

(An excerpt from the)

TRAVELS
of
LADY HESTER STANHOPE;

FORMING THE COMPLETION
of
HER MEMOIRS.

NARRATED BY
HER PHYSICIAN

IN THREE VOLUMES.
VOL. I.

LONDON:
HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,
GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET
1846.

(Her physician was Charles Lewis Meryon, 1783-1877)

CHAPTER XIV

Departure from Acre – Hadj Ali – Night journey – Encampment El Guffer – Roman road – Dangerous pass – Distant view of Tyre – Ras-el-ayn – Aqueduct – Slave-dealer – Egyptian grooms – Women washing linen – River Kasmia – Blind travellers – Ancient sepulchral grottoes and other remains – Sarfent – Signor Damiani – The Khudder, used as a coffee-house – The hostess – Grave of Sayd el Abd – Village of Gazzeah – District of the Metoualis – Arrival at Sayda – Beautiful country.

On the 18th of July, the baggage being all loaded on camels, about three in the afternoon, the caravan, for such, from the number of people and animals, it now was, left Acre. To Hadj Ali, a janissary, who has already been mentioned in this narrative, was committed the conduct of the baggage. It has just now been seen how, in the revolt against El Gezzàr, he had fled with the rebels to Constantinople, under Selim Pasha ; after whose death, Ali returned to Syria, and offered his services to Nasif, at that time pasha of Damascus. He remained with him some years ; and when, in consequence of suspicions attached to his government by the Porte, Nasif was obliged to quit his country, and exile himself in Europe, Ali was one of three or four who accompanied him, and, with him, visited Naples, Genoa, Leghorn, and Marseilles. Nasif Pasha being permitted to return, Ali was restored to his native country, and went and served Suliman, pasha of Acre. But Ali had likewise made a campaign in the vizir's army in Egypt, and, on the reverses of the Turks in that country, had quietly remained at Cairo, where, by his activity and adaptation to Frank manners, he was employed by the French, at a pay (as he often said with exultation) of a dollar a day. He would sometimes likewise display his knowledge of the French language acquired when in their service ; and no one would do him the injustice to infer anything from the expressions *prison*, *garde*, and *sacre*, which seemed to form almost the extent of his acquirements.

It was at Acre that we found him. He was past fifty ; but active, intelligent, and a good Mussulman ; which means that he strictly observed the rites and ceremonies of his religion. He was very

Note: Neither French nor Latin has been proof read in this excerpt.

diminutive in stature. This was the man who afterwards, in 1816, filled with the Princess of Wales the same situation which we shall now find him occupying in Lady Hester's suite. Length of service, and more especially fidelity in the execution of his duties, had procured him advancement, and he now styled himself Khial el Khazny—a name implying treasury horse messenger. With him was associated Mohammed el Ladkány, who, it will be recollected, was assigned to her ladyship as a guard at Jaffa. He was a man of not less activity and intelligence than his companion, and of noble physiognomy.

We left the city gates, and, as our people were somewhat heterogeneous, some confusion ensued the moment we were on the high road. Few of the Christian servants had probably ever mounted a horse before, since Christians, unless in the service of great Turks or Franks, are forbidden to ride on horseback. We were therefore entertained with a display of horsemanship that would not have disgraced a gentleman on the Easter hunt. Mrs. Fry, her ladyship's maid, had been accoutred in man's clothes and, from her timidity in this new garb, and thus mounted, was often exposed to the danger of falling from her ass, on which she persisted in sitting in the decorous posture customary with women in England although in a country where women invariably ride astride, and where there are no side saddles, she might have imitated them with less singularity and without indecency. Order was at length obtained, and we proceeded along the plain to the north of Acre. We passed on our left the village of Zyb,¹ where is the tomb of Saad-ed-dyn. We then reached the foot of a promontory jutting into the sea, called Gebel Msherify. At its first rise is a tower or *πυργος*, named in Arabic (by a corruption of the word) *Búrge* ; one of many others which are seen at unequal distances all along the Syrian coast. The road here is steep and ragged, and very unfit for camels, which, however safely they travel on level ground, lose their footing where there are inequalities.

