



SITE OF SAREPTA.

As early as the thirteenth century this city was in ruins, and now only fragments of its foundations exist, chiefly on a headland called 'Ain el Kantarah and also along the shore south of it, extending for a mile or more. Early Greek and Roman writers speak highly in praise of the wines of Sarepta.

THE PHŒNICIAN PLAIN.

THE route from Sidon to Tyre is by the seashore, generally pastureless and uninteresting, yet, in its ease and the absence of rugged stone-heaps and slippery rocks, a great contrast to the ordinary road of Palestine. Though the sea is tideless there is generally a broad belt of sand, not too soft or heavy. Behind this runs the narrow Phœnician plain, rich and well watered. Wells and springs are frequent throughout, often affording pure and sweet water within a few feet of the sea itself. Beyond the plain the bare but terraced hills rise abruptly, steep and rocky. Several streams intersect the path, across which have been bridges in Roman and perhaps in later days, but floods and neglect have left only traces of what once was, in a few buttresses and here and there the spring of an arch. In winter it is often difficult to ford or swim the swollen rivers, especially the Nahr ez Zaherâny, or "Flowery River" (so named from the mass of oleanders which fringe it), shortly before reaching the village of Surafend, which represents the Zarephath of the Old Testament, the *Sarepta* of the New (see above). There is little to mark the spot where Elijah sojourned so long with the hospitable widow and blessed her exhaustless cruse, for the ancient site, open and unprotected, close to the shore, has long been deserted, and its inhabitants have made a new settlement more than two miles inland, under the shelter of the hills, to which they have transferred the ancient name, and where they are safe from the raids of Bedawin horsemen. All that is left of old Zarephath are a few heaps of stones, the greater part of the materials having been carried off for modern

buildings to Beirût. There is, however, a little wely called El Khidr, the Arabic name for St. George, who is revered as a Muslim as well as a Christian saint; and the wely is reasonably believed to be the successor of the Christian chapel which the Crusaders built over the traditional site of the house of Elijah's hostess. A double interest attaches to this spot, from the tradition (for which we must confess there is no absolute historical ground, but surely much probability) that Sarepta was also blessed by the presence of a greater than Elijah, and that here our Lord showed mercy on the daughter of the Syrophœnician woman. We know that the village He visited was somewhere in the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. The context seems to imply it was beyond Tyre, and this is almost the only village which would meet these requirements. What more natural than that He should visit the place where His great forerunner sojourned so long? The modern inhabitants of Surafend have moved the sacred localities to their new home, and point out in the present village the house of the widow and the spot where our Lord met the Syrophœnician widow. But nothing is more certain than that until after the times of the Crusades the place was close to the shore.

Along the lonely strand skirting the fertile but scarcely cultivated plain we proceed towards Tyre. Strange that such desolation should have overtaken one of the chief cradles of early civilisation! Now lawlessness and barbarism have driven Phœnicia back into the rocky hills, and the weary peasant, with his tools on his shoulder, spends half his time in journeying from security to his field, and in toiling back at sunset to his rocky home.

The route to Tyre continues near the shore. Not a village is to be seen:—here and there ancient tombs and a few piles of stones. Several little streams have to be forded, till at length we reach the banks of the Kâsimiyeh, the ancient Leontes, still known higher up as the Litâny, when we turn inland by the traces of a Roman road towards one of the few bridges which remain unbroken in the country. Here the plain and the valley of the river (see page 53) are well cultivated. There is a khan, not in ruins, for the convenience of travellers, and several villages on either side of the river's course, one just to the south of the bridge. The stream is far too deep and rapid to be forded, and hence the bridge has been of necessity rebuilt (see page 52), a rare, perhaps unique exception to the ordinary system of the country. Hence we might in a short hour ride to the historic capital of Phœnicia. But a day is well spent in an expedition up the tortuous course of the Leontes. For several miles inland the river winds through a rich corn plain of some extent, into which it suddenly emerges from a deep fissure in the long range of the wall of Galilee. The plain is for the most part treeless, though the banks of the stream are richly fringed with oleanders. The country is best understood by riding through the corn-fields on the north bank. Under the foot of the hills is a charming piece of olive ground, with grateful shade, and a village behind it, nestled at the foot of the cliff. It is more than half an hour's very rough scrambling for the horses to reach the crest, when we find ourselves, not on the top of the hill, but on the brow of an upland down studded with villages, and with a noble view seawards, which well repays the climb. The villages are generally three or four miles apart and have names evidently derived from the Hebrew, as Rezieh, Zeraiyeh,

Zara, Athshit, Shukin, and the like. But although part of the old tribe of Asher, the survey of the Palestine Exploration has halted at the bank of the Leontes, and no research has as yet been devoted to their identification, beyond the very few names mentioned in the Book of Joshua. Each of these villages is surrounded by a grove of fig-trees, bare enough in winter, but without which in summer these uplands would be dreary indeed. In the centre of many of them is a mound or heap composed of the débris of the old Phœnician fort.

