, which once completed more than half the circuit of the city. "In the western part," observes Robinson,* "about 60 columns are still erect, mostly on ground recently ploughed; and further east are some twenty more standing irregularly at various intervals. Many more than

* Robinson's Biblical Researches in Palestine, vol. iii. p. 145.

these lie prostrate, and we could trace whole columns or fragments nearly or quite to the village. The columns which we measured were 16 feet high, 2 feet in diameter at the base, and 1 foot 8 inches at the top. The capitals are gone; we could nowhere find a trace of them remaining. The width of the colonnade was 50 feet. We measured from the western end more than 1,900 feet, and were afterwards satisfied that it extended for 1,000 feet or more further, making its whole length not much less than 3,000 feet. This colonnade is doubtless to be referred to the time of Herod the Great, who rebuilt and adorned Samaria with splendid structures. But the purposes of the work, and the edifice it was intended to decorate, are alike unknown; and these columns now stand solitary and mournful in the midst of ploughed fields, the skeletons, as it were, of departed glory."

We rode along the summit of the hill, the soil of which appears unusually fertile and in a high state of cultivation: and here the young blade of wheat was springing up on all sides and the fig-trees were bursting forth into leaf. The village stands on the eastern side of the hill, which commands a fine panoramic view of the surrounding moun-

tains and valleys jotted here and there with picturesque villages, and relieved by many groves of olive-trees in their vicinity. Descending the northern side of the hill we came to what appeared to have been a large amphitheatre, judging from the shape or formation of the ground. We now galloped across the plain, and ascended a steep hill, along the ridge of which we rode in an eastward direction for about an hour, and then descended upon Jeboa in the direct road to Jenîn. Another plain lay in front of us, with the village of Sânr perched on the top of a round conical hill on our left, and a large lake (dry in the summer months), abounding with wild fowl, at the further extremity to our right. The ground* resembled a vast swamp, owing to the late heavy fall of snow and rain. Round the western corner of the lake we saw our mules well in advance of us, but owing to the treacherous nature of the ground one or two of them got nearly engulfed, so that we were not long in rejoining them. Before reaching Jenîn we were gratified with a splendid prospect over

* "From its mud in winter, the plain is called Merj el Ghuruk, 'Meadow of Sinking or Drowning,' equivalent to 'Drowned Meadow.'"—*Robinson*.

the great plain of Esdraelon, with Gilboa, and Little Hermon to the north-east, and Mount Carmel in the extreme distance on the north-west, while the mountains of Nazareth lay extended in front.

After nine hours' march we pitched our tents outside the town of Jenîn, near an encampment of Turkish soldiers, who had been sent to curb the rebellious spirit of the inhabitants. This town is notoriously the worst in the whole of Syria. A few days before a friend of mine had been robbed at a short distance from the place, and P—— on his former visit narrowly escaped the like treatment at the hands of the very guards, who were sent by the Governor to protect his person and property. While the bustle incident upon halting for the night was going on, and dinner being prepared, we strolled through the town to the fountain, as important a place in the East as the market-place in the West, where we found the women coming out to draw water, and were soon followed by the muckerîyeh, bringing their mules to the drinking-troughs. Close by was a well-irrigated garden, filled with pomegranates, oranges, and fig-trees, where we whiled away a short half-hour, protected from the still powerful rays of the

setting sun, beneath the shade of a walnut-tree, under the soothing influence of pure Latakîyeh.

After dinner the Governor, a native of Jenîn, whose appearance was anything but favourable, and his brother, paid us a visit, and after the usual pipes of ceremony and coffee had been handed round, took their departure, promising to send us four men to guard our tents; a precaution, one would imagine, scarcely requisite in the immediate vicinity of a detachment of Turkish soldiers—*“Sed quis custodiet ipsos Custodes?”* It was, perhaps, a polite method of asking for backsheesh—so at least we thought; but the Governor, like all Arabs,—must I say, like all his brethren throughout the East?—thought otherwise; and immediately after quitting us went to my dragoman's tent and demanded wine and spirits. I need scarcely add this modest demand was not complied with.

Up with the sun; but it was past seven o'clock before we started. My companions, who were in the rear, were pelted by some boys on their way through the town; but, on giving chase, the young miscreants took to their heels, and speedily left the coast clear. On quitting Jenîn, the great plain of Esdraelon, wherein were the city and valley of

Jezreel, lay before us, flanked by Djebel ed-Dâky, (Little Hermon,) to the right, and terminated by the Nazareth hills. During the day we were obliged to make several considerable détours, to avoid the marshy ground in the plain; but, with all our precautions, most of our baggage-mules were engulfed once or more in the ditches and treacherous ground, which has been thoroughly saturated with wet. These mishaps caused great delay, as the load had to be removed before the animal could be extricated from its disagreeable situation. Leaving Gilboa to our right, we trotted on to Zer'in, the ancient Jezreel, lying in the midst of the plain, at a distance of three hours from Jenîn. Thence to Solân, (Shunem,) situate at the foot of Little Hermon, and abounding with fig-trees and immense plants of cactus, or prickly pear, which answer the purpose of hedges in Syria. We now wound round the south-western side of the hill, rising abruptly out of the plain, and presenting a shapeless mass of barren rock, and came in sight of Djebel et-Târ, Mount Tabor, lying eastward of the Nazareth range. At 1.30 P.M. we reached the foot of the Mount of Precipitation, a rocky precipice overhanging the plain of Esdraelon,

to the brow of which it is not improbable that the Nazarenes may have brought our Lord, when they rose up in the synagogue and led him forth, "that they might cast him down headlong. But he passing through the midst of them went his way." The ascent is a most fatiguing one, and far too steep for the mules, who made a considerable bend in order to reach Nazareth by a small wady to the east of the Mount. This valley, as well as the country round, was a perfect garden of flowers. It is extremely narrow, and the watercourse was filled with broken fragments of rocks, very slippery for the feet, while a stream of water flowed through it.

The town of Nazareth, called in Arabic En-Nâzirah, is pleasantly situated among the hills and surrounded with gardens of prickly pears, pomegranates, figs and olive-groves. The belfry of the Latin convent is the first object to catch the eye of the traveller as he approaches the place, which is concealed from view until he suddenly finds himself close to a well-built town, with long rows of white stone houses, in which flat terraced roofs have taken the place of the domes that obtain in Jerusalem and throughout the south of Palestine.

Our tents were pitched about a stone's throw from the Fountain of the Virgin, where, all writers appear to be agreed, more beauty is wont to congregate than elsewhere in Palestine. My own impressions were decidedly favourable: the absence of the provoking veil, which forbids approach to the fair daughters of Islam, seems to invite the traveller to go near and mingle with the merry throng that crowds round the fountain. Many a pretty lively face was there, smiling through the wreath of silver coins, gracefully arranged about their heads, which served to confine the hair of its fair wearer, while at the same time it proclaimed her dowry.

We spent some time with the Governor, and conversed with him on the subject of our tour beyond the Jordan. He at once offered us a guard of three Arabs, which we declined, as they knew neither the country nor the roving tribes that dwell in it, and gave us a letter to the Governor of Tubarîyeh, (Tiberias,) in whom our chief hopes lay. The following day the Governor of Tiberias came himself to Nazareth, on his way to pay his respects to the newly-appointed Pasha of Acre, to whom he owes obedience. He gave us a letter to his son desiring him to render us every assistance

in his power to forward our views. Our prospects brighten at every step. During his visit a month previously, P—— spent ten or twelve days in the Latin convent, and was on the best possible terms with the Governor, to whom he made a present of a silver watch. We received in return five or six okas of Latakîyeh.

On the summit of the hill above Nazareth is a wely, whence a glorious prospect bursts upon the view. Tabor, Little Hermon, and Gilboa, with the mountains of Samaria bounding the great plain of Esdraelon, are visible towards the south over the tops of the intervening hills of Nazareth, while the western range of Carmel bounds the view towards the sea. Had the day been clearer, the Mediterranean would have been visible to the right of Carmel. Below, on the north, in the midst of a fertile plain lies Sefûrieh, the ancient Sepphoris, or Diocæsarea, while the mountainous district of Esh-Shaghûn and Safed lies extended in the distance.

We rested a day at Nazareth. The hills on the road towards Carmel are clothed with trees and shrubs of almost endless variety. We spent the morning partridge-shooting, great numbers of these birds being found in this part of Palestine, and

particularly round Nazareth. They are unusually large, and of the red-legged tribe.

I had a letter for the doctor of the convent, Il Padre Joachim Martz, which had been given to me by my kind friend Doctor Roësor, who acts as almoner to King Otho in distributing annually sums of money in the Holy Land. He had spent a few days in the convent two years before, during a visit to Palestine. But P—— was quite at home here, so we were received with open arms, and pressing offers of hospitality. We declined, however, to take up our quarters in the convent, as indeed we preferred our tents on the green sward beneath the shade of the spreading olive-trees outside the town. The Church of the Annunciation in the Latin convent is supposed to cover the spot where the Virgin dwelt; we were shown the kitchen and an upper room, hewn in the rock. The site of another chamber is marked by granite columns, said to have been placed there by Helena, who erected an altar, and inscribed on it, *Hæc est ara, in quâ primo jactum est humanæ salutis fundamentum*. (The *casa santa*, in which it was placed, is believed to have been carried by angels into

thirteenth century, where I saw it cased in Carrara marble, exquisitely sculptured with figures of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Ezekiel, and divers sacred subjects, principally designed and executed by Andrea Sansovino and Cavalliere della Porta.) On the altar in the subterranean chapel is inscribed in letters of gold, *Et Verbum caro factum est, et habitavit in nobis.*

One of the monks played on the well-toned organ. We seemed to recognise a favourite air in the Sonnambula. On the morning of our departure we went betimes to the convent to receive a palmer's staff, which had been promised to each of us. We found a large congregation assembled in the church, and engaged in chaunting the Litany of the Virgin. In an hour the service was over. We accompanied the Doctor to the workshop of Joseph, thence to the place where our Lord supped with his Apostles after his resurrection, and visited the synagogue where he preached to his own countrymen, and uttered those memorable words: "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house."

The population of Nazareth is principally Christian, the greater number being members of

the Greek communion; there are besides a few Maronites, and not more than a thousand Mahometans. I felt quite proud of my palm-branch, which was more than ten feet long, as I rode forth from the convent-gate staff in hand, or rather in rest, like a lance. I was subsequently obliged to cut mine into two parts in a slanting manner, so that they might be joined together again without difficulty.

Mount Tabor rises near the north-eastern extremity of the plain of Esdraelon, at a distance of an hour and a half from Nazareth, and stands in isolated grandeur about a thousand feet above the plain. The sides are mostly covered with shrubs and small trees, consisting chiefly of the holm and gall-oak. The day was not clear; but Little Hermon, Gilboa, Carmel, the mountains of Ammon, and the northern range of Esh-Shaghûr, as well as the mountains of Samaria to the south, lay before us in a complete panorama: while Endor, Naim, and the villages of the great plain, seemed scattered almost at our feet. The brow and summit of Tabor, which resembles a truncated cone, are covered with the remains of churches, and with the foundations of walls, and towers, and

buildings of every description. A long row of vaults appeared to be entire, where wolves, and, if report speaks true, leopards are wont to congregate. My informant stated that one had been killed there by a native of Nazareth the year before.

I rode down on the south-eastern side of the hill by one of the steepest road-descents that I ever met with; it was sufficient to try the nerve even of a Syrian horse. We saw two or three gazelles on the summit of the hill, but we had left our rifles with our servants, who had gone forward towards Tiberias. Near the foot of the eastern slope of Tabor, we found a large party of Arabs encamped. They proved to be Ghôrneys, half Bedouins, half Gipsies; they have the reputation of being strongly addicted to thieving. The long djerid, or lance, fifteen feet in length, was, as is the custom, planted in the ground before the door of the Sheikh's tent. Close by the river Kishon takes its rise. It soon swells into a brook of considerable size, and turns westward towards the Mediterranean Sea. After crossing the Kishon, a ride of an hour brought us to Khân et-Tujjah, a large enclosure on the main road from Egypt to Damascus, where are considerable remains of two castellated for-

tresses, built for the accommodation and protection of caravans.

An extensive plain or platform of raised ground about twelve miles in length lay before us. It was clothed with rich verdure, and nature had parcelled it out into plots and gardens, where the dark-blue lupin and the pale poppy of the desert disputed the ground with a thousand varieties of flowers of every colour and description. A steep descent brought us to the Lake of Gennesareth, a little above the town of Tubarîyeh. Our tents were pitched about a mile below the town, at Hummân Tubarîyeh, or Hammath, the ancient Emmaus, close to the hot sulphuric baths erected by Ibrahim Pasha during the time that he ruled over Syria. The situation of the lake is most lovely, surrounded on all sides with lofty hills except to the south, where the Jordan flows on in its own rich valley of the Ghôr. The wind was blowing fresh off the western shore when we arrived, and I was hesitating whether to bathe or not, when I caught sight of a duck on the crest of a wave at a distance of about thirty yards. The prize was soon mine, but I had a long swim for it, as the wind was fast taking it out of my reach. We had some good

rifle practice in duck-shooting on the lake. In this branch of the art C—— was very successful, and one after another turned over pierced by his unerring ball. P—— and I found plenty of employment for our double barrels, but the real difficulty was to get the ducks out of the water. In a walk of a couple of miles along the shores we shot five or six couple of water-fowl. Our four tents were for the last time pitched together, at not more than twenty yards from the lake, the shores of which are covered with pretty little shells, some of which I brought away as a memorial of the Sea of Tiberias. The waters are said to abound with fish; those which were brought to us were excellent. The town of Tiberias is regarded by the Jews as one of the holy places in Galilee, as Hebron and Jerusalem are in Judea. It is surrounded on three sides by walls and fortifications in a dilapidated state; towards the sea it is open. The walls were nearly demolished by the great earthquake of Jan. 1, 1837, when many of the houses were destroyed, and hundreds of Jews as well as Mahometans perished.

