# Picturesque Palestine

## Sinai & Egypt

S. A. HARPER. PINX.^T^ C. COURER. SCULP.^T^

THE SEA OF GALILEE, FROM THE HEIGHTS OF SAFED.

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# PICTURESQUE

# PALESTINE,

## SINAI AND EGYPT.

The Convent of St Catherine Mount Sinai

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# PICTURESQUE PALESTINE

## SINAI AND EGYPT

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ASSISTED BY THE MOST EMINENT PALESTINE EXPLORERS
ETC.

*WITH NUMEROUS ENGRAVINGS ON STEEL AND WOOD FROM ORIGINAL DRAWINGS BY HARRY FENN AND J. D. WOODWARD*

IN TWO VOLUMES

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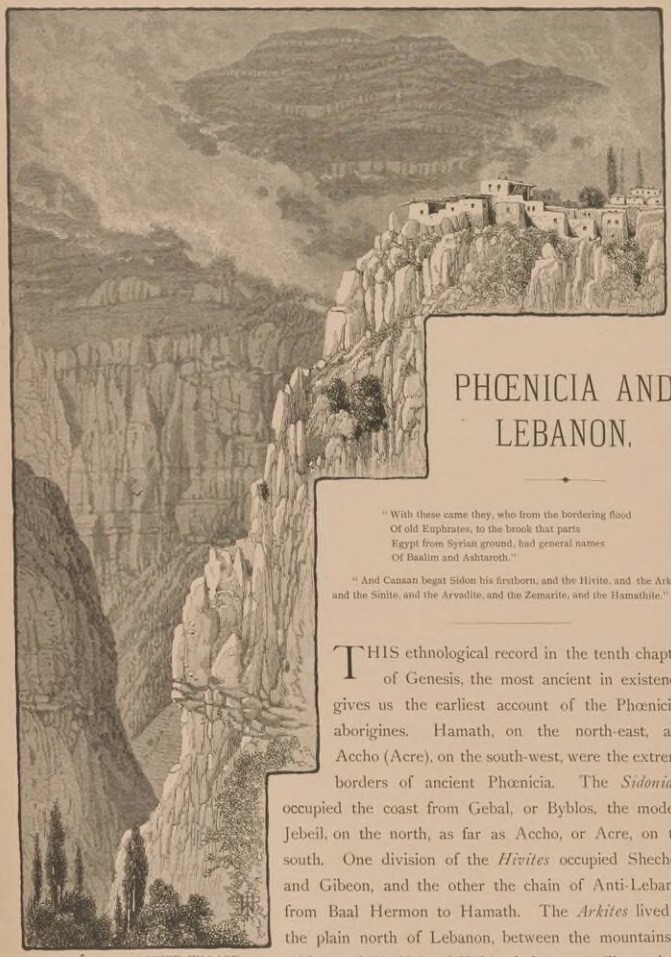


HASRÛN, A MARONITE VILLAGE
Of North Lebanon, on the summit of a precipice on the south side of the gorge of the Kadisha (the sacred river).

# PHŒNICIA AND LEBANON.

"With these came they, who from the bordering flood
Of old Euphrates, to the brook that parts
Egypt from Syrian ground, had general names
Of Baalim and Ashtaroth."

"And Canaan begat Sidon his firstborn, and the Hivite, and the Arkite, and the Sinite, and the Arvadite, and the Zemarite, and the Hamathite."

THIS ethnological record in the tenth chapter of Genesis, the most ancient in existence, gives us the earliest account of the Phœnician aborigines. Hamath, on the north-east, and Accho (Acre), on the south-west, were the extreme borders of ancient Phœnicia. The *Sidonians* occupied the coast from Gebal, or Byblos, the modern Jebeil, on the north, as far as Accho, or Acre, on the south. One division of the *Hivites* occupied Shechem and Gibeon, and the other the chain of Anti-Lebanon from Baal Hermon to Hamath. The *Arkites* lived in the plain north of Lebanon, between the mountains of Akkâr and the Nahr el Kebir, their name still remaining in the Tell and river of Arka.

One of the most striking historic names in Northern Syria is Kûl'at Kadmûs, about twelve hours south-east of Ladakiyeh, probably the former home of Cadmus, who first brought letters into Greece.

In prosecuting our journey through Phœnicia from north to south we will begin at the northernmost relic of Phœnician architecture in Syria, the secluded "Husn Suleiman." In company with the Rev. S. Jessup, of Tripoli, and Professor Dodge, of the S. P. College in Beirût, we visited this then unexplored and comparatively unknown ruin a few years since. We spent Tuesday night at Mahardee, near the castle of Seijar, on the Orontes, north-west of Hamath; and on Wednesday took a south-west course to the foot of the Nusairiyeh mountain range, then ascended a rocky precipitous steep, several hundred feet in height, through tangled forests of oak, to the summit of the range near 'Ain esh Shems, or Fountain of the Sun. Farther to the west we rode down a narrow valley to 'Ain ez Zahib, or Gold Fountain, and then turning southward over a high rounded ridge, came suddenly in sight of the green secluded vale in the midst of which stand in weird solitude the ruins of "Husn Suleiman." The ruin is of unknown origin and of great antiquity. Like Ba'albek, it is of three styles of architecture, the colossal Phœnician, the Greek, and that of the Crusaders. There are two quadrangular courts a short distance from each other and quite distinct. The southern or larger one is a rectangle of four hundred and fifty feet long by two hundred and eighty feet wide, with a wall formerly forty feet in height. In the centre of each side is a great portal ten feet wide, twenty feet high, and eight feet thick. On the soffit of the east and west portals is an immense eagle with a caduceus in his talons and a retreating Ganymede on either side. The work resembles that at Ba'albek, but is far less elaborate. We spent six hours in sketching the ruins, and the engravings from these hasty sketches (in the Second Statement of the American Palestine Exploration Society) were the first pictures of the ruins published in Europe and America. The lintel over the eastern gate is a monolith twenty-one feet long, ten feet wide, and five feet high. It is chastely carved with a cornice of dice and flowers, with a king's head in the centre. On each end is a winged image in high relief, draped from the waist down, supporting the upper portion of the cornice on his shoulders, the arms being uplifted. At the bottom of the cornice is a Greek inscription, which reads somewhat thus: "Theobaitus possessed it. Servants of his household built it in the 682nd year." The cornice of the western portal has alternate dice, flowers, and grotesque faces in relief. The lintel of the east gate alone remains perfect; the western is broken in two pieces, the northern in three, and the southern has fallen.

Inside the northern portal, on a tablet six feet by three, is an inscription in Greek and Latin. The Latin inscription has been translated by Dr. Ward. It states that the Emperor Valerianus and his son Gallienus and grandson Saloninus intrusted the province of Asia to Marcus Aurelius and others, &c., commanding them to see that the distant kingdoms over against the turbulent Parthians remain to them intact. The date is between 253 A.D. and 259 A.D., but the inscription is evidently of far later date than the building, and was not improbably cut in a tablet from which an older inscription had been effaced.

The rectangle is built of huge stones, the largest of which on the north-east corner is thirty feet long, nine feet nine inches high, and four feet seven inches wide, and at an elevation of thirty feet from the ground on the inside. The most of the stones are of similar dimensions, some thicker and narrower and some shorter and wider. Those on the south side have a wide coarse level or draft, and unfinished attempts at a moulding on the top of some of them.

The quarry is on the slope of the hill a few rods from the north-east corner. The north-east corner block has a rude lion carved in high relief on its northern face. The corresponding block on the north-western corner has a lion standing by a cypress tree. This style of rude ornament is still in use among the Syrian stonemasons, and even the Arab women use the lion and cypress tree in decorating the interior mud walls of their rude houses. On both the inner and outer sides of the north portal are niches with canopies for statues. On the inside was once a portico forty-five feet wide and seventeen feet deep. Its roof and columns are fallen and mostly buried beneath the débris. The capitals of the pilasters on the main wall are early Corinthian.

In the southern central part of the rectangular area is the Ionic temple, its cella being seventy-five feet by forty-five feet. To the north are two flights of steps of the width of the temple, covering a space sixty feet in length northward. The temple is built of the same light-coloured limestone with the court, but the blocks are much smaller, varying from six to ten feet long, and from three to four feet in breadth and thickness. It is surrounded by half columns, which become at the corners three-quarter columns. There are four at the south end and five on each side, all being three feet five inches in diameter and twenty-seven feet high. In the interior lie piles of fallen blocks and half columns in utter confusion. In the winter a fine fountain gushes out from under it, and in its original state the fountain was doubtless, as at Fîjeh (see page 440, vol. i.) and Afka (Apheca) (see page 16), the attractive feature of the spot, and connected with the worship of those ancient days, now so completely enwrapped in mystery. The water is sweet, cold, and pure; it escapes from beneath the western wall of the enceinte, its former place of exit being buried beneath the débris.

The northern ruin is also a rectangular enclosure, standing north-west of the great court, and at an angle with it. It contained several small temples, one on the south-east corner, another at the south-west corner, and one outside the western wall forty-five feet by fifteen feet. Behind the platform at the south-west corner are the pedestals of numerous columns, which may have surrounded the cella of a temple whose portico occupied the platform. The little temple on the south-east corner has a portico thirteen feet by twenty-six feet, and twenty feet high, now in ruins, and a vestibule twenty-six feet by forty feet. The portal between them is seven feet wide by ten feet high, its lintel being a monolith thirteen feet long, having an unfinished moulding and cornice, with an egg cornice under the dice and flowers common to the portals of the great court, and a spread eagle above. The stone above the lintel is fifteen feet long. The stones are laid up without mortar, and beautifully joined, like those in Ba'albek and Palmyra. The only building laid up in mortar is the ruined Crusaders' Church on the eastern

side, with its apse towards the north-east. A semicircular projection of the northern wall would indicate the apse of some former edifice within the wall at that point.

The whole mass of ruins is a mystery. It was evidently one of the holy places of the Arvadites, at once a temple and a stronghold. M. Ray, of Paris, in his report on the remains of the military architecture of the Crusaders in Syria, styles this place the best specimen of τεμενος that exists in Syria. Its name, "Solomon's Fortress," would indicate the prevailing ancient tradition as to its origin. The whole Arab race believe Ba'albek (see page 453, vol. i.) and Tûdmûr (Palmyra) (see page 429, vol. i.) to be the work of Solomon aided by the genii, and this Phœnician quadrangle very naturally bears his name. It is not impossible that when Solomon went to Hamath Zobah and built store cities or magazines for storing grain in this district, his men may have made this a store city. The word Hamath means *Husn*, or fortress, and the fame of Solomon must have extended through this entire region, then inhabited by the Phœnicians and Hittites; and it is no improbable supposition that this retired and almost inaccessible spot may have been selected as a stronghold in which to store grain for his subjects in Northern Syria, or even as a military fortress. The small temples were probably of much later date.

Leaving this lovely valley we rode to Burj Safita, the "Castel Blanc" of the Crusaders, and now, with its Protestant church and schools, a veritable white spot in this dark mountain. Thence, on the 1st of June, we rode down for six hours over the undulating chalk hills towards the coast, when suddenly we came upon the modern town of Tartûs, the ancient Antaradus of the Phœnicians. The town contains about one thousand five hundred people, four-fifths Muslims and one-fifth Greek Christians. The majority of the people live within the walls of the castle, an immense structure, whose vaulted halls and chapels, built by the Crusaders, are still in excellent preservation. The castle stands on the seashore, protected from the waves by a massive sloping buttress. On the land side the castle was surrounded by two walls and two moats, one between the walls and one beyond. These are in fine preservation, especially on the north-east side. The ancient structures are solid and beautiful, the modern of the most abject character.

Taking the Arab shakhtûr, or sloop, which plies between the town and its insular sister, we sail across the two and a half miles of sea to the ancient island of Arvad, now Ruâd. This island is three-quarters of a mile in circumference, with a population of two thousand. It was surrounded by a wall intended to serve as a fortification, and a dyke to protect the town from the sea. A portion of the wall still remains, composed of blocks of stone from fifteen to twenty feet in length. The finely drafted stones indicate its Phœnician origin. The rock interior is full of cisterns to supply water to the inhabitants. The inscriptions in Greek begin with the words, "The Senate and People," &c. On the north-east side was the harbour, formed by two moles built of immense stones brought from the quarries at 'Amrit. The present population are chiefly fishermen, whose boats supply fish to Ladakiyeh, Tripoli, and even Beirût, and carry lumber from Mounts Casius and Amanus to the cities of Southern Phœnicia.

THE VALLEY OF THE KADÎSHA (THE HOLY RIVER).
With a distant view of the Mediterranean Sea and El Mîna (Minet Tarâbulus), the port of Tripoli.

After the union of Arvad with the Sidonians it still retained its own king as a vassal of the Phœnician monarch. To this brave and hardy insular population, who vied with the Tyrians and Sidonians for the palm as navigators of the Mediterranean and Black Seas, belonged the two towns opposite on the coast, Antaradus (Tartûs), and Marathus ('Amrit), where are found the most perfect, important, and beautiful remains of Phœnician architecture.

The trip to Ruâd can be easily made in the summer months, and generally in the spring, unless the wind blows a gale, as the sailors of Ruâd are skilful and perfectly fearless.

From Tartûs we rode southward along the coast to 'Ain el Haiyeh and 'Amrit. It was the time of wheat harvest. The whole country was golden yellow with the ripened or newly harvested grain, and the muzzled oxen were treading out the corn on the circular earthen threshing floors. South-east of Tartûs stands the Cathedral of the Crusaders, a fine edifice one hundred and thirty feet by ninety-three feet, divided into nave and aisles by two rows of clustered pillars. As is usual in the Syrian cities, this grand Christian edifice is now the property of the Muslims, and we found a Muslim sheikh seated on a mat teaching a dozen little unwashed boys to read the Koran. It is partly roofless, but not an utter ruin. It is a painful and interesting sight, yet such sights abound through this entire region from Aleppo to Tripoli.

The beautiful lordly castles of the French and English Crusaders, with their Gothic chapels and spacious halls, are now turned into stables or filthy hovels, or used by Turkish mudirs and their zabtiés and servants.

Leaving the Tartûs Cathedral, we reach in one hour the ruins of 'Amrit, so thoroughly explored by M. Renan, and which he has admirably illustrated in the plates of his "Mission de Phœnice." The ruins of 'Amrit are peculiar and striking, being the most perfect Phœnician structures in Syria. There are three lofty massive monuments, one of which is composed of a pedestal sixteen feet square and six feet high, with sculptured lions at the corners; on this stands a monolithic shaft fourteen feet high. The second has a pedestal fifteen feet square and ten feet high, on which stands a huge cylindrical block, and the whole is surmounted by a cone-shaped stone, the extreme height being thirty-three feet. Beneath each structure are sepulchral chambers hewn in the rock, with loculi of a large size, measuring eight and a half by three and a quarter feet. The third is partially destroyed. Lenormant regards these cone-shaped monuments as having a peculiar meaning in the ancient Baal-worship—"At Paphos, the stone representing Ashtoreth was of a conical form." In the island of Malta, in one of the Phœnician sanctuaries, was a very lofty semicircular recess, which was the "Holy of Holies," and "in Giganteja there was found in this recess the conical stone which, as at Paphos, was the emblem of the nature goddess." "We cannot enter here on an explanation of the brutal and obscene symbolism that was the origin of this representation of the divinity by a conical stone. Two monoliths, or enormous stone cylinders, terminated at the summit by a cone or a rounded cap, called by the Arabs of our day 'mughazil' (spindles), were placed like the Egyptian obelisks before the temple of Atargatis at Bambyce. Probably there were some also at the temple of

Melkarth at Tyre, for in the temple of Jerusalem (an exact reproduction of its arrangements), in order to efface all vestiges of a symbolism so contrary to the spirit of the worship of Jehovah, they were replaced by the two columns with bronze capitals, Jachin and Boaz. Three monoliths of the same type are still to be seen among the ruins of Marothus ('Amrit)."

It is probably impossible for one in our day to imagine the depth of immorality and abominable licentiousness which was inwrought in the very spirit and fibre of the old Phœnician Baal-worship.

> " . . . . Baal next, and Ashtaroth,
> And all the idolatries of heathen round,
> Besides their other worse than heathenish crimes."

Around their religious system gathered, in the external and public worship, a host of frightful debaucheries, orgies, and prostitutions in honour of the deities, such as accompanied all the naturalistic religions of antiquity. Creuzer, as quoted by Lenormant, says, " This religion silenced all the best feelings of human nature, degraded men's minds by a superstition alternately cruel and profligate, and we may seek in vain for any influence for good it could have exercised on the nation." Their human sacrifices to Baal Moloch were followed by feasts in which deep sorrow and frantic joy alternated. The Phœnicians are described by ancient writers as both unruly and servile, gloomy and cruel, corrupt and ferocious, selfish and covetous, implacable and faithless. It is well for us to have these peculiarities of the old Baal-worship in mind as we are proceeding on our journey south through the maritime cities, the Lebanon strongholds, and the characteristic temples of the ancient Phœnicians.

Just to the north of the three conical symbolic shafts of 'Amrit is the extraordinary rock-hewn temple of "'Ain el Haiyeh," or Serpent Fountain. The name is appropriate to the place, for no part of Syria is more infested with venomous serpents than these cretaceous hills along the coast of the Arvadites. On every journey in this region we hear stories of their ravages. While riding ahead of my companions near this very temple I heard a sudden rustling in the wheat stubble; my horse started back, and I saw a repulsive-looking snake about two feet in length, of a dark yellow hue, and about as thick as my wrist from head to tail, floundering along towards a *rejmeh*, or stone heap. The boy with us exclaimed, " Beware, a serpent!" It was of the most venomous character. Michaud relates, in the history of the eighteenth Crusade, that when the Christian army remained three days on the banks of the river Eleuctera (Nahr el Kebir), fifteen miles south of 'Amrit, they were assailed by serpents called *tarenta*, whose bite produced death. The Crusaders were stricken with terror, but the remedy proposed by the natives surprised them even more. It was of a nature so vile as to remind one of the abominable rites of the ancient Baal-worshippers of the same plains.

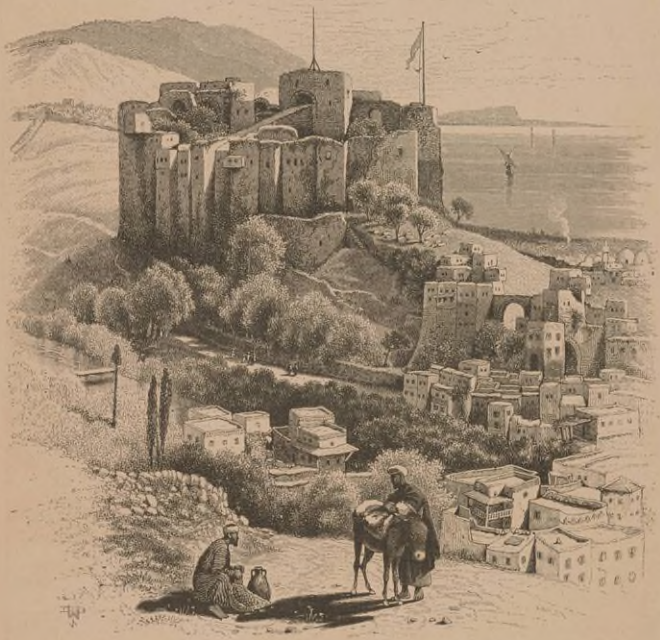
On the north-east of the fountain is an excavation a quarter of a mile long, cut in the rock, ninety feet wide at the top, descending in steps to the bottom. The rock-hewn temple consists of a court one hundred and fifty feet square, cut nine feet deep from the ledge of rocks, smoothly hewn on the floor, the north side being cut away to form an opening towards the stream. In the middle of the northern opening a square block of the native rock is left, sixteen and a

half feet square and nine feet high. On this are four huge blocks of stone, one at each side, one at the back, and over them a colossal mass fourteen feet by twelve and a half feet,

CONVENT OF THE MULLAWÎYEH, OR DANCING DERVISHES, TRIPOLI.
With a distant view of the snow-crowned summits of Lebanon. In the foreground flows the Kadîsha (the sacred river), called also Nahr Abû Alî. On the pathway may be seen a water-wheel and two millstones.

and seven feet thick, concave below, forming a canopy over this immense throne. Here once sat the chief idol of the Arvadites. Around the ruins are ancient sarcophagi, ruined

walls, and signs of an ancient town. The site is beautiful. To the south the green plain of Akkar extends for miles, sweeping around the curving level shore in graceful perspective to the cape and islands of Tripoli, thirty miles away. Beyond, to the south-east, rise the snow-



THE CASTLE OF TRIPOLI, A STRONGHOLD OF THE CRUSADERS.
It was converted into an imperial penitentiary by Midhat Pasha, when he was Governor-General of Syria. It stands on a narrow ridge, which slopes on the west towards the town, and on the east to the bed of the Kadisha.

crowned summits of Northern Lebanon (see page 8), while to the west sparkle the blue waters of the Bahr er Rûm, "Sea of the Greeks" (the Mediterranean) (see page 5).

Three hours south of Tartûs a magnificent fountain of crystal water rises up from a circular basin, about twenty rods from the seashore, and flows down in full volume to mingle its waters with the sea. This is the famous 'Aïn el Hishy, notorious for ages as the resort of highwaymen and cut-throats, who hid themselves in the low copse along the shore and waylaid the passing

traveller. The Turkish Tartar postmen, however well armed, were often shot by Nusairiyeh brigands in these dreary thickets. At the time of our visit a Greek merchant had built a house and was living here, and we spent the night unmolested. Not the least interesting feature in this region is the people who now inhabit it—the Nusairiyeh. They are justly regarded as the descendants of the old Canaanites, never converted to Judaism, Christianity, or Islamism, but retaining the old Baal and star worship of the Canaanites, with their sacred shrines in groves on "every high hill," and at the same time having borrowed various features from both Christians, Muslims, and Jews. Ali is their God. When they speak of Allah they always mean Ali. They practise circumcision, use wine at their sacrament, a secret rite bound by terrific oaths, and their principal prayer is a series of dire curses upon all other sects. Their present name was derived from Abû Shuaib ibn Nusair in 840 A.D. They are a secret society with mysterious signs and passwords. When one of the initiated dies they believe that Mars or Jupiter descends and takes his soul to the sky, where it becomes a star in the "Darub et tibban," the "Milky Way." They believe in transmigration, and that the souls of Muslims pass into donkeys, of Christians into swine, of Jews into monkeys, and of Nusairiyeh into other men. Women are not allowed to be initiated into their secret rites, nor even attend their worship. "Devils were created from the sins of men, and women from the sins of devils." The soul leaves the body through the mouth, and hence death by hanging is regarded by them with horror. The Turks look upon them as Kafirs, or infidels, and hence for ages have persecuted and oppressed them in the most cruel manner, driving them to desperation. Blood revenge and highway robbery are common. At present they are somewhat better treated, but their fertile mountains have been turned almost into a wilderness. Native writers on the Nusairy religion insist that the initiated sheikhs offer their wives to their guests when visiting each other, but this is not confirmed by credible testimony. Physically they are a fine race. Some of their sheikhs are men of splendid personal appearance, and their girls and boys who have enjoyed the advantages of education in the Christian schools at Ladikiyeh have proved themselves equal to any class of Syrian Arabs in intellect and capacity.

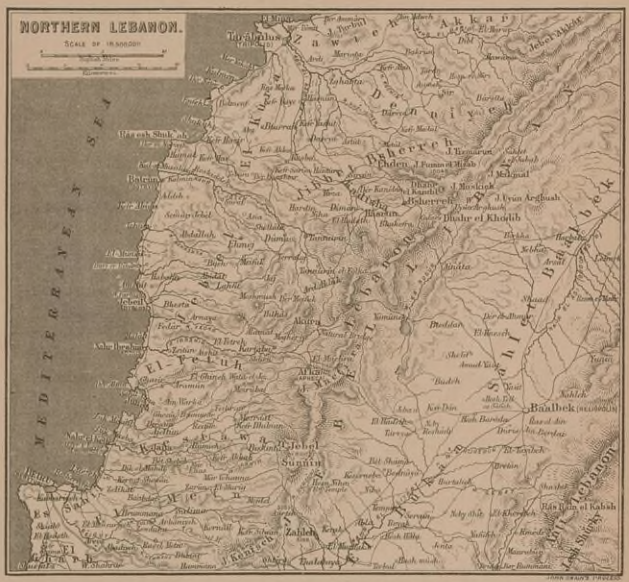
South of Tartûs we meet but few villages of the Nusairiyeh, and on entering the Lebanon district beyond Tripoli we find only a Mohammedan, Christian, and Druse population. Crossing the broad and fertile plain of Akkar, we reach Tell Arka, on a river of the same name, where dwelt the Arkites. The Tell is evidently the site of the old Arkite capital. Fragments of columns, sarcophagi, and blocks of stone lie scattered on the slope and in the deep rocky gorge of the river. A four hours' ride from this point takes us along the seashore, across the Nahr el Barid, and thence to the famous "'Ain el Bedawy," or "Sheikh el Bedawy," known as the "Mosque of the Sacred Fish." Just below the road, down a grassy slope and in the edge of the rich green gardens and orchards of the Tripoli plain, is a circular birkeh, or pool, into which flows the clear sweet water of a fine fountain. The pool is about one hundred feet in diameter, and the water two or three feet in depth. In it are hundreds of fat light-coloured fish, from three to twenty inches in length, resembling river bass. They are

fed by visitors to the mosque, who come from Tripoli, three miles distant, and from the surrounding region on the religious fête days to make vows at the shrine of Sheikh el Bedawy,

THE CASTLE OF MUSEILIHAH ("PLACE OF WEAPONS").
It stands on a precipitous rock by the Nahr el Jozeh, in the middle of a wooded valley, and commands the pass. It was until recently occupied by a band of brigands, the terror of travellers.

or receive a blessing from the sacred fish. These fish are regarded as inhabited by human souls, and killing them is looked upon as murder. The Muslims say that during the Russian

War not a few of them disappeared and went under the sea to fight the Russians. They claim that any one eating them will speedily die, but as I ate of them more than twenty years ago in the house of a Greek aristocratic family in Tripoli, I can confidently deny the assertion. The ride from this point to Tripoli is a delightful one. With dense olive orchards on the right towards the sea, and fig and mulberry gardens on the left, we ride along the level macadamised road, the white roofs, domes, and minarets of Tripoli gradually rising in the foreground, until our horses' hoofs clatter on the pavement at Bâb et Tibbaneh, and we enter this peculiarly Oriental city. It seems a strange and sudden transition to glance from the ancient khans, Muslim tombs, vaulted streets, and crowding throngs of Bedawîn and Nusairîyeh cameleers to the brilliantly painted and gilded cars of the Tripoli tramway, which here has its eastern terminus. It is the East and the West in conjunction, the Syria of the past and the Syria of the future. Tripoli was probably founded about 700 B.C., but it has no continuous history. The Seleucidan prince, Demetrius I., erected a palace here, which was succeeded by splendid edifices erected by the Romans, but owing to frequent and destructive earthquakes few traces of the ancient city



remain. The Muslims occupied the town at the time of the Islamic invasion, but the

THE NATURAL BRIDGE OF AKURA.

In front of a vast cavern from which issues a stream called the Neb'a Ruweis, a tributary of the Adonis (Nahr Ibrahim).

Crusaders failed to capture it until five years after their arrival at Antioch in 1104. When the Christian army finally took the city, a valuable library of one hundred thousand volumes was destroyed. This famous library, celebrated through all the East, contained the monuments of the ancient literature of the Persians, the Arabs, the

Egyptians, and the Greeks. A hundred copyists were constantly employed in transcribing manuscripts. The Kadi sent into all countries men authorised to purchase rare and precious books.

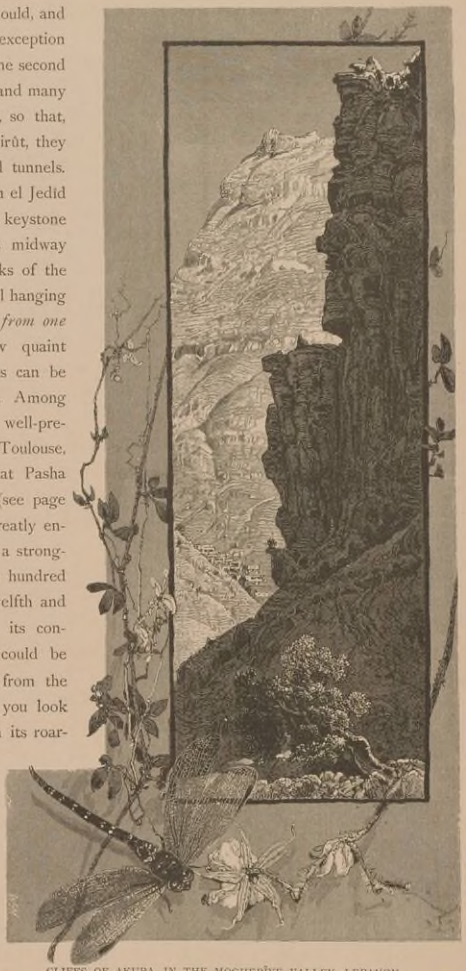
After the taking of the city a priest attached to Count Bernard de St. Gilles entered the room in which were collected a vast number of copies of the Koran, and as he declared that "the library of Tripoli contained only the impious books of Mohammed," it was given up to the flames. Ibn Abû Tai says that the library contained three million volumes, and that the Christians exhibited at the taking of Tripoli the same destructive fury as the Arabs had done who burned the library of Alexandria. Novairy fixes the number of volumes at one hundred thousand.

In 1289, when the city was destroyed by the Sultan Kilawûn, it was said to have contained four thousand looms for the weaving of silk, and the *zinnâr* Tarâbulusy, or Tripoli silk girdle, is famous even to the present day. The Arabs call the city Tarâbulus, the Arabic form of Tripoli. The Turks usually speak of it as "Kochuk Sham" (Little Damascus), and it is well worthy of the name. It stands on the eastern extremity of the triangular plain, a mile wide, at the base of the elevated plateau called El Kûra, from one hundred to three hundred feet high, which reaches to the foot of the Lebanon range (see page 5).

The sacred river Kadîsha, which rises at Bsherreh, just under the cedars of Lebanon (see page 475, vol. i.), runs twelve miles through a wild ravine to the plain, then cuts through the plateau for eighteen miles in a deep gorge to Tripoli (see pages 1 and 5), where it breaks out into the level plain, forming a tortuous and picturesque valley, at the mouth of which, on both sides of the river, the city of Tripoli is built (see pages 8 and 9). The roaring Kadîsha, called by the Muslims Abû Ali, runs through the city, crossed by two stone bridges, besides the new bridge of a tramway farther down the stream. On the right bank, the houses on the hill are chiefly rough structures of the Maronite fellahîn; those below, between the river and the Bab Tibbaneh, being Muslim. The Christian quarter is on the left side of the river, and stretching far to the southern Blacksmith's Gate is the populous Muslim quarter. The population consists of twelve thousand Muslims, four thousand Greek Christians, five hundred Maronites, and a few Protestants, Papal Greeks, and Jews. These sects live in distinct quarters, and the different trades of the city, as in Damascus, occupy separate streets.

From a fine fountain five miles south-east of the city, the water of the Zghorta river is brought in an aqueduct, which crosses the Kadîsha a mile from the city on the Kunatîr el Brins, or Prince's Arches, a structure dating back to Raymond of Toulouse, Count of Tripoli. The distributing reservoir is a small room below the castle, whose floor is punctured with holes a few inches in diameter, through which the water flows in earthen pipes to all parts of the city. Every house, mosque, and khan has its *anbûb* and *birkeh*, in which the water runs constantly day and night, giving a cheerful aspect to the houses, refreshing in summer, but chilling and damp in the winter. The houses are built of the yellow porous sandstone from the reefs along the seashore, and there are few dry houses in the city. The ground floors are

often green with damp and mould, and the entire population, with the exception of the poorer classes, sleep on the second floor. The city is well paved, and many of the streets are arched over, so that, as in Sidon and intramural Beirût, they have the appearance of vaulted tunnels. Over the door of the Hammam el Jedid is a curious stone chain. The keystone of the arch, two arch stones midway down the arch, the huge links of the chain, and a massive stone tassel hanging in the middle, are all *carved from one block of stone.* Not a few quaint Saracenic arches and doorways can be seen in various parts of the city. Among the objects of interest is the well-preserved castle of Raymond of Toulouse, recently transformed by Midhat Pasha into an imperial penitentiary (see page 9). It was either built or greatly enlarged by Raymond, and was a stronghold of the Crusaders for one hundred and eighty years during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Before its conversion into a prison, access could be obtained to the charming view from the top of its walls. On the east you look down into the river gorge, with its roaring waters, the Mullawiyeh Convent, and the orange groves, with snowy Lebanon in the background piercing the clouds (see page 8). On the west, the verdant plain, the blue sea in the distance, its shore broken by the Mîna, or marine city, and the five old towers along



CLIFFS OF AKURA, IN THE MOGHERÎYE VALLEY, LEBANON.
Every available space in this valley is cultivated. On the ledges of the cliffs fruit-trees flourish and wheat is grown.

THE FOUNTAIN OF AFKA (APHECA).

Source of the Adonis (Nahr Ibrahim). Close to this spot are the remains of a famous Temple of Venus, which was destroyed by order of Constantine.

the northern beach, while the snow-white roofs, walls, domes, and minarets of the city form the foreground at your feet. From a residence of several years in Tripoli, I can testify to the ever-changing beauty of its scenery, the lusciousness of its fruits, as well as the courtesy and hospitality of the better portion of its people. Passing beyond the castle, and descend-

H. PENNE. PINXT.

S. BRADSHAW. SCULPT.

THE GORGE OF THE KADISHA - LEBANON.

D. APPLETON & Co NEW YORK.

THE VALLEY OF THE ADONIS (NAHR IBRAHÎM).

The scenery of this valley is not surpassed by any in the Lebanon. The hillsides are in many places clothed with pines and oak-trees, and groves of mulberry and fruit-trees border the stream.

ing rapidly into the gorge of the river, you walk for a few minutes among trees and flowers and murmuring waters to the convent of the Mullawîyeh Dervishes, who perform their sacred dances every Friday afternoon, at certain seasons of the year. I have seen it crowded with men below and women above behind the latticed screen, when eight or ten of the Dervishes whirled in the literally giddy mazes of the dance for two hours, until the performers fell on the floor exhausted, and the audience retired. This charming spot is a favourite resort of the Tripolitans, and in the month of April, when the orange and lemon groves below and around are in full bloom, and the air filled with the delicious fragrance, this quiet retreat is a place one never wearies of visiting (see page 8).

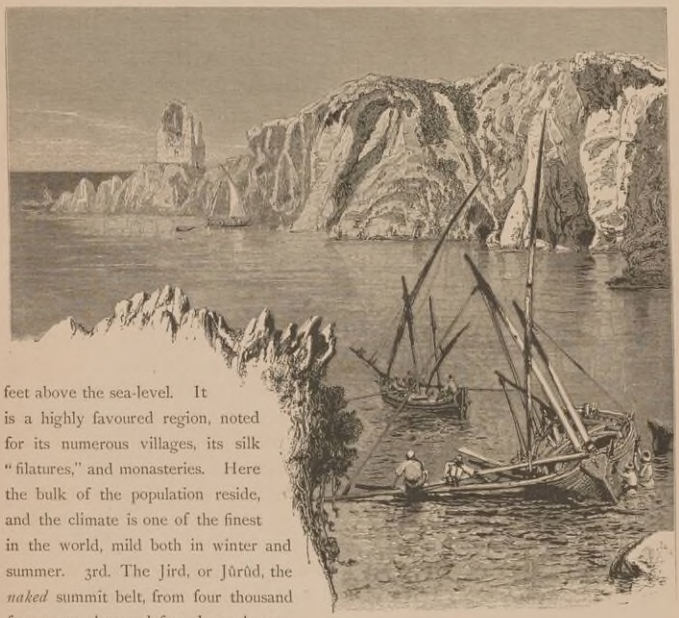
Between the mouth of the Kadîsha, on the northern shore, and El Mîna, are several fine towers of cut stone, standing like sentinels along the shore. They are called Burj Ras en Neb'a, Burj es Seb'a (Lion's Tower), Burj et Takîyeh (Traveller's Rest), Burj el Mugharibeh (Algerines), and Burj esh Sheikh Affân. These are evidently mediæval structures, and were built on foundations made up of ancient granite columns and fragments of Greek and Roman edifices. They are now being rapidly razed, to supply stone for more modern structures.

El Mîna (see page 5) has a population of seven thousand, chiefly Greek fishermen and sponge-divers, who obtain an ample livelihood from their laborious and perilous profession, the sponge crop amounting to £20,000 a year. The steel-tracked tramway from Tripoli passes down the broad level road between the gardens to the Mîna gate, and thence to the seashore.

The modern Tripolitans are proud of their fine scenery, their gardens and sparkling waters, their fruits and flowers, their sea and mountain landscape. The Greco-Syrian women of Tripoli are noted for their beauty, and not a few of them are acquiring, through education in Christian schools, the higher charm of intellectual and moral cultivation. The Boys' High School and the Female Seminary, on the American mission premises, are affording the youth of both sexes good advantages for education. The French Sisters of Charity have also an institute for girls. The Orthodox Greeks have opened schools, and the Mohammedans have formed a "Society of Benevolent Intentions" to maintain schools for girls and boys. The proposed railway from this point to Hums (Emesa) and the Euphrates valley will, if completed, make Tripoli the most important commercial port on the entire Syrian coast.

The range of Lebanon, extending for a hundred miles, is a great treasure-house of interest in its geology, botany, ethnology, and archæology. Its lofty summits, its frightful chasms, its deep caverns and subterranean lakes, its magnificent fountains and cascades, its noble cedars, its vineyards, walnut and olive groves, its ruined temples and nameless vestiges of hoary antiquity, its monasteries, churches, khulwehs (Druse chapels), and palaces, its geological structure, its one thousand two hundred villages, and its peculiarly Oriental population, combine to make it a fruitful theme of study, alike interesting to the passing traveller and the most scholarly and patient explorer. Lebanon, the White Mountain, or Mont Blanc of Syria, receives its name from the gleaming white limestone rocks. The Arabs divide Lebanon into three longitudinal belts or zones—the Sahil, the Wâsat, and the Jird. 1st. The Sahil is the littoral or maritime,

which we may call the *Palm-tree* belt, extending from the sea-level to an elevation of about one thousand five hundred feet. On this belt are the cities of modern Phœnicia—Tripoli, Jebeil, Beirût, Sidon, Tyre, and Acre. It is the most fertile in soil, salubrious in climate, and attractive in scenery. The palm, olive and mulberry, orange, pine, lemon, apricot, oak, peach, grape, and Pride of India abound. 2nd. The Wâsat, or medial zone, which we may style the *Walnut* belt, extends from an elevation of one thousand five hundred feet to four thousand feet above the sea-level. It is a highly favoured region, noted for its numerous villages, its silk "filatures," and monasteries. Here the bulk of the population reside, and the climate is one of the finest in the world, mild both in winter and summer. 3rd. The Jird, or Jûrûd, the *naked* summit belt, from four thousand feet to ten thousand feet above the sea, which we may call the *Cedar* belt, includes the cedar groves, many of the ice-cold fountains, and the great desert solitudes of the highest ranges. It is of vast extent, running for a hundred miles north and south, and contains some of the finest scenery in the world, although scant in its vegetation.

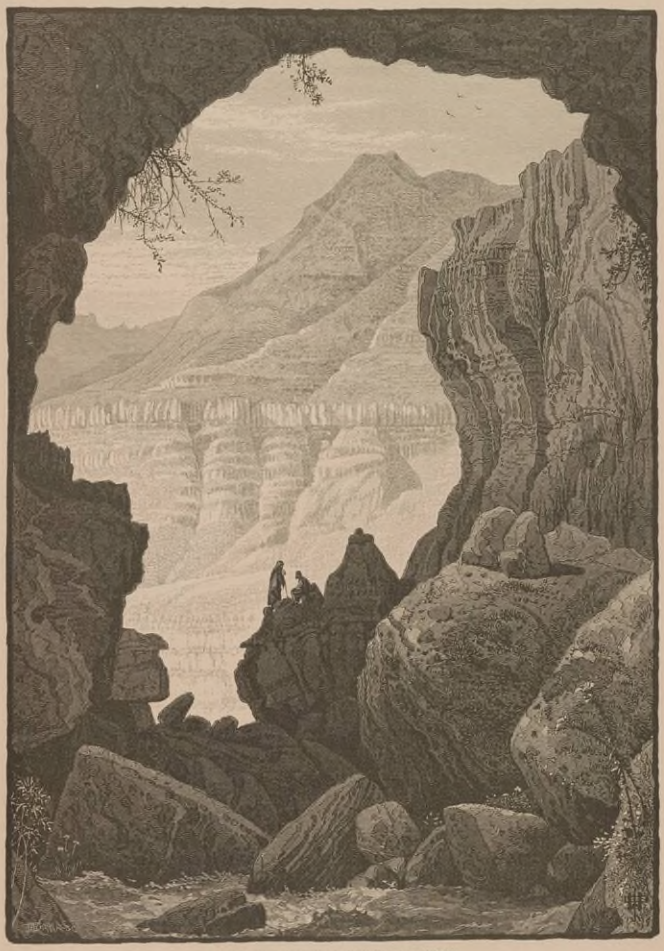


LEBANON COAST NEAR THE MOUTH OF THE ADONIS RIVER.
The iron-stained soil of the sandstone strata is annually washed down into the river by the heavy winter rains, and the discoloured stream can be traced far out in the blue sea. This gave rise to the belief that the river was tinged with the blood of Adonis every year, in memory of his death.

Before the massacres of 1860 Northern Lebanon was under a Maronite Kaimakam, and Southern Lebanon under a Druse, an arrangement well calculated to keep the population in a

THE NATURAL BRIDGE, LEBANON.

It is called in Arabic "Jisr el Hajr" (the Bridge of Stone). It spans the chasm through which flows the Neb'a el Lebban (Fountain of Milk), one of the sources of the Nahr el Kelb (the Dog River).



UNDER THE NATURAL BRIDGE, LEBANON.

The stream, after passing under the bridge, descends the mountain-side through a glen like a huge fissure, and then dashes over a ledge of rock in sheets of foam.

ferment and to obstruct the administration of justice. The Turks were determined to break up this European compromise and place an Osmanli pasha over the whole of Lebanon. The result was a bloody war, the frightful horrors of Deir el Kamr, Hâsbeiya, Râsheiya (see pages 371 and 376, vol. i.) and Damascus (see page 415, vol. i.), which forced the intervention of Europe, and resulted in the new Nizam or Règlement of Lebanon, which guarantees a Christian pasha for the whole mountain under the joint protectorate of the six European Powers. Under the pasha are several kaimakams, generally chosen from the most numerous sect in the locality. Rustem Pasha is noted for his uncompromising hatred of bribery, his even-handed justice, his efforts for civilising the people, and for road and bridge building in Southern and Central Lebanon. He promises like improvements in this well-nigh roadless district of Northern Lebanon.

Before ascending eastward to the Cedar amphitheatre, let us cross over the dazzling white chalk cliffs of Râs esh Shuk'ah to the valley of Nahr el Jozeh and visit the rock fortress of El Museilihah (see sketch map, page 12). The Tripoli coast-road to Beirût crosses over this lofty promontory, called by the Greeks Theou Prosopon (Cape of the Divine Countenance), and down its southern precipitous face on a slippery road, which follows the deep ravines worn by the rains, and which change their course with every winter's storm. At the foot of this dangerous descent and on the right bank of the Walnut river, "Nahr el Jozeh," stands on an isolated mass of cretaceous limestone the ancient "Kûl'at el Museilihah" (see page 11). The name signifies "The Place of Weapons," and there is probably no pass in Syria, unless it be Wâdy el Kûrn, on the Damascus road, where more robberies have been committed. The castle is one of the most picturesque in the East, rising abruptly on its isolated rock, seemingly a part of the rock itself, surrounded by wide-spreading trees and murmuring waters, and overhung by lofty and precipitous chalk cliffs.

We now cross the Kûra Plain eastward to the fine village of Kesba, plunge into the ravine of the Kadîsha, and begin the ascent to Ehden. This village is perched on a lofty spur of the Jird, nearly five thousand feet above the sea, and commanding one of the sublimest landscape views in Lebanon. The magnificent fountain at Mar Sarkis sends a deep, broad, and crystal stream of almost ice-cold water through and around the village, producing a luxuriant growth of walnut, fir, mulberry, pine, and oak, with summer vegetables in abundance; wheat, maize, and the potato being largely cultivated.

Ehden, or Eden, as it has been called, is the paradise of the Maronite priests, where, as in Bsherreh, Hasrûn, and Kesrawan, they hold undisputed sway; but, under the impartial rule of the present pasha, their former theocratic and despotic civil rule over the people has been reduced to a mere religious authority.

Our present limits will not allow more than a passing allusion to the history of the Maronite sect, now the dominant one in Lebanon. Their name is derived from Mar Marûn, a hermit who lived in the Bûkâ'a, near Neb'a el 'Asy, in the fifth century. His followers were condemned by the Council of Constantinople, A.D. 681, as holding the monothelite heresy, and, being driven from the cities and towns of Syria, they took refuge in the fastnesses of Lebanon.

They adhered to the Papal Church in 1182, and now pride themselves on their devotion to the Pope of Rome, yet it was not until 1438 that they consented to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope in matters of ecclesiastical discipline. Their parish priests are married men, and they use the Syriac language in their Church Service. Their patriarch yields only in dignity to the Pope himself. The present patriarch is Boulos (Paul) Butros Masaad, taking the name Butros (Peter) as an official title. Under him are thirteen bishops, one thousand priests, one thousand two hundred monks, six hundred nuns, and seventy-one monasteries. The Maronite people number two hundred and fifty thousand, the mass of whom are grossly ignorant. The immense revenues of the monasteries are devoted to the support of the monks and nuns or the private emolument of a few who control the monastic estates. The total number of monasteries of all sects in Lebanon is one hundred and seventeen, with two thousand five hundred monks and nuns.

Ehden, we have said, is a typical Lebanon village, with its Dar or great house, surrounded by the flat earth-roofed stone tenements of the peasantry, its numerous churches with their clear-toned bells, its village convent at Mar Sarkis, its copious water, its primitive oven, consisting of a large earthen jar sunk in the ground, its brawny youth and buxom girls with their unique head ornaments of an inverted silver cup, over which the white veil is thrown, its comfortless houses in which the people sleep on the earthen floors, the cattle, goats, and sheep sharing the one large room with the husband, wife, sons, and daughters.

THE CHASM OF NEB'A EL LEBBAN.
Just above the Natural Bridge (Jiar el Hajr).

Yonder village of Hasrûn (see page 1) is noted for the beauty of its women and girls, many of whom, for a wonder, are light-haired and blue-eyed.

After two and a half hours' ride over the undulating moraines which extend east of Ehden, and form the curved shelf around the base of the encircling amphitheatre of giant mountains, we descry on our right, far down in the east end of the Kadîsha gorge, the large crowded village of Bsherreh, with its churches and convents, its water and trees, and east of it the roaring cataract which leaps down the rocks from the fountain of the sacred river. Still higher up, standing solitary and alone, is the dark compact cluster of trees known as the Cedars of Lebanon (see page 475, vol. i.).

We hasten our pace, if it be in April, over the scattered snow-drifts and muddy fields, or,

ROMAN BRIDGE NEAR JUNEH.
It spans a little stream called Ma'amîltein, which in the winter flows from the hills to the beautiful bay of Juneh. Adjoining the bridge there is a Syrian khan.

if in August, over the dusty, parched, and cracked earth, to the sacred grove called "Arz er Rub," that is, "The Cedars of the Lord." There are three hundred and ninety-three trees, some ten or twelve of which are of giant girth, though the loftiest is not more than eighty feet in height. The twelve largest trees are called by the fellahîn "The Twelve Apostles," and they have a curious tradition that our Lord and His apostles came to this spot and left their walking staves standing in the soil, which sprouted into cedar-trees. A Maronite chapel stands in the grove, and the patriarch claims the sole right to the sacred trees. The clergy have cultivated the superstition that those cutting the trees for fuel will be smitten with disease or calamity by the guardian divinity of the grove. It is pleasant to find that one at least of the thousand superstitions of Syria has been of some utility to the people in the conservation of

valuable trees.* The range of Lebanon for a hundred miles along the Jird was doubtless

LIMESTONE ROCKS, AJELTÛN, LEBANON.

In this district, well named Kesrawan (Broken Region), is a chaos of rugged mountains, which in some places assume grotesque and in others grand architectural forms. The belfry of the great Convent of Ajeltûn is shown in the background.

once covered with cedar forests. We have visited eleven distinct groves of cedars in

* H.E. Rustem Pasha, Governor-General of the Lebanon, has surrounded this grove with a well-built stone wall with two strong gates, and appointed guardians to prevent the ravages of the goats on the young trees, and to compel travellers to pitch their tents outside the enclosure.

Lebanon:—1. The ancient "Cedars of the Lord" above Bsherreh, three hundred and ninety-three in number (see page 474, vol. i.). 2. The grove at the fountain of Ehden, fifty trees. 3. The great grove between El Hadeth and Niha, numbering tens of thousands of trees, covers an area of nearly twelve miles. 4. A smaller grove farther south on the summit and brink of the precipice. 5. The scattered trees above Duma. 6. The Ain Zehalteh grove of ten thousand trees, cut down by Murad Akîl, and now growing up again. 7. A small grove on the cliff overhanging El Medûk. 8. A small cluster near Kûl'at el Bizzeh. 9. The fine grove of Mâsir el Fukhkhar, about three hundred trees, some of great size. 10. The forest of Jird el Barûk, thousands of trees. 11. The eastern grove of Barûk, about two hundred trees.

The first historical notice of the cedars of Lebanon is in the reign of David, when this monarch built himself a palace of cedar-wood (2 Samuel v. 11). Solomon caused cedars to be brought from Lebanon for the building of the Temple, and they were floated down the coast from Jebeil to Jaffa, after being cut by the "four score thousand hewers in the mountains." In 536 B.C. Zerubbabel hired the Phœnicians of Tyre and Sidon "to bring cedar-trees from Lebanon to the Sea of Joppa." The cedar was also used in ship-building and in idol manufacture. Tiglath Pileser, after his successful campaigns against the Khatti and the Hittites and the subjugation of Carchemish, visited the Lebanon for the purpose of obtaining cedar-wood to adorn the temples and palaces of Kileh Shergat. The groves of Lebanon have thus been despoiled for three thousand years by the kings of the adjacent countries, until the upper ranges are quite denuded, and the voracity of the flocks of goats in nipping the tender shoots, and the rapacity of the fellahîn, are preventing the growth of new forests from the seed. Were it not for the energetic action of the Lebanon Government the whole mountain would soon be stripped of its forest glory.

The geological formation of Lebanon is the lower cretaceous limestone with a stratum of ferruginous sandstone running through it almost from one end to the other, and here and there an outcropping of trap, amygdaloid or partially columnar. In the sandstone is a well-defined stratum of bituminous coal or lignite, which crops out at Kornâil and elsewhere in the district of El Metn, east of Beirût (see sketch map, page 12). The Jura limestone has been found by Professor Lewis, of the Beirût College, in but one place, at Mejdel Shems, on the southern slope of Mount Hermon, where the Jurassic fossils, such as half-crystallized Ammonites, &c., have been found in great profusion.

The strata of the Lebanon rocks, upheaved by mighty internal convulsions of nature, stand at every conceivable angle of inclination. On the very top of Ard Aklûk is a singular battlemented hill called Jebel Aklûk, looking in the distance like an artificial fortress. Passing around it on the west, we turn south-east and begin the four-mile descent to Akûra, which lies at the head of the great valley of Moghêrîye, or "little cavern." To the east of the village rises a rock wall one thousand feet in height, through which a narrow chasm has been rent, opening a highway to the east, the shortest route from this point, *viâ* Ain Rûmeh, to the Cedars and to Ba'albek, *viâ* Yâmûneh (see page 15). The village is small, but the sides of

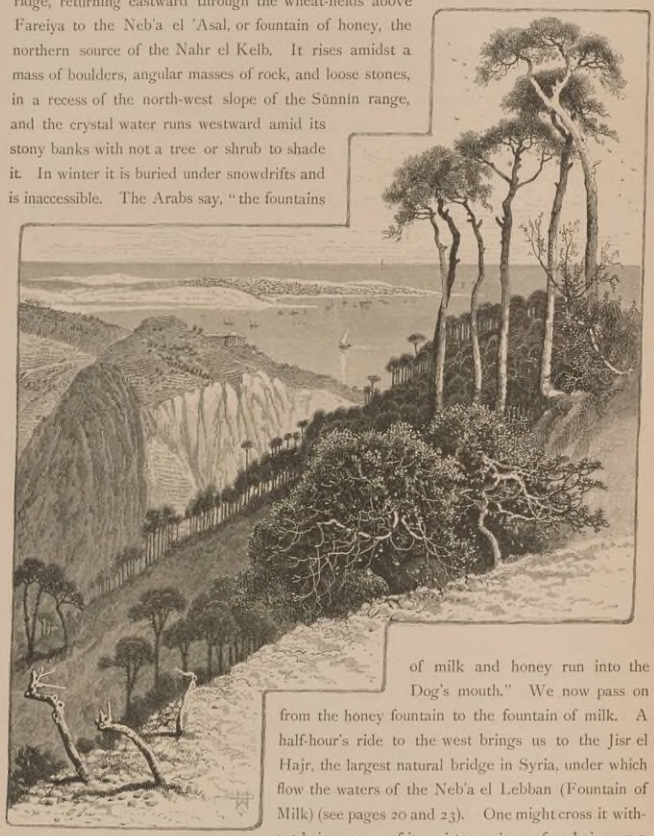
the valley below are everywhere cultivated and verdant in the summer, with mulberry, walnut, and other fruit-trees, and with fields of wheat and barley.

After a half-hour's ride southward along the base of the giant cliff overhanging the valley, we reach the natural bridge of El Akûra, over the mouth of a cave (see page 13). It is formed by a fallen rock which once evidently constituted the roof of the cavern's mouth, and has now settled down, covering the channel of the Neb'a Ruweis, which issues from the cave. Leaving our horses on the bridge, under the overhanging cliff, we took our staves to steady our steps over the mud-slimed stones in the bottom of the cave, and, lighting our wax candles, slid down the declivity into the mouth of the cavern. The roof is from ten to twenty feet in height, and we walked or groped along for four hundred feet, when the cavern suddenly divided into two branches, the one on the right muddy and rough, and that on the left clean, overarched with wax-like stalactites, and floored with stalagmitic mounds, between which, on a pebbly bed, runs a stream of water so crystal clear, that I stepped into a pool a foot deep, supposing it to be dry. We traced this bright gallery for about four hundred feet, when it terminated suddenly in a lofty arched room, whose perpendicular wall stopped our progress. But some twenty feet up the side of this wall is the mouth of another vast cavern, which could not be reached without ladders, and we were obliged to retreat.

From El Akûra (see page 15) to the fountain of Afka (see page 16) is a ride of an hour and a half along a tableland overhanging a valley covered with wheat-fields and scattered trees, until, turning to the south-east, we come to the Maronite village of El Mnetira, which faces southwards towards the fountain, to which we descend over a steep rocky road. This historic fountain of Afka (Apheca) issues from the cave, and from the limestone strata below it, which descend in stair-like gradations to the road, and below it to the deep gorge of the river Adonis (Nahr Ibrahîm) (see page 17). The great cliff wall rises abruptly above the fountain from one thousand to fifteen hundred feet, and the water bursts forth from the recess formed by the sudden turning of the cliffs from a north and south to a westerly direction, and dashes down into a rock basin fifty feet below. We cross this basin on a bridge, which leads us to a ruined temple one hundred feet in length by fifty in width; this is without doubt the ancient temple of Venus, which was destroyed by the Emperor Constantine in the fourth century. A fountain still issues through the vaulted passage under the ruins, and there were probably artificial outlets for the water at various points under the temple. This is the principal source of the river Adonis of the ancients, and latterly known as the Nahr Ibrahîm. Here was the scene of the ancient mythological fable of Venus and Adonis, and of the weeping for Adonis annually by the maidens of Phœnicia. The Lebanon maidens chanted, "I mourn Adonis; the fair Adonis is dead: dead is the fair Adonis, whom the gods lament." Adonis was Adôn, the Baal god, the sun—the same in meaning with 'Tammûz, the present Arabic name of the month July, which was the month of the feast of Adonis. The scarlet anemone of Lebanon was thought to be stained with his blood.

Leaving the Temple and Fountain of Afka (see page 16), we ascend gradually towards

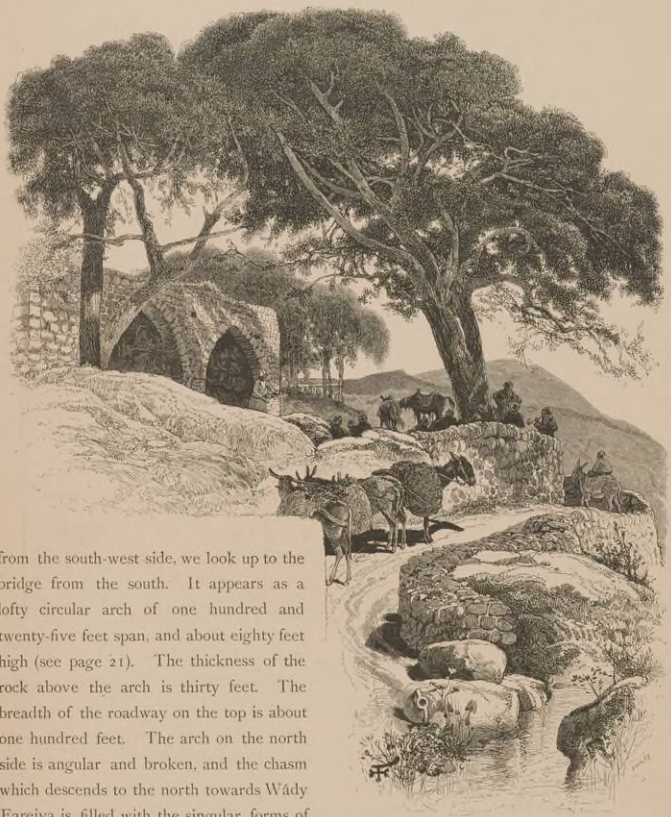
the south-west and ride on by Neb'a el Hadîd (Iron Fountain) and around the edge of the ridge, returning eastward through the wheat-fields above Fareiya to the Neb'a el 'Asal, or fountain of honey, the northern source of the Nahr el Kelb. It rises amidst a mass of boulders, angular masses of rock, and loose stones, in a recess of the north-west slope of the Sunnin range, and the crystal water runs westward amid its stony banks with not a tree or shrub to shade it. In winter it is buried under snowdrifts and is inaccessible. The Arabs say, "the fountains of milk and honey run into the Dog's mouth." We now pass on from the honey fountain to the fountain of milk. A half-hour's ride to the west brings us to the Jisr el Hajr, the largest natural bridge in Syria, under which flow the waters of the Neb'a el Lebban (Fountain of Milk) (see pages 20 and 23). One might cross it without being aware of its existence, its surface being on a level with the fields on both sides. But a glance suffices to reveal the great chasm of the south branch of the Dog River, flowing from Neb'a el Lebban,



BEIRÛT, FROM JAITA,

A beautifully situated village north of the Dog River (Nahr el Kelb), on the heights above the gorge. In the distance, beyond St. George's Bay, the sandy promontory of Beirût appears.

fifteen minutes farther up, under the base of the mountain. Climbing down into the chasm



A LEBANON CAFÉ.

Pleasantly situated by a mountain stream and sheltered by the dense foliage of carouba trees (*Ceratonia siliqua*). The presence of one of these way-side resting-places always indicates a good site for an encampment, for it is sure to be near a supply of good water.

from the south-west side, we look up to the bridge from the south. It appears as a lofty circular arch of one hundred and twenty-five feet span, and about eighty feet high (see page 21). The thickness of the rock above the arch is thirty feet. The breadth of the roadway on the top is about one hundred feet. The arch on the north side is angular and broken, and the chasm which descends to the north towards Wâdy Fareiya is filled with the singular forms of rock wrought out by the detrition of ages.

We follow the irrigating canal which carries the water of Neb'a el Lebban down through Upper Kesrawan, and hasten onwards to the great Convent of Ajeltûn, which stands in the midst of a singular region of projecting limestone rocks (see page 25). The strata stand

in a vertical position, and the rains and storms of centuries have worn away the softer parts, leaving the harder veins standing upright, often to a height of forty or fifty feet. They assume the most grotesque shapes, resembling "columns, blocks, houses, round and square towers, castles, fortresses," spires and shafts; and the road passes through the midst of them, sometimes by very narrow clefts. In the western part of the village is a good camping ground, but every available rod of soil is occupied by the mulberry, the staple product of this part of Lebanon. This district is the Kesrawan, or broken region, a chaos of rugged mountains, and the stronghold and holy mountain of the Maronites. Monasteries, nunneries, and churches are seen in every direction; the monks own the best part of the land, and the people are largely their tenants. The industry of the people is remarkable. They have quarried the rocks and built terrace walls like steps up the sides of these steep mountains, and wrest a livelihood from the soil. The insecurity of the great plains east and north-east of Lebanon has driven the people into these mountain fastnesses; and in the civil wars of Lebanon, when the Druses south of the Damascus road have everywhere defeated the Maronites, this region has been regarded as impregnable. The Maronites are a fine race, and if once freed from the ecclesiastical tyranny of the bishops and monks and given possession of the immense monastic estates for the purposes of education, they would become a power in the East. As it is, they are forcing their way upward and reaching positions of influence throughout Syria and Egypt.

From Ajeltûn (see page 25) we descend gradually over a rocky road towards the sea, having on our left the deep chasm of the Nahr el Kelb (see page 21), and in front to the west a fine view of the promontory of Beirût (see page 28), some twenty miles distant. About three miles and a half from the mouth of the Dog River, on the north side of the gorge there are three grottoes, from two of which water issues, and from these comes the chief supply of water in the summer, when the fountains of 'Asal and Lebban are diverted for irrigating purposes. The late Dr. Thomson, the author of "The Land and the Book," first noticed these caves, but the first full exploration of them was made in September, 1873, by W. T. Maxwell, C.E., aided by H. G. Huxley, C.E., Dr. Bliss, President of the S. P. College in Beirût, and Dr. Brigstocke, M.R.C.S., of Beirût. Provided with a raft of inflated goat-skins and a small boat, with a good supply of lights and magnesium wire, they brought their boat and raft into the entrance, down the rugged descent to the main grotto, and launched forth on the still, clear waters of the subterranean lake. After sailing six hundred feet, they reached a rock barrier fifteen feet in height, which compelled them to leave the raft. They then climbed over the rock screen and along a lofty ledge for seven hundred feet, when, lighting a magnesium wire, a scene of great magnificence burst upon their vision. As one of the party says, "From the lofty vaulted roof and precipitous sides hung massive stalactites, between which the rocks were studded with others of a more slender and graceful make, while from below shot up in wild profusion stalagmites which towered aloft, in some cases almost reaching their pendant companions."

From these caves we pass down the river gorge by the stone aqueduct and the weir of

the London Waterworks Company, then by the ancient Roman aqueduct on the north bank, where a wonderful discovery has just been made by Mr. J. Loyted, a Danish architect in Beirût, in company with Dr. Hartmann, Chancellor of the German Consulate. On a line with the ruined abutment of the old Roman bridge they found a series of Babylonian cuneiform inscriptions, engraved on a rock eight mètres and forty centimètres long and twelve mètres in height. The modern aqueduct (see page 37) passes above it. These inscriptions have not yet been fully translated, but it has already been ascertained that one of them relates to the time of Nebuchadnezzar, and his name occurs more than once upon the tablet. From this point we cross the ancient bridge (see page 36) and observe an almost obliterated Arabic inscription at the base of a rock on the south bank, supposed to have been the work of Sultan Selim in 1517. Farther on towards the sea, on the left of the paved road, is a Latin inscription (of 173 A.D.) which settles the identity of the Lycus flumen of the ancients with the Dog River, the wolf having given place to the dog. There is another short Latin inscription of Antoninus farther west towards the sea. On the rock-cut road round the promontory south of the Dog River (see page 33) are to be seen the collection of Assyrian and Egyptian tablets for which this pass has long been celebrated. There are nine tablets in all, three Egyptian and six Assyrian. Mr. W. St. Chad Boscawen has arranged them as follows:—

| | Height. ft. | in. | Breadth. ft. | in. | Depth. in. | Date, &c. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Egyptian, square-headed | 7 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 6 | By Rameses II., dedicated to Phtha. |
| 2. Assyrian, square-headed | 6 | 7 | 4 | 5 | 4½ | By Assur-ris-ilim (?), B.C. 1140. |
| 3. Assyrian, square-headed | 5 | 1 | 2 | 4 | 5 | By Tiglath-pil-esir, B.C. 1140. |
| 4. Assyrian, round-headed | 6 | 1 | 2 | 6½ | 4½ | By Assur-Nazir-pal, B.C. 885. |
| 5. Assyrian, round-headed | 6 | 4 | 2 | 9½ | 5 | By Shal-men-esar, B.C. 860. |
| 6. Egyptian, square-headed | 7 | 6 | 3 | 8 | 5½ | By Rameses II., dedicated to Ra. |
| 7. Assyrian, round-headed | 7 | 3 | 3 | 8½ | 5½ | By Sennacherib, B.C. 702. |
| 8. Egyptian, square-headed | 7 | 4 | 3 | 8 | 5½ | By Rameses II., dedicated to the Theban Ammon. |
| 9. Assyrian, round-headed | | 6 | 3 | 1 | 6 | By Esar-hadden, B.C. 681—671. |

At the top of the pass on the modern road is a pedestal, and near by it a fragment of a Roman milestone. Here, according to tradition, once stood the statue of a dog, which gave its name, Nahr el Kelb, to the river. Among the striking features of the pass are the old road beds cut in the solid limestone rock by successive monarchs of antiquity. The foot holes of the horses and the grooves worn by the chariot wheels of armies are still distinctly traceable in the rock. Here passed Pul, Tiglath Pileser, Sesostris, Shalmaneser, Sargon, and Sennacherib; here swarmed the hosts of Alexander the Great en route for Egypt; here passed the Romans, the later Greeks, the Arabs, the Turks, and the Crusaders; and here pass constantly the traders and travellers of the East.

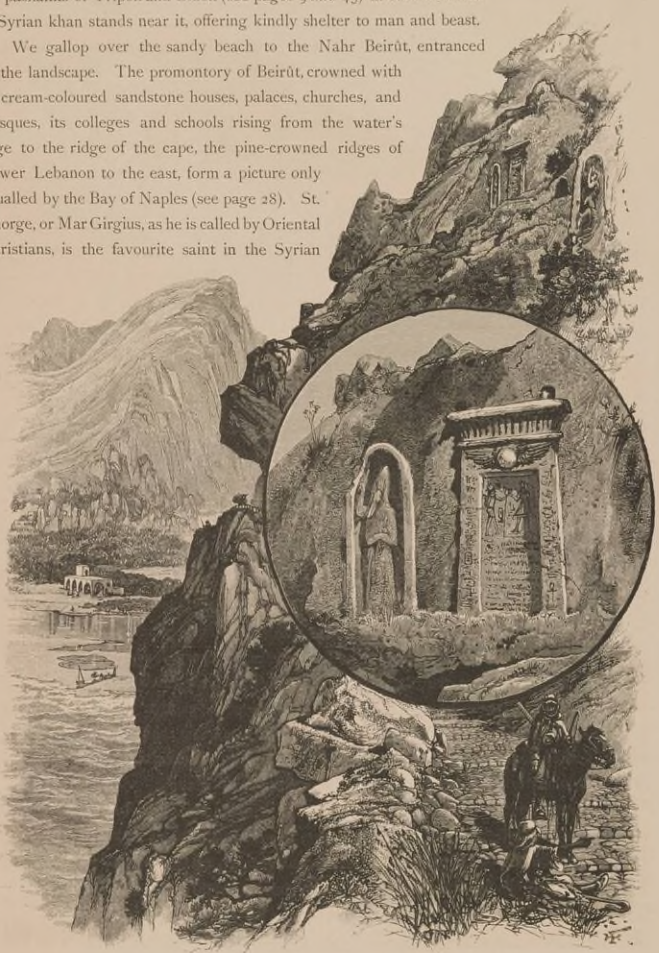
South of the river's mouth, riding down the coast, we cross a lofty paved bridge, pass numerous khans and rock tombs on the right of the road, and then come down to the low cliffs which skirt the northern shore of the Bay of Jûneh. Following an old Roman road hewn in the face of the precipice above the water, we come down on the sandy beach to the river Ma'amiltein. This little torrent is spanned by a round arched Roman bridge in fair state of preservation (see page 24). It is called Ma'amiltein, or "Two Districts," as it divided

THE SLOPES OF LEBANON.

With a characteristic Maronite village in the foreground, the principal feature of which is its strongly fortified monastery.

the pashaliks of Tripoli and Sidon (see pages 9 and 45) in ancient times. A Syrian khan stands near it, offering kindly shelter to man and beast.

We gallop over the sandy beach to the Nahr Beirût, entranced by the landscape. The promontory of Beirût, crowned with its cream-coloured sandstone houses, palaces, churches, and mosques, its colleges and schools rising from the water's edge to the ridge of the cape, the pine-crowned ridges of Lower Lebanon to the east, form a picture only equalled by the Bay of Naples (see page 28). St. George, or Mar Girgius, as he is called by Oriental Christians, is the favourite saint in the Syrian



CLIFFS AND SCULPTURED TABLETS.

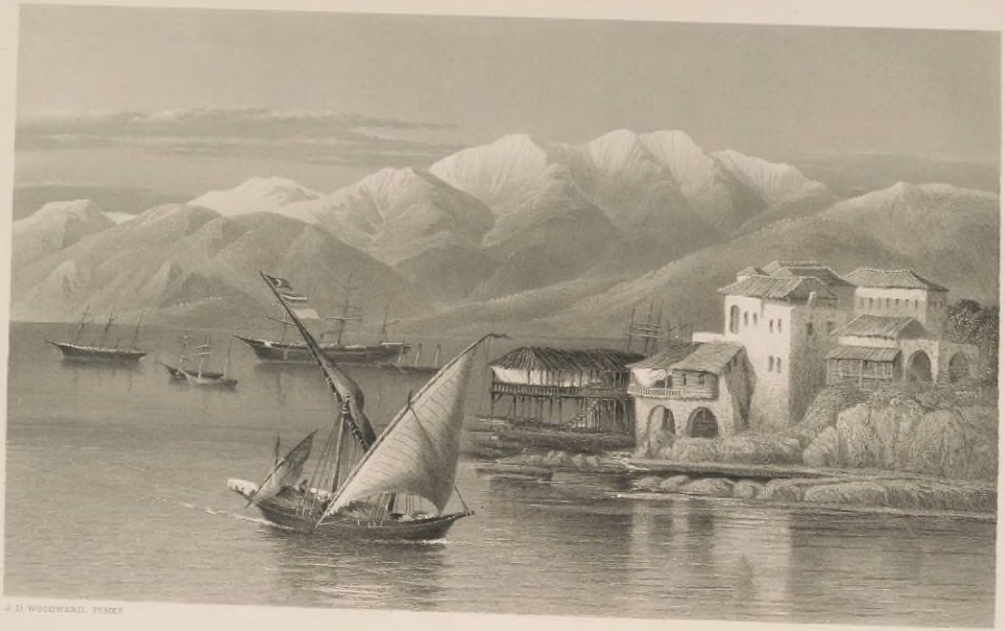
On the rocky promontory which projects far into the sea, south of the Nahr el Kelb (the Dog River), rising to the height of about one hundred feet.

calendar. The Moslems call him El Khidr. Near the bridge of seven arches over the Nahr Beirût is a Muslim mosque or Mazar, said to be his place of burial, and farther on towards the city is a ruined tower on the north side of the road, claimed to be the place where St. George killed the Dragon and washed his hands of the bloody stains.

We now enter Beirût, the metropolis of modern Phœnicia, and its most beautiful and most enlightened city. Its situation is all that could be desired, on the northern slope of a promontory which runs west for three miles from the Nahr Beirût to Râs Beirût (see page 28). Here where the changes of temperature through the successive months of the year are so gradual that autumn fades imperceptibly into winter, and winter itself is a genial spring, and spring warms into summer with hardly a change of half a degree a day, you have the perfection of climate, and do not wonder that the Greek poet should call it "the nurse of tranquil life."

Beirût is the Berytus of the ancients, and was probably founded by the Phœnicians. It is the common opinion that its name is derived from its wells, Beer-oth, but M. Renan labours, in his "Mission de Phénicie," to prove that the name was taken from its Pineto or Pine Groves, "called in the Chaldee בְּרוֹת, Beeroth, and rendered in the Arabic Bible *snobar*, or pine-trees." But in this view M. Renan stands alone. In the verse Cant. i. 17, to which he refers, the Chaldee word is rendered, in Dr. V. Dyck's Arabic translation of the Bible, *seru*, or cypress. Robinson gives both cypress and pine as the meaning of "Beroth." Beirût has been celebrated both for its wells and its pines, and the pinegrove of Beirût is certainly a more striking feature than its brackish wells could have been in former times, but the weight of traditional authority is in favour of the wells. Strabo first mentions the city in 140 B.C., when it was destroyed by Tryphon during the reign of Demetrius Nicator. The Romans rebuilt it and colonised it with veterans of the fifth Macedonian and eighth Augustan legions. It was here that the two sons of Herod the Great were tried unheard and in their absence, and condemned to death by their cruel and unnatural father. The Elder Agrippa greatly favoured the city, and adorned it with a splendid theatre and amphitheatre, besides baths and porticoes, inaugurating them with games and spectacles of every kind, including shows of gladiators. Here, too, after the destruction of Jerusalem, Titus celebrated the birthday of his father, Vespasian, by similar exhibitions in which many of the captive Jews perished.

In the middle of the third century a celebrated Roman law school was founded here. Students flocked to it from all countries, including Gregory Thaumaturgus and Apion, the martyr. Apollinaris taught grammar here in the fourth century. After the death of Julian the Apostate the Emperor Jovian compelled one Magnus, who had demolished the Church of Berytus, to rebuild it at his own cost. From 250 A.D. to 550 was the golden age of literature in Beirût, which reached its zenith in the reign of Justinian, who regarded the Beirût school with special favour. On the 9th of July, 551, this city was destroyed by an earthquake, and its learned men went for a season to Sidon. In the seventh century Khaled, "the Sword of Mohammed," swept over the land. Beirût fell into Muslim hands, and its decline was rapid and complete.



J. D. WOODWARD, PINXT.

C. COTMAN, SCULPT.

BAY OF BEIRÛT.

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In 1110 Baldwin I., with the Crusading army, captured Beirût, and they long held it as a religious and military centre, the Maronites of Lebanon acting as a friendly barrier to the Muslim hordes of the east. Saladin occupied it for a short period, but the Christians were not permanently displaced until after the battle of Hattin, in 1187. From that time until the days of the famous Druse prince, Fakhr ed Din, it continued in obscurity. This energetic man rebuilt the city and planted new pine groves. In 1840 the English fleet bombarded the city to expel the Egyptian army of Ibrahim Pasha. In August, 1860, it was occupied by six thousand French troops, sent by Napoleon III., with the consent of the European powers, to check the tide of massacre and civil war which had overwhelmed the land.

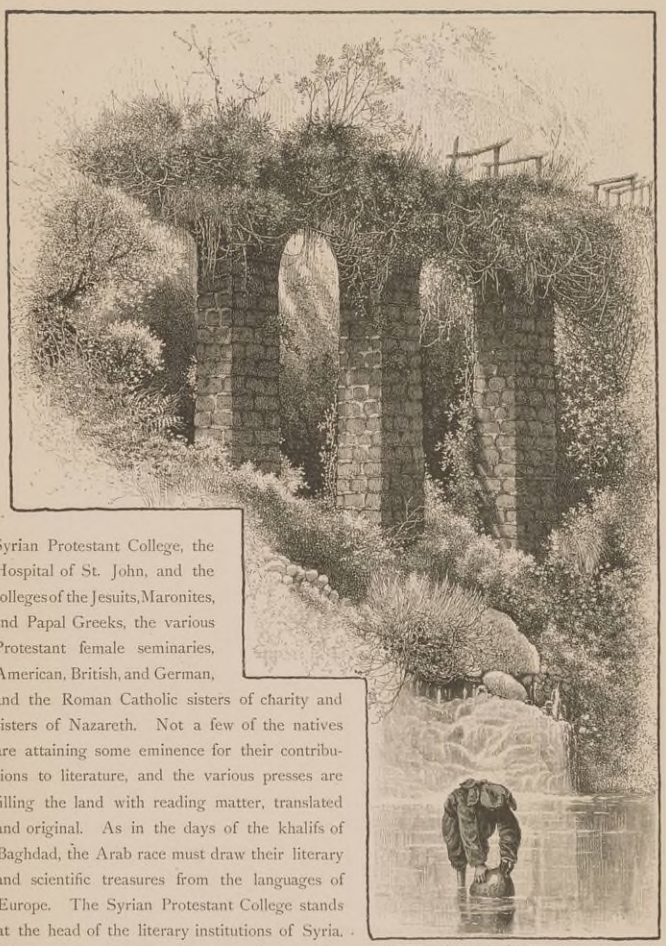
The antiquities of Beirût are few. Columns of granite and porphyry are scattered everywhere, and built into the old castles at the entrance of the harbour (see page 41). Stone, earthen, and leaden sarcophagi are constantly dug up in excavating for the foundation of houses: three massive granite columns are still standing near the Russian church; old Roman mosaic floors are often uncovered; a Greek inscription is still legible over the Bâb ed Dirkeh; and a picturesque Roman aqueduct crosses the Nahr Beirût a few minutes' ride above the stately bridge just built by H.E. Rustem Pasha. Smaller relics, such as lachrymatories, jewellery, and various articles of bronze and glass, are often discovered.

The ancient coins of Beirût are adorned with various temples and porticoes, and it was once noted for its castles, of which four were standing a few years since. The most lofty and imposing, Burj el Kesshaf, stood outside the south-east corner of the old city, but was recently sold to a native merchant, who razed it to the ground for the stone. The military hospital covers the site of the old round tower, and the two remaining ones guard the entrance to the harbour. These castles were evidently built by the Crusaders from the ruins of ancient Beirût, as the foundations are laid up with granite columns from the old Roman porticoes and temples. But it is modern Beirût which is chiefly interesting to the traveller in our day. This favourite city of Justinian has become again the literary centre and pride of Syria. Here are gathered its colleges and seminaries, and its chief hospitals and churches, journals and printing presses.

The American Mission, founded in 1820, preceded all other agencies in the work of education. Thousands of youths have been taught, and there are now under its care one hundred and four schools, with more than four thousand pupils, a college and medical institution, three female seminaries, and eight high schools. It has seen Beirût rise from a town of eight thousand to a city of eighty thousand. The cactus-bordered lanes have become macadamised streets of well-built houses, furnished with native-made furniture vieing with that of Europe. The native sects most hostile to education are falling under the influence of educated young men and women, and Mohammedans, Greeks, Maronites, Papal Greeks, and Jews have established schools of their own. Other foreign societies, as the British Syrian Schools, the Prussian Deaconesses of Kaiserswerth, and the Established Church of Scotland, have opened schools for girls and boys, until there are to-day in Beirût three thousand five hundred children in Protestant schools, and seven thousand in the schools of the native societies. Of the twelve

THE NAHR EL KELB (DOG RIVER).
And ancient bridge connected with the rock-cut coast road. In summer the river is fordable here.

journals now published in Beirût, seven are in the hands of Protestants, four belonging to native Syrians. All the sects and communities have literary, benevolent, or educational societies, and the old spirit of religious fanaticism is gradually disappearing. Mohammedans glory in the education of their girls, and Greek young women form "women's societies" for the promotion of education. In Syria and Palestine are two hundred and forty-four Protestant schools, with thirteen thousand children. The number of American and European labourers is one hundred and twenty, with four hundred and thirty-two native teachers and preachers. The radiating centre of influence for all these movements is in Beirût. The finest edifices in the city are the



MODERN AQUEDUCT ON THE NAHR EL KELB
Near to which are the newly discovered Assyrian tablets relating to Nebuchadnezzar.

Syrian Protestant College, the Hospital of St. John, and the colleges of the Jesuits, Maronites, and Papal Greeks, the various Protestant female seminaries, American, British, and German, and the Roman Catholic sisters of charity and sisters of Nazareth. Not a few of the natives are attaining some eminence for their contributions to literature, and the various presses are filling the land with reading matter, translated and original. As in the days of the khalifs of Baghdad, the Arab race must draw their literary and scientific treasures from the languages of Europe. The Syrian Protestant College stands at the head of the literary institutions of Syria. The language of instruction is English, and in its various departments, medical, literary, and

scientific, it is fitting young men for the highest spheres of usefulness in the future. The vernacular Arabic, together with the French, Turkish, and Latin languages, are also taught. The astronomical and meteorological observatory is in daily telegraphic communication with Constantinople, London, and Washington. The American, British, and German Protestant seminaries for girls are training hundreds of the choicest daughters of Syria. The Jesuits have established a college and printing house on a scale of great magnificence, and the Maronite, Papal Greek, Orthodox Greek, Mohammedan, and Jewish academies are educating a vast body of youth, while the Sœurs de Charité and the Dames de Nazareth have under training about seven hundred and thirty Arab girls. The massacres of 1860 drove thousands of Christians from the interior into Beirût, many of whom have made this city their permanent home. Its fine climate, pure water, educational advantages, commercial importance, and security from the perils of civil war and massacre have made it the favourite refuge for all sects and classes. Beirût is connected with Damascus by a fine French macadamised road, with diligences running through twice a day (see pages 380 and 381, vol. i.).

The Mutserrif and all executive and judicial officers are appointed by the Sultan, but the municipality are elected by the people. The Christians of all sects outnumber the Mohammedans two to one. There is an increasing Jewish population and a small European element. Beirût has been noted for its silk culture and manufacture for many centuries, and its modern jewellers and weavers excel in silver and gold filigree work and in the exquisite fabrics of silk, woollen, and cotton, now so greatly in vogue in civilised countries for curtains, cushions, and divans. The silk and gold cloth curtains woven at Zûk, near the Dog River, are sought for to adorn the palaces of Europe. The future commercial importance of Beirût will depend on the terminus of the great trunk railway from the Mediterranean to India. But its literary importance and its eligibility as a home for the most enlightened of Syria's sons in the future can never be materially changed. Its people, largely descended from the vigorous races of Lebanon, are enterprising and capable of high cultivation. The city is growing year by year in beauty and in influence in the East, and its institutions bid fair to be far more potent for good than its famous university in the golden age of Justinian.

About one mile south-west of the College, the cape of Râs Beirût terminates in an abrupt cliff at the Rausheh, the old Syriac name for Râs, or headland. The cliff is worn away in a curve, at the base of which is a deep grotto or cavern only to be approached by rowing boats. Opposite the mouth of the cavern, and in the focus of the semicircle formed by the cliff, rise the two picturesque Pigeon Islands, under one of which is a natural tunnel. Not only pigeons, but vast shoals of seals formerly added interest to the spot. The cretaceous rock presents a curious appearance with its alternate strata of white chalk and black flint, and the distortions and curvatures of the strata are beautifully marked in the islands. On a recent visit during a westerly gale the scene was one of indescribable grandeur. The mighty waves came rolling in from the deep sea and, striking upon the ledges outside the islands, burst into milky foam

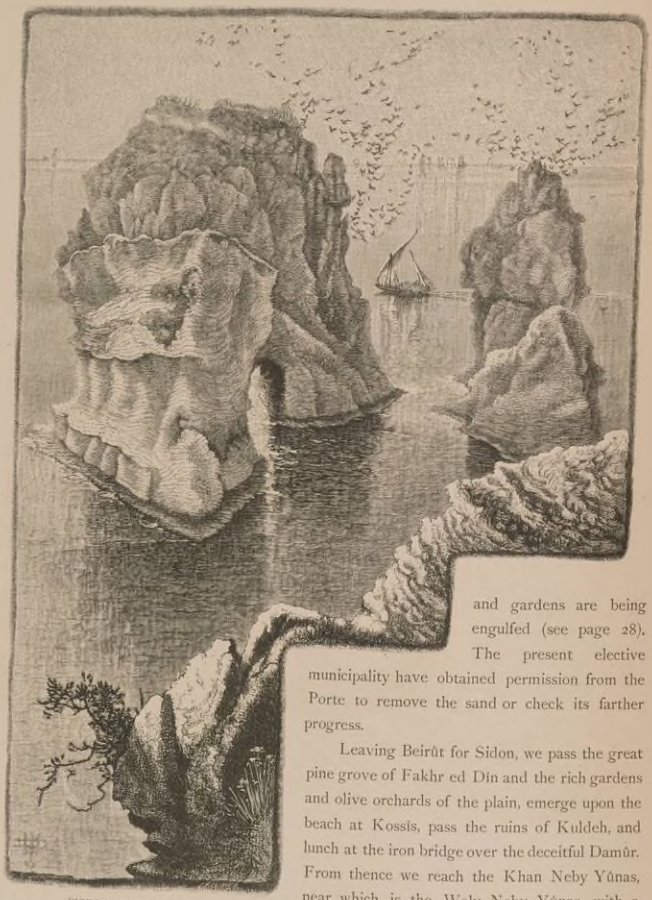
and swept around and behind the islands with deafening roar, dashing far up the cliffs and falling back into the boiling abyss of waters (see page 40).

South of the city, and for four miles along the beach, is the drifting sandbank called "Ramel Beirût," which for ages has been creeping slowly northward and eastward, threatening

BATH AND CAFÉ, BEIRÛT.

Of late years a great impetus has been given to fishing on this coast. During the summer nights fishermen may often be seen out on the rocks and reefs with torches and cressets, by which certain kinds of fish are attracted.

the destruction of the city. Within twenty-five years, to my own knowledge, it has advanced in some places not less than one hundred feet. The prevailing west winds drive it up from the seashore on the south-west, and during the rainless summer months it drifts like new-fallen snow towards the city. Numerous houses have been removed to make way for it, and orchards



PIGEON ROCKS, BEIRÛT.
In the cliff, from which these island rocks have broken away, there is an enormous cavern which can be entered by small boats.

and gardens are being engulfed (see page 28). The present elective municipality have obtained permission from the Porte to remove the sand or check its farther progress.

Leaving Beirût for Sidon, we pass the great pine grove of Fakhr ed Dîn and the rich gardens and olive orchards of the plain, emerge upon the beach at Kossis, pass the ruins of Kuldeh, and lunch at the iron bridge over the deceitful Damûr. From thence we reach the Khan Neby Yûnas, near which is the Wely Neby Yûnas, with a white dome, marking the place where, according to Muslim tradition, the prophet Jonah was thrown up by the fish (see page 44). The part of Lebanon between Beirût and Sidon is

known as Druse Lebanon, from the Druses, that extraordinary people who inhabit it. Their religion is a secret politico-religious code, El Hakim is their incarnate god, and while they may, when convenient, profess any or all other religions, they still continue Druses at heart. Courteous, brave, united, and industrious, they are the puzzle, the unsolved problem of

BEIRÛT CASTLE.

Built by the Crusaders, but partly with materials which had been used in earlier structures, for there are many granite columns introduced transversely into the lower part of the walls.

Syrian society. They speak pure Arabic, and are English in their political bias. Leaving Neby Yûnas, we ride over the successive sand beaches and rocky nukkars for three hours, until we reach the river Auwaly, where we have the ancient city of Sidon in full view (see pages 45 and 47).

## SAIDA, OR SIDON.

"Sidonii que lares . . . . . Sidonaque pulchram."
"The gods of Sidon . . . . . Sidon the beautiful."

These two lines from two of the later Latin poets sum up the two striking features in the history of Sidon, the antiquity of its religious cult, and the beauty of its scenery. Sidon was the Divine City, which gave gods to the Phœnicians, and through them to Greece, Italy, and Carthage. It was the Jerusalem of Baal worship. Here was worshipped that divine couple of the Phœnician religion, Baal Sidon and Ashtaroth, the same which at Gebal (Jebeil) was called Thammuz and Baalath, at Carthage Baal Hamon and Tanith, among the Hittites Shed and Shedath, and in Damascus Hadad and Atargath. Here was the home of—

"Astoreth, whom the Phœnicians called
Astarte, queen of Heaven with crescent horns:
To whose bright image nightly by the moon,
Sidonian virgins paid their vows and songs."

The hardy navigators of Sidon and Tyre, in pushing their adventurous prows into the Euxine, the Ægean, and beyond the Pillars of Hercules, carried with them their religion and their peculiar divinities. Their Ashtaroth became Aphrodite in Greece, and the temple of Thasos in the Ægean was dedicated to Melkarth, the Tyrian Hercules. In the island of Malta a dedicatory inscription speaks of "the lord Melkarth, Baal of Tyre."

Old Sidon, named by the grandson of Noah, and styled Great Zidon by Joshua, is, perhaps, the oldest living city in the world, and claims the honour of being mentioned both in the book of Genesis and in the Homeric poems. Homer speaks of Sidon as rich in ore; but its ores were not native, excepting the iron, brought down from Southern Lebanon. Its tin was brought from Britain (Ber-et-tanic), Spain, and the Caucasus, its steel from Colchis, its gold and copper from the Red Sea and Cyprus, and the Sidonian and Tyrian artificers became famous for their bronzes and other works in metallurgy.

The Sidonians were already a commercial nation when the Egyptians expelled the shepherd kings, and from the first half of the seventeenth till the end of the thirteenth century B.C., the Sidonians were subject to the Egyptians.

A papyrus in the British Museum contains the account of an imaginary journey made by an Egyptian officer into Syria, at the end of the reign of Rameses II., which indicates that Beirût, Sidon, and Tyre at that time were peaceful tributaries of Egypt.

The Sidonians supplied the mercantile and military navy of Egypt, and during this period, when no rival navy existed, Sidonian trade and commercial prosperity reached their highest point. Beyond the Nile valley, the sailors of Sidon and Beirût coasted along the shores of Africa and founded Cambe, afterwards Carthage, and Hippo. The Egyptians had a superstitious horror of the sea, regarding it as impure, and as the domain of Set, the god of evil, the adversary of Osiris. An Egyptian navy was therefore out of the question. Sidonian officers and seamen manned the Egyptian fleets in the Mediterranean and the Red Sea, and

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A. WILLMORE, SCULPT.

SIDON.

D. APPLETON & Co. NEW YORK.

the commerce of Solomon between Ophir and his ports of Elath and Ezion Geber was carried on by Tyrian sailors, the descendants of the old Sidonian navigators. But alas! Great Sidon is now only little Saida, "the place of fishing." Its seamen are mere coasting sailors running their little feluccas and shakhtûrs along the Syrian shores, while its contracted harbour can hardly shelter its tiny craft (see page 45).

The ancient city, so often built, destroyed, and re-built, is now a town of nine thousand inhabitants, and in its want of business life and enterprise, a typical oriental city. The Israelites never conquered it, but the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Persians subdued it, and it opened its gates to the two-horned Alexander in 332 B.C. Under the Romans it was a wealthy city, and it continued such during the New Testament times, when our Lord visited the borders of Tyre and Sidon. St. Paul found Christian friends here on his voyage to Rome. Its Bishop Theodorus was present at the Council of Nice, 325 A.D. During the crusades Sidon was alternately in the hands of the Franks and the Muslims, and suffered terribly from capture and re-capture by the hostile armies. The town is situated on the north-western slope of a low promontory extending down to the sea. In front of the sea wall a chain of island rocks runs from north to south, formerly enclosing a harbour large enough to hold fifty galleys; but the Druse prince, Fakhr ed Din, filled it up with stones and earth to prevent the entrance of Turkish ships, and now only the little shakhtûrs of Kozta Jiz and his fellow sailors can find anchorage in the shallow waters. Sidon is a walled town, and, unlike Beirût, which has overleaped its walls and spread for miles around, it keeps closely pent up within its narrow limits. A more compact city could hardly be imagined, for not only are the streets too narrow to allow loaded camels to pass each other with facility, but the houses are to a great extent built on arches over the streets, so that one can ride or walk from one end of the town to the other under dark, gloomy tunnels. Within the town are six great khans, called by the people wakkaleh, or agencies. They are quadrangular, built around a large paved courtyard, two stories high, with numerous rooms for travellers and storehouses for merchandise. But Beirût has destroyed the commerce of Sidon, and the caravans, bringing the wheat and butter of the Haurân to Beirût and carrying back the wares of Europe, pass by Sidon, outside the walls. About seven hundred of the people are Muslims, five hundred Jews, and the rest Catholics, Maronites, and Protestants. There is a female seminary under the care of the American Mission, with forty-five boarders and ninety day scholars, and a boys' high school. The French Sœurs de Charité have also a girls' school, the Jesuits a school for boys, and the Muslim Benevolent Society a boys' school.

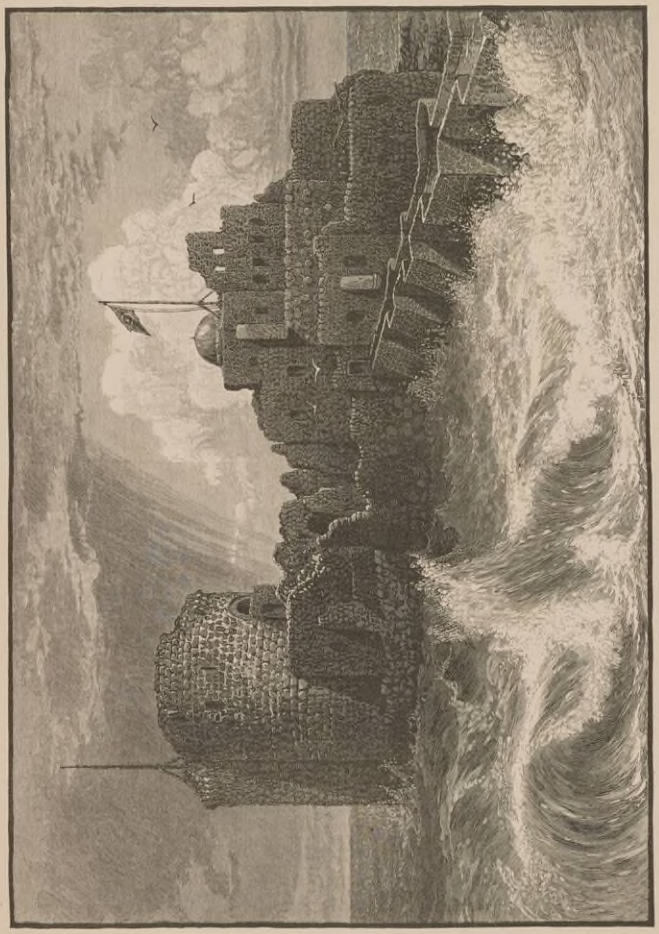
The fruit gardens and orchards of Sidon, extending half a mile from the walls, are the pride of its people, and abound in oranges, lemons, sweet lemons, figs, apricots, pomegranates, almonds, plums, apples, peaches, pears, citrons, and bananas, which are exported by sea to Beirût and Alexandria, and by land to all the towns of Lebanon and to Damascus. The view of the plain and town from the Neby Yahia, or Tomb of John the Baptist, a mile to the east, in the month of April is extremely beautiful. A more verdant glade than that south of the

gardens cannot be seen even in the charming scenery of southern England. But its verdure is vernal only, for while the gardens and orchards, irrigated by the Auwaly, retain their fresh green aspect throughout the year, the plain and hillsides are burned by the summer sun to an arid and dusty brown.

The most interesting antiquities about Sidon are the fragments of mosaic pavements on the north, the hill of broken murex purpura on the south-west, from which the Tyrian purple dye was extracted, and

KHAN NEBY YÛNAS (THE KHAN OF THE PROPHET JONAH).
Adjoining a Muslim shrine sacred to his memory. Close to it there is a group of mulberry-trees, and beyond are groves of olive and fig trees belonging to the village of Neby Yûnas, called also El Jôjeh.

the famous Necropolis on the plain south-east of the town. This city of the dead, as mapped by Renan, contains a vast number of tombs of various kinds, which are deeply interesting. There are rectangular grottoes, which are the most ancient, entered by steps cut in the sides of a vertical shaft, from which doors lead into rock-hewn chambers similar to those in Egypt. The vaulted grottoes are entered by flights of steps, and have side niches for sarcophagi, many of which are still in place. There are also grottoes lined with lime cement, painted in the Græco-Roman style, some having Greek inscriptions. In the rectangular grottoes are marble sarcophagi of the



THE CASTLE AND HARBOUR OF SAIDA, THE ANCIENT SIDON.

Called Kil'at el Bahr (Castle on the Sea). It stands on a rocky island opposite the north-east end of the town, with which it is connected by an embankment with arches.

Phœnician anthropoïde style, fitted to the shape of the embalmed body. There are also sarcophagi in lead, such as are constantly found in the villages east of the city. Those in the vaulted grottoes are generally of pottery, and those in the decorated tombs are square, profusely decorated with garlands and other sculptured ornaments. About ten minutes south-east of the Acre Gate of Sidon is the Mugharet Ablûn, or Cave of Apollo, where, in 1855, was discovered the beautiful black basalt sarcophagus now in the museum of the Louvre in Paris. The Phœnician inscription of nine hundred and ninety words on its lid is well cut and perfectly preserved. European scholars have made several translations of it, which agree in the essential features.

"In the month Bul, in the 14th of my reign, King Ashmunazar, the king of the Sidonians, son of Tabnith, king of the Sidonians, grandson of King Ashmunazar, king of the Sidonians, spake, saying, I am snatched away before my time, like the flowing of a river . . . . . .

"Every royal person, and every man who shall open this funeral couch, or who shall take away the sarcophagus of this funeral couch, he shall have no funeral with the dead, nor be buried in a sepulchre, nor leave behind them son or posterity . . . . and the holy gods shall cut off that royal person, nor shall his root be planted downward, nor his fruit spring upward, for I am Ashmunazar, king of the Sidonians, son of Tabnith, king of the Sidonians, grandson of Ashmunazar, king of the Sidonians, and my mother, Immiastoreth, priestess of Astarte, our sovereign queen, daughter of King Ashmunazar, king of the Sidonians . . . . . .

"It is we who have built this temple of the gods—in Sidon by the sea, and the heavenly powers have rendered Astarte favourable. It is we who have erected the temple to Esmuno and the sanctuary of Ene Delil in the mountain . . . . the temple of Baal Sidon, and the temple of Astarte, the glory of Baal, lord of kings, who bestowed on us Dor and Joppa and ample corn lands which are at the root of Dan . . . . ."

This inscription is written in the Phœnician character, and is one of the most important Phœnician inscriptions yet discovered, the next in interest being that of Mesha on the Moabite stone, the Siloam tablet,* and a tariff of sacrifices of Punic origin. The various Phœnician cities possessed rich archives and regular records, preserved with care from the most ancient times, the most valuable of which is the Græco-Phœnician work of Sanchoniathon the Beirût scholar, and dedicated to Abi Baal, king of Beirût. It is the opinion of Professor Sayce, that remains of the old Phœnician libraries must still exist somewhere in the unexcavated ruins of Syria. The gardeners of Sidon are constantly on the watch for new treasures, as they plough the soil or dig foundations for building. The citadel of Sidon, called by the Arabs Kûl'at el Mezzeh, is an ancient tower, said to have been built by Louis IX. in 1253. Near its base two colossal statues were recently exhumed. The Kûl'at el Bahr, or Castle on the Sea, stands on a small island connected with the land by a bridge of nine arches. It was built in the thirteenth century, the large blocks belonging to a more ancient structure. The

* As the "Siloam tablet" had not been discovered when Colonel Wilson wrote his description of the Conduit and Pools of Siloam (see page *102 et seq.*, vol. i.), a few words respecting it must be added here. The inscription was first observed, in June, 1880, by a pupil of Herr Schick, an architect who has long resided in Jerusalem. He was wading along the rock-cut channel which conveys water from the Fountain of the Virgin to the Upper Pool of Siloam, when he suddenly slipped and fell into the water; as he rose he noticed "some marks which looked like letters" on the rocky wall of the channel, which in this part is not more than two feet wide; its length is one thousand seven hundred and eight feet, but the direct distance from the Fountain to the Pool is only one thousand one hundred and four feet, for the channel deviates considerably from a straight line. The inscription is in a recess at the lower end of the conduit, and about nineteen feet from the place where it opens out into the Upper Pool of Siloam (see page 78, vol. i.). Before the inscription could be copied it was necessary to reduce the level of the water till the stream was not more than six inches in depth; but in this the copyist was obliged to crouch down in a cramped attitude, for the last line was still only just above water. Nevertheless Herr Schick and Professor Sayce each made a copy, and Lieut. Conder afterwards obtained a squeeze of the inscription from which casts were made for distribution, and thus many independent translations (which only slightly vary) have been made. The language is primitive Hebrew, the characters are Phœnician of the sixth to the eighth century B.C. The record implies (according to Professor Sayce and others) that the channel was excavated from both ends, and that the workmen met in the middle. "Behold the excavation! Now this is the history of the tunnel. While the excavators were lifting up the pick, each towards the other, and while there were yet three cubits to be broken through, the voice of one called to his neighbour, for there was a (crookedness?) in the rock on the right. They rose up . . . . they struck in the west of the excavation, each to meet the other, pick to pick; and there flowed the waters from their outlet to the Pool for a distance of a thousand cubits, and (three-fourths?) of a cubit was the height of the rock over the head of the excavation here."—[M. E. R.]

island on the west and south-west was once covered by a massive sea-wall, protecting the harbour from the waves, but after the destruction of the harbour by Fakhr ed Din, the

THE CITADEL OF SAIDA, THE ANCIENT SIDON.
Now called the Kûl'at el Mezzeh. It stands on the south-eastern extremity of the town, on a heap of rubbish in which layers of the purple shell still are visible.

huge blocks were removed for building purposes, and in rough weather the sea makes a clean breach over the rocks into the little harbour. The old seats of Phœnician art and commerce have fallen into ruin and decay. Arvad, Gebal, Sidon and Tyre are hardly

known to modern commerce, while Beirût is monopolizing the Syrian trade. The art of extracting the purple dye from the murex purpura, millions of whose broken fragments

A PEASANT WOMAN CHURNING.

The churn is made of the tanned skin of a goat stripped off whole; it is partly filled with milk and the extremities being securely closed, it is suspended in any convenient place, by four ropes fastened to the skin of the legs. It is then regularly moved to and fro, with a jerk, until the process is completed.

form a hill at the south-west gate of Sidon, is hopelessly lost. The arts of gold and silver fancy work and the weaving of silk and wool have left Sidon and Tyre for the more thriving market of Beirût and Damascus.

SITE OF SAREPTA.

As early as the thirteenth century this city was in ruins, and now only fragments of its foundations exist, chiefly on a headland called 'Ain el Kantarah and also along the shore south of it, extending for a mile or more. Early Greek and Roman writers speak highly in praise of the wines of Sarepta.

# THE PHŒNICIAN PLAIN.

THE route from Sidon to Tyre is by the seashore, generally pastureless and uninteresting, yet, in its ease and the absence of rugged stone-heaps and slippery rocks, a great contrast to the ordinary road of Palestine. Though the sea is tideless there is generally a broad belt of sand, not too soft or heavy. Behind this runs the narrow Phœnician plain, rich and well watered. Wells and springs are frequent throughout, often affording pure and sweet water within a few feet of the sea itself. Beyond the plain the bare but terraced hills rise abruptly, steep and rocky. Several streams intersect the path, across which have been bridges in Roman and perhaps in later days, but floods and neglect have left only traces of what once was, in a few buttresses and here and there the spring of an arch. In winter it is often difficult to ford or swim the swollen rivers, especially the Nahr ez Zaherâny, or "Flowery River" (so named from the mass of oleanders which fringe it), shortly before reaching the village of Surafend, which represents the Zarephath of the Old Testament, the *Sarepta* of the New (see above). There is little to mark the spot where Elijah sojourned so long with the hospitable widow and blessed her exhaustless cruse, for the ancient site, open and unprotected, close to the shore, has long been deserted, and its inhabitants have made a new settlement more than two miles inland, under the shelter of the hills, to which they have transferred the ancient name, and where they are safe from the raids of Bedawin horsemen. All that is left of old Zarephath are a few heaps of stones, the greater part of the materials having been carried off for modern

buildings to Beirût. There is, however, a little wely called El Khidr, the Arabic name for St. George, who is reverenced as a Muslim as well as a Christian saint; and the wely is reasonably believed to be the successor of the Christian chapel which the Crusaders built over the traditional site of the house of Elijah's hostess. A double interest attaches to this spot, from the tradition (for which we must confess there is no absolute historical ground, but surely much probability) that Sarepta was also blessed by the presence of a greater than Elijah, and that here our Lord showed mercy on the daughter of the Syrophœnician woman. We know that the village He visited was somewhere in the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. The context seems to imply it was beyond Tyre, and this is almost the only village which would meet these requirements. What more natural than that He should visit the place where His great forerunner sojourned so long? The modern inhabitants of Surafend have moved the sacred localities to their new home, and point out in the present village the house of the widow and the spot where our Lord met the Syrophœnician widow. But nothing is more certain than that until after the times of the Crusades the place was close to the shore.

Along the lonely strand skirting the fertile but scarcely cultivated plain we proceed towards Tyre. Strange that such desolation should have overtaken one of the chief cradles of early civilisation! Now lawlessness and barbarism have driven Phœnicia back into the rocky hills, and the weary peasant, with his tools on his shoulder, spends half his time in journeying from security to his field, and in toiling back at sunset to his rocky home.

The route to Tyre continues near the shore. Not a village is to be seen:—here and there ancient tombs and a few piles of stones. Several little streams have to be forded, till at length we reach the banks of the Kâsimîyeh, the ancient Leontes, still known higher up as the Litâny, when we turn inland by the traces of a Roman road towards one of the few bridges which remain unbroken in the country. Here the plain and the valley of the river (see page 53) are well cultivated. There is a khan, not in ruins, for the convenience of travellers, and several villages on either side of the river's course, one just to the south of the bridge. The stream is far too deep and rapid to be forded, and hence the bridge has been of necessity rebuilt (see page 52), a rare, perhaps unique exception to the ordinary system of the country. Hence we might in a short hour ride to the historic capital of Phœnicia. But a day is well spent in an expedition up the tortuous course of the Leontes. For several miles inland the river winds through a rich corn plain of some extent, into which it suddenly emerges from a deep fissure in the long range of the wall of Galilee. The plain is for the most part treeless, though the banks of the stream are richly fringed with oleanders. The country is best understood by riding through the corn-fields on the north bank. Under the foot of the hills is a charming piece of olive ground, with grateful shade, and a village behind it, nestled at the foot of the cliff. It is more than half an hour's very rough scrambling for the horses to reach the crest, when we find ourselves, not on the top of the hill, but on the brow of an upland down studded with villages, and with a noble view seawards, which well repays the climb. The villages are generally three or four miles apart and have names evidently derived from the Hebrew, as Rezieh, Zerayiyeh,

Zara, Athshît, Shukin, and the like. But although part of the old tribe of Asher, the survey of the Palestine Exploration has halted at the bank of the Leontes, and no research has as yet been devoted to their identification, beyond the very few names mentioned in the Book of Joshua. Each of these villages is surrounded by a grove of fig-trees, bare enough in winter, but without which in summer these uplands would be dreary indeed. In the centre of many of them is a mound or heap composed of the débris of the old Phœnician fort.

THE BAY OF SIDON FROM SAREPTA.

The distance from Sarepta to Sidon, in a straight line across the bay, is about ten miles. On the extreme right, partly concealed by a tree, the ruins on Tell el Burak can be distinguished, and the Khan el Burak close by. In the distance the snow-covered summits of Lebanon appear.

Though as we ride along we are very near the Leontes, the river gives no sign of its neighbourhood. It is never mentioned in Scripture, yet is the largest river in the country after the Jordan, and has some peculiar features. Rising near Ba'albec, far away north in the Bûka'a, or Cœlo-Syria, it has its farthest source, like the Jordan and the Orontes, in the plain which commences the separation between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon (see small map, page 12). We may stand on a slope of Lebanon and see the origin of the watersheds of the three rivers from the same spot, and it is difficult to realise, as we gaze,

how utterly different is the subsequent career of each. For many miles the tiny streamlets of Litâny and Jordan flow southwards in almost parallel lines, while the Orontes takes a due northward course. The almost imperceptible rise which separates them gradually swells into a ridge, forming a watershed between Lebanon and Hermon, till the Litâny makes a rift through Northern Galilee, a stupendous gorge, which affords the grandest scenery in the country, as by the natural bridge of El Kûweh (see page 372, vol. i.). Dashing through a glen some thousand feet deep in places, just below the great castle of Shukîf it meets a mountain barrier, a spur

RIDGE OVER THE NAHR EL KÂSIMÎYEH (THE LEONTES).
On the ancient Roman coast-road, which is now traversed by telegraph wires; higher up, this river is called El Litâny.

of Lebanon running east and west. Exit seems impossible. The river rushes straight against the mighty wall and turns at right angles to the west, working its way by a fissure wholly invisible till the traveller is close upon its edge, and which splits the apparently continuous range to its very centre. The tableland to the north of the river continues without any prominent hills or deep valleys from the ridge above the mouth of the Kâsimîyeh (called in its upper course the Litâny, doubtless its old Phœnician name, corrupted by the Greeks into Leontes), as far as Shukîf and the range which forms the watershed of the Jordan.

Returning again to the Phœnician plain, the path lies for six miles along the shore on hard, smooth sand. The sweep of the land makes a fine embayed coast line, with the headland by Sarepta forming one end of the bow, and the moles, buildings, and ruins of Tyre, in front,

forming the other (see page 57). Tyre, no longer an island but a peninsula, stands out boldly into the sea, and the first view is very imposing, whether we approach it from the north or the south. A bare strip of sand intervenes between the port and the plain behind, which of late years is rapidly becoming a bright oasis of mulberry and orange groves and

THE VALLEY OF THE LEONTES, NEAR THE COAST.
The river, the Nahr el Kâsimîyeh, is of considerable depth at this point, and flows hence to the sea in a very serpentine course.

gardens, such as have long adorned the environs of Sidon. But these do not reach the shore, and we pass them on the left. On the right several grim skeletons of vessels, driven ashore from the dangerous anchorage of the roadstead, stand out from the shallow sea; and just opposite to them is a fine old fountain, an arched building covering several cisterns fed by springs beneath, and much resorted to by the inhabitants of this side of the city. Twenty years ago Tyre, now called Es Sûr, was a miserable, squalid village; but it has latterly much increased, and though still chiefly a labyrinth of ruins, yet contains a population of over seven thousand, with some bazaars fairly stocked. A few small craft may generally be seen in the roadstead, and a number of fishing

vessels in the inner harbour. Just at the north gate of the city, by which we enter, is the principal market, where scarlet leather, millstones from the Haurân, and tobacco, are the staples of commerce. The inhabitants are chiefly fishermen and some dyers, though the old Tyrian dyes are no more, and we may search in vain for Tyrian purple. The streets are most wretched, very few feet wide and wattled over at intervals with palm leaves and decayed brushwood; while windowless, mud-floored hovels nestle among huge fragments of polished granite and porphyry columns prostrate in rubbish. The strip of sand between the well and the gate has accumulated on the causeway by which Alexander the Great united the city to the mainland; for Tyre originally was an island rather less than a mile in length, containing about one hundred and twenty-five acres, and with the harbours between it and the mainland, on which was the larger city of Palæotyrus. The moles or breakwaters of the ancient harbours can still be seen both on the north and the south sides of the peninsula, the greater part of which consists of ruin-strewn fields, affording a charming camping ground, especially to the west of the modern town, where the tents can be pitched within a few yards of the waves, looking down on the mass of granite columns and marble blocks which pave the bottom of the clear sea (see page 59). The ruins of Tyre above the water are few indeed, and beyond the moles and harbour are none which carry us back to the times of Phœnician glory and supremacy, before its conquest by Alexander the Great. One, and one only, building of any interest remains, and its associations are far indeed removed from the history which must most absorb the traveller's thoughts, the story of the queen of commerce, the mistress of the seas, and the mother of mighty nations. The Cathedral of the Crusaders occupies a conspicuous position at the south-east angle of the shrunken city, and though roofless, and at the west end wholly demolished, is still comparatively perfect (see page 56). It is one of the largest of the many crusading churches of Syria, and occupies the site of a much older and yet more historic building, the Basilica of Constantine. Within the last few years the German Government have obtained a sort of protectorate over it, and prevented the utter demolition which threatened it as a mere quarry for building. They have also excavated much of the débris which choked the interior, and revealed many details of its architecture. Comte de Vogüé, the first living authority on Syrian architecture, fixes the date of its foundation 1125 A.D., by the Venetian Crusaders, who dedicated it to St. Mark. But it has an earlier history still. The original church was built by Constantine, Paulinus was its bishop, and the historian Eusebius delivered the oration at its consecration, which he has preserved at full length in his Ecclesiastic History, simply stating that it was the address delivered on the occasion by a certain man of moderate merit. In that church were laid the bones of the great father of the Church, Origen. But in evil times and national convulsions it had become, we know not how, a ruin, and the Crusaders nobly restored it. It measured two hundred and sixteen feet long by one hundred and thirty-six feet wide, and though we dare not controvert the architectural decision of De Vogüé, it is evident to every one who sees it that the restoration was on the old lines, on the Greek basilica model, not on the Latin. There are the three

apses at the east end, which the Muslims have since incorporated into the city walls, and I cannot but think that both the greater part of these apses as well as the lower corners of the walls are the original work of Constantine. A few years ago the interior was crowded with squalid hovels clustering on the sides. Now all have been cleared out, and the area is only strewn by the colossal red granite columns, which once stood upright and supported the roof. These shafts and pilasters, some of them double, are from six to eight feet in diameter and

THE GATE OF TYRE (SÛR).
There are two springs of fresh water on the north side of the peninsula, one of which is close to this gate. It has been conjectured that they are connected with the fountains of Râs el 'Ain.

about twenty-six feet long, yet they are only broken fragments, and no doubt were utilised by Constantine from some of the condemned heathen temples. Though their removal has been more than once attempted by the Muslims, they proved too massive to be broken, too heavy to be lifted. Of the resting place of Origen no mark remains. Frederick Barbarossa's body is believed to lie under the central apse. The emperor died at Tarsus, and all down that long coast of Syria day after day the funeral procession marched, till, halting at Antioch, there was

deposited the heart and intestines of the grand Crusader, while his bones were carried on hither, to be lain within the limits of the Sacred Land. Few churches, indeed, can vie in historic memories with the Cathedral of Tyre.

