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H. FENN, PINX.

NABBUS, THE ANCIENT SHECHEM.

A. GRAUSSE, SCULPT.



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PICTURESQUE
PALESTINE,
SINAI AND EGYPT.



Well at Nazareth.

VOL. II.

LONDON, J. S. VIRTUE & CO. LIMITED



PICTURESQUE PALESTINE

SINAI AND EGYPT

EDITED BY

COLONEL SIR CHARLES W. WILSON

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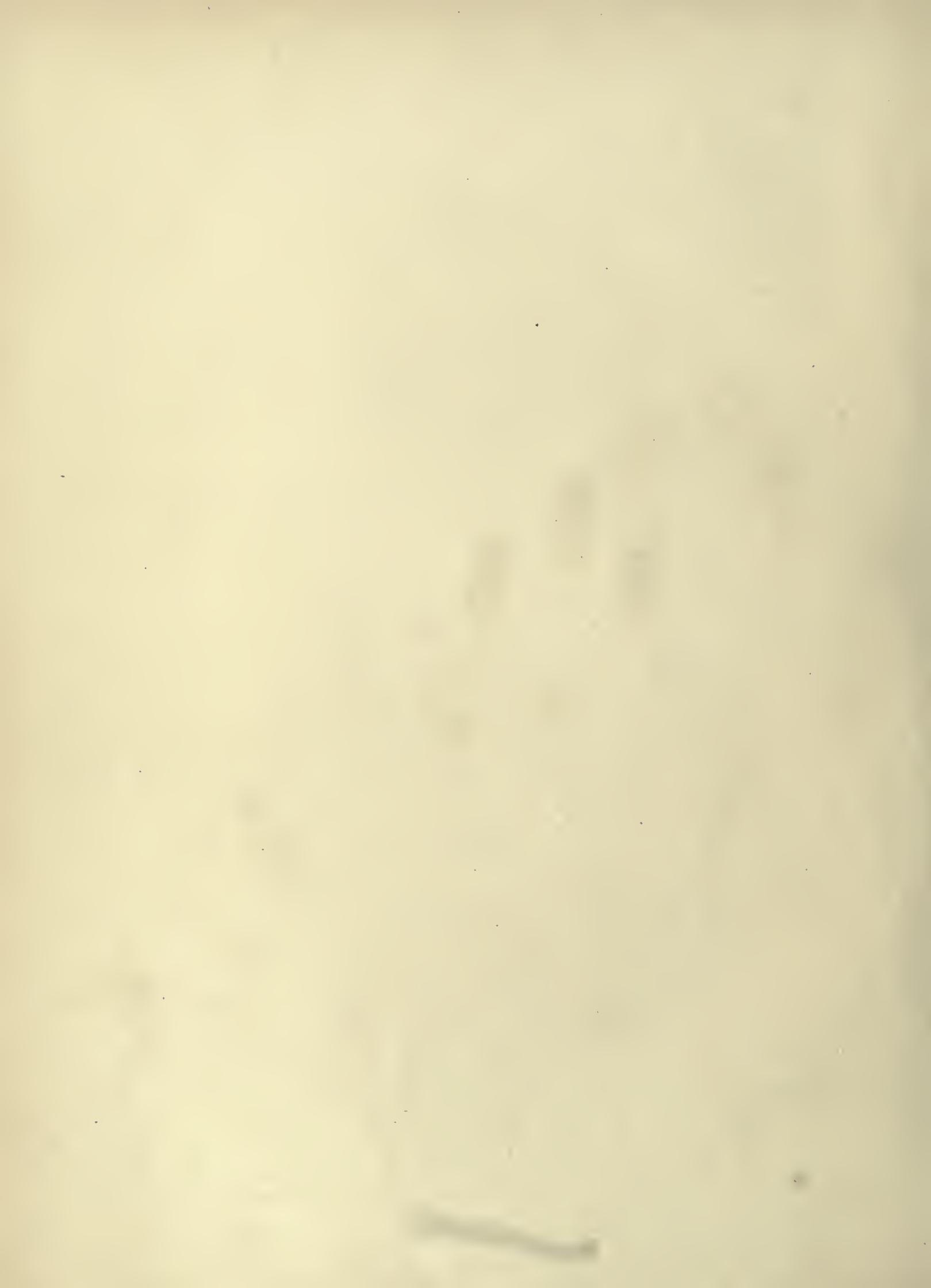
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SAMARIA

AND

PLAIN OF ESDRAELON.

THERE are few places even in Palestine in which, within so narrow a compass, so many interesting associations are centred,

or where the history of the past is so vividly illustrated, as in the narrow Vale of Shechem, which is formed by the near approach of the two terraced mountain ridges of Ebal and Gerizim; and certainly there is no spot throughout the Holy Land which can rival it in beauty.

All travellers, ancient and modern, speak in glowing terms of the peculiar loveliness of this valley, and many are the improvised songs which are sung in its praise, in the present day, in the pleasant gardens of Nâblus, by the Moslem successors of the Shechemites, who proudly quote their prophet Muhammed himself as an authority for saying that "it is the place beloved by Allah above all other places," and "His blessing rests upon it continually."

MOSLEM SANCTUARY AT THE ENTRANCE TO THE VALLEY OF SHECHEM.
The wild flowers represented are a peculiar kind of scabious, the *Scabiosa prolifera*, and a fine salvia, the *Eremostachys lacinata*.

And Shechem must have been regarded as a specially favoured and hallowed spot in patriarchal times. It was the first halting-place of Abraham after he had passed over the Jordan and entered the land of Canaan, and the first altar erected to Jehovah in the Promised Land was that which Abraham then built at the "place" of Shechem among the oak-trees of Moreh, where it is said "the Lord appeared unto him" (Gen. xii. 6, 7).

To this neighbourhood, and probably to the same camping ground, Jacob in after years was attracted. "And Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem" (Gen. xxxiii. 18). About three miles to the east of Shechem there is a little village called Sâlim. It is plentifully supplied with "living water" from two sources, one of which is called 'Ain Kebîr, the Great Fountain. Probably Sâlim is the modern representative of the city near to which John the Baptist found a convenient place for baptizing his disciples, "because there was much water there" (John iii. 23). This village, Sâlim, represented on page 237, vol. i., has also been pointed out as Shalem, the "city of Shechem" to which "Jacob came;" although the highest authorities among Hebrew scholars and annotators of the Bible agree that Shalem does not in this passage indicate the name of a place, but simply means "safe," like the Arabic word *sâlim*, and the verse should be read thus: "And Jacob came *safe* to the city of Shechem and pitched his tent before the city. And he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent, at the hand of Hamor the Hivite, prince of the country, for a hundred pieces of money." Here he dwelt with Leah and Rachel, and their handmaidens and men-servants and women-servants; his wealth, like that of a Bedouin chieftain of the present day, consisting of "flocks and herds and camels."

That the "parcel of ground" acquired by Jacob was situated at the eastern entrance to the Valley of Shechem (see page 237, vol. i.), where it widens and meets the Plain of Mukhnah, there seems to be very little doubt, for here, at the foot of Mount Gerizim, we find the deep and unquestionably ancient well which bears his name (see page 230, vol. i.), and a quarter of a mile to the north of it, exactly opposite Nâblus, the ancient Shechem, stands the traditional tomb of Joseph, Israel's beloved son. The illustration on page 231, vol. i., does not show the interior of the irregularly shaped little court which encloses the tomb, so a few words must be added in description of it. From the entrance, in the north wall, a narrow, irregular, and rudely paved path leads to a Moslem prayer niche in the south wall. In the south-west corner, at about five feet from the ground, there is a splay in which is formed a round-headed niche, in the direction of the site of the Samaritan temple on Mount Gerizim, the Kibleh of the Samaritans. On the east side of the path there is a raised daïs about seven inches high, for the use of devotees who come to rest, or read, or pray. Opposite to it on the west side of the path the tomb itself appears on a raised base. It is a clumsy-looking simple structure of stone and plaster, about three feet high and seven feet long, and as it is not parallel with the west wall, near to which it stands, the effect is very peculiar. The top terminates in a blunt-pointed ridge. At the head and the foot a rudely formed pillar of plastered stone is set up, about the same height as the tomb. These pillars are seven-

teen or eighteen inches in diameter, and resemble rude altars, their summits being slightly hollowed. In the shallow basins thus formed I have seen traces of fire, as if votive offerings had recently been burnt there. It is said that small objects, such as kerchiefs of embroidered muslin or silk shawls and other trifles, are occasionally sacrificed at this tomb by Jews. The burial of Joseph in Shechem is recorded in Joshua xxiv. 32, and the next verse states that "Eleazar the son of Aaron died; and they buried him in a hill that pertained to Phinehas his son, which was given him in Mount Ephraim."

About three miles and a half due south of Joseph's Tomb stands the picturesque and flourishing little village of 'Awertah, surrounded by extensive olive-groves and fig-orchards. Numerous rock-cut tombs, cisterns, and wine-presses, unused for centuries, prove 'Awertah to be a very ancient place. It is regarded with great veneration by Moslems, Jews, and Samaritans, for here, according to the Samaritan chronicle, are "the tombs of the holy priests Eleazar and Phinehas." 'Awertah was inhabited by the Samaritans until the seventh century of our era. It is now occupied exclusively by Moslems. They, however, not only guard the sacred tombs reverently and keep them in good repair, but willingly and with evident pride point them out to passing travellers. The traditional tomb of Phinehas (Kubr el 'Azeirat) is a rude structure of stone and plaster, about fourteen feet in length and seven and a half in breadth, with a high gabled top (see page 238, vol. i.). The tomb of Eleazar (El 'Azeir) is on a mound on the west side of the village, in a large paved court, in a corner of which there is a mosque dedicated to a Moslem sheikh. This tomb is eighteen feet three inches in length and fifteen feet and a half in breadth. A low stone wall immediately surrounds it, and a grand old terebinth-tree overshadows it. A large jar of coarse pottery is generally kept here, filled with water for the use of pilgrims (see page 4).

In nearly every mukâm, or shrine, held sacred by the Moslem, this welcome refreshment is provided either by endowment or by the dwellers in the neighbourhood, as a means of propitiating the goodwill of the saint or prophet to whom it is dedicated. On entering one of these sacred enclosures it is customary to say "Destûr ya Sheikh!" or "Destûr ya Neby!"—that is, "Permission, O Sheikh!" or, "Permission, O Prophet!" as the case may be.

Every village in Palestine has its sacred "place;" sometimes marked only by a heap of stones or by a venerable tree on which votive offerings are suspended, but more generally by a whitewashed structure of plaster and stone, surmounted by a dome (kubbeh), built over the grave of a famous chieftain or a revered "wely," that is, a Moslem saint—in which case the building itself is familiarly called a "wely." Similar structures are erected on spots connected with traditions relating to heroes and prophets and saints of old, including Pagans, Hebrews, Samaritans, and Christians. A building of this kind is called in Arabic a "mukâm;" that is, a station, literally a "place," like the corresponding Hebrew word "makom."

Local traditions thus preserved, have in many instances assisted explorers in the recovery of Biblical sites. The entrance to these sacred enclosures is rarely provided with a door, and yet peasants often deposit their ploughs and other implements and tools within a mukâm, or

wely, or even outside it, close to the walls, and leave them with perfect confidence under the protection of the invisible guardian of the place, after perhaps lighting a little lamp to propitiate his or her goodwill. These localised saints and prophets are feared as fully as they are



TOMB OF ELEAZAR,

Under an ancient terebinth-tree, on an eminence to the west of the village of 'Awertah (Gibeah Phinehas). Water-carriers filling a water-jar for the use of visitors to the shrine.

trusted, for it is very generally believed that they have power to punish as well as to protect, consequently a promise made by a peasant in the name of the enshrined guardian or patron-saint of his village is a surer guarantee than any other. There are many such sanctuaries in

the Vale of Shechem, to which we will now return, pausing for a few moments on our way by Jacob's Well.

When Maundrell visited this well in March, 1697, it must already have been partly choked by the débris of fallen buildings, but he states that it was then one hundred and five feet in depth, and had fifteen feet of water in it. Dr. Robinson states that Messrs. Hebard and Homes, in May, 1838, found the well dry, but their measurement of its depth corresponded



THE APPROACH TO NÂBLUS, THE ANCIENT SHECHEM.
Through the olive-groves on the eastern side of the city; the gate is shown beneath the minaret.

exactly with that of Maundrell, namely, one hundred and five feet. In April, 1839, the Rev. S. Calhoun found ten or twelve feet of water in the well. In April, 1843, Dr. John Wilson induced Jacob esh Shellaby, then a boy of fourteen years of age, to go down to the bottom of the well to search for a Bible, which had been accidentally dropped into it three years previously by the Rev. Andrew Bonar of Callace, who states that in the act of descending into the vault built over the mouth of the well the Bible escaped from his coat-pocket, "and was

soon heard plunging into the water far below." Jacob esh Shellaby was let down into the well by means of ropes supplemented by two long shawls, which formed the turbans of two Samaritans who were present. The well was fortunately dry, and after some searching among the stones (which are constantly being thrown into it by travellers), the Bible was found and conveyed safely to Dr. Wilson, to his very great satisfaction. It was currently believed in Nâblus that it was a book of necromancy for the recovery of which so much trouble had been taken. The well was at that time, 1843, found to be "exactly seventy-five feet deep," consequently if the measurements made in 1838 were accurate, débris to the amount of thirty feet had collected in the well in the short space of five years!

In the month of May, 1866, Captain Anderson, R.E., in order to thoroughly examine the well, caused himself to be lowered into it by means of a knotted rope. He states that the mouth of the well has a narrow opening "just wide enough to allow the body of a man to pass through with arms uplifted; this narrow neck, which is about four feet long, resembling the neck of a bottle, opens out into the well itself, which is cylindrical, and about seven feet six inches in diameter. The mouth and upper part of the well are built of masonry, and the well appears to have been sunk through a mixture of alluvial soil and limestone fragments, till a compact bed of limestone was reached, having horizontal strata which could be easily worked, and the interior of the well presents the appearance of being lined with rough masonry."

The depth was the same as it was in 1843, namely, seventy-five feet, and when Lieutenant Conder measured it in 1877 he found no alteration. Probably this represents not much more than half the original depth of the well, for it was "undoubtedly sunk for the purpose of securing, even in exceptionally dry seasons, a supply of water, which at great depths would always be filtering through the sides of the well, and would collect at the bottom."

Captain Anderson's descent into the well was rather a perilous one, for he fainted during the process of lowering. As the rope had fortunately been securely and skilfully lashed round his waist, and his feet rested in a loop, he reached the bottom safely though unconsciously. Suddenly he heard the people shouting to him from above, and when he began to move he found himself lying on his back at the bottom of the well, from whence "the opening at the mouth looked like a star." Fortunately his ascent was accomplished in safety.

From Jacob's Well the road, evidently an ancient one, takes a north-westerly direction, skirting the base of Gerizim. On the right is the ancient pasture-land of Jacob and his descendants, now well cultivated, and yielding abundant harvests of wheat and barley, and a good supply of beans, lentils, sesamum, cotton, and tobacco, and a wealth of wild flowers on every uncultivated patch of ground, especially mallows and anemones of many colours and ranunculi (page 230, vol. i.). A spur of Gerizim runs northward as if to meet a corresponding but less developed spur advancing southward from Ebal, the twin mountain opposite; the point of their nearest approach is the true entrance to the Valley of Shechem. As we follow the path, which takes a westerly direction round the northern extremity of Gerizim, the whole length of the valley comes suddenly into sight, with its terraced hillsides, its running streams,



ENTRANCE TO THE GREAT MOSQUE (JAMIA EL KEBÍR), NÁBLUS.
At the east end of the city; it was originally a church dedicated to St. John.

and olive-groves and orchards, above which the mosques and minarets and white house-tops of Nâblus appear, rather more than half a mile distant.

We pass the spring of Defneh (Daphne) and then the new barracks, to build which many of the stones of the ruins around Jacob's Well were carried away. A distant view of this long white building is shown in the illustration on page 237, vol. i. Here the valley seems to widen again, for the steep slope of Gerizim is broken by a deep wâdy which forms a vast natural amphitheatre. Immediately opposite there is a corresponding ravine reaching almost to the summit of Ebal. It has been conjectured by several writers that it was here that Joshua, after having taken possession of the Promised Land, assembled the tribes of Israel, and having erected an altar on Mount Ebal and offered sacrifices thereon, he read the blessings and the curses, and all that is written in the book of the law, before all the congregation of Israel. It would be difficult to find a more appropriate spot for the celebration of the solemn ceremonies described in Deut. xxvii. and Joshua viii. 30—35. We may imagine the Ark of the Covenant placed in the centre of the valley where the four ways meet, guarded by the priests, "the sons of Levi." And all the tribes of Israel, their elders, officers, and judges, on this side and that side of the ark, half of them ranged on the slopes of the picturesque reft of Gerizim responding joyously to the promised blessings, the other half standing on the rock ledges and mounds of the grand gorge of Ebal re-echoing the threatened curses, while loud "Amens," uttered simultaneously by the whole congregation at regular intervals, resounded from hill to hill.

But the scene changes. The Ark of the Covenant is lost and the children of Israel are scattered. Instead of the ark, we see in the middle of the valley a few Bedouin tents and laden camels, and groups of Arab labourers at work in fields and orchards; instead of the tribes of Israel, we see little detachments of Turkish soldiers hurrying towards the new barracks at the entrance to the gorge of Gerizim, the lower part of which is well cultivated and planted with trees, for, unlike the opposite wâdy of Ebal, it is well provided with water. Here in an enclosed garden is the little Moslem shrine already referred to, called *Jamia el 'Amûd*, the Mosque of the Pillar, where forty Jewish prophets are said to be buried. Black goats, seemingly innumerable, are leisurely climbing up the gorge of Ebal, steadily following their leader and browsing on the scanty and prickly pasture that springs up among the rocks and stones. It is only at this point, however, that there is any marked difference with regard to fertility between the "Mountain of Blessing" and the "Mountain of Cursing." Many experiments have been made here to ascertain at what distance the human voice can be heard singly and in chorus; the results have often created surprise. Peasants, and especially shepherds and goatherds, often call to each other from hill to hill, and even contrive to carry on a conversation where favourable positions have been discovered.

We hasten onwards, with Gerizim on our left and Ebal a little farther off on our right, but they are gradually approaching each other. We cross and recross winding streams and artificial water-courses in gardens and cultivated fields, then pass through picturesque



olive-groves where the waysides are in many places brightened with wild flowers and patches of self-sown barley. In a few minutes we enter the eastern gate of Nâblus (see page 5). Nâblus is a contraction and corruption of "Flavia Neapolis," as the city was called when it was almost rebuilt by Titus Flavius Vespasian. This is one of the very few instances in which the ancient Semitic name has been superseded by one of Roman origin. The Arabs cannot pronounce the letter "p," so of Neapolis they made Nâblus or Nâbalus.

MOUNT EBAL, FROM THE GARDENS S.W.S. OF NÂBLUS.

Showing the square tower of the Mosque El Khadra, and part of an aqueduct on the slope of Gerizim.

The town, which is about three-quarters of a mile long, is built on the water-shed in the narrowest part of the valley, where it is eighteen hundred and seventy-seven feet above the level of the sea, and only one hundred yards wide. It is said that there are no less than eighty springs of water in and about Nâblus, each having its special name. The water is conveyed from these springs to the mosques and other public buildings and to private houses, and then irrigates the gardens in and around the city. Many of the streets have little channels of clear water running through them. After being thus utilised, the streams on the western side of the city are allowed to unite and form a stream which turns several mills and flows towards the Mediterranean; those on the eastern side irrigate the gardens east of the town, and then, with a rather abrupt fall, flow towards the river Jordan.

There are no very ancient buildings in Nâblus, and scarcely anything remains to remind us of the "New City" of Flavius but the mutilated vestige of its name. The Crusaders, however, have left several memorials of their influence here. We at once recognise their work in the façade of the principal mosque, which was originally a church dedicated to St. John. It is at the eastern end of the city, and is called Jamia el Kebîr (the Great Mosque). The chief entrance consists of a deeply recessed pointed arch resting on short columns, five on each side, with foliated and varied capitals (see page 7). In the central court there are several ancient columns of Egyptian granite.

From this point we enter the bazaars, which are better built and kept in better order than those of Jerusalem. Those, however, in which vegetables and prepared food are sold are rather difficult to traverse during certain hours of the day. Turkish soldiers hurry by, some of them carrying large metal dishes containing a *mélange* of chopped vegetables, or deep earthenware plates filled with stiff cold pottage made of peas or beans and garnished with slices of lemon floating in oil; others push their way through the crowd with bowls of steaming soup held at arm's length before them, which very effectually clears the way.

There are small arcades especially devoted to the sale of tobacco, others which are filled with the refreshing odour of green lemons, oranges, citrons, and shaddocks. The long narrow bazaar, where dried fruits, olives, rice, cheese, and butter are sold, leads to another Christian church of the twelfth century, now converted into a mosque called Jamia el Nîsr, the Mosque of the Eagle. Here also are some ancient granite columns. Making a *détour* through a street almost blocked up with camels, we pass into the principal bazaar, the finest arcade in Palestine. Here European goods are displayed, such as Manchester cottons, printed calicoes, Sheffield cutlery, Bohemian glasses for narghilehs, and crockery and trinkets of all kinds from Marseilles. But the brightest shops are those in which Damascus and Aleppo silks, embroidered jackets, and crimson tarbûshes appear, with stores of Turkish pipes, and amber rosaries from Stamboul, and glass bracelets from Hebron. An opening in this arcade leads into the old khan on the north side of the city, the Khan of the Merchants (Khan Tujjar). It consists of an extensive square space enclosed by a two-storied range of buildings. A stone stairway leads to the terraced roof, from whence there is an interesting view in every direction.

The chief trade of Nâblus is in wool, cotton, olive oil, and soap of excellent quality. There are no less than twenty soap factories in the city. A native of Nâblus will sometimes offer a present of soap to a friend living in a less favoured district, saying, "I bring you soap made of the purest olive oil that your face may shine upon me;" or, "I bring you some soap that your heart may be clean towards me." At Nâblus goat-skins in great numbers are converted into *khirbehs* for carrying water. Sometimes the floor of this *khan* may be seen half covered with the inflated skins laid out for seasoning. Returning to the arcade, we pursue our way westward through narrow bazaars, where smiths, carpenters, weavers, tailors, and shoemakers may be seen at work; then, turning southward, we traverse tortuous lanes and gloomy streets, arched at intervals and built over in many places, till we reach a passage which leads us out of the town just opposite to the terraced gardens on the slopes of Gerizim, where flourish all "the precious fruits brought forth by the sun" (see Deut. xxxiii. 14). Oranges, lemons, figs, apricots, pomegranates, mulberries, walnuts, grapes, and almonds follow each other in due season, and hedges of cactus afford the cooling fruit commonly called prickly pear. On one of these garden terraces Jotham, perhaps, stood when he cried, "Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem," and spoke his parable of the fruit-trees and the bramble, with olive, fig-trees, and vines around him, and thorns and brambles overgrowing the garden landmarks (Judges ix. 7—21). From a certain point in these gardens, looking towards the north-east, an excellent general view is obtained of the city, a faithful representation of which is given on page 12. From nearly the same standpoint, turning towards the north-west, we see the outline of the western heights of Ebal, and in the foreground the tall square tower (remarkably like the White Tower of Ramleh) which adjoins the Mosque El Khadra, the Green Mosque, another appropriated church of the Crusaders (see page 9). In the front of this tower a slab is fixed, on which there is a Samaritan inscription. The Samaritans state that they once had a synagogue on this spot, which is popularly known as the *Mukâm Hizn Yakûb*, that is, "The Place of the Mourning of Jacob," for, according to local tradition, it was here that Jacob stood when the coat of his beloved son Joseph was brought to him, and where, believing him to be dead, "he mourned for him many days." A very old mulberry-tree stands in the court of the mosque, the representative of one which is said to have withered when the death of Joseph was reported, and became green again when he was found to be living. Not far from the summit of the mountain peak which appears in the illustration behind the tower, there stands a Moslem *mukâm* called 'Amad ed Dîn (the Pillar of Faith), which gives its name to this part of the mountain range. It has been suggested that this may mark the site of the altar erected by Joshua on Mount Ebal; it is, however, locally regarded as the resting-place of a Moslem saint so named, said to have lived about four hundred years ago. On the slope of the nearer hill, there is a greatly revered shrine of a Moslem female saint named Sitti Eslamîyeh, the Lady of Eslam; from her Mount Ebal derives its present name, *Jebel Eslamîyeh*. The highest point of the mountain, which is three thousand and thirty-two feet above the level of the sea, is more easterly, and not shown in the illustration. Turning away



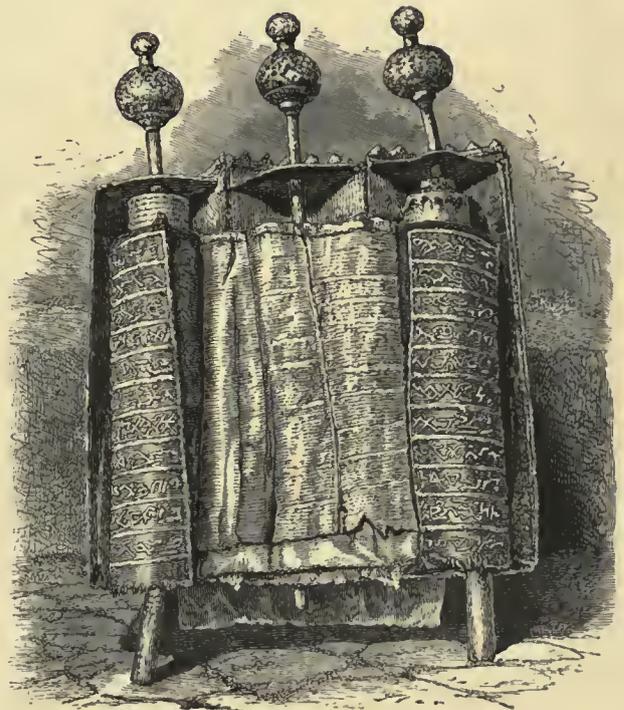
NÁBLUS AND GERIZIM FROM THE SOUTH-WESTERN SLOPES OF EBAL,
Just above a broad belt of olive-trees. The whole extent of the city and the western approaches to it are shown.

from this scene, we climb to the head of the glen above the gardens, where there is a fountain of deliciously cool clear water called Ras el 'Ain, the "head of the spring." Here we find a few women washing their tattered garments in a stone reservoir, and a group of men repairing the stone walls of the water-course with rather clumsy-looking tools. We follow the course of the duct, which conveys water from the fountain to the terraced gardens below, running eastward all along the hillside, where it forms a kind of coping to the tree-shaded pathway. The stones of this aqueduct are moss-grown, and from between them spring up bright leaves of the most vivid green. At short intervals there are square apertures, through which we can see the running limpid water in a framework of maidenhair and other ferns and white and lilac blossoms. A branch from this aqueduct, carried on arches, is shown in the illustration on page 9.

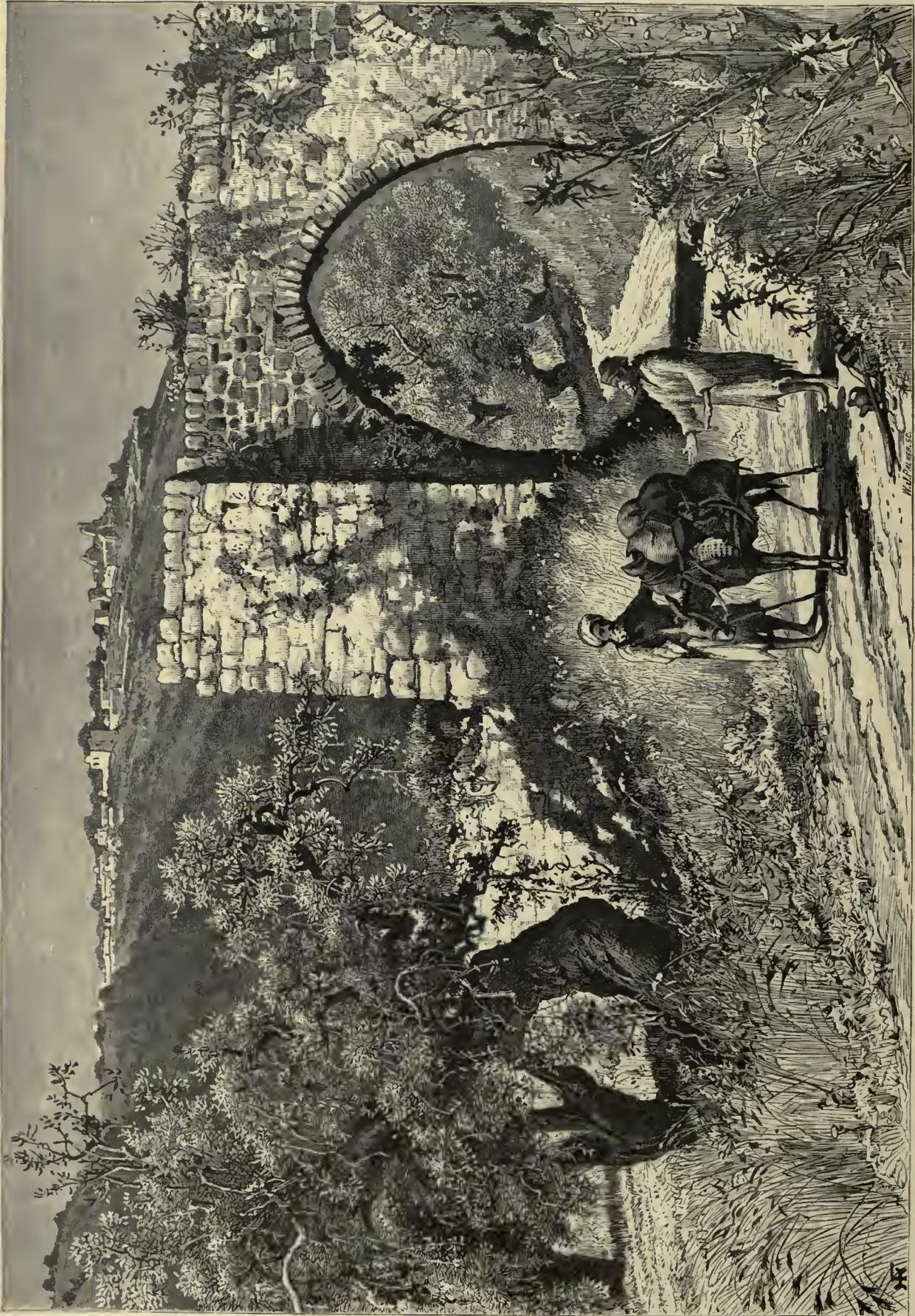
Presently we come to a large square pool or reservoir well filled and in good repair. It is nearly opposite to the handsomest house in the city, which is worthy of notice as a good example of modern Oriental architecture uninfluenced by European taste. This house was erected in the year 1855 by Mahmoud Bek Abd ul Hady, of Arrabeh, who was then Governor of Nâblus. Its spacious courts, surrounded by arched corridors and lofty reception rooms, are paved with marble. The white walls of the principal rooms are relieved by arabesque borders of good design in two shades of blue, some being painted in fresco, others simply stencilled.

Many important buildings have been erected within the last twenty years, including a new khan, a military arsenal, a Latin monastery, increased accommodation for the Protestant mission, and several large new dwelling-houses, showing signs of local prosperity and progress. But the chief interest of Nâblus is centred in a little group of irregularly built houses, clustered closely together in the south-west quarter, the most crowded part of the city.

Here we find the last remnant of the once powerful Samaritan community. In 1874 they numbered one hundred and thirty-five individuals, of whom twenty-eight were married couples, ten were widows advanced in years, forty-nine were unmarried men and young boys, and twenty were young girls, many of whom were already promised in marriage. Since this date the numbers have decreased. Several marriages have, however, taken place. According

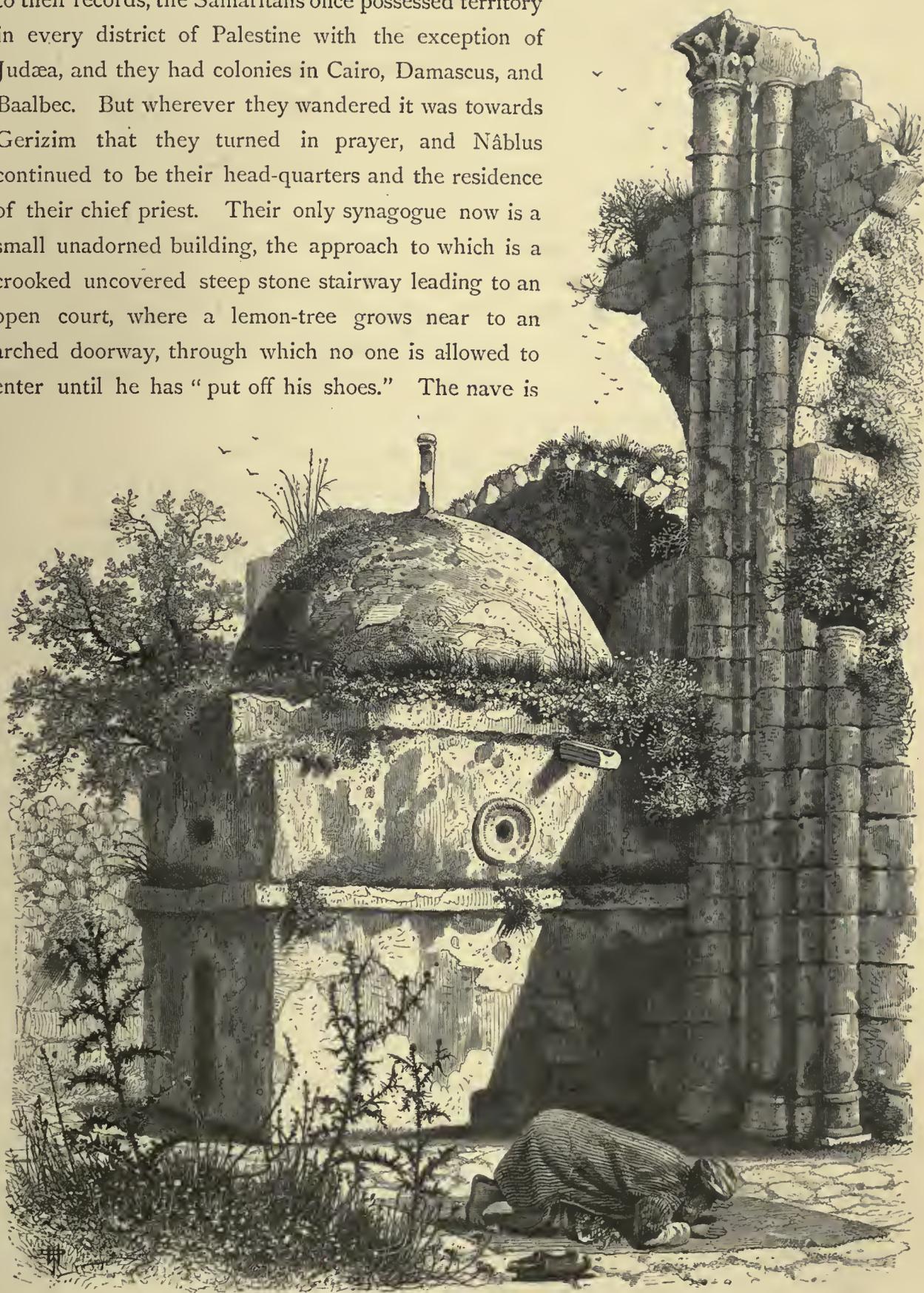


ANCIENT COPY OF THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH.
In a silver-gilt case; it is protected by a red satin cover embroidered with inscriptions in gold thread.



THE HILL OF SAMARIA.
The road by which it is approached from the south passes through an olive-grove and under a ruined aqueduct.

to their records, the Samaritans once possessed territory in every district of Palestine with the exception of Judæa, and they had colonies in Cairo, Damascus, and Baalbec. But wherever they wandered it was towards Gerizim that they turned in prayer, and Nâblus continued to be their head-quarters and the residence of their chief priest. Their only synagogue now is a small unadorned building, the approach to which is a crooked uncovered steep stone stairway leading to an open court, where a lemon-tree grows near to an arched doorway, through which no one is allowed to enter until he has "put off his shoes." The nave is



MOSLEM SANCTUARY ABOVE THE REPUTED TOMB OF ST. JOHN, SAMARIA.
Within the ruined walls of a church dedicated to St. John, now used as a mosque.

lighted by a circular aperture in the vaulted roof, as is also the north-east transept through which we enter. On the south-east side, which is in the direction of the "Holy Place" on Gerizim, there is a veiled recess to which the priests alone have access. The veil which is commonly used consists of a large square curtain of white damask linen, ornamented very skilfully with appliqué work, apparently of the sixteenth century, though the Samaritans regard it as much older; pieces of red, purple, and green linen cut into various forms are sewn on to it so as to form a complete and harmonious design.

Within the veil are preserved with jealous care, among other literary treasures, three very ancient copies of the Samaritan Pentateuch, one of which is said to have been written by Abishua, the great-grandson of Aaron. This celebrated Roll of the Law, which is probably of the third century of our era, is preserved in a cylindrical silver-gilt case, opening as a triptych does on two sets of hinges. The outside of the case is embossed, and in some parts engraved. On one of the divisions there is a representation of the Tabernacle of the Wilderness with the Ark of the Covenant, altars, candlesticks, trumpets, and various sacrificial implements, with explanatory inscriptions. The two other divisions of the cylinder are ornamented with conventional designs in repoussé work. This case is said by experts to be Venetian work of the fourteenth or fifteenth century. The Samaritans regard it as much older. The roll itself is composed of prepared goat-skins twenty-five inches high and about fifteen feet wide; they are neatly joined together, but in many places have been torn and rather clumsily repaired with parchment of various qualities. This much-prized volume is exhibited to the congregation once a year by the chief priest and his assistant the ministering priest. The ceremony takes place on their only fast day, the Day of Atonement, and then the people, young and old, are permitted to kiss that part of the roll on which the Aaronic blessings are inscribed; the consequence is that the blessings are by degrees disappearing. A crimson satin cover, on which Samaritan inscriptions are embroidered in gold thread, envelopes the treasure (see page 13).

The Torah (Pentateuch) is the only portion of the Bible which the Samaritans hold sacred. It is their sole guide and rule of life. Their version differs in many points from the Hebrew version. The other historic portions of the Hebrew Scriptures they regard as spurious, and especially resent the account given therein of their origin. They describe themselves as "Children of Israel," but trace their origin chiefly to the two sons of Joseph. They date their separation from the Jews from the time of Eli the priest, whom they regard as a usurper, he not having been of the priestly family of Eleazar, but a descendant of Thamar, Aaron's fourth son. According to the Samaritan Chronicle their high priests were true descendants of the sacredly appointed branch of the family until A.D. 1624, when the last male representative of the line died. Then, as it is recorded, "the consecration of Levites commenced;" sacrifices ceased to be offered up, and the ministrations were limited to such services as may legally be performed by them.

Selameh al Kohen, the correspondent of Baron de Sacy, was the chief priest of the

Samaritans when we visited Nâblus in 1856. He was then a fine old man of seventy-three years of age. He was learned in Samaritan lore and had gained great influence not only over his own community, but over the credulous of other creeds, on account of his widely spread reputation for skill in occult sciences. Amran, his nephew and adopted son, next to him in age, and therefore his successor, was the ministering priest. He was forty-seven



PART OF THE COLONNADE WHICH ONCE ENCIRCLED SAMARIA.
On the south side, near to the west end, a great number of columns are still standing.

years of age, married, but with no surviving children. The next in order of age and succession was his cousin Yakûb, then an unmarried youth of fourteen years of age; and Amran greatly feared that the family might become extinct, in which case the people would be left without a priest. He asked us confidentially if we thought that the English people would be displeased and withdraw their protection from the Samaritans, if he, their priest, were to

take a second wife. He explained that the Samaritan law permitted him to do so under the circumstances. He soon afterwards married, with the consent and approval of his first wife, and there was great rejoicing in the house of Amran and throughout the community when a son was born; and they gave him the name of Isaac.

Selameh, the chief priest, died in the year 1857. Amran, who had been the ministering priest, became the chief priest, and died in 1875. He was succeeded by his handsome young cousin Yakûb, above referred to. Since the death of Selameh and Amran the difficulties of governing and guiding the little community have continually increased, especially with regard to the distribution of property and the arrangements of marriages, the marriageable men being more numerous than the marriageable girls. Although the Samaritans always intermarry among themselves, they are as a rule intelligent, tall, strong, and handsome, and bodily defects are very rare among them.

During the feast of unleavened bread, from the 14th to the 21st of the first month (Nisan), the Samaritans, when it is possible for them to do so, close their houses in the city and live in tents pitched in the form of a half-circle on a sheltered plateau at some distance below the summit of Mount Gerizim (Jebel et Tûr). Sometimes they go there a few days earlier, but more frequently they only remain on the mountain for two days, to celebrate the sacrifice of the Passover, and to partake of it during the intervening night.

The scene of the sacrifice is on a terrace a little way above the place of encampment. Here towards the close of the day all is in readiness for the service. Two cauldrons filled with water are standing over a long trench, in which a fire made of thorns and brushwood is crackling and blazing. A few paces higher up a deep circular pit is thoroughly heated to serve as an oven. Near to the trench, within a space marked off by stones, stand twelve men in white garments and turbans, reciting prayers, their faces turned towards their "Holy Place," or Kibleh. In front of them stands the ministering priest looking towards the west, as if watching for the going down of the sun. At intervals he recites portions of the history of the Exodus. Behind him stand the spectators, while the elders of the congregation range themselves on one side, where the chief priest is seated on the ground. Presently six or seven youths, dressed in white, advance, each holding a white lamb, "according to the number of souls" about to celebrate the Passover. (Until recently seven lambs were required.) They take their places near the oven, and behind them a little group of women and children stand. At the moment of sunset the chief priest rises, and with a loud voice pronounces a blessing three times, and repeats the words, "And the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it in the evening" (Exodus xii. 6). The slaughterers stand with their knives ready, and as these words are uttered the lambs are slain, all at the same instant. The twelve men approach the spot reading the twelfth chapter of Exodus, and at the seventh verse they pause, while fathers dip their fingers in the warm blood of the victims and mark the foreheads of their children with it. Boiling water from the cauldrons is then poured over the fleece, which causes the wool to leave the skin without much diffi-

culty. It is plucked off with great nicety. Then each lamb is carefully examined lest there be any blemish. The right forelegs and entrails are removed and burnt with the wool. The lambs are rubbed with salt and spitted, and then forced into the glowing oven. A wooden trellis is placed over the top and covered with damp turf to keep in all the heat. In the meantime, unleavened cakes seasoned with bitter herbs are distributed by the chief priest. Soon afterwards nearly every one present retires to rest, except the twelve white-robed men, who return to their original station within the enclosed space, and continue reciting and chanting by the light of the full moon until midnight, when the sleepers are aroused, and in the presence of all the men of the community the lambs are withdrawn from the oven and carried in new straw baskets to the enclosed space, where they are eaten "in haste," each man having "his loins girt and a staff in his hand." There are slight variations from year to year in the manner of celebrating this festival, but none of great importance.

The plateau on the summit of Gerizim is two thousand eight hundred and forty feet above the level of the sea. It is crowned by a little Moslem wely which stands among the ruins of a fortress built by Justinian in the sixth century to protect, from the fury of the Samaritans, the church which had been erected there by Zeno. The foundations of this church, octagonal in form, have been traced. This possibly marks the site of the temple; but the "Holy Place" of the Samaritans is shown near to the edge of the plateau on the south side, and not far from it is a trough called the place of Abraham's sacrifice (see page 234, vol. i.).

But we must hasten onwards to Samaria. Leaving Nâblus by its western gate (see page 12), we follow the course of a mill stream which runs towards the west through cultivated fields and gardens. Presently the road takes a north-westerly direction, winding among rounded hills, many of which are terraced and crowned with villages. In less than two hours we enter a large and fertile basin-shaped valley surrounded by high hills. Nearly in the centre stands an isolated and less lofty hill, which, however, is one thousand four hundred and fifty-four feet above the sea-level; it is united to the hills on the eastern side of the basin by a low undulating ridge. Omri, King of Israel, bought this beautifully situated hill, of Shemer, its owner, for two talents of silver, and the city he built upon it he called Shemeron (Samaria), (1 Kings xvi. 24). After many vicissitudes it was given by the Emperor Augustus to Herod the Great, who built a splendid city here, to which he gave the name of Sebaste. The cities of Omri and Herod are now represented by an unimportant village called Sebustieh, which stands on the eastern side of the hill. The houses are rudely constructed of ancient materials; entablatures, fragments of columns, and massive stones being used indiscriminately by the peasant builders. The only ancient structure standing is a twelfth-century church dedicated to St. John the Baptist, now used as a mosque. The walls, except on the south side, are very much dilapidated, and the roof has disappeared. Within the spacious enclosure there is a Moslem sanctuary with a domed roof built over a crypt hewn in the solid rock, to which we descend by twenty-one steep steps. Here the guardian of the shrine shows a stone slab under which it is said the Neby Yahtha (John the Baptist)

was buried (see page 15). Above the village there is an artificially levelled oblong space of considerable extent which is now used as a threshing-floor. It was evidently at one time encircled by columns; the shafts of several are still standing on its western side. Perhaps



THE SOUTHERN EXPANSE OF THE PLAIN OF ESDRAELON, FROM JENÎN.
The whole extent of the plain is now called Merj ibn Amr (the Meadow of the Son of Amr).

this is the "sacred place nearly in the middle of the city," within which, according to Josephus, "Herod erected a temple which was illustrious on account of its largeness and beauty."

A level terrace about fifty feet in width, embellished with a colonnade, seems at one time



THE PLAIN OF DOTHAN.
From an isolated hill called Tell Dôthân, on the south side of the plain.

to have entirely encircled the hill, about half-way from its summit. There are between fifty and sixty columns without capitals still standing towards the western end of the southern

terrace (see page 17), which leads through ploughed fields to an indistinguishable mass of ruins on the south-west side of the hill. The columns are of limestone, and not more than sixteen feet in height. There are traces of the colonnade at intervals all round the hill, and it must have been at least three thousand feet in length.

On leaving Sebaste we journey northwards through valleys and over steep hills, passing near to many villages, of which Senûr, with its castle and closely clustering houses perched on a rocky eminence, is the most picturesque. We are on our way to the Plain of Dothan, and,

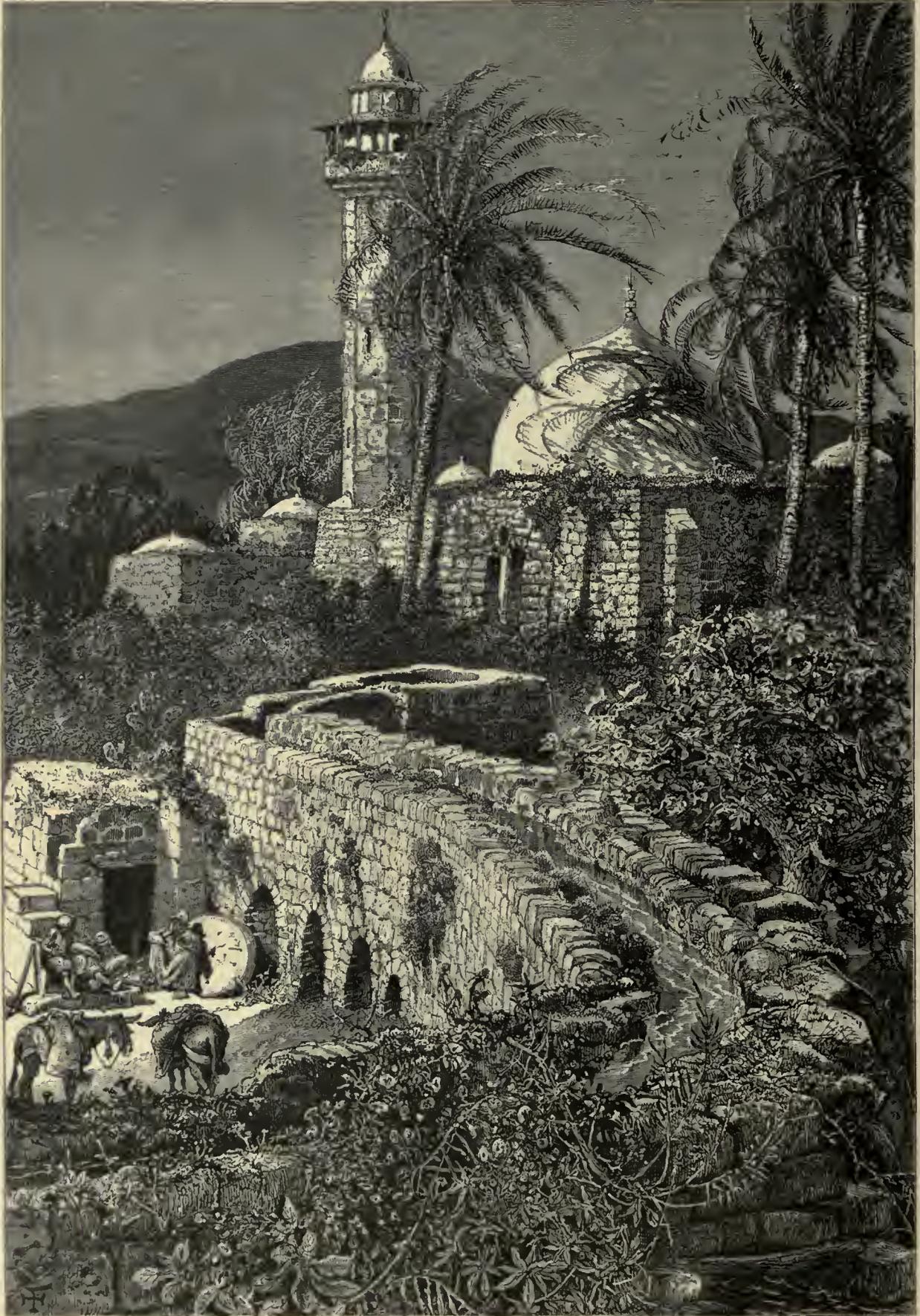


JENÎN, THE ANCIENT EN-GANNIM.

From the hill above the cemetery, showing one of the outfalls of the stream which traverses the town.

perhaps, following in the footsteps of Joseph when he went to seek his brethren there (Genesis xxxvii. 17). The name Dothan, or Dothain, signifying two wells, is preserved in the modern Tell Dôthân, a green hill which overlooks from its northern slopes a fertile plain which there is no difficulty in identifying with the pasture land where Joseph found his brethren (see page 20). About a mile to the west there is a very steep hill, on which stands, one thousand one hundred and ten feet above the sea, the walled town of Arrabeh, the head-quarters of the famous Abd ul Hady family.

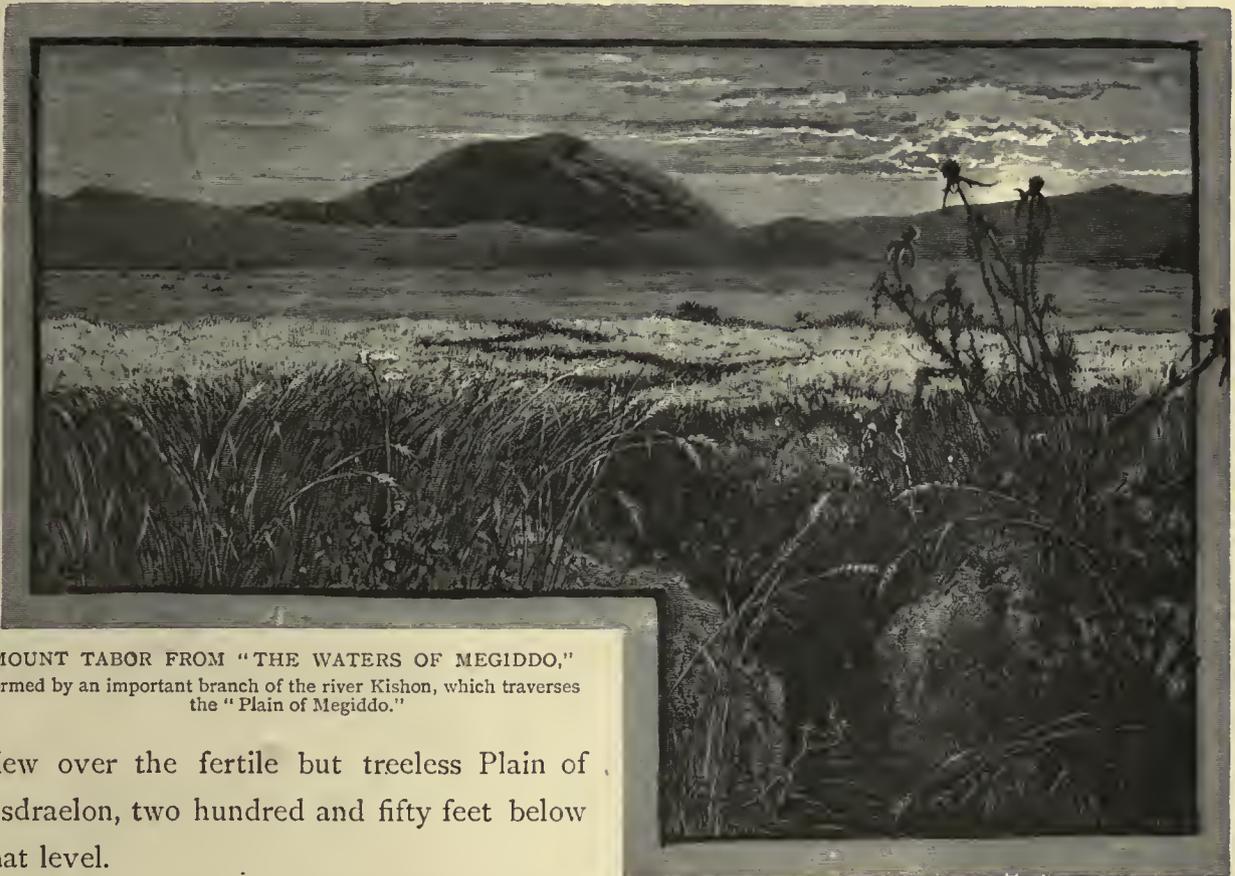
From Arrabeh we journey north-east to Jenîn, an important town of about three



THE MOSQUE OF JENIN.

Surrounded by gardens ; an aqueduct and fountain in the foreground.

thousand inhabitants, beautifully situated just where the Mountains of Samaria meet the Plain of Esdraelon. The grey stone houses and the mosque with its whitewashed domes and tall minaret stand in the midst of fruit-gardens surrounded by hedges of prickly pear. A few palm-trees, very rare in Palestine, add greatly to the picturesqueness of the place from every point of view (see pages 20 and 21). A copious stream flows through the town and waters the gardens and fields around, then runs north-west to join the numerous rivulets which help to form the Kishon. A public fountain and large stone reservoir with a trough for cattle were erected here in the year 1833 by Husein Abd ul Hady, of Arrabeh (see page 22). Jenin is six hundred and fifty-six feet above the sea, and commands an extensive



MOUNT TABOR FROM "THE WATERS OF MEGIDDO,"
Formed by an important branch of the river Kishon, which traverses
the "Plain of Megiddo."

view over the fertile but treeless Plain of Esdraelon, two hundred and fifty feet below that level.

On leaving Jenin we skirt the western edge of the plain at the foot of the range of low wooded hills which unite the Mountains of Samaria with Mount Carmel, far away in the north-west. We pass several unimportant towns and green wādys, and in two hours reach the little village of Ta'anuk, built on the south-east side of a small hill at the foot of which there are remains of ancient buildings, the ruins, perhaps, of Taanach, the Canaanitish city whose name is made familiar to us in the war song of Deborah and Barak. "The kings came and fought, then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo" (Judges v. 19). We pursue our way, still keeping close to the western hills, and in rather more than an hour reach the Khan el Lejjûn; but the khan has long been in ruins. An old bridge here crosses an important affluent of the river Kishon. In the valley and on the hill on the north side of the stream there are some ancient ruins.

Dr. Robinson's arguments in favour of regarding Lejjûn (the Roman Legio) as the Megiddo of Deborah's song are generally accepted as conclusive, and its river, which runs through a



KHAN EL LEJJÛN (THE ROMAN LEGIO), THE SUPPOSED SITE OF MEGIDDO.
The old bridge proves that the waters of Megiddo were formidable in ancient times.

deep glen, is thus identified with the "waters of Megiddo," which helped to swell that ancient river, the river Kishon, into the torrent that swept away the defeated army of Sisera.



TAANACH FROM THE WATERS OF MEGIDDO.

The modern village of Ta'anuk, on a rounded hill below the range of Carmel, plainly indicates the site of the old Canaanitish city.

ESDRAELON AND NAZARETH.

THE traveller from the south, whether from Nâblus or Samaria, gains his first view of the historic plain of Esdraelon from the little town of Jenin, the modern representative of En-gannim, *i.e.* the Fountain of Gardens, on the edge of the hills which form the southern limit of the plain, but itself nestled in a narrow opening of the range, the crest of which rises behind it, screening it from the south, and feeding a copious and never-failing spring, from which the place derives its name. In front a gently sloping valley gradually spreads down into the plain. Sheltered by the hills in the rear is a broad belt of garden and orchard, with orange and apricot trees, and now and then a palm waving over them. This is the first place where the traveller from Jerusalem sees the palm cultivated to any extent. Careful irrigation from the spring secures perpetual fertility; but the traveller who prefers his tent to the too-

fully tenanted chambers which are at his service in the village must beware lest he camp within reach of the malaria engendered by the warm damp of the little rills (see page 21).

We have here passed from the border of Ephraim, or Central Palestine, for En-gannim was the southernmost town of the northern tribe of Issachar, though itself a Levitical possession assigned to the Gershonites. The name only once occurs after the allotment of Joshua, in the story of the tragic end of King Ahaziah, who, while endeavouring to escape in this direction from Jehu, was mortally wounded in the ascent of Gur, by Ibleam, one of the steep ascents between this place and Jezreel. Jenin also reveals to our memories one of the tragedies of the later days of Judæa, when the Galileans, going up to Jerusalem to worship very shortly before



ZERÏN, THE ANCIENT JEZREEL.

Called Esdrelon in the Book of Judith, and alluded to in Crusading times as *Parvum Gerinum*.

the siege of Titus, were massacred by their old foes the Samaritans. But we must stroll out from camp and scan the Plain of Esdraelon, so rich in historic memories, which now for the first time lies spread before us. To the eastward the view is somewhat circumscribed by the shoulder of Mount Gilboa, which stretches on our right as far as Jezreel, and shuts out the open valley which slopes down to Beisân. Beyond we see Jebel Duhy, or Little Hermon, as it is often called, behind which are perched the little towns of Nain and Endor, and farther still the rounded top of Mount Tabor comes in sight. Thence looking westward we see the whole width of the plain, with Nazareth and the hills beyond it, while the fringe of the southern hills pushes gently to the north-west as far as Carmel, with Megiddo (or Legio), Taanach, and Jokneam on their northern slopes. Nor must we forget to notice Shunem, in a line with

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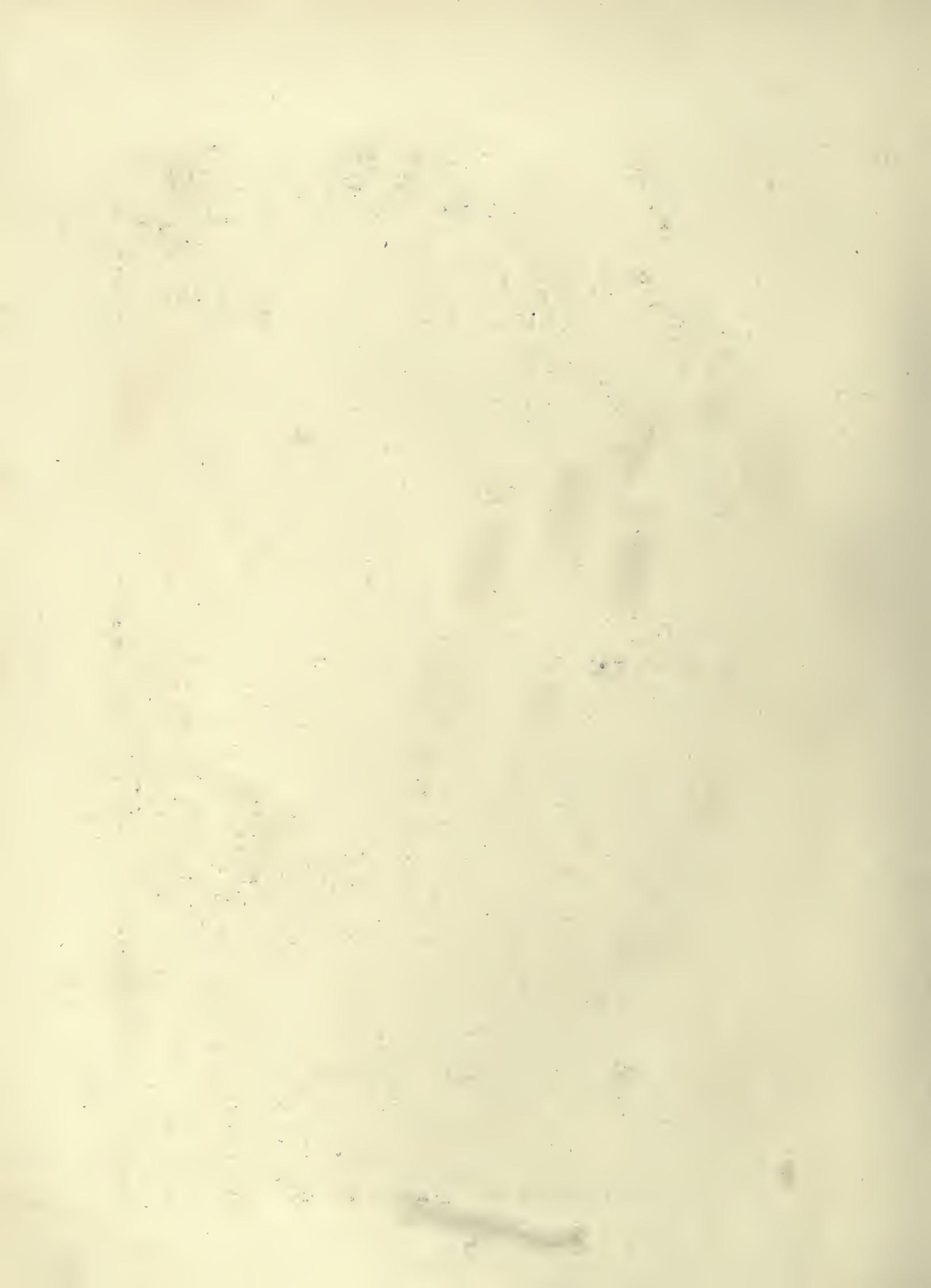
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J. D. WOODWARD. DEL.

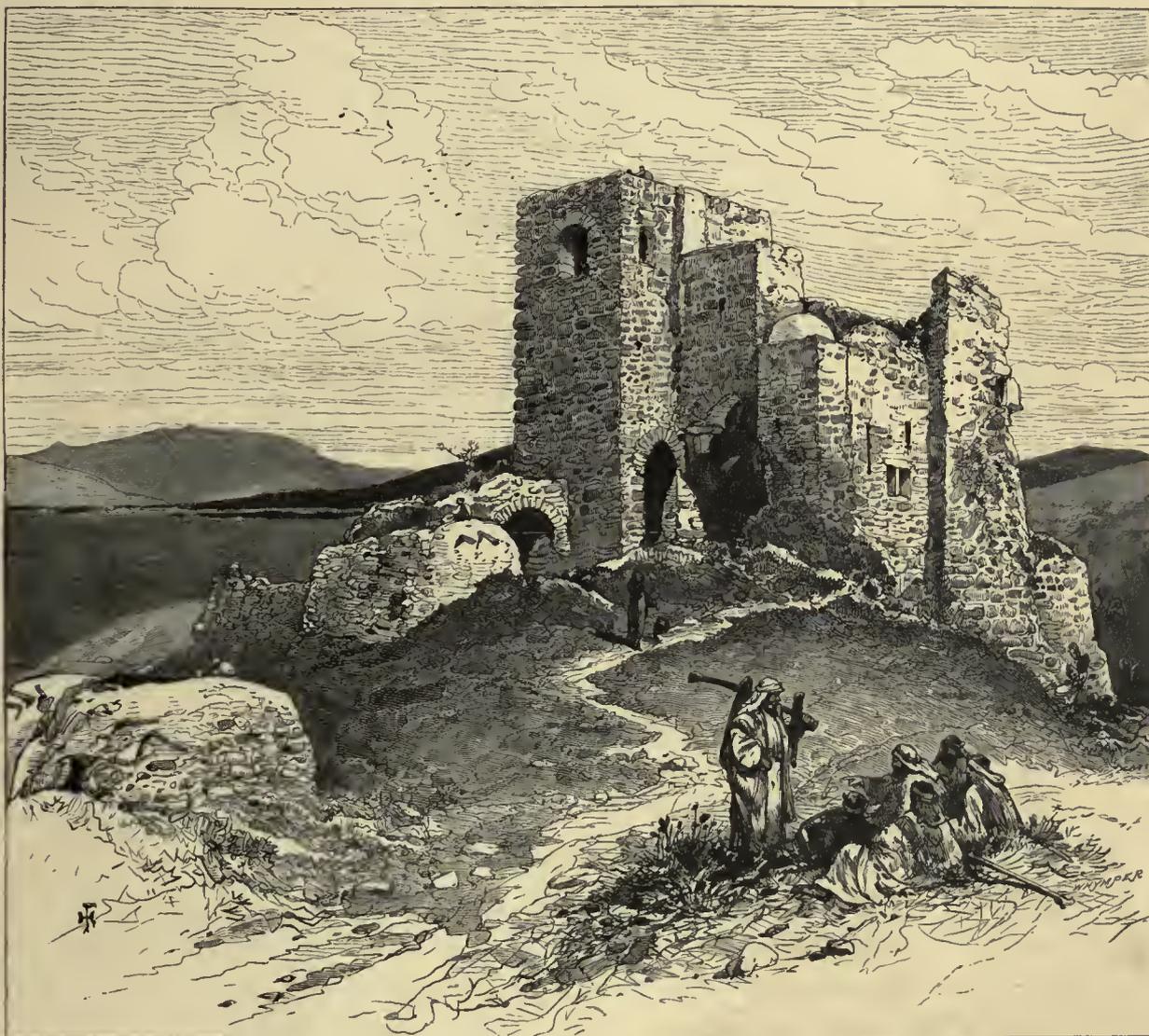
MOUNT TABOR.

A. WILLMORE. SCULPT.



Jezreel, a few miles beyond, on the southern foot of Jebel Duhy. Then the whole scene is thickly studded with sites which carry us in retrospect through ages of history for three thousand years. That plain has been what Belgium is to Europe, the battlefield of Syria, and that portion of it called the Plain of Megiddo has consequently been adopted in the Apocalypse to mark the scenes of the last great conflict between the powers of good and evil, *Armageddon*, "the hill of Megiddo."

We gain a more complete panoramic view of the plain when, leaving Jenin, we skirt the



THE CASTLE OF ZERÎN (JEZREEL).

Now used as a *manzal* or inn, literally "a place for unloading," open to all wayfarers.

western edge of Gilboa till we reach the once-royal Jezreel, now Zerîn. The position is a lovely one, with steep valleys to the north and east, and a gentle slope to the south and west. Two copious springs bubbling forth at the foot of the cliff, one about a mile eastward, 'Ain Jalûd, the ancient Fountain of Jezreel, or Well of Harod, and the other a little farther north, 'Ain Tubaun, found in Crusading history, each supplying a pool swarming with fish,

insure the perennial fertility of the valley. The site was well chosen as a royal residence, for it is easily defensible on the north and east, and commands a clear unbroken view almost to Jordan on the one side, and to Carmel on the other, while in front the whole plain stretches to Nazareth and the foot of Tabor. But there is nothing to mark its bygone importance. The desolate heaps have crumbled into turf-covered hillocks and one large mound. A few flat-topped hovels clustering round a tower, not very ancient, and which occupies probably the site of the old Migdol, or watch-tower, are all that make up modern Jezreel. Not a tree or a shrub relieves the monotony of the valley of old Jezreel; we see only innumerable cisterns and many marble sarcophagi strewn about, some of them still perfect, many finely sculptured with figures of the crescent moon, the symbol of Ashtaroth. These are the only relics of its ancient beauty, all that is left by which we can say, "This is Jezreel" (see pages 26 and 27). There is no trace of the royal gardens nor a vestige of a vineyard on the hillside. We may guess, however, where they were—probably the royal grounds sloping down the little valley to the east—for we may be sure the vineyard of Naboth was on the hillside, the vine never being cultivated in the plain. It must have been on the way up to the city, for it was as the King was riding with Jehu and Bidkar behind him, that Elijah met him and rebuked him, on the very spot itself where again Jehu encountered his son Joram on his way up from the Jordan, by the road from Bethshean. From the town, any parties coming from beyond the Jordan, could be easily descried, and as we stand there the whole history is brought vividly before our eyes. For miles we can trace the road up from the Jordan Valley by the side of the little stream, the Nahr Jalûd, where the watchman recognised, in the charioteer dashing furiously along, the impetuous Jehu. It was on the same side also that Jezebel looked out of the window, and, knowing that there was no mercy in store for herself, bitterly taunted him. Just below must have been the open space by the gate of the city, the resort of the eastern scavengers, the pariah dogs, to which the queen was thrown. Turning to the south, we have almost as clear a view of the ascent up which the panic-stricken Ahaziah vainly pressed his horses, pursued by the victorious rebel. While no locality in the land has been more indisputably identified than Zerin, there is scarcely, even in this land of ruins, a destruction more complete and utter than that of Jezreel.

As we stand here, under the shadow of Mount Gilboa, looking down the smooth slope which opens the great thoroughfare to Gilead by Bethshean, itself out of sight; and then turning north, behold the bell-shaped dome of Tabor, with the snowy peaks of Hermon just visible in the blue haze beyond it, the little village of Shunem in the plain, and Nazareth with its white minarets and towers rising on its edge; while in the far east, a low wooded elevation pushes from the north and cuts the plain in two, shutting out the Plain of Acre and the sea; then following its line, the eye detects the opening through which Kishon wends its way seaward, close under Mount Carmel, and from the bold bluff which marks the face of Carmel note the gradually receding hills, sheltering some historic name in every dell—we may recall the story of many a battle which could have been watched from our post of observation.

First in time is the great victory of Barak over Sisera, and the details of that struggle, though they extend over the whole plain, may be at once traced from the spot where we stand. Although the capital of Jabin was at Hazor, in the north, yet the trysting-place of his army was on the southern edge of the central plain, where the chariots could muster on the level ground at Taanach, still called Ta'anuk, just seven miles south-west from Jezreel. We

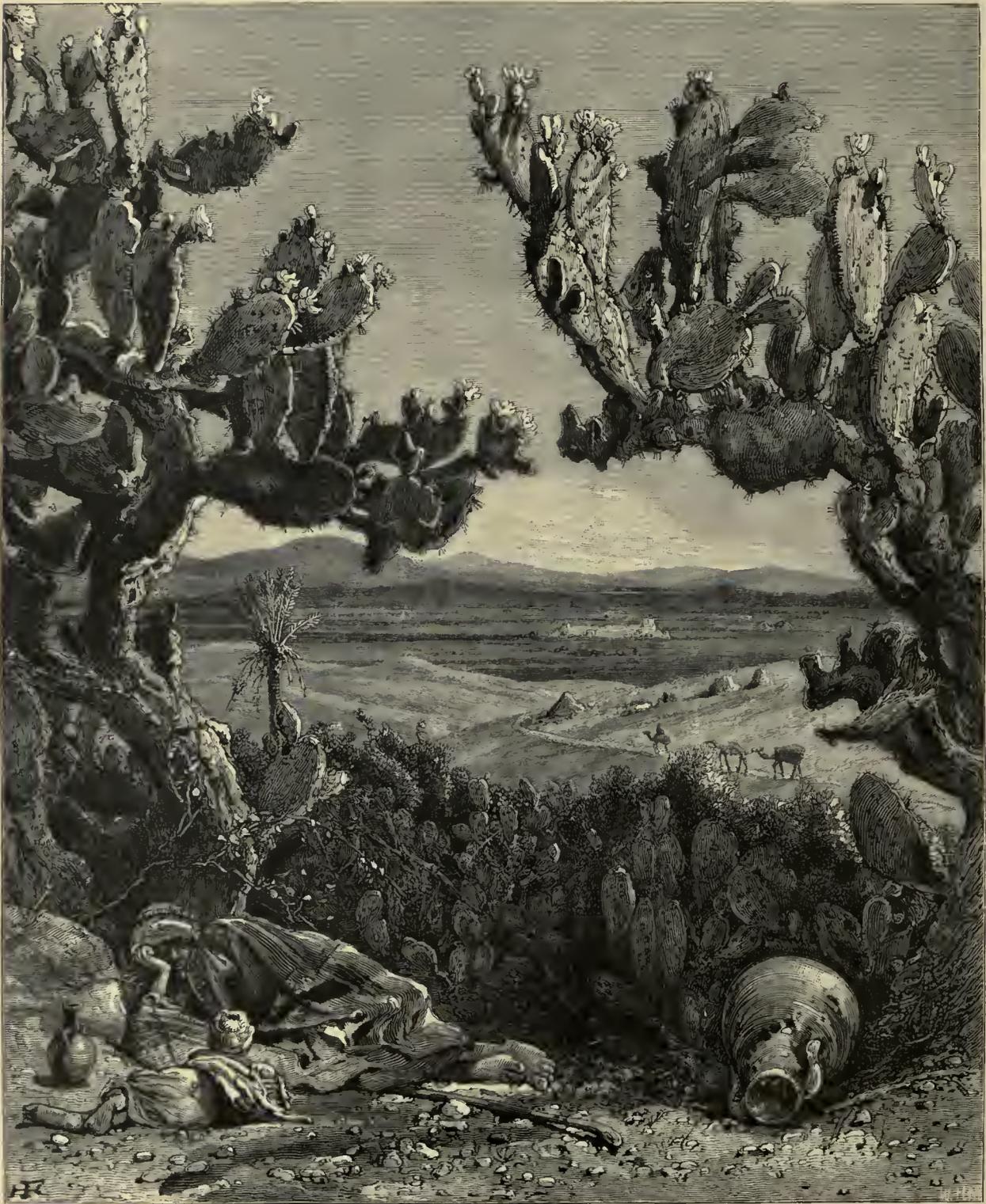


'AIN JALÛD, THE FOUNTAIN OF JEZREEL, KNOWN ALSO AS GIDEON'S FOUNTAIN.

It flows from a cavernous recess in the base of Jebel Fukh'a (Mount Gilboa), and spreads out at once into a fine limpid pool forty or fifty feet in diameter.

can see the village before us, almost at the foot of the range (see page 25). In front of the camp was the stream of the Kishon, securing an abundant supply of water for the chariot horses, while the "waters of Megiddo" (which is only four and a half miles farther west), *i.e.* the little rills which scarp the hillsides and feed the Kishon, provided for his footmen pitched on the higher ground (see pages 23 and 24). Barak, on the contrary, having only

ten thousand footmen, mustered his little army on the flat top of Tabor, where he could observe all the movements of Sisera, and choose his own time for attack, while for the purpose



THE HILLS OF SAMARIA FROM SÛLEM, THE ANCIENT SHUNEM.

Zerin (Jezreel) appears upon the plain below, and in the foreground there is a characteristic example of the *Cactus Opuntia* (prickly pear) in blossom.

of dislodging him Sisera's nine hundred chariots were worse than useless. The opposing armies probably met on the southern edge of the plain, Barak having crossed to the hills to

attack his enemy in flank, while one of the storms so frequent in that region suddenly burst from the east, beating in the invaders' faces; and the rush of the torrent down the hills not only swelled the Kishon to an unfordable depth, but turned the whole of the low-lying plain, spongy and soft at any time, at once into a treacherous swamp. But attacked on their right



MOUNT GILBOA FROM SÛLEM (SHUNEM).

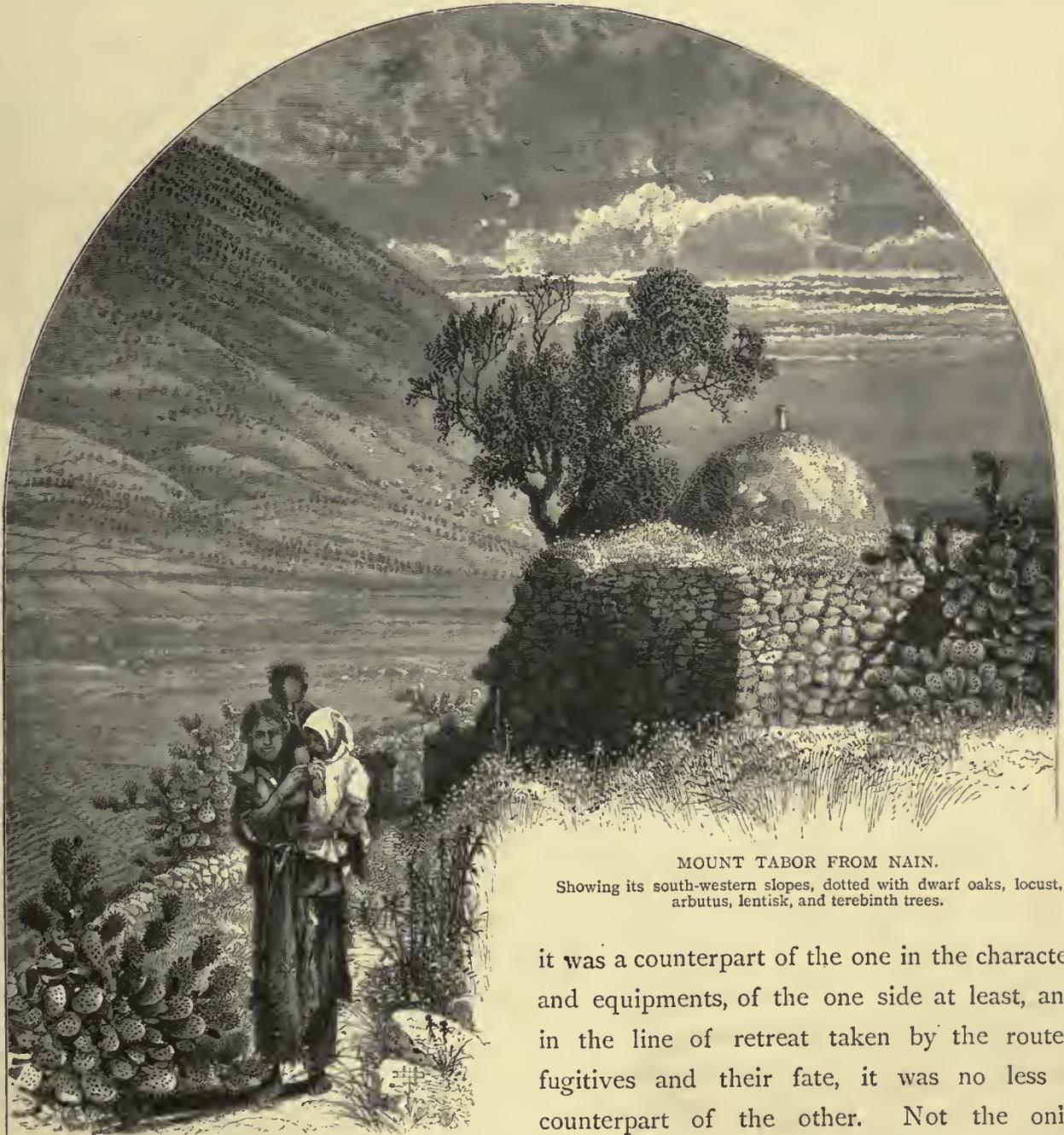
The northern extremity of the range of Jebel Fukû'a (Gilboa) is shown; the highest point is crowned by the sanctuary of Neby Mezâr. In the foreground a woman is spinning cotton.

flank by Barak, when the Canaanites gave way, no possible line of retreat was open except that across the plain northward; the south was shut in by hills inaccessible to their chariots, the swollen Kishon barred their passage towards the Plain of Acre. Those who have seen this plain during the winter rains can easily picture the wild and inextricable confusion of the

defeated host, the terrified horses vainly struggling in the swamp and treading down the fugitives, till the general himself was fain to abandon his chariot, and fly on foot, and unattended, by one of the paths behind Nazareth towards the Northern Hazor.

Three thousand two hundred years of history had passed and gone, when that plain saw a similar battle between hosts almost as unequal in numbers, if not in equipment, with an identical result. Little more than four miles to the north-west we may detect a mound, in the plain on the direct road to Nazareth, covered with ruins, and on the other side of it a small swamp, sometimes a lake, the resort of wild fowl, where flocks of the stilted plover daintily step. The mound with a few huts behind it clustered round a well is known as El Fûleh, the "Bean," and marks the site of the Crusading castle of Faba, an important garrison of the Knights Templar, the foundations of which are still plainly visible. Round this spot in the beginning of April, 1799, the Turks had collected a vast army—Mamelukes from Egypt, Janissaries from Damascus, regulars from Aleppo, with the whole Mohammedan population of Syria, and countless hordes of Arab cavalry, which even outnumbered the foot levies, from the whole east of Jordan and Northern Arabia—for the purpose of forcing Napoleon to raise the siege of Acre, then held by the aid of Sir Sydney Smith. The Turkish general was in the same position as Sisera. He was compelled to camp in the plain, or at least to hold his cavalry there for the sake of water. The little handful of French held, like Barak, the hill country to the north. Junot held Mount Tabor and Nazareth, other detachments held Cana of Galilee and Safed, while Murat with one thousand men held the bridge across the Jordan, to intercept the enemy's communications. Kleber held the supreme command, and, mustering all his troops at Nazareth, marched as far as Fûleh to the attack. Here he was assailed by fifteen thousand cavalry and as many infantry. Forming in squares, the French soon were behind ramparts of dead men and horses, till, after they had held their ground for six hours, Napoleon, who had been working his way with the besieging army from before Acre by the edge of the southern hills, came suddenly down from Taanach and Megiddo, and by his dashing charges decided the fate of the day. The Turkish cavalry was driven into the swamps of the head-waters of the Kishon, in which Sisera's chariots had stuck fast, and they then fled towards Mount Tabor and the Jordan, by the route that Sisera's fugitives must have followed towards Harosheth; but, finding Murat holding the bridge (Jisr Mejâmi'a), endeavoured to ford the swollen Jordan, in which numbers perished, and the army, "countless as the sands of the sea," was utterly dispersed. Napoleon returned by the banks of the Kishon to resume the siege of Acre; but soon found his victory a barren one, and, baffled by a few hundred men, was fain to lead his army back by the coast to Jaffa and Egypt. We cannot forget how constantly in after life he recurred to the events of that April on this plain, and bitterly exclaimed that here Sir Sydney Smith had marred his destiny. He held, with other military geographers, that through this plain and across the Jordan was the natural access to Damascus, from Damascus to the Euphrates, and thence to India.

We have referred to Napoleon's battle, strangely out of chronological order, from its strategic resemblance to the battle of Barak; but it resembled in several other conditions another great struggle of this period of the judges, Gideon's victory over the Midianites. If in the previous position of the hostile forces, and in the probable scene of the battle itself,



MOUNT TABOR FROM NAIN.

Showing its south-western slopes, dotted with dwarf oaks, locust, arbutus, lentisk, and terebinth trees.

it was a counterpart of the one in the character and equipments, of the one side at least, and in the line of retreat taken by the routed fugitives and their fate, it was no less a counterpart of the other. Not the only counterpart, however, for the incursions of the

Midianites which Gideon checked and revenged have been rehearsed almost from year to year with miserable monotony by their modern successors, the trans-Jordanic Bedouins. The key to the two battles we have been describing is just in front of Jezreel. That of the defeat of the Midianites is a mile and a half in the other direction, at the Well of Harod, now 'Ain Jalûd, at the north-east base of Mount Gilboa. It is the first time after

the settlement of Israel that we read of an invasion from the east or desert side. The hordes of nomads, with their camels and dromedaries, came up countless as the sand by the seashore, and spread from the east end of the Plain of Jezreel, where they had crossed the Jordan, as far as the Bay of Acre. Thence, keeping always in the low ground, and reversing the course of the modern French invaders, they doubled the promontory of Carmel, overran the rich expanse of Sharon and the Plain of Philistia, till they came unto Gaza, to the very confines of the southern desert, sweeping off the herds of cattle and destroying the increase of the earth, hastily cutting off the ears of corn with their scimitars and loading therewith their capacious camel-sacks, and meanwhile wasting and trampling down more than they carried off; for they had of course selected the harvest-time for their inroad. It was evidently a well-organized invasion, on a greater scale than any that have followed it from that side, excepting only the Saracenic conquest under Omar. Not only the Midianites who roamed over the regions of the modern 'Anizeh and Beni Sakkr, but the Amalekites from the south, and "the children of the East," the hordes of the Syrian desert as far as the Euphrates, had combined for the foray. But though their foraging parties went as far as Gaza, they with military precaution kept their head-quarters at the mouth of the Plain of Jezreel, so as to hold secure the line by which they should retire with their booty. The whole population of Israel fled to the hills and mountain fastnesses and caves, whither the dromedary men could not pursue them; but even these were not safe from marauding parties, for they were fain to hide their wheat as they thrashed it, doubtless in the "silos," or underground plastered granaries, which their successors on the confines of the desert use even to this day.

