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No. I.

ART. I.—*Melancthon's Letters.**

WHOEVER feels an interest in the Reformation, feels an interest in Melancthon; and yet, to judge others by ourselves, he is comparatively little known. The noble edition of Luther's correspondence, published by De Wette, which is, in fact, the best biography of Luther, made us wish for something of the same kind, to bring us personally acquainted with *Magister Philippus*. We supposed, however, that the epistolary remains of Melancthon would probably not prove so illustrative of his history and character, as those of his more ardent and open-hearted colleague. We even doubted whether there existed a sufficient mass of his letters, to form a collection of tolerable size. We are, therefore, both surprised and pleased to see three goodly quartos, filled with the miscellaneous papers, chiefly letters, of Melancthon. While we gratify our own curiosity respecting them, we propose to take our readers with us, for the purpose of affording them a glimpse at Master Philip, through the faithful glass of his own private correspondence. Before doing this,

* *Corpus Reformatorum* ed. C. G. Bretschneider. (Philippi Melanthonis Opera quae supersunt omnia.) Vol. I.—III.—(Epistolae, Praefationes, Consilia, Judicia, Schedae Academicae.) 4to.

In suggesting to his late charge the principles upon which they should select a pastor, he says: "Do not choose a man who always preaches upon insulated texts. I care not how powerful or eloquent he may be in handling them. The effect of his power and eloquence will be, to banish a taste for the word of God, and to substitute the preacher in its place. You have been accustomed to hear that word preached to you in its connexion. Never permit that practice to drop. Foreign churches call it *lecturing*; and when done with discretion, I can assure you that, while it is of all exercises the most difficult for the preacher, it is, in the same proportion, the most profitable for you. It has this peculiar advantage, that in going through a book of scripture, it spreads out before you all sorts of character, and all forms of opinion; and gives the preacher an opportunity of striking every kind of evil and of error, without subjecting himself to the invidious suspicion of aiming his discourses at individuals."*

With these remarks we may safely leave the subject, commending it to the careful and impartial investigations of all who are interested in the propagation of divine truth, and particularly to ministers of the gospel, who, of all men living, should be most solicitous to direct their powers in such channels as to produce the highest effect.

ART. IV.—*Incidents of Travel in Egypt, Arabia Petræa, and the Holy Land.* By an American, with a map and engravings. In two volumes. Second edition: Harper & Brothers, N. Y. 1837.

It has become very customary for young Americans to take the tour of Europe; but few of them hitherto, have ventured far to the East, except our enterprising merchants. The writer of these volumes appears to possess, in a high degree, the qualifications of a successful traveller. His curiosity is unbounded. His intrepidity is such as to be intimidated by no dangers, and turned aside from his purpose by no common obstacles. He seems also to possess the power of conciliating those with whom it is important for the traveller to be on good terms. He appears to have travelled extensively

* Mason's Works, vol. i. p. 366.

in Europe and America, before he commenced the tour, the incidents of which are here described. And he does not detain his reader with any preliminary dissertations, or tedious details respecting his motives for undertaking this tour, and preparations before setting out; but hurries him at once, and somewhat abruptly, into the narrative. The style of the author is not elaborate, not at all ambitious; but he expresses himself as simply, and in as few words as possible. But somehow his descriptions of the scenes visited have the effect of presenting them to our imagination in a very vivid manner. The reader must not expect to find a scientific tour in these volumes. The author disclaims every thing of the kind. His object evidently was not to enrich botany or mineralogy with new species: and although he seems to have a taste for architecture, and took every opportunity of visiting the splendid antiquities of Egypt and Arabia; yet he examines nothing with the eye of an artist. He simply gives the impression made on his own mind by the objects before him. And we confess that a traveller of this description suits us. He gives us very exactly the impression which we should receive were we on the spot. In one respect, however, we cannot express an entire satisfaction with our American tourist. He is too fond of the ludicrous: and often employs pages to describe a scene of this kind, which might have been despatched in one or two sentences. No doubt this very thing will be a strong recommendation for the book to many readers; but we are soon sated with this frothy nutriment.

When we began to read these volumes we strongly suspected, from the manifest levity of the author, that we should have, after a while, a spice of irreligion; but in this we have been happily disappointed. He not only shows, every where, his unwavering conviction of the truth of the Christian religion, but is evidently familiar with the holy scriptures, and has done more to illustrate the sacred volume, than any traveller who has recently visited the east. It is solely on this account that we have resolved to give an extended notice of these volumes, in our periodical, which is devoted almost entirely to biblical subjects. Our attention, therefore, will be principally directed to those things in these volumes which cast light on the sacred history, or serve to elucidate the prophecies of scripture.

There is nothing in our author's description of the city of Alexandria, which need detain us a moment. Indeed, he was hurried away from the place, before he had time to enter

upon a minute examination of the curiosities and antiquities of the place. When he arrived at the Nile, he felt that he stood upon ancient and sacred ground.

“At about eight o'clock next morning we were standing on the banks of the Nile, the eternal river, the river of Egypt, recalling the days of Pharaoh and Moses; from the earliest period of recorded time watering and fertilizing a narrow strip of land in the middle of a sandy desert, rolling its solitary way more than a thousand miles without receiving a single tributary stream; the river which the Egyptians worshipped and the Arabs loved, and which, as the Mussulmans say, if Mohammed had tasted, ‘he would have prayed heaven for terrestrial immortality, that he might continue to enjoy it forever.’”

Rich as is the country of Egypt, especially on the banks of the Nile, nothing can be conceived more wretched than the condition of the inhabitants. Christianity, which has proved a blessing, and the means of civilization to every country where it has been received, has long been nearly banished from Egypt, and Mohammedanism, which has blighted the fairest portions of the globe, has full sway here. At Old Cairo our tourist saw a few miserable Copts, the descendants of the ancient inhabitants of Egypt, who have the charge of a church and grotto, where, as tradition reports, Mary and the infant Saviour found a refuge, when they fled from Judea. “The grotto, which is guarded with pious care by the Coptic priest, is a small excavation, the natural surface covered with smooth tiles: it is hardly large enough to allow one person to crawl in and sit upright. It is very doubtful whether this place was ever the refuge of the virgin; but the craft or simplicity of the priests sustains the tradition; and a half dozen Coptic women with their faces covered and their long blue dresses, followed me down into the vault, and kneeled before the door of the grotto, with a devotion which showed at least that they believed the tale.”

The predictions of Jehovah respecting the desolations of Egypt have been signally accomplished as it relates to the character of the inhabitants, and the nature of their government. It was foretold by Ezekiel, that it “should be a base kingdom; the basest of kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations; for I will diminish them that they shall no more rule over the nations.” And again, “I will sell the land of Egypt into the hand of the wicked, and I will make the land waste, and all that is therein by the hand of strangers, and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt.” But by the concurrent report of all travellers, it appears, that the threatened desolation respected the condition of the very

land, as well as the condition of the inhabitants. The sand of the desert has been making inroads on the fertile valley of the Nile, every year for ages, until now it has entirely covered the sites of some of the most famous cities, and has so encroached on the suburbs of Cairo, "the mother of the world," that according to the testimony of this author, "The sands of the desert approach it on every side; and every gate, except that of Boulac, opens to a sandy waste. Passing out by victory gate, the contrast between light and darkness is not greater than between the crowded streets and the stillness of the desert, separated from them only by a wall."

One cannot but be filled with melancholy reflections on the vanity of all human greatness, when he contemplates the present desolation of cities, once the wonder of the world. Our traveller rode four miles from Cairo, to the site of the ancient Heliopolis, on the borders of the rich land of Goshen. "The geographer Strabo visited these ruins thirty years before Christ, and describes them almost exactly as we see them now. A great temple of the sun once stood here. Herodotus and Plato studied philosophy in the schools of Heliopolis; a barbarous Persian overturned her temples; a fanatic Arabian burnt her books; and a single obelisk standing sixty-seven feet high, in a field plowed and cultivated to its very base, stands, a melancholy monument of former greatness, and eternal ruin."

The only works of man which have been able to stand against the ravages of all-devouring time, are the pyramids, the origin of which has hitherto baffled all inquiries. But even on these the desolating sands of the desert are making encroachments on these imperishable structures. The largest pyramid is described by our author as about eight hundred feet square, and covering eleven acres of ground; and according to the last measurement four hundred and sixty-one feet high; and is supposed to contain six millions of cubic feet of stone. "The four angles stand exactly in the four points of the compass. The entrance is on the north side. The sands of the desert have encroached upon it, and with the fallen stones and rubbish have buried it to the sixteenth step."

