NOTES OF A TOUR IN THE LEBANON.

By E. H. Palmer, M.A.

On Tuesday, July 19th, 1870, we left Damascus, and passing out of the city by the west gate enjoyed the beautiful view from the little well called Cubbet es Siyar; a rather uninteresting ride past the village of Dammâr (the residence of the celebrated 'Ábd-Ál-Cader), and down Wády Bassíní, brought us at last to 'Ain Fíjeh, one of the most beautiful spots in Syria. Here a broad rushing stream flows through a richly wooded valley with steep rocky sides; this is the Barádeh and 'Ain Fíjeh, its principal source flows, or rather rushes, out of a cavern westward, but immediately takes a turn and flows eastwards down the valley. Hard by the spring is a large ruined temple, probably dedicated to the nymph or goddess of the river. A short distance further on is Deir Mokaráram, a village containing some extensive ruins, and the tomb of a well or saint, called Sheikh Heláí, whose name, "New Moon," reminds us of that Sabýmán worship which was once the established religion of the land; and a short ride past el Kufr and Efkír Zeit brought us at last to Suk Wády Barádeh. Here are numerous ancient tombs cut in the rock, in several of which the remains of busts and full length figures (apparently Roman from the dress) may still be traced. A path has been cut out in the solid rock, and on the walls of this are found two Latin inscriptions, one recounting the fact that the road was reconstructed by the Emperor Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, the same whose name is inscribed to record a like work at the Dog River. A fine aqueduct also runs along the face of the cliff. There is an Arabic inscription also on a rock at Suk Wády Barádeh—it is illegible, but is written in the Neskhi, and not in the Cufic character, as Porter says. The ancient name of the place was Abíla; and this has given rise to the Muslim tradition that it is the spot where Abel was buried, and his tomb is still pointed out to the faithful. Up to this point the valley runs between lofty hills, the sides of which are covered with trees, and a broad river flows along its bed; after Abíla, however, it widens out into a broad spoon-shaped space which might almost be called a plain; from this a splendid view of Hermon is obtained; at the right hand extremity lies the village of Zebedání completely buried in trees; and, higher up on the hill, Blúdán. Having pitched our tent at the spring of Zebedání we rode up to Blúdán and called upon Captain Burton, the learned and indefatigable English Consul, who received us very kindly and insisted
upon our stopping at his house for the night. The next morning we
all rode out before breakfast to visit some caves at Zebedâni; they
proved to be rock-cut tombs, and over one of these were three busts in
bas-relief and a Latin inscription, of which, however, only the first
word, Deus, was legible. Captain Burton having himself made prep-
arrations for a semi-official tour in the Lebanon, arranged to accompany
us, and we accordingly set out together, accompanied by some native
horsemen, retainers of the Sheikh of Zebedâni. Passing by the villages
of Ghabteh, 'Ain el Hûl, Sargháyeh, Yahsûfeh, and 'Ain Tardeh, we
reached Nebi Shîth, the traditional burial-place of Seth, the son of
Adam. The tomb is a hundred feet in length and of the ordinary
Muslim pattern, set upon a raised pavement or dais with two steps.
From hence we rode for a short distance past the village of Khareibeh,
where we were hospitably entertained by Mr. and Mrs. Rattery, Eng-
lish settlers in Syria, and made for Nebi Hám. Here, according to the
Mohammedan tradition, Ham, the son of Noah, is buried; being a
prophet of rather questionable character, his tomb has been neglected
and is now in very bad repair. On measuring his tomb we found that
the father of the Canaanites was only nine feet long; the sanctity of
Mohammedan prophets is always measured by their height. At this
village we camped for the night, the sheikh providing us with an
excellent repast. Having noticed from Sarghâyeh an ancient fort
situated on the neighbouring hills, we determined to visit it the next
morning, and after a tedious climb succeeded in reaching the spot. It
is called Caesar el Benát, and lies due south of the cedars of Lebanon,
occupying a commanding situation between two valleys. At the
bottom of the hill on which it stands runs Wâdy Mârabún, and close
by is the village of the same name. The aneroid on the fort read
24° 42' with the thermometer at 77° Fahr.

