

the case of instruments from the Royal Geographical Society brought up and opened, and I took out the binocular glass and pocket compass for use. The glass is an excellent one. At 9.20 we passed the 'Zenobia' light ship, which Captain Sciassar says he placed there about a fortnight ago. The P. and O. mail-ship from Aden had just passed us, and the 'Zenobia' had the Company's flag flying, which she took down before we came up. As we had our flag flying, she might have saluted it, *only she did not*.

Being a good deal excited with my morning's work, and having slept but little during the night, I went below and lay myself down on the couch. The cabin is small but not nearly so bad as Milne represented to me: it has a couch along each side, which serves as a bed: there is a port-hole on either side, and a sort of skylight in the middle, so that there is plenty of ventilation. I slept till eleven o'clock, when I went on deck again. Things were now getting a little ship-shape; awnings were being rigged fore and aft: the jib was set, but there was no wind to fill it; and by and by they shook out the great big square sail, though to very little effect, except towards evening, when the wind began to freshen. We have two boats, one of which is towed behind.

Luncheon was served at twelve o'clock. Whilst we were having it, the Captain was observing the sun, and came *and reported to me* that it was twelve o'clock, to which I touched my hat; I had hardly the conscience to tell him to "*make it so*:" but I suppose I ought, as I am in fact in command of the ship, and Sciassar is only sailing master.

Abu Nabut has been repeating to us the *Legend of the Korân* respecting Mount Sinai.¹ I have a notion that the *Jebel-en-Nûr* story is taken from this source, but we shall see. At all events, it gives me a new idea. Somehow or other this *Jebel-en-Nûr* has in my mind an importance, which I know not how to account for.

Our lunch was set out in regular dragoman form. We had boiled fowl and mutton together; then red currant jam, cheese, oranges, apples, and dates; winding up with a cup of coffee. In the afternoon the Captain came to me, with a bad finger, he told me he had had the tips of two of his fingers cut off by an accident, and was in the hospital for some time, and came out well, after a fashion. The nail of one had grown long and round the stump, and had got pulled off, which had wretchedly inflamed the finger; altogether it was a very ugly affair.

¹ See Palmer's "Desert of the Exodus," Appendix C

He had had some camphor water given him to bathe it with, but mere bathing is of no use; so I got out my "medicine chest," when the first things I laid my hand on were lint and oiled silk; a piece of the former wetted with his camphor water, and covered over with a piece of the latter, served as a poultice, and a bandage over this put it all in order.

The afternoon was passed in *dolce fàr niente* on my part, chatting, looking about, and half dozing on a divan on deck made of our tents. Milne amused himself by sketching the hind part of the ship, and then took my portrait and that of Abu Nabut. Mine is really not so very, very bad; you would know it to be me, *if you were told so*.

Our old pilot tells me he was up the Gulf of Suez in 1871-72 with the 'Shearwater,' my good friend Captain Washington's old ship, and knows every part of it well. He wanted to anchor to-day at 4.15 P.M., but the skipper said that *here he* is pilot, and he knew we could reach the next anchorage. We therefore went on, the wind freshening and giving us a helping hand, so that by six o'clock, half an hour after sunset, we were safely anchored off Hammâm Fir'ôn—the Bath of Pharaoh. A native boat was already lying there at anchor; she

has come from Suez to buy wood and charcoal of the Beduins. Where the latter get these articles it is not easy to say; but this shows how the country is rendered barren and desert by the destruction of its vegetation.

As it was rather cold, we went below to have our dinner, the table being placed across from couch to couch, and we eating in a half-reclining posture, picnic fashion. When we came on deck again, the main awning (its sides) had been lowered so as to form a tent, and the wind having fallen, it was very jolly and comfortable; then I had a chat with the Captain, the crew lying about in respectful silence. He is a very well-informed man; and in speaking of Malta, he expressed himself decidedly opposed to the tradition which says that St. Paul landed there. The real island was *Maleda* in the Adriatic; but *Melita* or *Malta* was chosen *because it is a bigger island*. This is precisely what I say, in "*Origines Biblicæ*," respecting the origin of the erroneous Jewish traditions.

At nine o'clock we had a cup of tea, Milne and I, the Captain having one with us "at my command," as he said, when I asked him to join us, and then we turned in. Abu Nabut has supplied us with plenty of thick covering for the desert, but here we

had to turn off one-half of it : our mattresses we did not want at all, as the ship's couches were sufficient. Captain Sciassar tells me he has on board a full supply of bedding, &c., for the use of Munzinger Pasha : he is really a Pasha, he says.

January 19.—Started at 5.30 A.M. I lay in bed till just nine o'clock, when I came on deck, where we breakfasted. A delightfully still sea, with a nice breeze, just sufficient to fill the jib and foresail. I have employed myself in writing up my log thus far, and Milne in "painting" the man at the helm. The pilot, named Ramadhan, sits day and night in the bow of the ship by himself, looking constantly forward : when he sees reason to alter the ship's course, he rises up, and motions with his hand which way the helmsman is to go. His life cannot be a very lively one ; but he is so accustomed to it that conversation seems rather an annoyance than otherwise. Captain Nares [now Sir G. S.], R.N., in 1871-72, when surveying the Gulf of Suez and the Egyptian coast, did not then go into the Gulf of Akaba, I believe. When I told Ramadhan that Captain Nares's survey was in the "Red Sea Pilot"—the new edition of the "Sailing Directions"—he was rather more animated than usual, and asked

whether *he* was named. He is paid seven francs a day for his work by the Government.

Our cabin is forward, then comes a tank capable of holding eleven tons of water, with which Captain M^cKillop used to supply vessels in the roads; but which tank is now filled with coal: then comes the regular coal hold and the engines. The cook's galley is aft, and Abu Nabut is generally there; but when wanted, he comes forward and discourses most learnedly on all the places we are passing, pointing out this, and that, and the other, as they are all laid down by the Ordnance Survey; as Mr. Poulett Scrope sarcastically says, on the map of the Peninsula, which is more exactly drawn than the map of the county of Surrey.

No observing the sun to-day. The Captain, like the rest, is an idler. The weather is lovely, the sea has scarcely a ripple upon it; but there is a nice breeze, only unfortunately it is from the south, so that it is against us, and as the current is also contrary, we do not go on so fast as I could wish. To-night we anchor at Tor; to-morrow at Aiyūnah (Ayoun el Kassab),¹ on the east side of the Gulf of Akaba. Milne says he enjoys this "travelling in the *desert*;" and he may well do so. He has

¹ See Burckhardt's "Travels in Arabia," p. 430.

nothing to do, sees something fresh and of importance every hour almost, enjoys himself to his heart's content, and has no expenses. But, my dearest Milly, you would really have liked it too. Except just at last, and then only for a moment as it were, we had a lovely passage from Venice to Alexandria; and here it is as smooth as if one were on the Thames; and this south wind blowing will be all the better for the Gulf of Akaba, for entering which Captain Sciassar says this is just the proper season. So all will go well, please God!

As Master Ramadhan now says he cannot fetch Tor before dark, and it would be dangerous to enter then, he has stopped at 4.30 P.M. for the night, at a place just opposite the Ras Gharib Lighthouse, which is on the west side of the Gulf. They say it is twenty miles north of Tor, but it must be more. (I do not write very steadily on board ship, but I hope you will be able to make it out.) The crew set to work fishing, but caught only two small fish, though plenty of large ones were visible.

Mr. Milne went on shore with the Captain, our servant, Hashim, and one man to row. Milne and Hashim went up the land, whilst the Captain and his man collected shells on the shore. The former

found the distance much greater than they expected, and were not back till dark. We whistled for them to return, and then, as it was cold, I went below. They came on board at half-past six. Milne had a pocketful of specimens, which were to be examined in the morning. We dined below, and then came up into the "tent" to chat and have tea, and at nine o'clock we turned in.

January 20.—Off at 5.30. We did not get up till eight o'clock, when we came on deck to breakfast. It was quite still and calm, the sky overcast, and the sea like a sheet of glass, or rather *oil*. After breakfast we prepared to examine our specimens, when we found to our surprise and vexation that the boy Giosé (Guiseppe) had thrown them overboard! One specimen alone was preserved, Milne having taken it below with him. It is a sandstone, *beginning to be formed* by drifts of sand apparently consolidated by calcareous matter, or perhaps simply by the rain, or the moisture of the atmosphere. It is in layers, each of which had evidently become hard before the next was laid upon it. I noticed them when I passed along here from Tor in 1843, when I saw the footmarks of wild ducks *fixed* on the surface, which being afterwards covered with another sand-drift, would remain in perpetuity. Notwithstanding the loss of his

specimens, Milne made a few notes, which will serve me to bring in the subject of the geological formation of the pseudo Mount Sinai.¹ Inshallah! we will make a useful book yet. There is no chance of our being at Aiyūnah to-night, and we shall be lucky if we get out of the Gulf of Suez.

At 11 A.M. we anchored at Tor. Our flag was hoisted, which was answered from the Governor's house. The Governor came at once on board, accompanied by several persons. The usual inquiries were made, and our bill of health shown. He is a quiet, civil, middle-aged man, who made the usual compliments, and placed himself and all about him at my service, &c. We told him we wanted nothing but to buy some meat for the crew, and some charcoal for ourselves! For this purpose the Captain and Abu Nabut went on shore in the Governor's boat, and Milne accompanied them. I remained on board and copied out his geological notes of last night, as they will be required to work into my book. We are here at the foot of the pseudo Mount Sinai.

Tor² is situated at the edge of a broad and slightly undulating plain, running back to a granitic range of hills, the highest of which is Serbal. The

¹ See Appendix A.

² See Dr. Fraas's description of Tor, and account of the coral formations in the northern parts of the Red Sea, in his "*Aus dem Orient*" (Stuttgart, 1867), p. 184.

houses are built of coral, obtained from a mound on the north side of the town, which on the side facing the sea forms a small cliff. There are many shells with the coral, which appears to be in detached masses. If not left there by the sea, they must have been drifted into the mound-shape form they now make, the latter is the more probable. The mound or mounds are about twenty feet high—higher than the highest houses in the village. The people of Tor are Greek Christians, dependent on the convent on (the tourists') Mount Sinai.

At *noon* the boat came back, and we instantly weighed anchor and were off. The orders to the engineer are given in "English," such as, "Torn astarn," &c. Our crew had purchased a pig and some dried fish for the voyage. Mr. Milne made a rapid sketch of the place, sufficient for a picture. After luncheon we docketed several shells he had brought from a mound some twenty feet above high-water level, which had evidently been washed up by the sea.

In the afternoon the wind freshened, and as we are approaching the most difficult part of the sea, there was a talk of stopping. The Captain and ourselves remonstrated, but the pilot said that it was more than his head was worth to go on, and

if the Captain chose to do it, it must be on his own responsibility. This shut us up; and so at 3.40 we cast anchor again in a sort of bay a little above Ras Sybille. The Ashrafi Lighthouse on the Egyptian side is distinctly visible. What a blessing these lighthouses are along the coast!