Such a visitation remained stamped on the memories of the nation, as is seen by references to the great victories of Gideon, in psalmist and prophet, centuries after the event. The rallying point of the champions of Israel was this time in the fastnesses to the south of the plain, as the chieftain selected by God for his deliverance was of this region of Manasseh, while the northern heroes in the struggle against Sisera had naturally mustered on Mount Tabor on the opposite side. The cliffs of Mount Gilboa, honeycombed with caves, afforded safe retreat. The copious spring at their base forms a fine pool, of considerable extent, and doubtless many a long file of camels had there been watered, for the head-quarters of the invaders' camp was just in front of it. Down from their hiding-place under cover of night Gideon and his men crept unobserved to this pool, and there the chieftain tested his men, and retained only the sifted three hundred, and from that day the Pool of Gilboa was known as the "Fountain of Trembling" (Harod) (see page 29). The enemy were "beneath him," yet on the hill Moreh. To one standing on the spot, the rising ground or slope of Tubaun, just to the north, suggests itself as the place for the camp. Hither on the next night Gideon and his servant cautiously descend, and hanging undetected on the outskirts of the camp, hear a Midianite telling his dream to his comrades as they try to keep themselves awake by the embers of the watch-fire. Evidently the daring of the "fellahin," as

they would contemptuously term them, had shaken the confidence of the invaders, for they knew that Gideon was watching their movements on the opposite heights. At once the general hurries back to his men. Just after midnight they marched down, with a stratagem that somewhat reminds us of the wood of Birnam—they carry each a lighted lamp concealed in a pitcher. They wait till the posts have been visited and the middle watch has been set. The guards just relieved at once wrap themselves in their cloaks and are asleep. The little

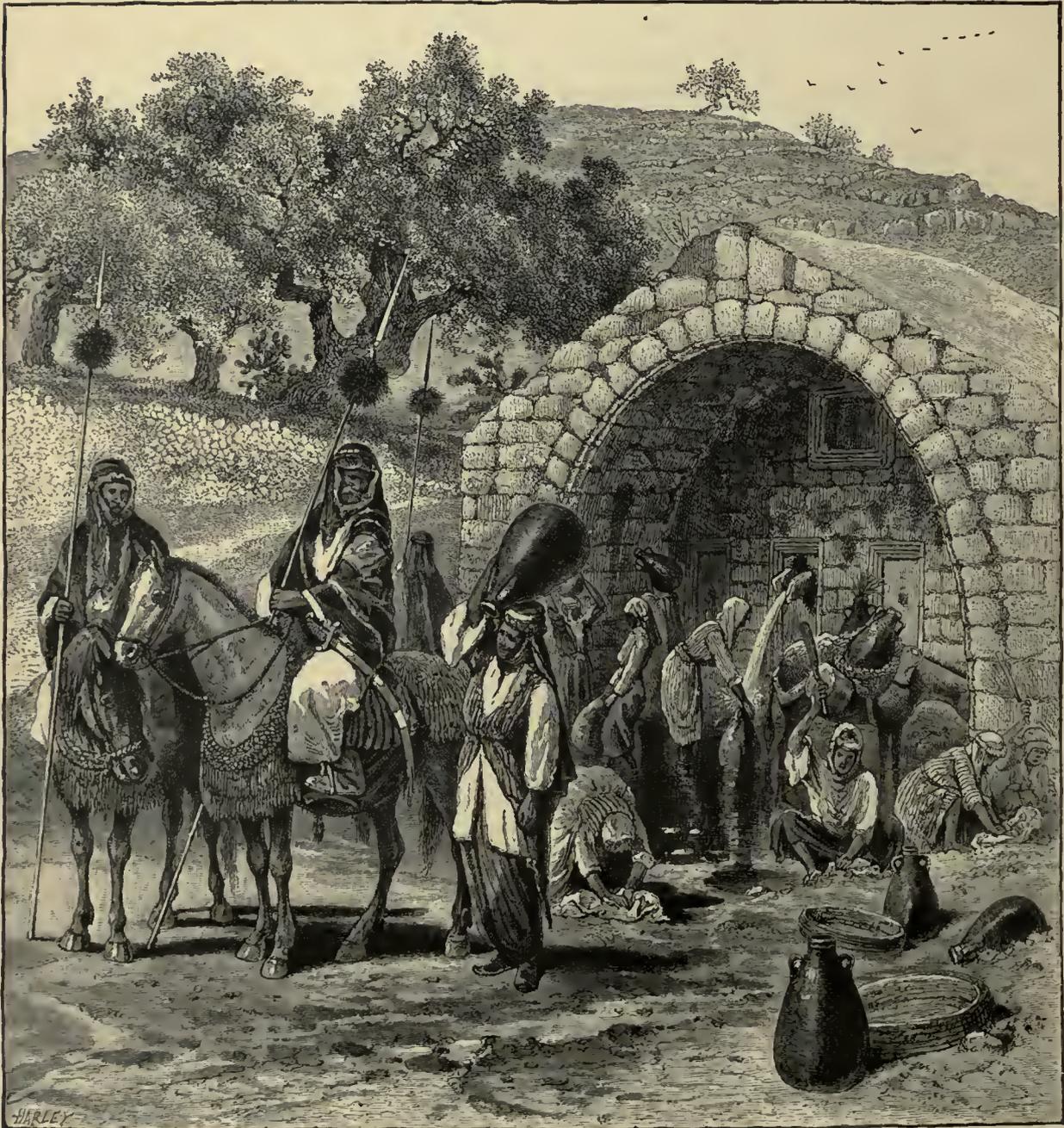


ENTRANCE TO THE CAVE OF ENDOR,

Between two rocks overshadowed by a fig-tree; the cave itself is apparently a natural one, and has within it a never-failing spring of water, which originated the name En Dôr (the "fountain of Dôr").

band in three divisions deploys in silence round the camp, unsuspected and unobserved. On a given signal the pitchers are simultaneously broken, and every trumpet sounds. The rallying cry of Manasseh is raised. The invaders, suddenly startled from sleep, are bewildered, as on all sides they see glimmering lights surrounding the camp, and hear the shout of victory from unseen foes. They know not whither to turn. Panic-stricken, they rush against each other, and in wild confusion they rush headlong down the valley. News

travels fast in the East. Many watchers were on all the hills around, the disbanded super-numeraries of Gideon. The shrieks and discordant cries passed up and down the plain, and long before daybreak the message of Gideon had reached every man, for miles around, that they should seize the passages of Jordan and intercept the fugitives at the fords. They

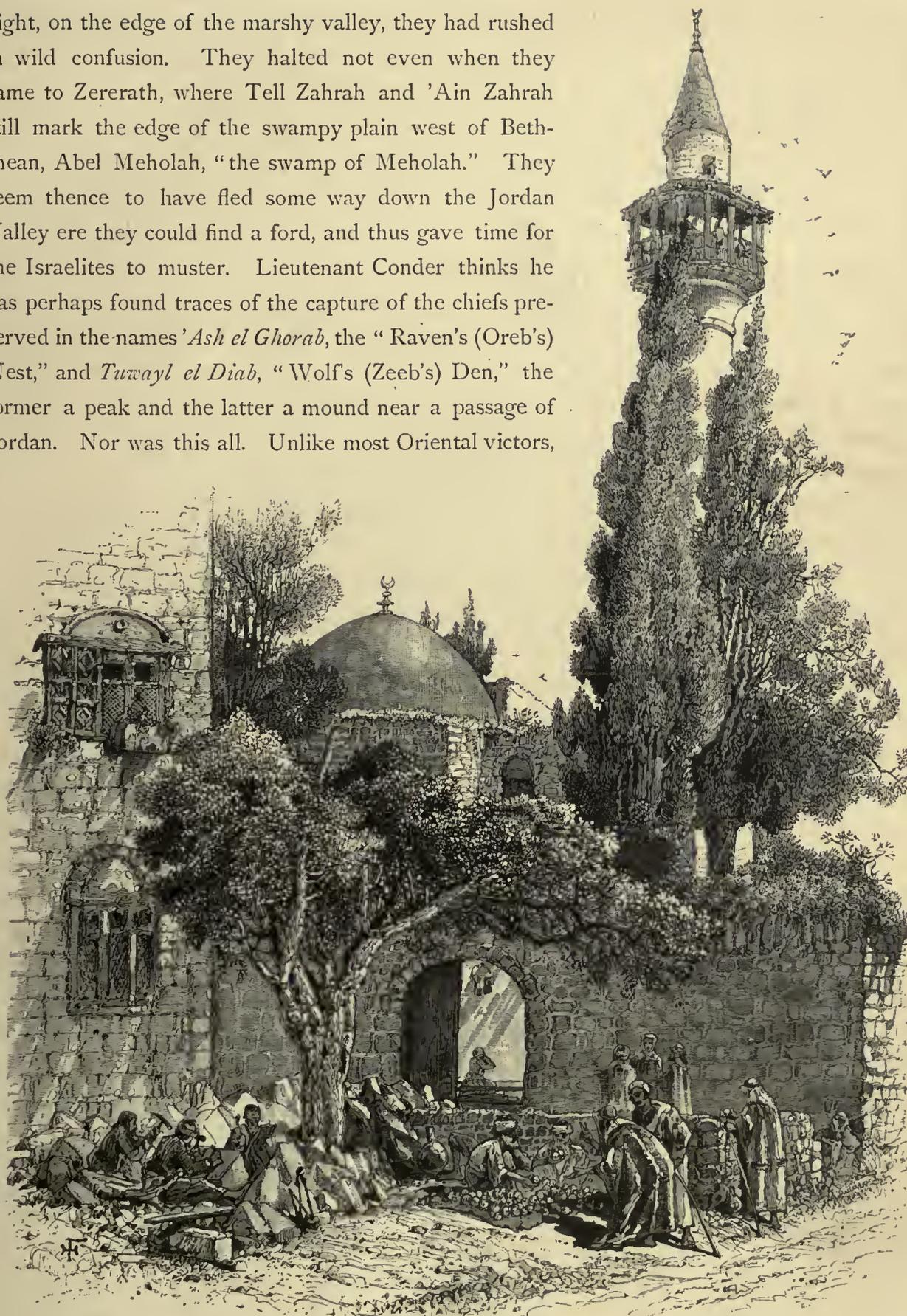


THE FOUNTAIN OF THE VIRGIN, NAZARETH,

On the eastern side of the town. A Bedouin sheikh with his attendant in the foreground carrying long tufted spears. Women filling water-jars and cleansing their garments by soaking and beating them with strong bats made of wood.

were too late to cut off the retreat of the van under Zebah and Zalmunna, but before Gideon and his band, exhausted with victory, could come up, a second battle had been fought at the fords. The courage of the three hundred had proved contagious, and Oreb and Zeeb had been captured and slain. Past Beth-shittah, where the village of Shutta still marks the line of

flight, on the edge of the marshy valley, they had rushed in wild confusion. They halted not even when they came to Zererath, where Tell Zahrah and 'Ain Zahrah still mark the edge of the swampy plain west of Bethshean, Abel Meholah, "the swamp of Meholah." They seem thence to have fled some way down the Jordan Valley ere they could find a ford, and thus gave time for the Israelites to muster. Lieutenant Conder thinks he has perhaps found traces of the capture of the chiefs preserved in the names *'Ash el Ghorab*, the "Raven's (Oreb's) Nest," and *Tuwayl el Diab*, "Wolf's (Zeeb's) Den," the former a peak and the latter a mound near a passage of Jordan. Nor was this all. Unlike most Oriental victors,



MOSQUE AT NAZARETH.

A Bedouin bargaining with a seller of fruit, and a group of stonemasons at work, with their hammers characteristically in their left hands.

Gideon did not hesitate to push his successes far beyond merely driving back the invading hordes. He pushed across Jordan into the wilds of Eastern Manasseh, retraced the path by which Jacob had led his family to the Land of Promise, and long after the remnant of the invaders had dreamt themselves safe in their own Eastern plains, he burst upon them at Jogbehah (Jubêhât), and utterly routed them, and captured their chiefs, Zebah and Zalmunna.

The name of Gilboa evokes, however, not only glorious but also humiliating memories for the annalist of Israel, "for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil." Just two hundred years after the great battle of Gideon, hostile hosts were again mustered on the same plain, almost on the same spot. The Philistines, reversing the march of the Midianites, had come up from the coast, and pitched in Shunem, the modern Sûlem (see page 31), very near the camping ground of the Midianites, but leaning rather more on the hill for security, while Saul gathered the men of Israel at the base of Gilboa, at the fountain of Harod ('Ain Jalûd), the trysting spot of Gideon's heroes, and perhaps in memory of their victory (1 Sam. xxviii. 4). Very different was the result. Unlike the midnight dash of those men of Manasseh was the timid, hesitating conduct of the army of Israel. With the steep, rugged cliffs behind them, they waited the Philistines' assault, on ground where retreat was impossible, where there was no space to rally or reform a shaken line, and where, therefore, defeat or even failure meant utter rout and destruction. Standing over the bluff over Gideon's Pool, we can vividly picture the whole scene. The irregular hedges of prickly pear mark the village of Shunem, where lay the Philistine army. The conscience-stricken king, with dark forebodings weighing down his spirits, longs to take counsel with the witch of Endor, since the Lord will give him no guidance or comfort. To do this he must cross the plain where the Philistines are encamped, and then surmount the ridge of Jebel Duh, on the other side of which, facing Tabor, are the huts and caves of Endor. The midnight visit must have been made round the eastern shoulder of the hill, by a tract which we can trace across the plain, and then a détour would bring him down on Endor. Heavy in heart and weary in body, appalled by the invited though unwelcome apparition of Samuel, the king returns before daybreak, but only just before, and in ill plight for a chivalrous onslaught. The Philistines ere sunrise had deployed across the plain past Jezreel to Aphek (probably Fukû'a), thus turning the position of Saul, and hemming him in between the precipices and the enemy on either side. Thus it was on the bare hill itself that the slaughter chiefly took place, and on the heights that Saul and Jonathan were slain. When we look on the rugged ridges of Gilboa, it requires no stretch of imagination to feel that the malediction has been fulfilled: "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain, upon you, nor fields of offerings: for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away" (2 Sam. i. 21).

If we ascend to the crest of the ridge two or three miles to the east, to El Mezâr, a little Moslem village of great reputed sanctity, we may trace the whole course of the rout of Saul's army, fleeing towards the Jordan valley. Bethshean, the key of the valley, still

remained in Canaanite hands, and hither to their friends and kinsfolk the Philistines carried their trophies, and mutilated and exposed the royal corpses. From Ras Seiban a fine panorama is stretched, in which the widespread ruins and arches of Beisân (Bethshean) are conspicuous. This hill seems still to be a stronghold of the aboriginal races. The fellahîn of Mezâr and Jelbôn are very dark and square-built, and recall our ideal of the old Canaanites. Mohammedan in name and fanaticism, though very ignorant of the tenets of the Prophet, they attach far greater importance to the worship of the new moon on the high places of this ridge, like Ras Seiban, than to the ceremonial of the mosque. They seem, in fact, to be an isolated survival left overlooked by successive waves of conquerors on these barren, uninviting heights.

We have not yet completed the circuit of battle-fields which fringe uninterruptedly this historic plain. Let us look westward, where the nullahs of Taanach, Rimmon, and Megiddo, and others beyond in rapid succession, push into the plain. Here was fought the battle of Megiddo, when the last of the great kings of Judah, Josiah, fell, and the kingdom received a blow from which it never rallied. The Egyptian King, Pharaoh Necho, in his march against Assyria, had rounded the promontory of Carmel, coming up by the Plain of Sharon, and thus following up the course of the Kishon, encountered the army of Judah at Megiddo. We can see the four "tells," or heaps, of Lejjûn, Ta'anuk, Rummaneh, and Mutesellim, which seem to have been the "Quadrilateral" on which the king relied, and where he elected to resist the invader. We know no further details of the battle than the death of Josiah, annually bewailed with the weeping of Hadad-rimmon. It has been suggested that most probably it was on the very same field that the kingdom of Israel had already received its death-blow, and that here Shalmaneser defeated Hosea, its last monarch. The event is referred to by Hosea the prophet, who speaks prophetically of the bow of Israel as broken in the Valley of Jezreel, and again historically of Shalmaneser's butchery at Beth Arbel. We cannot however, identify Beth Arbel with any spot in this neighbourhood; and as there is an almost unquestioned identification of one Beth Arbel with Irbid, close to Hattîn, by the Lake of Gennesaret, we should rather place the overthrow of the northern kingdom on the upland plain of Hattîn, where the last army of the Crusaders was annihilated.

We have lingered long on the sides of Mount Gilboa, for the view from Jezreel has suggested a reminiscence of every battle which has rendered this plain famous. Let us now cross the southern branch of the eastern plain, and we shall find ourselves among scenes which arouse less martial but more hallowed memories than these, which have been called the most secular of sacred history.

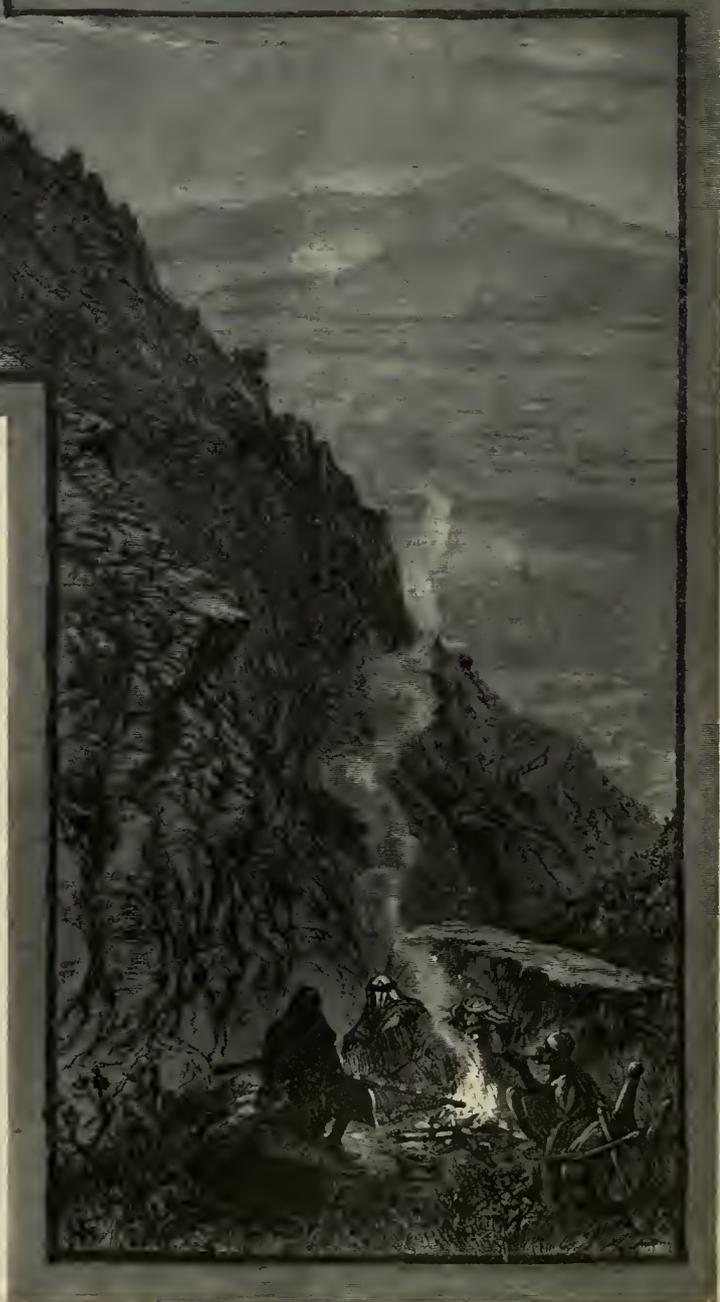
It is but a short walk across the head of the plain from 'Ain Jalûd to Shunem (Sûlem), near the base of the opposite hill; in fact it rests upon its foot. The village is one of the least attractive and most squalid in the country, surrounded by mean enclosures and ungainly hedges of prickly pear, with crooked lanes always ankle-deep either in sand or mud, according to the weather. All the houses but one are of mud, and there is nothing to lead us to picture it as the home either of a fair Shunammite or of a great lady (see page 31).



Yet it must ever have a charm for the Bible student from its close connection with the history of Elisha. It lies full in sight of Carmel, some fifteen or more miles off. Thus we can trace the whole ride of the Shunammite lady across the plain glowing under the heat of the autumnal sun, which had stricken down her boy with sunstroke in the harvest field; and not less easily could the prophet's servant, in

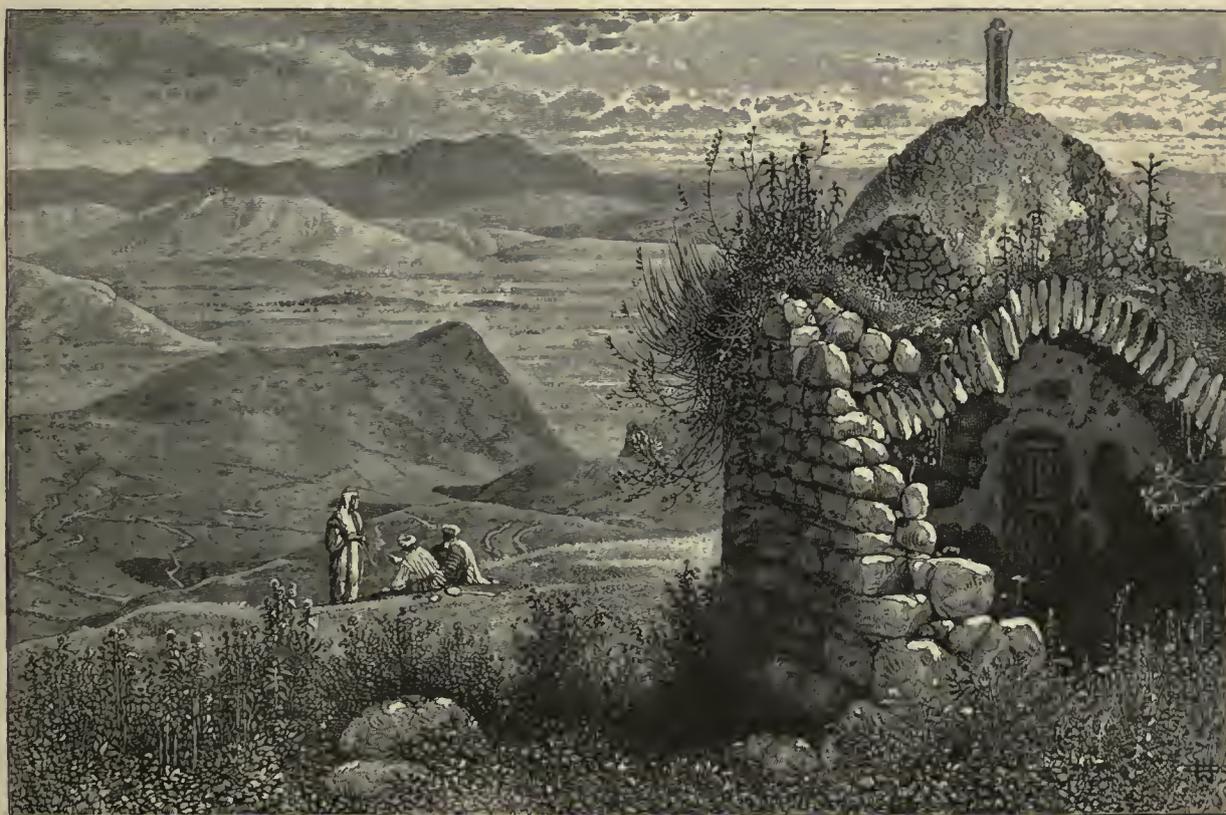
that clear atmosphere, recognise her long before she arrived at his door. The path from Carmel to Abel Meholah, now 'Ain Helweh, in the Jordan Valley, the prophet's birthplace, lies through Shunem; and in Eastern travel this would be the natural halting-place for the night for the pedestrian; and the prophet's chamber with its simple furniture would be a welcome bivouac to the man of God, who, though he lived on Carmel, yet often visited his native valley.

From Sûlem the ordinary road to Nain lies round the north-west shoulder of Jebel Duhy, or Little Hermon, but neither the geologist nor the lover of scenery will grudge the climb to the summit of the hill, or the



THE TRADITIONAL MOUNT OF PRECIPITATION, NAZARETH.

steep descent to the sacred village on its north face. The latter will be able to reconnoitre all the scenes on which we have dwelt at Zerin from a different point of view; the geologist will find here his first example of the basaltic structure so frequent to the north and east, for Duhy is simply the bold and abrupt end of a great upheaved basaltic dyke amidst the rolled and denuded limestone hills on all sides of it. There is a little village on the top, with a holy place (Neby Duhy) of the Mohammedans. The view is very extensive, and for the first time we can trace the great range of Bashan, the peaks in the east of the Hauran on the one side, to the sea by Carmel on the other. To the south the hills of Ephraim are visible as far as Ebal. Not the least interesting view is that to the north, where the dome of Tabor fills



VIEW FROM THE SUMMIT OF THE HILL N.W. OF NAZARETH.

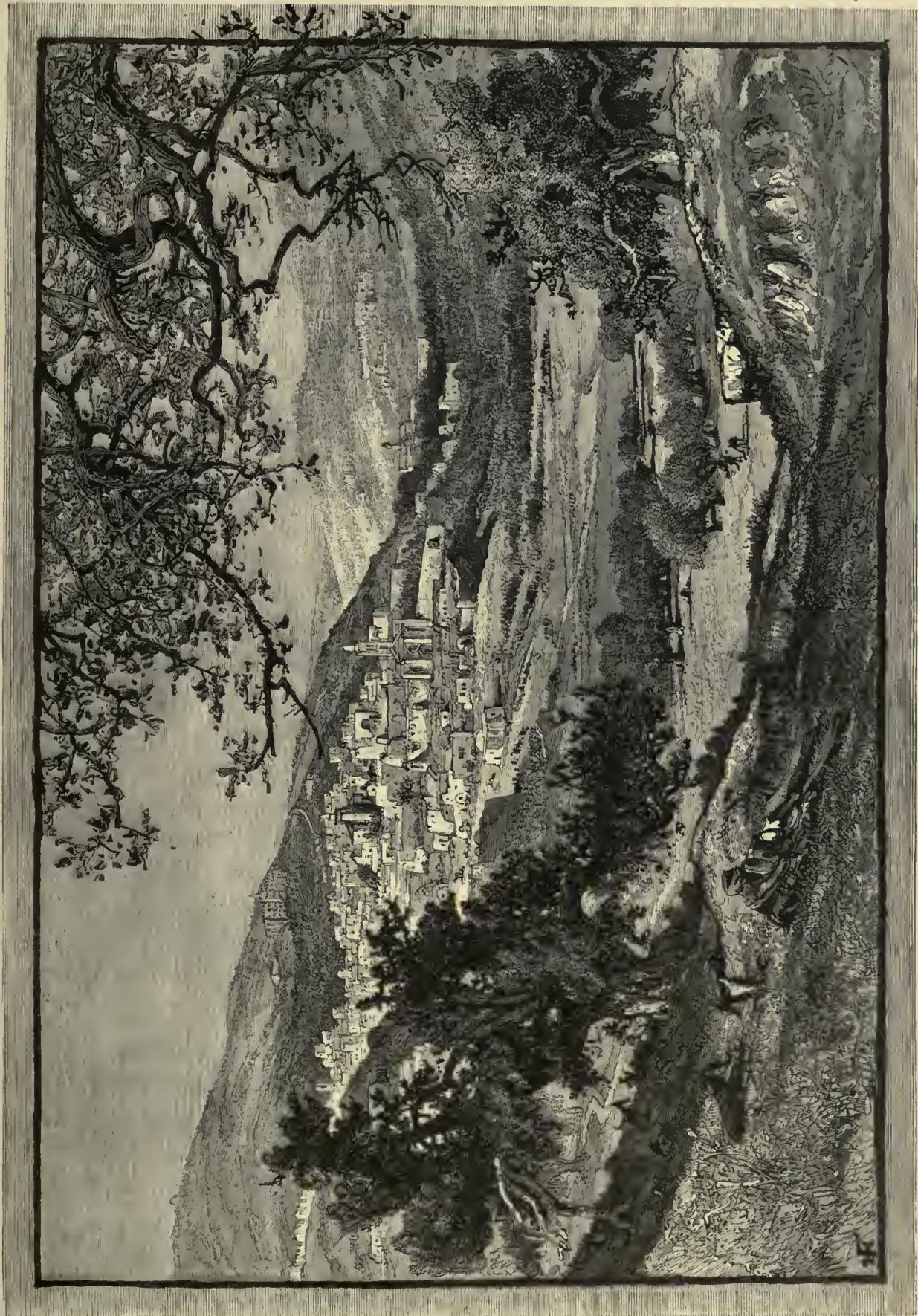
This hill is one thousand seven hundred and eighty-eight feet above the level of the sea, and is crowned by a dilapidated Mohammedan sanctuary called Neby Sa'in.

the foreground, and the peaks of Hermon, glistening in the sunlight far away beyond it, tower against the deep blue background. The people of Nazareth still call Duhy "Little Hermon;" but standing here and looking at the true Hermon, we can well imagine it was this glorious prospect which suggested the line, "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name."

We scramble down among grey and black boulders, or rather huge fragments of basalt, to the village of Nain, several hundred feet below us, but standing on a spur of the ridge to the north and itself some height above the plain. The village itself is a collection of squalid mud hovels, shrivelled and shrunken, for on all sides are the foundations of stone-built houses, extending far beyond the present hamlet, the site of which is indisputable, and fixed by the

unerring mark of the perennial fountain. It bears no trace of having ever been a walled city, but it is hardly probable that so large an enceinte as the foundations reveal should have been anciently unprotected. "The gate of the city" would probably be on the side facing west; and though there are rock-hewn tombs both east and west of the place, it would naturally be on this side, a three hours' walk from Nazareth, that our Lord met the funeral procession of the widowed mother's only son, and by His act of divine power and love has immortalised that obscure village for all time. On the west side also, near the place of tombs, is a little Mohammedan wely or mosque, poor and insignificant, but by its name, the "Place of our Lord Jesus," recalling the incident, and probably built on the site of some chapel consecrated to the memory of the miracle in Christian times. The widow's house, a mere heap of stones, is still pointed out by the inhabitants, who here as elsewhere reverence any tradition connected with the life of our Lord, though they generally have them in strangely distorted forms. Though the graveyard of Nain lies unfenced, marked only by the little stone mound and whitened plastered tombs that serve for headstones, though the buildings, gardens, and trees have all gone, and leave a sense of desolation behind, still the paths and the features of the landscape remain, and are all we want. The story of the past rises up more vividly in a dreary lonely spot like this, than among the chapels and shrines that disfigure and encumber many a so-called "holy place." The old rock-hewn tombs are just behind the modern cemetery, probably used also by the poorer inhabitants in our Lord's time; and very near is the ancient fountain, a square cistern with the water conducted to it from the hills by a small square-built subterranean aqueduct. The fountain is evidently of ancient masonry. (See page 33).

A walk of little more than two miles east brings us to another village, in many of its features a repetition of Nain, a collection of mud huts, pitched almost on the side of the hill after the fashion of swallows' nests, while the rocks behind them are perforated with small caves in all directions (see page 35). Not a tree or shrub relieves the monotony of the scene, only a few untidy straggling hedges of prickly pear by their ungainly shape add to the impression of squalor. It may be fancy from historic association, but certainly the place has a strange weird-like aspect, well suited for the home of the necromancer, and its inhabitants to-day are among the most ragged and squalid of even this poverty-stricken land. As to Nain, so to Endor, nature has enticed inhabitants of some kind, for there is an unfailing spring, from which it takes its name, En-Dôr, the "Fountain of Dor;" and past this place the Midianites fled before Gideon—many fell, perhaps, as they endeavoured to quench their thirst at the spring, in their headlong rush towards the Jordan. But it is the history of Saul which has given the little village its fame. Here we can trace the midnight walk of the king round the shoulder of Jebel Duhy, where the undulating ground would effectually conceal him from the enemy's outposts as he came, forsaken by his God, to consult the witch. The Scripture nowhere states that this dealer with the Evil One dwelt in a cave; but when we look at these grimy caves, each with the remains of buildings in front of it, we may well picture one of them as the cavernous abode, the inner chamber in which she performed her magic rites, and

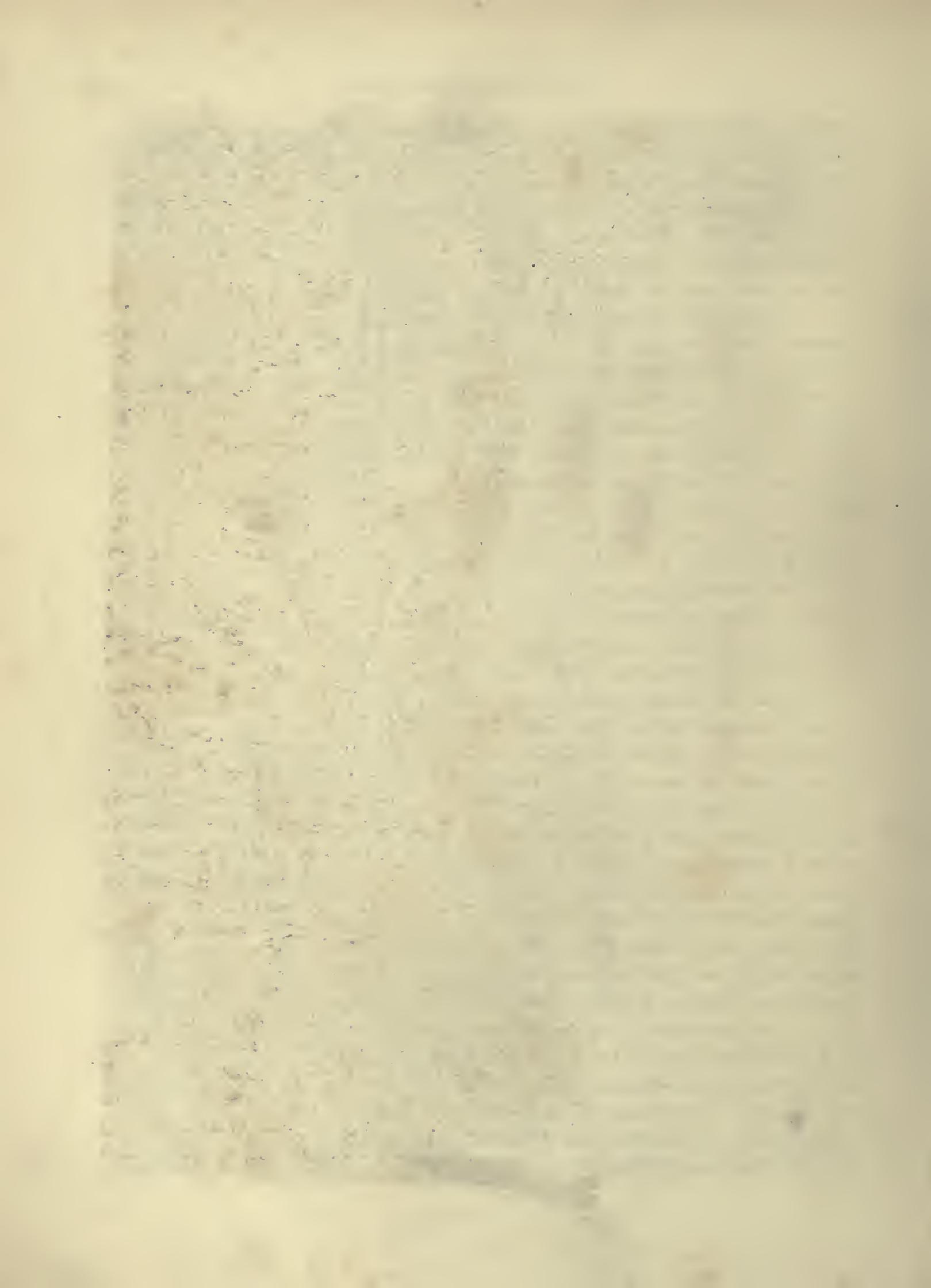


NAZARETH, FROM THE SOUTH.
Now called En Násirah. The large building on the hill of Neby Sa'In is the English Orphanage for Girls.

was appalled at her own success when the prophet's figure arose from the earth. In many hillside villages to the present day a portion of the dwelling is excavated, and forms the inner chamber of the family. They are true cave-dwellings, such as the Amalekites, and before them the Horites, used—the earliest settled homes of man when he left the nomad life, and in parts of Southern Judæa seem to have been the only kind of dwelling used down to the devastation of the country by the Saracens. In fact, they are merely on a small and humble scale the counterparts of the sumptuous and imposing palaces of Petra, where art and civilisation adorned, but never changed, the pristine domestic architecture of the nation.

Two paths will lead us from Endor across the plain to that centre of Christian interest, Nazareth; one, the more direct, to the westward, enters the hilly country by Yâfa, two miles south of Nazareth, the ancient Japhia, noted for a fearful slaughter of the Jews by the Romans, against whom it had been held by Josephus. The palm-trees which surround it give it a cheerful air to which Shunem, Nain, and Endor are strangers. But the best road lies to the north of this, taking the village of Iksal and Debûrieh on the way, which will repay us for the slight *détour*. But the panorama near the foot of Tabor illustrates from a new standpoint the strategy of the various battles on this blood-stained plain. We are on the dividing of the watersheds of the Mediterranean and the Jordan. On our left a little stream trickles towards the Kishon. A few feet to the west a rill from the marsh helps to feed the Wady Bîreh, and finds its way to the Dead Sea. The Jordan Valley is not revealed; but the long and even range of the Hauran, furrowed and ridged with a faint capping of cloud, bounds the eastern horizon, and southwards the taller crest of Ajlûn; on the west the dark hump of Carmel runs into the hills of Samaria, and the corner of Gilboa projects on the south beyond Jebel Duhÿ. The view of Tabor from this road is effective, and gives the impression of greater height than it really possesses, for it is only fourteen hundred feet above the plain, not very much higher than the bluffs behind Nazareth; but its perfect symmetry of form, its isolated position standing out into the plain completely severed from the Galilean hills behind it, its wooded slopes, and especially from this point of view the magnificent setting of snowy Hermon for its background, make it one of the most striking features of Palestine. But we leave its ascent for another chapter; and after a glance at the cheerful, thriving village of Debûrieh, where there is a little Protestant congregation under the auspices of the Church Missionary Society, we turn down on Iksal, the ancient Chesulloth. The place is worth a visit if only for the strong mediæval fortress which still remains, with two fine vaulted halls, built probably by the Crusaders, judging from its architecture and the fact that sculptured sarcophagi and altars are built into the walls, and there are remains of towers at each corner of the square fort.

A bold ridge separates Iksal from Nazareth, known as the Mount of Precipitation, from the tradition that it was to the edge of this cliff that His infuriated townsmen brought our Lord to cast Him down (see page 40). The topography confutes the legend: Nazareth itself, as we shall see, lying on the side of a hill with many a steep cliff above it. Descending this steep ridge, we find ourselves at once in one of the pleasant valleys, planted and cultivated,





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THE VALE OF NAZARETH.



which render Nazareth the least desolate and forsaken of all the towns of Palestine. Itself resting on a very steep slope, it is encircled by hills on all sides, leaving an undulating saucer-shaped basin, with many little valleys running into it on both sides and in front of the town. Dean Stanley remarks that fifteen green hills rise round it like the edge of a shell to guard it from intrusion, "enclosed by mountains as a flower is by leaves." Unlike Bethlehem and the cities of Judah and Benjamin perched on the hilltops, unlike Shechem, where gushing fountains and perennial streams have invited the earliest settlements of men, the site of Nazareth offers none of the advantages which have usually determined the position of Eastern cities. It seems to court obscurity and seclusion. The encircling cluster of hills is in fact the melting away of the hills of Galilee as they are lost in the Plain of Esdraclon. Nazareth clings to the steep slope of the last of these which deserves the name of hill, while the amphitheatre in front is formed by the smaller ridges, mere gentle swellings enclosing the shallow basin, which forms the foreground in their sweep. The enclosing sides are towards the south and east well cultivated, corn-fields mingle with vineyards and fig-trees, and the occasional date palms, which here reach their northern limit, are marked features in the home landscape (see page 46). But the encircling rim is bare, rocky, and in winter white and naked, a soft chalky limestone. However refreshing, the scenery about Nazareth is the reverse of grand. There are no sublime heights, no deep ravines, no forest solitudes, as a French writer has suggested, to fill a boyish mind with wild dreams or enthusiastic visions, nothing here to suggest dreams of heroism or to feed the reveries of romance—an ordinary busy place, it was the natural nursery of one whose mission it was to meet man and man's deepest needs on the platform of commonplace daily life. Unknown and unnamed in Old Testament history, itself the theatre of no one event in the nation's life, though almost within sight of its most stirring scenes, it never reached the dignity of a walled town or city; till within the last few years it was but a village, owing its celebrity only to that event which has entwined its memories with our holiest thoughts. It has but one fountain, and very few remains of antiquity, consisting only of the traces of buildings and foundations a little above the present town, which seems to have slid down the hill a little from the ancient village. The erections of Nazareth are for the most part very modern. It is the one place in Palestine which has thriven and grown in the last few years, and out of a population of six thousand counts about four thousand Christians. The Jews are very few, and have only been drawn by the allurements of trade, for the associations of Nazareth are naturally repellent to them, and they have their own holy cities of Safed and Tiberias within easy distance. But though the buildings are modern, the streets are truly Oriental in their lack of arrangement. The sides of the hill are so steep, that frequently while there are houses on one side, the other side of the street is simply a wall of rock, where the stones have been hewn for the houses opposite. Heaps of rubbish intervene in most inopportune spots, and the writer well remembers, on his first entrance into Nazareth by night, finding himself and his horse perched on the roof of a house, to which he had ridden from a mound of masons' refuse.

The holy places of Nazareth are as diverse as the sects which are there represented, but there is only one which has any interest for the thoughtful student, the Greek Church of the Annunciation, near the fountain of the town. The fountain, or rather the mouth of the pipe by which the water is conveyed from the spring to a large open basin with drinking and



A GALILEAN HAMLET NEAR NAZARETH.

A garden-house in the foreground, with a birket, or raised pool, adjoining it; water flows from the pool into little channels which traverse the garden.

washing troughs fed from it, is in an open place surrounded with cactus and olive trees, the favourite camping ground of European travellers, just to the east of the town. This must ever have been the well of Nazareth, and the only one. Hither come from sunrise till long after sunset the maids and matrons of Nazareth to fill their tall pitchers, with their little ones

trooping at their heels. The open space is the rendezvous of the town, for there is no "gate of the city" where there is no wall. Hither we may be quite sure the Virgin-mother daily came followed by her Divine Son, and often He, too, as He grew up, would carry his pitcher with his mother, as we may see the boys of Nazareth to-day. Here, says the tradition, the angel Gabriel appeared to Mary, and hence the Great Church of the Greeks just above is dedicated to Gabriel. The present church is a modern structure, but occupies the site of one which existed in the time of Arculph, A.D. 700. The spring is under the church, a portion of which is actually cut out of the rock. There is a well let down in the pavement, by which water is raised for the use of pilgrims, and a channel of masonry at a considerable depth conveys the stream to the public fountain. The Latin holy place is the Franciscan convent, where many an Englishman has been hospitably and kindly entertained, and which, it is pretended, occupies, or rather contains, the site of the house of Joseph and Mary before it took its aerial voyage to Loretto. This site, too, is as old as the time of Arculph, and a succession of churches has occupied the ground. At first we only know of a rock-cut grotto, said to be the Virgin's house. Then succeeded a Greek church. The Crusaders erected a great church on the same site, of which portions existed when Maundrell visited Nazareth, two hundred and fifty years ago. The modern church and monastery is only about one hundred and eighty years old, but undoubtedly cover the traditional grotto, which is still shown. The other so-called holy places, such as Joseph's workshop, are of comparatively recent origin, and have little to interest, nor have they any pretensions to architectural beauty. No less than six Christian churches and sects are represented in Nazareth, and for once the English Church asserts her rightful position as the representative of the Reformation in the East. Three of the most conspicuous buildings in Nazareth are the English Church, the Protestant Hospital connected with it, open to all, and the Orphanage for Girls, recently built by the English Female Education Society for the East. They all stand high, and the orphanage overlooks the whole place, perched just beneath the summit of Neby Sa'in. The English Church was raised by the gifts of English visitors, but its Gothic tower was the gift of the Grand Duke of Mecklenburg, as a memorial of his visit to the Holy Land. The schools, both of the Church Missionary Society, in the centre of the town, and of the Female Education Society, will repay a visit, and have stimulated largely educational effort on the part of the native churches. There is a considerable Protestant population in Nazareth, which owes much to the persevering labours for many years of the Rev. J. Zeller, now of Jerusalem.

We cannot fail to notice both the bright costumes and the healthy, intelligent, and often beautiful faces and figures of the women of Nazareth, owing, doubtless, in some degree, as in the case of their Bethlehemite sisters, to the admixture of Crusading blood in their veins. But this cannot be the sole cause, as in the sixth century they are spoken of as noted for their beauty, which was attributed to the blessing of the Virgin. Being chiefly Christians they are unveiled, and in some respects dress like the women of Bethlehem. They differ, however, in their head-dress, carrying on each side of the face a rouleau of silver coins fastened to a sort

of pad which is fitted to the head. Doubtless it was to coins worn in this fashion that our Lord alludes in the Parable of the Lost Piece of Silver. Poor indeed would she be who had only twenty such pieces, and piteously would she bewail the loss of one, as she lit her lamp and searched the dark windowless inner chamber; nor less joyously would she proclaim its recovery as she stood at eventide with her neighbours by the well.

Before leaving Nazareth we must take a farewell view of now familiar Esdraelon from



MOUNT CARMEL FROM THE CASTLE AT SEFÛRÏYEH, THE SEPPHORIS OF JOSEPHUS.

The Roman name was Diocæsarea. The village lies on the south-west side of the hill; on the north side are the ruins of a church built by the Crusaders on the supposed site of the home of the parents of the Virgin.

the height of Neby Sa'in, above the town (see page 41). Often as it has been described, there are new features which strike the beholder from each new point of view. Here we see as we never did before Carmel jutting out into the sea, and the pearly beading of surf which fringes the Bay of Acre; while to the north we have opened out to us for the first time the steep Galilean hills, the spur of Lebanon, often well wooded, and introducing us to features of scenery unknown farther south.



MOUNT TABOR.

Bearing among the Arabs, like so many other mountains, only the general name "Jebel et Târ."

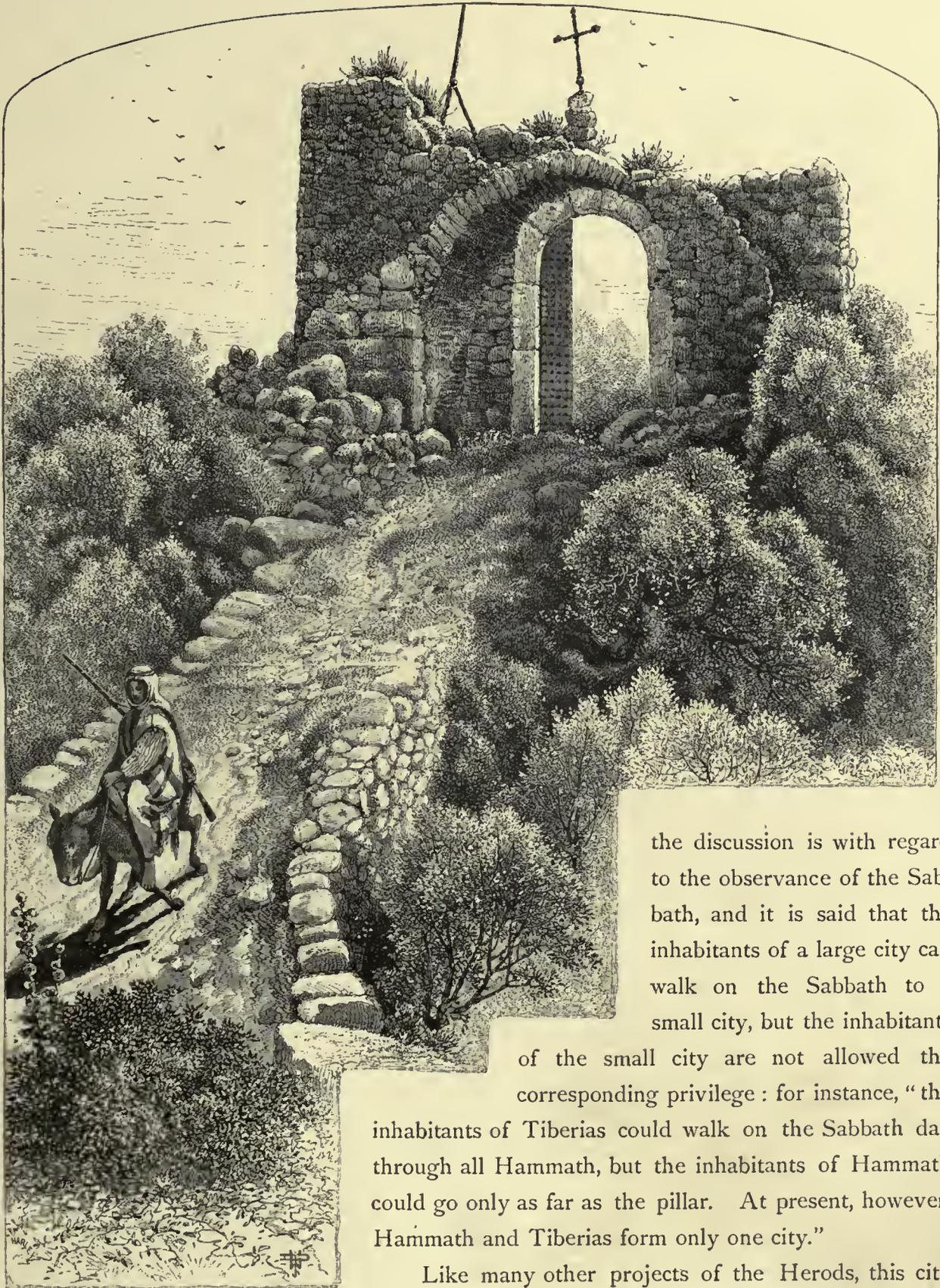
GALILEE.

GALILEE is a name which awakens in the mind of the Christian the most sacred and tender memories. It brings before us the family and early home of our Lord, and the scene of a large part of his active ministry. We think at once of Nazareth (see page 43), Cana of Galilee (see page 54), Capernaum, and Tiberias (see page 65), of Mount Tabor, of

the plain of Gennesaret (see page 70), and of the quiet lake upon which the Master sailed, and by which he taught, and "did many mighty works" (see page 71). A more charming and picturesque region could not be found in the East than Galilee, the northern province of the Holy Land. Mountains, valleys, plains, rivers, springs, and lakes combine to make the natural scenery remarkable, even when compared with those portions of the world which are much better known and far more widely praised.

With regard to particular localities in Palestine, it is a great satisfaction to know that about some of the most interesting places there can be no doubt. Hermon, Tabor, Carmel, Jerusalem, the Jordan, the Sea of Galilee, and even humble Nazareth, occupy the same points that they did when looked upon or visited by Christ. This certainty adds much to the value of all historical allusions to any given place, and greatly enhances the pleasure of those who love to study the past on the very ground where its great events were enacted.

Tiberias was one of the most important towns of Galilee. It was once an attractive and beautiful city, but to-day it is in ruins, like almost everything else in the country upon which the eye may rest. Even the very soil of Palestine has degenerated with the decay of former enterprise and prosperity. He who visits Tiberias now will find the shore lined with ruins of what were once stately structures, filth and wretchedness among its degraded inhabitants; and his view of the lake and its surrounding hills must be obtained, not from the roof of some splendid palace, but from the broken city walls and the crumbling castle (see pages 59 and 63). The present town (see page 62) which travellers visit is comparatively modern, while the ancient city of Herod Antipas stretched to the south of it along the shore for more than a mile. The space between the water's edge and the steep hill to the west is completely covered with ruins, and among these are to be found whatever remains still exist of the times of Christ. The hot springs (see page 65), the tombs, the fine columns and ornamental work, the theatre, and the wall which runs up to the summit of the hill just referred to, where stood the ancient castle, date no doubt from the first century, if not from the days of Antipas himself. The family of Herods were famous builders, and it is to a son of Herod the Great that Tiberias owes, if not its origin, at least its rank among the cities of Galilee. Such attractions for health and pleasure as were afforded by these hot springs would have made this place widely known, and one of great resort from the earliest occupation of the country; and in the list of the fortified cities of Naphtali (Joshua xix. 35—38) these springs are doubtless referred to under the name Hammath. The order of names in this passage is Hammath, Rakkath, and Chinnereth; and some scholars have supposed that Rakkath is identical with Tiberias. If this cannot be proved, there is evidence that immediately north of the hot springs there was an ancient town, which was so thoroughly remodelled and rebuilt by Herod Antipas as to justify the general impression that Tiberias was founded by him. Even after the city was built it remained in some respects distinct from that at the springs, and in other respects it was regarded as identical with it. This fact will be sufficiently illustrated by the following statement from the Jerusalem Talmud, where



BÂB EL HAWA (GATE OF THE WIND),

On the summit of Mount Tabor. It was formerly part of a mediæval fortress, but now serves as an approach to the Latin monastery.

the discussion is with regard to the observance of the Sabbath, and it is said that the inhabitants of a large city can walk on the Sabbath to a small city, but the inhabitants of the small city are not allowed the corresponding privilege : for instance, "the inhabitants of Tiberias could walk on the Sabbath day through all Hammath, but the inhabitants of Hammath could go only as far as the pillar. At present, however, Hammath and Tiberias form only one city."

Like many other projects of the Herods, this city was not built without giving great offence to the stricter Jews. It seems that a portion of the ground enclosed or built upon by Antipas had been an ancient

cemetery, and was consequently unclean. The thought of residing there was repulsive to the Jews, and Herod had to resort to various expedients to induce people to live in his new town. Josephus states that "many were necessitated by Herod to come thither out of the country belonging to him, and were by force compelled to be its inhabitants. Some of them were persons of condition. He also admitted poor people, such as those that were collected from all parts, to dwell in it. Nay, some of them were not quite freemen, and these he was a benefactor to, and made them free in great numbers, but obliged them not to forsake the city, by building them very good houses at his own expense, and by giving them land also; for he was sensible that to make this place a habitation was to transgress the ancient Jewish laws, because many sepulchres had to be taken away in order to make room for the city" ("Antiquities," xviii. 2, 3). This offence passed away with time, for a generation later Tiberias and Sepphoris (see page 48) were the most important cities of Galilee, and still later Tiberias became the seat of the Sanhedrim, and the residence of many learned and eminent rabbis. Further, it had at one time as many as thirteen synagogues. The Mishna was completed here by Rabbi Judah, called "the Holy," A.D. 220. The Jerusalem Talmud was also written here, about a century later, and the ancient Jewish writers themselves are authority for the statement that "the university of Tiberias was greater than that of Zippor or Sepphoris." The graves of Rabbis Ami, Ashe, and Akiba, and of the famous scholar Maimonides, are pointed out in the Jewish burial-ground to the west of the present city. St. Jerome also considered himself fortunate in having had for his teacher in Hebrew a learned Jew from this famous city.

It is not known that Christ ever visited Tiberias, and some writers would account for the supposed fact by a reference to the ceremonial uncleanness of the place, while others think he did not wish to put himself unnecessarily into the power of Antipas.

The rebuilding of Tiberias cannot have taken place before A.D. 20, or later than A.D. 27; hence we know nearly at what period of Christ's life this work went on. With the princely means of Antipas lavished upon it to make it a perfect city, its growth was rapid and its period of prosperity was permanent and long-continued. Here rose, as if by magic, fine Grecian colonnades, Roman gates, and costly public edifices, including the palace of Herod, while the streets and squares of the city were adorned with marble statues, and its synagogue was one of the finest in the province of Galilee. Here the council of the nobles of Tiberias, consisting of six hundred members, held its sessions during the Jewish War. The strength of the place at that time is indicated by the fact that Vespasian did not dare to approach the city with less than three legions of his best troops.

The steep hill already referred to, which overlooked the old city, rises to a perpendicular height of one thousand feet. It is full of ancient caves, some of which are over one hundred feet in length, with cemented walls and abundant evidences of their having been occupied as dwellings. They are now principally the abode of hyenas, foxes, and jackals. The old wall of the town led up on the south side of this hill in a zigzag line, and cisterns exist at



H. FENN. DELF.

E. BRANDARD, SCULPT.

TIBERIAS.

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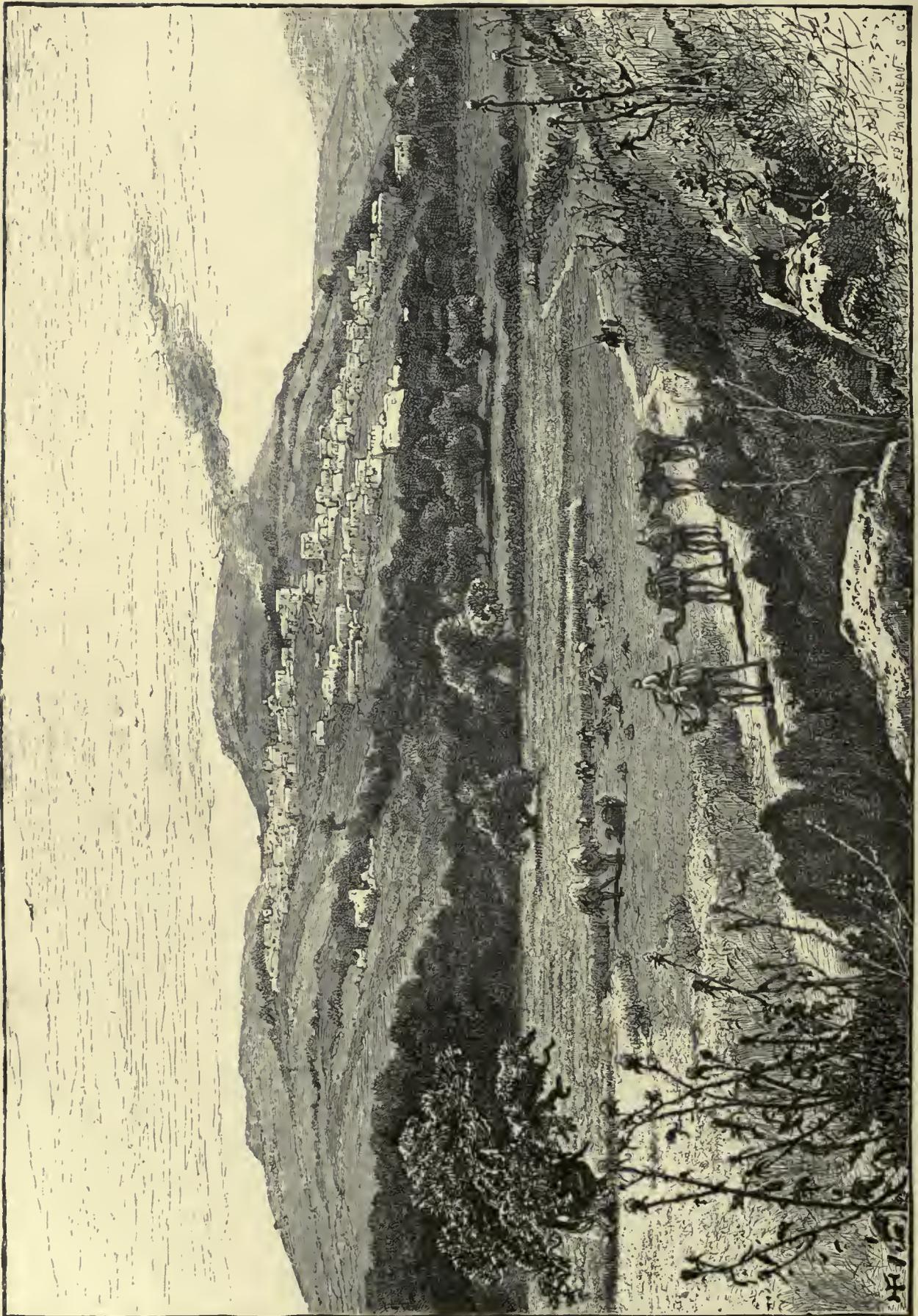


several of the angles; while the castle on the summit must, like Safed, Tabor, and Gamala, have formed one of the strongholds of the country. On the brow of the hill, a little to the west of this castle, we ourselves discovered a hot-air cave, which we made more than one attempt to explore. Its distance from the hot springs would be nearly a mile, to say nothing of its height above them; but the current of hot vapour had made it impossible to take any lights with us, and in the interior the walls and rocks were so slippery that it was unsafe to go far, although we had a rope lashed round us, and strong men outside the cave to hold it, who might thus recover us in case of any accident. This cave is a natural and perfect steam-bath.

The Jews in Tiberias appear to be very numerous, yet they number probably less than one thousand souls. Not far from the shore, and north of the Jews' quarter, is the Latin convent, said to have been built on the site of the miraculous draught of fishes (John xxi.), where small and poor accommodations can be obtained by the traveller. There is also a building which answers to a *locanda*, or hotel, and a Jew of the better class also entertains travellers in his own house; but one must not expect much luxury or comfort in Tiberias, and a tent on the hillside or the shore of the lake is by far the cleanest and the most desirable mode of sojourn in this "holy city." The hot baths are frequented by Arabs, Syrians, and foreigners; and sometimes the crowds about them, and along the shore toward the city, present not only a lively, but, on account of the strange costumes of the people, a variegated scene. An old man named Haj Ali, whom we employed once as a hunter, an Algerine by birth, who had visited Mecca—a quiet, reserved, and dignified person—was the keeper of the bath, and from him we had "the freedom of the place." A serious drawback to comfort, however, was the fact that visitors bathe in the common basin, and the water is changed none too often. Some complaints are no doubt benefited by bathing here, and, with proper care, the springs might be made not only a comfort or a luxury, but a real blessing to the people of the land. The baths themselves, and all the buildings about them, were thoroughly repaired by Ibrahim Pasha in 1832—40; but to-day, although still in use, they are practically in ruins, "a fine example of the wise Turkish administration."

It was about the middle of the last century that the present walls of Tiberias were built and the castle repaired, which, had it not been for the terrible earthquake in 1837, might even now be in tolerable condition. As it is, the walls are dilapidated and the spacious castle is deserted, or occupied only by a handful of soldiers—a sort of police force, whose pay is very small and whose living is precarious. Near the modern castle is an old mosque that has shared in the general neglect and decay, and the few stunted palms about it hardly remind one of the gardens, and groves, and natural beauty of the royal city of Antipas (see pages 62 and 63).

But if the castle is in ruins, the view from it to the east and north, over the Sea of Galilee, is inspiring (see page 59). On the east side of the lake there is a wall of hills which are really the western bank of the great table-land of Gaulanitis (see page 62). On



KEFR KENNA, THE TRADITIONAL CANA OF GALILEE. Pleasantly situated on an eminence on the south side of the fertile plain of Büttauf. It contains about six hundred inhabitants, half of whom are Moslems and half Greek Christians.

the edge of the plateau a ridge is seen projecting to the west, and its entire summit is occupied by the ruins of Gamala, which resisted with great energy the attacks of the Roman army under Vespasian. On the west side this ridge drops perpendicularly to the lake, and on the north and south sides into deep wadys, and it can be approached only from the east. The natural strength of this fortress was very great. In the siege of the place both Vespasian and Titus took part, and also Herod Agrippa II. (called King Agrippa in Acts xxv.), who



THE WELL AT KEFR KENNA.

The sculptured sarcophagus in the foreground is used as a trough for cattle.

was wounded. Among the troops engaged here were the fifth and fifteenth legions, and the famous tenth, which subsequently, at the siege of Jerusalem, was encamped on the Mount of Olives. Beyond Gamala, a distance of two and a half miles, we have a good view of Fik, the Aphek of 1 Kings xx. 26. The country about the town is level and exceedingly fertile, and the city has been an extensive and wealthy one. The place is memorable in the wars between the Syrians and the Israelites, when, after a great battle disastrous to the former, they fled into this city, and twenty-seven thousand of their men were slain by the wall falling upon

them. On the shore of the lake, some distance north of Gamala, is a ruined town called Kersa or Gersa, which should probably be identified with Gergesa of the New Testament times. The valley and shore about it are broad, and in Wady Semakh, which runs past it on the north, flows a beautiful and living stream. Just south of this place is the probable scene of the miracle of the demoniac and the herd of swine (Matthew viii.). Still farther north, the great plain of Batiha appears at the north-west corner of the lake, and where it touches the Jordan the site of the eastern Bethsaida can be seen. That was the burial-place



THE SHRINE OF NEBY YÛNAS, AT EL MESHHAD.

This is one of the many Moslem sanctuaries in Syria dedicated to the Prophet Jonah.

of Herod Philip, one of the mildest and best of the rulers who bore that name, so hateful to the orthodox Jews.

The opening in the basalt hills is seen, through which the Upper Jordan descends to enter the Lake of Tiberias. Forty miles in the same direction rises Hermon's majestic dome, the grandest object in all the landscapes of Syria. The Sea of Galilee, by which we are standing, is seven hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean, while the summit of Hermon is nearly ten thousand feet above it. It is almost beyond the power of language to convey the impressiveness of such a scene as this. The apostle John often stood by this lake, and sailed upon its surface, and lifted his eyes to the white head of this venerable mountain; and, if we

have a right to say that natural objects furnished him with symbols and figures, it may be that Hermon, the Jordan, and the Sea of Galilee were in his mind when he spoke, in the Book of Revelation, of the "great white throne," proceeding from it "a river of the water of life," and "before it a sea of glass." No more appropriate language can be chosen with which to express the beauty and majesty of the scene witnessed from this ancient castle of Tiberias (see page 59).

From the top of Mount Hermon one can look down upon a large part of Palestine and Syria. To the east lies Damascus, one of the oldest cities in the world, a paradise in the midst of a desert. To the south-east the whole Bashan plain is visible, dotted everywhere with ruins. To the south the Jordan Valley can be seen throughout its entire length. It is a vast chasm, from six to twelve miles wide, sunk between two walls of mountains which rise on either side from two to five thousand feet. Almost at the foot of Hermon is Lake Hûleh, the Merom of the Bible. Farther south is the Lake of Tiberias, while seventy miles below that one beholds the Dead Sea. To the west of the Jordan rise, peak after peak, many of the sacred hills of western Palestine, such as Tabor, the hill at Nazareth, Olivet, Carmel, and others; while the expanse of the Mediterranean, which stretches away to the sky, seems almost boundless.

But, if the view from Hermon is one of the finest in the world, there are among the mountains of Galilee a few summits which are not difficult of access, and which command a wide and beautiful prospect. First among these should be mentioned the hill at Nazareth and Mount Tabor (see page 49). To reach the latter from Tiberias, we ascend from the lake a thousand feet, and reach the edge of an uneven table-land, which stretches to the south almost to the very foot of the mountain. This is a region of great fertility, and, towards the western part, is dotted with oak-groves, which adorn the valleys and gentle slopes, and furnish delightful shade. Its broad fields are finely cultivated, and rich harvests reward the husbandmen. It has a few small villages, but the most interesting point is the great khan of merchants, Khan et Tujjâr, called thus from the fact that fairs or markets are held there every Monday. The buildings are not kept in repair, nor is the place inhabited, but on market-days the whole region is alive with tents and camels, horses, donkeys, sheep, goats, and cattle, men, women, and children, peasants, Arabs, and Jews. There is a good deal of noise and loud talking; the barking of numerous dogs adds to the general confusion; buying, selling, and exchange go on until the day is ended, and the following morning discloses the fact that the busy crowd has dispersed. Much of the trade is what we call "barter," but Arabs from a distance, and peasants and village-people, are able in this way to supply themselves with what they need for their tents and houses, or for their work in the fields.

Tabor, no doubt, appears most imposing when approached from the Esdraelon plain on the south (see page 23). It rises, however, so abruptly and to such a height above the surrounding country that, when approached from any point, its graceful form and rounded summit not only attract the eye of the beholder, but convince him that Tabor deserves to

be classed with Hermon, which the Psalmist has done (lxxxix. 12), as one of the finest landmarks of Palestine. The mountain rises two thousand feet above the Mediterranean, and one thousand feet above the surrounding table-land, from which the ascent to the summit occupies about fifty minutes. We climb along a made road, which is broken and difficult at certain points, but every step gives us a wider and wider view of the country below, and rough roads and hardships are forgotten in our excitement and surprise that, at a single glance, our eyes can sweep over so much of fair Galilee. Soon after the summit is reached, and while on the way to the Latin Convent, one passes through a pointed archway called Bâb el Hawa, or Gate of the Wind, which may have been built by the Crusaders, or near the period of their dominion (see page 51). In both Greek and Latin Convents the stranger can find very comfortable quarters, and the monks are among the most obliging and kind that are met with in Syria. They have large gardens, which supply them with vegetables



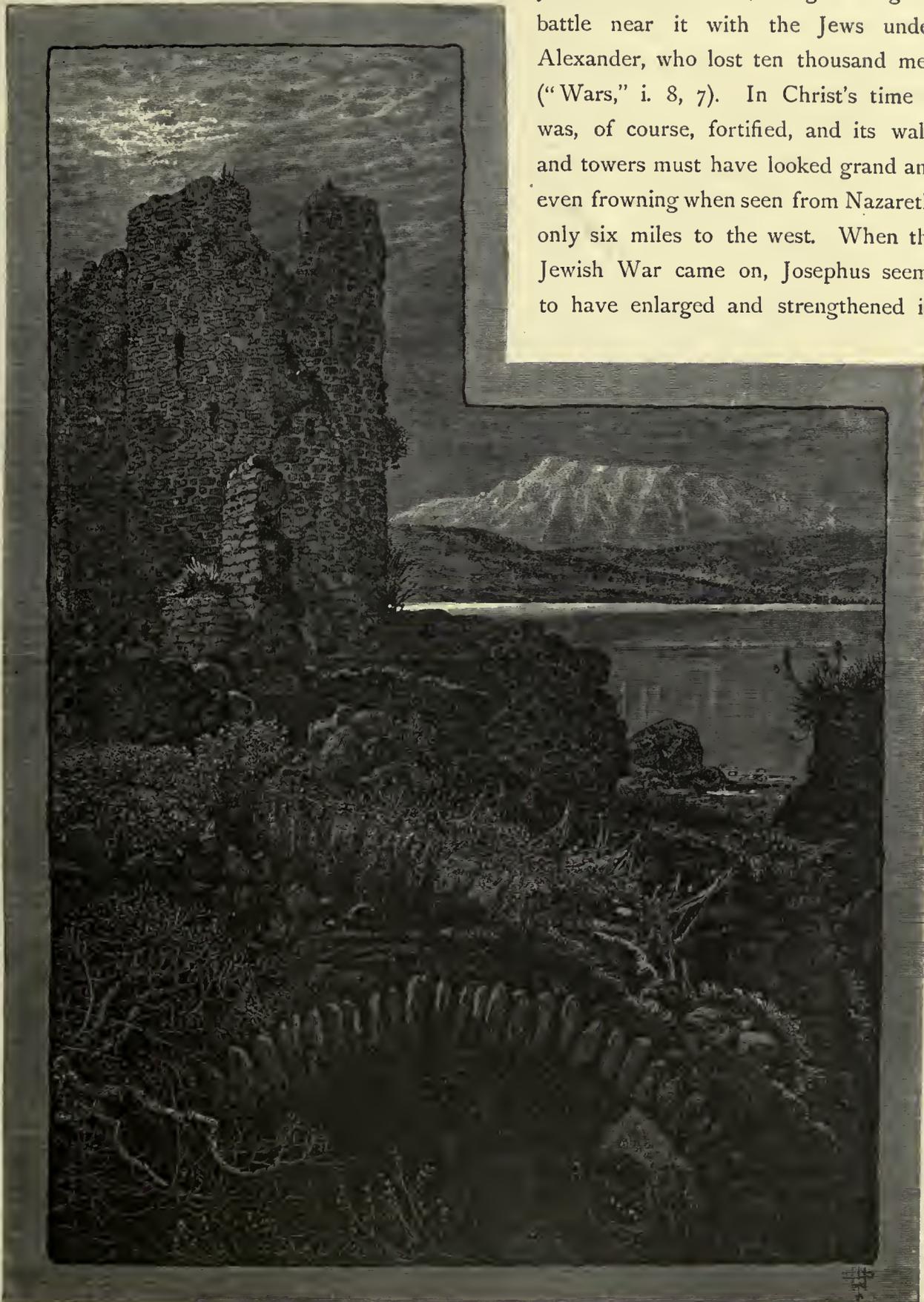
THE HORNS OF HATTÎN (KÛRÛN HATTÎN).

The summit of the eastern horn is a little circular plain; and the top of the lower ridge between the two horns is also level.

and fruit in abundance, while, on days when the heat was severe, we found their cells not only neat, but cool and quiet, and delightful as a place of rest.

Tabor comes prominently into notice in very early times, amid the stirring events which attended the defeat of Jabin by Deborah and Barak (Judges iv.). At the command of Deborah, Barak collected a valiant army of ten thousand men from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun, and encamped on this watch-tower of Galilee. The great captain, Sisera, rallied his army, described as a "host" and as a "multitude," and "nine thousand chariots of iron," on the Esdraelon plain towards the river Kishon, within sight of the enemy, where he suffered an ignominious defeat. The song which celebrates that day of battle is one of the most vivid and thrilling that can be found in any literature. All through the nation's history this point seems to have been used as a fortress. In 218 B.C., Antiochus the Great, before extending his campaign across the Jordan, subdued Mount Tabor, and garrisoned it with his own troops. Gabinius, fifty-three

years before Christ, fought a great battle near it with the Jews under Alexander, who lost ten thousand men ("Wars," i. 8, 7). In Christ's time it was, of course, fortified, and its walls and towers must have looked grand and even frowning when seen from Nazareth, only six miles to the west. When the Jewish War came on, Josephus seems to have enlarged and strengthened its



NORTHERN END OF THE SEA OF GALILEE, FROM THE CASTLE OF TIBERIAS.
With Mount Hermon (Jebel esh Sheikh) in the distance.

defences, and placed there a strong garrison. Vespasian's general, Placidus, who was sent against the place, "found it impracticable to ascend the heights," and obtained possession of it only by stratagem. Its history during the long struggles between Crusaders and Moslems was a chequered one, and even in modern times this sacred mountain has become associated with one of the greatest conquerors of the world. The famous battle of Mount Tabor, which occurred April 16th, 1799, between the French and Turks, was fought near it by General Kléber under the eye of Napoleon himself.

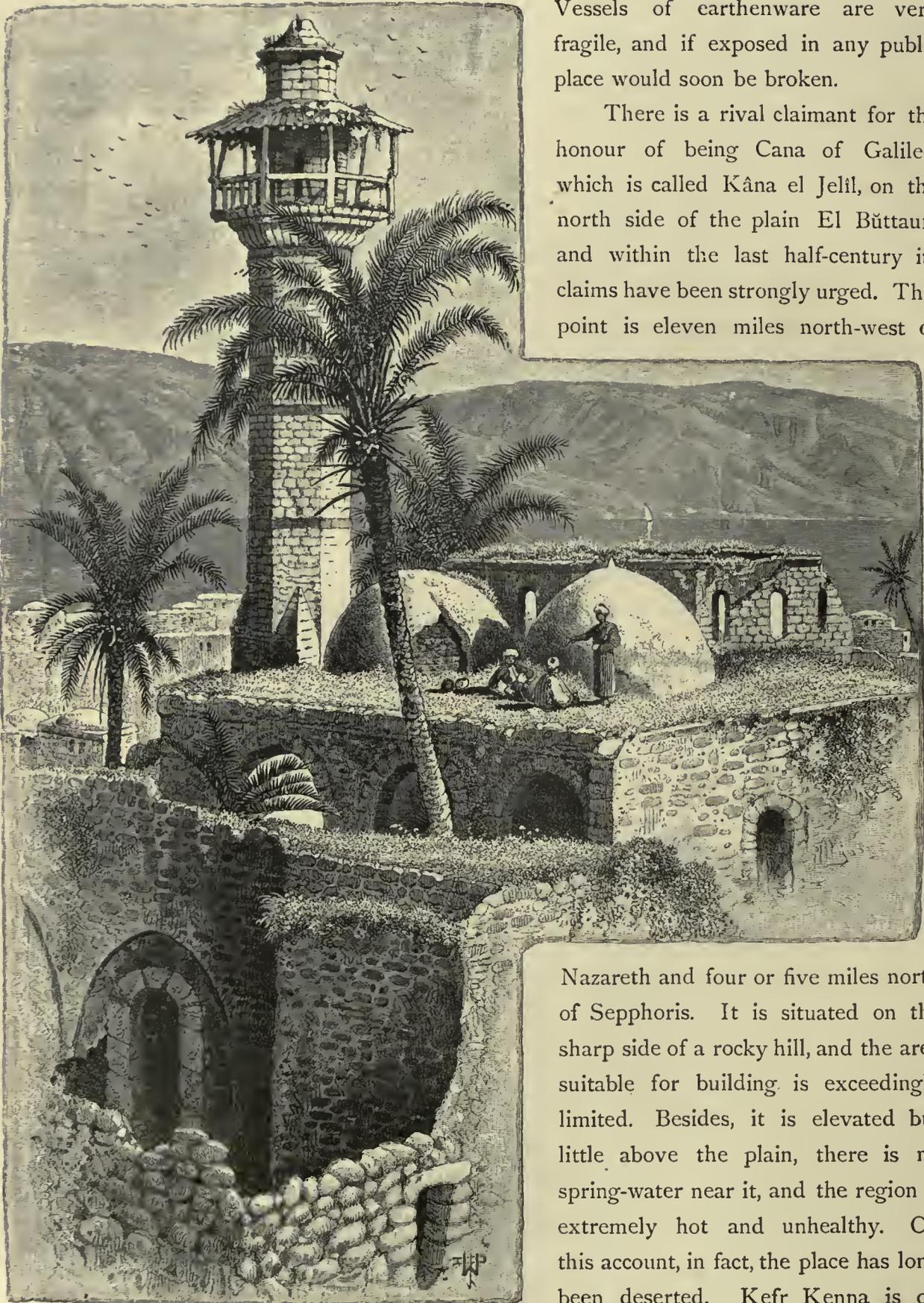
But far more inspiring than its historical associations is the magnificent view from its summit. Not only are beautiful fields in sight, but also many peaceful cities and villages, the silent mountains which were the pride of the Hebrews, and much of the country which was familiar to our Lord. In the north we see the Horns of Hattin (see page 58), Safed, and Hermon, the north end of the Sea of Galilee (see page 59), and the great plateau of Bashan to the east; in the south-east, the hills of Gilead and the chasm-like depression of the Jordan Valley; in the south, Gilboa (see page 31), and the hills of Samaria (see page 30); and in the west, Mount Carmel. Below us is the plain of Esdraelon, "one vast carpet thrown back to the hills of Samaria and the foot of Carmel," and north-west towards the Mediterranean. The landscape is exceedingly diversified, and the fertility of the soil of this province enabled it to be one of the most densely-populated regions on the globe. One fact connected with Mount Tabor is deserving of special notice, and that is, the clouds that gather about it during a large part of the summer (see page 49). In an almost cloudless land this gives special beauty to this isolated peak, which may have been one reason why the Hebrews gave special prominence to it when they declared, "as Tabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea" (Jeremiah xlvi. 18). The abundance of dew which falls there is also noticeable, and to this circumstance is to be attributed the freshness of vegetation on the slopes and about the foot of the mountain.

In the fourth century, the period in which St. Jerome flourished, there was a tradition that Mount Tabor was the scene of the transfiguration of our Lord, and during the centuries since that time this opinion has been widely circulated; but scholars are now quite unanimous in rejecting this view. It is almost certain that at this time Christ was farther north, and that this wonderful event took place elsewhere.

From the summit of Tabor one sees, looking north towards Safed and the hills of Upper Galilee, a rolling country in which are situated Cana of Galilee (Kefr Kenna) and the Horns of Hattin; and beyond that is an extensive and fertile plain called El Büttauf (see page 54). In making our way north from the foot of Tabor we shall leave Nazareth on our left, and in two hours shall reach Kefr Kenna, where, according to ecclesiastical tradition, the first miracle of our Lord was performed. Before reaching El Meshhad we pass a spring and a small village on our left called Er Reineh. Near this point, on the 1st of May, 1187, the Franks won a victory over the Moslems, which, with nearly all else that they had gained in Palestine, was soon to be lost in the terrible slaughter at the Horns of Hattin.

About one mile south of the village of Kefr Kenna we pass a ruin called Jiftah, and near it, on a hill, is the so-called tomb of Jonah. Jiftah has been regarded as a corruption of Gath Hopher, with which it has been identified, and thus the birthplace of the prophet Jonah has been made known (2 Kings xiv.). It belonged to Zebulun, and Jerome states that it was two miles east of Sepphoris, on the way to Tiberias. In his day, also, even as it is in ours, was shown here the tomb of the oldest of the Hebrew prophets. If we have Biblical authority for the birthplace of Jonah, we have at least a venerable tradition for the place of his burial. It happens, however, that this is only one of the prophet's burial-places, which anomaly a native would have no difficulty in explaining by the rule that, if a man when living may have several houses, he may likewise when dead have several tombs. There can be no objection to honouring a great man by building for him a cenotaph, but, if several were built, it would inevitably become impossible after thirty centuries to tell in which of these he was buried. The little hill on which a few houses, including the tomb of Jonah, stand is called El Meshhad, and the Moslems of the region look upon the place with feelings of veneration (see page 56). The region is rocky but fertile, and clusters of fig and old olive trees are abundant. From this point the beautiful valley of Tur'ân opens to the west and north-east, along the southern edge of which we pass, and reach in twenty minutes Kefr Kenna (see page 54). Only three or four minutes from the village is the well or fountain. As the village has no other well, the people in Christ's time drew water here, as do the people of to-day.

The situation of Kefr Kenna, which has now but a few hundred inhabitants, is pleasant, and among its attractions are its gardens and its orchards of fruit-trees. Here the pomegranate will be specially noticed. It is extensively cultivated, and among the lovely things of this now desolate land, perhaps its gorgeous blossoms should be mentioned as one of the richest and most charming objects. There are found here many ancient ruins, most of which have been brought to light during the past few years, and the modern houses are less neglected than those of many other towns. At the well there is an ancient sarcophagus, used now as a watering-trough (see page 55). The time-worn rosettes and wreath upon it show with what care and skill it was made, and that it was designed to be an object of beauty as well as a resting-place for the dead. These sarcophagi, more frequently broken than whole, are found in great numbers throughout the country. About Sefûriyeh—Sepphoris—(see page 48), once the capital of Galilee, there are many; and at Gadara, east of the Jordan, they have been counted by hundreds. With their massive lids and rich ornamentation, they must have been very costly, and this fact may be taken as an incidental illustration of the wealth of the inhabitants in former times. In the morning, and again at night, groups of women and girls with their water-jars are gathered about this well, and shepherds also come with their flocks; and now and then a passing traveller may stop, to whom some friendly girl will offer a refreshing draught. If a person chooses he may still see in the Greek church one or more large earthen jars which are said to have been used at the time when the miracle was performed; but the water-pots mentioned by John were of stone.



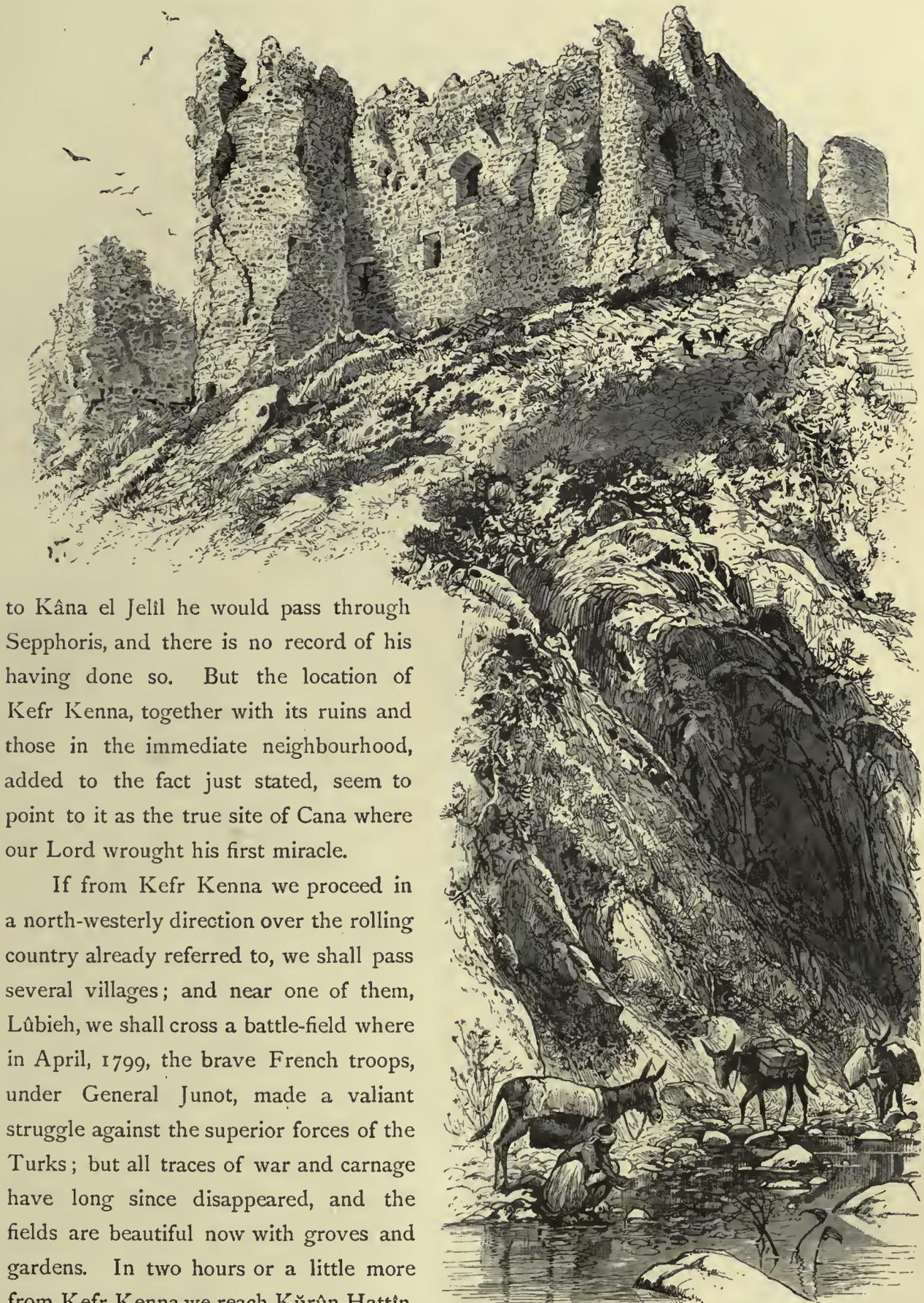
MOSQUE OF TIBERIAS (TŪBARĪYEH).

This is a good example of the appearance of "grass on the house-tops." After the winter rains every flat mud-roofed building is overgrown with grass and weeds, which soon perish.

Vessels of earthenware are very fragile, and if exposed in any public place would soon be broken.

There is a rival claimant for the honour of being Cana of Galilee, which is called Kāna el Jelil, on the north side of the plain El Büttauf; and within the last half-century its claims have been strongly urged. This point is eleven miles north-west of

Nazareth and four or five miles north of Sepphoris. It is situated on the sharp side of a rocky hill, and the area suitable for building is exceedingly limited. Besides, it is elevated but little above the plain, there is no spring-water near it, and the region is extremely hot and unhealthy. On this account, in fact, the place has long been deserted. Kefr Kenna is on the direct route from Nazareth to the Sea of Galilee, while if Christ went



to Kāna el Jelil he would pass through Sepphoris, and there is no record of his having done so. But the location of Kefr Kenna, together with its ruins and those in the immediate neighbourhood, added to the fact just stated, seem to point to it as the true site of Cana where our Lord wrought his first miracle.

If from Kefr Kenna we proceed in a north-westerly direction over the rolling country already referred to, we shall pass several villages; and near one of them, Lūbieh, we shall cross a battle-field where in April, 1799, the brave French troops, under General Junot, made a valiant struggle against the superior forces of the Turks; but all traces of war and carnage have long since disappeared, and the fields are beautiful now with groves and gardens. In two hours or a little more from Kefr Kenna we reach Kūrūn Hattīn, the Horns of Hattīn (see page 58).

CASTLE OF TIBERIAS (TŪBARĪYEH),
Showing the damage done by the earthquake of 1837.

