

THE IMMOVABLE EAST.

(Continued.)

By PHILIP G. BALDENSPERGER, Esq.

THE FELLAḤĪN.

THE name of the Fellaḥīn is usually derived from the word *falaḥa* (فَلَاحَ), to plough or cultivate, from which was formed *fallāḥ* (فَلَّاحَ) cultivator, and the plural *fallaḥīn*. Whether this is the real origin of the name, or whether it has only been adapted, is not quite certain. Colonel Conder suggests that the word is from Poulains, the Syrian Franks of the Crusaders (*Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem*, p. 209). The formula used by the Franks in the sale of their estates and serfs was "casalia cum omnibus *villanis* et pertinentiis" (*Arch. Crus.*, p. 294), *i.e.*, houses and all the villeins and the belongings. The *v* in villein was pronounced *f*, and became *fillain*, and (possibly) in time the spelling with *h* was introduced to adapt it to *fallāḥ*, cultivator. Now, though the fellah has long ago ceased to be a villein in the crusading sense of the word, he is still as firmly attached to his native soil, and it is a hard task for him to move away from his land, or rather from the very spot where his forefathers lived, died, and were buried. "The *fellah* remains a *fellah*," says the proverb.

The fellah, Abu Ahmad,¹ has received his share in his father's goods in the shape of a cow and a plough, which he uses about his native village (called *ballad* [بَلَد] by him in Palestine and *say'at* [صَيْعَة] in Syria, whence it has become Aldea in Spain). The townsman calls the town *ballad*, and the village is called *ḥariat* or *kafr* by him. Certainly the word *ballad* was brought along with the nomads from civilisation. In Hebrew a fortified town was called *hōmah* (חֹמָה), an unfortified one 'ir (עִיר) or *kiryah* (קִרְיָה), and the village פְּרִז (Hab. ii, 14; Ezek. xxxviii, 11). Consequently the פְּרִזִּים (Judges v, 7), Perizzites, may have been nothing more than "villagers."

Agriculture is their principal calling, but they have minor industries, which they follow at odd moments and intervals, *e.g.*,

¹ See *Quarterly Statement*, 1903, p. 67.

between sowing and harvest, when agricultural work is not very pressing. They have also certain industries which are not to the taste or convenience of the townsmen or the Bedawy. Thus a Bedawy has always female camels and rears camels for sale only, and the fellah keeps only male camels for his work: a sinful occupation, since the camel carried the Prophet and his followers in the Flight and in their wars, and is among the blessed animals. The thoughtless, unheeding fellah, however, does not stop at such considerations. A camel carries big loads (about 6-700 lbs. weight) to and from the fields, but being very costly to keep, and the barren mountains of Palestine not affording enough food, the owner must buy vetches, *kersavneh* (كرسنة), with which a working camel is fed every evening, and vetch-straw called red straw, *tibn ahmar*. The vetches are broken on a mill (*majrashy*) and soaked, and after an hour or two are placed before the camel, who, kneeling down, either helps itself or gently receives it from the hand of his owner in small balls. The camel very graciously accepts and chews the portion, fondly following with its eyes the movements of its master, who talks to it and gives it pet names, as "young pigeon," or rebukes it if it tries too eagerly to take more than its portion, if a second one may be awaiting its share. Ten to twelve pounds of vetches is considered a good supper; they only receive this once in twenty-four hours. When every grain is consumed straw is brought, and the animal is allowed to eat as much as it pleases.

The camel, with its movable features and soft intelligent eyes, is probably one of the most sensible animals living with man, and here among the natives it forms part of the family. Its exceptionally elastic lips moving in every direction indicate its character, and in its eye the master guesses its intentions. When well kept the camel has a mild character, but being also of a revengeful turn of mind it may wait for an opportunity and take its revenge for any past ill-treatment. A strong camel is very dangerous in spring, and during the roaring season (*hader*, هدر), which lasts four or five weeks, the owner must treat it with great care and often muzzle it, for in its wrath it might kill a person, as during this "mad-season" it remembers all offences committed in the bygone months. It eats very little and during this time often blows out a skin which hangs down as a long tongue from the side of its mouth, foaming and