Sunday we rested at Hummân Tubariyeh in our encampment on the shores of the lake, close to the

hot springs. The messenger whom we despatched at seven o'clock to the governor's son or deputy, did not return till past one with the required letter for the sheikh of Shammakh, when he informed us that the delay arose from the absence of the secretary with the governor, and the incompetency of his deputy, who could neither read the epistle, nor indite a reply. At length a Jew was called in, who soon despatched the business.

It was past two o'clock when we started for Shammakh. Our road lay for nearly three miles along the shores to the lower end of the lake, where the Jordan issues in a rapid stream from its waters, like the arrowy Rhone from Lake Lemman at Geneva. About 300 yards from the lake are the remains of an old Roman bridge, immediately above which is a ford, that my companion had crossed a few weeks before on an excursion to Om Keis, the ancient Gadara. The river was now so swollen as to render the passage impracticable, or at all events unsafe without a guide. We had in consequence to retrace our steps, and arrived at length, not without much difficulty, over the roofs of subterranean houses and vaults full of pit-falls, while the grass and herbage reached as high as our

horses' heads, at a ferry close to the *embouchure* of the Jordan. Leaving our horses to await our return we crossed with Nicola in the ferry-boat, and on reaching the opposite shore, the channel of which is about 130 yards wide, walked along the southern extremity of the lake to Shammakh, a distance of less than a mile. Time was wearing on apace, so we inquired our way at once to the residence of the sheikh, who received us in a large smoky hovel, in which it was impossible to stand upright. The whole village, at least the male portion of it, was soon assembled and seated with due regard to rank and age around and in the centre of the apartment. After the usual preliminaries of pipes, the letter was produced and read by the secretary, after which Nicola propounded the matter, and a long discussion ensued, in the course of which we learnt that a Turkish Agha was collecting the *miri* or taxes eastward of the Jordan within two or three days journey of Tubariyeh. This was joyful intelligence to us, as we knew that our firmaans would at all events command the assistance of two or three soldiers upon our arrival at Tibni, where the officer of the Porte was said to have his head-quarters, and to be invested with

powers plenipotentiary. We were somewhat incredulous at first, for we knew that the part of Syria which we were about to visit, though nominally under the Porte, was rarely visited by Turkish troops, but when, after an hour's debate, (the shortest discussion I ever assisted in or listened to upon any question, however frivolous, in all my experience with the Arabs,) the sheikh promised to send two men with us on the morrow, who should conduct us as far as Tibni, beyond which his power did not extend, and one of those men proved to be a Turkish soldier despatched by the Agha to examine into the state of affairs, and collect the *miri*, at Shammakh, then indeed we began to felicitate ourselves on having selected the upper route to Gerash; and, despite the bad coffee which policy obliged us to swallow, and the smoke from a large fire of green wood in the midst of the chimney-less apartment, and from the bad tobacco around us, which nearly caused our eyes to start from their sockets, we sat out the discussion with exemplary patience and good-humour. Recrossing the Jordan we found our horses, which had been left in the charge of one of the ferrymen, and trusting to their sagacity to avoid the deep holes,

hidden even in the day-time by long grass and rank weeds, we marched slowly, for it was already dusk, towards the corner of the lake, and thence trotted on to our tents. The next morning, on examining the ground over which we had ridden in the dark, I felt an involuntary shudder pass through me : how we all escaped in safety, when there was no path to guide us or our horses, I can only account for by the wonderful instinct of the animals which we were riding.

The evening was lovely and serene ; the stars were reflected in the glassy mirror of the lake ; once more we strolled along its shores. For one short week had we journeyed together ; it seemed an age. A slight acquaintance had ripened into friendship : the same love of travel, the same desire of information, perhaps the same objects and feelings, had brought us together as companions ; *now* it seemed hard that we must part on the morrow. Our way lay across the Jordan towards Damascus ; C—— was homeward bound, by Safed and Sidon to Beyrout.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE HIEROMAX—PLAIN OF BASAN—MOUNTAINS OF GILEAD—PELLA—
MOHAMMED AGHA—AJLŪN—SOUF—GERASH—BENISUCKER ARABS—
ED-DURRAH—VILLAGES OF THE HAURAAN—BRIDAL PARTY—
UM WŪLAD.

STARTED at seven oclock. The rain began to fall heavily soon after, but it cleared up about nine, as we were engaged in unloading our mules preparatory to making them swim across the Jordan. Our baggage and the donkeys were conveyed in the ferry-boat; the horses and mules were turned loose into the river, and swam across against a strong side-stream that carried them considerably out of their course. The passage, including loading and unloading, occupied an hour and three quarters. As soon as the loads were re-adjusted we mounted and rode to Shammakh, where we arrived about eleven o'clock, having sent Nicola on in front to look after our escort. The two men

soon appeared, both well mounted, and armed with musket and sabre. A rich plain now lay before us, exceeding in luxuriance of vegetation and verdure any that I had before witnessed. It was partially cultivated with wheat, but the greater part was left to riot in its own richness and in the natural resources of the ground. The eastern side of the Jordan valley is so thinly peopled that a great portion of this fertile tract of country remains unreclaimed.

A ride of an hour and a half brought us to the ford of the river Hieromax (Sheriat el Mandhour), a very large tributary of the Jordan, into which it flows a few miles below the Lake of Gennesareth. At the spot where we forded it the river flows in two broad channels; the water reached our saddle-girths, and the stream was so strong that the donkeys could scarcely stem the current. The mukeriyeh held on to our horses' tails with one hand, and led their donkeys with the other. After a short delay we re-started in a direction east-by-south from the banks of the river, which reminded me strongly of the Jordan both in its woody banks and in its winding course, as it flows swiftly down to the Dead Sea near Jericho. What a change from the

desert appearance of the rocky hills of Judah and Samaria, where a few scattered olive-groves and the scanty herbage on the sides of the mountains, occasionally interspersed with the springing blade of wheat, and a garden or orchard in the centre of a village, alone relieved the eye in the midst of the great waste of Palestine. The whole country before us resembled a boundless park beautifully wooded, and surpassing even Egypt in the richness of its vegetation. The oak and the acanthus abounded in the plain, while the distant mountains of Ajlûn were clothed with forests. This was indeed the country for a people who possessed great flocks and much cattle.

“ Now the children of Reuben and the children of Gad had a very great multitude of cattle: and when they saw the land of Jazer, and the land of Gilead, that, behold, the place was a place for cattle;

“ The children of Gad and the children of Reuben came and spake unto Moses, and to Eleazar the priest, and unto the princes of the congregation, saying,

* * * * *

“ The country which the Lord smote before the

congregation of Israel, is a land for cattle, and thy servants have cattle :

“ Wherefore, said they, if we have found grace in thy sight, let this land be given unto thy servants for a possession, and bring us not over Jordan.”

* * * * *

“ And Moses gave unto them, even to the children of Gad, and to the children of Reuben, and unto half the tribe of Manasseh the son of Joseph, the kingdom of Sihon king of the Amorites, and the kingdom of Og king of Bashan, the land, with the cities thereof in the coasts, even the cities of the country round about.” *

As we drew near to the eastern range of the hills of Gilead, we met a party of ten or twelve Christians going up to Nazareth and Jerusalem to assist at the ceremonies of Easter. They all saluted us with “ Buon giorno, Signore.” Leaving Gadara (Om Keis) to our left, and the plain of Basan behind us, we turned up Wady el Arab, on an eminence to the right of which is the little village of Ma’ad, prettily perched on a rock overhanging the plain. It commands a fine view of the Ghôr, with

* Numb. xxxii.

the mountains of Nablous and Nazareth, the hills of Tabor, and of Safed, while far beyond the Sea of Tiberias were distinguishable the snow-clad peaks and sides of Hermon, (Djebel esh-Sheikh,) glistening in the distant rays of the sun.

The day turned out very fine, and the objects at a distance were clearly defined. We ascended the wady for an hour and a half, to the village of Tummoh, whence our road lay across the hills in a south-easterly direction, through even more enchanting scenery than that of the plain, to Et-Taïyibeh, where we halted at half-past four, after a march of seven hours and a half, exclusive of nearly two hours delay at the two rivers. At the entrance to the village is a ruined khân of small dimensions, divided into three apartments, the walls of which are of considerable size and thickness. Et-Taïyibeh is in a somewhat high and exposed situation. We encamped on a large plot of ground beyond the village, and while our tents were being pitched, some thirty or forty belladîn (villagers) came and seated themselves in a semi-circle around us, and informed themselves through our guides of our intended visit to Gerash and Bozrah. The good belladîn likewise brought

chickens at twenty piastres a couple for the Haw-agat, which were in the end purchased for four piastres and a half. An offer to purchase a lamb at a *reasonable* price was firmly, though good-humouredly declined.

What a joyful sight must this land have been to the Israelites, who had passed their whole lives in the Wilderness, and knew only by report the pleasant fields and rich pastures of the land of Egypt!

We were off betimes in the morning, changing our course to a west-south-westerly direction towards Tābathat Fākhīl, the ancient Pella, which we were bent upon visiting, notwithstanding the assurances of the people of Et-Taīyibeh, that we must fall into the hands of the Arabs, if we persisted in journeying southwards. We could not persuade any one to show us the way. Our road lay through the same rich country as before. The villages that we passed were few in number, and marked by adjacent fields of corn not yet in the ear, and were for the most part hidden from view by thickets of oak and arbutus, and the ubiquitous olive, until we suddenly found ourselves almost stepping upon the low roofs of the houses, which were not unfre-

quently on a level with the ground. For some hours we continued to ascend the sides of the hills, and descend again into narrow wadies and ravines, without coming to any plain or level tract of country. At the village of Jen'in, distant about two hours from Et-Taïyibeh, we endeavoured to procure a guide, but no one dared to accompany us. We were getting into a fix, for our Sham-makh guides knew nothing whatever about the country. Another hour brought us to the village of Summah, where with great difficulty we induced an enterprising ploughman to leave his plough-share, and show us the way. A steep descent over perfectly smooth rocks brought us to Wady Mūs, where we shot two or three brace of partridges, the young birds being already strong on the wing, and nearly full grown. A finer or more picturesque country can scarcely be imagined: from the higher points the grandeur of snow-clad Hermon, and the more distant parts of Lebanon, were visible in the extreme north; the isolated hill of Tabor stood forth in the plain of Esdraelon, flanked on either side by the great western ranges. Beneath us lay the rich valley of the Ghôr, with the waters of the Jordan sparkling in the rays of the midday sun.

Tabathat Fākhīl lies in a deep ravine through which a small stream of delicious water flows towards the Jordan, from the banks of which Pella was situated at a distance of not more than two miles, or as the parlance of the country has it, about half an hour. The ancient acropolis on the summit of a detached and precipitous rock faces the plain. To the south and east of it are the remains of two temples, entirely demolished, but the ground around is strewn with fragments of many columns, and broken capitals are scattered about in every direction. Two columns are standing in the centre of the rivulet; but the whole place is so overgrown with grass and luxuriant vegetation, that it is utterly impossible to form any correct idea of the plan and dimensions of the ancient structures. Several of the columns were of unusually large diameter, and probably supported the portico: others lying on the same spot were much smaller. We discovered two vast architraves which probably adorned the portals of the great temple. Pella was one of the cities of Decapolis, unrivalled in the beauty of its situation, which is probably one of the most picturesque spots that can be found in Syria. It nearly faces

Beit 1, or Scythopolis, the capital of Decapolis, and the only city in it which lay on the western side of the Jordan. I believe we are almost the only travellers who have visited the place since Irby and Mangles were there thirty-three years before. Leaving Tabathat Fākhîl we reascended the hill, and journeyed eastward for two hours, till we arrived at Kaphr er-Rîby, where we halted for the night, nine hours after leaving Et-Taïyibeh, from which it is distant less than three.

Each succeeding spot that we came to presented a grander prospect than the last. To quit Syria without crossing the Jordan and ascending the mountains of Gilead is to leave a work wholly unfinished; for Palestine appears to advantage only from the high range of Ajlûn, though it can bear no comparison in richness of soil and beauty of scenery with the land of Moab and of Ammon.

The following morning we started soon after sunrise, and took a north-easterly direction through wood and dale, while the scenery around us hourly grew bolder and more wild. After an hour's march we commenced a descent, which seemed almost impracticable for horses, much more so for

heavily laden mules. Still we progressed, though slowly. Around us grew oaks and ilexes and the smooth-barked arbutus, while our precipitous path lay over rough unhewn rocks, among which the boughs of trees, stretching entirely across our path, offered an impediment at nearly every step to the canteens and saddle-bags, which projected on either side of the mules. Both the horses and mules pass over smooth polished rocks and loose rolling stones, with a precipice on either side of them, without ever making a false step. We now ride down precipices with a feeling of perfect security, that a fortnight ago we should have shuddered to contemplate.

In three hours we arrived at Tibni, the headquarters of the Agha. Our good fortune still followed us. We found Mohammed Agha holding an extraordinary court of the sheikhs of the surrounding villages for the purpose of collecting the annual tribute of 1,100 purses of 500 piastres each, about £5,500, for the Sultan. Between two and three hundred men were collected in the great hall of the village and in the court in front, where the spirited Arab steeds and the gay dresses of their riders formed the prettiest sight imaginable

The Agha received us with the usual Turkish politeness, and seated us one on each side of him on the divan. After the usual compliments of ceremony we expressed our wish to visit Gerash es-Salt and Ammân, and to proceed across the Syrian desert to Bozrah, and thence by the Hauraan to Damascus. We next produced our firmaans, which had at once the desired effect. The Agha promised to arrange everything to our satisfaction, but it would be a difficult matter, he added, for us to go to Ammân, where the Adwaan and Beni-sucker Arabs were engaged in hostilities, but if we made a point of going there he offered to escort us with his troop. He expressed his intention of going at least one day's journey with us, and gave orders to prepare for an immediate start. The Sheikh of Souf, Youseeph, was now called in, and to his especial care and protection we and our property were commended. Tibni is finely situated on the summit of a hill, and commands an extensive view. From the village, Djebel esh-Sheikh (Hermon) bears N. 10° E., Mount Tabor N. 50° W. and Little Hermon, with the Sea of Tiberias intervening, N. 72° W.