It was now dark. Sometimes I kept in front of the caravan with Hadj Ali ; and sometimes, when the delay of the camels induced me to ride back towards them, in my anxiety for the medicine-chest, which was more particularly an object of care to me, I rode by the side of the camel which bore it, balanced on the opposite side by a large clothes-trunk, and both surmounted by my camp bed. As we were ascending Gebel Msherify, what was my alarm when I saw,

¹Zyb is the ancient Ecdippa.—Poc.

or rather heard (for the darkness of the night prevented my seeing clearly) the camel fall over what appeared to be a precipice. The caravan stopped, and we alighted to see what mischief was done. Instead of falling over the precipice into the sea, the camel had rolled down about nine feet, and was found rid of his load, which in his struggle had quitted him. By the aid of the camel-drivers, who are sturdy fellows, and probably used to such mishaps, the luggage was replaced on the same beast, who had experienced no serious injury. But to the chest, filled with glass bottles, much damage was to be apprehended. However, this was no place to examine it, both from the darkness that enveloped us, and from the apprehension of robbers—a fear that possessed me more powerfully at this time than when I performed the same journey some years afterwards, when I knew how well the government of Suliman Pasha protected the traveller in his peregrinations.

When the caravan proceeded, a winding path seemed to carry us higher and higher, whilst the roaring of the sea, heard distinctly, indicated how near we were to the edge of the precipice. Underwood covered the soil. On a sudden, we descended rapidly by the side of a watercourse, which brought us to another burge on the seashore, and elevated but a few yards above it. Close to it was a cottage, or what we should in England designate as a lodge for cattle ; for it seemed no better, although it was inhabited by a man who levied a toll on passengers and loaded animals, without the assistance of a gate or barrier. This place is called the Guffer. It was here that Hadj Ali, who had been desired to divide the distance between Acre and Tyre into two equal parts, caused us to halt ; and, although the very stoney soil hereabouts left not a smooth spot for our encampment, yet, by beating the surface of the ground, a level was effected for Lady Hester's tent, and, in an adjoining field, nearer to the seashore, the other tents were pitched with some regularity.

The following morning was hot, and the low spot of ground on which we were encamped seemed to confine the heat so as to make it additionally oppressive. Behind us was a steep ascent covered with stunted oaks, and at the summit of it was the village of Nakura, of about forty or fifty houses, from which were procured milk, eggs, and fowls. We walked down to the ruined tower by the edge of the sea, and found it in the last stage of dilapidation ; it is, like the others, round, of common materials, and of ordinary construction. The pilgrims, who, with the exception of a few merchants, are the only Christians who travel along the coast, are contented with the

current story respecting these towers ; namely, that they were built by order of the Empress Helena, when, zealous in the search she was about to make at Jerusalem for the lost cross, she resolved to establish by beacons a speedy means of communication with Constantinople, to announce the important event; but they were probably built as watch-towers against maritime descents on the coast.

Soon after breakfast, all the tents were struck. Our next station was fixed near Tyre ; it not being considered necessary to enter that city, inasmuch as it afforded no accommodation better than our tents. Proceeding from El Guffer² (the toll-house), we rode by the seaside, along a stoney ridge elevated but a few feet above the sea, upon which were visible the remains of a Roman paved road ; this ridge continued, with now and then a few undulations, until we reached a promontory, which, similar to that passed over on the preceding evening, forms to the north the natural division of the plains of Acca and Tyre. We began to ascend it, and, at a small distance from its foot, passed a burge more ruinous than that of El Nakura. At the top, we were obliged to traverse a road said to be the work of Alexander the Great, the side of which next to the sea overhangs a tremendous precipice ; this road had no wall, either natural or artificial, to prevent the sudden start of a horse from precipitating himself and his rider to certain destruction.³ Hadj Ali did not fail to tell me a story, always probably repeated at this place, of a beautiful bride, who, on her way to the bridegroom's house, was, by her horse's taking fright, thrown from the top to the bottom, and dashed to pieces.