About mid-day we returned to camp, and having had lunch and a
short siesta, started for Baalbekk, which we reached at about five
o'clock, having emerged upon the plain by a valley called Wâdy Esbát.
Najîb Bey, the governor of Baalbekk, a friend of Captain Burton's,
here came out to meet him. At Nebi Hâm we had been joined by
Mr. Barker, engineer to the Wâli, who accompanied us here to ascer-
tain if it were possible to carry out a project of Captain Burton's,
namely, the demolition of a wall which hides the fine proportions of the
Temple of Jupiter, as well as the removal of some unsightly stones on
the top of one of the beautiful cornices of the same building. These had
both been raised by Fakhr en dîn Ma'ân, the celebrated Druze chieftain,
who had turned the place into a fort. Baalbekk is entered by one of
the underground passages which form part of the substructures on
which the platform of the great temple is raised. In these the lower
courses of masonry are composed of huge stones, and apparently belong
to the Phœnician period, while the upper part is late Roman. In the
morning we went round to look at the ruins and get a general idea of
them as a whole. We first inspected the famous great stones; they are
of immense size, being at least 60 or 70 feet long, and were placed by the Phoenicians apparently as the beginning of a temple, the design of which was never completed. The late Greek architects have used them as the foundation of their larger temple, that now known as the Temple of the Sun. On one very large stone beneath an ancient window I noticed the Phoenician letter αλεπά.

The town of Baalbek is of considerable extent, and the water supply large; the principal spring is at Ras el ‘Ayn, situated just outside the town to the east. The position of the town on the edge of the fertile plain of Buka’a is one of the finest in Syria, and were commercial facilities extended to the neighbourhood by the opening of the long talked of Euphrates railway, Baalbek would undoubtedly soon regain its ancient prosperity and importance. Our tents were pitched in the centre of the ruins, or rather of the courtyard of the larger temple.

The temple of Jupiter is in beautiful preservation, though many of the columns have been overthrown and broken by earthquakes. The ceiling of the outer colonnade is magnificent, being formed of huge blocks of stone, on which are carved elaborate patterns consisting of Solomon’s seals and triangles interwoven one in the other; in the centre of each of these patterns is a large bust, smaller ones are placed round it, and intricate foliage fills the intermediate spaces. The whole effect is fine, though the intercolumniation is in rather bad taste, the pillars being placed only 9 feet apart while their diameter is 6 feet, whereas the canon of architecture decides that one and a half diameter is the least allowable distance. All the work, though very elaborate, is debased Roman. In the courtyard, where our tents were pitched, the walls are covered with niches in which statues formerly stood, these are called by the Mohammedans مکدر, and are evidently the models from which the latter took the form of their مکدر or prayer niche. The entrance to the Temple of Jupiter has been profusely ornamented; on one side is seen a bas-relief of a winged figure standing by an altar, to which a bull and sheep are being led for sacrifice. The key-stone of the gateway has partially dropped through; it has on it a bas-relief of an eagle with a winged figure on one side trailing a garland of flowers and fruit, the other side is obliterated. Beneath the temple is a vaulted chamber where “the French” are said to have discovered some treasure, an iron box full of coins.

Many of the carvings are as fresh as though they had been done but yesterday; one of them, a fallen capital about 13 feet square, shows the enormous scale on which the work was executed. Most of the columns are made of limestone, but there are also several composed of a coarse hard granite. In the centre of the courtyard are the foundations of a large building, and to the south is a large hexagonal court, and beyond that an esplanade, now, however, blocked up with modern walls. Up this the great staircase from the east appears to have led. At each end of the esplanade is a tower.