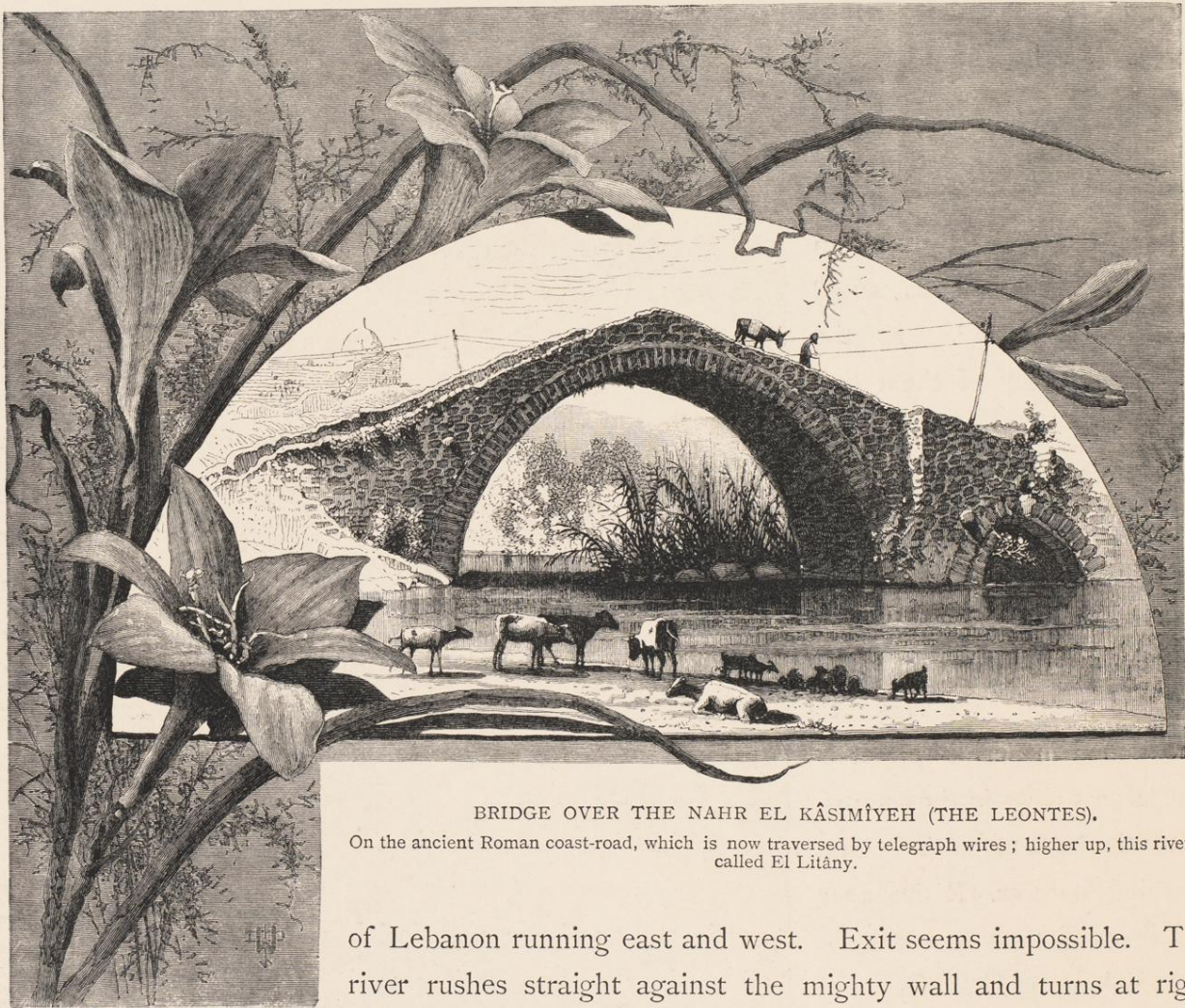
Though as we ride along we are very near the Leontes, the river gives no sign of its neighbourhood. It is never mentioned in Scripture, yet is the largest river in the country after the Jordan, and has some peculiar features. Rising near Ba'albec, far away north in the Būka'a, or Cœlo-Syria, it has its farthest source, like the Jordan and the Orontes, in the plain which commences the separation between the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon (see small map, page 12). We may stand on a slope of Lebanon and see the origin of the watersheds of the three rivers from the same spot, and it is difficult to realise, as we gaze,



THE BAY OF SIDON FROM SAREPTA.

The distance from Sarepta to Sidon, in a straight line across the bay, is about ten miles. On the extreme right, partly concealed by a tree, the ruins on Tell el Burák can be distinguished, and the Khan el Burák close by. In the distance the snow-covered summits of Lebanon appear.

how utterly different is the subsequent career of each. For many miles the tiny streamlets of Litány and Jordan flow southwards in almost parallel lines, while the Orontes takes a due northward course. The almost imperceptible rise which separates them gradually swells into a ridge, forming a watershed between Lebanon and Hermon, till the Litány makes a rift through Northern Galilee, a stupendous gorge, which affords the grandest scenery in the country, as by the natural bridge of El Kúweh (see page 134, vol. ii.). Dashing through a glen some thousand feet deep in places, just below the great castle of Shukif it meets a mountain barrier, a spur



BRIDGE OVER THE NAHR EL KÂSIMIYEH (THE LEONTES).

On the ancient Roman coast-road, which is now traversed by telegraph wires; higher up, this river is called El Litány.

of Lebanon running east and west. Exit seems impossible. The river rushes straight against the mighty wall and turns at right angles to the west, working its way by a fissure wholly invisible till the traveller is close upon its edge, and which splits the apparently continuous range to its very centre. The tableland to the north of the river continues without any prominent hills or deep valleys from the ridge above the mouth of the Kâsimiyeh (called in its upper course the Litány, doubtless its old Phœnician name, corrupted by the Greeks into Leontes), as far as Shukif and the range which forms the watershed of the Jordan.

Returning again to the Phœnician plain, the path lies for six miles along the shore on hard, smooth sand. The sweep of the land makes a fine embayed coast line, with the headland by Sarepta forming one end of the bow, and the moles, buildings, and ruins of Tyre, in front,

forming the other (see page 57). Tyre, no longer an island but a peninsula, stands out boldly into the sea, and the first view is very imposing, whether we approach it from the north or the south. A bare strip of sand intervenes between the port and the plain behind, which of late years is rapidly becoming a bright oasis of mulberry and orange groves and



THE VALLEY OF THE LEONTES, NEAR THE COAST.
The river, the Nahr el Kāsimiyeh, is of considerable depth at this point, and flows hence to the sea in a very serpentine course.

