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THE

LAND OF PROMISE;

OR,

A TOPOGRAPHICAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PRINCIPAL
PLACES IN

PALESTINE,

AND OF

THE COUNTRY EASTWARD OF THE JORDAN:

EMBRACING THE

RESEARCHES OF THE MOST RECENT TRAVELLERS.

Illustrated with a Map and numerous Engravings.

BY JOHN KITTO, D.D.

AUTHOR OF THE HISTORY OF ANCIENT AND MODERN JERUSALEM,
THE COURT AND PEOPLE OF PERSIA, ETC.

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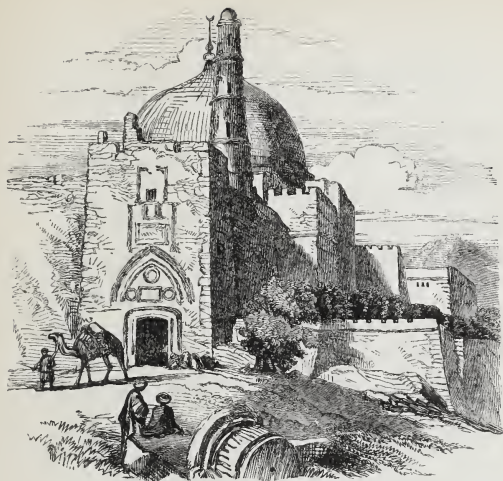
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GATE OF EPHRAIM, JERUSALEM.

PREFACE.

It is the object of the present work to describe every place or site of interest or importance in the Land of Promise *as it now appears*. As there is no country upon the earth in which that which is now stands so intimately connected with that which was, as Palestine, slight historical references have occasionally been introduced where they have appeared expedient or necessary. These allusions to the past more particularly bear upon the leading facts in the Scripture history of some of the principal places; for as it is assumed that most of the readers of this book are familiar with the sacred book, it was judged that such allusions to Scripture facts, however sparingly introduced, could not fail of being acceptable to them. Indeed, a reference to Scriptural or later history is

often required to show why the place which comes under survey has any claim to be regarded as interesting.

A plan has been chosen in the execution of this task, which appeared best calculated to combine the completeness and unity of formal description with some of the vivacity of actual travel. The country is taken in its existing provinces; and after the chief town therein has been described, excursions are made therefrom to whatever objects or sites of interest the province presents. For this purpose the routes have been carefully selected, so as to bring every matter of real interest under view: and it is hoped that nothing of the least moment which has engaged the attention of any traveller, in any part of Palestine, upon any road, has failed to obtain that degree of notice which the extent and nature of this work allows.



THE
LAND OF PROMISE
AS IT IS.

PART I.—JERUSALEM.



JERUSALEM.

LIKE most of the other provinces into which the modern Palestine is divided, that of Jerusalem takes its name from its chief city. Both, however, now are called el-Kuds, "the holy;" which name Jerusalem has received from the strangers who tread her down since her true "holiness" and consecration to God's service have departed from her.

Jerusalem has, in our own days, been visited by numerous travellers. Of these not a few have recorded their impressions on the first view of that city, which, like the people from whom she derives her glory, has been "wonderful from her beginning hitherto." A first glance of the city may be best given in the words of one whose mind was replete with scriptural recollections, Dr. John

Wilson, whose approach to it was by the way from Bethlehem. "From the tomb of Rachel to the convent of St. Elias, there is a gentle ascent. As we advanced to its summits, we began to call to remembrance some of the beautiful allusions in holy writ to 'the city of the great King,' Psalm xlvi. 2; the type of the spouse of Christ, Sol. Song vi. 4; 'the joy of the whole earth,' Psalm xlvi. 2; and which was for many ages 'full of stirs, a tumultuous city, a joyous city,' Isaiah xxii. 2; and which in its glorious towers, and palaces, and bulwarks, was unto God himself 'Gilead and the head of Lebanon,' Jer. xxii. 6. In a moment, JERUSALEM was before our view. We stood still in solemn silence; and again went forward, and stood still and gazed. Our feelings were so overpowering, that we could neither understand them nor give them expression. 'I am strangely disappointed,' at last said my companion; 'yet there is something in the scene strangely affecting.' In the language of Scripture, partly applied by accommodation, and partly used as by the inspired writers, as descriptive of the present desolations of the wondrous city, the only suitable response could be given,—'How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! how is she become a widow!' 'From the daughter of Zion all her beauty has departed.' 'All that pass by clap their hands at thee; they hiss and wag their head at the daughter of Jerusalem, saying, Is this the city that men call The perfection of beauty, The joy of the whole earth?' Lam. i. ii. 'Many nations shall pass by this city, and they shall say every man to his neighbour, Wherefore hath the Lord done thus unto this great city? Then they shall answer, Because they have forsaken the covenant of the Lord their God,' Jer. xxii. 8, 9. 'O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate,' Matt. xxiii. 37, 38. 'Yes,' replied my friend, 'Jerusalem was the most highly favoured and the most guilty; and it is now the most signally punished city on the face of the earth.' Ages have passed away since its glorious temple, and palaces, and towers, and residences, were overthrown; and it is not now that we have to find anything in it approaching to its former magnificence. The beauty of its situation is all we can hope to discern;

and that beauty of situation,—in the eminence and slopes of the platform on which it stands, and in its natural defences on two of its sides,—still remains, though only a glimpse of it is got on the approach from Bethlehem. The southern wall, with a few domes and minarets overtopping



WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

it, and the mosques covering the sepulchres of David and the other kings of Judah on Mount Zion, were all that here appeared to our view.”

Let us now look at the city from a more favourable point of view—the Mount of Olives. Beheld from hence, it is seen that Jerusalem lies upon a sort of tongue of land, which extends from the western chain of Palestine, and is separated and bounded by the deep valleys of Jehoshaphat and of Hinnom. This tongue of land is not level, but has first an inclination from west to east, which is much to the advantage of the general view of the city from the Mount of Olives; and it exhibits different levels, forming, perceivably, separate hills,—not, probably, so distinguishable as formerly. In the first place the site, if we regard it as an oblong quadrangle approaching to an oval, is divided into two principal portions by a diagonal indentation or valley, from north-west to south-east—the general direction of the site being from north to south. The westernmost of these hilly eminences is Zion, which is prolonged and spread out much

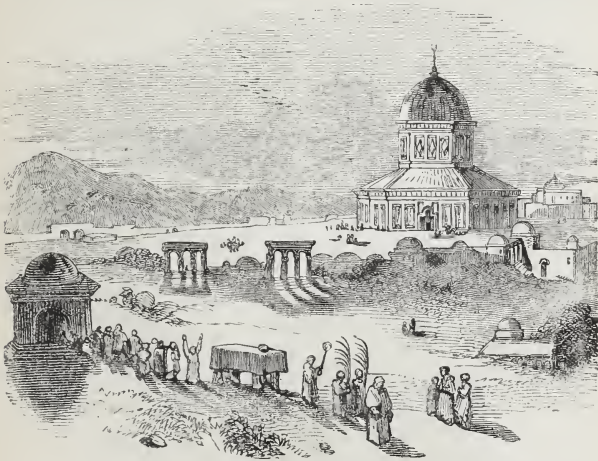
towards the south, and forms, in fact, the southern portion of the whole site. To the northern portion of this division, separated from the southern by a depression of ground, it has been usual to give the designation of Akra, which has been found in Josephus; but it is now believed that this appropriation of the name is erroneous; and that this portion of the western division of the city was either a part of Zion, or had no distinctive name which has descended to us. The eastern half of the site—nearest to the spectator from the Mount of Olives—is similarly divided by a very slight depression into two portions; the southernmost of these, opposite Zion, is Mount Moriah, the hill of the Temple, extended to the south by its promontory, in former times called Ophel; and the northernmost is that which has been usually identified with that which Josephus called Bezetha, but which is now more correctly regarded as his Akra. His Bezetha is sought in the district beyond the present walls, northward, in a district now “empty, and void, and waste,” but which was formerly a populous quarter, inclosed by a wall, which was built within the first twenty years after Christ.

The position of Jerusalem at present is doubtless the same, upon the whole, as that which it occupied eighteen centuries ago, and still earlier—only that Zion’s most southern part is now outside the walls, and unoccupied, except by the citadel and a few other buildings, whereas in the days of David, as well as in those of Christ, it bore the chief buildings of the city; and except also that the large northern quarter of Bezetha was anciently embraced within the walls.

It is towards the east that Jerusalem presents its most unchanged features. Here Mount Moriah descends almost precipitously into the Valley of Jehoshaphat, with the brook Kidron; while opposite to it the Mount of Olives rises towering above the city and locality. Equally unchanged have the natural features of the spot, to the south and west, remained. In the south there rises, as a neighbour to the Mount of Olives, “the Mount of Corruption,” so called from Solomon having built temples to the heathen deities thereon. 2 Kings xxiii. 13. At its foot lies, exactly opposite Ophel—which, strictly speaking, forms but a continuation of Moriah—the very ancient village of Siloam, close beneath which the Valley of Jehoshaphat becomes narrowest, where close to the celebrated well, Rogel, the southern Valley of

Hinnom adjoins the Valley of Jehoshaphat, at a sharp angle. The whole southern portion of the city, namely Mount Zion, is bounded by this Valley of Hinnom. This valley also, at its western extremity, forms, in conjunction with the western Valley of Gihon, the limitation of the city on the west. It is only on the north that the ground has no fixed natural limits. To the north-west lies a hilly country, whereas the direct north forms a continuous elevated plain.

Now let us, from our vantage ground, survey more closely the city which lies spread out like a map before us. The part nearest to us—the Mount Moriah, on which the Lord's "holy and beautiful house" once stood, is occupied by the mosque of Omar, perhaps the finest building in the Ottoman



MOSQUE OF OMAR.

empire, and which is held in scarcely less respect by the Moslems than the Temple of Solomon was by the Jews. The ground occupied by the inclosure, which corresponds to that of the temple, takes up about one-eighth of the whole space of the modern city, and presents a most attractive appearance from the Mount of Olives, being studded with olives, cypresses, and other trees, in the midst of which stands the magnificent mosque. This is of very light, fantastic architecture, bristling with points, and little spires, and minarets. Many of these have gilded crescents, that flash and gleam in the sunshine ; while the various groups

of Moslems, sitting upon bright carpets, or wandering among the trees, or a funeral procession slowly passing along, give animation to the scene. To the Mohammedans it affords the most agreeable promenade in the city ; but Christians are never allowed to pass the outer walls. The site is but little elevated above the neighbouring street, so that Mount Moriah, once the highest eminence that joined the city, is now shorn of that honour.

The sides of the hill of Zion, beyond the present walls, present a pleasing aspect, as they possess a few olive-trees, and rude gardens, and, in the season, some corn may be seen growing there, reminding one of the prophecy, that Zion should "be ploughed as a field," Mic. iii. 12.

Towards its southern extremity is the mosque of David, which is held in the highest reverence by the Moslems, who



MOSQUE OF DAVID.

affirm that the remains of David and Solomon were here interred, and that their tombs still exist.

The south-west quarter of the city, embracing part of Zion within the walls, is to a great extent occupied with the Great Convent of the Armenians, and with the residences of that people. It is, in fact, the Armenian quarter, and is, in all respects, the most agreeable part of the city. The convent is a most extensive edifice, and the only conspicuous

object to arrest the eye in this locality. It has a large garden, and can furnish accommodation for eight hundred pilgrims within its walls ; the poorer part lodging in the outhouses and offices in the courts, while the richer repose in comfort and luxury,—all the apartments being well furnished in the oriental manner. The wealthy pilgrims never fail to have a handsome present, sometimes to the amount of several hundred pounds. If a pilgrim dies in the convent, it is understood that all the property he has with him goes to the order. The church is very wealthy, and ornamented in a very curious style, the floor being covered, as in all the religious edifices of this people, with a large carpet.

Between this and the temple, on the north-east part of Mount Zion, is the quarter of the Jews. This is the dirtiest and least pleasant part of the city. Several of the people are, however, rather affluent, and live in a very comfortable style. It has been remarked, that both men and women are more attractive in their persons than those of their nation who reside in Europe, and their features are less strongly marked with the indelible Hebrew characters, being more mild and interesting. It is, however, to be observed that few passengers are, in general, to be met with in the streets of Jerusalem, which have the aspect, where the convents are situated, of fortresses, from the height and strength of the walls which the monks have thought necessary for their defence. Handsomely dressed persons are seldom seen, as the Jews and Christians retain the habit—though less necessary than formerly—of preserving an appearance of poverty, that they may not excite the jealousy of the Turks.

The north-west quarter of the city is largely occupied by the Latin convent, a building only inferior in extent and importance to that of the Armenians. Between these two fortress-like structures is seen the real fortress or citadel of Jerusalem. This comprises a group of square towers, erected at various periods. The greater part appears to be of Saracenic origin, though its foundation may be of great antiquity. One massive tower at the north-eastern extremity, close to the principal eastern entrance to the city, is evidently much older than the others, especially in its lower part, and is supposed by Dr. Robinson to be no other than the Tower of Hippicus, one of the three noble bulwarks erected by Herod, and which were left standing by Titus,

as memorials of his conquest, and as a shelter to the camp which he left behind.

Near the centre of the city, as at present occupied, we behold the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, whose domes from this point of view engage much attention, and are the only striking objects in the immediate vicinity. To those who distrust its claims to be regarded as covering the site of our Lord's death and burial,—it may still be regarded with interest and emotion, from the historical, and moral associations connected with it, and from the peculiar influence it has in many ages exerted upon the minds of men, who have made long and painful journeys to set their eyes upon it, who have shed their blood in rivers for it, and who have watered it abundantly with their tears. Yet even this sympathy is not unmixed with compassion and grief, at this tendency of the human heart to gravitate towards objects of sense—idols, whether of stone, or brick, or flesh—which do not really bring near, but distance, by their interposition, Him to whom the soul may have direct access, and who is not only near, but dwells intimately in every faithful heart. How much better to come to God at once in the way He has appointed,—namely, through Him who is exalted to the right hand of the Majesty on high, as a Mediator for us, and by faith in whom we may “have boldness and access with confidence!” (Eph. iii. 12.) There is but one way; and we bewilder and lose ourselves by seeking entrance at many doors, by many winding passages. Better go in at once by faith in Christ, and say in the words of the old poet,—

“ On Thee as on my centre shall
The lines of all my longings fall;
On Thee, as on my bed
Of soft repose, I'll rest my weary head.”

The north-east quarter of the town is inhabited by the Mohammedans, and presents no objects of special interest, except the minarets, which are however not confined to this quarter. There are eight or ten in different parts of the town. They offer nothing remarkable to the eye accustomed to such objects, but they are essentially picturesque, and tend much to enliven the view of an eastern town—pleasing the sight as much as they sadden the heart, which beholds in them the symbols of the false prophet's dominion.

In this view of the city, the picture is relieved by the low domes which cover the principal dwellings,—a charac-

teristic of these eastern towns, where timber proper for any other form of roof is not easily obtained. It is in a cursory survey from a distant point that the town appears to greatest advantage—for the most agreeable and striking objects are those which are thus most prominently seen—and the unpleasant details of the scene—the heaps of rubbish and ruin, the mean abodes, the filth, the uneven streets, and “all things that offend,” do not appear.

Let us not quit the Mount of Olives without recollecting that our Lord often stood there and beheld the city at his



MOUNT OF OLIVES.

feet. Just as the eastern wall bounded it to his view, even so is it distinctly bounded at the present day. On the spot where the Mosque of Omar stands, upon the broad area, there then towered the Temple of Herod, in all its glory. Above all, may we call to mind how the Lord, as he approached from Bethany to make his entry into Jerusalem, beheld the city and wept over it from hence, (Luke xix. 41 ;) and how his disciples here questioned him as to the woful hour of the future. A projecting rock is traditionally said to be the very place, and a small chapel was built thereon, of which few traces now remain.

If we turn from this spot to the side where the level summit inclines to the east, and where the view of the town is intercepted by some buildings, another splendid scene

opens to the view. Far off, in front, is the sandy-coloured Pisgah, solemn and rugged ; and hence it was—for Mount Nebo belongs to the chain of Pisgah—that Moses looked down upon the Promised Land. Along the furthest plain, and near the foot of the mountains, we may, on a clear sunny day, see a narrow winding line, as of silver thread, which loses itself in a bright, broad sheet of dazzling sea, to the south-east. That expanse is the plain of Gilgal, and of “ the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar ; ” that narrow, winding thread of silver, is the Jordan, and that far-off glittering water is “ the sea of the plain, even the salt sea, under Ashdoth-Pisgah.”

As a separate work has been devoted to the subject of Jerusalem,* it is not here our purpose to supply a minute description of that city, and of the objects of interest within and without its walls. We merely sketch its outlines that the present work may not seem defective, through the want of some notice of the chief city which Palestine contains. To complete that outline we may add, in the words of the author of “ Nozrani in Egypt and Syria,” that “ the *coup d'œil* of the city is altogether unlike any other that I have yet seen. The predominant character is ponderous gloom ; the heavy, grey stone houses are all flat-roofed, surmounted, as at Hebron, by white domes, the number of which strikes the eye as the leading peculiarity in this style of architecture. Several extensive places are cleared and deserted ; but no trees, no birds, no verdure, no softening embellishment. If there be beauty in Jerusalem, or in the hills that stand around her, it is the sublime beauty of stern endurance, ‘ for Jerusalem is ruined,’—‘ her house is left unto her desolate.’ ”

Another late traveller, Mr. Warburton, says,—“ The character of the city within corresponds with that of the country without. Most of it is very solitary and silent ; echo answers to your horse’s tread ; frequent waste places, among which the wild dog prowls, convey an indescribable impression of desolation ; and it is not only these waste places that give such an air of loneliness to the city, but many of the streets themselves, dark, dull, and mournful-looking, seem as if the Templars’ armed tread were the last to which they had resounded. The bazaars and places of business are confined to one small quarter of the city ;

* ANCIENT AND MODERN JERUSALEM, by Dr. Kitto, published by the Religious Tract Society.

everywhere else you generally find yourself alone. No one is even there to point out your way ; and you come unexpectedly upon the Pool of Bethesda, or wander among the



POOL OF BETHESDA.

vaulted ruins of the Hospitallers' court, without knowing it. The remains of the ancient city that meet the eye are singularly few ; here and there a column is let into the wall, or you find that the massive and uneven pavement is of costly marble ; but except the pools of Hezekiah and Bethesda, and the Tower of Hippicus, and some few other remains, preserved on account of their utility, there is little of art to assist the memory to the past."

The absence of stirring life is even still more marked beyond the walls. A recent traveller remarks, that—
 " With the exception of a few Turkish soldiers lounging at the gates, a shepherd with his sheep in the valley of the Kidron, a woman with her water-pitcher at the Pool of Siloam, and a party of mounted Bedouins on the ridge of the Mount of Olives, I scarcely saw a human being in a long morning's ramble round the walls of Jerusalem, many times repeated, and always with deepening interest, during the fortnight that I sojourned within her sacred lines."

With regard to the population of Jerusalem, the most trustworthy estimate makes it amount to between fifteen

and sixteen thousand. Of these the Jews are not far short of one half, the Mohammedans are 5,000, and the remainder are Christians—in all, about 3,400, of whom at least 2,000 are Greeks. The Protestants in Jerusalem are about seventy or eighty, connected with the various missions and consulates. In addition to this, there is a Turkish garrison of 800 or 1,000 men; so that 17,000 may be taken as the outside estimate for the ordinary population. But at the time of Easter, when pilgrims flock hither from all parts, there is a temporary increase of 3,000 or 5,000 people. The four convents or monasteries—Latin, Greek, Armenian, and Coptic—are central rallying points for the members of the various denominations. The Latin Christians, amounting to nearly a thousand, are chiefly native Arabs; and the twofold number who belong to the Greek communion are also natives of Syria. The Armenians, on the contrary, who number from three to four hundred, are principally foreigners, of some wealth and respectability. The Coptic Church is represented only by the monks of their inconsiderable convent, situate close to the shrine of the Holy Sepulchre, where all the four communions have their chapels and burning lamps. “By the grave of the mortal friend we have loved on earth,” says Warburton, “men meet even their enemies in peace; but at the Saviour’s [reputed] tomb the infidel watches with drawn sabre to prevent His followers from destroying one another. At this tomb, the chiefs of two rival and hating creeds unite, *for once*, on Easter Eve, but it is in the cause of fraud. Inclosed within the chapel, Greek and Armenian bishops call down fire from heaven by the appropriate means of a lucifer match. Greek and Armenian pilgrims strive madly to light their torches at this sacred flame; and priests of other faiths stand scanning by—in their turn to triumph in some other dotard superstition.”

Of the seven thousand Jews, at least six thousand are Turkish subjects—and therefore of oriental birth—and not so largely from Europe as is commonly supposed. Yet, come whence they may, few claim Jerusalem for their birth-place. They are, for the most part, such as seek a grave there—such as have come to lay their bones in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and under the shade of Zion, to await the day when there shall be no more destruction. They appear to the last degree withered, wretched, and squalid—probably the more so to avoid the exactions to which their unhappy

race has been so long subjected. In an obscure nook, near the south-west angle of the temple area, where a portion of the ancient wall is seen, they have the privilege of purchasing permission to mourn over the desolations of Israel ; for which purpose a considerable number usually assemble there on Friday. Mr. Bartlett thus describes the scene :—" In the shadow of the wall, on the right, were seated many venerable men, reading the book of the law, wearing out their declining days in the city of their fathers, soon to be gathered to them in the mournful Valley of Jehoshaphat. There were also many women, in their large white robes, who, as they entered the small area, walked along the sacred wall, kissing its ancient masonry with every appearance of deep devotion. I saw no weeping or outward signs of sorrow—the scene is sufficiently expressive without such manifestations ; nor was it rendered less so by the demands for charity, urged with all the eagerness of deep poverty. The Jew begging of the stranger beneath the memorials of his once proud and contemptuous superiority to the rest of mankind."

The actual standing of the city, apart from the associations which render it illustrious, is that of the chief town of a poor Turkish province, ruled by a subordinate officer, in command of a garrison scarcely sufficient to secure the gates against an inroad of the Bedouins. The commerce of such an isolated hill fortress, with no navigable river or practicable sea-port, is, of course, of very small account. The influx of pilgrims during "the holy week" gives activity to a little manufacture of beads and crosses from the trees of the Mount of Olives, rudely carved with a knife by the Arab Christians ; but beyond these and such-like memorials, there is no export of any kind. The population of the surrounding country has been so drained by warfare and oppression, that its resources are barely adequate to the supply of the city with the necessaries of life. The bazaar, as it is called, is but miserably furnished, offering little beyond a poor display of cotton stuff, lean mutton, scarce vegetables, bad tobacco, and poisonous opium.

The elevation of the city, about 2,500 feet above the level of the sea, secures its climate from extreme heat, and keeps the spot much cooler generally than our habits in thinking of any eastern city might lead us to expect. The air is pure, dry, and bracing ; and, even in the dog days, the thermometer seldom rises above 85° of Fahrenheit in the shade.

The winter, or rainy season, begins here in November, and lasts till March. Frost and snow are not unknown, but are of rare occurrence. From April to October the weather is always bright and calm, except during the Khamseen or Sirocco, which is very oppressive, though not in the same degree as in the plains.

“The streets of modern Jerusalem,” says a writer to whom we owe part of this description (Rev. Dr. Thomas Wilson), “are narrow, heavy, and gloomy ; the pavement, apparently

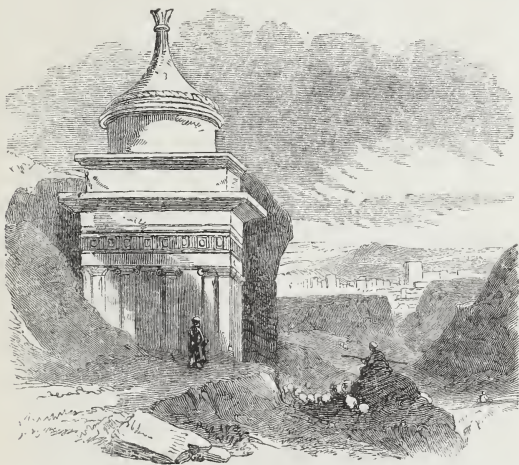


STREET IN JERUSALEM.

never relaid since the days of the Romans, rugged, sharp, and steep, to a degree that would flounder any horse but a Syrian, to whom a broken stone staircase seems as safe as a macadamized road. The senses, however, are not more offended by disagreeable impressions in these rough thoroughfares than in those of the proudest capital of Europe, though the virtue of cleanliness may, perhaps, be rather negative than positive, owing to the absence of the toiling and grimy population with which towns of equal circumference are usually thronged. Under Turkish rule, no one ever dreams of finding regulations and appliances for the convenience or safety of the public, with us so mighty and imperious a potentate ; no drilled police, no lamp-posts or penny posts, no water-pipes, no names of streets, no numbered houses,

no *trottoir* for pedestrians, no drains or sewers, no scavengers but dogs and jackals, no coaches or carriers' carts. Everybody is expected to provide for himself; and the governors take special care to set the example by employing their power in nothing but screwing taxes, and consulting nothing but their pleasure in spending them."

Before we pass from Jerusalem, let us notice one or two spots immediately under its walls. On the east of the city runs the VALLEY of JEHOSEPHAT, which meets the Valley of Hinnom, at the south-east corner of Mount Zion. The former appears to be mentioned both in the Old and New Testament only under the name of The Brook



VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT.

Kidron. "The prophet Joel," says Robinson, "indeed, speaks of a Valley of Jehoshaphat, in which God will judge the heathen for their oppression of the Jews; but there seems to be no ground, either in the Scriptures or Josephus, for connecting it with the valley of the Kidron. The name Jehoshaphat, however, was already applied to it in the earliest ages of the Christian era; there is, therefore, no good reason why we should not apply this name at the present day. "Below the fountain of En-rogel the Valley of Jehoshaphat continues to run south-south-west, between the

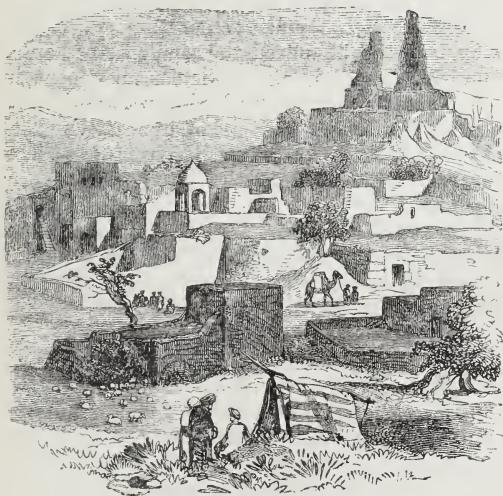
Mount of Offence and the Hill of Evil Counsel. The valley afterwards bends off to the south-east, and pursues its way to the Dead Sea. Below the well it is full of olive and fig trees, and is in most parts ploughed, and sown with grain. Further down it takes the name, among the Arabs, of 'Monk's Valley,' from the convent of St. Saba, situated on it; and still nearer to the Dead Sea, it is called 'Fire Valley.'

The Valley of Hinnom is so called in the Old Testament, though more commonly in the fuller form, "Valley of the Son of Hinnom." It is a deep and narrow dell, with steep rocky sides, often precipitous; and, sweeping around Mount Zion, descends with great rapidity into that of Jehoshaphat. Here it meets the gardens, (lying partly within its own mouth and partly in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, or Kidron, and irrigated by the waters of Siloam,) in which Jerome assigns the place of Tophet; where the Jews practised the horrid rites of Baal and Moloch, and "burned their sons and daughters in the fire." It was probably in allusion to this detested and abominable fire that the later Jews applied the name of this valley (Gehenna) to denote the place of future punishment, or the fires of hell.

On the south side of the Valley of Hinnom, and near its junction with Kidron, is the Potter's Field. It is a small parcel of ground near the top of the bank, with an old ruined house on it. There was a small level spot, thirty feet below the top of the bank, at the bottom of a thick stratum of horizontal rock. Walls have been made inclosing a part of this; the face of the rock forming the south wall of the building. The roof, which is flat, is on a level with the top of the bank, and in it are a number of holes, through which they used to throw the dead bodies. It is not now used as a place of interment, and is, in fact, going to ruin, part of the walls having fallen in.

At the junction of the Valley of Hinnom with that of the Kidron, which is nearly at right angles, the Hinnom running nearly east, and the Kidron nearly west, there is a level space of several acres, laid out in gardens, and set well with trees. These gardens and trees continue up the Valley of the Kidron, which is wider than that of Hinnom, for some distance; this rich and beautiful spot, watered by Siloam, is called the King's Dale. These valleys have all steep, high banks.

From Jerusalem let us now turn to view the sites of interest in its neighbourhood. Our first trip may be the short one to BETHANY, a spot of much interest, from its having been the little town to which our Lord seems to have habitually resorted when at Jerusalem—being the residence of his friends and disciples, Lazarus and his two sisters, Mary and Martha; as the place where his feet were anointed with precious ointment; and as the spot honoured with the exhibition of that signal miracle, attended with so many tender circumstances, the raising of Lazarus from the dead. The usual horse-road is the same that leads towards Jericho; but there is a footpath directly over the Mount of Olives. The distance is found to be about two miles, corresponding to the fifteen furlongs of the evangelist.



BETHANY.

It is but a poor village, the conspicuous object in which is a ruinous tower, built of large square stones, which doubtless belongs to the era of the Crusade. The villagers, however, declare this to be the house of Lazarus and his sisters. The number of houses does not exceed forty or fifty; but it is not easy to count them, as they are, in some instances, hid under the cliff, from which the traveller may sometimes find himself stepping upon their mud roofs, without

suspecting that he has left *terra firma*. There are a few olive and fig trees around the village, which thrive well. The present name of the village is el-Azirezeh, from el-Azir, the Arabic form of Lazarus.

The Tomb of Lazarus is shown, at some distance north of the tower at the edge of the village. It is not easy to determine whether this is a natural cave, remodelled by human labour, or wholly an artificial excavation; but it is most probably the former. The entrance is about three and a half feet high and two feet wide, immediately after which a descent is made by twenty-seven stone steps, into a dark room, about nine feet square. In its sides are four niches for the reception of bodies, and there is one broken sarcophagus. Three more steps lead through an excavated passage into an arched chamber, eight feet square by nine in height. This might readily be taken for an ancient Jewish tomb, which it quite resembles in form and construction. If this be indeed the sepulchre of Lazarus, the body probably rested in the particular apartment just described; the first room, with its niches, serving the double purpose of a family sepulchre and of an ante-chamber to the second, according to the style which prevails in several apartments of "the tombs of the kings," north of Jerusalem.

The situation of BETHPHAGE, which was in the same neighbourhood, was not until lately known, and all trace of it was supposed to have been lost. The footpath which leads from Bethany over the Mount of Olives to Jerusalem takes a north-west direction, around the head of a deep ravine, which passes off along the foot of the mount to the right. This valley, which contains a good many fruit-trees, and is extensively tilled by the plough, separates a lower ridge from Olivet, which also stretches off to the right, parallel with the ravine. Instead of following this customary path, Dr. Olin turned off along the top of this ridge, which is tolerably level and partially cultivated. His object was to look for any existing remains of the ancient Bethphage; and, from the nature of the ground about Bethany, taken in connexion with the language of the evangelists upon the subject, he thought that, if there were any, they would probably be found in that direction. He was gratified to discover, at the distance of about forty rods from the path, and a little more than a quarter of a mile nearly north from Bethany, the unquestionable vestiges of an ancient

village. Here, upon the top of the ridge, and upon the upper portion of the slope towards the Mount of Olives, is a large reservoir, which, though not used at present, is very little out of repair. It is lined with cement, and covered with an arch. Near this reservoir are several foundations for houses, made by excavating the rock so as to form a level of sufficient extent for the purpose. Besides these well defined and unchangeable remains, there are several shapeless heaps of stone and rubbish, which must be taken, in such a place, for the ruins and accumulations of former habitations or other edifices. The traveller does not state the present name of the place, but he gives what appear to be satisfactory reasons for concluding this ancient village to be the Bethphage of the New Testament.

Now, from Jerusalem, let us bend our steps towards
BETHLEHEM.

This excursion we commence by quitting the city at its eastern gate. We then cross the Valley of Hinnom, and come out upon the Plain of Rephaim. About three-quarters of a mile on our way, we come to what is called the Tower of Simeon, alleged to be a remnant or a monument of the house belonging to the aged Simeon, who received in his arms the Son of God when presented by his virgin mother in the temple. In connexion with this, the French traveller Nau (A.D. 1674—1680), mentions a curious belief of the eastern Christians, which we have not met with elsewhere. They entertain the persuasion that he was one of the seventy translators of the Old Testament into Greek. When he came to the text in Isaiah, "A virgin shall conceive and bear a Son," he was sorely perplexed, as at an impossibility, and he wished to render the word by "woman," instead of "virgin,"—when it was revealed to him that he should not see death until he had beheld that virgin and her Son, the Saviour of the world. By this account he would have been above three hundred years old when that promise was fulfilled. This is, of course, a fable; but they that are wise may see a moral in it—showing a sense in these people of the danger of altering or explaining away one jot or tittle of God's word in deference to human apprehensions. That text must really have seemed the most difficult in the Old Testament Scripture, until the fulfilment made it clear.

About two miles further on, over the same plain, we came to a spot, little noticed now, where once stood a noted

terebinth tree, much revered by pilgrims, in the belief that the virgin, with her infant Son in her arms, rested under its shade on her way from Bethlehem to Jerusalem. It remained many years, and grew to a large size—as this species does when suffered to attain its full growth. But one night it was wilfully set on fire by the Arabs, and great part of it consumed. The monks of the Terra Santa took away what remained, and made it up into crosses and rosaries, which were sold as sacred relics, at no mean price.

Near to this spot we find a well, which tradition has named the Well of the Three Kings, in the belief that the three eastern Magi rested here in their way from Jerusalem, when one of their number saw, in the clear water of the well, the reflection of the star whose guidance they had for some time lost. He cried aloud to his companions, and “when they saw the star, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy,” Matt. ii. 10.

About three miles from Jerusalem, and about midway to Bethlehem, we come to the convent of Mar Elias, which lies on the brow of the high ridge overlooking Bethlehem and the deep valley through which the rest of the way lies. This convent is an old, grey, square, fortress-like building, surrounded by olive plantations. On the other side of the road, is shown a stone, under an old olive tree, where the prophet Elijah is said to have rested on his way to “the mount of God.” 1 Kings xix. 3—8. But the tree was a juniper tree, and instead of being here, it was in the wilderness of Beersheba—a considerable distance from this locality.

Here we find ourselves in a broken, mountainous region. Indeed, the whole country, to far beyond Hebron, southward, is a continuous mountain, diversified with hills and valleys, but always at a very great elevation—probably scarcely anywhere much less than 2,000 feet, and in parts considerably more, above the level of the sea.

Further on, about a mile from Bethlehem, we come to Rachel's Sepulchre. This is now merely a common Mohammedan Wely—such tombs as they usually erect over their holy persons. It is a small, square building of stone, with a dome, and within it a tomb, in the ordinary Mohammedan form. Of course, a building of this sort cannot be ancient; and it is known that in the seventh century the monument was a pyramid of stones. It is now neglected and falling to decay; but the Moslems of Bethlehem used formerly to bury their dead around it, and to the Jews the tomb of the beautiful mother in Israel is still a place of

pilgrimage. The inside is plastered over with mortar ; and the naked walls are covered with names, many of them in Hebrew. The general correctness of the tradition which has fixed upon this spot for the tomb of Rachel is not open to question, since it is fully supported by the Scriptural narrative.

To the west of this tomb, upon the face of a hill, stands a large and pleasant-looking village, called Bet-Jalah, said to be inhabited entirely by Christians. Messrs. Bonar and M'Cheyne ask, "Whether this may not be the ancient ZELZAH, 'by Rachel's sepulchre, in the border of Benjamin,' where Saul was told that his father's asses had been found?" 1 Sam. x. 2. As they remark, the place is in other passages of Scripture called Zelah, from which the modern name might easily be formed, by prefixing the common syllable, "Bet," (that is, "house,") and softening the sibilant letter. If so, then is this the spot where they buried the bones of Saul and Jonathan,—“in Zelah, in the sepulchre of Kish his father.”

The last object that claims our attention before we reach Bethlehem is the so-called Well of David, for the water of which the pious king so intensely longed, and of which he said, "Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" 2 Sam. xxiii. 15. It is less than half a mile from the present village, and is in a rude inclosure, and consists of a large cistern, with several small apertures. It bears marks about it of having been long in use ; and its position seems to agree with the sacred narrative. David was at the Cave of Adullam when he expressed his desire for this water. The garrison of the Philistines was in Bethlehem. Their camp was further to the north. David's valiant men, coming from the south, broke through the soldiers of the garrison ; and, drawing water out of the well, they took and brought it to David. No question about the excellence of the water is necessarily involved. It may have been no better than water nearer at hand : but it was made sweet to him by the memories connected with it ; and he must be of slow understanding who fails to see how David might crave to drink again the waters which had refreshed his thirsty youth. Dr. Robinson objects that this is not a well, but a reservoir ; and there might be some force in this objection, in so far as that the waters of a well might be expected to exhibit some more peculiar, and perhaps more refreshing qualities than

those of a cistern. But the argument that it is called "a well" in Scripture, and therefore could not be this cistern, is met by the remark of Dr. Wilson, that the original Hebrew word is not *ain*, a fountain, but *bor*, corresponding with the Arabic *burah*, a pit or cistern, which will exactly suit such a place as has been noticed.



BETHLEHEM.

The first appearance of Bethlehem is very striking, in whatever direction it is approached. It is built upon a ridge of considerable elevation, and has a rapid descent to the north and east. The white stone of which the hill is composed, and of which the town is built, makes it very hot, and gives it a dusty appearance. It is surrounded by small valleys or depressions, devoted to the culture of the olive and the vine, and has, in the distance, a massive and imposing appearance. There can be no doubt that the town is the Bethlehem of Scripture—"not the least among the princes of Judah"—where was consummated the great mystery of "God manifest in the flesh,"—where the Son of God entered a sin-ruined world, that by his obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, He might make an atonement for human guilt, and "open the kingdom of heaven to all believers." What would be the gross darkness of the earth now, had not the Light of the world appeared, as "a day-spring from on high," out of Beth-

lehem? As the poor virgin of Nazareth became the "blessed among women," even so was this humble mountain-town of Judah selected to rank among the most honoured of all the cities of the earth. But its fame reaches far back beyond the Christian era. A thousand years before it gave to the world the thorn-crowned King, who still reigns over all the realms of truth, it bestowed upon the house of Israel its most illustrious minstrel and monarch, in the person of Jesse's son. It was amid these fields that the youthful David fed his father's sheep, and that his young heart was nourished in those pious thoughts which abundantly break forth in his Psalms. More highly honoured yet were the fields of Bethlehem, when the shepherds who watched their flocks in them by night were, first of all, privileged to hear proclaimed by the heavenly host, the good tidings of great joy to all people, that there was born that day, "in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord." And still more, for that great mercy to man, for which man is so thankless, the angelic choir was there heard to break forth in praise, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men." Luke ii. 14. These are high and solemn things to remember as we enter Bethlehem.

As we have seen, the town exhibits an appearance of beauty and stateliness, as viewed from without. And although, like other Eastern towns, it somewhat disappoints, when fairly entered, the expectations which the exterior view awakens, the streets are found to be, although narrow and steep, more regular than is usual in the towns of Palestine, and of remarkable cleanness. The houses, even the meanest, are all well roofed; and those small cupolas abound, which give to the towns and to the houses of the Holy Land an air of comfort, and even of importance, in strong and agreeable contrast with the uniform flat roofs and the roofless mud-walls of Egypt.

At the easternmost extremity of Bethlehem, on the edge of a steep rock overhanging a plain of several miles in extent, stands the Convent of the Nativity, containing within its precincts what is said to be the place where the Saviour was born into the world. In the plain to the eastward, a little less than a mile from the convent walls, is what is asserted to be the field where the shepherds received the glad tidings of the Saviour's birth. The convent is built in the most adorned style of Byzantine architecture;

having, from without, the appearance of a rude fortress, and being well adapted for defence against all the means of attack with which it could be threatened in the middle ages, or which could now be brought against it by its only enemies, the wandering Arabs, who might visit it for plunder. It is accessible only at one entrance, secured by a massive iron door; so low, like the entrance of most houses and of all places of defence in Palestine, that a tall man must stoop nearly double to pass, and even a short man bend, and enter head foremost, in a posture little adapted either for aggression or resistance. Within the convent there is little worthy of observation, excepting some very good editions of ancient books of travels, topography, and divinity, which are kept in the sleeping cell of the librarian.

The monastery, in its extensive area, is inhabited collectively by Latin, Greek, and Armenian monks, although anything but fraternal unity prevails among them, and most European travellers, who repair to the Latin part of the convent, are entertained during their stay with manifold complaints of the aggressions of the Greeks and Armenians.

The Church of the Nativity is contained within the convent. Its chief nave has a noble aspect, adorned with four rows of marble pillars, the splendour of which, however, no longer dazzles. The roof is not arched, but rests upon a framework of beams of Lebanon cedars—though some say of cypress-wood. The walls are unadorned; but they have the appearance of having been divested of some former decorations. In the arches of the windows may be discerned glittering remains of the beautiful mosaics of golden glass, which still adorn the mosque of St. Sophia, at Constantinople, and other ancient ecclesiastical buildings. The whole of the nave of this cross-shaped building is deserted and waste, the wings only of the cross being in use; and of these the Latins possess the smallest portion, in their little church of St. Catherine. It deserves to be noticed, that this small structure is furnished with an organ, being, we think, the only one in all Palestine. From this church a subterranean passage leads into the sanctuary, which lies fifteen steps below the high altar of the Armenian and Greek church. This sanctuary is a low rocky cavern, arched at the roof, its floor paved with white marble, and its marble walls hung with silken draperies. In a niche, between the two flights of steps which lead up to the high altar, lies the spot which is revered as the birth-place of the Re-

deemer. The flames of many silver lamps light up the place, night and day. A small marble table or slab, supported by low pillars, serves as an altar ; in front of it, a spot upon the floor is distinguished by a glory of inlaid jasper, and inscribed with the words, *Hic de Virgine Maria Jesus Christus natus est.* " Here was Jesus Christ born of the Virgin Mary."

The place which is called the Presepio is within a few yards. Into this one descends by a few low steps. It contains an alabaster trough, or hollowed bed, made to represent the manger and to replace it. This is enclosed in a shrine, hung with blue silk and embroidered with silver. Directly opposite the shrine of the manger, and but a few yards from it, is another chapel and altar. There, it is said, the kings of the east opened their gifts and worshipped.

Adjoining to the cave of the Nativity is shown the chapel and sepulchre of the Innocents slain by order of Herod, and a preserved tongue, set forth as a relic of one of the infants. There is also the altar of Joseph, the graves of Eusebius of Cremona, the disciple of Jerome, and of the noble Roman lady, Paula, and her daughter Eustochia ; and still further, a chapel and a sepulchre which possess a special interest to Biblical scholars. The chapel, which receives light from above, was originally the cell in which Jerome—in spite of the envy, hatred, and malice which, in place of gratitude, were his meed—steadily pursued for many years, with iron industry, his learned and useful labours upon the Bible. The adjacent grave is the bed of repose on which, at the great age of ninety, he was at length permitted to lay down his weary head.

This, at least, *is real* ; and in the midst of the uncertainties which a Protestant traveller will feel, as all these various objects are indicated with such exact precision, it is satisfactory to the feelings to have something undoubted, resting on evidence, even though a grave. In fact, that Jerome, who made the localities of the Holy Land his particular study, acknowledged this, in the fourth century, as the place of the Nativity, and on that account fixed his abode there, seems to us one of the strongest arguments for the reality of the site. It certainly proves the antiquity of the identification—and that is something : but that is not all, unless we could take it up, upon undoubted evidence, to the very time of the events. There are also some serious objections.

The chief of these is, that there is nothing in the sacred narrative to show that our Lord was born in a cavern like this, difficult of access to cattle ; but it seems plainly enough to indicate that it was in an approachable stable, attached to the khan, or inn, in which the virgin-mother could not be accommodated. On the other hand, it is alleged, with truth, that nothing is more common at the present day, in Palestine and the neighbouring countries of the east, than the conversion of caves into stables, so that the evangelist would not specially point out the circumstance. As we have undertaken merely to describe things as they stand, questions of this nature do not fall within our province. And this is well ; for we see no profit in the discussion of them. Our interest is in the events rather than in the places where they occurred ; and although it is not possible, as the human mind is formed, to separate the interest in events wholly from that in places, the least uncertainty or doubt as to the latter severs the nice links by which the association is formed and the interest awakened. There is another thing which goes far to impair the emotions which might be felt where no such uncertainty is entertained. This is the extraordinarily injudicious manner in which these alleged sacred places are decked out for effect, so as completely to disguise the natural characteristics of the spot, with which so much of the real interest that can be felt in it must be connected. On this point we willingly cite the words of the Rev. Messrs. Bonar and M'Cheyne, who, after describing the "decorations" of the cavern, say :—" Yet all this is only a miserable profanation, like the Church of the Holy Sepulchre ; it called up in our bosoms no other feelings than disgust and indignation. If this cave were really the place of the Nativity, then Popery has successfully contrived to remove out of sight the humiliation of the stable and the manger. 'The mystery of iniquity' which pretends to honour, and yet so effectually conceals both the obedience of Christ, which he began at Bethlehem, and the sufferings of Christ, which he accomplished at Calvary, has with no less success disfigured and concealed the places where these wonders were 'seen of angels.'"

We have not yet done with caverns. There is another, a few hundred yards to the eastward of the convent, which is shown as the place where Mary and her husband secreted the infant Saviour during the massacre of the young children of the country around. The cavern is hollowed in a

chalky rock. About *this* grotto only one word need be said, which is, that it is clear from Matt. ii. 13, that being *beforehand* warned of God in a dream, Joseph had already removed the young child to Egypt, before the time of the massacre, and therefore did not require the concealment which this tradition provides.

Of the town itself little remains to be said. The inhabitants, about two thousand in number, are mostly nominally Christians—Greeks and Catholics in nearly equal numbers; there being no Jews, and few Mohammedans. The dress of the Christian women here is singularly graceful and becoming; probably but little varied in fashion from those of Naomi and her daughter-in-law, poor Ruth, who “clave unto her,” and said, “Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.” The young women wear a light veil, or rather hood, not covering the features, like the Turkish or Egyptian *cimaar*, but descending on each side of the face, and closed across the bosom, and showing the front of a low but handsome head-dress, usually composed of strings of silver wires plaited in among the hair, and hanging down below the chin as a sort of necklace. The mothers and aged women wear a larger and darker robe.

The people of the place, in addition to their agricultural pursuits, are much engaged in the manufacture of various holy toys and trinkets, which command a ready sale among the pilgrims, who are anxious to possess such memorials of their visit. These articles consist of models of the Holy Sepulchre, figures of Christ, of the virgin Mary, of the apostles, and of other saints, crucifixes, rosaries, heads, spoons, cups, and platters, with portions of Scripture inscribed upon them in Arabic letters. The materials out of which these articles are manufactured, are mother-of-pearl from the Red Sea, olive wood, agates, jaspers, and bituminous limestone, from the rocks to the east of Bethlehem.

The windows of the convent, which are all in the upper story, and still more the terrace, command an extensive view over the east country, even to the mountains of Moab and Ammon beyond the Dead Sea and the Jordan.

Immediately east of the town—beyond the rocky shelvings on which it stands—is the small plain in which it is believed that the birth of Christ was announced to the shepherds. It is now, like other fields in the neighbourhood, under cultivation. A convent, said to have been

built by Paula, (whose sepulchre was lately mentioned,) formerly stood on the spot, but is now destroyed. It was,



FIELDS NEAR BETHLEHEM.

without question, in some field in this neighbourhood that Ruth followed the reapers of Boaz. The neighbouring village of Beit Sahur is said to be that in which the shepherds lived. It is now inhabited principally, or solely, by Christians. The country between the neighbourhood of Bethlehem and the Dead Sea is now almost entirely desert; and its cretaceous strata and debris have much the appearance that is witnessed in the great southern wilderness. Dr. Wilson thought he had a glimpse of the waters of the Dead Sea itself from this point of view, but, on resorting to the telescope, it proved to be an ocular illusion, arising from their exhalation, and the consequent haziness of the atmosphere.

The most conspicuous object in this view, east from Bethlehem, is the *Jebel el-Fureidis*, or the Frank Mountain, which is seen to the south-east, above four miles off. It has much the form of a truncated cone, and rises about three or four hundred feet from its base. Pococke conjectured it to be the *BETH-HACCEREM* of *Jer. vi. 1*:—"Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Beth-haccerem;" and, certainly, a more suitable place for a fire-signal could not be imagined. The supposition is

probably correct. The manner in which the place is mentioned in connexion with Tekoa is strongly in its favour, and Jerome, who intimately knew this neighbourhood, states, in his Commentary under this text, that Beth-haccerem lay on a height between Jerusalem and Tekoa, which agrees with the position of Fureidis. Beth-haccerem means the "house of the vineyard," and there is no place more suitable for raising vines between Tekoa and Jerusalem than the neighbourhood of Fureidis, ("the little paradise,") the lower sides of which bear marks of ancient cultivation, and which is contiguous to the verdant Wady Urtas. There are not only remains of a fortification on the summit of Fureidis, but there are rivers on both its northern and southern sides. Dr. Robinson suggests, with no small probability, and in accordance with Mariti, that it is the site of the remarkable palatial fortress built in this quarter upon an eminence by Herod the Great, called after his own name the Herodium, and which was afterwards his burying-place, his body having been brought hither from Jericho, where he died. Its present name, of Franks' Mount, is derived from a somewhat obscure story, vouched by Quaresmius and others, that here a party of crusaders maintained themselves for forty years, after Jerusalem fell for the last time into the hands of the Saracens, in 1187. But this story is discredited by captains Irby and Mangles, who remark, that "the place is too small ever to have contained even half the number of men which would have been requisite to make any stand in such a country; and the ruins, though they may be those of a place once defended by the Franks, appear to have had an earlier origin, as the architecture seems to be Roman." Prior to the seventeenth century, travellers and pilgrims regarded this as the Bethulia of the book of Judith; but no one now supports an opinion which can be shown to be utterly untenable.

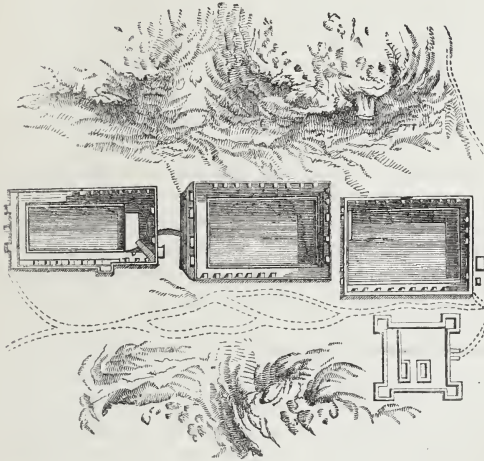
It has been mentioned that the Wady Urtas leads down to the Frank Mountain; in a more western part of this wady, about a mile south of Bethlehem, is the village Urtas, from which the wady derives its name. The place is still inhabited, although the houses are in ruins; the people dwelling in caverns among the rocks of the steep declivity. Here are manifest traces of a site of some antiquity,—the foundations of a square tower, a low thick wall of large squared stones, rocks hewn and scarped, and the

like. Robinson appears to think that this may mark the site of ETHAM, which was decorated by Solomon with gardens and streams of water, and fortified by Rehoboam along with Bethlehem and Tekoa; and whence, too, according to the Rabbins, water was carried by an aqueduct to Jerusalem. The fountain here sends forth a copious supply of fine water, and forms a beautiful purling rill along the bottom of the valley. In the valley and on the hills, hereabout, the traveller sees flocks of sheep and goats mingled together; and this would seem to have been also the patriarchal mode of pasturage. The sheep of Palestine are all of the broad-tailed species; the broad part being a mere excrescence, with the proper tail hanging out of it. A few camels may also be seen, and many neat cattle, all looking in fine condition; thus showing that this is a good grazing district, however rocky and sterile may be its appearance. The little stream of Urtas at first fertilizes many fields and gardens with its waters; but it is soon absorbed in the thirsty soil, and then the gardens cease.

It is here that the monks find the garden alluded to in Canticles iv. 12, "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse:"—described by old travellers under the name of *Hortus conclusus*. But although Robinson and other travellers point out this, it seems to have escaped all of them, that the existing name, Urtas, is but a corruption of Hortus, which, in all probability, the inhabitants heard so constantly applied to the place, that they at length caught it up. The village is doubtless that which the same old travellers describe as "the village of Solomon," which they represent as having been in their time inhabited by poor peasants, who cultivated the bottom of the valley. It was believed, they add, that the village owes its origin and its name to the lodges which Solomon established here for the numerous gardeners who had the care of this pleasant spot. The manner in which the place is hemmed in by high mountains on both sides, except where the valley opens, seems to have suggested this identification; and it is hinted that a magnificent balustrade, thrown across the opening of the valley, might, and probably did, complete the seclusion of the scene.

It is but little to the west of Urtas that we find the celebrated Fountains of Solomon. They consist of three vast quadrangular basins, which occupy a hill-side sloping eastward, and are so arranged, that the water which passes

from the upper, or western basin, is received by the second, from which it is carried into the third. The upper pool is



SOLOMON'S POOLS.

the smallest, and the lower pool is the largest. Dr. Robinson thus gives their dimensions:—“*Lower Pool*: length, 582 feet; greatest breadth, 207 feet; depth, 50 feet. *Middle Pool*: length, 423 feet; greatest breadth, 250 feet; depth, 39 feet. *Upper Pool*: length, 380 feet; greatest breadth, 236 feet; depth, 25 feet. They are walled with squared stones, and lined with a coat of cement, the whole having the appearance of great antiquity. The bottom is formed of the natural rock, which slopes to the east.”

The principal fountain from which these pools are supplied, is distant from the upper reservoir some thirty or forty rods. It is usually closed with stones, but the interior has been explored by some travellers, who state, that the entrance leads by a considerable descent into two vaulted rooms, formed of several stone arches with one of brick. The water of four springs or sources is collected here, and conducted into another subterranean reservoir near to the pool. This is, in pilgrim tradition, alleged to be the “spring shut up, the fountain sealed,” of Canticles

iv. 12. "And in confirmation of this opinion," says Maundrell, "they pretend a tradition, that king Solomon shut up these springs, and kept the door of them sealed with his own signet, to the end that he might preserve the waters for his own drinking in their natural freshness and purity. Nor was it difficult thus to secure them, they rising under-ground, and having no avenue to them but a little hole like to the mouth of a narrow well." From this fountain, the largest portion of the water passes into an aqueduct, the channel of which is formed of earthen pipes, secured in a line of substantial and well-cemented masonry, which winds along the sides of the mountains, in order to maintain the proper level till it reaches Jerusalem. This is a stupendous work, considering the age in which it was probably achieved, and is perhaps the oldest aqueduct in existence. It gives a high idea of the state of the arts among the Jews at that early day. The pools are not necessary appendages of the aqueducts, and are thought to have been connected with pleasure-grounds—perhaps with a country place which Solomon built in this valley, and to which he is supposed to allude in Eccles. ii. 4—6: "I made me great works; I builded me houses; I planted me vineyards: I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kind of fruits: I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees." Josephus, no doubt, alludes to these pools, and to the other improvements which formerly existed in their neighbourhood: "There was a certain place, about fifty furlongs distant from Jerusalem, which is called Etham. Very pleasant it is in gardens, and abounding in rivulets of water. Thither did he (Solomon) use to go out in the morning, sitting on high in his chariot." The distance of these pools from Jerusalem answers very well to this description, and this spot satisfies its conditions better than perhaps any other about the ancient metropolis.

A large building, once used as a fortress, or caravan-serai, or for both purposes, stands close to the upper pool. It is of substantial workmanship, and in good repair. The windows open into the court. It was probably built in the time of the Crusades, to guard these waters during the wars, as we all know to what extremities some of the early Crusaders were reduced, from the different wells being poisoned by the enemy on the approach to Jerusalem.

While in this neighbourhood, we may as well strike across the eastern wilderness to visit the monastery of St. Saba, which lies about seven miles north of east from Bethlehem. It lies in the valley by which the Kidron proceeds to the Dead Sea, and there is a route to it from Jerusalem down that valley; but this route from Bethlehem is the shortest and most convenient. After a journey of about three hours through a wilderness of limestone and yellow sand, seldom relieved by a tree or a shrub, we stand upon the summit of a considerable elevation, in full view of the neighbouring bold mountain fortress, which bears the name of Deir Mar. Beyond it the Dead Sea appears, at what, to the unpractised eye, may seem no greater distance than half a league.

The Saint Saba, whose name this place bears, was a famous personage in his day. He died in the year 532, and was the founder of many monasteries, of which the present is the best known, and the largest. On the declivity of the rock, which looks down several hundred feet into the valley of the Kidron, the stony structure commences, supported upon massive pillars: it then ascends the mountain in a succession of terraces, and with strong, high, and massive walls, its iron gates, and its towers, loopholed for the discharge of musketry, presents, at the first view, much more the aspect of a feudal castle than of an establishment of peaceful recluses. Yet these strong defences are not, even in our day, needless. From one of the towers a vigilant eye is constantly kept watching the valley for the movement of strangers, and in particular of Bedouins; for, although a basket of coarse bread constantly hangs from the walls for the solace of these hungry sons of the desert, they are not always thus satisfied, and from time to time make hostile assaults upon the monastery.

The immense structure, which stretches from the top of the bank quite to the bottom of the abyss, is merely, however, a vast frontage, screening a considerable number of cells hewn in the natural rock behind, and containing the staircases, corridors, and covered ways, necessary for intercommunication, together with the old and new churches, the chapels, and the other appendages of such establishments. The structure of the rock, which forms the steep banks, or rather walls, of the Kidron valley, afforded peculiar facilities for the formation of cells for the residence of a vast number of anchorites. For the cliffs are filled

with a multitude of cavities formed by the displacement of some of the strata, which are as regular and distinct as the layers of stone in a pile of masonry. They vary greatly in their dimensions; for while some of them present an opening to the ravine several yards in length, and extend far back into the mountain, others scarcely afford room enough for a small cell. They are not usually more than six or seven feet in height. The cells are formed by erecting, in front of these caverns, walls, which rest upon projecting layers of the rock, or by narrow paths formed along the front of the precipice. Such cells occupy both sides of the ravine. Most travellers who visit the spot will recognise the fitness of the comparison of an American traveller, Dr. Olin, who writes: "When I first saw them in the distance, they reminded me of swallows' nests, or the mud-built habitations of hornets, stuck upon the high walls of uninhabited buildings. They extend for a considerable distance above and below the convent, and their number and ruinous state point back to ages when the monastic life was in better odour, and attracted more votaries than at present."

The inmates of the convent are of the Greek denomination. Their present number is said to be about fifty, but the building might very easily accommodate a hundred. They abstain from flesh meat altogether, and allow themselves even eggs and milk only twice in the week.

We are now so near the valley of the Jordan, that without returning to Bethlehem or Jerusalem, we may leave behind us the wastes of Judæa, and shaping our course in a northeasterly direction over the mountains, descend into the equal but different desolation of that valley.

Here JERICHO, "the city of palm trees," whose renown is of ancient times, first engages our attention. This city, after its miraculous overthrow at the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, lay for a long time waste. At length, in the time of Ahab, one was found who defied the curse which was laid upon him who should rebuild it,—and, accordingly, the weight of that anathema fell upon him to the uttermost. His first-born son died when he laid its foundation, and his youngest when he set up its gates, 1 Kings xvi. 34. It afterwards became a place of some importance, and appears as such in the Gospels, having then been much improved and strengthened by Herod the Great, who died

there. But at the close of the seventh century after Christ, it was already void of dwelling-places, and covered with corn-fields and vineyards. There is still, however, a place



JERICHO.

which claims to represent the Scriptural Jericho. This is the miserable Arab village of Rihah, in which word some profess to recognise the name, Rahab, of the woman who sheltered the Jewish spies. Whatever be the origin of the name, the village itself is pronounced by all travellers to be the meanest and foulest in Palestine. It contains about forty human dwellings, built of small loose stones. The walls, which threaten to tumble down at a touch, are covered with flat roofs, composed of reeds or straw, plastered over with mud. A small yard is inclosed around most of the houses, by dry thorn bushes. The whole village has a similar bulwark, which, feeble as it appears to be to oppose resistance to an invader, is quite sufficient against the marauding Bedouins with their bare legs and feet, or any other enemy who happens to be in too great haste to burn it. The most conspicuous object in the village is a dilapidated edifice, some thirty or forty feet square, and about as high, which was probably constructed to defend or overawe the

place when of more importance than at present. There are some narrow apertures in the wall, which appear to have been designed as loop-holes for musketry. If so, they may seem to limit the date of the structure to an age subsequent to the invention of gunpowder, and point to a probably Saracenic origin. Dr. Robinson, however, inclines to ascribe it to the age of the Crusades, and suggests that "it may not improbably have been erected for the protection of the fields and gardens that then covered the plain, and was therefore placed in the midst, at a distance from the fountain and the former site of Jericho." The pilgrims assign to it a higher antiquity, and regard it as the house of Zachæus, in which he entertained the Saviour. They also point to a solitary palm-tree, the sole survivor of the luxuriant groves that distinguished Jericho as "the city of palm-trees," as the tree into which this chief of the publicans climbed up to obtain a view of Jesus as he passed through the city. That tree, however, was not a palm-tree, but a sycamore.

The tradition which identifies this wretched place with Jericho cannot be traced higher than the Crusades : and no tangible evidence exists for its occupying the site of that ancient city. There are no ruins to indicate the former existence of any considerable town ; there is nothing, in fact, but the tower, to induce a suspicion that anything better than the present wretched village ever existed on the spot. The site does not agree with that of the ancient town, which, according to Josephus, was close to the mountain, and nearer by several miles to Jerusalem. In the situation indicated by these conditions—that is, near the mountains which bound this plain on the west, and hard by the place where the road from Jerusalem comes down into it — there are some very considerable traces of an ancient town of importance ; and as we know of no other town save Jericho in the plain, the inference that it does represent that famous place is very strong.

The fertility of the oasis in which Jericho lay was famous in ancient times ; and the concentrated heat of the place gave an Egyptian character to its climate and products. The Scripture calls Jericho "the city of palm-trees," and Josephus everywhere describes these graceful trees as here abundant and very large, and growing even along the very banks of the Jordan. The region also produced honey, opobalsam, the Cypros-tree, or el-Henna, and the myro-

balanum, as well as the common fruits of the earth, in prolific abundance. The sycamore tree also grew here, as we learn from Scripture. Of all these productions which so distinguished the plain of Jericho, and which it had, for the most part, in common with Egypt, few now remain. The groves of palm, such as still constitute the pride of Egypt, have here disappeared, and only one solitary palm-tree lingers in all the plain. Honey, if found at all, is now comparatively rare; the Henna has entirely disappeared; the sycamore, too, has retired from Jericho; and the opobalsam is no longer known in the country. The myrobalanum alone appears to thrive, being, probably, identical with the tree called by the Arabs, Zukkum: the oil extracted from the kernels of whose fruit is still highly prized by the Arabs and pilgrims for the cure of wounds and bruises. This is the *Elæagnus angustifolius* of botanists. "The rose of Jericho" is not a rose, and does not grow near Jericho. Indeed, Belon regards the name as merely got up by the monks, to have something to correspond with the mention of roses at Jericho by the son of Sirach.

From the nature of the climate, the seasons are more advanced in this plain than in the country generally. The traveller who, about the middle of May, finds the wheat green upon the fields near Hebron and Carmel, may, two or three days after, find the wheat harvest over in the plain of Jericho. Here Dr. Robinson gives us a lively agricultural picture:—

"The wheat was beautiful; it is cultivated solely by irrigation, without which nothing grows in the plain. Most of the fields were already reaped. The grain, as soon as it is cut, is brought in small sheaves to the threshing-floors on the backs of asses, or sometimes of camels. The little donkeys are often so covered with their load of grain, as to be themselves hardly visible; one sees only a mass of sheaves, moving along as of its own accord. A level spot is selected for the threshing-floors; which are then constructed near each other, of a circular form, perhaps fifty feet in diameter, merely by beating down the earth hard. Upon these circles sheaves are spread out quite thick, and the grain is trodden out by animals. Here were no less than five such floors, all trodden by oxen, cows, and younger cattle, arranged in each case five abreast, and driven round in a circle, or rather in all directions, over the floor. The

sled or sledge is not here in use, though we afterwards met with it in the north of Palestine. The ancient machine with rollers we saw nowhere. By this process the straw is



THE PLAIN OF JERICOH.

broken up, and becomes chaff. It is occasionally turned with a large wooden fork, having two prongs; and when sufficiently trodden, is thrown up with the same fork against the wind, in order to separate the grain, which is then gathered up and winnowed. The whole process is exceedingly wasteful, from the transportation on the backs of animals to the treading out on the bare ground. The precept of Moses, 'Thou shalt not muzzle the ox when he treadeth out the corn,' was not very well regarded by our Christian friends; many of their animals having their mouths tied up: while among the Mohammedans, I do not remember ever to have seen an animal muzzled. This precept serves to show that of old, as well as at the present day, only neat cattle were usually employed to tread out the grain."

If we turn from Rihah, south-west towards the Jordan, we shall come to a low tract running from west to east, and covered with a fine grove of the *Agnus castus*. Most

of the trees are young, but some of them old and very large. Within this grove, at the upper or west end, we find the source of all this fertility,—a beautiful fountain of perfectly sweet and pure water, inclosed by a circular wall of masonry five feet deep, and sending forth a stream which waters the tract below. It is regarded as the finest water of the valley, and bears among the Arabs the name of Ain Hajla—a name corresponding with the scriptural BETH HOGLA—a place indicated in Josh. xv. 5, 6, as being in this part of the boundary line between Judah and Benjamin. There are, however, no traces of ruins near the fountain; but about a mile to the south-west, is a ruin, which obviously derives its Arabic name of Kusr Hajla from it. This is a ruin of one of the many monasteries which formerly existed in the plain of Jericho.

There are other fountains to the north of Rihah. One of these, about two miles thence, is called Ain es-Sultan, and is, not without reason, believed to be that whose waters were miraculously cured by the prophet Elisha, 2 Kings ii. 19—22. This fountain bursts forth at the foot of a high double mound, or group of mounds, looking much like a tumulus, or as if composed of rubbish, situated a mile or more in front of the mountain Quarantana. It is a large and beautiful fountain, of sweet and pleasant, but somewhat warm water. It seems to have been once surrounded by a sort of reservoir, or semicircular inclosure of hewn stones; from which the water was carried off in various directions to the plain below; but this is now mostly broken away and gone. The principal stream at this time is that which runs towards the village, a part of which is carried across a wady by an aqueduct on arches. The rest of the water finds its way at random in various streams down the plain, here decked with a broad forest of the lote-tree and other thorny shrubs. The mounds above the fountain are covered with substructions of unhewn stone, and others of the same kind are seen upon the plain towards the south-west. In the same direction, not far off, are the broken pointed arches of a ruined building, which may perhaps have been a Saracenic castle, like the one now near the village.

Another fountain, called Duk, is found upon a narrow tract of table-land at the base of the mountain Quarantana. This is a still larger fountain than Ain es-Sultan, and its waters were formerly distributed to several mills: but the

mills are now in ruins, and the stream is only used to irrigate a few gardens of cucumbers in the vicinity. Here, or in the vicinity, we may look for the site of the ancient Castle of Doch, near Jericho, in which Simon Maccabæus was treacherously murdered by his son-in-law Ptolemy.

We are here at the foot of the mountain Quarantana, so called as the supposed scene of our Saviour's forty-days' temptation. The Arabs have adopted the name under the form of *Jebel Kuruntul*. The mountain rises precipitously, an almost perpendicular wall of rock, twelve or fifteen hundred feet above the plain, crowned with a chapel on its highest point. The eastern front is full of grotts and caverns, where anchorites are said to have once dwelt in great numbers. At the present day, some three or four Abyssinians come hither annually, and pass the time of Lent upon the mountain, living only upon herbs. There is nothing else remarkable about this naked cliff to distinguish it from other similar ones along the Ghor and the Dead Sea, further south. The tradition which regards the mountain as the place of our Lord's temptation, as well as the name of Quarantana, does not appear to be older than the time of the Crusades. It is part of the ridge by which the plain of the Jordan—here widened out into the broader plain of Jericho—is bordered on the west, and behind which is the wild region through which lies the notorious road, from Jerusalem to Jericho, to which our Lord alludes in the parable of the Good Samaritan. The highest summit of the Quarantana is supposed to be that "exceeding high mountain" from which the tempter showed to Jesus "all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them," Matt. iv. 8. The region itself is singularly wild and stern. Maundrell calls it "a most miserable, dry, and barren place, consisting of high rocky mountains, so torn and disordered, as if the earth had suffered some great convulsion, by which its very bowels had been turned outward."

To the north of Quarantana the mountains retreat from the basin of the Jordan, sweeping round in the arc of a circle. They thus leave a broad recess of higher tableland, which is separated from the plain by a range of lower hills. The southern part of this higher recess is broken land, as far as the fountain of Duk, already mentioned, which passes down through it; but further north it forms a fine plain or basin, watered by another fountain, which

gives beauty and verdure to the whole tract. Here, too, in the northern part of the recess, near this fountain, is a conical hill, crowned by the ruins of a town, which, like the fountain, bears the name of el-Aujeh. In this Dr. Robinson wishes to find the city called Phasaëlus, which Josephus informs us that Herod built in the *Aulon* or Ghor, north of Jericho, by which means a tract, formerly desert, was rendered fertile and productive.

