

Jejazy on the hill is small and of a modern date, though now in ruins: the only things noticed there, besides the remains of the dwellings, were a number of mill-stones used in the grinding of corn. Ghiddery, which stands above it, is, however, larger and of older date, its site being now almost grown over with trees. We saw here several beautiful crested hoopoes, and a number of large partridges, as well as numerous flocks of the pigeons before seen and described in a former journey to Jerash, on passing through the village of Soof. These pigeons are nearly double the size of the common pigeon of Europe, and are nearly all distinguished by a fine rich blue plumage. They are held in such esteem as food, that at Soof, where I had first seen them, they blind one of them as a decoy-bird by thrusting a needle into its eyes, and drawing a thread from one eye to the other, after which they are put into trap-cages to allure and entice others into the snare. It was said also, that they were birds of passage, being known to go to Abyssinia in the end of the spring, to stay there during the rainy season of that country, and return again to these mountains to enjoy the winter rains here.

Ascending the hill over a clayey soil, we soon reached the summit, and found that the firs which clothed these elevated spots grew larger and larger as we approached the pinnacle, and then again dwindled in size as we descended. It was within an hour after our passing the summit and going over the north-eastern side of the hill that we came to Dibbeen, a modern town, the buildings of which were distinguished by their Saracen or pointed arches. We found it entirely deserted, its inhabitants having taken refuge from the extortions of Syrian governors and the incursions of plundering Arabs, in Assalt and other strong and independent towns of the Hauran. There were originally not more than 100 separate habitations in this place, and these were small and of inferior construction, but there are now few remaining perfect even of that small number.

From this spot the reputed tomb of Ooda-el-Nebbê was again seen, over the Valley of Jerash, bearing nearly east of us, and a small party of Arabs were encamped below. We still continued to descend over the slope of the hill to the northward, our way being through pines and other trees, and we passed on our left the ruined villages of Nahaly, Reymoon, and Witkitty. I was here called out of my path by one of my companions to see what he called the Hadjar Nufook, a stone that was said to cover an opening in the rock close by us, from which a large quantity of gold had been taken out some time ago by Muggrebin magicians from the west. This was a tale so common, and applied to such various and distant spots, that I had become too much accustomed to hear it to pay the least attention to such a narrative.

In an hour afterwards, we came to a valley in which ran a small stream said to discharge itself into the Zerkah. This valley and stream collectively is called Wâdi Nahaly. It must once have been deemed of some importance, as there are still seen here the ruins of two aqueducts, called Towaheen; they are evidently both ancient works: one of them has a single arched passage beneath it, about 30 feet high, and is now covered with leaves and creeping plants on both sides; the other has its surface encrusted with large masses of petrifications exactly like the cisterns at Ras-el-Ain, the aqueduct of Tyre, and the northern baths of Tiberias. There had been a modern settlement also near the spot, which is now, however, quite deserted, and only a few of the dwellings remain.

From hence we ascended in an easterly direction over a stony ground, and noticed a number of olive trees, not growing wildly and spontaneously, as we had seen them before, but planted here, and said to have belonged to the dwellings below. On the left we passed the ruined village of Deer, and the villages of Merj, and Megibbely to the north of it; and in an hour from the aqueduct of Towaheen, which most probably conveyed water to Jerash, we reached that city, this being the third time of my visiting it, having

travelled from Assalt for about eight hours, or not more than thirty-two miles, in a north-east direction.

As it was now sunset, my companions were as much disposed as myself to halt; and we fixed on the ruins of Jerash for the place of our repose. In entering the city from the west, by the outer gate, we observed several sarcophagi, and I inferred from thence that in this quarter there was also a necropolis, though in my former visit we had met with a large assemblage of tombs in another and opposite quarter, and more remote from the city walls. On the south-west of the outer entrance to the city, and on the south-east side, we observed several tombs excavated in the rock, to the number of twenty at least, resembling in general appearance those seen at Oom Kais: some of which, like the tombs at that place also, had apparently been used, and that very recently, as places of shelter and habitation; near one of them was the fragment of a stone door, but neither of them were closed.

We passed up through the centre of the city, and made our halt at the large square building conjectured to be a bath, which stands on the east of the northernmost theatre, and west of the stream in the valley. The part covered with a circular dome gave us and our horses shelter, although three of its sides were open; we had firewood, provisions, and water with us, so that we were well off; making a hearty supper, and smoking our pipes in an arched recess, which we called the Horse-shoe Arch from its shape, at the south-west angle of the interior.

After supper I enjoyed a fine moonlight walk alone through these magnificent ruins, and only regretted the want of a companion to share with me the feelings which so impressive a scene inspired. In the two former visits, we were so hurried that there was scarcely time to note any thing, and still less to examine, to reflect, and to compare. Circumstances having, however, most unexpectedly brought me to this interesting spot for a third time, I was determined to make the most of so favourable an opportunity for bringing away a fuller and more accurate account of its remains

than it had been possible to do on the former occasions already alluded to ; as very few persons were likely, for some time to come at least, to possess so good an opportunity, even in a projected visit to this place, as would be afforded me by merely halting a night at it, in a direct journey from Assalt to Damascus, as a spot just one day's distance from our place of starting, and in the common route between these two places.

I did not return to the spot fixed on for our repose, until near midnight, having gone over and examined alone, nearly every part of the principal edifices by moonlight, and seen much that had escaped me before ; and when I returned, I found that my guides, who were still awake, had given me up as lost, or robbed, or murdered : though, as might well be expected, I had met with no living being in my ramble, not even the guardian bird to whose care the people of Soof assured us on a former visit that the preservation of the buried treasures was confided.

As there was a large fire still blazing in the Horse-shoe Arch in which we had taken up our quarters for the night, I scrawled my name, with the date, on the inner wall near where we sat ; and the inference drawn by my credulous and suspicious companions, from this simple act, was, that I had actually found the place in which the hidden treasures of Jerash were concealed, and that this discovery was made during my moonlight ramble alone, which fully accounted to them for my absence, as well as for my going out without them ; and that this writing on the wall was but the commencement of the incantations which I was about to perform, for the purpose of raising the buried gems and gold, and enriching myself for ever !

Jerash, Thursday, March 8.— After midnight we divided ourselves into three watches, as our situation was thought to be one exposed to danger ; and, as we decided the order of our succession by drawing lots, it fell to my chance to keep the third, or morning guard, Mallim Georgis the second or middle watch, and

Abu Fārah the first, or from twelve till two o'clock. During these first two hours, the old sentry, then at his post, kept me awake by his songs; for, having a blazing fire before him, a coffee pot near, and a full purse of tobacco for his pipe, he cheered the solitude of the moment, and gave vent at the same time to the satisfaction of his heart, by chanting the legendary songs of his youth. When Georgis was aroused from his slumbers, for *he* slept most soundly notwithstanding every obstacle, the old Abu Fārah lay down to take his repose. It must have been about three o'clock, for it was full three hours before the day broke, when we were suddenly awakened by our temporary guardian, who crossed himself twenty times in the midst of his recital, and told us, with shortened breath, a tale of robbers, and horses, and muskets, and lances, which he uttered in so interrupted a manner, that Fārah and myself, thus suddenly roused from our sleep, could scarcely understand what was meant. We were only aware that some imminent danger, or, at least, the apprehension of it, must have been the cause of our being disturbed; and we, therefore, seized our muskets to prepare for defence. While thus on our guard, we learnt from our affrighted companion that, during the middle watch of the night, one of our horses had been stolen; and that this had occasioned him to awake us. We at first accused him of sleeping on his post, which he stoutly denied, with many appeals to the Virgin and St. George for the truth of his story; and, as if to convince us beyond all doubt of his not having even slumbered on his guard, he confessed that he had been a silent spectator of the whole transaction from beginning to end. He said, that soon after his taking the look out, he saw a party of five men approaching the ruined building in which we had taken shelter, two of them leading their horses, and the other three without horses, but all on foot. The horsemen, he said, walked up and down, to and fro, like Franks who are always restless and in motion, while the three men on foot approached the place of our halt, each having a musket in his hand. One of these, he added, then came close to the building,

and removing the bushes with which we had blocked up the entrance to one of the arches, took out from thence with great caution and silence the horse that stood nearest to the aperture. During all this time the prudent Georgis pretended to be asleep: but thinking it might have some effect upon the robbers, whom he was afraid to encounter openly, to show symptoms of being disturbed, he turned round upon his side, as if half awakened by the noise; and the robbers themselves being quite as desirous of avoiding a contest, provided they could secure any thing without the risk of personal danger, walked silently off with their prize; nor was it until the party were quite out of sight and hearing that we were apprized of our loss!

I saw in this instance, a very striking picture of the Arab character. The robbers themselves, though nearly twice our number, and we too asleep, were afraid to attack us openly; while our companion, who then held the post of looking out, witnessed all in silence, being equally afraid of rousing his smaller party for defence. The plunderers were satisfied to gain a small booty without injury, while the plundered was ready to make a sacrifice of part of his property, for the sake of securing the same desirable blessing, a whole skin. Had the one pushed his attempts further, a skirmish at least might have ensued; and if the other had given a timely alarm, our little force might have been exerted to repel the attack; so that, in either case, death or wounds might probably have followed an encounter. As it luckily happened, the horse that was stolen belonged to Mallim Georgis himself, and was worth between 3 and 400 piastres; but instead of blaming his own weakness for suffering it to be taken away, without an effort even of resistance, he expressed great contrition for his sins, and believed this loss to be a judgment from heaven for some neglect of religious duty of which he had been guilty, some breaking of a fast, or some indulgence of his evil passions.

We did not sleep, of course, during the remainder of the morning, but continued debating the affair, and putting ourselves

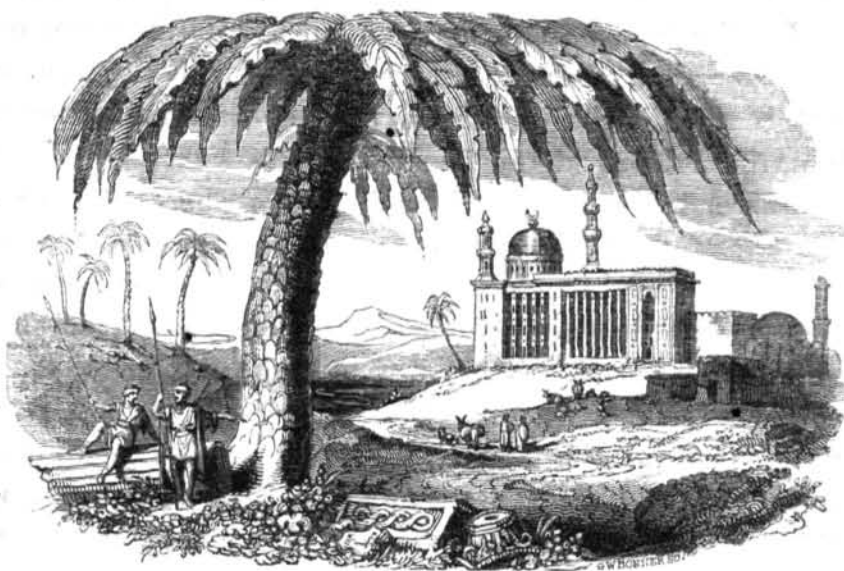
in a better state of preparation, for the possible return of these successful plunderers, whom we determined to meet at their next visit, if they should venture to make another, with arms in our hands. The ruined building in which we slept being open on three sides, we conceived it highly probable that the light of the fire had attracted the robbers from afar; and although it was now but of little use to remove the cause, after its effect had been produced, the fire was put out, which left us to suffer considerably from the piercing cold of the morning, with a hoar frost whitening the whole of the surrounding country.

As we could not well pursue our journey so expeditiously, with one of our party on foot, as if we were all mounted, it was agreed that we should go down to one of the villages in the valley of Adjeloon, where Georgis had some friends and relations residing, under the hope of procuring from some of these, the loan of a mare for his use during the remainder of our way, or an advance of money for the purchase of one, if none could be otherwise obtained. I would willingly have dispensed with the services of these men altogether, had it been possible; but every day we met with small parties of two, four, and half a dozen, who would have been ready to insult and even plunder an unprotected stranger, but who gave us always friendly salutes when they saw my guides, as these were personally known to some persons or other in almost every town and village of the country, and were therefore able at once to enter on a friendly conversation with half the people we met. The advantage of having such guides as these, was therefore considerable, as in their company I could pass in safety, where arms alone, unless in great force, would never have secured my way: and while they were with me, I was as certain of a kind and hospitable reception among Mohammedans as among Christians, each of these being apparently glad to profit by the Mallim's learning, and to consult him as a sort of oracle on the signs of the times, as well as to learn from Abu Fārah the state of the roads, the encampments of Arabs, the removal of fairs or markets, and all the local news of

the district which no one was more competent to give: the first of these men being the most celebrated Seer, and the last, perhaps, the most complete and experienced Itinerant in the whole country.

While our morning coffee was preparing, I ventured out with my compass and note-book, to take sets of bearings for the correction of the plan of the city, which I could now enjoy an opportunity of doing, without any interruption and with but little delay. Starting at daylight I had hoped to have done all I wished by eight or nine o'clock, but one object led to another, so that it was nearly noon before I completed the peregrination of the principal quarters of the city. By incessant and unwearied assiduity during this period, I was enabled to sketch the ground plans of four new edifices, take seven separate sets of bearings from different buildings by compass, and copy some Greek inscriptions from an altar, a column, and the frieze of a temple, making besides upwards of ten closely written pages of notes, on the several portions that struck me as worthy of remarking on as I went along.*

* The whole of this, which formed a far greater body of materials respecting Jerash, than Mr. Banks and myself had been able to collect during our first hasty and interrupted visits, I thought it advisable to incorporate in the account given of the ruins of that city, in the *Travels in Palestine*, already before the public, in order to make it as complete as possible, and to gratify, as well as I could, without delay, the curiosity of all who desired to know whatever could be communicated respecting these recently discovered and highly interesting remains. Instead, therefore, of repeating in this place, the portion of information collected on this third visit to Jerash, I must refer the reader to the more comprehensive general account of its ruins, contained in the *Travels in Palestine* already referred to; where it occupies about sixty pages, accompanied by a ground plan of the city, and many of its separate edifices, drawn entirely from the notes, bearings, and measurements taken by myself on this last occasion.