gardens, such as have long adorned the environs of Sidon. But these do not reach the shore, and we pass them on the left. On the right several grim skeletons of vessels, driven ashore from the dangerous anchorage of the roadstead, stand out from the shallow sea; and just opposite to them is a fine old fountain, an arched building covering several cisterns fed by springs beneath, and much resorted to by the inhabitants of this side of the city. Twenty years ago Tyre, now called Es Sûr, was a miserable, squalid village; but it has latterly much increased, and though still chiefly a labyrinth of ruins, yet contains a population of over seven thousand, with some bazaars fairly stocked. A few small craft may generally be seen in the roadstead, and a number of fishing

vessels in the inner harbour. Just at the north gate of the city, by which we enter, is the principal market, where scarlet leather, millstones from the Haurân, and tobacco, are the staples of commerce. The inhabitants are chiefly fishermen and some dyers, though the old Tyrian dyes are no more, and we may search in vain for Tyrian purple. The streets are most wretched, very few feet wide and wattled over at intervals with palm leaves and decayed brushwood; while windowless, mud-floored hovels nestle among huge fragments of polished granite and porphyry columns prostrate in rubbish. The strip of sand between the well and the gate has accumulated on the causeway by which Alexander the Great united the city to the mainland; for Tyre originally was an island rather less than a mile in length, containing about one hundred and twenty-five acres, and with the harbours between it and the mainland, on which was the larger city of Palæotyrus. The moles or breakwaters of the ancient harbours can still be seen both on the north and the south sides of the peninsula, the greater part of which consists of ruin-strewn fields, affording a charming camping ground, especially to the west of the modern town, where the tents can be pitched within a few yards of the waves, looking down on the mass of granite columns and marble blocks which pave the bottom of the clear sea (see page 59). The ruins of Tyre above the water are few indeed, and beyond the moles and harbour are none which carry us back to the times of Phœnician glory and supremacy, before its conquest by Alexander the Great. One, and one only, building of any interest remains, and its associations are far indeed removed from the history which must most absorb the traveller's thoughts, the story of the queen of commerce, the mistress of the seas, and the mother of mighty nations. The Cathedral of the Crusaders occupies a conspicuous position at the south-east angle of the shrunken city, and though roofless, and at the west end wholly demolished, is still comparatively perfect (see page 56). It is one of the largest of the many Crusading churches of Syria, and occupies the site of a much older and yet more historic building, the basilica of Constantine. Within the last few years the German Government have obtained a sort of protectorate over it, and prevented the utter demolition which threatened it as a mere quarry for building. They have also excavated much of the débris which choked the interior, and revealed many details of its architecture. Comte de Vogüé, the first living authority on Syrian architecture, fixes the date of its foundation 1125 A.D., by the Venetian Crusaders, who dedicated it to St. Mark. But it has an earlier history still. The original church was built by Constantine, Paulinus was its bishop, and the historian Eusebius delivered the oration at its consecration, which he has preserved at full length in his Ecclesiastic History, simply stating that it was the address delivered on the occasion by a certain man of moderate merit. In that church were laid the bones of the great father of the Church, Origen. But in evil times and national convulsions it had become, we know not how, a ruin, and the Crusaders nobly restored it. It measured two hundred and sixteen feet long by one hundred and thirty-six feet wide, and though we dare not controvert the architectural decision of De Vogüé, it is evident to every one who sees it that the restoration was on the old lines, on the Greek basilica model, not on the Latin. There are the three

apses at the east end, which the Muslims have since incorporated into the city walls, and I cannot but think that both the greater part of these apses as well as the lower corners of the walls are the original work of Constantine. A few years ago the interior was crowded with squalid hovels clustering on the sides. Now all have been cleared out, and the area is only strewn by the colossal red granite columns, which once stood upright and supported the roof. These shafts and pilasters, some of them double, are from six to eight feet in diameter and



THE GATE OF TYRE (SÛR).

There are two springs of fresh water on the north side of the peninsula, one of which is close to this gate. It has been conjectured that they are connected with the fountains of Râs el 'Ain.

about twenty-six feet long, yet they are only broken fragments, and no doubt were utilised by Constantine from some of the condemned heathen temples. Though their removal has been more than once attempted by the Muslims, they proved too massive to be broken, too heavy to be lifted. Of the resting place of Origen no mark remains. Frederick Barbarossa's body is believed to lie under the central apse. The emperor died at Tarsus, and all down that long coast of Syria day after day the funeral procession marched, till, halting at Antioch, there was

deposited the heart and intestines of the grand Crusader, while his bones were carried on hither, to be lain within the limits of the Sacred Land. Few churches, indeed, can vie in historic memories with the Cathedral of Tyre.

Yet when we climb up, and, standing on the apse of that old church, look forth upon the



RUINS OF THE CATHEDRAL CHURCH AT TYRE.