The celebrated sphinx, probably as old, and hardly inferior to the pyramids in interest, is so covered with sand, that it is difficult to realize the bulk of this gigantic monument.

The preparations of our traveller for ascending the Nile will be amusing to our readers, and, therefore, we give an extract.

“On the first of January I commenced my journey up the Nile. My boat was small, for greater convenienc in rowing and towing. She was, however, about forty feet long, with two fine latteen sails, and manned by eight men, a rais or captain, and a governor or pilot. This was to be my home from Cairo to the cataracts, or as long as I remained on the river. There was not a place where a traveller could sleep, and I could not expect to eat a meal or pass a night except on board; consequently, I was obliged to provide myself at Cairo with all things necessary for the whole voyage. My outfit was not very extravagant. It consisted, as near as I can recollect, of two tin cups, two pairs of knives and forks, four plates, coffee, tea, sugar, rice, macaroni, and a few dozen of claret. My bed-room furniture consisted of a mattress and coverlet, which in the day-time were tucked up so as to make a divan. Over the head of my bed were my gun and pistols, and at the foot was a little swinging shelf, containing my LIBRARY—which consisted of the Modern Traveller in Egypt, Volney’s Travels, and an Italian Grammar and Dictionary. My only companion was my servant; and as he is about to be somewhat intimate with me, I take the liberty of introducing him to the reader. Paolo Nuozzo, or, more familiarly, Paul, was a Maltese. I had met him at Constantinople travelling with two of my countrymen; and though they did not seem to like him much, I was very well pleased with him, and thought myself quite fortunate, on my arrival at Malta, to find him disengaged. He was a man about thirty five years old; stout, square built, intelligent; a passionate admirer of ruins, particularly the ruins of the Nile; honest and faithful as the sun, and one of the greatest cowards that luminary ever shone upon. He called himself my dragoman, and, I remember, wrote himself such in the convent at Mount Sinai and the temple at Petra, though he promised to make himself generally useful, and was my only servant during my whole tour. He spoke French, Italian, Maltese, Greek, Turkish, and Arabic, but could not read any one of these languages. He had lived several years in Cairo, and had travelled on the Nile before, and understood all the little arrangements necessary for the voyage.”

We pass over the incidents of travel which occurred in sailing up the Nile, until our tourist came to Ghizeh, from which place he crossed over the river to Dendera.

“The temple of Dendera,” says our author, “is one of the finest specimens of the arts in Egypt, and the best preserved of any on the Nile. It stands about a mile from the river, on the edge of the desert, and, coming up, may be seen at a great distance.”—“I shall not attempt any description of this beautiful temple; its great dimensions, its magnificent propylon or gateway, portico, and columns; the sculptured figures on the walls; the spirit of the devices and their admirable execution; the winged globe and the sacred vulture, the hawk, and the Ibis, Isis, Osiris, and Horus, gods, goddesses, priests, and women; harps, altars, and people clapping their hands, and the whole interior covered with hieroglyphics and paintings, in some places, after a lapse of more than two thousand years, in colours fresh as if but the work of yesterday.”

“It was the first temple I had seen in Egypt; and although I ought not perhaps to say so, I was disappointed. I found it beautiful, far more beautiful than

I expected; but, look at it as I would, wander around it as I would, the ruins of the Acropolis at Athens rose before me; the severe and stately form of the Parthenon, the beautiful fragment of the temple of Minerva, and the rich Corinthian columns of the temple of Jupiter, came upon me with a clearness and vividness I could not have conceived. The temple is more than half buried in the sand. For many years it has formed the nucleus of a village. The Arabs have built their huts within and around it, range upon range, until they reached and almost covered the tops of the temple. Last year, for what cause I know not, they left their huts in a body, and the village, which for many years had existed there, is now entirely deserted. The ruined huts still remain around the columns and against the broken walls. On the very top is a chamber, beautifully sculptured, and formed for other uses, now blackened with smoke, and the polished floors strewn with fragments of pottery and culinary vessels.

“Nor is this the worst affliction of the traveller at Dendera. He sees there other ruins, more lamentable than the encroachments of the desert and the burial in the sand, worse than the building and ruin of successive Arab villages; he sees wanton destruction by the barbarous hand of man. The beautiful columns, upon which the skilful and industrious Egyptian artist had laboured with his chisel for months, and perhaps for years, which were then looked upon with religious reverence, and ever since with admiration, have been dashed into a thousand pieces, to build bridges and forts for the great modern reformer.”

Near the cataracts of the Nile is the beautiful island of Philoe, on which are the ruins of a very splendid temple, of which the author gives the following brief description.

“The temple of Philoe is a magnificent ruin, four hundred and thirty-five feet in length, and one hundred and five in width. It stands at the south-west corner of the island, close upon the bank of the river, and the approach to it is by a grand colonade, extending two hundred and forty feet along the edge of the river to the grand propylon. The propylon is nearly a hundred feet long, and rises on each side the gateway in two lofty towers, in the form of a truncated pyramid. The front is decorated with sculpture and hieroglyphics; on each side a figure of Isis, twenty feet high, with the moon over her head, and near the front formerly stood two obelisks and two sphinxes, the pedestals and ruins of which still remain. The body of the temple contains eleven chambers, covered with sculpture and hieroglyphics, the figures teined in the most lively colours, and the ceiling painted azure and studded with stars.”

From the cataracts our tourist began to descend the river, having proceeded as far to the south as was expedient. The only place described, worthy of notice, before coming to Thebes, was Edfou, which lies a mile from the bank of the river. “The town, as usual, contained mud houses, many of them in ruins, a mosque, a bath, bazars, the usual apology for a palace, and more than the usual quantity of ferocious dogs; and at one corner of this miserable place stands one of the magnificent temples of the Nile. The propylon, its lofty proportions enlarged by the light of the moon, was the most grand and imposing portal I saw in Egypt. From a base of nearly one hundred feet in length, and thirty in breadth, it rises on each side of the gate, in the form of a truncated pyramid, to the height of a hundred feet, gradually narrow-

ing, till at the top it measures seventy-five feet in length, and eighteen in breadth. Judge then what was the temple to which this formed merely the entrance; and this was far from being one of the large temples of Egypt. It measured, however, four hundred and forty feet in length, and two hundred and twenty in breadth, about equal to the whole space occupied by St. Paul's church-yard. Its dromos, pro-naos, columns, and capitals, all correspond, and enclosing it is a high wall still in a state of perfect preservation."

Our traveller, bent on seeing every thing worthy of observation, formed the purpose of penetrating the desert, until he reached the *great Oasis*. Having provided himself with a caravan of six camels and their drivers; and having engaged a guide, who was to meet them at a Christian convent situated in the entrance of the desert. To this place he came, and to his great chagrin and disappointment was refused admittance; and began to pour forth his reproaches against the only men who bore the Christian name in that region. But in the night, the priests, who had been absent at a village in the neighbourhood, returned and received him kindly, and treated him courteously. Upon inquiry of the presiding priest, he found that the number of Christians in that region was small, and rather decreasing; that it was a thing unknown for a Mohammedan to become a Christian; but that there were instances of Christians turning to be Mohammedans. The priest, however, though apparently devout, appeared to be a very iguorant man.

Our traveller, by lying in a damp room, where he was exposed to a current of air, felt himself, in the morning, much disordered, and, experiencing the return of an old complaint, he found it necessary to relinquish his visit to the oasis of Siwah, and to return to Thebes.

On the last day of his descent of the Nile, our traveller visited the ruins of, perhaps, the greatest city, which ever flourished in Egypt, so renowned for its great cities. So complete is the desolation that antiquarians have disputed whether there is really a single monument to show where the great Memphis stood; but the weight of authority is in favour of the site occupied by the little Arab village of Metrahenny.

"This village stands about four miles from the river; and the traveller might pass through it and around it, without ever dreaming that it had once been the site of a mighty city. The only passage in the bible, in which this city is mentioned by the name of Memphis, is Hosea ix. 6. "Egypt

shall gather them up. MEMPHIS shall bury them." The author inferred from this expression, that there must be here "some allusion to the manner in which the dead were buried at Memphis, or to a cemetery or tombs different from those of other cities. It seems almost impossible to believe, that a city having for its burying place, the immense tombs and pyramids which even yet, for many miles, skirt the borders of the desert, can ever have stood upon the site of this miserable village; but the evidence is irresistible."

