

Syria : a lecture / delivered by Winslow Jones, to the members of the Exeter Literary Society, at the Athenaeum, Exeter, November 16th, 1870.

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SYRIA.



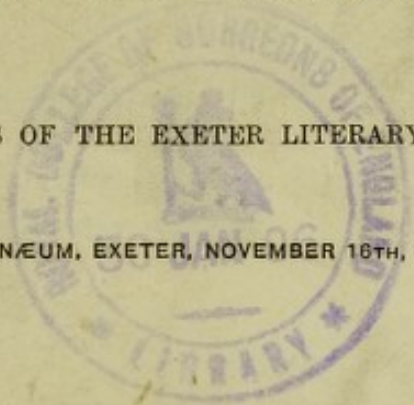
A LECTURE

DELIVERED BY

WINSLOW JONES,

TO THE MEMBERS OF THE EXETER LITERARY SOCIETY.

AT THE ATHENÆUM, EXETER, NOVEMBER 16TH, 1870.



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1871.

SYRIA

A HISTORY

BY W. M. THOMAS

IN TWO VOLUMES

LONDON

1901

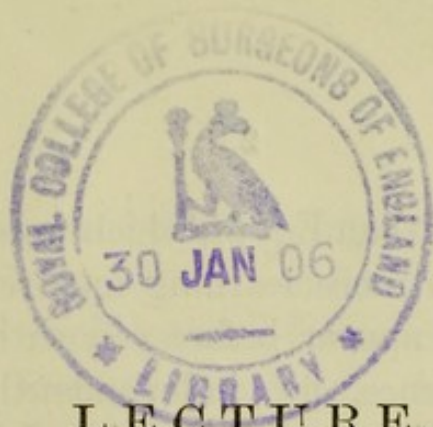


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LECTURE.

A good many customs' duties, which formerly occasioned much annoyance to the traveller, have of late years been abolished, but a new exaction seems now to have sprung up, in this ancient city of Exeter at least, in the demand upon him by the Literary Society of an account of his tour, and he is summoned on his return to stand and deliver a lecture, with as little remorse as his purse would formerly have been demanded by a footpad.

Having, at the end of the summer of 1869, returned from a visit to Egypt and Syria, I was asked by your secretary, in due course, to submit to the usual impost, and though, like the needy knife-grinder, I assured him,

“Story, God bless you, I have none to tell, sir,”

all excuses failed, and a promise was exacted of a lecture during the last winter; but this promise, owing to an accident I afterwards met with, I was unable to fulfil, and after the lapse of a twelve-month I had hoped that the whole affair would have been forgotten; unfortunately for me, and for you also, I fear, your secretary's memory was too good, and, as he has held me to my engagement, I have now to give you a few details and remarks respecting Syria, under the belief that that country will be more

interesting to you than Egypt, which would also in fact demand infinitely more learning and research than I am master of. I appear before you with great reluctance and diffidence, for, independently of limited natural qualifications and education, I had not time, before starting on my tour, to read up the history and description of Syria, and, indeed, owing to weak sight, have had little opportunity of doing so since my return ; the books respecting it, moreover, too often mislead and perplex instead of enlightening ; the tour is best taken in the short interval between the cold rains of winter and the heat of summer, and is, consequently, a hasty one ; I am ignorant of Arabic, possess but a smattering of geology, in spite of the lectures of our friend Mr. Pengelly, and have but a slight knowledge of botany, or rather, I should say, of plants, for of systematic botany I know nothing.

Similar disadvantages, however, though less in degree, have not deterred others from even *publishing* their travels, and we are consequently inundated with a number of books on trite subjects, which too often contain inaccurate or meagre information, while unfortunately many authors are also tempted to indulge in gross exaggeration, or in attempts at fine writing. From this latter charge even Dean Stanley, who ought to know better, is not exempt ; for instance, in the sketch of Egypt, which he has prefixed to his *Sinai and Palestine*, he gravely informs us that “ the vultures, and cormorants, and geese fly like constellations through the blue heavens ;”¹ we have all ~~all~~ seen shooting stars, as they are called, but I have

¹ *Sinai and Palestine*, in connection with their history, by A. P. Stanley, D.D., new edition, London, 1866, introduction, p. xxxvi.

never before heard of a flying constellation, and were such a phenomenon to make its appearance, the most eccentric combination of stars would experience insuperable difficulty in imitating the flight of three birds, all differing widely in their habits. Again, though the Dean ridicules the story of the Angels flying off from Nazareth with the house of the Virgin, and transporting it, after two or three halts, to its present resting place at Loreto, (which, by the way, he, in common with most of our countrymen, persists in miscalling Loretto), he still refers to it as "the petrification of the last sigh of the Crusades;"² a sculptor may mould into material form his visions of beauty, as the old masters depicted on wood or canvas their ideal of the grace and purity of the Madonna, but I am at a loss to imagine how such a vague and lackadaisical thing as a sigh can be turned into stone, and the Angels moreover, according to the infallible authority of a Bull, merely flew away with the old *casa santa*, and did not attempt to build a new one.

As regards the charge of exaggeration, some of you have doubtless read, or taken up, *the giant cities of Bashan*,³ by Mr. Porter, the author of Murray's *handbook for Syria*, who seems to have imbibed the belief of the Moslem that every prophet was a giant; he informs us in the early part of the book, "that traditional memorial of the primeval giants exist, even now, in almost every section of Palestine in the form of graves of enormous dimensions, as the grave

² *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 449.

³ *The giant cities of Bashan, and Syria's holy places*, by the Rev. J. L. Porter, London, 1866.

⁴ *Ibid*, p. 12.

of Abel, near Damascus, 30 feet long, that of Seth, in Anti-Lebanon, of about the same size, and that of Noah, in Lebanon, which measures no less than 70 yards." Mr. Porter seems to think that the size of a tomb is good evidence of the size of its original occupier, and, under that supposition, Noah would have been seven times as tall as Seth or Abel, that is to say, 210 feet high, and would not only have been terribly cramped in the ark, but would have taken up far too large a share of its stowage; the name of Abel, however, has only been given to the tomb on the hill near the site of the Roman town of ~~Abilene~~ owing to the accidental similarity of the names, and Mr. Porter admits as much in the latter part of his book⁵, while the identity of the so-called tombs of Seth and Noah has neither evidence nor pretext on which to rest.

As regards the traces of ancient Canaanitish giants to be found in the cities of Bashan, Mr. Freshfield, in his sensible and interesting account of his visit to them, prefixed to his *Central Caucasus*, assures us⁶ that the principal buildings are all of Roman or later construction, and bear, (as Mr. Porter himself admits,) inscriptions in Latin or Greek, of a date subsequent to our era; while the doors and rooms are of the ordinary height, so that the giants, if they *had* existed, would have been constantly bumping their heads. Even St. Augustine had better ground for *his* belief in giants, for he rested it,⁷ in addition to

⁵ *Giant cities of Bashan*, p. 352.

⁶ *Travels in the Central Caucasus and Bashan, &c.*, by Douglas W. Freshfield, London, 1869, p. 56, and post.

⁷ *Augustini opera*, Basle, 1543, tom 5, *de civitate Dei*, liber 15, cap. 9, p. 822a.

the vague statements of Homer and Virgil, on the evidence furnished by a large tooth which he picked up on the shore at Utica, and which he considered to be the molar of a giant, as he told the friends who accompanied him, adding that a hundred, at least, of their degenerate grinders might be carved from it; the saint, however, though a very able man, was doubtless, a poor odontologist, and, if he could now leave his splendid tomb in the Cathedral of Pavia, and consult Mr. Owen on the subject, he would probably be convinced that the tooth had originally belonged to an elephant, or a mammoth, and not to a giant.⁸

After these preliminary remarks I must now proceed by informing you that the term "Syria" was generally applied by the⁹ Greeks and Romans, as it still is by ourselves, to the country which lies between the 31st and 37th degrees of north latitude, and is bounded by Asia Minor on the north, the Mediterranean on the west, Egypt on the south-west, the Euphrates on the north-east, and Arabia on the south and south-east. The name is supposed to have been derived from¹⁰ Tzur, the Hebrew name of the city of Tyre, (which is still preserved in the Arab name of Sûr,) and which city, after the destruction or decay of ancient Sidon, became the capital of Phœnicia, and the most important commercial town in that part of the world; but the ancients were poor geographers,

⁸ As to tales of giants originating in the discovery of large fossil bones, see *Researches into the early history of mankind, and development of civilization*, by E. B. Tylor, London, 1865, p. 314 and *post*.

