

11. *Bethsaida* at *el Mes'aideh* I proposed with hesitation some time ago. The idea is, therefore, not new ; but further consideration induced me to look for the true site further north.

12. *Beten* at *Tibuin* is inappropriate topographically, and the argument which places Beten at *el Baneh* is overlooked by the author.

13. *Helkath* at *Yerka* is also not new. Vandevelde proposed it a long time ago, and it appears in "Names and Places," p. 84, with a query.

14. *Achshaph* at *Kala't esh Shukif* is not satisfactory as regards philology, since the *Caph* and the *Qaf* are confused. The site also is a Crusading Castle ("Castle of the Cliff," as the name implies) : the position is not that in which Achshaph can be supposed to have lain, and the identification which I proposed at *Kefr Yusif* seems to me more probable.

15. *Janoah* at *Hunin* is not in any way to be preferred to the old dentification at *Yanith* which presents exactly the Hebrew word, whereas *Hunin* has no connection at all with the Hebrew root.

It would seem, therefore, that out of these 15 new identifications there is not one of any real value. Several of the proposals introduce great confusion into the topography, and in a third of the cases the proposals are not new, while several others suggest that the author is not familiar with the words in the original languages and characters.

ESSAYS ON THE SECTS AND NATIONALITIES OF SYRIA AND PALESTINE.

(Continued from April "Quarterly Statement," p. 153.)

THE MARONITES.

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IV.

THE RITUAL.

The Maronite service books contain two languages, the Syriac and the Arabic. In general, it may be said that the portions relating to the direct worship of God are in Syriac, and those looking towards the edification of the people are in Arabic. For example, the mass, the seven daily hours of prayer, and the funeral services are in Syriac, while the rites of baptism and marriage are largely in Arabic, including some of the prayers. The scriptures are always in the people's language. The Arabic, however, is written in the Syriac character, and spoken of as Karshuni. Some parts of the ritual are chanted to tunes containing minor intervals, melancholy yet pleasing in effect. In churches which do not have regular singers, the men and boys often join in the chanting.

A well-to-do church should contain from 12 to 15 different books. The poorer churches may dispense with some of these. The following is a list of books :—

I. The Sh̄im, containing the prayers for seven times in the day, for the seven different days in the week, all in Syriac : 1. Evening prayer. 2. Sittar, an hour or two after sunset. 3. Midnight. 4. Dawn. 5. Third hour. 6. Noon. 7. Ninth hour. These prayers are said regularly in the convent churches, five times a day, the fourth being combined with the fifth, and the sixth with the seventh. The parish priests should also say them in their own houses. At the hour of prayer a priest may often be seen walking upon his flat roof, service-book in hand. Not all priests understand the literal meaning of the Syriac. In the parish churches the Sh̄im is used only in the evening service, which is held at the option of the priest. The gospels for the day are read on Sundays and feast-days, or if a large congregation is present. The large Sh̄im used in the churches is usually in manuscript. There is an old printed edition, and a new edition is now in press. The priests carry an abridged form, which is printed.

II. Book for feast-days, in two volumes, for summer and winter. They contain Syriac prayers for various hours in the day, which are substituted for those in the Sh̄im. In a church too poor to own these books the Sh̄im is read instead. Usually found in manuscript, though an edition was printed in Rome, omitting the two Marūns.

IV. Book of the Mass, in Syriac, with Arabic gospels.

V. Sinksar ; brief notices in Arabic of the apostles, prophets, martyrs, saints and councils, for every day in the year. Two or three commemorations often occur on the same day. Manuscript ; read at the evening service.

VI. Rish Quryan, Arabic selections from the prophetical passages in the Scriptures (as from the Psalms and the Epistles, as well as from the Prophets), to be read on feast-days.

VII. Epistles of St. Paul.

VIII. Gospels, printed at Rome in parallel columns, Syriac and Karshuni.

IX. Funeral services, for a Patriarch, priest, monk, man, woman, &c.

X. The Ritual for Ash Monday, Palm Sunday, the Washing of the Feet, Good Friday, Easter, Pentecost, the Feast of Mar Marūn, &c. Largely in Arabic. Printed at Rome, 1839 ; title : *Rituale aliaeque piæ precatio[n]es ad usum ecclesiae Maroniticae*.