Soon after we had anchored, a native came alongside in a small canoe, which he paddled, bringing for sale some large oysters, of the sort that the Americans say it requires three men to swallow one at a mouthful. These are real whoppers! eight or ten inches long.¹ The Captain bought four for half a franc as food for the crew; they make an excellent dish cooked with rice. He says that no *frutti di mare* (shellfish) is poisonous: for sailors find everything to be "very good eating" We passed our time reading, writing, and drawing—the latter being my companion's work, and he has already "painted" me three times! It was a delightful mild evening, with little wind, and that from the *south*, which is my only consolation for being so long on the voyage, as I trust it will con-

¹ These big oysters, Mr. Milne tells me, are *Tridacna gigantea* (the largest bivalve), and have been seen one yard and a half long. In the Church of St. Sulpice, at Paris, the shells are used as fonts. There are some magnificent specimens in the garden of the hotel at South Kensington Museum.

tinue in the Gulf of Akaba. At night we had the moon, not very large as yet, but she will get bigger every night. It was so mild that we had our dinner on deck by lamplight, and we sat reading till we went to bed. Milne is translating Dr. Loth's account of the Harras of Arabia, and I was reading Macaulay's Biographical Essays.

January 21.—Left our anchorage at 6 A.M. The pilot would not start till it was light, and he is not to be blamed, for the shoals and reefs about here are tremendous: we had to stand well out, to keep clear of them. Before starting, the Captain bought nineteen more oysters for one franc of the same man, who came off to us at daybreak. Thus the crew will not starve. Captain Sciassar is an active, good-natured fellow, always doing something, helping in cooking occasionally, &c.; but unfortunately he keeps his ship in a filthy state. It is true the boy sweeps the deck, but as to putting water on it, there is no more than they put to their faces! It is rather a "piggish" life we are leading. The pilot is mostly squatted down at the bow of the ship; but when the sail is set, he climbs up and stands on the yard looking earnestly forward, and giving his commands to the steersman, either with his hands, or by the words "*burra*"—

"outwards," "*djowa*"—"inwards." He needs no charts, no observations, scarcely any bearings, but looks *into* the sea!

The wind is now *south-east*. Oh, if it would only continue so in the Gulf of Akaba! This morning I have been acting quite like a *deus ex machinâ*. One of the sailors having lost the key of his watch, I recollected that I had an old one in my writing-desk, which was found exactly to fit; so I gave it to him. By and by the Captain dropped his tobacco-box overboard. The ship was stopped, and the boat begun to be lowered; but it was seen to be of no use, so we went on. The poor man was *au désespoir*. I found a remedy for this misfortune likewise. At Cairo, seeing all the world smoking cigarettes which they made for themselves, I thought I would do the same. So I took lessons of Mr. Rogers, and also at the tobacconist's, and then ventured to buy a pouch of tobacco with some cigarette papers; but I soon found "the game not worth the candle," and therefore purchased some ready-made cigarettes for the journey. The pouch, which I had laid aside, now came in seasonably as a present to the Captain. I need not say that he was delighted.

We are now nearing Ras Mohammed, which lies

very low. I had fancied it must be very high ! The Captain observed the sun to-day, and at twelve o'clock reported it to me, and on my bowing, he opened the steam-whistle, and so struck eight bells ! At 1.30 we passed something which the Captain says is the wreck of a vessel which sank there eight or ten years ago.

The granite now ceases, and low sandy (?) cliffs begin. We are taking stock of our coal, and find that out of twenty tons we have consumed seven, leaving only thirteen tons for the rest of the voyage. We have steamed thirty-eight hours in four days. In the afternoon we saw an Arab camp on the sandy coast, too far off to be very distinguishable. It is very slow work going against the wind. When we came to rounding Ras Mohammed, we hoisted the foresails, which helped us a little.

At 4.20 P.M. we passed very near under the cape, or bluff, nearly one hundred feet high, of calcareous sandstone (?), much undermined by the sea. There are two points, the westerly one being the longer and lower. The English surveyors have placed a stone on the summit of the easterly one to designate the true cape. We are now out of the Gulf of Suez ; but not in that of Akaba ; to do which we must first enter the Straits of Tirân. After we had rounded

the cape we found the wind not so favourable as we had anticipated : still the sails helped us a bit, and we ran on till 6.40, when we cast anchor in Sherm el Monjeh.¹ This is a small basin quite landlocked ; and as we entered it, we were met by shoals of fishes, pursued, the sailors said, by a large fish which they called *cerne* : they were in such numbers and made such a noise that it sounded exactly like a heavy shower of rain : I jumped up in surprise to see what it could be, as there was no rain falling.

After dinner I sat on deck chatting with the captain and crew, to whom I related the history of the navigation of the Gulf of Akaba by the fleets of King Solomon, and Hiram, King of Tyre, of whose people, the Phœnicians (the Maltese), are the descendants. Of this there is no doubt: Their language, which is not Arabian, but Carthaginian, plainly shows this. I told them what a feather it would be in their cap to have performed this voyage with me ! (I am writing on deck, and my paper blows about so, that my writing is scarcely legible.) They all seemed very delighted with what I told them.

January 22.—Milne went on shore to collect

¹ See Rüppell's description of Shûrm, in his "Reise in Abyssinien," Bd. I., p. 142.

specimens. (This delayed us a bit, and we did not start till 7.15 A.M.) They seem to be of sand, like Ras Mohammed. There do not appear any signs of volcanoes, but Milne did not go inland. Beyond the sand is granite. The steam being already up, we started the instant he came on board.

The Sherm in which we passed the night is a lovely little basin, protected from every wind, except towards the south-east. The hills on the east side of the harbour are formed of sand capped with two beds of yellowish limestone. The sand is yellowish red, and in places is formed of quartz grains as large as peas, being quite a grit. It contains one band of rounded and angular stones (flint, quartz, granite, &c.), about eight inches wide. These sand beds dip 17° to the south. Masses of the rock having fallen from above, protect them from the action of wind and weather. The beds above are horizontal, soft, full of irregular cavities, and, in fact, rather a mass of shells and coral than a true limestone: just as the beds below are too soft to be a sandstone. The upper bed of limestone is of a darker grey colour than the lower one, which is yellowish.¹

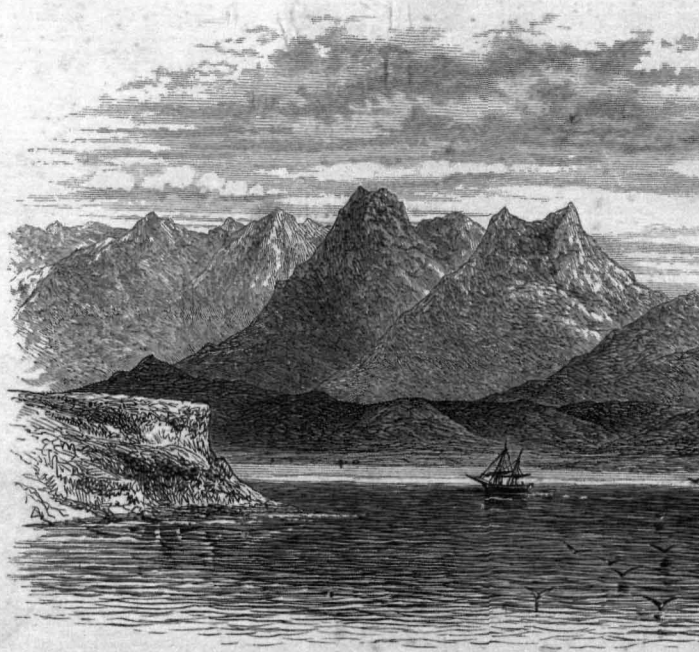
We now crossed the entrance of the Gulf of

¹ See Appendix A.

Akaba, going to the north of Tirân Island. I wanted the Captain to keep on the outside, as the sea is quite free from rocks, and he felt inclined to do so ; but the pilot humbugged him, pretending that Mugna was the place I wished to go to, instead of Aiyūnah.

It is a fine morning, but the wind is getting up from the north. After breakfast we examined the specimens collected this morning by Milne, and he wrote his notes thereon, also referring to what Burckhardt says about volcanoes, of which we find no traces. The coast to our left continued sandy, with granite rising immediately above it. The wind was now dead ahead, and we shipped a good deal of water. As we proceeded, the sandy coast seemed to die out, and the granite came down to the sea. The idea that this *barren, rocky country* is the scene of the Wanderings of the Israelites is perfectly preposterous. At 11 A.M. we saw a few date-palms on the beach : but that is all the vegetation.

As it was now time for something certain to be decided about our course, there was a *kalām* (talk) with the pilot. He wanted to persuade me that Mugna, within the gulf, was where I wanted to go. I knew what I wanted better than he did, and



SHERM EL MONJEH.

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showed the place to the Captain on the chart and in the "Sailing Directions," and, as he is under my orders, he had no alternative but to submit. He fears it will take time, and that he shall run out of coal, &c. ; but that is not my affair. I want to go to the Encampment *by the sea* of the Israelites, as I have supposed Aiyúnah to be, and to make a drawing of it. This will serve to illustrate my book, and, besides, will perhaps save me from illustrating (and going to) Marah (Shorafà), and Elim (Moghayr Shayb), of which there are accurate descriptions by Burckhardt and Rüppell.

We then shifted our course to the eastward, set sail, and crossed behind Tirân. The wind was pretty strong, and Milne could not stand it, but went below and was very sick. I enjoyed it very much. By noon we were under the land on the east coast of the gulf, when it became quite still and delightful. The Captain says they have in the Museum at Malta a Carthaginian ship just like those that navigate the Gulf of Suez at the present day. In consequence of the stupid pilot's keeping within Tirân instead of without, he now says it is doubtful whether we shall reach Aiyúnah to-night, that is, by sunset ; for he will not navigate by night. As soon as we get into an open channel, Captain

Sciassar says he will take the navigation into his own hands, and only employ the pilot when he nears the shore. I only wish he had done so this morning: it would have saved us at least ten miles, and we are only going some *five* miles an hour! The delay does not, in truth, very much signify, as I *must* remain at Akaba till the night preceding the 21st day of the moon; on which day, Saturday, February 7th, in the morning, I hope to start on my return to Suez. All my arrangements will have been previously made, so that there may not be a moment's delay after I have observed the state of the tide and of the moon on the day corresponding to the Passage of the Israelites through the Red Sea. I could not leave the spot without that. It was a dodge of the pilot, Ramadhan, to do as he did. Had I not been on the alert, he would have run me into Mugna (Magna), and have said he understood that was what I meant. As it is, he has subjected us to the rough passage in the morning along the coast of the Peninsula, and across to Tirân, besides making us take a course probably double of what it would have been had we kept out at sea.

