

Gleanings from Bible Lands



GLEANINGS FROM BIBLE LANDS,

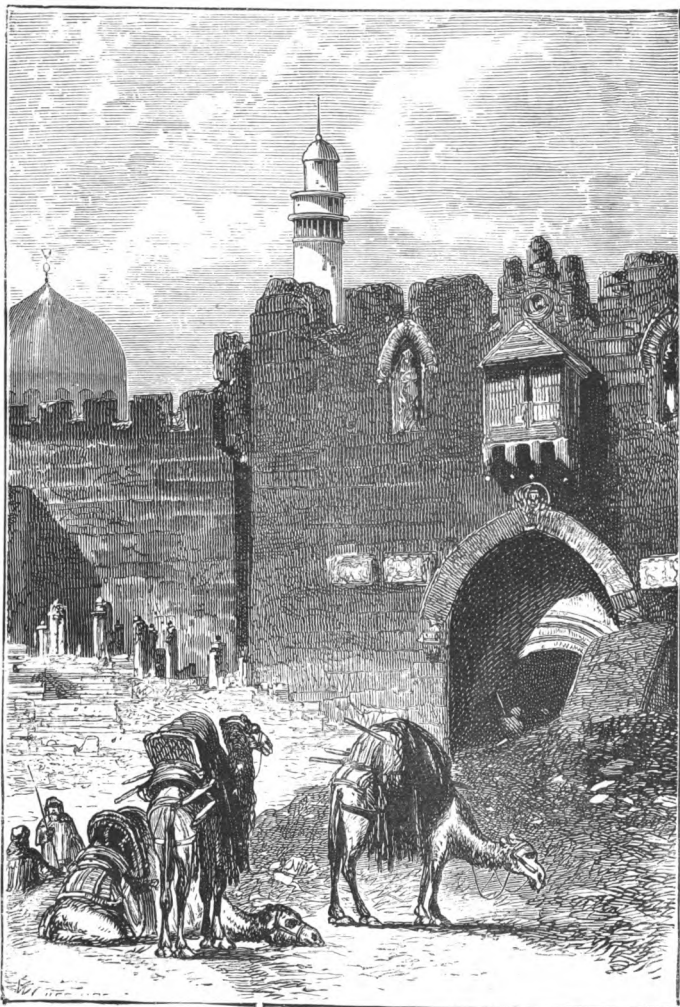
BEING CHAPTERS ON
EASTERN CITIES, THEIR DWELLINGS, FURNITURE, &c.
AND THE
DRESS AND OCCUPATIONS OF THE INHABITANTS.

OVER 500 PASSAGES OF SCRIPTURE ILLUSTRATED.

BY
ALFRED E. KNIGHT,
*Author of "A Concise History of the Church," "Twice Born,"
"Bible Plants and Animals," &c., &c.*

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A CITY GATE.

(See pp. 16-23.)

PREFACE.

A GENERAL knowledge of the manners and customs of the East is of real assistance to the student of Holy Scripture. The Bible is a book of metaphors, and of metaphors distinctly Oriental. Indeed, there is scarcely a phase of Eastern life which has not been drawn upon by the inspired writers for their varied and striking similes.

Nor this only. The pictures of social life, contained in the Divine Word, stand out in bolder relief and brighter colours, when the destructive and smoky varnish of our Western ideas is removed, and the light of Oriental discovery is thrown upon the canvas. Then the figures become instinct with life, and appear to move before our eyes ; while the separating mist of ages passes away, and we seem to live in the very scenes and circumstances which the pencil of inspiration has depicted.

“I am sure,” says a popular writer on the East, “that I am a wiser, and I will say a happier, if not a

better man, from my improved knowledge of Oriental life and of sacred associations. . . . However ambiguous some passages of the Bible may seem to be, we may rest assured that every paragraph was fully understood by the people in whose language, or languages, it was originally written. Indeed, every sentence was worded so as to set forth, not only the *actings* of the people, but their very thoughts, words, and ideas."

This, then, shall be our apology for sending forth the present work, though, perhaps, such apology is scarcely needed. We would add that should the volume meet with a favourable reception, we hope to send forth another, in which the rural economy of Eastern nations, and their domestic customs and usages, will be considered.

CORRIGENDUM.

Page 21, line 15, read *the* for *and*.

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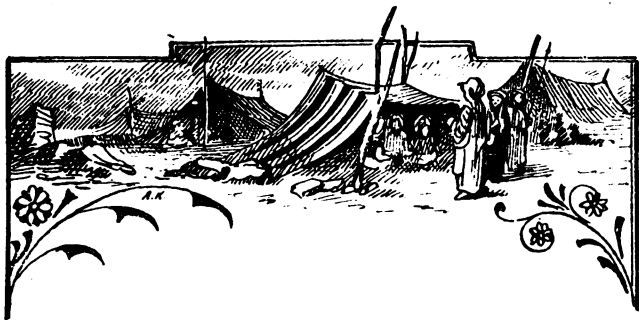
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CHAPTER I.

WITHOUT THE CITY.



THE subject before us admits of widely different treatment, just as the mention of an Eastern city awakens widely different thoughts in the mind of the historian, the antiquary, the traveller, and the Christian. We propose to look at it from the standpoint of the Christian; and to make use of the writings of historians, antiquaries and travellers, as we proceed.

The cities mentioned in the Word of God may be said to be of three kinds, namely, cities in the ordinary sense of the word, cities of refuge, and treasure-cities. Cities of the first kind will afford us all the material for succeeding chapters, and most of the material for the chapter before us, so that it would be better to treat first of the two latter, which may be disposed of in a few pages.

Cities
of
Refuge. AND first, regarding CITIES OF REFUGE. These were cities appointed by the children of Israel, for the protection of the homicide. Any person who killed another "unawares and unwittingly," might flee to one of these refuge-cities, where he was safe from the avenger of blood; though only so long as he remained in the city. On the death of the high priest he was free to depart, and to return to the land of his possession (Num. xxxv.; Josh. xx.). The institution of such a law was wise and merciful, for the usages of surrounding nations made it imperative that the nearest relation of a slain person should avenge his death; and doubtless the Israelites had some such practice among themselves, prior to this legislation. We have only to contrast the Divine law on this subject with the law of Mahomet, to perceive the wondrous suitability of the former and the miserable incompetency of the latter; for while the one discriminates in a beautiful and perfect manner between the innocent and the guilty, the other prescribes a system of remorseless and undistinguishing revenge, which aggravates the evil rather than abates it.

The number of refuge-cities appointed by the children of Israel, at the command of Moses and Joshua, was six; but it is asserted by Jewish writers that all the cities of the Levites were so used; although there were special privileges and exemptions for the manslayer in the cities specially authorized. Thus, in

the latter, houses were provided for the fugitive free of cost, and he resided there by right rather than by permission. He knew that he was safe if he could escape to the city in time; whereas, in the other forty-two cities, the Levites reserved to themselves the power of refusing admission within the walls—using their discretion in fact—and thus the trembling fugitive might be turned back upon the mercy of his pursuers.

Dr. Kitto observes, “that as the death of the high priest enabled the refugees to leave the city without any further fear from the blood-avenger, and as it was natural enough, under such circumstances, that they should not feel very anxious for the long life of that high personage, the mother of the existing pontiff usually gave them supplies of food and clothing, and otherwise endeavoured to promote their comfort, that their impatience might not lead them to pray for the death of her son.”*

The same writer draws attention to the fact that places of sanctuary were common amongst other nations, though they differed from the Jewish refugees in many important respects. Thus the right of sanctuary was conceded to *all* homicides without distinction, the guilty being protected as well as the innocent; whereas the law of Moses ordained that the guilty person should be given up. According to

* *Illustrated Commentary*, Vol. II.

the usage of the outside nations the guilty man was absolutely safe directly he had claimed sanctuary; no one could bring him to trial, and he was not bound to surrender himself against his will; according to the Mosaic law, the refuge-city was only a place of shelter for the innocent, or if for the guilty, only so long as his case remained unproved.

Furthermore, the place of sanctuary among the nations was the temple* or the altar, objects the most sacred to their superstitious and idolatrous minds, where no one dared raise a finger against the criminal, though he cowered there red-handed: but the law of Moses said, "If a man come presumptuously upon his neighbour, to slay him with guile; thou shalt take him from mine altar, that he may die" (Exod. xxi. 13, 14; 1 Kings ii. 28, &c.). But what other can we expect than that God's way of administering justice should immeasurably transcend the feeble legislations of man?

Heathen
Customs. PLACES OF SANCTUARY are not unknown even in modern times. In Samoa, the manslayer, be he innocent or guilty, instantly hastens to the house of his village-chief, or even to the house of some other chieftain in a neighbouring village, where he is unconditionally protected so long as he chooses to remain there. The

* During the corrupt Middle Ages the churches were often used for the same purpose.

chieftain, proud of such an opportunity of showing his importance, does not grudge the refugee his necessary food and lodgment, and thus the manslayer is safe.*

A more remarkable instance is recorded by Mr. Adair in his work on the North Americans. "The North American Indian nations," he says, "have most of them either a house or town of refuge, which is a sure asylum to protect a manslayer or an unfortunate captive. The Cheeroke, though now exceedingly corrupt, still observe that law so inviolably as to allow their beloved town the privilege of protecting a wilful murderer, but they seldom allow them to return home afterwards in safety: they will revenge blood for blood, unless in some particular case where the eldest can redeem. In almost every Indian nation there are several peaceable towns, which are called old, beloved, ancient, holy, or white towns (white being their fixed emblem of peace, friendship, prosperity, happiness, purity, &c.). They seem to have been formerly towns of refuge, for it is not in the memory of their oldest people that ever human blood was shed in them, although they often force persons from thence, and put them to death elsewhere."

Cities of Refuge.	THE CITIES OF REFUGE were easy of access; and every year, on the fifteenth of Adar, the magistrates inspected the roads to see
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* Turner's *Polynesia*.

that they were in good condition, and that there were no impediments. At every division of the road there was a direction-post on which was written, *Refuge*, for the guidance of the person who was fleeing for security. They were well supplied with water and provisions. The manufacture of weapons was not permitted there, lest the relatives of the deceased should procure arms to gratify their revenge. It was necessary that whoever took refuge there should understand a trade, that he might not be chargeable; but this did not apply to the six principal cities. They used to send some prudent and moderate persons to meet those who were pursuing the culprit, in order to dispose them to clemency and forgiveness, and to await the decision of justice.*

It only remains to state that of the six refuge-cities mentioned in the Bible, three were on the east of Jordan, namely, Bezer, Golan, and Ramoth-Gilead; and three on the west, namely, Kedesh of Naphtali, Hebron, and Shechem; and that these cities were available, not to the Hebrews only, but to all strangers residing in the country (Josh. xx. 7, 8; Deut. xix. 1-8).

Treasure
Cities. WE come now to TREASURE-CITIES. The mention of these cities carries us back to the time of Israel's bondage, and recalls at once the names of Pithom and Raamses (Exod. i. 11).

* Calmet's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

The Israelites, we are told, "built for Pharaoh treasure-cities, Pithom and Raamses"; and the Hebrew word in this passage has been variously rendered store-cities, granaries, fortresses, and walled towns, though it is doubtful whether any of these words is an improvement of the word in the Authorized Version, "treasure-cities." It is generally believed that these cities were used for the storing of grain and other produce, which in different districts belonged to the king; and this belief is supported by the fact that in later times, when the Israelites were established in the Land, mention is made of the store-cities of Solomon (2 Chron. viii. 4-8); and, again, of Hezekiah, who provided himself cities, and "had storehouses also for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil" (2 Chron. xxxii. 28, 29).

A recent writer has an interesting fragment on the same subject. Speaking of the buildings of ancient Egypt, he says that the oldest of them were of stone; "and later, they were partly of stone and partly of brick. But Pharaoh made them (the Hebrews) erect not only isolated buildings, but also build for him treasure-cities, Pithom and Raamses. These were probably cities mainly devoted to the storing of grain, &c.; as we read that Hezekiah made store-houses for the increase of corn, and wine, and oil. A papyrus describes the visit of an official to what appears to be this very city of Raamses. It reads, 'I proceeded to Pa-Ramessu Meiamen (house

of Ramessu-Meiamen'). He found it flourishing in good things, without a rival; fish in the pools, fowl on the ponds, grass in the fields. 'Its threshing-floors are full of barley and wheat.' Wine and salt are also named."*

Tasks THE enforced labour of the children of
and Israel, which the building of these trea-
Taskmasters. sure-cities entailed, is not without its parallel in modern times. One traveller, when staying at Alexandria, passed a public building in course of erection, and saw the poor slaves at work. "A great number of women and children of both sexes were carrying away the earth excavated for the foundation. Some labourers had loosened the soil, and the poor creatures then scraped it with their hands into circular baskets, which they bore away on their backs; they were barefooted, and very slenderly covered with rags. Several taskmasters—who have not ceased out of Egypt since the time of the Pharaohs—stood at intervals, holding a scourge of cords, which was not spared if any of the people, as they passed by crouching under their burdens, seemed to slacken in their work. They had all been pressed into the service by the Pasha's officers, and were paid at the miserable sum of half a piastre a day."†

* *Egypt as seen in Scripture and on the Monuments.*

† *The Boat and the Caravan.*

Ancient Bricks. MR. GADSBY found some brick ruins near the Remeseum in Egypt, which he believed to be the remains of one of these ancient store cities. "Some of the bricks have on them the cartouche of Thothmes I., and others of Thothmes III. These ruins are not merely of walls, but also of *towers*, probably watch-towers. They enclosed and defended a building of sandstone, now almost entirely demolished. May not this have been one of Pharaoh's treasure-cities?" asks Mr. Gadsby. "I think it more than probable, seeing that it was thus surrounded, guarded by walls. Two of these bricks (of Thothmes III.) I procured and conveyed to England. They contain no straw, but particles of rubbish, which I apprehend to be the meaning of the word 'stubble.' . . . I think there can be no reasonable doubt that these bricks were made by the Israelites."*

Plan of the Work. WE must now leave this interesting subject, and devote the remainder of the volume to the consideration of Eastern cities generally. We propose, in pursuing our enquiries, to commence at the *gates*, and so to work our way to the interior of the city, examining by turn the streets, walls, inns, and dwelling-houses. To these

* Gadsby's *Wanderings*, Vol. II. This can scarcely be, however, as Thothmes III. lived 250 years before the oppression of the Hebrews began! Yet similar bricks have been found stamped with the name of *Rameses II.*, who was probably the great oppressor of the Israelites.

last we shall seek admittance, and endeavour to gather from their porches and reception-rooms, their kitchens and banqueting-halls, their bed-chambers and dressing-rooms, the meanings of not a few Biblical allusions. By so doing, we shall, we trust, produce a work that will be of real value to the untravelled reader.

Importance THE subject is an important one, though
 of the many have shrunk from the study of it, on
 Subject. the plea that it is without human interest.

It shall be the effort of the author to dispel this illusion, by proving to the reader that almost every object to be met with in an Oriental city—from a dead wall to a broken cistern—has its charm for the Christian inquirer, no less than for the historian, the antiquary, and the traveller. When we fail to be interested in a certain object, the fault may, after all, rest merely with ourselves; and it is unfair to charge with tameness whatever our own minds have failed to dwell upon with interest. The monks of the Convent of St. Catherine on Mount Sinai could see nothing in a soiled manuscript which had been lying there for years, and they were going to burn it; but Tischendorf saw in it a valuable copy of the New Testament, which proved to be more ancient than the Codex Alexandrinus, a manuscript that was thought to be the oldest of its kind in the world. We mention this as an illustration. Let us turn now in the direction

of an Eastern city, and look for the road which leads us to its gates.

Some AND an Eastern road has its inconveni-
perilous ences. Indeed, one traveller* affirms that
Roads. it is hardly correct to speak of the existence of such a thing in Palestine. "Carriages are unknown there; and the thoroughfares consist merely of tracks worn by the feet of the beasts of burden. As the country is hilly, with the exception of a few extensive plains, and as the tops of the hills generally present a surface of denuded rocks, the paths over them are not only rugged and narrow, but often ascend and descend almost as steeply as a flight of stairs. Nothing but their singular expertness in this sort of travelling enables them to climb these heights and maintain their footing; and as it is, mis-steps may occur, not a little dangerous. In addition to this, the paths often conduct the traveller to the edges of precipices and fissures, which expose him still more. Stepping a few feet the wrong way, perhaps treading on a rolling-stone, or the sudden start of his horse and mule, may cause his destruction. Of this character was a part of the way between Kuriet el-Enab, supposed to be the ancient Kirjath-Jearim, and Jerusalem. We were obliged to dismount in some places, and pick our way on foot. This physical configuration of the country, and the

* Rev. H. B. Hackett, in *Illustrations of Scripture from the Holy Land*.

nature of the roads, have originated a mode of speaking in the Bible, the force of which is not always perceived—I refer to the passages which represent it as so calamitous a thing to the traveller to fall, stumble, have his feet slide, and the like. Thus it is said of the wise son in Proverbs iii. 23, ‘Then shalt thou walk in thy way safely, and thy foot shall not stumble.’ See also Proverbs iv. 12. In Jeremiah xxxi. 9 the safety of the straight path is opposed to one in which men are liable to stumble. In Psalm xxxviii. 16 the Psalmist prays that his enemies might not ‘rejoice over him when his foot slippeth’; and in Psalm lxvi. 9 he says of the righteous, that God ‘holdeth their soul in life, and suffered not their feet to be moved.’ In Deuteronomy xxxii. 35 God says of the wicked, ‘To me belongeth vengeance, and recompence; their foot shall slide in due time.’”

The writer goes on to speak of the vividness with which the significancy of the above figure was brought home to him on a certain occasion. “I was going from Tekoa to Khureitun, where is one of the most remarkable caves in Palestine, called, traditionally, the cave of Adullam, though without sufficient reason. The road crowded us into a narrow foot-path, between a high cliff on the right hand, and an immense ravine, hundreds of feet deep, on the left. It was almost enough to make the head reel to look into the horrible chasm. A slight confusion of mind, a shelving rock, a slip of the foot, would have hurled

the horse and rider to destruction in a moment. As an image of the doom of the wicked, what could be more expressive to the minds of those familiar with such places, than the words, 'Their foot shall slide in due time!' (Deut. xxxii. 35. See also Ps. xxvi. 1, xxxvii. 31, &c.)."

Another traveller, for many years a missionary in Hindostan, states that he was often reminded of these and other similar passages of Scripture during a journey in the Himalayas. The mountain roads there are very narrow, so narrow that they are not often wide enough for more than two men to walk together, and it is generally found easier to follow in single file. Those who are encumbered with burdens seldom walk two abreast. There are ascents and descents so steep as to require the traveller to plant his foot firmly and carefully in order to save himself from falling—or *sliding*—down the hill. In some places the roads lead around the side of a mountain, or along the bank of a torrent, with a precipice, either perpendicular, or nearly so, immediately on one side of it, and hundreds of feet deep. Sometimes the sharp ascent or descent is combined with the precipice on one side, and a further complication of the difficulty is made by both a slope of road towards its outer edge, and a chalky or friable kind of stone in the pathway, affording no safe hold to the feet. In many of these places the traveller looks down a giddy slope of a hundred,

a thousand, or two thousand feet, on which no foothold could be found, with the consciousness that a false step, or the breaking of a bank under his foot, would precipitate him into a ravine filled with stones. Our traveller came to a place where the bank above the road had slipped and filled the pathway, excepting about eight inches at the outer edge. As the ravine was not very deep, and therefore did not look very fearful, he rode around the heap, and his horse's hind foot broke down the remainder of the pathway. He was carried safely over, however; and at once the words of the Psalmist rose to his mind, "My steps had well nigh slipped" (Ps. lxxiii. 2). The same writer expresses his conviction that only those who have had some experience of mountain paths can feel the full meaning of those figures which are derived therefrom.*

Psalm cxxi.
Illustrated.

WE will conclude our mention of EASTERN ROADS, in so far as they have reference to the environs of the cities, by another quotation from Professor Hackett. It was an interesting thought, he says, as he was approaching Jerusalem, that a striking instance of the figurative language of the Scriptures occurs in one of the Psalms of Degrees or Pilgrimages (cxxi. 3, 4)—"a class of Psalms composed for the use of the Hebrews as they went up to celebrate the yearly festivals in

* Rev. J. Warren's *Travels*, &c.

the capital of the nation. Nothing could be more natural than that the pious worshipper, after having surmounted the peculiar dangers of such a journey, should single out his exemption from the casualties of the way as a special mark of the divine goodness to him.

“ ‘He suffers not thy foot to slide,
Thy Keeper slumbers not ;
Behold, He neither slumbers nor sleeps
Who is the Keeper of Israel.’ ”

“How often may these words have given utterance to the grateful joy with which the pilgrim from Galilee, who had crossed the steep mountains of Ephraim, or the pilgrim from the south of Judah, who had pursued his way over lofty summits and along the verge of precipices, having reached at length the holy city, has looked back, almost with shuddering, upon the perils which attended his steps, and blessed the care which watched over him, and brought him in safety to the goal of his hopes and desires !

“ ‘Standing now are our feet
Within thy gates, O Jerusalem,
Whither go up the tribes,
The tribes of Jehovah as prescribed to Israel,
To give thanks to the name of Jehovah.
Pray for the peace of Jerusalem ;
May they prosper who love thee ;
May peace be within thy walls,
Prosperity within thy palaces ! ’ ”

This beautiful quotation has brought us, almost unexpectedly, to the subject which we have next to consider—the city-gates. “Standing now are our feet,

within thy gates, O Jerusalem." Let us consider them.

City
Gates.

THE name CITY-GATES has an old-world ring about it, particularly in this country; and the latter-day Englishman must travel eastward if he would look upon a walled city, and learn for himself the importance which attaches to the gates. Eastern cities are very much alike in their external appearance, having always a surrounding wall, and numerous entrances of the kind referred to. "Jerusalem has, at present, only four open gates, one on each of the four sides of the city, looking towards the north, south, east and west. Besides these, there were formerly four others, mostly smaller gates, now closed up with walls."* The town of Shohba, which was formerly one of the chief cities in the district east of the Haurān, has "eight gates, with a paved causeway leading from each into the town. Each gate is formed of two arches, with a post in the centre."†

In the world's earlier days the gate of a city had a far greater importance than now, especially among the Jews. Hence the word "is often used to denote a place of public assembly, where justice was administered (Deut. xvii. 5, 8; xxi. 19; xxii. 15; xxv. 6, 7, &c.); because, as the Jews mostly laboured

* Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, Vol. I.

† Burckhardt's *Travels in Syria and the Holy Land*.

in the fields, assemblies were held at their city gates, and justice administered there, that labourers might lose no time; and that country people, who had affairs of justice, might not be obliged to enter the town.* It was at the gate of Bethlehem that Boaz went into the question of the law of redemption with his kinsman (Ruth iv. 1, &c.); and it was at the gate of Hebron, that Abraham closed his negotiations with Ephron, the Hittite, for the purchase of the cave of Machpelah (Gen. xxiii. 10-20). The above facts will also serve to illustrate some references in the prophets; as, for instance, "They turn aside the poor in the gate from their right" (Amos v. 12), and "Execute the judgment of truth and peace in your gates" (Zech. viii. 16). In Job v. 4 we read that the children of the foolish "are crushed in the gate"; that is to say, their folly is there exposed; similar confusion awaits the enemies in the gate noticed in Psalm cxxvii. 5. (See marginal reading.)

When Bonar and M'Cheyne were visiting the fort of El-Arish, in Lower Palestine, they went at mid-day to the gate, to enjoy the cool. The arched roof afforded a complete shade, and a pleasant breeze was passing through. "Under such a gateway Lot was probably seated, for coolness' sake, when the angels came to Sodom; and, for the same reason, the

* Calmet's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

people of old used to resort to it, and it became the market-place." Our travellers saw how the gate became the seat of judgment, when, a little after, the governor appeared. "His attendants having spread a mat and a carpet over it, and a cushion in each corner, he took his seat, inviting us to recline near him."*

Markets THE ancient custom of holding markets
 at at gates still obtains in Persia, Africa and
 Gates. other parts. Thus Mr. Morier, when
 riding about Teheran (in Persia), usually went
 out of the town at the gate leading to the village
 of Shah Abdul Azum, where a market was held
 every morning, particularly of horses, mules, asses
 and camels. At about sunrise the owners of the
 animals assembled, and exhibited them for sale.
 But there were also sellers of other goods, who
 erected tents and temporary stalls for the display
 of their wares.† (See 2 Kings vii. 1, &c.)

A traveller in Africa speaks of a market in front of one of the principal gates of a town he visited. "Slaves, sheep and bullocks, the latter in great numbers, were the principal live-stock for sale. There were at least fifteen thousand persons gathered together, some of them coming from places two or three days' distant. Wheat, rice and gussub were

* *Narrative of a Mission of Enquiry to the Jews.*

† Morier's *Second Journey through Persia.*

abundant; tamarinds in the pod, ground nuts, ban beans, ochres and indigo. . . . Leather was in great quantities; and the skins of the large snake, and pieces of the skin of the crocodile, used as an ornament for the scabbards of their daggers, were also brought to me for sale." *

The Gate
a Seat of
Justice.

THE gates being used as the place of judgment, a seat in the gate became, naturally, a seat of honour and authority.