In less than an hour we started with an im-

posing cavalcade of above seventy horsemen, preceded by two musicians on horseback, who played on tambourines at intervals during the march. Our road lay south-south-east through a succession of glens and glades and richly-wooded hills, beautiful beyond imagination, and presenting on every side to the eye landscapes worthy of the pencil of a Salvator Rosa. I could only compare the scenery by which we were surrounded to that which my mind had sometimes pictured to itself in its day-dreams, and longed to realize as a place of retirement and rest from cares and troubles, where the contemplation of nature clothed in her most lovely garb, and the intrinsic beauty and excellence of all around, might wean it from worldly thoughts and desires, and raise the soul to a serious meditation on the works and greatness and goodness of nature's God.

We met with the utmost civility from the Agha, who is an Egyptian by birth, and formerly served under Ibrahim Pasha, of whom, as well as of Mohammed Ali Pasha, he spoke in terms of great respect and admiration. Soon after midday we halted at the village of Yugier, where carpets were spread beneath the spreading boughs of a mag-

nificent ilex, larger even than the Sindiân at Hebron, while the luggage was sent forwards. We lunched, and afterwards smoked our tchi-boukes, while coffee was being roasted, ground, and prepared for us. My small stock of Arabic served me in good stead, for I was enabled to converse with the Agha without the assistance of a dragoman.

About an hour before sunset we reached the village of Ajlûn by a long wady bearing the same name, filled with prickly oaks, and arbutus, and occasional clumps of oleander on the side of the stream that flows in a south-south-westerly direction down the wady. Having declined the Agha's offer of a house, with its *lively* accompaniments, we left our servants to pitch the tents in a small enclosure of olive-trees outside the village, and started on foot to visit the Castle of Ajlûn, Callaher-Rubbat, situate on the summit of the mountain. A brisk walk of five-and-thirty minutes brought us to the castle, where we were rewarded by the finest view that it has ever been my fortune to behold. The evening was remarkably fine and clear. The prospect from the summit of the castle far exceeded in magnificence all we had

before seen. We stood on the highest point in the country. Again I wished I could have borrowed the pencil of an artist to give even a faint idea to distant friends of the exceeding beauty and grandeur of the surrounding scenery.

Below, on the southern side of the mountain was the broad and rich vale of Ajlûn, where the moon stayed in her course at the command of Joshua, while the children of Israel avenged themselves upon the Amorites.

* * * * *

“Then spake Joshua to 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 people had avenged themselves upon their enemies.*

* * * * *

The castle is a massive structure of extraordinary strength and solidity, built of great blocks of stone cut out of the rock it stands upon, which has been excavated at its immediate base to form

* Josh. x. 12, 13.

the deep moat that surrounds it. Abulfeda,* in the early part of the fourteenth century speaks of the Castle of Ajlûn as recently built by Azzodin, otherwise called Osamat, one of the principal Emirs of Sultan Salachoddin, to control the natives of Mount Aouf. All the exterior walls are standing, and, although in ruins within, from a little distance the castle bears every appearance of an occupied fortress.

I took the following bearings from the castle: Djebel esh-Sheikh (Hermon) N. 10° E.; Sea of Tiberias and Safed, N. 12° W.; Mount Tabor, N. 40° W.; Little Hermon, N. 50° W.; Mount Carmel, (northern extremity,) N. 58° W.; Mount Gilboa, N. 62° W.; highest point of the hills of Samaria above Jenîn, N. 80° W.; Jericho, and north-western extremity of the Dead Sea, S. 25° W.; highest point of the Mountains of Moab, S. 5° W.; Village of Ajlûn N. 72° E.

It was nearly dark when we returned to our tents. Mohammed Agha paid us a visit in the evening, and sending for Sheikh Youseeph, desired him to take as many men with him as he con-

* Abulfeda, *Tabula Syriæ*, p. 13.

sidered necessary, and to put himself entirely under our orders and to accompany us by whatever route we might choose to Damascus. We had dismissed our Shammakh escort at Tibni with a suitable present. The Agha told Yousseph that he was to receive 500 piastres instead of 2,000, which he demanded for his services, and that he would be answerable with his life for any injury that might befall us. He was going himself the following day to Kefrendjy, a village lying s. 45° w. from the castle, to collect the tribute, and offered to accompany us to Es-Salt, if we would await his return. The next thing to consider was the present which we ought to make to our Turkish friend for his valuable assistance. He had, it appeared, taken a great fancy to a gun which I carried with me, one in fact that I had purchased expressly for my travels; so, as I was approaching the termination of my tour, I did not hesitate to offer it to him, with a box of percussion-caps and some gunpowder. They were graciously received, and we parted the best friends in the world, the Agha not a little proud of his double-barrelled gun, while we were well pleased with our bargain,

out further difficulty through the country of the Hauraan.

Having promised to breakfast with our Turkish friend before our departure, we sent as soon as we were dressed to inquire whether Mohammed Agha was stirring; and, answer having been brought that he was on the point of rising, we gave him half an hour's law, and then proceeded to the house where he had taken up his quarters. We found him at his toilet surrounded by a *turba clientium* from the neighbouring villages, either bringing the *miri* or excuses for the non-payment of the same. We seated ourselves on a seggádeh at the upper end of the room, and enjoyed the luxury of a fragrant nargeeleh till the toilet was completed and breakfast announced. In the meantime the baggage had been sent on in the midst of a pelting rain. The repast consisted of grilled fowls, curds and cream, bread soaked in milk, and several plates of rice and pilaf. It was arranged that if we determined upon going to Es-Salt and Ammán the Agha should join us in three days at Souf, and accompany us to those places himself. After sipping our coffee he took us to see an old stone building, arched over, and enclosing a cistern

of very clear water, by way of showing us the antiquities of the place. There is rather a remarkable tower of considerable height in Ajlûn, which was once a post of great importance in the country, and used as an outpost of the castle.

Our road lay nearly due east through a lovely valley, the sides of which were clothed with oak, ilex, and arbutus, with here and there a clump of cedar-trees on the summit of the woody hills. The rain which had been falling in torrents ceased soon after our departure from Ajlûn, but a cold and blustering westerly wind prevailed during the day. In two hours and a half we reached Souf, and encamped in a deep hollow to the north of the village near a fountain of excellent water, where we were partially sheltered from the wind. After a hasty lunch we rode over to Gerash, with a strong escort of ten or twelve armed men, who gave us more trouble than the *dytchmaan* (enemies) would have done, if we had fallen in with the Adwaan, whom the men of Souf seemed to hold in great awe. On our way thither we passed a party in charge of the flocks belonging to the village, out of which they selected a sheep, and it was all we could do to prevent them stopping in order to kill, cook,

and eat it on the spot at our expense. After leaving Souf the valley widened considerably, and several large fields of corn occurred at intervals. A ride of an hour brought us to a wely overhanging the brow of a hill, and commanding a magnificent view of Gerash, which lies in a broad valley running at right angles to that of Souf, and terminating further south in a large plain. At this wely our guides stopped to repeat a short prayer, holding the palms of their hand upwards. As this was not repeated either in passing or repassing the following day we did not attach much weight to this show of piety. We returned the same afternoon by the Souf wady, with a clear stream flowing through it, the sides of which were planted with olive-trees, and the ground around sown with wheat. Here they went through the usual ceremonies of ablution, and the form of prayer common among Moslems. The fear of the Turkish governor alone kept them in tolerable order; and when the sheikh was not with them they proved to be a great set of rascals.

The view from the summit of the hill of the beautiful colonnade that runs through the entire length of the city, of the theatres and temples

scattered in all directions within the walls, far surpassed our most sanguine expectations. Gerasa was one of the cities of Decapolis: it is built on the banks of a broad and rapid stream running north and south through the valley, over which are two well-constructed bridges. Oleanders line the banks of the little river; I brought away a few seeds with me, and take no small pleasure in watching the growth of the healthy little plants, which seem worthy scions of the parent shrubs at Gerash. The principal part of the city lies on the western side of the stream, and has suffered less from the repeated shocks of earthquakes, which have laid low so many of its buildings, than the eastern portion of the city, which is built on lower and less rocky ground. The city is surrounded by a strong wall, formed of large blocks of stone, the entire circuit of which still remains and cannot be far short of two miles. There were, however, houses as well as temples beyond the walls, and possibly a second wall may have once existed, but I did not discover sufficient traces to warrant me in arriving at that conclusion.

Gerash stands upon three hills, two on the western and one on the eastern side of the river,

and contains the remains of eight temples, four on either side of the stream, two theatres, two large baths, a handsome fountain, and a large oval colonnade, formed of nearly a hundred columns, with Ionic capitals, (fifty are still standing,) within which the principal street passes. The High Street, as well as two other streets crossing it at right angles, is ornamented with a double row of fine handsome columns surmounted with Ionic and Corinthian capitals. Near the centre of the principal street is a semicircular building ornamented with rich and elaborate sculpture, and a handsome propylon facing the great temple, which stands on an elevated position above the street. It was probably reached by a long flight of steps, as the ascent is so steep that the back of this building, perhaps the forum or place of general assembly, is buried in the high ground above. The street on the opposite side led down to the river, and was ornamented by a quadruple row of columns, which have been converted by the erection of an apse into a Christian church. So at least we conjectured.

Beyond the walls on the south side of Gerash stands in isolated grandeur a triumphal arch, consisting of a great gateway and a smaller one on

either side, with square niches in the stone-work above. The centre archway is very light and elegant, and not a stone has been disturbed from its place: it is about thirty-six feet in height, and fifteen feet in span. On each side of the three gateways are pilasters in the frame of the arch, standing on Corinthian pedestals; but the capitals of all are gone. To the south-east of the arch are the remains of a small temple *extra muros*. To the west of the road leading to the city is a large stadium and a circus, the walls of which are of great size and thickness. Some few of the seats in the circus still remain, but the interior was sown with wheat by the Arabs, who take up their abode during the summer among the ruins of the place. The southern gate of Gerash has likewise three archways, one for chariots and horses, the other two for foot-passengers, but it is not remarkable either for beauty or elegance. To the left on entering are the remains of a temple in a very perfect state with the exception of the western wall, which has fallen in. In the northern and southern walls are four niches for statues. A little to the northwest of this temple is the great theatre, as far as my recollection goes, much the most per-

fect specimen of an ancient theatre that I ever beheld. It was probably capable of containing ten thousand spectators. Many of the rows of seats are now buried in rubbish, and the height was undoubtedly greater than at present, but according to a calculation that I made, the thirty rows of seats still remaining would hold 7,200 persons. The stage and proscenium have suffered most, though several marble columns with Corinthian capitals remain to bear testimony to the original beauty of the edifice. On either side between the stage and the seats is an entrance to a subterranean chamber, one of which is blocked up with large stones, and by the side of these are the principal entrances to the lower part of the theatre. Between the first and second tier of seats, (the upper having eighteen and the lower twelve rows above the present surface of the ground,) are four doors through which the spectators entered by means of flights of steps from without. The rows are divided into six compartments by steps leading up to the top of the theatre. The fountain lies about midway between the colonnade and the theatre. It is worthy of remark that the columns on the northern and southern sides of the city near the gates have

Ionic capitals, whereas all that lie between have Corinthian capitals, and are considerably larger than those at the two extremities. Some of the columns towards the centre of the principal street are forty feet high and five feet in diameter. About a hundred yards to the south of the forum, at the spot where the cross-roads meet, are four pedestals thirteen feet six inches square, and nine feet high, probably intended for equestrian statues. Beneath the propylon in the forum were scattered many fragments, which once formed part of the great architrave, and bore the dedicatory inscription of the temple. From the following portions of lines it appears that the temple was dedicated to the Sun by Antoninus.

ANTONEI	OKPAIO	KAIK	THPIA	ANOY	CAPOC
TOYKAITON	OYAAP	. . .	AIC	HAIOYKAI	.. OIKOYCO
TOYKAIHEPA	HKAIAYT	IAAT		YNPANTO	ΩN.HΠ..
TOTPOHYA	KAITOYC			YROMAIΩ	OEN
OPNHA	YΔHMO			PYΠAΠ	OYAP
	CTOA				
	TICT				

The great temple of the Sun, or Baal, stands on a considerable area, the whole of the sacred enclosure having been surrounded by a double (I thought I could trace a third) row of columns. The Portico is supported by a treble row of columns about forty-seven or forty-eight feet high, with most elaborately

sculptured Corinthian capitals, their circumference being fifteen feet six inches. Beneath the temple is a large chamber with a bath in the centre. The walls are entire, but the peristyle has been thrown down; and very few of the columns that surrounded the sacred enclosure are now standing: those in the portico are alone perfect.

About 150 yards to the north-east of the great temple is the second theatre, somewhat smaller than the other, and not so well preserved, for the whole of the proscenium is gone, and parts only of sixteen rows of seats remain. Between the two tiers on each side of the entrances are niches for statues, which must have added to the beauty of the building. Beyond are eight large columns with Corinthian capitals, five on the north and three on the south side of the cross street leading to the theatre, with a continuation of smaller columns, with Ionic capitals, twenty-one feet six inches high, as far as the principal street, at its junction with which are the remains of an arch once spanning the street. Crossing it at right angles, the road led to the magnificent baths on the western bank of the stream. The baths are the only great buildings besides the theatres and temples that remain in Gerash. Both

of them are surrounded by a double row of columns, and consist of several large and commodious apartments. That on the western bank is surmounted with a dome, which has not, strange to say, been in the least injured by the earthquakes that have levelled so great a portion of the city. Towards the northern gate the stone pavement is nearly perfect, and is only slightly encumbered with fallen columns. The marks of wheels are very plain on the stones. Westward of the northern gate is a large fortress built against the walls within the city. Some of the smaller columns consist of a single block of stone, but they are mostly formed of two or three, and a few of the larger ones of four pieces. The great earthquake in 1833 did great injury, but many of the columns lie whole and uninjured with their capitals and the architraves beyond, waiting only to be set up in their original positions. The only ground for wonder is that several hundred columns should have withstood so many rude shocks which have destroyed every house in Gerash.