⁹ *The history of Herodotus*, a new English version, by George Rawlinson, London, 1858, vol. i, p. 579.

¹⁰ Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, vol. i, p. 62.

and Herodotus confused Syria with Assyria, which was to the east of the Tigris, and derives its name from a different root. The authors, too, of the Septuagint as well as of our own version, have occasioned still further confusion by giving this more modern and more comprehensive Greek name of Syria, in the translation of the earlier books, as the equivalent for the old Hebrew name of "Aram,"¹¹ which merely meant "highlands," just as in our own version of the prophet Daniel, the title in the Hebrew and Septuagint texts of ¹²king of the "*Hellenes*" has been translated, by a similar anachronism, into the later and Roman form of king of "*Græcia*."

The whole of the country within the limits described is about 400 miles in length from north to south, and about 100 in width at each extremity, increasing into three times that width at the central and broadest part; but, as my tour extended only through the country which formed ancient Phœnicia and part of the territory of Damascus, and of the country we now call Palestine, I must confine myself to the district visited, which is comprised in the map on the wall, though this also extends to tracts to the east of the Jordan, and to the east and south of the Dead Sea, which I did not reach.

Having given the etymology of Syria, I must also say that the name of Phœnicia is a Greek one, and is supposed to be ¹³derived from "Phoinix," the Greek word both for the date-palm (in Hebrew, Tamar) and the purple-red obtained from a fish on the coast, but,

¹¹ Judges, x. vi. 2 Samuel, viii. 6, &c.

¹² Daniel, viii. 21.

¹³ Smith's *Classical Dictionary*, title *Phoenice*.

though the name occurs in Homer, it is not found in the Old Testament.

The name of ¹⁴ *Palestina* occurs in Herodotus, but three times only in the Bible, namely, once in the Song of Moses,¹⁵ and twice in Isaiah,¹⁶ and was applied to Philistia, the coast country of the Philistines, from which it took its derivation, and the Romans used it in the same sense, though it was afterwards transferred, as we now use it, to the territory formerly held by the Israelites.

Phœnicia comprised the coast from the river Eleutherus to a little below Carmel, and had a length of about 160 miles, with a breadth, in the widest part, of about 15. Philistia comprised the strip of coast to the south, while the country which we call Palestine formed the central district, extending from Dan to Beersheba, and including also the port of Joppa, or Jaffa as it is now called, and the portion of coast between Phœnicia and Philistia.

I must not attempt to give the various other names and divisions by which the whole country was known at different periods of its history; but, at the commencement of our era, the country west of the Jordan and of the Lakes was divided into Galilee on the north, Samaria in the centre, and Judea on the south, while the country to the east was known as *Peræa*. At present, Syria is divided into the pachalics of Tripoli, Acre, and Jaffa, on the coast, and the pachalic of Damascus, which includes Jerusalem, in the interior.

Palestine, though it has played so important a part

¹⁴ Rawlinson's *Herodotus*, vol. i. p. 580.

¹⁵ Exodus, xv. 14. ¹⁶ Isaiah, xiv. 29 and 31.

in the world's history, is only about 160 miles in length, and about 70 in width, being even smaller, perhaps, than most of you imagine ; and St. Jerome confessed ¹⁷ that he was ashamed to admit its limited extent to the Gentiles, lest he should seem to have given occasion for their sneers ; Gibbon, however, who had no such scruples, tells us ¹⁸ that it was scarcely superior to Wales, either in extent or fertility, but to you a better idea will be conveyed by saying that it is of about the size of our four western counties.

The map hung up is that of ¹⁹Van de Velde, but you must bear in mind that it is on a large scale, and contains only three and a half degrees of latitude, and a little more than two degrees of longitude. The part coloured light green, consisting principally of the coast portion, does not exceed 500 feet above the sea-level ; the portion coloured red comprises the country ranging from 500 feet to 3,000, and the dark colour denotes a height of upwards of 3,000 feet, while the great depression of the Jordan valley to the south of lake Huleh, (which is on a level with the Mediterranean,) to a few miles south of the Dead Sea is coloured dark green.

The range of the Lebanon rises in the highest part to about ²⁰10,000 feet, and Mount Hermon to rather more than 9,000, both having perpetual snow on their summits, and the highest part of the Anti-Lebanon,

¹⁷ *Hieronimi opera, epistola ad Dardanum*, tom. iii, p. 68.

¹⁸ *Decline and fall of the Roman Empire*, 4to, London, 1789, p.30.

¹⁹ Karte von Palästina von C. W. M. van de Velde, Gotha, Justus Perthes, 1866.

²⁰ For this and other heights and the depressions see table in the Notes on the English edition of Van de Velde's map, Gotha, 1865.

which forms the range to the north-east of Hermon, is under 7,000 feet.

The valley between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon was formerly called Koile-Syria, or hollow Syria, which we must needs turn into Coele-Syria.

The Jordan valley, from Jacob's bridge, a little below lake Huleh, to the lake of Tiberias, gradually sinks to the depth of 653 feet below the Mediterranean, and from the lake of Tiberias to the Dead Sea of 664 feet more, making a total depression of 1,317 feet, and being the greatest dry depression in the world; while the lake of Tiberias has a depth in one part of 165 feet, and the Dead Sea a depth, near the hot spring of Callirhoe, of ²¹1,308 feet, and giving the lowest part of its bed a total depression of 2,625 feet. The highest point of Palestine itself is Jebel Jurmuk, near Safed, which is 4,000 feet; and to the south of this you can pass from Acre to the Jordan, over the plain of Esdraelon, with a rise of less than 500 feet. To the south of this plain various hills rise to above 3,000 feet, such as Ebal and Gerizim, Neby Samuel, and others; while Jerusalem itself is about 2,500 feet above the sea, and Hebron, still further south, somewhat higher. There is, therefore, every variety of elevation and depression, and consequently of climate, production, and scenery.

The principal rivers are the Litany (formerly the Leontes) and the Jordan. The former rises partly in the Lebanon, and partly in the Anti-Lebanon, and runs into the Mediterranean a little to the north of Tyre, while the Jordan has its sources in Mount

²¹ This is the depth given by Lynch, but Moore and Beke make the extreme depth to amount to 1,800 feet.

Hermon, and, after leaving the lake of Tiberias, is joined by the turbid and larger stream of the Yarmuk, which rises in the Haurân, and both then flow together to the Dead Sea, where their waters are evaporated. Mr. Macgregor in his canoe voyage on the Jordan rather congratulates himself on having enlightened the world as to the sources of that river, but in the ²²map given in his book he entirely omits the affluent which rises near lake Phiala, and flows down the valley to the south of the village of Banias, and which appeared to me to be second only in importance to the main stream of the Jordan, which rises to the west of Hermon, and which, above lake Huleh, is called the Hasbany. The western slope of the country, and especially towards the north, is well watered by many streams, which run into the Mediterranean, but most of the smaller streams, which in winter flow eastward into the Jordan and the lakes, dry up in summer. Fortunately, however, there are numerous springs throughout the country, which form the halting places of the traveller, and which give a constant supply of cool water, except in periods of extreme drought, which are of too frequent occurrence.

As regards the geology of Palestine, Dean Stanley gravely informs us that ²²“the geological structure is almost entirely limestone ;” but as he does not state to what series the limestone belongs, nor give any account of the fossils imbedded in it, he is probably

²² The *Rob Roy on the Jordan, Nile, Red Sea, and Gennesareth*, by J. Macgregor, 2nd edition, London, 1870. See map facing p. 220, but in p. 224 he adds a note as to this tributary, from the observations of Capt. Newbold.

²² *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 147.

not aware that limestone is associated with the sedimentary rocks of every age, and he would appear to be even ignorant of the meaning of the term "geological," and of the facts and theories which it involves.

²³Murray's hand-book is not more instructive, for though it refers to "geology" in the index, the page referred to contains only a description of the contour of the country; and the French guide-book, ²⁴*L'Itinéraire de l'orient*, is entirely silent on the subject.