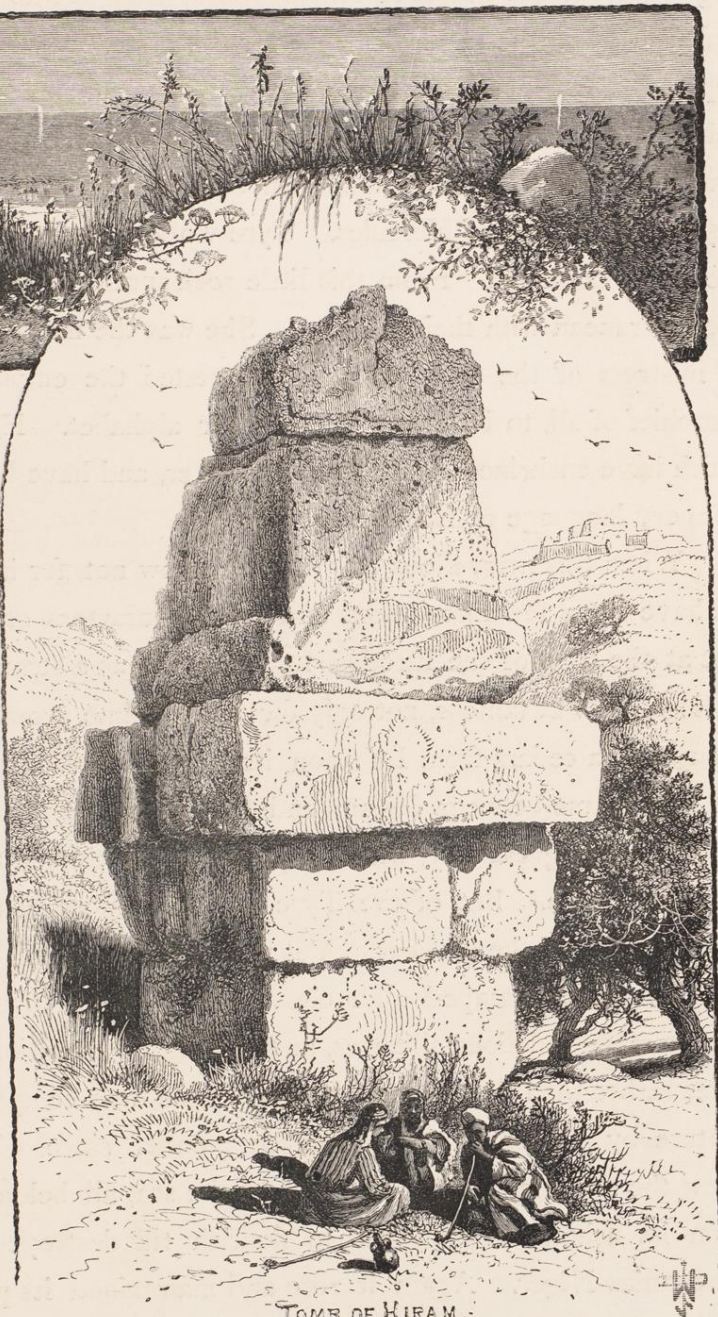
Eusebius describes this building as the most splendid of all the temples of Phoenicia. Among the ruins there is a double column of red syenite granite, now prostrate, consisting of two parallel connected shafts of great size.

sand-heaps on our left, the sea beyond, and the breakwaters, and see the red jagged fragments to the right, the long history of that church is but of yesterday when compared with the remote

memories behind it. Egypt and Assyria may carry us many centuries farther still, but what is their direct connection with us when compared with Phœnicia? That strange and mysterious people, where are they? What descendants have they left? Where can we trace them? They were scarcely of the land. Like some fowl of the sea, which never touches shore or visits



the land, save to rear its young, the Phœnician asked no territory, conquered no nations, yet was found on every coast. These original settlements of Tyre and Sidon, what are they? Along that straight, monotonous, havenless Syrian coast, the very last we should have imagined to have fostered a spirit of commerce and enterprise, here and there in front of some sandspits, or at the foot of some headland, there rises from the water a ridge of reefs, or a rocky islet. Like some sea-swallow, the Phœnician seized on this. There he made his perch, and took breath for a while between his adventurous voyages. Such rocky islets or headlands are Tyre (see above), Sidon (see page 45), Berytus, Gebal, Botrys, Tripoli, and Aradus [the modern Beirût (see pages 28 and 41), Jebeil, Batrûn, Tarabalûs (see pages 5 and 9), and Ruad], most of them very similar in position, and three of them—Jebeil, Batrûn, and Tarabalûs, in their little reef of rocks fronting and parallel to the headland, close reproductions of the site of Tyre. Tyre, though historically the daughter of Sidon, soon became the leading city of the



TOMB OF HIRAM.

KABR HIRÂM.

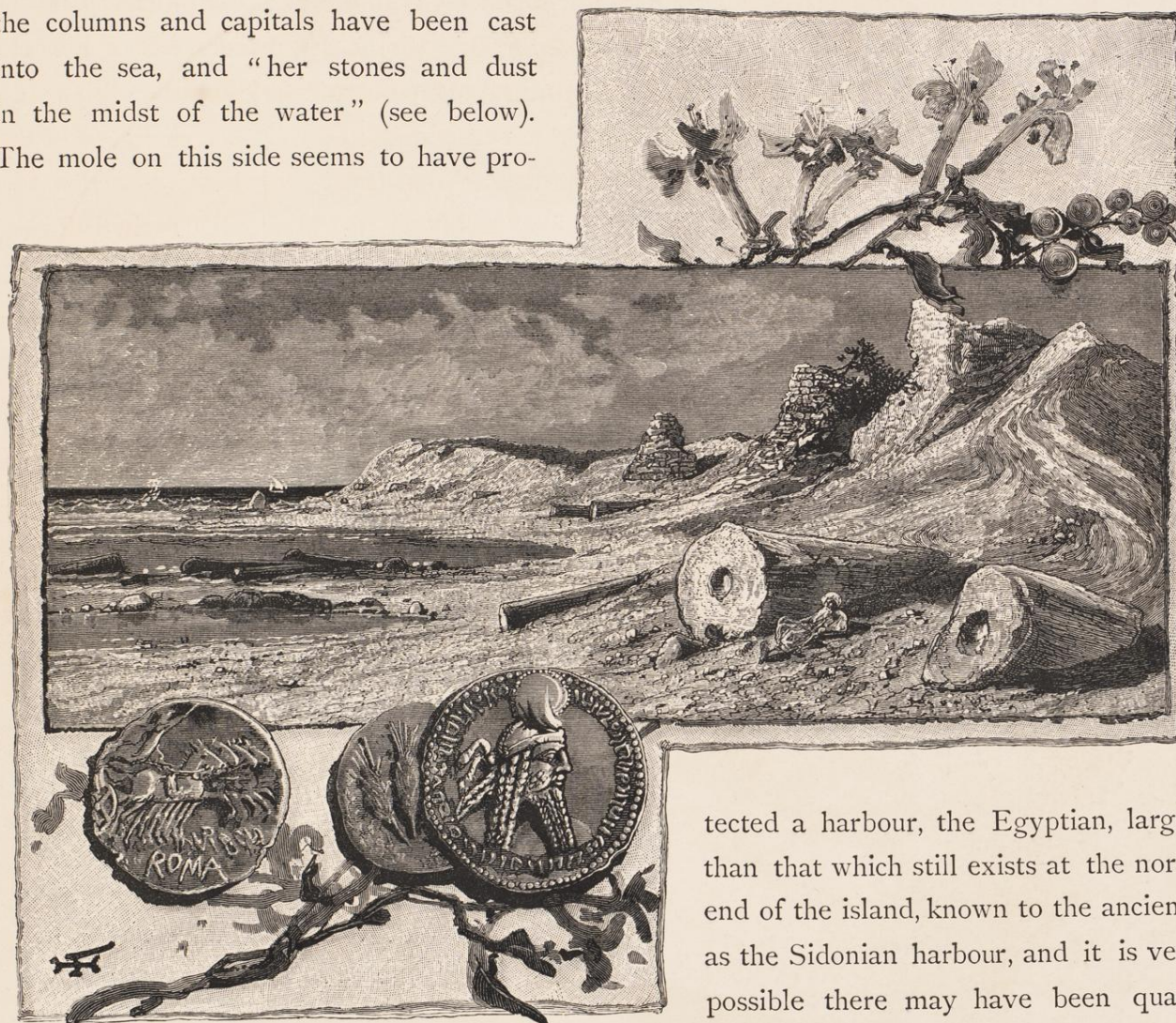
And the neighbouring village of Hanâwîeh, with a view of the peninsula of Tyre as it appears from this spot.