The entrance (for horses) to the building is through the arched tunnel
before spoken of; on the roof of this is an inscription. Some busts and
a figure of Ashtaroth, with the crescent moon on her head, also adorn
the ceiling. Another cross tunnel leads to a parallel one, at the east end
of which is an inscription on the ceiling similar to that just described.
At the north-west corner of the cross tunnel there are traces of what
may have been a Phœnician inscription, but it is now so effaced as to be
quite illegible. Between the two temples the remains of a covered
passage may also be discerned. On the side of the tunnel to the
south, are several chambers and an entrance, now walled up; on the
outside of this two square pillars. We lunched in the portico of
the Temple of Jupiter, and in the afternoon Mrs. Burton received a
visit from some native ladies.

After this we paid a visit to the governor, Najib Bey (a very intelli-
gent and agreeable Kurdish gentleman), to Habib Effendi, Asad Effendi
Mutran, Rafi' Effendi Mutran, some Maronite priests, and Ibrahim
Effendi Jubbûr. All these, the gentry of Baalbek, seemed to be
extremely well off, their houses being well appointed, and an air of
substantial comfort reigning throughout them. The Syrians, indeed,
are a wealthy people; for instance, at Sarghâyeh, where we had lunched
a few days previously, the sheikh, a petty village chief, had been able
to borrow the sum of 4000 napoleons to lay out in cultivating his fields.
So many visits all at once entailed an amount of sweetmeats, sherbet,
coffee, and narghilehs, which threatened entirely and for ever to
ruin our digestion.