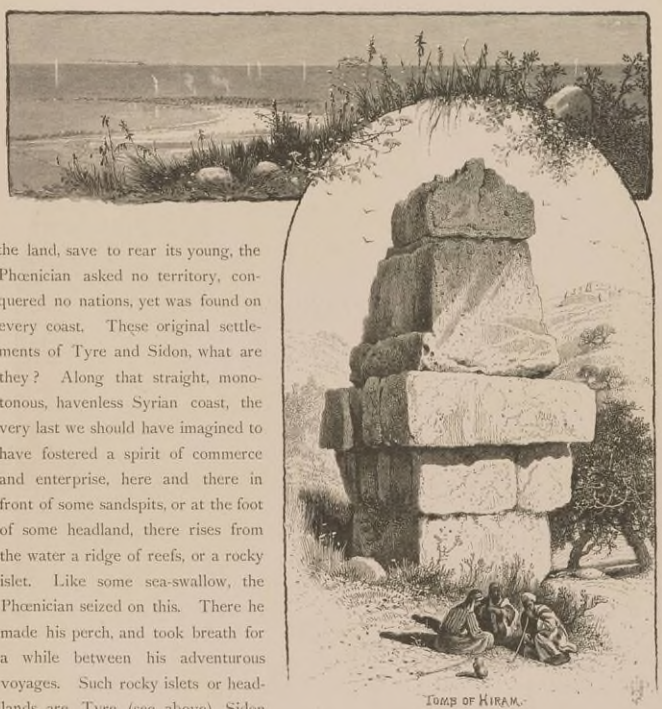
Yet when we climb up, and, standing on the apse of that old church, look forth upon the

RUINS OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH AT TYRE.

Eusebius describes this building as the most splendid of all the temples of Phœnicia. Among the ruins there is a double column of red syenite granite, now prostrate, consisting of two parallel connected shafts of great size.

sand-heaps on our left, the sea beyond, and the breakwaters, and see the red jagged fragments to the right, the long history of that church is but of yesterday when compared with the remote

memories behind it. Egypt and Assyria may carry us many centuries farther still, but what is their direct connection with us when compared with Phœnicia? That strange and mysterious people, where are they? What descendants have they left? Where can we trace them? They were scarcely of the land. Like some fowl of the sea, which never touches shore or visits




KABR HIRÂM.

And the neighbouring village of Hanâwieh, with a view of the peninsula of Tyre as it appears from this spot.

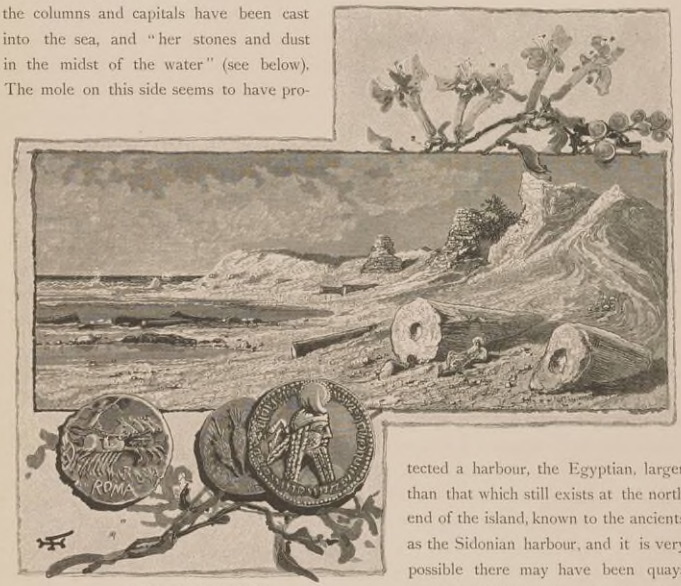
the land, save to rear its young, the Phœnician asked no territory, conquered no nations, yet was found on every coast. These original settlements of Tyre and Sidon, what are they? Along that straight, monotonous, havenless Syrian coast, the very last we should have imagined to have fostered a spirit of commerce and enterprise, here and there in front of some sandspits, or at the foot of some headland, there rises from the water a ridge of reefs, or a rocky islet. Like some sea-swallow, the Phœnician seized on this. There he made his perch, and took breath for a while between his adventurous voyages. Such rocky islets or headlands are Tyre (see above), Sidon (see page 45), Berytus, Gebal, Botrys, Tripolis, and Aradus [the modern Beirût (see pages 28 and 41), Jebeil, Batrûn, Tarabalûs (see pages 5 and 9), and Ruad], most of them very similar in position, and three of them—Jebeil, Batrûn, and Tarabalûs, in their little reef of rocks fronting and parallel to the headland, close reproductions of the site of Tyre. Tyre, though historically the daughter of Sidon, soon became the leading city of the

federation. What does not Europe owe in the way of civilisation to these decaying villages? We have but to look to the glowing denunciations of Ezekiel to see how vast and how varied was their trade. Tyre was the inventress and the cradle of glass manufactory, and for centuries she retained her pre-eminence. It was from Tyre that some adventurous monks, pilgrims from the coasts of Northumbria, brought into England the secret of the manufacture, and planted on the banks of the Wear the first glass works of the West in the days of the Saxon heptarchy. Hence came the brilliant dyes which made resplendent the royal robes of kings, hence the bronze and metal which equipped the armies of antiquity. The tiny crafts of Phœnicia penetrated into unknown seas, and brought back to the East the news of a world beyond the Pillars of Hercules. Tyre worked the mines of Spain, and freighted her ships with the tin of Cornwall. From this little rock sprang the men who dotted the western shores of the Mediterranean with their colonies. She was the mother of that Carthage which succeeded her as mistress of the seas, and all but wrested the empire of the world from her rival, Rome. But chief of all, to Phœnicia we owe our alphabet. Hence Cadmus borrowed those characters which have enshrined the strains of Homer, and have become the framework for the expression of every language of Europe.

When this marvellous city rose we know not, for its indigenous literature has perished, and we have but a few inscriptions and a few characters on coins to tell us what was its language. But at the time of the Exodus, 1450 B.C., it was a strong city (Joshua xix. 29), and in the reign of David it was famous, not only for its maritime prowess, but for its arts and skill; its seamen brought him cedars from Lebanon, its masons and carpenters built his palace. Still closer was the intercourse between Hiram and Solomon, who formed a treaty of alliance and commerce. Israel fed the great city, which supplied the architect, the workmen, and many of the materials for the Temple. But of the Tyre of that day we can trace nothing, unless it be the massive substructions of the harbour. Yet throughout the long period of Persian supremacy, Tyre and her sister cities escaped all molestation. Careful to maintain their trade, the men of Tyre always made judicious alliances, and having no ambition for territory on shore, were voluntary allies rather than vassals, and though Sidon was conquered by Ochus, Tyre remained until its capture by Alexander after a seven months' siege. The numberless granite columns, which strew the shore and form the bed of the sea, all belong to the second Tyre, which soon rose from its ashes, and continued to flourish till destroyed at the end of the second century by Pescennius Niger. Again it rose and maintained its prosperity till the time of the Crusades. It was long held by the Christians, and in its cathedral was celebrated one of the last religious services held before the final embarkation of the last remnant of the chivalry of Europe. The final blow to its prosperity was given by the conquest of Syria by the Ottomans, in 1516 A.D.

But we must not run on into a history of Tyre. We have been led to muse on the past, as we wonder how she has become so utterly ruined, and where her ruins are. Perhaps they have served as a quarry for the whole coast, and her stones may now be for the most part in Acre and Beirût. It has been the fate of places which have been continuously inhabited to have far

less to reveal of their old history than have those which have been destroyed and then deserted. Still the evidences of a great past are not far to seek. As we stroll along the shore, especially on the south side of the promontory, the shingle is composed of broken pottery almost as much as of natural pebbles, the old columns lie in every direction, pierced by the pholas and festooned with seaweed. The south side gives the clearest idea of the plan and position of the ancient city, on the foundations and massive sea-walls of which we may note the fishermen day after day spreading their nets, while the columns and capitals have been cast into the sea, and "her stones and dust in the midst of the water" (see below). The mole on this side seems to have protected a harbour, the Egyptian, larger than that which still exists at the north end of the island, known to the ancients as the Sidonian harbour, and it is very possible there may have been quays and wharfs where is now the broad belt of sand south of Alexander's Causeway. This was very narrow at first, but the current has rapidly silted up the shallow bay, till the neck is almost as wide as the island itself. The process has long been going on, for at the south-east angle of the former island, and on what was once sea, stands what is called the Algerian tower, a portion of an old line of fortification constructed of the materials of earlier buildings, yet itself certainly not later than the time of the Crusaders, and probably part of their line of defence. The present gate (see page 55) is probably also on the site of the mediæval portal; but, though duly guarded, its use



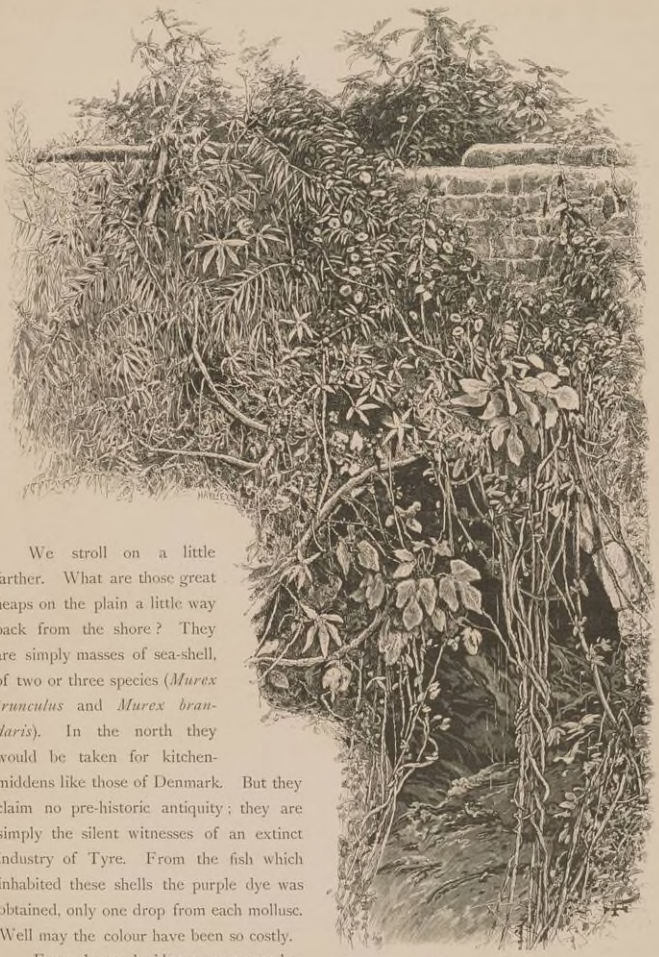

THE REMAINS OF TYRE.

The shore is strewn from one end to the other, along the edge of the water, and in the water, with columns of red and grey granite of various dimensions, the only remaining monuments of ancient Tyre.

has gone, for only fragments of the wall remain beyond the limits of the shrunken town, and on all sides the place is completely open, almost every street having a free exit into the open ground beyond. If we are inclined to wonder at the paucity of the remains of old Tyre, we must remember that for ages the site has been a quarry for building material. We noticed

RESERVOIRS OF RÂS EL 'AIN AND PART OF THE ROMAN AQUEDUCT.
Close to this spot stood Palæotyrus, of which no vestige now remains, the materials having been carried away by Alexander (332 B.C.) to construct the mole or causeway which unites insular Tyre to the mainland.

close to the modern houses a pit recently excavated for this purpose, not less than thirty feet below their level. Yet even at that depth the walling was composed of the broken columns and material of still older buildings. Lower still, therefore, must lie buried the Tyre of Hiram and of Solomon.



AQUEDUCT, RÂS EL 'AIN.
Of Saracenic origin, its slightly pointed arches are in many places almost concealed by luxuriant vegetation.

We stroll on a little farther. What are those great heaps on the plain a little way back from the shore? They are simply masses of sea-shell, of two or three species (*Murex trunculus* and *Murex brandaris*). In the north they would be taken for kitchen-middens like those of Denmark. But they claim no pre-historic antiquity; they are simply the silent witnesses of an extinct industry of Tyre. From the fish which inhabited these shells the purple dye was obtained, only one drop from each mollusc. Well may the colour have been so costly.

From the south side we can proceed to the reservoir of Râs el 'Ain, "the head of

the fountain," the farther limit of Old Tyre, or Palæotyrus (see page 60). The mainland Tyre, as this really was, claimed to be the original city, though we may feel certain that the island was from the very earliest existence of the colony inhabited and fortified, and the commercial centre. There are few if any remains of the mainland Tyre above ground, but sufficient in the way of foundations to show the great extent of the city. Râs el 'Ain is an hour's ride, about four and a half miles from insular Tyre, and along the shore, from the one to the other, the city extended. It was not fortified, and doubtless many of the dwellings were suburban, with orchards and gardens extending back towards the hills. But all is now corn-plain or waste. We can trace the line of the aqueduct by which water was conveyed from these springs to the island. Râs el 'Ain itself is a picturesque group of ruins, with some water-mills and hovels, and the group of trees are refreshing. The springs are numerous and copious. The drainage of the sandstone strata appears to be concentrated towards this spot, and gushes forth with great force. It is collected in great tanks of masonry, each built round a great spring, which pours immense volumes of water with great force from the bottom of the reservoirs (see page 60). The original intention of these massive structures, which in some points recall the masonry of the Pools of Solomon, near Bethlehem (see page 145, vol. i.), has evidently been to force the water up to a sufficient height to supply the aqueduct. This is now completely ruined, but can be traced the whole way along the plain, first of all trending rather inland, till almost opposite the island it reaches a massive ruin, probably another great cistern, from which the aqueduct turned westward to the shore (see page 57). The masonry of the aqueduct, the shape of the arches, point to the Roman period as the probable date of its construction (see page 60), but the reservoirs themselves may claim a much greater antiquity. Tradition and mediæval writers popularly assign them to King Solomon, and some later writers ascribe them to Alexander. But the great conqueror had enough to do to take the city and at once left it, and it is scarcely likely that he should immediately after his conquest have set about such a great work. Far more reasonably may we believe that here, if nowhere else, we have a silent evidence of the genius of the old Phœnicians; and I am not aware of any similar work elsewhere constructed by the Romans. That they constructed the aqueduct we may well believe, but probably on the lines of a previous channel, for we may be very sure that the first operation of any besieger, whether Egyptian, Assyrian, Persian, Greek, or Roman, would be to interrupt this great water supply. Indeed, one aqueduct is as late as the Saracenic or Crusading times (see page 61). It starts from the fourth and smallest cistern, has pointed arches, and has been used for the purpose of irrigating the plain. The largest cistern is octagonal, sixty-six feet in diameter, inside measure, twenty-five feet high, and its wall, which is massively revetted, slopes gently from the ground to the summit, where the masonry is eight feet thick. This wall, of this enormous strength, is bound with the finest and hardest cement. The water is impregnated with lime, and has thickly encrusted all the reservoirs, as well as formed massive stalagmites both round the cisterns and along the course of the aqueduct. The only use to which this mighty work is now applied is the turning of a water-wheel for a

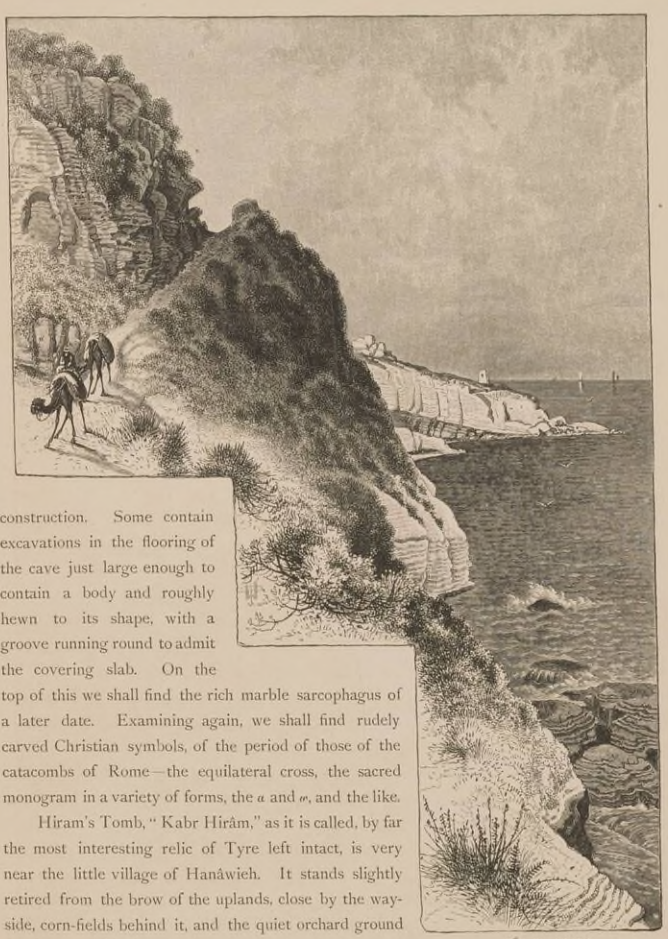
corn-mill, and the water running through leaks, and over the masonry, is wasted as it works its way uselessly to the sea. These springs are first mentioned in the records of ancient Tyre as having been cut off by Shalmaneser when he withdrew from the siege, which certainly implies their importance at that very early date. In the time of the Crusades the water was used for the irrigation of the whole plain, which was cultivated and full of fruit-trees, and especially of sugar-cane, in strange contrast to its present half-desolate state.

But what must this plain and Old Tyre have been in the days of Israel, when, relying upon the impregnable insular fortress and their fleets which ruled the sea, the merchant princes had their villas and palaces all along the plain for many miles, in the open country (for the fortifications never extended to Palæotyrus), and all the wealth and art of the age was lavished on the furniture, the gardens and the baths of her "whose builders had perfected her beauty" and "set forth her comeliness." Ebony and ivory, the gems of India and the riches of the East, bright iron from Cornwall, the gold of Tarshish, the spices of Arabia, the fine linen and broidered work of Egypt, silver and lead, tin and iron from afar, coral and agate from Syria, rich fabrics from Mesopotamia, such were some of the treasures and the decorations of the mother of commerce. But now she "is broken by the seas in the depth of the waters, and her merchandise and all her company in the midst of her are fallen." Yet it would be difficult to find a more lovely moonlight walk than along this beach from Râs el 'Ain to Tyre, with the light beaming far on the water, where now no gallant galley with oars can be seen, but the ghost-like black columns, gaunt in the moonlight, look like spectres on the sea, mourning the fate of their proud city. The ride to Hiram's Tomb (see page 57) may be accomplished from Râs el 'Ain as easily as from Tyre, following the line of the aqueduct (see page 60) for two miles and then turning towards the hills, which here rise very gradually from the plain. Very near Hiram's Tomb, to the southward, is the little village of Hanâwieh, surrounded by orchards and olive yards, with many tombs in the sides of the hills. In these tombs have recently been discovered many interesting specimens of Phœnician or at least pre-Roman glass. In a sepulchre, which this year was opened by a charcoal-burner in digging up an old tree root, a complete set of funereal glass was found, undisturbed as when first placed in the newly-occupied tomb, which was a very small niche just large enough for a body and about four feet high, hewn at the foot of a rock against which earth and rubbish had accumulated. At each of the four corners of the tomb was a lachrymatory, much larger than the ordinary or later Roman ones and with a very long neck. At the upper part of the tomb were placed two flat dishes, one about six inches, the other twelve inches in diameter, for the meat and bread offerings for the dead, and a glass flask of antique and graceful shape for the wine.

The tombs in all these hills may be counted by thousands, but they have been rifled and rifled again centuries ago; many of them afford evidence of successive occupation by the dead of epochs distant from each other. For instance, to many of the old Phœnician tombs, which may be recognised at once by the style of their sculpture, there have been added Roman or Greek façades in various different styles, and niches for statues, subsequent to the original

RÂS EL ABYAD (WHITE CAPE), THE LADDER OF TYRE,

From the south side. The rock-cut undulating road, with its shallow steps, is in many places nearly two hundred feet above the sea.



RÂS EL ABYAD.
Showing the north or Tyrian side. The little tower in the distance is a Turkish guard-house, where tolls are levied, as it commands the pass to and from Acre.

construction. Some contain excavations in the flooring of the cave just large enough to contain a body and roughly hewn to its shape, with a groove running round to admit the covering slab. On the top of this we shall find the rich marble sarcophagus of a later date. Examining again, we shall find rudely carved Christian symbols, of the period of those of the catacombs of Rome—the equilateral cross, the sacred monogram in a variety of forms, the α and ω, and the like.

Hiram's Tomb, "Kabr Hirâm," as it is called, by far the most interesting relic of Tyre left intact, is very near the little village of Hanâwieh. It stands slightly retired from the brow of the uplands, close by the way-side, corn-fields behind it, and the quiet orchard ground in front. Whether it be the tomb of the great Phœnician monarch or not there is no possibility of

proving. One argument for its great antiquity is its extreme simplicity and its dissimilarity from any sepulchral structures of the Greek age. The great repertory of Phœnician monuments is on the wonderful plain of Amrit, in Northern Syria, the ancient Marathus, opposite the island of Ruad, or Arvad. There is not a solitary inscription among them all, and Renan has demonstrated to the satisfaction of antiquaries that they are all long prior to the time of Alexander the Great. But the most archaic of those unique and massive sepulchres are in style and workmanship decidedly later than Hiram's Tomb, and yet they are formed on a similar model. The natural inference to any one seeing the tombs of Marathus and this of Tyre for the first time, would be that the architects of the former were familiar with such constructions as this, but had no idea of the Greek or Syro-Greek sepulchral architecture.

The Tomb of Hiram, for so we love to believe it as well as call it, is a grand massive sarcophagus, laid on a massive megalithic pedestal of dressed limestone, but without any trace of the Phœnician or Jewish bevel, standing in solitary desolation, commanding the sea and that city of Tyre over which Hiram ruled. The pedestal is composed of three courses of great stones, more than twelve feet by eight, and six feet thick. The third course is still thicker and projects over the others. On this is placed the great sarcophagus, hollowed out for the body, and over it still remains the lid, slightly pyramidal in form, a single block, twelve feet long by five thick. Immediately behind the tomb two flights of steps have recently been opened out, evidently coeval with it, and leading to a vaulted chamber not under but exactly behind the mausoleum. This was cleared out and examined by Renan, but no trace of inscription or indication of its purpose or date discovered.

From Hiram's Tomb it is little more than half an hour south-east to the village of Kanah, with its name unchanged since the days of Joshua, when it was a town of Asher. The whole district is strewn with broken sarcophagi, but there are some very interesting Phœnician sculptures, rarely visited, on the side of a very rocky hill overhanging a dell to the north of the road half-way to Kanah, called the Wâdy el 'Akkab, or by others El Afid. Here have been quarries very extensively worked in ancient times, and the rock in many places has been cut down perpendicularly. On many of these faces are rude sculptures and especially many cartouches, somewhat Egyptian in style, but very different in type as regards the figures within the cartouch. On one face of rock, besides the cartouches are nine figures in a row, the largest in the centre seated, the others, four on each side, about four feet high, standing. On another rock is a female draped figure standing, much more Assyrian than Egyptian in the style of dress, which is full. All the figures have been cut in the rough face of the rocks, which have not been squared or dressed to receive them.

From Kanah there is a lovely ride into the interior, an excursion which will well repay the traveller for the extra day it will cost, or he may traverse the valleys of Asher and Naphtali till he reaches the magnificent mediæval castle of Tibnîn. The route is up the Wâdy 'Ashûr. It is a narrow valley with a very steep descent, which winds down to the coast in a serpentine, meandering course. Frequently it contracts into a romantic rocky glen, so narrow at the

bottom that it is difficult for a horseman to pass a laden camel without dismounting, and where he may touch the cliffs on either side with his stick. The sides of the enclosing hills gently slope back, timber being absent, but its place taken by dense brushwood, lentisk, myrtle, arbutus, the lovely storax, and the Judas-tree all in blossom together, with an undergrowth of endless variety of flowers, generally very different from those of Esdraelon and Galilee, and partaking more of the character of the Lebanon flora—especially a number of ferns of northern type.

Just at the mouth of the valley is a little plain, and high up in the rocks on the north side of this opening are some very curious sculptures. On the face of the cliff is cut a square recess about thirty-two inches square, and thirty inches deep. It is set in a bevelled frame of five steps, each two inches deep, cut in the rock. On the back wall of the niche is a fine piece of delicate sculpture, rather weathered. There is a group of five figures, the central one seated and two standing on each side, apparently offering gifts. Over the group is engraved the Egyptian symbol of eternity, with the outstretched wings, the disk, serpents, and other emblems. In many of these Phœnician remains we have the Egyptian, in others the Assyrian recalled, but nowhere has yet been found anything resembling the Hittite type.

When we reach the head of the Wâdy 'Ashûr, north of the village of Kefra, the summit of the hill affords a magnificent view. Three thousand feet beneath is the strip of the Phœnician plain, with Tyre conspicuous, jutting out from its neck of sand into the sea, fringed by the Mediterranean. Turning round, Hermon (see pages 334 and 375, vol. i.) and the craters of the Lejah stretch from north to south, with the great castle of Shûkif distinct, perched on its crag south-west of Hermon. One bit of snow behind it marks the beginning of the Lebanon (see page 337, vol. i.), while on the top of an isolated cone immediately to the east frowns the castle of Tibnîn, as though still impregnable, and giving the idea of a stupendous fortress, looking all the larger from its isolation.

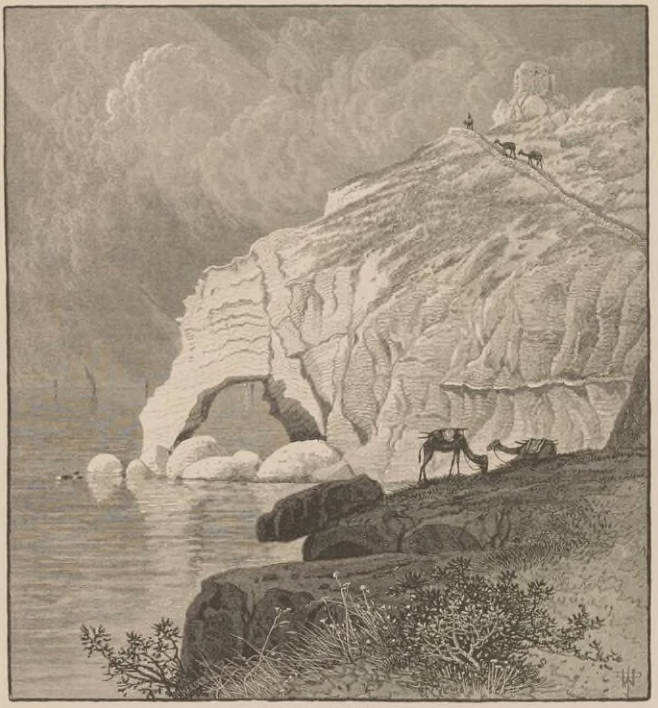
And now, having surveyed the highlands, we will descend by that charming glen again to Râs el 'Ain (see page 60), and after a farewell glance at its dripping cisterns and fairylike festoons of maiden-hair fern, we continue along the shore till we reach the bluff headland of Râs el Abyad, "White Cape," which boldly projects into the sea, the sharp and clearly defined boundary of the Phœnician Plain (see page 65). The chalky headland is often called the Ladder of Tyre, and a true ladder it would be were it not that many of its rungs are wanting, and the path, being worn in the cliff side without the slightest bridge or fence and overhanging the sea two or three hundred feet below, is somewhat trying to novices in Palestine riding. From the crest of the pass is a very impressive view of the Phœnician coast. Desolate as the plain is, it is, at least in early summer, green, and shows well with its girdle of sand curving gracefully as it recedes, and then runs out in the headland of Tyre. Curving again inwards from this point we can follow it beyond the promontory of Sûrafend, which forms the head of the second bow. The ridge of the limestone hills behind varies in colour, through blending shades of purples, reds, and yellows, closing with the white and glittering brow on which we stand, while behind all tower the snowy ranges of Jebel Sûnnîn and Jebel esh Sheikh (Hermon), from forty

to sixty miles distant. From the ladder of Tyre is a very narrow stony plain, extending in a crescent shape for about six miles as the crow flies, but over eight to ride, to the next headland, Râs en Nâkûrah (see page 69), beyond which commences at once the plain of Acre. Between the two promontories, slightly retired from the shore, are the ruins of a considerable town without a history, save that here Alexander encamped after the capture of Tyre, in honour of which a city was founded, called Alexandroschene, still preserving the name of Iskanderûneh. The embayed coast is here fringed by a rough

LOOKING TOWARDS TYRE FROM NÂKÛRAH.
An old olive-tree in the foreground and a Muslim cemetery on the hillside.

stony plain, or rather a gradual crescent-shaped slope, soon rising into low hills. One conspicuous Doric column still stands erect in the wilderness, with the shafts of many others, which have formed a colonnade, strewn around. A little farther on, marble fountains, fragments of tesselated pavement, gateways and architraves may be seen half buried in the thickets, with

many pieces of sculpture, some with emblems of Ashtaroth or the moon goddess. No inscription has been found here, nor is there now a solitary inhabitant in the bay till we reach Nâkûrah at the next pass. The road or stony track keeps close along the shore and then



RÂS EN NÂKÛRAH.
The road over this headland, which has also been called the "Ladder of Tyre," has lately been greatly improved. South of it there is a spring called 'Ain el Musheirifeh.

climbs by the brow of the headland of Râs en Nâkûrah, the second ladder of Tyre, the southern side of which is shown on this page.

So soon as the crest of the pass has been surmounted a fine view bursts suddenly upon the traveller. The rear of the rocky platform is shut in by Jebel Mushakka, and in front is spread the whole expanse of the plain of Acre, at least of its shore-line as far as Carmel. As the eye

follows the fringe of sand, a brown knob a few miles off marks the site of Zîb, the ancient Achzib, the frontier town of Asher. Far beyond, another spit of sand is crowned by the buildings of the historic Acre, one of the few spots in Syria which has drawn to its focus a concentration of historic episodes, which link its name with almost every chapter in the story of Syria's fortunes for two thousand years. Beyond it again, in the far distance, the glass reveals the white spot in a crescent of green which, nestled under Carmel, marks the now flourishing Haifa. We here get our first view of Carmel from the north (see page 72). While able to realise its full extent, the effect of this outline is rather tame, as it gradually slopes towards the sea; yet the length of the ridge rising suddenly at this point of view from the plain, and forming a barrier across the horizon, makes it a conspicuous feature. But the nearer view, a green cultivated plain many miles in extent, studded with olive groves, with their grey-blue hue spangling the carpet, and each grove half concealing a village, affords a striking contrast to the solitudes of the Phœnician coast.

The road to Acre lies along the shore, but there are too many objects of interest to allow us to hurry onwards. Zîb itself possesses nothing but its name to delay us. It is simply a modern village built on a mound of ruins. The valley of the little stream, Wâdy Kûrn, which is almost lost in the sands as it reaches Zîb, where in ancient days it may have formed a creek for the fishing boats of Asher, is one which well repays a few days' exploration. The stream, swarming with fish, winds through a wooded glen which pushes into the plain, and forms one of the several spurs which, running from the Galilean hills, practically divide the plain of Acre from that of Esdraelon. A ride of four and a half hours from El Bûssah, in a south-east direction, brings us to the mediæval fortress known as Kûl'at el Kûrn, the *mons fortis*, Montfort of the Crusaders. Few travellers have entered it, but it is one of the finest ruins of Palestine. It is the first of that great chain of fortresses, stretching from the sea to Mount Hermon, by which the knights bade defiance to any attempted invasion from the north. Montfort was the apex of a triangle with the strongholds of Tyre and Acre at each extremity of its base. Thence a short day's march east found the battlements of Tibnîn. From that citadel, a few hours distant, the impregnable walls of Shûkîf (Belfort) commanded the passage of the Litâny. South of Shûkîf and Tibnîn, on the hill where now stands the village of Kaukâb el Hawa, Belvoir overlooked the passage of the Jordan and the bridge south of the Sea of Galilee, while northwards frowned Hûnîn (see pages 337 and 340, vol. i.), commanding the plain of Hûleh; and within sight of it again the mighty fortress of Subeibeh (see pages 354 and 355, vol. i.), overhanging Bâniâs, under Hermon, and guarding the eastern approaches from the Haurân. Every one of these was, while sufficiently garrisoned, impregnable under the conditions of mediæval warfare, and no invader could dare to leave them unmasked in his rear.

None of these, though the most decayed may compare with any other ruin in the country (for the Saracens, though they may have captured, took care to do no more than dismantle them), can rival Kûl'at el Kûrn in its state of preservation. Seven miles from the coast, one thousand

and fifty feet above the sea, and five hundred and sixty above the stream at its foot, a tongue of rock stands out between two ravines with perpendicular sides, not more than twenty yards wide and two hundred yards long, and cut off from the ridge behind by a deep artificial chasm. Where needful its sides have been coated with masonry, each tier sloping inwards, but the course above projecting three inches, so that scaling was impracticable. On the top are four successive fortresses, each successively defencible, and under each enormous cisterns, securing an independent supply of water. From the masonry of the lower structures it would seem that the fortress was originally Phœnician, that it was afterwards enlarged, and, perhaps, rebuilt by the Syrian Greeks or the Romans, and finally strengthened as we now see it by the Christian knights. It is, indeed, one of the most interesting relics of the long and hardly won, and still more hardly kept, dominion of our Norman ancestors. Yet all that history tells us of it is, that it was built by Hermann, grand master of the Teutonic knights, in A.D. 1229, and captured by Sultan Bibars in A.D. 1291. The knights, however, did little more than restore and strengthen fortifications of far earlier conquerors, as Phœnician, Greek or Maccabæan, and late Roman work, can be successively traced below the mediæval structures.

From Kûl'at el Kûrn the road to Acre passes through a partially wooded undulating plain for about four hours, till the maritime plain, drained by the classic river Belus (see page 72), now the Nahr Na'mân, is reached. The spurs of the Galilean lower hills run far down and form a low barrier between the plain of Acre and the plain of Esdraelon. From these spurs are fed the springs which supplied the aqueduct on the north. From the south-east the Belus (see page 72) works its way through its marshy bed, the sand almost absorbing it as it nears the shore.

The whole of this plain of Acre is studded, especially at the foot of the surrounding hills, with mud-built villages, many of them inheriting ancient names, but none bearing any other signs of antiquity. Thus we find to the south-east of Acre, Kabûl, the Cabul of Joshua and Kings, and north of it Amkah, the old Beth-emek; Semîrîyeh, anciently Sherivron-meron; Abdeh, or Abdon; Jefât, the Jotopata of Josephus; and many others. The fame of the river Belus arises from the Greek tradition, that the invention of glass manufacture was due in the first instance to the accidental discovery on its banks of a vitreous mass produced by a fire of seaweed among the flints and sand, which some sailors had lighted when camping here. There are no traces of glass works to be seen, but we know that the Tyrians were the first manufacturers, and the tradition may very probably be true.

From the springs of the Nahr Na'mân is an interesting ride up a gentle wooded slope to Shefa 'Amr, one of the principal villages of the district. We know nothing of its biblical name or history. It first came into notice in the time of the Crusades, and was the head-quarters of Saladin when endeavouring to raise the siege of Acre. On the crest of the hill are the ruins of an extensive mediæval castle, apparently of Saracenic construction. Nothing of interest beyond its massive walls remains. There is a very fine view of Acre, Haifa, and the plain from this castle. Not a mile to the south, on the opposite hill, is another smaller ruined castle, El Burj.

Shefa 'Amr, which is chiefly Christian, also possesses a church and schools of the Church Missionary Society.

From Shefa 'Amr is a beautiful ride through wooded glens—almost the only park-like scenery with fine timber left on the west side of Jordan, but, alas! rapidly perishing under the

THE CITY OF ACRE (AKKA) FROM THE NORTH.
Mount Carmel is seen in the distance, beyond the bay. Muslim cemetery and aqueduct in the foreground.

axe of the charcoal-burner—till we reach the large village of Sefûriyeh, the ancient Sepphoris, Diocæsarea of the Romans, Kitron of Joshua, eight miles to the south-east, girt with olive groves. Here are ruins reminding us of the part that Sepphoris played in the history of the Herods and of the Crusades. The central apse of the Crusaders' church still exists, and above

THE CITY OF ACRE FROM THE SOUTH.
The mouth of the Nahr Na'mân, the ancient river Belus, in the foreground, where, tradition says, glass was first produced by an accidental combination of the necessary materials.

it on the hill is the castle; the lower portion of the work of the Herods, or even earlier, but the gateway and pointed arches above of the Crusading period (see page 286, vol. i.). The place which once boasted a Roman mint is now a squalid Muslim village.

From Sefûriyeh good horse-paths lead both to Nazareth and to the coast.

GATE OF 'AKKA (ST. JEAN D'ACRE).
It is the only entrance to the city, and is situated near the south end of the eastern land wall, close to the head of the shallow harbour.

# ACRE, THE KEY OF PALESTINE.

FROM every point of view the external appearance of 'Akka (Acre) is pre-eminently picturesque, and especially so from the deck of a yacht or steamer approaching the shore on a calm bright moonlight night, or, as an Arab would say, "when God's lantern is in the sky."

The bold western front of the city appears suddenly to rise up before us out of the sea, with its loopholed battlemented walls, its square towers, and its serviceable lighthouse at its southern extremity. In the northern division of the city, the lofty and curiously buttressed dome of the great mosque of Jezzar Pasha vividly reflects the moonlight (see page 76), and near to it the formidable-looking citadel is conspicuous. No city in Syria or Palestine so completely carries one back in fancy to Crusading and feudal times as does this city of 'Akka, especially when thus beheld from the sea; if the tall minaret of the great mosque were not

there to remind us of the local supremacy of the followers of the prophet Muhammed, we might easily imagine ourselves to be steering towards a stronghold still occupied by Crusading kings and by those Knights of St. John to whom the place owes its familiar European name of St. Jean d'Acre. We glide round the formidable-looking redoubt at the southern point of the promontory or rocky reef on which the city is built, and are soon safely anchored in the bay south of the shallow harbour (see page 72).

The broad plain of 'Akka (see page 80) is flooded with white mist which quivers in the moonlight, and makes the undulating hills of Galilee far away in the east, and the level range of Carmel in the south, look strangely unsubstantial and foundationless. But morning dawns and the mists are cleared away, and our illusions are to a great extent dispelled by a nearer approach to the city.

The distinctive feature of 'Akka is its complete isolation. There are people still living who remember when (during the peaceful rule of Suleiman, who became pasha of 'Akka a few years after the death of the tyrant Jezzar Pasha, in 1804) the plain north of the city was planted with pines and firs and groves of the rapidly growing *Melia Azederach*, commonly called the "Pride of India," a favourite tree for plantations in Syria and Palestine, with tender green foliage and pendent lilac blossoms, which are succeeded by clusters of yellow berries. But all the trees within a mile and a quarter of the city were cut down by order of Abdallah Pasha (the successor of Suleiman as governor of 'Akka, in 1820), lest they should serve as places of ambush for an enemy. The cleared space is now occupied by cotton-fields, melon grounds, and vegetable gardens, skirted by the aqueduct from El Kâbry, while near to the seashore there is a strip of fever-producing marsh-land. But there is nothing to intercept the view of the city (see page 72).

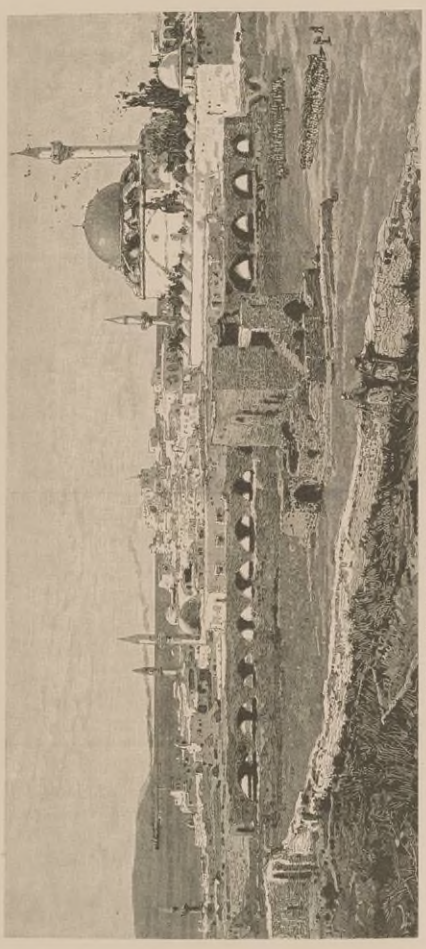
Nearly all other important walled towns of Syria and Palestine are by degrees overleaping their boundaries and losing their original characteristics. The walls of Beirût (see page 28) have altogether disappeared except on the eastern side of the city. This is the natural result of peace and prosperity. Even the city of Jerusalem is rapidly extending beyond its walls, but happily only on the northern and western sides (see steel plate facing page 4, vol. i.). Colonel Sir Charles Wilson thus describes the impression made upon him by his recent visit to that city. "The approach to Jerusalem was to me a painful one. When I left in 1866, the only buildings outside the town were the Russian convent and two or three small houses; now new Jerusalem is almost as large as the old one. I had always liked to think of Jerusalem as the walled city, with its gates closed at nightfall, surrounded by olive gardens, which I had learned to know so well during the Survey, and it was anything but pleasant to ride over the hard metalled road through a long suburb, such as one sees round a third-class Italian town."

This refers to the approach to Jerusalem from the north-west by the carriage road from Jaffa.

There is no prospect of any such innovations at 'Akka. The city is of irregular form,

RUINS OF AN AQUEDUCT EAST OF 'AKKA.
The position of the stork is quite characteristic, as storks instinctively take possession of lofty deserted structures, where they may build their huge nests in safety.

and contains an area of fifty acres. Its western sea front is its longest façade in a direct line, and leads one to expect to find the city very much larger than it really is. On the land side, facing the north and east, there is a double line of fortifications and a deep fosse (see page 76). The outer line was commenced by Jezzar Pasha in 1799, immediately after the retreat of Napoleon I., who had for sixty days besieged the city in vain, notwithstanding his eight deadly assaults on it. Napoleon's transport ships, which were to have landed his heavy ordnance and stores at Haifa (see page 83), were



GENERAL VIEW OF 'AKKA FROM THE NORTH-EAST. CARMEL IS THE DISTANCE.

More than half the space within the walls is occupied by Government buildings and barracks. On the right is the great mosque of Jezzar Pasha, with its curiously buttressed dome. It stands in a square court surrounded by domed chambers for the use of the mosque attendants and pilgrims. The steamer is approaching the town of Haifa, at the foot of Mount Carmel.

cleverly intercepted and captured by Admiral Sir Sydney Smith, and used in defence of 'Akka. Jezzar Pasha's outwork, which was completed and extended by the above-mentioned Abdallah Pasha in 1820, is four hundred feet in advance of the inner line of fortification, which was constructed by the celebrated Sheikh Dhâher el 'Amer, who, having made himself master of Central Palestine, chose this city as his place of residence in the year 1749. It is conjectured that these two lines of fortification coincide with those of the Crusaders (see engraving).

The sea-wall along the south front of the city is of great strength; it is built of very large stones with marginal drafts and rustic bosses, characteristic of the work of the Crusaders. The harbour is formed by the curve of the narrowing reef on which the city is built towards the south-west, corresponding with the curve of the opposite shore to the south-east. There are the remains of

an ancient mole, visible under water, running eastwards from the south-east point of the reef, but within this line the average depth of the harbour is now only three feet. This partly arises from recent silting, but chiefly from having been purposely filled up early in the seventeenth

ABLUTIONS AFTER A MID-DAY MEAL.

Of all the people of the East it may be said, "except they wash their hands diligently, eat not," and after a meal it is urgently necessary when fingers have been used instead of forks.

century by the renowned rebel Druse chieftain, the Emir Fakr ed Dîn, who held supreme sway over Syria and Palestine from the year 1595 to 1634. He, however, greatly strengthened the city and revived its commerce; he also built the large and convenient khân near the south-

eastern end of the reef, called (in memory of its occupation by European merchants and factors the Khân of the Franks. In a corner of this khân there is a Franciscan monastery, famous for its lofty-terraced roof. The port of 'Akka extends one thousand feet from north to south, and seven hundred feet from east to west, but it affords no protection in stormy weather, and ships then seek refuge at the opposite side of the bay in the sheltered haven of Haifa (see page 83), which is formed by a deep curve of the shore at the foot of the headland of Carmel (see page 88).

It was at Haifa that Ibrahîm Pasha, stepson of Mohammed Ali, Viceroy of Egypt, and commander of the Egyptian army, caused his artillery and stores to be landed preparatory to his investment of 'Akka in November, 1831. His cavalry and the bulk of his infantry marched through the desert from Egypt, entered Palestine at El Arish, and without opposition took possession of Gaza and Jaffa (see page 129). At the latter place Ibrahîm arrived simultaneously from Alexandria, with a large fleet carrying siege material and the remainder of the troops. He landed at Jaffa with his staff and marched northwards up the coast, at the head of his army of between thirty and forty thousand men, and, rounding the promontory of Carmel, approached Haifa. To the great terror of the townspeople, the fleet at the same time steered towards the shore and safely landed the siege material. Ibrahîm thence marched onwards to 'Akka, skirting the bay (see page 80), while his squadron proceeded to attack the city by sea, thus enabling the land forces to take up their position before it, under great advantages, on November 27th, 1831.

The siege was not, at the onset, scientifically conducted. For more than five months a furious and reckless bombardment was kept up, during which time thirty-five thousand shells were thrown into the heart of the city, causing terrible destruction to life and private property, while comparatively little damage was done to the walls and ramparts. A breach which had been made in February, and assaulted twice unsuccessfully, had been successfully repaired. Mohammed Ali, impatient of delay and of the waste of ammunition without any results, sent Roset, a Neapolitan engineer of great experience, to 'Akka to organize the siege, and fifteen days after his arrival, the place, though defended with great vigour and bravery by Abdallah Pasha, was taken by storm. The final assault was made on May 27th, 1832, soon after daybreak. The conflict continued through all the heat of the day, and it was not until late in the afternoon, when hundreds of men had been killed in the breach, that the city surrendered —exactly six months after the commencement of the siege. The place was given up to pillage, and terrible scenes ensued.

The whole country soon became subject to Mohammed Ali, and 'Akka speedily rose out of its ruins, but as an Egyptian fortress. The public buildings were restored, streets and bazaars rebuilt, a military hospital erected on the site of the Hospice of the Knights of St. John, and the fortifications strengthened until they were deemed almost impregnable. In the meantime all citizens who had survived the siege or who had taken refuge in distant towns were encouraged to re-establish themselves in 'Akka, and a great impetus was given to

trade and commerce. The city was occupied by the élite of the Egyptian army under Colonel Sêve (a former aide-de-camp to Marshal Ney), and was kept constantly stored with five years' provisions and abundant ammunition. Ibrahim Pasha caused the long western sea-wall to be almost entirely reconstructed, with stones carried away from the fortress of 'Athlit (see page 98). The scarps of this wall are from thirty to forty feet in height; in its centre stands the Burj el Hadid (the Iron Tower); at the northern end there is another important tower called Burj el Kerim, while Burj Sanjâk (the Flag Tower), also built by Ibrahim with stones from 'Athlit, protects the southern extremity.

But as soon as the city had to all outward appearance recovered from the terrible effects of the siege of the year 1832, it had to undergo another bombardment. The fleets of England, Austria, and Turkey united to expel the Egyptian invaders from Syria and Palestine, just when the people in the district of 'Akka were becoming somewhat reconciled to the rigorous rule of Ibrahim Pasha. But the siege on this occasion, though most disastrous, was of very short duration. The British fleet appeared off 'Akka on the 3rd of November, 1840, and the Egyptian colours were immediately hoisted at the Citadel and the Flag Tower, in defiance. Admiral Stopford directed the operations of the squadron from a steamboat. Commodore Napier, commanding the northern, and Captain Collier the southern division, led their ships close up to the fortress, and took up their positions at two o'clock in the afternoon, under a tremendous fire from the batteries. But the Egyptian artillery officers had not anticipated that the fleet would venture so near to the ramparts, and they fired very much too high. The result was that while the ships poured in their broadsides in a terrific manner, and with great effect, the balls from the fortress flew over their hulls almost harmlessly. There was an uninterrupted roar of guns and the atmosphere was darkened with smoke. At about four o'clock a terrible explosion took place within the fortifications on the land side. The whole of the arsenal and one of the principal magazines, containing five hundred barrels of powder, were blown up, and two entire regiments (consisting of at least sixteen hundred men), who were formed in position on the ramparts above it, were at once annihilated. An unknown number of women and children and animals perished at the same time. Everything within an area of sixty thousand square yards was destroyed, and masses of solid buildings, blown to a great height in the air, descended in a shower of fragments, greatly damaging the fortifications on the land side. This accident naturally hastened the conclusion of the contest. At sunset the firing ceased from the ships and from the batteries; the fleet then retired into deep water. Soon after midnight a boat put off from the shore conveying to the fleet the startling intelligence that the Egyptian troops were hastily quitting 'Akka. An armed force immediately landed and took possession of the city without opposition, and thus it became once more a Turkish fortress. Daylight disclosed a terrible state of devastation—scarcely a dwelling-house in the city had escaped injury. Ordnance stores, however, of every description, and in extraordinary abundance, were found in excellent order; no fortress at that period could have been better provided with munitions of war; but the destruction of life had

been so great in a few hours that this was of no avail to the besieged. The scene of the explosion of the magazine and arsenal is said to have resembled the crater of a volcano; it was a vast hollow, a mile in circumference, lined with smouldering débris and surrounded to a great distance with dead bodies. Unhappily, there was another explosion two days

THE PLAIN OF 'AKKA FROM THE SLOPES OF CARMEL.

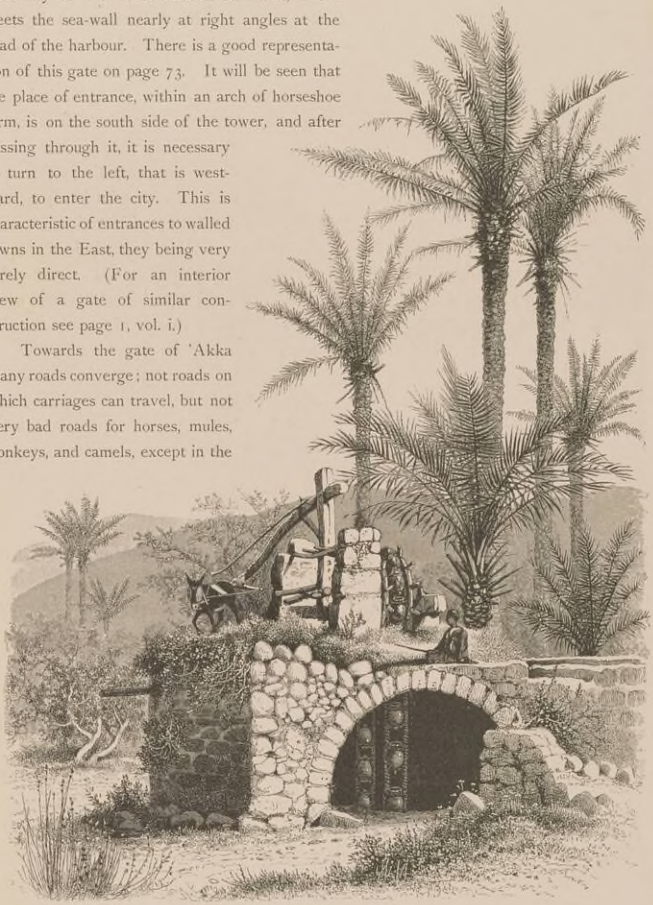
Showing the grove of palm-trees which extends from Haifa nearly as far as the mouth of the river Kishon.

afterwards near to this spot; five cases filled with ammunition blew up in rapid succession, and an unknown number of people were killed, including many women who were seeking for the bodies of their husbands among the ruins.

There was great difficulty at first in restoring order in the city, owing to the propensity to plunder and the confusion of languages. But authority finally prevailed, and under the energetic direction of British and Turkish officers the work of reparation commenced, and by degrees 'Akka once more rose out of its ruins. When Mohammed Ali heard of the loss of 'Akka he sent instructions to Ibrahim Pasha to evacuate the whole of Syria and Palestine immediately; these provinces were accordingly restored to the Turkish Empire.

The only entrance to 'Akka is through Burj Kepi (the Gate Tower), near the southern extremity of the short eastern land-wall, which meets the sea-wall nearly at right angles at the head of the harbour. There is a good representation of this gate on page 73. It will be seen that the place of entrance, within an arch of horseshoe form, is on the south side of the tower, and after passing through it, it is necessary to turn to the left, that is westward, to enter the city. This is characteristic of entrances to walled towns in the East, they being very rarely direct. (For an interior view of a gate of similar construction see page 1, vol. i.)

Towards the gate of 'Akka many roads converge; not roads on which carriages can travel, but not very bad roads for horses, mules, donkeys, and camels, except in the



A WELL IN A GARDEN OF HAIFA.
Showing a machine, called a sâkiyeh, raising water to fill the adjacent tank, on the right.

rainy seasons. There are the old coast roads from the north and south, the much-frequented road from Jenîn *viâ* the plain of Esdraelon (see page 258, vol. i.), the roads from Safed (see page 328) and Sefûrîyeh (see page 286), but the road from the great, treeless, corn-producing plain of the Haurân, the chief granary of the whole country, is by far the most important. Wheat in that highly-favoured region yields eightyfold, and barley a hundredfold (see Matthew xiii. 8). Its semi-transparent "hard wheat" is very highly valued and largely exported; and during the season thousands of camel-loads of this grain arrive at 'Akka. The road which unites the Haurân with this city, its natural seaport, must have been much used, if not made, by the Romans. It passes through southern Jaulân, the ancient Gaulanitis, crosses the Jordan south of the Sea of Galilee, and after being joined by an old road from Tiberias (see page 303, vol. i.), takes an almost direct course to 'Akka. At other seasons this road is traversed occasionally by camels laden with millstones made of basalt, which abounds in the Lejâh (Trachonitis), a rocky region of the Haurân, of volcanic origin, situated to the east of Jaulân (Gaulanitis, see page 340, vol. i.) and north-east of the great corn-plain above mentioned, which owes its extraordinary fertility to the fact that its soil is composed of basaltic trap in a state of disintegration.

In forming millstones, especially of this extremely hard material, considerable skill is required. The stones for hand-mills are usually from eighteen to twenty-four inches in diameter, but larger ones are made to be worked by wind or water power (see page 8). The upper surface of the nether millstone is slightly convex, and fits into a corresponding concavity in the upper millstone, which is called in Arabic *râkib*, راكب, "the rider," corresponding with the Hebrew *rekeb*, רֶכֶב, "chariot." They are each pierced through the centre, and in the hole of the lower stone a strong pivot is fixed, on which the upper millstone "rides." When two women are "grinding together at a mill" they sit opposite to each other, grasping the upright handle fixed near to the edge of the upper stone, and moving it together steadily in a circle, so as to cause the "rider" to rotate regularly. The woman whose right hand is disengaged throws the grain into the cup-like aperture in the centre as required (see page 127, vol. i.). The mill is sometimes fixed in a kind of cement which rises round it in the form of a shallow bowl, and receives the meal as it falls from between the stones. The "nether millstone," to which the heart of "leviathan" is compared in Job xli. 24, is frequently formed of a denser kind of stone than the upper one. The basaltic district of the Haurân furnishes stones of every degree of density, but all of extreme hardness, and mills made from them are so much in demand on account of their great durability, that notwithstanding the expense of transport (a pair of ordinary millstones being a load for a camel), they are sent in great numbers to 'Akka, and thence widely distributed by land and by sea.

Comparatively few camels are possessed by the peasantry of Palestine. At harvest times and for special services they are hired of the Bedawîn who frequent the regions east of the Jordan, and whose chief wealth consists of herds of camels, which are absolutely

necessary to the existence of nomadic tribes. Camels which are used for bearing burdens are called *jemel* (see page 189, vol. i.), and those which are bred and trained for riding *dhelul* (see page 159, vol. i.); the difference between them is as great as that between a race-horse and a cart-horse.

At certain times, for a few days in succession, strings of camels approach 'Akka, carrying baskets of rice from the valley of the Jordan. From nearer districts baggage mules bring bales of cotton, sacks of olives, and jars of oil, or packages of scammony and madder (*alizari*), all in due season; but every day, early in the morning, troops of donkeys and peasants arrive from the neighbouring gardens and villages with fruit and vegetables, eggs and milk, while fishermen land their spoils from the sea; and in fine weather, during the busy season, the scene

THE BAY OF 'AKKA FROM THE SLOPES OF CARMEL.
With the ruined castle of Haifa in the foreground and a glimpse of the town of Haifa at the foot of the castle-hill; in the distance the city of 'Akka is clearly shown.

is further enlivened by little boats hurrying to and fro with merchandise or provisions for ships in the offing.

Al Hariri (1052—1123), the most famous Arabic poet of the Mohammedan era, who flourished during the First Crusade, wrote, in the last of his Assemblies (Makâmât), words in praise of a seaport town which are perfectly applicable to 'Akka:—

"This is the pleasant place of meeting, the meeting-place of the ship and the camel, where lizards may watch the leaping sea-fish, where the camel-driver communes with the sailor, and the fisherman astonishes the tiller of the soil with stories of the sea."

'Akka contains, according to a recent estimate, about nine thousand inhabitants, of whom seven thousand five hundred are Mohammedans, including the garrison of Turkish soldiers; the rest, with the exception of a few Jews and Protestants, belong, really or nominally, to the

THE CONVENT OF MOUNT CARMEL.

Its terraced roof commands extensive views along the coast, north and south. The building on the left is used for the accommodation of native pilgrims, and is surmounted by a lighthouse four hundred and seventy feet above the sea.

Latin, the Greek, and the Greek Catholic Churches. Of these the Greek Catholics, who are also called Melchites, and are affiliated to the Latin Church, form by far the largest community. During a residence of several years at Haifa, with my brother Mr. E. T. Rogers, when he was H.B.M. Vice-Consul there, I had frequent opportunities of visiting 'Akka. We could row across the bay in an English boat in an hour and a quarter, or gallop along its sandy shore in two hours and a half (see page 83). There were always kindly greetings for us in Turkish, Arabic, Greek, Italian, French, or English (somewhat broken English,

THE GROTTO KNOWN AS "THE SCHOOL OF THE PROPHETS."

To which pilgrimages are made by Mohammedans, in honour of Elijah. The house on the left is modern, but occupies the site of an ancient chapel. It is opposite the entrance to the cave.

but none the less pleasant to hear) as we crossed the open space within the gate of 'Akka, where there is generally a little crowd assembled during the business hours of the day. Close by is the great corn market, sometimes almost blocked up with its heaps of golden grain, its busy buyers

and sellers, and heavily laden porters. Beyond are the bazaars. The principal one is well-built and substantially roofed, and largely supplied with silks from the looms of Aleppo and Damascus, Manchester cottons printed and plain, glass, cutlery, and crockery ware from Marseilles and Trieste, and jewellery from Constantinople. The smaller bazaars for provisions and more homely merchandise are sheltered with planks and mats or carpets. A very excellent kind of fine matting is made here, to measure, for covering floors of stone or cement. There are many well-built and commodious private houses in 'Akka, some of which (chiefly those occupied by foreigners and native Christians) are furnished in semi-European style, where Eastern and Western customs are agreeably blended. Especially to be remembered is the home of Mr. Girgius Giammal, with its cheerful-looking many-windowed saloon overlooking the sea, in which I have often been kindly welcomed.

In the Mohammedan establishments there are, as a rule, very few Western innovations. The illustration on page 77 gives a good idea of the general appearance of a thoroughly Oriental reception-room in an ordinary house. The bare walls and the small barred windows are especially characteristic. The broad cushioned divan, which occupies three sides of the apartment, serves as a sleeping place by night, the necessary mattresses and quilted coverlets being kept in readiness, in a deep recess concealed by a curtain or in a closet, in the lower part of the room; for in a genuine Eastern home there are no chambers set apart as bedrooms, the roof or any apartment may be used as a sleeping place as occasion requires, and every bed is portable (Mark ii. 11); thus a great number of guests may easily be entertained at the same time.

In the centre of the room dinner and supper are served; the latter is taken at sunset, and is the chief meal of the day. A round tray of tinned copper or of brass, two or three feet in diameter, and more or less enriched with engraved ornament and inscriptions, serves as the dinner table. It is placed on a stool about fifteen inches high, made of wood, and often inlaid with mother-o'-pearl or ivory, like the one in the illustration (on page 77), on which a coffee-pot and coffee-cups are arranged. Of all people of the East it may be said, "except they wash their hands diligently, eat not" (Mark vii. 3). And this is particularly necessary where knives and forks are not used, and each one "dips his hand into the dish" with his neighbour.

When the dinner or supper is ready a servant brings in a large metal basin (*tisht*), with a perforated cover and a raised perforated receptacle for soap in the middle, and places it before the chief or most aged person present, who takes the soap and rubs his hands, while a stream of water is poured gently over them from a long-spouted ewer (*ibrīk*); the water disappears through the pierced cover, so that when the basin is carried to a second person no soiled water is visible. The same process is repeated after a meal. It is an after-dinner washing of hands that is shown in the illustration on page 77. The elder man, who is blind, has already performed the ablution, and is waiting for his nargileh to be lighted, after which coffee will be served.

It need hardly be said that no ancient buildings are left standing in 'Akka; the most

important of the modern structures owe their origin to Ahmed Pasha, surnamed Jezzar (the Butcher), who died in 1804, and who has been compared to Herod for his cruelty, as well as for his delight in building. The great khân of Jezzar Pasha occupies the site of a Dominican convent; the galleries surrounding it are supported by ancient columns of red and grey granite, hence it is known as Khân el Amîd (Khân of the Columns). The great mosque of Jezzar Pasha, which has been restored again and again (the present buttressed dome having been erected since 1863), occupies the site of a cathedral. It is formed chiefly of ancient materials, the columns of various coloured marbles and granite having been brought from Cæsarea and Tyre. It is an elaborate but not a beautiful structure. It stands, however, in the centre of a magnificent quadrangular court, planted with cypress and palm trees and flowering shrubs, which shelter some tombs of white marble. This court is surrounded by cloisters supported by ancient columns, and divided into apartments for the accommodation of the mosque attendants and pilgrims. The domed roofs of these retreats may be distinguished in the illustration on page 76. The doves hovering over the great dome and settling upon it are characteristic of the place, for these birds are always safe within the precincts of a mosque, and this gives rise to the Arabic expression, "As safe as a dove in the Haram" (the sacred enclosure).

The ramparts of 'Akka, to which access can only be gained by special permission of the Pasha, form a pleasant and interesting promenade, and though the battered walls bristle with cannons and mortars (among which are some of those which Sir Sydney Smith captured from Napoleon's transport ships), yet the place looked peaceful enough when I last walked there, for many little wild plants were growing out of the crevices, and there were some fine specimens of the acanthus in full blossom.

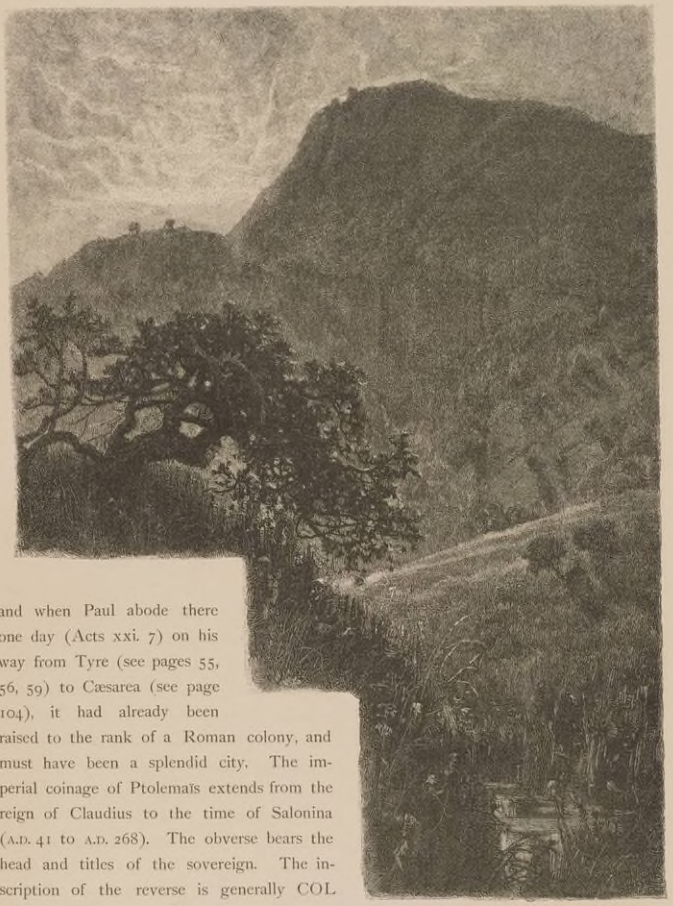
## SKETCH OF THE EARLY HISTORY OF 'AKKA.

It is recorded in Judges i. 31, 32, that the tribe of Asher, to whom the city of Accho, עַכּו ('Akka) was assigned, did not succeed in driving out its inhabitants, "the Canaanites," but "dwelt among them." The fragments of buildings which have been found here, formed of small and highly sun-dried bricks with a mixture of cement and sand, characteristic of structures of the remotest ages, may be regarded as relics of this period. No further mention is made of Accho in the Old Testament, but it is occasionally alluded to by classic authors as Ake, a city of Phœnicia, and mention is made of it by Menander as having yielded to Assyria when Tyre was attacked by Shalmanasar. Akkon is its Assyrian name. That this city was a place of importance when Alexander the Great, B.C. 333, wrested Syria, Palestine, and Egypt from Persian rule, is proved by the existence of numerous very fine gold and silver coins of the Macedonian monarch struck at 'Akka. When Alexander's vast dominions were divided among his generals, who were his successors, Egypt fell to the share of Ptolemy, who subsequently acquired 'Akka, B.C. 320. For a long period the city was under

THE NORTHERN POINT OF MOUNT CARMEL.

With the lighthouse on its summit. The sandy point below is Râs Kerûn (the head of the vineyard). The city of 'Akka appears in the distance, and beyond it are the white cliffs of Râs en Nâkûrah.

the rule of the Ptolemies, who greatly enlarged and beautified it, and gave it the name of Ptolemais. But of this, probably its most brilliant era, no relics which can be with certainty identified remain, except the coins of the Ptolemies which were struck here. They are distinguished from other coins of the Ptolemies by the initial letters of Ptolemais, πτ, on the obverse. The rule of the Ptolemies in 'Akka was not continuous; they lost and regained the city several times during their contests with the Seleucidæan Kings of Syria (see 1 Maccabees xi., xii.). Ultimately this much-contended-for city passed into the hands of the Romans. It was greatly embellished by Herod, though it was not actually within his jurisdiction,



EL MAHRAKAH, THE PLACE OF ELIJAH'S SACRIFICE.

At the south-eastern point of the range of Carmel. In the foreground is the green knoll called Tell el Kassis (the Hill of the Priests), close to which the Kishon flows.

and when Paul abode there one day (Acts xxi. 7) on his way from Tyre (see pages 55, 56, 59) to Cæsarea (see page 104), it had already been raised to the rank of a Roman colony, and must have been a splendid city. The imperial coinage of Ptolemaïs extends from the reign of Claudius to the time of Salonina (A.D. 41 to A.D. 268). The obverse bears the head and titles of the sovereign. The inscription of the reverse is generally COL PTOL. The most striking reverse types are on the coins of Trajan and Hadrian—a female figure wearing a mural crown (the Genius of

the city) seated on a rock, at her feet a river (the Belus), and in her right hand ears of wheat; and on coins of Caracalla—a hexastyle temple in which Fortune stands crowned by Victory, who is placed on a column beside her. At an early period this city became an episcopal see. Clarus, Bishop of Ptolemais, attended the Council of Cæsarea A.D. 198 (see page 107).

In A.D. 638 the Mohammedans took possession of Ptolemais, and its Semitic name of Accho, which had evidently been cherished by tradition, was immediately revived under the form of 'Akka.

The next great change was the conquest of the city by the Crusaders under Baldwin I. A.D. 1104, when it became their chief stronghold and landing-place. The Venetians, Genoese, and Pisans, whose fleets continually conveyed pilgrims and Crusaders, stores and merchandise to the port of 'Akka, had special quarters assigned to them for trade, and the place rapidly grew in importance; yet it surrendered to Salah-ed-din (Saladin) without resistance, A.D. 1187, after his decisive victory at Hattin. (For a view of Hattin see page 296, and for a description of the battle of Hattin see pages 301 and 302, vol. i.) 'Akka was regained by the Crusaders in 1191, after a long siege, by the timely arrival of Richard Plantagenet and Philip Augustus with fresh forces. The city remained in their possession for exactly one hundred years, during which time many splendid buildings, churches, palaces, monasteries, and aqueducts were erected. It became the head-quarters of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, and acquired its European name of St. Jean d'Acre.

The coinage of the Crusaders is very interesting, but there is one series of coins so remarkable as to be worthy of special notice here.

To facilitate dealings with the Arabs, the Venetians, who may be regarded as the money farmers of the Crusaders, struck from time to time, at Tripoli (see page 9), 'Akka, and Jerusalem, gold coins in imitation, more or less exact, of the dinars of the khalifs. On these coins the name and titles of one of the khalifs appeared on the obverse, and on the reverse the declaration of the Mohammedan faith, in Arabic in the Cufic character. This practice continued for a long period, and the fabricated coins passed current throughout the country. When Eudes de Châteauroux, the Legate of Pope Innocent IV., arrived at Acre with Louis IX., he was enraged to find that coins, the legends of which declared that Mohammed was the Apostle of God, were struck and issued under the auspices of the Crusaders. Excommunication was pronounced against "the evil-doers" and ratified by the Pope. But the want of gold coinage was such a serious inconvenience that the Venetians of 'Akka resorted to a subterfuge to get over the difficulty. They once more imitated the coins of the khalifs, but substituted Christian legends for the Mohammedan ones. For instance, one example has on the obverse within a circle (where the name of a khalif ought to appear) the words, "The Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, One God," and in the margin, "Struck at 'Akka in the year 1251 of the incarnation of the Messiah." On the reverse, "We glory in the cross of our Lord Jesus the Messiah, by whom we have our salvation, our

life, our resurrection, and by whom we have been delivered and pardoned." Another coin dated as above has within the square of the obverse, "One God, one faith, one baptism," with a small cross in the centre, and on the reverse a declaration of trinity in unity, with the words, "Glory to God from age to age, Amen," in the segments of the circle.

Christian rule in Palestine came to an end in A.D. 1291, when the Egyptian sultan, Melek-el-Ashrâf Khalîl, son of Kâlaoun, took the city of 'Akka by storm, after a siege of one month. He gave orders for the demolition of its walls and churches; but a gateway of one of its churches was preserved and carried to Cairo (El Kahireh) as a trophy of victory. El Makrizi, the celebrated Arab historian (refer to page 476, vol. i.) relates the circumstance, and speaks with enthusiasm of the beauty of this gate, saying, "It is one of the most admirable that the hands of man have made, for it is of white marble, novel in style, surpassing in workmanship, its bases and jambs and columns all conjoined (clustered), and the whole was conveyed to Al Kahîreh." It forms the entrance to the mosque tomb of Melek-en-Nasr Mohammed, brother and successor (1293—1341) of the above Melek-el-Ashrâf Khalîl (1290—1293), in the Sûk en Nahhasin, one of the main thoroughfares of Cairo; and it often puzzles travellers who do not know its history. This gateway is especially interesting, being the only perfect relic now left of the numerous churches built by the Crusaders at 'Akka.

A traveller in Palestine in the middle of the fourteenth century (Ludolf de Suchem) describes 'Akka as empty and desolate, but he says that its churches, towers, and palaces were not then so completely destroyed as to have rendered their restoration impossible. About sixty Saracens were left to guard the place and port. They supported themselves by the culture of silk and the sale of doves and partridges which swarmed there. The city was still in ruins when it passed into the possession of Selim I., the Sultan of Turkey, A.D. 1517, and it did not begin to revive until the seventeenth century. The only remains of Crusading work now distinguishable are the subterranean magazines beneath the modern military hospital, a range of immense vaults under the ramparts, traces of the churches of St. Andrew and of St. John, and portions of the city wall.

About one mile due east of 'Akka stands the "Mount Turon" of the Crusaders, where Richard Cœur de Lion encamped in 1191, and where, in 1799 Napoleon planted his batteries in vain. It is an isolated and apparently artificial mount, ninety-six feet in height, completely dominating the city of 'Akka and overlooking the plain. The Arabic name of this hill is Tell el Fokhâr, "the hill of potter's clay," but it is sometimes called Napoleon's Mount, and is also known as the Mount of *Antikâr*, the name given to King Richard in the numerous Arabian chronicles of the Crusades.

## MOUNT CARMEL AND THE RIVER KISHON.

The distance, in a straight line, from the promontory of 'Akka to the headland of Carmel (Râs Kerûm, literally "the head of the vineyard") is eight miles (see page 88). Between these

two points the coast recedes considerably, and the distance along the shore is more than twelve miles. The bay thus formed widens towards the south, measuring not more than a mile near to 'Akka, but at least three miles opposite the mouth of the River Kishon (Nahr Mukütta'), south of which the curving shore forms the haven of Haifa, which faces the north (see page 80). The broad smooth beach of fine sand which leads from 'Akka to Haifa (see page 83) is separated from the fertile plain by a broad belt of drifted sand-dunes, which extends from south of the Belus (see page 72) to Haifa, interrupted only by the ever-shifting mouth of the Kishon, a distance of nine miles. In the middle of the bay this belt of sand-hills is a mile in width. But it is not entirely devoid of vegetation. There are frequent tufts of marram grass (*Psamma arenaria*) binding the sand with its long tangled roots, clumps of the beautiful sea holly (*Eryngium maritimum*), and broad patches of alkali (saltwort), interspersed

WELL AT THE PLACE OF ELIJAH'S SACRIFICE, AND A VIEW FROM THE HEIGHTS ABOVE IT,
Embracing a long line of the coast of the plain of 'Athlit, with a strip of blue sea beyond.

here and there with half-buried shrubs, stunted trees, and thickets of tamarisks; while south of the Kishon, the narrowing sand-ridge is crowned with palm-trees (*Phœnix dactylifera*), which form an extensive grove, the chief glory of Haifa, and one of the most picturesque places in Palestine (see page 80 and the

THE RIVER KISHON FROM EL MAHRAKAH.

The place of Elijah's sacrifice. A Bedawîn encampment in the foreground, and the hills of Galilee in the distance beyond a forest of oak-trees.

steel plate entitled "Mount Carmel"). Within the sand-dunes north of the Kishon the plain extends eastward for four miles to the foot of the hills, where there are numerous villages surrounded by olive-groves. The plain is in many parts well cultivated, and yields cotton and

tobacco, good crops of wheat and barley, and vegetables of many kinds; liquorice grows wild. The marshes by the river Belus (Nahr Na'mân), and near the fountain of Jidru, are in the spring-time bright with blossoming reeds and rushes, and the blue and yellow iris springs up at the edge of every little pool of water (see Job viii. 11); while large expanses of firm ground bordering the marsh-land are carpeted as early as February with anemones—scarlet, crimson, white, blue, purple, pink, and lilac—with patches of clover and mallow here and there, and golden buttercups. Meadow grass grows quickly here, after the winter rains, to the height of two feet or more, and it is curious to see the frail speedwell and pimpernel, with long pale stems, struggling upwards through it towards the light. But this grass of rapid growth quickly falls while yet green, and there is no attempt at haymaking (see Job viii. 12). Many horses, however, are sent here from Haifa to graze during this short season of plentiful pasturage.

The gardens of Haifa are pleasantly situated between the palm-grove above mentioned and the slopes of Carmel (see page 80), and extend from near the east gate of the town to Wâdy Selmân, whose winding channels and large lagoon are fringed with oleasters and sea lavender, and haunted by egrets, herons, and kingfishers. My brother's garden was about a mile and a half from Haifa, and just opposite Wâdy Rashmia. It produced fruit and vegetables of many kinds, but it was most famous for its large white mulberry-tree, and we often rode there to spend the hour before sunset with a few friends, when its fruit was ripe, resting on mats in its shade, or on the broad stone parapet of the raised pool close by. There were a few rose-bushes and carnations round the rustic dwelling of the gardener and his two wives, who seemed to live very amicably together, although the first wife was an Arab woman, no longer young, and the second was an Egyptian girl whom he had avowedly married because he required an extra assistant, and knew that she was clever at gardening, especially in the cultivation of tomatoes, the bâmieh (*Hibiscus esculentus*), and the purple egg-plant (*Melongena badinjan*). But the illustration on page 81 reminds me of another garden, the first I visited at Haifa. It was close to the east gate of the town. We made our way, one pleasant afternoon in October, down a short narrow lane of prickly pears (*Cactus opuntia*), and soon came to a little mud and stone hut, the dwelling-place of the gardener and his family. They were all Egyptians (who are generally considered more skilful than the Arabs in the cultivation of the ground, but they are content with more clumsy machinery). Fig-trees, olives, pomegranates, almonds, oranges and lemons, and large beds of cucumbers flourished under their care, and a few date-palm trees embellished the enclosure; the fruit hangs in golden clusters from these trees year after year, but it does not arrive at perfection in Palestine. A pleasant sound of falling water attracted us towards a rudely built stone reservoir, round which were seated a company of fezzed and turbaned Arabs smoking, chatting, and eating the long rough-skinned but juicy cucumbers for which this garden was especially famous. Water was falling with considerable force into the reservoir from a duct supplied by a series of earthenware jars attached to ropes made of palm fibre, which revolved round a vertical cog-wheel, moved by means of a horizontal wheel also cogged, which was

J. D. WOODWARD. PINXT. E. BRANDARD. SCULPT.

HAIFA, AT THE FOOT OF MOUNT CARMEL.

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kept in motion by a blindfolded mule. As the creaking wheel turned round, the jars dipped into the well and were filled with water, and as soon as they reached the top of the wheel they emptied themselves into the trough, and so on again and again as long as the mule kept up his monotonous round, urged on by a little barefooted boy, stick in hand (see page 81). (This machine is called a *sâkîyeh;* it is said to be of Persian origin, and is much used in Egypt.) A hole in the lower part of the wall of the reservoir was every day unplugged for a certain time, and the water allowed to flow into the little furrows or channels which intersected the beds of vegetables and encircled the trees (see page 284, vol. i.).

The town of Haifa occupies a space in the form of a parallelogram on a gently rising slope close to the seashore, and is protected by well-built stone walls. It has two embattled gates, one at each end of the main thoroughfare, which is parallel with the shore, and has an open space in the middle where camels and their drivers often bivouac by lantern or moonlight. The houses are very irregularly distributed, and with few exceptions have flat roofs, on which the grass grows freely after the winter rains. Those occupied by consuls, foreign merchants, and the wealthier of the townspeople are large substantial two-storied structures, some of which have central verandahed courts paved with marble. The ground-floor premises are generally used for stabling or stores. The town is rapidly rising in importance, and its markets and bazaars are well supplied. Many houses have recently been erected outside the walls. When I first arrived in Haifa in 1855 there were no suburban dwellings except the huts of the gardeners, and the population was not much more than two thousand; but according to a recent estimate it contains five thousand inhabitants, of whom more than half are Christians of various communities. The remainder are Mohammedans and a considerable number of Jews. Immediately behind the town rises a steep hill, a spur from Mount Carmel, dotted with olive and terebinth trees and crowned by a small castle called Burj Haifa, in which English cannon balls of 1840 are embedded (see steel plate "Mount Carmel," and page 83). Although both town and castle have a somewhat venerable appearance they are quite modern, and only date from 1761.

The old historic Haifa which was taken by the Crusaders in the year 1100, regained by the troops of Saladin in 1190, and retaken and refortified by Louis IX., was a mile and a half north-west of the present town, and extended nearly as far as Râs Kerûm (see page 88). It was called by its Christian conquerors the "Seigneurie de Caiphas," and among its successive rulers were Tancred, afterwards Regent of Antioch, and Rorgius, who had previously been "Lord of Hebron." But the city was lost to the Crusaders, and almost destroyed by the Mohammedans, at the end of the thirteenth century. It still existed, however, in 1761, when Sheikh Dhâher-el-'Amer was ruler of Central Palestine (refer to page 76); but he found it so dangerously exposed to the incursions of nomadic tribes from the plains of Athlit (see page 92), that he determined that it should be entirely abandoned. Having bombarded the place, he used its stones to build the walls of the new town. He also constructed the serai and the castle (see page 83). The people of Haifa by degrees built

THE PLAINS OF ESDRAELON FROM THE HEIGHTS ABOVE EL MAHRAKAH, LOOKING TOWARDS THE SOUTH-EAST.

In the distance, in a central position, the village of Zerin (Jezreel), with its white castle, is easily distinguished. On the left rises Jebel Duhy (Little Hermon), and on the right are the Mountains of Gilboa.

their new homes from the ruins of their old ones, and for more than a century the site of the old city, now called Haifa el 'Atikah, served as a quarry of ready-dressed stones. It is at the present time almost covered with gardens and drifting sand-hills, but foundations of walls, broken columns, and large portions of tesselated pavement are sometimes exposed, while the shingly beach below is strewn with fragments of granite porphyry, rosso antico, and serpentine marble. The ruins of a tower stand on the shore and are washed by the sea. "Hidden treasures" of more or less value have been found occasionally among the ruins. The most important discovery was made about thirty years ago, when a workman digging for dressed stones found a jar containing one thousand gold coins of a period anterior to Mohammedan rule in Palestine.

Nearly midway between the new town and these ruins (just where the strip of land between the slopes of Carmel and the shore widens out into a plain rather more than half a mile in width) a small colony of German Templists, chiefly of the agricultural and artisan class, established themselves several years ago. Some of them have lived

in America and can speak English. They numbered in 1877 about three hundred and fifty individuals. Their village consists of a long straight street running up from the sea to the foot of the hills. Two parallel streets have been laid out. The houses, some of which have sloping red-tiled roofs, are built of white limestone, or of reddish grit, quarried

THE RIVER KISHON.

As it appears after the rainy season, where it flows through the narrow pass called Wády el Kasab (Valley of Reeds), which leads from the great plain of Esdraelon to the plain of 'Akka. Oleanders flourish here, and many small birds build their nests.

in the mountains close by. Each dwelling-house stands in its own garden, and has a well and a cistern for rain-water. The street is planted with an avenue of mulberry, sycamore, and other trees, and the hill just above it has been newly terraced and planted with vines by the colonists. (It can be traced in the distance in the steel plate, "Mount Carmel.") They

have a chapel and a college, where several languages, including Arabic, are taught, and a library and reading-room. At the lower end of the street there is an hotel of simple character, which is greatly praised by travellers for its cleanliness. Near it stands a guard-house for the use of the nightly patrol.

Beyond the colony the plain extends towards the north-west to the headland of Carmel, a distance of a mile and a quarter, with an average breadth of half or three-quarters of a mile, and an area of about six hundred acres of good arable land, all now under cultivation, half of it being owned or rented by the Germans, and the rest by Arabs. Olive-groves (a few groups of which belong to the colonists) skirt the base of the hills, and the sandy seashore is fringed with fig orchards and hedges of *Cactus opuntia* (prickly pear). The colonists have made a carriage road from Haifa to Nazareth, and there is a carriage-maker among them. They have also a soap manufactory, which is beginning to do a good trade with America. Every family has a cow or two and a few goats, which an Arab is employed to collect and take out to pasture every day. They are not rich, but they have enough for their actual needs, and seem to be happy. They live peaceably with the people of the country, but apparently do not desire to fraternise with them.*

Near to the rocky shore at the foot of the western extremity of Mount Carmel, where the plain is not more than two hundred yards in width (its narrowest part), there is a mound of ruins called Tell es Semâk, and a ruined fortress, evidently built to guard the pass. This probably was the site of Sycaminum, a city which Strabo, who died A.D. 24, describes as existing only in name in his time, but which must have been of considerable importance a century earlier, for large and beautiful gold coins of Cleopatra, the thrice-married daughter of Ptolemy VI., surnamed Philometer, were struck at Sycamina in the year of the Seleucidæ 187 = B.C. 125. (The strange story of her life is graphically told in 1 Maccabees x. xi.)

Josephus relates that when Ptolemy VIII., surnamed Lathyrus, came from Cyprus with an army of thirty thousand men to besiege Ptolemais (ʿAkka), "he came to the country of Sycamine, and there set his army ashore." Wherever the *city* may have stood, "the country of Sycamine" must have included the shores of the haven within the northern headland of Carmel, the haven of Zebulun. "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for an haven of ships" (Gen. xlix. 13; see page 83). חוף, the Hebrew word for haven, is echoed, with a slight variation, and perpetuated in the Arabic name of the town of Haifa, حيفا, and the Greek Ἡφά.

Eusebius, who died in A.D. 338, speaks of a village of Sycaminum, "also called Ἡφά," and this seems to indicate that the new Sycaminum was built in the "haven," probably on the site

* The sect of "Temple Christians," called also "Lovers of Jerusalem," had its origin in a little village of Würtemberg, in the year 1851. A few piously-disposed individuals united themselves into a society for the promotion of spiritual life. Their numbers quickly increased, and in 1853 they started a newspaper; Christopher Hoffmann, its editor, was elected president of the community. One of their chief aspirations was to help to restore fertility to the land once "flowing with milk and honey." Accordingly, in the year 1868, they sent pioneers to Palestine to select suitable places for colonisation. Plots of land were purchased at Haifa and at Jaffa, and the first company of colonists arrived in the autumn of that year. A colony was subsequently established in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

now called Haifa el 'Atikah (see map). In the Talmud reference is made to חופה, *Haifha* and *Shikmonah.*

Mount Carmel is called in Arabic Jebel Mâr Elyas (the mountain of Saint Elijah), and from time immemorial it has been regarded as a sacred place, "the Mount of God." In the time of Tacitus an altar to the "God of Carmel" is said still to have stood upon the mount, but without temple or ornament, and upon this altar Vespasian sacrificed and consulted the oracle as to his future fortunes.

The grottoes and caves of Mount Carmel were at a very early period used as places of retreat by holy men and sages, and it is recorded that even Pythagoras retired here for study and meditation. Prophets and philosophers were succeeded by Christian recluses, and a regular order of "hermits of Mount Carmel" was instituted in the year 400, by Jean, Patriarch of Jerusalem, in honour of the Prophet Elijah. (Some of the stories and fables which were related to me by people of Haifa were attributed to a hermit of Mount Carmel.) From these hermits naturally sprang the monastic order of the Carmelites, which was organized early in the thirteenth century. Under the protection of the Crusaders they built a monastery, which was visited by Louis IX. in 1252. Edward I. of England was enrolled in this order, and one of its most famous generals was an Englishman, Simon Stock or Stoke of Kent, who for sixteen years lived in a grotto, which is now enclosed in a chapel on the slope of Carmel just below the lighthouse (see page 88). His memory is greatly revered; he died in 1265.

In 1291, when the Crusaders finally lost their possessions in Palestine, the monastery (which was on the site of the present building, shown on page 84) was attacked and plundered, and many of its inmates were murdered. The place was deserted and remained in ruins for a long period. The grotto known as "the School of the Prophets," at the foot of Mount Carmel (see page 85), was, after a long interval, purchased and tenanted for a time by a small company of Carmelites. A little chapel was built close to it by Fra Prospero, but in 1635 the monks were massacred by the Mohammedans, who took possession of the place and have held it ever since. They regard it with great reverence, and keep lamps constantly burning there in honour of Elijah, and it is visited by a great number of pilgrims of divers creeds every year. The grotto, which is partly artificial, is twenty-eight by twenty-one feet square, and eighteen feet in height. I once saw a rudely carved and painted wooden cradle here, and was told that it had been brought by a young mother who had lost two children successively in infancy, and who desired a blessing and protection for her newly-born child, an infant son. A small house, built only a few years ago, stands opposite the entrance to the grotto, where the ruins of the chapel of Fra Prospero could formerly be traced. A palm-tree grows within the enclosed court of this sanctuary (see page 85).

The monastery which Napoleon visited in 1799, and which was used as a hospital for his wounded soldiers after his unsuccessful siege of 'Akka, was destroyed in 1821 by Abdallah Pasha.

The present monastery or "Convent of Mount Carmel" (see page 84), though dedicated "in honorem B. B. Virginis Mariæ," is commonly called Deir Mâr Elyas (the Convent of Saint Elijah). It owes its origin to the indefatigable exertions of one monk, Fra Giovanni Battista di Frascati, who collected the money for its erection. Its first stone was laid in 1828. It is very substantially built; the north side is protected by a ditch; the bastion on the east side, plainly shown in the illustration, is formed by the apse of the chapel which is built over the so-called grotto of Elijah. On a side altar of this chapel there is a large statue of the prophet carved in wood, adorned with silver bracelets, anklets, and necklets, and a silver chain from which is suspended an Austrian gold coin of the value of five sovereigns. These ornaments are chiefly votive offerings of the peasantry of Mount Carmel,

ATHLÎT, FROM THE SOUTH.

Called Castellum Peregrinorum by Mediæval writers. It was one of the most important landing-places for pilgrims during the thirteenth century. It stands on a rocky promontory which projects a quarter of a mile westward into the sea.

including the Druses. There are generally from eighteen to twenty monks in residence, one of whom must be a qualified surgeon. A most hospitable and courteous welcome is always given to European travellers, for whom twenty-eight beds in the handsome suite of rooms on the first floor are always kept in readiness. Native pilgrims are accommodated on the ground-floor and in the building surmounted by a lighthouse west of the convent (see page 84). The monks diligently cultivate a garden of flowers and vegetables, and the vine flourishes under their care. From the abundant aromatic herbs of Carmel they distil fragrant essences and very valuable medicaments. They possess about three hundred goats and twenty cows, and employ native herdsmen to lead them to pasture. There are several small chapels south and east of the convent, called "Rumitorii;" in one of them there is a statue of John the Baptist, carved in wood.

About two miles due south of the convent, on a level space half-way up a picturesque winding valley called Wâdy es Siyeh, السياح, on the western slope of Mount Carmel, there is a ruin known as Ed Deir (the Convent). It is close to a copious fountain, "'Ain es Siyeh" (the

RUINS ON THE WEST SIDE OF ATHLÎT.
The fortress was built by the Templars in the year 1218, and was the last place held by the Crusaders in Palestine. It was taken by the Sultan Melek el Ashráf el Khalîl after his conquest of Acre in 1291.

Pilgrim's Spring), and near to a large and partly artificial cave, which, according to a very ancient tradition, was a favourite retreat of Elijah, and is regarded as a sacred "place" (*mukâm*) by the Mohammedans (refer to page 241, vol. i.). The ruin, Ed Deir, probably marks the site of the convent said to have been built by Brocardus (the second general of the order of the Carmelites) "at the fountain of Elijah." It had but a brief existence, for it was pillaged and its inmates were massacred in the year 1238. The Carmelites did not re-occupy this site, and the building gradually fell to decay.

Higher up in the valley there is a place called "Elijah's Garden," where hollow stones (the geodes of geologists), called locally "petrified fruits," are found. The very large ones, which are now rare, resemble water melons in form and size; smaller ones, which are regarded as apples, are more common. These hollow stones are composed of a pale-coloured flint, with a thin coating of lime, the surface of which is of a tawny tint; the interior is lined with quartz or chalcedony, and some of the specimens are exceedingly beautiful. In addition to these there are small stones, which are not unlike olives in shape and size; they are known as *Lapidis Judaici*, and are said to be the fossil spines of a species of echinus (*Cidaris glandifera*). The existence of these stony fruits is accounted for by an ancient legend, of which I have heard many versions; but it was related to me as follows, on the spot, in the year 1858, when I spent a whole day in the valley with my brother and a large party of Haifa friends:—"In the days of Elijah (Mar Elyas), a certain man possessed a large garden in this valley. His fruit-trees flourished exceedingly, and his water-melons were renowned for their size and flavour. One day Elijah passed by this garden, and he saw its owner gathering melons, and there was a great heap of them upon the ground; and Elijah said, 'O friend! give me of the fruit of your garden, out of your abundance a little fruit to quench my thirst!' And the man answered, 'O my Lord! this is not fruit that you see; these are but heaps of stones!' And Elijah replied, 'Be it so!' And immediately all the fruit of the garden, the gathered and the ungathered, was turned to stone!" *

A pilgrimage to this place is very pleasant in the early spring-time, when the valley is bright with blossoming shrubs, and the cyclamen and narcissus, and many other wild flowers, spring up luxuriantly among the thorns. To give some idea of the wildness of this valley I may mention that, in addition to some specimens of fruits from the Garden of Elijah, I have a broken tusk of a wild boar, a beautifully formed horn of a gazelle, and the claw of a leopard or cheetah, all of which were found there on the same day.

The corresponding valley on the other side of the ridge or watershed of Mount Carmel is a tributary of Wâdy Rashmia, a beautiful valley which runs towards the north, and falls into the Nahr Matneh about one mile east of the town of Haifa (see page 80). The terraced hills of Rashmia (see map) were formerly planted with vines and olives, but they are now overgrown with thorns and brushwood and tall thistles. In a commanding position, seven hundred and seventy-seven feet above the level of the sea, there are the remains of a strong fortress, an oblong building with a square tower at its north-east corner; the walls are seven feet in thickness, and constructed of rather soft limestone. It is comparatively modern, but is quite deserted and allowed to fall into decay. South of this fortress there is a solitary rock-cut nameless tomb, evidently of a very early period. A grooved recess, to the left of the square-headed entrance to it, proves that it was formerly closed by a "rolling stone," four feet

* There are many similar stories told by the people of Palestine in deprecation of inhospitality to wayfarers. For instance:—"One day, when Abraham was on a journey, he passed by a large heap of rock-salt, and he asked its owners to give him a handful of it, but they said, 'Alas! this is not salt; it is only rock in the likeness of salt.' And Abraham answered, 'Be it even as you have said!' And immediately the salt became tasteless rock, and the rock is called to this day 'the salt that lost its savour.'"

in diameter, and this renders it especially interesting (see Mark xvi. 4), for tombs of this kind are now very rarely met with (refer to page 100, vol. i.). Lieutenant Conder has carefully examined it, and he says that its "three *loculi* are cut in the very hardest stone."

Immediately to the east of Haifa there is a little valley called Wâdy es Salîb (the Valley of the Cross). It is famous for its profusion of fragrant herbs, such as salvias of many kinds, wild thyme, lavender, and rosemary. Wild asparagus, too, may be gathered here.

When an Arab story-teller interrupts the thread of his narrative by describing details too minutely, he is rebuked for quitting the main road to wander right and left into the wâdys. I find it rather difficult to avoid this error now, for every valley and ravine of Mount Carmel has some especial attraction for me. But I must hasten onwards. A reference to the map will show that the central ridge of Carmel extends in a south-easterly direction from the Carmelite monastery, which is five hundred and fifty-six feet above the sea, and rises gradually till, at the Druse village of Esfia, a distance of about ten miles, it attains the height of seventeen hundred and forty-two feet. Between these two points there is not a single habitation and no cultivation of any kind. Large expanses of the undulating table-land are covered with thorny burnet (*Poterium spinosum*), shrubberies of myrtle, box and bay trees, thickets of arbutus and evergreen oaks, with small groups of wild olive and pine trees here and there. Clematis and bryony travel from tree to tree, and a multitude of wild flowers spring up after the winter rains. The *Styrax officinalis* flourishes here, and tall hollyhocks, red and pink, may frequently be seen. Many ruined sites and ancient cisterns, mill-stones, and oil and wine presses, remain to show that the mount was formerly well peopled and carefully cultivated. It is said that as recently as the second decade of this century there were seventeen villages still in existence, and inhabited by Druses. In the troublous times which followed they were nearly all destroyed, and only two now remain on Mount Carmel, namely, the above-mentioned Esfia, and Dâliet el Kûrmûl, two miles and a quarter south-west of it. It is somewhat remarkable that at this latter place alone the ancient name of the mountain is preserved by the native population. It was evidently called Dâliet el Kûrmûl (Carmel) to distinguish it from the Dâliet of the Rûheh district. Dâliet signifies "trained vine," and el Kûrmûl represents הכרמל, "the vineyard of God," hence it is "the trained vine of the vineyard of God." The vine is still carefully cultivated here as well as at Esfia, and corn-fields, orchards, and olive-yards give a cheerful aspect to these isolated Druse villages. There are a few Christians living here, on friendly terms with the Druses, but they are easily distinguished by their dress, which is like that of the people of Nazareth.

The houses are built of stone, and form a pleasant contrast to the mud-built hovels of the villages in the plains. The roof of the highest house of Esfia, which is situated on the highest point of the main ridge of Carmel, was chosen as the trigonometrical station during the recent survey, much to the satisfaction and pride of its owner. I stayed at Esfia for a short time once during a hot summer, greatly enjoying the cool fresh mountain air, and I can testify to the extreme kindliness of the people. They are greatly superior in appearance and

VIEW OF THE GREAT SEA FROM ATHLÎT.

Through a large pointed arch, which is only held in position by the extreme hardness and tenacity of the cement used in the construction of this fortress.

intelligence to the inhabitants of the villages in the plains. Some of the women were really handsome, and the young girls and little children remarkably pretty.

About a mile and a half due south of Esfia there is a peak which rises to the height of eighteen hundred and ten feet above the sea. This is the highest point of Carmel; it is half a mile west of the central ridge or watershed, and is rarely visited.

From Esfia we can proceed to El Mahrakah (see page 89), at the south-eastern extremity

REMAINS OF A CRUSADING FORT AT TANTÛRAH.
Its shattered tower is thirty feet in height. In the distance the village of Tantûrah appears, on the site of the ancient city of Dor.

of the Carmel range. In a direct line it is only three miles and a half distant, but practically it is nearly five miles, and the undefined road, over rocky hills and undulating table-land covered with dense thickets and brushwood, is so tortuous that it cannot possibly be followed without an experienced guide. The rude quadrangular structure of hewn stones called El Mahrakah, "the place of burning," is on a terrace of natural rock, sixteen hundred and eighty feet above the sea, facing the plain of Esdraelon (see page 96). A steep, well-wooded cliff,

fifty or sixty feet high, rises behind it, and on a plateau beneath it there is an ancient rock-cut well called Bir el Mansûreh, shaded by a few fine trees, one of which is a Turkey oak (see page 92).

According to a tradition preserved at the convent and by the Druses of Mount Carmel, this was the scene of Elijah's contest with the four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal, in the presence of King Ahab and all the children of Israel and the four hundred prophets of the groves (see 1 Kings xviii. 17—40). This identification is mentioned in a brief history of Mount Carmel written by an Italian monk in 1780. The late Dean Stanley, who visited this place in the year 1853, says: "The tradition is unusually trustworthy; it is, perhaps, the only one in Palestine in which the recollection of an alleged event has been actually retained in the native Arabic nomenclature. Many names of towns have been so preserved; but here is no town, only a shapeless ruin; yet the spot has a name, El Mahrakah, 'the burning' or 'the sacrifice.' The Druses come here from a distance to perform a yearly sacrifice; and, though it is possible this practice may have originated the name, it is more probable that the practice itself arose from an earlier tradition. . . . . There, on the highest ridge of the mountain, may well have stood, on its high sacred place, the altar of Jehovah which Jezebel had cast down. Close beneath, on a wide upland sweep, under the shade of ancient olives and round a well of water (see page 92), must have been ranged on one side the king and the people with the eight hundred and fifty prophets of Baal and Astarte, and on the other the solitary and commanding figure of the prophet of Jehovah. Full before them opened the whole plain of Esdraelon, the city of Jezreel with Ahab's palace and Jezebel's temple distinctly visible (see page 96); in the nearer foreground was clearly shown the winding bed of the Kishon (see page 93). From morning till noon, and from noon till the time of evening sacrifice, the priests of Baal cried in vain, 'O Baal, hear us!' When the sun was sinking behind the mountain, Elijah's sacrifice was accepted by fire from heaven. The last act of the tragedy was performed on the plain below, when Elijah brought the defeated prophets down the steep declivity to the torrent of the Kishon, and slew them there." It has been suggested that this terrible scene took place close to Tell el Kassis, "the hill of the priests," a green mound situated in the narrowest part of the pass or valley called El Kasab (see page 89), which unites the plain of Esdraelon with the plain of 'Akka; and this is not improbable, for a path leads down from El Mahrakah to the river Kishon, just opposite to Tell el Kassis (see page 93). The river is generally fordable near this spot, but its bed must have been quite dry on this occasion after the long drought. The incident which followed can be perfectly realised at El Mahrakah. Elijah returned to the "high place" on the mount, but he told his servant to go up still higher, and look out towards the sea; and he went up to the top of the steep wooded cliff which hides the western horizon, and he looked and saw the Mediterranean beyond the plain of Athlit, just as it is represented on page 92, but he saw no cloud. Elijah said, "Go again," seven times, and after the seventh time the servant said, "Behold, there ariseth a little cloud out of the sea, like a man's hand" (a sure sign of coming

rain to this day), and soon the heavens were "black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. And Ahab rode, and went to Jezreel . . . and Elijah girded up his loins, and ran before Ahab to the entrance of Jezreel" (1 Kings xviii. 45, 46). The view (on page 96) of the great treeless plain of Esdraelon (Merj ibn Amir), as seen from El Mahrakah, shows the route they must have taken. They went towards the south-east, curving round the curiously shaped hill called Tell Kaimûn, which I have heard compared to a curved cucumber (the site of Jokneam), and then hastened onwards straight to Jezreel (Zerin), a distance of sixteen miles. The modern village and its little castle can be plainly distinguished in the illustration, and it is interesting to compare them with the nearer views shown on pages 264, 265, and 268, vol. i.

The view from El Mahrakah, looking towards the north-east (see page 93), shows the Kishon under its best aspect, when its waters are abundant after the rainy season, when all the winter torrents of the hills are full and overflowing. The banks are fringed with oleanders, tall lupins, and St. John's wort, and many kinds of rushes, reeds, and grasses (see page 97). The rounded hill just beyond the river, on page 93, is Tell el Kassis, and farther away, at the edge of the oak forest, there is a village (hidden by the tree in the foreground) called Sheikh Abreik, famous for its subterraneous caverns called Jehennum (Gehenna), which are well worthy of a visit. Further down the river, at the lower end of the narrow pass which leads from the plain of Esdraelon to the plain of 'Akka, there is a village called El Harothieh. It is on a rounded hill, or rather a large mound, over which are scattered the remains of ancient walls and buildings. It was evidently at one time an important fortress, and is said to mark the site of "Harosheth of the Gentiles" (Judges iv. 16), the stronghold of Sisera, towards which his chariots and his hosts were fleeing when "the Kishon swept them away" (Judges v. 21).

Harothieh is rather more than half a mile from the Kishon, which near this point approaches so close to the steep slopes of Carmel that in some places there is not room for more than four or five horsemen to ride abreast with safety. It is conjectured that it was at this gradually narrowing pass at the foot of Carmel, within sight of Harosheth, that the horses and chariots of Sisera's defeated army became inextricably crowded together, and trampled each other down (Judges v. 22).

The river on emerging from the narrow valley flows between steep banks of rich loamy soil fifteen or sixteen feet high, and it is fordable only in two places. There is a ford not far from Harothieh. I crossed it once, in October, when there was very little water flowing; but the muddy bed of the river, which at that spot was about twenty feet wide, seemed to me as if it would swallow us up, and I was very glad when my good horse had scrambled up the steep slippery bank on the opposite side and landed me safely on its summit. A serpentine line of verdure marks the course of the Kishon across the plain of 'Akka. There is generally a firm sand-bar at the mouth of the Kishon which can be easily crossed, though the sea washes over it. Sometimes, however, when strong east winds sweep the bar away, a ferry-boat is used. Nahr el Mukutt'a, the modern name of the Kishon, signifies the "river of the ford,"

and this is the locally received interpretation of it; the translation "river of slaughter," which has been given by many writers, is, however, a correct one verbally.

But we must return to El Mahrakah, and thence travel westward to Athlit (see page 100), over the southern slopes of Carmel, an almost deserted district in which the ruins of several

THE CASTLE OF CÆSAREA.

A mediæval structure, with marble columns built transversely into the walls. In the interior there are several vaulted chambers. It stands on the ancient mole on the south side of the harbour.

once-flourishing villages may be recognised. The large blocks of hewn stone scattered about indicate that there were many goodly habitations here in former times. The only signs of human life we see on our way are some Bedawin tents by a stream in a valley, and a few tents of charcoal-burners here and there upon the hillside.

The range of Carmel at its southern base is about seven miles in width. The Wâdy el Mâlih (Valley of Salt), which enters the plain of Esdraelon (see page 96) between Tell Kaimûn and El Mahrakah, marks its southern boundary (see map). The spurs of Carmel thence merge into the widening range of low undulating hills called Belâd er Rûheh (the Breezy Land), composed of soft chalky soil, which divides the great inland plain of Esdraelon from the plains of the coast.

## THE MARITIME CITIES AND PLAINS OF PALESTINE.

Nowhere in Palestine do we recognise so many indications of the former prosperity of the country as in the strip of coast-land which stretches from the headland of Carmel (see page 88) to the port of Jaffa (see page 131), yet this is now one of its most neglected and poorly populated districts. It does not include one modern town or village of importance, and its once-splendid cities and its Crusading fortresses are in the last stages of decay or utterly destroyed. Nevertheless, the route is always interesting. We emerge from the Carmel hills nearly opposite to the ruins of Athlit (see page 100). Here the fertile but scantily cultivated coast-plain is about two miles in width. It extends northward for eight miles, closed in between a narrow ridge of sandstone rock,

COLUMNS IN THE SEA, CÆSAREA,
Formed of granite and various kinds of marble; they are relics of Herod's city which were used by mediæval builders to strengthen sea walls which have now perished.

which borders the seashore, and the western slopes of Carmel. These ranges gradually approach each other till they almost meet at Tell es Semâk (Sycaminum) at the foot of the headland of Carmel (see map). From this point to Athlit the road, a very ancient one, on which the ruts of chariot wheels may be traced here and there, runs just within the ridge of rock, and the traveller only obtains occasional glimpses of "the Great Sea" through narrow fissures made fertile by winter torrents. The only village in this, the northern section of the plain of Athlit, is Tireh, whose inhabitants are noted for their turbulence and daring. Its houses of mud and stone are clustered together at the mouth of Wâdy el 'Ain (Valley of the Spring), the central valley in the western slopes of Carmel, and are surrounded by cultivated fields and orchards.

Exactly opposite to Athlit (Castellum Peregrinorum) (see page 100), the coast-road turns abruptly and passes through a narrow and very ancient defile, cut through the broad ridge of sandstone rock; it is just wide enough to enable two horsemen to ride abreast freely. There are deep broad ruts in the roadway, made by chariot wheels many centuries ago. Lintels at each end of this rock-cut passage show that it was protected by gates; and there are the remains of fortifications on the cliffs above. From this rock-cut passage Athlit probably derived its mediæval name of Petra Incisa. The old chariot-road from this point runs outside or west of the sandstone ridge, but there is a narrow coast plain, which varies from half a mile to a mile in width, between it and the seashore.

The fortress of Athlit, which was built by the Templars in 1218, on ancient foundations whose history is unknown, stands on a rocky promontory which runs westward into the sea a distance of about a quarter of a mile. There is a shallow shell-strewn harbour on the south side (shown on page 100), and a rather deeper and much wider one on the north side, protected by a reef of rocks, called by the natives "Buwâbet" (the Portals). A large space of ground adjoining the promontory was enclosed by a strongly fortified wall, which can still be traced; it starts from the northern harbour and takes a southernly direction for eight hundred yards, and then runs westward to the sea, a distance of three hundred yards. Portions of this wall, which was constructed of very large hewn stones, are still standing, but still more of it may be seen in the western wall of 'Akka, which was almost entirely rebuilt of stones carried away from Athlit by Ibrahim Pasha, as related on page 79. Beyond the wall there was a deep fosse through which the sea formerly flowed, thus entirely insulating the fortress, which may be described as a miniature reproduction of the ancient Tyre (see pages 55 and 56), and it is actually called Tyre in ancient chronicles of the Crusades.

The citadel of Athlit occupies a rectangular space in the centre of the promontory. Its walls, fifteen feet in thickness and thirty feet in height, are constructed of sandy and rather porous limestone from a neighbouring quarry. Lieutenant C. R. Conder observes that "the masonry is all drafted and *in situ*, whence it has been supposed to be earlier work than the Crusading erections, but the posterns of the towers have pointed arches" (see page 104) "in drafted masonry, identical with that of the walls, showing that the Crusaders cut their own

stones and drafted them." In the south-east corner of the citadel are the remains of a magnificent church, described by early writers as a decagon, with three apses. Only one apse now remains; it has pointed arches with sculptured corbels. The roof was thrown down by the earthquake of 1837. Projecting from the north-east corner there are the ruins of a spacious hall, called by the natives El Karnifeh. The eastern wall of the northern tower of

PART OF THE NORTH WALL AND MOAT OF CÆSAREA.
The walls are six feet in thickness and are strengthened by buttresses; they are still from twenty to thirty feet in height. The moat is lined with masonry. There are three ruined towers in the north wall, two of which are shown above.

Athlit is still standing; it is eighty feet in height, and from a distance it appears to be a complete structure. Among the ruins of the ancient town, which stood within the citadel, modern houses and hovels, rudely constructed of ancient materials, have sprung up, and are inhabited by a poor and rather disreputable Mohammedan population. There are extensive vaults beneath this site; one, which is divided into compartments, has been explored to a

TOWER OF THE CASTLE AT CÆSAREA.

Built by the Crusaders. It probably occupies the site of "Strato's Tower," which was succeeded by the "Tower Drusus" of Herod.

distance of two hundred and sixty-four feet; another very large one has a groined roof with ribbed arches; a third, which is cemented, is said to have been "an oil vat capable of containing two hundred and sixty thousand gallons."

About half a mile to the east of the northern harbour of Athlit the Crusaders had, some time previously to the year 1191, built a small fort called Detroit (the "House of Narrow Ways") on ancient foundations on the sandstone ridge, at a point where it is seventy-five feet above the sea-level, at a short distance north of the rock-cut defile above described. From this "narrow way" it probably took its name. The fort having been greatly extended and

REMAINS OF A FORTIFIED KHAN AT MUKHÂLID.
A Saracenic structure, which has long been in ruins. It is nearly a mile from the seashore and close to the little village of Mukhâlid. The solitary tree near to it is a well-known landmark.

strengthened by the Templars in 1218, it served as an outpost for their fortress at Athlit. The courtyard, within which there is a tower, is called Khan Dustrey, a corruption of Detroit apparently. On the eastern side, north of the tower, there are rock-cut stables.

On the eastern side of the ridge, not far off, there is a fountain called 'Ain ed Dustrey, which forms a tiny lake, and then finds its way through a narrow valley to the sea. The first time I paused at this place, a group of goatherds with reed pipes were assembled round a clay trough where their flocks were crowding to drink. It was in the month of September, and the vegetation by the fountain and all along the stream was most luxuriant, consisting

chiefly of oleanders and lupins in full bloom, mallows, tall grasses, and large bushes of arbutus.

Nothing is positively known of the early history of Athlit, not even its name. It appears to have been included in the territory allotted to Manasseh, from which he could not drive out the inhabitants, "for the Canaanites would dwell in the land," though at a later period Israel became sufficiently powerful to compel them to pay tribute (Judges i. 27, 28).

So favourable a position for a seaport town as the promontory of Athlit, with its bay and two natural harbours, and with springs and extensive quarries and fertile plains in its immediate neighbourhood, could not have been overlooked by the Phœnicians, and the Greeks and Romans must also have occupied it. But the history of Athlit begins and ends with the Crusading era. It is, however, recorded that the Crusaders discovered ancient foundations both at Athlit and its outpost Detroit, and at the latter place the builders found a store of very curious coins which they could not decipher.

As already stated, the "Knights of the Temple of Solomon" (commonly called the Knights-Templar) built the fortress of Athlit (see page 100), and it was evidently a very strong one. The Sultan Muezzin besieged it unsuccessfully in the year 1220, and it was the last place held by the Crusaders in Palestine. It was finally subdued by the Sultan Melek-el-Ashrâf Khalîl, son of Kâlaoun, after his conquest of St. Jean d'Acre in the year 1291 (refer to page 91).

From Athlit we journey southwards towards Tantûrah (see page 105), a distance of six miles and a half. The ancient chariot road runs westward of the range of coast-hills, but a broad strip of sandy and marshy land separates it from the seashore. About a third of a mile south of the promontory of Athlit (see page 101), the shore line abruptly advances westward into the sea, and thus forms the commodious little bay of Athlit. From this point, for a mile or more, the sandy and marshy coast plain is nearly a mile in width. Through an opening in the rocky hills on our left we see the fertile plain of Athlit stretching to the slopes of Carmel, traversed diagonally by a footpath leading to the ruined site called "El Mezâr" (the Place of Visitation). The many large caves near to it, and a Mohammedan sanctuary, cistern, and well, attract the peasantry, especially shepherds and goatherds, to this spot. In its neighbourhood there are wooded ravines with the pleasantly suggestive names Khallet Rummâneh (Pomegranate Dale) and Khallet Zeitûneh (Olive-tree Dale); but we must pursue our way southwards. As we approach Surafend, a small village four miles south of Athlit, built on the crest of the low coast hills, we see signs of cultivation. Instead of sand-dunes, lagoons, and marshes, there are fields of sesame, millet, and tobacco bordering the road, and little groups of palm-trees near to the seashore.

Half a mile south of Surafend, which is famous for its fig-orchards, there is another village. It is called Kefr Lamm, and though built on the broad smooth summit of the widening coast range, it is only fifty-one feet above the sea-level. On one occasion, when I was travelling along the coast with my brother, we spent a night here. It was the last week

in the month of July, and we approached the village through fields of rapidly ripening Indian corn (maize) and fruit and vegetable gardens. The sheikh and all the chief men came out to meet us with pleasant words of welcome, for we were expected and well known there. We alighted on the outskirts of the village, which is very compact and built of sun-dried bricks; close to it there is a large enclosure, with buttressed walls, built of stone, for the protection of flocks and herds, and for storage of grain and fuel. I found my tent already pitched amid little mountains of wheat and barley, near to an extensive threshing-floor, where oxen were busy treading out the corn.