XI. Rites of baptism, churcning, betrothal, marriage, extreme unction, &c. Printed at Rome in 1840 ; title : *Ritus administrandi nonnulla sacram. ad usum eccl. Antiochenæ Maronitarum*.

XII. Book for Lent, to be substituted for Sh̄im ; but not found in poorer churches. Syriac manuscript.

XIII. Book for Passion week. Syriac manuscript. In churches that can afford a copy, it is substituted for the Sh̄im.

XIV. Service of Deacon.

XV. Ephraimite. Chants by St. Ephraim, to be introduced into different parts of the service.

Among the church books it is very uncommon to find an ancient manuscript on vellum. The late Patriarch declared to me that there were no old books to be found in the Lebanon, owing to the frequent wars engaged in by Moslems, Metawileh, Turks, and Crusaders, when churches and convents were devasted. It is understood that he had a good private collection. I am told that it included a MS. professing to be in the handwriting of Mar Yuhanna Marûn found in the store-room of the convent of Deir Hâb, but I do not put much faith in the story. I have seen three or four illuminated gospels, the oldest of which may have been 500 years, but the chances to find such manuscripts are growing rarer every year. The Priors of monasteries have no right to sell their books. The late Monsignor Joseph David, Syriac Catholic Archbishop of Damascus, told me that during the first half of the century a rich collection of Syriac manuscripts was burned in the Greek convent of Sedanaya for fear of their falling into the hands of the Maronites.

Mass is said every day in the year except on Good Friday. Every Maronite is obliged to confess and commune at least once every year, at Easter. In some places at this time the priest goes about with a ledger, in which he writes the names of the villagers present, who must come to confession. I was told by the son of a priest that in the case of very old and holy men, communion may be taken without an antecedent confession. As to frequency of taking the Eucharist, it is impossible to make any general statement, as the people vary in this matter as do members of English churches where the sacrament is constantly celebrated. It is usually taken on the great feasts. The cup is not given to the laity. Mass is never commenced after noon, but in the case of a great feast, as of Easter, where the communicants are many, it may be prolonged till after mid-day. In the villages, even upon Sunday, the mass is usually said soon after sun rise. As an illustration of the high sacramental views taught, I may mention a story told by a well-known Maronite preacher of a Jew who, having received the wafer from the priest at mass, took it from his mouth, and going home threw it in the fire, whence there emerged a little child weeping. The Eucharist may be taken as early as a child understands the meaning of confession and before his confirmation.

It may be well to speak briefly of certain ceremonies occurring during the church year. On December 15th, the priest consecrates two wafers; he partakes of one, and the other he puts in the "house of the body" on the altar, to be taken out and elevated every evening from the 16th to the 24th inclusive, in celebration of the nine months of the Virgin's pregnancy. On the evening before Christmas he eats the second wafer. In some churches the nine months of pregnancy are not celebrated in this way, but by carrying the picture of the child about the church for nine days previous to Christmas. Representations of the manger, with toy images of the mother and child, the cattle, sheep, &c., are found, but

not commonly in the mountain churches, a fact probably indicating that the custom is a recent innovation.

The rites of blessing the water on the feast of the Baptism of Christ, January 6th, occurs at the beginning of the midnight mass. The Sacristan places a bowl of water on the lectern or on a table in front of the altar, and lights two candles. The priest says prayers in Syriac and Arabic, and selections are read from the Epistle to Titus and the Gospel of John, the latter selection being the account of the Woman of Samaria. The priest then takes a coal from the censer and immerses it in the bowl of water; this he does three times, in the name of each person of the Trinity respectively. He then sprinkles the people with the consecrated water. After mass the people take some of the water home in bottles. The priest also visits the houses and sprinkles them with the holy water.

The rite of blessing the candles on the Feast of the Presentation of Christ to the Temple, February 2nd, is an important one. A tray of candles is placed on the lectern. In the prayers, both Arabic and Syriac, constant reference is made to the Light of the World. The account of the creation of the sun and moon is read, also the account of the golden candlesticks made by Moses, also the description of the New Jerusalem which needs no light, but that which the Lord gives, and finally the passage in Ephesians v, 8-14, where they are exhorted to walk as children of Light. After blessing the candles and sprinkling them with holy water, the priest distributes these among the people, who must make an offering of money in return. The value of the candles for believers is held to be great; they ward off sickness and evil spirits, especially at the time of death. Sometimes they are burned in the booth where silk-worms are being raised.