According to Mr. ²⁵Tristram, who, after two or three tours in Palestine, spent ten months in the years 1863-4 in investigating the physical character of the country, ²⁶the lower beds consist of a compact limestone of the Jurassic period, (which corresponds with our beds of lias, oolite, and the wealden); and he says, that in the upper surface of these beds extensive hollows were denuded, which were afterwards filled with beds of the lower cretaceous formation, corresponding with our Norfolk chalk, on the top of which a deposit of sandstone was formed, which was much denuded, and is now found in patches only, and over the sandstone a further stratum of limestone, interspersed with flinty bands and nodules. In one passage he speaks of having met in a gorge of the Litany with mountain limestone, (formerly and still

²³ *A Handbook for travellers in Syria and Palestine*, new edition, London, 1868, preliminary remarks, p. xii.

²⁴ Collection des Guides—Joanne. *Itinéraire descriptif, historique et archéologique de l'orient*, par A. Joanne et E. Isambert, Paris, 1861.

²⁵ *The land of Israel*, a Journal of travels in Palestine undertaken with special reference to its physical character, by the Rev. H. B. Tristram, London, 1865.

²⁶ *Ibid*, p. 39, 40, 89, 90, 111, 112, and others.

²⁷ *Ibid*, p. 596.

used as an equivalent for carboniferous limestone,) but, though he enumerates various fossils which he found in the chalk beds, he does not mention his having discovered any in the Jurassic or the mountain limestone, and I must confess my suspicion that he uses the latter term in rather an off-hand manner, and perhaps almost as carelessly as he writes, in ²⁸two instances at least, about "calcareous" limestone, which in plain Saxon English means "limy" limestone.

My tour being a hasty one, and most of it passed on horseback, I had little time to look for fossils, but I was able to walk up mount Ebal, and on the summit I found in hard compact limestone many nummulites, (lower eocene of the tertiary formation,) and I traced them for some distance down the mountain. My friend Mr. Carter, of Budleigh Salterton, who has carefully studied the nummulites of India and Arabia, and has figured several varieties in a ²⁹paper published by him in 1853, in the journal of the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, informs me that my Ebal specimens are "nummulites millecaput." I cannot find that nummulites have been previously discovered in Palestine, though the formation is largely developed in the adjoining countries of Egypt and Arabia, as well as in India, and, singularly enough, on ³⁰Gerizim, which is directly opposite Ebal, and is only 200 feet lower, Mr.

²⁸ *The land of Israel*, p. 40, and 89.

²⁹ Description of some of the larger forms of fossilized foraminifera in Sinde, with observations on their internal structure, by H. J. Carter. See *Journal of the Bombay branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, v. 5, p. 124, July, 1853.

³⁰ *The land of Israel*, p. 133.

Tristram found chalk fossils only. I should also add, that he makes no mention of the fossil fish found in the neighbourhood of Beyrout, of which I saw some specimens in the hotel in which I stayed when there, nor of the fossil fish found in the broken up limestone on the summit of the Lebanon range, of which my friend, Mr. Parfitt, has lent me a specimen, nor does he appear to have visited Elijah's garden, near the monastery of Mount Carmel, in search of the melons, apples, and olives, which, according to the legend, were turned into stone by the prophet in order to punish the churlishness of their owner, but which ³¹modern science, which ruthlessly dissipates so many illusions, now declares to be geodes and fossil echini, and spines of the echinus. When at the convent, I asked a stupid old Spanish monk about these "lapides Judaici," as they were formerly called, but could get no information about them.

The igneous rocks prevail extensively in the Lejah and Haurân, districts to the east of Palestine, which I did not visit, and also to a considerable extent in the valley of the Jordan from its source near Rasheiya to Bethshean, about ten miles below the lake of Tiberias; and in the latter instance (though two masses near Safed are alone given in a sort of ³²geological map, which Dean Stanley has inserted in his book,) there is in fact a succession of lava streams, at no very wide intervals, throughout a length of about seventy miles from north to south, and they have principally flowed out from the west

³¹ Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, title *Carmel*, p. 279a, but note the reference given to Mislin is incorrect.

³² *Sinai and Palestine*, see pages 111 and 337.

side of the Jordan, since the country assumed its present contour, and in fact remain in much the same state as when originally ejected, except where the Jordan and its affluents have cut through them, and except so far as the rain has smoothed their surface.

They seem to have proceeded from numerous vents, many of which now form small lakes or pools, such as lake Phiala, east of Banias, and Birket el Jish, near Safed; and many of the outbreaks have been very small in extent. I did not see any regular cone and crater like Vesuvius, or those found in Auvergne.

On the south-west side of lake Tiberias, streams of lava flow down over the hollows in the limestone ridge forming its western boundary, and one crosses the valley at the very point where the Jordan issues from the lake, and forms a dam which has considerably raised its level, and must have raised it still more before the river cut through the upper part of the lava. This interesting circumstance does not seem to be mentioned in any of the books, and Mr. Tristram even expressly states ³³that no feature marks the exit of the Jordan from the lake.

The igneous rock of Little Hermon or Jebel Duhy, which hill lies to the south-west of the lake of Tiberias, belongs, I believe, to a much earlier period than the lava streams noticed above; and as I am not aware that it has been referred to by any writer except Mr. Tristram, (whose book unfortunately I have only read since my return), I will give an extract of his remarks upon it:—

“³⁴A rather quick ride of about an hour round the

³³ *The land of Israel*, p. 428.

³⁴ *Ibid*, p. 129.

base of Little Hermon into the plain to the south brought us from Nain to the village of Shunem. A new geological feature here presented itself to our notice. We had observed at Nain many fragments and large rounded boulders of trap, and sometimes pieces of columnar basalt ; and we now found that the south-west corner of Little Hermon is raised up on a basaltic or trap-dyke, and that the whole of the lower portion of the shoulder here is basalt, which rises to no great height, but presses forward, bulging in low rounded mamelons into the plain of Esdraelon, while all the hills above it consist of limestone in horizontal stratification. The limestone adjoining the dyke was metamorphic several yards thick, and of a rich amber colour. It would, then, appear that Little Hermon owes its elevation to the period of the basaltic currents north-west of Gennesaret, and not to the denudation which has moulded most of the Galilæan hills."

My own route lay from Shunem to Nain, from south to north, exactly in the opposite direction to that of Mr. Tristram, and in following a dry water-course through the plain of Esdraelon I observed many blocks of lava, and so concluded, that Little Hermon, then just in front of me and conical in form, was of igneous origin. On reaching it, however, I found, much to my surprise, that the base was entirely of limestone, and I could discover no trace of lava. Being a good deal puzzled at this, I determined to ascend the mountain, or rather hill, for the summit is only about 1,500 feet above the plain. In the ascent I saw a few pieces of lava lying on the surface, *and some actually embedded in the limestone*, and on

arriving at the top I found, much to my delight, that the last 200 feet formed a complete cone of lava, while the flanks and projecting shoulders of the hill were all of limestone. The only explanation I can offer is, that the hill was originally a volcano, and submarine with the exception of the cone at the top, which was projected above the sea-level, that the hill was gradually elevated with the rest of the country, and that as it rose, the coral insects gradually clothed the part of the base from time to time within the sphere of their action with limestone. The conical shape of the hill, and the pieces of lava embedded in the limestone, and which must have fallen from the cone during the process of the coral formation, favour this view, while if the lava had been ejected through the limestone, this latter must have been rent in the process, and a stream of lava would in all probability have flowed down over it, but of neither process could I observe any trace. The metamorphic appearance of the limestone at the point noticed by Mr. Tristram is certainly opposed to my hypothesis, but this may have been caused by the partial re-heating of the lava at the period of subsequent volcanic outbursts in the neighbourhood of the lake of Tiberias, and the lava at that particular point may have become exposed by the denudation, which must have taken place during the general upheaval of the country. It is scarcely prudent to propound a theory on so slight an examination of the locality, but if any of you should have an opportunity of making a more careful examination, I hope that advantage will be taken of it. Attention should also be paid to the neighbouring hills of Tabor and

Nazareth, which, though both apparently entirely of limestone, have the form of volcanic hills : a conical outline however is often produced by denudation, as may be seen in Jebel Fureidis (or the Frank mountain) near Jerusalem, which, though unquestionably of limestone, is stated in Dr. Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* to be an extinct volcano.

As earthquakes are supposed to be connected with igneous action, I may mention that they have frequently caused great destruction in Syria. ³⁵Volney, in his admirable work on that country, mentions that 20,000 persons are said to have perished in the earthquake which took place in the plain of Baalbek in the year 1759 ; and great devastation was also caused by the earthquake of the 1st of January 1837, when 4,000 persons, principally Jews, are said to have been killed at ³⁶Safed, and the extensive rents caused by it in the castle of Tiberias are good proofs of its violence.