There is nothing deserving of especial notice in

of the Necropolis on the eastern hills: there is another Necropolis on the hills to the west of Gerash: the two contain nearly 500 monoliths. For the most part they are arranged by threes in the form of a horseshoe, and are sculptured on the sides facing one another, but are plain on the outer side as well as in the interior of the sarcophagus. I noticed one on the western hill with a crosier sculptured upon it. There appear to have been three bridges over the stream; the one intended for chariots is in a good state of preservation. The place abounds with partridges, and we found time to kill two or three brace for dinner.

Few travellers have hitherto visited Gerash, owing to the insecurity of the neighbourhood, since the iron rule of Ibrahim Pasha has been exchanged for the mild sway and careless indolence of the Turks. So long as a military governor with an armed force remains in the country, the tour beyond the Jordan will be as safe and as easy of accomplishment as that from Jerusalem to Beyrout. For our own part we were exceedingly gratified and delighted by our visit to this magnificent city of columns. As we were pressed for time, we gave up all thoughts of Es-Salt, which lay

considerably out of our way, and determined to push on forthwith to Bozrah.

We quitted Souf the next day with Sheikh Yousseph and a single guide. After about two hours ride along the hills to the north of Gerash, through the same beautiful woody scenery that extends from Tabithat Fākhil throughout the whole range of Ajlûn, the forest gradually died away, and winding northward round the scantily clothed hills, we came upon the great plain that leads to the Syrian desert. Bozrah is distant only twelve hours from Souf across the desert, but as there is no water for the horses, we were obliged to make a considerable bend round its northern extremity. Mount Hermon lay in front of us, and to the north-east was the high range of the Dog Mountains and the lower hills of Arabia Felix. About three o'clock we came to a large encampment of the Benisucker Arabs, who had lately pitched their tents (about eighty in number) in different parts of the plain. Their flocks of sheep and goats, which we saw feeding in all directions, must have numbered several thousands. The camels were likewise very numerous. The Benisucker are the principal tribe of Bedouins in these parts. The

Selhaan are, it appears, only a branch of the same tribe. A war was at the time going on between them and the Adwaan, who dwell near the Jordan and come as far north as Ammân. Abdel Assees, who generally conducts travellers from Jerusalem across the Jordan, belongs to the latter tribe. Large flocks of cranes, with white bodies and black-tipped wings and tails, were feeding in the plain, but we did not succeed in shooting any of them.

A broad and verdant valley lay westward of the plain, but the drought of summer will soon convert it into an arid desert, and the springing blade will shortly be parched by the fierce glare of the eastern sun. After a march of ten hours we halted at Ed-Durrah, a ruined city of considerable size, through or rather below which flows a large tributary of the Hieromax. Within the village are the remains of a Turkish mosque, perhaps once a Christian church, built with columns and materials taken from an ancient temple. On the north-eastern corner is a high tower, or belfry, which commands a fine view of the plain towards Panyas and Hermon, and of the mountains of Auranitis. Part of the old town is inhabited by a

good-looking, fair-complexioned, and cheerful race of people, who declared they had never seen an Hawagee in their village before. The children danced and played before our tent, and I never beheld a happier or merrier group. We saw a hyæna to-day among the hills, but we could not get a shot at it. There are two or three inscriptions in the old mosque. One was

ΕΤΤΥ

ΧΕΤΗ ΠΟΛΙ

It may have been εὐτυχεστάτη πόλει, "To the most prosperous city." Another was written in Arabic, probably of no ancient date; and a third was inscribed in Greek characters, on a stone placed upside down between the top of a column and the architrave, in lieu of a capital. We could not decipher it. The villagers were very anxious that we should take a *kadoom*, an instrument with a hatchet on one side and a hammer on the other, into the mosque, to break the stones and discover some hidden treasure, in search of which they supposed we were travelling.

There was a slight hoar frost on the ground when we rose the following morning. On quitting

the village with Sheikh Yousseph, we passed three Bedouins mounted on horses, who annoyed our servants, and took from them a powder-flask and a pipe, which were recovered with some difficulty by the Sheikh. To the north of Ed-Durrah is a fine reservoir for water, now disused, and a large bath on its brink, the walls of which are standing. We crossed the stream by the old Roman bridge, which, with the exception of one parapet, is in a perfect state of preservation. It is built with four large arches, and is perfectly flat, without the slightest rise in the centre. The first village that we came to, El Hammâm, contained an unique specimen of a sepulchral chapel. In the interior were two arches, spanning the building from north to south, and dividing it into three compartments, each of which contained six shelves for sarcophagi. The interior was twenty-three feet long by fifteen broad. The doorway was square, and ornamented with a rich cornice, and two square Corinthian pilasters on either side. Two niches, with scalloped canopies, were supported by round Corinthian pilasters. The other walls were severally ornamented with four square Corinthian pilasters. A simple cornice ran round the chapel. To the

south of the village flows another tributary of the Hieromax, which we forded near the remains of a ruined bridge. Below the chapel was another chamber, similar to the former, and containing a like number of shelves for sarcophagi.

Our road now lay in a north-easterly direction to the village of Araar, where the baggage joined us. Over the whole of this plain, which is the commencement of the Hauraan, are scattered the remains of numerous Roman villages at a distance of a mile or two from one another. The houses and other edifices stand nearly perfect; many of them being two or three stories high, built of a dark stone, which makes them conspicuous objects at a distance. One of the largest that we passed was Hermy e' Gazelly; but, with the exception of a Greek inscription roughly cut on a large stone, and probably transferred from some temple to the modern walls, we saw nothing of particular interest. After leaving Hermy we changed our course towards the south-east, in the direction of Bozrah; for we had borne very far to the north, and made a circuit of these half-deserted villages, as Sheikh Yousseph afterwards informed us, to avoid falling in with a party of Bedouins, whom

he did not wish to meet through fear of compromising us, or rather, as we suspected, from a desire to visit the sheikhs of the different villages, in whose houses he always took up his abode at night. We halted, after a march of ten hours, at Um Wūlad, after passing through seven of these nearly deserted villages during the day, most of which were built on the banks of a running stream. We had found it necessary to insist upon turning southwards at Hermy, as Youseeph wished to conduct us still further north, with the intention, I strongly suspected, of avoiding Bozrah altogether. We arrived at Um Wūlad just in time to see a marriage procession, in which the boy-bridegroom was being conducted on horseback to the house of his bride. The principal persons of the village were engaged in the favourite amusement of throwing the djerid, or lance, on horseback. The men who preceded the marriage party stopped every twenty yards to dance round in a circle, at the same time nodding their heads and making the same grunting noise that I heard in the burial-ground at Hebron.

The inhabitants generally were good-humoured, well-behaved, and not at all troublesome; though

they seemed to take great pleasure in peeping into our tent and watching our proceedings. The children were somewhat alarmed at first, on seeing our European costume and hearing a strange language, but soon grew accustomed to both, and in no one instance did they annoy us in the slightest degree. Many of the girls were very good-looking, with fair complexions and dark eyes and hair; the latter was usually plaited and worn long, falling as low as the waist, beneath a red and yellow or slate-coloured handkerchief, which was thrown over the head and confined by a double cord of camels' hair, while the ends of the handkerchief floated upon their shoulders. The men likewise wore this head-dress instead of the turban.

In the neighbourhood of the inhabited villages the ground is cultivated, but there are no gardens, no trees or shrubs of any description; simply large tracts of land lightly turned over with the plough to a depth of three or four inches, and covered with large stones, among which wheat and barley were springing up with considerable vigour and luxuriance. In a few places the plough was still at work, drawn by two small oxen yoked with neck-collars, and occasionally by a single horse.

We saw nothing except corn growing in the fields. A few small hills rise in the plain, on the sides of which the villages are generally, though not always, situated. Immense flocks of the desert partridge (*guttar*) were wending southwards: they flew very high, but occasionally stopped to feed near the banks of a stream. Their plumage is exquisitely beautiful. The heat was very great during the day, and we again beheld the mirage, which converted villages into large fortresses, surrounded by moats full of water, with lakes and wooded islands appearing in the distance. A strong breeze blew from the south.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE HAURAAH.

BOZRAH—SUWEIDEH—KUNAWÂT—THE DRUSES OF THE HAURAAH—
SCHURBAH—ARRIVAL AT DAMASCUS.

NEXT morning, after three hours' ride, we arrived at Bozrah, and encamped beneath the walls of the old Saracenic castle. At El Arabah, one of the ruined villages of the plain, lying about midway between Um Wûlad and Bozrah, we found some thirty horsemen collected round a large pool, and awaiting the arrival of the Mussellem, the Turkish commander of the district, who had spent the previous night at Bozrah, in his tour through the province of the Hauraan. We met his baggage and personal attendants soon after, but did not see

the Mussellem himself, as he had taken a more circuitous route by an outlying village.

The entrance to Bozrah is over an old Roman bridge with three arches, the buttresses of which are in the shape of a wedge, (like those at Ed-Durrah,) to break the force of the current. There is a slight rise in the centre. The path continues over heaps of ruins, through which it was no easy task for our horses to pick their way. Here and there stand a few scattered columns, while the dark gloomy-looking houses, with their walls partly fallen in, wear an air of desolation, which pervades the extensive but ruined city. "For I have sworn by myself," saith the Lord, "that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse: and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes." "For the Lord hath a sacrifice in Bozrah, and a great slaughter in the land of Idumæa." And again: "I will send a fire upon Teman, which shall devour the palaces of Bozrah." To the very letter have the fearful denunciations of Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Amos, been fulfilled. The cities of the plain, like Bozrah itself, have become a desolation, a curse, a reproach, and a perpetual waste. The burden of

Edom pronounced by Jeremiah is the truest description that can be given of the present state of the country that has fallen under the curse:

“Edom shall be a desolation: every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah and the neighbour cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it. Behold, he shall come up from the swelling of the Jordan against the habitation of the strong: but I will suddenly make him run away from her: and who is a chosen man, that I may appoint over her? for who is like me? and who will appoint me the time? and who is that shepherd that will stand before me? Therefore hear the counsel of the Lord, that he hath taken against Edom; and his purposes, that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out: surely he shall make their habitation desolate with them. The earth is moved at the noise of their fall, at the cry the noise thereof was heard in the Red Sea. Behold, he shall come up and fly as the eagle, and spread his wings over Bozrah: and at that day shall the

heart of the mighty men of Edom be as the heart of a woman in her pangs."*

Bozrah was the northern capital of Arabia Provincia under the Romans, and was the first town in Syria that yielded to the arms of the Caliphs. It is likewise celebrated in the history of the Crusades,† as having withstood the Christian army under Baldwin the Third, of Jerusalem. I took a livelier interest in the ruins of Bozrah, and felt greater pleasure in finding myself within the almost deserted town, than I experienced at any other place, ancient or modern, which I visited during my tour. A villager brought me a small cornelian, having an eagle with extended wings engraved upon it; the stone was well cut, and I believe it to be an antique. Set in a ring it is to me at least an interesting memorial of Bozrah during the palmy days of Roman sway in the land of Edom.

On our way to the castle through the town we passed six Corinthian columns, four of which are very lofty and evidently belonged to a temple—having most probably formed part of the portico.,

* Jer. xlix. 17—22.

† See note B at the end of the volume.

as a greater distance is left between the two middle columns than between the others, but not sufficient for the insertion of a fifth, so that there can be little doubt this space was intended for the doorway. The other two are smaller and stand on lower ground, inclining towards the others at an angle of forty-five degrees, and apparently belonged to another building. They cannot measure less than forty-five feet from the base to the top of the capitals, but the diameter is unusually small in proportion to their height. They are surmounted by a richly sculptured entablature.

The greater part of the place is wholly deserted. On the south-eastern side of Bozrah the present inhabitants have taken up their abode in caves and underground dwellings, beneath the ruined houses, not one of which has been repaired, although abundance of materials lie scattered around. The mosques are filled with rubbish, and not a hand has been raised to remove the curse which hangs over the city. The belladîn number thirty families, comprising about two hundred and thirty souls. The Sheikh el Bellad inhabits one of these caves, which he wished to place at our disposal; the offer, however, was not a tempting one. The

force of habit and their natural indolence are the apparent causes of the indifference of these sons of the soil to their own comforts, while they look with the greatest unconcern upon the ruined palaces of Bozrah.

The castle is situated to the south of the town, outside of the walls. It is a magnificent specimen of Saracenic architecture, built round an immense Roman theatre, which occupies the entire centre of the castle, the upper seats being nearly on a level with the summit of the walls, while the whole of the lower tier has been cut away, and immense vaults, resembling powder magazines, have been formed in their place with three great arches supported on massive pillars. Above the top seats is a Doric colonnade, once consisting of about eighty columns, a few of which still remain. The side wings, or parascenia, are ornamented with scalloped niches and composite pilasters, while the outer casing of the centre wall, or scena, has been destroyed. The castle itself is of vast size and of extraordinary strength and solidity. Some of the chambers are now used as granaries. A bridge extends across the moat, and the entrance to the castle is defended by a ponderous gate covered

with thick iron plates and fully capable of withstanding an Arab siege. In the outer walls are inserted enormous blocks of white marble, bearing Turkish and Arabic inscriptions.

On the western side of the town is a triumphal arch of moderate pretensions, and rather mean in appearance. Near to it is a fine stadium, both longer and broader than that of Gerash. I here found an altar with the following inscription :—

ANTONIAE FORTUNATAE ANTONIUS EVICESCONIVGI PIISSIMAE

“Antoniae Fortunatae Antonius e Vicesimâ (sc.*
legione) Conjugi Piissimæ.”

We proceeded to visit three ruined churches, and a once handsome mosque, which our guide informed us had been blessed by Mahomet himself. The great reservoir to the south of the town is, next to the castle, by far the most perfect of the ancient remains of Bozrah. It is about forty feet deep, and five hundred and sixty feet in length by

* This suggestion was made by the restorer of the Greek fragment in page 275.

four hundred broad. A second just beyond the walls is scarcely of inferior dimensions. They are built of solid masonry, and the walls that surround them are wide enough to allow of a chariot being driven upon them.

We met with great civility and attention from the belladîn, while the sheikh's son accompanied us in our rambles through the place, and proved himself a very useful and communicative guide. One peculiarity I noticed in Bozrah, which, as I afterwards discovered, obtains throughout the ancient towns of the Hauraan. All the houses were furnished with stone doors, which moved in sockets of the same material, without the assistance of either lead or iron.