When we arrived at the summit of the promontory, the town of Tyre came into view ; its peculiar situation on a tongue of land, with the ruins of some towers, which, afar off, have still a picturesque appearance, has much to interest the traveller, exclusive of the sacred and pagan recollections which its name excites. In a climate almost always pure, a tree or a bush seen through the haze of noonday, along a coast in some places presenting nothing but an even strand, becomes an object of attention. Much more beautiful

²There is reason to believe that pay-gates and toll-bars were of frequent occurrence in Judea and Palestine. Capernaum, in the New Testament, is no other than a compound of Guffer and nâam.

³Since that time, I have traversed this same road five times, and on every occasion I have observed some persons so alarmed at the danger to which they were exposed as to choose to lead their horses over rather than to remain mounted.

was the sight of the town which now burst upon us ; and of the plain, which, bounded by hills at first retreating and again at a distance of several miles bending towards the seashore, showed on its varied surface the ripened corn, the maize, the water-melon fields, and other grains and fruits which the inhabitant of the western world never sees growing. On entering the plain, some inconsiderable ruins were observable; and, whatever they might have formerly been, exhibiting at present nothing more than dispersed stones, and very small fragments of columns, once parts of buildings, the foundations of which no longer existed. Four hours' march brought us to the skirt of a village, the direct road to which diverged somewhat to the right, through plantations of mulberry-trees, whilst we proceeded along the seashore. In a quarter of an hour, we came to a small rivulet, running over a gravelly bottom with a limpid stream. Here we were to halt for the night. The camels were unloaded, the tents pitched, and every disposition made for dinner, and for passing the night. The spot was truly romantic, and, when visited on subsequent occasions, although it had lost its novelty, it never lost its charms. The soil from Acre to Tyre we observed to be generally a rich black mould.

Ras-el-âyn (or the fountain head) is a village which occupies the ground where perhaps once stood a part of Tyre. The rivulet, on the banks of which we were now encamped, is the almost neglected stream of two or three rich springs, which were carried by noble aqueducts to the old city, and inland, in another direction, for agricultural purposes. These springs now served to turn three water-mills ; as they issued out of the ground, they were confined in spacious cisterns,⁴ until they had reached a considerable height, and were then poured off by different spouts, and afterwards carried by trenches to irrigate the surrounding gardens, or were lost in the sea through two or three rivulets like those near which we were. The village, consisting of about thirty or forty houses, is inhabited by Metoualis (or Shyites), a sect of Mahometans held as heretics by the Turks. It owes its fertility to the springs, and its beauty to the verdure which they nourish. A portion of the ancient aqueduct crossed a watercourse, that traversed the village, and assumed the appearance of a bridge. It is still used for the purpose of carrying

⁴I measured the largest of these basins or reservoirs on the top, and found its circumference to be eighty paces. It was much damaged by time and use, but seemed, when perfect, to have been of a heptagonal or hexagonal form. This reservoir alone supplied water to four pair of mill-stones, which were rented at the rate of 2500 piasters (£75) a year each pair.

water to the neighbouring orchards, is beautifully covered with *capillus Veneris* and other aquatic plants. Farther on, in another direction, stalactitic incrustations had in some places coated the whole pier of an arch, or blocked up an arch itself. There was a tree in the centre of the village, which I shall ever recollect, as having at different periods passed four nights of my life under it. I saw it now with the satisfaction that spreading trees give in hot climates, where their umbrageous covering is so delicious. It was an ilex, as large as an English elm, and is called sindean in Arabic.