On the Feast of Mar Martin, February 9th, the picture of the Saint is placed on the altar, and during the rite it is borne around the church three times, in a procession. After mass the people come forward to kiss the picture. Mar Martin is commemorated also on the second Sunday of every month. On the third Sunday of every month there is an especial service in connection with the Society of the Scapular of Our Lady of Mount Carmel.

In the Maronite church, Lent begins with Ash Monday. On Saturday evening the Sacristan takes from the Sacristy the dried olive branches preserved from the Palm Sunday of the previous year, and reduces them to ashes by burning them in a brazier. On Monday the ashes are placed in a tray on the lectern, and before the mass a special service is read, with prayers in Syriac and Arabic. It is directed that the Psalms should be sung to a "sad tune." The priest sprinkles the ashes with holy water, and incenses them from the censer, praying for a blessing upon them. Then the people advance one by one, and the priest makes the sign of the cross on their foreheads with the ashes saying: "Remember, O man, that dust thou art and that to dust thou shalt return." At the end of the rite the priest reminds the people that the Roman church has ordained that believers, receiving this rite with real

repentance, shall obtain forgiveness for 40 years ; referring undoubtedly to remittance of purgatorial punishments.

On every Friday in Lent a special service commemorative of the death of Christ is read.

We may mention here a general custom in which the Maronites share. On the Saturday before Palm Sunday the school boys go from house to house carrying a long roll of paper, on which has been written by the teacher a poetical account of the raising of Lazarus. Two boys unroll the paper, another lies on the ground under it and the rest chant the story. When they reach the point where Lazarus comes forth, the boy gets up and the paper is rolled up again. A collection is made of money and eggs, &c., part of which goes to the teacher.

On Palm Sunday a tray of olive twigs is placed on the lectern, and a special service takes place. After the blessing of the twigs or branches, there is a procession, in which boys sometimes bear the branches ; the singers introduce in the chants the words "Hosanna to the Son of David." The service is long and contains much scripture. After mass the people take home the twigs for a blessing. I am told that it was an ancient practice to erect an olive tree in the church, but that it was given up as there arose some unseemly disturbance when the people pulled it to pieces. The Greeks celebrate Palm Sunday in a somewhat similar manner, but do not go through with the ceremony of the ashes on Ash Monday.

During Passion week the pictures are draped in the Maronite churches, and a black curtain is hung over the altar with models sewn upon it in white cotton—representations of the Cross, the crown of thorns, the nails, hammer, pincers, the scourge of ropes, the striking hand, the ewer and basin used by Pilate, the cock, the torch, a sword, the sun, moon, and stars, the sponge, and the spear.

On Thursday of Passion week occurs the rite of washing the Disciples' feet. In the Greek church in Syria the Patriarch performs this at Jerusalem, but the priests do not observe it while in the Maronite church the ceremony is observed in every village. I witnessed it recently in the cathedral church of Beirût, which was so densely thronged with spectators that Turkish soldiers were on guard. The high altar was draped, but over the right side altar was erected a lofty canopy, or framework hung with white muslin, trimmed with pink ribbons, and decorated with candles and flowers, both real and artificial. In this booth was kept the wafer which had been consecrated that morning, that on Good Friday, when no mass is said, the priest might communicate. In the village of Hammana I was told that this was not the custom.

A platform was built out into the nave below the pulpit. It was carpeted, and on it were placed twelve chairs, six facing six, on which sat twelve surpliced boys. The Bishop in his ordinary dress mounted the platform, and there was robed in canonicals, with mitre and staff and took his seat at the end. In the pulpit a priest and deacon chanted the account in the Gospel of John. When they came to the words,

"He arose from supper," the Bishop arose, was disrobed, and was girt about with a towel ; attendants carried a ewer, basin, and an embroidered towel, the Bishop then washed the heel of the right foot of three boys, kissing the foot, while they kissed his hand. He then was robed again and took his seat, while some chanting went on. The readers began again, and the Bishop proceeded to wash the feet of three other boys, as before. This was repeated a third and a fourth time ; except that after washing the feet of two of the last three boys, when the reader reached the words, "Then cometh he to Simon Peter, and Peter said unto him :" the remaining boy rose and read from a paper, "Lord, dost thou wash my feet ?" The Bishop read the reply, and when the conversation between Jesus and Peter was completed, the Bishop finished the washing. There was no attempt at dramatic representation. In the villages the ceremony is conducted in a simple manner, though the rite is the same. The service book, however, gives an alternative rite for small churches. After the ceremony is over the boy who is supposed to have represented Judas is sometimes mocked and beaten by his comrades, in a spirit of mischief.