CHAP. VIII.

FROM JERASH TO THE VALLEY AND CASTLE OF ADJELOON.

IT was about noon when we left Jerash, quitting it now by the western wall. Proceeding westerly for about an hour, and going over rocky ground, we came to the village of Kittey, which is a modern station, entirely occupied by Mohammedans. It has good water, an excellent soil, and an abundance of olive trees near it, with about fifty separate dwelling houses.

Proceeding more northerly, but over the same kind of rocky ground, we came, in another hour, to Eremoon. At this place we found a well-built Mohammedan tomb, with a reservoir for water and a large spreading tree near it, on which, as well as at the door of the tomb itself, were suspended tokens of devotion in various shapes. Near it, was also a deserted mosque, with pillars on the

inside, and a tolerably good exterior, with a small inscribed tablet half way up the wall, on the northern face of the building. There were many trees in the surrounding soil, and a population that appeared to be in as comfortable circumstances as peasants and labourers ever are in these ill-governed and improvident countries, where it is literally the custom to take no heed for the morrow, but to let the day provide for itself.

We ascended a steep hill on leaving this spot, and in half an hour after quitting it, passed by a place called Ahheatherah, which, from the large size of the stones of which its buildings were constructed, and the great abundance of fragments of fine pottery scattered around it, indicated an ancient site, whose very ruin must have been at some remote period, as it was quite grown over with trees.

Being now near the summit of Jebel Adjeloon, we could see, from this elevation, the deep valley of the Zerkah, with its stream winding from the S. E. to the N. W. The head of this stream is said to rise near Ammān, and to form the brook that runs through the ruins of that city. From our present position we could also observe, that on the summit of Jebel Asswete, there was an elevated plain like that of Belkah, which we had passed over on our way from Assalt to Oom-el-Russās. Beyond this again, to the eastward, is the lower plain of the Haurān, which is said to be even more thickly covered with ruined cities and towns than either of the districts already traversed in this once abundantly peopled, and now comparatively desolate, region.

On turning our way round the top of this elevated point of Jebel Adjeloon, we shaped our course more northerly; the soil being still clay, with sand and limestone intermixed, and the whole covered with firs and other trees. From what I observed here, it would seem, that in these high regions, and remote from the sea-coast, the wind blew most frequently, and with greater strength, from the northward than from any other quarter, as the largest trees were all much bent to the southward, and in a manner so uniform

that could have only been effected by long prevailing winds ; yet it is remarkable, that all along the Syrian shore, southerly winds prevail throughout the largest portion of the year. On the left of our present route was a western branch of the same chain of hills, stretching out from that on which we rode, and thickly covered with wood ; and in the valley below, a few ruins of some old place, which my guides named Huzzar.

Proceeding now in nearly a N. W. direction, we came, in half an hour, upon the site of old ruins, which bore the name of Oom-el-Jelood, the remains of which were now grown over with trees. In its neighbourhood were fine corn-fields, in which the young corn had begun to appear ; and near to the site of the town there still remained a fine fountain of water, and the portion of an ancient paved road. We continued to ascend over a hill covered with the same kind of trees as those abounding near Assalt, which were there called Finjan, but were here pronounced Sinjan trees ; they were covered on the bark by a rich and beautiful moss.

From the summit of the hill we could see Mounts Tabor and Hermon, with the hill in the hollow of which Nazareth is seated, bearing N. W. over the Valley of the Jordan. Here, too, we first obtained a sight of the castle and valley of Adjeloon. From hence we descended to the westward, and came, in half an hour, to the village of Anjerah. There was a Roman arched well, which stood near the entrance of this village, and fine corn-fields and olive-grounds close to the houses, which pleasingly relieved the picture. We alighted here to take coffee and enquire the news of the road ; but learnt nothing worthy of notice. The village itself was a flourishing one, and the people apparently industrious and happy : the population was estimated at about 500 Moslems, and twenty Christian families. The castle of Adjeloon, in its general appearance, resembled that of Assalt ; and below it, at the foot of the hill on whose summit it stood, was pointed out to us the village of Arrhubbudth, now deserted and in ruins, while in the valley near this, stood the villages of Adjeloon and Ain Jerrah.

We descended, after leaving Anjerah, and passed through a rich and beautiful wood scenery, with grottos in the cliffs, large masses of fallen rock, moss-covered stones and old trees, that presented the most picturesque assemblage of objects; and, after going in a westerly direction for half an hour, we came to Cufr Injey, a village approached through corn-fields and olive grounds. The scenery of our ride over the mountain of Adjeloon, and more particularly down its western side, when we first obtained a sight of the castle on the opposite hill, and the whole aspect of the fine valley below, was equal in beauty to any portion of this richly varied country that I had yet beheld.

We halted at Cufr Injey, and alighted at the house of a Nazarene, named Maalim Yakoube, who had settled here as a schoolmaster, doctor, and worker in metals, and who was thought to be the most clever man to be found in all the country, for many miles round. We met with a very kind reception from this worthy person, and between himself and my companions, as well as between them and various visitors of the village, who had collected around us almost before we alighted, there were exchanged all those cordial salutations, kissings, and greetings, for which the Arabs are so remarkable. Maalim Yakoube, who was a young man of rather a handsome person, was unusually well dressed, with two fine cloth pelisses, of bright red and blue colours, and wore a rich shawl turban, while his wife and infant child were literally laden with gold and silver ornaments, so that his triple profession must have been a profitable one. The dwelling of this family was like all the abodes that I had yet seen, for persons in moderate condition; namely, a raised portion for the members of the family, and a lower part for the household stock and cattle. The workshop in which the silver and gold of the peasants were worked up into rudely fashioned ornaments for their women and children, as well as the school in which the latter were flogged into a knowledge of reading and writing, stood near the house, so that the establishment was all under the eye of the master and

conveniently seated also for his domestic comfort. There were only two Christians in the place besides our host, and as these were not present among the groupe that surrounded us on our arrival, they were sent for, when the kissing and greeting of our first meeting was again repeated.

After we had satisfied the curiosity of our Mohammedan visitors, they gradually dispersed; and being now left alone, or with Christian companions only, the conversation became more free and unconstrained than while they were present. The subjects touched on were chiefly religious and political, and the beaten ground of the partition of the Turkish empire among the sovereigns of Christendom, was trodden again with renewed zeal, the Maalim Yakoube taking a warm and lively interest in the prospects of future emolument and advancement which such a scene opened to his aspiring hopes. Our supper consisted of a dish of rice, peas, and onions, all stewed together in oil; and ungrateful as such a mess must naturally be to an English palate, my appetite was rendered so keen by hunger, that I literally and truly enjoyed it, and made a hearty meal. By way of dessert, some walnuts and dried figs were afterwards served to us, besides a very curious article, probably resembling the dried wine of the ancients, which they are said to have preserved in cakes. Those of which we now partook might also be called wine-cakes: they were of the shape of a cucumber, and were made out of the fermented juice of the grape formed into a jelly, and in this state wound round a central thread of the kernel of walnuts; the pieces of the nuts thus forming a support for the outer coat of jelly, which became harder as it dried, and would keep, it was said, fresh and good for many months, forming a welcome treat at all times, and being particularly well adapted for sick or delicate persons, who might require some grateful provisions capable of being carried in a small compass, and without risk of injury on a journey.

During the conversation of the evening, I learnt that the population of this village was about 400, all of whom were Mo-

hammedans, except our small party; and though governed by a Mohammedan sheikh, the consideration and comfort enjoyed by the very few Christians residing here, evinced a degree of toleration that was far from usual, and would hardly anywhere be found except in places like this and Assalt, remote from the immediate influence of the authorities of larger towns. All the villages in this district of Adjeloon were, however, tributary to the Pasha of Damascus, though lightly taxed, and Assalt was the first town, going to the southward, that was entirely independent of his dominion. Even the Bedouins, who come in to encamp on this fertile country, and of which there were now many who had pitched their tents on the hills, the vallies, and the streams, pay a yearly tribute, from their flocks and herds, to the same authority. Some few, indeed, dispute its payment, as I remember to have seen on the banks of the Jordan, when soldiers from Tiberias had been sent to collect the tribute due; but this is seldom attempted except by large and powerful tribes, or branches of them, who can enforce their refusal by effectual resistance.

The castle of Adjeloon, in size, situation, and construction, resembles that at Assalt, and was said here to be like that at Karak also. They appear to be all old Roman works, with Saracen additions and repairs at subsequent periods. It has a fine commanding situation, with a deep well for water within, and a broad ditch for defence without. It is, however, but poorly garrisoned, as there were, at this moment, only ten soldiers in it from Damascus, these leading so idle a life, that, as far as protection or utility was concerned, it was thought they might as well have been absent as present; and there are neither cannon, ammunition, or provisions, kept within the walls.

I learnt also during our evening's conference, that about nine hours' journey to the N.W. of this, was a place, called by some, Tub kut Fehhel, and by others Jerim Moaz or Mooze, where there were ruins of an ancient city, with a few fragments of broken pillars and five or six tombs, like those of Oom Kais, with stone doors

still standing, and sarcophagi within them. These ruins are about two hours to the eastward of Beisan, the ancient Scythópolis, but on the east side of the Jordan; after crossing which, in a straight line from Beisan, the way up is by ascending the eastern hills, when the tombs are met with about half an hour after beginning to ascend. I was assured that no European had ever yet been there, and that the place was well worth a traveller's visit; but I had other objects to pursue, and was compelled to content myself with seeing only such places as actually lay in my way, or through which the route I was now pursuing necessarily led.

Cufr Injeý, at which we made our halt for the night, lies nearly west from Jerash, about five hours' journey, or twenty miles; and from the nearest part of the Jordan it is about the same distance east. It is about fifteen hours' journey from Nazareth, which bears N.N.W. from hence, and is considered a good day's journey for a horseman, being perhaps from forty to forty-five miles by the road, and from thirty to thirty-five in a straight line. Oom Kais lies north of this about twelve hours' journey, and El Hhussan, the first point of entrance into the Hauran, is in a N.E. direction, distant about eight hours or thirty-two miles.

Cufr Injeý, Friday, March 9.—The object of our visit to this place being to procure a horse for one of my guides, Mallim Georgis, in lieu of the one stolen from him at Jerash, some time was spent in the morning and much difficulty experienced in the search after one, in which we were even at last unsuccessful; but the kindness of our entertainer, Yakoube, soon relieved us from our disappointment, by his granting to Georgis the use of his own mare, and the loan of a small sum of money for the way, to replace what he had lost, and serve his purpose as far as Damascus. I engaged to remunerate him for this, on our arrival at that city; but the act itself was nevertheless one of great kindness, and evinced a confidence which would not be reposed in a perfect stranger in more civilised countries.

We breakfasted with the family on a variety of excellent dishes, among which were included walnuts, figs, and a dried jelly of wine, about the consistence of a cake of portable soup, which we found both agreeable and exhilarating. After breakfast, the several members of the family repaired to their respective duties. The elder brother of Yakoube, a young lad of about fifteen years of age, went out into the school, where he heard the boys read and repeat their lessons, and at the same time occupied himself in the manufacture of some metal bracelets, at a bench fitted with an anvil, vice, and all the conveniences of a regular workshop. The second brother, a lad of about twelve years old, drove out the cattle to graze, and attended at the same time to the feeding of the mare and the poultry. The wife repaired to the kneading trough, to make the usual portion of daily bread for the consumption of the family; and the husband sat down to copy a manuscript book of Arabic prayers used in the service of the Greek church of Syria; while two infant children perpetually quarrelled with each other, and ran alternately to the father and the mother for encouragement and protection.

During our morning stay here, I learnt that there was a constant communication between the towns seated on the east and the west of the Jordan, from Jerusalem, Nazareth, and Nablous, to Assalt, Adjeloon, and the villages in their respective districts. These journies were said also to be in general safe and easy, when performed in company with the inhabitants of the country, in parties from ten to twenty in number. From some of the towns named, the communication is both regular and frequent, and from others the parties are larger and the journies performed at more distant periods: a caravan generally came from Nablous once a month, when all who had business in these parts profited by the protection it afforded; and this, like all the others in this part of the country, was composed chiefly of horses, mules, and asses; the mountainous and rugged nature of the road rendering it disadvantageous to employ camels, which are used chiefly in the plains.

The whole of the country that we had yet traversed on the east of the Jordan, from the lake of Tiberias to the Dead Sea, and from Oom Kais to Heshbon, is fertile in the extreme; and the woody scenery of the mountain districts of Belkah and Adjeloon scarcely to be surpassed in beauty. The soil is so generally fertile as to be capable of producing almost any thing that is required; and while the vallies abound with corn-fields and olive-grounds, the upland slopes of the hills are planted with vines, and the summits of the mountains are clothed with the trees of the coldest regions. The climate is really delightful: a clear, deep blue sky, a pure air, a warm summer in the vallies and plains, a snowy winter on the mountain-tops, with all the finest shades of gradation between these two extremes, furnish every variety of temperature and atmosphere that can be desired by man. The strongest proof that could be given of its salubrity, is the remarkable fact that not one maimed, deformed, or sickly-looking person anywhere met our sight, during the whole period of my being in this part of the country, though we saw new faces, and came in contact with great numbers of persons every day. Indeed this portion of the country included in the districts of Belkah and Adjeloon, on the east of the Jordan, is as superior to the Promised Land on the west of that stream, as the most romantic and beautiful parts of Devonshire are to the bleak hills and barren heaths of the adjoining county of Cornwall.