In our walk through the village, coming into the fields from the south, we saw another party, that, like our own, was encamped. Curiosity induced us to advance close to them. At the foot of a spreading fig-tree, now in full foliage, a middle-aged, robust Turk was employed in boiling a saucepan over a fire made between some rough stones temporarily raised for the purpose. At a short distance, two pack-horses and an ass were grazing. A carpet was spread on the ground, on which was sitting a beautiful bronze-faced girl, about thirteen or fourteen, whom we guessed to be an Abyssinian. Beside her was a black girl, still younger, employed in washing rice to be prepared for dinner. The man showed no symptoms of displeasure at our approach, nor did the eldest girl attempt to conceal her face, which is generally the first action of Mahometan females, even of children, on the appearance of a stranger. The Turk invited us to join his party ; and, on our thanking him, asked us if we belonged to the tents by the waterside, and whether it was true that an English princess was travelling through the country. He then told us that he was a slave merchant, and had these two girls on sale ; that if either of them would suit the English lady he should be happy to dispose of her. It was thus that, to induce us to recommend the Abyssinian from a sight of her extraordinary beauty, he had left her uncovered. An ignorance of the usages of the country, and an abhorrence of such traffic, induced us at that time to look with feelings of the sincerest pity on those poor creatures ; but a more thorough knowledge of the institutions of the Turks has taught me to behold slavery among them as a means of advancement to situations, which otherwise Circassian women and negresses could never hope to obtain. It is the mother of a child thus stolen who is most to be pitied ; she loses her offspring for ever ; but the child will sometimes rise to extreme affluence, and seldom fails to meet with the same kind treatment as the children of the family in which she lives. We however quitted him, impressed with admiration of this young Abyssinian, whose

symmetry of form and regularity of features gave us the idea of as perfect beauty as can be found, without any admixture of red and white.

We returned to our encampment through a lane with hedges on either side, and reached the turfy bank upon which some of the tents were pitched ; whilst below the bank the tents for the servants and the Mamelukes, ranged by the side of the rivulet, with just space enough between them to tether the neighing horses, formed one of those groups of picturesque objects which we so often had occasion to admire in our course through this charming country.

On the morrow, we proceeded on our route in the same order as before ; Lady Hester, with her two grooms walking on either side of her horse's head. There cannot be a class of persons more active than these Egyptian grooms, and, on this account, every gentleman throughout Turkey who pretends to make any figure has one or more of them in his stables. They are accustomed to run or walk by the side of their masters ; and, as was the case with those who accompanied us, will do this for entire days without yielding to fatigue. Their dress is generally composed of a close waistcoat, embroidered at the bosom, and of a blue smockfrock, with very full sleeves and full body, which they tastily brace up by a silk cord that crosses behind, and passes round the shoulders, giving a form to the drapery which may be observed in the folds of the *peplum* on ancient statues. A red turban, a pair of linen drawers, and red shoes, complete the suit ; and, thus lightly equipped, they show a degree of activity which makes them invaluable. Their skill as grooms in the stable is equally great.

Mr. B. did not pass by a place so celebrated as Tyre without entering it. Early in the morning, he had taken his janissary, and proceeded thither ; and, after examining the few antiquities which are yet left in it, he rejoined us on the road soon after our departure.

As we were riding along the high road, we were much surprised to observe, about a hundred and fifty yards from it, in a place where there was a running stream, several naked women, who were washing and spreading linen on the ground and hanging it on trees to dry. They paid little attention to us, excepting that they turned their backs on us. There was a low stone wall between them and the road. We afterwards found that it was customary, almost throughout Syria, for the female peasantry to resort to some spring close to their village, carrying with them boilers and earthenware pans, and there, stripping themselves naked, to wash even to the shifts from

their backs, after which they comb their hair and wash themselves, or frolic away their time until their linen is dry. The hill that overhung the rivulet where they were washing was a part of the ruins of old Tyre, or the very mound which Nebuchadnezzar raised in order to take the city.

Our road this day was more diversified than on the preceding. We traversed the rich plain of Tyre, which is remarkable for its fertility. About two hours' march brought us to the point at which the hills again advance to the seaside. Through them, by a narrow valley, the river Kasmia⁵ pours its clear waters into the sea. It was, at this season of the year, fordable, not being deeper than up to the stirrups. A bridge of one arch, of modern date, but not devoid of beauty, leads over it, and its verdant banks are hedged in by oleander trees, a shrub which, whether in or out of flower, is highly beautiful. Close to the bridge, on the south side, and on the first rise of the hills, stand the venerable ruins of a khan or caravansery, now incapable of affording shelter to the traveller. In earlier times, it probably had been a castle for the defence of the passage of the river.

