

are to repeat seven *Paters* and *Salves* daily, and abstain from meat on Saturdays. These Catholic Guilds are very popular.

Each congregation of monks has formed an organization among the people, according to the rules of which the members agree to pay the price of masses (three, five, or seven, as the case may be) for every monk dying in a convent of the congregation; while if a lay member dies every priest of the congregation is to say an equal number of masses for his soul. Every year monks are sent through the villages with a list of monks deceased to collect the dues. When a lay member dies word is sent to the Abbot-General, who commands the masses to be said in the convents.

I have found no traces of extra-Biblical stories in regard to the Patriarchs, or to Christ and the Apostles, except the ordinary tales of the Apocryphal Gospels. In regard to Anti-Christ it is believed by some that he is to be born of a Sidonian Jewess by a Greek ecclesiastic in Capernaum. He is to be received by the Jews, make headway, and will then be opposed by Enoch and Elijah, whom he will slay in Golgotha forty days before the Resurrection. He will be overthrown by Saint Michael.

Beirût, Syria, *December*, 1890.

Since my article on the Maronites went to press I have obtained an authentic statement as to the number of Maronite monks.

Order of the Beladieh	...	...	...	about	700
„ „ Halabieh	...	...	...	„	160
„ „ Mar Isha'ya	...	...	...	„	300
Total	...	...	...	„	1,160

The Beladieh and the Halabieh were divided in 1768. I may mention that Mar Shallita, the patron of animals, is known in the Latin Church as St. Artemius.

F. J. BLISS.

NARRATIVE OF A SECOND JOURNEY TO PALMYRA,
including an exploration of the Alpine regions of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, and the southern half of the Nusairy Chain.

By Rev. GEORGE E. POST, M.A., M.D., F.L.S.

(Continued from July "Quarterly Statement," p. 262.)

A little distance to the west of the group is a round, half-buried shaft, a yard or so in length, with a fragmentary Greek inscription on it.

To the north of the plain in which these altars are situated is el-Jebel-el-Abiad, which we subsequently visited. It is dotted all over with dark spots, which we afterwards found to be trees of *Pistacia mutica*, C. A. M.

We sat down on the sand, in the blazing sunshine, with a thermometer of over 100° F. in the shade of our bodies, and ate our lunch, and drank the tepid water which we had brought in skins, and then rode forward toward Palmyra. Just before entering the street of tombs we encountered *Frankenia pulverulenta*, L.

The impression produced by the mausolea by sunlight is far less imposing than by moonlight. It would be well for a visitor, if he has not first entered by night (as we did in April) to make a point of riding out at night some distance into the western desert, in order to take in the view of the pass and the monuments, and then of Palmyra itself by moonlight.

We found the ground about the wells of Abul-Fawâris quite parched, and learned that the wells were choked by locusts, so that the water was undrinkable. We arrived in Palmyra at 2½ p.m., just 5½ hours road time from el-Beida. Our mules made the distance in 6¼ hours. We encamped at our old station west of the triumphal arch. Barometer at 4 p.m., 28.72; height, 1,500 feet. At sunset we enjoyed a bath in the great fountain, and the weird swim into the heart of the mountain.

Palmyra, Friday, July 25.—The night was made uncomfortable by a furious wind, which almost blew our tent to tatters, and prevented us from enjoying any restful sleep. The temperature by 9 o'clock in the morning reached 100° F. in the shade. The same distracting wind, blowing sand into our tent, our provisions, and our eyes, made the day one of considerable discomfort. We spent the morning in overhauling and labelling our collections, and in photographing the group of five figures on the slab in front of the schoolhouse. In the October *Quarterly* I furnished you the notes of Professor Porter on the inscriptions. They may be compared with those of Rev. J. E. Hanauer in the April *Quarterly*.

In the afternoon we rode to the cave known as *Magharat-Mohammed-'Ali*, about two hours north of Palmyra. On our way we visited one of the ancient quarries, about an hour from the city. They cover a space of two or three acres. The impression produced by them is more startling because less familiar than that of the ruins. Here are immense blocks of stones all squared and ready for transportation. There are others half separated from the rock. Still others are marked out by grooves, but not as yet cut. There are columns large and small, and all just as left by the workmen perhaps fifteen hundred years ago. But for the grey lichens which cover them, we might fancy that the quarrymen would soon return, and the tumbrils would roll in and carry away the finished stones.

Near the centre of one of the quarries is a low hut, into which the workmen could crawl, but not stand erect. As we approached the door of this hut a covey of over thirty red-legged partridges whirred out of it, and flew away to the rocks around the quarries. A venomous looking snake glided in among the stones and disappeared.