Carpets and cushions were soon spread for us in the open air, and coffee and pipes were brought. The sheikh and the heads of families sat opposite to us in a half circle, while the younger men stood round or rested on the heaps of wheat near. We were not quite a mile from the shore, and were facing the sea and the setting sun. The rocky islands and the ruins of Tantûrah (see page 105) could be plainly seen a little way to the south, and the tall tower of Athlit appeared far away in the north (see page 100). At the moment when the sun dropped down into the sea, the imâm (or village priest) rose and stood in the middle of a large and newly swept threshing-floor which was close by; he looked earnestly towards the south, and began chanting, in a loud and sonorous voice, the call to prayer—"God is most great. I testify that there is no deity but God. I testify that Mohammed is God's apostle. Come to prayer. Come to security. God is most great. There is no deity but God."

The sheikh and the elders who had gathered round us immediately rose and assembled on the threshing-floor in a double row behind the imâm, who thus looked truly like the leader of the little band; and when he uttered the usual ejaculations of prayer and praise, and recited the appointed verses from the Koran, they echoed his words and followed all his movements with precision and solemnity, kneeling and bowing their faces to the ground, and uplifting their hands and rising to their feet with one accord. They were joined by the labourers from the fields and neighbouring threshing-floors and by our Mohammedan servants, but some of the younger men who had been talking with us hesitated at first to attend to the "call to prayer." They looked at each other, as if undecided what to do; and then at us, as if they were ashamed or thought it impolite to leave us. We endeavoured, by keeping perfectly still and silent, to make them understand that we did not wish or expect them to neglect their devotions on our account. Suddenly they rose altogether and ranged themselves in a row at the edge of the threshing-floor, and their voices blended with the voices of their fathers as they cried, "God is most great! . . . May God hear him who praiseth Him!"

No women came forward to pray; they stood afar off, with their little ones, watching the assembly; but I do not think that there was one man or youth of the village who did not join in this service, which lasted about a quarter of an hour, and was conducted with the greatest solemnity.

Immediately afterwards supper was served. A wooden bowl, rather shallow, but about a yard in diameter, filled with steaming rice, boiled in butter, was placed on the ground at a little

distance from us. Metal dishes containing meat, eggs, vegetables, and cream were added to the feast, round which the sheikh, the priest, and the elders of the village assembled. They ate quickly and silently, dipping pieces of their thin leathery loaves into the dishes of fried eggs and cream, tearing the tender morsels of meat to pieces with their fingers, dipping their hands together into the mound of rice, and skilfully and neatly taking it up in pellets. When they were satisfied, they retired one after the other to wash their hands and to light their pipes. Their places were quickly taken by the younger men and boys in turn, and when they had all finished the servants gathered round, eating from the same dishes, the simplest of which had

NEBY BEN YAMÎN (TOMB OF THE PROPHET BENJAMIN).
A Mohammedan shrine about half a mile to the east of Kefr Saba. A well of good water adjoins it. In the foreground a peasant is guiding a primitive plough and a yoke of oxen.

been several times replenished, and the thin loaves of bread were freely distributed. Several sets of people silently swallowed their supper, while we leisurely used our knives and forks. The fragments that remained after the feast were not carried away until all the men and boys of the village had eaten there, but the women and children ate elsewhere and in private.

Coffee and pipes were again served, and by star and lantern light we sat talking with the sheikh and a few of the villagers till nearly nine o'clock, when they retired. For a little while we could see lanterns flitting about, but soon all was quiet and silent, and every one was at rest except those who were appointed to keep the night-watch. Dim lights gleamed from the

half-open doorways and windows of every dwelling, for it is customary in the East to keep a lamp burning all night in every occupied room. I retreated to my tent, and my brother and his attendants, wrapped in heavy cloaks, slept on the hillocks of wheat not far off. At five o'clock I rose, and from the door of my tent watched the sun rise over the Eastern hills and suddenly burnish the sea with gold. Soon all the villagers were stirring again. Coffee and milk and bread and fruit were brought, and bright-eyed children gathered round us to have a

KEFR SABA.

A straggling village consisting of houses built chiefly of sun-dried bricks, with extensive orchards to the west and south of it. It is fourteen miles from Jaffa, and is interesting inasmuch as it preserves the name of the ancient Caphar Saba.

share of the ripe green figs. Then we took leave of our kindly entertainers and pursued our way.

At Kefr Lamm we leave the ancient chariot road (traces of which are still visible) and follow a footpath which crosses the coast plain diagonally to Tantûrah, a distance of two miles and a half. We approach the seashore through a district of disused quarries, nameless tombs, ruins, and marsh-land. We soon come to a rugged promontory, on which stands a solid tower

thirty feet in height, formed of rubble faced with stone. The lower part is crumbling away. It was the corner block of a fortress built here by the Crusaders (see page 105). This place is now quite abandoned, its walls have fallen, and the cliffs are giving way. The modern village of Tantûrah is about half a mile farther south, and stands on the site of the ancient Canaanitish city of Dor (see Joshua xvii. 11), but all along the shore there are columns and capitals, partly embedded in the ground, slabs of marble, and hewn stones, remains of the Roman city Dora. Women and children may be seen collecting in large baskets the coarse encrusted salt, which settles in the natural hollows and artificial basins of the rocks on the beach below. Herds of cattle and goats, the chief wealth of Tantûrah, graze on the coast plain, which is here overgrown with thorns and thistles, dwarf mimosas, and low brushwood. The village of Tantûrah consists of about forty or fifty rudely built houses, made of irregularly piled blocks of anciently hewn stone, fragments of broken columns, and masses of mud and clay. On one occasion, in the month of September, when we were on our way from Jaffa (see page 133) to Haifa (see page 83) in an Arab sailing-boat, we landed at Tantûrah to pursue our journey by land, because "the winds were contrary." It was at the same time of the year (after the Fast of the Atonement, which is kept on the tenth day of Tishri, or towards the end of September), that St. Paul was tossed about by "contrary winds" on this sea, and when, as he said, "sailing was dangerous" (Acts xxvii. 9).

We were assured that the voyage from Jaffa to Haifa by sea would not occupy more than eight or ten hours, and as we were extremely anxious to arrive there as quickly as possible, my brother made arrangements with the owner of a little Arab sailing-boat to convey us there, with our servants and baggage. We were ready and waiting, when at midnight he sent word to us that "the wind was favourable," and that he was ready to sail. We hurried down to the dark wharf accompanied by our kawass and my servant Katrine, a woman of Bethlehem, and two Carmelite monks who had requested permission to travel with us. The great water-gate of Jaffa was opened for us, and I was somehow dropped gently into a little rowing-boat far down in the darkness below, where I was taken charge of by two sturdy boatmen. After much shouting and jolting we were all huddled together, and the boat skimmed rapidly over the water to the sailing-vessel which awaited us outside the shallow rock-encircled harbour, and to which with some little difficulty we were transferred. It was divided into three parts—the central portion being like an uncovered hold, four feet deep and eight feet square. The decks, fore and aft, were encumbered with ship's tackle and crowded with sailors, who were singing lustily. The hold, lighted by two lanterns, was matted and set apart for passengers and luggage. Our portmanteaus and carpet-bags served us for a couch, and the monks sat on their saddle bags, wrapped in their comfortable-looking hooded robes. Poor Katrine, who had never been on the sea before, was very much alarmed. She rolled herself up in her cloak, stretched herself full-length by my side, and was happily soon fast asleep. Our kawass smoked his pipe in company with the captain above, and an Italian, who had smuggled himself and his luggage on board in the hurry and darkness, kept aloof with the sailors. The sky was bright

with stars, the south wind was strong and filled the sails, and by fits and starts I dozed till dawn of day. Then I roused myself and watched the little group around me—the hooded monks sleeping soundly, my brother at my feet leaning against a hamper, and Katrine so enveloped that I could not distinguish her head from her heels.

The favourable wind had ceased, and the sailors were busy taking in sail. By the time the sun appeared above the low coast hills the wind had shifted to the west, and we were in danger of being driven on to the rocks. It then suddenly veered to the north, and blew so violently that the captain was obliged to cast anchor, and we were tossed on a heavy sea near to a desolate coast where there was no possibility of landing. By nine o'clock the sun was very powerful. An awning made of the now useless sails was thrown over the hold. We found our quarters far from comfortable, but we were determined to make the best of them, and fortunately we were all good sailors. By noon the heat was intense and suffocating in the hold, so I climbed on to the deck and sat on a coil of rope, clinging to the mast. The strong wind and the sea spray revived me. We were still at anchor. The coast opposite to us, which was every now and then concealed by the high waves, was a range of drifted sand-hills, traversed by flocks of goats feeding on the scanty patches of pasture. Not a human habitation, not even a human being was visible, and not a boat or ship was seen all day.

In the afternoon the wind ceased, but the little ship rocked lazily from the effect of the sea-swell, which had not yet subsided. My brother read St. Paul's voyage to me, as it is recorded in the twenty-seventh chapter of the Acts of the Apostles. It seemed to me more interesting than ever. We were not far from Cæsarea, the port from which St. Paul embarked (see page 108).

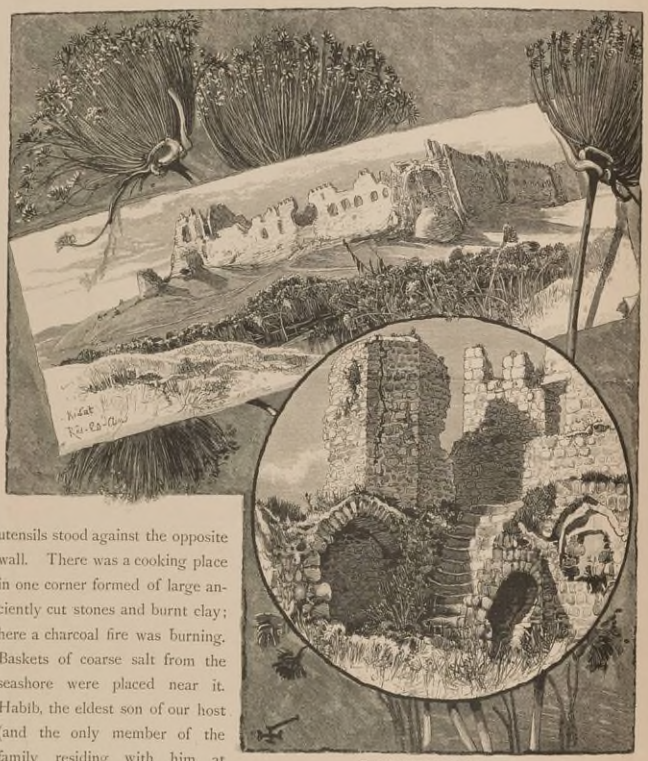
At sunset "the south wind blew softly." The sails were soon set, and in better spirits we sat down to our evening meal, and shared our chickens and preserved soup with the monks of Mount Carmel, who proved to be very pleasant fellow-travellers.

We passed a dreamy, restless night, "sailing slowly," and in the morning were nearly opposite Tantûrah. The wind had changed to the north-east, so my brother insisted on landing. We tacked about, put out to sea, and then allowed the strong wind to drive us towards the picturesque coast (see page 105). Little islands of rock and mounds of ancient masonry stood out before it, beaten by the waves. With some manœuvring the boat was brought safely to the beach, where there were plenty of Tantûrah men to meet us and carry us through the surf to the smooth yellow sands.

I was delighted to find myself on firm land again, and I shall always remember St. Paul's advice to the centurion, and vote against sailing in the Levant in an Arab boat during the equinoctial gales.

The custom-house officer, Abu Habîb (an intelligent and very well-informed man, who was afterwards our neighbour at Haifa), came to meet us. He guided us to his house, which consisted of one large square room lined with clay, and roofed with tree-branches blackened with smoke. One half of the ceiling was concealed by matting, and the other half was

picturesque with pendant branches. Small square holes served as windows, and the roughly made door was a portable one. A narrow mattress occupied one side of the room, and served as a divan by day and sleeping place by night. Large water jars, metal dishes, and cooking



THE CASTLE OF MIRABEL.

Now called Kûl'at Râs el 'Ain, built by the Crusaders before the year 1149. It is now a mere shell and encloses a large space of ground, in the centre of which stands a small mosque.

utensils stood against the opposite wall. There was a cooking place in one corner formed of large anciently cut stones and burnt clay; here a charcoal fire was burning. Baskets of coarse salt from the seashore were placed near it. Habîb, the eldest son of our host (and the only member of the family residing with him at Tantûrah), prepared coffee for us; in our presence he roasted the berries, and then pounded them in a stone mortar. A very large wooden box, like an ancient muniment chest, with ornamental lock and hinges of wrought-iron, stood near to

the open doorway, and upon this I rested. Gaunt-looking women, partly hiding their faces with their tattered white cotton veils, peeped at us, and dirty but pretty children came crowding round.

THE NAHR EL AUJEH FROM KÛL'AT RÂS EL 'AIN.
The river rises out of the earth in several copious streams at the foot of the mound on which the castle stands. This mound has been satisfactorily identified as the site of Antipatris.

Katrine (who had never been so far from Bethlehem before) was in the meantime making a tour of the town, and presently she returned and led me without any hesitation to the house

which appeared to her to be the cleanest and neatest in the place. Her confidence in the ready hospitality of the people was fully justified. The women of the house received me with pleasant words of welcome, and led me to an inner room, the divan of which had been recently renovated, and there I gladly rested until horses were procured for us and we were enabled to proceed on our journey to Haifa.

Dor, דּוֹר, a royal Canaanitish city (and probably the most southernly settlement of the Phœnicians in Palestine), was "with her towns" allotted to "the children of Manasseh," but they could not expel the original inhabitants, "the Canaanites would dwell in the land" (Joshua xvii. 12). However, in the time of Solomon, "the region of Dor" was compelled to furnish provisions for the King and for his household during one month in every year, under the superintendence of Ben-Abinadab, who married the Princess Taphath, a daughter of Solomon, and who was one of the King's twelve purveyors (1 Kings iv. 11). This was a very large tribute, and to provide it the region of Dor must have been rich in flocks and herds, and very highly cultivated, for "Solomon's provision for one day was thirty measures of fine flour, and threescore measures of meal, ten fat oxen, and twenty oxen out of the pastures, and an hundred sheep, beside harts, and roebucks, and fallow-deer, and fatted fowl" (1 Kings iv. 22, 23). On the hillside just opposite to Tantûrah, beyond the "Vale of Dor," there is a spring called 'Ain Ghûzâl (the Fountain of the Gazelle), which indicates that these graceful animals were numerous there formerly. A specimen of the fallow-deer has been recently found on Mount Carmel. When these hills were well wooded it was probably not very difficult for the people of Dor to contribute a good supply of game to King Solomon's table. Dor was evidently a strong and important city in the time of the Seleucidæ. It is related in 1 Maccabees xv. that Diodotus, surnamed Tryphon (the murderer of Jonathan Maccabæus and of Antiochus VI., and the usurper of the throne of Syria), "being pursued by King Antiochus VII. (surnamed Sidetes), fled to Dora, Δώρα, which lieth by the seaside, for he saw that trouble came upon him all at once and that his forces had forsaken him."

"Then camped Antiochus against Dora, having with him an hundred and twenty thousand men of war and eight thousand horsemen. And when he had compassed the city round about, and joined ships close to the town on the seaside, he vexed the city by land and by sea . . . . assaulting it constantly." Thus the city was almost destroyed about the year 139 B.C. "Tryphon fled by ship to Orthosias," north of Tripoli (see page 9), and he soon afterwards either committed suicide or was killed by King Antiochus, who "pursued him."

Josephus relates in his "Antiquities of the Jews," book xiv., ch. 5, that when Gabinius Aulus "came from Rome to Syria as commander of the Roman forces," he caused Dor and many other cities, "which had been demolished" and had "been desolate for a long time" to be rebuilt, B.C. 64.

There are many autonomous coins of Dora in existence, but they are chiefly undated. The imperial coinage of Dora ranges from Caligula, A.D. 39, to Heliogabalus, A.D. 222. The commonest types are a female figure or bust veiled, with a turreted crown; and a head of Jupiter

with a laurel-wreath. Dora became an episcopal city in the province of Palestina Prima, but it did not long enjoy this dignity, for St. Jerome, who died at Bethlehem (see page 131, vol. i.) in the year 422, describes Dora as a city already in ruins and utterly deserted, but still worthy of admiration. Out of these ruins at a later period grew a station of the Crusaders, of which only a fragment remains, while the shore is strewn with relics of the Roman city (see page 105). On leaving Tantûrah we reapproach the coast road, which is here about three-quarters of a mile from the shore and close to the low sandstone hills. Through an opening in the range we see the shrub-dotted western slopes of Belad er Ruheh beyond the plain of Tantûrah, or, as it may be called, the "Vale of Dor," which is here about two miles in width, and is sometimes partially cultivated as far south as the Nahr ed Dufleh (see map), but more frequently it is made desolate by the incursions of the Bedawîn. No neglect, however, can destroy the beauty of this district in the early spring-time, when for a brief period all the uncultivated ground is carpeted with verdure and with wild flowers of the most brilliant colours.

Exactly opposite Tantûrah a footpath crosses the plain diagonally and leads south-east to a little double village called El Fureidis (Paradise), nestled at the mouth of a winding valley which comes down from the summit of Belad er Ruheh, and at the head of which stands the village called Dalieh er Ruheh (the Trained Vine of the Breezy Land), seven hundred and twenty-eight feet above the sea (refer to page 103). Lower down in this valley there is a village surrounded by orchards called Umm et Tût (Mother of Mulberries).

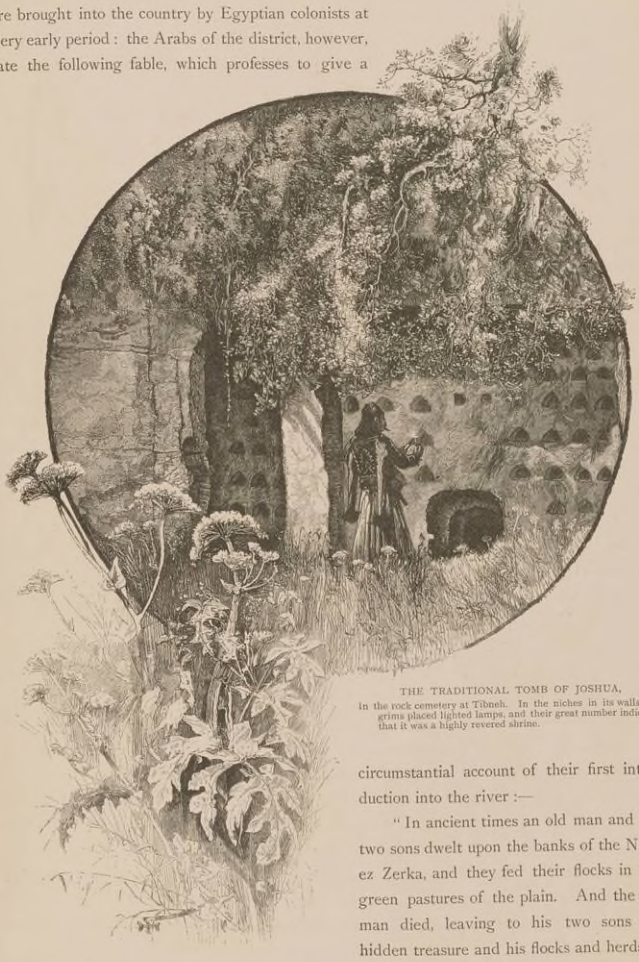
But we must pursue our way southwards by the coast plain, which is here sandy and marshy and quite uncultivated. We pass many ruined and nameless sites, probably representing "the towns of Dor" (Joshua xvii. 11). We soon cross Nahr ed Dufleh (River of Oleanders) and then hasten onwards to the Nahr ez Zerka (the Blue River), the northern boundary of the broad Plain of Sharon (see map). Between these two rivers the Plain or Vale of Dor is narrowed by the advance westward of a bold mountain spur called El Khashm, and here, through neglect of the ancient system of drainage, it has degenerated into marsh-land. The Nahr ez Zerka is easily crossed where the old road intersects it, about a mile inland; but on one occasion, in the month of July, we and some fellow-travellers forded it close to the seashore, though not without some difficulty, for the river was broad, deep, and rapid, and there was no one to guide us to the easiest fording-place. A few hours sometimes make a great difference in the character of the mouth of a river—the wind may entirely carry away the sand-bar or change its position. Our kawass made many experiments before he found a safe path for us, which we traversed cautiously one after the other in single file, and landed on the opposite side very wet and chilly. On the south side of the river, close to the seashore, there is a ruined castle called El Melât, apparently an outpost of Cæsarea, and a little way to the north of the river there are a few rocky islands of the same name, Jezirat el Melât.

The Nahr ez Zerka was anciently known as the Crocodile River, and it is so called by Pliny. According to common report it is still entitled to that name. Many people living on the coast have assured me that they have seen crocodiles here, but it is admitted

SACRED TREE CALLED SHEIKH ET TEIM.
South of the extensive mound of ruins and tombs known to the Arabs as Tibneh, but which has long been regarded as the site of Timnath Sera, the city of Joshua.

that they are now rare; a dried specimen of one, three feet in length, said to have been caught here, was shown to me at 'Akka. The celebrated traveller, Richard Pococke, who was in Palestine in the year 1738, says that he was "credibly informed that there were crocodiles in the river," and adds, "they say that the crocodiles are small, not above five or six feet in length, but that they have taken some young cattle that were standing in the river."

Tradition says that the Nahr ez Zerka crocodiles were brought into the country by Egyptian colonists at a very early period: the Arabs of the district, however, relate the following fable, which professes to give a circumstantial account of their first introduction into the river:—



THE TRADITIONAL TOMB OF JOSHUA,
In the rock cemetery at Tibneh. In the niches in its walls pilgrims placed lighted lamps, and their great number indicates that it was a highly revered shrine.

"In ancient times an old man and his two sons dwelt upon the banks of the Nahr ez Zerka, and they fed their flocks in the green pastures of the plain. And the old man died, leaving to his two sons his hidden treasure and his flocks and herds.

"Now the younger son was industrious and prudent, and his wealth increased greatly. The elder one was profligate and idle, and he became poor. In his poverty he looked with jealous anger on the rich flocks and herds of his brother, and considered in his heart how he might destroy them. He journeyed to Egypt, and thence brought some young crocodiles, and having secretly placed them in the river, he went to a distant country. His hope was that his brother's flocks would be devoured on going to drink, or while feeding on the banks. He did not know that his brother, having been warned of coming danger in a dream, no longer watered his flocks there.

"Now after a time the elder brother returned to this place, and he went down to the riverside to wash his feet, without taking thought of the danger which he in his wickedness had spread there. The crocodiles swiftly approached him, and seized upon him and destroyed him. Such was the will of God, and thus the wicked fall into the nets which they spread for their neighbours."

Stories or fables of this kind are often very appositely introduced in ordinary conversation, to point a moral or give force to an argument, or to administer an indirect rebuke to a superior. The versions of such stories naturally vary slightly according to the circumstances under which they are related.

It is probable that the ancient city called Crocodilon was situated near to the Nahr ez Zerka. Strabo, who died in A.D. 24, speaks of it as one of the many cities of the coast of Palestine which in his time existed only in name. From the Nahr ez Zerka the Plain of Sharon extends southwards to the Nahr er Rubin, a distance of forty-four miles (see map).

The northern section between Nahr ez Zerka and Nahr Iskanderûneh, nine miles from north to south, averages eight miles in width: the greater part of it is either marshy or encumbered with drifting sand dunes. It is a district of deserted ruins, and is haunted by the Bedawîn, who occasionally cultivate some patches of land here, and reap scanty crops of wheat and barley (see page 111).

This desolate-looking region, however, includes a winding water-course called Nahr Mefjîr, to the north of which there is an oak forest nearly nine miles in circumference, near to the eastern hills, which are bordered by a strip of rich alluvial soil. Here there are a few insignificant villages, with small plots of cultivated land around them.

Groups of sarcophagi and mounds of ruins, representing ancient towns or comparatively modern villages, are numerous; and by the seashore, midway between the Nahr ez Zerka and the Nahr Mefjîr, a vast expanse of ground is covered with the almost indistinguishable débris of Herod's once-splendid city of Cæsarea Sebaste, so named in honour of Augustus; and within this area, in a central position close to the seashore (occupying, however, only about one-tenth of the space included within the walls of the Roman city), stand the ruins of the Crusading city which succeeded it.

CÆSAREA SEBASTE was built on the site of a place called Strato's Tower, and is minutely described by Josephus. It was planned and completed by King Herod the Great within the

HARRY FENN, DEL^T J. C. ARMYTAGE, SCULP^T

CÆSAREA.

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short space of ten or twelve years, and was inaugurated with great pomp and splendour in the twenty-eighth year of his reign, B.C. 12. There were musical performances, public games, single combats, and combats with wild beasts; horse races also, and "such sports and shows as used to be exhibited at Rome and other places."

The multitude of people who came to the city to witness its inauguration were entertained in public inns and at public tables; and Herod ordered that the festival should be celebrated every five years, in honour of Augustus Cæsar, to whom the city was dedicated. "It contained sumptuous palaces and splendid edifices, all built of white stone brought from a distance," now represented by shapeless mounds, fallen columns, and dislocated masses of masonry.

There was a theatre of stone, and in the south quarter "an amphitheatre also, capable of holding a vast number of men, and conveniently situated for a prospect of the sea."

But the greatest work was the harbour, which had a double station for ships, and which Josephus compares to the Piræus at Athens. Its mole, the ruins of which still exist, extending a great distance into the sea on the southern side of the harbour (see page 108), was constructed of huge stones, and was originally, according to Josephus, "two hundred feet wide. One half was left as a breakwater, but the other half had upon it a wall with several towers, the largest of which was named Drusus, after a son-in-law of Cæsar, who died young." The great blocks of granite and the marble columns lying in the water are no doubt fragments of these structures. There were vaulted hostelries for the sailors and a terraced walk all round the harbour, where stood, on an elevation, a temple of polished stone, which could be seen from a great distance, and wherein were two statues, one of Rome and one of Cæsar. Of this temple a portion of the foundation wall remains, and Lieutenant Conder says "its white stones contrast with the brown sandstone blocks of the later builders, and attest Josephus's accuracy in describing the materials as brought, at great expense, from a distance." There are a great number of prostrate columns in the sea, upon a reef on the north side of the harbour (see page 109).

Cæsarea soon became the most important city in Palestine, and its chief port. It was the official residence of the Herodian kings and of the Roman procurators.

Repeated mention is made of Cæsarea in the Acts of the Apostles, especially in connection with St. Paul, who visited this place several times, and was detained here in prison for two years. At Cæsarea, Vespasian was declared Emperor, A.D. 70, and he bestowed upon the city the privileges of a Roman colony. The imperial coinage of Cæsarea extends from the reign of Augustus Cæsar (from whom the city derived its name) to Gallienus, A.D. 268.

At the commencement of the third century Cæsarea was created a bishopric, and was soon afterwards famous for its public school, in which for a time Origen taught.

Eusebius, the celebrated ecclesiastical historian, was Bishop of Cæsarea early in the fourth century, and towards its close the city was visited by Sta. Paula, the friend of Jerome. It is recorded that she saw the house of the centurion Cornelius, which had been converted into a church, and the house of Philip, with the chambers of his four daughters. In the sixth century the Greek historian Procopius was established here as professor of rhetoric.

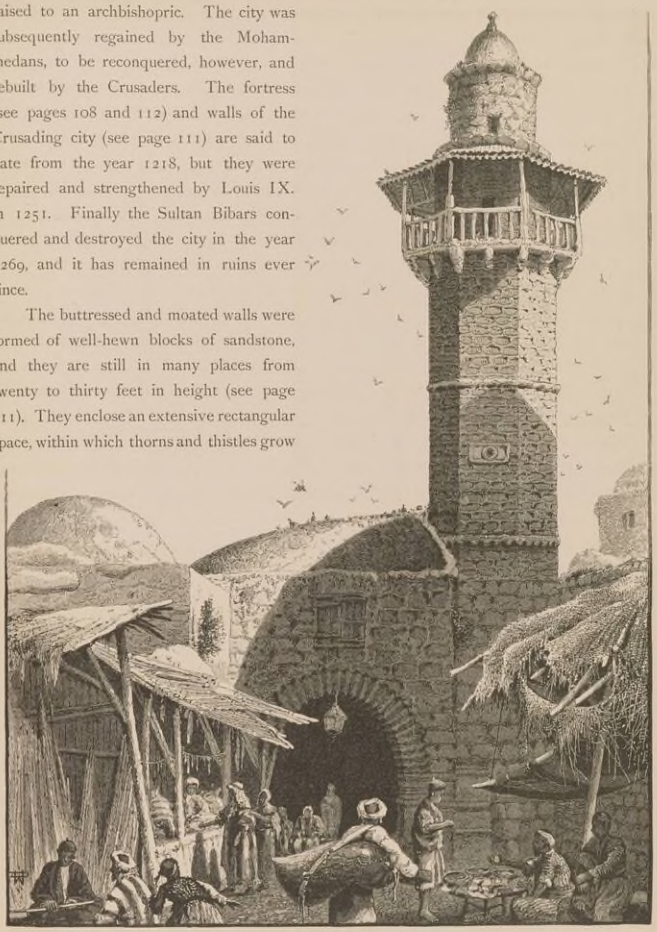
After the Mohammedan conquest of Palestine, early in the seventh century, Cæsarea continued to be a wealthy and important city, and Baldwin I., who gained possession of it in A.D. 1101, after a siege of fifteen days, found great treasures within its walls. The "Sacro Catino," preserved in the treasury of S. Lorenzo at Genoa, formed part of this plunder. It is a transparent green tazza of hexagonal form, slightly ornamented, and was said to have been used for the distribution of wine at "the Last Supper," on which account it was held sacred. It was long believed to be an emerald, but experts have decided that it is a remarkable specimen of ancient glass. This treasured tazza was the "holy grail" of mediæval romance. Cæsarea was on this occasion

LANDING AT JAFFA.

This is always attended with difficulty, as there is no harbour for large vessels at Jaffa. Steamers are obliged to anchor in the roadstead, about half a mile from the shore, and passengers are landed in small Arab boats.

raised to an archbishopric. The city was subsequently regained by the Mohammedans, to be reconquered, however, and rebuilt by the Crusaders. The fortress (see pages 108 and 112) and walls of the Crusading city (see page 111) are said to date from the year 1218, but they were repaired and strengthened by Louis IX. in 1251. Finally the Sultan Bibars conquered and destroyed the city in the year 1269, and it has remained in ruins ever since.

The buttressed and moated walls were formed of well-hewn blocks of sandstone, and they are still in many places from twenty to thirty feet in height (see page 111). They enclose an extensive rectangular space, within which thorns and thistles grow



THE MOSQUE AT JAFFA.

A modern structure in the north-east quarter of the town. It can be easily distinguished in the general view of Jaffa (see steel plate), where it appears between the masts of the Arab fishing-boats.

among fallen columns and huge masses of masonry, where, in succession, palaces and forums, Roman temples, synagogues, Byzantine basilicas, mosques, and mediæval churches have stood. The foundation of the cathedral can be traced, and near to the edge of the low cliffs there are the remains of a church of the Crusading era, consisting of its three apses and four massive buttresses, which stand erect and firm, though the walls they were intended to support fell long ago. (They are shown in the steel engraving.) I once spent an hour or two here quite alone, while my fellow-travellers and our attendants were all wisely sleeping or resting, during the mid-day hours of a midsummer day, in a shady place by the seashore. I mounted the low cliff and wandered among the ruins. Not a human being was visible, and I shall never forget the impression which the solitude and silence and utter desolation of this place made upon me. There are a few cisterns, but only one shallow well of brackish water, within the walls; but the Roman city was evidently well supplied. There are traces of a low-level aqueduct, which brought water from Nahr ez Zerka, and fragments remain of a high-level conduit, which crossed the marshes on arches of fine masonry, and conveyed spring water from the main source of the Zerka, in the distant hills.

On the sandy shore south of the mole (see page 108) I gathered beautiful pale yellow sea poppies and prickly sea holly, and found some good specimens of white and yellow-tinted *opercula*, but no perfect shells, though the shore was strewn with broken ones. The Arabs call these ruins Kaiseriyeh, thus preserving the name of the city in its Greek form, Καισάρεια.

From Cæsarea we pursue our way southwards along the seashore, presently crossing the bed of the Wady Mefjîr (called by some writers Nahr Akhdar), and hastening onwards to a rocky point of land which forms a small harbour, where there is a rude landing-place for Arab boats, called the Minet, or port, of Abû Zabûra. It is near to the river Iskanderûneh (Alexander), to which it gives its more popular name of Nahr Abû Zabûra (see map). This river in the summer time has not sufficient force to reach the sea, but forms a shallow lake not far from it.

At this point we leave the seashore and ascend the cliff of the broad sandstone ridge on our left. The first village we come to is Mukhâlid, standing near to the high road about a mile from the edge of the cliffs, midway between the river Iskanderûneh and Nahr el Fâlik (see map). It is the centre of the melon-growing district. I was here once with my brother at the commencement of the melon harvest. We approached this place at about half-past seven one July morning. A lively picture of Arab life was before us. All along the coast, between the road and the edge of the cliff, as far as we could see, north and south, there were beds of various kinds of melons, and groups of dusky peasants in white shirts, with leathern girdles and large white turbans, were busily engaged gathering them and building them up in pyramids. Hundreds of camels were there too, some walking away well laden, others kneeling patiently while their panniers were being filled with the bulky fruit. White tents were pitched here and there in the melon gardens: they were the tents of the tax-gatherers who had come to claim the tribute of the melon harvest.

We alighted in the midst of these scenes, and rested for a little while under the spreading branches of the solitary tree which is shown on page 113. We were about a mile from the edge of the cliffs. Looking westward beyond the melon gardens, we could see a broad strip of the sunlit Mediterranean, and a little fleet of Arab boats was sailing towards the north. The melon gardens are by no means picturesque. The large rough melon leaves lie flat upon the ground, which looked as if it were strewn with green and yellow marbles fit for giants to play with. There were no hedges or trees to break the monotony of the view, but the busy labourers gave life to it. The various plots of ground were divided by deep furrows, in which thorns and thistles flourished, but they scarcely appeared above the level of the sandy soil.

SHITTIM TREE AT JAFFA,
In the Mohammedan cemetery north of the town, close to the sea. Represented at the hour of sunset, the time of evening prayer.

We wished to buy a few melons, but the overseer of the labourers told us that we might take as many as we liked, though he could not sell them except by hundreds.

Some of the laden camels were journeying southwards, but the greater number were engaged in carrying the fruit down to the port of Abû Zabûra, where it was transferred to Arab sailing boats. After a refreshing rest we rode through miles and miles of melon ground. Wherever the land in this district is left uncultivated or fallow, the wild colocynth or coloquintida (حنظل, *hanzal*) springs up plentifully. This fruit, which is intensely bitter, was, on an average, three inches in diameter, and almost as hard as a stone, with a smooth green, white, and yellow rind marked like fine marble. Some ancient beads of Phœnician glass which I have seen appear to have been made in imitation of this fruit. We filled one of

our saddle bags with it, for it is only regarded by the Arabs as a weed. Squills, too, grow luxuriantly here, but they are ploughed up and destroyed.

The village of Mukhâlid apparently derives its name from a neighbouring and highly-revered Mohammedan sanctuary, dedicated to Sitti Saba Umm Khâlid (the lady Saba, mother of Khâlid).

The fortified khân of Mukhâlid is a good example of Saracenic architecture, but it has long been in ruins. The fragments of glass and hard pottery found near it indicate that this site was occupied at an early period, but nothing has yet been ascertained of its history.

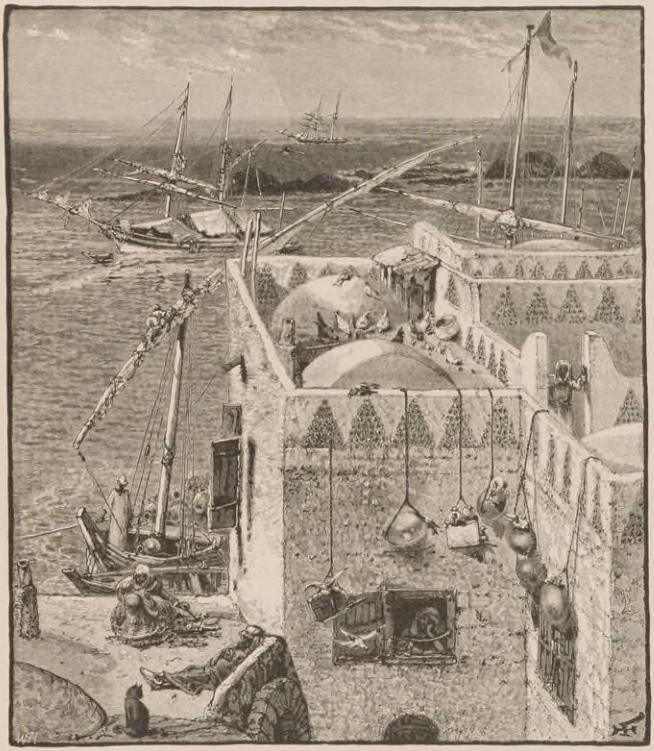
THE TRADITIONAL HOUSE OF SIMON THE TANNER.

A Mohammedan sanctuary. On the south side of the court of the house there is an arched recess, in which a lamp is always kept burning, and where pilgrims perform their devotions. A well of good water and a fine fig-tree add to the attractions of this "place."

From the eastern brow of the sandstone ridge, near to Mukhâlid, there is a fine panoramic view, extending from the headland of Carmel to Jaffa. Looking due east, we see the beautiful hills of Samaria (Har-Ephraim), beyond the plain of Sharon, the surface of which is here diversified by a central range of low, scantily wooded hills, which run southwards and terminate in an oak forest, the remains of the ancient forest of Arsûf, opposite to the ruins of the city of that name. This hilly district is said to support "a considerable population of bad character, but rich in horses, flocks, and herds."

The melon district terminates near to the river El Fâlik, which we approach through a wild shrubbery, formed chiefly of ilex, arbutus, hawthorn, and rue. Its name signifies "the

cutting," for it is an artificial outlet for springs which rise in the great marsh east of the sandstone ridge. The course of the stream is marked by tall flowering reeds (Syrian papyri), which in the distance look like miniature palm-trees, and it is bordered by thickets of oleanders,



VIEW OF THE ROCK-ENCIRCLED HARBOUR AT JAFFA.
From the roof of the house of Simon the Tanner. The building in the foreground, with its domes and perforated parapets, is a characteristic example of native domestic architecture in towns and cities of Southern Palestine.

lupins, and St. John's wort. Mounds of ruins near to the river prove that there was at one time an important fortress here. After crossing the stream we traverse an undulating sandy plain, quite uninhabited, uncultivated, treeless, and waterless, and with scarcely a sign of a

beaten track anywhere. This desolation extends southwards for nearly five miles, relieved only by occasional patches of *poa bulbosa* and marram grass, and thistles of many kinds, with pink, blue, and yellow blossoms. Drifted sand-hills on the right shut out the view of the sea, and another range on the left conceals the wooded hills of the plain of Sharon.

We pass some pools of stagnant water, partly overgrown with reeds and rushes, and notice a few caves and several groups of rock-cut tombs in the sandstone ridge on our left. This lonely way leads us to El Haram 'Aly Ibn 'Aleim (the sanctuary of 'Aly the son of 'Aleim), which stands on the coast ridge about one hundred and ten feet above the sea-level. It consists of a few substantial-looking houses clustering round an ancient mosque, said to have been built by the Sultan Melek ed Daher Bibars in honour of the famous dervish 'Aly Ibn 'Aleim, about the year 1270.

I spent a few hours here one night when on a journey with my brother. We approached it, however, on that occasion from the south, making our way along the seashore at time of sunset. Sea-gulls were flapping their broad white wings above our heads, a multitude of crabs (*cancer volans*) were running from their sandholes towards the sea, and oyster-catchers were flitting about, busily seeking an evening meal. The cliffs on our right were high and steep, and formed of a conglomerate of shells and sand. In some places the beach was very narrow and rocky. The twilight deepened rapidly, and a thick mist rose from the ground, so that we could only see the upper parts of the figures moving before us. We met a long string of camels swinging themselves lazily along: they looked very strange and shadowy, partly concealed and partly magnified as they were by the mist. Our kawass, who was riding a little way in advance of us, appeared to be gliding along without support, for his grey horse was quite invisible. Presently he guided us towards a curious winding fissure in the cliffs, an ancient water-course which served as a road. A low rough wall of rock stood in the middle and divided it into two natural causeways. The groom alighted and led the way, groping along the steep and winding road with a large lantern in his hand. We soon reached the top of the cliff, far above the sea mists, and found ourselves close to the precincts of the sanctuary. We were conducted through several courtyards and passages, then up a steep uncovered stone staircase to a wide terrace, where a number of Arabs were sitting round a little mountain of rice, and eating it quickly and silently by star and lantern light. The sheikh of El Haram welcomed us with great courtesy, and invited us to enter the spacious and lofty guest-chamber which opened on to the terrace. Little red earthenware lamps of antique form were lighted and placed in niches round the room, and then we could see that the roof was domed and fluted, and the walls plastered and decorated with incised ornament of good design. In central positions there were ornamental inscriptions in red and black, chiefly consisting of the names of prophets and saints, and invocations to God. But the whole surface was blackened with smoke from the wood fires which are always kept burning in the centre of the cemented floor in the winter. There was nothing in this spacious apartment but a few old reed mats, spread in the slightly raised recesses on three sides of it and in the corners. We had some of our tent furniture brought in,

and after supper and some talk with the sheikh we walked for a little time on the star-lit terrace, where our servants, rolled up in their heavy cloaks and wadded quilts, were already in deep sleep.

We rested for a few hours in the great guest-chamber, and when the mueddin (see page 385, vol. i.) chanted the call to prayer from the little minaret close by, "Awake, sleepers, it is better to pray than to sleep," we answered to the call and then went on to the terrace.

The day was just beginning to dawn. It was three o'clock, and the loud shrill voice echoing from the courtyard below reminded us that it was the hour of the "first cock-crowing:" the "second cock-crowing" is at sunrise, about two hours later. At four o'clock we were ready to pursue our journey, and we rode away, grateful for the shelter which had been given to us in this ancient sanctuary.

At a very short distance from this place, towards the north, are the ruins of the Crusading fortress of Arsûf (see map). It is alluded to by Josephus under the name of Apollonia, but of its early history scarcely anything appears to be known, except that it was in ruins in the year 57 B.C., and subsequently rebuilt by the Romans.

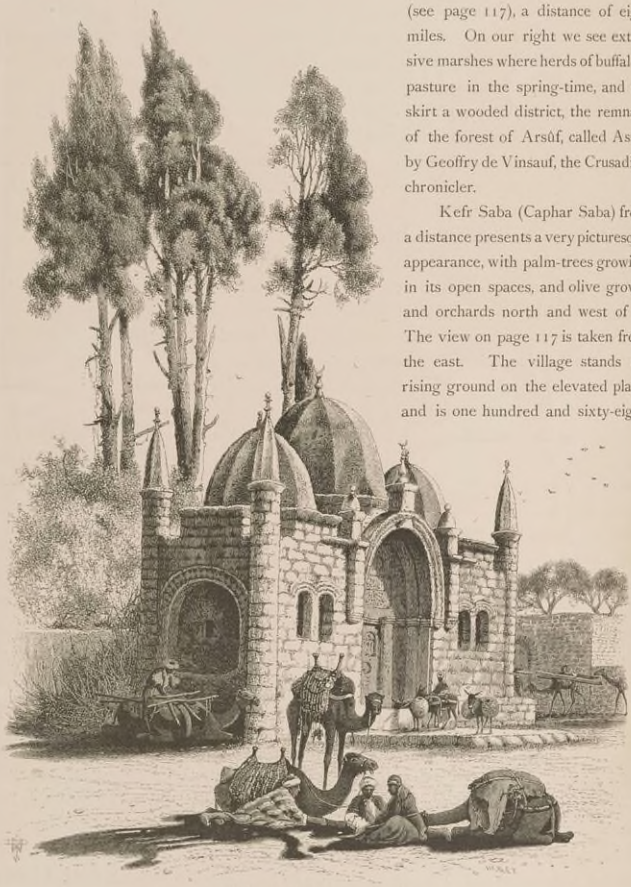
ARSÛF must have been a strong fortress in the eleventh century, for it is recorded that Godfrey of Bouillon, King of Jerusalem, besieged it unsuccessfully; but it shared the fate of Cæsarea, and was taken by Godfrey's brother and successor, Baldwin I., and, like Cæsarea, was recaptured by the Mohammedans.

During Richard Cœur de Lion's famous march of a hundred miles from Acre (see page 73) to Ascalon (see page 169), in 1191, for the recovery of the Crusading fortresses on the sea-coast, it was in the neighbourhood of Arsûf that the most important encounter took place, when Saladin's troops were defeated and the fortress of Arsûf regained. The Arab historian, Boha-ed-din, admits that it was the forest of Arsûf alone that saved Saladin's army from destruction, since without its shelter they would have been pursued and dispersed.

Arsûf was refortified by Louis IX. in 1251, but in 1265 this fortress was successfully besieged by the Sultan Melek ed Daher Bibars. The inhabitants were massacred and the place destroyed: it has remained in ruins ever since. Lieutenant Kitchener, R.E., in his "Journal of the Survey" (1877), says: "The Castle of Arsûf is very like Ascalon (see page 173) in the style of its masonry and the excellence of the cement employed. In places where the stones are weathered away, the cement remains. In other places the pointing remains as fresh as when the masons left it. The castle was built on a bad foundation of very soft rock, on the seaside: this has been worn away, and the walls have slid down bodily. They are naturally cracked and broken, but immense portions of the walls have rolled down from a great height without breaking up. In some parts the walls look as if they had been built on sloping scarps, so perfectly have they slid from their high position. A quantity of green sulphate of copper is scattered about, attached to the rocks in crystals." The harbour was well constructed, and "measured three hundred feet from north to south, and one hundred and twenty from east to west," with an entrance barely thirty feet wide.

On leaving this utterly deserted place we follow a track which leads due east, across the plain of Sharon to Kefr Saba (see page 117), a distance of eight miles. On our right we see extensive marshes where herds of buffaloes pasture in the spring-time, and we skirt a wooded district, the remnant of the forest of Arsûf, called Assûr by Geoffry de Vinsauf, the Crusading chronicler.

Kefr Saba (Caphar Saba) from a distance presents a very picturesque appearance, with palm-trees growing in its open spaces, and olive groves and orchards north and west of it. The view on page 117 is taken from the east. The village stands on rising ground on the elevated plain, and is one hundred and sixty-eight



A ROADSIDE FOUNTAIN AND TOMB.
The Sebîl of Abû Nabût, commonly called the Tomb of Tabitha (Dorcas).

PUBLIC FOUNTAIN AT JAFFA.

Near to the gate of the town, shaded by an octagonal domed structure, formed of eight pointed arches supported by columns.

feet above the sea. Many biblical topographists, including Dr. Robinson, have alluded to this place as the site of Antipatris, but there is nothing to indicate that any city of importance ever stood here. Its houses are built of sun-dried bricks and small stones, and its square rain-water tanks are made of clay. There are no springs in or near the village, but about half a mile to the east of it there are two wells of good water, one of which is at the sanctuary of Neby Ben Yamîn (Benjamin), shown on page 116. Some trees above the average size

SCENE IN A JAFFA GARDEN.
Two women engaged in working a sâkiyeh, a clumsy machine for raising water from a well to fill a reservoir. On the branch of pomegranate there is a chameleon.

grow near the shrine, and one of them appears in the foreground of the view of Kefr Saba (see page 117).

Josephus records that Herod built the city of Antipatris in honour of his father, Antipater, "on the plain of Caphar Saba, the finest plain in his kingdom," and he especially states that the city was encompassed by a river. The mound on which stands Kûl'at Râs el 'Ain is now generally regarded as the site of Antipatris. It is five miles and a half due south of Kefr

Saba, and on the same plain with it. It is strewn with tesseræ, Roman bricks, and fragments of marble, and close to it are the copious streams which form the chief source of the Nahr el Aujeh (see page 121). Mr. James Finn, in his "Byways in Palestine" (1868), says:—"It is impossible to avoid the conclusion that this is the true site of Antipatris. The mound has still a dry trench round it, which must have anciently had its current of water;" and he adds, "no better spot could have been selected for a military station."

To Antipatris St. Paul was hurriedly conveyed by night from Jerusalem by a military guard, and thence conducted to Cæsarea (see page 108) on the morrow (Acts xxiii. 31, 32). On the Roman road, between Antipatris and Jerusalem, there is an extensive mound of ruins called Tibneh, which Christian tradition identifies with Timnath Sera, the city of Joshua and his burial place (Joshua xxiv. 30). A remarkable tomb in a rock-cut cemetery, on a declivity south of the mound, is associated with this tradition (see page 125). Lieutenant Conder says:—"There are niches for over two hundred lamps in front of the tomb entrance. Within there is a chamber with fourteen graves or *kokîm*, and a passage which leads to an inner chamber with only one *koka*. . . . The great oak-tree some forty feet high, near the tomb, is called Sheikh et Teim (the chief servant of God)" (see page 124). M. Guérin, who regards this tomb as the veritable tomb of Joshua, states that the peasants opened the inner chamber shortly before his visit to the place in 1863, and they found a sort of candelabrum with three branches, in yellow metal. Flint knives were found in the kokîm of this tomb by the Abbé Richard in 1870. (For the Samaritan tradition respecting the tomb of Joshua, refer to page 234, vol. i.)

## JAFFA, THE ANCIENT JOPPA.

Jaffa, or rather Yâfa, is one of the oldest seaports in the world, and its name has been preserved almost unchanged from the earliest times—יפו, *Yapho*, "the beautiful." To the "haven of Joppa" cedars of Lebanon (see page 475, vol. i.) were sent "in flotes" for the building of successive Temples at Jerusalem (2 Chron. ii. 16; 1 Esdras v. 55). Jonathan Maccabæus besieged Joppa "and won it" (1 Macc. x. 75, 76). The city fell successively under Greek and Roman sway, and had been several times destroyed and rebuilt before the Arab invasion, A.D. 636. It was acquired by the Crusaders in 1099, and after having been lost and regained several times, was finally taken by the Sultan Melek ed Daher Bibars in 1267, who left it in ruins. It was not until the end of the seventeenth century that the place began to revive. It was, however, a walled town when Napoleon's army attacked it in 1799, and it was able to make resistance for a few days, but was finally taken by storm on the 4th of March, and a terrible massacre of prisoners ensued. Napoleon then caused the fortifications to be strengthened, and the place prepared for receiving supplies from Egypt, but after his defeat at Acre (refer to page 75), he gave orders for the fortifications to be entirely destroyed. They were accordingly blown up on May 27th, 1799. The walls were rebuilt under the superintendence of English and Turkish officers. No change has been made in the site of the city: the Jaffa

SCENE IN THE BAZAAR AT JAFFA.

A public café, in a deep arched recess, with a group of smokers. An attendant pounding coffee is steadying a wooden mortar with his naked feet. In the foreground there are fruit-stalls, and a Bedouin with his tufted lance; a water-carrier and a peasant boy leading a camel are passing by.

of the present century stands on the accumulated ruins of former cities, on a rounded hill, the summit of which is one hundred and fifty-three feet above the level of the sea (see steel plate, Jaffa).

Just in front of the town there is a semicircular belt of rocks, some of which rise high out of the water, while others are only indicated by the surf which dashes over them. These rocks (to one of which, according to Pliny, Andromeda was chained) form a large but shallow harbour, which can only be entered by small boats (see page 133). There is a wide opening to the north and a narrow one to the west. Steamers anchor in the roadstead half a mile from the shore, and passengers are landed in small boats (see page 128). The town of Jaffa is rapidly increasing in wealth and importance. Its population is said to exceed eight thousand, and of this

SANCTUARY OF IMÂM 'ALY.
Surmounted by one large and eight smaller domes. On the road between Jaffa and Ramleh, near the village of Yazûr.

number more than two-thirds are Mohammedans. The suburban population also is considerable; there is an Egyptian colony north of the town beyond the cemetery (see page 131), and the Temple colony (refer to page 98) occupies an estate called Sarôna, some

distance to the north-east of it; they have also acquired a settlement nearer to the city, which was founded by an American colony in 1866. A very large piece of ground beyond the Jaffa gardens, on the south-east side, has been granted to the Agricultural Colony of the Universal Israelitish Alliance.

The bazaars of Jaffa are well supplied, and generally crowded with picturesque and motley groups of people (see pages 129 and 140). Herr C. Shick, Government Surveyor of Buildings at Jerusalem, says in a recent report: "The town wall has been demolished, the ditch filled up, and a number of large houses and magazines have been erected." He adds: "As a sign of the advance of agriculture, it may be mentioned that the Jaffa gardens have increased in extent fourfold during a quarter of a century." These gardens are the principal attraction of the place. They extend about two miles inland, and nearly three miles from north to south. The surface of the ground is sandy, but there is rich soil beneath, and water is abundant. The gardens are enclosed with stone walls or with formidable hedges of prickly pear (*Cactus opuntia*). Each garden has its well, lined with masonry, and a raised tank or reservoir, which is filled by means of a sâkiyeh. The one shown on page 138 is being worked by two women, probably the wives of the gardener. The string of water-jars revolving round the wheel over the well can be distinguished through the arched opening (see also page 81, and for a fuller description of a sâkiyeh, see pages 94 and 95). These well-watered gardens produce a great variety of fruit and vegetables. The grapes are delicious and abundant, though the vines are half buried in the sand. The oranges of Jaffa are unrivalled, and are largely exported.

One of the chief resources of the inhabitants is the annual arrival of pilgrims on their way to Jerusalem. There is tolerably good hotel accommodation, and the Latin Monastery offers a welcome to travellers. It stands high on the slope of the hill, and is said to occupy the site of the house of Simon the Tanner, but a little Mohammedan mosque or sanctuary by the seaside claims to be the house itself (Acts x. 6) (see page 132). From the roof of the house there is a good view of the harbour (see page 133). The domestic architecture of Jaffa (see steel plate) resembles that of Jerusalem (see pages 8 and 9, vol. i.); there being very little timber available for building, the roofs are necessarily constructed of stone and are therefore domed. The base of the dome is always more or less concealed by masonry, so that a flat space may be secured for walking upon. These terraced roofs are generally protected by a low wall or parapet, as they must have been anciently in obedience to the law: "When thou buildest a new house, then thou shalt make a battlement for thy roof, that thou bring not blood upon thine house, if any man fall from thence" (Deut. xxii. 8). The parapets and upper portions of walls of houses of this description are frequently constructed partly of earthenware pipes about five inches in diameter and eight or ten inches long. These tubular bricks are embedded in cement and arranged in fanciful geometrical patterns. The house-top represented on page 133 is a good example of this peculiar mode of construction (see also page 40, vol. i.). Near to the gate of Jaffa there is a handsome fountain (see page 137).

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J. D. WOODWARD PINXT.

J. J. CHEW SCULPT.

JAFFA, THE ANCIENT JOPPA.

G. APPLETON & CO. NEW YORK.

The journey from Jaffa (see page 137) to Jerusalem (see page 1, vol. i.) may now be made in an omnibus in about twelve hours; two vehicles run daily each way, under the superintendence of the Temple colonists. Telegraphic posts and wires, and watch-houses at intervals of about two miles or less, mark the course of the road (see page 195, vol. i.). Travellers who prefer riding usually start from Jaffa early in the afternoon, and spend the night at Ramleh (see page 148), ready to start for Jerusalem before dawn on the following day; but there was no choice in the matter when I arrived in Palestine in the year 1855, for there was not a wheeled carriage of any kind in the country, not even a wheel-barrow.

I well remember my first ride on the Jaffa road. We had spent a short time in quarantine, and had been afterwards kindly entertained by Dr. Kayat, the British Consul at Jaffa, and his family, in their pleasant bow-windowed house by the seaside, when, towards the close of a July day—our fellow-travellers and the muleteers with the baggage being in readiness—we mounted and set out on our journey. An old man in a coat of many colours led my horse up the steep and narrow streets of stairs, through the crowded bazaars (see pages 129 and 140), and out at the great gate north-east of the town. It was about six o'clock. The open space outside the gate was in shade, for the sun was going down towards the sea, and here picturesque groups of the townspeople, seated on low stools or on matting, were enjoying their pipes, while others, well mounted, were galloping backwards and forwards. We rode towards the south-east, along a broad sandy road, which led us to a bridle-path between dusty hedges of cactus (*opuntia*), the large fleshy thick-jointed leaves of which were fringed with yellow flowers, promising a rich harvest of prickly pears. In the fruit gardens on each side oranges, lemons, pistachios, apricots, almonds, and mulberries were ripening. The pomegranate tree showed its scarlet flowers, and acacias, locust-trees, tamarisks, olive, and fig-trees flourished, while here and there a group of palm-trees laden with golden fruit towered above them.

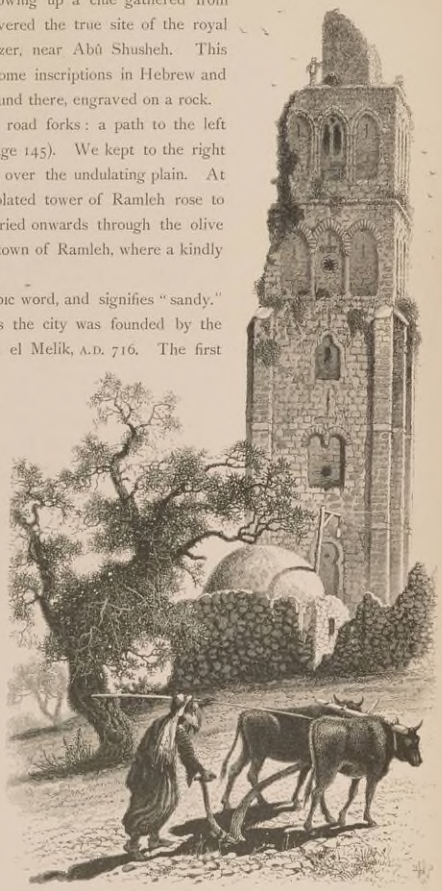
We paused for a few minutes at a wayside tomb and fountain, "the Sebîl of Abû Nabût," who was Governor of Jaffa at the commencement of this century. It is popularly called the Tomb of Tabitha. (Close to this tomb (see page 136), and extending northwards from it into the fruit gardens, the ancient cemetery of Jaffa was discovered, in the year 1874, by M. C. Clermont Ganneau. It contains many rock-cut tombs, and the circle of ground which includes them is known as Ard Dhabitha, "the land of Dhabîtha.") It was about half-past six when we reached the open country beyond the gardens. The sun went down. Vultures and kites were sweeping through the air. As the darkness increased our little party, including our servants and six muleteers, assembled together to keep in close company for the rest of the way. We could distinguish parties of field labourers and oxen at rest by the roadside, and sometimes we came to a rude threshing-floor, where by the light of a bonfire of weeds and thorns we saw Rembrandt-like groups of rough-looking peasants, some of them sleeping, others lighting their long pipes with the fragrant embers.

The nine-domed sanctuary of Imâm 'Aly presently appeared close to the roadside, its whitewashed walls gleaming through the darkness. It is near to the village of Yazûr (see map

and page 141). This place was supposed to represent the ancient Gezer (Joshua x. 33) until M. Ganneau, by cleverly following up a clue gathered from an old Arabian writer, discovered the true site of the royal Canaanitish city at Tel Gezer, near Abû Shusheh. This discovery was confirmed by some inscriptions in Hebrew and Greek characters which he found there, engraved on a rock.

Not far from Yazûr the road forks: a path to the left leads to Ludd (Lydda, see page 145). We kept to the right and rode on in the darkness over the undulating plain. At about nine o'clock the tall isolated tower of Ramleh rose to view on our right. We hurried onwards through the olive groves and soon entered the town of Ramleh, where a kindly welcome awaited us.

Ramleh is a purely Arabic word, and signifies "sandy." According to Arab historians the city was founded by the Khalif Suleiman, son of Abd el Melik, A.D. 716. The first notice of it by a European writer is in "The Voyage of Bernard the Wise." He calls it "Ramula," and passed through it on his way to Emmaus (see page 152), in A.D. 867, when it must have already become a place of importance, for many coins of the Omeiyad and Abbaside khalifs had been struck there. Marasid el 'Ittila'a describes Er Ramleh as "formerly the capital of Filastîn." Its original boundaries extended far beyond the present unwalled town. Ramleh passed through many vicissitudes during the time of the Crusades. It was held by the Crusaders from A.D. 1204 to 1266, when it was finally taken by Sultan Melek ed Daher Bibars.



THE TOWER AT RAMLEH.

Said to be the minaret of a large mosque which once stood here. According to an Arabic inscription over the door, it was built in the year 1318. It is known as the White Mosque.

RUINS OF THE CHURCH OF ST. GEORGE AT LUDD, THE ANCIENT LYDDA.
The nave and north aisle have been recently restored and converted into a Greek church; the south aisle is destroyed, and the remainder is used as the court of a mosque.

# LYDDA AND RAMLEH.

THE traveller who, on arrival at Ramleh at sunset, can forget his fatigue and accomplish the ascent of the lofty tower overlooking the plains (see page 144), will be amply rewarded for his exertions by the magnificent view spread out before him (see page 148).

Though yet early in the year, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone. "The flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land. The fig-tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell." The fragrance from the orange-groves is wafted on the breeze, the last lowing of cattle and bleating of sheep returning to their folds fill the air with a pleasant sound—darkness and quiet are spreading over the land. The soil is still moist with the winter rains, not yet licked up by the dry easterly winds, and lagoons and sheets of water flash back the splendour of the setting sun. Abundant verdure, both corn and weeds, covers the rich loam, and when swayed by the breeze displays glints of crimson from the millions of anemones, the roses of Sharon, which lie shrouded among the lengthening grasses.

The whole goodly plain of Sharon is visible—from Mount Carmel on the north down to Lydda, from the eastern hills to the blue sea, now bathed in gold—a wilderness of weeds and thorn brakes, and yet a very paradise of colour and ever-varying beauty. Sharon was lovely in days gone by, when every acre was cultivated and teeming with an abundant population; it is yet lovely during the land's long holiday, at this time of year, before the fervid summer heat has parched up the land and reduced the plain to a barren waste.

Yet ascend the tower once again in the autumn and a different prospect presents itself. Far and wide the olive-groves have become dull and lustreless from the accumulation of dust, the mulberry leaves have disappeared, used as food for the sheep. The soil is parched up and dry, all verdure has departed, even the stalks of corn have cracked up and fled away on the wind, and there is left a sky of brass and earth of iron. Trees and houses quiver in the heated atmosphere, camels in the distance are seen with their bodies separated from their legs, in grotesque confusion, and there are sudden glimpses of oases in stony places, beautiful sheets of water and green trees where it is known to be only parched-up land. The villages, which so few weeks ago were thronged with mountaineers assisting in the lowland harvest, are now denuded of their normal inhabitants, who in their turn have ascended the hills to assist their neighbours. The corn has long since been harvested, thrashed, winnowed, and heaped up; the Government has taken its share, the landowners have taken theirs, the money usurers theirs, and what is left to the villages is now safely housed in the boxes made of cow-dung which serve for barns, and the people know what are their slender means for the coming year. They are a frugal race, who do their best to keep body and soul together—with very moderate success, for they are not only preyed upon by their own Government officials, but also by the Bedawin of the desert, who constantly make inroads from the south country and carry off the corn as it lies on the threshing-floors. They are probably descendants of the ancient inhabitants of the land, and their traditions go far to prove this. It was on these pasture lands that the royal herds of King David were wont to graze, and their excellence is referred to by the prophet Isaiah (xxxv. 1, 2): "The desert shall rejoice, and blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing: the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon."

The desolation of the plain of Sharon is at present due to want of a stable and organized government. It is still well watered, it still counts its forests, and the sea-sand has not greatly encroached upon its borders; its soil is most fertile, and its people are able and willing to till the land, were they not ground down and hindered by the rapacious officials who are sent periodically to take from them their gains, under one pretext or another. These people are a rural race whose sympathies are evidently not with their Turkish rulers, but rather with the Egyptians, with whom, as in days of yore, they still keep up a close connection, not a few having been down to work on the Suez Canal. Like the Egyptians, they have raised the fruitful groves surrounding their habitations by the sweat of their brow. Irrigation is necessary to keep them in a flourishing condition, and this is kept up by means of water ever flowing from wells nearly one hundred feet in depth, the water-wheels (see page 138) of which are worked by contributions of animals, camels, horses, mules, oxen, donkeys, from the families in the villages, according to their wealth and breadth of lands.

Let us descend the tower and visit Ludd, the ancient Lydda, by moonlight. Passing over fields of ranunculus, anemones, saffrons, and other wild flowers now closed, we burst through a line of tall bushy reeds and grasses, startling a heron into flight, and see in front of us, on a flash of water, the beautiful ruins of Lydda, the city of our patron saint, St. George, held in honour both by Mohammedans and Christians. The church, the ruins of which were until lately so picturesque, has passed through many vicissitudes (see page 145). As early as A.D. 315 we know it to have existed here, the site of a bishopric, and dedicated to St. George, whose remains are said to be interred beneath. This church was destroyed in the eighth century by the Saracens, and again rebuilt by the Crusaders, again destroyed by Saladin and rebuilt by Richard Cœur de Lion.

But it is not only as a Christian site that Lydda is of interest—unlike the modern Ramleh, Lydda can lay claim to our interest as an ancient site; not, however, rendered conspicuous until the time of the apostles. Here it was that Saint Peter healed the paralytic one, and here he was staying when he was sent for to Joppa (see page 137), nine miles distant, at the time of the death of Tabitha. It assumed the name of Diospolis (City of Zeus) about the time of Hadrian, and only gradually, through the lapse of centuries, regained its original name.

Forcing our way over vast quantities of segs or flags, and scarcely escaping the thorns of the prickly pear, we ascend the swelling hills and find ourselves among the ruins of 'Amwâs (the ancient Emmaus, afterwards called Nicopolis), with Latrôn in the distance (see page 152).

Emmaus is mentioned in the book of Maccabees, and also by F. Josephus as being a place of note in the time of the Asmoneans, and it was in sight of this city that Jonathan Maccabæus defeated the Syrian army. It must not, however, be confounded with Emmaus of Luke xxiv. 13, though Dr. Robinson was in favour of this supposition. (Refer to pages 198 *et seq.*, vol. i., where the subject of the site of Emmaus is fully treated.) 'Amwâs is now merely a squalid village with a ruined church. From here we can see the new carriage road winding up the highlands to Jerusalem.

THE PLAIN OF SHARON FROM THE TOWER, RAMLEH.

This tower, shown on page 144, was the minaret of a mosque called Jami'a el Abtad. It has a winding staircase of one hundred and twenty steps. Its eastern windows overlook the town of Ramleh and the plain beyond, bounded by the hills of Judæa.

SŪR'AH, THE ANCIENT ZORAH.
The birthplace of Samson. It is five miles south of Latrôn, on a conical hill on the north side of the Wâdy es Sûr'ar (the Valley of Sorek).

# PHILISTIA.

THE term Philistia or Palestine (the land of the stranger) has now, by some strange irony of fate, been assumed by all that portion of Canaan which was occupied and conquered by the children of Israel as the Promised Land.

It is probable that this has arisen from the fact that during the time of the Grecian

supremacy the Philistines were great in power and occupied the sea-board from Jaffa to Gaza, with the ports or *majumas* of Jabneh (see page 162), Ashdod (see page 165), Ascalon (see page 173), and Gaza (see page 175), and at one time even held the people of Israel in subjection, and would naturally assert themselves owners of the inland territory to those trading on their coasts. The land of the Philistines, at the time of the conquest of Canaan by the Israelites, extended from Ekron ('Akir) on the north to Gaza on the south (see map), from the sea-board on the west to the mountains on the east, and was usually called Shephelath, or the Low Country. At that time the Philistines appear to have been on very friendly terms with the Anakim of the mountains and with the other nations of Canaan, and to have joined them in withstanding the incursions of the Israelites. That the Philistines alone were successful in offering a continued and strenuous resistance, is probably due to their possession of horsemen and chariots, which they could use to advantage on the plains, and which their antagonists did not possess in any number.

The whole of Philistia was in those days highly cultivated and most productive, and was renowned for its vast unbroken expanses of luxuriant corn, and groves of fruit-trees and vineyards; and even to the present day the land still enjoys a reputation for productiveness, and exports corn to foreign countries, though its breadth of production is very much narrowed, for on the sea-board the drift sand has been allowed to encroach and cover the land for some miles inland, engulfing the site of many an ancient city. This encroachment of sand from the sea-shore is a most serious evil, and every year threatens more and more the fertile plain. Already many miles of rich country have been devoured by this insatiable monster, and there is no Perseus at hand to deliver Andromeda. Gaza (see page 175) and Ashdod (see page 165) are threatened and will in a few years be overcome, while their ancient ports have long since disappeared. The method of progress of this silent sea monster is plainly visible. The whole of the coast now consists of sand dunes sloping at an angle of ten degrees in the direction of the prevailing south-west wind, and presenting a slope of about thirty to thirty-five degrees to the north-east or on the leeward side, and when the prevailing wind is blowing the sand may be seen gently working up the windward incline, and, on arriving at the summit of the dune, swiftly falling to the bottom, from thence again to ascend another gentle slope, ever moving onwards towards the interior.

On the eastern side of Philistia another enemy has laid waste the country and destroyed its ancient fertility, for there the hills have been denuded of their soil until nothing is left but the bare rock; year after year the terraces supporting the vineyards and fruit-trees have been allowed to fall away, and the rich red loamy soil has been washed down until the hillsides are bare and desolate. At the bottoms of these valleys are still narrow slips of fertile ground, which yield in abundance, when they are not deluged by torrents from the unclothed hillsides or too greatly scorched by the glare from the overhanging rocks.

Philistia is not by any means the uniformly level tract it is generally supposed to be; it may be said to be divided into two portions: first, the undulating plains, about twelve miles

in breadth, bordering on the sea-coast, elevated from fifty to one hundred feet above the sea-level, and consisting of a series of undulations without distinctive features, composed of the richest alluvial deposit. Here were built and flourished Ekron, Jabneh (see page 162), Migdol (see page 167), Ashdod (see page 165), Ascalon (see page 169), and Gaza (see page 175), cities well fortified and situated on eminences, and dedicated to the worship of the ancient fish-gods. Between this undulating country and the mountains or hill country of Judah, is the hilly country of Philistia, stretching from north to south, and about twelve to fifteen miles wide. It consists of a series of hills and spurs from five hundred to eight hundred feet above the sea-level, broken through by broad valleys, and is distinct from the hill country of Judah, where the mountains rise to a height of two thousand to three thousand feet, and overhang Philistia. In this district, as has already been stated, the productive soil has been washed away with the terraces from the hillsides into the valleys, leaving vast extents of bare rock; but even yet the country is not abandoned, and the fellahin, when not too closely ground down under Turkish rule, carefully and successfully cultivate here and there the portions left uninjured (see page 160).

It is, in a great measure, due to the desolating rule of the nations which have held sway in Palestine for so many centuries, that we are enabled at the present time to recognise so many of the ancient sites mentioned in the books relating the conquest of the country by the Israelites more than three thousand years ago.

Instead of being the "battle-field of nations," had this country existed for any lengthened period under a settled form of government and been allowed to develop its resources and prosper, it is probable that all records of the far-distant past would long ere this have been swept away; but, owing to the state of poverty in which the country has continued, very slight changes have taken place, with the exception of a general decay.

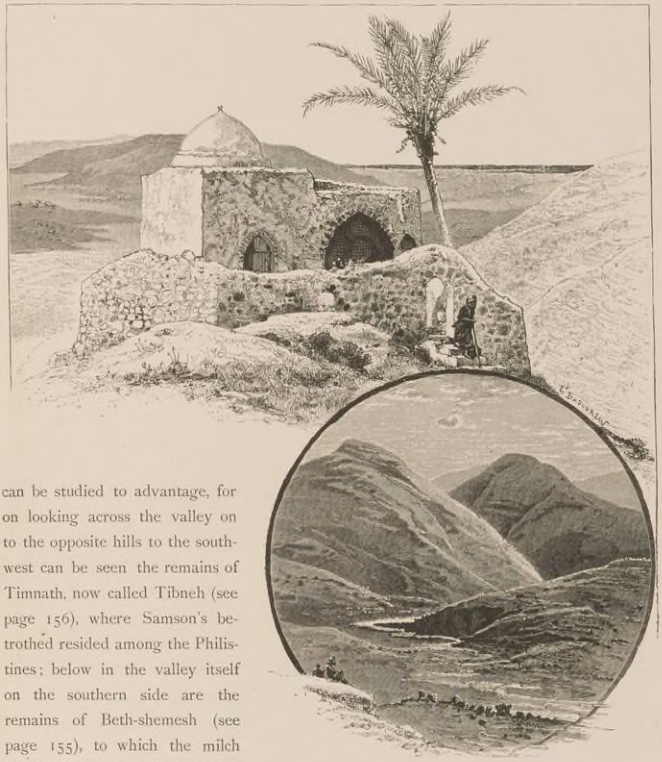
The descendants of the original inhabitants still linger about the ancient sites and ruins, and preserve their ancient traditions, so that it is practicable at the present day to go through the land, Bible in hand, and identify the places there mentioned. This is more especially the case with regard to places of minor importance, such as the ancient second-rate towns in Philistia, for very little has occurred to cause any change in their sites, while on the other hand the chief towns, such as Gath (see page 161), Ascalon (see page 169), and Gaza (see page 175), have been subject to many sieges, and to the usual fortunes of war. In many instances the stones of the ancient towns have been taken by the fellahin and burnt into lime (see page 184), or carried off to other sites, as in the case of Ascalon, whence many shiploads of cut and carved stones were taken for the rebuilding of 'Akka (see page 76) and Saida (see page 45), but, as a general rule, the remains of the cities are still to be found on the spot, covered with rubbish or built into the walls of the peasants' houses.

At the foot of the mountain-wall of Judah, just beyond the north-eastern extremity of the hills of Philistia, is still to be seen the site of Zorah, the birthplace of Samson, the son of Manoah. This place is now called Sŭr'ah (see page 149); it is on the northern bank of the Wâdy es Sŭr'ar, the head of the river called Nahr Rubîn (see map).

THE RUINED FORTRESS OF LATRÔN, FROM 'AMWÂS.
The Emmaus of the Maccabees, afterwards called Nicopolis. In the foreground are the remains of the ancient church of Emmaus. There is a direct road, running southwards, from Latrôn to Zorah (Sŭr'ah), over hills dotted with ruined sites.

Zorah was well placed as an outlying post of the Israelites on the brow of a sharp-pointed conical hill overlooking the Valley of Sorek (Wâdy es Sŭr'ar) towards the Philistines, and yet with a gentle slope on the north-east towards the cities of the tribes of Dan and Judah. It is at a height of eleven

hundred and seventy-one feet above the level of the sea, and commands a view of the opposite side of the valley, on which the Philistines were located and where they still owned the soil. From this central point of view at Sŭr'ah (Zorah) the history of Samson and subsequent events



SHRINE OF SHEIKH SAMAT AT SŬR'AH (ZORAH).
On the summit of the hill. Below is shown the upper part of the Wády es Sŭr'ar (Valley of Sorek), which falls into the river called Nahr Rubin.

can be studied to advantage, for on looking across the valley on to the opposite hills to the south-west can be seen the remains of Timnath, now called Tibneh (see page 156), where Samson's betrothed resided among the Philistines; below in the valley itself on the southern side are the remains of Beth-shemesh (see page 155), to which the milch kine brought the ark in a cart from Ekron ('Akir), and on looking down the Valley of Sorek the line can be traced up which the cart would have been drawn (see page 155). We find that Samson grew up to manhood in the country about Zorah and Eshtaol (Joshua xix. 41); that is

to say, about the sides and among the steep slopes and precipices of the mountains of Judah at a time when the Philistines had dominion over Israel. And he went from Zorah (Sûr'ah, see page 149) across the valley of Sorek (Wâdy es Sûr'ar) to the opposite side, into the parts where the Philistines lived, to Timnath (Tibneh, see page 156) where he sought for his wife a daughter of the Philistines. And among the vineyards of Timnath a young lion roared against him, and Samson, who had nothing in his hand, rent him as he would have rent a kid. And as he returned he found a swarm of bees and honey in the skeleton of the lion, and put forth a riddle to his companions among the Philistines, who had come to feast with him. Through Samson's wife they ascertained the answer, and Samson's anger was kindled, and he went over the mountains to Askalon (see page 169), where he slew thirty Philistines in order to obtain garments with which to pay for his wager; he then abandoned his wife and went up to Zorah (Sûr'ah, see page 149). Some time after, during wheat harvest, he prepared to visit his wife with a peace offering, but found that she was married to another. Then he determined to be revenged upon the Philistines, and caught three hundred foxes and tied them two and two, and put a firebrand in the midst. And when he had set the brands on fire he let them go into the standing corn of the Philistines, and burnt up both the shocks and also the standing corn, with the vineyard and olives. The corn in Philistia at the time of harvest may be seen in unbroken expanses for many miles in extent, on the undulating plains and in the valleys, and on the terraces of the hills, and a conflagration once kindled would be most difficult to arrest. It would probably extend over all the land of Philistia, and reduce the people to starvation. The question naturally arises as to whether the people of Israel would have suffered from this act of Samson, but it will be noticed, on reference to a map representing Palestine at this period, that they lived entirely in the high lands, and would be exempt from this devastating calamity.

At the present day during the harvest time the people are obliged to adopt the most stringent measures to prevent any accidental conflagration among the expanses of standing corn.

Our next detailed account relating to the southern part of Philistia is that concerning the journeys of the ark after it had fallen into the hands of the Philistines at Eben-ezer, near Aphek, when the sons of Eli were killed. And the ark was taken from the mountains about Eben-ezer down to Ashdod in the plains, and it was brought into the house of Dagon; and in the morning the people of Ashdod found that their god, Dagon, was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. And they took Dagon and set him in his place again, and were much troubled about the matter. And on the following morning again Dagon was found to have fallen with his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord, and was broken, and the people of Ashdod (see page 165) and the surrounding district were smitten with emerods. And when the people saw that this was on account of the ark being among them, they summoned a council and decided that the ark should be taken across the plain to Gath (see page 161), at the foot of the hills. And the people of Gath suffered in like manner for

holding the ark in possession, therefore they sent the ark to Ekron; and the people of Ekron were afraid, for there was a deadly destruction throughout all the city, and the hand of God was heavy on them. And after the ark had been seven months among the Philistines they called for their priests, asking them what they should do with it, and how they could get rid

'AIN SHEMS, THE SITE OF BETH-SHEMESH.
South of the Wâdy es Sûr'ar (Sorek), and nearly opposite to Sûr'ah (Zorah). The ancient and modern names Beth-shemesh (House of the Sun) and 'Ain Shems (Eye of the Sun) are indicative of sun-worship.

of it. And they were told to make a new cart, and take two milch kine, on which there had come no yoke, and tie the kine to the cart and take their calves home from them. And the Philistines did this, and took the ark in the cart with the milch kine out from Ekron ('Akir) to a place where three roads met, and then left it. And the milch kine, instead of returning to

THE VALLEY OF SOREK.
Where the men of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest when the ark arrived from Ekron.

their calves or going on into the plain of Philistia, turned up the Valley of Sorek, and, passing between Timnath (see page 156) and Zorah (see page 149), arrived opposite to Beth-shemesh (1 Samuel vi. 12) on the south side of the valley, then in the hands of the Israelites. Now Beth-shemesh was a suburban city allotted to the children of Aaron. And the people were

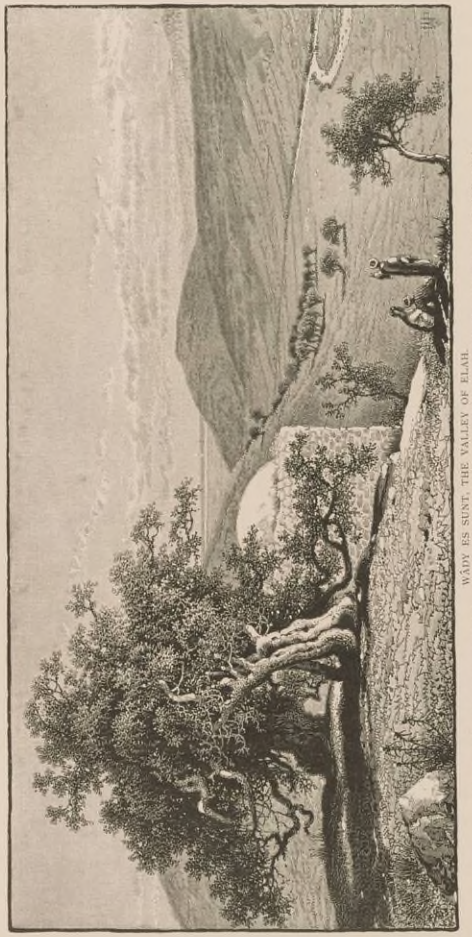
reaping their wheat harvest in the valley, when they lifted up their eyes and saw the ark approach (see page 155). And the cart came into the field of Joshua, and the Levites among them set down the ark upon the great stone of Abel, and offered burnt offerings and sacrifices unto the Lord. Now the five lords of the Philistines had followed the ark until they arrived at the border of Beth-shemesh, and when they had seen the ark in possession of the Israelites they returned to Ekron ('Akîr) the same day. And the people of Beth-shemesh suffered, as did the Philistines, because they looked into the ark of the Lord; and they sent

TIBNEH, THE SITE OF TIMNATH.
The home of Samson's wife, and the scene of his encounter with the young lion in the vineyard.

messengers to the people of Kirjath-jearim, which lay about ten miles farther to the east in the mountains of Judah. And the men of Kirjath-jearim came and fetched up the ark of the Lord out of Beth-shemesh. Beth-shemesh was in after years the scene of a contest between Jehoash, King of Israel, and Amaziah, King of Judah, when the people of Judah were put to flight and their king taken prisoner (see 2 Kings xiv. 13, and Josephus, "Ant." chap. ix.). And afterwards, in the days of King Ahaz, it fell into the hands of the Philistines (2 Chron. xxviii.

18). It is now known under the name of 'Ain Shems, but there is no fountain to be found there at the present day (see page 155).

One of the most interesting incidents recorded in the early history of the Israelites in Palestine is the passage at arms between Goliath of Gath and the youthful David in the Valley of Elah. This valley, now recognised as Wâdy es Sûr or Es Sunt (see engraving), commences in the mountains of Judah near Hebron (see page 192), and descending rapidly towards the north, divides them from the hills of Philistia to the west. After about ten miles it bends round to the west, and is here crossed by the main road leading from Gaza to Jerusalem; that road by which the Egyptians of ancient times gained the hill country, and by which the Bedawîn of the present day make their forays upon the villages in the mountains. Hitherto it has been a somewhat broad valley, with parallel lines of hills on either side, but after passing Shocoh (Shuweikeh) on



WÂDY ES SUNT, THE VALLEY OF ELAH.

The scene of David's encounter with Goliath. The valley winds between the low hills, and enters the plain of Philistia opposite Tell es Safy.

the left (see page 159), it narrows considerably, and winds in and out through a somewhat narrow gorge for some miles until it enters the more open plain near Tell es Sâfy. This Valley of Elah (or the Terebinth) at the present day contains, near Shocoh (Shuweikeh), one of the largest terebinth-trees in Palestine, fifty-five feet in height, with a spread of shade seventy-five feet in diameter, and a trunk seventeen feet in circumference (see page 159). The bottom of this valley, near Shocoh, is a fine fertile plain, cultivated as corn-fields, and here it was that the encounter between David and Goliath took place, the Philistines standing on a mountain on one side, and Israel on a mountain on the other, with the valley between them. The people of Israel came down from the mountains and were to the north-east, while the Philistines concentrating from the plains were on the south-west, army against army in battle array. Gath, famous for its giants, had given to the Philistines a champion called Goliath, ten feet in height, clad in a coat of mail, with a helmet of brass, and the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and the spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron. For forty days were these two armies face to face, and for forty days did Goliath call to the armies of Israel, "I defy the armies of Israel this day; give me a man, that we may fight together." And all Israel were greatly afraid, for a champion who could cope with Goliath was unknown (1 Samuel xvii.).

While the people of Israel were "dismayed and greatly afraid," there arrived in camp the youthful David, who, when he had heard of the challenge of Goliath, asked what should be done for the man who killed the Philistine, and took away the reproach from Israel, and was told in reply that the king would enrich him and give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel. And David was brought before Saul and offered to fight with the Philistine. Now in this personal combat, thus contemplated, there was not only the danger to the life of David to be considered, but also to the whole people of Israel, for if the Philistine conquered they were to be servants to the Philistines. The consequences were, therefore, so momentous that Saul required a pledge as to David's ability and prowess. David recounted his adventures with a lion and a bear, in each of which combats he was victorious, and Saul admitted his claim to act as champion, and bid him go against the Philistine. This circumstance shows clearly that the people of Israel were on the verge of a panic, on the point of giving in, otherwise they would not have so desperately adventured their safety to a comparatively unknown champion, to a youth totally unversed in the arts of war; but it also shows us something more—they permitted David to go to the encounter without armour, and knew that he was about to enter the lists trusting in the assistance of the God of Israel. It is clear from this that the people as a body still thoroughly believed in their God, and trusted to David as His instrument:—"And David put his hand in his bag, and took thence a stone, and slang it, and smote the Philistine in his forehead, and slew him. And when the Philistines saw their champion was dead, they fled; and the Israelites pursued them even to Gath and Ekron, and spoiled their tents." At the present day the account of this victory of David can be read and studied on the spot, and all the incidents realised; for the ancient sites are still in existence, and

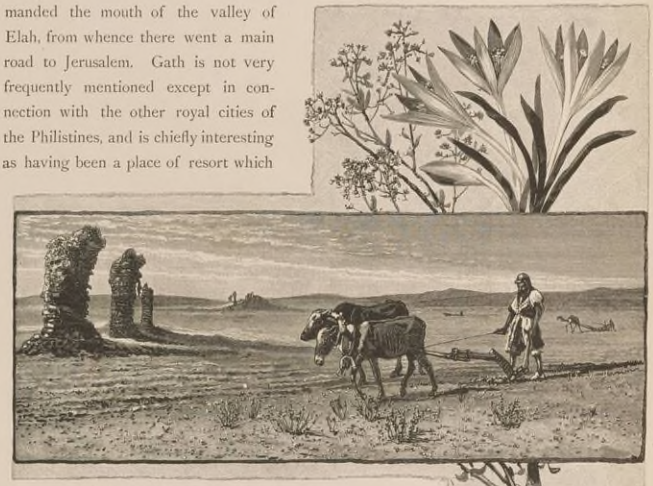
the habits of the people are as in former days. It is not unusual at the present day to meet

SHOCOH, THE CAMP OF THE PHILISTINES.
This site, now called Shuweikeh, is marked by extensive ruins, large terebinth-trees, and a Mohammedan shrine dedicated to Sheikh Abû Helâl.

with shepherds so skilful with their slings that they can easily bring down birds at a distance of several yards.

The royal city of Gath (see page 161) is generally admitted to have stood on the

conspicuous hill now called Tel es Sâfy, on which was built the important fortress of Blanchegarde by King Fulke during the Crusades (see page 161). It lies about sixteen miles from the seashore, and is situated on the extremity of one of the spurs of the hills of Philistia, as they melt down into the undulating plains. It obtained the name of Alba Specula during the Middle Ages on account of the glaring white chalk cliff or scarp which surrounds it, and which is most conspicuous for many miles to the south-west. It was a most important stronghold of the Philistines, and commanded the mouth of the valley of Elah, from whence there went a main road to Jerusalem. Gath is not very frequently mentioned except in connection with the other royal cities of the Philistines, and is chiefly interesting as having been a place of resort which



PLOUGHING IN THE PLAINS OF PHILISTIA.
In the neighbourhood of Tell es Sâfy. Ploughing and sowing for winter crops extends from the end of November to the middle of January, or later.

King David frequented during his troubles; here out of fear of Achish "he feigned himself mad, and scrabbled on the doors of the gate;" and here again, some years later, he was received with honour by the Philistine king, and again out of Gath came one of David's most faithful of followers and firmest of friends, Ittai the Gittite (2 Samuel xv. 19—23). When Gath was rebuilt under the name of Blanchegarde, it played a most important part in the wars of the Crusades, and was witness to some of the chief adventures of Richard Plantagenet with the Saracens who infested the plain. The hill on which the city stood is about two hundred feet above the surrounding plain, and is of an irregular shape. A modern wely rests on the highest level, and around are the remains of the ruined castle, and some large stones forming

portions of the terraces which cover the hill. It appears in a great measure to have been scarped all round, though the rubbish from the ruins has fallen over and covered up the old fortifications (see engraving). Here, as in many adjoining villages, there are extensive well-cut cisterns; the vines still grow luxuriantly on the terraces and the olive-trees on the hillsides. In the valley and on the plain around are tracts of corn-fields stretching as far as the eye can reach, and in the middle of June all the people are in the fields bringing in the corn to the threshing-floors (see page 160).

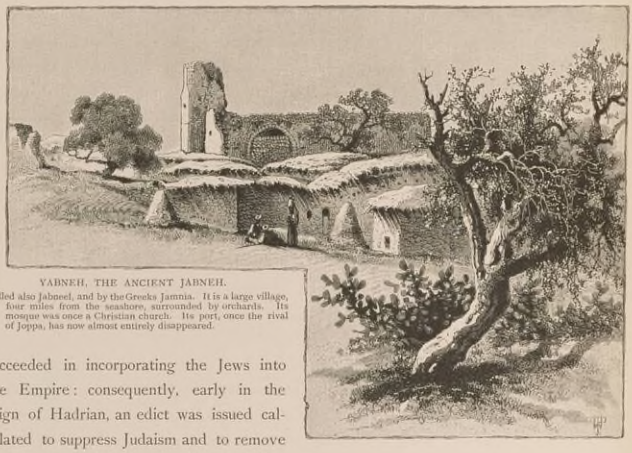
Passing over the swelling plains of Philistia, at about

TELL ES SÂFY, THE SUPPOSED SITE OF GATH.
An isolated hill of irregular form sixteen miles from the seashore. A shrine dedicated to El Khudr (St. George) stands on its highest point, six hundred and ninety-three feet above the sea. The Roman road runs north and south on the eastern side of the Tell.

eighteen miles to the north-west of the city of Gath we arrive at the site of the ancient Jabneh (see page 162), a town of the Philistines, situated on a slight eminence on the west bank of the Valley of Sorek (Wâdy es Sûr'ar), about four miles from the sea-coast. It is now called Yabneh. This city is mentioned as having been taken by assault and its wall broken down by the forces under Uzziah, King of Judah, and it is subsequently spoken of as a fenced city by F. Josephus; but it did not prominently come into notice until just before the great siege of Jerusalem by Titus, when it became the residence of many of the members of the Sanhedrin, and during the first and second centuries of our era was famous as the great theological and legal seminary of the Jews. The Sanhedrin had previously assembled in the Chamber (Gazith) of the Court

of Israel, in the Temple at Jerusalem, but at the time of the siege by Titus its members were permitted by him to proceed to Jabneh, under Gamaliel, their Nasi, A.D. 70. This school, after the demolition of the Temple, obtained great authority over the Jews who were left in Palestine, owing to the rank and position of the learned Gamaliel and other members of the Sanhedrin located there, and in a large measure served to prevent the extinction of the Jews as a nation, and to keep in their minds the prospect of the Messiah's advent.

The influence of the Rabbins over the minds of the people was at this time complete, not only in the religious services and in the superintendence of education, but also in all matters connected with domestic life. The Romans felt this, and realised that they had not yet



YABNEH, THE ANCIENT JABNEH.

Called also Jabneel, and by the Greeks Jamnia. It is a large village, four miles from the seashore, surrounded by orchards. Its mosque was once a Christian church. Its port, once the rival of Joppa, has now almost entirely disappeared.

succeeded in incorporating the Jews into the Empire: consequently, early in the reign of Hadrian, an edict was issued calculated to suppress Judaism and to remove all power out of the hands of the Rabbins. The rites and existing ceremonies of the Jews were interdicted, and it was declared that Jerusalem should be established as a Roman colony, and the site of its Holy Place adorned with a temple dedicated to Jupiter.

The Rabbins of Jabneh (Yabneh) saw on the one hand entire annihilation of their schools, and consequently of the national life of the Jews; on the other hand, they kept in view the prospect of success in a sanguinary struggle with the Romans. With great astuteness they seized upon this moment for the proclamation of the advent of the long-looked-for Messiah. The star that should "arise out of Jacob" was at hand, who should govern the Jews with great power and majesty. His name, Barcochaba (the Son of a Star), fulfilled the prophecy. He was a man of considerable force of character, and the great and learned Rabbi

Akiba acknowledged him as the Messiah. The revolt commenced in A.D. 130. Jews flocked to his standard from all parts of the world; the whole Hebrew race was in a state of ferment at the news of his advent. Barcochaba advanced against the Romans at the head of a large body of insurgents, and at first was constantly successful; he even captured Jerusalem, and held it for the space of three years. It is said that he was at the head of an army of two hundred thousand fighting men, and though this is probably an exaggeration, it is worthy of note that Strabo states that so great was the population about Jabneh, that this district in his time could furnish forty thousand fighting men. It is not necessary to follow the fortunes of Barcochaba, and to watch how quickly the star of this false Messiah set for ever, until even his name was changed by his aggrieved and despairing countrymen to that of Barcosba (the Son of a Lie).

At the termination of this unsuccessful revolt the whole of the Rabbins of Jabneh were barbarously persecuted by the Romans, as the ringleaders of the insurrection, and were forbidden to fill up the vacancies in the Sanhedrin, an order which they managed to evade. After the death of Hadrian, and on the accession of the gentle Antoninus, the Rabbins were emboldened to re-establish their synagogues and to re-open the school at Jabneh (Jamnia), but in consequence of the indiscretion of the rabbi, Simon Ben Jochai, in speaking evil of the Roman authorities, the school was suppressed and the Sanhedrin wandered to other places in Palestine. Benjamin of Tudela asserts that even in his day (A.D. 1163), the site of these schools could still be traced. During the time of the Crusades a fort was here established called Ibelin, the site being admirably adapted for a work of defence.

Jabneh became the site of a bishopric, and its mediæval church is now converted into a Mohammedan mosque (see page 162). This ancient site (called by the Arabs Yabneh) is now occupied by a flourishing town, numbering about two thousand inhabitants, principally Mohammedans, and on the coast, at a distance of four miles, is still to be seen the remains of the ancient port or Maju-ma of Jabneh, mentioned by Pliny. If we turn to the south from this port and traverse the sea-coast there is little of interest for some miles. The rich lands of Philistia for three to four miles inland are covered to a depth of thirty to forty feet with ever-increasing heights of sand dunes, blown eastward by the sea breeze, and threatening ere long to engulf the whole lowland districts if steps are not taken to obviate the growing evil. It is a truly melancholy sight, when travelling over this once densely populated country, to find little remaining save here and there a fellah's solitary hut, surrounded by walls of sand which have from day to day to be battled and wrestled with. With wonderful tenacity of purpose these fellahin continue the struggle until at last they are driven out of the inheritance of their forefathers. In some cases the sand has so far got the upper hand that nothing is left of the cultivated lands, the most strenuous labour being only sufficient to preserve a few remaining fruit trees from the general destruction. These are to be seen each at the bottom of a crater of sand, laden with delicious fruit.

After proceeding about eleven miles along the coast a sandstone town or barrack is met

with, which probably marks the ancient site of the port of Ashdod, of which nothing now is visible; and about five miles farther to the south the low line of coast is seen to develop into a bold cliff, which increases in picturesqueness as it is approached, and on which are the remains of "Ascalon by the Sea" (see page 173). But here we turn off to view the modern Mejdel, identified as *Migdol* (see page 167), Gad of the Philistines, and even as Magdala, mentioned by Herodotus (xi. 159), when Pharaoh-Neco engaged the Syrians by land and conquered them. Mejdel is now the site of the government of the district about Ascalon, and is a flourishing country town. It possesses a mosque with a tall minaret, large stone houses, and a bazaar. It is surrounded by groves of large olive-trees, and undulating plains covered with cereals, interspersed with palm, walnut, and fig trees. The soil around is very rich, and the people are industrious, watering their crops from deep wells, in some of which the water is one hundred and twenty feet below the surface. In many instances the wells are common to the whole village. The water is brought to the surface by means of a "Persian wheel" or "naura," which is worked by camels or oxen, provided in turn by the various heads of families (identical with the "sâkiyeh," see pages 81 and 132).

Not far from Mejdel is the site of Ascalon (see page 169), whose general position is well known, but the exact site of which has not as yet been identified. It was one of the royal cities of the Philistines when the children of Israel entered the Promised Land, and remained in the hands of the Philistines until the time of the Jewish captivity. Ascalon is described by Herodotus as having possessed the most ancient of all the temples erected to Venus, or Derceto, the mother of Semiramis. She was represented as a woman above the waist, with termination in shape of a fish-tail, a female counterpart to Dagon. Ascalon, like other towns of the Philistines, had its seaport, now called "Ascalon by the Sea." This town came prominently into notice in the time of Herod the Great, who adorned it with public baths and fountains and palaces; here his sister Salome resided.* During the wars of the Jews with the Romans, the former suffered a great defeat here at the hand of Antonius.

At an early period Ascalon was made the seat of a bishopric, and owing to its advantageous position and strong walls it became the most important fortress in Palestine during the Middle Ages, and during the Crusades was a thorn in the side of the Christians, as it had been to the Jews when in possession of the Philistines. It was around Ascalon that the great battle took place between the Egyptian army and the Crusaders under Godfrey. Godfrey of Lorraine, after the capture of Jerusalem, was just elected King by the army of the Crusaders, when intelligence arrived that a vast army of Egyptians had crossed the desert into Palestine, to annihilate the Christians and raise again the standard of Islam. Hurriedly the Christian army was assembled and collected in battle array near Ramleh, prepared to dispute the passage of the Egyptian invaders (see page 148). Raymond took up a

* In the year 1815, Lady Hester Stanhope having procured a firman from the Turkish authorities, instituted a search for antiquities among the ruins of 'Askelân (Ascalon). Among other objects then brought to light was a colossal statue of a Roman emperor, probably one of Augustus erected by Herod. Unfortunately it was broken to pieces by the excited workpeople, who apparently expected to find some wonderful treasure concealed within it.—M. E. R.

ESHDŪD, THE ANCIENT ASHDOD.

Called by the Greeks Azotus. The modern village stands on the slope of a hill, one hundred and forty feet above the sea, and three miles from the shore. The green knoll in the foreground is crowned by the wely of Sheikh Ibrahim el Mathûk.

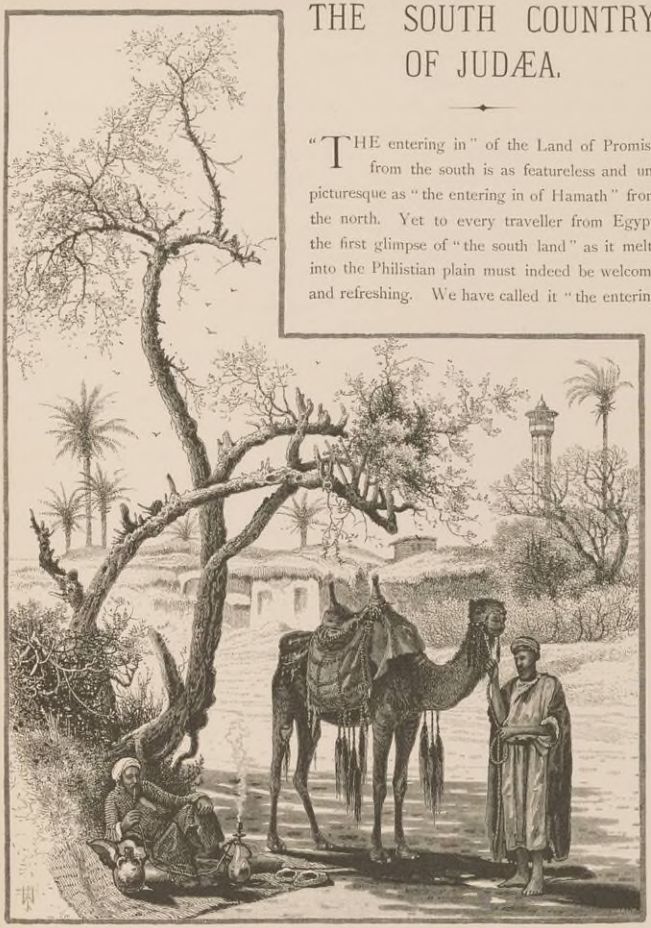
position on the sea-coast, Godfrey invested Ascalon with five thousand cavalry and infantry, while Tancred and the two Roberts directed the attack upon the enemy. Gallantly the Christians charged their swarthy antagonists, who exceeded them greatly in numbers. It is related that large flocks of sheep and herds of cattle accompanied the Christians from the mountains, and these were mistaken by the Mohammedans for the Christian reserve forces, apparently so numerous that when the first collision took place a panic arose among them and they fled in all directions, hotly pursued by the Christians. Some fled to the seashore and were there put to death by Raymond, while others perished in the desert. One portion attempted to escape into Ascalon, but were intercepted by Godfrey and killed. On the destruction of this vast army Godfrey now laid siege to Ascalon, but was in a short time obliged to raise the siege again in consequence of the quarrels among his knights, and Ascalon still remained in the hands of the Mohammedans, a standing menace to Jerusalem.

In A.D. 1124 the Mohammedans made an ineffectual raid from Ascalon upon Jerusalem, while the Christians were endeavouring to subdue Tyre. It was not until A.D. 1153 that Ascalon was taken from the Mohammedans. Then Baldwin III. laid siege to it, determined to capture it at all hazards; he completely invested the fortress both by sea and land, and for two months carried on extensive siege operations. During this period he omitted to observe the Easter festival, and ordered all the pilgrims in the land to hasten to the assistance of the investing army. The Mohammedans defended the walls with the utmost gallantry, and when at last they were obliged to submit they were enabled to make their own terms and march out of the fortress with all the honours of war.

In a few years the cause of Christendom languished, and under the leadership of the Sultan Saladin the followers of Islam recaptured many of the cities of Syria. Among others Ascalon was the last to capitulate previous to the march of the Mohammedans upon Jerusalem (A.D. 1187). In 1190 Saladin determined to destroy the fortifications of Ascalon, lest it should again fall into the hands of the Christians; accordingly, under his directions, this magnificent fortress became in a short time a heap of ruins (see page 169). During the Third Crusade the walls of Ascalon were rebuilt by the Christians, in which work Richard Plantagenet took a special interest, part of the expenses being defrayed by a subscription from the ladies of England. In the year 1270 the walls were again totally destroyed by the Sultan Bibars. The walls of Ascalon are still standing in places (see page 173), but they are of small-sized pieces of indurated sandstone; here and there may be seen remains of the massive blocks which formed the old walls, which for the most part have been carried away for the building of other sites. Columns of granite, seventeen to eighteen feet in length and two and a half feet in diameter, are to be seen projecting from the faces of the walls. Ascalon is still used as a seaport in a small way (see page 172), and exports bones and pottery. The neighbourhood is very fertile; groups of palm-trees give a picturesque aspect to the place (see page 169). Vines, olives, and many kinds of fruit, including apples, are cultivated by the inhabitants of El Jûrah, a small village north-east of the group of ruins now called 'Askûlân.

# THE SOUTH COUNTRY OF JUDÆA.

"THE entering in" of the Land of Promise from the south is as featureless and unpicturesque as "the entering in of Hamath" from the north. Yet to every traveller from Egypt, the first glimpse of "the south land" as it melts into the Philistian plain must indeed be welcome and refreshing. We have called it "the entering



EL MEJDEL, THE ANCIENT MIGDOL.
An important village of fifteen hundred inhabitants. Its mosque and tall minaret are constructed of ancient materials. A weekly fair is held here.

in," and so for ages it has been: the route taken alike by warriors and merchants, the gate of the thoroughfare between Egypt and Assyria, the rival empires of the East. Before the introduction of steamers few travellers entered Palestine by any other road, save those who undertook the *long* desert journey by Sinai and Petra. From the Nile to Wâdy el Arish is a dreary desert journey of nine days, but now we have entered the boundary of Simeon, and a few villages surrounded by palm and olive trees near the shore are gratefully refreshing to the eye, while scanty verdure takes the place of sandy wastes. When we have reached the last of these villages, Deir el Belah, the "convent of the dates," we are in the true pastoral country of the patriarchs. The country is broken up by frequent wadys and rounded hills, few showing any cliffs or rocks, but all covered with turf, chequered by wide unfenced tracts of cornland, and dotted with many a black encampment of Bedawîn. The common notion that this southern region is desert is at once dispelled. But covered though it be with countless flocks, not a tree relieves the monotony of the green expanse, and it is doubtful if this district was ever wooded as the inland region east of Beersheba (see page 209) certainly was in early ages. Most of the streams are dry in summer, and the dependence of the Arabs is on wells, always carefully concealed, and seldom known except to the tribe which claims the pasturage. Three hours south-east of Gaza (see page 175), and two hours to the east of the road from Egypt, is a featureless low ridge, rising north of a shallow valley, and commanding a wide view on all sides, which claims a visit from its historical associations. The Bedawîn have no tradition respecting it, but its name has come down unchanged for four thousand years, Jerar, the Gerar of Genesis, the favourite camping-place of the patriarch Isaac. Four miles before reaching the Wâdy Guzzeh, as the combined watercourses of the Wâdy es Seba, or Valley of Beersheba, and the more northern Wâdy Sheriar are called, we leave the caravan road ten miles south of Gaza and strike east over what seems a boundless expanse of rolling treeless downs. Crossing the Wâdy es Seba and then the Sheriar, in both of which a copious stream was flowing at the beginning of February, we rode on, sometimes on turf brilliant with a mass of scarlet anemones, sometimes over plots of young wheat painted with various yellow flowers, till we reached the flat-topped mound, or "tell," commanding a splendid view from Beersheba eastward, to the sea on the west—Abu Jerar. Wells are its only visible ruins. The turf is scarcely broken by faint traces of foundations, and the soil is full of fragments of coarse pottery, certain indications of a former extensive occupation. The wells stud the top and sides of the hill down to the bottom of the valley. All are more or less filled in, some of them even with the surface—perhaps the wells of Abraham, choked by Abimelech's herdsmen. Some were filled only up to a depth of twelve or twenty feet, showing the lower part cut in the rock and the upper portion cemented; evidently later work, as the cement has many fragments of pottery in it. Many were roofed with low cupolas of very small masonry with a hole in the centre. Only two of them are perfect, the others being more or less broken in. We found water in two only of nineteen wells which we examined. Many of them seem to have been purposely filled in and utilised, after they were cemented, as storehouses by the Bedawîn. The hill must have

been an admirable look-out station whence Isaac could watch his flocks and servants. There are traces of the foundations of a keep, but this is evidently later work.

The ride across the downs from Jerar to Gaza (see page 175), though without grand scenery, is full of interest. The district abounds in wild animals. The gazelles may be seen bounding on every hill. The fox and the jackal start up at every turn, and one long ridge is a favourite resort of the great grey crane, which returns year by year in hundreds to its quarters, like rooks to their trees.

Gaza, or rather the olive-groves which gird it, bursts suddenly upon us (see page 175). It

RUINS OF ASCALON, FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

Here there are fine orchards and olive-trees, cultivated by the Egyptian peasants of the neighbouring village of El Jûrah. The wild onions of 'Askûlân are celebrated for their delicate flavour. The Romans gave them the name of Ascalonia, hence *scalogna* (Ital.) and shallot (*Allium Ascalonicum*).

has no natural advantages of situation, and there is no reason apparent why it should have been a city from the earliest times. It is now entirely denuded of fortifications or walls, and many of its streets straggle out into the open country. A broad sand road opens among the olive-trees, the highway of Egypt and Syria, trodden by Midianites and camels long before Abraham, by Egyptian and Assyrian kings, by Greek and Roman conquerors, by Saracens and Crusaders, and lastly by Napoleon from Egypt and back again. Gaza has over twenty thousand inhabitants. The central town, stone-built, is girt by wide suburbs of mud-built turf-covered houses, over which rise in numbers the minarets, shining white above the grass-

clad roofs, and many an isolated palm rivalling them, among which the telegraph wires shoot straight across the city—a strange mingling of new and old. There is only one hill near which can claim the name, and this is crowned by a shrine called 'Aly el Muntâr. It is south-east of the town, of which it commands a fine view, and the traditional spot to which Samson carried the gates; and may very well be so, as it is the only hill near, and is on the road to Hebron. We are shown not only this, but also the site of the Philistine gateway, of Dagon's temple, and of Samson's death! There is very little of historic interest in the buildings of Gaza. The Mosque of Hâshim, Mohammed's grandfather, is entirely of Saracenic architecture, and very ancient. We are shown the tomb of Hâshim in one corner of the cloister. But the great mosque, over which is an Arabic inscription giving the date of the Hegira 677, or A.D. 1276, is in reality the Basilica of Helena, a noble cathedral, with its three apses partially built up, and one of them made the staircase to the added minaret. The nave and aisles are unaltered, and on the columns remain the cross and other Christian symbols unerased. A second south aisle has been added by the Mohammedans, communicating with a college of dervishes adjoining (see page 175).

All the other buildings of Gaza are very poor, streets and bazaars filthy beyond description and winding between irregular flat-roofed houses. But the striking feature of Gaza is the quantity of marble relics everywhere. It rivals Ascalon (see page 173) in this abundance of columns. They are dug up in every yard and garden, and they form every threshold and most of the lintels. From the narrow street you step over a puddle on to a marble column lying across a doorway. You pass through a stable, then into a narrow court, on one side of which is the kitchen, open in front. Then by a passage into the inner courtyard, large and paved with marble fragments, the open arcaded rooms on each side of it flanked by marble columns, dug up on the premises, with capitals Corinthian, Herodian, or Late Byzantine, the relics of church and temple together. Polished slabs of marble vary the walls, built in along with Roman stones. Such is the Gazan imitation of a Damascus palace. There have been many statues found here, and very recently a fine colossus was exhumed and sent to the new national collection at Constantinople.

The environs of Gaza on the north side are far more extensive than on the south. For miles the park-like olive forest extends, the trees old, weird, gnarled, and of the quaintest shapes, with cattle grazing everywhere under their shade. Beyond the trees the road towards Hebron leads across the widest part of the great Philistian plain. The country is now all carefully cultivated, though twenty-five years ago it was a neglected waste of wild herbage, and is studded with olive-girt villages. Here and there a winter torrent has cut its way through the rich loam of the level plain, and it is no easy task to find a spot where the horses can descend and cross to the opposite bank. After a ride of fifteen miles the ground becomes more undulating, bare but rich downs take the place of the luxuriant plain, and not a habitation can be seen on any side. Lachish, the modern Lakis, is the first historic spot we reach. It is indeed a desolate heap. Low spurs from the Judæan hills very gradually

H. PENN. PINXT

A. WILLMORE. SCULPT

GAZA.

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push forward into the Philistian plain. Between two of these spurs we ride, and on our left is a low "tell," with stones strewn about in all directions. This is all that is left of Lachish. The hill seems almost formed of broken pottery, which covers the ground like gravel. A few half-choked wells and lines of foundations of very thick walls are all that is left to tell of the city, whose capture forms the chief feature of Sennacherib's slabs. There the city is represented as surrounded by palm-trees. Now not a tree or a shrub remains for miles distant. Commanding the country around, and secure by its situation from surprise, the farthest elevation projecting into the plain, it is the natural position for a frontier outpost fortress.

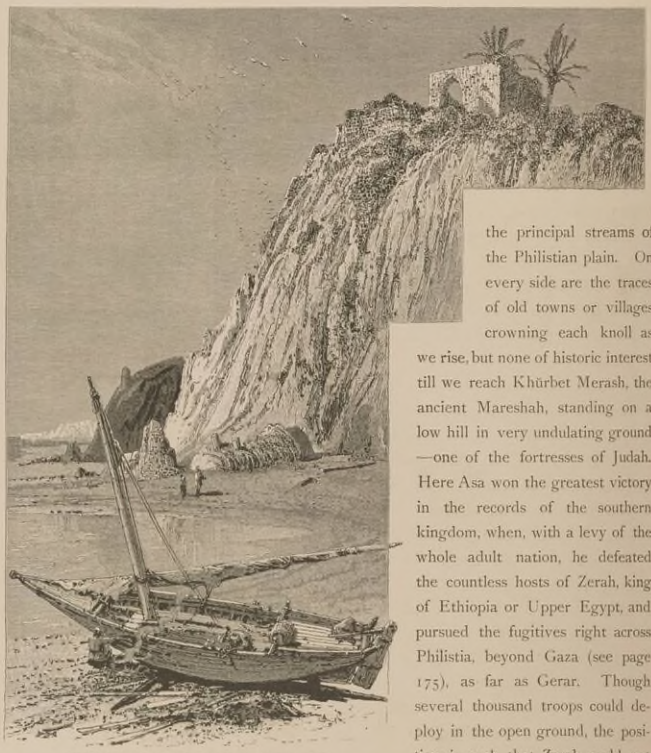
Three miles farther on, on a similar "tell," we reach Ajlân, the ancient Eglon, a simple repetition of Lachish, but much better preserved. The whole enceinte of the keep can be easily traced, now a field of onions protected by a cactus hedge. Several wells and an old cistern remain, and some excavations, recently made, have brought to light some fine substructures of dressed stone, attesting its former importance.