The following inscription was rudely engraved upon a fractured block of stone, which was lying at some distance from any building or column. Many of the letters were wholly illegible, while others were exceedingly doubtful.

ΤΙΘΕΙΑΤΕΚΦΙΑΟΤΙΜΙ ΙΟΡΘΟΔΟΔ
ΔΕΩΝΙΟΥΣΤΙΝΙΑΝΟΥΚΑΙΘΕΟΔΩΡΑΚΩΚΟΔ
ΗΡΙΟΟΙΚΟΚΤΟΥΑΓΙΟΥΚΑΙΘΑΟΦΟΡΟΥΙΩΒ
ΕΠΙΤΟΥΒΟΚΙΩΤΙΚΑΙΛΑΤΙΩΤΑΤΟΥΑΡ

I am indebted to the kindness of a distinguished scholar for the following clever and very plau-

sible suggestions with respect to this interesting fragment.

[ΠΡΟΝΟΙΑΙ] ΤΗ *ΘΕΙΑ ΕΚ ΦΙΛΟΤΙΜΙΑΣ ΚΑΙ ΟΡΘΟΔΟΞΙΑΣ
[ΒΑΣΙ]ΛΕΩΝ ΙΟΥΣΤΙΝΙΑΝΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΑΣ ΩΚΟΔ[ΟΜΗΘΗ]
[ΟΥΤΟΣ ΕΥΚΤ]ΗΡΙΟΣ ΟΙΚΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΓΙΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΑΘΛΟΦΟΡΟΥ ΙΩΒ
ΕΠΙ ΤΟΥ ΟΣΙΩΤΑ[ΤΟΥ] ΚΑΙ ΑΓΙΩΤΑΤΟΥ ΑΡ[ΧΙΕΡΕΩΣ]†

The Sheikh el Bellad entertained Yousseph in his house, and those important personages became great friends after an unusually warm dispute during the morning, about the right of the Sheikh of Souf to conduct travellers beyond Bozrah, the former stoutly maintaining that we ought to be handed over to his care. As Yousseph's arguments only served to prolong the debate, we informed the sheikh that we had been entrusted by virtue of our firmans to the safe keeping of Sheikh Yousseph by an officer of the Porte, and that the former was conducting us through the Hauraan, not as Sheikh of Souf, but as servant of the Sultan. This method of reasoning appeared to have some weight with the men of Bozrah, but they informed Yousseph, that he must for the future leave tra-

* De iota ascribendo parum solliciti erant hujus ævi scriptores; et η simili sono efferebant.

† Vel ΑΡ[ΧΙΕΠΙΣΚΟΠΟΥ], vel ΑΡ[ΧΙΜΑΝΔΡΙΤΟΥ]

vellers at Bozrah to be conducted by them to Esh-Sham (Damascus).

As we rode forth from among the ruins, which surrounded us on every side, I could not refrain from lamenting over the utter desolation of this once mighty city. The day of vengeance is already past. "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save."

About five hours eastward of Bozrah stands the fortress of Sulchaed, built by the brother of the Emir who erected the Castle of Ajlûn. This, as well as Meli Hassarah, two or three hours further distant, we had hoped to have visited; but Sheikh Youseeph absolutely declined accompanying us through fear, as he alleged, of the great Arab bugbear, the *dytchmaan*.

Passing the remains of six ruined towns, in one of which we noticed a temple with five Corinthian columns still erect, we rode to Suweideh, the residence of the chief of the Druses in this part of the Hauraan. Burckhardt states that there are more than two hundred of these towns in ruins, at a

quarter or half an hour's distance from each other, on the eastern declivity of Djebel Hauraan. Under the Lower Empire Auranitis was the favourite and most fertile province in the power of the Romans. At the present day the labour of the plough is very slight, and is rewarded an hundredfold by abundant harvests. The whole surface of the ground is covered with large stones, which seem to offer little impediment either to the labourer or to the crops. The numerous streams that flow through the plain render irrigation particularly easy, and are no less useful in carrying off the water, so that artificial draining is scarcely needed. There are considerable remains of a large temple at Suweideh, but the columns bespeak the decline of architecture in the time of the Lower Empire: the capitals are richly decorated; above are representations of a human face, and the friezes are of the most elaborate description, sculptured with fruit and flowers. On the northern side of the stream, which flows past the town, stands a small but elegant sepulchral chapel, ornamented with six pilasters on each side, forming compartments, in the centre one of which is sculptured a helmet, in those on either side a coat of mail, and at the

extremities a round shield with a boss in the centre.

We had gradually been approaching the range of Djebel Hauraan. After leaving Suweideh we began to ascend the hills in a north-easterly direction, and soon found ourselves amid rocks and little wadies filled with the prickly oak. We reached Kunawât in two hours from Suweideh, and encamped in an enchanting spot close to the remains of a beautiful Corinthian temple, erected on a raised platform at a little distance from the town. Seven columns are still standing, and have a romantic appearance, as they tower above the oak forest, which monopolises this part of the hill country. They rest upon high pedestals, each of which bears a Greek inscription, now wholly illegible. In a vault beneath the temple is a curious slab with two human heads, (one a full, and the other a side face,) sculptured upon it.

The inhabitants of Kunawât (the ancient Kenath and Roman Kanatha) are Druses: we have left the Moslems behind us at Bozrah. The Sheikh of the village came to pay us a visit, and conducted us over the ruins of the ancient town situate above the modern village. They are the finest

and most perfect remains of any that we have seen in the country. The principal buildings consist of a spacious temple, with five lofty and well-proportioned columns standing in the portico, surrounded by high walls; and a magnificent palace, beautified with an hypæthral court in front, round which ran a double row of columns. A small vaulted chapel is here shown, which is supposed to be the tomb of Neby Eyoub—the prophet Job. To the south of the paved area are small gardens with a broad terrace-walk immediately below the walls of the temple. The chambers of the palace are spacious, and the upper story is lighted by windows furnished with stone shutters. The roof is supported upon elegant Corinthian and composite columns. Among the débris I observed the fragments of some twisted columns. An exceedingly high wall surrounds the edifice, which bears the name of Deir Eyoub, the Convent of Job.

A mountain torrent falling from rock to rock flows round the northern and eastern sides of the town, and turns a mill, which is the only work of art that the modern inhabitants have fashioned. They appear to be proportionably proud of so valuable a piece of machinery. The temple and

palace are built upon the highest part of the town : the hill on which Kunawât stands commands a fine view of the immense plain of the Hauraan, of Mount Hermon, and of the whole Lebanon range to the north and north-west ; while Djebel Kelb, or Hauraan, the highest point of the mountains of Arabia Felix, towers above the surrounding hills southwards in the direction of Bozrah. Neither labour nor expense appear to have been spared in the construction of the beautiful monuments of Kanatha by the indefatigable conquerors of the world.

Following the course of the torrent for a hundred yards, we discovered on the opposite (eastern) bank a charming little theatre, excavated in the rock, and capable of holding 250 or 300 spectators. Not far from this is a small temple of very elegant proportions. On the hill above the town we visited several sepulchral chapels containing shelves for sarcophagi : they were remarkable only for their extreme solidity and the absence of all ornament.

On our return the Sheikh dined with us, and in the evening we received the Druse Priest and four of the principal men of the place in our tent. Mahmoud had a severe task in filling pipes and

making coffee, until our guests departed. They appeared to be a remarkably intelligent race, and were very desirous of learning the state of European politics. They professed to regard the English as their allies, the French and Russians as their enemies. They anxiously look forward to a change in the government of the country, in the hope of freeing themselves from their allegiance to the Porte. We were exceedingly pleased with the gentlemanly manners and demeanour of our Druse guests.

Now mark the sequel. Before our departure I made the Sheikh a present of a canister of English gunpowder, which is highly prized in the East, and gave a few silver coins to his little boy. Youseeph, who in other respects had proved himself a faithful and efficient guide, has never forgiven the Agha for cutting down his demand from two thousand to five hundred piastres. At his instigation the Sheikh el Bellad put forward a claim the next morning for *backsheesh*, in return for the privilege of visiting the place. The very mention of that odious word suffices to raise the cupidity of every man and child throughout the East, and to convert the polite and attentive host

into an arrant beggar. True it is, "where all are rogues, and cheating and imposition are reckoned honourable and fair, one must not expect too much." Still, as we had shown unusual civility to the Sheikh in asking him to dine with us, and in receiving a party from his village, this attempt to extort money from us for passing through Kunawât seemed far more surprising and ungracious here than at Bozrah; and we were grieved to see the change from the easy and graceful manners of the Druse Sheikh the previous evening to the coarse language and disgusting threats which he made use of on our refusing to comply with his demands the next morning. Our servants, as usual, had paid more than double their full value for the chickens and other provisions which were brought to us from the village; and, although occasional squabbles will arise in the attempt to impose upon the Haw-agat, yet such a display of effrontery and impotent rage we had never before witnessed.

Our servants have a great share in spoiling these people. They are constantly boasting of the enormous sums of money which this or that traveller paid to visit such and such a place. One of them has informed Youseeph that a tra-

veller last year came into the country with a great many bags full of gold, but that he took nearly all of them away with him. This story was believed at Souf by the villagers, who consequently demanded five or six times their real value for fowls and charcoal, and in short for every thing that we required; and it was not till they saw that the contents of our canteens, with the game that we killed, rendered us wholly independent of them, that they came to their senses and lowered their prices. I overheard them say, that before we left Souf we must purchase all that we required for whatever sum they might choose to demand. I need not add that they were marvelously disappointed. As a general rule, I found that I (a mere Hawagee—*marchand*—as the people of the East are pleased to call all Franks) could purchase sheep and chickens in the villages for a third less than an experienced dragoman: not that our servants deliberately appropriated part of the money themselves, but they had no sort of regard for our purses, as my slight knowledge of Arabic enabled me to discover, while listening to their bargains with the natives.

We passed through the deserted village of

Suleim, and winding round the foot of a lofty conical hill called Tel Abu Tentûr, after a ride of three hours came to Schurbah, another Druse town, surpassing in size and magnificence both Gerash and Bozrah. Entering by the southern gate, which has three portals, we rode along the principal street, nearly half a mile in length, and about forty feet in breadth, paved throughout with large flat stones, the greater part being quite perfect, and as unincumbered as if Roman chariots were still in the habit of passing through the city. As at Gerash the four principal streets intersect at right angles, albeit these are both longer and broader; here too are four large pedestals for equestrian statues at the junction of the streets, one of which has been thrown down; the other three are perfect and uninjured. There are four great gates in the city walls, the circuit of which remains entire, though part of the masonry has fallen. Unlike Gerash, however, many houses and public buildings are standing, while the stone doors and windows to this day move in their sockets. These old Roman houses form the habitations of the Druses of the Hauraan, who dwell peaceably in cities once renowned for beauty and

splendour, now mere monuments of the instability of mighty empires.

On our way to the western gate, we examined seven Corinthian columns, the remnants of the portico and colonnade of a ruined temple—a theatre of great size and magnificence, larger than either of those at Gerash and Bozrah—an enormous bath supplied with water by an aqueduct, which crosses the valley to the eastern hills about half a mile from the town—a large forum, and many public as well as private edifices, two stories high, which constitute the main features of the place. The side streets are all paved; and the general appearance of the town is like that of Pompeii, but on a far grander scale.

To the west of Schurbah are three conical hills, rising abruptly out of the plain; the centre one appears to have been thrown up by some volcanic agency. After crossing the ravine to the north of the town, the ground over which we passed was covered for about two miles with a small sparkling mineral, resembling coal-dust.

After eleven hours' march, we halted for the night on the banks of a stream running north and south through the plain, near the direct caravan

road between Mecca and Damascus. Every mile or two along the western bank we passed the remains of an ancient village, entirely deserted, and containing nothing of interest to the traveller. Our tents were pitched at a short distance from one of them, much to the distaste of Youseeph, who pretended to feel great alarm at the apparition of two Bedouin women, who came to fetch water for their camp, which proved to be in the vicinity.

About noon the next day, March 29, we reached the plain of Damascus by a steep descent, and an hour afterwards crossed the Abana, a rapid stream, but not more than thirty feet broad; and riding through a rich pasture country, watered by a thousand little streams, drawn off from the rivers of Damascus, came to the first inhabited village we had seen since the middle of the previous day. Near the foot of the mountains to the south of Damascus, we encountered two large wolves, who quietly trotted past us within fifty yards of our horses' heads, and on our giving chase, retreated quickly to the side of the hills, where they stopped and looked at us. I had left my rifle with Mahmoud, who, as usual, brought up the rear. In an hour and a half we came to a large mud village;

which may be regarded as one of the outworks of Damascus. From this point to the gate of the city is a constant succession of orchards and olive-groves; the fruit-trees were beginning to burst into leaf, but we were full a fortnight too soon to behold them in perfection.

Passing the supposed place of St. Paul's vision, and the spot where he was let down from the walls in a basket, we entered the eastern gate leading to the Frank quarter, where we established ourselves in the *Hotel de Palmyre*, an hour before sunset.

"The burden of Damascus" still remains to be accomplished. "Behold Damascus is taken away from being a city, and it shall be a ruinous heap." Of all the cities, doomed to destruction in the prophecies of Scripture, this alone continues great and thriving. A vast emporium of commerce, the central point for nearly all the caravans in the East, and the most important military station in Syria, it maintains its rank and position at the present day. The bazaars are second only to those of Stamboul in size and splendour.

On the first of April my companion started on his return to Jerusalem, where he arrived on

Easter-eve. I remained three days at Damascus, in the hope of accomplishing a visit to Palmyra. I was, however, doomed to disappointment, as I found no one willing to undertake the expedition, and I felt disinclined to make another solitary journey in the desert; still I cannot but regret not having seen the famous ruins of Tadmor. Nevertheless, I was not left companionless. Two gentlemen who had spent the winter on the Nile arrived at Damascus on the 31st of March, direct from Beyrout, and with them I continued my tour across the Lebanon, to Baalbeck and Beyrout.