roaring and curving its long neck serpent-like backwards. If it is very angry and cannot bite it will try to stamp on its enemy. As a rule, they fear and respect their master, but sometimes try to attack him unawares, for in this season the camel is a back-biter and tries to avoid its master's face. A fellah who wanted to test his camel's spitefulness filled his *'abāyeh* with grass to imitate as closely as possible a sleeping man, and went to hide himself in some bushes near by. The camel caught sight of the supposed sleeping man, and rushed at him and began stamping on the mantle, then taking the end began tossing it to and fro. The owner suddenly called to it: "Well! are you not ashamed? Is this the way to treat your master? Shame on your eye!" When the camel found out its mistake and heard its master's voice, it retreated in shame, and refused food for some time to come, but never again tried an attack.

The heavy pack-saddle is called *rahel*, and is never taken off the camel when it is being worked unless it be to see if the camel is injured. It is only in spring when the camels are sent to pass a month in the green pastures that the saddles are removed. The camel is very delicate and could easily catch a chill if the saddle were taken away imprudently, and on no account can the camel stay out of doors in bad weather. It is then taken into the house, part of which is turned into a stable. As long as a camel is not hurt it will quietly receive the burden, and rise calmly when the order is given. When hurt it will still mournfully bear it, and become quiet only when the load has pressed the wound and benumbed the feeling. A good camel-owner washes and tends the back and keeps it free from wounds. In spring the camels are shorn and anointed with oil and sulphur and sent into the lowlands for repose under the supervision of the Bedawin.

Laban assured Eleazar, when he arrived from Canaan with camels, that he had prepared the house and room for the camels, and as a careful herd-owner he ungirded the camels without taking away the pack-saddles and gave them *teben*, straw, and did not forget the "piled up" food (Gen. xxiv, 31, 32), no doubt the *kersanne*. Then only did he go and give water for the men to wash their feet.

The patriarchs living the bedouin life had camels, but in the cultivated mountains of Judah and Ephraim these would not be very useful, and here asses or mules would be more in evidence. Camels were often brought by travellers who came from afar with heavy baggage (1 Kings, x, 2, and 2 Kings, viii, 9), as the Queen

of Sheba and Ben Hadad, or the Amalekites in the plains, and David himself is said to have had a keeper of the royal camels named Obil (1 Chron. xxvii, 30).

The rocky and often dangerous roads are very fatal, for a slip on these costs the camel its life; having a heavy body and comparatively thin legs, the camel in its fall breaks its leg, and, as it would take several months to heal it, the expense is not worth the cure. Consequently the fallen camel is at once slain, and its flesh is sold to the fellahîn of the district. On these occasions the *rotl* ($6\frac{1}{2}$ lbs.) fetches about 2 piastres. A fat animal, therefore, which cost £15 or £20, realises about £1 10s. or £2 as meat. The camel is therefore led by the halter over rough roads, and at every step the owner calls out "God" or the patron saint which might be revered or known in the neighbourhood.

The camel cannot resist the bridle or halter. This is called *ḡarrāsât* (قراسة), and consists of a pair of irons which scratch the cheeks, and under the influence of which the camel goes steadily on. Like all beasts, some camels may be stubborn and refuse to advance, but they are certainly a good deal more submissive, on the whole, than either mules or donkeys, and for big loads in countries where no carriages run are of the utmost utility.

It is very probable that Isaiah refers to the roaring of the camel in chapter xxxvii, 29: "Because of thy rage against me, and thy tumult, I will put my hook in thy nose and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest." Only a camel is led thus; mules or horses are generally ridden.

The camel is in most cases the support of all the family, doing not only the works of the field and bringing in the harvest, but carrying loads to towns and developing those industries which, however useful to the towns, cause a great deal of damage to the country by destroying the forests. When the driver goes behind his camels as they move slowly along the smooth roads, he cheers them up and talks to them—nay, he even sings to them. This singing is of a wailing character, like all other songs, and has the specific name *ḡhdiēt* (أحديّة). Some camels actually wait for the music, and show their satisfaction in the most characteristic manner by bending their long necks and looking round, or by hanging the lips or lifting them up, or even by emitting a wailing kind of noise, a language which is perfectly understood by the driver. How

much the camel is prized in a family is seen by the title "camel of the family" given to a departed member, or the mournful cry "My camel!" which, it is true, may often be mistaken for *jamil* "handsome." Though so ugly to Western eyes, the camel is in every respect a thing of beauty to the dwellers of the East.