On the same Thursday the Patriarch, with two or three Bishops, at his Seat, consecrates the oil of baptism, oil for extreme unction, and the Meirún (oil containing balsam) for ordination and confirmation, to be used also in the rite of baptism. These three kinds of oil are distributed by the Bishops among all the Maronite churches for use during the year. Oil remaining from the year before is burned.

The rite of the adoration of the cross, commonly called the burial, is celebrated on Good Fridays. In the Book of Ritual it is appointed before noon, but when I saw it it took place about 4 p.m. In the centre of the church there was erected a small platform, upon which was placed a short, deep bier, hung with white lace and pink cambric. As the people came in they threw bunches of flowers into the bier. In front of the altar there was a wooden stand, with steps, on which was erected a cross, with a coloured plaster figure of the Saviour fastened to it. This figure, which was hardly a yard long, was covered with crape. On either side there was a candle, one of them veiled in crape. A round table covered with service books stood just outside the altar rails at one side ; the priest and laymen both read from the books on the table, the former standing within and the latter without the rails. The priest wore no robes but put on the stole at times. The service was long and impressive, including many melancholy chants and selections from the scriptures. After it had continued for some time the candles around the bier were lighted, also the one candle near the cross and the candles under an altar at the side of the church, where a place decorated with flowers had been prepared to receive the figure. The priest unfastened the figure from the cross, and bearing it into the body of the church placed it in the bier, covering it up with flowers. Four men in surplices took up the bier and carried it around the church three times, preceded by the priest walking backward and swinging the censer, and followed by a procession

of men and boys chanting and bearing candles. When they put down the bier the priest walked around it, prostrating himself on each side. He then took a large silver crucifix and held it up for the people to kiss, repeating as they pressed forward the Arabic salutation for feast days, equivalent to "Many happy returns of the day," literally, "Every year may you be at peace." As the people left the church they stopped before a small table at which was seated the wakeel of the church with a plate before him containing a mixture of oil and dough, into which he dipped a candle, making the sign of the cross on the forehead of those who dropped a piece of money on the table. Later, the crucifix was placed in the "tomb" I have mentioned at the side of the church. In the village services the ceremony is less elaborate; a simple crucifix is placed on a black cloth resting on a chair, the cloth taking the place of the bier. In the Greek church, which allows no image, a cloth on which is imprinted the figure of the Saviour is carried by four men. I have seen people bend and pass under the cloth as the procession went around the church.

No bells should be rung on Thursday, Friday, or Saturday till noon.

The services on Easter begin immediately after midnight. The altars are decorated and the pictures undraped. The priest wears his robes and, after some prayers, approaches the tomb accompanied by deacons and people bearing candles. He incenses the tomb three times, and calls out in Syriac three times: "Christ who rose from the house of the dead has had mercy on us." He then takes out the figure or crucifix, covers it with a white veil, and carries it in front of his face, while the people follow in grand procession singing and chanting. After all have kissed the cross the flowers are distributed to the people "for a blessing." Easter Sunday and Monday are celebrated universally. The ecclesiastics receive visitors, who bring with them gifts. The people also visit each other, and come out in new clothes. The children amuse themselves by colouring eggs, which they strike together in a sort of game. Tuesday is also a feast, but the people are not required to abstain from labour as on Monday.

Between Easter and Pentecost the people do not kneel in the churches, nor prostrate themselves, as a sign that they are "risen in Christ." Accordingly, on the latter feast, on which they return to their kneeling, there is a special rite, divided into three parts, in honour of the Three Persons in the Godhead respectively. In each part there are prayers and readings from the Psalms, the Acts or Epistles, and the Gospel of St. John. At the end of the first part the priest says in a loud voice, turning to the people, "Kneel before the Lord upon the left knee." The people obey, and after a prayer the priest says: "Rise in the strength of God and worship Him who rides upon the sunsettings,"¹ &c. In the second part they kneel upon the right knee, and lastly upon both knees together. The language of the rite is certainly very impressive.