In walking on the shore of the lake, between the town and the sulphur spring, (which, by the way is so hot that you cannot keep your hand in it,) you see several ancient columns in the water, a little below the surface and close to the margin, but when these became submerged I know not.

It is the fashion to attribute the great depression of the Jordan valley to volcanic action, but the lava streams on the lake of Tiberias and above and below it appear, as I have before stated, to have all flowed out since the country assumed its present contour³⁷

³⁵ Voyage en Syrie et en Egypte pendant les années, 1783, 84 et 85, par C. F. Volney, quatrième édition, Paris, 1807, vol. i, p. 304.

³⁶ Murray's *Handbook for Syria and Palestine*, p. 414-5.

³⁷ Murray's *Handbook for Syria and Palestine*, p. 398.

and as regards the shores of the Dead Sea, we are assured by ³⁸Mr. Tristram that there are no traces of volcanic action, except one or two small streams of lava near the north-western end, and another near the south-eastern end; but I only visited the north shore of the Dead Sea, and must not involve myself in a question beyond my depth.

I must refer you to Mr. Tristram for a ³⁹description of Jebel Usdom, (or Esdoum,) the remarkable hill of salt at the lower end of the Dead Sea, which has a considerable height and extent, but having bathed in the Dead Sea I can speak as to its extreme saltness and buoyancy. The sharp smarting of my eyes, when I was careless enough in my bathe to allow the water to get into them, soon convinced me of the former quality, while in swimming I found that I was apt to kick my feet out of the water, and in treading water, as we call it, the upper part of my shoulders was exposed, and I felt a slight tendency to fall forwards, which I was obliged to counteract by paddling with my hands, my centre of gravity being doubtless brought a trifle too high. Dean Stanley rather foolishly speaks of the ⁴⁰unnatural buoyancy of the water, but as it has a larger proportion of salts than nearly all other seas, it is heavier, and consequently more buoyant than they are, and the buoyancy, though remarkable, is certainly not unnatural. The salts held in solution are chiefly those of magnesia and soda, and ⁴¹lake Elton, in the steppes east of the

³⁸ *The Land of Israel*, p. 248, 254, 320, 327, 328.

³⁹ *The Land of Israel*, p. 311 to 325, and the frontispiece to *The Dead Sea*, by the Rev. A. A. Isaacs, London, 1857. *The salt hill of Card*

⁴⁰ *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 293.

⁴¹ *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 292, and note at foot.

in Catalonia appears to be of similar character. See Murray's handbook for Spain, 11th edition, p. 472.

Volga, and lake Urumia, in Persia, are said to be still salter than the Dead Sea.

If I am not exhausting your patience, I should also wish to call your attention to a statement by Dr. Hooker in the ⁴² *Natural History Review*, for January 1862, to the effect that the cedars of Lebanon grow upon an ancient moraine, and to which Sir Charles Lyell refers in his well-known work on the ⁴³ *Antiquity of man*. The Doctor states that "the Kedisha valley, at the head of which they grow, at 6,000 feet elevation, terminates in broad, shallow, flat-floored basins, and is two or three miles across, and as much long; it is here in a straight line fifteen miles from the sea, and about three or four from the summit of Lebanon, which is to the northward of it. These open basins have shelving sides, which rise 2 to 4,000 feet above their bases; they exactly resemble what are called Corrys in many highland mountains; the floor of that in which the cedars grow presents almost a dead level to the eye, crossed abruptly and transversely by a confused range of ancient moraines, which have been deposited by glaciers, that, under very different conditions of climate, once filled the basin above them, and communicated with the perpetual snow with which the whole summit of Lebanon was, at that time, deeply covered. The moraines are perhaps 80 to 100 feet high; their boundaries are perfectly defined, and they divide the floor of the basin into an upper and lower flat area. The rills from the surrounding heights collect on the

⁴² *The Natural History Review*, a quarterly journal of biological science, Williams and Norgate, London, No. 5, p. 12.

⁴³ *The geological evidences of the antiquity of man, &c*, by Sir Charles Lyell, London, 1863, p. 323.

upper flat, and form one stream, which winds amongst the moraines on its way to the lower flat, whence it is precipitated into the gorge of the Kedisha." It is doubtless very presumptuous in me to express my dissent from the opinion formed by so experienced an observer as Dr. Hooker ; but, though I by no means assert that there are no moraines or traces of ancient glacial action in the Lebanon, my firm conviction is that the cedars grow on a very extensive slip, and not on a moraine, and I will state the reasons of such conviction. As many of you have never had the good fortune to see a glacier, I must first explain that it owes its origin to the accumulation of snow, which falls on the upper portion of a mountain, within the limit of perpetual snow ; this accumulation gradually compresses and congeals into a partially frozen mass called "névé ;" and this mass, owing partly to gravitation and partly to the pressure of the snow and névé constantly forming above and behind it, slowly finds its way down the nearest drainage-valley of the mountain, until, after being exposed in its course to all the melting influences of a gradually increasing temperature, it is at last entirely dissolved. The glacier, during its descent, occasionally passes under cliffs and precipices, the rocks of which, detached by frost and other agencies, fall on its sides, and these rocks are carried along in a train on the surface of the glacier, and form the "lateral moraine ;" and, if two glaciers unite, the inner lateral moraines of each also unite, and form on the combined glacier a central or "medial moraine ;" and all these moraines are carried on in distinct lines on the surface of the glacier until they are finally discharged at its foot, where they

form the "terminal moraine," with the exception always of the various blocks which have fallen from time to time through the rifts, or "crevasses" as they are called, in the glacier, and been pounded into gravel and silt, which, with the detritus formed by the friction of the glacier itself on its bed, give their muddy character to all glacier streams. The terminal moraine, you will observe, is always formed at the point in the valley at which the glacier is ultimately melted; but, so far as I could see, the floor on which the cedars grow fills up all the *upper* portion of the Kedisha valley, and the mountain shelves smoothly, though rapidly, down to the level of the floor, without presenting any cliffs or precipices from which rocks could fall upon a glacier and so be carried down to form a moraine. On these grounds I venture to doubt the correctness of Dr. Hooker's view, while, in support of my own, I would state that the range of the Lebanon, or at any rate the part in question, appears to consist of a mass of loose broken-up limestone resting on a plateau of compact limestone, with streams of lava interposed in some parts between them; and that there is a perpendicular rent in this compact limestone of many hundred feet in depth, of several hundred in breadth, and of many miles in length, which commences, as far as can be seen, a little below the cedars, and through which the waters of that particular district which form the Kedisha river, flow down in their course to the sea. The rent, judging from the perpendicular character of its walls, must, I should think, have been caused by some subterranean movement and not by denudation; but whatever may have been its origin, I believe that

the Kedisha, and the small streams flowing into it, have gradually denuded the loose beds of limestone within reach of their action, the débris being carried off through the great natural drain presented by the rent described ; and that the process of denudation has been hastened from time to time by large slips in the upper part of the valley, carried further back on each occasion, for which the loose nature of the upper beds, percolated by rain and the melted snow from the mountain, and the depth and direction of the rent would give every facility ; and I believe that the floor on which the cedars grow is merely the last of these slips, to be itself hereafter the subject of denudation and slip, as the river eats still further back into the mountain.

The opinion I formed in examining the upper part of the valley was strongly confirmed by the distant views of the cedars and their floor obtained at various points to the west, and I should also state that the platform of compact limestone extends for many miles in this direction, on a level but little below that of the cedars, so that any glacier, if formed, and especially one sufficiently large to form a moraine of the extent alleged by Dr. Hooker, would have filled up the whole rent of the Kedisha, and discharged its moraine where the platform ceases, and the slope to the sea commences.

I also believe that the loose débris of a slip would be favourable to the growth of large trees, while the mud and blocks of a moraine would offer very unfavourable conditions ; and I must lastly add, that on board the steamer, by which I afterwards sailed from Smyrna to Syra, I had the pleasure of meeting Capt.