The aged Eli (of whom it is said "he had judged Israel forty years") was sitting in the gate when the messenger arrived with the news that the ark of God was taken (1 Sam. iv. 18); and we are told both of Mordecai and Daniel that they sat in the king's gate (Esth. ii. 19, and Dan. ii. 49), an expression which denotes the authority that was vested in their persons. We learn also from Scripture that the husband of a virtuous woman was "known in the gates," when he sat "among the elders of the land" (Prov. xxxi. 23). It is related of the Persians, that when one of their great men build a palace it is the custom to feast the king and his grandees in it for several days. "Then the great gate of it is open: but when these festivities are over they shut it up, never more to be opened."† The custom is one of great antiquity, and may,

* Denham and Clapperton's *Discoveries in Africa*, Vol. I.

† Sir John Chardin.

perhaps, be alluded to in the passage, "This gate shall be shut, it shall not be opened, and no man shall enter in by it; because the Lord, the God of Israel, hath entered in by it, therefore it shall be shut. It is for the prince" (Ezek. xliv. 2, 3).

Gates closed at Night. THE gates of Eastern cities are always closed at night for the security of the inhabitants, and porters are usually stationed there to admit those who have the right to enter. Mr. Lane notices this fact in his "Modern Egyptians." "Cairo," he says, "is surrounded by a wall, the gates of which are shut at night. To the right and left of the great thoroughfares are by-streets and quarters; most of the by-streets are thoroughfares, and have a large wooden gate at each end, closed at night, and kept by a porter within, who opens to any persons requiring to be admitted. The quarters mostly consist of several narrow lanes, having but one general entrance, which is also closed at night."* How different will it be with the twelve gates of the holy city, the new Jerusalem! Thieves and robbers, and even *sin* itself, will be far removed from that blissful place, because there will be no darkness there to befriend them. "The gates of it shall not be shut at all by day: for there shall be no night there" (Rev. xxi. 25). That is how the beloved John speaks of it.

* Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, Vol. I.

Materials of Gates. IRON, brass and stone seem to have been the chief materials used in ancient city gates. These were the hardest and most durable materials known, and hence their almost universal use. "Vain would have been the precaution of building their walls high, unless the gates had been well secured also. Algiers has five gates; and some of these have two, some three, other gates within them, and some of them plated all over with thick iron. After this manner the place where St. Peter was imprisoned seems to have been secured. Some of their gates are plated over in like manner with brass."* So we read in Scripture, "He hath broken the gates of brass, and cut the bars of iron in sunder" (Ps. cvii. 16); and reference to gates within gates will be found in the account of Peter's deliverance from prison by the angel (Acts xii. 10).

Stone gates are still to be seen in some Eastern towns, particularly in Arabia and Syria. One traveller, speaking of the towns in the Haurān, observes, that he saw one of these gates "fifteen inches thick, from which some idea may be formed of these ponderous masses, how unwieldy they must be to open and shut, and with what propriety they might be enumerated under the terms of 'gates and bars,' when speaking of the threescore cities of Og, the King of Bashan, as these ponderous doors of stone

* Harmer's *Observations*, Vol. I.

were all closed on the inside with bars going horizontally or perpendicularly across them.”* (Deut. iii. 5.) Burckhardt states that the gates of the town of Kuffer, though between nine and ten feet high, are of a single piece of stone.†

The gate which formerly stood outside the city, on the way to Boulac, consisted of three parts. In the centre was a wide gate for animals and carriages, and on either side a narrow one for foot-passengers. These narrow gates have been termed by some “the needles” (Matt. xix. 24). “I have stood,” says Mr. Gadsby, “against the gate at Cairo, time after time, watching the people pass and repass, and have invariably observed that where one person went through the narrow gates, a hundred or more took the broad centre gate, except when a horse or carriage was coming up, and then the people slipped on one side, and passed through one of the narrow gates. I cannot help believing,” continues this interesting writer, “that at the time the Redeemer addressed His disciples, as in Matt. vii. 13, 14, he had one of this kind of gates in view as he sat upon the mountain; for we find that both the Redeemer and the apostles suited their remarks to the objects near to them, and he might point to the gate and the people passing, as I have described, as an illustration: ‘Wide is the gate that leadeth to destruction,

* Buckingham’s *Arab Tribes*.

† Burckhardt’s *Syria*.

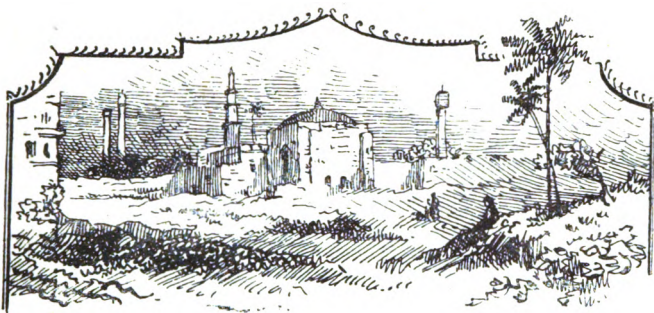
and many there be which go in thereat: because strait is the gate which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”

City
Walls.

BEFORE proceeding to enter an Eastern city, we may glance for a moment at the walls. These were anciently of a great height. The men who were sent by Moses to spy out the land of Canaan returned with a report that the cities were “great and walled up to heaven” (Deut. i. 28), and the people were cast down by reason of the report. Humanly speaking, these walls were safe from attack because of their height, for even scaling-ladders failed to be of any use when a wall exceeded certain limitations. “If,” says one writer, “they raised up anciently the walls of their cities so high as not to be liable to be scaled, they thought them safe; the same simple contrivance is to this day sufficient to guard places from the Arabs, who live in the very wilderness in which Israel wandered when the spies discouraged them by saying, ‘The cities are walled up to heaven’; and who are a nation more inured to warlike enterprises than the Israelities were?”

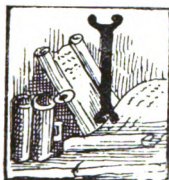
It was the height of the walls of Damascus which necessitated the peculiar mode of St. Paul’s escape from that city (Acts ix. 25); and instances of similar escapades will doubtless occur to the reader. Thevenot, who wrote in the seventeenth century,

tells us that pilgrims to the monastery of Mount Sinai had to *enter* the building in some such way. The walls were high and smooth, and on the east side was a window, from which those who were within drew up the pilgrim with a basket, which they let down by a rope that ran in a pulley. These walls were so high that they could not be scaled, and without cannon the place could not have been taken.



CHAPTER II.

STREETS AND DWELLING-HOUSES.



IF we think to form our ideas of the streets of Eastern cities by those of our own country, we shall only be misled. They are narrow, tortuous and gloomy, even in the most important cities; their character being mainly fixed by the climate and the style of architecture. The heat explains their narrowness, and the situation of the windows (most of which look upon the inner court), accounts for their gloom.* The testimony of travellers is unvarying on this point. In Damascus, for example, the bazaars or streets, where the stores and shops are placed, are not more than ten or fifteen feet wide on an average; while roofs are

Streets
and Lanes.

* Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. III.

thrown across them, at heights of ten, fifteen, or twenty feet, to exclude the sun. These roofs are not very close, but are so arranged that the air has more or less circulation. In almost all Eastern countries, indeed, great care is taken to procure a shade from the scorching rays of the sun; and for this purpose the streets are made narrow, and covered in the way described. This narrowness of the streets, and the covering of them, does, it is true, give a closeness to them, and operates against a free circulation of the air; but this is supposed to be compensated, in part at least, by the protection they give from the direct action of the sun.*

The streets of Cairo are built over in the same fashion, and the entrances, according to Mr. Gadsby, are mere openings, cut through the walls on the ground floors of the houses. "And then the streets are such labyrinths! so winding and interminable, that no stranger ought to penetrate far into the interior of the city without a clue or guide." The writer just named never forgot his own experiences when he lost himself one day in the streets of Cairo. He had walked about for a long while, now turning down one street and now another; admiring this, and wondering at that, until he quite forgot himself, and was presently roused to the painful consciousness of the fact that he had lost his way. He endeavoured to find a passage out of the maze, but to no purpose;

* Paxton's *Letters*.



A STREET AND BAZAAR IN CAIRO.

even his compass, which had often befriended him in the past, was of no use. In short, had it not been for the opportune arrival of a donkey-boy, he might have been wandering about the city all night.*

Bazaars IT is no uncommon thing in Eastern
or countries for *all* the houses in a street
Shops. to be devoted to the sale of one particular commodity; and this has been the case from very early times. "Zedekiah the king commanded that they should commit Jeremiah into the court of the prison, and that they should give him daily *a piece of bread out of the bakers' street*" (Jer. xxxvii. 21). "The great thoroughfare streets of Cairo generally have a row of shops along each side; commonly a portion of a street, or a whole street, contains chiefly, or solely, shops appropriated to one particular trade, and is called the 'market' of that trade. Thus a part of the principal street of the city is called the market of the sellers of copper wares; another part is called the market of the jewellers; and so on."† Our illustration (p. 27) shows the market of the sellers of shoes, in other words, the shoe bazaar of Cairo.

Straight WE have alluded to the tortuous character
Streets. of Eastern streets, and though this may be taken as a rule, there *are* exceptions, and a straight street may be sometimes met with.

* Gadsby's *Wanderings*, Vol. I. † Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, Vol. II.

The street proceeding from the principal gate of Shohba, "leads in a straight line through the town," and must have an imposing appearance, for it "is paved with oblong flat stones, laid obliquely across it with great regularity."* In the Acts we read (ix. 11) that Ananias was bidden to "arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for one called Saul, of Tarsus." This street was in Damascus, and was a "noble thoroughfare, one hundred feet wide, divided in the Roman age by colonnades into three avenues, the central one for foot passengers, the side passages for vehicles and horsemen going in different directions."† The street is thus described by one who saw it at a much later period: "This morning we went to see the street called Straight. It is about half a mile in length, running from east to west through the city. It being narrow, and the houses jutting out in several places on both sides, you cannot have a clear prospect of its length and straightness. In this street is shown the house of Judas, with whom Paul lodged; and in the same house is an old tomb, said to be Ananias's; but how he should come to be buried here they could not tell us, nor could we guess, his own house being shown us in another place. However, the Turks have a reverence for this tomb, and maintain a lamp always burning over it."‡

* Burckhardt's *Syria*, &c. † *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. III.

‡ Maundrell's *Journey*.

Eastern
Wells.

ONE of the objects which most frequently meet the eye, in passing through an Eastern city, is the *well*. What varied thoughts are roused in the mind at the very mention of the word! A well! It is a word which wakens tender and happy memories. At a well Eliezar found Rebekah; Jacob, Rachel; and Moses, Zipporah. It was at a well the wearied Son of man was sitting, when the woman of Sychar came to fill her water-pot (Gen. xxiv. and xxix.; Ex. ii.; and John iv).

Travellers have had much to say on this subject, and their writings have often beautifully illustrated familiar passages of Holy Writ. Of course, many of the wells lie outside the city, perhaps most of them; but we forbore to speak of them in our opening chapter, knowing that we should meet with them again when we got within the city walls. The reader will not be surprised, therefore, if he finds himself taken occasionally "without the city" while this subject is before him.

"It is the business of the *women* in the East to fetch water. This they do in the cool of the mornings and evenings, at which times great numbers of females are seen going together on this employment. It is principally the girls who draw water, though they generally have with them one or more grown persons; and sometimes the *married* women go out, tying their suckling children behind them. When thus engaged, the Eastern women are much adorned;

sometimes with trinkets of very great value: it was not, therefore, strange in the servant to put ornaments on Rebekah, when she came forth to draw water" (Genesis xxiv. 22, &c.).*

But it is often a source of sore trouble to the women to have to make these journeys backwards and forwards to the well. "Nothing distresses the Bedouin women so much as fetching water. The tents are but seldom pitched very close to a well; and if this be only half an hour's distance from the camp, the Bedouins do not think it necessary that the water should be brought upon camels; and, when asses are not to be procured, the women must carry the water every evening on their backs, in long water-skins; and they are sometimes obliged to seek a second supply at the well."†

Methods IN Palestine the wells, for the most part,
of raising are dug from the solid rock, and sometimes
Water. have steps hewn in them for the purpose
of descent. "The brims are furnished with a curb
or low wall of stone, bearing marks of high anti-
quity in the furrows worn by the ropes used in
drawing water. It was on a curb of this sort that
our Lord sat when he conversed with the woman of
Samaria" (John iv. 6).

* M. F. M., abridged from Drs. Shaw and Russell and Sir John Chardin.

† Burckhardt's *Notes on the Bedouin Arabs*, Vol. I.

There are three methods of raising water from these wells. The first is by bucket, or water-skin, to which a rope has been attached. The drawer grasps the other end of the rope (or, if an ox or ass be employed, the beast is tied to it), and walks away from the well till the skin or bucket has reached the summit.

The second method is called the *sakerjeh*, or Persian wheel. "This consists of a vertical wheel, furnished with a set of buckets or earthen jars, attached to a cord passing over the wheel, which descend empty and return full as the wheel revolves. On the axis of the wheel revolves a second wheel parallel to it, with cogs which turn a third wheel set horizontally at a sufficient height from the ground to allow the animal used in turning it to pass under. One or two cows or bulls are yoked to a pole which passes through the axis of this wheel, and as they travel, round, it turns the whole machine."* The third method is a modification of the foregoing, "by which a man, sitting opposite to a wheel furnished with buckets, turns it by drawing with his hands one set of spokes prolonged beyond its circumference, and pushing another set from him with his feet." In fact, the spokes of this wheel correspond with the cogs on the vertical wheel of the *sakerjeh*, and the man who turns the wheel answers the purpose of the horizontal cog-wheel of the same machine.

* *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. III. ; *Narrative of a Mission to the Jews*, p. 111.

There is also an ancient Egyptian method of raising water, which is still sometimes employed in the present day, but this is of no use for wells of any depth. We refer to the *shadoof*, "a simple contrivance consisting of a lever moving on a pivot, which is loaded at one end with a lump of clay or some other weight, and has at the other end a bowl or bucket. This is let down into the water, and, when raised, emptied into a receptacle above."*

Meetings THE wells outside the cities are naturally
 at great gathering places for the wandering
 Wells. tribes of the East; and here it is that the shepherd very often finds his future wife, and the maid a husband. Belzoni speaks of meeting "two beautiful damsels of the desert" at a well, and adds that the poor girls had no other way of showing themselves—the well was the only place where they had a chance to see or be seen.† The reader will doubtless connect with this the fact that Rebekah, Rachel, and Zipporah all found husbands at wells (Gen. xxiv. 16, &c.; xxix. 10, 11; and Ex. iii. 16–21).

The willingness displayed by Rebekah in giving drink from her pitcher to Eliezer (Gen. xxiv. 18) is sometimes remarkably illustrated by the like willingness of Eastern women of to-day. "About five in the

* *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. III.; *Narrative of a Mission to the Jews*, pp. 51, 52, and 98.

† Belzoni's *Travels*

evening," says one traveller, "upon entering the town of Nazareth, we saw two women filling their pitchers with water at a fountain, and about twelve others waiting for the same purpose, whom we desired to pour some water into a trough which stood hard by, that our horses might drink. We had scarcely made the request before they instantly complied, and filled the trough, and the others waited with the greatest patience. Upon returning them thanks, one of them, with very great modesty, replied, 'We consider kindness and hospitality to strangers as an essential part of our duty.'"*

WE cannot dismiss this subject without
Sychar's
Well.
alluding again to the beautiful narrative of

Jesus at the well of Sychar (John iv.). This well, called also in the chapter Jacob's well, is nowhere else referred to in the Bible; but the *once* mention is enough to make it for ever memorable. The Lord of Glory sat upon it, and there breathed into the ears of a poor, fallen woman, His message of pardoning love. On that well sat the Saviour of the world, and beside that well a soul was born again for glory.

The well lies about a mile from the present town of Sichem, and its mouth is now covered by an arched or vaulted building, without door or window

* Harmer's *Observations*, Vol. I.

so that the only way down to it is through a small hole in the roof, scarcely large enough to admit the body of a man. A traveller,* who visited the neighbourhood some years ago, thus writes of it: "Landing on a heap of dirt and rubbish, we saw a large, flat, oblong stone, which lay almost on its edge across the mouth of the well, and left barely space enough to see that there was an opening below. We could not ascertain its diameter; but, by the time of a stone's descent, it was evident that it was of considerable depth, as well as that it was perfectly dry at this season, the fall of the stones giving forth a dead and hard sound." Maundrell calculated that the depth was about thirty-five feet; † but Dr. Wilson, who induced a Jew to descend to the bottom, found it to be seventy-six feet.

Our Lord's situation, as implied in the words of the woman, "Sir, thou hast nothing to draw with, and the well is deep," was brought forcibly before the mind of Mr. Hartley, when he happened to come to a well without the requisite means for drawing water. ‡ And Captain Basil Hall remarks, that he could "never see a Hindoo female sitting by the steps of a well in India, with her arm thrown wearily over the unfilled water-pot, without thinking of the beautiful story of the woman of Samaria." § Gadsby,

* Buckingham. † Maundrell's *Travels*. ‡ Hartley's *Researches*.

§ Basil Hall's *Fragments of Voyages and Travels*.

with the same incident before his mind, relates, that when going from Beersheba to Hebron, he came upon a well, where were several women with their water-pots; but that they no sooner saw him than they ran away, leaving their water-pots behind.* Lastly, Dr. E. D. Clarke has finely remarked upon the wonderful chain of undesigned coincidences which the whole narrative presents, when looked at by the side of geographical facts and Oriental usages. "The journey of our Lord from Judæa into Galilee; the cause of it; his approach to the metropolis of this country; its name; his arrival at the Amorite field, which terminates the narrow valley of Sichem; the ancient custom of halting at the well; the female employment of drawing water; the disciples sent into the city for food, by which its situation out of the town is obviously implied; the question of the woman referring to existing prejudices which separated the Jews from the Samaritans; the depth of the well; the Oriental allusion contained in the expression *living water*; the history of the well, and the customs thereby illustrated; the worship upon Mount Gerizim; all these occur within the space of twenty verses; and if to these be added what has already been referred to in the remainder of the same chapter, we shall, perhaps, consider it as a record, which, in the words of Him who sent it, we may

* Gadsby's *Wanderings*, Vol. I.

*lift up our eyes, and look upon, for it is white already to harvest.”**

Disputes IN some cases the water of a well is
 at not to be had without paying for, and
 Wells. then there is frequently a dispute, or
 even fight, in which weapons are freely used, and
 lives are, perhaps, sacrificed. Persons who have
 not travelled in the East can but feebly under-
 stand those passages of the Word which speak of a
 dearth of water, or of *paying* for that precious fluid.
 How often have many of us read Genesis xxi. 25 or
 xxvi. 20 without a thrill; and yet how much do they
 imply! “Abraham reproved Abimelech because of
 a well of water, which Abimelech’s servants had
 violently taken away”; and “the herdsmen of Gerar
 did strive with Isaac’s herdsmen; and he called the
 well *Ezek—contention*.” Such disputes as these are
 not unknown in modern times. Irby and Mangles
 speak of coming to a well where some Tarabeen
 Arabs were watering their camels, and of witnessing
 a violent quarrel between the conductors of both
 parties. The upshot of the altercation was, that the
 Tarabeen Arabs levied a contribution on the Arabs of
 the other party, and would have levied one on the
 Englishmen also, had they not produced their arms.†

* Dr. Clarke, quoted in Calmet and Kitto’s *Illustrated Commentary*.
 Vol. V.

† Irby and Mangles’ *Travels*.

Major Rooke,* mentions a similar dispute which ended in the death of three of his party; but his account is much too long for insertion.

Drinking
Fountains.

A DRINKING-FOUNTAIN is not an uncommon object in an Eastern city. Gadsby, on one occasion, saw a number of youthful Arabs crowded round an erection of this kind in Cairo, all striving frantically to get their mouths to the spout. He said the scene reminded him of a litter of sucking pigs.† Others make mention of a similar fountain in Smyrna, erected many years before by some benevolent Mahometan, the water of which “gushes plentifully into a trough.” A large spoon-like cup is attached to the fountain by a chain, which no one injures or thinks of removing.‡ “The bowl is not broken, nor the cord loosed, at this fountain” (Eccles. xii. 6). Nearly every important city is provided with a like erection.

Inns
or
Caravanserais.

FROM wells and fountains we are led by natural steps to the subject of *Inns*, to which the Word of God has some important references. Those outside the cities are often found in conjunction with wells, and are called

* See *Travels from India to England*, p. 52.

† *Wanderings*.

‡ *Narrative of a Mission to the Jews*.

caravanserais; but they are doubtless of comparatively modern date (perhaps of European introduction), and are not mentioned in the Bible. The inn spoken of in Exodus iv. 24 was doubtless nothing more than a halting-place, selected "on account of its proximity to water or pasture," by which Moses and his family pitched their tents and passed the night.* "The superior class of caravanserais appear very striking objects to the stranger, who takes them for palaces, fortresses, or castles; but this first impression wears off on a nearer approach, when it is seen that no enclosed buildings rise above the level of the enclosing wall. This wall is generally upwards of twenty feet high, and it sometimes extends one hundred yards on each side of the square which it encloses. It is strongly built of fine brickwork, commonly based on stone, and is ornamented at the top. In the centre of the front walls is the entrance, a tall and spacious archway, over which are sometimes chambers crowned with superb domes. These form the places of honour. On each side, under the arched roof of the portico, are the keeper's rooms and shops, where the commodities most required by travellers are sold.

"Passing through this archway, the spectator perceives a sort of piazza extending on every side of the interior of the quadrangle, leaving a spacious area in the middle. Arched recesses in the walls

* *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I.

now appear to be apartments, divided from each other by walls, open in front, neatly paved, and sometimes possessing a fire-place, while compartments cut out in the thick wall serve as cupboards. A small door conducts to an inner room, seldom resorted to, of an oblong shape, receiving its only light from a chimney opposite the door, and having also a range of cupboards, about three feet from the floor. In the middle of each of the three sides of the building is an apartment much more spacious and lofty than any other, and not divided into two rooms. These are used as places where the different inmates resort to smoke, converse, or tell tales.

“The stables of the caravanserai extend along a covered lane between the back wall of the apartments and the outermost wall of the building; and along this wall there extends, within the stable, another series of cell-like apartments, for servants and poor people. But the spacious central courtyard is always used as a stable when the weather is fair. In the centre of the court is an elevated platform of masonry, the roof of a subterraneous chamber, a most refreshing retreat during the great mid-day heat. Sometimes the place of this platform is occupied by the parapet of the deep well or reservoir, from which the caravanserai is supplied with water. At the angles of the square, flights of steps conduct to the flat roof of the building, resorted to in the cool of the evening. The traveller brings his

bedding, culinary utensils, and some articles of provision with him. Few caravanserais, however, are thus complete, and many are suffered to fall into decay.”*

Inns THE inns within the walls of Eastern cities
or are called *Khans*; though the name is
Khans. used interchangeably with caravanserais.

These buildings vary considerably as to size and architectural pretensions; some being little better than stables, and others rivalling the finest buildings in the towns in which they may be found. Some samples of the former kind may be found in the khans of Asia Minor, which, according to Mr. Arundel, are as destitute of comfort as a prison cell. They are usually flat-roofed; and consist of a single room, with an open area surrounded by chambers. The room is for the accommodation of travellers, but contains not a stick of furniture; while the open area is occupied by the camel-drivers and their beasts. †

Samples of the latter kind of inns may be found in those of Damascus, of which Mr. Buckingham has left us an interesting picture. “Some of the finest buildings in Damascus,” he writes, “are the khans or caravanserais, appropriated to the reception of goods brought in caravans from various quarters by wholesale merchants, who supply them to the retail dealers.

* *Biblical Treasury*. Vol. III.

† Arundel's *Discoveries in Asia Minor*, Vol. II.

In the course of our ramble to-day, we visited several of these, and were much pleased with them all, but were particularly struck with the beauty of one that was superior to every other. It consisted of a spacious court, the entrance to which from the street was by a superb gateway of the pointed arch, vaulted and highly ornamented with sculpture. The court was paved throughout with broad flat stones, smoothly polished, and admirably joined together; and in the centre of this stood a large fountain, sending forth cooling and agreeable streams; the whole being crowned with a cluster of lofty domes. The masonry of this pile was formed of alternate layers of black and white stone, and the ornaments were profusely rich." *

No Room in the Inn. IT is interesting to read of the difficulties which were experienced by Bonar and M'Cheyne's party in obtaining a night's lodging during their stay at Bucharest. They went first to the Khan Rosso, and having waited more than half-an-hour for an answer to their knocking, were sent away with the discomfiting word—"no room." They then tried another khan, but could get no answer at all, so they turned from this place more wretched than ever. It was night, and their condition was not inviting. They were cold and weary, in a strange city, and unfamiliar with the

• *Arab Tribes.*

language of its people. What was to be done? At length a Jew, perceiving their dilemma, was good enough to help them out of it. He conducted them to the Khan Manuk, an inn of large dimensions, where they found an empty room, and there they spread their mats for the night. The ground floor, on which they slept, was occupied with horses and carriages of all kinds; the floor above (the rooms of which were all engaged when they arrived) was for travellers.* This incident recalled to their minds the birth of our Lord recorded in the Gospel of Luke. Yet the first resting-place of the holy Child was not an empty room, but a manger; the Evangelist taking care to inform us, that "there was *no room* for him in the inn" (Luke ii. 7).

The foregoing extracts and observations may help the reader to realize the scene described in Genesis xlii. 27, as, also, that in Luke x. 34.