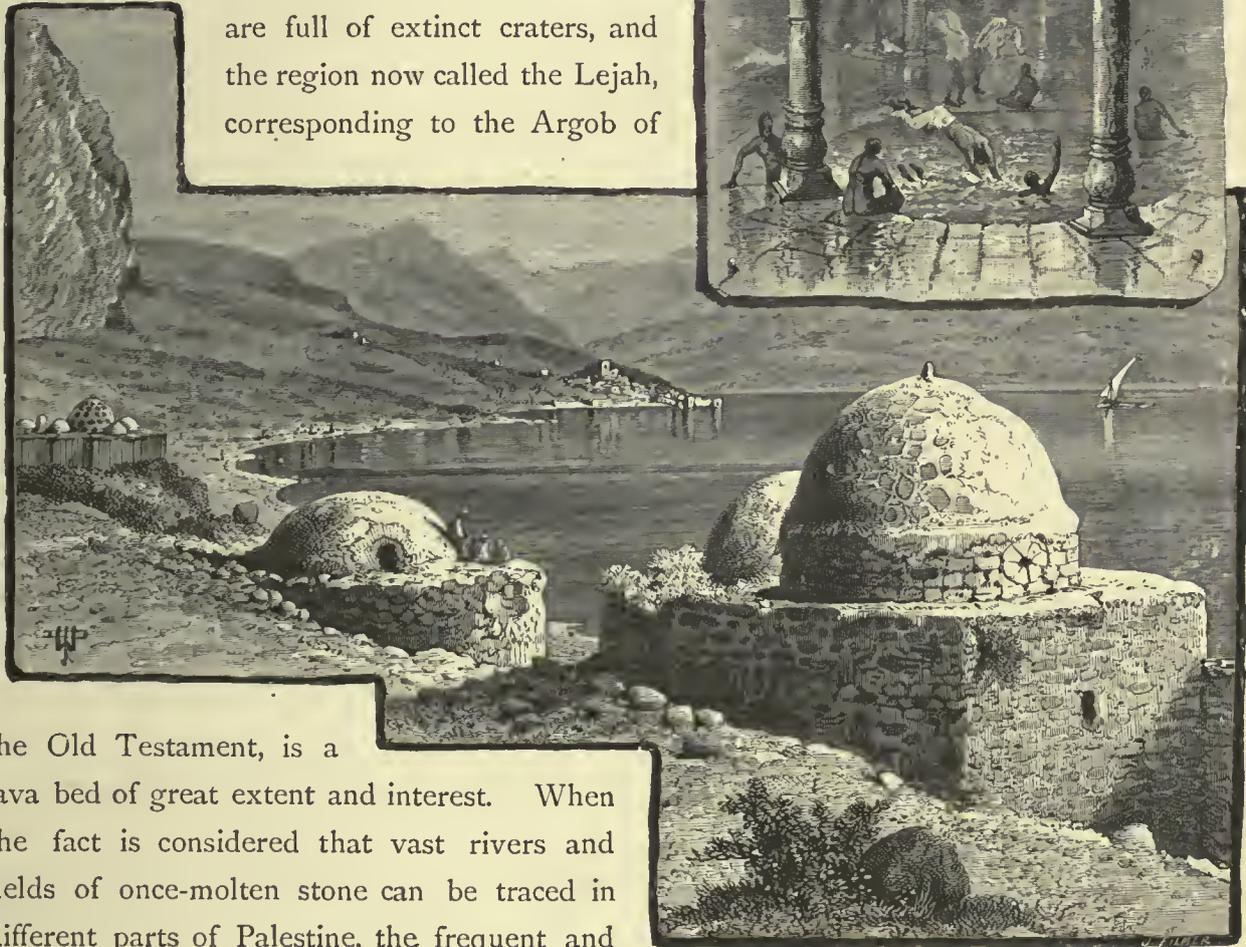
Several remarkable facts deserve to be mentioned in connection with these singular peaks. In the first place, we are on historic ground. This is the scene of the greatest disaster that ever befell the army and the power of the Crusaders in the Holy Land. They had conquered it after many terrible battles, and held it for nearly a century; but on this occasion they had the brave Saladin, no ordinary general, to contend with, and their defeat was overwhelming and irreparable. This battle took place in July, 1187: There being no rain in Syria during the summer, streams and fountains dry up, cisterns get low, the ground is parched, and the air becomes insufferably hot; and what has been said in the histories of this event is no doubt true, that heat, thirst, and exhaustion helped to weaken the strength of the Christians, whose heroism and bravery on this occasion are worthy of the highest praise. It would seem that the Christians had at first the advantage of position, being encamped near the fountain of Sepphoris, where they had abundance of water. Saladin had taken Tiberias, and drawn up his army on the plateau to the west of the town. The Christian king, Guy of Lusignan, with less wisdom than daring, marched forward to meet the enemy. This was what Saladin desired, and he met them at the base of Hattin. The struggle was long and fierce, but the Christians were at last obliged to yield. A few brave knights cut their way through the Moslem ranks and fled to 'Akka; while others, including the king, with the Holy Cross, retreated to the summit of these hills, and, after they had repeatedly driven back the enemy with severe loss, were finally taken prisoners. Some of the knights were sold as slaves, some of the Templars and Hospitallers were executed; and Raynold of Châtillon, who was Lord of Kerak, and who had been the immediate cause of the war, was slain by Saladin's own hand.

If we are to credit tradition, these hills have been the scene of two other events immediately connected with the life of our Lord. This has been named the Mount of Beatitudes, because here, it is claimed, Christ delivered the Sermon on the Mount to the multitudes that stood below on the plain. The nature of the ground is such that the sermon might have been spoken here, and when reference was made to "a city that is set on a hill" (Matthew v. 14), the eyes of both the speaker and the multitude might have been lifted to Tabor in the south, or to Safed in the north, either of which places, with their imposing walls and towers, would form a striking illustration of the Master's words. Still further, it is claimed that on the side of these hills the five thousand were assembled whom Christ miraculously fed with five loaves and two fishes (Matthew xiv.), and even now there is pointed out to the traveller the "Stone of the Christian," which it is supposed served as a table on that memorable occasion. But as the Gospels do not mention or indicate any particular locality for the miracle, or any particular mount for the sermon, the scene of both, like that of the Transfiguration, must be left in doubt.

Another fact, to which we would refer, is that these peaks and the region about them are of a basaltic formation. Some distance to the west, towards Sepphoris, one notices that the basalt is fading out, for it is mingled with limestone, while at Sepphoris limestone alone prevails. About Tell Hûm, along the banks of the Upper Jordan, and at various points between the north end of the lake and the Horns of Hattin, the basalt appears. The dyke

of basalt extends south, and the traveller will cross it on the direct road from Tiberias to Mount Tabor. Farther north, in the region of Safed, the same or other great streams appear again, and at El Jish, which corresponds to Gischala, a city famous in the Jewish wars with the Romans, there is a vast birket or pool which occupies the mouth of an extinct crater, and two other extinct craters exist in the same vicinity. Volcanic influence is noticeable all about the Sea of Galilee, particularly on the east side, from which point the lava formation extends for at least one hundred miles eastward and includes the entire Bashan plain. What are known as

the Druze or Haurân Mountains are full of extinct craters, and the region now called the Lejah, corresponding to the Argob of



the Old Testament, is a lava bed of great extent and interest. When the fact is considered that vast rivers and fields of once-molten stone can be traced in different parts of Palestine, the frequent and sometimes terrible earthquakes to which the country is subject can no longer be a matter of surprise. That which took place in 1837 has already been noticed. More than once they are referred to in the Bible; and among the memorable ones that have occurred since the time of Christ, that in the reign of the Emperor Justinian may be mentioned, which levelled to the ground the beautiful city of Beirût, and in the more northern city of Antioch destroyed two hundred and fifty thousand lives.

HOT BATHS OF TIBERIAS (HÜMMÂM TÜBARİYEH).

With the town of Tiberias and Khân Minyeh in the distance. The interior of the public bath is shown, with its pierced dome and marble pavement.

We have yet to speak of the remarkable prospect which the Horns of Hattin command. Without dwelling upon this in detail, it may be said that in the north and north-west Safed and Jebel esh Sheikh are the most prominent objects. We look down also upon the north end of the Sea of Galilee, Khân Minyeh, the plain of Gennesaret, Tell Hûm, and the hills beyond, which distinctly appear (see pages 59 and 65); while to the south stretches the plain called Ard el Hamma, and to the west, towards the northern end of Carmel and the Mediterranean, the great plain of El Büttauf, of which the most noticeable features from a distance are the vast olive-groves which skirt its borders and occupy some of its more fertile portions.

The distance from the base of Hattin to Tiberias is about one hour and forty-five minutes. Just below the village of Hattin there is a small and finely-cultivated plain extending to the north-west, and also to the south-east towards the Sea of Galilee. After the crops are gathered, the weeds take possession of the soil and grow with surprising vigour. The beds of great thistles sometimes cover many acres, and when they have reached their full growth, and especially when they have become ripe, it is impossible to drive an animal through them. A person standing on the summit or slopes of Hattin, and looking across this plain towards the Sea of Galilee, would never suspect that it drops almost perpendicularly at some points to a depth of more than one thousand feet. The edge of the plain, which is outlined against the water of the lake, is seen to be broken at one point, and on either side the tops of perpendicular cliffs appear. Still, one has no conception of the gorge or chasm which exists here until he has crossed the plain and begins to descend, attracted by the smooth and beautiful surface of the Sea of Galilee below. Through this gorge led in ancient times one of the main highways of the country, and the camel trains from Esdraelon and the south to Damascus follow it to-day. This is also the direct road between Nazareth and Capernaum, and consequently we are on ground over which our Saviour passed. The path is neither rough nor difficult, and, as we descend, the cliffs rise higher and higher on either hand, and we perceive that the walls of rock are perforated with holes. This is called Wady el Hamâm, or the Valley of Pigeons, and myriads of them make their home in these rocks (see page 67). But these innocent and beautiful birds are not the only ones that frequent these wild and savage cliffs. All kinds of birds of prey, such as the raven, the eagle, and the vulture, have here their nests. Indeed, one might be in doubt whether it could not be called the Valley of Vultures as appropriately as the Valley of Pigeons. The griffon-vulture, which abounds here, is an immense bird, with its head and part of its neck bald, and measures when the wings are spread eight feet four inches, and sometimes more. From tip of beak to tip of tail they measure three feet four inches, and in some instances more than that. We have often seen large numbers of them soaring so far above the valley that they looked no bigger than common sparrows, and seemed like mere specks in the sky. As might be supposed, numerous wild animals now make their dens in these caves.

The cliffs, with the excavations in them, have played an important part in the history

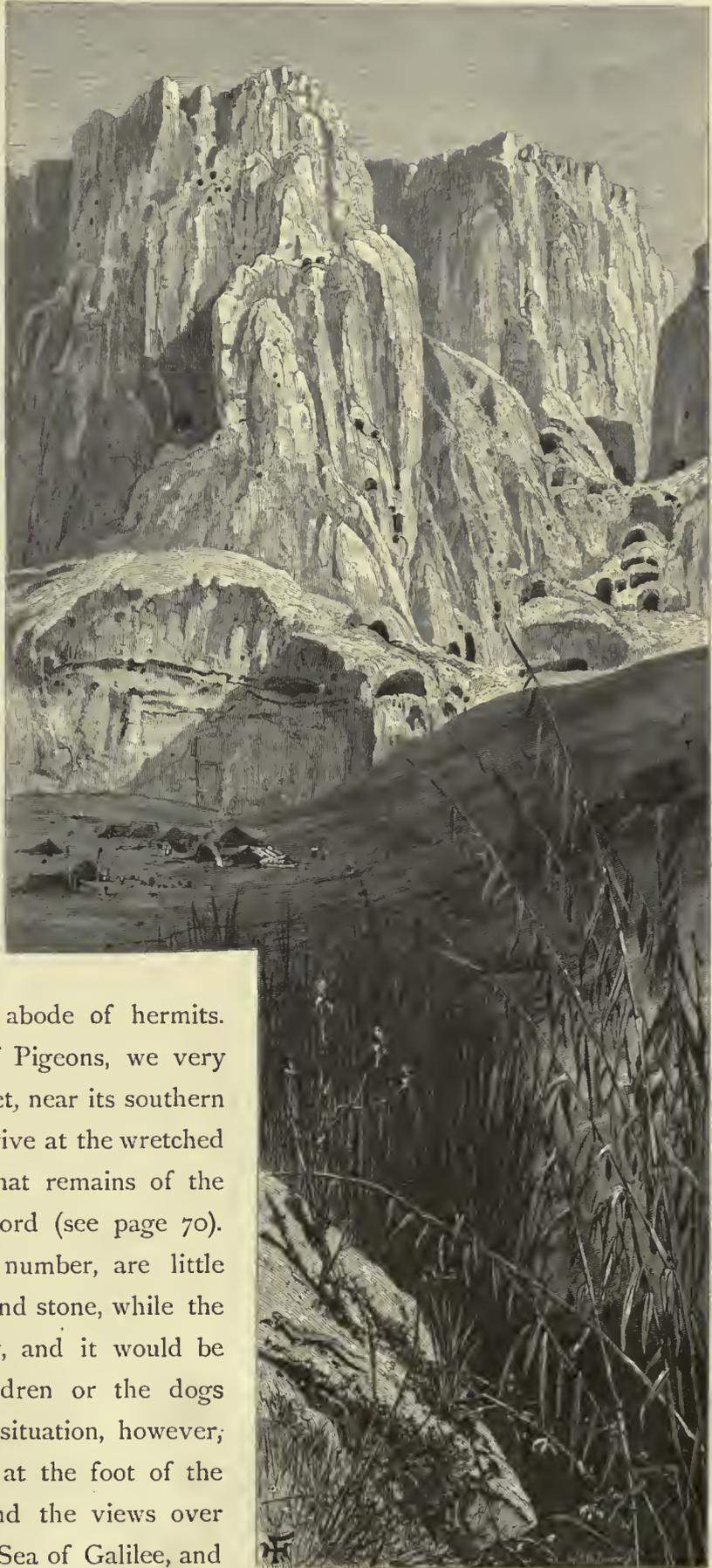


THE VALLEY OF PIGEONS (WÂDY EL HAMÂM).
The bed of this picturesque valley runs towards the Lake of Tiberias just north of Mejdal.

of the country ever since the time of Hosea. Not only have the inhabitants of the region taken refuge in these vast caverns when war has desolated the land, but bands of outlaws have made them their hiding-place, whence they have issued forth to plunder the neighbouring villages and people. The account of the capture of these caves by Herod the Great, although we have no reason to doubt that it is veritable history, reads more like a romance. He had been appointed captain of Galilee by his father Antipater in the year 46 B.C., when he was twenty-five years of age, and his acts at that early period are characterized by the same energy and something of the same severity which marked his later career. In the year 40 B.C. he was appointed King of Judea by a decree from Rome, but did not gain full possession of his kingdom till the year 37 B.C. It was between these last dates, probably in the year 39 B.C., that his bold feat of subduing the robbers in these caves was accomplished. Through a snow-storm—an event which Orientals always regard with terror, and which is described as “sent of God,” and hence must have been of unusual severity—Herod pushed his way from the south into Galilee and took Sepphoris (see page 48), where he found ample provisions for his army. He immediately sent a force against Arbela (see page 69), where “his opponents, who possessed at once military skill and brigand daring, met him in arms.” A battle ensued, in which they were at first victorious; but Herod himself, having arrived on the scene, rallied his retreating forces and soon overcame the enemy and put them to flight. Josephus remarks that the caves were not then subdued, as “their reduction demanded time.” This is a significant statement, and affords a hint as to the character of this stronghold. Herod himself took personal direction of this important undertaking, and the task before him was no easy one. “To these caves opening on the face of mountain precipices there was no direct access” (see page 69). “The rock forming their front extended downward into ravines of prodigious depth,” and, in order to reach them, “the king had recourse at length to a most hazardous contrivance.” Great chests, strongly bound with iron, were let down from the edge of the mountain above, which proved to be a work of extreme difficulty and danger. “They were filled with armed men, who had long hooks in their hands, by which they might pull out such as resisted them and tumble them down and kill them by so doing.” Being emboldened by their first successes, “the soldiers made repeated sallies into the mouths of the caves, where they slew many of the enemy, and then returned again to their chests.” There was a great deal of combustible material in the caves, and the besiegers set this on fire, which aided them in their work of destruction. At last, the besieged being weakened in numbers, some of those that remained submitted to the king while others threw themselves down the precipice, and thus destroyed their lives rather than submit to the conqueror. A touching story is told of an old man, the father of seven children, who, with their mother, entreated him to go out and submit himself under Herod’s pledge of protection, which he obstinately refused to do. “Herod, looking on from an eminence which commanded the spot, was overpowered by his feelings and extended his right hand to the old man, imploring him to spare his offspring. But he, unmoved by his exhortations, and even reproaching Herod for his abject birth, slaughtered

his children and finally his wife, and, casting their dead bodies down the precipice, he ended by throwing himself headlong after them" ("Antiquities," xiv. 15, 3—6; "Wars," i. 16, 4). Thus these robbers were at last subdued, and Herod gained thereby not only the good-will of the inhabitants of Galilee, but added security to his own government. Many of these caves cannot be visited to-day without resorting to the use of ropes, after the manner of Herod's soldiers; but the result of such a visit would fully repay the struggle. Only by visiting them can one realise their great extent, and the skill with which they were protected by walls, provided with cisterns, and connected together by passages and archways. This home of robbers became afterwards the abode of hermits.

Passing down the Valley of Pigeons, we very soon reach the plain of Gennesaret, near its southern end, and in twenty minutes we arrive at the wretched village of Mejdal, which is all that remains of the Magdala of the times of our Lord (see page 70). The houses, which are few in number, are little more than hovels made of mud and stone, while the people are degraded and filthy, and it would be difficult to tell whether the children or the dogs were the more impudent. The situation, however, on the borders of the lake and at the foot of the mountain, is a beautiful one; and the views over the plain of Gennesaret and the Sea of Galilee, and up to Mount Hermon, are natural attractions of which even some of the proud cities of the country



THE KÛL'AT IBN MA'ÂN, ON THE NORTH-WEST SIDE OF THE VALLEY OF PIGEONS.

This castle consists of caverns connected by passages; opposite to it stands Irbid, the ancient Arbela.

cannot boast. This place, although now so humble and forbidding, is known throughout Christendom as the home of Mary Magdalene; and wherever the New Testament is read poor Magdala will be mentioned when many places of note and power are quite forgotten.

The ride along the sea to Tiberias is a pleasant one, and occupies about one hour. If the weather is favourable for boats, a white sail may occasionally be seen far out on the lake,



MAGDALA (MEJDEL).

Beyond the village is the fertile plain of Gennesaret. It is three miles long and one mile in width.

for the traditional "one boat" has increased to half-a-dozen or more (see page 71). Still the number is very limited, there being no business to support them. These boats are built in Beirût, or some of the coast towns, and transported in sections to Tiberias, and there put together. They are made for carrying burdens, but when there is a good breeze considerable speed is obtained. If, however, those who manage them have to depend upon oars, their progress is aggravatingly slow. But in Christ's time the sea was covered with ships and boats engaged either in fishing or traffic, or carrying parties of travellers or of

pleasure-seekers from shore to shore. The Talmud speaks of "merchants coming and going between Hippos on the east shore and Tiberias," which indicates a lively and constant intercourse of the inhabitants of the cities on the different sides of the lake. Once, when Josephus planned a certain movement against Tiberias which was to start by water from Tarichæa, he collected for this purpose at that point, apparently in a short time, two hundred and thirty ships from the vicinity of Tarichæa alone. It is said that the sight of the lake covered with these vessels struck the Tiberians with terror. At a later time, when Tarichæa expected an attack from the Romans, the citizens got ready a great number of vessels to which they might flee in case of a repulse. The day went against them, and they fled to their ships. In these they made a bold



FISHERMEN ON THE SEA OF GALILEE.

The lake contains many good kinds of fish, some of which, it is said, do not occur elsewhere except in tropical climates.

resistance, and cost the Romans a fierce and bloody struggle before they could be overcome. That is a bloody sea-fight in which from four to five thousand are slaughtered on one side alone, as was the case here, and not a "sharp skirmish," as one writer has termed this event. As all who took part could hardly have been killed, the number of Jews that actually perished is a hint at least that the number of ships on the side of the Tarichæans was very large, while the Romans who pursued them were likewise in ships.

The difference between ships and the small boats which are attached to them seems to be clearly brought out in the Greek of John xxi. 3, 6, 8. Likewise the phrase in Josephus ("Wars," iii. 10, 5), "climbing up into their ships," is a significant hint as to the size of some of their vessels.

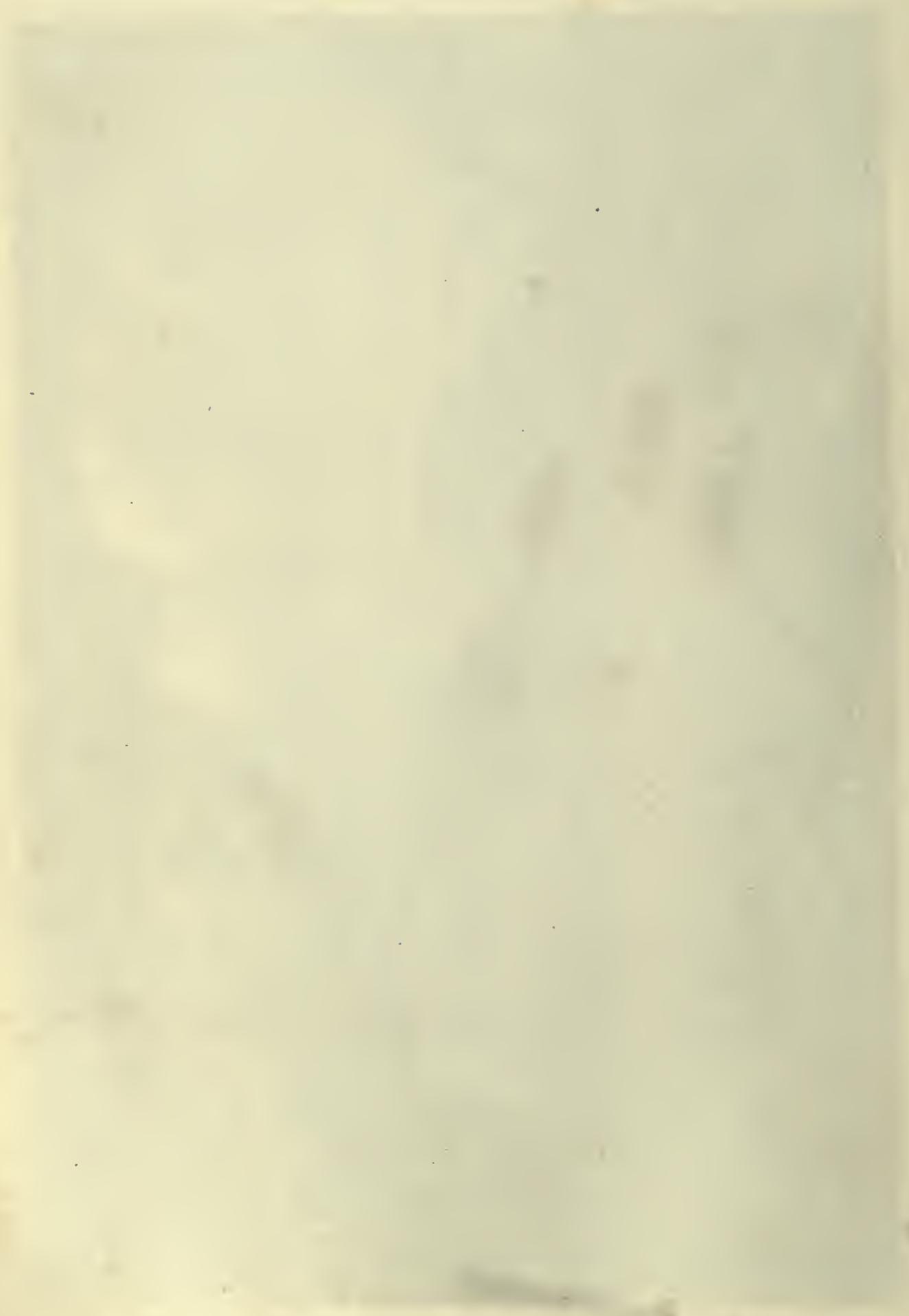
From a passage in Josephus ("Wars," iii. 10, 6), we infer that ship-building was one of the important industries of Tarichæa. And, "when we add to the fishermen the crowd of ship-builders, the many boats of traffic, pleasure, and passage, we see that the whole basin must have been a focus of life and energy, the surface of the lake constantly dotted with the white sails of vessels flying before the mountain-gusts, as the beach sparkled with the houses and palaces, the synagogues and the temples, of the Jewish or Roman inhabitants" (Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," p. 367).



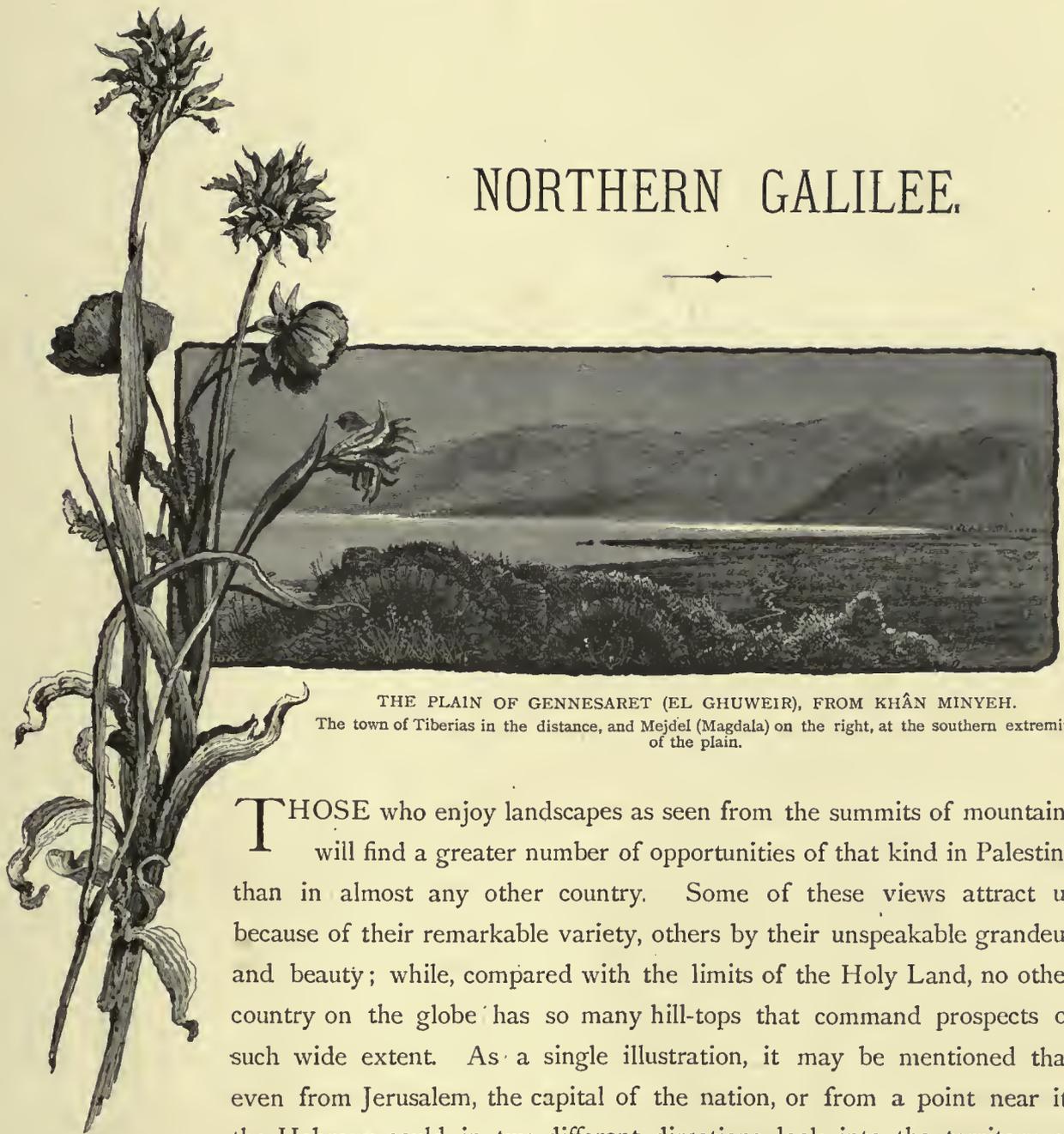
H. A. HARPER, PINK

THE SEA OF GALILEE, FROM THE HEIGHTS OF SAFED.

C. COUSEN, SCULPT



NORTHERN GALILEE.



THE PLAIN OF GENNESARET (EL GHUWEIR), FROM KHÂN MINYEH.
The town of Tiberias in the distance, and Mejdal (Magdala) on the right, at the southern extremity of the plain.

THOSE who enjoy landscapes as seen from the summits of mountains will find a greater number of opportunities of that kind in Palestine than in almost any other country. Some of these views attract us because of their remarkable variety, others by their unspeakable grandeur and beauty; while, compared with the limits of the Holy Land, no other country on the globe has so many hill-tops that command prospects of such wide extent. As a single illustration, it may be mentioned that even from Jerusalem, the capital of the nation, or from a point near it, the Hebrews could, in two different directions, look into the territory of their enemies—that of the Philistines on the west and that of the Moabites on the east.

Among these views, perhaps that from the hill at Nazareth is as inspiring as any, and it is all the more interesting from the fact that every object in that wonderful panorama was familiar to our Lord (see page 41). When the Jewish War broke out, in A.D. 66, a large part of the Roman troops landed at Acre. The bay covered with their ships, and the shores crowded with the camps of their invincible legions, must have formed a splendid and stirring sight. But new interest is awakened in this event when we consider that very many of those who were brought up with Christ at Nazareth could, from their mountain-home, look down upon this scene, and watch the movements of those who had come to take away the liberties of their nation. Under such circumstances feelings of dismay and terror may

have seized upon the patriots of Galilee, in view of the struggle before them. Yet, in spite of the gloomy prospect, they rallied in defence of the fatherland, and their efforts to drive back the invader are among the most heroic in the annals of war.

To the ancient people of Palestine these hill-tops were sacred places, and here they erected their altars and practised the rites of their religion.

The mountain-summits were also chosen as places of defence. If a peak, inaccessible by nature, could be capped by a fortress with strong walls, it was thought to afford the most secure place of refuge in times of danger. In these days the explorer or traveller is often surprised at the extent of the remains which he finds on some of these elevated points. Of this fact a good illustration is Kūrn Sūrtūbeh, which rises from the Jordan Valley a little west of the Dāmīeh ford. It is an extremely difficult task to climb to the top of this peak, yet the summit is covered with massive ruins. How the stones were ever brought there remains a mystery.

Galilee, the province with which we are now specially concerned, was renowned for its strongholds. In the time of Joshua sixteen of the nineteen cities of Naphtali were "fortified" (Josh. xix. 35); and in the time of Josephus the list of fortresses is a long one, and some of them will be famous while the records of the Hebrew nation are preserved.

Not the least among these strongholds was the castle at Safed (see pages 90 and 91). Of this place we have no ancient history, except that it is mentioned by Josephus, and in both the Jerusalem and the Babylonian Talmuds; yet, from what we know of the habits of the Jews and of the older inhabitants of the land, we can say that it is precisely such a point as would be selected for defence. The fact that Josephus repaired its walls shows that it had been used as a fortress from much earlier times; and indeed, beneath the masses of débris which now cover the hill, traces of walls appear which belong to the earliest remains of the country. The village itself is nearly two thousand eight hundred feet above the level of the Mediterranean, and is said to be the highest in Galilee. The peak, however, on which the castle stands rises considerably above the village, and the prospect, except to the north, is almost unlimited. The Horns of Hattin (see page 58), Tabor (see page 49), Mount Carmel (see page 48), and the intermediate country lie before us in the south; to the south-east are the Gilead Hills and the Hauran Mountains; while to the east and north towards Damascus stretches the great plain of Bashan.

But one of the most charming views on earth is the Sea of Galilee as beheld from this ancient castle. It appears to be at our very feet, although it is eight or ten miles away. It lies in a deep basin fully three thousand five hundred feet below where we are standing, and its surface is bright beneath the blue sky. Beautiful and quiet, and surrounded by picturesque hills, it has more the appearance of a work of art than of a natural lake; and one ceases to wonder at the extravagant praises bestowed upon it by the ancient Hebrews, since it was justly the pride of their land.

The city of Tiberias is also in full view, although to reach it requires a journey of six



THE SEA OF GALILEE FROM 'AIN ET TÎN, THE FOUNTAIN OF THE FIG-TREE, NEAR KHÂN MINVEH, THE SUPPOSED SITE OF CAPERNAUM. Showing traces of an aqueduct which conveyed water from 'Ain et Tabighah (the supposed site of Bethsaida) to the Plain of Gennesaret; it is now used as a road. In the marsh by the fountain the papyrus flourishes.

hours. There are two routes which we have followed at different times: one leading to the east, past Khân Jubb Yûsef to Khân Minyeh (see pages 73 and 75); and the other leading south under the majestic cliffs of Akhbara and just above the wild gorge of Leimôn (see pages 85 and 87), and thence reaching the plain of Gennesaret at Abu Shûsheh. Either way the roads are not free from difficulties, such as sharp ascents and fields of boulders; still both are interesting, if romantic scenery and other natural attractions are to be considered.

Khân Jubb Yûsef, which we pass on the first-mentioned route, about half-way between Safed (see page 90) and Khân Minyeh (see page 73), is distinguished now for its dirty water; but a curious Arab tradition makes it the place where Joseph was thrown into the pit by his brethren. At that point we strike the line of the Roman road running from the south to Damascus, and follow it to Khân Minyeh, where we touch the lake. This khân, which is now in ruins, has no antiquity to recommend it to our notice; and indeed at this point there are, above ground, few ruins of any kind, and none that date from any remote period. This place bears also the name 'Ain et Tîn, or Fountain of the Fig-tree, and one or two old but small and partly decayed fig-trees still exist by the spring, so that the name is not entirely without significance (see page 75).

The high land which we have followed in coming from Khân Jubb Yûsef terminates here in a rocky bluff, the face of which rises perpendicularly from the lake, leaving no space for a road or path along the shore. Consequently, the road from the south turns aside and goes up over the bluff, and descends again to the plain of 'Ain et Tâbighah, which is farther east. The Fountain of the Fig-tree is very near the edge of the lake, and, when the water in that is high, would not be much above its level. Between the fountain and the lake there is a large marsh filled with reeds and papyrus (see page 75). This is the only place about the Sea of Galilee where the papyrus grows at present, and although it is being gradually displaced by the more hardy canes or reeds, still sufficient is left to form, when it is growing, a large and beautiful field of green. Besides Khân Minyeh, the papyrus is found now in Palestine only at Lake Hûleh, the Merôm of the Old Testament, where many acres are covered with a luxuriant growth of the same (see page 102). The tall slender stalks and graceful heads of this plant present a strange but attractive appearance, especially when a thicket of them rises directly from the surface of the water, which has overflowed to a considerable depth the ground where they stand. In the face of this bluff there is a wide trench cut in the rock, which is used now as a path, and horses and loaded animals slip and stumble when urged along its uneven bed. This was designed as an aqueduct to bring water from the fountain of Tâbighah to the plain of Gennesaret, and many of the stones of which its walls were constructed are found with the cement still adhering to them (see page 75). This trench, according to our own measurements, is fifty-three feet above the surface of the lake.

From this point the plain of Gennesaret is spread out before us like a vast garden (see page 73). Mejdél, at the farther end, and Tiberias, some miles below that, are in full view; while from the bluff above the fountain not only the southern end of the lake, but its entire

shore, is seen at a glance. West of the plain of Gennesaret there is a wall of hills through which the gorge of Wâdy Hamâm (see page 67) is cut, and on the opposite or eastern side of the sea the wall of mountains appears like a great bank of earth deeply furrowed by wild ravines. These two banks of mountains not only continue to the southern end of the lake, but throughout the entire course of the Jordan Valley; and from where we stand we can look down the chasm in which the Jordan flows until river, valley, and mountains are lost in the distance.

At present the only inhabited places about the Sea of Galilee are Tiberias and Mejdél (see page 73); while in Christ's time there were upon its shores no less than nine cities, besides numerous villages which dotted the surrounding hillsides and plains. Hence, whether our attention is directed to the land itself or merely to the inhabitants, the contrast between the present and the past is a painful one. The people of to-day are poor and oppressed. They are without ambition or any inspiring hopes for the future; and under the present government it is not likely that anything effective can be done to alleviate their wretchedness.

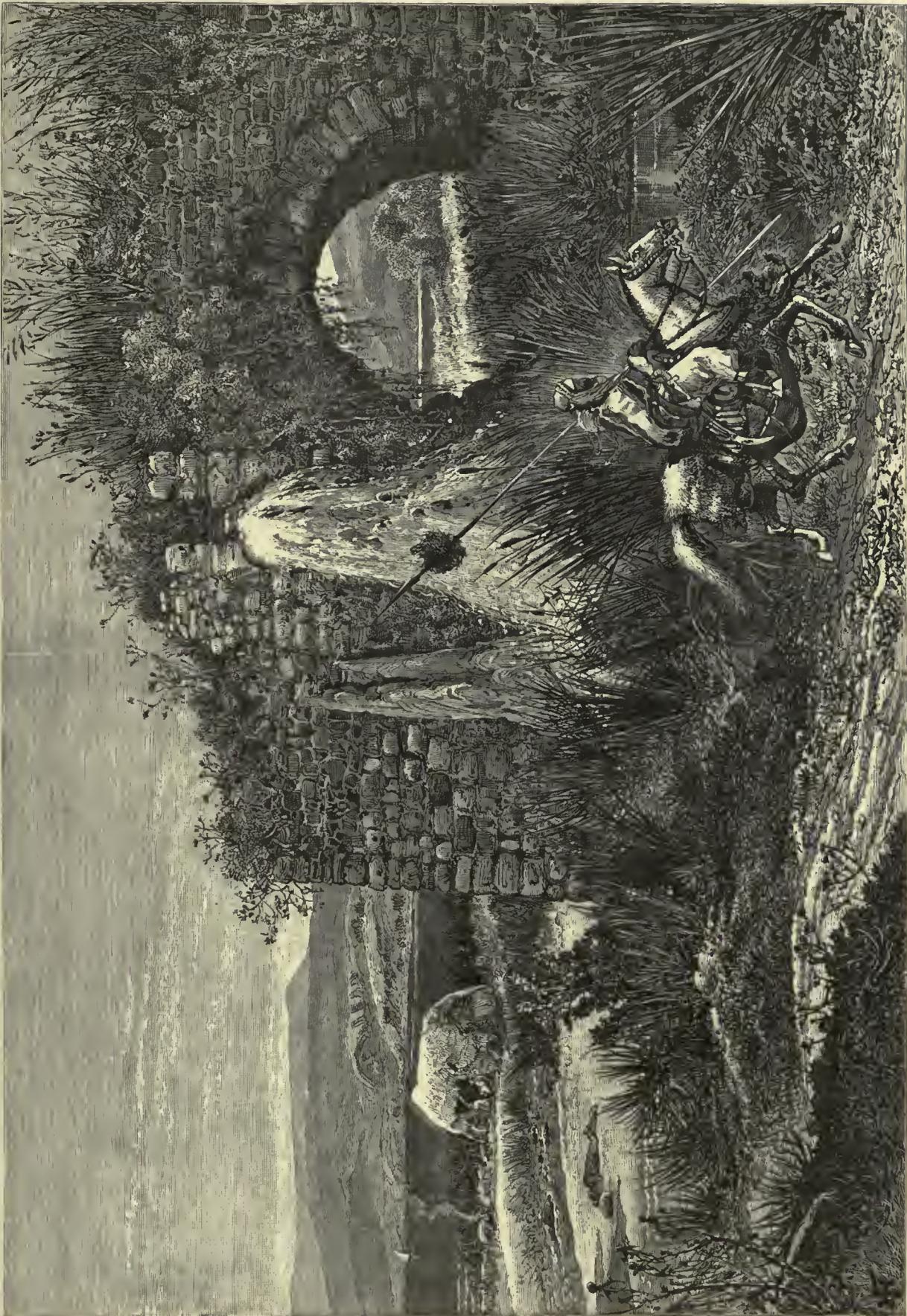
The plain of Gennesaret (see page 70), although only about one mile wide and a little less than three miles long, was the gem of Palestine, and, on account of its remarkable fertility, the Rabbis looked upon it as an earthly paradise. Its Hebrew name was thought to be significant of its character, and was explained as implying, "its fruit is sweet as the sound of a harp," or again as meaning the "garden of princes." Josephus speaks of it as "admirable both for its natural properties and its beauty." "Such," he says, "is the fertility of this soil that it rejects no plant, and accordingly all are here cultivated by the husbandman; for so genial is the air that it suits every variety. The walnut, which delights beyond other trees in a wintry climate, grows here luxuriantly, together with the palm, which is nourished by heat; and near to these are figs and olives, to which a milder atmosphere has been assigned. One might style this an ambitious effort of Nature, doing violence to herself in bringing together plants of discordant habits, and an admirable rivalry of the seasons, each, as it were, asserting her right to the soil; for it not only possesses the extraordinary virtue of nourishing fruits of opposite climes, but also maintains a continual supply of them. Thus it produces those most royal of all, the grape and the fig, during ten months without intermission, while the other varieties ripen the year round." In addition to "the genial temperature of the air," he notices also the abundant irrigation of the plain, to which, in a good degree, its fertility was due ("Wars," iii. 10, 8). This praise might be regarded as extravagant had we not abundant testimony from other ancient sources to show that the statements of the Jewish historian are not exaggerations. The wide fame of this region and its productions may be judged from the fact that the Jews were accustomed to ask why the fruits of Gennesaret were not found in Jerusalem at the time of the feasts; and the reply was, "That no one may be tempted to come to the feasts merely for the sake of enjoying those fruits," instead of coming, as they should, solely for divine worship. In the rank soil of this plain grew the finest wheat of the land, and the wonderful climate of the region has been described as a "harmonious mingling of the seasons." While Gennesaret was justly looked upon as the garden of Palestine, if not of the

whole East, it may be taken as an index, to a large degree, of the entire province of Galilee, which, with the exception of the country east of the Jordan, was the most fertile portion of the Holy Land. Josephus says: "It is throughout rich in soil and pasturage, producing every variety of tree, and inviting by its productiveness even those who have the least inclination for agriculture; it is everywhere tilled, no part allowed to lie idle, and is everywhere productive" ("Wars," iii. 3, 2, 3). The Rabbis said: "The land of Naphtali is everywhere covered with fruitful fields and vines, and the fruits of this region are renowned for their wonderful sweetness." Rabbi Yose, the Galilean, who flourished at the beginning of the second century of our era,



ON THE SHORE OF THE LAKE, AT ET TÂBIGHAH, THE SUPPOSED SITE OF BETHSAIDA.
An oleander in full bloom grows among the rocks, and storks are characteristically hovering over the lake.

said: "For sixteen miles about Sepphoris" (see page 48) "the region is fertile, flowing with milk and honey." The words of Moses, in his farewell address, indicate that this was a region of great natural fertility and beauty, when he speaks of it as a land "full of the blessing of Jehovah" (Deut. xxxiii. 23). Renan, with glowing language, describes this portion of Palestine, even in its decadence, as "a country very green, and full of shade and pleasantness, the true country of the Canticle of Canticles and of the songs of the well-beloved" ("Life of Jesus," p. 96, English translation). From many hints that could be gathered, we have reason to believe that in the time of our Lord the resources of the soil were fully developed by skilful



THE SEA OF GALILEE FROM ET TÂBIGHAH, THE SUPPOSED SITE OF BETHSAIDA.
The dilapidated mill in the foreground is one of several which were built here by the celebrated Sheikh Dhafer el 'Amr, to utilise the copious streams for which this place is famous.

labour. Meadow and pasture-land were turned into tillage, because the cultivation of grain and fruit was found to be more profitable than the raising of cattle.

Of the productions of this province, the more important seem to have been fish, wine, wheat, fruits, and oil. The Rabbis said, "It is easier to raise a legion, *i.e.* a forest of olive-trees, in Galilee, than to raise one child in Judæa." Both Syrians and Phœnicians drew their supplies of oil from this region, and the traffic in this commodity alone proved a source of wealth to the Galileans ("Wars," ii. 21, 2). Gischala (El Jish), only six miles from Safed (see page 90), was a famous centre for the production of oil; and at Jotapata, when that place was besieged, the supply was so abundant that it was freely used by the inhabitants in repelling the assaults of the enemy. Large quantities of it were heated and poured down on all sides upon the Romans, which soon scattered their ranks. Their troops, scalded, rolled headlong from the ramparts in excruciating agony. From the particulars given by Josephus, we learn that this was a terrible and effective as well as a singular means of defence ("Wars," iii. 7, 28). In Christ's time oil was a common article in the treatment of the sick; and Herod the Great, in his last illness at Jericho, was almost killed by being plunged into a vessel of oil, when his physicians hoped that thereby he might obtain relief ("Wars," i. 33, 5). But the fish and the fisheries of the Sea of Galilee had then a world-wide reputation. The choicest kinds abounded in this lake, and some varieties existed here similar to those found in the Nile. Tarichæa was noted for its extensive "fish-factories," and from the business of fishing more than one of the towns upon the shore are said to have derived their names. People came hither even from Jerusalem, especially just before the great feasts, to fish in these waters, and thus provide means of support for the multitudes that, on those occasions, flocked to the Temple. The Jews distinguished sharply between clean and unclean fish, which custom may be referred to in the words of our Lord, "They gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away" (Matt. xiii. 48).

Certain places in Galilee were also noted for particular productions of manufactured articles. Thus the olives of Bethshean (Beisân), which was called "the Gate of Paradise," were highly praised, and likewise the fine linen garments which were there produced. Safed (see page 90) was celebrated for its honey; Shikmonah for its pomegranates; Akhbara for the raising of pheasants. Sigona furnished the best wine. Arbela (see page 69) was celebrated for the manufacture of cloth; Capernaum (see page 75) and Chorasin for the raising of wheat; Sepphoris (see page 48) for the production of grain and fruit; Sichin and Kefr Chananyah for the manufacture of pottery. Certain places are mentioned where grain-merchants were accustomed to congregate in the interests of their line of trade. Even Magdala—Mejdel—(see pages 73 and 70) boasted of three hundred shops where pigeons for sacrifice were sold. About this place the indigo-plant flourished then, as now, and the Talmud calls it "the city of colour." More definitely, one portion of the city was called "the tower of dyers," and here were eighty shops where fine woollen cloth was made. Moreover, the women of Galilee were widely celebrated for a certain kind of linen fabric, in the production of which they were specially skilled.

The industries of Galilee, and likewise the activity and enterprise of its inhabitants, are deserving of notice, because they throw light on the particular region where Christ lived, and the people among whom He laboured. His lot was cast, not in a remote and desolate portion of Palestine, but in that section which, compared with Samaria or Judæa, was the most fertile and densely populated.

Nazareth, the home of Jesus, may have been a comparatively quiet place, but it cannot have been so insignificant as has been sometimes represented. It is always spoken of as a "city," and no one can deny that it was "beautiful for situation;" while there is evidence for saying that it contained fifteen thousand or twenty thousand inhabitants (see page 43). Sepphoris (see page 48), the capital of the province, three miles distant, was within sight of the hill at Nazareth (see page 41); and every day of Christ's life he could look down upon the plain of Esdraelon (see page 20), Mount Carmel (see page 48), and the broad Mediterranean, or up to Tabor (see page 23) and the splendid dome of Mount Hermon (see page 96).

A very significant fact in the life of our Lord is that, when he began his public ministry, he left Nazareth and took up his residence at Capernaum, then a stirring and beautiful town upon the shore of the Sea of Galilee. This was an important centre of business and travel. Men from all sections of the country, and from foreign parts as well, would be found here, and likewise people of every class; and from this point, better than from any other in all Judæa, perhaps, news of the wonderful Healer and Teacher would go south to Jerusalem and Egypt, west to the seaports of Cæsarea and Ptolemais and thence to Rome, and east to Damascus and the Euphrates. In those active times news was carried farther and travelled more rapidly than is generally supposed. The Mediterranean was covered with ships; long caravans, freighted with treasures, came from the far East, and returned thither again; and on the substantial Roman roads which covered the country men travelled one hundred and sometimes two hundred miles in twenty-four hours. According to our own estimate, there were in the country east of the Jordan alone, between Damascus on the north and Petra on the south, no less than five hundred miles of these elegant roads, perfect sections of which, together with a few bridges, still remain at certain points, enduring monuments of Roman enterprise and skill. Such a road, as we have before stated, came from the south through Wâdy Hamâm, crossed the plain of Gennesaret, touched the lake at Capernaum, and went on thence to Damascus.

Some important facts with regard to Capernaum are well known, among which may be mentioned that it had a *custom house* or *station*. Here Christ found Matthew, one of the collectors of customs, whom he called to be his disciple (Matt. ix. 9). It had a *garrison*, and one officer connected with it—whether the highest or not we do not know—was of the rank of a centurion (Matt. viii. 5). The place is spoken of as a "city," and it had one or more synagogues (Luke iv. 31; vii. 5). These facts are sufficient to indicate its importance among the towns of Galilee. The point where the great route from north to south touched the lake

would seem to be the natural one for a customs station, and with the latter the garrison might also be connected; at all events, in this instance both were found at the same place.

The Roman road past Khân Minyeh (see page 73) can easily be traced, and it is still in use. To the east, however, in the angle formed by the Upper Jordan and the north end of the lake, there are no indications that a road ever existed. The surface of the ground in all that section is so thickly covered with boulders of basalt rock, that a horse can make his way through them only with great difficulty. The Romans could have made a road here,



VIEW FROM TELL HÛM, WITH FISHING-BOAT.

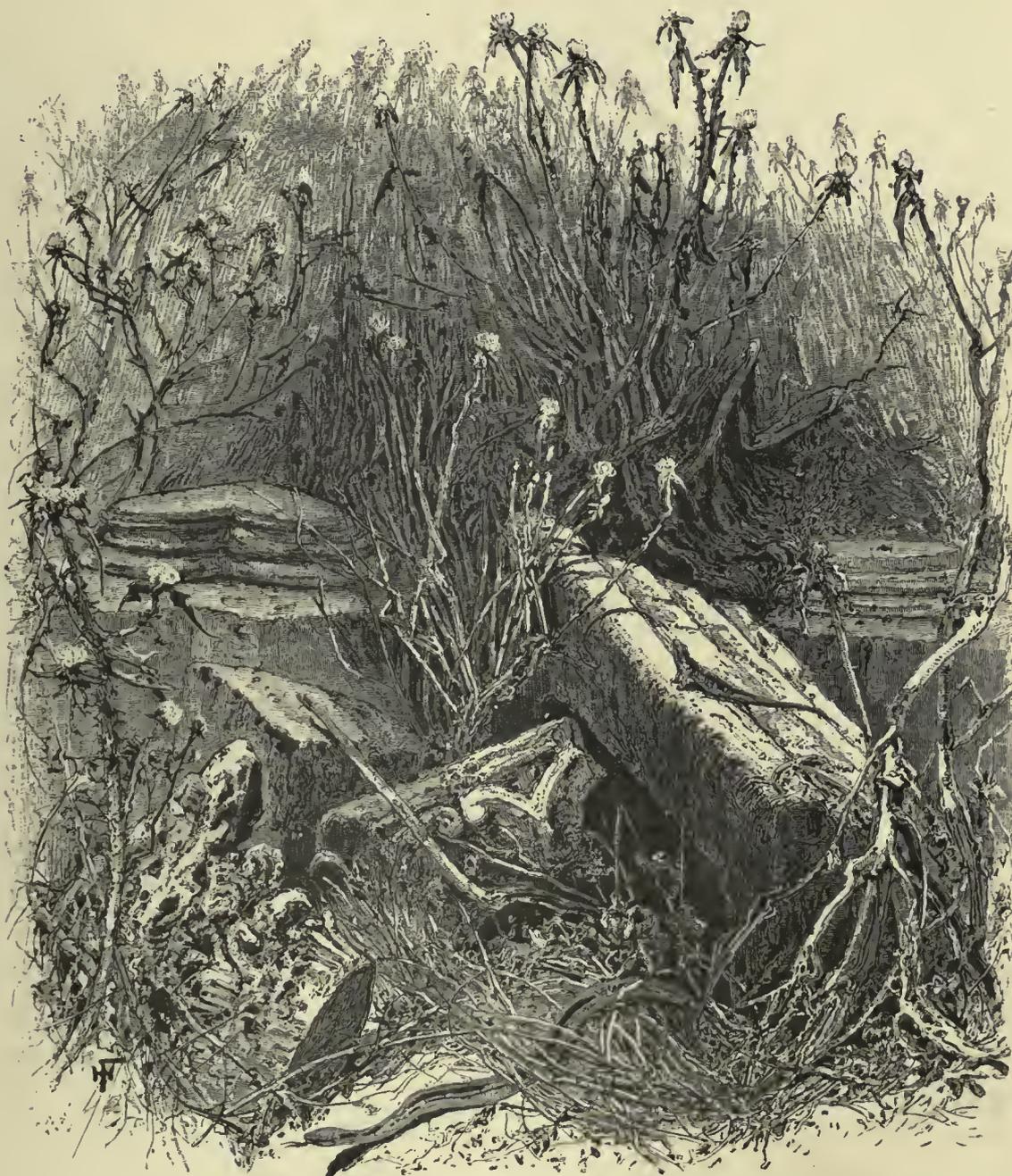
There is no sign of any harbour having been constructed here, and in stormy weather it would be difficult to effect a landing at this spot.

but its construction would have been attended with great expense. Besides, the nature of the ground is such that all traces of a highway of the kind they were accustomed to build could not possibly have disappeared. We are, therefore, fully convinced that Khân Minyeh was the only point where the road touched the Sea of Galilee.

It is a noticeable and interesting fact that the hill overhanging Khân Minyeh (see page 75), between the Roman road and the trench in the face of the bluff, has been shaped artificially, so that the summit resembles a platform with terraced sides. There is every

appearance that this point was once occupied by a castle. This hill is called Khūrbet el 'Aureimeh, and some remains of ancient walls are seen.

South of Khân Minyeh there is a swell in the plain, with nothing on the surface to attract particular attention: Indeed, one might pass back and forth over this ground



THE RUINS OF TELL HÛM.

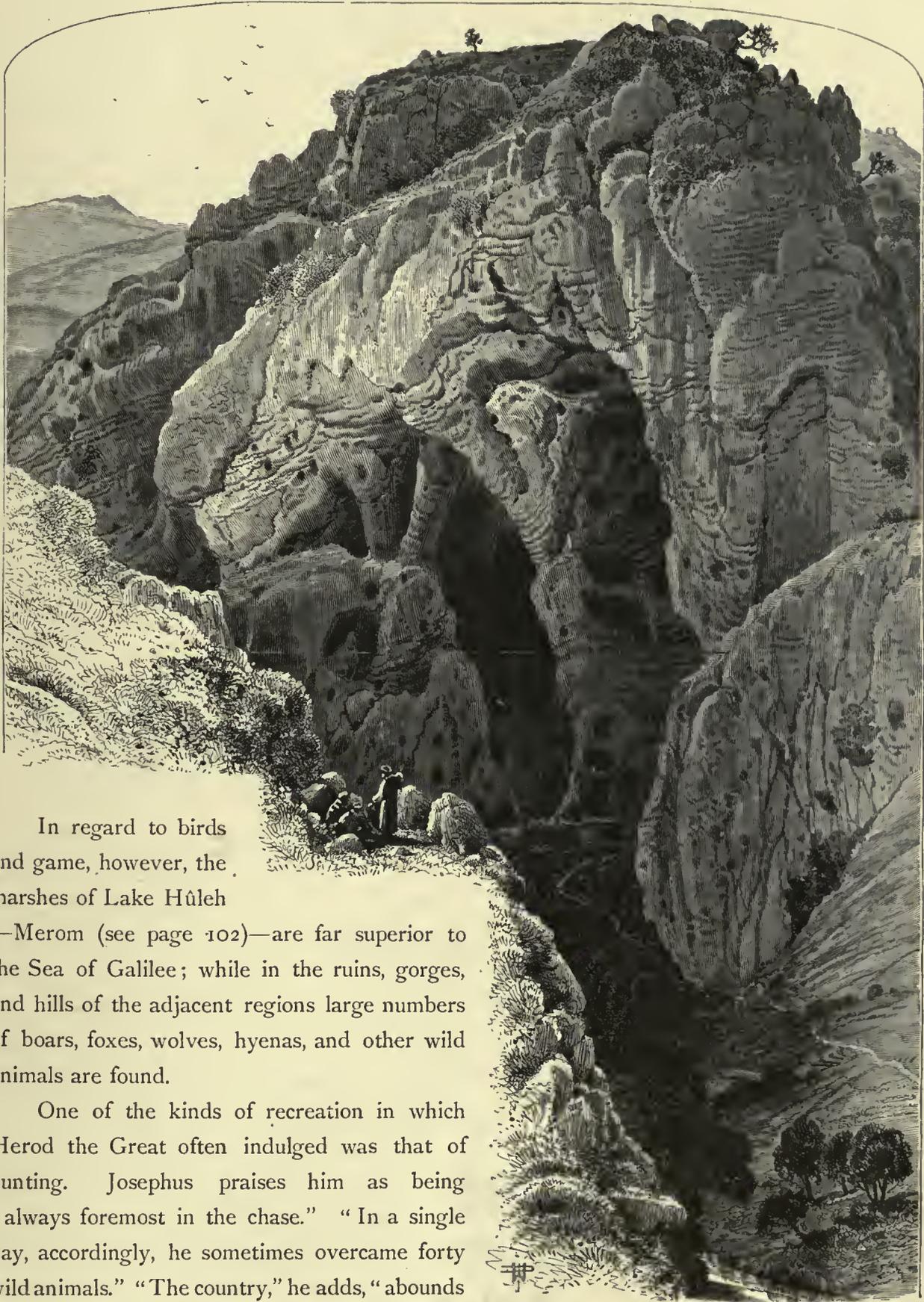
By several authorities this place is regarded as the site of Capernaum. The principal building, of which remains exist, was constructed of white limestone, but the ruins around it are of black basalt.

without even a suspicion that it was not a part of the common field. But, on the contrary, there is evidence that just here a town of considerable size is buried. We ourselves have, at two different times, watched peasants who were digging into this mound to a depth of eight or twelve feet. First was met the soil of the wheat-field; next yellow earth and

rounded stones; but below this, at a depth of four or more feet from the surface, a wall was struck, which was followed some distance, and which at last turned an angle and ran in another direction. This wall was built of limestone, the blocks finely squared and faced, and the work belongs to the best class of Eastern ruins. The peasants had dug at other points near by, and had come upon walls, pottery, and remains of various kinds. When the spades struck the yellow earth full of smoothed stones, almost any person would have declared it to be utter folly to expect to find débris and ruins below it; but the peasants knew that even underneath this there was material, marble and limestone, which they could convert into lime. Excavations here might reveal the extent of this buried town, and possibly its name. Considering all the facts as they are known at present—the Roman road touching the lake at this point, the suitability of the place for a custom-house, the garrison, the remains of a castle, and important ruins under the surface—we think the evidence is very strong for regarding this as the site of Capernaum, our Lord's "own city" (Matt. ix. 1). (See page 75.)

About twenty minutes beyond this point there is another copious fountain called 'Ain et Tâbighah (see page 79). There are here a few ruins, and around the fountain itself is a strong octagon wall, designed to raise the water to a higher level, so that it might be carried over the small adjacent plain, and by means of the trench in the cliff at Khân Minyeh to the plain of Gennesaret as well (see page 75); for 'Ain et Tin lies so near the edge of the lake that the north end of the plain could not have been irrigated by it. The top of this reservoir is at present fifty-one feet above the lake. In neither of these two fountains is the water very cool, and that in 'Ain et Tâbighah is besides slightly brackish. Some eminent scholars regard this as the site of Bethsaida, the home of Philip, Andrew, and Peter (John i. 44). It is called a "city," and hence must have been a place of some importance. Against this the absence of extensive ruins cannot be urged as an argument, when we consider the practice that has been carried on for ages of removing building materials from one place to another. Scholars are now nearly unanimous in the opinion that there were two Bethsaidas, an eastern and a western. About the one on the east of the Jordan there can be no dispute, for the site of the residence and burial-place of Herod Philip is well known. The name Bethsaida is said to mean *House of Fish*, but it can just as properly mean *House* or *Place of Hunting*. In the Hebrew it is invariably used in the latter sense.

The water of the lake at this point is alive with fish, and a native requested us very urgently that we would not shoot near there, lest the fish should be frightened away. But the clusters of oleanders along the shore, the nubk or dôm trees scattered on the slopes above it, and especially the thickets of reeds and papyrus about Khân Minyeh, are the resort of many kinds of birds, which, with the waterfowl in the lake, make this region a capital hunting-ground (page 75). We obtained here, for our natural history collection, cormorants, grebes, Smyrna kingfishers, purple gallinules, bitterns, egrets, herons, spur-wing plover, pigeons, partridges, and gulls; and among the latter was a magnificent eagle-gull, which spread five feet eleven inches.



In regard to birds and game, however, the marshes of Lake Hùleh —Merom (see page 102)—are far superior to the Sea of Galilee; while in the ruins, gorges, and hills of the adjacent regions large numbers of boars, foxes, wolves, hyenas, and other wild animals are found.

One of the kinds of recreation in which Herod the Great often indulged was that of hunting. Josephus praises him as being “always foremost in the chase.” “In a single day, accordingly, he sometimes overcame forty wild animals.” “The country,” he adds, “abounds in wild boars, but particularly in deer and wild asses” (“Wars,” i. 21, 13). “Desert places”

CAVERNS IN THE CLIFFS OF WÂDY LEIMÔN.
The upper portion of Wâdy el Amûd, the Valley of the Column.

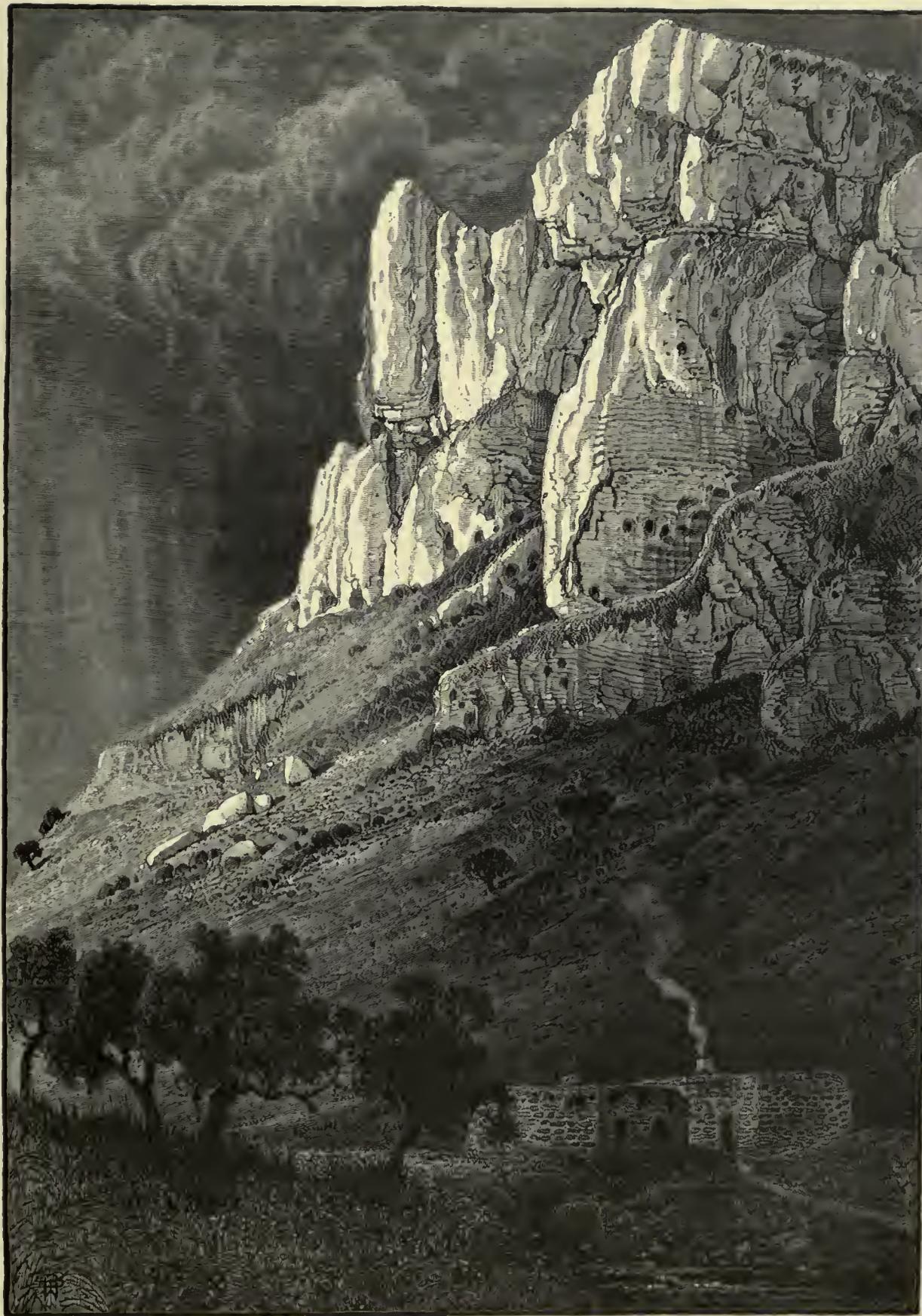
are mentioned, and also the plains and marshes about the Sea of Galilee and Lake Hûleh (see page 102), where the king used to resort for this purpose. In his busy life, and occupied as he was with building, carrying on wars, overcoming intrigues, and pacifying the arbitrary powers at Rome, one would not suppose he would have much time left for hunting. But his expeditions of this kind are frequently mentioned, and there seems to have been a special stable where his hunting-horses were kept, and also his hunting-spears and other outfit; and besides, there was one man who held the office of "the king's chief hunter" ("Antiquities," xvi. 10, 3).

The old mill at 'Ain et Tâbighah will attract attention, partly because its walls and arches are somewhat dilapidated, but chiefly because they are covered with grass and vines, which, with the water trickling over the sides and dashing over the stones, give the whole a beautiful and romantic appearance (see page 79).

From 'Ain et Tâbighah to Tell Hûm (see pages 82 and 83) the distance is about forty minutes, and the path is a difficult one because of the stony nature of the ground, as already indicated. Tell Hûm itself is so thickly overgrown with thistles and weeds of every kind, that at certain seasons it is almost impossible to get about. Among the ruins the absence of blocks of stone will be noticed, and instead, the extensive use of boulders in all the common houses. In fact, the ruins, as such, are of a very inferior kind. With the exception of what is thought to have been a synagogue, including a large building which at some time enclosed it, Tell Hûm has no ruins that would be worth visiting. The remains of this synagogue have been referred to as an evidence that Tell Hûm represents the site of Capernaum of the New Testament; but the preservation of these ruins is such as to justify the conclusion that they date from the second to the fourth century of our era, rather than from the time of Christ. Besides, Tell Hûm is two and a half or more miles from the point where the Roman road touched the lake, and hence would be a most unlikely place for a custom-house. It has no remains of a road or of a castle, and the unimportant character of the ruins has just been noticed. If Capernaum was here, it could have no possible connection with the plain of Gennesaret, which, we infer from the Gospels, should be the case. The place possesses no harbour, and in fact hardly a landing-place for a boat. This would be quite true in a storm, or at any time if the sea were very rough.

At some point near here, on the shore, an interesting event in Josephus's life took place, and we refer to it because in that connection mention is made by him of Capernaum. His troops attacked the Roman forces under Sylla, and were gaining an advantage over them, when the horse which Josephus rode fell into a quagmire, throwing him to the ground and dislocating his wrist. He was carried into the village of Capernaum and attended by his physicians; but a fever set in, and during the night he was taken, probably by boat, to Tarichæa (Kerak), at the other end of the lake. These bogs abound even in this rocky soil, and at certain seasons those on horseback must be constantly on their guard if they would avoid accidents.

The view from this rough shore is a charming one. To the east is the plain of Batiheh, corresponding in general appearance to the plain of Gennesaret on the west. Farther to



THE CLIFFS OF WÂDY LEIMÔN.

Pierced with holes in which a great variety of birds find safe retreat. The bed of the valley is in some places very narrow and difficult to traverse.

the south is Wâdy Semakh, where is the site of Gergesa, and above that the ruins of Gamala crowning a bold summit. Far in the distance the southern end of the lake is seen, and the broad valley of the Jordan. Near the point where the river leaves the lake appears the mound which represents all that remains of the once large and wealthy city of Tarichæa (Kerak). Midway along the western shore is Tiberias, and farther north the few huts at Magdala. The cliffs which line Wâdy Hamâm on either side open like the jaws of some hideous monster, and beyond and above them rise the Horns of Hattîn.

In Christ's time the region about the Sea of Galilee was thronged with intelligent, busy men, and covered with the marks of civilisation and prosperity. But all is changed; and the only signs of life at present are a few boats on the lake, a few ploughmen in the fields, and the cattle or tents of the Bedawin on these sacred hillsides. Still, although in desolation, this region is to us one of the most delightful places on earth. No church or cathedral in civilised lands brings us so near to the Divine Master as a day spent on these lonely shores. While carrying on our work east of the Jordan, we made an effort to spend the Sabbath by this lake whenever it was possible to do so. We have been across it many times, and examined every locality north and south of it, and on both the eastern and western banks; we have seen it in calm and storm, in summer and winter; and its beauty grows upon us. Like Niagara, like some of the lakes of Scotland or Switzerland, one cannot appreciate its attractions by a single glance; they are developed by study. And he who goes from point to point about this hallowed lake, and observes the changing aspects of sea and mountains, will find its scenery to be diversified instead of monotonous and uniform, and that some of its views possess elements of unusual loveliness and grandeur.

As we descended from Safed (see pages 90, 91) to the Sea of Galilee by way of Khân Jubb Yûsef, we shall return by the other route previously indicated, starting from the north-west corner of the plain of Gennesaret at the large ruin called Abu Shûsheh. Fine squared stones project from the ground at many points, and it is possible that this also is the site of a once-important town. There is a large mill here, run by water from the copious stream of the Rûbüdtyeh. A few minutes north of this ruin we cross Wâdy el Amûd, which in its upper portion is called Wâdy Leimôn (see pages 85, 87). This is a large stream, and is one of the main sources for irrigating the plain of Gennesaret. The path leads up to the east of this wâdy, across a rough plateau, and meets the stream again under the cliffs of Akhbara. But it is also possible to go up the wâdy itself. Although the task is difficult, the adventurer will be fully repaid by the wild and savage aspect of this mountain gorge. At many points the walls are perpendicular, and they rise to a height of six hundred or one thousand feet. They often spring from the edge of the stream, so as to leave no path on either side. These walls of rock are perforated with innumerable openings which lead to caves. Very many of them are at present inaccessible. They may have been reached by some interior and secret passages, or the face of the rock may have been injured by earthquakes, so that the proper approaches have been destroyed. Swarms of birds now occupy them, and have here a secure retreat. While

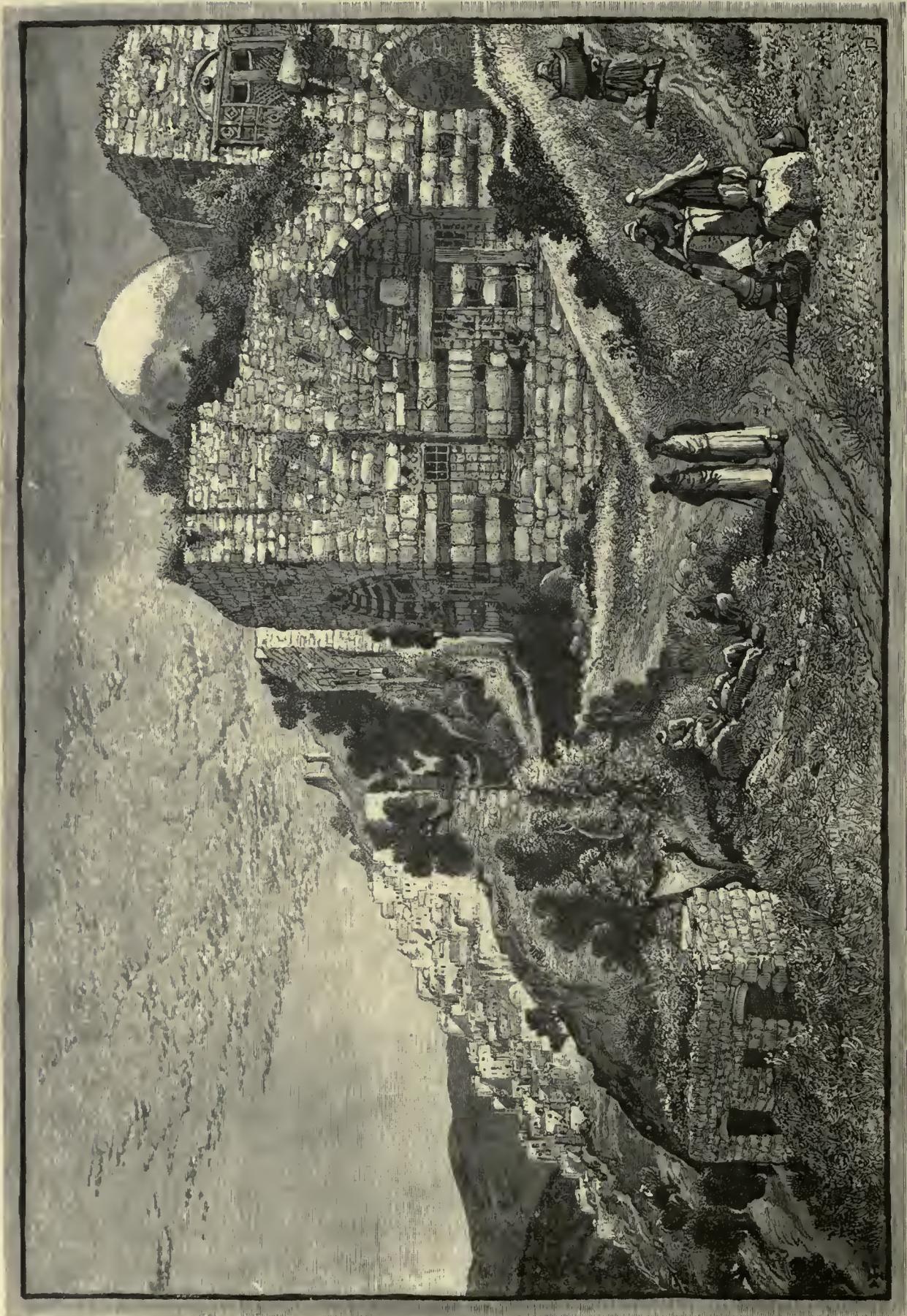
natural caverns no doubt existed in this limestone formation, a great many of these caves must be looked upon as artificial. Immense labour must have been expended in excavating them and fitting them for dwellings. They have, however, no history. No doubt robbers, distressed and terrified people flying from oppression or war, Christian monks, and the cave-dwellers of a remote antiquity, have in turn occupied them at different periods.

Akhbara, a little farther north, is mentioned by Josephus as "an extremely rocky situation" which he fortified ("Life," 37; "Wars," ii. 20, 6). This expression conveys no adequate idea of these cliffs, which form one of the wildest places in Syria. The labyrinth of passages and interior apartments can perhaps never be explored. There may have been a town connected with these caves, or they themselves may have been more accessible formerly, for the Talmud mentions the fact that Rabbi Yose had here a school. Except that it is wilder, the general character of Akhbara is like that of Leimôn (see page 85), and is referred to because it is mentioned in history, while Leimôn is not. We have already learned something of the famous caves in Wâdy Hamâm (see pages 67 and 69), where in past ages tragic scenes have been enacted.

Besides the three places now mentioned, we may refer to the Jordan Valley, where, in the mountain walls which line its eastern side, thousands of these holes appear. They were once the abode of Christian hermits, and, previous to them, of the Essene anchorites, who existed in great numbers in this valley and about the Dead Sea before the time of Christ. In some of those about the mouth of the Jabbok (Zürka), we found decorations in red paint, which showed considerable artistic skill. In this connection we may notice the vast caves at 'Arâk el Emîr, east of the Jordan, which Hyrcanus, before 175 B.C., fitted up with apartments of all kinds, designing them as a place of refuge; and also to the underground city, with its network of streets and avenues, at Der'a, which is supposed to represent Edrei, one of the capitals of Og, king of Bashan. There must be others still in that region quite as extensive as any that are now known, which have not yet been discovered; for the Crusaders speak of some of great size which were three stories in height, while in Strabo, and particularly in the Talmud, we find almost fabulous accounts of the extent of various natural caves in different parts of the country.

We have already said that Şafed (see page 90) is the highest village in Galilee; and after sweltering for two months in the fearful climate of the Jordan Valley, we have found the fresh mountain air of this region very delightful and invigorating. Being situated on the summit of a hill, one would expect to find the town tolerably clean. On the contrary, the streets are filthy, and there does not appear to be any desire to improve them. Nevertheless, it is reckoned as one of the sacred cities of the Jews—Tiberias, Hebron, and Jerusalem being the others. The soil in this elevated district is exceedingly fertile, because the clouds collect above it and rain and dew are abundant. The olive, fig, pomegranate, and vine flourish here, besides many other trees and shrubs.

Once in the month of February, when approaching this place from the north, we were overtaken by a sudden and violent storm, which lasted nearly all the afternoon. There were



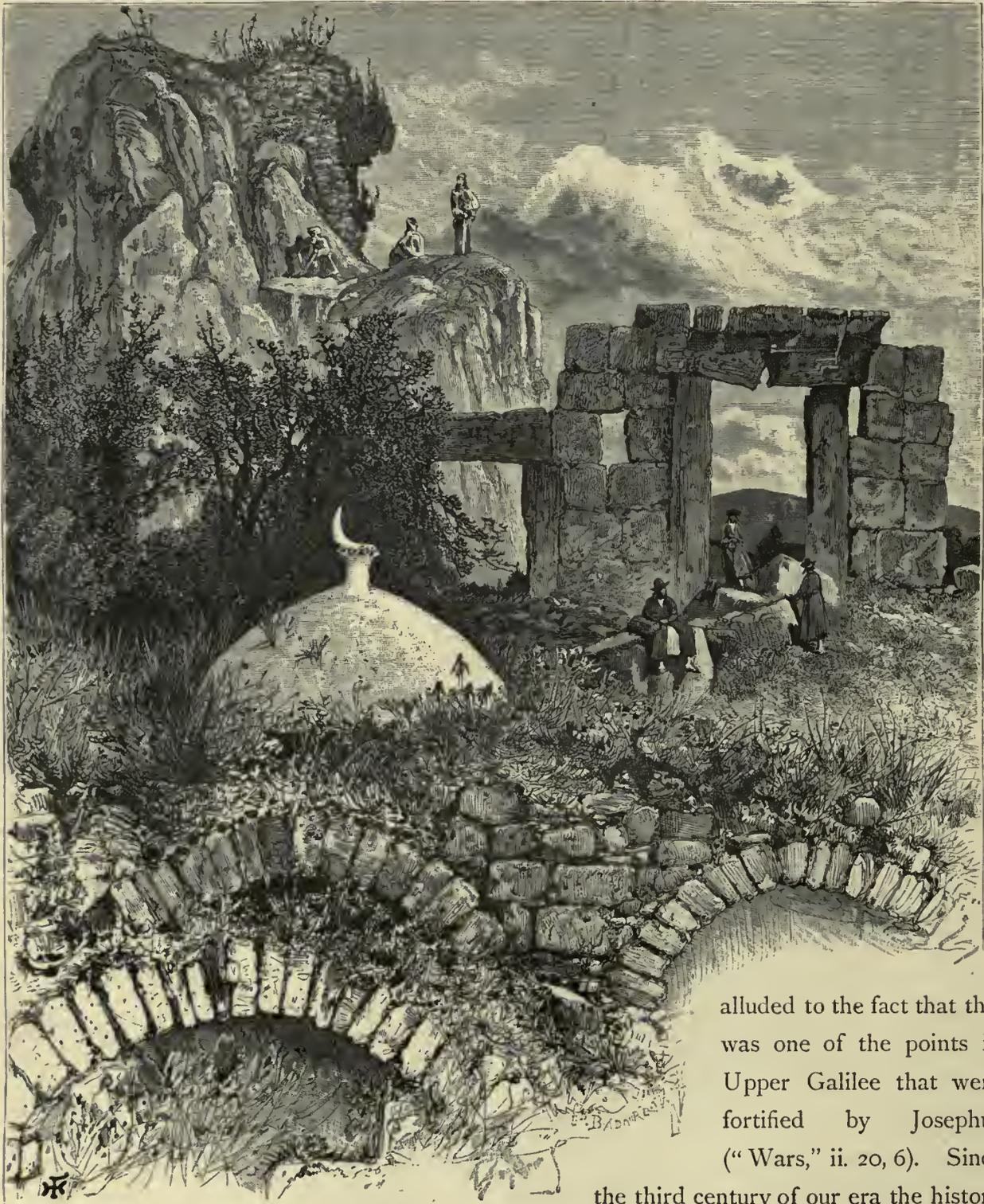
SAFED.
One of the four holy places of the Jews in Palestine : showing the Jewish quarter on the western and north-western side of the hill, just below the castle.



CASTLE OF SAFED,
On the northern crest of the hill, with the
Moslem quarter in the foreground.

at intervals gusts of wind, accompanied by rain and sleet. During these, it was sometimes impossible to urge our animals forward. The cold was intense, and our men almost perished. The roads were, by night, in a frightful condition, and the streams had become torrents. From six o'clock till midnight we toiled on and wandered about, trying to find our way to Safed. It was nearly one o'clock before we entered the town, where, by the aid of a friendly watchman, we roused the owner of a *café*, who, in his rude den, which was as welcome to us as a palace, made a substantial fire and furnished us with an abundance of black coffee. From exposure to the intense

cold and wet we were well-nigh exhausted; but before morning we had become warm and refreshed, while our animals had been comfortably sheltered in a neighbouring khân. We have



ANCIENT SYNAGOGUE, MEIRÔN,

Situated on the top of an overhanging cliff, which was levelled artificially.
Only the south front is now standing.

alluded to the fact that this was one of the points in Upper Galilee that were fortified by Josephus ("Wars," ii. 20, 6). Since

the third century of our era the history of the place has been in many respects remarkable. It was an important

fortress during the Crusades, and on one occasion, A.D. 1188, Saladin besieged it for five weeks. In 1260 it was besieged again by Sultan Bibars, the garrison, which surrendered, being

murdered, and their leader being flayed alive. In 1799 Napoleon stationed in the castle here a garrison of four hundred French troops. Three centuries ago it boasted of seventeen synagogues and a Hebrew printing establishment. Subsequently this became an important centre for the publication of Hebrew books, and in 1833 employment was given to no less than thirty persons. On account of a severe earthquake in 1759, by which many Jews perished, a large number of the inhabitants left the city, and a century ago it had but five synagogues. Its schools have at different times enjoyed a wide reputation, and besides the works issued from its press, some of the writers and rabbis who flourished here have been eminent men. In 1812 a plague swept over Galilee, and it is said that hardly a fifth of the population of Safed remained alive.

As the place comprises not only a village but a fortress, it has suffered in nearly all the wars that have desolated the country. That under Ibrahim Pasha, 1832—1840, may be mentioned as a time when the Jewish inhabitants especially were robbed and killed without mercy; and it was only by the combined influence of the foreign consuls of the country that their persecutors were forced to stop their cruel and bloody work.

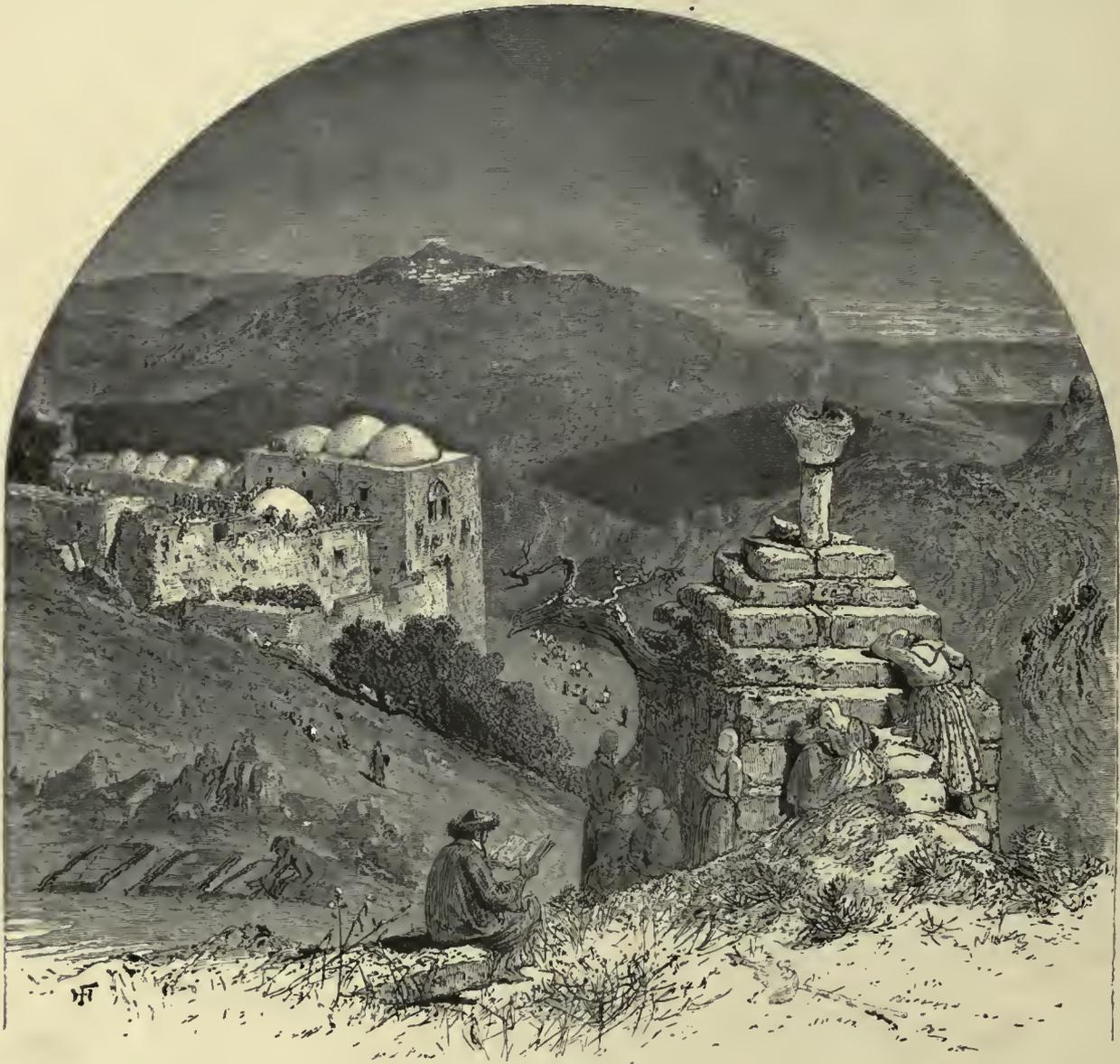
But more shocking than the barbarities of war seem the details of the terrible earthquake which visited the city in 1837. By this awful calamity not only the city but the castle itself was reduced to ruins, and many occupants of the latter were buried beneath its fallen walls and towers. It has been estimated that in this town as many as five thousand persons perished, although the number could never be accurately determined. At least fifteen hundred Jews were killed, and, as the shock was sudden, most of them died instantaneously; while it is known that some who were crushed beneath the ruins lingered for several days before relief could reach them, or death put an end to their misery. The details of that catastrophe, as given by the Rev. William M. Thomson, are too painful to be repeated (*"Missionary Herald,"* Boston, 1837, pp. 433—441).

We have referred to the Jewish enterprise for which Safed has been famous during three or four centuries past; but this region is full of monuments which belong to a much more flourishing period of Jewish history, namely, that of the second to the fourth century of the Christian era. After the conquest of Judæa by Vespasian and Titus, and especially after the final destruction of their liberties under Hadrian, A.D. 132—135, the Jews repaired to Galilee, where for many generations they enjoyed considerable freedom from persecution.