In the morning we walked up the hill to the south-east, and visited
the ruined tomb or mosque of sheikh 'Abdallah, near which is the
Cubbet Suleiman. From that we descended to the quarry in which is
the enormous stone called the Haçjar el Hebâla, or Pregnant stone, an
immense block designed for the substructures of the neighbouring
temple, but never removed from the quarry; it measures 73 ft. in length.
The upper part and sides have been dressed, but the bottom still
adheres to the living rock. It seems impossible that it should have
ever been contemplated to move such an enormous mass, but some of
those actually built into the old wall of the Temple of the Sun are even
larger. We next came down into the plain itself, visiting the Cubbet
Mar Eliás, a wall formed of huge pieces of granite columns, taken from
some earlier building. Returning to the ruins we lunched in the old
fort of Fakhr ed din Ma'an, and later in the day went out into the
town. Amongst the objects of interest which we visited were, first, the
old mosque, where are some fine ruined granite columns and one piece
of porphyry, which (although the natives declare that it comes from
Egypt) Captain Burton has discovered on the French road near Sahl
el Jedeideh. Secondly, we inspected a large female figure sculptured
in marble, seated in a chair, with a sphynx on her left hand—the pro-
portions and execution of this figure are decidedly bad. Thirdly, we
proceeded to the little temple called by the natives El Cadisah Barbára,
Sta. Barbára; the interior is circular in shape and the work very pretty,
though debased Roman in style. In the evening we dined with the
governor, Najib Bey, who gave us a capital dinner, consisting of about
thirty courses. The next day we started off at 5.30 a.m., and after
two-and-a-half hours' walking reached the 'Ain el Baradeh, which is the
highest source of the Litâni; it forms a pleasant pool at the foot of a
mound called Tell el Baradah, the earth of which has evidently been
the site of an ancient village. At this point is the watershed of the
Buka'a; the 'Ain el Baradeh, flowing down to the Litâni southwards,
while another fountain about a mile distant flows down to the 'Asî.
The turf above the 'Ain Baradeh is called Marjat es Sahân, and
immediately above this is the Marj Baradah, in which is the Neb'a
Na'aaneh, a spring which flows down into the Litâni. Here we found a
large encampment of Turkomans, consisting of fifty or sixty tents;
they are a well-to-do tribe, and are much better dressed than other
nomad peoples. The women especially are distinguished from Bedâwîn
females by wearing trousers and red robes. Just before coming upon
them we passed an encampment of the Wuled Abu 'Eid Arabs, and
a little village called Hosh Baradeh. The second of the two springs
mentioned above, viz., that of the 'Asî, is called Neb'a el 'Elleh. In
front of it is a Tell called Mugharr Saîdeh, and further to the left
another called Tell el Jab'a. The mountain at the foot of Lebanon, and
just above the Neb'a el 'Elleh, is named Sha'arât Baalbekk. We returned
home across the plain, taking, however, a more northerly course, and
passed upon our way Neb'a Hosh ed Deheb, Neba el Caddûs (the
largest of the springs), all of which flow into the 'Asî. We re-entered
Baalbekk by the old wall of the town near the Cadîe (St.) Barâbara;
behind this is a ruined mosque called Jam'i 'es Sâghah, "The Silver-
smith's Mosque;" the earth here is like that of the part of Palmyra,
where the metal worker's quarter is said to have stood—whence the name
of the mosque. We ourselves found several pieces of slag on the spot.
Passing through the town we came to the Râs el 'Ain, the great spring
which feeds the water of Baalbekk. The spring is deliciously cool and
clear, and in the centre of the pool which it forms is a large stone, a
broken column with a capital. Beside the pool stands a mosque now
in ruins, which an inscription tells us was built by order of the then
governor by a Greek architect in the year 670 A.H. Above the pool is
a square building called Cubbet es Sath, and another Cubbeh, above
the town, immediately behind the governor's house, is called Cubbet el
Amjad. The latter is said to be the tomb of El Amjad, son of the
celebrated El Melek ed Dhûkir. From this point the large extent of
ground occupied by the old town of Baalbekk is plainly distinguishable.
The old walls may still be traced, and two of the gates, the Buwâbet
Huma and Buwâbet Makneh, still remain. Apropos of this I may
mention that gates of Eastern towns are almost invariably named from
the first large or important town in the direction of which they face.
Rising long before sunrise on the following morning we set off and
rode up the hill to the fountain called 'Ain Lujûj, keeping beside
the rock-hewn aqueduct which is said to supply every alternate five
days Baalbekk and Nahleh; the spring is situated high up the valley,
and the water issues from a small vaulted tunnel. About twenty-
five yards from this is the mouth of a well communicating with the
tunnel, and an old Syrian who accompanied us declared that he had
been all along it till he reached a flight of steps, down which the water
passed through an iron door, too narrow, however, for him to enter.
On the north side of the wādī are traces of a ruined aqueduct, leading
directly from the spring. Descending the valley on our return we rode
across the Buk'aa to visit a column which stands in the centre of the
plain. It is a Roman memorial column, and is now called Camū ‘Aiyād,
from the name ‘Eiyād, of the owner of the adjacent fields. It is a solitary
column, made of limestone, and about 50ft. high, with a capital and a
pedestal of four steps. About 20ft. up on the north-east side there has
been an inscription, but the tablet is now gone. From this point we
rode into ‘Ain Lebweh, a large and abundant spring, so embanked as
to flow out into four channels on different levels. That to the east is
said to supply Tadmor, and it really does go as far as El Kā‘ah, a village
some thirteen or fourteen miles distant, where all the water is made
use of for purposes of irrigation. At 3 o’clock p.m. we reached
the village of Lebweh, passing Makneb and Yuhnin on the night; the latter
is the residence of Husein Za‘īb, sheikh of the Mutāweleh; on the left
we passed two other villages, the lower named Sh‘at and the upper
Nebhā. At Lebweh we stopped to lunch, and after a short siesta rode
on past El ‘Ain and Fikah to Rās Baalbekk, a village said to be the
most beautiful in Syria, but which is really only a patch of gardens at
the foot of bleak barren hills situated on the edge of an almost desert
plain. Our ride was altogether about thirty-six miles.