In this part of the country there is nothing which need detain us longer. Let us therefore return to Jerusalem, and from thence again set forth to explore the northern and western parts of the province. In this we shall principally take the guidance of Robinson, whose researches in this quarter are of peculiar interest and value. Indeed, for a great part of it, there is no other guide, as a direction was purposely given to the route which had not previously been taken by any European traveller.

We quit Jerusalem by St. Stephen's Gate, at the north-east corner of the city, over against the Mount of Olives. On ascending that mountain we may look back, and realize a view over the city in a diagonal direction ; different, and in some respects finer, than that which is usually taken from another part of the same mount. This is behind us : before us is a wide prospect of broken hills and valleys, extending even to the plains of the Jordan. Here, within sight of Jerusalem, must have been situated *NOB*, which was the last station of the Assyrian army under Sennacherib in approaching the city ; for here, in the poetical description of the prophet, the Assyrian made a halt, and "shakes his hand against the mount of the daughter of Zion," Isa. x. 32. The same was probably, also, the city of the priests destroyed by Saul, 1 Sam. xxi. 1—9 ; xxii. 18, 19. No trace of its name or site can now be found.

After we have journeyed one hour and a quarter north-east from Jerusalem, we reach the village of Anata, situated on an elevation between two wadys. This seems to have been once a walled town, and a place of strength. The wall is in part standing, built of large hewn stones, and apparently ancient, as are also the foundations of some of the houses. The present dwellings are few, and the people are poor and miserable, amounting to only a few scores. From this neighbourhood a favourite kind of building-stone is carried to Jerusalem ; and we may meet troops of

donkeys laden in this manner, a hewn stone being slung on each side the poor animal. Large stones are transported by camels. In Anata we may, without difficulty, recognise the ancient ANATHOTH, the birth-place of the prophet



ANATA—ANATHOTH.

Jeremiah (Jer. i. 1 ; xxix. 27) ; and which is also mentioned in Joshua xxi. 18, and 1 Kings ii. 26. Ecclesiastical tradition has, however, selected another and more distant (at the village of Kuryet el-Enab), which less agrees in name and situation than Anata with the ancient Anathoth.

The whole tract north of Anata is made up of a succession of deep, rugged valleys, running toward the east, with broad ridges of immense table-land between, often broken, and sometimes rising into high points. These terminate towards the east in high cliffs overlooking the plains of the Jordan. The whole district is a mass of limestone rock, which everywhere juts out above the surface, and imparts to the whole land an aspect of sterility and barrenness. Yet, wherever soil is found among the rocks, it is strong and fertile ; fields of grain are occasionally seen, and fig-trees and olive-trees are planted everywhere among the hills. Lower down the slope, towards the Jordan valley, all is an unsightly desert.

Our northward route next brings us to Hizmeh, a village with a position similar to that of Anata. The houses are solidly built of stone; but there are no appearances of antiquity, nor is any ancient name known in this locality to which that of Hizmeh corresponds. When Dr. Robinson was here, in the time of the Egyptian rule, the place was deserted, the inhabitants having fled two months before across the Jordan to avoid the conscription, leaving their fields of wheat, and their olives and fig-trees, with none to attend them.

Descending into another wady, or valley, and thence ascending to another ridge, through which runs the bed of a water-course, we find there a place called Jeba. This lies upon a low, conical, or rather round eminence, upon the broad ridge, which shelves down like all the rest towards the Jordan valley, and spreads out below the valley into a fine sloping plain. The village is small, and is half in ruins. There is here the ruin of a square tower, almost solid, and a small building, having the appearance of an ancient church. An incident, which marks the condition of the country, and might find more than one parallel in the Bible, is here noted by Robinson. Two nights before he arrived, robbers had entered the village, and, breaking into the houses of the principal inhabitants, wounded them with swords. So, at this time, the men were all out on the search, and only women were found in the village.

Dr. Robinson informs us that he for some time doubted whether this was to be regarded as Gibeah of Saul, or as the Geba of the Scriptures. For the reasons which he states, he concluded that it was the former. Geba he could not discover. But a few years after, he found occasion to apprehend that he had been mistaken,* and that Jeba was really GEBÄ, and that Gibeah was to be sought at Tuleil el-Ful.† This Geba was a Levitical city in Benjamin, Josh xviii. 24; xxi. 17, situated upon the northern border of the *kingdom* of Judah, 2 Kings xxiii. 8; Zech. xiv. 10. From this point several other places may be seen. Among them is Rummon. This village forms a remarkable object in the landscape; being situated on and around the summit of a conical chalky hill, and visible in all directions. There can be little doubt of its being the identical rock, RIMMON, to which the remnant

* Bibliotheca Sacra, ii. 598, *seq.*

† See p. 54.

of the Benjamites fled after the slaughter of the tribe at Gibeah, Judges xx. 45, 47 ; xxi. 13.

Another place plainly visible from Jeba is Mukhmas on the route before us. This is without doubt the



MICHMAS.

MICHMAS of Scripture, remarkable for the exploits of Jonathan and his armour-bearer against the Philistines. Before reaching it, we cross a steep precipitous valley, which is probably "the passage of Michmash," mentioned in Scripture, 1 Sam. xiii. 23. In this valley are two hills of a conical, or rather spherical form, having steep rocky sides, with small wadys running up behind each, so as completely to isolate them. They are supposed by Robinson to be the two rocks mentioned in connexion with Jonathan's adventure, 1 Sam. xiv. 4, 5. They are not indeed so "sharp" as the language of Scripture would seem to imply, but they are the only rocks of the kind in this vicinity. Mukhmas itself stands upon the slope of a low ridge running up between two small wadys. The village is even more desolate than Anathoth, but it bears marks of having been a larger and stronger place than any of the others we have passed. Here are many foundations of large hewn stones, and some columns are lying among them.

Somewhat more than half an hour from this stands a

large and tolerably well conditioned place called Deir Diwan. It lies in an uneven rocky basin, at the head of a valley, and its position is high, though shut in by hills. The declivities around are covered with grain, olive, and fig-trees, all growing among the rocks, and every thing denotes good husbandry. The place is said to produce large quantities of excellent figs. No traces of antiquity are to be found here, but on the south there are some ruins on a low hill, or projecting point, between two shallow wadys. In the eastern valley are some excavated tombs. The western valley is the broadest, and the rocks on that side are precipitous for a few feet. There are three reservoirs, dug mostly out of the rock, and bearing marks of antiquity. On the hill itself are ruins, or foundations of large hewn stones, but in no great number, many stones having probably been taken away to build the modern village. Robinson conjectures, not without some appearance of probability, that it may be the site of the ancient Ai, between which city and Bethel Abraham pitched his tent when he first entered the promised land, "having Bethel on the west, and Ai on the east," Gen. xii. 8 ; xiii. 3 ; but which is chiefly celebrated in Scripture history for its capture and destruction by Joshua, Josh. vii. 2—5 ; viii. 1—29. It appears, however, to have been afterwards rebuilt, for it is mentioned as existing in Isaiah x. 28 ; and we know that it existed and was inhabited after the captivity, Ezra ii. 28 ; Neh. vii. 32. In the fourth century its site and scanty ruins were still pointed out, not far from Bethel, towards the east. If this therefore be Ai, we have a clue by which to seek Bethel ; but without turning westward at present to look for it, let us pursue our northward journey.

North of Deir Diwan, a deep valley, the deepest we have yet crossed, goes towards the Jordan. Upon its steep northern side, on a naked conical point of the ridge, which we have already noticed as seen in the distance from Jeba, is the village of Rummon, the dwellings of which are built in terraces around the hill from the top downwards.

Into this deep valley a branch valley comes down from the north at nearly right angles. Through this valley our road lies. It is called Wady el-Ain, (fountain valley,) from a spring of water which descends into it further up from the western hill.

Through this valley, over rocky uneven soil, we pursue our way to Taiyibeh. This village crowns a conical hill, on the very summit of which are the ruins of a tower, similar to those seen in almost all the villages. From these ruins the houses extend down the sides of the hill. Here on the west and north are fertile basins of some breadth, forming the beginning of wadys, and these are full of gardens of olive and fig-trees. Many olive-trees are also scattered upon the hills around. From the site of the old tower there is a fine view over the whole eastern slope, the vale of the Jordan, the Dead Sea, and the eastern mountains; and towards the south the view takes in the Frank mountain towards Bethlehem.

Upon the top of a lower hill close by Taiyibeh, are the ruins of the small church of St. George, the walls of which are still partially standing. The inhabitants of this place are all Greek Christians, from three to four hundred in number. The land here is held by the peasants in freehold, except that in a certain sense it belongs to the great mosque at Jerusalem, to the steward of which it annually pays seventy-five measures of wheat and barley. Besides, there are paid in taxes to the government for each olive and fig-tree one piastre; for each she-goat and ewe one piastre; and for each ox seventy-five piastres—which is, however, intended rather as a tax upon the land ploughed than upon the oxen. Besides this, each man also paid one hundred piastres as a capitation tax; and the inhabitants being all Christians and free from the military conscription, each paid an additional tax of twenty-five piastres, which is reckoned to the kharaj, or toleration tax. The village was said to pay in all not far from seventy-five purses annually, about equal to 380*l.*, being probably above one pound for each inhabitant, including women and children, which seems a very heavy sum for so poor a country. This was under the Egyptian government, some years ago; and since then the weight of local taxation has generally been materially relaxed. The Sheikh el-Beled, “elder of the village” is here, as in other places, the chief man, and the medium of communication with the government.

Taiyibeh is thought by Robinson to be probably the OPHRA of Benjamin, mentioned in Joshua xviii. 23, and 1 Sam. xiii. 17. That place, according to Eusebius and Jerome, lay five Roman miles east of Bethel, which agrees very well with the position of Taiyibeh.

Not far to the north of this place lies another remarkable hill, with a Moslem saint's tomb at the top. This is called Tell Asur, in which we may perhaps be allowed to recognise the ancient HAZOR of the tribe of Benjamin, Neh. xi. 33, or, as probably, the Baal-hazor where Absalom held his sheep-shearing feast, 2 Sam. xiii. 23.

It may be well in this place to point out that the large district, from here northward, extending from the western ridge of the Jordan valley on the one hand, to the road from Jerusalem to Nabulus on the other, has remained to this day unexplored by travellers. This district is the *terra incognita* of Palestine; and there is much reason to expect that some interesting and valuable discoveries in respect of ancient sites will reward the zeal of any competent explorer who shall venture so far to deviate from beaten routes as to traverse this region.

As, therefore, we have no guidance further north, let us take our station at the northern boundary of this Jerusalem province, upon the Nabulus road, that, returning thence to Jerusalem southward, we may be enabled to survey whatever of interest lies to the west of the route we have just traversed.

At the point indicated, in the very southern border of the province, is a large wady facing westward. Upon the road from Nabulus to Jerusalem, we find a village called Sinjil, lying upon the high southern bank of this deep and wide wady, at least two hundred feet above its bottom. It is a considerable place, with a population of seven or eight hundred. We find nothing remarkable, unless that most travellers meet with some adventure or other here. When Robinson was at this village, it was in insurrection, the inhabitants having been required to produce forty-five pounds as the price of one horse to the government. To enforce the equal levy of the sum, a crier went about proclaiming in a loud voice that all the men must be at home the next day, and that whoever was absent would be beaten with so many blows. It was stated that although the taxable male inhabitants had been reduced by one hundred taken away for soldiers, the village had to pay the taxes of the whole original number. It was by night that, in a later year, Dr. Wilson arrived at this place, and his party participated in the entertainment of some Turkish soldiers, around their fire in the open air in the midst of the village. The villagers, looking on, are described as having been

scandalized at the freedom with which the Turks allowed the Christians to share their victuals; and one of their number, "a grisly dirty lubbard," called out to the soldiers, "What kind of Mohammedans are you? These are Nazarenes, no better than swine, and yet you allow them to plunge their snouts into your dish!" Perhaps, however, the doctor somewhat hastily infers the character of the villagers from this incident. But the Turks told him that the Arab cultivators of this part of the country were notorious for their mischief, and were loud in their threats.

About two miles to the west of Sinjil, Robinson passed through a small village in a beautiful plain. The place stands very high, near the western brow of the high mountain tract. It affords an extensive view over the lower western plain and the sea beyond, while at the same time the mountains of Gilead are seen in the east. Even a glimpse may for the first time be obtained of a dark blue mountain, far away in the north-east, which proves to be *Jebel esh-Sheikh*, the *MOUNT HERMON* of Scripture, still not less distant than eighty minutes of latitude. Robinson went to this place only by the accident of missing the road, and the poor people of the place had never seen Franks in their village before, and evinced much alarm at their appearance. The name, *Jiljilia*, obviously corresponds to the ancient name, *GILGAL*; but we find no mention of any ancient place of that name situated in this vicinity.

From here we may turn back upon the regular *Nabulus* road to Jerusalem. The district immediately west of this road is, with the exception of the names of a few villages, still unknown.

At the village called *Ain el-Haramiyeh*, about four miles south of Sinjil, this road branches off into two arms, which again unite in the vicinity of *Bireh*, six miles further south. To the right of the western road, we see, at the distance of about three miles from each other, two villages, whose names may be ancient. *Atara*, a large village on the summit of a high hill, may be the *ATAROTH* of the border of Benjamin, *Josh. xvi. 2, 7*. The other and southernmost, named *Jufna*, may be the strong place which Josephus calls *Gophna*, a name possibly derived from the *OPHNI* of Benjamin, mentioned in *Josh. xviii. 24*. In his time it was

the head of a toparchy; it was captured by Vespasian during the Jewish war, and Titus afterwards passed through it in his march to Jerusalem. The present village is inhabited by about two hundred Christians; it contains the ruined walls of an old castle, probably of the age of the Crusades; and in the vicinity are the remains of an old church said to have been dedicated to St. George. Under a walnut-tree which grows within its precincts, is an altar, on which mass is still sometimes celebrated; and also the ancient baptismal font of limestone, partly buried in the ground. The whole valley here, and the sides of the mountain, are richly cultivated, and abound in olives, vines, and fig-trees. Around the village itself are numerous apple, pear, fig, pomegranate, and apricot-trees, and some apple-trees. The landscape on every side is rich, and indicates a high degree of fertility and industry.

In an almost direct line east from this, upon the eastern branch of the Nabalus road, is Ain Yebrud, on the top of a hill inclosed by fruitful vales. Pursuing this branch of the road southward, for less than two miles, we find ourselves at Beitin, already mentioned as probably the ancient BETHEL, nearly parallel to, and west of that Deir Diwan, the ruins near which, in pursuing our way northward, were indicated as possibly the site of the ancient AI. Dr. Robinson must be regarded as having satisfactorily established that both from name and situation Beitin (it is even said that the Christians of the neighbourhood call it Beitol) can be no other than the Bethel so celebrated in Old Testament history, although not mentioned in the New. In Jerome's time it was still a small inhabited village; but was afterwards nearly, if not altogether lost sight of, until in 1836, two years before Robinson's journey, the Rev. C. B. Elliott, visiting the spot in company with the Jerusalem Missionary Mr. Nicolayson, recognised in it the Bethel of Scripture. As to the name, some of our readers may be at a loss to see any great resemblance between Beitin and Bethel; but it should be observed that Beit, "house," is the exact Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew Beth, and the final *n* of *l*. Most of the actual changes of letters in the transference from Hebrew into Arabic, occur, as in other languages, in the letters *l*, *m*, *n*, and *r*.

The ruins of Bethel are such as show that it must have revived and been enlarged after the time of Jerome, when it

was a small village. They lie principally at the extremity of a low ridge, with a slight shelving on each side of it, and surrounded by higher ground. They consist of numerous foundations and broken walls, of no great height, and loose stones, some of which are of considerable size. Among the inclosures are what may be taken for remains of churches or public buildings, although they cannot be clearly made out. A large tank, about 100 paces by 75, is close to the site. It is constructed in the fashion of the tanks in India, with a *bund* or principal door of large stones on the south, and with walls on the two sides joining to this. It seems to have been fed partly from the elevated ground contiguous to it, and partly from springs at its bottom. East of the ruins, and about a quarter of a mile distant from them, is the Burj Beitin, or "Tower of Beitin," at which also are the remains of a Greek church. South of this, and about the same distance from it, are the remains of another church. Bethel is not now inhabited. "A few Arabs," says Robinson, "probably from some neighbouring village, had pitched their tents here for the summer, to watch their flocks and fields of grain; and they were the only inhabitants. From them we obtained milk and also butter of excellent quality, which might have done honour to the days when the flocks of Abraham and Isaac were pastured on these hills. It was indeed the finest we found anywhere in Palestine."

"The Scriptural associations of Bethel," writes Dr. Wilson, "are both delightful and painful. Shaded by a pastoral tent on the heights between it and Hai on the east, we call, with the father of the faithful, on the name of the Lord, Gen. xii. 8. Interested and solemnized by the glorious vision of Jacob, we say of it, 'This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven,' Gen. xxviii. 17; and, with the same patriarch, we there make an altar unto God, who answered in the day of our distress, Gen. xxxv. 3. We find it, after the death of Joshua, fall, through the righteous vengeance of God upon its immoral inhabitants, into the hands of the house of Joseph, Judg. i. 25. We visit it with the devout and upright Samuel in his annual circuit of judgment, 1 Sam. vii. 16. We see Jero-boam planting here one of his abominable calves, to tempt Israel to sin, (1 Kings xii. 29,) and there signally punished by God, 1 Kings xiii. 4. Our spirit is relieved when its idolatrous establishment is totally destroyed by Josiah, the

regal reformer of the Jewish nation, 2 Kings xxiii. 15. At Bethel we repeated the beautiful paraphrase,—

“ ‘ O God of Bethel ! by whose hand
Thy people still are fed,’ etc.”

Something less than two miles from Beitin, our route brings us to Bireh, where, as already mentioned, the two branches of the Nabulus road unite. This place stands upon the ridge which bounds the northward prospect from Jerusalem and its vicinity, and is visible to a great distance from the north and south. The village is, however, poorly built of stone. The houses are very low, and have a forlorn and ruinous appearance. They may be about one hundred and fifty in number. There are many indications of antiquity: massive stones built into the peasants' houses or lying upon the earth, half buried walls and substructions, and mounds of rubbish. The walls and beautiful solid arches of a dilapidated church form the most conspicuous object in the place. It is commonly ascribed to Helena; but the pointed arches indicate the time of the Crusades, and it was probably erected by the Knights Templars, to whom the place belonged. There is a tradition that Mary had proceeded thus far in her homeward journey from Jerusalem, when she discovered that the child Jesus had been left behind, and the church marks the spot where, in the fulness of a mother's feelings, she turned back in quest of him. Another ruinous pile was once a khan. There is a beautiful and copious fountain just west of the village—one of the finest to be seen in the country; and it is from this, doubtless, that the place derives its name, which, as well as the ancient name, Beer, signifies a well. A little below is a large and ancient reservoir which formerly received its waters. A stone trough, close by the spring, now answers the purpose of watering the traveller's beasts, and for the ablutions of the devout Moslems who may choose to offer up their prayers in a small chapel or oratory which is adjacent. This place is regarded as the BEER to which Jotham fled after he had delivered his parable to the men of Shechem from Mount Gerizim, Judges ix. 21. Dr. Robinson allows it to be the Beer or BEEROTH of Scripture, unless these were names of two distinct places, in which case el-Bireh corresponds to the latter. They were probably not distinct, Beer being merely the same word in the

singular, "well," of which Beeroth is the plural, "wells." The name Beer occurs only in the text already cited: that of Beeroth may be found in Josh. ix. 17; xviii. 25; 2 Sam. iv. 2; Ezra ii. 25; Neh. vii. 29.

After crossing a low ridge or swell, west of the fountain at Bireh, we came, in twenty minutes, to Ram Allah. This swell forms the dividing line between the waters running to the Jordan and those of the Mediterranean. Ram Allah itself stands on high ground, which overlooks the whole country towards the west, even to the waters of the Mediterranean. The inhabitants of this place are all Greek Christians, and the population is reckoned at eight or nine hundred, and seem to be in good circumstances—the village exhibiting every appearance of industry and wealth. The houses are substantially built, and all modern; there being here, apparently, no traces of antiquity. The country around is fertile and well cultivated, yielding grain, olives, figs, and grapes in abundance. The village, like Taiyibeh, belongs to the Haram, or great Mosque of Omar, to which it pays annually about 350 measures of grain, besides the dues to the government.

On leaving this place, Robinson found that the guide furnished to his party there was no less a personage than the schoolmaster of Ram Allah. "He had, however, only five or six boys under his care, and considered their education as completed when they had read through the Arabic Psalter. His pay consisted of fifty piastres received for each boy thus carried through his education; besides ten paras ($\frac{1}{4}$ piastre) every Saturday, and three piastres on finishing each of the seven lessons of the Psalter."

This Ram Allah, it will be remembered, is *west* of Bireh, and thence there is a route to Jerusalem, which we shall have to follow. But first let us state that upon another route—and that the usual one—direct south from Bireh to Jerusalem, and east of this, at the distance of one hour, is a place called er-Ram, which is, without doubt, the RAMAH of Benjamin, Judg. xix. 13. It is a miserable village, with but few dwellings, and these mostly deserted in summer: but there are large squared stones, and even columns, strewed about the fields, indicating that here was once a place of some importance. A small mosque, with columns, seems at one time to have been a church. The identification of this place with the Ramah of Benjamin, which is

one of the advantages we owe to Robinson, is of importance, chiefly as obviating the difficulty which was felt in making all the texts in which Ramah is mentioned applicable to a single place—that place called Neby Samwil, to which we shall presently come. It is clear from Judges xix. 13, 14, 1 Kings xv. 21, 22, Isa. x. 29, and Hos. v. 8, that this Ramah was near to Gibeah, which is not true of any other; for Ram is but half an hour west of the village of Jeba, which we have lately had occasion to indicate as the Gibeah of Saul; but the two places are not visible from each other, on account of intervening swells of ground.

This Ram is somewhat east of the Jerusalem road. We recover that road in ten minutes, at a point where there are ruins on the west of the path, which bear the name of Khuraib er-Ram, "Ruins of er-Ram." There are some eight or ten ruined arches, in a line parallel to the road, and the foundations of as many more parallel to these. They may probably have belonged to a large khan for travellers and caravans. Here there are also several cisterns.

Nothing worthy of remark occurs further on this road towards Jerusalem, till we come to Scopus, except a high hill on the left of the road, called Tuleil el-Ful, "Hill of Beans," six or eight minutes from the path, with a large heap of stones upon it. There seems to have been here originally a square tower, fifty-six feet by forty-eight, built of large unhewn stones, and apparently ancient. This has been thrown down, and the stones and rubbish falling outside, have assumed the form of a large pyramidal mound. No trace of other foundations is to be seen. This place is of Scriptural interest, it having been proved by the later researches of Dr. Robinson to be the GIBEAH of Benjamin, called also "Gibeah of Saul." In this, then, we have the birth-place of Saul, and the seat of his government; and, at an earlier date, the scene of that abominable transaction which led very nearly to the extirpation of the tribe of Benjamin, 1 Sam. xi. 4; xiii. 2, 15; Judges xix. 12; xx. 4. Like Bethel, it seems to have been reckoned among the ancient boundaries of the land, 1 Sam. x. 26.

Still more to the south we come opposite to Shafat, a small village to the right of the road, where the remains of an old wall are visible; and very shortly after we reach the brow of the hill Scopus, overlooking the Valley of Jehoshaphat, and Jerusalem beyond. The view of the city from

this spot is celebrated. Here Titus first beheld it, and admired the magnificence of its temple.

Instead of tarrying in Jerusalem, which we have once more reached, we proceed to traverse the westernmost portion of the province. For this excursion we quit Jerusalem by the Jaffa gate, on the road towards Ramleh. Traversing this road for an hour and a half, we come to a place called Kulonieh—a name which looks very much like a corruption of the Latin *Colonia*, though no historical fact is known to account for such an etymology. The village overhangs the western side of the great valley of Beit Hanina, which is in that part very broad, and planted with trees. There are here many old walls, built with hewn stones.

Here we quit the road and turn westward towards Soba, one hour distant. This place is seated on a lofty conical hill, overlooking the great Wady Ismain on the west, and nearly opposite to the convent of St. John. It belongs to the family of Abu Ghush—a name long familiar to travelers in Palestine. The chief of that name, whom Robinson saw, related to him that when governor of Jerusalem he had been compelled to lay this place in ruins on account of the rebellion of the inhabitants, and had not visited it since. For centuries Soba had been regarded, in the traditions of the cloisters, as the site of the ancient Modin, the city of the Maccabees, where they lived and were buried, and where Simon erected a monument with seven pyramids to their memory. This however could not possibly be the case, as Modin lay close to the plain of the coast, and the monument was visible to all who sailed along the sea. On what pretext, therefore, the name came to be transferred to Soba—a spot several hours distant from the plain upon the mountains, and wholly shut out from any view of the sea—it is difficult to conceive. Dr. Robinson's own conjecture, resting chiefly on the similarity of the name Soba to Zophim, is, that the name contains a reminiscence of Ramathaim-Zophim, and the land of Zuph, and that here was the Ramah or Ramathaim-Zophim, which was the birth-place and residence of Samuel, 1 Sam. i. 1, 19 ; ii. 11 ; vii. 17 ; viii. 4 ; xvi. 13 ; xix. 18 ; xxv. 1 ; xxviii. 3. It will be remembered that the prophet Samuel was descended from an ancestor named Zuph, an Ephraimite of Bethlehem, 1 Sam. i. 1 ; and his city was called

in full, Ramathaim-Zophim, and lay apparently in a tract spoken of as the land of Zuph, 1 Sam. i. 1 ; ix. 5. Under these circumstances, the name Ramathaim-Zophim probably signifies no more than Ramah of the Zophites, or descendants of Zuph. The letters of the name Soba correspond to those of the Hebrew Zuph and Zophim (*ph* and *p* being not unfrequently changed into *b*). It is further urged, that its position accords well with the intimations which may be collected from the description of Saul's journey in search of his father's asses, 1 Sam. ix. 4—6. In this, however, there are real difficulties, and it may be questioned if they have all been obviated even by the learning and ingenuity of Dr. Robinson. Rachel's grave, which Saul passed in this journey, from Samuel's residence to his own at Gibeah, is an ascertained point, and there is an almost insuperable difficulty in conceiving a route so prodigiously circuitous as would enable Saul to pass by Rachel's grave in going from this Soba to Gibeah. Perhaps the Ramah of Samuel has not yet been discovered, but lay somewhere in the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, probably in or near the Frank mountain, where indeed it is placed by some oriental Christians. It may be fairly objected that this situation would not agree with the Ramathaim-Zophim of 1 Sam. i. 1, though it would suit with the Ramah of Samuel's residence. And this is true, and may suggest whether in fact they were not different places. Ramathaim-Zophim is in that one text described as the native place of Samuel's father ; in every other text, Samuel's own residence is described as Ramah. If they were two places, Robinson's identification is good for Ramathaim-Zophim, but Ramah is still to be sought.

About a mile and a half north of Soba we reach a place bearing the name of Kuryet el-Enab, three hours from Jerusalem. There was formerly here a convent of the Minorites with a Latin church. The latter remains entirely deserted, but not in ruins, and is one of the largest and most solidly constructed churches in Palestine. The monks have found the Anathoth of Jeremiah in Kuryet el-Enab ; but we have seen the greater probability of its being at Anata. Robinson suggests that it may probably be the KIRJATH-JEARIM of Scripture. This is highly probable, on the grounds which he states. This place was long the residence of the ark, after it had been brought from Bethshemesh, 1 Sam. vi. 21 ; vii. 1, 2 ; 1 Chron. xiii. 5, 6 ;

and we know that it lay on the western border of the tribe of Benjamin, Josh. xv. 9, 10; xviii. 14. It is placed by Jerome nine Roman miles from Jerusalem, on the road to Diospolis, or Lydda, which agrees entirely with the situation of Kuryet el-Enab. Kuryet is the same as Kirjath, "city;" and the change is, that the "city of forests," which is the meaning of Kirjath-Jearim, has been changed to the "city of grapes," which is the signification of Kuryet el-Enab.

To the north-east of this place is a short but high mountain ridge, which forms the highest point of land in the whole region. Its elevation cannot be less than 500 feet above the plain, and is apparently higher than the Mount of Olives. It is called Neby Samwil (Prophet Samuel), from a miserable village of the same name, with a neglected mosque with which the top is crowned. The mosque is regarded by Jews, Christians, and Moslems as covering the tomb of the prophet Samuel. It is now in a state of great decay. The alleged tomb is a sort of box or ark of boards. The building was evidently once a Latin church, built upon older foundations in the form of a Latin cross, and it probably dates from the time of the Crusades. There are few houses now inhabited, but many traces of former dwellings. In some parts, the rock, which is soft, has been hewn away for several feet in height, so as to form the walls of the houses; in one place it is thus cut down apparently for the foundation of a large building. Two or three reservoirs are in like manner hewn in the rock. These cuttings and levelings extend over a considerable space.

In fixing to this locality the tomb of Samuel, it is of course assumed that this place was Ramah, for we know that the prophet was buried in his own city of Ramah, 1 Sam. xxviii. 3. But although this identification may be traced back to the fourth century of the Christian era, it cannot possibly be correct. The reasons hinted at in speaking of the claim of Soba, apply with still greater force here, seeing that the place is much nearer to the Gibeah of Saul. As however Neby Samwil is one of the most marked places in the vicinity of Jerusalem, and was unquestionably the site of an ancient town, it becomes a matter of interest to ascertain, as far as possible, what city of antiquity did occupy this conspicuous post. In pursuing this inquiry, Dr. Robinson fixes on Mizpeh of Ben-

jamin, renowned in the Old Testament, where the tribes often assembled ; where Samuel offered sacrifice and judged the people ; where Saul was chosen king by lot ; and where, under the Chaldeans, Gedaliah the governor resided and was assassinated. The name Mizpeh, which signifies " a place of look out, a watch-tower," implies that it was on an elevated spot ; and as it was fortified by King Asa with materials taken from Ramah of Benjamin, (er-Ram,) it could not have been far from that spot. These circumstances agree well with Neby Samwil, and not so well with any other place within the locality which Mizpeh must have occupied.

From the high ridge of Neby Samwil we descend into a kind of basin formed of broad valleys, or inclosed plains, well cultivated, and full of corn-fields, vineyards, olive plantations, and fig-trees. In this basin, separated from the base of Neby Samwil by a narrow tract of land, is an isolated oblong hill, or ridge, composed of horizontal layers of limestone rock, forming almost regular steps, rising out of the plain ; in some parts steep and difficult of access, and capable of being everywhere very strongly fortified. On the summit of this hill is the village of el-Jib, in which it is not difficult to recognise the ancient GIBEON. The village itself is of moderate size. The houses stand very unevenly and irregularly, sometimes almost above one another. They seem to be chiefly rooms in old ruins, which have fallen down in every direction.

One large massive building still remains, perhaps an ancient castle or tower of strength. The lower rooms are vaulted, with raised arches of hewn stones fitted together with great exactness. The stones outside are larger, and the whole appearance is that of antiquity. The ridge sinks a little towards the east ; and here, a few rods from the village, is a fine fountain of water, in a cave excavated in and under the high rock, so as to form a large subterranean reservoir. Not far below it, among the olive-trees, are the remains of another open reservoir, perhaps 120 feet in length by 100 in breadth, which was doubtless intended to receive the superfluous waters of the cavern. This is in all probability " the pool " which is assigned to the neighbourhood of Gibeon in 2 Sam. ii. 13 ; Jer. xli. 12. The stratagem by which the inhabitants of Gibeon obtained a treaty of peace from Joshua, as well as their being rendered

servants to the tabernacle on that account, is recorded in Josh. ix. But it may have escaped notice that under David



GIBEON.

and Solomon this was the high place of worship, probably from the ark being there, 1 Kings iii. 4 ; 1 Chron. xvi. 39 ; 2 Chron. i. 3, 13. It is probably, therefore, that which is designated "the hill of God" in 1 Sam. x. 5.

From el-Jib we proceed in a north-westerly course, till we reach the high ridge of Mount Ephraim, where the road takes a more westerly direction, and gradually descends the westward declivity among rocky and desolate hills, having all the characteristics of a desert. At length, we come out upon the extremity of a sort of promontory, jutting out between two deep valleys as they issue from the mountain. Here, upon a small eminence which forms the summit of the promontory, is the village of Beit Ur el-Foka (Beit Ur the Upper), which is small, but exhibits traces of ancient walls and foundations. Just below the little hill on which it stands, towards the east, is a small but very ancient reservoir. From hence the steep, rugged and rocky way goes down into the valley. The rock is

however hewn away in many places, and the path formed into steps, showing that this is an ancient road. Upon the top of the last step of the descent are seen foundations of large stones, the remains perhaps of a castle which once guarded the pass. At the bottom we find a wady, on the opposite side of which, upon a low ridge, is another village called Beit Ur el-Tahta (Beit Ur the Lower). This also is small, but the foundations of large stones indicate an ancient site.

From the names, and from the indications of locality which may be gathered from ancient notices, there can be little doubt that these two valleys,—the one at the top and the other at the bottom of the mountain, Beit Ur the Upper and Lower,—represent the ancient Upper and Nether BETH-HORON, mentioned in Josh. xvi. 5 ; 1 Chron. vii. 24. From these and other texts it appears that the Nether Beth-horon lay at the north-west corner of the territory of Benjamin ; and between the two places was a pass called the ascent and descent of Beth-horon, leading from the region of Gibeon (el-Jib) to the western plain. Down this pass fled the five kings of the Amorites who made war upon Gibeon, Josh. x. 11 ; and both the upper and lower town were eventually fortified by Solomon. These, with later intimations, show that in ancient times, as at present, the great road of communication and heavy transport between Jerusalem and the coast was by the pass of Beth-horon. The two Beth-horons were small villages in the time of Jerome, as they are now, and from his time nothing was heard of them until, at the beginning of this century, Dr. Clarke, wandering hither from Kuryet el-Enab, recognised the ancient appellation in the present name of Beit Ur.

II.—THE JORDAN.



PLAINS OF THE JORDAN.

HAVING had occasion to mention the Jordan in the preceding pages, and seeing that the lower part of its course forms the eastern boundary of the province, we here introduce such particulars concerning that river as recent researches enable us to supply.

The Jordan is the only river of any importance in Palestine, and the only one to which there are frequent allusions in Scripture. The chief incident in the Old Testament history of the river is the miraculous separation of its waters before the ark of God, to open a passage whereby the hosts of Israel might enter the Promised Land. At the moment the feet of the priests, bearing the ark in advance of the host, touched the brink, the waters coming down from the upper part of the river "stood still," or the current was stopped, and rose up in one heap to a great distance from the city called Adam, hard by Zaretan, while the lower waters that were going down to the Dead Sea, (called in the narrative of this great miracle in Josh. iii. the "Sea of the Plain," and "the Salt Sea,") ran quite off, being separated from the

upper stream ; and as the passage took place over against Gilgal, it would seem that the whole portion of the river between that point and the head of the Dead Sea was left clear. The manner in which the passage took place appears from the sacred narrative to have been this:—The priests, bearing the ark, at the distance of two thousand cubits from the host, marched onward, and, in full confidence in the Divine promise, proceeded as if to enter the river ; but no sooner did their feet touch its waters, which then overflowed the banks from the melting of the snows in Lebanon, than the stream divided from shore to shore, to the extent probably of about seven miles. The bed of the river, in the part immediately above the Dead Sea, has a firm, pebbly bottom, on which the armies of Israel might pass with convenience as soon as the waters had been cleared before them. The priests entered first, and stood in the mid-channel with the ark, until the entire host had passed over. They seem to have been so placed that the people passed, not on each side of them, as they stood there, but only below them, that is, between them and the lake. The ark of God was thus interposed between the people and the suspended waters, that the most faint-hearted might feel assured of their safety from the gathering waters, which, stayed by the Almighty arm, rose high above them. It must have taken a considerable time, many hours, for so vast a multitude of men, women, and children, with baggage and cattle, to pass clear over ; and the constancy which, during that time, the priests manifested, bears high testimony to their faith. When all were over, the priests also went up with the ark out of the channel ; and no sooner had they left it than the suspended waters returned to their place, and the river overflowed its banks as before. When the river is in this state, about the time of the vernal equinox, the breadth of the stream is said to be nearly two hundred fathoms, and its greatest depth fourteen feet. This gives some idea of the immensity of this miracle, in the greatness of the body of waters which must have gathered above, and been kept suspended there, while the chosen people went over. “The passage of this deep and rapid, though not wide river,” says Dr. Hales in his *Analysis of Chronology*, ‘at the most unfavourable season, was more manifestly miraculous, if possible, than that of the Red Sea ; because here was no natural agency whatever employed ; no mighty wind to sweep a passage, as in the former case ; no reflux

of the tide, on which minute philosophers might fasten, to depreciate the miracle. It seems, therefore, to have been providentially designed to silence cavils respecting the former ; and it was done at noon-day, in the face of the sun, and in the presence, we may conclude, of the neighbouring inhabitants. It struck terror into the hearts of the kings of the Amorites and Canaanites west of the river, whose hearts ‘melted, neither was there spirit in them any more,’” Josh. v. 1.

The matter of the “overflowing” of the Jordan at that time of the year has lately been examined by Dr. Robinson. He remarks : “It has generally been assumed that the Jordan of old, somewhat like the Nile, regularly overflowed its banks at the spring, covering with its waters the whole of the lower valley, and perhaps sometimes large tracts of the broad Ghor itself. It seems, however, to be generally admitted that no such extensive inundation takes place in the present day. It is therefore supposed that some change must have taken place ; either because the channel has been worn deeper than formerly, or because the waters have been dispersed or diverted. But although at present a smaller quantity of rain may fall in Palestine than anciently, in consequence, perhaps, of the destruction of the woods and forests, yet I apprehend that even the ancient rise of the river has been greatly exaggerated. The sole account that we have of the ancient rise of its waters, is found in the earlier Scripture history of the Israelites, where, according to the English version, the Jordan is said to ‘overflow all its banks’ in the first month, or all the ‘time of harvest.’ But the original Hebrew expresses nothing more in these passages than that the Jordan was ‘full (or filled) up to all its banks,’ meaning the banks of its channel ; it ran with full banks, or was brimful. The same sense is given by the Septuagint and the Vulgate.”

It is scarcely correct to say that this is the only text which implies or expresses the overflowing of the Jordan. Indeed, while this passage is, by itself, open to the more limited interpretation suggested, there are others which demand more certainly the wider application. Thus the lion, (and by implication other ravenous beasts,) is described as driven from its coverts on the banks by the “swellings” of the river, (Jer. xlix. 19 ; see also xii. 5 ;) and this would hardly be possible unless the channel were not merely filled but overflowed, so as to inundate the thickets which lie

above the inner channel of the river. As animals hiding in the jungle of this river have been mentioned, it may be added, that in all probability the bears which slew the youths who mocked Elisha at Jericho, came out of the same coverts. These coverts still afford shelter to wild animals; but not either to the lion or the bear. The lion has long disappeared from all parts of Syria, though it is now found upon the lower Euphrates; but wild boars are still found there, and the tracks of the leopard have been seen.

In the New Testament, the most memorable occurrence connected with the Jordan is the baptism of the Saviour there, by John, with its wonderful incidents; when the Baptist, as "he bare record," "saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him," (John i. 32;) "and lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased," Matt. iii. 17. John the Baptist testified of him, saying, "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world;" adding, "I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God," John i. 29, 33, 34. Thus wonderfully began at the Jordan the public ministry of the Lord Jesus Christ, to be terminated by his crucifixion, death, and resurrection, as an atonement to the justice of God, thereby "to make reconciliation for iniquity, and to bring in everlasting righteousness," (Dan. ix. 24;) "and to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus," Rom. iii. 25, 26.

The place of this baptism is not known. It is described as being at "Bethabara beyond Jordan." But both this name, and that of "Enon near to Salim," where John subsequently baptized, are now unknown. The pilgrims who repair yearly at Easter to Jerusalem, proceed also to the Jordan to bathe. The place where this takes place is over against Jericho, probably at, or not far from the point where the Israelites crossed the river. We are aware of no evidence for or against this being the spot of our Lord's baptism; but it is not impossible that the question may, in no long time, be determined by the discovery of the very names, which would fix the site. The ceremonial of

bathing takes place at the time of the year when the river is at the fullest, agreeing certainly with the time when the Hebrews passed the Jordan, and probably with that of the baptism of our Lord.

The most important and interesting portion of the whole river, and the only part with which any Scriptural interest is connected, is that between the Lake of Tiberias and the Dead Sea. Yet this, until recently, is precisely that portion of the Jordan of which the least has been known. A geographical problem of much interest was also connected with this stream, presenting difficulties which had been regarded as insuperable, and had perplexed the most learned inquirers. By the measurements of Lieutenant Symonds, of the Royal Engineers, it appears that the level of the Dead Sea below that of the Lake of Tiberias is no less than 984 feet. Now, as the distance between the two lakes is but sixty miles, this would give to the river, which passes from the one to the other, a descent of no less than 16.4 feet per mile. This seemed incredible to many. It was urged that of several rapid rivers whose course is known, the lower part of the Orontes, "roaring over its rocky bed," and unnavigable, and the Missouri, at the great falls, were the only ones whose rapidity of descent can be compared with it.* But the Jordan, so far as known, appeared to have neither cataracts nor rapids, and its course though swift was silent. Yet in the 984 feet of its descent there would be room for three cataracts, each equal in height to Niagara, and there would still be left to the river an average fall equal to the swiftest portion of the Rhine, including the cataract of Schaffhausen.

To solve these among other difficulties, and to supply in general more satisfactory and distinct information respecting the Jordan and the Dead Sea, was the object of an expedition sent out in 1847, under the command of a naval officer, Lieutenant Lynch, by the government of the United States. The party charged with this interesting duty comprised fourteen American officers and seamen, increased eventually by the addition of two gentlemen (one a medical man) who volunteered to join the expedition, together with an interpreter and cook, an Arabian sheriff from Mecca, (whose presence was expected to conciliate the respect of the

* It has, however, lately become known that the Sacramento, of California, has a fall of 2,000 feet in twenty miles, or an average of 100 feet to a mile.

Arabs), and the escort of a noted Arab sheikh with ten horsemen. The expedition was provided with boats, one of iron and the other of copper, constructed for the service,



THE JORDAN, ACCORDING TO THE SURVEY OF LIEUTENANT LYNCH.

which might be taken to pieces if occasion required, but which it was rather desired to transport entire upon low

trucks, across Galilee to the Lake of Tiberias, it being intended to take them down the Jordan to the Dead Sea, which was then to be circumnavigated in them.

The party left the coast near Acre on the 4th of April, 1848, and the boats having been successfully drawn across the country by camels, (for the horses refused to draw in harness,) were launched upon the lake on the eighth of the same month. A wooden boat, the only one on all the lake, and used only in bringing wood from the eastern shore, was purchased for twenty-one dollars in aid of the transportation down the Jordan. In two days, (April 10,) the exploration was commenced by the arrival of the metal boats at the bathing-place of the pilgrims, opposite Jericho. The difficulties encountered in this passage were great and unexpected; but were such as afforded a most satisfactory solution of the problem to which we have referred. The stream was found to be not nearly straight in its course, as usually represented, but exceedingly tortuous; and instead of the even although rapid flow expected, the course was found to be obstructed by numerous rapids, sometimes of irresistible velocity. Boats of no other material or construction than those employed could have stood the voyage. The wooden boat just purchased sank, and was abandoned on the second day. So great were the difficulties that in the first two days not more than twelve miles were accomplished, and not until the 18th did the boats arrive at the bathing-place of the pilgrims, opposite Jericho. The phenomena of the supposed unusual fall of the Jordan is abundantly accounted for by the winding course of the stream, and by the frequent rapids. The former are such as to extend the direct distance of sixty miles to two hundred miles by the course of the stream; and within that distance were passed no less than twenty-seven threatening rapids, besides many others of less descent. Taking into view these windings of the Jordan, it is now necessary to allow no greater than an average fall of about six feet in each mile, instead of 16·4 feet, and for this rate of descent the numerous rapids now first brought to our knowledge satisfactorily account

It was found that the river, although impetuous, is graceful in its windings, and fringed with luxuriance; while its waters are sweet, cool, and refreshing.

The following description of the mode in which the boats were conducted over one of the most formidable of the rapids will interest the reader, and furnish some notion of

the nature of the difficulties encountered in this remarkable passage:—"In the middle of the channel was a shoot, at an angle of sixty degrees, with a bold, bluff, threatening rock at its foot, exactly in the passage. It would therefore be necessary to turn almost at right angles in passing, to avoid being dashed in pieces. This rock was on the outer edge of the whirlpool, which, a cauldron of foam, swept round and round in circling eddies. Yet, below, were two fierce rapids, each about 150 yards in length, with the points of black rocks peering above the white and agitated surface. Below them, again, within a mile, were two other rapids—larger, but more shelving, and less difficult.

"Fortunately a large bush was growing upon the left bank, about five feet up, where the wash of the water from above had formed a kind of promontory. By swimming across, some distance up the stream, one of the men had carried over the end of a rope, and made it fast around the roots of the bush. The great doubt was, whether the roots of the bush would be sufficient to withstand the strain, but there was no alternative. In order not to risk the men, I employed some of the most vigorous Arabs in the camp to swim by the sides of the boats, and guide them, if possible, clear of danger. Landing the men, therefore, and tracking the 'Fanny Mason,' (the copper boat,) up stream, we shot her across, and, gathering in the slack of the rope, let her drop to the brink of the cascade, where she fairly trembled and bent in the fierce strength of the sweeping current. It was a moment of intense anxiety. The sailors had now clambered along the banks, and stood at intervals below, ready to assist us, if thrown from the boat and swept towards them. One man with me in the boat stood by the line; a number of naked Arabs were upon the rocks, and in the foaming water, gesticulating wildly, their shouts mingling with the noise of the boisterous rapids, and their dusky forms contrasting strangely with the effervescing flood; and four on each side, in the water, were clinging to the boat, ready to guide her clear of the threatening rock if possible.

"The 'Fanny Mason,' the meanwhile, swayed from side to side of the mad torrent, like a frightened steed, straining the line which held her. Watching the moment when her bows were brought in the right direction, I gave the signal to let go the rope. There was a rush, a plunge, an

upward leap, and the rock was cleared, the pool was passed and, half full of water, with breathless velocity, we were swept safely down the rapid. Such screaming and shouting! The Arabs seemed to exult more than ourselves. It was in seeming only. They were glad—we were grateful. Two of the Arabs lost their hold, and were carried far below us, but were rescued with a slight injury to one of them.”

From the same source we learn that there are evidently two terraces to the Jordan, and through the lowest one the river runs its labyrinthine course. From the stream above the immediate banks, there is on each side a singular terrace of low hills, like truncated cones, which is but the bluff terminus of an extended table-land, reaching quite to the base of the mountains of Hauran on the east, and the high hills on the western side. Their peculiarity of form is attributable, probably, to the washing of rain through a long series of years. The hill sides presented the appearance of chalk, without the slightest vestige of vegetation, and were absolutely blinding from the reverberated light.

At times, the boats would be perfectly becalmed, the trees and bushes, which line the banks, intercepting the light air coming down from the mountains;—and then, even at this early season, the heat would be intense, and the birds, ceasing to sing, hid themselves among the foliage, from which, even the noise made by the explorers, could not startle them.

“On one of these [occasions],” says Lieut. Lynch, “when the stream was shadowed by the graceful oleander, the low, drooping willow, and the fernlike tamarisk, and a stillness audible prevailed, we were swept sharply round the base of a high barren bluff towards the opposite shore, when it became necessary to pull out again into the channel. In so doing, the water-worn banks distinctly echoed the steady beat of the oars in the rullocks; but it was soon after lost in the hoarse murmur of the rapid we were approaching, which went surging over the shallows in its burly blustering course.”

There are many islands in the river,—as many as twelve were passed in one day. Some of them are described as “fairy-like, and covered with a luxuriant vegetation, others mere sand-bars and sedimentary deposits.”

The prevailing trees on the banks of the river are the willow, the ghurrah, and the tamarisk. There were at the time of this passage many flowers, of which the oleander

was the most abundant, contrasting finely with the white fringe blossom of the asphodel. Where the banks are low, the cane was constantly seen at the water's edge. The lower plain was in parts covered with a luxuriant growth of wild oats, and with patches of wild mustard in full flower.

Fish are plentiful in the river, and birds abound on its banks. Lieutenant Lynch writes one day: "We saw many fish, and a number of hawks, herons, pigeons, ducks, storks, bulbuls (nightingales?), swallows, and many other birds we could not identify—some of them of beautiful plumage. At one time, there were a number of moths floating over the surface of the stream, and we caught one of them. Its body was about the size of a goose-quill, about an inch in length, and of a cream colour, widest at the head, and its wings, like silver tissue, were as long as the body. After frightening the wee thing by our close inspection, we let it go. Just before coming in sight of camp, we saw several tracks of wild boars."

In anticipation of the last sentence, it might have been stated that, as the reader will have supposed, the passage was made in the day-time only, the explorers encamping at night upon the bank of the river.

The party arrived at the bathing-place of the pilgrims on the evening of the 17th, and encamping on the shore for the night, were aroused as early as three o'clock the next morning by the intelligence that the pilgrims were coming. The scene of this annual bathing of the pilgrims has been described by many travellers; but as it was observed by these American explorers under novel circumstances, and from a peculiar point of view, we shall avail ourselves of the commander's description:—

"Rising in haste, we beheld thousands of torch-lights, with a dark mass beneath, moving rapidly over the hills. Striking our tents with precipitation, we hurriedly removed them, and all our effects, a short distance to the left. We had scarcely finished when they were upon us:—men, women, and children, mounted on camels, horses, mules, and donkeys, rushed impetuously down the bank; they presented the appearance of fugitives from a broken army.

"Our Bedouin friends here stood us in good stead; sticking their tufted spears before their tents, they mounted their steeds, and formed a military cordon round us. But for them we should have been run down, and most of our

effects trampled upon, scattered, and lost. Strange, that we should have been shielded from a Christian throng by



THE JORDAN—BATHING-PLACE OF PILGRIMS.

wild children of the desert ;—Moslems in name, but pagans in reality ;—nothing but the spears and swarthy faces of the Arabs saved us.

“ I had in the meantime sent the boats to the opposite shore a little below the bathing-place, as well to be out of the way, as to be in readiness to render assistance, should any of the crowd be swept down by the current and in danger of drowning.

“ While the boats were taking their position, one of the earlier bathers cried out that it was a sacred place, but when the purpose was explained to him he warmly thanked us. Moored to the opposite shore, with their crews in them, they presented an unusual spectacle.

“ The party which had disturbed us was the advanced guard of the great body of the pilgrims. At 5 o'clock, just at the dawn of day, the last made its appearance, coming

over the crest of a high ridge, a tumultuous and eager throng.

“ In all the wild haste of a disorderly rout—Copts and Russians, Poles, Armenians, Greeks, and Syrians, from all parts of Asia, from Europe, from Africa, and from far distant America, on they came ; men, women, and children, of every age and hue, and in every variety of costume ; talking, screaming, shouting, in almost every known language. Mounted as variously as those who had preceded them, many of the women and children were suspended in baskets or confined in cages ; and with their eyes strained towards the river, heedless of all intervening obstacles, they hurried eagerly forward, and dismounting in haste, and disrobing with precipitation, rushed down the bank, and threw themselves into the stream.

“ They seemed absorbed by one impulsive feeling, and perfectly regardless of the observations of others. Each one plunged himself, or was dipped by another, three times below the surface, in honour of the Trinity, and then filled a bottle or some other utensil, from the river. The bathing dress of many of the pilgrims was a white gown, with a black cross upon it. Most of them, as soon as they were dressed, cut branches of the *Agnus castus*, or willow ; and dipping them in the consecrated water, bore them away as memorials of their visit. In an hour they began to disappear ; and in less than three hours the trodden surface of the lately crowded bank reflected no human shadow. The pageant disappeared as rapidly as it had approached, and left to us once more the silence and the solitude of the wilderness. It was like a dream, An immense crowd of human beings, said to be 8,000, but I thought not so many, had passed and repassed before our tents, and left not a vestige behind them.”

III.—HEBRON.



CITY OF HEBRON.

THE province or district of which Hebron is the chief city, is bounded on the north by that of Jerusalem, and on the west by that of Gaza ; on the south it has the desert, and on the east the Dead Sea.

The city known in Scripture by the name of **HEBRON** is now called el-Khulil, or “the Friend.” This name it owes to the fact that the place derives its chief historical interest to the Moslems from its connexion with the history of Abraham, whose tomb is to this day regarded as its chief monument ; and Abraham is among them distinguished by the epithet “the Friend,” (that is, of God,) whence this became the name of the city.

The town occupies the highest ascertained site in Palestine ; for although there are others that seem to be more loftily situated, this is physically higher in actual altitude

being not less than 2,700 feet above the level of the Mediterranean Sea. This position has necessarily considerable effect upon the temperature, rendering the place and its environs much colder in winter, and much less warm in summer, than but for this remarkable elevation could be expected in the southernmost province of Palestine. The climate thus obtained is highly congenial to the vine, plantations of which abound in the neighbourhood, affording now, as of old, the finest grapes of the land.

The town is situated in and on the declivities of a deep, narrow valley, which commences in the open country, about one hour's journey north of the place. This valley is called in Scripture "the Valley of Hebron," Gen. xxxvii. 14. The largest and principal part of the town lies on the east side of the valley. It is divided into three quarters, which are separated from each other by gates, closed at night. The principal and upper quarter lies apart, to the north of the great mosque, upon the declivities of the eastern hill; the other quarters comprise the lower portions of both the opposite declivities, and stretch forth into the valley. The streets of the town are angular, narrow, and gloomy. The houses, however, are of stone, high and well built, with good windows, and flat roofs—the latter furnished with, and indeed formed of domes, like those of Jerusalem—a style of roof-construction prevalent throughout the east, wherever timber is scarce.

Hebron is not furnished with walls, nor, consequently, are there any gates, except those at the end of the principal streets, which are of no avail for defence, and are not in good condition; but which, here as elsewhere, are designed to inclose the inhabitants at night in their respective quarters, and to protect them from the depredations to which unwall'd towns are, in the east, exposed.

In the bottom of the valley, towards the south, lies the lower pool—a square reservoir, well built with hewn stone; and at the northern end of the upper part of the town there is another pool, smaller, but of similar construction. Reservoirs of this sort are among the most ancient existing monuments of the Holy Land, and these are manifestly of great antiquity. It may fairly be supposed that one of them—but whether the larger or the smaller it may not be easy to determine—is "the Pool of Hebron," by which the murderers of Ish-bosheth were hanged up by David, 2 Sam. iv. 12.

The most important building in Hebron is the great mosque, which is built over the alleged tomb of Abraham. It is situated in the south-eastern part of the city, and stands in a square inclosure formed of immense stones, squared and bevelled like those of the Mosque of Omar at Jerusalem. At each of the four corners of the wall there was formerly a tower, one of which is now quite destroyed, and another partly so, but the other two remain in tolerably good condition, and are used as minarets. The mosque itself occupies but a small part of this space, and has the form of an oblong square. Tradition ascribes the whole work—the mosque and its inclosure—to the time of Helena, the mother of Constantine ; but experienced observers have been disposed to assign a much earlier date to the external wall, and a much later date to the mosque which it surrounds. The former, they observe, correspond with the remains of the ancient temple at Jerusalem, and are therefore probably of as high antiquity ; whereas the latter may seem, from the style of its architecture, not to be older than the twelfth century. More positive information in this matter is not now attainable ; and as little certainty is felt with respect to the interior ; for it is forbidden to any Frank or Christian to enter the place, and our information concerning it is consequently very confused and obscure. Thus much is known, that the Moslems, with whom the Jews and the Christians agree, regard the sepulchre within these walls as “the Cave of Machpelah,” which Abraham bought of the children of Heth, when Sarah died, and in which his own remains, and those of his sons, Isaac and Jacob, were eventually deposited. There appears to be no good reason for disputing this tradition, which agrees very well with the intimations in the Bible. See Genesis xxiii., xxv. 9, xxxv. 27 ; 1. 13. All these persons were certainly buried in the family sepulchre at Hebron, which appears, from the minute description in Gen. xxiii. 17, as well as from the nature of such private sepulchres in Palestine, to have stood apart, and was therefore not likely to be confounded with any other sepulchre by the descendants of the patriarchs, when they obtained further inheritance of the whole land, of which this tomb formed the sole possession of their pilgrim fathers. The difficulties which make us hesitate, or induce us to decide against the identity of that which is deemed “the holy sepulchre” at Jerusalem, do not apply to the comparatively remote site of Hebron, which has not

been exposed to the same subversions as that of Jerusalem ; and the tomb was a conspicuous and notorious object of attention to the children of Abraham from the first—at one time as their sole, and then as their earliest, possession in the land which God promised to their fathers for an inheritance. We know that not only the three patriarchs, but their wives—those mothers of Israel—were buried in the Hebron sepulchre. Jacob himself is the authority for this ; for in his dying admonition to Joseph to take his body thither for burial, he touchingly couples the patriarchal pairs in death, as they had been in life, together : “ There they buried Abraham and Sarah his wife ; there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife ; *and there I buried Leah.*”

With respect to the interior, a still greater degree of uncertainty prevails ; as no Christians or Jews are admitted within the mosque, much less into the caverned tomb beneath, into which, indeed, it is said, that the Moslems never enter. When Hebron was, in the twelfth century, in the possession of the Crusaders, the place was visited by the Jewish Rabbi, Benjamin of Tudela. Access to the building was then comparatively free, and the sarcophagi, on the platform of the mosque (then a church), might be seen—perhaps the same that now exist ; and an additional fee procured, even for a Jew, admission to the real tomb below. “ An iron door is there found, which dates from the time of the forefathers, who rest in peace, and with a burning candle in his hand, the visitor descends to the first cave, which is empty, traverses a second in the same state, and at last reaches a third, which contains six sepulchres ; that of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and of Sarah, Rebekah, and Leah. All these sepulchres bear inscriptions, the letters being engraved thus upon that of Abraham—‘ This is the sepulchre of our father Abraham, upon whom be peace.’ And even so upon that of Isaac, and the other sepulchres. A lamp burns in the cave and upon the sepulchres continually, both day and night ; and you there see tubs filled with the bones of the Israelites ; for it is a custom of the house of Israel to bring thither the bones of their relicts and of their forefathers, and to leave them there, unto this day.”

The current description of the interior of the mosque and tomb, is that given by Ali Bey ; but this is now known to be incorrect, on the testimony of sir Moses Montefiore, who, as a special and distinguished favour, was

admitted to the interior. He saw nothing of the silver doors, and silken carpets embroidered with gold, which figure in the description of Ali Bey ; but he did see that ancient iron door of which the Rabbi Benjamin makes mention. What else he saw, or did not see, has not been stated ; but there is an account of the interior, by the rev. Vere Monro, which bears intrinsic marks of accuracy in the analogies it offers to the sacred tombs which we have ourselves had opportunities of elsewhere examining. " The mosque, which covers the cave of Machpelah, and covers the patriarchal tombs, is a square building, with little external decoration, at the south end of the town. Behind it is a small cupola, with eight or ten windows, beneath which is the (alleged) tomb of Esau, excluded from lying among the patriarchs. Ascending from the street, at the corner of the mosque, you pass through an arched way by a flight of steps to a wide platform, at the end of which is another short ascent ; to the left is the court, out of which, to the left again, you enter the mosque. The dimensions within are about forty paces by twenty-five. Immediately on the right of the door, is the tomb of Sarah, and beyond it that of Abraham, having a passage between them into the court. Corresponding with these, on the opposite side of the mosque, are the tombs of Isaac and Rebekah ; and behind them is a recess for prayer and a pulpit. These tombs resemble small huts, with a window on each side, and folding-doors in front, the lower parts of which are of wood, and the upper of iron or bronze, being plated. Within each of these is an imitation of the sarcophagus which lies in the cave below the mosque, which no one is allowed to enter. These, seen above, resemble coffins, with pyramidal tops, and are covered with green silk, lettered with verses from the Koran. The doors of these tombs are left continually open ; but no one enters those of the women—at least men do not. In the mosque is a *baldaquin*, supported by four columns, over an octagonal figure of white and black marble inlaid, around a small hole in the pavement, through which a chain passes from the top of the canopy to a lamp, continually burning, to give light to the cave of Machpelah, where the actual sarcophagi rest. At the upper end of the court is the chief place of prayer ; and on the opposite side of the mosque are two larger tombs, where are deposited the bodies of Jacob and Leah."

The Jews, not contented with the authentic sepulchral honours of Hebron, find it to have been also the burial-place of Adam; and the Christians add the names of Abner, Ishbosheth, and Jesse. Abner, we know, found a bloody grave at Hebron, and Ishbosheth's head was, not long after, deposited there; but, as to Jesse, it seems a pure conjecture, founded upon the hypothetical probability that he resided and died there, while his son reigned over Judah in Hebron; but it seems much more probable that he remained in his native Bethlehem, and died there.

Somewhat to the north of the mosque is the castle, or citadel, which has some middle-age fame—as from it the whole town was, in the time of the Crusaders, known by the name of “the Castle of Abraham.” It has very strong and massive, although not high, walls; but a good part of it is now in ruins. In the same neighbourhood is a very old and deep cistern, not usually noticed by travellers. It takes its name from Sarah; and the tradition connected with it ascribes to her no common stature; for although a small house might stand in this cistern to the upper story, it is alleged that, when full, the water reached no higher than the throat of Sarah. This is a fair enough specimen of the thousand grotesque, if not always degrading traditions, connected with almost every spot and every object in the Promised Land.

To the north of the mosque is the bazaar; and in the dark narrow streets, at the north end of the upper quarter, are the glass-manufactories for which Hebron has long been noted. The articles manufactured are chiefly small lamps of glass, considerable quantities of which are exported even to Egypt, together with rings of coloured glass, which, in the absence of costlier ornaments of the same kind, the women of the poor wear upon their arms. The bazaars are, for the most part, covered in the central parts by arches springing from the sides of the houses, and spanning the narrow streets, and in the outer and inferior part by some kind of awning. The goods are thus protected from the effects of the sun and rain, but the avenues are thereby rendered gloomy as well as damp.

The population of Hebron, once the metropolis of Judah, does not now probably exceed 4,000 or 5,000, although much higher estimates have been given. This population is composed mostly of Moslems, who are reckoned among the most fierce and intolerant in Palestine. There are no

Christians ; but the town contains about a hundred families of Jews, who have emigrated thither from different countries (chiefly Europe) to secure the privilege of having their bones laid near the spot which contains the remains of their renowned ancestors. They have two synagogues and a school ; and they inhabit a quarter of the city by themselves, in which, as usual with this people, the streets are narrow and filthy, and the houses mean.

In the valley north-west of the town, apart in a field covered with green-sward, stands a noble tree—a prickly oak*—which is locally believed to be the very tree beneath whose shade the angels were entertained by Abraham. It is, indeed, a venerable tree, the vast bulk of which, considering the slow growth of the species, proclaims an extreme age, and whose wide spreading branches cover an enormous space of rich, refreshing turf. The trunk of this tree measures $22\frac{1}{2}$ feet around the lower part. It separates immediately into three large boughs or trunks ; and one of these again, higher up, into two. The branches extend from the trunk, in one direction, 49 feet, their whole diameter in that direction being 89 feet, and in the other, at right angles, $83\frac{1}{2}$ feet. The tree is still in a flourishing state, and the trunk sound, so that it may still subsist for ages. The wide shade which its branches afford, with the perpetual verdure which that shade preserves upon the spot, with the presence of a well of water hard by, renders the tree a place of much resort for holiday makers from Hebron—and, indeed, a more attractive spot for recreation and refreshment could hardly be found. This tree invites the more attention from the fact that trees of large size have become exceedingly rare in the southern parts of Palestine ; and Dr. Robinson declares that he hardly saw another tree to compare with it in all Palestine—certainly not anywhere south of the plain of Esdraelon. This, however, is not, as the reader may readily suppose, the tree of Abraham. That was not an oak, but a terebinth-tree ; and such was also the tree near Hebron, which was popularly regarded as Abraham's tree in and after the age in which our Lord appeared. That tree—beneath which a great annual fair was held, where many of the captive Jews, after the fall of Jerusalem, were sold into Egyptian bondage by the Romans,

* *Quercus Gramuntia*, or Holly-leaved Grammont oak.

“till no man would buy them”—had already perished in the time of Jerome. Above a thousand years later, however, travellers found a venerable tree, also a terebinth, to which the honours of Abraham’s tree had been transferred. That has also disappeared—for some of these old travellers knew both terebinths and oaks too well to take an oak for a terebinth, and the tree which is now venerated as that which shaded the tent of Abraham, cannot therefore be the one which was in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries described as the terebinth of Abraham. Indeed, there is not now any large tree of that species in the neighbourhood of Hebron. It appears, in fact, that the elder tree regarded as that of Abraham stood further from Hebron, towards Jerusalem, than the one which has been described, and which must be regarded as the third, if not the fourth or fifth representative of the tree of Abraham. Thirty-seven centuries afford time enough for several trees to attain such bulk as this tree exhibits; and no doubt we have here one, and certainly a remarkable example of the process followed, in keeping up the succession of a tree reputed to be historical. The tree is preserved till it attains its utmost age and bulk, and perishes by accident or slow decay; then the most conspicuous tree in its neighbourhood is chosen for its successor, and in like manner is protected from the axe, in like manner dies, and in like manner finds an heir. That the successor should be of imposing bulk and appearance seems to have been held a more important consideration than that it should be of the same species as its predecessor; and hence we have here an oak as the representative of a terebinth, although, had a good sized terebinth remained, it would probably have obtained the preference. There is reason to suspect that this process of traditionary succession has been applied to other monuments than this now noticed.

In order to set forth the information we possess respecting the other places in the province of Hebron, we must traverse it in different directions, making the principal city our starting point. It may previously be observed, that the eastern part of this district, forming what is called in Scripture “the wilderness of Judæa,” is very scantily—indeed, scarcely at all, inhabited, while the western part of the same district has numerous inhabited villages, and abundant remains of ancient sites. Since the seventeenth

century this part of Palestine has been little frequented by travellers; but during the present century, and especially of late years, it has been more frequently visited. Dr. Robinson's industrious and well-directed inquiries were here richly rewarded, by the discovery of a large number of ancient sites mentioned in the Scriptures.

The road from Hebron towards Jerusalem is rough and mountainous. Not far from the former city, it is covered, now rather unevenly, with large stones, and exhibits manifest signs of having been the ancient highway between Hebron and Jerusalem. It is direct, and in many places artificially constructed, and has all the marks of a very ancient date.

On this road, to the left, three quarters of an hour from Hebron, lie the ruins of a village bearing the somewhat remarkable name of Khurbet en-Nuzarah (Christian village). Robinson was informed that the Christians by whom it was inhabited were massacred by the Moslems, and that at the present time there are no Christians in any part of the province of Hebron.

A quarter of an hour further on, to the right of the road, upon an ascent which leads to Tekoa, are the foundation walls of a large building, which seems to have been designed on a large scale, but never completed. It consists simply of two walls—one fronting south, 200 feet long, and another at right angles with it, fronting the west, 160 feet long, with a space left in the middle of it, as if for a portal. There are only two courses, of large hewn stones, above ground; and there are no stones or ruins of any kind lying around, to mark that these walls were ever carried higher. In the south-east corner is a well or cistern, arched over, but of no great depth. The intention of the builder cannot be determined from these remains, but must be regarded as uncertain—whether it be a church, a fortification, or a work of the ancient Jews. The Arabs call it Kamet el-Khulil; while the Jews of Hebron give it the name of Abraham's House; and it is here that *they* locate the tent of Abraham, and the terebinth tree of Mamre. Their idea is that Abraham designed to build a house at this spot, but was forbidden to do so, it not being intended in the purposes of God that he should have any fixed abode in the land promised for a heritage to his descendants. Robinson asks, "May we not perhaps suppose that these massive walls were indeed the work of Jewish hands, erected here in

ancient days around the spot where the founder of their race had dwelt?"

About two miles further on, a ruined mosque, which Robinson compares to the church of a New England village, is visible on a long hill, above a mile to the right of the road. This mosque bears the name of Nebi-Yunas (Prophet Jonah); and one who chooses to follow the by-path, through a narrow valley that leads from the main road to it, will find around the mosque remains of walls and foundations, marking an early site. The Arabs call it Hulhul (probably the Halhul of Joshua (xv. 58); and it is regarded by the Jews as the burial-place of the prophet Nathan.

A little further on is a ruined tower, on the left, apparently of the time of the Crusades; and not far off, on the other side, is a fountain with a stone trough. Around this are ruins like those of a fortified place. The stones are very large, and the adjacent rocks are hewn away to a perpendicular face. This place now bears the name of ed-Dirweh, and not improbably represents the site of the ancient Bethzur. This is said by Jerome to have been situated upon the Hebron road, near a well; and it is seen from Josh. xv. 58, to have been in the neighbourhood of Halhul. Bethzur was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 7); and it was its strength and position as a fortification which gave it the important character it bore in the Maccabæan wars, in the history of which the name of Bethzur is of frequent occurrence. Tradition makes this spring the water in which the Ethiopian eunuch was baptized by Philip. This is somewhat hastily declared to be impossible by Dr. Robinson, for it seems to us as incapable of disproof as of proof. That the eunuch was going by the road to Gaza, is not against it; for this, by Hebron, was one of the two most frequented routes to Gaza: and that he rode in his chariot is not against it; for although this author declares that chariots never traversed this road, we must venture to ascribe this to inexperience of chariot travelling in rough and hilly districts. We have travelled in a chariot over roads very far more difficult to chariot wheels than the road between Hebron and Jerusalem. The matter is of no importance. It is of great interest to us to be assured that the treasurer of Candace believed in the Lord Jesus Christ "with all his heart;" but the place of his baptism is among the least of the things which it is worth any one's while to know. We hear no more of this Ethiopian treasurer save

that he "went on his way rejoicing;" and this is enough. We know the cause of his joy: he had found the Pearl of great price; he had received the grace of the Divine Spirit, which had enabled him to see in Jesus, lately crucified at Jerusalem, a Redeemer; he had begun to feel the constraining power of that love, passing all knowledge, which brought down the Son of God to die thus ignominiously for him. This is the highest joy of earth.