The Sanhedrim was removed successively from Jerusalem to Yabneh or Jamnia, Usha, Shefaram, Beth-Shearim, Sepphoris (see page 48), and at last to Tiberias (see page 62). All but the first two of these places were in Galilee. During this period of prosperity they built many synagogues and established a number of celebrated schools. The remains of at least twelve of these synagogues have been brought to light, and they reveal a good many important facts with regard to these ancient structures. At Meirôn (see page 92), one hour and a half north-west of Safed (see page 90), the remains of one exist in very good preservation. The site for it was excavated in a hill, and its western wall and floor are of solid rock. There is

one also at El Jish, or Giscala, and two at Kefr Beirim. These places are respectively one hour and a half and two hours north-west of Meirôn.

In a large rock-chamber at Meirôn, containing thirty *loculi*, is shown the tomb of the great Hillel and his thirty-six pupils, and at another point that of the no less famous Shammai and his wife. Still other celebrated men were buried here, among them Rabbi Simeon ben Jochai,



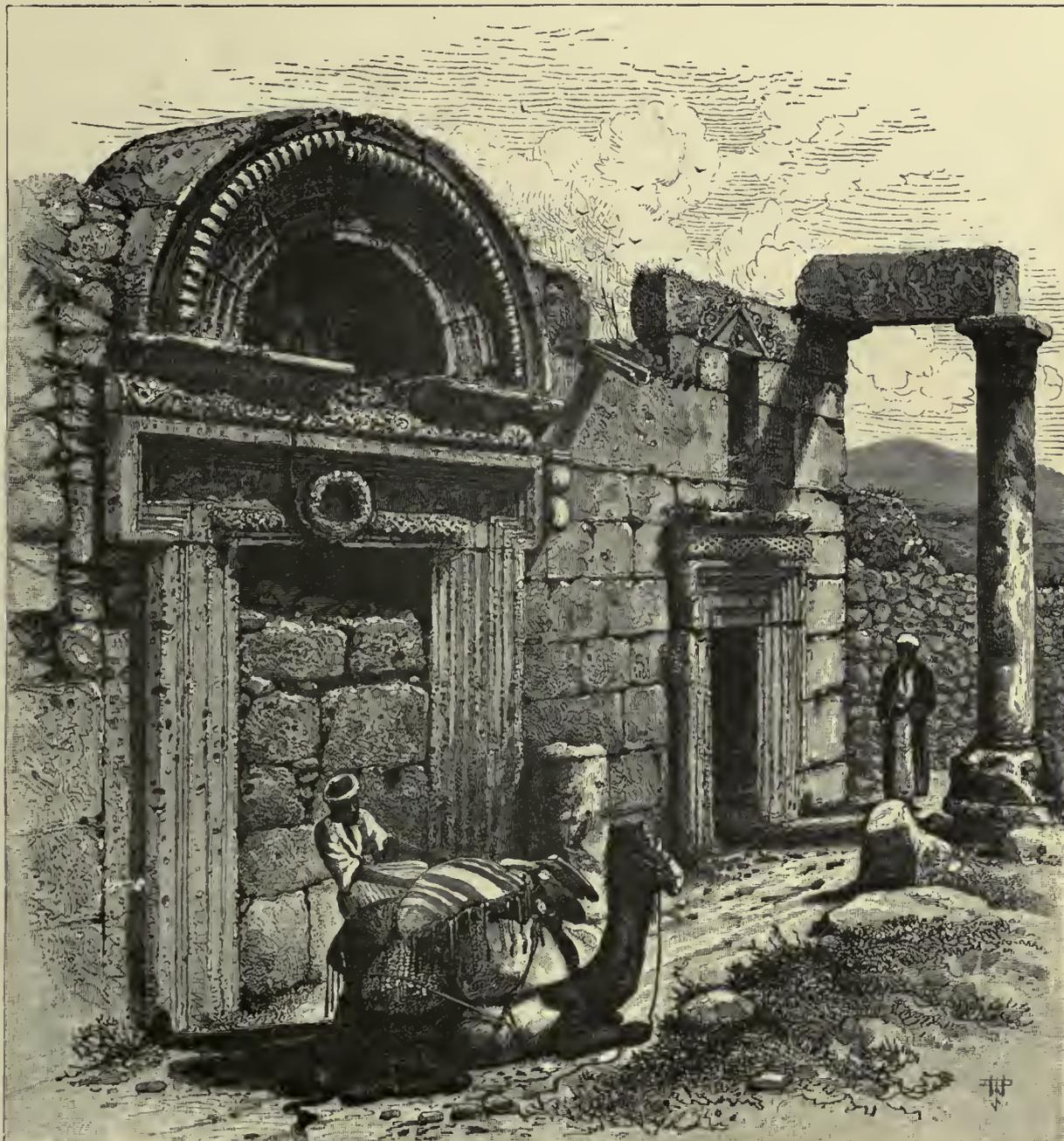
JEWISH SHRINE AT MEIRÔN

The town of Safed appears on the hill beyond, and on the right there is a glimpse of the sea of Galilee. During the annual festival pilgrims burn shawls, robes, and kerchiefs, more or less costly, at this venerated shrine.

the reputed author of the book "Zohar." It is on account of the latter that this place has become a shrine of the Jews, to which pilgrimages are made every year. Not only do pilgrims come from Damascus and the other towns of Palestine, but they have been known to come even from Aleppo, Constantinople, Cairo, and Bagdad. The occasion is celebrated by brilliant illuminations, dancing, and festivities of various other kinds, which are kept up not only through the day, but often during the entire night. It is called "the Jubilee of Rabbi

Simeon ben Jochai," and its ceremonies are not only wild, but are said to partake at times of an immoral character.

Of the two synagogues of Kefr Beirim, the larger one (shown below) is the nearest perfect of any of these remains in Palestine. The size of the interior is forty-six by sixty feet. Its



REMAINS OF A SYNAGOGUE AT KEFR BEIRIM.

The village of Beirim, with its remarkable ruins, stands on the summit of a peak north-west of Meirôn. Its present inhabitants are chiefly Maronites.

southern face, which appears to be nearly entire, has three doors. The wall, which is two feet thick, is constructed of finely cut blocks, and some of them are of large size. There is a good deal of ornamentation about the doors, especially over the central one, above which is a decorated arch. The columns which formed the colonnade in front have mostly fallen. One

will notice that the fluting, the vines, grapes, and leaves, the rosettes and other ornaments, exhibit skilled and beautiful workmanship. If we are to credit tradition, Kefr Beirim is the burial-place of the prophet Obadiah, and also of Barak, who, at the instigation of Deborah, rallied the heroes of Zebulun and Naphtali and led them triumphantly against Sisera. The ruins of the smaller synagogue here are to the north-east of the village, in the open field. The building has almost wholly disappeared, except the sides and lintels of the main entrance, which are richly decorated, and over which is a Hebrew inscription—bearing, however, no date.

But the relics and monuments of the kind we are now considering are so fragmentary that



SITE OF KEDESH NAPHTALI,

Marked by remains of buildings of Jewish and Roman origin, and by a small village called Kedes. The spring used by the villagers is shown in the foreground. Mount Hermon is seen in the distance.

they convey no adequate idea of the character of the people to whom they belonged. These fragments, however, are not the only mementoes of that noble race. The Jewish nation, indeed, was not celebrated for its works of art; hence its brilliant memorials are not to be sought for amid ruined synagogues and temples, or on the sites of famous and sacred cities. Its influence on mankind was chiefly of a spiritual nature; but this was so powerful and abiding, that it has led all civilised races since to look away to Judæa as the fatherland of their religion.



TOMB AT KEDES, THE ANCIENT KEDESH NAPHTALI,

Thirty-five feet square; piers at the corners support round arches twenty-one feet high. Between the arches were the places for interment, three between each and one on either side of the door. The arches were formerly walled up and the building was covered with a dome.

CÆSAREA PHILIPPI AND THE HIGHLANDS OF GALILEE.

THE region of Upper Galilee lies to a large extent out of the path of travellers in the Holy Land. Yet even at the present time it is very populous and fertile, and its natural features combined with its historical associations render it deserving not only of a

visit, but of careful study. There is, however, a feeling that this section lacks interest; that it is not only remote from Jerusalem, Damascus, and other centres, but that it is rough and uncultivated, and its inhabitants are wild and degraded.

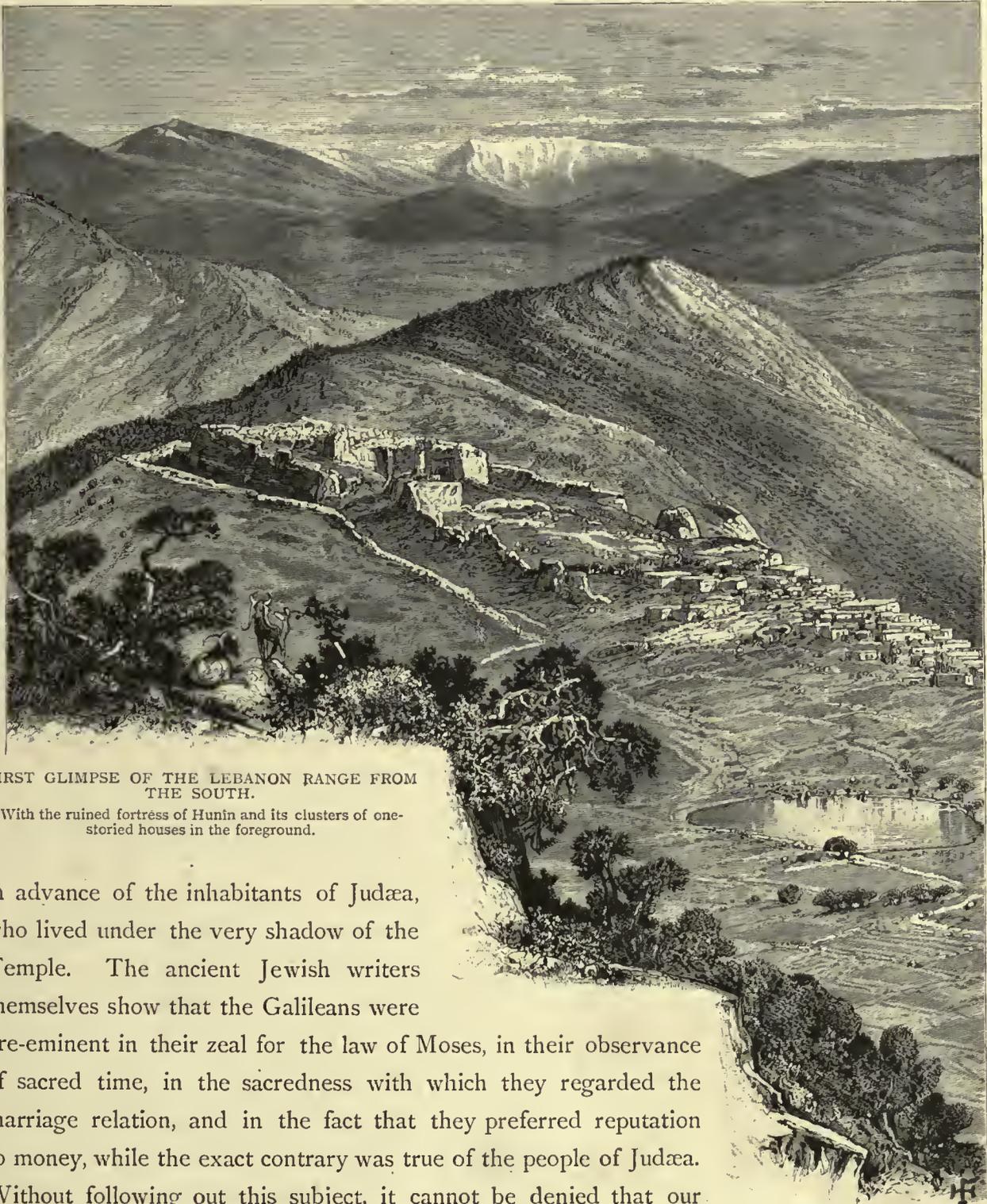
It is thought further that the character of the province and people of Galilee was such



SARCOPHAGI AMONG THE RUINS OF KEDESH NAPHTALI.
The one in the foreground is a good example of a sarcophagus with two receptacles.

in former times as to lead the rest of the country to look upon both with contempt. Some writers have spoken of Galilee as a "despised region," as "the darkest district of Palestine;" of Nazareth as an "outlying village" with "a bad reputation;" and of Peter as having been "brought up in the rudest district of an obscure province." But it can easily be shown that these and all similar statements are wholly at variance with the truth.

Of the people of Galilee at the time referred to it may be said, in general, that their patriotism and courage cannot be too highly praised, nor their great respect for law and order, while as regards religion, education, and morals, they were in many important particulars



FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE LEBANON RANGE FROM THE SOUTH.

With the ruined fortress of Hunin and its clusters of one-story houses in the foreground.

in advance of the inhabitants of Judæa, who lived under the very shadow of the Temple. The ancient Jewish writers themselves show that the Galileans were pre-eminent in their zeal for the law of Moses, in their observance of sacred time, in the sacredness with which they regarded the marriage relation, and in the fact that they preferred reputation to money, while the exact contrary was true of the people of Judæa. Without following out this subject, it cannot be denied that our Lord found in Galilee the most congenial soil for the seeds of that truth which he came to plant. The territory of Galilee, at the time of the division under Joshua, was occupied by the four tribes Zebulun, Issachar, Asher, and Naphtali (Joshua xix.).

The land was not wholly conquered, and some of the original inhabitants were allowed to remain.

Eighteen centuries ago the distinction between Upper and Lower Galilee was well defined and understood. The boundaries are given by Josephus ("Wars," iii. 3, 1), but it is impossible to identify several of the places mentioned. The Talmud defines Upper Galilee as the region where the sycamore grows, and Lower Galilee, where it does not; but this definition is no longer of any service.

In these two parts of Galilee no less than fourteen strongholds were fortified by Josephus in the Jewish War ("Life," xxxvii.; "Wars," ii. 20, 6); and this number does not include several other places of strength which are mentioned either incidentally or as the scene of a bloody struggle. The statement of the Jewish historian that Galilee had two hundred and four cities and villages, the smallest of which numbered above fifteen thousand inhabitants, has been regarded as an exaggeration; but, when all the facts are considered, it will probably be found to be correct. As military governor of Galilee, Josephus raised without difficulty an army "of above a hundred thousand young men;" and there is evidence that in addition to this force, he had an equal number of men enrolled who were not actually called into the field.

In A.D. 39, twenty-seven years previous to the time just referred to, Herod Antipas was on trial at Rome, charged with preparing to levy war against the Romans, and the fact was developed that in a single armory he had armour collected for seventy thousand men. This, it must be noted, was in a time of comparative peace. These facts are mentioned in order to convey some idea of the military strength of this province at the beginning of our era. With these should be stated another, namely, that Galilee bore, unaided, the whole brunt of that terrible war during the first year of its progress, and that, too, when the sixty thousand veteran troops with which her young men had to contend were fresh for the conflict, and were led by Vespasian, the best general in the Roman Empire. The backbone of the rebellion was broken when Galilee was subdued; but in that bloody year one hundred and fifty thousand of her people perished, and among these the flower of her youth had fallen. Even Vespasian praised the conduct of the Galileans; but the ranks of his own army had been thinned in the struggle, and he was obliged to order time for rest and recruiting.

The people of Upper Galilee could not but be powerfully affected by their neighbours on the sea-coast, with whom they were in constant intercourse. Twenty miles from the Mediterranean would, at almost any point, take one into the heart of Galilee; and the inhabitants of these two sections, living in such close proximity to each other, must have been to a large extent identical in their interests. It was not a small matter for the Galileans to be thus situated, at the very gates of the market of the world. The ships of the people who controlled so largely the trade and commerce of all civilised lands were at their very doors.

Strabo says of the people of Tyre, "The great number and magnitude of their colonies and cities are proofs of their maritime skill and power" (xvi. 2, 24). While both Tyre and Sidon were distinguished and illustrious cities, it was disputed even in ancient times which

could justly claim the highest antiquity. Isaiah speaks of Tyre as the "daughter of Zidon" (xxiii. 12), and in our private collection there is a coin with an inscription in Phœnician characters which reads, "Sidon, the mother of Kamba, Hippo, Cittium, (and) Tyre." This interesting relic would seem to indicate that the four places mentioned were colonies of Sidon.

Even in Homer's time, the choicest works of art came from Sidon, and the most costly offerings to the gods were the product of its looms. The purple dye of Tyre had a world-wide celebrity on account of the durability of its beautiful tints, and its manufacture proved a source of abundant wealth to the inhabitants of that city.

Homer speaks of Sidon as "abounding in works of brass," and praises it for the drinking-vessels of gold and silver which her skilful workmen had made. From among the artists of Tyre, Solomon employed at least one master workman "cunning to work in gold and in silver, in brass and in iron, in stone and in timber, in purple, in crimson and in fine linen, and in the engraving of precious stones" (2 Chron. ii. 7, 14). These hints will indicate the progress of the nation in these special arts.

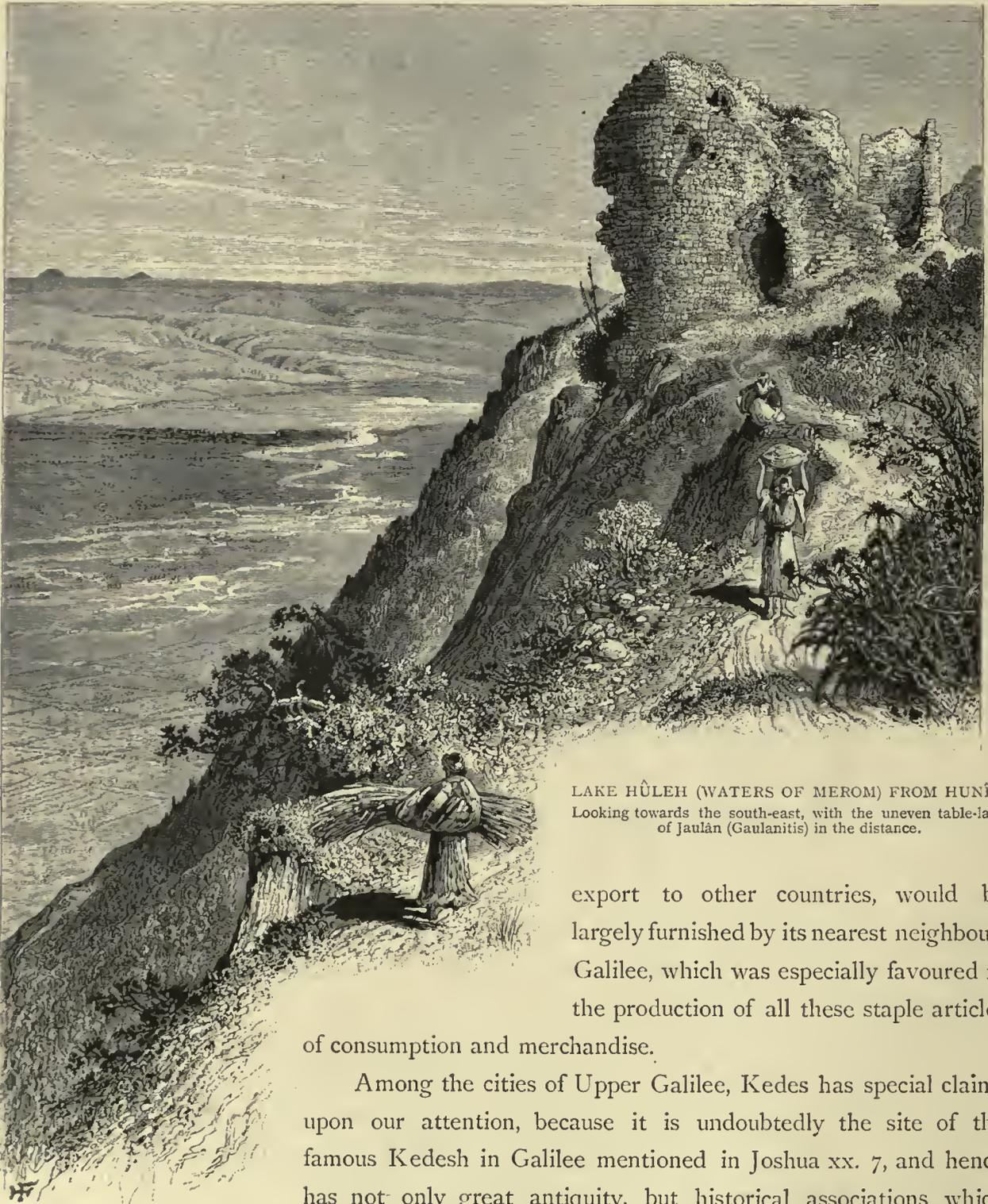
The Phœnicians were celebrated in ancient times for the manufacture of glass, and some of the specimens of their work that have been preserved are still the wonder of mankind. Here where its manufacture is supposed to have originated, and in later times elsewhere, it was produced in such abundance, that before the commencement of our era glass was in ordinary use for drinking-vessels, and a glass bowl could be bought for a penny. On the other hand, so much skill had been devoted to its manufacture that elegant and costly articles were produced, and for a single pair of glass vases Nero paid a sum equal to about four thousand pounds.

The Phœnicians were the connecting link between the civilisation of the East and the vast and unknown regions of the West. Their ships went to all parts of the world as then known, and news of remote peoples, conquests, and discoveries would be brought first to Phœnicia and disseminated among themselves and their immediate neighbours. They appear also to have been renowned in ancient times for marine stories, or what we call "sailors' yarns;" for, like seafaring men in all ages, they entertained their own people, as well as those in the distant ports which they visited, with either strange or amusing, but still too often fabulous, accounts of lands and seas, men and other beings which they had seen or which had appeared to them on the great deep.

Of the shipping of Phœnicia, in which she surpassed all other nations, it may be sufficient to state that when Xerxes invaded Greece the Persian navy consisted of twelve hundred triremes, and of these "the Phœnicians, with the Syrians of Palestine," furnished three hundred, or one-fourth of the whole number (Herodotus, bk. vii., ch. 89); and Xenophon has described at some length a Phœnician ship that he himself saw, which visited Athens, and which seems to have attracted as much attention when it first appeared as the Great Eastern did in modern times.

The commerce and business of Phœnicia would bring wealth, and wealth would bring power and ease, and in time a luxurious mode of life, which could not fail of influencing

in some degree the people of the hill country only a few miles away. Flax for its looms, timber for its ships, corn, wine, oil, sheep, and cattle to feed its inhabitants, as well as for

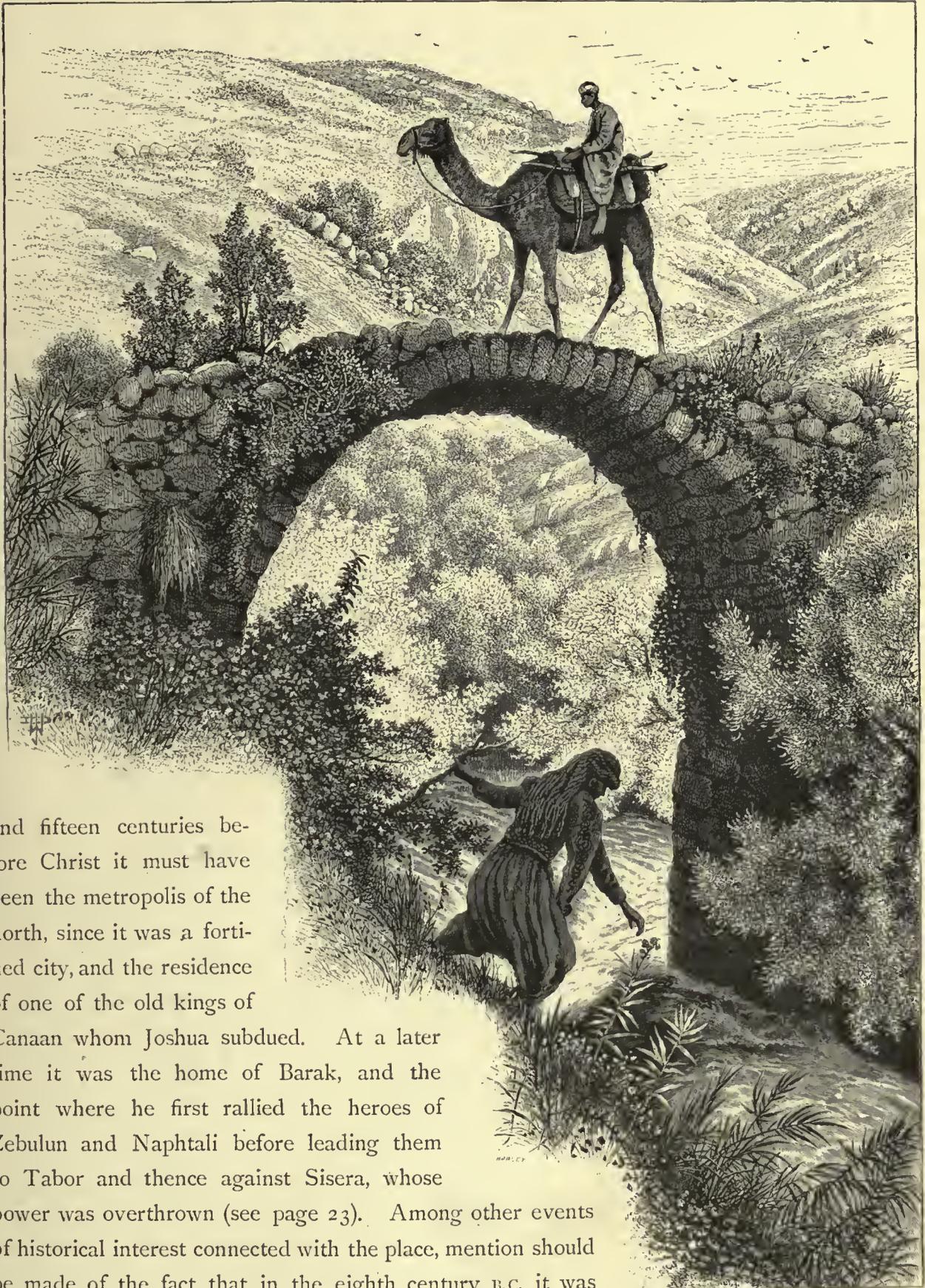


LAKE HÛLEH (WATERS OF MEROM) FROM HUNÍN. Looking towards the south-east, with the uneven table-land of Jaulán (Gaulanitis) in the distance.

export to other countries, would be largely furnished by its nearest neighbour, Galilee, which was especially favoured in the production of all these staple articles

of consumption and merchandise.

Among the cities of Upper Galilee, Kedes has special claims upon our attention, because it is undoubtedly the site of the famous Kedesh in Galilee mentioned in Joshua xx. 7, and hence has not only great antiquity, but historical associations which make it a point of unusual interest. In the time of Joshua it was called Kedesh in Galilee, to distinguish it from other towns of the same name in other parts of the country; and it was sometimes further designated as Kedesh Naphtali, because it was situated within the limits of that tribe (Judges iv. 6) (see pages 96 and 97). Fourteen



and fifteen centuries before Christ it must have been the metropolis of the north, since it was a fortified city, and the residence of one of the old kings of Canaan whom Joshua subdued. At a later time it was the home of Barak, and the point where he first rallied the heroes of Zebulun and Naphtali before leading them to Tabor and thence against Sisera, whose power was overthrown (see page 23). Among other events of historical interest connected with the place, mention should be made of the fact that in the eighth century B.C. it was embraced in the region conquered by Tiglathpileser, King of Assyria (2 Kings xv. 29). The western campaigns of the

THE RIVER HASBÂNY, THE NORTHERN TRIBUTARY OF THE JORDAN. Fringed with oleanders and willows, and crossed by the Jisr el Ghtjjar.

Assyrian kings were among the commonest events of that early period and time, and again not only all of Palestine, but Moab (see page 9, vol. i.) and Edom as well were overrun by their armies; but on the occasion here referred to, while Gilead and Galilee were swept by the conquerors, Samaria and Judæa appear to have escaped.

The student of the Bible, however, will be attracted to this point because it is the site of one of the cities of refuge. Even before the Hebrews entered the Promised Land a singular provision was introduced into the law of Moses with regard to those who should take the life of their fellow-man. In case of premeditated murder the offender was to be slain, even if he had to be taken from God's altar—to them the holiest place on earth; but if any caused the death of another by accident or without premeditation, such were to be allowed to live, provided they fled to certain appointed places, and conformed to certain prescribed regulations (Exodus xxi. 12—14). Joshua was therefore commanded, "when he had passed over Jordan into the land of Canaan," to appoint six cities of refuge, "that the slayer may flee thither which killeth any person at unawares. They shall be unto you cities for refuge from the avenger; that the manslayer die not until he stand before the congregation in judgment" (Numbers xxxv. 11, 12). This provision was not to shield the guilty, but to protect the innocent, and in cases of doubt to give a person an opportunity of fair trial.

Accordingly, there were set apart and devoted to that purpose, "Kedesh in Galilee in Mount Naphtali (see page 96), and Shechem in Mount Ephraim (see page 5), and Kirjath-arba, which is Hebron, in the mountain of Judah. And on the other side Jordan, by Jericho eastward, they assigned Bezer in the wilderness upon the plain out of the tribe of Reuben, and Ramoth in Gilead out of the tribe of Gad, and Golan (Jaulân) in Bashan (see page 102) out of the tribe of Manasseh" (Joshua xx. 7, 8). In the early Jewish writings we are informed that these cities were located at central points, and that they were in pairs, those on the west of the Jordan corresponding to those on the east. Moreover, the cities were so selected that the distance between them from north to south was about equal. It was also required that the roads leading to them should be broad, that streams should be bridged, that every obstacle which might hinder one, or against which he might dash his foot, should be removed, and that at crossings or doubtful points finger-posts should be erected lest the fugitive should mistake the way. This fact is alluded to in Hosea vi., where the high-road between Shechem in the west and Gilead (*i.e.* Ramoth Gilead, now Gerash) in the east had become infested with robbers. The manslayer who had taken refuge in one of these cities was to be restored to his country and friends on the death of the high priest; and it is a curious fact that the mothers of the high priests used to feed and clothe these fugitives, so that they might not pray for the death of their sons. If, however, the fugitive died before the high priest, his bones were to be restored to his friends after the death of the latter. While these very ancient laws are interesting, they seem also to be exceedingly wise and just.

We have at different times approached Kedesh Naphtali from the north, south, east, and west, and have always been impressed with the beauty of its situation (see page 96). Directly

on the brow of the mountain west of Lake Hûleh is a long, narrow plain, remarkably fertile, and dotted with fine terebinths, oaks, and groves of olive-trees. This plain is bounded on the west by a ridge or hill, on the eastern slope of which, and extending some distance into the plain below, the town was situated, which, if we include all the existing ruins, must have been one of great extent. From the hill the distant view towards the north and east is fine, although the ground is not high enough to enable one to see much of the Hûleh Plain or

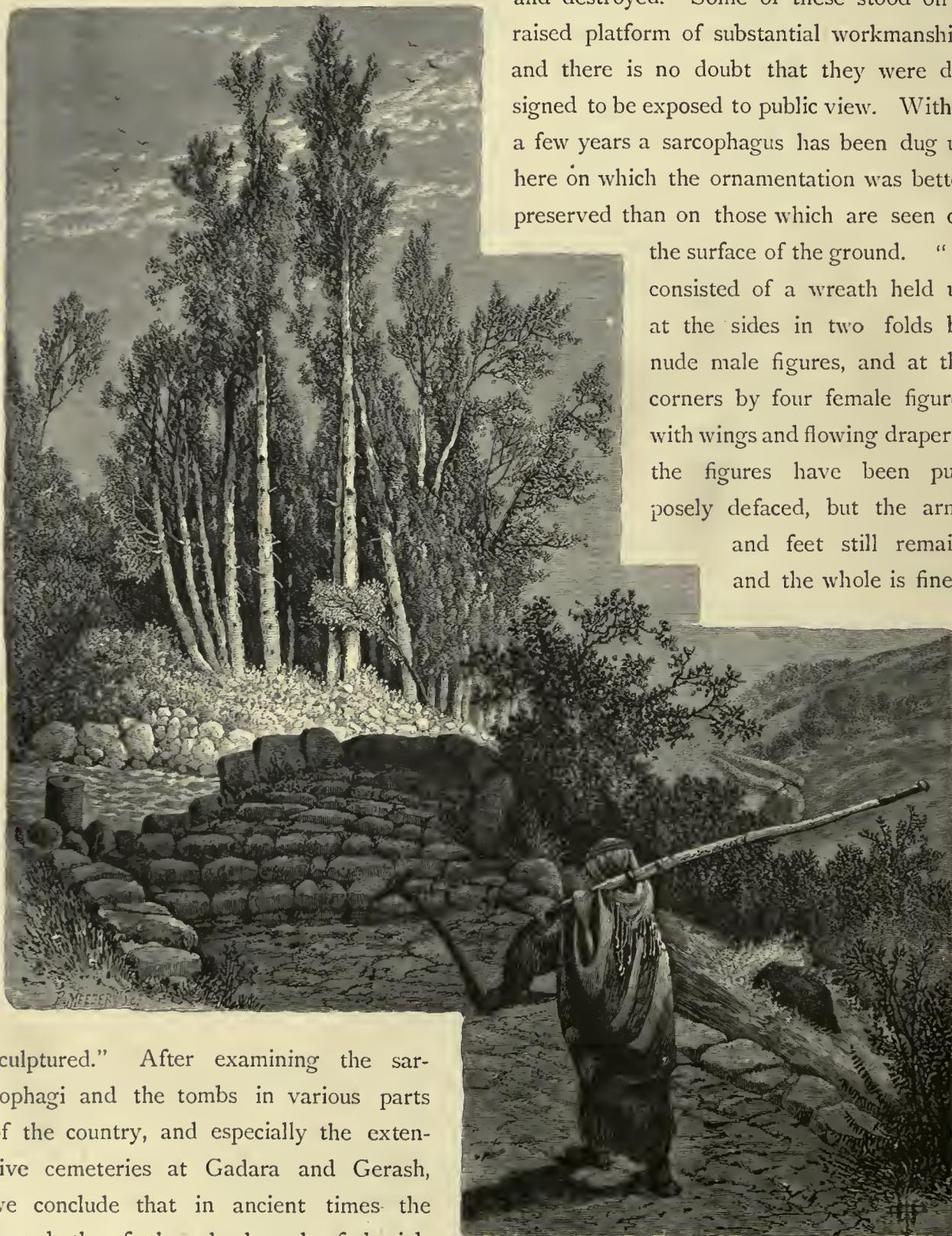


THE SITE OF LAISH, AFTERWARDS CALLED DAN, THE ANCIENT NORTHERN LIMIT OF THE HOLY LAND. At the most westernly source of the Jordan. This spot is now known as Tell el Kâdy (the Hill of the Judge), and here stands a sacred oak hung with votive offerings, over a tomb dedicated to Sheikh Merzûk.

Lake. At the foot of the hill is the copious fountain which supplied the town, and about it are a number of stone sarcophagi doing service as watering-troughs. There are other groups of sarcophagi at different points, and the ornamentation on them was unusually elaborate. We counted as many as four double sarcophagi, and the lids, designed to cover two receptacles each, were, like the coffins themselves, massive and finely executed (see page 98). Among the ruins of the country these double coffins are now rare. They may, however, have been

common in ancient times, and their absence be due to the fact that they have been broken and destroyed. Some of these stood on a raised platform of substantial workmanship, and there is no doubt that they were designed to be exposed to public view. Within a few years a sarcophagus has been dug up here on which the ornamentation was better preserved than on those which are seen on

the surface of the ground. "It consisted of a wreath held up at the sides in two folds by nude male figures, and at the corners by four female figures with wings and flowing drapery; the figures have been purposely defaced, but the arms and feet still remain, and the whole is finely

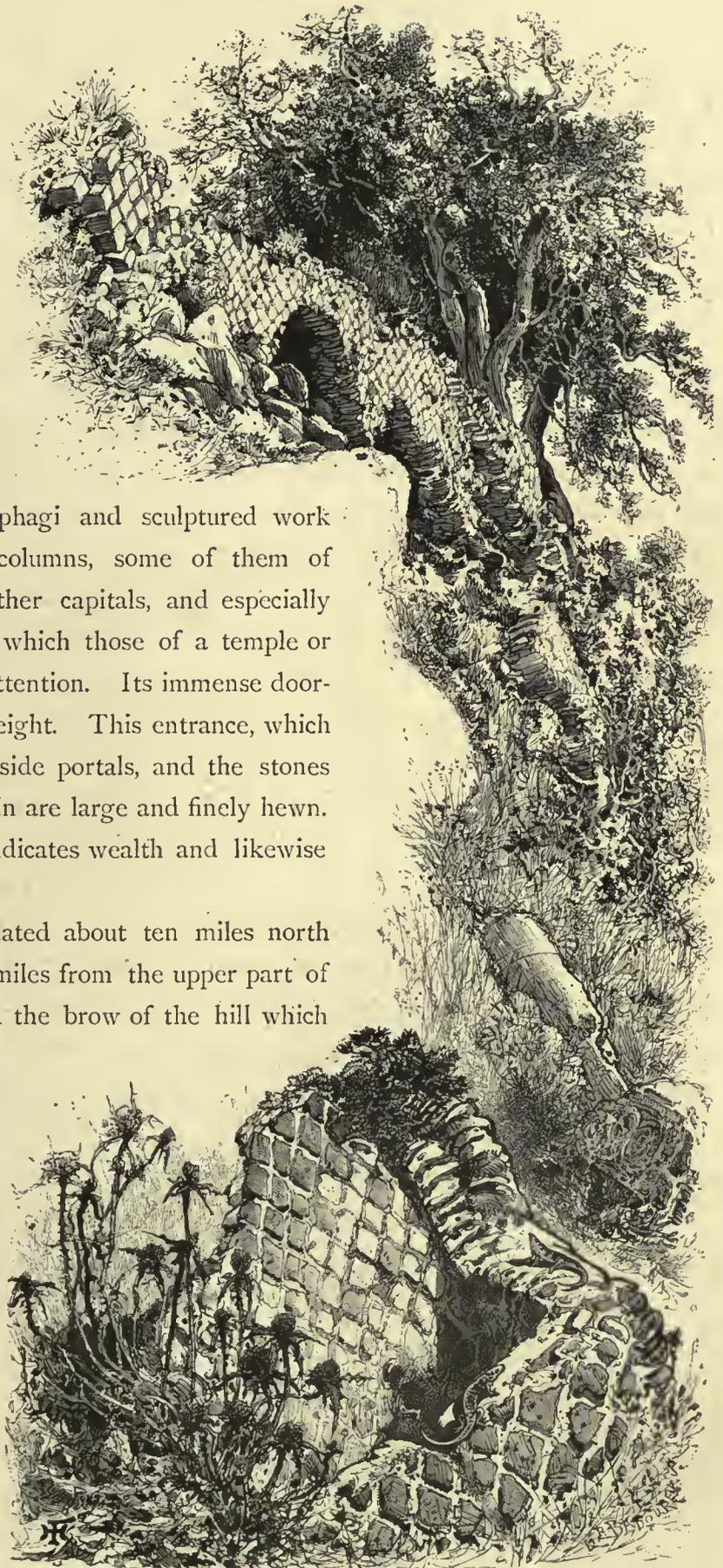


sculptured." After examining the sarcophagi and the tombs in various parts of the country, and especially the extensive cemeteries at Gadara and Gerash, we conclude that in ancient times the care both of the dead and of burial-places was a matter of sacred importance, and that whatever skill and art money could command were devoted to beautifying the graves of public citizens and friends.

THE JORDAN AT BÂNIÂS (CÆSAREA PHILIPPI).
Bâniâs is merely the Arabic pronunciation of the ancient Pnias of the Greeks and Romans. In the foreground is a peasant carrying a plough.

Most of the ruins which exist here belong, no doubt, to the Roman period; still it is claimed with good reason that some of the remains are of Jewish origin. Indeed, it would be strange were it otherwise, when we consider the history of the place; nor would it be surprising if excavations should bring to light some traces or relics of the ancient Canaanite inhabitants. Besides the sarcophagi and sculptured work already referred to, there are columns, some of them of peculiar style, Corinthian and other capitals, and especially the remains of buildings, among which those of a temple or a synagogue will attract special attention. Its immense door-posts are at least sixteen feet in height. This entrance, which was on the east, had two small side portals, and the stones of the arch and walls which remain are large and finely hewn. The character of the building indicates wealth and likewise the best workmanship.

Kedes (see page 96) is situated about ten miles north of Safed (see page 90) and four miles from the upper part of Lake Hüleh (see page 102). On the brow of the hill which overlooks the lake is a large white-domed *wely*, or tomb, of Neby Husha, *i.e.* the prophet Joshua, which is a famous place of resort, and we have sometimes seen about it scores of people engaged in festivities of various kinds. The road leading north from Kedes has the usual characteristics of this region—hill and valley, fine pasture-land, some wooded sections, and here and there noble terebinths, while at certain sea-



REMAINS OF ROMAN AQUEDUCT AT BANIÁS (CÆSAREA PHILIPPI).
Overgrown with thistles and reeds, and crowned with an evergreen oak.

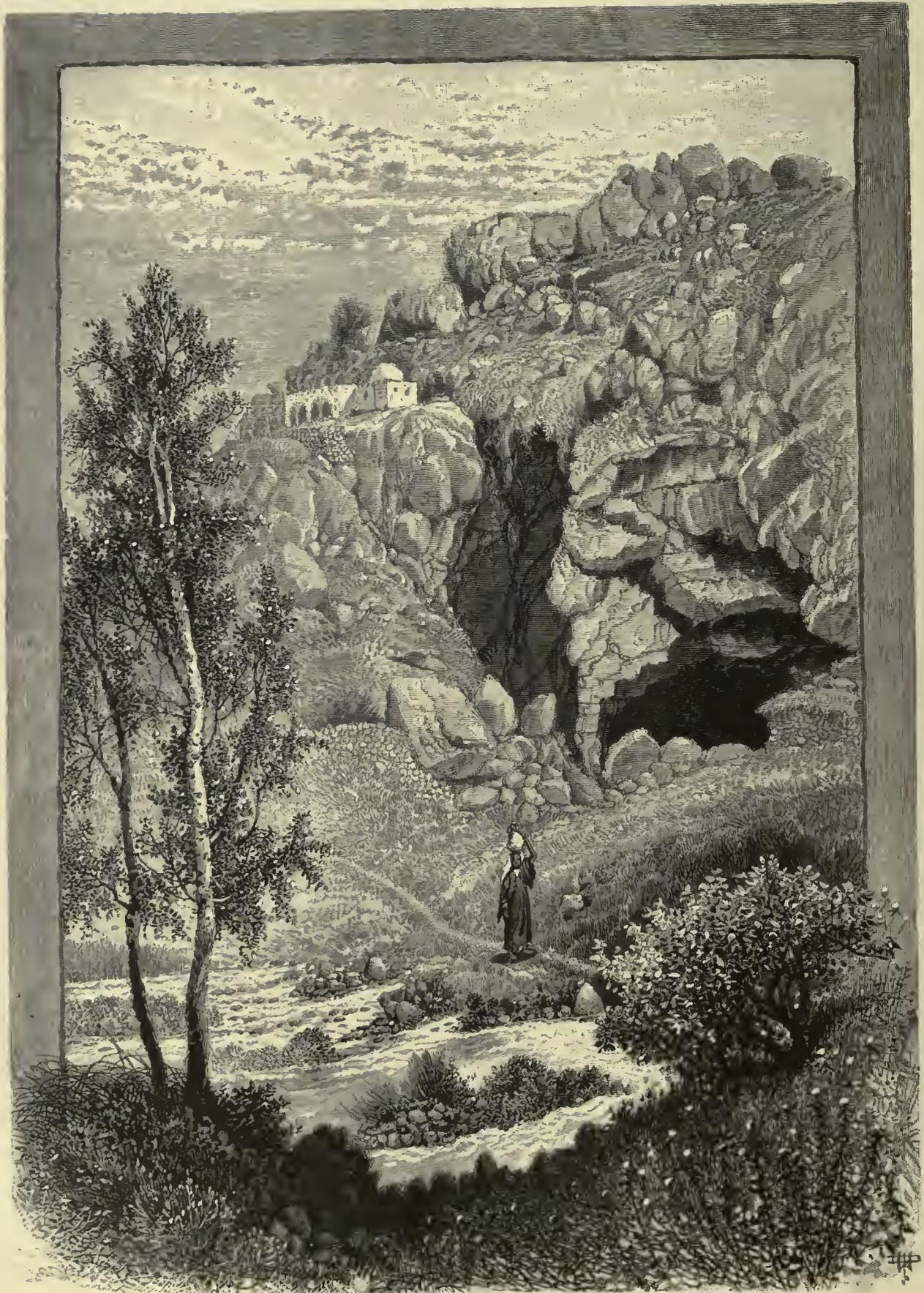
sons the cultivated fields will be carpeted with green and the rest of the earth with flowers. Among the villages passed on this route, Meis is the largest, and is inhabited by the Metawileh, who have an intense hatred of Christians, although they might not treat them with violence. The distance between Kedes (see page 96) and Hunin (see page 99) is perhaps seven miles, and north of Meis we find many traces of a Roman road, which fact is of importance as indicating one line of travel in ancient times.

A short distance before reaching Hunin the road passes over the summit of a hill which commands a fine view in every direction. On the right in the foreground is the Jordan Valley, the Hûleh Lake, and the vast marsh above it (see page 102). Beyond, to the east, is the great table-land of Gaulanitis stretching towards Damascus, and dotted in its western portion by a line of volcanic hills. North of these is the grand dome of Hermon. Still farther in the north is the range of the Lebanon Mountains, the highest summits of which, for several months in the year, are capped with snow. To the west rises the old castle of Tibnin, and before us lie the castle and village of Hunin. Whoever first fortified this place selected a commanding position on the main route leading from Damascus past Bâniâs to Tyre. That this point has been an important one is attested by the fact of the variety of ruins which exist here; for not only do Turkish and Arab work appear, but also that which belongs to the Crusades; and still mingled with these or underneath them all are abundant traces of Roman and Phœnician times. The north end appears to be the most ancient, and was surrounded by a moat dug in the rock to the depth of twenty feet, and which was thirty or forty feet in width (see page 99). The large bevelled stones which exist in some of the most ancient ruins of the country are found also in these walls, and the place was one of great strength. It commands a fine view of its sister castle above Bâniâs, on the way to Damascus; and as in ancient times methods were known for signalling from point to point, the soldiers in these two fortresses in times of danger no doubt communicated to each other across the great Hûleh Plain. This plain, including the marsh and lake, as seen from this point, forms a picture of unusual beauty, especially for parched and rocky Palestine. The greatest length of the valley is not far from sixteen miles, with an average breadth of six miles. The lake proper is four miles long and as many wide, but in addition six or more miles to the north are occupied by reeds, among which the streams not only wind, but form here and there miniature lakes, adding variety to the surface, which otherwise would be an unbroken mass of green. Into this dense jungle of canes and papyrus it is impossible to penetrate. We have sometimes made the attempt on horseback at points where there seemed to be a small opening, but never succeeded in going any great distance. So far as we went the bottom was hard, but this may not be the case in every part. On the south, west, and north the lake and marsh are bordered by a wide and fertile plain. Here the farmer is always rewarded by abundant crops. A few tents may be seen and a score or more of villages counted; but it will be observed, if one is accustomed to look down upon this plain at different seasons, that the villages do not always occupy the same localities. They are, in fact, *reed* villages, and the houses can easily be moved from place to place at the

convenience of those who occupy them. Such dwellings are, of course, in constant danger of being consumed by fire, and sometimes in a few moments the flames reduce an entire village to ashes. Never elsewhere have we seen waterfowl so numerous as in this lake and among these reeds. Every variety of Syrian bird which seeks the marshes exists here, but the difficulty is to catch them. They have secure retreats to which the hunter cannot approach, and seem to be aware of their immunity from his destructive arts. The trees that are about the lake are likewise filled with birds, and the wilderness of flowers which cover the plain and marsh attract innumerable bees and winged insects, from which in their incessant flights a loud hum rises and fills the air on every side. To enjoy it fully, one must look down upon this landscape in both summer and winter—when the storm-clouds, resting black and frightful on the mountains to the north, cast their shadows over it; when the sun is rising or setting in splendour; and when the moon and stars from a clear sky pour down upon it their mild but full and steady light.

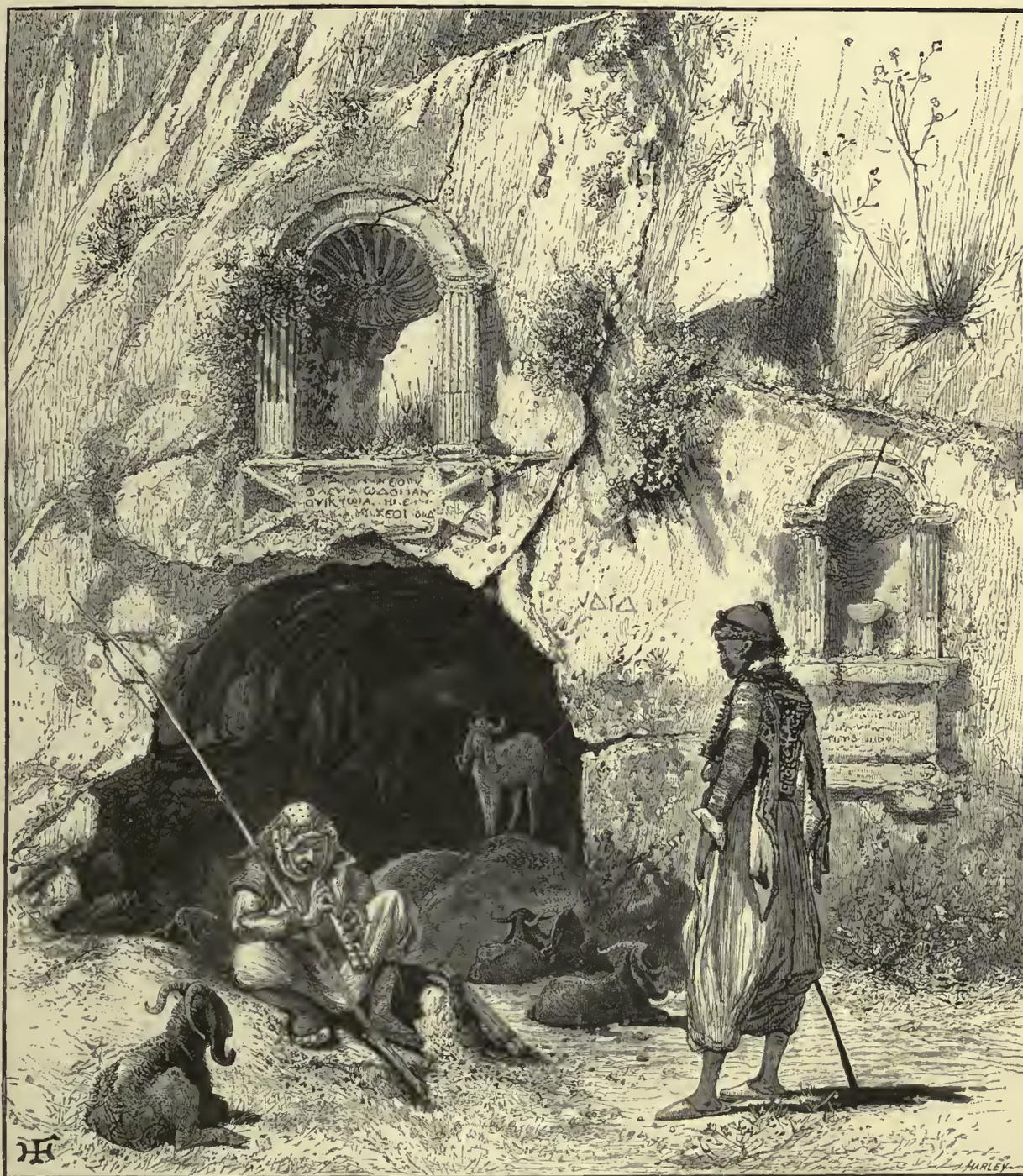
The reeds which grow here so abundantly are manufactured into mats and sent to the markets in different parts of the country; while the papyrus, if it were in the days of the Pharaohs or the Assyrian kings, would no doubt be highly valued as material for making paper. We see no reason why it might not be made profitable to cultivate this plant for the same purpose in modern times. Our methods of making paper are different from those employed in remote ages, but in civilised lands there is a constantly increasing demand for suitable material that may be used in its manufacture.

The present road from Hunin to the plain (see page 102) is somewhat difficult, but the distance is not great, and we soon pass, among the foot-hills, the village of Âbil, which some scholars regard as the modern representative of Abel, and which seems to have been an important place in the early Hebrew history (2 Samuel xx. 14). The site is an admirable one, and the appearance of the ground is such as to justify the belief that considerable ruins exist below the surface. The location also is to be noticed, since it was on or very near two main routes leading from Damascus to Tyre and Sidon. Not far from Âbil, on our way to the Hasbâny, we meet "the basaltic current again, which has poured in, filled the northern end of the plain, and gradually expanded till exhausted near the great marsh." Through this hard rock, upon which the implements made by men have hardly any effect, the mountain-stream has cut a channel which at some points is nearly two hundred feet deep, and along its bed the river dashes among great volcanic boulders, while the banks are lined with oleanders, willows, honeysuckle, and still other flowering shrubs and vines. The noise of the water and the chirping of birds in the trees, together with the wild natural scenery, combine to make this place romantic and beautiful. An ancient bridge called Jisr el Ghūjar spans the stream (see page 103), and the distance from it to Tell el Kâdy, or Dan (see page 105), is about three miles, which place is reached by a comparatively easy path. Here we find ourselves on a site of great antiquity, where sacred and profane history meet in some strange and thrilling events. The region itself is a charming one. The "lowlanders" of the country in the remotest times chose this point as



THE MOST EASTERLY SOURCE OF THE JORDAN, BÂNIÂS (CÆSAREA PHILIPPI).
This place has justly been called a Syrian Tivoli. The cliff is of ruddy limestone mingled with basalt. On a platform of the rock stands the wely of El Khidr (Saint George).

well adapted to the needs of their race for a commercial and religious centre. About it is a broad, level plain, whose rich soil produces an abundant and even a surprising growth of vegetation. No section of Palestine has a more ample supply of living water. Here Hermon



SCULPTURED NICHES DEDICATED TO PAN, AT CÆSAREA PHILIPPI,

In the face of the cliff, south of the cavern from which the Jordan springs. A peasant with his double-reed Pandean pipes and his flock of long-eared sheep appropriately occupies the foreground.

pours forth lavishly in fountains and streams her precious treasures, which give life to the land. One of these fountains is the largest in Syria, if not in the world, and the volume of water from it forms at once a stream of greater size than the river Hasbâny, which we have just crossed

(see page 103). Its course, however, as it goes to join the latter, can scarcely be traced, on account of the wilderness of oleanders and reeds which hide it from view. The place is not now inhabited, and one can roam at will over the site of ancient Dan, either shooting birds or gathering flowers, studying its history or searching for antiquities. Unless one defies the marsh and struggles through the tall grass from point to point, he would see only a large mound half a mile in diameter, perhaps sixty feet in height, destitute apparently of ruins, and certainly would not discover its strongly-marked artificial character. On one side of the mound are a good many trees of small growth, while near one of the springs stand side by side an oak and a terebinth, two beautiful trees of immense size, beneath whose branches are the graves of one or more Moslem saints (see page 105).

Dan comes into notice fourteen centuries before Christ as a place that had been long settled, and one that enjoyed great prosperity. In fact, it appears to have been well known before that, or in Joshua's time, under the name of Leshem or Laish; and subsequently, when taken by the Danites, it received a new name which has been preserved even to the present day. The men of this tribe who went on the expedition "to spy out the land," as related in Judges xviii., seem to have been freebooters; for at the home of Micah in Mount Ephraim, where they were well entertained, they stole not only his priest, but his idols and all that belonged to his worship, "an ephod and teraphim, and a graven image, and a molten image," and these they carried to Dan, where "they set up the graven image" and worshipped it.

With regard to the report of these spies, who said, "We have seen the land and behold it is very good, . . . a large land, . . . a place where there is no want of anything that is in the earth," we can testify from its present condition that, although they were robbers, they neither exaggerated nor conveyed false impressions. The Hebrew words translated "a large land" mean *broad on every side*, and are strikingly descriptive of Dan, situated, as we have seen, in the middle of a vast and fertile plain. The very difficult verses in Judges xviii. 7, 10, 27, 28, appear to indicate that the old inhabitants of Laish lived in a quiet and peaceable manner, enjoying plenty, having no oppressors, devoting themselves, like the Sidonians, to the affairs of trade and commerce, possessing characteristics the very opposite of a warlike people, and hence they fell an easy prey to the swords of the Danites. History does not reach back to the time when the place was first settled, but there is evidence for supposing that it had been, as we have already indicated, a sanctuary before the conquest now referred to, and even long previous to the conquest of the country under Joshua. At a later time, in 975 B.C., Jeroboam set up here one of the golden calves which he made, and the place became at once a popular religious centre (1 Kings xii. 28—30); a fact in keeping, no doubt, with its ancient character. As to the geographical province with which it was connected, it is interesting to notice that, in the book of Deuteronomy, Dan, including the region about it, is reckoned as belonging to Bashan (xxxiii. 22); while the Talmud, on the other hand, makes Cæsarea Philippi belong to Upper Galilee. About one mile south of this mound is another called Tell Difneh, the Daphne of Josephus ("Wars," iv. 1, 1), which he speaks of as "a spot delightful in various respects, and

of running brooks. Travellers who have made a tedious journey of weeks over the mountains and rough fields of Western Palestine will welcome the olive-groves and cool streams of Bâniâs as a place of rest. Poplars, oleanders, reeds, and flowering shrubs exist here in great abundance. With this rich soil and ample supply of water there could be no lack of vegetation. (See pages 106, 107, and 110.)

The ordinary way of reaching the town is by crossing a bridge, which creeping plants and vines have nearly covered, and passing through a low gateway in a section of an ancient wall. Beyond this a few houses are seen, and the road very soon leads directly into a stream. The water, the broken pavement, and the scattered boulders are soon left behind, and the groves of walnut and olive trees at the north of the town are reached. The city was fortified, and the old wall and moat can still be traced. The present houses are few in number and the people are poor. In such a delightful place as this they ought to be happy and in comfortable circumstances, but on the contrary they seem to be very wretched. On the flat roofs of the houses temporary lodging-places are built of reeds and boughs. They are raised a few feet above the roofs, and the inhabitants climb into them and sleep. These booths are cooler than the rooms below, and besides in this way the people avoid the scorpions which infest these old ruins (see page 113). A short distance to the north-east of the town is a bold cliff of limestone not far from one hundred feet high. At its base is a large cave, of which the mouth is obstructed by immense blocks of stone that have fallen from above. What its original shape or dimensions were cannot now be told, for earthquakes, judging by the fallen rocks, have entirely changed the face of the cliff immediately about the cave. From underneath these great stones issue the copious streams which have caused the spot to be named the Fountain of the Jordan (see page 110). The waters form at once a single stream, almost deserving to be called a river, which foams and dashes over rocks and fragments of ancient buildings, and is soon hid from sight by the trees and reeds which line its banks. The cave and fountain must have been much more extensive in former times than at present, for the place was early chosen as a sanctuary, and Herod the Great, in honour of Augustus, built here a splendid temple of white marble. Josephus says: "There is a very fine cave in a mountain under which there is a great cavity in the earth, and the cavern is abrupt and prodigiously deep and full of still water; over it hangs a vast mountain, and under the caverns arise the springs of the Jordan. Herod adorned this place, which was already a very remarkable one, still further by the erection of this temple, which he dedicated to Cæsar" ("Antiquities," xv. 10, 3). In the parallel passage in the "Wars" he describes "a yawning chasm" in the cave, "which descends to an immeasurable depth, containing a vast collection of still water, hitherto found unfathomable by any length of line" (i. 21, 3). Whether these statements are strictly true or not, they justify us in the conclusion that the appearance of the place is now unlike what it was twenty centuries ago. Just beyond the cave are some niches that were cut in the face of the cliff (see page 111). These were designed for statues, and the roof of each was shell-shaped. From the fragments of inscriptions remaining we learn that Pan was worshipped here

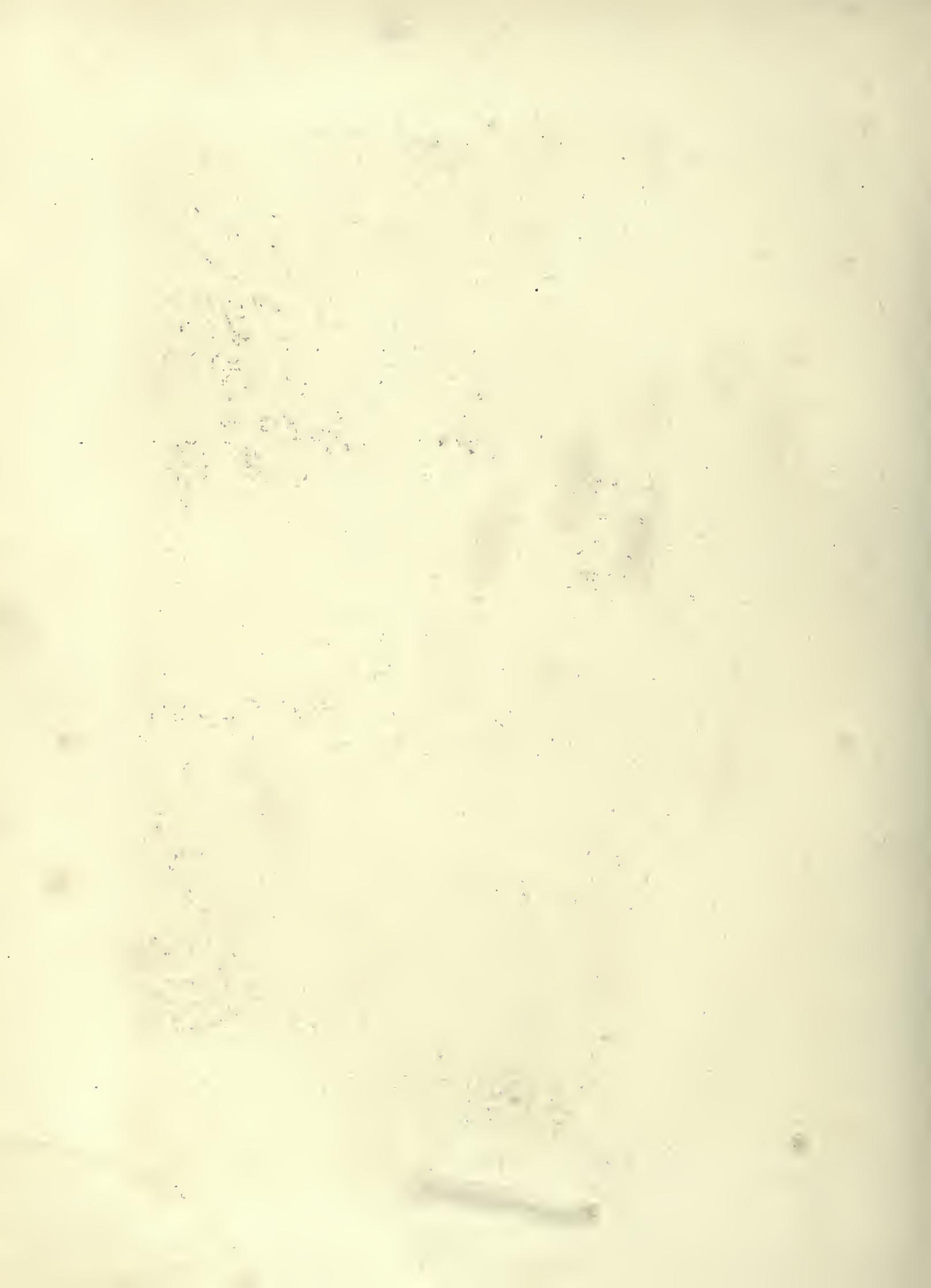




H. FENN. PINXIT

C. BERTRAND. SCULPSIT

CAESAREA PHILIPPICI.

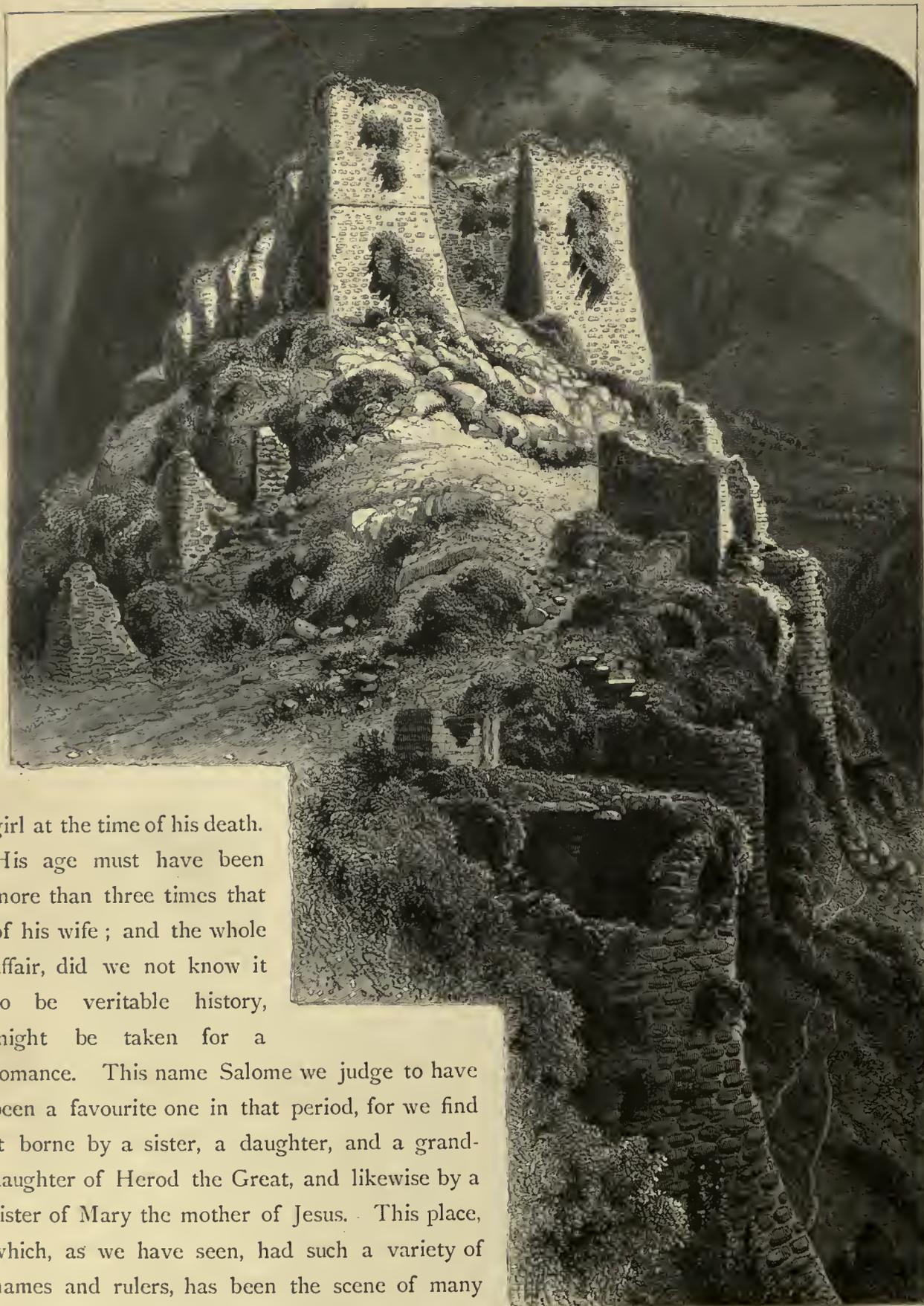


at the time when they were written, which was probably later than the time of the Herods. Polybius, however, mentions the name in connection with Antiochus the Great in B.C. 198.

This place has been known in history by a variety of names. Pnias is one of the more ancient of them, and Baniâs is the most modern. Herod Philip rebuilt or enlarged it, and called it Cæsarea Philippi (see page 107), the first part in honour of Augustus, and the second in honour of himself, and likewise to distinguish it from its sister town of Cæsarea on the sea-coast. Cæsarea Philippi is the name it bears in the New Testament. Agrippa II. enlarged it still further, and gave it the name of Neronias, in honour of the Emperor Nero, by whom large additions had been made to his territory. This was in A.D. 55, and the fact is attested by coins of Agrippa II. which still exist. The Babylonian Talmud states that Leshem was an old name of Pnias. Panium, a name found in Josephus, refers properly to the cave which was one of the sources of the Jordan (see page 110). Still other names to be met with in ancient writings are Kisrin, Cæsarea of Pnias, and Belinas or Balinas. The last is important because it is probably the oldest name of the place, and carries us back beyond the worship of Pan to the time when the altars of Baal stood here, and the rites of a very ancient religion were practised in and about this famous grotto. The two names Balinas and Pnias could easily be confounded until the latter completely supplanted the former.

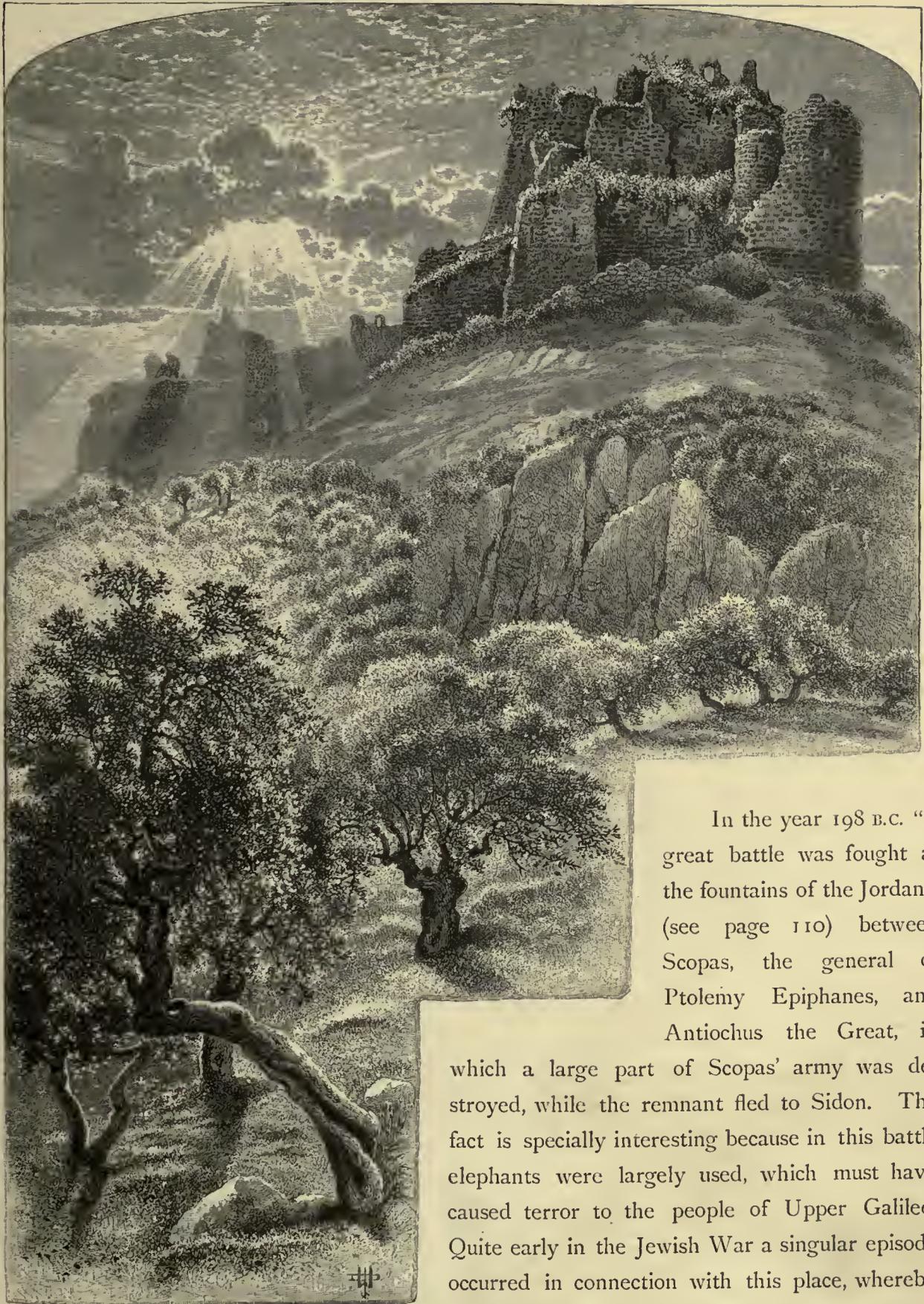
Pnias had at the beginning of our era a variety of masters. In B.C. 36 it was included in the grant made by Antony to Cleopatra. After her death it was farmed out to Zenodorus. Herod the Great next came into possession of it, by whom it was bequeathed to his son Herod Philip. At his death it reverted to the Emperor Tiberius, and was attached to the Roman province of Syria. Scarcely four years passed before it was given by Caligula in A.D. 37 to Herod Agrippa I., who died in A.D. 44. It then came successively under the procurators Cuspius Fadus, Tiberius Alexander, and Cumanus. At last it was bestowed upon Herod Agrippa II. in A.D. 53, to whom it belonged during the Jewish War, or from A.D. 66 to 70.

Under Herod Philip, Cæsarea Philippi was not only greatly enlarged and beautified, but it enjoyed, perhaps, its most flourishing period. The character of this prince is in marked contrast to that of either of his brothers, Archelaus and Herod Antipas. Philip was a mild ruler, and one who had the good of his subjects and his province at heart. On his journeys he was accustomed to take with him his judges, so that the cases brought before him might be dispatched at once ("Antiquities," xviii. 4, 6). This fact is so wholly unlike the habit of Oriental princes, who court delay, that it is worthy of special notice. He seems furthermore to have been peculiar in other respects. For example, he remained the most of his life unmarried; and after he had transformed the humble village Bethsaida into the beautiful and royal city Julias, he built there for himself an elegant and costly tomb. In his last years he fell in love with Salome and married her. She was the daughter of her husband's half-brother Philip and Herodias, and danced at the feast of Herod Antipas when John the Baptist was beheaded. At that time, A.D. 31, she was about fourteen years of age, and was married probably not long after. As her husband died late in A.D. 33, she must still have been a mere



girl at the time of his death. His age must have been more than three times that of his wife ; and the whole affair, did we not know it to be veritable history, might be taken for a romance. This name Salome we judge to have been a favourite one in that period, for we find it borne by a sister, a daughter, and a granddaughter of Herod the Great, and likewise by a sister of Mary the mother of Jesus. This place, which, as we have seen, had such a variety of names and rulers, has been the scene of many interesting historical events, to some of which reference may appropriately be made.

THE CASTLE OF SUBEIBEH.
Known also as the Castle of Baniás.



THE CITADEL OF THE CASTLE OF SUBEIBEH.
From within the castle walls, which enclose an olive-grove. It is
two thousand three hundred feet above the sea-level.

In the year 198 B.C. "a great battle was fought at the fountains of the Jordan" (see page 110) between Scopas, the general of Ptolemy Epiphanes, and Antiochus the Great, in which a large part of Scopas' army was destroyed, while the remnant fled to Sidon. The fact is specially interesting because in this battle elephants were largely used, which must have caused terror to the people of Upper Galilee. Quite early in the Jewish War a singular episode occurred in connection with this place, whereby John of Gischala endeavoured to make money out of the distress of the inhabitants. When oil

was ten times as high in price at Cæsarea Philippi as it was at Gischala, John had a large quantity which was stored at the latter place taken to the former, where he realised on it a vast sum. The transaction shows the shrewdness of the man, and also his unprincipled character; for he pretended to do it that the Jews of Cæsarea Philippi (see page 110) might not be obliged to use that which was prepared by foreigners, which necessity did not exist, and also that he had authority from the governor of Galilee, which was directly contrary to fact (Josephus, "Life," xiii. 3).

In A.D. 67, after the destruction of Jotapata, and Galilee was practically subdued, King Agrippa II. invited Vespasian to Cæsarea Philippi, and entertained him "in the best manner his resources permitted." Here the Roman general "rested his troops for twenty days, and enjoyed himself in festivities, presenting thank-offerings to God for his success" ("Wars," iii. 9, 7). This was in midsummer, and his son Titus was with him during this interval of relaxation from their work of conquest. Three years later, in A.D. 70, after Vespasian had gone to Rome, Titus, who had taken Jerusalem, went to Cæsarea Philippi, and remained some time exhibiting various shows. Very many of the Jewish prisoners were brought hither at this time, and destroyed in the most violent and cruel manner. "Some were thrown to wild beasts, while others in large bodies were compelled to encounter one another in combat" ("Wars," vii. 2, 1). These scenes and deeds of blood, which the Romans enjoyed and looked upon as sport, only add to the chequered history of this ancient place, which has witnessed almost every variety of fortune that cities or men can experience. During the reign of Diocletian there existed here a large community of Jews, and they are said to have been severely treated by the emperor. In the fourth century it was the seat of a bishop, who was subject to the Archbishop of Antioch. The extant coins of Pania cover a period of nearly two hundred and fifty years. Coins of Herod Philip exist with the head of the Roman emperor upon them, although this is said to have been in violation of the Mosaic law. On the reverse of these coins a temple is figured, which may have been intended to represent the one at Panium already referred to, built by Herod the Great of white marble, in B.C. 20, and dedicated to Augustus ("Wars," i. 21, 3).

Cæsarea Philippi has special claims upon our attention from the fact that it was visited by our Lord. It was here that Christ questioned his disciples as to his own character: "Whom do men say that I the Son of man am?" (Matt. xvi.) The majority of those who have studied most carefully the gospel history agree in placing near here the scene of the Transfiguration. This single fact would make it one of the most sacred places in the Holy Land. It had natural beauty and wealth; it had costly public buildings, temples, and marble gods. Emotions of a peculiar character are awakened in the mind when we consider the fact that Jesus of Nazareth looked upon all these things. On the one hand were the military power of Rome and pagan idolatry in its most fascinating forms, and on the other Christ and his disciples, a humble band; but the Master utters to one of them the notable words: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not

prevail against it." This city, famous for the visits and works of kings, emperors, and victorious generals, was honoured also by the presence of Christ. This is, however, but one of the many strange contrasts which meet us at almost every turn as we study the history of this land.

A little more than one hour from Bâniâs is the great castle of Subeibeh (see page 116). This has been one of the strongest fortresses in the East. It exhibits the work of every period from the early Phœnician to the time of the Crusaders. Its situation is remarkable, and from its broken walls one looks across the Hûleh Plain to the hills of Galilee in the west, while at his feet the mountain-slope descends in terraces that are covered with oaks and olive-trees. The castle is not far from one thousand feet long by about three hundred feet in width, and the walls at some points are even yet one hundred feet high. The natural approach to it is from the east, while it is well-nigh inaccessible from the south, west, and north. On the north side the mountain, for six hundred feet below the castle, presents an almost perpendicular wall before the bottom of the ravine is reached. The strength of the position has been greatly augmented by the skill and labour of man, until this might appropriately be called the Gibraltar of Palestine. Situated at the southern base of Mount Hermon, the armies from the East would pass by it on their way to the sea-coast and Egypt; and the same might be true on their return, as we know was the case with one of the earliest Eastern invaders, Chedorlaomer, whose date is at least twenty centuries before the birth of Christ. The cuneiform inscriptions often speak of Assyrian kings reaching the kingdom of Damascus, and then entering the kingdom of Tyre. They would be almost compelled to follow the great highway of the nations on which this fortress stands. The Phœnicians, no doubt, used all the means in their power to repel these invaders, and these two facts are sufficient to account for the existence of this castle at this point, while the urgency of the case demanded that it should be built with all possible strength. From this point two roads diverge, one leading to Tyre and the other to Sidon. We have found on the road leading hence to Tyre, Assyrian sculptures which prove the early passing over this route of their great armies. At the eastern end of this castle stands the citadel of the place (see page 117). It has a wall and a moat of its own. It is one hundred and fifty feet higher than the castle proper, which lies below it to the west. Here one has an excellent illustration of a fact often mentioned by Josephus and other ancient writers, that even if the castle was taken in any given case, the garrison could retire to the citadel and resist the enemy for a long time, if not with entire success. Such a citadel might best be described as a castle within a castle, with the difference that the inner one would possess greater strength and greater means of resistance.

Subeibeh played an important part in the history of the Crusades, and was often taken and retaken during those bloody wars between Moslem and Christian. Underneath the ruins, where we crawled by a difficult passage, we found a stone ball such as were in common use in ancient sieges. This is a small one, weighing not more than fourteen pounds, while some that were thrown by the *ballistæ*, as described by Josephus, weighed at least one hundred pounds.

These weapons corresponded to the heavy artillery of our times, and their destructive power was very great.

Water being accessible in its cisterns, the Arabs sometimes resort thither; and as the



A CUP OF COFFEE ON THE HEIGHTS OF SUBEIBEH.

All the implements for preparing it are shown in the foreground—the iron saucer in which to roast the berries, the pestle and mortar for pounding them, and the water boiling on the fire of crackling twigs, which is in rather dangerous proximity to the camel-saddle.

space is ample, the traveller or explorer may pitch his tent by the side of these Children of the Desert, and, when wearied with the labours of the day, sit down with them by their camp-fire, on ground where great warriors and kings have trod ever since the days of Abraham.



MOSLEM GRAVES UNDER "THE OAKS OF BASHAN,"

At Tell Hazûr, near Bâniâs. There appears to have been a complete circle of evergreen oaks here, surrounding a temple or an altar. It is still regarded as a holy "place," and is now dedicated to Sheikh Othmân of Hazûr. A group of ruins called Hazûr exists not far from this spot.

MOUNT HERMON AND ITS TEMPLES.

IT was not without reason that Moses referred to the hill country of western Palestine, and particularly to the Lebanon, as "that goodly mountain" (Deut. iii. 25), or that the Hebrew prophets and poets employed its famous trees as symbols of beauty and strength, and its streams as symbols of life. Snow-capped summits and deep ravines, barren and savage hills interspersed with small but quiet and beautiful valleys, wild and rugged beds of winter torrents, springs bursting from the foot of rocky cliff or gentle slope, here and there a charming waterfall, frightful precipices and caverns of unmeasured depths, villages and lovely gardens, fruit and olive orchards, groves of noble cedars, and wide and inspiring views of sea and land, make up the peculiarly varied scenery which is to be witnessed by the traveller among these sublime and ancient mountains. Nor was it altogether in imagination that some of the Jewish writers visited the highest peaks and boldest headlands (Song of Solomon, iv. 8, vii. 4). Sunrise and sunset from those points were as glorious then as now. "The eyelids of the

dawn" (Job iii. 9) opening upon "fair Damascus" is a sight of beauty which belongs to the Lebanon and Hermon alone. The fertile plain of Bashan fading into the great desert on the east, the almost boundless expanse of the Mediterranean on the west, and about one's feet a wilderness of broken and distorted hills, formed a picture upon which no doubt more than one sacred poet had gazed with the deepest interest.

Even the Romans looked with admiration upon these mountains, their landmarks as in ships they approached the coast from the west; and one of their most gifted writers, Tacitus, after having spoken of the people of Judæa as "strong and patient of labour," of its soil as "rich and fertile," and of its palm-trees as "beautiful and lofty," refers to them as follows: "Libanus . . . rises to a great height, affording shade under its verdant groves, and even in the ardent heat of that sultry region is covered at the top with eternal snow. From this mountain the river Jordan derives its source and the abundance of its waters" (Hist., bk. v. 6).

The Syrian coast presents the physical peculiarity of two important ranges of mountains running nearly parallel to each other throughout the greater part of its whole extent. It is on the northern border of the Holy Land that these two ranges reach their greatest height. The highest point is one of the peaks near Tripoli, which ascends to ten thousand feet, while Jebel Sunnin, which overlooks Beirût, is a little less than eight thousand six hundred feet. In the opposite range, Jebel esh Sheikh, or Mount Hermon, the highest summit, is nearly ten thousand feet above the sea (see page 137). Between the Lebanon and the Anti-Lebanon there is a great valley, called by classical writers Cœle or Hollow Syria. By the Arabs it is called Büká'a, which is a survival of the ancient Hebrew name *Bikath*, or *valley*. Here we find two of the great rivers of Syria, the Orontes running north and the Leontes—el Litâny (see page 134)—running south, both having their rise at no great distance from each other in the neighbourhood of Ba'albek. Still farther south this general depression becomes what is called the Ghor or Valley of the Jordan, which includes Lake Merom, the Sea of Galilee, the river Jordan (see page 163, vol. i.), and the Dead Sea (see page 152, vol. i.). The extension southward is called the 'Arabah, while about one hundred miles of the extreme southern portion is occupied by what is called the Gulf of 'Akaba, the eastern arm of the Red Sea. The Jordan Valley, for at least one hundred and twenty-five miles of its course, presents the strange phenomenon of being sunk below the level of the Mediterranean, and this depression at one point is not less than thirteen hundred feet.

Far in the north rises the noble and majestic Hermon, one of the grandest objects on the globe (see page 59). It is not one of a group, a peak higher and more imposing than other peaks which surround it; but it stands apart, unaffected by contrast with mountains of equal or even of less grandeur. A remarkable fact about Hermon is that its white dome, its "eternal tent of snow," is visible from nearly every section of both eastern and western Palestine. Not only from Galilee, but from many points in Samaria (see page 234, vol. i.) and Judæa as well, from Olivet and the Dead Sea, from Gilead and Bashan, it is clearly seen, and is looked up to as the great landmark of the country. Some scholars have thought that the words in Solomon's

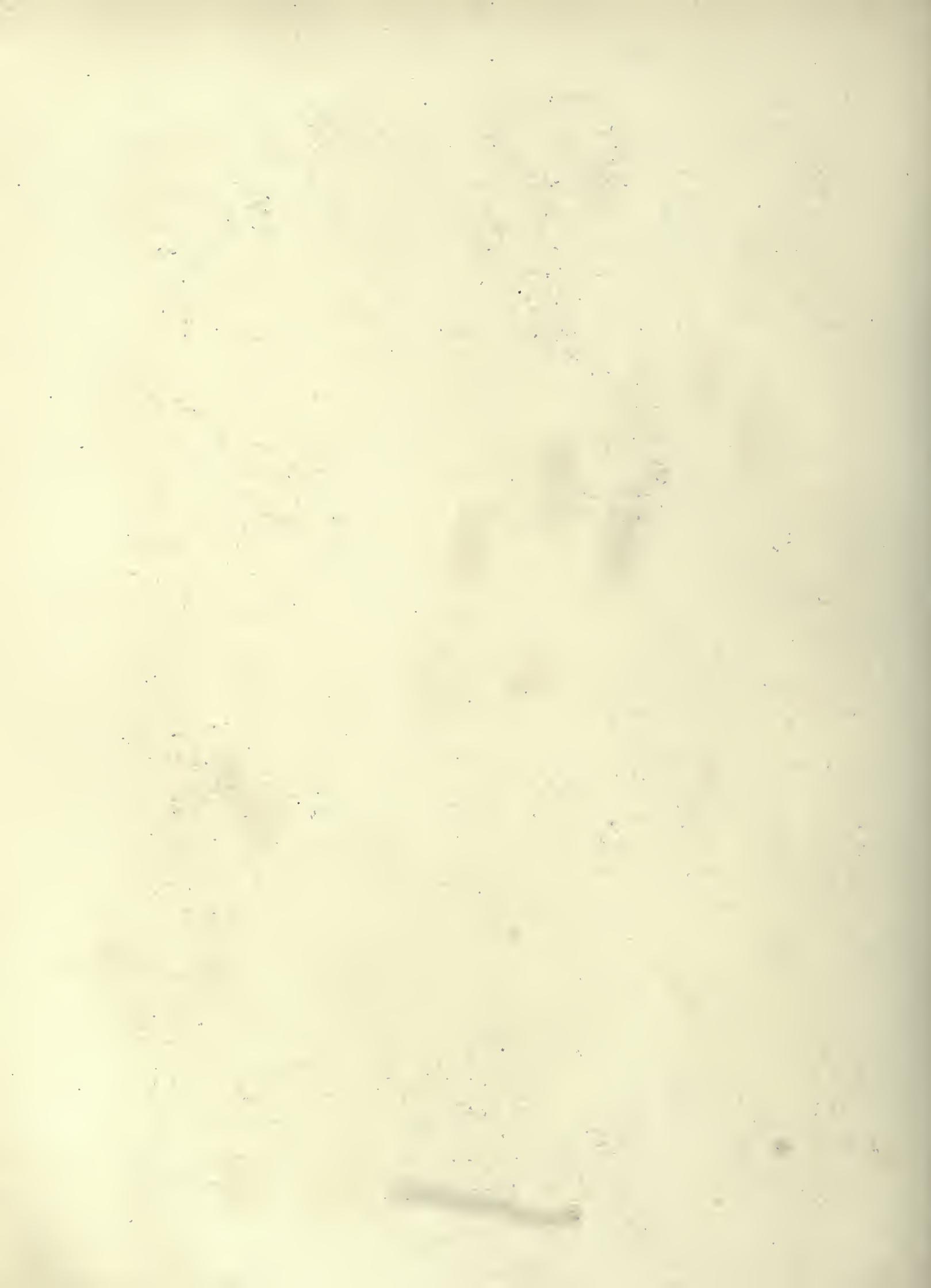
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H. A. HARPER, PINXIT

S. BRADSHAW, SCULPT

MOUNT HERMON.