Eastern Dwelling- houses.	HAVING treated of the Khan and caravan-serai, we may now consider some Oriental dwelling-houses. In Egypt and most parts of Syria, Arabia, and Persia, the houses of the village poor are built of mud, or sunburnt bricks; occasionally stone houses may be met with. They are seldom more than one story high, and the windows, which are placed high up in the walls, are small and grated. Their roofs are flat, and constructed in
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* *Narrative of a Mission of Enquiry to the Jews.*

a primitive fashion of straw and mud, which is laid upon boughs, or rafters. Sometimes they are surrounded by walled courts, in which the cattle are kept. The houses of the city poor are not dissimilar; but the roofs are more strongly built, and the houses themselves are often higher.* There are many stone houses in the Haurān (the remains of ancient towns) which are still inhabited † (Isa. ix. 10; Amos v. 11).

The dwellings of the wealthy and middle classes differ materially from these, and are built with a view to the utmost privacy. "As a general idea, we may state that the principal part of an Oriental mansion occupies one, two, three, or even all four sides of an interior court or garden, none of the buildings of which have either the front or back towards the street; for, interposed between this and the street is another smaller court, with its distinct rooms, forming a smaller house, or tenement. The entrance from the street is through a passage into this court, from which another passage conducts to the large interior court. This is the ground communication; besides which the first floor of both the houses has a communicating door, so that a person on the first floor of the one house need not descend to the court to enter the other." "If we except a small latticed window or balcony which sometimes looks into the street, all the other windows open into

* *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I.

† *Buckingham's Arab Tribes*.

their respective courts. It is during the celebration only of some public festival that these houses and their latticed windows or balconies are left open. For this being a time of great liberty, revelling, and extravagance, each family is ambitious of adorning both the inside and the outside of their houses with their richest furniture; whilst crowds of both sexes, dressed out in their best apparel, go in and out where they please. The account we have of Jezebel's 'painting her face, and tiring her head, and looking out at a window' upon Jehu's public entrance into Jezreel, gives us a lively idea of an Eastern lady at one of these solemnities"* (2 Kings ix. 30. See also Judges v. 28). Our illustration on page 109 gives a good idea of the window and lattice of an Eastern house.

Digging through Walls.	HOUSES in the East are necessarily much exposed to the raids of thieves and burglars, the unburnt brick or mud walls offering an inducement rather than a barrier to the person so disposed. "Nearly all the houses in the East," says one traveller, "are made of unburnt bricks, so that there is very little difficulty in making a hole sufficiently large to admit the human body. No wonder, then, that this is the general way of robbing houses. Thus, in the morning, when the inmates awake, they see daylight through a hole in the wall, and
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* *Illustrated Commentary*, Vol. II., and *Shaw's Barbary*, Vol. I.

immediately know what has been done.”* In Job we read, “In the dark they dig through houses, which they had marked for themselves in the daytime”; and in the New Testament the exhortation occurs (we quote from the translation by J. N. Darby), “Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon the earth where thieves dig through and steal”; and again, “But know this, that if the master of the house had known in what watch the thief was coming, he would have watched, and not have suffered his house to be dug through” (Matt. vi. 19; xxiv. 43. Also Job xxiv. 16).

Crumbling
Walls.

THE above facts would tend to show that Eastern houses, as a rule, must be very perishable; and that is the case. “Village after village may be seen in Egypt, built of unburnt brick, crumbling to ruins, and giving place to new habitations”; † and Dr. Shaw relates that after a two hours’ rain at Tozer several of the houses “fell down by imbibing the moisture of the shower! Nay,” he adds, “provided the drops had been either larger, or the shower of a longer continuance, or *overflowing*, the whole city would have undoubtedly dissolved and dropped to pieces.” ‡ Such facts as these will greatly assist in the understanding of

* Roberts’s *Oriental Customs*.

† Jowett’s *Researches in the Mediterranean*.

‡ *Travels in Barbary*, Vol. I.

such Scriptures as Job iv. 19, xv. 28; Isaiah ix. 10, xxxi. 18; Jeremiah xxx. 28; and Ezekiel xiii. 10, 11.

Gates of Dwellings. THE entrances to the houses are sometimes made low and narrow; so much so indeed, that the person entering will have to stoop; but more frequently the *gate* at the end of the street is thus constructed, and that is thought sufficient. "High, large gates are a token of wealth, which provokes the envy of equals, who will not be slow to find accusations, or the cupidity of superiors, who can as readily find pretexts sufficient to relieve the thrifty owner of his surplus revenue, if to strip him of nothing more. 'He that exalteth his gate,' as Solomon warns us, 'seeketh destruction' " (Prov. xvii. 19. See also Matt. vii. 13, 14.).

Locks and Keys. THE locks to these gates are usually of tremendous size. Lane speaks of some that were two feet, and even more, in length!† This fact would perhaps explain the statement of the bride in the Canticles. "My beloved put in his hand by the hole of the door"; a statement which it is difficult, otherwise, to understand. Harmer has explained that the city gates of Grand Cairo might be opened in this manner, provided the finger was coated with a little paste.‡

* Perkin's *Residence in Persia*. † *Modern Egyptians*.

‡ *Observations*, Vol. I.

Locks of such extravagant dimensions require keys to correspond, and as these would be too heavy to carry about if they were made in metal, they are constructed of wood, and carried at the girdle or on the shoulder.* The reader may call to mind the figurative language of Isaiah xxii. 22, "The key of the house of David will I lay upon his shoulder." We subjoin an extract from *The Quiver* on this subject, which can scarcely fail to interest. "The allusion here made (to Isaiah xxii. 22) is at once explained by the fact that it is the custom in the East for people to carry their key on their shoulder. The handle is generally made of brass, though sometimes of silver, and is often nicely worked in a device of filigree. The corner of a handkerchief is tied to the ring, the key is then placed on the shoulder, and the handkerchief hangs down in front. At other times they have a bunch of large keys, and then they have half on one side of the shoulder and half on the other. For a man thus to march along with a large key on his shoulder shows at once that he is a person of consequence. Hence the expressions—

* Raman is in great favour with the Mordeliar, for he now carries the key.' 'Whose key have you got on your shoulder?' The key of the house of David was to be on the shoulder of Eliakim, who was a type of Him who had 'the government upon His shoulder'; the Messiah, the 'Prince of Peace.'" Many

* *Narrative of a Mission of Enquiry to the Jews.*

other references to locks and keys throughout the Bible will doubtless occur to the reader (Judges iii. 23-25; Matt. xvi. 19; Luke xi. 52; Rev. i. 18, and ix. 1). Having treated of the gate and the key, we will now avail ourselves of the latter, and enter the porch.

Vestibules
and
Porches. "If," says Dr. Shaw, "from the streets we enter one of the principal houses, we shall first pass through a porch or gateway with benches on each side, where the master of the family receives visits, and despatches business; few persons, not even the nearest relations, having further admission, except upon extraordinary occasions."* This porch, then, according to the description of an Eastern house given on page 45, would lead into the first or outer court; and, indeed, is sometimes identified with it. It was in the porch of the high priest's palace that Peter, for a second time, denied his Master (Matt. xxvi. 71; Mark xiv. 68); and we may observe that though the word may be translated "porch" in the first Scripture, it is more strictly "vestibule" or "outer court" in the second. Both in Egypt and Bengal the servants live and sleep in the porch; a position which is given them (as we need scarcely say) in order that they may watch persons going in and out

* Shaw's *Barbary*, Vol. I.

of their masters' houses.* (See 2 Sam. xi. 9, and Mark xiii. 34.)

The
Interior
Court.

BUT we must not waste time at the porch. We pass on, therefore, to the court. "From the door a blind passage conducts into an interior court or quadrangle, towards which all the buildings of the mansion front. There may, indeed, in a superior dwelling, be one or two more such courts beyond this, and then the external one is appropriated to the more public affairs of the owner, such as the reception of friends and clients, and the transaction of business, the interior being occupied by the private apartments, to which no strangers have access. . . . The court is paved with marble or tiles, or left unpaved, according to the rank of the house or the means of its occupier; and in a superior and spacious house there may perhaps be a piece of water in the centre, or some trees or shrubs may be planted there." This account is fully borne out by other travellers, who do not forget to speak of the coloured marble pavements, the flower-beds and rose bushes, the shrubberies and bubbling fountains, the citron and orange trees which they have observed in some of the more splendid courts.† In 2 Samuel xvii. 18 we read of a man in

* Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, Vol. I., and Ward's *History of the Hindoos*, Vol. II.

† *Illus. Commentary*, Vol. V.; Perkins' *Residence in Persia*; and Buckingham's *Arab Tribes*.

Bahurim who had a well or fountain in the court of his house; and in the Book of Esther (i. 6) we have "a pavement of red, and blue, and white, and black marble," which would doubtless resemble the court of the Governor's house at Damascus, described by Mr. Buckingham as "paved with coloured marbles, arranged in various devices of Mosaic work." (Notice also Nehemiah viii. 16, and 2 Chron. vii. 3.)

ON looking up we perceive that we are
The
Lattice.
surrounded by a covered gallery, with wooden lattice-work or balustrades, which is supported on pillars of the same substance. This gallery is on a level with the first floor, and all the chambers on that floor lead into it. It is reached from the court below by a stone staircase; and the gallery itself is provided at one corner with a covered staircase, which conducts to the roof. Doubtless the bridegroom in Solomon's Song, who is described as standing behind the wall, *shewing himself through the lattice* (Cant. ii. 9), may be fitly pictured as standing on such a gallery. These chambers or galleries are usually provided with couches, which are upholstered in the richest manner. (See also Cant. vii. 5.) Our illustration on page 109 shows us the lattice-work and window (the "hole in the door" of Cant. v. 4)* of an Oriental divan.

* The words "in the door" do not occur in the original, so that the passage reads: "My beloved put in his hand by the hole; i.e., by the hole of the lattice."



THE INTERIOR COURT OF AN EASTERN HOUSE.

Chambers
on
Walls.

IN the houses, which have two or more courts, the outer building, facing upon the street, has seldom more than one or two chambers in it, and these are usually built out from the wall. There seems to be no need to question that the "little chamber" prepared for Elisha was one of the smaller rooms of such a tenement. "A person accommodated here can go in and out with perfect independence of the main building of the inner court, into which he probably never enters, and does not in the least interfere with the arrangement of the family. A visitor or friend is almost never accommodated anywhere else, and certainly never in the interior court." * (2 Kings iv. 10.) The summer chamber of Eglon, which seems to have had private stairs belonging to it, through which Ehud escaped after he had revenged Israel upon the king of Moab—the inner chamber, or chamber within a chamber, where the young prophet anointed Jehu—the chamber over the gate, whither David withdrew to weep for Absalom—the upper chamber, upon whose terrace Ahaz erected his altars—the upper chambers where our blessed Lord ate the passover with his disciples—where Tabitha was laid—where Eutychus fell from the third loft—seem to have belonged to these outer tenements of which we have spoken.†

* *Illustrated Commentary*, Vol. II.

† Shaw's *Barbary*.

(Judges iii. 20; 2 Samuel xviii. 33; 2 Kings xxiii. 12; ix. 2; Luke xxii. 11; and Acts ix. 37; xxii. 8, 9.)

The Roof
and
its uses.

APPROACHING now the stairs, which proceed from the gallery of an Eastern house, we ascend to the roof. We may notice, in passing, that a person, by means of these stairs, together with the stairs which lead from the court to the gallery, may reach the roof without ever entering the house; a fact which will explain the injunction of our Lord to the persecuted Jewish Remnant, "Let him that is on the housetop not go down into the house, neither enter therein, to take anything out of his house" (Mark xiii. 15). Bonar and M'Cheyne's party were told, by that singular man Mr. Nicolayson, that in his own house at Jerusalem there was a staircase from the flat roof into the street, by which he could descend and escape without passing through the house if danger called for it.*

Arrived upon the roof, we look around us. Beyond the low wall which skirts the roof we gaze abroad upon towers, and minarets, and domes; upon streets and dwelling-houses; upon gardens and trees and sparkling fountains; upon vineyards and oliveyards; and, away in the far distance, upon a blue line of hills, behind which the sun rises. Restricting our

* *Narrative of a Mission of Enquiry to the Jews.*

range of vision, we look below upon galleries and cloisters, and upon the paved court with its luxuriant gardens; or confining our gaze to the roof itself, we look upon an even floor of plaster, on which, perhaps, some flax or linen has been spread to dry (Josh. ii. 6), or some figs and raisins are being prepared. Here it is that the Eastern repairs at evening to enjoy the cool, restoring breezes; here it is that the poor Mussulman repeats his evening prayer; and here too, in the mild weather, that the owner unrolls his couch, and prepares for his night's repose.

How many Bible incidents this little description recalls to the mind! It was to the roof of the house that the spies were brought, when Rahab "hid them with the stalks of flax," which she had laid in order there; it was on the roof that Samuel communed with Saul when he entertained him at his house; it was on the roof that David's unholy passion for Bath-sheba was awakened; it was there that a tent was spread for Absalom by the wicked counsel of Ahithophel; it was there that Peter saw the vision of the unclean beasts. We read also that during the feast of Tabernacles, booths were erected upon the roofs; and numerous other passages of a hortatory kind allude to them. (See Josh. ii. 6; 1 Sam. ix. 25; 2 Sam. xi. 2; 2 Sam. xvi. 22; Neh. viii. 16; Prov. xxii. 9; Isa. xv. 3; Zeph. i. 5; Matt. x. 27; and Acts x. 9.)

Leaky
Roofs. PROFESSOR JOWETT has stated that "on the top of every house (in Malta) is a large stone roller, for the purpose of hardening the soil which has been laid there, so that the rain may not penetrate; but upon this surface, as may be supposed, grass and weeds grow freely. It is to such grass that the Psalmist alludes, as useless and bad, "Let them be as the grass upon the housetops, which withereth afore it groweth up" (Ps. cxxix. 6). Rae Wilson also observes that "rotted grass may be seen on the top of several houses, bleached by the sun."*

It may be readily supposed that the roofs of Eastern houses would be often rendered extremely rotten by reason of their flatness, the rain collecting there in considerable quantities; and many travellers confirm this supposition. Bonar and M'Cheyne mention a case which came before the Cadi of Saphet, in which the owner of a house sought to recover damages from a camel-driver, whose camel, while taking a stroll upon the housetops, had made an unexpected descent into the private apartment of the astonished gentleman.† Mr. Hartley tells us that, having retired to rest one night in what appeared to be one of the best rooms of an Eastern inn, he was roused at midnight by the rain pouring through the roof, and found it necessary to rise and

* Jowett's *Christian Researches*, and Rae Wilson's *Travels*, Vol. II.

† *Narrative of a Mission of Enquiry to the Jews*.

dress. "In flat roofed houses," he adds, "this is a frequent occurrence. I discover in this adventure an illustration of Proverbs xxvii. 15. The Septuagint has it, 'Drops of rain in a wintry day drive a man out of his house; and just so a railing woman.' The Vulgate speaks expressly of *the roof through which the water passeth*. I was literally driven out of the house by the rain descending through the roof, and sought for shelter in the corridor, which was better protected."*

BEFORE considering the rooms of an
Oriental
Lights. Eastern house in detail, it would not be out of place to say a few words on the subject of *lights*.

It appears that lamps, wax candles, torches, lanterns, and cresset lights (a kind of movable beacon), are all in use among Orientals at the present day. There are only three words in the New Testament by which to express these things; one signifying the common lamps used in ordinary life which afford but little light (of this kind would be the light spoken of in Luke xv. 8); and another word (*lampas*) seeming to mean any light of more than common brilliancy, whether torches, blazing resinous pieces of wood, or lamps that are supplied with more than ordinary quantities of oil. These words are frequently but erroneously translated

* *Researches.*

“candle,” though it would be difficult to find a word to take its place. “Candles, among us, are columns of solid tallow, wax, &c., surrounding a wick; but in countries where oil is plentiful, and especially in hot countries, the preference will naturally be given to short portable oil lamps; and perhaps it were to be wished that our language afforded a diminutive to express this piece of domestic furniture, as in Spanish, *Lampara*, *Lamparilla*. When we read of the ‘golden candlestick’ in Exodus and Leviticus, we naturally connect with it the idea of a stand for holding candles; but we find directions for trimming and filling the lamps which shows this idea to be erroneous.” (Exod. xxv. 31, 37; Lev. xxiv. 4, &c.)*

Various
Classes of
Lamps. EASTERN lamps might be divided into three classes—military lamps, domestic lamps, and lamps for religious uses; but it will be simpler to adopt the division given by the learned editor of Calmet, who separates them into two classes: *exterior* lamps, or those used in the open air, and *interior* lamps, or those used for domestic purposes.

Exterior
Lamps. HERODOTUS makes mention of some exterior lamps which were used in Egypt by the Carians in his day. “When they are

* Calmet's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

assembled at the sacrifice, in the City of Sais, they all on a certain night kindle a great number of lamps in the open air, around their houses; the lamps are flat vessels filled with salt and oil, and the wick floats on the surface, and this burns all night; and the festival is thence named the lighting of lamps."*

Modern Egyptian lamps consist of small glass vessels, with a tube at the bottom containing a cotton wick twisted round a piece of straw. Some water is poured in first, and then oil. The whole is placed in a wooden receptacle to protect the flame from the wind.

The *mesh'al* is another kind of exterior light used in Egypt. It consists of a staff with a cylindrical frame of iron at the top, filled with flaming wood, or having two, three, four, or five of these receptacles for fire. *Mesh'als* are used in marriage processions, and are carried on the shoulders of the men. On such occasions, the street or quarter in which the bridegroom lives is lighted up in the gayest manner with lanterns, chandeliers, &c., of various colours.

For night travelling, a lantern composed of waxed cloth, strained over a sort of cylinder of wire rings, and a top and bottom of perforated copper, is used. This would correspond with Gideon's lamps within pitchers, mentioned in Judges vii. 16, 20.† In

* Herodotus II., 62.

† Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, Vol. I., and *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. II.

marriage processions in India, the men carry lamps full of oily rags in their hands, and pots of oil from which to replenish them. Perhaps these were the lamps our Lord speaks of in the parable of the wise and foolish virgins. (Matt. xxv. 1, &c.) *

There is an interesting fragment in Thevenot which may help to illustrate John xviii. 3. "While I was at Surat the governor of the town married his daughter to a young lord. On a Wednesday, which was appointed for the ceremony of the wedding, the bridegroom made the usual cavalcade, about eight o'clock at night. First marched his standards, which were followed by several hundreds of men carrying torches; these torches were made of bamboo or cane, at the end whereof was an iron candlestick, containing rolls of oiled cloth, made like sausages. Among these torch-lights were two hundred men, women, little boys, and little girls, who had each of them upon their heads a little hurdle of osier twigs, on which were five little earthen cruses, that served for candlesticks to so many wax candles. These people were accompanied by a great many others, some carrying baskets, rolls of cloth, and oil to supply the flambeaux, others carrying candles."

Dr. Taylor observes,† however, that it may be questioned whether torches are really mentioned in Scripture; and Mr. Phillott points out that the word

* Sir John Chardin, quoted in Calmet.

† Calmet's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

which is translated "lamps" in Matthew xxv. 1, and Revelation iv. 5, is the same word (*lampades*) as is translated "light" in Acts xx. 8, and torches in John xviii. 3.*

Interior
Lights.

THEN, as to *interior* lights. We are informed by one writer, "that the houses of the Arabs are never without lights. They burn lamps, not only all the night long, but in all the inhabited apartments of the house. This custom is so well established in the East, that the poorest people would rather retrench part of their food than neglect it. Therefore Jeremiah makes the taking away of the light of the candle, and the total destruction of a house, the same thing (Jer. xxv. 10). Job describes the destruction of a family among the Arabs, and the rendering one of their habitations desolate, after the same manner. 'How oft is the candle of the wicked put out! and how oft cometh their destruction upon them!' (Job xxi. 17). On the other hand, when God promises to give David a lamp always in Jerusalem (1 Kings xi. 36), considered in this point of view, it is an assurance that his house should never become desolate. So Virgil (*Æneid* ii., line 281), 'O Ilium's light, the Trojan's surest hope!'"†

* *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. II.

† *The Lands of the Messiah, Mahomet, and the Pope.*

The domestic lamp of greatest *known* antiquity is the earthen "tea-pot shape" lamp. It has been found in the ancient Egyptian tombs, and among the ruins of Pompeii and Herculaneum ;



TEA-POT SHAPED LAMP.

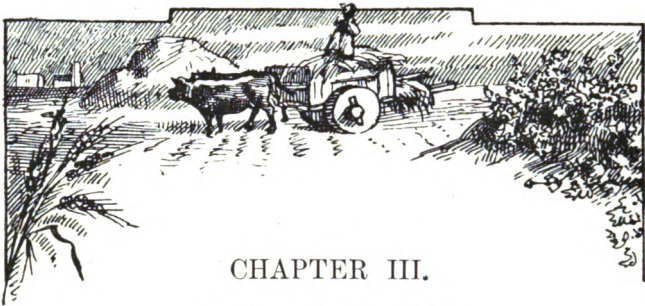
and, strangely enough, it still holds its own as an integral part of household furniture in many parts of the East. "These 'tea-pot' lamps present very considerable diversities of shape and pattern, some of them resembling ink-stands, rather than tea-pots. The Etruscans had lamps of bronze, formed like deep ladles, and some of the Roman ones were like our circular vases."* A considerable number of these articles will be found in the British Museum, but these are chiefly of the common sort. All the works, however, descriptive of Herculaneum and Pompeii, show us illustrations of the richer and more remarkable class, which attract admiration, both by the beauty of the workmanship and the whimsical variety of their designs. But, beautiful as these lamps are, the light which they gave must have been weak and unsteady. The wick was merely a few twisted threads drawn through a hole in the upper surface of the oil-vessel ; and, whenever these lamps were used (as they often were) for *exterior* use, there were no glasses to steady the light, or to protect the flame from the breeze.†

* *Bible Class Magazine.*

† *Adam's Roman Antiquities.*

The Lamp
as a
Symbol. FREQUENT instances in which the word lamp is used metaphorically in Scripture, will doubtless occur to the reader, as for example, 2 Samuel xxii. 29; Job xii. 5; Psalm cxix. 105; Proverbs vi. 23; Isaiah lxii. 1, &c., &c. One passage (namely, Rev. xxi. 23-25) we cannot forbear quoting. We give the rendering in the translation of a well-known scholar and commentator:—

“And the city [the holy city, New Jerusalem] has no need of the sun, nor of the moon, that they should shine for it; for the glory of God has enlightened it, and the lamp thereof [is] the Lamb. And the nations shall walk by its light; and the kings of the earth bring their glory to it.” How beautiful is this! The glory of God the light, and the Lamb the lamp—the depository of that glory. All the glory of God, in that day of manifested glory, will be seen through Christ; and then will the prayer of that Blessed One be answered, “Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world” (John xvii. 24).



CHAPTER III.

THE KITCHEN.



WHEN we speak of "The Kitchen," the reader must not suppose that we are going to treat of any particular room or rooms; for an Eastern kitchen is not always confined within walls. It may consist of a cave among the hills, of a piece of pasture land in the valleys, of a spot of waste country in the desert, or of a tent in any open space. Our purpose is rather to speak of the food to be found in the kitchen, and of the vessels in which the food is prepared.

Bread and Baking. "THE diet of Eastern nations has been in all ages light and simple. As compared with our own habits, the chief points of contrast are the small amount of animal food consumed, the variety of articles used as accompaniments to bread, the substitution of milk in various forms for our liquors, and the combination of what we should deem heterogeneous elements in the same

dish, or the same meal. The chief point of agreement in the large consumption of bread.”*

Bread indeed was the staple food of the Jews, as is indicated in such passages as Leviticus xxvi. 26, and Psalm cv. 16, where it is spoken of as the *staff* of bread. The preparations of this necessary article were various, and mostly simple. Sometimes the fresh green ears were eaten in a natural state (as is still the case in parts of Palestine), the husks being rubbed off by the hand ; but more frequently the grains, after being carefully picked, were roasted in a pan over a fire, and eaten as “parched corn,” in which form it was an ordinary article of diet, particularly among labourers or others, who had not the means of dressing food.† (Lev. ii. 14, and xxiii. 14; Deut. xxiii. 25; Ruth ii. 14; 1 Kings iv. 22; 2 Kings iv. 42; Matt. xii. 1, &c.). The latter practice is still very usual in the East, and Niebuhr describes the Arabians of the desert as using “a heated plate of iron, or a gridiron, in preparing their cakes,” adding, that the said cakes are often as thin as wafers.‡ Another traveller, who watched a villager’s wife in Syria engaged in baking bread, describes the fuel as consisting of dried dung and withered vine branches, which were laid upon the hearth; and the bread, having been spread out with the hands, like a pancake, was

* Smith’s *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I.

† Smith’s *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I.

‡ Niebuhr’s *Arabia*, Vol. II.

baked over it. Each cake was exceedingly thin, and when eaten was folded into a compass that admitted the whole to be put into the mouth at once.* One of the oblations of the meat offering, mentioned in Lev. ii. 5, 6, was to be unleavened *wafers*—anointed with oil, which were to be baked in a plate or *frying pan*; and doubtless the cakes, which Sarah made *upon the hearth* for the three angels, were of this kind (Genesis xviii. 6). Sometimes the grain was bruised, and then dried in the sun; after which it was eaten, either mixed with oil, or made into soft cakes (the “dough” of the Old Testament. Lev. ii. 14, 15, 16; Num. xv. 20; Neh. x. 37, &c.). Perhaps this would correspond with the *durra* bread, about which travellers have written so fully. The common people of Arabia have little other food than this *durra* bread, which consists of “a sort of coarse millet, kneaded with camel’s milk, oil, butter, or grease.”†

The best bread—such as was used in the sacred offerings—was almost invariably made of wheat, and when ground and sifted formed the “fine flour” used in the offerings. The ground but unsifted wheat would answer to the “flour” and “meal” of Judges vi. 19; 1 Samuel i. 24, &c. The common bread—such as was used only by the very poor, or in times

* Rae Wilson’s *Travels*, Vol. II.