From this point the country becomes more open. The valleys are wider, and apparently fertile; and the hills are covered with bushes, the arbutus and dwarf oaks, exhibiting also in their terraced hills the traces of ancient cultivation. We now come to Wady Urtas, which forms the northern boundary of the eastern half of the province of Hebron. By the Pools of Solomon we formerly left the road, and turned through this wady to the Frank mountain, where the wady connects itself with the mountain by a narrow picturesque pass, with high shelving sides. High up on the southern side, at some distance from the entrance of the ravine, are the remains of a square tower and village, called Khureitun; and further down, among the rocks on the same side, is the immense natural cavern, the mouth of which can only be approached on foot along the sides of the cliffs. This cavern was visited and described by Irby and Mangles, according to whom the cave "runs in by a long, winding, narrow passage, with small chambers or cavities on either side. We soon came to a chamber with natural arches of a great height; from this last there were numerous passages leading in all directions, occasionally joined by others at right angles, and forming a perfect labyrinth, which our guides assured us had never been thoroughly explored, the people being afraid of losing themselves. The passages are generally four feet high by three wide, and were all on a level with each other. There were a few petrifications where we were; nevertheless the grotto was perfectly clear, and the air pure and good." This remarkable cavern is regarded in monastic traditions as the cave of Adullam, in which David found refuge after leaving Gath of the Philistines. But Adullam, an old city which gave its name to the cave, is in Josh. xv. 35, named among the cities of the plain of Judah, and therefore lay much further westward.

From this point in the wady which forms the northern boundary of the province, we may venture southward by

an easterly route, which will enable us to explore the eastern parts of this interesting district. Leaving therefore the Frank mountain behind us, we pursue our way, and ere long find our attention arrested by the Scriptural name of TEKOA, to which belonged the "wise woman," whom Joab



TEKOA.

sent to plead in behalf of Absalom, and which, fortified by Rehoboam, was afterwards the birth-place of the prophet Amos, and gave its name to the adjacent desert on the east.* It lies on an elevated hill, not steep, but broad on the top, and covered with ruins to the extent of four or five acres. These consist chiefly of the foundations of houses, built of squared stones, some of which are bevelled. At the north-east part are the remains of a large square tower or castle, still the highest point of all. Near the middle of the site are the ruins of a Greek church, among which are several fragments of columns, and a large baptismal font of rose-coloured limestone, verging into marble. There are many cisterns excavated in the rocks, and not far off is a living spring from which excellent water is

* 2 Sam. xiv. 2; 2 Chron. xi. 6; Amos i. 1; 2 Chron. xx. 20.

obtained. This place was inhabited by Christians in the time of the Crusades ; but in the year 1138 it was plundered by a party of Turks from beyond the Jordan ; the inhabitants had however fled to the cave at Khureitun, and they never ventured back to their former home, so that the place became deserted, and has never since been occupied.

From Tekoa we take our way south-west, upon the road to Hebron, and in two hours we come unexpectedly, in the small Wady Arrub, upon a village called Sa'ir. In this district, the valleys and the sides of the surrounding mountains are scattered with the arbutus, dwarf oaks, small firs, and various shrubs, as also with the *zater*, a species of fragrant thyme, and sometimes indeed quite covered with them ; so that this neighbourhood presents generally the same aspect as that of Hebron. Ruins and ancient sites are encountered everywhere in great abundance, and they are speaking testimonies of the populousness of Judæa in ancient times. We can, of course, name only the most important of them, and such as have a manifest connexion with Scriptural localities.

Thus, westward from Sa'ir, in the vicinity of Ramet el-Khulil, we meet with a place called Beit Ainun, where there is a considerable number of ruins ; and this is conjectured, with sufficient reason, to be the Beth-Anoth of Joshua xv. 59. To the south of Sa'ir, about one and a half hour from Hebron, is Beni Naim, a village with a very high mosque, which the Moslems believe to cover the grave of Lot. This mosque is so built as also to serve the purpose of a fortress. Robinson found some of the houses of the village to be built of large hewn stones, which in this country is a sign of high antiquity. But at the time of his visit, none of the dwellings of Beni Naim were inhabited. It is not however a forsaken village. But in this part of Palestine it is the custom of the country people, in the spring season, during the months in which the pasture is green and soft, and until the crops are gathered, to leave their homes in order to guard their cattle and their corn-fields. They return to their homes on the approach of winter. Cisterns excavated in the solid rock also testify to the antiquity of the site ; and the exterior of the rock is in many places hewn smooth or scarped. Over most of the cisterns is laid a broad and thick flat stone, with a

round hole cut in the middle forming the mouth of the cistern. This hole is in many cases covered with a large stone, which it would require two or three men to roll away, a circumstance which well illustrates Gen. xxix. 2, 3. Robinson does not find this place to be mentioned in the Bible ; but he thinks it is the Caphar Barucha (village of benediction) mentioned by Jerome, and concerning which he adds that this was reported to be the place to which Abraham accompanied the Lord, and where he afterwards looked towards Sodom and Gomorrha, and beheld the smoke of their burning. Certain it is that the mountains beyond the Dead Sea are to be seen from this spot ; but the sea itself is not visible except through gaps in the western mountains by which the eye can penetrate into its deep bosom. This perhaps explains why the Moslems place here the grave of Lot.

South of this place lies Yukin, a Mohammedan *makam*, or station, where they say that Lot stopped after his flight from Sodom ; and further on in the same direction is Tel Zif, a round hill in the plain, 100 feet or more in height. The proper remains of Zif,—the Ziph of the Old Testament,*—are somewhat more to the south of the Tel, and are separated from it by a narrow wady. These ruins are little more than broken walls and foundations, mostly of unhewn stones, but indicating solidity, and extending over a considerable surface. In the middle is a low massive square building, constructed of squared stones and vaulted with pointed arches, showing that the place must have been inhabited long after the Mohammedan conquest. Cisterns also remain ; and in the midst of the ruins is a narrow sloping passage, terminating at the door in a subterraneous chamber beyond. The summit of the Tel Zif itself is level, and seems to have been once surrounded by a wall ; and here too are many cisterns.

To the south of Zif, a fine high plain, probably 1,500 feet above the level of the Mediterranean, extends itself in a basin-like form, shut in on every side by higher land or by hills, except on the east, where it slopes off towards the Dead Sea. The surface of this plain is undulating and almost free from rocks ; and in May the whole tract is almost

* Josh. xv. 55 ; “wilderness of Ziph,” 1 Sam. xxiii. 14, 24 ; xxvi. 1, 2.

covered with fields of wheat, belonging to persons in Hebron, who rent the land of the government. Watchmen are then seen stationed in various parts to prevent cattle and flocks from trespassing upon the grain. The wheat in early May is ripening in Palestine, and, says Robinson, "we had here a beautiful illustration of Scripture. Our Arabs 'were an hungered,' and going into the fields, 'they plucked the ears of corn, and did eat, rubbing them in their hands.' On being questioned, they said it was an old custom, and no one would speak against it; they were supposed to be hungry, and it was allowed as a charity. We saw this afterwards in repeated instances."

In the plain which has been described, and at no great distance south of Hebron, is Kurmul, which is the CARMEL in the mountains of Judah, repeatedly mentioned in the history of Saul and David. It was here that Saul set up the monument of his victory over Amalek, and here that the churlish Nabal was shearing his sheep when the men of David sought refreshment at his hands: (1 Sam. xv. 12; xxv. 2; xxvii. 3:) but which must not be confounded with the Mount Carmel upon the coast, which is still more frequently named in Scripture history and poetry. There are here considerable ruins, which lie around the head, and along the two sides of a valley of some width and depth, the head of which forms a semicircular amphitheatre, shut in by rocks. The bottom of this natural amphitheatre is a beautiful grass-plot, with a very large artificial reservoir in the middle. The principal remains are upon the level ground, west of the amphitheatre. They consist principally of the foundations and broken walls of dwellings and other edifices, scattered in every direction, and thrown together in mournful confusion and desolation. Upon a small elevation in the centre of these ruins stands the castle—a remarkable ruin; the external wall of which appears from its construction to be of ancient date, and very probably the work either of Herod or of the Romans. We know, indeed, that the place was in their time fortified, and the station of a Roman garrison. The castle itself was rebuilt by the Saracens, and is a square building facing towards the cardinal points.

In connexion with this Carmel the name of MAON is in Scripture associated, (1 Sam. xxv. 2,) and a Wilderness of Maon is also mentioned, 1 Sam. xxiii. 24. For the dis-

covery of this place we are indebted to Dr. Robinson, who found it under the name of Ma'in, about twenty-five minutes south of Carmel, upon a conical mountain which rises not less than 200 feet above the site of Carmel. From the top of this hill there is a fine view eastward over the country to the Dead Sea, and northward as far as Beth Naim and Hebron, and over the broad plain on the west. While taking a survey from this advantageous spot, Dr. Robinson and his companion found that the peasants fancied they were each noting down his own estate in the lands around; and it was ascertained to be the current impression among the people, that ever since the country was in the hands of the Franks, their descendants still have deeds of all the land, and when travellers come to the spot their presumed object is to look over their estates. But the expectation that we shall ere long come to take possession is not to them a subject of alarm and apprehension, but of hope and pleasure. It is here that Dr. Robinson writes: "We are in the midst of scenes memorable of old for the adventures of David, during his wandering to escape from the jealousy of Saul; and we did not fail to peruse here, and with the deepest interest, the chapters of Scripture which record the history of these wanderings and adventures, 1 Sam. xxiii. 13, *seq.*; xxiv. xxv. xxvi. Ziph and Maon gave their names to the desert on the east, as did also Engedi; and twice did the inhabitants of Ziph attempt to betray the youthful outlaw to the vengeance of his persecutor. At that time, David and his men appear to have been very much in the condition of similar outlaws at the present day; for 'every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him, and he became a captain over them; and there were with him about four hundred men.' They lurked in these deserts, associated with the herdsmen and shepherds of Nabal and others, and doing them good offices, probably in return for information and supplies obtained through them."

In this part, about Carmel and Maon, the land is still under cultivation, and is fertile. But about five miles east, we find ourselves in what the Scripture calls the Wilderness of Judæa. The whole descent between the mountains of Judah and the Dead Sea must be considered, in its natural state, to form three different divisions of nearly equal extent. Immediately upon the slopes of these mountains,

eastward, follows an undulating country, which is fertile in natural herbage, and forms the principal pasture ground of the Bedouins. Then comes a range of white and naked conical mountains, mostly unfruitful; and lastly, bounding the sea, a rough rocky district, intersected by wadys. In this last easternmost tract, opposite to Carmel in the west, we have the WILDERNESS OF ENGEDI, which is also memorable in the history of David, 1 Sam. xxiv. The district is full of caverns, which of old afforded effectual concealment to David and his men. The town of ENGEDI, from which the wilderness had its name, belonged to Judah (Josh. xv. 62), and bore originally the name of Hazezon-tamar (Gen. xiv. 5; 2 Chron. xx. 2), and lay on the border of the Dead Sea, Ezek. xlvii. 10. According to Josephus, it was by the lake Asphaltites, in a mountainous country, broken by steep precipitous cliffs. In the fourth century it was a large village on the shores of the Dead Sea. Misled by some indefinite expressions of Eusebius and Jerome, both ancient and modern geographers have assumed the existence of two Engedis; but there was but one, the ruins of which are still extant.

On the western shore of the Dead Sea, about midway between its two extremities, a brook with the name of Ain Jidy was discovered by Seetzen. This was, nearly forty years after, visited again by Robinson. After a long and difficult wandering through the wilderness which has just been described, he came to a cliff which had a descent, almost perpendicular, of more than 1,500 feet to the Dead Sea. A very difficult zigzag path leads down this cliff to within 400 feet of the lake's level, where there is a narrow terrace, or shelf of the mountain. Here wells forth the beautiful spring to which the locality owes its name (En-Gedi means "kid's fountain"), and whose clear stream of sweet, but somewhat tepid water, rushes down the steep descent of the mountain below, its course being hidden by a luxuriant thicket of trees and shrubs, belonging naturally to a more southern clime. The whole of the declivity over which this stream flows manifests signs of having been once terraced for tillage and gardens. On the right, near the foot, are the remains of a town, indicating nothing of peculiar interest. Some of the stones appear to have been hewn. From the base of the declivity a fine rich plain slopes off very gradually, for nearly half a mile, to the shore. The brook runs across it directly to the sea, which, however, it

does not reach in the dry season, but is lost in the sands. The climate here, in the deep basin of the lake, is like that of Egypt, as are also the vegetable productions. Such is the richness of the soil, both on the descent below the fountain and on the small plain, and such the abundance of water, that nothing but tillage is wanting to render this a most prolific spot, well suited to the culture of tropical fruits. There are traces of ruins dispersed over the lower plain, as well as higher up, showing that the borders of the Dead Sea lay not in forsaken desolation, but were, in this part at least, well inhabited.

Proceeding from Ain Jidy southward, along the shore of the lake, we cross in our way two wadys, one called Khubarah and the other Seyal, and about three miles beyond the latter come to a remarkable ruin, upon a high pyramidal cliff, rising precipitantly from the sea. It is called Sebbeh. Robinson only saw it at a distance from Ain Jidy, and conjectured it to be the famous palatial fortress of Masada, originally built by Jonathan Maccabæus, and afterwards strengthened and rendered impregnable by Herod the Great, as a place of refuge for himself. This conjecture has since been signally confirmed by the researches of Mr. Wolcott, who visited the spot in February, 1842. According to the account of this intelligent missionary, the rock of Sebbeh is opposite to the peninsula of the Dead Sea, and is itself separated from the water by a shoal or sand-bank, two or three miles in width from north to south. This extends out on the northern side of the cliff, which projects beyond the mountain range. The mountains on the south are in a line with it, and of the same height; and it is separated from them by the deep and precipitous wady Suiein. On the west a smaller wady separates it from more moderate hills. The isolation of the rock is thus complete. This solitary cliff rises to the height of above 1,000 feet, and it requires strong nerves to stand on the steep sides and look directly down. It is only on the western side that the rock can be ascended, and there not without difficulty. The upper surface forms an area of about three quarters of a mile in length from north to south, and one-third of a mile broad, from east to west. The highest points of the rock are on the north and the south-west; the ground sloping into a gentle wady towards the south-east corner. There are here no traces of

vegetation, except in the bottoms of some of the open cisterns.

Traces of king Herod's works, and of some of recent date, still remain. First, there is the wall by which Herod is said by Josephus to have inclosed the whole area. All the lower part of it remains. It is a remarkable fact that the historian describes this wall as being built with white stone, whereas to the traveller it presents the same dark red colour as the rock. But, on breaking the stone, it appeared to have been naturally whitish, which had in the lapse of ages been externally burned brown by the sun. In the existing foundations it is only possible to trace the general outlines of the buildings which Josephus describes. Their peculiar form, composed of long parallel rooms, indicated that they had been rather store-houses, or barracks, than private dwellings. The architecture, both of the wall and the buildings, is of one kind, consisting of rough stones, quarried probably on the summit, laid loosely together, and the interstices filled with small stones. It has the appearance of cobbled work. The traveller thought at first that it could not be the work of Herod; but soon dismissed all doubt of its being so. The stone is of the most durable kind, and there are no traces of any more ancient work; and these would be almost the only materials accessible on the spot.

Of the ancient remains in this place the most remarkable is, however, not upon the rock, but on the ground below. Standing on the summit of the rock, we can trace the whole course of a military wall, carried along the low ground, and wherever it meets a precipice, commencing again on the high summit above, thus making the entire circuit of the place. Connected with it, at intervals, are the walls of the Roman camps, built as described by Josephus in his chapter on Roman camps and armies.* The outline of the works, as seen from the heights above, is as complete as if they had been recently abandoned. The wall is six feet broad, and built like the walls above, but more rudely. It has, of course, crumbled, and was probably never high. Mr. Wolcott writes: "It brought the siege before us with an air of reality; and recalled to our minds, as we looked down upon it, the awful immolation which had taken place upon the spot where we stood. It

* Jewish War, book iii. chap. 5.

was also a stupendous illustration of the Roman perseverance that subdued the world, which could sit down deliberately in such a desert, and commence a siege with such a work ; and, I may add, that could scale such a fortress." The siege here referred to was the last horrible act of the great Jewish war. As already intimated, besides the fortifications and the immense cisterns, Herod built here a palace, with columns and porticos, and baths, and sumptuous apartments, situated upon the west and north of the plain upon the summit of the rock. The fortress was dependent solely on its cisterns for water, as there was no fountain near ; and the interior part of the area was left free of buildings, and cultivated, in order to guard against the possibility of famine. Here Herod had laid up an immense store, both of arms and provisions, sufficient to supply an army of ten thousand men for many years. After the destruction of Jerusalem, the fortresses of Masada, Herodium, and Machærus, all then in the hands of robbers, were the only posts not yet subdued by the Romans. The two latter eventually surrendered, and at length the procurator, Flavius Silva, laid siege to Masada. Determined not to fall into the hands of the Romans, when a prolongation of the defence became hopeless, the whole garrison, at the instance of their leader, Eleazer, devoted themselves to self-destruction, and chose out ten men to massacre all the rest. This was done ; and nine hundred and sixty persons, including women and children, perished. Two females and five boys alone escaped.

If from this point we continue our course still more southward, along the border of the lake, we find that the western range of cliffs again recedes to the south-west, and forms a rocky shelf about eight hundred feet high. But keeping our course along the shore, we come at length, about six miles from Sebbeh (Masada), to the wady Ez-Zuweirah, which has its commencement in the *receded* declivity, through which its channel forms a narrow ravine like a deep pass. The formation of the mountains here is of white chalk, or a whitish indurated marl, in horizontal layers, washed by the rain into pillars and other fantastic shapes. At the bottom of this narrow wady, just where it runs off in an apparent level towards the sea, stands a small Saracenic fort upon an isolated cliff of this chalky earth, so soft as to be easily broken by the hands. It is entirely

surrounded and overlooked by other similar chalky cliffs of much greater elevation. At a short distance are two reservoirs, built of stone, and a cistern. This spot is called Zuweirah, from which the wady takes its name. This name may remind us of the ancient Zoar. But Zoar was originally called Bela, and belonged to the submerged Pentapolis in the vale of Siddim, of which alone, for Lot's sake, it was spared, (Gen. xiv. 2, 3, 10,) and afterwards existed as a city of Moab, (Deut. xxxiv. 3; Isa. xv. 5; Jer. xlviii. 34,) and was still known in the time of the Crusades. But this ancient Zoar lay on the eastern side of the Dead Sea—perhaps in the place where Wady Kerek empties itself into the back water at the southern extremity of the Dead Sea, and where a place called Zoghar, which more nearly resembles the Hebrew name, is indicated by the mediæval Arabian historians and geographers; and there traces of an ancient site were found by Irby and Mangles.

The naked limestone mountains, which still run southwest, rise to the height of a thousand feet, opposing a formidable barrier in this direction to the access of large bodies of people to the interior country. There are, however, three passes up these mountains to the elevated interior. One of them, es-Sufah, not far from which, on the right, is another called es-Sufey; and at some distance to the right the third, called el-Yemen, leading up through a deep rent cleaving the mountain to its base, known as Wady el-Yemen; and from this point the range of mountains, still prolonged to the south-westward, becomes lower and less steep. The name of the central pass, es-Sufah, (that is, a rock,) answers entirely to the Hebrew Zephath, called also Hormah, whereby the Israelites desired to enter the promised land from Kadesh, but were driven back by the Canaanites, Judges i. 17; Numb. xiv. 45; xxi. 3; Deut. i. 44. A city stood there in ancient times, "one of the uttermost of the cities of Judah towards the coast of Edom southward," which was afterwards assigned to the tribe of Simeon, Josh. xii. 14; xv. 30; xix. 4. There is, therefore, every reason to suppose that in the name of Sufah we have a reminiscence of the ancient pass which must have existed here, and which bore the name of the adjacent city of Zephath. Of the name of Hormah no trace has been found.

Having ascended by this pass, the road now returning towards Hebron north by west, lies at first over a rocky

and rugged land, then again over tolerably smooth and level ground with a bottom of fine sand, and we come, after journeying six miles, to another long mountain ridge, similar in general appearance to that already ascended, but not more than half as high. The tract between the bottom of this ridge and the top of the one previously ascended, constitutes the second step or offset of the whole ascent between the broad low valley south of the Dead Sea and Palestine. At the head of the principal pass in the ridge before us, and consequently on the summit of that ridge, are extensive ruins of a walled city with fragments of columns, called Kurnub, which is supposed to be the Thamura of Ptolemy and other writers—the Tamar of the Old Testament, Ezek. xlvii. 19 ; xlviii. 28.

Passing over an open tract or basin with traces of grass, for above three miles, we come to another low ridge, or swell, called at this point Kubbet el-Baul, on reaching the top of which we have before us a smaller basin, forming the head of Wady Ararah, which runs off to Wady es-Seba, on which Bir es-Seba, or Beersheba, is situated ; and so to the Mediterranean. Having reached this elevation, we find that the barren waste has been left behind us, and traces of former cultivation every where appear. In the Wady Ararah itself are traces of ancient habitations—foundation walls and unhewn stones ; and the situation, with the similarity of name, may suggest that this was the Aroer of southern Judah to which David sent presents after the recovery of the spoil of Ziklag, 1 Sam. xxx. 26—28.

To visit this spot, where however there is little to see, we have turned aside into the Gaza road ; but as we are exploring the Hebron district, we direct our way due north towards that city. We soon reach the Wady el-Mileh, which in its junction further down with the Wady el-Khulil, forms the Wady es-Seba, lately mentioned. In this Wady el-Mileh there are remains of some old places. Two round excavated wells, forty feet deep, are here found, which furnish water to an Arab tribe that encamps in the neighbourhood. On the plain, southward, near these wells, are the stones of a ruined city or large village. The stones are all hewn, and lie strewed about over a surface of above half a mile square. The situation, if not the name, agrees with that which ancient writers assign to the Malatha of the Greeks and Romans ; the same as the Moladah, which the Scripture places in the extreme south of Judah towards Edom, and

which afterwards belonged to Simeon, and was again inhabited after the captivity, Josh. xv. 26 ; xix. 2 ; 1 Chron. iv. 28 ; Neh. xi. 26. This place is said by Eusebius to have been four miles south of Arad, and accordingly when we have proceeded about that distance southward, we see to the right (eastward) of our road a Tel or mound, which to this day is called Arad. This place, it will be remembered, was an ancient Canaanitish city, whose inhabitants drove back the Israelites when they attempted to penetrate from Kadesh into Palestine, but who were afterwards subdued by Joshua.* The Tel Arad is a barren looking eminence, rising above the country around. It has not, so far as we know, been fully inspected by any traveller ; but the Arabs state that there are no ruins upon or near the Tel, but only a cavern.

Before proceeding further, we may indicate, that about twelve miles westward from the ruins of Moladah, and in the Wady es-Seba, about four miles from its commencement, as formed by the union of the Wady el-Khulil with Wady Ararah, are two wells bearing the name of Bir es-Seba, which, without question, is the Beersheba (well of the oath) so often mentioned in Genesis as the southernmost encampment of the Hebrew patriarchs. The discovery of this site we owe to Dr. Robinson, by whom it was visited on his journey from Akabah to Jerusalem ; and it is one of the most interesting of the many facts for the disclosure of which we are indebted to the researches of that learned traveller. The wells in question are at some distance apart ; they are circular, and built up very neatly with solid masonry, and they are apparently of a very ancient date. The largest is twelve and a half feet in diameter, and forty-four feet and a half deep to the surface of the water, sixteen feet of which from the bottom is excavated in the solid rock ; the other is five feet in diameter, and forty-two feet deep. The water in both is pure and sweet, and in great abundance. Both wells are surrounded with drinking troughs of stone for camels and flocks, such as were doubtless used of old for the flocks that there fed on the adjacent hills. The curb stones are deeply worn by the friction of the ropes in drawing up water by the

* Numb. xxi. 1—3 ; xxxiii. 40 ; xii. 14 ; Judges i. 16. The authorized version has in Numb. xxi. 1, " King Arad," incorrectly for " king of Arad."

hand. Dr. Robinson scarcely expected to find any ruins here ; but on ascending the low hills a little to the north of the wells, they were found to be covered with the remains of former habitations, the foundations of which are still to be distinctly traced, although scarcely one stone remains upon another. The houses appear not to have stood compactly, but scattered over several little hills, and in the hollows between. They were chiefly built of round stones, although some of the stones are squared, and some hewn. It was probably only a small straggling place. This confirms the information of Eusebius and Jerome, that Beersheba was in their time a village with a Roman garrison. These ruins are spread over a space half a mile in length along the northern side of the watercourse, and extending back about a quarter of a mile. Fragments of pottery are scattered over the whole.

“ Here, then,” says Dr. Robinson, “ is the place where the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob often dwelt. Here Abraham dug, perhaps, this very well ; and journeyed from hence with Isaac to Mount Moriah, to offer him up there in sacrifice. From this place Jacob fled to Padan-Aram, after acquiring the birth-right and blessing belonging to his brother ; and here, too, he sacrificed to the Lord on setting off to meet his son Joseph in Egypt. Here Samuel made his sons judges ; and from hence Elijah wandered out into the southern desert, and sat down under a shrub of retem, just as our Arabs sat down under it every day and every night. Here was the border of Palestine Proper, which extended from Dan to Beersheba. Over these swelling hills, the flocks of the patriarchs roved by thousands, where now we found only a few camels, asses, and goats.” Gen. xxi. 31, *et seq.* ; xxii. 19 ; xxvi. 23 ; xxviii. 10 ; xlv. 1 ; 1 Sam. viii. 2 ; 1 Kings xix. 3 ; 2 Sam. xvii. 11.

We now return to the route from which we diverged westward to visit Beersheba ; and, re-entering the Hebrew province, soon again find ourselves among a great number of ancient Biblical sites ; the names of which have been preserved to our own day, and have been brought to light by the labours of Robinson.

Starting again from Molada northward, and passing Tel Arad, as already mentioned, on the right, we come not long after to a site, which, as seen some distance to the left of

the road, is marked by caverns upon a hill. It is called Attir, and is not improbably the Jattir to which David sent presents after his recovery of Ziklag, 1 Sam. xxx. 26, 27 ; see also Josh. xv. 48. The ruins of the village of el-Ghuwein, to the east of this, may possibly correspond to the Ain, which the Bible places in this district, Josh. xv. 32 ; xix. 7 ; xxi. 16. North of this, upon two hills, are the not inconsiderable ruins of Rafat, with remains of walls and arches ; and still further on is Semua, the first inhabited place which, in coming from the south, is reached in this district, in which, as we have seen, the traces of ancient habitation extend far more southward. This place is a decent village, situated upon a low hill, with broad valleys around it, not susceptible of much tillage, but full of flocks and herds in very good condition. In several places in and around the village there are remains of walls built of very large stones, bevelled, but left rough in the middle. These old foundations seem to mark this as the site of an extensive ancient town, probably the Eshtemoa of the Old Testament, (Josh. xxi. 14 ; xv. 50 ; 1 Sam. xxx. 28 ;) which might easily pass into the existing Arabic name with the article, es-Semua. The ruins of a castle form the most conspicuous object here at the present day. One square tower is in tolerable preservation, and the whole work seems to have been of Saracenic or Turkish origin. At this place, in the beginning of June, Dr. Robinson fell in with several small swarms of young locusts, the first he had seen during his journey from the south. They were quite green, with wings just sprouting ; they entirely resembled grasshoppers, and hopped briskly away from his path. The traveller says : " Our Arabs, when asked if they ate them, spurned at the idea ; but said the Ma'az do so, and also the Sherarat, a tribe in Wady Sirhan in the east." It is probable that they must have merely meant to deny eating them in *that* stage of their existence, as certainly Arabs are not often met with who feel any scruple about eating full-grown locusts.

To the north-east from Semua, and about midway between it and Carmel (Kurmul), which was mentioned in our southward route, is Susieh, where there is a large extent of ruins, with columns, and other indications of an ancient city. About two miles and a half north from this, we reach a modern Mohammedan village, named Yutta, in which name we can hardly fail to recognise the JUTTAH of the

Old Testament, (Josh. xv. 55 ; xxi. 16,) a city of the priests, which has been lost sight of since the days of Jerome. This is fairly supposed by Reland to have been the residence of Zacharias and Elizabeth, and the birth-place of John the Baptist. The present village stands upon a low eminence, surrounded by trees. There are said to be here old foundations and walls like those of Semua.

All the places named since Rafat inclusive, lie upon a branch of the great Wady (el-Khalil), which takes its name from Hebron, near which it commences. Westward, upon the wady itself, is a place, with a small tower, retaining its Biblical name of Anab, (Josh. xi. 21 ; xv. 50 ;) and on this also, due west of Semua, is a large village, called Shuweikeh, in which we recognise, without difficulty, the Socoh of the mountains of Judah, Josh. xv. 48.

Hebron, from which we started, is now right before us, but, having been there already, we turn aside to explore the western part of the province, of which Shuweikeh is the chief town.

This district is also found to be thickly planted with ruins, both on the borders of the central mountains and on the hilly land towards the out-lying western plain.

If, when leaving Shuweikeh (Socoh), instead of proceeding northward, we take our way westward, we should not have gone three miles before we reach edh-Dhoheriyeh, which is upon the summit of a hill, and is beheld from afar in every direction. It is a rude assemblage of stone hovels, many of which are half under-ground, and others broken down. A castle or fortress, apparently, once stood here ; the remains of a square tower are still to be seen, now used as a dwelling ; and the doorways of many hovels are of hewn stone, with arches. It would seem to have been one of the line of small fortresses, which apparently once existed all along the southern border of Palestine. The village contains about 400 inhabitants. Though half in ruins, it is yet rich in flocks and herds, and owns at least a hundred camels. The country around looks barren ; the limestone rock comes out in large blocks and masses upon the slopes and tops of the hills, and gives a whitish cast to the whole landscape. No trees are visible, nor any fields of grain, except in the bottoms of the narrow valleys. Indeed, the aspect of the whole region is stern and dreary. Yet it must be a fine grazing country ; as is proved by the

fat and sleek condition of the herds and flocks, and by its having been, from the time of Abraham, regarded as a place of resort for nomadic herdsmen.

Four miles north-west of this, towards the borders of the western plain, is el-Burj, situated upon a very rocky promontory, or long neck of land, projecting towards the west. The ruins here disappoint the expectations which the exaggerated reports of the Arabs are calculated to excite. They consist of the remains of a square fortress, about 200 feet on a side, situated directly upon the surface of the projecting rocky hill. The walls are mostly broken down, and nothing remains to mark its probable age, or even the character of its architecture, although the general appearance of the ruins is decidedly that of a Saracenic structure. And it may probably be regarded as one of the line of strong Saracenic or Turkish fortresses which appears to have once been drawn along the southern frontier of Palestine. About the castle are some remains of huts, and many caves in the rocks, which seem once to have been inhabited as a sort of village.

The principal place in this district, and indeed one of the largest villages in the Hebron province, is Dura, situated on the gradual eastern slope of a cultivated hill, about five miles west-south-west from Hebron, with olive groves and fields of grain all around. Above, and not far from it, is the well of Nebi Nuh (Prophet Noah). No traces of antiquity are found at Dura; but the name and the locality point it out as the Adora, or ADORAIM, of the Bible, 2 Chron. xi. 9; of the Apocrypha, 1 Macc. xiii. 20; and of Josephus, by whom it is often mentioned.

Two miles north of Dura is an old village called Teffuh, on a higher and broader part of the same ridge. It contains a good number of inhabitants, and lies in the midst of olive groves and vineyards, with marks of industry and thrift on every side. Indeed many of the former terraces for cultivation along the hill sides are still in use, and the land looks somewhat as it may have done in ancient times. Several portions of walls, apparently those of an old fortress, are visible among the houses, and seem to attest the antiquity of the place, and to confirm the recognition of Teffuh as the BETH-TAPPUAH of the mountains of Judah, not far from Hebron, Josh. xv. 53. Another place of the same

name lay in the *plain* of Judah, Josh. xv. 34 ; compare xii. 17.

To the north-west of Teffuh is the small village of Idhna, divided into two parts by a short wady or gully. Small as the place is, each part has its separate sheikh, with its Kusr or tower ; and the inhabitants are divided into two parties, according as they live north or south of the watercourse. In all civil broils, the sheikhs, with their followers, usually take different sides—a singular illustration of Cowper's remark—

“ Lands intersected by a narrow frith
 Make enemies of nations which had else,
 Like kindred drops, been mingled into one.”

Which might have been put even more strongly, for the “ frith ” is here a “ brook.” This Idhna lies near the foot of the mountains, where the steep ascent of the higher ridge begins.

North-eastward from Idhna we come to Terkumieh, a village lying near the foot of the high mountains, on a low ridge or swell between the wadys. No ruins are here to be seen ; but it is not improbable that the stones of former buildings have been used in the construction of the present houses. The name and locality appear to identify it with Tricomias, enumerated in the ecclesiastical *Notitiæ*, as an episcopal see of *Palæstina Prima*, but of which until the present time there is no further mention whatever.

Proceeding northward two miles, we come to Beit-Nusib, probably the NEZIB of the plain of Judah, Josh. xv. 43. Here is a ruined tower, about sixty feet square, very solidly built. The interior is dark ; and in attempting to enter it Dr. Robinson was driven back by myriads of fleas. Near by are the foundations of a massive building, apparently still more ancient than the tower. There are also fragments of columns, and ruined foundations are visible on another mound to the south.

If we go up the mountain ridge north-east of this place, we find upon its brow a place with ruins, called Jedur, which, from its position, is visible to a great distance, and in which we may easily recognise the GEDOR of the mountains of Judah, Josh. xv. 58 ; 1 Chron. xii. 7 ; perhaps also 1 Chron. iv. 39.

On the western side of the road from Hebron to Beth-lehem, and about midway between these towns, are the

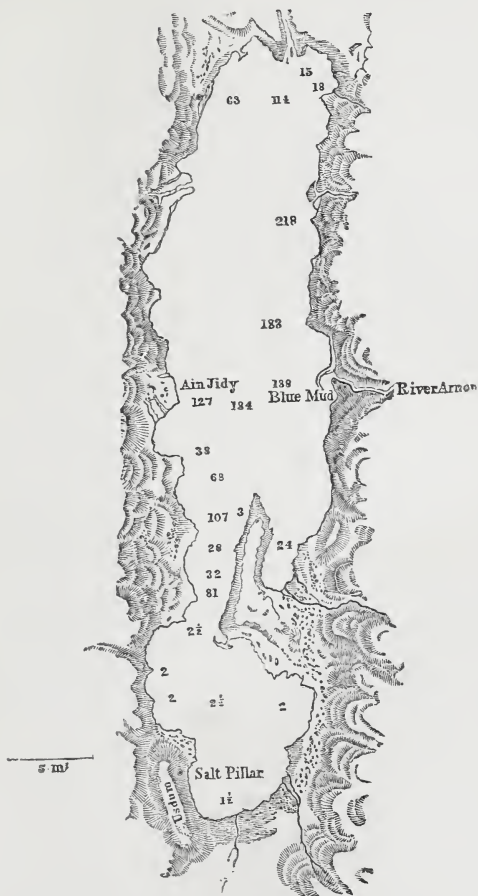
ruins of a village called Kufin, surrounded with olive-trees and cultivated fields, with a reservoir for rain water. This is the Abu Fid of Robinson's map, which assigns Kufin a different situation. This error has been pointed out by Wolcott, (in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, i. 44;) and we here repeat the correction, as the mistake is still copied in the maps constructed from that of Robinson.

Still further (north by east) on the road to Bethlehem, and on approaching the northern border of the province of Hebron, we come to a broad open valley, running north. "I asked," says Wolcott, "the Khatib its name, and he replied, 'Wady Bereikut.'—Is not this the *Valley of Berachah*, unto this day?" 2 Chron. xx. 26. Robinson, who did not visit the spot, and had only the name, questioned that it was the Valley of Berachah (benediction) where Jehoshaphat celebrated the miraculous overthrow of the Moabites and Ammonites; but this arose probably from his having placed the valley too far west, as his map indicates, which rendered the identity the less probable. Wolcott says: "The identity was rendered the more striking by the sheikh's immediately adding, that it bore this name only opposite the village, and was called by a different one below, where it turns south-east, namely Wady Khanzireh." The ruined town of Bereikut lies on the western side of the valley, upon a small eminence, and covers three or four acres. Here are ten cisterns, some very large, on which the place seems to have depended for its water. At the south end are the foundation walls of a building, the stones of which are bevelled, and larger than seems to have been usual in the country towns.

The Dead Sea having been often mentioned in this view of the province of Hebron, which is wholly bounded by it on the east, we shall here introduce as full an account of that remarkable body of water as the limits of this work allow.

The Dead Sea is not once mentioned in the New Testament; but in the Old it is occasionally noticed or referred to by the names of "the sea of the plain," "the salt sea," and "the east sea." The name of the "Dead Sea" is not known in Scripture nor in any ancient writings. It seems to have originated in the belief, now known to be correct, that no living thing existed in its waters; and perhaps also in the impression which is now certainly known to be

erroneous—that no birds could fly over the lake or exist upon its borders. The only historical circumstance connected with the lake in Scripture is that which records the



THE DEAD SEA, ACCORDING TO LIEUTENANT LYNCH.

(The figures denote the depth in fathoms.)

signal overthrow, by the immediate judgment of God, of Sodom, Gomorrah, and the other cities which stood in the plain, and the horrible crimes of whose inhabitants cried

aloud for some signal mark of the Divine displeasure. Most awfully was that displeasure manifested. Yet in the midst of wrath the Lord remembered mercy. Had ten righteous men been found in Sodom, the whole of the inhabitants would, at the intercession of Abraham, have been saved for their sake. The venerable patriarch, doubtless, supposed the place saved by that concession—for to him it must have seemed incredible that a large city should not contain ten righteous men. Yet so it was; as Abraham painfully found when on proceeding the next morning to a place looking over what was the day preceding a fertile and well-watered plain, he beheld the smoke of its horrible burning ascending high towards heaven. Yet, although there were not ten righteous men to save the city, the one righteous man who dwelt there—Abraham's nephew, the just Lot, "who vexed his righteous soul from day to day" in beholding the wickedness around him—was spared. His life was given him for a prey, Jer. xxxviii. 18; xlv. 5, and the commissioned angels stayed their hands until this one upright man was safe—and even one of the doomed cities was spared, to furnish a refuge to him. "Behold, therefore, the goodness and severity of God." And so is it now: the finally impenitent he overwhelms in his just displeasure; whilst those who flee for refuge to his Son, Christ Jesus, with faith in his atoning sacrifice and justifying righteousness, shall find mercy, and obtain deliverance in the day of the Divine displeasure.

The nature of the change locally effected by the terrible judgment upon a sinful people has been differently understood. The old opinion was that no lake at all previously existed here, but that the whole space was occupied by a fertile plain through which the Jordan flowed. The discovery by Burekhardt of the Ghor, or valley, extending from the present Dead Sea to the eastern arm of the Red Sea, and through which the Jordan might be assumed to have pursued its course, seemed to establish that conclusion beyond all question. More lately, however, Dr. Robinson and others shook this conclusion by demonstrating that there were cliffs to the south of the Dead Sea, through which there was an *ascent* to this ghor, or broad valley, from the basin of the lake and its bordering plains; and that, furthermore, the tendency of the watercourses of the ghor itself was, in the northern half, towards the Dead Sea, and not towards the Gulf of Akabah. The conclusion resulting from

this would be, that a wholesome lake once existed here, into which the streams not only of the north but of the south flowed, and whose waters were absorbed, not only as now by evaporation, but also by cultivation. The plain of Sodom is thus supposed to have occupied the site of the present southernmost branch of the lake, or "back-water," as Irby and Mangles call it, and which is in fact almost a detached part of it, being separated from the larger portion of the lake by a low peninsula which extends out from the eastern shore across three-fifths of the basin's breadth, leaving the two portions of the lake connected only by a channel between the peninsula and the western shore. It is around this southern bay that we find the salt cliffs; and a convulsion making this a part of the lake, and throwing into it the salt which here abounds, and the bitumen of the "slime pits" which the sacred writer describes as having existed in the vale of Siddim, would sufficiently account for the great density and the saline and bitter quality of the water. Still, the first impression suggested to any plain reader of the sacred narrative is, that the whole basin of the Dead Sea was, previous to the catastrophe which destroyed its cities, a plain watered by the Jordan and other streams; and our information as regards the country south of the Dead Sea is as yet too imperfect to enable us to rest with implicit confidence upon the view which has of late years been generally received. Indeed some facts were ascertained in the recent American expedition which, if borne out by further researches, may throw us back upon the first view, which this explanation was supposed to have superseded. The cliffs to the south of the Dead Sea may be found to present a less insuperable obstacle to the idea of the ancient progress of the Jordan to the Red Sea than has been hitherto supposed; for the tendency of the evidence now before us is to show that in the day when the Lord overthrew Sodom, a large portion of the valley of the Jordan underwent a sudden break down or depression, greatest in the site of the present Dead Sea, but extending a good way up the Jordan, and probably to a corresponding distance below the present lake. It may prove that the southward cliffs which have been mentioned, mark the point of the depression in that direction as distinctly as do the rapids and cataracts of the Jordan in the other. On this subject we must await further information; and meanwhile it must be understood that considerable doubt has of late been cast

upon the evidence which created distrust in the opinion that the river Jordan once passed through a fertile plain now covered by the waters of the Dead Sea.

Concerning a body of water thus signalized by the Divine wrath against sin, many strange and terrible traditions have come down to us, some of which have been disproved or explained by modern research, while others have been confirmed. Most of them there will be occasion to notice as we proceed.

It has been ascertained that the length of the Dead Sea is forty miles by an average breadth of nine miles. It lies deep in its bed, surrounded on all sides by high cliffs or hills, which, with its great depression below the level of the adjacent country, (being in fact more than 2,500 feet below the mountains on the west, and not much less below the high lands to the east,) give a most intense and tropical heat to the climate of the lake, alone sufficient to produce injurious effects upon the health, and even upon the life of those unaccustomed to it, who have been long enough subject to its influence. Vegetable life is but scantily displayed upon the borders of this lake; this is accounted for partly by the heat, which is unfavourable to the growth of plants unless there is also fresh water, and partly from the fact that saline exhalations are not suited to many species of vegetable existence. Such verdure as does appear is found mostly at the mouth of and up the ravines—such as that which forms the bed of the Arnon—which send their streams into the lake; and in such places it is exuberant. But fresh water from streams or from fountains is rare upon the borders of the lake.

It was held by tradition that no wholesome vegetable would grow here. "Apples of Sodom," were the only produce of the lake—fair indeed to the eye, but which when attempted to be eaten filled the mouth with dust and ashes, and the scent with a noisome smell. A fruit has been found which sufficiently corresponds with this description to leave no doubt that it is the one intended. But although this fruit is in Palestine found only on the Dead Sea, it is common enough in Nubia, Arabia, and Persia, and is therefore not a peculiar product of the "accursed lake." It is called by the Arabs *osher*, the *Asclepias procera* of botanists. The tree is here generally from ten to fifteen feet high, with trunks four, six, or eight inches in diameter, but some specimens have been found measuring

two feet or more in circumference. It has a grey cork-like bark, with long oval leaves. If an incision be made in the bark, or a leaf torn off, a viscous milky juice exudes, which is exceedingly acrid and very caustic. The green fruit, when cut, affords the same fluid, which is called by the Arabs *leben osher*, (osher-milk,) and is used medicinally in the east. About the beginning of May the half-formed green fruit of the year, with the dry fruit of the last year, may be seen on the same trees. The former is then soft and elastic as a puff-ball, and when cut affords the milky juice which has been noticed. The old fruit greatly resembles externally a large smooth apple or orange, hanging in clusters of three or four. It is of a yellow colour, and fair and delicious to the eye, and soft to the touch; but it is exceedingly brittle, and is crushed with the slightest pressure, leaving in the hand only the shreds of the thin rind and a few fibres. In the centre is found a small pod, which runs through it from the stem, and is connected by thin filaments with the rind. This pod contains a small quantity of fine cotton resembling silk, with seeds. This cotton is collected by the Arabs, and twisted into matches for their guns; they prefer it to the common match because it requires no sulphur to render it combustible. Such, without doubt, are the fruits which occasioned the tradition respecting "the apples of Sodom," and which arose among a people who knew not that the same fruit was abundant in other parts of the world.

The ancient accounts respecting the saline qualities and the density of the water of the lake have been, however, most abundantly confirmed. It is limpid; but from the quantities of saline and bituminous matters which it holds in solution it is most unpleasant to the taste. It is much saltier than the ocean, and exceedingly bitter; it is like sea-water mixed with Epsom salts and quinine. It acts on the eyes as pungently as smoke, and produces on the skin of those who bathe in it a sensation resembling what is called "prickly heat," leaving behind a white saline deposit. A portion of it analysed in this country by Dr. Marcet, was found to contain nearly one-fourth of its weight in salts.* This quantity of solids which the water holds in solution, sufficiently explains its extraordinary density. It has been

* Muriate of lime 3.920, muriate of magnesia 10.246, chloride of soda (another account adds, "with a trace of bromine") 10.360, sulphate of lime 0.054, = total 24.580.

found by experiment that it is sixteen per cent. heavier than rain water ; and by another experiment (of the American expedition) it was found that taking distilled water as 1, the water of the Atlantic is 1.02, and of the Dead Sea 1.13. This last dissolved $\frac{1}{11}$ th, the water of the Atlantic $\frac{1}{8}$ th, and distilled water $\frac{5}{17}$ ths of its weight of salt.

Water like this is necessarily of great buoyancy. Although the ancient assertion that a flat dense mass of iron will remain suspended on its surface is not correct; yet it is true that a man who cannot float elsewhere, finds no difficulty here. Having proceeded some way into the lake till his shoulders are nearly immersed, his feet are actually borne off the ground, and he walks, as it were, on water ; or else his legs are forcibly raised, and he is compelled either to float or swim. To sink or to dive requires some effort. The American expedition on leaving the Jordan carefully noted the draught of the boats. With the same loads they drew one inch less water in the lake than in the river. Horses and asses taken into the water could with difficulty keep upright. Two fresh eggs which would have sunk in the water of the Atlantic or the Mediterranean, floated up one third of their length. The specific gravity of the water accounts also for its reputed immobility ; it is less easily excited than any known lake, and sooner resumes its wonted stillness. Yet the American explorers encountered something of a storm as they entered the lake from the Dead Sea. The commander of the expedition writes :—

“The sea continued to rise with the increasing wind, which gradually freshened to a gale, and presented an agitated surface of foaming brine ; the spray evaporating as it fell, left incrustations of salt upon our clothes, our hands, and our faces ; and while it conveyed a prickly sensation wherever it touched the skin, was above all painful to the eyes. The boats, heavily laden, struggled sluggishly at first ; but when the wind freshened in its fierceness, from the density of the water it seemed as if their bows were encountering the sledge hammers of the Titans, instead of the opposing waves of an angry sea.”

It seems also that the sailors found rowing against the force of such substantial waves a work of unusual labour ; and it is recorded that from the same cause the crests of the waves instead of curling *back* from the sides of the boat curled *into* it, to the serious inconvenience of the men.

The activity of the evaporation in this deep basin, and

under a hot local climate, is very great. Some notion of it may be formed from the fact of its sufficing to carry off a quantity of water equal to that which the Jordan and lesser streams bring into it. The effects of this evaporation are sometimes visibly exhibited in that appearance to which it is not difficult to trace the "smoke" which old traditions allege to be frequently seen arising from the lake. This appearance is thus noticed by the commander of the American expedition. "At one time, the sea assumed an aspect peculiarly sombre. Unstirred by the wind, it lay



THE DEAD SEA.

smooth and unruffled as an inland lake. The great evaporation enveloped it in a thin transparent vapour, its purple tinge contrasting strongly with the extraordinary colour of the sea beneath, and where they blended in the distance, giving it the appearance of smoke from burning sulphur. It seemed a vast caldron of metal fused, but motionless."

Whence is it that the lake derives the reputation of unwholesomeness which it bears? The fact is not to be gainsaid, at least to this extent, that it is injurious, and sometimes fatal, to strangers subjected for any time to the influence of its water and atmosphere. Mr. Costigan, who first of all navigated the Dead Sea in a boat, died at Jerusalem of the fever acquired upon its waters. So, afterwards, died Lieut. Molyneux, who more lately performed

the same exploit. Of the American expedition, the second in command died, probably from the same cause ; and most of the others suffered considerably, and were brought into a state of much nervous distress and prostration of strength. The unsuitableness of such a climate—or at least of constant exposure therein—to a northern constitution might alone account for this : but it is reported that, of a colony transported to the shores of this lake from the banks of the Nile—and, therefore, from a climate altogether as warm—there were, in a few years, scarcely any survivors.

The evaporation from the waters of the lake itself can scarcely account for this, as the exhalations from water thus composed must be rather wholesome than otherwise ; and the scantiness of vegetation on the shores precludes that fruitful source of malaria, vegetable decomposition. Nevertheless there is, especially at night, a sickening sulphureous odour which seems to have procured for the lake one of its Arabic names—the Bahr Mutneh, or “Stinking Sea.” Many have supposed this to arise from the sea itself ; but Lieut. Lynch, the commander of the American expedition, questions this. He says : “ We have been twice upon the sea when the spray was driven in our faces ; but although the water was acrid, greasy, and disagreeable, it was perfectly inodorous. I am therefore inclined to attribute the noxious smell to the fœtid springs and marshes along the shore of the sea, increased, perhaps, by exhalations from stagnant pools in the flat plain that bounds it to the north.” From whatever cause this arises it taints the air, and must therefore have an injurious effect upon those exposed to it. This, with the exhausting heat of the climate, and the irritated condition of the skin produced by the acrid qualities of the water, are, together, quite sufficient to account for all the bad effects upon health and life which have been ascribed to this lake. The following is the account which Lieut. Lynch gives of the state of health among his people, after they had been a fortnight upon the lake and its shores : “ Thus far, all, with one exception, had enjoyed good health ; but there were symptoms which caused me uneasiness. The figure of each one had assumed a dropsical appearance ; the lean had become stout, and the stout, almost corpulent ; the pale faces had become florid, and those that were florid, ruddy ; moreover, the slightest scratch festered, and the bodies of many of us were covered with small pustules. The men complained bitterly of the

irritation of their sores, whenever the acrid water of the sea touched them. Still, all had good appetites, and I hoped for the best."

The old report, that no fish, or other aquatic creature, exists in these waters, appears to be true. It has been confirmed by all recent observation; and the American expedition, which spent three weeks here, never saw any kind of living thing in the water. Nay, more; in some of the water which they took home with them no trace of animalcules could be discovered by the aid of a powerful microscope; a circumstance which appears to be far more extraordinary than the non-existence of fish in the lake.

But the exhalations of the lake are by no means so deleterious as reported to birds, which, it used to be affirmed, fell dead upon the surface in attempting to fly over the waters. That aquatic birds should be scarce upon a lake where there is no fish; and that land birds should be not abundant on shores which offer but little vegetation, is easily to be understood: but birds of all kinds have been seen *crossing* the lake very safely; and wild ducks were repeatedly observed by the American explorers, floating at ease upon the surface of the water.

The accounts of travellers, that they had heard from the natives of the existence upon the shores of the pillar of salt into which Lot's wife was turned, have often been given; but as none of them professed to have seen it, this has usually been regarded as an invention of the natives to amuse the strangers. The belief, however, that the pillar of salt still existed may be traced back to an early period, for it is found in the apocryphal Book of Wisdom, which must have been written in or previously to the second century before Christ. Josephus also mentions the pillar into which Lot's wife was turned, and declares that he had seen it. There is nothing in Scripture to inform us whether the mass into which this wretched woman was changed, remained for any length of time or not. But it is clear, from these and other intimations, that an erect mass of salt existed upon the shores of the lake, which was in a late age—though ancient to us—regarded as this "monument of an unbelieving soul."

It was reserved for the recent American expedition to discover a pillar of salt, which may be that to which these ancient allusions refer; but is more probably one of the same sort of later date. We may, however, readily understand that this is the very pillar of which modern travellers

have received accounts from the natives. It is found among the salt mountains of Usdum on the west side, near the extremity of the southern bay of the Dead Sea ; and it is without doubt the summit of a hill of rock-salt rounded into the shape it bears by the action of the rains. Being found in this position—as others like it probably were in former times—it is natural enough that it should come to be regarded in the neighbourhood as the salt-pillar into which the wife of Lot was turned. It is thus described by Lieut. Lynch :—“Soon after, to our astonishment, we saw on the eastern side of [the hilly range of] Usdum, one third of the distance from the north extreme, a lofty round pillar, standing apparently detached from the general mass, at the head of a deep, narrow, and abrupt chasm. We immediately pulled for the shore, and Dr. Anderson and I went and examined it. The beach was a soft slimy mud encrusted with salt, and, a short distance from the water, covered with saline fragments and flakes of bitumen. We found the pillar to be solid salt, capped with carbonate of lime, cylindrical in front and pyramidal behind. The upper, or rounded part, is about forty feet high, resting on a kind of oval pedestal, from forty to sixty feet above the level of the sea. It slightly decreases in size upwards, crumbles at the top, and is one entire mass of crystallization. A prop or buttress connects it with the mountain behind, and the whole is covered with debris of a light stone colour. Its peculiar shape is doubtless attributable to the action of the winter rains. The Arabs had told us, in vague terms, that there was to be found a pillar somewhere upon the shores of the sea ; but their statements in all other respects had proved so unsatisfactory, that we could place no reliance upon them.”

This is the same “pillar,” if we may so call it, which, in another and less authentic account of the expedition, is set forth as that of Lot’s wife ;—but the physical cause of its formation is apparent ; besides, it is upon a hill, not on the plain where, as appears from the sacred text, the distrustful woman was death-stricken ; and it is not in the direction which must have been taken in escaping to Zoar from any point to which the situation of the town from which they fled can, with any probability, be assigned.

The impression conveyed by the account of the American expedition to the Dead Sea is more strongly one of desolation than some previous travellers had furnished. This, indeed, is less the effect of any general statement as applicable to

the whole lake, than from the frequent recurrence of the descriptions of particularly arid and desolate scenes. It should not, however, be forgotten, that the explorers were sailors, quite unacquainted with the peculiarities of eastern scenery, and whose means of comparison are drawn from the abundantly wooded lakes and streams of their own land. Those who have been, by previous travel through different parts of Western Asia, qualified to make a more correct comparison, speak differently, and are almost invariably surprised to find the region of the Dead Sea less desolate than they had expected it to be. The sensible remarks of a traveller thus qualified—the Rev. J. Paxton—seem to set this matter in the true light:—"The bank, the water, and the bottom, so far as I saw and tried it, had much less of the terrible, fearful, and unnatural, than I had expected. Instead of that dark, gloomy, and turbid spread of water, that I had from my childhood imagined, it struck me as a very pleasant lake. It reminded me of the beautiful lake of Nice. As to the deep and fearful gloom which many describe as hanging over it, I must think that it is mainly found in their imagination. It is not wonderful that a place which, for its great wickedness, was doomed to such a fearful catastrophe as were the cities that stood on this plain, should be looked upon with fear and horror. It is a wise provision of our nature that it should be so. It operates, and no doubt it is designed to do so, as a check to that fearful wickedness that calls down such a doom. It is not an uncommon thing for people to think there is something fearful and gloomy in places where they know awful crimes have been perpetrated; and on this principle we may account, perhaps, for the fact that so many travellers have dwelt on the deep gloom which hung over the water, and the desolation that reigned over the whole region. Now, to me, it did not appear thus. The shores, the waters, and the lake, had a natural, and wore a pleasing appearance; the more so, as from my old habits I had expected something of the fearful and the terrible. The district was, it is true, rather destitute of trees and vegetation, but not more so than many districts that I have seen; not more so than the district from Mount Olivet to the plain of the Jordan, and a very large district near Damascus, which I noticed in a former journey. There are more small trees, bushes, canes, and other vegetable growth, for a quarter of a mile along the shore, than there are in some districts north of Damascus, perhaps ten miles square."

IV.—GAZA.



GAZA.

THE province of el-Gazzeh, or Gaza, comprehends the whole of the territory of the Philistines, but its breadth from east to west being greater than that territory, it also embraces the westernmost portion of the territory of the tribe of Judah. Judah, however, had few sites of much historical importance in a part so exposed to the assaults of Israel's bitterest enemies, and, substantially, this province of Gaza may be regarded as the territory of the Philistines, who indeed often held possession of that portion of it belonging to Judah. Thus, consequently, it is chiefly interesting as the seat of the Philistine pentarchy, and as containing the five cities of that remarkable people, on which Scripture history and prophecy have conferred an enduring name. By their possession of this territory along the coast, they excluded the descendants of Abraham from the sea in the southern part of the land, as

effectually as the Phœnicians did in the northern, shutting them up among their mountains as an inland, agricultural, and unmaritime people. Thus, without intending it, they subserved one of the purposes of the Lord's providence towards the chosen seed, that of keeping them separate from the nations, by excluding them, by the way of the sea, from that intercourse with them which they were, for the most part, but too desirous to cultivate. Nothing, humanly speaking, but the possession of the coast by a hostile race, could have kept the Israelites, as a people, from much contaminating intercourse with the isles and coasts of the Levant.

The province of el-Gazzeh is bounded on the west by the Mediterranean, and on the north by the province of Ramleh, from which it is separated by Wady Rubin and Nahr Surar. On the east it has the province of Hebron, and a portion of that of Jerusalem; and on the south the Wady Sheriah. In the south-western corner of the district defined by these limits is its capital, GAZA (el-Gazzeh), famous in the history of Samson, and often mentioned in sacred prophecy. It is seated upon a low round elevation, of considerable extent, but overtopping the neighbouring plain about fifty or sixty feet. This elevation may be regarded as the heart of the city, though at present only the southern half of it is covered with houses, and the greater part of the town lies below it, extending northward and eastward over the plain, like suburbs, and seems to be thickly inhabited. The disposition to assign a suburban character to the lower parts of the town is strengthened, if not created, by a very perceptible difference in the buildings. The houses upon the hill are of stone, while those upon the plain are constructed of clay or with unburned bricks. The present city has no gates, and resembles a large open village: but at the foot of the hill the place of the former gates is shown; and one towards the south-east is pointed out as the place of the gate, which, with its posts and bars, was carried away by Samson. This is not unlikely; for Samson left the town in that direction; and although Gaza has since been destroyed, ruined cities are in the east usually rebuilt upon the old foundations, and new gates, if any, are mostly set up where the old ones stood. The endings of the streets and the direction of the roads seem to fix the spot by unfailing indications. The Moslem inhabitants of the city inherit the traditions which

connect its name with the Hebrew champion. They have there a Mukam, or sepulchral mosque, in honour of him, and it is their belief that it contains his grave; but we know, that although Samson died at Gaza, his body was removed and buried in the sepulchre of his father, between Zorah and Eshtaol.

All traces of the ancient walls and fortifications of Gaza have disappeared, nor can other signs of the great antiquity of the place be found. Gaza is about an hour distant from the sea, which is not visible from the town, the view being intercepted by the sand-hills which extend along the coast. Around the city, particularly on the north and south, are numerous productive gardens, fenced in by cactus hedges. In the north, beyond the gardens, is an olive grove, and many palm-trees are scattered in the neighbourhood. The present inhabitants are said to be about 15,000.

The ancient Gerar, where Abimelech reigned in the time of Abraham, must have been situated in the southern part of this province. From Gen. xxvi. 17, it seems to have lain in a watered valley, which the church history of Sozomen also mentioned. This could not well have been any other than the Wady Sheriah; but even the diligent inquiries of Robinson were not rewarded by any indications of the precise site.

To the east and the north-east of Gaza extends the district of el-Hasy, named from a spring and former town of that name, and full of forsaken sites and ruined villages. Respecting the present state of the soil in the once rich and fertile region of the coast, the following account is given by Robinson:—"The soil of all the plain through which we passed is good, as is proved by the abundant crops of grain we saw upon it. The whole of this vast level tract is the property of the government, and not of the inhabitants. Whoever will may cultivate it, and may plough in any place not already pre-occupied. But for every two yoke of oxen thus employed in tillage, he must pay to the government seven measures of wheat and eight measures of barley. The peasants, when rich enough to own oxen, plough and sow on their own account; but they frequently are the partners of merchants and others in the cities. The merchant furnishes the oxen, and the Fellah (peasant) does the work; while the expenses and income are

equally divided between them. In like manner, as we learned, the greater portion of all the rich plains of Palestine and Syria are in the hands of the government, while the hill country and mountains are held in fee-simple, or nearly so, by the inhabitants. It results from this state of things that the inhabitants of the hills and mountains are far better off than those of the plains. They raise a greater variety of crops, and have an abundance of all kinds of fruit; while those of the plains are in general poor, and are compelled to cultivate only grain, in order to satisfy the rapacity of the government. Hence, while the rocky and apparently almost desert mountains teem with an active, thrifty, and nearly independent population, and the hand of industry is everywhere visible; the rich and fertile plains, deserted of inhabitants, or sprinkled here and there with straggling villages, are left to run to waste, or are at the most tilled by the unwilling labours of a race of serfs."



ASCALON.

Five hours' journey from Gaza, northward, brings us to ASCALON, another of the five chief cities of the Philistines. This place is often mentioned in the Old Testament, but no historical incidents are there connected with its name. It, however, made some figure in the wars of the Macca-

bees, and was twice taken by the high-priest, Jonathan. No less importance did it assume in the history of the Crusades, when it was a strong fortress. It was many times destroyed and again rebuilt, until finally, in the year 1270, the fortifications were entirely overthrown by the Sultan Bibars, who also caused the harbour to be choked up, and the entrance to it prevented by large stones being cast into the sea. The place never recovered this blow; and the ruins which still remain present a melancholy picture of desolation, there being nothing to be seen but subverted walls, the amazing thickness of which attests the strength of the ancient fortifications of Ascalon.

ASHDOD, another of the five cities, is historically memorable in Scripture as the place where the image of Dagon fell prostrate and broken before the ark of God, 1 Sam. v. Its situation, as one of the great frontier fortifications towards Egypt, caused it to be very often besieged, until it was finally taken possession of by the Maccabean brothers, Judas and Jonathan, who cast all the idolatrous altars to the ground. Ashdod is now an unimportant Mohammedan village, retaining the ancient name in the form of Esdud, situated somewhat to the north-east of Ascalon inland, upon the summit of a grassy hill thickly covered with trees, like a forest.

The city of GATH, whither the ark of God was taken from Ashdod, and with whose king, Achish, refuge was twice sought by David from the wrath of Saul, seems from 1 Sam. v. 7—9, to have been situated between Ashdod and Ekron. From its situation it repeatedly fell into the hands of the Hebrew kings, having been first taken by David, 1 Chron. xviii. 1. Uzziah destroyed its walls, 2 Chron. xxvi. 6; and from that time it seems to have lost its importance; for Amos alludes to the fallen greatness of Gath, Amos vi. 2, and later prophets do not name it with the other four cities of the Philistines. The very site of Gath had become uncertain even in the time of Eusebius and Jerome, nor to this day has that uncertainty been removed.

The northernmost of the five cities was EKRON, whence the captive ark of God was sent back in a new cart drawn by two milch kine, 1 Sam. v. 10. It is not within the limits of the province of Gaza, but in that of Ramleh; but

we mention it here for the sake of the connexion, it being on the northern frontier of the Philistine territory, Josh. xiii. 3, and was the seat of the worship of Baal-zebub, who is specially designated as "the god of Ekron," 2 Kings i. 2, 3, 16. In the fourth century Ekron still subsisted as a large village inhabited by Jews, between Ashdod and Jamnia eastward. Accordingly somewhat east from Yebna, which Robinson has identified as the ancient Jamnia, upon a rise of land north-east of the wady which forms the northern boundary of the province of Gaza, is seen a village named Akir. The village is of considerable size, but travellers perceive nothing to distinguish it from other villages of the plain. Like them it is built of unburned bricks or mud, and exhibits no visible marks of antiquity. The inhabitants of the place, as well as those of Ramleh, regard this as the Ekron of the Bible, and the circumstances of name and situation concur in establishing their tradition. The absence of all remains of antiquity may be accounted for, Robinson says, by the circumstance, "that probably the ancient town, like the modern villages of the plain, and like much of the present Gaza, was built only of unburnt bricks. Esdud, as to the identity of which with Ashdod no one doubts, is in like manner without remains of antiquity; and ancient Gath, for aught we know, is swept from the face of the earth." He adds, however, that the sheikh of the village, "an intelligent man, informed us that here at Akir and in the adjacent fields, they often discover cisterns, the stones of hand-mills and other relics of the former place."

From the five Philistine cities we may now turn our attention to the other principal places in the province of Gaza.

The Yebna above mentioned is without doubt the JABNEH, one of the Philistine cities which king Uzziah possessed and fortified, 2 Chron. xxvi. 6, and probably identical with the Jabneel of Josh. xv. 11. In the history of the Maccabees it occurs under the name of Jamnia. After the destruction of Jerusalem there remained here for a long time a high Sanhedrim and famous college of the Jews, the walls of which were still to be seen in the time of Benjamin of Tudela, although no Jews were then to be found in the place. Yebna is situated upon a small eminence on the west side of Wady Rubin, about an hour's journey from the

sea. There are here the remains of a church, afterwards a mosque; and between the place and the sea is a Roman bridge over the water of Wady Rubin, with high arches, built of very large stones. On the east side of the wady on a small eminence, is seen the well of Rubin (Reuben) the son of Jacob, an early place of pilgrimage to the Mohammedans, and not even now wholly disused as such.

About ten miles south-east of Yebna, and nearly the same distance east of Ashdod, is an eminence called Tel es-Safieh. This is an isolated oblong hill or ridge, not very high, but rising sufficiently above the surrounding country to be seen at the distance of some hours in every direction. There are some ruins at the top, but merely the indistinct foundations, apparently of a castle, on the highest part, constructed of large hewn stones. These remains belong, without doubt, to the time of the Crusades. Indeed it is known that in 1138 the Crusaders built here a fortress of hewn stones with four towers, and gave it the name of Blanchegarde. It afterwards came into the possession of Saladin, and was dismantled by him in 1191, but appears to have been built up again by king Richard of England the very next year. Some of Richard's romantic adventures are related as occurring in the vicinity of this castle. Once, riding out in this quarter from his camp near Rambet in search of adventure, he narrowly escaped falling into the hands of a band of Turkish horsemen, whom Saladin had sent from Ascalon to Blanchegarde. At another time, on a similar excursion hither from Ascalon, he had an affray with a party of Saracens, three of whom he slew and took five prisoners.

Not far from the eastern border of this province, upon the high road from Jerusalem to Gaza, we come to Beit-Jibrin, situated among low hills at the head of one of the principal arms of the great wady Simsim (Samson) by which the breadth of the southern part of this province is traversed. The site is so shut in by hills that no other places are visible from it. Like most of the villages of this region, it is surrounded by olive-trees. Here are ruins, apparently of different ages, and more extensive and massive than any Dr. Robinson had seen in Palestine, except the substructions of the ancient Temple at Jerusalem, and the haram at Hebron. They consist of the remains

of a fortress of immense strength, in the midst of an irregular rounded inclosure, encompassed by a very ancient and strong wall. This outer fortification, for the most part destroyed, was built of large squared stones, uncemented; and along it, on the inside towards the west and north-west, is a row of ancient massive vaults with fine round arches apparently of the same age as the wall itself. These are now nearly covered by the accumulated rubbish; but some of them still serve as dwellings for the inhabitants. The character of this wall and these vaults leaves no doubt that they were of Roman origin. In the centre of this area is an irregular castle, the lower parts of which seem as ancient as the exterior wall; but it has obviously been built up again in more modern times. Indeed, according to an inscription over the gate, it was last repaired by the Turks in the year 1551. The walls are so far fallen down that (the gate being closed) a person can clamber over them without difficulty. The interior is full of arches and vaults, and the inhabitants speak of a church in the southern part, now shut up, and indeed buried beneath the ruins. Several marble columns are strewed around. The area of the inclosure outside of the castle is occupied partly by the modern hovels of the village; partly by patches of tobacco and vegetables; while in the northern and eastern quarters it is confusedly covered with heaps of stones, the materials of ancient walls and structures. The situation of the fortress is low, and behind the village the ground rises into hills by which it must have been overlooked. The ancient town seems to have extended for some distance along the valley towards the north-east. In this part are still remains of the former wall and dwellings.