Leaving our camp at Er Rās the next morning, we made an excursion
to ‘Ain Zerka, the great source of the ‘Āsi. The valley down which
this river flows is called, between Lebweh and ‘Ain Zerka, El
Majerr, after which point it takes the name of ‘Āsi. Starting at 5.40
a.m. we rode over the plain, and reached ‘Ain Zerka in two hours. It
is a very pretty spring, overhung with plane trees, from which depend
graceful festoons of wild vine. About 200 yards below it is a second
and more copious spring, the Neb‘a ‘Āsi itself; and the Orontes, which
above the Zerka was only a trickling stream not a foot deep, now rushes
on a swollen and impetuous river, 70ft. or more in width, and from 3 to
6ft. deep. The valley here is very deep; on the eastern side the rocks
are conglomerate limestone, but on the western bank there is a lower
stratum of sandstone. Although the river is thickly lined with trees,
the valley is so deep that standing a little distance off upon the plain
above, one might fail to notice its existence. High up in the rocks, about
300 yards on the right bank of the valley below the Neb‘a ‘Āsi on the
eastern bank of the wādī, is the rock-hewn convent of Mār Marūn, the
founder of the Syrian Christian sect of the Maronites. It is a picturesque
place, entirely excavated in the living rock, and faced with masonry in
which are loopholes for the defence of the convent. The entry is into a
small chamber half cut in the rock, then we pass along a passage formed
by a wall of masonry built upon a ledge of rock facing south. In the
face of the cliff behind this wall are niches cut in the stone. We next
cross by a bridge of earth and boughs (constructed by the Arabs, who
still make use of the place) into the interior of the excavation, and find
it to consist of three large chambers and one small one on the ground
floor. The innermost of these has evidently served for the church.
The first floor is reached by a staircase hewn in the live rock, and con­
tains only one room; the second floor can only be gained by a ladder
through a circular hole in the roof of the first floor at the head of the
staircase. The convent is in the lower part of a steep cliff about 150ft.
above the bed of the Orontes. Returning to 'Ain Zerka, we breakfasted
and rode off to the Camúa Hirmil, a singular isolated monument on an
elevated ridge, commanding an extensive view of the neighbouring plain.
It is a square monument consisting of three storeys, the upper one
pyramidal in shape, the second a square with a pilaster at each corner,
and two on each face; the lower one is also square, with a pilaster at
each corner, and the whole rests on five steps, two of limestone, and the
other three of black basalt, which here crops out. The masonry is solid,
as can be seen on the south-west side where the face has broken away.
On the faces of the lower storey are rude bas-reliefs, representing
animals, and weapons of the chase, bows, arrows, hunting-knives,
quivers, and the like. The north-west has two bears; the north-east two
stags, one standing and the other couchant and wounded; the south­
east two dogs and a wild boar; and on the south-west (the broken) side
are the remains of what was apparently the figure of a gazelle pursued
by a dog.
The monument probably marks the site of the ancient Paradisus.
This word signifies "a hunting park," and the nature of the sculptures,
as well as the correspondence of the situation with the topographical
notices of that locality found in ancient authors, points almost with
certainty to this conclusion.

We next rode over the plain to the village of El Ká'ah, where there is
a fort built by Fakhr Eddín Ma'án, as a half-way station between Baal­
beck and Hums (the ancient Emesa). After a light meal with the
sheikh of the village, we returned to Rás Baalbekk, which we reached
about 5 p.m. after a ride of over twenty-five miles, and having arrived
in camp we proceeded to inspect the ruins existing in the neighbour­
hood. On a hill to the north-east of the town is a ruined church called
Der Má'r Túma, "St. Thomas' Convent," and below this, in the bed of
the wády, is another convent dedicated to St. John, the only present
denizen of which is a single monk, who remains there in order to keep
up the territorial rights of his fraternity. In the precipitous cliffs at
the head of the wády are some caves which once formed part of the
convent of Má'r Kúlia.

Close by the town, and also situated on the bed of the wády, are some
traces of older buildings, viz., the convent of Mar Sim‘āu, the foundations of a large Byzantine church, with three apses, and to the north-west of the town the convent of St. John. The ancient name of Rās Ba‘albekk, according to the Arabs, was Catfneh; it is called Rās Ba‘albekk because the hills on which it stands project like a headland (Rās) into the Bukā‘ah. The ruins of the old town lie to the south-west of the city, amongst the vineyards and trees.

The house-tops here, as in many other Syrian villages, are covered with compressed dung arranged in square or round enclosures; these are used as sleeping-places (!) in summer, and as fuel in winter, wood being very scarce in the country.