We were about to depart from Cufi Injei, when as singular an accident as that which brought us here occurred to detain us. A Greek priest, belonging to Nazareth, had walked up this morning from a village called Rajib, seated on the site of an ancient town about two hours to the S.W. among the hills, to claim the use of Yakoube's mare for the day, our worthy host having before assured him that the animal would be at his service whenever he wished it. It was in vain that we pleaded the urgency of our want of the animal in question, as the length of our journey would not admit of any one of our party proceeding on foot. The

same plea was set up on the part of the priest, who had a number of visits to make at the different villages in the district, and who professed to be equally unable to perform them by walking. The question was at last put to the vote, by my desire, but I stood quite alone, in a solitary minority; for all the rest of the company, myself excepted, thought that a day's detention could be of no material consequence to us, as the mare would certainly return to-night, and be ready for our journey to-morrow : whereas, if I persisted in my claim on the animal, and proceeded to set out at once, the priest, as they considered, would be interrupted in the performance of his more important duties, and the guilt of this they conceived would lie on their heads, if they were, in any manner, accessaries to his detention. I was therefore obliged to yield, however reluctantly, and consent to await the priest's return, before we could continue on our way.

At noon we were visited by the wife of the Sheikh-el-Belled, a Moslem woman, who came into the house with her face unveiled, dressed in rich robes, with a fur cloak, a profusion of silver ornaments, and a costly pipe which she smoked as she walked. She had come to consult our host Yakoubé, whose fame as a physician had spread through the neighbouring country, and who she therefore addressed by the title of Hakeem, entreating his professional advice on a complaint, which air and exercise would have been sufficient, without the aid of medicine, to remove. Her visit, though short, was extremely ceremonious : she was accompanied by a female slave, and all rose at her entrance and departure, well knowing that any mark of disrespect to her would be likely to be amply returned by the power of her husband.

After the departure of this lady, dinner was brought, but instead of eating together as before, we now formed four distinct parties. A grilled fowl was served up to me on a separate stool ; then followed my guides and their two Christian visitors, over a large bowl of boiled wheat and oil : after these had finished, the master of the house, his brothers,⁶ and their children, partook of

the same dish ; and last of all came the young wife of Yakoube, quite alone, who retired into a corner of the room with the dishes out of which we had all eaten, and literally gathered up the fragments that nothing might be lost, feeding, as it were, on the crumbs that had fallen from her husband's table.

The degraded state of the women in this country cannot be viewed without feelings of pity, mixed with indignation, by the native of a freer and a happier land, where females are assigned their proper rank in society, and by their education, manners, and amiable qualities of the mind and heart, add so many charms to man's existence. In England, the better part of the passion of love is intellectual : in this country it is wholly formed of animal desire, which alone renders women necessary, or even acceptable, either to Mohammedans or Christians, for in this respect there is no difference whatever between the followers of these religions. They are therefore purchased by both, as any other animal would be, to promote their domestic convenience. The prices of wives, who are literally bought for money, vary from 500 to 1000 piastres, among the better order of the inhabitants living in villages, and scattered through the country, but descends as low as 100 and even 50 among the labouring classes. The wife of the merchant Aioobe, at Assalt, had cost him 800 piastres, and the wife of the Hakeem Yakoube, at this place, had cost him 550, which had been paid to the parents of each. These facts were easily learnt, as no feeling of delicacy forbids such disclosures ; on the contrary, so far from scrupling to name the amount of the money paid for their wives, they frequently mention it without solicitation, and very frequently exaggerate the price for the purpose of enhancing their estimated worth in the mind of a stranger. It should be added, however, that on this subject it is only the Christians that are so communicative, their Mohammedan neighbours being in general averse to any mention of the female part of their families, and resenting as an insult enquiries even after their health. No servants are kept, except by families of great wealth and consideration, so that even in the middling

classes of life, nearly all the domestic labour is performed by the wife, who, it must be confessed, is, after all, only a higher order of slave, being doomed to confinement, degradation, and perpetual labour, from the day of her marriage to the day of her death.

In the afternoon I proposed a walk down into the valley, under the pretence of desiring to bathe in the stream which flows through it. It was my wish to have gone alone, but our kind entertainer Yakoubé offering to accompany me, I could not with propriety decline, and we accordingly set out together. The stream that runs along this valley comes from the eastward through the Wādi Adjeloon, and ultimately discharges itself into the river Jordan to the west. The nearest part of the brook itself is about a quarter of an hour's walk only from the village of Cufr Injey, and about an hour's walk from the castle of Adjeloon, which stands on the summit of the opposite hill. To the south, the land is sufficiently sloped to admit of corn-fields and olive-grounds, but to the north it is more steep and woody, presenting, in many places, steep perpendicular cliffs, in which are natural hollows and artificial excavations, formerly perhaps the abodes of the living and the sepulchres of the dead. The distance from hence, to the spot where the stream first enters on the plain of the Jordan, or El Ghore, as it is called here, is estimated at four hours, or about sixteen miles, in a W. S. W. direction, and from thence to the river itself is reckoned at three quarters of an hour more, the valley being narrow and winding about that part of it.

In a close retreat of this beautiful valley, just beneath some large caves in a high cliff, called Irak el Wehhesh, we surprised some Moslem females from the village washing their own garments, and at the same time bathing themselves in the stream, while their clothes were drying in the sun. As they could not have conceived themselves liable to interruption, (for what man of the country would ever think of walking to such a spot for pleasure?) so they apparently gave loose to their fancies, and four of the party were seen by us in the state of Eve before the fall, with exquisitely fine

forms, and long hair hanging luxuriantly to the water, with some of the tresses floating on the stream, playing all the antics and tricks of sport on each other that might be witnessed in a bathing party of boys just released from the confinement of school. The alarm that was occasioned among them by our unexpected approach, was as great as our own surprise at such a scene; but having no wish to disturb their enjoyment, we retired instantly to leave them in quiet possession of their delightful retreat.

On our return to the village, I was enabled to view it more perfectly than on the preceding evening, as we first entered it; and perceived many proofs of its being on the site of some more ancient settlement. The first of these was the presence of scattered fragments of pottery, of a deep red colour and finely ribbed surface, such as is no where used in the country at the present day; and which, in almost all cases that I remember, has proved one of the surest indications of other remains near, to establish the certainty of its being the wreck of earlier ages, and a more refined and civilised population. Next to this were several excavated caves facing the north, hewn out of the bed of rock on which the village stands, with recesses for the reception of dead bodies within them: other smaller excavations, just adapted to the size of the human body, standing separately; and others again of a still smaller kind, nearly square in form, and probably meant for the interment of young children, though the inhabitants of the village, in common with all the natives of the country, constantly regard all excavations, whether large or small, as the ancient receptacles of treasure. We saw also the portion of a well-built wall on the edge of the cliff above us, the workmanship of which was in the Roman rustic style and manner, the stones large, well hewn, and generally oblong and square; smooth at the edges of union, with a rough projection in the centre of the exterior surface, and the joints still close and compact, though no cement had ever been used in the masonry. To the north-east of this, and a little lower down the hill, I was shown a fine sarcophagus of stone, not long since discovered by

some labourers who were digging on that spot for earth. It was now within an excavation of the rock, and both its contents and its cover had been removed before the labourers found it, so that it did not occupy its original place, and must have been buried in the rubbish that enveloped it since the period of its being originally violated. The clear space of the inside of this sarcophagus was nine spans long and three broad: the stone out of which it was hewn was about three inches in thickness, grooved along the upper edges to receive the cover, and the ends and sides neatly sculptured with two oblong compartments divided by a pillar, and in the centre of each compartment a large full-blown flower, with mouldings enclosing it as a border, and smaller flowers studding the angles of the square. The central flowers in each panel were in a very high relief, of nearly three inches from the surface of the sides which they ornamented, thus differing from all the sarcophagi I had yet seen: but if the execution of the sculpture was ever remarkable for its skill or elegance, it was now too much injured by time and decay to be perceived. The work was, however, undoubtedly Roman, and, connected with the other features of the place already described, established beyond dispute the fact of this being the site of some early settlement, of much greater importance than the village now standing on its ruins. Not far distant from this was the shaft of a small pillar; higher up, the pedestal of a larger one; and hewn stones of a considerable size scattered about in great numbers, which, if confirmation were needed, would strengthen the opinion already expressed.

In the village itself, and not far from the dwelling of our host, I was taken into the house of a Mohammedan family to be shown what was justly considered to be the greatest curiosity in the place. The lower part of the room into which we were introduced was appropriated to the cattle of the family. It was about fifteen feet square, and was surrounded by a bench of solid rock, about two feet broad, and two feet high. In the upper surface of this bench or raised seat were hewn, close to each other, separate troughs or cis-

terns of about eighteen inches square, and nearly two feet deep. At one corner of this singular apartment was a trough or cistern, with an outlet for conveying the water through the building; and beyond the walls of it, in the same direction, were seen the remains of a small subterranean chamber, hewn out of the rock, and ornamented with stucco on its walls. The most curious part of all was the pavement of the first room, which was a sort of Mosaic work, formed of very small stones united together on a bed of cement below them; the persons who showed us this apartment asserted that the stones were of various colours, naming white, green, red, yellow, and blue; but if this were really the case, the surface was now too dirty to enable us to perceive the variety of colours described. It appeared to me, at first sight, to be a thin layer of natural stone liable to break in squares, as I had before seen a layer of that kind only a few inches below the surface of the earth, near the spot where the Roman sarcophagus had lately been dug out of the rubbish; but on a closer examination of the whole I thought it to be really an artificial work, as the joints were in many instances too ill-shapen to be natural. The separate pieces were, in general, less than an inch square: and, though dark at the upper surface as if stained, were white at the bottom. The stone itself was a coarse marble, and the cement on which the whole reposed was a fine lime. I had no doubt, indeed, after a close examination, that the work was entirely artificial, and as such it might be considered, perhaps, as ancient a specimen of that kind of pavement as any in existence. Were it not for this display of labour and expence, I should have thought the apartment originally meant for a stable, with the square pits hewn in the raised bench running round it for grain, and the large trough in the corner for watering the cattle; but, with a Mosaic pavement in the centre, and the square excavations serving as rude cisterns for water all around, it appeared more probable that it had been a very ancient bath. On the outside of this building, to the eastward, and above the stuccoed subterranean chamber, we were shown another pave-

ment, of a similar kind, the stones being only larger in size, or nearly two inches square; like the former one, this was a coarse white marble imbedded in lime, and resembling, at first sight, a layer of stone naturally fractured into squares, as in the vein of this kind near the sarcophagus already described. It is not improbable but that the hint of this rude Mosaic might have first been taken from nature; consisting originally of a simple imitation of such broken layers, and the idea subsequently improved by all the successive varieties of colour and form through which it must have passed before the art attained its present high state of perfection.

It was sunset before we returned to the house; and though I was vexed at my unexpected detention, yet I saw in this instance, as in many others, how many interesting objects might be seen by more fortunate travellers than myself, who should come to traverse this unexplored country, with leisure and means to examine, and opportunity and ability to record what they might see and hear at almost every step of their way.

In the course of the afternoon, during our ramble over the village, two parties had been dispatched to make provision for our supper; one of young boys to catch some fish in the stream of Adjeloon, another of elder lads, with a man at their head, to rouse a wild boar from his lair in the mountains, and hunt him to the death. Both of these foraging parties were successful, and returned before sunset with their game, so that our supper was both abundant and excellent; the fish were small, but of very delicate flavour, and the boar's flesh equal to any that I had ever eaten. The manner of dressing the latter was by placing about twenty pieces of half an inch square on a long skewer, and turning it over the fire as on a spit, so that a few minutes were sufficient to roast it, and even in this rude way of preparing it, nothing could be more palatable. The only regret that was uttered, but this was deep and general, was, that in so Christian an assembly, and with such excellent viands, there should be neither wine nor spirits to complete the feast.

Our host, in his capacity of silversmith and working jeweller, being also a great buyer of strange and foreign coins, both ancient and modern, exhibited to me several very common ones of the Lower Empire, which he had bought at an extravagant price, under an idea that they were really rare and valuable, and would, at a proper opportunity, afford him a handsome profit. His ideas of chronology were so confused, that he thought the early Christians far more ancient than the Greeks or Romans, and considered Alexander of Macedon, and the twelve Cæsars, quite modern personages compared with the Christian emperors of Constantinople. In all his purchases of what he considered ancient coins he, therefore, made the cross the chief standard of antiquity, and paid a much higher price for pieces on which that emblem was found, than for any others. Among his present collection there were several Christian coins, such as Venetian, Spanish, and Portuguese, now current in their respective countries, though he considered them to be of great antiquity; but I did not observe one that was worth more than its weight in the metal of which it was formed. He mentioned, however, having lately possessed a fine white semi-transparent stone (which I took to be an agate from his description), brought to him by a peasant from the ruins of Jerash, having a male figure on one side, and a long Greek inscription on the other. This would, perhaps, have proved an interesting fragment, if it could have been traced; but he knew not to whom it had been sold, all his information being confined to the more interesting fact, as far as he was concerned, of his having purchased it for one Spanish dollar, and sold it soon after for five. He had, at present, in his possession, a coarse agate stone about an inch long, by half an inch broad, of an oval shape, flat on one side and convex on the other, which he said was also found at Jerash; he had set it for the owner into a ring of silver, the outer or convex part containing, in large and rudely cut characters, the inscription here given:—

Η ΟΥ Π
Υ Ο Ι Α

In the conversation of the evening, I learnt that the village of Cufr Injey was considered to be one long day's journey of fifteen hours from Assalt; the same distance from Nazareth; twelve hours from Nablous; and twenty-four hours from Jerusalem, with all of which places there is only occasional communication, and to neither of which it would be considered safe to journey from hence without companions, and these well armed.