Just beyond the quarries we came upon a gazelle. The graceful

creature ran away, not in a straight line, but on a sort of parabolic curve, and every hundred feet or so leaped into the air after the manner of a springbok.

We collected, on our way to the cave, *Euphorbia* sp., *Andrachne telephoides*, L., var. *rotundifolia*, Post, *Atriplex roseum*, L. The caves themselves are not specially interesting. They seem to have been worked somewhat for the efflorescent sulphur which encrusts their walls. Otherwise they contain no minerals of value. The rock in which they are hollowed out is calcium carbonate, with veins of impure calcium sulphate (whence the sulphur) and selenite.

From the caves we took a south-east course to the *Sabkha*, or salt marsh east of Palmyra. The soil of this marsh is so impregnated with salt that a trench or pit sunk in it becomes filled in a short time with concentrated brine, the water of which soon evaporates in the intense sunshine, and leaves an incrustation of excellent salt. The production of this staple is a government monopoly. A series of circular guard huts not ten feet in diameter surrounds the marsh, and in each of them lives a guard to prevent anyone coming to get salt. A Circassian officer, at a monthly salary of 260 piastres (about 2*l.*), which is considered there a good living, has the general oversight of these works. The soil, wherever dry, is covered with a thick efflorescence of salt. At the edge of the marsh are numerous Salsolacæ, and *Statice Palmyrensis*, Post (a new species), giving quite a green aspect to the plain.

Saturday, July 26.—The continued heat and distracting wind kept us from doing much this day. We, however, engaged a Bedawi sheikh, Rusheid, to go with us as far as Hamath, and take an extra camel to carry water. We needed two, as one stage of our journey was to be 26 hours without any water.

In the evening Rusheid's wife came over with a present of lebben, and she and her husband and son, of about 13 years of age, passed the evening with us. We enjoyed their naïve conversation. The following are a few snatches of it :—

“ *We* : May God bless your evening, Im Asa'ad.

“ *She* : (Filling her stumpy pipe with tobacco from a dirty pouch) God bless your evening, Khowaja.

“ *We* : Are you not afraid to let your husband go with us to Hamath ?

“ *She* : If I had been, he would not go a step.

“ *We* : So, even among you Bedawin, the ladies rule ! We thought that it was only among the Franks that they had the upper hand.

“ *She* : (Picking up a red hot coal between her thumb and finger, and pressing it down with vigour into the bowl of her pipe with the ball of her thumb) of course we do. What did you think ?

“ *We* : What would you do if he would not obey your orders ?

“ *She* : I would leave him and go back to my father's tent.

“ *We* : But perhaps he might divorce you, and send you home.

"*She*: He knows better than that. Who would make his butter and semmen, and cook his dinner, and wait on him?"

"*We* (to Rusheid): Is it all as she says?"

"*He*: What can we do? That's a way they have.

"*We* (to Rusheid): Can your wife manage all your flocks and herds as well in your absence as when you are at home?"

"*He*: Yes. She does most of it when I am at home.

"*We*: And does she manage you as well?"

"*He* and *She* (laughing together): That is about it."

And so for half an hour, by the flickering light of our camp fire we kept up a pleasant badinage with this enterprising daughter of the desert, until her sense of propriety led her to make a move, and with dignity and grace she rose and bade us good night, and withdrew, followed by her obedient husband and son. I may here say that the relations of Bedawin women to their husbands are far more on a footing of equality than those of the Mohammedan women of the towns. Few men have more than one wife, and she is far more of a companion to her husband than are the more civilised women to theirs.

We enjoyed the services of the man and his camel for the round trip at five medjeedies, about 17s.

Palmyra, Sunday, July 27.—The air became somewhat cooled off in the night, and at 7 a.m. the thermometer stood at 76° F. It became hot, however, in the middle of the day, and cooled off again at night.

Monday, July 28.—We left Palmyra at 6½ a.m., taking the road through Marbat'Antar, el-Weshen, el-Bil'âs, Barri, and Salamyah to Hamath.

Our course lay first through the ruins to the northern spur of the hill on which is the mediæval castle. Just over the watershed of this spur we passed a large corral used in hunting the gazelle. These corrals are numerous in the desert, and may be seen for many miles away on the mountain sides. They consist of stone fences about 6 feet high, enclosing areas often of many acres in extent, and so arranged that they are open to one side of a great square or parallelogram, and closed on all the others. At the corner, and along the wall farthest from the entrance, are openings over pits 10 feet or more in depth, and too broad for a gazelle to leap over. The hunters form a great circle, enclosing a herd of these animals, and drive them into the corral. Although they might leap or climb over the walls if there were no other way of egress, yet, seeing the openings at the far end, they make for them and fall into the pits, where men await them with knives, and instantly cut their throats. Rusheid told me that as many as 50 are sometimes bagged at once in these wholesale battues.