The Feast of Corpus Christi is observed under the Arabic name of

¹ Probably a rendering of שְׁבֹות in Ps. lxviii

The Thursday of the Body. Occasionally there is a procession bearing the Host from church to church.

On the Feast of St. Peter and St. Paul there is a procession, and a basin of water is blessed and placed on the lectern, from which after the service the people fill small bottles of water to take to their homes.

The rite of baptism is largely in Arabic. Pure water, warm or cold, is to be used. It is to be poured on the head in three handfuls, and not sprinkled except in cases of extreme necessity ; in such exceptional cases the water must trickle down the face. The child should be either entirely undressed and placed in the font, or else have its head bared, in which case it is held over the font. When there is fear of death a midwife may baptise, but she is to use the formula : "I baptise thee," &c., and not the words "I seal thee," &c. (The Arabic word شفاعة, is obsolete ; it originally means to seal or stamp, as wheat when measured.) Nothing but holy water should be used except in extreme cases. The god-parents should be seven years of age at least. It is required that the names of the god-parents, the child, and the priest officiating, should be registered in the church book. One god-parent is sufficient, but there may be two.

The priest meets the child with its god-parents at the door of the church, and after a prayer he asks the child's name ; when this is given, he asks what is the reward of faithfulness ; the answer is : "Life everlasting." The priest then says : "If thou wouldest lay hold on life everlasting keep the Commandments, that thou shouldest love the Lord thy God with all," &c., &c. The priest then says to the child : "May the evil spirit go out of thee, that the righteous spirit of holiness may dwell in thee." Here follows a direct adjuration to the evil spirit. He then blows in four corners of the child's face, as a sign of the cross. Then placing his hand on the child's head he prays for spiritual blessing. Here follows the blessing of the salt ; the priest then puts a little in the mouth of the child, saying : "Receive, O child, this salt of wisdom, that it may benefit thee in the everlasting life." Then follows another adjuration to the evil spirit : "I adjure thee, thou evil, accursed spirit, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, that thou depart far from this thy servant, in the strength of the Lord Christ, by which He walked on the waves of the sea as if He were on dry land, and in the strength by which He put forth His hand and saved Peter when he was about to sink."

They then enter the church, the priest bearing the child. After some prayers, the repetition of the Lord's Prayer and of the Nicene Creed by the god-parents, and another adjuration to the evil spirit to depart and give place to the Holy Ghost, the priest places his hand upon the nose of the child, saying : "Open, O nostrils, and breathe in the sweet odours of God, and flee thou accursed one, baffled because the judgment of God is nigh." Here the priest approaches the font, pouring water in it, and lights a candle. He adjures the evil spirit to depart from the water "that it may be a fountain causing eternal life." After several responsive

entences, he drops three drops of tallow into the water, saying : "In this water man is regenerated by a new birth, and becomes the first born of Heaven . . . for all are born from the womb of the church, the spiritual mother, by a new birth. Drive out, O Lord, every evil spirit and every Satanic wile from this water that nothing opposed to the mystery of baptism may have influence in it, now and for ever." During the blessing of the water the priest blows upon it, and then plunges a lighted candle into it, saying when he takes it out : "May the power of the Holy Ghost enter the water to blot out all sins . . . that whoever is bathed in it may be born a new child, pure, purified by the grace of the Holy Trinity." He then puts in the water some of the oil of baptism, praying that it may be united to the water ; and also some of the Meirûn. After asking whether the child renounces Satan and all his works, he anoints his breast and shoulders with the oil. The child is then questioned as to his belief, the god-parents answering for him. The baptism is then performed, the priest pouring a handful on the head of the child in the name of each Person of the Trinity. The child is then returned to the god-parent, and the priest, putting his thumb in the Meirûn, anoints him on the forehead, praying that he may be anointed by the Meirûn of Salvation. The priest then washes the child, puts a white veil upon him, and gives him a light, all with appropriate prayers, referring to the symbolic meaning. The ceremony closes with a procession, and with prayers in Syriac and Arabic.