† Smith’s *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I.; Niebuhr’s *Arabia*, Vol. II.

of famine—was made of barley.* The hungry multitude was fed with this by our Lord (John vi. 9, 13), and so also were the sons of the prophets in the days of Elisha (2 Kings iv. 42). “Barley bread,” says Dr. Thomson, “is only eaten by the poor and the unfortunate. Nothing is more common than for the people at this day to complain that their oppressors have left them nothing but barley bread to eat.” The Bedouins, also, will often ridicule their enemies by calling them “*eaters of barley bread.*”† (Judges vii. 13, 14.)

Oriental
Ovens.

IN the towns, the Arabians have ovens like our own; but in the villages the baking is done either by means of the methods already named, or by means of ovens of clay. Each of these ovens “consists of a large jar made of clay, about three feet high, and widening towards the bottom, with a hole for the extraction of the ashes. Occasionally, however, it is not an actual jar, but an erection of clay in the form of a jar, built on the floor of the house. Each household (of the Israelites) possessed such an article (Ex. viii. 3); and it was only in times of extreme dearth that the same oven sufficed for several families (Lev. xxvi. 26). It was heated with dry twigs and grass (Matt. vi. 30); and

* Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I.

† *The Lana and the Book.*

GLEANINGS FROM BIBLE LANDS.

the loaves were placed both inside and outside of it. It was also used for roasting meat. The heat of the oven furnished Hebrew writers with an image of rapid and violent destruction" (Ps. xxi. 9; Hos. vii. 7; Matt. iv. 1). The ovens of the ancient Egyptians were also of this kind.

**Kneading
Troughs.** THE kneading troughs, mentioned in the book of Exodus (xii. 34), which the people "bound up in their clothes upon their shoulders," would perhaps find their equivalent in the small wooden bowls which the Arabs of the present day use for kneading the unleavened cakes which they prepare for strangers. But it is more probable that they would answer to the round leather cover lids described by Harmer and Niebuhr, which the latter thus describes: "For a table, with table-linen, we had a round piece of leather, with iron rings at certain distances round it, through which cords were passed after our meals; and the table hung, in the form of a purse, upon one of our camels." These pieces of kitchen furniture sometimes contain the meal made into dough.*

**Animal
Food.** WE have already alluded (page 66) to the small consumption of flesh meat among Oriental nations, but as the subject is of some importance we turn to it again. The sparing

* Harmer's *Observations*; Niebuhr's *Travels*, Vol. 1.

use of animal food may be accounted for by the excessive heat of the climate, which renders the free use of such food extremely unwholesome; moreover, the necessity of immediately consuming a whole animal, makes the frequent consumption of flesh-meat an expensive luxury. The Mosaic law ordained that all animals which had been torn of beasts, or had died natural deaths, should not be eaten (Ex. xxii. 31; Deut. xiv. 21); and in the New Testament, Christians were commanded to abstain "from meats offered to idols" (Acts xv. 29, and xxi. 25), whether at private feasts or as bought in the market. All unclean beasts were also prohibited to the Jew, and certain portions of the fat of sacrifices; but the Word of God contains no other restrictions.*

Such animals as lambs and kids are often roasted whole, and it is probable, from the description given in Genesis xviii. 7, that the practice existed in patriarchal days. We there read that "Abraham ran unto the herd, and fetcht a calf tender and good, and gave it unto a young man; and he hasted to dress it"; language which would seem to imply that the calf was not divided in any way. The expedition with which an animal is skinned and cooked and served up for eating is indeed remarkable. Gadsby saw some Arabs buy, kill, cook, and eat a sheep in less than two hours! and Burckhardt affirms that "no butcher in Europe can surpass a

* Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. 1.

Bedouin in skinning an animal quickly." He has seen them strip a camel in less than a quarter of an hour.*

An interesting illustration of Ex. xxiii. 19, "Thou shalt not seethe a kid in his mother's milk," is to be found in Buckingham's *Arab Tribes*. "A meal was prepared for us," writes that traveller, "the principal dish of which was a young kid seethed in milk." Irby and Mangles affirm that "this mode of cooking renders the meat very delicious and tender; far preferable to meat boiled in water: the milk enriched with the juice of the meat, is poured on the pillau of rice or wheat."

THE Arabs, however, are not always particular as to cleanliness in their cooking; and this may account, in some measure, for their celerity in preparing their savoury dishes. Robinson tells of the rapidity with which some Arabs slaughtered a goat in his presence and cut it up for cooking at different fires. He thinks that that, in kind, was the "savoury meat" which Isaac loved; and with which Jacob enticed from him the blessing intended for his elder brother (Gen. xxvii. 9). The guide had brought along his family, with two or three camels, and to them the offals of the kid were abandoned. Our traveller looked in upon this feast, and found the women boiling the stomach and

Gadsby's *Wanderings*, Vol. I.; Burekhardt's *Syria*, &c.

entrails, which they had merely cleaned by stripping with the hand, without washing; while the head, unskinned and unopened, was roasting underneath in the embers of a fire made chiefly of camel's dung.*

Milk
and
Butter. THE reference to seething in milk introduces that useful beverage to our notice, and we may proceed to consider it as an article of diet in the East. Here, indeed, it holds a conspicuous place, not only as a beverage, but mixed with solids, such as flour, salad, meat, &c. It is also made into butter, and in that form is eaten in great quantities by the Arabs, sometimes without any addition of bread, vegetables, or meat.† In the thanksgiving song of Deborah and Barak, they say concerning Sisera and Jael: "He asked water, and she gave him milk; she brought forth butter in a lordly dish"; from which it would appear that the custom of eating butter alone is of great antiquity (Judges v. 25).

Burckhardt affirms that those who can afford the luxury, swallow every morning a large cupful of this article before breakfast; and adds that all the food of the Arabs "swims in butter."‡ The process of making the butter is thus described:—"The milk is

* *Biblical Researches*, Vol. I.

† Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I.; Buckingham's *Arab Tribes*.

‡ *Notes*, Vol. I.

placed in a goat's skin, which is filled as full as possible, and then tied at the mouth, after which it is rolled or shaken on the ground by a woman, who sits before it; this operation continuing for several hours on each skin, till the butter is formed from the milk, when the bag or skin is untied, and the two parts separated from each other."*

Honey
and
Dipse. HONEY is also an article of large consumption in the East, and the great partiality for it among Orientals is as old as the Bible. It is frequently eaten with milk or butter, and travellers bear testimony to the prevalence of the taste for this combination of rich things among the Arab tribes. In truth, a paradise, flowing, *literally*, with milk and honey, would doubtless be as pleasant to their thoughts as the mythical paradise which Mahomet has told them of.

While in the East, and dining with a family in a Syrian town, Mr. Carne had placed before him a plate of fresh and exquisite honey and a small plate of fresh butter as part of the meal, and was duly instructed how they should be eaten together: nor is this the only case that might be mentioned. Rae Wilson was treated to much the same fare in a Syrian village, and Irby and Mangles had honey and butter placed before them, with bread to dip in it, when dining with a sheikh near Homs. On this

Buckingham's *Arab Tribes*.

occasion their host desired one of the men to mix the two ingredients for them, as they were awkward at it, whereupon "the Arab, having stirred the mixture up well with his fingers, showed his dexterity at consuming as well as mixing, and recompensed himself for his trouble by eating half of it."† (See 2 Sam. xvii. 29; Job xx. 17; Cant. v. 1; Isa. vii. 15, and lv. 1.) The exhortation in Isaiah lv. to "buy wine and *milk* without money, and without price," is curiously illustrated by the fact that milk "is constantly offered to travellers, and in some parts of Arabia it is deemed scandalous to take any money in return for it."*

There is a honey or syrup called *dipse*, made from raisins, dates, &c., which is eaten in considerable quantities in some parts of the East. Shaw's *Barbary* contains a passage of some interest relating to this article. "Besides the great quantities of grapes and raisins that are, one or other of them, brought daily to the markets of Jerusalem, and the neighbouring villages, Hebron alone sends every year to Egypt three hundred camel-loads of the Robb, which they call *Dipse*—the same word that is rendered simply honey in the Scriptures; particularly Genesis xliii. 11, 'Carry down the man a present of the best things of the land, a little balm, and a little honey

† Carne's *Recollections of the East*, Rae Wilson's *Travels*, Vol. II.; Irby and Mangles' *Travels in Egypt and Nubia*, &c.

* Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I.

(*dipse*).’ For honey, properly so called, could not be a rarity so great there as *dipse* must be, from the want of vineyards in Egypt.”

Oil FROM milk and honey, we pass naturally to
and oil and wine. The former of these articles
Wine. is soon treated of. Oil “does not appear to have been used to the extent we might have anticipated. The modern Arabs only employ it in frying fish, but for all other purposes butter is substituted. Among the Hebrews it was deemed an expensive luxury, to be reserved for festive occasions”; and its only use in cookery was for mixing with certain kinds of cakes (Prov. xxi. 17; 1 Chron. xii. 40; 1 Kings xvii. 12). Yet it is in request among the modern Jews, who eat it in great quantities with their fish. Ezekiel mentions oil as an article of food, in conjunction with fine flour and honey; and it may be added that the Syrian Jews of to-day eat oil and honey together, the honey being the *dipse* already referred to.*

We must go back to the days of Noah if we would find the earliest mention of the manufacture of wine; and it is thought by many that Noah was the discoverer of the process. Scripture says that he “began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: and he drank of the wine”; and it is on these facts that this opinion is grounded (Gen. ix.

* Smith’s *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I.

20, 21). The grape and the pomegranate are the only two fruits named in Scripture from which wine was made, and the latter fruit is only mentioned once in this connexion (Cant. viii. 2).

“One of the charges brought against the Pentateuch is that it falsely represents the Egyptians having wine. Without a moment conceding that Scripture needs any confirmation, it is interesting to see how the monuments bear witness to the details of Scripture. There we see persons gathering the grapes; and there we see others pressing the juice out of them, both by a twisted cloth and by persons treading the grapes in a wine press. Some of the pictures portray wine being offered to the serpents as a god. At their feasts an attendant carried round the ‘wine-cup.’ Some evidently partook too freely of the wine, for one is being carried home, and another (a lady) is sick!”*

As a rule, however, Oriental nations seem to have been, and are to this day, very abstemious in the use of wines, their usual beverage being, milk, barley-water, and a mixture of fig-cake and water resembling sherbet. Yet the wealthy have never been without their *shechar* or “strong drink,” which is imbibed freely on festive occasions; and the poor have never been entirely ignorant concerning a certain “sour wine” (called “vinegar” in the Authorized Version), which quenched the thirst, although it is not

* *Egypt, as seen in Scripture and on the Monuments.*

very agreeable to the taste. (Lev. x. 9; Num. vi. 3; Judges xiii. 4, 7; Prov. x. 26, and Matt. xxvii. 48.) *

This would probably answer to the *oxos* of John xix. 29, which is somewhat erroneously translated "vinegar" in our Version. The word denotes "a kind of very weak and inferior wine, which did then, as it does now in South Europe, form the ordinary drink of the common people, being as a drink, in relation to the best wines, what beer is to wine in our own country, or what small beer is to strong beer. This poor wine—generally mixed with water, and then called *posea*—was the usual drink of the Roman soldiers, and the vessel of it here mentioned was probably for their use, while attending the crucifixion." †

Onions, Leeks, and Garlic. THESE brief references to Eastern food and drink would be woefully incomplete without some mention of the onions, leeks, and garlic of time-honoured memory. "It will be remembered that the Israelites, when in the wilderness, sighed for the cucumber, and the melons, and the leeks, and the onions, and the garlic (Num. xi. 5), which they had eaten in Egypt. On the monuments we constantly find vegetables presented to the gods, especially leeks and onions, which were tied up in

* Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I.

† *Illustrated Commentary*, Vol V.

fanciful shapes. In the annals of Rameses III., among the gifts of this king to his gods, are, "onions, 180 ropes, 50 loads, 50 sacks, with two other measures unknown—one is 77, and the other 2. Enough surely of this savoury esculent!"* In Herodotus we read that the cost of radishes, onions and garlic, for the workmen engaged upon one of the pyramids of Cheops, was 1,600 silver talents, or £384,000.†

Miscellaneous SPEAKING of the food of the modern Arabs,
Articles of Mr. Gadsby says, "Sometimes it consists
Food.

only of stewed vegetables, such as onions, lettuces, cucumbers, &c., with parched corn (Ruth ii. 14), and sometimes of fish, fowl, and animal food. Onions are always plentiful, and are sold at about twenty-five pounds for $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. These are not like our English onions, but exceedingly mild and delicious, said, indeed, to be superior to any others in the world. They are not coated with hard skins like ours, but every part of them is soft and easy of digestion";‡ Lentils are also much eaten; and Mr. Lane adds to the above list, melons, gourds, beans, chick-peas, lupins, the fruit of the black egg-plant, pickles and dates.§

* *Egypt, as seen in Scripture and on the Monuments.*

† Herodotus, Book ii. 125.

‡ Gadsby's *Wanderings*, Vol. I.

§ *Modern Egyptians*, Vol. I.

Pottage, POTTAGE is another favourite dish of Eastern
or people. They call it *kool*. "It is some-
Kool. thing like gruel, and is made of various
kinds of grain, which are first beaten in a mortar.
The red pottage is made of *kurakan* and other grains,
but is not superior to the other. For such a
contemptible mess did Esau sell his birthright!
When a man has sold his fields or gardens for an
insignificant sum, the people say, 'The fellow has
sold his land for pottage.' Does a father give his
daughter in marriage to a low-caste man? it is
observed, 'He has given her for pottage.' Does a
person, by base means, seek for some paltry enjoy-
ment? it is said, 'For one leaf (that is, leaf-ful) of
pottage he will do nine days' work.' Has a learned
man stooped to anything which was not expected from
him? it is said, 'The learned one has fallen into the
pottage-pot.' Has he given instruction or advice to
others? 'The lizard which gave warning to the
people has fallen into the pottage-pot.' Of a man in
great poverty it is remarked, 'Alas! he cannot get
pottage.' A beggar asks, 'Sir, will you give me a
little pottage?' When a person greatly flatters
another, it is common to say, 'He praises him only
for his pottage.' Does a king greatly oppress his
subjects? it is said, 'He only governs for his
pottage.' Has an individual lost much money by
trade? 'The speculation has broken his pottage-pot.'
Does a rich man threaten to ruin a poor man? the

latter asks, 'Will the lightning strike my pottage-pot?' " *

Spicery MOST of the spices or condiments known
and to the Hebrews, such as cummin, dill,
Salt. anise, coriander, mint, rue, mustard, and
salt, have been identified in the present day, but it
is impossible to speak of them in detail. Our only
reference on the present occasion shall be to *Salt*.

The preservative character of salt has been long known and recognized. Its diffusion throughout the ocean is a merciful arrangement, and its purifying power in the material world can scarcely be over-rated. It gives a relish and seasoning to our food, and enervates and purifies the whole system. Hence the admirable propriety of using it as a figure of the preservative principle in divine things.† A well-known expositor thus alludes to its figurative meaning in his comment on Matthew v. 13, 14. "The salt of the earth is a different thing from the light of the world. The earth, it appears to me, expresses that which already professed to have received light from God—that which was in relationship with Him by virtue of the light—having assumed a definite shape before Him. The disciples of Christ were the preservative principle in the *earth*. They

* Robert's *Oriental Illustrations*. See also p. 96 in "*Egypt as seen in Scripture and on the Monuments*."

† *The Biblical Treasury*, Vol. II.

were the light of the *world*, which did not possess that light.”*

In order to give a pledge of the inviolability of their engagements, the Orientals have from time immemorial been in the habit of eating salt together. This may recall a passage in Numbers xviii. 19. “It is a covenant of salt for ever before the Lord unto thee and to thy seed with thee.” Some think that, as with all sacrifices salt was offered, a covenant of salt means one confirmed by solemn sacrifice. Others are of opinion that it contains an allusion to the fact that covenants were generally confirmed by the parties eating together, salt being a necessary appendage. This act of eating another’s salt has always been regarded as a token of fidelity and friendship; hence, during the Indian Mutiny, there were bitter complaints that those who had eaten our salt had rebelled against our authority. Tamerlane, speaking of a traitor who had gone over to the enemy, but who afterwards returned to loyalty and obedience, says, “My salt which he had eaten filled him with remorse, till at length he fled from his new master, and threw himself on my mercy.”†

BEFORE concluding our chapter, we will
 Kitchen offer a few additional remarks on the
 Utensils. subject of kitchen utensils. Of these, we

* *Synopsis of the Books of the Bible*, Vol. III., pp. 58 and 59.

† Alpha, in *The Biblical Treasury*, Vol. IV.

have at present only described the oven, the frying-pan, and the kneading-trough. Mortars and the various kinds of water-vessels have yet to be treated of.

In Numbers xi. 8, we read that the Israelites either ground the manna which they gathered in their mills, or beat it in mortars; and it is interesting thus to learn of the great antiquity of this utensil. It is still in use among Oriental nations. Niebuhr informs us that the Arabians pound their coffee in a mortar instead of grinding it, and adds that he found the flavour of pounded coffee so superior to that which was ground in the mill, that he left off using his own mill. The Turkomans do the same.*

In the Proverbs we read (xxvii. 22) that "though thou shouldest bray a fool in a mortar among wheat with a pestle, yet will not his foolishness depart from him." The idea of braying a man in a mortar is a curious one, but it is not extravagant. Anaxarchus suffered death in this manner. When his executioners were in the midst of their ghastly work, he is said to have exclaimed: "Beat, beat the outside of Anaxarchus, for you do not beat Anaxarchus himself." The same punishment has been in vogue among the Turks. The guards who suffered Prince Coreskie to escape from prison were pounded to death in great iron mortars, by order of the Turkish

* Niebuhr's *Arabia*, Vol. II.; Burckhardt's *Syria*, &c.

Government.* Mortars of this kind, however, could scarcely be called kitchen utensils.

Water
Vessels.

THE water-vessels in most familiar use among Oriental nations, and, apparently, the only kind mentioned in the Word of God, are made of skins, earthenware, or stone. Bottles of metal and glass, which may have been used for this purpose, have been found in the ancient tombs of Egypt, and among the ruins of Babylon, but their interest is chiefly antiquarian.

The bottles in most frequent use among the nomad races of the East are made of goatskins. "When the animal is killed, they cut off its feet and its head, and they draw it in this manner out of the skin, without opening its belly. In Arabia they are tanned with acacia-bark, and the hairy part left outside. If not tanned, a disagreeable taste is imparted to the water. They afterwards sew up the places where the legs were cut off and the tail, and when it is filled they tie it about the neck." The larger bottles are made of the skins of the he-goat, and the smaller of kids' skins.† Of such a kind, doubtless, was the bottle which Abraham gave to Hagar when he sent her away (Gen. xxi. 14); and evidently such bottles are referred to in the passage, "no man putteth new wine into old bottles: else

* *Biblical Treasury*, Vol I.

† *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. I.

the new wine doth burst the bottles, and the wine is spilled," a calamity which would be very likely to happen through expansion produced by fermentation (Mark ii. 22).

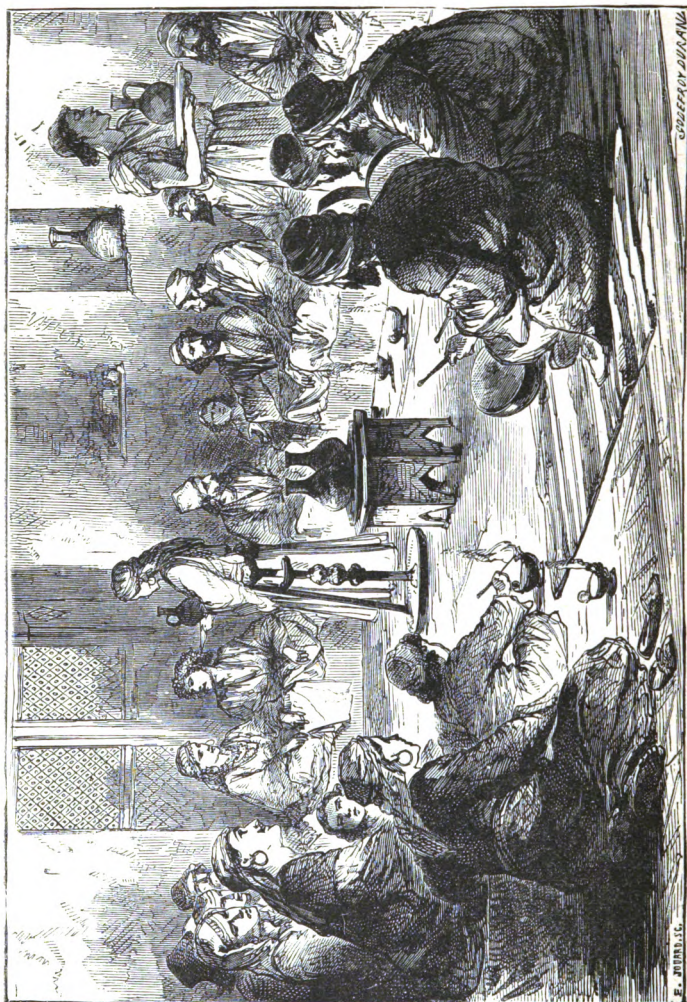
In course of time the continual fires and smoke in an Arab's tent dry and blacken his goatskin bottles; a fact which beautifully illustrates the Psalmist's mournful cry, "I am become like a bottle in the smoke." (Ps. cxix. 83). Probably too, he meant thus to signify his meanness and degradation; for after living with those who used vessels of gold and silver, in Saul's palace, he was obliged to live as the wild Arabs, and to drink, like them, out of a smoked leather bottle.* (See also Josh. ix. 4, and Judges iv. 19).

The water-vessels which are of earthenware or stone may be said to be of two kinds. The one kind is small and narrow-necked, and is sometimes carried in a long wicker basket; this may answer to the ancient *cruse* (1 Sam. xxvi. 12, and 1 Kings xix. 6). The other kind is large and broad-necked, and is undoubtedly the earthen pitcher or water-pot of the Bible. The latter is described as of globular shape, and large at the mouth, being not unlike the bottles used in this country for vitriol. Dr. Clarke relates that when walking amidst the ruins of a church in Cana of Galilee, he actually saw some large massy stone waterpots, answering to the description of the

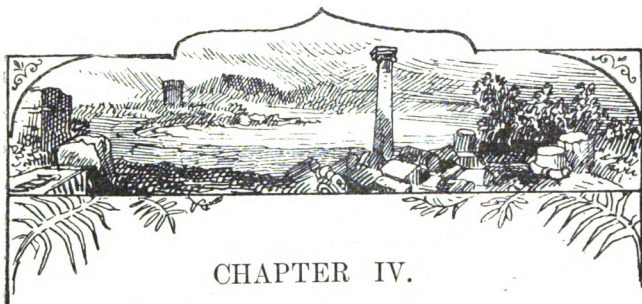
* Harmer's *Observations*, Vol. I.

ancient vessels of the country, lying there neglected (John ii. 6). To quote his own words these were "not preserved, or exhibited as relics, but lying about disregarded by the present inhabitants as antiquities with whose original use they were unacquainted." From their appearance, and the number of them, it is quite evident that a practice of keeping water in large stone pots, each holding from eighteen to twenty-seven gallons, was once common in the country.

Drinking
Horns. SOME have seen an allusion to drinking-horns in Isaiah xxii. 24; but the sense of the passage is doubtful, and we must leave it for wiser heads to settle.



AN EASTERN BANQUET.



CHAPTER IV.

THE BANQUET HALL.



OR a general idea of an Eastern banquet chamber, and the preliminaries of an Eastern feast, we cannot do better than bring before the reader the entertaining account by Mr. Morier. This gentleman, who was attached to the suite of the English Ambassador in Persia at the beginning of this century, was invited, together with the Ambassador and the rest of the suite, to an entertainment, given at the house of the second, Vizier Ameen-ad-Dowlah. On the day appointed, a messenger came about five o'clock in the evening to bid them to the feast—a usual custom in that country, and one that recalls very forcibly the Scripture language, “A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: and sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready” (Luke xiv. 16, 17). The difficulty which some have pretended to find in the parable, consists

A
Persian
Feast.

in the apparent harshness of asking people to an entertainment, and giving them no option, punishing them, in fact, for their refusal. But it may be pointed out that all the guests to whom, when the supper was ready, the servant was sent, had already accepted the invitation, and were therefore already pledged to appear at the feast, at the hour when they might be summoned. They were not taken unprepared, and could not, in consistency or decency, plead any prior engagement.

On alighting at the house the guests were conducted through mean and obscure passages to a small square court, surrounded by apartments. These were the habitations of the women, who had been dislodged on the occasion; and on passing the court they entered a low room, where they found their host waiting for them, with about a dozen more of his friends. The Ambassador was placed in the corner of honour, near the window, and the host next to him, on his left hand. The other guests were arranged round the room, according to their respective ranks.

When a Persian enters a *mejlis*, or assembly, after having left his shoes without, he makes the usual salutation of "Peace be unto you," which is addressed to the whole assembly, and then, measuring with his eye the degree of rank to which he holds himself entitled, he straightway wedges himself into the line of guests, without offering any apology for the general disturbance which he produces. It may be

conceived that, among a vain people, the disputes which arise on matters of precedence are numerous; and on the occasion in question, Mr. Morier could notice by the countenances of those present when anyone had taken a higher seat than that to which he was entitled.