This Beit-Jibrin is manifestly the same as the Beth-Gebrim which the Crusaders found in ruins, and where, upon the old foundations, they built a strong fortification, the defence of which was entrusted to the Knights Hospitallers. The Arabic name was corrupted by them to Gibelin, and they regarded the place, most strangely, as no other than the ancient Beersheba. But the existing name occurs much earlier in history. Ptolemy, in the beginning of the second century, has the name of Betogabra, and so have the Peutinger Tables, probably about A. D. 230. But the place seems to have been also known by the Greek name of ELEUTHEROPOLIS so early as the time of the emperor Septimius Severus, (about A. D. 202,) as it occurs in coins of

that emperor. Eusebius in the early part, and Jerome at the latter end of the fourth century, use this name. Eleutheropolis (free-city) was in their time an episcopal city of importance, and so conspicuously known that these writers assumed it as the central point in southern Palestine from which to determine the position of more than twenty other places. It is this circumstance which renders the determination of its site of peculiar geographical importance. The name Eleutheropolis continued in use till the close of the eighth century, when the destruction of the city was effected by the Saracens in the year 796, after which the name passed out of use and the site became unknown. Or. Robinson, by a laborious collection of authorities, shows the identity of Eleutheropolis with Betogabra, and consequently with the present Beit-Jibrin. This discovery is one of the great triumphs of his remarkable and most praiseworthy combination of literary and personal investigation; and although its importance may not be very clear to the general reader, it is at once obvious to those who have made the geography of Palestine their study. One piece of evidence, singly more important than any one that Robinson has produced, has since been pointed out by the learned Professor Rödiger of Halle, in the fact that in a Syriac account of the Holy Land, cited by Assemani, a place is described as being in "the district of Beth-Gubrin," the Greek and Latin versions of which have, "in the district of Eleutheropolis." This is a piece of direct historical testimony, which is all that Robinson wanted to render his evidence complete.

Above three miles to the north of Beit-Jibrin, is a village called Deir Dubban. Here in the soft limestone or chalky rock, which the soil scarcely covers, are several irregular pits, some nearly square, and all about fifteen or twenty feet deep, with perpendicular sides. Whether these pits are natural or artificial it might at first be difficult to say. In the sides are irregular doors, or low arched passages, much obstructed by rubbish, leading into large excavations in the adjacent rock, in the form of tall domes or bell-shaped apartments, varying in height from thirteen to twenty feet, and in diameter from ten or twelve to twenty or more. The top of the dome usually terminates in a small circular opening at the surface of the ground above, admitting light into the cavern. The apartments are

mostly in clusters, three or four together, communicating with each other. Around one pit are so many as sixteen apartments thus connected, and forming a kind of labyrinth. They are all hewn very regularly, but many are partly broken down, and it is not impossible that the pits themselves may have been caused by the falling in of similar domes. Other excavations, but of much greater extent and more carefully executed, were found by Robinson having some dome-shaped chambers, and many wide rooms supported by columns of the same rock, left in excavating, in the valley south of Beit-Jibrin, and more especially in one of chalky limestone just on the south of that valley. Dr. Robinson confesses his inability to divine the purpose of these excavations. A German writer on Palestine compares them with somewhat similar dome-shaped excavations near Paris and Maestricht, and he hazards the conjecture that these excavations were made by the Troglodytes, whose presence in the neighbourhood of Eleutheropolis is attested by Jerome. He does not see that this fact proves nothing to the purpose. Troglodytes were those who dwelt in caves; and Jerome, in saying that there were Troglodytes near Eleutheropolis, asserts no more than that the caves found in this neighbourhood were inhabited, but affords no evidence as to their original construction. Considering the intense heat of this plain in the time of summer, we are inclined to inquire whether these subterranean, and therefore cool chambers, were not constructed to furnish retreats to the inhabitants during the heat of the day in that season. The probability of this is suggested to us by our having dwelt in similar plains, where the inhabitants of towns invariably seek in the day-time refuge from the heat and glare in cellars during the hot season.

Upon a low platform or projecting point of the Tel are many foundations of walls and buildings, yet no hewn stones or any remains of the superstructures. There would seem to have been here, therefore, an ancient site, the materials of whose buildings may perhaps have been absorbed in the later erections of Eleutheropolis. Robinson inclines to think that this may have been MARESHAH, which was fortified by Rehoboam, and where Asa defeated the hosts of Zerah the Ethiopian. 2 Chron. xi. 8 ; xiv. 9, 10.

Some where in this neighbourhood, east of Eleutheropolis, must also have stood, according to Jerome, the MORESHETH

GATH, which was the birth-place of the prophet Micah. Micah i. 1, 14.

It has been already intimated that Beit-Jibrin lies upon the high road from Jerusalem to Gaza. Further on, upon that road towards Gaza, is a low round hillock, covered with scattered heaps of unhewn stones. It is called Ajlan, and may have been the EGLON of the Old Testament, Josh. x. 34; xv. 39. Near this place Dr. Robinson's muleteers killed a large black snake, six feet long, the only one seen by that traveller in Palestine.

Nearly west from this place, upon the same road, is a low round knoll or swell, called Um Lakis, covered confusedly with heaps of small round stones, with intervals between; among which are some few fragments of marble columns. The place is wholly overgrown with thistles. Below the hill is a well, now almost filled up, around which lie several columns. This might be supposed to be the ancient LACHISH; but the remains are not such as belong to a strongly fortified city, which Lachish was, nor does the situation or the apparent (but not real) analogy of name, confirm the conjecture. The stronghold of Lachish, fortified by Rehoboam, and taken by Sennacherib and by Nebuchadnezzar, (2 Chron. xi. 9; 2 Kings xviii. 14; Isa. xxxvi. 2; xxxvii. 8; Jer. xxxiv. 7,) is still an undiscovered site; but it must have lain in or near the hilly district, somewhere to the southward of Beit-Jibrin, while the present Um Lakis is in the middle of the plain, west of that place, and three hours distant from the hills. The sister fortress of Libneh, which lay in the same neighbourhood, is also undiscovered.

To the south-east of Um Lakis, a hill called Tel el-Hasy rises steeply from the bed of a wady of the same name, to the height of 200 feet or more; being connected, towards the south-west, with other lower swells. The form of this Tel is singular, a truncated cone, with a fine plain at the top. The summit commands a rich and pleasing prospect over a wide extent of undulating country, low swelling hills, and broad valleys, all of the finest soil; yet without a single village or ruin rising above the ground, on which the eye can rest. Yet, although in the language of Scripture and in common parlance, such a region, without fixed habitations, may well be called a desert, there is here, at least in early summer, not wanting the charm of busy life.

Arab encampments are in sight, surrounded by flocks and herds, and troops of camels and asses; besides the tents of the Henady and their numerous horses, and the multitudes of reapers and gleaners scattered over the fields. There are no ruins of any kind upon the Tel el-Hasy, although some of the older travellers mention traces of stony walls. Robinson, however, heard of, but did not see, a place called el-Hasy, which could not be far from the Tel. In the days of Saladin and king Richard this place is mentioned in connexion with the march of their armies, under the name of Elhissi, or Alhassi; and said to be near water, and not far from the monument of Abraham, in Hebron.

V.—RAMLEH.



RAMLEH.

THE small province of Ramleh (er-Ramleh) lies to the north of that of Gaza, and is bounded on the south by the same wady Rubin which forms the northern boundary of that province. On the north it has the province of Ludd, on the east the province of Jerusalem (el-Khuds), and on the west a small portion of the sea.

RAMLEH, the chief town of the district, is situated near the northern border, upon the east side of a broad, low swell, in the sandy though fertile plain; and its streets have therefore a slight declivity towards the east. It is surrounded by gardens, in which grow the olive, the carob,* the mulberry, fig, and tamarind trees, and all kinds of excellent

* Called also "St. John's bread," and "the locust tree," from being supposed, but probably without just grounds, to have furnished food to the Baptist in the wilderness. This tree, however, probably supplied the "husks" with which the Prodigal Son fed his swine. It is generally considered that the locusts were the insects of that name, which are still used for food in the east.

fruits, and which are inclosed by impenetrable hedges of the prickly pear. Palm-trees are also found on this part of the coast, but they seldom bear any fruit. The streets of Ramleh are few; but the houses are of stone, many of them large and well built. There are several mosques, one or more of which are said to have been formerly Christian churches; and there is here one of the largest Latin convents in Palestine, at which most travellers from Europe lodge during their stay. The establishment is now, however, confined to a few Spanish monks. As the place lies on one of the common routes from Joppa to Jerusalem, it was formerly (and is in some degree still) much frequented by European pilgrims, in their way. For their accommodation a *hospitium*, or khan, was purchased or built by Philip the Good, duke of Burgundy, some time after 1420; and this was served by the monks of the Latin convent at Jerusalem. It was little in use except at the time of the great concourse of pilgrims about Easter; and was, early in the last century, superseded by the present convent. This convent is alleged by the monks to cover the site of the house of Nicodemus, who is supposed by them to have belonged to this place. This conclusion appears to have been reached by some such process as this:—Joseph and Nicodemus were those members of the Sanhedrim who secretly believed in Christ; but Joseph was of Arimathea, therefore Nicodemus must also have been of Arimathea; and Arimathea was Ramleh, therefore Nicodemus was of Ramleh. All this seems to be wrong. That Joseph and Nicodemus concurred in their belief, and were both members of the Jewish council, is no proof that they belonged to the same place; and if it were so, there is no conclusive evidence that Ramleh is the Arimathea of the New Testament. It is, we think, satisfactorily shown by Dr. Robinson that the analogy of names between Ramleh and Arimathea—not even in appearance of much weight—in reality goes for nothing; there being no more real etymological affinity than between Ramah and Bramah, or Poland and Portland. Besides, the tradition which identifies them is of comparatively recent date, since the time of the crusades, and is not once alluded to by any of the earlier pilgrims whose itineraries remain to us. There is also strong evidence, both historical and architectural, to confirm the accounts of the early Arabian writers, who state that Ramleh is not an ancient city, but owes its origin to

Suleiman, son of the khalif 'Abd el-Melek, in the early part of the eighth century. It soon became of great importance; and there was a time when Jerusalem and Ramleh used to be spoken of as the two chief cities of Palestine. It has now not above three thousand inhabitants, of whom about one-third are Christians, mostly of the Greek communion.

About ten minutes' walk west of the town, is a monument much more striking than any within it. This is an old tower, situated upon the highest part of the swell of land on which the town stands. It is in the midst of the ruins of a large quadrangular inclosure, which has much the appearance of having been once a splendid khan; indeed the arches on the southern and eastern sides are still standing. Under the middle of the area are extensive subterranean vaults, resting on arches of solid masonry, and lighted from above. These have very much the aspect of store-rooms or magazines for the deposit of merchandise, which might once have passed through the khan. The tower, in the north-west part of this inclosure, is at present wholly isolated, whatever may have been its original construction. It is of Saracenic architecture, square, and built of well hewn stone; the windows are of various forms, but all with pointed arches. The corners of the tower are supported by small slender buttresses; while the sides taper upwards by several stories to the top. The tower is about one hundred and twenty feet high, and is built of solid masonry, excepting a narrow staircase within, winding up to the external gallery. This gallery is of stone, and is carried quite round the tower a few feet below the top. Such galleries as this are in the east peculiar to the towers of mosques, being used for the station of the crier, who, in the absence of bells, calls the people to prayer. This, to our mind, stamps the character of the tower, and shows that it belonged not to a church, or to a khan, as khans never have towers, but to a mosque—most probably "The White Mosque," which Arabian writers describe as having been built by the founder of the city, and as being renewed in the time of Saladin, although the tower, celebrated for its loftiness and elegance, was not added till the reign of the sultan, Nazir Mohammed Ibn Kalawun, who ascended the throne of Egypt, and also possessed Palestine, in the year A. D. 1310. The tower is altogether remarkable, for we know not any

minaret like it in any part of the Moslem east which we have traversed.

From the top of this tower there is a wide view on every side, presenting a prospect rarely surpassed in richness and beauty. In the east, the frowning mountains of Judah rise abruptly from the tract of hills at their foot ; while on the west, in fine contrast, the glittering waves of the Mediterranean suggest to the traveller ideas of Europe and of his distant friends. Towards the north and south, as far as the eye can reach, the beautiful plain is spread out like a carpet, variegated with the tracts of human cultivation or of recent harvest, or with fields still yellow with the ripe wheat, or green with the springing millet. Immediately below, the eye rests on the immense olive groves of Ramleh and Lydda, and the picturesque towers, minarets, and domes of those large villages. In the plain itself, there are not many villages; but the tract of hills and the mountain side beyond, especially in the north-east, are perfectly studded with them ; and, as seen in the reflected beams of the setting sun, they appear like white villas and hamlets among the dark hills ; presenting an appearance of neatness and beauty, which will hardly stand the test of a closer examination.

It was at Ramleh that Dr. Robinson took notice of an interesting custom, which he had not occasion to observe elsewhere in Palestine. These are his words :—" Our youthful host now proposed, in the genuine style of ancient oriental hospitality, that a servant should wash our feet. This took me by surprise ; for I was not aware that the custom still existed here. Nor does it, indeed, towards foreigners, though it is quite common among the natives. We gladly accepted the proposal, both for the sake of the refreshment and the Scriptural illustration. A female Nubian slave accordingly brought water, which she poured upon our feet, over a shallow basin of tinned copper, kneeling before us and rubbing our feet with her hands, and wiping them with a napkin. It was one of the most gratifying minor incidents of our whole journey."

If we proceed from Ramleh eastward, we come to a small village called Nebi-Daniyal (Prophet Daniel), upon an eminence on the very verge of the hilly region between the plain and the interior mountains. The Moslems hold in veneration all the Old Testament saints, in which indeed

they claim an interest. Oh that the time were come—who that visits this land must not sigh for it?—in which they shall claim a true interest not only in the Old Testament and its prophets and patriarchs, but in Christ himself, even in that “new testament in his blood” which is now a byword and a mockery to them!

At the well belonging to this village may be witnessed a mode of drawing water from deep wells which seems to be less common in Palestine than in the lands beyond the Euphrates. The water is drawn up by oxen, who travel off with the rope in a straight line from the well, and then back. The length of ground passed over by the oxen affords an easy mode of measuring the depth of a well; and by this mode the present well is found to be no less than 160 feet deep.

Among the hills still further to the east, is a common and rather large village called Jimzu, so situated on an eminence as to make a conspicuous figure at a great distance. It is easy to recognise in the name of this village the ancient GIMZO, mentioned in the Old Testament as having been occupied by the Philistines along with Bethshemesh, Ajalon, and other cities of the hill and plain, 2 Chron. xxviii. 18.

The breadth of the province, south of Ramleh, is traversed from east to south-west by a broad and beautiful valley, or depressed plain, bearing the name of Merj Ibn Omeir. The interest which this fine tract excites is enhanced to the traveller by its probable connexion with a remarkable event in sacred history. Upon the side of a long hill which skirts the valley on the south, is perceived a small village called Yalo, which name cannot well be other than the ancient AJALON, (Josh. x. 12,) celebrated in the history of Joshua; and consequently the great Hebrew leader looked down upon this valley, when in the power of faith he uttered the memorable command, “Sun, stand thou still in Gibeon; and thou, moon, in *the valley of Ajalon.*” The fact of this miracle is authenticated by the Divine testimony; the manner in which it was accomplished lies beyond the proper limits of our inquiry. Every difficulty and objection, however, may be met by the inquiry, “Is any thing too hard for the Lord?”

The indications of the sacred books,* and of ancient

* Josh. xix. 42; 2 Chron. xi. 10; xxviii. 18.

writers, concur in assigning Ajalon to the vicinity in which Ajlun is found.

About two miles west of Yalo is a village called Amwaz, which is beyond question the EMMAUS in this plain, which is repeatedly mentioned in the wars of the Maccabees, and was under the Roman government made the capital of a toparchy. After the third century it bore the name of Nicopolis. But in this, as in other instances, the legal and foreign name imposed by strangers passes away, and the more ancient native name, never abandoned by the people, remains, and is alone preserved. The Emmaus of the New Testament, where our Lord disclosed himself to the two wayfaring disciples in the breaking of bread, (Luke xxiv. 13—31,) is sometimes confounded with this other historical Emmaus. But the Emmaus of the Gospel was but “a sabbath-day’s journey” (seven-eighths of a mile) from Jerusalem, whereas this other is at least three times that distance. The traditions of the monks place both the localities of this name at the village of el-Khubeibeh, which is rather too distant for the Gospel Emmaus, and not distant enough for the other. It seems, in fact, that there is no existing means of determining the exact site of the former, and the knowledge of its precise locality must have been lost very early, seeing that both Eusebius and Jerome are among those who confound it with the one called Nicopolis—a strange error for them, who must have known that a sabbath-day’s journey from Jerusalem was not so far.

To the south of Amwaz and Yalo, on the road to Jerusalem, is a place called Latron, which name is a contraction of the name *Castellum vel Domus boni Latronis*, which was given to the place by the monks, in the belief that it was the abode of the penitent thief crucified with our Lord. The earlier pilgrims found here the Modin celebrated in the history of the illustrious Maccabees, who lived and were buried there, and where Simon erected a lofty monument with seven pyramids to their memory, (1 Mac. ii. 1, 15 ; xiii. 25, 30,) the remains of which these travellers profess to have seen. The monument, indeed, existed in the time of Jerome ; and from the indications which he and others offer, it is indeed not unlikely that this Latron is Modin, although we are now taught by the local traditionists to look for Modin at Soba.

Further south, not far from the boundary of the province, Wady Surah, where it emerges from the mountains into the plain, forms a fine deep valley, on a high hill, on whose northern bank is a village named Surah, in which we are able to recognise the ZORAH, which was the birth-place of Samson, Judges xiii. 2. He was buried *between* Zorah and Eshtaol, Judges xvi. 31. Southward of this, in the valley of Wady Surah, is a site of ruins bearing the name of Ain Shems (Fountain of the Sun), which should indicate the presence of some spring or fountain, which, however, modern travellers have not been able to find. The place itself consists of the ruins of a native village of some extent, with a wely, all evidently constructed out of old materials. But a little to the west of the village, upon the plateau of a low hill, indisputable traces of an ancient place present themselves. Here are the vestiges of a former extensive city, consisting of many foundations, and the remains of ancient walls of hewn stone. The materials have indeed been chiefly swallowed up, probably in the repeated re-constructions of the modern village; but enough remains to mark this as one of the largest and most important sites to be seen in southern Palestine. Both the name and the position of this spot seem to indicate the site of the ancient BETH-SHEMESH of the Old Testament, the inhabitants of which were the first to hail the return of the ark of God from the land of the Philistines, but who trespassed against it, and were therefore smitten of the Lord, 1 Sam. vi. 9—20. The ancient name means "the house" or "abode of the sun;" and the Arabic prefixes, Beit (Beth) and Ain, are so exceedingly common in the existing names of the Holy Land, that it can excite no wonder that there should be an exchange, even without any obvious ground. That there has been such change is confirmed by the fact, that no such spring has here been found as the prefixed Ain would have led us to expect. In like manner the Beth-shemesh (Heliopolis) of Egypt is known in Arabian writers as Ain Shems.

Eastward from Ain Shems is a place called Tibneh, a deserted site, in which we may recognise, from name and situation, the TIMNAH, or TIMNATH, of Dan, the city of Samson's wife, to which he "went down," (Judges xiv.) from Zorah. It lies south-west from the place already indicated as Zorah, and not more than an hour distant from it.

VI.—LUDD.

THIS small province lies between those of Ramleh and Joppa. It has the former on the south, the latter on the north and west ; on the east the mountains of Ephraim.

The town of Ludd, from which it takes its name, is the LOD of the Old Testament, 1 Chron. viii. 12 ; Ezra ii. 33 ; Neh. xi. 35 ; and the LYDDA of the New Testament and the Apocrypha, 1 Macc. xi. 34 ; comp. x. 30, 38 ; Acts ix. 32—35 ; the scene of Peter's miracle in healing Eneas. Some years after, the place was taken and laid in ashes, by the Roman proconsul Cestius Gallus, in his march from Cæsarea to Jerusalem ; but it was subsequently rebuilt, and became the capital of one of the toparchies of the later Judæa, and the seat of a celebrated Jewish academy, or college. Very early in history, the place became connected with the so-called saint and martyr, St. George. Here he is said to have been born, and here to have been buried, after he had suffered the death of a martyr at Nicomedia, in the Diocletian persecution of the Christians. At what time the church which afterwards appeared here over his alleged remains was built, has not been clearly determined. When the Crusaders arrived at this place, they found the splendid sepulchre outside the city, but the church over it had just been levelled to the ground by the Saracens, lest it should afford advantage to the Christians in their intended assault upon the city. Lydda was taken, however, and the Crusaders soon rebuilt the church, and made the town the seat of a bishopric. These facts are worth mentioning, as the Crusaders paid great honours to St. George, and invested him with the dignity of their patron ; and it was from this time that his renown spread more widely throughout Europe, where he in like manner became the patron, not only of England, but of several other states and kingdoms. Hence, also, the frequent use of George as a Christian name in this and other countries.

After undergoing many changes, and reverting to the hands of the Mohammedans, Ludd was laid waste in 1271 by the Tartars (Mogols), with whom prince Edward of England (afterwards Edward I.) had made a league in aid of the Christians. The present place is a considerable village of small houses, but has nothing to distinguish it from ordinary Moslem villages, except the ruins of the celebrated church of St. George. It is still the nominal seat of a Greek bishop, who, however, resides at Jerusalem. The ruins of the old church are in the eastern part of the town. The edifice must have been very large. The walls of the eastern end are standing only in the part near the altar, including the arch over the latter; the western end is, however, better preserved, and has been turned into a mosque, whose tall minaret forms the land-mark of Ludd. Robinson, who has given a more particular description of these remains, says, "We saw these noble ruins by the bright yet mellow light of the full moon; the lofty remaining arch towered in imposing majesty; and the effect of the whole, though mournful, was indescribably impressive. It transported me back to the similar but far more perfect moonlight grandeur of the Coliseum."

There are no other sites of importance in this province. Safriyeh, a village about two and a half miles north-west from Ludd, may be noticed in the probability that it is the Sariphæa which was, along with Gaza, Ascalon, and Eleutheropolis, laid waste A.D. 796, during a civil war among the various tribes of Saracens in Palestine, and which had in an earlier age been the seat of a bishopric. There is, however, an equal probability that Sariphæa may be found at a place called Surafend, half an hour from Ramleh, on the road to Joppa. About four miles further, upon the same road, there is a place called Beit-Dejan, which is obviously the Hebrew Beit-Dagon, (abode of Dagon,) denoting a place which was the seat of that idol's worship. Scripture does not indeed mention a place of that name in this quarter, although two other towns that have such a name are indicated—one in the plain of Judah, further south, Josh. xv. 41, and the other in the tribe of Asher, Josh. xix. 27.

Still further on upon the same road to Joppa, and near the boundary of the province, we reach a village bearing the name of Yazur, which Berghaus and others associate with the Biblical GEZER.

VII.—JAFFA, OR JOPPA.



JOPPA.

THE western coast of this province is washed by the sea, and on the south it is bounded by the province of Ludd. On the north and east it has the provinces of Nabulus and Jerusalem.

The chief town is the JOPPA of Scripture, and the Jaffa of modern history. The town lies close to the shore. The harbour is small and shallow, and in front of it rises from the water a semicircular mass of rocks and ruined walls, over which the surf breaks with violence night and day. This is without doubt the mole of the ancient harbour. Upon the steep shore of the sea rises a seemingly confused mass of trees, domes, arches, and houses, which constitute the existing town. Among the most remarkable of the buildings thus displayed is the Latin convent, built in three or four terraces upon the mountain side; and hard by, but less conspicuous, is the Greek monastery. Close upon the sea-shore, near the ruins of an old chapel, is shown the

place where stood the house in which the apostle Peter abode with Simon the tanner, Acts ix. 43. That the knowledge of the spot should be so distinctly preserved is not likely ; but the house must have been hereabouts, as it is said to have been "by the sea-side," and it must have been outside the town, as we know that the trade of a tanner was one which the Jews did not allow to be carried on within their towns. The town has between 6,000 and 7,000 inhabitants, of whom nearly one-half are Christians.

Joppa is a very ancient place. Heathen accounts make it older than the flood ; but the rabbinical traditions are content to ascribe its origin to Japhet. The scene of the famous pagan myth of Perseus and Andromeda is laid here, and seems to have had some connexion with the prevalent worship in this quarter of the fish-goddess Derketo. In the Bible it is first mentioned as a Philistine city, to the borders of which the territory of the tribe of Dan extended, Josh. xix. 46. The cedar timber used in the building of the temple, was brought in floats from Lebanon along the coast, and landed at Joppa, 2 Chron. ii. 16 ; compare 1 Kings v. 9 ; Ezra iii. 7. It was hither that Jonah went and embarked for Tarshish in the vain hope of "fleeing from the Lord," and of thus evading his appointed service, Jonah i. 3. The place was repeatedly taken by the Maccabees. It was at first attached to the province of Syria by the Romans, but afterwards belonged to Herod's dominion, after whose death it reverted to the Syrian province, to which it still belonged in the time of the apostles, in whose history it is repeatedly mentioned, Acts ix. 36 ; x. 5 ; xi. 5, 13. In the Jewish war Joppa was destroyed by the Roman general Cestius, but was soon restored. As, however, it had become a lurking-place for pirates, Vespasian again levelled it, and built in its place a fortress, which was soon again surrounded by the buildings of a city. It was the see of a bishop till the conquest of Syria by the Arabs, when it was once more broken down. The Crusaders seem to have found it still in ruins and deserted ; but it was rebuilt by duke Godfrey, and then again became, and has remained till the present day, the chief landing-place for pilgrims from Europe to the Holy Land. There is hence scarcely any of the numerous itineraries in Palestine produced in divers languages in which Joppa is not most conspicuously mentioned. The most recent event in its

history is that it was stormed by Napoleon in 1799, and afterwards had its fortifications strengthened by the Turks, assisted by the English under sir Sidney Smith. Except the town of Joppa itself, there is not a single place in the whole province that claims particular mention.

Before we quit the territories which in the main composed the ancient Judæa, and proceed to Samaria, it may be proper to mention a few places which no occasion has yet been found to notice, chiefly because their situation has not been exactly determined. We shall therefore follow the alphabetical arrangement in speaking of them. But there is little to say; for as this is substantially intended for a description of modern Palestine, it does not appear desirable to advert to more of the ancient accounts than may suffice for indication of the places where existing sites have not been identified.

ADUMMIM appears in Scripture as a hill near Gilgal, upon the border between Judah and Benjamin, Josh. xv. 7; xviii. 17. Jerome, and in modern times D'Arvieux and others, mention an Adomim, or Maledomim, as a fortified convent for the protection of travellers against robbers, upon one of the passes which led from the western margin of the valley of the Jordan into the plain of Jericho. Tradition had made this the scene of the parable of the good Samaritan, related in Luke x. 30—37. The locality is well chosen for such an event as is mentioned, being, as the text requires, on the road from Jerusalem to Jericho, and one of the most wild, gloomy, and to this day dangerous places in Palestine.

ANTHEDON was a city of some importance upon the coast, twenty miles north of Gaza. It is not mentioned in the Bible, but makes some figure in the later Jewish history. It was taken by the Jewish prince Alexander Janneus, restored by Gabinus, and was given by Augustus to Herod, who called it Agrippas, in honour of Agrippa. It was destroyed by the Jews at the outbreak of the Jewish war; but it seems to have recovered subsequently, as there were bishops of Anthedon at the councils of Ephesus and Chalcedon. Much stress, however, should not be laid on such indications. The names of sees have been often retained long after the actual seat has been changed, or the function unexercised in the place

from which it derives its name. Thus, at the present day, the Roman Catholic bishop of Malta claims the precedence due to an archbishop, and is styled archbishop of Rhodes, because the knights of St. John were once in possession of that island.

APHEKAH is mentioned with Beth-tappuah, in Josh. xv. 53. We may, perhaps, regard this as one with the Canaanitish royal city of Aphek, where the Israelites were beaten, and the ark of God taken by the Philistines, 1 Sam. iv. 1.

AZEKAH in the plain, Josh. xv. 35, was the place where Joshua slew the five kings, Josh. x. 10, and between which and Socho, (1 Sam. xvii. 5,) the combat of Goliath with David took place, 1 Sam. xvii. 1. It was one of the cities fortified by Rehoboam, 2 Chron. xi. 9, and besieged by Nebuchadnezzar, 2 Chron. xxxiv. 7. A place called Azekah is mentioned by Eusebius and Jerome between Jerusalem and Eleutheropolis, which must have been another. It is well to point out this, as much confusion is produced in reading the Scriptures, by confounding different places of the same name with each other.

BEZEK, in the tribe of Judah, whose king, Adoni-bezek, (lord of Bezek,) organized and led a confederacy against the Hebrews, and was subjected to a severe retaliatory punishment when taken prisoner, Judg. i. 3—7. Schubert identifies this Bezek with Beit Jala, near Jerusalem, (See before, p. 2,) but he gives no reason for this conclusion, and we are unable to discover any.

DEBIR, earlier called Kirjath-sepher, Josh. xv. 15; Judg. i. 11, and Kirjath-sannah, Josh. xv. 49, an old Canaanitish city, the capture of which won for Othniel the hand of Caleb's daughter, and which afterwards became one of the cities assigned by the tribe of Judah to the Levites, Josh. x. 38; xii. 13; xv. 15—17; 1 Chron. vi. 58. It must not be confounded with another Debir, near Gilgal, on the northern border of Judah, Josh. xv. 7.

EPHRAIM, a town in the wilderness of Judæa, is early mentioned in the text which names it as the place to which our Lord retired after he had raised Lazarus from the dead, John xi. 54. It is perhaps, however, the same

with the Ephron of 2 Chron. xiii. 9, where the text has several readings. It is mentioned in this passage, and also by Josephus, in connexion with Bethel, and appears not to have been far from thence.

KEILAH is noted in Scripture as the town which David delivered from the Philistines after he had withdrawn from the court of Saul, 1 Sam. xxiii. 1—13. It was a city "in the plain," of the tribe of Judah, and remained a place of some importance after the captivity, Josh. xv. 44 ; Neh. iii. 17, 18 ; but its site has not yet been discovered. Tradition makes it the burial-place of the prophet Habakkuk.

MAKKEDAH was a Canaanitish city, near which Joshua hanged the five kings who had hid themselves in a cave hard by, after the battle of Gibeon. It was one of the cities of Judah in the plain, towards the coast, Josh. x. 10—29 ; xii. 16 ; xv. 41. The cavern may, eventually, help to indicate it, but the site has not yet been found.

ONO was a place near Lydda, built by the Benjamites, and inhabited by them after the exile, 1 Chron. viii. 12 ; Neh. xi. 35. A valley of Ono is mentioned in Neh. vi. 2, and probably the town was in that valley.

RIMMON, in the south of Judah, seems to have been a conspicuous place after the captivity, from the way in which it is named in Zech. xiv. 10. In the first division of the land the place was given to Judah, but in the second, was transferred to Simeon, Josh. xv. 32 ; xix. 7 ; 1 Chron. iv. 32.

ZELAH is mentioned in Scripture as the place where Saul and Jonathan were buried, in the sepulchre of Saul's father Kish, 2 Sam. xxi. 14. That the family sepulchre was there, seems to indicate that it was the seat of the family, and, probably, the birth-place, as well as burial-place, of Saul and Jonathan. It is named in Josh. xviii. 28, as a city of Benjamin.

ZIKLAG, which king Achish of Gath bestowed upon David for a residence, and which is so memorable in his history, 1 Sam. xxvii. 6 ; xxx. 1 ; 2 Sam. i. 1, must also be numbered among the sites not yet discovered. This is

to be regretted from the very peculiar interest which attaches to the spot where David was in imminent danger of being put to death by his own followers, when after their absence with him they returned and found their wives, their children, and their substance had been carried away by the Amalekites ; whither he soon after returned triumphant with the recovered spoil ; and where, a little later, the royal diadem and armlets of Saul were brought to him with the news that his inveterate pursuer, and his gallant and generous son, had perished together upon the bloody battle-field of Gilboa, slain upon their " high places."

VIII.—NABULUS.



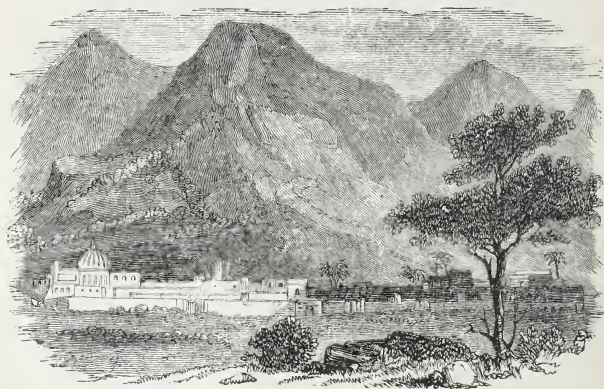
NABULUS—SHECHEM.

THIS is the largest of the existing provinces of Palestine west of the Jordan. It embraces the whole of the ancient Samaria and some part of Galilee; and, according to the division by tribes, it comprehends the territories of the tribe of Ephraim, the western half-tribe of Manasseh, and a portion of Issachar. It has on the west the sea, and on the east the Jordan. On the south it is bounded by the provinces of Jaffa and Jerusalem; and on the north, the boundary line from the sea to the Jordan goes in a north-east direction, separating this from the provinces of Khaifa, Nasirah (Nazareth), and Tubariyeh (Tiberias).

The chief town of the province is the SHECHEM of the Old Testament and the SYCHAR of the New; and the name of Nabulus, which it now bears, is a form of the Greek name Neapolis (New-town), which it received, it would seem, in the time of Vespasian. The town lies in a deep

valley between two lofty hills, of which that on the north is the Ebal, and that on the south the Gerizim of Scripture. The valley has a fine rich soil of black vegetable mould, which affords a most abundant and incomparably green herbage, to which a profuse watering from many springs very materially contributes ; consequently the town is surrounded by gardens and orchards ; but it may be noted, that while the prevailing olive-tree of the region is found on the north side of the valley upon the declivities of Ebal, the south side of the valley, at the foot of Gerizim, is mostly planted with the orange, citron, pomegranate, fig, apricot, and other fruit-trees. The different aspects, northern and southern, of the two sides of the valley, is no doubt quite sufficient to account for this variety.

The town is long and narrow. The houses are high, and generally well built, with domed roofs, like those of Jerusalem. The population is about 8,000, including about



MOUNT GERIZIM.

five hundred Greek Christians, and one hundred and fifty Samaritans. There is a Greek bishop of Nabulus, but he has his residence at Jerusalem. The Samaritans reside in a separate quarter in this their ancient metropolis. This quarter is in the south-west part of the city, and somewhat on the declivity of Gerizim. The town stands directly upon a water-summit in the valley ; the waters on the eastern part flow off east into the plain and onward to the Jordan ; while the fine fountains on the western side send off a

pretty brook down the valley south-west to the Mediterranean.

The mountains of Gerizim and Ebal rise in steep rocky walls immediately from the valley on each side, to the height of about 800 feet. The former bears the name of *geb-el et-Tur*, although the name of Gerizim is not unknown, at least among the Samaritans. Ebal is now called *Sitti Salamiyah*, from a conspicuous wely upon it.

The sides of both mountains, as seen from the valley, are naked and sterile, although some travellers have seen proper to describe Gerizim as fertile, and to confine the sterility to Ebal. More truly may both mountains be described as desolate, with the exception of a few olive-trees scattered here and there. The side of Ebal, along the base, is covered with old excavated sepulchres. Gerizim has, nearly opposite the town, a small ravine, full of fountains and trees, through which the road from the city leads up the mountain. The summit is a tract of high table-land, on whose eastern margin stands a wely on a slight elevation. This is the holy place of the Samaritans, whither they still come up four times in the year to worship God. The spot where they sacrifice the passover—seven lambs among them all—is just below the highest point of the mountain, and is marked by two parallel rows of rough stones laid upon the ground, and a small round pit, roughly stoned up, in which the flesh is roasted. Upon the rising ground above this spot are the ruins of an immense structure of hewn stones, bearing every appearance of having been once a large and strong fortress. The stranger is naturally at first led to suppose that he has here found the remains of the ancient temple of the Samaritans upon Mount Gerizim; but the Samaritans of the present day attach no sanctity whatever to these ruins, and call them simply *el-Kulah*, “the castle.” The probability is that we have here the remains of a fortress historically known to have been erected upon the top of Gerizim by Justinian. Just under the walls of the castle, upon the west, are a few flat stones, of which it is difficult to say whether they were laid there by nature or by man. Under these, the Samaritan guides affirm, are the twelve stones brought up out of the Jordan by the Israelites, and there they will remain until *el-Muhdy* (the Guide) shall appear. This, as they explain, is the name which they give the expected Saviour. They cannot tell, they say, when he will appear, but they think that

there are already some signs of his coming. Oh that they knew he had come, and that "there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved!" May the gospel, in all its simplicity and fulness, soon bring them into the spiritual liberty with which Christ makes his people free!

Soon after having passed this castle, towards the south, Dr. Robinson's Samaritan guide took off his shoes, saying, it was unlawful for his people to tread upon this ground, it being holy. Here is a naked surface of rock, even with the ground, and occupying a considerable area; this the Samaritans regard as their holiest spot, being the place where the tabernacle of the Lord, with the ark of the covenant, had been pitched. Around this rock are slight traces of former walls, perhaps of the ancient temple; but the Samaritans themselves have no traditions of any temple here, and do not even seem to have heard of any. This spot is the *kibleh** of the Samaritans; they turn their faces towards it in prayer, but when they are upon the spot itself, they account it lawful to pray in any direction. Not far from this spot the Samaritans show the place where, as they believe, Abraham was commanded to offer up Isaac. Further south, and indeed all around upon this eminence, are extensive foundations, apparently of dwellings, as if the ruins of a former city.

Near to the southern extremity of the valley in which Nabulus lies, and distant from the town about half-an-hour, is a well, which bears undeniable marks of antiquity, and is regarded as Jacob's well, beside which our Saviour rested, and held the discourse with the woman of Samaria which the fourth chapter of St. John records. A very interesting account of this well has been given by Dr. Wilson in his "Lands of the Bible." His party visited it from Nabulus, under the guidance of a Samaritan lad named Jacob; and as they were determined to effect a thorough exploration of it, they took with them a supply of wax candles for its illumination, and all the cords from their boxes, that a correct measurement might be made. The account proceeds thus:—

"On arriving at Jacob's Well, we found the mouth of it,

* The point towards which the face is turned in prayer, just as the temple at Jerusalem was, and is, the *kibleh* of the Jews; and that at Mecca of the Mohammedans.

which is in the middle of the ruins of a church, by which it was formerly surrounded, covered by two large stones. These we were unable ourselves to remove; but half-a-dozen sturdy Arabs, from a small hamlet close by, did the needful for us, in expectation, of course, of a due reward. The opening over the well is an orifice in a dome or arch, less than two feet in diameter. Our Samaritan friend was the first to enter. He held by a piece of rope, which we kept in our hands, till, swinging himself across the mouth of the well, properly so called, he found footing on the margin of the excavation over which the dome extends. Mr. Smith and myself, dispensing with the superfluous parts of our dresses, followed his example. The Jews Mordecai and Dhanjibhai, whom we thought it expedient to leave without, kept fast hold of the rope till, with the assistance of Jacob, we got a firm footing beside him. The Arabs entered one after another without difficulty. All within was hitherto darkness; but, by the aid of a packet of lucifers, we lighted our candles, and were able to look down the well to a considerable depth. It was now time to disclose our plan of operations to our native attendants. 'Jacob,' said we, 'a friend of ours, an English traveller, and a minister, dropped the five books of Moses, and the other inspired records, into this well,* and if you will descend and bring them up we will give you a handsome *bakshish*' (present). 'Bakshish,' said the Arabs, kindling at the sound, 'if there is to be a bakshish in the case, we must have it, for we are the lords of the land.' 'Well, down you go,' said we, throwing the rope over their shoulders, 'and you shall have the bakshish.' 'Nay, verily,' said they, 'you mean to hang us; let Jacob do what he pleases.' Jacob was ready at our command; and when he had tied the rope round his body below his shoulders, he received our parting instructions. We asked him to call out to us the moment he should arrive at the surface of the water, and told him we should so hold the rope as to prevent him from sinking if there was any considerable depth of the element. We told him to pull out one of the candles with which we had stored his breast, and to ignite it when he might get below. As he looked into the fearful pit, upon the brink of which he stood, terror took hold of him; and he betook himself to prayer in

* This was founded on the fact that the Rev. A. Bonar had lost his Bible in the well.

the Hebrew tongue. We, of course, gave him no interruption in his solemn exercises, as, in the circumstances of the case, we could not but admire the spirit of devotion which he evinced. On a signal given, we let him go. The Arabs held with us the rope, and we took care that he should descend as gently as possible. When our material was nearly exhausted, he called out, 'I have reached the bottom, and it is at present scarcely covered with water.' Forthwith he kindled his light, and that he might have every advantage, we threw him down a quantity of dry sticks, with which he made a blaze, which distinctly showed us the whole of the well from the top to the bottom. We saw the end of the rope at its lower part, and we put a knot upon it at the margin above, that we might have the exact measurement when Jacob might come up. After searching some five minutes for the Bible among the stones and mud at the bottom, our kind friend joyfully called out, 'It is found! it is found! it is found!' We were not slow, it may be supposed, in giving him our congratulations. The prize he carefully put into his breast, and then he declared his readiness with our aid to make the ascent. Ready he was not, however, to move. He was evidently much frightened at the journey which lay before him to the light of day; and he was not slow to confess his fears. 'Never mind,' said Mordecai to him from the top, 'you will get up by the help of the God of Jacob.' He betook himself again to prayer, in which he continued a much longer time than before his descent. When we got him in motion, he dangled very uncomfortably in the air, and complained much of the cutting of the rope near his arm-pits. By-and-by he became silent. We found it no easy matter to get him pulled up, as we had to keep the rope from the edge of the well, lest it should snap asunder. When he came into our hands, he was unable to speak, and we laid him down on the margin of the well, that he might collect his breath. 'Where is the bakshish?' were the first words he uttered, on regaining the faculty of speech. It was immediately forthcoming, to the extent of about a sovereign, and to his fullest satisfaction. A similar sum we divided among our Arab assistants. The book, from having been so long steeped in the water and mud below, was, with the exception of the boards, reduced to a mass of pulp. In our effort to recover it, we had ascertained the depth of the well, which is exactly seventy-five feet. Its

diameter is about nine feet. It is entirely hewn out of the solid rock, and is a work of great labour. It bears marks about it of the greatest antiquity. 'The well is deep,' was the description given of it by the woman of Samaria to our Lord. It still, as now noticed, has the same character, although to a considerable extent it is perhaps filled with the stones which are thrown into it, to sound it, by travellers and pilgrims."

This pious traveller adds, "The adventure which I have now noticed being over, we emerged from the well, and sitting down at its mouth, we could not but think of the scenes and events of other days. We were near to the very parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Jacob's well was here. Here Jesus the Saviour sat wearied with his journey, suffering from the infirmities of that lowly human nature which he had assumed when he came from heaven to accomplish the work of our redemption, which his Father had given him to do. Here he spake with inimitable simplicity and majesty, as never man spake, setting himself forth as the Source and Giver of the copious and sanctifying waters of eternal life. Here he declared that the time was at hand when the whole world should be consecrated as the temple of God, and the spirituality of Divine worship manifested in its fullest extent: 'Woman, believe me, the hour cometh, when ye shall neither at this mountain, (Gerizim,) nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him,' John iv. 21, 23. Here by his perfect knowledge of the human heart, and of the dark events of the woman's life, and by the wisdom, and power, and grace of his words, he so revealed himself as that Messiah whom the Samaritans, as well as the Jews, expected, that many believed in him, and knew that he was indeed the Christ, the Saviour of the world."

The traditions of the Jews, Christians, and Moslems agree in the identification of this as the well of Jacob; and there seems to be little reason to question its correctness. Some of the apparent objections are well met in the following sensible observations of Messrs. Bonar and M'Cheyne:—"In all the other wells and fountains which we saw in this valley, the water is within reach of the hand, but in this one the water seems never to rise high. This is one of the

clear evidences that this is really the Well of Jacob; for at this day it would require what it required in the days of our Lord, something to draw with, for it was deep. On account of the great depth, the water would be peculiarly cool; and the associations which connected this well with their father Jacob, no doubt caused it to be highly esteemed. For these reasons, although there is a fine stream of water close to the west side of the town, at least two gushing fountains within the valley, and the fountain el-Defna, nearly a mile [half a mile?] nearer the town, still the people of the town may very properly have revered and frequented Jacob's well. This may, in part, account for the Samaritan woman coming so far to draw water; and there seems every probability that the town, in former times, extended much further to the east than it does now. The narrative itself, however, seems to imply that the well was a considerable way from the town." To this Dr. Wilson very properly adds, that "no one acquainted with the custom of the people of the east to have their wells in their own fields, will be at a loss to account for the digging of this well, even in the vicinity of the natural fountains and streamlets of the valley in which it is situated."

The tomb of Joseph is often, in old writers, coupled with the well of Jacob. It lies across the valley, about two or three hundred yards to the north of it. As it at present stands, it is a small solid erection, in the form of a wagon roof, over what is supposed to be the patriarch's grave, with a small pillar or altar at each of its extremities, sometimes called the tombs of Ephraim and Manasseh, and in the middle of an inclosure without a covering. Many visitors' names, in the Hebrew and Samaritan characters, are written on the walls. One of the inscriptions imports that the tomb was repaired by a Jew of Egypt, about a hundred years ago. Dr. Wilson well suggests that an excavation under Joseph's tomb, if made with suitable caution, might lead to some very important discoveries. It is not at all improbable that the coffin or ark into which Joseph's body was put, when it was embalmed in Egypt, and which was taken by the Israelites to this place, was deposited in a stone sarcophagus, which may remain to this day.

The Samaritans formerly professed to show at Nabalus the tombs of Eleazar, Ithamar, Phinehas, and others. It is

not unlikely that they were buried there, as Shiloh, where they probably died, was at no great distance; and we learn from Acts vii. 16, that not only Joseph but all the twelve sons of Jacob were buried at Shechem; which fact must, for a time, have caused the Hebrews to regard it as a privileged burial place for such conspicuous personages as these. Robinson, however, could hear nothing of their tombs, although Schubert says that he saw the tomb of Eleazar, at the west end of the city, and recognised it as a building of modern times.

There is no question of the identity of the present Nabalus with Neapolis or Shechem, although the old city



VIEW IN NABULUS.

may have been somewhat further eastward, towards the commencement of the valley. Shechem was a very ancient place. It is repeatedly mentioned in the history of the patriarchs, especially in that of Jacob, who bought a piece of ground in the vicinity, Gen. xii. 6; xxxiii. 18, 19; xxxv. 4; xxxvii. 12—14. At the division of the land among the tribes, the city lay in the lot of Ephraim, and during the lifetime of Joshua appears to have been regarded as the centre of union to all the tribes of Israel, Josh. xx. 7; xxiv. 1, 25. In the time of the Judges the Shechemites made Abimelech king, but afterwards revolted, and their town was destroyed by the king they had chosen,

Judges ix. ; but it was rebuilt ; and here the separation of the ten tribes from the house of David was consummated. It then remained for a time the metropolis of the new kingdom, and the residence of Jeroboam, 1 Kings xii. 1, 12—15, 25. Until the Captivity, Shechem does not again appear in sacred history. After the ten tribes were carried into captivity, Shechem became the chief town of the mixed people whom the conquerors sent in to occupy the country, and who, having gradually amalgamated, took the name of Samaritans. This name they assumed as being inhabitants of the country of which Samaria had been the capital. These were at first idolaters, but as they acquired instruction, adopted the religion of the country—at first with pagan admixtures, but eventually with so much strictness, that they professed to be in their principles and practice more truly Mosaical than the Jews, refusing to recognise any other sacred books than those of Moses. The source of the bitterness and enmity between them and the Jews, after the latter had been restored to their own land—that is to say, to southern Palestine, or Judæa—lay in the refusal of the latter to recognise the Samaritans as Jews, and entitled to share with them in the hopes and privileges of the seed of Abraham. Hence, being repelled in their offers to assist in rebuilding the temple at Jerusalem, they obstructed the design by all the means in their power, and at length set up a new temple of their own upon Mount Gerizim, contending that this site, and no other, was that which the books of Moses indicated. At this place they celebrated high worship according to the law of Moses, under a Levitical priesthood ; and here they observed the solemn festivals which the Jews celebrated at Jerusalem. The temple was, however, destroyed by the Jewish high-priest, John Hyrcanus, in 129 B.C. The hatred between the Jews and Samaritans then increased more and more, and at length reached that degree of mutual abhorrence and contempt which the New Testament repeatedly indicates. The Jews could think of no stronger term by which to express their hatred to Christ, than, “Thou art a Samaritan, and hast a devil ;” and, on the other hand, the woman at the well was much astonished that our Lord, being a Jew, should ask drink of her, being a woman of Samaria. After the destruction of Jerusalem, and the dispersion of the Jews, the Samaritan worship was still kept up at this place ; and under the emperors Zeno,

Anastasius, and Justinian, many violent outbreaks between them and the Christian inhabitants are recorded, which it required the strong hand of the government to suppress. Zeno, indeed, gave up Gerizim to the Christians. From the time of Justinian, the Samaritans are little mentioned in history. During the Crusades, the place several times changed masters, although generally in the hands of the Christians; but it was finally taken from them in 1244 by Abu Ali for the sultan Bibars, since which time it has remained under Moslem government.

It is remarkable that the early historians of the Crusades do not mention the Samaritans at all. Perhaps they regarded them as Jews. Benjamin of Tudela, in the twelfth century, was the first who drew attention to them. The earliest Christian travellers who noticed them were William of Baldensel, in the year 1336, and our own Sir John Mandeville, about the same time. The former describes the Samaritans as a singular sect, differing alike from Christians, Jews, Saracens, and Pagans, and distinguished from them all by their red turbans, as at the present day. The existence of the Pentateuch among the Samaritans became early known to European scholars, and it was an object of interest to compare their copies with those of the Hebrew in current use. The celebrated traveller, Della Valle, in 1616, furnished the means of accomplishing this wish by securing two manuscripts of these sacred books; and others have since been obtained, and fully examined by competent scholars. From the time mentioned several correspondences have been carried on between some scholars of Europe and the Samaritans, from which much has become known respecting their condition and opinions. From the earliest of these communications it seems that the Samaritans had, about two hundred years ago, small societies of their body at Cairo, Gaza, and Damascus, as well as at Nabulus; but they appear to be now confined to Nabulus, where they are few in number, and seem to be hastening to extinction. This, as Robinson remarks, "appears to be the last isolated remnant of a remarkable people, clinging for more than two thousand years around this central spot of their religion and history, and lingering slowly to decay; after having survived the many revolutions and convulsions which, in that long interval, have swept over this unhappy land; a reed continually shaken with the wind, but bowing before the storm."

The writer estimates their number at not more than one hundred and fifty souls. They are mostly in middling circumstances. Their physiognomy is not at all Jewish, but resembles that of the other natives of the land ; their vernacular language is also the common Arabic of the country. They keep the Saturday as their sabbath with great strictness, allowing no labour nor trading, not even cooking nor lighting a fire, but resting from their employments the whole day. On Friday evening they pray in their houses, and on Saturday have public prayers in their synagogues at morning, noon, and evening. They meet also in the synagogue at the great festivals, and on the new moons, but not every day. The law is read publicly, not every sabbath-day, but only at the same festivals. Four times a-year they go up to Mount Gerizim in solemn procession, to worship ; and then they begin reading the law as they set off, and finish it above. These seasons are : the feast of the Passover, when they pitch their tents upon the mountain all night, and sacrifice seven lambs at sunset ; the day of Pentecost ; the feast of Tabernacles, when they sojourn here in booths made of branches of the arbutus ; and, lastly, the great Day of Atonement in autumn. They still maintain their ancient hatred against the Jews. They accuse them of departing from the law in not sacrificing the Passover, and in various other points, as well as of corrupting the ancient text, and they scrupulously avoid all connexion with them. If, of old, "the Jews had no dealings with the Samaritans," the latter at the present day reciprocate the feeling, and neither eat, nor drink, nor marry, nor associate with the Jews, but only trade with them.

It appears that although the Samaritans still practise sacrifice, and attach very much importance to it, they have no idea of any typical import in that remarkable ordinance. Dr. Wilson and his companion drew their attention very pointedly to this subject. "It was instituted, they said, solely for commemoration and thanksgiving. When we asked them why Abel's offering was more acceptable to God than that of Cain, they said, 'Solely because in making it he followed the commands of God, while Cain disobeyed them.' When we asked them why God preferred the sacrifice of an animal to an offering of fruit, they gave an answer more worthy of those who walk in the darkness of absolute heathenism than of those who

profess to be guided by the light of a Divine revelation,— ‘ God likes blood, because in blood there is life !’ When they confessed that they could not explain to us how the guilt of man could be removed by the blood of bulls and of goats, we sought to point their attention to Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, and who is the great antitype of all the olden sacrifices.”

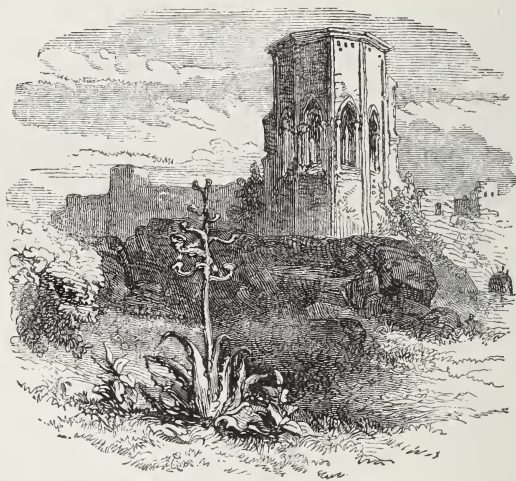
This great theme they set forth even in the synagogue. “ We explained our own views on the subject to them, showing that men, on account of their sins, are worthy of eternal punishment, and that the Messiah was appointed by God to die for sinners, to allow such a demonstration of the evil of sin to be made before the universe, as should uphold the authority of the moral administration of God, even when he pardons sin in consideration of the work of the Messiah. The priest professed to be much offended at our bringing forward our views in the synagogue, and we agreed to adjourn the discussion to his own house. He was not anxious, however, that even there it should be resumed.”

The fine valley in which Nabulus lies extends hence in a north-westerly direction. It is full of fountains irrigating it most abundantly, and for that very reason not flowing off in any large stream. The valley is rich, fertile, and beautifully green, as might be expected from this bountiful supply of water. The sides of the valley, too, the continuations of Gerizim and Ebal, are studded with villages, some of them large ; and these again are surrounded with extensive tilled fields and olive groves ; so that the whole valley presents a more inviting aspect of green hills and vales than any other part of Palestine. It is the deep verdure arising from the abundance of water which gives it this peculiar charm, in the midst of a land where no rain falls in summer, and where of course the face of nature, in the season of heat and drought, assumes a barren and dreary aspect.

Pursuing the course of this valley, we find that it at length spreads out into a fine basin, or inclosed plain, of about two hours’ journey in diameter, in the midst of which, but surrounded in the distance by higher mountains on every side, rises the fine round swelling hill, or almost mountain, of Samaria, now called Sebastieh, a manifest form of the name Sebaste, which Herod gave to

SAMARIA in honour of his patron Augustus, of whose name Sebaste is the Greek form.

The mountains and valleys around it are to a great extent arable, and enlivened by many villages and the signs of industrious cultivation. From all these circumstances, the situation of Samaria is one of great beauty. The hill itself is cultivated to the summit; and, at about midway of the ascent, is surrounded by a narrow terrace of level land, like a belt, below which the roots of the hills spread off more gradually into the valleys. Higher up are the marks of slighter terraces, once occupied, perhaps, by the streets of the ancient city.



SAMARIA.

The existing village of Sebastieh lies on the level belt on the east side just described. The ascent to it is by a very steep and winding path, among ancient foundations, arches, walls, and the like. The villages are modern, and the houses are tolerably built of stone taken from the ancient remains. The inhabitants have the reputation of being restless and turbulent. The most important ruin in the place is the church of John the Baptist, erected over the spot where a tradition, of long standing, but of no credibility, has fixed the place of his burial, if not of his

martyrdom. The eastern end, which is quite entire, overhangs the brow of the steep ascent below the village, and arrests the attention of the traveller long before he reaches Sebastieh. The church is approached from the west, where there is a narrow sunken court. The walls remain entire to a considerable height, inclosing a large space, in which are now a mosque and the small building over the tomb. This is a small chamber excavated in the rock, into which there is a descent by twenty-one steps. The erection of this church is usually ascribed to the empress Helena; but the architecture would rather seem to assign it to the age of the Crusades. The presence of many of the crosses of the Knights of St. John, and the circumstance that the spot was regarded as the birth-place of their patron saint, may even tend to render it probable that the church was erected by that Order, in connexion perhaps with the Latin bishopric of Samaria.

The village itself presents no other ruin of importance, unless it be a square tower adjacent to the church on the south, the bottom of which is surmounted by a mass of sloping work. Many fragments of ancient columns and sculptures are built into the modern dwellings.

The whole of the hill of Sebastieh consists of fertile soil, and is now cultivated to the top, and has upon it many olive and fig-trees. The ground has been ploughed for centuries; and hence it would be in vain to look for the foundations and stones of the ancient city. They have either been employed in the construction of the later village, or removed from the soil in order to admit the plough; or have been covered over by the long course of tillage. Yet on approaching the summit we come suddenly upon an area once surrounded by limestone columns, of which fifteen are still standing and two prostrate.* The order of architecture to which they belong is not distinguishable; nor are there any traces of foundations which might indicate the character of the building of which they once formed a part.

Upon the south-west side of the mountain is a colonnade, which once ran along the belt of ground on the south side of the hill, apparently quite round to the site of the present village. It begins at a mass of ruins on this quarter of the hill, which may have been a temple, or more

* According to Robinson; but Schubert counted twenty in the whole.

probably an arch of triumph, looking out west-south-west over the green valley and towards the sea, forming apparently the entrance of the city on this side. Hence the colonnade runs south-south-east for about a thousand feet, and then curves to the left, following the base of the hill. In the western part, about sixty limestone columns are still erect ; and further east are twenty more, standing irregularly at various intervals. Many more than these lie prostrate, and whole columns or fragments may be traced nearly or quite to the village. The width of the colonnade is sixty feet, and its whole length not much under three thousand feet. The columns measured are sixteen feet high, and two feet diameter at the base, less by four inches at the top. The capitals are gone, and no trace of them has been found. Robinson concludes that this colonnade is to be referred to Herod the Great, by whom Samaria was rebuilt and adorned with splendid structures. But the purpose of the work, and the edifice it was intended to decorate, are alike unknown, and these columns now stand solitary and mournful in the midst of ploughed fields, the skeletons, as it were, of departed glory.

The city which once stood here was, as the readers of Scripture know, built by Omri king of Israel, about 925 B.C., after he had purchased the city from Shemer, its owner, from whom the city took the name of Samaria. It then became the capital of the kingdom of the ten tribes, and continued such for two centuries, or until the carrying away of the ten tribes into captivity by the Assyrians in 720 B.C. During all this time, it was the seat of idolatry ; and is often denounced by the prophets, and sometimes in connexion with Jerusalem. Here, too, was the scene of many of the mighty works which the Lord permitted his prophets Elijah and Elisha to effect, connected with the various famines in the land, the unexpected plenty in Samaria, and the various deliverances of the city from the Syrians. After the deportation of the ten tribes, Samaria seems for a time to have been regarded as the chief city of the foreigners brought into their place ; although Shechem (Nabulus), as we have seen, soon became the capital of the Samaritans as a religious sect. The Samaria which existed in the time of our Lord and his apostles was that which was rebuilt, with great magnificence and strength, by Herod the Great, who, as already mentioned, changed the name to Sebaste. That the existing name refers to this foreign designation,

and not to the original one, is one of the very few instances in Palestine in which names of foreign origin have superseded the native denomination. It is still, however, called Samaria in the New Testament, and it was here that Philip preached the gospel, and that a church was gathered by the apostles, Acts viii. At what time the splendid city of Herod was laid in ruins, history has not recorded ; but all the notices of the fourth century, and later, would lead us to infer that the destruction had already taken place before that early period.

The present Sebustieh is, as we have seen, an inconsiderable village. Among the inhabitants there are a few Greek Christians, and a titular Greek bishop of Sebaste resides in the convent at Jerusalem.

From the account given in 1 Kings xvi. 23, 24, it would appear that the site of Samaria was chosen with much care, as suitable for a metropolitan city. The testimony of all travellers sanctions this selection ; and Robinson affirms that it would be difficult to find in all Palestine a situation of equal strength, fertility, and beauty combined. "In all three particulars," he adds, "it has greatly the advantage over Jerusalem."

When this traveller visited the spot, about the middle of the month of June, the people were busy in their threshing-floors. "Here," he says, "we first fell in with the sled, or sledge, as used for threshing. It consists chiefly of two planks, fastened together side by side, and bent upward in front. Many holes are bored in the bottom underneath, and into these are fixed sharp fragments of hard stone. The machine is dragged by the oxen as they are driven round upon the grain ; sometimes a man or boy sits upon it, but we did not see it otherwise loaded. The effect of it is to cut up the straw quite fine. We afterward saw this instrument frequently in the north of Palestine."

Having made the reader acquainted with the present condition of the two ancient capitals of Samaria, it is now time to look at the other sites of interest which this important province affords.

At the entrance of the valley of Nabulus, somewhat east of Jacob's well, two valleys and two large depressed plains form a kind of cross, thus: west, the valley of Nabulus ; north, a valley which forms an arm of Wady Bidan ; east and south, the two plains. Of these plains the southern is the largest, and bears the name of el-Mukhna. Both are

very fertile, and well cultivated. The Mukhna is from half an hour to forty minutes broad, and stretches along for several hours on the east of the mountains among which Nabulus is situated. The inclosing hills on the west border of this plain run in a tolerably straight line, from Gerizim towards the south; but those which bound the plain on the east and north are quite irregular and rocky, and often jut out into the plain. The south end of the plain runs almost into a point. On all sides of this plain are many villages and ruined sites. There are none, however, that require particular notice; but in the other and smaller inclosed plain there are some that claim attention. This plain runs east-south-east from the eastern side of the Mukhna, over against the valley of Nabulus. It is properly separated from the Mukhna by a low ridge of rocky hills, through which runs a low wady, connecting the two plains, and drawing off the waters of the smaller one westward. On the hills along the north side of this wady are seen the three villages of Azmut, Deir el-Hatib, and Salim; the latter lying furthest east. This may probably be the "SHALEM, a city of Shechem," to which Jacob came on his return from Padan-Aram, Gen. xxxiii. 18. The plain beyond extends eastward for an hour or more, bearing the same characteristics of beauty and fertility as the Mukhna itself. On its further side, on the low hills, may be seen a village called Beit Dejan, which seems to imply the ancient existence of another Beth-Dagon (besides the one in the plain of Judah, and another in the tribe of Asher), of which the Scripture gives no information.

In the country east of the southern plain, we find the villages of Akraheh and Daumeh, which names agree well with the ancient Acrabi (which gave name to the toparchy Acrabatene), and the Edumia of Eusebius and Jerome. Further south, upon the road from Nabulus to Jerusalem, is a small village bearing the name of Kuriyut; it does not exhibit any considerable marks of antiquity, but is, not without reason, supposed by Robinson to be the Coreæ of Josephus, to which Pompey came on his march from Damascus to Jerusalem, by way of Scythopolis (Bethshan); and to which Vespasian journeyed by the road between Neapolis and Jericho. The situation of Kuriyut agrees well with both these statements.

Upon the same road, about four miles south, we come to the interesting site of the ancient SHILOH, now bearing the

name of Seilun, surrounded with hills, but looking out through a small valley towards the plain on the south. The ruins here had been described to Robinson as very important; but when he came to the spot he found nothing



SEILUN—SHILOH.

remarkable save the remains of an ancient tower, or rather a small church, about twenty-four feet square inside, with walls four feet in thickness. "As we came up," says Robinson, "three startled Arabs flew off in dismay." The main site consists of the ruins of a comparatively modern village, covering a small tel, which is separated from the higher mountain on the north by a deep, narrow wady. The position is a fine one for strength; for the fact of its being commanded by neighbouring hills was of less account in ancient than it is in modern warfare. Among the ruins of modern dwellings are many large stones and some fragments of columns, showing the place to have been of ancient date. At the southern foot of the tel is a small ruined mosque, standing partly beneath a noble oak tree.

There can be little if any doubt that this is really Shiloh. Not only does the position agree with the indications afforded in the Scripture and by Josephus, but the name is identical—the full form of the Hebrew name (Shilon) being

scarcely perceptibly different from the existing Seilun. "Here, then," says Robinson, "is Shiloh, where the tabernacle was set up after the country had been subdued before the Israelites, and where the last and general division of the land was made among the tribes, Josh. xviii. 1—10. The ark and tabernacle long continued here; from the days of Joshua, during the ministry of all the judges, until the close of Eli's life; and here Samuel was dedicated to God, and his childhood passed in the sanctuary, 1 Sam. i.—iv. From Shiloh the ark was at length removed to the army of Israel, and being taken by the Philistines, returned no more to its former place, 1 Sam. iv.—vi. Shiloh henceforth, though sometimes the residence of the prophets, as of Abijah, celebrated in the history of Jeroboam, (1 Kings xi. 29; xii. 15; xiv. 2,) is nevertheless spoken of as forsaken and accursed of God, Ps. lxxviii. 60; Jer. vii. 12; xxvi. 6. It is mentioned in Scripture during the exile, but not afterwards; and Jerome speaks of it in his day as so utterly in ruins that the foundations of an altar could scarcely be pointed out.

If we go westward from Seilun, down the valley in which it lies, and which takes the name of Wady el-Lubban, we come in one hour to the village of Lubban, upon the north-west declivity of a charming valley or depressed plain. The village is inhabited, and has the appearance of an old place. In the rocks above it are excavated sepulchres. There can be little doubt that this is the **LEBONAH** of the Old Testament, (Judges xxi. 19,) between Bethel and Shechem.

The country west of the road between Nabalus and Suijil has been little frequented by travellers, and therefore little more than the names of a few places in this quarter is known.

Among these we find, towards the sea, close upon the border of the province of Ludd, a place bearing the name of Jiljuleh, which appears to correspond to the ancient Galgula of Eusebius and Jerome. This was apparently the **GILGAL** in the region of Dor, whose king was subdued by Joshua, Josh. xii. 23.

Not far from this, northward, is a place called Kefr Saba. In this we cannot fail to recognise the Caphar Saba, which Josephus tells us was the former name of the site on which Herod the Great built the city called **ANTIPATRIS**, after his father, Antipater. The spot was well watered and fertile; a stream also flowed around the city; and groves of large

trees were near. The situation of Kefr Saba agrees entirely with the position assigned to Antipatris, and confirms the identity which the name suggests. It was to Antipatris that the soldiers brought Paul by night from Jerusalem to Cæsarea, and then returned, leaving the horsemen to go on with him alone, Acts xxiii. 31, 32.

North-west of Kefr Saba, close upon the coast, and near the mouth of the Nahr Arsuf, is Arsuf, now a deserted village, about six hours from Joppa. It was here that the Crusaders erroneously supposed that they had found Antipatris; but which is more probably the Apollonia of which Josephus makes mention. This Arsuf is of some renown in the history of the Crusades, and was at length, when in the possession of the Hospitallers, taken and destroyed by the Sultan Bibars, in the year 1265.

We now turn back again from the coast into the interior of the mountains, to start afresh in another direction from the central and metropolitan region of Nabulus and Sebastieh.

About six miles west of the former place, upon an elevation beyond the valley of Nabulus, is a place called Kuryet Jit, which is very probably the Gitta mentioned by Justin Martyr, Eusebius and other writers as a village in the region of Samaria, the reputed birth-place of Simon Magus.

For those who travel northward from Nabulus to Nazareth, which route we next pursue, there are two roads; one by way of Sebastieh, and the other more directly north. Both roads unite at Jeba, nearly eight miles to the north of Nabulus.

Jeba is a large village, or rather town, on the slope of a range of hills. In the village is a tower, and there is about it an appearance of antiquity. The name seems to mark it as the site of another ancient Geba or Gibeah, of which, however, there is no mention in the Bible. So also the somewhat remarkable name of Fendekumieh, belonging to a village upon the hill side, with several fountains near it, upon the road from Nabulus hither round by Sebastieh, is doubtless the ancient Pentacomia, of which history has left no record.

Proceeding from Jeba on our way to Nazareth, we come soon to a village called Sanur, upon the left side of

the road, upon a round rocky hill of considerable elevation, which is almost isolated in the plain, being connected with the low hills in the north-west only by a low rocky ridge. This village was once considerable. Here is a very strong fortress, which, so far as the situation is concerned, might easily have been made impregnable. It belonged to one of the independent sheikhs of the country, who although nominally subject to the Turkish pasha, was not always ready to yield him obedience. The notorious Jezzar, pasha of Acre, once besieged the sheikh for two months in his stronghold without success. In 1830, however, it was taken, after a siege of three or four months, by Abdallah Pasha, aided by troops for Lebanon. The conquerors razed the fortress, and cut down the olive-trees, and the place is now a shapeless heap of ruins, among which a few families still find a home, living chiefly in caves. Many travellers have desired to find here the Bethulia of the Book of Judith : but there are no traces of antiquity at Sanur, and it is fully three hours distant from the plain of Esdraelon, one of the passes to which, the stronghold of Bethulia must have guarded.

To the east of Sanur extends a beautiful plain, oval or nearly round in form, three or four miles in diameter, and surrounded by picturesque hills not very elevated. It is almost perfectly level, with a soil of rich dark loam, exceedingly fertile. This plain has no outlet for its waters, which in winter therefore collect upon it and form a lake. From its mud in winter this plain is called Merj el-Ghuruk, "Meadow of sinking or drowning," equivalent to "drowned meadow." Around its southern and eastern border are several villages. Eastward from this, at the commencement of the Wady el Malih, is a place called Tubas, which probably corresponds with the THEBEZ of Scripture, under whose walls Abimelech met his death, from a millstone cast upon his head by a woman's hand, Judges ix. 50 ; 2 Sam. xi. 21.