Mansell of the Navy, who accompanied Dr. Hooker to the cedars, and made ⁴⁴a plan of the platform, which was published by the Admiralty in 1862, and is exhibited at Kew, and on my asking him whether the cedars grew on a moraine or slip, he at once answered, "on a slip decidedly." I was exceedingly glad to receive this confirmation of my views, and I hope that it will excuse my laying them before you in opposition to so high an authority as Dr. Hooker. I have not been able to obtain a copy of Captain Mansell's plan, nor to purchase the large ⁴⁵map of the Lebanon, made by the officers of the French army, at the time of its occupation of the country after the Christian massacres of 1860, but I have examined the latter map, at the rooms of the Geographical Society, in London, and it appears to me to favour my view far more than that of Dr. Hooker.

There is one other geological point to which I must call your attention, and that is, the discovery by Mr. Tristram of a ⁴⁶breccia, at the Nahr-el-Kelb, (the Dog river,) north of Beyrout, containing flint flakes and the bones of an ox, somewhat resembling that of our peat mosses, and of bones, which Mr. Dawkins referred to the bison, the red-deer or rein-deer, and the elk, all now confined to a far more northern latitude ; but the remarkable fact connected with the discovery is, that this breccia, according to Mr. Tristram's account, had apparently formed the floor of

⁴⁴ Plan of the Cedars of Lebanon, surveyed by Commander A. L. Mansell, R.N., H.M.S. Firefly, July 1861.

⁴⁵ Carte du Liban d'après les reconnaissances de la brigade topographique du corps expéditionnaire de Syrie en 1860-61, dressée au dépôt de la guerre, impr. Lemercier, rue de la Seine, Paris, 1862.

⁴⁶ *The Land of Israel*, p. 10.

a cavern, which had once extended to the face of the cliff, and that on the inner and only remaining wall of the cavern Rameses the second, one of the kings of Egypt of the 19th dynasty, and the Sesostris of the Greeks, (who is supposed to have lived about the same time as Moses, or immediately before,) had ^{carved} ~~erected~~ two tablets to commemorate his conquest of the country. As to how many centuries or tens of centuries had elapsed between the age at which the bone breccia was formed in the cave, and the time at which, after the wearing away of ~~the outer part of~~ the cavern by the action of the sea, the tablet had been ^{carved} ~~erected~~ on its inner wall, it is in vain to speculate; but Rameses is supposed to have lived about 1,200 or 1,400 years before our era, and we must, therefore, put back the formation of the breccia to a far more remote period, and especially as the cavern is so much to the south of those in Europe containing similar bones.

As regards the fertility of Palestine, Gibbon's statement before referred to, that it is scarcely superior to that of Wales, is decidedly incorrect. The plains of Acre and Esdraelon are exceedingly fertile, though the latter is only partly cultivated; and the whole coast from Carmel to Jaffa, and further south as far as Gaza, as I believe, is also very rich, while many parts of the Jordan valley could be irrigated and made exceedingly productive. Most of the hill country has pans and terraces of fine soil, in which grain and other crops are grown, but this district is admirably adapted to the olive, the vine, and the fig, and the whole of Palestine, if under good government and protected from the inroads of the

Bedouin, who are even permanently settled in some parts, would easily maintain a large population. The Lebanon, which is free from Bedouin and less subject to the arbitrary exactions of the Turkish pacha, is highly cultivated, and large quantities of silk are also produced. Roads are now unfortunately unknown, except the one leading from Beyrout to Damascus, which was formed by the French army of occupation in 1860, and the road from Jaffa to Jerusalem, which was constructed, I believe, by the government; the rocky tracks, which elsewhere serve for roads, are execrable.

There are many traces of old forests which formerly existed, for instance, on the ridge of Carmel and on the ridge to the west of Lake Huleh, but, owing to the carelessness of the government and the improvidence of the people, no attention has been paid to the growth of timber. In the Lebanon, as you are all aware, there is the celebrated cedar grove, but this only contains about 400 trees, though others have recently been found in the district; the largest tree in the grove measures 39ft. 4in. in girth, and there are about a dozen other trees which are also of considerable size, but, so far as I could judge by comparing them with the largest specimens in this country, none of which go back beyond ⁴⁷ 200 years, their age has been a good deal exaggerated, and I should not assign to the oldest an age of more than four or five centuries. Capt. Mansell told me that he had counted the rings in a main branch of one of the oldest trees, and that they had given an age of about

⁴⁷ See *Arboretum et fruticetum Britannicum*, by J. C. Loudon, London, 1838, vol. iv, p. 2241.

five centuries. Unfortunately the Maronites have built a hideous chapel in the centre of the grove, and one's anger is also a good deal excited by the contemptible desire of travellers to record their visit by carving their detestable names on some of the finest trees, a habit in which the snobs of all countries, and especially of our own, seem prone to indulge, abroad as well as at home, in the east as well as in the west. The cedar, (which Dean Stanley, by a singular metaphor, and in forgetfulness of the far superior size of the mammoth trees of North California, describes as standing *at the apex of the vegetable world*,⁴⁸) is also found in the Taurus range in Asia Minor, and in the Atlas range in North Africa, as well as in the Himalayas; and if these ranges had been also visited by the enthusiastic travellers who have made pilgrimages to Syria, the exaggerated terms in which they have usually described the Lebanon grove might, perhaps, have been somewhat toned down. Dean Stanley appears to go into the opposite extreme, and, like Sydney Smith's friend who talked so disrespectfully of the Equator, he speaks rather slightly of these nature-planted trees, and says that they are⁴⁹ "huddled together." In spite, however, of the Dean's disparaging expressions, the trees form a noble grove, and their beauty and interest are much enhanced by the desolation which prevails around them.

The evergreen oak is common everywhere, and the one near Hebron is twenty-three feet in girth, five feet from the ground; it is perhaps three or four

⁴⁸ *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 414 a.

⁴⁹ *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 414 b.

centuries old, at the most, but in Palestine it inevitably becomes the oak of Abraham. The terebinth, which takes its name from the Greek word for turpentine, is a large handsome tree, and there is a fine specimen of it near the Damascus gate at Jerusalem, and another at Tell el Kady, the ancient Dan. The sycamore attains a large size, but the largest are found near the coast; it is not the tree known by the name in this country, but has a different foliage and bears on a short stem on its main branches a fruit in shape like the common fig, the "sycon" of the Greeks. The date-palm, which formed the ancient emblem of Judea, is also now principally found near the coast, though there are a few at Jerusalem and elsewhere in the interior. The *Pinus Halepensis* is very common on the hills near Beyrout, and resembles the stone pine as seen in Italy; and I believe that the fine pine tree outside the northern wall of Jerusalem is of the kind in question. The plane tree, which grows to a great size in the east, and somewhat differs from the American variety, is very common, and grows fast in moist situations; the caroub also is abundant, and I likewise met with a tree with a bark resembling that of a beech, which the Arabs call Mass, but I do not know its botanical name. The orange and lemon trees grow on the coast and in the sheltered valleys, and are found in great luxuriance in the gardens of Sidon, Jaffa, and Nablous, the silver blossoms and golden fruit hanging together on the boughs, and representing, (as I think Sir Humphry Davy says in his *Consolations in travel*,) the union of hope and fruition. They also grow luxuriantly round the foun-

tains in the court-yards of the houses at Damascus, where you can pick the fruit and press the juice into water cooled with snow from Hermon ; but, I was informed that they are not planted in the gardens round the city, which is 2,400 feet above the sea, as, owing to the loss of shelter, they are exposed to injury by occasional spring frosts. The pomegranate, being more hardy, grows in less favoured situations, and its pink blossoms and bright foliage make it one of the most beautiful of shrubs ; and a plantation of them, which I saw in full bloom in a small valley near Nablous, formed a charming horticultural exhibition. At Damascus, and in the upper valley of the river Barada (the ancient Abana), which supplies its fountains and fertilizes its gardens, in addition to the olive, the vine, the fig, the pomegranate, and the mulberry, we find the apricot, the walnut,⁵⁰ the plum, the cherry, the pear, the apple, and the almond, and sticks of the latter tree are largely exported from Damascus to Cairo ; they have a handle sloping obliquely, as in the specimen I produce ; and it is a curious circumstance that the gods of Egypt, (with the exception of Osiris and one or two others), are always represented as holding a similar stick, terminating in a metal prong or fork, and called the Kukufa sceptre.⁵¹ In a fresco painting from a tomb at Thebes, in one of the Egyptian galleries at the British Museum, a husbandman also is depicted carrying a similar pronged stick.⁵² There is reason to believe that the

⁵⁰ The damsen of our gardens is a corruption from "Damascene."

⁵¹ Aaron's rod was also of almond, Numbers, xvii, v. 8 ; and Jeremiah "saw a rod of an almond tree," Jeremiah, i. 11.