Once, in speaking with a Maronite peasant about the frequent ablutions of the Moslems, I remarked on the fact that the Christians have no such ceremonies. "No," he replied, "the Moslems were never cleansed in baptism as we are, and are always trying to get rid of their natural evil odour by washing themselves all over, but without success. Thank God, I have had no need of a bath since I was baptised." I heard this physical theory of baptism advanced some time later, in another place, by a Greek Catholic, from which it might be inferred that it is common among the peasantry.

As marriage customs and festivities are the same with all Christian sects in Syria, it will be sufficient to give a brief outline of the Maronite service.

The priest is commanded to inquire if there be any impediment to the marriage. In computing the degree of relationship, the Eastern Church counts all the persons up to the common ancestor. For example, first cousins are said to be related in the fourth degree ; an uncle and his niece, in the third degree ; children of cousins, in the sixth degree. The Eastern Church forbids marriage within the seventh degree. According to the Council of Lebanon, the Maronites are forbidden to marry within the eighth degree, Eastern computation ; in the fourth degree, Latin computation. Licence may be obtained from the Patriarch, through the Bishops, for a fee which varies according to the nearness of relationship ; in this way first cousins may marry.

The marriage service begins with the blessing of the rings by the priest ;

gives the bridegroom his ring, saying, "May the right hand of the Lord be given to thee with grace," and does the same to the bride. Then follows the blessing of the crowns or rosaries which may be substituted. A passage is read from Ephesians (v. 22-33) and from Matthew (xix., 3-6), followed by prayers, in which the Lord is asked to bless the crowns to the groom with the blessing with which He blessed Abram and Sara, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Rachel. The pair are then crowned with the prayer that they may receive the crown of righteousness. After this the priest puts a crown upon the head of the groomsman, or, if he be married in his hand. The bridesmaid is also crowned. Here follows an exhortation to bride and groom; the latter is urged to love his wife, not to insult her, not to strike her or curse her relatives; the bride is urged not to disobey her husband, unless he commands her to sin; not to tell his secrets, not to come between him and his relations, or to answer him with bitter words. The priest then joins their right hands and pronounces the marriage formula in the name of the Trinity. The Lord is prayed to send His blessing on the marriage, as He sent it to Tobias and Sara by the presence of Raphael. After various prayers and responses, in which the marriage at Cana is mentioned, the priest looses the hands of the pair and takes off the crowns, saying, "Thou Who didst wear the crown of thorns, and didst take from us the thorns of sin, remove from this pair these perishable crowns, and put upon them the crown that never perishes. Amen." The ceremony closes with another exhortation and a prayer.

The rite of extreme unction is in Arabic, and is administered when the sick is supposed to be at the point of death. Should he linger on, remaining in bed, and then die, the rite is not repeated. If he recovers, so that he is able to rise, and then later has a relapse and dies, the rite is repeated before his death. The priest anoints the eyes with the sacred oil, praying that the sins of sight may be forgiven, and proceeds to anoint the ears, nostrils, mouth, hands, and feet. Reference is made in the final prayer to the commands of the Apostle James, to pray over the sick, anointing them with oil, and the priest prays the Lord to restore the sick man to health.

The funeral services are in Syriac. If the deceased be a member of the Brotherhood of the Immaculate Conception, the Litany of the Virgin follows, while all hold candles. At a Maronite funeral recently attended, there were several Greek Catholic priests standing in the chancel, but at one side. The corpse was placed on a bier, and was not transferred to the coffin till the service closed. Every priest who attends a funeral receives money, sometimes as much as 4s., to say mass for the dead. On the evening after a death, if a night pass before the funeral, the priest visits the house with the censer, and incenses it, with prayers; this ceremony is repeated after the funeral.