CHAPTER XX.

DAMASCUS—ARAB GRATITUDE—PHARPHAR—ROMAN ROAD—ANTI-LE-
BANON—BAALBECK—ZACKHLE—ROAD TO TRIPOLI—BEYROUT—
LADY HESTER STANHOPE—DJOÛN—DEIR EL KAMMOR—CONCLUSION.

As the traveller passes through the narrow winding streets of Damascus, the opinion which he forms of the habitations around him is perforce an unfavourable one. Their exterior presents as uninviting an appearance as the deserted villages of the Hauraan. The houses are for the most part built of mud, with low narrow doors, and small crevices in place of windows, which admit a dubious light. Hence his surprise is the greater, when after passing through the mean portal, and along a dark corridor, he suddenly finds himself in a spacious court ornamented with marble fountains, and planted with spreading trees, beneath the shade of which the owner is enjoying his tchibouke after the fatigue of the day. The

court is paved with black and white marble, cut in lozenge shape. The walls are covered with vines, supported on trellises; while a flight of steps leads to the large and handsome saloons, likewise paved with marble, with a bubbling fountain in the midst, and a vaulted roof supported on wooden beams, richly gilt and painted in arabesque fashion. The divans are covered with magnificent Persian tapestry, cushions of the most luxurious description invite repose, and a look of ease and comfort reigns through the apartment.

The residence of our excellent and hospitable Consul, Mr. Wood, far surpasses the description I have here given of the better class of houses in Damascus. The Consul has himself been a great and enterprising traveller: he had made the tour of the Hauraan some years before, and congratulated us on having accomplished our journey with so much ease, and at the same time so successfully. He is ever ready to lend his aid to travellers, and to smooth the way for them in their wanderings through this interesting country.

One act of courtesy on the part of Mr. Wood I trust I may be pardoned for mentioning. The Sheikh of Djebel Ajlûn, a relative I believe of

Youseeph, had been for some months confined at Damascus on a charge of having made a false return of the number of able-bodied men in his village. At our request, Mr. Wood promised to intercede in his behalf with the Pasha, and in a day or two the man was liberated. When my companion returned to Souf, on his way to Jerusalem, the gratitude of the belladîn knew no bounds. A horse of pure Arab blood was brought out, and paraded before the tent: it was a beautiful creature, and the Hawagee was requested to accept it as a present. It was a long time before they could be persuaded to take a denial, and send the horse back to its stable. They further offered to conduct him with their whole force wherever he might choose to go, and promised to secure for him and his friends a free access to all places throughout their country for ever.

Two Englishmen were robbed in the mountains of the Hauraan the preceding year; but as they had started from Damascus with little or no baggage, their loss was not a severe one. We visited a Jew's house where the same travellers had lodged in Damascus. It is one of the handsomest in that quarter. The rooms are spacious

and lofty ; a marble fountain occupies the centre of the principal apartment ; the floor is of marble, and the panels round the walls are highly and tastefully ornamented. Preparations were being made for Easter, and the richest silks and tapestry displayed on the divans at the upper end of the room.

The cavalry barracks, which were built by Ibrahim Pasha, consist of two immense courts surrounded by stables and apartments for the soldiers. Many of the horses appeared fine spirited animals ; about half were bays, and the other half greys. In the centre of the great bazaar, close to the cross roads, are the remains of a large Corinthian temple ; the shafts of the columns are partly visible in the bazaar. Mounting by a narrow flight of steps to the roof of a house, some fifty yards from the great mosque, we found six high columns, three on either side of a richly-decorated arch, which formed part of the temple. About a third of the arch still remains.

The luxury of a Turkish bath after our fatiguing journey can scarcely be imagined. Stiff and weary, I entered the *hummâm* (baths), and delivered myself over to the hands of the *moockey-*

isâlees (bathing attendant), who after cracking all my joints, wringing my body, first one way, and then the other, kneading my flesh, and covering me from head to foot with soap-suds, left me to plunge into the *mughtus*, or tank of scalding water, (the heat of the *harârah*, or inner chamber, averaging 120° Fahrenheit;) whence I returned to the first apartment, where I threw myself upon the *leewân* (couch), and lay for some time incapable of the slightest exertion, while Mahmoud stood by and supplied me with sherbet, cooled with snow, and a delicious nargeeleh filled with fragrant tumbaky. When I left the bath, the sense of fatigue was entirely gone, my joints were supple, and, in short, I was thoroughly refreshed and renovated. So great a change had two short hours wrought in my entire system, that I anxiously looked forward to the moment when I should again be in the saddle, climbing the sides of Lebanon, or riding across the plain to Baalbeck.

The view of the city from the hills at the foot of Anti-Lebanon is surprisingly grand.* Surrounded by groves of olives, sycamores, and

* See note C at the end of the volume.

poplars, with extensive fruit-gardens on every side, where the spreading vine interlaces its tendrils with the branches of the apricot and the fig-tree, lies extended

Fair Damascus, on the fertile banks
Of Abbana and Pharphar, lucid streams.

The citadel, the barracks, the Seraskier Serai, and all the principal mosques are situated on the eastern side of the city, forming a great square; while a long and broad strip of ground covered with low flat-roofed houses, and bristling with a thousand minarets, flanked on either side by a forest of trees of every form and variety, extends along the plain in the far west, and completes the picture of Damascus.

Our last view of the walled city was from a wely, or Sheikh's tomb, high among the hills on the road to Beyrout, near which Mahomet is said to have stopped and contemplated the beautiful scene in the plain below, and then, turning his horse's head, declared that he would go no further, after having seen Paradise upon earth.

almost as difficult as those in Palestine, and then dips into a verdant valley in the heart of the bleak and barren hills, which form the out-works of Anti-Lebanon. Through it flows the Barráda, (Pharphar,) a furious torrent, along the banks of which is a narrow strip of cultivated ground lined with white poplars, and a few scattered villages perched aloft in the ravine. Here and there the rocks stretch across the valley, and over them the water falls with the noise of thunder into the deep basin beneath. One of these cascades was more than forty feet in height. Before quitting this valley we came to a wild spot surrounded on every side by high rocky crags, which the Romans had selected for the site of a temple. In the rocks on the northern side of the Barráda are several grottoes which we made an ineffectual attempt to reach. Crossing the stream by an old Roman bridge we climbed the rocks, and came to an immense excavation, apparently intended for a road. It stopped suddenly above the torrent. Below are the remains of an aqueduct cut in the rock, which is a coarse kind of marble. The following inscription (for the Roman emperors

took good care to chronicle the mighty works of their hands) fixes the date about A.D. 170:—

IMPCÆSMAVRELANTONINVS
AVGARMENIACVSET
IMPCÆSAVRELVERVSAVGAR
MENIACVSVIAMFLVMINI[S]
VIABRVPTAM
MONTERESTITVER[VNT]
TVIVERVMIECPRRPRCVNTPER
SYRETAMICVMSVVM
IMPENDIISARMEN[I]ORVM

Some of the letters were nearly illegible, and others have been entirely destroyed, but sufficient remains to inform us that the Armenians, after being defeated by the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, and his colleague Lucius Verus, (here called Aurelius Verus,) were constrained to repair this road, which had been broken off from the hill by the force of the torrent, at their own cost.

We encamped, after a ride of seven hours, near the village of Zebdania, at the northern extremity of a fertile plain, with lofty snow-clad mountains towering on either side. The horses and mules, which have come with me from Jerusalem, are far superior to those which my fellow-travellers

brought from Beyrout. The next day, after a fatiguing ride among the snow-drifts on Anti-Lebanon, and through the great plain of Becaah, we arrived at Baalbeck, and pitched our tents on the green sward within the enclosure of the ruins to the east of the great temple. The distance from Damascus is about sixteen hours.

The platform upon which the temples of Baalbeck, the ancient Heliopolis, stand, is composed of enormous blocks of granite, some of which are from fifty to sixty feet long, and about fifteen or sixteen feet high. Its entire length is about a thousand paces, and the breadth nearly two hundred and fifty. High above all, tower the six gigantic columns of the great temple,* surmounted with Corinthian capitals, and bearing a rich entablature and an elaborately sculptured cornice. They are about sixty feet in height, and their diameter at the centre measures seven feet six inches. These columns stand on an elevated platform, and are the sole remains of the magnificent

* Popular tradition states that the temple of Baalbeck was built by Solomon for the Queen of Sheba, or according to another version, for the reception of his Egyptian bride, the daughter of Pharaoh.

temple dedicated to the gods of Heliopolis, on either side of which were originally sixteen or seventeen columns of similar dimensions. The pedestals of ten are entire on the south-eastern side, and parts or traces of sixteen are visible to the north-west. The temple itself was probably never completed, but, such as it is, it bears the appearance of having been one of the finest and most remarkable monuments of antiquity.

To the south-east of the great colonnade, on a lower platform, is the beautiful peripteral temple of Baal, or the Sun, with nine out of fourteen columns standing on the northern and four on the southern side. They are fifty-seven feet high and six feet in diameter. They were connected towards the west by eight columns, five of which are broken and lie in fragments on the ground. The peristyle is unique in beauty and elegance. The *lacunaria*, arching across from the walls of the temple to the architraves of the columns, are of the most elaborate design, consisting of a species of intricate net-work, in the centre of which are large hollows or lozenges for busts, surrounded by four smaller lozenges of a similar description. Four fluted columns of the vestibule remain: it

consisted of two rows of columns, all of which were fluted, excepting those at the extreme ends on either side, which form a part of the peristyle. A huge dead wall has been cruelly built by the Saracens immediately in front of the great portal, a *chef d'œuvre* of Corinthian architecture. A hole in the wall enabled us to creep in and admire the interior of the edifice. The portal consists of nine immense blocks of marble, six of which form the sides and three the arch; the key-stone has slipped from its place, and threatens to fall to the ground. The ornaments are of the richest description, and their execution admirable. On the under side of the key-stone a fine eagle is sculptured holding a caduceus in his talons, and streaming ribands in his beak; to the left is a winged genius with a wreath of leaves and fruit in his hands; the subject on the right side has fallen with the lower part of the stone. On the side walls of the cella are six fluted pilasters, with an arch between each, and ornamental niches above. There has been a double row of columns within the cella; fragments of the frieze and cornice lie scattered around. Lord Lindsay states that they were added by Theodosius, when he converted this

temple into a church, and were visible at the commencement of the last century. A great portion of the ground in front of the Temple of Baal has been occupied by a strong Saracenic fortress, the lower parts of which are constructed with enormous blocks of stone more than fifty feet long, probably intended for the completion of the great temple. Within the fortress are the remains of a large palace, the walls of which are partly standing, though shorn of their fair proportions and ornaments. About two hundred yards to the south-east of the Temple of the Sun is a small circular Corinthian temple of elegant design and great architectural beauty.

In the marble quarries in the vicinity, from which the stone has been excavated for the construction of the temples, is an enormous block partly detached from its bed. It measures seventy-five feet in length; the sides are eighteen feet by sixteen; it is to my mind one of the most interesting remains of Baalbeck. Above the quarry is a small wely, erected with more taste and elegance of design than is usually to be found in those structures.

About half an hour's walk from Baalbeck to the

west of the temples, are eight highly polished columns of red Syenite granite, placed in a circle indiscriminately upon their heads and bases, and supporting a heavy ceiling of coarse limestone, part of which has fallen. Between two of the columns is the top of an enormous sarcophagus, resting on its beam ends, with a block of stone between it and the architrave, which keeps it in its unnatural position. It is, I imagine, the tomb of a saint or of some powerful Emir: the granite columns have been brought from the great temples, where their broken capitals and architraves are scattered among the *débris* of the coarse marble of Baalbeck, to which they present a striking contrast, not only in colour, but in the high polish, of which the Egyptian granite is susceptible. Such is Baalbeck.

The evening was calm and clear; the moon, nearly full, shone brightly upon the dark pile of buildings around us. I have lingered by moonlight in the Colosseum, have stood in the midst of the Parthenon, and wandered amid the magnificent temples of Egypt, when the pale moon has shed her silvery rays upon the solemn scene, and brought out in bold relief the stately monuments of ages

long gone by. And yet, I know not why, those ruined temples in the lone mountains of the Lebanon cast a far greater spell over my mind, as I sat and gazed upon their vast and shadowy forms,—a feeling that I knew not in the midst of a busy city, or among the idol-stamped temples in the valley of the Nile.

On the fifth of April we quitted Baalbeck, and traversing the great plain of Becaah halted for the night at Zackhle, a large town containing a convent, E'deir Mâr Eliâs, which is situated at the north-western extremity of a deep ravine or wady near the foot of the Lebanon. The inhabitants are mostly Catholics of the Greek Church, and are actively employed in the trade of cloth-dying. A rapid stream meanders through the valley, on the south side of which we encamped upon a high spot of ground near a spring of clear water, which filled a reservoir hard by. Beneath us lay the plain of Becaah with the snow-capt Anti-Lebanon beyond, whose dark and gloomy sides presented a striking contrast to the pretty villages built upon sandstone rocks in the fertile wadies along its slopes.

The road from Zackhle to the Cedars was im-

passable. The summits of Lebanon were covered with snow, and the caravan road from Damascus to Beyrout had been blocked up for several days. The following morning we commenced the ascent of the Lebanon, and crossed the mighty range amid showers of rain and sleet, while the snow-drifts in our route more than once threatened to engulf both ourselves and our horses. We reached the summit about midday, and two hours later arrived at the village of Homála, where we were glad to take refuge in the house of a Latin Christian, who received us in the most hospitable manner.

I still entertained hopes of being able to visit the Cedars by the western side of Lebanon from Trablous (Tripoli), and went two days journey through its lovely and picturesque scenery, and along the sea coast as far as El Batrún (Botrys), where I arrived late on the evening of the eighth of April, and had scarcely pitched my tent in the middle of the town, when the rain commenced, and the torrents descended from the mountains, while the wadies, which a few hours before were perfectly dry, were the next morning full and almost impassable, so that my further progress to

Ehden and the Cedars was fairly stopped. A stream of water ran through my tent, and Mahmoud and I were for some time engaged in diverting its course from my bed into a more appropriate channel.