The result is, that we do not reach Aiyûnah to-night, but anchor on a desert island called Barakan, some twelve miles off. The Arabian coast, along

which we skirted after crossing the straits, is low ; but ahead of us are some immense mountains, marked on the chart as being 6000 and 7000 feet high ; like those of Abyssinia.¹

It is a hot day with scarcely a breath of wind, and the sea so clear that we can see the coral reefs at the bottom ; ten fathoms down, they tell me. Ramadan is so plaguy careful that he takes us first one way and then another. Poor Abu Nabut does not like the sea any more than Milne. He has no idea where we are going, and is quite shut up. He says, very naturally, that he likes best to be "at sea" on the Nile. The Captain is in a stew about coal. He says we may have enough to take us to Akaba ; but how he is to get back he does not know, except by the help of the north wind. At Tor he hopes to find some coal, and he is looking out in the "Code" for the signal, "Want coal immediately," in case he should meet a steamer on his way. At Akaba he may, perhaps, be able to get some ; but I doubt it. At all events, he talks of remaining there two days, which will enable me to send you letters, and, *if the news is good*, a telegram. I pray God it may be so.

¹ See Burckhardt's "Travels in Arabia" (London : Colburn, 1829), p. 340.

At 5.40 P.M. we anchored behind the island of Barakan; a low, barren, sandy rock, of the same sort as Ras Mohammed. The evening was still, with a bright moon; and a dew fell which caused the Captain to put the tent up: under it he and the crew held an animated conversation, in which I took no part, being sufficiently occupied with my thoughts. But I could not help noticing the strange mongrel language they spoke, half Punic and half Italian, and I figured to myself how the English language came to be formed by the two races Saxon and French speaking together. Sometimes the Italian predominated, and then the Punic.

January 23.—During the night the wind veered to the east, bringing what might have been a severe storm. Fortunately the wind was not strong; but there was thunder and lightning, and at five o'clock in the morning there was a large *tròmba marina*—waterspout. I was up before seven, when the vessel was only then about to start, as the pilot could not see his way earlier. It was very overcast and threatened rain: in fact, it was raining on shore. The sky was dreadfully lowering; indeed, I think I never saw heavier masses of black clouds, not even in Abyssinia; and yet as the morning went on one could see them gradually

taken up by the sun. Still, on shore it must have rained heavily, and soon after nine o'clock we had a sprinkle even on board, but very, very slight. Fancy this in the Red Sea !

We were obliged to go slowly on account of the reefs. The pilot was up the mast looking out, and the Captain below giving the word to the steersman. The navigation here is rendered most dangerous in consequence of these reefs, of which the sea is full. At 8.45 the Captain burst out in an exclamation of admiration of the "devil" of a pilot, who had carried us clear through a passage between two of them, where there was scarcely room to pass ! We were, however, not yet clear ; but continued along over the reefs, which were distinctly visible, at a depth perhaps of three fathoms. At length, at 9.15 A.M., we got into deep water, fifteen or twenty fathoms.

Milne employed himself in making a sketch of the black mountains above the place we are steering to, namely, Aiyúnah, but it is not very good. The weather now cleared up, and we approached the shores, on which we saw, to our surprise, a number of houses ; Captain Sciassar counted twenty-four on the beach, and many more further up. We passed them on the left, and continued to the

harbour, where we saw other houses, and what appeared to be a large heap of charcoal; but not a human being was visible.

At 10.15 A.M. we anchored about a furlong from the beach, in deep water. We had previously shown the Turkish flag, and as we were in strange ports, the Captain thought it better to hoist the same also at the fore, to show that we had some one *in authority* on board: the British flag would do no good here. As soon as we had anchored, the Captain went on shore with one man, whom the rower left, and then returned for me. I landed at 10.45, being carried from the boat to the shore, a few yards only, by the men. As they dropped me on dry land, one of them exclaimed, "*Benedetta tèrra!*" and I repeated the words mentally. To me it is indeed a blessed spot, because this is *the first* of the (supposed) stations of the Israelites¹ visited by me, and you will see how admirably it answers, *in its present condition*, to the "Encampment of the Israelites," 3000 years and more ago.

At the spot where we landed were some eight or ten "houses," or, as they now turned out to be, huts made of date-palm leaves and matting. These are now all deserted, but show signs of having

¹ Numb. xxxiii. 10.

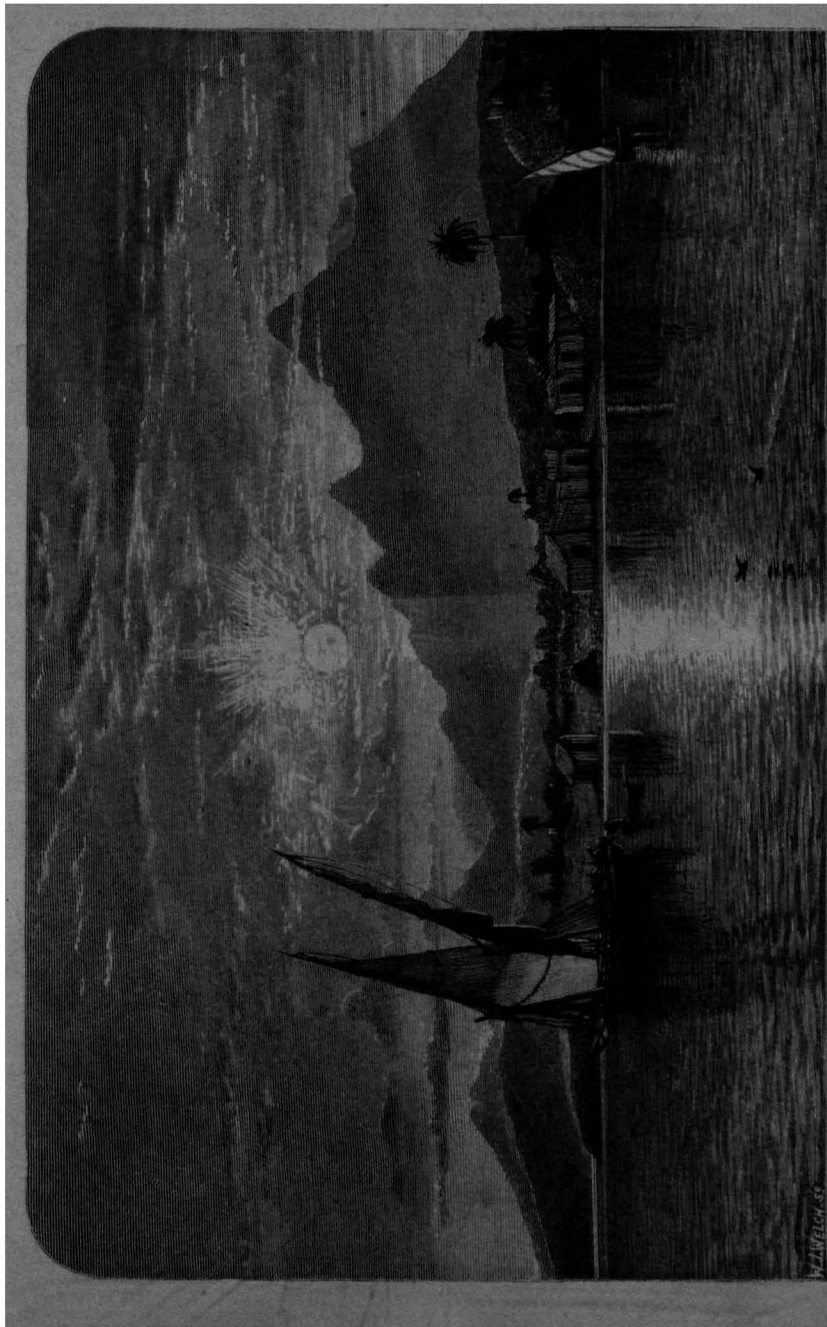
recently been occupied. In one of them was an Arab flour-mill, a water-jar from Upper Egypt, a couple of wooden cases, one bearing the mark "Burbidge, Burbidge, & Co., export druggists, Coleman Street, London;" outside was a large heap of charcoal, with two sacks full and one empty sack, and in a bush lay some woman's tresses of plaited hair. It was manifest that we had here the remains of the pilgrim caravan which passed by here on the way to Mecca some three weeks ago; and these things, including the huts, are left for them on their return. All over the plain, and up the valley, are numerous other huts, perhaps some hundred or more in all.

Milne made a drawing of the place from the ship, and then came on shore after me, and went a short distance inland, taking Hashim with him. It was high water here at 11.15 A.M., with very little rise and fall. And now occurred what proved these Maltese to be not one whit better than their Carthaginian ancestors. If I recollect rightly, Herodotus relates that Hanno did something of the same kind when he circumnavigated Africa. Being short of coal, as I have related, the Captain took possession of the two sacks of charcoal as *budna prèsa*. On one of them were some Arabic characters, which

he read "Emmanuele Chiassaro," clearly showing they were intended for him. This puts me in mind of the "reading" of the Hieroglyphics by the Egyptologists. There being a quantity of fire-wood in one of the huts, he took a boatload of this too; altogether providing himself with enough fuel for one day's steam. The worst of it is, example is catching; and so we saw Master Hashim filling the empty sack with charcoal from the heap, which he tied up with a bit of cord left by the pilgrims "mighty convenient," and then carried it off on his back to the boat.

Unfortunately there was no water to be had except at a considerable distance from the shore, and no natives to help us with it on board; but we hope to find water to-morrow, and so the men took the water-jar on board with them, in order to have it handy they said! Altogether it was a regular case of piracy. I wonder what the pilgrims will say when they come back from Mecca. To show that he had a conscience, Captain Sciassar took three five-franc pieces out of his pocket, and hid them in the heap of charcoal; but I am afraid there was some jugglery in it, and that if any one went to look there for the money he would never find it.

I returned on board at 11.30, and as the Captain



AINÚNAH (OR AYOUN EL KASSAB).

To face p. 327.



did not wish to stay, we whistled for Milne, who came on board by noon. He had not been much more than half a mile inland, but had seen the aqueduct or canal, made for bringing water to the beach. It is built of brick, about two feet wide and some eight inches deep, along the surface of the ground, like our *Grand Canal* at Mauritius. Milne has made three pretty drawings of the place, besides that of the mountains which he made in the morning.

In the "Sailing Directions of the Red Sea," page 136, AINÚNAH is described thus—"This harbour, although its approach is formidable from the number of outlying reefs, may, with the assistance of a good pilot, be entered with facility and safety. Towards the interior, at the distance of a mile and a half from the beach, between two barren and rocky hills, is the valley of Ainúnah, celebrated among the Beduins for the purity and abundance of its water. About two miles from the beach, a long line of cliffs rises from the plain, and forms the outer edge of an extensive tract of table-land. The appearance of the luxuriant though uncultivated tract contrasts strangely with the wild sterility of the neighbouring scenery. On both sides of the valley there are some ruins, which are said to be the remains of a

Nazarene or Christian town, and from it, leading to the beach, may be seen an aqueduct by which water was formerly conveyed to a reservoir near the beach. There are still some remains of this work."