Two hours' ride from Eglon, across a level plain, brings us to Arak el Menshiyeh, the ancient Libnah. A wide valley from the south winds round the spur of Eglon, and we are soon on a rich corn plain again. Far ahead we can see an isolated rock, with a white wely in one corner, standing up out of the plain, and a large mud village at its foot. This is Libnah. Just to the north-east of the village, separated from it by a narrow stream, close by which are several ancient wells, with fragments of sculptured marble strewn around, and surmounted by the rude and cumbrous apparatus for lifting the water, such as we see in Egypt, rises the rock Arak el Menshiyeh, on which was the citadel of the Jewish town. It had originally been a completely isolated rock, intended by nature for a fortress, absolutely impregnable before the introduction of firearms. Its perpendicular sides stand out from the plain without the slightest connection with any neighbouring ridge, and about one hundred feet high. The old rubbish of former buildings has been thrown down the south side, and forms a steep slope, by which we climb to the top. This is perfectly flat, about four acres in extent, and utterly deserted, forming a fig orchard surrounded by a cactus hedge. The panorama all around for miles is unbroken. The whole plain is corn or pasture, not a shrub or tree, not a house, not a feature to break the green expanse, save here and there a Bedawîn encampment, with fires beginning to twinkle in the distance as the shades of evening creep on. It is an impressive sight, and we can picture how the host of the Assyrians marched from the distant ridge of Lachish, and were spread over this wide plain, and how impossible was the capture of this place, even by such an army, otherwise than by starvation. Hence the beleaguered garrison looked down on the plain to the west and saw the whole strewn with the thousands of corpses smitten by the angel of the Lord :

> "For the angel of death spread his wings on the blast,
> And breathed on the face of the foe as he passed,
> And the eyes of the sleepers wax'd deadly and chill,
> And their hearts but once heaved, and for ever were still."

From Arak el Menshiyeh the route to Beit Jibrîn (see page 180) is for the most part

lonely and deserted. We soon leave the rich plain and begin to ascend the spurs of the Judæan hills, where many a little winter torrent runs down to feed the Nahr Sukereir, one of



RUINS OF ASCALON, FROM THE SOUTH-WEST.

Here there is a shallow bay, with a landing-place for small boats. The beach is strewn with masses of ancient masonry. On the cliff above there is a Mohammedan shrine, called El Khudrah, with a few palm-trees near it.

the principal streams of the Philistian plain. On every side are the traces of old towns or villages crowning each knoll as we rise, but none of historic interest till we reach Khûrbet Merash, the ancient Mareshah, standing on a low hill in very undulating ground—one of the fortresses of Judah. Here Asa won the greatest victory in the records of the southern kingdom, when, with a levy of the whole adult nation, he defeated the countless hosts of Zerah, king of Ethiopia or Upper Egypt, and pursued the fugitives right across Philistia, beyond Gaza (see page 175), as far as Gerar. Though several thousand troops could deploy in the open ground, the position is such that Zerah could not bring his superiority of force to bear, and the front ranks being broken only spread panic among the crowded masses at the opening of the plain. The whole is now covered with low brushwood, and swarming with partridges, but not a tree exists in the whole country till we arrive at the outskirts of Beit Jibrîn (see page 180). We may make a

RUINS OF ASCALON, FROM THE NORTH.

Showing the fortifications at the north-west corner of the city. The western wall was about twelve hundred feet in length and followed the line of the edge of the cliffs, which are from thirty to seventy feet in height. The conquest of Ascalon by Rameses II. is recorded on the walls of the Temple of Karnac.

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détour hence to the north, so as to enter the town by that side, and in so doing visit a site which may aid in identifying the place—Khûrbet Gat. The name is well known and recognised by the fellahîn, who point out the hill to the north-west of Beit Jibrîn, full of old foundations, and well adapted for a fortress, as *Gat*. Of this more anon. No place in South Judæa contains so many and such varied remains as Beit Jibrîn. The modern town is of some extent, though shrunken indeed within its ancient limits. There are, perhaps, one thousand inhabitants, of a different type from the fellahîn, large-made, muscular, bold and insolent, but industrious and enterprising, and comparatively rich. The father of the present sheikh, Azazeh, was a noted tyrant, defiant of Turkish authority, the terror alike of his own people and of the country around. The stories that are told of him surpass in bloody crime even the hideous tales of Jezzar Pasha (refer to page 87). If he heard of a man having married a handsome wife he would send for the couple, and, if the hapless girl pleased him, would cut down the husband without a word, and tell her that as she was now a widow he should take her. It is only since his death that traders from Hebron (see page 196) or travellers have ventured here. The sheikh's castle is near the ancient fortress, and built of its materials (see page 177). The old citadel, round which the modern town clusters, has been enclosed by a wall of massive masonry, and is probably Crusading, as polished shafts and marble capitals of the Græco-Roman period are often built into the walls, and many broken columns are still standing *in situ* in the courtyards of the modern hovels. The citadel has been about six hundred feet square, and round the walls on the inside were rows of arched vaults, many of which are still perfect and some inhabited. In the centre of the area is the Crusading keep of similar masonry, but which has been partially ruined, restored by the Saracens, and now again a ruin, with massive arched chambers, and a splendid crypt chapel, the groined roof of which still remains. Not the least interesting and useful relic of the past is a noble well, probably Roman, of unusual diameter, faced with most beautiful masonry, and apparently about one hundred feet deep, still affording an abundant supply of water. These are the remains of Beto-Gabra, the "house of Gabriel," its Syro-Greek name, changed by the Romans to Eleutheropolis, which, though now completely lost, was retained as late as the beginning of the ninth century, when the Saracens destroyed it. Though Tell es Sâfy, a short day's journey to the north (see page 161), is a more favourite claimant for the honour, I have always inclined to the belief, when I look at the massive and certainly Crusading masonry, that this is not only Beto-Gabra and Eleutheropolis, but also the Blanchegarde of the Crusaders, the celebrated outpost, which is surrounded by a halo of romance from the heroic and almost miraculous adventures and single-handed feats of our own lion-hearted king. Round it circle the most romantic of the tales of the Crusaders. At Tell es Sâfy there is scarcely a vestige of a ruin, however strong the natural position, and if these walls be not Blanchegarde, what are they? We observed one very interesting relic which may give a hint as to the antiquity of the place. Lying near a well, a little outside the village, was a white marble Corinthian capital in the style of the best period, but in the centre of the cornice, instead of the acanthus leaf, was sculptured the seven golden candlesticks, exactly of

the same pattern as represented on the Arch of Titus. This must be præ-Christian. Is it

GHŪZZEH, THE ANCIENT GAZA.

The modern village, which is of semi-Egyptian character, has neither walls nor gates. The serai dates from the thirteenth century, and the great mosque, Jami'a el Kebir, which towers above the palm-trees, was originally a Byzantine cathedral.

Maccabæan or Herodian? The industry of Beit Jibrin is carpet-weaving, and all around the

Crusaders' castle we saw the tops of the houses covered with women at work, turning out, with the most primitive of looms, and using their fingers as a shuttle, strips of solid and substantial carpet. Outside, all along the pathways, on either side was a sort of public rope-walk, where both weavers and dyers were at work, carefully dyeing and stretching the threads before they were woven. Flocks and herds are abundant, and the shepherds are armed, not only with guns, but with battleaxes, for defence against the wolves, who are the depredators of the hills, as the Bedawîn are of the plain. We met a weeping shepherd boy, who told us a wolf from a cave hard by had just carried off a kid before he could save it.

But I am inclined to give Beit Jibrin (see page 180) a yet older history than Blanchegarde, and to identify it with Gath, of which Khûrbet Gat may have been the citadel. It is not its castle nor the remains on the surface which make the plain so remarkable, as the great

A WELL IN THE PLAIN OF PHILISTIA.
Around it there are a few rudely formed cup-shaped stone water-troughs for the use of flocks and herds.

artificial caves, unrivalled in extent and size in any other part of Palestine, chiefly artificial and far older than mediæval times. Nowhere are Jewish tombs, and kokim, or niches for the dead, so abundant as in the valleys of Beit Jibrîn. They are absolutely countless, and point to a vast and concentrated population. Then there are vast *columbaria* (artificial vaults), containing hundreds, nay thousands, of niches for urns. But besides these are the most remarkable subterranean works of Palestine—the labyrinth of artificial caverns, of which the origin and use is utterly lost, and which occupy the whole interior of a hill. The access to them is most intricate and difficult. Robinson was, I believe, the first to explore them. Though from its situation there is much in Tell es Sâfy to support Captain Conder's identification of it with Gath, I have great difficulty in passing over the claims of such important remains as those of Beit Jibrîn. But whatever they be, these subterranean halls deserve a visit and description. About one mile south of the town Tell Sandahannah is completely hollowed out by a vast

system of artificial connected caves. Candles and a ball of twine, as well as guides, are requisite. The entrance is by a perpendicular shaft with steps in the hillside, into which we creep, and then, trusting to our guide in front, let ourselves down. The opening is well concealed by a tangle of briars among crumbling rocks. We soon find ourselves in darkness at the bottom, and, lighting our candles, creep

THE CASTLE OF BEIT JIBRÎN, BY STARLIGHT.

Arab musicians in the foreground. The one-stringed instrument is the "rabâb esh shâ'ir," or poet's viol; it is used as an accompaniment to chanted poetry. The double-reed pipe is the "arghûl;" its longer reed serves as a drone or continuous bass.

for some way on all fours along a winding passage. This brings us to a circular dome-shaped cavern, apparently about sixty feet high, and without any aperture at the top. We have entered near the bottom, and creep up a flight of steps which wind round the side to about half its height (see page 179). From this we creep by a labyrinthine tunnel to another and smaller domed cave, but between them are various irregularly hewn chambers; and passages branch into bewildering confusion in all directions. There appears to be no regular system of arrangement. We visited at least half-a-dozen of the great domed chambers, and there may be many more, for it would require the skill of a mining engineer to plan and exhaustively explore them. In some the staircase admitted us near the top of the dome, and these steps led to the bottom. There was no exit at the bottom, and only dry hard mud, as though water had at some time penetrated and remained. But they cannot have been intended for cisterns, still less for tombs. There is no trace of any system of lighting them from above, nor could we find a trace of sculpture or inscription. The roofs of the smaller chambers are supported by many pillars of rock left standing. Neither chambers nor domes are on the same level; everything is most irregular. How the excavated rock has been removed is another problem. There may possibly have been holes in the centre of the domes, which have been carefully filled in after the stone was removed. Nothing elsewhere in Syria or in Petra, so far as I am aware, in the slightest degree resembles this subterranean labyrinth. Who were its excavators and what was its purpose, can only be answered by the vaguest conjecture. They can scarcely have been the Horites, or cavemen, the prehistoric troglodytes of Canaan, for these domes are far more elaborate and artificial than any known to have been worked out by primæval man. But long subsequent to their epoch the Idumæans continued to be cave-dwellers, as had been the aborigines. It is possible they received the habit from their predecessors, and that at the period just before the Maccabæan times, when this part of the country was held by them, until conquered by John Hyrcanus, they hollowed out this hill for the sake of security, and finding the rock extremely soft, developed a form of subterranean architecture impracticable among the granite cliffs of Petra.

Half-way between these caves and Beit Jibrin is a very interesting ruin, one of the finest Byzantine churches in Palestine; it was dedicated to Santa Hanna or St. Anne (see page 181). The east end, with its massive apses, is still perfect, and the foundations and a few courses above them remain for the whole length, which is over one hundred and twenty feet for the nave. But two walls run out on either side in a line with the arch of the apse, each of them over sixty feet long, and making the width of the building a little over one hundred and fifty feet; and at the west end are chapels seventy-five feet by twenty-five, with apses parallel to that of the nave. The Crusaders, those marvellous builders, have evidently altered the plan of the building in many ways. Probably they found it partially ruined. They have added piers to the walls of the nave, which support pointed arches. The bay next the central apse still has its roof entire, but it is ten feet lower than the splendid domed roof of the Byzantine apse, which is of magnificent masonry, and has not a stone out of its place. The appearance

of the restored church, with the roof of the nave below that of the east end, must have been somewhat peculiar. The difference between the Byzantine and Crusading masonry may here be studied with advantage.

Between the church of St. Anne and the village we visit many other caverns, some of them with domed roofs such as we have described above, and quite as extensive, but all more or less open to the day. Great portions of the roofs have fallen in, and many of the domes have a circular opening at the top about six feet in diameter, as though these had been intended for cisterns. There are many inscriptions, some of them at a great height, but all entire. We could find no Latin or Greek inscriptions, but many Christian symbols, proving that they are at least prior to the Saracenic invasion. The sides of the caverns are dressed with a pick diagonally, and in some places great pillars have been left to support the roof; and there are apses at the east end of two or three, as though they had been at some time used as chapels. On one, and one only, was a broad border of tracery

SUBTERRANEAN LABYRINTH OF TELL SANDANNAH (BEIT JIBRIN).
Showing one of the numerous circular dome-shaped caverns, with its winding rock-cut stairway.

THE VALLEY OF BEIT JIBRÎN.

With a distant view of the sea and the sandy coast-hills. On the hillside on the left the entrance to one of the great caverns with which this district abounds is shown. In the foreground a shepherd is sleeping; near to him are his dog and gun and double-reed pipe.

running on either side just below the roof. Days might be spent in exploring the caverns of

THE CHURCH OF ST. ANNE, BEIT JIBRÎN.
Called by the Arabs El Kenîseh; it stands one thousand and seventy-two feet above the sea, opposite to Tell Sandannah (Santa Hanna?). It was originally a Byzantine church, but was restored by the Crusaders.

subterranean Beit Jibrin. Everywhere the hills are honeycombed, and the ground rings hollow as we walk.

Instead of taking the direct road from Beit Jibrin (see page 180) to Hebron (see page 196), on which there are not many historical sites of note, we may make a détour northwards, and in a long day's ride visit Wâdy es Sûr, the upper portion of the Vale of Elah, the recently recovered cave of Adullam (Ed el Miyé), and Keilah. Wherever we wander we shall find ruins in abundance. So frequent are the proofs of a former dense

population that Captain Conder estimates the number of ruined sites to average three for every two square miles. We ascend the whole way, for Hebron lies two thousand one hundred feet above Beit Jibrîn, and the hills we cross to reach it are three hundred feet higher still. For two miles the path winds among the charming olive-groves by the side of the old Roman road to Jerusalem, still very distinct and even perfect in places. Emerging from the olive-groves we continue up a narrow wâdy, for some way by the side of the Roman road and aqueduct, with the characteristic rounded and rocky hills of Judæa shutting us in on all sides and forbidding any distant view. Then turning eastward we wind up a labyrinth of little wâdys, the lower portion always cultivated with corn, by the edge of which we ride, guiding our course by compass and map alone, for the valleys meet and intersect in bewildering confusion, and we find not a solitary human habitation the whole way, and rarely meet a fellah at work or an Arab wandering on foot. After three hours' ride over rugged hills and through little winding stony valleys, carpeted with green wheat, we find ourselves in front of a dome-shaped hill, round the base of which the valley divides. The sides are perforated with caves. For the first time to-day we see families of women and children sitting in front of the scattered caves. We have in fact come on a troglodyte village. We are told that the next hill is Ed el Miyé, and declining the hospitable proffer of coffee if we will only alight, we ride on to the head of a little glen which opens out on either side. To the right and left the brown stony hills, brilliantly stippled with cyclamen and anemone, are studded with countless caves. In front is an isolated hill, round which these wâdys sweep, clothed with green turf and crowned with low ruins—"Khurbet Ed el Miyé," the old city of Adullam (refer to page 142, vol. i.). To this we climb direct; up the hill, and just below the brow, where it dips on the opposite eastern side, is a small whitened dome—the Mukâm of Neby Mudkhar. The prospect hence surprises us. A fine broad valley (Wâdy es Sûr) is spread before us, the upper part of the Vale of Elah, the land of Samson and of David's wanderings. Here and there a terebinth, one of them an especially noble tree, forms a conspicuous feature in the valley. On the opposite side rise other bare and rounded hills. Close by the wely is the low opening of a well-smoked cave, still inhabited. It is nowhere lofty, but very extensive, and several of its branches have been built up. We afterwards found one of these branches which had been built off, with an opening cut in its roof. There was certainly here abundant room for David's four hundred refugees. The mouth of the cave commands a fine view, and is well situated for security from surprise. It must have been an admirable station from which to make forays and sweep down on any hapless travellers making their way to or from the Philistian plain by the wâdy below.

Descending the hill of Adullam, the route to Hebron lies up the wâdy, now called the Wâdy es Sûr. Below, at the junction of another valley, stands one of the largest trees in Palestine, and which sometimes gives its name to the valleys. It is conspicuous from afar, and reminds us of the ancient name lower down—Emek Elah—the Vale of the Terebinth (Wâdy es Sunt, see page 157). An old road, not Roman, but earlier, may be traced up the valley towards Hebron, passing between Keilah and Hharass, or Hareth. We rapidly ascend,

the valley narrows to a watercourse a few feet wide, the hills are steeper and steeper, and the path a goat-track occasionally varied by a flight of broken natural stairs. Several ancient wells, shaded by a tree on the wayside, still supply the traveller with water; and just above one of these are the ruins of Keilah, still known by the same name, dreary and unattractive, and with no decipherable remains, yet once the head-quarters of David, and then a fenced city. It is a strong natural situation, and a few men might hold the pass.

There is little to detain us on the rest of the way to Hebron. Hharass is passed on the right. The road still ascends till we reach an irregular mountain plateau, about six miles north-west of Hebron, and after crossing it, descend no longer bare hills, with brushwood and pasturage, but carefully enclosed and cultivated vineyards, with clumps of olive and fig yards. We are now in what is popularly known as the Vale of Eschol (see page 192), though the true Eschol must be placed many days' journey to the south, near Kadesh Barnea.

As we approach the environs of Hebron, on the left of the paved and walled road, a wide gateway leads through some vineyards to a large building, the Russian hospice, erected just behind a very fine old tree, the traditional oak of Mamre (see page 193). For at least three hundred years this tree, which is not a terebinth (*elah*), but an *ilex*, or evergreen holm oak (*Quercus pseudo-coccifera*), has been visited by pilgrims and known as Abraham's oak. That, however, was in another place, Ramet or Mamre, and was a terebinth. It has long since gone, and this noble tree will soon follow, for within the last twenty-five years it has lost more than half its limbs, and is rapidly sinking into decrepitude (see pages 192 and 193). It used to spread its shadow over a circumference of one hundred yards, and its trunk measures thirty-two feet in circumference at a height of six feet from the ground.

One mile farther and we are at Hebron (see page 197), or rather in front of it, for the road runs alongside the long straggling suburb of Esh Shêkh, and then passing to the south of the central quarter El Haram, we halt on the slope facing the city, by the Mohammedan cemetery, with the pools of Hebron directly below us, and the famous mosque in front, behind the buildings of the city. Hebron, though it stands higher above the sea than any other city of Palestine, is yet one of the very few ancient sites which is not on, but under, a hill. The ancient city may have been a little more to the north-west, but the pools (see page 196) as well as the Haram fix the variations within narrow limits. A wide open grassy space extends south and west, surrounded by olive-clad hills. The central and conspicuous feature of Hebron is the great Haram wall (see steel plate). It is an oblong enclosure about two hundred feet by one hundred and fifteen, and fifty-eight feet high, surrounding the cave of Machpelah, the burial-place of Abraham and his family for three generations. The ground on which it stands is very steep, and was possibly below or "before" the ancient city, which claims to be one of the oldest in the world, built, as we are told, seven years before Zoan, the classical Tanis (a date which has not yet been ascertained), and coeval with Shechem and Damascus. Besides its own antiquity, it embraces here the most ancient and the most authentic of all the holy places of the Holy Land. Much controversy has arisen as to the date of this wall. Beyond

H. PENN. DEL.

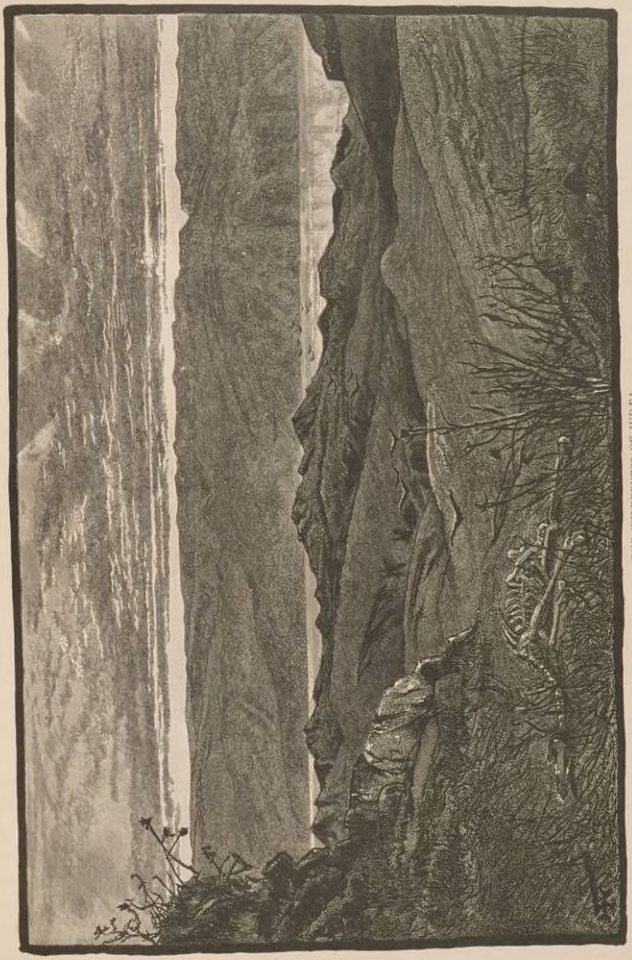
ALFRED KRAUSSE. SCULPT.

HEBRON.

THE VALLEY OF BERACHAH.

Jehoshaphat's "valley of blessing." A wide open vale between Tekoa and the road from Hebron to Bethlehem. In the foreground there is a lime-kiln, and on the distant hill a ruined site, two thousand eight hundred and fifteen feet above the sea, called Khurbet Bereikuh.

its great height and massiveness, it is of marvellously beautiful workmanship —as Josephus describes it, "of beautiful marble and admirably worked." The stones are many of them of immense size: one is thirty-eight feet long and three and a half feet high, the chiselling is very fine, and all have the true Jewish marginal draft, broad, shallow, and beautifully cut. Sixteen pilasters strengthen each of the longer, and eight each of the shorter sides. In spite of recent theories and criticism, it seems impossible to assign to the building a date later than that of Solomon. It existed in the time of Josephus, who speaks of it with



THE WILDERNESS OF JUDÆA.
With a view of the Dead Sea (Bahr Lût) and mountains of Moab at sunrise.

rapture; and had it been the work of his hero, Herod, it is incredible that he should not have assigned it to him, when he so fully specifies all his other architectural works. And if it were old then, it is impossible to assign a later epoch than the Hebrew monarchy. After the return the nation was too poor and enfeebled to have undertaken such a structure, and the masonry harmonizes with what we know of Solomon's age. There is really no valid ground for rejecting the consentient tradition of Jews and others for two thousand years.

It were strange indeed if any of the Herodian princes should here also have raised, at enormous cost, a building utterly differing from the countless products of their architectural passion and Roman taste, with which the land is strewn. Stranger still had any Byzantine architect here conceived a work of such impressive simplicity, without one single feature—either in design or execution—in common with the elaborate ornamentation in which he everywhere else indulged.

A modern Saracenic wall surmounts the old enclosures, and at the north-east and south-west angles minarets have been added. The entrance is by a staircase, to which access is forbidden to Christians, though we succeeded in running up and peeping in at dawn, without being detected. But this is a rash and rather dangerous experiment. It is only within the last few years that two or three royal and princely parties have been permitted to enter. The first of these was the Prince of Wales in 1862, and to his companion, the late Dean Stanley, we owe the account of the interior. This has been at one time a Byzantine church, the enclosure having, in the Jewish period, been free from buildings. The apse has been cut and the arches pointed when it was transformed into a mosque. It occupies about a third of the interior space, and contains cenotaphs, not tombs, of the various patriarchs whose dust lies in the cave beneath. The shrines of Abraham and Sarah are outside the mosque, and within, in corners, are the chapels of Isaac and Rebekah, and of Jacob and Leah, the two latter in a separate cloister. Outside, but attached to the enclosure, is another cenotaph, which Mohammedans claim as that of Joseph, who, they say, was brought hither from Shechem. There is a mosque on the north side, to the roof of which we obtained access, and whence we could look down upon two other shrines of Jacob and Leah. To the cave itself beneath no one has yet obtained access. There is an opening at the corner of Abraham's shrine, in the living rock, which is evidently an aperture into the cave itself, but this has never been penetrated for centuries. Were it examined we could not expect to find any traces, save dust, of the earlier patriarchs; yet as Jacob was embalmed with all the skill of the Egyptians and dignified with royal honours, it is quite possible that his mummy case still remains, for Machpelah has never passed into any hands but those who loved and reverenced the patriarchs. Jew, Christian, and Moslem concur in this, and during the period of Roman rule, we know well how careful they were to conciliate the local cults of every conquered nation, to whom they always left the regulation of their own religious matters. We may feel certain that these hallowed sepulchres have remained for four thousand years undesecrated and undisturbed.

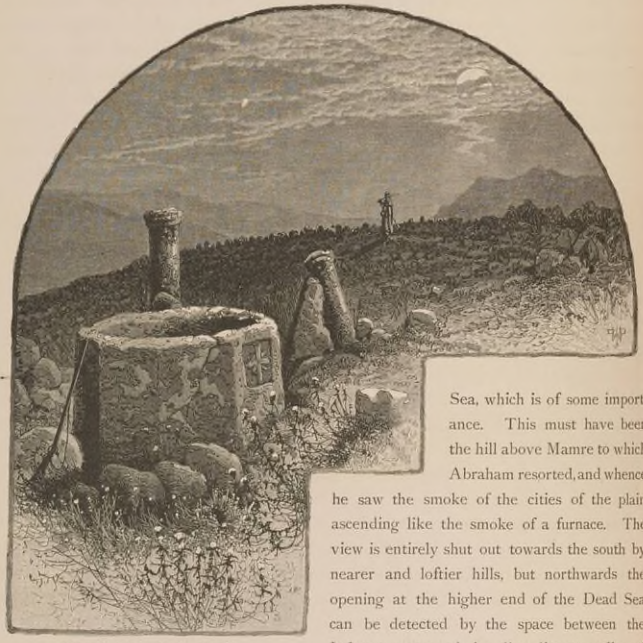
There remains one more relic of the Hebrew times to be noticed in Hebron—the pools

or tanks. The most important of the two is the lower pool, a square tank of very ancient masonry, massive and finely wrought, one hundred and thirty-two feet square, and some fifty feet deep (see page 196). Its supply never fails, being derived from subterranean conduits, which seem also to supply a similar but rather smaller pool of like antiquity, higher up on the north edge of the city. It was over this lower pool, according to consentient tradition, that David hanged the murderers of his rival Ishbosheth, and set an example of magnanimity to foes and of stern justice rarely witnessed in the struggles of Oriental monarchs.

The history of Hebron—with the single exception of the seven and a half years during which it was the capital of David's southern kingdom, before the fall of Ishbosheth enabled him to unite Israel at Jerusalem—presents scarcely an event worthy of note, since the days of Abraham; with memorials of whom the whole neighbourhood abounds. The only two undoubted monuments of the past, the Haram and the Pools, are, we have seen, connected with these epochs respectively. To the Jew, though he clings to it, the memories are bitter as well as hallowed. For it was close to Hebron, at a spot if possible even more hallowed than Machpelah itself—under the oak of Mamre (see page 189), where Abraham had so often pitched his tent, where he conversed with God, and where he received the promises to himself and to his seed—that, after the great revolt of the Jews had been finally suppressed at Bether, the Emperor Hadrian sold tens of thousands of hapless captives to a slavery worse than death itself.

The site of Mamre, now known as Râmet el Khûlîl (see page 189), is about two miles north of Hebron, a little to the right of the road to Jerusalem. It was once a Roman road, carefully paved, as perhaps it had been in the days of royal Solomon, but certainly it is worse now than it could have been when it was but a mountain path, along which Abraham may have often passed to visit his friends at Hebron. The place is identified on the authority of Jerome, and must have been well known in his days, and the Jews have always looked on it and reverenced it as the home of Abraham. There is nothing to mark the place till we reach it—a small flat plain extends to the foot of the hills half a mile off, without a tree or a shrub, and only some few dilapidated fences where patches of vegetables have been cultivated. Here we find several deep wells, three of them carefully faced with dressed stone, and evidently very ancient. By the largest of them are two lines of an unfinished enclosure, at right angles, two hundred feet and one hundred and sixty feet respectively in length, and built of very large square stones, but without a marginal draft. There remain only two courses, three and four feet high respectively, and some of the stones fifteen feet in length. It is impossible to discover the object of this building, if indeed it were ever finished, for there are very few traces of débris to be seen around. It cannot have been the basilica which Constantine erected here, for a little farther to the east the foundations of a large Byzantine church can be easily traced. It may have been the enclosure by the great terebinth, which had become before the time of Constantine a place of worship both for Christians and heathens, and under which Hadrian sold the captive Jews. A great terebinth existed here as late as the fourth

century A.D., traditionally that which had shaded Abraham's tent, and very possibly its real successor. It is well worth while to ride up to the top of the hill to the east of the plain. The view is fine and commanding, and there are traces of an old town. But it suggests a corroboration of the true positions of the cities of the plain, at the north end of the Dead



TEKU'A, THE SITE OF TEKOA.
Showing the remains of a Byzantine church, and its massive baptismal font of octagonal form.

Sea, which is of some importance. This must have been the hill above Mamre to which Abraham resorted, and whence he saw the smoke of the cities of the plain ascending like the smoke of a furnace. The view is entirely shut out towards the south by nearer and loftier hills, but northwards the opening at the higher end of the Dead Sea can be detected by the space between the Judæan range and the dim distant outline of the Moab mountains, so that though the plain of Jordan is itself sunk far out of sight, the smoke of any great conflagration could be seen, and the spot whence it arose identified.

There is a curious tradition connected with Beni-N'aim, a lofty height just five miles south-east of Rameh, with a wely, called Neby Lût, believed by Mohammedans to be the burial-place of Lot. Here, they say, Abraham stood and interceded for Sodom. The place is worth a visit for the sake of the view from the top of the mosque. It is exactly on the watershed between the Jordan and the Mediterranean, and we ascend the whole way from Rameh or

Hebron. It is one of the highest isolated points in this part of the country. The view embraces the country round Hebron, but not the city itself; and though shut in to the north, is unveiled towards the south and south-east. We could see the whole southern wilderness of Judah, rapidly descending from Nabal's Carmel, which is very distinct, with its tower, seven miles south, and seeming to form a gradually sloping plain rather than a series of ravines, which it really is. The mountains east of the Dead Sea (see page 185) can be traced from the neighbourhood of Heshbon southwards, and through two openings glimpses of the sea itself may be caught, one by the pass of Engedi (see page 200), and another showing a portion of the sandy promontory of the Lisan (see page 204). The Mohammedans, in dedicating this as a holy site, appear to have seized on an old Christian tradition, for this height is evidently the Caphar Barucha of Jerome, which was visited by his friend Paula as the place where

RÂMET EL KHŪLÎL, THE SITE OF MAMRE.
The camping-place of Abraham. It is a little way to the right of the old Roman road to Jerusalem, and is also known as Beit Khûlîl, "the house of Abraham."

Abraham met the Lord. The village itself is well built of stone, with some ancient remains, and the surrounding lands are well tilled; but we are here almost on the limits of arable cultivation.

This Barucha must not be confused with the Berachah of 2 Chronicles xx. 26, near Tekoa (see page 188), where Jehoshaphat and his army returned thanks for their miraculous deliverance from the combined forces of Ammon, Moab, and Edom, who had turned their arms against each other in mutual slaughter near Tekoa, before the Jewish king and his troops could meet them. The name they gave to the place was the Valley of Berachah, *i.e.* "blessing." The name has continued to this day in the Wâdy Bereikuh, a wide open valley between Tekoa and the road from Hebron to Bethlehem, and represented on page 184. It does not lie directly in our course, but may conveniently be visited by following the Roman road northward till within three miles of the Pools of Solomon (see page 145, vol. i.); or, more conveniently still,

by pursuing the mountain track parallel to this along the crest of the ridge towards Tekoa, and then descending at once on Berachah. West of this ridge there is general cultivation; the eastern slopes are for the most part bare downs, with sparse stunted shrubs, pastured over by the Ta'amireh Arabs, abounding in partridge, and the favourite haunt of the gazelle and a few ibexes or wild goats.

From the Wâdy Bereikuh a ride of five miles brings us to Tekoa (see page 188), crossing the little upland plain, ensconced in a circle of hills, called Bukat et Teku'a. In front of us is a long hill, with a copious spring at its foot and ruins on its top. The name is scarcely changed, Teku'a for Tekoa, and the district in its natural features seems to have been always what it is now—bare, treeless, open pasturage. We here lose all traces of the ancient terraces which gird the undulations of every hill farther west with their swathing bands. Here and there are still patches of cultivation in the hollows of the valleys, but the soil is dry and stony, and we begin here to lose the rich vegetable mould which, however scanty, still covers more or less the whole of the central hills, and have, in its stead, only a thirsty chalky marl. That vegetable soil is doubtless due, in the first instance, to the primæval forest, which certainly once covered the whole of the Judæan as of the Gilead range, but which has left no traces of its existence on the western slopes towards the Dead Sea (see page 185). Tekoa thus stood on the outskirts of civilisation. Though a city, and a fortified one, for its strategic importance is evident, and it was the permanent advanced post towards the pass of Engedi (see page 200), yet it is not girt with a number of low ruin-topped knolls, like the strongholds of the country we have been traversing. As a town it stood in the centre of a nomad district, and the inhabitants of the region eastward dwelt in tents like their modern successors, the Ta'amireh Arabs. But that it was always a garrison post is indicated by the words, "Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Beth-Haccerim" (*i.e.* Frank Mountain, or Jebel Fureidis, the peak facing us on the north), (see page 137, vol. i.). Tekoa was fortified by Rehoboam as one of his frontier posts. Of its large buildings little remains that can be identified; but it was occupied during the Christian era, and the most conspicuous ruin is that of the Byzantine church, with the broken columns of its aisles, and a large baptismal font well wrought in hard limestone (see page 188). St. Saba established a convent here; and the Crusaders resettled the place, only to be again, after their expulsion from the country, devastated by the Bedawin.

But the chief interest of Tekoa is not its history, but the fact of its being the birthplace and home of the prophet Amos, a "herdsman of Tekoa" and a "gatherer of wild figs." His early life here, the character of the country, and the nature of his calling, have stamped his writings with an individuality which has attracted the notice of every student and critic, from St. Jerome, the father of commentators, downwards.

From Tekoa to Engedi (see page 203) there is no track, but we may follow the course of the wâdys which converge towards the pass, the Wâdy Husasah, Wâdy el Jihar, or Wâdy el Areijeh. All are equally featureless, all alike without relics of the past, or dwellings of the present. But any of them afford an admirable opportunity for studying the natural products,

especially the flora of the wilderness or midbar, "the highland downs," as contrasted with the lowland plains. During the ride we descend from Tekoa—which is two thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight feet above the sea—two thousand one hundred and twenty-eight feet to the cliff over Engedi (see page 205), which, though only six hundred and sixty feet higher than the Mediterranean, yet overlooks the Dead Sea immediately beneath from a height of all but two thousand feet (see page 204). On the way we see here and there traces of ancient beacon stations. One of these may have been that "watch-tower in the wilderness," the wilderness of Jeruel, mentioned in Jehoshaphat's history (2 Chronicles xx.). But of the name Jeruel we have found no trace in the Arabic nomenclature, though this must be the region, as it lay between Tekoa and Engedi. But of Hazziz, the cliff of Ziz, we have the equivalent in El Hasasah, the tableland just before the pass.

The pass itself is not recognisable till we are close upon it. It is simply a zigzag path, chiefly artificial, but occasionally aided by nature, cut out of the sides of the precipices, at the inner edge of a semicircular wall of cliff, which, spanning a chord of about one and a half miles, embraces a horse-shoe plain, which gently slopes to the shore and forms a sub-tropical oasis. This pass and cliff have been, from the days of Chedorlaomer and Abraham, the one ascent by which invaders from the south and east entered the hill country of Judæa. As far as Engedi they could march by the shore without any obstacle; north of it the shore line is impracticable, even for footmen, and there are no paths by which beasts could be led up. Had they taken any of the openings south of Engedi this must have entailed a long march across a rough and almost waterless wilderness. The trade between Jerusalem and Kerak in Moab is still carried on by this route, by which also the salt is brought from Jebel Usdum.

Few landscapes are more impressive than the sudden unfolding of the Dead Sea basin, and its eastern wall, from the top of the pass of Engedi (see pages 200 and 201). The whole length of the lake may here be taken in one view; the opposite hills are veiled in a delicate haze, the evaporation from the sea clothing the mountain-sides with a gauzy pink, and the tops with as gauzy and light a blue. We wind down the zigzag niche which serves for a path. After descending more than one thousand two hundred feet, there is a break in the cliff. It becomes a rugged slope for the next six hundred feet, and at the base of a rock, the copious warm fresh "Fountain of the Kid" (En-gedi or 'Ain-Jidy)* bursts forth amidst an oasis of tropical vegetation (see page 203), and then, kid-like, skips from rock to rock, till it reaches the plain below. From the level at which this spring gushes out of the cliff there are evidences of the most careful system of irrigation, carried round the little amphitheatre at different levels, in the days when the palm, the camphire, and the sugar-cane brought in rich revenues to the possessors of the oasis. It is still the home of many of the choicest and most peculiar plants, birds, and insects of the Dead Sea shore. The camphire still lingers. The fine and striking

* The ancient name of Engedi ('Ain-Jidy) was Hazezon-tamar, "the pruning of the palm" (Genesis xiv. 7). There is no doubt about this identification, for, in 2 Chronicles xx. 2, the place is referred to as "Hazazon-tamar, which is Engedi." The vineyards and camphire of Engedi are mentioned in the Song of Solomon, and Pliny praises its palm-trees, which, according to Josephus, were of "the best kind" (Ant. ix. 1, § 2): he also alludes to its precious balsam, "opobalsamum." In the time of Eusebius "Engaddi" was still a place of importance, and its position, "east of Hebron," is described by the Arab historian, Mejr ed Dîn, who wrote towards the end of the fifteenth century.—M. E. R.

asclepiad, the osier, is abundant, and over its great leaves hover some richly painted Nubian butterflies, while bulbuls and sunbirds suck the bright blossoms of the Indian parasite (*Lonicera indica*). Engedi is the true halting-place for those who purpose to examine the marvellous

WÂDY ET TUFFÂH, COMMONLY CALLED THE VALE OF ESCHOL.
The peasants grouped in the foreground are under the southern branches of Abraham's oak. In the distance the minaret of the great mosque of Sheikh 'Ali Bakka, Hebron, may be distinguished.

remains of Masada, the fortress and the Roman camp around it, which can be visited with only an absence of one night from camp, and which both from their position, their workmanship, and their history, are the most remarkable remains on either side of the Dead Sea shore.

ABRAHAM'S OAK, HEBRON.

An ilex or evergreen holm oak (*quercus pseudo-coccifera*). One of the lower branches was broken down by a heavy fall of snow in the winter of 1850. It was cut up into logs and conveyed to Jerusalem; there were seven camel-loads; one log was sent to England.

# THE SOUTHERN BORDERLAND AND DEAD SEA.

THERE is no pleasanter place for an encampment in Southern Palestine than in the valley which leads to Hebron, the Wâdy Tûffâh, especially during the vintage season, and in the vicinity of the traditional oak of Abraham (see page 192). This giant tree, which measures thirty-two feet in circumference, and whose leafy crown is supported by four main branches fifty feet in length, is reverenced as the direct surviving representative of the oaks (erroneously rendered "Plain") of Mamre beneath which the patriarch was encamped when he entertained his angelic visitors and received the news of the future birth of Isaac, the son of promise. The oak rears its head amongst the vineyards north-west of Hebron, and is surrounded by a stone wall, built by the Russians, to whom the field in which it stands belongs. It is known as Ballûtet Sebta, or the "Oak of Rest," and it is supposed to be about two hundred years old. Tradition has at different times shown the world-famed tree at various

sites. Josephus mentions "a very large terebinth-tree, which has continued ever since the creation of the world," as existing about six furlongs from the city of Hebron. St. Jerome places it at what is now known as Râmet el Khûlîl, the traditional site of Mamre (see page 189), where a large stone enclosure, a wall and other ruins are to be found; and Sir John Maundeville speaks of Abraham's Oak, which he, however, describes as "the dry tree." "They say," writes the old traveller, "that it has been there since the beginning of the world, that it once was green and bore leaves till the time that our Lord died on the cross, and then it died, and so did all the trees that were then in the world." The present oak, the "Ballûtet Sebta," in the Wâdy Tûffâh, is green and flourishing, and the situation which it occupies accords with the Bible description of Mamre. There is nothing improbable in the supposition that it is the descendant of the ancient grove (see page 193). As a rule, the oaks do not grow to a great size, being cropped while yet young by the goats; but sometimes a tree is preserved for superstitious reasons and attains to an immense age. The worship of trees is an old and widely spread form of primitive religious cult. The Bible constantly couples the mention of groves with "high places" and other sanctuaries of idolatrous worship; the ancient oracle of Zeus Dendrites at Dodona was an oak, and Maximus Tyrius writes of the religion of the Druids, "The image of the Celtic Zeus is a tall oak." So inseparably were groves connected with the worship of false gods that the Israelites were distinctly forbidden "to plant a grove of any trees near unto the altar of the Lord" (see Deut. xvi. 21). In spite of this prohibition we find Hosea (iv. 13) lamenting that the people "sacrifice upon the tops of the mountains and burn incense upon the hills, under oaks and poplars and elms." It is not to be wondered at that a grove so intimately connected with the most solemn events in the life of the Father of the Jewish race should be venerated by his descendants, or the memory of the site kept up for ages and a representative tree always cultivated on the spot.

A half-hour's journey farther on takes us to Hebron, now called Medînet el Khûlîl, "the City of the Friend," or simply "el Khûlîl;" Khûlîl Allah, or "the Friend of God," being the name by which the patriarch Abraham is known to the Mohammedans (St. James ii. 23). Few spots in the Holy Land have such deeply interesting associations as this. Here it was that Abraham purchased of Ephron the Hittite the double cave Machpelah to serve as a sepulchre for himself and his house. It was from Hebron that Jacob sent his son Joseph to Sichem, when the Dreamer was cast by his brethren into the well and sold to the Midianites. Hence later on the aged Jacob set out for Egypt by way of Beersheba (see page 209), and here the patriarch's bones were brought to rest beside his kin. Hebron was laid waste by Joshua, and its surrounding territory was given to Caleb, while the city itself was made over as a city of refuge to the house of Aaron. David, after his romantic adventures in the Wilderness of Judæa, reigned in Hebron for seven and a half years, until, becoming sovereign of the whole land of Israel, he removed the seat of his government to Jerusalem. At the gates of Hebron Abner was slain by Joab, and by the pool of Hebron (see page 196) David put to death the murderers of Ishbosheth, the son of Saul. The rebellious Absalom too betook

himself to Hebron, "to fulfil a vow" and offer up sacrifices at the altar of Jehovah for the success of his revolt against his father, for then as now Hebron was next in sanctity only to Jerusalem itself. The ancient name of Hebron was Kirjath-Arba, literally "the city of four," which the rabbinical commentators explain to mean the four patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Adam. The Bible, however, says, "And the name of Hebron before was Kirjath-Arba; which Arba was a great man among the Anakims." (Josh. xiv. 15.)

Unlike most towns in Palestine, Hebron does not stand upon a hill, but lies in the narrow part of a valley, called Wâdy Khûlîl, the continuation of Wâdy et Tûffâh. Some have conjectured that the ancient city was situated on the hill north-west of the modern town: this would agree with the Bible narrative, which makes Machpelah to have been "in a field before Mamre—the same is Hebron." It is easy to understand how a new town might grow up round the sacred site, while the original one would disappear. The neighbourhood is exceedingly fertile and the valley has been supposed to be that of Eshcol from the luxuriance with which the vines thrive there. But this site should more probably be looked for in the mountain plateau south of Judæa, which now forms part of the Desert of the Tih, but which must in former times have been as fertile as Palestine itself. There, although all is now arid and bare from the failure of the water supply, there are the ruins of immense works for irrigation, and the terraced hillsides are covered with small stone heaps in regular order, which are still called Teleilât el 'Anab, or "grape-mounds." The grapes of Hebron are large, and the clusters grow to an immense size. There is a tradition that it was here that Father Noah planted the vine; his grave is shown at Dura, the ancient Dora, a little to the west.

The town of Hebron contains four quarters: Hâret esh Sheikh, "the sheikh's quarter," so called from the fine mosque of Sheikh 'Ali Bakka on the north-west, which dates from the time of the Mamelukes (see page 197); Hâret Bâb ez Zâwîyeh, "the quarter of the Cloister Gate," on the west; Hâret el Harâm, "the quarter of the Sanctuary," on the south-east; and Hâret el Mushârikeh, "the common quarter," on the south. The population is from eight thousand to ten thousand, of whom five hundred are Jews. These are the only foreigners permitted in the place; they exercise no trade or industry, but subsist on the charity of their European co-religionists, for whom they offer up prayers in return at this peculiarly holy place.*

On approaching the city, the first object which meets the eye is the square castle-like structure of the Harâm, with its towering walls of ancient and massive masonry (see steel plate). These, as already stated, enclose the mosque which now covers the cave of Machpelah. According to Jewish opinion, it was Solomon who first erected the mausoleum, Esther who restored it, and the Empress Helena who rebuilt it after it had been destroyed or fallen into decay. The walls of the Harâm at Hebron are the most perfect examples of masonry of the kind which exist in Palestine, almost surpassing even the ancient portions of the walls of

* There is an important and anciently founded glass factory on the north side of the Harâm; here lamps and smooth rings of coloured glass, worn as bracelets, are made in great numbers, and distributed all over the country. Hebron supplies the southern districts with water-skins made of goats' hides; and there are a few primitive hand-looms in the town, where strong rough carpets are produced.—M. E. R.

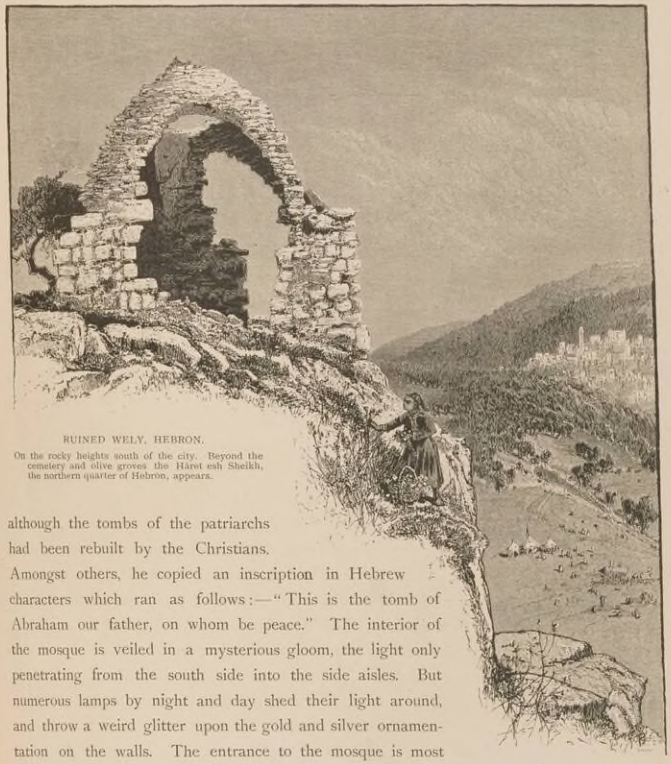
the Temple area at Jerusalem. The stones are still so well fitted together that, notwithstanding

THE POOLS OF HEBRON.

The chief pool is one hundred and thirty-two feet square, and twenty-one feet deep. There are stone steps leading to the bottom at each corner. The other pool is eighty-four feet in length, and fifty-four feet in width. The enclosed building in the distance, on the slope of the hill to the left, is the Quarantine station.

their antiquity, no vegetation has yet found the least place to grow between them. The

building within the sacred enclosure which formerly occupied the place of the present mosque was a well-built square stone erection, like the Kaabeh at Mecca, and is mentioned by the Bordeaux Pilgrim, A.D. 333. Benjamin of Tudela, a learned Jew who visited it in 1160, describes "the great church of St. Abraham" as having been at one time a Jewish synagogue,



RUINED WELY, HEBRON.
On the rocky heights south of the city. Beyond the cemetery and olive groves the Hâret esh Sheikh, the northern quarter of Hebron, appears.

although the tombs of the patriarchs had been rebuilt by the Christians. Amongst others, he copied an inscription in Hebrew characters which ran as follows:—"This is the tomb of Abraham our father, on whom be peace." The interior of the mosque is veiled in a mysterious gloom, the light only penetrating from the south side into the side aisles. But numerous lamps by night and day shed their light around, and throw a weird glitter upon the gold and silver ornamentation on the walls. The entrance to the mosque is most jealously forbidden by the Mohammedans to any but their fellow-worshippers; by special firman of the Sultan, an exception was made in favour of the Prince of Wales in 1862, the Marquis of Bute in 1866, the Crown Prince of Prussia in 1869, and the sons of the Prince of Wales in the present year, 1882.

Of these occasions the most noteworthy was the visit of the Prince of Wales. His Royal Highness was accompanied by the late Dean Stanley, who thus describes the event:—"Before our arrival at Hebron, the Governor of Jerusalem, Sûraya Pasha, had made every preparation to ensure the safety of the experiment. Accordingly, as the protracted file wound through the narrow valley by which the town of Hebron is approached (see page 192), the whole road on either side, for more than a mile, was lined with soldiers. The native population, which usually on the Prince's approach to a town streamed out to meet him, was invisible, it may be from compulsion, it may be from silent indignation. We at length reached the green sward in front of the town, crowned by the Quarantine (see page 196). There Sûraya Pasha received us. It had been arranged that His Royal Highness should be accompanied by the two members of the party who had given most attention to Biblical pursuits, so as to make it evident that the visit was not one of mere curiosity, but had also a distinct scientific purpose. It was, however, finally conceded by the Governor that the whole of the suite should be included, amounting to seven persons besides the Prince. The servants remained behind. We started on foot, two and two, between two files of soldiers, by the ancient pool of Hebron (see page 196), up the narrow streets of the modern town, still lined with soldiers. Hardly a face was visible as we passed through; only here and there a solitary guard, stationed at a vacant window, or on the flat roof of a projecting house, evidently to guarantee the safety of the party from any chance missile. It was, in fact, a complete military occupation of the town. At length we reached the south-eastern corner of the massive wall of enclosure, the point at which enquiring travellers, from generation to generation, have been checked in their approach to this, the most ancient and the most authentic of all the Holy Places in the Holy Land.

"Up the steep flight of the exterior staircase—gazing close at hand on the polished surface of the wall, amply justifying Josephus's account of the marble-like appearance of the huge stones which compose it—we rapidly mounted. At the head of the staircase, which, by its long ascent, showed that the platform of the Mosque was on the uppermost slope of the hill, and therefore above the level where, if anywhere, the sacred cave would be found, a short turn at once brought us within the precincts, and revealed to us for the first time the wall from the inside. A later wall of Mohammedan times has been built on the top of the Jewish enclosure. The enclosure itself, as seen from the inside, rises but a few feet above the platform.

"Here we were received with much ceremony by five or six persons, corresponding to the Dean and Canons of a Christian cathedral. They were the representatives of the forty hereditary guardians of the mosque.

"We passed at once through an open court into the mosque.

"· · · · The whole building occupies about one-third of the platform.

"I now proceed to describe the Tombs of the Patriarchs, premising always that these tombs, like all those in Mohammedan mosques, and indeed like most tombs in Christian churches, do not profess to be the actual places of sepulture, but are merely monuments or cenotaphs in honour of the dead who lie beneath. Each is enclosed within a separate chapel

or shrine, closed with gates or railings similar to those which surround or enclose the private chapels or royal tombs in Westminster Abbey. The two first of these shrines are contained in the inner portico or narthex, before the entrance into the actual building of the mosque. In the recess on the right is the shrine of Abraham, in the recess on the left that of Sarah, each guarded by silver gates. The shrine of Sarah we were requested not to enter, as being that of a woman. A pall lay over it. The shrine of Abraham, after a momentary hesitation, was thrown open. The guardians groaned aloud. But their chief turned to us with the remark, 'The Princes of any other nation should have passed over my dead body sooner than enter. But to the eldest son of the Queen of England we are willing to accord even this privilege.' He stepped in before us, and offered an ejaculatory prayer to the dead patriarch: 'O Friend of God, forgive this intrusion.' We then entered. The chamber is cased in marble. The so-called tomb consists of a coffin-like structure about six feet high, built up of plastered stone or marble, and hung with three carpets, green embroidered with gold. They are said to have been presented by Mohammed II., the conqueror of Constantinople (A.D. 1453), Selim I., the conqueror of Egypt (A.D. 1518), and the Sultan Abdul Mejid. Fictitious as the actual structure was, it was impossible not to feel a thrill of unusual emotion at standing on such a spot—an emotion enhanced by the rare occasion which had opened the gates of that consecrated place, as the guardian of the mosque kept repeating to us as we stood round the tomb, 'to no one less than the representative of England.'"

The next most interesting objects in Hebron are the two pools (see page 196). The larger of these lies low down in the bed of the valley, which here begins to make a dip, running down with a steady declivity to the ancient border of Beersheba; the other is situated somewhat higher up in the wâdy, and is a little more than half the size. The first-mentioned is traditionally regarded as the scene of the murder of Ishbosheth.

From Hebron the traveller may make a short but deeply interesting journey of some seven or eight hours to the southern end of the Dead Sea. Mounting the slopes of Jebel Jobar to the south-east, we come in about an hour and a half to a small hill on the left, called Tell Zif. This is the Ziph of Holy Writ. The ruins lie on a low hill or ridge between two small wâdys which run from this point down to the Dead Sea. It was in the vicinity of this city that David hid himself (1 Sam. xxiii. 24) and wandered as an outlaw in the wilderness; and "every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him" until his band mustered four hundred men. The inhabitants of Ziph twice attempted to betray him into the hands of his persecutor. The town was afterwards fortified by Rehoboam, after which it passes out of history, the last mention of it being made by Jerome in the Onomasticon. Another hour's travelling in an eastward direction brings us to Wâdy Khabra, where for the first time we enter upon the great wilderness of Judæa. Passing thence over a broad plateau, a favourite camping-ground of the Bedawin, we reach at length the top of the Pass of Engedi, where the Dead Sea and the rugged mountains of Moab first burst upon the view (see page 201).

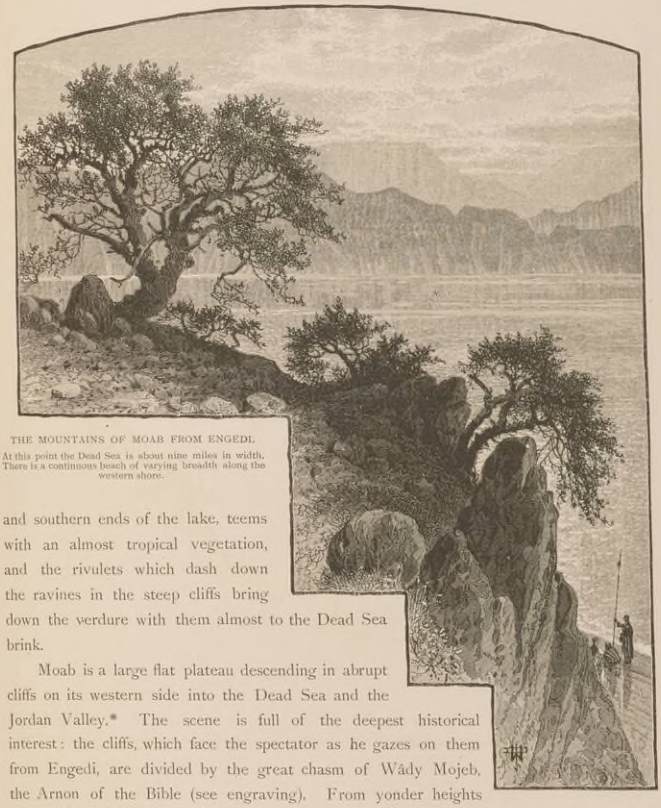
When, as often happens in the rainy season, the sky is overcast with clouds, a dense haze obscuring the mountains, and a fleecy mist hovers over the water, the Dead Sea seems, indeed, worthy of its name: look where one may, no sign of life is visible, and no sound is heard save the dull monotonous surging of the waves. The shore, too, is the very picture of barrenness

THE DEAD SEA, LOOKING NORTH-EAST FROM ENGEDI.
Anciently called the Salt Sea, and Sea of the Plain. The name Dead Sea, now so familiar, does not occur in the Bible; it was adopted by Greek and Roman writers in the second century of our era. The Arabs call this sea Bahr Lût (Sea of Lot).

and desolation, the white salt incrustation which covers it being only relieved by the dark patches of black rolling mud or stagnant pools of brine.

But on a bright and sunny day the salt lake wears a far different aspect. The clear

transparent waters then sparkle with a sapphire hue, and the mountains glow with variegated tints. All animated nature also seems to quicken into life, and flocks of storks and cranes may be seen flying overhead (see page 200). The Ghor, or low-lying plain at the northern



THE MOUNTAINS OF MOAB FROM ENGEDI.

At this point the Dead Sea is about nine miles in width. There is a continuous beach of varying breadth along the western shore.

and southern ends of the lake, teems with an almost tropical vegetation, and the rivulets which dash down the ravines in the steep cliffs bring down the verdure with them almost to the Dead Sea brink.

Moab is a large flat plateau descending in abrupt cliffs on its western side into the Dead Sea and the Jordan Valley.* The scene is full of the deepest historical interest: the cliffs, which face the spectator as he gazes on them from Engedi, are divided by the great chasm of Wâdy Mojeb, the Arnon of the Bible (see engraving). From yonder heights Balaam blessed Israel, and Moses looked upon the promised land which he might never enter.

* For Canon Tristram's description of the northern part of the Dead Sea refer to pages 154—161, vol. i., and for further illustrations of the Dead Sea, Moab Mountains, and Jordan Valley, see pages 152, 159, 163, 165, 167, and 168.

Stretching out into the lake on the south-west is the promontory of El Lisân, "the tongue" (see page 204), and far above it, on a high precipitous rock, stands the mediæval bastioned castle of Kerek. Kerek is called in the Bible Kir-Hareseth, Haresh, or Heres, and the latter part of this name has for a long time puzzled commentators and philologists. When at Diban, the ancient Dibon, where the celebrated "Moabite stone" was found, I learned that the term "Harith" in the local *patois* of the district means a hill surmounted by buildings. As "Harith" is the exact Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew "Haresh," Kir-Hareseth would mean "the city on the hill," a description the accuracy of which is patent to the eye, especially when viewed from our present standpoint. This furnishes a curious instance of the survival of an old Moabite word, and of the manner in which the most apparently trifling incidents, customs, and idioms may illustrate the Bible. Kerek was the scene of the last act of the fearful tragedy of the rebellion of Mesha, whose successes at some other time against Israel are so proudly and boastfully recorded on the Moabite stone. Here, after having made one last despairing but futile effort to burst through the beleaguering lines, the Moabite monarch "took his eldest son that should have reigned in his stead and offered him for a burnt-offering upon the wall." In later Crusading times the castle of Kerek was held by the turbulent knight, Raynald of Châtillon, who, by breaking faith with Saladin and attacking the Mohammedan pilgrim caravan in time of peace, brought about the fall of the Christian kingdom in Palestine.

The nearer shore is not visible until we begin to descend the pass by a precipitous and winding path, which in about half an hour brings us to 'Ain Jidy (see page 203). The modern name of this spring, "the fountain of the kid," is absolutely identical in meaning and orthography with the Engedi of Scripture.

The full stream gushes out from beneath a huge boulder upon a narrow terrace of rock four hundred feet above the level of the lake, and, rushing down the steep declivity, its course hidden by rich tropical vegetation, flows out upon a broad patch of alluvial soil (see page 203). Over this it dashes in a sparkling cascade, and again collects itself below in a quiet pool fringed with graceful tamarisks and fragrant oleanders. The roots of the luxuriant growth, however, absorb the water, and the brook never finds its way down to the sea. The water of the spring is warm (83° Fahr.), of a sweetish taste, and impregnated with lime. Around the spring is a cane-brake, with a perfect thicket composed of different kinds of zizyphus, or thorny lote-tree, the *sidr* or *dôm* of the Arabs, who are very fond of its pleasant-tasting fruit. There is also a great profusion of nightshade, or the "egg" or "mad apple," as well as of the *'osher*, a plant seldom found except in tropical regions, and bearing the so-called "apples of Sodom."

The *seyal*, or thorny acacia, the "shittîm-tree" of the Bible, also grows here in great abundance. The ancient town probably lay below the spring, and the ruins of several buildings, apparently ancient, are found in the neighbourhood. To reach the level of the lake we descend for about three hundred and thirty feet along the thicket through which the stream

flows and a very steep and rugged path. The sides of the brook are cultivated so far as the water extends by the Rashaidy Arabs. Farther to the north the fountains of 'Ain Terabeh, el Ghuweir ("the little lowland"), and El Fesh-kah, the last a large and copious one, flow into the

ENGEDI, THE FOUNTAIN OF THE KID ('AIN JIDY).
The sparkling limpid water is warm, rather sweet, and impregnated with lime. To the left there is an example of the remarkable esclepiad called in Arabic *'osher*; it bears a bladder-like fruit filled with long silky hairs, used by the Arabs as tinder for their matchlocks.

lake, but their waters are brackish, and the spring of 'Ain Jidy seems to be the main source of sweet water on the western shore. At length we stand upon the shores of the Dead Sea, the frightful desolation of which accords well with the terrible history that attaches to the spot.

We are undoubtedly in the neighbourhood of the "Cities of the Plain," though much difference of opinion exists as to the spot on which they stood. Ancient tradition fixes it at what is now the southern end of the lake, and this accords with the physical geography of the region. We are told (Gen. xiii. 10) that "all the plain of Jordan was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar." And in xiv. 3 we learn that the allied kings "were joined together in the vale of Siddim, which is the salt sea," *i.e.* evidently which had become the "salt sea" at the time of writing. The soundings taken by Lynch prove that

THE SOUTHERN END OF THE DEAD SEA FROM ENGEDI.
Showing the Peninsula called El Lisân (the tongue), which may easily be mistaken for an island.

the southern end of the lake is some one thousand three hundred feet deeper than the northern, and seems to point to some great convulsion of nature on the spot.

Many writers have supposed that the agencies employed in the destruction of Sodom and its sister cities were the natural ones of volcanic eruptions accompanied by earthquake. This hypothesis is quite in accordance with the language of the Bible; the mention in Genesis of the existence of "slime (*i.e.* asphalte) pits" in the neighbourhood, and of Abraham's seeing that "the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace," would certainly seem to indicate some such phenomena. The asphalte pits are still to be seen, and the frequent and severe earthquakes that have occurred in the vicinity also point to the presence of subterranean volcanic action. The present aspect of the place can only be reconciled with the Scripture

THE CLIFFS OF ENGEDI.

They form a very difficult pass, and the zigzag paths are not kept in repair. The surface of the limestone rock is of marble-like smoothness, and a pale reddish tint is the prevailing colour.

account by supposing the vale of Siddim to have sunk down and been overwhelmed by the waters of the lake.

The Dead Sea, which is about forty-six miles long and nearly one thousand three hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean, is shut in on both sides by precipitous cliffs, the bases of which at one time project into the waters of the lake, at others recede and leave a narrow strip of beach. At the southern end a number of low, sandy promontories jut out into the sea, amongst which the largest and most conspicuous is the Lisân already referred to (see page 204). Seen from 'Ain Jidy, the view is magnificent for its rugged and desolate grandeur: opposite are the hills of Moab, and far away to the south stretches the western coast, with its numberless white promontories jutting out into the lake, and towering high over these the rocky precipices rise one above the other like the bastions of some mighty castle. Towards the south-western end of the lake, and washed at the base by its waves, is Jebel Usdum, or the Mount of Sodom, an isolated hill composed almost entirely of crystalline rock-salt. It is about seven miles in length and three hundred and fifty feet in height, and where the water has washed it away in places it assumes quaint forms resembling pillars and minarets, naturally suggesting the pillar of salt into which Lot's too-curious wife was turned. One, the most conspicuous of these pillars, is indeed pointed out as such, and called by the Arabs "Bint Sheikh Lût," or Lot's wife. Just before Jebel Usdum the outline of the once-powerful fortress of Masada may be discerned against the sky. This famous stronghold was originally built by Jonathan Maccabæus, and was enlarged and strengthened by Herod the Great; it was the last refuge of Jewish independence after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

The leafy thicket of 'Ain Jidy, at the foot of the sheer and towering cliffs of the barren mountain, presents a strange contrast to the desolation which surrounds it. The mighty cliffs that overhang it, with the awful chasms and sombre gorges which divide them, also lend an indescribable grandeur to the scene (see page 205). The inhospitable shores of the lake were at one time inhabited, first, perhaps, by the indigenous inhabitants, later on by the Israelites, and after them came a succession of hermits—the mystical Jewish sect of the Essenes and the anchorites of the first few centuries of the Christian era. The mountain-sides are everywhere honey-combed with the caves in which these recluses dwelt; many of them are now quite inaccessible, the paths and terraces in the cliffs by which they were once approached having long since been washed or worn away.

The water of the Dead Sea contains about 25 per cent. of solid matter. Its pungency and saltness cause intense pain to the eyes if it is allowed to enter them, and it is abominably nauseous to the taste; but it is so buoyant that to sink in it is out of the question. One may float on back or breast, sit on the surface as on a feather bed, and—provided one does not fall over head downwards—perform almost any antics without fear of submersion. Swimming, however, is very trying to the small of the back, from the jerk with which the legs fly out on the least attempt to strike out in the ordinary way. The Dead Sea receives the whole torrent of the Jordan, as well as the rivulets and streams from the ravines in the cliffs of Palestine and

Moab, on its western and eastern shores. The volume of water thus discharged into it has been calculated at six million tons daily, for which there is no apparent, or, indeed, conceivable outlet, the immense evaporation which takes place being sufficient to maintain the level of the lake.

The wilderness of Engedi is as grand but dreary a sight as can well be imagined: a broad rolling expanse, shut in on every hand by high ridges with jagged summits, their sides deeply scored by torrent beds, and intersected here and there by broad valleys of white marl, with not a tree, and scarcely a shrub, to be seen for miles around (see page 208). From time to time a small Arab encampment or a few isolated figures come in sight, and with their primæval costume, and their wild and savage air, seem like some weird vision of David and his outlaw band conjured up by a highly wrought fancy, rather than the ordinary inhabitants of the place.

From the city of Abraham we proceed to another spot connected with the history of the patriarch, Beersheba—variously interpreted, "the Well of the Seven" or "the Well of the Oath"—where he dug the well, and gave seven ewe lambs to Abimelech in token of an oath of covenant with him (see page 209). There were once seven wells here, two of which are still filled with water, and another, in a fairly perfect condition, is dry; they are all built of solid masonry. In the immediate vicinity may be seen traces of the other four wells. An Arab tradition says that, "The Beni Murr dwelt by seven wells (*seba' biyûr*); each well had seven tanks, each tank had seven troughs, and each trough had seven horses drinking thereat." Round the two wells which contain water are rude stone troughs, which appear to be very ancient. The southern bank of the valley is banked up with a strong wall of solid masonry, extending for a few hundred yards along the part opposite the wells, which are thus protected from the earth falling in and filling them up. The hillside behind them is covered with ruins, though, from the confused state into which they have fallen, it is impossible now to make out with any certainty the original ground-plan of the town. Higher up in the valley are the foundations of a Greek church. The country around Beersheba consists of a rolling plain, intersected by the wâdy beds of Seba' and Khûlil. In spring, when the rains have fallen, it is often covered for miles around with grass, flowers, and herbage; at other times it is nothing but a dry parched land, bare and desolate as the desert itself. Strange and solemn are the thoughts which such a place inspires. Here were the very wells, in all human probability, which the Father of the Faithful dug. The name he gave it still clings to the spot; the Bedawîn, to whom the Scriptures are unknown, still point with pride to the great work which their father Ibrahîm achieved, and as they draw water from it for their flocks and herds, the ropes that let the buckets down still glide along the same deep furrows in the masonry which, mayhap, the ropes of the patriarch's servants first began. It was to the wilderness of Beersheba, too, that Elijah fled for his life from Ahab and Jezebel (1 Kings xix. 3).

We now take a final farewell of Hebron and its sacred memories, and, providing ourselves with an escort of the Jehalin or the Hawetât Arabs, set out upon a journey through the wilder-

ness towards the rock-cut city of Petra, in the land of Edom. Our road leads us past Semû'a, the ancient Eshtemoh, mentioned in Joshua xv. 50; Tell 'Arâd, the site of the city of "King 'Arâd the Canaanite, which dwelt in the south," who, when he "heard tell that Israel came by the way of the spies, fought against Israel, and took some of them prisoners" (Numbers xxi. 1); Tell Milh, "the salt mound," where once stood the ancient Moladah, mentioned by Joshua and Nehemiah, and later on by Josephus—it is the Malathah of the fourth century, and is, perhaps, identical with the "City of Salt" mentioned in Joshua xv. 62; and next by 'Ar'ârah,

THE WILDERNESS OF ENGEDI,
Where David and his followers lived among "the rocks of the wild goats." There are many caves in the hillsides which might well serve as places of refuge for fugitives and outlaws.

the Aroer of Judah (1 Sam. xxx. 28), one of the cities to which David after his victories over the Amalekites sent a share of the spoil—the only traces of the ancient town which now remain are a few wells built up with rude masonry, some of them containing water.

The character of the scenery now begins to change, rolling hills and rough stony valleys succeeding the open plains through which we have hitherto been passing, and it becomes every moment more evident that we are entering upon the confines of the "great and terrible wilderness." Passing through this wild region, we at length reach Jebel Madherah, a hill of which the Arabs tell the following legend:—"A people once dwelt here, to

whom there came one day some travellers seeking hospitality; but the people of the place did unto them a vile and horrible deed, wherefore the Almighty in his anger rained down stones upon them and destroyed them from off the face of the earth." The base and summit of the mountain are covered with large blocks of stone, to which the Bedawîn point in confirmation of their tale. From this point a few hours' journey takes us to 'Ain el Weibeh, with its

BÎR ES SEBA', THE SITE OF BEERSHEBA.
The ancient wells can still be traced, and two of them are serviceable; but the city has ceased to exist. In the distance may be seen an encampment of the Tiyâheh Arabs. In the foreground a woman is asking alms of the artist's travelling attendants.

three springs, which Robinson and others have identified with Kadesh Barnea (see page 210). With this I am unable to agree, and prefer placing Kadesh at 'Ain Kadîs, about forty miles farther to the west. The name Kadîs is in meaning and etymology exactly equivalent to the Kadesh of the Bible, and the identification of this site is perhaps more important than any other in the region, as it forms the key to the movements of the Children of Israel after leaving

Hazeroth for the scene of their forty years' wanderings. The spring which bears this suggestive name is situated at a part of the mountain plateau where this falls to a lower level, and, being more open and less hilly, is easily approached from the direction of Akabah. It is thus situated at one of the natural boundary lines of Palestine. From northern Syria to Sinai southwards the

'AIN EL WEIBEH, ON THE BORDER OF EDOM.
In the valley of El Jeib. The name signifies "hole with water." Many authorities regard this now deserted place as the site of Kadesh Barnea.

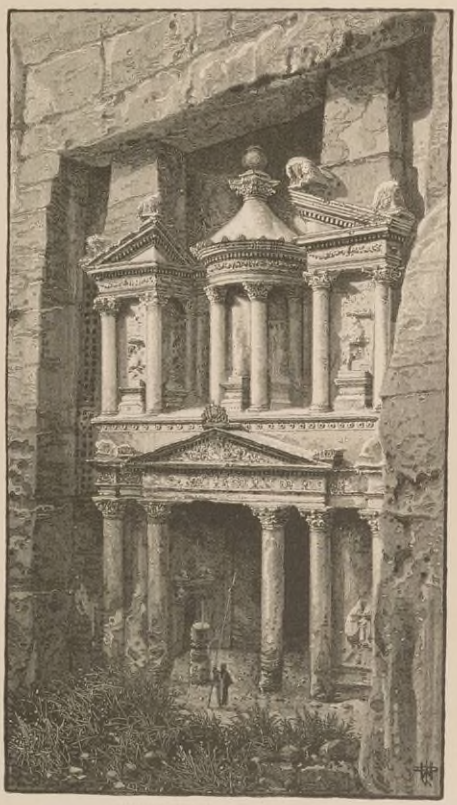
country seems to have certain natural divisions marked by the comparative fertility of the soil of each. In Syria at the present day we have a well-watered and productive soil; in Palestine, south of the Hermon district the soil is much more barren, but shows traces of greater fertility in former times; south of the mountains of Judah, to the point immediately below 'Ain Gadis,

the country, though now little more than a barren waste, shows signs of extensive former cultivation, reaching down even to a comparatively recent period. This tract of land is the Negeb, or south country of Scripture; and 'Ain Kadis is situated on the frontier of the district. Between this and the edge of the plateau of the Tih the country is even more barren, but there are still traces of a primæval race of inhabitants who found a living on its soil. At the time of the Exodus it must have borne the same relation to the then fertile district of the Negeb which that now barren land bears to Palestine at the present day. Now the spies went up from Kadesh, and returned bringing with them grapes from Eshcol, which, as has been stated above, many geographers identify with Wâdy el Khûlil, or the Wâdy of Hebron. But the city of Hebron is at least four days' journey from 'Ain Gadis, and grapes and figs could not have been brought so far without spoiling—to say nothing of the cautious manner in which Caleb and his companions must have passed through the country. If, then, Kadesh Barnea is at 'Ain Kadis, the grape-bearing Eshcol must be near the same place; and it is a curious fact that among the most striking characteristics of the Negeb are miles of country—hillsides and valleys—covered with small stone heaps, swept in regular swathes, and called by the Arabs to this day *teleilat el 'anab*, or "grape mounds." From a strategical point of view also, 'Ain el Weibeh is ill adapted for the site of Kadesh Barnea, as the Israelites would there have been confined in a *cul de sac*, with the Canaanites, Amorites, Edomites, and Moabites completely hemming them in; whereas in the neighbourhood of 'Ain Kadis they would have nothing but the wilderness around them, and certainly no very hostile peoples in their rear. A good general like Moses would scarcely have chosen a bad position for his camp, and the probabilities therefore are that the more western 'Ain Kadis is really the Kadesh Barnea of the Bible.

From 'Ain el Weibeh we descend into the broad valley of the Arabah, and, mounting the opposite banks, enter Edom by the Nemelah Pass, and reach Petra by way of the magnificent ravine called the Sik (see page 219). Edom is that narrow strip of country between the Arabah and the Derb el Hajj, or Pilgrim Road to Mecca; it extends northwards from Akabah, the ancient Elath, on the Red Sea to Wâdy Kerek, which formed the ancient boundary between it and Moab. The district is divided into two parts, the northern portion of which is now called Jebâl, the Gebal of the Hebrew, known to the ancient Romans as Gebalene. The southern portion is called Esh Sherah, and corresponds to the Mount Seir of the Bible. The capital city was called in Hebrew, Sela, "the rock" (2 Kings xiv. 7), and still bears the equivalent Latin appellation of Petra, although the natives speak of it as Wâdy Mûsa, or "the Valley of Moses."

Edom consists of a range of porphyritic rock covered by a mass of sandstone coloured with the most warm and vivid tints. On either side rise limestone hills, those on the east forming the outpost of the great plateau of the Arabian Desert, while the lower range on the west forms the eastern bank of the Arabah, which valley skirts the south country and the Bâdiet et Tih, or "Desert of the Wanderings." The district is very fertile, the valleys being

watered by pleasant streams and filled with trees and flowers, and the uplands furnishing rich and plentiful pasture interspersed with cornfields. Before the difficulties of ocean travel were overcome and the desert was the direct and easiest road to the East, Edom was a flourishing country and its capital one of the world's great centres of commercial activity. From the earliest times the Midianites and Ishmaelites conveyed the products of Arabia through this province to Egypt in caravans (Gen. xxxvii. 28), and bartered them for manufactures and other commodities of the realm of the Pharaohs. From the second century before Christ the region was inhabited by the Nabathæans, of whose extensive civilisation there are still abundant traces to be seen in the inscriptions and architectural remains which cover the country. In 105 A.D. Edom became a Roman province, and Petra became an even more important city than before. Christianity was introduced there at a very early period, and Bishops of Petra are mentioned as having attended some of the Councils of the Church. By the fourth century the commerce had been diverted, the Arabs encroached upon its territory; and anarchy, neglect, and wanton violence soon brought about the fulfilment of the prophecy



ROCK-CUT TOMB OR TEMPLE, PETRA.
Eighty-five feet in height. It is called by the Arabs El Khûzneh Far'on, "the Treasure of Pharaoh," which is said to be concealed in the urn-shaped finial at the summit. The portal leads into a lofty chamber twelve yards square.

that the inheritance of Esau, which was once "the fatness of the earth and the dew of heaven from above" (Gen. xxvii. 39), should become "a desolation" and a curse. The northern part, El Jebâl, is inhabited partly by fellahin, or peasants, and partly by the Bedawin tribe of the Hejaya. Esh Sherah belongs principally to the Hawetât and 'Ammarin Arabs (the latter being probably the representatives of the ancient Amorites), and the powerful but lawless tribe of the 'Alawin, who have obtained from the Egyptian

DETACHED TOMBS, PETRA.

Isolated masses of rock, from fifteen to twenty feet square. In one of them there is a small sepulchral chamber. The background represents the excavations in the cliffs opposite to the Amphitheatre.

Government the privilege of escorting pilgrims and travellers. Petra and its immediate neighbourhood is in the hands of a turbulent but interesting tribe called the Liyatheneh. They are more fellahin than Bedawin in character, and have a singularly Jewish type of

countenance. Indeed, they are in all probability the descendants of one of the Jewish tribes who emigrated from Arabia after the conquests of Islam. Besides their Hebrew physiognomy they retain many distinctive Jewish customs to the present day. After the fourth century Petra disappears from history, and it remained absolutely unknown until an Arab of Esh Sherah described its ruins to Seetzen, in the year 1807. In 1812, Burckhardt, under great difficulties, reached the place and fully explored it.

Petra lies in a valley running from north to south, and about three-quarters of a mile long. At the northern end it is five hundred feet wide, and narrows to half that breadth at the south. This is called by the Arabs Wâdy Mûsa, "Moses' Vale," from a tradition that the spring 'Aín Mûsa, from which the stream takes its rise, was the same which gushed forth when Moses struck the rock. The valley is enclosed on all sides by precipitous sandstone rocks of variegated hues, and presents the appearance of having been originally an inland lake. The first thing which strikes the spectator in Wâdy Mûsa is the magnificent colour of the rocks; the stone where the surface is old and weathered is of a deep chocolate hue, but where it has been more recently cut or excavated it assumes bright red or yellow tints, relieved here and there by white, the general effect being that of gorgeous watered silk.

The effect on entering the city is most imposing; the chief monuments being hewn in the solid rock, and the most elaborate façades, pediments, pilasters and all, strictly monolithic. The valley was no doubt occupied in the earliest times by the cave-dwelling tribes who are spoken of in the Bible as Horites, and their dwellings have been enlarged and ornamented by the later inhabitants and used for houses, temples, and tombs. In some of the caves, notably at the smaller and less-known rock-cut towns which still exist in the neighbourhood, though unknown to travellers, the walls and ceilings are decorated with elaborate and graceful patterns painted in distemper, as bright and fresh as though they had been but lately finished. One ceiling at El Bârid, which was discovered by the late Mr. Drake and myself, is painted with festoons of grape-vines and convolvuli, with Cupids playing among the branches. The design is evidently Roman, and is extremely well executed. A smaller ravine branches off to the left by the village of 'Aireh, spanned over with an arch which carries an aqueduct. It is called Kantaret Bint Far'on, "Pharaoh's daughter's arch," and the ascent to the east is also named Besâtin Far'on, or "Pharaoh's gardens," nearly every grand or mysterious piece of architectural work in the country being attributed to the Egyptian monarch. At the entrance of the gorge on the south-west side of the valley are some tombs entirely detached from the rock, which has been hewn smooth behind them (see page 213), and calling to mind the ancient sepulchres in the Valley of Jehoshaphat at Jerusalem (see pages 82 and 83, vol. i.). The buildings of the city have nearly all disappeared, the largest and most important of the ruins being that known as Kāsr Far'on, or "palace of Pharaoh," probably a temple, situated near the entrance of the valley from the west. A little to the east of this is a triumphal arch, farther still a solitary column called Zibb Far'on on the south, which apparently once formed part of a church, the apse of which may still be traced. To the

west of this rises a lofty hill, upon the summit of which stands what is supposed to be the acropolis or citadel of Petra.

The architecture of Petra belongs to the debased Roman style which was in vogue in the third or fourth centuries of the Christian era, when the severe simplicity of the classical period had given way to florid decoration and harmony of design was sacrificed to striking effect. The Sîk is one of the most beautiful and picturesque ravines in the world (see page 219). We enter by a narrow passage running between lofty perpendicular cliffs of magnificent red sandstone, and spanned by a broken archway, now quite out of reach, which once carried an aqueduct from the heights above. A clear and sparkling stream ripples along the bed of the ravine, fringed with oleanders and other shrubs, while creepers hang in graceful festoons from the rugged walls. As we advance the gorge grows narrower and grander. In the walls are several square cuttings which once held tablets, and some small ornamented niches, no doubt intended for dedicatory altars, of the same pattern as those found at Bâniâs and elsewhere (see page 111, vol. i.). Beneath these are some imperfect Greek inscriptions. At a point in the Sîk where the ravine takes a sharp turn we come upon one of the most remarkable monuments in Petra, namely, the Khûzneh Far'on, or "Pharaoh's Treasury," excavated in the solid rock and surpassing all the other tombs and temples in beauty of colour and execution (see page 212.) The façade is of a deep but delicate rose colour, which shines out in strong relief against the deep reddish-brown of the uncut rock around it and the bright green of the oleanders and other shrubs that grow beneath. The façade of the temple consists of a portico originally of six columns, but one of them has now broken away. The four middle pillars support a pediment; on the apex of this is an ornament which has been variously described, but which a more careful inspection proved to be a lyre. Above the whole is a very curious piece of ornamentation: a second pediment, the width of the whole façade, is supported by two pilasters at either end; the pediment has then been cut through on each side of the centre, and the block so left has been fashioned into a cylindrical ornament surmounted by an urn. The cylinder and the recesses have then been furnished with pilasters and dressed to correspond with the front portions. This pediment, which is thus divided into three portions, presents nine faces of rock, each having a pilaster on either side, and on these are sculptured female figures with graceful flowing drapery. The curious device was in all probability adopted to admit of the symmetrical arrangement of *nine* figures—those, I take it, of the nine Muses. The lyre, the emblem of Apollo, being also introduced, lends colour to the supposition that it was dedicated to those divinities. The mysterious excavation, then, is nothing but the *Musæum* of Petra—not what the Turks would call an "antiquity house," but the "philharmonic institution of the place."

The next most important monument is, perhaps, the amphitheatre, which is entirely hewn out of the solid rock (see page 216); it is thirty-nine yards in diameter, and contains thirty-three tiers of seats rising one above another, and capable of accommodating from

three to four thousand spectators. The view from the highest tier is magnificent, and embraces almost all the excavated parts of the valley (see page 213). In the wall of rock behind the theatre are some boxes, or *loculi*, which, perhaps, existed as caves in the face of the rock before the amphitheatre was excavated. Immediately opposite to the theatre are some tombs with beautifully executed fronts, the first of which contains a curious arrangement of graves, or *loculi*. These are cut in the floor of the cave, and are so placed as to make the most of the room, no regard being paid to the direction in which they lie. On the wall to the left are some rudely cut representations of the sepulchral

THE ROCK-HEWN AMPHITHEATRE, PETRA.
Thirty-three tiers of seats rise one above another, and above the seats there are chambers hewn in the rock. The brook of 'Ain Mûsa, bordered with verdure, flows across the arena.

monuments in favour with the Nabathæans, something between an obelisk and a pyramid, and beneath these are two inscriptions in the Nabathæan character. A little farther on is a finely carved temple, which originally contained six caves or recesses; these have since been made into three, and fashioned into apses at the end so as to form a Greek church of the usual pattern. A Greek inscription in red paint records the fact of its consecration, but the date is unfortunately illegible. Each tomb or cave has its owner, who dwells there with his family in the cold or wet weather.

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J. D. WOODWARD. PINXT. C. BERTRAND. SCULPT.

ENTRANCE TO THE VALLEY OF PETRA.

D. APPLETON & Co NEW YORK.

MOUNT HOR.
The scene of the death of Aaron, called by the Arabs Jebel Harûn, "the Mount of Aaron." Its highest point is about four thousand three hundred and sixty feet above the sea-level.

# MOUNT HOR AND THE CLIFFS OF EDOM.

THE steel plate facing this page will convey some idea of the grandeur of the famous defile, which was the chief and probably the only usual approach in ancient times to the deep valley hidden in the heart of the mountains of Edom where the city of Petra once stood, but which now contains only its site, strewn with ruins and surrounded by rock-cut tombs and temples. This wonderful ravine (Es Sik, *the cleft*) approaches the valley of Petra from the east; it is about a mile and a half in length, and winds continuously, taking unexpected turns, as if it were the most flexible of meandering rivers instead of being a chasm in a mighty mountain wall. About fifty feet from the eastern entrance to the defile a picturesque arch (shown on the steel plate, and alluded to on page 215) is thrown across from one precipice to the other, at a great height. Immediately beneath the spring of the arch, on each side, niches enriched with pilasters, evidently intended for statues, are sculptured in the face of the rock. At this point the cliffs are from eighty to a hundred feet in height, and the chasm is not more than twelve feet wide. This is one of the narrowest parts of the chasm, but it does not become much wider for a considerable distance. The bottom of the ravine, watered by

ROCK-CUT TOMBS, PETRA.
Used as dwelling-houses by local tribes in cold or wet weather.

the brook from 'Ain Mûsa in the winter, descends rapidly on its winding way towards the west, and the sides become proportionately higher, varying from one hundred to two hundred and fifty feet or more in height. The near approach of the precipices to each other cause them to appear to be much higher than they are in reality. Irby and Mangles estimated them at from four hundred to seven hundred feet in height, and Mr. Stevens regarded them as from five hundred to one thousand feet high. They are everywhere perpendicular, and the effect of the narrow strip of blue sky seen from the gloomy depths below is very striking. In some places, however, the cliffs overhang to such a degree that, without actually meeting, they almost shut out the view of the sky for a hundred yards together. Suddenly a flood of light streams across the ravine from a deep gash in the cliffs on the north side and on the south side simultaneously, and beyond it the beautiful rose-coloured temple known as Khûzneh Far'on (described on page 215) appears, carved in a cliff of the southern chasm, facing the east (see page 212). From this point the defile, pierced on each side with tombs and caves innumerable, turns towards the north-west until it opens into a little glade overgrown with oleanders and tamarisk bushes (see page 219), a favourite haunt of the present inhabitants of Petra, and close to some tombs, which serve as con-

CLIFFS OF THE SÎK, PETRA.

Showing the western outlet of the great defile opposite to the rock-cut amphitheatre represented on page 216.

venient dwelling-places (see page 218). The rock-hewn amphitheatre is just below, towards the north (see page 216). Beyond it the cliffs, still honeycombed with caves and tombs, once more approach each other, till a little farther to the north they at last open into the valley of Petra. The bed of the winter torrent pursues its way, and as it crosses the valley winds among the ruins of the city of Petra, and then enters a defile in the western hills.

From the west-north-west corner of the area a steep ravine ascends into the heart of the mountains and leads to one of the most important monuments of Petra, Ed Deir (the Convent), hewn in the face of a perpendicular rock, which forms one of a group projecting from the lofty tableland of Edom. The long ascent by which this now isolated temple is approached is for the most part along the edge of a precipice, which is carefully hewn, where the rocks admit of it, into a continuous staircase, the steps of which are in more than one instance marked by inscriptions in the so-called Sinaitic character. After many windings among tangled thickets and round great blocks of sandstone, a platform two hundred and sixty feet square, partly formed by excavation of the rock and partly by masonry, is reached; on the northern side of it stands the Deir, withdrawn between two gigantic walls of cliff (see page 221). It is of greater, magnitude than the Khûzneh (see page 212), being upwards of a hundred feet in height. The capitals of the columns and the cornices have, apparently, never been completely finished. In the interior, facing the entrance, is a recess a little above the floor, with a dais in front of it, and a few steps leading up to it on each side. A rude staircase leads to the roof of the Deir, and on the rocky platform with which the roof communicates is a circle of hewn stones, and again, still beyond, is a solitary cell, hewn in an isolated cliff and joined to this platform by a narrow isthmus of rock. It is said that the Deir stands more than a thousand feet above the level of the valley basin of Petra, and the few travellers who have visited it speak highly in praise of the picturesque view which its terraced roof commands. From it can be traced the entire length of the steep defile, by which alone it can be approached, winding among perpendicular rocks; while nearly the whole extent of the site of the once splendid city of Petra can be distinguished below. Towards the south-west, the summit of Mount Hor (see page 217), called by the Arabs Jebel Harûn (the Mountain of Aaron), appears beyond the intervening cliffs. The domed wely over the traditional grave of Neby Harûn (the prophet Aaron) can be discerned on the highest point of the sacred mount.

On the levelled surface of a rock immediately opposite to and facing the Deir there are the remains of what must once have been a stately temple. The bases of the columns of the portico and colonnades on each side are still *in situ*, and in a vault beneath David Roberts, the artist, saw a capital of one of the columns, which he describes as being of "white marble and in the best taste."

The incidental references made by Josephus (Ant. IV., iv. 5, 6, 7) to Idumea and Petra, in connection with his account of the death and burial of Miriam and her brother Aaron, are very striking, and in conjunction with the Bible narrative lend special interest to these now

desolate lands, and help us to repeople them in fancy with their ancient inhabitants and the wandering hosts led by the Lawgiver.

"When Moses together with his whole army came to the borders of Idumea, he sent

THE DEIR, PETRA.
An isolated building on a lofty eminence north-west of the valley of Petra. It faces Mount Hor.

ambassadors to the king of the Idumeans, and desired him to give him a passage through his country, and agreed to send him what hostages he should desire, to secure him from injury. He desired him also that he would allow his army to buy provisions, and if he insisted on it

he would pay down a price for the very water that they should drink. But the king was not pleased with this embassage from Moses; nor did he allow a passage for the army; but brought his people armed to meet Moses, and to hinder them, in case they should endeavour to force their passage. Upon which Moses consulted God by the oracle, who would not have him begin the war first; and so he withdrew his forces, and travelled round about through the wilderness (see Numbers xx. 17—21). Then it was that Miriam, the sister of Moses, came to her end. They made a public funeral for her at a great expense. She was buried on a certain mountain which they call Sin, and when they had mourned for her thirty days Moses purified the people. . . . . Now when this purification was over, he caused the army to remove and to march through the wilderness and through Arabia, and when he came to a place called Arke, *but has now the name of Petra*, at this place, which was encompassed by high mountains, Aaron went up one of them (see page 217), in the sight of the whole army; Moses having before told him that he was to die, for this place was over against them. He put off his pontifical garments and delivered them to Eleazar his son, and died while the whole multitude looked upon him. He died in the same year wherein he had lost his sister, on the first day of the month of Abba" (see Numbers xxxiii. 38).

In the time of St. Jerome a shrine, said to be the tomb of Miriam, was shown near Petra (the Kadesh Barnea of early Christian tradition), but the site of this traditional tomb has not been identified. It is distinctly stated in Numbers xx. 1 that Miriam died at Kadesh and was buried there. Josephus states that her death took place on the first day of the lunar month of Xanthicus, and, as Dean Stanley says, "this seems to imply that the anniversary was still observed in his time," and pilgrimages were probably made to the real or supposed tomb. Dean Stanley suggests that the place of sepulture of Miriam was the mountain height crowned by the above-described monument Ed Deir (see page 221), and it is certainly quite possible that the tomb known to Jerome as the grave of Miriam may have been on this spot. Its remarkable position, and the laboriously constructed rock-cut stairway leading to it, tend to prove that it was a pre-eminently "sacred place," and the inscriptions above alluded to indicate that it was a place of pilgrimage in early Christian times.

To the little white-domed wely, which is said to mark the burial-place of Aaron, on the summit of Jebel Neby Harûn (the Mount of the Prophet Aaron), pilgrimages are made to this day by Jewish and more especially Mohammedan devotees. That this venerated mountain is identical with the "Mount Hor by the border of the land of Edom," described as the scene of Aaron's death, is now the general opinion. In Hebrew it is called הֹר הָהָר, literally "Hor, the mountain." If, as Gesenius explains, "Hor" is only an archaic form of "Har," the usual Hebrew term for "mountain," then it means simply "the mountain of mountains." It well deserves the epithet, for it rises high above the surrounding mountains and cliffs of Edom, and may easily be distinguished, even from a distance, by its twin peaks (see page 217). The shrine of Aaron stands on the higher peak, which is in the form of a truncated cone, and is separated from the less elevated peak by a little plain in which grows a solitary cypress-tree

The highest point of the mountain is said to be four thousand feet above the level of the sea.

Owing to the frequent contentions which take place among the local tribes of Arabs, and their somewhat capricious dealings with strangers, travelling in the land of Edom is rather difficult, and the ascent of Mount Hor is occasionally rendered impossible.

The late Mr. James Finn, during his residence in Palestine as H.B.M. Consul, did much to facilitate expeditions to Petra and Mount Hor, by personally visiting these places and making arrangements with the sheikhs of local tribes for the safe conduct and escort of English travellers for a fixed sum per head. He thus describes his approach to and ascent of Mount Hor:—

"April 4th. At length we were upon the great plain of the Wâdy 'Arabah, or 'Wilderness of Zin;' and our path was to be diagonally across this, pointed direct to Mount Hor.

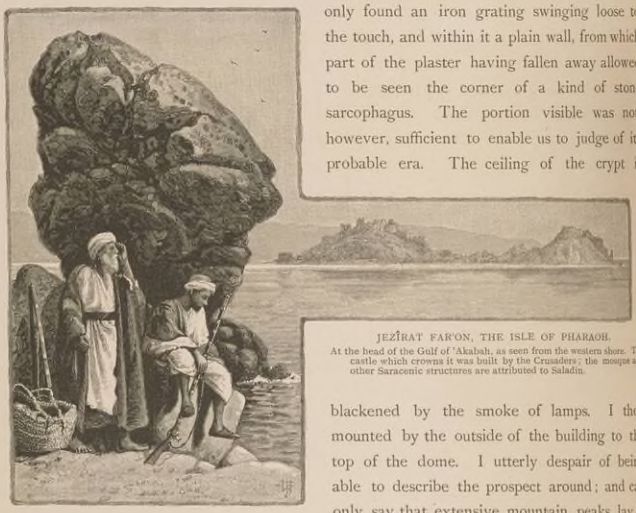
"April 5th. . . . . Distances are hard to judge of in such extensive plains and in so clear an atmosphere. We had been travelling nearly two days with Mount Hor in sight, straight before us; yet the mountain only grew in size as we approached it, not in distinctness. As we came near to the eastern mountains, we found innumerable and huge blocks of porphyry rock scattered over the ground. . . . . We turned off from the Wâdy 'Arabah by the Wâdy Tayibeh, which runs south-east into the heart of the mountain. We ascended a series of precipices, and at a quarter before four caught the first glimpse of Aaron's tomb, and at five pitched our tents on the rugged side of Hor, among crags and scented plants, enlivened by numerous cuckoos and the sweet warbling of one little bird. During the last hour we had seen some blue pigeons, one partridge, and, separately, two large eagles, to which our attention had been drawn by their shadows moving on the ground before us; then on looking upwards, the royal birds were seen sailing along, silently and slowly, against the blue vault of ether.

"April 6th. In the morning we advanced upwards towards Aaron's tomb, sometimes clambering on our hands and knees. We had to rest occasionally in the shade of large trees of 'Arar (juniper). The *ret'm* (a large kind of broom) was very abundant and covered with white blossom, shedding the richest perfume." [This is the *rothem*, רֹתֶם of 1 Kings xix. 4, 5, mentioned as having sheltered Elijah. It is the largest shrub of Sinai, *Genista monosperma.*]

"The mountain is all of dark red colour; and the higher we ascended, the more difficult we found the progress to be. At length all further advance seemed impossible, till, on looking round, we observed an excavation for a well, with masonry around it; and beyond this were steps cut into the rock, which rock was sloped at an angle of between fifty and sixty degrees. This encouraged us to persevere. Still higher I picked up some tesseræ of mosaic and morsels of marble and alabaster. At length we attained the highest peak, where there was scarcely more space than sufficient to contain the small wely." [An oblong stone structure surmounted by a dome plastered and whitewashed.] "On entering we found near the door a common-looking tomb, over which was spread a pall of silk, striped in red, green, and white, but much faded. Against a pillar which supports the roof were hung rows of coloured rags

and threads of yarn, with snail-shells and sea-shells among them by way of further ornament. A wooden bowl at one end of the tomb was probably intended to receive alms for the support of the devotee who claims the place, and who practises the curing of diseases by charms among the wild Arabs. The floor of the chamber has been handsomely paved with tesselated bits of coloured marble, much of which still remains. Over the tomb are suspended some ostrich eggs on a line, as is common in Oriental churches, and near it is a mihrab, or niche in the wall, to indicate the southerly direction for Mohammedan prayers.

"In a corner of the floor a flight of steps leads down to a crypt; and providing ourselves with a light we descended thither. But we only found an iron grating swinging loose to the touch, and within it a plain wall, from which part of the plaster having fallen away allowed to be seen the corner of a kind of stone sarcophagus. The portion visible was not, however, sufficient to enable us to judge of its probable era. The ceiling of the crypt is



JEZÎRAT FAR'ON, THE ISLE OF PHARAOH.
At the head of the Gulf of 'Akabah, as seen from the western shore. The castle which crowns it was built by the Crusaders; the mosque and other Saracenic structures are attributed to Saladin.

blackened by the smoke of lamps. I then mounted by the outside of the building to the top of the dome. I utterly despair of being able to describe the prospect around; and can only say that extensive mountain peaks lay in lines below, and might be compared to those made upon embossed maps, but that the whole scene was vast, savage, and abandoned to sombre desolation, both the hills and the desert, in every direction. I could see nothing of Petra, so deeply sunk is that valley between the hills." [From this point, however, the Deir (see page 221) is visible on the hill to the east-north-east, and in clear weather the Red Sea and the Dead Sea can be plainly distinguished.]

"Descending the mountain by the opposite side of that of our arrival, namely, on the side next Petra, we discovered that more pains in road-making had been bestowed there, and that the ascent in that direction would be comparatively easy. Cuckoos and partridges were heard plentifully, and on looking back I saw a very large raven hovering over the wely."

It is customary for Mohammedan pilgrims, before ascending to the tomb, to sacrifice a kid, goat, or sheep on a high platform or rock ledge called Aaron's Terrace, صطوح هارون (Settûh Harûn), at the base of the mountain, but within sight of the wely. Burckhardt, the pioneer of explorers of this region, travelled in the guise of a poor

LETTER OF ADMISSION TO THE CONVENT OF ST. CATHERINE.
Formerly travellers were drawn up into the convent through the pent-house shown above; now, however, if the letter thus received is found satisfactory they are admitted by a side door.

Mohammedan pilgrim, and hired a guide east of Petra to lead him through the city to Aaron's shrine that he might sacrifice there, and thus it was that he contrived to see the wonders of the valley. The guide led him to Aaron's terrace. Burckhardt killed the goat at a spot where he observed a number of heaps of stones. While he was in the act of slaying the animal his guide called out, "O Harûn, look upon us! it is for you we slaughter this victim! O Harûn, protect and forgive us! O Harûn, be content with our good intentions, for it is but a lean goat! O Harûn, smooth our path, and praise be to the Lord of all creatures!" This

he repeated several times, after which he covered the blood that had fallen on the ground with a heap of stones. They then dressed the best part of the flesh for supper as expeditiously as possible, for the sun had set, and the guide was afraid of the fire being seen and attracting robbers to the spot.

A camel path runs in a south-westerly direction from the southern base of Mount Hor, and leads down through green winding wâdys and rocky passes into the Wâdy el 'Arabah. From this point the route southward to the Gulf of 'Akabah (see page 224) occupies three days.

The Arabic word عربه "'Arabah," signifies *rapid river* (and probably at an immeasurably remote period a "rapid river" flowed along this valley from the Lebanon to the Red Sea), but the precisely corresponding word in Hebrew עֲרָבָה signifies *desert*, and this is a perfectly appropriate definition for the great wâdy bound on the east by the rugged slopes and cliffs of Edom and on the west by the horizontal limestone ranges of the Tih. It is truly "a land not sown" (Jer. ii. 2). Its bed is mainly composed (as Mr. Finn describes) of "sand and pebbles, in different proportions in different places, sometimes the sand predominating and sometimes the pebbles, with occasionally an abundance of very small fragments of flint serving to give a firmer consistency to the sand. Round boulders are also met with on approaching the hillsides. In some places large drifts of soft yellow sand are wrinkled by the wind, as the smooth beach is by the ripples of a receding tide."

But even here sweet-scented shrubs and a few stunted thorn-trees, especially the mimosa (*tûhl*), contrive to grow. The *nebk*-tree, too, is common, and the Arabs can subsist for many days on its small insipid fruit, called *dôm*. The colocynth creeps along the sand here and there, and one plant will yield as many as thirty or more "bitter apples;" when ripe the leaves and plant die away, leaving the golden-coloured fruit (the size of an orange) on the sand. The Arabs make no use of it. Tufts of fine grass and a few wild flowers spring up in this desert year after year. Mr. Finn mentions "a starry flower, called *dibbaih*, not unlike a wild pink, which is eaten by the Arabs, both petals, calyx, and stalk."

My brother, Mr. E. T. Rogers, of Cairo, in a letter describing a journey in the 'Arabah, says, "When travelling quickly and noiselessly we came now and then upon flocks of gazelles browsing on the short tufts of herbage, and occasionally a hare was seen Jerboas started from under our camels' feet and ran about on four legs for a few seconds, and then commenced a series of leaps on their hind legs, till they could regain their holes, or till otherwise out of sight and danger. It was interesting, too, to watch for footprints in the sand; we recognised the marks of the long-pointed cloven foot of the ibex and the large paws of the hyæna; in one place we noticed the double footprints of the wolf and the gazelle, with the sand thrown up at every step, as if there had been a chase."

The bed of the 'Arabah gradually rises towards the south till it forms a ridge known locally as the Shrag er Risheh (saddle-bag of feathers), said to be the water parting between the Dead Sea and the Gulf of 'Akabah. The valley is here about five miles in width, but narrows to four miles where it meets the gulf. It slopes towards the west, so that when the

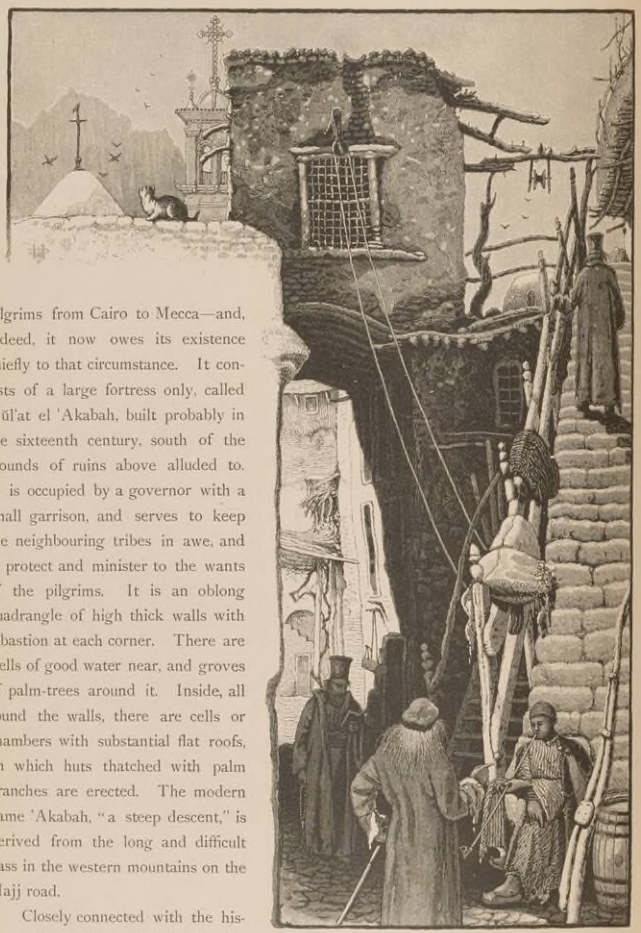
winter torrents rush down from the chasms and wâdys of Edom and from channels in the western hills, they form a little watercourse along the western side of the valley and enter the Gulf of 'Akabah at its north-west corner. The mountains on the east are two thousand to two thousand five hundred feet, and those on the west fifteen to eighteen hundred feet in height.

It is recorded that "King Solomon made a navy of ships in Ezion Geber, on the shore of the Red Sea, in the land of Edom" (1 Kings ix. 26). Of this ancient seaport there is now no vestige left; but its site has been identified with the position of a spring of brackish water called 'Ain el Ghŭdiân, and opposite to a wâdy of the same name which runs from the western hills into the great valley of the 'Arabah, at a point which is now nearly ten miles from the seashore, but which must have been the northern point of the Red Sea, "in the land of Edom," in the time of King Solomon. (A somewhat similar change in the position of the sea margin is said to have been observed at the head of the Gulf of Suez.) The identification of the site of Ezion Geber does not, however, rely on the configuration of the valley or on the existence of the springs of brackish water at this point. The nomenclature is regarded as the proof, for, though in appearance so different, the word Ezion, in its original Hebrew form, and the Arabic word El Ghŭdiân, are actually identical, letter for letter; and they correspond phonetically, as Professor Palmer observes, with "Diana," the Latin form of the name as it appears on the Peutinger Tables.* It is there shown that "Diana" (Ezion) was sixteen Roman, that is fourteen and a half English miles from "Haila" (Elath), which agrees with the position assigned to the former at El Ghŭdiân.

There has never been any doubt respecting the position of Elath; its site is still marked by extensive mounds of rubbish at the head of the Gulf of 'Akabah, on the eastern curve of the bay. In the history of this place there is scarcely a missing link since Solomon used it as his seaport. In the reign of Ahaz it was conquered by the Syrians and the Jews were driven from it (2 Kings xvi. 6). It is mentioned frequently by Greek and Roman writers under the name of Ailah and Ælena, and was the station of a Roman legion. In the days of Jerome it still traded with India. On the approach of the victorious army of the followers of Mohammed in A.D. 630, John, the Christian King of Ailah, submitted voluntarily to the conquerors, and secured peace by payment of tribute. From this time the place declined, and Baldwin I., in the year A.D. 1116, with two hundred followers, took possession of it, having found it deserted. Saladin (Salah-ed-Din) regained it in 1167, and it was never fully recovered by the Crusaders, though the reckless Raynald of Châtillon seized upon the town and held it for a few days.

Aileh, or 'Akabah Aileh, as the modern representative of the ancient city of Elath is called, is one of the chief stations on the route of the Egyptian Hajj—the yearly caravan of

* This remarkable work owes its name *Tabula Peutingeriana* to Peutinger, a scholar and statesman of Augsburg, who was long its possessor. It is a rude chart or delineation of the military roads of the Roman empire, with the distances between the towns, constructed not later than the fourth century. By some authorities it is believed to date from the reign of Alexander Severus, A.D. 222—235. The present copy, the only one known to exist, appears to have been made in the twelfth or thirteenth century. It is a long narrow chart wound on rollers, and is preserved in the Imperial Library at Vienna. It has been of great value to students of biblical topography, and a fac-simile of it has been published.



A PEEP INTO ONE OF THE COURTS OF THE CONVENT.
Showing a rude flight of steps leading to the upper chambers. On the left the summits of the belfry of the church and the minaret of the mosque may be seen.

pilgrims from Cairo to Mecca—and, indeed, it now owes its existence chiefly to that circumstance. It consists of a large fortress only, called Kûl'at el 'Akabah, built probably in the sixteenth century, south of the mounds of ruins above alluded to. It is occupied by a governor with a small garrison, and serves to keep the neighbouring tribes in awe, and to protect and minister to the wants of the pilgrims. It is an oblong quadrangle of high thick walls with a bastion at each corner. There are wells of good water near, and groves of palm-trees around it. Inside, all round the walls, there are cells or chambers with substantial flat roofs, on which huts thatched with palm branches are erected. The modern name 'Akabah, "a steep descent," is derived from the long and difficult pass in the western mountains on the Hajj road.

Closely connected with the history of 'Akabah (Elath) is the picturesque Jezirat Far'on (Island of

Pharaoh). It is about nine miles south-south-west of the fortress of 'Akabah, and half a

THE UPPER CHAMBERS OF THE CONVENT.
With the peaks of Jebel Mûsa in the background.

mile or less from the opposite or western shore, whence the view on page 224 is taken.

Captain R. F. Burton, who has recently visited it, says that the people of 'Akabah call it simply Jebel el Kûlat (Mount of the Fort). It has had a puzzling variety of names attributed to it—variations of the words El Kurey and El Kureiyeh, meaning "the village," or "the ruin." Laborde calls it El Graie. It is a grey granite rock, dyked with decaying porphyritic trap, and everywhere veined with white and various coloured quartzes. The shape is a long oval of about three hundred and forty by one hundred and fifty yards, and it consists of two stony mounds united by an isthmus. The northern peak is the higher, and rises about a hundred yards above the sea-level. It is encircled with barrier reefs of coraline. At the extreme north there is a tower, and on the northern mound, which is scarped here and there, stands the castle keep, defended by an enceinte. In the highest part there is a carefully cemented underground cistern, in which there are two pointed arches divided by a tall column. Below there is a small harbour, and the pier leads to a covered way enabling the garrison safely to circulate round the base of the island. The southern knob supports similar but inferior constructions.

Captain Burton, from whose account the above description is gleaned, says: "The castle is evidently European, built in the days when the Crusaders held El 'Akabah; but it probably rests upon Roman ruins, and the latter, perhaps, upon Egyptian remains of far older date. The Saracenic buildings may date from the reign of Salâh-ed-Din (Saladin), who drove out the Crusaders in 1167 A.D." In the year A.D. 1182 the island was unsuccessfully besieged by Raynald of Châtillon, and in the time of Abulfeda (about 1300) the island was already abandoned and the governor transferred to the castle on the mainland—Kûl'at el 'Akabah: thus all the important structures must have been erected prior to that date. For centuries it has been either utterly deserted or used as a place of refuge or abode by pirates and fishermen.

## THE CONVENT OF ST. CATHERINE.

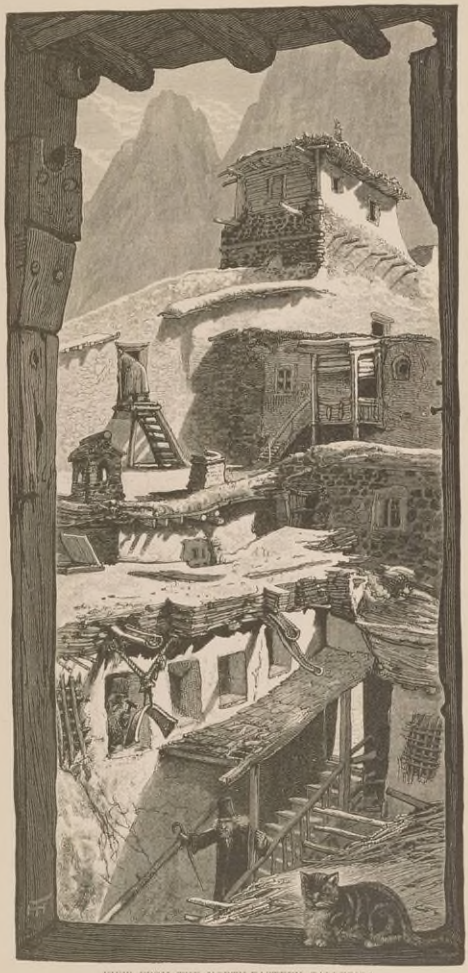
THE Caravan or Hajj route of Christian pilgrims from Syria and Palestine to the Convent of St. Catherine and the "holy places" in its neighbourhood, runs from the Valley of the 'Arabah round the head of the Gulf of 'Akabah, and winds along its western shore. Travellers who approach the Sinaitic peninsula from the north-east, instead of from Suez, usually follow the same route, traversing the shell-strewn sands at the foot of a mountain wall of grey granite intersected at intervals by stony wâdys strewn with gravel.

At the mouth of the broad and barren Wâdy Merâkh, within sight of Jezirat Far'on (see page 224), the traveller is compelled to change his escort, for here the territory of the Haiwat tribe of Arabs terminates, and that of the great Tawarah tribe commences. For some distance south of this point the road passes over high promontories stretching far into the sea.