federation. What does not Europe owe in the way of civilisation to these decaying villages? We have but to look to the glowing denunciations of Ezekiel to see how vast and how varied was their trade. Tyre was the inventress and the cradle of glass manufacture, and for centuries she retained her pre-eminence. It was from Tyre that some adventurous monks, pilgrims from the coasts of Northumbria, brought into England the secret of the manufacture, and planted on the banks of the Wear the first glass works of the West, in the days of the Saxon heptarchy. Hence came the brilliant dyes which made resplendent the royal robes of kings, hence the bronze and metal which equipped the armies of antiquity. The tiny crafts of Phœnicia penetrated into unknown seas, and brought back to the East the news of a world beyond the Pillars of Hercules. Tyre worked the mines of Spain, and freighted her ships with the tin of Cornwall. From this little rock sprang the men who dotted the western shores of the Mediterranean with their colonies. She was the mother of that Carthage which succeeded her as mistress of the seas, and all but wrested the empire of the world from her rival, Rome. But chief of all, to Phœnicia we owe our alphabet. Hence Cadmus borrowed those characters which have enshrined the strains of Homer, and have become the framework for the expression of every language of Europe.

When this marvellous city rose we know not, for its indigenous literature has perished, and we have but a few inscriptions and a few characters on coins to tell us what was its language. But at the time of the Exodus, 1450 B.C., it was a strong city (Joshua xix. 29), and in the reign of David it was famous, not only for its maritime prowess, but for its arts and skill; its seamen brought him cedars from Lebanon, its masons and carpenters built his palace. Still closer was the intercourse between Hiram and Solomon, who formed a treaty of alliance and commerce. Israel fed the great city, which supplied the architect, the workmen, and many of the materials for the Temple. But of the Tyre of that day we can trace nothing, unless it be the massive substructions of the harbour. Yet throughout the long period of Persian supremacy, Tyre and her sister cities escaped all molestation. Careful to maintain their trade, the men of Tyre always made judicious alliances, and having no ambition for territory on shore, were voluntary allies rather than vassals, and though Sidon was conquered by Ochus, Tyre remained until its capture by Alexander after a seven months' siege. The numberless granite columns, which strew the shore and form the bed of the sea, all belong to the second Tyre, which soon rose from its ashes, and continued to flourish till destroyed at the end of the second century by Pescennius Niger. Again it rose and maintained its prosperity till the time of the Crusades. It was long held by the Christians, and in its cathedral was celebrated one of the last religious services held before the final embarkation of the last remnant of the chivalry of Europe. The final blow to its prosperity was given by the conquest of Syria by the Ottomans, in 1516 A.D.

But we must not run on into a history of Tyre. We have been led to muse on the past, as we wonder how she has become so utterly ruined and where her ruins are. Perhaps they have served as a quarry for the whole coast, and her stones may now be for the most part in Acre and Beirût. It has been the fate of places which have been continuously inhabited to have far

less to reveal of their old history than have those which have been destroyed and then deserted. Still the evidences of a great past are not far to seek. As we stroll along the shore, especially on the south side of the promontory, the shingle is composed of broken pottery almost as much as of natural pebbles, the old columns lie in every direction, pierced by the pholas and festooned with seaweed. The south side gives the clearest idea of the plan and position of the ancient city, on the foundations and massive sea-walls of which we may note the fishermen day after day spreading their nets, while the columns and capitals have been cast into the sea, and "her stones and dust in the midst of the water" (see below). The mole on this side seems to have pro-



THE REMAINS OF TYRE.

The shore is strewn from one end to the other, along the edge of the water and in the water, with columns of red and grey granite of various dimensions, the only remaining monuments of ancient Tyre.

tected a harbour, the Egyptian, larger than that which still exists at the north end of the island, known to the ancients as the Sidonian harbour, and it is very possible there may have been quays and wharfs where is now the broad belt of sand south of Alexander's Causeway.

This was very narrow at first, but the current has rapidly silted up the shallow bay, till the neck is almost as wide as the island itself. The process has long been going on, for at the south-east angle of the former island, and on what was once sea, stands what is called the Algerian tower, a portion of an old line of fortification constructed of the materials of earlier buildings, yet itself certainly not later than the time of the Crusaders, and probably part of their line of defence. The present gate (see page 55) is probably also on the site of the mediæval portal; but, though duly guarded, its use

has gone, for only fragments of the wall remain beyond the limits of the shrunken town, and on all sides the place is completely open, almost every street having a free exit into the open ground beyond. If we are inclined to wonder at the paucity of the remains of old Tyre, we must remember that for ages the site has been a quarry for building material. We noticed



RESERVOIRS OF RÂS EL 'AIN AND PART OF THE ROMAN AQUEDUCT.