I was forced to retreat. My companions had returned to Beyrout two days before, and thither I determined to follow them. On the 9th I arrived at Djebal (Byblus), a good-sized town, containing a fine old castle, a covered bazaar, and two khâns, or places for the reception of travellers, in one of which I was obliged to take up my quarters for the night, as my tent was thoroughly saturated with wet, and the rain had recommenced in good earnest. It was the first time I had spread my divan in a Syrian khân, and my reminiscences are painfully unpleasant. I slept but indifferently during the night, for the rain came through the dilapidated roof, and those plagues of Syria, the fleas, were diligently at work during the hours of darkness. When I arose in the morning I was completely covered with red marks, and resolved never to spend another night in a Syrian khân.

The following day I retraced my steps across Nahr Ibrahîm, (Adonis,) one of the principal

rivers in Syria, which flows into the sea near Byblus, where the death of Thammuz was particularly lamented.

"Thammuz came next behind,
Whose annual wound in Lebanon allur'd
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, suppos'd with blood
Of Thammuz yearly wounded." *

Where the road does not pass among the rocks, the sides of the hills sloping down to the shores of the Mediterranean are sown with corn and thickly planted with mulberry-trees. On the heights above, which are covered with the tall stone pine, is many a convent and old-castle belonging once to some powerful Emir. After winding round the bay of Jûneh, or Kesrawân, I climbed the rocks overhanging the sea, and descended upon the banks of the Nahr el Kelb, the Lycus or Sacred river, close to which are several ancient inscriptions and the remains of a fine aqueduct. The whole western range of Lebanon is studded with picturesque villages and convents, while the summits are covered with snow; and although the

* Milton, *Paradise Lost*, b. i. 446—452.

higher range has a barren appearance, still the many groves of olives and mulberry-trees suffice to relieve the eye from the monotonous appearance of bare rocks, and make the scenery both varied and interesting.

On reaching the outskirts of Beyrout (Berytus), the road lay through deep sandy lanes between high banks covered with the prickly pear. I had ridden in advance of the mules, and arrived at Antonio's hotel beyond the walls, on the opposite side of the city, about five hours before Mahmoud appeared with the baggage.

My companions from Damascus had arranged an excursion for the morrow into the Lebanon, with the intention of visiting Djoûn, once the abode of Lady Hester Stanhope, and Deir el Kammor, the fortress and capital of Emir Beschir. I gladly availed myself of the opportunity of seeing the spot which our extraordinary countrywoman selected for her residence among the Arabs, over whom her energy and personal courage enabled her to gain so powerful an ascendancy. Poor Lady Hester Stanhope! her end was a melancholy one. In the zenith of her power and fame she had been proclaimed Queen of Palmyra: the

Arabs, struck with her deportment and the unusual appearance of a woman venturing among the wild tribes of the desert, and charmed with her graceful manners and munificence, believed that she was a supernatural being, and as such they paid her that allegiance, which they refused to the Porte.

A residence of some years in the solitude of the Lebanon in Oriental luxury and magnificence, added to her friendly relations with the neighbouring Pasha of Sidon, and with Emir Beschir, the Druse sovereign of Lebanon, and above all with the Arab sheikhs of the desert, served to keep up the prestige of her power and importance ; until at length the diminution of her fortune and a series of losses obliged her to decrease the number of her retainers : whereupon the friendship of the Arabs, which could only be maintained by constant presents, began to grow cold ; her intercourse with them almost ceased ; while her European attendants left her alone in her fortress among the mountains, surrounded only by a few Arab servants and some negro slaves. This extraordinary woman retained her undaunted courage and displayed the firmness of her character to the last. As she lay upon her deathbed, the very

slaves whom she had reared from their childhood, and treated with kindness and benevolence, one and all deserted her; before the breath had left her body her boxes and wardrobes were broken open and pillaged; and when the consul and the doctor arrived from Beyrout, they found the place deserted; and entering the house came at length to the chamber where Lady Hester was lying. She was dead!

We started at nine o'clock. Our party consisted of five, and seven or eight servants and surroudees accompanied us. For an hour and a half we rode through deep sandy lanes flanked on either side by hedges of prickly pear and groves of mulberry-trees, after traversing a wood of magnificent fir-trees, planted on a high promontory, which commands an extensive view of the Mediterranean on the right, and of the fertile valley of the Lebanon on the left, where the vine and the poplar, the mulberry and the fig-tree flourish beneath the dark and sombre sides of the mountain, whose heights are crowned with many a convent and Maronite church. Our road lay for some hours along the sea shore to a large khân,*about mid-way between Beyrout and Saïda (Sidon).

Turning to the left we commenced the ascent of Lebanon by a steep and rugged path along the side of a deep valley, clothed with the richest verdure. Towards sunset we pitched our tents about half a mile from a Druse village on a lovely and picturesque spot, amid scenery scarcely inferior to that around Ajlûn, on the eastern side of the Jordan.

We started at an early hour the next morning under the guidance of a black slave of Lady Hester Stanhope's, who had obtained his freedom, and was residing in the neighbouring village. A ride of two hours brought us to Djoûn, where, on the northern side of the village, our heroic but eccentric countrywoman cast her lot among the Druses of the Lebanon.

In the midst of a broad and deep valley, bounded on every side by steep and barren rocks, above which the mountain rears its head in majestic grandeur, rises the little hill of Djoûn, forming an esplanade about half a mile in length, and commanding an extensive prospect over the sea and the surrounding hills, which are studded with Druse villages. A small fortress lay before us, composed of low buildings, separated from one another by paved courts, with several kiosks in the

neglected garden, while a stone wall runs round the enclosure. The house is falling rapidly into ruin; the apartments, which are small and ill-lighted, no longer present that appearance of eastern comfort and luxury for which they were celebrated during the lifetime of their noble occupant. The courts are ornamented with marble fountains; a flight of steps leads from the private apartments to a terrace, overlooking a small but once charming garden, laid out in Oriental style with marble basins, where a never-failing supply of water from the mountains spread a refreshing coolness through the air. A few rose-trees and jasmines still blossom amid the wilderness that surrounds them. In a half-ruined stable on the northern side of the garden once stood an Arab steed, which by a strange freak of nature was born with a hollow resembling a Turkish saddle in its back, and together with another beautiful animal that stood by its side, was destined by Lady Hester Stanhope for a high and mysterious mission.* No one was ever permitted to mount either of them.

* "Approchez," me dit-elle, "et regardez cette jument baie; voyez si la nature n'a pas accompli en elle tout ce qui est écrit sur la jument qui doit porter le Messie:—elle naîtra toute sellée."
—*De Lamartine, Voyage en Orient*, vol. i. p. 213.

In the lower part of the garden is the tomb of Lady Hester: it consists of a plain slab, raised about two feet from the ground, and supported by a mound of earth, which is cased in stone. It is useless now to discuss the motives which may have induced this extraordinary woman to leave her own country and to wander through nearly all the countries of the East, until she finally took up her abode in the solitude of the Lebanon: whether her affections received a blow, which time could not heal, by the death of one to whom she had plighted her troth, or whether she was actuated by a noble or by a wayward spirit and the love of adventure, it does not behove us to inquire. The grave has closed upon her virtues and her follies. Peace be with her manes!

On leaving Djoûn we began to climb the higher mountains of the Lebanon, which separate it from Deir el Kammor. After an hour's toilsome march in a northerly direction, we stopped to admire the beautiful scenery that lay extended below us. Saïda appeared almost at our feet: the promontory upon which it is built juts out obliquely into the sea, and on the higher ground is a large square citadel of the middle ages. The town is enclosed

on the land side by a wall, extending across the promontory, and is planted on the east with gardens and a forest of trees. The view included a great part of the Phœnician plain, bounded by the vast expanse of the deep blue sea, whose surface was smooth as a mirror, while the immense range of Lebanon, rising in every imaginable variety of shape, and enclosing deep and fertile valleys, a mass of verdure, at different elevations almost to their summit, completed the prospect.

A steep descent brought us to a broad and picturesque valley, with a rapid stream running through it, and rushing furiously over huge masses of rock, which have been detached by earthquakes from the craggy sides of the ravine. To the right and left of us two enormous chains of mountains rose to a height of more than three hundred feet in sublime and awful grandeur. For two hours we proceeded along the course of the foaming torrent, when on reaching the head of the valley we turned westward, and winding round the sides of one of the highest mountains of the Lebanon, came at length in sight of Deir el Kammor. Beneath us lay a magnificent valley of immense depth, cultivated with vines, mulberries and fig-

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trees, which presented an appearance of freshness and verdure, and extended from the banks of the stream, that murmured softly in its rocky bed below, up to the spot where we were standing; and as the setting sun behind the mountains cast a long shadow across the valley, the scenery around grew more enchanting and indescribably beautiful. On the heights beyond upon the eastern side of the mountain was the town of Deir el Kammor, the capital of the Druses, containing about twelve thousand inhabitants. To our right appeared the palace and fortress of Dptédin, built in terraces, with long colonnades in front, on the summit of a small but precipitous hill, rising abruptly out of the valley. Poor Emir Beschir! In his old age he is an exile from his home and his Druse dominions. His existence has been a strange and chequered one, but his misfortunes have not been undeserved, for his hands have been deeply dyed in the blood of his relatives. Still, great allowance must be made for crimes, which he was often driven to commit in the troubled times, during which he has lived and long wielded the sceptre as sovereign prince of Lebanon.

Two of the Emir's sons were residing in Deir el Kammor; but the fortress was occupied by

Turkish troops. Our tents were pitched to the west of the town on an eminence overhanging the ravine, and commanding a full view of the palace and fortress of Dptédin, and of the lovely scenery above, around, and below us; while the sound of music was wafted lightly across the valley in the stillness of evening, as we sat before our tents and listened to the military band in the heart of the Lebanon. The Druse women wear a silver horn, from twelve to eighteen inches in length, upon their foreheads, over which is thrown a white veil, sometimes drawn close over the face. They are not, however, condemned to the same degree of restraint that Mahometan women are forced to undergo.

The following day we returned to Beyrout. On the seventeenth of April I quitted Syria in a French steamer, and after touching at Alexandria arrived at Malta on the twenty-sixth, where I went on board the Peninsular and Oriental Company's vessel, the "Euxine," and after a smooth and pleasant voyage by Gibraltar, and through the Bay of Biscay, reached Southampton on the eighth of May, having been absent from England above a year and a half.

APPENDIX.

NOTE A.

Note to p. 29, line 5. (Cairo.)

“THE modern Egyptian metropolis is now called *Musr*; but was formerly named *El-Ckáhíreh*; whence Europeans have formed the name of *Cairo*. It is situated at the entrance of the valley of Upper Egypt, midway between the Nile and the eastern mountain range of Moockuttum. Between it and the river there intervenes a tract of land, for the most part cultivated, which, in the northern parts, (where the port of Boolack is situated,) is more than a mile in width, and, at the southern part, less than half a mile wide. The metropolis occupies a space equal to about three square miles; and its population is about two hundred and forty thousand. It is surrounded by a wall, the gates of which are shut at night, and is commanded by a large citadel, situated at an angle of the town, near a point of the mountain. The streets are unpaved; and most of them narrow and irregular: they might more properly be called lanes.” — LANE’S *Modern Egyptians*, Ed. 1846, vol. i. p. 7.

NOTE B.

Note to p. 270, line 7. (Bozrah.)

“THERE is something very sad in the fate of Bozrah. The town was strong, garrisoned with twelve thousand horse—the citizens were brave, and, but for the treachery of the Roman governor, might have long held out against the Saracens. Suspicious of his loyalty from his advice to yield to the enemy, the high-spirited citizens deposed him, and chose in his stead the general of the garrison, desiring him to challenge Caled, the Saracen general, to single combat, which he did.

“When Caled was preparing to go, (I quote poor Ockley’s narrative,) ‘Abd’orrahman, the Caliph’s son, a very young man, but of extraordinary hopes, begged of him to let him answer the challenge. Having obtained leave, he mounted his horse, and took his lance, which he handled with admirable dexterity, and, when he came near the governor, he said, “Come, thou Christian dog, come on!” Then the combat began, and, after awhile, the governor, finding himself worsted, having a better horse than the Saracen, ran away and made his escape to the army. Abd’orrahman, heartily vexed that his enemy had escaped, fell upon the rest, sometimes charging upon the right hand, sometimes upon the left, making way wherever he went. Caled and the rest of the officers followed him, and the battle grew hot between the Saracens and the miserable inhabitants of Bostra, who were at their last struggle for their fortunes, their liberty, their religion, and whatsoever was dear to them, and had now seen the last day dawn in which they were ever to call anything their own, without

renouncing their baptism. The Saracens fought like lions, and Caled, their general, still cried out, "Alhamlah! Alhamlah! Aljannah! Aljannah!" that is, "Fight! Fight! Paradise! Paradise!" The town was all in an uproar, the bells rung, and the priests and monks ran about the streets, making exclamations, and calling upon God; but all was too late, for his afflicting Providence had determined to deliver them into the hands of their enemies.

"Caled and Serjabil, (for the Saracens could pray as well as fight—and England, as well as Arabia, has had some that could do so too,) said, "O God! these vile wretches pray with idolatrous expressions, and take to themselves another God besides thee; but we acknowledge thy unity, and affirm that there is no other God but thee alone; help us, we beseech thee, for the sake of thy Prophet, Mahomet, against these Idolaters!"

"The battle continued for some time; at last the poor Christians were forced to give way, and leave the field to the victorious Saracens, who lost only 230 men. The besieged retired as fast as they could, and shut up the gates, and set up their banners and standards with the sign of the cross upon the walls, intending to write speedily to the Greeian Emperor for more assistance."

"That night, however, as Abd'orrahman, who was the officer on guard, went his rounds, he saw a man come out of the city, "with a camlet coat on, wrought with gold." He instantly levelled his lance—"Hold!" cried the man, "I am Romanus, the ex-governor—bring me before Caled the general."—He came to say, (treacherous dog!) that he had ordered his sons and servants to dig a hole in the wall, (for his house stood upon the town-wall,) and that he was ready to introduce any number of trusty men into the city. Caled forthwith despatched Abd'orrahman with a hundred Saracens. Romanus introduced them through the breach

entertained them in his house, and disguised them in the Christian uniform.