Proceeding upon our northward road from Sanur, we pass over seven miles without observing anything of importance till we come to Jenin. This place is situated at the mouth of a narrow, stony, naked dell, or wady, where it enters the great plain of Esdraelon. The town lies in the midst of gardens of fruit-trees, which are surrounded

by hedges of the prickly pear ; here too are seen a few scattered palm-trees. The houses are of stone, tolerably well built ; and the place appears to contain about two thousand inhabitants, among whom are three or four families of Greek Christians. The most remarkable thing here is a fine flowing public fountain, rising in the hills at the back of the town, and brought down so as to issue in a noble stream in the midst of the place. The fountain is built with plain but good mason-work. It has a reservoir of stone, in which the people may dip their jars ; and also a long stone trough for the herds and flocks. Jenin is the chief place of the district embracing the great plain, and is subordinate to Nabulus in the same manner as Hebron is to Jerusalem. This place is, with sufficient reason, held to be the *Ginæa* of which Josephus makes mention as lying on the borders of the great plain towards Samaria, and where the district of Galilee ended and that of Samaria began.

About one hour west of Jenin is a village called *Kefr Kud*, which is not improbably the *Caparcotia* of Ptolemy ; but of this old place nothing further is known than that it was upon the road between *Cæsarea* and *Scythopolis*.

If a traveller ascends the knoll on the west of Jenin, and casts his view north-westward towards Mount Carmel, he may perceive, on the south-east side of a low tel or mound, a place called *Taannuk*, above six miles off. It is said to have ruins, and this leads the people of the country to suppose that it was once a large city, though but a few families are now to be found there. The place has not been actually visited by travellers, though seen at a distance ; but, from the analogy of name and situation, there is no reason to question that we have here the ancient *TAANACH*, first a royal city of the Canaanites, then allotted to *Manasseh*, and assigned to the Levites ; but, in the time of the Judges, the Canaanites were still in the place, and only in the time of Solomon does it appear to have become wholly Israelitish, Josh. xii. 21 ; xvii. 11 ; xxi. 25 ; Judges i. 27 ; v. 19 ; 1 Kings iv. 12.

Not far from Jenin the great plain of Esdraelon opens before us. This famous plain, the "great battle-field of nations" in ancient times, extends in the form of an acute triangle. Its general direction is from east-north-east to

west-south-west, and its extent from ten to twelve miles. Its northern border is formed by the abruptly rising mountains of the high plain of Galilee, which, in the west, run down in a line of lower hills to Mount Carmel, and a narrow valley between these hills and Carmel affords an outlet for "the ancient river" Kishon from the great plain to the sea. The eastern side of the plain is the widest, being not much under fifteen miles in length. On the southern side it is bounded by low hills, which run in a north-west direction from Jenin to Carmel. Further south these hills assume a bolder aspect, and become "the mountains of Samaria." From the plain of the coast that of Esdraelon is separated by the ridge of Carmel, and by the hills which come down to it from the high lands of Galilee. From the eastern border of the plain extend three arms, each above two miles broad, concerning which Dr. Robinson was the first to afford any precise information. The northernmost of these extends between Mount Tabor and Little Hermon. It is more distinct and marked than the others, the mountains which inclose it being higher, and rising more abruptly from its borders. It extends around and beyond Tabor, quite to the brow of the Jordan valley. The middlemost arm goes from Zerim, where the great plain rises suddenly to the height of about one hundred feet, and spreads out into a fine fertile valley in the direction east-south-east along the northern ridge of Gilboa, between this mountain and the Little Hermon. This broad and deep valley goes quite out to the Jordan as far as Beisan (Bethshean), the acropolis of which is indeed visible from Zerim. As we are now describing the general features of the plain of Esdraelon, we shall not pause to consider the evidence which establishes that here we have the valley, and in Zerim the town of JEZREEL, both of great renown in Scripture history.

The third, or southernmost of these arms or valleys, runs between Mount Gilboa, whose ridges extend far into the plain, and the hills of Samaria, which are here higher than more to the west. This branch of the great plain is about three quarters of an hour broad, and rises with a perceptible ascent towards the south-east for four or five miles beyond Jenin.

These arms of the great plain are for the most part under cultivation—much more so, indeed, than the plain itself, which, although abundantly fertile, is very partially culti-

vated. The German traveller, Von Schubert, who has given more attention to the natural history of the country than any other recent writer on Palestine, says : "The soil of the plain of Esdraelon is a field of grain whose seed is not sown by the hand of man, and whose harvest no reaper gathers. At least, the greater part of those high stalks of corn which almost hide the mules of the traveller are self-sown from the ripened ears, whose abundance is neither used nor enjoyed by the inhabitants of the country. The flocks of sheep and goats, as well as oxen, trample down the wild-sown fields as they graze ; the wild boars from Tabor and Carmel wallow and grub about unscared, concealed from view among the high luxuriant herbage of this most fertile soil ; the leopard, also, when hunger drives him down from the mountains, steals in here, and waits securely ambushed till he finds an opportunity of seizing a lamb or a kid from the flocks. Among this tall herbage many variegated flowers, especially of the lily kind, are seen."

In the Old Testament this great plain bears the name of the PLAIN of JEZREEL, in Josh. xvii. 16 ; Judges vi. 33 ; Hosea i. 5 ; of which name Esdraelon is simply the Greek form, which we accordingly find in Josephus, and in the apocryphal books, where we read of "the great plain of Esdraelon," or simply, as in 1 Macc. xii. 49, "the great plain." It is also called the "PLAIN of MEGIDDO," from the city of that name on its western border, 2 Chron. xxxv. 22 ; Zech. xii. 11. Indeed, it seems to have been called by the former name whenever the circumstances which occasion it to be mentioned occurred on the eastern side of the plain, and by the latter when they occurred on the western. In the middle ages it was called the Plain of Taba, from a village and castle of that name ; and at present it is locally distinguished by the name of Merj Ibn' Amir—that is, Ibn' Amir's Meadow.

This fine plain could not fail to become from its situation and extent the battle-field of contending nations ; and accordingly, from the earliest ages down to our own times its soil has occasionally been soaked with the blood of slaughtered hosts. Here the Midianites and Amalekites were routed by Gideon, Judges vi. 33 ; here Saul fought his last battle with the Philistines, 1 Sam. xxix. ; here Ahab met in warfare the Syrian hosts of Benhadad, 1 Kings xx. 26 ; and here was Josiah defeated and slain by

the Egyptians, 2 Kings xxiii. 29 ; 2 Chron. xxxv. 22. Here, near the base of Mount Tabor, were the Jews overcome, fifty-three years before Christ, by the Romans under the proconsul Gabinus ; and, a century and a quarter later, by Vespasian's general, Placidus. In the time of the Crusades many battles were fought on this plain between the Christians and the Moslems ; and in modern times a victory over the Turks was won here by Napoleon Bonaparte, in the year 1799.

Let us now resume our journey, and pause at the village of Zerín, which has been just indicated as situated at the entrance of the central one of the three arms which issue from the eastern border of the great plain. The village consists of about twenty dwellings, but these are mostly in ruins, and the number of inhabitants is very small. At the entrance of the village Robinson found an ancient sarcophagus with sculptured ornaments, and other travellers have noticed many of them. There is a square tower of some height, partly in ruins, from the windows of which a splendid view of the country in all directions may be obtained. Zerín stands upon the brow of a steep rocky descent of one hundred feet or more, where the land sinks off at once into the great fertile valley which has just been noticed. In the valley directly under the village is a considerable fountain, and about twenty minutes further east, another large one under the northern side of Gilboa. Zerín thus lies comparatively high, and commands a wide and noble view, extending down the broad low valley to the east of Beisan, and to the mountains of Ajlun, beyond the Jordan ; while to the west it includes the whole of the great plain, quite to the ridge of Carmel. It is a most magnificent situation for a city, which being itself thus a most conspicuous object in every part, would naturally give its name to the whole region. On these and other grounds which he states, Robinson says, "There could, therefore, be little question that in and around Zerín we had before us the city, the plain, the valley, and the fountain of the ancient Jezreel." This identity was indeed recognised by the Crusaders ; but this identification was again lost sight of, and although writers of the seventeenth century speak of the deep valley under the name of Jezreel, and describe it correctly as lying between Gilboa and Little Hermon, yet the village itself seems not further to be

mentioned from the fourteenth century down to 1814. Since then, it has again been brought into notice by several travellers, but without any description of the site, and also without any suggestion of its identity with Jezreel, until the idea was revived by the Rev. C. B. Elliot, and by Von Schubert, and confirmed by Dr. Robinson. The situation corresponds with all the indications which Scripture and ancient history afford, and the existing name appears on examination to be decisively similar; for the first feeble letter of the Hebrew being dropped, and the last syllable *el* becoming *in*, as is not unusual in Arabic, the two forms are seen to be obviously identical.

JEZREEL is first mentioned in Scripture as belonging to the tribe of Issachar, and it constituted afterwards a portion of the kingdom of Ishbosheth, Josh. xix. 18; 2 Sam. ii. 8, 9. It became more notorious under Ahab and Jezebel, who, though residing at Samaria, had a palace here; and it was to enlarge the grounds of this palace that the king desired the vineyard of Naboth, and gave occasion for the tragic story of the latter, 1 Kings xviii. 45, 46; xxi. In the retributions of Divine Providence, the same place became the scene of the massacre of Jezebel herself, her son Joram, and all the house of Ahab, 2 Kings ix. 14—37; x. 1—11. Still later Jezreel is alluded to by the prophet Hosea; and we find the name in the Book of Judith under the Greek form of Esdrelone, Hos. i. 4, 11; ii. 22; Judith i. 8; iv. 5; vii. 3. In the fourth century it was still a large village, but had become a small one in the time of the Crusades, and seems to have remained such to the present time.

If we go from hence northward, along the mountain ridge, we find at the base of its northern extremity, south of Tabor, the ruins of ENDOR, which is in Scripture mentioned in connexion with the victory of Deborah and Barak, but is chiefly known as the abode of the "woman who had a familiar spirit," whom Saul consulted on the eve of the fatal battle of Gilboa, Josh. xvii. 11; 1 Sam. xxviii. 7. The name is not found in the New Testament, but in the fourth century it was still a large village, four Roman miles south of Mount Tabor. It was recognised by the Crusaders, but seems to have been again lost sight of till the seventeenth century, when it is mentioned by various travellers. It is now an ordinary village, where a cave is pointed out which is affirmed to have been the abode of the witch of Endor.

A little to the south-west of Endor lies the village of

Nein. This is the NAIN of Luke vii., where occurred the affecting scene of our Lord's raising the widow's son. It



NEIN—NAIN.

seems to have been a small town at that time ; but has dwindled into a small hamlet, occupied by only a few families. The knowledge of its site has been well preserved, and may be traced down to the present day.

Upon the declivity of the western side of the mountain of Duhy, over against Zerim, but higher up, having the deep broad valley of Jezreel between, and overlooking the whole western plain to Carmel, is the village of Solam. It is small and dirty, lying upon a steep slope, with a small fountain, hardly sufficient for the wants of the inhabitants, who seem an unusually civil, quiet, and friendly people. There are no remains of antiquity about this place ; yet there is little room for doubt that it is the ancient SHUNEM, where the Philistines encamped before Saul's last battle ; and probably where Elisha was hospitably entertained in the house of the Shunamitish woman, and afterwards raised from the dead the son whom God had given to her and taken from her. The place has often been mentioned by travellers, but only a few years ago was recognised as Shunem by Elliot, Schubert, and others.

IX.—HAIFA.

WE now quit the provinces of Samaria to explore those into which the ancient Galilee is at present divided.

The first of these, in the mode of progression we have thus far followed, is that to which the town of Haifa, under Mount Carmel, gives its name. This province, which is of small extent, is in the form of a triangle, whose base is formed by about twenty miles of the line of coast, from a point somewhat south of Nahr el-Akhdar to the river Kishon, and whose apex penetrates into the heart of the plain of Esdraelon.

The town of Haifa lies directly upon the coast, under the inner side, towards the Bay of Acre, of the cape or promontory in which Mount Carmel terminates. It is, at the present time, a poor, small, and filthy place, but possessing a harbour superior to that of Acre, to which circumstance it seems to owe its subsistence, if not its origin. In the time of the Crusades, Haifa had indeed a strong fortress, which Tancred could only take after a long siege. This was in 1100 ; and ninety-one years after, our king Richard, in his march from Acre to Jaffa, found that this fortress had been destroyed by Saladin. The crusaders regarded this place as the ancient Porphyrium, which, however, lay much more to the north, between Sidon and Berytus. It is rather the ancient Sycaminopolis—so called from a noted sycamine tree that grew near the spot.

Throughout this province of Haifa, the ruins of ancient cities, as signs of former prosperity, and tokens of fallen greatness, claim much more attention than the existing places.

We may not quit this locality without noticing MOUNT CARMEL, whose entire length is comprised in this province, and at whose base Haifa itself is situated. The extent of this mountain or range of hills is about six miles, and the utmost height about 1,200 feet ; the northern and eastern

parts being the most lofty. The foot of the northern portion approaches the sea very closely, so that when seen



PROMONTORY OF CARMEL.

from the hills north-east of Acre, the mountain appears as if “dipping its foot in the western sea;” but further south it retires more inland, so as to leave a somewhat extensive and very fertile plain between the mountain and the sea. At its inland base flows the “ancient river” Kishon, whose overflow destroyed Sisera’s host; and a little more to the north is the river Belus, the fusion of whose sands, by a fire kindled on its bank, is said to have led to the discovery of glass.

Carmel is regarded as the most beautiful mountain in Palestine, as it was in ancient times, when “the excellency of Carmel” was a proverb. It is everywhere covered with verdure. On its summit are pines and oaks, and further down olive and laurel trees. It is everywhere well watered. A great number of crystal streams have their rise in it; the largest of them is the so-called “Fountain of Elias;” and they all hurry along between banks thickly overgrown with bushes to the Kishon. Every species of tillage succeeds here admirably under this mild and cheerful sky. The prospect from the summit of the mountain over the Gulf of Acre and its fertile shores, to the White Cape and the blue heights of Lebanon, is most impressive. The flora of Carmel is one of the richest and most varied to be

ound in the land, blending, as it does, the species of the mountains with those of the valleys and the sea-shore; and in this world of various flowers exists an almost boundless variety of rare insects of every hue, so that here the collector might, all the year round, find rich reward for his interesting occupation. Two or three villages and some scattered cottages are found upon its sides. It will thus be seen that the vivid representations of the inspired prophets and poets, with respect to this fine mountain, are still in a great measure applicable to it, and are sufficiently illustrated by its actual condition. Thus, Isaiah alludes to "the excellency of Carmel," (xxxv. 2.) So, on account of the graceful form and verdant beauty of the summit, the head of the bride is, in the Song of Songs, vii. 5, compared to Carmel. It was also celebrated for its herbage, and is therefore ranked with Bashan, in Isa. xxxiii. 9; Jer. l. 19; Amos i. 2.

The mountain is of compact limestone, and, as often happens where that is the case, there are in it very many caverns—it is said, more than a thousand. In one tract there are as many as four hundred adjacent to each other, furnished with windows and with places for sleeping, hewn in the rock. A peculiarity of many of the caverns of Carmel is, that the entrances are so narrow that only a single person can creep in at a time; and some of them are so crooked that a person is immediately out of sight unless closely followed. This may throw light upon Amos ix. 3, where the Lord says of those who endeavour to escape his punishments, "Though they hide themselves in the top of Carmel, I will search and take them out thence." That the caverns of Carmel were, even in the most ancient times, the abode of prophets and others, is well known. The prophets Elijah and Elisha often resorted thither (1 Kings xviii. 19, 2; 2 Kings ii. 25); and the context renders it probable that here were the caverns in which the prophets of the Lord were, in the time of Ahab, concealed and sustained by Obadiah, 1 Kings xviii. 3, 4. Still more Scripturally interesting to us is this mountain, from its being the scene of one of the most sublime and awful spectacles ever witnessed—when the prophet Elijah alone stood forth before an apostate king and people, and in the calm dignity of faith called down, to consume his sacrifice, the fire from heaven, which the priests of Baal had frantically invoked in vain. Here he demanded of the multitude that they should

no longer halt between two opinions, which was responded to, by innumerable voices, with the shout, "The Lord, he is the God! the Lord, he is the God!"

For this great prophet tradition has, of course, found a special cavern in the mountain. It is a little below the monks' cavern, already mentioned, and is now a Moslem sanctuary and place of pilgrimage.

On the north-western declivity of the mountain, at the height of not more than 582 feet above the level of the sea, is an ancient establishment of Carmelite monks, which order, indeed, derives its name from the mountain. The old building was destroyed by Abd' Allah Pasha, who converted the materials to his own use; but it has lately been rebuilt, on a somewhat imposing scale, by the aid of contributions from Europe. The accommodation of pilgrims and travellers has been much consulted in the reconstruction of this building, which forms a very striking object in the scenery of the mountain.

Directly upon the coast, about three miles from Cape Carmel, is Athlit, upon a small rocky cape, on whose south and east sides there are ruins, and on the western part of which are the tolerably well preserved remains of a large and strong castle, within the walls of which are seen the remains of a decagonal Gothic church. Near by, on the road to Haifa, are the ruins of a water-conduit, pool, and well. In the time of the Crusades this place was held by the Knights Templars, who fortified it against robbers, and kept the road safe. It was at that time called "Pilgrim's Castle" (*Castrum Peregrinum*; in Italian, *Castell Peregrino*), and also *Petra Incisa*, or Rock-hewn, probably because the small cape was then separated from the mainland by a small trench, now filled with sand.

At almost an equal distance southward is a miserable village, called Tortura or Tantura, with a harbour for large vessels, and a poor dirty khan; and somewhat north of this is a small cape, upon which are the fragments of a castle. This is, with good reason, supposed to be the ancient city of DOR, or DORA, one of the royal cities of the ancient Canaanites (Josh. xi. 2; xii. 23), which was assigned to Manasseh (Josh. xvii. 11; 1 Chron. vii. 29), but does not seem to have been actually possessed till towards the time of Solomon, when it first appears as an Israelitish city, 1 Kings iv. 11. In the time of the Maccabees it is mentioned as a strong fortress, 1 Macc. xv. 11.

3. Its importance, in the first centuries of the Christian era is indicated by its being the see of a bishop; but in the time of Jerome it had already become a forsaken place.

The most important of the ancient cities of this district was CÆSAREA, situated upon the coast, about eleven miles



CÆSAREA.

south of Tortura. There was another Cæsarea in the north, at Baniyas; and for distinction therefrom, this was called *Cæsarea Palæstina*, or *Cæsarea Maritima*. The city was founded by Herod the Great, on the site of an old fortress, called Strato's Tower. The building of the city took ten or twelve years, and was completed about four or five years before the Christian era. Herod fortified the city, and constructed here a fine artificial harbour, protected from the swell of the sea and adverse winds by a mole or breakwater, which was regarded among the most ingenious, if not one of the most wonderful works of that age. Along the shore was spread out the beautiful city, with its marble palaces, temples, theatres, and other public buildings. Even before the destruction of Jerusalem, Cæsarea was the seat of the Roman governors, and, in fact, the military and political metropolis of Judæa. It is hence repeatedly mentioned in

the Acts of the apostles; but is chiefly memorable for the three years' imprisonment of St. Paul, and for his appearances before Felix, Festus, and Agrippa, Acts viii. 40; ix. 30; x. 1, 24; xi. 11; xii. 19; xviii. 22; xxi. 8; xxiii. 23—33; xxiv. A quarrel which arose between the Jewish and Greek inhabitants of the city was the immediately exciting occasion of the outbreak of the Jewish war, which ended in the destruction of Jerusalem; after which, Cæsarea was more entirely the capital of Palestine. It eventually became the seat of a Christian bishopric, and one of the three metropolitan cities of Palestine. Thus, amid the desolations of older places, Cæsarea remained a place of wealth and importance for many years. It was stormed by the crusaders, under king Baldwin, in the year 1101, after fifteen days' siege; and large booty was obtained by the conquering host. The possession of the place subsequently alternated between the Christians and the Moslems, till it was taken, in 1265, by the sultan Bibars, who so completely destroyed it that one stone was scarcely left upon another. From this stroke Cæsarea never recovered; and at the present day only the widely extended ruins, inhabited by wild beasts, serve to show where once this proud city stood.

In the interior of this province, where the eastern spurs of Carmel meet the plain of Esdraelon, is found a village with the name of Lejjun, distinguished by its minaret and olive groves. Near it is a large fountain sending forth a mill-stream, which, like all the brooks of the south-western hills, runs into the plain, and goes to form the river Kishon. The name and the situation indicate the ancient Legio. This name does not occur in the Bible, but it is frequently used by Eusebius and Jerome in fixing the bearings and distances of other places. Its name would seem to indicate a Roman origin; but it is probable that it was not first built by the Romans, but was some old place, the name of which they changed. Robinson says: "As we travelled across the plain, and had Legio and Taannuk continually in view, we could not resist the impression that the former probably occupies the site of the ancient MEGIDDO, so often mentioned (in Scripture) along with TAANACH, a circumstance which likewise implies their vicinity to each other. Both were Canaanitish cities (Josh. xii. 21); both belonged to Manasseh, although lying beyond

the boundaries of that tribe, Josh. xvii. 11 ; 1 Chron. vii. 29. The chief onslaught in the battle of Deborah and Barak took place in the plain near Taanach and 'the waters of Megiddo;' and whether the expression be applied to a large fountain, or to the river Kishon, we know that the scene of battle was at any rate not far from the Kishon," Judges v. 19, 21. Under Solomon both cities had one intendant, 1 Kings iv. 12. All these circumstances, which exhibit Megiddo in that proximity to Taanach which Lejjun at the present time bears to Taannuk, point to the identity of the former with Megiddo. This place is also celebrated in the Scripture history as the place where king Ahaziah died of the wounds which he received in his escape from Jehu, and where king Josiah met his death in opposing the advancing host of the Egyptians, 2 Kings ix. 27 ; xxiii. 29 ; 2 Chron. xxxv. 22. A very able writer on the geography of Palestine (Von Raumer) takes Legio to be the same with Maximianopolis, and, with Jerome, assumes this to have been the ancient HADAD-RIMMON in the valley of Megiddon, Zech. xii. 11. This certainly is shown by the cited text to have been close to Megiddo. Both views may, as Arnold suggests, be easily made to coincide, by regarding Hadad-Rimmon as identical with Megiddo, both which more ancient names are just as much alike, or, if we will, as unlike, as the more modern names of Legio and Maximianopolis. Hadad-Rimmon only occurs in Scripture once, in Zechariah, in the same connexion which Megiddo bears in the historical books, and it is therefore fair to suppose that "the mourning of Hadad-Rimmon" is no other than the lamentations over the slain Josiah at Megiddo. The plain of Megiddo was part of the great plain of Esdraelon, and, consequently, the prophet used the synonymous name for the city.

X.—NAZARETH.



NAZARETH.

WE now reach the interesting province of Nasirah, or Nazareth, which, with those that follow, constituted the ancient Galilee, and included the territories of the tribes of Zebulun, Asher, and Naphtali. This particular province is bounded on the east by that of Tubarijeh (Tiberias), on the south by those of Nabulus and Haifa, and on the west by those of Haifa and Acre.

The chief town, NAZARETH, called in Arabic en-Nasirah, lies upon the western site of a narrow oblong basin, extending from south-south-west to north-north-east, perhaps twenty minutes in length by eight or ten in breadth. The height of this valley is set down by Von Schubert at 821 Paris feet above the level of the sea, and he gives to the hills west-south-west and north-west of the town the height of 1,500 feet, which Robinson found to be much too high. The houses of Nazareth stand on the lower part of the slope of the western hill, which rises

steep and high above them, and is crowned by a wely called Nebi Ismail. Towards the north the hills are less high, and on the east and south they are low. From this situation it results that Nazareth only becomes visible on a near approach. "We had hitherto," says Dr. Wilson, "no view of Nazareth, but, in a few minutes, when we had turned the shoulder of the hill, we found it to our left, ensconced in a lonely little dell, or basin, surrounded on all sides by hills, to which we had not very far to descend, as it has itself a very considerable elevation. The view, as we went downward and approached the village, became very contracted in dimensions, although not certainly so in the interest of its associations. We had before us the very scene which would be most familiar to the Saviour during the greater part of his sojourn in this sinful world. We were deeply affected in the remembrance of his humiliation and gracious condescension, when he here dwelt, with his ineffable glory, covered with the veil of that humanity which he assumed when he took upon himself the form of a servant, and was sent by God in the likeness of sinful flesh, and died for sin to condemn sin in the flesh."

The houses are in general well built of stone. They have only flat-terraced roofs, without the domes so common in Jerusalem and the south of Palestine. Upon the whole, although not so mean as some of the other small towns, or rather villages, of the country, Nazareth has nothing very striking in its appearance. The conventual buildings of the Franciscan monks, including the Latin church of the Annunciation, with their different inclosures surrounded by strong walls; the Casa Nuova, or house built by the convent for the accommodation of travellers, and the Mohammedan mosque, are the erections belonging to the place which chiefly engage attention.

Dr. Wilson reached Nazareth on a Saturday evening; on the following day, being the Lord's-day, he states: "We left our lodgings in an early part of the day, that, without any disturbance or interruption, we might engage in social worship and communion upon the hill, on the western flank of which the village is principally situated. We were sorry to observe the villagers, three-fourths of whom are professing Christians of different denominations, paying very little regard to the sanctity of the Sabbath. As far as we could see, it was marked only by the shutting of the shops. A good many people were at work as masons.

Several were engaged in cutting grass in the fields. Crowds of women, tittering, and laughing, and jesting, were filling their pitchers at what is called 'the Fountain of the Virgin,' to which they think it peculiarly meritorious to



FOUNTAIN AT NAZARETH.

repair, for a supply of water. The children were heartily engaged in their every-day amusements.

“ A Greek monk, as we passed along, called us to step into the church of the Annunciation, which he declared to be the true sacred spot, in opposition to that of the Romanists ; and he gave us a draught of cool water from a fountain within it, which he raised by letting down with a chain a small vessel to a spring which communicates with the Fountain of the Virgin a little below.”

A description of the view from the summit of the hill upon which the wely Nebi Ismail is situated is given by both Drs. Robinson and Wilson, together with the natural reflections which such a scene is calculated to awaken in a Christian mind. We shall give the description of Wilson and the reflections of Robinson. The description is, besides its interest, useful as combining in one view many sites and objects of which we have already spoken, or concerning which we shall soon have occasion to speak.

“ We had a most glorious prospect. The sphere of observation is here as much enlarged as below it is contracted. To the north-west of us, overlooking a part of the country considerably wooded, we had the bay of Akka and Haifa, with the clear blue expanse of the Mediterranean, or Great Sea of the Hebrews, spreading itself in the distance beyond. South of this, and striking to the south-east, we had the whole ridge of Carmel before us, which, though stripped of much of the glory of its olden forests, still presents striking memorials of that excellency for which it was distinguished. To the south and south-west of us, somewhat circular in its form, is seen here, bounded by the picturesque mountains of Samaria, ‘ the great plain,’ the battle-field of the country both in ancient and modern times, and probably the real or typical site of the battle of Armageddon. To the east and south-east of us we had the little Hermon, which though bald on its crown, has considerable vegetation on its shoulders; Mount Tabor, standing apart in its own nobility, and, like nature’s own pyramid, not commemorative of death, but instinct with life, and clothed with luxuriant verdure to its very summits; and the deep valley of the Jordan and the sea of Tiberias, with the equable hills and mountains of Bashan and Golan, on its eastern side. To the north, beyond the plain of el-Battauff, we had the hills and mountains forming the continuation of the Lebanon; and to the north-east those forming the termination of the Anti-Lebanon, with Jebel esh-Sheikh, the true Hermon, the chief of all the mountains of the land, moistened with the copious dews which descend from his hoary locks. Many villages, including a considerable number mentioned in Scripture, are distinctly visible. Besides Jezreel, Jenin, Taannuk, Megiddo, and others, to which I have already alluded when passing over the great plain, we had before us, beginning with Sefurieh, the Sepphoris of Jewish history, called also Dio Cæsarea, lying immediately beyond the rather bare hills of Nazareth, and, turning to the right, Kana el-Jelil, or Cana of Galilee, which witnessed the beginning of our Lord’s miracles; Safed, the famous sanctuary of Rabbinitism, and supposed to be ‘ the city set upon a hill,’ immediately before the attention of our Saviour and his disciples, during the delivery of the sermon on the Mount; Endor, the residence of the witch who is noticed in the history of Saul; Nein, or Nain,

where the widow resided whose son was raised to life by our Lord. The associations of the scene were numerous and hallowed, independently of those immediately connected with Nazareth below.

“There is a good deal of soil on this hill of Nazareth, and doubtless it is to a considerable extent capable of culture. It is covered in many of its patches with a species of erica, (heath,) called bilad, which is found on all the hills of the country. With this are mixed a good many herbaceous and flowering plants, among which we noticed some of great beauty.”

The associations suggested by this locality are traced with much force by Dr. Robinson. “Seating myself in the shade of the wely, I remained for some hours upon this spot, lost in contemplation of the wide prospect, and of the events connected with the scenes around. In the village below, the Saviour of the world had passed his childhood; and although we have few particulars of his life during those early years, yet there are certain features of nature which meet our eyes now just as they once met his. He must often have visited the fountain near which we had pitched our tent; his feet must frequently have wandered over the adjacent hills, and his eyes doubtless have gazed upon the splendid prospect from this very spot. Here the Prince of peace looked down upon the great plain, where the din of battles so often had rolled, and the garments of the warrior been dyed in blood; and he looked out, too, upon that sea, over which the swift ships were to bear the tidings of his salvation to nations and continents then unknown. How has the moral aspect of things been changed! Battles and bloodshed have indeed not ceased to desolate this unhappy country, and gross darkness now covers the people; but from this region a light went forth, which has enlightened the world, and unveiled new climes; and now the rays of that light begin to be reflected back again from distant isles and continents, to illumine anew the darkened land where it first sprang up.”

From the hill one may descend in a tolerably straight line to the precipice adjoining the Maronite church, which Dr. Clarke thought was the “brow of the hill on which the city stood,” down which the infuriated inhabitants sought to precipitate our Lord. There are certainly two or three bare scraps of rock here and in the neighbour-

hood, some twenty or thirty feet in depth, whence a person could be "cast down headlong" to his destruction. "The Mountain of the Precipitation," which the monks regard as the scene of this transaction, lies south by east of Nazareth, from which it is fully two or three miles distant. It is not on the brow of the hill on which Nazareth now stands; and satisfactory objections have been urged against its being supposed to be the place referred to in the Gospels. "The legend presupposes," says Dr. Robinson, "that in a popular and momentary tumult they should have had the patience to lead off their victim to an hour's distance, in order to do what there was an equal facility for doing near at hand. . . . Indeed, such is the intrinsic absurdity of the legend, that the monks themselves, now-a-days, in order to avoid it, make the ancient Nazareth to have been near at hand on the same mountain. The good friars forget the dilemma into which they thus bring themselves; for if the ancient Nazareth lay near the precipice overhanging the plain, what becomes of the holy places now shown in the present town?"

The Latin convent at Nazareth is not only the principal building in the place, but is the finest of the kind in Palestine. It is surrounded by such strong walls as to appear more like a fortress than a monastery. Near the cloister is a school, in which the children of the place are taught to read and write Arabic, are instructed in arithmetic, and acquire some Spanish and Italian. The church of the convent stands in the place on which the dwelling of the virgin is supposed to have stood. The upper part of the house—as one of the most outrageous of the legends which disgrace the land affirms—was carried through the air by the angels to Loretto, in Italy, when, in the year 1291, the Christian religion was more and more oppressed by the Mohammedans in Palestine. The basement portion of the house still, however, remains at Nazareth, and presents, in a grotto under the rock, the alleged place of annunciation; and two columns, one of which, broken in the centre, so that the upper portion hangs suspended from the roof, are supposed to mark the relative positions of the angel and the virgin. Of this Dr. Clarke well remarks, "The capital and a piece of the shaft of a pillar of grey granite has been fastened to the roof of a cave; and so clumsily is the rest of the *hocus pocus* conducted,

that what is shown for the lower fragment of the same pillar resting upon the earth is not of the same substance, but of Cipolino marble."

Above the cave, there is an ascent by a flight of steps to an elevation behind the altar. Here is shown the "true picture" (though there are other impostures of the "true picture" at Rome and Genoa) of our Saviour impressed on a handkerchief, said to have been sent by him, together with a famous letter, to Abgarus, king of Edessa. Copies of this letter, together with an equally spurious description of our Lord's person, printed on a broad sheet, used to be seen some years ago most abundantly in the dwellings of the poor, and were often held in most superstitious regard. But they have now, happily, become scarce, having been in most cases removed at the persuasion of tract distributors.* The picture is a striking piece of art, but of course apocryphal. Above it there is another still more presumptuous artistic device—an attempt to represent the first Person of the Trinity. With this fearful degradation of Deity, there is connected a similar impious exaltation of humanity in a blasphemous address, in which the virgin Mary takes precedence of the Saviour of the world as the grand refuge in the time of peril, which is exhibited as a specimen of calligraphy, and set to music and suspended below. This is in Latin, and is given at length by Dr. Wilson, in whose books such of our readers as are curious in these matters may find it. The *vera imago* is likewise described as "a small painting, well executed. The brow of the figure is rather contracted, but the *tout ensemble* is remarkably pleasing and dignified, especially when viewed in the sombre light of the morning. Art, however, shows only becoming deference to the great mystery of godliness, 'God manifest in the flesh,' where it realizes the subject as one far beyond its puny efforts."

At Nazareth is also shown the "house of Joseph," where he exercised the craft of a carpenter, and the synagogue

* The writer of this can remember that, while occupying his youthful leisure in distributing the publications of the Religious Tract Society from house to house, he removed about forty copies of this "letter" in one town, and replaced them by the wholesome "broad sheets" of the Society. Consent to this was seldom obtained without difficulty, and was in many cases withheld, for the paper was deemed to bless the house which contained it; and indeed the "letter" itself promised a blessing to all who possessed a copy of it.

where Christ read the Scriptures to the Jews, Luke iv. 16, and the *mensa Christi*, a large stone, on which he is supposed to have eaten with his disciples both before and after his resurrection.

The inhabitants of Nazareth are, according to different computations, from two thousand to three thousand in number, of whom about one-third only are Moslems, the bulk of the people being Christians, of the Greek, Maronite, and Latin denominations. Jews there seem to be none. The inhabitants appear to be somewhat different in complexion and features from the northern Syrians generally; and their physiognomy makes some approach to that of the Egyptians, while their accent and dialect vary materially from those of Damascus, which are the prevalent type in this region. How these differences have arisen we have not seen stated.

That the name of Nazareth occurs neither in the Old Testament nor in Josephus, seems to imply that it was a small and unimportant village. "Can there any good thing come out of Nazareth?" is a question implying anything but respect; and the name of Nazarenes was in like manner given to the first Christians in scorn. Yet to the present day the name for Christians in Arabic continues to be *en-Nusâra*, that is, Nazarenes. From the subsequent notices of Nazareth by travellers and others, it may be doubted whether it ever was of greater importance than at present, except perhaps during the Crusades, when much attention was paid to the spot in which so many sacred associations centred, and it was erected into a bishopric, and remains such nominally, in the Greek Church, at the present day.

After Nazareth, which is the chief object of historical and Scriptural interest in this province, we may notice MOUNT TABOR, which lies on its eastern border, and forms the most conspicuous natural feature in it. It is about five miles south of Nazareth, and has generally been regarded as the mount in which our Lord was transfigured; but this is very uncertain, and its name does not once occur in the New Testament. In the Old Testament it is repeatedly named, and is historically celebrated as the rendezvous of the army which, under the direction of Deborah, Barak collected for the mighty conflict with the hosts of Sisera, Judges iv. 6. This mountain stands out alone

and eminent at the end of the plain of Esdraelon, with all its fine proportions conspicuously displayed. This peculiarity has perhaps led to the exaggerated notions which have been entertained of its height. Old travellers estimated its altitude by miles ; but gradually, as men thought less of marvels and more of accuracy, report brought it down to one mile, half a mile, quarter of a mile ; and at length it has been, by barometrical measurement, found to be 1,905 feet above the level of the sea, and 1,432 feet



MOUNT TABOR.

above that of the plain at its base. Viewed from the south-west, this remarkable mountain presents a semi-globular appearance ; but from the north-west it bears more resemblance to a truncated cone. The mountain is of limestone, and the sides are mostly covered with bushes, and with woods of oak, and occasionally pistachio trees, presenting a fine appearance and affording a pleasant shade. Here are also the larch-tree, the terebinth, the holly, and the myrtle, not to mention a large variety of other plants and flowers which cover the surface of this most beautiful mountain. Nor are the woods of Tabor tenantless. Pan-

thers and wild boars have been found in their recesses ; and the wild rock-goat and the fallow-deer have been observed ; red partridges have also been noticed in large numbers. By an ancient pathway we may ride to the summit in one hour, and the ascent has been made in even less time.

The crest of the mountain is found to be an oval plain, about a quarter of a mile in its greatest length, covered by a bed of fertile soil on the west, and having at its eastern end a mass of ruins, seemingly the vestiges of churches, grottoes, stony walls, and fortifications, all appearing to be of some antiquity, and a few the work of a very remote age. Three of the grottoes are absurdly pointed out by the local guides as the remains of the three tabernacles which Peter *proposed* to erect for Jesus, Moses, and Elias. No particular history has been assigned to the other remains. The whole appears to have been once inclosed with a strong wall, a large portion of which still remains entire on the south side, having its firm foundations in the solid rock ; and this appears to be the most ancient part, and to these we may perhaps attribute a very high antiquity, for the mountain seems from the very earliest times to have been employed for a military post, for which it is admirably adapted. We know from Josephus that it was thus occupied in the time of Christ. This fact alone seems to disprove its claim to be regarded as the Mount of the Transfiguration, as it is clear that this solemn event took place in some solitary spot, and Galilee abounds in "high mountains apart," which correspond sufficiently to the Scriptural indications.

From the summit of Mount Tabor there is one of the most extensive and interesting prospects which the country affords, although wherever one stands, one edge or another of the table land intervenes, to make a small break in the distant horizon. To the south is discovered a series of valleys and mountains, extending as far as Jerusalem, fifty miles distant ; to the east, the valley of the Jordan, with the lake of Tiberias, appear as beneath the feet, the lake itself seeming as if inclosed in the crater of a volcano ; to the north are the plains of Galilee, backed by mountains, beyond which are visible, to the north-east, the snow-capped summits of Jebel esh-Sheikh, the Hermon of Scripture. To the west, the horizon line of the Mediterranean appears over the range of land near the coast, and portions of its

blue surface are seen through the openings left by the downward bends in the outline of the western hills.

In order to make ourselves acquainted with the other places worthy of notice in the province of Nasirah, we shall first turn eastward to Deburieh, which lies about two hours distant from Nazareth. It is a small and unimportant village, lying on the side of a ledge of rocks, just at the base of Tabor. It is said to have once had a Christian church, the ruins of which are still visible. This is probably the **DABERATH** of the Old Testament, belonging to Issachar, but assigned to the Levites, Josh. xix. 12 ; xxi. 28 ; 1 Chron. vi. 72. South-west of this, in the plain, upon a low rocky ridge or mound, not far from the foot of the northern hills, is the village of Iksal, where there are many sepulchres hewn in the rock. "Some of them," says Pococke, "are like stone coffins above ground ; others are cut into the rock like graves ; some of them having stone covers over them, so that formerly this might be no inconsiderable place." It is probably the **CHESULLOTH**, and **CHISLOTH TABOR** of the book of Joshua, Josh. xix. 12, 18, in the border of Zebulon and Issachar.

Still more to the south, indeed quite in the southernmost portion of the province, and therefore in the great plain west of Solam, lie the ruined villages Fuleh and Afuleh, both situate near the low watershed at the head of the valley of Jezreel. Fuleh has become celebrated in modern times as the central point of the battle, in 1799, between the French and the Turkish army, advancing from Damascus for the relief of Acre, commonly known as the battle of Mount Tabor. But the place has a still older renown, as the site of a fortress in the time of the Crusades, known among the Arabs as Fuleh, and among the Franks as the Castle Faba, and occupied by the Knights Hospitallers and Templars in common, but eventually captured by Saladin in 1187. In connexion with the operations of the French in these parts, the following extract from Burckhardt will be read with interest :—

"When the French invaded Syria, Nazareth was occupied by six or eight hundred men, whose advanced posts were at Tubariyeh and Safed. Two hours from Nazareth, general Kleber sustained, with a corps not exceeding fifteen hundred men, the attack of the whole Syrian army, amounting to at least twenty-five thousand. He was posted

in the plain of Esdraelon, near the village of Fuleh, where he formed his battalion into a square, which continued fighting from sunrise to mid-day, until they had exhausted almost all their ammunition. Bonaparte, informed of Kleber's perilous situation, advanced to his support with six hundred men. No sooner had he come in sight of the enemy, and fired a shot over the plain, than the Turks, supposing that a large force was advancing, took precipitately to flight, during which several thousand were killed, and many drowned in the river of Deburieh, which then inundated a part of the plain. Bonaparte dined at Nazareth, . . . and returned the same day to Akka."

At the distance of about half an hour south-west of Nazareth, is the small village of Yafa, containing about thirty houses, with the remains of a church, and a few palm trees. Tradition regards this place as the residence of Zebedee, and his two sons, James and John, whence it bears among the Latin monks the name of St. Giacomo (St. James). The name Yafa may be regarded as identifying the place with the JAPHIA which the Scripture places in the border of Zebulon, Josh. xix. 12. This was probably the same with the Japha, a large and strong village in Galilee, which Josephus fortified, and which was afterwards captured by Trajan and Titus, under the orders of Vespasian. In the storm and sack of this place, according to this writer, fifteen thousand of the inhabitants were put to the sword, and 2,130 made captives.

About two miles south-west of Yafa is Jebata, near the brow of the hills skirting the plain of Esdraelon. It is not named in Scripture, but is conjectured to be the place which, in the fourth century, Eusebius and Jerome mention under the name of Gabatha.

Nearly west by north from the above named Yafa, upon a hill, stands the small village, Semunieh, in which we may without difficulty recognise the Simonias of Josephus, whom the Romans here attempted to surprise by night and take prisoner. The place is not named in Scripture.

More to the north,—that is, north by west from Nazareth,—is the small village of Sefurieh, lying at the foot of an isolated hill, on which are the ruins of a large castle. This name is obviously the Sepphoris of Josephus, and the Isippori of the rabbins, a place not noticed in Scripture, but afterwards called by the Romans Diocæsarea. This

place is often mentioned by Josephus, and seems to have been, in the time of our Lord, a town of much importance. It is indeed stated, that after it had been rebuilt and fortified by Herod Antipas, it became the largest and strongest city in Galilee, and at length took precedence even of Tiberias. There were here many synagogues; and after the destruction of Jerusalem, the great Jewish Sanhedrim is said to have been transferred to Sepphoris, for some years before it went to Tiberias. The Jews were still the most numerous inhabitants of the place in A. D. 339, when it was destroyed by the Romans in consequence of their rebellion. During the Crusades it became celebrated for the large fountain in the neighbourhood, which made it the rendezvous of warlike hosts. Here was formerly the tomb of the celebrated Rabbi Judah Hakkadosh (or, the holy), who died at Sepphoris; and a legend of no very ancient date makes it the residence of Joachim and Anna, the reputed parents of the virgin Mary, and upon the hill, the remains of a church dedicated to her may yet be seen. At the present day, Sefurieh is a poor village, situated about half a mile below the ruins of the castle. It received little or no injury from the earthquake in 1837, by which this region was devastated. In the middle of the last century, Hasselquist describes the inhabitants as raising great quantities of bees, and obtaining considerable profit from the honey.

The CANA of the New Testament, where our Lord turned the water into wine, is placed by the monks, and by all travellers, till Robinson, at Kefr Kenna, a small village an hour and a half north-east of Nazareth, on one of the roads to Tiberias. It lies upon an eminence connected with the hills of Nazareth. Here are shown the remains of a Greek church, and of a house reputed to have been that of St. Bartholomew. Robinson, however, was shown from the wely above Nazareth, at about three hours' distance north by east, a ruin called Kana el-Jelil. It lay at the foot of the northern hills beyond the plain of el-Buttauf, apparently on the slope of an eminence. In the days of Quaresmius it contained a few houses, but is not now inhabited. "Now," says Robinson, "as far as the prevalence of an ancient name among the people is a medium for the identity of an ancient site,—and I hold it to be among the strongest of all testimony, when, as here, not subject to extraneous

influences, but rather in opposition to them,—so far is the weight of evidence in favour of the northern Kana el-Jelil, as the true site of the ancient Cana of Galilee. The name is identical, and stands the same in the Arabic version of the New Testament; while the form Kefr Kenna can only by force be twisted into a like shape. On this single ground, therefore, we should be authorized to reject the present



FOUNTAIN AT CANA.

monastic position of Cana, and fix the site at Kana el-Jelil; which, likewise, is sufficiently near to Nazareth to accord with all the circumstances of the history." But, in addition to this, there is historical evidence that an earlier tradition actually regarded the present Kana el-Jelil as the ancient Cana; and that it is only since the sixteenth century that monastic convenience has definitively assigned Kefr Kenna as the site. Early travellers, in describing the Cana which *they* visited, may be clearly shown, from distances and directions, to mean the Kana el-Jelil; and so well was this tradition understood and established, that Marinus Sanutus, who visited the place about A.D. 1321, and indicates its site beyond the possibility of mistake, states that here the place was professedly shown where the six water-pots

had stood; and also the triclinium where the feast was held; but the whole was in a crypt or cavern under ground, like the grotto of the Annunciation or of the Nativity. The Cana of the New Testament does not occur in the Old, but it is mentioned by Josephus as a village of Galilee. Our Lord not only performed here his first miracle, but afterwards visited the place; and the disciple Nathanael was a native of Cana. John ii. 1, 11; iv. 46; xxi. 2.

At el-Meshad, a village on a high hill, about a mile south-west of Kefr Kenna, is one of the many Moslem tombs of Nebi Yunas, the prophet Jonah. And hence modern monastic tradition has adopted this village as the GATH-HEPHER, in the tribe of Zebulun, where the prophet was born, 2 Kings xiv. 25. This, indeed, coincides with the position which Jerome assigns to this place, and which the Rabbi Benjamin of Tudela gives to the sepulchre of Jonah. Nearer to Nazareth, in the same direction, is a village called er-Reineh, which was reduced to a heap of ruins by the earthquake of 1837.

It has already been stated that the acropolis or citadel of Beisan is visible from Zerin, being at the mouth, towards Jordan, of the same valley at whose head the latter town lies, at the distance of about five miles. The present village contains not more than seventy or eighty houses, and the inhabitants are about two hundred in number. They are described as a fanatical set, and have become rather notorious among travellers for their lawless and rapacious demeanour. Both the name and situation show this to be the ancient BETH-SHEAN, whose remains, of considerable extent, are still to be seen, along the banks of the rivulet which waters the town, and in the valleys formed by its several branches; and must be nearly three miles in circuit. The chief remains are large heaps of black hewn stones, with many foundations of houses and fragments of a few columns. There are also traces of a Roman theatre; and we find excavated tombs, with sarcophagi remaining in some of them, and several of the doors still hanging on the ancient hinges of stone, in remarkable preservation. The acropolis is a high circular hill, on the top of which are traces of the walls by which it was once encompassed. Two streams run through the ruins of the city, almost surrounding the acropolis, and uniting below. Over one of these streams is a fine Roman bridge; and on the left bank of the

same stream is a large khan, affording a place of repose to the caravans which take the shortest road from Jerusalem to



BETH-SHEAN.

Damascus, crossing the Jordan the below Lake of Tiberias. Thus, therefore, singularly enough, the place still affords some correspondence with the signification of its ancient name, "the house of rest,"—a beautiful name, suggestive of much matter for thought and prayer to those who desire that this land may, ere long, be full of the houses of those who have found rest in Christ—who is, indeed, himself the true "house of rest," to every living soul. All seek rest somewhere; it is the great good for which all sigh, and which all seek after, but which none of the seekers ever find until they know that it is to be found only in Him.

Beth-shean is principally mentioned in Scripture as the place to whose walls the Philistines hanged the body of Saul, after the disastrous overthrow of the host of Israel at Gilboa; but from which it was stolen away by night by the inhabitants of Jabesh Gilead, who thus at the fatal close of Saul's reign evinced their grateful remembrance of the service he had rendered them at the commencement, in delivering them from the hands of the Ammonites. The ancient importance of the place is also indicated by the fact that in the reign of Solomon it was the station of one of

the king's purveyors, showing, seemingly, that it was the most important town of one of the twelve districts into which the land was for the purposes of this service divided, 1 Sam. xxxi. 10, 12; 2 Sam. xxi. 12; 1 Kings iv. 12. Not long after the Captivity, the place acquired the Greek name of Scythopolis—some think from a colony of the Scythians, who are reported to have made an incursion into Palestine in the time of king Josiah; but others rather, and perhaps with greater probability, find the source of its name in the vicinity of Succoth, which lay somewhere in this quarter, near to the Jordan. Under this new name Beth-shean became a town of consequence, and in the fourth century was still a noble city. But it had much declined in the time of the Crusades; and in A.D. 1182 it was consigned by Saladin to the flames.

XI.—TIBERIAS.



THE LAKE OF TIBERIAS.

THE district of Tabariyeh, the modern form of the ancient name Tiberias, includes about two-thirds of the Lake of Tiberias (the excluded part being the northernmost), with the shore on both sides. But the greatest portion of it lies on the western side, where it extends on the south-west as far as Mount Tabor.

Of the lake, which is mostly included in this province, we shall first speak, and that as a whole, or comprehending the northern portion excluded from the province. This lake is of much Scriptural interest, for our Saviour generally abode upon its shores after the commencement of his public ministry; and these shores and waters formed the undoubted scene of many of his miracles. The existence of the lake is scarcely indicated in the Old Testament; but in the definition of boundaries it occurs as the Sea of Chinnereth, Num. xxxiv. 11; Josh. xii. 3; xiii. 27, from a town of the same name upon its border. In the books of Maccabees and in Josephus it is called the Sea of

Gennesareth. In the New Testament it is generally called the Sea of Galilee, but by John the Sea of Tiberias, John vi. 1, and xxi. 1.

The sacred recollections which the spot excites, the clear and placid surface of the lake, and the deep blue of the heavens which arch it over, naturally impress the minds of travellers, and induce them to dwell with peculiarly warm interest upon the scenery, which, apart from these considerations, offers nothing very remarkable to those acquainted with inland lakes. The varying accounts which have been given, however, depend in some degree upon the time of the year when their visits are made. The scenery of the lake in the season of spring and early summer, when the shores and inclosing hills, especially on the western side, are clothed in various shades of rich and luxuriant verdure, present a very different aspect from that which is witnessed, and make a very different impression from that which is experienced, when the herbage is dried up by extreme drought in a later season of the year, and when everything around the whole cincture of the lake offers a withered and barren appearance.

With the explanation that Dr. Robinson's visit was far in the month of June, when the scenery was subject to this disadvantage, we may cite his description of the lake:—"We reached the brow of the height above Tiberias, where a view of nearly the whole sea opened at once upon us. It was a moment of no little interest; for who can look without interest upon that lake on whose shores our Saviour lived so long, and where he performed so many of his mighty works? Yet to me, I must confess, so long as we continued around the lake, the attraction lay more in these recollections than in the scenery itself. The lake presents indeed a beautiful sheet of limpid water, in a deep depressed basin, from which the shores rise, in general, steeply and continuously all around, except where a valley, or occasionally a deep ravine interrupts them. The hills are rounded and tame, with little of the picturesque in their form; they are decked by no shrubs or forests; and even the verdure of the grass and herbage, which earlier in the season might give them a pleasing aspect, was already gone; they were now only naked and dreary. Whoever looks here for the magnificence of the Swiss lakes, or for the softer beauty of those of England and the United States, will be disappointed. My expectations had not been of

that kind; yet from the romantic character of the scenery around the Dead Sea, and in other parts of Palestine, I certainly had anticipated something more striking than we found around the lake of Tiberias. One interesting object greeted our eyes, a little boat with a white sail glided over the waters; the only one, as we afterwards found, upon all the lake."

This vessel is, we suppose, the one employed in bringing firewood from the eastern border of the lake for the use of the inhabitants of Tiberias—a poor representative of the numerous vessels which appeared upon the lake in the time of our Saviour, some engaged in fishing, some in the conveyance of commodities, and others in maintaining the intercourse between the opposite sides of the lake, and between the numerous large and small towns which lined its shores—and a still less adequate representative of the proud "galleys with oars," which, in all the panoply of ancient warfare, appeared upon the lake in the great and fatal Jewish war.

The lake is, in fact, an expansion of the Jordan. Its form is an irregular oval, much narrower at the southern extremity than at the northern. The length is about twelve miles, and the greatest breadth about six miles. On the southern part of the lake, and along the whole eastern coast, the height of the steep, yet not precipitous mountain wall may be estimated at eight hundred or one thousand feet above the water. On the west, the summit of what appear to be mountainous cliffs, from below, is found to be little above the level of the great high plain north of Tabor, although fully one thousand feet above the surface of the lake; and in like manner the mountains of the east spread out into the high uneven table-land of Jaulan (Gaulonitis). The cited figures show that the depth of the basin is little less than one thousand feet below the high plains among which it lies. Its actual depth below the level of the Mediterranean was not ascertained till 1841, when Lieutenant Symonds of the Royal Engineers found it to be 328.98 feet below that level. Along the north-west part the inclosing elevations are lower, and the neighbourhood behind them uneven. The hills here rise gradually upward from the shore, and in their commencement cannot be more than from three to five hundred feet high.

The water of the lake is clear and pleasant to the taste, and is, as of old time, rich in fish. It has been ascer-

tained that among the finny inhabitants of the lake are several species of carp, including the Benni, or *Cyprinus Benni*, the Mesht of Burckhardt, which is perhaps the same with the *Sparus Galilæus* of Hasselquist. There is also that species of *Mormyrus* which Sir J. G. Wilkinson takes to be the *Oxyrinchus* of the ancients, together with several species of *Silurus*, including the Karmut, or *Silurus anguil-laris*, the Hafafi, a fish with large cirri, and various others. The number of edible fishes in the lake, though still great, is said to be less than before the earthquake of 1837. Hasselquist notices the identity of some of the species with those found in the Nile. This identity is referred to so early as the time of Josephus.

Notwithstanding this abundance of excellent fish, there are no fishing vessels upon the lake. A little fishing immediately upon the shore is sufficient to meet the demands of the immediate neighbourhood, and this fishery is farmed out by the government to certain individuals.

Dr. Wilson observed a bird about the size of a goose, swimming about in considerable numbers up and down the whole lake, particularly near the shore. He also noticed a great many kingfishers of a large species, carrying on their vocation at the south end of the lake. They generally made a sort of gyration in the air before they dropped down to seize their prey. Here also were seen a few Rollers; and it is noted that the jay is not with the Arabs of this country, as by the Hindoos, deemed an unlucky bird.

The low situation of the valleys and the passes opening into the lake, which are protected by the mountains on the east and north from the coldest winds, gives to the deep basin of the lake and to its contiguous valleys, a tropical climate and a corresponding vegetation. About Tiberias are seen isolated palms, and further north the thorny Nubk tree,* and the oleander are found. Indigo is also raised, but in no great quantity. The usual products of the fields are wheat, barley, millet, tobacco, and a few vegetables. The melons raised along the shores of the lake are said by Burckhardt to be of the finest quality, and to be in great demand at Acre and Damascus, where that much-prized fruit ripens nearly a month later. This fact is strongly indicative of the earlier and greater warmth of the climate in this depressed basin,—though in these respects it will not bear comparison with the still more

* The Lotus tree—*Rhamnus Nabeca*, or *Zizyphus Lotus*.

depressed and more completely inclosed plain of the Jordan near Jericho, where the climate is warmer, and the products more tropical. The season is likewise so much more in advance, that the harvest is over a month earlier at Jericho than at Tiberias. The great variety of climate embraced within the narrow bounds of Palestine affords materials for many interesting and curious comparisons of this nature.

The main geological formation along the lake is everywhere limestone; but around Tiberias black basaltic stones are found scattered upon the ground, and the walls and houses of the town are in part built of them. Towards the north end of the lake they are much more frequent, and in some places thickly cover the ground. This circumstance, taken in connexion with the hot springs near Tiberias and the tepid fountains along the western shore, together with the frequent and violent earthquakes, appears to offer very manifest indications of the volcanic nature of the basin of the lake and the surrounding region.

Upon the west shore of the lake, from Mejdal to Khan Minyeh, the cliffs recede triangularly, and leave upon the shore a fertile plain of rich black loam. This is called el-Ghweir (the lesser Ghor), and is supposed to be the district Gennesar (Gennesareth) of Josephus, and that which is in the Gospels, Matt. xiv. 34; Mark vi. 53, as, "the land of Gennesaret."

The position of the lake of Tiberias, embosomed deep in the midst of higher tracts of country, necessarily exposes it to gusts of wind, and in winter to tempests. One such storm is recorded during the course of our Lord's ministry; but, as Robinson remarks, in order to account for this, it is surely not necessary to assume (as is sometimes done), any particularly tempestuous character in the lake itself; nor does it appear from the testimony of the ancients either, or of the present inhabitants, that storms are more frequent within the basin itself than in the region round about.

The town of Tabariyeh, the modern representative of TIBERIAS, lies directly upon the shore, at a point where the mountains retire a little, leaving a narrow slip, not exactly of plain, but of undulating land, nearly two miles in length along the lake. At the back of this, the mountain ridge rises steeply. The town is situated near the northern end of this tract, in the form of a narrow parallelogram, about half a mile long, surrounded towards the land by a thick wall,

not far from twenty feet high, with towers at regular intervals; but the walls, as well as the turrets, are in many places rent, broken, and breached, so that the inhabitants do not consider themselves safe from the inroads of the



TIBERIAS

Arab tribes. Here, and throughout the city, we see the effects of the great earthquake of 1837, which consigned some hundreds of the inhabitants to death, and the survivors to poverty and woe. Towards the sea the town is open; but at the north-west corner is the castle or citadel, an irregular mass of building, of no great strength. Like most of the other public buildings of the place, it sustained great injury from the earthquake, and is still in a dilapidated condition, although the residence of the governor. The church of St. Peter is said to have been built over the spot where the miraculous draught of fishes was brought to shore. It was never an attractive building, being merely a plain arched vault, of an oblong form, and some length. Many of the houses which were thrown down by the earthquake have not yet been re-erected; and those which have been lately built are, generally speaking, of very unsubstantial materials. Upon the whole, the town of Tiberias

presents but a mean appearance to those who approach it, and does not improve when they get within its walls.

The entire population of Tiberias is about two thousand, of whom nearly one half are Jews. This unusual proportion of the descendants of Abraham excites peculiar interest respecting their condition in this chief seat of their abode in the land of their fathers. Here, as in other parts of the world, even where not constrained thereto, they live in a particular part of the town by themselves. It is that which lies in the south-east corner, towards the sea. A residence at Tiberias is highly valued by them, because of the ancient renown of the place in connexion with Jewish literature, and because they expect that the Messiah will make his appearance in the parts of Galilee bordering on the Lake of Tiberias—a remarkable fact, when it is borne in mind that the true Messiah was rejected by them on this ground among others, that he did, as it seemed to them, come from this part of the land. It is understood that they found this expectation upon Isa. ix. 1, 2; not knowing—but may they soon know—that this very passage has found an application in the Gospel to the very neighbourhood in which they dwell: for Matthew, after reciting that Jesus left Nazareth and “came and dwelt in Capernaum, which is upon the sea-coast, in the borders of Zabulon and Nephthalim:” adds, “that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by Esaias the prophet, saying, The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephthalim, by the way of the sea, beyond Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles; the people which sat in darkness saw great light; and to them which sat in the region and shadow of death light is sprung up,” Matt. iv. 13—16.

This place and Safed are the holy places of the modern Jews in Galilee, as Jerusalem and Hebron are in Judæa; and it is their belief that if prayer in these four sacred spots be once interrupted, the world would forthwith relapse into its primeval chaos. The Jews of Tiberias are from different lands. About one-fourth are Ashkenazim, chiefly of Polish origin, very few Germans; the rest, forming the great bulk, are Sephardim, chiefly from Spain, Barbary, and different parts of Syria. The greater part of the Jews who reside in this and the three other holy places, do not engage in mercantile pursuits; but may be regarded as a society of religious persons assumed to be solely occupied with their sacred duties. Burckhardt, to whom we owe much

information on this subject, knew of but two merchants, and these were styled Kafirs, or unbelievers, by the others, who did nothing but read and pray. Jewish devotees from all parts of the world flock to these holy places in order to pass their days in praying for their own salvation, and for that of their brethren who remain occupied in worldly pursuits. The belief, to which reference has been already made, produces considerable pecuniary advantage to the supplicants, as the missionaries, sent forth to collect alms for these religious fraternities, plead the danger of the threatened chaos, to induce the rich Jews to send supplies of money in order that the prayers may be continually offered up.

The pilgrim Jews who repair to Tiberias are of all ages, from twelve to sixty. If they bring a little money with them, they are soon deprived of it by the cunning of their brethren; for as they arrive with the most extravagant ideas of the holy cities, they are easily imposed upon before their enthusiasm begins to cool. To rent a house in which some learned rabbi or saint has died, to visit the tombs of the most renowned devotees, to have the sacred books opened in their presence, and public prayers read for the salvation of the new comers—all these highly-prized advantages, together with various lesser crafty devices, covered with the garb of religion, soon strip the simple stranger of his last farthing. He then, in his turn, becomes dependent upon the charity of his nation, upon foreign subsidies, and upon the fervour of inexperienced pilgrims.

The Jewish devotees pass the whole day in the schools, reciting the Old Testament and the Talmud, both of which some of them are said to know entirely by heart. They all write Hebrew; but specimens of fine handwriting, on which educated Jews commonly pride themselves, are rarely to be seen among them. Their learning seemed to Burckhardt to be on a level with that of the Turks, among whom it is considered that an ulema has attained the pinnacle of human knowledge if he can recite all the Koran, together with some thousand of Hadeath, or sentences of the Prophet, and traditions concerning him; and Burckhardt affirms that neither Jews, nor Turks, nor Christians, in these countries, have the slightest idea of that critical study which might guide them to the better understanding and clearer exposition of their sacred books. "It was in vain," he says, "that I put questions to several of the first rabbis, concerning the desert in which the children of Israel

sojourned for forty years ; I found that my own scanty knowledge of the geography of Palestine, and of its partition among the twelve tribes, was superior to theirs."

There are some beautiful copies of the Books of Moses in the Syrian synagogue, written upon a long roll of leather, not parchment. No one could tell Burckhardt when or where they were made, but he suspects—and our own information confirms his impression—that they came from Bagdad, where the best Hebrew scribes live, and of whose writings very fine specimens may be often seen at Aleppo and Damascus. The libraries of the two schools at Tiberias are moderately stocked with Hebrew books, most of which have been printed at Venice and Vienna. Except some copies of the Old Testament and the Talmud, they have no manuscripts.

Burckhardt speaks of "a singular custom" among the Jews here, which, however, Dr. Wilson states to be peculiar to the Ashkenazim. It is stated that while the rabbi recites the Psalms of David, or the prayers extracted from them, the congregation frequently imitate by their voice or gestures, the significance of some remarkable passages : for example, when the rabbi pronounces the words "Praise the Lord with the sound of the trumpet," they imitate the sound of the trumpet through their closed fists. When "a horrible tempest" occurs, they puff and blow to imitate a storm ; or should he mention "the cries of the righteous in distress," they all set up a loud screaming ; "and it not unfrequently happens," says Burckhardt, "that while some are still blowing the storm, others have already begun the cries of the righteous, thus forming a concert which it is difficult for any but a zealous Hebrew to hear with gravity." Dr. Wilson adds, with reference to the customs of worship among the same people, "Never did we see a more affecting sight than where we witnessed the worship of the Khasidim at Tiberias. They roared aloud, as if they wished to be heard at Jerusalem, twisted their garments with their hands, stamped with their feet, contorted their faces, and wept most piteously, as if labouring under the greatest mental agony. Their delusion, and their impatience for the advent of the Messiah, seemed uncontrollable. Yet on leaving the synagogue they returned to their houses in peace—slowly enough, indeed, according to the rabbinical rule, to mark their reluctance to leave the house of God."

The Sephardim Jews at Tiberias are under the authority of their own Hakim. They are seldom interfered with by the authorities of the pashalic of Acre, to whom Tiberias belongs ; and they are left to settle their own religious affairs among themselves. They pay a tax of 3,500 piastres annually to the Turkish government. They speak among themselves the Spanish, Hebrew, and Arabic languages—particularly the last, which is vernacular to most of them. Very few of them, however, can read Arabic, or even know the Arabic letters. The Ashkenazim are mostly from Austrian and Russian Poland, and the Polish is the language in which they converse with one another ; but their intercourse with their brethren the Sephardim is chiefly carried on in Hebrew. Most of them have passports, and are under the consular protection of their respective countries. Hence they do not, like the Sephardim, pay any capitation tax to the Turkish government.

Dr. Wilson relates that in conversing with some of the heads of the Sephardim on the subject of the Jews embracing Christianity, they said they were much offended at Jewish converts marrying Gentile wives. Their liberty to do so as Christians was vindicated ; on which they said, " Their offspring must be then impure." " How so ? " it was asked : " had not David, the beloved king, of whom the Messiah, according to your own belief, is to be, Ruth the Moabitess for his great-grandmother ? " This question proved a hard one to them ; and they began to search through some old dusty volumes for an answer.

This conversation, like all others stated in this work, and many more of the same kind which travellers furnish, have an important use even to ourselves, in the force with which they impress upon the mind the necessity of those regenerating influences upon the heart—whether of the Jew, the nominal Christian, the Druze, or the Moslem—through which alone it can be made fit to receive, or capable of holding fast, the Saviour. It is felt that till the Spirit has sown the seed, there is no sign, no hope of even the blade, much less of the full corn in the ear or of the harvest. There is not—there cannot be till then, any true apprehension of Christ as the Divine Redeemer, or any value of or even relish for the salvation bought by his blood. There is no resource from the pain and discouragement growing out of these discussions with unbelievers, but in prayer for the outpouring of the Spirit : and in the deeply affecting case

of the Jews, how earnestly it is to be desired that instead of turning to "old dusty volumes" for answers, they may turn to and be Divinely made to understand the full meaning of that passage in their own Scripture, Isa. xlv. 3—5, in which the Lord promises to pour his Spirit upon the seed, and his blessing upon the offspring of Jacob. This promise is sure, and will be fulfilled in its time. In *this* there is hope.

Josephus states that the city of Tiberias was founded by Herod Antipas, and named Tiberias in compliment to the reigning emperor, Tiberius. The question has been raised, whether Tiberias, as built by Herod, was an entirely new erection, or was raised upon the foundation of some older town? Jerome in his commentary upon Ezekiel, intimates that it was originally the Chinnereth, which gave its name to the district and the lake; while the Talmud identifies it with the Rakkath, which is associated with Hammath and Chinnereth in Josh. xix. 35. Neither of these identifications seems to us open to much objection, although there appears no means of deciding which of them is entitled to the preference. It is more certain that as adorned and fortified by Antipas, Tiberias became the capital of Galilee, until it was presented by Nero to Agrippa II. who transferred the preeminence to Sepphoris. In the Jewish war, the place was fortified by Josephus, and in the history of that eventful time its name is of frequent occurrence. It readily submitted to Vespasian, and thereby preserved and increased its privileges. After the destruction of Jerusalem the Sanhedrim proceeded thither, and Tiberias became from that time the head quarters of Jewish learning in Palestine; from which, in process of time, emanated the Mishna, a fundamental portion of the Talmud. Until the days of Constantine, the Jews remained in exclusive possession of the city; but at that period a Christian church was built there, and from A. D. 449, bishops of Tiberias are traced in the signatures of the councils. In the year 637, the city was brought under subjection to the Saracens. In the Crusades, the district was committed as a fief to Tancred, by Godfrey of Bouillon, who subdued Tiberias and restored the bishopric. The place remained in the hands of the Christians until taken from them by Saladin, from which time it has remained (save in the years 1240-1247) under the dominion of the Moslems. It seems to be only within the last one hundred

and fifty years that the Jews have begun to return to the spot.

About three miles north-west of Tiberias, upon the shore of the lake, we came to Mejdol, a miserable little Moham-medan village, looking much like a ruin, though bearing no marks of antiquity except its name, which is manifestly



MAGDALA.

the same with the Hebrew MIGDAL-EL, Josh. xix. 38, and the MAGDALA of the New Testament, Matt. xv. 29, chiefly remarkable as the native town of Mary Magdalene.