Mollahs, the Persian scribes, are remarkable for their arrogance in this respect, and bring to mind the caution that our Saviour gave to the Jews against their scribes, whom, among other things, he characterizes as loving "the uppermost rooms at feasts." The master of the entertainment has, however, the privilege of placing anyone as high in the ranks of the assembly as he may choose, and Mr. Morier saw an instance of it on this occasion, for when the assembly was nearly full the Governor of Kashan, a man of humble mien, though of considerable rank, came in, and had seated himself at the lowest place, when the Ameen-ad-Dowlah, after having testified his particular attentions to him by numerous expressions of welcome, pointed with his hand to an upper seat in the assembly, to which he desired him to move, which he accordingly did. What a strong analogy is here between the manners of the Jews and those of the Persians!* (Matt. x. 12 and 13; xxiii. 6 and 12; Mark xii. 39; Luke xi. 43, and xiv. 10.)

* Morier's *Second Journey through Persia*.

Scripture No special names are given in Scripture
 Terms as to to the different meals; and though the
 Meals. words *dine* and *dinner* do occur in the
 Authorized Version of the Old Testament (Gen. xliii.
 16, &c.), they would be better translated *eat* and
portion of food respectively.

Hours THE chief meal of the day seems to have
 of been in the evening, though some un-
 Meals. certainty exists on this point. The
 Egyptians undoubtedly took their principal meal at
 noon (Gen. xliii. 16); labourers took a light meal at
 that time (Ruth ii. 14; compare verse 7); and
 occasionally that early hour was devoted to excess
 and revelling (1 Kings xx. 16). It has been inferred
 from the above passages (somewhat too hastily, we
 think) that the principal meal generally took place at
 noon: the Egyptians do indeed still make a substantial
 meal at that time, but there are indications that the
 Jews rather followed the custom that prevails among
 the Bedouins, and made their principal meal after
 sunset, and a lighter meal at about 9 or 10 a.m.*
 Thus, Lot prepared a feast for the two angels in the
 evening (Gen. xix. 1—3); the Israelites partook of
flesh in the evening, and *bread* only, or manna, in the
 morning (Exod. xvi. 12); and the Paschal Feast, as
 is well known, was kept in the evening. The feast

* Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. II.

at the vizier's house (the account of which we have just given) took place after sunset.

Washing THE custom of washing the hands and
Hands and feet before meals (particularly the former)
Feet. is purely Eastern, and dates from very early times. The cleansing of the hands on such occasions is a necessary act, for an Oriental's knife and fork are his fingers, and all the guests help themselves from the same dish. The "Pharisees transformed this conventional usage into a ritual observance, and overlaid it with burdensome regulations—a wilful perversion which our Lord reprobates in the strongest terms."* We read that "when they (the scribes and Pharisees) saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled (that is to say, with unwashed) hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees and all the Jews, except they wash their hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders." (Mark vii. 1, 13.)

"The Oriental mode of washing," says Mr. Hartley, "is universally different from that practised in the West. Nowhere is water previously poured into a basin; but the servant pours water from a pitcher upon the hands of his master. The custom of washing hands before dinner prevails also to this day. The servant goes round to all the guests with a

* *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. II.

pitcher, and a vessel to receive the water falling from the hands, and performs the office attributed to Elisha in 2 Kings iii. 11. The same service is repeated when the repast is ended." *

That the custom of washing the feet before meals still exists, may be gathered from the remarks of Mr. Jowett, who states that on his arrival at Deir el-Kamr, his host, among other attentions which he showed him, directed his servant, *before* supper, to bring in a large brass pan, full of warm water, "in which" says our traveller, "for the first, and indeed the only time, that I ever experienced such attention, he illustrated the ancient custom of washing the feet of strangers, and no compliment could have been more seasonable."† Another traveller describes the same custom, an instance of which he witnessed at Ramleh. His host having proposed, in the genuine style of ancient Oriental hospitality, that a servant should wash his feet, he gladly accepted the proposal, both for the sake of the refreshment and of the Scriptural illustration. A female Nubian slave accordingly brought water, which she poured upon his feet over a large shallow basin of tinned copper; kneeling before him, and rubbing his feet with her hands, afterwards wiping them with a napkin.‡

* Hartley's *Researches*.

† Jowett's *Researches in Syria*.

‡ Robinson's *Biblical Researches*, Vol. II.

The Grace. IN ancient times a grace was often said both before and after meals, of which we have instances in 1 Samuel ix. 13, Matthew xv. 36, Luke ix. 16, &c., and the practice still exists; but alas! the *letter* seems to be more observed than the *spirit*, and “saying grace” is too often a mere formality, for which the Koran or the Talmud is the accredited authority.

Dipping in the same Dish. ANOTHER ancient custom, alluded to in Matthew xxvi. 23, the custom of dipping from the same dish, still survives, and an amusing instance of it is given by Mr. Jowett. There were set on the table, he informs us, two or three messes of stewed meat, vegetables, and sour milk. He alone, of all the company, was granted the privilege of a knife, spoon and plate; the rest helped themselves immediately from the dish—in which, indeed, it was no uncommon thing to see more than five Arab fingers at one time. Their bread was so thin as to tear and fold like a sheet of paper, and was used for the purpose of rolling together a large mouthful, or sopping up the fluid and vegetables. When the master of the house found in the dish any dainty morsel, he took it out with his fingers and applied it to the mouth of his guest. This was true Syrian courtesy and hospitality; and our traveller observes that, had he been sufficiently well-bred, his mouth would have opened to receive

it. On pointing to the plate, however, his friend had the goodness to deposit the morsel there. The circumstance may appear trivial, but it illustrates what the Evangelists record of the last supper.*

Passages of this kind, indeed, need no comment, and as illustrations of the manners and customs of the Bible they are invaluable. Take, as another example, the account of an Egyptian meal, given us by Mr. Lane. "The Egyptians are very hospitable in inviting strangers to eat with them. A round tray of tinned copper, or sometimes of brass, serves as a table, being placed upon a stool about fifteen inches high. If the party be numerous, the tray is placed in the middle of the room, and they sit round it with one knee on the ground, and the other (the right) raised; and in this manner as many as twelve may sit round a tray three feet wide. Each person bares his right arm to the elbow, or tucks up the hanging end of his sleeve. Before he begins to eat, he says, 'In the name of God.' This is generally said in a low but audible voice, and by the master of the house first; and is both a grace and an invitation to partake of the meal. The master of the house first begins to eat, and the guests follow his example. Neither knives nor forks are used—the thumb and two fingers of the right hand serve instead; but spoons are served for soup or rice, and both hands may be used in particular cases. When there are

* *Christian Researches in Syria.*

several dishes upon the tray, each person takes of any that he likes, or of every one in succession; when only one dish is placed on the tray at a time, each takes from it a few mouthfuls, and it is quickly removed to make place for another. To pick out a delicate morsel and hand it to a friend is esteemed polite. This manner of eating with the fingers is more delicate than may be imagined by those who have not witnessed it. Each person breaks off a small piece of bread, dips it in the dish, and then conveys it to his mouth, together with a small portion of the meat, or other contents of the dish. The piece of bread is generally doubled together, so as to enclose the morsel of meat, &c., and only the thumb and the first and second fingers are commonly used.* When anyone appears to be helping himself a little too liberally, the saying goes round, "He descends like the foot of a crow, but ascends like the hoof of a camel."

Sending EVEN the Bible custom of sending messes
Messes from the table to favoured persons is by
to Friends. no means a rare occurrence in the present day. "In serving up a meal in Samoa, it is all laid on separate trays or messes; and taken by the male or female attendants, and laid down, a tray to every two or three. It is a mark of respect for one who has something good on his tray to send it to another.

* Lane's *Modern Egyptians*. Vol. I.

At public meetings, also, chiefs send to their friends and favourites portions of choice food, which have been first set before themselves.* How strikingly this illustrates the conduct of Joseph towards his brethren! We read that "he took and sent messes unto them from before him: but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of theirs" (Gen. xliii. 34).

Posture PERHAPS we should have chosen an earlier
at occasion for some remarks upon the *posture*
Meals. of Eastern people at their meals. Sitting was probably the earliest posture, but when couches were introduced the practice of sitting gave way to that of reclining. In Genesis xxvii. 19, Judges xix. 6, 1 Samuel xx. 5, and 1 Kings xiii. 20, the former posture is spoken of, and there is no apparent hint of any change from this, till we get the first mention of a couch in Amos vi. 4. The monuments tell us that the ancient Egyptians sometimes used chairs, and Wilkinson states that the houses of the wealthy among them were always so furnished; but we have no authority for saying that the Israelites ever used them.

After the introduction of couches, however, the custom of reclining at table became common, and this will help to explain many passages of deep importance in the Gospels. If the reader will picture to himself two parallel couches or sofas, each capable

* Turner's *Polynesia*.

of holding three or four persons reclining *broadwise* upon them, and these two couches connected at one end by a third shorter couch, thus leaving an opening at the other end for the passage of servants—if he will picture this, he will have a tolerable idea of the way in which the Jews would take their meals in the time of our Lord. Mattresses were spread on these couches, stuffed with feathers, herbs, or tow; and the centre mattress, on the smaller end couch, was the place of honour. “The persons who reclined at table on these couches lay with the upper part of the body leaning on the left elbows, their faces being of course turned towards the table. The hand was a little raised, the back being supported by cushions; but the lower part of the body was extended at full length, inclining outward behind, at the back of the person who reclined below him; which person, consequently, was so placed, with the table before him, and the inferior part of the first person’s body behind him, that his head approached the breast of the one above him, as also did the head of the person below himself approach his own breast.” *



This description not only illustrates a passage in John’s Gospel, in which the disciple whom Jesus loved is spoken of as leaning on Jesus’ bosom, but also explains the position which Mary Magdalene must have occupied on another occasion, when she “stood

* *Illustrated Commentary.* Vol V.

at his feet, behind him." Any person who was ministering to the guests under such circumstances, would necessarily be standing at their feet, and behind them. They could not well be otherwise (Luke vii. 37; John xii. 23).

The Governor of the Feast. AMONG the ancient Greeks a person was appointed to superintend the feasts, and that the Jews had something of the sort is evident from John's Gospel (ii. 8), where "the governor of the feast" is spoken of. This officer was called by the Greeks the *symposiarch*, and was usually chosen from amongst the guests. He needed to be a man of pleasant conversation, and one who could "drink hard" without intoxication. He watched over the company, promoting the hilarity of the guests, though preventing disorders; and if anyone showed a disposition to get drunk, he thoughtfully weakened his wine with a little water. In Ecclesiasticus "the master of the feast" is exhorted not to lift himself up, but to be among the guests as one of the rest. He is to take diligent care of them, and so sit down; and when he has done all his office, he is to take his place that he may be merry with them, and receive a crown for the well ordering of the feast (xxxii. 1).

Sprinkling the Guests. DR. KITTO states that, when an Eastern potentate gives a grand entertainment, "there are servants who sprinkle with

perfumed liquids (as rose-water, &c.) the several guests as they enter. This sprinkling is understood to fit them for the presence of the entertainer, to declare them his guests, and, as such, to place them under his favour and protection. This custom supplies a striking illustration, and probably was before the prophet's mind when he said, 'So shall he sprinkle many nations' (Isa. lii. 15).

AN opportunity now offers to insert a few
 Oriental
 Hospitality. remarks on the duties of *hospitality*. The

subject is of some importance; for "the Old Testament abounds with illustrations of the divine command to use hospitality, and of the strong national belief in its importance. So, too, in the writings of the New Testament; and though the Eastern Jews of modern times dare not entertain a stranger lest he be an enemy, and the long oppression they have endured has begotten that greed of gain that has made their name a proverb, the ancient hospitality still lives in their hearts. The desert, however, is yet free; it is of old a howling wilderness; and hospitality is as necessary and as freely given as in patriarchal times."

THE accounts which modern travellers
 Instances of
 Arab
 Hospitality. have given of the uniform hospitality of the Arab tribes are indeed remarkable, and afford some most striking illustrations. Thus

Irby and Mangles write: "An Arab, on arriving in a strange camp, goes to the first tent that comes in his way; he does not wait to be asked in, but without any ceremony makes his camel lie down, unloads at the entrance, and entering the tent with the simple salutation of 'Peace be between us,' sets himself down by the fire, no matter whether the host be at home or not. Should the latter be present he immediately puts fresh wood on, and begins to burn and pound coffee, generally offering his pipe to his guest in the meantime. His wife, or wives, after spreading mats, if they have any, for the stranger to sit on, retire to their part of the tent, which is divided in the middle by their sack of corn, and whatever other effects they have, prepares the dinner or supper according to the time of the day, without any order being given by the master, but as a matter of course. In the meantime the host chats with his guests, generally about their flocks, &c., such being their principal concern. The coffee being ready, the landlord pours out for everyone his cup, helping himself last. As soon as the meal is prepared, he pours water alternately for his guests, who therewith wash the right hand, beginning with one, and going regularly round the circle. The ablution finished, everyone commences; the host retires, not eating with his guests, but welcoming them with frequent repetitions of 'Coula, coula' (Eat it all, eat it all). The repast being finished, the

attentive master washes the hands of his party, and eats himself of what remains."

On two occasions the travellers above named arrived at a camp late at night, and, halting before a tent, found that the owner, with his wife and children, had arranged their carpets, &c., for the night, and had just retired to rest. Great was their astonishment to see the good humour with which everyone arose again and kindled a fire, the wife commencing to knead the dough and prepare a supper. The Arabs who accompanied the travellers made no apology, but seemed to take everything as a matter of course, although the nights at that season were bitterly cold. It would be difficult to find two more striking instances of Arab hospitality than these.*

Rewards for Hospitality resented. BURCKHARDT remarks that he was generally averse to making the slightest return for any hospitality received. "Few travellers," he adds, "will perhaps agree with me on this head, but will treat the Bedouins in the same manner as the Turks, and other inhabitants of the towns, who never proffer their services or hospitality without expecting a reward. The feelings of Bedouins, however, are very different from those of townsmen; and a Bedouin will praise the guest* who departs from him without making any other

* Irby and Mangle's *Travels*.

remuneration than that of bestowing a blessing upon them and their encampment, much more than him who thinks to redeem all obligations by payment." He thus illustrates his remarks :—

"We alighted at an encampment of Bedouins, and entered the Sheikh's tent, though he was absent; and the Arabs had a long and fierce dispute among themselves to decide who should have the honour of furnishing us a supper, and a breakfast the next morning. He who first sees the stranger from afar, and exclaims, 'There comes my guest,' has the right to entertain him, whatever tent he may alight at. A lamb was killed for me, which was an act of great hospitality; for these Bedouins are poor; and a lamb was worth upwards of a Spanish dollar—a sum that would afford a supply of butter and bread to the family for a whole week."*

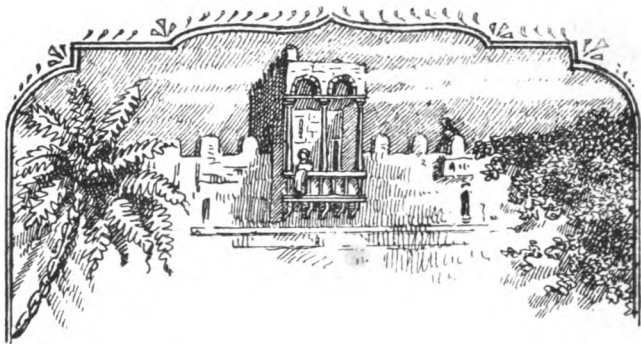
Robinson gives a humorously pathetic account of some Arabs who had purchased a kid of a neighbouring tribe, and were just settling down to make a meal of it, when the very men who had sold the kid, looked in at the tent door, and, claiming their hospitality, quietly consumed the animal before their eyes!

Bible Instances of Hospitality.	How vividly these circumstances bring before us the hospitality of the patriarchs, and others named in the Sacred
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* Burckhardt's *Syria*, &c.

Scriptures! We are reminded of Abraham, who entertained the three angels at his tent door—of Lot, who prepared a feast for the two angels in Sodom—and of Gideon, who made ready the kid and the unleavened cakes, for the angel of the Lord at Ophrah. Such instances also give point to the apostles' exhortations, "Use hospitality one to another, without grudging"; and "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares" (Gen. xviii. 1-8; xix. 1-3; Judges vi. 11-19; Heb. xiii. 2; 1 Peter iv. 9).

The rationalist may curl his lip, while he passes his petty criticisms on the Book he cannot understand, but even the habits of these poor children of the desert confound his guilty reasonings, and vindicate the Sacred Oracles.



CHAPTER V.

THE BATH AND THE BED-CHAMBER.]



ASTERN houses are usually two or three stories high, and the upper chambers are devoted to the women and children. No males, save the eunuchs and the master of the house, are suffered to enter these apartments, unless under exceptional circumstances, when the women are absent. In Egypt, no chambers are furnished as bed-rooms. The bed, in the daytime, is rolled up and placed on one side, or in an adjoining closet, which, in the winter, is a sleeping place; in summer, many people lie upon the house-top.* The bath is usually situated in or near the garden, and is sometimes shielded by porticoes for the sake of greater privacy.

Mr. Gadsby states that "besides the court and

* *Egypt and Nubia.*

fountains, most of the houses have good gardens and baths, so that, however mean they look in front, they have within themselves the element of luxury. The gardens, however, are not like our English gardens, laid out in walks for the purposes of recreation, but are more like squares, filled with orange trees, sweet-smelling acacias, jasmines, &c., the doors of the private rooms opening into them; so that the people can luxuriate in their fragrance while reclining and smoking on their divans." Many indulge themselves by having soft pillows under their armpits, in addition to those against the wall, when they "stretch themselves upon their couches" (Amos vi. 4)—a luxurious way of reclining, unknown to Western civilization. These pillows, or cushions, are often made by the women of the harem (Ezek. xiii. 18).

Ishbosheth is named as "lying on a bed at noon" (2 Sam. iv. 5); but this is a constant practice in the East, especially in the summer. There is no business done from twelve to two. Everyone flies to his divan, or some shaded spot, to escape the scorching embraces of the sun. Amos pronounces a woe upon those Israelites who lie upon "beds of ivory," and are "at ease in Zion" (Amos vi.), the figure being taken from these luxurious habits.* Mr. Shaw gives the following interesting description of an Eastern sleeping apartment. "At one end of each chamber there is a little gallery, raised three, four, or five

* Gadsby's *Wanderings*. Vol. I.

feet above the floor, with a balustrade in front of it, with a few steps leading up to it. Here the occupants of the chamber place their beds, a situation frequently alluded to in the Holy Scriptures, which may likewise illustrate the circumstance of Hezekiah's *turning his face, when he prayed, towards the wall, i.e.,* from his attendants, that the fervency of his devotion might be the less taken notice of. The like is related of Ahab, though probably not upon a religious account, but in order to conceal from his attendants the anguish he was in for his late disappointment" * (1 Kings xxi. 4, and 2 Kings xx. 2).

Carrying
one's Bed.

THE poor in India frequently lie in the streets all night. Captain Basil Hall speaks of getting up with the first blush of the dawn the morning after his arrival in Bombay, and of going forth alone in search of adventure. He had not gone far before he saw a native sleeping on a mat, spread in the little verandah extending along the front of his house, which was made of basket-work plastered over with mud. He was wrapped up in a long web of white linen, or white cotton cloth, called cummer-bund, or waist-cloth. As soon as the first rays of the sun peeped into his rude sleeping chamber, he "arose, took up his bed, and went into his house" (Luke v. 25; Matt. ix. 6). The expression just quoted could not have been better illustrated than by the above incident. The Hindoo got

* Shaw's *Barbary*, Vol. I.



CORNER OF AN EASTERN DIVAN, SHOWING THE LATTICE.

on his feet, cast the long folds of the wrapper over his shoulder, stooped down, and having rolled up his mat, which was all the bed he required, he walked into the house with it, and then proceeded to the nearest tank to perform his morning ablutions.*

Beds of the Wealthy. BUT all Eastern beds are not so plain as this of the poor Indian. Some are very sumptuous. Such was the bed on which the Baron du Tott was once privileged to spend the night. It was composed of fifteen mattresses of quilted cotton, about three inches thick, placed one upon another, and over these was thrown a sheet of Indian linen, sewed on the last mattress. A coverlit of green satin, adorned with gold embroidered in embossed work, was, in like manner, fastened to the sheets, the ends of which, turned in, were sewed down alternately. Two large pillows of crimson satin, covered with the like embroidery, in which there was no lack of gold or spangles, rested on two cushions of the sofa, brought near to serve for a back, and intended to support the Baron's head.†

Sewing Pillows to Armholes. WE have already alluded to the custom of sewing pillows to armholes. One writer describes them as velvet or damask bolsters, which are placed upon the mattress. These

* *Fragments of Voyages and Travels*, Vol. III.

† Calmet's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

indulgences are apparently referred to by the prophets in the woes pronounced upon the women "that sew pillows to all armholes," and upon "them that are at ease in Zion . . . and stretch themselves upon their couches" * (Ezek. xiii. 18; Amos vi. 4).

Sleeping Two
in
a Bed. THE following curious fragment from Gadsby will throw some light upon one or two expressions in the Word of God, which might otherwise present a difficulty. He was staying at Mahhalid, and, having occasion to rise in the night, stumbled over the prostrate bodies of some Turks and Arabs, who were sleeping together on the floor. "There were twelve of these poor fellows. They all lay on the mud floor, without any covering but their bare cloaks. They were packed close together to keep each other warm. We often in England say, 'As close as three in a bed'; and here there were a dozen; but *what* a bed! Solomon says, 'If two lie together, there is heat; but how can one be warm alone?' Now, as the people in the East who have beds, always sleep in *separate* beds, no two persons, not even man and wife, sleeping together, I used to wonder what Solomon meant. But there can be no doubt he referred to the custom, which was generally practised, of the aged and infirm having young healthy persons with them in bed for warmth, and even, as

* Shaw's *Barbary*, Vol. I., and Perkin's *Residence in Persia*, &c.

they supposed, to impart *vital heat*”* (1 Kings i. 2-4, and Eccles. iv. 11).

Lying at the Feet. THE same writer has a note on the custom of *lying at the feet of a person*. “Ruth went and lay, crossways, at the feet of Boaz, and uncovered his feet, that is, covered herself with his cloak or skirt; just as my guide lay at my feet on going to Ephesus; a custom common all over the East. By this act, Ruth placed herself under the protection of Boaz; and by afterwards requesting Boaz himself to spread his skirt over her, she merely asked him to acknowledge her right to his protection. Hence, says Boaz, ‘I will do to thee all that thou requirest, for all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman. If thy kinsman will not take thee to wife, I will.’ The same custom is referred to in Ezekiel xvi. 8: ‘I spread my skirt over thee, and thou becamest mine’” (Ruth iii. 7-14).

Some Ancient Mirrors. CLOSELY connected with the bed and the the bed-chamber, is the *toilet-table*. It will, therefore, be no departure from the subject before us to notice the use of mirrors, perfumes, &c., and the custom of painting the eyes. It is probable that when the Hebrew women left Egypt, they brought with them mirrors like those which were

* *Wanderings*, Vol. I.

used by the Egyptians. These were made of a mixed metal, chiefly copper, and were wrought with such admirable skill, that they were "susceptible of a lustre, which has even been partially revived at the present day, in some of those discovered at Thebes, though buried in the earth for many centuries. The mirror itself was nearly round, inserted into a handle of wood, stone, or metal, whose form varied according to the taste of the owner. Some presented the figure of a female, a flower, a column, or a rod ornamented with the head of Athor, a bird, or a fancy device; and sometimes the face of a Typhonian monster was introduced to support the mirror, serving as a contrast to the features whose beauty was displayed within it."*

"The obscure image produced by a tarnished or imperfect mirror, appears to be alluded to in 1 Corinthians xiii. 12. On the other hand, a polished mirror is, among the Arabs, an emblem of a pure reputation. 'More spotless than the mirror of a foreign woman,' is with them a proverbial expression, which Meidani explains of a woman who has married out of her country, and polishes her mirror incessantly, that no part of her face may escape her observation."† (Ex. xxxviii. 8, and Job xxxvii. 18). "St. James refers to the metal mirror, and the reflected image which it gave, as a type of the Word of God, and

* Wilkinson's *Ancient Egypt*, Vol. III.

† Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, Vol. II.

the reflection which it presents to us of what we are (James i. 23, Revised Version). St. Paul points out how imperfect was the reflection given, when contrasted with a direct view of the object itself. We can only now behold "*as in a mirror* the glory of God" * (2 Cor. iii. 18, Revised Version.)

Perfumes THE use of perfumes has always been
and common in Eastern countries; so common,
Ointments. indeed, that the omission of it was looked
upon as a sign of mourning. The perfumes mentioned in the Word of God were applied in various ways. Sometimes they were worn about the person; sometimes they were applied in the way of fumigation; sometimes the perfume was extracted and mixed with oil, to be afterwards used as ointment; and sometimes the scent was confined in smelling bottles, which were fastened to the girdle. Allusions to each of these several ways will be found in Cant. i. 13; iii. 6; John xii. 3; and Isaiah iii. 20.† In Proverbs xxvii. 16 we have the curious expression:—"The ointment of his right hand, which bewrayeth itself"; and this, says Dr. Thompson, "refers to the custom of perfuming, so common in ancient times, and not infrequent now. The odour of their cosmetics is so powerful that the very street along which the person walks is highly scented. Such ointment cannot be

* *The Bible Student in the British Museum*, p. 19.