Saturday, March 10.—The mare of Yakoube having returned during the night as promised, she was saddled for my guide, Georgis, at daylight this morning; and taking leave of our kind entertainers, we left the village of Cufr Injey at about seven o'clock. In our way out, we saw more remains of ancient buildings, and proceeded down to the valley, in order to cross the stream along which we took our ramble on the afternoon of the preceding day. At the stream itself we observed the remains of an aqueduct and sloping moles of masonry, as I had before remarked when crossing the ford over the Zerkah in a former journey from Jerusalem to Jerash, both of these, probably, marking the boundaries of ancient divisions apportioned to neighbouring tribes.

In about three-quarters of an hour from hence, we came to the caves of Irak-el-Wehheir, the largest of which faced to the westward, and seemed to have a deep descent. It was about 100 feet long, and 30 high, but appeared to be a natural cavern, although it had been used for a place of dwelling or retirement, as there were niches for lamps in the cliffs near it.

In ascending to the castle of Adjeloon, we saw some cisterns, many hewn stones, and part of a paved road leading up to the fortress. The castle has a general resemblance to that of Assalt, being, like it, seated on the summit of a high hill. It is nearly square in form, and about 400 paces in circuit, with a central buttress on each face. It is built on a mass of lime-stone, and surrounded by a broad and deep ditch hewn out of the solid rock, and originally faced with masonry in those parts where the broken surface of the

rock required it, on both sides of the ditch and at the foot of the fortress itself, where it slopes off near its foundations. The architecture of this castle appeared to me to be Roman, the stones being large in size, well squared, and the smooth edges united without cement, with the rough projection of the rustic masonry in the centre of the surface of each separate block. There are also loop-holes for arrows in several parts of the walls, and shell-niches of the form of the Roman arch, resembling those seen in the ruins of Jerash. Within this building, however, the round, the flat, and the pointed arch, are all seen in the same apartment, and though the appearances of Roman work are found in every part, yet the pointed arches of the interior are of the most solid kind, and look as if they were coeval with the building. The loop-holes for arrows resemble the modern embrasures for cannon in every thing but the contracted space of the outer part, and they are so numerous as to prove that the building was erected with a view to hot and desperate defence. The castle may be almost said to be in ruins, though many parts of it are still habitable, for it would require great labour and great expense to restore it to a state of complete repair. It was with some difficulty that we mounted to the top of the walls, but when we succeeded, we were well rewarded by the fine view obtained from thence of all the surrounding country.

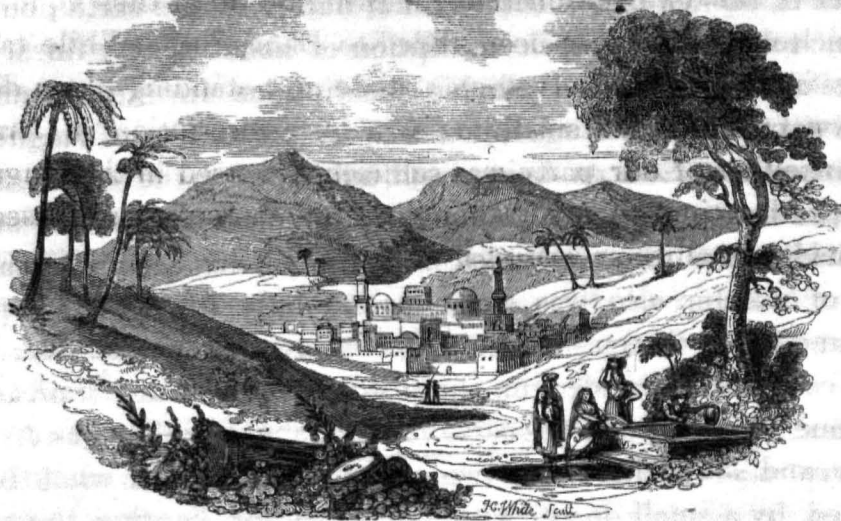
The mixture of Roman and Saracen work which appeared in different parts of the same building, rendered it difficult to decide to which it originally belonged; the opinion I formed on the spot, however, was, that it was originally a Roman edifice, but subsequently enlarged and repaired in different parts by Saracen hands, into which it must have afterwards fallen. This opinion was much strengthened by the discovery of an Arabic inscription, which was evidently not coeval with the building, but placed there after its erection, for which purpose the rough projecting parts of the surface were smoothed down, and a sort of tablet formed underneath two

fan-topped or shell-niches of Roman work on the eastern face of the castle. The only part of the inscription that I could make out was the name of Salah-ed-din-el-Mullela-ibn-Yusef, but no date could be traced. The castle faces nearly towards the four cardinal points, and must have been originally considered one of the strongest positions in the country, though in the hands of its present possessors it is of very little strength or utility. The following is a list of the bearings and estimated distances of places seen from the top of the castle; the former taken by a compass on the spot, and the latter from the authority of the guides and soldiers who were present:—

Village of Anjerah	S.E. $\frac{1}{2}$ S.	1 hour.
Village of Cufr Injey	S.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W.	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hour.
Opening to the Valley of the Jordan	W.S.W.	4 hours.
Town of Nablous	West . .	14 hours.
Town of Beisan	N.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ N.	9 hours.
North extreme of Mount Carmel	N.W.	
Mount Hermon	N.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ N.	18 hours.
Mount Tabor	N.N.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W.	16 hours.
Town and Lake of Tiberias . . .	N. by W.	12 hours.
Gebel-el-Telj, or Snowy Mountain	N. by E.	40 hours.
Osha-el-Nebbe, over Assalt . . .	S. $\frac{1}{2}$ W. .	12 hours.
Bahr-el-Loot, or Dead Sea . . .	S.S.W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W.	10 hours.
Village of Adjeloon	E. by N. .	1 hour.
Village of Ain Jerrah	E. $\frac{1}{2}$ N. .	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ hour.
Beida Hubbar—in ruins	N.E. . .	4 hours.

All around the eastern side of the hill are the ruins of a town called Errubbedth, with a square reservoir for water hewn out of the hill, and stuccoed on the inside with a flight of steps descending into it; and from this town, though now in ruins, the castle of Adjeloon is frequently called Khallet-Errubbedth.

Before we departed from hence we remained to smoke a nargeel and take a cup of coffee with the soldiers, of whom there were, at present, only two stationed at the castle, some of their comrades, as they told us, having been called to Damascus. While taking this refreshment, I observed on a stone now standing like a dividing post between two small doors, a long inscription in Arabic, which neither of our party was sufficiently versed in the language of the olden time to read, though in the characters still used by themselves in all their writings.



CHAP. IX.

FROM THE CASTLE OF ADJELOON TO GHERBEE IN THE HAURÂN.

ON leaving the castle, we descended the hill on which it stands, and passed over the ruins of Errubbedth, which we found nearly covered with trees. In our way to the village of Adjeloon, we passed a large mass of rock, in which we observed an arched recess, and several niches and portions of the surface hewn out, but for what purpose was not very apparent. In half an hour after leaving the castle we entered the village of Adjeloon, the situation of which in the valley is extremely agreeable. It had, however, been once much more populous than at present, there being now but few inhabitants, and the greater number of the buildings in the place in ruins. Among others there was an old mosque, with a central court and pillars, lighted by circular windows from a

dome above, and containing several Arabic inscriptions, none of which, however, we had time to copy. In the court were a number of broken pillars that lay half buried in the earth; on one of which was a long Greek inscription of about twenty lines, now nearly obliterated; and Arabic inscriptions in great number. There was the same strange mixture of architecture as of languages, the Roman and Saracen being both united, as at the castle, triangular pediments marking the one, and pointed arches the other. Attached to this mosque, which might once have been a Christian place of worship also, was a slender but lofty tower of a square form, and about fifteen or twenty feet in breadth on each side. The tower could be ascended on the inside by a winding staircase of sixty-one steps, formed of coarse marble, above which was a small gallery, and above that again two octagonal stages, the whole being crowned by a small dome, with apertures for lighting the stairs from the bottom to the top. On the east of this tower, and on a little lower level, I observed a large well, now used for washing clothes, with the ruins of a large building once erected over it, and apparently of Roman architecture, with Saracen additions and repairs.

From the village of Adjeloon we ascended a steep hill to the E.N.E. over vine grounds, and in a quarter of an hour came to a place called Deer Mar Elias, or the convent of St. Elias, where there were the remains of some former building, probably a Greek monastery, as the name would import. No portion of the building was standing, but a number of hewn stones were scattered about in all directions, and broken pottery, of the red and ribbed kind before described, strewed all the way between the mosque of Adjeloon and this spot.

We remarked at this place that the stones of the original building had been carefully collected by some hand, and heaped up in a circular pile of seven or eight feet high, and about twenty feet in diameter, and on the top of this a smaller circle of about

four feet high. On a loose stone which lay broken among others, the following Greek letters were observed :—

Η ΕΥΔΗΧ

ΕΡΧΝΤΡ

the characters being deeply cut, about three inches in length, and standing at some distance from each other. One of my guides remembered to have seen another stone with Greek characters on it near this spot, but it was not now to be found. There are several large natural caverns in the neighbourhood of this place, and many smaller excavated tombs in the rocks, with small benches near them as if for seats, so that this spot was also likely to have been the site of some larger settlement.

We halted at the house of a Christian Arab at Adjeloon ; and as our host, Yakoobe, had come with us from Cufr Injei thus far, the priest of the village called together all the Christians who were in the neighbourhood to meet us. It appeared that at Cufr Injei there were only four Christians among all its inhabitants, at An-jerah ten, at Ain-Jerrah fifteen, and at this place, Adjeloon, twenty. They have a small room here which is appropriated to worship, and on Sundays and feast days they have the occasional visits of the other villagers to add to their congregation. There are about 400 inhabitants in each of the three former villages, and 200 in this; which, however, must have been once the largest place of the whole, judging from the extent of the ruined dwellings around it, and particularly on its northern side.

We left Adjeloon about ten o'clock, and after ascending a narrow valley to the northward, inclining easterly, entered into a fine forest of Sinjān trees, where, after an hour's journeying, we passed over a spot covered with the vestiges of former buildings, walls, and streets, though now entirely overgrown with shrubs and trees. This spot is called by the people of the country, Belled-el-Yosh, or the country or place of Joshua, probably referring to that leader's bidding the sun to stand still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, (Joshua x. 12.) ; this valley of " Adjeloon," as it

is now pronounced, through which we had come, and on the skirts of which the ruins spoken of are placed, being undoubtedly the same with the valley of Ajalon named in the Scriptures.

Continuing in a northerly direction from the spot, we entered on a red soil with silicious stones, and rock of perforated lime; and in half an hour passed on our right, at the distance of half a mile, the ruined towns of Hhubbeen and Sakkara. The village of Soof, at which we halted in a former journey from Jerusalem to Jerash, was also on our right; and from the high level of the tract over which we now rode, we had a fine view of the plain of the Hauran, bounded by a range of snow-capped hills on the east, by the snowy mountains of the Druse on the north, and by the great Gebel-el-Telj, or Mountain of Snow on the west; in which direction, or on our left, inclining to the south-west, the Sea of Tiberias and the valley of the Jordan extended far to the south. On the road over which we now rode, there was a considerable quantity of unmelted snow, so that the air was sharp and biting; but this track being considered dangerous, we were all on the alert, and rode the greater part of the way with our muskets cocked and ready in our hands.

In another half hour we passed the ruined village of Sampta, about a quarter of a mile on our right, and from thence began to descend over stony ground. Our course still continued to be northerly, inclining to the east a point or two occasionally, and going on in this direction we passed, in half an hour more, a large heap of stones in the road, which was said to mark the grave of a celebrated Bedouin thief, named Abd-el-Azeez, the Slave of the Mighty, on which every Arab of his tribe that passed, and many others following their example, threw a stone to do him honour, and keep the place of his entombment in remembrance.

In half an hour from this, passing still through a thickly wooded tract, we came to a large tomb, excavated out of the solid rock, and lying on the right-hand side of our path. In front of the tomb itself, and forming the approach to its entrance, was a quadrangular court or platform, cut down from the rock, descended

into by three steps, and about fifteen feet square, with a deep cistern for containing water within the same space. From this, the first entrance into the tomb was by a Roman arched aperture, about five feet in height; after this, and further in, was a small square doorway, about two feet and a half wide, which had evidently been fastened with a stone door, as in the tombs at Jerusalem and Oom Kais; the marks of the pivot, hinges, and the cavity for receiving the bolt or lock in the side of the doorway, being still visible. The inner chamber of this tomb had three arched recesses for the reception of the dead. In that on the right hand were seen two sarcophagi lying side by side; in that on the left was only one sarcophagus; and in that at the end of the chamber was another, each, larger than the present human form; all of them being fixtures, and, like every part of the tomb itself, hewn out of the solid rock. The inner chamber appeared to be about ten feet square, and was probably the same in height originally; but the bottom being now covered with accumulated rubbish, it was too low to admit of standing quite upright on the inside. The general aspect of the whole of this remarkable place strongly resembled that of many of the smaller caves of Kenneri, in the island of Salsette, near Bombay; so much so indeed, that but from the great distance of the respective countries, one would be prompted to consider them as the work of one and the same race of people.

From hence our course went north-east, and, in half an hour after quitting the tomb, we left the woody sides of Adjeloon, and came out on a stony tract, forming the northern point of the range of hills over which we had passed, and marking its termination on the plain, at which place the stony tract alluded to, is called Benahh Beida. On the left of our road we saw the village of Summud, about a mile distant and seated on a hill. This village is inhabited, but many others near it are deserted, and among these were four pointed out to us on our right, under the names of Naimry, Shuttemah, Otteadthy, and Hadeijey. The hill on which Oom Kais is seated, was in view to the west, and the white town

of Rumza seen stretching north and south, in the very centre of the brown plain of the Hauran to the east. This extensive district was now entirely open to our view; and we could perceive that though lower than the district of Belkah, it was still on a high level, measuring from the surface of the lake of Tiberias; as the tops of the lofty hills which form the eastern boundary of that lake, were but on a level with the surface of this plain, so that the lake itself must have been much lower. The eastern range of hills that now bounded our view, and are said to be inhabited by the eastern Druses, were of unbroken outline, and not much elevated from the plain, although their summits were covered with snow. To the north-east the land gradually rose, and became lost in an even horizon of high plain. To the north, another range of snow-clad mountains, called also the mountains of the Druse, bounded the view in that direction. On the north-west, the still higher range of the Jebel-el-Telj, sheeted over with snow, extended from north-east to south-west; and in this last direction the northern points of Jebel Asswete and Jebel Adjeloon, showed patches of snow amidst their thick forests of evergreen wood.