Song vii. 4, "the tower of Lebanon which looketh towards Damascus," could refer to none other than this sacred mountain.

King Og, who "reigned in Mount Hermon (see page 137), and in Salcah and in all Bashan" (Josh. xii. 5), could from this natural watch-tower overlook every part of his wide dominions. Those ancient cities of the giants, "fenced with high walls, gates, and bars" (Deut. iii. 5), would appear like dark masses on the distant plain. At a later time Bashan became a land of temples, and its ruins are justly regarded as among the finest in the East, if not in the world. Were they as accessible as those of Greece and Rome, the tide of admirers of all that is splendid in ancient architecture would be turned from Athens and the Tiber to the monuments that exist on the east of the Jordan. We ourselves have visited and measured eleven of its thirteen great theatres. We have also examined scores of its ruined churches, for in the early centuries of our era Christianity had a strong hold upon all this vast and fertile region. There is abundant evidence that this part of Palestine has been densely populated, and that the inhabitants were not only possessed of wealth and intelligence, but enjoyed also an unusual degree of prosperity. At present, however, wandering tribes roam here at will, and the cities are in desolation.

In Bible times the "oaks of Bashan" seem to have enjoyed a special fame. The Phœnicians of Tyre used them in building their ships (Ezekiel xxvii. 6). These trees have for the most part disappeared, for, between the Arab and the Turk, their struggle for existence has been in vain. Yet among the Gilead hills fine forests are still to be found. Travellers visit western Palestine, which is denuded of trees, and report that none exist in the country. In the section east of the Jordan just referred to there are even groves of timber—a strange sight in that land, where forests have for the most part been swept away. Occasionally a group of very ancient oaks is met with, in which the single trees, not being confined by others, have sent out wide-spreading branches. One of the most picturesque and beautiful oak-groves in Syria exists not far east from the castle of Subeibeh or Bâniâs. Under its delightful shade the traveller may pitch his tent and enjoy the upland breeze, or the view of the hillside which slopes gradually westward towards the Hûleh Plain. Beneath these oaks there are a number of Moslem graves, the most revered of which is that of Sheikh Othmân el Hazûry. The trees above them are sacred, and hence are allowed to stand (see page 121).

Ancient graves beneath ancient and sacred trees are a common sight throughout Palestine. It is not always, however, that a saint whose grave is honoured has the luxury of a stately tree above his resting-place. There is often but a rude pile of stones; yet in the settled portions of the country the grave is usually marked by a tomb that has been built with some care. These tombs vary in size; they have a dome which is whitewashed and a door by which the large interior room is entered. In the grove just described the graves are marked by a platform of stone with an oval coping made of stone and mortar. Of the more elaborate kind to which we refer, the wely of El Khidr or St. George, just above the grotto at Bâniâs (see page 110), is a fair sample. But, whether marked by rude stones, a well-built tomb, or a sacred tree, the



THE NAHR LEDDÂN, AN AFFLUENT OF THE JORDAN.
It joins the stream from Baniás four miles south of Tell el Kady.

place where a saint was buried is often visited, and one will find it, or the tree branches above it, covered with bits of rags and threads that have been brought from the clothing of the sick, in the hope that the act or the offering may be efficacious in curing disease and restoring health.

Of the early Christian saints, St. George has the good fortune to be honoured by both Christians and Mohammedans alike. In his chapel, which still remains at Edhra, in the Haurân, a lamb is sacrificed every year to his memory. The church which was dedicated to him still stands, and is one of the oldest in the East. It was built by John, the son of Diomedus, to whom, it is said, an angel appeared, not in a dream but in reality, directing him to do this pious act. This is recorded in a Greek inscription which exists over the door of the church, which gives also the date when the building was erected as A.D. 515. Here the bones of this saint were finally deposited.

In the desert country east of the Jordan the sacred trees to which we have referred form not only excellent landmarks, but they are exceedingly interesting objects when viewed as monuments of the past. In spite of wars and the pressing needs of the inhabitants for timber and fuel, they have been spared for centuries. Perhaps, in a section embracing many square

miles, the only tree will be one of these venerable relics connected in some way with the superstition or the religion of the people. In our judgment they go back to the remotest times, for we find them mentioned in the Old Testament as existing not only among the Jews, but among the older tribes of Canaan.

About one hour east of the grave of Othmân el Hazûry is Lake Phiala, now called Birket er Râm, which is interesting from its traditional connection with the fountain of the Jordan at



POTTERY, RÂSHEIYET EL FÛKHÂR.

This place, as its name implies, is famous for its potter's clay. Its furnaces are dome-shaped and capable of burning enormous jars. The potter, mounted on a high seat, sets the wheel in motion with his foot and shapes the clay with his hand. The man beyond is adding handles to the jars.

Cæsarea Philippi. The tradition may have arisen from the fact that the lake has no visible outlet, and hence it was supposed that its waters, by some underground passage, reached the fountain referred to. Herod Philip wished to prove this matter by experiment, and for that purpose had chaff thrown into the lake; as chaff appeared in the water at Panias, it was concluded that what before had been fable was now established as fact ("Wars," iii. 10, 7). This was a "scientific test" which no one in that age dared dispute; but any such connection

between the two points has long since been proved to be impossible. This lake is interesting further from the fact that it occupies the mouth of an extinct crater, and its surface is not far from two hundred feet below the surrounding table-land. Our own measurements make its circumference about one mile and a half in extent.

In going north from this point, where we have had a glimpse of some of the noble oaks of Bashan, we shall pass over ground seldom frequented by the ordinary traveller in Palestine, for the reason that the routes are too difficult and the attractions too few, and possibly also in part because the traveller is in too much of a hurry. But it would be a mistake to suppose that these grand hills have no points of natural as well as historic interest. Four or five miles north of Bâniâs one may visit Kûl'at Bustra, a group of ruins with fortifications situated on a projecting shoulder of Mount Hermon, not less than one thousand feet above the plain. Above the ruins there is a small plateau, and the view from this point is wide and beautiful. The ruins are thought to be those of a temple, or of several temples; for the foundations of four or five large buildings appear, constructed of great stones, while columns, cisterns, and reservoirs are abundant. The place is supposed to be of high antiquity, and it certainly was one peculiarly favoured for defence. Neither inscription nor style of architecture, however, gives us any clue to its origin.

The valley which lies below us to the west, and which we ascend, is called Wâdy et Teim, and is the natural continuation of the valley of the Jordan. Beyond the gorge of the Hasbâny, which at times is a formidable river, lies the rolling upland of Merj 'Ayûn, where the rich soil and the fine scattered trees remind one of some of the beautiful park scenery of England. The road from Bâniâs past Kûl'at esh Shûkîf to Sidon leads across this attractive plain. This valley is full of villages, although on our route we pass but few of them. Going still north, the country is broken and the roads are rocky, but here and there groves of oaks or olive-trees dot the small valleys or the steep hillsides, and wherever we approach a stream the scenery is romantic and wild. Above us, too, rise the bold cliffs and barren sides of Hermon.

Something more than half an hour to the right from the bed of Wâdy Khureibeh is a village of considerable size called Râsheiyet el Fûkhâr. The potteries of this place are celebrated throughout Syria. The pottery is carried south into Palestine, east into the Haurân and the markets of Damascus, north to Hums (Emessa) and Hamah (Hamath), and west to the cities of the sea-coast. All kinds of household vessels are made here, and some of the articles are highly ornamented. Considering how remote in the mountains this village is, and the unusually rugged and difficult paths which connect it with any possible market, and also the fact that all this fragile stuff has to be transported on the backs of mules and donkeys, it is a wonder that any of it ever reaches its destination in a perfect state. A foreigner visiting the different cities of Syria is surprised at the amount of ware of this kind that is exposed for sale, and also at the remarkable variety in the size and shape of the various articles. The trade of the potter in Palestine is always good, because what he produces is always in demand. Were these articles costly, the case might be different; but, on the contrary, the necessary

ones are within the means of the poorest person. Four small water-coolers can be bought for a penny (see page 125).

In the East this business must have been one of the most essential branches of industry from the remotest times. The ground about some of the ruined cities in Bashan is literally covered with broken pottery. On some of the artificial mounds in the Jordan Valley we have seen it so thick that it could easily be raked into heaps. However deep about any city excavations are carried, the débris is found to be composed largely of the same material. In practical use the waste of the article must be immense; and this has been true in all the past. One finds in the pottery various light shades of colour, although perhaps red is the most common; while in the New Testament times the black, which is still found in some markets, was considered the most valuable. It appears from the Talmud that Kefr Chananyah, a town in Galilee, had a monopoly of its manufacture.

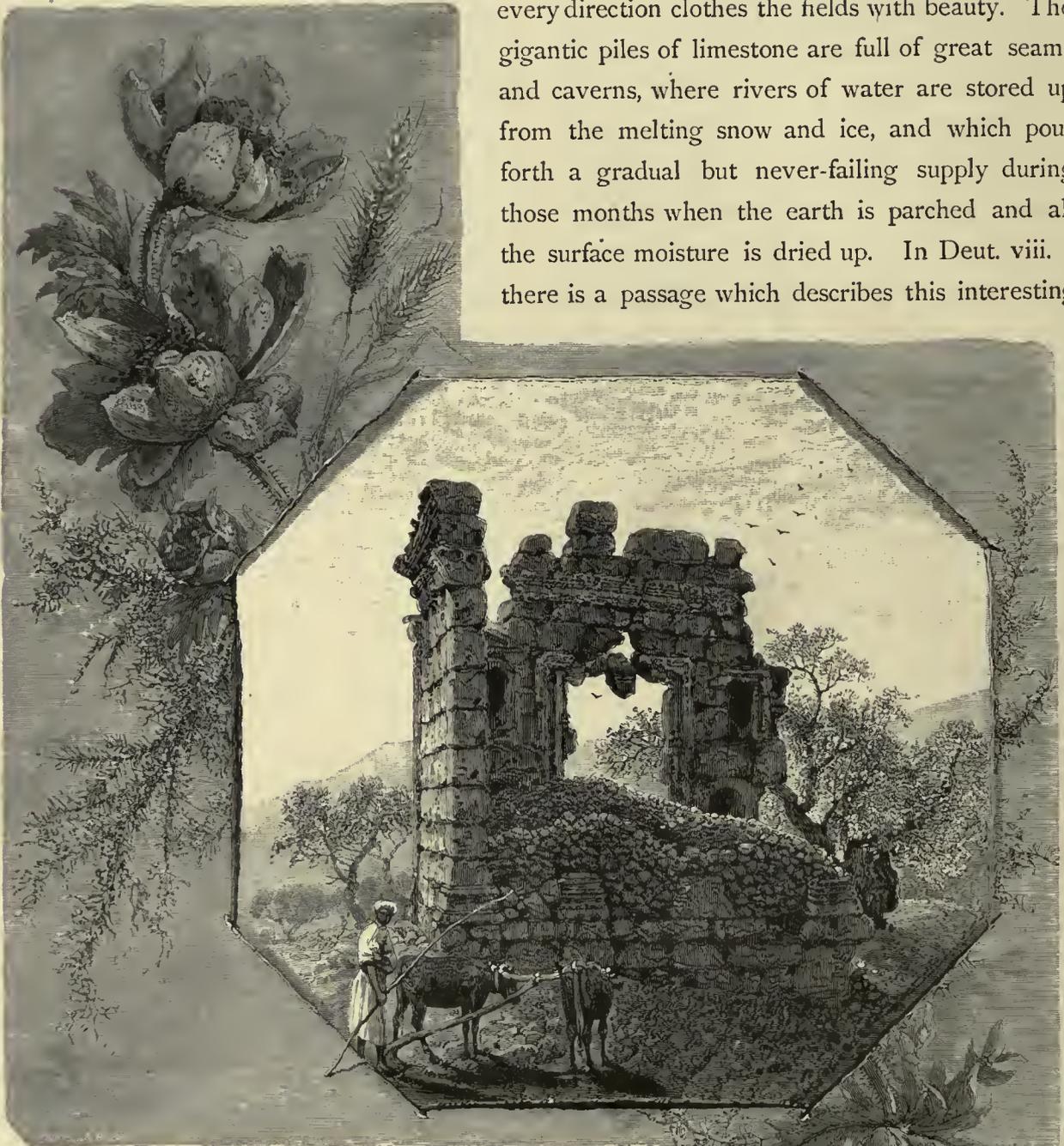
About one hour north-east of Râsheiyet el Fûkhâr (see page 125), over a road characteristic of these mountains, we reach Hebbâriyeh (see page 129), a village interesting on account of its position among these wild and barren hills, and also because it contains the ruins of an ancient temple (see page 128). This was fifty-eight feet long by thirty-one feet wide. The walls were thirty-two feet high and six feet thick. Many of the stones were large, and one at least that Dr. Robinson measured was fifteen feet in length by two feet nine inches in width, and the same in thickness. The capitals are Ionic, and the temple faced the east, looking up the great gorge which opens before it "as if to catch the first beams of the morning sun rising over Hermon."

Wâdy Shib'a, the gorge just referred to, is one of the grandest about Jebel esh Sheikh. The village of the same name is said to be the highest in these mountains, and the property of the villagers has in days past consisted largely of goats (see page 129). They climb up and feed where men cannot go, and thrive where other domestic animals would perish. It is easy to see how, during the summer months, these people are very comfortable even in the rude hovels which serve as their abodes; but in winter, when the valleys are filled with snow and ice, and the hills above them are covered with the same, it is a problem how they keep from perishing, to say nothing of the luxury of communicating with neighbouring villages and towns.

The citizens of New York or London who pine for mountain air would find in Wâdy Shib'a one of the most charming and healthful places in the world. We ourselves have enjoyed in this valley our sweetest sleep. Great fountains of ice-cold water, clear and sparkling, burst from the ground and rush down the way of the torrents, filling the mighty chasms with the noise of their united and angry streams. Here everything is invigorating and inspiring; sunrise and sunset among these royal peaks, the air doubly freighted with life, Nature in its wildest aspects, all conspire to reanimate the body and make the mind buoyant and hopeful.

The fountains bursting on all sides from the foot of Hermon and Lebanon, and supplying copious streams to fertilise the valleys, are a peculiar feature of these memorable hills; while in vast sections they are bleak and barren themselves. yet they supply that which for miles in

every direction clothes the fields with beauty. The gigantic piles of limestone are full of great seams and caverns, where rivers of water are stored up from the melting snow and ice, and which pour forth a gradual but never-failing supply during those months when the earth is parched and all the surface moisture is dried up. In Deut. viii. 7 there is a passage which describes this interesting

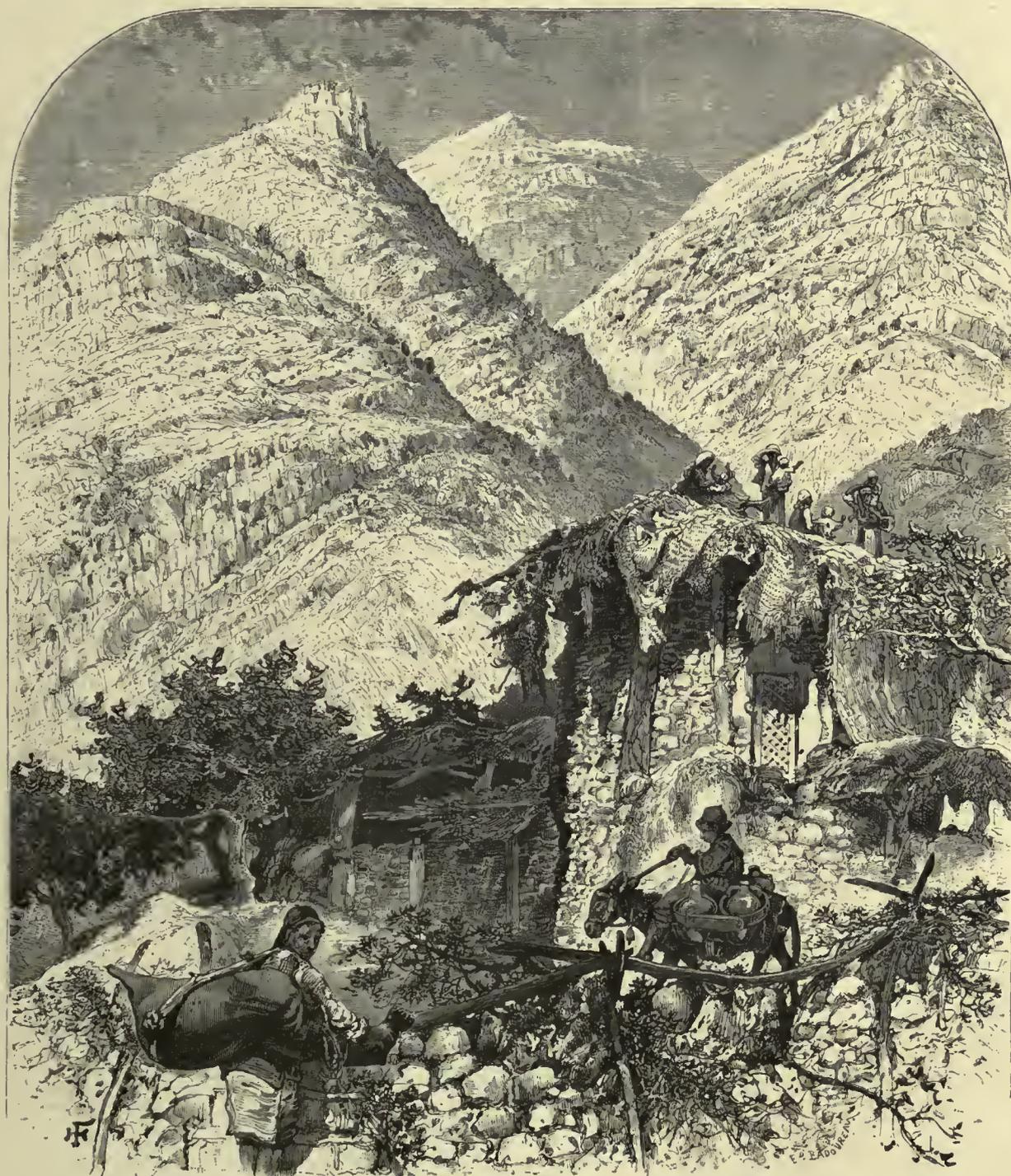


THE RUINS OF THE TEMPLE AT HEBBÂRIYEH,
Showing the eastern portal, which faced Mount Hermon, exactly opposite the valley
of Shib'a.

fact. The goodly land into which God is to bring His people is said to be "a land of brooks of water, of fountains and *internal reservoirs pouring forth* in the valley and in the mountain." Were it not for this wonderful provision of Nature, a large part of Palestine that is now fertile would become as barren as the deserts of Arabia. Not only to-day, but in Bible times as well, have these mountains served as the ice-houses for Damascus and the cities on the sea-coast. Solomon represents that even the

labourers in the hot harvest-field sometimes enjoyed the luxury of water cooled from these inexhaustible sources (Prov. xxv. 13).

With regard to these internal caverns, we will refer to one not far from Jebel Sünnin, in



WÂDY SHIB'A, FROM HEBBÂRIYEH.

The village of Shib'a may be seen on the summit of the second peak; it is the highest inhabited place in Mount Hermon (Jebel esh Sheikh).

the Lebanon, which, from our own estimate, is not less than six hundred feet in depth. It is a great pit in the earth, with vast unexplored chambers leading under the mountain, and even its real depth has never been ascertained. The famous grottoes of Nahr el Kelb, north of Beirût,

have within recent years been explored by W. J. Maxwell, C.E., and Rev. Daniel Bliss, D.D., President of the Syrian Protestant College in Beirût, to a distance of nearly a mile; and the wonders there found to exist are no doubt but a repetition of those in yet unexplored caves in other parts of the Lebanon mountains.

From the temple at Hebbâriyeh to Hâsbeiya the distance is about one hour and a half, which would make, altogether, six hours between Hâsbeiya and Bâniâs, while the distance in a straight line between these two points is not more than twelve miles.

Hâsbeiya is interesting, in the first place, on account of its situation (see page 132). The valley just here is in the form of an amphitheatre, and on three of its sides the town is surrounded by hills, which are covered with vineyards and olive-groves to their very summits. The village is situated on both sides of the ravine; and on a ridge, which projects at one point almost to the bed of the torrent, stands the famous palace or castle which, no longer ago than 1860, was the scene of dark and bloody deeds (see page 133). Four-fifths of the inhabitants of Hâsbeiya are Christians, and the Protestant community is large and important. The American missionaries have for many years laboured here, until this has become one of their strongest outposts. Besides the profit of their fruit-trees, the people depend largely for income upon the fine grapes which these hillsides produce, and which are converted into raisins, or into syrup called *dibs*; for both of these articles find a ready sale. The village itself has not many attractions; yet the mission church and school, the mosque with its minaret, the pointed arches, the crumbling walls richly overgrown with beautiful creeping plants and vines, the tall cypress-trees about the palace, and men and women everywhere engaged in the struggle for existence, together with the natural features already pointed out, will no doubt interest the traveller who can devote time to this place, which is considered one of the most flourishing towns of the Lebanon.

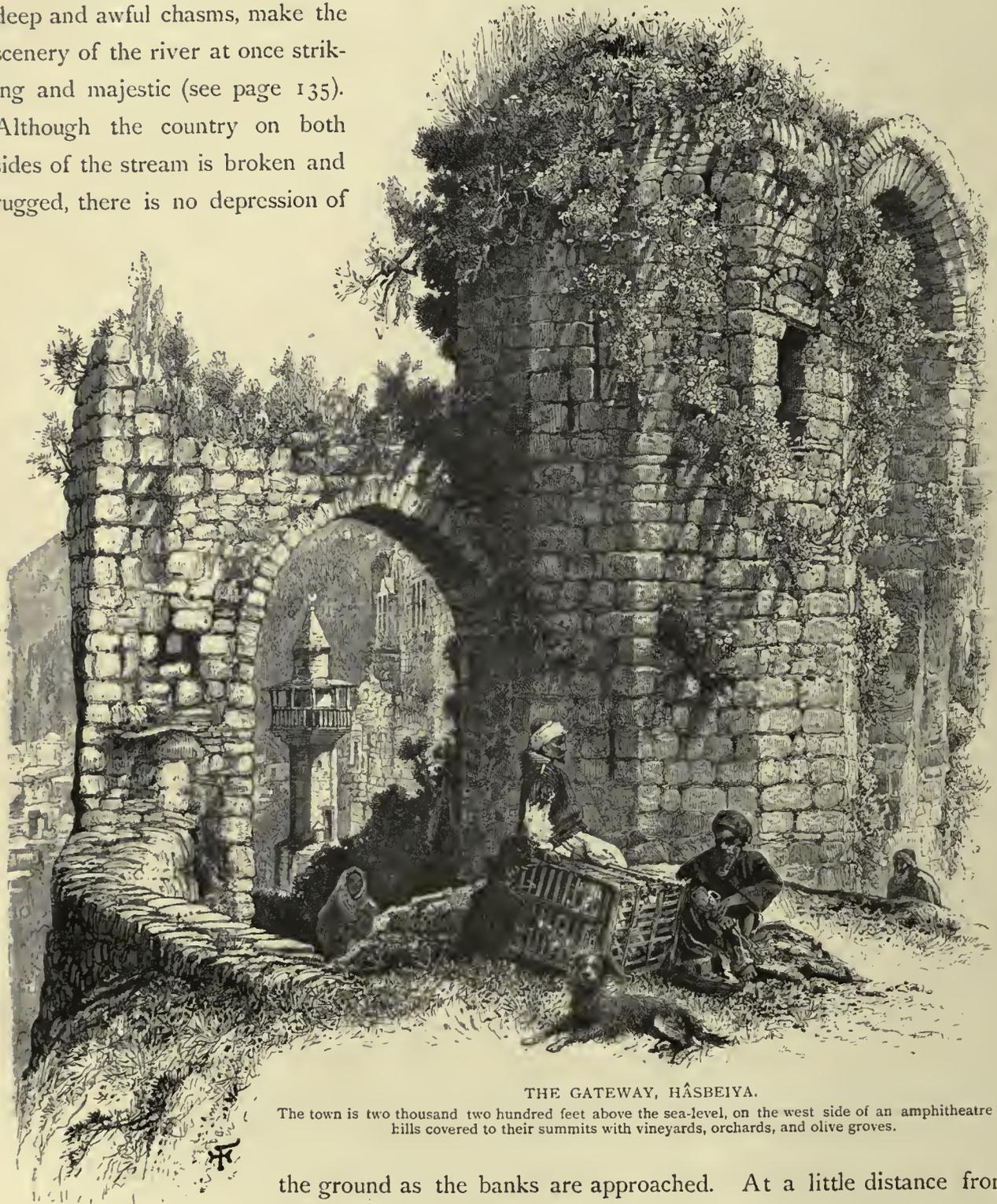
One cannot, however, visit the palace without a shudder at the thought of the horrible cruelties which were perpetrated upon innocent and defenceless people but a score of years since. Those massacres, which startled Europe and sent a French army to the Lebanon and a British fleet to St. George's Bay, nominally carried on by the Druses but secretly instigated by the Turks, are but a single item in the catalogue of deeds of violence and shame for which the government that has so long oppressed Syria is responsible. On the occasion now referred to, during "that sad battle-summer of 1860," the Christians of Hâsbeiya fled to the castle and implored the protection of the garrison. The Turkish officers in charge gave them "a written guarantee, pledging the faith of the Sultan for their personal safety, on condition that they delivered up their arms." This they did, and were confined in the castle, where they remained seven days, suffering meantime very much from hunger and thirst. At the close of this period of terrible suspense the officers of the garrison opened the doors to the murderers, and the slaughter of one thousand victims was attended with horrors too revolting to be either written or told. The Turkish colonel in command here at the time was subsequently, under British influence, tried for this offence and shot in the streets of Damascus.

Another important fact connected with Hâsbeiya is, that near it there are a large number of bitumen pits or wells, some of which are fifty feet deep, and one which Dr. Thomson measured extended to the depth of one hundred and sixteen feet. These are worked only in a poor way, but the mineral is hard and of the finest quality, and when cleaved it presents a beautiful glossy surface, which it retains for a long time. The people affirm that the bitumen is constantly forming, and hence that an exhausted well, after being cleared for some time, will be found filled and ready for mining again. Dr. Robinson learned that "the bitumen was sold chiefly in Damascus, and mainly used on vines to keep off insects which destroy the grapes." What is collected at present, however, is sent to Europe. A good deal of it exists about the Dead Sea, and is said to appear upon the surface, especially after an earthquake. Doubtless the deposits of this mineral are much more extensive and numerous than is at present known, and they may hereafter prove a source of considerable wealth.

The mineral deposits of Syria have never yet been thoroughly examined, nor have those that are known ever been worked in any adequate manner. Besides bitumen, the sulphur-beds are rich and valuable. Rock-salt, also, could be mined with great profit south of the Dead Sea, but the inhabitants are not allowed to touch it. Lead and copper also exist; but the most extensive deposits that are at present known are iron. Valuable beds have been discovered at different points in the Lebanon, and some of them have been worked in times past with considerable success. We have examined one such bed lying west and south-west of the great cedars, which extends in a north and south line for several miles and crosses Wâdy Kadîsha. This wâdy is a gigantic chasm that has been cut into the side of the mountain to a depth of fifteen hundred feet. The walls are perpendicular, and the deposit of iron ore of which we speak can be distinctly traced on either side, and appears to be about five hundred feet in thickness. Ore from this deposit we have had examined, and it yields but eleven per cent. of impurities, consisting almost wholly of silica. This bed is not more than fifteen miles from the sea-coast. There are also extensive deposits of coal; but that found on or near the surface is said to contain a good deal of sulphur. Beneath the surface, wherever examinations have been made by experts, coal of excellent quality is developed; and it is the opinion of these persons that at a proper depth there is probably an unlimited supply. Coal and iron in untold amounts, lying side by side in close proximity to the seaboard, and no one allowed to make them productive! The Government either will not or cannot work them, and it certainly puts all sorts of obstacles in the way of foreign capitalists who stand ready to develop these mines.

As the most remote and highest source of the Jordan is but half an hour north of Hâsbeiya, one will visit with pleasure the locality where that river of the Holy Land, with which are connected so many sacred associations, actually has its rise. The fountain, like that at Cæsarea Philippi, bursts forth from the foot of a bluff which in this case is of volcanic origin, and sends into the valley a large volume of water. A dam has been thrown across the channel, making a pretty waterfall, which, together with the pond and mill-race, the modern bridge and the old scraggy trees, form quite a romantic spot.

A ride of from two to three hours west of Hâsbeiya will bring the traveller to the Litâny, which, for a portion of its course, has worn its bed through one of the wildest regions in Syria. Bold headlands, gigantic cliffs, and deep and awful chasms, make the scenery of the river at once striking and majestic (see page 135). Although the country on both sides of the stream is broken and rugged, there is no depression of

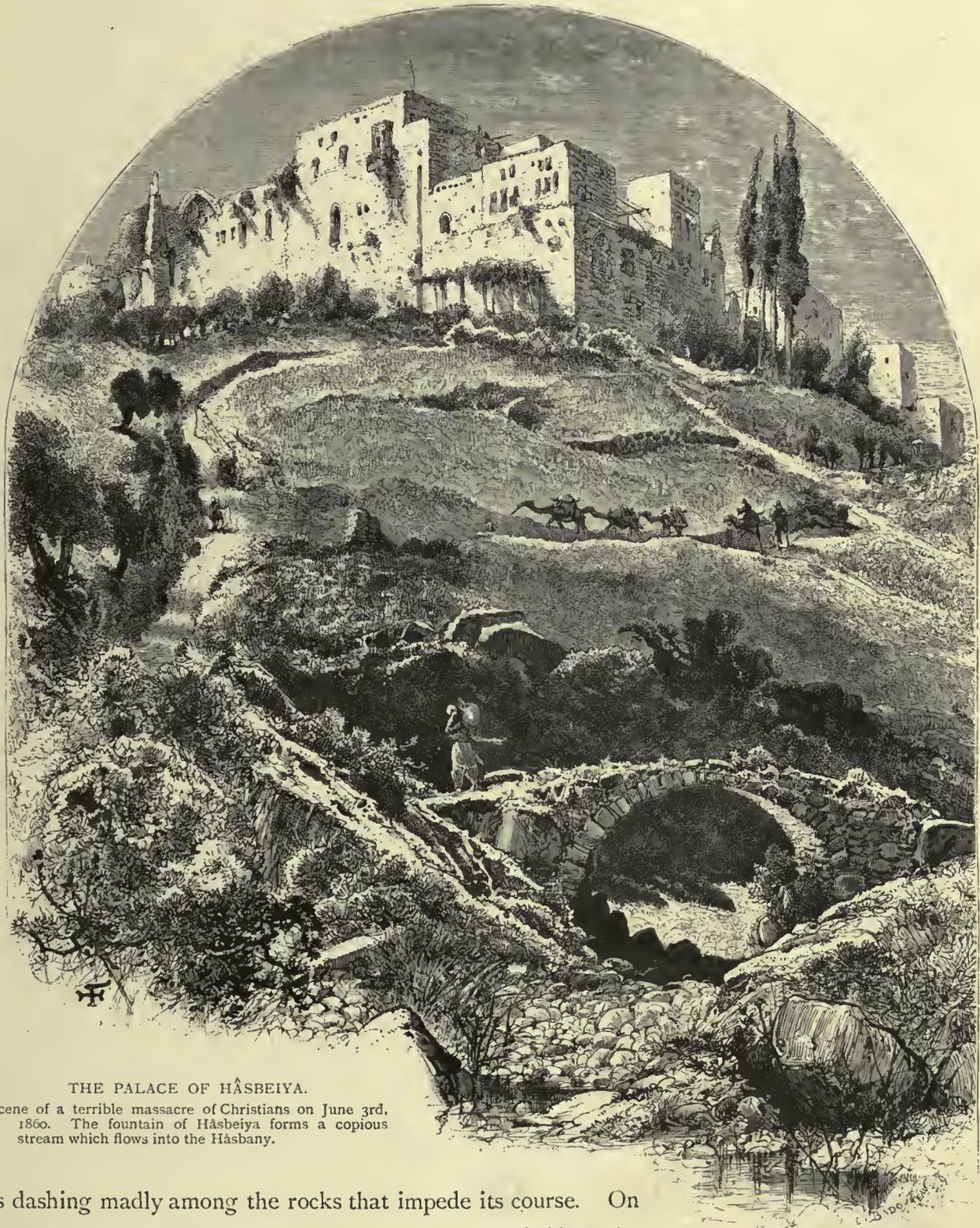


THE GATEWAY, HÂSBEIYA.

The town is two thousand two hundred feet above the sea-level, on the west side of an amphitheatre of hills covered to their summits with vineyards, orchards, and olive groves.

the ground as the banks are approached. At a little distance from them one would not suspect the existence of such a chasm opening into the very depths of the earth. The inhabitants of the villages situated on the opposite sides of this gorge can easily talk across to each other, and, impossible as it may seem, there are at certain points footpaths which wind down the face of these abrupt and perpendicular walls to

the river below. From the edge of this precipice the stream appears like a mass of foam ; but the distance is so great that the noise of it is somewhat subdued, although we know that it



THE PALACE OF HÂSBEIYA.

Scene of a terrible massacre of Christians on June 3rd, 1860. The fountain of Hâsbeiya forms a copious stream which flows into the Hâsbany.

is dashing madly among the rocks that impede its course. On the Nahr Leddân, which we cross by a Roman bridge, the scenery is romantic and the mountains are sublime (see page 124) ; but to enjoy the wildest part of the Litâny one must descend six hundred feet between its chasm-walls to the famous natural bridge called El Kûweh or Jisr Bûrghûz (see page 134), which spans both river and gorge

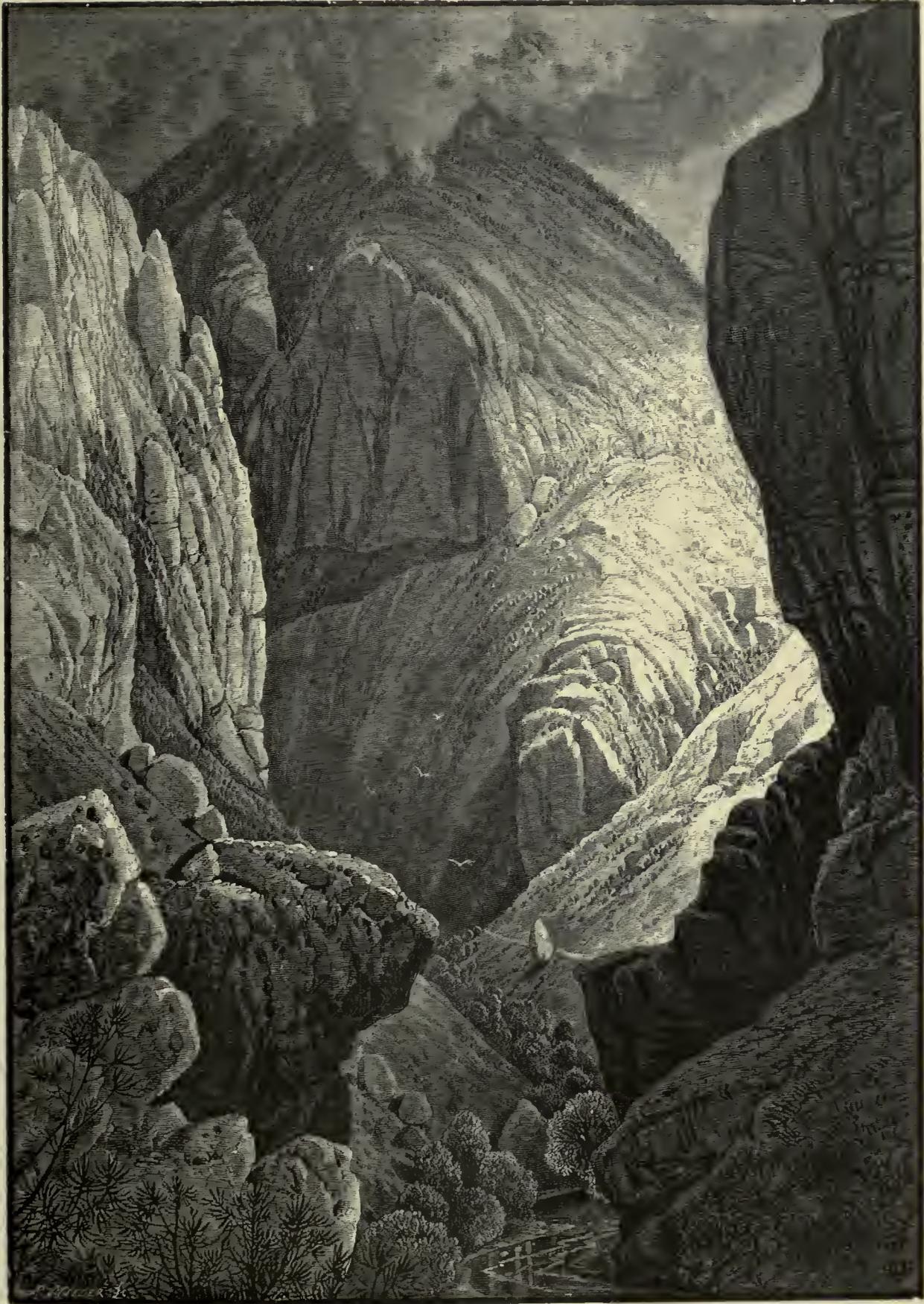


EL KÛWEH, THE NATURAL BRIDGE OVER THE LÎTÂNÏ.

It is formed of a number of fallen rocks, which have left a passage of about one hundred feet in height for the stream below.

at a height of more than one hundred feet above the water. The noise of the river below us, plunging along the bed of its strange channel, is almost deafening. About us, flowers and creeping plants find nourishment in the seams of the rocks, and hide from view some of the most jagged points and roughest features of the chasm. From the bridge it is possible to descend to the bed of the stream, but the effort is hazardous, and no special advantage is gained by it. Impracticable as it may appear, the regular road from this region and the north crosses this bridge, and leads thence to Jezzîn and other places in the Lebanon. Along the face of these cliffs one notices many caverns that open deep into the mountain-side, and some of them are said to be in part artificial, and to have been the abode of robbers. Another fine natural bridge, though not equal to this in the scenery which surrounds it, exists near Afka, the ancient Aphek, in the Lebanon mountains; and we ourselves have brought to light one east of the Jordan, in the Gilead hills, which spans a great wâdy, and is one hundred feet high and three hundred feet long.

The journey from Hâsbeiya to Râsheiya will occupy about six hours, although the distance in a straight line is not more than twelve miles. In this case the most direct route is the most feasible one, and



THE GORGE OF THE LITÂNY.

The precipices are in some places nearly one thousand feet in height. The banks are overgrown with sycamores, myrtles, and various shrubs and eagles build their nests in the inaccessible cliffs.

it is likewise the main route to Damascus, of those on the north of Jebel esh Sheikh. None of the roads in these mountains are easy, and, however strong and patient men and beasts of burden may be, they soon become weary when struggling along over these difficult paths.

A few years since a strange innovation was made upon the primitive methods of intercourse in these mountains by a French company that built a substantial road from Beirût to Damascus (see page 142). It was laid out and constructed by the best engineering skill that could be employed; it is seventy miles long, is macadamised throughout its entire extent, and is so broad and smooth that riding and driving upon it is a real luxury. It commands views of portions of the grandest Lebanon scenery, but at certain points is so high that sometimes for days together it is blocked by snow. The old winding and rocky path follows the same general direction as the new road, and is still used by the Syrians and Arabs, who are not able or disposed to pay the tax which the company require for the use of theirs. The contrast between the donkey or the camel toiling slowly over this rough mountain-trail, and the *diligence* drawn by strong, fleet horses, moving easily over the splendid carriage-way, will lead one to appreciate the blessings of civilisation so far as conveniences for travelling are concerned. Doubtless, if we extended our survey over the entire history of the Lebanon, we should find that paved roads and wheeled vehicles are, after all, no novelty here, for traces of more than one Roman road exist; and it is not at all likely that Damascus, which from time immemorial has been one of the foremost cities in the East, would have been content with a rocky bridle-path as its only means of communication with the near seaports where the ships of the world lay at anchor. There was, in the Roman times at least, a road between the two mountain ranges coming from the north past Ba'albek, and leading over Lebanon to the coast; and another running north-west from Damascus past Abila, the capital of the district called Abilene, which is mentioned in the third chapter of the Gospel of Luke.

Râsheiya is pleasantly situated on a steep but terraced slope which abounds in vineyards and orchards (see page 137). Among its three thousand inhabitants there are a few Protestants. The finest object in the town is the old palace, which, like that at Hâsbeiya, was also a castle, and which in the same manner was the scene of a massacre in 1860, when eight hundred innocent Christians that had taken refuge within it were foully murdered (see page 138).

The view from Râsheiya is extended, and interesting from the fact that one looks out upon uplands and mountain ranges. The eastern face of Lebanon is in sight, and in the south the white head of Hermon (Jebel esh Sheikh) appears in its regal glory (see page 137). Its height is not so imposing as when seen from the Lake of Tiberias (see page 59); yet, from whatever point it is beheld, it impresses the mind with a sense of sublimity, strength, and massive grandeur. The ascent of Hermon is by no means a difficult task. Its summit can be reached in six hours from Râsheiya. No specially rocky or broken paths have to be surmounted, and the route is in every respect much easier than many of those in the Lebanon that are in constant use. One may have been suffering from the heat on the sea-coast or the plains of Damascus, but here one can, even in midsummer, revel in snow-fields and drink water

that seems colder than ice. Of the unlimited view on every hand from this sacred height we have already spoken. No traveller who can by any means accomplish it should fail to visit the summit of Hermon, the grandest of all Syrian mountain-tops.

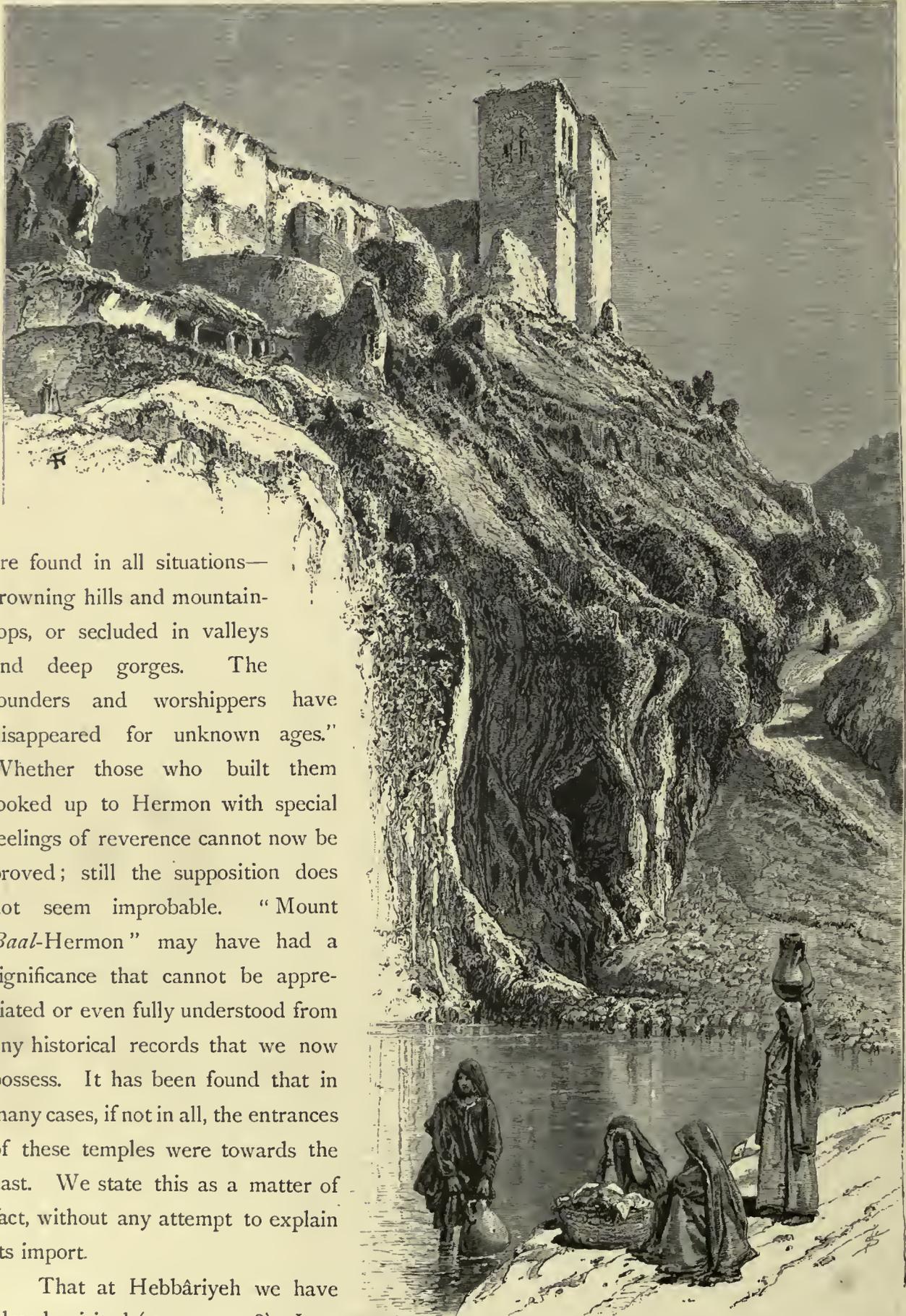
Very great interest is attached by scholars to the temples that exist about this sacred



MOUNT HERMON FROM RÂSHEIYA.

The name Hermon (like harem) signifies "unapproachable," or "the holy." The Sidonians called this Mount Sirion. The Arabic name Jebel eth Sheikh means "Mountain of the aged" or "of the white-headed." It is also called Jebel eth Thej, the "Snow mountain."

mountain. The number of such remains is itself surprising. Dr. Robinson visited no fewer than thirteen, but the real number can perhaps never be known. Other persons since his day have made a pretty thorough examination of them, and the facts that have thus far been brought to light only stimulate our desire to know more of their ancient history and purpose. "They



are found in all situations—crowning hills and mountain-tops, or secluded in valleys and deep gorges. The founders and worshippers have disappeared for unknown ages.” Whether those who built them looked up to Hermon with special feelings of reverence cannot now be proved; still the supposition does not seem improbable. “Mount *Baal-Hermon*” may have had a significance that cannot be appreciated or even fully understood from any historical records that we now possess. It has been found that in many cases, if not in all, the entrances of these temples were towards the east. We state this as a matter of fact, without any attempt to explain its import.

That at Hebbâriyeh we have already visited (see page 128). Less than three hours south-east of

THE CASTLE OF RÂSHEIYA.

The scene of a terrible massacre of Christians on June 4th, 1860.

Râsheiya (see page 137) there is a beautiful temple at Thelthâtha, a place which also bears the name of Neby Sufa. The spot where the temple stands is romantic, while the view of Hermon from this point is imposing beyond the power of language to express. But still nearer Râsheiya, and on the different routes leading thence to Damascus, there are the remains of several of these monuments of ancient religion and art. These are found at 'Aiha, Burkush, Rûkhleh (see page 140), Kefr Kûk, and Deir el 'Ashâir (see page 141), the first place being only thirty minutes from Râsheiya, while the last is just south of the carriage-road to Damascus. They also exist at Zekweh, Kûsr Nebâ, Husn Niha, 'Ain Harshy, and at several other places. In some of these temples the style of architecture is Ionic, in others Corinthian, and in others the two orders are combined.

At Rûkhleh, a little more than three hours from Râsheiya, there were two temples, both now in a very ruined state, but it is thought that one of them may have been used in the Christian period as a church. It is in this one that the medallion head exists, which has attracted so much attention (see page 140). "It consists of an external circle or ornamented border in relief, five feet in diameter; an inner circle or border, in higher relief, is four feet in diameter. Within these is a finely carved front view of a human countenance, in still bolder relief. The features have been purposely disfigured, but are still distinct and pleasing. It may have been a Baal worshipped in the temple" (Dr. Robinson, "Researches," iii. p. 436).

A number of Greek inscriptions exist here, and we ourselves found four that had not been copied by others before us. Inscriptions have also been found in connection with some of the other temples, and they may have been far more numerous than is now known or even supposed. On the same side of the building with the face just described, and near the entrance, there is an immense wing which is essentially Assyrian in character. The stone on which it is carved appears to have been brought from a distance. The block bearing the other wing and the bird itself has fallen in such a way that they cannot be copied, and indeed can scarcely be seen. We found a wing of the same type among the ruins of Sia, a place twenty minutes east of Kûnawât (the Kenath of the Old Testament), and a few others have been discovered in other parts of the country, but chiefly near the coast. These are among the oldest monuments in Palestine, dating, no doubt, many centuries before the Christian era.

Two hours from Rûkhleh is the village of Deir el 'Ashâir, where a fine temple of the Ionic order once existed. Its ruins occupy a conspicuous point, with an interesting prospect to the east. It was eighty-eight feet long and forty feet wide. Like several other of these remarkable structures, it is peculiar in having no steps up to its platform, "the stylobate running all round without a break" (see page 141).

It must not be understood, however, that the region about Mount Hermon is the only portion of Syria where temples are to be found. There are a few in the Lebanon as distinguished from the Hermon range, also many in the more northern parts; but it is in the Haurân that they exist in the greatest numbers. All the important towns in the old Bashan country had each one or more, and those at Kûnawât (the ancient Kenath), at 'Ammân (the

ancient Rabbath of the children of Ammon), and at Gerash (the ancient Ramoth Gilead) vie with those at Palmyra and Ba'albek in the splendour and beauty of their ruins.

From Deir el 'Ashâir (see page 141) to Damascus the distance was formerly about six hours; but now, on the fine French road, which is not far away, and which we reach at a station called Khân Meiselûn, it can be accomplished in much less time. The old trail led



MEDALLION ON THE TEMPLE AT RÛKHLEH.

Outside the south wall, near the east corner; it is five feet in diameter. The upper part has been destroyed by gunpowder. The neighbouring village is inhabited by Druses.

over barren ridges and across some small and exceedingly desolate upland plains before it brought the traveller to the banks of the BÛrada, whose welcome stream clothes the desert with greenness and beauty. This ancient river, the Abana of Scripture history, just before issuing upon the plain, has carved out from the limestone ridge one of the wildest and most picturesque of its many deep and sublime gorges (see page 142). But after plunging, a mad torrent, along the bed of its narrow chasm, it becomes quiet and harmless at last, and devotes

itself to adorning with verdure the broad fields that lie about one of the oldest and most attractive cities of the East. From these cliffs we look down upon Damascus, which lies at



THE TEMPLE AT DEIR EL 'ASHÂIR.

It stands on a platform of massive masonry, one hundred and twenty-six feet long by sixty-nine feet wide, and about twenty feet high on the eastern side, which faces Mount Hermon. The village is inhabited by a few families of Druses and Christians.

our feet, and, while we admire its extensive gardens and pleasant dwellings, our minds are busy with its historical associations, which, throughout all its long past, have been so thrilling and strange that they compel us to look upon the place with feelings of wonder and reverence.



THE GORGE OF THE BŪRADA (ABANA), THROUGH WHICH THE NEW FRENCH ROAD APPROACHES DAMASCUS. At the outlet of this gorge the stream is divided into seven branches, two of which supply the fountains in the city, and the rest are used to irrigate the fields and gardens.



ENTRANCE TO DAMASCUS.

By the new French road through the Merj, or meadow, west of the city. The large building on the right, with its many domes and two slender minarets, is the Tekiyeh, or hospital for pilgrims, built by Sultan Selim I. in A.D. 1516.

DAMASCUS.

DAMASCUS (usually called Esh Shâm, also Dimeshk) is one of the oldest and most remarkable cities in the world, and bursts upon the view of the traveller like a vision of paradise. It is situated at the base of the Anti-Lebanon Mountains, in latitude $33^{\circ} 32'$ north, longitude $36^{\circ} 20'$ east; one hundred and thirty-three English miles north-north-east of Jerusalem, one hundred and eighty miles south-by-west of Aleppo, and about fifty miles east of the Mediterranean, at an altitude of two thousand two hundred and sixty feet above the sea-level. It numbers about one hundred and twenty thousand inhabitants, mostly Mohammedans, twelve thousand Christians, and five thousand Jews. It was formerly the capital of all Syria, now of a part of Syria, and the residence of a Turkish governor. It can be reached from Jerusalem through Samaria, Galilee, and over Mount Hermon (the Mont Blanc of Syria), in a week's journey on horseback, and from Beirût, by the French diligence, in about fourteen hours

(from 4 A.M. to 5.30 P.M.), over the splendid macadamised road of seventy miles, which was built by a French company after the massacre of 1860. The climate is delightful; in the summer the heat rises to 100° and 104°, but the nights are cool and the dews heavy.

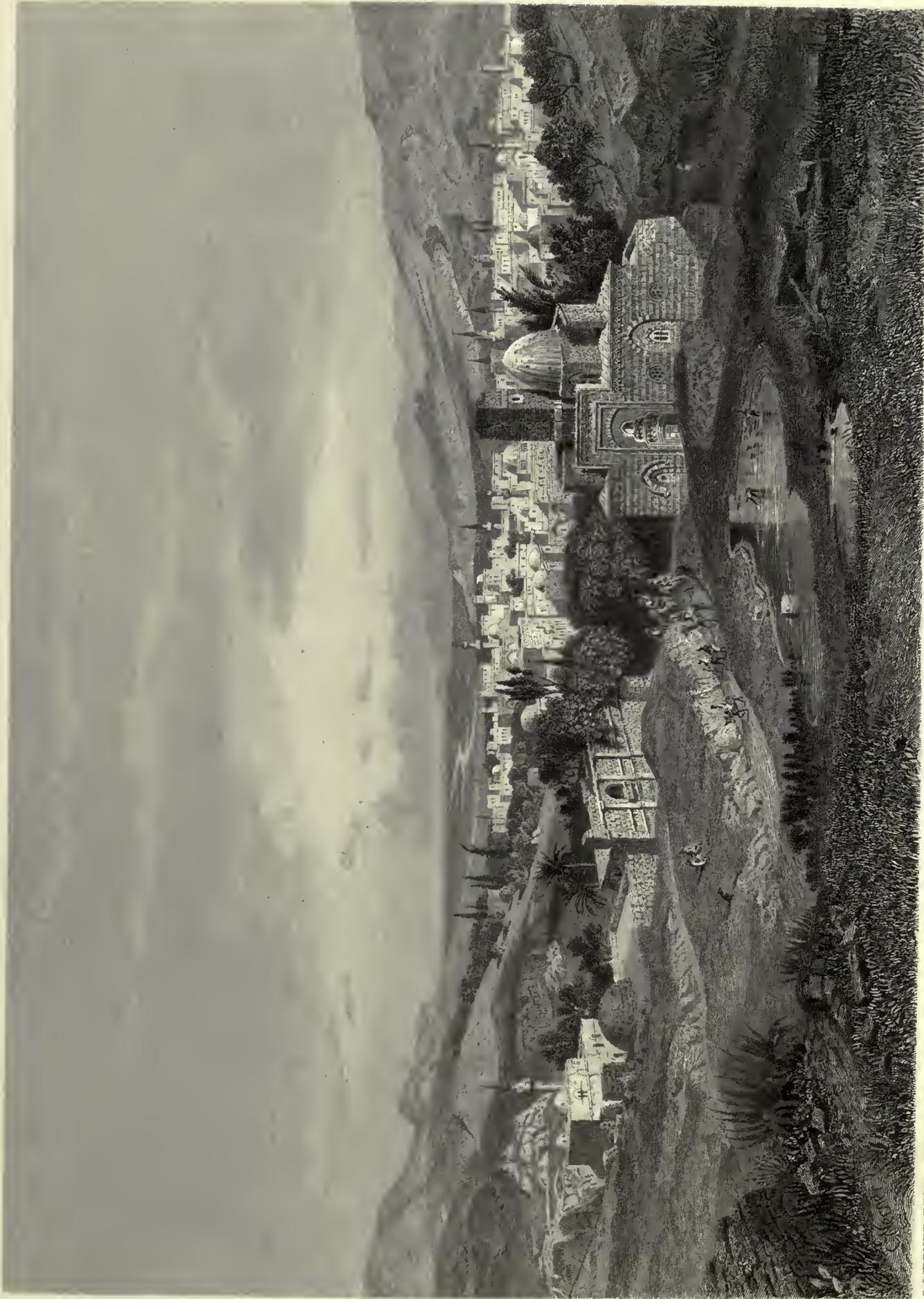
The Orientals call Damascus a terrestrial reflection of Paradise, "The Pearl of the East," and "The Eye of the Desert." The Damascenes believe that the Garden of Eden was located there, and that the clay of which Adam was formed was taken from the banks of the Abana. Fifteen miles north of the city, on a lofty cliff, the reputed tomb of Abel is shown, which measures thirty feet in length! It is reported that when Mohammed, on one of his journeys as a camel-driver from Mecca, in the service of Khadijah, who afterwards became his wife, reached the brow of the barren hill of Kasyûn, and saw the city and gardens below in all their enchanting beauty, he turned away, saying, "Man can have but one paradise; my paradise is fixed above." But his guide remained and exclaimed, "Here let me die!" The spot is marked by a small building called "Kubbet en Nusr," which is said to contain the grave of the guide. The English historian, Henry Thomas Buckle, who died in Damascus, May 29, 1862, said, when he beheld the city from the same place only a fortnight before his death: "This is, indeed, worth all the toil and danger it has cost me to come here!" Dean Stanley declares, "There may be other views in the world more beautiful; there can hardly be another at once so beautiful and so instructive." Dr. J. L. Porter, who spent several years in Damascus, says: "Damascus occupies one of those sites which Nature seems to have intended for a perennial city; its beauty stands unrivalled, its richness has passed into a proverb, and its supply of water is unlimited, making fountains sparkle in every dwelling."

The beauty of Damascus is all the more striking for the contrast to the barren desert which surrounds this oasis. The white city looks like a diamond set in the dark green of fruitful gardens. These gardens and orchards extend several miles around the city to the borders of the desert, and are a marvel of fertility. The fields of wheat and barley and beans are shaded by fruit and forest trees—the poplar, the cypress, the palm, the walnut, the citron, the pomegranate, the orange, the apricot, the fig-tree, arrayed in a rich variety of colours, laden with golden fruit, and filling the air with sweet fragrance. The soil is refreshed by perennial streams of abounding water from the mountain. A ride through these shady groves, after a journey over the barren desert under the scorching heat of the Syrian sun, is a luxury which must be enjoyed to be appreciated.

The finest views of Damascus and its environs may be obtained from a minaret of the Great Mosque (see pages 147 and 173), and from various points of the range of hills north-west of the city, the rugged Jebel Kasyûn.

The beauty and fertility of the surroundings of Damascus are chiefly due to the abundance of water, this greatest of blessings in a sandy and rocky desert, and fit symbol of life and regeneration. Naaman of old very naturally thought the rivers of Damascus, Abana (or Amana) and Pharpar, far better than all the waters of Israel (2 Kings v. 12). They are now called the Barada (the Chrysorrhoeas, or Gold River of the Greeks), and El 'Awaj (see

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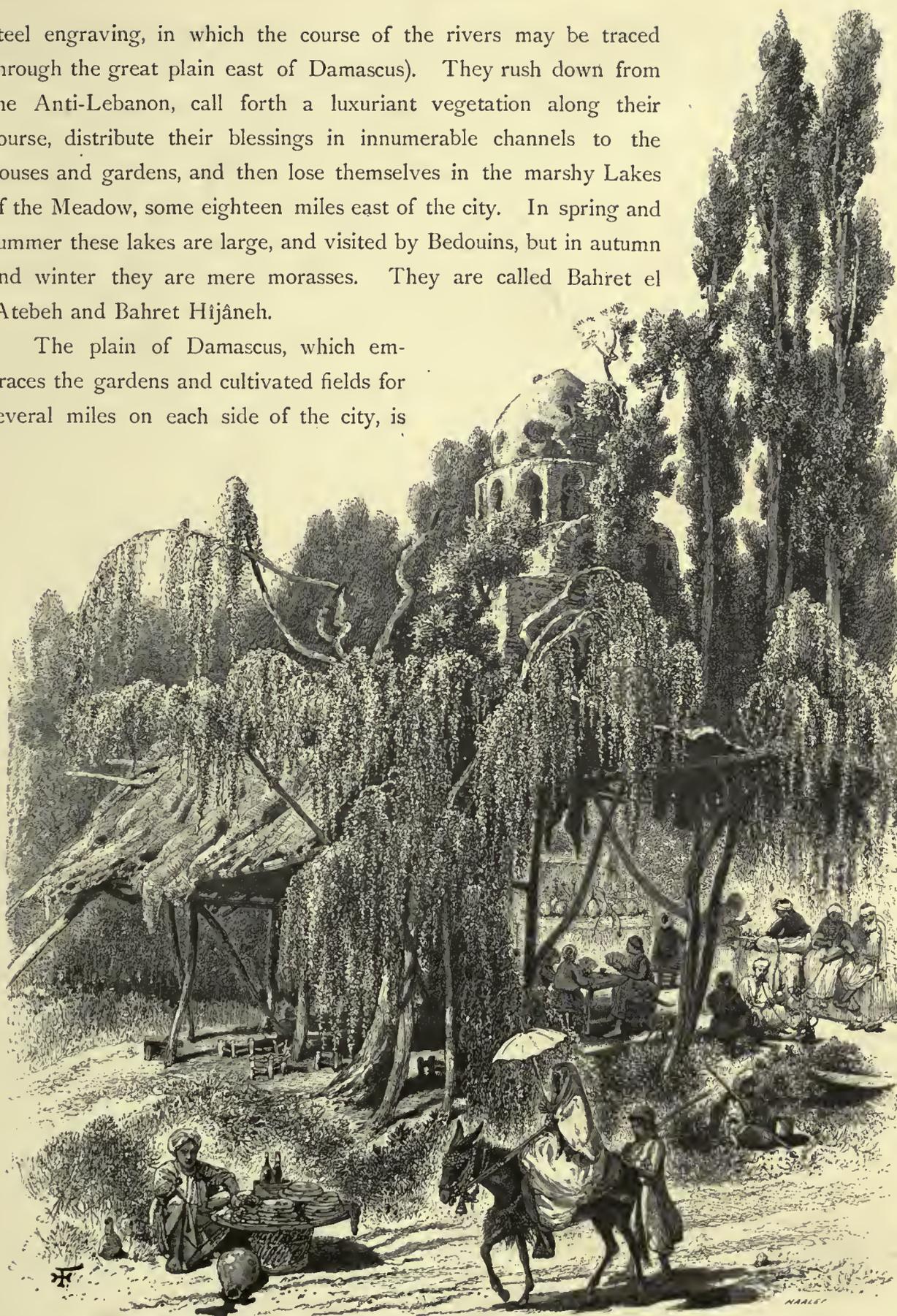
J. SADDLER. SCULPT.

RIVERS OF DAMASCUS.



steel engraving, in which the course of the rivers may be traced through the great plain east of Damascus). They rush down from the Anti-Lebanon, call forth a luxuriant vegetation along their course, distribute their blessings in innumerable channels to the houses and gardens, and then lose themselves in the marshy Lakes of the Meadow, some eighteen miles east of the city. In spring and summer these lakes are large, and visited by Bedouins, but in autumn and winter they are mere morasses. They are called Bahret el 'Atebeh and Bahret Hijâneh.

The plain of Damascus, which embraces the gardens and cultivated fields for several miles on each side of the city, is



ROADSIDE CAFÉ, DAMASCUS.

The man in the foreground is selling thin loaves of wheaten bread, slightly spread with butter and grape syrup and sprinkled with sessame seed. He calls out every now and then, in a plaintive voice, "God is the nourisher! Buy my bread!"

called El Ghūtah. How old this name is cannot be determined, but we find it in the Jerusalem Talmud. This beautiful district shows what a Syrian desert may become under proper cultivation. No cultivation would, however, be attempted unless an ample supply of water could be provided for irrigation. That which is brought down by the different mountain streams is carried in many directions by a multitude of aqueducts, and distributed far and near. Not all the water, however, that is needed is supplied in this way. From the earliest times the inhabitants have had a method of obtaining it, on an inclined plain, by means of wells. But, in the case of any given well, the water from it does not supply the plain immediately about its own mouth. A well is sunk until abundant water is found. From the bottom of this well a shaft, nearly horizontal, is driven underground until the surface is reached. Thus a well consists of a perpendicular and a long horizontal shaft, the latter bringing the water to the top of the ground at a great distance, perhaps, from the mouth of the well, and without the constant expense of men and machinery to raise it. In a full description of these wells other particulars should be mentioned, yet what we have said will give one a good idea of these singular underground aqueducts, of which there is a complete network beneath the Damascus plain. These, together with those on the surface, although many of both kinds are now in a ruined condition, combine to make this region, to the Orientals of the present day, a garden of beauty, just as they led the Hebrews to esteem it a "paradise among the rivers" (Babylonian Talmud, Erubin, 19 *a*).

The inside of Damascus contrasts at first unfavourably with the outside. The streets, with few exceptions, are narrow, crooked, and filthy, and form a labyrinth which makes a guide indispensable (see page 161). The houses are high and generally unsightly externally. There is but one hotel suitable for strangers; it was formerly kept by a Greek named Dimetri, and now by his widow; it is close by the station of the French diligence. It was built by a wealthy Damascene as a private residence, and contains an interior court, with a large fountain.

* For native wayfarers there are, however, many places for rest and refreshment. Roadside cafés are numerous in the city and its suburbs, and especially on the road which approaches Damascus on the west through the Merj (see page 143). A good example of a suburban roadside café is given on page 145. A rude shed erected under some spreading trees, a number of low rush-seated stools, two or three tables for players at cards or *dameh* (the Arabic form of chess), and a good supply of coffee and pipes, are all that is needed. In the evening, lamps, coloured or plain, are suspended from the trees, and a wandering minstrel or professional storyteller entertains the smokers. Itinerant vendors of fruit, bread, cakes, and sweetmeats are generally found near a roadside café. A still more favourite position for a café is on a jutting balcony or kiosk, above a swiftly flowing stream or river. There are many such places in Damascus, and they look very bright and cheerful at night, with irregularly suspended lamps and lanterns reflected in the running water, which forms a murmuring accompaniment to the Arabic melodies, which are always in the minor key. For examples of these water-side cafés,

* The following pages (to page 172), describing the cafés and principal buildings and bazaars of Damascus, are contributed by Miss M. E. Rogers.



A MUEDDIN CHANTING THE CALL TO PRAYER FROM A GALLERY OF THE MINARET OF 'ISA (JESUS).

This minaret (on the summit of which Moslem tradition says that Jesus will appear on the Judgment Day) is at the south-east corner of the Great Mosque, Damascus, and is two hundred and fifty feet in height. The beautiful octagonal minaret at the south-west corner is called El Gharbiyeh. A third minaret, not shown in this illustration, is called El 'Arûs (the Bride).

see one near the Shoemakers' Bazaar, on page 160, and another more important one opposite the citadel, on page 162.

Outside the north-eastern (the Christian) quarter of Damascus, on the north-east road, called "the Zenobian way," which leads to Palmyra, and is approached from Bâb Tûma (see page 178), there are many very attractive cafés, frequented chiefly by Christians, where the favourite beverage is *raki*, or raisin brandy. Here, too, there are some large gardens, where native family parties frequently spend the day from sunrise to sunset. But the pleasantest place for a picnic, according to my experience, is by the swiftly flowing stream which traverses the myrtle plantations of the Salihiyeh, the north-western suburb of Damascus, when the ever-fragrant trees, which rise to the height of sixty or seventy feet, are covered with blossom, or in December, when the fruit (which is a valuable astringent) is quite ripe. The trees are heavily taxed, but a large revenue is derived from the sale of myrtle branches, with which mourners in Muslim cemeteries decorate the tombs of their friends. It is very usual for all the females and children of a Muslim family to go regularly once a week to the burial-ground, generally on Thursday or Friday, to commune with the dead and place fresh flowers or myrtle branches on the family grave.

There is an extensive and picturesque Muslim cemetery outside the eastern walls of the city, and another still larger one on the south-west side, which is called "Makbaret Bâb es Saghîr" (the Burial-ground of the Little Gate). A portion of this is shown on page 166. The gate from which the cemetery derives its name leads from the densely populated quarter called the Shagûr, which is chiefly inhabited by peasants, and very rarely traversed by strangers. The gate is sometimes called Bâb esh Shagûr. The Christian cemeteries are on the south-east side of the city, and beyond them there are some very ancient Jewish graves.

In Damascus there are seventy large or, as they may be called, cathedral mosques (Jami'a), in which sermons are preached and congregational prayers are offered up for the reigning Sultan every Friday. Besides these there are about one hundred and eighty Muslim oratories or chapels (Mesjîd), to many of which schools are attached. Prayers are also frequently said at the grated windows of the little shrines or tomb-houses of celebrated welys, or saints, which are numerous in Damascus. Men of the higher classes rarely go to the mosques except on Fridays, as they can command proper places for ceremonial ablution and prayer in their own houses; but to a Muslim of the lower ranks, a large mosque which is open every day from sunrise to sunset or later, is like a second home. In its courts or cloisters he may not only rest and sleep, or read (see pages 150 and 165), but he may take his food and eat it there, and even pursue any cleanly and simple avocation. Notwithstanding this liberty the greatest decorum is observed.

The largest and most ancient mosque in Damascus is the Jami'a el Amwy, "The Great Mosque of the Omeiyades," which ranks only next in importance to the sanctuaries of Mekka, Medina, and Jerusalem. "Amwy" literally translated means "the little slave-girl." Tab'ary, the Arab historian, states that the Kinyah, or surname, of the founder of the Omeiyades dynasty

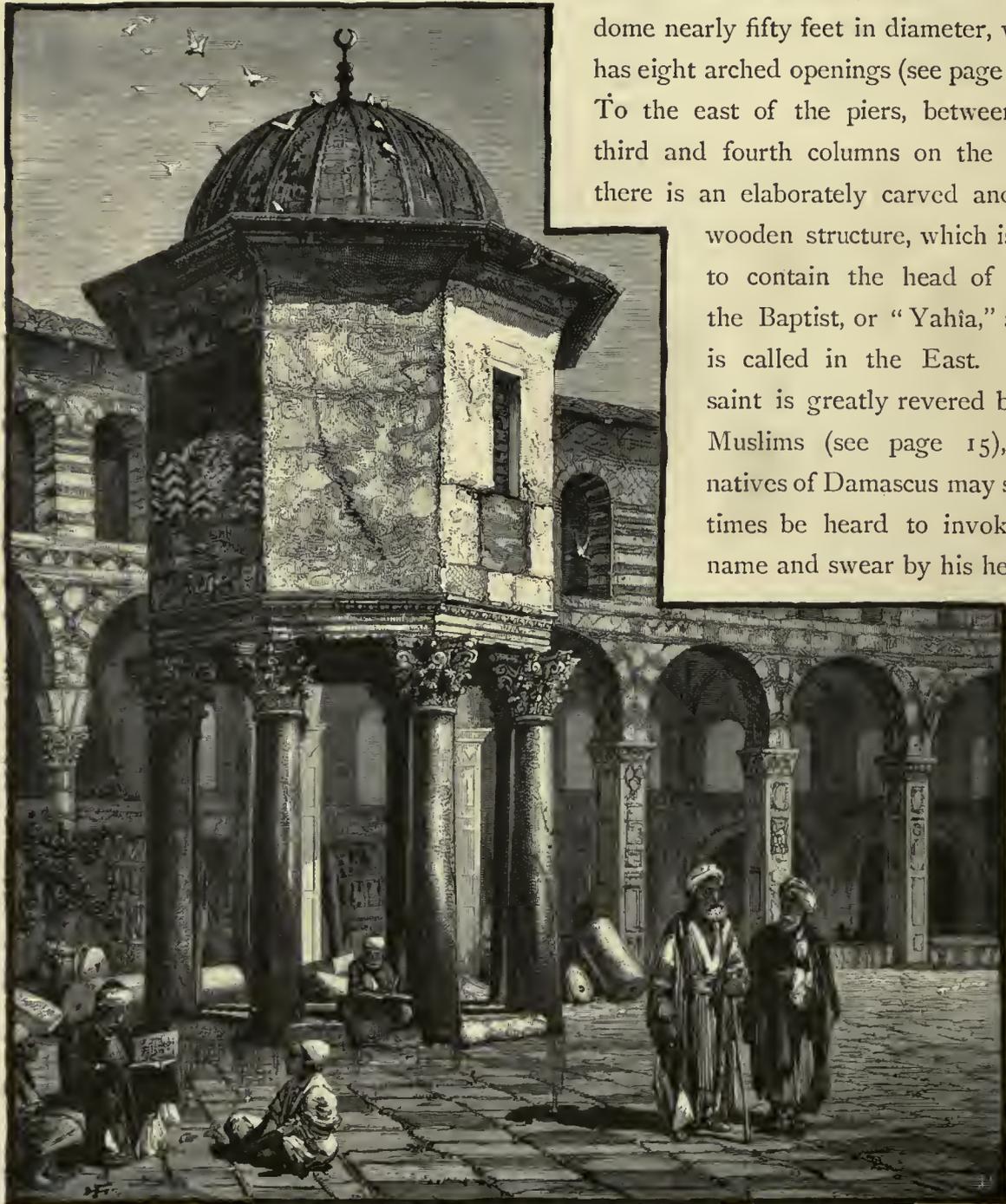
was "Ibn Amwy" (the son of the little slave-girl). This mosque (to which strangers are admitted on payment of a fee) occupies the site of many former and important structures. A Roman temple which stood here was, towards the close of the fourth century, converted into a Byzantine basilica dedicated to St. John the Baptist. It is said that his head was enclosed in a casket of gold, and preserved in a cave or crypt beneath the building. On the capture of Damascus by the Saracens in 634, they took possession of the east end of the basilica, and Christians and Muslims for many years worshipped under one roof. It was not until the commencement of the eighth century that the whole building was seized by Wêlid I. (the fifth of the Omeiyad khalifs), and converted into a mosque. He did not, however, destroy the outer walls, but enriched them with costly mosaics of gold and precious stones and glass. He paved the floors with marbles of many colours, the ceiling was covered with carved wood inlaid with gold, and from it were suspended six hundred golden lamps. It is recorded that these lamps were a few years later removed by his successor, 'Amr Abd ul Azîz, and replaced by others of less intrinsic value, which included probably some at least of the beautiful glass lamps (now so rare and so highly prized), the manufacture of which in Damascus dates from this period. They were adorned with Arabic inscriptions in coloured enamels, including the name of the individual for whom they were made, and sometimes with an appropriate verse from the Koran, such as the following :—

"God is the light of the heavens and of the earth. The similitude of His light is as a niche containing a lamp, the lamp in a glass, and the glass as though it were a shining star" (ch. xxiv. v. 35).

In the year 1069 part of this mosque was destroyed by fire. In its present state it consists of a quadrangle four hundred and eighty feet long by three hundred and twenty-four feet wide, surrounded by a lofty wall of fine masonry. The northern part of the quadrangle is an open court paved with limestone, with slabs of marble of various colours introduced at intervals. There are cloisters round three sides of it, supported on arches resting on columns of reddish-coloured stone, some of which are cylindrical, but the greater number are square and decorated with Byzantine and Arabesque ornament in low relief (see page 150). In the centre of the court there is a fountain for religious ablutions, surmounted by a dome resting on ancient marble columns. At the east end there is an elegant little building called the "Dome of the Hours." At the west end of the court stands the "Kubbet el Khazneh" (Dome of the Treasures), which is faithfully represented on page 150. It is said that some valuable manuscripts and ancient relics are preserved here, but they are inaccessible to strangers. It has been suggested that this beautiful little structure may have been the baptistry of the cathedral church of St. John the Baptist. The sanctuary of the mosque occupies the southern portion of the great quadrangle, but is only separated from it by a row of columns now encased in masonry. It is four hundred and thirty feet long by one hundred and twenty-five feet wide, and is still paved with tessellated marble, which is nearly everywhere covered with matting or prayer carpets. Two rows of columns, twenty-three feet high, extend from east to west, dividing the space into three aisles of equal width. A triple-gabled roof rests on horseshoe-

shaped, slightly tapering, arched vaulting. In the centre four massive piers of solid masonry, each twelve feet square, and veneered with marbles of various colours, form the transept, and support a lofty roof from which rises, in the middle, an octagon drum pierced with sixteen

round-headed windows, surmounted by a dome nearly fifty feet in diameter, which has eight arched openings (see page 147). To the east of the piers, between the third and fourth columns on the right, there is an elaborately carved and gilt wooden structure, which is said to contain the head of John the Baptist, or "Yahia," as he is called in the East. This saint is greatly revered by the Muslims (see page 15), and natives of Damascus may sometimes be heard to invoke his name and swear by his head.



KUBBET EL KHAZNEH (DOME OF THE TREASURES), DAMASCUS.

In the west part of the court of the Great Mosque. It is said to contain ancient books and other relics which are held sacred.

The south wall is pierced by a row of round-headed windows, with beautiful tracery and fine stained glass. Beneath them there are several prayer niches in the direction of Mekka. This celebrated mosque has three tall minarets, and they and its great dome and lofty walls are the most prominent objects in every general view of Damascus. It stands in the middle

of the north-western quarter of the city, yet a very good though distant view of it is obtained from a mound of rubbish (a relic of the time when glazed tiles were made in Damascus) outside Bâb Shurky (East Gate), as shown in the illustration on page 173, where it forms the central object of the picture. Of the three minarets, that on the north side is the most ancient. It is



THE TOMB OF SALADIN, DAMASCUS.

This mausoleum, which is just outside the north-west corner of the Great Mosque, is jealously guarded, and it is very difficult to gain access to it. The south-western minaret of the Great Mosque can be seen through the archway.

called Mâdinet el 'Arûs (the Minaret of the Bride), and is said to have been built by the Omeiyad khalif Wêlîd I. at the commencement of the eighth century of the Christian era. He at the

same time endowed an institution for the support of two sets of mueddins to chant the call to prayer from his minaret to the end of time. The most beautiful of the three minarets is that at the south-west angle of the mosque, called Gharbiyeh. It occupies the place of one destroyed by fire in A.D. 1449. The Christians were accused of having set fire to it, and they were accordingly heavily taxed for its reconstruction. No expense was spared in the execution of the work. It is built of fine limestone and black basalt from the Haurân. The foundation, which rises to a considerable height, is square; by an ingenious mode of cutting the angles this is converted into an octagon, on each face of which there is a trefoil-headed niche surmounted by circular ornaments of inlaid black and white stone, four of which are pierced in the centre. Above these there is a covered projecting gallery supported by stalactite brackets and protected by a balustrade of beautiful tracery carved in stone. Here the mueddin stands to chant the call to prayer. Above this the minaret is more slender, and is ornamented with courses of black basalt and circles with bosses in the centre. Higher still there is another gallery with a carved balustrade, but without a canopy; here there is a framework on which to suspend lamps to be lighted at night during the month of Ramadân and on the eve of the great festivals of Islam. From the third and highest landing-place, which is surrounded by an ornamental battlement, rises a slender octagonal pinnacle surmounted by an egg-shaped finial, which supports a glittering crescent. This minaret may be distinguished in the view on page 173 to the left of the great dome, but a clearer representation of the upper portion of it is given on page 147. The third minaret is at the south-east angle of the mosque, and is called Mâdinet 'Isa, "the Minaret of Jesus," from the Muslim tradition that "when Christ comes to judge the world he will first descend on its summit." Perhaps this idea arose from the circumstance of this being the highest minaret in Syria. It is two hundred and fifty feet in height. It consists of a high square tower, on each side of which there are double-arched openings on two stages. The twin arches, which are of slightly pointed horseshoe form, are together framed in pointed arches of beautiful proportions, the masonry between the inner arches being pierced with a star-shaped or circular opening.

In the illustration on page 147 a mueddin is admirably represented in the act of chanting the call to prayer from the higher of the two stages, only one of the twin arches, with its wooden balustrade, being shown. High above this level, from the summit of the square tower, springs an octagonal turret with two projecting open galleries one above the other, and still higher there is an inner gallery, which is surmounted by a tall pyramidal spire rising from an octagon base and crowned with a crescent. On page 173 this minaret may be distinguished in front of the great dome, which is more clearly shown on page 147, rising above the high dilapidated roof of the transept, and beyond the triple-gabled lead-covered roof of the aisles. The dome is called Kubbet en Nisr, "the Dome of the Vulture."

The entrance to the court of the mosque, at Bâb Berîd, on the western side, is through the Muslim book bazaar, a lofty arcade in which there are remains of an ancient colonnade. This was without doubt one of the chief entrances to the ancient temple, for at its western

extremity, in the draper's bazaar, there still stands a portion of a splendid archway. The lower part of the remaining columns can be seen from the bazaar, but they are so lofty that it is necessary to mount on to the roof of a neighbouring house (which is courteously permitted on payment of a few piastres) in order to see the upper portion of them and three Corinthian capitals, which support a richly carved architrave and a portion of the arch, which must have been at least sixty feet in height. A large fragment of the gable which rose above it is also preserved; it is pierced by a small window (see page 158). The width of the whole structure was about eighty feet, and its height, measuring to the top of the pediment, must have been about seventy feet.

While looking at this relic of Roman work, it is interesting to remember that the celebrated architect, Apollodorus, who was employed by the Emperor Trajan to erect his magnificent column, and to build the great bridge across the Danube, was a native of Damascus.

At the opposite or eastern side of the quadrangle, outside Bâb Jeirûn (the Gate of Jeirûn), there is a fountain with a large jet; and a colonnade twice the length of that on the western side can be traced. It is recorded that a great Roman pediment which stood at the end of this colonnade was removed in A.D. 1215, by order of the Vizier of Melek el 'Aâdel, and the stones of which it was composed were used to pave the court of the mosque. Portions of the great columns of this once-important gateway plainly indicate its position, and there was apparently a colonnade in front of it running north and south.

But it is on the south side of the mosque that the most remarkable relics of former structures exist. To obtain a view of this portion of the building it is necessary to mount on to the roof of the silversmith's bazaar (see page 155), from which point can be seen, near the transept, a disused but magnificent doorway, with a small one on each side of it. They are richly decorated with sculptured scroll-work, somewhat similar in design and execution to that of the great gateway of the Temple of the Sun at Ba'albek (see page 226). This was probably one of the triple portals of the Roman temple, subsequently used by the Christians as an entrance to their basilica, for on the upper beam of the central doorway there is an inscription in Greek which evidently formed no part of the original design, and to introduce it a moulding has been cut away (see page 185). The sculptured words, well indicated in the illustration, are from the Septuagint version of Psalm cxlv. 13: "Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations"—the words *O Christ* being interpolated.

There is no record as to the time or occasion when the verse was inscribed here. Few Muslims seem to be aware of its existence, and fewer still of its significance.

Ibn 'Asaker states that there was "an entrance to the temple on the south side by a triple gateway, and that in front of it was a large area surrounded by a double row of columns." This no doubt refers to the portal above described (see page 185), and the position of twenty of the columns may be traced in the shoe bazaar (see pages 156 and 160).

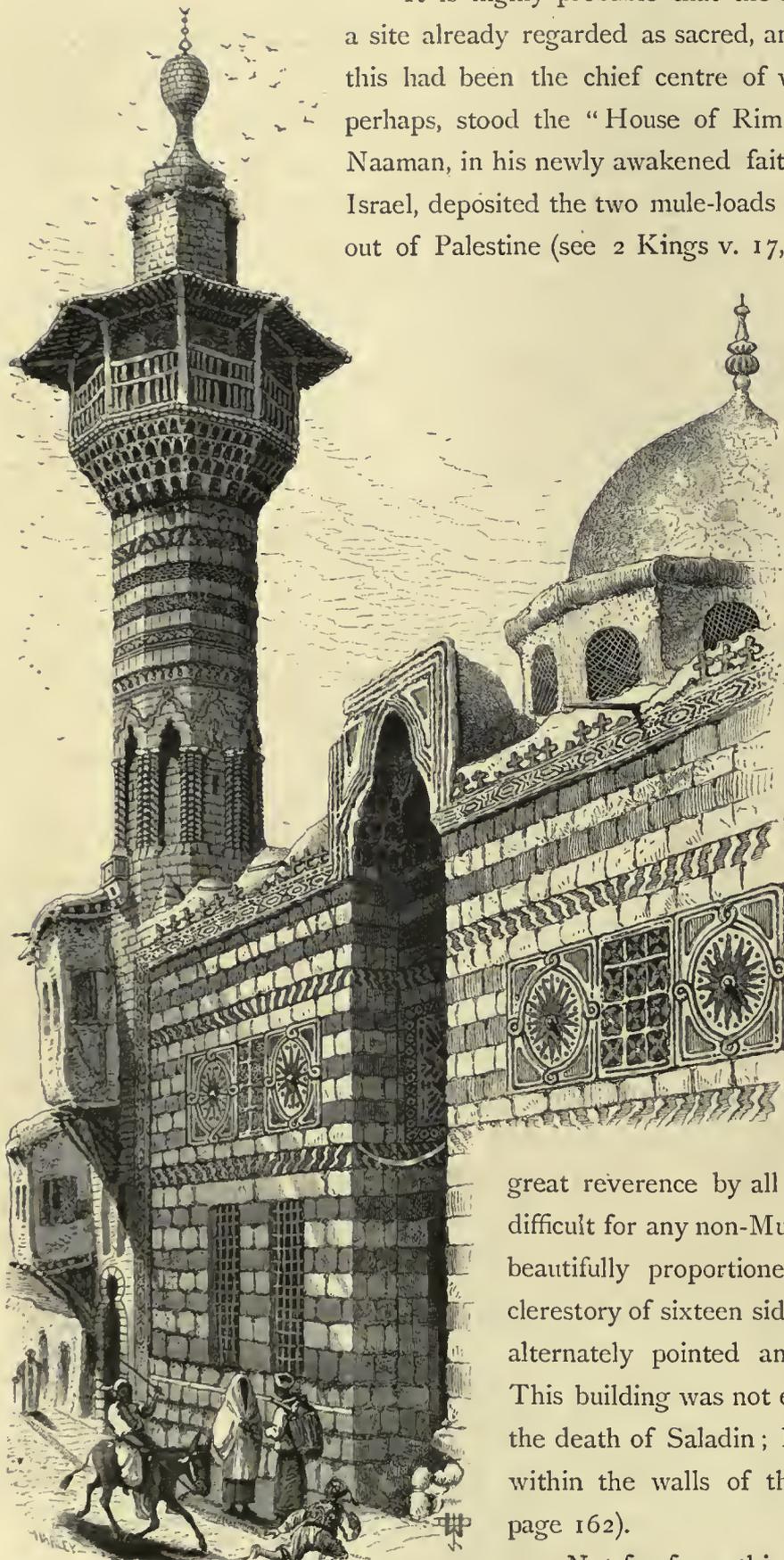
It is highly probable that the Roman temple was erected on a site already regarded as sacred, and that from the earliest times this had been the chief centre of worship in Damascus. Here, perhaps, stood the "House of Rimmon," the Syrian god, where Naaman, in his newly awakened faith in the power of the God of Israel, deposited the two mule-loads of earth which he had brought out of Palestine (see 2 Kings v. 17, 18), and perhaps it was here

that Ahaz saw the altar, the beauty of which so much pleased him that "he sent to Urijah the priest the fashion and the pattern of it, according to all the workmanship thereof," that one precisely like it might be erected in Jerusalem (see 2 Kings xvi. 10, 11).