Striking across the plain in a north-westerly direction on the following morning, we came, after an hour’s ride, to the foot of the moraine which leads up into Wādy Fi‘rā. This is a winding, thickly-wooded valley filled with butmeh, wild pear, sindian, hawthorn, juniper, and arbutus trees; it flows down from the sub-range of es-Sha‘arēh at the foot of Lebanon. On our way we passed a furnace for making pitch, which is obtained from the butmeh or terebinth, just alluded to. For three hours we continued to ascend this valley, and at the expiration of that time reached the uplands—a valley dividing es-Sha‘arēh from the Lebanon proper. In the centre of this valley is a spring called ‘Ayūn Urghush, which we reached in another hour, and where we stopped to breakfast. The waters of this spring, after flowing for a short distance, sink into the ground and are lost to sight. We found the same to be the case, not only with all the other springs on the mountain, but with almost every hollow where the snow collects, and this fact may account for the immense force with which the waters rush out in the springs at the foot of the range.

Crossing over the watershed into Wādy Nussūr, amongst rugged limestone débris, we arrived after two hours at ‘Ain Atā, a little collection of mud hovels, situated at the point where the wādy first begins to widen out and present any appearance of fertility, for the intermediate distance had been over ground rough and barren in the extreme. The stream which runs along the wādy is fringed with drift-wood, showing the force with which the winter torrents rush along its bed. Some of the Maronite inhabitants here came up to welcome Captain Burton as the French consul, and began to deliver an address replete with fulsome praise to the French and depreciation of the English. On being warned, however, of their mistake, they as suddenly veered round, and said they had tried the French as allies, but finding them wanting, had adopted the English as their only friends! We encamped beneath some fine walnut trees on the side of the valley opposite to ‘Ain Atā, and near a rapid stream. The waters of Wādy Nussūr flow southward into the Birket Yamūneh, a small lake which we could just see in the distance.

The next day was devoted to the exploration of the summit of Lebanon, for which the unusual drought that had prevailed during the past year, and theleness of the season, afforded us unusual advantages.
In the spring and winter, when travellers usually visit the neighbourhood, the mountain is covered with snow, and the passes scarcely practicable. The summit is rarely, if ever visited. I do not suppose that even in the worst season, the summit of Lebanon would present any formidable difficulties to an Alpine mountaineer, but it must be remembered that the Syrian traveller carries his hotel upon his mules' backs, and is therefore compelled to regulate his marches by the endurance of his animals and guides. We started at 5.30 a.m. and reached the top of the pass in an hour and a half. The view from this was very fine, as it comprised on the east the greater part of the Buka'a, bounded only by the range of Jebel Sherkiyeh (Anti-Lebanon) and Jebel es Sheikh; to the south-west were the mountains of Sunin, the lower portion of the Lebanon range, with the Birket Yaműneh lying between it and the ridge on where we stood. To the north rose the lofty snow-capped peaks, the ascent of which was to form our day's work, and on the west opened out an entirely new prospect—the steep descent into Wády el Cadischeh, the little patch of cedars on the mountain side, the rugged steep-banked Wády Cadischeh itself, and the coast line with the sea stretching out for miles and miles beyond. On the very surface of the sea innumerable clouds appeared to rest, invisible from below, but gradually rising throughout the day until the, ultimately covered the mountain tops and enveloped them in mist. This side of the mountain, viz., that in which the cedars lie, forms a huge amphitheatre or basin, which, although the most decided and remarkable feature in the landscape, has been entirely neglected by cartographers, and even unnoticed by the surveying party sent out here by the French government. The Lebanon proper consists of five peaks, which we visited one after the other, ascertaining the comparative heights with the aneroid. The walking was very severe, lying all the way over deep valleys filled with snow.

Descending by a steep zigzag path to the cedars, we pitched our camp and proceeded to examine the sacred and renowned grove, and could not repress a feeling of disappointment at its small extent, and the insignificant appearance of the trees. They consist of a little clump of trees of comparatively modern growth, not more than nine of them showing any indications of a respectable antiquity, and covering only about three acres of ground. They stand on a ridge consisting of five mounds and two spurs running nearly east and west, as in the accompanying plan.