Half an hour west from Mejdol, in the high perpendicular cliff which forms the north-west side of Wady el-Hamam, are situated the singular remains of Kulat Ibn Maan, called also Kulat Hamam (Pigeon's Castle), on account of the vast numbers of wild pigeons that breed there. Here, writes Burckhardt, "in the calcareous mountains are many natural caverns, which have been united together by passages cut in the rock, and enlarged to render them more commodious for habitation. Walls have also been built across the natural openings, so that

no person could enter them except through the narrow communicating passages. And wherever the nature of the almost perpendicular cliff permitted it, small bastions were erected to defend the entrance of the castle, which has thus been rendered almost impregnable. The perpendicular cliff forms its protection above; and the access below is by a narrow path, so steep as not to allow of a horse mounting it. In the midst of the caverns several deep cisterns have been hewn. The whole might afford refuge to about six hundred men; but the walls are now much damaged. A few vaults of communication, with pointed arches, denote Gothic architecture." Burckhardt seems to have regarded this as the work of some mighty robber during the Crusades; but Robinson remarks that the description accords remarkably with the account given by Josephus, of certain fortified caverns near the village of Arbela in Galilee, which in the time of Herod the Great were occupied by robbers, and which Josephus himself afterwards fortified against the Romans.

At the upper end of the same cleft or gap, on the south side, are the remains of what appears to have been an ancient town. It is called Irbid, and Dr. Robinson sees good reason for supposing that this is the Arbela of Josephus, the form Irbid being probably a corruption of Irbil, synonymous with Arbela, or rather Arbla. This may also have been the BETH-ARBEL of the prophet, Hosea x. 14.

If we set out from Tiberias for an excursion along the south-west shore of the lake, to the emergence of the Jordan, we find outside the walls of the present town considerable ruins of different edifices, including some shafts and fragments of grey granite columns, and one of the red Theban granite, which must all have been brought from a distance, as no rock corresponding with them is known to exist in Palestine. The erection to which they belong must have stood close to the lake, whose waters now cover part of the ruins. This may possibly be the remains of the heathen temple, called the Adrianum, which the emperor Adrian erected at Tiberias, and which was changed into a Christian church in the time of Constantine. Some, with apparently less reason, think that we have here the remains of the great Jewish college of the ancient Rabbis of Tiberias.

As we pass on, we may notice in the face of the rock

bounding the narrow plain, the black basalt breaking through the cretaceous strata. In these strata there are numerous caves and sepulchres, in which many of the distinguished rabbis of the school of Tiberias are said to be interred. Remains of buildings of various kinds are to be seen as far as the Hamam or baths, although we learn from Josephus, that they were four stadia (about half a mile) from Tiberias; they are over a mile from the present town. There are five or six springs a little distant from one another, the water of which is mostly collected for the baths constructed here, by means of a small channel running across in front of them, and conveyed by it into a covered reservoir from which the baths are supplied. The water which does not find its way into this channel, runs down the sands into the lake in small smoking streamlets, which deposit a yellowish or greenish sediment. The bath over these waters which have a heat of 140° Fahrenheit, was erected by Ibrahim Pasha, during his rule in Syria; and besides this, the old bath, although not kept in good repair, is still in use. The whole establishment is open to the public without distinction. It is highly useful, not only for promoting the cleanliness of the inhabitants of Tiberias, but for affording relief to persons labouring under rheumatic complaints, many of whom repair to the spot from a great distance. The effects of the baths in certain cases of indisposition, are alluded to by Josephus; they are mentioned in the Mishna in connexion with the curious but trifling legislation of the rabbis. The natural composition of the water does not seem to have been analysed; but the taste is salt and bitter, although not excessively so. There is also a slight smell of sulphur, but this substance is not recognisable by the taste.

Dr. Wilson used this bath on his return to Tiberias from a visit to the place where Jordan quits the lake. He says:—"In the belief that we were some great nabobs from India, the people who had come for their ablutions from the town were kept outside, while we remained within the fine erection over the bath made by Ibrahim Pasha when he occupied Syria. We looked through the different rooms of the building. In its principal apartment, there is a round tank for the bathers, about fifteen feet in diameter, and with a depth of water of about fifteen feet. The hot stream is conveyed into it in a pipe terminating

in a lion's mouth. It is surrounded by eight marble pillars. After inspecting it for a few minutes, we went into one of the side rooms, where private baths can be obtained. We disrobed ourselves in one of these, and then returned to the tank to bathe. The heat of the water was found to be well nigh intolerable ; but this was owing in part to the circumstance that, in obedience to our orders, a new supply of water had been let in from the covered reservoir a few yards distant. Both Mr. Smith and I nearly fainted after we had been a few minutes splashing about in the bath, and we had to be helped to a side chamber, where we had to lie a considerable time covered with sheets, before we had strength to put on our clothes.

In about one hour's journey from these baths, and about ten minutes from the termination of the lake, we come to an elevation, with a village called Kerak, which exhibits traces of fortification. This appears to have been the Tarichæa which was fortified by Josephus during the Jewish war, and was taken with much bloodshed by Titus, acting under the orders of Vespasian. This is one of the interesting discoveries of Dr. Robinson, since confirmed by other inquirers and travellers. A few mean houses inhabited by fellahin, or cultivators, stand upon the mounds at the south-west corner of the lake. From this corner, it takes about ten minutes, along the southern border of the sea, to reach the place where the Jordan emerges. The elevation of the bank bounding the water here varies from ten to forty feet ; but it is not precipitous unless for a few paces. A path, though not always a very easy one, may be found at the brink of the waters below. A small bank of sand and gravel seems to run along the south of the lake east of the Jordan. The margin of the Jordan itself, at the west side, is level for about twenty yards. Here may be found many beautiful oleanders, intermixed with high reeds and rushes. This rank vegetation continues along the river more or less to the south. The water as it issues from the lake is found to be clear as crystal, which is not its character as it enters it from the north. The river is here estimated at thirty feet wide, and about six feet in depth in the middle of the stream.

XII.—SAFED.

THIS province lies to the north of Tiberias, and includes the northern part of the lake of that name. On the north it extends to the Ard el-Huleh, and includes the lake Huleh ; on the east it reaches to the mountains beyond the Jordan ; and on the west it is bounded by the districts of Jebel and Shaghur.

The chief town of the district is also called Safed. It stands upon a high isolated hill or peak, rising upon the northern end of a steep ridge, which extends south-south-west between two deep valleys. The most elevated point of Safed is toward the north. It is conical, and is crowned by a castle ; and this castellated summit rises high and rocky, not only above the deep valley at the north end of the ridge, and the heads of the eastern and western valleys, but also above the southern part of the ridge itself. The town is properly divided into three distinct quarters, separated by the nature of the ground. One is upon a lower southern summit, over against the castle ; another below the castle, at the head of the eastern valley ; and the third upon the steep western and north-western side of the main summit, immediately below the castle. This last is the quarter of the Jews, and between this and the southern quarter is the market. The Moslems occupy the southern and eastern quarters. Their houses are chiefly built of stone, and seem to have more solidity than those of the Jews ; and the people appear to be of a more active and enterprising race than those further south. The costume also begins to be different ; for here is first seen the short close jacket, with embroidered sleeves hanging loose from the shoulders, which is regarded as forming part of the Turkish costume. The Jewish quarter is more slightly and more crowdedly built. Clinging to the steep western declivity below the castle, their houses are often of mud, and stand in rows one above another, almost like the seats

of an amphitheatre ; so that in some instances the flat roof actually serves as the street for those next above.

Safed seems to have been the centre of the great earthquake of the 1st of January, 1837, and suffered far more than any other place. "The new year," says Dr. Robinson, "was ushered in by the tremendous shocks of an earthquake, which rent the earth in many places, and in a few moments prostrated most of the houses, and buried thousands of the inhabitants of Safed beneath the ruins. The castle was utterly thrown down ; the Mohammedan quarters, standing on more level ground, and being more solidly built, were somewhat less injured ; while here, as at Tiberias, the calamity in its full weight fell with relentless fury upon the ill-fated Jews. The very manner in which their houses were erected along the steep hill-side, exposed them to a more fearful destruction ; for where the terrific shock dashed their dwellings to the ground, those above fell upon those lower down ; so that at length the latter were covered with accumulated masses of ruins. Slight shocks continued at intervals for several weeks ; seeming to aggravate the scene of unspeakable dismay and distress, which now prevailed here. Many were killed outright by the falling ruins ; very many were engulfed, and died a miserable death before they could be dug out ; some were extricated even after five or six days, covered with wounds and bruises, only to prolong for a few hours a painful existence ; while others with broken limbs, but more tenacity of life, lived to recover. The spectacle which was presented for several weeks after the catastrophe, in every quarter, were the wounded, the dying, and the dead, without shelter, without attendance, without a place to lay their head ; on every side wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores, that had not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment. These scenes were described to us by eye-witnesses as inexpressibly painful, and sometimes revolting even to loathsomeness. According to the best accounts, there perished, in all, not far from five thousand persons, of whom about one thousand were Mohammedans, and the rest chiefly Jews." This was out of a population reckoned at eight or nine thousand. The houses are now partly rebuilt ; but it will probably be long before the place assumes its former appearance. The number of new houses, however, gives a sort of fresh aspect to the place, and confers upon these really mean and frail structures

an air of cleanliness and comfort unusual in the east. The streets too, though blocked up in many places with rubbish, are kept tolerably clean by the rains, which sweep down these steep slopes with sufficient force to bear away the offal and filth that, but for this beneficent interference, would no doubt be left in undisturbed occupancy of the town.

Some of the effects of the peculiar mode of building the rows of houses in terraces above each other are described in a lively manner by Dr. Olin. "We stopped in the bazaar, a large area with some ranges of open stalls or sheds around it. The market-place lies between the Mohammedan and Jewish quarters, or rather in the edge of the latter, just north of the first. It is a curious place. As I sat on my horse, the smoke of a kitchen or a cook's shop rose from the earth near me. Upon looking about, I perceived the mouth of the chimney from which it issued rising a few inches above the ground at my horse's feet. I was upon the flat roof of a house, and soon perceived that a considerable portion of the bazaar was undermined in a similar way. The natural hill-side is nearly perpendicular, and it is found easier to place the houses upon one another than to excavate for more solid foundations and a more commodious site. Just on my left hand was a precipice, on approaching the brink of which, I found myself moving upon the tops of the houses that formed the next street, to which the rows of mud-built tenements gave the appearance of a ditch of similar dimensions dug in the earth. There was some show of business in the bazaar; and a considerable quantity of cotton cloths, tobacco, pipes, and various articles of food, were exhibited for sale. The Jews were conspicuous here, and seemed to have the largest share of the business. Only a small proportion, however, of those congregated in the bazaar were doing anything, but most were mere idlers and loungers. Few exhibited any mark of extreme poverty, and nearly all were respectably clad."

Perhaps the best description of Safed which we yet possess is that of Messrs. Bonar and M'Cheyne, whose book, always interesting, is in the part which refers to this quarter peculiarly valuable, for its fulness where other accounts, of higher geographical claims, are remarkably meagre. For this reason, as well as for the Scriptural illustrations which it furnishes, we cite their description of

the same spot as that to which the passage just given bears reference :—

“Returning by the bazaar, we had an opportunity of witnessing the market which is held here weekly. All was bustle and noise, very like a market at home. The Bedouin Arab was there, fully armed, with his long firelock under his arm ; for though he is known to be a robber, yet he attends the market in peace, no one laying hands upon him ; in wonderful fulfilment of the prophecy, ‘His hand will be against every man, and every man’s hand against him ; and he shall dwell in the presence of all his brethren,’ Gen. xvi. 12. Here too were the Syrians, wearing the nose-jewel alluded to by Isaiah, Isa. iii. 21, fastened by a hole bored through the nostril, not so large or uncomely as we had expected. A much more unpleasant, yet common custom, is the staining of the chin and under the mouth with dots of henna.* In many of the shops, the only weights in the balance were smooth stones, which we learn from Prov. xi. 1 ; xvi. 11, (see original) were also used in ancient times. The custom of drying corn and other articles on the roofs of houses here, appears to be as common as it was in the days of Rahab, Josh. ii. 6 ; 2 Sam. xvii. 19. The houses in the streets have their flat roofs so connected, that nothing could be easier or more natural in the course of any alarm, than to walk along the whole length of the street on the housetop without coming down. Indeed, there are some yet remaining where the roofs of the lower row of houses form the pathway of the row above. This was very generally the case in Safed before the earthquake, and, in reference to it, a well-known story is current among the inhabitants. A camel-driver passing along the street suddenly observed his camel sink down. It had been walking on the roof of the house, and the roof had given way. The owner of the house was filled with alarm and anger at seeing the animal descend into his apartment ; he carried the case to the *cadi*, claiming damages for the broken roof of his house. But he was met by the camel-

* We quote this as given, but we suspect some mistake. The henna, which stains of a tawny orange, is used only to tinge the hands and the feet ; the dots spoken of upon the face were always blue, as seen by ourselves, and are certainly not produced by henna. To our taste also, the nose-jewel is a much more hideous custom than the other, which may be compared in some degree with the patches worn by English ladies in the last century.

driver claiming damages from him for the injury his camel had sustained by the fall, owing to the roof not being kept in good repair. We did not hear the decision of the *cadi* on this difficult case."

A very high antiquity has usually been claimed for Safed ; which, however, so far as it depends on any historical accounts, does not appear to be well founded. Modern ecclesiastical tradition, indeed, regards Safed as Bethulia of the book of Judith ; but Dr. Robinson seems to have demonstrated that Bethulia must have lain near the plain of Esdraelon, not far from Dothaim, and guarded one of the passes to Jerusalem. As Safed is visible from the hill which tradition regards as that whereon our Lord delivered his sermon on the mount, it has been supposed that its presence suggested the allusion to "a city that is set on a hill," which "cannot be hid," Matt. v. 14. And we cannot agree with Dr. Robinson in the conclusion that this supposition is nullified by the fact, that no historical evidence for the existence of such a city at that time is to be found. Very many cities arose in Palestine posterior to the time of the lists which occur in the book of Joshua, few of which are mentioned in the incidental notices of the later Scriptures and of Josephus ; and in this, as in other countries, the mere absence of historical notice by no means establishes the non-existence of a town upon a site otherwise likely to have been occupied. It seems to us that the site of Safed offered too many attractions to a people fond of building upon eminences, to have been neglected till after the time of Christ ; and we know of no subsequent period in which a site like this would begin to be occupied. Certain it is, however, that we do not *know* that any city existed here in our Lord's time ; nor do we *know* that he had any city actually in view. But if any town did exist on the spot, the allusion to it would have been obvious, as Safed is visible from a great distance in all directions except the north, and is therefore in view from any point where we may suppose the sermon on the mount to have been delivered, whether we admit or deny that the alleged Mount of Beatitudes was the site of its being uttered.

Safed has also been regarded by some as the place of our Lord's transfiguration. Did the sacred writers say that the Mount of the Transfiguration was the highest in all these parts, then the description would certainly apply to the two peaks just north of Safed. But their language is

simply "an high mountain," Matt. xvii. 1 ; Mark ix. 2 ; and Luke only says "a mountain," Luke ix. 28. Here is hence as little evidence for this as for Mount Tabor, which is more generally regarded as the spot where that solemn transaction occurred.

Safed has been in its time a famous seat of Jewish learning, and is still one of the four holy places of the land—Jerusalem, Hebron, and Tiberias being the others. The origin of the Jewish settlement and of the famous rabbinical college is uncertain—but it seems to have been in its most flourishing state about the middle of the sixteenth century. All the celebrated rabbis who are known to have lived and taught at Safed flourished within that century, and their productions are numerous and of high renown in Jewish literature. Under them the school at Safed became famous, and was frequented by pupils from every quarter. It appears also that a printing office was already established, and a Commentary on Ecclesiastes is extant, bearing the imprint of Safed, 1578. The place was then like another Jerusalem. The Jews dwelt there in great numbers ; and had a vast khan, like a square fortress, covered with lead, in which many lived, and where there was a fine synagogue. Besides the schools in which the sciences were taught, they counted eighteen colleges distinguished by the names of the several nations that possessed them—as the Portuguese, Spanish, Italian, and others.

It was then probably that Safed acquired that character, which it has since maintained, as one of the holy places ; and as such it has for several centuries been more visited than Tiberias, though the chief rabbi of the latter city is said to take rank over the one at Safed. The Jews on the spot indeed allege that it is the chief of the four holy places ; but this distinction is claimed for the others by the Jews resident in them. Notwithstanding, in the comparative decay of recent times, the Jews have had several synagogues at Safed, and a school for the study of the Talmud, as in Tiberias. Even the printing office was kept up ; and the Rev. R. S. Hardy, who visited the place in 1833, found two presses at work, and two others in course of erection. The type and furniture, he was told, were all made under the master's own direction, and there were nearly thirty persons employed in the departments of composing, press-work, and binding. Several reasons are assigned for the sanctity which the Jews ascribe to the place—the most legitimate is,

that Simeon the author of the Zohar and several of their most celebrated rabbis are buried near ; but they are said also to believe that the Messiah will establish here the capital of his kingdom ; and they cherish an impression that the ark of the covenant was hidden by Jeremiah somewhere in the hill of Safed. There are moreover places in the vicinity which are, on apocryphal grounds, venerated as having been in the possession of the patriarchs—such as the wells of Isaac, and the cave of Jacob.

Messrs. Bonar and M'Cheyne, who paid particular attention to the Jews in the places to which they went, inform us that there are two synagogues of the Sephardim and two of the Ashkenazim in Safed, besides six of those places of study called Yishvioth. They say, " We visited one of the former, and found it very neat and clean, beautifully lighted up with lamps of olive oil. Several very venerable men were seated all around ; more than half the worshippers had beards verging to pure white, and grey hair flying on their shoulders. It was indeed a new scene to us. In reading their prayers, nothing could exceed their vehemency. They read with all their might ; these cried aloud, like Baal's prophets on Mount Carmel ; and from time to time the tremulous voice of some aged Jew rose above all the rest in earnestness. The service was performed evidently as a work of special merit. One old man often stretched out his hand as he called on the Lord, and clenched his trembling fist in impassioned supplication. Some clapped their hands, and others clasped both hands together, and wrung them as in agony of distress. One man, trembling with age, seemed to fix on the word ' Adonai,' and repeated it with every variety of intonation till he had exhausted his voice. All of them, old and young, moved the body backward and forward, rocking to and fro, and bending towards the ground. This indeed is an important part of worship in the opinion of the Talmudists, who regard this as the proper commentary on David's words, ' All my bones shall say, Lord, who is like unto thee ?' Psa. xxxv. 10. When all was over, one young man remained behind prolonging his devotions in great excitement. We at first thought he was deranged, and was caricaturing the rest, but were assured that on the contrary he was a peculiarly devout man. Sometimes he struck the wall, and sometimes he stamped with his feet ; often he bent his whole body to the ground, crying aloud, ' Adonai, is not Israel

thy people?' in a reproachful tone, as if angry that God did not immediately answer. The whole service seemed embodying to the life the description given by Isaiah, 'Wherefore have we fasted, say they, and thou seest not? wherefore have we afflicted our soul, and thou takest no knowledge?... Ye shall not fast as ye do this day, to make your voice to be heard on high,' Isa. lviii. 3, 4. We never felt more deeply affected at the sight of Israel. It was the saddest and most solemn view of them we had yet obtained. Sincere, anxious, devout Jews, 'going about to establish their own righteousness.' None seemed happy. Even when all was over, none bore the cheerful look of men who had ground to believe that their prayers had been accepted: many had the very look of misery and almost of despair."

The same travellers visited the synagogues of the Sephardim. These are both within a small court in which fig-trees are planted; they are both clean, whitewashed, and well lighted up. Here they entered into conversation with a young Jew, who had followed them from Tyre. "When we were speaking on Psalm xxxii. of the blessedness of being forgiven, he said, 'But I obtained forgiveness long ago by taking four steps in this holy land.' And, referring to Isaiah liii.; 'Yes, it applied to Messiah, who is now sitting at the gate of Rome among the poor and the sick.' A singular legend which exists in the Talmud, and is one of the ways by which the Jews evade the force of that remarkable prophecy. Whenever any entered into conversation with us in the synagogue they were forbidden by the frown and authority of elder Jews. At last, they cut off all further debate by beginning the public prayers. The same young Jew afterwards meeting Mr. M'Cheyne in the street, and observing a strong staff in his hand, requested him to make him a present of it. He urged his request in Hebrew, 'Give me this staff, and if the Arabs come, I will smite them with it.' It was strange to hear this youth speaking the language of his fathers on their own mountains."

Entering a synagogue upon another occasion, several persons were found reading the Talmud, and the commentators. "A young man was reading a commentary on 1 Chron. xxix. where the dying words of David are recorded. This led us to speak of what a man needed when death arrived, and we came at length to the question, How can a sinner be righteous before God? We were

speaking in a mixture of Hebrew and German. The young man was very earnest, but several gathered round and stopped the conversation by asking, 'From what country do you come?' Before leaving, Mr. Bonar read out of a German tract the story of Salmasius, who on his death-bed wished that he had devoted his life to the study of the Scriptures. In another synagogue, a young man who spoke Hebrew and German conversed with us, but all of them looked suspiciously upon us, and soon went away."

On the evening of the same day, towards sunset, these pious travellers "could observe the preparations going on in every Jewish dwelling for the Sabbath. The women brought out of the oven the bread they had baked, beautifully white wheaten bread, the first we had seen in Palestine. The houses were all set in order, the table arranged, and the couches spread; in every dwelling the sabbath lamp was lighted, and a low murmur was heard while the father of the family repeated the appointed benediction, 'Blessed art thou, O Lord, king of the world, who hast sanctified us by thy commandments, and commanded us to light the sabbath lamp.' Soon after, all hurried to the synagogue to begin the sabbath there."

The sepulchres of the rabbis, to which allusion has already been made, are at Marona, the white mausoleum of which is visible from Safed, from which it is about two hours' journey distant westward. This must have been an ancient place, for there are ruins of terraces, also many caves and excavated tombs, some of them large and very curious. But the most remarkable object here is formed by the remains of an edifice which the Jews affirm to be the remains of a synagogue built about fifty years after the destruction of Jerusalem, and which was still standing in the time of Maimonides. Its southern wall is yet to a good extent to be seen. The stones of which it is constructed are large, being about four feet six inches long by two feet seven inches deep. Its doors are worthy of notice. The height of the larger one is nine feet eight inches, and the breadth five feet seven inches. The lintel above is of one stone, extending beyond the posts about a couple of feet. The rock has been levelled to form the floor of the synagogue, and it overlooks a precipice on its northern side.

The whole space occupied by the edifice can be clearly traced by the large foundation stones that are still visible.

A pillar, said to belong to this building, lies among the ruins in the village. Below this spot are situated the tombs of the holy men of the Jews, having a whitewashed oratory built over them and inclosed within walls. The entrance is by a narrow gate, leading into a court, in the centre of which a spreading fig-tree grows. From this court is the entrance to the white oratory, a cool pleasant spot, having an ostrich egg-shell suspended from the roof. There is a desk with prayer-books for the use of the Jewish pilgrims. The devout Jews have left their names scrawled over the walls, this practice being by no means so peculiar to European travellers as some have fancied. Beneath, repose the ashes of the Jewish saints, the most distinguished of whom is the author of the Zohar, who is said to have lived in the second or third century, and is believed to have composed his book under the instruction of the prophet Elijah. A little lower down the hill is a large cave, with seven vaults hewn out of it, containing many places for dead bodies, all empty. At the entrance lie four singularly carved stones, probably intended for the lids of the sarcophagi. This is believed to be the tomb of Rabbi Hillel and thirty-six of his pupils; and as this rabbi and his contemporary Shammai were members of "the great synagogue," it is clear that the Jews regard Marona as a place of high antiquity. Every year pilgrims visit the sepulchres of Marona, and, after many prayers, burn precious shawls dipped in oil, in honour of the deceased rabbis. Dr. Wilson, fresh from India, clearly discerned the heathen character of the ceremonies observed on this occasion, and gives vent to this solemn declaration:—"From all that I have seen or read of traditional Rabinism, I have no hesitation in saying, that it is as great a corruption of real Judaism as Paganism is of the patriarchal faith, and Popery of Christianity."

It seems that the Jews of the place, most erroneously, hold this Marona, or rather Meirun, to be the Shimron-Meron of Joshua (Josh. xii. 20); and, still more strangely, they call the channel of a small winter-torrent close by, "The waters of Megiddo." In proof of the former notion, they rely upon the identity or at least analogy of names; and the latter they deduce from the circumstance, that Kedesh, Megiddo, and Taanach all appear in the history of Barak's expedition against Sisera, and then occur along with Shimron-Meron in Joshua xii. 20—22.

North-west of Safed, about four miles on the road towards Tyre, we find ourselves in a region of dark volcanic stones, like those around the lake of Tiberias. We come out upon a high open plain, and these stones increase as we advance, until they take the place of every other, and besides covering the surface of the ground, seem also to compose the solid formation of the tract. In the midst of this plain, about five miles from Safed, we come upon heaps of black stones and lava, surrounding what has evidently been once the crater of a volcano. It is an oval basin, sunk in the plain to about forty feet deep, and having a length of between three and four hundred feet, by a breadth of one hundred and twenty feet. The sides are shelving, obviously composed of lava, of which three different kinds or ages have been distinguished. Near the north-western extremity, a space of a few feet in width slopes up more gradually from the bottom, having a sort of entrance through the wall of the crater. The basin is usually filled with water, forming a pond, but is nearly or quite dry in summer, containing nothing but mud. All around it are traces of its former action, exhibited in the strata of lava, and in the vast masses of volcanic stones. This is thought to have been the central point of the great earthquake of 1837, to which we have lately had occasion to refer. The pond bears the name of Birket el Jish, from an adjacent village.

At the north-western extremity of this high plain, is a fine basin-like lower plain, tilled and surrounded by bushy hills. In the northern part of the latter lies the village of Jish, just mentioned as giving its name to the pond-like crater. This place was quite destroyed by the earthquake, not a house of any kind being left standing. The Christians were at prayers in their church at the time, when the building fell upon them, and destroyed above one hundred and thirty persons. Two hundred and thirty-five names in all, of those who perished in that awful visitation, were returned to the government from this village alone.

This Jish is probably the Giscala of Josephus, the last fortress in Galilee which made a stand against the Romans; but it finally made terms with Titus, and surrendered itself, contrary to the will of John, a native leader, who retired to Jerusalem, and became one of the defenders of that

city against Titus. It is probably also the same place with the Gush Halab of the Talmud, mentioned therein as not far from Meirun, and as celebrated for its oil.

If we proceed hence northward along the ridge of Safed, we find close at the north boundary of the province a village called Kedes. This is, doubtless, the ancient KEDESH of Naphtali, a city of refuge and of the Levites, the birth-place of Barak, and eventually conquered by Tiglath-pileser. Josh. xix. 37 ; xx. 7 ; xxi. 32 ; Judg. iv. 6 ; 2 Kings xv. 29.

As the northern shores of the Lake of Tiberias lie within the province, let us turn thither. Approaching this quarter where the Jordan winds to the lake through the fertile plain of el-Batihah,* we find ourselves in a region cultivated, but very rarely visited by travellers. The river here runs near the western hills, and the fine plain just named stretches off on the other side of the stream, along the end of the lake, quite to the eastern mountains. On the north this plain is shut in by similar mountains of considerable altitude, which approach close to the Jordan higher up, and confine it to a valley of no great width. At the north-west corner of this plain, a lower spur, or promontory, from the northern mountains, runs out for some distance southwards along the river, and forms for a time the eastern wall of its valley. The people on the spot call it simply the Tel, and know it by no other name. In this plain along the shore, are the ruined villages of Araj, Mesadiyah, and Dukah, all built of unhewn black volcanic stones. Some of the buildings in the two latter are kept in repair by the Arabs who cultivate the plain, as magazines for their produce. The plain belongs to the government, but is given up for a produce rent to these Arabs, (the Ghawarineh,) who cultivate upon it wheat, barley, millet, maize, and rice. They have large herds of horned cattle, among which are many buffaloes, and present an appearance of ease, not to say of wealth, seldom witnessed among the Arab tribes. They furnish an interesting specimen of the nomade passing into the cultivator. The original tents are in general exchanged for huts of reeds and rushes, though a few tents of black cloth may be found. As many as a hundred and fifty of these huts

* A name signifying a low tract, liable to be overflowed by streams.

are generally pitched along the shore ; and the people may for the most part be observed sitting listless in and around their huts and tents, exposing themselves fully to the strong lake breeze, under a temperature of 90°, and apparently enjoying their mode of life.

Upon the Tel, already mentioned as extending from the northern mountains southward, at the point where the Jordan issues from thence, occurs the most important site of ruins to be found along the plain. It is considered as a sort of capital by the Ghawarineh Arabs, although they have lost the ancient name, and now occupy in it only a few houses as magazines. The ruins cover a large portion of the Tel, and are very extensive. They consist entirely of unhewn volcanic stones, without any traces of ancient architecture. This is held by Dr. Robinson to be the probable site of the ancient BETHSAIDA of Gaulonitis, afterwards called Julius. It was originally a mere village, but was built up and enlarged by Philip the Tetrarch, not long after the birth of Christ, and then received the name of Julius in honour of Julia the daughter of Augustus. Philip appears to have made it in part his residence ; for here he died, and was buried in a costly tomb. This is, doubtless, that Bethsaida near to which our Lord fed the five thousand, on the east of the lake ; and probably also the same where the blind man was healed, Luke ix. 10 ; Mark viii. 22.

Upon the border of the lake, about one hour's journey from the other or western side of the Jordan, are the ruins of Tel Hum, situated upon a small projecting point, or rather curve of the shore. Here are the remains of a place of considerable extent and importance, covering a tract of at least half a mile in length along the shore, and about half that breadth inland. They consist chiefly of the foundations and fallen walls of dwellings, and other buildings, all of unhewn stones, except two ruins. One of these is a small structure near the shore, the only one now standing ; and on near approach it is seen to have been built up in later times with the hewn stones, columns, and pilasters of former buildings. Not far off are the prostrate ruins of an edifice, which, for expense of labour and ornament, surpasses anything to be seen in Palestine. Its materials consist of sculptured stone, mostly of the

usual rock of the country, but in some parts of a species of marble, which must have been brought from a distance. Among the scattered materials of this erection are the fragments, capitals and pedestals of numerous Corinthian pillars, with friezes and cornices. Some of the shafts and appendages are double, a peculiarity not elsewhere to be seen in Palestine. The extent of the foundations of this structure cannot well be made out ; but Dr. Robinson states, that he measured a hundred and fifty feet along the northern wall, and eighty feet along the western, and adds "perhaps this was their whole length." From the confusion in which the ruins lie, it is difficult to say to what the original building was appropriated ; but it would seem to have been either a heathen temple or a church. "The whole place," says Robinson, "is desolate and mournful. The bright waters of the lake still break upon its shore, and lave its ruins, as once they reflected the edifices, and bore the little fleets of what was of old 'no mean city.' But the busy hum of men is gone. A few Arabs only are here encamped in tents, and have built up a few hovels among the ruins, which they use as magazines."

The formerly prevalent opinion, till disturbed by Dr. Robinson, that Tel Hum offered to us the site of CAPERNAUM, seems to be of late recovering ground. Rather, the arguments advanced by him against Tel Hum may be regarded as tending to render *that* position doubtful ; and the arguments now urged against his favourite position of Khan Minyeh, tend to throw doubt on his conclusion in favour of that site. Thus, the whole question remains as undecided as before ; or is rather complicated by a fresh alternative. But this very uncertainty as to the site, does but all the more, to our minds, illustrate the signal denunciation of our Lord :—"And thou, Capernaum, which art exalted unto heaven, shalt be brought down to hell ; for if the mighty works, which have been done in thee, had been done in Sodom, it would have remained until this day," Matt. xi. 23. These "mighty works" resulted from this city having been the frequent residence of our Lord after the commencement of his public ministry ; so that it, rather than Nazareth, is called by the evangelist "his own city," Matt. ix. 1. The nobleman whose son, the centurion whose servant, and Jairus whose daughter, our Saviour raised from beds of sickness and of death, were of this city ; and it was here that he healed so

many after the Jewish sabbath was over, and the cooling breeze of sunset was favourable to the journey of the sick, Mark i. 32—35. “An awful voice,” write Messrs. Bonar and M’Cheyne, “rises from these ruined heaps, warning the cities of our favoured island that a despised gospel will bring them as low as Capernaum.”

It is proper to observe that the name Capernaum is a compound word (in Hebrew), Kaphar-Nahum, meaning the “village of consolation,” if interpreted; or else, as a proper name, the “village of Nahum.” On the supposition that the word *Kaphar* (the original form of Caper), meaning a village, has been exchanged for *Tel*, “a mound,” on the place becoming a ruin, it is not impossible that *Hum* is a contraction for *Nahum*. It is, as Dr. Wilson remarks, no fatal objection to this that *Hum* has a distinctive meaning in Arabic, that of “a herd of camels;” for coincidences of this sort do not seldom occur. However, we leave this question for the moment, until it comes again before us at Khan Minyeh.

From this place we may make a digression two miles inland, westward, to visit Khan Jubb Yusuf, or the khan of Joseph’s pit. This khan is ruined, though not wholly disused. Outside of it there is a large reservoir for water, and in a small court adjoining the khan, a draw-well of about three feet in diameter and thirty feet in depth. A tradition, at least as old as the Crusades, regards this as the well or pit into which Joseph was cast by his jealous brethren, (Gen. xxxvii. 22—28.) Dr. Robinson calls this a “clumsy legend,” and Burckhardt quietly remarks that the circumstance that the water never dries up “makes it difficult to believe that this was the well into which Joseph was thrown.” The well is, however, held in much veneration by Moslems as well as Christians; the former have a small chapel just by it, and caravan travellers seldom pass here without saying a few prayers in honour of Joseph. In this vicinity, the whole district is thickly strewed with the black volcanic stones already described, but which are here larger, and so numerous that the path is often obstructed by them. The chief mass of rock is, however, limestone. Tradition undertakes to account for this by alleging that the tears shed by Jacob while seeking his lost son had turned the white stone into black, and hence these stones bear the name of Demu Yakub, “Jacob’s Tears.”

The great road from Damascus to Egypt leads over this place, and goes hence in a south-east direction to Khan Minyeh, upon the lake, to which therefore we may return by this route. Before we reach this place, after having again come out upon the border of the lake, the road intersects a wady having a very copious stream bursting forth from immense fountains, whose water is somewhat warm, but so brackish as not to be drinkable. The stream works one or two mills; and double the same quantity of water runs to waste. Several other mills are in ruins. These mills are rented from the government by people in Safed, and are served by Ghawarineh (Arabs of the valley of the Jordan and its lakes). Close by is a small village called Ain et Tabighah; called by Burckhardt a miserable place, the few inhabitants of which live by fishing. East of the mills, on the right of the path, is a brackish fountain, inclosed by a circular wall of stone, or a reservoir, called Ain Eyub, "Job's Fountain," or Tannur Eyub, "Job's Oven."

Speaking of Ain Tabighah (which he calls Tabghoorah) Mr. Elliot says: "The only indications of life are a mill and a few huts made of rushes. Its position points it out as an eligible fishing-place; and such is the import of the word Bethsaida; which city, if not situated on this spot, could not have been very far off. Here we halted, and requested the tenant of one of the huts to throw in his line, and let us taste the produce of the sea. In a few minutes each of us was presented with a fish broiled on a plate of iron according to the custom of the country, (Luke xxiv. 22,) and wrapped in a large flat wafer-like cake, a foot in diameter, of which one was spread as a tablecloth and two others served as napkins; thus we made a repast, on the banks of the sea of Tiberias, of what was almost literally 'five loaves and two small fishes,' John vi. 9." Mr. Elliot is not alone in his opinion that Ain et Tabighah is Bethsaida; but this is only one of several conjectures respecting the site of a place which we fear must still be regarded as unidentified. And here it may be proper to remark that there appear to be two Bethsaidas named in the Gospels. The city of Bethsaida near to which Christ fed the five thousand, (Luke ix. 10,) seems from the parallel passages, (Matt. xiv. 13; Mark vi. 32—45,) to have been not in Galilee, but on the eastern side of the lake; and we have already pointed out its probable

identification with the ruins which cover the spur or promontory called the Tel, at the north-east corner of the plain at the north end of the lake. Another Bethsaida, mentioned in Mark vi. 45 ; viii. 22 ; John i. 44 ; xii. 21, is clearly seen, by some of the texts in which the name occurs, to have been in Galilee, upon the western shore of the lake, and not far from Capernaum—and certainly therefore different from the other. This is the Bethsaida which is associated with Chorazin and Capernaum in the solemn passage, (Matt. xi. 20—23 :) “Then began he to upbraid the cities, wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not : Woe unto thee, Chorazin ! woe unto thee, Bethsaida ! for if the mighty works, which were done in you, had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes.” Of Chorazin not even a conjecture can be offered.

In half an hour from Ain et Tabighah southward we come to the Khan Minyeh, which we have several times had occasion to mention, and which is close upon the shore, at the northern extremity of the plain of Gennesareth, just where it begins to widen out southward. It has also been mentioned as the site which Dr. Robinson, and some others after him, assign to Capernaum. There is nothing here but the ruins of the khan which gives name to the place—no traces of any kind of ancient remains, although there is, a few rods south of the khan, a large mound with ruins, occupying a considerable circumference ; but the remains obviously belong to buildings of no remote date. The khan itself is in ruins, but seems to have been once a large and well-built structure. Between the khan and the shore a large fountain gushes out from beneath the rocks, and forms a brook flowing into the lake a few rods distant. Over this source stands a very large fig-tree ; from which the fountain takes the name of Ain et-Tin. Near at hand are several other springs, the waters of which were said by Dr. Robinson’s guides to be brackish, although Burckhardt, who rested during the heat of the day under the shade of the great fig-tree, describes the water of the main source as sweet. Along the lake at this place is a tract of luxuriant herbage, occasioned by the springs ; and on the shore are high reeds. Large flocks and herds may be seen at pasture in this part of the plain. Dr. Robinson brings together the various passages in which Capernaum is mentioned,

and infers from them that the town was in the plain of Gennesareth. But this designation he holds to be limited to the fertile plain on the western shore, at the north extremity of which Khan Minyeh is situated, and he argues, in too great detail for us to follow, that Capernaum could only have been here, and not at Tel Hum. This argument, as already intimated, has been searchingly examined both here and on the continent, and the result seems to be, that although the claim of Khan Minyeh has been added to that of other possible sites, nothing conclusive in its favour has been established. Even the ground for a preference of its doubtfulness, over the doubtfulness of Tel Hum, is not clear. The ruins at Khan Minyeh are of more recent date than those of Tel Hum. In Khan Minyeh there is not even that slight trace of the ancient name which Tel Hum affords; and the small brook by Khan Minyeh is assuredly too short in its course to answer to that fountain of Capernaum, which Josephus describes as fertilizing by its waters the plain of Gennesareth. Other difficulties we pass by, and content ourselves with expressing a conviction that the site of Capernaum must still be regarded as unsettled.

Approaching this place from the south through the plain of Gennesareth, Dr. Robinson, in searching diligently for any trace of Capernaum, had at first his attention attracted by a fountain towards the southern part of the plain, which he thought to answer to the Fountain of Capernaum, as described by Josephus, and which was doubtless near the town of that name. This fountain bears the name "Ain et-Mudauwarah," (Round Fountain). It is large and beautiful, rising immediately at the foot of the western line of hills. It is inclosed in a low circular wall of masonry, forming a reservoir nearly a hundred feet in diameter; the water is perhaps two feet deep, beautifully limpid and sweet, bubbling up and flowing out rapidly in a large stream to water the plain below. Numerous small fish may be seen sporting in the basin, which is so thickly surrounded by trees and brushwood, that a stranger would be apt to pass by without noticing it. The oleander grows here abundantly, and the lotus trees are also frequent. The waters of this fountain irrigate the ground between it and the lake—but can hardly be said, like Joseph's fountain of Capernaum, to irrigate and fertilize the plain of Gennesareth. Indeed we know not of any stream of which this

could be said except the Wady Rubudiyeh, which in its divided branches traverses both the central and northern portions of the plain. If the site of Capernaum is ever discovered, it may be upon one or the other of the branches of this stream. This thought must have been present to the mind of Dr. Robinson when he went to Abu Shusheh upon this wady to seek traces of Capernaum. This is a village upon a slight eminence; but there are here no traces of antiquity; no hewn stones, nor any mason work; nothing indeed but the remains of a few dwellings built of rough volcanic stones,—some of them still used as magazines by the Arabs of the plain. A wady with a white dome marks the spot. This wady and its branches claims to be more thoroughly explored.

Hemmed in between the province of Safed, which we have just explored on the east, and that of Acre, which will next engage our attention on the west, are the two small districts of Shaughur and Jebel. They offer nothing of importance, and as they are seldom or never visited by travellers, scarcely any names of places they contain have become known to us. It appears that Jebel is chiefly inhabited by Mohammedans, among whom, however, live many Druses, and that a few Druses are also to be found in Shaughur.

XIII.—ACRE.



BAY OF ACRE.

THIS important province lies upon the sea-coast, and extends from the river Kishon and the borders of Carmel northward to the remarkable headland called Cape Nakurah.

The line of coast in the south recedes so as to form an extensive bay, the southern point of which is Cape Carmel, and on the north stands the fortified town of Akka, known among Europeans by the name St. Jean d' Acre, from its occupation by the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem. During the Crusades it is mentioned by the name of Acon ; but its ancient name was ACCHO, identical with the present name of Akka. The place never belonged to the Jews, though it is mentioned in Judges i. 31, as within the lot of Asher. The Phœnicians however retained possession of it. In the apocryphal books of Maccabees it is often mentioned by the name of PTOLEMAIS, which is derived from Ptolemy Lathyrus, king of Egypt, by whom it was

much improved. In the New Testament it is called by that name, St. Paul having tarried there during one day in his journey to Jerusalem, Acts xxi. 7. From the time of its improvement by the Egyptian king, even down to the expulsion of the Knights of St. John, Acre was a place of great importance; and although in the hands of the Turks it declined greatly, it still remained a place of some consequence, as compared with other towns in Palestine, down to our own day, in which it has, from a British fleet, sustained a degree of ruin and overthrow from which it has not yet recovered. Its maintenance amid the general decay of the land arose chiefly from the fact that it was the most important strong-hold of the country, and the actual key to its military occupation and defence. Out of this circumstance all the great facts of its history—the strife for its possession by contending kings and powers, have arisen. This importance led to its being strongly fortified from remote times, and hence its possession has never been acquired without large, vigorous, and often protracted operations by land or water, or by both. When the Saracens first invaded Syria, Acre was an imperial garrison, and was one of the last that submitted to the victorious Amru. This was in A.D. 638. In the history of the Crusades the place is very famous. King Baldwin took it from the Saracens in 1110, and it was retained by the Christians till 1187, when it surrendered to Saladin. But it was recovered four years after in that siege, the details of which are so familiar to us from the part taken in them by our own Richard Cœur de Lion. His name, however, is scarcely known in the traditions of Palestine. The only local recognition of him which our investigations of modern travel have brought to our notice, is the somewhat equivocal one produced by Dr. Wilson, who states: “When we were standing upon the ramparts, an Arab who was with us pointed to a mound opposite to us, exclaiming at the same time, Kardillan! Kardillan! We were for some time at a loss to know what he meant; but on his telling us that Kardilian was ‘our own man,’ we came to the conclusion that he had in his mental eye, however obscurely,

‘Richard, who robb’d the lion of his heart,
And fought the holy wars in Palestine;’

whose valour and cruelty were so conspicuous when Akka was retaken by the Christians in 1191.” “This,” adds the

doctor, "was the only allusion to the Crusades which we heard made by a native of the east during our long journey. The accounts of them by the Mohammedan historians and biographers, interesting though they be, are now but little read. Their evil effects, however, in a moral point of view, continue to be felt to this day. The exasperation and embitterment which they caused to the whole Muslim world are incalculably great, and injurious to Christianity."

The Christians held possession of this valuable post, their last foot-ground in Palestine, exactly one hundred years; it having been, in the year 1291, wrested by the Sultan of Egypt from the Knights of St. John, to whom it had been assigned. Above three centuries ago (in 1517), Acre fell with the rest of Palestine to the Turks, under whose authority it rested in quiet obscurity till about the middle of the last century, when a celebrated Arabian Sheikh, named Daher, took it by surprise. Under his sway, the town recovered some of its prosperity and importance; which it did not lose while subject to his able but savage successor, appointed by the Porte, Hajji Ahmed Pasha Jezzar, commonly called, more shortly, Jezzar Pasha. The addition to his name (Jezzar) means, the "Butcher," and indicates his humble origin, he having commenced his career in the trade of a butcher, which circumstance he desired to perpetuate; for the Turks—in this as in many other respects opposite in their ideas to Europeans—boast not of high birth and illustrious descent, but glory rather in the personal distinction implied in the low beginning from which they have made their way to greatness and to fortune. So Ahmed Pasha gloried in the surname of the "Butcher,"—although it seemed to many, who knew not its real origin, as an appropriate mark infixed upon his name in public execration of the sanguinary atrocities of his career. This Pasha greatly strengthened the fortifications of the place, which in his time became again celebrated through the successful resistance which, under the direction of Sir Sydney Smith, it offered to the arms of Bonaparte, who withdrew baffled from before its walls, and abandoned the vaunted eastern enterprise to which his highest energies had till then been directed. After this, the fortifications were still further strengthened, so that it became the strongest place in all Syria. It was not until six months had been consumed before its walls, during

which no less than 32,000 shells were cast into the town, and its buildings literally beaten to pieces, that Acre surrendered to Ibrahim Pasha, in 1832. From this calamity it had not time to recover, when it was subjected to the operations of the united English and Austrian fleet, in pursuance of the plan for restoring Syria to the Porte. It was then (Nov. 3d, 1840) bombarded for several hours, when the explosion of the powder magazine destroyed the garrison and laid the town in ruins.

This is one of the cities which it is desirable to view as it appeared in the successive stages of its history. There are no satisfactory materials for a description of the ancient Accho, or even of Ptolemais ; and space fails us to produce all the information we have brought together in illustration of its appearance in different ages. There are, however, some remains, which more than one traveller is disposed with us to refer to a very ancient date ; and others, which probably belong to the intervening periods of its history, before our written information becomes more full and exact. Mr. Buckingham made it his particular care to trace out, as far as he could, the remains of the successive periods in the signal history of this place. He writes :—
“Of the Canaanitish Accho it would be thought idle, perhaps, to seek for remains, yet some presented themselves to my observation so peculiar in form and materials as to leave no doubt in my own mind of their being fragments of buildings constructed in the earliest ages. On the south-east front of the newly erected outer walls of the city, in sinking the ditch below them to the depth of twenty feet beneath the level of the present soil, the foundations of buildings were exposed to view, apparently of private dwellings of the humblest order, as they were not more than from ten to twelve feet square, with small doorways and passages leading from one to the other. As we obtained admittance into the ditch for the purpose of examining these remains more closely, we found the materials of which they were originally constructed to be a highly burnt brick, with a mixture of cement and sand, as well as a small portion of stone in some parts, so firmly bound together by age, and by the strongly adhesive power of the cement used, as to form one solid mass.”

Of the period during which the place bore the name of Ptolemais, and existed in its highest splendour, it may be doubted whether any monument exists, although the

traveller just cited is disposed to refer to this period the shafts of red and grey granite, and the marble pillars which are seen in different parts of the town, some used as thresholds to large doorways, others lying neglected on the ground, and others, again, used as supporters to the interior galleries of the *okellas*, or public inns.

Dr. E. D. Clarke, who visited Acre at the beginning of the present century, makes particular mention of the remains of a considerable edifice, exhibiting a conspicuous appearance among the buildings on the north side of the city. He says—"In this structure, the style of the buildings is what we call Gothic. Perhaps it has on that account borne among our countrymen the appellation of King Richard's Palace, although, in the period to which the tradition refers, the English were scarcely capable of erecting palaces or any other buildings of equal magnificence.* Two lofty arches and a part of the cornice are all that now remain to attest the former greatness of the superstructure. The cornice, ornamented with enormous stone busts, exhibiting a series of hideous distorted countenances, whose features are in no instance alike, may either have served as allusions to the decapitation of St. John, or were intended as representations of the heads of Saracens, suspended as trophies upon the walls." This he supposes to have been the church of St. John, erected by the Knights of St. John, when the city changed its name from Ptolemais to St. Jean d'Acre. He also considers the style and architecture here exhibited to be in some degree the origin of our ornamented Gothic, before its translation from the Holy Land to Italy, France, and England.

There is perhaps little of Saracenic remains in Acre. The walls have been too often repaired and rebuilt to exhibit much of it; and the existing or recent public buildings, such as mosques and bazaars, are certainly more of the Turkish than the Saracenic style of architecture. There is indeed a khan, which Mr. Buckingham supposed to be probably Saracenic, but which we have ourselves no manner of doubt to be that which was erected at a much later period by the celebrated Emir Fakir ed-Deen, who at one time held possession of Acre,

* This is surely an error. We have to this day buildings in England, in greater or less preservation, nearly or quite as old as that age, and not only equal, but far superior to any *Gothic* remains in Syria.

and which is mentioned with much admiration by the travellers of the seventeenth century. The Christian remains noticed by former travellers, have now entirely disappeared. The cathedral church of St. Andrew, the church of St. John (the Baptist), the titular saint of the Knights Hospitallers, with the convent of the Order, the magnificent palace of the Grand Master, and all the other churches, convents, palaces and forts, enumerated by the elder travellers, are no more to be seen. Even the Gothic ruin described by Dr. Clarke, and which he took to be the church of St. John, but which Maundrell and Poccocke rather supposed to be that of St. Andrew—have been razed to the ground; so that the very sites of those monuments of early days will soon become matters of uncertainty and dispute.

Of the *successive* notices of the place by travellers, space allows us to produce only a few. We need not go back further than to our countryman Sandys, whose description refers to the early part of the seventeenth century. He correctly describes the town as: "Seated on a levell, in form of a triangular shield, on two sides washt with the sea, the third regarding the champagne." He adds: "The carkasse shewes that the body hath beene strong, double immured [walled], fortified with bulwarkes and towers; to each wall a ditch lined with stone, and under these divers secret posternes. You would think by the ruines that the city rather consisted wholly of divers conjoyning castles, than any way mixed with private dwellings; which witness a notable defence, and an unequall assault, or that the rage of the conquerors extended even beyond conquest; the huge walles and castles turned topsie turvey, and lying like rocks upon the foundation." He further informs us that the town then contained "not above two or three hundred inhabitants, who dwell here in the packt up ruines; only a new mosque they have, and a strong cane [khan], built where was once the arsenall for gallies—in which the Franke merchants securely dispose of themselves and their commodities." These merchants, it seems, brought chiefly ready money to Acre, with which they bought up the cotton produced abundantly in the surrounding country. Sandys also gives the curious fact, that the inhabitants were in the habit of housing their sheep and goats at night for fear of jackalls, "whereof an infinite number doe lurke in the obscure vaults and reedy

marshes adjoining the brook—the brook itself abounding in tortesses.” This writer, Sandys, is the same whose other works entitle him to no mean place among our poets. We only mention this fact to be enabled to introduce the fine lines which, he says, formed his offering at the sepulchre of Christ :—

“ Saviour of mankind, man, Emmanuel !
 Who sinless died for sin ; who vanquish'd hell ;
 The first fruits of the grave ; whose life did give
 Light to our darkness ; in whose death we live :—
 Oh ! strengthen thou my faith, convert my will,
 That mine may thine obey ; protect me still,
 So that the latter death may not devour
 My soul, seal'd with thy seal.—So, in the hour
 When thou (whose body sanctified this tomb,
 Unjustly judged) a glorious Judge shalt come
 To judge the world with justice ; by that sign,
 I may be known and entertain'd for thine ! ”

A somewhat later traveller, Eugene Roger, a French missionary, confirms the account given by Sandys ; and states that the only objects worthy of note that even then remained were the palace of the Grand Master of the Hospitallers, and the cathedral church of St. Andrew. All the rest was a sad and deplorable ruin, pervaded by a pestiferous air, which soon brought new comers into dangerous maladies. The Emir Fakir ed-Deen had, however, lately built a commodious khan for the use of the merchants ; for there was still considerable traffic, and vessels were continually arriving from France, Venice, England, and Holland, laden with oil, cotton, skins, and other goods. The Emir had also built a strong castle, notwithstanding repeated orders from the Porte to desist. Roger also makes special mention of the immense stone balls, above a hundredweight, which were found in the ditches and among the ruins, and which were thrown into the town from machines before the use of cannon. A number of other travellers of the same age add little to this account ; but one of them, Morrison, also a French missionary, speaks more fully than the others of the ancient remains, which consisted of portions of old walls, of extraordinary height and thickness, and of fragments of buildings, sacred and secular, which still afforded manifest tokens of the original magnificence of the place. He affirms that the metropolitan Church of St. Andrew was equal to the finest churches in France and Italy ; and that

the Church of St. John was of the same perfect beauty, as might be perceived by the pillars and vaulted roof, half of which still remained.

An excellent and satisfactory account of Acre is given by Nau, somewhat later, who takes particular notice of the old and strong vaults upon which the houses are built; and the present writer having observed the same practice in Chaldæa (for it is not now usual in Palestine, and may never have been necessary in the interior and cooler parts of the country), has no doubt that Nau is perfectly correct in his conjecture, that these vaults were destined to afford cool underground retreats to the inhabitants during the heat of summer, when the climate of the plain is intensely sultry. Indeed, the name of the place is supposed to be from the Arabic *ak* which signifies *sultry*. Our own Maundrell gives no further information, save that he mentions that the town appears to have been encompassed on the land side by a double wall, defended with towers at small distances; and without the wall were ditches, ramparts, and a kind of bastions faced with hewn stone. Pococke speaks chiefly of the ruins, which we have already sufficiently examined.

It was about thirty years ago that the town was, perhaps, in its most prosperous modern condition. The Christian remains, as we have noticed, had already disappeared. Approached from Tyre, the city had then, as it still has, a beautiful and interesting appearance, from the trees within, which rise above the walls, and from the ground immediately on the outside being planted with orange, lemon, and palm trees. Inside, the streets exhibit the usual narrowness and filth of Turkish towns; the houses solidly built, however, of stone, with flat roofs; the bazaars mean in appearance, but tolerably well supplied. The principal public buildings were the mosque built by Jezzar Pasha, the seraglio of the pasha, the granaries and the arsenal. Most of these exhibit signs of the bombardment in 1840, by which, indeed, the last was wholly destroyed in that horrible explosion which sent two thousand souls into eternity in a moment. The two bombardments by Ibrahim Pasha in 1832, and by the British fleet in 1840, have materially altered the appearance of the city in many respects—though the general character of the previous arrangements has been preserved, as it is the tendency of the orientals, when a building is destroyed, to

reconstruct it on the old foundations and in the form which it previously bore. Considerable activity has been shown in restoring the fortifications; but signs of the recent catastrophe are still apparent. Even in the bazaars, the weights employed by the shopkeepers consist of split shells; and similar relics of that dreadful infliction are to be found in abundance in the fields around the town. It is as a garrison town that the place is to be regarded. The predominance of the military is everywhere manifested: and the rest of the inhabitants appear to be chiefly engaged in ministering to their wants and services, either directly or indirectly, through the traffic which the presence of so large a body of soldiers creates. The entire population is reckoned at something above 9,000 (which is not materially below Mr. Connor's estimate in 1819), of whom about 8,000 are Moslems, and nearly 1,000 Christians, mostly Greeks, with about thirty families of Jews. The latter, who must always engage much of our interest in all that relates to Palestine, are merchants, oilmen, drapers of cotton, pipe-head manufacturers, fishermen and confectioners. They have one synagogue, built about twenty years ago, and a school with twenty boys.

The public buildings of Acre are mostly clustered together within the walls at the north-east corner of the town. The mosque of Jezzar Pasha is the chief of the ecclesiastical structures. It was much damaged by the shot in 1840. The principal curiosity in it is the tomb of the man of blood, whose name it bears. Dr. Wilson secured with some difficulty a copy of the inscription, which is thus translated:—"HE [GOD] IS THE LIVING ONE. THE IMMORTAL. This is the tomb of him who requires mercy; who is needful of the forgiveness of the Forgiver, the Hajji Ahmed Pasha, the Butcher [Jezzar]. On him be the mercy of the dear Forgiver. A. [H.] 1219 [A. D. 1804] on the 17th M [uharram]."

It is affecting and instructive to contemplate this destroyer crying aloud, as it were, from the tomb, for that mercy which he never showed to man or woman. But it is still more impressive to discern, not only from such monumental inscriptions as these, but from the writings and discourse of the Moslems, that notwithstanding the essential self-righteousness on which their false religion (like all false religions) stands—they dare not at the last, as many who call themselves Christians—presume to

present themselves before God wholly clad in the filthy robes of their own righteousness. They often come as sinners, needing and imploring forgiveness ; but alas ! they know not, as we know—and they *refuse* to learn, how God has been able, by laying upon his beloved Son the burden of our iniquity, at once to testify his abhorrence of sin, and yet to clear the guilty. May the time soon come when the Lord shall disclose to this benighted people the knowledge of his love, and give them, through faith in the Redeemer whom they now despise, a right to all the mercies and to all the blessings of his kingdom.

Of the other places in this province there is none of any note or interest, unless we reckon ez-Zib, upon the Mediterranean coast, ten miles north of Acre. It stands upon an ascent close to the sea-side, and is described as a small place, with a few palm-trees rising above the dwellings. It is at present noted chiefly for the fine quality of its water melons. This is in all probability the ACHZIB, nominally belonging to the tribe of Asher, but which was almost always in the possession of the Phœnicians—being one of the places from which the Israelites were unable to expel the ancient inhabitants, Judg. i. 31. This, however, must be distinguished from the Achzib in the tribe of Judah, Josh. xv. 44 ; Mic. i. 14 ; of which there is no historical mention, and the site of which has not yet been ascertained.

The Cape Nakurah (Ras en-Nakurah, or Hewn Promontory), which we reach about five miles north of ez-Zib, and which forms the coast boundary of the province, is steep and precipitous. There is at the top a khan, where a guard of Turkish soldiers is stationed. The traveller who pauses here, coming from the north, finds a new and interesting view opened to him, embracing the nearly level coast of the Mediterranean to Acre and Kaifah, bounded on the south by the picturesque ridge of Carmel. In fact, he sees before him, as in a panorama, the whole length and breadth of the province of Acre.

XIV.—TYRE.

THE coast district of Belad Besharah, in which Tyre is situated, lies to the north of that of Acre—commencing south where the latter ends north—at Cape Nakurah. In the north its boundary is formed by the River Kasimiyeh, which was known to the ancients by the name of the Leontes. Belad Besharah is a province of some importance, having its own governor, who resides at Tsur (Tyre), although Tibnin is regarded as the proper capital. Except Tyre, it has few sites of interest to engage our attention. It is nevertheless a populous and prosperous district compared with many others in Palestine—affording many industrious villages, inhabited chiefly by the Metawileh, a Mohammedan sect, which is here regarded as heretical, because, like the Persians, it upholds the supreme imamah or pontificate of Ali, the cousin and son-in-law of Mohammed, and his legitimate successors. The Christians are here unusually few. The province has this peculiarity, that as it contains but few olive trees, very little oil is prepared in it—a curious and interesting circumstance, when we remember that anciently “twenty measures of pure oil” were, along with corn, given by Solomon yearly to the Syrians for their aid in supplying fir-trees and cedars from Lebanon, 1 Kings v. 11. It is thus seen, that their own territory did not then, any more than now, produce oil in any great quantity. Butter is, however, abundant; and it is burned in lamps instead of oil.

About four miles north of Ras en-Nakurah, we come to another even more remarkable and celebrated promontory. This is the Ras el-Abyad (or Beyad, as some write it), supposed with sufficient reason to be the White Promontory (*Promontorium Album*) of the ancients. This name is derived from the whiteness of its cretaceous slopes and strata: the rock here, as in other promontories jutting

into the Mediterranean on the south, being the upper white chalk. Its ascent is by a winding artificial road,—much worn, and very rugged and steep, though with steps to facilitate the progress of the traveller. This ascent is ascribed to Alexander the Great, but is probably in its original shape much older than his day, and constructed to suit the land transit of the Phœnicians along the coast. This path frequently passes the very edge of precipitous rocks, against which the waves are seen dashing below. An old fort near the summit lies to the right. This promontory may be cleared in twenty or twenty-five minutes with baggage-mules.

About three-quarters of a mile further north we come to a mound with some slight and obscure ruins, being those of the castle named Scanderuna, from Alexander, whom the Orientals call Scander,* who built here a strong fortress as a retreat for his troops during the siege of Tyre. It was restored by King Baldwin for the same purpose, when he besieged the same city in 1116. The ruin, less distinguished now than in Maundrell's time, was then a hundred and twenty paces square, having a dry ditch encompassing it; and from under it, on the side next the sea, there issued out a fountain of very fair water.

About two miles before we arrive at Tyre, we reach the celebrated fountains called the Ras el-Ain. There are two sets of these fountains. Those on the north of the others are small and apparently of more recent date. These are in ruins; and their decayed state allows an examination of the mode in which they were constructed, in order to raise the body of water to its required level. This water now finds its way direct to the sea, turning a mill in its course. There can be little doubt that both these and the larger ones are natural springs, which by being inclosed in these water-proof walls, raised the water to the height necessary for conducting it to the city. It is scarcely reasonable to suppose them, as some have done, supplied by a river having a higher source in the adjacent mountains; for had such been the case, as Dr. Wilde well observes, why not have conducted it from the highest point at once, instead of bringing it into a valley, in which both these cisterns are situated? The larger set of cisterns are nearly

* From confounding the first syllable with the Arabic definite article *al*. We commit the reverse error, by retaining the *al* in words from the Arabic when it is in that language the article, as in *alcoran*, *algebra*, *alchemy*, etc.

half a mile south of the others. The ground between them and the lesser ones is covered with corn and large groves of mulberry trees—silk still forming a considerable article of commerce here. The fountains are three in number. They are situated in a valley about a quarter of a mile from the sea; and although they are much broken and neglected, yet they retain sufficient magnificence to attest their antiquity and former beauty. The larger one, called the Birket, or Pool, *par excellence*, is nearer by a hundred yards to the sea than the others, to which it is joined by some very beautiful arches. A row of steps leads to the top, which is surrounded by a walk eight feet broad. Either it was originally arched over, or the lining is much worn away, as the top projects like a cornice. The aperture is twenty-two yards across, and on sounding the depth is found to be not more than eleven yards in the centre, and about two at the edges; but its depth has probably been diminished by rubbish, which from time to time it must have received. Indeed, the wonder is that these cisterns have at all stood amid the many desolations that have visited this unhappy country. They are always full, and an immense body of water flows from them, by which a number of mills are turned.

Several villages lie to the east of the Ras el-Ain. Among them is Kana, four or five miles distant, which has been recognised as the KANAH of Asher, mentioned in Josh. xix. 28.

The hilly country is here everywhere cultivated, particularly with tobacco. This plant is throughout Palestine regarded as a necessary of life, essential to every household; and it is reared upon small patches of ground near most villages, where the soil permits. But here it is raised largely for exportation, and forms, indeed, one of the most considerable, if not the principal article of export from Tsur, whence it is mostly carried to Damietta in Egypt.

We now reach TYRE—so renowned in history, in commerce, in arts, and in prophecy. It would require a volume by itself to set forth fully all the interest that belongs to this most remarkable place. In the present work, however, we have only undertaken to furnish a description of the land and its cities, *in their present state*, although we have not always forbore to touch slightly upon the ancient history and condition of the more remarkable places which this survey has brought under

our notice. So now, even at Tyre, we can allude to the history and prophecy connected with this place only so far as may be necessary to elucidate the description of its present appearance.



RUINS AT TYRE.

Tyre was, in its origin, a colony of Sidon, and is hence called by Isaiah (xxiii. 12) a “daughter of Zidon;” and as it was founded at least two hundred and forty years before the building of Solomon’s temple, the same prophet speaks of its “antiquity of ancient days,” Isa. xxiii. 7. A position so excellently chosen for commerce, as well as for defence, combined with other advantages, soon raised the daughter above the mother city, and rendered Tyre the metropolis of Phœnicia, the mart of nations, and a planter of colonies.

The original city was built, not upon the island or peninsula where the later and present Tyre stands, but upon the mainland, at some point not yet clearly ascertained. Those therefore mistake who apply to the present and later site the facts and prophecies of Scripture, to which they cannot be made to agree; and those perhaps err no less who apply all indiscriminately to the Old or Continental Tyre; for the new, or Peninsular Tyre, arose before Scripture history and prophecy had closed, and had probably

for some time previously coexisted with the more ancient city as a port, or haven, in like manner as the Piræus was connected with ancient Athens. It is, however, with the old city, *Palæ Tyrus*, that the Scriptures have chiefly to do—not only in history, but in those prophecies which predict to Tyre utter destruction and irrecoverable overthrow; and in those which describe it as being besieged with horses, and chariots, and forts, and engines of war. In one or two instances, it may appear that both cities are included in the prophetic denunciations; but Insular Tyre is particularly specified as “an island in the midst of the sea,”—a description which cannot apply to Old Tyre, but which shows that the island had already been so occupied by the Tyrians that it was regarded as a part of their city—or that the prophet’s view embraced the Insular Tyre before it had acquired a distinctive existence.

In the time of David and Solomon an active friendly intercourse of mutual benefits and assistance was maintained between Israel and Tyre, which was then a sovereign state, with a king of its own. The produce of the land of Israel—“the corn wine and oil,” were of great importance to the Tyrians, who cultivated commerce and the arts to the neglect of agriculture—for which, indeed, they had no adequate home territory. The friendship of the Jews was therefore of great importance to them; and hence, we see, that even so late as the time of the apostles, these people were exceedingly anxious to appease the displeasure of Herod Agrippa, and “desired peace; because their country was nourished by the king’s country.” Acts xii. 20. In return for this, the Tyrians could offer the Israelites the produce of their markets and their arts—affording abundant articles of use and ornament, which the Israelites could only obtain by the products of their industry in the culture of the land. The relation between the two was therefore that of customers to each other—the one in each case needing what the other could supply. This explains the intercourse, and illustrates its nature. The Tyrians were induced to take a leading part in supplying the substantial materials, particularly timber, for the temple; the works of which were in fact under the management of a man who had been brought up at Tyre, to which his father belonged, though his mother was of Israel.

The maritime enterprises of Solomon were also assisted materially by the Tyrians; and probably owed much of

their success to that assistance. We do not hear much of this intercourse after the time of Solomon, but there are facts which indicate its subsistence—painful facts, which show that it had indeed become ruinously intimate. Jezebel, Ahab's wife, was a daughter of the King of Tyre, and their daughter, Athaliah, became the wife of Jehoshaphat's son, and both the mother in Israel and the daughter in Judah strove to bring in the idolatries of Tyre—the worship of Baal, thereby causing severe calamities in both kingdoms, and shedding blood to a fearful extent. The wretched end of these two women, and the abhorrence felt in the land towards their measures, together with the displeasure with which the Tyrians must have regarded the slaughter of the priests of Baal in both kingdoms, probably gave a severe blow to the intercourse between the nations. The Israelites could not but see that all the evils which they had suffered, drought, famine, slaughter, and convulsion, had originated in the intercourse with the Phœnicians. At all events, a coldness must certainly have sprung up between them, and indeed a hatred on the part of the Tyrians towards the Jews; for what is the reason assigned in Scripture for the judgments denounced upon Tyre? its exultation at the ruin of Jerusalem—“Because that Tyrus hath said against Jerusalem, Aha! she is broken that was the gates of the people: she is turned unto me: I shall be replenished, now she is laid waste.” Ezek. xxvi. 2. There is much in the later Scriptures, indeed, to give most terrible emphasis to one part of the great promise to Abraham, “I will bless him that blesseth thee, and *curse him that curseth thee.*” Thus was Tyrus cursed.

The first siege of Old Tyre which is recorded, is that by the Assyrians, in the time of Hezekiah, towards the close of the seventh century before Christ. Salmaneser, the Assyrian king, then warred against the Tyrians both by sea and land, for he had a fleet of sixty ships and eight hundred rowers. That there were no more rowers to so many ships implies that the latter could have been of no great size, and may explain how the Tyrians were able with only twelve ships, doubtless of much larger size, to obtain a victory over the Assyrian fleet, and make five hundred prisoners. On this the king returned home to Nineveh, but he still left a land force to prosecute the siege. This shows that the *continental* city must have been intended, as, had it been the insular Tyre, the loss of the fleet would

have compelled the abandonment of the enterprise. A land force alone could have been of small avail against it. Here the Assyrian army lay five years and then abandoned the enterprise. At this time, Isaiah prophesied that Tyre should be taken, not indeed by the army then before it, but by the Chaldeans. This prophecy was repeated in still more awful terms by Ezekiel; and it is to be remarked that this denunciation of its impending doom was uttered at the time when Tyre seemed at the very pinnacle of its power and glory, and when, in the exultation of having defeated and baffled the greatest king of the east, she had not unreasonable grounds for reckoning upon the permanence of her power, and to believe that she should "sit a queen for ever." But it was in that hour of her pride that her doom went forth; and its accomplishment was nigh at hand. Before a generation had passed away the Chaldean conqueror appeared before it, in the reign of Ithobal. He set engines against it, he broke down the towers, and at length, after that "long service against Tyre," which the prophets had foretold, namely, after no less than thirteen years, the city was taken. This was fifteen years after the Captivity, in the year B. C. 573. The Chaldeans rushed upon the rich prize which had been so long withheld from them, and found that all its worth had departed. For when the Tyrians saw no further hope from resistance, they fled with all their wealth, according to Jerome—on the authority of a Syrian writer whose works have been lost—to the islands; some say to Carthage; but it is generally supposed that they took refuge in the neighbouring island, which other writers affirm was then first built upon; but Vitranga, followed by Heeren and others, clearly prove that it existed as a *port* even at that time. "How beautifully," says Dr. Wilde, "the inspired poet describes [by anticipation] the scene that then took place, when the cry of the pilots rang through the suburbs, and the mariners that stood upon the shore of the island, wept in bitterness of soul over the destruction of the hearths and homes of their beloved city. Nebuchadnezzar sacked the city, but was disappointed of the spoils he expected to gain, as the inhabitants had carried off all their valuable effects to the island previous to abandoning the city. However, in his subsequent conquest of Egypt, he obtained a recompense for the disappointment he experienced at Tyre. All this was set forth in the fulness of

prophecy; and we know not any single passage of Scripture, which so strikingly illustrates the great fact that ‘prophecy is history,’ as this of Ezekiel: ‘Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon, caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus: every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled: yet had he no wages, nor his army, for Tyrus, for the service that he had served against it: therefore, thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I will give the land of Egypt unto Nebuchadrezzar, king of Babylon; and he shall take her multitude, and take her spoil, and take her prey; and it shall be the wages for his army. I have given him the land of Egypt for his labour wherewith he served against it, *because they wrought for me*, saith the Lord God,’ Ezek. xxix. 18—20.”