At about twenty minutes' march from the bridge, we met with five blind men, led by a sixth, who, with their staves and wallets, were journeying towards Acre. Each held by the skirt of the one who preceded him. They had the appearance of dervises, or calenders, and their adventures would probably have furnished as much amusement as their one-eyed predecessors in the Arabian Nights' Entertainments. They appeared cheerful.

We next passed the dry bed of a river, called Abu-el-Aswad, over which is the ruin of an ancient bridge of one arch, and leading from it are seen the remains of an ancient road. In times of great security (as when El Gezzar Pasha was alive), a guard was stationed at this bridge, in an old structure of masonry now going to decay. Abundance of tansy grows hereabouts. Patches of the ancient Roman road occasionally reappear.

Abreast of this road, upon the hills, is a sanctuary called the tomb of the Nebby (prophet) Sury ; and on the left are some upright stones by the seaside, fragments of a ruined building ; but which the mule-driver told me were so many men petrified for having blasphemed the prophet. The regularity in which the stones stand no doubt gave rise to the popular tradition.

⁵The Kasmia would seem to be the ancient Leontes, as marked on d'Anville's map of Palestine.

In the rocks which overhung the coast hereabouts we observed excavations with small entrances, which were ancient sepulchral grottoes. There were also appearances of quarries ; and on the seashore were old foundations of edifices. Just before reaching this spot we passed a small creek, where were indistinct ruins and cisterns among some fig-trees. It is therefore probable that a town or city⁶ once stood here, the antiquity of which may be inferred from the grottoes. A little farther on we came to a row of pedestals of pillars, and some indistinct foundations, and in three minutes more to a well-spring neatly cased with steps down to the water. It is called Ayn Bab el Feteh. In a quarter of an hour after quitting the spring there is a rocky promontory called Kysarrâa, which scarcely leaves a passage round it ; boundary of ancient Phœnicia. A small stream runs closeby. At the distance of two hours and a quarter, reckoning from the bridge of the Kasmia, we halted for the night at a place called the Khudder (or green), where is a small sanctuary dedicated to a santon, or some Mahometan of renowned sanctity. It stands close to the waterside, directly west from the burgh of Sarfent, which is built on the foot of the neighbouring mountains, one mile off.

This burgh has a very picturesque appearance when viewed at a distance. It is the general but loose assertion of travellers that its name is a corruption of Sarpentum, a Greek city, which once stood on the seashore, and the ruins of which are still visible, scattered about on the north of the Khudder. But it is known to every one from holy writ that there was a town hereabouts called Sarpent. The Arabic name, therefore, is prior to the Greek one, with the slight alteration necessary for affiliating it to the Greek language. It was adopted on the founding of a new city, in the same way as Acre is evidently a corruption of Acca, which name is to be found in the Bible. Although the perpetual plunder, for centuries, of the materials which once composed the edifices of the town, has almost cleared the spot of every moveable stone above ground, still old Sarpentum continues to be the quarry whence stones are supplied for Sayda, and excavations for foundations have now succeeded the demolition of the superstructures.

We marked out a green plot of ground, close by the place, for our encampment, and, overpowered by the heat, I removed a little way off to bathe. I had not been in the water long when I observed a

⁶Upon the hills above these grottoes is the village of Adlûn, which Poccoke calls Adnou.

horse-man in scarlet, with a cocked hat, arrive at the Khudder, and, dismounting, fix his attention on me. I hastened to dress myself, and joined him. He spoke to me in Italian, and declared himself to be Signor Damiani,⁷ formerly dragoman to Sir W. Sydney Smith, and now established at Sayda as a self-created English agent. The object of his journey was to invite Lady Hester to take up her abode at his house during her stay there. With considerable energy he likewise vilified the character of the French consul of that place, stating his unjustifiable severities towards himself, and his dislike to the English name. New to the world, and to the sort of character I had to deal with in this man, I thought that he was an aggrieved and deserving person, and as such introduced him to her ladyship, who, however, dismissed him with a refusal.