Funeral customs are very much the same among all sects, but, at the risk of repetition, I may mention a few. A prominent Maronite recently died; his mare was richly caparisoned, her eyes were stained with kohl, salt was rubbed in to produce tears, and two swords were crossed above

the saddle. She was lead out with great lamentation. A bier was filled with iron, to make it heavy, and then had placed upon it the clothes of the deceased, and his watch. As each delegation of mourners came in from the villages it was met by four strong men bearing the bier aloft; the strongest young fellows of the visiting party would then transfer the bier to their own hands and carry it about, as a sort of trial of strength, reminding one of ancient funeral games. I am told that there are gypsies who attend funerals of the great Sheikhs, and mourn for a wage. The sword dance at a funeral is becoming rare, but I came across it once in front of a peasant's house. There was a procession, led by a man carrying a crucifix, elevated on a pole; behind him came two young men, each carrying a sword in one hand and a small shield in the other, dancing in a slow and stately measure, circling and lifting the leg, while he waved the sword, occasionally striking it upon the shield. Behind them came two men bearing swords upright in front of the breast, and walking in front of the coffin, which was borne high in the air by four men.

The first Sunday after the death of a person, the family boil wheat and take it to the church to be blessed by the priest; it is then placed a the door for the people to take a handful as they go out. This wheat is commonly spoken of as the "mercy" of the dead person. The fruit of pomegranate is also used. Sometimes the funeral service is repeated on the anniversary of a death. The cemeteries are, as a rule, neglected, for they are hardly ever visited except at an interment, especially in the mountains, where headstones with epitaphs are not common; the coffins are often laid in vaults.

Before her closer union with Rome, the Maronite Church followed the Eastern custom of making confirmation synchronous with baptism, but she now follows the mother church. Episcopal visits to the villages are rare, and at such times all the children between the ages of six and twelve who have not received the rite before are confirmed. After a short service the Bishop anoints the boys' foreheads with the Meirûn, making the sign of the cross in the name of the Trinity, and giving him a slap on the cheek. Confession must be made and the Sacrament taken immediately before Confirmation. As a matter of fact, not all Maronites are confirmed.

In studying the Maronite ritual the reader is impressed with its frequent beauty. The language is often rich and solemn. I have not examined the Shîm and the Book of the Mass, but in the services which I have here noticed the Adoration of the Virgin and her Intercession are rarely mentioned, although Mariolatry is very strong among the people. The Litany of Mary, in which she is invoked under forty-six names, has been borrowed from the Roman Church and translated into Arabic. The various services abound in Scripture; a Maronite attending the majority of services during the year must hear the most profitable passages from the Psalms, Prophets, historical books, Gospels, and Epistles in his own Arabic tongue. In view of this, one is puzzled at first to explain the

ignorance of the Scriptures prevailing among the common people. It is owing, however, to various causes : first, the reading is not with expression, but performed in a sing-song, perfunctory manner ; second, it is without commentary or exposition, as a rule ; and, third, the Scriptures are in the literary language, which contains many words which the women and the simpler peasants do not understand. This objection obtains in the case of the Arabic version used by the Protestants, among whom, however, preaching with explanation and illustration is constant. As we have seen, the ritual abounds in forms and ceremonies, but in almost every case the symbolic meaning is explained in connection with the act. During the 18th century the ritual was revised and altered by various Maronite Prelates, notably by the Bishop Germanus Farhat. I hope some time to compare carefully the Maronite ritual with the Jacobite, to which it bears a resemblance.

(*To be continued.*)

BAROMETRICAL DETERMINATIONS OF HEIGHTS IN LEBANON, ANTI-LEBANON, AND ON HERMON.

I.

FROM OBSERVATIONS WITH MERCURIAL BAROMETER.

THE following altitudes are partly a redetermination of, and partly a supplement to the list published by me in the *Quarterly Statement* for April, 1891. The two sets of results are directly comparable, as all observations at the upper stations were made by myself, and all those at Beirut were made under my direction, the instruments were the same, and the reductions were made according to the same set of tables. This year, however, hourly observations were taken at Beirut.

The instruments used were as follows : at the observatory in Beirut, which is 111 feet above sea level, barometer, Browning, No. 244, and thermometer, Browning, No. 66,810 ; at upper station, barometer, Casella, No. 738, and sling thermometer by Casella, broken July 28th. All readings are corrected for instrumental errors. The reductions have been made according to the tables prepared by Guyot (*Smithsonian Tables*, 1884, pp. 371-386).

Hourly observations taken for a few days in Damascus indicate that the calculated altitudes vary from a minimum in the early morning to a maximum at two or three o'clock in the afternoon. Hence the hour at which the determination was made becomes an important factor.

I have reason to believe that the same is true at all stations not on the seaward face of Lebanon.