He represents this plain, however, as being one of the richest on the Nile, "and herds of cattle are still seen grazing upon it, as in the days of the Pharaohs. The pyramids of Sacchara stand on the edge of the desert, a little south of the site of Memphis." Concerning which he remarks, "If it was not for their mightier neighbours, these pyramids, which are comparatively seldom honoured with a visit, would alone be deemed worthy of a pilgrimage to Egypt. The first to which we came is about 350 feet high and 700 feet square at its base.

After spending two months in Egypt, and almost the whole of it on the Nile, our tourist returned to Cairo, and immediately began to make preparation for a journey through the wilderness to Mount Sinai, and thence to the Holy Land. His reflections upon Egypt when about to leave it, are solemn as well as just.

"It is now more than three thousand years, since the curse went forth against the land—Egypt. The Assyrian, the Persian, the Greek, the Roman, the Arabian, the Georgian, the Circassian, and the Ottoman Turk have successively trodden it down, and trampled upon it. For thirty centuries the foot of a stranger has been upon the necks of her inhabitants; and in bidding farewell to this once favoured land, now lying in the most abject degradation and misery, groaning under the iron rod of a tyrant and a stranger, I cannot help recurring to the inspired words, the doom of prophecy, "It shall be the basest of kingdoms; neither shall it exalt itself any more among the nations; and there shall be no more a prince of the land of Egypt."

Our American traveller having formed his plan of a journey through the desert of Arabia, secured the guidance and protection of a sheik of one of the Bedouin tribes who dwell in the wilderness through which he wished to pass. This was the sheik of Akaba, who had come to Cairo to escort the annual caravan from that city, on their pilgrimage to Mecca.

These tribes of the desert are so far from being under the dominion of the pacha of Egypt, that unless he sent for some of their chiefs to protect the caravans, they would be sure to rob them. This wily Arabian, accustomed to make the most out of European travellers, while he promised the most perfect protection, could not be induced to name any sum which would be satisfactory to him for conducting our traveller to Gaza. The caravan which was now about to set off for Mecca, "consisted of more than 30,000 pilgrims, who had come from the shores of the Caspian, the extremities of Persia, and the confines of Africa; and having assembled, according to usage for hundreds of years, at Cairo, as a central point, the whole mass was getting in motion for a pilgrimage of fifty days, through dreary sands, to the tomb of the prophet."* These 30,000 people, with probably 20,000 camels and dromedaries, men, women, and children, beasts and baggage were all commingled in a confused mass, that seemed hopelessly inextricable. Some had not yet struck their tents, some were making coffee, some smoking, some cooking, some eating, many shouting and cursing, others on their knees praying, and others again, hurrying on to join the long moving stream that already extended several miles into the desert."

Before leaving Cairo, our traveller had an opportunity of seeing the punishment of the bastinado inflicted on a poor Arab; and as some of our readers may not have a very distinct conception of this dreadful means of torture, we will give the substance of the description. After the governor had given sentence against the culprit, he laid himself down upon his face, a space was immediately cleared around; a man on each side took him by the hand, and stretching out his arms, kneeled upon and held them down, while another seated himself across his neck and shoulders. Thus nailed to the ground, the poor fellow, knowing that there was no chance of escape, threw up his feet from the knee joint, so as present the soles in a horizontal position. Two men came forward with a pair of long stout bars of wood, attached together by a cord, between which they placed the feet, drawing them together with the cord so as to fix them in their horizontal position, and leave the whole flat surface exposed

* The notion that the tomb of Mohammed is situated at Mecca, instead of Medina, has been widely extended; and the fable about his coffin being suspended in the air by the power of magnetism, in the great mosque at Mecca, was for a long time believed in Europe.

to the full force of the blow. In the mean time, two strong Turks were standing ready, one at each side, armed with long whips, much resembling our common cowskin, but longer and thicker, and made of the tough hide of the hippopotamus. When the first blow fell upon the naked feet, the convulsive agonies and piercing shrieks of the miserable sufferer were dreadful. "I have heard," says the narrator, "men cry out in agony when the sea was raging, and the drowning man, rising for the last time upon the mountain waves, turned his imploring arms towards us, and with his dying breath called in vain for help; but I never heard such heart-rending sounds as those from the poor bastinadoed wretch before me." When the punishment was ended, "the poor scourged wretch was silent; he had found relief in happy insensibility. I cast one look upon the senseless body, and saw the feet laid open in gashes, and the blood streaming down the legs. At that moment the bars were taken away, and the mangled feet fell like lead upon the floor," when his friends took him in their arms and carried him away.

The author's reflections on entering on this interesting and dangerous tour, are worthy of being noticed. "It was a journey of no ordinary interest, on which I was now beginning my lonely way. I had travelled in Italy, among the mountains of Greece, the plains of Turkey, the wild steppes of Russia, and the plains of Poland, but neither of these afforded half the material for curious expectation that my journey through the desert promised. After an interval of four thousand years, I was about to pursue the devious path of the children of Israel, when they took up the bones of Joseph, and fled before the anger of Pharaoh, among the mountain passes of Sinai, and through the great and terrible desert which shut them from the land of promise. I rode on in silence and alone for nearly two hours, and just as the sun was sinking behind the dark mountains of Mokattam, halted to wait for my little caravan; and I pitched my tent for the first night in the desert, with the door opening to the distant land of Goshen."

On the third day after leaving Cairo, our tourist came "in sight of the Red Sea, rolling between the dark mountains of Egypt and Arabia, as in the days of Pharaoh and Moses; and in an hour more came in sight of Suez," which is described "as a low dark spot on the shore, above the commencement of the chains of mountains on each side." The author seems to have had his mind intent on finding out the

localities mentioned in sacred scripture. As soon as opportunity offered, he strolled along the shore of the Red Sea, looking for the place where the children of Israel miraculously passed over dry-shod, under the conduct of Moses. But of this, more hereafter. As the pilgrimage to Mecca is the most meritorious duty of a Mussulman, it will be worth while to take a nearer view of the manners of the devotees. The author had wished, on some accounts, to go by sea as far as Mount Tor, by which he would have been saved six days journey in the wilderness. This is supposed to be the Elino, or place of Palm trees, mentioned in Exodus, and only two days journey from Mount Sinai. But "the boats were all taken by the pilgrims, and these holy travellers were packed together, as closely as sheep in one of our North River sloops. They were a filthy set, many of them probably, not changing their clothes from the time they left their homes." Upon application for a place in one of the boats, he was advised by an Arab, the owner of the boat, 'to think of no such thing.' "He told me, if I hired and paid for such a space, the pilgrims would certainly encroach upon me; that they would beg and borrow, and at last rob me: and above all, that they were bigotted fanatics, and if a storm occurred, would very likely throw me overboard."—"The scene itself did not sustain the high and holy character of a pilgrimage. As I said before, all were abominably filthy; some were sitting round a great dish of pilau, thrusting their hands into it above the knuckles, squeezing the boiled rice, and throwing back their heads as they crammed the huge morsel down their throats. Others packing up their merchandize, or carrying water skins, or whetting their sabres. Others wrangling for paras; and in one place was an Arab butcher, bare-legged, and naked from the waist upward, with his hands, breast, and face smeared with blood, leaning over the body of a slaughtered camel, brandishing an axe, and chopping off huge pieces of meat for the surrounding pilgrims. A little off from the shore, a large party were embarking on board a small boat, to go down to their vessel, which was lying at the mouth of the harbour. They were wading up to their middle, every one with something on his shoulders, or on his head. Thirty or forty had already got on board, and as many more were trying to do the same; but the boat was already full. A loud wrangling commenced, succeeded by clenching, throttling, splashing in the water, and running to the shore. I saw bright swords gleaming in the air, heard

the ominous click of a pistol, and in one moment more blood would have been shed, but for a Turkish aga, who had been watching the scene from the governor's balcony, and now, dashing in among them with a huge silver headed mace, and playing about him right and left, brought the turbulent pilgrims to a condition more suited to their sacred character." Having relinquished the plan of going by water to Mount Tor, our traveller sent his camels round the head of the gulf, with directions to meet him on the other side, while he crossed over in a small boat. "Late in the afternoon," says he, "we landed on the opposite side, on the most sacred spot connected with the wanderings of the Israelites, where they rose from the dry bed of the sea, and, at the command of Moses, the divided waters rushed together, overwhelming Pharaoh and his chariots and the whole host of Egypt. With the devotion of a pious pilgrim, I picked up a shell and put it in my pocket as a memorial of the place."—"I shall never forget the sun-set scene."—"I was sitting on the sand, on the very spot where the chosen people of God, after walking over the dry bed of the sea, stopped to behold the divided waters returning to their place, and swallowing up the host of the pursuers. The mountains on the other side looked dark and portentous, as if proud and conscious witnesses of the mighty miracle, while the sun, descending slowly behind them, long after it had disappeared, left a reflected brightness, which illumined with an almost supernatural light the dark surface of the water."