Close to this spot stood Palæotyrus, of which no vestige now remains, the materials having been carried away by Alexander (332 B.C.) to construct the mole or causeway which unites insular Tyre to the mainland.

close to the modern houses a pit recently excavated for this purpose, not less than thirty feet below their level. Yet even at that depth the walling was composed of the broken columns and material of still older buildings. Lower still, therefore, must lie buried the Tyre of Hiram and of Solomon.



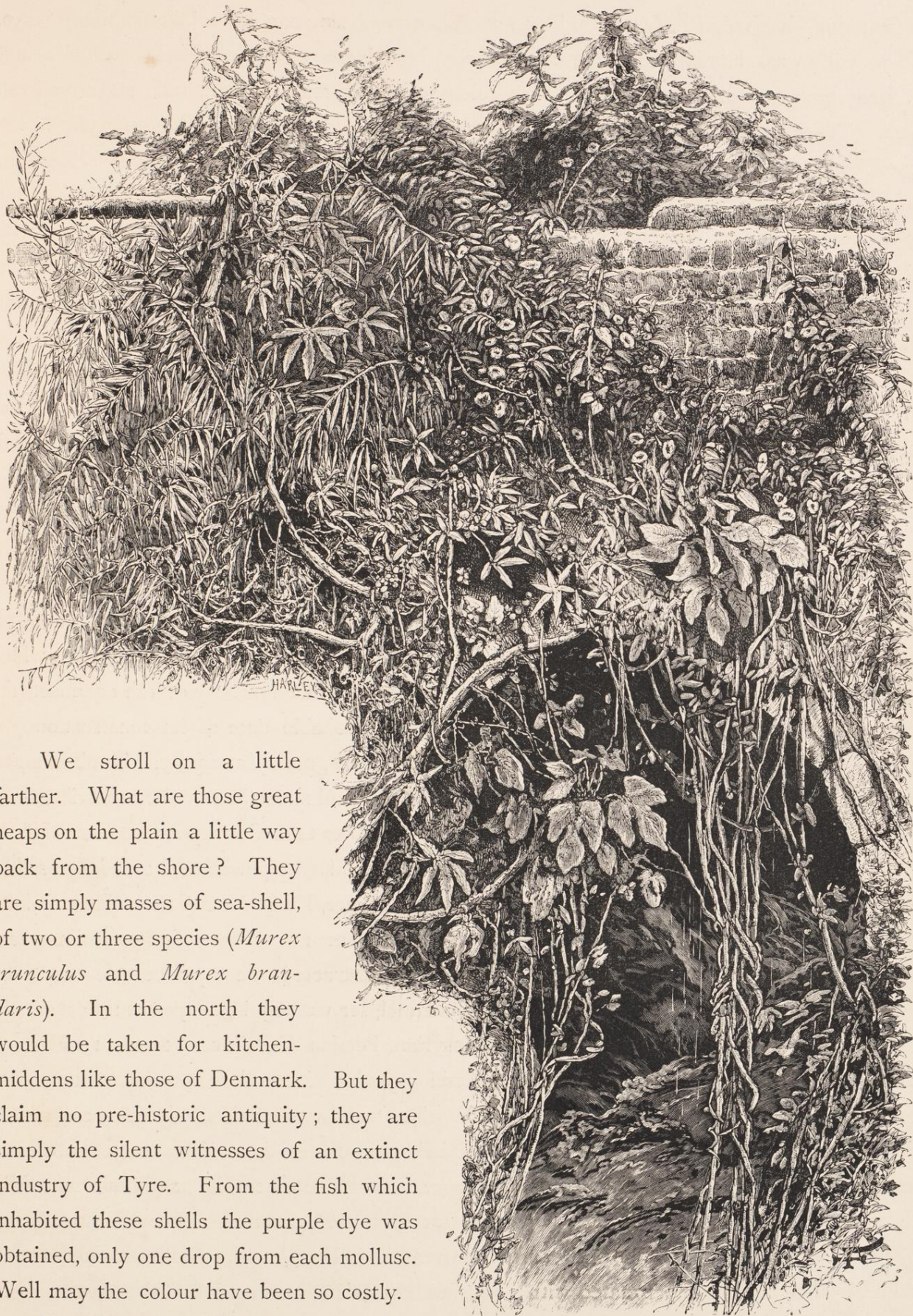
J. D. WOODWARD. FINCH

A. WILLMORE. SCULPT.

SIDON.



We
farther.
heaps on
back fro
are simp
of two o
truncate
laris).
would t
middens
claim n
simply t
industry
inhabite
obtained
Well me
Fro
the rese
VOL. I



We stroll on a little farther. What are those great heaps on the plain a little way back from the shore? They are simply masses of sea-shell, of two or three species (*Murex trunculus* and *Murex brandaris*). In the north they would be taken for kitchen-middens like those of Denmark. But they claim no pre-historic antiquity; they are simply the silent witnesses of an extinct industry of Tyre. From the fish which inhabited these shells the purple dye was obtained, only one drop from each mollusc. Well may the colour have been so costly.

From the south side we can proceed to the reservoir of Râs el 'Ain, "the head of

AQUEDUCT, RÂS EL 'AIN.

Of Saracenic origin, its slightly pointed arches are in many places almost concealed by luxuriant vegetation.