An hour from Palmyra we came to *ed-Derajât* (the steps), which are another of the ancient quarries of the city, much more extensive than those which we had visited three days before. They are on the precipitous side of a rocky bluff which forms the first terrace of Jebel Antar.

Over the watershed of this bluff we came upon a round plain which opens out toward the west into the general expanse of the desert. In this plain we found *Carthamus flavescens*, W., *Centaurea balsamitoides*, Post (a new species), *Atriplex roseum*, L.

Mounting from this plain toward Marbat-'Antar we found *Verbascum Antari*, Post (a new species, near *V. ptychophyllum*, Boiss.), *Celsia glandulifera*, Post (a new species), *Thymus Syriacus*, Boiss., and *Avena* sp.

Marbat-'Antar is a cleft between two precipitous headlands about a mile apart, after the manner of the Rosstrappe in the Hartz. It is said that 'Antar's horse leaped this tremendous chasm. Marbat signifies a place where a horse is tied. In the centre of the space between the cliffs is a perennial spring of water, which would have been pleasant but for the large number of locusts which had fallen into it, and to which the Arabs were too indifferent to care to clean them out. They drank the water with a gusto which showed that it was in no way disagreeable to them.

After watering our animals we pursued our journey along the plateau which skirts the Jebel-el-Abiad, the range which takes its rise in the precipice *vis-d-vis* with Jebel 'Antar. We began to see along its sides to its very top numerous *Butm* trees (Terebinths), *Pistacia mutica*, F. et M., the only tree of this and the Bil'as range.

We sat down on a sandy ledge in this plateau to lunch, while our train went forward to the wells of el-Weshen. While we were eating, some Arab horsemen armed with spears swooped down on our train, but, seeing that we were under the guidance of Rusheid, a man of their own tribe, they did not molest them or us, but rode on after their flocks and herds. After eight hours from Palmyra we reached the two wells of el-Weshen, in the heart of the Jebel-el-Abiad. Just before climbing the mountain we found in a meadow dried stalks and fruits of *Sameraria Armena*, L. (new for the desert).

Barometer at el-Weshen, at 4 p.m., 27; height, 3,375 feet.

After arranging where our tent was to be pitched we peered into the wells, and found that they were full of locusts. Notwithstanding the disgusting taste and odour, the Arabs were filling their water-skins to supply their camps, and likewise watering their flocks. We resolved to drink as little as possible of this tainted water, although it was all that we were to see for the next thirty-eight hours.

While our tent was being pitched and our dinner prepared we climbed the mountain. The southernmost peak is the highest. At this point the barometer at 3½ p.m. stood at 25.9; height, 4,600 feet. The view from this was fine. It took in Jebel-Bil'as and el-Jebel-el-Abiad, and the green plain between, the great desert plain, and beyond it the range of el-Bâridi and Ain-el-Wu'ûl. Below us to the north was the plateau up which we had come from Marbat-'Antar, and far away to the east the castle of Palmyra.

We observed the following plants on this mountain side:—*Papaver Syriacum*, Boiss., *Isatis Aleppica*, Scop., *Silene coniflora*, Oth., *Alsine*

Meyeri, Boiss., *Pistacia nutica*, F. et M., *Rhamnus Palæstina*, Boiss., *Astragalus Bethlemiticus*, Boiss., *Argyrolobium crotolarioides*, J. et S., *Cerasus tortuosa*, Boiss. et Huussk., *Eryngium falcatum*, Labill., *Pterocephalus plumosus*, L., *Crucianella ciliata*, Lam., *Galium aureum*, Vis., *Anthemis montana*, L., *Achillea micrantha*, M.B., *Picnomon acarna*, Cass., *Jurinea Stæhelinæ*, D.C., *Onopordon* sp., *Cousinia Wesheni*, Post (a new species), *Centaurea virgata*, Lam., *Echinops Syriacus*, Boiss., *Verbascum* sp., *Onosma flavum*, Lehm., *Micromeria mollis*, Bth. (or a new species), *Ballota saxatilis*, Sieb., *Salvia Libanotica*, Boiss., *Teucrium pruinatum*, Boiss., *T. Polium*, L., *Noea spinosissima*, L., *Vulpia brevis*, Boiss. et Ky., *Bromus tectorum*, L., var. *squamosus*, Boiss., *Poa bulbosa*, L.