The Land of Midian, on the opposite or eastern side of the gulf, can be plainly seen. Far inland, and tinged light blue by the distance, rise the sharp and saw-like crests of

El Sharâf, and a sandy plain (called by the Bedawîn "Tihâmat Madyan") slopes from them towards the shore cliffs. The Hajj route to Mecca can be distinguished running diagonally in a south-easterly direction across the plain, from Hakl, a pilgrim station on the sea-shore, towards the distant mountains. The Christian Hajj road pursues its way southwards along the widening sandy shore, till at a short distance south of the great chasm of Wâdy Wetîr, and just opposite a brackish fountain surrounded by dwarf palm-trees, called 'Ain en Nuweibi'a, it turns abruptly from the sea-shore and enters the great mountain range by the picturesque ravine, Nûkb el Abweib (the little door). From this point the convent is about fifty miles due south-west, and the camel road approaches it in as direct a line as is possible in a land of mountains and precipices. After traversing the Wâdy Samghi, it issues out into a plain of sandstone veined with granite and deoderite, then it runs through wâdys and over steep slopes to another plain, El Ghor, soon passing near to 'Ain el Hûdhera, which probably represents Hazeroth (Numbers xi. 35). In its neighbourhood there are several connected wâdys called Mawârid el Hûdhera (paths to Hûdhera), indicating that it was once an important place. After crossing the Wâdy Mûrrah, the road runs along the wide plain of Wâdy Sa'al. Here *seyal* or *tûhl* trees (acacias) grow to a considerable size, with thin foliage and a multitude of thorns. From them gum arabic is sometimes gathered. The road now enters a narrow branch of Wâdy Sa'al, a gloomy valley shut in between high desolate mountains of granite, veined with porphyry and slate, and here and there crested with sandstone, all entirely destitute of vegetation; a few scattered shrubs and herbs, however, grow in the bottom of the valley. Emerging from this wâdy, the road rises over a rocky pass to the summit of a ridge, said by Robinson to be the water-parting "between the waters flowing to the Gulf of Suez and those running to the Gulf of 'Akabah." It presently descends to the Wâdy Suweiriyeh, in which there is a well with enclosed gardens near it, called Abu Suweiriyeh. This wâdy enters the broad Wâdy esh Sheikh (Sâleh), near to a Mohammedan wely, four thousand four hundred and seventy-nine feet above the sea, dedicated to Neby Sâleh (the prophet Sâleh), who is highly revered by the Bedawîn. Like the generality of welys, it is a cubical structure covered with a dome and whitewashed. It contains a cenotaph with numerous votive offerings suspended above it, consisting chiefly of tassels, shawls, ostrich eggs, camels' halters and bridles. The Tawarah Bedawîn (the Bedawîn of Tûr, *i.e.* Sinai) regard Neby Sâleh as their ancestor; he was probably, however, the celebrated Mohammedan prophet of the same name, who at an early period was renowned for his eloquence, and who is extolled in the Koran as one of the most venerable of patriarchs (see Sale's Koran, chap. vii., called "El Araf." In the notes to this chapter will be found the curious legends concerning Sâleh).

Every May a great festival takes place at the shrine of Neby Sâleh, accompanied with sacrifices, feastings, and games, at which women are also present; and a smaller festival is held immediately after the date harvest. At the close of the proceedings all present ascend to the summit of Jebel Mûsa, and there offer sacrifices to Moses. From the shrine of Neby Sâleh



VIEW FROM THE NORTH-EASTERN GALLERIES.

Showing the lofty chamber of the south corner. A monk at a lower window is striking a piece of suspended iron with a hammer, to call the fraternity to prayers in one of the numerous chapels.

the heights of Jebel Mûsa are visible. The road gradually ascends as it traverses the Wâdy esh Sheikh, and finally turns into the Wâdy ed Deir, when suddenly the great convent is revealed to the view of the curious traveller; but from this point only its high, eminently picturesque north-western wall and its extensive gardens can be fairly seen.

The convent is an irregular quadrangle, enclosed by lofty walls built of blocks of granite, except the upper courses, which are composed of a mixture of granite, sand, and gravel, cemented together by mud, which has acquired great hardness. The walls are protected by several towers, and the south-eastern wall is scarped. The valley in which the convent stands is so narrow at the bottom, that while its north-eastern wall runs along the water-course, the main body of the building is on the slope of the mountain, so that the south-western wall lies considerably higher than the north-eastern. In the north-eastern wall there is a wicket gate covered with a pent-house, about thirty

INTERIOR OF THE CHURCH OF THE CONVENT OF ST. CATHERINE.

The framework of the door leading into the nave is richly decorated; its panels are embellished with enamels. From the ceiling hang numerous silver lamps and ostrich eggs, suspended by long cords.

feet from the ground, through which travellers were formerly drawn up into the convent. As the traveller approaches its walls, his Bedawy attendants hasten forward, and standing beneath the pent-house, shout out, "Ya Mûsa! Ya Mûsa!" ("O Moses!"), this being the name of the porter now in office. Presently a turbaned head peers out, then a rope with a basket attached to it is let down; in this the letter of introduction, or pass from a branch convent, is placed, and quickly drawn up (see page 225). The buttress near to this wicket was built by General Kleber, the commander of the French troops during their occupation of Egypt. A tablet let into the wall commemorates the restoration of the building by that commander.

Presently an iron gate, which leads into a courtyard between the garden and the convent, is opened, and the candidate for admission is welcomed by the *Œconomos*, or bursar of the convent, and probably received with an embrace and a kiss. His Arab attendants and camels are left outside to bivouac in the valley (see page 238), while he is led into the convent through a low door in the north-west wall near to an entrance, now built up, which was formerly used for the admission of high dignitaries, and called Bâb er Râs, or the Abbot's Gate. The space enclosed within the convent walls is cut up into a number of irregularly shaped small courts, by ranges of buildings running in all directions, forming quite a labyrinth of narrow winding passages ascending and descending (see page 228). In one of these courts there is a well with a few apricot-trees near it, in others a few flowers or vegetables are planted, and ancient vines appear in several places running over rude trellis-work. There are many isolated upper chambers approached by rickety wooden stairs or ladders (see page 232), and apartments are perched high up, projecting with fine picturesque effect over the walls at the west and south corners. A long row of cells, half of which are reserved for the use of pilgrims and travellers, are built along the north-west wall, and open into a covered corridor or gallery constructed of wood and approached by two flights of stone steps (see page 229). The wall facing the top of the first flight of steps is pierced with loopholes, through which glimpses may be caught of the broad plain of Er Râhah (see page 238). In these are set the ordnance of the convent. Everything bears the mark of high antiquity, being apparently the patchwork of various bygone centuries.

Besides the great Church of the Transfiguration which, with its handsome new bell-tower, stands in the midst of these buildings, close to a now rarely used mosque (see page 235), there are several small chapels or oratories dispersed over the convent, in which masses are occasionally said. The ordinary mode of calling the fraternity to prayers is by striking with a hammer a piece of iron, like part of the tire of a wheel, more or less bent, and suspended by ropes (see page 232). A flat piece of granite, thus suspended and struck with a wooden stick, serves the same purpose, producing a ringing sound. There is an example of this kind of bell hanging by the doorway of an oratory on page 228, and in the lower stage of the great bell-tower there is a long plank of wood which, on being struck, can be heard all over the convent. Bells are only rung on church festivals and occasions of rejoicing, or to show respect to some high dignitary.

The Church of the Transfiguration is an early Christian basilica, traditionally ascribed to Justinian, and the interior is a very imposing specimen of Greek ecclesiastical decoration (see page 233). The church is entered by a porch, and a flight of steps descends beyond it. Each of the lofty walls, bearing the entablature of the nave, rests on thick columns of granite, the capitals of which are adorned with boldly executed foliage. The aisles are lighted by five Byzantine windows on each side, and are covered by a sloping roof; the west window over the entrance is in the form of a cross, and is shown on this page. The beautiful rounded apse is adorned with mosaics of great value, executed by European artists as early as the seventh or eighth century.

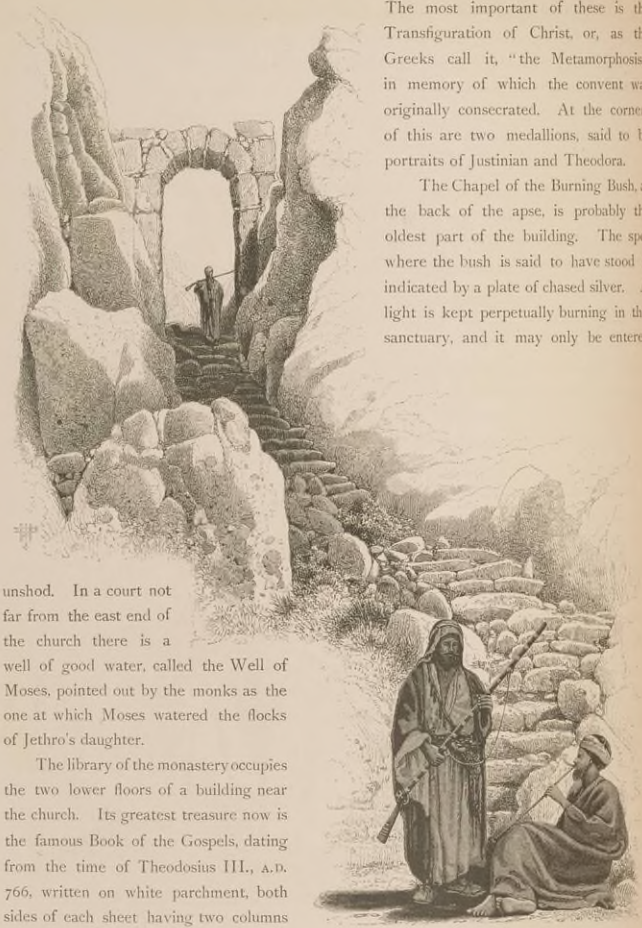
THE CRESCENT AND THE CROSS.

The belfry of the church and the minaret of the mosque, standing so near to each other within the convent walls, produce a singular effect, and strange to say the former is of very recent construction, while the latter dates from an early period.

The most important of these is the Transfiguration of Christ, or, as the Greeks call it, "the Metamorphosis," in memory of which the convent was originally consecrated. At the corners of this are two medallions, said to be portraits of Justinian and Theodora.

The Chapel of the Burning Bush, at the back of the apse, is probably the oldest part of the building. The spot where the bush is said to have stood is indicated by a plate of chased silver. A light is kept perpetually burning in this sanctuary, and it may only be entered unshod. In a court not far from the east end of the church there is a well of good water, called the Well of Moses, pointed out by the monks as the one at which Moses watered the flocks of Jethro's daughter.

The library of the monastery occupies the two lower floors of a building near the church. Its greatest treasure now is the famous Book of the Gospels, dating from the time of Theodosius III., A.D. 766, written on white parchment, both sides of each sheet having two columns in golden uncial characters. It was at this convent that M. Tischendorf dis-



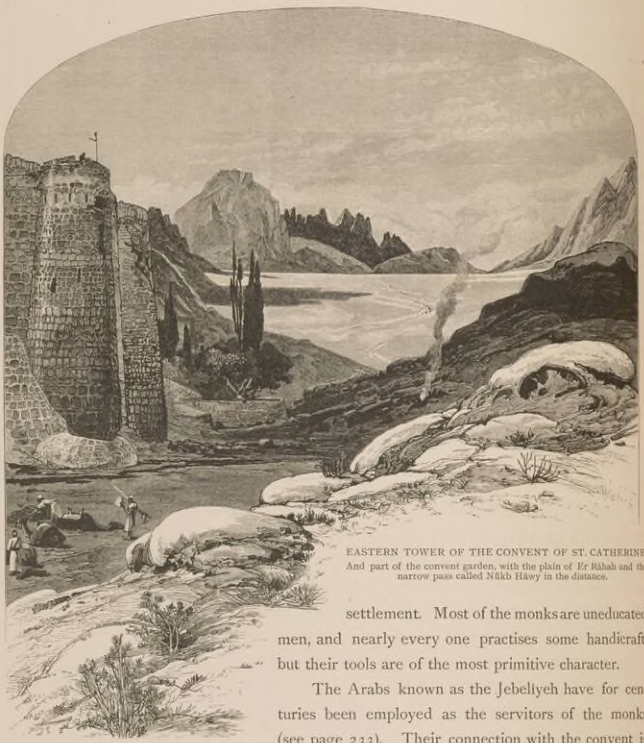
GATE OF ST. STEPHEN THE PORTER.
An archway on the ascent to Jebel Mûsa, where pilgrims formerly confessed before they visited the sacred heights.

covered the copy of the Bible known as the "Codex Sinaiticus." It is now at St. Petersburg, with the exception of a few leaves preserved in the University at Leipsic, and others which are lost. The New Testament is quite complete. The work has been reproduced at the expense of the Emperor of Russia, who has presented a copy to the convent library.

On the north-west or garden side of the convent is the burial-place of the monks. At the gate of the priests' vault is placed the skeleton of St. Stephanus "the porter," wearing a skull cap of violet velvet; he died in A.D. 1580. This is the St. Stephen from whom the archway on page 236 derives its name. The ascent to the holy places on Jebel Mûsa (the Mount of Moses) by the path which leads through this gate is said to be not very difficult, for its three thousand steps are kept in tolerably good repair. The first object of interest on the way is 'Ain Mûsa (the spring of Moses), which runs from beneath a great boulder. Higher up is the Chapel of the Virgin; at this point the road turns to the right, and, after a steep ascent, passes through a cleft in the rock spanned by the arch known as the Gate of St. Stephen the porter, for here it is said he used to sit (in the same attitude in which he now sits in the charnel-house), confessing pilgrims, and giving them passes to the sacred heights, so that they might proceed on their way chanting the words, "Who shall ascend unto the hill of the Lord? Who shall stand in His holy

WELL IN THE GARDEN OF THE CONVENT OF ST. CATHERINE.
This garden is north-west of the convent, and enclosed by a high wall. The lofty chamber at the north corner of the convent is shown above.

place? Even he that hath clean hands and a pure heart." The Convent of St. Catherine belongs to the Greek Church, and is presided over by a non-resident archbishop, who is represented by a prior or agent, but the affairs of the convent are actually managed by an intendant. The monastic rules are very strict, and the convent is said to be regarded as a kind of penal



EASTERN TOWER OF THE CONVENT OF ST. CATHERINE.
And part of the convent garden, with the plain of Er Rāhah and the narrow pass called Nākb Hāwy in the distance.

settlement. Most of the monks are uneducated men, and nearly every one practises some handicraft, but their tools are of the most primitive character.

The Arabs known as the Jebeliyeh have for centuries been employed as the servitors of the monks (see page 233). Their connection with the convent is very singular. They are said to be descended from one hundred Roman and one hundred Egyptian slaves, who, with their wives and children, were presented to the convent as retainers by Justinian. Although originally Christians, they could not be prevented by their monastic masters from embracing Mohammedanism, but they do not make much use of the mosque (see page 235), which was built in the fourteenth century to propitiate the rulers of the land.

RÂS ATÂKAH.

Râs is the same as our "nase" or "naze." This bold promontory, south of Suez, running out from Jebel Atâkah, on the western shore of the Red Sea, comes into every view of Suez.

# SINAI.

SUEZ itself has no history, but it occupies one of the finest sites in the world. Up to it—not as an affair of yesterday, but always—must have come the sea-borne commerce and the enterprise of Asia, seeking fresh outlets. As to-day there is a tide of people passing by it on the way to India, China, and the newest countries of the newest continent, Australasia, so we may with reason suppose that the primitive peoples of the world sailed up the Red Sea in their rude ships, ever lured on with the idea that there must be some "happy islands" or some "land of the gods" beyond those glowing waters. To such the golden sands of Suez presented the first impassable barrier, and in the still air might the thoughts have had birth—

> "Surely, surely, slumber is more sweet than toil, the shore
> Than labour in the deep mid-ocean, wind and wave and oar;
> Oh rest ye, brother mariners, we will not wander more!"

There are no ancient buildings and certainly no modern buildings worth looking at in Suez. The Canal, the big ships, and all that pertain to them, these are the only things that one would care to see, and, perhaps, to watch the bustling ease with which the mails are

shipped from the train to the P. and O. steamer on their voyage to India, &c. Except to a novice the bazaars are not comparable with those of Cairo or Damascus or many other smaller cities. In them, beyond the wonderful and facetious donkey boys, one sees the nationalities of both sides of the Red Sea (Arabs, Nubians, Egyptians, Syrians, &c.) mingled with Greeks and Europeans of all sorts. One looks at piles of native silks and embroideries, there are carpets from Yeddah, stones and pebbles and beads brought by pilgrims from Mecca, and plenty of stores such as occur in every port which sailors or travellers frequent.

Still for the traveller who has rushed across Europe, the Mediterranean, and Lower Egypt in eight or nine days, or for him who slowly for two days past has been steaming down the "long ditch" called "The Canal," there is this interest in Suez: Here two worlds meet! Neither the Railway, nor the Canal, nor the Port, nor the Post Office, nor the Steamship Offices, nor the first-rate Hotel, nor the workshops full of all manner of mechanical contrivances suited for the repair of the sea-monsters in which modern civilisation delights, have altered the real town or changed its people. Suez is sunny, whitewashed, flat-roofed, narrow, inconvenient, and stocked with evil smells, although you may have to get out of the way of a locomotive every now and then, and though its harbour and roadstead be gay with the shipping of all nations. I say advisedly "of all nations," for just as we were in anxious hope yesterday of getting through to Suez before nightfall, we had to go into a "siding" to let seven large vessels pass us, and amongst others a Chinese merchantman manned and commanded by self-satisfied Celestials.

During our detention, battered by the pitiless chaff of the Suez donkey boys, who had swarmed down in order to induce some of us to make an excursion by land to Suez, instead of fretting our souls out against the bulwarks of our floating but not moving prison, one had ample time to examine the position of Suez. The blue bay is bounded by the weary grassless desert which ever shimmers and glistens in the almost rainless atmosphere. The town stands out on the right, with its tall minaret, from a forest of masts and yards of native boats, overhung by the massive purple form of Jebel Atâkah (see pages 239, 241); while to the left there is a long vista—beyond the nearer ridges of the desert—of broken lighter-coloured mountains, the outlying portion of the Sinaitic range.

One may feel impatient, or one may have worn off one's impatience in the Canal. The regulations of the Canal Company about passing ships, doubtless most wise and necessary, and about anchoring or mooring at sunset, cause a great deal of irritation to arise in one's suffering temper. It is so hot; the Canal banks are so uninteresting and monotonous; flamingoes and pelicans have become such common objects; the mirage even has worn itself out; while a stray Arab on his camel causes no excitement whatever. Yet how can one be impatient! Surely we are on classic ground! Let us try for a minute or two to keep under this impatience, to shut one's ears to the nonsense of the donkey boys, who have given to each donkey a new name suited to the stirring politics of the day at home and abroad, or even to the more domestic events with which for months past we have been feasted

by the Daily Press—and to meditate. And what will be the subject of our meditations! Surely none other than that which amused us and interested us and kept us quiet long ago, when we looked at the pictures in the big Bible at home—"the passage of Israel through the Red Sea." Many and many have been the suggestions made, and often has the solution seemed to be within reach, when it has vanished away, like the Indian's "Snow Maiden." The theory of Herr Brugsch, the able Egyptologist, set forth before the International Congress of Orientalists at London in 1874, proves conclusively that the modern Sân, near Lake Menzaleh, and distant about eighty-five miles north-west from Suez,

JEBEL ATÂKAH.

is the Pi-Ramessu or Raamses of the Bible (built as a temple city by Ramses II.), and that it almost occupies the ground of the ancient Zor, or Zoan. This city was the royal city of Ramses II. and of many of his successors, as in years gone by it had been the capital of those hated Hyksos kings, during whose time Joseph was sold into Egypt. From this city started the military roads which led, by "the way of the Philistines," to Phœnicia and the Hittite empire, and so on to the Euphrates—or through the Negeb to Edom and Moab. From a "papyrus," which seems to be the detailed report of a subordinate to his superior of the pursuit of two fugitives who had escaped into the marches of the frontier land east of the Delta, the imagination of the learned German conjures up for us the probable route of the Israelites, placing "Baalzephon" at "Mount Casius," on the shore of "The Sea" (the Mediterranean). This is the extreme northern route proposed. There is another route, which, taking Memphis as the royal city of the Pharaoh of the Exodus, makes the Israelites journey on from the Land of Goshen till they reach the Red Sea at the foot of Jebel Atâkah. Two reasons, however,

are to be urged against a passage at this spot; the width of the gulf, which would have required the lapse of hours and hours in order to traverse it, and the depth of the waters—for there would have been on either side the strange roadway, along the bed of the sea, a *mountain* rather than a *wall* of water, sixty or seventy feet high. But between these extreme points of conjecture there are several spots which a combination of circumstances make likely—such as (1) the ford across the attenuated arm of the Red Sea which runs up behind Suez (what vestiges remain of the ancient Kholzum, the ancestor of Suez, are close to this arm of the sea, and an island hereabouts is known as Jews' Island); or (2), better still, a spot near the "Crocodile Lake" (Lake Timsâh) and Ismaïlia, famous in modern story.

Let us leave now the happy land of conjectures, take this Arab dhow, which has been cleaned up at our dragoman's order, and with baggage piled round us sail across the head of the gulf and get on to 'Ayún Músa, where camels and encampment are to wait for us. We shall have a good deal of trouble with the Quarantine authorities, for there is a strong military cordon drawn round 'Ayún Músa this autumn (1881) in order to stop the expected return of pilgrims from Mecca, where the plague or cholera is said to have broken out; so we must not be too sanguine as to reaching "the Wells" before sunset. Very lovely was the day when I made such a start. But the anticipations which force themselves on one block out of sight the clear air, the brightness of the sunshine, the deep but various blue of sky and sea. One has reached the desert and is going to lead a desert life, one has said good-bye to the restraints of civilisation and has become enfranchised; the bondage of the Egypt of the nineteenth-century world is broken, at least for a time. 'Ayún Músa, or "Wells of Moses," is a beautiful oasis in the desert, one hour's walk from the Red Sea and the new Quarantine ground, and, I should think, eight or nine miles from the town of Suez. There are several springs of clear but brackish water, sheltered by groups of fine tamarisk-trees and knotted palms, and surrounded by well-kept diligently tilled gardens stocked with lettuces, radishes, &c. There is one pool which is built round with ancient masonry. Summer-houses or Greek cafés (which can furnish sleeping accommodation), and the boisterous habits of its visitors, may justify the unhappy claim of this desert oasis to be the "Richmond" of Suez. One can turn one's back, however, on all this, and have the tent pitched near the solitary palm, beside the lonely, dark-coloured, brackish, scanty pool, on that sand hillock which lies away from the oasis proper. Here the real "genius loci" will meet one, and will whisper that after the Red Sea this was the first encampment, and that here Miriam taught the women of Israel "The Song of Triumph." (Exodus xv. 20, 21.) But here too henceforth there will arise a sadder memory; for from this spot (where, as himself tells us, he who had for years been familiar with the literature of Arabia, and had read with a certain vague interest the descriptions of desert life, had had in 1868 at last all its reality brought before him) there set forth in the August of this year (1882) on a chivalrous expedition, viz. to wean the affections of the Bedawín from the rebel Arabi, Professor Palmer with Captain Gill, R.E., and Lieutenant Charrington, R.N. Solitude is a true companion in such a place. One strolls towards the sea over the uneven space

of wind-tossed sand mounds, which form the entire landscape (see page 249). What marvellous shells!—the shells one has so often looked at in London fancy shops mounted as flower vases! What strange waifs and strays of sea and desert life! The lights are beginning to show in the mighty ships which are lying in the Suez anchorage, and there is a faintness of distinctness about the white buildings and the minaret which mark out the town itself (see page 248), lying at the feet of the purple mountain out of which the glow of sunset has just faded. That is Africa, and of that mysterious continent the strip of land—the valley with its mighty river—behind those mountains is the greatest marvel. Now let us turn and watch the stars, which seem so much larger and brighter than they are in the English sky, come out, from our encampment under the tall, ragged, weather-beaten palm-tree, which may have stood as a sentry looking over the thirsty desert, stretched across the whole base of the triangle of the Sinaitic peninsula, for countless ages.

The loneliness is very intense. Yet there is an intermittent murmur of laughter and merriment from the group of Arabs round the encampment fire, which begins to shoot forth a cheerful light on the white canvas of our two small English tents. And who are these Arabs? and why should one be obliged to have their company, or at any rate the company of any except those to whom the camels belong and who act as camel-men? The track is not hard to find, and the watering places are well known. These Arabs are the *ghufará*, or protectors, without whose escort the traveller would not be safe in the Peninsula or in the Desert. They belong to the tribes which have the legitimate right to give protection to the Convent and to travellers. The country under their protection is accurately defined and recognised by other Bedawín; and while under their care and within the limits of their protectorate one is safe. The name of the tribe occupying the Sinaitic peninsula is Towarah (sing. Túrí), from "Tor," the seaport on the south-west of the peninsula, with which word is connected the old Arab term for the peninsula. The Towarah are divided into several tribes, the most despised of which is the Jibalíyeh, whom we shall find at the Convent acting as servants, porters, agricultural labourers, &c. There is a chapter in Professor Palmer's "Desert of the Exodus" (chap. v.) which gives a capital description of them, etched in with the gentlest, most sympathizing, but most masterly hand. He points out that the prevalent idea of the nomade character of the Arabs is incorrect; no people wander less, and no people (the eager desire one's Arabs display to reach home, when home is near, is the best evidence of this) are more attached to their native homes. So difficult to find in European languages, in Arabic we find a word corresponding with our "home," viz. *watan*. They have, though innocent of many built villages and towns, summer and winter camping grounds, and make at the proper season a regular exodus from one to the other. The Arab has no history, because there is no nationality; and so one does not meet with any annals breathing of heroism and chivalry such as Scotland can produce. There is some clanship between the members of a tribe, and the fierce laws of blood-feud keep this up; but there is nothing more.

In frame and physique the Arab generally is a fine model. His step is elastic and his carriage marvellously upright. In running or climbing he would be a formidable competitor in our ordinary village games. On his simple food (so simple that beyond the coffee and great round unleavened cakes one does not know of what it consists) he thrives, and his white teeth, shining out between his smiling lips, remind one that to one ill at least of high civilisation he is not heir, and that dentists would be *nowhere* in the Desert. Very charming is the sound of Arab laughter, and, though one does not understand a word of it, the never-ending song, which seems capable of any amount of "gag," and not to be injured by constant interludes, does not really weary any one. Their demeanour is noticeably courteous, whether one observes the threefold salutation (by placing the right hand on the heart, the lips, the forehead or turban) with which they greet one another ordinarily, or such a salutation as took place between an old Arab who came up to our sheikh just now—he saluted him, embraced him, kissed him on either cheek, and then the two, with right hands clasped, said again and again, "Are you well?"—"Thank God, well!"—as Moses said probably to Aaron on the Mount of Salutation (Exodus iv. 27) or to Jethro in the wilderness (Exodus xviii. 7).

When they dispute, which is not infrequently in the day, and especially on the subject of adjusting the loads on the camels each morning, or on the question of agreeing to terms or apportioning the money, they are as violent, demonstrative, and abusive as the frequenters of Billingsgate. In the bargaining the Arab will lie right and left and overreach you; but, the bargain being made, his word is his bond.

The Arab woman does all the home work, and the unmarried girls tend the flocks and herds of an encampment and take them to pasture. Such occupation is derogatory for men. Here, therefore, we may note a relic of that contemptuous regard which was had for the flock-tender among the Israelites. David the shepherd boy, away from his home when Samuel goes down to Bethlehem to visit Jesse, is of no account among his brethren, as being employed in mere girl's work.

The religion of the Bedawín has yet to be explored. Very few, when travelling, are regular in their devotions. There is a strange superstitious awe which certain spots and tombs evoke, and constantly there will come to the surface little evidences of a deep religious feeling. For instance, I and my dragoman met with a bad accident one day. The next morning, when I went to pay my respects to our sheikh, he said, congratulating us, "You are now two days old." Our rescue from imminent peril was regarded by him as a new lease of life by Allah's will. Then one day I had to make a fresh agreement with my Arabs, having changed my route; they sealed, as it were, their promise to conduct me in safety by another way, by solemnly repeating the Fâtihât (the first chapter in the Korān).

I have said nothing about the dress of the Bedawín of Sinai; nor have I pointed out our sheikh, that is, the petty chief who commands our Arabs, and who is responsible for our safe conduct. There he sits almost undistinguishable, no staff or sword of office. He does more work, I think, than the others, and the others seem to get more angry with him than with any

UNDER THE PALMS, 'AYÚN MÚSA.

"It is a strange spot—this plot of tamarisks" (and palms) "with its seventeen wells—literally an island in the Desert, and now used as the Richmond of Suez—a comparison which chiefly serves to show what a place Suez itself must be!"—(STANLEY.)

one else. I notice, however, later on, that he can bring out a striped 'abba which looks more silky than the other 'abbas, and that he has a smarter turban. Well, these dignified Towarah are dressed in very poor rags. There is a white coarse surplice, or shirt, coming down a little below the knees, with very long pointed sleeves; this is fastened round the waist with a broad strong leathern belt; in the bosom of this shirt, or knotted up in the ends of the sleeves, the Arab carries any odds and ends of wealth he may possess. Most of them have a pair of sandals (the best are made of fish skin), though they don't always use them, perhaps hardly ever in the open desert. Generally they wear the turban and fez instead of the picturesque kefiyeh. The *'abba*, a great straight garment about two and a half or three yards wide, with holes for the arms to come through, and usually with a capote or hood attached, is stowed away on the camel, but always ready to hand for storm or cold.

Colour in apparel is monopolized by the Arab men. The women, who are (partially, not strictly) veiled, are dressed in a blue long loose frock, with a large blue mantle to cover over head and all. Their chins are tattooed; and in the case of married women the hair is tied up into a kind of knot or horn in front, which is surmounted by a red bead, and seldom *untied*. The girls dress their hair in short curls over the forehead, across which is tied the *shebeikeh*, an ornament of red cloth with bits of mother-of-pearl sewn on.

For arms the Arab has a sword (those I looked at were European blades), which answers, like the kookree of the Ghoorkas, for many purposes, and a long gun. Some also carry spears. But the armoury depends on the purse; and several of our Arabs had no weapons whatever, while amongst the Towarah, who are in many ways, owing to their isolated position in a peninsula, to be distinguished from other Bedawîn, one does not notice many spears.

It was the middle of December, 1881, when I set out on my journey from 'Ayûn Mûsa, and the mornings were become chilly. The dew in the night had been heavy, and the tamarisk-trees were misty with it, somewhat like trees with a slight frost on them in England. I venturously tasted it and found it quite salt.—The camels have been grumbling and growling for some time, and one is certain that this first start will be a troublesome affair, for each camel-owner wants to excuse his camel from taking so much of the baggage, and tries to make out that the load apportioned to him is in excess. Then there is the live stock (forty chickens and one hen turkey) to be looked after; and then, worst of all, some of the Arabs seem so apathetic that they won't leave the bivouac fire, notwithstanding the dragoman's objurgations, till every scrap is made ready for packing on the beasts by him, the servant, and the ever-active Sheikh (see page 249).

Professor Palmer thus describes ("Desert of the Exodus," vol. i. p. 30) his first camel-ride:—"The camel is a much overrated beast, and is the very incarnation of peevish ill-temper. Docile he is, but apparently from no other reason than sheer stupidity. No sooner do you approach him than he sets up a hideous snarling groan; the driver pulls his head forcibly down to the ground, and you seize the opportunity of jumping on to his back. But before you can secure your seat you are suddenly pitched violently forward, then as violently backwards, for

the creature gets up by jerks, and only half of him at a time. When once mounted the motion is not so unpleasant as it has been described, and a very few days makes you quite at home in your elevated seat."

And so the first day of real desert journeying commences! Our track keeps the sea on the right hand not very far off (see page 252), and on the left is the tableland, with the mountains which belong to it, of the southern portion of the great plateau, the "Wilderness of Tîh." To this long ridge bounding a monotonous barren waste one thinks that the name Shur (meaning in Hebrew "a wall") might fitly have been given by the Israelites (see page 253). We are told that "they went three days in the wilderness and found no water" (Exodus xv. 22): *we* shall not reach Elîm (Wâdy Gharandel) before the third day. There is not much to mark off or disentangle the days in this part of the journey. Shall we read as we ride along at this slow pace (not more than two and three-quarter miles in the hour), or meditate, or think of those at home? Despairingly one tries anything to make the time pass quickly under the burning sun, to which one has become a slave. Perhaps if there is a copy of it in the saddle-bags (for I suppose the crossbar wooden erection on the top of the camel's hump may be called a saddle; it is cunningly fashioned, and is divided in two parts, posts and all), it may be a consolation to see what the author of "Eothen" thought of the Desert and the camel. Here is what he says (chap. xvii.):—

"The earth is so samely that your eyes turn towards heaven—towards heaven I mean in sense of sky. You look to the sun, for he is your taskmaster, and by him you know the measure of the work that remains for you to do. He comes when you strike your tent in the early morning, and then for the first hour of the day as you move forward on your camel he stands at your near side and makes you know that the whole day's toil is before you; then for a while, and a long while, you see him no more, for you are veiled and shrouded and dare not look upon the greatness of his glory, but you know where he strides overhead by the touch of his flaming sword. No words are spoken, but your Arabs moan, your camels sigh, your skin glows, your shoulders ache, and for sights you see the pattern and web of the silk" (your head is supposed to be wrapped up in a silk kefiyeh, one of the things in which the traveller feels it to be *de rigueur* to invest at Cairo or Suez) "that veils your eyes and the glare of the outer light. Time labours on, your skin glows, your shoulders ache, your Arabs moan, your camels sigh, and you see the same patterns in the silk and the same glare of light beyond; but conquering time marches on, and by-and-by the descending sun has compassed the heaven and now softly touches your right arm, and throws your lank shadow over the sand right along on the way for Persia. Then again you look upon his face, for his power is all veiled in his beauty, and the redness of flames has become the redness of roses; the fair wavy cloud that fled in the morning now comes to his sight once more, comes blushing, yet still comes on, comes burning with blushes, yet comes and clings to his side.

"Then begins your season of rest. The world about you is all your own, and there, where you will, you pitch your solitary tent; there is no living thing to dispute your choice. When at

last the spot had been fixed upon and we came to a halt, one of the Arabs would touch the chest of my camel and utter at the same time a peculiar gurgling sound. The beast instantly understood and obeyed the sign, and slowly sank under me till she brought her body to a level

GULF OF SUEZ, LOOKING OUT FROM 'AYÚN MÚSA.
These complicated wheels and spars are a mixture of Egyptian shâdoof and sâkiah (water-wheel), by which the precious water is raised from the wells.

with the ground; then gladly enough I alighted."

Four Arabs pass us on their way to Suez and Cairo. There is a halt and a chat between the tribesmen, but nothing to delay us. Now we come up to a very small Arab encampment (see page 253). There are one or two dark blackish-brown striped tents of goat's-hair, with a small whitish pattern woven in at the edge, propped up on sticks; though not large, they are divided in order to separate women and men. So low is the tent and scanty is its accommodation, that a good-sized tent is rolled up round its proper sticks into a bundle not much bigger than those awful bundles of sticks and rugs which are thrust into first-class carriages at Charing Cross Station, to the annoyance of small travellers.

There was not much life in the encampment, and not much to observe. When we halted our camels, however, for the midday meal, and when, having had no breakfast, the Arabs had got their little fire lighted, I had an opportunity of watching their primitive mode of bread-making. One took some meal and held it in his hands, whilst his comrade poured over it a few drops of water; he then mashed up the moistened flour into a paste, pulled the lump of dough so made into small pieces, and thrust them into the embers to bake. Some of our Arabs had wooden bowls with a handle in which to mix up the paste, and there was, I think, some salt (salt dug out of the earth) thrown in. This midday meal in the Desert often brought to my mind what the Scotch say, "Better a small bush than no shelter." What pains one took to find out the tallest bush. And then the arrangement of the baggage to eke out the pretence at shade, and the giving shade to different parts of the body in turn! In the rocky districts of the Desert this matter of shade did not concern one so much; and there it is that the traveller learns the full meaning of that expression, "As the shadow of a great rock in a weary land" (Isaiah xxxii. 2).

'AYÚN MÚSA.
From this spot probably one commences the real desert journey.

It is at this part of the journey that one dreads a sand-storm (see page 253), the creator, so to speak, of those newly reared hills of sand and fresh dug out valleys, which we have been traversing all through the day. Such a storm overtook Dean Stanley's party in 1853. "The day after leaving 'Ayún Músa was at first within sight of the blue channel of the Red Sea. But soon Red Sea and all were lost in a sand-storm, which lasted the whole day. Imagine all distant objects entirely lost to view;—the sheets of sand fleeting along the surface of the Desert like streams of water; the whole air filled, though invisibly, with a tempest of sand, driving in your face like sleet. Imagine the caravan toiling against this, the Bedawin each with his shawl thrown completely over his head, half of the riders sitting backwards, the camels meantime thus virtually left without guidance, though from time to time throwing their long necks sideways to avoid the blast, yet moving straight onwards with a painful sense of duty truly edifying to behold. I had thought that with the Nile our troubles of wind were over; but (another analogy for the *ships* of the Desert) the great saddle-bags act like sails to the camels, and therefore, with a contrary wind are serious impediments to their progress. . . . . Through the tempest, this roaring and driving tempest, which sometimes made me think that this must be the real meaning of a *howling* wilderness (Deut. xxxii. 10) we rode on the whole day." ("Sinai and Palestine," p. 68.)

On the evening of the second day from 'Ayún Músa we reached 'Ain Hawwârah (see page 256). There is a stunted palm-tree, or perhaps one might say a small thicket of stunted palms, shading a spring of brackish water on the slope of a ridge: and that is all. The dark green of the tree against the glaring sand makes it a conspicuous object for some distance. The Arabs say to you, looking wistfully at the spring, "Murrah" ("bitter"); and it is this, probably, which has given rise to the conjecture that here is the spring "Marah," which the Israelites found to be bitter (Exodus xv. 23). The water at this spring varies in quantity and also in quality. Robinson ("Biblical Researches," vol. i.) thought the water unpleasant, bitter, and saltish in taste, but not worse than the water at the "Wells of Moses." His Arabs told him that it was the worst water in the district, but their camels drank of it freely. Professor Palmer found the water palatable. Mr. Holland, well acquainted with the spring, pronounced its purity to be very exceptional. Some glamour has been cast over the identification of this fountain with Marah from the fact that it has been incorrectly called 'Ain Hawarah, "Fount of Destruction," whereas its proper name, Hawwârah, signifies a "small pool," the water of which gradually sinks into the soil, leaving the residue unfit to drink. Some twenty minutes beyond this pool a little plain is reached in a hollow called El Fûl ("the Bean"). The water stands here after much rain, making a soil of rich loam. This patch of ground, the only spot fit for cultivation for miles round, is diligently cultivated by the Arabs, and, if there is rain, a good crop may be reaped of barley or beans, &c.

From this point one passes into broken country, and, were it not for the want of foliage, the change would be most refreshing. Crossing a bristly ridge, a fine view is obtained of the mountains of Hammâm Far'ún, "Pharaoh's Hot Bath." Those great chalk cliffs look down into

the sea, and one knows that they must therefore mark a stage in our journey! And this reminds me that, under shelter of this ridge, above Wâdy Gharandel (see page 257), into whose thickets of tamarisk and palm, with its pleasant stream of water, we are going to descend, is a good halting-place whereat to make note of the peculiarities of the Sinai district, for it lies at the western extremity of the base line of the peninsula. This peninsula, naked of the gentler beauties of natural scenery, foliage, lake, running waters, does combine nature's three grander features—the sea, the desert, the mountains. Geographically its position is peculiar. Palestine, Egypt, and Arabia each have an interest in it, while from each it is kept distinct. Historically the interests embosomed herein are stupendous. From Sinai the very life of the human race takes a fresh departure. If, as great writers have suggested, Egypt with its prodigality of antiquarian information is yet a tomb whose occupants excite no interest, in the Desert—and the further and further we advance into it will the impression become more real—we feel that we are on the stream of continuous history. It will flow on and through the Desert; it will pass the hill country of Judah, till Jerusalem and Calvary and Olivet are reached, whence will issue fresh streams of life. Three clefts break in on that great waterless region, which we call generally the Desert, extending nearly from the Atlantic Ocean to the Persian Gulf. The westernmost is the Valley of the Nile, the second is the Gulf of Suez, and the Elanitic Gulf (the Gulf of 'Akabah) is the third (see page 224). This last must have at one time communicated with the wide valley "El 'Arabah," which in turn communicates with that marvellous chasm, the valley of the river Jordan, running up into the heart of the Lebanon Mountains. The triangle formed between the Gulf of Suez and the Gulf of 'Akabah is Sinai, its boundary on the north, its base line being the plateau of the Tîh, projecting into it somewhat like a blunt wedge. The area of this triangle is about twice the size of Yorkshire. South of the Tîh a broad belt of sandstone crosses almost from shore to shore, and reaches down as far as Jebel Mukatteb. Very fantastic are the shapes and gorgeous is the colouring of the mountains in this district; the valleys are narrow and steep-sided, whilst there are many undulating barren plains of gravelly sand found at their mouths. In this formation are veins of iron, copper, and turquoise, in the mines of which Egyptian captives from the far south or from the northern Hittite country pined away their life, generation after generation.

South of this sandstone is a triangular mass of mountains, some of which reach to over eight thousand feet, nearly as high as the upper heights of Mount Hermon, in the north of Palestine. The two sides of this triangle are parallel with the sides of the peninsula itself, and meet in their common apex, Râs Mohammad. A strip of desert of very varying width bounds these sides, its greatest extension being at the plains El Markha (probably the "Wilderness of Sin") and El Ga'ah ("*the* plain"), on which is situated the little town of Tor. The dreariest portion of the peninsula is that which skirts the sea-coast from Suez to Tor. There are in it a few fine bluffs of limestone, but they are not more than two thousand six hundred feet high, and are altogether wanting in the colouring and picturesque outline of the sandstone and granite districts.

The grandest mountain groups are found in the centre of the peninsula, where granite, porphyry, sienite, gneiss, and mica schist occur. The granite district is fullest of fine scenery,

RED SEA, AS SEEN DURING THE FIRST DAY'S MARCH IN THE DESERT.
The proper adjustment of the load on the camel's back requires much skill. If it is unevenly balanced the poor beast suffers a good deal and begins grumbling until things are made ship-shape.

but the colouring of the doleritic dykes which streak the gneissic and schistose rocks always add an extraordinary effect to the panorama. The tumbled group of granite mountains is divided

A HALT IN THE DESERT.
The Bedawîn never trouble themselves with tents when on a journey.

into three clusters—on the west the Mount Serbâl pile, in the centre the Jebel Mûsa and Jebel Katharina group, and in the south the group which is dominated by Jebel Umm Shomer.

There are other mountains which attract attention—specially the range which shelves down towards the shore of the Gulf of 'Akabah—but not to the same extent. The long winding

IN THE WILDERNESS OF SHUR.
A small encampment of Bedawin, probably of the Terabin tribe, whose territory extends as far as Gaza.

valleys, which, in serpentine course, pierce the mountains, are very unlike the valleys in Switzerland. *There* there are perpetual streams and rivers, rushing with noisy violence on their way; *here* the silent valleys scarce have water in them at all, or, if there is any, it is merely a struggling, almost motionless, streamlet, unless some fierce storm bursts upon the mountains in

SAND-STORM IN THE DESERT.
The dreaded *khamseen* (wind and sand storm) very frequently overtakes the traveller in the region between Ayûn Mûsa and Wâdy Amârah. Dean Stanley, Niebuhr, Miss Martineau, all encountered it here.

terrible flood. Such a storm and flood (a *seil*) is most destructive. The Wâdy Solâf, into which we shall come after we have passed through Wâdy Feirân, was the scene of a great flood

in 1867. An Arab encampment was then washed away and forty human beings, with camels, cattle, and sheep, perished. One still sees the marks of this flood, just as in most of the valleys one can trace the height to which the furious waters rise on more ordinary occasions. Mr. Holland was in Sinai at the time, and witnessed it. He has described the boiling, roaring torrent as filling the entire valley, carrying down huge boulders of rock as though they had been so many pebbles, with whole families swept by, hurried on to destruction by a volume of water powerful enough to transport the trunks of large palm-trees thirty miles from the place where they had grown. A simple thunderstorm with a heavy fall of rain dashing on the naked granite mountains will cause these dreadful effects, and in a few hours change a dry, level, listless valley into a mighty river.

But all the valleys are not barren. There are several perennial though not continuous streams. Wâdy Feirân contains a beautiful oasis of varied vegetation; and behind Tor is a magnificent grove of date-palms. The gardens in the Wâdy Lejâ are most fertile; and in the north-eastern district the oasis of Hudherah shows signs of being but the remnant of a very extensive cultivation. Myrrh, hyssop, fennel, thyme, and other fragrant herbs are found in the highlands; the rocks of the sides of the gorgeous coloured valleys are festooned with the elegant caper plant, and the caves are often draped with maidenhair fern; whilst the colocynth gourd runs over the ground amongst the gnarled roots of the *retem*, a white-blossomed broom (the "juniper" of the Bible), the shittim-tree (a species of acacia), and tamarisk. The *abeithirân*, a fragrant low-growing shrub, of which the camels are very fond, the *ghârkad*, a bushy, thorny shrub, producing in June small red berries juicy and acid, something like the barberry, the *kirdhy*, a green plant with small yellow flowers, also the *silleh*, a bluish thorny plant—grow all over the plain, as well as other dusty-looking plants, withered and worn and panting for moisture, and hardly distinguishable from the pale sickly green herbage which scantily covers portions of the valleys.

Round Serbâl, as round Jebel Mûsa and Jebel Katharina, in the clefts of the mountain-sides, are many old gardens which tell of the industry of the former monkish population. Often so small as not to be perceived till one climbs up to them, the fence of stone and the imported earth must have acted as a sponge or dam to check the suddenly formed torrents coming down from the mountain-tops. Standing in one of these gardens, one thinks that possibly the whole peninsula, held by a powerful tribe like the Amalekites, may have been more fertile in the time of Moses, and that the resources of the country may then have been better developed than at present.

There are passages, such as Psalm lxviii. 7—9, "When thou didst march through the wilderness . . . . Thou, O God, didst send a plentiful rain, whereby Thou didst confirm Thine inheritance, when it was weary," or Psalm lxxvii. 17—20, "The clouds poured out water: the skies sent out a sound: Thine arrows also went abroad," where the allusions are evidently to the life in the wilderness, when God "led His people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron." These scattered evidences all go to support the supposition that in former

times this peninsula was better supplied with water, and that more land was cultivated, and in turn made capable of cultivation, than now.

Through the whole journey in the peninsula, or in the "Desert of the Wanderings," is noticeable in the clear luminous air the deep *silence*. The Arabs conducting the distinguished Niebuhr declared that their voices could be heard from shore to shore of the Gulf of 'Akabah. Exaggeration doubtless, but exaggeration of a fact—that in these silent regions the human voice travels a long way. Noticeable also is the fragrance of the Desert. Most of the low shrubs, which seem more dead than alive on one's stony path, are aromatic. But notice-worthy beyond everything is the desolation and mountain confusion. Most desolate, most barren—for the little oases of verdure we have mentioned are lost out of sight in any general view of the mountains—these hills of Sinai are the "Alps unclothed." A naked Switzerland, even though its glaciers and snows should remain, seems inconceivable; but Sinai is naked as to any verdure of forest tree, or fir, or pine, or moss, or flowery pasture. Strange lichens grow on the boulders and rocks in some parts, as weird in form as vivid in colouring. Such a path as that which leads up Jebel Katharína is all the world over much the same as a Swiss mountain-path, but the illusion vanishes when one looks for the shade of the trees which beguile the way up a ravine in Switzerland. Then the confusion—the intricate complication of peak and ridge! One traveller (Sir Frederic Henniker) says of the view from Jebel Músa, that it is as if "Arabia Petræa were an ocean of lava, which, whilst its waves were running mountains high, had suddenly stood still."

"The very nakedness of the rocks," says Professor Palmer ("Desert of the Exodus," page 27), "imparts to the scene a grandeur and beauty peculiarly its own. For as there is no vegetation to soften down the rugged outlines of the mountains or conceal the nature of their formation, each rock stands out with its own distinctive shape and colour as clearly as in some gigantic geological model map. In some wâdies the mountain-sides are striped with innumerable veins of the most brilliant hue, thus producing an effect of colour and fantastic design which it is impossible to describe. These effects are heightened by the peculiar clearness of the atmosphere and the dazzling brightness of the sunlight. One part of a mountain will glow with a ruddy or golden hue, while the rest is plunged in deepest shade. Sometimes a distant peak will seem to blend with the liquid azure of the sky, while another stands out in all the beauty of purple or violet tints; and, with what would seem the mere skeleton of a landscape, as beautiful effects are produced as if the bare rocks were clad with forests and vineyards, or capped with perpetual snows. Nature, in short, seems here to show that in her most barren and uninviting moods she can be exquisitely beautiful still."

But the joy at the nearness of water to drink is experienced by the camels as well as by one's self. Their pace has quickened, they move their heads and long necks from side to side, and when at last we come to the palms and tamarisks they hardly wait to be unloaded before they go to the water. Of course there is an abundance of noise, and shouting, and gesticulation, and argument; so while the Arabs fill the water-skins and load again we may rest our cramped

limbs on the sand in the shadow of this wild palm, and imagine the history of the valley. Wâdy Gharandel comes down from the western escarpment of Jebel et Tîh, the boundary

'AIN HAWWÂRAH.
This may be the spring "Marah" of Exodus xv. 23.

of the Et Tîh plateau (which, with its horizontal strata, may have suggested the name "Shur," as we have said), just like the Wâdy Amârah, which we crossed yesterday. Its distance from such a point as 'Ayûn Mûsa corresponds with the progress of the Israelites, as recorded in the

WÂDY AMÂRAH.
Of Wâdy Amârah, some forty miles from Ayûn Mûsa, Professor Palmer says, "There is no other water but this (at Bir Abu Suweirah, twelve miles distant) in or near Wâdy Amârah." A proof that this wâdy is not to be identified with the Marah of the Bible.

Bible, to Elim. Here is water and here are palm-trees. In another valley, Wâdy Useit, further on, there are some palm-trees, and also wells of water; but the valley is much smaller

and more rugged than Wâdy Gharandel. Supposing, then, that this is Elim, we can fancy the delight with which that great multitude, with its women and children, would hail the sight of green trees and verdure. Yet how barren must this valley have seemed when compared with the glorious fertility of the Delta. The illustration before us gives the shapes of the

ENTRANCE TO WÂDY GHARANDEL.

chalk hills in the valley, but their barren look and the aspect of desolation must be pictured from the scenery which such a coast as Dorsetshire or Portland affords us here in England.

Both Wâdy Useit and Wâdy Gharandel lead down to the hot sulphur springs which burst out under the northern side of Jebel Hammâm Far'ûn, nearly on a level with the sea. There is no way, however, except by a footpath high up the cliffs, to get round the mountain. One may be almost certain, therefore, that the Israelites crossed, as we are doing, Wâdy Gharandel (Elim) and Wâdy Useit, and so took their way to the Red Sea.

The Arabs place the passage of the Red Sea not only at 'Ayún Músa, but also at Hammâm Far'ún. Here the unquiet spirit of the arrogant Pharaoh is still supposed to haunt the deep and keep alive the boiling sulphurous spring which started into being with his last drowning gasps of useless anger: and so the sea at this point is called Birket Far'ún ("Pharaoh's Lake"). Great faith is placed by the Arabs in the virtues of the springs at the foot of the cliffs; they believe them to be infallible in cases of rheumatism. Professor Palmer tried them. He says ("Desert of the Exodus," page 239): "A few hours' walk (down Wâdy Useit) brought us again to the seashore, where we rejoined Captain Palmer, who had left us at Mukatteb, and while

THE SPRINGS IN WÂDY GHARANDEL,
Probably the "Elim" of the Bible.

we were engaged at Sarábit el Khâdim had been occupied in surveying other parts. He had just returned from Jebel Bisher, at the base of the mountains of the Tíh, and was encamped by the Hammâm Far'ún, or 'Pharaoh's Bath.' After the fatigues of the day a bath in a natural hot spring was very acceptable, and we made straight for the spot. A large bluff of white rock" (see page 265) "comes down almost into the sea, and at the base of this from several small fissures in the stone trickles a stream of nearly boiling hot water, which also bubbles up at intervals from the sand. The beach is covered with a white incrustation, and is so hot that one can scarcely stand upon it with naked feet, while a thick sulphurous steam exhales from the sand, making the whole immediate neighbourhood of the springs smell like

a medicated vapour bath. A dip at the point where the hot water meets the cool waves is delightful, as the temperature may be graduated at pleasure by moving a few feet either way. Our first bathe was brought to a premature conclusion by the appearance of a huge shark, which suddenly rose within a few feet of where I was standing, and continued to sail gracefully round and round the spot, waiting for a favourable opportunity to snap at the legs of the first person who should venture into the water. We watched his ominous black fin glittering for some time in the light of the setting sun and then turned back to camp."

Professor Palmer tells us that no Arab ventures to prove the efficacy of these baths for the too-frequent rheumatic pains to which he is exposed—owing not only to the bleak air of the mountains, but to the immense difference of the temperature of the day and the night—without bringing an offering to propitiate the angry ghost of the Egyptian king. This offering is usually a cake made of certain stated quantities of meal, oil, &c. He gives us at length, too, the Arab legend of the Baths:—

"When our Lord Moses had quarrelled with Pharaoh and determined to lead the children of Israel out of Egypt, he found himself stopped by the salt sea. At the command of God Most High, however, he raised his staff and smote upon the waters, whereupon they parted on the right hand and on the left, and the children of Israel found a dry passage in the bottom of the deep. Then Pharaoh and his soldiery essayed to follow, but when they had come midway Moses again raised his staff, and, smiting the waters, said, 'Return, O sea, into thy former course!' and the waters closed over the Egyptians, and the children of Israel saw the corpses of their enemies floating on the waves. But Pharaoh was a mighty man and struggled with the billows; then seeing Moses standing on the rock above him, he waxed exceeding wroth, and gave so fierce a gasp that the waters boiled up as they closed over his drowning head. Since that time the angry ghost of the King of Egypt has haunted the deep; and should any unfortunate vessel come near the spot he rises up and overwhelms it in the waves, so that to the present day no ship can sail on Pharaoh's Lake."

The whole peninsula is a hot-bed of tradition and traditional sites, planted and carefully tended not only by Christian but by Mohammadan. Take those only relating to Moses, which are of constant recurrence, and which give a sort of atmosphere of evidence to the conjectures which establish the mountain of Sinai as the scene of God's conference with Moses and of the giving the Law.—There are the "Wells of Moses" from which we started on our Desert journey. In the Convent of St. Katharine (see vignette on title-page, vol. ii.) we have the Well where he watered his sheep, of which there is the Arab replica in the cool and shady cave on the side of Jebel Músa, higher up and above the convent, which the monks only point out as the hermitage of a cobbler saint (see page 237). Any spot whose surroundings were strange or magnificent became associated in the Arab's mind with the grand figure of the Hebrew Lawgiver, even to the exclusion of Mohammad himself, and in this possibly there is a shadow of testimony for the greater antiquity of the Moses legends. The rivalry between the monks of Feirân and those of Jebel Músa would be sure to bring into existence a double series of

memorable spots at which it would be necessary for the pious pilgrim to make his devotions. Take another handful of the lesser traditions.—At the foot of the mountain above Tor the Arabs place "our Lord Moses' Bath;" a natural hot spring takes its rise in the mountain, and trickles down by various canals into the midst of a large palm-grove belonging to the monastery of St. Katharine. Here a series of chambers similar in arrangement and construction to those of an ordinary Turkish bath have been built over the pool for the convenience of those who take the water, which is very similar to the waters at Hammâm Far'ûn. Then there are several Moses' seats—(1) at Abu Zenîmeh, some miles south of Jebel Hammâm Far'ûn, whence Moses is said to have watched the destruction of Pharaoh and his host; (2) in the pass of El Watîyeh, by which on the extreme east the great granite enceinte of the Jebel Mûsa district is pierced —here a rock is pointed out as having got its shape from the Lawgiver's form; (3) in Wâdy ed Deir there is a boulder with an indentation which the Arabs say is the mark of Moses' back; (4) on Jebel Mûsa itself you have, besides other marvels at the summit, a rock with a grotto, into which you creep to look at the impression of a man's head and hand. The monks say that here Moses hid himself at the time when he received the Law. The Arabs say that he crept into this cave in obedience to the Divine command, when the Lord spoke to him, saying, "Creep thou in, O Moses, for thou canst not bear my glory!" While (5) in the rock, which serves as the foundation of the mosque hard by, is a small cave with a flight of steps leading down into it, which is said to have been the resting-place of Moses during the forty days of his sojourn on the mount.—Rocks, moreover, struck by or spoken to by Moses are very numerous also in the valleys round Jebel Mûsa.

One tradition connected with a spot—far off, indeed, but inseparable from the history of Moses, and assigning to that history the geographical boundaries of the Bible account—gives the name "Moses' Well" ('Ayûn Mûsa) to the spring just above the picturesque cascade on the steep slope of Jebel Neba ("Mount Nebo," in Moab); not, however, so as to make confusion with the events in Moses' life which the Red Sea and Pisgah severally witnessed.

Mohammadan tradition points steadily to Jebel Mûsa as the "Mount Sinai" of the Bible. The passage in the Korân (chap. xx.) reads thus:—

"Hast thou been informed of the history of Moses? When he saw fire, and said unto his family, 'Tarry ye here, for I perceive fire; peradventure I may bring you a brand thereout, or may find a direction in our way by the fire.' And when he was come near into it a voice called unto him, saying, 'O Moses! verily I am thy Lord: wherefore put off thy shoes, for thou art in the sacred valley Towa. And I have chosen thee; therefore hearken with attention unto that which is revealed unto thee. Verily I am thy God; there is no God beside me: wherefore worship me, and perform thy prayer in remembrance of me. Verily the hour cometh: I will surely manifest the same, that every soul may receive its reward for that which it hath deliberately done.'"

The commentators on this passage say that Moses obtained leave of his father-in-law Shoaib, or Jethro (who gives his name to the steep ravine at the north-east corner of Jebel

Mûsa, by which one descends from Rás Sufsáfeh to the mouth of Wâdy ed Deir), to visit his mother, and that Moses departed with his family from Midian towards Egypt; but coming to the valley of Towa, wherein Mount Sinai stands, his wife was taken in labour and delivered of a son in a very dark and snowy night. (One hardly thinks of snow in connection with Sinai, but when I made the ascent of Jebel Katharina there was a thin sprinkling of snow on the higher ranges; and when the Ordnance Survey party was engaged on the mountain in 1868 there was heavy snow.) Moses had also lost his way, and his cattle were scattered from him, when on a sudden he saw a fire by the side of a mountain, which, on his nearer approach, he saw burning in a *green* bush.*

The sources from which Mohammad drew for the Korān, or Cor'ân, were for the most part Jewish. He was an enthusiast who, being confronted with strange and perplexing difficulties, tried to grapple with these difficulties by the light he saw and felt within himself. Ignorant, impressible, superstitious, carried away by circumstances, may we not think rather thus of him, than as a mere charlatan and impostor? His earlier life as a shepherd on the hills gave him the true shepherd's love for nature, and apprenticed him in those long soul-communings which equipped him to be the prophet of a nation. His later adventurous life as a camel-driver to the Syrian caravans must have brought him into contact with Jewish merchants and hānifs † who would visit the great markets. Jewish legends abound both in the Cor'ân and in the "Speeches," and one may suppose that these legends had been in part collected by Mohammad during his sojourn in Sinai, and in part learned from the Jewish tribe of Mecca, the Kheibari, whom Dr. Wolff supposed to be descendants of the Rechabites of Jeremiah's time. If this were so, then in these legends we possess very old Jewish folklore indeed.

Here are some of the legends strung together by Professor Palmer out of the commentaries on the Cor'ân, which may well be read as we make another halt to gaze seawards and sketch the form of Jebel Hammâm Far'ún. The Pharaoh of the Exodus was a just and vigorous prince, and his reign was protracted to an unusual length (this suggests Ramses II., the Greek Sesostris). He became infatuated with pride and rebelled against God, claiming for himself divine honours. He married Asia. Of such beauty and goodness was she, that it was said of her that God, when asked by the angels, marvelling at the beauty of the Houris of Paradise, whether he had created aught lovelier, answered, "Yea, I have created Asia and Mary and Fâtimah." Pharaoh was warned on first entering his wife's bridal apartment by an invisible monitor of his approaching end, and of the overthrow of his dominion by the hands of a prophet from among the sons of Israel. It was this that caused him to issue the fierce decree against the male children who should be born to the Israelitish women.

Then comes the mysterious midnight voice which tells him "Moses is born and Pharaoh's doom draws nigh." The soldiery are sent out everywhere to seek for and destroy the child,

* Taken chiefly from Sale's "Korān."

† Hānif, "incliner." Just before Mohammad's time there had been a strange stirring amongst the better classes of Arabs, who were dissatisfied with the low fetishism of their countrymen, and were seeking the "religion of Abraham," the father of their progenitor Ishmael. By these men (hānifs) a change was declared to be at hand, and a prophet about to arise.

and so come to Imrân's house. The mother has hidden the child in the cold oven and gone out. Her sister, not knowing this, comes in and lights a fire beneath the oven in order to bake some bread. It was just when the fire had burned up that the soldiers forced their way in. Every nook and corner of the house is searched in vain—the heated oven is out of the question as a hiding-place. When they are gone the mother returns; she sees the oven heated—she tears her hair, beats her breast, scolds her sister. Then rushing to the oven to look at her roasted darling, she finds him alive and well and draws him forth without a scorch! After this she thinks she may entrust him to the care of the Nile. And so it is that at the end of three days (some say forty) the child is wafted by a branch canal into a tank in the midst of Pharaoh's Palace. Pharaoh's daughters (seven) were afflicted with various diseases: the wonderful child cured them all by his touch, and was, in consequence, promoted, after much coaxing of her husband on Asia's part, to be heir-apparent to the throne. When Moses reached the age of three years Pharaoh sent for him, and, captivated by his pretty childish ways, set him upon his knee to play. Moses immediately seized him by the beard with one hand and soundly boxed his ears with the other, at which sign of decided authority all his old suspicions were revived, and Pharaoh again determined on putting him to death. This good intention Asia soon divined, and excused the child's conduct on the score of infantile thoughtlessness and foolishness. "I will soon convince you," said she, "that the boy is incapable of judging between right and wrong." She ordered a silver basin to be brought containing a date and a live ember, and setting the basin before Moses, commanded him to choose. As he was about to select the date the angel Gabriel appeared before him, struck his hand upon the coal and made him carry it to his mouth. Of course his tongue was burned severely and he uttered dreadful howls. Pharaoh was now convinced that the boy was a fool, and from that hour Moses lisped in his speech.

The cause of Moses' flight from Pharaoh's court was the fear of the blood feud which would be the consequence of his killing an Egyptian who was abusing an Israelite. He went to Midian. At the watering place outside the city he acted the part of a chivalrous knight to the daughters of Sho'eib, the blind prophet of Midian. The shepherds, when they had finished watering their own flocks, rolled a great stone over the mouth of the well, so that Sho'eib's daughters should not share in the use of the water. Moses seeing this grew wroth, and gave the huge boulder such a kick with his foot as to send it flying full forty cubits from the spot, and Sho'eib's daughters watered their sheep. The two girls of course told their father of this, and he sent to invite the stranger to his house. Then there comes the contract of eight years' service for the eldest daughter Sâfura (Zipporah), and the suggested interval of quiet pastoral life.

We have already considered the tradition of the Burning Bush. The contest between Pharaoh's seventy thousand magicians and Moses assumes this shape:—The magicians are assembled, Pharaoh is seated on an eminence commanding a wide valley on the sides of which all the fashion of the Egyptian world is grouped. The magicians had provided three hundred mule-loads of ropes and sticks, and had so sprinkled magic dust on the eyes of the

spectators that when these loads were thrown out in the valley they appeared like living and writhing snakes. But Moses put an end to the illusion, for his rod (the rod of which in the Cor'ân he says to God, "It is my rod whereon I lean, and with which I beat down leaves for my flock, and I have other uses for it, such as to drive away wild beasts from my flock, to carry my bottle of water, to stick up and hang my upper garment on to shade me from the sun") when cast down devoured all the rest, so that even the sorcerers believed. Pharaoh became exceedingly angry, and said, "Verily he is the great sorcerer who has taught you all, but ye shall suffer for this."

The Cor'ân describes certain plagues which were inflicted for a special act of impiety on Pharaoh's part. He had had a great tower made, and from it had shot an arrow into heaven; this fell at his feet covered with blood, and he said, "I have slain the God of Moses!" An interval of forty days occurs between each plague. The taking away of one plague Pharaoh declared to

THE CLIFFS OF JEBEL HAMMÂM FAR'ÛN.
The altitude given in the "Ordnance Survey Map" for Jebel Hammâm Far'ûn is 1,567 feet.

be a miracle of his own, and commanded the people to adore him. Thereon the angel Gabriel was sent to him in the likeness of a goodly youth, and addressed him thus: "I am one of the servants of my Lord the King, and I desire sentence on a servant of mine own. For I have heaped benefits upon him, and he hath rebelled against me, and denies my right over him, and lays claim to my name and power." Pharaoh answered, "Let him be drowned in the sea!" and gave a warrant under his own hand and seal that this should be done. On this the angel left him. The Exodus soon followed, and the passage through the Red Sea, before Pharaoh's pursuing army, of the twelve tribes of Israel by twelve suddenly-revealed paths.

Pharaoh's horse refused to take the unusual road, it is said, until Gabriel appeared mounted on a charger to lead the way. In the middle of the sea Gabriel approached the king and drew forth the royal warrant which has just been mentioned. Pharaoh on reading it understood the hidden meaning of Gabriel's proceedings and knew that the hour of his doom had come. He would fain repent, but it was too late; and the waters closed in on Pharaoh and his armies.

Such traditions linger in these drear valleys, then, belonging to a very remote period; and by these Mohammad's impressionable mind was instructed. The Arab of to-day and the Arab of former ages has always been fond of story and song. As we all know, the happiest memories of our own childhood's imaginative years connect themselves with stories which come from a far-distant and mysterious Arabia. A legend slight and fragmentary attaching to some cave or rock would soon get magnified and contorted so as to be scarcely recognisable by those who first told it; passed on from one to another, it would gain power, and at length become an article of faith. A further reason why legend and tradition should grow rapidly and so readily in this Desert district is to be found, perhaps, in the seclusion of the Arab's life from the outer world. He lives far from the madding crowd. Monotonous is the journey of his life. One day is so much like another, and one journey is so undistinguishable from another, that anything with a pretence to singularity is sure to be remarked on and treasured up.

Soon after leaving Wâdy Gharandel one notices two heaps of stone called Mangaz Hisân Abu Zena ("The leap of Abu Zena's horse"); and this is the story. An Arab named Abu Zena was riding a mare in foal, and notwithstanding her condition was riding at a furious pace. When he came to this spot he dug his spurs into her sides, and the mare made a tremendous leap and fell down dead. Abu Zena, in amazement at the immense length of the stride which the horse had taken, marked the distance with two stones, and afterwards related the incident to his friends. The matter was soon noised abroad, and every Arab who passed that way with a comrade would discuss the marvellous leap, and trace out again the distance, as Abu Zena himself had done. Thus the stone heaps grew. Admiration for the mare's performance soon increased with the pagan Arabs of that time. She became at length an object of veneration, and was worshipped as a deity, offerings of corn being brought to the spot. But when the Arabs forsook idolatry for the worship of the true God they came to look upon their former gods as devils, and turned their pagan observances into an expression of aversion for the

JEBEL HAMMÂM FARʿÛN.

The hot springs bubble up at intervals from the sand, and also issue from several fissures in the rocks. The temperature of the water is 160°.

ROCK FORMS IN WÂDY HAMR.
This valley leads up to Jebel et Tîh.

demon who, as they supposed, haunted the accursed spot. Then instead of bringing the usual offering of corn they threw stones on the heaps, and kicking a little dust on them with their feet, would cry out, "Eat that and get thee gone!" This custom is still kept up. Each of my Arabs, so far as I could see, threw a stone, and kicking the dust over it said contemptuously, "Begone and feed!" If one may credit this tradition, it would go at least to prove that at one time horses were not uncommon in the peninsula; and, if so, there must have been pasture for them.

The scenery as one approaches Wâdy Taiyebeh is fine. Very noteworthy is the perfect network of little white chalky wâdies running into and from the Tîh ridge, which meet in Wâdy Shebeikeh, and give it its name, "The Net." It is here that a decision has to be come to as to which of two routes one will follow in order to reach Mount Sinai. The one leads by Sarâbît el Khâdim, with its most interesting Egyptian ruins; the other leads down the Wâdy Taiyebeh to the Red Sea and the Wilderness of

Sin, and then turns inland again to strike the Wâdy Feirân. We shall eventually take the lower route, but here branch off awhile to explore the wonders of the upper route.

Wâdy Hamr is a broad valley with precipitous sides of limestone. The mountains on all sides abound in salt, and it is amazing to see how quickly the Arabs find and scoop out great lumps. Rough and coarse it is, but beautifully white. In front of us now rises the pyramidal peak of Sarbût el Jemel, naked, desolate, and seeming to bar all further progress. The sandstone district commences here, and we see the first specimens of those Sinaitic inscriptions with which one becomes so familiar on the sandstone rocks in Wâdy Mukatteb.

Now these inscriptions are a most interesting study. Diodorus (B.C. 10), referring either to the palm-groves of Tor or to Feirân, says that "there is also an altar of solid stone very old, inscribed with unknown letters." About A.D. 518 Cosmas, the Indian traveller, visited the Sinaitic peninsula. He noticed that at all the halting places all the stones in that region which were broken off from the mountains were written with carved Hebrew characters, and these were explained to him by his Jewish companions "as written thus: 'the departure of such and such a man of such a tribe, in such a year, in such a month;' just as with us some people often write in inns." The mistake here made (Stanley points it out, but it would occur to any one) is that the writing is not ordinary Hebrew.

The varying explanations of these inscriptions are—(1) that the greater part of the ancient inscriptions are in a dialect of Arabic, and are the greetings and names of Christian pilgrims; (2) that they are of earlier date, and are the work of Pagan pilgrims to a shrine on Mount Serbâl; (3) that the characters are Egyptian, that the rude accompanying figures illustrate the characters and that they record the chief events of the Exodus, being of Israelite origin.—The wide district over which these inscriptions are spread must always be taken into account in any attempt to explain their origin and purport, as also the very different dates at which some of them were written. I can hardly think that those which almost cover the conspicuous rock, Hudheibat El Hajjâj, on the tableland above the valley of 'Ain Hudherah, are of the same date as those in Wâdy Mukatteb. Dean Stanley has given an account of the impressions which the inscriptions, from their position and variety, left on his mind—prepared as it was by acquaintance with the remarks of those ancient and modern writers who have written of them. Judging from the localities, he assigns many of them to pilgrims visiting sacred shrines, specially those in Wâdy Lejâ, on the way to Jebel Katharina, and those in the Wâdy Aleyât leading up into Serbâl, and those on the top of Serbâl itself. In these valleys there is no thoroughfare, so that either the places themselves or some spot in near vicinity must have been the objects of the visit.

In a general way one would say of the inscriptions, looking at their slight workmanship, that they were written by ordinary passers-by. Most of them are on sandstone, which, as every one knows, is very easily figured. Those which are on granite are faintly and imperfectly scratched. Very few are so out of reach that they might not have been written by an ordinarily venturesome climber to kill the time, say, whilst his caravan was preparing to start.

Professor Palmer considers that the Sinaitic inscriptions in Wâdy Mukatteb were the work of idle loungers, and he pronounces them to be as unimportant as the Arab, Greek, and European *graffiti* with which they are interspersed. The language used is Aramean that Semitic dialect

WÂDY USEIT.

One can get down to the sea-shore by this valley, but the path is hardly passable for camels. There are clumps of stunted palm every here and there, and some brackish water.

which in the earlier centuries of our era held the place now occupied by Arabic. To him they seemed in style much like the performances of our cockney tourists in some favourite holiday resort. Wâdy Mukatteb is on the high road through the country, and has the largest share of

WÂDY TAIYEBEH.

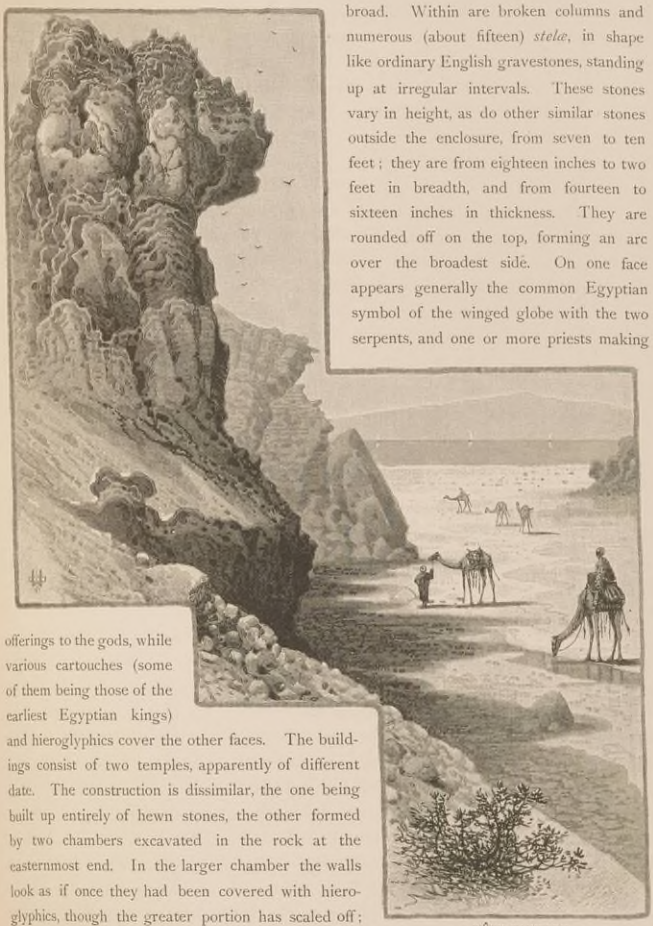
"The Valley of Good" (Water and Pasture). Through this valley most probably the Israelites journeyed to their encampment by the Red Sea.

the inscriptions. In more flourishing times—and especially during the monkish occupation, when Feirân was so important a centre—there must have been *sûks*, or public markets, there, and even permanent colonies of traders, to supply the wants of the inhabitants. Those frequenting such fairs, writing and speaking the prevalent dialect of the East, would be as likely to leave notices of themselves and their birthplace, &c., as do their successors in other parts of the desert to-day. "I imagine," he says ("Wilderness of the Exodus," page 193), "that the greater part of these inscriptions are due to a commercial people, traders, carriers, and settlers in the land. No less than twelve of those which we copied were bi-lingual, being written in Greek and Sinaitic by one and the same hand. The existence of one of these was previously known; it differs from the rest in being carefully cut with a chisel and enclosed by a border line. That many of the writers were Christian is proved by the number of Christian signs, crosses, &c., which they used, but it is equally clear from internal evidence that a large proportion of them were pagans. They must have extended far down into the later monkish times, possibly until the spread of El Islâm brought the ancestors of the present inhabitants, Bedawîn hordes from Arabia proper, to the mountains of Sinai, and dispersed or absorbed that Saracen population of which the monks stood in such mortal fear." In some such way, too, would Professor Palmer perhaps account for the inscriptions on Serbâl—that they are possibly the work of those who had to tend the beacon fires which were lighted on the highest point (El Madhawwa, "The Lighthouse") to tell of approaching invaders, just like those at Hazeroth above 'Ain Hudherah, or those on the road from Syria to Egypt.

Passing on, then, from the encampment near Sarbût el Jemel, we halt again at the mouth of Wâdy Nasb ("The Valley of the Sacrificial Stone"). This name suggests rites of some ancient religion. There are here great heaps of slag and other vestiges of the Egyptian miners who once colonized the place, and whose workings for copper, manganese, and turquoise cover the neighbouring sandstone hills.

A few hours' ride from this encampment brings one to the foot of the mountain (six or seven hundred feet high) of Sarâbît el Khâdim ("The Heights of the Servant.") This name, the Arabs say, was derived from a black statue representing a "slave or servant," which was removed by the French during their occupation of Egypt, but for which, amongst the ruins, a suitable pedestal was found by Professor Palmer. The Professor also suggests that a female foot carved in black stone, which belonged to Major Macdonald, and was found in this very spot, may have been a portion of the statue itself. The ruins of Sarâbît el Khâdim were discovered by a chance in 1761 by Niebuhr. The mountain is of precipitous sandstone, mostly red, and the climb up its sides is a trying one: there is a scramble over a slide of loose sandstone—a sloping ledge of rock overhanging a precipice—and a steep ravine! Then a level ridge is reached connected with a high tableland of sandstone, intersected in every direction by sudden ravines and broken up by rising knolls. On one of the highest of these are the singular and mysterious ruins we have come to see. There is a small enclosure contained by the débris of a wall of hewn stone, about one hundred and sixty feet long from east to west, by seventy

broad. Within are broken columns and numerous (about fifteen) *stelæ*, in shape like ordinary English gravestones, standing up at irregular intervals. These stones vary in height, as do other similar stones outside the enclosure, from seven to ten feet; they are from eighteen inches to two feet in breadth, and from fourteen to sixteen inches in thickness. They are rounded off on the top, forming an arc over the broadest side. On one face appears generally the common Egyptian symbol of the winged globe with the two serpents, and one or more priests making offerings to the gods, while various cartouches (some of them being those of the earliest Egyptian kings) and hieroglyphics cover the other faces. The buildings consist of two temples, apparently of different date. The construction is dissimilar, the one being built up entirely of hewn stones, the other formed by two chambers excavated in the rock at the easternmost end. In the larger chamber the walls look as if once they had been covered with hieroglyphics, though the greater portion has scaled off; at the upper end is a small niche, probably for the altar, beside which is a carved figure in bas-relief.



WÂDY TAIYEBEH.

With the Red Sea in sight. The lower part of the valley is very picturesque. The horizontal strata of the cliffs and their bright colouring make a deep impression on one fresh from the Desert.

Another niche is seen at the right-hand corner, and in the centre of the chamber is a pillar cut in the solid rock and covered with hieroglyphics. The paint still remains on some of these —emerald green inside the characters, with a red and black band above and below. It is supposed now that these monuments were connected with the working of copper-mines in the neighbourhood, and that the temple probably presented to the miners and their guards the worship of the national gods of Egypt. Mines are very numerous in the neighbourhood. Although Robinson failed to find them, Mr. Holland discovered them, and the Ordnance Survey party certified them. The manner of worship of the Egyptians in outlying districts is still a matter about which we know very little. We seem to be approaching towards the Egyptians' religion in great sacerdotal and royal centres like Thebes or Abydos: but it was never a *popular* worship—rather a pageant of religion set forth in the presence of the people by an exclusive priestly caste. The mines were so extensively worked that Sarâbît el Khâdim may have been made a religious centre on account of them. Or it is possible that, like Mecca to Mohammad and his followers, this may have been a sacred place of pilgrimage for the ancient Egyptian world. To it certain kings may have made pilgrimages, and they may have erected each of them a votive column, with his name inscribed. Moses' demand, therefore, that the Israelites might go three days' journey into the desert (which seems to have excited no surprise whatever as a demand) to do sacrifice may have been based on national customs existing amongst the Egyptians.

The inscriptions in the mines about Sarâbît el Khâdim range from the twelfth dynasty of Egyptian kings down to (though they become very rare at this date) Ramses IV. of the twentieth dynasty, a period of twelve or thirteen hundred years. Between Ramses IV. and his ancestor, Mineptah II. (son of Ramses II.), the Pharaoh in whose reign probably the Exodus took place, is a space of a hundred years. We may suppose, then, that while the Israelites were marching through Wâdy Taiyebeh to the Red Sea these mines were in full work in the hills to their left, and that the worship of Hathor, "queen of heaven and earth and the dark depths below," or of Supt, "the lord of the East," was being punctually and carefully rendered. It is almost certain that Senoferu, "a good king," who is buried under the ancient pyramid so conspicuous from the Nile near Meidoum, was the conqueror of the mountainous peninsula of Sinai—long coveted for its mineral wealth—and that permanent works at the mines were established by him.

Before turning our backs on Sarâbît el Khâdim let us read one of the inscriptions by Professor Palmer's help. It refers to a certain Har-ur-ra, superintendent of mines, who arrived at his post in the month Phamenoth (January or February), in the reign of one of the kings of the twelfth dynasty (B.C. 2466—2266). The author of the inscription tells us that he never once left the mine, and he exhorts the chiefs to go there also. "If your faces fail the goddess Hathor will give you her arms to aid you in the work. Behold me, how I tarried there after I had left Egypt; my face sweated, my blood grew hot, I ordered the workmen working daily and said unto them there is still turquoise in the mine and the vein will be found in time.

And it was so; the vein was found at last and the mine yielded well. When I came to this land aided by the king's genii I began to labour strenuously. The troops came and entirely occupied it, so that none escaped therefrom. My face grew not frightened at the work, I toiled cheerfully. I brought abundance, yea, abundance of turquoise, and obtained yet more by my search. I did not miss a single vein."—Is it not strange to read such a record referring to a time about four thousand years distant from us? There is another inscription given also by Professor Palmer, which may, perhaps, date from 3766 B.C. It runs thus: "I came to the mines of my lord. I commenced working the *mafka* (turquoise) at the rate of fifteen men daily. Never was like done in the reign of Senoferu the Justified."

But we have to retrace our steps in order to follow the lower route by Wâdy Taiyebeh. Possibly we may startle in these mountains a herd of gazelles, and our Arabs may get a shot. In "Eothen" (page 308, chap. xxiii.) the Arabs surprise in her sleep a young gazelle, and take the darling prisoner. "I carried her," the description runs, "before me on my camel for the rest of the day and kept her in my tent all night; I did all I could to gain her affections, but the trembling beauty refused to touch food and would not be comforted. Whenever she had a seeming opportunity of escaping she struggled with a violence so painfully disproportioned to her fine delicate limbs that I could not go on with the cruel attempt to make her my own. In the morning, therefore, I set her loose, anticipating some pleasure from the joyous bound with which, as I thought, she would return to her native freedom. She had been so stupefied, however, by the exciting events of the preceding day and night, and was so puzzled as to the road she should take, that she went off very deliberately and with an uncertain step. She was quite sound in limb, but she looked so idiotic that I fancied her intellect might have been really upset. Never, in all likelihood, had she seen the form of a human being until the dreadful moment when she woke from her sleep and found herself in the gripe of an Arab. Then her pitching and tossing journey on the back of a camel, and lastly a soirée with me by candlelight. I should have been glad to know, if I could, that her heart was not broken!"—The gazelle is called roe and roebuck in our version of the Bible. It was reckoned among the clean animals of the law and was held in high esteem, Solomon's table being specially furnished with it (1 Kings iv. 23). Swift, graceful, gentle, timid, these are the characteristics of the pretty little animal. You see them often in small herds, but Canon Tristram mentions herds of one hundred in number. As to their swiftness, Asahel, Joab's brother, whom Abner slew at last in self-defence, is said (2 Samuel ii. 18) to have been "light of foot as a wild roe" (*i.e.* gazelle), while amongst the mighty men who flocked to David in the wilderness the Danites are described (1 Chronicles xii. 8) as "men of might, and men of war fit for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as the roes [gazelles] upon the mountains." As to their timidity, it supplies a metaphor to the great prophet describing man's fear in the day of the Lord, when (Isaiah xiii. 13, 14) He "will shake the heavens, and the earth shall remove out of her place, in the wrath of the Lord of Hosts, and in the day of His fierce anger; And it shall be as (with) the chased roe [gazelle] and as (with) a

sheep that no man taketh up: they shall every man turn to his own people, and flee every one into his own land."

The chief reasons why Moses is not likely to have conducted the children of Israel by

THE PLAIN EL MARKHEIYEH.
At the mouth of Wâdy Taiyebeh, looking south and south-east towards the mountains of the Serbâl group. The plain takes its name from the long white range of chalk hills called El Markhâ.

the upper route past Sarâbît el Khâdim to Horeb, leaving out of sight the mysterious form of the column of cloud which went before the host to lead it, are (1) because its rugged passes,

NEAR THE MOUTH OF WÂDY TAIYEBEH, LOOKING NORTH-WEST.

narrow valleys, and intricate windings would have presented most gloomy difficulties to a large caravan, encumbered with women and children, flocks and herds, and baggage; (2) because there would be detachments of Egyptian soldiers (though, perhaps, not in very large numbers)

guarding the captives at work in the mines. As much stress must not be laid on the capabilities for attack of military outposts engaged on such duty (for one can well imagine that the marvellous news of the destruction of the Egyptian army would precede the slow march of the Israelites), the first reason seems the better one; while the conjecture (almost a certainty) that the Israelites descended Wâdy Taiyebeh corresponds, as to the camp stations mentioned, with the Scriptural account.

The entrance to this valley (see page 269), which at first looks broader and more verdant than it really is, strikes one as lovely and, in its contrast with the ground which we have been lately traversing, homelike. Some think that here, and not at Gharandel, we have "Elim."

RÂS ABU ZENIMEH.

On a low promontory running out somewhat farther into the sea is placed the tomb of the saint. Unless it is rough the camels are made to take to the water instead of climbing the cliffs.

The forms of the cliffs on the left hand are very beautiful. There are horizontal bands of colour in the sandstone, which the declining sun lights up marvellously; and the luxuriant caper plant is like a dab of glistening green thrown on anyhow every here and there, as it strikes out and makes festoons from each cranny. Whilst the Arabs were pitching the tents I climbed up the north side of the valley to watch the sunset. All sunsets are beautiful, and all poetical descriptions, rich in suggestion as they may be, fail to bring back to one the reality. There is, however, a description by Shelley of a sunset amidst very different scenery—where there was no grand sea, and the mountains were much more near than those shadowy hills of Egypt stretching before me in the fading distance—in which I seem to catch again glimpses of

the sunset vision of that evening walk above the Wâdy Taiyebeh. The lines occur in "Julian and Maddalo," a conversation piece drawn near Venice :—

> "We stood
> Looking upon the evening and the flood
> Which lay between the city and the shore,
> Paved with the image of the sky; . . . .
> . . . . . and half the sky
> Was roofed with clouds of rich emblazonry,
> Dark purple at the zenith, which still grew
> Down the steep west into a wondrous hue,
> Brighter than burning gold, even to the rent
> Where the swift sun yet paused in his descent
> Among the many folded hills; . . . .
> And then, as if the earth and sea had been
> Dissolved into one lake of fire, were seen
> Those mountains, as from waves of flame,
> Around the vaporous sun, from which there came
> The inmost purple spirit of light, and made
> Their very peaks transparent."

I think it was the music of the jackals which reminded me to get back to camp, and the thought, too, that perhaps a hyæna might be near. This music begins in a sort of low long-drawn wail, rising and swelling higher and higher until it conquers all other sounds. One solitary brute seems to begin, and then, when one thinks it has satisfied itself or has got some plunder, it seems to be reinforced by a whole troop of jumping, prancing friends, whom night has let loose to yell and scream and bark and wail. The jackal, though it slinks out of the way to let one pass, will boldly enter a town, and will come sniffing up in the silence of night to the very canvas of one's tent. The hyæna comes next to the jackal as a common desert beast of prey. Most unclean of all animals—prowling about cemeteries exhuming bodies, and even where the grave is protected by heavy stones burrowing alongside to get out the miserable corpse—the hyæna is a coward, though the Arab believes him to be extraordinarily cunning. The Arab will tell one how a hunter lay down to sleep, with his dog and powder flask beside him, when the hyæna of whom he was in quest seized the opportunity and the dog; devoured the latter, and walked off with the powder flask without disturbing the hunter!

Amongst the tamarisks, which bend gracefully over the stream, and amid the tall trunks of the palms, some wild and unkempt and some of better appearance as if they had been cultivated for dates, the Arabs and the tents look most picturesque. We shall come to much finer tamarisks or tarfah-trees at Feirân, and again in Wâdy es Sheikh, still we may make some notes about them here. When we reach the convent we shall persuade the Œconomos to sell us some "manna," which is the highly prized exudation of the tamarisk-tree. In name, but in nothing else, there may be a connection with the miraculous food which fell round the tents of the Israelites. Like hoar frost it fell on the ground, and the Hebrews said, "What is this?" (*Man hu?*) The Arabs call the gummy substance, which is tapped from the tamarisk by the puncture of a small insect, "Munn." Other trees in other countries produce such manna. The harvest is very uncertain; for unless the season has some rain there will probably be no manna. It ought to drop for about two months, commencing at the same time as the apricots.

The Arabs declare that it falls only by night, and that in moonshine there is a more plentiful supply; while if a goat approach the tree the manna will dry up and disappear. It is found in

JEBEL EL MARKHÂ.
This ridge of limestone, about nine hundred feet high, separates the two plains El Markheiyeh and El Markhâ.

the form of shiny drops on the twigs and branches. What is shaken down on the sandy ground is of no use. It has the appearance of gum, is sweet to the taste, and must be gathered early

in the day, as it melts in the sunlight. The Arabs cleanse and boil it, strain it through a cloth, and put it by in leathern bottles. They eat it with their unleavened bread like honey or butter, but they never make it into cakes or eat it by itself.—Well, a good fire has been lighted, the baggage is piled to windward of it, the camels are all brought in near, and a great deal of coffee-pounding and smoking and talking is going on. Several of the voices are very pleasing, and—as there seems to be no quarrelling as yet—the murmur is by no means disagreeable in the still air. One does not know the language, so one need not attempt to understand what they are talking about. I think, however, from a few familiar words that they are discussing the terms of the agreement made between us at Cairo, for the hated word "Bakhshish" (the curse of Egyptian and Arab and Fellah) comes in pretty often. A few

THE PLAIN EL MARKHÂ.
This weary plain of flinty barrenness slopes gently to the sea, the glare from which and from the limestone cliff is almost overpowering.

stories about the Bedawín, therefore, may not be out of place, as the fire lights up their brown features and plays upon their picturesque clothing. Mrs. Finn, who has made the Fellah of Palestine her study, tells us what an implacable animosity exists between Bedawín and Fellahín. The Bedawín say—

"The townsman is the table of the world (provider),
The peasant (Fellah) is the donkey of the world (menial),
The Bedawy is the sultan of the world (ruler).

The Fellahín transpose all this and give a far different version. They say—

"What is the townsman? The sultan of the world.
What is the Fellah? The donkey of the world.
What is the Bedawy? The dog of the world, for he snatches from everybody, but nobody dares to snatch from him."

These two following stories told by Mrs. Finn are, I think, good ones. An acquaintance of hers among the Fellahín came one day with this strange tale:—"Fâtimeh tells me that there has been a robbery in her village, and that they called in a Bedawy to find out the thief. He heated an iron and branded the tongue of every man, woman, and child, telling them that the tongue of the thief would swell, and that he would then make him pay the value of the theft. All their tongues (of course) swelled, and he made them pay the money between them."

The other story runs thus:—"A Bedawy and a Fellah arrived at a village at the same time and repaired to the "Sakha" (public guest-room). Supper was set before them, and the Bedawy observed that it was only enough for one.

ROCKS IN THE RAVINE OF SARÂBÎT EL KHÂDIM.
And a natural gallery in the same ravine. Wind and storm have worn these sandstone rocks into the most fantastic shapes.

He accordingly engaged the Fellah in talk, asking, 'What presents do you give to the bride at a Fellah wedding?' 'What presents? Why, we give a silk robe, and a cotton robe, and silver ornaments; and then we give so much in money to the father, and so much to the brother, and so much to the uncles and aunts.' By the time that he had got to the uncles and aunts he perceived that the Bedawy had eaten up three-quarters of the supper, so he in turn asked the Bedawy what they gave the bride at a Bedawy wedding? The Bedawy replied bluntly, 'A tob (robe), a veil, a necklace, and a headdress.' He continued eating till all was finished, leaving the Fellah still very hungry and done out of his supper."

I think I ought to place by this the next story told by Mrs. Finn, in which the tables are turned on a Bedawy. It happened that a Bedawy came to a village one evening in the summer and entered the public room of the guest-house. For supper amongst other things the Fellah host set before him some prickly pears—the fruit of the great cactus, which forms the hedges for enclosures so common in Palestine, &c.—which he had never seen, and which was then in season. In mockery of his ignorance they did not shell the prickly pears, but left them in the husk all covered with their innumerable sharp spines. The Bedawy, unsuspicious, took up and ate the fruit as he was accustomed to eat cucumbers; after supper his host asked him how he liked them? "God be praised for them, they are very refreshing," said the man; "only the hair upon them is rather sharp, it is rougher than the hairs on cucumbers, and it sticks to my tongue and smarts."

Mr. Palgrave, in his "Central and Eastern Arabia," warns one not to accept without much allowance the favourable pictures which travellers draw sometimes of the good faith and the hospitality of the Bedawín. Of the first he writes—*

"Deeds of the most cold-blooded perfidy are by no means uncommon among these nomades, and strangers under their guidance and protection, nay, even their own kindred and brethren of the desert, are but too often the victims of such conduct. To lead travellers astray in the wilderness till they fall exhausted by thirst and weariness, and then to plunder and leave them to die, is no unfrequent Bedawín procedure. . . . . Thus, for example, a numerous caravan, composed principally of wealthy Jews on their way across the desert from Damascus to Bagdad, was, not many years since, betrayed by its Bedawín guides. The travellers perished to a man, while their faithless conductors, after keeping aloof till they were sure that thirst and the burning sun had done their work, returned to the scene of death, and constituted themselves the sole and universal legatees of the moveable goods, gear, and wealth of their too-confiding companions. I myself, during my stay at the town of Ha'yel, in Central Arabia, met with a large Hebrew folio, once the property of one of these unfortunate Israelites. The Bedawy, to whose lot it had fallen amid his share of plunder, had brought it thus far in hope of rendering his treason so far profitable by the sale of a work all the more valuable in Eastern opinion for being totally unintelligible."

Of their hospitality he says: "Nor do I wish to deprive them of all credit for these

* Palgrave's "Arabia," vol. i. 3. 36.

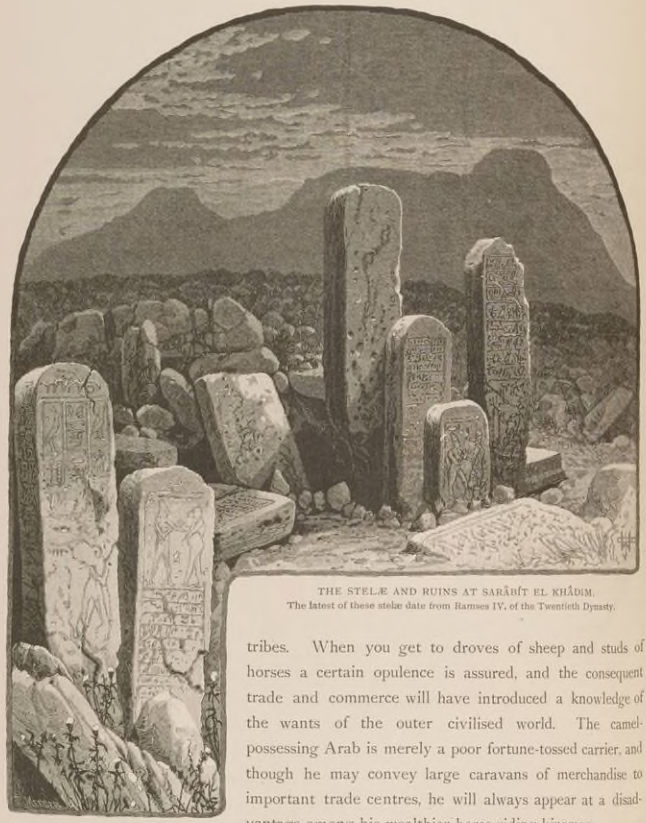
good qualities (hospitality and generosity). But their open-handedness often springs more from the childish levity of the savage than from true and praiseworthy liberality of character. Like an infant that stretches out its small hands and opens its little mouth for whatever comes within its reach, be it a guinea or a cherry, and with almost equal readiness lets its new acquisition drop no sooner than grasped, the Bedawy is at once rapacious and profuse, coveting all he sees, without much distinction of its worth, and lightly parting with what he has already appropriated from very incapacity to estimate or appreciate its value. To give, to beg, or to plunder are for him correlative acts, all arising, in the main, from the same immense ignorance of what property really is and what its importance! . . . . Besides, he has in general but little to offer, and for that very little he not unfrequently promises himself an ample retribution by plundering his last night's guest when a few hours' distant on his morning journey. Still a certain kindness of feeling towards strangers—the same which forms a very prominent feature in the Arab family likeness—is not wholly extinct in the breast of this half-savage; and what he offers in the way of hospitality is accompanied by a heartiness of welcome and an uncouth attempt to please which certainly has its merit, and often obtains encomiums very agreeable to Bedawín ears. But he is at best an ill-educated child, whose natural good qualities have remained undeveloped or half stifled by bad treatment and extreme neglect."

There will be differences of opinion as to the moral qualities of the Arabs, just as there will be much disagreement about a proper definition of their country. The Arab will tell you that that is his country wherever Arabic is spoken. This gives a wide expanse of dominion. Your donkey-boy at Cairo, for instance, will be indignant if you call him an Egyptian,* and will say at once, "Me, Arab!" At Damascus the bazaars and squares will be full of Arabs, come in probably from the Haurán; then away to Palmyra and on to the Great River you will scarce hear of any other people. Not only the country which we usually term Arabia Proper, but the northern parts of Africa, between the Sahara and the littoral of the Mediterranean, seem to be given up to them. The truth is, we mix together all the nomades of this part of the world, and, losing sight of their differing tribal characteristics and habits, believe that the vast territory (larger than all France and Spain together) lying between the Red Sea and the Persian Gulf must, as the cradle of the race, be inhabited by a like people. Hardly do we care to realise what a difference exists between the sheikh of some district in Central Arabia and the Bedawín chief of a desert tribe, who exhibits nature almost at its lowest stage. The accounts of savages in other parts of the world certainly throw out in strong relief the Bedawy, and make him appear almost a civilised being, but reflecting that he has always lived on the fringe of Western civilisation, one wonders how his education has never made progress, while further observation soon does away with any admiration which may have been excited by him.

Possibly the romance and poetry which surrounds our idea of the Arab has something to

* The country people in Egypt are El-Fellahin, a term which Turks and townspeople often use in the abusive sense—as "the boors," "the clowns," "the country louts," although there are many pure Arab settlers in the country, while town Arabs are really a somewhat mixed race.

do with the animals pictured by his side. The horse—the noblest of animals—and the Arab seem inseparable; but there are many Arab tribes without horses, and altogether dependent on that most unromantic beast, the camel. These tribes are the most miserable of Arab



THE STELÆ AND RUINS AT SARÂBÎT EL KHÂDIM.
The latest of these stelæ date from Ramses IV. of the Twentieth Dynasty.

tribes. When you get to droves of sheep and studs of horses a certain opulence is assured, and the consequent trade and commerce will have introduced a knowledge of the wants of the outer civilised world. The camel-possessing Arab is merely a poor fortune-tossed carrier, and though he may convey large caravans of merchandise to important trade centres, he will always appear at a disadvantage among his wealthier horse-riding kinsmen.

The desert has again and again been compared with the ocean—wild, boundless, uncontrollable. The comparison may well be further extended in observing that as the

portions of the sea which border a powerful coast are rightfully said to belong to this or that flag, whose symbol must be respected by ships trafficking there, unless they are strong enough to dispute its rights, so the desert where it adjoins and touches the confines of orderly govern-

THE ROCKS AT SARÂBÎT EL KHÂDIM; AND THE TEMPLE ENCLOSURE.
There are two temples, of different dates. The one not shown here is formed of two chambers excavated in the rock, having a walled continuation in front.

ment becomes amenable to the laws of that government. Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, Egypt, Syria, &c., exercise a certain coercive authority over the Arab tribes which come within their territorial jurisdiction for the purposes of trade or pasture. The Sultans of Shomar, of the Wahhabee, and of Oman—in Central and Eastern Arabia Proper—in like manner wield a considerable amount of real power. Within these governments the Arab is seen almost at his best, and becomes a foil to the Bedawy. The nomade tribes, without real country, without much honour, without perceptible religion, whose only object in

war is to plunder, or to occupy a poor bit of pasture land, or to get the use of some wretched wells of brackish water, are but withered unsightly branches of a far nobler trunk. They are a pastoral population grown out of and round the real fixed nation. The circumstances of the country and the difficulties of the climate compelled them to wander, and so to encroach (as is noticeable in the early history of the Egyptian Delta) on lands which from their fertility and capabilities had attracted the primæval colonists of the human race. Possibly, at first, these encroachments, not resulting in permanent occupation, would escape notice; and this negligence would give encouragement to insolence and rapine, until the very civilisation which should have checked or absorbed the Arabs seemed to them to be but a contemptible thing, because possessed by a people willing to be preyed upon and pillaged.

Anything which may be said of the Arab tribes and their nationality suggests the beginnings of the Israelite people. The symmetry of the later Jewish commonwealth sometimes blinds us and prevents us from imagining that there ever could have been a "ragged edge." For instance, we seldom think of the twelve tribes or clans, unequal in size and strength, as being divided between themselves or engaged in tribal wars. We hardly ever picture the tribesmen in the full strength of their manly independence. They always appear as being *led* by opportunist leaders; for the life of the nation in the time of the Judges is so confusedly put before us that even in that interval we seem to be reading the history of a homogeneous nation, living under an orderly government, however weak and powerless in the presence of stronger neighbouring people. Mr. Palgrave bids us see the Arab tribes as almost from the first split up, each and all, into two branches, correlative, but unequal in size and importance. The larger portion became townsmen and villagers with permanent occupations, gendering necessarily culture. The smaller portion gave itself up to the pastoral life in that hard desert land, whose valleys are only distinguishable by less degrees of barrenness. The one division of the clan under the favourable circumstances of settled life advanced, the other retrograded, till at length it bore the same relation to the rest of its fellow-countrymen (though pure in descent, and competent to trace out a line of ancestors for a genealogical tree which would intoxicate the European pedant in heraldry) which a wild crab offshoot below does to the thriving and fruit-laden branches above.

It is in the midst of his description of his life at Hofhoof, far away near to the coast of the Persian Gulf, that Mr. Palgrave, having given a most lucid account of the conventional term "Nabathœan," points out how confusion likewise has burdened all our conceptions of the Arabs with inaccuracies and misapplications. The passage is too pointed to bear condensation. He says: "The European public is deluged with accounts of Arab customs, Arab ways, Arab qualities, houses, dresses, women, warriors, and what not; the most part from materials collected in Syria, Mesopotamia, Egypt, 'Irāk, perhaps Tunis, Algiers, and Morocco, or at the best at Djiddah and on the Red Sea coast. Sometimes a romantic spirit will furnish scenes among the hybrid Bedawín of Palmyra as portraits of Arab life; sometimes we are invited to study Arab society in a divan at Cairo or Aleppo. Such narratives, however

accurate they may be for the localities and races they describe, have not an equal claim to the title of correct delineations of Arabs and of Arab customs. The case appears to me much as if the description of a backwoodsman of Ohio should be given for a faithful portrait of a Yorkshire farmer, or the ways and doings of Connaught for a sketch of Norfolk life and manners. Syria and Egypt, Palmyra and Bagdad, even less Mosoul and Algiers, are not Arabia, nor are their inhabitants Arabs. The populations alluded to are, instead, a mixture of Kurds, Turcomans, Syrians, Phœnicians, Armenians, Berbers, Greeks, Copts, Albanians, Chaldeans, not to mention the remnants of other and older races, with a little, a very little Arab blood—one in twenty at most—and that little re-diluted by local and territorial influences! That all more or less speak Arabic is a fact which gives them no more claim to be numbered among Arabs than speaking bad English makes an Englishman of a native of Connaught or of Texas. For the popular figure of the Bedawy, I must add, that even were he sketched, as he rarely is, from the genuine nomade of Arabia, it would be no juster to bring him forward as an example of Arab life and society than to publish the 'Pickwick Papers' or 'Nicholas Nickleby' with 'Scenes in High Life' or 'Tales of the Howards' lettered on the back. These unlucky and much-talked of Bedawîn in the Syrian, also miscalled Arabian, desert, are, in fact, only hybrids, crosses between Turcoman and Kurdish tribes, with a small and questionable infusion of Arab blood, and that too none of the best, like a wine-glass of thin claret poured into a tumbler of water. In short, among these races, town or Bedawîn, we have no real authentic Arabs. Arabia and Arabs begin south of Syria and Palestine, west of Basrah and Zobeyr, east of Kerak and the Red Sea. Draw a line across from the top of the Red Sea to the top of the Persian Gulf: what is below that line is alone Arab; and even then do not reckon the pilgrim route (*i.e.* the Hajj route to Mecca from Damascus, Cairo, &c.), it is half Turkish; nor Medinah, it is cosmopolitan; nor the sea-coast of Yemen, it is Indo-Abyssinian; least of all Mecca, the common sewer of Mohammadans of all kinds, nations, and lands, and where every trace of Arab identity has long since been effaced by promiscuous immorality and the corruption of ages. Mascat and Kateef must also stand with Mokha and 'Aden on the list of exceptions." (Palgrave's "Central and Eastern Arabia," vol. ii. p. 162.)

But to return to Wâdy Taiyebeh (see pages 269 and 271). A few bends the valley makes, and then, set in a frame of white cliffs, with horizontal bands of varied colouring on the one side and darker-tinted cliffs on the other, the deep blue waters of the Red Sea come in sight. The description of the Israelite march is clearly given in Numbers xxxiii. 10, 11: "And they removed from Elim, and encamped by the Red Sea: and they removed from the Red Sea, and encamped in the wilderness of Sin." If we can imagine the sloping terraces of the mountain black with the great moving multitude of people, may we not imagine that here, on the quiet shore of the sea, they first realised the *completeness* of that deliverance which God had wrought for them. Before them was their enemy and their friend, the mysterious sea, beyond which there was one more last glimpse of Egypt; behind them was the Desert, promontory after promontory stretching out into these waters. They had on their

right (see page 274) the threatening form of Jebel Hammâm Far'ún, and on their left (see page 274) beyond the wilderness of Sin, and beyond the trending line of beach where the waves break laughingly, the distant view of the mountains which close in to form the outposts of Serbâl.

Here then, or a little farther on, may have been the "encampment of the Red Sea." There is a sandy cape, very lonely, jutting into the sea, about a mile from the mouth of Wâdy Taiyebeh (see page 275), called Râs Abu Zenímeh, from a saint of that name who lies buried there. The welí, or tomb, is a rude hut built up of very light materials, well white-washed, part wreckage, part palm-branches, and covered with coarse matting, but is a somewhat conspicuous object on the lonely shore. Inside there is a strange collection of offerings, principally maritime—bits of rag, of rope, of matting, with meat tins, fish-bones, and lamps intermingled. There is a picturesque desolation about the place to which the dry stunted shrubs on the banks of the sloping shore add character. Many and beautiful are the shells, amongst which grows or drifts the so-called rose of Jericho (*Anastatica hierochuntina*), its stiff stem and its tiny clustering branches, with their bibulous flowers, looking like a grey withered twig stuck into the sand.* This portion of the coast is called El Markheiyeh (the diminutive of El Markhâ), and forms the last narrowing section of the undulating plain of gravel which, as we said before, in a measure bounds the triangle of Sinai on its south-western side (see page 251). It is separated from the plain called El Markhâ by a long white spur of chalk hills which runs down to the sea till within a few feet of high-water mark. The illustration (see page 275) shows the position of this ridge and the unwilling camels, who yet will have to wade for a few minutes through the sea, so as to avoid a long détour over the hill. In its far angle there is one scanty spring, but the water is undrinkable. Our course will lie across the plain in a line from the extreme sea end of the ridge to Seih Bab'a, six miles distant. But this taste of its extreme dreariness, without shadow of shelter in the full light of the midday sun, the sea glaring on the one hand, and the white unpicturesque hills glaring on the other hand (see page 278), will be, even if the sirocco wind does not rise up against us, as trying as any piece of work before us in our whole journey.

Seih Bab'a is the debouchure of the Wâdies Bab'a and Shellâl. Great slag heaps mark the entrance; and the traveller—weary of the dry, baked, glowing plain—gladly turns aside by them to make his way to Magharah, Feirân, and the convent by the pass of Nagb Buderah. The Israelites in all probability followed a more open route, skirting the edge of the low white cliffs, with the sea still on their right hand, until the entrance of the Wâdy Feirân was reached, some eighteen miles farther south. The shorter way through the mountains is neither over-steep nor tortuous, but it leads into a mining district where in former days, as at Sarâbît el Khâdim, Egyptian soldiery would be stationed.

* This plant has nothing to do with that mentioned in Eccles. xxiv. 14, &c. It derives its botanical name from its power of opening its minute flowers, when plunged into water, many months after it has been pulled up. "Jericho" may have been added to "resurrection flower" (*anastatica*) because it is found in the sand in the hot plains by the Dead Sea. The pilgrims, who prize it as a relic, may in irony have called it "the rose of Jericho."

H. PENN, PINXT. R. BRANDARD, SCULPT.

EL HESWEH, WÁDY FEIRÁN.

D. APPLETON & Co. NEW YORK.

WÂDY SIDREH.
The Wadies Mukatteb, Sidreh, and Igné all debouch into the Seib Sidreh.

Wâdy Bab'a and Wâdy Shellâl (see page 295) are both picturesque, and their rock scenery is a relief after the tamer formations of the cretaceous mountains which immediately bound the plain El Markhâ. Following up Wâdy Bab'a, which trends a little to the left some two or three miles from the entrance of Seih Bab'a, we feel at last that we have reached the long-wished-for mountain district, whose forms and colouring have been so frequently described. The valley contracts after one or two bends into a wondrous gorge, guarded by a stupendous mass of rock some forty or fifty feet high, which seems to have been splintered from the mountain but yesterday. The walls of the gorge are sometimes only eight feet apart, and are so lofty that the sunlight scarcely penetrates through the narrow chasm. Farther on there is a barrier of great boulders, which almost forces one to climb the side of the valley to a ledge where some ruined huts look as though they may have been a military guard-house to prevent egress from the upper parts of the valley—a region yet to be explored. Then there is a narrow gut to be threaded, reminding one of the defiles at Bad-Pfeffers. A small stream of brackish water finds its way through, and here and there is a stunted palm or a patriarchal seyal tree. To this gorge a more open valley succeeds, flat and desolate, and then the track leads into the wâdy by which the sanctuary and the mines at Sarâbît el Khâdim were approached by us.

From the appearance of a great bank—which almost looks artificial—of rounded water-worn stones at its mouth, the stream of Wâdy Shellâl (the name means "Valley of Cataracts") at a far distant period may have broken through, like an impetuous cataract, the mountain ridges which enclosed it, and—reinforced by the drainage from Nagb Buderah (which the Arabs describe as the "stair-way" called up by Lord Moses in order to extricate the children of Israel from these valleys)—may have scooped out a course for itself through the soft limestone to the Seih Bab'a.

To the crown of the pass of Nagb Buderah from Seih Bab'a is a distance of seven or eight miles. Wild and solitary is the road, and the silence is only broken by the whirr of a covey of partridges disturbed by the noise of the caravan, or the timid rustle of a light-coloured hare. The zigzag camel-track up the front of the pass deserves the name of a road, and was constructed, or re-constructed, by the late Major Macdonald, who lived at Maghârah and worked the mines. Access to the sea is obtained by it, and many a weary mile is saved by using it instead of going through Wâdies Mukatteb and Feirân.

The plain, opening out when the top of the pass is reached, is marked by confused heaps, looking like the refuse of old mines worked quite near the surface. Maybe we shall have pushed on before our baggage, and have caught sight of the morning glow on the mountain world through which we are passing. The sunbeams striking on the various heights of white and red remind us, as Dean Stanley suggests, of the effect which must have been produced on the children of Israel as the vast encampment broke up dawn by dawn in these mountains with the shout, "Rise up, Lord, and let thine enemies be scattered; and let them that hate Thee flee before Thee" (Numbers x. 35).

Through the Wâdy Nagb Buderah the track leads into the Seih Sidreh (see page 291). There is on the left a small wâdy called Umm Themâïn, and in the side of this wâdy is a

THE ROAD UP NAGB BUDERAH.
By this pass travellers generally approach Mukatteb from Egypt.

mysterious cave, which was explored by Professor Palmer. He and his companion, with lighted candles and a large ball of string for a clue, entered the dark opening. They crept serpent-wise along narrow winding galleries for about four hundred feet, leaving other branching passages to be explored later on. "The air was hot and stifling; bats flew out with shrill and startled screams and festooned themselves upon our hair and beards; the walls were black with the smoke of lamps, extinct, like their owners' lives, long ages ago; and in one place where a small side cutting had been made the miners had propped up the roof with a branch of shittim wood.

There it stood, dry and brown enough certainly, but as perfect in shape as when it was first set up—perhaps before the Great Pyramid was built" ("Desert of the Exodus," page 205). In this cave or mine no trace of metal or turquoise was found, so the object of those ancient miners who worked it out could not be conjectured. In the valley below are two hieroglyphic tablets which prove its Egyptian origin, and these tablets, unlike those in the neighbouring valley, are so time-worn that the sacred writing is illegible.

After this break Wâdy Igné, or, as it is sometimes called, Wâdy Maghârah, is soon gained, and a fresh scene opens out on this ever-varying route. Hardly had I got abreast of the mouth of the wâdy before half-a-dozen Arabs, springing from nowhere—so undistinguishable at first were their bronze forms from the red-tinted rocks—ran down the mountain-side, thinking that I might be a merchant come to purchase turquoise. These few miners are the representatives, as it were, of the thousands who had toiled here ages ago for Pharaoh.

In the left-hand bank of the steep sandstone wall of the wâdy are the principal mines, and in the walls of these caverns and in the fissures and cuttings in the rock are the marks of the many chisels (probably of bronze or other hard metal) of the ancient captives who here searched for turquoise. The tablets—some *in situ*, some overturned and half destroyed—are of the familiar Egyptian type: a Pharaoh of gigantic proportions slaying his enemies; priests presenting offerings to hawk-headed deities; troops of captives, &c. Not unnaturally, as one stoops and shuffles along these gloomy caverns, one thinks of the scene so vividly portrayed in Professor Ebers' "Egyptian Princess," and almost hopes that one may come across the ghosts of the creatures of his subtle brain. On the little hill behind the remains of the late Major Macdonald's house are the ruins of some small stone huts, where possibly superintendents and military guardians of the captive miners lived. There is a tablet in the rocks above the mines which represents a group of miners at work, equipped with ordinary chisels and a kind of swivel hammer. The soldier guarding them is armed with a bow and arrow, and is, Professor Palmer suggests, "the prototype of the present Egyptian police officer, who is still called a cawwâs, or archer." Another tablet on the hills opposite the mines and near the mouth of the valley, discovered by Professor Palmer, represents in rude style a miner taking a walk with his wife and son. Ah, how little varied is human life! As to the dates of the inscriptions, Senoferu, of the Third Dynasty, records here his conquest of the country and his discovery of the mines, while the latest of the tablets belongs to the Eighteenth Dynasty, and mentions an expedition to the mines set on foot by Tothmes (or Thutmes) III. The mines evidently were worked at intervals during a period of more than two thousand years, and probably to a later date than that assigned to Tothmes III.; but we may suppose that some three thousand years have elapsed since Maghârah ceased to be a penal settlement of the Egyptians.