the fountain," the farther limit of Old Tyre, or Palæotyrus (see page 60). The mainland Tyre, as this really was, claimed to be the original city, though we may feel certain that the island was from the very earliest existence of the colony inhabited and fortified, and the commercial centre. There are few if any remains of the mainland Tyre above ground, but sufficient in the way of foundations to show the great extent of the city. Râs el 'Ain is an hour's ride, about four and a half miles from insular Tyre, and along the shore, from the one to the other, the city extended. It was not fortified, and doubtless many of the dwellings were suburban, with orchards and gardens extending back towards the hills. But all is now corn-plain or waste. We can trace the line of the aqueduct by which water was conveyed from these springs to the island. Râs el 'Ain itself is a picturesque group of ruins, with some water-mills and hovels, and the group of trees are refreshing. The springs are numerous and copious. The drainage of the sandstone strata appears to be concentrated towards this spot, and gushes forth with great force. It is collected in great tanks of masonry, each built round a great spring, which pours immense volumes of water with great force from the bottom of the reservoirs (see page 60). The original intention of these massive structures, which in some points recall the masonry of the Pools of Solomon, near Bethlehem (see page 145, vol. i.), has evidently been to force the water up to a sufficient height to supply the aqueduct. This is now completely ruined, but can be traced the whole way along the plain, first of all trending rather inland, till almost opposite the island it reaches a massive ruin, probably another great cistern, from which the aqueduct turned westward to the shore (see page 57). The masonry of the aqueduct, the shape of the arches, point to the Roman period as the probable date of its construction (see page 60), but the reservoirs themselves may claim a much greater antiquity. Tradition and mediæval writers popularly assign them to King Solomon, and some later writers ascribe them to Alexander. But the great conqueror had enough to do to take the city and at once left it, and it is scarcely likely that he should immediately after his conquest have set about such a great work. Far more reasonably may we believe that here, if nowhere else, we have a silent evidence of the genius of the old Phœnicians; and I am not aware of any similar work elsewhere constructed by the Romans. That they constructed the aqueduct we may well believe, but probably on the lines of a previous channel, for we may be very sure that the first operation of any besieger, whether Egyptian, Assyrian, Persian, Greek, or Roman, would be to interrupt this great water supply. Indeed, one aqueduct is as late as the Saracenic or Crusading times (see page 61). It starts from the fourth and smallest cistern, has pointed arches, and has been used for the purpose of irrigating the plain. The largest cistern is octagonal, sixty-six feet in diameter, inside measure, twenty-five feet high, and its wall, which is massively revetted, slopes gently from the ground to the summit, where the masonry is eight feet thick. This wall, of this enormous strength, is bound with the finest and hardest cement. The water is impregnated with lime, and has thickly encrusted all the reservoirs, as well as formed massive stalagmites both round the cisterns and along the course of the aqueduct. The only use to which this mighty work is now applied is the turning of a water-wheel for a

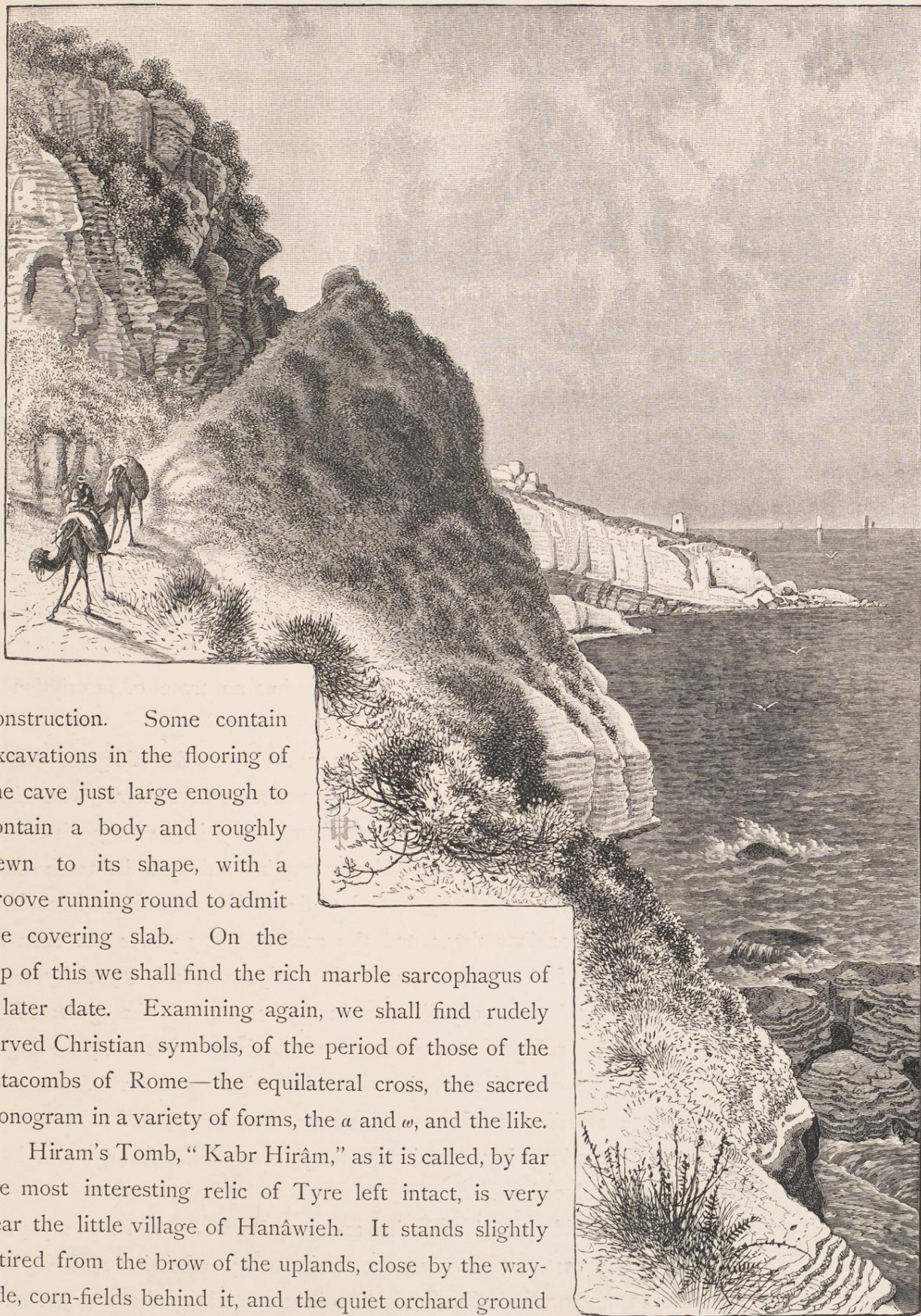
corn-mill, and the water running through leaks and over the masonry, is wasted as it works its way uselessly to the sea. These springs are first mentioned in the records of ancient Tyre as having been cut off by Shalmaneser when he withdrew from the siege, which certainly implies their importance at that very early date. In the time of the Crusades the water was used for the irrigation of the whole plain, which was cultivated and full of fruit-trees, and especially of sugar-cane, in strange contrast to its present half-desolate state.