“ ‘Then Abd’orrahman divided them into four parts, five-and-twenty in a company, and ordered them to go into different streets of the city, and commanded them, that as soon as they heard him and those that were with him cry out, “Allah Akbar!” they should do so too. Then Abd’orrahman asked Romanus where the governor was which fought with him and ran away from him? Romanus proffered his services to show him, and away they marched together to the castle, attended with five-and-twenty Muslims. When they came there, the governor asked Romanus, what he came for? Who answered, that he had no business of his own, but only came to wait upon a friend of his, that had a great desire to see him. “Friend of mine!” says the governor—“What friend?” “Only your friend Abd’orrahman,” said Romanus, “is come to send you to hell!” The unhappy governor, finding himself betrayed, endeavoured to make his escape. “Nay, hold!” says Abd’orrahman, “though you ran away from me once in the daytime, you must not serve me so again,” and struck him with his sword and killed him. As he fell, Abd’orrahman cried out, “Allah Akbar!” the Saracens, which were below, hearing it, did so too; so did those who were dispersed about the streets, that there was nothing but “Allah Akbar!” heard round about the city. Then those Saracens which were disguised killed the guards, opened the gates, and let in Caled with his whole army. The town being now entirely lost, the conquering Saracens fell upon the inhabitants, and killed and made prisoners all they met with; till, at last, the chief men of the city came out of their houses and churches, and cried, “Quarter! quarter!” The general, Caled, immediately commanded them to kill no more; “for,” said he, “the Apostle of God used to say, ‘If

any one be killed after he has cried out, Quarter! 'tis none of my fault.' "

" ' Thus was the condition of Bostra altered on a sudden, and they, which had been before a wealthy and flourishing people, were now brought under the Saracenical yoke, and could enjoy the Christian profession upon no other terms than paying tribute.'

" Bozrah was very nearly retaken by the Christians, and in precisely the same manner, 513 years afterwards, when the Turks were in occupation of Syria. As the expedition to Wady Mousa was the first, so this to Bostra was the second enterprise of Baldwin the Third of Jerusalem, then in his fifteenth year—the graceful, affable, wise, generous, gallant young prince, whom William of Tyre speaks of with such affectionate enthusiasm, (and with such candour too,) in his charming history. Imagine him seated beside his mother Melisenda, in his palace-hall at Jerusalem, giving audience to a noble Armenian, the Governor of Bozrah, who—having fallen under the displeasure of Ainard, Regent of Damascus, and apprehending punishment, had come to offer to deliver up that city and the dependant town of Salkhud to the Christians.

" The Council assembled to debate on this proposition. That the recapture of a town so important to the Christian cause as Bozrah could not but be agreeable to God, was laid down at once as unquestionable. But then, most unfortunately, a truce subsisted between the King and the Soldan—how could they break it without dishonour? They struck a medium by accepting the offer of the Governor and summoning the lieges to attend the royal banner to Bozrah, and by sending the Regent word of their intentions, that he might prepare for his defence. Within a few days, the chivalry of Palestine were assembled at the bridge over the Jordan above the Lake of Tiberias, and, at

the expiration of a month, they started for Bozrah, the venerable Archbishop of Nazareth, with a fragment of the true Cross, attending them, to ensure a blessing on the enterprise.

“Ainard, meanwhile, an excellent man, who had always shown himself friendly to the Christians, and sincerely desired peace, had offered to pay all their expenses, if they would abandon their unjust enterprise—for unjust it was; many—the wisest of the Franks—disapproved of it, and urged the acceptance of these terms, but all in vain—the voice of the multitude carried the day. They little knew what a force Ainard had assembled to oppose them.

“Traversing the deep valley of Roob, the Christian army entered the plain Medan, and were instantly surrounded by swarms of Turks and Arabs, far more numerous than they had expected, and who kept up such an incessant shower of darts and arrows, that those who had been most ardent for the expedition would now willingly have given it up, and retraced their steps. They determined, notwithstanding, to proceed boldly towards Bozrah, deeming it shameful to retreat, and impossible, even were they willing to incur such a disgrace.

“Slowly and painfully they toiled on all the next day, yet still in good courage; the enemy hovering around and harassing them, but finding no opportunity of breaking their close columns, the knights kept guard over them so carefully. Indeed, says the chronicler, high and low, knights and men-at-arms, they were united in love as if but one man. The knights took the tenderest care of their comrades on foot, often leaping from their horses to assist them in their duty, or relieve them by a ride when faint and fatigued. The heat of the sun, the weight of their armour, the blinding, choking dust, burning thirst, and the scanty supplies in the water-tanks—all poisoned too by

the putrified bodies of locusts — completed their hardships.

“ They arrived that evening, about sunset, at Adrate, the Edrei of Og King of Bashan — the ‘city of Bernard d’Etampes’ of the Crusaders—and, after two days more of unparalleled sufferings, marching under a constant hail of arrows and missiles of every description, the enemy seemingly multiplying every hour, and every hour their own strength failing—they reached Bozrah, and, after chasing the enemy from the springs near the Bab el Howa, as it is now called, or the western gate of the city, pitched their tents there and lay down, anxiously hoping for the morrow.

“ But, alas! in the middle of the deep silence of the night, a man came out from the city, traversed the enemy’s camp, and came to the Christian army, desiring to speak with the king. The princes assembled, and the noble Armenian, who had conducted the Franks through so many dangers, was also called in; when the messenger announced that the city was already in the hands of the enemy, having been given up to Nouredin, the illustrious son-in-law of the Regent Ainard, by the wife of the very man who had offered to betray it!—Thus ended their hopes of Bozrah!

“ Sad and disappointed, and in despair of making good their retreat, their first anxiety was to ensure their young king’s safety, and, drawing him aside, the principal nobles implored him to take the fragment of the true Cross, and a horse belonging to Sire Jean Gomain, the fleetest and strongest in the army, and save himself by flight. ‘No,’ cried the gallant boy, with the spirit of Saint Louis,—‘never will I save myself, and leave the people of God to perish so miserably!’

“ Nerved by despair, and animated by the very difficulties

that surrounded them, these brave men commenced their retreat at daybreak, cutting irresistibly through every battalion that attempted to impede them, and carrying their weak and wounded men on camels, that the Turks, seeing no proofs of their arrows having taken effect, might believe them the men of iron they really were, and thus be discouraged. This expedient, however, suggested a worse annoyance—setting fire to the thorns and dry stubble of the country; the wind blew towards the Christians—scorched by the flames, blackened and choked by the smoke, hope sunk in their hearts. ‘Pray for us,’ cried they, turning with streaming eyes, to the grey-haired Archbishop—‘pray for us!’ He did so, extending the Cross towards the enemy, and lo! the wind changed in a moment, and blew back the flames and smoke on the enemy!

“Another incident much encouraged them at this juncture. Four illustrious Arab brothers, with their followers, had joined the Turks, and, hovering on the flank of the Christian army, terribly harassed them by their repeated flying attacks, which they endured without resenting, as everything depended on their keeping their ranks, and maintaining the strictest discipline. At last, however, one of the followers of the ex-governor, losing his patience, broke from the ranks, and, spurring his horse, fell sword in hand on one of the Arab brothers, struck him down on the spot, and retired in perfect safety among his companions. Amidst the groans of the Turks, and the involuntary applause of the Christians, he must have died the death of young Manlius, had not his being a foreigner and ignorant of the language in which the order not to quit the ranks had been issued, pleaded his excuse, and secured his pardon.

“They had now, after five days’ march, arrived once more at the Valley of Roob, but, fearful of ambuscades, hesitated

on entering so dangerous a pass. That there was another and a safer road over the mountains they knew, but were lamenting their ignorance of the country and want of a guide, when suddenly an unknown knight, mounted on a white steed, and carrying a red banner, became visible at the head of the army—whence he came they knew not—whither he led they followed. Taking the shortest roads, halting always at fountains till then unheard of, and pointing out with unerring sagacity the fittest places for encampment, he conducted them, says the historian, like the Angel of the God of Hosts, for three days, as far as Gadara—the Om Keis, evidently, from his description, of the present day; and on the morrow, weary and worn out, they arrived at Tiberias.—No one, adds William of Tyre, knew their guide; as soon as they arrived at the place where they were to encamp, he suddenly vanished—‘like a blink of the sun or a whiss of the whirlwind,’ as Lindsay of Pitscottie would have added—and no one saw him again till he re-appeared on the morrow at the head of the army.

“No man living, concludes the chronicler, remembers an expedition of such peril to the Christians, and yet of such little positive advantage to the Infidels, since the Latins established themselves in the East.

“Two curious pages these in the history of Bozrah! A few years afterwards, the citizens, of their own accord, submitted to Saladin, and little or nothing is known of its history—at least from Frank authorities—intermediate between that event and Burckhardt’s visit in 1812.”—LORD LINDSAY’S *Letters on Egypt, Edom, and the Holy Land*, vol. ii. pp. 139—151.

NOTE C.

Note to p. 293, line 23. (Damascus.)

“ JE marchais à la tête de la caravane, à quelques pas derrière les Arabes de Zebdani; tout à coup ils s'arrêtent, et poussent des cris de joie en me montrant une ouverture dans le rebord de la route; je m'approche, et mon regard plonge, à travers l'échancrure de la roche, sur le plus magnifique et le plus étrange horizon qui ait jamais étonné un regard d'homme: c'était Damas et son désert sans bornes à quelques centaines de pieds sous mes pas; le regard tombait d'abord sur la ville qui, entourée de ses remparts de marbre jaune et noir, flanquée de ses innombrables tours carrées, de distance en distance; couronnée de ses créneaux sculptés, dominée par sa forêt de minarets de toutes formes, sillonnée par les sept branches de son fleuve et ses ruisseaux sans nombre, s'étendait à perte de vue dans un labyrinthe de jardins en fleurs, jetait ses bras immenses çà et là dans la vaste plaine, partout ombragée, partout pressée par la forêt, de dix lieues de tour, de ses abricotiers, de ses sycomores, de ses arbres de toutes formes et de toute verdure; semblait se perdre de temps en temps sous la voûte de ces arbres, puis reparaissait plus loin en larges lacs de maisons, de faubourgs, de villages; labyrinthe de jardins, de vergers, de palais, de ruisseaux, où l'œil se perdait et ne quittait un enchantement que pour en retrouver un autre: nous ne marchions plus; tous pressés à l'étroite ouverture du rocher, percé comme une fenêtre, nous contemplions, tantôt avec des exclamations, tantôt en silence, le magique spectacle qui se déroulait ainsi subitement et tout entier sous nos yeux, au terme d'une route, à travers tant de rochers et de solitudes arides, au commencement d'un

autre désert qui n'a pour bornes que Bagdad et Bassora, et qu'il faut quarante jours pour traverser : enfin nous nous remîmes en marche ; le parapet de rochers qui nous cachait la plaine et la ville s'abaissait insensiblement, et nous laissa bientôt jouir en plein de tout l'horizon ; nous n'étions plus qu'à cinq cents pas des murs des faubourgs : ces murs, entourés de charmants kiosques et de maisons de campagne des formes et des architectures les plus orientales, brillent comme une enceinte d'or autour de Damas ; les tours carrées qui les flanquent et en surmontent la ligne sont incrustées d'arabesques percées d'ogives à colonnettes minces comme des roseaux accouplés, et brodées de créneaux en turbans, les murailles sont revêtues de pierres ou de marbres jaunes et noirs, alternés avec une élégante symétrie ; les cimes des cyprès et des autres grands arbres qui s'élèvent des jardins et de l'intérieur de la ville s'élancent au-dessus des murailles et des tours, et les couronnent d'une sombre verdure ; les innombrables coupoles des mosquées et des palais d'une ville de quatre cent mille âmes répercutaient les rayons du soleil couchant, et les eaux bleues et brillantes des sept fleuves étincelaient et disparaissaient tour à tour à travers les rues et les jardins ; l'horizon, derrière la ville, était sans bornes comme la mer ; il se confondait avec les bords pourpres de ce ciel de feu, qu'enflammait encore la réverbération des sables du grand désert ; sur la droite, les larges et hautes croupes de l'Anti-Liban fuyaient comme d'immenses vagues d'ombre, les unes derrière les autres, tantôt s'avancant comme des promontoires dans la plaine, tantôt s'ouvrant comme des golfes profonds, où la plaine s'engouffrait avec ses forêts et ses grands villages, dont quelques-uns comptent jusqu'à trente mille habitants ; des branches de fleuve et deux grands lacs éclataient là, dans l'obscurité de la teinte générale de verdure où Damas

semble comme engloutie ; à notre gauche, la plaine était plus évasée, et ce n'était qu'à une distance de douze à quinze lieues qu'on retrouvait des cimes de montagnes, blanches de neige, qui brillaient dans le bleu du ciel, comme des nuages sur l'Océan ; la ville est entièrement entourée d'une forêt de vergers d'arbres fruitiers, où les vignes s'enlacent comme à Naples, et courent en guirlandes parmi les figuiers, les abricotiers, les poiriers et les cerisiers ; au-dessous de ces arbres, la terre, grasse, fertile et toujours arrosée, est tapissée d'orge, de blé, de maïs et de toutes les plantes légumineuses que ce sol produit ; de petites maisons blanches percent çà et là la verdure de ces forêts, et servent de demeure au jardinier, ou de lieu de récréation à la famille du propriétaire ; ces jardins sont peuplés de chevaux, de moutons, de chameaux, de tourterelles, de tout ce qui anime les scènes de la nature, ils sont, en général, de la grandeur d'un ou deux arpents, et séparés les uns des autres par des murs de terre séchée au soleil ou par de belles haies vives ; une multitude de chemins, ombragés et bordés d'un ruisseau d'eau courante, circulent parmi ces jardins, passent d'un faubourg à l'autre, ou mènent à quelques portes de la ville ; ils forment un rayon de vingt à trente lieues de circonférence autour de Damas." — DE LAMARTINE, *Voyage en Orient*, vol. ii. pp. 61—64.

THE END.