You see the name is Ainúnah. Copying Burckhardt and Rüppell, I have written Aiyūnah, Ayoun, and Aiune, which is wrong. I fancy Captain Richard Burton was here too when he went the Hadj.¹ To me this is a most interesting and important place, and I should have liked to remain here much longer; but I have done what I wanted, and now do not care to detain the vessel a single moment; indeed, my only wish now is to arrive at Akaba. As soon as Mr. Milne was on board the anchor was weighed, and we were off by 12.15 P.M. At luncheon Hashim went to the ship's tank for some water, but found none: fortunately, however, Abu Nabut had some in a barrel, intended for the desert. If I had known what I *now* know, I would have insisted on stopping a couple of hours more at Ainúnah, to look about the place whilst the sailors fetched water; but it is too late to complain now.²

¹ He does not appear to make any mention of Ainúnah, or Maghara Sho'eib, in his "Mecca." He left them N.E. of his course.

² Captain Burton will probably give some interesting particulars of Ainúnah in his forthcoming work—see page 69.

We now went westward along the coast, a fresh wind blowing W.S.W.—you see how it changes—which makes the sea a little rough, and difficult for me to write. We kept at a distance from the coast, and at 2.45 P.M. passed three small native craft close inshore. Soon after this we passed within a few fathoms of a rock just under water. Ramadhan luckily has sharp eyes! Had we struck it, going at the rate we did, we should assuredly have gone to the bottom. The navigation being very difficult, and it not being possible to find an anchorage later on, we cast anchor at 3 P.M. in shallow water over a coral reef, and behind a shoal now above water. The position is in about 28° N. and $34.50'$ E.—not at all a pleasant place to stop; but they say it is quite safe. As we were to come such a very little way, why might we not just as well have remained two hours longer at Ainúnah. Confound that Ramadhan! The Captain and crew are busy fishing, and I am writing; but you see what a bad place it is for it, the wind almost blows my paper away.

I find that we are only in 35° instead of $34^{\circ} 50'$ E., so that we are ten miles short of what I imagined. We shall *never* get to Akaba at this rate; and the camels are there waiting for me. It

is dreadfully unfortunate: and yet I ought not to complain. All will be right, if I can only get a start. The wind got up so much that we were obliged to let go a second anchor; that is to say, it was deemed prudent to do so. Milne is a regular Job's comforter. He compares our position to anchoring in the middle of the Atlantic. I asked him if he ever did so? when he began relating some of his experiences, and of their having lost three persons by sickness out of nine hundred in an emigrant vessel, and buried them without most of the other passengers knowing it. And then he went on speculating on what would become of us if we parted from our anchor, saying (as is quite true) that the strength of a cable is dependent on that of every single link being sufficient to nullify the strength of all the rest. Confound the fellow! he makes one feel quite nervous.

The "tent" being set up for the night, the Captain and crew assembled round the lantern, and began telling stories. As I was in the circle, the Captain suggested that he should tell his story in Italian, to which Giosé, the boy, replied, that then *he* would not understand it. This was, of course, sufficient reason for me to beg that I might not be taken into account, and so the Captain and the cook spun a

long yarn, of the purport of which I can form no idea. But I noticed the constant repetition of familiar Italian expressions, such as "in somma," which I take to mean much the same as our "and so." Master Giosé is the pet of the ship's company: he is a smart, active boy of eleven, whose first voyage this is. He knows only Maltese, and is very much afraid his father and brother, the one speaking English and the other Italian, will forget their Maltese, and then, he says, how will they be able to speak to him? His brother Mariano is only twenty-one, and he is the engineer!

January 24.—During the night it blew great guns—"fulmine di vento," to use the Captain's expression. After midnight it became calmer, and on my going upon deck to look about me, I found it a beautiful starlight night: the moon had already set. We started at 6.45 A.M. Although I was not exactly frightened by what was said about the ugliness of our position last night, I thought it quite as well to be prepared for anything that might happen, and therefore I did not undress, only taking off my coat and undoing my necktie. This morning there was no washing for want of water, so that we are getting more and more "piggish," and I fear, shall continue so till we get to Akaba. In case of

need, the engine can make some ten gallons of condensed water per diem. The wind was now from the north, which not being altogether unfavourable, we hoisted sail, and went on pretty well. About breakfast time a little rain fell : there must be a good deal on the mountains at times.

We bore straight for the island of Tirân ; and at 11.20 A.M. altered our course so as to enter the Gulf of Akaba. At 12.30 P.M. we rounded Ras Fartak and entered the gulf. The wind was now nearly ahead, but it was not very strong, nor was the sea very rough : still it was rough enough to cause us to ship a good deal of water, which wetted Abu Nabut's tents, bedding, &c., which are on deck. These had, consequently, to be shifted, and spars placed under them to keep them from the deck. The Captain is very obliging and handy, taking part in all the operations of the crew, to whom he is, as it were, a father.

No one, I believe, has been in these waters since the time of the surveying-ship 'Palinurus,' in 1830-34. The Captain tells me he has three letters which were given to him by the Admiral before leaving Suez, for delivery at Akaba. He does not know their purport. Taking this fact and other matters into consideration, I have thought it better

that we should not hoist British colours on our arrival. It would be merely a piece of national vanity, and could do me no good; whereas it might possibly do me harm, especially in connection with the difference between England and Turkey in the south of Arabia.¹ So I suggested this to the Captain, who quite approved of my determination. By keeping himself strictly to his character of an Egyptian officer, and his ship one of the Egyptian Navy, he pays no port dues, and is not subject to quarantine regulations. So it was at Tor, and so it will be at Akaba. My flag is therefore put aside, to be returned to Captain Kellock at Suez.

When once we had got into the gulf we were in deep water, and a course of about N.N.E. being set, we continued along the Arabian coast, the pilot leaving his post, and the Captain going to sleep. And this is the terrific Gulf of Akaba one hears so much about! But we must not cry before we are out of the wood: we have yet to see how we like it. We kept along *close* to the shore as it seemed; but everything is on *so gigantic a scale*, and there being nothing by which we could calculate distances or heights, that Milne and I made an egregious mistake. After luncheon, while looking at the

¹ Should Egypt accept the *sole* Protectorate of England, or become independent, it will have to be decided to which country Akaba rightly belongs.

mountains, Milne asked me what I thought their height was. He estimated them, he said, about 300 or 400 feet. I said, without paying much attention, that I thought they were at least 300 feet; but such things were so deceptive that we had better ask the Captain. We did so; and he made a rough observation and calculation, from which he deduced a height of 2700 feet—and this (he said) at the very least! Captain Sciassar told us we were distant three quarters of a mile from the shore; but I had estimated it at a quarter of a mile, or even less! It requires great practice to form just estimates in such matters, where everything is on so immense a scale, and there is nothing—no trees, no houses, no people—with which to compare what we see. The mountains appear to be composed of sandstone, and behind them is what seems to be granite. As we proceed (about 4 o'clock), the granite comes forward to the coast, but it is doubtful whether it is granite, or if so, it must be much disintegrated on the surface. At 5 P.M. we saw what is called a *wind dog* over the mountains ahead—a short rainbow, which is a sure sign of wind.

At 5.40 we came to *Mägna* (Mugna) in $28^{\circ} 23' 30''$ N. lat., where the pilot said we should get water. In lowering the anchor no stop was put on the cable, and so it ran out! A nice piece of lubberly

seamanship. This caused a great deal of confusion : the other anchor was cast, but before this was properly secured the vessel was moved backwards and forwards as if to keep her near the spot where the other was lost. This place is a vast improvement on Ainúnah, there being up the valley a perfect wood of date trees, and a number of huts along the shore. There appear to be a few natives, but not at all in proportion to the number of dwellings : six men soon made their appearance on the beach, with whom we endeavoured to communicate as well as the wind would allow us. “ *Hat moiye! Hat moiye! Hat moiye!* ” was our cry ; we are without water, and dying of thirst. Then some attempts were made to tell them who and what we were ; and Abu Nabut “ explained ” that the Khédive’s Hakim (doctor) was on board ! On my remonstrating with him on this, he answered me, as Mikhail did when we were in the valley of the Jordan, that it was his affair, and not mine ; at which I laughed, and said that as I had already passed in Syria for the Hakim Bashi of the Sultan, it was but a little thing to be the Hakim of the Khédive !

Meantime the boat had been lowered to look for the anchor, which they appear to have found, and which is to be fished for to-morrow morning by

Ramadhan, who is a good diver, when the sun is up sufficiently high for him to see the bottom. The boat then went on shore and brought off a Beduin, a youngish, good-looking man, dressed in a striped abba, who by "lamp light" looked very bright and picturesque in his Arab dress. After the usual salutations he squatted on the deck in front of me with Abu Nabut before him, and a long conversation ensued. He is not the Sheikh, but only one of a few of the tribe who remain here to attend to the fructification of the dates, which, like the *aucubas*, have male and female trees, and the blossoms have to be set, or they would not produce fruit. The rest of the tribe have gone inland.

The name of this place, he tells me, is Mägna, and also Madian (Midian)!¹ You may well imagine how this took me by surprise. In the Map of the "Wanderings of the Israelites," in your little Bible,² there is a "Madian" marked in about this position; but when you drew my attention to it sometime back, I only fancied it to be one of the "traditional" identifications, having no idea that there was any such place actually so called. But here it is: there

¹ See Captain Burton's further discoveries in 1877, referred to at page 69 of this work.