The Khudder⁸ was kept by a man, whose wife was a sprightly middle-aged woman. The building upon the consecrated spot was a square small chamber, surmounted by a cupola, and around it were three small rooms little better than sheds, for the accommodation of travellers and their horses. For, as the Khudder lies in the high-road from Sayda to Tyre, the passage of travellers is frequent and the resort to the house considerable, owing to its equidistant situation from the one and the other place ; by which persons departing late from either, and under fear of being benighted or shut out from the city, where the invariable rule is to close the gates soon after sunset, can enter it early enough for business on the following morning. The Khudder, in fact, was no more than a coffee-hut, similar to many which exist throughout the country ; and the entertainment to be found will serve as a sample of what the others produce. Provender for horses, mules, and asses, consisting of barley and chopped straw, is the chief article of sale ; for the traveller himself are kept dried figs, bad bread, dibs (a kind of treacle,) coffee of the most common quality, tombac for the narkeely, and perhaps a few raisins. Leben or sour milk is generally to be procured from the neighbouring village. Our hostess had much the air of having departed somewhat from the strict rules of female reserve prescribed by the Mahometan faith ; although her husband and she were Metoualys, whose notions regarding the privacy of the female sex are still more rigid than those of any other Mahometan sect. Her gallantries did not seem to be unknown to the camel-drivers, whose occupations often led

⁷Cousin to Damiani of Jaffa.

⁸Khudder is an appellative of St. George, but why he is considered a holy man by the Mahomedans I am ignorant.

them along that road ; and her coquettish air, and the studied affectation of hiding her face in her veil in a way that constantly showed it, were indubitable signs of a wanton. In speaking of her thus, the reader will observe how much similar situations tend to form similar characters in all countries. This woman subsequently ran away with a muleteer, and her husband married a young girl of 18 or 20 ; but, finding her, although more comely, less capable of serving him in the way of getting money, he recalled the first wife, and kept them both. During five years that we were in the habit of seeing her as we passed that road, we had often occasion to admire her activity and her complaisant attentions to her guests ; whilst it was curious to see the divided empire which the one held by the precarious tenure of her personal charms, but which the other built on the more lasting foundation of her utility.

It should be observed that the portion of Mount Lebanon, that runs parallel with the coast, from Gebel el Meshery to Sayda, is inhabited entirely by Metoualys. Of this race of people we shall have to speak more at large hereafter. We have already seen the remarkable neglect of decency shown by them in the display of the naked persons of the women at Ras-el-ayn.

The following day, soon after sunrise, the march was resumed. From the Khudder, Sayda bore E.N.E. Sarfend was on the right, and the ruins of Sarpentum were scattered around us. In twenty minutes we passed a spring called Ayn-el-Kantara,⁹ overhung by a gemaizy or sycamore tree. There were some naked women bathing in the sea, at a small distance from the road. In twenty minutes we came to Burge el Akbeia (the tower of Akbeia) a ruined watch-tower close to the water's edge. There is an appearance of a small port which, even now, occasionally serves as a nook for fishing-boats. Shallow tanks likewise have been here and there for the evaporation of sea-water to obtain salt. Portions of foundations on two sides of the gully, which here carries off rains running in winter from the neighbouring mountains, but was now dry, showed that it once had a bridge. In a few minutes more we crossed a small stream, scarcely up to the horse's fetlocks, called, however, a river, the

⁹This spring is named by Pococke Saliat Elourby. Saka is a watercourse, and Elourby is mistaken by him for El Kharby, a ruin. His muleteers, ignorant of the real name, probably answered him, when he asked what do you call this? This? why, this is the watercourse of the ruin, and so it was entered in his note-book. We shall have occasion to remark several errors of this sort, regarding names of more consequence than of a spring, and the more dangerous in such a man, inasmuch as he has always been considered a good Arabic scholar.