† See also pp. 82, 83.

concealed; it proclaims itself, as the Hebrew may be rendered, wherever it comes. The right hand is mentioned because it is most honourable, most used in anointing, and cannot be kept concealed in the bosom, as all salutations, and the endless gestures in conversation, call it forth. The ointment of the right hand will surely bewray itself, and so will a contentious woman; she cannot be hid." *

Remarks on ALABASTER boxes, as receptacles for such
 Matt. xxvi. ointments, were evidently familiar articles
 6 and 7. in early times, and Pliny mentions them
 in this connexion in his third book. In Matthew
 xxvi. 6 and 7 we read of the woman with the
 alabaster box of "very precious ointment," which she
 poured upon the Saviour's head, and Mark adds that
 "she brake the box" when so doing (Mark xiv. 3).
 Dr. A. Clarke, however, translates the clause, "she
 brake the seal"; remarking that this is the best
 translation he can give of the passage, and that he
 gives it for these reasons: First, it is not likely
 that a box, exceedingly precious in itself, would be
 broken to get out its contents. Secondly, the broken
 pieces would be very inconvenient, if not injurious,
 to the hands of the woman. Thirdly, it would not
 be easy effectually to separate the oil from the
 broken pieces. And fourthly, it was a custom in
 Eastern countries to *seal* the bottles that held

* *The Land and the Book.*

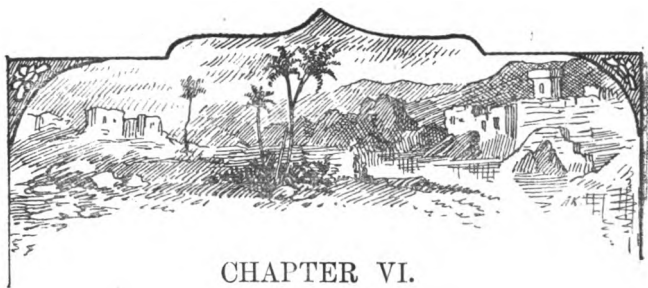
the perfume, with wax, so that, to come at their contents, no more was necessary than to *break the seal*, which this woman appears to have done; and when the seal was thus broken, she had no more to do than to pour out the liquid ointment, which she could not have done had she broken the bottle. He adds, that the bottles containing the otto of roses, which come from the East, are sealed in this manner.*

Painting
the
Eyes. THEN as to PAINTING THE EYES. There are three passages in the Word of God which refer to this curious and ancient custom. These passages occur in 2 Kings ix. 30; Jeremiah iv. 30; and Ezekiel xxiii. 40. In the first two cases we do not get the correct meaning in the text, as the word *face* has been substituted for *eyes*; but the marginal rendering corrects the error. According to this truer rendering, the passages read as follows: "And she (Jezebel) put her eyes in painting, and tired her head, and looked out at a wipdow." "Thou that rentest thine eyes with painting, in vain shalt thou make thyself fair." The remaining passage, which is given correctly in the text, runs thus: ". . . . thou didst wash thyself, paintedst thine eyes, and deckedst thyself with ornaments." "This custom," says Dr. Kitto, "is universal among the women of the East, and

* *The Biblical Treasury*, Vol. V.

sometimes is also adopted by the men. The eyelid is tinged with a metallic black powder, which is called *surmeh* by the Turks and Persians, and *kohl* by the Egyptians. It is rather a delicate operation, and is thus performed:—The eye is closed, and a small ebony rod smeared with composition is squeezed between the lids, so as to tinge their edges with the colour. This is considered to add greatly to the brilliancy and power of the eye, and to deepen the effect of the long black eye-lashes of which the Orientals are proud. The same drug is employed on the eye-brows: used thus, it is intended to elongate, not to elevate the arc, so that the inner extremities are usually represented as meeting between the eyes. To a European the effect produced is seldom, at first, pleasing; but it soon becomes so.”* Another writer, in the course of a description of a Jewish family with whom he stayed, says, “But one decoration attracted my attention from all the others, and seemed to my unaccustomed eyes to mar their beauty in a high degree. From the outer corner of each eye a black line was painted upon the cheek, which gave exactly the appearance of two slits or *rents*.”

* *Illustrated Commentary*, Vol. II.



CHAPTER VI.

THE "WARDROBE" AND JEWEL-CASKET.



THIS subject covers a wide field. It embraces everything in the way of Eastern dress, and necessitates, in consequence, an examination of the various materials of which such dresses are made, the manner of wearing them, and the special usages relating thereto. Yet the subject is not without interest, and with the wealth of material at our command, brevity need be our only concern.

THE common dress of the Hebrews was a coat or waistcoat, and a cloak; the coat constituting the under-garment, and the cloak the upper one. These two garments made what Scripture calls a change of raiment (2 Kings v. 5, 22), such as those which Naaman brought as presents to Elisha. The coat was commonly of linen; and the cloak of stuff, or woollen; and as this was only a great piece of stuff, not cut, there were often many made, each of a single piece, of

The Coat
and
the Cloak.

which they used to make presents. They never changed the fashion of their clothes, and the colours most esteemed by them were purple and white. Some coats were without seams, woven in a loom, and had no openings either at the breast, or on the sides, but only at the top to let the head through. Such, probably, were the coats of the priests (Ex. xxxviii. 32) and that of our Lord, which the soldiers would not divide, but chose rather to cast lots for.*

Coats of Skins.	AN exceptional form of dress among the Hebrews was that worn by their prophets, which seems to have consisted, almost invariably, of the skins of beasts. Gadsby asks, "How did the widow of Zarephath know that Elijah was a prophet?" and answers his own question by adding: "Assuredly by his dress. The distinctive outward mark of a prophet was that he wore a garment of sheepskin or goatskin. The former Elijah wore; and this is what is called, in 1 Kings xix. 19, his mantle. In confirmation of this we read, in 2 Kings ii. 8, that 'he took his mantle, and wrapped it together, and smote the waters'; but the Septuagint translation reads, 'He folded up his <i>sheepskin</i> '; and doubtless this is the correct rendering of the passage. Therefore it is that Elijah is called a 'hairy man' (2 Kings i. 8), the meaning of which is, that he wore a hairy garment, the badge
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* Calmet's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

of a prophet."* In Zechariah xiii. 4 we read that the false prophets shall not wear a "rough garment (*marg.*, garment of hair) to deceive," and the reader will doubtless be reminded of the Saviour's own words: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. vii. 15).

That these garments of hair are still sometimes worn in the East, we have witness enough. "Travellers know well the startling appearance of the savage figures, who, whether as Bedouins or Dervishes, still haunt the solitary places of the East, with a 'cloak'—the usual striped Bedouin blanket—'woven of camel's hair, thrown over the shoulders, and tied in front on the breast; naked except at the waist, round which is a girdle of skin; the hair flowing loose about the head.' This was precisely the description of Elijah, whose last appearance had been on this very wilderness (the wilderness of Judæa), before he finally vanished from the eyes of his disciple. This, too, was the aspect of his great representative, when he came in the same place, dwelling, like the sons of the prophets, in a leafy covert woven of the branches of the Jordan desert, preaching in 'raiment of camel's hair,' with a leathern girdle round his loins, eating the locusts of the desert, the wild honey which dropped from the tamarisks of the desert region, or which distilled

* Gadsby's *Wanderings*, Vol. II.

from the palm groves of Jericho.”* The Syrian Arabs on the coast wear sheepskin jackets, the woolly part on the inside, and the skin, which is tanned and of a red colour, on the outside.†

**Pledging
& Neighbour's
Raiment.** A GARMENT in common use among all classes in the East is the *cloak*, already mentioned. The women formerly made the stuff for these robes, but whether they still do so we have not been able to ascertain: probably they do. The Eastern camel-driver may be almost invariably seen in a garment of this kind. It “is his fair-weather and foul-weather companion, his protection against the heat and cold by day, and by night his bed and counterpane. How cruelly would he feel its loss! So humane was the law of the Jewish Legislator, ‘If thou at all take thy neighbour’s raiment to pledge, thou shalt deliver it unto him by that the sun goeth down: for that is his covering only, it is his raiment for his skin: wherein shall he sleep?’” ‡ (Ex. xxii. 26, 27.)

**Fringes
to
Garments.** AMONG other commands which the Israelites received from God, with reference to their dress, was that they should wear tufts or fringes at the four corners of their upper garments, of a blue colour, and a border of galloon on the edges (Num. xv. 38; Deut. xxii. 12). “From Matthew ix. 20,

* Stanley's *Sinai and Palestine*. † Buckingham's *Arab Tribes*.

‡ Arundel's *Asia Minor*, Vol. II.

we see that our Saviour wore these fringes; for the woman who had the issue of blood, promised herself a cure, if she did but touch the hem, that is the fringe, of His garment.”* The Pharisees, as the Lord Himself tells us, enlarged the borders of their garments for purposes of ostentation (Matt. xxiii. 5).

THIS latter verse also makes mention of Phylacteries. the phylacteries, those little rolls of parchment, inscribed with certain words of the law, which were worn by the Jews upon their left wrists and foreheads. They are still in use among Eastern Jews. Bonar and M'Cheyne visited the shop of a Jew, and purchased some of these phylacteries, “the *broadest* which he had.” They consisted of little scrolls of parchment, in which were written certain passages of the law, enclosed in two black leather boxes. The boxes were furnished with leather thongs, with which to bind them to the forehead and left hand, during the time of prayer. It was to these that our Lord alluded when reproving the Pharisees, “All their works they do for to be seen of men; they make broad their phylacteries”† (Matt. xxiii. 5).

Fine Linen of Egypt.	LINEN, as an article of wearing apparel, is frequently mentioned in the Scriptures, and not less frequently in the works of
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* Calmet's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

† *Narrative of a Mission of Enquiry to the Jews*.

modern travellers. "Egyptian linen was an article of export, and was of high repute among the Greeks in the time of Herodotus. Joseph was arrayed in 'fine linen' (Gen. xli. 42); and even in Solomon's days 'linen yarn' was brought from Egypt by the king's merchants 'at a price' (2 Chron. i. 16). In Ezekiel xxvii. 7, it is said of Tyrus, 'Fine linen with brodered work from Egypt was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail.' In Proverbs vii. 16, the bed was decked with 'fine linen of Egypt.' The monuments represent the spinning to be the work of the women, and the weaving to be done by men and women."* The wealthier Turks and Moors of the present day wear shirts of linen underneath their tunics; and Niebuhr describes the dress of a young Arabian girl as consisting of a shirt of linen, chequered blue and white.†

Coats of EVEN "coats of many colours" have not
Many altogether had their day; and the Rev.
Colours. Justus Doolittle informs us that "Chinese

parents are fond of clothing their young children in gaudy-coloured garments. They seem to take special delight in seeing them playing about in clothing having bright colours in large patterns. Sometimes the cloth is stamped with coarse and large

* *Egypt, as seen in Scripture and on the Monuments.*

† Shaw's *Travels*, Vol. I., and Niebuhr's *Arabia*, Vol. I.

figures. . . . Such garments are often made so as to be worn for the first time when the children are four months old, or on the occurrence of a birthday. After becoming six or eight years old children are seldom seen wearing such garments, if new.* Mr. Gadsby saw several little boys in Egypt wearing coats of many colours: and Mr. Buckingham observes that such coats are much esteemed throughout the East in the present day† (Gen. xxxvii. 3).

Costly
Apparel.

IN several parts of Scripture we have allusions to garments of a costlier kind than those of which we have been speaking. Aholiab was "an embroiderer in blue, and in purple, and in scarlet, and fine linen" (Ex. xxxviii. 23); and in Judges v. 30 we read of "a prey of divers colours, a prey of divers colours of needlework, of divers colours of needlework on both sides, meet for the necks of them that take the spoil." So also in Esther viii. 15, "Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of blue and white, and with a great crown of gold, and with a garment of fine linen and purple": while King Lemuel tells us that all the household of a virtuous woman "are clothed with scarlet. She maketh herself coverings of tapestry; her clothing is silk and purple" (Prov. xxxi. 21, 22).

* *Social Life of the Chinese*, Vol. II.

† Gadsby's *Wanderings*, Vol. II.; and Buckingham's *Arab Tribes*.

“Whatever other fashions may have changed in the East,” says Mr. Jowett—“and yet we may truly believe that very few have varied—there is one still stationary, the sight of which carries us back to the remotest Scripture antiquity: I mean the fashion of splendid dresses. I had a full specimen of it this evening in the lady of the house. She produced from her wardrobe at least ten heavy outer garments, coats of many colours, embroidered and spangled with gold and silver and flowers. I was weary with her showing them, at which she seemed surprised. There are some of them as old as the date of her marriage—some still older. They are only worn on great festivals, as Christmas, Easter, &c., when she sits in state to receive her friends, and hands coffee and a pipe to them. It is curious, however, to see how her splendid dresses are contrasted with her humble daily occupations; for, in the ordinary duties of the house, she is to be found sweeping out the kitchen, boiling the pot, &c.; and she eats her meals when her husband and his friends have finished, sitting on the ground with her children and servants at the parlour door; and such, generally, is the condition of females in Eastern countries. She wears an infinity of braids, which hang down all the length of her back, and terminate in gold sequins, which, together with those she wears on her head, may be worth from five to ten pounds sterling. The advice of St. Peter is quite forgotten

in this land. The ornament of a meek and quiet spirit appears to be very little known; but the adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, and of putting on of apparel, is most studiously retained.”*

The reader will, doubtless, have called to mind ere this, the “goodly Babylonish garment” which tempted the cupidity of Achan in the days of Joshua (Josh. vii.). That Babylon was noted for these things is a fact borne witness to both by ancient and modern writers. They tell us that these garments were of cotton, and that the most costly were so highly valued for their brilliancy of colour and fineness of texture, as to be set apart for royal use. They were even to be found at the tomb of Cyrus, which was profusely decorated with every description of furniture in use among the Persian kings during their lives.†

The Veil: AN important, and indeed, indispensable
Ancient article of female attire in the East, is the
and
Modern. veil. Its use has continued from very
early times. The women wear, in all, four kinds of
veils; two being worn in the house, and two on
occasions when they go abroad. The first kind “is
made as a *kerchief*, falling on the back of the wearer
by way of an ornament. The second kind passes
under the chin, and covers the bosom. The third is

* Jowett's *Researches*.

† Heeran on *Asiatic Nations*.

the white veil, which covers the whole of their persons; and the fourth, is a kind of handkerchief, which they wear round or over the face, and at the temples. This handkerchief, or veil, has a net-work at the place of the eyes, like point or thread lace, that it may be seen through.”* To be found in an Eastern street without a veil would be a calamity, and none but the most abandoned in the cities are ever seen in that condition. The bride in the Canticles complained that the keepers of the city had taken away her veil (v. 7); and we are told that when Rebekah saw Isaac in the field near the well Lahai-roi, “she took a veil, and covered herself” (Gen. xxiv. 65).

Anciently the veil seems to have been the most important part of an Eastern woman’s dress—her chief care was always to hide her face. It is so in the present day. “The face-veil is a long strip of white muslin, concealing the whole of the face except the eyes, and reaching nearly to the feet. It is suspended at the top by a narrow band, which passes up the forehead, and which is sewed, as are also the two upper corners of the veil, to a band that is tied round the head.” The head-veil, which is worn in the house in modern Egypt, is described as “a long piece of white muslin, embroidered at each end with coloured silk and gold, or of coloured crape ornamented with gold thread, lama, and spangles.

* Calmet’s *Dictionary of the Bible*.

It rests upon the head, and hangs down behind, nearly, or quite, to the ground.”*

The
Horn.

ANOTHER kind of ornament sometimes worn on the head was the *horn*. It was an emblem of power and authority, and the habit of wearing such an ornament, though not so common as formerly, has not yet entirely disappeared. In addition to the numerous trinkets, &c., with which the Syrian ladies almost cover their ears, necks and arms, they wear on the head a hollow horn, which is made of copper or silver, according to the means of the wearer. Its form is tapering, and varies from fifteen to twenty inches in length; so that it must be no light weight to be always pressing upon the forehead. It is fastened in its place by straps, and rises obliquely from the forehead, at an angle of twenty or thirty degrees. Over it is thrown a veil of white muslin, which may be readily pulled across the face for concealment when occasion requires. Mr. Bruce found the chiefs of Abyssinia wearing this distinction, though their horns were shorter than those described above.

Triumphant Hannah could cry, “Mine horn is exalted in the Lord”; and Job, stripped of all his glory, could say, “I have defiled my horn in the dust”; and it is easy to see the beautiful propriety of the figures used. Daniel and St. John, also,

* Niebuhr's *Arabia*, Vol I., and Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, Vol I.

represent powerful kingdoms under the same graphic imagery (1 Sam. ii. 1; Job xvi. 15; Dan. vii. 7; Rev. xiii. 1-11). Other allusions to this ornament will be found in 2 Sam. xxii. 3; 1 Kings xxii. 11; Ps. lxxv. 5; and other places.

The Girdle ANOTHER of the "important parts of Eastern
and costume is the *girdle*. This is usually a
its Uses. large shawl, or long piece of cloth, folded
round the waist or loins. The support it gives is
very great; and it is also most useful in keeping in
order the long loose robes worn in hot countries.
Our blessed Lord frequently alludes to these uses of
the girdle, and draws from them a spiritual lesson.
He bids His people to be as men that wait for their
lord; having *their loins girded*; that is, as servants
who, expecting to have to wait upon their master on
his arrival, would not sit down in idleness, with
loose and disordered garments, but laying aside all
superfluous apparel, would *gird* themselves for active
service; so should Christ's disciples not be slothful,
but active, diligent, and watchful. So also St. Peter,
after recounting the trials of Christians, and their
hopes, bids them 'gird up the loins of their mind, be
sober, and hope to the end.' Be not self-indulgent
and indolent; nor yet cast down and desponding;
but be strong in the Lord, and in the power of
His might; in His strength gird yourself to active
work; and lie not down to rest till all that work is

finished which He hath given you to do ; till you hear His own voice bidding you ‘sit down to meat,’ for that He Himself will come forth and serve you”* (Luke xii. 35, 36, 37 ; Ephes. vi. 14 ; 1 Peter i. 13).

That girdles, of the kind from which these figures are taken, are worn by Orientals of both sexes in the present day, may be gathered from the numerous references to them in the works of those travellers from which we have already had occasion to quote. Burckhardt† describes them as made of leather (2 Kings i. 8), and adorned with pieces of ribbon or amulets ; but all girdles are not the same as those of the Bedouins. Some partake more of the character of shawls, and are wrapped three or four times round the body ; and others, again, are worsted, woven into a variety of figures, and perhaps resembling those rich girdles which the virtuous virgins are described as wearing (Prov. xxxi. 24). Niebuhr, observes that in order that the long robes of the Turks shall not incommode them in walking, they gather up a part of it by means of a broad girdle.‡ So also did the Israelites when they prepared for their journey through the wilderness (Ex. xii. 11) ; so, also, in figure, should the Christian as he passes through the wilderness of this world.

* M. F. M. in *Manners, Customs, &c., of the East.*

† *Notes on the Bedouins.*

‡ Paxton's *Letters*, Shaw's *Travels*, Vol. I., and Niebuhr's *Arabia, &c.*

OUR references to Oriental dress would not be complete without the mention of shoes and sandals. *shoes.* The shoes of the Bible were really sandals, or, roughly speaking, the *soles* of shoes, which were secured to the feet by means of strings or leathern thongs. The Bedouins use such sandals in the present day, and Gadsby describes them as "leather or skin soles, which are fastened to the feet with straps. Some indeed," he adds, "are merely made of palm leaves. I have one by me, found in one of the tombs, which is probably not less than 3,000 years old. The sandals are the most worthless part of the dress. So, when the Lord charges Israel with having sold the poor for a pair of sandals (Amos ii. 6), He means that they sold them for nothing."*

The custom of loosing the sandals from off the feet of an Eastern worshipper is of great antiquity. It still exists, and is also commonly observed in visits to great men. The sandals, or slippers, are pulled off at the door; and either left there, or given to a servant to bear. The person to bear them was an inferior domestic, or attendant upon a man of high rank, to take care of, and to return them to him again. This was the work of servants among the Jews; and it was reckoned so servile that it was thought too mean for a scholar or disciple to do. The Jews say, "All services which a servant does

* *Wanderings*, Vol. I.

for a master, a disciple does for his master, except unloosing his shoes." John thought it was too great an honour for him to do that for Christ, which was thought too mean for a disciple to do for a wise man " * (Matt. iii. 11). We have given on page 27 an illustration of a shoe bazaar in Cairo.

Ornaments of Eastern Women. OUR remarks on Oriental dress having come to an end, the chapter would still be incomplete without some reference to the ornaments of Eastern women. Their fondness for trinkets and meretricious finery of all kinds goes without the saying. The Old Testament abounds with references to such ornaments, and it is curious to notice how even the *style* of them has little changed at the present day. Bracelets and earrings, and chains of gold are as much worn now, as they were in the days of the Exodus; and even the "head-bands," and the "tinkling ornaments for the feet," and the "round tires like the moon," and the "tablets" and the "nose-rings" are as fashionable as ever (Isa. iii. 16-24).

Head-bands and Khoors. MOST Eastern ladies wear head-bands, called *khoors*, which are sometimes made of gold, and studded with diamonds, and these are sewn upon the crown of the cap or head-dress. Bruce, in describing a lady of distinction,

* Burdes.

says, "She appeared magnificently dressed, with a kind of round cap of solid gold upon the crown of her head, all beat very thin, and hung round with sequins." And the Scotch missionaries, writing of the Jewesses at Brody in Austrian Poland, say, "They wear a black velvet coronet, adorned with strings of precious stones or imitation pearls; and though this piece of finery costs several pounds, yet so devotedly attached are they to their 'round tires like the moon,' that scarcely can an old woman be found seated at her stall who does not wear one, as if they were queens even in their captivity."* These "round tires like the moon" are also worn in the form of necklaces by the modern Egyptians; and are described as crescent-shaped disks of metal, strung together by a thin chain of gold.

Bracelets and CHAINS for the neck are mentioned together in Numbers xxxi. 50, and Ezekiel xvi. 11, and separately in Chains. many other parts of Scripture. The bracelets that Eliezer produced for Rebekah weighed ten shekels of gold; and certainly no persons in the present day are more addicted to wearing heavy bracelets than the Jewish women, and this not in the East merely, but in all parts of the world.

But bracelets and chains of gold were not only worn by women in former days: they were worn by

* *Narrative of a Mission to the Jews*, and Bruce's *Travels*.

men of noble birth, and by officials of high rank. Pharaoh put a gold chain about Joseph's neck at the time of Joseph's exaltation (Gen. xli. 42), and Belshazzar conferred the same honour upon Daniel when Daniel interpreted the King's dream (Dan. v. 29). A bracelet for the arm is mentioned as among the ornaments of Saul (2 Sam. i. 10). Herodotus tells of a neck-chain and armlets sent by King Cambyses to the King of Ethiopia, on the receipt of which the latter, fancying they were fetters, laughingly observed that the Ethiopians had much stronger ones.*

Nose-rings NOSE-RINGS and EARRINGS were also styles
and of ornament formerly much in vogue in
Earrings. the East; the latter being worn by men as well as women. The golden "earring" of half a shekel weight, which Eliezer produced for Rebekah, was really a nose-ring, as the marginal reading, "jewel for the forehead," indicates (Gen. xxiv. 22). In verse 47, Eliezer, alluding to the same ornament, says, "I put the earring upon her face"; and it will be noticed on referring to Ezekiel xvi. 12, where a similar expression occurs, that the marginal reading is, "I put a jewel on thy *nose*" (see also Isa. iii. 21). Harmer informs us that in almost all the East the women wear rings in their noses, in the left nostril, which is bored low down in the middle. These rings are of gold, and have commonly two pearls

* *Herodotus* II., 20, 22.

and one ruby between, placed in the ring. He never saw a girl or young woman, in Arabia or Persia, who did not wear a ring after this manner in her nostril.

Some idea of the size of these nose-jewels may be gathered from Layard, who describes one that he saw depending from an Arab lady's nose. It was a prodigious gold ring, set with jewels, of such ample dimensions that it covered the mouth, and needed to be removed when the lady ate. Bruce, also, refers to a similar ornament, which he saw in Nubia. It was so long that it hung down to the opening of the wearer's mouth, and must have impeded her breathing! *

The earrings at present worn in the East are also of an extraordinary size. The writer quoted above describes a lady—the king of Nubia's wife—whose “ears reached down to her shoulders, and had the appearance of wings. She had in each of them a large ring of gold somewhat smaller than a man's little finger, and about five inches diameter. The weight of these had drawn down the hole where her ear was pierced, so much, that three fingers might easily pass above the ring.” Layard saw a pair of earrings that were even more astonishing for size. They were of solid gold, terminating in a tablet of the same material, and ornamented with eight

* Harmer's *Observations*, Vol. IV. Layard's *Nineveh*, Vol. I., and Bruce's *Travels*.

turquoises. Each earring reached down to the owner's waist! * (Ex. xxxii. 2; Judges viii. 24.)

Seals, FINGER-RINGS, which were worn by persons
or of both sexes, were carried both for use
Signet-rings. and ornament. Those for use were furnished with seals or signets; and such rings are largely in use in many parts of the East at the present day, where the custom of sealing every document still prevails. A document without a seal would not be considered authentic; and in Persia the authenticity of a merchant's letters, as of his bills, depends entirely upon the seal. The modern Egyptians wear on the little finger of the right hand a seal-ring, which is generally of silver, with a cornelian, or other stone, upon which is engraved the wearer's name. All who can afford it wear a ring of this kind, even the servants.