Our way now turned easterly, for the purpose of entering on the plain, and descending gradually for about two hours through a stony, woodless, and uninteresting tract of land, we arrived about sunset at the village of El Hhussen, which is the first point of entrance from the mountains into this great plain, and is seated close under the eastern foot of the hills. We alighted here at the house of a Christian Arab, to take shelter for the night; and as I was mentioned to the host as an Englishman on my way to Damascus, the conversation turned on the number of persons that had passed this way within his recollection. Dr. Seetzen and Mr. Burckhardt were familiarly known to him as Hakeem Moosa and Sheikh Ibrahim; and mention was made of an English gentleman who had been at Bosra about a year since, whose name they said was Mr. Wynn, and whom they considered to be a near relation of Lady Hester Stanhope.

The village of El Hhussen contains about 200 inhabitants, among which are 14 or 15 Christians, the greater number of whom came to visit us during the evening. There are appearances, however, of its having been at one time much larger than at present; and as we passed through it at our entrance, I remarked one plain sarcophagus of stone, several large cisterns, and some large sculptured blocks, belonging to former buildings. The town is divided into two portions, the sheikh's house being in the northernmost of these, seated on a hill, and surrounded by many smaller dwellings.

Sunday, March 11. — We quitted El Hhussen at sunrise, and going in a north-east direction for about half an hour, over a soil covered with grass turf, we came to the village of Sareeagh, inferior in size to the former, and in a more ruined state, standing on a slight elevation. Among the ruins of this place I remarked the angle of a large building still perfect, with one column standing erect before it, its base being now surrounded with rubbish. The stones used in the construction of this building were of a larger size, but though the masonry was strong, it wanted that regularity which I had hitherto seen in the ancient edifices of the country. In the western front of the building spoken of, there were two of the largest stones scarfed or fitted to each other in a manner that I had never before remarked, and which induced me to think that the architecture was neither Roman nor Saracen, but probably of an earlier date than either.

In about two hours after leaving Sareeagh, we descended into a valley or ravine, bordered on each side with cliffs and hills of soft white stone, with a torrent running along through the middle of it. The valley is called Wādi Shellāly, and divides the Haurān from the tract over which we had entered it.

In an hour afterwards we passed through Howārah, a ruined village, the dwellings of which are built from large blocks of black porous stone, of basaltic or volcanic origin, like that at Oom Kais. There were also several large wells here, most of which were

stuccoed: and over one of them I observed a large stone, like the cover of a sarcophagus, with a central square hole in it. The village stood on the site of some larger place which was now destroyed, and its ruins scattered widely round.

In an hour and half after crossing the stream in the Wādī Shellāly we passed close to the town of Rimzah, leaving it on our right; and in half an hour afterwards we passed by Torrah, leaving it on our left, with the bed of a stream going westward between them. The last-named towns are both inhabited by Mohammedans, the former having about 800 and the latter about 300 dwellings; they both lie in the Derb-el-Hadj, or the high road of the pilgrims from Damascus to Mecca.

In half an hour after passing Torrah, we came to a stream called Wādī Zeidy, which comes from near Bosra, and discharges itself into the Jordan, to the southward of Tiberias. It was about seventy or eighty feet wide, but very shallow; over it was a bridge of three Roman arches, built chiefly of the black porous stone before described, and paved with the same in the road over the top. It appeared to me, however, to be a modern Turkish or Arabic work, formed perhaps from the ruins of some more ancient and better built bridge occupying nearly the same position, as many of the stones are large and well hewn, though other parts of the materials are very inferior. On the west front of this bridge were three tablets of white stone, of about two feet square; the central one of these is plain; and in each of the others is rudely sculptured the figure of an animal apparently intended for a lion, though more nearly resembling a cat, with a human head under one of its fore paws; the head is without a beard, but has mustachios on the upper lip, and the animal itself is certainly without "a likeness to any thing in the heavens above, or in the earth beneath, or in the waters under the earth," at least as far as they have yet been explored; so that it might be the work either of Jews or Mohammedans, without their breaking any commandment by its execution.

Beyond this, on our left, we saw the town of Suffed, which is now in ruins. From this spot to the Lake of Tiberias, the district is called Joolan, and, like the districts of Belkah, Adjeloon, and Asswete, this was also said to contain 366 ruined cities, by which it is only meant to express indefinitely some great number, as it is usual among the country people in England to talk of mansions with as many windows in them as there are days in the year.

At an hour's distance from thence is a smaller stream, the bed of which was, however, now dry, with a bridge similar to the last described, and with three arches also, leading over it. The stones of which this bridge is constructed are good, and the paved road on the top excellent; but the masonry in the lower part is very inferior; the black porous stone and a cement of lime are used in each.

In half an hour from this last bridge, we came to the castle of Mezereebe, a large square building about 100 feet on each of its sides, with square towers at the angles and in the centre of each face, the walls being about forty feet in height. This is evidently, from its appearance, an old Mohammedan work, and was once, no doubt, strongly occupied; though it is now inhabited only by a few Arab cultivators with their respective families.*

About 200 yards to the west of the castle of Mezereebe, is a lake called Ras-el-Bezhy. It is the source from whence issues the

* In Murray's Historical Account of Discoveries and Travels in Asia, recently published, is the following passage respecting Mezereebe, which is worth transcribing: — "LUDOVICO BARTHEMA, 'spurred by the desire to see the diversity of worldly kingdoms,' undertook (about the end of the 15th century) and effected a long peregrination over almost all India. * * * * After staying some time at Damascus, Barthema 'being desirous of seeing various things, and not knowing how,' contrived to insinuate himself into the favour of a Mameluke, who was going as chief of a caravan to Mecca. On their way they touched at Mezaribe, (capital of the Houari Arabs,) governed by a prince called Zambei, who set at defiance the governments both of Cairo and Damascus, and made constant incursions into the fertile territories of Syria. These Arabs (he says) do not run, but fly like hawks: they ride on horses without a saddle, wearing merely a shirt; they are little men, of a dark leonine colour, with feminine voices and long black hair."—Vol. ii. p. 26. 28.

ancient stream of the Hieromax, or, as it is now called by the Arabs, Shereeah Mandoor, from the latter being the name, as I was assured, of a celebrated chief who once governed the whole of the tract through which that stream runs, from its source at Mezercebe, to its outlet into the Jordan, near the southern extremity of the Sea of Tiberias. The lake is about a mile in circumference; it has a small grass-covered islet in the centre, and an abundance of fish in its waters, equal in size and not inferior in beauty to the gold and silver fishes which are kept suspended in glass globes in England. The water is sweet and transparent, and the lake never dries. All around its margin are seen large round masses of the black porous stone before described, which are in equal abundance also at the outlet of the stream that issues from it, near the hot springs of the Hāmi. These black masses are all separate and unconnected with each other, each being rounded like the large stones on a sea beach; and masses of the same size and form were seen by us scattered over every part of the plain that we had yet traversed since our entering the Hauran. The stream that issues from the lake flows in nearly a westerly direction, with few windings, till it empties itself, at the spot already indicated, into the Jordan, which is considered to be about fifteen hours' journey from hence, in a W.S.W. direction.

We remained no longer at Mezerebe than to water our horses, and proceeded onward without delay. In half an hour after resuming our route, we passed a ruined town called Summahh, which had been entirely constructed of the black porous stone; among the scattered fragments of former buildings here, I saw a fine Corinthian capital, cut out of the same material, but less porous than the general quality; and near this was a small altar of a yellow stone, in shape exactly the same as one seen at Jerash, which is described in a former journey from Jerusalem to that city, already published. This yellow altar had also an inscription on it of three or four lines in Greek; but as we met trains of camels, and a number of passengers traversing the road, we could

not dare to excite curiosity by halting to copy it. The town of Summahh must have been originally of a respectable size; but it is now completely in ruins, and besides the fragments already described, other sculptured blocks were seen, indicating the remains of former edifices.

The direction of our route from El Hhussan to Mezereebe had been about north-east, and the whole distance just six hours, as we had left the former place at sunrise and reached the latter at noon. From Mezereebe, however, we proceeded easterly, and after an hour and half's riding, came to a large ruined town, called Tuffus. The most remarkable object that I observed here was a lofty quadrangular tower, sloping upwards, and becoming gradually narrower from the base to the summit, with a kind of dome on the top, and a large aperture in the centre.

This building might have been some ancient temple of idolatry, for it resembled a Hindoo pagoda more than any other kind of structure that I remember; or it might have been an ancient tomb: the whole aspect of it seemed to denote antiquity, but we learnt nothing on the spot that could explain its nature, nor did we halt to examine its interior. The town had been once much larger than at present, as its ruins were widely scattered; and in most of the buildings that were standing the lower parts near the foundations were of solid workmanship and good materials, but the upper parts were evidently modern repairs of the original edifice, the whole being constructed out of the black porous stones so common to this part of the country; and many of the dwellings being without inhabitants, the only persons now residing in all the town being about a dozen Mohammedan families.

We continued our route still easterly, the level of the plain descending gently, and in an hour and half after passing Tuffus, we came to a much larger town called Dahhil, but like the former also in ruins. On entering this town I observed a small stone door, hung and closed, as at the tombs of Oom Kais, standing in the lower part of a building evidently of ancient work, and once partly

demolished, the upper part of the structure being completed by more modern hands. At a little distance from this in our way through the town, I remarked another portion of a ruined building, the stones of which were of a large size, and smoothly hewn, but instead of depending on the close union of the parts for strength, as in the ancient masonry of the Greeks, Romans, and even Saracens, or using the cement so common in modern works to unite the materials in one mass, the stones here were let into each other, as if the work had been of wood rather than stone.

There were also circular apertures as windows, half being cut out from the upper and half from the under stone, and both these hooked together by pieces of the stone above locking into sockets made to receive them in the stone below; there were also other windows of a square form, supported on the ends of stone beams, giving altogether a new character to this style of architecture, of which I could remember nothing that it resembled. Near to this spot was a still more remarkable building than any yet described: the base of it formed a square of about twenty-five feet, and from thence it rose in a pyramidal form, by regular stages or steps of small but well hewn stones, each layer retiring within the one next below it, as in the great pyramids of Egypt. At the height of about twenty feet this pyramidal form ceased, and was terminated by a platform, on which again was raised a smaller square tower, rising from thirty to forty feet above the pyramid, making the whole height about fifty or sixty feet from the ground. In the western face of this building, but not exactly in the centre of it, was a common-sized doorway, flat at the top, and ornamented by a sculptured frieze. At the south-west angle of the tower, above the pyramid, was also a square pilaster, with a capital resembling the Ionic of the Greeks; but the ornament between the volutes appeared to represent a branch, with leaves extending on each side, as if to represent a wreath bound round its head; the sculpture was, however, too much worn to trace this distinctly.

The passage of entrance being open, we could see that the interior of this pyramidal edifice was square; and I learnt from my guides that it was now used as a mosque by the few Mohammedans residing here. I had so strong a desire to enter this that I would willingly have encountered any risk to effect it if alone; but, with my present companions, I could not even stay to examine the exterior sufficiently, although every thing I saw around me tended to awaken my curiosity. The buildings in this place seemed to indicate a style of architecture neither Greek, Roman, nor Saracen, and, therefore, probably aboriginal and of very high antiquity. The pyramidal tower resembled in some of its features the works of Egypt; in others it was not unlike the pagodas of Hindoostan; and in others it might be considered as of the same age with the supposed tombs of Zacharias and Absalom, in the valley of Jehoshaphat, near Jerusalem; and, therefore, of Chaldean or Jewish origin. I halted to drink for the purpose of prolonging our stay for a moment, and on every side on which I cast my view, blocks of ancient masonry and fragments of ruined buildings caught my eye.

From the large masses of the black porous stone found among the ruins here, the people of the country make circular millstones, and carry them from hence to the large towns on the west of the Jordan for sale. We saw here two camels employed in the transport of these stones, each of them now loaded and on their way. The weight is so great that it requires a strong animal to carry even one of them; those that we saw were laid flat on the animal's back, on the very centre of the hump, thus resting on the high part of the camel's saddle, and secured by cords passing under its belly. The diameter being nearly six feet, the stone completely shaded the body of the camel from the sun, though it must have been a painful burthen to carry, the stone being about six inches thick in the centre and diminishing to about four at the edges. The price of these millstones at the places where they are made, which must be for the labour only, as the material costs nothing,

we learnt to be from 100 to 500 piastres per pair, according to their size and quality.

Our course from Mezerebbe to Dahhil had been east, and the distance three hours; from hence, however, we proceeded in a south-east direction, making this circuit in order to keep on the highway, as there is in general no making sure progress but by following the beaten track, every other part being liable to obstructions that are sometimes impassable, and oblige those who make a digression from the high road to return to it again. In about an hour after quitting Dahhil, the level still gently descending, we came to the remains of a fine Roman aqueduct, going across a hollow in the plain. It is called Canāter Pharaoun, by the Arabs, who generally attribute all great works of which they know not the origin, either to Pharaoh, to Solomon, or to Genii. From my guides, who were well acquainted with its course, I learnt that this aqueduct began at a place called Idilly, one hour to the north-west of Ismiskeen, a town about two hours' journey to the north of this; and after traversing the Hauran thus far, it turned off to the town of Rimzah, which we had passed, and from thence went westward to the ruined city seated on the hill of Oom Kais, which it anciently supplied with water, as the Hieromax, which flows at the foot of that mountain, was too low to be available for domestic purposes. This was only another proof, added to the many I had already witnessed, of the vast labour and expense bestowed by the Romans on the towns of their distant colonies, to promote the comfort and even luxury of their citizens; an example that would be worthy the imitation of our own country, and as yet, certainly, unattempted; for neither in the East nor in the West Indies, at the Cape of Good Hope, New South Wales, nor any other of the many colonial possessions of Great Britain, are there any works, even at their respective capitals (fortresses alone excepted), which can be compared, for magnificence or utility, with the numerous public works scattered over the region of the Decapolis, and attached to colonial towns of the Romans, of so little importance even in their

estimation, that not even their names have descended to us in the annals of their empire.