Wâdy Mukatteb (the "Written Valley," or "Valley of Inscriptions"), so far as scenery goes, is not over-interesting. One seems to leave the finer scenery as one emerges from Wâdy Igné and crosses the Seih Sidreh. The valley is broad and open; on one side are low sloping hills, and on the other some fine ranges of mountain. Beneath the low hills are several isolated

plains, and from these have become detached the masses of sandstone on which are found the well-known inscriptions. Some of these rocks have got weather-worn into fantastic shapes.

THE OUTLET OF WÂDY NAGB BUDERAH, IN THE SEIH SIDREH.
The *Acacia seyal* is the shittah or shittim tree of the Bible. The "seyal" is the only timber tree of any size in the Arabian Desert.

Here one traces the gigantic profile of a man's face; there we find a horizontal layer jutting out so as to form a sort of umbrella. Here are cool caves, seeming all the more cool in this fierce

sunlight; while there one fancies a regular set of stone benches and tables has been arranged by giant hands for giant travellers. This sandstone is so inviting in its softness that one begins unconsciously to scratch a record of one's visit, as thousands may have done centuries ago. Allusion has been already made to these inscriptions, consisting for the most part of a word or two, and then some rough figure of a man, or of animals like the camel, or of birds like the ostrich. There are undoubtedly a very great number of them, and this may be accounted for either by the probable supposition that in this valley (in some respects more convenient than Wâdy Feirân) must have been large markets to which would have been attracted a great concourse of foreign merchants—or else that at one period, for some reason or other, this valley was occupied by a foreign migratory people, driven here, perhaps, by the exigencies of war or persecution.

In itself there is nothing in the valley, either traditionally or otherwise, which would have made it an object of pilgrimage. There is no shrine, no temple; and there is no legend of any such shrine or temple as would have drawn worshippers to the locality. One knows how deep-seated is the love of scribbling in most people. Some go further than this—for I remember seeing a traveller at Philæ who, armed with hammer and chisel, had begun cutting his miserable name on the imperishable stones of the celebrated inner propylon! These Mukatteb inscriptions damage nothing; there is no "bad taste" about them, except it be their apparent valuelessness. Most of them are dotted in with a sharp stone; and altogether the impression is conveyed that one day some more lounging spirit than another commenced writing his name in a sort of haphazard manner, and that this grew into a fashion and habit of the place. Of course fresh light may yet be thrown on these inscriptions. Possibly a tragic story may be connected with some of them; a long interval of years, sufficient for a hundred tragedies to have been enacted here, detaches large groups of them from their neighbours—but as yet the missing link has not been found which will bind them to history.

From the watershed of Wâdy Mukatteb the view is very fine. Jebel Mukatteb, taking its name from the wâdy, as is so commonly the case in Arab nomenclature, is a large bold mountain on the right hand, and rises about two thousand four hundred feet from the Wâdy Feirân, which it forces out of its course. This wâdy, one of the grandest and longest in the peninsula, exhibits best the peculiar features of a wâdy. It is not altogether correct to speak of wâdies as being the same as our valleys, for there are striking points of difference. The word means properly a "hollow between hills, whether dry or moist," and is derivable from a verb signifying radically "to perforate by water." There is no limit as to length, or depth, or breadth; while the constancy of the mountain torrent by which they may have been grooved out is immaterial. For a few days or weeks in winter some of these valleys have the appearance of rapid streams. The Wâdy Shellâl, for instance, bears every trace of water at some seasons rushing down its floor.

Their usual aspect, however, is naked and waste. Possibly the barrenness is increased by the constant signs and indications of water which is no longer seen. The great river beds in

Switzerland in the early summer present sometimes something of the same appearance as one nears their glaciers. Dean Stanley reminds us that these wâdies were the only conception of rivers in the mind of the Arab conquerors of Spain. The consequence is that we find the name as introduced by them still attached (1) to the water-courses of Southern Spain, which, like the valleys of Arabia, are dried-up confused hollows of stones and boulders, until the snow melts or the sudden fierce showers descend; and also (2) to mighty rivers, to which the streams of the desert, even when forced into life by the winter storms, could at best furnish only a *general* parallel. "Guad-al-quiver," grand and imposing river, pride of the Spaniard—who knows, or troubles himself to know, that this name breathes of the far-off desert air of Arabia, and that it is, with little variation in the spelling, the "Guad-al-Khebir," *i.e.* the "Great Wâdy!" The process of reasoning by which this similarity would be established is by no means far-fetched. Wâdy Feirân, which we strike at right angles, certainly does resemble a mighty river; and one almost expects to hear the roar of its rush, or even to see the light play on the dull tawny-coloured waters. There is a further point of resemblance between the river and the wâdy. The wâdy is the highway of the desert. From the fact that the watersheds are frequently low and narrow one might thread one's way through the peninsula by merely following the courses of these valleys, when once one had mastered the general direction of the main arteries. The great Wâdy es Sheikh, for instance, which Stanley calls "the queen of the Sinaitic rivers," is not really separated from Wâdy Feirân; and by means of the two valleys you may bring a road of easy communication from the sea to Jebel Músa, however lengthened out by the numerous windings. Suppose the Thames to be drained dry and its sides bordered by great mountains, we should have something very like a Sinaitic wâdy, and put it to the same use. Water and verdure, in any great extent, are wanting; and so the distinguishing names for the wâdies, as for the mountains, are taken from the noticeable presence of that which is so scarce. The second highest mountain in the peninsula is called Umm Shomer, *i.e.* the "Mother of Fennel;" Râs Sufsâfeh is the "Head or Peak of the Willows," from the group of two or three scant willows growing in the hollow beneath the last ascent; Sinai may have taken its name from the tree "seneh" (Hebrew), which the Arabs call "seyal;" Wâdy Taiyebeh means the "Wâdy of Goodly Water," with its consequent vegetation; Wâdy el 'Ain, the "Wâdy of the Fountain," or "Well;" Wâdy Tarfah, the "Valley of the Tamarisks;" Wâdy Sidreh is named from the bushes of "sidr;" Wâdy Saal, from the splendid "seyal" trees it contains, &c., &c. A spring of water, a tree, a few shrubs, these are the points of greatest interest to the poor Arab, and these form his distinguishing landmarks in these intricate valleys.

Soon after descending into Wâdy Feirân, the course bearing east or a very little south of east, at the entrance of Wâdy Nisrín, are some fourteen or fifteen stone circles and cairns. These circles are from ten to twenty feet in diameter, and in the centre of each is a cist about four feet long by two and a half broad, and of the same depth, composed of four stones and a covering slab. Inside some of these have been found human bones, teeth, &c., and in one a small copper bracelet, lance and arrow heads, and a necklace of marine shells. The

outline of a body could be seen in some of these cists; and this outline, thus traced, as it were, in human dust, showed that the body had been buried in the most ancient manner, on its left side, doubled up so that head and knees met. We shall come to other similar circles and to traces of the altars at which the offerings of the dead were sacrificed and offered, and to the huts and dwellings called *nawâmîs*, in which the people lived who buried their dead in such wise. But who were they? The mode of burial proves their great antiquity. May they have been the Amalekites, the people who fought Israel at Rephidim? or may they have been the homes of some still more ancient people?

The change from sandstone to granite as one leaves Jebel Mukatteb and winds along Wâdy Feirân is very striking. "Even," says Dean Stanley, "to the most uneducated eye the colours tell their own story of chalk and limestone and sandstone and granite, and these portentous appearances" (the mountains streaked from head to foot as if with boiling streams of dark red matter poured over them, the vast heaps of seemingly calcined mountains, the detritus of iron in the sandstone formation, the traces of igneous action on the granite rocks dating from their first upheaval) "are exactly such as give the impression that you are indeed travelling in the very focus of creative power. I have looked on scenery as strange and on scenery more grand, but on scenery at once so strange and so grand I never have looked, and probably never shall again."

In Wâdy Feirân, there can hardly be a doubt, with the reports of the Ordnance Survey and the opinions of its able conductors lying before us, that we are again on the track of the main body of the Israelites. Their course was followed by us to the encampment in the Wilderness of Sin; then *we* made a détour. The two next encampments mentioned are those of Dophkah and Alush (Numbers xxxiii. 12, 13), and after these Rephidim, "where was no water for the people to drink." From the point at which we escaped from the thirsty plain El Markhâ, and turned up between the white bare-looking hills of Seih Bab'a, to the mouth of Wâdy Feirân is about nineteen miles; from the mouth of Wâdy Feirân to the stone circles at the entrance of the little Wâdy Nisrîn is another seventeen miles as the crow flies, or say twenty miles, a long day's march for such a host. Except, however, from the weariness of the plain and the distress caused by the heat of the sun, this route presents no difficulties. Some four or five miles below the stone circles which we have already described there is another group of them. May they not have been the sites of Amalekite villages, and occupied in that day when Israel passed by as outposts to the great force gathering at Rephidim to bar their further progress? The limestone hills between Seih Sidreh and Wâdy Feirân are so low that, though the ground is broken and not always easy for travelling, we may rightly suppose large bodies of the Israelites to have made a cut across them in order to save going all the way round by the valley's mouth. "Familiar as we had grown with desert scenes," writes Professor Palmer of his journey from Seih Sidreh to this mouth of Wâdy Feirân, in the month of March, 1869, "we were not prepared for such utter and oppressive desolation as this; the blue waters lay calm or rather dead before us, a realisation of the 'Ancient Mariner's' dreary vision, whilst on

either hand, as far as eye could reach, there stretched a dull flat sandy waste, unrelieved by any green or living thing—the barren wilderness and the still more 'sterile sea' side by side. It

WÂDY SHELLÂL, "VALLEY OF CATARACTS."
This valley bears, both in name and aspect, every trace of wintry cascades. It leads up to the pass of Nagb Buderah.

was as though nature had left this spot to point out to man how awful indeed were the fulfilment of the ancient sentence, 'Cursed is the ground for thy sake,' did not her bounteous and regenerating hand temper the dreadful doom." It is indeed a difficult task to find words to

describe what such a march is. Hands and faces are blistered—there is no shade, and any attempt to halt without shelter in the glare of such a sun means *sunstroke!*

The mouth of Wâdy Feirân is almost on a straight line of twenty-four miles with the immense Serbâl cluster of mountains, and this recedes some eight or nine miles from the limestone hills which form a barrier-wall to the plain El Gâ'ah, draining gradually towards Tor. In this section of the wall (from the entrance of the Feirân valley to opposite Tor) there are at least two gorges which, coming unexpectedly upon one with their exuberance of vegetation and all the features of grand landscape, relieve the monotony of the desert and give hope to the traveller. One of these is called Wâdy Dhaghadeh. Into this valley, from a home amidst wondrous little peaks of sandstone, there flows a clear cool stream bordered by palm-trees. Such a secluded valley occurs—and there may be many like it only waiting to be explored—in the immediate neighbourhood of Wâdy Shellâl. The other is farther to the south, Wâdy Sigillíyeh, into the débouchure of which comes the system of valleys which drain the southern, *i.e.* the seaward, face of Serbâl. The gorge which leads up to this valley is impassable, and the Arabs declare that in the great floods it is sometimes filled from top to bottom with the torrent, a depth of more than four hundred feet. That the gorge is impassable is not altogether a correct statement: for Professor Palmer and his companions got into the glen beyond the gorge by crossing over the lower mountains. They there found fenced in and concealed by precipitous cliffs a lovely mountain valley through which,

"With many a break and many a fall,"

over a pavement of smooth white granite, and overshadowed by fantastic rocks draped with ferns and desert plants of richest green, murmured a tiny stream.

The lower part of this wâdy has the name Jebâah, and its *upper* part is called Sigillíyeh. To make their way *out from* this happy valley of mountain solitude the explorers determined to essay the passage of the mysterious gorge. On one side was a wall of granite about fifteen hundred feet high, on the other a rock of some thirty feet, as smooth as though it had been polished by a lapidary: and between them was a pool of water breast deep on one side, twelve feet deep on the other. Two of the party took to the water, the other scaled the rock: the old Arab guide, Salem, sat down and groaned until his misery was terminated by being sent back by the way they had used in the morning to reach the valley. Safe through one pool of water, they came to a rock with an abrupt drop of about fifteen feet, down which they had to lower themselves in acrobat fashion. A smooth ledge of sloping rock, overhanging a precipice, brought them next to a large flat slab or pavement of rock, terminating in a yawning chasm two hundred feet deep.

The sun had dipped behind the hills and night was fast coming up, when luckily they discovered a kind of broken path, the remains of an attempt apparently to make a way in former times to reach the upper pools from the mouth of the gorge. Along this they scrambled, and so reached at length the open country, and then their encampment. The Arabs were enthusiastic in their congratulations on their escape from the ravine, which human eye had

never before explored, and till a late hour they heard Salem relating how they had swam

VIEW FROM THE TURQUOISE MINES OF MAGHÂRAH.
Wády Maghârah is another name for Wády Igné (properly Gena). The mines are high up on the left side as one ascends the narrow wády.

through huge lakes and mounted slippery precipices "by making ladders of themselves," and how they were as mad as mad could be.

From the stone circles at Wâdy Nisrîn to a palm-grove called El Hesweh in Wâdy Feirân is ten or twelve miles in a straight line. A little before one reaches this, however, a certain amount of verdure appears, and low stunted tamarisks break the monotony of the foreground. Nothing can be finer than the mountain scenery of this part of the valley. The colouring of the steep sides is very beautiful, while the unexpected turnings give depth and variety of vista. Above all, Serbâl is constantly to be seen rising beyond these nearer mountains through which the valley conducts one.

It is just before the fertile portion of Wâdy Feirân is reached that one comes to a strange rock called "Hesy el Khattatîn" (see page 305), surrounded by small heaps of pebbles placed upon every available stone in the immediate neighbourhood. Thus runs the legend:—"When the children of Israel had drunk of the miraculous stream which God had supplied to them from this rock, thirsty, wayworn, and ready to die, they rested here awhile and amused themselves by throwing pebbles upon the surrounding pieces of rock." The Arabs of to-day keep up the custom, for Moses is supposed to be propitiated thereby, and any one having a sick friend thinks that if a pebble is thrown here in his name he is assured of speedy relief. Now the history in the Bible describes Israel murmuring in the Wilderness of Sin from hunger. "In Egypt," say they, "we sat by the flesh pots and we ate bread to the full. But now in this wilderness what are we to do? You have brought us out here to kill us!" Then God gave them the quails and manna. The seventeenth chapter of Exodus commences with the journeying towards Rephidim, a place "where was no water for the people to drink." The people thirsted there for water, and murmured once more against Moses, that he had brought them and their children and their cattle out of Egypt to kill them with thirst, and they proposed to stone him and his brother. Moses cried unto the Lord, and the answer was, "Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel; and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go. Behold, I will stand before thee there in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock and there shall come water out of it, that the people may drink." The scene of this murmuring is called "Massah," because they tempted the Lord, saying, "Is the Lord among us or not?" and also "Meribah," because of the chiding of the children of Israel.

The initial difficulty here is "Horeb." When Feirân, the episcopal city of the district, had perished, and Jebel Mûsa with its conventual establishments began to take its place in the popular estimation of sanctity, the monks felt that they must transplant the tradition of the "Stricken Rock" to their own ground. Consequently you have under the immediate shadow of Jebel Mûsa—the scene of the punishment of Korah, then at a little distance from the mountain you have a Rephidim pointed out, and—as being only in proper accordance with the words of the Bible—you have also a "Stricken Rock," the most famous of all the Sinaitic relics, the Rock of Moses, in the Wâdy Lejâ. In Bible usage Horeb seems to be applied to the whole district as well as to the mountain: "Thou stoodest before the Lord thy God in Horeb" (Deut. iv. 10); "Also in Horeb ye provoked the Lord to wrath" (Deut. ix. 8). The derivation of

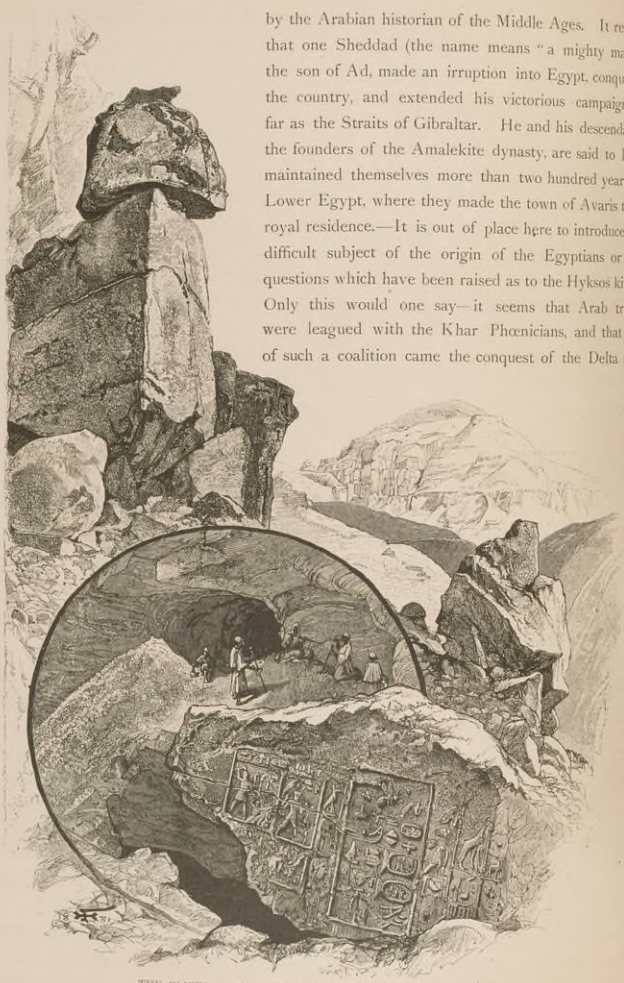
the word—"ground which has been drained and left dry"—suggests not mountains only, but the plains or valleys surrounding them. As mountain names of daily Bedawîn use "Sinai" and "Horeb" have disappeared; nor do we trace any vestige of the words, unless we may argue that Jebel 'Aríbeh, on the other side of the convent valley, has some etymological affinity with Horeb, and that Jebel Sonâ, the conspicuous mountain which rises over against Râs Sufsâfeh, and commands a view of both the plain Er Râhah and the Wâdy es Sheikh, recalls legitimately the word Sinai. To some it seems probable that the name Horeb has been introduced by a later writer into Exodus xvii., if not into Exodus iii. as well. For such process of difficulty-climbing there may be an insufficiency of evidence to go upon. Better, therefore, to adhere to the assumption that the whole of this portion of the desert was known at first as Horeb, and that the name was attached subsequently to the mountain alone.

But this encampment at Rephidim is famous not only for the miraculous supply of water from the rock, but also because the Israelites here first saw war. "Then came Amalek and fought with Israel in Rephidim" (Exodus xvii. 8). Something of the nature of the warfare adopted by the mighty desert tribe is told us in the fragment which occurs at the end of Deut. xxv. The Amalekites met Israel by the way. Like the Afghans in the fatal Khyber Pass, they hovered round them, and untiringly harassed the hindmost of them, the feeble ones of that great multitude, so faint and so weary. The scenery and characteristics of the valley give a meaning to the attack of the Amalekites. Feirân is to-day the Paradise of the Bedawîn. What the oasis of Ammon is in the western desert of the Nile, so is Feirân in the Sinaitic peninsula. Quite marvellous is its beauty, for the stream is perennial, being fed by the waters collected on the northern and eastern sides of Jebel Mûsa, and drawn off by Wâdy es Sheikh into Wâdy Feirân. The tamarisks, the palm-trees, the nebbuk-trees, the tall reeds by the side of the running brook, the sound of the singing of birds, the life of growing things—and all this made more conspicuous by the desert which has been one's home so many days! As now there is a sacred tomb for the Bedawîn devotees, and some approach to a permanent settlement with enclosed gardens and plantations, so in those ancient days for the Amalekites this must have been a centre of their tribal existence, and not improbably a sanctuary of their gods. Scouts had told them then of the strange moving mass coming out of Egypt, not as captives to toil in the mines, but with all the pride of a victorious people laden with rich spoil glittering in gold and silver and jewel. The cry "To arms!" had echoed through the hills. From out the valleys, such as we have seen running up beneath the southern side of Serbâl, from the plains of the northern plateau of the Tih, the tribesmen had flocked in towards Feirân's oasis, in order to protect the most prized of all the districts of their mountain territory.

And these Amalekites! it is very noticeable with how lengthy a period in the Bible story they are connected. They are like an "evil genius" to the early life of the people of God. Whence came they? are they met with in the annals of other nations? Herr Brugsch, in his account of the Hyksos kings of Egypt,* tells us of an ancient tradition preserved

* Brugsch's "Egypt of the Pharaohs," vol. i. p. 266.

by the Arabian historian of the Middle Ages. It relates that one Sheddad (the name means "a mighty man"), the son of Ad, made an irruption into Egypt, conquered the country, and extended his victorious campaign as far as the Straits of Gibraltar. He and his descendants, the founders of the Amalekite dynasty, are said to have maintained themselves more than two hundred years in Lower Egypt, where they made the town of Avaris their royal residence.—It is out of place here to introduce the difficult subject of the origin of the Egyptians or the questions which have been raised as to the Hyksos kings. Only this would one say—it seems that Arab tribes were leagued with the Khar Phœnicians, and that out of such a coalition came the conquest of the Delta and



THE CLIFFS, MINES, AND EGYPTIAN TABLETS OF MAGHÂRAH.
These mines were worked more than four thousand years ago.

the long tyranny over the people of Upper Egypt, which causes the gap of shame during five hundred years in the chronology of the dynasties of the Egyptian kings. One might go

WÂDY MUKATTEB, THE "WRITTEN VALLEY," OR "VALLEY OF INSCRIPTIONS."
The celebrated Sinaitic inscriptions abound in this valley on the right-hand side as one passes down.

beyond this, and assert that of the sons of Ham Cush migrated from the East to the southern parts of Arabia and the opposite coast of Africa; that from that Southern Arabia, "the land of God," three bodies of emigrants went forth,—one, led by Nimrod, penetrated to the Euphrates

country, another crossed the Red Sea and occupied the country to the south of Egypt, and a third went on to the north of Egypt and founded the Shasu kingdom.

It is certain, from Balaam's words (Numbers xxiv. 20), that the Amalekites were much more than a mere handful of Bedawín. The great regenerator of Egypt, Thotmes III., may have driven them out, may have recovered the rich mines of the peninsula, and may have crushed their power by frequent campaigns; but they still remained a powerful nation, commanding two great roads of commerce, the one from Phœnicia and the Canaanite countries to Egypt, the other to Southern Asia, Arabia, and Africa, by the Elanitic arm of the Red Sea. In the expedition of the four kings under Chedorlaomer, described in Genesis xiv., after the rebellion of the King of Sodom and his confederates, the Amalekites are mentioned in connection with the mountain tribes whom the great king punished previous to the campaign against the King of Sodom. This goes to prove that the idea which derives the Amalekite nation from Esau's grandson, Amalek, is erroneous; and it also accounts for the silence in the Bible as to there being any relationship between Amalekite and Edomite, or between Amalekite and Israelite. God's anger against Amalek is not grounded on Amalek's faithlessness to the obligation of consanguinity, as in the case of Edom ("because he did pursue his brother with the sword," Amos i. 11, or Obadiah 12), but on the insolent arrogance of Amalek, who feared not Jehovah.

At Rephidim, we may be certain, the children of Israel expected to be able to get water for themselves and their cattle; and at Rephidim they found this water strictly guarded by the terrible enemies who, for the last two days, had been harassing their flanks and rear. The valley becomes very tortuous after passing Hesy el Khattatín, making it six miles of travelling before one has accomplished three and a half miles of direct progress. One skirts the pretty palm-grove of El Hesweh, three miles from the Stricken Rock, where, in all probability, the first line of the Amalekites would be drawn up. The general direction of the valley is still a very little south of east, and runs parallel with the mountain. Its southern side is here formed by the northern slopes of Serbâl and its mighty granite outworks. The mountain is drawn back some three or four miles, and lies, not north and south, but east and west—a magnificent pile, forming at its summit a ridge three miles in length. From the extremities of this northern front two plainly defined valleys (Wâdy 'Ajeleh on the west, and Wâdy 'Aleyât on the east), rough, stony, and inhospitable, stretch down like long arms to Wâdy Feirân. They enclose in their grasp a tumbled mass of mountains, of no distinct shape, called Jebel el Muârras,* which rises above Feirân some two thousand five hundred feet. There is no wide plain at the base of Serbâl, and the Amalekites must have been crowded together in the valley bed, opposing to the Israelites a front of less than a quarter of a mile. At the mouth of Wâdy 'Aleyât, which is wider and more noticeable than the exit of Wâdy 'Ajeleh (two-thirds of a mile to the west of it), is the mound El Maharrad, where are the ruins of the ancient city Pharan (Feirân). On the northern side of the narrow valley, exactly opposite the city, is Jebel Tâhûneh (the

* The highest point of this lower mass of Serbâl is called Jebel Abu Shiah.

H. KEEN. PINXT. G. GAUSEN. SCULPT.

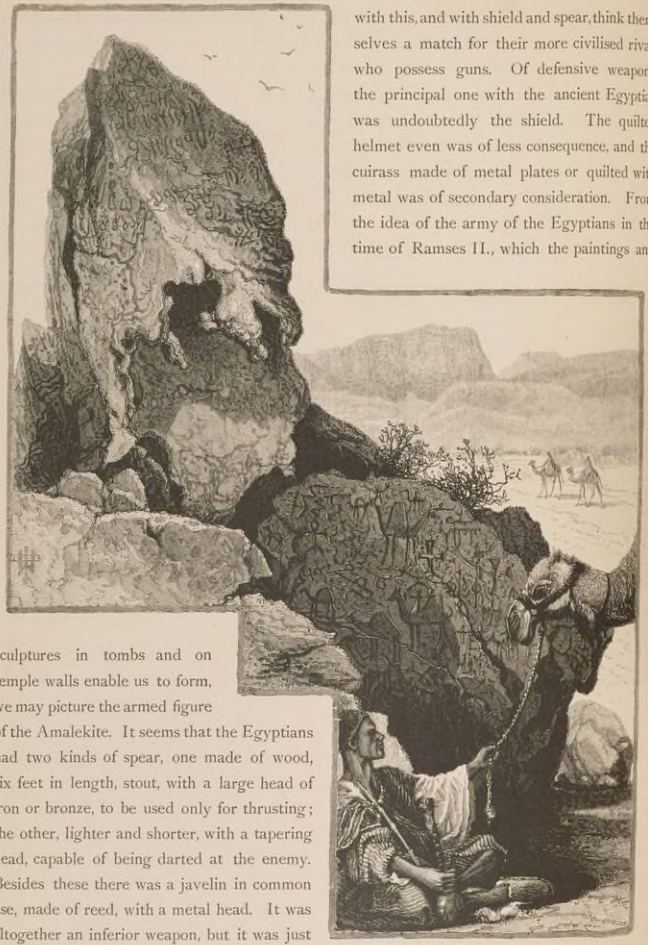
WÂDY MAGHÂRA, SINAI.

"Mountain of the Windmill"). It is not a high mountain—some seven hundred feet only of scramble—but its position is marvellous! The beautiful valley meanders at its feet with the limpid stream flowing past the ruins of the ancient city; beyond and right in front, overpoweringly grand, is seen the whole form of Serbâl: to the north there is a mighty basin of red rocks, out of and above which the tall peak of Jebel el Bénat rears itself; while, far away to the south-east, is seen the long range of the Jebel Músa mountains, blue against a deeper blue sky.

Jebel Tâhúneh is the mountain from which traditionally Moses viewed the battle with Amalek, climbing up to it by a path which commences just before the grove of El Hesweh is reached. The tradition as to this site was current in the days of Antoninus Martyr (circ. A.D. 600), for in his Itinerary he says: "So we came to the city of Pharan" (this translation occurs in the Appendix to the "Desert of the Exodus"), "where Moses fought with Amalek, where is an oratory whose altar is set on those stones which, while Moses was praying, they put under him. In this very place is the city, fortified with walls of brick, and a place very barren, except in the neighbourhood of the wells." If Feirân be Rephidim, no hill to which Moses would have access could be so suitable. He would have before him the whole plan of the Amalekite defence in the two valleys, Feirân and 'Aleyât, and from here he would be seen by the advancing Israelites with his hands upraised to heaven till the sun went down.

Of course there is no way of estimating the numbers of the Amalekites. At this present time the Bedawín of Sinai number, according to their own accounts, about four thousand males; for the Arab does not count the females nor the younger boys of his family in a census of the tribe. As to the arms used by them, one may make a conjecture from the descriptions of the wars of the Egyptian kings, from the bas-reliefs, &c., of the tombs and temples of Egypt, and from passages in the Bible itself. They had their weapons of the chase—the bow and arrow, such as Esau used, or the sling, so commonly seen now in Upper Egypt. These were used as weapons of war, in addition to spear and sword and shield. Swords and spears were the principal weapons in later times, and are made memorable in the wars between the Israelites and Philistines. The *Egyptian* infantry at this period (for we need not consider the horsemen and chariots) were divided and classified as bowmen, spearmen, swordmen, clubmen, and slingers. Their various defensive arms consisted of bow, spear, two species of javelin, sling (the sling was a thong of leather or string, plaited like those used to drive away the birds from the corn-fields of Upper Egypt, broad in the middle, and having a loop at one end by which it was fixed upon and firmly held with the hand, the other extremity terminating in a lash, which escaped from the finger as the stone was thrown), a short and straight sword, dagger, knife, falchion, axe or hatchet, battle-axe, pole-axe, mace or club, and a curved stick, like those in use now amongst Egyptians and Arabs, and called *lissan*, "tongue." The falchion, a short sword of a curious curved shape, must have been a most formidable weapon, as also the axe, which Ramses II. is seen so often to wield, when with gigantic force he smites his smiling enemies. The curved stick seems the most insignificant of these arms, but it is not so. It is about two and a half feet long, and made of tough acacia or other hard wood; and tribes who are armed

with this, and with shield and spear, think themselves a match for their more civilised rivals who possess guns. Of defensive weapons, the principal one with the ancient Egyptian was undoubtedly the shield. The quilted helmet even was of less consequence, and the cuirass made of metal plates or quilted with metal was of secondary consideration. From the idea of the army of the Egyptians in the time of Ramses II., which the paintings and sculptures in tombs and on temple walls enable us to form, we may picture the armed figure of the Amalekite. It seems that the Egyptians had two kinds of spear, one made of wood, six feet in length, stout, with a large head of iron or bronze, to be used only for thrusting; the other, lighter and shorter, with a tapering head, capable of being darted at the enemy. Besides these there was a javelin in common use, made of reed, with a metal head. It was altogether an inferior weapon, but it was just the weapon—akin to the long tufted spears one sees in the hands of the Adwân Arabs—



WÂDY MUKATTEB.

The strange shapes of the weather-worn sandstone rocks are almost as noteworthy as the Sinaitic inscriptions. In the inscriptions represented in this illustration the camel recurs frequently.

for the Amalekite guerilla. In the Feirân brook, as in the stream coming down Wâdy Lejâ, he would find the reeds ready to hand; and the mines in the mountains of Maghârah and elsewhere in the peninsula would supply him with metal for the spear-heads, &c.

Here, then, we have an outline of the battle. The Amalekite skirmishers have fallen back on the two lines of defence, the one protecting the groves and pools of water at El Hesweh, the other barricaded, perhaps, with trunks of trees and branches of the prickly *sidr*, covering the approach to the more important oasis lying farther east beyond the mound El Maharrad. And that oasis *is* worth a struggle! No finer dates are produced in Egypt than are grown here. To-day every single tree has an owner (the property being the tree, not the soil in which it grows). The dates, when gathered, are moistened with oil or butter to preserve

WÂDY FEIRÂN.
The rock supposed to have been struck by Moses is in the right-hand foreground. The Arabs call it Hesy el Khattatin.

their freshness and flavour, and then pressed tightly into bags of goat-skin, to be sold at a high price. Besides the palms there are the *sidr* trees (which bear a small bright rosy yellow fruit called *nebbuk*, something like the Siberian crab to look at, and not at all unpleasant to the taste), and—above all—the groves of tamarisk. Lepsius (A.D. 1845), speaking of Feirân, which he visited after he had been to Jebel Mûsa, says, "Everything that we had hitherto seen, and what we afterwards saw, was naked stony desert compared to this fertile oasis abounding in wood and water. For the first time since we had left the Nile valley we once more walked on soft black earth, obliged to defend ourselves with our arms from the overhanging leafy branches, and we heard singing-birds warbling in the thick foliage." Lepsius thought that in very ancient times, judging from the deposits of earth which extend up the sides of

the valley to a height of eighty or a hundred feet, the valley must have been closed in at Feirân, and that, as all the northern waters of the mountain system of Jebel Músa flow into Wâdy Feirân, a considerable body of water must have accumulated here until at length the barriers were burst by the pressure, and the torrent rushed down in a devastating volume into the lower portion of the valley.

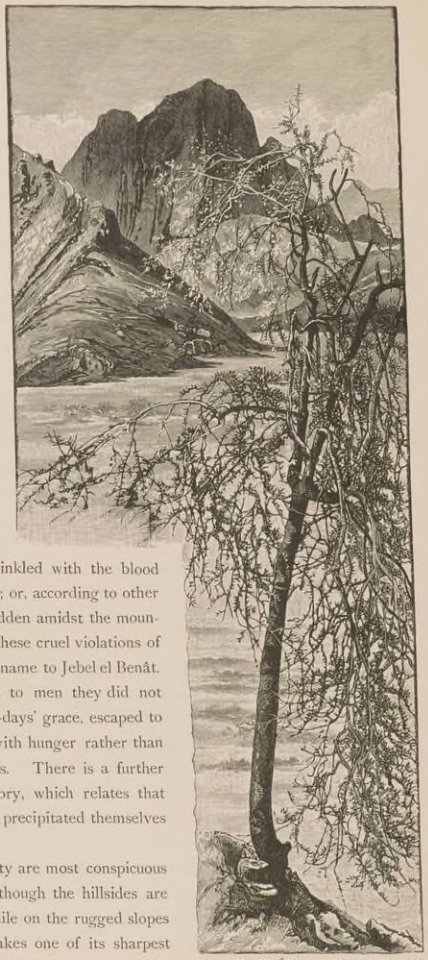
The battle is fiercely contested! There is some hidden spring of malevolence and hatred against the people of Jehovah which fires the Amalekite princes. The words of Exodus xvii. 15, 16 are remarkable words. The altar is called "The Lord my banner" (Jehovah nissi), and then there is a description, as it were, of the attitude of Amalek in "Because the hand of Amalek is against or upon the Throne of the Lord." Joshua has carefully selected his fighting men; the Israelites are marshalled in some sort of array of battle, such as they had often seen on the review grounds of Tanis, whilst they toiled as slaves in making brick for the buildings of the royal temple city. Far behind them, spread over a long distance, is the people, who had thirsted and murmured and longed to die from weariness of the way. All day long they fought; all day long Moses lifted up his hands in prayer! He is faint; he can stand no longer, as he boastingly said he would, on the top of the hill with the rod of God in his hand! He sees the people yielding before the maddened fury of the mountaineers. Aaron and Hur, the most trusted of his comrades—the men to whose care afterwards at Sinai he will commit the people—bring a stone and put it under him. Still he is too weak; his arms, his hands must be stayed up; and then with evening glow upon the mountains, casting a long shadow on the battle-field, Amalek is discomfited with the edge of the sword!

Mysterious words breathe now through the air. Miriam leads no chorus of women; but the awful voice of God speaks to Moses, "I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua."

It is the memory of this battle which is preserved by the church which was built on the summit of Jebel Tâhúneh. The plan of the church is easily traced, and the ruins of the subordinate chapels and stations remain by the side of the path leading up the hill. The original building of the church was of dressed sandstone, but a later edifice was built over this, constructed of rude stones taken from the mountain itself, and the orientation of the church was changed so as to look towards Jebel Serbâl, that is to the south. This noticeable change of the plan of the church, the shifting, as it were, its whole position, indicates that the builders of the *first* church saw nothing to reverence in Serbâl, that there was no tradition to make of it a holy place, and that the idea of its being the Mount of God (the Mountain of the Law) had not then been published. How many pilgrims must have climbed this hill! These hermits' cells, these innumerable tombs in the furrows of these desolate mountain-sides, of what a strange side of life do they tell the story! Yet, maybe, one should think more of the ancient Israelites pressing forward to overcome their foes beneath the banner of Jehovah than of these men, who shunned the dangers of temptation, and avoided the fatigue of life's rough

warfare by a mere existence of contemplation of God in the fancied presence of the memories of the past.

Before we descend into the valley let us look well at the graceful peaks of El Benât and El Jozeh. Ever since we came from Mukatteb we have seen El Benât, the "Girls' Mount," and admired it. There is a story connected with it which illustrates the marriage customs of the Bedawin in these parts. The betrothal of a girl is a mere mercantile transaction between the girl's father and the proposed bridegroom. It is only when this is completed that the girl is made acquainted with the transaction. There is then a three-days' grace. This is spent by the girl, according to the rules of some tribes, in a tent near the father's tent, after she has been sprinkled with the blood of a sheep sacrificed for the occasion; or, according to other tribal customs, it is spent by her hidden amidst the mountains. It was a rebellion against these cruel violations of free choice which gave a story and a name to Jebel el Benât. Two girls who were to be married to men they did not like, taking advantage of the three-days' grace, escaped to this mountain, and there perished with hunger rather than prove faithless to their real lovers. There is a further detail sometimes added to the story, which relates that they twisted their hair together and precipitated themselves from the cliffs.



JEBEL EL BENÂT, "GIRLS' MOUNTAIN."
Stands some seven miles to the north of Serbâl.

The vestiges of the ancient city are most conspicuous on the mound already mentioned, though the hillsides are dotted over with ruined houses, while on the rugged slopes to the east of the valley, which makes one of its sharpest bends soon after passing El Maharrad, are extensive

remains of what might have been a suburb of Pharan. It may be well to sum up the scraps of information which we have about this city. (1) As to the present name: the difficulty the Arabs have in pronouncing the letter P explains the substitution of Fâran for Paran or Pharan. Fâran might easily degenerate into Feirân, the "Valley of Mice," which again

WÂDY FEIRÂN.

*Acacia seyal* is the same as the shittim-tree. The Arabs lop these trees for charcoal, &c., in the cruellest and most unscientific manner.

might have its origin in the resemblance of the monkish cells and tombs on a large scale to the burrows of the field mice or jerboas. (2) The Hebrew word Rephidim means "Rest." If we cannot connect the names Pharan and Rephidim together, we may, without asking too much, suppose that Pharan is taken from some Amalekite name for the famous oasis. (3) That Pharan was a well-known place we have the evidence of Eusebius and Jerome (circa A.D. 330

JEBEL TÂHÚNEH, THE "MOUNTAIN OF THE WINDMILL."
Opposite Serbâl, on the north side of the Feirân valley. The ruined city Pharan, or Feirân, lies at its foot.

—400). Eusebius' work, "Onomasticon Urbium et Locorum SS.," was written in Greek and subsequently translated by Jerome with changes and enlargements. But besides this, Ptolemy the geographer, who lived in the time of the Antonines, in his description of the peninsula, is now supposed, notwithstanding other inaccuracies and miscalculations, to be accurate in his description of an inland town Pharan having a communication with the sea, probably at Râs Abu Zenîmeh, where was an altar and shrine built by the Greeks in honour of Poseidon. With this Pharan too there is mention of palm-groves. (4) Whichever of the two, Jebel Mûsa or

Jebel Serbâl, be the Mountain of the Law (our commonly accepted Sinai), it could not be that Moses would have left in his rear a place like Feirân, the most fertile spot in the peninsula, which as such must have been occupied by some colony of Amalekites, besides being probably the most hallowed of their sanctuaries. Even were we to allow that the great battle did not take place at Feirân, but at El Watiyeh in the Wâdy es Sheikh, it would still be most unnatural that no mention should be made of an encampment at Feirân, marked out naturally to be a camping ground for a host of people—journeying as were the Israelites. And these conventual buildings and the remains of the churches and the hermits' cells—what date shall we assign to them? There is an old make-up story which tells us that the town of Pharan was converted to Christianity in the middle of the fourth century. When Justinian, in A.D. 527, countenanced the foundation of a convent at Jebel Músa, he did not break new ground. A chapel, ascribed to the Empress Helena, had been built there in years long passed away, and the small conventual establishment attached to it seems to have been regarded as an outpost resting on the church at Pharan for support, and terribly exposed to the attacks of the Saracens. The cause of the decline of Pharan and the growth of the monasteries of Mount Sinai is not very clear, but there is amongst the subscriptions at the council of Constantinople, A.D. 536, the name of Theonas, a presbyter and legate of the holy Mount Sinai, the desert Raithu, and the holy church at *Pharan*.

Of the old monastic establishment on El Maharrad there are the foundations, part of the walls of its church, the remains of a tower, and a few broken columns and entablatures. Amongst the latter Professor Palmer found a stone with a carved representation of a seated man with his arms raised, probably meant to be Moses at the battle of Rephidim. Many of the stones of the church are to be found in the walls of the small houses of roughest construction which rise up on all sides, specially on the other side of the valley. The hill-tops abound with small square *nâwâmîs*, which may have been hermitages and graves together. In one, opened by Professor Palmer, were traces of a coarse shroud and wooden coffin. Above the body was a flat stone forming a shelf in the upper part of the tomb, but this did not seem to have been used for a second interment. The bodies in these *nâwâmîs* are buried east and west. The burying-ground of the present little Arab village is beautifully situated, secluded in the palm-grove a little way from the stream. One grave is ornamented with a white marble tombstone carved in a lily pattern, evidently brought from the ruins of the convent church. In the cemetery is the tomb of Sheikh Abu Shebîb, the patron saint of the district. It is a small stone building, and on the actual tomb is a cotton pall. To swear by this tomb is considered so solemn an oath as to be clear proof of a man's innocence. Abu Shebîb is reported to have appeared to a hunter who broke his leg on Jebel el Benât and to have conveyed him safely to his own home, and further to have demanded bakhshish in the shape of a white-faced sheep to be offered yearly at his tomb. The Arab regards his patron saint with the same reverence which the Neapolitan shows to St. Januarius. In every so-called village of the Arabs there is a consecrated shittim (acacia) tree, whose branches are not hacked and

lopped as is the case with other like trees. The tree is left to grow naturally, and the pods even (which when ripe form a favourite food for the camels) are only shaken off after the permission of the saint has been asked at his tomb.

Wâdy 'Aleyât, that right-arm valley which stretches down from Serbâl, is filled with dark green acacia-trees, and at the upper end are small groves of palm. Here, from beneath a great white boulder, rises a tiny mountain stream amidst moss and fern. Near this spot the Arabs point out a hole, in which they say that once a large treasure was discovered by a Maghrabí soothsayer; just as they say that on El Maharrad, from the cave or well on the north side there is communication with vaults beneath the convent ruins, where there are stores of wheat and treasures of immense wealth. Half-way up the valley there is, as at Sinai, a mountain called Jebel Moneijâh —the "Mount of the Conference." To this mount the Arabs attach more sanctity than to Serbâl itself, for every year they sacrifice to Moses on it. There is an enclosure of rough stones on the summit where they deposit votive offerings, beads, human hair, camel ropes, &c. A little before one turns out of the way in order to climb Jebel Moneijâh, on the western side, is the mouth of a valley called Nakheleh. It is possible by following it to cross over the watershed into Wady 'Ajeleh. There are remains also of an ancient causeway, along the sides of which are to be seen a number of Sinaitic inscriptions. Wâdy 'Ajeleh

A SPRING IN WÂDY FEIRÂN.
To the Bedawin of Sinai, Feirân realises Paradise.

is more rough and steep than Wâdy 'Aleyât, and much less picturesque. There are on one of its farther mountains the remains of a building, probably a fort. This Professor Palmer thinks may be the Jebel Latrum, to which the monks of the whole district were wont to retreat when harassed by the Saracens. The position is a strong one, and it seems that in addition to other defences large stones have been placed so that they could be hurled down easily on the advance of a hostile force. From the source of the little stream in Wâdy 'Aleyât it will take three hours to reach a ridge between the two highest of the many peaks of Serbâl. Five peaks the Arabs count. They rise so column-like from the broken ground, which seems to form the mountain base, as to appear inaccessible from the starting-place. Wâdy Abu Hamad ("Valley of the Father of Wild Figs"—there are a few stunted fig-trees in the ravine) is the easiest course to follow; though easy is a purely relative term. Three-quarters of an hour will bring one, over smooth blocks of granite whose coarse grain affords just a little foot-hold, and at the last helped on by loose stones arranged in some sort of path—(fashioned by human hands, yesterday or two thousand or three thousand years ago, of Bedawy, or of monk, or of Amalekite, or of Egyptian—who shall say?)—with a final scramble up a narrow natural chimney, to the summit.

"The topmost peak of Serbâl," says Professor Palmer, "consists of a series of rounded crags separated by deep and rugged ravines, and commanding a fine view of the country around: (the Red Sea bounded by the Egyptian hills in the hazy distance—the awful waste of El Gâ'ah to the south, with the village and grove of Tor like a dark line drawn with a chalk on the shore—to the east the Sinai group, the peaks of Jebel Katarína, and beyond those again Jebel Umm Shomer). The highest point is called El Madhawwa (the 'Lighthouse,') and is covered, as well as the roads leading up to it, with Sinaitic inscriptions. Some of these have been executed in white paint or whitewash, and owing to their sheltered position on the walls of a cavern have perfectly withstood the ravages of time. On the lower of the two bluffs of which the summit consists is a ring of stones, the remains of an erection on which beacon-fires were lighted at the approach of invaders, or other danger, when Sinai was better populated than it is now." The word Serbâl is not a corruption of Ser Ba'al (Lord Baal), and the mountain was not even consecrated, as far as we know, to Baal worship, as was Hermon. Nor has the name anything to do with the Indian god Shiva. The word signifies simply "a shirt," and is often used by the Arabic writers to describe a body of water pouring over such smooth rounded surfaces as those composing the summit of this mountain. We ourselves use the expression "a sheet of water;" and one can fancy the tops of Serbâl with a light covering of thin snow or ice glittering in the sun like a great white shirt, and so suggesting a proper name whereby to distinguish it.

The southern (seaward) side of Serbâl, though it has no open valley like Wâdy Feirân, would be the most familiar to the early Christian world and to the pilgrims of the Middle Ages. Unless one were anxious to follow the steps of the Israelites, the natural way to reach the two rival mountains, Serbâl and Jebel Músa, would be from the port of Tor. A

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J. D. WOLFSWARD. PINXT. S. BRADSHAW. SCULPT.

MT SERBÂL — FROM WÂDY FEIRÂN.

WÂDY FEIRÂN.

Professor Palmer describes the walk through Wâdy Feirân, with its shade of palms, tamarisks, and sidr-trees, and with its running water, as one of the most delightful in Sinai.

very little expenditure of time and money would make a small harbour here, and drain the marshy ground. At one time it must have had a certain amount of life and bustle, and to this the chapels and cells in the hills behind the town bear witness. The hot springs, the pleasant palm-groves, the comparative propinquity to Egypt—these combine to make Tor not an unlikely place to which pilgrims and anchorites would resort. On the opposite coast of the Red Sea, some ten or fifteen miles inland and fifty miles to the north-west, are the famous convents of St. Anthony and St. Paul. There is every reason to suppose that we may place the regular constitution of the monastic order at the close of the third century, and that Egypt was the cradle of monasticism in its Christian garb. Monasticism was not the invention but the *inheritance* of Christianity. The human mind seems always to have had a desire to flee away to the wilderness and be at rest. Retirement and solitude, quite apart from any teaching of Christianity, have again and again, at different ages and in different climates, suggested themselves as the safer conditions under which frail man may be able to obtain conquest over self, and attain to the perfection of God. It does not matter whether the result has been successful, or whether men—who have thus retired from the world—have lost sight of the discipline which God has ordained for us by stationing us *in* the world. The fact remains that to a variety of dispositions, and under the most opposed circumstances of life, separation from the world has suggested itself as the only panacea for the diseases of the soul.

Look at the Buddhist order of mendicants; call to mind the life of Elijah, the vows of the Nazarites, the story of Jonadab the son of Rechab, the influence of Essenes and Therapeutæ—the monks of Judaism! At far-off places in the history of humanity will be found abundant proofs of the widespread conviction that withdrawal from the world is the first step towards mastery of self. From the cell of the anchorite to the stately building of the monastery the transition is easy! The struggles of "the athletes of penitence" drew disciples not only in the times of persecution, when the far-off caves inhabited by holy men might serve as a refuge, but much more in the time of the Church's peace. The luxury and the profligacy of the Roman empire seemed a worse enemy than the cruelty of tyrants. The one was open, visible, fearful; the other secret, gentle, honey-mouthed, captivating in form and habit. The one was like the blast and roar of a terrible tempest, the other like the soft scented breeze of summer evenings. Take then the history of Anthony, "the father of asceticism,"—young, rich, noble, of honourable Christian parentage, living in the balmy climate of Upper Egypt. More than one thousand six hundred years ago he chanced to hear read in church the words of the Gospel, "If thou wouldest be perfect, go, sell that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me!" He applied the words to himself. His parents being dead, he made provision for his only and dependent sister, and sold his estate. Giving the price of it to the poor, he plunged into the desert to work out his own salvation. By macerations, fasting, prayer (prayer as long as the night), incessantly struggling against the devil and the flesh, he overcame at last the enemy which wars against the spirit. Twenty years he spent near the Nile, now shut up in a ruined castle for months together with only bread and water

to sustain him—now issuing forth to instruct and encourage the multitudes who flocked to hear him. Pilgrims of all nations—as of old the people brought from every town and village their sick and dying ones to the feet of Jesus—brought to him the troubles of their souls to be remedied. The subtle philosopher came with his perplexity and doubt to find not an ignorant recluse, but a man ingenious and eloquent, well able to explain and to defend the mighty mystery of Redemption. Thus he became the head and chief of the anchorites of the Thebaid. His next work was to fashion these disciples into cœnobites (from *κοινός*, "common," and *βιόω*,

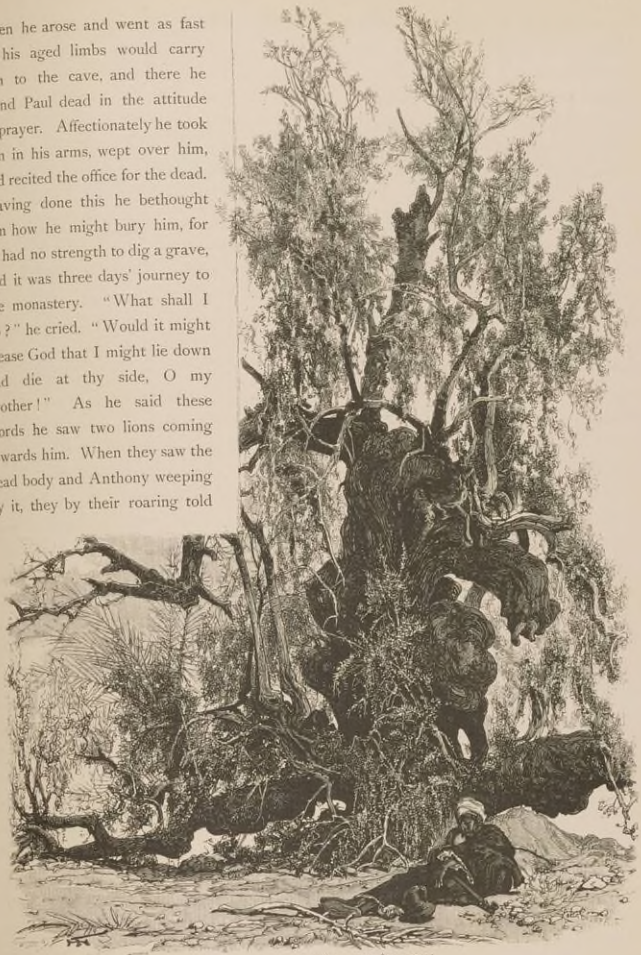
"EL MAHARRAD," PHARAN (FEIRÂN).
These ruins are all that remain of the great church and old monastic establishment of Pharan. The Bedawin grow small patches of maize, bearded wheat, and tobacco about here.

"to live"), for he saw the necessity of substituting for a life of isolation that life in common—so difficult to endure, but which is so wholesome for the breaking down of pride and the bringing into active being religious fervour. Anthony's influence was great even with Constantine, who, as well as his sons, wrote to him as to a father, recommending to him the destinies of the new Rome. During Maximin's (A.D. 311) persecution he went down to Alexandria to comfort and encourage the martyrs there; and again he paid the great commercial city a visit at the request of his friend Athanasius in A.D. 335, in order to preach against the Arians. But his stay could not have been long, for "fish die," said he, "when

they are drawn to land, and monks lose their strength in towns; let us return quickly to our mountains, like fish to the water."

The name of St. Paul the hermit is inseparably connected with St. Anthony's. Seventy years had Anthony lived in the Thebaid, and the thought began to steal over him that no one before had ever lived such a life of solitude and self-devotion. But in the night's silence he heard a voice, "There is one holier than thou art, for Paul the hermit has served God in solitude and penance for ninety years!" On waking, Anthony determined to go and seek this Paul. As he journeyed across the desert he met a creature, half man half horse—a centaur, of whom he asked the way. Further on in a deep valley he met a satyr. The satyr bowed before him and said, "I am one of those creatures who haunt the woods and fields, and who are worshipped by the blind Gentiles as gods. But we are mortals, as thou knowest; and I come to beseech thee to pray for me and my people to thy God, who is my God and the God of all." When Anthony heard these words of the satyr the tears ran down his venerable face, and he stretched out his hand towards Thebes and cried, "Such be your gods, O ye pagans! Woe unto you when such as these confess the name of Christ, whom ye, blind and perverse generation, deny!" At length on the third day he reached a cavern overhung by wild and savage rocks, with a palm near and a fountain trickling at its roots. There he found the hermit Paul, to whom this cave had been a home for near ninety years. Paul would hardly break his solitude to receive St. Anthony. At length he admitted him, and the two aged men held long communion with each other beneath the shade of the palm-tree. While they talked on the state of the world and of idolatry in the presence of Christianity, time was forgotten. There came, however, a raven and alighted on the tree; then after a little while the bird flew away—but to return, carrying in his beak a small loaf which he dropped between them. Paul lifted up his eyes and blessed the goodness of God, and said, "For sixty years every day hath this raven brought me half a loaf, but because thou art come, my brother, lo! the portion is doubled, and we are fed as Elijah was in the wilderness." Then they ate, and drank of the water of the fountain, and returned thanks. After this Paul said to Anthony, "My brother, God hath sent thee here that thou mightest receive my last breath and bury me. Go, return to thy dwelling, bring here the cloak which was given thee by that holy bishop Athanasius, wrap me in it, and lay me in the earth." Anthony was amazed, for the gift of this cloak some years before was unknown to every one. He could only do as Paul begged him; so kissing him he returned to his monastery. Arrived there he took down the cloak and hastened on his way back, fearful lest in the meanwhile Paul might have died. When he was three hours' journey from the cave he suddenly heard a sound of ravishing music. Looking up he beheld the spirit of Paul, bright as a star and white as the driven snow, carried up to heaven by the prophets and apostles and a company of angels, who were singing hymns of triumph as they bore him through the air. When all had disappeared, Anthony fell on his face and wept, and threw dust on his head, exclaiming, "Alas, Paul! alas, my brother! why hast thou left me? Why have I known thee so late, to lose thee so early?"

Then he arose and went as fast as his aged limbs would carry him to the cave, and there he found Paul dead in the attitude of prayer. Affectionately he took him in his arms, wept over him, and recited the office for the dead. Having done this he bethought him how he might bury him, for he had no strength to dig a grave, and it was three days' journey to the monastery. "What shall I do?" he cried. "Would it might please God that I might lie down and die at thy side, O my brother!" As he said these words he saw two lions coming towards him. When they saw the dead body and Anthony weeping by it, they by their roaring told



TAMARISK-TREE, WÂDY FEIRÂN, SINAI.

"And the sleep in the dried river channel, where bulrushes tell
That the water was wont to go warbling so softly and well."—BROWNING'S "SAUL."

forth their sympathy, and began with their paws to scoop out a grave. When Anthony saw this he was awe-struck, and blessed them, saying, "O Lord, without whose divine providence no leaf can stir upon the tree, no little bird fall to the ground, bless these creatures according to their nature, who have thus honoured the dead!" Then Anthony took up the corpse, wrapped it in the cloak of St. Athanasius, and laid it reverently in the grave.

After this Anthony lived fourteen years, till his one hundred and fifth year. Feeling at length that his end was near, he summoned his disciples and took leave of them. With a few monks he retired to a more solitary place. There, having exacted of them a promise that they would not reveal the place of his burial, whilst they prayed around him, he gently drew his last breath.

It is to St. Anthony, then, "the father of abbots," and to St. Paul the hermit, that the two monasteries are dedicated. The Dayr Mar Antonios is reached from the Nile by following a broad valley called Wâdy el Arraba, which opens out nearly opposite Benisooéf. This valley takes its name from the carts (âraba or âroba, "plaustrum") which used to carry the provisions to the two monasteries—but there is also a tradition that it is so called from the chariots of Pharaoh, who pursued the Israelites down this valley as they fled away to the Red Sea. The monastery claims to be the oldest in Egypt. The lofty walls enclose an irregular pile of buildings, as well as a large garden where there are date-palms, carob-trees, &c., and an abundance of vegetables—for the garden is well watered from a spring which bursts out from the rock behind the convent. In this spring Miriam, Moses' sister, is said to have bathed at the time of the Exodus. There are some five or six churches in the convent and a large twelve-domed church in the garden; in one of these, dedicated to St. Anthony, there are some very old and curious frescoes. High up in the cliff is the Cave of St. Anthony, from which there is a grand view of the Egyptian desert, the Red Sea, and the Sinaitic range beyond. How often in this desert among these barren wastes must have ascended to heaven the evening hymn and the vesper prayer of monks and hermits. "Everywhere, all at once," suggests Montalembert, "the air echoed the hymns, the prayers, the songs pious and solemn, tender and joyous, of these champions of the soul and conquerors of the desert. . . . . then the traveller, the pilgrim, and especially the new convert stood still—lost in emotion and transported with the sounds of that sublime concert—and would cry aloud, "Behold, this is Paradise!"

From Egypt the monastic spirit overflowed into Arabia, Syria, and Palestine. Sinai was occupied by hermits and monks almost as soon as the Thebaid. The mountain where God gave His law to Moses was the scene of a constant struggle between Saracen or Arab and monk. But the destroyers tired sooner than the monks, and in a measure became converted by the gentle teaching of St. Nilus—the great monastic coloniser of Mount Sinai—and by the example set them in the piety of his followers.

Tor, with its oasis, seems, as we have said, to have been chosen by the monks for their chief landing-place. Close down to the shore, and also in the hills to the north, are the remains of

hermits' cells. In some the plaster adheres to the walls, and here and there a cross with an inscription tells the story of the life of a former occupier. The march across the plain to the mouth of Wâdy Hebrân, about eighteen miles, is a tiring one. At the entrance of the

ALLUVIAL DEPOSITS, WÂDY FEIRÂN.
These strange deposits serve as a "meter" to measure the height to which the Feirân stream may once have reached. At Philæ, &c., in the valley of the Nile, the same deposits may be observed.

valley are seen some Sinaitic inscriptions, which suggest their same origin with those in Wâdy Mukatteb. The scenery now becomes more imposing, and there are groups of palms, tamarisk-trees, and seyals fringing the course of the half-hidden stream. The late 'Abbâs Pasha, whose unfinished palace is so conspicuous from Jebel Músa—built on the near summit of Jebel Tíníyeh,—commenced a road from Tor to Sinai. Some portions remain,

having survived neglect and floods. To any one inexperienced it would not seem a difficult matter to carry a mountain road through Wâdy Hebrân, and so, penetrating by Nagb Hawa, make on one hand the Sinai group accessible, and open out, on the other hand, through Wâdy Soláf the Serbâl district. Apart from all biblical and historical associations, the scenery of the peninsula is very fine, the air is delicious, and, if the desert journeys could be shortened by the selection of better routes, the surroundings of travel are not over-fatiguing.

Sinai as it was in the days of—what we may term—the Monkish Invasion and Occupation, and Sinai as it is, must be very different! Most countries change for the better, cultivation improves, locomotion is made easier, intercourse with the outside world is encouraged; *but* in the Sinaitic peninsula everything has been reversed. It would be rash to say that these valleys were ever filled with an exuberance of life even in early Christian times, or that colonies of monks and the renowned sanctity of certain places made the land ring with the sound of busy commerce or the activity of thriving industries; but there was movement, and there was some attempt to make the "desert rejoice and blossom as the rose!"

The watershed of Wâdy Hebrân, where is a vast collection of the primitive dwellings (*nâwâmîs*) of a forgotten people, is some eight or nine miles from the entrance of the valley. A fine view is obtained from it of Serbâl, with Jebel Shinénîr as a supporting buttress, and Beidhat Umm Tâkhah as its near neighbour. A visit to the conventual ruins in Wâdy Sigilliyeh shows one the scenery of the southern side of Serbâl, and completes the circuit of the monastic establishments of which that mountain is the centre. Burckhardt did not visit these ruins, but heard that they were spacious and well built, and that there was in them a well, plentifully supplied with water. Lepsius thinks that the convent in Wâdy Sigilliyeh, from which a rock road led to Feirân, constructed with much skill and difficulty, is probably the oldest and, perhaps, the most important in the peninsula.

Professor Palmer encamped in Wâdy er Rimm — which descends into the great trunk valley Wâdy Soláf, near a favourite camping ground of the Towarah Arabs. The traces of the camel-road, made centuries ago by the men who had probably been trained by the advice and example of St. Anthony himself in the Thebaid, are almost destroyed, and a rough walk must be endured before the head of the valley is gained. Hence is seen the corresponding valley, most difficult of access, at the base of a precipice twelve hundred feet high, into which the road must have led so as to reach the Sigilliyeh convents.—"After a few yards of loose gravel we came upon a portion of the old road, composed of large blocks of granite arranged as a flight of steps, but this presently terminated in an abrupt precipice, where the floods had broken away the ground, and it was at least half an hour before we could find a practicable path. Arrived at the bottom we found another admirably constructed road, quite a model of engineering skill, which ran along the shoulder of the opposite mountain, and shortly brought us to our destination. Here we stood upon the brow of a hill looking down into a deep ravine filled with palm and other trees indicating the presence of a living stream of water, and amidst the verdure were the walls of a small convent—the ruins which

we were seeking. Descending into the ravine we made a careful examination of these, and then partially retracing our steps we went out on to a projecting spur of the hill and found behind it another glen, still wilder and more beautiful than that which we had left, and also filled with ruined monkish dwellings and garden walls. Looking across the wâdy, too, we saw a third ravine, with palm-trees and tall rushes peeping above its winding walls, and evidently containing similar dwellings to those beneath us, since the road along the mountain-side leading to it was the counterpart of that by which we had ourselves reached the ruins. Southward was the Wâdy Sigillíyeh—far away in the distance could be seen the narrow gorge whose difficulties we had so recently experienced—and beyond this stretched the burning plain El Gâ'ah. A more wildly picturesque and secluded retreat than this it would be difficult to conceive, and with the luxuriant vegetation that fills the wâdy bed, and the almost inaccessible nature of the place, it forms the very ideal of a Bedawí 'Happy Vale.' Judging from the fact that we found numerous Sinaitic inscriptions at the bottom of the pass in Wâdy er Rimm, that is, as far as camels could have been brought when the roads were better kept, and none at all after the part at which the real difficulties of the ascent commence, I should conclude that the Saracen carriers gave in at this point, allowing the worthy monks to fetch their stores over the mountains themselves, and were occupied in the interval with carving their autographs upon the rocks, since no other mischief was left for their idle hands to do." ("Desert of the Exodus," p. 225.)

Here, then, in a space measuring less than a square mile, are situated the ruins of three convents. By the difficult gorge leading from the plain into Wâdy Sigillíyeh, and by this road through Wâdy er Rimm, are the only apparent approaches to them. In Principal Tulloch's "Pascal" there is a description of Port Royal, which, far removed, indeed, by its nobler associations, suggests to us something of the life which *should* have animated the recluses of Jebel Serbâl. "The famous valley of Port Royal lay before us. It was a quiet and peaceful, yet gloomy scene. The seclusion was perfect. No hum of cheerful industry enlivened the desolate space. An air rather as of long-continued neglect rested on ruined garden and terraces, on farmhouse and dovecot, and the remains as of a chapel nearer at hand. The more minutely the eye took in the scene, the more sad seemed its wasted recesses and the few monuments of its departed glories. The stillness as of a buried past lay all about, and it required an effort of imagination to people the valley with the sacred activities of the seventeenth century. A rough wooden enclosure has been erected on the site of the high altar, surmounted by a cross. . . . . It was here alone that the recluses from the neighbouring Grange met the sainted sisterhood, and mingled with them the prayers and tears of penitence. Otherwise they dwelt apart each in diligent privacy, intent on their works of education or of charity. All the ruin and decay and somewhat dreary sadness of the scene could not weaken the life of thought and faith and hope and love that had once breathed there; and never before had I felt so deeply the enduring reality of the spiritual heroism and self-sacrifice, the glory of suffering and of goodness, that had made the spot so memorable!"

Breaking up the camp at Feirân with no slight regret, and hungrily longing to penetrate those recesses which have yet to be explored, we resume our march towards Sinai and Jebel Músa. The valley is narrow, and for some distance its bed is filled with groves of fine tamarisks, palms, and nebbuk trees. Bulbuls (nearly allied to our thrush, and rivals in song of the nightingale) are flitting about from branch to branch, making sweet music: while the softness of the air fascinates one into forgetfulness of the gloomy desert which encloses this Bedawîn paradise (see page 313). A tamarisk can be exceedingly picturesque. I, for my part, had no conception that it ever grew to such a size, knowing it only as a useful hedge-tree

EL BUWEIB, THE "GATE" OF FEIRÂN.
A narrow passage between the rocks, about one hundred feet long by twenty wide.

in the sandy district of Cornwall and the southern parts of England. Its feathery foliage, which seems so insignificant in the small shrub, groups and arranges itself in a variety of graceful forms, which are set off by the contrasted colouring of the leaf-stem and trunk; and when the tree is in blossom in spring the spikes of light pink bloom must add a further charm to its appearance. Through this grove, which fills up the valley bed for some miles, the traveller passes on under Jebel Moneijâh, and gradually works eastward of Serbâl.—Are we then leaving the true Sinai—the Mount of God—and the scene of the proclamation of the Law, or are we really following the track of the Israelites, and taking a proper course for the mountain on which God

had told Moses, when He appeared to him in the bush, that Israel should worship Him? The three main considerations which must be kept in view in any attempt—with our present knowledge—to decide whether Jebel Músa or Jebel Serbâl be the "Mount of God," or, as we generally term it, "Sinai," are—(1) tradition; (2) geographical position as to the requirements of the biblical account of the great march of the Israelites through the Peninsula, and as to the references to Horeb and Sinai in other parts of the Bible; (3) the capacities of the ground.—One does not expect to be able to exhibit any new arguments, or to make any suggestion by which old athletes on this old battle-ground of biblical topography will be induced to desert their opinions. This were presumptuous! It may be worth noticing, however, that if Serbâl be the true Sinai, there is no reason at all why the Israelites should have journeyed farther south to Jebel Músa.

(1.) As to the traditions:—we have already considered many of them at different stages of our journey, and have seen that, however mixed be the Arab and Mohammadan traditions about Moses, they still do hold in solution, as it were, very ancient Jewish folk-lore. Some of these stories have been manipulated by the monks, and thus fashioned have been cunningly and carefully nurtured by them in the Arab mind, in order that a certain magical atmosphere may be shed round the convent, so as to restrain the lawless instincts of the Bedawín. Josephus ("Antiq." ii. 12) speaks of Mount Sinai as being regarded with awe from the rumour that *God dwelt there*, and as being the highest of all the mountains in that country,—the whole passage having reference to Moses driving up Jethro's sheep to feed on the slopes of Sinai, a pasturage which had ever been deemed sacred. Suppose that this mountain "Sinai" was Serbâl:—Moses, then, would drive his sheep through the upper portion of Wâdy Feirân, right into the home of the Amalekites, and in their face would turn up Wâdy 'Aleyât to pasture them on the rare herbage of Serbâl; for the city of Jethro's tribe in Midian is placed, it must be remembered, by Josephus on the Red Sea! We have already seen that Pharan as a centre, with its palm-groves, was a known place in the time of Ptolemy Philadelphus (circ. B.C. 280): that it was a chief city of the ancient Amalekites is a matter of conjecture certainly—but there are plausible grounds for the conjecture. There is no evidence, on the other hand, that the valleys of Jebel Músa were ever inhabited to any great extent; rather the reverse. Its seclusion and its comparative isolation therefore would not unnaturally foster the belief that some peculiar sanctity attached to the mountain.

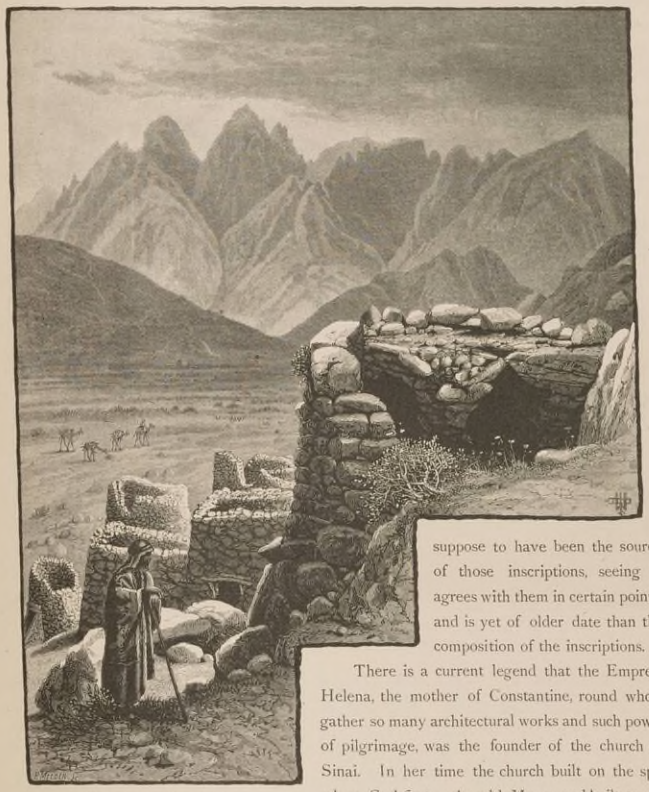
Two inscriptions on marble exist at the convent itself referring to the foundation of the building. They are let into the external wall facing the garden; one is in Greek, the other in Arabic. These two inscriptions relate, with some variation, that, "The holy convent of Mount Sinai, where God spoke to Moses, was built from the foundation by Justinian, the lowly king of the Romans (dependent on God, and hoping in the promise of his Lord), in eternal remembrance of himself and of his consort, Theodora. It was completed in the thirtieth year of his reign, and he placed a chief in the same, one of the name of Dulas, in the year 6021 since Adam, 521 since Christ." These inscriptions are not more than seven or eight hundred years

old.—But there is also another tablet, with an ornamental Roman margin. Although the inscription is illegible, it is apparently the oldest record in the building, and possibly the other two tablets are translations, or at any rate memoranda, of its contents. Not much stress is to be laid on these inscriptions!—There is an account, however, of the foundation of the convent in the Annals of Eutychius, Patriarch of Alexandria in the latter half of the ninth century, which is given at length by Robinson. In this there is a great deal of information; not conclusive, indeed, but of such a nature that one cannot help thinking that there may be something in the traditions imbedded therein. He describes the monks of Mount Sinai as imploring Justinian to build them a convent, that so they might have a common home, and be protected from the wandering sons of Ishmael. The monks speak of themselves as living scattered upon the

WÂDY SOLIEF OR SOLÂF, SINAI.
In the foreground is a shittim-tree, whose branches the Arabs are lopping off in the roughest fashion for their camels and for fuel.

mountains and in the valleys round the sacred bush "out of which God—His name be praised—spoke with Moses." The Patriarch states that the monks had constructed a tower of refuge above the bush, and that in it was the church of St. Mary. This tower and the bush, according to the description, were in a narrow place between two mountains where fountains of water sprang up. The Emperor's legate built the convent so as to include the tower,—but in such a position that any one on the top of the mountain could throw a stone into the midst of the convent. This is doubtless a spiteful exaggeration:—he placed it in that position because of the propinquity of the bush, and because there was a necessity put on him to avoid blocking up the valley and so preventing the rush of the torrents. He also built a chapel on the top of the mountain on the spot where Moses received the Law. The name of the first prior is

mentioned here likewise as Daula (Dulas). Such evidence as this is no more decisive than that of the inscription in the convent wall; but possibly it may tally with some tradition which we may



NÂWÂMÍS IN WÂDY SOLÂF.

*Nâwâmîs* (singular *nâmûs*), or "mosquito houses," are *said* by the Arabs to have been built by the Israelites as a shelter from a heaven-sent plague of mosquitoes!

suppose to have been the source of those inscriptions, seeing it agrees with them in certain points, and is yet of older date than the composition of the inscriptions.

There is a current legend that the Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine, round whom gather so many architectural works and such power of pilgrimage, was the founder of the church on Sinai. In her time the church built on the spot where God first spake with Moses, and built, too, to commemorate that crisis in the history of man, was dedicated probably to Mary the mother of God. The burning bush was, and is still, not an uncommon symbol of the Incarnation, and the church built on the holy ground of God's revelation to Moses would not be unfitly dedicated to her

of whom was born the Saviour of the world. The chain of evidence is weak; for the Annals of Eutychius (he wrote about A.D. 932—953) are somewhat fabulous.—Still there is no higher authority in favour of Jebel Serbâl being the scene of this momentous event. Lepsius, a fierce advocate for Jebel Serbâl, points out that the testimony of Procopius, the contemporary historian of Justinian, a dexterous but by no means hearty admirer of the Emperor, should be considered valuable * in any question of Justinian's buildings on Jebel Músa. Procopius tells us that "Justinian built a church to the mother of God, not on the summit of the mountain, but a considerable way below it." And the spot hereby indicated is, Lepsius surmises, the plain in the hollow of the saddle between Jebel Músa and Rás Sufsâfeh, where Elijah's chapel now stands near the famous cypress-tree. Quite apart from this church Justinian built, at the foot

BEIDHAT UMM TÂKHAH, A NEIGHBOUR OF MOUNT SERBÂL.
In the foreground is the usual scene of preparation for a night's bivouac.

of the mountain, a very strong castle in order to check the incursions of the wandering sons of Ishmael referred to in the monks' petition to the Emperor. We have, then, references to three churches on Jebel Músa: (1) Helena's church or chapel of St. Mary near the bush, and protected by, if not enclosed within, the tower; (2) the church or chapel on the top of the mountain, built by the legate of Justinian; (3) the church which Procopius says Justinian built a considerable way below the summit—(a convent having been built near the bush and the old tower). There is, however, another group of traditions, already referred to, which gives some little weight to the testimony connecting the great event of Moses' life with

* Dean Stanley says of the Emperor Justinian and his wife: "Two great and wicked sovereigns, than whom perhaps few could be named who had broken more completely every one of the laws which have given to Sinai its eternal sacredness."

this mountain. Professor Palmer has cleverly pieced together and arranged for us the real story of the mark of the camel's foot near the summit of Jebel Músa, which is an object of such peculiar veneration amongst the Bedawín.* There is of course a first prejudice to be got over—for every one supposes that the name of the rock-mark, Athar Nágat en Nebí, "the footprint of the Prophet's she-camel," must refer to Mohammad, and also to his night journey to heaven. But the marvellous animal he used for his marvellous journey was Borák. Prophets, it is said, were wont to use that kind of animal for their peregrinations. Partly ass, partly mule, it had the face of a man and the body of a horse. Milk-white was its colour; its mane was of the finest pearls, its ears emeralds, and its eyes sparkling jacinths. Its whole body, the wings with which it was furnished, and its flowing tail, bristled with the richest jewellery. Of its swiftness, not only its name, which signifies "Lightning," but the events of Mohammad's journey are sufficient proof. The hollow in the rock may be artificial, as the monks declared it was to the prefect of the Franciscan convent at Cairo, who visited them in the eighteenth century; but it has a very natural appearance, although the eye must be educated to perceive at once the shape of a *camel's foot*. In the Cor'ân, however, Mohammad has a legend that a certain prophet Sâleh, a messenger of God to an incorrigibly impious tribe named Thamúd, gave them, on their importunity, a sign of his mission by causing a she-camel, big with young, to come forth from a rock. This Nebí Sâleh of the Cor'ân is, we may conclude, the Nebí Sâleh of Wâdy es Sheikh, whose tomb is the great shrine of the religious worship of the Bedawín of the peninsula; and further we may argue that the prophet of the camel's foot-print on the summit of Jebel Músa is Nebí Sâleh of the Cor'ân and of the adjacent valley, and that the Thamúdites, the tribe to which Nebí Sâleh himself belonged, were a primitive people, the early inhabitants of Sinai.

But who was Nebí Sâleh? The word Sâleh is connected with "righteous," and for a moment one thinks of Melchizedek, King of Salem. But pass this by. The Bedawy has but a vague idea as to the individuality of Moses, Elias, or Sâleh. When one looks at the sign given, and considers, too, the veneration in which Nebí Sâleh is held, may it not be conceivable that Sâleh is Moses himself? The stories in the Cor'ân which surround the miracle worked by Sâleh are childish and ridiculous; still it is well to note the stricken rock after prayer producing a live camel, the greatest of Bedawy blessings,—the subsequent rebellion of the people to whom the prophet addressed his warnings,—and the terrible destruction sent by God upon them.

The Cor'ân says that the tribe of Thamúd inhabited Hejer, a mountainous district, where they had cut out for themselves habitations in the rocks. It is described as a territory in the province of Hejaz, between Medina and Syria,—a loose definition, but applicable to the country on the east coast of the Gulf of Akabah,—and consequently very little removed from the peninsula proper. From the commentaries on the Cor'ân we gather that the Thamúdites defied Sâleh

* The Bedawin girls, when tending their flocks on these mountains, will often milk their goats into it, as being a sure means of obtaining increase and prosperity. The Arabs sometimes say that this mark is the impress of the dromedary on which Moses rode up and down the long ascent to Jebel Músa.

to bring down on them the vengeance he had denounced for their impiety. He had told them, after they killed the miraculous camel, that on the morrow their faces should become yellow, the next day red, and the third day black, and that on the fourth God's vengeance should light on them. The first three signs happened, and the people at once prepared to put Sâleh to death. God delivered him from them and sent him to Palestine. Some add that he died

TARFAH OR TAMARISK GROVE, WÂDY ES SHEIKH.
This fine grove is called Tarfat el Gidarain. The wády itself cuts through the granitic wall which fences in Sinai.

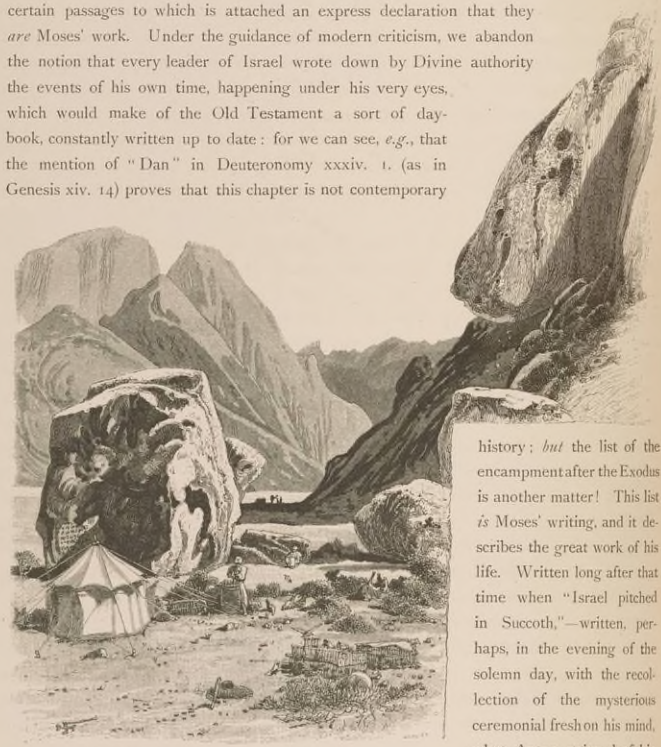
at Ṛamleh, and was buried at the spot where the White Mosque stands, to which is attached the famous tower. Mohammadan geography is not trustworthy: no traditions connected with Sâleh have taken root at Ramleh. One may therefore credit the welí in Wâdy es Sheikh (the valley itself probably acquired its designation from him) with being the real tomb or cenotaph of the prophet Sâleh, the great saint of the Bedawín, who had retired to this valley from Hejer.

In the expedition of Tabûc, a town situated on the route to Damascus, which Mohammad undertook against the inclination of his people, "who inclined heavily towards the earth," the Prophet passed by Hejer, the country of the ancient Thamûdites. Though they were much distressed by heat and thirst he forbade his army to draw any water there, but ordered them if they drank of that water to bring it up again, or if they had kneaded any meal with it to give it to their camels. He himself wrapped his face in his garment and spurred on his mule, crying out, "Enter not the houses of those wicked men, but rather weep lest that happen unto you which befell them!"—Thus much for the traditions of Jebel Músa!

(2.) The geographical position of Jebel Músa, with reference to the Bible narrative, must, of course, be an important factor in every attempt to settle which mountain should be "the Mountain of the Law." This is the account of the movements of the Israelites. In Exodus, chapter xix. (which one may suppose to be either Moses' own writing, or to contain at least the first record which he made of the march from the Red Sea), we have, "In the third month, when the children of Israel were gone forth out of the land of Egypt, the same day came they into the wilderness of Sinai," that is, on the same day of the month—the nicety of the chronology, so like what one finds in the Egyptian monuments and *papyri*, is much more evident than accuracy as to the geography and the stations on the route—"for they were departed from Rephidim, and were come to the desert of Sinai, and had pitched in the wilderness; and there Israel camped before the mount. And Moses went up unto God, and the Lord called unto him out of the mountain," &c. Now except in chapter xviii., recording the visit of Jethro, the only historical "Mountain of God" which is brought before us by Moses is that Horeb where God appeared to him in the burning bush, and of which God said emphatically (Exodus iii. 12), "Certainly I will be with thee, and this shall be a *token* unto thee that I have sent thee: When thou hast brought forth the people out of Egypt, ye shall serve God upon this mountain." The narrative of Moses' successive interviews with the Pharaoh leaves an impression that from day to day he did not know what mode of deliverance God would adopt, nor what would be the route taken, nor the manner of conducting the people when delivered in order to establish them in the Promised Land. All was vague and misty. There was Egypt, the house of bondage, near at hand; far off was the land where Abraham, two or three centuries ago, had lived merely as a great pastoral chief, with no defined country or territorial boundaries: in between, as it were, was a stupendous enterprise, sufficient to have taxed the organizing powers and endurance of the greatest of generals,—illumined only by that assurance of the Divine leadership of which the after-worship at Horeb was to be the token.

The thirty-third chapter of Numbers is undoubtedly a most important document. The second verse tells us, "Moses wrote their goings out according to their journeys by the commandment of the Lord: and these are their journeys according to their goings out." The words naturally convey to the reader that the several breakings up of the encampment indicate the progress of their march, and that the length of the halt is of no consequence. It is not Serbâl, it is not Sinai, which is to be remembered, but it is the moving on to the goal, viz. the

inheritance of the Promised Land. Let the critic, then, dissuade us from our old belief—that the Pentateuch was entirely, with the exception of the concluding verses of Deuteronomy, the work of Moses! While pointing out that we may stand on firm ground if we note that the historical portion does not *profess* to be written by Moses, he still leaves us certain passages to which is attached an express declaration that they *are* Moses' work. Under the guidance of modern criticism, we abandon the notion that every leader of Israel wrote down by Divine authority the events of his own time, happening under his very eyes, which would make of the Old Testament a sort of day-book, constantly written up to date: for we can see, *e.g.*, that the mention of "Dan" in Deuteronomy xxxiv. 1. (as in Genesis xiv. 14) proves that this chapter is not contemporary history; *but* the list of the encampment after the Exodus is another matter! This list *is* Moses' writing, and it describes the great work of his life. Written long after that time when "Israel pitched in Succoth,"—written, perhaps, in the evening of the solemn day, with the recollection of the mysterious ceremonial fresh on his mind, when Aaron, stripped of his high-priestly garments, had died on Mount Hor,—it is the indisputable chronicle of the encampments in the wilderness. What do we learn from it? The Israelites broke up their camp at Rephidim, and the next great halt was made in the wilderness of Sinai. The description raises a difficulty, and it removes one. If Jebel Serbâl be



HAJAR EL LAGHWEH, "THE SPEAKING STONE."
A rock covered with Sinaitic inscriptions in Wâdy Berrah, "The Valley of the Passer-out." From this valley you pass into a more open country, and leave the sandstone district.

the Mountain of the Law, and Feirân, near the ruins of the episcopal city (see page 315), be the scene of the great battle with the Amalekites, the Israelites would have been practically as near and as well in sight of the mountain in an encampment placed at the foot of Jebel Táhúneh as if they had moved on six or seven miles to the head of Wâdy Feirân, near El Buweib, the "gate." This is a very short and apparently unnecessary march. The victory gained, and Amalek in retreat, it would seem natural—it would be almost a necessity—that the Israelites should occupy at once the whole oasis. There is no open plain, and the bed of the valley is filled even now, as we have saïd, with flourishing groves of palms and tamarisks, which at that date were probably much more abundant.—Some days would be spent in this encampment called Rephidim, as there were distant settlements and villages of the Amalekites to be reconnoitred. Then would come the move forward to the ground immediately surrounding Jebel Músa (which we may safely designate "the Desert of Sinai"), because Jehovah was to be worshipped there.

But from Feirân proper—that is, from the episcopal city of Pharan—Jebel Músa could hardly be reached by any large body of people, encumbered with baggage, in a day's march! The road is comparatively broad and open up to Nagb Hawa; it is a distance, however, as the crow flies, of some sixteen miles, which means twenty-two or twenty-three through the windings of the valleys: Nagb Hawa, moreover, would have to be reckoned—if the requirements of the Exodus narrative demand that the Desert of Sinai be reached the same day as Rephidim or Feirân is left—as the *gate*, and so the commencement of this Sinai wilderness.—Of course all this becomes simple, if it is conceded that the principal encampments *only* are mentioned by Moses, and that halting-places merely for the night are not included always in his itinerary, unless some village or well-marked spot be reached. There is another way out of the difficulty, suggested by Professor Palmer, which may set at rest the scruples of those who insist on regarding the passage in the Book of Numbers as positively specifying each day's camping-ground. He tells us that—"It is quite possible that Moses and the chiefs of the elders took the short road through the pass (Nagb Hawa), leaving the rest of the caravan, with the heavy baggage, to follow them round Wâdy es Sheikh, and come into camp next morning. Captain Wilson and myself, being desirous on one occasion of pushing on to Jebel Músa by a certain day, actually adopted this expedient."—There is something like special pleading in another suggestion of his, that the Israelites may have made a forced march, and have crowded the toil of nearly two days' march into twenty-four hours. Arabs travelling are accustomed, it is true, to make tremendous marches in their own country—"a dreary land of death, beset by drought and danger." Palgrave commences the story of his great journey with a careful description of the incidents of a day's march: "And now began a march during which we might have almost repented of our enterprise, had such a sentiment been any longer possible or availing. Day after day found us urging our camels to their utmost pace for fifteen or sixteen hours together out of the twenty-four, under a well-nigh vertical sun, which the Ethiopians of Herodotus might reasonably be excused for cursing, with nothing either in the landscape around

or in the companions of our way to relieve for a moment the eye or the mind. Then an insufficient halt for rest or sleep, at most of two or three hours, soon interrupted by the oft-

MAGÂD EN NEBÍ MÚSA, "SEAT OF THE PROPHET MOSES."
This large detached rock, which from one point looks something like an arm-chair, occurs in the gorge El Watiyeh. Near here is pointed out the place where Moses' sheep grazed.

repeated admonition, 'If we linger here we all die of thirst,' sounding in our ears; and then to remount our jaded beasts, and push them on through the dark night, amid the constant

probability of attack and plunder from roving marauders. . . . The days wore by like a delirious dream, till we were often unconscious of the ground we travelled over and of the journey on which we were engaged. One only herb appeared at our feet to give some

A RECOLLECTION OF SINAI AND THE MOUNTAINS OF THE PASS OF THE WIND.

"On Horeb, with Elijah, let us lie,
Where all around, on mountain, sand, and sky,
God's chariot-wheels have left distinctest trace."—KEBLE.

appearance of variety and life: it was the bitter and poisonous colocynth of the desert." (Palgrave's "Arabia," vol. i., page 12.)

Anything like rapid travelling would have been quite impossible for such a multitude as

followed Moses.* The movement of the pilgrim caravan on the yearly journey to Mecca is always a marvel, but this does not usually number more than a small fraction of the "armies" of the Israelites who came up out of Egypt. Men, women, and children—the old and infirm, the young and the sickly—all have to be reckoned in with this host. Then, too, the imagination must conjure up, not a country of vast rolling plains or steppes, but a mountainous district, full of narrow winding valleys with steep precipitous sides.

There is a third point to be considered when the claims of the two mountains are being examined, viz., What is the capability of either for the encampment of the Israelites, and also for the giving of the Law, under the conditions of the Bible narrative? It must be remembered that it was in the second month of the second year that the camp was broken up at Sinai (Numbers x. 11), and that *then* commenced the direct march to the Promised Land, which was destined to end so miserably in the punishment of the long years of wandering in the wilderness of the Tíh. For such a prolonged halt, during which the ritual of worship and the orderly government of the people was laid down and adopted, a roomy camping-ground, it may be supposed, would be indispensable. This is found in the immediate neighbourhood of Jebel Músa, but *not* in the valleys of the Serbâl district. The great plain of Er Râhah, in front of Jebel Músa, was carefully measured at the time of the Ordnance Survey by Captain Palmer, and his measurements proved that "the space extending from the base of the mountain (*i.e.* from the foot of the bluff Râs Sufsâfeh) to the watershed or crest of the plain is large enough to have accommodated the entire host of the Israelites, estimated at two million souls, with an allowance of about a square yard for each individual." At the watershed the breadth is about nine hundred yards. From here to the foot of Râs Sufsâfeh the distance is about one mile and a third, while the northern slope of the plain is about two-thirds of a mile in length. Apart, however, from the commodiousness of Er Râhah for an encampment, its gradual slope to Jebel Músa, and the grand view which is always had of the mountain rising at once out of the plain—not in gentle slopes, nor in steep gradations, but abrupt and precipitous—forces one to recognise the superior claim of the block of mountains which is bounded by Jebel Músa—the highest point—at its southern or south-eastern extremity, and by Râs Sufsâfeh at its northern end, to be the scene of the giving of the Law.

As to the narrative of Jethro's visit to Moses, in Exodus xviii., with its several references to the Mount of God, we may with reason suppose that it may not be in its proper historical position. The visit would not have been made until it was known that the Israelites had permanently encamped; and unless we argue that Jethro had been waiting in the neighbourhood for some time, it is not likely that he would move from Midian into the territory of the Amalekites before certain news had reached him of their defeat and enforced withdrawal from Feirân and the neighbouring valleys. The chapter is very complete in itself, and in no wise suffers from being removed to a position in time subsequent to the giving of the Law, when Moses and the people were busy in preparing the tabernacle, ark, &c., &c. The Jethro episode

* The Israelites had waggons even with them: cf. Numbers vii. 3.

would suit an encampment at Jebel Músa or at Rephidim,—provided the point of time "when he heard of all that God had done for Moses and for Israel, his people, and that the Lord had brought Israel out of Egypt," is maintained, and the place can be fairly identified with the wilderness where Moses encamped at the Mount of God.

There is another hero whose life at one point touches Horeb: Elijah was driven thither by the Spirit after the victory over Baal. Ahab told Jezebel, in the palace at Jezreel, all that Elijah had done. Some pageant of death, we conclude, was to be exhibited by the indignant

ARABS.
These Arabs are Towarah, who generally prefer the turban and fez to the gaily-striped *keffiyeh*. One of them has in his hand the head of an ibex (*bedan*).

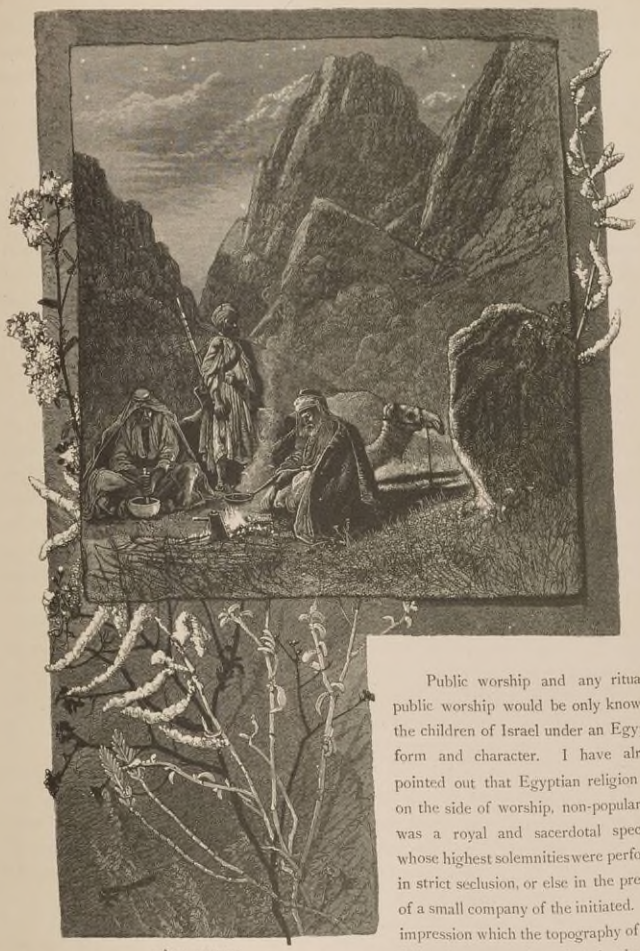
Queen, so as to counterbalance the awful tragedy at the brook Kishon. Confident of her own power she does not have the prophet at once executed. As in Naboth's case, so now, she will propose a certain legal procedure, in order to win the halting people to her side. In the presence of this new danger Elijah flies for his life to Beershebá and its sanctuary. *Yesterday*, perhaps, he fancied that he had won the King to the side of Jehovah. Baal, the god of an allied people—the god for whom, at his wife's request, Omri's son had built the famous temple at Samaria—had been exhibited a contemptible idol, and the statecraft of Ahab had been proved weak and unsound in the presence of the better policy which was based on the principle that

Jehovah was King of kings, and Israel his people. But *to-day* there is a pitiful reaction. The King has yielded to Jezebel, and the prophet, the "representative of Jehovah's personal claims on Israel," * must retire before the qualms of the near-sighted politician. He had propounded the proposition that where Jehovah is worshipped no other god can be acknowledged in any sense. The maintenance of such a proposition, or the introduction of it into the affairs of State and into the intercourse of Israel with foreign nations, meant political isolation, because friendship and alliance with other peoples was impossible if their gods were proscribed in Samaria and the royal cities. Ahab, the Israelite, had, Elijah was certain, some drops of the blood of Abraham in him. He aspired, may be, to act the rôle of Solomon—but there was not yet extinguished in his heart a feeling of awe at the majesty of Jehovah, and of pride in the unique position which the people brought up by Jehovah out of the land of Egypt were destined to occupy. What might he not have achieved, if, now under Elijah's tutelage, he had shaken off the thrall of the Syrian Jezebel? Overwhelmed, then, at the very moment of the triumph of Jehovah's cause, the prophet seeks in hot haste an asylum on the extreme boundaries of Judah.

But there he was not safe! From a passage in Amos (v. 5, and viii. 14) we are led to infer that at Beersheba, as at Dan, Bethel, and Gilgal, there were idolatrous shrines, with the almost necessary concomitance of heathen licentiousness. Such a place would not long tolerate the presence of Jehovah's prophet, fresh from the execution of the priests of Baal. If no rumour had already reached Beersheba of what had happened on Mount Carmel, there would be the inquisitive inquiry (just as there would be to-day) on the part of the townsmen into the business of the prophet and his servant. So Elijah, leaving his servant behind him, goes on farther, into the Negeb. In point of time Jebel Serbâl or Jebel Músa would be equidistant from the prophet as he starts on his journey in the strength of the miraculous food, while the difficulty of the route to be followed to either mountain would be the same. Arrived within reach of them, the solitariness of Jebel Músa would attract the fugitive. Even supposing the mines at Maghârah at this data to have been disused,† and that the Maghârah district was denuded of Egyptian soldiers and their captives, we have no right to strip the fertile Wâdy Feirân of inhabitants. Repeopling the peninsula then, and trying to conjure up its life in the times when Ahab was king of northern Israel, one would have to regard Jebel Músa as more withdrawn from the noise and bustle of the little world than Serbâl. To "the Mount of God" Elijah is led by the Spirit. On the "Mountain of God" the children of Israel, according to God's promise, had worshipped Him. The situation and circumstance of Jebel Músa afford a suitable locality for Moses' and Elijah's critical interviews with Jehovah. Do not its physical features mark it out as specially adapted for the gathering together of a great multitude convened for a religious service?

* Robertson Smith's "Prophets of Israel."

† As we have said, the latest of the inscriptions as yet found at Sarâbit el Khâdim have the date of Ramses IV. of the Twentieth Dynasty, B.C. 1200—1166. But the Assyrian Sargon, in B.C. 711, after the conquest of Asdud, made a tour of the mining districts and visited the copper mine of Baalzephon—by which is meant probably Sarâbit el Khâdim.



WÂDY SH'REICH.
One of the peaks in Wady Sh'reich is called Jebel Abu Mahûreh, "The Thunder-stricken Mountain," a large portion of its summit having been detached by a thunderbolt.

Public worship and any ritual of public worship would be only known to the children of Israel under an Egyptian form and character. I have already pointed out that Egyptian religion was, on the side of worship, non-popular. It was a royal and sacerdotal spectacle, whose highest solemnities were performed in strict seclusion, or else in the presence of a small company of the initiated. One impression which the topography of Jebel Mûsa leaves on the mind is that this mountain presents the form of a pro-

digious temple, to which Râs Sufsâfeh is the propylon, while the plain Er Râhah is the open space outside the temple wall, from which the people might observe and mark in silent adoration the intercourse between the god and men. Just as within the farthest recess of the temple at Abou Simbel, in the presence of the four statues whose utter lifelessness even now fascinates one, the great Ramses, offering sacrifice to the gods of his dynasty, was supposed to receive inspiration from them through such communion, so Israel would apprehend that to this mountain Moses, as their leader and their representative, went up to hold communion with Jehovah.

Dr. Robinson ("Biblical Researches," vol. i., page 89) thus describes his approach to the

NEAR THE MOUTH OF WÂDY SH'REICH.
The scene of the worship of the golden calf was placed by early tradition at the mouth of this valley.

convent by Nagb Hawa: "As we advanced, the valley still opened wider and wider with a gentle ascent, and became full of shrubs and tufts of herbs, shut in on each side by lofty granite ridges with rugged shattered peaks a thousand feet high, while the face of Horeb rose directly before us. Both my companion and myself involuntarily exclaimed, 'Here is room enough for a large encampment!' Reaching the top of the ascent or watershed, a fine broad plain lay before us, sloping down gently towards the south-south-east, enclosed by venerable mountains of dark granite,—stern, naked, splintered peaks and ridges of indescribable grandeur,—and terminated at the distance of more than a mile by the bold and awful front of Horeb (*i.e.* Râs

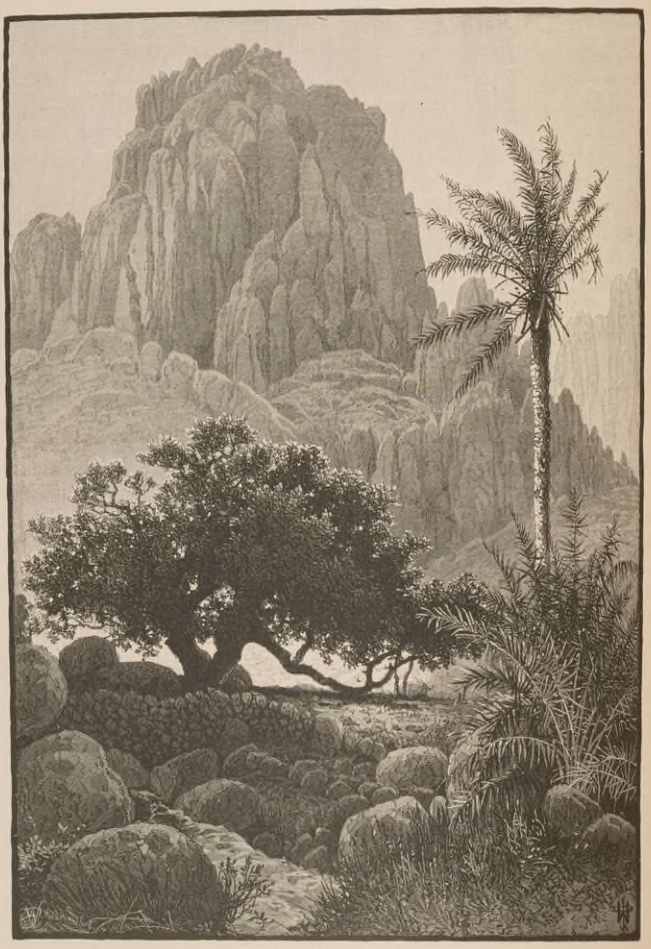
Sufsâfeh) rising perpendicularly in frowning majesty from twelve to fifteen hundred feet in height. It was a scene of solemn grandeur wholly unexpected, and such as we had never seen, and the associations, which at the moment rushed upon our minds, were almost overwhelming."

Stress, too, should be laid on the fact that Jebel Músa is a mountain which may be touched. Râs Sufsâfeh rises from the plain with no intervening slopes of débris, while in Jethro's valley on the eastern side of Jebel Músa, where stands the Convent of St. Catherine, the cliffs tower so immediately above the convent buildings that one wonders how a pathway may be discovered by which to scale them. How different is the style, manner, and appearance of Jebel Serbâl! There is no plain worthy of mention; the winding valley never opens out in such wise that a compact or properly ordered encampment could have been formed there, while the mountain could not be described graphically as "a mountain which may be touched." To those who think that in Wâdy 'Aleyât—the eastern valley of Serbâl—there should be room for a large encampment, it is sufficient to point out that the floor of this steep valley is thickly strewn with great boulders, and is so worn and broken up by the torrents which have constantly rushed through it that it is difficult to pick one's way along, while there are few places where even a *few* tents could be pitched. As to the space between Wâdies 'Aleyât and 'Ajeleh, we have already seen that it is filled by a rugged mountain mass!

We are following, then, the track of the main body of the Israelites when we and our camels journey on through Wâdy Feirân. After some five miles the verdure of the oasis is lost to us, and the scenery is made dreary by a succession of banks of alluvial deposits called *jorfs* * (see page 319), cut through by the stream in flood, and exhibiting the former levels of the valley-bed. In these sinuous wâdies it were rash to say off-hand what is the distance from point to point, or what is the bearing of our course to the "king of Sinaitic mountains." The general direction of the valley is south-east, while the distance between Serbal and Músa-Katarina is twenty-one miles. Before the natural gateway, El Buweib, is reached a picturesque valley called Khabar runs into Wâdy Feirân. It might properly be termed a continuation of Wâdy el Akhdhar, which strikes the important valley of Berrâh at right angles. Wâdy Berrâh gradually ascends in a north-west direction to the watershed, whence Wâdy Lebweh descends to its trysting place with Wâdy Bark. Thence to Sarâbît el Khâdim is a day's journey. Sinaitic inscriptions abound in these valleys, and from this fact we may argue, not only that formerly they were more populous, but that they were much frequented by travellers and merchants bound for Feirân, or for the sea *viâ* Wâdy Hebrân.

In Wâdy Bark, a steep toilsome valley with an abundance of seyal-trees, are the remains of a wall of loose stones, built by the Towarah to keep out Mohammad Ali's soldiers. It is a poor affair and easy to be turned. The Bedawín deeming that their privileges in the matter of "convoy" had been violated by the Egyptian government, attacked and pillaged a

* Masses of distinctly stratified alluvium are lodged at the sides and mouths of the watercourses. They are cut through so as to present vertical faces, and are weathered into many a fantastic and imposing form. They are forty, sixty, and a hundred feet high, sometimes in long stretches, and sometimes in detached cones and blocks.



WÂDY T'LÂH, MOUNT SINAI.

This wâdy runs parallel with the plain Er Râhah, but flows in a contrary direction. It is marvellously beautiful and picturesque.

laden caravan on the road from Cairo to Suez. The Pasha did not trouble himself about the rights of one paltry set of Bedawín as against another set, nor would he interfere with the traders' choice as to escorts. He sent his soldiers to punish the rebels, and also left an abiding mark on them—in the shape of a yearly tribute of ten shillings!—Wâdy Lebweh is noticeable for nothing but a fine overhanging rock with a narrow cleft called Shagík el 'Ajúz, "The Old Woman's Cleft" (the word 'Ajúz may refer to the Egyptian Queen Delúkah), in which is a delicious spring. The watershed, however, presents an example of a class common in the peninsula, in which the valleys instead of rising steeply to sharp ridges fall gradually either way from open summit plains. The conical peak with the quaint name, derived possibly from its peculiar form, Zibb el Baheir Abu Baharíyeh, which rises to a height of one hundred and sixty feet on the north side of the watershed, commands a superb view. From this vantage ground are seen the hills upon the African coast, the long white range of the Tíh Mountains, the solemn peaks of Serbâl, Katarína, and Umm Shomer; but above all that most characteristic feature of the central Sinai group, the huge granite wall which shuts it off from the western cluster.

Two miles down Wâdy Berrâh, opposite to the mouth of a small valley with another refreshing spring called Erthâmeh, stands a great rock, looking as if it had been divided by a clean cut from a smaller boulder at its side. It is called Hajar el Laghweh, or "The Speaking Stone" (see page 330). According to the legend, Moses and the children of Israel were stopped in their career by this rock. A companion urged the prophet to smite it with his sword. When he hesitated a voice came from the stone itself bidding him strike. He struck, and immediately the rock was cleft through from top to bottom, "as though it had been but a piece of flesh!"

Three miles farther down are the two massive bluffs of red granite standing like sentries, from which the valley takes its name, "The Valley of the Passer-out;" and so we come into the plain called Erweis el Ebeirig (there is another plain farther to the eastward called by the same name, on which Professor Palmer locates Kibroth-Hattaavah), across which runs Wâdy el Akhdhar, passing on its way to the south-west.

The long granite escarpment just mentioned, stretching from Jebel Tarbúsh on the south-west to El Watíyeh on the north-east, a distance of fourteen miles, fences in, as it were, and protects the Sinai group of mountains. There are but three points at which this barrier is passable. The westernmost is Wâdy Emleisah, which, suited only for pedestrians, is one of the most beautiful of the mountain glens of Sinai. Immediately to the west of Nagb Hawa a narrow cleft in the gigantic wall discloses the entrance to this wâdy. The glen is about fifty yards across, and is hemmed in by towering mountains from one thousand to two thousand five hundred feet high. About a mile from the mouth of the gorge a tiny trickling stream fringed with vegetation—wild fig-trees, palm-trees, rushes, reeds, &c.—reveals itself. Here there are some old monastic buildings and gardens. As one slowly ascends the vegetation becomes more plentiful; the tiny stream is now a rivulet, here falling in spray over great ledges of

H. VERNE. PINXT. D. GOUGEN SCULPT.

WÁDY SHU'EIB—JETHRO'S VALLEY.

CLIFFS OF JEBEL KATARÎNA.

Of the three peaks of the Jebel Katarina cluster, Jebel Zebir is the central; Jebel Katarîna lies half a mile to the north of it; and Jebel Abu Rumail a mile to the south.

rock, there forming deep pools which invite one to bathe in their cool waters, reflecting green ferns and mosses. Just where Wâdy Bugíyeh—"the valley through which water rushes with the sound of a trumpet"—flows in from the neighbouring pass of Nagb Hawa the vegetation is seen in its utmost abundance, and the ruins and gardens are most numerous. In the midst of the savage grandeur of such utter desolation these gardens smiling with vines, olives, apple and pear-trees, fig-trees, *nebbuk*, apricots, mulberry-trees, &c., &c., almost make one forgetful of the surrounding wilderness. The main defile is named Wâdy Emleisah, "The Slippery Valley," and the traveller is prepared for hard work amongst its smooth boulders polished by the running waters. Just below Wâdy Bugíyeh an old monastic path affords a little help. Two miles above this tributary there is a bifurcation, and the valley takes the name Wâdy T'lâh,—(*Talâh* is the opposite to Salâh, "righteous"—the inaccessible nature of the valley once made it a favourite resort of robber bands). The principal and fertile branch turning southward subdivides into many little valleys, which climb the slopes of Jebel Katarína to their sources; the other branch, a mile long, terminates in a steep *nagb*, with an immediate descent into Seil Lejâ, not far from the foot of Râs Sufsâfeh. In this Wâdy T'lâh are the remains of the convent of SS. Cosmas and Damian, and of the prison convent of St. John Climax.

The central passage, Nagb Hawa, "Pass of the Wind," may be reckoned as being fifteen miles from the commencement of Wâdy Feirân. It can be traversed by very lightly laden or riding camels, but a large caravan must necessarily take the road by Wâdy es Sheikh. The pass commences near the head of Wâdy Solâf (some three thousand five hundred feet above the sea). A large cluster of ancient stone circles and *nâwâmis* is soon reached, called Matabb ed Deir el Gadím, "The Site of the Ancient Convent," and then the ascent begins. It is steep and difficult at first, for the old way paved with flags, passing in and out amongst tremendous boulders and blocks of granite detached from the heights above, has been partly destroyed by torrents. The defile varies in breadth from two hundred to three hundred yards, and is like a long straight passage, through which the winter storms from the north-west must rush with tremendous fury. It is a tedious two hours' journey, though only four miles direct from the foot of the *nagb* to the watershed—about one thousand five hundred and seventy feet above the head of Wâdy Solâf. After the watershed is crossed, there is a rapid descent and then another ascent through Wâdy Abu Seileh. Following the course of a feeble stream till the crest of the pass is gained (five thousand one hundred and forty-one feet above the sea), the entire plain of Er Râhah is seen stretched before us, and we are face to face with Râs Sufsâfeh, two miles away, and the majestic pile of Jebel Músa.

This mountain block, composed mainly of red or pink syenitic granite, has for the traveller coming from the north a direction south-east. Its length is rather more than two miles and its breadth a mile. Wâdy ed Deir, "The Convent Valley," sometimes called Wâdy es Sho'eib, "Jethro's Valley" (see steel plate), in which stands the Convent of St. Catherine, separates it on the north-east from Jebel ed Deir; while on the south-west a deep, narrow ravine, Wâdy Sh'reich, divides it from the subordinate ridge of Jebel Ferâ, which is itself cut off from the

H. PENN. PINXT. G. COUSEN. SCULPT.

WÁDY SHU'EIB—JETHRO'S VALLEY.

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huge red bluffs of Jebel el Hamr, "The Red Mountain," by the grand valley Wâdy el Lejâ,

"Valley of Refuge." This valley, at whose head is situated the lonely convent El Arba'ín, after a course of two miles to the north-west, sweeps round the end of Jebel Ferâ, and, *now* called Seil Lejâ *now* Wâdy ed Deir, runs north-east for more than three miles beneath the precipices of Râs Sufsâfeh and the steep slopes of Jebel ed Deir to Wâdy es Sheikh. Here there is a confluence as it were with Wâdy es Sudûd, which comes down from the south, being the continuation of Wâdy Seba'iyeh.


CONVENT OF THE ARBA'ÍN (OF THE FORTY), WÂDY LEJÂ.
The situation of this convent is most secluded and picturesque. The celebrated "Moses' Rock" loses its claim to notoriety, if Rephidim be located in Wâdy Feirân.

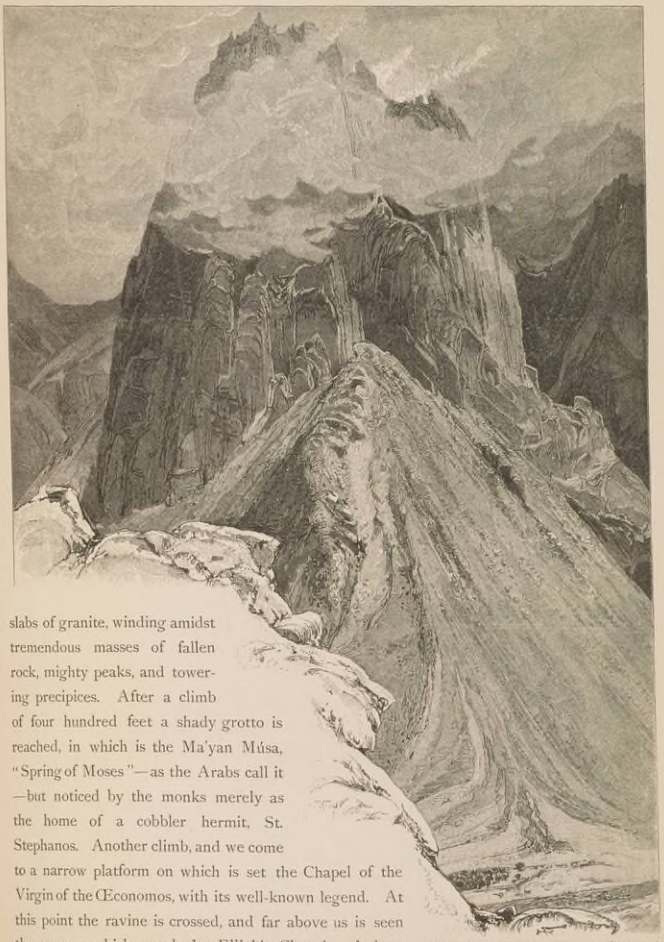
At the mouth of Wâdy es Sho'eib is a low rocky mound called Hârún, "Aaron's Hill," where there is a small building consecrated by Arab sacrifices in honour of Moses' brother on the spot where he set up the golden calf. Passing under this, and beyond the remains of the barracks of the soldiers of 'Abbâs Pasha, the picturesque pile of the convent, built right against the mountain-side, and rising out from a mass of variously tinted foliage, comes at once into our view. It is a medley of buildings combining the strength of a mediæval fortress with the flimsiest superstructures of an Italian monastery, all built on different levels, in the midst of which stand, side by side, the mosque and the church with its conspicuous campanile. The fertility of the convent garden—less beautiful and fertile than the garden at El Arba'ín—affords proof that the neighbourhood of Músa-Katarína is the best-watered in the whole peninsula. The convent has two copious springs, and there are five or six springs in the cliffs above Wâdy ed Deir, besides those in Seil Lejâ. In Wâdies Sh'reich, Lejâ, T'lâh, and Abu Seileh (to the north of Er Râhah), as well as in Wâdy Zawâtín ("The Valley of Olive-trees," coming down from the western slopes of Katarína), are streams of water. Springs and streams, too, are constantly met with in the surrounding hills and valleys, which must have always occasioned a certain amount of pasturage. The Deyset Fur'eiah (a mountain plateau or *fersh*, loved of Bedawín), enclosed by that great ring of granite peaks called El Fur'eiah, fronting Jebel Músa and Jebel ed Deir on the north, is one of the most extensive pasture grounds in the country, and abounds in desert herbs and grasses; while the upper slopes of Jebel Katarína have the appearance of well-clothed downs.