The compiler of *Scripture Manners and Customs* informs us, that the articles most appropriate to a patriarch or elder in ancient times were "a staff, a *signet-ring*, and bracelets. Thus, when Judah asked Tamar what pledge he should give, she answered, 'Thy signet, and thy bracelets, and thy staff that is in thine hand' (Gen. xxxviii. 18). The ring was engraved with some emblem, or perhaps with the name of its owner. It was sometimes regarded as the symbol of authority. Thus, 'Pharaoh took off

* Bruce's *Travels*, and Layard's *Nineveh*, Vol. I.

his ring from his hand, and put it upon Joseph's hand' (Gen. xli. 42); and again, 'the king took his ring from his hand, and gave it unto Haman' (Esth. iii. 10); and afterwards, 'the king took off his ring, which he had taken from Haman, and gave it unto Mordecai' (viii. 2)." In the book of Job we have the expression, "It is turned as clay to the seal" (Job xxxviii. 14); and Harmer makes mention of a granary in Egypt, whose door was kept carefully sealed, but not, as was usual, with wax. The inspectors put their seal upon a handful of *clay*, with which they covered the lock of the door.

The ring is still an emblem of authority in Egypt, Turkey, Persia, and elsewhere. Thus, we read that the Grand Vizier of the Turkish Empire is the keeper of the imperial signet, by virtue of which he issues his orders for the empire, without let or hindrance. When Pharaoh placed his ring upon Joseph's hand, it became the sign of delegated power, and was the greatest honour that Pharaoh could confer (Gen. xli. 42).*

Anklets BEFORE closing the lid of our jewel-casket,
and there are two other articles of female
Stride-chains. adorning to which we may refer. "Anklets
 and stride-chains are ornaments unknown in our

*Harmer's *Observations*, Vol. IV.; Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, Vol. I.; Perkin's *Residence in Persia*; and Ludeske's *Description of the Turkish Empire*.

country; they are mentioned in Isaiah iii. 18, 20, 'In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet . . . and the ornaments of the leg.' The effect of the stride-chain was to shorten the step, while the anklet was furnished with small bells. Hence the daughters of Zion are described as 'walking and mincing as they go, and making a tinkling with their feet' (Isa. iii. 16)." The royal lady referred to on page 136—whose ears reached down to her shoulders, and sustained the weight of two earrings, some sixteen inches in circumference—was wearing anklets when Bruce saw her. They were made of gold, and were larger than any manacles which he had ever seen on the feet of felons.*

**Oriental
Fondness
for
Ornaments.** DR. THOMSON, who writes from a fulness of knowledge acquired during twenty-five years residence in the East, did not fail to notice the fondness for ornaments among all classes of Eastern people. Arab ladies, he says, and "particularly the married, are extravagantly fond of silver and gold ornaments; and they have an endless variety of chains, bracelets, anklets, necklaces, and rings. It is also quite common to see thousands of piastres, in various coins, around the forehead, suspended from the neck, and covering a system of network, called *sūffa*, attached to the back

* *Scripture Manners and Customs*, and *Bruce's Travels*.

of the head-dress, which spreads over the shoulders, and falls down to the waist. The jewels cannot be taken for the husband's debts. A poor man often goes to prison for a few piastres, while thousands glitter and jingle on the dress of his wife. This is very provoking to the creditor, who knows that his money has been purposely attached to these inviolable ornaments, so that he may not get hold of it. Married women are much more eager after ornaments than unmarried. The former also adorn themselves more elaborately, and endeavour to add to their beauty by wearing gay flowers, by painting their cheeks, putting kohl around their eyes, and arching their eyebrows with the same, and by staining their hands and feet with *henna*. It is considered indelicate for the unmarried thus to deck themselves, and conveys an impression highly injurious to the girl's moral character."*

The Ornament of Good Works. THANKFUL indeed ought we to be that the Christian woman has to do with none of these things. Her adorning is not to be "that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel" (1 Pet. iii. 3). The apostle expressly enjoins "that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broided hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array; but (which

* *The Land and the Book.*

becometh women professing godliness) with good works" (1 Tim. ii. 9, 10).

There is a story of a mandarin who took much pride in appearing with a number of jewels on every part of his robe. He was once accosted by a waggish person, who followed him through several streets, and as he followed, bowed frequently to the ground, and thanked the mandarin for his jewels. "What does the man mean?" cried the mandarin, "I never gave you any of my jewels." "No," said the other, "but you have let me look at them, and that is all the use you can make of them yourself; so the only difference between us is, that you have the trouble of watching them; and that is an employment I don't much desire."

Would that we could all receive the lesson! Let the poor worldling and the Babylonish harlot, put on their raiment of purple and scarlet, if they will, and deck themselves "with gold and precious stones and pearls" (Rev. xvii. 4); but these things are undeserving the Christian's regard? What will have become of them when a few years have rolled away? We cannot take them with us to our heavenly home, and if we could, we should not want them there. *We can give them now to Christ.* Is He worth the sacrifice?

Let us have another story. A Karen woman offered herself for baptism. After the usual examination, Dr. Judson enquired whether she could give up

her ornaments for Christ. It was an unexpected blow. The doctor explained the spirit of the Gospel. He appealed to her own consciousness of vanity. He read to her the apostle's prohibition (1 Tim. ii. 9). She looked again and again at her handsome necklace, and then, with an air of modest decision, that would adorn beyond all adornments, she took it off, saying, "I love Christ more than this."

The Jewel of Wisdom. JOB asks the question, "Where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding? Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living. The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold. Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?"

"Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding" (Job xxviii. 12-20, 28).

Yes; the fear of the Lord is wisdom. And a prophet of old has said (Mal. iii. 16, 17):—

“They that FEARED THE LORD spake often one to another; and the Lord harkened and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up MY JEWELS.”



CHAPTER VII.

SOME ANCIENT HANDICRAFTS.



HERE are two facts in the Word of God which have an important connexion with the subject of our present chapter; namely, that the original discovery of the mechanical arts is attributed to Tubal-Cain, and that the *smith's* art took precedence of all others.

The
Smith's
Craft.

THIS is easily proved. Tubal-Cain was "an instructor of every artificer in brass and iron" (Gen. iv. 22), or, as the expression might be better rendered, "a whetter of every instrument of copper and iron"; and though his brother Jubal was "the father of all such as handle the harp and organ" (v. 21), tools were required for the construction of these instruments, and therefore the smith's art must have taken precedence.

As Dean Philpott has remarked, "The preparation of iron for use either in war, in agriculture, or for domestic purposes, was, doubtless, one of the earliest applications of labour"; and, coeval with this was the use of copper alloyed with tin, that is, bronze—the "brass" of the Bible. The construction of so large a vessel as the ark shows that the smith's art must have made great progress at a very early age; but whether the metal used on that occasion was bronze or iron, we are not informed. In the construction of the tabernacle it would appear that no iron was used, though bronze is frequently mentioned: and perhaps there is a spiritual reason for this.

After the Israelites took possession of the land, the occupation of a smith became recognized as a distinct employment. In the days of Saul it is mentioned, as a significant fact, that "there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel" (1 Sam. xiii. 19), the reason being that the Philistines had either removed or destroyed all who followed that craft. By so doing the Israelites were prevented from possessing themselves of swords and spears.* A similar precaution was taken by Nebuchadnezzar in the time of Jehoiachin, king of Judah. We read that the Babylonish monarch "carried away all Jerusalem, and all the princes, and all the mighty men of valour, even ten thousand captives, and all the craftsmen and *smiths*: none remaining, save the

* *Smith's Dictionary*, Vol. II.

poorest sort of the people of the land" (2 Kings xxiv. 14, and Jer. xxiv. 1).

SOON after the death of Joshua, a place
Jewish
Craftsmen. was expressly allotted by Joab (who is called in 1 Chron. iv. 14 "the father of the inhabitants of the valley of craftsmen"—see margin) to artificers; and being thus together, it is simple to understand how an enemy might remove all the men of one craft from the nation without necessarily subjugating the whole land (1 Sam. xiii. 19. See also page 29). The Jews do not seem to have been a nation of artificers, or, at least, to have carried on any extensive trade in home manufactures; and the prophet, when describing the affluence of the goods which came to Tyre, makes mention of nothing brought thither from Judæa, except wheat, oil, grapes, balm and pannag, which were natural products of the land (Ezek. xxvii. 17). Indeed, the art-manufactures of the Jews seem to have been limited chiefly to the more difficult crafts, such as chariot-building and stone-carving, or to the making of sacred vessels and domestic utensils (Judges xvii. 4; Isa. xxix. 16; xxx. 14; and Jer. xxviii. 13).

It is also worthy of remark that Jewish artificers were not, as among the Greeks and Romans, servants and slaves, but men of some rank and wealth: so that they are frequently mentioned in Scripture in connexion with the "men of valour" and princes of

the land (2 Kings xxiv. 14; Jer. xxiv. 1; xxix. 2). In the New Testament we find that St. Paul, though a man of noble birth, was brought up to the craft of tent-making (Acts xviii. 3); and to this day, almost every Jew, no matter what his rank or prospects, is instructed in some trade or profession.

Goldsmiths BUT the employment of the SMITH, to which
and we have already alluded, demands a more
Silversmiths. extended notice. The art of the GOLDSMITH and the SILVERSMITH is frequently referred to in the Bible, and carries us back to patriarchal times (Gen. xxiv. 22, 53; xxxv. 4, &c.) Whether the ornaments sent by Abraham to Rebekah were manufactured in Palestine, or imported from Egypt, we are not informed; but, doubtless, at a later period, the Jews acquired much of their proficiency as metal-workers in the land of their bondage. At the same time, it must not be forgotten that those who were employed in the construction of the tabernacle, acted by Divine instructions, and were specially furnished by God for the work (Ex. xxxi. 6). It is expressly said of Bezaleel, the son of Uri, "I [Jehovah] have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship, to devise cunning works, to work in gold, and in silver, and in brass, and in cutting of stones, to set them, and in carving of timber, to work in all manner of workmanship (Ex. xxxi. 3, 4.)

Modern rationalism would attribute all the skill of the Jews, in connexion with the tabernacle, to their Egyptian training, and would see in the most sacred furniture of the sanctuary, only an imitation of certain objects associated with the idolatry and demon-worship* of their former oppressors; but the verses quoted above expose the fallacy of these low and unhallowed thoughts, and trace the wisdom of the workmen to its proper source.

We do not doubt for one moment but that the Jews may have learnt the arts of metal-working, stone cutting, &c., while in Egypt, but to say that the designs for the furniture of the tabernacle, and for the tabernacle itself, were obtained from thence, is quite another thing. We believe that the several processes alluded to in the chapters which treat of this subject (Ex. xxv., xxxi., &c.), were learnt in Egypt; and, indeed, in the ancient tombs there are representations of every one of them.

Thus, "in one picture the gold just brought from the mine, after being pounded, is shaken in a cloth to separate the precious grains from the dust and

* We say *demon-worship*, for of all the religions of antiquity, none was so distinctly Satanic in its nature and origin as that of Egypt. By no nation was the worship of the serpent made more prominent. "This reptile entered into the Egyptian religion under all its characters; as an emblem of divinity, a charm, an oracle, and a god. Nor was the origin of this practice unknown or unnoticed. Bracelets in the form of serpents were worn by women in the time of Clemens Alexandrinus, who thus reproves the fashion: 'The women are not ashamed to place about them the most manifest symbols of the evil one; for as the serpent deceived Eve, so the golden trinket in the fashion of a serpent misleads the woman.'" (Smith's *Sacred Annals*.)

sand. Then comes the smelting, or purifying of the ore in a furnace, the gold being contained in a large open vessel over which the workman is kneeling, blowing the fire with a reed, defended at the end next the fire by a coat of clay. The inscription over this painting signifies 'the dross is removed to make pure gold.' The gifts of the Pharaohs to the temples of their gods, were of *pure gold*; and the vessels of Jehovah's sanctuary were to be made from 'pure gold'; thus proving that a certain standard, or assay, of gold, was known to the Israelites in the desert, being that which they had used in Egypt."*

The art of plating or overlaying with gold was also known to the ancient Egyptians, as was proved some years ago by the discovery at Thebes of a mummy, which was entirely wrapped in plates of gold. The monuments, moreover, illustrate the process, and we see in one of the pictures a person called "the giver of gold," who is handing to a group of workmen, from a gold chest, some thin slips of the precious metal, which they are occupied in fixing to a block (Isa. xli. 7). Other pictures show us the various processes of melting, casting, beating, and chasing the gold; the tools used being extremely rude, and, one would think, quite insufficient to produce the beautiful results that were actually obtained (Prov. xviii. 3; xxv. 4; and Isa. i. 25).

* *Scripture Manners and Customs.*

New Testament Notices. IN the New Testament we have a SILVER-SMITH and a COPPERSMITH mentioned, but no goldsmith. The former was Demetrius, who "made silver shrines for Diana," and, as we are told, "brought no small gain unto the craftsmen" (Acts xix. 24). These "shrines" were, in reality, miniature models of the temple, or, at least, of the chapel which contained the statue of Diana, and were small enough to be carried about in the breast or girdle. The coppersmith was Alexander, who did Paul much evil (2 Tim. iv. 14); but we are told nothing about his trade. It only remains to be said that the chief tools of the smith mentioned the Bible are—the tongs, hammer, anvil, and in bellows.

The Art. of Carving. THE art of CARVING is intimately associated with that of working in metals, and we will now consider it. In the language of the English Bible, carving includes all ornamental cutting of wood, ivory, or other hard material; and thus the word has a wider meaning there than is usually given to it. But in the original Scriptures distinctions are to be noticed, which the translators of our own beautiful version have not sufficiently observed. Indeed, where we only have the one word in the Authorized Version, in the original there are no less than six Hebrew words, all differing more or less in import. One of these means carving

generally (Judges xviii. 18; 2 Chron. xxxiii. 7, 22; xxxiv. 3, 4); another, carving in relief (1 Kings vi. 18-32); another, carving in wood (Deut. xix. 5; Josh. ix. 21; 2 Chron. ii. 10; Jer. xlvi. 22); another, sculpture on doors or walls (1 Kings vi. 35; Ezek. viii. 10; xxiii. 14); another, ornamental cutting on wood, stone, or iron (Ex. xxxi. 5; xxxv. 33; 1 Chron. xiv. 1; xxii. 25; xxiv. 12; Isa. xlv. 12, 13); and another, ornamental cutting of the kind done on seals and signets (Ex. xiv. 13; xxxix. 6; 1 Kings vi. 29; Ps. lxxiv. 6).

The ruin-mounds of ancient Nineveh seem to be the great field of discovery for the carved relics of other days. In one chamber which Mr. Layard unearthed he found several beautiful ivory ornaments, and tells us that he spent hours lying on the ground while he separated these interesting remains from the rubbish by which they were surrounded. Amongst other things he came upon two small tablets, on which were represented "two sitting figures, holding in one hand the sceptre or symbol of power. The chairs on which the figures are seated, the robes of the figures themselves, &c., were enamelled with a blue paste let into the ivory, and the whole ground of the tablet, as well as part of the figures, was originally gilded—remains of the gold leaf still adhering to them." Many of the relics which he found were elegant in design, and elaborate in execution, and showed an intimate knowledge of

the method of working in ivory. There were fragments of winged sphinxes, the head of a lion, human heads, legs and feet, bulls, flowers and scroll-work, and in every specimen the spirit of the design and the delicacy of the workmanship were equally to be admired.*

A description of the "pleasant furniture of Nineveh" (Nah. ii. 9) from the pen of Mr. Layard, will serve not only to illustrate the skill of ancient carvers and metal-workers, but will give, perhaps, an additional vividness and interest to certain descriptive passages in the Word, where the furniture of Solomon is described. "Ornaments," says this traveler, "in the form of the heads of animals, chiefly the lion, bull, and ram, were very generally introduced by the Assyrians in parts of the chariot, the harness of the horses, and domestic furniture. In this respect they resembled the Egyptians. Their tables, thrones and couches were made both of metal and wood, and probably inlaid with ivory. We learn from Herodotus that those in the temple of Belus at Babylon were of solid gold. The chair represented on the earliest monuments is without a back, the legs are tastefully carved, and the seat is adorned with the heads of rams. The cushion appears to have been made of some rich stuff, embroidered or painted. The legs were strengthened with a cross-bar, and frequently ended in the feet of a lion, or the hoofs of a bull,

* Layard's *Nineveh*, Vol. II.

either of gold, silver, or bronze. Chairs and couches, adorned with feet of silver and other metals, were looked upon as a great object of luxury in Persia; from thence they were probably introduced into Asia Minor and Greece. Artaxerxes presented Entimos Gortyna, who had gone to him from Greece, with a couch having silver feet, and with all the furniture that appertained to it, and with a dome-shaped tent, or curtain, worked with flowers, and a silver seat, and gilded dome, and with cups, bottles, and other things of gold, inlaid with jewels and silver. The feet of the couch on which the body of Cyrus was placed in his tomb, were of solid gold. The couches and tables found by Pausanias in the tents of Mardonius, were of gold and silver. They had belonged to Xerxes. Couches wreathed with ivory and silver, and the beds variegated or inlaid with gold, silver, and ivory are mentioned by Homer.*

There is much in the above quotation to remind us of the ivory throne of Solomon, overlaid with gold, with its six steps and fourteen lions (1 Kings x. 18-20); and the writer's references to the couches mentioned by Homer, Herodotus and others, remind us of the litter or bed which King Solomon made himself of the wood of Lebanon. "He made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple, the midst thereof being

* Layard's *Nineveh*, Vol. II.

paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem" (Sol. Song iii. 9, 10. See also Esther i. 6).

Masons MASONS are mentioned in the second of
and their Samuel (v. 11), the second of Kings (xii.
Tools. 12; xxii. 6), both books of Chronicles
 (1 Chron. xiv. 1; xxii. 2, and 2 Chron. xxiv. 12), and
 the book of Ezra (iii. 7). We learn from these Scrip-
 tures that the masons employed on David's house in
 Jerusalem, and on the house of the Lord, were foreign
 workmen; but possibly those employed in the repairs
 of the temple, in the days of Jehu and Josiah, were
 Jews.

Among the implements of the mason mentioned in the Word of God, are the saw, the plumb-line, and the measuring-reed (1 Kings vii. 9; Amos vii. 7; Ezek. xl. 3) and some of these, says Dean Philpott, together with the chisel and mallet, are figured on the Egyptian monuments, specimens of the articles themselves are to be seen in the British Museum. Josephus tells us that the large stones used in Solomon's temple were fitted together without either mortar or cramps; but the foundation stone was fastened with lead.* The monuments of Egypt, the ruins of Baalbec, Nineveh, and other great cities, and the writings of Xenophon, Herodotus, Diodorus, &c., all bear witness to the wonderful skill of the masons of antiquity.

* Smith's *Dictionary*, Vol. I.

ANOTHER of the handicrafts which frequently comes before us in the Scriptures is CARPENTRY. The first carpenter was doubtless almost contemporary with the first smith; but his name is not recorded. The building of the ark is a proof of the rapid progress of the art before the Flood; and the ancient monuments present us with pictures of saws, chisels, hatchets, drills, mallets, oil-horns, planes, rules, plummets, squares, and baskets of nails, in use among the ancient Egyptians.

We are told, indeed, that "the cabinet-makers of Egypt were not behind the best of our own day, either in tasteful design or in manual execution." They also made boxes "in every variety of form and design. Some were inlaid with different woods, and some made of ebony, inlaid with ivory. The rarer woods were also imitated by a coating of stucco being laid on and then coloured, grained, and varnished." Veneering and dovetailing were also known.*

The carpenters (as, indeed, the rest of the workmen) employed by David and Solomon seem to have been mostly Phœnicians (2 Sam. v. 11; 1 Chron. xiv. 1); but in the repairs of the temple in the time of Joash, and in the rebuilding under Zerubbabel, there is no mention made of foreign workmen (2 Kings

* *Egypt, as seen in Scripture and on the Monuments*; and Smith's *Dictionary*, Vol. I.

xii. 11; 2 Chron. xxiv. 12; Ezra iii. 7). Jewish carpenters are certainly in view in Isa. xli. 6, 7, where we read, "They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smoothed with the hammer him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the soldering; and he fastened it with nails, that it should not be moved."

In the New Testament the occupation of a carpenter is mentioned in connexion with Joseph, the husband of Mary (Mark vi. 3); and the word is used as a term of reproach by the men of Nazareth, when they insolently enquire concerning the blessed Lord Himself, "Is not this the carpenter's son?" (Matt. xiii. 53.)

SHIP-BUILDING and BOAT-BUILDING are arts
 Ship-builders and akin to that of the carpenter, and may be
 Boat-builders. now considered. Needless to say, the
 vessels of the ancients differed from those of modern
 times. The Grecian seas, which were almost the
 only waters navigated in ancient times, were land-
 locked, filled with small islands, and subject both to
 violent storms and frequent calms. Hence sails
 were not generally used. The ships were rowed by
 oars, and in sailing, the mariners kept near to the
 coasts. Ships of war were called long ships—those
 of burden were called round ships. The ships of the

Phoenicians, being adapted for commerce, were broader and deeper than those intended for war. In the time of Homer, hempen cordage seems to have been unknown; leathern thongs were used instead; and the ships had only one mast, and that a movable one. The greatest number of men on board any one ship was one hundred and twenty. Navigation was in its infancy; but the principal constellations had been observed, and by means of these the Greeks had navigated as far as Cyprus, Phoenicia, and Egypt.

Ships had usually several banks of oars rising one above another. The principal vessels used at first were triremes, or ships with three banks of oars; but the Phoenicians or the Carthaginians constructed vessels of four or even five banks of oars. Vessels built for stateliness and show had sometimes a greater number. Ships of war had usually a beak of wood covered with brass, placed on their prows, for the purpose of annoying the ships of the enemy.

Some of the ancient ships had two rudders on each side; afterwards they had a rudder at each end; but at length they had a rudder only in the stern, and the prow or bow of the ship was ornamented with a figure-head. The ships of war were not adapted for carrying any cargo; the chief object was swiftness in rowing. The men could never sleep, nor even conveniently eat on board. In

their naval expeditions they kept close to the shore, and landed to take their meals. When about to engage they took down their sail, and depended entirely on their oars, as they could then advance or retreat, according to circumstances. The ships of war being long and narrow, and crowded with men, could not bear up against a high wind; but the ships of burden, or the round ships, as they were called, were adapted for the wind. They were worked by fewer hands, and suited for long voyages.*

We have said that the Grecian seas were almost the only waters navigated in ancient times, and this is the fact. At the same time, the Carthaginians extended their voyages throughout the whole of the Mediterranean, and even visited Britain, where they carried on an extensive and lucrative trade with the inhabitants. This trade, indeed, was so valuable that the enterprising Carthaginians sought to keep it to themselves. When one of their vessels was followed, on a certain occasion, by a Roman vessel, the captain of which was determined to discover her destination, the Carthaginian captain designedly ran his ship aground. The Roman ship followed, and ran aground also. The Carthaginian captain threw out his cargo, and got his ship off, while the Roman vessel stuck. The senate of Carthage commended his conduct, and made good his loss.

* Altered and abridged from *Commerce of the Ancients* by J. W. Gilbart.

Biblical THE ship-building yards of Solomon were
Notices of at Ezion-geber, in the land of Edom ; and
Shipping. we learn from 1 Kings ix. 26, 27, that he made there "a navy of ships," and that "Hiram sent in the navy his servants, shipmen that had knowledge of the sea, with the servants of Solomon." These vessels went to Ophir for gold, and returned well laden. At a later period Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, in conjunction with Ahaziah, king of Israel, built a similar navy at the same place, with the view of sending them to Tarshish ; but "the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish" (1 Kings xxii. 48 ; 2 Chron. xx. 35, 37).

These vessels of Solomon and Jehoshaphat were doubtless made after the model of the ships of Tyre ; indeed, we read that Hiram, king of Tyre, sent not only servants to Ezion-geber, but *ships* also (2 Chron. viii. 18) ; and this fact affords almost conclusive evidence. The ships of Tyre are thus described by the prophet : "They have made all thy ship boards of fir trees of Senir :* they have taken cedars from Lebanon to make masts for thee. Of the oaks of Bashan have they made thine oars ; the company of the Ashurites have made thy benches of ivory, brought out of the isles of Chittim. Fine linen with brodered work from Egypt was that which thou spreadest forth to be thy sail ; blue and purple

* *Senir* was an Amorite name for a portion of Mount Hermon, in the North of Palestine. The Phœnicians called it *Sirion*.

from the isles of Elishah was that which covered thee. The inhabitants of Zidon and Arvad were thy mariners: thy wise men, O Tyrus, that were in thee, were thy pilots" (Ezek. xxvii. 5-8). The other Bible references to ships and shipping will be found, for the most part, in the New Testament (see Matt. vii. 23; ix. 1; John xxi. 3, 8, &c.)

The Potter's Craft. A VERY important occupation in Eastern countries is the occupation of the POTTER. A graphic picture of the process of moulding a vessel, as still practised, will be found in Jeremiah xviii. 3, 4, "Then I went down to the potter's house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it." If we examine these verses with the accounts of an Eastern potter at his work in the present day, we shall see how closely they agree.