There is in the neighbourhood a grove of palm trees, shading a fountain of bad water, called, ayoun Moussa, the fountain of Moses.

"I am," says the author, "aware, that there is some dispute as to the precise spot where Moses crossed; but having no time for skepticism on such matters, I began by making up my mind that this was the place, and then looked round to see whether, according to the account given in the bible, the face of the country, and the natural land-marks did not sustain my opinion. I remember I looked up to the head of the gulf, where Suez or Kolsum now stands, and saw that almost to the head of the gulf, there was a high range of mountains which it would be necessary to cross, an undertaking which it would have been physically impossible for six hundred thousand* people, men, women, and children,

* The author greatly underrates the number of the host of Israel. There

to accomplish, with a hostile army pursuing them. At Suez, Moses could not have been hemmed in as he was: he could go off into the Syrian desert; or, unless the sea has been greatly changed since his time, round the head of the gulf. But here, directly opposite where I sat, was an opening in the mountains, making a clear passage from the desert, to the shore of the sea. It is admitted, that from the earliest history of the country, there was a caravan route from the Rameseh of the Pharaohs to this spot, and it was perfectly clear to my mind, that, if the account be true at all, Moses had taken that route: that it was directly opposite to me, between the two mountains, where he had come down with his multitude to the shore; and that it was there he had found himself hemmed in, in the manner described in the bible, with the sea before him, and the army of Pharaoh in his rear. It was there he had stretched out his hand and divided the waters; and probably on the very spot where I sat, the children of Israel had kneeled upon the sands to offer thanks to God for his miraculous interposition. The distance too was in confirmation of this opinion. It was about twenty miles across; the distance which that immense multitude could have passed, with their necessary baggage in the space of time (a night) mentioned in the bible."

Our traveller pursued the very route which must have been passed over by the Israelites in their march to Mount Sinai. Of this he says there can be no doubt, because the country and mountains have remained unchanged, and there is but one way by which an army could pass from the Red Sea to Mount Sinai. "Then, as now, it was a barren mountainous region, bare of verdure and destitute of streams of living water; so that the Almighty was obliged to sustain the people with manna from heaven, and water from the rocks."

The fountain of Marah, so called from the bitterness of its waters, is represented in Exodus, to have been three days march into the wilderness. "They went three days in the wilderness, and found no water; and when they came to Marah they could not drink of the waters, for they were bitter." "Burekhardt objects that the distance is too short for three days journey, but this cavil is sufficiently answered by others; that the movements of such an immense multi-

were six hundred thousand capable of bearing arms. The whole number could not have been less than two millions, possibly three.

tude, of all ages and both sexes, with flocks and cattle, must be slow. And it is according to the custom of the east to march slowly, after the pursuit was over." Our traveller arrived at this fountain on the third day at noon; and says, "he would fain have performed the duty of a pious pilgrim, by making his noon-day meal on its banks; but as in the days of Moses, they could not drink the waters of Marah, "for they were bitter." And even the camels would not drink them. It seems then, that the effect produced on the waters by the piece of wood which Moses was directed to throw into these waters was not permanent. They were rendered sweet for the present occasion, but when the supernatural power was withdrawn, the natural causes which made them bitter, operated as before.

After entering among the mountains of Sinai, "at every step the scene became more solemn and impressive: all was still around us, and not a sound broke the universal silence, except the soft tread of our camels, and now and then the voice of one of us—but there was little encouragement to garrulity. The mountains became more striking, venerable, and interesting. Not a shrub or blade of grass grew on their naked sides, deformed with gaps and fissures; and they looked as if by a slight jar or shake, they would crumble into a million of pieces. It is impossible to describe correctly the singularly interesting appearance of these mountains. Age, hoary and venerable, is the predominant character. They looked as if their great Creator had made them higher than they are, and their summits, worn and weakened by the action of the elements for thousands of years had cracked and fallen."

The sufferings endured by pilgrims in the desert, for want of water, are very common. And when the caravan comes in sight of a palm tree shading a fountain, their eagerness to obtain this necessary of life, is not easily conceived by those who never experienced the extremity of thirst. And water, which in our country would be rejected with disgust, is drunk in the wilderness with indescribable avidity.

One remarkable thing observed in these mountains was inscriptions on the rocks, in a character which our traveller could not read. He informs us, that in several places of the wilderness of Sinai, the rocks are full of these inscriptions, supposed to have been made by the Israelites in their long sojourn in this dreary region. As we know that letters were known to the chosen people, and as they had years of leisure,

there is nothing improbable in the supposition that they were made as far back as the time of Moses; especially as letters deeply engraven on the solid rock, and sheltered from the weather, will last for thousands of years; and we can scarcely conceive of their being placed there by any other people. We have heard of the existence of such inscriptions from others, and a strong wish expressed, that some learned oriental scholar would visit these regions with the view of ascertaining the language in which they are written; and perhaps such a man might solve the vexed question about the original form of the Hebrew alphabet.

On the tenth day from Cairo, our pilgrim, as we may now call him, as he was going to visit places deemed holy by Jews, Christians, and Mohammedans, was all day in full view of the top of Mount Sinai.

The last day of the journey was by far the most interesting. The road lay in a deep valley, between parallel ridges which arose like ramparts on both sides, sometimes receding and then contracting again. About mid-day they entered a narrow and rugged defile, bounded on each side with precipitous granite rocks, more than a thousand feet high. In this defile there were so many fragments of fallen rocks, that the camels with difficulty, and not without frequent stumbling, made their way, and the travellers found it safest and pleasantest to dismount and pursue their journey on foot. At the other end, they came unexpectedly to a table land of some extent, and the holy mountain of Sinai now towered in awful grandeur, so huge and dark, that it seemed close to them. On their left hand was a large isolated stone, called Moses' chair, on which, tradition says, he rested when he came with the people of his charge to this place. Farther on, on a little eminence, are some rude stones which are pointed out as the house of Aaron; and on the right hand, there is a stone which is absurdly alleged to be the petrified golden calf, which we know Moses reduced to powder and cast upon the waters.

Our pilgrim traveller seems to have been much impressed with the solemnity of the scene by which he was surrounded. "I felt," says he, "that I was on holy ground, and dismounting from my dromedary, loitered for more than an hour in the valley.—It was after dark, as alone and on foot I entered the last defile leading to the holy mountain. The moon had risen, but her light could not penetrate the deep defile through which I was toiling slowly on to the foot of Sinai. From about half way up it shone with a pale and solemn lustre,

while below all was in the deepest shade, and a dark spot on the side of the mountain, seeming perfectly black in contrast with the light above it, marked the place of the convent."

When the monks were waked up by the noise below, they let down a rope for the traveller's letter from their patriarch; and as soon as they had read it, they sent down the rope again to draw him up; for in this way alone is any stranger permitted to enter the convent of St. Catharine. This precaution is necessary on account of the wild Arabs, who often made hostile attacks on the building.

No sooner was the pilgrim introduced within the walls, than he was almost smothered with the kisses of the long-bearded monks. The superior is described as "a remarkably noble looking old man, of more than sixty."—"He was a Greek by birth, and though he had been forty years absent from his country, he was still a Greek in heart. His relation to his native land was kept up by the occasional visits of pilgrims. He had heard of her bloody struggle for liberty, and of what America had done for her in her hour of need; and he told me that, next to his own country, he loved mine; and by his kindness to me, as an individual, he sought to repay in part his country's debt of gratiitude."—"When I talked of Greece, and what I had seen there, of the Bavarians lording it over the descendants of Cimon and Miltiades, the face of the superior flushed, and his eyes flashed fire. And when I spoke of the deep interest their sufferings and their glorious struggle had created in America, the old man wept. Oh, who can measure the feeling that binds a man to his native country! Though forty years an exile, buried in the wilderness, and neither expecting nor wishing to revisit the world, he loved his country as if his foot now pressed the soil, and under his monkish robes there glowed a heart as patriotic as ever beat beneath a soldier's corslet. The reader will excuse an unusual touch of sensibility, when he reflects upon my singular position, sitting at the base of Mount Sinai, and hearing from the lips of a white-bearded Greek the praises of my beloved country."