name of which was not noted down. Close beyond it there is a most plentiful and clear spring, issuing from the crevices of a large angular cistern in masonry, of antique date, and now crumbling away. It is called Berkyt-et-tel,¹⁰ or the reservoir of the hill, there being a hill or mound facing the reservoir, which bears the name of Tel Yea. At the distance of a quarter of an hour from the reservoir are some portions of columns lying on the ground, and by them a river called El Zahràny,¹¹ over which is a modern stone bridge of tolerable neatness. Beyond the Zahrany we observed, in the middle of the road, a loose conical heap of bowlders. To account for their lying so piled up, our muleteers related a long story, of a certain black, named Sayd el Abd, and his wife Luky, one or both of whom were murdered on the highway ; and, to perpetuate the memory of their untimely end, every passer-by is expected to throw a stone on the grave. The gradual accumulation has now formed a very considerable heap.¹² In fourteen minutes more Ave observed some rubbish and stone masonry as of an old caravansery, and six minutes beyond it a dry water-course. Fourteen minutes farther, the road being still by the sea-side, we passed another dry bed of a river, on the banks of which are some wells, that serve for shepherds to water their flocks.

We were now abreast of a considerable Metoualy village, half a mile off, at the foot of the neighbouring hills, and distant from Sayda two leagues or thereabouts. Guzzeah is partly in ruins, otherwise it would be a pretty place, commanding a fine view of the plain and of the sea. It seems to have been populous, and to have had mosques. Guzzeah may be said to be the Northern boundary of the Metoualys ; for their district is comprehended in two strait lines drawn from W. to E. through Gezyn to the N. and through Gebel el Msherify and Bussa to the South, including a length of about twelve leagues. Their principal burghs are Gebaa and Tibenyn, at which latter resided at this time the motsellem deputed by the Pasha of

¹⁰This reservoir Pococke calls Elborok, meaning to say El Burky, the reservoir, which he should designate as such, otherwise the name obtains a place in a map as that of a village or town.

¹¹This river Pococke calls the Torrent Eruron.

¹²This custom exists in the north of Scotland. In Galloway, for example, in 1798, on the estate of Kironchtree was found, under a cairn of stones which was removed to build a dyke, a sepulchre, within which was an urn. The cairn had been heaped up precisely in the same way as that of Sayd el Abd.

Acre, who was called Ibrahim Aga el Kûrdy, and his soldiers were, for the most part, Kurds also.¹³

Before reaching Sayda, we crossed the beds of three other rivers, or more properly, watercourses, the first Nalir Kutÿshy; the second Nahr Essÿn, or Nahr Derb es syn ; and the last, immediately before entering the town, and over which there is a bridge, Nahr Burgût. Derb es syn lies on the right within a nook of the mountain, through which the river runs ; its inhabitants are Christians. Another Christian village Mëah-wy-mëah, overlooks the other valley, out of which runs the Burgût river. Winding round the foot of the castle, through orchards now in full leaf, we turned by a short angle to the left, traversed a cemetery, and, continuing for four or five hundred yards close to the outside of the city wall, which appeared no stronger than gaol-walls in England, entered the city gate by the water side. As our file of camels and horses was of more than ordinary length, we attracted some notice as we traversed the narrow streets, and the arrival of the English Princess was already noised through the city.

Thus far the face of the country through which we had passed had seemed delightful. Palestine presents all the different varieties of plain and mountain, hill and valley, river and lake ; and has likewise an exceedingly fine climate. The luxuriance of vegetation is not to be described. Fruits of all sorts, from the banana down to the blackberry, are abundant. The banks of the rivers are clothed naturally with oleander, myrtle, arbutus, and other flowering shrubs.

Mount Lebanon, through the whole of the distance from Acre to Sayda, seldom recedes from the sea more than a mile, and generally not so much, excepting immediately behind Acre, where there is a plain bounded by Mount Carmel, nine miles south of the city, and on the north by the promontory of Msherify.¹⁴ The inhabitants there are Mussulmans, Christians, and Druzes. The vestiges of ancient cities, bridges, and roads, denote the vast population that once dwelt on the coast.

¹³The Kûrds are a ferocious people inhabiting a part of Mesopotamia. They pass into Syria as mercenaries, and are often selected as executioners.

¹⁴Beled Suffad, of which Suffad is the capital, extends from Calâat Sâas to Geser Benât Yacûb and to Khan el Minny between Tabariah and Suffad. Calâat Sâsa lies in a strait line from Suffad to Acre.

Typset by Børre Ludvigsen from text
retrieved by OCR from a digitized version of the original book.
April 18, 2017 / June 30, 2017