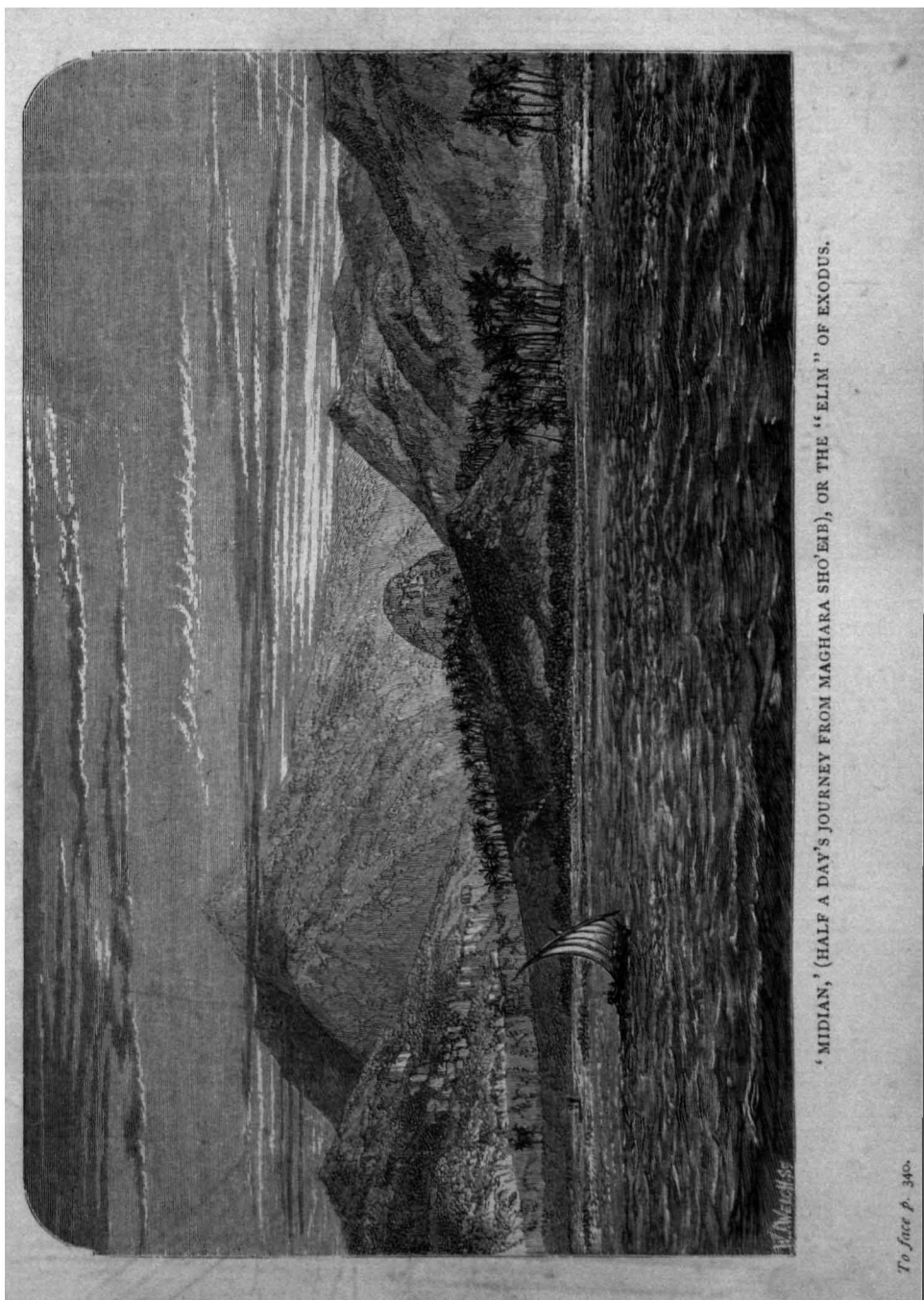
² Printed at the University Press, Oxford, and published by Gardner & Son. London: 1847.

is no mistake about it. How it came to get this name I do not know. The Beduin repeatedly said it is known by both names, but the pilot says he only knows it by that of Mägna. -I could not find out from the Beduin whence the name of "Madian" is derived: but I have set Abu Nabut to try and find this out from him, and hope to ascertain. Meanwhile I have a theory of my own. Maghara Sho'eib is in about this latitude, and only half a day's journey inland from hence.¹ *This* then, and

¹ In Burckhardt's "Arabia" (London, Colburn, 1829), a map is given showing the Hadj route east of the Gulf of Akaba. Like Ruppell and Burton, his course was from Suez to Tor, Ras Mohammed, and thence to Moulah. In his map (ii p. 392), the names run from N. to S. thus:—Akaba, Thaher el Homar; Shorafa [Marah]; Moghayr Shayb [Maghara Sho'eib, or Jethro's Cave]; Ayoun el Kassab, and Kalat el Moeyleh—the latter place being described at p. 430 of his work. Dr. Beke says in his "Sinai a Volcano," p. 37.—"The road which I consider the Israelites to have taken corresponds so entirely to the words of the Scripture narrative, that, when once the incubus of 'tradition' shall be shaken off, I cannot bring myself to believe there will remain any doubt respecting it. This road is that, namely, taken at the present day by the pilgrims from Cairo to Mecca after passing Akaba, and described by the traveller Burckhardt, who, it is needless to explain, entertained not the slightest idea of its being that of the Children of Israel on their way from Mitzraim [to the 'Encampment by the Red Sea' at Midian]. The coincidence, too, of the Hadj stations with those of the Israelites is most striking. Thaher el Homar and Shorafa, respectively with bad water and without water, may be taken to correspond to the three days' journey without water to Marah with bitter water, whilst the description of Moghayr Shayb, with 'many wells of sweet water, date plantations, and trees among the wells,' is almost identical with that of Elim, with its 'twelve fountains of water, and threescore and ten palm trees.' " Numbers xxxiii. 9, 10; Exod. xv. 22, 23, 27.

not Ainúnah, must have been the "Encampment by the Red Sea of the Israelites" of Numbers xxxiii. 10; and in the names "Maghara Sho'eib" and "Madian" we have a *distorted* tradition of the presence of the Israelites here. Of course the tradition, if preserved, must necessarily have become distorted; as otherwise it would have been contradictory to the received tradition respecting the position of Mount Sinai. I much prefer this spot, with its wood of date palms, for the encampment by the sea; but had I come here without going to Ainúnah, I might have been accused of twisting facts to suit my own views. As it is, I have visited *both* places, and therefore, cannot have any personal partiality for the one rather than the other: and this "Madian" is certainly preferable in every respect. I must not forget to mention that Ainúnah and Ain el Kassab are both correct names for the other place; at least, so they tell me here.

Water was soon brought us, and it is deliciously pure and sweet: the Arab was told to get us twenty skins for to-morrow morning; also a sheep, if any are to be had. Besides dates, they appear to have limes here, as the Captain showed me a small unripe one. The man now asked for coffee and tobacco, of the latter of which article a little was



'MIDIAN,' (HALF A DAY'S JOURNEY FROM MACHARA SHO'EB), OR THE "ELIM" OF EXODUS.



given him, and some coffee. I also gave him an orange in exchange for his lime. After talking a long time with us and then with the pilot, he was taken back on shore. They have no boats here, and no animals, the camels being all with the tribe inland.

The 'Erin' is safely anchored behind a headland forming the side of a sort of bay, with a long reef running out from it, which shelters us well from the north. There is, however, no anchorage for large vessels here—these would have to stand off whilst their boats came on shore for water.

January 25.—The wind, which had seemed to fall in the evening, rose during the night, so as to blow a perfect tempest: the crew were up three times during the night, thinking that we were driven from our anchorage: they had warped us to the shore by way of greater security; but when I came this morning to see the rope by which we are fastened, I was thankful that we had not to depend on that at all, as it would not have held us a moment. I passed a wretched night, and this morning am altogether unwell; my head aches, so that I can hardly hold it up—a very unusual occurrence for me; and besides this, my ankle is somewhat swollen and painful. I do not know whether I hurt it going on shore at Ainúnah, or whether it

is a little gouty : in any case, I have made up my mind not to go on shore. It is a great sacrifice to me, as I now believe *this* to be really holy ground instead of Ainúnah ; but I resign myself to the sacrifice since it *must* be. I should be very wrong to run the chance of making myself ill before I get to Akaba.

Last night I ordered breakfast to be served early this morning in order that we might not lose time in going on shore. Accordingly at 7 A.M. we breakfasted, and after this Milne made a sketch of the place before landing. Midian is a very much prettier place than Ainúnah, though his sketch is not so, owing to the sun being behind instead of before him. When he had finished it he went on shore accompanied by Abu Nabut, Hashim and most of the crew. The engineers have plenty of work to do on board, and I have my journal, which I have now managed to write up. About half-past ten the boat brought off a number of skins of water and two Beduin lads, and when the water had been taken on board, and the boat was about to return to the shore, I felt myself so much better that I decided on going in it.

On the beach I found some twenty persons, mostly children, and all males : there was not one

female to be seen. Abu Nabut had been making inquiries for me, and I learned through him that the place is called "Mägna" by the Arabs, but that its old official name is "Madiän," by which it is known to the Mäzri (Egyptians) and the pilgrims to Mecca. I walked a quarter of a mile and more in the direction of the watercourse, and up it. It is some fifty yards wide, and carries water into the sea during the rains. I came to some beautiful palm groves, the trees being countless, and they extend some considerable distance up the valley, which comes from the east, that is to say, from the neighbourhood of Maghara Sho'eib, if not actually from it. In front of the date-palm groves are plantations of barley on a small scale, which are enclosed in hedges formed by the leaves of the date-palm; the entrance to which is closed by a curious door fastened by bolts and cords in a most mysterious manner. Within there are also growing lime, nebbuk, and fig-trees. Here I met Milne returning laden with stones, and two or three drawings he had made.¹

Abu Nabut tells me that "Maghara" means a

¹ Those who are interested in the geological formations of Midian and the discoveries of gold recently made by Captain Burton there, I would refer to "Appendix A," which specially treats of the quartz veins in the granite, &c.

cave artificially made, not a natural cavern. I do not think this signifies much, as the artificial dwelling was originally a natural cave. I was told by one of the Arabs, "who had seen it with his eyes," that, at an hour's distance, there is a place marked with stones where *the Prophet Moses prayed to God!* Of course this is so important that it must be seen. It is unfortunately too far off for me to think of walking there, and as there is no other means of getting to the place, I was compelled to content myself to accept Milne's offer to go for me. So it was decided that we should return on board to lunch; and then that he should go again on shore with Hashim and the Beduin as a guide. Then we went off to the ship, taking with us some shells which we had picked up.

We lunched, and at half-past twelve Milne was off to the "praying place of Moses," as it is called. He is very good, and does everything I ask him to do, especially as he sees that I am not too exigent. These traditions about Moses and Jethro are very curious. I do not wish to attach too much value to them; but, at all events, they are worth quite as much as those *within* the peninsula. I may fairly set the one set of traditions to neutralise the other: and I should say that *these* have every appearance

of being *older* than those, and certainly better fulfil the requirements of the Scripture History, and adapt themselves better to it, especially when taken in connection with the information recorded by travellers like Burckhardt, Rüppell, Palgrave, and others. Burckhardt, in giving the following description of the stations on the Syrian Hadj route from Ma'an,¹ says it is :—"A long day's journey to the Castle of Akaba Eshamie, or the Syrian Akaba. . . . Here is a Birket of rain-water. The Hadj road, as far as Akaba, is a complete desert on both sides, yet not incapable (p. 659) of culture. The mountain chain continues at about ten hours to the *west* of the Hadj route. . . . From the foot of the castle walls the Hadj descends a deep chasm, and it takes half an hour to reach the plain below. . . . The mountain consists of a red grey sandstone. . . . The mountain sinks gradually, and is lost at a great distance in the plain, which is very sandy.

"Medawara, one day's journey, a castle with a Birket of rain-water.

"Dzat Hadj, a castle surrounded by a great number of wells, which are easily found on digging two or three feet. It has likewise a Birket of rain-water.