⁵² Egyptian gallery on ground floor, wall-slab No. 176.

sticks were always ⁵³ exported from Damascus to Egypt, and, if this were so, it is a curious example of a traffic in a trifling article carried on under different national circumstances for some thousands of years, and the "sceptre" may almost serve as a slight indication that the Egyptian gods had a Syrian origin. One of the prongs, with a piece of the stick still inserted in it, and taken from a tomb, is exhibited in one of the cases in the splendid Egyptian collection at the Louvre, but M. Devéria (the sub-curator of it,) to whom I gave one of the sticks, had not previously had his attention drawn to it; and there is also another prong with the handle in the Egyptian ⁵⁴ collection at the British Museum. The cypress is grown in some of the cemeteries, and the tamarisk, the bay, and the myrtle are common everywhere, and I occasionally saw the elder, the maple, the arbutus andrachne, and the oleaster (or elœagnus).

The oleander is met with on the bank of almost every stream, though Dean Stanley ⁵⁵ says that it is only to be found in the valley of the Jordan; I even saw it growing on the sea-shore, where water was trickling through the shingle. On the Lebanon the juniper is common, and on Mount Carmel there are some flowering shrubs of great beauty and fragrance, the styrax being the finest; and at Jericho are thickets of the nebk, or zizyphus spina Christi, from which it is supposed that the crown of thorns was formed. Mr. Tristram, as well as I recollect, mentions his having

⁵³ The fruit was certainly exported; Israel desired his sons to take nuts and almonds to Egypt as a present to Joseph, Genesis, xliiii. 11.

⁵⁴ Wall-case in the upper Egyptian Gallery marked "arms."

⁵⁵ *Sinai and Palestine*, p. 146.

seen the chesnut tree in some part of Syria, but it is not included in the index of natural history to his book, and I cannot put my hand on the passage. I did not myself see it, and was surprised at its not having been introduced into the Lebanon, where I believe it would grow to perfection.

Of plants there is a great variety, which you will see enumerated in the index of natural history appended to Mr. Tristram's book ; but I may especially mention the cyclamen, which is one of the most common as well as of the most beautiful, the maiden-hair fern, which is found on every fountain and on every aqueduct, the papyrus, which covers a great part of lake Huleh, anemonies, the prickly pear, the hollyhock, the honeysuckle, and the anastatica, or rose of Jericho, which, as you will see by the specimen I produce, is scarcely entitled to the name of rose ; it possesses the singular power of expanding after being placed in water for a few hours, and of contracting again when dry, and is said to retain this power for centuries. Among the plants I saw, which are not enumerated by Mr. Tristram, are the gum cistus, mistletoe, mignonette, garlic, rhubarb, watercress, *ceterach officinalis*, wild geranium, navel-wort, the chicory (*cichorium intybus*), which, with its fine blue flower, is one of the commonest ; and on the western slope of the Lebanon I also saw the common English ivy and the daisy.

As regards wild animals, the hyena, jackal, boar, bear, lynx, wolf, fox, gazelle, ichneumon, hare, and coney are occasionally seen, and scorpions and snakes are not uncommon ; but the scorpions, fortunately, generally keep themselves under stones, and the

snakes in their holes, and out of the whole list I only saw a single fox, a gazelle or antelope, near Neby Samuel, and two large snakes, which had been recently killed. I also saw a beaver swimming about in the upper part of lake Tiberias, near the shore; this animal has not been before observed in Syria, that I am aware of,⁵⁶ but after carefully examining the specimen in the zoological gardens, in London, I have no doubt of the identity of the animal I saw in the lake, and whose movements I watched for some time. The beaver has been found on the Euphrates, ^{and the Khabour} ⁵⁶ and somewhat resembles the otter, but the specimen seen by me could not have been the latter animal, as the fish, which were in shoals near, it took no notice of its presence. Crocodiles, it is asserted, are still extant in the Kishon and Zerka rivers, on either side of Carmel.

The cattle of Syria, especially those near Haifa, are small and exceedingly pretty; but the only buffaloes I saw were in the marshy ground at the western side of lake Huleh. The sheep are said, in ⁵⁷ books of authority, to have tails laden with fat, and so largely developed as to trail upon the ground, and even to require to be artificially supported by a board on wheels; but, so far as my own observation went, this appeared to me to be an exaggeration, and I only saw them with an excrescence of a large flap of fat on each side of the rump.

Of the birds you will find a long list in Mr. Tris-

⁵⁶ Mr. Trisram has since informed me that the beaver is mentioned by Pliny as existing in his day in Asia Minor, and that Cælian gives details respecting it, which shew that its range southward was far beyond its present limits.

⁵⁷ Palestine, description géographique, historique et archéologique, par S. Munk, Paris, Firmin Didot et cie, 1863, p. 30, and plate 3 at end.

*suggested to me by Mr. Trisram, may have remained
abundant for ages centuries among the papyrus beds of
the Huleh, and he informs me that it*

*See Col. Chesney's Expedition for the survey of the Euphrates
and Tigris; London, 1850, p. 442, 581 and 728, and Layard's
"Discoveries in the ruins of
Nineveh and Babylon"
expedition
London, 18
p. 296. See*

tram's book and in the index of natural history appended to it ; but I must express my regret that Mr. Sclater, the accomplished secretary of the zoological society, should have given his name to a sort of starling with chocolate bars on its wings, which the monks of Mar Saba feed at the convent, and have perhaps fed for centuries ; the name of "amydrus Mar Sabæ" would at once have been recognized by travellers, while few know that Mr. Tristram was the first person to bring home a specimen to England, which was Mr. Sclater's reason, as he told me, for calling it the "amydrus Tristrami." I by no means, however, wish to detract from our obligations to Mr. Tristram, for he has undoubtedly given us more information on the natural history of Palestine than any other writer.

Of the scenery it is difficult to speak, as all descriptions fail to convey an accurate idea. From the Mount of Olives to the east of Jerusalem, and separated from it by the narrow valley of the Kedron, you obtain the finest view of the city, and in fact the only good one ; and you also see from it the lower part of the Jordan valley, and the upper part of the Dead Sea, and the mountains of Moab beyond it : both views are most striking and impressive, and the main features of the former were admirably given by Gérome in his picture of Jerusalem, which many of you doubtless saw in the last exhibition of the Royal Academy, though for the sake of the view he represents the crucifixion as having taken place on the Mount of Olives, and for the sake of the shadows and sunset effects he twists about the points of the compass ; but, in spite of these pictorial liberties, it

formed a striking contrast, most unfavourable to English art, to Linnell's picture of "*Sleeping for sorrow*," in the same exhibition, in which the Mount of Olives is made to resemble a Surrey hill with a grove of cabbage-headed date-palms painted in in order to give an oriental character to the scene, the artist being unfortunately ignorant that the palm is rare at Jerusalem. A few miles to the north of Jerusalem some points can be visited from which you can see the Mediterranean, and the broken ground sloping down to it, with the plain and coast towns at the foot of the slope on the one hand, and the wilderness of Judea, the Dead Sea, and the mountains of Moab on the other hand ; and still further north, by ascending Ebal or Gerizim, you obtain a view of almost the whole of Palestine. The views again from Little Hermon, the hill of Nazareth, and Mount Tabor are exceedingly fine and interesting ; and as you descend from Hattin to Tiberias, the view of the lake with Hermon rising to the north, with its peak glittering with patches of snow, is in the highest degree beautiful and impressive. From the ruined castle of Safed there is a fine view looking back upon the lake, and the views from the ridge of Carmel are exceedingly fine and varied ; and, as you approach Damascus, the prospect of the gardens and orchards, watered by the Barada, with the city and its mosques and minarets rising beyond, while all around is desert, is most singular and picturesque.

The Lebanon, too, is a charming and delightful country, and the whole coast from Batroun to Sidon, with the sea to the west and the mountains to the east, is full of varied and beautiful scenery.

Mr. Tristram, in the preface to his book, remarks upon the "absence⁵⁸ in the scenery of Palestine of the *romantic*—of all that could bewilder the imagination or foster a localized superstition," and seems rather to regard it as a matter of congratulation, but I cannot see the force of the remark: the scenery in some parts certainly verges on the romantic, if it does not quite come up to it, but, if its beauty were of a still higher character, I do not think that persons living in the midst of it would be one jot more credulous or illogical than the dwellers in plains; and I am sure that the Scotch and Swiss are as shrewd, keen, and practical as the Dutch or the inhabitants of Cambridgeshire; and it must also be remembered that a strong love and appreciation of scenery are decidedly of modern growth, and even now affect but a small part of the community.