This was the end of Palæ, or Continental, Tyre; but it still existed, although in ruins, and Herodotus speaks of it as continuing to possess the temple of Hercules, which had been the pride of Old Tyre. But the time was near when the prophetic denunciations were to receive their complete accomplishment. “They shall destroy the walls of Tyrus, and break down her towers.” “I will also scrape her dust from her, and make her *like the top of a rock*,” a passage which Abp. Newcome, who translates “earth,” rightly conceives to have reference “to the custom in Palestine of fertilizing particular spots by carrying mould to them from other places less eligible for the purpose of sowing or planting—the top—the bare shining surface of a rock.” Again, “Thou *shalt be no more*; though thou be sought for, yet shalt thou never be found again;” a passage which perplexed Jerome, by reason of its inapplicability to Insular Tyre; but which we can well understand by restricting it to the Tyre which reigned when the denunciation was delivered. This was never built again; it is wholly extinct, and travellers search for its site in vain. Now this is an important circumstance. The utter disappearance of all trace of an ancient city is one of the rarest things that can happen, and is truly marvellous. In this case it was the declared purpose of God that the Old Tyre should be utterly lost, and that its place should be found no more at all. Well might it be asked, “Who hath taken this counsel against Tyre, the crowning city, whose merchants were princes, and her traffickers the honourable of the earth?” and it is answered: “The Lord

of hosts hath purposed it, to stain the pride of all glory, and to bring into contempt all the honourable of the earth." But yet again: "Thou shalt be a terror, and never shalt thou be any more." And, once more, the very mode in which this utter ruin was to be effected is pointed out: "They shall lay thy stones, and thy timbers, and thy dust in the midst of the waters."

The Tyrians having fled to their Island when their old city was taken by Nebuchadnezzar, the new city, situated "in the midst of the sea," thenceforth the Tyre of history, speedily rose to considerable grandeur and importance. When Alexander the Great came into these parts, he wished to enter their city, but being justly jealous of such a guest, they declined his demand. Exasperated at this, he resolved to take the city by force, and punish them for their refusal. But the place being an island was not easily to be subdued by one without a fleet. The resource he employed was worthy of his genius, and most undesignedly wrought out the whole purpose of God respecting the Old Tyre. He resolved to obtain access for his host and engines of war to the island, by joining it to the mainland by a mighty causeway. It was no less than two hundred feet broad, and we may easily conceive what a vast quantity of materials were required for this work. But for this the rubbish of the old ruined Tyre was close at hand and admirably available—and it was accordingly used. The work was finished in seven months. How beautifully and literally was prophecy here fulfilled, when the very stones and dust of the former city were used for the destruction of the island fortress, to which the inhabitants had retreated, and which they regarded as impregnable. Having once gained a footing on the island, the city was soon taken by Alexander, who stained his name by the brutalities of the conquest. Besides eight thousand men slain in the attack, two thousand were crucified after the city was taken, and thirty thousand of the Tyrian captives were afterwards sold for slaves. The remainder of the inhabitants were secretly conveyed away by the Sidonians. The city was finally set on fire by the victors. Then was further fulfilled that sure word of prophecy:—"The Lord will cast her out; and he will smite her power *in the sea*, and she shall be devoured with *fire*;" and well might it then be asked, "What city is like Tyrus, like the Destroyed in the *midst* of the sea?" Even

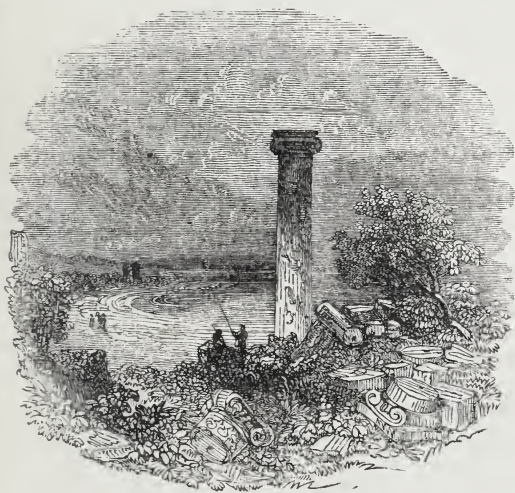
the selling of the captives into slavery was predicted : —“ Behold I will return your recompence upon your own head, and will sell your sons and daughters.”

These things took place three hundred and thirty two years before Christ. Yet this was not, like Old Tyre, doomed to utter extinction ; and although the rivalry of the newly founded city of Alexandria, and other causes, retarded its revival, it did recover some degree of prosperity and importance, though being no longer, by reason of the mole of Alexander, an island, but a peninsula, it could never again assert its independence, but became like the rest of the land subject to the masters who successively ruled in these parts—the Ptolemies, the Seleucidæ, and the Romans.

In the Gospel it is recorded that many from the coasts of Tyre and Sidon came to be taught of Jesus ; and the ship in which Paul sailed from Macedonia was there to unlade her burden, Acts xxi. 3. On that occasion, the apostle “finding disciples” at the place, was induced to tarry there seven days. Indeed, in the early age of Christianity a considerable church existed at Tyre ; and Isaiah’s prediction, that it should return to the knowledge of the Lord, may thus, in some respects, have been verified.

Subsequently the possession of Tyre was often contended for. It was beleaguered more than once during the Crusades ; and some works of the Crusaders are still to be seen. Upon a later kingdom being established in Syria, it became the see of an archbishop, and the first who held it was William of Tyre, the well known historian of the Crusades. It was retained by the Christians till 1291, and was among the last places which they yielded to the ascendancy of the Saracens. Its almost impregnable fortifications were then demolished, and Tyre has never since been a place of any consequence. Travellers of every succeeding century describe it as a heap of ruins, broken arches and vaults, tottering walls and towers, with a few miserable wretches housing amid the rubbish. About two hundred years ago, a chief of the Druses attempted to rebuild it, but in vain. Maundrell, in 1694, found not so much as one entire house left. In 1766, a part of the town was walled by the Metawileh, and the town which still exists under the name of Sur, (merely a form of the Hebrew name Tsur) may be regarded as then having had its origin.

The present town is situated entirely on the peninsula, of which it occupies about a third part. The houses are all built of grey sandstone, and are flat-roofed; they are surrounded by courts, and are much scattered. Opposite to the landing place on the north side, and about a hundred yards from the shore, are some portions of the ancient town wall, which are of very great thickness and of Cyclopean architecture. Within these is a pool of water about three feet in depth, which has generally been taken for part of the ancient harbour, but which appears rather to be an encroachment of the sea upon the land. Some old castles, and several rows of Gothic arches mark the days of the Crusaders; these require to be distinguished from the ancient



PORT OF TYRE.

city on whose ruins they stand, and above which they are raised about six or eight feet. Towards the south-east angle are the remains of a large Christian church, the east front forming three semicircles flanked by towers with winding staircases leading to the top of each. In the immediate vicinity of the church are three large granite pillars such as are hardly to be seen anywhere but in Egypt, from which country they were probably brought, as no such material is to be found in the neighbourhood of Tyre. The church

is that which Maundrell supposes to be the cathedral of Tyre, erected by the bishop Paulinus, and asks whether it may not be the same which was honoured with the famous consecration sermon of Eusebius, recorded by himself in his Ecclesiastical History. This traveller mounted to the top of this building, and had from thence a prospect of the whole island, part of Tyre, of the isthmus, and of the adjacent shore. "I thought," he says, "that I could from this elevation discern the isthmus to be of a soil different from the other two ; it lying lower than either, and being covered all over with sand, which the sea casts upon it, as the tokens of its natural right to a passage there, from which it was by Alexander the Great injuriously excluded."

A custom-house, market-place, and bazaar were established while the place was under the recent Egyptian rule. The population is about five thousand, of whom very few are Turks and other orthodox Moslems, about one-half of the whole inhabitants being Christians, and nearly the other half Metoualies. The business of the place is chiefly a trade in cotton, wool, wood, and tobacco. The harbour is now navigable only by small boats, and becomes more and more shallow every year.

In the gardens outside the town some ancient sarcophagi are found, remarkable for the peculiarity of having a pillow hewn in each for the head of the corpse to rest on.

Some indications of the ancient Insular Tyre may be discovered on the south shore of the peninsula. There are here remains of a considerable pier extending all along the water's edge ; the stones which compose it are of great size, and scattered about are numbers of pillars of granite and variegated marble, many of them piled up as landing-places for boats. The shore here demands particular attention, as it contains the remains of houses, the foundations of some of which are still in many places to be seen. In the perpendicular face of the beach are found the floors of these ancient houses, marked by whole strata of tessellated pavement, which show that the level of the peninsular city was from eight to ten feet below the present surface ; the intervening portion being composed of broken crockery-ware, pieces of marble, and rubbish. This pavement is of three different kinds ; the first is composed of small bits of marble of from one-half to three-fourths of an inch square ; another of small bricks or tiles ; and

the last of small portions of broken brick thrown into a bed of mortar, which were wrought together, and afterwards smoothed down and polished.

Dr. Wilde, who spent three days in exploring this site—to which other travellers have rarely devoted more than a day—found, while examining the remains along this shore, a number of round holes cut in the solid sandstone-rock, varying in size from that of an ordinary metal pot to that of a great boiler. Many of these holes were seven feet six inches in diameter, by eight feet deep; others were larger, and some were very small. They were perfectly smooth in the inside, and many of them were shaped exactly like a modern iron pot, broad and flat at the bottom and narrowing towards the top. Some were found detached, and others in a cluster; when the latter occurred, two or three of the holes were connected by a narrow channel, cut through the stone, about a foot deep. Many of these reservoirs were filled with a breccia of shells. In other places where the pots were empty, the breccia lay in heaps in the neighbourhood, as well as along the shore of this part of the peninsula. It instantly struck this traveller on seeing these apertures, that they were the vats or mortars in which the celebrated Tyrian purple dye was manufactured. He was confirmed in this opinion by the fact that the species of shell discovered in the breccia corresponds exactly with that described by the old authors, as that from which the colour was extracted, and from which a purple dye can be obtained at the present time, as is acknowledged by naturalists. It is the *Murex Trunculus*. Dr. Wilde broke up large quantities of these masses, but could in no instance find an unbroken specimen, which he certainly would have found had they been rolled in from the sea, or were in a fossilized state. He picked up one of the recent specimens on the shore, and found it to correspond in every respect with those discovered in the conglomerate. It would seem that the shells were collected in these holes, or, as they might more properly be called, mortars, in which they were pounded for the purpose of extracting from them the juice which the animal contained; and this notion is borne out by the statement of Pliny, who says: “When the Tyrians light upon any great purples, they take the fish out of the shells to get the blood; but the lesser fish they press and grind in certain mills, and so gather that rich humour which issues from them.”

It is to Dr. Wilde that we owe the confirmation of a remarkable passage of prophecy. From the smallness of the present peninsula compared with the probable extent of the ancient city,—from the submerged reef, or ancient



RUINS ON THE COAST OF TYRE.

pier, running north and south on both sides of it, the ruins of which he was enabled to trace,—and from the ancient town wall, now standing *in* the water at the landing place, he draws conclusive proof that the sea has risen at this point many feet above its ancient level. How strikingly does this illustrate the word of God:—“For thus saith the Lord God; When I shall make thee a desolate city, like the cities that are not inhabited; when I shall *bring up the deep upon thee, and great waters shall cover thee*; when I shall bring thee down with them that descend into the pit.”

Now leaving Tsur, and proceeding eastward along the isthmus, we arrive at two square towers about a hundred and fifty yards from the gate. The first of these is built over a well, from which the principal supply of water for the inhabitants is obtained; and to which numerous bands

of Arab women, carrying their pitchers on their heads, are continually passing. Within is a flight of steps leading to a terrace at the top, from which there is an extensive view, and underneath there is a khan, for the accommodation of those who do not choose to stop in the town, or who may have arrived late at night. This tower is upon the isthmus, which is now covered, as already mentioned, with sand; and the water of the well, which is pure and good, cannot rise here, but is most probably conducted by some portions of the aqueduct, which still remain pervious, but hidden beneath the sand and rubbish. Looking inland from this tower, you see a plain of some miles in extent; its horizon bounded towards the east by the Zeharen range of mountains. On the north stands Sidon; and following with the eye the line of aqueduct, whose broken arches rise at intervals above the sand, a most remarkable object arrests attention. This is a solitary mount of white appearance, standing above the plain, and crowned by a mosque, a marabut, and one or two old houses, which, being whitewashed, glitter in the sun, and attract the eye almost involuntarily. It is visible on all sides, and from a great distance, owing to the flatness of the plain. It is instantly remarked by the mariner entering either of the roadsteads of Tyre. It is called by the natives Marsukh; and Dr. Wilde seems strongly inclined to suspect that it may have been the Acropolis of the old continental Tyre, and consequently marks the site of that renowned city.

The aqueduct, which is the principal object of the plain, and figures conspicuously in most views of Tyre, runs towards the present town from the north-east. Several of its magnificent arches are still perfect, and can be seen at a considerable distance at sea; and the water oozing out at breakages, or filtering through the cement, has encrusted them all over with stalactites of a peculiar form, which give them at a little distance the appearance of being clothed with some gigantic foliage. The water was conveyed across the plain on these arches in a trough at the top, lined with cement, and forty-four inches in depth. All the arches are not of the same construction, and are in all probability of different dates, as if renewed from time to time. The principal of these are seventeen feet in chord, and the buttresses eight feet ten inches in breadth by nine feet three in depth. Where the sand has encroached, as is the case in some places, the arches are completely obliterated,

yet the stream-way can be traced for a great distance throughout. The aqueduct was evidently repaired at a more recent date, when hydrostatics were better understood. A perfectly watertight tube of pottery ware, formed of pieces about two feet long, accurately fitted and cemented into each other, is found connecting the broken parts of the aqueduct, or in some places laid in the stream-way.

The high road to Sidon passes by the rock of Marsukh already mentioned. About half a mile from that rock eastward we come to a range of low hills, which terminate the plain in that direction, and which ascend gradually to the more elevated heights of Lebanon. In the sides of these hills may be seen an extensive series of catacombs, cut in the face of the white sandstone rock of which they are composed, and which from their colour cause them to be distinguished at a considerable distance on the plain. The ground above these catacombs is much broken, and is now covered with a plantation of fig-trees. The interior arrangements are exactly similar to those of the Egyptian catacombs, especially those of Sakkara and Alexandria. Like them they have a low, square doorway, opening into a chamber varying in size from ten to fifteen feet square, containing three horizontal sarcophagi, or places for bodies, one on each side. The doorway or entrance fills up the fourth side; the whole carved out of the solid rock, which, like that of Egypt, is soft and easily excavated. In one place is found a large circular aperture in the ground, which has around it the entrance to eight tombs. In another place is an immense deep excavation in the rocks, which is approached by a winding descent. This may have been originally a quarry for the old city; but in the sides of it are the obvious remains of several tiers of sarcophagi. These tombs have not been fully explored; but they are doubtless of great extent, and just in the spot that we should expect to find the burial place of a city—the side of a neighbouring hill. Porcupines in great numbers have taken possession of many of the excavations, throwing up large piles of rubbish about their mouths, which, as well as their being choked with weeds and brambles, together with the lowness of the apertures, serve to conceal them much from view. Hence no traveller appears to have noticed these tombs previously to Dr. Wilde; but they are, as he remarks, well worthy of observation, not only as giving an explanation of the mode of burial

practised by the Tyrians, but as helping to fix, or rather we should say, to give an approximate idea of the site of the original Tyre; and they are also of considerable moment in showing the intimate connexion of the inhabitants with the Egyptians.

The place called Tibnin, which has been previously mentioned as the nominal capital of the province, lies inland upon the highest branch of the hills from Lebanon by which the province is diagonally intersected, on the road from Safed to Tyre. Tibnin is a strong castle upon an isolated hill in the midst of an undulating cultivated region of great beauty. Around the base of the castle-hill is the town of the same name, regarded as the chief place of the district. The castle is very strong, and not greatly impaired, though now unoccupied. It is of the time of the Crusades, and was built in 1107 by Hugh of St. Omer, then lord of Tiberias. This chieftain was in the habit of making incursions upon the city and territory of Tyre, which had not then been subdued by the Franks; and built this castle as a stronghold in furtherance of his plans, on the way between the two cities; selecting for its site a precipitous height, in the midst of a rich and cultivated tract upon the mountains, abounding in vineyards, fruits and forests. To this new fortress the founder gave the name of Toron, by which it is usually mentioned among the Franks; but Arabian writers know it only by the name of Tibnin. After the fatal battle of Hattin, in 1187, the fortress was besieged and taken by the sultan, Saladin, in person, and the original relations between Tyre and Tibnin were then reversed; and the Saracens in possession of the former henceforth harassed the Christians as masters of the latter. In the year 1197, the newly arrived Crusaders made an attempt to recover it; but retired after a siege of seven weeks without gaining their object. After that we have little recorded of Tibnin. It was, with other fortresses, demolished in 1219 by the sultan Moaddem, in order that it might not again become a stronghold of the Christians. Yet it appears to have been afterwards rebuilt and repossessed by them; for, in 1266, we find the sultan Bibars again taking possession of it after the siege and capture of Safed. Since then, until our own day, the place appears to have remained unvisited and unknown, except by that excellent French traveller Nau, who passed this way in 1674.

XV.—SIDON.

THE province of Belad esh-Shukif may be regarded as including SIDON, although that lies just beyond its northern border in one of the Lebanon districts, which, as a whole, it will not be any part of our duty to explore. The Belad esh-Shukif lies to the north of the Belad Besharah, which we have just quitted, and extends to the district of Lebanon (Jebel Libnan), where the territory of the Emir Beshir begins.

The district derives its name from the fortress of Kalat esh-Shukif, which is erroneously laid down in Robinson's, and other maps that follow it, seeing that it is not north, but west of the Merj Ajun, and from twelve to fifteen miles south-west of the position it is usually made to occupy. At the point where a line prolonged from Hunia northward would intersect the Leontes, stands the castle, upon the steep hills on the north bank of that river. With the natives it is renowned as a work of marvellous architecture and impregnable strength; and like Tibnin it makes no inconsiderable figure in the history of the Crusades. By the historians it is called Bel-fort, or Beau-fort; but it is not known when it was built, or whether by the Franks or the Saracens. It is first mentioned by William of Tyre, in the year 1179, as a castle of the Franks. In 1190, the sultan Saladin obtained possession of it by capitulation; but it was fifty years after restored to the Christians under a treaty with Ismail the sultan of Damascus. Twenty years later, in 1260, the Templars acquired possession of it, together with Sidon, by purchase; and it was still in their hands when the sultan Bibars suddenly appeared before the place, in 1268, and commenced a violent assault. After a few days of vain resistance, the Christians surrendered at discretion; the men were distributed as slaves among the conquerors, and the women and children were sent to Tyre. The fortress was then again put in good condition, garrisoned, and furnished with a cadî, and imaums for the

mosque. It is mentioned not long after by Arabian historians, but from that time has been lost sight of till our own day. It is in the occupation of a family of Sheikhs, which is regarded as the head of all the Metawileh of this region, called the house of Aly es Sugir. They boast of high antiquity, and are exclusive in their marriages, like the Sheikhs of the Druses.

Having mentioned this place, which bestows its name upon the district, let us resume our journey along the coast northward from Tyre to Sidon.

The road goes not due north in the first instance, but strikes obliquely across the plain, in order to cross the bridge over the Kasimiyeh. Here, on the high southern bank, is a khan, an old dilapidated building, the same which Sandys describes as "an ancient Cane, whose port doth bear the portraiture of a chalice." The khan is inhabited, but when Dr. Robinson's party called there the people were all absent, and had left their poultry and other effects to the honesty of all comers. "Our servants looked around for something to eat, and found at last some eggs in the nest; these they took, leaving money in the nest to pay for them."

The bridge just below this khan is a handsome modern one of a single arch, superseding the dilapidated one of four arches, of which travellers in the seventeenth century speak. The stream is in this part of considerable depth, being perhaps one-third as large as the Jordan above the Lake of Tiberias; and flows to the sea with many windings through a broad low tract of meadow land.

The celebrated Phœnician plain, through which our way now lies, has in part been already described. It may be said to begin at the White Promontory, formerly noticed, and extends to the Nahr Auly, about one hour's journey to the north of Sidon, a distance of ten or eleven hours. Its breadth is unequal; but it is nowhere more than half an hour wide, except around the cities of Tyre and Sidon, where the mountains retreat somewhat further. In some places, they approach quite near the shore. The surface is not a dead level, but undulating. The soil is fine and fertile, and everywhere capable of tillage, though now suffered for the most part to run to waste. The immediately adjacent heights are hardly to be called mountains;

and although sometimes rocky and covered with shrubs, are yet oftener arable and cultivated to the top. The hills, too, are enlivened with villages, of which there is not a single one in the plain, until near Sidon.

In about five miles from the river we come to a place where the hills approach near to the coast, and we see on the shore at our left the traces of a former site called Adlan, consisting of a confused heap of stones with several old wells, with two or three villages on the heights above. The side of the projecting mountain is rocky and precipitous near the base ; and in it are many sepulchral grottoes, hewn out of the hard limestone rock. The tombs are very numerous, and all of the same form—having a door leading into a chamber about six feet square, with a sort of bed left in the rock on three sides for the dead bodies. They are thus of the same peculiar character as those near Tyre—different from the rock sepulchres of the Jews, and having more resemblance to those of Egypt.



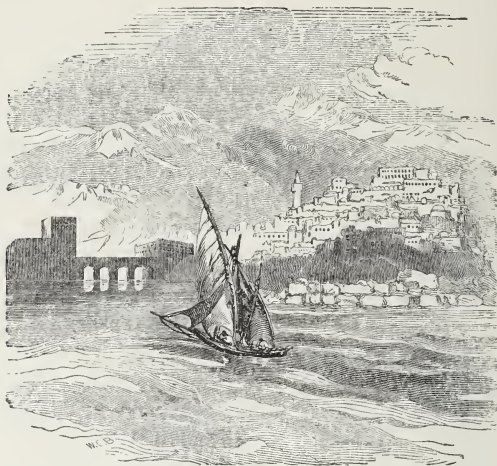
SURAFEND—SAREPTA.

A league further brings us to a site of some interest, being no other than the ZAREPHATH of the Old Testament, and the SAREPTA of the new, (1 Kings xvii. 10 ; Obad. 20 ; Luke iv. 26,) where Elijah long dwelt in the house of

the widow and restored her son to life. We are not informed of the ancient state of Sarepta; but it seems to have been a small town or large village. In the early ages of our era it is mentioned by some Latin writers as famous for its wine. A pilgrim of the sixth century describes it as being then a small Christian city. The Crusaders made it the seat of a Latin bishopric, and erected near the port a small chapel, over the spot which tradition pointed out as the residence of the poor woman who entertained Elijah. In the thirteenth century, the town contained but eight inhabited houses, although ruins evincing its former prosperity remained. It has long been utterly forsaken, the site being only marked by some broken foundations and heaps of stones, and by the ancient sepulchres excavated in the adjacent hills. This spot is hard by the sea, and answers so well to the descriptions of Sarepta given by Josephus, and other early writers and travellers, that its identity is scarcely open to question. Near the ruins is a khan for travellers, and also a small building which is described as a Moslem tomb; but which may prove to be the chapel or oratory already mentioned. A French pilgrim of the seventeenth century informs us the Moslems had changed this erection into *une petite mosquée*, "a little mosque," which they kept up with great care, and to which they came to say their prayers. The village of Surafend, the modern representative of Sarepta, is not by the sea-shore, nor even upon the plain, but upon the slope of the opposite eastern hills. It seems to have sprung up since the time of the Crusades, the inhabitants having probably removed thither from the same unascertained cause which has led to the abandonment of the rest of the plain. It is a large village, high up the slope of a partially isolated hill, marked by the conspicuous tombs of two or three Mohammedan saints. Some recent travellers have erred in connecting their scriptural associations with this spot, unmindful of the change of site; and they have needlessly marvelled that no old ruin or ancient wall is pointed out as a remnant of the widow's cottage. The situation is interesting, and has a sort of romantic beauty. The distant groves of Sidon, ten miles off; the fine summits of Lebanon; and the wild hills behind that on which the village lies, are all visible from Surafend. The air of the place is healthy and free; but the winds are strong here in winter. There is pasturage in the plain and on the declivities of the hills for the

flocks. The inhabitants and their dwellings are homely and pastoral. The latter, like most of the village residences in these parts, exhibit two or three small windows, and the interior is usually composed of three chambers, with raised divans of earth against the walls.

A little further on our way, Saida, the ancient SIDON, became visible even from the road, but still in the distance. It looks verdant and beautiful in the midst of a forest of trees. It takes us still three hours to reach it,



SIDON.

and we do not arrive at its walls until we have ridden for nearly one-third of that time among gardens and country seats.

The town lies upon the north-west slope of a small promontory, which here juts out for a short distance obliquely into the sea, towards the south-west. The ancient city extended further to the east and along the coast than the modern. On the land side, the city is protected by a high wall running across the promontory from sea to sea. Two mosques are seen to tower conspicuously above the other buildings of the town. But the most striking object is the fortress, built upon a rock in the harbour, and connected with the town formerly by a mole, but now by a causeway upon arches. This fortress was built by the

Emir Fakir ed-Deen, and is a good and imposing specimen of Saracenic fortresses. Upon an elevation on the south side of the city, commanding the town, are seen the remains of another and more ancient castle, which is usually ascribed to Louis IX. and which certainly belongs to the age of the Crusades.

The ancient harbour was formed by a low ridge of rocks, parallel to the shore in front of the city. Before the time of Fakir ed-Deen the port was here capable of receiving large vessels ; but that chief, to protect himself against the Turks, caused it to be partly filled up with stones and earth, so that since his time it has been accessible only to boats. Larger vessels lie without the entrance, on the north of a ledge of rocks, where they are protected from the south-west winds, but exposed to those from the northern quarter.

As in most eastern cities, the streets of Saida are narrow, crooked, and filthy. Many of the houses are, however, large, and well built, of stone ; and in this respect the town presents a marked contrast to the modern Tyre, which has comparatively few good habitations. Those especially along the eastern wall are distinguished for their size and height ; they are built directly on the wall, so as to constitute part of it—like that at Jericho from which the spies, and that at Damascus from which Paul was let down by the window, which in the former case is explained by the words, “for her house was upon the town wall, and she dwelt upon the wall.” Josh. ii. 15. There are within the city six khans, for the use of merchants and travellers. The largest of these formerly belonged to the French factory and consulate, and is still called the French khan. It is a large quadrangle of about one hundred and fifty feet on one side, with a fountain and basin in the middle, and covered galleries all around. It was erected by the celebrated Fakir ed-Deen, early in the seventeenth century, when the commerce of the place was very considerable, and that with Europe especially favoured. That commerce was still of some importance thirty years ago ; but has fallen off of late in consequence of the prosperity of Beirut, which has become exclusively the port of Damascus. The chief exports of Sidon are silk, cotton, and nutgalls ; and with reference to the first of these products it may be remarked that the orchards of mulberry trees around the villages in this quarter indicate the commencement of that

district in which silk is extensively cultivated. Several houses were thrown down and others injured by the great earthquake of 1837 ; but only a few persons lost their lives. The population of Sidon is reckoned at six thousand, of whom about two-thirds are Moslems, the remainder Christians, with from three hundred and fifty to four hundred Jews. The latter are all Sephardim. They have one school with three teachers and forty scholars, who read the Scripture but not the Talmud. Dr. Wilson had some conversation with them which he thus records :—

“ *Travellers.*—Have you any fields belonging to or cultivated by yourselves, near Sidon ?

“ *Jews.*—We have none.

“ *T.*—Have any Jews in the Holy Land any fields of their own ?

“ *J.*—None of them have.

“ *T.*—Then the sceptre has departed from you ?

“ *J.*—It has departed.

“ *T.*—Then, according to the prophecy of Jacob, Shiloh must have come ?

“ *J.*—There is no sceptre to the Jews here ; but there is beyond the river Subation.

“ We found it impossible to divorce them from their dreams about the *terra incognita* [unknown land] in which they suppose a prince of Judah reigns.”

Sidon is undoubtedly beautiful ; but the beauty is of that sort which everywhere arises from the presence of foliage and verdure. Gardens and orchards of fruit-trees fill the neighbouring plain and extend to the foot of the mountains. This, in a great degree, or indeed wholly, arises from the abundant supply of water by aqueducts and channels, which conduct it from the Auly and other similar streams as they issue from the mountains. The environs thus exhibit everywhere a luxuriant verdure.

The eldest son of Canaan, the son of Ham, bore the name of Sidon ; and it is generally supposed, on the authority of Josephus, that the city was founded by him. As it is allowed that Sidon is among the most ancient cities in the world, this is possible ; and the fact that it is distinguished as “ Great Zidon ” at the time of the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, Josh. xix. 28, implies a degree of eminence which it must have taken some ages to acquire. It is however quite as likely that the city was founded by those who claimed the son of Canaan for their

forefather, and who bore his name, which they transferred to the city that they built. The text to which we have referred is not the only one that indicates the early prosperity of Sidon. There is a remarkable one in Judg. xviii. 7, where, of Laish, or Leshem, a city near the sources of the Jordan, a day's journey from Sidon, it is said,—that the people that were therein “dwelt careless; *after the manner of the Zidonians*, quiet and secure; and there was no magistrate [possessor, or heir of restraint] in the land that might put them to shame in any thing.” Most of the conditions of this statement are obviously intended to apply, by comparison, to the Sidonians also. Indeed, the place in view, though so distant from the coast, seems to have had some dependence upon Sidon, for it is, further on in the same chapter, assigned as a reason for the facility with which a division of the tribe of Dan was able to take Laish, that “there was no deliverer, because it was far from Zidon, and they had no business with any man.” It is questioned whether Sidon was included or not among the cities assigned in the original allotment to the Israelites. The passage that seems to imply that it was, in Judg. i. 31, appears to speak not of Sidon, but of the Sidonians, and may apply merely to the territory beyond their own boundary upon which they had encroached, and from which it was intended that they should be expelled. But we know that the Israelites were so far from being able to expel them, owing to their lack of faith, that they became themselves subject to oppression from the Sidonians. This is intimated in Judg. x. 12, where it is said:—“The Zidonians also, and the Amalekites, and the Maonites did oppress you; and ye cried to me, and I delivered you out of their hand.” The amount of all this evidence, coupled with the fact that Tyre is scarcely mentioned, although its site was much nearer to the Hebrew territories, is, that this city was at the height of her power and prosperity at the time of, and for some time after, the conquest of Canaan; although she had already established, some fifteen miles to the south, as a staple for her own wares, that Tyre which was destined, in no long time, to become much greater and more illustrious than the mother city.

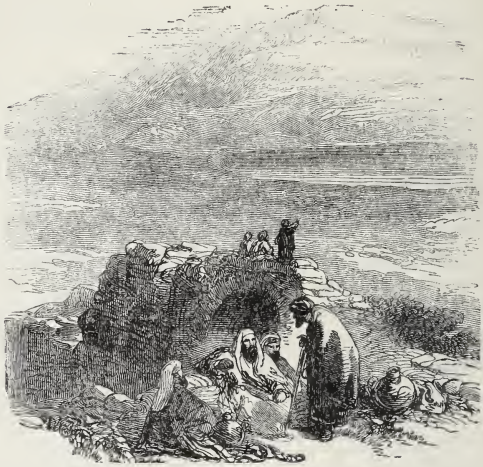
The fruits of Sidon are reckoned among the finest of the country. Hasselquist enumerates pomegranates, apricots, figs, almonds, oranges, lemons, and plums, as growing here in such abundance as to furnish annually several ship-loads

for export ; to which D'Arvieux, who was a century earlier, and who was well acquainted with the place, adds also pears, peaches, cherries, and bananas, as at the present day. At Sidon, the stranger will look in vain for those vestiges of ancient grandeur which the descriptions of historians might have led him to expect, and which indeed are still to be seen in most of the other celebrated cities of the east. All wears a modern aspect, and that too of the most ordinary kind.

Sidon is less celebrated in Scripture and in history than Tyre ; but it was the parent city, and is mentioned, as we have seen, in the Pentateuch ; and also in the poems of Homer, which Tyre is not. In the division of the promised land by Joshua, Sidon is spoken of as a great city, and was assigned to Asher, but the Israelites never subdued it. The inhabitants drove a great trade both by land and sea. In architecture, geometry, arithmetic, navigation, and in all the fine and curious arts, the Sidonians were in the earliest ages greatly famed ; and their manufactures, especially in glass and linen, were highly prized. In the time of David, the city seems to have been under the same dominion as the then more flourishing Tyre ; unless, as Sir Isaac Newton conjectures, it is the Tyrians themselves that are called " Sidonians " on account of their origin. At all events, when Shalmaneser appeared against Tyre, the Sidonians were eager to disavow all connexion with, or dependence on the beleaguered city, and sought the friendship of the Assyrian by surrendering quietly to him. It was hence allowed to remain under the government of its native prince ; nor was it deprived of that advantage by the Babylonians or the Persians. Under Artaxerxes Ochus, however, it adventured upon the bold step of declaring itself free and independent, but was conquered and destroyed by that monarch. It was shortly rebuilt, and according to its usual policy submitted to the arms of Alexander in 332 B.C., and after his death it kept alternating between Syrian and Egyptian dominion, till it came at length under the power of the Romans. It was then still an opulent city—and this was in the time of the New Testament, when our Lord visited the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and where Paul afterwards found Christian friends on his journey to Rome. Matt. xv. 21 ; Mark vii. 24 ; Acts xxvii. 3. There is no doubt that a Christian church was early established here, though the first bishop

whose name is preserved is Theodorus, who was at the council of Nice in 325. In the same century, it is spoken of as an important city—but we know but little further of it till the time of the Crusades. It did not come into the hands of the Christians till 1111, when it was taken by King Baldwin, long after the taking of Jerusalem. It remained in the hands of the Christians till 1187, when it surrendered quietly to Saladin, after the battle of Hattin, the result of which seems for a time to have dispirited even the most valiant ; but in general, as we have seen, it was as much the policy of Sidon to yield, as it was that of Tyre to resist. It seems, however, at this time to have been partly destroyed, and that destruction was completed before long by Malek Adhel in 1197. It was again recovered by the Christians and rebuilt ; but in 1249 the Saracens got possession of it, and destroyed it once more. Four years after, it was rebuilt by King Louis ix. and strengthened with high walls and massive towers. But at length, in 1291, it reverted to the Moslems, who razed its fortifications this time also ; and since then Sidon has remained a small unfortified city as it is now.

XVI.—HERMON.



MOUNT HERMON.

THIS district lies to the east of the two Phœnician provinces last described. Its proper name is *Jebel esh-Sheikh*, or as we should say, "MOUNT HERMON," *esh-Sheikh* being the present name of that mountain, which is by far the highest within the Hebrew dominions. Our view need not comprehend the whole of this large province, but only the western portion of it, which bears the name of *Wady et-Teim*.

In the first place, we notice the mountain. The *Jebel esh-Sheikh* is a south-eastern, and in that direction culminating branch of *Anti-Libanus*. It is perhaps the highest of all the Lebanon mountains, and is thought to rival *Mont Blanc*; although, as Mr. Elliot has well observed, the high ground on which it stands detracts materially from its apparent altitude, and makes it a less imposing object than that king of European mountains, as viewed from the Italian valley of *Aösta*. Its top is covered with

now even in summer, and must therefore rise above the point of perpetual congelation, which in this quarter is about 11,000 feet above the level of the sea. It might be safe to add some hundreds of feet for the height *above* the level of perpetual snow, or rather ice—that is, of frozen snow; but it is better to await the result of more exact observations than have yet been made. Some statements make it as low as 9,500 feet; but we see not how that is possible if the top is covered with *perpetual* snow. The appearance, of course, varies with the advance of the season, and we have not, that we recollect, any observation so *late* in the season as to put the matter beyond question. Our impression is that the mountain exhibits during summer, (but we are not sure that it does to the end of summer (into autumn,)) a cap of snow, *below* which descend many streaks, caused by the snow in the ravines, which remains unmelted lower down than in the exposed surface. It is from this appearance that it derives its name of *Jebel esh-sheikh*, or “Old Man’s Mountain,” as it suggested a fancied resemblance to the white hair and flowing locks and beard of a venerable Sheikh, or elder. Dr. Robinson is disposed to contend, indeed, that the snow is perpetual only in the ravines, “so that the top presents the appearance of stripes *upon* and below the summit.” This observation was made in June: but Dr. Clarke, who saw the mountain still later in the season, and whose testimony in such a matter is at least of equal value, from the greater experience he had in the observation of snow-topped mountains in his extensive travels, says plainly:—“The summit is so lofty that the snow entirely covered the upper part of it, *not* lying in patches, but investing all the higher part with that perfect white and smooth velvet-like appearance which snow only exhibits when it is very deep.”

Since this mountain has been known to modern travellers, no doubt has been entertained that it is the Mount Hermon of Scripture; and seeing that it is clearly indicated in Deut. iii. 8, as upon the northernmost boundary, and therefore as belonging to Anti-Lebanon, it is very strange that its representative has been sought in the shapeless, barren, and uninteresting mass of hills in the north of the valley of Jezreel, opposite Mount Gilboa. This bears the present name of *Jebel ed-Duhy*, and there is no reason to suppose that it is at all mentioned in Scripture. The mention of Hermon along with Tabor in

Psalm lxxxix. 12, probably led to its being sought near the latter mountain, where, accordingly, the maps and travellers give us a "Little Hermon," in this Jebel ed-Duhy. But that text, and also Psalm cxxxiii. 3, apply even better to Jebel esh-Sheikh; for it is more natural that the psalmist should call upon these mountains, respectively the most conspicuous in the eastern and western divisions of the land, than upon two mountains near each other, to "rejoice in the name of the Lord;" and it is to be observed that this great mountain is distinctly visible from Mount Tabor, and that both mountains together are in sight from the plain of Esdraelon.

The province on which this mountain bestows its name does not possess any town of importance, and whatever of interest it offers can be sufficiently examined in a route through its western part from south to north.

At the commencement of this route, we find so much of the basin of the Lake Huleh as lies within this district, and which we shall therefore here notice as a whole. This lake exhibits what would be almost a perfectly triangular shape but for a sweeping indention on the west side, whereby the apex is narrowed and the regularity of the figure marred. The base of this triangle is northward; and the Jordan, which entered there in several streams, comes out at the apex southward in one. This description scarcely answers to the figure given to the lake in maps, in few of which is it correctly delineated. The length of the lake to the southern point is about four-and-a-half miles; but northward there is a marshy tract of land, (the Ard el-Huleh,) of equal or even somewhat greater extent, where tall reeds and lotus plants are profusely exhibited, and which may be regarded as belonging to the area of the lake, the extent of which, with this addition, cannot be taken at less than nine miles in length, by four-and-a-half miles broad. Still further north, the morass merges into a fine broad tract of good meadow land, and beyond that, the soil becomes a fertile plain, in which corn is cultivated.

The lake serves as a kind of reservoir to collect the waters which form the Jordan, and let it go forth at the opposite extremity in a single stream. There are no considerable banks to the lake, and a small rise of the water, above the ordinary spring level, would make it overflow. On the margin of the lake itself, and on a great part of its surface

throughout, are a great many sedges, rushes, and lotus plants. Thousands of aquatic birds are seen gambolling on its bosom, and many swallows skimming its surface. The water of the lake has not the purity of that of the Lake of Tibérias, as it is fed by several muddy streams running through the morass. It would be no difficult matter to effect its drainage. The shores of the lake are frequented by a great number of wild boars, which conceal themselves in the reeds and rushes that surround it. Wolves and jackals are also mentioned as inhabiting the shores of the lake.

This Lake Huleh is only once referred to in Scripture. It is "the WATERS OF MEROM," (Josh. xi. 5, 7,) where Joshua gave battle to the host of Jabin, king of Hazor. In Josephus it bears the name of Samochonitis; and the present name of Huleh can be traced back to the time of the Crusades.

At the north-west angle of the lake, a stream runs into it from the north-west, rising in the near western hills. It is called Ain el-Mellahah, "Fountain of Salt," which name derives not from any brackishness of the water, nor from any incrustations in its neighbourhood. The fountain is a large pool, an irregular polygon from about one hundred and fifty to two hundred yards in length, and about one hundred in breadth. Many copious and clear springs appear to rise at its bottom, at the base of an almost perpendicular rock, and the depth of water in the reservoir is three or four feet. It is certainly entitled to be spoken of as one of the sources of the Jordan. It is surrounded by wild figs, brambles, briars, thistles, and every rank stalks of peppermint, and contains many fishes, chiefly gudgeons of small size.

We now approach the sources of the Jordan; but before we direct our attention to them, let us turn aside to the left, and view the Castle of Hunin, which lies upon the western mountains, upon which it is the most conspicuous object. It stands out in bold relief, almost due west from Baniyas, (which we have presently to visit,) and is long before the eyes of any traveller who explores this quarter. The structure is an oblong quadrangle, rounded at the south end, and is about nine hundred feet long by three hundred feet wide. It overhangs the very brow of the precipice, which on the east side falls sheer down to a great depth, towards the plain. On the north and west sides it is pro-

tected by a trench, hewn in the solid rock, forty feet wide, and fifteen or twenty deep. The southern and south-western parts are defended by six round towers and a double wall: there are also three round towers on the eastern wall. The large area within was formerly covered with houses and magazines, and undermined by numerous cisterns. The village has no fountain, but depends entirely upon these cisterns, and the water in them is now scarce in dry seasons, and alive with animalcules. There is, indeed, a fountain about a mile below the castle, and near it are some foundations of ancient buildings, which may suggest the probability that the village was in former times there situated, but that the people were eventually driven to nestle nearer to the old feudal castle for greater security. The village is small and inhabited wholly by Metawileh. Most of the works existing at present appear to be modern, —Saracenic, if not even Turkish; but the northern part affords manifest tokens of antiquity. It is about three hundred feet square, and surrounded on all sides by a ditch cut in the solid rock. A few specimens of the original wall are still to be seen, and show that the whole was constructed of large bevelled stones, bound together by iron clamps, and bearing a strong resemblance to the works of Jewish and Phœnician origin which are yet to be seen at Jerusalem and in the island of Ruad, the ancient Aradus. The Rev. W. M. Thomson, an American missionary, to whom we owe this description, asks, "Whether this old castle may not mark the site of HAZOR? We know that Hazor was a city of Naphtali somewhere in the neighbourhood of Kedesh, Abel, and Ijon; and if, as Josephus says, Hazor was on a high mountain above the Huleh, this site accords well with his account; for it occupies precisely such a position, commanding a noble view of the plain, marsh, and lake." This may deserve consideration. The principal objection is, that Josephus appears to describe Hazor as lying upon or opposite to the Lake Samochonitis, whereas the Castle of Hunin is ten miles from any part of it.

It is in this quarter, coming as we do from the south, that we are likely first to meet with the buffalo in Syria. Dr. Wilson writes:—"It differs from the buffalo in India only in being of a smaller breed, with more shaggy hair, and, I think, with somewhat less lateral horns. It is a very uncomely and uncouth animal; but it is well suited for

marshy grounds. It stands exposure to heavy rains, as among the western ghauts of India, better than the cow. The first specimens which we saw to-day were engaged in ploughing a field. Their appearance and occupation, even giving the animal every credit for degeneracy in agility and ferocity since its domestication, appeared ill to accord with the idea of Schultens, Robinson, and others, who think that the buffalo is probably the Reem; rendered "unicorn" in many versions of the Scripture, from the Septuagint downward. It was a more powerful ruminant than this, we all thought, when we saw it yoked to the plough, to which God himself referred in his challenge to Job, when he said—"Will the Reem be willing to serve thee, or abide by thy crib? Canst thou bind the Reem with his band in the furrow? or will he harrow the valleys after thee? Wilt thou trust him, because his strength is great? or wilt thou leave thy labour to him? Wilt thou believe him, that he will bring home thy seed, and gather it into thy barn?" Job xxxix. 9—12.

We are now soon among the springs of the Jordan. According to the ancients, the Jordan rose in the neighbourhood of the city Paneas, (now Baniyas,) issuing from a double spring. This double source has in our own times been sought out and identified. One of them is found on the north side of the village of Baniyas, and issues from a cave in a cliff, which it enters for a few feet. The cave is much choked up with stones, from under which the stream appears a few yards in front of the cave. Over the cave and to the east of it, several niches, evidently intended for the reception of statues, have been cut in the rock. Some of these are nearly filled up with earth and stones. There are several Greek inscriptions on the tablets below or beside the niches, the most legible of which appears to have been annexed to a dedication by a priest of Pan. The formation of a large temple at this source of the Jordan by Herod the Great, is thus noticed by Josephus:—"So when he had conducted Cæsar [Augustus] to the sea, and had returned, he built him a most beautiful temple of the whitest stone, in the country of Zenodorus, near the place called Panium. This is a very fine cave in a mountain, under which there is a great cavity in the earth, and the cavern is abrupt, and prodigiously deep, and full of still water; over it hangs a vast mountain, and under the caverns arise the springs of the river Jordan.

Herod adorned this place, which was already a very remarkable one, still further by the erection of this temple, which he dedicated to Cæsar." Philip, the son of Herod, when tetrarch of Ituræa, Batanæa, and Trachonitis, built or enlarged the city here, and named it Cæsarea, after the Roman emperor. From himself it received the addition



SPRINGS OF THE JORDAN.

of Philippi, and was known as CÆSAREA PHILIPPI, to distinguish it from Cæsarea Palestinæ, on the sea coast. It is mentioned by that name in Matt. xvi. 13 ; Mark viii. 27. It was enlarged by Agrippa, who named it Neronis, after the emperor Nero. One of the Greek inscriptions near the cave, which can only be imperfectly read, commences with the name of Agrippa (ΑΓΡΙΠΠΑ). Vespasian, when in Syria, refreshed his army at this place for twenty days, and was there royally entertained by Agrippa. Titus, also, after the destruction of Jerusalem, stayed there a considerable time, and exhibited all sorts of shows, in the course of which great numbers of the captives were destroyed, some being thrown to the wild beasts, and others, in multitudes, forced to kill one another as if they were enemies.

Banias was still an important place during the Crusades, but is now a mere village, with some sixty huts and houses and about four hundred inhabitants. It is situated in the corner of a recess in the plain, and is surrounded on all sides by hills, except on the west. It lies at the base of the lofty Jebel esh-Sheikh, some of the flanks and prolongations of which are remarkably fertile and beautiful, like the plain below, presenting a forest of very thriving trees. A considerable part of the town is in the form of a trapezium, and has been regularly fortified; its defences yet remain in tolerable condition. Among them there is a handsome gateway, and eight large towers showing massive walls, and still bearing distinctive names. A ruinous castle is situated upon the heights above the town, and is a conspicuous object from a great distance.

Josephus speaks of the stream issuing from the cave at Banias as distinctively the source of the river, although he speaks of another fountain as existing at Dan, and giving rise to the lesser Jordan. It is, however, a curious fact that he makes the stream at Banias only the source of the river in a secondary sense. He says:—"Now Panium is thought to be the fountain of the Jordan, but in reality it is carried thither, after an occult manner, from a place called Phiala. This place lies as you go up to Trachonitis, and is a hundred and twenty stadia [say 'furlongs'] from Cæsarea, and is not far out of the road, on the right hand. And, indeed, it has its name Phiala, [vial or bowl,] very justly from the roundness of its circumference, as being round like a wheel. Its water always continues up to its edges, without either sinking or running over; and as the origin of the Jordan was formerly not known, it was discovered so to be when Philip was tetrarch of Trachonitis; for he caused chaff to be thrown into Phiala, and it was found at Panium, where the ancients thought the fountain head of the river was, to which it had, therefore, been carried by the waters."

A lake corresponding to this Phiala of Josephus was first noticed by Captains Irby and Mangles in their journey from Sasa to Banias. But a more full and exact description of it has more recently been furnished by the American missionary, Thomson:—"It is about one hour and a half due east from the castle of Banias, and, consequently, about three hours from the fountain of Banias. The path climbs over a high mountain, and then leads across a plain

covered with lava, and divided by the deep channel of a brook, which runs down south-west, and falls into the marsh of Huleh. The Birkeh [lake] is the most singular basin of water I have ever examined. It is manifestly the mouth of a perfectly round crater, filled with water to within about eighty feet of the top. This great volcanic bowl is about three miles in circumference, and the sides are so steep that it is difficult to get down to the water. It does not appear to be very deep, since in most parts the surface is covered with weeds, upon which thousands of chicks were feeding. The circumstances which identify the Birket er-Ram with the ancient Phiala, are its bowl-like shape, and the fact that it has neither inlet nor outlet, is fed neither by a running stream nor by any visible fountain, and has no known channel of escape for its surplus waters. It neither increases nor diminishes; but what it is now, in this hottest and driest season of the year, the line on its lava-built margin clearly shows it to be during the rains and snows of winter. This is a singular fact, and I leave others to explain the curious phenomenon. This examination confirmed my former doubts. It is scarcely possible that the Phiala is the more distant appearance, much less the *source* of the stream at Banias. The water of the Phiala is so insipid and nauseous that it cannot be drunk, while the fountain of Banias pours out a river of cool, sweet, and delicious water. The Phiala is so crowded with leeches that a man can gather 6,000 or even 8,000 in a day, while the fountain at Banias is not infested by a single leech. This could not be if the river of Banias drained the Lake Phiala. Besides, the size and position of the mountains, with the depth and direction of the intervening valleys, interpose physical and geological obstacles which render the supposition incredible; and, moreover, so vast a discharge of water as the fountain of Banias requires, would draw off the whole lake of Phiala in twenty-four hours; or if the supply from some hidden source be equal to the demand, it would at least change the stagnant character of the lake, and manifest its operation on the surface." This is surely evidence enough, and far more than enough, to discredit the chaffy experiment of the tetrarch.

The hill called Tel el-Kadi, in which the other source rises, is about four miles west of Banias. This Tel is a small elevation, principally of basaltic tufa. At the base

of this hill we come to a circular basin about one hundred yards wide, in the bottom of which large quantities of water rise and boil up, and a considerable number of fresh green tortoises (*testudo Græca*) disport themselves. It seems to be one of the most copious springs to be seen in Palestine. Two large streams of the purest water issue from the basin, which, after forming a small island, immediately unite into a rapid river, ten yards wide and two feet deep, having a very quick descent through a luxuriant grove of oleanders, briars, and wild figs, and of poplar, pistachio, and mulberry trees. Higher up the Tel there is another spring, by which two mills are turned, and whose waters combine with the other, and the collected stream eventually forms a junction with that from Banias, and then proceeds in one united Jordan to the Lake Huleh.

The fountains at Tel el-Kadi directly correspond to the source which Josephus speaks of as "the other source of the Jordan, called also Dan; where stood the city DAN," anciently Laish, belonging, as it seems, originally to the territory of Sidon, but captured by the Danites, and named after the founder of their tribe. The same city of Dan is placed by Eusebius and Jerome at four Roman miles from Paneas on the road to Tyre, corresponding well to the present distance of these sources. The river from this source was called, according to Josephus, "the lesser Jordan," obviously in distinction from the somewhat larger stream from Banias, into which it flows. In confirmation of the conclusion that this is the site of Dan, which the common expression "from Dan to Beersheba" seems to point out as the uttermost northward town occupied by the Israelites, one or two interesting facts are mentioned by Dr. Wilson. Where a town has existed, we expect to find some indications of the fact. No previous travellers had noticed any evidence at Tel el-Kadi, and some declare that none exist; but this traveller saw heaps of stones and old foundations, together with comparatively more recent (as we understand him) ruins of huts and houses. Dr. Wilson also points out the analogy which exists between the name Kadi—in Arabic, a judge—in exact accordance in etymological meaning with the Hebrew Dan. Further, he writes:—"A small grove of large trees lying about two miles to the south, the miller told us, is called the Shajar ed-Difnah. We were startled at this information, which he communicated to us of his

own accord, and without any idea of its possible import. It struck us for the moment, that though the word Difnah means a laurel, this may be the exact locality of the Daphne mentioned by Josephus, and supposed by Reland and others to be a corruption of the word Dan, and to which Josephus refers when, speaking of the Lake Samochonitis, he says, that 'its marshes extend as far as the place called Daphne, which has fountains supplying the lesser Jordan, under the fountain of the golden calf, and sent into the great Jordan.' Indeed, nothing is more likely than that the golden calf set up by Jeroboam at Dan, was worshipped in a grove near that place, which grove seems to be here indicated and identified. This spot requires to be further explored."

It is remarkable that in describing the sources of the Jordan, Josephus wholly overlooks the large stream, the Hasbani, which flows from Hasbeiya in what may be called the natural course of the Jordan. It is the remotest source, and makes its way direct to the lake, without uniting with the other stream, to which, in the latter part of its course, it runs parallel. It contributes as large, if not a larger body of water to the lake, and geographically speaking, is the true source of the Jordan. We find no means of accounting for the neglect, or for the origin of the Jordan being ascribed exclusively to the nearer sources, unless in the disposition of the Jews to find the whole of the Jordan within their own territory, beyond the ordinary boundary of which the Hasbani rises. The source of this stream is about a mile and a half distant from the town of Hasbeiya. The only description of it we possess is that of Mr. Thomson, which we therefore adduce:—"We left the palace of the Emir of Hasbeiya about sunrise, and in half an hour reached the fountain of Hasbani. The fountain lies nearly north-west from the town, and boils up from the bottom of a shallow pool, some eight or ten rods in circumference. The water is immediately turned by a strong stone dam into a wide mill-race . . . It meanders for the first three miles through a narrow, but very lovely and highly cultivated valley. Its margin is protected and adorned with a green fringe and dense shade of the sycamore and willow trees, while innumerable fish sport in its cool and crystal bosom. It then sinks rapidly down a constantly deepening gorge of black basalt for about six miles, when it reaches the level of the great volcanic plain extending to the marsh above the Huleh. Thus far its direction is nearly

south, but it now bears a little westward, and in eight or ten miles it enters the lake Huleh, not far from its north-west corner." The total length of its course to the lake is estimated to be not less than twenty-five miles.

The town of Hasbeiya, near which the spring rises, is the principal place of the province. It stands upon a hill about eight or nine hundred feet high, on the south and south-west of which most of the houses are situated, covering it in their different rows from top to bottom. Terraces with mulberry-trees are found where no houses stand. The front sides of all the houses have one or two windows. Every house seems to have a kind of fore-court, entered by an arch, and in most of these courts there are one or two fig-trees. The sides of the mountain around the town are laid out in terraces, in which are planted numerous olive, fig, and mulberry trees. The town contains a tolerably large and well-supplied bazaar; and the main employment of the inhabitants seems to be the cultivation of silk, weaving, raising of olives, and agriculture. The grain crops are much later than further to the south, the corn being not yet in the ear in the middle of April, by which month it is ripening fast in the south of the land. The town and the district of which it is the capital, pertain to the pashalic of Damascus, but are under the actual government of a Druse emir, whose residence is a conspicuous object in the town. It might in time of war serve as a fortress. Burckhardt did not reckon the town to contain more than seven hundred houses at the time of his visit. Half of these belonged to Druse families, the other half were inhabited by Christians, principally Greeks, though there are also Catholics and Maronites in the place. About forty Turkish families, and twenty Enzarie (Arabs) also find here a residence. The population must have had since then a large increase, for Dr. Wilson's information makes the Christians alone have one thousand houses, regarded as representing a population of four thousand souls; the Druses at three hundred houses and one thousand souls; and the Moslems at twenty houses and one hundred souls, in all, a population of about five thousand souls, which is a large one for Palestine. The remarkable preponderance of the first-named class makes it almost a Christian town, and, indeed, the social aspect of the place is nearly identical with that of the Christian towns of Lebanon, to which it may be said to belong.

Here the traveller will obtain his first sight of the *tantur*, or horn worn by the married women of Lebanon. It is supposed to be the "horn" so often alluded to in Scripture as an ensign of power and strength. In connexion with this fact, we learn with great interest from Dr. Wilson, that although the use of this ornament is now confined to women, he procured at Damascus an ancient gem, representing *a man* wearing the horn. There is a very graphic description of this curious appendage by Mr. Graham of Damascus:—"The females have one striking peculiarity, *the horn*, which gives them a wild, fierce, and inhuman appearance. This ornament is of dough, tin, silver, or gold, according to the wealth of the different classes. The rank is also indicated by the length of it—the nobler the lady, the longer the horn; some of them are more than an English yard. The horn is of different shapes, but generally they resemble a cone. The larger end admits the head, to which it is fastened very firmly. Sometimes the horn rises right out from the forehead, sometimes it is inclined to the right or left as the wearer chooses; and, except among the upper classes, this honourable head-furniture is confined to the married. They rarely lay it off. They sleep in the horn. A principal Sheikh lately attempted to alter this custom, and lay the horn aside; but though his own family did so, the females in general absolutely refused, and he humorously said he would not risk a rebellion for the sake of the horn. I should mention that a large mandile or handkerchief is uniformly thrown over the horn, and hangs loosely down around the head and shoulders."

It is a fact of interest as a Scriptural illustration, that Dr. Wilson was here offered by the Jews water cooled with snow from Mount Hermon. It is a similar use of snow which is referred to by Solomon where he says, "As the cold of snow in the time of harvest, so is a faithful messenger to them that send him: for he refresheth the soul of his masters," Prov. xxv. 13. This cannot allude to a natural fall of snow, which could not be expected in the time of harvest, and would then, indeed, be most disastrous.

"Referring here," writes Dr. Wilson, "to the snow of Hermon, I may mention its *dew*, the abundance and fertilizing properties of which we had, like others, noticed in this neighbourhood. When we adverted to the position of

the mountain, we had some difficulty in understanding the figure :—‘As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion,’ Ps. cxxxiii. 3. The ‘dew of Hermon,’ in this verse, may perhaps mean any dew like that of Hermon. Were it not for the words following the Psalm, ‘for there the Lord commanded his blessing, even life for evermore,’ which seem to refer to that Zion which was the site of the tabernacle, we might be disposed to conjecture that the word Zion in the Psalm corresponds with Sion, a name of Hermon mentioned in Deut. iv. 48.”

We must not neglect to mention the Jews, of whom there are in Hasbeiya about twenty houses, with a population of one hundred souls. They are all natives of the place, and all Sephardim, forming a colony said to have been founded about a hundred years ago by Jews mostly from Austria. Two or three of them are stationary merchants, but most of the others are travelling dealers. They lend money on the security of trees and fields, taking charge of the produce, but allowing the owners to act as cultivators. They have a small synagogue, but no reading-room, and little inclination for study. A few of them understand Hebrew, and eight or ten of them read and write Arabic.

Dr. Wilson, when at this place, was waited upon by some of the Christians. Finding them able to read, he opened a box containing copies of the Arabic Bible and New Testament, and publications replete with plain statements of evangelical truth. Among those which he distributed were several copies of the “Life of Luther,” and other Protestant publications. “When the Greek priests saw them in the hands of the people, they became quite infuriated, and sent an agent to beg me to order their restoration. I told the people that, as a friend of religious liberty, peaceable discussion, and prayerful inquiry, I left the matter entirely in their hands. They declared they would keep what they had received at all hazards; and they heard the threats of the agent of the priests and their attendants unmoved.”

Even the Druses came in some degree under the notice of this traveller. An intelligent member of that strange sect told him before he left Hasbeiya, that a considerable number of persons in the town had been for some time anxious to declare themselves Protestants; and that if the protection of England could be promised, he was sure that

a hundred families would immediately join our communion. We fear that not much reliance is to be placed on conversions made subject to such conditions ; but the fact shows that attention has been excited, though it is to be feared that they have no regard to the spiritual doctrine of Christ and him crucified : so true is it that "the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God : for they are foolishness unto him : neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned," 1 Cor. ii. 14. Dr. Wilson sees in the disposition of the people to become proselytes the effects of the ministrations of the excellent missionaries from America stationed at Beirut, who had occasionally visited this town, and at one time maintained a school for the instruction of its youth.

The neighbourhood of Hasbeiya is interesting to the mineralogist. Burckhardt was told by a priest that "a metal" was found near it, of which nobody knew the name or had found the use. On this, the traveller procured a labourer, and found after digging in the wady a few hundred paces east of the village, several small pieces of a metallic substance, which he took to be a native amalgam of mercury. According to the description given him, cinnabar is also found here ; but he could discover no specimen of it after half an hour's digging. The ground all around and the spring near the village are strongly impregnated with iron, and the prevailing rock is sandstone of a deep red colour. The other mineral curiosities are a number of wells of bitumen judiacum, in a wady an hour's journey to the west of the village. They are situated in the declivity of a chalky hill, and the bitumen is found in large veins at about twenty feet below the surface. The pits are from six to twelve feet in diameter ; the workmen descend by a rope and wheel, and after hewing out the bitumen, they leave columns of that substance at different intervals as a support to the earth above. Pieces of several rotolas* in weight are brought up ; and the produce is sold for about twopence-halfpenny the pound to the merchants of Damascus, Beirut, and Aleppo. There are upwards of twenty-five of these pits or wells, but the greater part of them are abandoned and overgrown with shrubs.

* A *rotola* is about five pounds.

XVII.—BEYOND THE JORDAN.

ALTHOUGH Palestine, properly so called, comprehends only the region between the Mediterranean and the Jordan, yet as the interest belonging to that country, from its ancient connexion with the chosen people, extends also to the districts beyond the Jordan eastward, which were partly in their possession, and which are much noticed in the sacred history, a rapid survey of that part of the country is necessary to the completeness of this work.

We have not here, however, the same advantages which we possessed in exploring the districts which lie to the west of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. In comparison with these, the eastern country may be regarded as almost entirely unknown; and this quarter yet awaits that searching exploration which Dr. Robinson and some other travellers have applied to the nearer country. The following may be regarded as a careful summary of the best information which exists concerning this region, drawn from the accounts of Seetzen, Burckhardt, Irby and Mangles, Buckingham, G. Robinson, Lord Lindsay, Chesney, Lynch, Richter and some other German travellers.

On the west side of the Jordan our course was from south to north; and being thus arrived in the north, our best course will be to pass over, and return on the other side, from north to south, making Mount Hermon (or *Jebel esh-Sheikh*) our starting point.

At the foot of Hermon we find ourselves upon the high basaltic table-land, which extends eastward to the Syrian desert, and southward to the river *Sheriat el-Mandhur* or *Jarmuk*, (ancient *Hieromax*), which enters the Jordan a few miles below the Lake of Tiberias.

From the roots of Hermon branches off a low range of hills running towards the south, called *Jebel Heish*, which terminates near the northern end of the Sea of Galilee in the hill *el-Faras*. Around these hills is a high open plain,

which bears in its various parts different names. The northern part, along Jebel Heish, is called Jedur, and corresponds to the ancient Ituræa. South of that, as far as the Sheriat el-Mandhur, is Jolan, the ancient Gaulonitis. The part of the plain lying east of this is called the Hauran as far as the range of hills which comes down from the neighbourhood of Damascus; and that portion of the plain which lies to the east of these hills is called the Lejah, which is the ancient Trachonitis. Popularly, however, the name of the Hauran is extended to another cluster of hills lying beyond this, and the Lejah is regarded as a district of the Hauran. This plain, or at least the greater part of it, formed the territory of the half-tribe of Manasseh, which received its inheritance in the east country. It is crossed from north to south by the route of the great Mohammedan pilgrim caravan (the Hadj route) which annually proceeds from Damascus to Mecca.

The present district of Jedur, the ancient Ituræa, is for the most part a flat tract of country, lying east of the Jebel Heish, which has already been described as a branch, prolonged southward, of Mount Hermon. This region now contains about twenty villages; the chief of these, which bears the remarkable name of es-Sunamein, (two idols,) lies upon the Hadj route. It consists of forty or fifty hovels, built of the black basaltic stone of the Hauran, where the ruins of ancient buildings are used without alteration for modern erections. There are at this place some considerable remains of antiquity, about one hour's journey in circumference. Three square towers five storeys high, two temples, many detached houses, and some cisterns, are still in tolerable preservation. One of the temples forms the principal ruin, and is called by the inhabitants the Monastery, (el Monastir.) There are, however, inscriptions which indicate that it was built to the honour of Julius Germanus and his successful expedition. The other temple is also shown by inscriptions to have been built in the time of the emperor Hadrian, in honour of Jupiter. It is twenty-one paces long, by nineteen broad, and is surrounded by a threefold range of columns. It is used as a mosque by the Arabs. From an inscription in the first of these temples it appears that the place was anciently called Aere, and was the first station from Damascus on the road to Scythopolis.

The second province of this high plain bears the name

of Jolan, of which we recognise no faint trace in the classical and New Testament name of Gaulonitis. The ancient Scriptural districts of Argob and of Bashan lay within its limits. Only a small part of this district is under culture ; but the pasturage is remarkably good, bearing out all that the Scriptures tell us of the pastoral richness of this region.

The principal place in Jolan is at present Nowa, now a large village, formerly a town of half an hour in circumference. In former times it was called Neve, and was inhabited by Jews about the time of our Lord, when most of the towns beyond the Jordan were occupied by heathen. In the neighbourhood, to the north, there are the ruins of a large square building, of which the entrances only now exist, ornamented with sculptures, with heaps of broken columns in front of it. At the north end of the village is found a small square solid building, probably a mausoleum, which has no other opening than the door. There are also at Nowa some remains of private buildings and public edifices.

In immediate connexion with Jolan, but not nominally forming any part of it, are the small districts of Kanneiterah and Fik. The district of Kanneiterah comprises the mountain range of Heish, from the neighbourhood of Banias to its southern extremity. It takes the name of Kanneiterah from its chief place so called, in which we recognise the ancient Canatha, not mentioned (at least not by any recognisable name) in Scripture. This place lies at the eastern base of the mountain, upon the road from Jacob's Bridge to Damascus. It is surrounded by a strong wall, which incloses a good khan, a fine mosque, enriched with many short columns of grey granite, and a copious spring. On the north side of the place are ruins of a small ancient city, probably Canatha.

The village called Fik also does not belong to Jolan, though situated in the plain of Jolan, on the east side of the lake of Tiberias, and nearly opposite the city of that name, but forms an isolated district. Fik is a considerable village containing about two hundred families. It lies at the head of a wady of the same name, which empties itself into the Lake of Tiberias. The brook which passes through this wady has three sources issuing from beneath a precipice, around whose summit the village is built in the form of a half-moon. Upon the flat roofs of all the houses in this village is a small apartment called *hersh*, formed of branches of trees covered with mats. To this cool retreat

the family retires during the mid-day heats of summer. This gives a lively idea of "the corner of the housetop," which the book of Proverbs indicates, (xxi. 9,) as a retreat from domestic distractions.

There are a few ruins of ancient buildings at Fik ; among others two small towers on the opposite extremities of the cliff. These remains must be regarded as indicating the Apheca of Jerome, and probably the ΑΡΗΕΚ of 1 Kings xx. 26. The analogy of the existing name is evident.

There being a constant passage through this place between the Hauran and Tiberias and Acre, more than thirty houses in the place have open menzils, or lodgings, for the entertainment of strangers of every description and the supply of their cattle without cost. The landlords have an allowance from the government for their expenses, which is made by a deduction from the customary direct taxes. The establishment of these public menzils, which are general over all the country south of Damascus, does much honour to the hospitable spirit of the Turkish government ; but it is in fact the only expense the government thinks itself obliged to incur for the benefit of the people of the country. A peasant is, however, thus enabled to travel a whole month without expending a para ; but persons of any consideration are in the habit of giving a few paras on the morning of their departure to the waiter or watchman. If the traveller does not choose to alight at a public menzil, he may go to any private house, where he will find a hospitable landlord and as good a supper as the circumstances of his host may afford.

Three quarters of an hour from this village, descending the hills towards the lake, we come to a steep insulated hill, which has on its top extensive ruins of buildings, walls, and columns. These remains bear the name of Kalat el-Hosn. This probably indicates the site of the ancient Gamala, which is described as having been on the eastern shore of the lake, opposite to the fortress Tarichæa. The name Gamala signifies a camel's back, to which the site of el-Hosn has much resemblance, and it also agrees with the observation of Josephus, that the district of Gamalitica, belonging to this place, formed a part of the lower Gaulonitis.

South-west from el-Hosn, upon the shore of the lake, is Khurbet es-Sumrah, the only inhabited village upon the

eastern border of the lake. Burckhardt recognised in this the ancient Hippos. This was a city of the Decapolis, presented by Augustus to Herod the Elder, but after his death re-annexed to the province of Syria. In the Jewish war it was laid waste by the Jews. From this time the district which bounds Galilee on the east, took the name of Hippene.

One hour south-west of this place, upon the south point of the lake, about half a mile east of the point where the Jordan departs from it, we observe the village of es-Semakh, which is composed of forty or fifty houses, built mostly of mud, with a few of black basalt. The inhabitants are chiefly Moslems, with a few Greek Christians.