¹ See Burckhardt, Appendix III., "The Hadj Route from Damascus to Mekka," p. 658.

At four hours from it is a descent, rendered difficult by the deep sand. It is called El Araie, or Halat Ammar. . . . From Halat Ammar the plain is no longer sandy, but covered with a white earth as far as Tebouk. The vicinity of Dzat Hadj is covered with palm trees; but the trees being male, they bear no fruit, and remain very low. The inhabitants sell the wood to the Hadj.

“One day from Dzat Hadj is Tebouk, a castle, with a village of Felahein. . . . There is a copious source of water, and gardens of fig and pomegranate trees, where Badintshans (egg plant), onions, and other vegetables, are also cultivated. The Fellahs collect in the neighbouring desert the herb *Beiteran* (a species of milfoil). . . . The castle is also surrounded by shrubs with long spines called Mekdab, which the Fellahs sell to the Hadj as food for the camels, and likewise two other herbs called Nassi and Muassal.

“Akhdhar, a castle with a Birket of rain-water, upon a small ascent. . . . El Moadham, a very long day's march (p. 660). Dar el Hamra. Medayn Szaleh. . . . El Olla . . . with a rivulet, and agreeable gardens of fruit-trees. Biar el Ghanam, with many wells of fresh water. Byr Zemerrod, a large well. Byr Dyedeyde.

"Hedye. . . . It is a Ghadeir, or low wady coming from Khaibar, which is four hours distant. . . .

"El Fahletein ; asses, and what the Arabs call tigers, are met with here. . . .

"Biar Nasyeif, a number of wells in the sandy ground, which are every year newly digged up, because the wind covers them immediately after the caravan's departure."

In Mr. Palgrave's "Travels in Arabia" the following particulars are given of the country *east* of the Syrian Hadj route from Ma'an :—"Ows il Wells, 30° 15' N. 38° 10' E.—When in the afternoon we resumed our way once more, we found the general appearance of the desert somewhat modified by large patches of sand or grass on its *black surface*, and these continued to increase in number and size as we went on.

"Before reaching Djoon, in Djowf, 29° 30' N. 39° 10' E., we had yet a long way to go, and our track followed endless windings among low hills and *basaltic ledges*, without any approach to cultivated regions. At last the slopes grew greener, and a small knot of houses with traces of a village close by appeared ; Djoon. 'Aatām-es-Sáad, 28° 50' N. 40° 10' E.—Near sunset we came in sight of two lonely pyramidal peaks of dark

granite, rising amid the sand walls full in our way. . . . At midnight we passed close under the huge black masses of rock, but without stopping." These particulars will assist me with my book and map.

The sea is still very rough outside the reef, and there is no moving yet: we cannot even fish up the anchor, which lies in water some twenty fathoms deep. There are no sheep to be got here, so the crew have killed a pig they bought at Tor, and our cook has killed a turkey to roast for dinner. Another wind-dog was seen this morning. So you see we are weather-bound here, and the camels are at Akaba at five pounds a day, doing nothing! Whilst Milne was absent I wrote up my diary, and selected the best shells from a large quantity Abu Nabut brought on board with him. They will do for studs, and to make presents as memorials of Midian. They ought to have a greenish hue, but the sun has bleached them.

The Beduins here are the Beni Ughba; they number four hundred souls, and remain on the coast only about four months of the year. They seem to be a quiet, harmless people, not answering at all to the character given of them in the "Sailing Directions." They are very poor and badly





RUINS OF THE ' MOSQUE OF MOSES ' AT MIDIAN, ON THE EAST COAST OF THE GULF OF AKABA.

off, and wanted to be paid for the water in bread, rice, coffee, &c. But Abu Nabut said this might do very well for a skin or two, but not for thirty-five—the number we have had. So the Captain gave them five francs, and Abu Nabut gave them four francs, with which they were well satisfied.

Milne came back to the beach at a quarter-past three, and brought with him a pretty and valuable drawing of the "Mosque of Moses," as the people call it, with the plan and full description. The remains are of *white alabaster*, a small piece of which I have kept for you. The spot where the ruins are is only a mile or so from the beach. Milne walked to it along the north side of a palm grove, gradually ascending over a sandstone slope, in many places worn into hummocks. He tells me that, at about half a mile from the sea, he came to a small stream about a yard wide, running in a channel worn in the solid rock. At this point he met with a small waterfall, or slide-down surface of rock, in all falling at least twelve feet, which looked very pretty among and with the palm trees overhanging it, and winding and losing itself among them. The surface has been quite cleared, so that one walks over the bare rock, which is composed of sand-

stone and conglomerate. A couple of hundred yards past this the rock is covered with sand, and just as you come to the end of the palm groves, you see a mound half as high as the palms, with the white blocks lying in the sand. Here there is a good view into the interior up the valley, along which date-palms are seen growing in patches; there are also a few dōm-palms, notably one overhanging the ruins.

Mr. Milne describes the ruins of the Mosque of Moses as follows:—"The blocks marked 'A' are of alabaster, whilst those marked 'G' are of granite, all much weathered. The alabaster blocks are about three feet long, and one foot six inches square. They all appeared to have been worked, but the edges are now rounded: one appears to form a portion of a column, and there would seem to have been two squares, one within the other, the south end of the inner one being semicircular, and there may have been another enclosure yet further out; but it is difficult to say. There are several large mounds near it, which may possibly contain other remains. The whole is being rapidly covered with sand, which is seen by its encroachments on the palm groves, which the natives try to prevent by erecting

fences. In one place the fence has been destroyed by the sand, and another erected further in."

On the chart of the Red Sea the ruins of the ancient Fort of Māgna (or Midian), and the encampment, with the running stream of water, are all placed much too far inland. The fort is not more than half a mile from the sea. Milne went as far as the running water; and, from what he says, there must be at the very least a thousand palm trees. The Beduin who was with us last night now came on board for some wine as "medicine" for his stomach, he said. Hashim had some for cooking, so he gave him a little. Then he came to me, calling out, "Hakim Bashi" several times. As I knew he had only come to beg, I pretended not to hear, but at last was obliged to turn round to him. His petition was, after all, a very reasonable one. It appeared that he had accompanied Mr. Milne to the Mosque of Moses, and now wanted four piastres as bakhshish, which I gave him, and he went away rejoicing.

Off and on all day the pilot has been diving, or looking for the anchor. He sits in the bow of the boat, with his head down almost to the level of the water, into which he looks with all his might. They say they know where it is; but I

see no proof of it. In the afternoon I spoke seriously to the Captain about our going on. He says the weather is still too bad; but if it would only become a little calmer, he would start, and leave the anchor to be fished up, or at least secured by the Beduins. Towards nightfall he made a great boast of starting during the night, at all risks, so as to anchor at Akaba to-morrow afternoon. But as there were no signs of getting up the steam I knew that this was all talk. After I had gone to bed I sent for him, and suggested that he should get up steam at all events, as, should it come on to blow so hard as to make the anchor part, he would be able to prevent the ship drifting on the lee-shore. But he said he was prepared for this by setting the two jibs, and so putting the vessel before the wind. With this I must needs be content.

January 26.—At about 7 A.M. the Captain came down into my cabin before I was up, to tell me the night had been worse than the two preceding nights, and at one time he really thought the anchor had slipped. This morning, however, the weather has calmed, and he had made up his mind to start, and continue all night, so as to get to Akaba to-morrow morning. I shall believe



PLAN OF "THE MOSQUE OF MOSES," AT MIDIAN.

him when we are really off. But, in fact, when I came on deck to breakfast at eight o'clock I found the fires were really lighted, which looks as if he were in earnest. We are here in $28^{\circ} 23' 30''$ N. latitude, and Akaba is in $29^{\circ} 29'$, so that we have some sixty-six miles to run. The Captain and pilot are still looking for the anchor!

I was copying out some of Milne's geological notes, when, at 10.15 A.M., I heard the steam-whistle as a signal for starting, and the ship began moving. At 10.30 the boat was up, and we were off. It was a lovely morning, only the sea rather rough, and the wind ahead as usual: drawing as it does down the immense funnel from as far as the Bay of Tiberias, it is almost constantly from the north. We keep close along the Arabian coast, which screens us a little from the wind, and gives us a smoother sea than we should have farther off the shore. Still the waves make the little steamer (she is only sixty-four tons) pitch a good deal, and prevent the screw from working as it should. The Captain says we are not doing more than two miles an hour, but we have a current of one mile in our favour, and as we go on the weather improves, so that we begin to make very decent way, on the whole. She is too much down

in the stern, as was remarked at Suez; and in consequence of which it was thought well to shift forward some of the things on board, so as to bring her head down. To me the sea seems as nothing compared to what I have been in on the coast of Kent in an open boat. Certainly, I have crossed the Channel over and over again in very much worse weather; but then allowance must be made for the size of our little craft.

At 1 P.M. we passed under a bluff of granite rising perpendicularly out of the water, which corresponding to the dip of the land, is without soundings. It is called Jebel Suwékhed; but in the 'Sailing Directions' it is called Tayyibat Isem, which I fancy to be some misunderstanding as to its name being "good." The sea has had such an effect upon poor Milne that he could not get up to lunch; but he must needs eat a large lump of cheese, and then take an orange to keep himself from being sick!

As we went along under the side of the mountain we saw a man and a boy walking along a narrow shelf of sand forming a sort of beach at its foot. At the distance at which we were it seemed to us as if there was scarcely room for them to walk. What they were doing there, and how they

got there, was a puzzle to us ; but the mystery was solved by our coming in front of a cleft in the mountain mass, at the foot of which was a little beach with date trees growing on it. I was sorry Milne was not in a state to make a sketch of it, but I supplied his place, and made a rough drawing of it, which will serve as the basis of a very pretty picture. It was now about 1.45 P.M. As we proceeded we witnessed signs of incipient vegetation on the face of the disintegrated granite : a tuft of grass here and there, and then a single stunted tamarisk. By and by the sandstone took the place of the granite, and the trees increased gradually in number, so as to almost form a little wood. We kept along in the deep water close along the shore, the hills gradually decreasing in height, till at 3.20 P.M. we stopped under a long sandy point called Bir-el-Máshiyah, in $28^{\circ} 51'$ north latitude, forty miles from the head of the Gulf of Akaba. About half a mile back from the beach there is an exposure of white coral and other shells. This is about twenty feet above the level of the sea by aneroid. Excepting these banks, the rest of the country is a flat plain, gently sloping upwards for two or three miles towards a range of granite hills.

We went in close to the land, and as the anchor

would not hold in the sandy bottom, it was carried on shore and a hole dug for it. A warp was also carried on shore. Here we are to remain till evening, when, if the wind falls, we are to go on during the night, so as to get to Akaba in the morning. The wind is rising just now, and I much fear we shall have to remain here all night. It is a good thing that we made the *détour* by Ainúnah, as we thereby escaped the bad weather in the Gulf, where it must have been infinitely worse than it was with us.