After giving you an account, however imperfect, of some of the aspects of nature, I must call your attention to a few of the relics of man.

The earliest are, doubtless, the flint flakes and the tablets of Rameses the second, at the Dog river before referred to; and some⁵⁹ tablets at the same spot record, in cuneiform characters, the invasion of the Assyrian King, Esarhaddon, (the son of Sennacherib,) who reigned nearly 700 years before our era.

⁵⁸ *The land of Israel*, preface, p. vi.

⁵⁹ *Murray's handbook for Syria and Palestine*, p. 385, 386. A cast of the principal tablet is in the Kouyunjik Gallery of Assyrian antiquities at the British Museum; and it is stated at page 88, in the "Guide to the exhibition rooms of the departments of natural history and antiquities," printed by order of the trustees, in 1870, to represent Esarhaddon, but in *Murray's handbook* it is attributed (under the authority of Mr. Layard) to Sennacherib.

Another, at the same spot, was erected in honour of the Roman Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, who traversed the pass in about the year 173 ; and the French army of 1860 inserted a memorial of their own occupation of the country in that year within an old Egyptian tablet, the hieroglyphics of which however, it is right to add, had been long previously effaced: these tablets all adjoin two ancient roads cut at different levels across the promontory, and traces of an old Roman road are still seen at different points along the coast, both to the north and south of Beyrout.

To me these various records, as well as the history of Palestine from its earliest period to the present day, all point to the continuous operation of the same or similar general causes and circumstances as affecting the country, both before and during its occupation by the Jews as well as subsequently ; and I cannot help thinking that they have been too much lost sight of in the exclusive attention paid to the *supernatural* events, with which the history of the Jews is laden.

At Sidon the celebrated sarcophagus of Esmunazar, now in the gallery of the Louvre, was found by the French consul, and he told me that he had sold it for the small sum of 2,000 francs (£30) to the late Duc d'Albert de Luynes, by whom it was presented to the Louvre. According to the duke's ⁶⁰ memoir on the subject Esmunazar was king of Sidon during the seventh century before our era, but the ⁶¹ Abbé Bargés considers that he reigned in about the middle

⁶⁰ *Mémoire sur le sarcophage et l'inscription funéraire d'Esmunazar, roi de Sidon*, par le Duc D'Albert de Luynes, Paris, 1856.

⁶¹ *Mémoire sur le sarcophage et l'inscription funéraire d'Eschmounazar, roi de Sidon*, par M. l'Abbé J. J. L. Bargés, Paris, 1856.

of the fourth century before it, between the time of Cyrus and that of Alexander the Great, but whatever may be its true date I trust that it may escape injury in the destruction which now threatens Paris. It is of very hard basalt, and of Egyptian style and workmanship, and entirely differs from the other Phœnician sarcophagi at the Louvre, as well as from the specimen at the British Museum, and it bears two Phœnician inscriptions, the shorter one, as far as it extends, being a duplicate of the other, and these are said to be the only inscriptions in that language which have been found in Phœnicia, a circumstance which, if correct, is most remarkable, inasmuch as we are indebted to the Phœnicians for the establishment of the first true alphabetic system, which was eliminated by them from the Egyptian hieroglyphics and hieratic signs, as ably explained by M. Lenormant in his ⁶² introduction to a memoir on the propagation of the Phœnician alphabet in the ancient world, a short analysis of which is appended to the last edition of our friend Dr. Scott's ⁶³ work on the deaf and dumb.

On the hills near Tyre is a tomb raised on a high pedestal, which is called the ⁶⁴ tomb of Hiram, the cotemporary of Solomon, but it bears no inscription, and we have no means of ascertaining when or to whom it was erected. To me it appeared to be of Greek construction, somewhat resembling, though in

⁶² *Introduction à un mémoire sur la propagation de l'alphabet Phœnicien dans l'ancien monde*, par François Lenormant, Lainé et Havard, Paris, 1866.

⁶³ *The deaf and dumb, their education and social position*, by W. R. Scott, second edition, London and Exeter, 1870, p. 263.

⁶⁴ See engraving in *Tristram's land of Israel*, p. 56.

rough outline merely, the ⁶⁵ two tombs in the Lycian room in the British Museum, and it certainly is unlike any Phœnician sarcophagus which I have seen.

These, so far as I am aware, are the only antiquities of importance found or extant in Phœnicia; but the celebrated Moabite stone, originally discovered in 1868 at Dhibân, which lies to the east of the Dead Sea, near one of the sources of the Arnon, possesses still greater value. It contains, or rather contained, for it is now broken and some of the pieces lost, an inscription in Phœnician characters, which Dr. Deutch believes to be of the ninth century before our era, and records the triumphs of Mesha over the Israelites; but as the stone was the subject of several letters, which appeared in the *Times* in the early part of the present year, I must refer you to them for further details. The correspondence was also reprinted in the ⁶⁶ exploration fund report for the first quarter of this year, and a photograph published from tracings taken by Captain Warren.

Monsieur de Saulcy, nearly twenty years since,⁶⁷ asserted that he had discovered the undoubted remains of Sodom and Gomorrah at the ^{south west end} north-west end of the Dead Sea, and the greatest interest was excited by the account, and especially in the religious world, where it was received with avidity, but it was soon ascertained by investigation on the spot, that

⁶⁵ Nos. 142 and 143.

⁶⁶ *Palestine exploration fund*, quarterly statement, No. 5, January 1 to March 31, 1870, p. 169 and post.

⁶⁷ *Voyage autour de la Mer Morte et dans les terres bibliques*, par M. de Saulcy, Paris, 1852.

there was no foundation whatever for the statement, except in the inventive imagination of the French traveller, and all hopes of examining the ruins of these ancient cities have now vanished from the minds of the most sanguine archæologists.

Round Mount Hermon may still be seen the remains of several temples, which the guide and other books describe as Phœnician or of early Syrian origin, but they all appeared to me to be of Roman date, and I see from the Exploration report just referred to,⁶⁸ that Captain Warren and Mr. Fergusson both consider them to be *late* Roman.

The celebrated temples at Baalbec are of the time of the Emperor Antoninus Pius, and the massive wall, enclosing the platform on which they stand, is probably of the same period, though the enormous size of three blocks forming part of the wall, which are thirteen feet high, and form together a course of one hundred and ninety feet, has tempted some persons to assign a much earlier date.

The still more splendid ruins of Palmyra are of the time of the Emperor Hadrian, but these I had not time to visit. If I had gone there I should have done so from Damascus, under the escort of the Bedouin Sheikh Mijuel, the husband of a lady whose first marriage took place at Sidmouth some forty-six years since. The various tombs outside Jerusalem, such as the so called tombs of Absalom and Zechariah, and others, are all also of the Roman period.

On a bend of the Litâny, which flows into the sea a little to the north of Sidon, and in a magnificent

⁶⁸ *Quarterly statement*, No. 5, p. 168.

position high above the river, stand the ⁶⁹ ruins of a fine old castle, the Kulat esh Shukif of the Arabs and the Belfort of the Crusaders, which the books assert to be of Phœnician, or at any rate, of very ancient date ; but on examining it I could not help doubting the statement, and on visiting other castles of similar construction, one for instance on Mount Tabor, and the Kulat es Subeibeh above Banias,⁷⁰ also asserted to be Phœnician, I came to the conclusion that they were all undoubtedly Arab, and I am glad to find that ⁷¹ Captain Warren has lately expressed the same opinion as to the Kulat esh Shukif, and ⁷² the Kulat es Subeibeh.

The exaggerations which have so long prevailed as to the antiquity of all these buildings rest, I believe, on the assumption adopted by some early traveller, and blindly followed by his successors, that all masonry containing stones with sunk or "channelled" margins (rustic masonry as it is technically called), is of very early date ; but though the fashion may have existed among the Phœnicians, it was also adopted by the Arabs, as well as by the Greeks and Romans, so that no deduction as to date can safely be drawn from its employment. ⁷³Mr. Tristram has attempted to define the various styles of these sunk margins, and to refer them to distinct periods, but he appears himself to fall into some of the errors of his prede-

⁶⁹ *Murray's handbook for Syria and Palestine*, p. 538.