If from this point we turn eastward, we soon come to the narrow ravine traversed by the Sheriat el-Mandhur, which has been already named as the boundary of the whole province in that direction. This river takes its name from an Arab chief, called Mandhur, who once bore extensive rule in this quarter. Its ancient name was Jarmuch, still heard among the Turks in the form of Jarmuk; this is the same name which the Greeks, according to their wont, softened into Hieromax. It has its source in a small lake at Mezareib, about a mile in circumference, and makes its way to the Jordan, which it enters about four miles below the lake of Tiberias, after a course generally west-south-west, covering about fifteen miles of direct distance. The lake, about a mile in circumference, from which the stream issues, has in the middle a small grass-covered islet, and contains an abundance of fish about the same size and not inferior in beauty to the gold and silver fish which we keep in glass globes. The water is clear and sweet, and the lake never dries. There are remoter sources to which the origin of this river might be ascribed; but it is said that only the stream as it issues from the lake is perennial. Lieutenant Lynch, of the American expedition, who examined the Jarmuk where it enters the Jordan, says that "the banks are there fringed with the laurustinus, the oleander, the willow, and the tamarisk; and further inland, on the slope of the second terrace, grew a small species of oak and the cedar. The arbutus (strawberry-tree) was mingled with the flowers of the field. From the banks to the elevated ridges on either side, the grass and the flowers presented a surface of luxuriance and beauty."

About five miles distance from Semakh, just where the Jarmuk makes a strong southward bend, we find along the course of the river, upon both its sides, ten hot springs, each having its own name. The first and hottest of them is called Hammet esh-Sheikh.* It lies in a very small plain in the valley between the river and the north cliff, and issues forth into a basin, which is about forty feet in circumference, and five feet deep. It is much blocked up by ruined walls and buildings. The water of this spring is so warm that the hand can scarcely bear the heat. A thick sulphureous crust invests the stones over which it flows; and a strong sulphureous odour is discernible many yards from the spring. Near the other springs likewise are the remains of ancient buildings. The most conspicuous ruin connected with these springs is evidently a Roman bath, showing, as indeed we know historically, that these tepid waters were formerly known and visited. By Eusebius and Jerome the place is called Amatha, or Emmatha, answering to the Hebrew Hamath. The baths have not yet wholly lost in the country the reputation they once enjoyed. The spring of esh-Sheikh is held in high reputation among the Arabs, and is visited by large numbers of these and other people of the neighbouring districts in the month of April. The Arab visitors rarely depart without leaving in front of the southern wall some humble votive offerings in the shape of hair, teeth, nails, and old rags of every shape and colour.

The eastern division of the high plain is Hauran, (ancient Auranitis, which is itself, however, merely a classical form of the ancient name,) which extends, in the largest sense, from the pilgrim road on the west to the mountains which separate the table-land from the desert on the east.

The plain of the Hauran is broken by a number of low hills, upon the declivities and at the bases of which most of the villages stand. The whole country possesses not a single river which has water in the time of summer. The consequence is, that water is used with great economy by the inhabitants, who fill all their vessels from these streams, and make the supply last till the return of rain. The plain affords no trees; but the growth of grass is in many

* That is, the Sheikh's bath—Sheikh being used as a description of dignity and priority of rank; hence, perhaps, its virtual meaning may be, "The Great Bath."

parts most luxuriant, and the district is famed throughout Syria for the abundance and excellence of its wheat.

Every hill in the Hauran, every loose stone in the fields, every stone used in building, consists entirely of the basalt, which is the constituent rock of this region, and extends even to the other side of the Jordan as far as Mount Tabor. This black stone as used in building gives to the villages of the Hauran a very peculiar appearance, the more remarkable from the fact that there is neither tree nor shrub by which the sombre hue of the villages might be softened or concealed. Thus a traveller sees in the distant view only certain great masses of black basalt scattered over the plain, and which on the nearer approach are found to be villages.

Within a circle of thirty or forty miles upon this great high plain, are observed a great number of ruined towns, villages, castles, temples, and palaces, most of which may be referred to the period of the Roman and Greek dominion, in the first six centuries of our era, and evince that this region was during that period most densely inhabited. These remains of antiquity are often in good preservation, and the people make use of them for habitations in their wanderings from place to place. It is a curious peculiarity of their condition that the people of the Hauran migrate from one village to another, and in every case the ancient buildings afford them commodious habitations. Those who occupy them may have three or four rooms for each family, while in newly-built villages the whole family, with all its household furniture, cooking vessels, and provision chests, is commonly huddled together in one apartment. In these migrations, one camel usually carries a man's family and goods. It may be asked whence arises this peculiar condition of life, approaching that of the wandering tribes, in a people who nevertheless require fixed habitations? It is to be understood, then, that the condition of the people of Hauran has considerable resemblance to that condition of Israel, which is more than once described in the book of Judges, but more especially with reference to that oppression from which the nation was delivered by "the sword of the Lord and of Gideon." Every year the Bedouins come up into the Hauran as the Midianites came up of old into the lands west of the Jordan,—“They came up with their cattle and their tents, and they came as grasshoppers for multitude; for both they and their camels were without number: and they entered into the land to destroy it. And

Israel was greatly impoverished because of the Midianites," Judges vi. 5, 6.

Thus, between the exactions of the local governors on the one side, and those of the Bedouins on the other, the fellah (peasant) of the Hauran has been brought into a state little better than that of the wandering Arab. Few individuals, either among the Druses or Christians, (who together form the bulk of the inhabitants,) die in the place where they were born. Families are continually moving from one place to another. In the first year of their new settlement, the Sheikh of the place or district acts with moderation towards them; but his vexatious proceedings become in a few years insupportable, and they flee to some other place where they have heard that their brethren are better treated, but they soon find that the same system prevails over all the country. This continued wandering is one of the reasons why no village in the Hauran has either orchards, or fruit-trees, or gardens for the growth of vegetables. "Shall we sow for strangers?" was the answer of a fellah, when once spoken to on the subject, and who by the word "strangers," meant both the succeeding inhabitants and the Arabs who visit the country in spring and summer. By this we see that fruits belong to a settled life, and are not to be expected where security of possession does not exist. The observation of the Hauran peasant brings to mind the threatened punishment of Israel's disobedience, more than once accomplished in their history:—"Thou shalt build a house, and shalt not dwell therein: thou shalt plant a vineyard, and shalt not gather the grapes thereof The fruit of thy land, and all thy labours, shall a nation which thou knowest not eat up; and thou shalt be only oppressed and crushed alway," Deut. xxviii. 30, 33.

It may be well to consider the HAURAN in the three districts into which it is divided, as they are considerably distinguished in their geographical characteristics.

The first of these is the district of en-Nukrah, which occupies the whole of the western part of the province, extending through its entire length from the Wady el-Ajam (the country between Damascus and the Hauran), on the north, to the Jarmuk on the south. The two other districts, the Lejah and Jebel Hauran, lie more to the east.

The surface of the Nukrah district is undulating, and throughout arable. The chief place in it bears the name of Eshmiskin, a village of more than a hundred families, upon the Hadj route, by the side of Wady Hareir, one of the largest torrents of the Hauran, over which there is at this place a substantial bridge. This is, in fact, regarded as the principal place of the entire district, and its head or sheikh holds the first rank among the village sheikhs of the country, with the title of Sheikh el-Hauran. His income is considerable, as the peasantry of the different villages, when engaged in disputes with the neighbouring villages, or with their own sheikhs, generally apply in the first instance to his tribunal.

At the distance of three hours southward from this place, we come to Mezareib, the first castle upon the pilgrim-road from Damascus. This was built about three hundred and fifty years ago by Sultan Selim I., and is a square building of about one hundred feet on each of its sides, with a square tower at the angles and in the centre of each face, the walls being forty feet high. The interior is an open yard, with ranges of warehouses against the castle wall to contain stores of provisions for the pilgrims. There are no dwellings beyond the castle, with only a few mud huts upon the roofs of the warehouses, occupied by the peasants who cultivate the neighbouring grounds. Close to this building on the north and east sides, are a great number of springs, whose waters collect at a short distance into a lake or pond, about a mile and a half in circumference. In the midst of this is an island, and at an elevated spot, at the extremity of a peninsula advancing into the lake, stands a sort of chapel, at the extremity of which are many ruins of ancient buildings. These are the only ruins. This is usually thought to indicate the site of the ASHTEROTH KARNAIM of Scripture, which existed even in the time of Abraham, (Gen. xiv. 5;) but some would rather regard it as the ancient Pella, a city of the Decapolis, rich in water, which was destroyed in the great Jewish war.

The waters of the lake at Mezareib are clear as crystal, neither weeds nor grass growing in it; and its depth in the middle exceeds the height of a man. It abounds in fish, particularly carp. In summer time, after the harvests of the Hauran have been gathered in, and the Bedouins approach the more populous parts of the country, the borders of this lake are crowded every evening with thousands of

camels belonging to the Arabs, who prefer filling their water-skins here, as they consider that this water keeps better than any other.

Mezareib is the final rendezvous of the pilgrim caravan on its departure for Mecca. It remains encamped here for ten days, in order to collect the stragglers, and to pay to the different Arab tribes the accustomed tribute for the passage through the desert. The warehouses of the castle are well stocked with wheat, barley, biscuit, rice, tobacco, tent and horse equipage, camel saddles, ropes, ammunition, etc. But these stores are exclusively for the use of the suite of the Pasha in command of the Hadj, and for the army that accompanies the caravan; and are chiefly consumed on the return. It is only in case of great abundance, and by particular favour, that any articles are permitted to be sold to the pilgrims. At every station, as far as Medina, is a castle, but generally smaller than this, filled with similar stores. The Hauran alone is required to deliver into the storehouses of Mezareib about 25,000 hundred-weight of barley.

In 1812, Burckhardt being at this place, took occasion to furnish some particulars respecting the pilgrim caravan—which are of interest to us chiefly from the ideas which they furnish respecting the progress of large bodies of people through the desert, so often alluded to in Scripture. The facts are still for the most part applicable, although we have understood that somewhat better order is now maintained. Of the whole caravan not more than one-tenth were real pilgrims; the rest consisted of soldiers, the servants of soldiers, people attached to the Pasha's suite, merchants, pedlars, camel drivers, coffee and pipe waiters, and a swarm of Bedouins. The larger part of the pilgrims usually contract for the journey with one of the great undertakers, or Mekouam, as they are called. This agreement is only for a beast of transport and for water; as to victuals, the pilgrims usually mess together at their own expense in bodies of about half a dozen. The Mekouam being bound to furnish a beast throughout, and consequently to replace any that may die upon the road, are obliged to take one unladen camel for every one that is laden. This greatly enhances the cost of the pilgrimage, and Burckhardt declares that, in his time, the pilgrimage from Damascus to Mecca could not be performed in the

most humble way—including going and returning, and the expenses of the stay—under 125*l.*, two-fifths being allowed for expenses in Mecca. Those pilgrims who do not engage with the Mekouam, but seek to perform the journey more cheaply on their own beasts, as is generally the case with those that come from Armenia and the borders of the Black Sea, are usually ill-treated on the road by the Mekouam. They are obliged to march the last in the caravan, to encamp on the worst ground, to fill their water-skins the last, and are often subject to extortions from the Pasha. “It is difficult,” says Burckhardt, “to conceive the wretched condition of the greater part of the Hadjis, and the bad conduct of the troops and the Arabs. Thieving and robbery have become general among them, and it is more the want of sleep from the fear of being plundered, which occasions the death of pilgrims, than the fatigues of the journey. The Pasha’s troops, especially those who bring up the rear of the caravan, are frequently known to kill the pilgrims during the night, in order to strip them of their property. The Pasha, it is true, often punishes such delinquents, and scarcely a day passes without some one being impaled alive. The caravan moves on, and the malefactor is left to be devoured by the birds of prey. The Bedouins are particularly dexterous in pilfering; at night they sometimes assume the dress of the Pasha’s infantry, and thus introduce themselves unnoticed among the camels of the rich Hadjis, when they throw the sleeping owner from his mule or camel, and in the confusion occasioned by the cries of the fallen rider, drive off the beast.”

The next station upon the pilgrim road is Remtha. Between the two places, as in many other parts of the Hauran, is the most luxuriant wild herbage, through which the traveller’s horse makes way with difficulty. Artificial meadows can scarcely be finer than these desert fields; and it is this which renders the Hauran the favourite resort of the Bedouin. The peasants of Syria are ignorant of the advantage of feeding their cattle with hay. They suffer the superfluous grass to wither away, and in summer and winter feed them on cut straw.

Remtha is built upon the summit of several hills, and contains about a hundred families. In the neighbourhood are a number of wells of fresh water. It is the last inhabited village on this side the Hauran. The houses here,

as in many other parts of Palestine, are so built, that the caverns in which the region abounds become part of the dwellings. This part of the country has been rarely visited by European travellers. When Burckhardt was there he found but an indifferent reception in the Sheikh's house, and observes that the inhabitants of the villages on the Hadj route excel all others in fanaticism. "An old man was particularly severe in his observations upon kafirs (infidels) treading the sacred earth which leads to the Kaabah, and the youngsters echoed the insulting language. I found means, however, to show the old man a penknife which I carried in my pocket, and made him a present of it, before he could ask it of me. We then became as great friends as we had been enemies, and his behaviour induced a like change in the others towards me. A penknife worth two shillings overcomes the fanaticism of a peasant; increase the present, and it will have equal weight upon a townsman; make it a considerable sum, and the mufti himself will waive all religious scruples."

To the east of the pilgrim road, between Remtha and Mezareib, is a place called Draa, or, more correctly ed-Drha, which is probably the EDREI where the gigantic Og, king of Bashan, was defeated by the Israelites and lost his kingdom, Numb. xxi. 33—35; Deut. i. 4; iii. 1—3. It is situated in a deep valley; and there are ruins covering an extent of about two miles in circumference. The principal remain is an immense rectangular building, with a double covered colonnade all around, and a cistern in the middle. This seems to have been originally a Christian church, and afterwards a mosque. Near the town, in the hollow of the mountains, is a capacious reservoir cased with stone, near which are the remains of a large building with a cupola of light materials.

In the south-eastern part of the Hauran, the last inhabited place is Busrah, in which we recognise the great city of the same name which was, in the time of the Romans, the capital of Arabia Provincia. All the remains seem to belong to that and a subsequent age; nor does there appear to be any trace, except in the name and the site, of the BOZRAH of Scripture, which is often mentioned as a chief city of the Edomites (see Isaiah lxiii. 1, and other texts). Bozrah is likewise stated to belong to Moab,

Jer. xlviii. 24. If we could suppose, as some do, that these were two different places, it would certainly agree best with the position of Busrah to regard it as the Bozrah of Moab rather than of Edom; for although not *in* the original territory of either, it is more distant from the original settlements of Edom than of Moab. But the supposition does not appear to be necessary; for in consequence of the continual wars, incursions and conquests among the small dominions of this region, the possession of particular cities very often changed hands. Since, therefore, Bozrah lay not in the proper territory of Esau's descendants, in Mount Seir, but north of the territory of the Ammonites, we must suppose that the Edomites had in the time of Isaiah become masters of the place by conquest, and that it was afterwards taken from them by the Moabites, who for a time retained it in their possession. We are entitled on these grounds to regard this as the Bozrah of prophecy; and certainly its present state is well suited to the prophetic intimation of its future condition. It is the greatest site of ruins in the country, being not less than two hours in circumference, though the present inhabited dwellings are not above a hundred hovels possessed by peasants. It is of an oval shape, its greatest length being from east to west. It was anciently inclosed by a thick wall, which gave it the reputation of a place of great strength. Many portions of this wall, especially on the west side, still remain. It is constructed with stones of moderate size strongly cemented together.

The southern and south-east quarters of the site are covered with ruins of private dwellings, the walls of many of which are yet standing, although most of the roofs have fallen in. The style of building is similar to that observed in all the other ancient towns of the Hauran. They are of various kinds, Greek, Roman and Saracenic, with perhaps some traces of native building in the private houses. Among the principal ruins of the place is a square building which within is circular, and has many arches and niches in the wall; this was probably a Greek church. A short distance west of this is an oblong square building, called by the natives Deir Boheiry, or the monastery of (the priest) Boheiry. This personage is well known to the biographers of Mohammed, and many strange stories are related of him by the Mohammedans, all tending to the honour of their "prophet." Many also as strange are

reported by the eastern Christians of the same priest, to the discredit of the impostor. Boheiry is said to have been a rich Greek priest settled in Busrah, who predicted the mission of Mohammed, whom he saw when a boy passing with a caravan from Mecca to Damascus. By the traditions of the Christians he is made to have been a confidential counsellor of Mohammed in the composition of the Koran. The building which here bears his name, has on the top of the walls a row of windows; on the north side is a high vaulted niche; the roof has fallen in, and the building is without ornaments. Between it and the one mentioned before, is the gate of an ancient house, communicating with the ruins of an edifice, the only remains of which is a large semicircular vault, with neat decorations and four small niches in the interior. The natives call this the house of Boheiry.

To the west of these buildings is the great mosque of Busrah, which is evidently coeval with the first era of Mohammedanism, and is commonly ascribed to the caliph Omar. Part of its roof has fallen in. On two sides of this square building runs a double row of columns, transported hither from the ruins of some Christian temple in the town. Those which are formed of the common Hauran stone are badly wrought, in the coarse heavy style of the lower empire; but among them are sixteen fine variegated marble columns, distinguished both by the beauty of the material and by the execution.

Not far from this mosque, to the south, is the principal ruin of Busrah, being the remains of a temple, consisting only of the back wall, with two pilasters, and a column joined by its entablature to the main wall. They are all of the Corinthian order, and both capitals and architraves are richly adorned with sculpture. In front of the temple are four large Corinthian columns, equal in beauty of execution to the finest of those at Baalbek or Palmyra. The ruin bears the remarkable name of Serir Bint el-Jehudi (house of the Jew's daughter). It stands at the side of a long street, which runs obliquely through the whole length of the ruined city, and ends at the western gate.

Not far from this ruined temple are the remains of a Roman triumphal arch, almost entire, from the circumstance of the approach to it being choked up with private houses, as is the case with all the public buildings in Busrah, except the church first mentioned.

On the west side of the place are springs of fresh water, five beyond the precincts of the town and six within the walls ; their waters unite with a rivulet, whose source is on the north-west side within the town, and which loses itself in the southern plain at several hours' distance. On the eastern quarter of the town is a large reservoir, almost perfect, one hundred and ninety paces in length, one hundred and fifty-three in breadth, and about twenty in depth. It is inclosed by a wall seven feet in thickness, built of large square stones. A staircase leads down to the water, as the basin is never completely filled. This fine reservoir is the work of the Saracens, made for supplying water to the pilgrim caravan, which so late as the seventeenth century passed by Busrah.

Just beyond the walls is a large Saracenic castle, probably of the time of the Crusades. It is one of the best built castles in Syria, and is surrounded by a deep ditch. Its walls are very thick ; and in the interior are alleys, dark vaults, and subterraneous passages of a most solid construction. This castle is an important post for protecting the harvests of the Hauran against the hungry Bedouins.

The place was once celebrated for its vineyards. This is expressed in that noble passage of the prophet, which occurs to the mind of every reader when the name of Bozrah is pronounced :—

Who is this that cometh from Edom ?
 With dyed garments from Bozrah ?
 This that is glorious in his apparel,
 Travelling in the greatness of his strength ?

I that speak in righteousness,
 Mighty to save.

Wherefore art thou red in thine apparel,
 And thy garments like him that treadeth in the wine-fat ?
 I have trodden the winepress alone ;
 And of the people there was none with me :
 For I will tread them in mine anger,
 And trample them in my fury ;
 And their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments,
 And I will stain all my raiment.
 For the day of vengeance is in mine heart,
 And the year of my redeemed is come."

Isa. lxiii. 1—4.

Greek medals also disclose the celebrity of Busrah for its vineyards.. But of these fruitful places not a trace now remains. There is scarcely a tree of any kind in the place ; and the twelve or fifteen families by whom it is now in-

habited cultivate nothing but wheat, barley, horse-beans, and a little Indian corn. A number of very fine rose-bushes, however, grow wild among the ruins.

“Bozrah,” writes Lord Lindsay, “is now for the most part a heap of ruins, a most dreary spectacle. Here and there the direction of a street or alley is discernible ; but that is all. The modern inhabitants—a mere handful—are almost lost in the maze of ruins. Olive-trees grew here within a few years, they told us—all extinct now—like the vines for which the Bostra of the Romans was famous. And such, in the nineteenth century, and under Moslem rule, is the condition of a city, which even in the seventh century, the time of its capture by the Saracens, was called by Kaled, ‘the market-place of Syria and the Hedjaz.’—‘I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord, that Bozrah shall become a desolation, a reproach, a waste, and a curse ; and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual wastes,’ Jer. xlix. 13. And it is so.”

The part of the Hauran which lies to the east of the northern half of Nukrah, is the Lejah (el-Lejah), to which a slight reference has been already made ; and the country which surrounds it bears the name of Luhf el-Lejah. *Luhf* is the plural of *Lihaf*, the name of the covering under which the natives sleep, which may suggest the analogy under which this bordering district is designated.

The elevation of the Lejah is about the same as that of the Nukrah. It is from two to three days’ journey in length by one in breadth. At a distance it has nothing remarkable in its appearance ; but it is found to be a complete labyrinth of passages among rocks. The rocks are volcanic ; and there is among them a hill, which from the description of the natives, exhibits every characteristic of the crater of an extinct volcano.

The outer Lejah is a level country, with a stony soil covered with heaps of rocks, among which are small patches of meadow, affording excellent pasturage for the cattle of the Bedouins who inhabit these parts. On approaching the inner Lejah, the ground becomes uneven, the pasturing places less frequent, the rocks higher, and the road more difficult. It is asserted that the Arabs alone have the clue through the labyrinth of rocks which compose this region. Some of the rocks are twenty feet high, and the country is full of hills and wadies. In these

interior parts, the rocks are in many places cleft asunder, so that the whole hill appears shivered, and in the act of falling down. The layers are generally horizontal, from six to eight feet or more in thickness, sometimes covering the hills, and circling to their curve, as appears from the fissures which often traverse the rock from top to bottom. In many places are ruined walls, whence it may be conjectured that a stratum of soil, of sufficient depth for cultivation, anciently covered the rock.

There are no springs in any part of this stony district; but water collects in winter time in great quantities in the wadies, and in the cisterns and pools which are everywhere met with. In some of these water is kept the whole summer. When they are dried up the Arabs approach the borders of the Lejah, and water their cattle at the springs of the Luhf.

It is somewhat remarkable that trees are less frequent in the outer than in the inner Lejah. They here grow in great numbers among the rocks. The most common are the oak, the mallula, and the butm—the latter is the bitter almond, from the fruit of which the people of the country extract an oil wherewith they anoint their temples and forehead as a cure for colds: its branches are much in demand for pipe-tubes.

This region is inhabited by some small tribes of Arabs; they breed a vast number of goats, which easily find pasture among the rocks. A few of them also keep sheep and cows, and cultivate the soil in some parts of the Lejah, where they sow wheat and barley. They possess few horses; but the camel is met with throughout the Lejah, and walks with a firm step over the rocky surface, feeding in summer upon the flowers and dry grass of the pasturing places.

There are several ruined towns and villages in the Lejah. The chief of them seems to be that which is now called Dama, which is regarded as the capital. It is in the very centre of the district; and it appears strange that a city should have been built by any people in a spot where there is neither water nor arable ground, and nothing but a little grass amid the stones. The place may contain about three hundred houses, most of which are in good preservation. There is here a large building, whose gate is ornamented with sculptured vine leaves and grapes. Every house appears to have had its cistern; there are many also

in the immediate vicinity of the town. They are formed by excavations in the rock, the surface of which is supported by props of loose stones. Some of them are arched, and have narrow canals to conduct the water into them from the higher grounds.

About three hours westward from Dama, is Edsra, one of the principal places in the Hauran, containing about one hundred and fifty Turkish and Druse families, and fifty Greek Christians. It lies about half an hour from the arable ground, and has no spring-water, but numerous cisterns. Its inhabitants make cotton stuffs, and a great number of mill-stones, the blocks for forming which are brought from the interior of the Lejah. In the place from which they are taken it is seen that the stones are cut horizontally out of the rock, having holes of four or five feet in depth, and as many in circumference. Fifty or sixty of these excavations are often met with in the circuit of a mile. The stones are finished at Edsra, and other villages of the Luhf, whence they are exported over the greater part of Syria, as far as Aleppo and Jerusalem. They vary in price, according to their size, from fifteen to sixty shillings; and are preferred to all others on account of the hardness of the stone, which is the black tufa rock spread over the whole of the Hauran, and the only species met with in the country.

Edsra was once a flourishing city; and its ruins are between three and four miles in circumference. The present inhabitants continue to live in the ancient buildings, which in consequence of the strength and solidity of their walls, are for the greater part in complete preservation. They are, as usual in this region, built of stone; and the information we possess respecting their construction and arrangements is interesting, from the knowledge thus derived respecting the ancient domestic buildings of this quarter. In general each dwelling has a small entrance leading into the court-yard, around which are the apartments, the doors leading to which are usually very low. The interior of the rooms is constructed of large square stones. Across the centre is a single arch, generally between two and three feet in breadth, which supports the roof. This arch springs from very low pilasters on each side of the room, and in some instances rises immediately from the floor. Upon the arch is laid the roof, consisting

of stone slabs one foot broad, two inches thick, and about half the length of the room, one end resting upon short projecting stones in the walls, and the other upon the top of the arch. The slabs are in general laid close to each other; but in some houses the roof is formed of two layers, the one next the arch having small intervals between the slabs, and a second layer of similar dimensions is laid close together at right angles with the first. The rooms are seldom higher than nine or ten feet, and have no other opening than a low door, with sometimes a small window over it. In many places there are two or three of these arched chambers, one over the other, forming so many stories. This substantial mode of building prevails also in most of the ancient public dwellings remaining in the Hauran, except that in the latter the arch instead of springing from the walls or floor, rests upon two short columns. The generality of these arches, including those of the public buildings, are oppressingly low. Burckhardt declares that in the whole of his tour in this region he saw but one or two arches whose curve was lofty. To complete the durability of these structures, most of the doors were anciently of stone, and of these many are still remaining. Sometimes they are of one piece, and sometimes they are folding doors. They turn upon hinges worked out of the stone, and are about four inches thick, and seldom higher than about four feet, though some may be met with upwards of nine feet high. It is obvious that this mode of building belongs to a region in which wood is scarce; and in this country there are not, and never were such facilities of transport as enabled any one part of the land to avail itself of building materials which another part afforded. In every district, therefore, the mode of building is adapted to the materials which the locality supplies. We may illustrate this by indicating the probability that the houses of London would be vaulted with brick, or raftered with iron, but for the facilities of obtaining deal from the Baltic and from Canada.

The most important of the ruins at Edsra lie to the south of the present dwellings. They consist of two churches with their domes; another pile resembles a theatre, and many detached buildings distinguished for the beauty of their architecture, and which well deserve the name of palaces. These ruins belong to the ancient Zara, or Zarava, as the inscriptions, which still remain, very

clearly denote. No place of this name occurs in Scripture ; but it is mentioned by Josephus, and was in the time of the Crusades an important and populous place.

At this place, Burckhardt mentions a custom and incident which will carry the reader's mind to the well of Haran, and to that one in Midian where Moses met with Jethro's daughter.

“ In the evening I went to water my horse with the priest's cattle, at the spring of Geratha, an hour distant from Ezra. I met there a number of shepherds with their flocks. The rule is, that the first who arrives at the well, waters his cattle before the others ; several were, therefore, obliged to wait till after sunset. There are always some stone basins around the wells, out of which the camels drink, the water being drawn up by leathern buckets, and poured into them. Disputes frequently happen on these occasions. The well has a broad staircase leading down to it.”

On the northern border of the Lejah, or, rather, in the northern Luhf, are the ruins of a place called Musmeih, of which the inhabitants of this region very often speak. The remains here cover a site of full three miles in circumference. The principal ruin is a temple in tolerable preservation, and which Burckhardt pronounced one of the most elegant buildings to be seen in the Hauran. There are several other public buildings, but none of any marked character. The place has no inhabitants. Burckhardt, however, met with only a few workmen digging the saline earth. This fact gives us occasion to remark, that saltpetre, called by the Arabs “gun-salt,” is found among the ruined houses in most of the deserted sites in the Hauran. All the gunpowder used in these parts is made from it ; but it is not of good quality—whence the jocular remark of one of the sailors of the American expedition—that a gazelle might almost run a mile between the flash and the report.

The earth in which the saltpetre is found, is thrown into large vessels perforated with small holes on one side near the bottom. Water is then poured in, which strains through the holes into a lower vessel, whence it is taken out and poured into large copper kettles. After boiling in these for twenty-four hours, it is left in the open air, where the sides of the vessel become covered with crystals, which are afterwards washed to free them from all impurities. It

appears that by this process a hundred pounds of the saline earth will yield one-and-a-half of saltpetre. The production is so abundant, that one person alone sends on his own account, a hundred *kantars* (each nearly 100 lbs.) of the saltpetre to Damascus every year. From this and other sources of supply in the same districts, all Syria is furnished with the article. At no greater distance than Tiberias it is sold at twice the price for which it may be obtained on the spot.

From the inscriptions found at Musmeih it appears to occupy the site of the ancient Phana, which in one inscription is called the principal town of the Trachonitis. It is not historically known.

The third district of the Hauran, lying south-east of the Lejah and east of the southern part of the Nukrah, is the Jebel Hauran (Mount Hauran), the highest point of which, called Kelb Hauran, rises like a cone out of the lower mass of hills. The district is called also Jebel ed-Druse—Druse Mountain—that people being the chief inhabitants. The mountains are covered with wood, and many considerable streams have their source among them. Beyond this mountain district to the east and south, extends the desert.

Among the places in this district the chief is Suweideh (Burckhardt's Soueida), nearly six hours north-east of Busrah. It stands on high ground upon a declivity of the Jebel Hauran. It is considered the first Druse village, and is the residence of their chief sheikh. Here, as in all their villages, the Druses sow a great deal of cotton, and the cultivation of tobacco is general all over the mountain. Suweideh has no springs, but there are in and near it several reservoirs; one of which, within the village, is three hundred paces in circuit, and at least thirty feet deep. A staircase leads down to the bottom, and it is entirely lined with squared stones. To the south of the village is another pool, larger but not so deep; and this bears the name of Pilgrims' Pool (Birket el-Hadj), from the circumstance that until within the last century it was a watering place of the pilgrim caravan, the route of which used to pass in this direction.

Suweideh was formerly one of the largest cities of the Hauran. The circuit of the ruins is at least four miles. Among them is a street running in a straight line, the houses on both sides of which are still standing, and to walk

from one end to the other takes twelve minutes. Like the streets of modern cities in the east, this ancient one is so very narrow as to allow only one person or beast to pass. On both sides is a narrow pavement. The great and remarkable variety witnessed in the construction of the houses, seems to prove that the town has been inhabited by people of different nations. In various places, on both sides of this street, are small arched rooms, which we may suppose to have been shops. This street commences in the upper part of the town, at a large arched gate built across it. South of the entrance of the street are the remains of a large and elegant building, with many broken columns. It seems to have been a church, and is connected with another erection which has the appearance of having once been a monastery.

From Suweideh north-east, the way lies through a forest of stunted oaks and zarur (hawthorn) trees to Kunawat, two hours to the north-east. Kunawat is situated upon a declivity on the border of a deep wady of the same name, which traverses the midst of the town, and whose steep banks are supported by walls in several places. The first object that attracts attention upon approaching the city is a number of high columns upon a terrace at some distance from the town. These columns inclose an oblong square, within which is a row of subterraneous apartments, probably designed for sepulture. Two divisions of the town may be distinguished—the upper, which contains the principal ruins, and the lower. The whole surface upon which the remains stand is about three miles in circumference, and is so overgrown with oak-trees that the ruins can scarcely be discovered. Almost all the buildings are richly adorned with columns and sculptured ornaments. The place is occupied only by a few Druse families, who employ themselves in the culture of tobacco. In Kunawat is recognised the KENATH of the Old Testament, (Numb. xxxii. 42 ; 1 Chron. ii. 23,) which had afterwards the name of NOBAH, Judges viii. 11.

The seat of the second chief of the Druses in the Hauran is at Acre, three hours south by west of Suweideh, situated upon a tell in the plain. This is a village of small consequence ; but some interesting particulars are given by Burckhardt respecting the Druse chief who resided there at the time of his visit. “ He is one of the most amiable

men I ever met with in the east, and, which is still more extraordinary, he is extremely desirous to acquire knowledge. In the conversations I had with him during my repeated visits to Acre, he was always most anxious to obtain information respecting European manners and institutions. He begged me to write down for him the Greek, German, and English alphabets, with the corresponding sound in Arabic beneath each letter ; and, on the following day, he showed me the copy he had made of them. His kindness to me is the more remarkable, as he could not expect the smallest return for it. He admired my lead pencils, of which I had two, but refused to accept one of them on my offering it to him. These Druses, as well as those of Kesrouan, firmly believe that there are a number of Druses in England ; a belief originating in the declaration of the Christians of these countries, that the English are neither Greeks nor Catholics, and therefore not Christians."

At the south-eastern extremity of the district is the town and castle bearing the name of Kulat (castle) Sulhad. The castle stands upon a hill at the southern foot of the Szfeikl mountain, and almost due south of the Kelb Hauran. It is a circular building of great strength, surrounded by a deep trench, but now in a ruined condition. Over the entrance of a tower in the interior is an Arabic inscription, thus translated :—" In the name of God, the merciful and the munificent. During the reign of the equitable king, Laud-eddin Ahu Takmar, the Emir ordered the building of this castle ;" which makes it probable that it was built for the defence of the country against the Crusaders. This town lies at the base of the hill on the south and on the west. It is not now inhabited. It contains about two hundred houses, and presents nothing remarkable except one of the mosques built in 1224 : but this seems to have been only a repaired temple or church. Neither in the castle nor in the town are there any wells ; but every house is furnished with a deep cistern lined with stone, and there is also a large reservoir. In the court-yards of the houses are a great number of fig and pomegranate-trees. This place seems to have been the SALCHAH, which is mentioned in Scripture as being on the extreme border of the kingdom of Bashan under Og, and which was taken by the Israelites, Deut. iii. 10 ; Josh. xii. 5 ; xiii. 11 ; 1 Chron. v. 11.

Having thus noticed the principal places of the Hauran, it behoves us to furnish some information respecting the inhabitants, whose condition offers many interesting peculiarities.

The Hauran is inhabited by Turks, Druses, Christians, and Arabs; and is visited every spring and summer by several Arab tribes. The whole country is under the government of the Pasha of Damascus, who generally sends a governor to Mezareib, with the title of Agat el-Hauran, (Aga of the Hauran). The Pasha also appoints the sheikh of every village, who collects the tax from both Turks and Christians. The Druses are not under the control of the Aga, but correspond directly with the Pasha, through their own sheikh, whose office, although subject to the confirmation of the Pasha, has been from a remote period hereditary in the family of Hamdan. This head sheikh of the Druses nominates the sheikh of each village, many of whom are his own relations, and the others members of the great Druse families. The Pasha usually maintains in the Hauran a force of five or six hundred men, about half of whom are usually at Busrah, and the remainder at Mezareib or patrolling the country. Burckhardt computed the population as being in his time about fifty or sixty thousand, exclusive of the Arabs; and there are probably not more now, as the natural increase of the population, if there be in these parts any natural increase, must have been greatly checked by the severe conscriptions during the time of the Egyptian rule. Of this number six or seven thousand are Druses and about three thousand Christians.

The Turks and the Christians have exactly the same modes of life; but the Druses are in many respects distinguished from them. The two former very nearly resemble the Arabs in their manners and customs. Their ordinary dress is precisely that of the Arabs; a coarse white cotton stuff forms the *kombaz* or gown; the *keffie* around the head is tied with a rope of camel's hair; they wear the *abha* (sleeveless cloak of woollen or hair) over the shoulder, and have the breast and feet naked. They also, for the most part, adopt the Bedouin dialect, gestures, and phraseology, according to which most articles of household furniture have names different from those which they bear in the towns. It requires however but little experience to distinguish the adults of the two nations from each other. The Arabs are generally of short stature, with thin figure, thin

visage, scanty beard, and brilliant black eyes ; while the Fellahs are taller and stouter, with a strong beard and a less piercing look ; but the difference seems chiefly to arise from the mode of life ; for the youth of both nations until the age of sixteen present precisely the same appearance. The Turks and Christians of the Hauran live and dress alike, and religion seems to occasion very little difference in their respective conditions. When quarrels happen the Christian fears not to strike or to execrate the Turk, a liberty which would be punished with death, or with a heavy pecuniary fine, in almost any other region which the doctrine of the false prophet overclouds.

Of the Fellahs, or cultivators of the Hauran, something has been already said. It may be added that the richest of them live and dress much like the poorest, and display their greater wealth only upon the arrival of strangers. The women dress in the Bedouin manner, and have a veil over their heads, but seldom over their faces. Neither women nor children take their meals with the men, but eat up whatever the latter have left on their plates. This custom, however, is general in the east.

Hospitality is a characteristic common to the Arabs, and to the people of the Hauran. A traveller may alight at any house he pleases ; a mat will be immediately spread for him, coffee made, and breakfast or dinner set before him. On entering it will often happen to the traveller that several persons will present themselves before him, each begging that he will lodge at his house. And this hospitality is not confined to the man himself ; his horse, or camel is also fed, the former with eight or twelve pounds of barley, and the latter with chopped straw. It is a point of honour with the host never to accept the least return from the guest. Burckhardt says :—“ I once only ventured to give a few piastres to the child of a very poor family at Zahouet, by whom we had been most hospitably treated, and rode off without attending to the cries of the mother, who insisted upon my taking back the money.”

Besides the private habitations which offer to every traveller a secure night's shelter, there is, as already mentioned, in every village, the *medhafe*, or lodging-house of the sheikh, where any traveller of decent appearance is received and entertained. It is the duty of the sheikh to maintain this *medhafe*, which is like a tavern, with the

difference that the host himself pays the bill, the sheikh having a public allowance to defray these expenses. Hence a man in the Hauran intending to travel about for a fortnight, never thinks of putting a farthing in his pocket for the expenses of the journey ; he is sure of being everywhere well received, and of living better perhaps than in his own house. A man remarkable for his generosity and hospitality, enjoys the highest consideration among this people. As among the ancient Israelites, the wealth of a man in the Hauran is estimated by the number of the yokes or pairs of cows or oxen, that he employs in the culture of his fields. If it be asked whether such a one has piastres (a common mode of speaking), the answer is, "A great deal, he drives six yoke of oxen ;" there are but few, however, who have six pair of oxen, a man with two or three is esteemed wealthy, and such a one has probably two camels, perhaps a horse, or a couple of asses, and forty or fifty sheep or goats.

The Fellahs who possess fedhans,* often cultivate one another's fields in company. A Turk, living in a Druse village, often wishes to have a Druse in his company, hoping thus to escape in some degree the vexations of the Druse sheikh. Among the Druse sheikhs black slaves are often met with, but the Turkish and Christian proprietors cultivate the ground by hired native labourers ; sometimes the labourer contracts with a townsman, and receives from him oxen, ploughs, and seed. A labourer who has a yoke of oxen under his charge, usually receives at the time of sowing one *gharara* (about 1,520 lbs.) of corn ; after the harvest he takes one-third of the produce of the field for his hire, but among the Druses only one-fourth. The master pays to the government the land-tax, and the labourer pays ten shillings annually. The rest of the agricultural population of the Hauran are such as subsist by their daily labour ; they in general live very hardly. Burckhardt relates an incident which strikingly reminds one of Jacob's engagement with Laban in Padanaram : "I once met with a young man who had served eight years for his food only ; at the expiration of that term he obtained in marriage his master's daughter, for whom he would otherwise have had to pay seven or eight hundred piastres. When I saw him he had been married three years, but he

* This word means both a yoke of oxen, and the ground which a yoke of oxen can plough.

complained bitterly of his father-in-law, who continued to require of him the performance of the most servile offices, without paying him anything; and thus prevented him from setting up for himself and his family."

The Druses who inhabit the villages of the Luhf, and those of the Jebel Hauran, are to be classed with the Fellahs of the plain, with regard to their mode of living, and their relations with the government; but there is some difference of dress, as they seldom wear the Arab head-shawl or keffie, and grown-up men do not so generally go barefoot. The authority of the Sheikh of Suweidah, although hereditary, is not great, and his income is solely that which he obtains as sheikh of the principal town. The heritage is however not lineal. On the death of the chief, the person who succeeds is not necessarily his son, but that member of the family who is in highest estimation from wealth or personal character. The manners of the Druses of the Hauran are similar to those of Kesrouan and Lebanon, and their superstitions are altogether the same. The families form clans independent of each other, and between which quarrels are very frequent; insults are studiously avenged by the respective families, and the law of revenge for blood is in full force among them, without being mitigated, as among the Arab tribes, by the admission of any pecuniary commutation. They all go armed, as do the Turks and Christians of the Hauran in general. Few Druses have more than one wife, but she may be divorced on very slight pretexs. It is not known when the Druses first settled in the Hauran: "*Min Kadim*," a long time ago, is the usual answer to those who put any questions on the subject.

As there seems to be some popular misconception respecting the tenets of these Druses, it may be well to state briefly that the system is founded on the blasphemous claims made by the Sultan Hakem of Egypt, about the middle of the eleventh century, to be the incarnation of the Divinity, His last and most perfect manifestation on the earth. This doctrine was industriously promulgated during the lifetime of Hakem in Syria and Lebanon, and was received by many; and the Druses are those by whom it is still retained. The real founder of this superstition however was one Hamza, whom the Druses regard as their prophet, and something more. He recognised the claims of Hakem, and organized the system of unbelief founded upon them. The people speak of him more often than of Hakem himself,

believing that the Spirit of universal intelligence was incarnated in the person of Hamza, as was God himself in that of Hakem. This intelligence was the first of the creation of God, and his delegate in the creation of men and things. Various other impersonations of this intelligence appeared before Hamza, one of which was Adam, but Hamza was the most perfect of all these manifestations, and the Druses apply to him many of those expressions which, in the Old Testament and in the New, are given to the Messiah.

These tenets create a vast difference between the Druses and the Moslems on the one hand, and the Christians on the other. The Moslems regard Jesus as a true prophet, and as such entitled to honour ; but they reject the doctrines of his Divinity, his incarnation, and his atonement; the Druses admit the incarnation of the Divinity, and in a certain sense of a Divine Messiah. This doctrine which the Moslems hate does not distress them ; but they deny that Jesus was the absolute incarnation of the Divinity ; the incarnation they do admit is divided in some sort into two, in the persons of Hakem and Hamza. With the Moslem the difficulty we have to meet is, his absolute denial of any incarnation of Deity. With the Druse we have not this stumbling-block ; he admits the idea of the incarnation, but he requires to be convinced that not Hakem nor Hamza, but Jesus of Nazareth was the incarnate God—was he to whom all the prophets bore witness. At present they not only do not recognise this claim, but they do not, even with the Moslems, regard our Lord as a prophet. Yet, awful and discouraging as this may at the first view seem, it is yet possible that the Druse is left by his form of error less inaccessible to the truth than is the Moslem, who, while he respects Jesus as a prophet, rejects with disdain the idea of his Divine nature.

Hamza is made to say, “ Peace be accorded to him who hath created me with his light, and given me the succour of his Holy Spirit, who hath favoured me with his service, who hath revealed to me the secret of his mysteries. I am the root of his creatures, the written book, the inhabited house, the master of the resurrection, and of the last day, and, with the permission of the Lord, the blower of the trumpet . . . I am the Messiah of the nations ; from me grace flows ; and by my ministry vengeance will fall upon the polytheists.”

Thus it is believed, that not only was it by the agency of

Hamza that all other creatures were produced, but that he alone possesses the knowledge of all truth, and that as the prime minister of the true religion, he communicates directly with the other ministers, and with the faithful, but in different degrees, the knowledge and the grace which he receives directly from God, and of which he is the sole channel. They hold that Hamza only has immediate access to God, and acts as a Mediator to the other worshippers of the Almighty. They declare that Hamza is he to whom in the latter days Hakem will entrust his conquering sword, to make his religion triumph, to overthrow all his rivals, and to distribute rewards and punishments to every one, according to his deeds.

The religion of Hamza embraces seven great commandments, to which every Druse is required to take heed. These principally exact from them the observance of truth ; charity towards their brethren ; the renunciation of their former religion ; the most entire resignation and submission to the will of God ; the confession that all preceding religions have been but types, more or less perfect, of the true religion of Hamza, that all their ceremonial observances are only allegories, and that the manifestation of the true religion requires the abrogation of every other creed.

It seems that the Druses believe in the transmigration of souls, but so that the soul of a believer enters the body of a believer, and of an unbeliever into that of an unbeliever ; every one being within these limits raised to a superior degree of excellence, according to his attachment to truth, or reduced to a lower degree, by neglecting or giving up religious meditation.

The Druses have some secret opinions and practices which they do not disclose to strangers, nor perhaps to any but the most advanced or privileged of their own body. There is a class of men among them called Akal, who are distinguished from the rest by a white turban, and the peculiarity of the folds in which they wear it. The Akal are not permitted even to smoke tobacco, they never swear, and are remarkable for the reserve and gravity of their demeanour.

On the whole, this religion of Hamza is an absurd and blasphemous system, so far as known ; and concerning the Lord Jesus, it utters perverse things, too painful to a pious mind to be here repeated. But who shall limit the Spirit of God ? There is room for hope concerning this people, room for prayer, room for labour ; and the day may not be

far distant when this, in many respects interesting people, shall in their mountains render unto Jesus all the honours, and more than all, which they now offer to Hamza and to Hakem. In him they shall behold the one Mediator, and on him they shall rely, as "made of God unto them wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption."

We may now cross the Jarmuk, and enter the district of Jebel Ajlun, which embraces so much of the mountainous country beyond the Jordan as lies between that river and the Zerka, which is the Jabbok of Scripture. It formed, together with a portion south of the latter river, the Mount Gilead of Scripture, and belongs chiefly to the tribe of Gad, although Manasseh had the north-eastern portion of it.

This district is much more mountainous and more diversified by hill and dale, than either the lands of Bashan on the north, or of Moab on the south; in the more southern part the mountains are of considerable height. It is in the northern part that this province is the least interesting; in the centre and eastern parts it is highly picturesque, and in the southern it is the most grand; but although the northern part is a comparatively dull and unattractive country, with little wood and less beauty, the soil is there rich, and amply repays the labour of the husbandman. On the southern border there is almost an equal want of wood, and the soil seems less productive, but a compensation is offered to the traveller in the striking scenery which the mountains offer; advancing from the north or north-east to the south, trees begin to appear, and are found in clumps, and woods, and forests. The roads are beautiful, winding over hills, or through vales, and narrow rocky ravines, overgrown with the valonidi oak, and by many other fine trees, while the beds of the streams and winter torrents are everywhere full of the most superb oleanders. The grandest part of the country is the mountains about Jebel Ajlun, which gives its name to the district; corn-fields appear in favourable situations; the valonidi, the prickly oak, and the olive-tree invest the lower summits, or appear tufted among the crags. After a long ascent, all these save the prickly oak disappear, but the arbutus, the fir, and the ash succeed them, and a larger leaved species of valonidi takes the place of that left behind; even the noble crags which form the summit of these mountains, are hidden among

beautiful trees. The fir-trees, of the utmost heights, are very noble. Of the country generally, the Rev. Eli Smith, in "Robinson's Researches," writes: "Jebel Ajlun presents the most charming rural scenery that I have seen in Syria; a continued forest of noble trees, chiefly of the evergreen oak, covers a large part of it, while the ground beneath is covered with luxuriant grass, which we found a foot or more in height, and decked with a rich variety of wild flowers."

The hot springs on the Jarmuk were mentioned in a preceding page (282). South of these, and about a mile from the southern margin of the river's bed, is a place called Um Keis. There are here considerable remains of antiquity, in a very mutilated condition. The ancient town was seated around a hill, the highest point in the neighbourhood; to the east of the hill are a great number of caverns in the calcareous rock, some of which have been rendered habitable; others have been used as sepulchral caves. Great numbers of sarcophagi are lying about in this direction; they are all of black stone, and must have been transported from the banks of the river below. They are enriched with sculptures of little elegance. Upon the summit of the hill are heaps of wrought stone, but no distinct remains of any important building. But on the sides of the hill there are ruins of two theatres, and of a temple; the former are constructed with the black stone which prevails to the north of the river; but, with this exception, all the buildings are of the limestone which constitutes the rock of all the region between the Jarmuk and the Jabbok. Burckhardt doubted what ancient city Um Keis represented. His editor thought it might be Gamala; but the conclusion to which more recent research and better acquaintance with the country have led, is that Gamala was at el-Husn, and that Um Keis was GADARA, where our Lord cast forth the legion of devils from, and restored to his right mind the man who had his dwelling among the tombs, Mark v. 1; Luke viii. 26. It is an interesting circumstance that, as we have just seen, such tombs still abound in the neighbourhood of the place. Natural caves in the calcareous rock are in great numbers, especially towards the Jordan. These have been used partly as tombs, and partly as habitations; the tombs being always apart, outside the towns, and often in solitary spots, afforded a congenial retreat to men in this unhappy condition. There can be little if any doubt that here is the place where the

inhabitants urged our Lord to leave their coasts, when he first appeared among them, Mark v. 17. Nor let us wonder at the blindness with which they desired the absence of one who came among them with the words of life, and with gifts of healing and deliverance. The same thing happens around us every day. It was nothing but the loss of their swinish wealth that made them dread his presence; but they knew him not as the Redeemer, and thousands of us, with that higher knowledge of his claims to our love and our obedience, are influenced by the like love of the world to desire him to depart from our coasts, and to refuse the knowledge of his ways. The carnality and unbelief of men still lead them to reject him; how severe a doom will befall them! May we "while we have the light, believe in the light, that we may be the children of light."

Nearly four hours east from Um Keis is Abil, in the angle formed by the bases of two mountains, in the sides of which are many caves similar to those at Um Keis. It is now likewise ruined and uninhabited—some fragments of the town walls, of columns, and of churches being alone preserved. This is probably the ancient Abila, a city of the Decapolis, which is usually by ancient writers named along with Gadara.

About an hour nearly south of Abil is Hebras, one of the largest villages in the country, and inhabited almost entirely by Greek Christians. About three hours south by east of this is the castle of Irbid, upon a low hill, at the foot of which lies the village. This seems to have been the ancient Arbela; but a well-built reservoir and some handsome sarcophagi scattered around it are the only remarkable objects in the place. Further south is the Wady Yabes, which empties itself into the Jordan. The name suggests the JABESH-GILEAD of the Old Testament, memorable in the history of Saul, 1 Sam. xi. 1—11; xxxi. 8—13; 2 Sam. ii. 4—7. Perhaps the ancient town so called lay upon this wady, and the discovery of its exact site may reward the researches of future travellers.

Still further to the south, just where the Wady Ajlun enters the valley of the Jordan, we find Amateh, the ancient Amathus, which although not mentioned in canonical Scripture, was in the time of our Lord the principal fortress of the Jordan. Somewhere in this quarter, not far from the Jabbok, is an unvisited site called Mahneh, which is perhaps MAHANAIM, where Jacob, returning to his own

land, not without dread of his life from his brother's wrath, was strengthened by the visible assurance that "the angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him."

If we turn from Amateh up Wady Ajlun, we come to a place called Rajib, in which we may recognise the site of the ancient fortress of Ragaba, at the siege of which the Asamonean prince Alexander Jannæus died, and which is described as being in Mount Gerasa. Some think that the Scriptural name Argob may be recognised in Rajib. The Gerasa from which this part of the mountain derived its name, has been identified with the site now called Jerash—which lies far off towards the eastern border, but nearly due east of Rajib. This place is not mentioned in Scripture; but it belonged to the Decapolis, and figures in the history of Alexander Jannæus, by whom it was conquered. It also occurs in the Jewish war, having been taken and hardly dealt with by Vespasian. The ruins of this city stand upon an elevated plain in the mountains of Moerad, upon uneven ground on both sides of a wady, which at a short distance empties itself into the Jabbok. The principal part of the city stands upon the right bank of the river, where the surface is more level than on the opposite side, although the right bank is steeper than the other. The city walls, more than an hour in circuit, are quite destroyed. All the ruins are of the Roman period: they are the most extensive and splendid in all the country, and abundantly evince the importance and magnificence of the ancient city. Two great amphitheatres, three temples, several palaces, a noble town gate, a very long street, and various buildings all adorned with innumerable fine columns, bespeak a degree of splendour which no one could have expected to find in this remote quarter. Burekhardt's description of the ancient remains is still the most satisfactory and complete, and to his account we must refer those of our readers who take interest in such details.

The country from the river Jabbok southward to the Arnon, which under the name of Wady Modjeb discharges its waters into the middle part of the Dead Sea, now bears the name of the Belka. It was the ancient territory of the Ammonites, of which they were dispossessed by the Amorites, on whose defeat by the Hebrews the territory was assigned to Reuben and in part to Gad. The whole of this large district is entirely without inhabitants. In

the time of Burckhardt, one town, es-Salt, possessed inhabitants, but this has since been destroyed, and the inhabitants plundered. Only wandering rapacious Bedouins remain in the land, and their presence renders a journey through it difficult and dangerous. Desert and uninhabited as this region now is, it was in old time very populous, and we everywhere meet with the remains of ancient towns, which have in some cases preserved their original names to the present day. Under the Israelites, Reuben was in possession of the southern part of this district, and Gad of the northern: to the south was the



THE JABBOK—(ZERKA).

country of the Moabites, and that of the Ammonites on the east.

Although deserted now, es-Salt must be regarded as the capital of the province. It stands upon the southern declivity of Jebel Jelad, in which name we recognise that of Mount Gilead. The town is situated upon a hill, running into a wild and romantic valley, and surrounded on all sides by steep mountains. The houses are small and flat-roofed, with a door, but rarely a window, the ceiling resting on an arch. They rise in terraces, one above another, on the hill, the crest of which is occupied by a castle, with square flanking projections, walls thirty feet high, abut-

ments of support in the ditch, and an extensive line of defence, finishing with a high terrace around the court. This is very probably the RAMOTH-GILEAD, often mentioned in Scripture, of which the Syrians eventually possessed themselves, and in the attempt to recover which king Ahab was mortally wounded, 1 Kings xxii.

Wady Shaib commences in the neighbourhood of es-Salt, and takes a south-western direction. At the place where it intersects the mountains which line the valley of the Jordan on the east, is a place called Nimrin, which is in all probability the BETH-NIMRAH of Num. xxxii. 3, 36 ; and Josh. xiii. 27. Another Scriptural site is JAZER, which, from the manner in which it is mentioned, must have been one of the principal towns in this quarter. It was taken by Moses from the Ammonites, and became one of the four Levitical cities in the tribe of Gad, Num. xxi. 32 ; Josh. xxi. 39. But authorities differ as to its site. Some have sought it in Khirbet es-Suk, south-west of es-Salt, near to which is a well whose name of Ain Chazir seems to have been the authority of this identification. Others have rather sought for Jazer in Khirbet es-Sar, or in Khirbet es-Seir—two ruined places very near to each other at the commencement of Wady Seir, which goes south of Wady Shaib.

Proceeding southward, we find, at a considerable distance from the extremity of the Dead Sea, three ancient Scriptural sites, at no great distance from each other. One of these is el-Aal, situated upon the summit of a hill, from which a fine view over the country is obtained. This is doubtless the ELEALEH of Num. xxxii. 3, and other passages of Scripture.

Half an hour from it southward is the more important site of Hesban, in which we recognise HESHBON, still oftener named in Scripture, and which was the capital city of Sihon, king of the Ammonites, who once ruled this fair region, when the Israelites came up from the wilderness. After the conquest, it belonged to the tribe of Reuben. The ruins of a considerable town still exist here, covering the sides of an insulated hill, but scarcely a single edifice is left entire. The view from the hill is very extensive, embracing the ruins of a vast number of towns, standing at very short intervals from each other, and many of which

continue to bear names strongly resembling those of Scripture. There are here a number of deep wells cut in the rock, and a large reservoir, which together supplied the inhabitants with water. This may illustrate Sol. Song vii. 4.

About three-quarters of an hour south-east of Hesban, is Ma'in, the BAAL-MEON of Num. xxxii. 38. And at about an equal distance therefrom in the same direction is Madeba, which is undoubtedly the MEDEBA of the Old Testament, where it first occurs in Num. xxi. 30, and where in the time of David a great victory was gained by Joab over the Ammonites and their confederates, 1 Chron. xix. 7—14. In this place is a large cistern, an hundred and thirty yards long by an hundred broad, and fifteen feet deep, surrounded by a thick and well-built wall. As there is no spring at Madeba, this reservoir might be most valuable to the Bedouins were they to be at the trouble to clear the surrounding ground of rubbish, and allowing the water to flow into it; but such an undertaking is far beyond the views of the wandering Arab. The ruins at Madeba are about half an hour in circumference, chiefly found on the crest of a round hill, and upon the plain below extending westward. Not a single edifice is left standing, though there are some fragments of a temple on the west side, built of large blocks of stone, and apparently of high antiquity.

South of Madeba runs Wady Zerka Ma'in, and still further south Wady Waleh. The whole south of the Wady Waleh to the Modjeb or Arnon is comprehended under the name of el-Kura, a name given in Syria to plains. This corresponds to "the plains of Moab." The soil is here very sandy and unproductive. The black-stone of the Hauran also appears in this district. In the southern part of this plain, just south of the Zerka Ma'in, rises a barren peak, called Jebel Attarus. On its summit is seen a heap of stones overshadowed by a large pistachio-tree. This is the NEBO of Scripture, from whose summit the great leader of the Hebrews, after the forty years' wandering in the desert, first surveyed the Promised Land; and being favoured with a view of the region he was not permitted to enter, surrendered his spirit to God. No mortal eye witnessed his death, no human being knew the spot where he was laid, Deut. xxxiv. 5, 6.

In the southern part of this plain, nearer to the Arnon, is Dhiban, in which we recognise the DIBON of Num. xxxii. 3, and other texts. On the extreme southward

border of the Israelite territory east of the Jordan is Ara'ir, on the edge of the precipice which forms the northern border of the Arnon channel, and where a foot-path leads down to the river. This is the AROER which the Scripture describes as being upon the Arnon, and on the border between the tribe of Reuben and the Moabites, Deut. ii. 36 ; Josh. xiii. 16. Another aroer belonged to the tribe of Gad, and although its site has not been found, we know that it lay opposite to Rabbah, the capital of the Ammonites. The site of this RABBAH has, however, been ascertained in that of the present Amman, which lies about nineteen miles south-east of es-Salt, just beyond what was the eastern border of the Hebrew territory. It was usually called " Rabbath of the children of Ammon," to distinguish it from another place of the same name belonging to Moab, Deut. iii. 11. It is historically celebrated in Scripture chiefly for the circumstances attending the siege of it in the time of David : and the importance attached to it is shown by the fact that although the siege had been carried on by Joab, the king went in person from his capital to the spot, avowedly that the honour of so important a conquest might be his own, 2 Sam. xi. 1 ; xii. 27—31. The place was known in the time of Christ by the name of Philadelphia, but its name does not occur in the New Testament. The names imposed by Greeks or Romans seem, however, to have had no currency among the natives, and hence, as in this case, the more ancient names are preserved to this day. The ruins of Amman stand in a long valley traversed by a stream, which at this place is bridged over, the bed as well as the banks being paved. The ruins are extensive, and offer remains of churches, temples, and a Roman theatre, the last in very good preservation. We find one part of the ruins in the plain of the river's bed ; and another part, containing the citadel with traces of ancient walls, upon an elevation. The former is doubtless " the city of waters," mentioned in 2 Sam. xii. 27. This is that Rabbah of which the prophet foretold that it should become " a stable for camels," and the country " a couching place for flocks," Ezek. xxv. 5. This has been most literally fulfilled—the country being at this day wholly abandoned to the Arabian pastors, with not an inhabited site in it ; and when Burckhardt visited Amman, he found that a party of Arabs had stabled their camels among the ruins.

The other Rabbah, the capital of Moab, called RABBATH-MOAB, to distinguish it from that of Ammon, is usually called in Scripture AR, or Ar of Moab. This name was eventually Græcised into Areopolis, while Rabbath-Moab is traced in Rabmathon and Rabathmoma. It was in the third century destroyed in the night-time by a great earthquake, fulfilling the prophecy, "In the night Ar of Moab is laid waste, and brought to silence," Isa. xv. 1. Its site is still found under the name of Rabba, nearly in the mid-distance between the Arnon and the present town of Kerak, about ten miles from each. The ruins are about half an hour in circuit, seated upon a hill which commands a view over the whole plain. The remains present nothing of interest, except two old Roman temples and some tanks : but it is obvious that the remains, though occupying the site, are those of a later and less important town than the capital of Moab.

More important at the present day is Kerak itself, which in ancient times was one of the chief towns, if not a sort of second capital of Moab. It is called in Scripture, KIR of Moab, Isa. xv. 1 ; also KIR-HERES, Jer. xlvi. 31, 36 ; and KIR-HARESETH, Isa. xvi. 7. Although but six hours east of the Dead Sea, the hill on whose brow it stands is reckoned to be three thousand feet above the level of its waters. Kerak has a strong wall, with a tower of flesh-coloured consolidated limestone ; but the town itself is little more than a collection of stone huts, built without mortar. They are from seven to eight feet high ; the ground floors about six feet below, and the flat terrace mud roofs about two feet above the streets ; and in many places there are short cuts from street to street across the roofs of the houses. These houses, without window or chimney, are blackened inside by smoke, and the women and children exhibit a squalid and filthy appearance. The place contains about three hundred families, three-fourths of whom are Greek Christians. By paying an annual tribute, and submitting to occasional exactions, the latter live amicably enough with the powerful Arab tribe of Kerakiyeh, whose encampment is a short distance without the walls. The Moslems have a somewhat wild and savage appearance, but the Christians have a milder expression. The males mostly wear sheep-skin coats ; the women, dark-coloured gowns. The Christian females do not conceal their faces, which are tattooed with blue, like the arms of our sailors and the faces of Arab

women. Of their condition, some striking facts were collected in 1848 by the American expedition, which made an excursion to the place from the shores of the Dead Sea. The commander of the expedition writes: "In the course of a long conversation to-night, Abd'Allah gave us a history of the condition and prospects of the Christians of Kerak. He said there were from nine hundred to a thousand Christians here. They could muster a little over two hundred fighting men, but are kept in subjection by the Moslem Arabs, living mostly in huts without the town. He stated that they were in every manner imposed upon. If a Moslem comes to the town, instead of going to the house of another Moslem, he quarters himself upon a Christian, and appropriates the best of everything: that Christian families have been two days at a time without food, all that they had being consumed by their self-invited guests. If a Moslem Sheikh buys a horse for so many sheep, he makes the Christians contribute until the number be made up. Their property, he said, is seized at will, without there being any one to whom to appeal, and remonstrance on their part only makes it worse. Already a great many have been driven away, poverty alone keeping the remainder; they have commenced building a church, in the hope of keeping all together, and as a safe place of refuge for their wives and children in times of trouble; but the locusts and the sirocco have for the last seven years blasted the fields, and nearly all that was spared them has been swept away by the Moslems."

The object of most interest to travellers at Kerak is the castle, which is historically famous in the Crusades. This castle, partly cut out of, and partly built upon, the mountain top, presents the remains of a magnificent structure, which is cut off from the town by a deep ravine, a steep glacis wall skirting the whole. The building seems to be Saracenic, although in various parts it exhibits both the pointed Gothic and the rounded Roman arch. The walls, still partly standing, are composed of heavy well-cut stones, with narrow slits for defence; within these are several ranges of arched store-houses, one above another. The part used as a chapel was evidently built in the time of the Crusades, being, as is usually the case, from whatever cause, most entire at the east end, where the altar stood. Against the walls are pilasters, and parts of columns with sculptured ornaments, with traces of fresco painting. In one place the

pavement has been dug up by the present Christian inhabitants of Kerak, for paving-slabs for their new church. "The vast extent of this magnificent castle," says the commander of the American expedition, "filled us with astonishment. It has five gates, and seven wells and cisterns, and the whole summit is perforated by subterranean passages. From the narrow embrasures of the vaulted chambers, we looked down into the ravine, green with fields of corn and grass, and the shrubbery of oleanders, and upon part of the sea in the distance."

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS.

WE have now taken a rapid survey of the Land of Promise in its present condition from Beersheba to Northern Dan, and from Mount Hermon to the Land of Moab.

It is impossible not to feel a deep interest in that land. It was selected by the Lord out of all lands, to be the abode of his chosen people, that, amidst the idolatrous desolation of the earth, the knowledge of the only true God and of his great covenants with man should be maintained, until the fulness of time should bring down the long promised Redeemer. It hence became the scene of the mercies, the judgments, and the miracles of God, and of the acts and sayings, the conflicts, the triumphs, the sufferings, the travels, and the memorable deeds of holy men, whose names are familiar to us from infancy. Still dearer is this land to us as the land in which our blessed Lord walked up and down for many years among men, and where he lived, and taught, and healed, and suffered more than mortal agonies, and died.—*That* is an interest intimately near ; for our deep concern in his death, the knowledge that our own sins—the sins of yesterday and to-day—bowed down his head in agony, and drew forth the bloody sweat, and subjected him to the scourge, the torturing crown, and the cross, all so connects us with him and with the record of his woes and triumphs, as to make us as nearly citizens of the land he trode as of our own country ; and renders many of the names found in it—names of cities, mountains, valleys, and rivers, more familiar to us, and more dear and venerable, than any names in the lands of our birth.

This is natural ; and within measure it is right. We cannot certainly be accused of neglecting these considerations. We have rather perhaps erred in the other extreme, till it may have become a part of that benumbing system which is continually, under one excuse or another more or less fair, taking away our thoughts and contemplations from the inward to the outward—from the spirit to the flesh.

Palestine is not *now* a favoured land. It is not now nearer to God than England, nor is Jerusalem than London—nor so much so. if, as we have reason to believe, that

place be dearest to Him where the largest number of his ransomed people are found. That now, wherever it be, is the "delightful land."

"Lo, the kingdom of God is within you." It is not a place or a country—not even the Land of ancient Promise—the living and real interest in which passed away in that hour when the veil of the temple was rent in twain, when the middle wall of partition was broken down, as it was in that triumphant hour when our Lord bowed his head in death upon the cross, declaring that his great work was FINISHED. Till then, this had been the Lord's chosen land—the land made glorious by his choice, his special regard, and his peculiar presence. It was a beloved land, not for its rocks, its valleys, and its trees, but because it was the seat and the abode of his chosen nation. This is no more its distinction; and although there are spots in this land that may and must be dear for the sake of the memories of old times connected with them—there is nothing, except for the quickened impulse which such memories give to sacred thought—nothing, left in that land to make us better by strengthening our spirits, while there is very much to grieve and offend our souls, and to depress our hearts.

We have cast our idols of wood, metal, and stone to the owls and to the bats. But there are other idols, scarcely less dangerous, whose worship we may knowingly or unknowingly cherish. To these belongs the inordinate appreciation of sacred lands or places, which involves us in some of the danger of making unto ourselves "gods of the hills," and "gods of the valleys." Those who find their religious emotions greatly quickened by the contemplation of, or a visit to, any place or external object, have much need to pray, "Lord, increase our faith," for the faith cannot be of the strongest texture which finds support from such crutches as these.

Hear one of the most recent travellers break forth with the psalmist when he enters Jerusalem:—

"Our feet stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

* * * *

Pray for the peace of Jerusalem:
 They shall prosper that love thee.
 Peace be within thy walls,
 And prosperity within thy palaces.
 For my brethren and companions' sakes,
 I will now say, Peace be within thee.
 Because of the house of the Lord our God
 I will seek thy good."

Yes, "because of the house." But the house is gone, and there is hardly a line of this which is in any degree true or applicable to the present Jerusalem, cast down by the judgments of God, although these words were most true, most applicable, at the time when God's holy and beautiful house stood there, when his presence shone between the cherubim, and when the tribes went up there to worship. All this is past, and much that we now read and hear respecting the "sacred land," and the "holy places," is written in utter forgetfulness of our Lord's own words to the woman of Samaria; "The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain, *nor yet at Jerusalem*, worship the Father.—But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth," John iv. 21—24.

To every true believer in Jesus belongs a "new Jerusalem," a "heavenly Jerusalem," a "Jerusalem coming down from heaven." To *that* all such texts as that just cited, are still beautifully applicable, and may be repeated by devout souls every day. That is "the city of the Great King;" they have their hope and portion there; and our concern is comparatively small indeed with the town of el-Kuds—that high seat of Moslem worship among the mountains of Judah.

"Jerusalem, my happy home,
Name ever dear to me;
When shall my labours have an end
In joy, and peace, and thee?"

"When shall these eyes thy heaven-built walls
And pearly gates behold;
Thy bulwarks with salvation strong,
And streets of shining gold?"

"Oh when, thou city of my God,
Shall I thy courts ascend;
Where congregations ne'er break up,
And sabbaths have no end?"

"There happier bowers than Eden's bloom,
Nor sin nor sorrow know:
Bless'd seats! through rude and stormy scenes
I onward press to you.

“ Why should I shrink at pain or woe,
Or feel at death, dismay?
I've Canaan's goodly land in view,
And realms of endless day.

“ Apostles, martyrs, prophets there,
Around my Saviour stand;
And soon my friends in Christ below
Will join the glorious band.

“ Jerusalem ! my happy home,
My soul still pants for thee ;
Then shall my labours have an end,
When I thy joys shall see.”

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