I cannot but look upon our voyage as having been thus far most fortunate and most favourable. When the subject is calmly considered, the undertaking is a most perilous one. The pilot knows the sea, it is true ; but neither the Captain nor any of his crew have ever been up the Gulf before ; and as to the young engineer—he tells me it is the first *sea* voyage he has ever made, his experience having been only on shore and in the harbour of Alexandria ; however, he knows his business very well. Milne is up and well the moment we reach land, and is already gone on shore. I stay on board to write up my journal for you, as the Captain says he shall not remain at Akaba, and I want you to have the latest news. This day fortnight I hope

you will receive this letter. If the Captain waits a day at Akaba, I think I may be able to send you a telegram from *Etham* (Wady Ithem). Before dinner-time Milne returned on board, bringing with him some sketches he had made, and a collection of rocks and pieces of coral as usual. The coast has risen here twenty feet at least.

January 27 (Tuesday).—Please God this is our last day at sea. Before I went to bed last night the Captain talked of starting as soon as the tide changed, which I understood him to say would be about 9 P.M.; but at 11 P.M. I got up, and looking over the companion-hatchway, I saw the Captain and all the crew fast asleep! At midnight I got up again, when I found two of the men beginning to stir, and the Captain was also in motion. He told me they were on the point of starting; and in a few minutes the word "presta" (ready) was given from the engine-room; whereupon the Captain called all the crew up. On this I returned to my bed, where I listened to the pleasing sound of weighing anchor and stowing the chain cable on the deck right over my head. By one o'clock in the morning we were off: the moon was still up, so that we had her light till full on our course. At seven o'clock I got up and went on deck. It

was a delightful still morning, the sky rather overcast, and the sea quite smooth. We were now steaming with the current right up the middle of the Gulf. Last night I read to Captain Sciassar what is said in the 'Sailing Directions' about the *Palinurus* having been thrice blown from her anchors (in 1830), which he repeated to the chief mate; whereupon they congratulated themselves on being *with me*; but who could say whether they would have my good fortune on their return voyage. I told them the danger was in coming up, not in going down the Gulf, the wind being almost always from the north.

At 8 A.M., the wind having shifted a little, we hoisted sail, and continued on a perfectly *smooth* sea! I am now getting very anxious and nervous. To-morrow will perhaps decide my fate. I have perfect faith, and *yet* one cannot help doubting at times whether there may not, perhaps, be some great mistake after all. If so, I must be content to bear it; but I *will* not doubt. I feel sure that I am right, and that a few hours will prove me to be so. I cannot be so grossly deceived. Yesterday it was intensely cold, the wind at times blowing very sharp: between this and the burning sun I have got a little erysipelas in the left ear, so this

morning I have put my kefiya over my cap. It protects the ears, which the hat with its brim and puggery does not at all. The sun is burning hot with scarcely a breath of air this morning.

At 10.30 A.M. we passed *Jesirat Fir'ôn* (Pharaoh's Island) opposite Akaba.¹ In the 'Sailing Directions' this island is described thus:—"Jazirrat Far'aun, or Pharaoh Island, about a quarter of a mile long and 300 or 400 yards broad, lies in lat. 29° 24', and from the fort and village of Akabah, S.W. by W. $\frac{1}{2}$ W., distant about eight miles. The fortification occupies the whole of the top of the island. The Arabs at Akabah will bring supplies to this place in five or six hours, but they are *not to be trusted*." There are caves in the island they say; but I fancy *they* are tanks only. Abu-Nabut speaks of a cave, "Maghara," near it; but I can get no satisfactory information from him. Every one must, I think, admit that these traditions about Moses and Pharaoh in *this* Gulf are at least quite as valuable as those in the Gulf of Suez; especially when taken in connection with my hypothesis with respect to the position of Mitzraim and Midian,² and that

¹ See "Diario in Arabia Petrea," di Giammartino Arconati Visconti, Rome, 1872, pp. 270-275, and Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, vol. i, pp. 160, 161.

² See chap. 11.

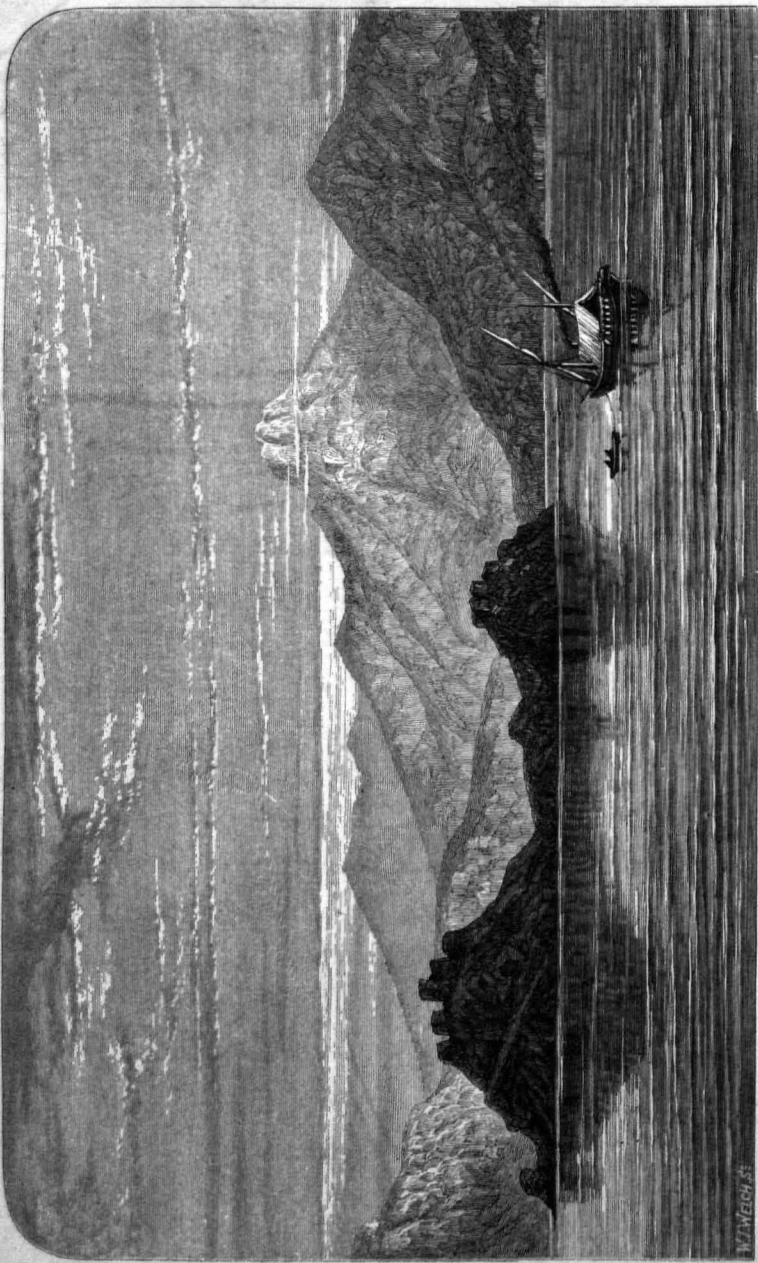
the Gulf of Akaba is the Yam-Suph, or Red (Edom) Sea—navigated by the fleets of King Solomon and Hiram, king of Tyre¹—which was crossed by the Israelites on the occasion of their departure from Mitzraim, as recorded in the fourteenth chapter of the Book of Exodus.

On the cumulative authority of the facts adduced in the second chapter of this work, it may be asserted without fear of confutation that by no possibility could “the Land of Mitzraim,” the country of the bondage of the Israelites, have been on the Isthmus of Suez,² or anywhere to the westward of it within the limits of the present country of Egypt. The result thus obtained leads directly to the further inference that the Gulf of Suez cannot be that sea which—by the direction and under the miraculous protection of the Almighty—was crossed by the Israelites in their flight from Mitzraim, and must, therefore, have been the Gulf of Akaba.

The argument by which this conclusion has been arrived at, however greatly at variance with the notions on the subject hitherto universally adopted, might, doubtless, be considered of itself sufficiently conclusive; but it fortunately happens that we

¹ 1 Kings, chaps. ix. x.

² See Origines *Biblicæ*, p. 176, note.



PHARAOH'S ISLAND (JESRAT FIR'ON), WITH JEBEL BAGHIR IN THE DISTANCE.

To face p. 359.

possess the means of arriving at the same result *from the Scriptures themselves*—the authority of which is *confirmed* by my disputing, as I do, the “traditional” explanation of the geography of the Bible.

The arguments which are thus adducible from Scripture are as follows:—The scene of the miraculous passage of the children of Israel is designated by the inspired historian as the יַם־סוּף (Yam-Suph);¹ by which designation, and by no other, it continued to be known to the Israelites throughout the whole course of their national history.² This name, it may be remarked, has been variously rendered in the Septuagint version by the expressions Ἐρυθρὰ θάλασσα, θάλασσα Σίφ, and ἔσχατη θάλασσα; but in the Vulgate it is (I believe invariably) translated *Mare Rubrum*, which authority has been followed by all the modern versions of the Bible, in which accordingly it is styled the *Red Sea*. In speaking, therefore, of the Yam-Suph, I use the expression “*Red Sea*” as a synonymous term: and at the same time, in order to avoid ambiguity, I distinguish the entire

¹ Origines Biblicæ, p. 177; Exod. xv. 4.

² See particularly Josh. xxiv. 6; Ps. cxxxvi. 13, 15; and Neh. ix. 9.

sea between the coasts of Arabia and Africa, to which the name of the "Red Sea" is usually applied by geographers,—and of which the *Yam-Suph*, or Red Sea proper, forms a part only,—by the name of the *Arabian Gulf*. So that the two head gulfs into which the Arabian Gulf is divided at its northern extremity are referred to by me respectively by the names of the *Gulf of Suez* and the *Gulf of Akaba*.

The only information respecting the situation of the Red Sea to be derived from those texts of Scripture in which that sea is mentioned in connection with Mitzraim, and as being the scene of the miracle wrought in favour of the Israelites, is that it lay in an easterly direction from Mitzraim;¹ and that the Israelites, having crossed it, "went out into the Wilderness of Shur,"² which, we are told, was "*before* (this is not necessarily the *east*) Mitzraim, as thou goest toward Assyria."³

Dismissing from our minds for a moment the formation of the low country in the neighbourhood of the Gulf of Suez, the foregoing references to the locality of the Red Sea might be considered

¹ "And the Lord turned a mighty strong *west* wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red Sea; there remained not one locust in all the coasts of Mitzraim."—Exod. x. 19.

² Exod. xv. 22.