At the spot where we first came in contact with the remains of this aqueduct, there were two separate and detached portions of it still standing; each of these contained seven arches perfect, and about the same number destroyed; the arches being about fifteen feet in the span, and twenty feet in height from the ground. The masonry was of the rustic kind in constant use among the Romans for all works of strength; the blocks of stone large, and admirably united without cement, and each stone marked with a separate character, as if for the guidance of the workmen in placing them, the marks having among others the following forms:—

TC N V R

From hence, in half an hour after passing the aqueduct, we saw the town of Ikketeby on our left, at the distance of a quarter of a mile. Rising from among its dwellings was seen a square tower with the appearance of a pyramidal base, like the one before described at Dahhil, but we were not sufficiently near to it to speak with certainty on this subject. A few minutes after this, we entered a place named Gherba, which is also called the town of Job, from a tradition that the prophet Job was born and resided here, and that this was the scene of his history as detailed in the sacred volume.

On our way from Mezereebc to this place, we had passed in sight of several towns, to the southward of our route, among which were El-Draah, or Idderahh,* a large town with a high square tower, appearing at the distance of four or five miles off like the tower at Oom-el-Russās, or that in the valley of Adjeloon. Idder-

* This is thought to be the city of Edrei, so frequently mentioned in the Jewish writings as one of the most important places in the territory of Bashan, the king of which, in the time of Moses, lived at Asheroth, which by some is considered to be the same with Bosra.

ahh is, however, now entirely deserted, and the inhabitants have taken refuge at Gherbee. This migration of persons from one town to another is said to be frequent throughout the whole of the Haurān, in consequence of the incursions of the Arabs belonging to the tribes of Beni Hassan, Beni Ibn Saood, Beni Saiide, and others, who come down from the eastern mountains in large bodies, and scour the plains below from one end to the other. We were assured that, only a week since, a party of 300 Arabs had come down from the hills, and taken off from Rimzah, one of the largest towns here, and in the sacred way of the Derb-el-Hadj, or road of the pilgrims from Damascus to Mecca, upwards of 100 head of cattle, in horses, oxen, and sheep; and this was said to be no unfrequent occurrence: in so unprotected a state are the lives and property of individuals residing in these parts, and so insecure also is the whole of the country for travellers, whether journeying on business or for pleasure.

On entering the town of Gherbee, I noticed small enclosures, like meadows, for the flocks, with a sort of watch-house built in the centre of each for the shepherds, who remain in them night and day, relieving each other by watches, for the purpose of guarding their herds from secret depredation, as well as to give the alarm in case of open attack.

In passing by a heap of ruins, among which were some sculptured blocks, I remarked one with an inscription on it, almost obliterated. The characters were certainly neither Arabic, Greek, nor the Hebrew now in use, but rather resembled some of the old inscriptions in unknown characters found in India, and particularly like some of those on the caves of Kenneri, in Salsette, near Bombay. As I remembered the great interest excited by the written characters at Mount Mokatteb, near the Desert of Sinai, from which the learned in Europe hoped to obtain some light as to the lost character of the original Hebrew, for which the Chaldaic is now used, I was particularly desirous of alighting to copy this inscription, four or five lines of which, at least, were tolerably dis-

tinct, and with some patience might have been accurately transcribed; but my guides resisted this most strenuously, as we were now in a town of 400 Mohammedans, with only four Christians in the whole place, at the house of one of which we were to alight; and this being known, we should be sure by such a step to attract a crowd around us, and be ill treated as infidels and sorcerers. I was obliged, therefore, to yield to their refusal, and descending into a lower part of the town, with ruined dwellings on each side of our road, we alighted at the house of my old guide Abu Fārah's friend.

Our horses were taken care of, and we were conducted into a large room of about forty feet long by fifteen broad, and twelve feet high, with a raised space at one end about fifteen feet square, as if for the accommodation of beds, and the lower part of the room set apart for animals, as there were troughs for food and water on each side. The whole of the masonry of this edifice was extremely solid, the stones being in general five and six feet in length, squarely hewn, and closely united, and the posterns and architraves of the doorways were each of one solid stone hewn into a square form. It was evident, too, that the door itself had once been of stone, as the marks of the pivots for hinges, and the aperture for receiving the bolt, exactly as in those at the tombs of Oom Kais, still remained; the original door had been removed, however, and its place was now supplied by a wooden one. The whole of the roof or ceiling was constructed of stone, the largest of the beams being of one solid piece, stretching across from wall to wall, and of corresponding thickness, as in the colossal temples of Egypt, and the intervals filled up by shorter stones like rafters and planking, making the whole one solid mass of stone. It appears to have been the same cause that led to this mode of building both in Egypt and the Haurān, namely, the total absence of good building timber in both these countries; for in all our route of to-day we had not seen in any point of direction a single tree, nor even a bush of any size upon the ground. In its

general character, the Plain of the Haurān resembles those of Belkah to the south-east of Assalt, and Esdraelon in Galilee, in having gentle elevations, the same level being nowhere of long continuation, though still not so much above or below each other as to destroy its general character of an irregular and undulating plain, in which there is nothing that deserves to be called a hill on its whole surface. The eminences that here and there break its continuity are mostly small veins of rock projecting above the surface, and these appear to have been selected in all cases for the sites of towns, for the sake of securing a commanding position, a freer air, a dryer soil, and convenient access to the materials of building, which, indeed, were thus close at hand. Of towns on eminences like these we saw at least thirty, in different points of bearing, on our way from El-Hhussen to El-Gherbee, and particularly to the eastward of the latter.

When our fire was lighted, the want of wood was supplied by using the dried dung of animals, which, with a small portion of charcoal, was the only kind of fuel procurable here. At sunset the camels of our host entered the room in which we were seated, and ranged themselves along, to the number of eight on each side, at the stone troughs before described. The height of the door of entrance, which was about seven feet, had struck me at first as something unusual, since, in most of the towns to the westward, the height of the door is rather below than above the human stature, and passengers are generally obliged to stoop before they can enter it. Here, however, the motive for increasing the height became evident, as in its present state it just admitted the entrance of the camels, and was no doubt originally constructed for that purpose, so as to admit them under shelter at night, and secure them from the incursions of the neighbouring Arabs. This flat country must always have been a country of camels, from the earliest ages: and these rooms for their reception might have been of very high antiquity, for the nature of the materials of which they were built (there being no wood whatever, and nothing else

of a perishable nature used in their construction) made them in a manner indestructible.

During our journey through the hills, we had seen only horses, mules, and asses, used as beasts of burden; but since we had entered the Plain of the Haurān, we had met only camels, and these to the number of several hundreds in the course of one day. If this were really the land of Uz, and the town in which we now halted the place of Job's residence, as tradition maintained, there could be no portion of all Syria or Palestine, that I had yet seen, more suited to the production and maintenance of the 7000 sheep, 3000 camels, 500 yoke of oxen, and 500 she asses, which are enumerated as forming the substance of this greatest of all the men of the East. (Job, i. 3.) At the present day, there is no man, probably, with such herds and flocks for his portion; but these are still, as they were in the earliest times, the great wealth of the men of substance in the country; and it is as common now as it appears to have been when the history of Job was written, to describe a man of consideration in these plains by the number of his flocks and herds rather than by any other less tangible indication of wealth.

At the period of our stay here we learnt that the late drought with which the plains had been afflicted, had nearly caused a famine in particular parts of the country, and this was one in which it was severely felt. Corn, for instance, in this plain, which in seasons of abundance formed the granary for the whole of Syria, and was, consequently, cheaper than elsewhere, was now selling at three piastres, or more than half a crown sterling per gallon, a price that was almost without precedent or example. From the entire absence of rain, all the pasture for cattle had also dried up, and the usual supplies of milk and butter were, therefore, equally deficient. Under this pressure of want and distress, innumerable families had migrated into the eastern hills among the Druses, and into the mountains near the Jordan, in both of which districts rain and snow had occasionally fallen; while in the great Plain of the

Haurān, which separates these ranges of hills, there had been a continued drought for four months past, without the means of watering by irrigation; and, consequently, the soil, though naturally fruitful, was by this calamity rendered, for the present at least, quite unproductive.

In the parties we had met on the road, and among all the inhabitants of the towns, I had noticed an appearance of freshness and health, with much greater cleanliness than is common to Arabs in general. In the towns at which we now halted the same thing was observable: the women and children were quite ruddy in their complexions, the men were well dressed and clean; and as the ancient town had been originally paved with large blocks of black stone, with a raised causeway on each side for foot passengers, both the streets and the interior of the houses were remarkably free from dirt. It was distressing, however, to hear from all classes the universal cry of want, and to witness, as we did, extensive tracts of corn land, where wheat had been already sown, and the blade appearing above the surface, prematurely withered away while yet green, from want of moisture. The conversation of the evening was wholly engrossed by this painful and distressing topic, and in gloomy apprehensions of the miseries which must result from a continuation of the present weather; though some indulged a hope that a seasonable supply of grain might be brought by caravans from Egypt, as of old, or that the latter rains would admit of a second crop, before a famine should be confirmed.



CHAP. X.

FROM GHERBEE TO BOSRA.

MONDAY, March 12. — After partaking of an early breakfast of bread and oil, the only food which the rigid rules of the Greek Lent would admit, and which were as rigidly observed by the four Christians here as if there had been a much larger community, we departed from Gherbee about an hour after sunrise. Our course from hence lay nearly east, and proceeding in that direction for about an hour the road turned to the north for a quarter of a mile to the town of Elmey. At this place were many vestiges of ancient buildings, among which I noticed some stones sculptured with a cable moulding, and two curious pillars with square shafts and rude capitals; their outlines perfect, but no ornament of any kind apparent, either on their summit or at their base: they were

of a small size, not more than a foot in diameter, and both had fallen on the ground. From the walls of one of the buildings I remarked also a flight of stone steps projecting from its front, without any other support than that derived from the insertion of their inner ends in the wall, as in the flight of steps seen in the south end of the Temple of Isis, at Tentyra, in Egypt. The windows, instead of being circular, as we had seen them at Dahhil, were in diagonal squares, cut partly out of the upper and partly out of the lower stone, in nearly the same manner as the circular ones before described.

Having drank at this place, we pursued our way, continuing again along the high road to the eastward, and in less than an hour after quitting Elmey we arrived at the town of Suwarrow. We had been informed by some peasants, with whom we had exchanged salutations just as we entered this place, that there were forty horsemen of the tribe of Beni Hassan, from the eastern hills, stationed in the road only an hour beyond the town, and that they intercepted all travellers who passed that way. It was thought prudent, therefore, to halt at Suwarrow, and learn the real state of the case before we proceeded further, when we accordingly turned in, and, enquiring for the house of the sheikh, alighted there about ten o'clock.

All the inhabitants of this place were Mohammedans, and bore the character of being bigoted and intolerant in an unusual degree: great caution was, therefore, necessary to be observed in our intercourse with them, to avoid insult, and, perhaps, aggression. Abu Fārah, the eldest of my guides, was so well known throughout every part of the country, that it was vain for him to attempt disguise, for he was almost certain of meeting some old acquaintance in every assembly. But it was not so with Mallim Georgis, who had less extensive connections in these parts: accordingly, Abu Fārah maintained his own character as a Greek Christian, but represented Georgis as an Arab Moslem, from the west, under the name of Abu Shumr, and myself as a Turk, from Roum, under the

name of Abdallah. We were received in our new characters with great hospitality; and, after coffee, an ample meal of bread, camel's milk, and honey was served to us. On directing our enquiry into the truth of the news we had heard respecting the horsemen who intercepted the road beyond us, we found it confirmed, and all parties advised us to halt here a day, in the assurance of perfect safety under the roof of the sheikh, during which interval we might be able to learn the movements of these plunderers, from such as might chance to escape them, and drop in or pass through this on their way from the eastward. My situation was, now, a very painful one. I understood sufficiently of Arabic to join in the general conversation without exciting suspicions of my being a stranger, using only the precaution of never speaking but when absolutely necessary; but I scarcely understood ten words of Turkish, and I trembled at the entrance of every new visitor, from the apprehension of my being addressed in that language, and being unable to reply. Fortunately for my wishes at the present moment, I had during the last two days suffered severely from a violent head-ache, which being known to my companions, they advised me to lie down for an hour and repose myself. I was but too happy to follow this advice, and as it was given publicly, the motive was generally understood, so that no apology was necessary for such a step. I therefore rolled myself up in my cloak; and though I did not sleep a moment, from the anxious state of my mind, I was glad to prolong this state of security from detection, and encroached on the limits of the hour at least fourfold.