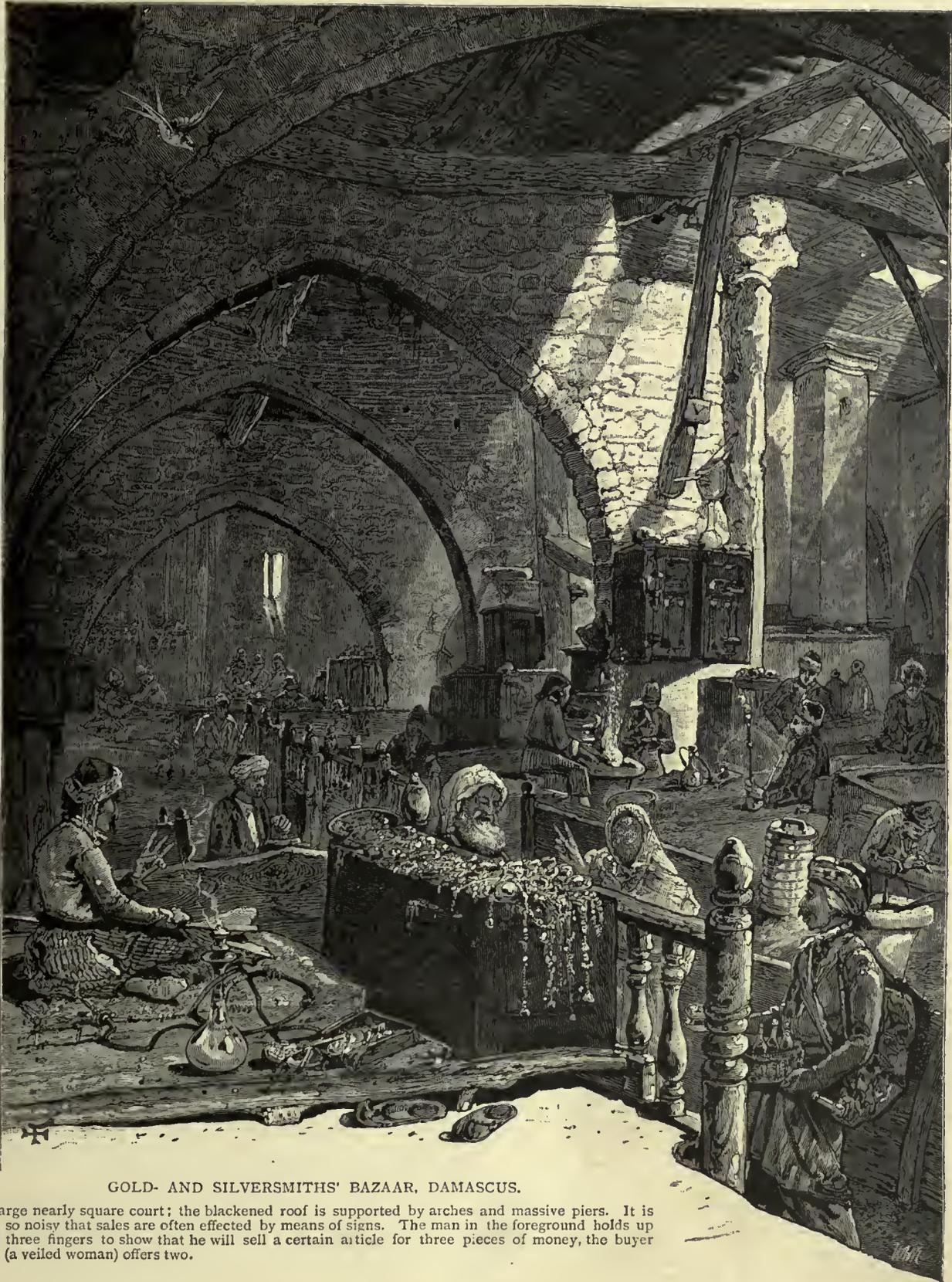
Just outside the walls of the mosque, at the north-west corner, there is a good, though very much dilapidated, specimen of a Saracenic mausoleum. It is the tomb of Saladin (Salah ed din), who died in the year 1193. The shrine is regarded with

great reverence by all Muslims, and it is exceedingly difficult for any non-Muslim to gain access to it. The beautifully proportioned ribbed dome rests on a clerestory of sixteen sides, pierced with small windows alternately pointed and scalloped (see page 151). This building was not erected until many years after the death of Saladin; his body was at first enshrined within the walls of the citadel, where he died (see page 162).

Not far from this spot, and under a much more elaborate structure, there rests with his son another



THE MOSQUE OF SABUNIYEH, DAMASCUS.
Built of alternate courses of black basalt and white limestone.



GOLD- AND SILVERSMITHS' BAZAAR, DAMASCUS.

A large nearly square court; the blackened roof is supported by arches and massive piers. It is so noisy that sales are often effected by means of signs. The man in the foreground holds up three fingers to show that he will sell a certain article for three pieces of money, the buyer (a veiled woman) offers two.

great general, who was an equally energetic antagonist of the Crusaders, and whose exploits are, among the Muslims, as popular as those of Saladin himself. He became Sultan under the title of Melek ed Dahr Bibars, A.D. 1260—1277. I had the privilege of visiting

this mausoleum several times. It is carefully constructed of polished red sandstone. Its



THE MOHAMMEDAN DAY SCHOOL IN THE SHOEMAKERS' BAZAAR.

The pupils are seated on the floor of a shop, each holding a wooden tablet, on which the lesson is written; and they intone it altogether, rocking themselves to and fro all the while.

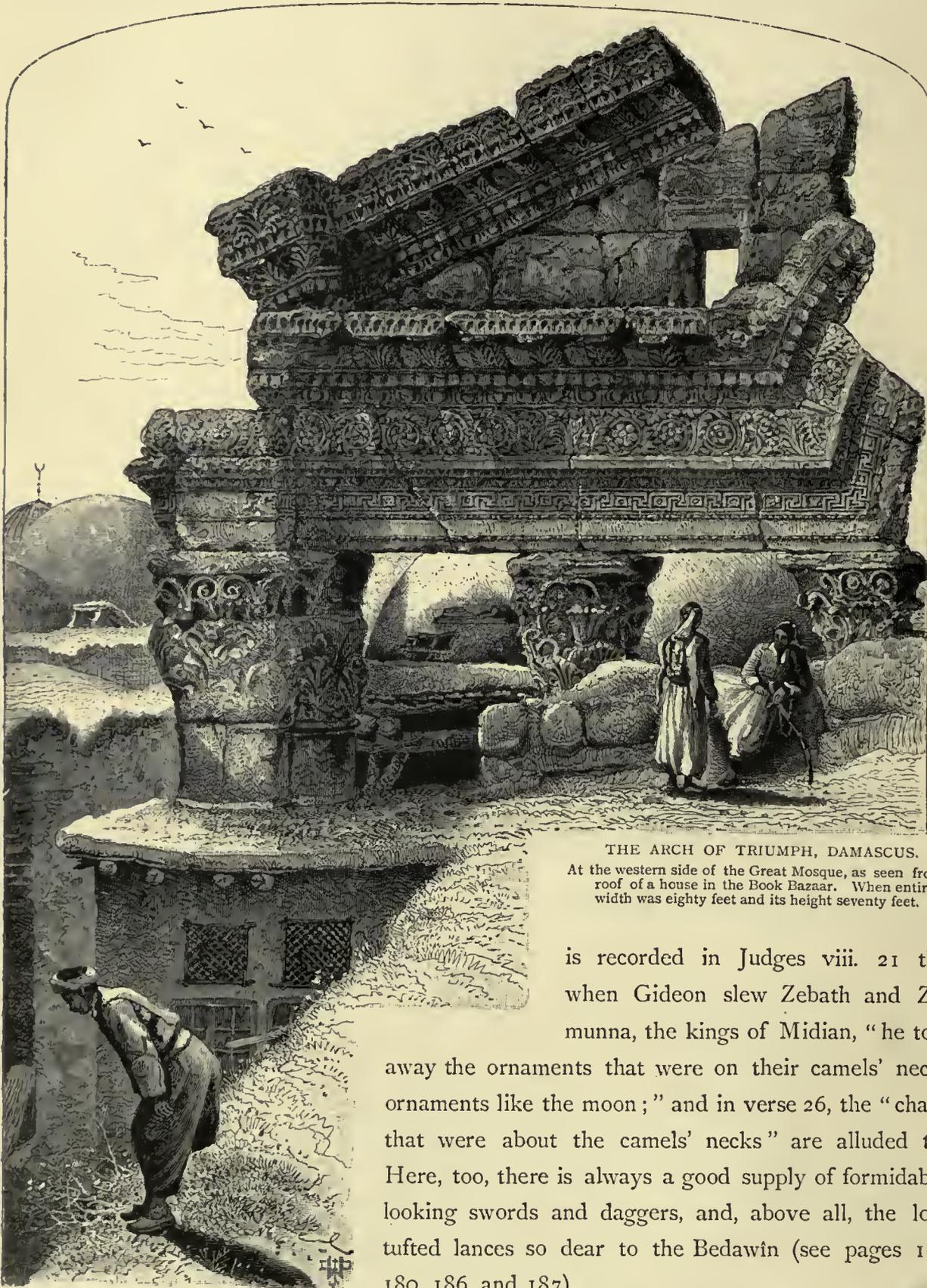
spacious and lofty domed chamber is paved with marble, and in the centre there are two low

gabled tombs side by side on a slightly raised marble platform. The *mihrab* niche on the south side is formed of the choicest marbles, and above it there is an elaborate floral design, executed in glass mosaics on gold glass mosaic ground. The first time I entered this beautiful tomb-house it was in use as a school, and a crowd of boys of various ranks were chanting a chapter of the Koran. Some of them wore gold-embroidered jackets and crimson fezzes, others only a single garment of white or indigo-dyed cotton, with some kind of girdle, and on their heads a white skull cap, with or without a coloured kerchief twisted round turban fashion. After their dismissal the schoolmaster not only kindly allowed me to make a sketch of the interior, but provided me with some paper that I might take rubbings of a beautiful stucco-work basso-relievo dado frieze. This building is one of the most complete specimens of thirteenth-century work in Damascus.

Another example of purely Saracenic architecture, but of a later date, is given on page 154, the Jami'a Sabuniyeh, which is built of alternate courses of white stone and black basalt, and decorated with inlaid conventional designs of the same materials. The portal is very lofty, rising even higher than the façade of the building, and its canopy is enriched with the stalactite ornament especially characteristic of all Arabian architecture, whether in Europe, Asia, or Africa. On the bar half-way up across the entrance, lamps are suspended on the eve of certain festivals, and all through the night during the month of Ramadân. The octagon minaret has a well-sheltered gallery and eight elegant trefoil-headed niches, alternately pierced with narrow openings.

Not far from this mosque, which is in the south-western district, stands the Sinâniyeh College, built in the same style. The Sûk es Sinâniyeh, which we now enter, is one of the broadest and handsomest bazaars of Damascus. Through the principal part of it, at intervals of about thirty feet, there are stone arches, twenty-nine feet high, supporting a gabled wooden roof pierced with square openings through which the sunlight streams. This bazaar, which leads from the straggling peasant suburb called El Meidan, is pre-eminently the bazaar of the Bedawin and fellahin (Bedouins and peasantry). Here they may be seen bargaining for garments of the most primitive fashion, such as we may well imagine Abraham himself to have worn, and household and tent furniture such as Sara, his wife, must have used—sheepskin coats; large, heavy, striped cloaks made of goat's hair, serving as outer garments by day and coverings by night (see Exodus xxii. 26, 27); caps and turban cloths; striped and fringed kefiyehs, or head shawls (well shown on page 162, worn by the man in the foreground); high red boots and clumsy-looking pointed shoes; milking tubs; strong round trays and shallow baskets made of black and white and red straw woven into excellent and varied geometrical designs; simple cooking apparatus and metal dishes of many sizes, some of them very large—every Bedawy likes to possess "a lordly dish" (Judges v. 25) as a sign of his hospitality. In another part of the bazaar there are tasselled saddle-bags, and camels' head-gear adorned with beads and shells, the *Cypræa moneta* (see page 186). Curious crescent-shaped ornaments of antique design, with heavy chains of silver or some inferior metal, for the necks of horses or

camels, are sometimes to be found here second-hand; they are greatly valued as charms. (It



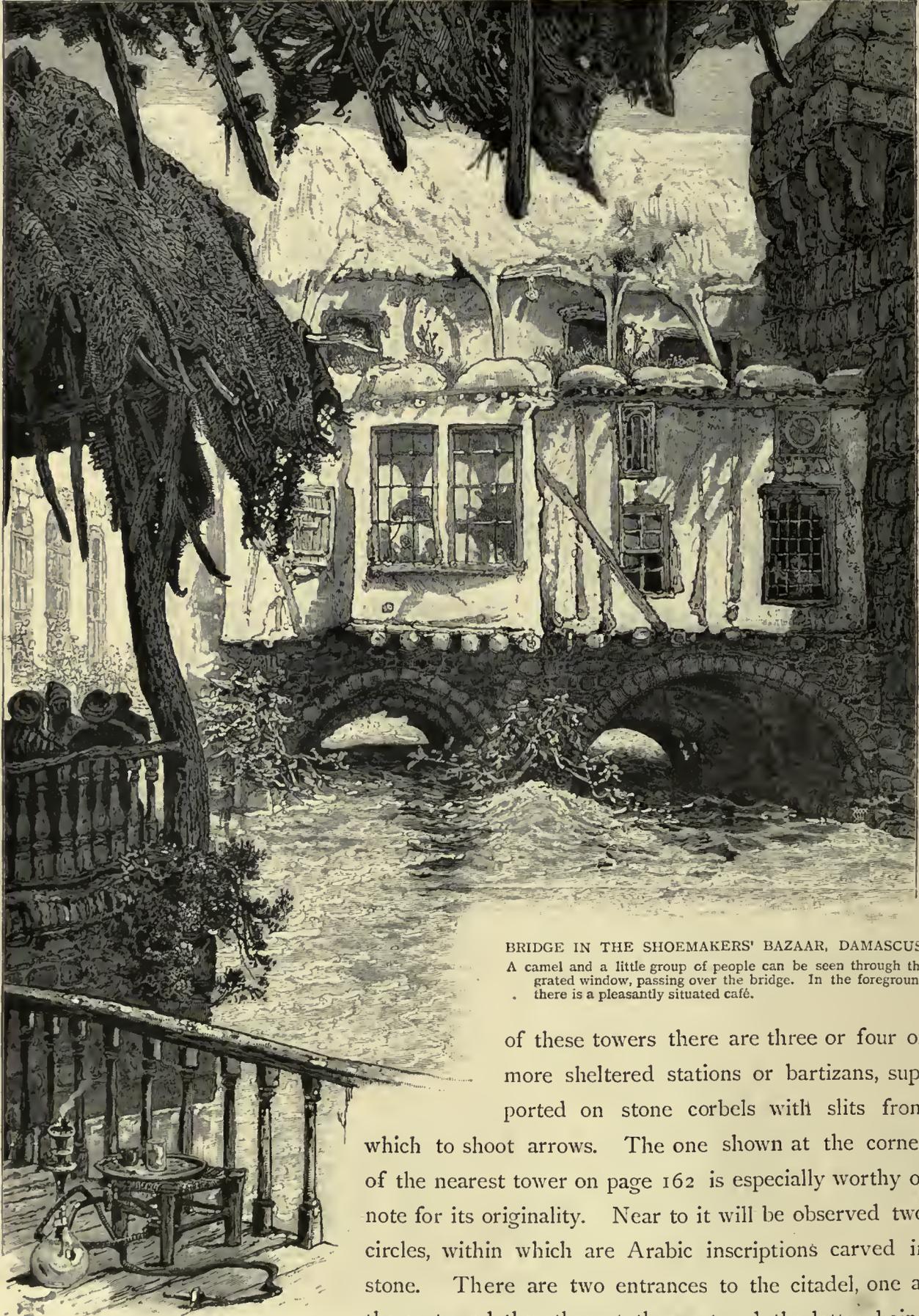
THE ARCH OF TRIUMPH, DAMASCUS.

At the western side of the Great Mosque, as seen from a roof of a house in the Book Bazaar. When entire its width was eighty feet and its height seventy feet.

is recorded in Judges viii. 21 that when Gideon slew Zebath and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian, "he took away the ornaments that were on their camels' necks, ornaments like the moon;" and in verse 26, the "chains that were about the camels' necks" are alluded to.) Here, too, there is always a good supply of formidable-looking swords and daggers, and, above all, the long tufted lances so dear to the Bedawin (see pages 167, 180, 186, and 187).

On emerging from this bazaar at the north end, we hasten onwards to an open space

where many ways meet, not far from the extreme west end of the street called Straight, the western section of which is the Sûk el 'Attarin, where drugs and spices and scents are sold. The most striking object in view is a tall and exceedingly beautiful minaret, covered with highly-glazed green and blue tiles, glistening in the sunlight; the stone balustrade of the gallery which encircles it is carved into delicate tracery. It belongs to the great mosque built by Sinân Pasha, Governor of Damascus, A.D. 1581, sixty-seven years after Syria had become a Turkish province, and it is named after him, Jami'a es Sinâniyeh. The bazaar and college above described also owe their origin to him, and bear his name. In the court of this mosque there are several ancient marble columns. The street in which this mosque stands is known as the Street of the Green Mosque. The steel engraving facing page 173 represents a portion of it, including a well-stocked grocer's shop, a café with an open window looking towards the Anti-Lebanon, characteristic groups of people, and a fine plane-tree. After passing along this street we pursue our way northwards, and presently enter a broad road planted with plane-trees, where the large Monastery of the Dancing or Whirling Dervishes is situated. This pleasant promenade, called the Derwishiyeh, leads direct to the south-west corner of the citadel, which towers grandly above all the surrounding buildings (see page 162). The date of its original erection is exceedingly doubtful. It is sometimes called the Castle of Saladin. The Sultan Bibars (A.D. 1260—1277), whose mausoleum has been described, is said to have almost rebuilt it; and for Melek el 'Ashrâ'af (1291) the same honour has been claimed. The building is eight hundred and forty feet from north to south, and six hundred feet from east to west. It occupies the north-west angle of the ancient boundary of the city, and is surrounded by a deep moat nearly twenty feet wide, partly overgrown with reeds. All the published plans which I have seen of this fortress, in guide-books and elsewhere, represent it as a perfect quadrangle, but this is far from being correct. The length of the west wall is about one-third less than that of the east wall, and the south wall slightly slopes towards it; but the north wall, which is at right-angles with the east wall for about two-thirds of its length, bends abruptly to meet the western wall. My authority for this, in addition to my own observation, is a very large unpublished map of Damascus, with plans of its principal buildings, made by the local military authorities about fifteen years ago. It was lent to me by H.E. Dervish Pasha, the Military Governor-General, and at my request he kindly gave me permission to make a tracing of it. (I was at the time residing with my brother, Mr. E. T. Rogers, who was then H.B.M. Consul at Damascus, and to that circumstance I owe the many privileges I enjoyed.) The foundations of the citadel are evidently very ancient, and date from a time long anterior to Muslim rule. The lofty walls, which are built of rusticated stones with marginal drafts, are strengthened, and at the same time embellished, by twelve boldly projecting towers placed at nearly equal distances from each other all round the building; they are not, however, uniform in size. Two of the towers are shown on page 162, and from these some idea of the citadel as a whole may be formed. (Compare this illustration with the representations of the citadel of Jerusalem on pages 5, 105, vol. i.) Projecting from the highest story of each



BRIDGE IN THE SHOEMAKERS' BAZAAR, DAMASCUS.

A camel and a little group of people can be seen through the grated window, passing over the bridge. In the foreground there is a pleasantly situated café.

of these towers there are three or four or more sheltered stations or bartizans, supported on stone corbels with slits from which to shoot arrows. The one shown at the corner of the nearest tower on page 162 is especially worthy of note for its originality. Near to it will be observed two circles, within which are Arabic inscriptions carved in stone. There are two entrances to the citadel, one at the east and the other at the west end, the latter being the principal one. The interior is disappointing; it

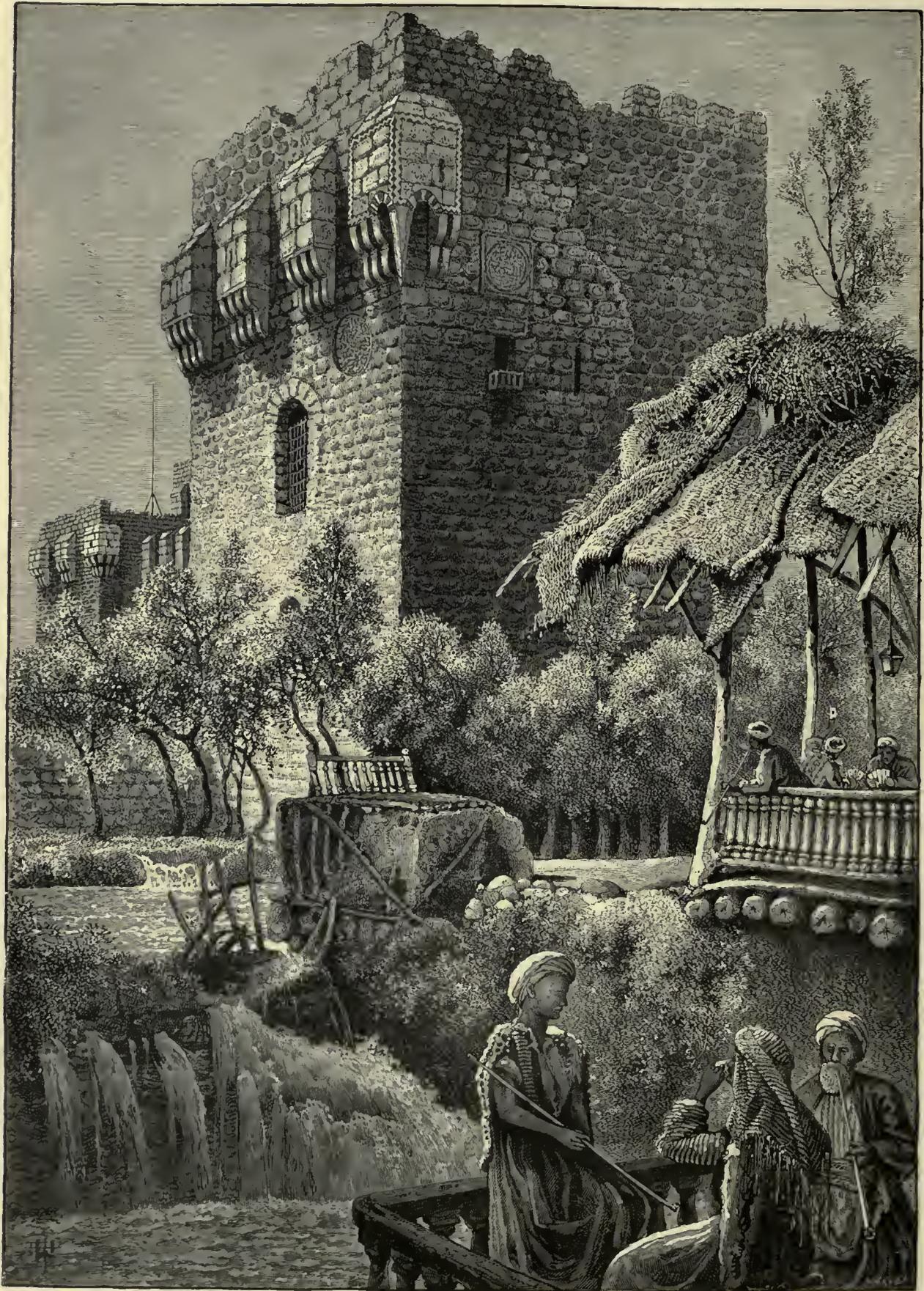
looks almost deserted, and only a comparatively small portion of it is kept in repair. Early writers speak of it as being fully garrisoned and containing a splendidly decorated council-chamber, and many fine apartments. It was, however, found dangerous to allow the Janissaries to occupy such a spacious and important stronghold; for it rendered it possible for them to set the government at defiance. Nothing is now left to tell of its former internal splendour. There is, however, a collection of ancient weapons in the armoury, including a great number of arrows.

It is worthy of record here that about thirty years ago thousands of skilfully fashioned arrow-shafts were accidentally discovered enclosed beneath the roof of one of the towers of the citadel of Jerusalem, that which is known as the Tower of Hippicus. Rain had penetrated through this vaulted roof and washed away part of the ceiling of one of the highest chambers, which was occupied by the gunners. Thus the arrows were exposed to view, and on further examination it was found that they were piled up "by hundreds of thousands" in this spacious loft. The Governor of Jerusalem, who was immediately informed of the discovery, gave strict orders that the arrows should not be removed. The roof and ceiling were accordingly quickly repaired and the arrows walled up



A NARROW BY-WAY IN DAMASCUS.

The upper stories and projecting windows are constructed of poplar stems, filled in with sun-dried bricks, placed diagonally and plastered over with clay.



THE CITADEL, DAMASCUS.

A large oblong structure surrounded by a moat. There are twelve projecting towers, two of which are shown above. In the foreground there is a café, in the upper balcony of which a turbaned player holds up a winning card exultingly.

again, with the exception of a few which were carried off by the workmen. One of these arrows is in my possession, it having been obtained at the time by the clerk of the works employed to superintend the erection of the Anglican church at Jerusalem, which is just opposite to the citadel (see page 102, vol. i.). By him it was brought to England, and given to my father, the late Mr. W. G. Rogers. Experts pronounce the form and finish of this arrow-shaft to be quite perfect, but as it is neither barbed nor feathered it is the more difficult to determine its age. But thousands of such arrows must have sped from the battlements and bartizans of the citadel; and we may well imagine that when "the Tower of David" (see page 5, vol. i.) "was builded as an armoury," its loftiest chambers were stacked with arrows ready for the use of the archers on the battlements and bartizans (see Solomon's Song iv. 4).

But we must return to the Citadel of Damascus. The north side of it is the most picturesque, and this can best be seen from the terraced roofs of houses on the north bank of the Barada, or from the balconies of the cafés by the river's side (see page 162). On page 147 the south-west angle of the citadel can be seen beyond the dome of the Great Mosque, and its position can be traced in the distance on page 173.

From the north-west corner of the citadel a road leads westward almost direct to the Tekiyeh, the hospice founded by the Turkish Sultan Selim I. in A.D. 1516 (see pages 143 and 165), for the accommodation of the poor, and especially for pilgrims on their way to or from Mekka. (It was in the reign of this Sultan, 1512—1520, that Armenia, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt were incorporated with the Turkish Empire.) The hospice is pleasantly situated close to the Merj, or meadow, and the Barada flows in front of it. When I visited it in May, 1867, by appointment, attended only by one of the consular *kawasses*, I was kindly welcomed by the Sheikh et Tekiyeh in the great cloistered court, which is surrounded by domed chambers. These were occupied by pilgrims from all parts of Asia. All the doors were wide open, and in one apartment I saw a poor woman fanning her little son, who was dying of fever; in another room a party of Kurds were sleeping, covered with sheepskins. The ogee pediments over the doorways and grated windows of these apartments were fitted with exquisitely designed tiles, made expressly for their places. The colours were rich dark blue, delicate green, and turquoise blue, all outlined in black. Presently the Mannûn et Tekiyeh invited me to witness the daily distribution of soup. He led me to the north side of the court, and into a large vaulted hall or kitchen, supported by four massive columns and piers blackened by smoke. In the middle there were two rudely constructed open fire-places of cemented stone, side by side, and on each one stood an enormous cauldron of simmering soup. There were no chimneys; the smoke and steam escaped through the apertures in the great dome above. A small stool was placed for me in the deep high recess of a grated window, whence I could watch the crowds of poor people coming in. The greater number of them were not dwellers in the Tekiyeh, but consisted of the poor of the neighbouring districts. Some were literally clothed in rags, others almost naked, while a few were wrapped in sheets or blankets, or clothed with sheepskins. They ranged themselves against the blackened walls, and stood expectant, with

gourds, calabashes, broken pots, or metal bowls in their hands. Behind the cauldron stood two men to ladle out the soup, directed by the Mannûn. I expressed a wish to taste the soup, so the sheikh sent for a silver drinking-cup (in the form of a saucer), and I was served. I found it was composed of rice, vegetables, and meat, flavoured with herbs, and was very substantial. I was afterwards conducted by the sheikh to the innermost court, and we entered the beautiful mosque which stands on the south side of it. The sunlight was streaming through the stained-glass windows of the clerestory of the dome, and a large chandelier, with beautiful lamps, was suspended from the centre. The walls were covered with glazed tiles; those of the *mihrab*, the niche on the south side, were especially beautiful, and the largest I had seen—much too large to be drawn in my sketch-book full size. I told the sheikh that I regretted this. He instantly went to his house on the opposite side of the court, and brought me some very large well-made Turkish paper, and I made a careful drawing of a tile which measured fifteen inches and a quarter by twelve inches and one-eighth, which well represents the style and character of the tiles throughout the building. I afterwards took coffee and sherbet with him in his room, and he gathered for me his choicest flowers.

As I passed across the great court, on my way out, I heard a terrible sound of lamentation. The little fever-stricken boy had just then died. A group of women stood in the doorway, and others quickly gathered round them from the neighbouring rooms. Then they together suddenly uttered the death-cry, called *wilwâl*, a peculiarly mournful cadence, with shrieks and pauses at regular intervals. This cry has been transmitted from one generation of mourners to another, and is probably exceedingly ancient; it may even be the echo of the *great cry* which was heard throughout all the land of Egypt when all the first-born were smitten (Exod. xii. 30). Throughout the East, the instant after a death has taken place the women present proclaim it by loud lamentations; all the women who hear it flock to the house of mourning and join in the "death cry," which cannot possibly be mistaken for any other sound. Professional mourners, who are "skilful in lamentation," are employed by wealthy people to assist the volunteers (see Amos v. 16). I had often heard this cry before, but it seemed to me especially mournful then. The dead child was the only son of a widow, and she "refused to be comforted" (Jeremiah xxxi. 15). I walked homewards sorrowfully, with the mournful chorus, "Alas for him! alas for him!" ringing in my ears.

The private houses of Damascus are almost as remarkable for their external plainness as for their internal splendour. A stranger in traversing the city would never guess that it contained such luxurious residences, for they are nearly always situated in tortuous streets with high bare walls on each side; an occasional doorway, more or less decorated, is the only outward and visible sign of their existence. Sometimes the doorway is sufficiently wide and lofty to admit a laden camel or a mounted horseman, and this indicates that it opens at once into a courtyard with stabling; but it is always pierced with a smaller door for ordinary use. The entrance to a private house is, however, generally only large enough to admit one person at a time, and opens into a passage which, after one or more abrupt turnings, leads into the



MOSQUE OF THE TEKĪYEH, OR HOSPICE OF THE SULTAN SELIM.

Its position is shown in the illustration on page 143. The court is planted with walnut-trees. The cloisters and interior of the mosque are decorated with exceedingly fine glazed tiles.

principal court of the house, which varies in size from fifty to even a hundred and fifty feet square. They are sometimes oblong, and an ordinary-sized court measures eighty feet by fifty. In Muslim establishments the principal court and its surrounding apartments are reserved exclusively for the use of the harem, a smaller court nearer the entrance being used by the master of the house for the reception of his guests. These courts are almost always paved with marble more or less elaborately laid down. Orange, lemon, citron trees, and sometimes

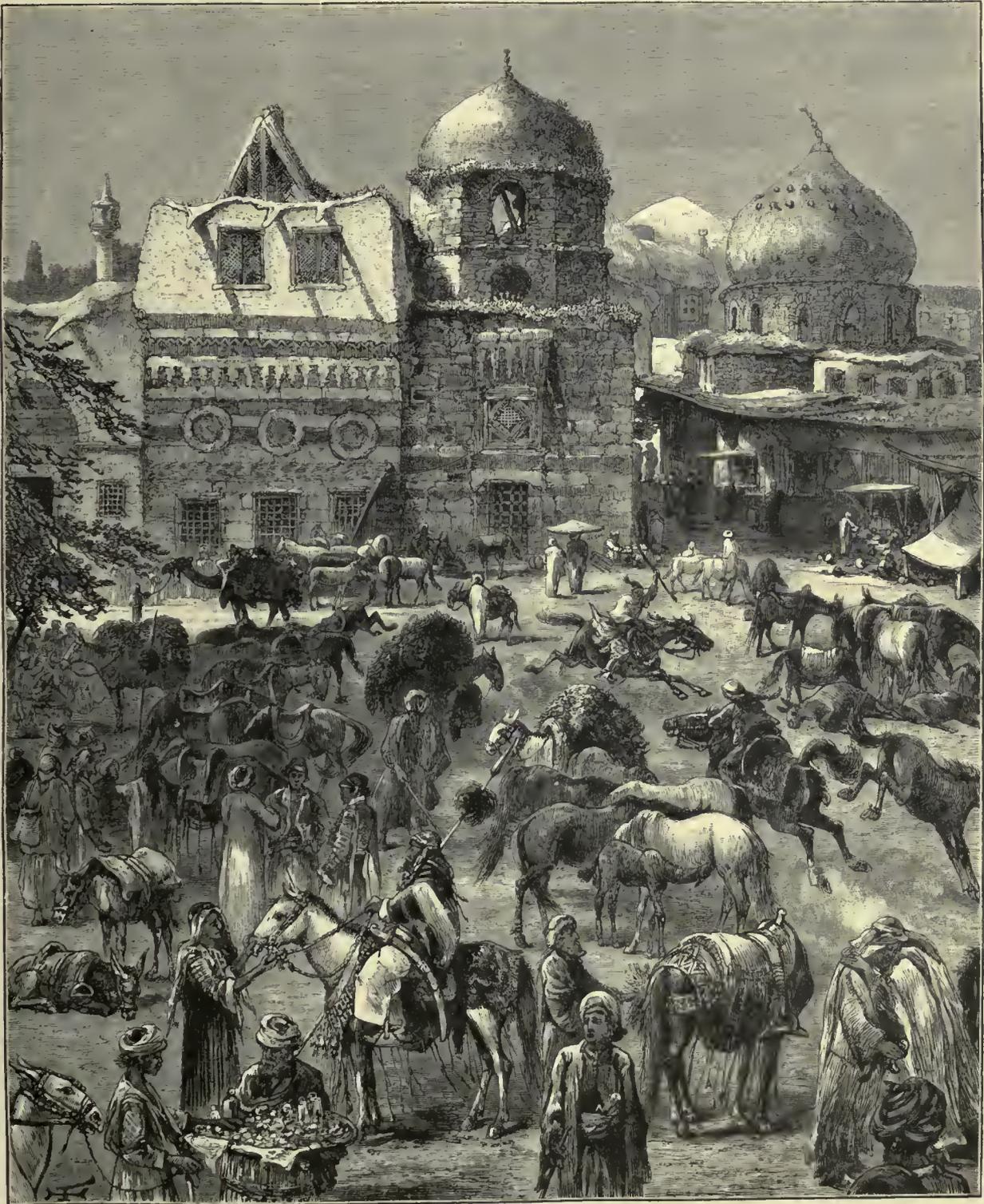


MAKBARET BÂB ES SAGHÎR (BURIAL-GROUND OF THE LITTLE GATE).

Tradition says that two of the wives of Mohammed were interred here. A modern domed structure marks the spot.

myrtles and oleanders, are planted here singly within raised marble borders, and a vine is sometimes trained over trellis-work. A fountain springing from a raised marble tank always stands in the centre of the court, and there are two or four additional fountains if the court be a very large one. All the rooms round the court open into it, and the windows have no other outlook. A beautiful house near to the castle, which my brother occupied when I first arrived at Damascus in 1865, had no windows looking into the street, but this was compensated for by the magnificent view from the terraced housetop.

The walls of a superior house, up to the height of about twenty feet, are built in alternate courses of black and white or black and yellowish coloured stone, or white stone walls are



THE HORSE BAZAAR, DAMASCUS, AS IT APPEARS ON MARKET DAYS.

In the foreground there is a Bedouin sheikh on horseback, fully equipped. Another Bedouin has just dismounted to greet a friend, exemplifying the words, "and he fell upon his neck and kissed him."

painted inside and outside in stripes to represent alternate courses (see page 182). The upper portions of the walls and all upper stories are constructed of a framework of poplar stems filled

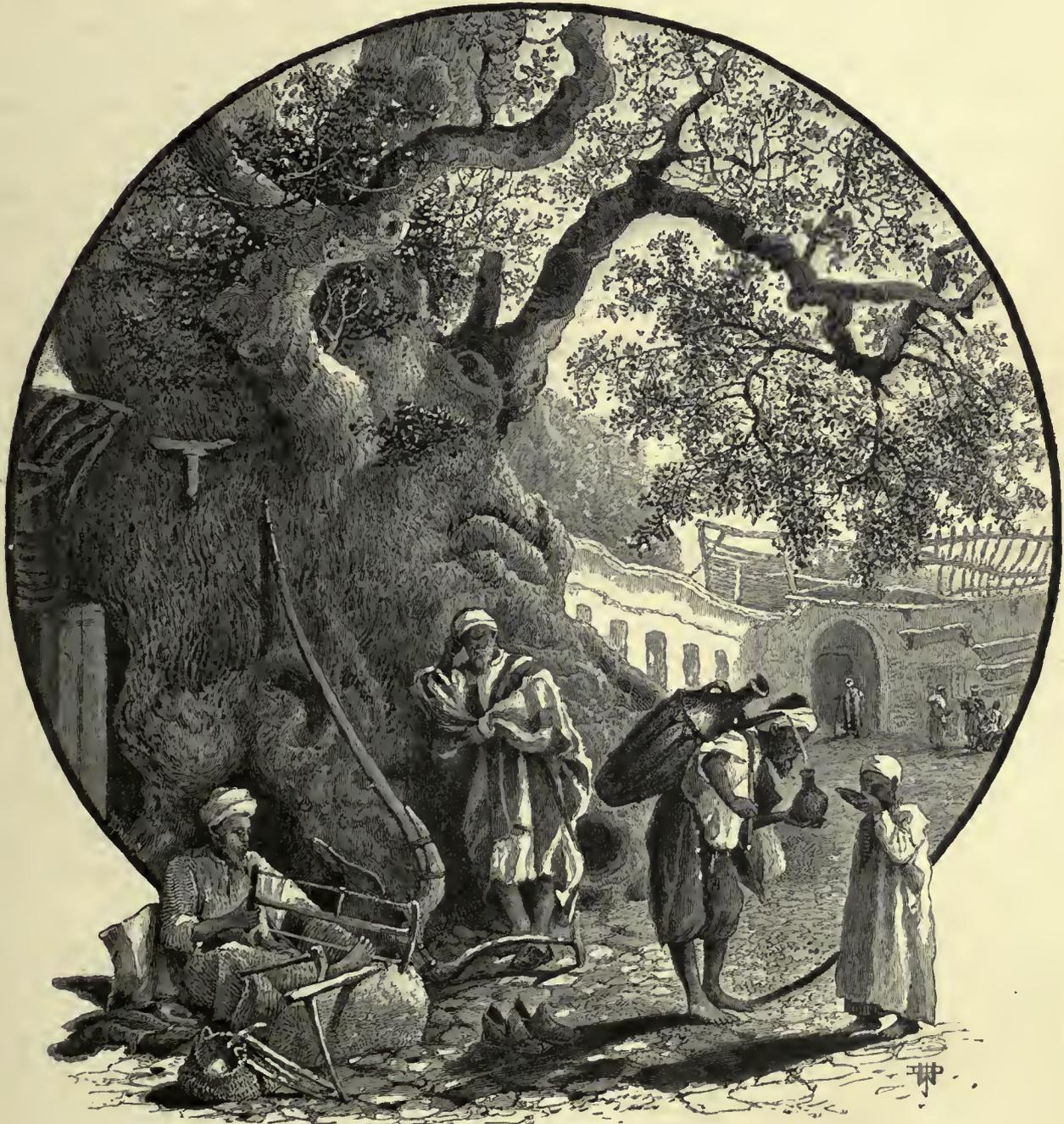
in with sun-dried bricks placed diagonally (as indicated in the little rudely built unfinished room on the distant wall on page 172), and afterwards plastered. In good houses they are well finished and smooth and more or less decorated, and it would not be supposed that they were built of such rude materials. (On page 161 the appearance of buildings carelessly constructed with these materials and injured by time is well shown.)

Nearly in the middle of the south side of the court there is always a wide and lofty arched recess or alcove, with slightly raised flooring, and cushioned seats on its three sides. On each side of this there is a closed reception room. The principal one always has a fountain in the lower part of it, which is paved with marble and called the 'Atabeh. Here the guests put off their shoes before they step on to the raised daïs, which is cushioned and carpeted, and occupies the larger portion of the apartment. Over the 'Atabeh, in a grand salon, there is usually a clerestory with stained-glass windows; its ceiling should always be higher than that of the daïs. Some idea of the richness of the decoration of a modern house in Damascus may be formed by examining the excellent illustration on page 182, which represents the 'Atabeh of a reception room. Many of these houses are provided with a complete set of bath-rooms, but the public baths, which are very numerous in Damascus, are generally preferred. The best ones are very fine buildings, with marble walls and floorings, handsome divans, and good attendance.

The old houses in the Muslim quarter are less elaborate, but much more beautiful and purer in style than the more modern structures in the Christian and Jewish quarters. The costumes worn by the upper classes is quite in keeping with the houses which they inhabit. Muslim gentlemen especially pride themselves on the scrupulous cleanliness as well as the excellent material of their garments. Their long and ample pelisses are made of the finest cloth, and lined with silk or fur, according to the season. Olive green, cinnamon colour, delicate greys, and various shades of brown are the favourite tints; the under garment is a long robe of striped silk and cotton, like a dressing-gown. Their turban cloths are of snowy whiteness, and carefully folded. On fête days not only the ladies, but all the servants are richly apparelled, and wear a great deal of jewellery.

Damascus is famous for its workers in gold and silver, and they are nearly all Christians, chiefly of the Armenian Church. Their bazaar, or khan, is one of the most curious and mysterious-looking places in the city. It is a large and nearly square covered court. Its shattered and blackened roof is supported by arches, ancient columns, and massive piers, arranged apparently without any regard to regularity. This place is fitted up with a great number of little parapeted stalls about four feet in height, and generally about four feet square. They are just far enough apart to enable people to walk between them, except that there is one passage through the centre of the bazaar which is wider than the others, and looks like the middle aisle of a small old-fashioned high-pewed church. Each platform or stall constitutes a separate workshop, and is furnished with a tool-chest which serves as a work-table and counter, an anvil, a tiny furnace or an open terra-cotta stove or brazier, and a cabinet with little drawers for valuables. A few of the stalls which are occupied by dealers

in jewellery are simply provided with cabinets, on the top of which the treasures may be exhibited (see page 155), but the dealer does not generally keep his jewellery exposed. He holds a trinket or two in his hand, and endeavours by signs or invocations to attract the attention of passers-by. As soon as any one pauses as if inclined to purchase, he is



THE LARGE PLANE-TREE, DAMASCUS.

It is nearly forty feet in circumference. A peasant and his plough are resting against it, and in its shade a carpenter is working, steadying his bow saw with his naked foot.

invited to mount on to the platform, and then it is that the treasures are turned out of the smaller cabinets, one drawer of which contains perhaps a collection of badly-cut diamonds, and some uncut rubies and emeralds; another drawer may be filled with seed pearls and two or three "pearls of great price." There is sure to be a stock of turquoise rings

and a variety of hard stones set, ready to be engraved, as signet rings. Other drawers contain old coins and various small articles of jewellery. In a large cabinet curious ornaments of massive silver worn by the peasantry are kept. They are sold by weight. It is a collection of this kind which is shown outside the cabinet on page 155, and the scales are near at hand. This khan has only two narrow entrances, which are closed and guarded at night. One of these doors leads from the silk-reelers' bazaar, and the other from the long arcade occupied by the fancy carpenters.

When I first passed through one of these narrow doorways and found myself within the khan, I could not help thinking that it looked like the patched-up ruin of some deserted sanctuary, which had been invaded and taken possession of by an army of tinkers. The smoke and the gas from the numerous charcoal fires, the noise of anvils and hammers, and the loudly raised echoing voices of buyers and sellers almost bewildered me. I had, perhaps unreasonably, expected to see an entirely different kind of place, and I could hardly believe that the kawass who was attending me had conducted me rightly. However, he led me through the crowded passages to the stall of a clever young Armenian silversmith, who was engaged on some work for my brother. As I had some directions to give to him, I was assisted to mount on to his platform, and was soon seated on a block of wood which was borrowed for my use, and thoughtfully placed as far from the little furnace as possible. From this point I had a good view of the novel scene around me, and the opportunity of seeing various kinds of work in progress, and of examining the best productions of the workers; for although I had never visited the khan before, I found that I was well known there, and many of the men quitted their stalls to show me their *chefs d'œuvre*. There appeared to be no jealousy or rivalry among them. They all seemed good-naturedly eager that I should see everything that was worth seeing. One man showed me a very beautiful gold bracelet which he had just completed for a customer. It was formed of seven filigree discs set with pearls, linked together with pearl rosettes. The more elaborate and costly articles are generally made to order, and I was told that only simple articles for which there is a general demand were kept in stock.

Sometimes a goldsmith is hired, as of old, to work by the day at the house of his employer. He brings his charcoal, stove, and tongs, his blow-pipe, and a few simple tools, and readily converts worn-out trinkets into new ones, and mounts gold coins or transforms them into delicate filigree work.

It will be remembered that it is from the roof of the silversmiths' bazaar that the remarkable Greek inscription on a disused doorway of the Great Mosque can be seen (see page 185).

Another bazaar which interested me especially was that of the booksellers and bookbinders, commonly called the "Sûk el Miskiyeh," because it leads to the Great Mosque. I had been assured that the Muslim booksellers were very fanatical, and would not show their books to non-Muslims. However, with my brother's consent, I went there one day attended only by one of

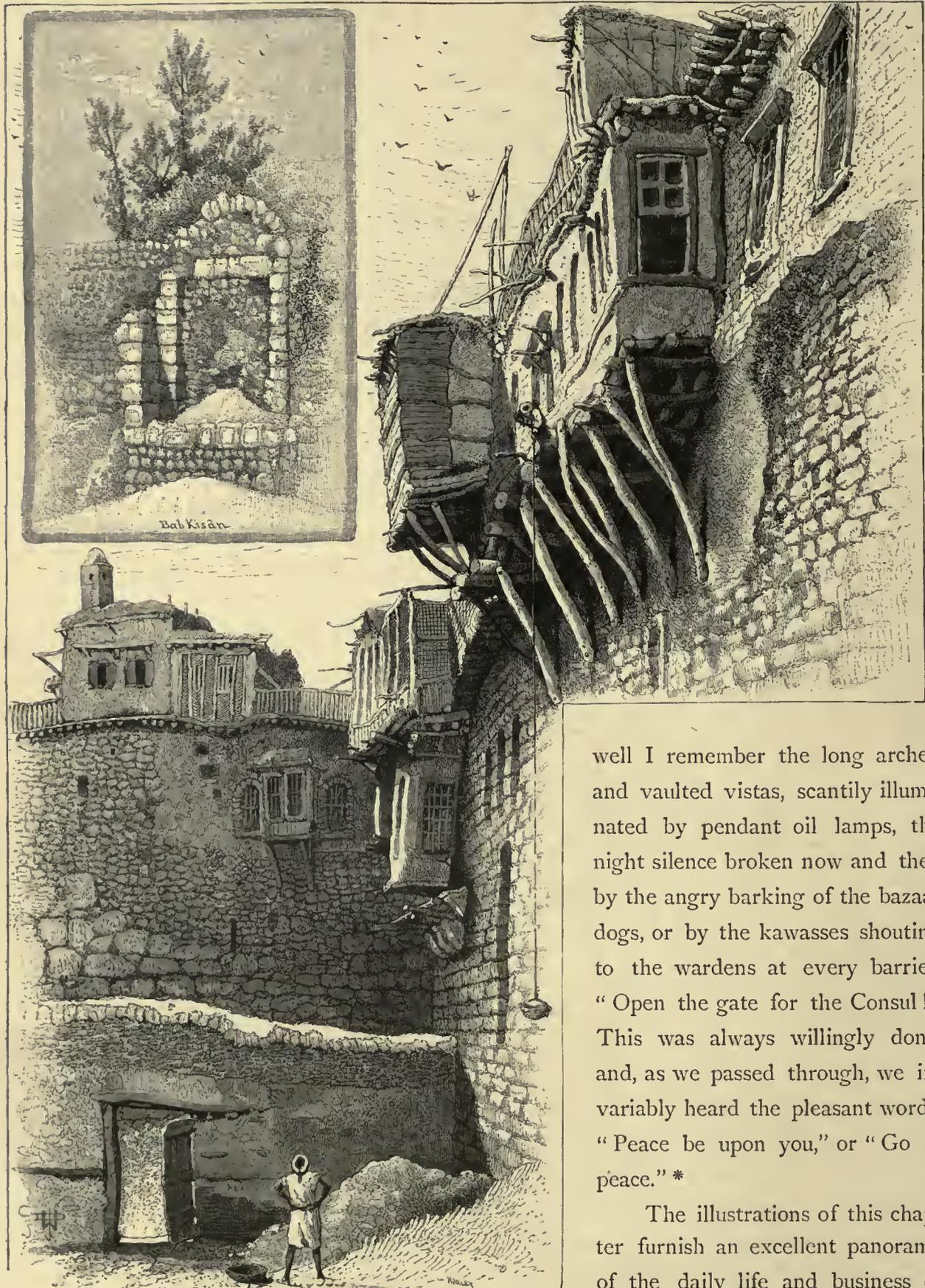
the consular kawasses. The bazaar is wide, lofty, and well built, but it does not extend far. It is approached by a broad flight of steps descending from the bazaar of the silk and linen drapers (see page 158). The shops are deep recesses about five feet wide and seven and a-half high, ranged close together nearly three feet above the footway. In these cosy-looking niches the booksellers were seated at their ease on mats or carpets, reading or conversing with a customer and watching the passers-by, while the bookbinders, kneeling at their tool chests, which served as benches, were busy at work. I found that there were twelve booksellers, five of whom were bookbinders. I soon got into interesting conversation with an occupant of one of the shops, a thoughtful-looking elderly man who was smoking a nargileh and fingering a rosary made of Mekka date-stones. He replied to my questions with grave courtesy, and watched me curiously while I made notes and sketches. I saw a great many printed books from the Cairo and Bagdad printing-presses, and a few MS. copies of the Koran, one old and the others quite modern. He showed me several newly written pocket prayer-books, for which he said there was a great demand, as even people who cannot read like to possess them. I was careful not to touch anything that he did not himself place in my hand. He handed me one of these; it measured four inches by three, and contained fourteen leaves of paper like fine vellum, on which the prayers were neatly written between carefully ruled indented lines. The price of the book well bound in leather was ten piastres, or unbound five piastres (about one shilling). There were inferior copies which were cheaper. The side walls of his shop were adorned with sacred monograms, pious ejaculations, and short prayers, printed on paper in very large characters, for the use of house-decorators, to trace on the walls of mosques, shrines, and dwelling-houses.

When I took leave of my kind entertainer, and thanked him for his courtesy, he said, "You have been welcome, O lady," and he good-naturedly volunteered to write his name, "Mohammed el Mufty el Katiby," in my note-book. On another occasion when I went to this bazaar he led me to the shop of Et Tayyib, one of the best bookbinders, who subsequently bound several books for me, and I was permitted to see every kind of tool and to take rubbings of every one of the brass dies used by the workers in this bazaar. Some of these were very beautiful.

The native Christian communities are now well supplied with books, chiefly printed at Beirût. A few years ago there were only two native Christian booksellers in the city; but now they are numerous.

Except on special occasions, all the shops in the chief bazaars of Damascus are shut more or less securely and deserted before sunset. The shopkeepers go to their several homes in the neighbouring lanes and by-ways, and soon after sunset the great wooden gates of the bazaars are closed and guarded by watchmen; who, however, for a trifling fee will swing them back on their creaking hinges, at any hour of the night, for the accommodation of people who are well known.

I have frequently ridden at midnight with my brother through the deserted bazaars. How



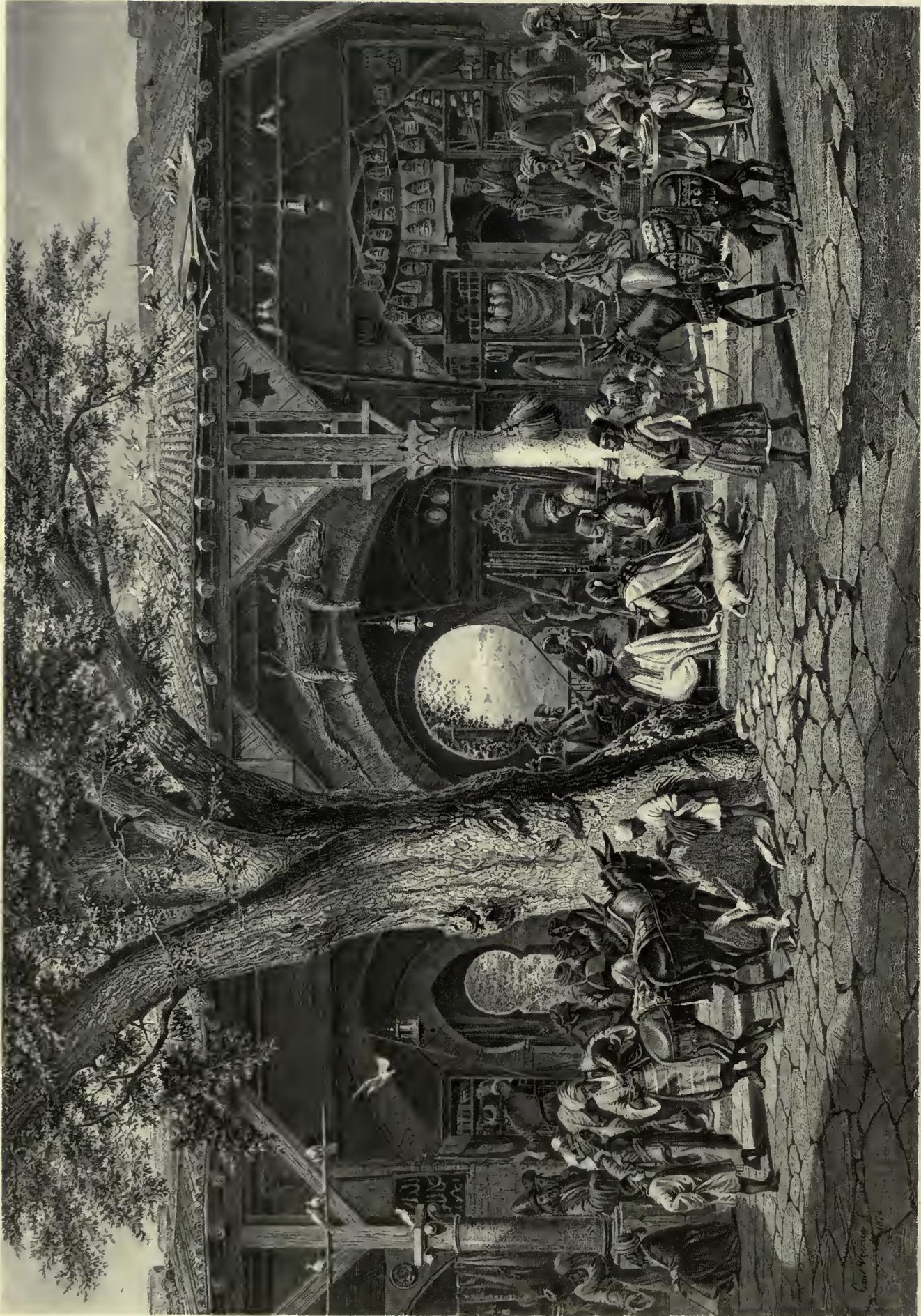
HOUSES ON THE CITY WALL, DAMASCUS.

On the south-east side, belonging to the Jewish quarter. The Bâb Kisân, which is not far from this spot, is a now disused and closed-up gate. It stands on the site of a much more ancient one.

well I remember the long arched and vaulted vistas, scantily illuminated by pendant oil lamps, the night silence broken now and then by the angry barking of the bazaar dogs, or by the kawasses shouting to the wardens at every barrier, "Open the gate for the Consul!" This was always willingly done, and, as we passed through, we invariably heard the pleasant words, "Peace be upon you," or "Go in peace."*

The illustrations of this chapter furnish an excellent panorama of the daily life and business of the people of Damascus. The

* See foot-note on page 146.

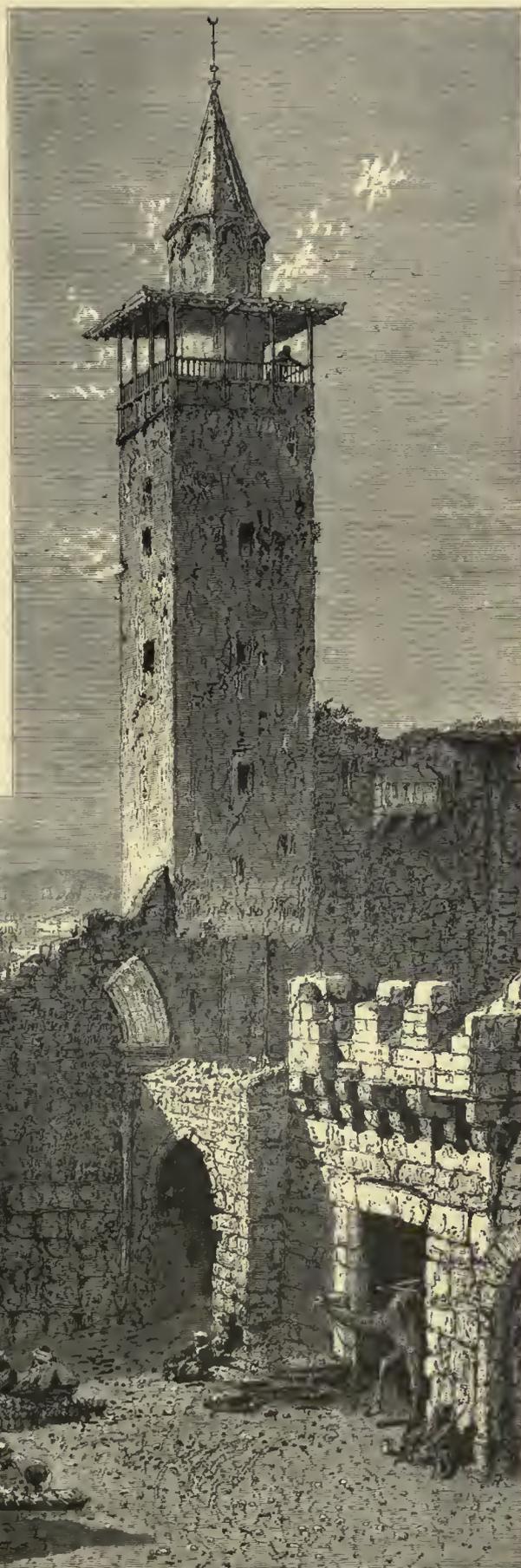


C. WERNER. PINXIT

C. BERTRAND. SCULPT.

A STREET IN DAMASCUS.

main streets are densely crowded with passengers in all sorts of costume and colour—venerable-looking men with patriarchal beards, semi-savage Bedouins of the desert, veiled women, pedlars of fruit, carriers of water, beggars in rags, braying donkeys, growling camels, barking dogs—the scavengers of the East—men and beasts jostling against each other in endless confusion. This motley street life is at once amusing and bewildering, a moving panorama, a perpetual carnival. It is the very opposite of the sight on the Paris Boulevards, London Bridge, or New York Broadway. For the Orientals, judged by Western notions, do everything the wrong way: they sit cross-legged on the floor or on the earth, they eat with the fingers, they keep their women veiled and out of public sight,



BÂB SHURKY (EAST GATE), DAMASCUS.

An ancient Roman portal with three arches. The central and southern ones are now built up; the northern arch, now in use, is concealed by the Saracenic Gate, at right-angles with it. The Great Mosque can be seen in the distance.

they take off their shoes in the mosque and keep on their fez or turban; they are dressed in flowing robes, and for the poorer classes any scrap of cotton or linen, or silk or blanket, or shawl or sash, serves for a covering; but they have a native air of dignity and courtesy, and always look picturesque. There are no ruling fashions which obliterate distinctions, as they do in the West; everybody follows his own taste or whim, and maintains his individuality.

It will be observed that camels form a conspicuous feature in many of the pictures. Indeed, go in any direction, one can hardly fail of seeing a large number of these strange creatures, with or without loads, jostling and crowding to make their way along, as though they formed a part of the inhabitants, and were pushing through the thoroughfares on business of their own. They need considerable room, but otherwise they make very little disturbance. Twenty or more horses, walking over the paved streets with their clattering hoofs, make an almost frightful din, while a string of a hundred camels will pass noiselessly, because their spongy feet fall on the stones like cushions.

The bazaars are so numerous and varied in character, that days and even weeks may be spent before a thorough examination of them has been made. While the methods of buying and selling are peculiar, one will find them to be uniform in every place, from the horse-market down to the bakers' shops and the old-clothes establishments. Each trade has its own separate bazaar. Formerly Damascus was rich in products of native industry, silk shawls, carpets, the famous Damascus blades, and other weapons. But European industry has largely replaced the Muslim manufactures, and introduced Manchester prints, Sheffield cutlery, and French ribbons.

The chief bazaars, in addition to those above described, are the Greek Bazaar, one of the largest, where weapons, shawls, and antiquities are sold (usually for one-fourth or one-third of the sum first asked); the Cloth Bazaar, well stocked with English and Saxony wares; the Silk Bazaar, with products of Damascene manufacture; the Bazaar of the Joiners, where mirrors, chests, cradles, tables, stools, of inlaid and carved wood, are kept; the Bazaar of the Coppersmiths, where Oriental dinner-services and various cooking utensils are displayed on low wooden stands. The Shoemakers' Bazaar (see pages 156 and 160), the Horse Market (see page 167), the Saddle Market, and the Brokers' Market are also worth visiting.

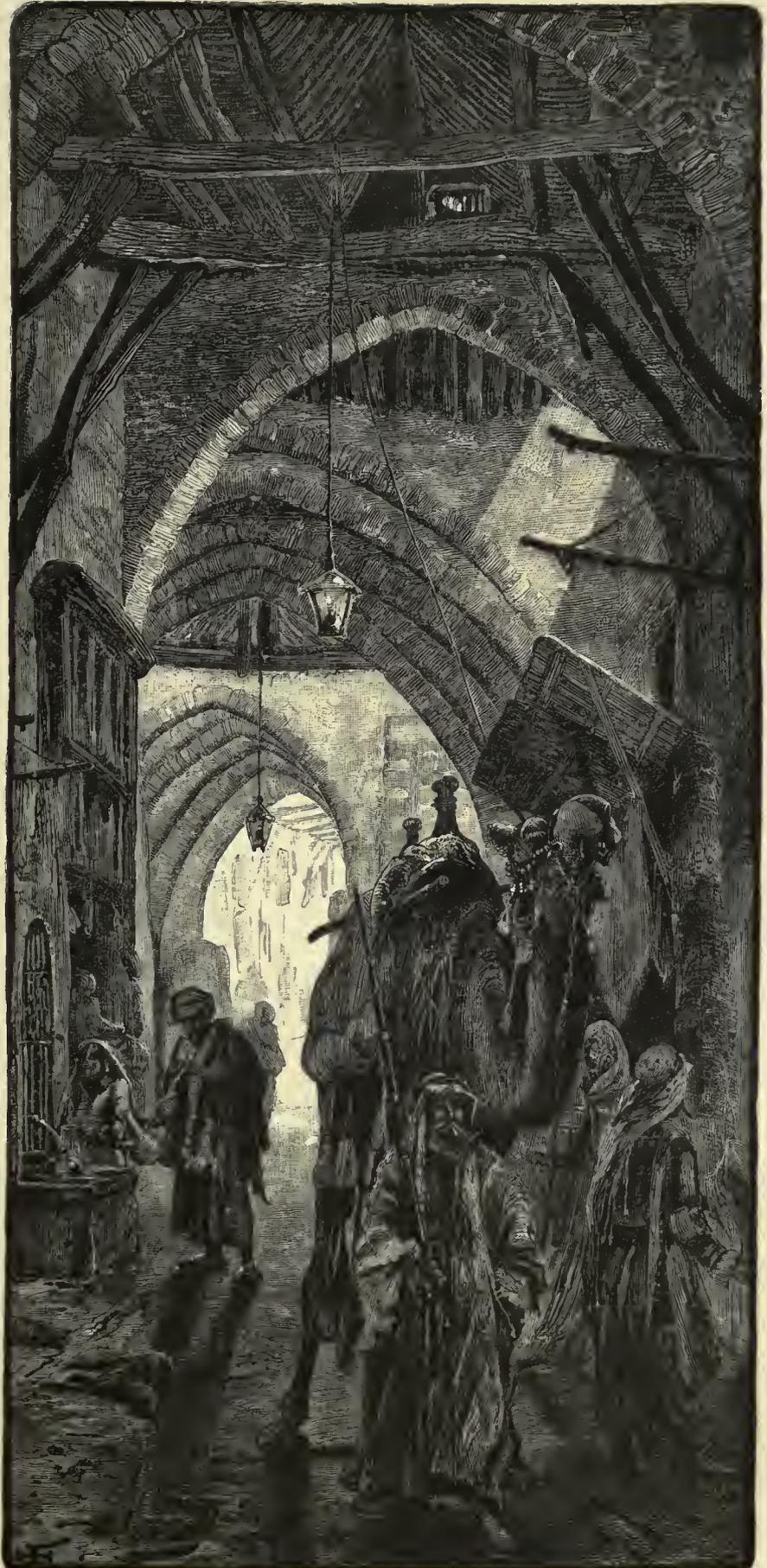
In the Horse Market (see page 167) the purchaser can suit his taste both as to style and speed, and generally also as to price. Among the common animals will now and then be found a few fine Arabian horses. These always command a good price. Burckhardt, in his day, took occasion to praise the honesty and sincerity of the horse-dealers among the Arabs. Times may have changed since then, for it is certain that now among the Bedawin, and especially in the Horse Bazaar of Damascus, one must not expect the truth to be spoken with every statement that is made.

In connection with the horses, the Saddle Market will be visited with interest, because these necessary articles are so unlike our own, being really broad cushions, and having broad stirrups with straps so short that the knees are sometimes elevated to a level with the top of the horse's shoulders. The bridles and girths, together with the saddle, are sometimes richly

ornamented with gold and silver thread, numerous tassels, and bits of gaily-coloured leather; and the pistol-holsters, and whatever else pertains to the outfit, are showy in the extreme.

Not less interesting are the blacksmith shops where the horses are shod. The shoes are of one piece, with a small hole an inch in diameter near the back part of the shoe. The plate of iron is turned a little at the edge, forming a sharp rim, which, when new, serves as a calk. Three nails on each side, with very large heads, fasten the shoe to the hoof. The heads of these nails also serve as calks. Shoes made in this manner protect the foot much better among the sharp stones and rocks than our horseshoes would; and, besides, they are far less liable to be torn off.

Damascus has also its pastry-cooks and confectioners, who furnish sweetmeats, jellies, and certain drinks, which, if they cannot be praised in any other respect, are certainly cool. Snow from Lebanon, which is regarded as a special luxury, is used in preparing them, and lemonade cooled



"THE STREET CALLED STRAIGHT."

It runs westward from the East Gate, dividing the Christian from the Jewish quarter. The Mohammedans call it "The Sultan's Highway."

in this manner is welcome and refreshing to a person who is worn down by the long-continued heat.

With these may be mentioned the bakers' shops. The ovens are curious, as well as the method of making and baking the bread, which is sold in shops, on stands in the streets (see page 145), or by boys who carry it about on large trays (see page 183). The cries of these vendors of bread would seem strange to other people, for among them one hears such as these: "O God, send a customer!" or, "Going for one halfpenny!"

A class that attracted our attention were the pigeon-fanciers. These persons are numerous, and they possess a kind of stock-exchange, where they meet for the transaction of business. In former times communication between Damascus and Bagdad by means of pigeons was extensively carried on, and one of the numerous breeds still existing here derives its name from this ancient custom. Pigeon-fanciers are supposed to be incapacitated from giving testimony in a court of law, because their business leads them into special temptations to theft; and, furthermore, it is thought that they yield to the opportunity afforded them of viewing from their lofts the harems of the surrounding houses. Hence, although numerous, they are not regarded as a very respectable class.

No detailed descriptions of these bazaars can be here attempted; but, as we pass from one to another, we witness on every hand, either in the streets or by the wayside, the strangest sights. The barber seems to be always busy (see page 179). Unlike those with us, the Damascus barber has with his regular business an associated branch, namely, that of bleeding, a practice of which we hear little in modern times.

At another point, the café by the roadside will certainly afford a place for rest, if one is weary, and for such refreshment as coffee and pipes can give. The busy proprietor will be found to be genial and pleasant, and inspired by a desire to entertain his guests in the most courteous manner (see page 145).

Farther on we find ourselves in front of a great plane-tree, which is nearly forty feet in circumference, and which, on account of its size and age, seems out of place where it stands, and leaves one to wonder how it can have survived for so many centuries. In the shadow of its trunk and underneath its branches, which serve as a roof, workmen carry on their trades (see page 169).

Damascus is, as we have previously stated, one of the oldest cities in the world. Josephus affirms that it was founded by Uz, the son of Aram. It was known in the days of the patriarchs, for Abraham's trusted servant Eliezer was from Damascus (Gen. xv. 2). It is often mentioned in the Old Testament, in the Acts of the Apostles, and twice in the Epistles of Paul (2 Cor. xi. 32; Gal. i. 17). David conquered the city after a bloody war (2 Sam. viii. 5, 6), but under Solomon an adventurer made himself king of Damascus, and founded an empire with which the Israelites came thenceforth often into violent conflict.

An interesting episode is the healing of Naaman, the Syrian general, from leprosy by the prophet Elisha, to whom his attention was directed by a Jewish captive maid (2 Kings

v. 8—14). The memory of Naaman is perpetuated on the banks of the Abana in a leper hospital, which occupies the site of his house. "I have often visited it," says Dr. Porter, "and, when looking on its miserable inmates, all disfigured and mutilated by their loathsome disease, I could not wonder that the heart of the little Jewish captive was moved by her master's sufferings."

In 732 B.C. the kingdom of Damascus lost its independence through Tiglath-pileser. The prophecy of Isaiah was fulfilled: "The kingdom shall cease from Damascus, and the remnant of Syria" (Isa. xvii. 1, 3). Alexander the Great conquered Syria (B.C. 333). After various fortunes it was made a Roman province (B.C. 63). At the time of Christ Damascus had several Jewish synagogues. In the Byzantine Empire it became the residence of a Christian bishop, next in rank to the patriarch of Antioch, and numbered several churches and a cathedral in honour of John the Baptist.

In A.D. 634 Damascus fell into the hands of Islam. The conquerors promised the Christians security of life and property and freedom of faith, but took from them first the half and afterwards the whole of the cathedral. Moawyah, the first khalif of the Omeiyades (A.D. 661), made Damascus the capital of the Mohammedan empire, and raised it to great splendour. During the Crusades it shared the changing fortunes and misfortunes of the cities in the Holy Land. The famous Saladin made it his head-quarters in his expeditions against the Franks. The Cross never displaced the Crescent. In A.D. 1516 Damascus passed into the possession of the Turkish Sultan, and has remained ever since a provincial capital of Turkey.

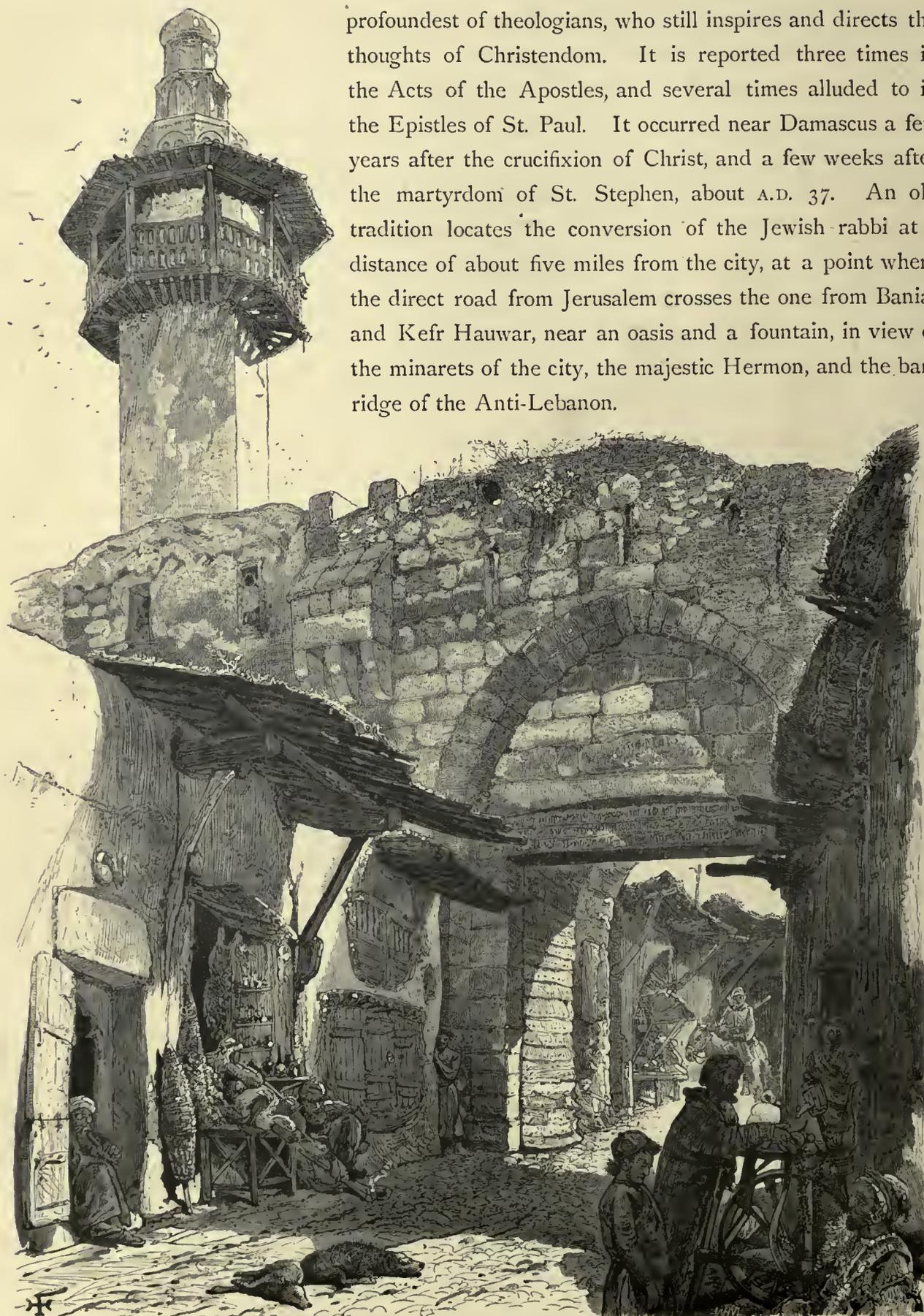
In Damascus there have been some terrible examples of religious fanaticism. Every one remembers the frightful massacre of July, 1860, when at least 2,500 adult male Christians were murdered in cold blood. Abd el Kader, the Algerian ex-chief, who still lives there in honourable exile, a vigorous old man of seventy years, behaved nobly on that occasion, and with his retinue saved the lives of many hundreds, while the pasha and the Turkish officials did not move a hand.

The venerable Rev. S. Robson, of the Irish Protestant Mission, who was in Damascus during these days of terror, gave us a description of the tragedy. His colleague, the Rev. William Graham, was treacherously murdered while attempting to save another, and Mr. Robson himself was only spared by seeking refuge in the house of a Mohammedan. The Christian quarter still bears traces of the terrible destruction to which it was then exposed.

It is an honour to France that she sent a corps of ten thousand men to Syria in the interest of humanity and Christianity. Since then the admirable road from Beirût to Damascus was built by a French company, and a daily diligence established. A Christian governor was at the same time secured for the Lebanon district, to the great advantage of the people. Thus "the wrath of man" was overruled for good.

The most important event which took place in Damascus, and one of the most important in the history of mankind, is the conversion of St. Paul, the greatest of missionaries and the

profoundest of theologians, who still inspires and directs the thoughts of Christendom. It is reported three times in the Acts of the Apostles, and several times alluded to in the Epistles of St. Paul. It occurred near Damascus a few years after the crucifixion of Christ, and a few weeks after the martyrdom of St. Stephen, about A.D. 37. An old tradition locates the conversion of the Jewish rabbi at a distance of about five miles from the city, at a point where the direct road from Jerusalem crosses the one from Bania and Kefr Hauwar, near an oasis and a fountain, in view of the minarets of the city, the majestic Hermon, and the bare ridge of the Anti-Lebanon.



BÂB TÛMA, THE GATE OF THOMAS.

An inscription states that it was erected in A.H. 634 (A.D. 1237). It leads out of the city towards the north-east road, the caravan route to Aleppo and Palmyra.

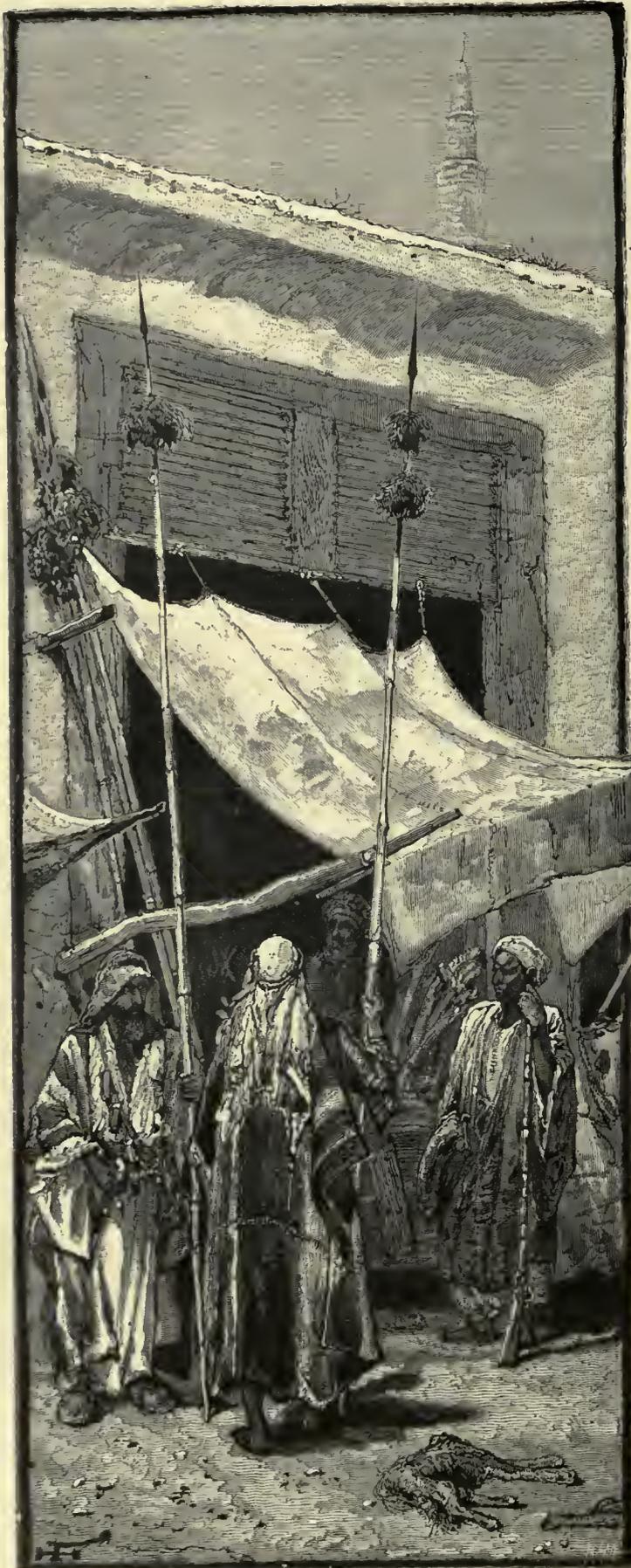
In the city itself, the house of Ananias and the house of Judas are still shown. "The street which is called Straight," where Ananias was to inquire after Saul of Tarsus, still bears that name (see page 175). The window in the wall is also pointed out through which Paul was let down in a basket (2 Cor. xi. 33). Considering the many changes which



A STREET BARBER'S STALL.

With a ragged canopy ready for use as a protection from sun or rain. The street barber is only employed by those who are too poor to go to the commodious barbers' shops.

Damascus has undergone, it is, of course, impossible to rely on these traditions; but there can be no doubt about the general locality. There are several examples in Damascus of houses, built on the city wall, from the projecting windows of which it would be very easy to descend (see page 172).



BEDOUINS BUYING SPEARS.

In the Sûk es Sinányeh, which is the great emporium for all the requirements of Bedouins and peasants, including all kinds of primitive weapons and clothing.

THE TOMB OF SALADIN.

Saladin, whose mortal remains are deposited near to the Great Mosque of Damascus (see page 151), is the greatest character among the Muslims during the period of the Crusades, and puts to shame many a Christian knight. Some men are much better, some much worse, than their creed. When we read the contemporary accounts of the Crusades, William of Tyre, Fucher of Chartres, &c., and strip the narrative of its palpable partiality, we feel that, in their encounter with the Muslim robbers, the Christian knights were by no means always in the right, and private documents, letters, &c., show that the Christian knights sometimes felt so themselves. But even if there were no historical or private documents to tell us that the Crusaders, when they stood face to face with the Muslims, often felt themselves in the presence of a higher civilisation, in which many fundamental virtues of human character and life were developed to a height and perfection hardly dreamed of or utterly forgotten by the Christian world, we would know it from the fact that, generally speaking, the Christian knights ended with imitating the Muslim robbers.

In no point is this imitation more easy to realise than in the contest between Saladin and the military religious orders, the Hos-

pitallers and the Templars. The character of these orders underwent a decisive change during the contest. The religious austerity which marked their origin was lost and supplanted by a romantic chivalry which soon became the ideal of every knight in Europe. But this change was the direct result of an imitation of Saladin.

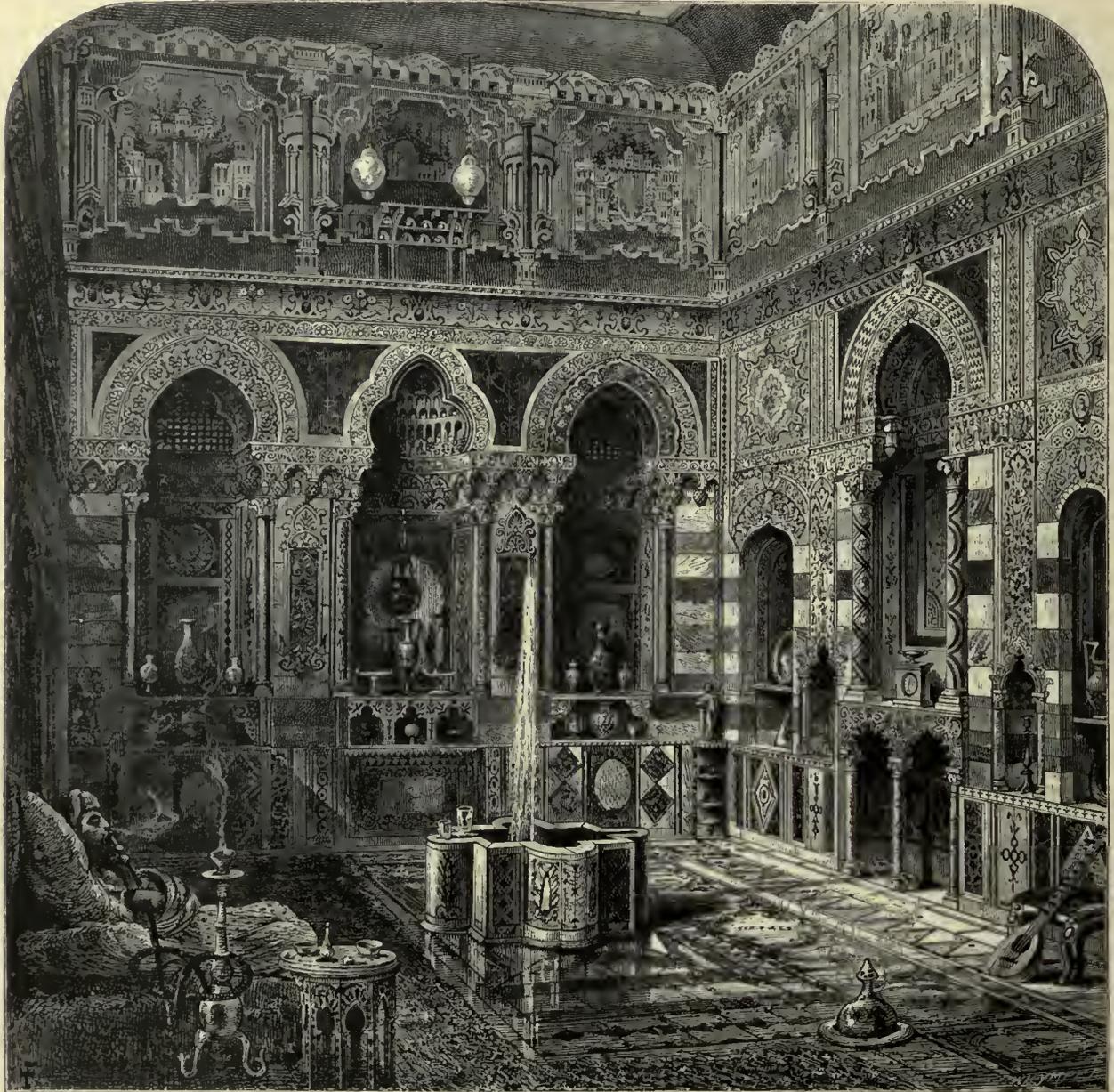
Notwithstanding his striking resemblance to the national genius of the Arabs, he was no Arab, either by birth or by education. He was born, 1137, at Tekrit, on the Tigris, and was a Kurd by descent; and he was educated under the tutelage of his uncle, Shirkah, in the service of the ruler of Northern Syria, Nûreddin. But the principal force active in forming his character was his religion and not his race. He is a typical instance of what the Koran can make out of human nature, not through its faith but through its poesy, not through its fanaticism but through its chivalry. He stands in the same relation to Islam as the Templar or the Hospitaller to Christianity.