The lime-kilns which are made by the fellahin on the mountains are called (اتون) *atone*, but known only as *latone*, the article forming part of the word. As building advances in Jerusalem and Jaffa limekilns are multiplied, forests or bushes disappear. A party of fellahin, eight or ten in number, associate, and for a month or so cut down every piece of brushwood or thorns for miles around and pile them into bundles. When they are sufficiently dry and numerous they are gathered by a long pole, and with a crosspiece of wood to keep it from coming too low are swept into the limekiln. The limekiln is generally built by an expert mason from Bethlehem. For seven or eight days the fire is continually fed by relays of two men who work for half-an-hour or so at a time until the lime begins to show at the top. After having invited friends and relations to assist at the final operations, the limekiln is left to cool down for a few days, and the contents carried away on camels to the nearest town. The lime (*shid*) is sold by the weight or by the load either in private houses for whitewashing or in buildings. In Egypt lime is called *jir*.

The same method of making lime was certainly known to the Hebrews. In Isaiah xxvii, 9, the prophet compares the purging of the house of Jacob to the stones taken from the altar to be used as chalkstones (in the limekiln). The word *qir* which is used here corresponds to the modern Egyptian *jir*. Further, the prophet compares the destruction of the people in chapter xxxii, 12, to the cutting of the thorns for the limekiln which are to be burned into lime. Here he uses *shid* the Palestine word for lime. The limekiln, if I am correct, is only mentioned once by the name *attin*, into which Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego were thrown (Daniel iii, 6).

Another industry, which is slowly exterminating the forests, is charcoal burning and the sale of wood, which is mostly done in the mountains of Ephraim and those of Hebron, to provide Jerusalem and the other towns with fuel. Wood laws prohibiting the incessant destruction of what little is left of the forests have not as yet done

very much to stop the havoc. The most destructive of all men are those who sell roots (*karâmy*) to convents and mills. The smaller wood is turned into coals and a good many more fellahin are employed at the trade. In all these trades the gain is very small, for they have to gather or cut the wood one day, load and carry it to the town the second day, and must often return on the third day. For all this the pay is a mejidi at the most, *i.e.*, about 3s. for three days' work. With this he must keep himself and his camel, as he seldom owns more than one. The wood and charcoal fellahin do not tend their camels as carefully as the limekiln fellahin, nor do they work as regularly. They only work when they are badly in need of a mejidi, and being far from their homes they are often exposed to many risks, especially from the weather, as a camel is in greater danger when the road is slippery than at any other time.

The charcoal is sold at about 8s. to 10s. a camel load, which may seem more remunerative, but the burning is a lengthy process, and, if it is not done properly, the charcoal cannot command the price. The wood is thrown into great pits, and when it is half-burned it is covered with earth, stones, and herbs, and after it has cooled down it is sold in large hair sacks.

The same fellahin collect branches of fir trees, strawberry bushes, and carobs. These are for the Jewish Feast of Tabernacles in September, whilst some Christian establishments use them at Christmas.

Stone is more and more in requisition as the towns are continually increasing in size, and though Jerusalem is itself in a stony region the so-called Jerusalem marble (*yehûdy*) is not suitable for the purpose, because it is a very hard stone and does not break at right angles under the strokes of the mason. Good building stone is therefore brought from the immense quarries around Bethlehem, and down the Wâdy 'Artâs to Tekoa and north of Jerusalem. In the plains of Sharon the sandstone employed is found near Jaffa, and is quarried by the townspeople.

The camel owners of Bethlehem and Beth Jâla have had the almost exclusive privilege of carrying loads to Jaffa, as a quantity of work in mother-of-pearl and olive-wood is made in Bethlehem, and thence exported. Their most serious competitors are the villagers of Sharon, and especially the camel-drivers of Ramleh. Being very energetic, they can be relied upon to deliver goods in the shortest

time possible. There is another class of camel-drivers who also go to Jaffa to trade, but they are apt to linger on the road, and are sometimes very crafty, stealing the wares, removing petroleum from the skins and putting in water. They have even been known to take in a tinsmith "on halves" to share in the "profit" and to solder the tin boxes which they have robbed.