Arising towards the close of the afternoon, I walked around the court of the dwelling in which we had reposed, and saw also from the outer walls some other portions of the town. Though there were said to be about 400 inhabitants, the town was almost entirely in ruins; and it was clear, from such parts of the edifices as still remained perfect, that the whole of the buildings now seen were of great antiquity, though many of their repairs were modern. In front of the house in which we remained was a large quadran-

gular court, on the outside of which were several raised semicircular benches of masonry, capable of containing a party of twenty individuals, and constructed apparently for the accommodation of persons desirous of enjoying there the freshness of the morning and evening air. Within this court was a large building nearly 100 feet long, the west end of which was used as the room of entertainment for strangers. It was not more than twenty feet square. The roof of this edifice was formed of beams of stone, but the pieces not being long enough to reach quite across the building from wall to wall, there was a central arcade for the ends of the short beams to unite upon for support. The arches of this were extremely rude, being neither round nor pointed, and so irregularly formed that no two stones in the sweep of the arch were of the same length, their ends thus overlapping each other in a most unfinished manner. Though the beams were of stone, the smaller parts, representing the rafters and planking, were supplied by wood, which formed a singular mixture, and gave the whole a new appearance; the first was probably the more ancient portion of the work, and the latter a modern labour. The entrance to this building had once been closed by a double or folding door of stone, but the place of this was now supplied by a single door of wood, which is lighter and more convenient for use, but far less secure. It was hung, however, exactly like the massy stone doors in the sepulchres of Oom Kais, as, indeed, were all the doors of every description that I had yet seen in the Haurān; that is, without hinges of any kind; but in lieu of them a pivot at the top and one at the bottom, formed from elongations of the material of the door itself, and traversing in sockets to which they are nicely fitted both above and below. The door was flat at the top, and the frame composed of three large pieces of stone; and over it was a small square window, which we regarded as an improvement worthy the adoption of the Arab villagers in their dwellings, in which, from the want of such apertures, when the door is shut, there is no place whatever for the admission of air or light, or for the outlet of the

smoke, by which persons unaccustomed to its effects are sometimes nearly suffocated.

At the east end of this building rose a high tower, now partly ruined; but the angle of it, which remained most perfect, had an inclined slope, like the pyramidal moles which stand before the principal temples of Egypt. Between this and the eastern end, or in the centre of the south front, was a door that led into an interior court, which I was prevented entering from its containing the females of the sheikh's family. This outer door had a flat and deep architrave, in the centre of which was the circle formed by a serpent with its tail in its mouth, supposed to be an emblem of eternity, and frequently seen among the sculptured hieroglyphics of Egyptian temples. On one side of this was visible the fragment of a figure, which, had I seen it in any other place, I should have pronounced to be an Egyptian priest, so much of it as was visible exactly resembling the lower part of those personages as they are represented in the multiplied sculptures along the banks of the Nile: and the corners of this block of stone were marked by circles like wheels of fire, probably intended to represent planets in motion. Within this door of entrance, and at a short distance only beyond it, was seen a Roman arched passage of masonry, leading to the inner court, which was paved; the outer court, over which stood the sculptured architrave already described, was closed by a double door, or, as it is more generally called, a pair of folding doors, formed each of one large and solid stone. I had an opportunity of seeing both these doors opened and shut, by which I perceived that they were hung in exactly the same manner as the stone doors in the sepulchres of Oom Kais, and that like them also, these were secured by a bar of stone on the inside. The whole of this edifice appeared to me, both from its style of building, its divisions, and its ornaments, to have been originally a Pagan temple, whether of the ancient Chaldeans, or of more recent times, it was not so easy to determine, from the mixture of seemingly incongruous parts: but it might have been converted to various uses, and have undergone corresponding additions and repairs.

since its original construction, which was decidedly of an age very remote from the present. I would gladly have bestowed an hour on the examination of its interior, but this was rendered impossible, from its being the apartment of the sheikh's female establishment, into which even their male relatives are not permitted to enter.

During the latter part of the day, which was spent in a circle round the fire, with a party of at least twenty persons, though these were constantly changing, by some rising up and going away, giving place to others who had newly come, I saw before me a complete picture of Arab life, and heard many curious particulars, which, as usual, I had occasion to regret my want of opportunity to record. It appeared that the forty horsemen in the neighbourhood, though they intercepted strangers and travellers coming from this town of Suwarrow, derived all their supplies from this place and another to the eastward of them, on condition that the towns themselves should be safe from their depredations, and that no strangers even should be molested as long as they were sheltered beneath their roofs. Their privileges were to extend thus far, and no farther; for they could not protect a man even a mile beyond their dwellings; so that the unwary traveller passing by either of these neutral or privileged posts, was almost sure of being stripped of all his property, though his life would be in no danger as long as he made no resistance.

The towns of the Haurān are so frequently visited by parties of plunderers of this description, that the present state of things was viewed here with comparative indifference, and was indeed expected by all to have existed to a much more extensive degree; for at the present moment the affairs of Damascus were in such confusion, that no one yet knew who was to succeed the late Pasha in his government, and accordingly, disorder and danger increased with every succeeding day. It is in periods of misrule like these, that one town becomes suddenly deserted and another re peopled at short intervals of time; so that from the edifices in each being of the most durable kind, they remain uninjured, and thus serve for the

habitations of race after race, descending through many generations. For the same reason, the houses may be said to be without permanent owners, the first occupier holding his right indisputable, until he is forced by some sudden emergency to quit it ; when the next occupier enters and retains it on the same condition, no rent or taxes being paid in either case, any more than would be if a man lived in his own tents, or in a natural cavern which he might find suited to his purpose, and adopt for his abode. As there are in general more houses in these everlasting and indestructible towns, than there are persons at any one time requiring to occupy them, an ample choice is afforded to all parties, but particularly to the earliest comers : and as no one has a permanent interest in the security of any one particular dwelling, very little attention is paid to improving them. The buildings are in themselves so strong, being wholly composed of stone, including roofs and even doors, that they never need repairs. In times of great danger, when a visit from Arabs of the Desert is apprehended, the inhabitants either retire to some other town, or barricade themselves in their houses by heaping up loose stones to oppose the approach of horsemen to the most defenceless parts of their dwellings, while they can assail them with the same material as missiles from the terraces above. It is only by walls of loose stones heaped up without cement, that the enclosures for the cattle are formed, unless, as is sometimes the case, they are driven into the dwelling itself at night, where they remain perfectly secure from depredation.

All the towns of the Haurān are considered as subject to the government of Damascus, but it is a mere nominal subjection ; for when the military make their annual tour for the collection of the miri, or land revenue, it is as frequently evaded as it is paid, by the parties from whom it is due retiring for a short period with their families and flocks into the eastern hills, and leaving the bare land and empty dwellings only for the tax-gatherers, which, however, being both immoveable, the farmers find exactly in the same state on their return. The people are in general tall, stout, and

muscular men, with full and dark beards, resembling in stature and person the finest race of the Fellahs of Lower Egypt, particularly those of Sharkieh, on the eastern branch of the Nile, who are superior to those on the west. They are, however, much cleaner than the Egyptians, and generally better dressed, their ordinary apparel being a long white shirt and trowsers, with a broad leathern girdle, a red cloth cap forming the centre of their turban, and this completed by a white muslin cloth rolled round the brow, encircling the head. All the men, of whatever class or condition, wear arms, consisting generally of a musket and a dirk, or a pistol and a sword, it being thought unsafe to travel even an hour's distance, without being thus prepared for self-defence.

During our stay at Suwarrow, there were continual arrivals of persons from all quarters, most of whom halted here without intending to proceed farther, until the road was clear: and by a small party of the townsmen themselves who came from the eastward, we learnt that the horsemen now intercepting the road in that quarter were preparing for movement, and intended making a tour northward, in the course of the night. Many of the incidents of our present situation reminded me forcibly of being at sea in an unprotected merchant ship in time of war, when every distant sail is magnified into an enemy, and all eyes are on the stretch for discovery. Look-outs were stationed on the terraces of the houses, and on the heaps of rubbish formed in different parts of the town; and messengers were repeatedly sent by them to the sheikh's house to report what they saw: one man, for instance, arrived to say that three horsemen were in sight to the southward, going westerly; another followed soon after, to say that five men on foot were seen in the western quarter, apparently bound this way; then came another announcement stating, that two horsemen, strangers, who had passed through Suwarrow without halting, about an hour before, were seen stopped by the plunderers to the eastward, by whom they were stripped, and were now returning on foot to the town, the whole of this affair being distinctly seen from the terrace

of the sheikh's house, and without a glass, so acute has nature and habit together rendered the vision of these people; the transaction, though on a plain, taking place at the distance of at least three miles from the spot in which it was observed.

We had a constant succession of reports like these, some true, and some perhaps exaggerated by alarm; but soon after sunset, the two horsemen who had been stripped, returned back to the town, and entered the room in which we were sitting, each having only a shirt and a skull cap remaining. These men had not halted in their way through the town, being well-mounted and proceeding onward in confidence, not knowing anything of the state of the road beyond us, from not stopping to make enquiries; they were therefore taken by surprise, when they found themselves surrounded by hostile men mounted and armed as themselves. They considered their case the more unfortunate, as, if they had been but half an hour later, they would have escaped injury, the whole troop being then mounted, in order to commence their march to the northward as the sun set. As it was, they were plundered of their horses, arms, money, clothes, and all that they possessed, excepting only the shirt and cap left to cover their nakedness; and they had the additional mortification to see their plunderers set out with all their train, and to know that there was no hope of their having their property restored. I observed, with pleasure, that every individual of our party sympathised in the condition of these unfortunate men, and that there was not one in the room who did not contribute to re-clothe them, and also to form a small purse of money to meet their immediate wants. They had thus more garments given them than they could possibly wear, or could conveniently carry, and about ten piastres in money, which was more than their expenses back to their own town would require, deprived as they now were of their horses, the only article requiring to be purchased with money in this part of the Haurān being corn for these animals, which was now unusually scarce and dear. A foot passenger could therefore make his way at little or no expense, as

travellers and wayfarers of every description halt at the sheikh's dwelling, where, whatever may be the rank or condition of the stranger, before any questions are asked him as to where he comes from, or whither he is going, coffee is served to him from a large pot always on the fire, and a meal of bread, milk, oil, honey, or butter is set before him, for which no payment is ever demanded or even expected by the host, who, in this manner, feeds at least twenty persons on an average, every day in the year, from his own purse: at least I could not learn that he was remunerated in any manner for this expenditure, though it is considered as a necessary consequence of his situation as Chief of the community, that he should maintain this ancient practice of hospitality to strangers.

Our evening supper consisted of boiled rice and stewed meat, with onions, and some milk poured on the whole; and as it was the Greek Lent, which my two Christian guides observed rigidly, though Abu Fārah's fasting was much against his inclination, the Mallim Georgis was obliged to decline eating of the dish set before us, there being flesh and butter in its composition. From this simple circumstance it was immediately known that he was not a Moslem, as at first pretended: but fortunately the company were in such good humour, that no evil consequences resulted from this discovery, which at any other time of the day, and in any other frame of mind, would not have been regarded by our Mohammedan entertainers with so much indifference or complacency. I performed my part, however, without scruple, and if the purity of my faith were estimated by the quantity of flesh meat eaten at my evening meal, I must have appeared in all eyes as one of the most orthodox of the party.

The Mallim Georgis and Abu Fārah, who ate a supper of bread and olive oil by themselves, rejoined the circle soon afterwards, and made effectual amends for their temporary separation, by their united exertions to please: the first reciting with appropriate action and gesture a long Arabian tale of the Khalifs of Baghdad, and the latter following this up by a sort of dramatic rehearsal,

consisting of declamation, recitative, dialogue, action, and singing, which lasted fully two hours, and which, like an Oriental personification of English Matthews, he sustained, unaided and alone, with great humour and spirit, from its opening to its close.

It was past midnight before our cheerful and entertaining party broke up, when we all lay down, to the number of twenty-three persons, on the same floor, each measuring his length on the earth on which he sat, rolling himself in his cloak to serve for matress and coverlid, and using whatever was nearest at hand for a pillow.

Tuesday, March 13.—We remained to take a light breakfast before starting from Suwarrow, and left the town about an hour after sun-rise, the sheikh and his son holding our horses, attending us to the outer gate of their dwelling, and giving us the “Maat Salaami,” or benediction of peace as we departed. As the Arab horsemen were now gone to the northward, the only route left open for us was to go from hence to Bosra, and join some safe party from that place to Damascus, or else go through the country of the eastern Druses, which from being well peopled and less visited by the Arabs, was less dangerous to travellers. We accordingly proceeded eastward, and in about an hour after our leaving Suwarrow, we passed Haraak and Haryik, the two ruined and deserted towns on which the predatory horsemen had quartered themselves, and which, they having now abandoned, was without a single living being as an inhabitant. We did not enter these towns, but passed a little to the southward of them; from whence however we could observe, that in size, manner of construction, and the general aspect and nature of their edifices, they resembled most of the other towns that we had yet seen in our way through the extensive plain of the Haurān.

Our road was now over a more rugged and stony soil, as we followed the vein of rock by the side of which the highway ran, and on the edge or ridge of which most of the towns had been originally

built. Our course from the two last-named towns made a bend in a south-east direction, until we came to Rukhum, a ruined and deserted town, distant about three hours from Suwarrow; after this, the road went again over a fertile soil, and the course bent to the S.S.E., in pursuing which we passed, in the short space of an hour, not less than fifteen dead animals, principally cows and calves, which were said to have died for want of pasture, as we could well believe, for the surface of the earth was every where parched and bare.

From Rukhum we came in less than an hour to Tchatchy, another ruined and deserted town, possessing no remarkable features by which to distinguish it from others of the same size. A sudden turn of the ridge of rock near which our road lay, obliged us to turn southward, the ridge running north and south along the plain, and the road repeatedly changing its direction in consequence of this obstacle.

One of the peculiar characteristics of difference between the ruined towns in the Haurān and those of the countries to the westward, is this, that in the former no fragments of broken pottery are seen, while near the ruins of ancient cities in Syria and Egypt, considerable quantities of such fragments are invariably found, either collected in heaps or scattered about on the surface of the earth. From this, one would infer, that abundant as was the use of earthen vessels in the two former countries, and particularly along the banks of the Nile, they were not much used in the Haurān, where, as stone had been so universally applied to all parts of their buildings from the want of wood, the same material, or perhaps metal, might have served for all their domestic utensils, and supplied the place of clay. Even at the present day, indeed, the want of this is so general that there are no potters or potteries in the country, and scarcely a vessel of earthenware is anywhere to be seen. The large jars used in their houses for containing corn and other provisions are made of mud and chopped straw, simply dried in the sun; their small drinking cups for coffee

are of chinaware brought from Damascus ; their cooking utensils are all of iron or copper tinned on the inside ; and water, wherever we had yet had occasion to ask for it, was handed to us in round wooden vessels, about the size of an English gallon, such as is used in measuring corn, about the same size, shape, and material, and not round like a bowl ; in every part of Syria and Egypt, however, the jars and water-pots are of red and yellow pottery of burnt clay.