About 500 feet below the summit, enclosed in a rocky amphitheatre fringed with Buṭm trees, we found a park-like glade about two miles in length by a few hundred yards in breadth. It was carpeted with dry grass of a rich golden colour, *Hordeum spontaneum*, P. Koch., and dotted with Buṭm trees loaded with their ripe pink berries. In the middle of this valley was a Bedawi encampment of two goats'-hair tents. We rode up and obtained from the Arabs a draught of lebben, which we vastly preferred to the locust-tainted water of the fountains below. Even in this lonely camp three sick folk claimed our care. They showed their gratitude for the prescriptions which they received by bringing us a pail of goats' milk, from which we made chocolate for our supper, and reserved a portion for our morning coffee. To make the water a little more potable we boiled it, and passed it through an extemporised filter of charcoal and then cooled it again. But nothing could free it from its disgusting smell and taste.

As our next stage was to be one of twenty-three hours, camel-time, we filled our water-skins over night and arranged for an early start.

Tuesday, July 29.—We were up at 3 a.m., and by 4½, as the day was breaking, filed down the valley, and turned off to the left towards the Jebel Bil'ās. All along our road for the first half-hour were dried stalks of *Hordeum spontaneum*, P. Koch. When this tall, coarse grass is still green it must give an appearance almost of fertility to this part of the desert.

Crossing a spur of el-Jebel-el-Abiad we descended to a broad plain, which is continuous with the great plain between Qaryetein and Palmyra. We passed over this plain parallel to the mountain as far as its western end. In a wadi we found *Silene swertiaefolia*, Boiss., and *Salsola rigida*, Pall. Our course now lay to the north-west over a rolling upland to the base of Jebel Bil'ās. This mountain consists of two parallel, nearly north and south, ridges rising very gradually out of the plains to the east and west, and separated by a broad valley, which was covered at the time of our journey with parched vegetation. The whole of the mountain slopes and summits are covered with Buṭm trees, many of them of large size and fine shape. The scenery is altogether park-like, and in spring, when the vegetation is still green, must be very attractive. We collected *Capparis spinosa*, L., *Ankyropetalum Cælesyriacum*, Boiss.,

Ferula BiFâsi, Post (a new species), *F. Barbeyi*, Post (also new), *Johrenia fungosa*, Boiss., *Atriplex portulacoides*, L.

We saw many partridges, which were almost as tame as chickens, and several other species of birds. The Arabs assured us that there was no water within many hours of us. We were not able to imagine where these birds drank, or how they could live without water.

On the highest point of the western range, which slightly overtops the eastern, the barometer stood, at 5½ p.m., at 26.9; height, 3,500 feet. A little over the watershed, at 6 p.m., we threw off our loads for a couple of hours to bait and water our animals, and cook and eat our supper. The place where we stopped was a picturesque grove of Butm trees, the trees being about as near to one another as apple trees in an orchard. The scene did not at all suggest the idea of a desert.

(To be continued in January "Quarterly Statement.")

IDENTIFICATIONS SUGGESTED IN MURRAY'S "HANDBOOK."

By the Rev. HASKETT SMITH.

In the July *Quarterly Statement* Major Conder criticises the identifications which I have suggested in Murray's "Handbook," and which, according to my belief, were then proposed for the first time in print.

His objections appear to be of a threefold nature :

1. That in a third of the cases the proposals are not new.
2. That great confusion is introduced into the topography by them.
3. That many of them are philologically wrong.

1. As regards the charge contained in the first objection, I can only say that, so far as my personal knowledge went, after a diligent study of most of the principal works which have been written upon Syria and Palestine during the last fifty years, I was under the impression that the identifications proposed were then suggested for the first time. Nor am I greatly surprised to find that in some instances I appear to have been anticipated; for the very fact of an identification being probably correct, renders it more than likely that some previous authority should have conjectured it, and there is nothing remarkable in the fact of two or more independent investigators arriving at the same conclusion.

The five identifications which Major Conder traverses upon this score are, it appears, Ittah Kazin at Kefr Kenna, Remmon Methoar Neah at Rummâneh, Bethsaida at Mes'aidieh, Helkath at Yerka, and Mizpah Galeed at Sâf. The first was suggested to my mind by a remark of Père Aegidius, the Franciscan monk at Kefr Kenna, who informed me that that village was known in later Jewish days under the name of "*Iskanni*,"