Dr. Thomson thus describes a visit to a manufactory at Jaffa: "There was the potter sitting at his 'frame,' and turning the 'wheel' with his foot. He had a heap of the prepared clay near him, and a pan of water by his side. Taking a lump in his hand, he placed it on the top of the wheel (which revolves horizontally) and smoothed it into a low

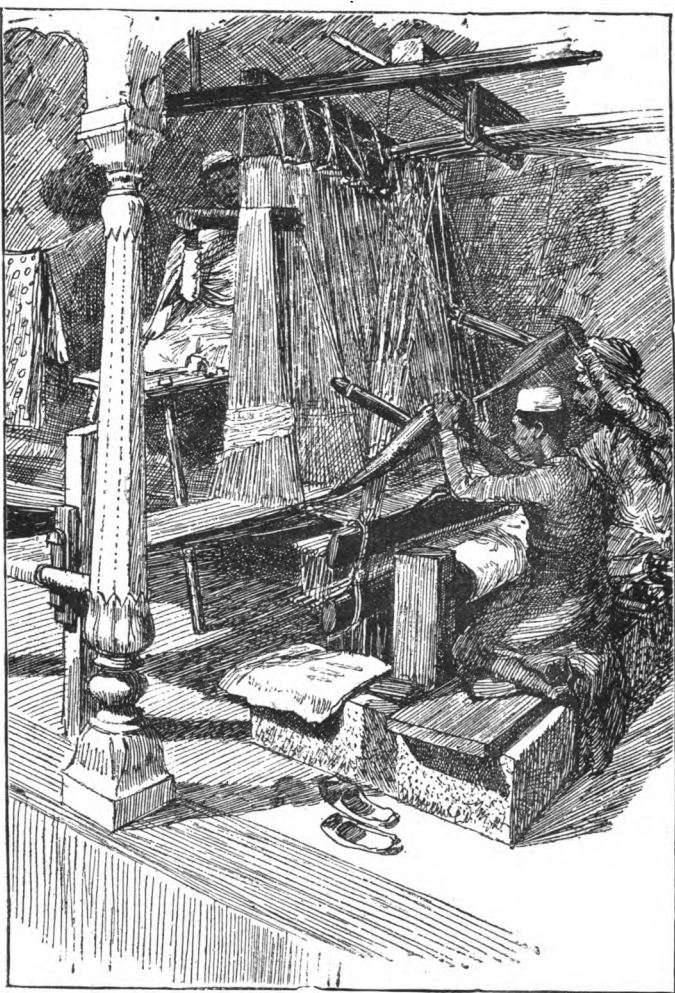
cone, like the upper end of a sugar-loaf; then thrusting his thumb into the top of it, he opened a hole down through the centre, and this he constantly widened by pressing the edges of the revolving cone between his hands. As it enlarged and became thinner, he gave it whatever shape he pleased with the utmost ease and expedition. This, I suppose, is the exact point of those Biblical comparisons between the human and the Divine potter: 'O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel' (Jer. xviii. 6). And the same idea is found in many other passages. When Jeremiah was watching the potter, the vessel was marred in his hand, and 'so he made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it.' I had to wait a long time for that; but it happened at last. From some defect in the clay, or because he had taken too little, the potter suddenly changed his mind, crushed his growing jar instantly into a shapeless mass of mud, and beginning anew, fashioned it a totally different vessel. This idea Paul has expounded and employed in the ninth chapter of the Romans, to soften some of those things which Peter says are hard to be understood: 'Shall the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one

vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?' '*
(Rom. ix. 21.)

Spinning
and
Weaving. SPINNING and WEAIVING are also occupations distinctively Oriental. "Wise-hearted" women are described in the Bible as spinning with their hands, in connexion with the rich coverings and hangings of the tabernacle (Exod. xxxv. 25, 26); and King Lemuel says of the prudent housewife, "She seeketh wool, and flax, and worketh willingly with her hands. . . . She layeth her hands to the spindle, and her hands hold the distaff" (Prov. xxxi. 13, 19).

"The Arab women," says Burckhardt, "use a very simple loom. It consists of two short sticks, which are stuck into the ground at a certain distance, according to the desired breadth of the piece to be worked. A third stick is placed across over them, about four yards from them; three sticks are placed in the same manner, and over the two horizontal cross-sticks, the woof. To keep the upper and under woof at a proper distance from each other, a flat stick is placed between them. A piece of wood serves as the weaver's shuttle, and a short gazelle's horn is used in beating back the thread of the shuttle. The loom is placed before the harem, or women's apartment, and worked by the mother and her daughters." The same traveller informs us that

* *The Land and the Book.*



MODERN ORIENTAL LOOM.

the Turkoman women, who are very laborious, work their tent-coverings of goats' hair, an interesting fact in connexion with Exodus xxxv. 26, where we find that "spun goats' hair" was the material for one of the coverings of the tabernacle.*

Dr Thomson saw a woman in Jerusalem, sitting at the door of her hut, spinning woollen yarn with a spindle, while another near her was twirling nimbly the ancient distaff. He was at once reminded of the good housewife described by King Lemuel, who "seeketh wool and flax, and worketh diligently with her hands" (Prov. xxxi. 13). This traveller also informs us that, in Sidon, many of the women actually support their families in this way, and, by selling the produce of their labour to the merchants, "bring their food from afar"; the very thing that is said of the virtuous woman by King Lemuel† (Prov. xxxi. 14).

The Art of Dyeing. CLOSELY connected with the arts of spinning and weaving is the art of DYEING, In ancient times the common people wore both their garments, the tunic and the mantle, of the natural colour of the wool, without any kind of dyeing; but the more wealthy had their garments dyed of various colours. The Syrians were renowned, at an early age, for the beauty of their dyes; and the

* Burckhardt's *Syria and the Holy Land*, and *Notes on the Bedouin Arabs*

† *The Land and the Book*.

Egyptians had made much progress in the art in the time of Pliny the elder. That writer informs us that they "stained cloths in a wonderful manner," and gives us a minute account of the process, from which it is clear that mordants were used. But the monuments show us that the knowledge of dyeing among the Egyptians dated back to a time long anterior to that of Pliny. "The remains found in the tombs of Egypt," says Mr. Osburn, "give ample proof of the perfection to which the dyeing, &c., of leather had attained among the ancient inhabitants of Egypt. Articles made of leather, dressed in various manners, dyed of different colours, embossed with hot irons, gilded and painted, are very frequently found there. . . . On a tomb at Thebes is a drawing of the dyeing of leather, and the processes for the manufacture of shields and drinking vessels. One man is engaged in immersing the raw hide in a vase which contains *red dye*. Another picture represents the twisting of strips of leather into ropes; another, the manufacture of sandals, &c. These pictures prove the existence of the manufacture of leather as a mechanical art [and of the process of dyeing] among the Egyptians at the time of the Exodus; and therefore, that the Israelites, who had been captives there, would be well able to perform this portion of the service of the tabernacle."*

Dyed articles, of one kind and another, are

* Osburn's *Ancient Egypt*.

frequently referred to in the Scriptures. We need scarcely remind the reader of the coat of many colours, which Jacob gave to his favourite son Joseph (Gen. xxxvii. 3); or of the blue and purple, and scarlet so often mentioned in connection with the tabernacle and temple (Exod. xxvi. 1; 2 Chron. iii. 14); or of the "prey of divers colours of needle-work . . . meet for the necks of them that take the spoil," in which the mother of Sisera had pictured her returning son (Judges v. 28-30). The reader will also remember the "royal apparel of blue and white," and the garment of "fine linen and purple," which Mordecai wore when he went out from the presence of Ahasuerus (Esther viii. 15). Purple and scarlet were both the colours of royalty; and in both of these was our blessed Lord arrayed (though in mockery) by the soldiers of Pilate, when He confessed Himself to be a king (Matt. xxvii. 11, 28, and John xviii. 36, 37; xix. 2); and, in striking contrast to this, Great Babylon, which "saith in her heart, I sit a queen," is seen in the "arrayed in purple and scarlet" in the book of Revelation (Rev. xvii. 4, and xviii. 7). Lydia of Thyatira, in whose house Paul lodged, was "a seller of purple" (Acts xvi. 14)

Preparation of Leather. THE TANNING AND DRESSING OF LEATHER was another of the mechanical arts known to the Jews in Old Testament times (2 Kings i. 8). They regarded it, however, as a very

mean occupation; and a tanner was looked upon with a degree of contempt which it is difficult to understand. The whole process of the manufacture of leather from the raw skin is represented, in a series of pictures, on the walls of an Egyptian tomb at Thebes, but we have already quoted Mr. Osburn's description of these pictures (p. 166), and there is no need to go over the ground again. Articles made of leather have also been found in the tombs, consisting, among other things, of sandals, shoes, girdles, badges of office, and drinking vessels. These articles are dressed in various manners, and many of them have been embossed with hot irons.*

The Bedouin Arabs of the present day tan their camel-skins by steeping them, for seven days, in a liquid paste made of barley meal and water, after which the skin is washed, and the hair removed without difficulty. The process of dyeing follows; and when that is over, they wash and grease the leather with camel's fat to render it smooth. Of skins so prepared, their larger water-skins are made.†

In the New Testament we have mention of "Simon a tanner," at whose house in Joppa Peter lodged (Acts ix. 43). We are told that his house was "by the sea side" (Acts x. 6); and doubtless the situation was chosen by Simon in order to be near a good supply of water. Tanneries still exist in

* Osburn's *Ancient Egypt*.

† Burckhardt's *Notes on the Bedouins*.



AN EASTERN BARBER. (See p. 171.)

Jaffa (*i.e.*, Joppa) at the present day ; or rather, they are situated *outside* the city, at some distance from the walls ; the reason being, that they are extremely offensive, as well as prejudicial to health.*

THOUGH there are many injunctions in
 Oriental Scripture as to shaving the beard and
 Barbers. head, the BARBER is only once mentioned
 by name (Ezek. v. 1). His razor is also noticed in the
 same verse, and in the figurative language of Isaiah
 (vii. 20), we read that the hair of Judah was to be
 shaved by the Assyrians "with a razor that is hired."
 "As the Jews allowed their beards to grow, and did
 not habitually shave their heads like the modern
 Orientals, there could have been little occasion
 among them for the use of the razor. Perhaps the
 allusion in Isaiah vii. 20, to 'a razor that is hired,'
 suggests that the suitable implements were so un-
 common as to be hired from the persons who possessed
 them, on those occasions of mourning when it was
 usual to shave the head ; or, as possibly, that there
 were professional barbers, little as their services were
 generally required—the employment of the hired
 barber being perhaps involved in the hiring of the
 razor."

It was customary in Egypt, says Rev. J. G. Kitchin, "to shave the head and cover it with an artificial wig. The face was also shaved, and to

* *The Land and the Book.*

neglect this custom, made a man a subject of reproach. The Egyptians also adopted the curious custom of attaching a false beard to the chin. Amongst the Hebrews, however, the beard was regarded with veneration, and any insult to the beard was looked upon as the greatest indignity that could be inflicted (2 Sam. x. 4, 5). The Hebrews were forbidden to 'mar the corners' of the beard, or to 'make baldness upon the head' (Lev. xxi. 5). Only in times of mourning the hair was shaved or plucked out (Isa. xv. 2; Jer. xlviii. 37). When Joseph was called to stand before Pharaoh, he observed the customs of the country, and 'shaved himself and changed his raiment' before he went into the king's presence (Gen. xli. 14)."

* The operation of shaving the head was probably performed much in the same manner as is now usual in the East. The facility with which this operation is performed by the Oriental barbers, and the soothing sensation which is experienced by the patient, have been frequently described by travellers. The operator rubs the head gently and comfortably with his hand, moistened with water. This he does a considerable time, and then applies the razor, shaving from the top of the head downward. The instrument is generally rude, and not remarkably sharp, as compared with our own; but, in consequence of the previous handling of the head, the hair is removed

* *The Bible Student in the British Museum.*

with such extreme ease that the process is scarcely felt, or felt only as an agreeable sensation.*

Mr. Gadsby tells us that it was always an amusing sight to him to see the barbers at work in Egypt. The shaving operation, as he witnessed it, was performed in the open streets, and he has sometimes seen as many as a dozen men being shaved at the same time. He further informs us (probably in jest) that when an Arab has his head shaved, the barber always leaves him a tuft of hair on the crown of it, for the convenience of any obliging infidel who may slash it off in time of war, and desire to carry it about as a trophy.†

Methods of
conducting

Trade.

BEFORE bringing our remarks to a close, it may be well to examine a little into the various METHODS OF CONDUCTING TRADE adopted by the ancients. We shall thus be able, to illustrate and elucidate several passages in the Sacred Scriptures.

The earliest method of conducting trade must have been by **BARTER**. This system of exchanging commodities is adopted, more or less, in almost all savage countries, and is the system on which missionaries and explorers have to act when opening up new territory. One of the most recent books on mission-work in Africa lies open before us, and we read: "Copper, salt, ivory, and slaves are the chief

* *Illustrated Commentary*, Vol. IV. † *Wanderings*, Vol. I.

articles of commerce. In exchange for these Msidi purchases flint-lock guns, powder, cloth, and beads, besides many other curious things that these native and Arab traders bring. It is, indeed, quite an entertainment when Msidi opens out his stores and exhibits his treasures, in doing which he seems to take a peculiar pleasure. His collection contains tins of meat unopened, musical boxes, concertinas, guns and pistols, all kinds of opera glasses, scientific instruments (generally out of order), trinkets of every imaginable description, watches and jewellery; also cast-off clothing, varying in quality and colour from the sombre blue of the London policeman's uniform to the gorgeous dress of some Portuguese governor.*

This method of exchange by barter, though not often noticed in Scripture, was adopted by Solomon in his dealings with the king of Tyre (2 Chron. ii.), and doubtless the "gold and silver, ivory, and apes, and peacocks" which his vessels brought from Tarshish (2 Chron. ix. 21) were obtained in exchange for other commodities. But the necessity of adopting some standard method of ascertaining the value of articles had been felt at a much earlier period, and hence a recognized system of weights and measures had been gradually adopted, and (though not till many centuries later) a system of coinage. The substitution of coin was not discovered, indeed, till a few centuries before the Christian Era.

* *Garaganzee*, by F. S. Arnot.

Weights
and
Scales.

IN most civilized, as well as semi-civilized countries, money was originally paid away by WEIGHT. The standard weight among the Jews was a shekel, which was represented in patriarchal days, and doubtless for long after, by a stone or stones of specific gravity. Hence we read in Lev. xix. 36 marg.: "Just balances, just stones, a just ephah, and a just hin, shall ye have." (see also Deut. xxv. 13 marg. and Prov. xx. 10 marg.) In recent times Gadsby noticed the use of stones as weights in Upper Egypt, and the Scotch missionaries saw them employed for this purpose at Saphet and other places.* "Stones," says Kitto, "are still used in Western Asia, although not exclusively; and as no two such weights are of similar appearance, and as all stones are not equally ponderous, even when of the same apparent size, the eye of the customer has no standard of estimate by which it might detect the dishonesty of a trader, who uses different weights for different occasions and customers." Hence the significance of the command in Deut. xxv. 13, "Thou shalt not have in thy bag divers weights [marg. stones] a great and a small."

That this command, or the spirit of it, has much need of enforcement upon Eastern shopkeepers in the present day, is a fact borne witness to by many travellers. Kitto testifies to purchasing articles at the bazaars, which have shown a deficiency of fully

* *Wanderings*, Vol. I., and *Narrative of a Mission of Enquiry*.

one-third, when weighed at home by true standards; though the sellers have never failed to affect great liberality, and to turn the scale deeply in the purchaser's favour. The laws of Mahommedan countries have been very severe on this crime, and the false prophet must have thought honest dealers a very scarce and exceptional class when he gave them a rank with martyrs in the future life! * (See Dan. v. 27.)

At the time Mr. Lane was in Egypt the punishment for using FALSE WEIGHTS was very severe; yet even the officers who were appointed to go round examining the weights, were often guilty of using them. There was one officer in Cairo whose servant was in the habit of carrying about with him a pair of scales, the beam of which was a hollow tube containing quicksilver. The shopkeepers who chose to bribe the officer, might be sure that when the servant called, their weights would be pronounced correct, the scales would be worked in their favour; but woe to the unhappy man who had neglected to furnish the bribe! Mutilation or the bastinado might be expected as a thing of course. †

Cheating Habits of Eastern Tradesmen.	WE may add that the cheating habits of Egyptian shopkeepers are not confined to the use of false weights—or, at least, <i>were</i> not when Mr. Gadsby visited the country. They seem to have been, at that time, beyond measure
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* *Illustrated Commentary*, Vol. I. † *Modern Egyptians*, Vol. I.

extortionate. "It was not until my last visit," says this entertaining traveller, "that I was able to make my own bargains, and I certainly saved both myself and my companions a considerable percentage on our purchases. If you want any article, the best way is to push it on one side, and seem indifferent about it, when the seller is almost sure to name a fair price, or somewhere near one. Their best goods are always kept in the background, and only brought out when they have failed in inducing you to purchase their inferior ones. . . . Some of the Arabs are not very particular what they trade in. One of their maxims is, 'Gain upon dirt, rather than lose upon musk,' and gain they will, by some means or other. They do not even *attempt* to make you believe they are honest. 'To thine eye, O merchant!' is one of their ejaculations; as much as to say, 'These are the goods, fairly before you'; or, in other words, Keep your eye open, or you may possibly pay too much." *

The Arab dealers also have a custom, when an article is being priced by a customer, of saying, "Take it for nothing; I shall be happy to make you a present of it." But by this they mean that they expect a *present*, in return, of much greater value. On one occasion Mr. Gadsby pretended to take a shopkeeper at his word, and when the benevolent Ishmaelite *presented* him with the article selected,

* *Wanderings*, Vol. I.

our traveller graciously accepted it, and after thanking the merchant very politely, walked hastily away. But he had not proceeded far before the clamour of the shopkeeper brought him back, when his fears were quickly dissipated by receiving the value for his *gift*. When Ephron the Hittite offered the field to Abraham as a burying-place, he said, "I give it thee"; but, doubtless, with as much thought of doing so as the Arab dealers, when they say, "Take it for nothing" (Gen. xxiii. 11-16).

Weighing
Money.

BUT we return to the shekel, and to the practice of weighing money. That the practice is very ancient, the student of Scripture must be well aware. In the account of the transaction between Ephron and Abraham, mentioned above, we read that the latter weighed to the Hittite landowner, as purchase money for the cave of Machpelah, "four hundred shekels of silver, current money with the merchant" (Gen. xxiii. 16); and there is evidence to show that the practice continued till the time of Jeremiah.

"In Burmah," says Rev. H. Malcolm, "silver and lead pass in fragments of all sizes, and the amount of every transaction is regularly weighed out, as was done by the ancients." The same thing was noted by Volney, during his residence in Syria, Egypt, and Turkey, in the last century. No piece of money, however defaced, was refused. The merchant drew

out his scales and weighed it, as in the days of the patriarch. In considerable payments an agent of exchange was sent for, who counted paras by thousands, rejected pieces of false money, and weighed all the sequins, either separately or together. The expression "current money with the merchant" is thought by Michaelis and others to suppose the existence of some such "agent of exchange" as is here spoken of.*

Having explained that the shekel was the standard weight of the Jews, we may now see how it stood in relation to their other weights. It "was divided into 2 *bekahs*, and the bekah into 10 *gerahs*. The talent equalled 3,000 shekels; and between the shekel and the talent came the 'pound' or maneh, which, according to one interpretation of Ezekiel xlv. 12, contained 60 shekels, though it has been otherwise understood, with more probability, to have contained 50; while according to 1 Kings x. 17, compared with 2 Chron. ix. 16, it contained no less than 100 shekels. The meanings of these names are worth observing: shekel means simply *weight*; bekah means *split*, i.e., a shekel divided in two; gerah a *grain*, either because it was a weight in the form of a grain or actually a grain; maneh *reckoned* or *appointed*, as a specific sum; and the Hebrew term translated 'talent,' viz., *kikkar*, a round mass of metal."†

* Malcolm's *Travels*; Volney's *Travels in Syria and Egypt*.

† *Scripture Manners and Customs*.

Beside the ordinary shekel mentioned in Scripture, we read of the "king's shekel," and the "shekel of the sanctuary," which, by many, are thought to be identical. Whether they really differed in weight from the ordinary shekel is not known; and opinion is pretty much divided on the question. We may add that the *royal* shekel equals in weight 10 dwts., and in value a little more than 2s. 3½d., so that it will not be difficult to compute the value of the Hebrew weights in our own system.

The Art of Coining. IT does not seem to be known who originated the art of COINING. We may trace the invention back as far as the ancient Greeks, who adopted a system of coinage in some respects not unlike our own. They had no copper coinage, however, and very little gold. Their chief coins were the obolus, the drachma, and the didrachma (worth respectively about one penny, sevenpence, and 1s. 3½d.) and they had also a half-obolus, and coins of two, three, four, and five oboles, together with two-drachm and four-drachm pieces. All these coins were of silver. Their mina (worth about £3 5s.) and talent (worth about £193) were only "moneys of account," and were not represented by coins. They were terms of convenience, employed in reckoning large amounts.

The mina is mentioned in the New Testament, and is the "pound" of the Authorized Version (Luke xix.

13, 16, 18, 20, 24, & 25); the drachma is also mentioned, and is the "piece of silver" of Luke xv. 8, 9, A. V. We have the didrachma in Matt. xvii. 24, when the English Bible simply reads "tribute money"; and the talent in Matt. xviii. 24; xxv. 15, &c., where our version is correct.

THE original coinage of Rome was brass. Roman Coins. Silver was not introduced for that purpose till B.C. 269, and gold not till sixty-two years later. In the New Testament we have mention of the following Roman coins:—the kodrantes (A. V. "farthing," Matt. v. 26; and Mark xii. 42), worth about three-fourths of a farthing; the assarion (A. V. "farthing," Matt. x. 29, and Luke xii. 6) equal to about three and one-tenth farthings of our money; and the stater (A. V. "piece of money," Matt. xvii. 27) worth about 2s. 7d. A Jewish coin called the lepton (A. V. "mite," Mark xii. 42) is also mentioned in the Gospels, and was the smallest Jewish coin, being equivalent in value to about three-eighths of our farthing.

The above particulars, which we have grouped together with considerable care, may serve to dissipate some erroneous impressions, particularly with regard to the supposed inadequate pay of the labourers in the parable of the householder, and of the "host" in the parable of the good Samaritan (Matt. xx. 2, and Luke x. 35). "As lately as the year 1351, the

price of labour was regulated in England by Parliament, and ‘hay-makers, corn-weeders, without meat, drink, or other courtesy,’ (in modern phrase, ‘finding themselves’) were to have a penny a day. In many places higher wages are given for hay-making than for any other kind of agricultural labour. The pay of a chaplain in England, in 1314, was three halfpence, or about twopence a day. At the same time, wheat was eightpence a bushel, and a fat sheep sixpence. A penny a day under such circumstances would not be inconsiderable wages. It has been estimated that four hundred and forty grains of silver would purchase as much in the fourth century before Christ, as four thousand four hundred grains would purchase in England in 1780.”* Hence, it is most important to distinguish in our minds between the real and the nominal value of money.

The *arguria* (Authorized Version, “pieces of silver” of Matthew xxvi. 15) were probably shekels of silver; and reckoning each at 3s., the thirty would amount to £4 10s.—the price for the meanest slave, (Ex. xxi. 32). At this price Judas valued his Master, and the Jews their Messiah! (Zech. xi. 12 and 13.)

WE will conclude our chapter, and the

Selling volume, with a reference to the WATER-
Water. CARRIER—a subject which has already
been before us when treating of Eastern wells.

* Eadie's *Biblical Cyclopædia*.

The sale of water is not, of course, a *handicraft* trade, but it is an occupation of considerable importance, and may fitly be treated of in the present chapter. "In Oriental towns, water is not conveyed to the several streets and houses by pipes or trenches; it must all be fetched from the river or the wells. In towns, this is seldom done by the householders themselves, or by their servants. There are men who make it a trade to supply every day, to regular customers, the quantity of water required."*

Lane informs us† that, "as the water of the wells in Cairo is slightly brackish, numerous *sakkas* (carriers or sellers of water) obtain their livelihood by supplying its inhabitants with water from the Nile. During the season of the inundation, or rather during the period of about four months after the opening of the canal which runs through the metropolis, the *sakkas* draw their water from this canal; at other times they bring it from the river. It is conveyed in skins by camels and asses, and sometimes, when the distance is short, and the skin small, by the *sakka* himself. The water-skins of the camel (which are called *rei*) are a pair of wide bags of ox-hide. The ass bears a goat's skin (called *kirbeh*); so also does the *sakka*, if he has no ass. The *rei* contain three or four *kirbehs*. The general cry of the *sakka* is, "Oh, may God compensate me!" Whenever this cry is heard, it is known

* *Illustrated Commentary*, Vol. I. † *Modern Egyptians*, Vol. II.

that a *sakka* is passing. For a goat's skin of water, brought from a distance of a mile and a half, or two miles, he obtains scarcely more than a penny."

Miss Whateley, when in Egypt, often heard the water-carriers of Cairo crying out, "The gift of God," "The gift of God"; and was irresistibly reminded of the Saviour's words to the woman of Samaria: "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water" (John iv. 10). In Palestine the water-carrier sings, "Water! Water! Oh, come and drink, ye thirsty ones!"—words that remind us of the divinely given invitation, so fraught with blessing to every thirsty soul that will but heed it:—"Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price" (Isa. lv. 1).

"I heard the voice of Jesus say,
 'Behold I freely give
 The living water—thirsty one,
 Stoop down, and drink, and live.'
 I came to Jesus, and I drank
 Of that life-giving stream;
 My thirst was quenched, my soul revived,
 And now I live in him."

THE END.



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