On March 4, 1193, Saladin died at Damascus. When he felt that his time was running out fast, he ordered his standard-bearer to descend into the streets, carrying his winding-sheet on a high pole, and crying out to the people, "Lo, this is all that remains of the great Saladin!" There was truth in that, for the whole political fabric which he had reared burst to pieces immediately after his death. Something more, though, than his winding-sheet remained of him—a moral influence which it is still interesting to study, a brilliant name which still kindles a wide enthusiasm, and a tomb which is still admired as a fine specimen of Moslem art.

THE CAMEL.

The camel is fitly called "the ship of the desert." It is admirably adapted for its use on the boundless ocean of sand from the Nile to the Euphrates. It has needed no repair since the days of Abraham, and could not be improved by any invention in navigation. It would be as impossible to cross the waterless desert without this wonderful animal as to cross the ocean without a ship. No horse or donkey would answer the purpose. The camel has the reputation of patient endurance and passive submission, which some, however, deny, or regard as mere stupidity. It carries the heaviest burdens on its single or double hump, which is its natural pack-saddle. The Bactrian camel of Central Asia has two humps, the Arabian camel, or dromedary, which is used in Egypt and the Sinaitic Peninsula, has one hump. The very name of the camel means burden-bearer. It can travel five (some say nine, or even fifteen) days in scorching heat without water, and resorts to its inside tank or cistern, which, at the sacrifice of its own life, has saved the life of many a traveller. It lives on barley, dry beans, and chopped straw while in camp, and on the prickly thistles and thorns of the wilderness, which, much to the annoyance of the rider, it snatches from the wayside and leisurely chews as a positive luxury. It supplies its master with milk, fuel, sandals, and garments; and, having done its duty, it leaves its bleached skeleton in the arid waste as a landmark to future travellers. With peculiar gurgling growls or sighs of protest, unlike the sound of any other animal, the camel goes down on its knees in four distinct motions, till it lies flat on its belly; growling, it receives its burden; growling, it gets up by

several jerks, first rising to its knees, then the full length of its hind-legs, which are longer than the fore-legs, then to its fore-feet, so that the rider is violently pitched backward, and then as violently jerked forward, and must hold fast to the saddle, or be thrown down on the sand. Once started, the beast moves with long strides on its soft, spongy feet, steadily and noiselessly forward, as under a painful sense of duty, but without the least interest in the

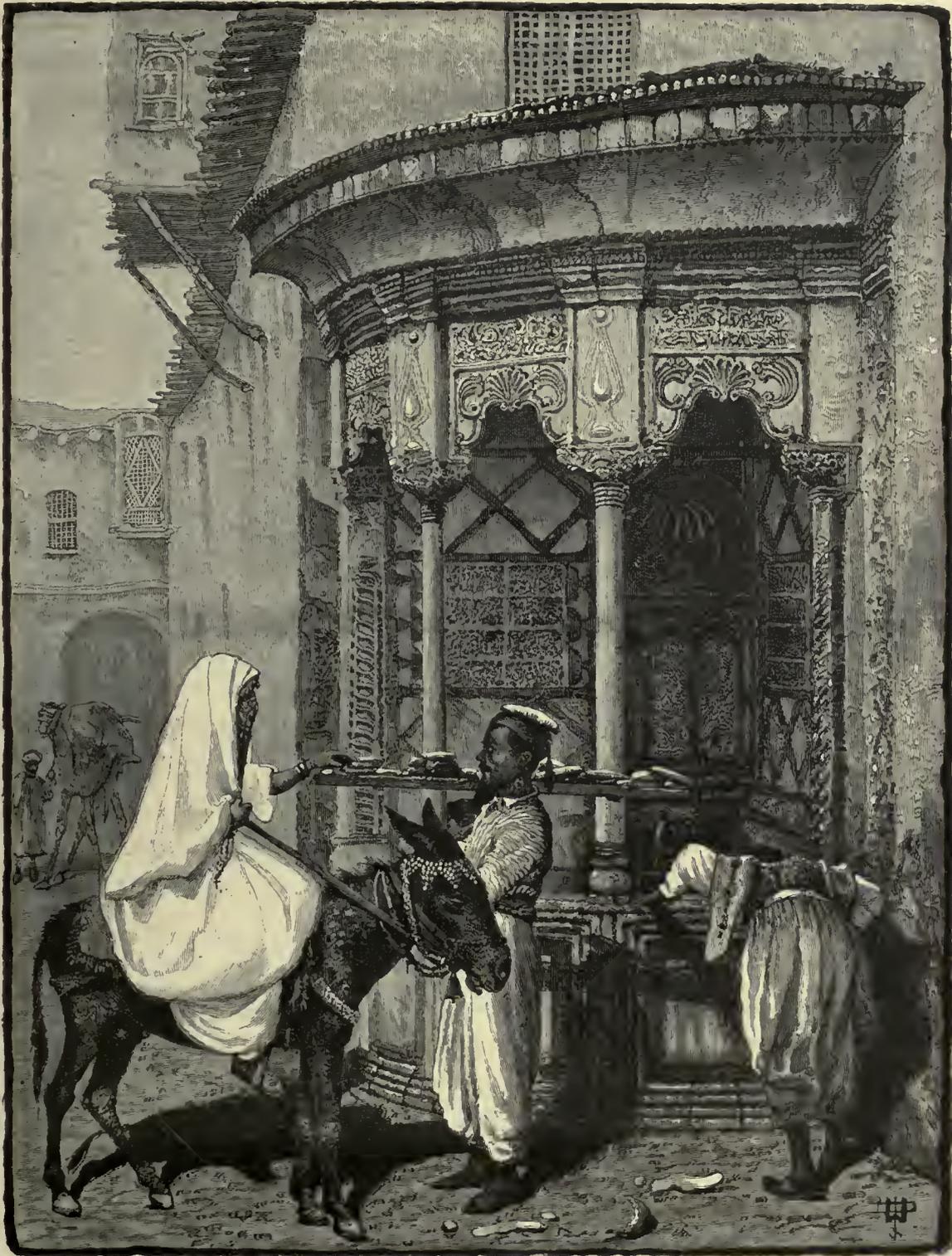


RECEPTION ROOM OF A DAMASCUS HOUSE.

Showing the lower portion of it only, with its fountain and marble pavement. The upper part of the room, where guests are received, is eighteen inches higher, and is furnished with cushions and carpets. An incense burner is standing at the extreme edge of the dais.

rider. A primitive wooden frame serves as a saddle, and a mattress or pillow is thrown over it as a seat. The swinging motion, high in the air, is disagreeable, and makes the rider a little sea-sick, till he gradually becomes used to it. To break the monotony and the fatigue, he changes his position, now riding as on horseback, now crossing the legs like the Arabs, now sitting on one side and then on the other. We parted with the *djemel* at Gaza, not without

a certain admiration and respect, and yet glad to exchange it for the noble, spirited, and dashing horse. The Bible mentions the camel only incidentally, though in a way that implies



A STREET DRINKING-FOUNTAIN, DAMASCUS.

The lady, who is riding *en cavalier*, wears a dark muslin veil, called a mandil, which quite conceals her features; her outer garment, an izzar, is like a large sheet of fine white calico, and in this she envelopes herself completely.

its great usefulness, while the horse is described in glowing colours and honoured with eloquent eulogy (Job xxxix. 19—25).

MOHAMMEDAN WORSHIP.

Mohammedan worship is very simple, and resembles that of the Jewish synagogue. It consists of prayer, reading of the Koran, and preaching. The second commandment is strictly understood as an absolute prohibition of all image-worship and of all representations of living creatures, whether in churches or elsewhere. The Arabesque is the only ornament allowed, and always taken from inanimate nature.

The mosques, like Catholic churches, are always open and frequented by worshippers, who perform their devotions either alone or in groups with covered heads and bare feet. In entering, one must take off his shoes, remembering the command, "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

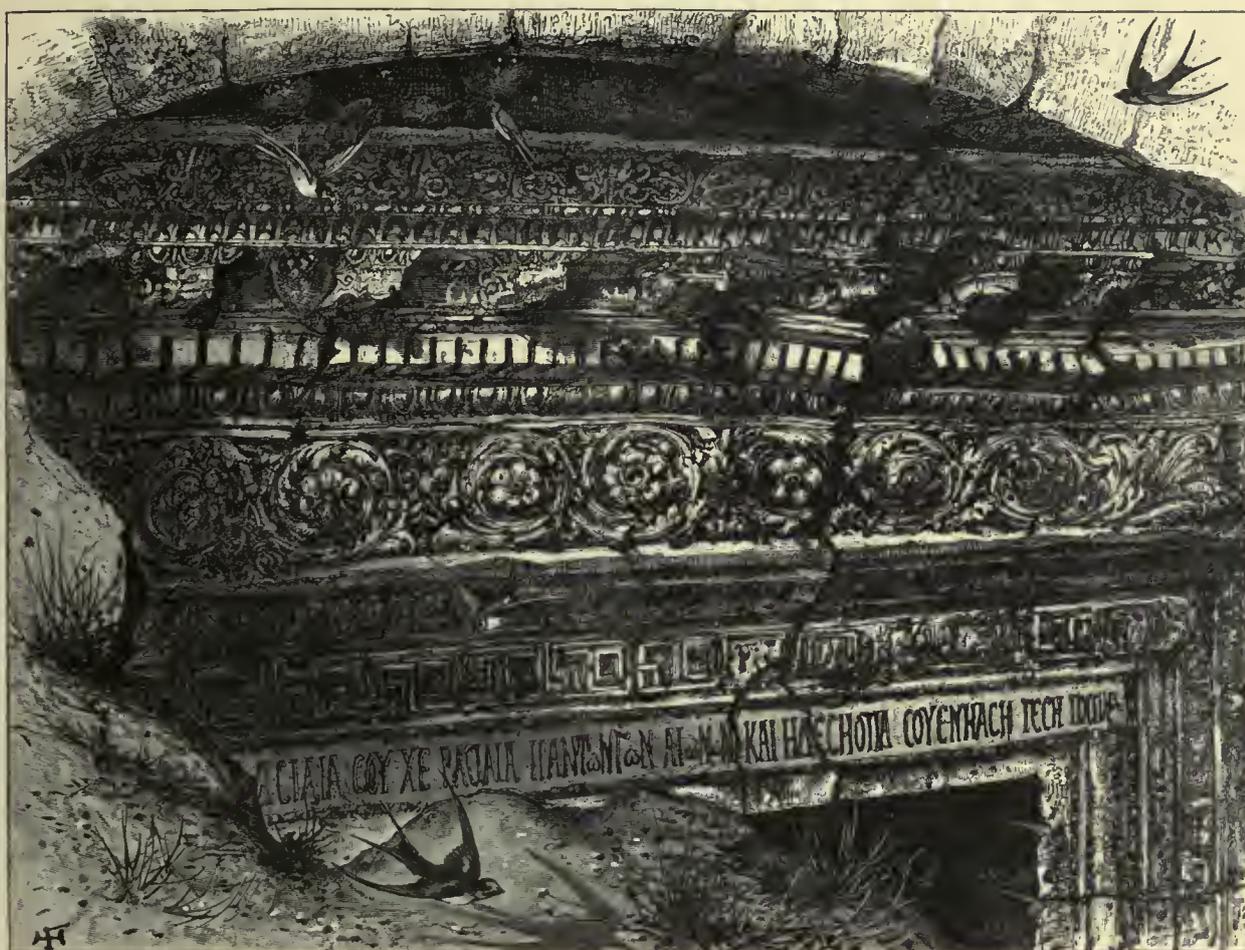
There are five stated seasons for prayer—at daybreak, near noon, in the afternoon, a little after sunset (to avoid the appearance of sun-worship), and at nightfall, besides two night prayers for extra devotion. The muëddin, or muezzin (crier), announces the time of devotion from the minaret of the mosque by chanting the "Adan," or call to prayer, in these words: "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! Prayer is better than sleep! God is most great! There is no deity but God!" (See page 147.) A devout Mussulman is never ashamed to perform his devotion in public—whether at home, or in the mosque, or in the street, or on board the ship. Regardless of the surroundings, feeling alone with God in the midst of the crowd, he spreads his rug, goes through his genuflexions and prostrations, his face turned to Mecca, his hands now raised to heaven, then laid on the lap, his forehead touching the ground, and repeats the first *surah* of the Koran, and the ninety-nine beautiful names of Allah, which form his rosary. The mosques are as well filled with men as many Christian churches are with women. Islâm is a religion for men; women are of no account; the education and elevation of the female sex would destroy the system.

With all its simplicity and gravity, the Mohammedan worship has also its frantic excitements of the dancing and howling dervishes, who equal the ascetic excesses of the ancient Christian hermits and the modern Indian fakirs. On the celebration of the birthday of their prophet and other festivals they work themselves, by the constant repetition of "Allah! Allah!" into a state of unconscious ecstasy, "in which they plant swords in their breasts, tear live serpents with their teeth, eat bottles of glass, and finally lie prostrate on the ground for the chief of their order to ride on horseback over their bodies."

THE KORAN.

The Koran is the Bible of the Mohammedans. It is unquestionably one of the great books of the world. It is not a book only, but an institution, a code of civil and religious laws, claiming divine origin and authority. It has left its impress upon ages. It feeds to this day the devotions, and regulates the private and public life, of more than a hundred millions

of human beings. It has many passages of poetic beauty, religious fervour, and wise counsel, but mixed with absurdities, bombast, and low sensuality. It abounds in repetitions and contradictions, which are not removed by the convenient theory of abrogation. It alternately attracts and repels, and is a most wearisome book to read. Gibbon calls the Koran "a glorious testimony to the unity of God," but also, very properly, an "endless, incoherent rhapsody of fable and precept and declamation, which seldom excites a sentiment or idea,



GREEK INSCRIPTION ON AN ANCIENT AND DISUSED DOORWAY OF THE GREAT MOSQUE,

In the south wall; it can only be seen from the roof of the Silversmiths' Bazaar. The words are, "Thy kingdom, O Christ, is an everlasting kingdom, and thy dominion endureth throughout all generations."

which sometimes crawls in the dust, and is sometimes lost in the clouds." Reiske denounces it as the most absurd book, and a scourge to a reader of sound common-sense.

Goethe, one of the best judges of literary and poetic merit, characterizes the style as severe, great, terrible, and at times truly sublime. "Detailed injunctions," he says, "of things allowed and forbidden, legendary stories of Jewish and Christian religion, amplifications of all kinds, boundless tautologies and repetitions, form the body of this sacred volume, which to us, as often as we approach it, is repellent anew, next attracts us ever anew, and fills us with admiration, and finally forces us into veneration." He finds the kernel of Islâm in the second *surah*, where belief and unbelief, with heaven and hell as their sure reward, are set over in contrast.

Thomas Carlyle calls the Koran "the confused ferment of a great, rude human soul; rude, untutored, that cannot even read; but fervent, earnest, struggling vehemently to utter itself in words;" and says of Mohammedanism: "Call it not false, look not at the falsehood of it; look at the truth of it. For these twelve centuries it has been the religion and life-

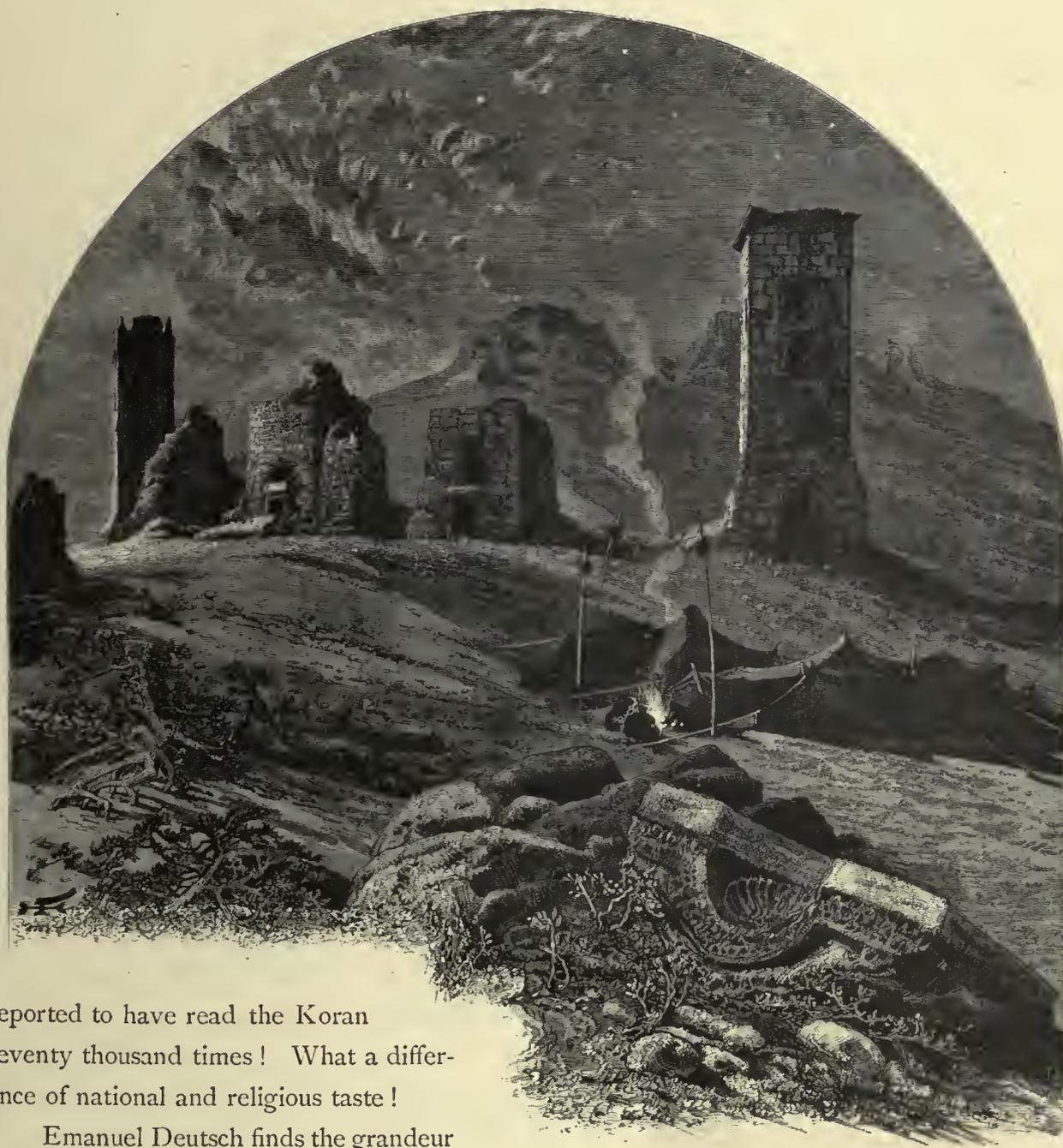


A BEDOUIN OF THE HAURÂN.

Bedouins (more correctly Bedawîn) occupy the north-west district of the Haurân; the plain is inhabited by peasants, and the Druses for many centuries have colonised the mountain range.

guidance of the fifth part of the whole kindred of mankind. Above all, it has been a religion heartily believed." But with all his admiration, Carlyle confesses that the reading of the Koran in English is "as toilsome a task" as he ever undertook. "A wearisome, confused jumble, crude, incondite; endless iterations, long-windedness, entanglement, insupportable

stupidity ; in short, nothing but a sense of duty could carry any European through the Koran. We read it, as we might in the State Paper Office unreadable masses of lumber, that we may get some glimpses of a remarkable man." And yet there are Mohammedan doctors who are



reported to have read the Koran seventy thousand times ! What a difference of national and religious taste !

Emanuel Deutsch finds the grandeur of the Koran chiefly in its Arabic diction, "the peculiarly dignified, impressive, sonorous nature of Semitic sound and parlance ; its *sesqui-pedalia verba*, with their crowd of prefixes and affixes, each of them affirming its own position, while consciously bearing upon and influencing the central root, which they envelop like a garment of many folds, or as chosen courtiers move round the anointed person of the king."

RUINED TOMBS, PALMYRA.

In the Wady el Kûbûr. The largest one, on the right, is eighty feet high. There is an inscription on it which states that it was built as a family tomb by Elabelos, in the Seleucian year 414 (A.D. 102).

E. H. Palmer, the most recent translator of the Koran (1880), says that the claim of the Koran to miraculous eloquence, however absurd it may sound to Western ears, was and is to the Arab incontrovertible, and he accounts for the immense influence which it has always exercised upon the Arab mind, by the fact that "it consists not merely of the enthusiastic utterances of an individual, but of the popular sayings, choice pieces of eloquence, and favourite legends current among the desert tribes for ages before this time."

PRESENT CONDITION OF DAMASCUS.

In modern times we know very well the meaning of the term "railroad centre." Business, enterprise, and men from all parts of the land combine to give to such places unusual interest. But even in the far East, where the currents of life are thought to be more sluggish, great centres of traffic and travel exist to-day, and have existed from the earliest times. It was on account of commercial interests that Tadmor, now known as Palmyra, sprang up in the desert. Damascus was bordered by the desert on two of its sides; yet, in regard to the matter we are now considering, it does not rank second to any city of the Old World. One great route led west to Tyre and the sea-coast. Another led south-west to Jerusalem and Egypt. Another led south through the rich countries of Bashan, Ammon, Moab, and Edom, to the Gulf of 'Akaba, passing the lines running at right-angles to it, which led to the Persian Gulf in one direction and to the Red Sea in another. A fourth route led north-west and north to the kingdoms of Karkor, Hamath, and Halman, or Aleppo. A fifth led north-east, past Palmyra to Nineveh, on the Tigris. A sixth led directly east across the desert to Babylon; while a seventh probably led south-east past Salchad, reaching the head of the Persian Gulf through the northern part of Arabia. That news, merchandise, and men from all parts of the world should be found here, would be inevitable. This would be true through all the centuries from the time of Christ back to the days of Abraham. The arrival and departure of immense caravans was a sight with which the people of Damascus were constantly familiar from its earliest history. Besides the peaceful caravans of merchants and travellers, they witnessed not infrequently also the passing of victorious armies, or the sad spectacle of an army of captives that were being transported from one country to another, at the caprice of some despot at Nineveh or Babylon.

At the present time several of the ancient routes which we have indicated are traversed by caravans, but those leading to Mecca and Bagdad are by far the most important. The time between Damascus and Bagdad is about twelve days, which allows two days for rest at the watering-stations. The distance is nearly five hundred miles. The overland mail to India goes by this route, and it is taken by a few travellers who wish to save time or to avoid a long journey by sea. The special danger in crossing the desert arises from the Bedouins, who sometimes plunder the caravans, although in recent years this has not often happened.

While the modern yearly caravan to Mecca probably does not rival in numbers or importance some of those that Damascus witnessed when, centuries before Christ, she was "the

head of Syria" (Isaiah vii. 8), yet one of the finest and most remarkable sights in the East is that of the Haj, or pilgrims, collecting in the plain outside of the city, and forming in a long procession, bound for the tomb of the Prophet. Three days south of Damascus—at a place called Mazarib, where water and grass are abundant—a halt is made, and the caravan reorganized. The holiday part of the pilgrimage ends here, since those who go on from this point must address themselves to the real hardships and dangers of the desert. The journey



GRAND COLONNADE, PALMYRA, FROM THE TRIUMPHAL ARCH.

Showing the syenite columns of the Tetracylon; the prostrate one is thirty feet long and three feet in diameter. In the distance the ancient city wall, known as the Wall of Justinian, can be traced.

occupies no less than twenty-seven days, and is attended with many hardships. When the roads are bad, owing to heavy rains, many of the animals die, and the pilgrims themselves suffer. At intervals, along the route, garrisons are stationed to prevent the caravans from being plundered, and to render such other aid as may be required. As the pilgrims are not only devout men, but are interested in trade as well, they carry with them many rich articles, and bring back, on their return, merchandise of various kinds, together with a considerable number of female slaves. Hence, peculiar temptations to plunder are offered to the wild Arabs, which they resist only through fear of the Turkish troops, or because of a contract made beforehand, in which they receive large presents, that they will not molest either the persons or property of these "holy men."

The government at Constantinople is supposed to bear the expense of the yearly present to Mecca ; but urgent calls for money in other directions have thrown the burden largely upon Damascus. The yearly cost to Damascus of the caravan is about £40,000. In 1876 it was £42,575 ; and in 1877 £39,091. Isaiah spoke of "the burden of Damascus" (xvii. 1). This language would be appropriate if used with reference to the present financial condition of this ancient city. The expenses connected with the Haj form only one of its burdens. In 1873 and 1874 the fifth army corps, numbering twenty-two thousand men, was quartered in Syria, and had to be provided for entirely by this district. This is mentioned as a sample, since it bears a similar burden continuously. It supports also a police force of four thousand men. Furthermore, there is an army of officials employed in the civil branches of the government who have in some way to be supported. To crown all, the home government sometimes demands more money than the entire revenue of the city. An illustration of the management of affairs in Syria is furnished by the official estimate for the revenue of the Damascus district in the year 1873, which was £2,381,255, while the actual amount received was only £629,337. Considering all the facts, the statement will occasion no surprise that the debt of the city increases year by year. In 1872 the debt of Damascus was £350,000, which amount, in two years from that date, or in 1874, had actually doubled, all of which bore a compound interest of 18 per cent.

In this district agriculture is the chief source of revenue ; but those who have watched the progress of affairs under the present government for a series of years testify that "not only is the zone of agriculture in the valleys of the Anti-Lebanon yearly contracting to a most alarming extent, but the inhabitants are also fast disappearing." The farmer is pressed for taxes until he is obliged to mortgage his crops or his land for money, on which he pays an exorbitant interest. When the year comes round he has obtained no relief, and is in no better condition to meet the inevitable and inexorable demands of the government. A new loan is effected, but on more ruinous terms than before. At last, in despair, he takes refuge in flight. In this manner, and on this account, the inhabitants of an entire village sometimes disappear in a single night. Such cases are not unfrequent. One sees north and south of Damascus, and elsewhere in Syria as well, many abandoned villages ; but unless one is familiar with the facts, he might not perhaps suspect that this depopulation was due far more to the usurer and tax-gatherer than to the wild Arabs to whom it is usually attributed. It may be of interest to mention further that all such accounts, especially arrears of taxes, are kept open, and even if the land should be tilled by strangers, the fruits of their labour would be seized to fulfil obligations said to have been incurred by the soil in times past.

If the Turkish Government, instead of practically robbing its own people, would help them to develop the resources of the country, the revenues would soon be more than ample for all its needs. Thus, while Damascus has an antiquity before which we stand amazed, and a long history that is at once thrilling and brilliant, the present condition of the city and its inhabitants is such as to call forth the deepest sympathy from the civilised world.



WESTERN SIDE OF THE RUINS OF THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN, PALMYRA.

Showing part of the double colonnade which formed the cloisters of the temple. The brackets projecting from the columns, about two-thirds of the way up, formerly supported statues.

PALMYRA.

CHRISTMAS at Thebes, Easter at Jerusalem, and then to Damascus and Palmyra. Palestine has its season of arid, dreary desolation, and its season of freshness and beauty, of verdure and flowers. Visitors to the Holy Land in August or October go away with a melancholy feeling of depression at its burned and lifeless aspect, while those who come in March or April are charmed with its fresh and floral beauty. This is especially true of Palmyra. Not only is the country at that time radiant with wild flowers, verdant and

refreshing to the eye, but that interesting people, the Bedawin Arabs, who have held sway over the surrounding country since the days of Abraham, are at that season on their good behaviour, and may be seen at the best advantage (see pages 186 and 187). They are then returning westward and northward to the settled region from their wintering in the east and south, and it is for their interest to maintain friendly relations with the fellahin, and not to involve themselves in trouble with the Turkish military authorities. A small Turkish garrison occupied Tüdmür a few years since, under a military *inudir*, but this official generally remains at Kuryetein (or "two towns"), from whence horsemen can be readily obtained.

The journey to Palmyra from Kuryetein can be made by leaving that place at 1 P.M., carrying water in flasks for drinking purposes, resting half an hour at sunset, then riding till midnight and resting three hours, when the final stage of eight hours is accomplished by 11 A.M.

After riding eleven hours the second day, we find the ranges of hills which border the broad valley suddenly approaching each other, the southern mountain sweeping to the north-east across the mouth of the valley. On the sides to the right and left are square towers. Some are low down, others on the summit of hills. These are the tower sepulchres of Palmyra (see page 187), and as we emerge from the valley we see in the distance, on the top of the high northern hills, the castle, which commands the whole plateau of the City of Palms. From the west end of the castle (see page 197) we are almost exactly in a line with the Great Colonnade, which seems in the distance like a forest of giant trees, stripped of their branches and bark by some fierce cyclone, and standing gaunt and naked against the sky. On every side are ruins, broken temples, towers, columns, tombs, and walls, in a tumultuous sea of stony fragments; and in the eastern extremity rises the stately Temple of the Sun, the finest ruin in Palmyra, and for extent and grandeur second to none in Syria.

Standing on a rising ground, near the south-eastern end of the town, its appearance when entire must have been most impressive. Its projecting base, or *krepis*, of massive rough-hewn stones is surmounted by a smooth-cut wall with a range of thirteen Corinthian pilasters, not less than thirty feet high, above which is a plain frieze and cornice. Between the pilasters are richly carved windows with pediments, of which no less than thirteen can still be counted on the north side. These are flanked by lofty pilasters sixty-eight feet in height, the three corner ones on each side being higher and larger than the rest, and projecting so as to form corner towers to the walls. Of the other three sides the foundations only are ancient, the superstructure being the work of the Arabs, who used the temple as a fortress. On the western side a magnificent triple gateway formed the entrance to this grand court, approached by a broad flight of steps. The portico of ten columns is gone, but the monolithic sides and lintel of the central door still remain, ornamented with rich sculptures of vine branches, clusters of grapes, and flowers. This door was thirty-two feet high and sixteen wide, but has been disfigured and almost concealed by a huge square Saracenic tower built by the Muslims, who also constructed a moat around the entire external wall.

Entering the great court through what remains of the doorway, we see whole rows of columns which are still standing, a part of that splendid double colonnade of three hundred and ninety columns which ran around three sides of the interior of the court. Each pillar had a bracket for a statue, and some of them still retain their entablatures (see page 191).



RUINS OF A MAUSOLEUM NEAR THE NORTH-WESTERN END OF THE GREAT COLONNADE, PALMYRA.

In the interior there is a large sarcophagus richly ornamented with sculptured satyrs and garlands of flowers and fruit; another mausoleum near it, in better preservation, is shown on page 197.

Crossing the wilderness of débris to the south-eastern angle of the court, and winding our way through the lanes of the modern Arab village, whose abject houses, grotesquely built of fragments of the old temple, with their more abject occupants, seem a mockery of the pristine splendour of the place, we come to the temple itself, the *naos*, or sanctuary.

This building, a peripteros standing on a raised platform, is one hundred and thirty-four feet in length exclusive of the colonnade, and is believed to be unique in design. Around the shrine stood a single row of fluted Corinthian columns, sixty-four feet high, with bronze capitals, above which was an unbroken entablature, whose frieze was ornamented with boldly carved festoons of fruit and flowers, supported at intervals by winged figures. The capitals are now gone, as bronze was an article too valuable not to be coveted and too portable not to be carried away. The doorway is not, as usual, in the centre of the building, but between two columns in the west side, and opposite to the main door of the court; and in front of it, within the building, is the entrance to the cell.

This exquisitely sculptured portal is thirty-three feet high by fifteen feet wide, and on the soffit is an eagle with outspread wings, similar to those at Ba'albek and Husn Suleiman. It is on a starred ground, flanked by genii. The wall is pierced with windows, between which are pilasters opposite the columns, and at each end are two Ionic semi-columns. The roof of the temple is entirely gone, as is that of the Ba'albek temples, and the roof of the mosque standing within it is supported by roughly built arches. At each extremity of the building is a semicircular vaulted chamber, with a richly sculptured monolithic roof. The chamber in the northern apse has the signs of the Zodiac carved in relief around the periphery of a circle, within which, carved in seven pentagons, are busts in high relief of what seem to have been figures of the principal deities. On the south side is the mihrab, or kibleh, of the mosque.

From the summit of the wall one can obtain a fine view of the temple, the triple arch, and the distant castle, and the imagination may reconstruct the splendid temple with the immense court and elegant colonnade. It cannot boast of marble columns, of which we read in so many books of travel, for there is not a marble shaft or capital in Palmyra. The temples were all built of the white compact limestone from the adjacent hills. Near the triumphal arch there are, however, four syenite columns, one of which is thirty feet in length and three feet in diameter (see page 189).

The most striking object in Palmyra, as you look down from the Saracenic castle on the north-western mountain, is the Grand Colonnade. This is the wonder of travellers and the artist's delight (see pages 189 and 197). When entire, with its one thousand five hundred white columns standing, its elegant entablature fading away in airy perspective for a distance of four thousand feet, with its central and side avenues, its intersecting colonnades and porticoes, and its triumphal arch flanked on both sides by temples and palatial dwellings, it must have been the perfection of architectural beauty. Between the temple and the arch was the market-place, or central square of the city, and on a column here there has been found the votive inscription of the leader of a commercial caravan.

The Triumphal Gateway, with three arches, the central arch being thirty-four feet high, is adorned with an excess of sculptured decoration, more Oriental than Grecian in its profuseness (see page 196). In the amount of minute detail, it reminds one of the temples of Northern India. The keystone of this central arch has subsided about a foot, and threatens to



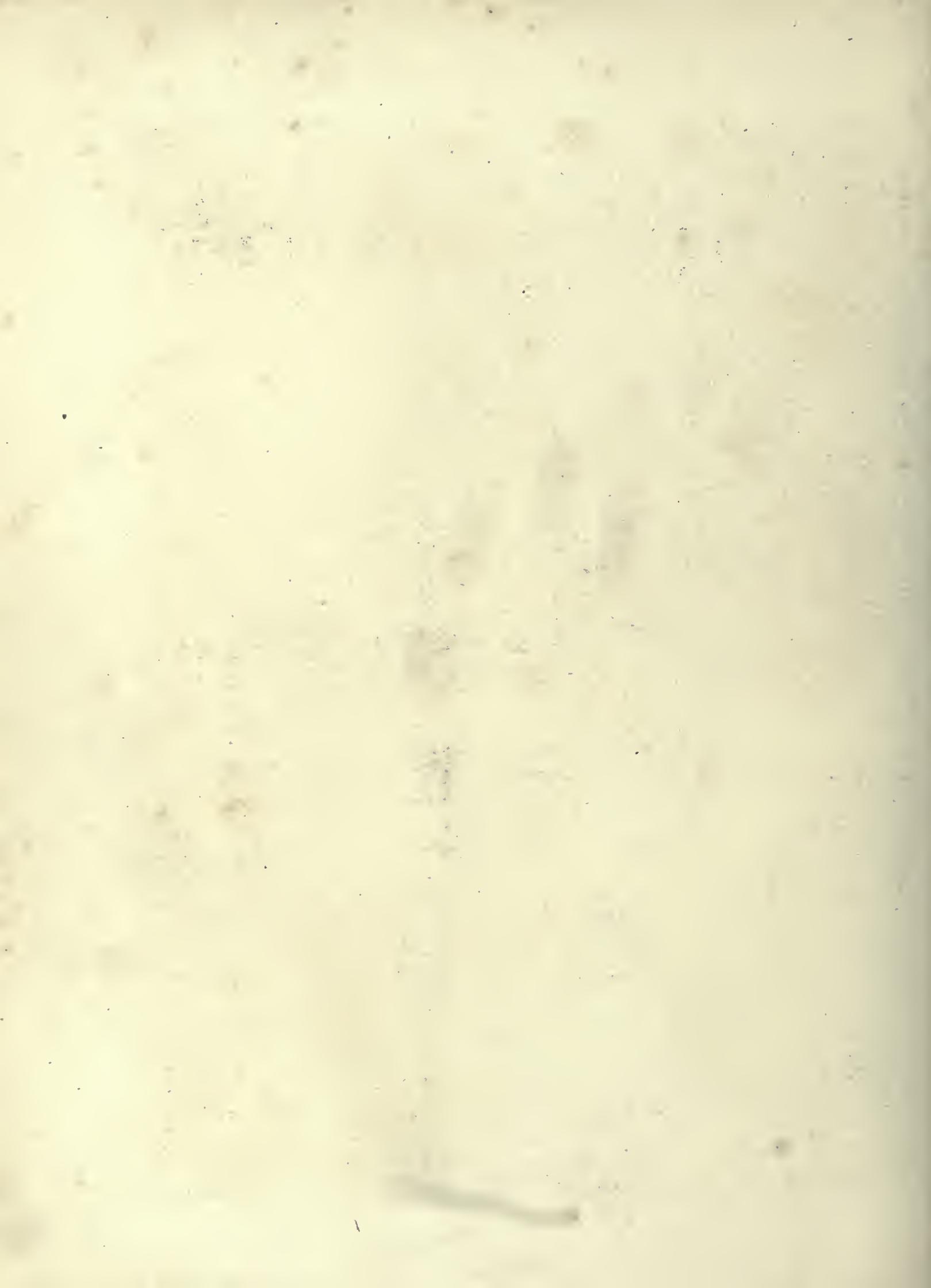
1941



W. FRENCH. SCULPT.

J. D. WOODWARD. PHOTO.

PALMYRA.



fall. The wonder in these ancient ruins is, not that so much has fallen, but that anything remains. There were, according to Wood, four rows of columns, between which ran the three avenues. Each column, consisting of three courses of stone admirably jointed, was fifty-seven feet high including the base and capital, and most of the columns have corbels or brackets projecting from them for supporting statues (see pages 197 and 189). This was evidently the monumental avenue of this Athens of the East, and the Palmyrenes here erected statues to their distinguished men, the inscriptions below giving the name of the individual. From one of the inscriptions it is clear that the chronological era in use in Palmyra was that of the Seleucidæ, 312 B.C.

The colonnade is not built in a straight line, but curves slightly in the middle. This must have given it a peculiar effect when seen from a distance, or when observed by the crowds who thronged its avenues in the palmy days of the Queen of the East.

At the curve or bend in the middle stand four square piers or bases, supposed to have been surmounted by colossal statues, or to have formed the foundations for a vaulted tetrapylon, standing as they do at the intersection of another colonnade running at right-angles with it. On the south side are rows of columns, which may have been connected with a forum. To the west of Dûr 'Adlah, in the main colonnade, is a column bearing on its top another smaller column. Other smaller colonnades lead off in various directions to the numerous temples and other buildings that occupy the space around the grand colonnade. This is supposed to have formed a purely ornamental part of the town, the promenade or boulevard of this Palm City of the Desert.

It seems difficult to realise, in this painful solitude, this voiceless ruin, where only a few Arab peasants mope drearily about, eking out a scanty subsistence from their little gardens and their flocks, that here once ebbed and flowed the surging tide of human activity, that these streets were thronged with merchants, civilians, Roman soldiers, Persian carpet dealers, Indian traders, and Greeks, Syrians, Bedawin Arabs, and Egyptians, who made this city the mart of the East, the highway of the nations, and the centre of business life.

A fine Corinthian column, erected as a monument to Alilamos, in the year 450 (A.D. 138), by the senate and people, stands alone a few hundred yards north of the Triumphal Arch (see page 196). The date and name are recorded in a long Greek inscription on the pedestal. A similar column stands one-quarter of an hour south-west of the Temple of the Sun, near a stream flowing from a sulphur fountain.

On the portico of one of the temples, of which there are three north of the colonnade, is a Hebrew inscription, showing that it may have been a synagogue, though there is no other indication of that colony of Jews visited here by Benjamin of Tudela in the twelfth century, then numbering four thousand, and supposed to have lived here from the time of Solomon. As you pass westward from the tetrapylon a wilderness of columns surrounds you. Here a single column, there a group of two or three, and farther on the traces of colonnades. Looking down again from the citadel, you see on the north of the city the ancient wall known

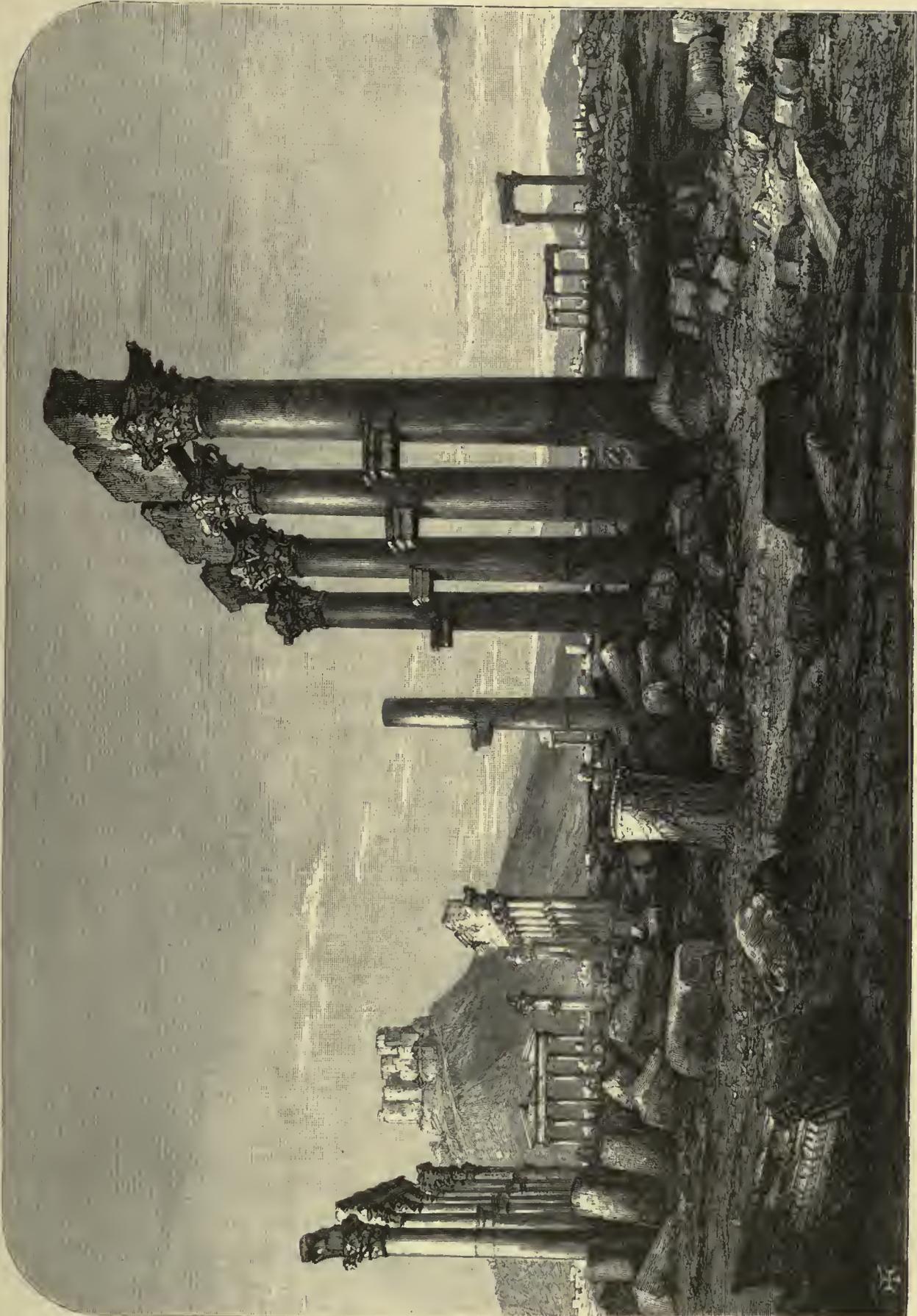
as the Wall of Justinian (see page 189). It runs in a zigzag line from near the mouth of the valley on the south-west to the Turkish fortification, then in a north-easterly direction, then



THE TRIUMPHAL ARCH, PALMYRA.

It is about three hundred yards from the north-western corner of the Temple of the Sun, and formed the triple entrance to the Great Colonnade, which appears to have consisted of a broad central avenue with narrower ways on each side.

turning east joins the south-east angle of the Great Temple court. In some places it is ten or twelve feet high, but for the greater part of the way is scarcely visible. The southern wall,



VIEW OF PALMYRA, FROM THE GRAND COLONNADE, SHOWING THE CASTLE IN THE DISTANCE. The building at the end of the colonnade is a grand mausoleum; each of the six columns of its pedimented portico is a monolith. Round three sides of the interior there are deep sepulchral recesses.

along sulphur spring valleys, had a deep moat, which is nearly filled up with débris and sand. Outside of the northern wall is a cemetery containing several tower-like tombs, and a vast number of subterranean vaults, whose existence can only be known by the undulating mound-like character of the surface. Similar tombs exist in the Necropolis on the south side.

We now turn our attention to what constitute one of the most interesting and striking features in the ruins of Palmyra—the mausoleums, or tower sepulchres.

One of the most beautiful towers stands in the glén, or Wâdy el Kûbûr, near the road to Kuryetein. It is a square tower, thirty feet on each side, and about eighty feet high, divided into four stories, and slightly tapering (see page 187). The door is ornamented with pediment and moulding, and half-way up is a bilingual inscription on a slab, above which is a bracket with two winged figures, and surmounted by a canopy. Entering the door we find ourselves in a chamber twenty-seven feet by ten, and twenty feet high. On each side are four fluted Corinthian pilasters, with tiers of loculi between them. Opposite the door is a recess containing five busts in relief, each having a short Palmyrene inscription, giving the name and parentage of the person represented. Over the cornice of the recess is a projecting slab, above which are four other busts with inscriptions. The interior of the doorway is ornamented with pilasters, and has a large bust over it. To the left of the door is a narrow staircase leading to the upper stories, and above the door to the staircase are five busts in two rows. The ceiling is beautiful, consisting of heavy slabs of stone, panelled and painted. Each of the central lacunars has a bust on a blue ground, and each of the outer ones a white flower in relief. The colours are fresh as those in the subterranean tombs of the Sidon Necropolis, but the busts are mutilated, as they are wherever Muslim iconoclasm has sway.

The mode of burial would seem to have been to embalm the body, place it in one of the loculi, and seal up the opening. Wood found in one of the tombs a mummy in all respects similar to those in the land of the Pharaohs, and fragments of mummy linen and winding-sheets soaked in tar have been discovered here recently, like those in the tombs of Egypt.

This building is a fair specimen of the mausoleums of Palmyra, of which more than one hundred can be seen along the mountain slopes and on the plains, a few of them entire, but the greater part in ruins. The inscriptions on them are generally in the Palmyrene character only, though not a few are bilingual, having a Greek translation appended. On the tower above described is a Greco-Palmyrene inscription stating that it was built as a family tomb by Elabelos in the Seleucian year 414 (A.D. 102) (see page 187). A similar inscription on another tower records its erection by Gichos in the year 314 (A.D. 2). Three of these tower sepulchres are called palaces by the Arabs. One is Kosr el 'Arus ("Palace of the Bride"), another Kosr ez Zeineh ("Palace of Zeineh," a girl's name, or, if it be Zineh, "Palace of Ornament"), and the third Kosr el 'Azba, or "Palace of the Maiden," which is adorned with the bust of a woman holding one of her own shoulders. The hill to the south-west of the city is called Tell es Sitt Balkis ("Hill of the Lady Balkis, Queen of Sheba"), the only name in Palmyra which connects it with the age of Solomon. The Arabs claim that the Queen of Sheba was named



WÂDY BARADA, FROM BESSÎMA.

The village is situated in a little basin formed by a bend of the river, and is entirely shut in by high ledges of rock. The soil is everywhere carefully cultivated. In the foreground the villagers are winnowing grain.

Balkis, a descendant of Yarab Ibn Kahtan of Yamen, and that Solomon married her. This would account for their naming a hill in Palmyra "Tell Balkis," had Solomon actually built or reconstructed Palmyra; but if Solomon had nothing to do with Palmyra, it would be difficult to explain the association of the Queen of Sheba's name with a spot so remote from Jerusalem.

One cannot cease to wonder how Palmyra could have sustained so great a population with so meagre a water supply. The fountain on the south-west of the city furnishes a copious stream, but the water is warm, and so impregnated with sulphur as to be extremely offensive. After flowing eastward, however, nearly two hundred rods, it becomes cooler, and the sulphurous taste partly disappears; but it could hardly have served the great city for other than medicinal, bathing, and agricultural purposes. For drinking water the ancient city must have had recourse to wells and rain-water cisterns. This fountain, however, must have determined the importance of the site and made it the key of the East. It is now resorted to in the summer by the Bedawin Arabs, of whom no less than twenty thousand are often encamped here at once. It is so necessary to the 'Anâzeh, that the rulers of Syria in different ages have found its possession to be a guarantee of subjection on the part of these lords of the desert. South of the fountain is a large cemetery with about twenty tower sepulchres of great antiquity. In one of them are two life-sized statues, sadly mutilated, "with flowing robes and close jackets curiously and elaborately laced over the chest." Near by are numerous subterranean tombs, whose arched roofs rise just enough above the surface of the ground to reveal their existence. A few are open, but the majority are buried beneath the débris of ages, and in all probability still undisturbed, with all their treasures of statuary and memorial tablets. One which was broken through a few years since is cruciform, with three tiers of loculi in each compartment. Several statuettes and other ornaments were discovered in it.

The Count de Vogüé, French Ambassador at Vienna, has published an extended account of the Palmyrene inscriptions. His translations and comments are invaluable. In his view the inscriptions are of four kinds: the monumental, chiefly attached to the pedestals and brackets of statues; those on tombs; the religious, on votive altars; and those on articles of terra-cotta. The oldest (on a tomb) bears date of B.C. 9.

On one of the columns of the Grand Colonnade is an inscription once attached to a statue of Odenathus, who is called "King of Kings," and on an adjoining column is the name of his wife, the world-renowned Zenobia, the date on both being A.D. 271.

According to this same author the Palmyrenes worshipped three gods, or a threefold god, the first person being "Baal Samim," the god of the heavens; the second, "Malek Baal," answering to the sun, and the third, "Agli Baal," to the moon. There are traces of this same worship in our own day in that strange people, the Nusairiyeh, supposed to be the descendants of the ancient Hittites, whose kingdom extended in ancient days from Antioch to Damascus, and from the sea to or even beyond the Euphrates. The Nusairiyeh, who now number a quarter of a million people, chiefly between Antioch and Tripoli, observe so many of the old rites of the Baal-worshippers, with adoration of the sun, moon, and stars, that their religion is

an object of the deepest interest. The attention of archæologists is just beginning to be turned to this interesting part of Syria. The newly discovered site of Carchemish, the old Hittite kingdom, the Hamath inscriptions, the Palmyrene tower sepulchres, and this great tribe of Baal-worshipping Nusairiyeh, all point to new revelations in the near future with regard to that old Hittite people who acted so prominent a part in the external history of Israel.

Near the north-western end of the colonnade are two mausoleums of great beauty in a commanding site (see pages 193 and 197), and farther to the west a group of small temples, in which the sculpture is of the most exquisite finish. In one of them was a portico of four columns, and at each side were porches supported on five rows of columns, four in each row. The cella is about one hundred feet long, with a semicircular recess at the far end. It is nearly all razed to the ground, but the foundations can be traced. On a broken architrave is a fragment of a Latin inscription, containing the names of Diocletian and the Cæsars Constantius and Maximianus, proving that the building was erected between A.D. 292 and A.D. 305. The ruins in this vicinity are in a remarkable state of preservation, the carvings and corners being as sharply defined as when fresh from the sculptor's hand. The west side of many of the columns, however, is corroded by the winds and storms. At Ba'albek the north side of the capitals and entablature of the six columns are similarly worn away. To the north of the colonnade are three temples and a church. One of these temples is beautifully preserved, with a porch of six columns, all standing, of which four are in front. This building illustrates the extent to which the débris of former buildings has accumulated in Palmyra. The pedestals or brackets projecting from the columns of this porch are only twenty inches above the ground, indicating that the bases of the columns are considerably below the surface. The columns now look short and awkward, and the portal is too wide for its height. The entablature above the porch and walls still remains, but the roof has fallen in. If the masses of rubbish could be excavated, the old city level would no doubt be found far below the present surface of the ground.

HISTORICAL SKETCH OF PALMYRA.

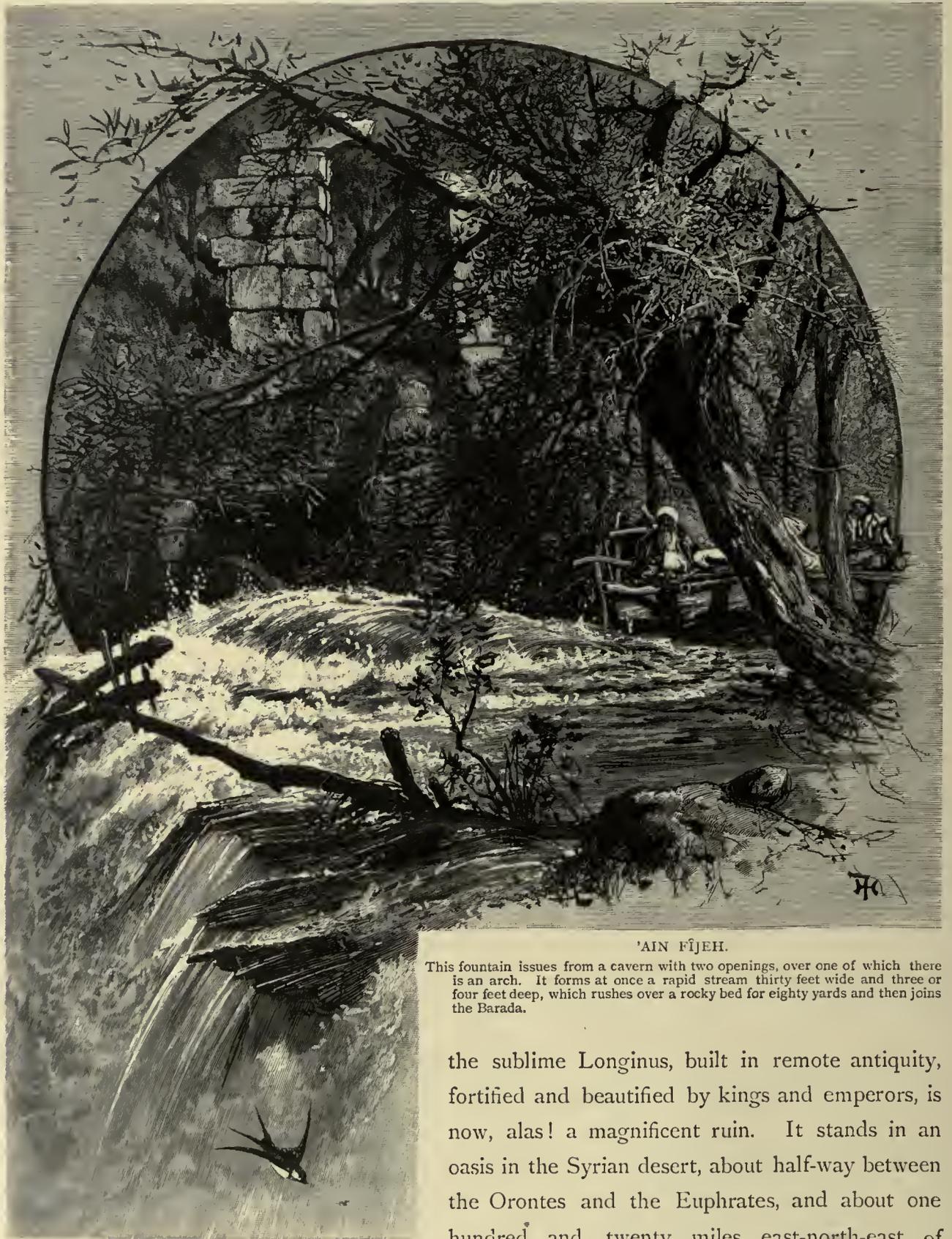
"And Solomon built Baalath, and Tadmor in the wilderness, in the land."—1 KINGS ix. 18.

"And Solomon went to Hamath-zobah, and prevailed against it. And he built Tadmor in the wilderness, and all the store cities, which he built in Hamath."—2 CHRON. viii. 3, 4.

In the former of these passages this city is called Tamar, תָּמָר, and in the latter תְּדֹמֹר, Tadmor. The word Tamar in both Hebrew and Arabic means palm, or fruit, and Tadmor means probably "City of Palms." The word Palmyra is simply the Latin translation of the Semitic original. The present name, and the only one by which it is known to the Arabic-speaking races, is Tüdmür.

Palmyra is an example of both the changing and the changeless in the East. Its name Tadmor remains. Its commercial importance is gone. The lines of national traffic have shifted from the Euphrates Valley to the Suez Canal and the Straits of Gibraltar. This once-glorious city, the seat of ancient commerce, the highway of the nations, the outpost of King

Solomon, the key of Persia and India, the city of palaces, the home of Zenobia, the school of



'AIN FĪJEH.

This fountain issues from a cavern with two openings, over one of which there is an arch. It forms at once a rapid stream thirty feet wide and three or four feet deep, which rushes over a rocky bed for eighty yards and then joins the Barada.

the sublime Longinus, built in remote antiquity, fortified and beautified by kings and emperors, is now, alas! a magnificent ruin. It stands in an oasis in the Syrian desert, about half-way between the Orontes and the Euphrates, and about one hundred and twenty miles east-north-east of Damascus. Josephus says, "Solomon built strong walls there to secure himself in the possession, and named it Tadmor, which signifies the Place

of Palm-trees." Ancient writers describe it as a city of merchants, and proverbial for its



WAYSIDE TOMBS IN WÂDY BARADA.

Where walnut and fig trees yield abundantly, and the oleander flourishes. Rows of poplar trees peering out of the gorge mark its course.

wealth and luxury. It has been suggested that this Indian trade was the cause, in ancient as in modern times, of much of the military strife between the eastern and western nations, and that it occasioned the continual wars between Assyria and Babylon on the east, and Palestine and Phœnicia on the west. After the time of Solomon it is not even mentioned in history for nearly ten centuries. And it is a striking fact, that among the extensive

ruins of the city there is not a wall or stone which can be identified as belonging to the era of the Hebrew monarch, the only approximation being the Hill of Balkis, Queen of Sheba, south of the sulphur fountain.

Palmyra is not alluded to in the history of the younger Cyrus or the campaigns of Alexander the Great. The decline of Tyre and Jerusalem, however, opened the way for the revival of the ancient city. Pliny says it was the first care of Parthia and Rome, when at war, to engage Palmyra in their interest. Mark Antony, during the triumvirate in 38 B.C., attempted to plunder Palmyra, on the ground of its having violated the neutrality between the Romans and Parthians. During the successive wars between these two great empires it increased rapidly in commercial and military importance, and became a wealthy and magnificent city. In 130 A.D. it submitted to Adrian, and, though nominally subject to Rome, had a senate and popular assembly of its own, as is seen from the inscriptions found among its ruins. Adrian adorned the city with many of its grandest temples and colonnades, gave it his own name, Adrianopolis, and conferred upon it the dignity and rank of a Roman colony.

More than a century later, A.D. 260, when Odenathus, a noble of Palmyra, by his valour and military prowess had avenged the ignoble captivity of the Roman emperor Valerian, by expelling Sapor, the Persian monarch, from Syria and Mesopotamia, he was rewarded by being associated with Gallienus in the imperial rule, 264 A.D. After a brief reign of three years Odenathus was assassinated in Hums, and his brilliant and heroic widow Zenobia assumed the reins of government in 267 A.D. By her heroism, self-denial, and wisdom, this remarkable and gifted woman ruled the East for five years with justice and clemency. She mastered not only the Arabic and Syriac, but the Greek and Latin languages, and called to her counsels the philosopher Longinus, who was not only her counsellor in matters of state, but her teacher in the poetry of Homer and the wisdom of Plato. Zenobia appointed him one of her counsellors, and in this capacity, and cherishing doubtless the traditional antipathies of the Greek toward the Roman, he persuaded her to shake off the Roman yoke, and dictated, it is said, a defiant letter to the Emperor Aurelian.

The letter of Zenobia to Aurelian, who had assumed the purple in 270 A.D., declaring her independence, provoked his hostility, and in 271 he marched through Asia Minor into Syria, defeated the army of Zenobia under her general, Zabdas, the conqueror of Egypt, in two great battles near Antioch and Hums. The Queen was present in both engagements, but after the Hums defeat could no longer rally her army, and retreated within the walls of her capital, Palmyra. The Emperor followed through the sandy desert, perpetually harassed by the Bedawin Arabs, and began the siege of Palmyra.

Still he offered her favourable terms of capitulation—for herself a splendid retreat, for the citizens their ancient privileges. The offer was indignantly rejected; but on the arrival of Probus from Egypt with heavy reinforcements, Zenobia resolved to fly. She mounted the fleetest of her dromedaries, and had already reached the Euphrates, sixty miles from Palmyra, when Aurelian's light horse seized her, and brought her a captive to the feet of the

Emperor. The city soon surrendered, and was treated with lenity. Aurelian withdrew with immense booty, leaving a garrison of six hundred archers, and leading in triumph his royal captive.

The triumphal entry of Aurelian into Rome was his crowning glory, and the crowning



GATHERING FIGS ON THE BARADA, NEAR 'AIN FIJEH.

Here the effects of irrigation are strikingly seen; as far as the canals and ducts are carried all is luxuriant, but immediately above the line all is parched and bare.

insult and humiliation of Zenobia. Never did Rome witness a more gorgeous pageant. Twenty elephants, four royal tigers, and two hundred Oriental animals preceded; next came sixteen hundred gladiators; then the arms and ensigns of conquered nations, the plate and wardrobe of the Syrian queen, the ambassadors of all parts of Asia and Africa, crowns of gold

presented by grateful cities, long trains of captive Goths, Vandals, Sarmatians, Franks, Germans, Gauls, Syrians, Bedawin, and Egyptians. But the observed of all observers was Zenobia, Queen of Palmyra. "Her beauteous figure was confined by fetters of gold, a slave supported the gold chain which encircled her neck, and she almost fainted under the intolerable weight of jewels." She preceded on foot the magnificent chariot which she had built in Palmyra for her own triumphal entry into Rome. It was followed by two other gorgeous chariots, of Odenathus and the Persian king, after which came the triumphal car of Aurelian, drawn by four elephants.

Aurelian bestowed fifteen thousand pounds of gold upon the Temple of the Sun in Rome, in which he placed the images of Belus and of the Sun, brought from Palmyra. His mother had been a priestess in a chapel of the Sun, and he was a devout worshipper of the God of Light.

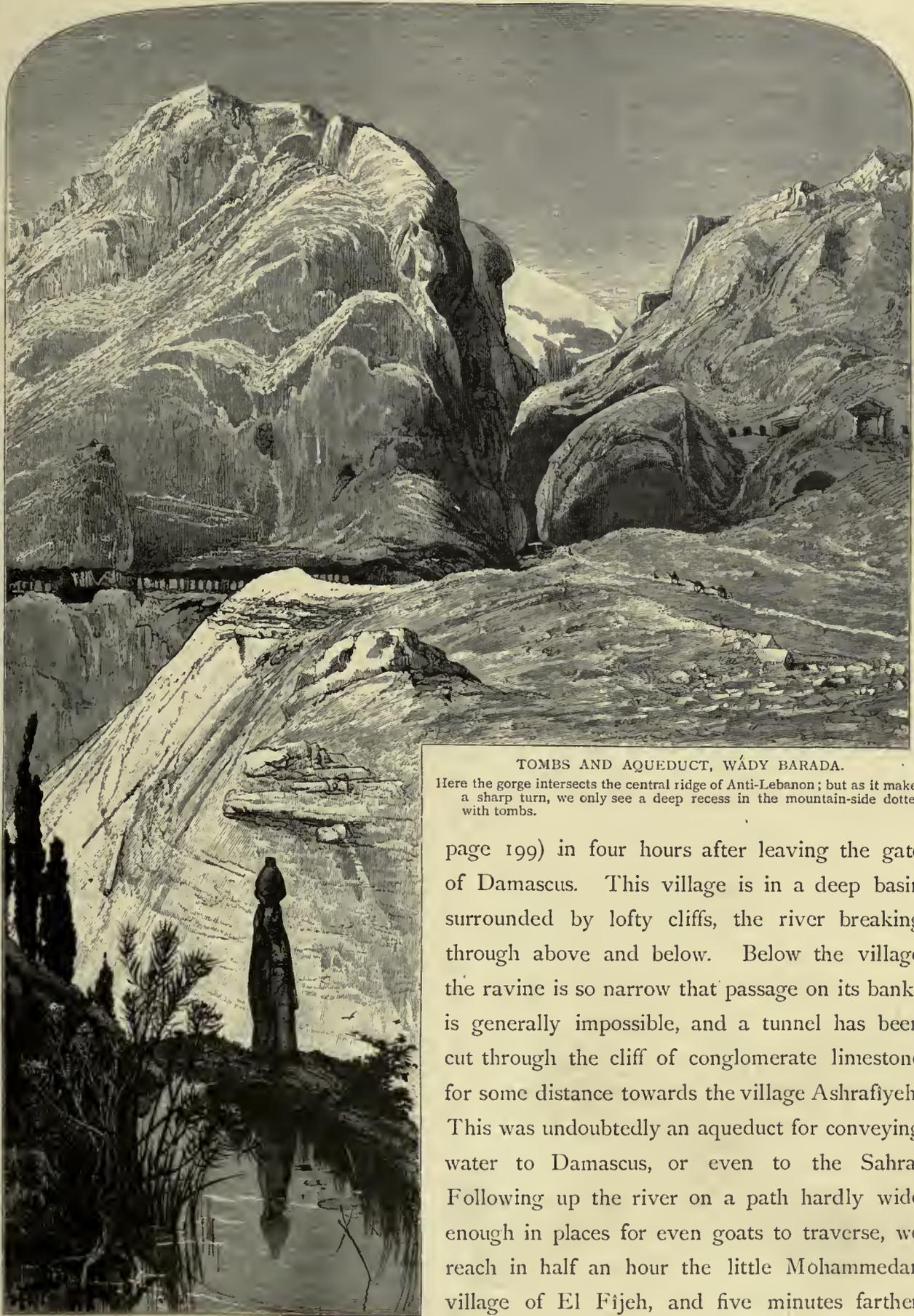
Should the new age of reform and material progress so ardently longed for by the oppressed races of Syria ever come, a railway from Tripoli, on the Mediterranean, *viâ* Hums, to the Euphrates would be indispensable. Palmyra would then be brought out of its desert isolation into the pathway of the nations.

THE WÂDY BARADA.

It was a fragrant spring morning when we set out from Damascus for Ba'albek and Mount Lebanon *viâ* the Wâdy Barada. The perfume of fruit blossoms and spring wild flowers filled the air as we rode through the shady suburbs, amid murmuring waters, across the Taurah canal and then the Yezid, which irrigates Sâlihîyeh, the northern suburb of Damascus. We then turned our horses' heads up the steep barren ascent to the Kubbet Seiyâr, commonly called "Kubbet en Nûsr," or Dome of Victory. From this point, seven hundred feet above the level of the plain, we take a last look at Damascus (see steel engraving facing page 145).

Our travelling party now turn northward, down the barren chalky rocks into the valley of the Barada. The scenery of this part of Anti-Lebanon is unique. Lebanon is one high range running from north to south, sending off lateral spurs or ranges westward down to the sea, while on the east it stands like a colossal wall one hundred miles long, breaking down suddenly into the Bükâ'a. But Anti-Lebanon, known as Jebel esh Shürky, or the "East Mountain," is a series of parallel ranges, in general verdureless and barren, its loftier points glaring white in the summer's sun, giving the scene an air of painful desolation.

What the Nile is to Egypt, the Barada is to Damascus. It seems a small stream as you ride along its banks, but the volume of water is great and unfailing. Along the river on both sides, in the deep narrow valley, every inch of land that can be reached by irrigation is cultivated, and the rows of tall poplars extend for miles, marking the course of the river as with a fringe of green, running zigzag among the chalky hills. Following the left bank of the river, high up on the rocky slope, then descending along the base of a high ridge and passing through vineyards and orchards of fig-trees, we reached the river Barada at Bessima (see



TOMBS AND AQUEDUCT, WÁDY BARADA.

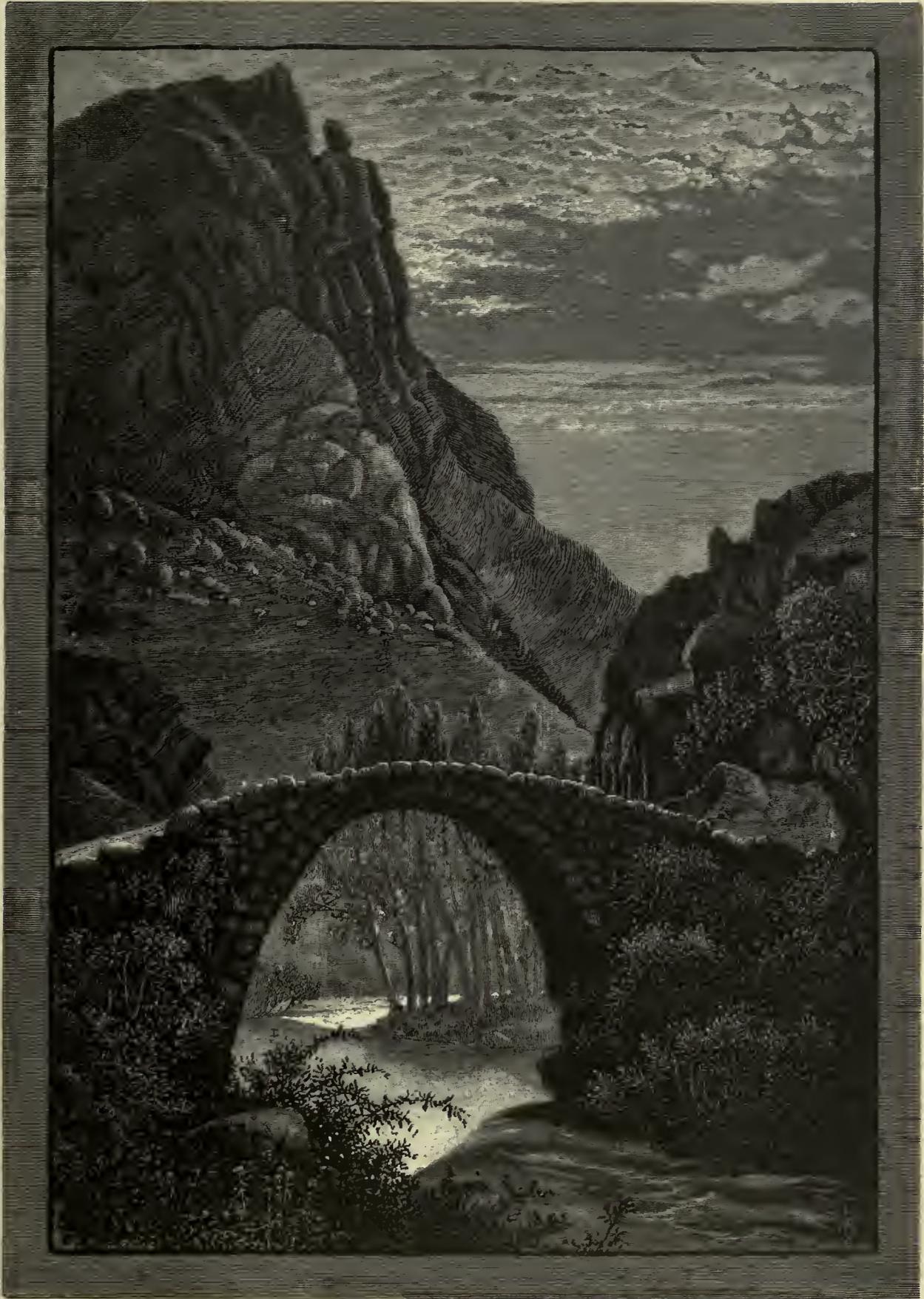
Here the gorge intersects the central ridge of Anti-Lebanon; but as it makes a sharp turn, we only see a deep recess in the mountain-side dotted with tombs.

page 199) in four hours after leaving the gate of Damascus. This village is in a deep basin surrounded by lofty cliffs, the river breaking through above and below. Below the village the ravine is so narrow that passage on its banks is generally impossible, and a tunnel has been cut through the cliff of conglomerate limestone for some distance towards the village Ashrafiyeh. This was undoubtedly an aqueduct for conveying water to Damascus, or even to the Sahra. Following up the river on a path hardly wide enough in places for even goats to traverse, we reach in half an hour the little Mohammedan village of El Fijeh, and five minutes farther on, through the dense shade of walnuts and

poplars, come suddenly upon the magnificent fountain 'Ain el Fijeh (see page 202), which is regarded by the people as the source of the Barada. The fountain bursts forth from a small cavern with two openings, over one of which is an arch. Above it is a large ancient platform of original rock and massive hewn stone. On this foundation are the ruins of a temple about thirty by thirty-three feet, built of large cut stones, but there is neither column, capital, nor pedestal.

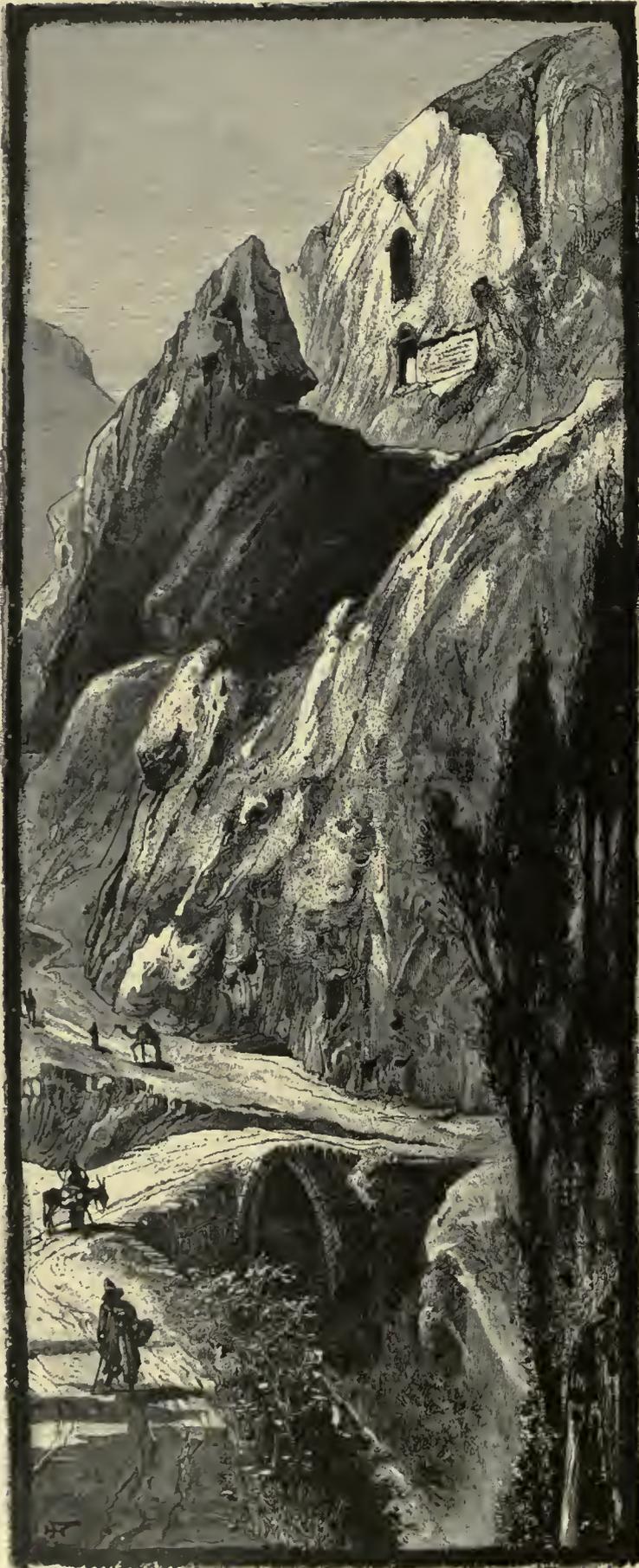
South of the opening of the fountain is another lower structure, built up from the bed of the stream itself, with two walls some two yards in thickness and nearly forty feet long, and twenty-seven feet apart, joined by a solid wall against the bank. This once formed a vaulted chamber of great solidity, twenty feet high, with a large portal in front, and in the rear a quadrangular opening or tunnel, from which a part of the fountain once issued, and low down in each of the side walls is also an opening for the discharge of the waters. Here was no doubt a small temple of great antiquity. South of the front lies the fragment of a column or pedestal of some simple order. Above the fountain, the platform, and the stream is a luxuriant growth of shade and fruit trees, shutting out the burning sun, and making this one of the most charming retreats of Syria. Yet this grand fountain with its crystal torrent is not the true source of the Barada. The true source is several hours farther up the stream, near Bustân el 'Arab.

Leaving 'Ain el Fijeh, we passed Deir Mükurrin and Kefr ez Zeit ("Village of Oil"), and thence to Kefr el Awamid ("Village of Columns"), five minutes above which, on a high spur of land, are the ruins of a Greek temple. There are numerous fallen columns, thirty-one inches in diameter, one being nearly twenty feet in length, and an immense Corinthian capital with parts of an ornamented pediment. Crossing the river on a stone bridge we came into the regular Damascus road, and in half an hour reached our tents, pitched below the road on a terrace overlooking the village of Sûk, Wâdy Barada, the ancient Abila. Just above the village the river makes a sharp turn. The lofty range, the backbone, as it were, of Anti-Lebanon, running north-east and south-west, is cut through by the river, which had been running parallel with the range on the west side and south of Zebedâny, and here turns suddenly to the east and north-east, cutting a deep chasm through the range, forming a pass one hundred and fifty feet wide, with a northern wall some four hundred feet in height (see page 207). The village of Sûk is embowered in gardens and orchards, and behind it on the north and west rises this stupendous mountain wall, like a vast amphitheatre. It seems to bar all progress westward. The scene is one of wild magnificence, and the remarkable remains of antiquity give it an additional charm. Leaving our camp we walked up the river some fifteen minutes to the stone bridge of a single arch, and crossed over to the north or left bank, in order to view this Petra of Northern Syria (see pages 209 and 210). Turning down the river below the bridge, we find the bank at first a slope of débris piled against the foot of the lofty cliffs. In this bank are hewn stones and broken columns of ancient temples, which have rolled down toward the river. Above it rises vertically the towering cliff, in the side of which are the famous



THE CLIFFS OF SÛK, WÂDY BARADA.

A modern bridge of a single arch spans the river, and the road crosses from the right to the left bank. This is the narrowest part of the gorge, and the cliffs that shut it in are not more than a hundred feet apart.

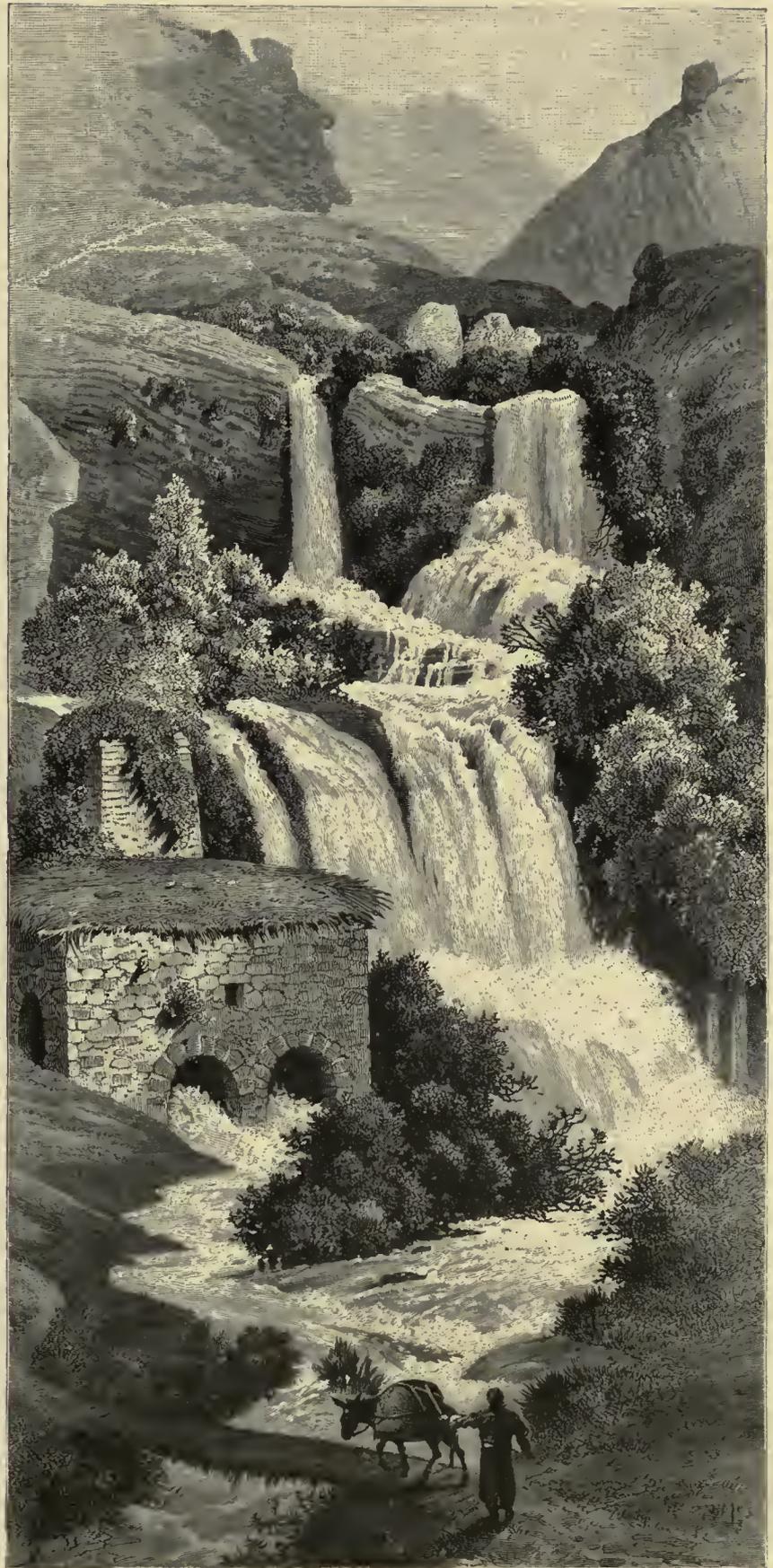


ROAD AND TABLETS CUT IN THE CLIFFS OF WÂDY BARADA.
On the north or left bank of the river.

tombs of Abila (see page 207). The face of the cliff is like an amphitheatre sweeping around in a majestic curve, the ancient road being excavated in the north-western part, a hundred feet above the bridge. Long flights of steps cut in the rock lead up to some of these tombs, which are hewn out of the rock with almost incredible labour. One of the tombs contains five crypts and no less than twelve niches or loculi for the reception of bodies. Others have one loculus with lids of stone like the sarcophagi of Sidon, Beirût, and 'Amrît. The rock-cut road, extending some six hundred feet along the cliffs, which are here seven hundred feet high, is one of the wonders of the place. This road is fifteen feet wide, and evidently had a rock battlement or a wall of masonry along the edge. It terminates suddenly in the east, in an abrupt precipice of rock, beyond which it was doubtless carried on a high viaduct. Below it is the aqueduct, partly tunnelled through the rock and partly covered with slabs of stone. The Latin inscriptions, one of which identifies this as the site of the ancient Abila, are on tablets cut in the wall of rock above the road, and shown on this page. The longer one is as follows: "The Emperor Cæsar Marcus Aurelius Antoninus Augustus Armeniacus, and the Emperor Cæsar Lucius Aurelius Verus Augustus Armeniacus restored

the road broken away by the force of the river, the mountain being cut through, by Julius Verus, the Legate of Syria, at the cost (*impendus*) of the Abilenians." The modern Turkish pashas make roads in the same way, by impressing the labour of the people in the most arbitrary and oppressive manner.

On a high cliff south of the village of Sûk is the Wely or Kabr Habil, the reputed tomb of Abel. The Muslim tradition has it that Cain, after carrying about the corpse of his brother Abel for one hundred years, at last laid it down on this hill. It is now one of the sacred shrines to which the Muslims make reverent pilgrimages. The length of Abel's tomb is nine yards, and it is plainly a part of an old wall, which can still be traced for twice that length. Near it are the ruins of a small temple of hewn stone, forty-five feet long and twenty-seven feet broad. There are three sarcophagi in a vault under the eastern end. The district around was called Abilene, and is mentioned by St. Luke (iii. 1), who says that John the Baptist began preaching "in the



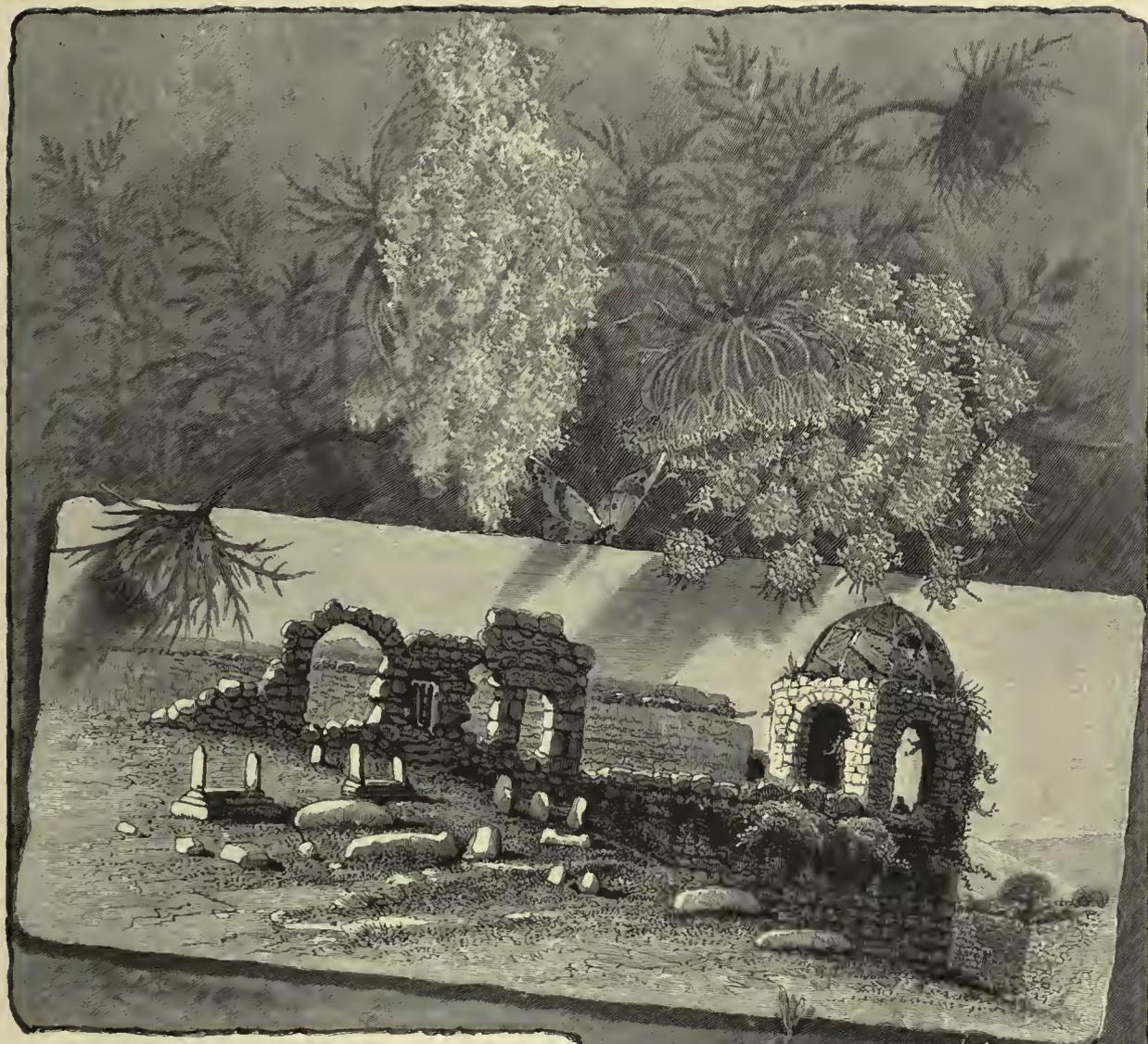
WATERFALL OF THE UPPER BARADA, NEAR ZEBEDÂNY.
Here the stream is augmented by the outfall of Wâdy el Kûrn.

fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Cæsar, . . . Lysanias being the tetrarch of Abilene." The next morning after our arrival we had a fine view of the Abila cliffs in the light of a brilliant Syrian sunrise, and riding across the one-arched stone bridge we followed up the left bank of the river. The Barada has worn a deep channel through the rock, and on both sides of the road there is a grotesque geological formation of calcareous tufa. Reeds, branches of trees, leaves, and roots are encrusted with the soft spongy carbonate of lime, and the infiltration of centuries has fused them into a solid mass. About a half-hour's ride above the pass we come upon a fine cataract or cascade falling over a ledge of twenty feet high (see page 211), and above it are the ruins of two Roman bridges.