Encamped under Músa-Katarína the Israelites would have a perennial natural supply of water and a fair amount of pasturage; they would be protected, moreover, on the west and north-west from any renewed attack on the part of the Amalekites by the granite wall to which we have so often alluded as enclosing this central group of mountains, while the country to the east would be in the occupation of the friendly Midianites.

The convent, with its church and library and ancient refectory, has been already described. Let us, therefore, set off on our pilgrimage to the holy places. The basin below the summit of Jebel Músa may be reached by five tracks or paths.* Along the Sikket Syednâ Músa—worn by the feet of monks and pilgrims for centuries—the lay-brother furnished by the convent authorities as a guide will lead us. Behind us is Jebel ed Deir† with its rugged pathless sides; one little ledge noticeable for a solitary cypress springing up from a heap of stones (the ruined convent of St. Episteme), which seems a mere dark green thread against the glowing grey of the mountain. Before us is a rough flight of steps formed of huge uneven

* 1. 'Abbâs Pasha's road which zigzags up the south-eastern face of the mountain. 2. Sikket Sho'eib, "Path of Jethro," a sort of scramble from Wâdy ed Deir to the basin behind Râs Sufsâfeh. 3. A path leading up the western cliffs from Wâdy Sh'reich, which according to early tradition is the path used by Moses. 4. A winding and easier track leading from El Arba'in to the south-western corner of the basin. 5. The well-known Sikket Syednâ Músa, ascending immediately above the convent.

† A statement made on page 299 on the authority of Dean Stanley as to Jebel Sunâ or Sonâ preserving a vestige of the name Sinai seems to be incorrect. Professor Palmer says the name means "Mount of Artisans," and is derived from a clever artisan who once dwelt there. Jebel ed Deir has several names; amongst others "Mountain of the Burning Bush," a legend connecting it with the sunbeam which on one day in the year darts into the "Chapel of the Burning Bush." Dean Stanley seems to derive its commoner name not from the convent of St. Catherine in the valley, but from the nunnery which once existed on the mountain itself!



MOUNTAINS AT THE HEAD OF WÂDY LEJÂ.

slabs of granite, winding amidst tremendous masses of fallen rock, mighty peaks, and towering precipices. After a climb of four hundred feet a shady grotto is reached, in which is the Ma'yan Músa, "Spring of Moses"—as the Arabs call it—but noticed by the monks merely as the home of a cobbler hermit, St. Stephanos. Another climb, and we come to a narrow platform on which is set the Chapel of the Virgin of the Œconomos, with its well-known legend. At this point the ravine is crossed, and far above us is seen the cypress which stands by Elijah's Chapel. A long

flight of steps (see page 236) leads us up to it, through two archways. At the gate of the first sat in ages past St. Stephen the porter (whose skeleton now guards the dismal charnel-house far below in the convent garden), to shrive pilgrims and pass them on for further examination to the confessors, who were stationed at the second gateway with its illegible

GARDENS NEAR THE MOUTH OF WÂDY LEJÂ.
The winding road seen in the cliffs leads up to Jebel Tinîyeh, where are the remains of the half-finished palace of the late 'Abbâs Pasha.

inscription in Greek characters. This gateway opens on to the plateau, and gives immediate access therefore to the holy places. On this mountain plain stands a small building containing two chapels dedicated respectively to Elijah and Elisha; and on the right of the altar of the inner chapel is the grotto in which the prophet is said to have dwelt during his sojourn on Sinai.

A world-renowned spot it is, with its remains of chapels and gardens, and with its well and the tree which tells of foreign ascetics, who may have planted it to remind them of a far-off birth-place in Attica or Corcyra! The five paths converge here, and then one path leads, passing by "the footprint of the prophet's camel," and the stone which marks the spot where Elijah was turned back as unworthy to tread the holy ground above, to "the top of the mount" (Ex. xix. 20).

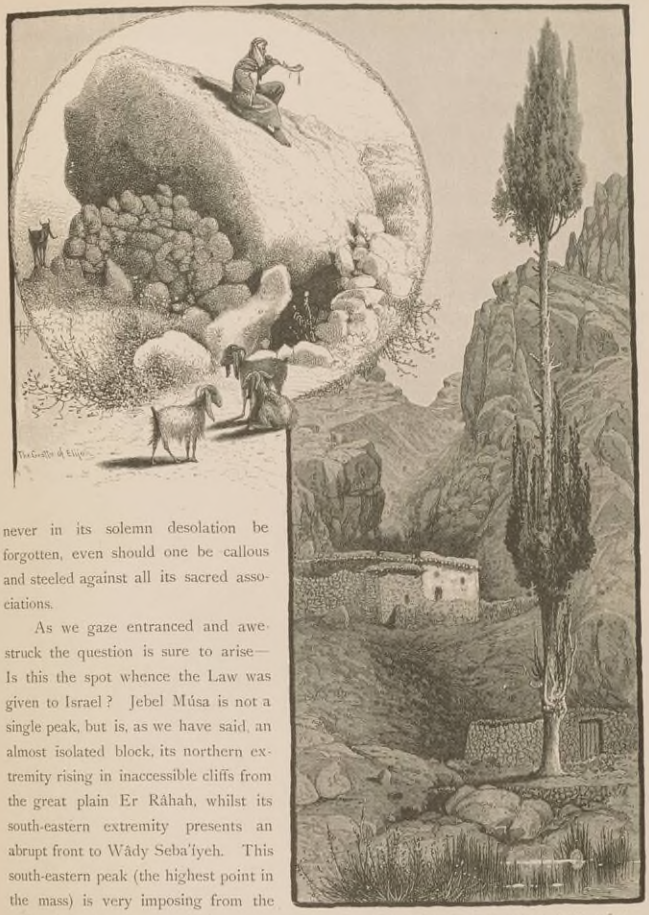
Here on the summit are two buildings within a few yards of each other, which are almost always visible whenever the peak itself is to be seen. The one is the Christian chapel near the cleft in which Moses was placed when the glory of the Lord passed by; the other is the mosque built over the cave in which he is said to have lived during the forty days and nights. Both chapel and mosque are constructed of hewn blocks of red granite taken from the ruins of an earlier church or convent, many fragments of which, such as lintels, jamb-stones, and capitals, lie scattered over the grey mountain-side. The view, though not so extensive nor so picturesque as that from Jebel Katarína, can

BEDAWÍN ENCAMPMENT, WÁDY SEBA'ÍYEH, SINAI.

This valley has been mentioned as a likely camping-ground for the Israelites, because of the view afforded of the summit of Jebel Mûsa. There is no open space, however, for a great multitude.

JEBEL MÚSA FROM THE SOUTH, SINAI.

Wády Seba'iyeh, through which the way passes to Jebel Umm Shomer, offers the traveller a splendid view of the steep southern extremity of Jebel Músa.



THE CHAPEL AND GROTTO OF ELIJAH, JEBEL MÚSA.
This gigantic cypress is one of the world-famous trees. In Niebuhr's time there were two of them.

never in its solemn desolation be forgotten, even should one be callous and steeled against all its sacred associations.

As we gaze entranced and awe-struck the question is sure to arise—Is this the spot whence the Law was given to Israel? Jebel Músa is not a single peak, but is, as we have said, an almost isolated block, its northern extremity rising in inaccessible cliffs from the great plain Er Râhah, whilst its south-eastern extremity presents an abrupt front to Wâdy Seba'íyeh. This south-eastern peak (the highest point in the mass) is very imposing from the valley beneath, but a single glance shows that no large body of people

LOOKING EAST FROM RÂS SUFSÂFEH, SINAI.
In the smaller illustration is represented the summit of Jebel Mûsa, with the chapel and less conspicuous mosque.

could have encamped either there or in the neighbouring valleys. One turns then to Er Râhah, and though the actual summit of Jebel Mûsa be not visible from the plain, one reasonably concludes that here the people stood and that from Râs Sufsâfeh Moses proclaimed the Law to them. This conclusion is in no wise contrary to the Bible narrative. Sinai is to be

regarded not only as the mountain on which Jehovah spake with Moses and with Elijah, but also as the mountain from which the Law was published to Israel. For these two transactions the mountain is well adapted by its physical characteristics. To the rear of Râs Sufsâfeh is a basin, in which stands the Chapel of St. Mary of the Zone, shaded by some hawthorn-bushes and by the weather-beaten willow which gives its name to the Râs, and where are remains also of chapels, &c., dedicated to St. Gregorius, to St. John the Baptist, and to St. Anne. To this little plain the path called Sikket Sho'eib leads up from Wâdy ed Deir. Here we may picture Moses as bidding farewell to the Elders; then taking with him only Joshua, he would traverse the gorge which occupies the central portion of the mountain block, now ascending, now descending—between enormous piles of granite, which suggest that some mighty earthquake long ago upheaved and shattered them—till he came to the open ground in front of Elijah's Chapel. There on the seventh day he would leave Joshua "when the Lord called him up into the mount." As for the people we know that they stood at the *nether* part of the mount (ὑπὸ τὸ ὄρος), and that bounds were set to guard any approach to the mountain through the surrounding valleys. We also know that, terror-struck at the sight of the mountain burning with fire unto the midst of heaven, the people removed and stood afar off, and besought Moses to speak to them in the place of God. May we not then with reason suppose that from such a position as the cleft in Râs Sufsâfeh he would proclaim to the children of Israel the Law which God had delivered to him?

It is a rough scramble from the Chapel of Elijah to the Chapel of St. Mary of the Zone; then there is a breathless climb over great loose stones—apt to roll treacherously under one's tread—with much labour of hands and arms and knees and legs, up a ravine steeply inclined, for three or four hundred feet, which splits in twain the westernmost bluff of Râs Sufsâfeh. Then the crest—a narrow chasm between tremendous walls of rock—being reached, we find ourselves suddenly standing above Er Râhah! The view is glorious; but by courageously ascending the mass of granite on the left (see page 352) to its topmost peak it is made more complete. The great grey plain stretching down to the foot of the headland on which we stand, from its crest two miles away, is seen extending into the lateral valleys, which carry it on into the wide Wâdy es Sheikh, while the stately hills framing it blend with the cliffs of Nagb Hawa and the wave-like ranges of mountains beyond. Immediately beneath us is the curiously curved mound 'Ujrat el Mehd, where the princes of Israel may have been stationed; behind is the peak of Jebel Músa with its many traditions, crowned with the memorials of its double sanctity;—on all sides is a troubled sea of confused mountain forms.

Retracing our steps to the plain of Elijah's Chapel, we descend into Wâdy Lejâ by the path usually taken by the Russian pilgrims. Nearly at the head of this valley—fronting the rocky glen Shagg Músa, "Moses' Cleft," up which the path to Jebel Katarína climbs in a south-western direction—stands the secluded convent (lately restored and set in order) of El Arba'in, dedicated to the Forty Martyrs of Cappadocia, surrounded by a magnificent garden and a fine grove of olive-trees. This convent is regarded with superstitious reverence by the Arabs.

MA'YAN MÚSA, THE SPRING OF MOSES, SINAI.
At this spring, rising up in a cool shady rock-grotto, the Bedawin believe Moses to have watered Jethro's flocks.

In the garden is shown the hermitage and chapel of St. Ounfrius; while lower down on the western side of the valley are the ruins of the Convent of the Twelve Apostles, sheltered by the towering form of Jebel er Rabbeh. Ammonius, an Egyptian monk writing in the fourth century, tells of a slaughter of Sinaitic monks by the Saracens, and mentions that twelve corpses were found in the monastery of *Gethrabbi*. This word may easily be traced in the present name of the mountain, which is abbreviated by the Arabs into Jerrabbeh. In Wâdy Lejâ monkish zeal has localised such a medley of memorable events (*e.g.* the site of Korah's rebellion, the mould in which the golden calf was cast, the spot where the broken Tables of the Law were buried, and above all the "Rock in Horeb" with its twelve fissures, which Moses struck) that the patience is sorely tried. Still one cannot look without some reverence at the places to which these traditions are attached, although we may

JEBEL SUNÂ, FROM SIKKET SYEDNÂ MÛSA, "THE PATH OF OUR LORD MOSES."
The path is very steep and difficult; it reaches the basin at the back of Ras Sufsâfeh after a climb of one thousand five hundred feet.

AS SUFSÂFEH (MOUNT SINAI) AND THE PLAIN OF RÂHAH (REST).

Beyond the convent is seen Jebel Musa (Jebel Musa is hidden behind the overhanging mass of Ras Sufsâfeh.

be able to question their authenticity.—It seems hard to turn away from Jebel Katarína! The mountain culminates in three peaks, of which Jebel Zebír, eight thousand five hundred and fifty-one feet above the sea (according to Arabic interpreters this name refers to "God

DEFILE OF THE JEBEL TÍH.
The long white range of the Tih mountains, mostly of the same average height, forms the southern and south-eastern boundary of the great "Wilderness of the Forty Years' Wanderings."

speaking with Moses on the mount," being derived from a root which means "to write" or "engrave"), is the highest point in the country; Jebel Katarína, so called from the legend that St. Catherine of Alexandria was buried here by angels, being twenty-five feet lower.

The prospect from the mountain-top—a huge naked block of strangely shaped syenitic granite on which is built a chapel dedicated to the saint—discloses three-fourths of the peninsula: from Hammâm Far'ûn on the north-west to Wâdy el 'Ain on the north-east—from Jebel Mûsa to the glimmering waters of the twin gulfs, and the hills of Arabia and Africa on either hand beyond. Serbâl is seen in all its grandeur; Umm Shomer and Zebîr break the view southwards; and, though Râs Mohammad is invisible, the two arms of the Red Sea are almost seen at the point of separation. Wonderful are the effects of the colouring! Delicate are the gradations of light and shade! Intense is the silence!—The warmer tints are even now deepening; the shadows are lengthening; as the sunlight fades speechlessly out of these mountains where God spake with man, and proclaimed the Law which is more everlasting than the hills themselves!

JEBEL ED DEIR, SINAI.

SUEZ.

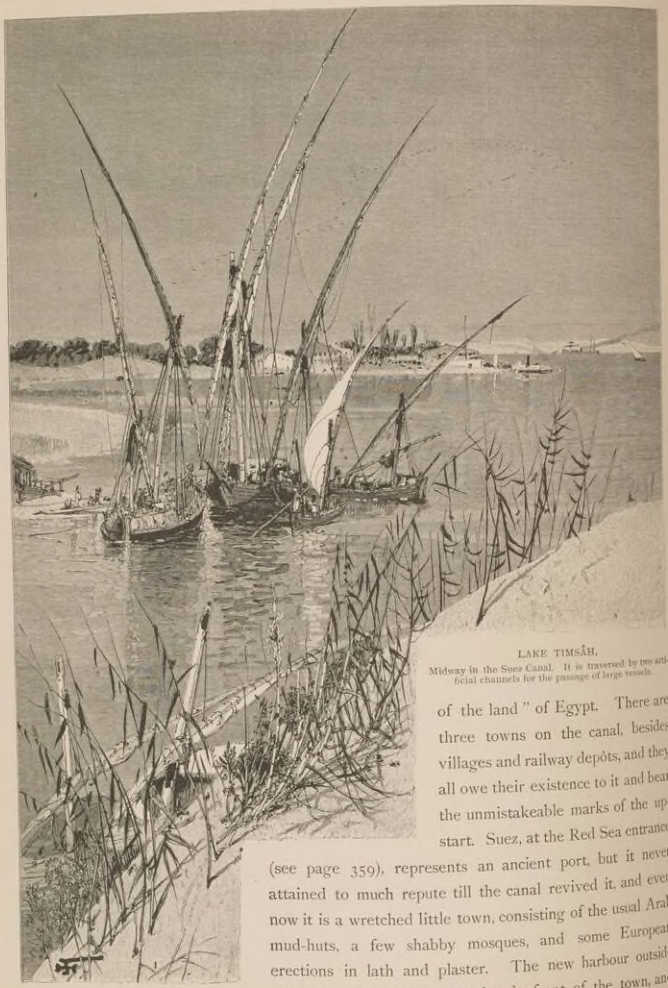
The approach to the Suez canal from the south is by an artificially deepened channel in the gulf. A stone pier one mile and three-quarters in length, erected on a sand-bank, runs from Suez to the entrance of this channel.

# THE LAND OF GOSHEN.

ON the wall of a tomb at Beny Hasan is a painting of a family coming to settle in Egypt. They are different in countenance from the people of the country; their dress is richer, and they are armed; one of them plays upon his lyre as he journeys, the women follow, and the children and goods are carried upon asses. It is a picture of a Semitic household, such as Jacob brought with him from Canaan; and it was thus that neighbouring tribes, like the Hebrews, in time of dearth and necessity, came to sojourn in the strange land where the fertilising river gave food to all who approached its waters. After the dreary wastes which sever Egypt from Palestine the wanderers lighted suddenly upon the rich fields of Goshen, "the best of the land;" and when the Hebrew historian wished to laud the "well-watered" plain of the Jordan, as it was in the days of its prosperity, he could only compare it to "the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt as thou comest unto Zoan." *

The wall-painting at Beny Hasan shows the journey into Egypt as it was more than four thousand years ago. In the present day we travel otherwise and see other sights. In the monotonous length of the Suez Canal and the sterile land which borders it on either side there is little to rejoice the eye. From the giant breakwaters of Port Sa'id, through the melancholy expanse of Lake Menzeleh, the sandhills of Kantarah, and the chain of lakes which map out the former junction of the Red Sea with the Mediterranean, and which have suggested to all the rulers of Egypt—Pharaoh or Ptolemy, Napoleon or Khedive—the design of an intermarial communication;—through the hundred miles of the cutting, so admirable in engineering and so unsightly in nature and art, there is nothing to indicate "the garden of the Lord," or "the best

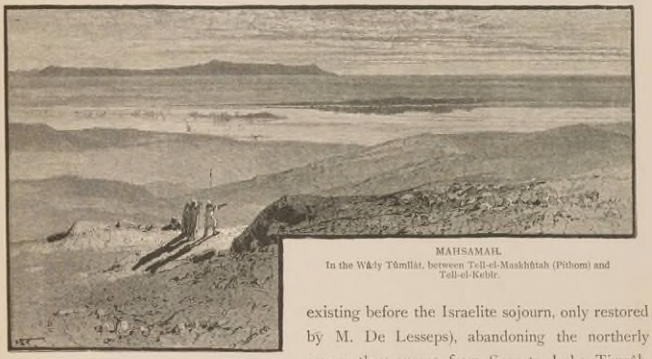
* Genesis xiii. 10, where Zoar must mean Zoan in Egypt.



LAKE TIMSÂH.
Midway in the Suez Canal. It is traversed by two artificial channels for the passage of large vessels.

of the land" of Egypt. There are three towns on the canal, besides villages and railway depôts, and they all owe their existence to it and bear the unmistakeable marks of the upstart. Suez, at the Red Sea entrance (see page 359), represents an ancient port, but it never attained to much repute till the canal revived it, and even now it is a wretched little town, consisting of the usual Arab mud-huts, a few shabby mosques, and some European erections in lath and plaster. The new harbour outside the great swamp that stretches in front of the town, and

the beautiful mountain of 'Atâka that overhangs the west coast, are the only notable things about Suez besides the canal that made it famous. Port Sa'îd, at the other end, is the counterpart of Suez with European improvements, and owes its existence simply to the circumstance that where it now stands the approach to the coast is deepest; and its site was therefore selected, in 1859, on one of the strip of islands forming the sea wall of Lake Menzeleh, as the best place for the exit of the canal, and it was christened after the patron of the enterprise, the Viceroy Sa'îd Pasha.* Between these two, on Lake Timsâh (see opposite), —which was formerly a reedy pond of brackish water, but has become by the influx of the Mediterranean an expanse of six square miles of clear blue water,—stands the third of the brand-new cities of the canal, Isma'ïlia, so named after Sa'îd's successor, the ex-Khedive. Isma'ïlia marks the angle where the railway and also the Freshwater Canal (an ancient work



MAHSAMAH.
In the Wâdy Tûmîlât, between Tell-el-Maskhûtah (Pithom) and Tell-el-Kebîr.

existing before the Israelite sojourn, only restored by M. De Lesseps), abandoning the northerly course they pursue from Suez to Lake Timsâh, turn off through the Wâdy Tûmîlât, by way of Tell-el-Maskhûtah, Mahsamah (see above), Kassasîn, Tell-el-Kebîr, and other places which (in sundry pronunciations) the late Egyptian campaign has rendered familiar to the English ear, and strike across the Delta by Zakâzîk to Cairo. Until near Zakâzîk the country is still a naked desert, and it is difficult to realise that the bare waste which stretches between the Suez Canal and the Tanitic arm of the Nile (whose dwindled volume and neglected channel are the prime causes of the change) was once the fertile tract of Goshen and the "field of Zoan," washed by a thousand canals, whose plentiful waters needed little aid to spread their fertilising alluvium over the soil or supply the villagers at the wayside well (see page 365).

This border-land, however, which bears scarcely a trace of its former prosperity, is the most interesting part of all Egypt to the Biblical student. It was at Zoan, "the Alexandria of

* "Egypt," by S. Lane-Poole, page 117 (Low's "Foreign Countries").

primitive Egypt," the great trade-mart at the Tanitic mouth of the Nile, where caravans from Midian and cargoes from Tarshish brought the merchandise of the East to meet the traders

A VILLAGE THRESHING-FLOOR.

Showing a primitive threshing-sledge drawn by buffaloes, and a peasant separating the chaff from the grain with a winnowing-fork. The huts of the village are formed of mud and sun-dried bricks, roofed with palm-tree rafters thatched with stalks of Indian corn, palm-leaves, and old mats. The dark patches on the mud walls represent cakes of fuel made of dung and straw; when thoroughly dry they are stored for use.

of Memphis, that the first scene of the Hebrew sojourn in Egypt was laid. When the famous Twelfth Dynasty had died away in a woman, a mysterious race of foreign warriors conquered

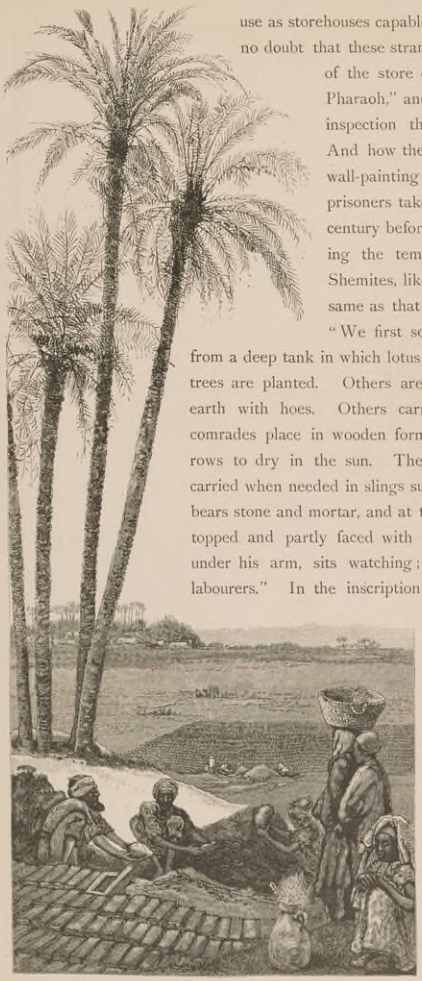
the border-land, which has now so little to invite conquest. These were the shepherd kings, or Hyksos. "When they invaded the country, how they conquered it, how long they ruled it, we do not know. All we can say is that towards the close of their dominion they raised the monuments we see at Zoan, the great works of Apepi, who reigned about seventeen centuries before our era, and seems to have been the Pharaoh of Joseph."

Not only was Zoan the capital of the Hyksos Pharaoh who made Joseph his regent and hospitably entertained his kindred, so that under his reign the children of Israel prospered and multiplied, tilled their land in peace and contentment, and threshed out their harvests with the primitive heavy waggon still employed by the fellahin (see opposite); it was at Zoan also that Rameses II., Pharaoh the Oppressor, "who knew not Joseph," was wont to reside after his re-conquest of the border-land and expulsion of the Hyksos. From the palace at Zoan the orders went forth to the Egyptian taskmasters to compel the Hebrews to find their own straw for their bricks. Here Moses confronted Meneptah, the Pharaoh of the Exodus, and worked his "wonders in the field of Zoan," and from the same memorable city did the Children of Israel set forth on the night of the first great Passover.

An Egyptian poet of the time of Pharaoh the Oppressor describes Zoan, or Rameses as it was then called, in terms of almost ecstatic admiration: "She is beautiful, beautiful. There is nought like her among the monuments of Thebes. Her fields are full of lovely places, abounding daily in the produce of food, her pools are full of fish, her ponds of ducks, her meadows are verdant with herbage, the bower with blooming garlands. The granaries are full of wheat and barley heaped up as high as heaven; . . . . sweet wine there is which one mixes with honey. Her ships go and come daily, laden with provisions. The joys have there fixed their seat, there is no word of want, the small are there as the great." And he describes the festival of the fourth month, and how the people came with branches and garlands, and the fowler with birds, and they stood waving garlands at their doors, "for the king is making his entry in the morning."

This was Zoan after its restoration by the children of Israel, who "built for Pharaoh store cities, Pithom and Raamses" (Exodus i. 11). This was the scene of the oppression, when "the Egyptians made the children of Israel to serve with rigour: and they made their lives bitter with hard bondage, in mortar, and in brick, and in all manner of service in the field" (i. 13, 14). The very bricks for which the Hebrews were ordered to "gather straw for themselves" (Exodus v. 7) are still to be seen; there is one in the Museum at Berlin, stamped with the name of Rameses II. himself, with the straw still visible in it. At Tell-el-Maskhûtah, which M. Naville's recent excavations have proved to be the Pithom-Succoth of the Bible, and the Heroöpolis of the Greeks and Romans, we can see the very store chambers which the children of Israel built. The greater part of the fortified enclosure of Pithom is occupied by numerous square chambers, which have no doors, and must, therefore, have been entered from above, as a store-room might be, whilst their massive walls, three yards thick, and constructed of large and well-made bricks laid with great regularity, also point to their

use as storehouses capable of resisting attack. We need have no doubt that these strange square strong chambers are part of the store city which the Israelites "built unto Pharaoh," and we are able to affirm from personal inspection that they were excellent bricklayers. And how the bricks were made we can see in a wall-painting in a Theban tomb, in which some prisoners taken in war by Thothmes III. (quite a century before Moses' birth) are depicted as building the temple of Amen. The labourers are Shemites, like the Hebrews, and their work is the same as that against which the Israelites rebelled. "We first see the captives drawing water in jars from a deep tank in which lotus lilies are blooming and around which trees are planted. Others are engaged in breaking up masses of earth with hoes. Others carry the moistened clay, which their comrades place in wooden forms and arrange the shaped bricks in rows to dry in the sun. The bricks when dried are stacked, and carried when needed in slings suspended from yokes. Another gang bears stone and mortar, and at the end is a carefully constructed wall topped and partly faced with stone. One overseer, with his staff under his arm, sits watching; another, staff in hand, follows the labourers." In the inscription accompanying the picture the taskmaster is made to say, "The stick is in my hand, be not idle;" and we are reminded of those other taskmasters who "hasted them, saying, Fulfil your works, your daily tasks," and of Pharaoh's reproach, "Ye are idle, ye are idle" (Exodus v. 13, 17).



BRICKMAKING.
A wooden frame is placed in position, ready to receive the clay.

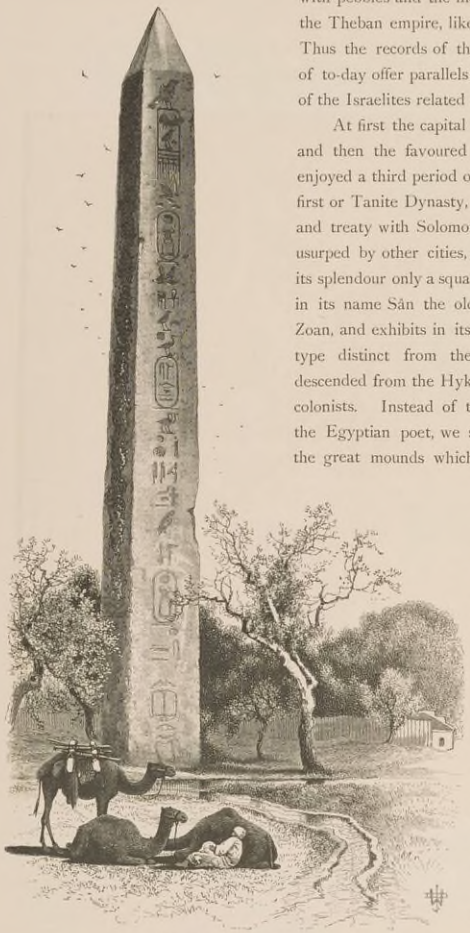
In the present day brickmaking goes on in the same manner as when Israel built the house of Pharaoh. Unburnt brick, merely dried in the sun, is still the staple of building material, but the old bricks were better and more carefully made than the modern. The most ancient bricks were bound

A WAYSIDE WELL.

Shaded by a fine specimen of the *Acacia Nilotica*. The water is raised by means of jars attached to a wheel, the sâkiyeh.

with pebbles and the like, but those of the buildings of the Theban empire, like Zoan, were bound with straw. Thus the records of the monuments and the practice of to-day offer parallels to the story of the oppression of the Israelites related in the Hebrew records.

At first the capital of Joseph's Shepherd-Pharaoh, and then the favoured residence of Rameses, Zoan enjoyed a third period of prosperity under the Twenty-first or Tanite Dynasty, which was related by marriage and treaty with Solomon; but its place was gradually usurped by other cities, and now there remains of all its splendour only a squalid fishing village which retains in its name Sân the old Egyptian Za'n and Hebrew Zoan, and exhibits in its brawny inhabitants a Semitic type distinct from the Egyptian, and undoubtedly descended from the Hyksos and perhaps their Hebrew colonists. Instead of the beautiful city described by the Egyptian poet, we see only the huts of Sân and the great mounds which mark the place where two splendid temples of red syenite, adorned with numerous obelisks and sphinxes and surrounded by palaces and gardens and all that went to make "the very secret of the joys of life," once tempted Sesostris to leave his Theban capital and dwell in the field of Zoan. "Not even at Thebes," says Ebers, "are so many monuments of hard granite to be found; but of all the magnificent buildings that once stood here not even the ground plan can be recognised. The great sanctuary erected by Rameses II. has crumbled into dust. Granite pillars with palm-leaf capitals,



OBELISK OF HELIOPOLIS,
Formed of red granite; it has been so much encroached upon by deposits of mud that a considerable portion of its base is now buried.

colossi, and no less than twelve broken obelisks, lie by the side of less important monuments in grand confusion on the earth. An Arab legend relates that the Pharaohs were giants, who could move the mightiest masses of rock with a magic rod; but if it needed giants to erect these monuments, it must have required the will and the strength of a god thus to overthrow

THE "VIRGIN'S TREE."

At the time of the inauguration of the Suez Canal this tree was presented to the Empress Eugénie by the Khedive. The garden in which it stands is watered by means of a double sâkiyeh supplied from a reservoir fed by springs.

them." Around the fallen stones desolation and solitude hold their dreary sway, and a chaos of mounds and ruins, wrapped close in silence and neglect, is all that is left of Zoan.

The same fate has fallen on all the cities of the eastern Delta. Where are all the fortresses that defended the Syrian border, where now the ships of commerce steam peacefully through

"the silver streak" which severs Africa from Asia? Where is Migdol, the frontier fort in Ezekiel's days, and Pelusium, the "City of Sweet Repose," near the Serbonian bog, and Avaris, "which commanded the border, at once the place of arms and the last possession of the mysterious shepherds"? A few high mounds are all that break the desolate scene of Pompey's murder. Migdol is supposed by some to be represented by the hillock called Tell-es-Samût. Lofty mounds, again, and the scattered ruins of temples near Zakâzîk are what remain to us of that famous city of Bubastis, at which Herodotus marvelled, and whither, he tells us, seven hundred thousand pilgrims yearly came to celebrate the festival of Bast, the cat-headed goddess of burning love, with riotous rites, just as their descendants keep the Molid of the Muslim saint Ahmad El-Bedawy at Tanta hard by. The young men of Pi-beseth, as the Hebrew prophet called Bubastis, have fallen by the sword, and the cities went into captivity (Ezekiel xxx. 17). Nothing more impressive exists in all the wonderful sights of Egypt than this total overthrow of the great cities of the Delta. The "best of the land" is become a very Golgotha of a vanished and unreturning splendour. Turkish conquest and Roman neglect have verified the words, "I will make the canals dry, and sell the land into the hand of the wicked: and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein, by the hand of strangers: I the Lord have spoken" (Ezekiel xxx. 12).

Goshen itself, the city which gave its name to half the "Arabian Nome," and which was the capital of the district assigned to Joseph's kinsfolk, has shared the fate of all the border-cities. The site can be shown at Fakûs, in which we trace the Greek Phaccusa, the Egyptian Pa-Kesem, and the Hebrew Goshen. We can now go by railway to the place whither Jacob journeyed, full of years and troubles, to end his days near his son, the famous viceroy of Egypt. But of the Hebrew capital—as of all the cities of the Delta—there remains nothing but the inevitable mounds. Everywhere throughout this wonderful land, where the Shepherd Kings conquered, where the children of Israel toiled, where a Pharaoh oppressed and another Pharaoh pursued, the plain is varied only by this one monotonous feature: mounds in every direction show the traveller where the buried cities of Zoan and Goshen lie waiting the tardy labours of the explorer to render up their secrets and tell something of their eventful and mysterious history. No part of Egypt demands excavation more loudly than the eastern half of the Delta; nowhere are the problems to be resolved so novel or so important. The cultus of the Shepherds, at present shrouded in obscurity, but offering already strange and remarkable features, bears, we know not how vitally, upon the religion of Israel; the sojourn of the Hebrews in Egypt await illustration in wall-sculptures of tombs; the mummies of the children of Israel themselves are beneath these mounds, if only the trouble were taken to uncover them. Mariette, ever in the van, did something for Zoan, but there remains a splendid field for a discoverer. The remarkable success attending the excavations at Pithom in 1883 is a good omen for the future; and Tanis and Daphnæ only await a like exploration to reveal, perhaps, even more astonishing results.

Near Cairo, forming the southern point of the triangle which included the land of Goshen,

stands a solitary obelisk (see page 366) of red granite, the oldest but one in Egypt—the only sign remaining that there was once a "City of the Sun." In the plain of Matariyeh, before this lonely stone, the Turks fought the battle that won Egypt from the Memlûks in 1517, and Kléber gained his famous victory in 1800 over the very site of Heliopolis, or On, the oldest seat of learning in the world. There stood the famous temple of On of which Potipherah, the father of Joseph's wife, was priest; here Pianchi, the Ethiopian priest-king, eight centuries B.C., washed at the "Fountain of the Sun," and made offerings of white bulls, milk, perfume, incense, and all kinds of sweet-scented woods, and entering the temple "saw his father Ra [the sun-god] in the sanctuary." Heliopolis was the university of the most ancient civilisation in the world, the forerunner of all the schools of Europe. Here, in all probability, Moses was instructed by the priests of Ra in "all the wisdom of the Egyptians;" here, too, Herodotus cross-questioned the same priesthood with varying success; here Plato came to study, and Eudoxus the mathematician to learn astronomy; and here Strabo was shown the houses where the famous Greeks had lived. Of this seat of learning and focus of religion nothing but the obelisk remains. "The images of Beth-Shemesh" (the "House of the Sun") have indeed been "broken," and "the houses of the Egyptians' gods" have been "burned with fire" (Jeremiah xliii. 13).

Beside the obelisk is an ancient sycamore, riven with age and hacked with numberless names, beneath which tradition hath it that the Holy Family rested in their flight into Egypt, and which is hence known as the "Virgin's Tree" (see page 367). Near by is a spring of fresh water—a rare sight in this brackish land—which, it is said, became sweet because the Bambino was bathed there. From the spots where the drops fell from his swaddling clothes, after they, too, had been washed in this sacred spring, sprang up balsam-trees, which, it was believed, flourished nowhere else. There is no evidence for these fancies, and, of course, the sycamore is but a descendant of the supposed original, as it was not planted till after 1672. But the circumstances that a temple was built by the Hebrew Onias for the worship of his countrymen near here, and that Jewish gardeners were brought here for the culture of the balsam-trees, give the tale a certain fitness. "The tradition is no more than a legend, yet there is no place in Egypt to which the visit of the Holy Family would be more fit, than to the almost deserted seat of learning, when it was already the parent of the great university under whose wide-spreading shadow grew and flourished those Hebrew and Christian schools which had so mighty an influence in the annals of the early Church. Thus Heliopolis then represented that which was passing away, not without hope of that which was to come. The least monumental of all the sites of Egypt, without temple or tomb, nor any record but the obelisk, is yet eloquent of greater things than the solemn pyramids of Memphis or the storied temples of Thebes. What these tell is rather of Egypt's history than the world's; the idea that Heliopolis suggests is the true progress of the whole human race. For here was the oldest link in the chain of the schools of learning. The conqueror has demolished the temple; the city, with the houses of the wise men, has fallen into hopeless ruin, downtrodden by the thoughtless peasant, as he

drives his plough across the site. Yet the name and the fame of the City of the Sun charms the stranger as of old while, standing beside the obelisk, he looks back through the long and stately avenue of the ages that are past, and measures the gain in knowledge that patient

THE GATE OF VICTORY (BÂB-EN-NASR).
The easternmost of the northern gates of Cairo. It was built in the reign of the Fâtimy khalif El-Mustansir, A.H. 480 (A.D. 1087).

scholars have won. He sees that phœnix-like power of renewing her youth, which gives all wisdom the deathlessness which is at once a type and a presage of immortality." *

* R. S. Poole, "Cities of Egypt," pages 71, 83, 106, 131 *ff.*, 147, whence much of the contents of this chapter has, with the author's permission, been derived. It should be stated that the recent explorations at Pithom, under the auspices of the Egyptian Exploration Fund and Sir Erasmus Wilson, were brought to a successful issue mainly by the exertions of Mr. R. S. Poole (joint secretary with Miss Amelia B. Edwards to the Fund) and the energy of M. Naville.

A SELLER OF LANTERNS.

In houses provided with latticed windows only, candles are usually sheltered by lanterns like those suspended above. One such lantern, with two or three wax candles in it, placed on the ground or on a low stool in a central position, is considered sufficient to light a large saloon.

# CAIRO.

THE view of Cairo after the buried cities of Goshen is like the passing from death unto life. Behind us are the desolate mounds that mark the site of a far-off civilisation, magnificent while it lasted, but inexpressibly melancholy in its ruin; before us lies the chief seat of Arabian commerce and of Muslim culture—decaying too, like all Eastern cities, but still

SEBÎL, OR STREET FOUNTAIN.

Supplied from a cistern below which is filled during the inundation of the Nile. The upper chamber, with its columns and double verandah, is a school-room.

full of movement and life. We have been studying the scanty traces of extinct capitals,

CARPET BAZAAR.
There are two carpet bazaars in the Khân El-Khalîly. The larger one is established in the picturesque court of a building of the thirteenth century, a portion of which is shown above. Here may be seen carpets from India and Persia and from every part of the Turkish empire.

engulfed by desert sand, dwelt in by no living thing: we are now to visit the apex of that

luxuriant Delta over which the Nile yearly spreads its fertilizing waters; for at the point where the narrow valley begins to expand, like a green fan, towards the broad embouchure, stands Cairo, the jewel in its handle. The country we have just traversed is interesting for its Biblical associations; the reign of the shepherd kings who welcomed Israel, and the sojourn and toil and exodus of the chosen people, render the land of Goshen beyond all things memorable. Cairo, on the other hand, is modern and Mohammadan. Yet even so it has its significance to the student of the Bible; for here, at least until European inroads laid waste the Arabian city, could the life and modes of thought of the Semitic race be studied at their best; and a study of the mind of the Muslim not seldom proved the best key to the thoughts of the Hebrew.

Cairo is not merely the largest city in Africa, it is the most perfect example the world can show of a Mohammadan capital. In spite of the "Haussmannizing" tendency of recent days, and the attempt to raise it to the questionable dignity of a bastard Paris, Cairo is still the ideal city of the Arabian Nights. We can still shut our eyes to the hotels and restaurants, the dusty grass-plots, and tawdry villa residences of the modern bricklayer's paradise, and turn away to wander in the labyrinth of narrow lanes which intersect the old parts of the city, just as they did in the days of the Memlûk sultans. And as we thread the winding alleys, where a thin streak of sky marks the narrow space between the lattice-windows of the overhanging upper stories, and dive under a camel here, or retreat into a recess there, to escape what seems imminent death at the feet of the advancing and apparently impassable crowd of beasts of burden, camels, asses, and horses, laden or ridden, we may fancy ourselves in the gateway of 'Aly of Cairo, and in that stall round the corner we may perhaps hear the story of the wonderful adventures of the six brothers, from the immortal Barber himself; within the grated lattice over the way, the Three Royal Mendicants may at this moment be entertaining the Portress and her fair sisters with the history of their lives; and if we wait till night we may see the good Harûn Er-Rashîd himself (though he did live in Baghdad) coming stealthily to the house in his midnight rambles, with Ja'far at his heels, and black Mesrûr clearing the way. A few streets away from the European quarter it is easy to dream that we are acting a part in the veracious history of the Thousand and One Nights—which do, in fact, describe Cairo and its people and life as they were in the fifteenth century, and as, to a great degree, they are still. In its very dilapidation the city helps the illusion; the typical Eastern houses falling to ruins, which no one thinks of repairing, are of course haunted by the 'Efrits and other mischievous Jinn, who keep away all God-fearing tenants. But if in its ruined houses, far more in what survives of its mediæval monuments does Cairo transport one to the golden age of Arabian art and culture. Among its mosques and the fragments of its palaces are the noblest examples of Arabian architecture which can be seen in all the wide empire of Islâm. Damascus and Baghdad, Delhi and Gaur, Seville and Cordova, possess elements of beauty that Cairo has not, and serve to complete the history of Arabian art; but to see that art in its perfection, uncorrupted by the mechanical detail of the Alhambra, free from the distorted outlines of India,

we must study the mosques and tombs of Cairo—the city whose beauties all Arabian literature extols, and of which the Jewish physician, in the Story of the Humpback, boasts that "he who hath not seen Cairo hath not seen the world. Her soil is gold; her Nile is a marvel; her women are as the damsels of paradise; her houses are palaces; and her air is soft, sweet-smelling as aloes-wood, refreshing the heart—and how can Cairo be otherwise, when she is the Mother of the World?"

The capital of Egypt has grown up on several foundations, and by the incorporation of various suburbs. It owes its origin to the Arabs, whose general, 'Amr ibn el-Âsy, after conquering the country, A.D. 641, fixed the site of his capital where he first pitched his tent; and hence it was called El-Fustât, "The Tent." Here the governors, which the khalifs of Damascus set over the land of Egypt, held their court; and even when it was no longer the actual seat of government it remained still the chief town. A century later (A.D. 751), the representatives of the 'Abbâsy khalifs—a new line who had just wrested the empire from the earlier house of Omayyeh—removed their residence to a site a little to the north-east of El-Fustât, where a military suburb called El-'Askar ("the Camp") grew up, and formed a sort of Cairene Versailles. The first independent Mohammadan sovereign, Ahmad Ibn-Tûlûn (A.D. 870), again changed the seat of government, and founded the new suburb, El-Katâi' ("the Feofs"), farther to the north-east, where he and his house, and the succeeding dynasty of the Ikhshîdis, kept their state. When Jowhar took Egypt from the latter for his master, the Fâtimy khalif of Tunis, he chose a fourth site, again to the north-east of El-Katâi', and founded there, in 969, the new city of El-Kâhirah, or "the Victorious," which Italians corrupted into Cairo.

Jowhar's object, however (as has been shown by Mr. H. C. Kay in the J.R.A.S., N.S. xiv. 2), was not to found a new city, but to build a palace for the Fâtimy khalif, El-Mo'izz; and for a long time El-Kâhirah was simply the khalif's fortified palace, and was dwelt in only by his harîm, his slaves, his officials, and his garrison. Two palaces, indeed, were enclosed within the fortified walls and double ditches; the eastern palace was the khalif's own residence, and here he kept his women, children, and eunuchs, to the number of, it is said, 12,000 souls. Near by, where now stands the Khân El-Khalily, was the imperial mausoleum, where El-Mo'izz deposited the remains of his ancestors, which he brought with him from their places of sepulture in Tunis. Farther south was the khalif's special mosque, the Azhar, where he himself, as Prince and Imâm of the Faithful, conducted the Friday prayers. The smaller western palace was separated from the eastern by the street called Beyn El-Kasreyn ("Between the Palaces"), now known as the Sûk En-Nahhâsîn, under which a subterranean passage connected the two. Nobody was allowed within the palaces, besides the khalif's household, but the high officials and the garrison. It was not till Saladin succeeded to the Fâtimy power, and enlarged the walls, that El-Kâhirah became a city instead of a palace.

The capital of Egypt thus includes four sites, each of which was a slight move to the north-east of the preceding, but contiguous at its western extremity. Until El-Kâhirah grew up El-Fustât was always the capital, and was called Masr (in literary Arabic "Misr"), the name

IN THE SHOE BAZAAR.

This was formerly a school, an interesting building now in a very dilapidated condition. The gateway, however, is still preserved.

THE ARMOURERS' MARKET.
In this street there are some good specimens of *meshrebiyehs* (latticed windows).

both of Egypt and its capital. But when El-Kâhirah took the leading position it also adopted the name Masr, or Masr El-Kâhirah, and El-Fustât then became known as Masr El-'Atîkah (Old Masr), or, as Europeans anachronously call it, "Old Cairo." There have been three successive walls or enlargements of walls since the foundation of El-Kâhirah. First Jowhar, the builder of the city, threw a wall round it in its originally limited extent. Next, a century later (A.D. 1087), the Fâtimy khalif El-Mustansir (or rather his general and grand vizier Bedr-El-Jemâly) enlarged this first wall so as to include some additional space to the north and south, and built or rebuilt some of the sixty gates that gave egress from the city. When Saladin (or, as he ought to be called, Salâh-ed-dîn) succeeded to the Fâtimy power in the twelfth cen-

tury, he built the Citadel on a spur of Mount Mukattam, and enlarged the Fâtimy walls so as to include his new fortress in their circuit, and also a small suburb to the north of the original wall of El-Kâhirah. The city had now expanded from the square mile or less of the old Fâtimy enclosure to the size of the Cairo of to-day, excluding the modern quarter of the south-west,—that is, about three miles long and a mile to a mile and a half wide.

Most of these changes can be traced in the present city. A small part of El-Fustât remains under the name of Masr El-'Atîkah, separated from the city by the great mounds of rubbish which indicate vanished suburbs. El-Katâî' was partly burnt and partly neglected, and little of it remains but the mosque of its founder, Ahmad Ibn-Tûlûn, which, with the site of the old suburb, was included within the circuit of Saladin's walls. Of El-Kâhirah the whole growth can readily be traced. The oldest wall still stands on the north side, though the magnificent gateways of the Bâb En-Nasr, or "Gate of Victory," with its mighty square towers and fine vaulting within, and the Bâb El-Futûh, or "Gate of Conquests," flanked with massive round towers, are not quite on their original sites, but were removed to enclose the ruined mosque and mebkharehs of El-Hâkim, the mad founder of the Druses. The cornice and frieze, adorned with fine Kufic inscriptions, which run along the face of the gateway and the faces and inner sides of the two towers, half-way from the ground, no less than its massive and clean-cut masonry, distinguish the Bâb En-Nasr among Arab monuments (see page 370). The second wall is still where it was on the eastern boundary of the city, and its other sides may be traced by the names of demolished gates, as the Bâb El-Bahr, the Bâb El-Lûk, and the Bâb El-Khalak; and the Bâb Zuweyleh, also called Bâb El-Mutawelly, still standing in the heart of the city, is one of the most striking monuments of Cairo, though its walls and inscriptions are daubed over with plaster, and its towers were lowered to make room for the minarets of the adjoining mosque of El-Muayyad.

This second wall, thus mapped out, must have run from near the present bridge over the Isma'iliyeh Canal, along the western side of the Ezbekiyeh (where the wall was standing in 1842), to near the Abdîn Palace, where it turned up to the Bâb Zuweyleh, and was prolonged to the eastern wall. Since it was built the Nile has considerably changed its course, and now runs much farther to the westward. Saladin's wall was a restoration of this in part, but his addition (begun in 1170) round the citadel is in full preservation, like the fortress itself, though the continuation round the site of El-Katâî' on the south is demolished. The names of the gates, however, show that the limits of the present city on the south are nearly what they were in Saladin's day, and this wall must have run from the citadel to near the mosque of Ibn-Tûlûn, enclosed it, and turned north to meet the old wall near the Bâb El-Lûk.

The limits of the modern additions are only too plain, but the "improvements" of the reigning dynasty happily do not extend to the old Fâtimy quarter, and indeed scarcely affect Saladin's city except in prolongation and widening of the Musky, the opening of the broad "Boulevard Mohammad 'Aly" to the citadel, and the laying out of the Rumeylah and the spaces of Sultan Hasan and Kara Meydan in the usual European style. With these

exceptions, the modern additions extend only from the Ezbekiyeh to the river, and consist of a number of parallel boulevards and *rondes places* whose only merit is that their designers, in borrowing Western ugliness and uniformity, have also followed a Western fashion in the planting of trees.*

To understand the topography of the old Arab city, which lies to the east of the canal on the side farthest from the Nile, we must imagine a white ensign with the red St. George's cross dividing it into four quarters. The rectangular oblong forming the flag represents the old part of Cairo, between the canal and the eastern wall. It is not set square to the cardinal points of the compass, but midway between them. The horizontal line of the St. George's cross is the old High Street of Cairo, and runs from the Bâb El-Futûh in the north wall in a south-westerly direction till it joins the new-fangled "Boulevard Mohammad 'Aly," almost in front of the citadel. It is called in various parts of its course by different names—first the Sûk En-Nahhâsin, or Coppersmith's Market; then the Ghûriyeh, or Street of Sultan El-Ghûry; then the Sukkariyeh, or Sugar Bazaar, and so on. The perpendicular line of the cross is formed by the Musky, so called after its builder, the Emir Musik, a kinsman of Saladin's. The Musky starts from the Ezbekiyeh, in the European quarter, and, crossing the canal, cuts the High Street in two and goes out through the east wall at the Bâb El-Ghureyyib. Around these two main thoroughfares which, crossing one another at right angles, form the cross of the ensign to which we have compared the old quarter of Cairo, are grouped those endless byways and *culs-de-sac* in which the Muslim population chiefly resides, and that wilderness of bazaars and streets of shops where most of the trade of the city is transacted.

As we turn into one of the narrow lanes that intersect the Mohammadan city, we are struck, not only by the vivid incongruities of the street scenes which travellers have described so often, but by the contrast between the noise and bustle of the crowded alley and the quiet and silence of the tall houses that overhang it on either side. Here there is no sign of life; the doors are jealously closed, the windows shrouded by those beautiful screens of net-like woodwork which delight the artist and tempt the cupidity of the collector. If we enter one of these gates, through the bent passage which bars the view of the interior from the profane eyes of the passing throng, we shall find the inner court almost as silent and deserted as the guarded windows which overlook the street. We shall see nothing of the domestic life of the inhabitants; for the women's apartments are carefully shut off from the court, into which only the guest rooms and groom's chambers and the like semi-public apartments open. We cannot penetrate through the closed door which leads to the rooms of the family, we can only notice the spacious and airy appearance of the interior court. After the bustle of the street this quiet and ample space is very refreshing, and it is impossible not to felicitate the Egyptian architects on their success in meeting the requirements of Mohammadan building. They make the streets narrow and overshadowed by projecting *meshrebîyehs* (lattice windows), because the sun beats down too fiercely for the wide street of European towns to be endurable. But they

* "Egypt," by S. Lane-Poole, pages 36—43 (Low's "Foreign Countries"), of which several paragraphs are reproduced in the present work.

make the houses themselves roomy and surrounded by courts and gardens, because without air the heat of the rooms would be intolerable. The Eastern architects' art lies in so constructing your

TOMB-MOSQUE OF EL-ASHRAF BARSABAY.
In the Eastern Cemetery, or so-called "Tombs of the Khalifs." It is constructed of alternate courses of pale red and yellowish white limestone. Barsabay died A.D. 1438.

house that you cannot look into your neighbour's windows, nor he into yours; and the obvious way of attaining this end is to build the rooms round a high open court into which and out of

FOUNTAIN IN THE COURT OF THE MOSQUE OF SULTAN HASAN.
The recess beyond it on the eastern side of the court is the sanctuary. The arch is ninety feet in height.

which nobody can look, and to closely veil the windows, especially the few that must look into the street, with lattice blinds, which admit a subdued light and sufficient air, and permit an outlook without allowing the outside world to see through the delicately carved screen. The wooden screens and secluded court are necessary to fulfil the requirements of the Mohammadan system of separating the sexes. Many private houses stand in quiet *culs-de-sac*, closed at the single entrance by a gate; but others are in frequented thoroughfares, and their ground-floors abutting on the street are often let out in shops which have no communication with the interior of the houses. Shops in Cairo occupy little space and encroach very inconsiderably upon the houses beneath which they are situated (see page 371). A recess eight feet high and six broad, with shelves for the wares, and a large stone seat in front for the tradesman and his customers to sit upon and discuss a quiet pipe (or in these degenerate days an unsatisfying cigarette) over their bargaining, forms all that the average Cairene requires in the way of a shop. When the day's work is over, or if he feels inclined to go to the mosque or for a chat with a congenial acquaintance, the shopkeeper lets down the shutter that is hinged above his recess, locks it in a perfunctory manner, and departs with an easy mind. If anybody wants to buy anything while he is absent, "God is with the patient," or "Haste comes from the devil," succinctly expresses his view of the interruption. A number of these little recesses on either side of the street make up a Sûk, or bazaar, over which picturesque awnings of more or less tattered and disreputable appearance are sometimes stretched to shade the customers. These various streets and bazaars used formerly to be closed by gates at night, but these have long been abolished. Sometimes they enclose a large building of a couple of stories, called a Khân or Wekâleh, entirely devoted to merchants and merchandise, and in several instances, like that of the noble Wekâleh of Kaït Bay beside the Azhar, these buildings have some pretensions to beauty. In Cairo the usual oriental plan prevails of arranging the shops according to their trades or the place whence their wares come; and if the purchaser wishes to buy several articles of different kinds he may have to go some distance. After buying boots, say, in one shop, he will pass several hundred other cobblers, and whole streets of other trades, before he arrives at the jeweller or carpet-seller he is seeking. Most of these classified streets, devoted to distinct trades, cluster round the great thoroughfares that form the cross upon the ensign—to retain our simile. The Jemaliyeh, where the wholesale dealers display the products of the Red Sea trade, and the great Khân El-Khalîly, a notable place for silks and carpets, are both in the dexter chief, the north-east corner of our flag. Below the horizontal line formed by the Sûk En-Nahhâsîn, where tinned and copper wares abound side by side with pipe-sticks, amber, and the smoker's paraphernalia in general, is the Marghûsh, or cotton market; nearer the Musky, the crooked intricate Seven Dials of the silversmiths and jewellers; and farther west the quarters of the Jews, odoriferous as usual. On the southern side of the Musky, or rather of its eastern prolongation, are the shops of the booksellers, who are learned men, and enjoy the peculiar advantage of being tied down by no fixed published price for their books; and the market for goods from the Sûdân—leopard skins, Nubian weapons, gums, ostrich eggs, feathers, and

the like. After turning aside into the languorous bazaar of the perfumers, and then resuming our way along the High Street, in the part where it is called the Sukkariyeh, we see the sugar and candied fruits and other sweet commodities that give it its name displayed on all sides, and then suddenly find ourselves in the midst of the less tasty wares of the shoemakers, whose

COURT OF THE TOMB-MOSQUE OF BARKÛK.

In the Eastern Cemetery. A fountain for ablution, shaded by trees, stands in the centre of the court, which is surrounded by a colonnade. The sanctuary occupies the space between two fine domes, one of which is shown above. Barkûk died A.D. 1399.

covered bazaar, however, is quaint and picturesque; finally passing the tentmakers' stalls before we emerge upon the Boulevard. Farther towards the Citadel a street runs parallel with the Sukkariyeh, known as the Market of the Armourers, Sûk Es-Sellâh. This used to be a great centre of attraction to European travellers, but it is now fallen into disrepute, since the fine

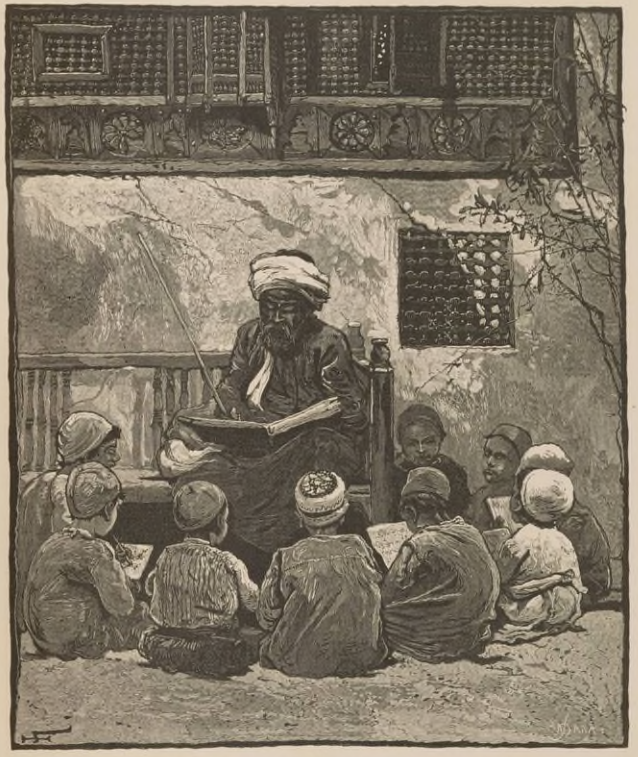
blades and the old-fashioned richly mounted arms have been mainly bought up, and Birmingham articles have taken their place. Besides all the fixed bazaars, there is what may be called a running or itinerary market of water-carriers (a most deserving and very numerous class—one of them may be seen at the left of the illustration of the Shoe Market, see page 376), coffee-sellers, auctioneers, and hawkers of vegetables, fruits, sherbet, and all manner of goods.

As we traverse the old High Street from end to end we see some of the most famous mosques of Cairo. There are upwards of three hundred of these beautiful and characteristic buildings in the city, to say nothing of smaller chapels; but of this

PULPIT OF THE TOMB-MOSQUE OF BARKÛK.

Presented by Kaiṯ Bay. It is carved in hard limestone, and is one of the most beautiful existing specimens of Arabian sculpture.

number a great many have fallen into decay (though not into disuse, as the crowd of worshippers on Fridays even in some of the most dilapidated mosques testifies), and there are



AT SCHOOL.

Small wooden boards painted white serve instead of books, the lessons being written upon them in ink by the schoolmaster, and renewed from time to time. The children, seated on the floor, read or recite the appointed lesson all at once, while rocking themselves to and fro or swaying from side to side.

not perhaps more than thirty that present individual and notably distinctive features. Of these, nine lie in the direct route from the Bâb El-Futûh along the High Street to the Citadel. Beside the gate, as has been mentioned, is the ruined mosque of El-Hâkim, with its fine Kufic

TOMB-MOSQUE OF KAÏT BAY.

In the Eastern Cemetery. It is constructed of alternate courses of pale red and yellowish white limestone. Kaït Bay died A.D. 1496.

frieze and curious mebkharehs (*i.e.* minarets upon which incense is said to have been burnt), the only important building, besides the walls and gates, and a small portion of the mosque of El-Azhar, that survives to commemorate the rule of the Fâtimy khalifs. Side by side, in the Sûk En-Nahhâsîn, stand the three mosques of the Memlûk sultans Barkûk, En-Nâsir, and

VALLEY OF THE NILE AND PYRAMIDS.
From Mount Mukattam. Beyond the picturesque cluster of "Tombs of the Memlûks" we see the ancient aqueduct stretching across the mounds of rubbish which form the southern boundary of Cairo.

Kalaûn, with their handsome portals and minarets. Unhappily the late tasteless régime did its best to deface them. The original builders had combined the colours of the alternate layers of pale red and yellowish white stone (examples of which are represented on pages 380 and 386) in such a manner as to produce a soft and harmonious effect which can hardly be believed by those who have not seen it. To the eye of the ex-khedive's decorators, however,

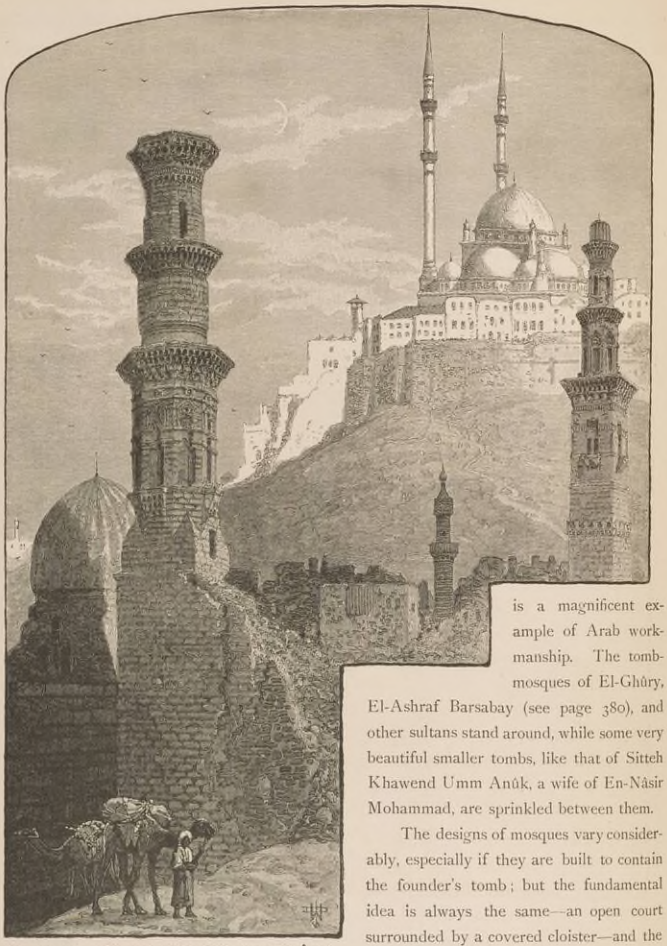
these subtle tints appeared merely washed-out colours that ought to be revived; and the arrival of visitors for the extravagant festivities that celebrated the opening of the Suez Canal presented an occasion for furbishing up the faded monuments of Cairo which could not be passed over. So the viceregal paintpot was put into requisition, and the subdued colours of the mosque façades were "daubed with vulgar ruddle and glaring yellow" by the common house-painter, till his vile "jack-pudding pattern of stripes," as Ebers indignantly exclaims, "disgraces the noble monuments" upon which the skilful architects of the Middle Ages bestowed so much thought and taste. The Turks can build nothing themselves but tawdry palaces and gaudy, tasteless, over-ornamented mosques; and the edifices they do set up are so insecurely built that they will infallibly come down before long amid the plaudits of a critical posterity. But if they cannot create, they can spoil; and it is hard to know which to anathematise more, their neglect or their restoration of the art monuments of Cairo.

The Memlûks, who built most of the mosques, were probably as bad a set of rulers as any Turkish sultans or khedives; many of them indeed were of Turkish, though not of Ottoman, blood. But at least they had a not ignoble ambition to adorn their capital with beautiful buildings, and if personal vanity entered into their motives it was a vanity which excuses itself by its effects. En-Nâsir, one of the best of the Memlûk kings, spent eight thousand pieces of gold a day on building, and this when the forced labour which reared all the monuments of Egypt, from the Pyramids to Port Sa'îd, struck out the item of wages! More than thirty mosques, besides mausoleums and other works, sprang up in his reign. Yet his own mosque is one of the least of its genus, and its most salient feature, the marble portal, is not Arab at all, but was subsequently brought by another sultan as a war trophy from Acre (refer to page 91). The mosque and hospital, called the Mâristân of Kalaûn, next to it, is a much more interesting structure. It was built at the end of the thirteenth century for the purpose of a hospital, wherein rich and poor were gratuitously treated and fed. There were wards for every different disease that was known, and a hall where the chief doctor delivered his lectures. In the religious part of the building fifty salaried readers of the Koran publicly taught the Mohammadan religion, and a librarian with five assistants superintended a fine collection of medical, legal, theological, and grammatical books. Four lecture-rooms were allotted to teachers of the four orthodox sects of Islam, and sixty orphans were gratuitously maintained and educated in a state-supported school. This noble institution was till lately used as a lunatic asylum, but now it is in ruins. Tinkers batter their pans where surgeons formerly operated; coppersmiths are soldering pots where once the learned expounded the law; and beyond the richly decorated tomb, a singularly noble structure, and a plainer mosque opposite it, little is preserved of the famous Mâristân. Women resort to the tomb-mosque to pray for male offspring, and mothers take their infants thither to have their "tongues loosed," which is effectually accomplished by squeezing lemon juice upon the red stone and making the unhappy babies lick it, with the immediate result of piercing screams and the perfect satisfaction of the mothers. People who suffer from headaches also go to touch the turban of Kalaûn, a piece of which is preserved,

together with part of his kaftân (or coat), which when wrapped round the body is believed to be a cure for ague. Probably the clothes of this charitable Muslim prince are as worthy to work miracles in healing as the wall of Knock chapel or the image of Our Lady of Lourdes.

Farther along the High Street, at the corner of the Musky, is the mosque and medreseh of El-Ashraf Barsabay, who also built a mosque in the Eastern Cemetery of Kaït Bay (see page 380); and a little beyond, in the Ghûrîyeh, are the two mosques of El-Ghûry, the last of the Memlûk sultans; that on the left hand (the tomb-mosque) is being restored with unusual skill, while that on the right, so far untouched, is a cruciform building with richly coloured ceilings and fine cornices. Farther still, with its minarets rising from the strange old gateway called the Bâb Zuweyleh, is the mosque of El-Muayyad, also a Memlûk, with a fine bronze gate which once belonged to the mosque of another prince of the same dynasty, Sultan Hasan. A view of the eastern transept of the latter magnificent mosque, which stands in the Rumeyleh in front of the Citadel, and is admitted to be the stateliest monument of Arab art in Egypt, is given in the woodcut on page 381, where the large canopied fountain for ablution before prayers is in the foreground, with the smaller fountain for the use of Turks at the right; while at the back can be seen the sanctuary, with its niche, pulpit, and reading platform, and the doors on either side which lead to the founder's tomb. If instead of proceeding to the Citadel we turn up the prolongation of the Musky towards the eastern wall, we shall find on the left the peculiarly sacred and unsightly mosque of the Hasaneyn, where the severed head of the martyred Hoseyn, the hero of the Persian Passion Play, is believed to be buried; while on the other side is the Azhar, the university mosque of Cairo—indeed the university of the Mohammadan world, whose ten thousand students come from India and the west coast of Africa, and even more remote regions, to learn Koranic exegesis and the decisions of the three hundred learned ulema who teach them without payment. The Azhar was built by the Fâtimy khalif El-'Azîz in the tenth century, but has been several times restored or added to till little architectural beauty remains in it. There is, however, one beautiful arcade leading up to the mihrâb in the eastern colonnade, and some inscriptional friezes, which clearly date back to the Fâtimy period.

Continuing our walk through the Bâb El-Ghureyyib, we shall find, beyond the huge mounds of rubbish outside the city, a collection of tomb-mosques, forming the cemetery known to natives as that of Kaït Bay, but to Europeans as "the Tombs of the Khalifs." The tombs, however, are not those of khalifs, but of that dynasty of Memlûk sultans who built most of the mosques within the city. The tomb-mosque of Kaït Bay (see page 386), with its exquisite fawn-coloured limestone dome and graceful minaret, deservedly gives its name to this Eastern Cemetery; but the tomb-mosque of Barkûk (see page 383), in the same vicinity, is scarcely less beautiful. Under one of its two noble domes the founder of the house of Circassian Memlûks sleeps after his career of conquest, the other covers the bones of his family, while his son and successor rests hard by. The mosque of Barkûk is of the colonnade form; the sanctuary on the east is distinguished by a deeper rank of columns, and the pulpit, carved out of fine limestone,



THE CITADEL FROM THE "TOMBS OF THE MEMLÛKS."
The Great Mosque of Mohammad 'Aly with its tall minarets and cluster of domes stands within the Citadel, and is the most conspicuous land-mark of Cairo.

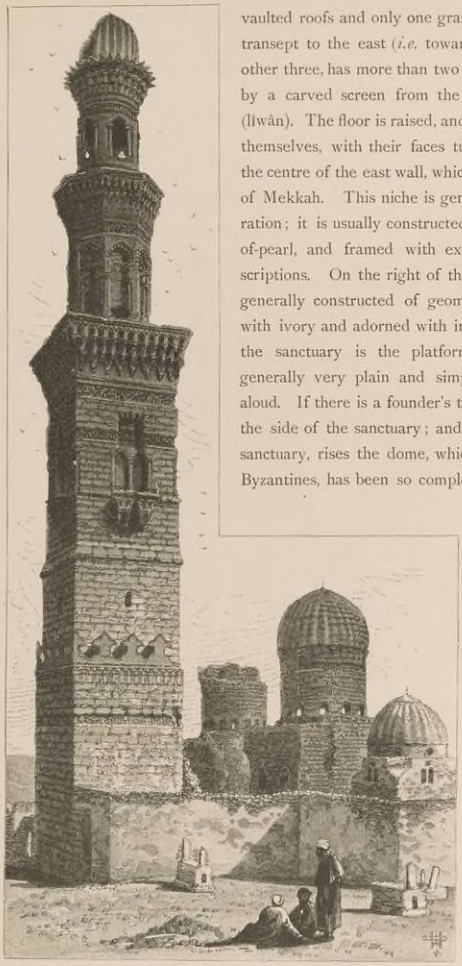
is a magnificent example of Arab workmanship. The tomb-mosques of El-Ghûry, El-Ashraf Barsabay (see page 380), and other sultans stand around, while some very beautiful smaller tombs, like that of Sitteh Khawend Umm Anûk, a wife of En-Nâsir Mohammad, are sprinkled between them.

The designs of mosques vary considerably, especially if they are built to contain the founder's tomb; but the fundamental idea is always the same—an open court surrounded by a covered cloister—and the main variation consists in converting the four cloistered sides into four deep transepts,

like that of Sultan Hasan, resulting in a cruciform interior, whilst the squares left between the four transepts are filled up by additional chambers, schools, fountains, &c. In either case,

ONE OF THE "TOMBS OF THE MEMLÛKS."
On Mount Mukattam. In the foreground is the *musattah*, or camel-litter, ordinarily used by pilgrims.

whether the court be surrounded by cloisters with double rows of columns supporting pointed arches on which the heavy carved beams of the flat ceiling rest, or by four transepts with



"TOMBS OF THE MEMLÛKS."
The whole of this region is dotted with gravestones and is still used as a burial-ground.

vaulted roofs and only one grand arch to each, the cloister or transept to the east (*i.e.* towards Mekkah) is deeper than the other three, has more than two rows of columns, or is separated by a carved screen from the court. This is the sanctuary (liwân). The floor is raised, and on it the worshippers prostrate themselves, with their faces turned to the niche (mihrâb) in the centre of the east wall, which marks the kibleh or direction of Mekkah. This niche is generally the chief point for decoration; it is usually constructed of inlaid marble and mother-of-pearl, and framed with exquisite borders of Arabic inscriptions. On the right of the niche is the pulpit, a staircase generally constructed of geometrically panelled wood, inlaid with ivory and adorned with inscriptions. Near the front of the sanctuary is the platform, resting on dwarf columns, generally very plain and simple, where the Koran is read aloud. If there is a founder's tomb, it is generally behind or at the side of the sanctuary; and as a rule over it, or over the sanctuary, rises the dome, which, though borrowed from the Byzantines, has been so completely naturalised as to form the most characteristic feature in Arabian architecture. Perhaps the bulb-shaped dome reminded the Arabs of their primæval tent, and the minaret recalled the palm-tree up which the first muëddin clomb to chant the call to prayer. The minarets rise from the corners of the cloisters or near the portal of the cruciform mosque, but their position, like their number, is very variable. The exterior of a mosque is either quite plain or slightly decorated with mouldings and inscriptional friezes, and sometimes the whole building is enclosed by a brick wall

and outer courts to isolate the devotions of the people from the noises outside.* The chief external ornaments are the domes and minarets and the gateway, but inside a great variety of decoration is employed. Arcades of horse-shoe or pointed arches are supported by Greek and Roman columns stolen from older buildings, or square pillars with inlaid corner columns, while graceful corbels and stalactite brackets break the sharpness of the angles. The walls are covered with Kufic inscriptions and arabesques in wood or plaster, marbles of divers colours form a dado round the sanctuary, while windows of coloured glass set in plaster tracery shed a dim religious light.

MOSQUES ON MUKATTAM.
Caverns and quarries are numerous on the slopes of the Mukattam hills, which are of the nummulite formation and extremely rich in fossils.

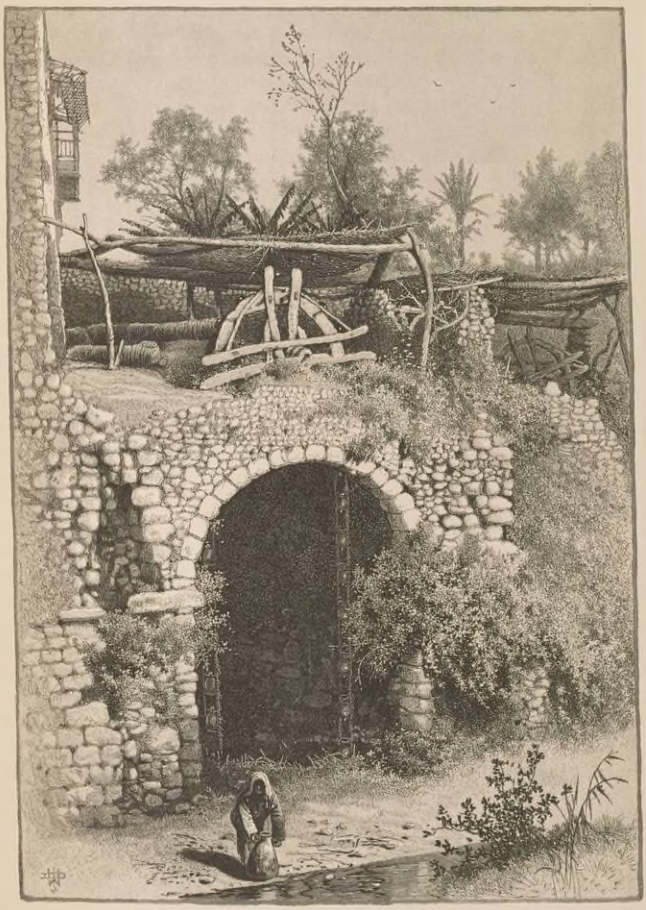
The pious founders of Cairo did not content themselves with providing for the religious wants of the people and expiating their own sins by building mosques; they generally attached a school to the mosque endowment; and we see many groups of noisy scholars (see page 385) shouting the Koran,

* "Egypt," by S. Lane-Poole, pages 50—52 (Low's "Foreign Countries").

ON THE CANAL (EL KHALÎG).
This water-way, which runs through Cairo, was formerly navigable at high Nile.

as they sway to and fro, before the reverend-looking sheykh, their master. The schoolrooms are generally attached to another form of charity — the water fountains (sebîls), which we encounter at every dozen steps in the chief streets of Cairo. Some of these fountains are tolerably tasteful buildings, like that figured on page 372, but too often they are the outcome of modern benevolence, and partake of the failings of the Turkish imagination.

Passing the great mosque of Sultan Hasan, we enter the Citadel (see page 390) by the narrow lane, guarded by the round towers of the Bâb El-'Azab, where the butchery of the Memlûks, which set the present dynasty on the throne, took place by order of Mohammad 'Aly. The omniscient dragoman will point out the very spot whence the solitary survivor of the massacre leaped his horse from the battlements down to the space below; but a more probable version of the story relates that the Memlûk who escaped distrusted Mohammad 'Aly's invitation and did not go to the Citadel at all. The fortress itself was built by Saladin rather as a place of residence than of defence. Though elevated on a spur of Mount Mukattam, it is commanded by higher positions behind; and while in the days before cannon was invented it was doubtless a very strong position, its uselessness as a place of defence against modern attacks was demonstrated in 1805, when Mohammad 'Aly, by means of a battery on a higher



A WATER-WHEEL (SÂKIYEH) ON THE CANAL.

When the creaking wooden wheels are in motion the earthenware jars, strung to ropes made of palm fibre, revolve, alternately dipping into the water and emptying themselves into a trough connected with a reservoir.

position, expelled the Turkish governor, Khurshid, from the Citadel. The fortress was constructed of massive stones brought from the third and smaller pyramids of Gizeh, and its vaulted gateways, machicolated battlements, and round towers present an almost Norman aspect. The principal building inside is Mohammad 'Aly's great mosque, with its over-slender minarets, cruet-stand of domes (see page 390), and gaudy Turkish decoration. The alabaster columns that procure it the name of "the Alabaster Mosque" were quarried near Beny Suweyf, but many of them were stolen by 'Abbâs Pasha for his palace, and replaced by wood. All Cairene building subsists on the principle of robbery. The Ptolemies stole the pillars of the Pharaohs; the Arabs used the materials of the Greeks and Romans; the Turks steal from most of their predecessors with their usual indiscriminating brigandage. The Citadel is an extraordinary medley of all styles and periods. Hieroglyphic blocks jostle Turkish lath-and-plaster; the eagle of Saladin looks down upon the flimsy ornaments of Isma'îl. The deep well called, after Saladin (whose name was also Yûsuf, or Joseph), Joseph's Well, but believed by the Arabs to have been the identical pit into which Joseph, son of Jacob, was cast by his envious brethren, is an enlargement of an ancient shaft. Though very deep—nearly three hundred feet—its slow supply, raised by oxen, has been superseded by the modern steam pumps. The mosque of En-Nâsir Mohammad, hard by, is a partly ruined building, despoiled of many of its adornments, but presenting much that is noteworthy in the history of Arab art.

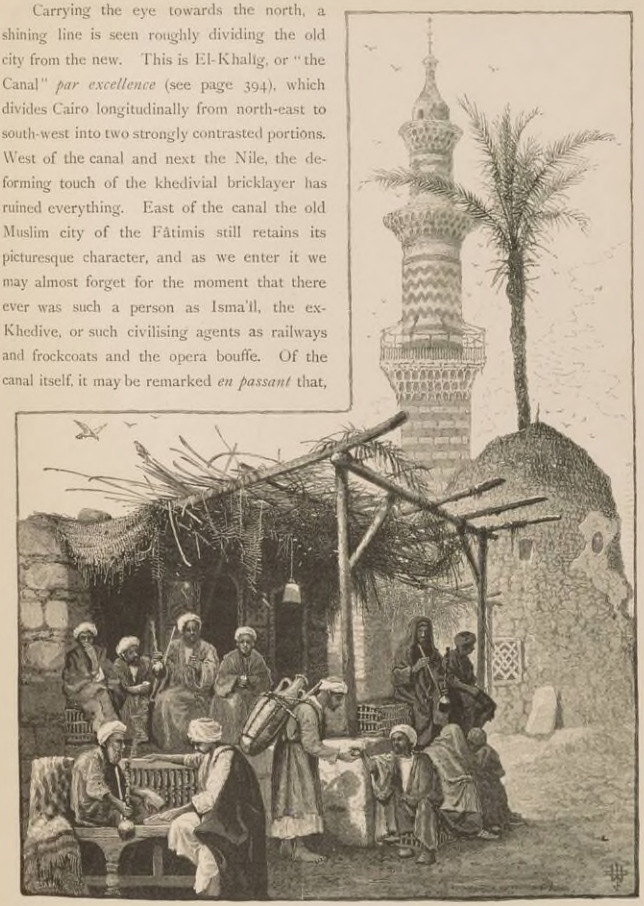
But the Citadel is not worth seeing for itself so much as for the view (page 387 gives but a portion of it) which spreads before the eye as one stands at sunset on its battlemented wall. Below lies the city with its countless domes and minarets—Sultan Hasan in the foreground—its wilderness of irregular tumble-down yellow and white flat-roofed houses, interspersed with many a garden and the dark foliage of the sycamores; beyond, a fringe of palms and a streak of silver show where the broad Nile rolls sleepily on between its brown banks. To the right, the huge dome and handsome minarets of El-Muayyad stand out prominently from among their fellows; beyond these the minarets of the Nahhâsîn; and at the end the two queer-shaped mebkharehs of El-Hâkim. To the left is the enormous court of Ibn-Tûlûn's mosque, and its strange minaret then the billowy mounds of Fustât; and in the distance, against the ridge that terminates the Libyan desert, in the carmine glory of the setting sun, stand the everlasting Pyramids, "like the boundary-marks of the mighty waste, the Egyptian land of shades." Still farther to the left, the aqueduct, which has brought water to the Citadel for nearly four centuries, stretches away to the Nile; and behind us is the picturesque cluster of the ruined "Tombs of the Memlûks," or cemetery of El Karâfeh (see pages 390, 391, and 392), with their attendant city, not only of tombs, but of numerous houses for the reception of families who pay annual visits to the graves of their relatives, and celebrate the occasion by acts of charity and recitations of the entire Korân. Looking over the Memlûk minarets, we can see the dim outlines of the Pyramids of Dahshûr and Abusîr and the well-known form of the Step Pyramid of Sakkarah; and as the glow of sunset fades away, the evening clouds gather in the west, and the desert beyond takes up their shades of grey and blue, like a vast mid-African ocean.

When we have studied the old Fâtimy city, and inspected Saladin's citadel and looked down upon the magnificent prospect it commands, we have not yet seen all Cairo. South-west of the fortress is the oldest part of the capital, as marked out by Saladin's wall. This is the Hârat Ibn-Tûlûn, which represents the old suburb El-Katâi', built by Ahmad Ibn-Tûlûn to the north-east of the still older Fustât. The suburb was burnt and demolished to a great extent, and there is not much left of its original buildings; but the mosque of its founder still survives to show us what Arabian art was in the ninth century, and what skill and labour an Eastern prince would expend upon his house of worship. The mosque of Ibn-Tûlûn was built in 879, at a cost of £72,000, after designs by a Christian architect—it is noteworthy that some of the chief triumphs of Arabian architecture are said to have been the creations of Greek artists—and it presents the peculiarity of having been entirely constructed of new materials. Instead of columns stolen from older monuments, the spacious court (ninety-nine yards every way) of Ibn-Tûlûn's mosque is surrounded by arcades resting on massive square brick pillars, with small Byzantine columns in gypsum, without bases, let into the four corners. Architects see in these the prototype of the Gothic clustered pillars. The lofty pointed arches, verging on the horse-shoe form, are bordered with exquisitely worked Kufic inscriptions and conventional foliage, and an upper row of (as it were) triforium windows, of the most beautiful and varied designs, are framed in a similar but even more delicate embroidery of arabesques. The absence of stalactyte ornamentation and the other characteristics of later mosques is significant of the period to which the mosque belongs, and of which it is the most notable example. It stands to the Memlûk mosques much as Early English does to Perpendicular Gothic; and as evidence for the tracing of the development of Arab architecture, which has its periods and transitions like the Gothic, it is a priceless monument. Among its titles to fame is the fact that it presents the earliest examples existing of the pointed arch, which was not introduced in England till three centuries later. Unfortunately its impressive quadrangle is ruined by the bricking-up of most of the arches for the purpose of providing cells to shelter the beggars and ne'er-do-wells of Cairo, who infest and disfigure the noble building. Ugly whitewashed walls now take the place of the cloisters on all sides but the east, and it is only there, in the Iwân or sanctuary, that the original beauty of the design can be to some degree appreciated. Here, too, stands a carved pulpit of inlaid ivory and walnut-wood; which, however, is of a much later date. In the centre of the court is the covered fountain for ablutions, which was originally intended to have served as the founder's tomb. The minaret, which is in a very ruinous state now, has the peculiarity of an external winding staircase, which was said to have been suggested to Ibn-Tûlûn by winding a strip of paper spirally round his finger. From the top it is possible to look down upon the dilapidated remains of what was once the aristocratic quarter of the capital. Among the wilderness of flat roofs, we can trace the course of the Salibeh street, which connects the Citadel with the south-west angle of Cairo, and in this quarter some of the most beautiful examples of the fast-disappearing lattice windows may still be seen.

IN A CAIRO GARDEN.

Where the date-palm, the *Cactus opuntia*, almond-trees, acacias, and sycamores, the common trees of the country, flourish. During the reign of the Khedive Isma'il about two hundred different kinds of trees, chiefly of East Indian origin, were planted in great numbers in the new parks and gardens of Cairo.

Carrying the eye towards the north, a shining line is seen roughly dividing the old city from the new. This is El-Khalig, or "the Canal" *par excellence* (see page 394), which divides Cairo longitudinally from north-east to south-west into two strongly contrasted portions. West of the canal and next the Nile, the deforming touch of the khedivial bricklayer has ruined everything. East of the canal the old Muslim city of the Fâtimis still retains its picturesque character, and as we enter it we may almost forget for the moment that there ever was such a person as Isma'îl, the ex-Khedive, or such civilising agents as railways and frockcoats and the opera bouffe. Of the canal itself, it may be remarked *en passant* that,



A SUBURBAN CAFÉ.

The two men on the bench in the foreground are playing at a game called *manhalah*; small pebbles are placed, according to certain rules, in hemispherical holes in a board. This game exercises the powers of calculation, and is often played at cafés. The loser is expected to pay not only for the coffee drunk by himself and his antagonist, but by the spectators of the game.

though it is a favourite subject for Cairene poets, and the inhabitants love to smoke their pipes and enjoy their "keyf" or siesta in the houses and terraces overlooking it, and drowsily listen to the murmur of the water-wheel (see page 395)—

> "Where bright Khaleega, like a spotted snake,
> Past meads and gardens trails her glittering coil"—

it is only pretty during four months when the Nile fills it, while for the rest of the year "bright Khaleega" is a gutter of mud and a home for noisome smells. The people, however, are so fond of this unwholesome drain that no ruler dares risk his popularity by converting it into a street, though that is, undoubtedly, its proper destiny.

In the gardens which fringe the Khalig the fair inhabitants of the harîm enjoy the fragrance and tints of the rose and oleander and the other favourites of Cairene horticulture unseen by the profane eye of man. It is true the ladies of Egypt do not take much interest in their flowers; the gardeners make formal bouquets for them, which they languidly admire, but they never dream of tending or even plucking the flowers themselves. Nevertheless, they enjoy "smelling the air," as they call it, amid the irregular parterres of Cairene horticulture; and if we are to believe Beha-ed-dîn Zuheyr, an Egyptian poet of the thirteenth century, who wrote some charming verse which our lamented E. H. Palmer (who deserved so well of students of Palestine and Arabia) turned into no less charming English, these gardens of Cairo were once, and may still remain, delightful places for lovers' meetings. The garden he described looked on the Nile, but in other respects the picture applies to many of the pleasure-grounds in the heart of the city:—

> "I took my pleasure in a garden bright—
> Ah! that our happiest hours so quickly pass;
> That time should be so rapid in its flight—
> Therein my soul accomplished her delight,
> And life was fresher than the green young grass.
>
> There raindrops trickle through the warm, still air,
> The cloud-born firstlings of the summer skies;
> Full oft I stroll in early morning there,
> When, like a pearl upon a bosom fair,
> The glistening dewdrop on the sapling lies.
>
> There the young flowerets with sweet perfume blow;
> There feathery palms their pendant clusters hold,
> Like foxes' bushes waving to and fro;
> There every evening comes the after-glow,
> Tipping the leaflets with its liquid gold.
>
> Beside that garden flowed the placid Nile.
> Oft have I steered my *dahabiyeh* there;
> Oft have I landed to repose awhile,
> And bask and revel in the sunny smile
> Of her whose presence made the place so fair."

West of the Tûlûn the canal makes a sharp angle, and then, resuming its south-westerly direction, enters the Nile close to Masr El-'Atîkah, or, as Europeans call it, "Old Cairo." The entrance of the canal (Fum El-Khalig) is opposite the island of Rodah, where is the famous Nilometer, or well for measuring the height of the inundation. Until the river has risen to the height of sixteen cubits in the Nilometer, an old law enacts that no land-tax can be levied. The Government, however, of course take care to publish a falsified measurement before the due

time, and thus induce the peasants to begin payment. Long before even this official date a public crier goes about, accompanied by a boy, announcing the portentous height of the river. "God preserve the master of this house," he cries, stopping before your door, "and increase upon him His favours. O Bountiful, O God!" "Ay, please God!" choruses the boy. "God preserve to me my mistress, the chief lady among brides, such a one" [naming your wife, perhaps] "for a long period! O Bountiful, O God!" "Ay, please God!" from the boy. Then comes the information that the Nile is rising abundantly. "Five digits to-day: and the Lord is bountiful!" To which the acolyte adds, "Bless ye, Mohammad!" to avert the possible effects of the evil eye. The people do not, however, pay much attention to, or at least place much credence in, the crier's daily announcements, until the last day before the government proclamation of "Full Nile," which is signalised by cutting the dam of the canal. On that day the crier goes about with additional pomp, accompanied by a crowd of little boys carrying coloured flags, and announces that it is now the "Wefâ en Nil" (the Fulness of the Nile), and that the Dâr en Nahâs, the old building between the aqueduct and Masr El-'Atîkah, whence the governors of Egypt used to inspect the height of the river, is filled. "The river hath given abundance," he cries, "and fulfilled (its measure)." At which the boys shout, "God hath

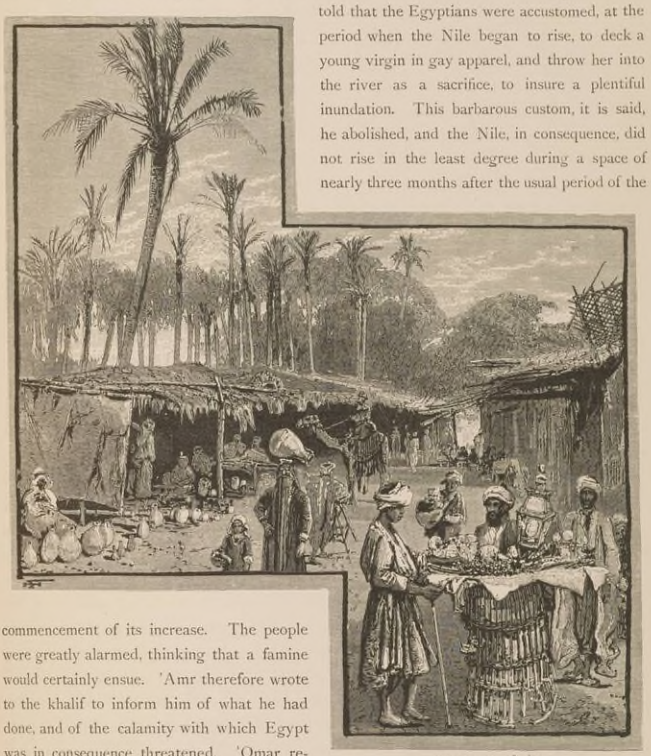
STREET IN MASR EL-'ATÎKAH.
The man in the foreground is selling water flavoured with orange blossom.

given abundance." "The canals flow—and the vessels are afloat—and the hoarder of grain has failed—by permission of the Mighty, the Requiter," &c., interrupted at each clause by the refrain of the boys, "Ofa-llah!" "God hath given abundance." "This is an annual custom," continues the crier. "God hath given abundance," repeat the boys. "And may you live to every year!" "God hath given abundance!" "And if the hoarder of grain wish for a scarcity—" "God hath given abundance!" "May God visit him with blindness and affliction ere he dies!" "God hath given abundance!" "This generous person" (here the crier personally addresses himself to the master of the house before which he is standing) "loveth the generous—an admirable palace is built for him (in Paradise)—and its columns are incomparable jewels—instead of palm-sticks and timber—and it has a thousand windows that open—and before every window is Selsebîl (the fountain of the blest)—Paradise is the abode of the generous—and hell is the abode of the niggardly." In every pause the boys ejaculate, "God hath given abundance!" "May God not cause me to stop before the door of an avaricious woman, nor of an avaricious man," continues the crier sarcastically—"nor of one who measures the water in the jar—nor who counts the bread while it is yet dough—and if a cake be wanting orders a fast—nor who shuts up the cats at supper time—nor who drives away the dogs upon the wall." "God hath given abundance!" echo the boys. "The world is brightened, and the damsels have adorned themselves—and the old women tumble about—and the married man hath added to his wife eight others—and the bachelor hath married eighteen!" "God hath given abundance!"

By this time somebody, afraid of his scorn of avarice, or cajoled by his flatteries and humour, has given a copper or two to the crier, who then moves on to the next house.

The adornment of the damsels and the excitement of the old women and the extravagances of bachelors and married men find their crowning point in the festivities of cutting the dam of the canal, which takes place on the following day. "The dam," says Mr. Lane, "is constructed before or soon after the commencement of the Nile's increase. The Khalig, or canal, at the distance of about four hundred feet within its entrance, is crossed by an old stone bridge of one arch. About sixty feet in front of this bridge is the dam, which is of earth, very broad at the bottom, and diminishing in breadth towards the top, which is flat, and about three yards broad. The top of the dam rises to a height of about twenty-two or twenty-three feet above the level of the Nile when at the lowest, but not so high above the bed of the canal, for this is several feet above the low-water mark of the river, and consequently dry for some months when the water is low. The banks of the canal are a few feet higher than the top of the dam. Nearly the same distance in front of the dam that the latter is distant from the bridge is raised a round pillar of earth, diminishing towards the top in the form of a truncated cone, not quite so high as the dam. This is called the 'arûseh, or 'bride.' Upon its flat top, and on that of the dam, a little maize or millet is commonly sown. The ''arûseh' is always washed down by the rising tide before the river has attained to its summit, and generally more than a week or a fortnight before the dam is cut.

"It is believed that the custom of forming this 'arûseh' arose from a superstitious usage, which is mentioned by Arab authors, and among them by El-Makrîzi. This historian relates that in the year of the conquest of Egypt by the Arabs 'Amr Ibn El-As, the Arab general, was told that the Egyptians were accustomed, at the period when the Nile began to rise, to deck a young virgin in gay apparel, and throw her into the river as a sacrifice, to insure a plentiful inundation. This barbarous custom, it is said, he abolished, and the Nile, in consequence, did not rise in the least degree during a space of nearly three months after the usual period of the commencement of its increase. The people were greatly alarmed, thinking that a famine would certainly ensue. 'Amr therefore wrote to the khalif to inform him of what he had done, and of the calamity with which Egypt was in consequence threatened. 'Omar returned a brief answer, expressing his approbation of 'Amr's conduct, and desiring him, upon the receipt of the letter, to throw a note which it enclosed into the Nile. The purport of this note was as follows:—'*From 'Abd-Allah 'Omar, Prince of the Faithful, to the Nile of Egypt. If thou flow of thine own accord, flow not; but if it be God, the One, the Mighty, who*



BAZAAR IN BÛLÂK.

Bûlâk is the river harbour of Cairo: here goods from Upper Egypt, Nubia, and Central Africa are landed, and the bazaars are often crowded with natives of distant provinces during the busy season.

*causeth thee to flow, we implore God, the One, the Mighty, to make thee flow.'* 'Amr did as he was commanded, and the Nile, we are told, rose sixteen cubits in the following night." *

The evening before the cutting of the dam the Nile about Rodah becomes very gay and animated. Boats of all kinds and sizes bring visitors to witness the ceremony, and a great state barge, carrying cannon and ornamented with lanterns and decorations, sails with much pomp from Bûlâk, and moors to the island opposite the entrance of the canal. The land is as fully peopled as the water; crowds gather on the mainland near Masr El-'Atîkah and on Rodah, and tents are pitched for their shelter and refreshment. A Cairo crowd easily amuses itself; coffee and pipes will generally content it, and the mere prospect of something going to be done is enough to make it very happy. All that night nobody sleeps. If he wished to, the constant firing of guns from the big barge, the beating of drums on the other boats, the discharge of rockets, and general babel of noises would render the desire abortive. But no one harbours so foolish a wish: the mere sight of the Nile that night is a scene out of fairyland. Boats gaily decked and covered with coloured lamps pass to and fro, their crews merrily dinning away at the târ and darabukkeh; every now and then a rocket flies up against the quiet stars, which look down in surprise at the disturbance mere sublunaries are making, and the whole air is alive with sounds and sights of gaiety and innocent frolic. It is like Venice in the old carnival time, only the voices and dresses are changed, and we cannot help feeling that, like the carnival, this ceremony belongs to an older state of things and an older religion. As we gaze upon the crowd we feel dimly that the priest of Isis ought to be there.

Early next morning the workmen are busy cutting away the dam, till only the thickness of a foot is left. Soon after sunrise the officials begin to appear: the Governor of Cairo rides up, the Kâdy reads a formal document, a boat bearing another officer is pushed through the mud wall, purses of gold are flung about, and the Nile is soon flowing rapidly between the banks of the Khalîg, and rejoicing the hearts of the Cairenes who dwell beside it (see page 394). Reserve and decency are thrown to the winds, and a mania for bathing seizes the population.

The only monument of any interest at Masr El-Atîkah (all that remains of Fustât, the first Muslim capital of Egypt), if we except some curious Coptic churches—built partly in the bastions of the old Roman fortress of Babylon, of which considerable remains can be traced—and some quaint old byways and alleys (see page 401), is the (oft-times rebuilt) mosque of 'Amr, the Arab conqueror. Here, in 1808, when the river seemed to be about to fall at the time when it ought to have risen, the chiefs of all denominations, Muslim ulema, Coptic clergy, Jewish rabbis, all assembled together for united prayer, and continued entreating until the river rose in the usual degree. Amid the general ruin and desolation of Fustât, which was almost wholly destroyed in 1168 by a fire which continued to burn for fifty-four days, and left little but the immense mounds we see around, the mosque of 'Amr still survives, with its fine colonnades of strangely incongruous pillars, as a monument, albeit a hybrid one, of the Mohammadan conquest. When it falls, they say, Islâm will cease to be.

* "The Modern Egyptians," chap. xxvi.

VIEW FROM THE TOP OF THE GREAT PYRAMID.
Looking southwards towards the Pyramids of Sakkarah and Dahshûr.

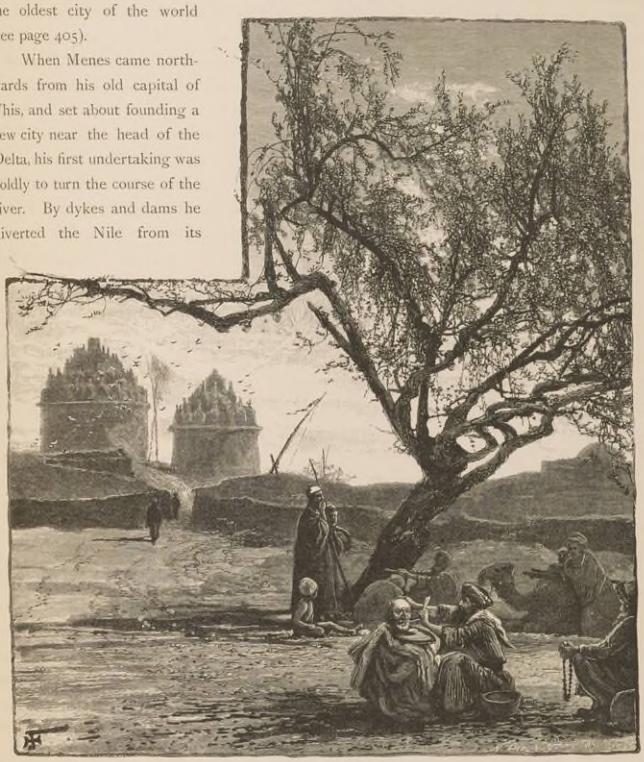
# MEMPHIS.

AN hour's ride from Cairo carries us back through the long vista of history to the earliest monuments of civilised man. We leave the mosque of 'Amr, the oldest building of Cairo, which has yet seen only twelve centuries pass since its foundation, and we stand before the Pyramids of Gizeh, which have looked down

upon the whole course of man's development, as we measure it in our puny Western scale, from ages when Noah had not built his ark, when Phœnician and Greek had not even a name, when the oldest of all the Troys was still in the dim future. At a time when our Aryan forefathers were pasturing their herds on the Asian steppes, and when a tent or a reed hut were the highest achievements of architecture everywhere else, in the Nile valley the Egyptians were building those stupendous monuments which are still the wonder of the engineer, and were painting those frescoes and modelling those statues which represent a stage of civilisation to which the Greeks did not attain till thirty centuries later, and which half the world has not reached even now. The people who built the Pyramids four thousand years before Christ were no barbarians, no nomad tribes or lacustrine paddlers; they were people with a profound philosophy, a lofty religion, a remarkable and individual art, a refined and complex society. If the progress of man from savagery to civilisation marched then by the same slow labouring steps as in later times, the Egyptians must have been a nation for thousands of years before they could have built Memphis and its chain of giant sepulchres. It is like standing on the border of infinitude when we think of this terrible antiquity. The immeasurable ages of geology and the weird traces of primitive man give one an overwhelming sense of insignificance, but these tell us only of a barbaric, savage existence, with scarcely the beginnings of a higher life. The monuments of Egypt show us man living as civilised a life as ever Roman conceived—as civilised in some of the best senses as any life we lead now—and there they stop short, and meet us like a closed door, bearing on its threshold the footprints of myriads of inhabitants, but suffering no man to enter and see them. It is not the age of the Pyramids that awes one most, but the thought of the unknown past that preceded their mighty birthday. Five thousand years ago they stood where they stand now, but the men who then looked upon them belonged to another immeasurable antiquity when Pyramids were not, of which we see the end but not the process, and whereof there remains no record but the result. In the brisk bustling bazaars of Bûlâk (see page 403), where traders and dealers meet to exchange their goods, the brown Nile labourer may be seen bringing the produce of the Sûdân and of the upper valley. In appearance he is much the same being that he was when Memphis was founded; but now he can neither build, nor paint, nor write. Turn into the Museum close by, where Mariette stored the treasures his unresting labours extorted from the grasp of the desert sand, and you will see the statues and pictures and the writing on the walls, which people with the blood of the modern Egyptians in them produced in lavish quantities and amazing perfection. One of this very people's descendants, a modern fellâh, is looking at the works of his forefathers in stupid wonder. He does not understand them, but he knows that he and his fellow-countrymen can do nothing like them now. We could tell him that his people have done nothing like them for the last twenty centuries and more. How they ever came to do them, why they and not their neighbours did them, and what took away the power of such works from them, are some of the questions that crowd upon the mind as, standing on the summit of the Great Pyramid, one gazes down

upon the long fringe of Pyramids that border the Libyan desert for a distance of forty-five miles, and upon the ruined traces of what was once called the "Perfect Abode"—Memphis, the oldest city of the world (see page 405).

When Menes came northwards from his old capital of This, and set about founding a new city near the head of the Delta, his first undertaking was boldly to turn the course of the river. By dykes and dams he diverted the Nile from its



VILLAGE BARBERS.

The two singular-looking structures on the left are pigeon-houses. The domes are formed of earthen pots of oval form; each pair of pigeons occupies a separate pot. These birds are kept solely for the sake of the manure they yield.

channel beside the Libyan mountains, so as to form a barrier between the new city and the tribes of the East, and on the former bed he built Memphis. We are told that there were palaces and temples and schools and beautiful squares and streets in this new city of six thousand years ago; there was a famous citadel called the "White Wall," a fine port upon

the Nile, and in later days a special quarter for the Phœnician traders who brought their merchandise to Egypt. So large was the city that even in the time of its decline it was half a day's journey to cross it from north to south. For five thousand years Memphis was the first or the second city of Egypt. It was only second to Sais when Herodotus journeyed there, and even when Alexandria was founded Memphis still stood next in rank. The Arab invasion and the building of Fustât at last destroyed it, for the inhabitants migrated to the new capital hard by. But long after this it was still a wonder to travellers, and that delightful writer, the learned physician 'Abd-el-Latif of Baghdad, describes Memphis as it was in the beginning of the thirteenth century with his quaint and graphic pencil. "Its ruins," he says, "still present a crowd of wonders that bewilder the intellect, and which the most eloquent of men would vainly attempt to describe. The more one considers the city, the greater grows the admiration which it inspires, and each new glance at its ruins is a fresh cause of delight. Scarcely has it given birth to one idea when it suggests another still more marvellous; and when you believe you have thoroughly grasped it, Memphis at once convinces you that what you have conceived is still far behind the truth." The wonderful monolithic green chamber of brecchia verde, once the shrine of a golden statue with jewelled eyes, was still to be seen there, and the sphinxes of the temple of Ptah, the Egyptian Vulcan, originator and fashioner of all things, and the walls and gates thereof, were still standing; but even there the insane greed of treasure-hunters had begun to work its disastrous effects. From the temples and tombs of Memphis to the ruins of Merv, the Oriental mind has associated the remains of antiquities with the presence of concealed treasure. 'Abd-el-Latif records with indignation the irreparable destruction wrought by "people without sense" in this childish pursuit, and tells how they mutilated the statues (whom they took for guardians of the tombs), bored holes, wrenched off metal-work, and split up monoliths, in the hope of discovering hidden wealth. Most of the tombs and Pyramids have been impiously broken into and pillaged of whatever they contained, though it could never have repaid the pains of excavation to vulgar burglars without archæological instinct. And when treasure was no longer expected, a worse thing came upon the monuments of Egypt: they were used as building materials for the walls and mosques and citadel of Cairo. Columns and slabs were carried over the river to the new capital; the splendid masonry which had stood unshaken for five thousand years was used for the beautiful but unstable monuments of Arab art; and the wonderful ruins that excited the admiration of the old traveller of Baghdad are now vanished. Of all that splendour and beauty nothing remains; as we wander among the palms that fatten on the site of Memphis, a few fragments of what may have been the temple, and the great half-buried, half-drowned colossus of Rameses II. prone upon its face (see page 410), are all that remain to remind us of the oldest city of the world. "The images have ceased out of Noph" (Ezek. xxx. 13).

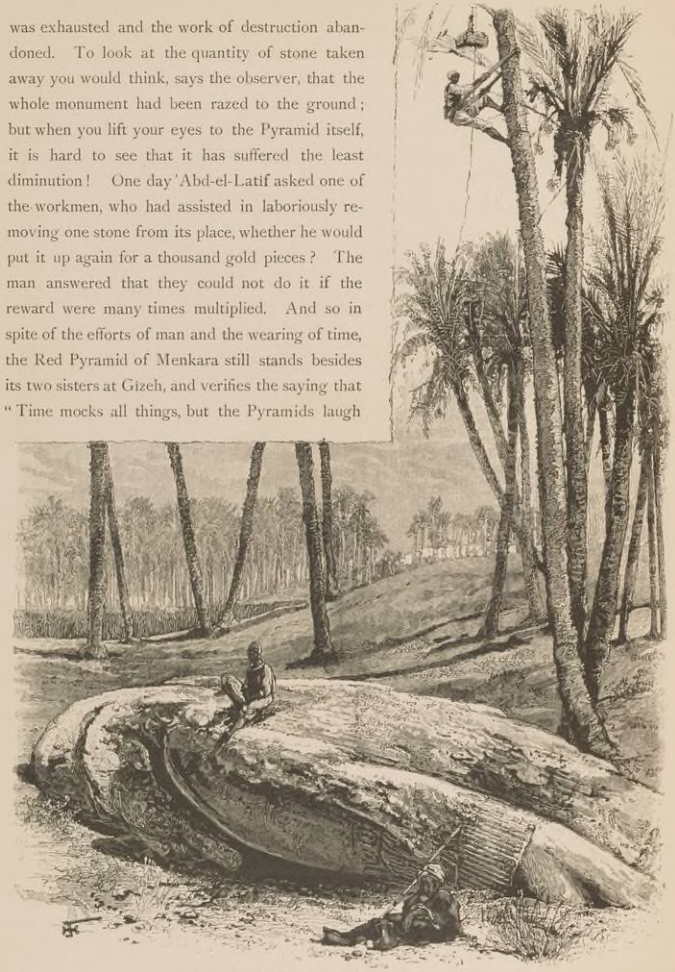
Even the Pyramids were not spared. 'Abd-el-Latif tells us how he saw the workmen of El-Melik El-'Aziz, son of Saladin, employed in 1196 in pulling down the Third Pyramid

—that at the left in our steel engraving of the Three Pyramids of Gizeh, from a sketch made during the inundation. A large body of engineers and miners pitched a camp close to the Red Pyramid (as the Third was called from its beautiful granite casing), and with their united and

THE SPHINX.
Called by the Arabs "Father of Terrors." It faces the east, and is hewn out of the natural rock.

continuous efforts achieved the removal of one or two stones a day. The blocks fell down with a tremendous shock, and buried themselves in the sand, whence they were extricated with immense toil and then were laboriously broken up. At the end of eight months the treasury

was exhausted and the work of destruction abandoned. To look at the quantity of stone taken away you would think, says the observer, that the whole monument had been razed to the ground; but when you lift your eyes to the Pyramid itself, it is hard to see that it has suffered the least diminution! One day 'Abd-el-Latif asked one of the workmen, who had assisted in laboriously removing one stone from its place, whether he would put it up again for a thousand gold pieces? The man answered that they could not do it if the reward were many times multiplied. And so in spite of the efforts of man and the wearing of time, the Red Pyramid of Menkara still stands besides its two sisters at Gizeh, and verifies the saying that "Time mocks all things, but the Pyramids laugh



THE FALLEN STATUE OF RAMESES II. AT MEMPHIS.

The soft mud in which it is embedded has perfectly preserved the well-cut features and all the front part of the figure. During about eight months of the year it is partly covered by the waters of the overflowing Nile.

at Time." This Red Pyramid contained the tomb of a queen, Nitocris of the seventh dynasty; and superstition has accumulated a number of traditions round this lady. Her rosy cheeks were celebrated and caused her to be confounded with the fair Rhodôpis, the Greek favourite of Amasis, who it is said fell in love with her, like Cinderella, from a sight of her sandal. Rhodôpis became the Loreley of Egyptian fairyland, and popular fancy depicted a beautiful treacherous woman who haunts the Red Pyramid and leaves bewitched travellers to their doom:—

> "Fair Rhodope, as story tells,
> The bright unearthly nymph who dwells
> 'Mid sunless gold and jewels hid,
> The Lady of the Pyramid."

To the present day the Arabs shun the Pyramids at night, and tell dreadful tales of the Jinn who frequent them.

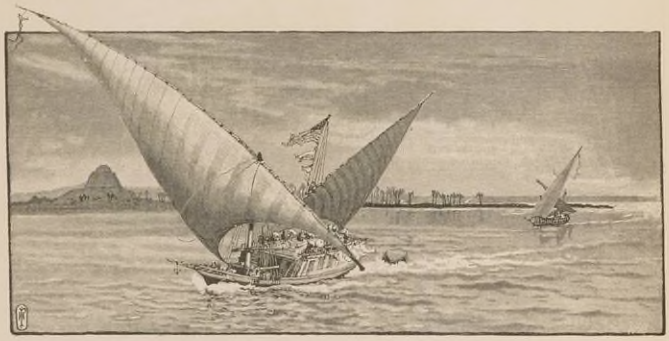
In front of the Second and Third Pyramids are ruins of what were doubtless temples

THE PYRAMID OF STEPS AT SAKKÂRAH.
Constructed of an inferior clayey kind of limestone quarried in the neighbourhood. Possibly the oldest monument in Egypt.

where rites were performed in honour of the kings who built them, and further away is the amazingly massive granite temple or tomb in which were found statues of Chefren, or Khafra, the builder of the Second Pyramid; and hard by is the most mysterious of all Egyptian monuments, the Sphinx—"Father of Terrors," the Arabs call it—a human-headed lion, the symbol of the rising sun, which stands on the approach to the Pyramid platform like a solemn sentinel (see page 409). Like most of the monuments of Memphis its foundations are so choked with sand that it is hard to realise its true proportions; but when Mariette for the moment tore away the desert shroud, it was found to be sculptured out of a natural rock,

and to stand some sixty feet from its base to its crown, while between its legs stood an altar, to which a great flight of steps conducted the worshipper of Horus in the Horizon. 'Abd-el-Latif was enchanted with its proportions and the "winning smile" upon its gracious countenance; but the loss of the nose has since destroyed its beauty.

A Pyramid is simply a cairn or barrow, only its stones are laid regularly and their edges are carefully finished, instead of being roughly thrown together. The principle of the Pyramid is almost always the same. A rocky eminence on the desert tract lying between the river and the Libyan hills, above the reach of the annual inundation, was excavated for the reception of the king's sarcophagus, and a sloping passage was cut to connect the royal sepulchre with the surface. Over the sepulchre, both to protect it from the inroads of the sand and to mark the spot, a large block of stones was erected, almost in



PYRAMID OF MEYDÛM.