The whole number of trees we estimated at about 355; their size has also been grossly exaggerated, none of them being over 80 ft. high. The ground is covered with débris of cedar and white limestone, and in the centre of the clump is a hideous little building, a Maronite chapel, the appointments of which are painfully poverty-stricken and inadequate. The trees have been lopped and otherwise maltreated, especially by the irrepressible tourist, who has been at infinite pains to cut his name on every available trunk. One tree, rather a large one,
has a hole in it where a branch had broken away, and this has been enlarged into a chamber. They are scrubby scanty specimens, and not half so fine as may be seen in many an English park.

In the afternoon we walked down towards Wády Cádiséh to Neb'a Már Sim'án, a gorgeous fountain situated about an hour and a half from the cedars, where the water streams out in a perfect torrent on the north side of the valley, and flows down to the village of B'sherreh. On our way we passed other springs, ‘Ain es’ Siyár, Neb’a en Nebát and Neb’a Harfúsh. The view of Wády Cádiséh, on emerging from the cedars, was the finest we had seen in Syria; the deep-cut ravine, the huge regular-shaped amphitheatre, a tall saddle-backed hill called Saiyidat el Hosan cutting the horizon line towards the sea, the fertile hill sides, the picturesque mountain outlines, and above all the soft Alpine colouring, deep green and softest blue, all this was an agreeable change from the monotonous character of the scenery through which we had lately passed.

At the cedars we took leave of our kind travelling companions, who were going to visit the Maronite patriarch at Kanabín on their road to Jebel Sunín, and keeping along the slope of the mountains to the north of Wády Cádiséh, reached Ehden in two and a half hours by an exceedingly rough and difficult road. The country through which we passed was excessively fertile, the hill sides being covered with cultivated terraces, and yielding abundant crops of corn, maize, potatoes, turmus, &c. Near Ehden also are large plantations of mulberry trees, for feeding silk worms; the cultivation of which forms one of the staple commodities of the country on the western slopes of the Lebanon. It was a market day when we arrived, and we found the town crowded with buyers and sellers, every one dressed in their gayest attire. The sight was very picturesque, the men in red embroidered ‘abbas or gay jackets, the women wearing gay muslins and cottons and enormous trousers, the married females wearing a kind of silver saucepan on their heads and an extensive turban. There is a large convent here not yet finished, and dedicated to Már Jirjia. On the south side of the valley we passed the villages of Haddat, Jesúreh, and Kefeirat Ghúb. At Ehden we breakfasted in the open street on grapes, figs, and bread.

Continuing our journey in a north-westerly direction, we reached Carn Cáltú, a hill which forms the last of the ridge overlooking the coast plain. On the north-east of this hill we found a large sarcophagus cut out of a single isolated block of stone; it is shaped like a gondola, and measures 20ft. in length, by 7ft. in breadth. It is called Námús el ‘Abd. The earth has been partially removed from it, the natives having, a few years ago, dug there in search of treasure. About twenty-five yards to the north of this are the ruins of an ancient temple about 20ft. by 18ft., standing on a levelled platform at the edge of a precipitous cliff. The green wooded hill immediately to the north of this is called El ‘Ajabých. A very steep and awkward road, called ‘Akabat Hairúni, led us down to the edge of the hills on the coast
south of Tripoli. The edge of the plain was reached in two hours, and in three hours more we came to Zaghartah, where we encamped. The country is extremely fertile, abounding in olives and mulberry trees. On our way we passed the villages of Farfatah, Daráyah, and Farhálah, all of which were quite deserted, the inhabitants having gone up into the mountains for the summer. We pitched our tent by the side of the river which runs by Zaghartah, after having been eight and a half hours on the road.