We respect in our countryman these sentiments of patriotism—they require no apology. We would that the breast of every American, who visits foreign climes, might be actuated by the same glow of patriotism. But there is another sentiment manifested by him, for which we feel a still higher respect. What it is will be understood by the following passage. "From the door of the little room in which I sat, I

saw the holy mountain, and I longed to stand on its lofty summit. Though feeble and far from well, I felt the blood of health again coursing in my veins, and congratulated myself that I was not so hackneyed in feeling as I had once supposed. I found, and I was happy to find, that the first tangible monument in the history of the bible, the first spot that could be called holy ground, raised in me feelings that had not been awakened by the most classic ground of Italy and Greece, or the proudest monuments of the arts in Egypt."

The next day after his arrival, our traveller, in company with an old monk, undertook to ascend to the top of the mountain. At almost every step he heard a monkish legend which was associated with the place which they were passing. When he had reached the summit, he exclaims, "I stand upon the very peak of Sinai—where Moses stood when he talked with the Almighty. Can it be, or is it a mere dream? Can this naked rock have been the witness of that great interview, between man and his Maker? where, amid thunder and lightning, and a fearful quaking of the mountain, the Almighty gave to his chosen people the precious tables of his law, those rules of infinite wisdom and goodness, which to this day, best teach man his duty towards his God, his neighbour and himself." He then justly remarks, that the site of many important places mentioned in the bible are extremely uncertain, "but of Sinai there is no doubt! This is the holy mountain; and among all the stupendous works of nature, not a place can be selected more fitted for the exhibition of Almighty power. I have stood upon the summit of giant Etna, and looked over the clouds floating beneath it, upon the bold scenery of Sicily, and the distant mountains of Calabria; upon the top of Vesuvius, and looked down upon the waves of lava, and the ruined, and half-recovered cities at its foot: but they are nothing compared with the terrific solitudes and bleak majesty of Sinai."

"The level surface of the very top, or pinnacle, is about sixty feet square. At one end is a single rock, about twenty feet high, on which, as said the monk, the Spirit of God descended, while in the crevice beneath his favoured servant received the tables of the law. There, on the same spot where they were given, I opened the sacred book in which those laws are recorded, and read them with a deeper feeling of devotion, as if I were standing nearer, and receiving them more directly from the deity himself." It is the lofty peak of Sinai, which towers far above the surrounding mountains,

which is called HOREB. Mount Catharine is the only peak which rivals that of Sinai in height. "They rise like giant twin brothers, towering above every other."

The next day our traveller was honoured with the company and guidance of the superior, which was a favour seldom bestowed on any pilgrim to the holy mount, and was now granted to our countryman, simply because he was an American. What a blessing to belong to a country whose good name obtains affectionate respect for her citizens, even in the deserts of Arabia!

As our traveller was ascending the mountain, the accompanying monk pointed out to him the place where Moses stood, with his arms supported by Aaron and Hur, while Joshua successfully contended with the Amalekites below. It was a table of rock standing boldly out, and running down almost perpendicularly an immense distance to the valley."—From the height I could see clearly and distinctly, every part of the battle ground, and the whole vale of Rephidim and the mountains beyond; and Moses, while on this spot, must have been visible to the contending armies from every part of the field on which they were engaged."

Among the many sacred places pointed out, the rock smitten by Moses, from which water gushed out to supply the people, was one. "The stone," says the author, "is about twelve feet high, and on one side are eight or ten deep gashes from one to three feet long, and from one to two inches wide, some of which were trickling with water. These gashes are singular in their appearance—they look something like the gashes on the bark of a growing tree; except that, instead of the lips of the gash swelling and growing over, they are worn and reduced to a polished smoothness. They are no doubt the work of men's hands, a clumsy artifice of the early monks to touch the hearts of pious pilgrims." Other travellers, however, no how addicted to superstition, have been of opinion that this is the identical rock smitten by the rod of Moses; and that the orifices are of such a nature that they could not have been made by the hands of men, since no tool could work so deep in the rock as they go. If we recollect right, the judicious Dr. Shaw, in his travels in the east, expresses this opinion. It is, however, after all, a matter of little consequence.

Our traveller having taken leave of the monks of St. Catharine, from whom he had received unceasing kindness, had determined, notwithstanding his strong curiosity to visit

the extraordinary ruins of Petra, to go straight forward in the usual route to Gaza; but when he came to the place where the roads divided, his desire of passing through the land of Edom, and of seeing the city cut out of the solid rock, prevailed. For although the prophet Isaiah had predicted the desolation of this country would be so complete, "that none shall pass through it forever;" and although Keith, in his learned work on the Prophecies, takes much pains to show that this has been fulfilled to the very letter; yet our traveller judiciously concludes that the prediction was sufficiently verified by the total breaking up of the route then travelled, as the great highway from Jerusalem to the Red Sea and India, and the general, and probably eternal desolation that reigns in Edom. He was so far from feeling any disposition to brave the prophecy, that he says, "I had already learned to regard the words of the inspired penmen with an interest I never felt before: and with the evidence I have already had of the sure fulfilment of their predictions, I should have considered it daring and impious to place myself in the way of a still impending curse." Our traveller, therefore, with a full view of the difficulties and dangers of the way through this desolate land, and almost untrodden by the feet of European travellers, determined to proceed to Akaba, which is a sea-port on the eastern or Elanitic gulf of the Red Sea. He had come in sight of this place, when upon the view which he had already obtained of the remarkable fulfilment of the prophecies, in regard to the utter desolation of the land of Edom, he has the following just and solemn reflections.

"I had now crossed the borders of Edom. Standing near the shore of the Elanitic branch of the Red Sea, the doomed and accursed land lay stretched out before me, the theatre of awful prophecies and their more awful fulfilment; given to Esau as being of the fatness of the earth, but now a barren waste, a picture of death, an eternal monument of the wrath of an offended God, and a fearful witness to the truth of the words spoken by his prophets. 'For my sword shall be bathed in heaven: behold, it shall come down upon Idumea, and upon the people of my curse, to judgment.' 'From generation to generation it shall lie waste; none shall pass through it for ever and ever. But the cormorant and the bittern shall possess it; the owl also and the raven shall dwell in it: and he shall stretch out upon it the line of confusion, and the stones of emptiness. They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing. And thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof: and it shall be a habitation of dragons, and a court for owls. The wild beasts of the desert shall also meet with the wild beasts of the island, and the satyr shall cry to his fellow; the screech-owl also shall rest there, and find for herself a place of rest. There shall the great owl make her nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under her shadow: there shall the vultures also be gathered, every one with her mate, Seek ye out

the book of the Lord, and read: no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate: for my mouth it hath commanded, and his spirit it hath gathered them. And he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line: they shall possess it forever, from generation to generation shall they dwell therein.' Isaiah xxxiv.

"I read in the sacred book prophecy upon prophecy, and curse upon curse against the very land on which I stood. I was about to journey through this land, and to see with my own eyes whether the Almighty had stayed his uplifted arm, or whether his sword had indeed come down 'upon Idumea and the people of his curse to judgment.' I have before referred to Keith upon the Prophecies, where, in illustrating the fulfilment of the prophecies against Idumea, 'none shall pass through it forever and ever,' after referring to the singular fact that the great caravan routes existing in the days of David and Solomon, and under the Roman empire, are now completely broken up, and that the great hadji routes to Mecca from Damascus and Cairo, lie along the borders of Idumea, barely touching at and not passing through it, he proves by abundant references that to this day no traveller has ever passed through the land."

At Akaba, the author was taken sick and was surrounded with difficulties, but a Bedouin sheik, whom he had met at Cairo, and who had engaged to meet him here, and conduct him to Petra, made his appearance, and informed him that he was ready for the journey, and had provided for our traveller, a fine Arabian horse. He no sooner mounted this fleet and docile animal, than his disease left him, and he felt as if inspired with new life.