⁷⁰ *Ibid*, p. 423.

⁷¹ *Palestine exploration fund*, quarterly statement, No. 5, January to March 31, 1870, p. 206.

⁷² *Ibid*, p. 229.

⁷³ *The land of Israel*, p. 80.

cessors, and his rules must consequently require revision. I should add that writers on Syria, all one after another, speak of the stones in question as "bevelled," but "bevelling" means merely the planing off of an angle, and they have perpetuated not only the original error of theory but the mistake committed in the technical term used in such perpetuation.

The only authentic remains of great antiquity in Palestine itself are probably to be found in the foundations of part of the south-east wall of the Temple area, on some of the stones of which the old masons' marks in Phœnician letters are still preserved according to Dr. Deutch; few others can be depended on, and even in the deepest excavations made by Captain Warren at Jerusalem, though conducted with great energy and ability, the earliest objects found have been of late Greek or of Roman date, such as lamps &c.; and, in fact, in the exhibition opened by the exploration fund in London during the season of 1869, nearly all the objects shewn were Arab: I must except, however, the canoe which Mr. Macgregor paddled upon the Jordan, and the hat he wore on the occasion, both of which, I presume, were of British manufacture. The canoe, I may observe, though interesting in itself, was rather out of place in the exhibition, and the hat, though apparently old and a good deal battered, was not antique nor otherwise attractive.

It may be thought remarkable that monumental remains of an early date should be so rare in a

⁷⁴ *Palestine exploration fund*, quarterly statement, No. 2, April 1 to June 30, 1869, p. 33.

country, and among a people surrounded by the great monumental nations of antiquity—the Egyptians, the Assyrians, the Babylonians, and the Greeks—but the Jews were a good deal fettered by the Mosaic precepts, and they were probably never skilled in the arts, nor wealthy, except in the reign of Solomon, and even *he* was obliged to ⁷⁵employ the idolatrous Phœnicians in the building of the Temple, and, on the completion of all the work, ⁷⁶to pay Hiram for it in cities, which were part of the promised land, instead of in hard cash.

Mr. King, in his recent work⁷⁷ on antique gems, humourously remarks that though faith may be the cardinal virtue of the theologian, distrust ought to be that of the gem collector; and I fear that suspicion must also be extended to the statements of nearly all writers on the antiquities of Palestine. ⁷⁸Mr. Fergusson, though not an architect by profession, is almost the only writer who seems to have brought a wide experience and high mental power to the subject.

I have not time to go into the various examples of Arab and Christian architecture, but must not omit to inform you that no Jewish coinage is believed to have existed before the time of Simon Maccabæus, who established the independence of the Jews about

⁷⁵ 1 Kings, v. 6 and 7.

⁷⁶ 1 Kings, ix., 11.

⁷⁷ *Antique gems, their origin, uses, and value, &c.*, by the Rev. C. W. King, London, 1860, p. 104.

⁷⁸ Consult the *illustrated handbook of Architecture*, by James Fergusson, London, 1855; his *Notes on the sites of the Holy Sepulchre at Jerusalem*, London, 1860; and the articles in *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, marked "J. F."

a century and a half before our era; and on this latter subject I must refer you to the recent⁷⁹ work of a son of Sir Frederick Madden. I will mention, however, that the coins of the Maccabees bear a triple-headed lily, with an inscription in Samaritan characters (which closely resemble the Phœnician,) of "Yerushalem Kedoshah" (the holy), an appellation still preserved in the title of "el Kuds" which is given to Jerusalem by the Arabs.

Poor Eliot Warburton, whose loss in the Pacific steamer, in 1856, was so universally regretted, says in his pleasant but highly coloured work, *the Crescent and the Cross*, that he does not⁸⁰ "envy the man who can merge the pilgrim in the traveller and the believer in the antiquary," but so far as I can judge from the few books on Palestine which I have read, the traveller and the antiquary have been too often merged in the pilgrim and the believer, who are unfortunately too apt to receive indiscriminately all that they hear or read, and to examine and compare far too little.

The pilgrim too, with his excited and sentimental notions, is liable to have them rudely shocked by the realities and contrasts of his journey.

The Phœnician galleys, which carried on the commerce of the old world, are now superseded by the screw steamers of the French Messageries, (no longer the "Impériales,") and the Austrian Lloyd.

The⁸¹ 30,000 war-chariots of the Philistines long

⁷⁹ *The history of the Jewish coinage, and of money in the old and new Testaments*, by F. W. Madden, London, 1864.

⁸⁰ *The Crescent and the Cross, or romance and realities of eastern travel*, London, 1845, vol ii., p. 191.

⁸¹ 1 Samuel, xiii., 5.

since disappeared, and the only wheeled vehicle now in Judæa is the omnibus which plies between Jaffa and Jerusalem.

The crusaders, the companions of Richard Cœur de Lion and S. Louis, have been succeeded by the excursionists of Cook and Gaze, and the various kinds of travellers so wittily described in the ⁸²preface to the *Sentimental Journey*, which Sterne wrote in the *Désobligeante* in the remise of the Hotel Dessin at Calais.

The miracles of the old and new Testaments are now sought to be imitated by the imposture of ⁸³“the holy fire” annually exhibited by the Greek bishop of Jerusalem on Easter Sunday in the church of the Sepulchre.

The only angels of which one gets a glimpse are a few of our fair countrywomen and American cousins in the modern costume of a riding habit and a wide-awake.

The predictions of Dr. Cumming, imported from London, and yearly falsified and yearly renewed, have succeeded to the denunciations of the old prophets.

While the brotherly love and charity taught in the New Testament are utterly disregarded in the constant quarrels and faction fights of the Greek Latin, Armenian and other churches, our own happily excepted.

⁸² *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*, by Mr. Yorick, a new edition, London, 1771, vol. i., p. 22.

⁸³ *Murray's handbook for Syria and Palestine*, p. 162, and *Jerusalem explored by Ermete Pierotti*, English translation, London, 1864, vol. i., p. 304.

But, in spite of all these changes and contrasts, Palestine presents a remarkable variety of objects and subjects of interest and study, and though we no longer vow, with ⁸⁴Henry the Fourth,

“ To chase the Pagans in those holy fields,
Over whose acres walk'd those blessed feet,
Which, fourteen hundred years ago, were nailed
For our advantage to the bitter cross,

the most careless wanderer must in some degree be impressed by the associations which must ever be connected with the country, and which are so strikingly put before us by our great poet in the passage which I have quoted.

I do not profess to be either a pilgrim or an antiquary, and still less a traveller in the higher sense of the term, and you must recollect that the few details and remarks which I have laid before you are the result of hasty observation, so that you must only take them for what they may be worth ; you must also bear in mind that I am a press'd man and not a volunteer, and that if my lecture has been tedious or uninteresting you have yourselves principally to thank for the infliction.

⁸⁴ *Henry IV.*, part I., act i., sc. 1.

POSTSCRIPT.

Since the lecture was sent to the printer I have read some of the numbers already published of M. Ernest Renan's *Mission de Phénicie*, Paris, 1864-5-6 and 1870, which were kindly lent to me by Canon Cook, and in which M. Renan goes at considerable length into the various examples of rustic-work found in Phénicia and Palestine. He expresses a decided opinion that the walls and citadel of Tortosa, and the castles of El Hosn, Safed, Kurein, Athlith, Gebeil, Semar-Gebeil, and others, which all contain rustic-work, were built by the Crusaders, although he was at first disposed in deference to the general current of authority to assign a high antiquity to them; he also expresses the same belief with regard to the castle of Subeibeh at Banias, and the Kalaat-esh-Shukif on the Litâny; but neither of these castles was visited by him, and notwithstanding the weight of his authority, I still consider them, in accordance with Mr. Fergusson and Captain Warren, to have been built by the Arabs, and not by the Crusaders. The former contains an Arabic inscription, which appears to have been contemporary with the erection of the castle, while the masonry and style of the Crusaders' Church in the

Kalaat-esh-Shukif are of very different character from those of the castle itself, and it may be readily supposed that some of the fortresses still remaining were built by the Arabs at the period of the Crusades, while others were erected by the Crusaders themselves, who doubtless employed many Arab workmen.

M. Renan's observations on the subject are contained in pages 47 to 54 of his work ; and in page 159 will be found some valuable remarks on the broken shafts of ancient columns inserted by the Crusaders in the walls of various castles and towns erected by them.