We now emerge upon the verdant plain of Zebedâny, through whose fresh green fields the river flows noiselessly and swiftly. During the summer season caravans of mules pour into this valley from all parts of Lebanon and Northern Syria, and return laden with its luscious apples, pears, quinces, apricots, and plums. On our right far up the mountain's side is the pleasant little village of Blûdân, embowered in magnificent walnut and other fruit trees, and affording a safe and salubrious summer retreat for the European residents of Damascus. The plain of Zebedâny is seven miles long, and varies from one to three miles wide, and is like an emerald carpet amid the barren desolated mountains which enclose it. The main fountain-head or source of the Barada is at the south-west end of this plain, in a small lake nine hundred feet long and three hundred feet wide. It is shallow and covered with reeds and water-lilies, and the stream flows north-east from it in a broad and deep current.

After resting on a green bank beyond the village of Zebedâny we rode on through 'Ain Hawar and Surghaya to the gorge of the river Yahfûfeh, at the Jisr er Rûmmâneh, or "Pomegranate Bridge." Then turning to the left down the Wâdy Yahfûfeh, for one hour we crossed over a rocky and sterile ridge on a dangerous road, over slippery rocks and broken stones, down the white hillside to the large Metâwileh village of Neby Shît, the tomb of the prophet Seth, the son of Adam. On descending this rocky slope a magnificent landscape burst upon us. The green fertile plain of the Bûkâ'a was at our feet, and on the west border rose the lofty range of Lebanon, its highest ridge covered with snow. I have seen this plain in February, when Hermon, Lebanon, and Anti-Lebanon were all sheeted with snow down to the very edge of the plain, which was green with the growing crops of wheat and barley, presenting a striking and beautiful contrast. The tomb of Seth is one hundred feet long and ten broad, built on a platform raised on two steps of masonry. The tomb, as usual with the Muslims, is covered with a green cloth—their sacred colour. Votive offerings hang on the tomb and on the walls around, as is the case at Neby Nûh, the tomb of Noah, on the opposite side of the Bûkâ'a, near Zahleh (see page 213). The tomb of Ham, an hour north-east of Neby Shît, is only nine feet six inches long. The tomb of Noah, according to my measurement, is one hundred and five feet eight inches in length, within the walls; and yet this only extends from his head to his knees, the feet are supposed to be in a deep pit beneath the tomb! The Muslims and other tribes in some parts of Syria lengthen their tombs according to

the dignity of the person buried. A great tomb indicates a great man. In the Sha'ara



THE TOMB OF NOAH.

At a place called Kerak Nüh. The so-called tomb is probably a portion of an ancient aqueduct.

oak forest, about half-way between Tripoli and Homs, is a Muslim cemetery in which many of the modern graves are twelve, fifteen, and eighteen feet long. The origin of these four tombs—of Abel, Seth, Noah, and Ham—is unknown. They were evidently built by the Muslims on the site of more ancient structures, and named from the Koranic allusions to these antediluvian worthies. They are visited by pilgrims from all parts of Syria, who make vows at the

shrine and bring presents to the sheikhs in charge of them. Men of every sect revere these old tombs—Greeks, Catholics, Muslims, Druses, Turkomans, and Bedawin regard them as common property, and the sheikh cares nothing for the religion of the pilgrim if he be propitiated by an offering.

Many Muslim shrines are of doubtful authenticity. The Arabs delight to tell the story of one, Sheikh Mohammed, who was the keeper of a wely of eminent sanctity, the tomb of a noted saint. Pilgrims thronged to it from every side, and Mohammed grew rich from their costly offerings. At length his servant Ali, dissatisfied with his meagre share of the revenue, ran away to the east of the Jordan, taking his master's donkey. The donkey died on the road, and Ali having covered his body with a heap of stones, sat down in despair. A passer-by asked him why he sat thus in lonely grief? He replied that he had found the tomb of an



AN ARAB SHRINE, SOUTH-WEST OF BA'ALBEK,

Called Kubbet Dûris, after the neighbouring village of Dûris; it is a modern structure formed of eight ancient granite columns clumsily set up and surmounted by a heavy architrave. An enormous sarcophagus, standing on end, serves as the mihrab, or Muslim prayer niche.

eminent saint. The man kissed the stones, and giving Ali a present, passed on. The news of the holy wely spread through the land. Pilgrims thronged to Ali, who soon grew rich, built a fine kubbah, or dome, and was the envy of all the sheikhs. Mohammed, hearing of the new wely, and finding his own shrine eclipsed by its growing popularity, made a pilgrimage to it, in hopes of ascertaining the source of its great repute. On finding Ali in charge, he whispered to him, and asked the name of the saint whose tomb he had in charge. Ali said, "I will tell you, on condition that you tell me the name of your saint." Mohammed consenting, Ali whispered, "God alone is great! This is the tomb of the donkey I stole from you." "Mashallah!" said Mohammed, "and my wely is the tomb of that donkey's father!"

It is a curious psychological fact, that although the Syrians are generally extremely credulous, they delight in stories which make credulity ridiculous.



ENTRANCE TO THE RUINS OF BA'ALBEK,

At the south-east corner, through a long vaulted passage like a railway tunnel under the great platform. Two of these great vaults run parallel with each other, from east to west, and are connected by a third running at right angles to them from north to south.

BA'ALBEK.

THE ride of three and a half hours the next day to Ba'albek was over an undulating country, along a side valley running parallel with the Büká'a for many miles, and separated from it by rounded hills.

We reached the outskirts of Ba'albek at noon, and paused to survey the scene. At our

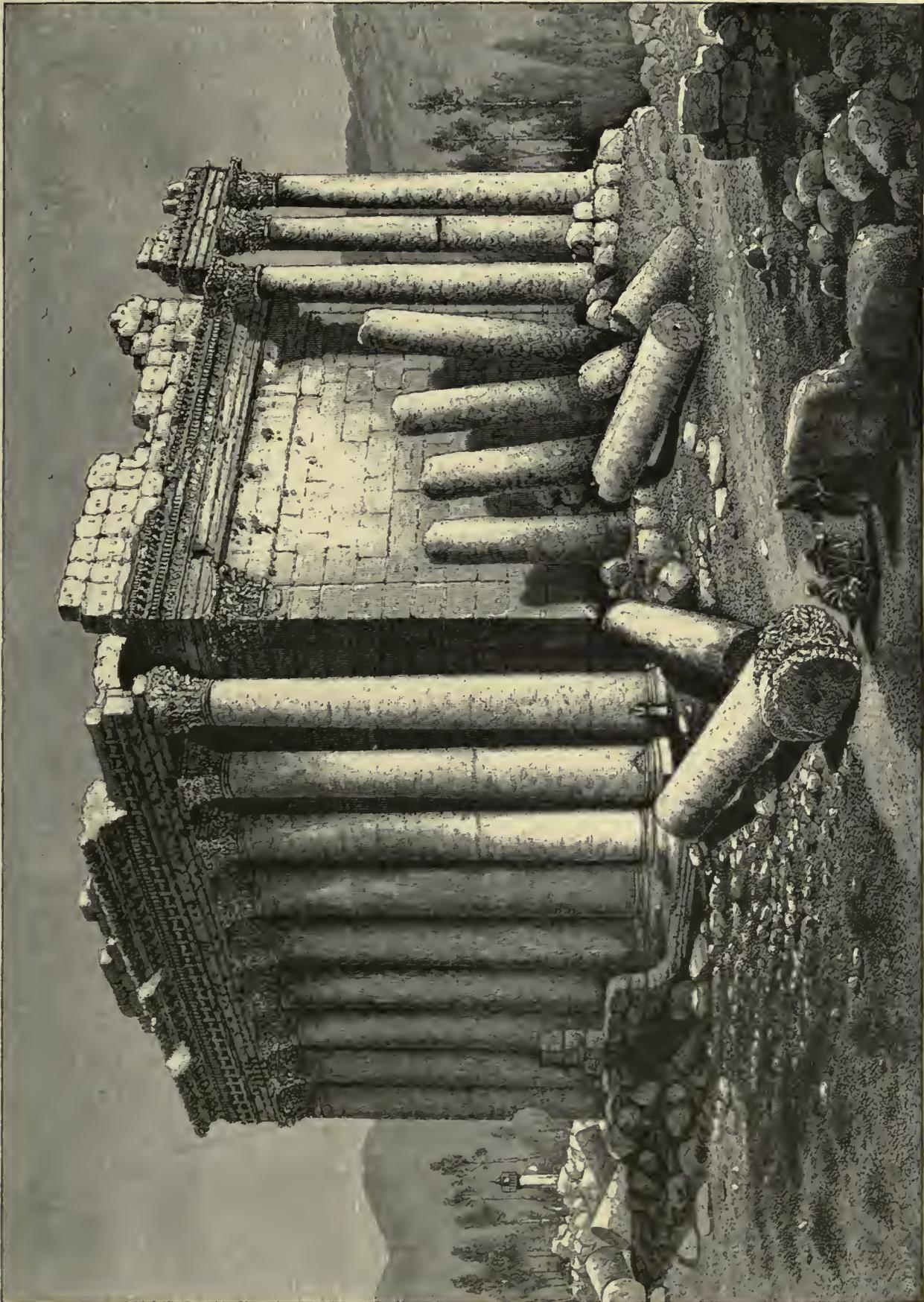
feet were the quarries from which the great hewn stones of yonder temples were taken. In front were the green gardens and groves of Ba'albek, watered by the great fountain, Râs el 'Ain. One-third of a mile to the north, above the poplar and mulberry orchards, rose the stately walls and columns of the matchless temples of the Ba'albek Acropolis.

The Great Stone, as it is called, lies in the quarry, hewn smooth on the top, the sides, and south-east end, the west end not yet being detached from the native rock (see page 235). On the under side it is cut away, remaining attached to the bed rock in the middle along its entire length. This is called by the Arabs the "Hajr el Hûbla," or stone of the pregnant woman, and is the wonder of architects, scholars, and practical men from all parts of the world. It is sixty-eight feet four inches in length, seventeen feet in width, and fourteen feet seven inches in height. It is computed to contain thirteen thousand cubic feet, and to weigh more than eleven hundred tons, or two million two hundred and seventy thousand pounds, and would be almost sufficient to make four obelisks like "Cleopatra's Needle," lately removed from Alexandria to New York. It was evidently intended to be placed in the northern wall, as a continuation of that on the west, where the three colossal stones lie end to end twenty feet above the ground. Some sudden war, pestilence, or revolution must have interrupted the plans of those ancient builders, or they would not have expended the labour of months, and possibly years, upon this mighty block, and then abandoned it still undetached from the quarry. Many other stones, half-quarried, stand on end here and there like square irregular pillars, separated from each other and the rock by narrow smooth hewn spaces.

The modern Syrians use the same tools and process in quarrying which were used by their ancestors two and three thousand years ago, and the marks on the blocks of stone made by the tools of the ancients, exactly correspond to the sharp teeth of the Arab mason's tools of our own day.

The natives insist, in the face of the evidence of their own senses, that these great stones were not quarried, but cast in moulds, and conveyed by the janns, or genii, to the temple wall. That these enormous blocks were transported to the temple, and then *lifted* by machinery to their place in the walls, or to the top of those towering columns, is incredible. The only reasonable supposition we can offer as to the *modus operandi* is, that embankments of earth were built from the quarry to the temple site on a regular grade, and the stones drawn on rollers by thousands of men with ropes, as we see represented in the bas-reliefs at Kouyunjik, discovered by Layard, where the transport of the colossal bulls from the quarry to the palace gateways is represented in the most elaborate detail. I have never seen this plan suggested for the transport and elevation of the great stones at Ba'albek, but I am satisfied that none other can account for the elevation of blocks weighing two millions of pounds.

In ancient times human labour was cheap, kings impressed tens of thousands of men for their great engineering and architectural projects, and the grade of an embankment from this quarry even to the top of the six columns of the peristyle (see page 230), would not be too great for the transport on rollers of even these immense masses of limestone.



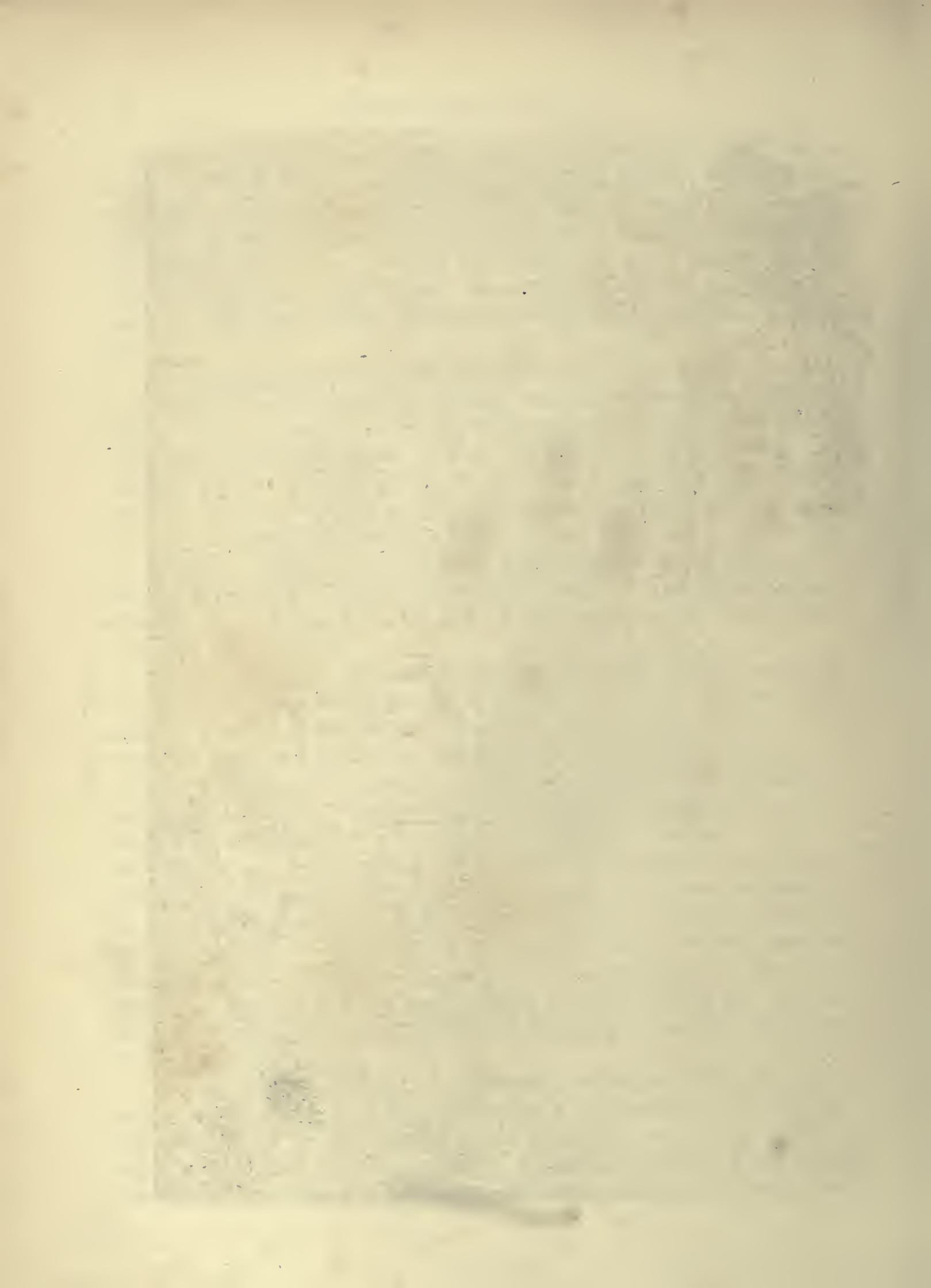
THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN, BA'ALBEK,
Showing the north and west sides. The columns, including the capitals, are forty-six and a half feet in height; they are ten feet from the walls, and support an entablature connected with the
cella by large slabs of stone.

On entering the town I observed a great change since my first visit in 1856. After the massacres of 1860 the Christian population began to increase in Ba'albek. New houses were erected, and a carriage road has since been built to Mo'allakah and Shtûra, hotels have been erected, Protestant schools established, mulberry orchards planted, vineyards renewed, neglected land ploughed and sown, and a new life seems springing up around this wonderful ruin of ancient civilisation and ancient idolatry. In 1880 the population was estimated at five thousand. Reliable local authorities inform me that Ba'albek contains twelve hundred taxable men.

After passing through the ruins of the old wall, and riding through the street nearest the ruins, we passed by the Temple of the Sun (see page 217), and the Circular Temple, or Temple of Venus (see page 234), and then turning westward through the green mulberry garden we found ourselves at the east end of the vast enclosure, and at the foot of the lofty wall which now hides the ancient portico. The great mass of undressed stones in the lower part of the wall indicates that here was the immense flight of steps leading up into the portico. Not one of these steps remains, and no sign of the staircase but two arches, and even these may be Saracenic in origin. A coin of Philip the Arabian shows the staircase complete. The great wall is crowned by a Saracenic battlement with loopholes. The masonry is a patchwork of broken columns, capitals, friezes, and blocks of stone mingled together, but the ancient ashlar below remains uninjured.

The plain on which the ruins stand is level, forming the outlet of the fine stream which runs down to the Sahlet Ba'albek from the fountain Râs el 'Ain, half a mile distant to the south-east in a valley of Anti-Lebanon. The ruins stand on a platform of titanic masonry evidently of Phœnician origin, about one thousand feet in length, six hundred feet broad, and varying in height from fifteen to thirty feet. This prodigious mass of masonry is composed of large cut stones, the smaller of which are from twelve to thirty feet in length, nine feet broad, and six feet thick; and three, on the west side, are the celebrated "Three Stones," which gave the temple the name *τριλιθον*, trilithon. One of them is sixty-four feet long, another sixty-three feet eight inches, and the third sixty-three feet; in all one hundred and ninety feet eight inches, and they are thirteen feet in height, and not less than this in thickness. But the stone *facile princeps* among the colossal blocks is the great corner stone, in the course underlying the trilithon, which has hitherto been supposed to be composed of two stones, but which is evidently one stone, sixty-seven feet long by eighteen feet wide and thirteen feet high, being thus larger than either of the three lying above it. (Compare these dimensions with the great stone in the quarry on page 235.)

These colossal substructions are of themselves one of the wonders of the world, and were there no splendid temples above them, would still fill us with astonishment and compel our admiration. Beneath this great platform are vast vaulted passages like railway tunnels, of massive architecture and beautifully constructed. The arches are evidently Roman, but the foundations are older, being of the same massive stones which appear outside on the north and

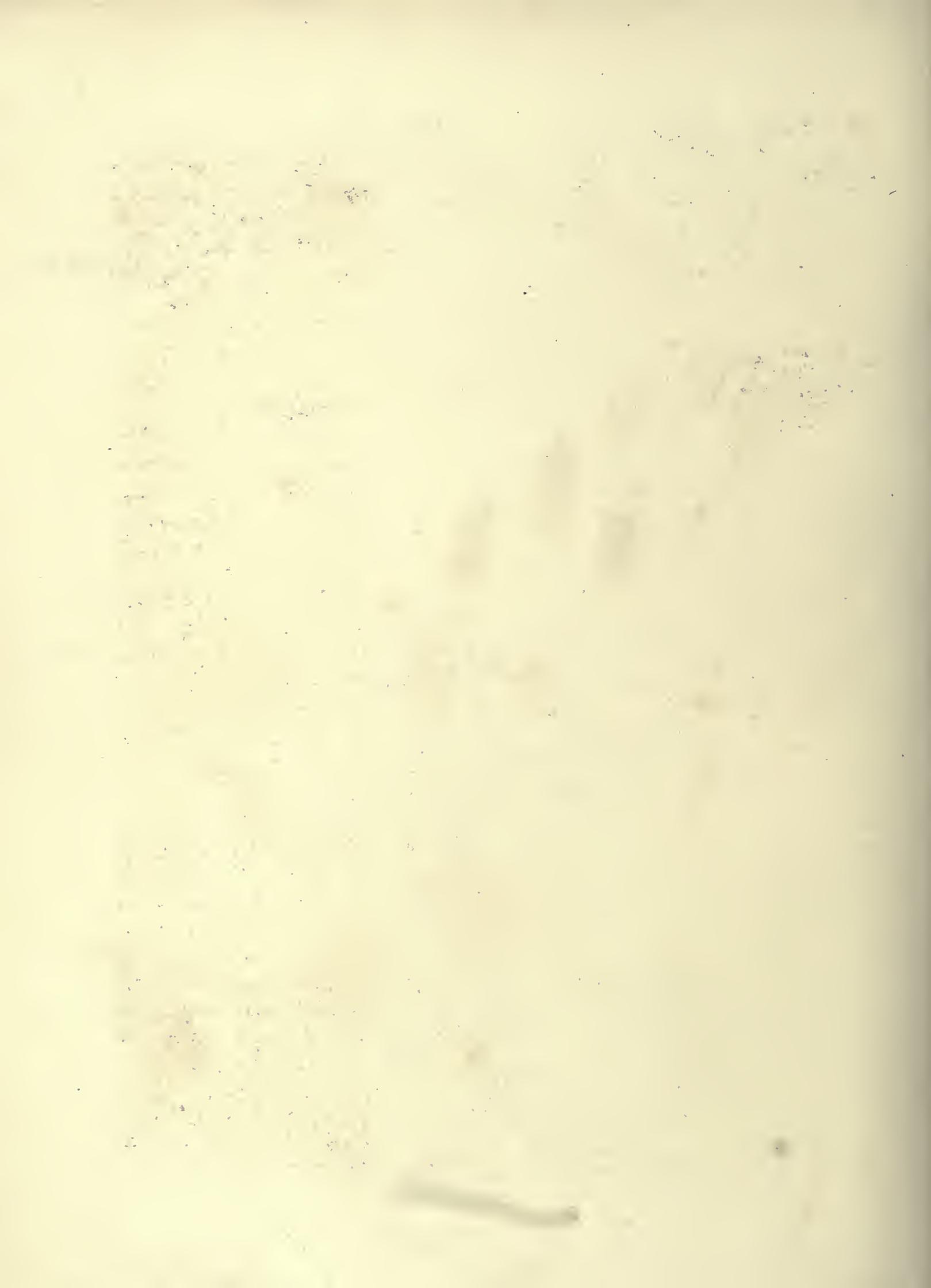




J. SADDLER, SCULPT.

LEBANON RANGE AND BAAIBEC.

J. D. WOODWARD, PINX.



west, and must have supported colossal arches long anterior to the Roman era. Two of these great vaults run parallel with each other from east to west, and are connected by a third running at right-angles to them, from north to south. There are also vaults beneath the Temple of the Sun, and sculptured chambers on the south side of the southern vault.

We now ride into the southern vault or tunnel at its eastern entrance (see page 215), and soon find ourselves in darkness, the arch behind us looking like a window curtained with green foliage, and the arch opening in front, almost choked with the pile of débris beyond it, glares with the reflection of the sunlight. Overhead we could distinguish, by the light cast on them from behind us, huge busts *in relief* at the intersection of the groined arches. As we advanced they grew more and more dim, until we strained our eyes in trying to count them. At night the Ba'albek shepherds drive their flocks into this vast subterranean chamber, secure from the storm, and safe from the attack of man or beast. We soon emerged from this underground ride and came up into the temple area. A heavy shower drove us under the northern peristyle of the Temple of the Sun (see page 217), on our left, for refuge, whence we had leisure to survey the scene. Behind us rose the smooth-cut wall of the cella, one hundred and sixty feet long, and around us were fragments of the six columns of the original fifteen which formed the northern peristyle, together with entablatures, capitals, and the exquisitely carved blocks of the sculptured ceiling. To the north-west, about sixty yards distant, rise the stately forms of the six remaining columns of the peristyle of the Great Temple (see page 230). As we looked up, the lofty ceiling seemed composed of a web of the most delicate tracery. On examining the huge blocks which had fallen and lay around us on every side, we observed that each slab was slightly concave on the lower surface. In the middle of each slab is a hexagonal panel, forming the setting of a bust of a god or king in relief. Smaller busts occupy the angles formed by the



UNDER THE PERISTYLE, TEMPLE OF THE SUN, BA'ALBEK.

On the west side, looking towards Lebanon. Compare page 217.

interlacing compartments, a most intricate and beautiful design. Some of the slabs are sixteen feet square, and are nearly five feet in thickness. This temple, known to the Arabs as *Dar es Sa'adeh*, or "Court of Happiness," and generally known as the Temple of the Sun, was two hundred and twenty-five feet in length, including the colonnades, and its breadth about one hundred and twenty (see page 217). The cella, or temple proper, was one hundred and sixty feet long by eighty-five feet broad, surrounded by the magnificent peristyle of fifteen columns on each side and eight at each end, counting the corner columns both ways. At the eastern end was an inside row of six fluted Corinthian columns, and an additional column on each side opposite the north and south walls of the cella, which are extended to form the vestibule. Four columns only remain perfect of this magnificent portico, those of the south-east angle (see page 231). The frieze and cornice above these four columns are most beautiful. A battlemented tower was built over them by the Muslims, who also barbarously raised a huge wall directly in front of the great gate of the temple; but this wall was demolished by Mr. Barker, C.E., in July, 1870, by order of the late Râshid Pasha, who was then Governor-General of Syria.

Climbing over heaps of ruins, we find ourselves in an open space east of the temple, and turning westward we behold that architectural gem, the celebrated portal of the temple (see page 226). Every ornament that could be introduced into Corinthian architecture is lavished on this portal, and yet it is perfectly light and graceful. It is twenty-one feet in width and forty-two feet high. It is composed of nine great stones, six forming the jambs and three the lintel. Each of these stones is of enormous dimensions. When I visited Ba'albek, in 1856, the central block or keystone of the lintel, weighing some sixty tons, had slipped down about two feet. When Pococke and Wood sketched the ruins this portal was in a perfect state, but in the earthquake of 1759 A.D. it sunk down between the two others. It is now supported by a pillar of rough masonry which entirely covers the body of the eagle carved on the soffit. He holds a caduceus, or Mercury's wand, in his talons, and in his beak the strings of long garlands extending each way, and having the ends supported by flying genii. This eagle is crested, and hence is not the Roman eagle, but is supposed to be the Oriental eagle consecrated to the sun. The ornamentation around the portal is the most elaborate known in all the range of Corinthian architecture. Not only the architrave, but the frieze and the cornice are profusely decorated. There are ears of corn, grapes, and vine-leaves, while genii lurk among the leaves in the lower compartments formed by the intertwining vine, though all are sadly marred by barbarian hands. The surviving scroll on the right is a gem in itself. The interior of the cella is divided into two parts, the nave measuring ninety-eight feet by sixty-seven, and the sanctum, or adytum, occupying thirty-six feet of the west end. It has no windows or apertures for light. High authorities have doubted whether it ever had a roof, but the immense mass of débris in the interior would indicate that the roof had fallen in, and there are mortices nearly a foot square over the pilasters, which would imply the existence of beams across the cella at some time in the past. Moreover, the coins on which both this temple and the temple of Jupiter are figured

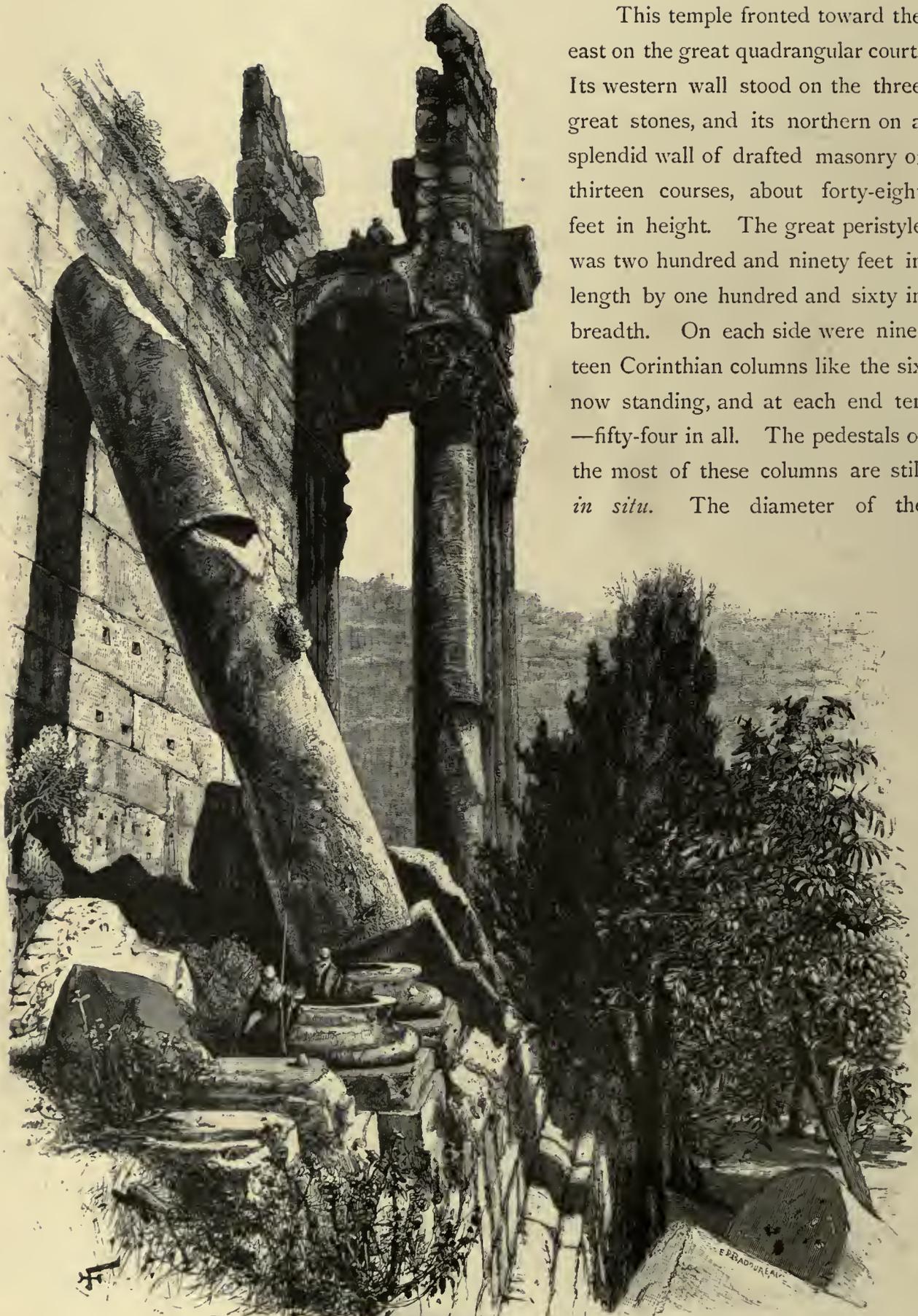
in relief represent both as having perfect gables and, as far as appearances are concerned, perfect roofs. The collection of M. Charlier, in Beirût, contains coins of Ba'albek which plainly illustrate this fact. The nave of the cella has six fluted attached columns on each side, between which are two rows of niches, the lower row with a circular scalloped top and a bracket beneath, and the upper with triangular pediments, or tabernacles, forming canopies for the statues. The carving of the canopies is strikingly distinct and bold, as though executed yesterday, the rosettes and arabesques standing out, almost separated from the stone.

The sanctum, or holy place for the altar, was about five feet above the main floor of the cella, and thirteen steps led up to it. At each end of the steps a door led down to the vaults, from which the priests uttered their mysterious oracular responses. The screen between the nave and the adytum was supported by fluted columns on each side, and on the walls are undulating figures in high relief, representing a sacrificial procession. Maundrell, in 1697, says that on that part of the partition which remained in his day are "carvings *in relievo*, representing Neptune, Triton, fishes, sea-gods, Arion and his dolphin, and other marine figures." A more exquisitely beautiful view than that from the east of the portal looking in upon this lavish treasure-house of sculpture cannot be found in the East or the West (see page 226).

On each side of the portal within are pillars, in both of which is a spiral staircase leading to the top. The flaking off of the face of the pillar on the south side distinctly shows the structure of this staircase. The exterior of the façade of the temple is in all stages of decay. The rude hand of barbarians, searching for the iron dowels or metal cores between the joints of the columns, has dug away the base of most of the standing columns to the very centre.

Four columns are standing on the south-east side, three on the west, and nine on the north side (see page 217). Each column is composed of three pieces, jointed so perfectly that a sheet of paper could not be inserted between the edges. Such perfect jointing, and the perfect preservation of the edges, would indicate that the three blocks must have been placed in position when rough, and then rounded and polished while standing. The sculpture of the capitals and entablatures was probably also executed after the blocks were in place; in proof of which the cornice of the rectangular exædram in the north-west corner of the quadrangle is partly sculptured, and partly left plain and unfinished. One of the columns on the south side fell about one hundred years ago against the wall of the cella, where it still stands in a leaning position, and although it broke in one of the stones in the cella wall, it is so well put together that it remains unbroken to this day (see page 222). The pedestals, still in place on the south side, fill one with wonder. But the crowning feature in the ruins of Ba'albek is the six columns. The first rays of sunrise fall upon the aerial entablature, seemingly hung in mid air, and the last rays of sunset gild it with indescribable glory. The first thought is one of wonder that they have stood so long. They stand on a wall fifty feet in height, which formed the southern wall of the great temple or peristyle (see pages 230 and 235).

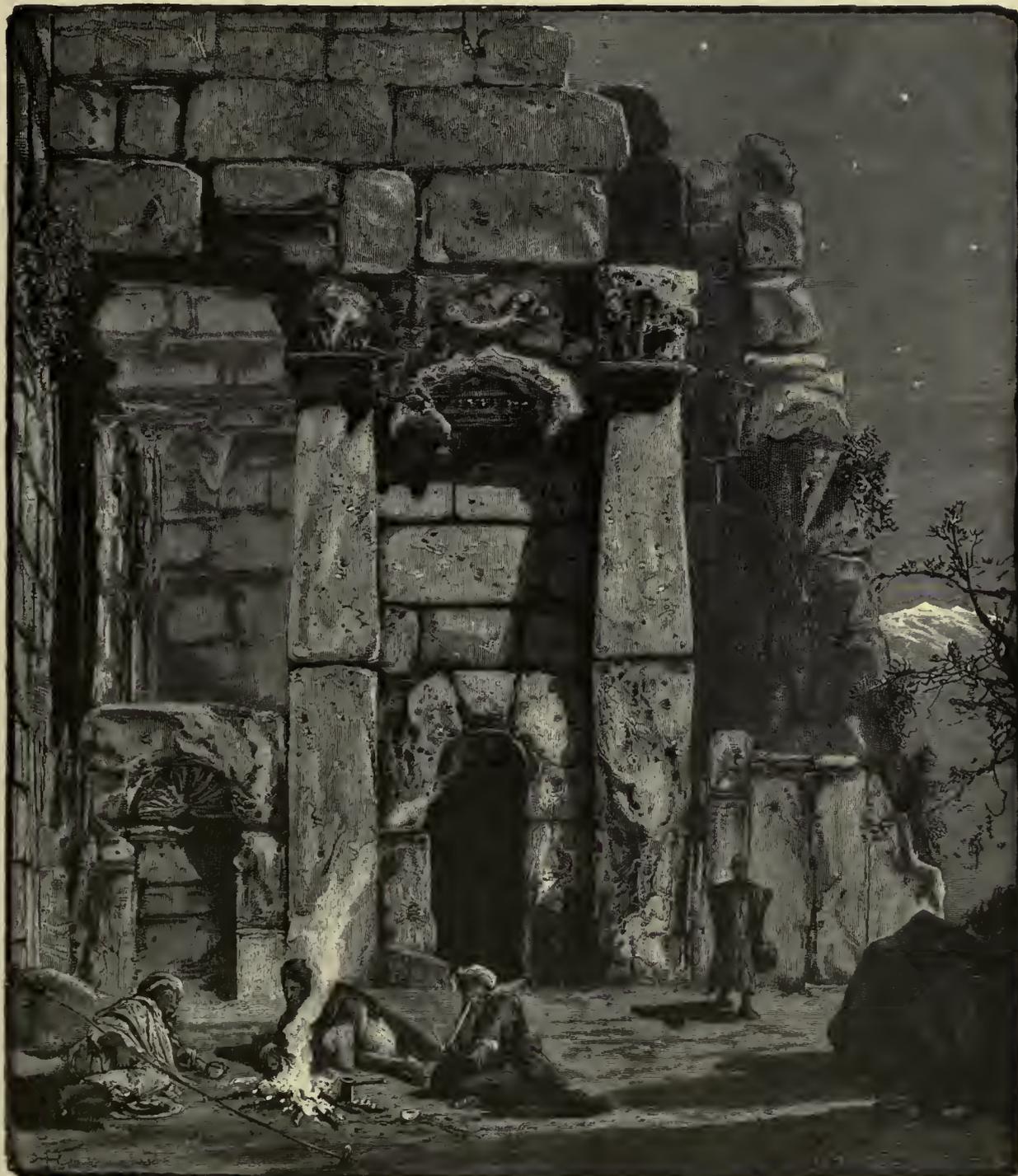
This temple fronted toward the east on the great quadrangular court. Its western wall stood on the three great stones, and its northern on a splendid wall of drafted masonry of thirteen courses, about forty-eight feet in height. The great peristyle was two hundred and ninety feet in length by one hundred and sixty in breadth. On each side were nineteen Corinthian columns like the six now standing, and at each end ten—fifty-four in all. The pedestals of the most of these columns are still *in situ*. The diameter of the



THE FALLEN COLUMN, BA'ALBEK.

In the peristyle on the south side of the Temple of the Sun, where only four connected columns remain *in situ*. Several shafts have fallen from the temple platform into the little orchard below.

columns is seven feet and three inches at the base, and six feet six at the top. As you look at them from a distance they seem much smaller, the perfect grace and symmetry of the proportions completely deceiving the observer; and it is only when standing by the base of



SOUTH WING OF THE PORTICO OF THE GREAT TEMPLE, BA'ALBEK.

The floor of the portico is twenty feet above the level of the adjoining ground, and it is probable that it was approached from the east by a broad flight of steps.

a prostrate column and actually measuring it, that one can credit its immense size, and believe that it is more than twenty-one feet in circumference. Each shaft is composed of three stones, and the height from the base to the top of the capital is seventy feet. Add to this fifteen

feet, the height of the entablature, ascertained by measuring the fragments on the ground, and the wall of forty feet below, and we have a total height of one hundred and twenty-five feet above the plain. What adds greatly to the beauty of the six columns now standing is the orange-coloured weather rust, which gives them a golden glow in almost every light, whether morning, noon, or sunset, and a mellow tint even by moonlight. One cannot look upon them without a feeling of indignation at the vandalism of the Arabs or Turks, who have dug them away at the bottom to secure the paltry value of the iron dowels which hold them in place. (See page 230, and for a distant view of the columns, see page 235.)

The base of the third pillar from the east is undermined to a depth of three feet on the northern side. The western column overhangs the base on the north-west side some thirteen inches, and the upper section of the eastern column is so crumbled that it would seem only a matter of months that its noble capital and entablature will come plunging to the earth. The three stones of which each is composed were jointed with mathematical precision, so that at a short distance, even after the attrition of centuries, the joints are almost invisible. The carving of the capitals on the northern face is almost completely gone, while on the south side it is perfect. The reason is, the bitter freezing winds which blow from the north during the winter months are gradually disintegrating the stone.

You are never weary of looking at the columns. At any distance, from any side, and in any light, they are the same majestic awe-inspiring objects, and you envy the artist traveller who can transfer to canvas their inimitable proportions and exquisite colouring. In the time of Wood and Dawkins, in 1751, nine of these columns were standing. It is impossible to decide whether this matchless peristyle once enclosed a cella with arched peristyles and sculptured soffits, as in the Temple of the Sun (see page 217). An eave trough ran along the whole length of the cornice on the top, and over every column was an eave spout of stone, some of which in both temples are still perfect.

Whether roofed or open, whether vaulted or hypæthral, it must have been the glory of its age, and the finest specimen of Corinthian architecture ever built. How were these ponderous cornice blocks, each weighing nearly one hundred tons, raised to this great height? Expensive and clumsy as modern science might regard it, we see no other practicable hypothesis than that which we have offered for the removal of the four cyclopean stones, namely, on rollers moving on inclined planes or embankments of earth from the quarries to the very summit of the columns.

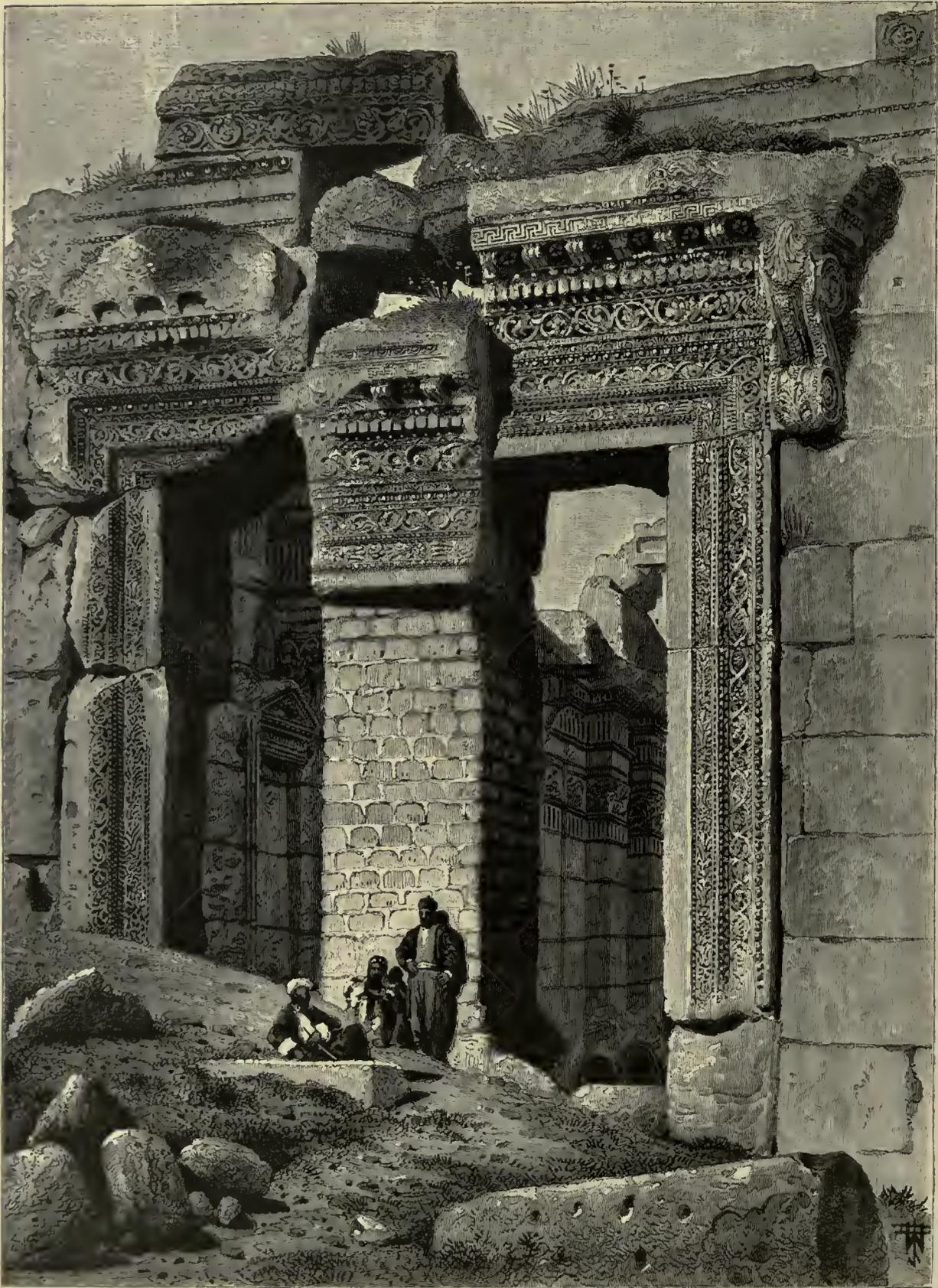
Moving eastward, we now leave the six columns (see page 230) and enter the vast quadrangular area known as the Great Court, our course being that of the ancient devotees on passing *out* of the great temple. In front we see in the distance the triple gateway with the hexagonal court, and in a direct line another triple portal leading to the great portico. We pause in the great quadrangle. Here, around the sides, are gems of ancient sculpture enough to detain the artist for weeks. This court is four hundred and fifty feet from north to south, and about four hundred from east to west. Beginning on the western side nearest

the peristyle, we pass through the semicircular wall, which is the principal relic of the magnificent basilica of Constantine. Turning north, we pass along about one hundred feet without finding traces of *exedræ*. In the north-west corner there is first a large chamber with a door, then a rectangular recess with four columns in front, a part of whose cornice is still unfinished, then a semicircular *exedræ*, with a magnificent groined roof supported by two columns. These alcoves, as well as the successive semicircular and rectangular *exedræ* on the north, east, and south sides, are lavishly decorated with shell-topped niches, canopies, rosettes, and arabesques of the most elaborate and minute character. Here were statues innumerable, which doubtless now lie buried under the masses of *débris* which fill the area. The entablature ran uninterrupted all around the court, the frieze having rich ornaments of pomegranates, grapes, vine-leaves, and flowers. In one is a head surrounded with a fan-like canopy of scaly wings; in another a winged dragon. All are decorated within and without with pilasters. There are eight chambers with doors, eight rectangular alcoves with columns, four semicircular dome-roofed *exedræ*, two niches eighteen feet wide for colossal statues, one on each side of the triple gateway leading into the hexagon, and in the southern niche, among the huge fallen arch stones which formed the ceiling, is a curious circular keystone, as perfect and sharply cut as when fresh from the hand of the builder.

The forty-four columns which supported the roofs of these alcoves were of Syenite granite, twenty-nine inches in diameter. As Wood found only the *shafts* of Syenite, he inferred that the bases and capitals of these columns were of the native limestone, the same rock with the rest of the temple—a very probable supposition.

Amid this maze of architectural wonders and unsolved questions, we will not attempt to offer any other solution of the mode of transporting these columns than to suppose them floated from Egypt to Seleucia on rafts, then up the river Orontes as far as practicable, and thence on sledges to the temples of Ba'albek and Palmyra.

On the east of the quadrangle is a triple gateway, the broad portal now in ruins, being fifty feet wide, with two side portals of ten feet, leading into the hexagonal court. This hexagon is two hundred feet in breadth, east and west, and two hundred and fifty from north to south. On the east and around the north and south angles were rectangular *exedræ* or alcoves, with smaller rooms intervening. The roofs of the alcoves were supported by twenty columns, all now fallen. The effect of this hexagonal court to one entering from the eastern portico must have been impressive, with its fine proportions and the glimpses of the great peristyle beyond. Within this hexagon are immense mounds of earth, piled against the north and south walls. May not this mass of earth have been brought in by the Saracens to aid them in rolling up the huge blocks to the top of the fortress walls, and then left as slopes for their soldiers to mount on to the loopholes above? We wonder at the cyclopean work of the Phœnicians, but one cannot help admiring the prodigious energy of the Saracens, who lifted these huge blocks from one place to another as if they had been mere toys.



GATEWAY TO THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN, BA'ALBEK.

It is twenty-one feet in width, and forty-two feet high. The modern masonry, which supports the displaced keystone, conceals the crested eagle carved upon its soffit.

We have now reached the second triple gateway, leading to the outer portico. There is a central gateway seventeen feet wide, with side arched portals ten feet wide. Passing through, we find ourselves in the magnificent portico, a worthy entrance to so splendid an interior.



RUINED MOSQUE, NORTH OF BA'ALBEK.

Rudely built of ancient materials. There are ten columns of polished red granite and eighteen limestone columns, all surmounted by richly carved limestone capitals.

This portico was approached on the east side, as we have already seen, by an immense staircase now entirely gone, its materials having been used in building the Saracenic fortress which walled up the entrance. The floor is twenty feet above the outside level, and the portico is one hundred and eighty feet long by thirty-seven feet deep, having twelve columns in front, of

which only the pedestals remain. The columns were four feet three inches in diameter. On two of the pedestals are Latin inscriptions, which in the time of Wood and Dawkins were distinct, but are now almost obliterated. They are nearly identical, beginning, "Magnis Diis Heliopolitanis, pro salute Antonini Pii Felicis Augusti et Julię Augustę matris domini nostri castrorum," and are votive memorials in behalf of Antoninus Caracalla (son of Severus), and of the Empress Julia Domna. The north and south wings, or pavilions, of this porch, are constructed of cyclopean stones, which, in any other ruin than Ba'albek, would be regarded as wonderful, but here they are but a minor feature in a structure which is throughout overwhelmingly great and impressive (see page 223). There are stones twenty-four feet five inches long. In front, near the bottom of each pavilion, is a door leading to the vaults beneath in the substructions. The top of each has been rebuilt by the Saracens, and their military constructions have well-nigh effaced the form and outline of the portico. The wings are ornamented with niches, cornices, and pilasters. If all the niches and brackets in these ruins were once occupied by statues, there must be untold treasures of ancient sculpture still buried beneath the débris.

Having now completed the circuit of the Acropolis, with its great temples, courts, and portico, there still remain the Temple of Venus, or Nymphasum (El Barbara), the Mosque Râs el 'Ain, and Kubbet Dûris (see page 214). The Temple of Venus, or Circular Temple (see page 234), stands about one hundred and fifty yards from the south-east angle of the Temple of the Sun. It is a beautiful little Corinthian structure, circular within and without, with handsome niches at regular intervals each flanked by two columns, so as to give the building the appearance of an octagon. Wreaths hang gracefully from the cornice over each niche. The cella is thirty-eight feet in diameter. The number of columns is six, each nine feet distant from the wall. The entablature supported by these projecting columns does not run continuously from column to column, but recedes in a graceful curve almost to the wall of the cella, giving the whole an appearance of lightness and elegance rarely equalled. It is looked upon as the gem of Ba'albek. In the days of Maundrell it was used as a Greek Church, although seriously shattered by earthquakes, and he remarks, "It were well if the danger of its falling, which perpetually threatens, would excite those people to use a little more fervour in their prayers than they generally do." Little did Maundrell think that in 1880 the temple would still be standing. The Greeks no longer worship in it, but it is still beautiful, even in decay. It is now called "El Barbara," in honour of St. Barbara. It is under the special watch and ward of an old Metwâleh woman, Um Kasim, who demands bakshish on the ground that she keeps watch over it, and lights olive-oil lamps for those who wish to make vows to the patron saint.

The fertility of the soil, the proximity of the water of Râs el 'Ain, and that instinct of self-preservation which drives the Syrians everywhere to crowd their houses and gardens together for mutual protection, have combined to choke up every available space around these ruins with houses, trees, and gardens, so that it is becoming yearly more and more difficult to examine

them with advantage. On the north side of the modern village is a ruined mosque (see page 227), which contains a large number of beautiful columns of syenite and porphyry, taken from the courts of the temple, reminding one of the vast collection of ancient columns of various styles of architecture now standing in the Mosque El 'Aksa, in Jerusalem. There are ten columns of red syenite polished, and eighteen of the native limestone, all with limestone capitals.

The ancient walls of the city of Ba'albek were some two miles in extent, but hardly a trace of them now remains, excepting on the south-west side, where its shattered towers and battlements stand out on the hillside in bold relief against the sky. And near the hotel of Arbîd you pass through the ruins of the wall, on entering Ba'albek from the west.

About one half-hour's ride south-west from the ruins is the very picturesque ruin called Kubbet Dûris, or Dome of Dûris, consisting of eight polished columns of Egyptian granite, supporting a clumsy structure of limestone blocks (see page 214). The columns were evidently brought from the temples, and one of them is upside down. It was no doubt the tomb or chapel of some Muslim saint, as a sarcophagus stands on end for the mihrab, to show the direction of Mecca.

Near one of the mills on the south-east side of the Lesser Temple a beautiful shell-topped canopy from the ruins has been set up as a mihrab, and the well-polished flat stones a few yards distant show that the faithful have prayed here for many years.

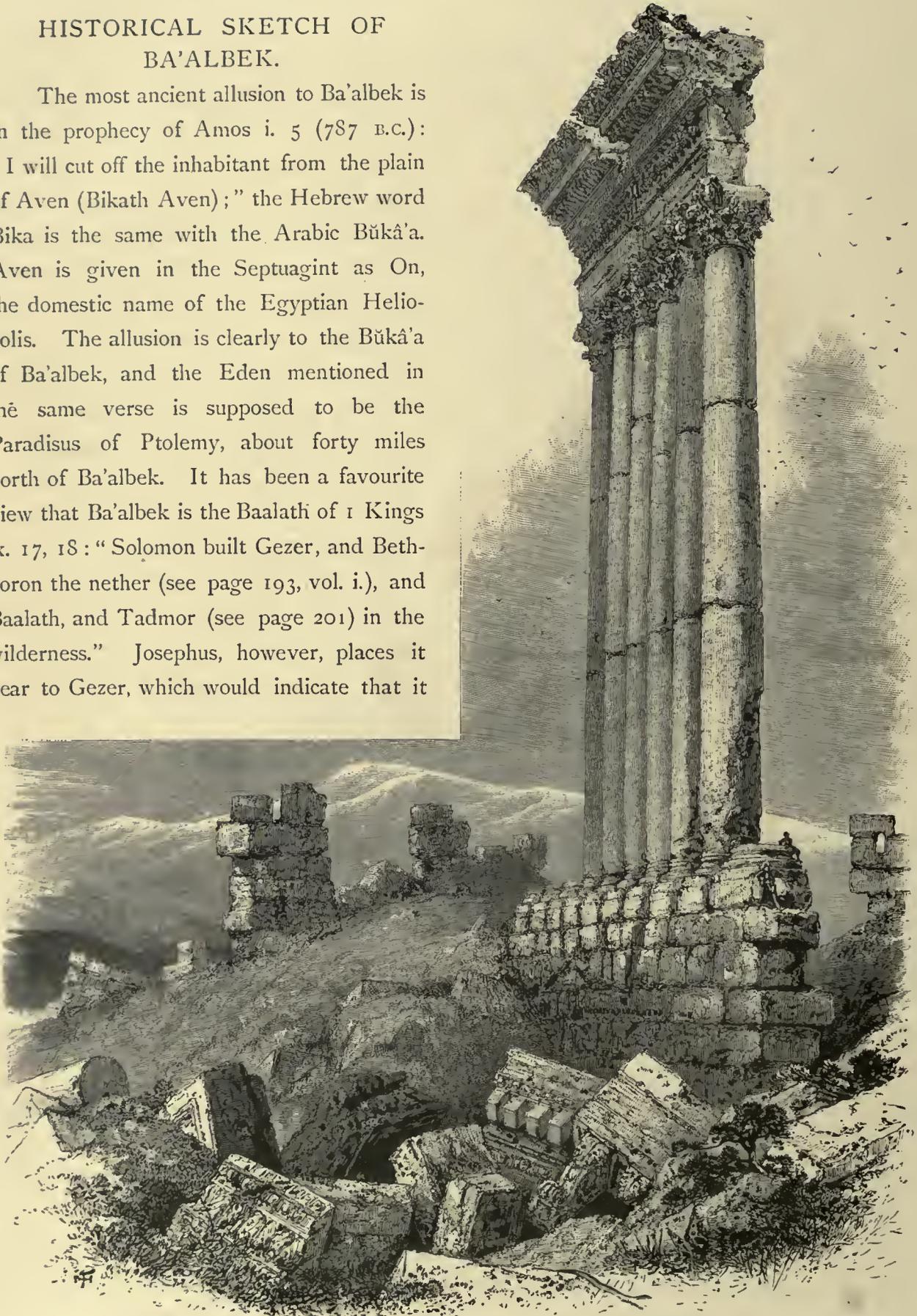
We now return to take a farewell look at the Acropolis and a last ride around the gigantic walls. We may spend hours in walking slowly around the cyclopean structure, no part of which is more impressive than the north-west corner, where the colossal stones of the substructures ever fill one with awe, and the great stones along the moat on the north side are a marvel of the cyclopean work of the builders.

One of the best views in or around Ba'albek is in the month of April, from the great quadrangle, as you look *through* the ruins towards the west, with the six columns as a foreground, the green plain of the Bûkâ'a and Sahel Belad Ba'albek beyond, and the snow-crowned summits of the Lebanon in the distance. The deep blue sky, the indescribable transparency of the air, and the brilliant orange tint of the ruins in the morning sunlight, combined with the gleaming of the distant snow, form a picture kept among the choicest treasures of memory, and preserved in the portfolio of many an artist and amateur.

There is, however, another spot which, for a morning view, is unsurpassed. In the extreme north-west corner of the enclosure of the six columns (see page 230) is a low opening through the wall. Creeping through, you come out upon the square tower of the north-west corner into what was once a corner room or chapel, the plaster lining of the wall still being visible. Below you are the colossal stones of the northern Phœnician wall, where the "Hajr el Hûbla" (see page 235) was designed to lie, and before you a view of Sahel Ba'albek and Northern Lebanon which can never be forgotten. From this shady retreat I lately had a view of the sun rising on Lebanon, which I would recommend to all visitors to this city of sun-worship.

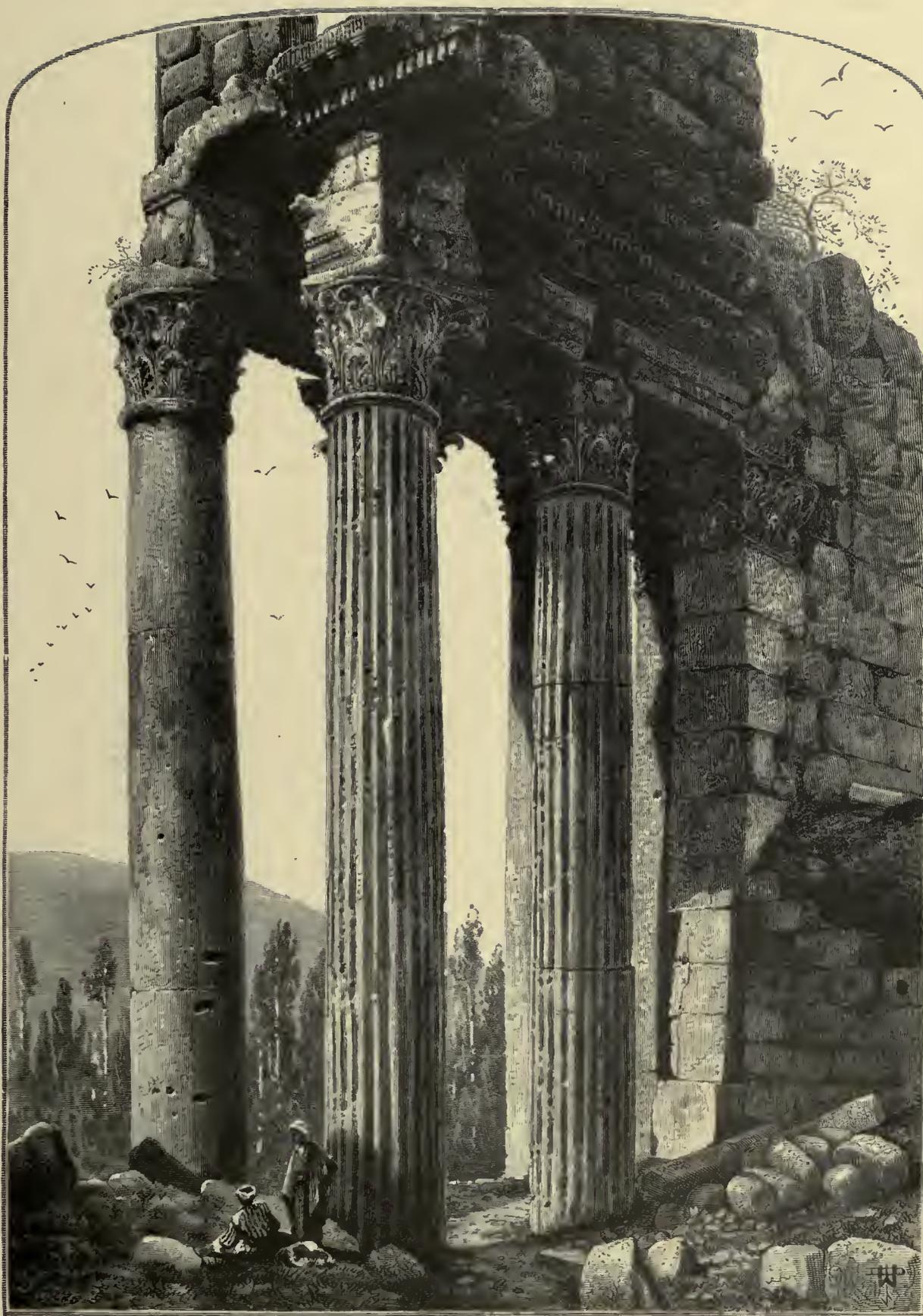
HISTORICAL SKETCH OF BA'ALBEK.

The most ancient allusion to Ba'albek is in the prophecy of Amos i. 5 (787 B.C.): "I will cut off the inhabitant from the plain of Aven (Bikath Aven);" the Hebrew word Bika is the same with the Arabic Büká'a. Aven is given in the Septuagint as On, the domestic name of the Egyptian Heliopolis. The allusion is clearly to the Büká'a of Ba'albek, and the Eden mentioned in the same verse is supposed to be the Paradisus of Ptolemy, about forty miles north of Ba'albek. It has been a favourite view that Ba'albek is the Baalath of 1 Kings ix. 17, 18: "Solomon built Gezer, and Bethoron the nether (see page 193, vol. i.), and Baalath, and Tadmor (see page 201) in the wilderness." Josephus, however, places it near to Gezer, which would indicate that it



THE SIX COLUMNS OF THE GREAT TEMPLE, BA'ALBEK.

The winter winds of centuries have almost destroyed the carving on the north side of the capitals; but the south side of the capitals and of the entablature, shown above, are in a good state of preservation.



THE SOUTH-EAST CORNER OF THE TEMPLE OF THE SUN, BA'ALBEK.

At the east end of this temple there was a vestibule with a row of fluted columns within the outer line of plain columns; only two of these are now standing.

is Baalath of the tribe of Dan. Baalgad also, thought by many to be Ba'albek, is supposed to be Bâniâs (see page 110), so that we cannot be sure that Solomon had any hand in the erection of these seemingly superhuman structures. Yet an Arab would as soon doubt that Noah built the ark as that Solomon built Ba'albek. The voice of Syrian tradition, among all sects and in every district, is that Solomon built the cyclopean walls of Ba'albek, assisted by the genii who were under his control. Dr. Robinson, whose learned chapter on the history of Ba'albek leaves nothing to be desired, states that "the name Heliopolis, 'City of the Sun,' implies that this city, like its namesake in Egypt, was already consecrated to the worship of the sun. Indeed, the sun was one of the chief divinities in the Syrian and Asiatic worship, and to him was applied in their mythology, as well as to Jupiter and some other gods, the name of Baal, or 'Lord.' The mythology of Egypt had a strong influence upon that of Syria, and it would not be unnatural to suppose a connection between the forms of sun-worship in the two countries. Indeed, this is expressly affirmed; and Macrobius, in the fifth century, narrates that the image worshipped at Heliopolis in Syria was brought from Heliopolis in Egypt."

The whole country in ancient times was given up to Baal-worship. In Hermon and Lebanon, "on every high hill," were groves, domes, and temples sacred to the god of the sun. Baal means lord; in the Arabic Bible it is the word in common use for husband: "A bishop must be the baal of one wife." The name was in old times attached to places innumerable, and Ba'albek was no doubt the centre of the Syrian Baal-worship. The rising sun was waited for by the priests in Ba'albek, who watched the summits of Jebel Sunnîn and Dahr el Kodîb (see page 237), above the cedars, for the first golden rays, and, as they flashed across the plain, the grand daily ceremonies of this grandest temple of ancient or modern times were begun.

Strabo, Pliny, Josephus, and Ptolemy mention Ba'albek under its Greek name, Heliopolis, but the only name known to the modern Syrians is the more tenacious and more ancient Semitic name, Ba'albek. According to the learned work of Mr. Hogg on Ba'albek, the Great Temple was dedicated "Magnis Diis Helinpoleos," "to the Great Gods of Ba'albek," that is, to the whole pantheon of the divinities worshipped here, the greatest of whom was Baal. The niches around the quadrangle and the hexagon, as well as in the two temples, may have been filled with the statues of the whole family of heathen gods.

In the second and third centuries our information with regard to Ba'albek is derived chiefly from coins, of which the number is very great. From these we learn that Ba'albek was a Roman colony, and enjoyed the boon of the *jus Italicum*, only granted to favoured provincial cities. On coins of Nerva (A.D. 96) and Adrian, and on many coins of the later emperors, may be seen the device of a colonist driving two oxen, with legends relating to Heliopolis; such as "COL. JVL. AVG. FEL." There is reason to believe that a colony of military veterans was sent here by Julius Cæsar or Augustus. It is on a coin of Septimus Severus that a temple is first seen with the legend, "Colonia Heliopolis Jovi Optimo Maximo Heliopolitano." On some of the coins are pictures of the two temples, with gables complete, indicating that both temples were finished and roofed. Had they been roofless and simply hypæthral, it is not unlikely

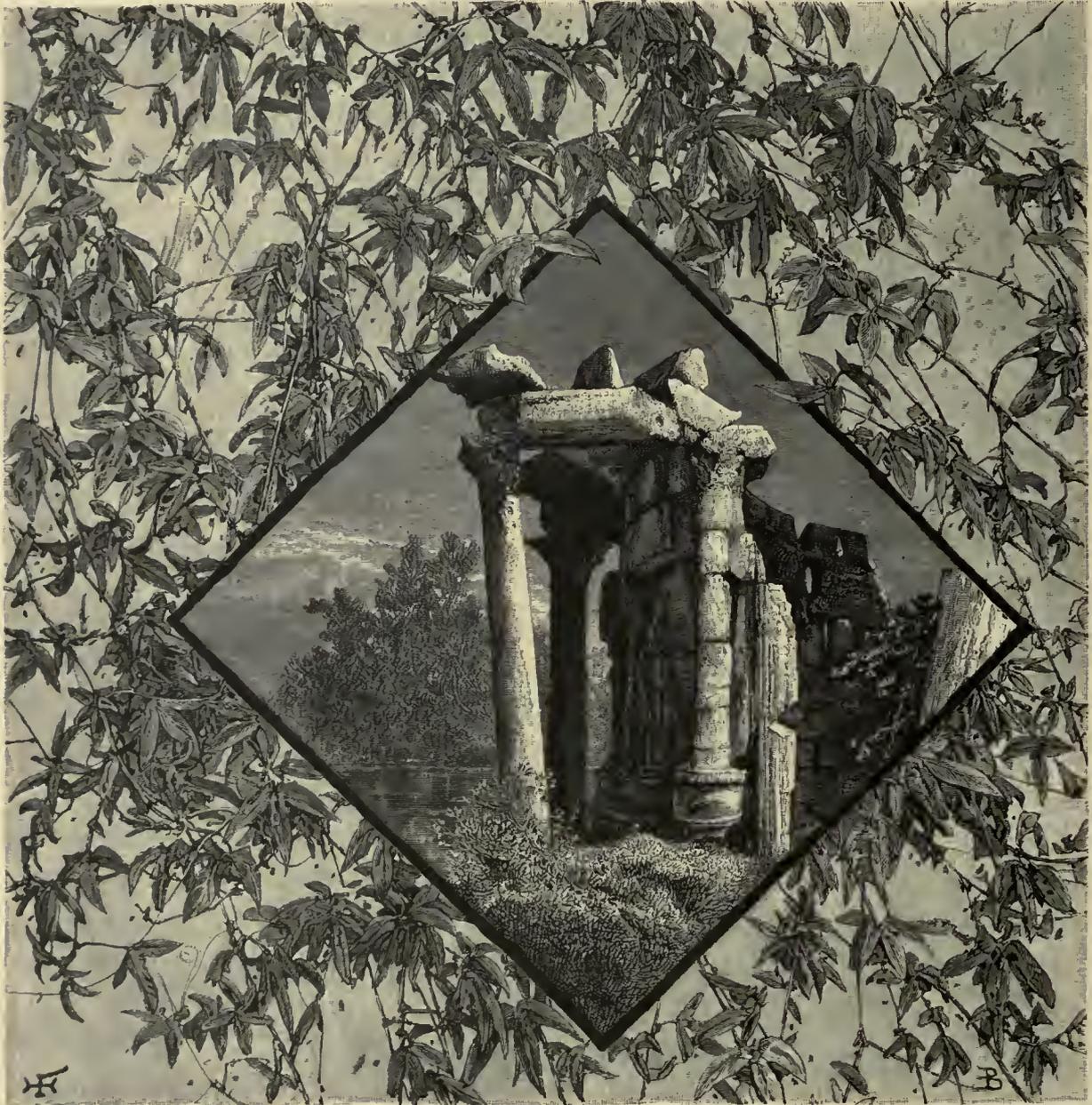
that we should have had coins indicating the fact. On a coin of Byblos of the time of Macrinus, there is a picture of a temple without a roof, and a lofty single column rising from the centre high above the walls.

There are, it seems, no coins extant of this city under the Antonines, and yet there is strong evidence in favour of Antoninus Pius (who died A.D. 161) having contributed to the Acropolis one of its stately temples. It is well known, from ancient records, that this peace-loving emperor (who, in A.D. 140, rebuilt the rampart from the Firth of Forth to the Firth of Clyde, in Scotland) and his coadjutor and adopted son, Marcus Aurelius, were munificent patrons of the cities of Syria. John of Antioch, surnamed Malala, writing in the seventh century, states positively that Antoninus Pius "built at Heliopolis, in Phœnicia of Lebanon, a great temple to Jupiter, one of the wonders of the world;" and he adds, "he also built at Laodicea of Syria a forum, a great and wonderful piece of architecture, together with a public bath called Antoninas." This allusion to Laodicea is of great importance, for although no Ba'albek coins have as yet been found inscribed with the name of Antoninus Pius, there are coins of *Laodicea ad Libanum* on which it appears, proving that he was a patron of that city, and thus giving weight to the words of Malala. The ruins of this once-important place have lately been identified at Tell Neby Mindhû, about thirty-five miles north of Ba'albek, on the road to Emesa (Hums).

Dr. Robinson thinks it probable that Antoninus Pius built the Lesser Temple and dedicated it to Jupiter Baal (*Baal Zeus*), and restored or rebuilt the Great Temple. They are evidently works of the same period. He says, "However strange it may appear that no contemporary writer has alluded to this temple of Antonine, yet the general fact of its erection by him accords well with various other circumstances. The elaborate and ornate style of the architecture belongs to a late period. The massive substructions, indeed, were probably those of an earlier temple which may have been left unfinished or overthrown by earthquakes."

The votive inscriptions, engraved in long slender letters on the pedestals of the portico of the Great Temple, alluded to on page 228, refer, according to De Saulcy, to the gilding of the portico pillars at the expense of a citizen of Ba'albek, probably on the occasion of a visit paid to the temple by the Emperor Caracalla and his mother, the Empress Julia Domna, second wife of the Emperor Septimus Severus. Severus died at York in A.D. 211. Caracalla and his brother Geta succeeded him, but Geta was murdered in A.D. 212. The Emperor Caracalla and his mother, the Empress Julia Domna, journeyed through Egypt and Syria in A.D. 215, and it is natural to conclude that they then visited Ba'albek and that this is the date of the votive tablets inscribed with their names in the portico of the Great Temple. This empress was a native of Syria, and daughter of Bassianus, priest of the temple of the sun at Emesa (Hums), about fifty miles north of Ba'albek. The fact that a daughter of a Syrian priest of the sun was chosen as a consort for a Roman emperor, shows how highly Syrian sun-worship was honoured at that time. Heliogabalus was also a priest of the sun at Emesa, and when he became emperor he retained the title "Sacerdos Dei Solis."

Dr. Robinson, quoting Eusebius, says, "The worship of Venus was also predominant at Heliopolis," and adds, "the licentiousness and the intolerance of heathenism were alike prevalent, as appears from the story of the martyr Gelasinus, the scene of which was Heliopolis, in A.D. 297, under the reign of Diocletian. Gelasinus was an actor, and was to appear before the people assembled in the theatre for the public games. Having embraced Christianity, he



THE TEMPLE OF VENUS, OR CIRCULAR TEMPLE.

In the village of Ba'albek, not far from the south-east corner of the Acropolis. It is now converted into a Muslim shrine, and dedicated to El Barbara.

declined his part, and was thrown by his fellow-actors into the reservoir of the bath, full of warm water, in mockery of his baptism. Having been taken out and dressed in white garments, he still refused to appear in the theatre, crying out, 'I am a Christian; I saw the terrible glory in the bath, and I will die a Christian!' The people rushed upon him, thrust him out of the theatre, and stoned him. His relatives buried the body in the neighbouring village of Mariamme, and there a chapel was erected to his memory.

“When the power of the state, under Constantine, began to be wielded in favour of Christianity, a check was given to the debaucheries and licentious rites of heathenism. An imperial rescript warned the people of Heliopolis against continuing the dissolute practices of their worship, and exhorted them to receive the better faith. At the same time the emperor founded here an immense basilica, and consecrated a bishop with his presbyters and deacons, although there were but few Christians in the city. By the founding of a church we are probably to understand the conversion of the great temple into a basilica.”

The heathen rites and customs of the people were too deeply rooted to be at once eradicated, and the accession of Julian the Apostate to the imperial throne (A.D. 361) was the signal for the violent suppression of Christianity. It was at this time that the people of Heliopolis distinguished themselves by deeds of violence and cruelty, in revenge, it is said, for



THE LARGE STONE IN THE QUARRY, BA'ALBEK.

Called the Hajr el Hübla. It is sixty-eight feet four inches in length. On the under side it is cut away all round, remaining attached to the bed of the rock in the middle along its entire length.

the restraints formerly imposed upon them. Under Julian's immediate successors the tide again slowly turned in favour of Christianity.

Theodosius, who began to reign A.D. 379, converted the temple of *Balanios* (Baal Heliov), at Heliopolis, the great and renowned, the *Trilithon*, into a Christian church.

In 636 Ba'albek, with Damascus, fell under Mohammedan rule, and for three centuries after that time, its history is involved in obscurity, although it is supposed that it continued a powerful city for a century, under the Omeiyad khalifs. A writer in the middle of the tenth century says: "Here are gates of palaces sculptured in marble, and lofty columns, also of marble, and in the whole region of Syria there is not a more stupendous or considerable edifice." Maundrell, Lamartine, and others, have made the same mistake with regard to both Ba'albek and Palmyra, in calling the indurated limestone marble.

Ba'albek was converted by the Muslims into a fortress, and their military structures have

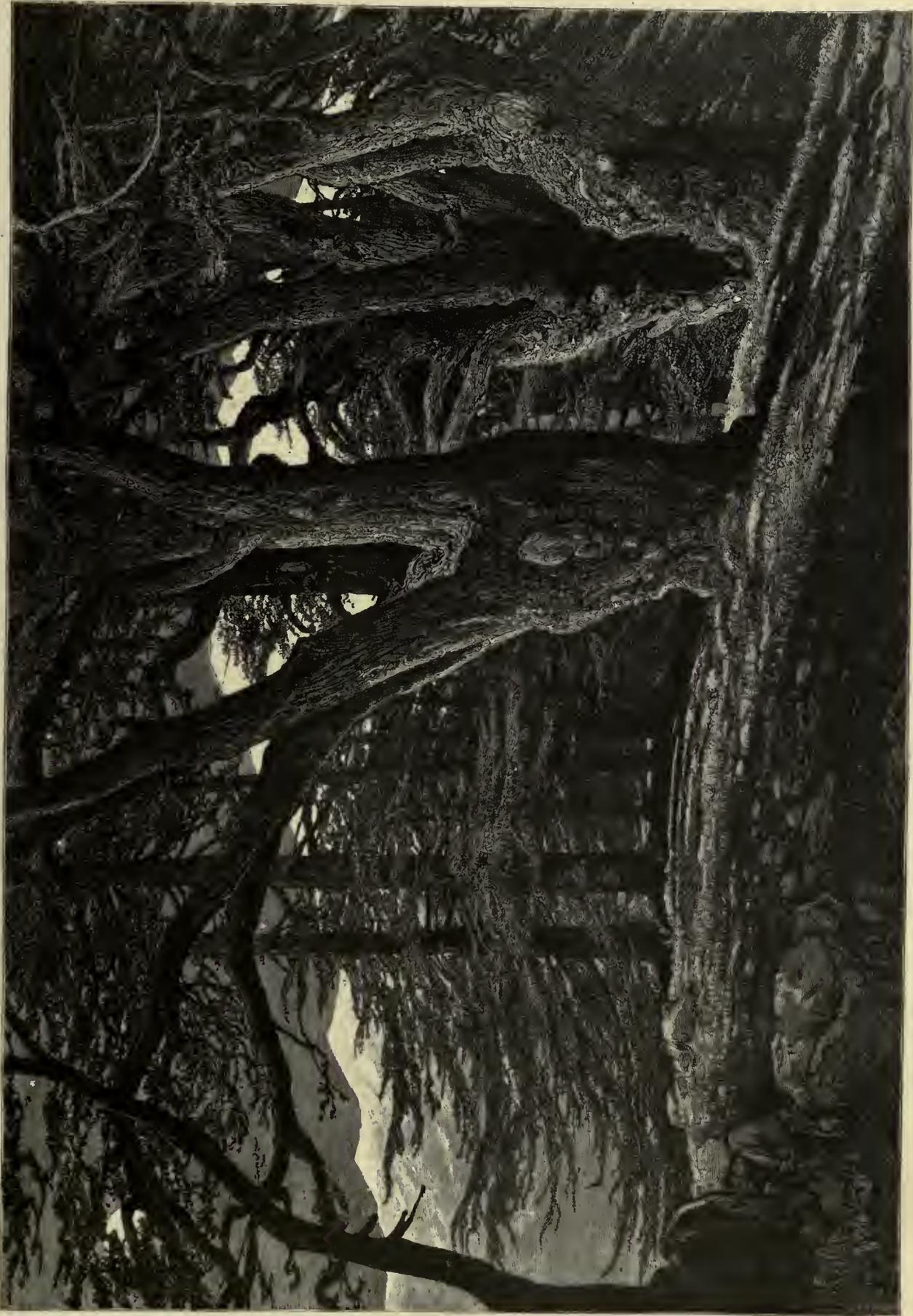
confused the minds of many travellers with regard to the original plan of the temple area. From the tenth to the twelfth centuries the wars between the Egyptians and the Syrian



A CEDAR OF LEBANON.

In the distance there is a glimpse of the Mediterranean Sea. The grove consists of about three hundred and fifty trees, the tallest of which are not more than seventy-eight feet in height. In the midst of the grove there is a Maronite chapel.

Muslims made Ba'albek a point of strategic importance. Edrisi the geographer, in the middle of the twelfth century, speaks of the two temples, and of the tradition which regarded the Great



IN THE GROVE OF CEDARS, LEBANON.
The group of cedars occupies the top of a hill with five culminating points of various sizes. The rock on which the trees grow is white limestone, and the decaying spines, cones, and other matter have formed a dark-coloured soil. In the background rise the snow-covered peaks of Dahr el Kodib; the highest point is ten thousand and fifty feet above the sea-level.

Temple, with the platform of colossal stones, as the work of Solomon. In 1174 Saleh ed Din, commonly called Saladin, captured Damascus, Hums, Hamath, and Ba'albek. In 1260 the general of Mogul Khan destroyed the fortress. Early in the fourteenth century Abulfeda, the Hamathite, describes Ba'albek as an ancient city enclosed by a wall, with a large and strong fortress. At this time one of the quarters of the city was called El Makriz, and here was born the celebrated historian Taki ed din Ahmed, better known by his more usual name El Makrizi. In 1400 Tamerlane, the Tartar conqueror, captured Ba'albek when on his way to Damascus.

The great work of Wood and Dawkins on Ba'albek represents nine columns of the Great Temple standing A.D. 1751. Three of these were destroyed by earthquake in A.D. 1759.

The Harfûsh Emirs and their retainers ruled this region for many years, paying a nominal tribute to the Turks, and grinding the peasantry with merciless extortion. In 1860—the massacre summer—they burned the houses of the Christians in Ba'albek and the adjacent villages, murdered many of the people, and plundered their property. Being themselves Metawileh, or Muslims of the Shia, followers of Ali, they forgot their hatred of the orthodox Sunni Mohammedans, and joined them in the massacre of the infidels. But Beit Harfûsh were always hostile to the Turks, and soon after 1860 were outlawed by the government. The Emir Soleiman and his men fled to the mountains, and for years eluded the pursuit of the irregular cavalry. In 1866 Soleiman was finally captured in a cave near Hums by Hûlû Pasha, and brought into that city with a list of his crimes written on a placard fastened to his breast. He was led to Damascus, and there exhibited for a few days with the card on his breast, and then poisoned. His name will never be forgotten by the people of Ba'albek and the Bûkâ'a.

To-day, the ruthless destruction of the fallen columns and cornices goes on unchecked. The modern town, with the waggon road of the Wâli of Damascus, are using up all the movable fragments of the ancient temples. The papal Greek bishop Basileus is now engaged in building a cathedral at the foot of the slope, south of the Hotel Arbîd. He has bought the site of a small temple on the summit of the southern hill, and is rolling down the fluted columns and cubical blocks of the temple walls to be used in the modern edifice. Various partial attempts have been made to excavate both within and without the ancient ruins. The colossal headless statue now standing at the gate of the Turkish Serâi is an example of what may be expected when a thorough exploration of the ruins shall be made. A few more earthquakes, and a few more winter frosts and gales, will lay the six lordly columns prostrate in the dust. Happy the traveller whose lot it shall be to see Ba'albek even in its present declining glory, before the relentless forces of nature, and the not less relentless hand of man, shall have completed the work of destruction.

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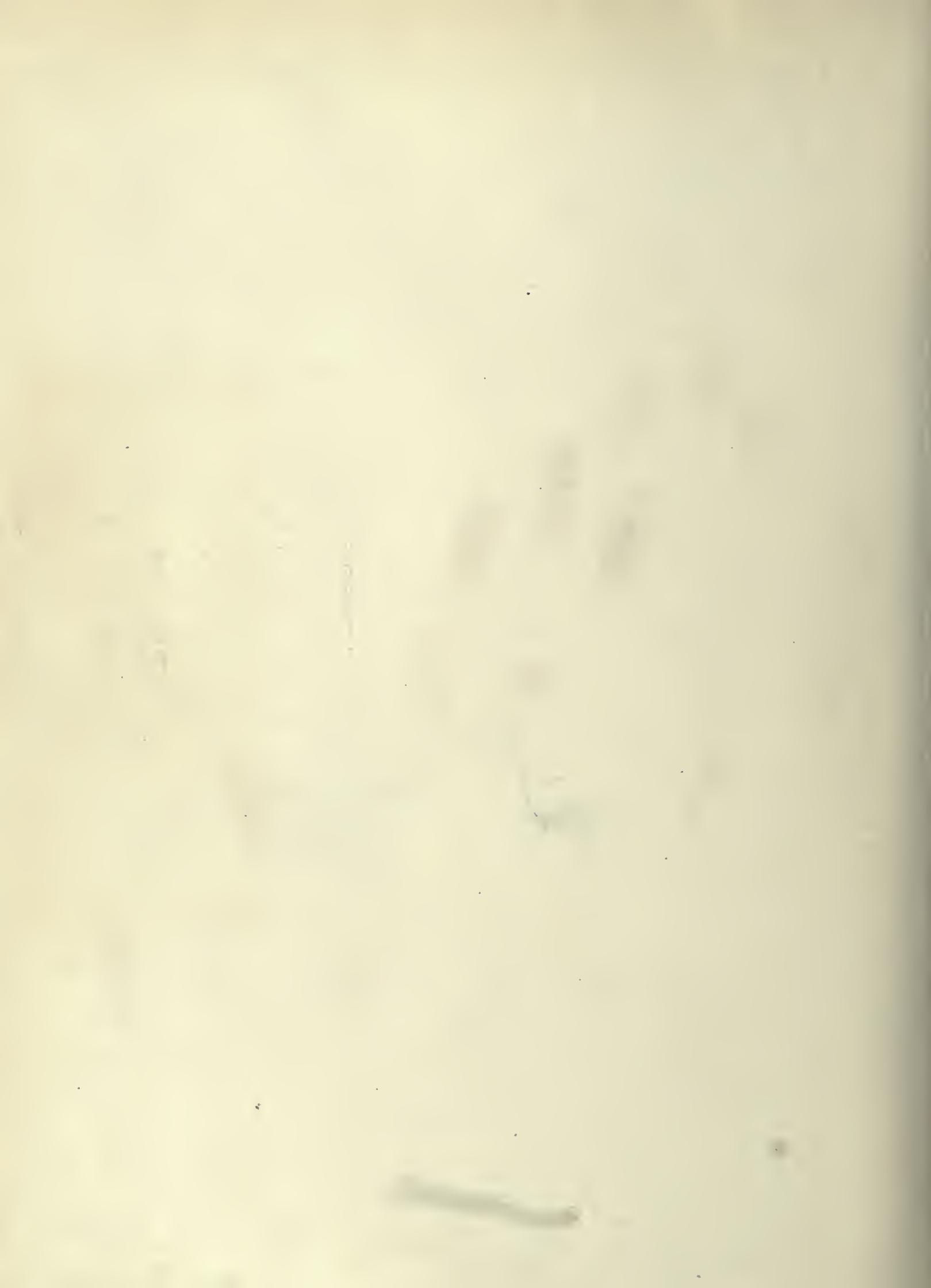
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