While standing on the northern shore of this gulf of the Red Sea, he saw an immense sandy valley, which appeared evidently to have been once "the bottom of a sea, or the bed of a river." This valley had been partly explored by Burckhardt, and is noticed in modern maps, as the valley of El Ghor, extending from the shores of the Elanitic gulf to the southern shore of the lake Asphaltites or the Dead Sea. And it was manifest to our author, that over that sandy plain those seas had once mingled their waters; "or, perhaps, more probably, that before the cities of the plain had been consumed by brimstone and fire, and Sodom and Gomorrah covered by a pestilential lake, the Jordan had here rolled its waters. This valley varied from eight to twelve miles in breadth, and on each side were high, dark, and barren mountains, bounding it like a wall. On the left, the mountains of Judea, and on the right, those of Seir—the portion given to Esau as an inheritance." In the midst of these mountains was situated the ancient capital of the kingdom, the excavated city of Petra; the cursed and blighted Edom of the Edomites.

It will, we think, appear more than probable to every intelligent reader, that prior to the formation or enlargement of the Dead Sea, the river Jordan pursued its course along the

sandy valley above mentioned, and emptied its waters into this eastern arm of the Red Sea, near to the fortress of Akaba, which is evidently the site of the ancient naval depot, Ezion-Geber. The ground now occupied by the Dead Sea was, before this catastrophe which overwhelmed four populous cities, probably a beautiful and fertile plain, and as Jordan passed through it, was called "the plains of Jordan," by the beauty and fertility of which Lot was determined in making his choice of a residence, when it became necessary for him and Abraham to separate from each other.

As the desolate city of Petra, excavated from the solid rock, is one of the greatest curiosities in the world; and for centuries entirely lost sight of by all, except the Bedouin Arabs, we are of opinion that our readers will be gratified to have the author's description of the place, with very little curtailment.

"Petra, the excavated city, the long-lost capital of Edom, in the scriptures and profane writings, in every language in which its name occurs, signifies a rock; and, through the shadows of its early history, we learn that its inhabitants lived in natural clefts or excavations made in the solid rock. Desolate as it now is, we have reason to believe that it goes back to the time of Esau, 'the father of Edom;' that princes and dukes, eight successive kings, and again a long line of dukes, dwelt there before any king 'reigned over Israel;' and we recognise it from the earliest ages, as the central point to which came the caravans from the interior of Arabia, Persia, and India, laden with all the precious commodities of the East, and from which these commodities were distributed through Egypt, Palestine and Syria, and all the countries bordering on the Mediterranean, even Tyre and Sidon deriving their purple and dyes from Petra. Eight hundred years before Christ, Amaziah, the king of Judea, 'slew of Edom in the valley of Salt ten thousand, and took Selah (the Hebrew name of Petra) by war.' Three hundred years after the last of the prophets, and nearly a century before the Christian era, the 'King of Arabia' issued from his palace at Petra, at the head of fifty thousand men, horse and foot, entered Jerusalem, and uniting with the Jews, pressed the siege of the temple, which was only raised by the advance of the Romans; and in the beginning of the second century, though its independence was lost, Petra was still the capital of a Roman province. After that time it rapidly declined; its history became more and more obscure; for more than a thousand years it was completely lost to the civilized world; and, until its discovery by Burckhardt in 1812, except to the wandering Bedouins its very site was unknown.

"And this was the city at whose door I now stood. In a few words, this ancient and extraordinary city is situated within a natural amphitheatre of two or three miles in circumference, encompassed on all sides by rugged mountains five or six hundred feet in height. The whole of this area is now a waste of ruins, dwelling-houses, palaces, temples, and triumphal arches, all prostrate together in undistinguishable confusion. The sides of the mountains are cut smooth, in a perpendicular direction, and filled with long and continued ranges of dwelling-houses, temples, and tombs, excavated with vast labour out of the solid rock; and while their summits present Nature in her wildest and most savage form, their bases are adorned with all the beauty of architecture and art, with columns, and porticoes, and pediments, and ranges of corridors, enduring as the moun-

tains out of which they are hewn, and fresh as if the work of a generation scarcely yet gone by.

"Nothing can be finer than the immense rocky rampart which encloses the city. Strong, firm, and immovable as nature itself, it seems to deride the walls of cities, and the puny fortifications of skilful engineers. The only access is by clambering over this wall of stone, practicable only in one place, or by an entrance the most extraordinary that Nature, in her wildest freaks, has ever framed. The loftiest portals ever raised by the hands of man, the proudest monuments of architectural skill and daring, sink into insignificance by the comparison. It is, perhaps, the most wonderful object in the world, except the ruins of the city to which it forms the entrance. Unfortunately, I did not enter by this door, but by clambering over the mountains at the other end; and when I stood upon the summit of the mountain, though I looked down upon the vast area filled with ruined buildings and heaps of rubbish, and saw the mountain-sides cut away so as to form a level surface, and presenting long ranges of doors in successive tiers or stories, the dwelling and burial-places of a people long since passed away; and though immediately before me was the excavated front of a large and beautiful temple, I was disappointed. I had read the unpublished description of Captains Irby and Mangles. Several times the sheik had told me, in the most positive manner, that there was no other entrance; and I was moved to indignation at the marvellous and exaggerated, not to say false representations, as I thought, of the only persons who had given any account of this wonderful entrance. I was disappointed, too, in another matter. Burckhardt had been accosted, immediately upon his entry, by a large party of Bedouins, and been suffered to remain but a very short time. Messrs. Legh, Banks, Irby, and Mangles had been opposed by hundreds of Bedouins, who swore 'that they should never enter their territory nor drink of their waters,' and 'that they would shoot them like dogs, if they attempted it.' And I expected some opposition from at least the thirty or forty, fewer than whom, the sheik had told me, were never to be found in Wady Moussa. I expected a scene of some kind; but at the entrance of the city there was not a creature to dispute our passage; its portals were wide open, and we passed along the stream down into the area, and still no man came to oppose us. We moved to the extreme end of the area; and when in the act of dismounting at the foot of the rock on which stood the temple that had constantly faced us, we saw one solitary Arab straggling along without any apparent object, a mere wanderer among the ruins; and it is a not uninteresting fact, that this poor Bedouin was the only living being we saw in the desolate city of Petra. After gazing at us for a few moments from a distance, he came towards us, and in a few moments was sitting down to pipes and coffee with my companions. I again asked the sheik for the other entrance, and he again told me there was none; but I could not believe him, and set out to look for it myself; and although in my search I had already seen enough abundantly to repay me for all my difficulties in getting there, I could not be content without finding this desired avenue."

The traveller having found the main entrance to this wonderful city, gives of it the following description.

"For about two miles it lies between high and precipitous ranges of rocks, from five hundred to a thousand feet in height, standing as if torn asunder by some great convulsion, and barely wide enough for two horsemen to pass abreast. A swelling stream rushes between them; the summits are wild and broken; in some places overhanging the opposite sides, casting the darkness of night upon the narrow defile; then receding and forming an opening above, through which a strong ray of light is thrown down, and illuminates with the blaze of day the frightful chasm below. Wild fig-trees, oleanders, and ivy were growing out of

the rocky sides of the cliffs hundreds of feet above our heads; the eagle was screaming above us; all along were the open doors of tombs, forming the great Necropolis of the city; and at the extreme end was a large open space, with a powerful body of light thrown down upon it, and exhibiting in one full view the façade of a beautiful temple, hewn out of the rock, with rows of Corinthian columns and ornaments, standing out fresh and clear as if but yesterday from the hands of the sculptor. Though coming directly from the banks of the Nile, where the preservation of the temples excites the admiration and astonishment of every traveller, we were roused and excited by the extraordinary beauty and excellent condition of the great temple at Petra. Even in coming upon it, as we did, at disadvantage, I remember that Paul, who was a passionate admirer of the arts, when he first obtained a glimpse of it, involuntarily cried out, and moving on to the front with a vivacity I never saw him exhibit before or afterward, clapped his hands, and shouted in ecstasy. To the last day of our being together, he was in the habit of referring to his extraordinary fit of enthusiasm when he first came upon that temple; and I can well imagine that, entering by this narrow defile, with the feelings roused by its extraordinary and romantic wildness and beauty, the first view of that superb façade must produce an effect which could never pass away. Even now, that I have returned to the pursuits and thought-engrossing incidents of a life in the busiest city in the world, often in situations as widely different as light from darkness, I see before me the façade of that temple; neither the Coliseum at Rome, grand and interesting as it is, nor the ruins of the Acropolis at Athens, nor the Pyramids, nor the mighty temples of the Nile, are so often present to my memory.

“The whole temple, its columns, ornaments, porticoes, and porches, are cut out from and form part of the solid rock; and this rock, at the foot of which the temple stands like a mere print, towers several hundred feet above, its face cut smooth to the very summit, and the top remaining wild and misshapen as Nature made it. The whole area before the temple is perhaps an acre in extent, enclosed on all sides except at the narrow entrance, and an opening to the left of the temple, which leads into the area of the city by a pass through perpendicular rocks, five or six hundred feet in height.”