Masons and stone-cutters are mostly fellâḥin from Bethlehem or Beth Jâla. The Bethlehemites are said to have learned the art from European masters. Whenever a good mason or stone-cutter is wanted, application is always made to Bethlehem. Hundreds of the men are employed in building at Jerusalem, and remain there all the week, to return only on Saturday afternoons in order to spend the Sunday at home, as they are all Christians.

The mason, *banâ* (بنا) corresponds to the *ḥârâsh eben* of the Hebrews (2 Samuel v, 11); the stone-cutter is also called *hajjâr* (حجار), or *ḥassâb* (قصاب), or *dakîk* (دقيق); the common worker is simply *fa'el* (فعل).

The masters, *me'almîn* (معلمين), as they call themselves, generally travel to and fro on donkeys, and carry their principal tools in the saddle-bag. These tools include the '*edlet* (عدة), a small hammer, *shâkûsh* (شاقوش), a square to trim the stone, *zâweaf* (زاوية), the *mastârîn*, or plumb-line; and a leveller called *mîzân* (میزان).

The water-carriers are chiefly villagers of Siloam, Maliḥa, and Lifta around Jerusalem, who bring in water in two waterskins on their donkeys. In other towns the water-carriers bring it from the well to the town and deliver a skin at a time. But the men of the above-named villages have two or three donkeys each and run or race down to wells or springs, striking, pushing, and beating their donkeys, and up the mountains again, always in a hurry, going thus to and fro some 10 or 15 times a day; the scarcer the water the better their trade, but when there is plenty of rain they join the builders and make themselves busy there. Girls also run after the donkeys when their fathers or brothers are busy filling the tanks at En-Rogel awaiting the return.

The Bethlehemites besides being masons are also workers in mother-of-pearl and olive wood, and they have succeeded so well in making their articles known that there must be few towns which do

not possess some of their products. The wealth they have thus accumulated is proverbial, and Bethlehem may be called the most wealthy town in Palestine, although in their homes the inhabitants strictly retain their fellah character.

At Abû Dis (أبو ديس), east of Jerusalem, Bêt-dejân, and Yehûdiyeh, in the Plain of Sharon, mat and basket making is carried on. The villagers of Dis make use of the *dis* which they get from the Jordan valley, and usually command a higher price (about a mejidi) than those of Bêt-dejân, where the palm is used. These mats, *hasširet* (حصيرة), are used in almost every house, generally underneath the carpet.

Baskets of different kinds and made of different materials are manufactured in the villages, and have each a different name according to their material. The *kuffet* is a small basket made of the rushes which grow in the swamps of the *Auje* and the Crocodile River, where the inhabitants of the villages of the *Futtuh* (Bêt-dejân and the others) gather them. The *kuffet* is the basket used by builders to carry earth and stones upon the shoulder or on the hip. It answers to the Hebrew *dûd*, and is soft, with two handles by which it can be carried in one hand when empty or only half filled. The *sull* is a round wickerwork basket made in the north of Jerusalem, with two handles, and is used by the women to carry grapes or fruit to the market on their heads. Another kind of round white basket (also called *sull*) is made of the long white or pale stalks of cereals in the plains. These baskets are made by the women, and are to be found in every house. They are used to carry the food to the workers in the field or to store the bread in the house. They have sometimes coloured stalks woven into them. With this *sull* we may compare the Hebrew *sal*. The chief baker dreamt that he had three such baskets on his head filled with the bread (Gen. xl, 16-18), and the Israelites also used it to carry their food (Exodus xxix, 23; Lev. viii, 31; Numb. vi, 15).