The Arabs call it "The False Pyramid." Its outer walls consist of admirably jointed and polished blocks of Mukattam stone. The base is hidden by a heap of débris.

the shape of a cube, but slightly tapering towards the top. This was done early in the king's reign, and if he died at this point his mummy was inserted into the tomb, a small pyramidal cap was put on the top of the block of stone, and triangular or wedge-shaped pieces were added to the sides, and a small Pyramid, effectually closing the royal sepulchre, was then complete. If the king, however, continued to reign, he deferred the cap and wedges, and, instead of them, put other blocks round the base, so as to form a second stage, upon which he erected another quasi-cube like the first. If the king died at this point, the cap and wedge-shaped side-pieces could be added, and the Pyramid thus completed would be one size larger than the first form. The longer the king lived the more numerous these stages became, so that it is possible to gauge roughly the duration of a king's reign by the height of his burial cairn. There are sometimes other chambers besides the subterranean tomb in Pyramids, which were probably

substitutes for the latter in the more advanced stages of the building. The entrance to the tomb itself—generally a steep sloping passage, narrow and low—was carefully concealed, and ingenious devices, portcullises, &c., were resorted to in order to prevent the sarcophagus being removed. The material of the Pyramids is mostly stone from the neighbouring limestone

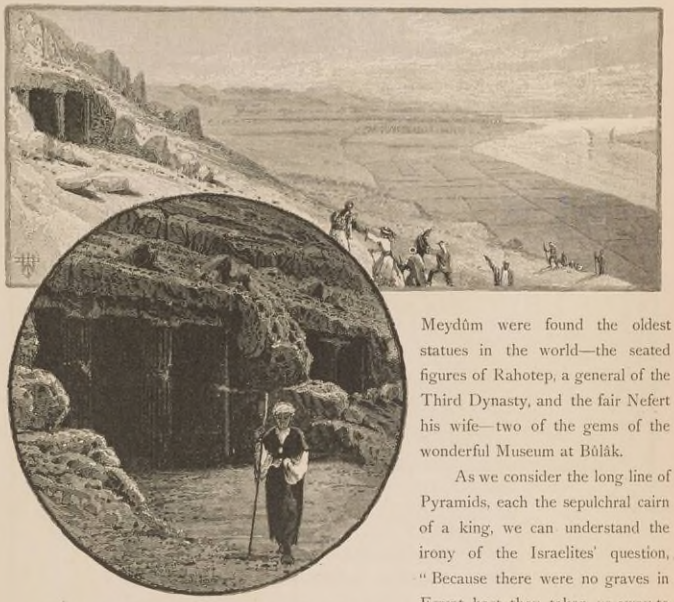
TOMB OF A MUSLIM SAINT AT MINYEH.
Shaded by an aged sycamore-tree. It is on the north side of the town, and near to the spot where boats are generally moored.

quarries, with finer blocks brought over the river from Tura and El-Ma'asarah; but some are of brick.*

A minute description of individual Pyramids is beyond the present scope. A complete volume would not exhaust the subject. It is enough here to signalise the remarkable "Pyramid of Steps" (see page 411), one of the eleven that are included in the second great cemetery of Memphis—the necropolis of Sakkarah. This Pyramid may have been built by Uenephes of the First Dynasty, and if so is the oldest monument in the world; its six steps, with the angles

* "Egypt" (Low's "Foreign Countries"), by S. Lane-Poole, pages 59—61.

not filled up, reveal the principle of Pyramid building, and it has the peculiarity of an oblong instead of a square base, and, unlike other Pyramids, it is not set square to the cardinal points of the compass. The truncated Pyramid of Meydûm, built by Seneferu of the Third Dynasty (see page 412), also seems to show in its unfinished upper stages the skeleton of a Pyramid; while the bent Pyramids of Dahshûr have their tops finished, but their lower stages lack the outer wedge-shaped additions which would give the true pyramidal shape. In a tomb at

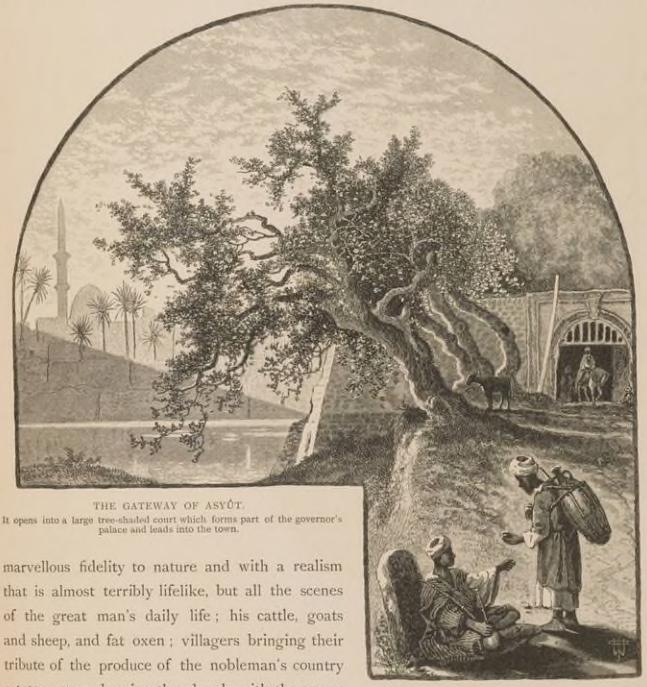


VIEW OF THE NILE FROM THE TOMBS OF BENY HASAN.
These grottoes, the interior of one of which is also shown, were excavated by a single family of the time of the Twelfth Dynasty.

Meydûm were found the oldest statues in the world—the seated figures of Rahotep, a general of the Third Dynasty, and the fair Nefert his wife—two of the gems of the wonderful Museum at Bûlâk.

As we consider the long line of Pyramids, each the sepulchral cairn of a king, we can understand the irony of the Israelites' question, "Because there were no graves in Egypt hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness?" Egypt is indeed a country of graves, and there is a singular appropriateness in Hosea's prophecy, "Egypt shall gather them up: Memphis shall bury them" (ix. 6). The necropolis of Memphis is a huge burial-ground, with graves so big that the stones of one of them would form a wall round the whole French coast, so high that St. Peter's at Rome would stand inside the Great Pyramid "like a clock under a glass shade" if it were hollowed out. But all about the Pyramids the ground is furrowed and perforated with graves. The tombs of the families and officers of the kings are grouped around, and

the walls are covered with sculptures depicting the life of the deceased. Nothing in all Egypt, the land of marvels, is more wonderful than the minute pictorial records of this peaceful country life of five or six thousand years ago, preserved in the tombs at Memphis and Sakkarah. In them we see not only the portrait of the deceased, in size a demi-god, and of his diminutive wife, the mistress of the house—"beloved of her husband, his palm of pleasantness"—sculptured with



THE GATEWAY OF ASYÛT.
It opens into a large tree-shaded court which forms part of the governor's palace and leads into the town.

marvellous fidelity to nature and with a realism that is almost terribly lifelike, but all the scenes of the great man's daily life; his cattle, goats and sheep, and fat oxen; villagers bringing their tribute of the produce of the nobleman's country estates; oxen drawing the plough, with the superscription "A strong pull" and "Trot on, beasts;" the overseer with his stick; every scene of agriculture, the large ears of corn, the reaping and gleaning; the exciting hunt of the hippopotamus, who is entangled in the ropes in the very act of devouring his prey, while the sportsmen launch their javelins at him; the nets full of fish; the chase of the antelope; the struggles of wrestlers—every branch of labour and of diversion is found on the walls of the

tombs. Over many of the pictures are inscriptions which are positively comic, as when the slaughterers of an ox comment on the various stages of the operation, or a captain of a ship calls his crew a set of apes. But the solemn side of existence is not forgotten amidst these cheerful scenes. Funeral processions and wailing women are engraved on the walls, and inscriptions are addressed to Anubis of the jackal head, the Hermes of the Egyptian religion, who guides the souls through the under world.

Nor are men and women alone honoured with these splendid resting-places. Under the Serapeum at Sakkarah—the Ptolemaic temple, with its various chambers, priests' houses, and cells for ascetic recluses, which was dedicated to the strange mixed Græco-Egyptian worship of Serapis—is the gigantic cemetery of Apis. This sacred bull, who was distinguished from common cattle by twenty-eight marks, such as a blaze on the forehead, a scarab under the tongue, a crescent on the flank, and the like, was kept in his lifetime in solemn state, secluded behind a curtain on a soft bed in the temple of Ptah at Memphis, with his venerated mother in another stall, and a plentiful harîm of cows near by; and hither came those who would obtain his oracular verdicts: if he ate from their hand it was well; if not, their doom was decreed, as Eudoxus, the Greek astronomer, and Germanicus proved to their dismay. When after his luxurious life the bull Apis died, he was buried, with immense pomp and with costly rites, which sometimes drained the treasury of £20,000, in the burying place of his ancestors at Sakkarah. Here, in long galleries, with vaults on either side, rested the mummies of all the sacred bulls for nigh two thousand years, in huge sarcophagi of granite or other stone, each monolith, empty, weighing nearly sixty tons (one hundred and thirty-four thousand pounds). When Mariette opened this amazing city of dead bulls he found one vault which for some reason or other had escaped the violating hand of the treasure-seeker, and there in the mortar was the impress of the fingers of the mason who had set the last stone in the reign of Rameses II., before the birth of Moses; there in the dust were the imprints of the feet that had last trod the floor three thousand and more years ago; there were the votive offerings dedicated in the sacred vault by visitors who have been dead since nearly twice as long a period as we are distant from our Era—among them a tablet of Rameses' own son, high priest of Apis, and one of the chief dignitaries of the time of the Oppression of Israel. It is not wonderful that when the great explorer set foot in this tomb, which had remained inviolate for thirty-five eventful centuries, he was overwhelmed, and burst into tears.

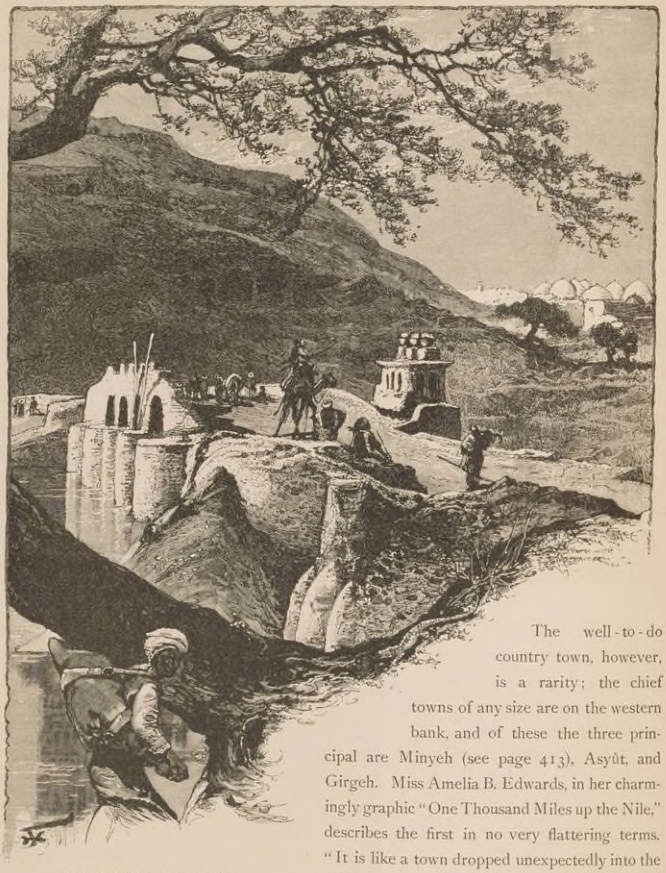
There are no graves like those of Memphis; they belong to the Titanic age of Egyptian building; but as we hasten up the Nile to Thebes we see tombs on either side, everywhere, old and new. Scarcely have we left the modern cupola of a Muslim saint's grave (see page 413) at Minyeh, when the rocks of Beny Hasan, honeycombed with painted ante-chambers and deep sepulchral vaults, come in sight (see page 414). The great cemetery of the sacred crocodile opposite Manfalût presents a counterpart to the vast necropolis of the bulls at Sakkarah. All along the eastern bank the cliffs that hem in the river are honeycombed with tombs or grottoes, and it is from the paintings of these tombs that much of our knowledge of ancient

Egyptian life and manners is derived. Those at Beny Hasan, excavated by a single noble family of the time of the Twelfth Dynasty, are the most famous; but every cliff and headland abounds in tombs which present some point of interest or importance.

The western bank presents a complete contrast. Here the mountains trend away to some distance, and between them and the river spread the famous corn-fields of the Nile valley, the villages in which the fellahîn live, sometimes a large town, and everywhere shadûfs (see page 425) and sâkiyehs—machines for raising water for irrigating the higher lands—(see page 395), cattle bathing in the cool river, women with water-pots on their heads, and the other usual commonplaces of Egyptian scenery. If one feature is more peculiar than another, it is the inevitable pigeon-tower, with earthen pots for a battlement, which greets the eye at every village and town all up the Nile voyage (see page 419). Trees are wanting in the scenery, except sparse clumps of palms and stunted acacias and tamarisks, which form a foreground to a village scene. These villages are of two kinds. "Some are built on high mounds, the accumulation for the most part of millenniums of crude brick buildings. Some, on the other hand, are flat, but protected from the inundations very imperfectly by thickly buttressed walls and a wide moat, which is full of water in October, a fetid marsh in December, and dry in spring—a place of bad smells and air thickened with mist and mosquitoes. Every here and there a house has fallen over the wall and an avalanche of crude bricks is being melted into the moat. Here the children bask, naked, except for a thick incrustation of flies, and the dogs sleep among them. As you walk round the village to find an entrance you come, if it is on a mound, to what looks like a newly extemporised path, leading up at an angle so steep that your hands often touch the ground as you climb. If there is no such mound, you probably enter without any gate between two high mud walls, and find yourselves presently in the public *place*, a square of perhaps fifty feet each way, with ruined seats or divans round three sides, and the sheykh's residence, sometimes a mere hut, at the other. Some villages have beautiful greens of very fine small grass, interspersed with palms, surrounding them; but the tendency of taxation within the last few years has been to cause these pleasant places to be desolated. A sheykh's tomb, with its white-washed mud dome, is usually to be seen glimmering through the shade, and near it there is often a well with a very primitive wheel made of sticks and cords. Here the elders of the village sit and smoke, and the women gossip as they fill their great pitchers.

"The houses in these villages are one-storeyed, built of unbaked Nile mud, without windows, and only a few small holes for light. On them or near by them is a sort of battlemented edifice which is devoted to the pigeons that infest every Nile village. There are all stages of these hamlets, from the cluster of miserable hovels kneaded up by the fellâh or Nile peasant covered with reeds or mats, and surrounded by a mud wall inclosing a yard which holds, besides the live stock, the tub-like structures which serve as store-room and pantry, to the well-to-do village, with its mosque and white-washed minaret, and the country town with its substantial dwellings, its market, and its street." *

* Loftie, "Ride in Egypt," pages 259—261.



THE NECROPOLIS OF ASYÛT,

Consisting of ancient rock-tombs and a modern cemetery (to the right), approached from the town by a bridge over a canal which skirts the cultivated land.

The well-to-do country town, however, is a rarity; the chief towns of any size are on the western bank, and of these the three principal are Minyeh (see page 413), Asyût, and Girgeh. Miss Amelia B. Edwards, in her charmingly graphic "One Thousand Miles up the Nile," describes the first in no very flattering terms. "It is like a town dropped unexpectedly into the midst of a ploughed field, the streets being mere trodden lanes of mud and dust, and the houses a succession of windowless prisons with their backs to the thoroughfare. The bazaar, which consists of two or three lanes a little wider than the rest, is roofed over here and there with rotting palm-rafters and bits of tattered

matting, while the market is held in a space of waste ground outside the town. The former, with its cupboard-like shops, in which the merchants sit cross-legged like shabby old idols in

PIGEON-TOWERS ON THE NILE.
The battlements are formed of earthenware pots, and rows of Indian corn stalks project from the loopholed walls to serve as perches (see page 417).

shabby old shrines,—the ill-furnished shelves,—the familiar Manchester goods,—the gaudy native stuffs,—the old red saddles and faded rugs hanging up for sale,—the smart Greek stores where Bass's ale, claret, curaçoa, Cyprus, Vermouth, cheese, pickles, sardines, Worcester sauce, blacking, biscuits, preserved meats, candles, cigars, matches, sugar, salt, stationery, fireworks, jams, and patent medicines can all be bought at one fell swoop,—the native cook-shops, exhaling savoury perfumes of kebabs and lentil soup, and presided over by an Abyssinian Soyer blacker than the blackest historical personage ever was painted,—the surging, elbowing,

clamorous crowd,—the donkeys, the camels, the street-criers, the chatter, the dust, the flies, the fleas, and the dogs, all put us in mind of the poorer quarters of Cairo. In the market, it is even worse. Here are hundreds of country folk sitting on the ground behind their baskets of fruit and vegetables. Some have eggs, butter, and buffalo-cream for sale, while others sell sugar-canes, limes, cabbages, tobacco, barley, dried lentils, split beans, maize, wheat, and durah. The women go to and fro with bouquets of live poultry. The chickens scream; the sellers rave; the buyers bargain at the top of their voices; the dust flies in clouds, the sun pours down floods of light and heat; you can scarcely hear yourself speak; and the crowd is as dense as that other crowd which at this very moment, on this very Christmas Eve, is circulating among the alleys of Leadenhall Market."

Asyût (or Siout) is a much larger place, and gloriously situated. The approach along the zigzags of the river is singularly beautiful, as the town appears first on one side and then on the other, with the glowing Libyan hills behind it and delicious riverside pictures in the foreground. Asyût is the capital of Upper Egypt, and musters a population of twenty-five thousand, according to Egyptian reckoning; and its superior rank and prosperity are testified by the comparative solidity and regularity of its mud huts, and the several well-built houses and mosques which it contains: after all, a large town in Egypt is only a magnified village. It is famous for its manufactures of pottery and pipe bowls, and caravans arrive here with the produce of the equatorial provinces. But the finest thing about Asyût is its situation. Half-girdled by a spur of the Libyan hills behind, it looks down upon the broad windings of the river, while around it stretches the rich green plain watered by the wide canal which irrigates the valley as far as the Fayyûm, with high embankments planted with trees. No site is more picturesque in all Egypt.

A high embanked road leads to Asyût from El-Hamrâ, its little port on the Nile, and another leads from Asyût to the tombs in the Libyan mountains (see page 418). Tier above tier in the lofty stratified cliffs yawn the tombs, while shreds and bones of mummies bleach in the sun on the slopes below. Interesting as many of these tombs are, the view from the mountain in which they are cut is even more fascinating. "Seen from the great doorway of the second grotto it looks like a framed picture. For the foreground, we have the dazzling slope of limestone débris; in the middle distance, a wide plain clothed with the delicious tender green of very young corn; farther away yet, the cupolas and minarets of Siout rising from the midst of a belt of palm-groves; beyond these again, the molten gold of the great river glittering away, coil after coil, into the far distance; and all along the horizon, the everlasting boundary of the desert. Large pools of placid water left by the last inundation lie here and there, lakes amid the green. A group of brown men are wading yonder with their nets. A funeral comes along the embanked road—the bier carried at a rapid pace on men's shoulders, and covered with a red shawl; the women taking up handfuls of dust and scattering it upon their heads as they walk. We can see the dust flying, and hear the shrill wail of the mourners borne upon the breathless air. The cemetery towards which they are going lies round to the

left, at the foot of the mountain—a wilderness of little white cupolas with here and there a tree. Broad spaces of shade sleep under the spreading sycamores by the road-side; a hawk circles overhead; and Siout, bathed in the splendour of the morning sun, looks as fairy-like as ever." *

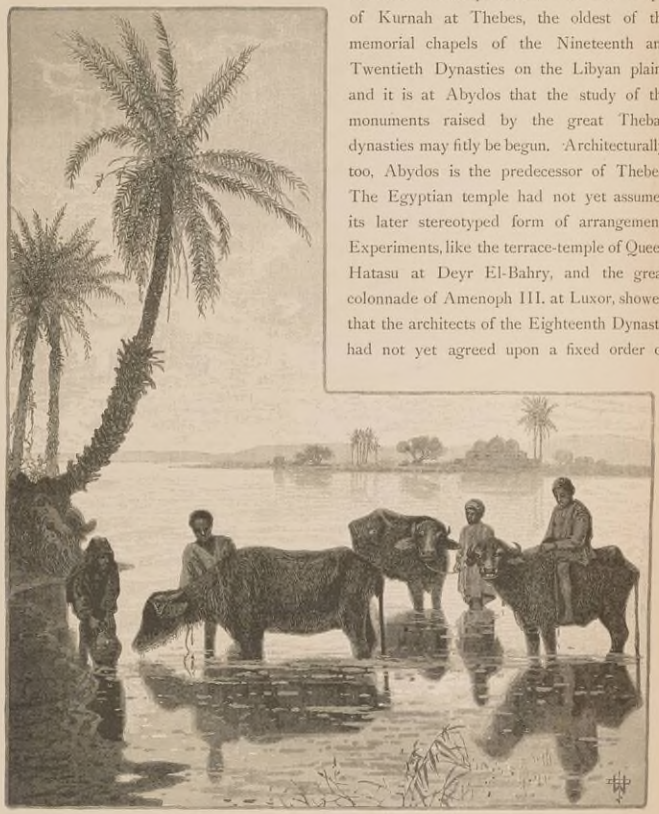
These tombs, and many others in various parts of Egypt, were appropriated by anchorites of the Christian Church; and there is a yet sacreder association with them, if we like to believe the legend that makes Asyût, or Lycopolis as the Greeks called it, the place where the Holy Family sojourned during their exile in Egypt. Similar traditions are unfortunately too common to meet with general acceptance; and in this case the likelihood is further weakened by the improbability that the Holy Family, if they had once settled at Asyût, would ever have deserted it.

Another large town was Girgeh, but it is now fallen into decay. Each year the river encroaches upon it; the banks are eaten away deeper at each inundation, the houses fall in, and Girgeh is disappearing into the Nile. Suhâg, with its sugar-mills, takes its place; but Girgeh is still a beautiful spot, faced by a noble cliff in the Arabian hills; and its population, largely composed of Copts—for Girgeh was a Christian settlement named after St. George—do a fair trade in dyeing and gold work.

Like Asyût, Girgeh has its monumental background, but it is much farther away and infinitely more important; for twelve miles west of the town of St. George lie the ruins of Abydos, the site of Thinis, and the burial-place of Osiris. The better way to go to Abydos, however, is from Belliâneh, a good-sized village with a curious underground Coptic church, but little else that is noteworthy. Passing between the clean-looking well-built houses with their quaint pigeon-battlements, crossing some dry canals, and traversing a lovely grove of palms, we emerge upon the most fertile tract in Egypt. For six miles we ride through waving barley, wheat, and bean fields; far as the sight can reach on either side stretches the wide expanse of green. Slingers are standing here and there, armed with their fibre slings, to guard the precious grain from the birds that hover above. A long string of camels winds slowly along the narrow footpaths that intersect the cornfields, and a grey-bearded Arab of the outlying village jogs into town upon his ass. This granary of Egypt is one of the most perfect sights in the land. Visiting Abydos, as the traveller generally does, on the return voyage, the vivid green of this six miles' ride offers a refreshing restful contrast to the eye which has been blinking for weeks at burning yellow sand and limestone; and to him who has seen the Holy Island where Osiris is fabled to sleep, the home of the older legend which tells how the head of the god was buried at Abydos is doubly interesting. Historically, however, Abydos should be the first monumental sight visited after Memphis and the Pyramids. Indeed, the oldest city of Egypt, Thinis or This, once stood here, whence Menes, the first of the long line of Egyptian kings, migrated to found Memphis. Crude brick remains are all that can now be seen of Thinis; and Abydos, its successor, belongs to post-Memphite times, and forms a fitting prelude

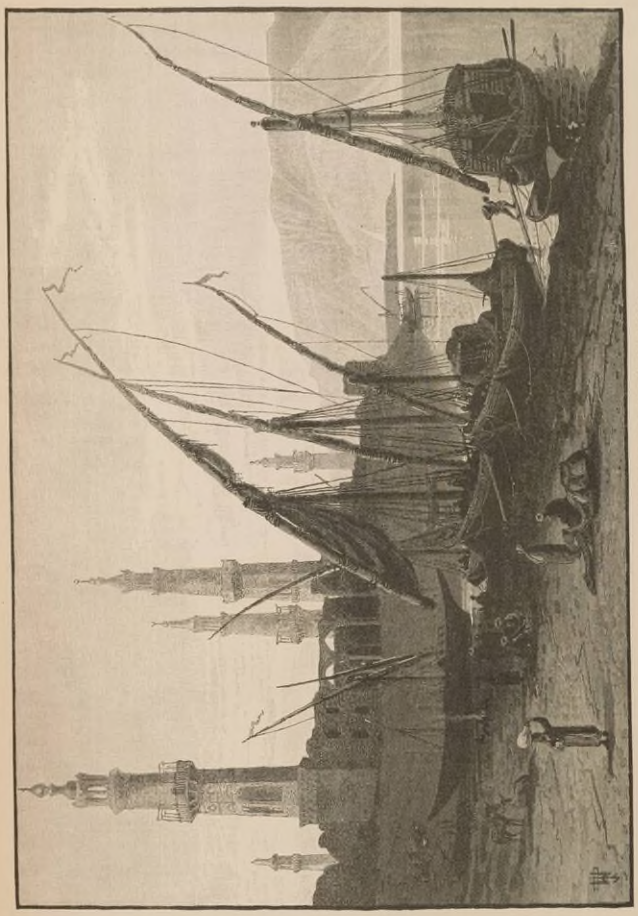
* Amelia B. Edwards, "One Thousand Miles up the Nile."

to the study of Thebes. Seti I. was the founder of the principal temple, and Rameses II., his son, completed it and added a second fane of his own. The older temple of Abydos is therefore contemporaneous with the temple of Kurnah at Thebes, the oldest of the memorial chapels of the Nineteenth and Twentieth Dynasties on the Libyan plain; and it is at Abydos that the study of the monuments raised by the great Theban dynasties may fitly be begun. Architecturally, too, Abydos is the predecessor of Thebes. The Egyptian temple had not yet assumed its later stereotyped form of arrangement. Experiments, like the terrace-temple of Queen Hatasu at Deyr El-Bahry, and the great colonnade of Amenoph III. at Luxor, showed that the architects of the Eighteenth Dynasty had not yet agreed upon a fixed order of



A SILHOUETTE ON THE NILE.
A group of the slate-coloured buffaloes of the country being watered is one of the commonest sights on the Nile.

courts and chambers; and Abydos is proof that Seti, of the Nineteenth, had a different idea of temple forms to those of his forerunners and his successors. The seven aisles ending in seven



GIRGEH, FROM THE MOORING-PLACE ON THE SOUTH SIDE.

pictured chapels are unique in Egyptian architecture, though Seti's other temple at Kurnah bears a certain resemblance to this arrangement. For a small temple nothing can be more beautiful than this sevenfold avenue of columns and portals; and here the beauty is increased by the remarkable preservation of the whole temple—roof, walls, and pillars—and by the unrivalled charm of the sculptures which cover the walls and columns. Not only are they in an unusually fine state of preservation, but they are evidently the work of a supreme artist. Unless it be the sculptures in the tombs at Sakkarah, there is nothing in Egyptian glyptic art at all comparable with the wall-chiselling at Abydos. The famous figure of Seti offering a little statue of the goddess Truth to the seated Osiris on the north wall of the inner court is matchless, and its pure white surface enhances its beauty to a Western eye, unacclimatised to the Egyptian method of colouring sculpture. The Theban artists could not rival Hi (for we know the name of Seti's sculptor), and even the portions of Seti's temple which Rameses II. completed show a marked falling off in artistic feeling. All the older sculptures, however, are magnificent. There is one of Seti and Rameses taming a bull which is full of power, and in the passage next to this is the celebrated Tablet of Abydos, wherein are engraved all the cartouches (or names and titles) of all the kings of Egypt from Menes to Seti I., each of whom is represented, uniform in aspect, sitting on his hams, beneath his cartouche, while Seti himself, in colossal contrast, and his son Rameses of more moderate proportions, offer libations to their assembled ancestors.

Near by is a mound now called Kom-es-Sultan, where it is pretended the head of Osiris is buried. The mound is formed of the accretions of centuries of pious Egyptians who had themselves buried near the sepulchre of the best-beloved of their gods. His tomb has not yet been found, but some such monument must eventually be discovered. Every one knows how Osiris came to be buried there; how he ruled the world wisely and gave just judgments until his false brother Typhon enticed him into a chest and cast him into the Nile; how Isis, his queen, searched the wide earth for her husband's body, and at last found it buried at Byblon in Syria, where it had been cast up by the sea; how Typhon again possessed himself of the corpse and cut it into fourteen pieces and scattered them over the land of Egypt; and how the mourning wife sought diligently for the severed limbs, and buried each where it lay, and the head was buried at Abydos. Then Osiris, who now ruled the world of shades, made armour for Horus, his son, and sent him out to do battle with Typhon, who was vanquished, but not slain outright. And Osiris came back to reign with Isis. How the setting and reappearance of the sun is figured in this beautiful myth, and how the conflict between Osiris and Typhon was made to symbolise the struggle between spiritual and intellectual as well as physical light and darkness, the fight between right and wrong, between life and death, till the resurrection of Osiris became the type and symbol of the immortality of the soul, is known to all. To every pious Egyptian the story of the risen Osiris was a presage of his own resurrection, and though, like the god, his body must be buried in the sand of the Western desert, like him too shall he rise again and triumph over death. We see this idea in the representation of the myth in many temples from Abydos to Philæ; and separate chapels were

SHADÛF.

The weight of the water in the bucket is balanced by the lump of Nile mud at the other end of the swinging beam, and the water is thus raised to the mouth of the canal with little effort: but pulling down the bucket is hard work, and the machine is ruinously extravagant in labour.

set apart for this special subject; and these "Mammisi" form a notable feature in all Ptolemaic temples, such as Dendarah, Edfû, and Philæ, when Greek philosophy had adopted this myth of Osiris and Isis and sublimated its significance.

Before Thebes is reached there is yet another famous monument, and this is Dendarah, the first Egyptian temple the traveller usually visits on his voyage up the Nile. Dendarah is quite a late creation. It belongs to Ptolemaic times, and was completed under Tiberius and Nero, when Christ was living at Jerusalem. The general plan of this beautiful building will be described hereafter. At present it is enough to say that in spite of a certain grotesqueness

DENDARAH.
A Ptolemaic temple, dedicated to the goddess Hathor, the Egyptian Aphroditê, and famous for its portraits of Cleopatra.

in its columns it is a marvellously impressive building. Descending from the modern level, raised far above that of the temple, we stand in a glorious hall of columns, and as we penetrate to the sanctuary the effect of the long avenue of pillars and portals is grand beyond expression. Dendarah, however, can hardly compare with its twin temple, Edfû; and though it has elements of beauty that Edfû lacks, the latter temple far excels it in size and preservation, and in the perfection of its details. Yet Dendarah has one attraction which is perhaps its greatest charm to the ordinary tourist: it offers several portraits of Cleopatra. How far they are faithful representations of the queen of her age it is difficult to say; but the impression may be hazarded that if they are true to nature, Cleopatra's empire over men's hearts must have rested upon some other power than beauty.

THE PLAIN OF THEBES FROM NEAR KARNAK.

In the foreground is seen a modern saint's tomb; in the middle-distance, the lateen sails of the Nile boats, the twin Colossi, and the Rameseûm stand out above the river, and the view is closed by the finest mountain in Egypt, whose steep cliffs are honeycombed with tombs, and whose towering mass guards and conceals the gloomy "Valley of the Kings" behind.

# THEBES.

IN all the long course of the Nile there is no site that can compare with that of Thebes. Nile scenery possesses a strange beauty of its own, but it is a monotonous unchanging beauty. Long lines of brown banks, a strip of vivid green behind them, narrow or wide according to the breadth of the valley and the facilities for irrigation, and beyond, closing in the view, a low rampart of yellow-brown hills—these are the only features of Egyptian scenery that meet the traveller's eye for mile after mile of his Nile voyage. Here and there a village, with its clump of palms, its shapeless mud huts and queer-looking pigeon towers, its sheykh's house and the little whitewashed dome which marks the tomb of a local celebrity, breaks the monotony; and at wider intervals a veritable town, with a few fairly-built houses and a couple

of minarets, to show that, whatever it may appear, it is not merely a village like the rest, makes an agreeable diversion. But, as a rule, brown river, brown banks, and pale brown hills constitute the Egyptian triad in the unemotional tourist's recollection.

Thebes upsets all such generalisations. It is not in the least like the rest of the Nile scenery. The Libyan hills, which have hitherto kept away at some distance from the river, low and dim, and rather like the South Downs of Sussex without their grass, draw close to the bank at Dendarah, just before Thebes is reached, and then suddenly sweep away again in a noble curve, rising at the same time to the, in Egypt, unexampled height of twelve hundred feet. The Arabian hills, on the eastern side, which have hugged the bank most of the way from Cairo south, seem here to have taken the hint from their Libyan rivals; for they too trend away from the Nile, only to return and almost meet their antagonists as they curve round again to the river and close in upon the view just above Thebes. Thus by corresponding curves the mountains open out a great amphitheatre, such as a king would choose to build his capital therein. Instead of a strip of vegetation, a broad green plain now borders the Nile on either hand, rich with bean-fields and clover and all manner of corn; and beyond the sandy slope that edges the plain, there rises no longer the low undulating ridge which merely marks the limit of the desert plateau, but a stern barrier of precipices, scored with ancient torrent beds and honeycombed with the tombs of the mighty dead. No one who has ever seen it can forget the first sight of this plain from the heights of the Libyan hills. Our earliest impression of Thebes should, in prudence, be taken from here. Instead of watching the boat's gradual approach, the appearance bit by bit of a pylon here and an obelisk there, and losing the general effect by the slow appreciation of details, as almost all travellers are compelled to do, we should arrive at Luxor by night, cross the river blindfold early in the morning, and never open our eyes till we are safe in the gorge which traverses the Libyan range and nothing but yellow rock is to be seen. After threading the "Valley of the Kings"—a bare rugged ravine scooped in the rock by an extinct torrent, where the baked cliffs reflect the blazing noonday sun till the gorge seems red-hot—and then clambering over the crest of the hill that divides the valley from the plain, the view of Thebes comes upon us as a delicious shock. Below our feet the mountains seem to overhang the plain; their threatening cliffs girdle it like the outspread arms of a giant; while opposite, the Arabian rampart, accepting the challenge like a jealous rival, stretches out its answering embrace, and raises its three peaks in vain attempt to measure itself against its towering adversary. And in the midst, the beautiful fertile plain seems, woman-like, to enjoy this strife for her possession, and, cool in the waters of her father Nile, to smile serenely through the sunlight at the hot endeavours of her emulous suitors.

Nothing more lovely than this green amphitheatre, with its border of yellow sand and rampart of cliffs, can be seen in all the land of Egypt. As we descend by the steep path that leads to the terraced temple of Deyr El-Bahry, which Queen Hatasu, sister of Thothmes and earliest of the great queens of history, built as an antechamber to her tomb, and look across the plain and over the river to the lofty obelisk—tallest in Egypt—which she set up in the

court of her father's temple at Karnak, new and wonderful points of view are reached at every step; and as we approach the level of the plain, and, leaving the platforms of Deyr El-Bahry, wander past the Assasîf to the long colonnade which shows how great a temple the Ramesêum has once been—and with Kurnah on our left and Medînet Habû on our right, ride back through the scented bean-fields where the two colossi keep guard, till we reach the Nile again, with the temples and minarets of Luxor rising opposite in picturesque confusion—we shall say with a Hebrew poet that no city could be "better than the city of Amon, that was enthroned among the streams, that had the waters round about her, whose rampart was the Nile and her wall the river-sea" (Nahum iii. 8).

The natural beauty of Thebes is not, however, in the eyes of most people, its chief title to admiration. Its girdle of hills encloses not only one of Nature's masterpieces, but some of the most marvellous achievements of human genius, skill, and perseverance. There are more than twenty temples at Thebes—as many, that is to say, as all the rest of the surviving temples of Egypt put together—and in variety of design, grandeur of scale, and richness of decoration, and also, unhappily, in the ruthlessness of their ruin, they have no rivals. Many will prefer, for perfection of plan and comparative preservation, such exquisite examples of Ptolemaic art as the temples of Edfû and Dendarah; the design and the matchless sculptures of Abydos enthral the admiration of others; while, for a bold and captivating realism in the wall-paintings, combined with an almost incredible massiveness in the masonry, the buildings of the Memphite empire stand without peer. But Thebes has something of all these, and something more. It has the massiveness of Memphis applied to columns and roofs and colossi, instead of square blocks of stone; it has graphic wall-sculptures, less natural and vivid, no doubt, than Sakkarah, and without the extraordinary, almost Greek, purity of Abydos, but still vigorous and artistic, and representing, moreover, not merely a man's domestic life and country pursuits, but the victories of the greatest kings of antiquity and the erection of the most magnificent of ancient monuments, the works and wars of conquerors instead of the sports and business of country magnates. And all this is found at Thebes in such abundance and variety, on such an immense scale, in such endless forms and repetitions, that the mind fails to grasp the outline in the lavishness of detail, and appalled at the number and vastness of the fragments of Thebes, abandons the thoughts of analysis or comparison, and by acclamation accepts "No Amon, enthroned among the streams" of its canals, as, after Memphis, the chief of the monumental sites of Egypt.

Yet what we now see of Thebes, the monster ruins that cover so immense a space, represent but a fraction of what Thebes once has been. Even of the temples, not one is even nearly entire. Karnak is a heap of ruins, fallen columns, broken obelisks, walls and roofs thrown down; Luxor is half buried and in part destroyed; Kurnah is in terrible decay; the greater part of the Ramesêum has disappeared; the temple of Amenoph has entirely vanished, except its two colossal sentinels; Medînet Habû has suffered partial martyrdom at the hands of the Copts, who built a village over it; and how many other temples, of which we know

nothing, have gone without a trace? But besides this demolition and decay, where is Thebes itself, the city "of the hundred gates," of which Homer sang?—

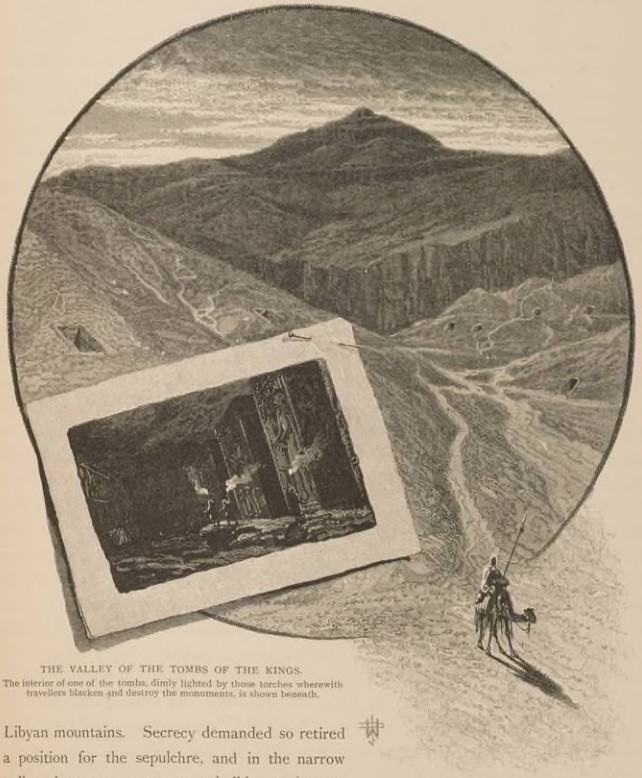
> οὐδ' ὅσα Θῆβαις
> Αἰγυπτίαις, ὅθι πλεῖστα δόμοις ἐν κτήματα κεῖται,
> αἳθ' ἑκατόμπυλοί εἰσι, δυηκόσιοι δ' ἀν' ἑκάστην
> ἀνέρες ἐξοιχνοῦσι σὺν ἵπποισιν καὶ ὀχεσφιν.—Il. ix. 381—384.

Here are some of its temples, whose pylons doubtless formed the "hundred gates," but the city itself seems to have been swallowed up by the earth. Of all this great metropolis, which once could send out twenty thousand armed chariots, and whose *κτήματα* furnished indeed a mighty spoil to the Persian Cambyses, of the capital of the victorious Amenoph, Thothmes, and Rameses, absolutely nothing remains—not a trace of a wall—hardly even a mound of rubbish! Like Memphis, Thebes itself has vanished utterly from the face of the earth. Like Memphis, also, Thebes has left behind monuments of its religion which three and four thousand years of neglect and wilful destruction, and finally of the ravages of indiscriminating affection, have not availed to destroy.

The city of Thebes has vanished because it was not built to endure. The ancient Egyptians laid no store by their dwelling-houses; they regarded life only as a halting-place on the journey to the next world, and their abode here was too transitory to be worth elaboration. They spent all their skill and ingenuity in constructing dwelling-places for their dead selves, where the *Ka* or "double" of their soul would agreeably pass his time in contemplation of the scenes of his past life which he would find depicted on the walls of the tomb. All the records we possess of the old Memphite empire are in tombs. The pyramids are tombs; the pictures at Sakkarah are on the walls of the antechambers of tombs; the sculptures of Meydûm are sepulchral monuments. Even of the second great period of Egyptian history, that represented mainly by the Twelfth Dynasty, our chief information is derived from the tombs of Beny Hasan. It is there that we see Egyptian society, as it was twenty-five centuries before Christ, depicted on the walls of a family burying-place. And at Thebes the same principle holds good. The monuments that survive are those that were built not for this life but for eternity. The palaces of Rameses have vanished, but the monuments he built for his soul's welfare bear testimony to his power and wealth in every degree of latitude from the Mediterranean to the second cataract. In a wall-picture we see the third Rameses caressing the chin of a favoured damsel, who supports the monarch's elbow with her hand to enable him to stroke her without fatigue; but we see this, not in the palace where such blandishments would naturally take place, but in a side structure of the temple of Medinet Habû. The position is so unexpected that scholars have called this side structure the "Pavilion of Rameses;" but there is little doubt that it formed part of the temple, and that the picture of the king caressing a lady was only a phase of the general representation of the kingly career which is the chief aim in Theban wall-decoration, after the relations of the sovereign with the gods have been fitly depicted.

Most of the temples on the Libyan side of Thebes are merely developments of the entrance chambers of the tombs of the early empire. Just as the daily surroundings of Ti

are depicted in the entrance chambers of his tomb, while his body lies buried at the bottom of a concealed shaft, so the history of Rameses is represented on the walls of his temple in the Theban plain, while his body was deposited in the gloomy Valley of the Kings behind the



THE VALLEY OF THE TOMBS OF THE KINGS.
The interior of one of the tombs, dimly lighted by those torches wherewith travellers blacken and destroy the monuments, is shown beneath.

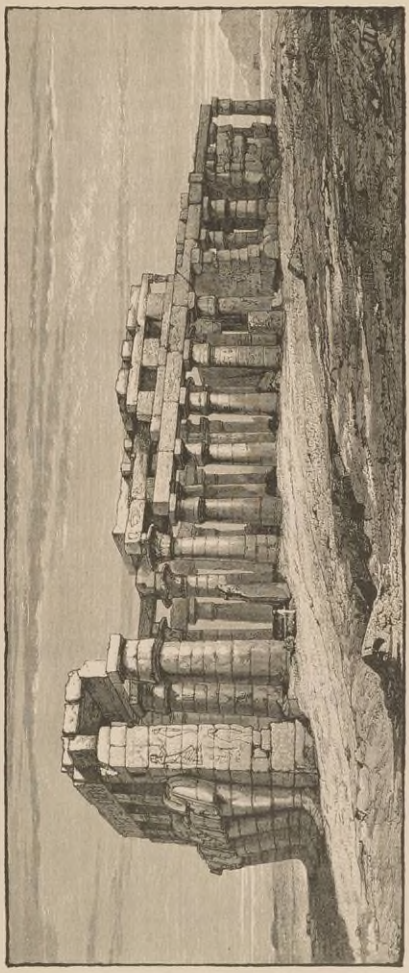
Libyan mountains. Secrecy demanded so retired a position for the sepulchre, and in the narrow valley there was no space to build an adequate memorial chapel on a scale conformant with Nineteenth Dynasty ideas. The two parts were therefore separated: the tomb itself was excavated in the Libyan rocks, and the memorial chapel, now developed into a complex and

elaborate temple of many halls and chambers, was built on the plain below. The tombs in this one valley number twenty-five (and there are hundreds in other parts of the mountains), and from Amenoph III. to the end of the Twentieth Dynasty not a single royal tomb but that of Horus is missing. The valley is a singularly impressive site for a burying-ground. Steep cliffs shut it in on every side, not a blade of grass or living thing can be seen, nothing but burning rock on the right hand and on the left. Here and there a steep slope leads down to a gloomy cavern's mouth. We enter a long tunnel-like passage, lofty and wide, but growing more intensely dark at every step. Candles show us that the walls are covered with pictures, and as we enter the larger chamber or chambers to which the passage leads, the eye grows accustomed to the partial light, and the design of the artist becomes clear. It is the progress of the soul through the underworld that we are witnessing in these pictures which line the dimly-lighted walls.

"Immediately on entering the tomb the visitor finds himself transported into a new world. The almost joyous pictures of Sakkarah and Beny Hasan have altogether disappeared. The defunct is no more to be seen at home in the midst of his family; no more making of furniture, no more building of ships; no more extensive farmyards, with cattle, oxen, antelopes, wild goats, geese, ducks, demoiselle cranes, marching in procession before the stewards. All has become, so to speak, fantastic and chimerical. Even the gods themselves assume strange forms. Long serpents glide hither and thither round the rooms or stand erect against the doorways. Some convicted malefactors are being decapitated, and others are precipitated into the flames. Well might a visitor feel a kind of horror creeping over him, if he did not realise that, after all, underneath all these strange representations lies the most consoling of all dogmas, that which vouchsafes eternal happiness to the soul after the many trials of this life. It has been said, that before according to their kings the honour of burial the Egyptians passed judgment upon them. This legend must of course be understood in an allegorical sense. The judgment of the soul after being separated from the body, and the many trials which it will be called upon to overcome by the aid only of such virtues as it has evinced while on earth, constitute the subject-matter of the almost endless representations which cover the walls of the tomb, from the entrance to the extreme end of the last chamber. The serpents standing erect over each portal, darting out venom, are the guardians of the gates of heaven; the soul cannot pass unless justified by works of piety and benevolence. The long texts displayed over other parts of the walls are magnificent hymns to which the soul gives utterance in honour of the divinity whose glory and greatness it thus celebrates. When once the dead has been adjudged worthy of life eternal these ordeals are at an end; he becomes part of the divine essence, and henceforward a pure spirit, he wanders over the vast regions where the stars for ever shine. The soul has no sooner left the body than we are called upon, from room to room, to witness its progress as it appears before the gods and becomes gradually purified, until at last, in the grand hall at the end of the tomb, we are present at its final admission into that life 'which a second death shall never reach.'" *

* Mariette, "Monuments of Upper Egypt," English translation, pages 236—238.

The memorial chapels belonging to these tombs were built in the plain between the mountains and the Nile. The temple of Kurnah is a cenotaph erected by Seti I. to the memory of his father, Rameses I.; the tombs of both are in the Valley of the Kings, and that of Seti, generally known as Belzoni's from the name of its discoverer, is the most famous of all these tombs, not only for its length (which measures four hundred and seventy feet from the entrance to the fallen rock which now blocks up the end), but for the beauty and extent of its wall sculptures, now unhappily greatly defaced by exposure and vandalism. The alabaster sarcophagus which Belzoni found here is now in the Soane Museum; but Seti's body was discovered among the mummies in the pit at Deyr El-Bahry, and is in the Bûlâk Museum, side by side with the other great Theban monarchs. The next temple was famous in classical times as the "Tomb of Ozymandias" or "of Memnon," but it is really the memorial chapel erected by Rameses the Great to his own glory, and therefore with better reason called the Ramesêum. Of this splendid monument, which once had the full array of temple ornament—its two noble gateways, its open court surrounded by a cloister supported by caryatid columns, leading to a hall of many columns, where the heavy stone roofing slabs lent a religious shade to the covered sanctuary beyond—little remains. The lofty gateways are half destroyed, most of the Osiride cloister has disappeared; but the long central vista of tall calyx-topped columns, and the side aisles of lower lotus bud capitals, representing the well-proportioned and well-spaced "hall of assembly," are enough to show that the Ramesêum must have been one of the most perfect of all the monuments of Egypt. As we stand in the shadow of the mighty columns, on which the successors of the Pharaohs have here and there painted the figure of a Christian saint, we begin to realise the majesty of the Theban sanctuary and the magnificence of the king who could rear such a temple to his praise. There on the pylons are the spectacles of his triumphs; above all the supreme scene where, deserted by his body-guard and surrounded by the enemy, Rameses throws himself alone into the thick of the fray, with his single arm deals death around him, kills with his own hand the chief of the Khetas, crushes the flying foe under his chariot wheels; and, when his officers crowd before him with servile felicitations, denounces them for their cowardice, as the proud inscription runs: "The princes and captains did not join hands with me in fight; by myself have I done battle; I have put to flight thousands of nations, and I was all alone!" The great conqueror was never wearied of recalling this deed of prowess; we see it twice in the Ramesêum, again at Luxor, at Karnak, at Abu-Simbel; and close beside the sculptured record of his courage, on the second pylon of the Ramesêum, lie the shattered fragments of the statue of Rameses himself, "the most gigantic figure that the Egyptians ever carved out of a single block of granite." This huge colossus once measured fifty-seven feet in height and weighed nearly twelve hundred tons; but now it lies strewn upon the earth, broken, by what superhuman power we cannot guess, into a hundred pieces (see page 435). Shelley's fine description of the face, quoted beneath the cut, is almost as imaginative as his interpretation of the hieroglyphic inscription.



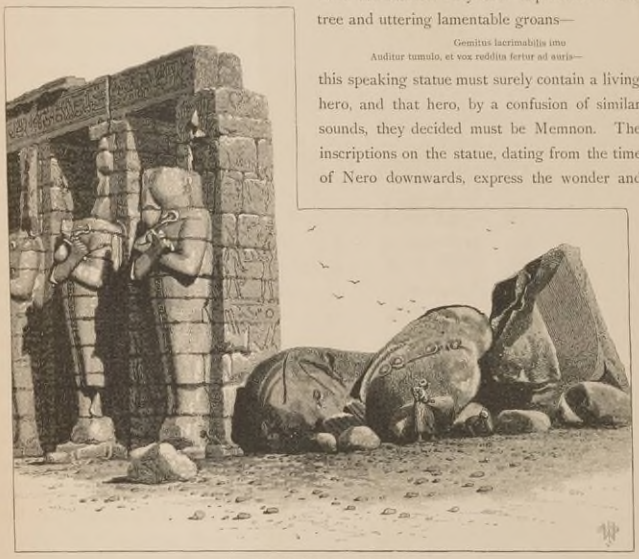
THE RAMESÊUM.
The remains of the great hypostyle hall of the Temple of Rameses II. The figures of Christian saints have been painted on some of the columns.

Next to the Rameseum once stood another memorial temple, sacred to Amenoph III., whose tomb is in the western valley in the mountains behind. Not even the foundations of the Amenophêum are now to be traced, but in front of where the pylons must once have been the two colossi which once guarded the temple still stand side by side amid the green fields. These twin giants, representing Amenoph III. seated with his hands on his knees, are perhaps, after the Pyramids, the best-known monuments in Egypt. That on the north (the nearest in the cut, page 437) is the famous "Vocal Memnon," which Roman visitors identified with the son of Tithonus and Eôs, and forthwith covered the throne and legs of the colossus with inscriptions in honour of the valiant hero who came to the aid of the Trojans, and slew Antilocus, and withstood the godlike Achilles himself. The identification probably arose out of a misunderstanding of an Egyptian word; but an accident invested the mistake with a romantic glamour. The northern statue, once, like its mate, a monolith of breccia, fifty-one feet high (or with the pedestal sixty-four), was shattered to its middle—it is said

by an earthquake which shook the monuments of Thebes in the year 27 B.C.—and this accident was the main cause of its after fame. For from the ruined giant there now came forth a sweet sound, as of a human voice, when the morning sun touched him with its early beams. The phenomenon was doubtless due to the effect of heat upon a cracked stone wet with dew—some say a shrewd priest worked the oracle from within—but to the Greeks and Romans, who were then the chief Nile tourists, the "Vocal Memnon" was nothing less than miraculous. Like the luckless Polydorus imprisoned in his tree and uttering lamentable groans—

> Gemitus lacrimabilis imo
> Auditur tumulo, et vox reddita fertur ad aures—

this speaking statue must surely contain a living hero, and that hero, by a confusion of similar sounds, they decided must be Memnon. The inscriptions on the statue, dating from the time of Nero downwards, express the wonder and



THE FALLEN COLOSSUS OF RAMESES.

> Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
> And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
> Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
> Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
> The hand that mocked them, and the heart that fed:
> And on the pedestal these words appear:—
> "My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
> Look on my works, ye mighty, and despair!"—SHELLEY.

delight of tourists of the ancient world who heard the morning song of Memnon. Some are in Greek, some in Latin, some prose and some verse; and the legend which they associate with the statue is thus told in the lines inscribed on it by Asclepiodotus:—

> O sea-born Thetis, know that Memnon lives,—
> Slain though he was beneath Dardanian walls,—
> And softly sings beneath the Libyan hills,
> Where spreading Nile parts hundred-gated Thebes:
> Yet thy Achilles, whom no fray could sate,
> Speaks not in Trojan or Thessalian plain.

People came from all parts to hear the plaintive song which Memnon raised to his mother, the rosy-fingered Dawn, and those who heard it cut their names and elegiacs. One inscription tells us that "Sabina Augusta, the consort of the Emperor Cæsar Augustus [Hadrian], twice heard the voice of Memnon during the first hour;" another is in verse, and ends—

*Ταύτοις τοῖς ἐλέγοις Πετρωνιανός σε γεραίρω*
*αὐδήεντι θεῷ μουσικὰ δῶρα ἐεδοὺς*
*Πατρόθεν οὔνομ' ἔχων Λουείλιος, Ἴταλος ἀνήρ*
*ἀλλὰ σύ μοι ζώειν ἐηρόν, ἄναξ, χάρισαι·*

while a third testifies that the voice was twice heard "when the sun left the majestic waves of ocean" by Gemellos, who "came here with his well-beloved wife Rufilla and his children" (*συν κεδνῇ ἀλόχῳ Ῥουφίλλῃ καὶ τεκέεσσι*).

At length the emperor Septimius Severus essayed the dangerous office of restorer, and reaped the usual fruits. He rebuilt the ruined upper part of the statue with layers of sandstone, and thereby silenced Memnon for ever. Severus was the last who ever heard the song to the dawn, and, though Juvenal could write—

Dimidio magicæ resonant ubi Memnone chordæ,

there is now no voice; the two weird sentinels in solemn silence sit and brood over the glory that is departed from them and the house that is left desolate.

The southernmost of the memorial temples of Thebes is that of Rameses III., or Medînet Habû. His tomb in the Valley of the Kings, generally known as Bruce's, is one of the most magnificent, and though its sculptures cannot compare with those of Seti's tomb, the subjects in the side chambers are peculiarly interesting as records of the life of the Egyptians, and some, as the well-known picture of the Harpers, are executed with exceeding skill. But if Rameses III.'s tomb may be contrasted unfavourably with others, his temple in the plain below may challenge comparison with any in Egypt. Setting aside the minor temple of Thothmes III. —which shows signs of frequent and ill-judged restoration, yet presents a fine vista of pylons and courts (see page 438), albeit the proportions are mean—and confining the attention to the large temple of Rameses III., it is impossible to deny it one of the first places in the long series of Egyptian monuments. None certainly is more impressive. You enter, through immense pylons, two spacious courts, both open to the sky, the first with a covered colonnade at each side, the second cloistered all round; the columns supporting the roof of the cloister have heavy lotus-bud capitals, or else the colonnade consists of a row of square pillars, with the much-defaced figure of Osiris, or rather of Rameses III. in the attributes of Osiris, sculptured on the side next the court. The second of these magnificent quadrangles was once used as a Christian church, for Roman pillars are still standing on one side, dwarfed by their gigantic neighbours (see page 439), and many lie around on the floor. Beyond is the hall of columns, which must have been too crowded for a just effect, but the merits of which are now beyond discussion, since the columns have all been cut down to four or six feet from the ground to suit the requirements of the Coptic settlement which till lately encumbered the spot. Various chambers and sanctuaries lay beyond the hypostyle hall, but they are mainly destroyed now.

THE VOCAL MEMNON.

The nearer colossus formerly gave forth a low sound when the rays of the rising sun first glanced upon it. The "Song of Memnon" was famous in Roman times, and is even said to have been heard in the present century.

The so-called "Pavilion of Rameses," however, stands in comparatively good preservation some way in front of the great temple, and beside the temple of Thothmes III. In truth this

PYLON OF THE TEMPLE OF THOTHMES III. AT MEDÎNET HABÛ.
Commonly called the small temple, in contradistinction to its greater neighbour. It has been restored and added to in Ptolemaic and Roman times.

"pavilion" is very like an improved propylon. Two pylon-like towers enclose a little court, and are joined together by chambers built over the gateway which leads into the court. It

curiously resembles the fortified entrance to a Norman castle, and we can almost fancy we see a drawbridge and portcullis, and the "youth over whose head scarce five-and-twenty summers

THE COURT OF THE GREAT TEMPLE OF RAMESES III. AT MEDÎNET HABÛ.
The short pillars in front belonged to the church which the Copts erected within this noble peristyle court, and of which many other columns strew the ground.

had shed their bloom" of the romances. The floors of the several stories over the gateway have disappeared, but the holes for the beams can be seen, and the slots for the bolts and

hinges of the folding windows. Grotesque caryatids support the balconies under the side windows. The whole tower or gate—donjon keep we should like to call it—is unique in Egyptian architecture, and, like the rest of the buildings of Medinet Habû, leaves an ineffaceable impress on the mind.

These four memorial temples all stood on the western plain, on the same side of the river as the tombs in which the kings their builders were buried. Indeed it is rare to find any funeral monuments on the east side of the Nile, Beny Hasan excepted. The notion of the sun's setting in the west, or rather going down into a pit near Abydos, was so closely associated in Egyptian belief with the passage of the soul to the under-world, that a tomb in the west seemed most appropriate for him who must travel the road wherein Osiris had journeyed. The pyramids and all the graves of the great necropolis of Memphis and Sakkarah are on the west of the Nile; and on this side the Theban kings excavated their tombs and built their memorial temples.

The eastern bank has also its temples, but they differ from those we have been considering in several important respects. They are not memorial temples built by one sovereign in his own honour, but a collection of temples erected by many kings at different periods in honour of the great Theban triad of gods—Amen, the male, Mout, the female, and Khons, the offspring of the two. Each ruler strove to improve upon the work of his predecessor in raising a worthy fane for the local divinities. One king built a sanctuary, another a huge propylon, a third a hall of columns, a fourth a peristyle court; others added side chambers and subsidiary temples, or adorned the approach with avenues of sphinxes or rams. This aggregate of pious zeal became the national temple, the centre of the worship of Thebes, which once meant the centre of Egypt. The great congeries of temples and portions of temples on the east bank, known now, from the miserable villages that have grown up over them, as Karnak and Luxor, are agglutinations of this kind. King after king has had a hand in increasing or adorning this wonderful group, and from the days of Osirtasen of the Twelfth Dynasty to the age of Ptolemy Physkon, nine dynasties and more than twenty monarchs have had their part in the great work. In the product of twenty-five centuries and innumerable architects it were vain to seek for unity of design, and Karnak is a bewildering heap of ruins in which it is hard to trace the faintest resemblance to the ordinary type of an Egyptian temple.

That type is best seen in the later temples by which the Ptolemies worthily carried on the traditions of the Theban empire. Dendarah or Edfû, by reason partly of their better preservation, partly because their architecture had become organized and defined by the influence of Greek method and precision, offer clearer examples of the Egyptian temple than Karnak, and the student may most easily advance from the consideration of one of these well-arranged Ptolemaic temples to the study of the more complex and indefinite temples of Thebes. Mariette has well said:—

"The Egyptian temple must not be confused with that of Greece, with the Christian church, or with the Mohammadan mosque. It was not a place for the meeting of the faithful

or for the recital of common prayer; no public ritual was celebrated within it; no one was admitted to it except the priests and the king. The temple was a kind of royal oratory, a monument reared by the king in token of his own piety, and in order to purchase the favour of the gods.

"The elaborate decoration with which all the walls of the temples are covered is only to be explained by admitting this point of departure. The essential element of this decoration is the picture; many pictures are arranged symmetrically side by side, and tiers above tiers of pictures cover the walls from floor to ceiling. This arrangement never varies, and the same may be said of the general significance of the pictures: on the one hand the king, on the other one or more deities—these are the subjects of all the compositions. The king makes an offering (meats, fruits, flowers, emblems) to the god, and asks for some favour at his hands; in his answer the deity grants the favour demanded.

"The whole decoration of a temple consisted, therefore, in an act of adoration on the part of the monarch repeated in various forms. The temple was, therefore, the exclusive personal monument of the prince by whom it was founded and decorated. This fact explains the presence of those precious representations of battles which adorn the external walls of certain temples. The king ascribed all his successes in the field to the immediate protection of the gods. In combating the enemies of Egypt, in bringing them by thousands to the capital, in employing them upon the construction of their temples, he was performing an act as agreeable to the gods as when offering incense, flowers, and the limbs of animals sacrificed. By such deeds he proved his piety and merited the continuation of those favours for which the erection of a temple was meant to be an acknowledgment.

"The ceremonies consisted for the most part in great processions, issuing from the sanctuary to be marshalled in the hypostyle hall, and afterwards traversing the open courts which lay between the buildings of the temple and the great wall which encloses the whole. They perambulated the terraced roofs, they launched upon the lake the sacred barque with its many coloured streamers. Upon a few rare occasions the priests, with the sacred images, sallied from the enclosure which ordinarily shielded their rites from profane eyes, and at the head of a brilliant flotilla directed their course to some other city, either by the Nile or by the waterway which they called 'the sacred canal.'" *

The two chief requisites of an Egyptian temple, therefore, were (1) such an arrangement of halls and passages as would allow room for long processions, and (2) strong chambers wherein to store the sacred emblems, barques, vestments, and other costly treasures appertaining to the rites. In two words, length and strength were the essential qualities of a temple. Accordingly we find the former secured by a series of avenues, halls, and courts, one behind the other; while the quality of strength or secrecy was obtained by lofty enclosing walls without and skilfully concealed secret chambers within.

It is but rarely that the original external appearance of an Egyptian temple can be realised

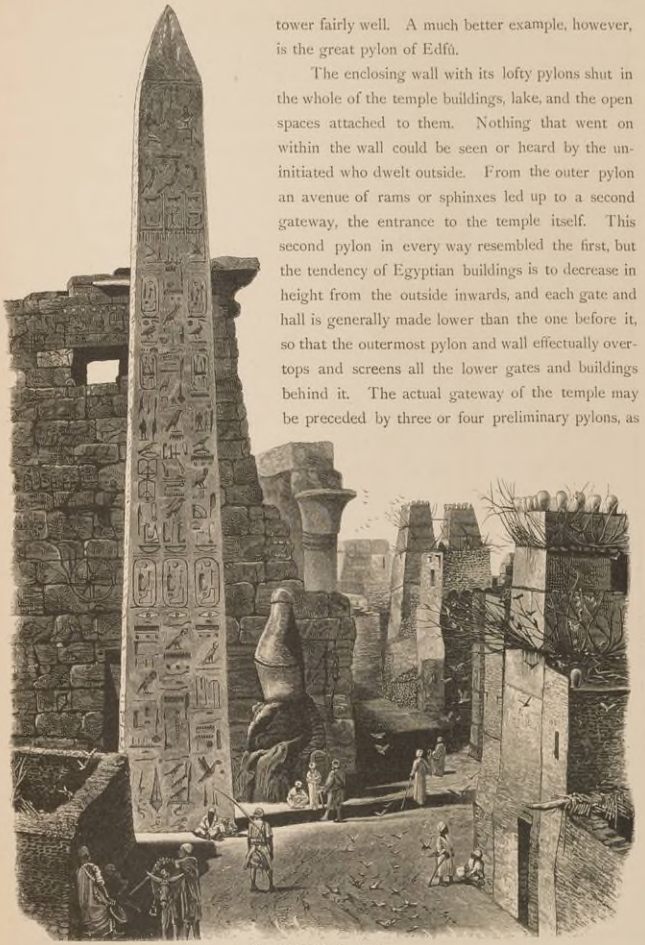
* Mariette, *apud* Perrot and Chipiez, "History of Ancient Egyptian Art," vol. i. page 435, English translation by W. Armstrong. 1883.

THE MOSQUE OF LUXOR.
Ornamented in black upon a white-washed ground in the manner characteristic of Upper Egypt.

at the present day. In most cases the wall of enclosure is gone, and the interior of the temple is exposed to view. At Karnak, the vast vallum which surrounds the ruins shows how massive this crude brick wall must have been. The recent excavations at Pithom show that the wall of that strong city was twenty-four feet thick, and this measure is doubtless but a moderate one, for the vallum at Karnak is thirty-three feet. These massive outer walls were proportionately high, and were crowned with a crenelated parapet. At certain places they were pierced with gates, and here the wall rose into one of those lofty gateways which are known as *pylons*, *i.e.* a high entrance between two towers, slightly tapered, with flagstaffs in front of them, and all their surface covered over with sculptures. An example of a rather plain and defaced pylon (of the temple of Khons, at Karnak) may be seen in the cut on page 448, where the Ptolemaic gate in the foreground has lost its twin towers, but that behind shows the left-hand tapered

tower fairly well. A much better example, however, is the great pylon of Edfû.

The enclosing wall with its lofty pylons shut in the whole of the temple buildings, lake, and the open spaces attached to them. Nothing that went on within the wall could be seen or heard by the uninitiated who dwelt outside. From the outer pylon an avenue of rams or sphinxes led up to a second gateway, the entrance to the temple itself. This second pylon in every way resembled the first, but the tendency of Egyptian buildings is to decrease in height from the outside inwards, and each gate and hall is generally made lower than the one before it, so that the outermost pylon and wall effectually overtops and screens all the lower gates and buildings behind it. The actual gateway of the temple may be preceded by three or four preliminary pylons, as



THE OBELISK OF LUXOR.
The hieroglyphics are cleanly and deeply cut in the red granite. The fellow of this monolith has been carried away to Paris, and set up in the Place de la Concorde.

was the case at Karnak and Luxor, and, in front of these, obelisks and colossi may be arranged in pairs; but the essential character of the arrangement is the *dromos* or avenue leading from the outer gate to the temple door.

Arrived at the temple itself we are met by another screen. The whole of the building is enclosed by an inner wall, nearly as high as the highest part of the temple, and sometimes adorned, like the pylons, with sculptured scenes. From outside, the temple, when entire, must have presented very much the appearance of a box without a lid. The engraving of Edfû, page 456, shows something of this enclosing wall, springing from the immense pylon and running round the whole of the interior structures, leaving an open corridor between itself and the walls of the rearward halls. Passing through the single pylon which admits us within this second screen, we find ourselves in what is called the peristyle, that is to say, a large court open in the centre, but surrounded by a narrow cloister supported by a single or double row of columns. From the peristyle we pass by another but lower pylon, often guarded by a pair of sitting colossi or obelisks or both, into the hypostyle, or hall of assembly, which was originally roofed with immense stone slabs, painted with stars in gold upon a blue ground, supported upon a forest of gigantic columns. Such a hypostyle is the famous "Hall of Columns" of the great temple of Karnak, of which portions are shown on pages 449, 450, and 451. It is the largest hall in Egypt (three hundred and forty by one hundred and seventy feet, and in the centre seventy-six feet high), and its one hundred and thirty-four columns are among the wonders of the world. Twelve of them, forming a central avenue, are thirty-three feet in circumference, or as bulky as Trajan's column, and a hundred men could sit on their enormous bell-shaped capitals. The one hundred and twenty-two side columns are shorter, and form aisles, above which the central nave projects with a kind of clerestory of grated stone windows. It is said that the entire cathedral of Notre-Dame at Paris could stand upon the ground occupied by this one hall at Karnak.

Behind the hypostyle, and sometimes separated from it by an open vestibule, with obelisks and colossi, is the sanctuary, the holy of holies, where the emblem of the god was kept in a monolithic shrine; and round the sanctuary itself are the treasure-chambers, robing-rooms, and laboratories for the manufacture of incense and other necessaries of the temple rites, while beneath are sometimes crypts where the most precious and sacred of the treasures were doubtless concealed. The crypts at Dendarah, for example, consist of long and narrow passages with beautifully preserved wall-paintings. The entrance, from the floor of one of the side chambers which surround the sanctuary, was probably concealed by a movable stone like that which figures in the story of the Treasury of Rampsinitus.

Thus the principal parts of an Egyptian temple are jealously secluding walls, an avenue of sphinxes, an outer and an inner gate or gates, an open court with cloisters, a covered hall of columns, and a sanctuary surrounded by small chambers. There are no dwelling-places or cells for the priests, nor is there accommodation within the hypostyle hall or sanctuary for a congregation of worshippers. But indeed the public were never admitted into the sacreder

portions of the temple. On great high days and festivals certain privileged persons might be allowed to view the processions from the open or even the hypostyle court. But the Egyptian temple is not calculated for the use of crowds. The procession passing from the sanctuary down the chief avenue of the hypostyle hall would be but imperfectly seen by people at the sides, where the forest of columns would shut out most of the spectacle. "The hypostyle hall was lofty and wide in order that it might be a vestibule worthy of the god who dwelt in the sanctuary beyond it, and in order that it might bear witness to the piety, wealth, and power of the king who constructed it. It offered no place in which the faithful could assemble to listen to religious discourses, to unite in the expression of their faith and hope, to sing and pray in common. In virtue of the sanctuary which was its nucleus, the temple was the dwelling of the god, the terrestrial resting-place to which the king, his son and the nursling of the goddesses, came to offer him thanks and to do homage in return for the protection and support which he received. The temple was also, in virtue of those numerous chambers which surrounded the sanctuary, a place for the preparation, consecration, and preservation of holy objects: a huge sacristy to which access was forbidden to all but those who were specially attached to the service of the god and charged with the custody of the sacred furniture. Such being the origin and purpose of the temple, we need feel no surprise at the triple fortification behind which it was entrenched. This fortification consisted, in the first place, of the brick wall which formed the outermost enclosure; secondly, of the wall of masonry which embraced the temple proper, leaving a narrow passage only wide enough for the walk of a sentry; thirdly, of a wall which divided the really sacred parts of the building from the pronaos [or hypostyle hall]. Now that the line of the external wall is only indicated by a gentle swell of the ground, now that the best preserved of the inner walls are broken down in many places [Edfû excepted], and now that the roofs and ceilings have fallen and encumbered the floors, it is difficult enough to form a true idea of the former appearance of the Egyptian temples. Could we see them as they left their architects' hands, we should be struck by the jealous severity of their isolation, by the austere monotony of the screen of stone which was interposed between the eyes of the people and the internal splendours of the building. In this we should find the chief point of distinction between the temples of Egypt and those great religious edifices of our own times, with which we half involuntarily compare all other works of the kind." *

When we come to apply these generalisations to the immense assemblage of buildings known as Luxor and Karnak, we shall find some difficulty in identifying the various parts of the temple. At Luxor this difficulty is enhanced by the fact that the temple is half buried in a village, mud huts are huddled together within the vistas of columns, cocks crow and cattle are stalled in the sanctuary, while the picturesque black and white decoration of a simple mosque stands out against the sky not far from the beautiful obelisk of red granite whose fellow has been carried away to the Place de la Concorde at Paris. It is not easy at first sight to

* Perrot and Chipiez, English translation, pages 439, 440.

realise that the hospitable abode of Mustafa Agha, the British vice-consul, with its flags, its French carpet, its chair and divans, its photographs and cheap prints, is actually built among the enormous columns of the grand colonnade which connected the first peristyle hall of Rameses II. with the temple of Amenoph III.; that the French consulate is built over the most sacred parts of this temple; and that the whole line of buildings that fringe the bank are interwoven into the ruins of one of the most splendid monuments of Egypt.

Part of the chief pylon of this double temple is seen in the cut on page 443, with the remaining obelisk and one of the colossi, buried almost up to his shoulders. A column of the great peristyle court of Rameses II. is seen beyond, and some of the mud hovels which (together with the mosque shown on page 442, and in the steel engraving facing page 445) encumber the building. Behind this court is the anomalous colonnade, peristyle court, and sanctuary and surrounding chambers of the original structure built by Amenoph III., as may be seen in the steel engraving, where the great colonnade is above the large sail of the boat in the foreground, and the peristyle hall of Amenoph III. over the dahabiyeh which is moored to the bank, while to the left is seen the minaret of the mosque which stands upon the peristyle court of Rameses II., and still further the pylon and the widowed obelisk which also appear in the woodcut. The temple of Luxor is the work of only two monarchs, Amenoph III. and Rameses II., and is therefore comparatively simple. When the mud huts are cleared away, an excellent work which M. Maspero is now attempting, the whole plan will appear coherent and complete. The curious bend in the axis of the temple, however, and the unexplained colonnade, will still form subjects for speculation, while the wall-pictures at present hidden by the village may be expected to furnish a mass of important historical material.

A long *dromos* or paved causeway, bordered by an avenue of sphinxes, leads from the great pylon of Luxor to Karnak. It is two thousand two hundred yards long, and seventy-six feet broad, and there must have been five hundred sphinxes on each side of it. Most of them are now destroyed, but enough remains to show that for part of the way there were woman-headed sphinxes, and that the rest were rams. This causeway leads up to the beautiful gate of Ptolemy Euergetes, which forms the propylon to the temple of Khons, the pylon of which is seen through it in the cut (page 448). The temple of Khons, however, built by Rameses III., and that of Euergetes beside it, are only two of the eleven temples included in the Karnak group; and the great temple, in the erection of which so many kings united, is some distance further north, and looks in a different direction. The first view of Karnak is rendered all the more confused and perplexing by the circumstance that most of the temples face different points of the compass. The great temple, indeed, faces the west, *i.e.* the Nile, as it should, and as most other temples do. But the subsidiary temple of Khons faces south, while the temple of Mout looks to the north. There is, however, a reason for these positions. The temple of Khons looks towards the south because that is the direction of Luxor, with which it is connected by the long avenue of sphinxes. The temple of Mout,

on the other hand, faces north, because that is the direction of the great temple of Amen-

NICHE IN AN ANCIENT CHRISTIAN CHURCH, LUXOR.
Part of the Temple of Amenoph III. converted into a church. Frescoes, of some pretensions to artistic merit, half cover the ancient bas-reliefs; and the figures of Egyptian gods mingle eccentrically with the aureoles of Christian saints.

Ra, whither an avenue of colossal statues and huge pylons conducted the priestly processions.

THE GATE OF PTOLEMY EUERGETES, KARNAK.

Showing the pylon of the Temple of Khons beyond. An avenue of rams leads up to this beautiful gate, which is the most graceful of all the structures at Karnak.

The variety of aspect is only one of the many obstacles to a clear understanding of Karnak.

THE SMALLER OBELISK OF KARNAK.

Belonging to the pylon of Thothmes I. The fragments of a fellow obelisk strew the ground. Behind is seen the central avenue of the Hall of Columns, and the clerestory windows are shown at the left-hand side.

To look at the exquisite maps and plans in MM. Perrot and Chipiez's delightful "History of Ancient Egyptian Art," which Mr. W. Armstrong has judiciously translated into English, one would imagine that, guide-book in hand, one could find one's way without difficulty from one temple to another and identify with certainty every part. It is not too much to say that months of serious study are needed before one can know Karnak even superficially. The general impression produced upon the chance visitor is more easily understood by a glance at the steel engraving (facing page 452). This represents the great temple of Amen-Ra from its first pylon to the sanctuary; the hall of Thothmes behind is not included for lack of space. We are standing with our backs to the temple of Mout, looking north. In front is the sacred lake;

THE LEANING COLUMN, KARNAK.

In one of the side aisles of the Hall of Columns. The base is worn and the foundations undermined by the Nile, which at the inundation rises some six feet above the level of the floor.

at the left we see a glimpse of the Nile, with the Libyan hills beyond. The first pylon is clearly seen next to the palm-trees, with its holes for the wooden brackets to which the flagstaffs

GRAND COLUMN OF KARNAK.
At the west entrance to the Hall of Columns. The central avenue is here seen from the opposite end to that shown in the engraving on page 449.

were fastened. This pylon is one hundred and forty feet high and three hundred and seventy feet broad. Before it stood granite colossi, now hurled down, defaced, and buried in the sand. Between this and the second pylon, which is indicated by a jutting piece of masonry

in the engraving, stretches the great peristylar court (two hundred and seventy-four feet by three hundred and twenty-nine feet), with a colonnade at each side and a double row of columns down the middle, of all which very little remains. A small temple (of Rameses III.) projects through the south wall (towards the spectator in the engraving), and another, of Seti II., stands in the north-west corner of the court. The ruined second pylon leads into the famous "Hall of Columns," several of which are seen in the centre of the engraving, while special points of view are shown on pages 449—551. This is really the only approximately complete part of the Great Temple; and even here the roof is off, the columns are partly fallen, and the grated windows of the clerestory are broken in. Beyond the Hall of Columns —which, to be seen to advantage, should be viewed on a fine moonlit night, when the strong contrasts of light and shade give distance to what is in sunlight an overcrowded vista—is a wilderness of ruins, representing a hall of Osiride figures, the sanctuary, and surrounding chambers; while further back is what remains of the temple of Thothmes III., containing various indistinguishable divisions. Amid this chaos are the obelisks, two upright and two fallen, the shorter ones bearing the name of Thothmes I., and the taller (indeed the tallest known—one hundred and nine feet) that of Hatasu, his daughter, the builder of Deyr El-Bahry. Round about are the remnants of the Osiride court, the granite sanctuary, and the so-called proto-Doric columns of Osirtasen I. (Twelfth Dynasty) behind it. As one stands amid the wilderness of fallen stones, broken obelisks, mutilated statues, the single emotion is wonder, not so much at how these huge buildings were set up, but how they came to be thus destroyed. Nothing short of a terrific earthquake, one would say, could have overthrown Karnak; yet the slow and irresistible sapping of the foundations by the Nile may account for a great deal of the ruin. The brown river-stained bases of the columns in the great hall warn us that the time may come when even what remains of Karnak may be overturned.

In spite of its ruined state, Karnak presents many exceedingly interesting wall-pictures. In one place we see Seti I. making war upon the nations of Asia, compelling the Armenians to cut down their forests in their conqueror's behoof, driving his chariot among the fleeing Shasu, or Bedouins, showering his arrows upon the Kharo, dragging home in triumph the prisoners taken in his campaign against the Assyrians, warring with the Khetas (Hittites), and holding the captives of all nations by the hair of their heads while he offers them as victims to Amen-Ra. In another place is the famous epic of Pentaur, with Rameses charging the foe single-handed: and on the outside of the south wall of the Hall of Columns is depicted the campaign of the "Shishak" of the Bible against Palestine. Shishak appears about to slay a row of suppliant prisoners, and behind is the long series of the Levite cities, each represented by a man hidden, all but his head, behind a cartouche containing the name of the place. It was believed by Champollion that one of these heads stood for Jeroboam, but later researches make this more than doubtful. The list of cities and Rameses' treaty with the Hittites are, however, alone enough to show the high importance of these sculptures. The walls of Karnak, indeed, even more than those of most temples, form an historical library of priceless value and interest.


THE GREAT TEMPLE AT KARNAK.

THE NILE, FROM LUXOR.

The two women in the foreground wear the ordinary black *burka* or veil, joined to the head-dress by a piece of cane placed between the eyes.

THE DÔM PALM.
Groups of these eccentric-looking trees form a characteristic feature of the scenery of Upper Egypt. They are not found south of the Thebaïd.

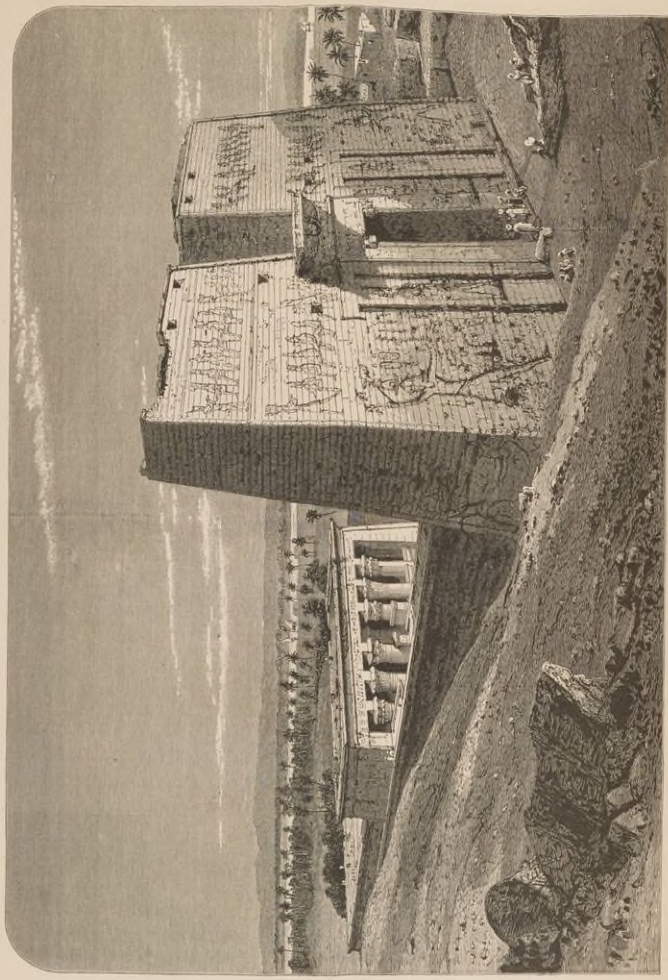
# EDFÛ AND PHILÆ.

ABOVE Thebes the hills again close upon the river and the valley resumes its narrow aspect. Indeed for the greater part of the way from Thebes to the First Cataract, and throughout Nubia, the hills hedge in the Nile so closely that there is scarcely room for any cultivation. Instead of the green plain one sees at Asyût or Abydos or Thebes, the upper valley of the Nile consists in a mere ribbon of vegetation, and often nothing beyond the sloping bank itself is cultivated. For miles a strip of green a yard wide and a fringe of palms behind form the sole relief to the brown mountain background, and it would be easy, one would think, to become the owner of a degree of latitude hereabouts for a trifling consideration. Egypt, in fact, can hardly be said to exist in the upper course of the Nile. Instead of the frequent villages that met the eye every half-hour in the voyage below Thebes, a whole morning may be passed on the steamer's deck above Thebes without the sight of a human habitation. There is no land to cultivate and consequently no means of supporting a population. Here and there a shadûf may be seen at work, but the incessant toil of the handsome brown figures that work it is ill repaid by the meagre vegetation that springs up in scanty patches near the machine. A narrow streak of brown river, running between banks of rugged and precipitous hills, and encouraging only at very rare intervals the growth of sparse crops and the settlement of a sparse population—such is Egypt above Thebes.

The change from the fertile and populous plains of the lower Nile to the barren valley

above is, however, a gradual one. At first some prosperous towns appear to promise a repetition of the scenery below Thebes. Erment, the first important place on the voyage up, consists of a long row of sugar factories, with many high square tapered chimneys, which, if they had but pointed tops and inscriptions on their sides, might be mistaken for obelisks by the unprejudiced eye. A neighbouring temple was lucklessly used in their building. Then Mutaneh is passed, a European-looking little town, with well-built but incongruous verandahed and terraced and French-windowed houses, overtopped by two huge chimneys, which interrupt a very beautiful bend of the Nile terminating in the curious detached hills known as the Gebeleyn. A little higher up, thirty-five miles above Luxor, is Esnê, an important place, and the capital of a wide-spread province. Dyeing blue cloth seems the main business here, and the market-place and streets are adorned with long pieces of blue stuff hanging to dry on ropes stretched overhead. Weaving is also done here, and coppersmiths ply their trade, while there is a good deal of business carried on with the Sûdân. Esnê has a look of affluence about it; it is unusually clean, well built, and prosperous. Some of its houses are really comfortable-looking, and its mosques, though simple, are not unpleasing, with the characteristic black-and-white decoration of the upper country. In one of them, however, beside a glaringly painted pulpit, stands a tall eight-day kitchen clock, in absurd incongruity. Beyond the market, buried up to its roof in the accretions of the modern town, is the temple, of which nothing can now be seen but the portico, with its richly carved bell-shaped capitals of the Roman period and the zodiacal ceiling, and some poor sculptures of Ptolemaic times within.

Thirty-two miles above Esnê is the most perfect temple in Egypt, the temple dedicated to Horus at Edfû by Ptolemy Philopator, and continued by his successors. It is the twin temple with Dendarah, but is even more perfect. Until quite recent years it was buried in the modern village, but M. Mariette, with the sanction of the ex-Khedive, destroyed nearly a hundred huts, and set the temple free from its invaders. The lofty pylon (see next page) is a conspicuous feature of the scenery long before Edfû is reached, but after walking over the fields that separate the village from the Nile, crossing the plank that bridges the great canal, and threading the narrow, tortuous lanes of the village, we lose sight of the noble towers, and afterwards the view of the temple suddenly bursts upon us with a shock. The other temples of Egypt are either ruined or buried; in no single instance elsewhere can we see the temple in its original perfection, but here, at Edfû, the splendid building seems intact, perfect, complete as when its architects left it. Except the cornice, the immense pylon is entire; and its position, with a space cleared in front and at the sides, gives it a commanding aspect that no other gateway in Egypt possesses. It is not so high as the first pylon of the great temple at Karnak, but its wonderful preservation makes its hundred and twenty feet of height infinitely more imposing than the hundred and forty feet of its ruined rival. Two hundred and forty steps of a square staircase, with rooms opening out of it alternately on either side, lead up to the summit of each of the twin towers. The chambers and parapet walls at the top are covered with scrawls, not of modern English tourists, but of old travellers like Irby and Mangles, and of those



TEMPLE OF EDFÛ.

The towers of the great pylon are one hundred and twenty feet high, and in almost perfect preservation. The columns of the hypostyle hall are seen over the wall of enclosure, which springs from the pylon and runs round the whole building.

DOORWAY OF A SIDE CHAPEL OF THE TEMPLE OF EDFÛ.

After leaving this chapel the priestly procession ascended the winding stone staircase opposite, which conducts by a series of easy steps to the roof.

pre-eminent offenders, the officers of the French army under Desaix, who pursued the Memlûks beyond the Cataract, defaced Philæ, and on their return voyage tattooed the interior of Edfû with their obscure names and regiments and their impertinent "An VIII." It is curious that the chief defacers of Edfû should be of the same nation as its uncoverer.

From the top of the pylon we look down upon a wide and beautiful stretch of country, chiefly of desert, yet with a rich expanse of vividly green crops near the winding river, the grey mountains beyond, and almost under our feet the village of Edfû, a tangled mass of huts with tunnel-like roofs, or flat roofs covered with durah, and little yards in front, so closely packed and so irregular, that it is impossible to see where one little house ends and the next begins. Turning round, we look down upon the great court of the temple, surrounded by colonnades, with pillars of every form of capital. This is a place of broadest sunshine, but the hypostyle hall beyond, which is divided from the great court by an intercolumnar screen between the exquisite papyrus-flower pillars, is dim and shaded. A pylon and wall divide the hypostyle into two portions, somewhat to the detriment of the general effect, and behind is the sanctuary, wherein still stands unbroken a granite shrine cut out of a single block, which must originally have weighed sixty tons, in which the sacred hawk, symbol of Horus, was once jealously concealed. A passage runs round the sanctuary, and off this open a number of small and very dark chambers. Outside these again runs a wider corridor, forming a space between the peculiarly sacred portion of the temple and the enclosing wall, and ending in the great court. The whole of the surfaces of the walls on both sides of this passage, and indeed every column and every wall in the temple, are covered with sculptures. The general character of these designs is conventional, the same figures are repeated again and again, until the eye grows weary of the sight of a uniform king offering uniform gifts to uniform gods; and the tendency to making symmetrical counterparts of the two sides of a door or pylon is a sign of artistic decadence. Nevertheless, the effect of the lofty walls covered with sculptures, towering up on either hand as one walks round the great corridor, is singularly impressive, in spite of the mutilation which iconoclastic zeal has wrought upon the faces of the divinities. The pictures of boats—one with an exquisitely carved sail, in which the king stands, harpoon in hand, to strike the hippopotamus (drawn relatively about the size of a guinea pig) which his men have enmeshed in their ropes—are especially vivid and dramatic.

We find here none of those great battle scenes which delighted the soul of Rameses, no epic poems like Pentaur's, but chiefly the rites of religion and the interviews between gods and kings. There is, however, a remarkable scientific value in the sculptures of Edfû. There are here "more inscriptions of a miscellaneous character than in any temple of Egypt, and it is precisely this secular information that is to us so priceless. Here are geographical lists of Nubian and Egyptian nomes, with their principal cities, their products, and their tutelary gods; lists of tributary provinces and princes; lists of temples, and of the lands pertaining thereunto; lists of canals, of ports, of lakes; calendars of feasts and fasts; astronomical tables; genealogies and chronologies of the gods; lists of the priests and priestesses of both Edfû and Dendarah, with

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PHILÆ.

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their names; lists also of singers and assistant functionaries; lists of offerings, hymns, invocations; and such a profusion of religious legends as make of the walls of Edfû alone a complete text-book of Egyptian mythology."*

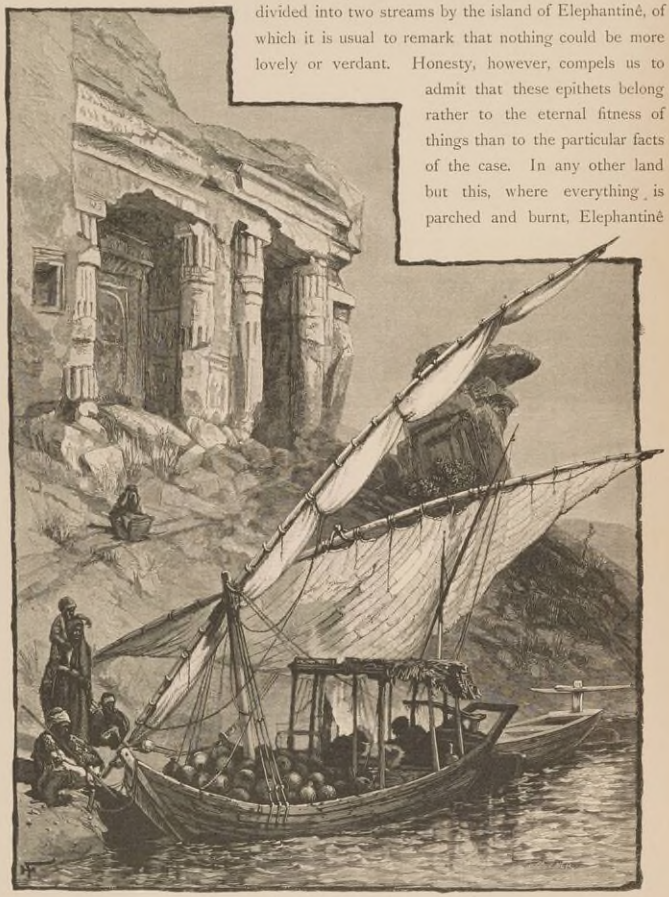
Just as at Dendarah, a side chapel of the star Sirius (see page 457), with strangely painted ceiling, opens out of the chamber on the right of the sanctuary; and close by, a winding staircase of deliciously graduated ascent, whose walls are decorated with a representation of an ascending procession, leads up to the roof, where are some curious chambers, and one queer little room in the thickness of the roof, entered from above, and closed by a heavy stone which rolled away into an adjoining recess. A straight staircase, with pictures of a descending procession, leads down to the opposite side of the sanctuary to that by which the ascent is made. Even the paving of the courts and passages is perfect.

From every point of view the temple of Edfû is magnificent, whether, standing on the steps that lead down from the modern to the old level, one looks up at the smooth creamy walls of the towering pylon, or, sitting under the colonnade of the great court, one surveys the dark entrance of the hypostyle hall, separated from the court by the low sculptured screen, like the choir of a cathedral, or wanders among the chambers round the sanctuary and along the paved corridor bounded by lofty sculptured walls. But perhaps the view which most delights the artist's eye is that which is obtained from near the entrance to the sanctuary. Overhead rise the columns of the hypostyle hall; in front, through a deeply shaded vista of columns and portals, appears the great court gleaming in the sunshine, and through the gateway of the mighty pylon which closes the view a vision of the outer world gives life to the scene. Peasant women in their dark blue gowns and brown-clad villagers throng the steps before the pylon, armed with the inevitable "antikas" and fruit of the dôm palm and other traps for the unwary traveller. We can forgive them their importunities for the sake of the life and colour they give to a scene which without the relief they afford would be almost overpowering in its stately grandeur.

Above Edfû is the gorge called Gebel-es-Silsileh, or Hill of the Chain, because it is fabled that a king once barred the river here with a chain. The Nile has here burst through a strong sandstone barrier, and the scene is a striking one, especially when viewed from the south side. The rocks on either hand, honeycombed with quarries and grottoes of the time of the great Theban dynasties (see page 460), are not high, but their outlines are bold, and the view looking backwards from the broadened river to the narrow mouth (scarcely eleven hundred feet wide) through which the Nile has forced its way, is very picturesque. Above Silsileh the valley becomes a mere ribbon, and the verdure has almost wholly disappeared. The Ptolemaic temple of Kom Ombo (see pages 461, 463) stands out finely upon the eastern bank, over which it is gradually falling in a cascade of masonry, and a little vegetation and even a tiny garden near the temple give colour to the otherwise monotonous scene. Presently the appearance of black rocks jutting out of the river on all sides shows we are approaching the

* Miss Amelia B. Edwards, "One Thousand Miles up the Nile."

great granite barrier that separates Egypt from Nubia, and nearing Aswân, the southernmost town of Egypt. Before Aswân is reached the Nile is divided into two streams by the island of Elephantinê, of which it is usual to remark that nothing could be more lovely or verdant. Honesty, however, compels us to admit that these epithets belong rather to the eternal fitness of things than to the particular facts of the case. In any other land but this, where everything is parched and burnt, Elephantinê



ROCK TOMBS AT GEBEL-ES-SILSILEH.

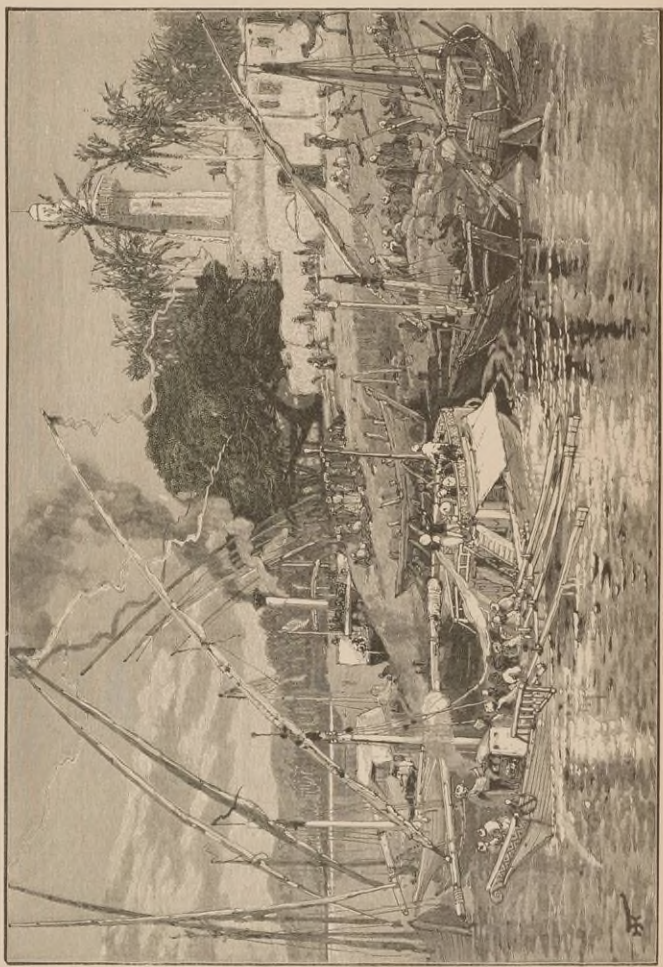
At this point the Nile is scarcely eleven hundred feet wide. The rocky barrier through which the river has forced its way is honeycombed with grottoes of the time of the great Theban dynasties.

would be called a barren brown baked little island, saved from decided ugliness by a few patches of green and a picturesque belt of palms (see pages 464 and 465). In Egypt, however, it is difficult for the traveller to preserve his mental balance and judge unromantically, and Elephantinê has acquired a factitious charm by a sort of reflected enthusiasm.

Aswân lies very picturesquely on the slope of a hill backed by rocks. On the arrival of any boat the bank is always lined with people selling baskets, kurbâjes or whips made of hippopotamus hide, shells, "Madame Nubias"—*i.e.* fringe girdles which form a Nubian girl's sole garment, well soaked in castor-oil—grass fans, silver and glass ornaments, and the other goods of the Sûdân and southern regions. Behind are a few white buildings, with a grove of trees at the end (see next page). Fighting our way through a crowd of donkeys and camels, and

DISTANT VIEW OF KOM OMBO.
The fine Ptolemaic temple stands out boldly on the edge of the cliff, over which it is gradually falling in a cascade of white masonry.

passing under two magnificent *lebbekh*-trees—great spreading acacias with yellow pods hanging down—we enter a narrow lane, under an archway, and avoiding the mosque, with its plain white minaret, turn suddenly round a sharp angle to the left and find ourselves in the principal, indeed the only, bazaar. It is a long covered lane, about eight feet wide, lined on both sides all along with little shops of the old-fashioned Eastern type, about six feet square, with a carpeted stone seat projecting in front on which the would-be purchaser sits while conducting his bargains. The first sight the eye encounters is one of these cupboard-like recesses, with a sly-looking, blear-eyed merchant sitting in it, smoking a cigarette and surrounded by ostrich-feathers (probably sent up from Cairo to meet the deluded traveller), a tray of curiosities—a few scarabs, shell necklaces, silver rings and bracelets of native make (and others from Europe), pieces of carved or turned ivory, a tusk or two, and a row of kurbâjes, ebony clubs, and the



ASWÂN, THE SYENE OF JUVENAL.

The chief entrance to the town is between the two noble *tebbeh*-trees to the left of the minaret, and opposite the landing-place for steamers. *Dahabiyehs* moor higher up, as is shown in the foreground.

stout sticks called nebbûts. Opposite him is another suspicious-looking trader buried in a cloud of ostrich feathers; then half a dozen more little shops, all alike, with the same feathers, kurbâjes, leopard skins, ebony, ivory, shells, and "Madame Nubias;" and the same system of haggling. Further along the bazaar a new order of goods appears; shawls and kerchiefs and cotton stuffs of all kinds—and all from Manchester—fill every shop. Aswân is full of English manufactures, and half the ornaments of the inhabitants are made at Birmingham! Then a fresh complexion comes over the market, and nothing but red slippers is to be seen on every side, till these give place to baskets of the well-known Nubian pattern, but, alas! in process of

TEMPLE OF KOM OMBO.
Half buried in sand-drifts, and half fallen over the river bank, the temple of Kom Ombo is one of the loneliest and, at a distance, the most impressive of the smaller shrines of Egypt.

degradation by aniline dyes. Here and there a shop is filled by the red-and-black earthenware of the country, but neither so abundant nor so well made as at Asyût. A large recess halfway down the bazaar is reserved for the local barber, who operates in public, and reduces the curly locks of his clients to one frizzy tuft on the top of their heads, and sometimes a frizzly fringe over the brow. The mixed crowd in the bazaar of Aswân—of all shades of brown, from the Egyptian red brown to the Sûdân black—is not easily forgotten. It is the most picturesque and, but for Manchester goods and magenta, the least contaminated mart in Egypt.

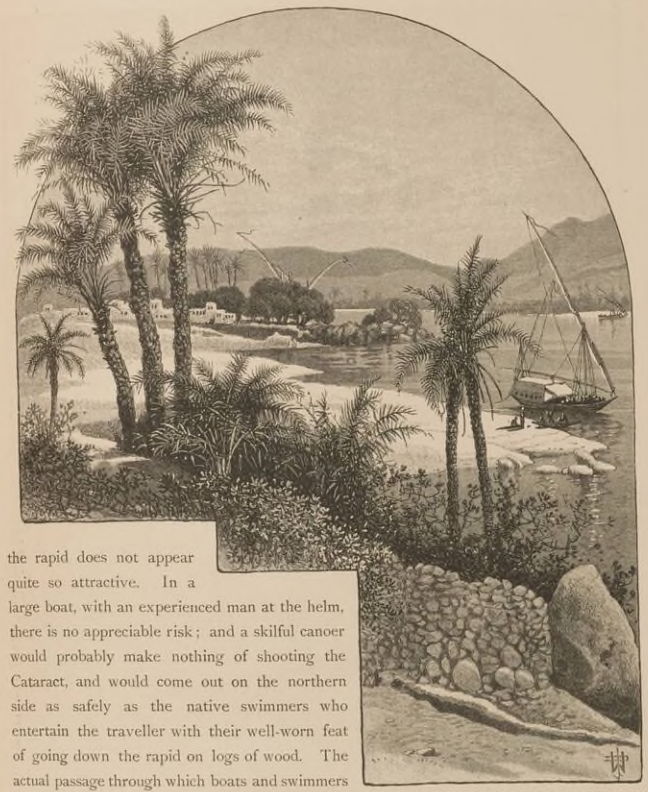
Aswân lies just below the First Cataract. In spite of travellers' tales, this famous rapid is no Niagara, but merely an exaggerated Thames lasher. The whole breadth of the river is

here choked up by black rocks, which jut out of the stream in every direction and in every variety of form. Between, around, and over them the river eddies and foams; not fiercely,

ON THE ISLAND OF ELEPHANTINÊ.
A large number of potsherds, inscribed with interesting Coptic and Demotic temple records, are constantly picked up on the island by the natives, who drive a profitable trade in these valuable archives.

however, but in a quiet, monotonous, persistent manner. The fall is both slight and gradual, and there is nothing resembling a cascade, so that one is tempted to fancy that the descent

of the cataract cannot be dangerous; but the stream is very swift and strong, the black rocks bristle on all sides, the backcurrents and underpull are problematical, and, on second thoughts,



LOOKING NORTH FROM THE ISLAND OF ELEPHANTINÊ.
At Aswân the inhabitants are still mainly of the Egyptian type, but at Elephantinê the population is wholly Nubian.

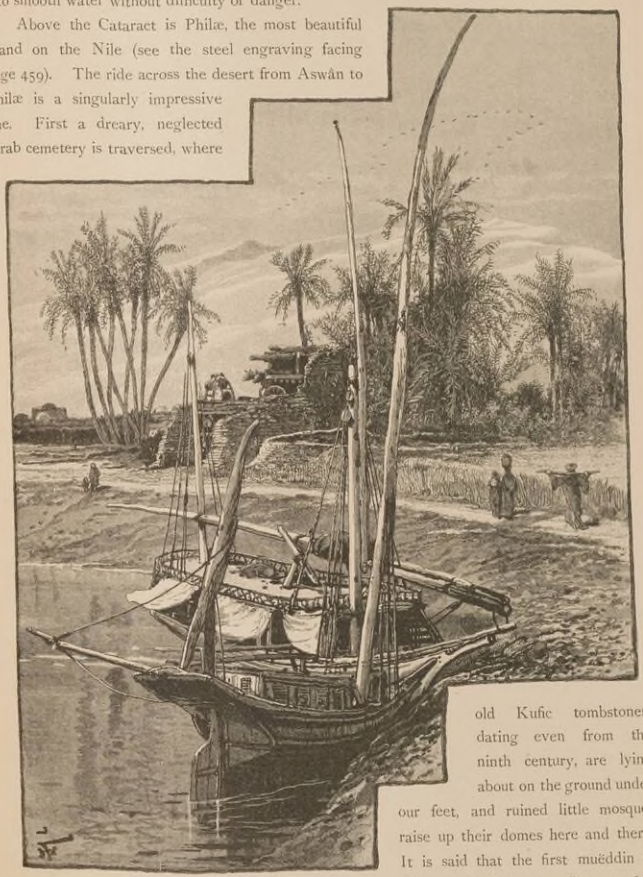
the rapid does not appear quite so attractive. In a large boat, with an experienced man at the helm, there is no appreciable risk; and a skilful canoer would probably make nothing of shooting the Cataract, and would come out on the northern side as safely as the native swimmers who entertain the traveller with their well-worn feat of going down the rapid on logs of wood. The actual passage through which boats and swimmers shoot the cataract is a sort of millrace, perhaps two hundred feet long and rather narrow, bounded on either side by steep but not very high rocks. The stream runs down it pretty fast, and there is a fine curly crest near the bottom, where currents meet; but with the boat's nose

GENERAL VIEW OF PHILÆ, TAKEN FROM BIBBEH.

In the great temple in the centre of the view the Sacred College still celebrated the mysteries of Isis and Osiris so late as A.D. 453, and thus for sixty-four years resisted the forcible conversion of Egypt to Christianity which followed the edict of Theodosius.

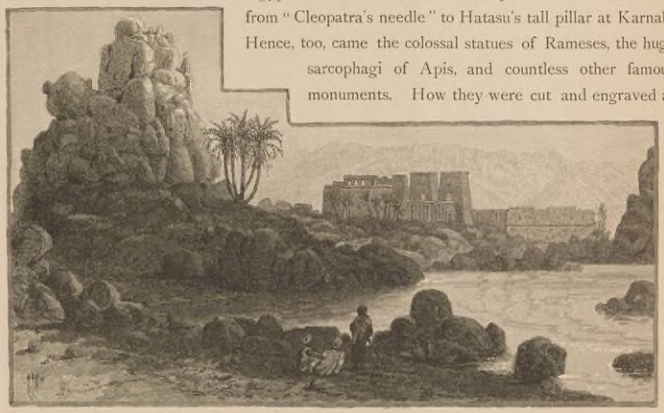
straight and the helm put up sharp at the right moment, the craft shoots round the corner into smooth water without difficulty or danger.

Above the Cataract is Philæ, the most beautiful island on the Nile (see the steel engraving facing page 459). The ride across the desert from Aswân to Philæ is a singularly impressive one. First a dreary, neglected Arab cemetery is traversed, where old Kufic tombstones, dating even from the ninth century, are lying about on the ground under our feet, and ruined little mosques raise up their domes here and there. It is said that the first muëddin of Islam was buried here. Then we find ourselves amid strange and weird



MAHATTAH, NEAR PHILÆ, ON THE NILE.
The home of many of the Shellâlis or boatmen of the Cataract.

scenery. We ride over miles of bare desert, with nothing to vary its yellow surface but huge torn masses of granite and black syenite. Immense jagged volcanic rocks tower up on either hand, and seem to have been intentionally thrown into the most impossible positions, balanced upon one another in the most hazardous way, and broken and split and thrown together in the strangest and weirdest shapes and combinations. It is one of the most extraordinary scenes in Egypt, and its historical associations are scarcely less wonderful. For it was here that the masons of Memphis and Thebes and Heliopolis came to quarry the granite for the coating of the Third Pyramid, the Temple of the Sphinx, the obelisks, colossi, shrines and sanctuaries of the great temples at Thebes, and indeed for every monument in Egypt. We may still see what looks like an obelisk half cut out of the rock and then abandoned. Every obelisk in Egypt was cut out of the solid rock just in the same manner, from "Cleopatra's needle" to Hatasu's tall pillar at Karnak. Hence, too, came the colossal statues of Rameses, the huge sarcophagi of Apis, and countless other famous monuments. How they were cut and engraved at



THE APPROACH TO PHILÆ.

"In the time of the Ptolemies visitors from all parts of Egypt, travellers from distant lands, court functionaries from Alexandria, came annually in crowds to pay their vows at the tomb of the god."

Aswân, and then floated down the river, and then rolled to the place where they were to stand, is one of the marvels of this marvellous antiquity.

At length we reach the river again; but now we are above the Cataract. A boat is ready and assistance is clamorously proffered, and we row across to Philæ. The approach to the island is very beautiful. On either hand great bare shining rocks, black and grey, tower against the sky, while between them, through an opening, appears the little island, with palms in the foreground, and the well-preserved pylon of the Temple of Isis rising out of the green. Philæ is green, however, only by comparison with the general brownness. There is really little verdure on the island, which is now wholly deserted; and it suffers from the same parched, barren aspect that is characteristic of all Upper Egypt. We cannot help missing the greenery

which we are accustomed to regard as a chief beauty in a landscape. If the heap of Coptic brick ruins that encumber the ground were cleared away, and the water of the Nile were once more applied to fertilize the island, Philæ would be incomparably more lovely. Its position is, indeed, almost unrivalled, and there is nothing in Philæ so beautiful as the view from the summit of the larger pylon. The girdling hills that bound the prospect on all sides, the sweep of placid water running under the palms, the savage rocks beyond, all lend an enchantment to the scene which the memories of the island's history serve to enhance.

Philæ does not indeed belong to the great days when a Thothmes or a Rameses conquered distant nations and commemorated his deeds on the walls of his temples. It is the work of Ptolemies and Cæsars. But its associations are more important than its architecture. "It shared with Abydos and some other places the reputation of being the burial-place of Osiris. It was called 'the Holy Island.' Its very soil was sacred. None might land upon its shores, or even approach them too nearly, without permission. To obtain that permission and perform the

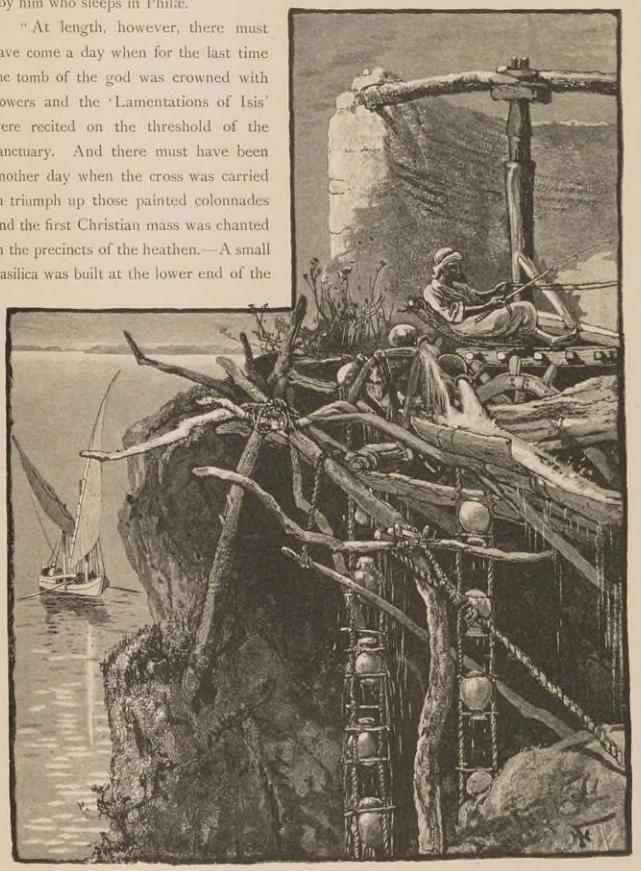
LOOKING SOUTH FROM PHILÆ.

HYPÆTHRAL TEMPLE AT PHILÆ.

Commonly known as "Pharaoh's Bed." One of the gems of Egypt, and exquisitely set.

pilgrimage to the tomb of the god, was to the pious Egyptian what the Mekka pilgrimage is to the pious Mussulman of to-day. The most solemn oath to which he could give utterance was 'By him who sleeps in Philæ.'

"At length, however, there must have come a day when for the last time the tomb of the god was crowned with flowers and the 'Lamentations of Isis' were recited on the threshold of the sanctuary. And there must have been another day when the cross was carried in triumph up those painted colonnades and the first Christian mass was chanted in the precincts of the heathen.—A small basilica was built at the lower end of the



NUBIAN WATER-WHEEL.
In Nubia these *sákiyehs* take the place of the *shadúfs* of Upper Egypt, and though they are costly to erect they effect a considerable saving of labour.

island, the portico of the great temple was converted into a chapel and dedicated to St. Stephen. 'This good work,' says a Greek inscription traced by some monkish hand of the period, 'was done by the well-beloved of God, the Abbot Bishop Theodore.'—The little basilica, we may be sure, had a cluster of mud huts upon the roof, and I fancy that the abbot and his monks installed themselves in that row of cells in the east side of the great colonnade, where the priests of Isis dwelt before them. As for the village, it must have been, like Luxor, swarming with dusky life, noisy with the babble of children, the cackling of poultry, and the barking of dogs, sending up thin pillars of blue smoke at noon, echoing to the measured chime of the prayer

THE TEMPLE OF ABOO SIMBEL, IN NUBIA.
The most wonderful of all the temples of Rameses the Great, excavated in the solid rock.

bell at morn and even, and sleeping at night as soundly as if no ghostlike mutilated gods were looking on mournfully in the moonlight. The gods are avenged now—the creed that dethroned them is dethroned. Abbot Theodore and his successors and the religion they taught and the simple folk that listened to their teaching are gone and forgotten. For the Church of Christ, which still languishes in Egypt, is extinct in Nubia. It lingered long, though doubtless in some such degraded and barbaric form as it wears in Abyssinia to this day. But it was absorbed by Islam at last, and only a ruined convent perched here and there upon some solitary height, or a few crosses rudely carved upon the walls of a Ptolemaic temple, remain to show that Christianity once passed that way." *

* Miss A. B. Edwards, "One Thousand Miles up the Nile," chap. xii.

# A MAP OF EGY


NEW YORK: D.


RANEAN SEA
PALESTINE
Gaza
Hebron
Kerak
Petra
Maan
ARABIA
WILDERNESS OF THE WANDERINGS
SINAI
GULF OF AKABAH
RED SEA
Jebel Mag
Jebel Arif
Jebel Madurah
Aqabah Fort
Dahab
Tor
Ras Mohammed
El Markadah
Jebel Gerdeh
34°
35°
36°
31°
30°
29°
28°

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