The author goes on to describe the interior of this wonderful temple, which he represents as perfectly plain, and in which he found a room fifty feet square and twenty-five in height.

After leaving the temple, and entering into another defile, he found a circular theatre cut also out of the solid rock, containing thirty-three rows of seats; and capable of holding three thousand people. Although the front pillars have fallen; yet “the whole theatre is in such a state of preservation, that if the tenants of the tombs around could once more rise into life, they might take their old places on its seats.” The author here makes some sober reflections, and concludes them by exclaiming, “Where are ye, inhabitants of this desolate city? ye, who once sat on the seats of this theatre, the young, the high-born, the beautiful, and brave; who once rejoiced in your riches and power, and lived as if there was no grave! where are ye now? Even the very tombs whose open doors are stretching away in long ranges before the eyes of the

wandering traveller, cannot reveal your doom: your dry bones are gone; the robber has invaded your graves; and your very ashes have been swept away to make room for the wandering Arab of the desert!"

The following remarks are at the same time so just, animated, and striking, that although our extracts have already been so long, we cannot consent to withhold them from our readers.

"Amid all the terrible denunciations against the land of Idumea, 'her cities and the inhabitants thereof,' this proud city among the rocks, doubtless for its extraordinary sins, was always marked as a subject of extraordinary vengeance. 'I have sworn by myself, saith the Lord, that Bozrah (the strong or fortified city) shall become a desolation, a reproach, and a waste, and a curse, and all the cities thereof shall be perpetual waste. Lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, and despised among men. Thy terribleness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thy heart, oh thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, that holdest the height of the hill; though thou shouldst make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord.'* 'They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing; and thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in the fortresses thereof, and it shall be a habitation for dragons, and a court for owls.†

"I would that the sceptic could stand as I did, among the ruins of this city among the rocks, and there open the sacred book and read the words of the inspired penmen, written when this desolate place was one of the greatest cities in the world. I see the scoff arrested, his cheek pale, his lip quivering, and his heart quaking with fear, as the ruined city cries out to him in a voice loud and powerful as that of one risen from the dead; though he would not believe Moses and the prophets, he believes the hand-writing of God himself, in the desolation and eternal ruin around him."

As Mount Hor, where Aaron died, and was buried, reared its lofty summit in the immediate neighbourhood of Petra, our adventurous traveller, contrary to the remonstrances of his Bedouin guide, determined to ascend to the top; and with great difficulty, and no small peril, accomplished the enterprize. Here he found a small building, called the tomb of Aaron. The building is about thirty feet square, containing a single chamber. In front of the door is a tomb-stone, in form like the oblong slabs in our church-yards, but larger and higher. As our object in this review is the elucidation of scripture history and prophecy, we cannot pass without notice, the following appropriate observations of the author, suggested by the view from the top of Mount Hor.

"If I had never stood on the top of Mount Sinai, I should say that nothing could exceed the desolation of the view from the summit of Mount Hor, its most striking objects being the dreary and rugged mountains of Seir, bare and naked

* Jeremiah xlix. 13, 16.

† Isaiah xxxiv. 14, 15.

of trees and verdure, and heaving their lofty summits to the skies, as if in a vain and fruitless effort to excel the mighty pile, on the top of which the high-priest of Israel was buried. Before me was a land of barrenness and ruin—a land accursed by God, and against which the prophets had set their faces; the land of which it is thus written in the book of life: ‘Moreover, the word of the Lord came unto me, saying, Son of man, set thy face against Mount Seir, and prophesy against it, and say unto it, Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, oh Mount Seir, I am against thee, and I will stretch out mine hand against thee, and I will make thee most desolate. I will lay thy cities waste, and thou shalt be desolate; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord. Because thou hast had a perpetual hatred, and hast shed the blood of the children of Israel by the force of the sword in the time of their calamity, in the time that their iniquity had an end: Therefore, as I live, saith the Lord God, I will prepare thee unto blood, and blood shall pursue thee: sith thou hast not hated blood, even blood shall pursue thee. Thus will I make Mount Seir most desolate, and cut off from it him that passeth out and him that returneth. And I will fill his mountains with his slain men: in thy hills, and in thy valleys, and in all thy rivers shall they fall that are slain with the sword. I will make thee perpetual desolations, and thy cities shall not return: and ye shall know that I am the Lord.’”*

The mind of our enterprising traveller seems to have been greatly struck by the remarkable fulfilment of the prophecies against Edom, which he had continually before his eyes in this whole journey. He returns to the interesting subject again and again. His road still lay along the valley of El Ghor; and having now nearly passed through the land of Edom, he reflects with some degree of exultation, that he was the first American who had ever visited this region; and not only so, but the only modern traveller who had passed through the whole extent of this land so evidently lying under the blighting curse of the Almighty. “The road along which the stranger journeys, was far better known in the days of David and Solomon, than it is now; and when he tires with the contemplation of barrenness and ruin, he may take the bible in his hand, and read what Edom was, and how God, by the mouth of his prophets, cursed it; and see with his own eyes, whether God’s words be true.” “Also Edom shall be a desolation: every one that goeth by it shall be astonished, and shall hiss at all the plagues thereof. As in the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, and the neighbouring cities thereof, saith the Lord, no man shall abide there, neither shall a son of man dwell in it. Therefore hear the counsel of the Lord, that he hath taken against Edom: and his purposes that he hath purposed against the inhabitants of Teman; surely the least of the flock shall draw them out; surely he shall make their habitations desolate with them. The earth is moved at the noise of their fall, at the cry;

* Ezekiel xxxv.

the noise thereof was heard in the Red Sea.”* And again, “Thus saith the Lord God: because that Edom hath dealt against the house of Judah by taking vengeance, and hath greatly offended, and revenged himself upon them; therefore, thus saith the Lord God, I will also stretch out mine hand upon Edom, I will cut off man and beast from it; and I will make it desolate from Teman.† Edom shall be a desolate wilderness.‡ For three transgressions, and for four, I will not turn away the punishment hereof.§ Thus saith the Lord concerning Edom; behold, I have made thee small among the heathen; thou art greatly despised. The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high: that saith in his heart, who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the Lord. Shall I not in that day, saith the Lord, even destroy the wise men out of Edom, and understanding out of the mount of Esau? And thy mighty men, oh Teman, shall be dismayed, to the end that every one of the mount of Esau may be cut off by slaughter.”||

While this country remained unknown, and before the city of Petra was discovered, such prophecies as the above, were exceedingly obscure; but now we can see the beauty and force of the particular expressions, by which Edom, and especially this wonderful city, are designated. They did, indeed, dwell “in the clefts of the rocks,” and were exalted on high, like the nest of an eagle. And as to the exact execution of the divine denunciations against this whole country, who can entertain a doubt who has only read what this American traveller brings to light, in his interesting volumes?

It seems that the road pursued from the Red Sea to the confines of the Dead Sea, was in the same sandy valley, through which doubtless the Jordan once flowed. “He who, in the wonders around him, seeks the evidences of events recorded in the sacred volume, here finds them in the abundant tokens that the shower of fire and brimstone which descended upon the guilty cities of Sodom and Gomorrah, stopped the course of the Jordan, and formed it into a pestilential lake, and left the dry bed of a river, in the desolate valley in which he is journeying. This valley is part of the once populous land of Idumea; in the days of Solomon, the

* Jer. xlix. † Ezek. xxv. ‡ Joel, iii. 19. § Amos, i. 11. || Obadiah, i.

great travelled highway, by which he received the gold of Ophir for the temple; and by which, in the days of imperial Rome, the wealth of India was brought to her doors."

Our traveller now entered the Holy Land, and terminated his journey through the wilderness at the ancient city of Hebron, where Abraham and the other patriarchs lived; and where many of them were buried; and where David commenced his reign after the death of Saul. It would be pleasant to accompany him to Bethlehem, to Jerusalem, and to the sacred places in and about this sacred spot; but we have already occupied more space than we intended; and so many travellers have recently described every thing worthy of notice in the Holy Land; and the accounts of our own missionaries, residing in that country, have made our readers so familiar with the places connected with the sacred history, that we feel the less regret in not being able to give the observations of our American traveller, or what he saw in this interesting country. We must, however, make one exception. The Dead Sea has been visited by many; and innumerable fables circulated respecting this mysterious lake; but few travellers have taken much pains to ascertain the true state of facts, or even the accurate topography of this mephitic lake. The attention of our author was turned to this object with intense curiosity; and, accordingly, he has given us more correct information respecting the dimensions, depth, and the qualities of the waters of this stagnant lake, than any who have preceded him.