The *sabbulet* (سبتة) is a deep and narrow wickerwork basket, it is made in the grape regions to gather the grapes and load them on camels or donkeys, one on each side of the animal. We are reminded of the *salsal* of the grape-gatherers of Jeremiah (vi, 9). The *kartallet* (قرطلة) is a small hamper made also of wickerwork or sometimes of grain stalks. The *kadah* (قدح) is smaller and is generally made of stalks. The *kafir* (قندير) is a big palm-leaf

basket, made in Egypt and is used to convey rice to Palestine ; it never lasts very long. The *ṭabak* (طبق) is properly a round tray or basket-cover, and is made of stalks by the women. All these stalk-woven articles last almost a generation. The *ṭabak* is used at once as a table and table-cloth, and upon it is placed the food, which is set before the family or guests. It is not unlikely that this flat basket is meant in Deuteronomy xxviii, 5 and 17. In the Gaza district cages are made for the fowls with which these regions abound, these are called *ḫafas*, and correspond to the *kēlāb* of Jeremiah v, 27. Very often the people of these districts bring their summer fruits in these same cages to Jerusalem, and no doubt this was already customary in ancient times, since Amos saw a basket (*kēlāb*, cage) of summer fruits (Amos viii, 1).

The fellaḥīn of Şurbahel (صرباهل),¹ a desert-bordering village between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, gather broken pottery, *ḫamra(t)*, which they bring to Birket es-Sultan, in the Valley of Hinnom, and there crush upon a flat rock with heavy stone rollers. The fine dust is red, as the name indicates, and is used to plaster the cisterns, which, in a city like Jerusalem, where there is no spring water, are so indispensable. The men, women, and children of the above-named village are seen roaming about with their leather bags, gathering potsherds (*shakaf*). Born and brought up on Ziou, just above the Birket es-Sultan, I have seen much of these inhabitants of Şurbahel with their potsherds, and have often wondered whether they possessed anything else besides potsherds. The flat rock, to which I have referred, being at the upper end of the Birket ("pool"), the rain-water which sometimes fills the lower part never rises high enough to disturb them in their work. One imagines that in earlier times, in the flourishing days of the kings of Judah, when the lower Pool of Gihon held water, this same flat rock must have been utilised by, perhaps, the inhabitants of Şurbahel itself. Jeremiah, we remember, was directed to go out by the gate Harsith to the Valley of Hinnom (Jer. xix, 2), and with earthen bottle, and before the elders, he crushed the vessel (xix, 10), perhaps on the identical spot. There are no other appropriate places throughout the neighbourhood, and indeed it is necessary to go far down the valley before flat spaces are found upon which to roll the potsherds, and the stone rollers are not easily moved from

¹ Baedeker, Şûr Baḫer ; Robinson, صور باهل.

place to place. Thus the principal crushing work is always performed in the Birket es-Sultan, and has the advantage of being near the Jaffa Gate, the centre of commerce.

(*To be continued.*)

A VISIT TO THE CEDARS OF LEBANON.

(*A Reprint.*)

By E. R. SHAW, B.A.

“The cedars wave on Lebanon,
But Judah’s statelier maids are gone.”—BYRON.

LEBANON—and its Cedars. These natural objects—the mountain and the tree, though in other respects forbidding comparison, possess in a remarkable degree the qualities of majesty and beauty combined; and to many of the writers of the Old Testament furnish types and figures of grandeur, permanence, and loveliness, of which they never seem weary.

Lebanon (the *white* mountain—*Mont Blanc*) is truly a glorious object, which, once seen, can never be forgotten. Its extensive range of lofty peaks (Sunnin, the highest, is 8,557 feet), gleaming in the sunshine like burnished silver; the long lines of glistening snow stretching down its wild and rugged ravines; its lower slopes with their wealth of foliage—the wild ever-green oak, and the cultivated olive, mulberry, vine, and fig tree; all present a varied series of pictures of rare and exceeding beauty. No wonder that Hosea, when describing Israel as restored to the favour of God, and resting under the divine blessing, should sing:—

“He shall grow as the lily,
And cast forth his roots as Lebanon;
His branches shall spread,
And his beauty shall be as the olive tree,
And his smell as Lebanon.”

To the cedars there are upwards of fifty allusions in the Old Testament, and there are two or three in the Apocrypha. In most of these, naturally occurring in the poetical books, the cedar-tree is regarded as an emblem of strength, glory, and prosperity; but there are others, and not a few, which have reference to the durability, fragrance, and general utility of the wood.