³ Gen. xxv. 18.

to be applicable either to that Gulf or to the Gulf of Akaba, according to the view which we might take of the position of the country of Mitzraim, on the eastern side of which that sea is thus shown to have been situate. There is another set of texts, however, which do not refer to the passage of the Red Sea, but which describe the sea which washed the shores of Edom as being known, in the time of Moses, in that of Solomon, and even so late as the age of the Prophet Jeremiah, by the same name of *Yam-Suph* (Exodus xv. 4):¹ which description (as it is by other texts of Scripture determined that the position of the country of Edom was to the southward of the Dead Sea),² it is evident, can-

¹ "And when we passed by from our brethren the children of Esau, which dwelt in Seir, through the way of the plain from Elath and from Ezion-gaber, we turned and passed by the way of the wilderness of Moab."—Deut. ii. 8.

"And King Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion-geber, which is beside Eloth, on the shore of the Red Sea [*Yam-Suph*], in the land of Edom."—1 Kings ix. 26.

"Therefore hear the counsel of the Lord, that He hath taken against Edom; and His purposes, that He hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman: Surely the least of the flock shall draw them out. The earth is moved at the noise of their fall, at the cry the river thereof was heard in the Red Sea [*Yam-Suph*]."—Jer. xlix. 20, 21.

"Then went Solomon to Ezion-geber, and to Eloth, at the sea-side in the land of Edom."—2 Chron. viii. 17.

² "Then your south quarter shall be from the wilderness of Zin,

not be applicable, under any circumstances, to the Gulf of Suez, but to the Gulf of Akaba alone.¹

If, therefore, the *Yam-Suph* referred to by Moses, by Joshua, by David, and by Nehemiah, as the scene of the miraculous deliverance of the Israelites, be not the same sea as the *Yam-Suph* mentioned in connection with the country of Edom, by Moses himself, and also by Joshua, and subsequently by the writers of the books of Kings and Chronicles, and by the Prophet Jeremiah, we are

along by the coast of Edom, and your south border shall be the outmost coast of the salt sea eastward."—Numb. xxxiv. 3.

"This then was the lot of the tribe of the children of Judah by their families; even to the border of Edom, the wilderness of Zin, southward, was the uttermost part of the south coast. And their south border was from the shore of the salt sea, from the bay that looketh southward."—Josh. xv. 1, 2.

¹ In Dr. Beke's Diary, 14th April 1835, he says: "The following text appears conclusive as to the position of the *Yam-Suph*:—'And I will set thy bounds from the Red Sea [*Yam-Suph*], even unto the sea of the Philistines, and from the desert unto the river' (Exod. xxiii. 31), written (as seems certain) during the sojourn by Mount Sinai, before the Gulf of Akaba could have been known to Moses and the Israelites, according to the vulgar notion that it was the Gulf of Suez that was crossed by the Israelites, but yet referring to the Gulf of Akaba as the *Yam-Suph* which was to be the eastern limit of the Promised Land. I conceive also that Gerar must have been to the south of the Dead Sea, at the eastern, and not the western side of the Promised Land, in the country of the Philistines before they removed to the coast of the Mediterranean and drove out the Canaanites. This they must have done subsequently to the time of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and during the time of the bondage in Mitzraim."

led to the strange and indeed most improbable conclusion, that the two Gulfs of Suez and Akaba, which are at a distance from each other of more than a hundred and fifty miles, were, during the entire period of the existence of the Israelitish nation, not merely known by the same name, but were even perfectly undistinguishable the one from the other:—a conclusion which nothing but the gratuitous assumption that the Gulf of Suez was the Red Sea passed by the Israelites would for a moment have allowed to be entertained.¹

Should the arguments and proofs already adduced be not considered even more than sufficient to rebut that assumption, and to demonstrate that the Gulf of Akaba, and not the Gulf of Suez, is *invariably* referred to in Scripture by the designation of *Yam-Suph*, or Red Sea²—and particularly that it is the sea which was passed through by the Israelites on their Exodus from Mitzraim—the statement of Scripture with respect to the natural agent employed by the Almighty to effect the miraculous passage will incontestably establish the

¹ *Ludolfi, Commentarius ad Historiam Ethiopicam*, L. 26, 2; and ים קצרים of Isaiah xi. 15, probably the Gulf of Suez.

² *Dictionnaire Universel de Géographie*, tome 1er, Paris, 1823, in Cahen's Bible, Exode, pp. 115, 116; *Ibid.*, p. 22, note.

fact thus asserted; for the words of the text are totally inapplicable to the situation of the Gulf of Suez, and can, in fact, refer only to the Gulf of Akaba. I refer to the words of the inspired historian with respect to the "strong east wind" which blew during the passage of the Israelites, and made them pass on dry land.¹

Having then, as I conceive, determined beyond the possibility of doubt the true position of the Red Sea of Scripture, I may be allowed to remark, that there cannot be a more striking exemplification of the consequences of permitting any *human* authority to supersede the exercise of our reason than the erroneous position which, down to the present time, has been attributed to that sea.

Dean Stanley, in the preface to his "Sinai and Palestine" (p. xxi.), after remarking that to some persons "the mere attempt to define sacred history by natural localities and phenomena will seem derogatory to their ideal or divine character," very justly adds, that "if, for example, the aspect of the ground should, in any case, indicate that some of the great wonders in the history of the Chosen People were wrought through means which, in modern lan-

¹ *Origines Biblicæ*, pp. 181-189, and "Mount Sinai a Volcano," pp. 29-31; *Exod.* xiv. 21.

guage would be called natural, we must remember that such a discovery is, in fact, an indirect proof of the general correctness of the truth of the narrative."

The wonder is, how an error of such moment, and one which was so easy of rectification, should during so many ages have maintained its ground undetected, and, as far as I have the means of judging, even without the slightest suspicion of its existence.

It is a satisfaction, however, that we at least possess the means of detecting and explaining to some extent the origin of this error, which is simply as follows:—Independently of the general ignorance of the Jews subsequently to the loss of their national independence, which led them to imagine that the Egypt of Profane History was the country in which the bondage of their ancestors had taken place, we have the most convincing proof from Herodotus that in his time the existence of the Gulf of Akaba was unknown to the Egyptians, and, *à fortiori*, to the Jews then resident in Egypt. According to his account, the sea to the east of the Arabian peninsula (the Persian Gulf of the present day), and also the Indian Ocean to the south of Arabia, were called by

the name of *Ἐρυθρὰ θάλασσα*,¹ with which sea the Arabian Gulf is correctly stated by him to have communicated.²

We are more especially led to the conclusion that this historian, in common with the Egyptians, from whom he derived his information, was ignorant of the existence of the eastern branch of the Arabian Gulf, by the statement which he makes when describing one of the regions into which he divides the world—namely, that this region “commences in Persia, and is continued to the Red Sea *Ἐρυθρὰ θάλασσα*, here the Persian Gulf. Besides Persia, it comprehends Assyria and Arabia, naturally terminating in the Arabian Gulf, into which Darius introduced a channel of [canal from] the Nile;”³ thus unequivocally establishing his ignorance of the existence of any division between the mainland of Arabia and the peninsula of Pharan, or Mount Tor.⁴

¹ Cho, clxxx; Melpom. xxxvii., xxxix.; and see notes from Larcher and Bryant on the last, in Beloe’s translation. It is true that in Melpom. xli. Herodotus refers to the Arabian Gulf by the name of *Ἐρυθρὰ θάλασσα*; but, at the same time, he clearly distinguishes this from his general application of it.

² Euterpe, xi.

³ Melpom. xxxix. In quoting Beloe’s translation of Herodotus, on account of its being the version which is best known in this country, it is scarcely necessary to protest against its many well-known inaccuracies and defects.

⁴ In Dr. Beke’s Diary, 11th November 1833, I find the following

This being, then, the state of knowledge in Egypt respecting the Arabian Gulf 450 years before the Christian era, we can readily understand how the Jews, who subsequently to that period resided in Egypt, and particularly in Alexandria the extreme western point of that country, should have entertained similar notions on the subject; and as they had (we know not how long anterior to the epoch of the Septuagint translation) also adopted the idea that the Mitzraim of Scripture was identical with the then flourishing kingdom of Egypt, under the sway of the mighty dynasty of the Ptolemies,—in the face, however, of the prophecies, which had said that Mitzraim should be “the basest of the kingdoms,”¹ and that there should “be no more a prince of the land of Mitzraim,”²—it is readily conceivable how the Gulf of Suez, the sea immediately to the eastward of Egypt, should have been regarded as the Red Sea in which the host of Pharaoh was over-

entry: “It is clear that Herodotus only knew the Arabian Gulf as a single straight gulf, and was unconscious of the biturcated head. Rennell, to whom I have referred this evening, did not remark this, but lays down the two head gulfs in his map, showing (as he alleges) the notions of Herodotus on geography. This error at once explains the application of the name of the ים סוף to the Gulf of Suez: the Septuagint were, in fact, ignorant of the existence of the Gulf of Akaba!”

¹ Ezek. xxix. 15.

² Ezek. xxx. 13.

whelmed. When once this conclusion had been formed, and the Jewish residents in Egypt had thence proceeded to determine (as they conceived satisfactorily,) the sites of the several localities connected with that miraculous occurrence, it would have been expecting too great a concession from that bigotry which unfortunately has generally characterised the Rabbins and their disciples, that they should have been induced, simply by an effort of reason, to reconsider and to impugn the authority which they had thus recognised; so that the knowledge subsequently acquired of the existence of the Gulf of Akaba would have availed them literally nothing.

Yet, however the Jews may have persisted in the error into which they had in the first instance unintentionally fallen, it is quite inconceivable how this erroneous authority should have so unhesitatingly been followed by Christian commentators and travellers, who possessed ample means for arriving at a correct judgment, and who ought not to have been bound in the trammels which enslaved those from whom they had originally derived their false impressions on the subject.

In thus establishing the fact that the Gulf of Akaba, and not the Gulf of Suez, is the *Yam-*

Suph, or Red Sea of Scripture, we at the same time obtain the strongest confirmation of the inference drawn from the physical condition of Lower Egypt in former times, that that country is not the Mitzraim of Scripture.

Having, therefore, demonstrated that the Mitzraim of the Bible was not the Egypt of Profane History, but that it was situated somewhere within the basin of the Wady el 'Arīsh, in the direction of the land of the Philistines, which "was near;"¹ and that the Biblical Midian was part of the "East Country,"² i.e., to the east of the Gulf of Akaba; and further, that the Red Sea of Scripture, through which the Israelites passed on their flight from Mitzraim, was not the Gulf of Suez, but the Gulf of Akaba; I shall now proceed with the narrative of my journey—for the discovery and identification of the true Mount Sinai, and of the various stations connected with the Exodus of the Israelites from Mitzraim.

January 27, continued.—The sea is as smooth as glass. We have not met with a single sail in

¹ Exod. xiii. 17.

² Which my discoveries at Midian (on the 24th January 1874) of the "Mosque of Moses" and "Maghara Sho'eib," or Jethro's Cave, now confirm. See Stanley's "Sinai and Palestine," pp. 33-35 (edit. 1864); *Ibid.*, pp. 191, 194, *post.*

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