From Zaghartah we reached Tripoli by an excellent road in about an hour, passing a village called Almah on our way. The town is picturesque, but extremely dirty and uncomfortable, consisting of narrow gloomy arched streets knee-deep in filth and decayed vegetables. It is situated at the foot of the plateau which here falls in a step of from 200ft. to 300ft. on to the shore plain. A fort at the east of the town commands it, but is itself overlooked from the hill above. The Mína, or port, is some three miles distant on the coast, and the intervening ground is thickly covered with trees. It is a hot unhealthy place, and the population chiefly Muslim. In two and a half hours from Tripoli we reached Cal'at el Mesailíbeh, passing the village of Ameyún and two little wayside inns or stores called Dúkán 'Asfúr and Dúkán el Hirrah. Next crossing a promontory called Rás Núriyeh, we passed by a steep winding road amongst rather picturesque hills into Wády Emseilíbah, where there is a picturesque old fort perched upon a tall isolated rock in the centre of the valley. An hour and three quarters from Tripoli we came upon the remains of a small temple and other adjacent ruins by the sea shore. In three hours from Rás Núriyeh we reached Batrún, a well-to-do, neat, little Christian town, where we rested for the night.

Outside the town are several small smelting furnaces, and immediately below the surface of the ground we could detect a rich vein of iron ore which is worked to a small extent by the inhabitants of the place. Diving for sponges is one of the chief occupations of the poorer peasants in this part of the coast, and we saw many men engaged in their dangerous pursuit as we rode along.

Three and a half hours from Batrún brought us to Jebeil, a compact little walled town noted for producing the best tobacco (Jebeili) in Syria. This place is the ancient Byblus; numerous columns of grey granite and sarcophagi were lying about in the neighbourhood. Here we stopped to lunch off some magnificent grapes, which we bought for a farthing a pound.

In an hour and a half we reached Nahr Ibrahim, anciently called the Adonis, a considerable stream, the mouth of which is closed in by a large bar of shingle. Immediately past it is the small village of Dákaibeh, and two and a half hours further on is situated, in a very pretty bay, the mercantile and maritime village of Júníeh. On the hills above (the slopes of Jebel Kesrún) are large mulberry plantations, villas, silkworm manufactories, &c., all of which give an air of
life and civilisation to the place. The luxuriant vegetation coming
down to the edge of the sea, the general richness of the soil, and the
softness of the colouring, reminded us forcibly of southern Italy. In
an hour and a quarter more we passed over a space of thickly wooded
land, and came to the Nahr el Kalb, or Dog River, where we bathed
and encamped.

After examining the famous tablets, all of which, except the Latin and
part of the Assyrian one, are too much effaced to be legible, we walked
up the valley for some distance, but could discover no traces of an
ancient road continued along the rocks. Indeed such a work would
have been unnecessary, as the wady widens out, and is now practicable
for mules. Near the bridge on the south side of the stream is a long
Arabic inscription on the flat face of the rock, 15ft. long by 5ft. deep;
it is much effaced, but the style of the writing, which is beautifully ex­
cuted, greatly resembles that of the period of the famous monarch
El Melik ed Dhahir.

On the north side of the valley is a fine old aqueduct, built on large
arches. A short and pretty ride along the shore brought us at last to
Beyrouth, where we were soon installed in Bassoul's comfortable hotel.

Note.—The Map of Moab published with this number of the Quar­
terly Statement, completes the geographical work of Mr. Palmer, the
larger portion of which was embodied in the map of the Tih Desert.
Some of the work of Captain Warren is also incorporated in it. Like its predecessor, this map is only a route-sketch, the route
of the travellers being marked throughout. In the next number of
the Quarterly Statement, Mr. Palmer proposes to give transcriptions
of all the inscriptions in the Haram es Sherif, together with their
translation, and a complete account of the history of the Mosque,
drawn from Arabic sources. A notice of some other inscriptions
in Jerusalem, and notes of a journey through Palestine, will be
included in the same paper.
NOTE ON THE METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS

Published in the "Quarterly Statement" (First Series, Nos. III., IV., and V.)

A writer, M. Alfred Gautier (Professor of Astronomy), in the "Archives des Sciences de la Bibliothèque Universelle," after quoting the results arrived at by Mr. Glaisher and published as above, gives the following comparative table of mean temperatures:

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Or reduced to Fahrenheit—

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