In the course of to-day's journey, we met some Christians from the eastern mountains, all armed, as were indeed all the inhabitants of the country that we had yet seen ; and as we advanced in this direction, we observed the people to be in general cleaner, handsomer, and better clad, than those subject to the government of the Turkish pashas in the west. After passing for half an hour along the side of the low range of hills described, we halted for a moment for the convenience of Georgis, who had occasion to claim a short delay, and taking Abu Fārah with me to the summit of the nearest point, which was quite close, I profited by this delay to take from thence a set of bearings and distances of the several towns and positions within sight from thence : the former were taken by compass on the spot, and the latter either computed by the eye, or set down from the information of my guides ; my desire being to attain as much and as accurate materials of this description as I could, to construct a map of this part of the country, which at present is quite unknown, and a blank in the best maps of Europe.

Mesefeny	S. W.	1½ hours.
Faqueer Zeahby	S. W. ¼ W.	2 hours.
Seyda	S. W. ½ W.	6 hours.
Nayme	W. by S. ½ S.	6 hours.
Idderāgh	W. by S.	6 hours.
Altaman and Arran	West	1 hour.
Gherbee	W. ½ N.	3 hours.
Ghumman	W. by N.	6 hours.
Karak	W. ½ N.	½ hour.
Rukhum	N. W. by N.	2 hours.

Centre of Jebel-el-Telj . . .	N. by W.	
Do. of Jebel-el-Druse . . .	N. to N. N. E.	
Iddoor	N. N. E.	4 hours.
El Melēhah	N. E. by N.	4 hours.
Iddārah	N. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ N.	$\frac{1}{2}$ hour.
Sidjin	N. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E.	3 hours.
El Mizzerāh	N. E. by E.	4 hours.
Reemy	E. N. E.	4 hours.
Walguh	E. by N.	1 hour.
Essāly	E. $\frac{1}{4}$ N.	3 hours.
Lussuhhah	E. by S.	3 hours.
Jeada	E. by S.	2 hours.
Soeda	E. by S.	6 hours.
El Ghelab Hauran, a round hill,	E. S. E.	10 hours.
Castle of Salghud	S. E.	12 hours.
Oom Welled	S. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ S.	2 hours.
Rghotha	S. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ S.	3 hours.
Bosra, (hid by a rising ground)	S. E. $\frac{1}{4}$ S.	8 hours.
Deer	S. E. by S.	$\frac{1}{2}$ hour.
Mukkraba	S. by E.	3 hours.

The spot from whence these bearings were taken, was to the north of Sheikh Hussein, about a quarter of a mile; and on a rocky eminence, similar to that on which is seated the deserted tomb of the Saint giving name to that place, which may be known by the distinguishing mark of two small domes, surrounded by a wall, though now in ruins. I have set down only the principal towns and places in view from the eminence on which we stood, omitting many smaller ones, but the enumeration is sufficient to show how populous a country must have been, wherein so many towns and villages could be seen from a slight elevation above its surface. Excepting in the immediate environs of large cities, or on the borders of rivers, I should doubt whether any country on earth, not even excepting China, was ever more thickly peopled than these plains of the Haurān must have been when in their most flourishing state, with all their numerous towns fully inhabited.

On descending from this eminence, and continuing our route in a south-east direction, we came in half an hour to the town of Deer, which I learnt was also called Ibn Eklāf. It was an ancient place of considerable size, but it was now mostly ruined and entirely deserted. There were some few buildings remaining, portions of which were tolerably perfect, and in these the original masonry appeared to be of the best kind, the stones being large, and the work both smooth and solid: in one of these I remarked a plain cornice projecting from the wall about half way up its height, without any apparent cause for its insertion there; and in another I remarked the square and circular window used alternately. On the left we passed a singular kind of pyramid, formed of a large collection of loose stones, heaped up in a pyramidal form upon a platform elevated from the ground, supported by four pillars of about three feet high, and the pyramid above this rising to the height of fifteen feet at least from the ground, the termination or apex of the whole being crowned by a rudely cut stone, of the shape of a sugar loaf, on the top. We could gain no accurate information as to this singular monument, which, however, I should be inclined to conjecture was an ancient tomb, though its rudeness might perhaps induce a belief of its more modern date.

In half an hour from Deer, we came to Wādi Thalith, where we found a considerable stream descending from the snows of the eastern mountains above Soeda. Here we watered our horses, and drank of the stream, which we found to be sweet and refreshing. During the rainy season, this brook must be of a considerable size, as at the present time, notwithstanding the long continued drought, which had parched up the face of the whole country below, the stream was about ten feet across and a foot deep in the centre.

The next place by which we passed was Oom Welled, a ruined but still inhabited village, containing about thirty Mohammedan families: and from thence our course continued south-east, until we came to Rghotha, another village, in which there were no per-

sons inhabiting the houses, but where a few of the Desert Arabs had encamped in tents. I noticed here the semicircular end of an old building, probably a Christian church, and many sculptured stones; but as we passed a short distance to the eastward of the town, I had no opportunity of seeing its interior.

From Rghotha our course turned east, and in half an hour from thence we passed by a rude tomb, formed out of a large quantity of loose stones collected together in a heap, and this again surrounded by an oval wall of other loose stones. It is called the tomb of Aziz Ibn Sultan Hassāni, who is said to have been a powerful chief of a tribe of Eastern Arabs, and to have met his death here in a warlike encounter, when very far advanced in years.

From hence, in another hour, and proceeding nearly in the same direction, we came to the town of Aehhrah, the station of Sheikh Shibley, the chief of the Eastern Druses, and peopled entirely by his followers and Christians, there being no Mohammedans among its inhabitants. We reached this town soon after four o'clock, and alighted at the house of a kinsman of Abu Fārah, who appeared to have relations, friends, and acquaintances over every part of the country. We had a large evening party assembled to greet our welcome, and here, for the first time in the Haurān, I saw chimneys and fire-places, as in the farm-houses in England, well filled with excellent fuel, and a blazing fire kept up during the night. The men of our party were all stout, handsome, clean, and well dressed; and the children were among the best-looking that I had ever seen in any part of Syria. The government being in the hands of the Druse chief, and the people of that sect never attempting to make proselytes, but exercising great toleration towards all other persons of opposite religions, there appeared to be greater harmony and good understanding between all parties here, than could have been the case if Mohammedans had possessed the sovereign rule. There were several of the Druses in our company, who were hardly to be distinguished in their manners or appearance from their Christian neighbours, and though

the conversation sometimes took a political and sometimes a religious turn, they readily joined in it, and expressed their opinions with great freedom; neither party, however, seeming to be offended at the remarks of the other. In this agreeable manner, the time passed away so rapidly, that it was midnight before we were aware of it, and still later before our party broke up.

Wednesday, March 14.—One of the first duties of the morning was to pay a visit to Sheikh Shibley, whom we found, as early as sunrise, surrounded by a party of his followers, in a large room in which he generally received strangers, and heard such complaints as it fell within his power to attend to and remedy. On being presented to him, I was invited to come and seat myself by his side, and we soon entered into a familiar conversation on general matters, which afterwards turned to those of a more local and particular nature. He was in person of the middle stature, and of an open countenance and agreeable manners; his age could not have exceeded forty-five; his dress was plain, and his whole demeanour entirely free from ostentation. He asked me many questions respecting Mr. Burckhardt, whom he had known under the name of Ibrahim, in a short stay which he had made here: and in the course of this conversation, having once or twice intimated to me, that from the number of persons present our intercourse could not be so free as he desired, he asked me for a small scrap of paper, which I fortunately possessed, and on this he wrote an Arabic line, which he handed to me without showing it to any one else, the purport of which was, "It may be, between us, another time, as it was with Ibrahim." I inferred from this, that though a chief of the Druses, the sheikh might be disposed to communicate much when alone that he felt it due to his station to repress when others were present, and regretted that circumstances would not admit of my staying a day or two with him, for the purpose of a more confidential and familiar intercourse. Under existing circumstances our conversation was confined to topics of the most

general nature, in which every one could join. Before we took leave, an excellent breakfast was brought in, consisting of the usual dishes of the Turks, who live much more expensively and luxuriously than the Arabs, to which were added walnuts and dipse or the sweet syrup made from dry raisins ; and after a hearty meal we arose to depart.

In passing through the town, on our way to the house of Abu Fārah's friend, at which we had slept, I observed the fragments of old buildings, wrought up into more modern ones, shewing that this had been the site of some ancient town now destroyed, and that many of the present edifices had been constructed out of the ruins of earlier ones. One of these fragments was the sculptured architrave of a doorway, the upper compartment containing a device of pointed leaves overlapping each other, and going from the left end to the right and the right to the left till they met in the centre; the under compartment was a series of more rounded leaves or scales, the inner one deeply cut, and the outer in slight relief. There were also several plain columns seen in different parts of the town, and some buildings with pointed arches in them, which seemed to be original works, and not repairs, though having the appearance of considerable antiquity.

Being determined not to delay my progress, whenever it was in my power to prevent it, I resisted all solicitations to halt for a day or two at this place, and left Aehrrah, much against the inclination of my guides, as early as nine o'clock. Our road now went nearly south, that being the direction of Bosra, from which we hoped to find a small caravan for Damascus ; and near the town we passed a small stream called Wādi-Dārah. In half an hour beyond this, we passed on our left the village of El-Mejamer, on the side of a hill. This village was inhabited principally by Druses ; and in the short space between it and the town we had quitted, the industry of these people was apparent, in the superior order and neatness every where conspicuous, as well as in the more cultivated state of the land. In this instance, as in a thousand

others I had witnessed, it was easy to be perceived how much the whole country might be benefited by a change of government. Wherever the despotism of the Turk extends, every motive to improvement is taken away, and every exertion paralysed; but where the influence of his tyranny is not felt, human industry makes the gifts of nature subservient to the happiness of man.

In half an hour after passing the Druse village of El-Mejeamer, we came to a ruined town called Walter, seated on the top of a hill, from which, as it afforded a commanding view of the surrounding country, I took the following bearings:—

Achbrah	N. by E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E.	2 miles.
El-Mejeamer	N. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ N.	1 mile.
El-Gheleab Haurān	E. N. E.	7 miles.
El-Ghussan (on a hill)	E. by S.	1 mile.
Castle of Salghud	S. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E.	9 miles.
Thel Zeghagh (on a hill)	S. E. $\frac{1}{2}$ S.	3 miles.
Buend (ditto)	S. by E. $\frac{1}{2}$ E.	10 miles.
Thebeen (ditto)	S. $\frac{1}{4}$ E.	8 miles.
Smaad (ditto)	S. $\frac{1}{4}$ W.	9 miles.
Muthahack (ditto)	S. $\frac{1}{4}$ W.	10 miles.
Krigt (ditto)	S. by W.	3 miles.
Bosra or Bussra	S. W. $\frac{1}{2}$ S.	4 miles.
Deer Abu Salāmy	S. W. $\frac{1}{4}$ S.	10 miles.
El-Kenyel	S. W. $\frac{1}{4}$ W.	6 miles.
Jemereen	S. W. $\frac{1}{4}$ W.	2 miles.
Oom-el-Semāk	S. W. by W.	12 miles.
Deer-el-Zebear	S. W. by W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W.	1 mile.
Maharraby	W. by S.	6 miles.
Ghussum	West	9 miles.
Gharraḥa	W. by N. $\frac{1}{4}$ N.	4 miles.
El-Jizey oua Sherkh	W. by N. $\frac{1}{2}$ N.	12 miles.
Jebel-el-Telj	N. N. W. in the distance.	
Jebel-el-Druse	From N. to N. by E.	

At Walter, the place from which the foregoing bearings were taken by compass, and the distances computed by the eye, there are remains of Roman masonry in rustic work, particularly in a

large reservoir for water and cistern there; but the place is now entirely in ruins, and has not, probably been inhabited for many years past.

In half an hour from leaving this, we passed on our right the ruined town called Deer-el-Zebear, and soon afterwards, on our left, the town of Krift, on a hill, both now deserted. In a quarter of an hour more we passed through the bed of the Wādi-Zeady, which in the rainy season is filled by a brook, the stones now left bare by the absence of the stream being of a deep jet or coal black; and in another quarter of an hour passed on our right, the deserted town of Jemereen, much larger in size than the two preceding it. At the northern extremity of this town I observed a square tower, with five successive cornices or mouldings, at different distances from each other, resembling the stages of a Chinese pagoda, and in the centre of the town, appeared the southern front of a large building, seeming to be in the ancient stile of the principal edifices of this country. In the second story were two broad projecting cornices, not extending the whole length of the front, but a little way only beyond the centre, and between these were three windows, two of a square form and a circular one between them; the lower part of the building was hidden by what appeared to me at this distance to be the wall of an inclosed court. On the whole there was more to excite curiosity than to gratify it, and I passed this place, as I had done many others, with a regret that the nature of my circumstances did not admit of my devoting a day or two to their examination.

We pursued our way without interruption, being impatient to ascertain the state of things at Bosra, and in half an hour from our last position, passed a stream called Abu Hamāgha, and in another half hour entered Bosra in safety.



CHAP. XI.

FROM BOSRA TO THE CASTLE OF SALGHUD.

HAVING alighted at the house of a person well known to both my guides, our first enquiry was as to the state of the roads, and the probable safety of a journey from thence to Damascus. In answer to our questions we received only vague assertions of what was already known to us, namely, that there was no assurance of safety in any part of the Haurān, without being well armed and in a party. The communication between this place and Damascus had not been so frequent of late as formerly, though there were occasionally parties of fifteen or twenty persons on horseback who assembled for the purpose of mutual protection on the road. We