The traveller passed over from Jerusalem to Jericho, and agrees with all former tourists in the character of the country, through which the road passes: but no one has represented the ancient city of Palms in so impoverished and desolate a condition. Scarcely could he obtain a night's lodging; and when obtained, far from being comfortable. He proceeded as near the bank of the Jordan as he conveniently could, until he arrived at the mouth, where he distinctly saw the waters of the river commingling with those of the lake; so that there is no foundation for the opinion formerly current, that the Jordan passes through the lake Asphaltites, without mingling with the waters of the lake. "And Pococke says, 'I thought I saw the stream of a different colour;' but Pococke did not follow the river down to the extreme point. I did: and could see most distinctly, where the waters mingled. Instead of keeping its way through, its current was rather stopped at once by the denser water of the lake; and,

in fact, for two or three miles above its mouth, the Jordan is impregnated with the salt and bituminous matter of the lake.”

“Almost at the moment of my turning from the Jordan to the Dead Sea, notwithstanding the long-credited accounts that no bird could fly over without dropping dead upon its surface, I saw a flock of gulls floating quietly on its bosom; and when I roused them with a stone, they flew down the lake, skimming its surface until they had carried themselves out of sight. From the point on which I stood, near its eastern shore, the sea was spread out before me, motionless as a lake of molten lead, bounded on either side by ranges of high and barren mountains, and on its southern extremity by the great desert Valley of El Ghor; constantly receiving the waters of the Jordan, but, unlike other waters, sending no tribute to the sea. Pliny, Diodorus Siculus, and Josephus, describe it as more than sixty miles long; but Mr. Banks and his companions, by observation from elevated heights, make it not more than thirty; and, as the ancients were better acquainted with it than modern geographers, it has been supposed that the lake has contracted in its dimensions, and that part of the Valley of El Ghor was once covered by its waters. Moving on slowly from the point of the Jordan, the shores low and sandy, strewed with brush and driftwood, and rising in a slope to the sandy plain above, I rode along near the whole head of the lake, with my horse’s feet in the water, and twice picked up a large piece of bitumen, almost like common pitch, supposed to be thrown up from the bottom of the lake. The sand is not bright like that of an Atlantic or Mediterranean beach, but of a dirty dark brown. The water is exceedingly clear and transparent, but its taste and smell are a compound of all that is bad.”

Here his guides insisted on returning to Jericho, but our adventurous traveller had not half satisfied his curiosity; and, at all events, determined to see more of this extraordinary lake; and against all remonstrances persevered in his determination to take as full a survey of it as he possibly could; and as his narrative is always concise, and perspicuous, we choose to give his observations in his own words rather than ours.

“Since early in the morning, I had had the sea constantly before my eyes. While riding along the northern shore, the general aspect was very much the same; but, as soon as I turned the head, and began to move along its side, the mountains every moment assumed a different aspect, although every where wild, rugged, and barren. At three o’clock we were approaching a place where the mountain rises precipitously from the lake, leaving no room for a passage at its foot; my eyes were fixed upon the lake, my thoughts upon its mysterious properties. The ancients believed that living bodies, and even heavy metals, would not sink in it; and Pliny and Strabo have written of its extraordinary buoyancy. Before I left Jerusalem, I had resolved not to bathe in it, on account of my health; and I had sustained my resolution during the whole of my day’s ride along its shore; but, on the point of turning up among the mountains, I could resist no longer. My clothes seemed to come off of their own accord; and, before Paul had time to ask me what I was going to do, I was floating on its waters. Paul and the Arabs followed; and, after splashing about for a while, we lay like a parcel of corks upon its surface.

“From my own experience, I can almost corroborate the most extravagant accounts of the ancients. I know, in reference to my own specific gravity, that in the Atlantic or Mediterranean I cannot float without some little movement of the hands; and even then my body is almost totally submerged; but here, when

I threw myself upon my back, my body was half out of water. It was an exertion even for my lank Arabs to keep themselves under. When I struck out in swimming, it was exceedingly awkward; for my legs were constantly rising to the surface, and even above the water. I could have lain there and read with perfect ease. In fact, I could have slept, and it would have been a much easier bed than the bushes at Jericho. It was ludicrous to see one of the horses. As soon as his body touched the water, he was afloat, and turned over on his side; he struggled with all his force to preserve his equilibrium; but the moment he stopped moving he turned over on his side again, and almost on his back, kicking his feet out of water, and snorting with terror. The worst of my bath was, after it was over, my skin was covered with a thick, glutinous substance, which it required another ablution to get rid of; and after I had wiped myself dry, my body burnt and smarted as if I had been turned round before a roasting fire. My face and ears were incrustated with salt; my hairs stood out, 'each particular hair on end;' and my eyes were irritated and inflamed, so that I felt the effects of it for several days. In spite of all this, however, revived and refreshed by my bath, I mounted my horse a new man.

"Modern science has solved all the mystery about this water. It has been satisfactorily analyzed, and its specific gravity ascertained to be 1.211, a degree of density unknown in any other, the specific gravity of fresh water being 1,000; and it has been found to hold in solution the following proportions of salt to 100 grains of water—

	Grains.
Muriate of lime,	3.920
Muriate of magnesia,	10.246
Muriate of soda,	10.360
Sulphate of lime,	0.054
	24.580

"Except the ruined city of Petra, I never felt so unwilling to leave any place. I was unsatisfied. I had a longing desire to explore every part of that unknown water; to spend days upon its surface; to coast along its shores; to sound its mysterious depths, and search for the ruins of the guilty cities. And why not? If we believe our bible, that bituminous lake covers the once fertile Vale of Siddim, and the ruins of Sodom and Gomorrah; and why may we not see them? The ruins of Thebes still cover for miles the banks of the Nile; the pyramids stand towering as when they were built, and no man knows their builders; and the traveller may still trace, by 'the great river, the Euphrates,' the ruins of the Tower of Babel. Besides, that water does not destroy; it preserves all that it touches; the wood that falls into it becomes petrified by its action; and I can see no good reason why it should hide for ever from man's eyes the monuments of that fearful anger which the crimes of the guilty had so righteously provoked."

We feel some regret in taking leave of our lively, and we are persuaded, voracious traveller. His volumes have afforded us much entertainment, and no little instruction. Wishing our readers to participate in our pleasure, we have extracted much more than is our custom. To those who have perused the work, our review can be of little service; except to present in a brief space those "incidents" and scenes, which in our view, are most interesting, and worthy of notice. To those who have not access to these volumes, nor time to read them, we feel persuaded that our compend

will afford much gratification. We are pleased to observe that the work is duly appreciated by the public; and that a second edition has been demanded. There is in our country a predisposition to think that nothing very good in literature can be expected from American authors; and too often second-rate British productions will pass through edition after edition among us; while works of more intrinsic value of American manufacture, lie uncalled for on the bookseller's shelves. This prejudice is certainly not patriotic; and we hope will soon give place to a more just estimate of American genius.

As our American traveller has visited many other countries, and no doubt has by him copious notes of the "incidents of travel" in those regions, we would respectfully suggest—what will occur to many who read these volumes—that another set of volumes from the same pen, would not be unacceptable to the public. We are aware, indeed, that no countries upon earth are so interesting as those, of which we have an account in these volumes; there is in the very ruins of Egypt, Arabia, and Judea, what may well be called "a religious interest;" a sacred feeling of reverence accompanies us whilst we read of the desolations which a righteous God hath produced in those regions, in punishment of the pride, luxury, cruelty, and rebellion by which they were characterized; and in fulfilment of prophecies uttered and recorded three or four thousand years ago: but still a lively description of scenes in Greece, Italy, Russia, and Poland, would be instructive and entertaining; and as our author has got the attention of the public, he may calculate upon their continued favour.

ART. V.—*Tracts for the Times. By members of the University of Oxford.* Second Edition. London. J. G. & F. Rivington. 1837. Three volumes.

THESE Tracts may be regarded as among the most important ephemeral productions of the day. They derive their consequence not so much from the ability with which they are written, as from the station of their authors, and the character of their contents. The title page informs us that they were written by members of the University of Oxford. The principal contributors are Dr. Pusey, the professor of He-