But what must this plain and Old Tyre have been in the days of Israel, when, relying upon the impregnable insular fortress and their fleets which ruled the sea, the merchant princes had their villas and palaces all along the plain for many miles in the open country (for the fortifications never extended to Palæotyrus), and all the wealth and art of the age was lavished on the furniture, the gardens and the baths of her "whose builders had perfected her beauty" and "set forth her comeliness." Ebony and ivory, the gems of India and the riches of the East, bright tin from Cornwall, the gold of Tarshish, the spices of Arabia, the fine linen and brodered work of Egypt, silver and lead, tin and iron from afar, coral and agate from Syria, rich fabrics from Mesopotamia, such were some of the treasures and the decorations of the mother of commerce. But now she "is broken by the seas in the depth of the waters, and her merchandise and all her company in the midst of her are fallen." Yet it would be difficult to find a more lovely moonlight walk than along this beach from Râs el 'Ain to Tyre, with the light beaming far on the water, where now no gallant galley with oars can be seen, but the ghost-like black columns, gaunt in the moonlight, look like spectres on the sea, mourning the fate of their proud city. The ride to Hiram's Tomb (see page 57) may be accomplished from Râs el 'Ain as easily as from Tyre, following the line of the aqueduct (see page 60) for two miles and then turning towards the hills, which here rise very gradually from the plain. Very near Hiram's Tomb, to the southward, is the little village of Hanâwîeh, surrounded by orchards and olive yards, with many tombs in the sides of the hills. In these tombs have recently been discovered many interesting specimens of Phœnician or at least pre-Roman glass. In a sepulchre, which this year was opened by a charcoal-burner in digging up an old tree root, a complete set of funereal glass was found, undisturbed as when first placed in the newly-occupied tomb, which was a very small niche just large enough for a body and about four feet high, hewn at the foot of a rock against which earth and rubbish had accumulated. At each of the four corners of the tomb was a lachrymatory, much larger than the ordinary or later Roman ones and with a very long neck. At the upper part of the tomb were placed two flat dishes, one about six inches, the other twelve inches in diameter, for the meat and bread offerings for the dead, and a glass flask of antique and graceful shape for the wine.

The tombs in all these hills may be counted by thousands, but they have been rifled and rifled again centuries ago; many of them afford evidence of successive occupation by the dead of epochs distant from each other. For instance, to many of the old Phœnician tombs, which may be recognised at once by the style of their sculpture, there have been added Roman or Greek façades in various different styles, and niches for statues, subsequent to the original



RÂS EL ABYAD (WHITE CAPE), THE LADDER OF TYRE,
From the south side. The rock cut undulating road, with its shallow steps, is in many places nearly two hundred feet above the sea.



construction. Some contain excavations in the flooring of the cave just large enough to contain a body and roughly hewn to its shape, with a groove running round to admit the covering slab. On the top of this we shall find the rich marble sarcophagus of a later date. Examining again, we shall find rudely carved Christian symbols, of the period of those of the catacombs of Rome—the equilateral cross, the sacred monogram in a variety of forms, the α and ω , and the like.

Hiram's Tomb, "Kabr Hirâm," as it is called, by far the most interesting relic of Tyre left intact, is very near the little village of Hanâwîeh. It stands slightly retired from the brow of the uplands, close by the way-side, corn-fields behind it, and the quiet orchard ground in front. Whether it be the tomb of the great Phœnician monarch or not there is no possibility of

RÂS EL ABYAD.

Showing the north or Tyrian side. The little tower in the distance is a Turkish guard-house where tolls are levied, as it commands the pass to and from Acre.

proving. One argument for its great antiquity is its extreme simplicity and its dissimilarity from any sepulchral structures of the Greek age. The great repertory of Phœnician monuments is on the wonderful plain of Amrit, in Northern Syria, the ancient Marathus, opposite the island of Ruad, or Arvad. There is not a solitary inscription among them all, and Renan has demonstrated to the satisfaction of antiquaries that they are all long prior to the time of Alexander the Great. But the most archaic of those unique and massive sepulchres are in style and workmanship decidedly later than Hiram's Tomb, and yet they are formed on a similar model. The natural inference to any one seeing the tombs of Marathus and this of Tyre for the first time, would be that the architects of the former were familiar with such constructions as this, but had no idea of the Greek or Syro-Greek sepulchral architecture.

The Tomb of Hiram, for so we love to believe it as well as call it, is a grand massive sarcophagus, laid on a massive megalithic pedestal of dressed limestone, but without any trace of the Phœnician or Jewish bevel, standing in solitary desolation, commanding the sea and that city of Tyre over which Hiram ruled. The pedestal is composed of three courses of great stones, more than twelve feet by eight, and six feet thick. The third course is still thicker and projects over the others. On this is placed the great sarcophagus, hollowed out for the body, and over it still remains the lid, slightly pyramidal in form, a single block, twelve feet long by five thick. Immediately behind the tomb two flights of steps have recently been opened out, evidently coeval with it, and leading to a vaulted chamber not under but exactly behind the mausoleum. This was cleared out and examined by Renan, but no trace of inscription or indication of its purpose or date discovered.

From Hiram's Tomb it is little more than half an hour south-east to the village of Kanah, with its name unchanged since the days of Joshua, when it was a town of Asher. The whole district is strewn with broken sarcophagi, but there are some very interesting Phœnician sculptures, rarely visited, on the side of a very rocky hill overhanging a dell to the north of the road half-way to Kanah, called the Wâdy el 'Akkab, or by others El Afid. Here have been quarries very extensively worked in ancient times, and the rock in many places has been cut down perpendicularly. On many of these faces are rude sculptures and especially many cartouches, somewhat Egyptian in style, but very different in type as regards the figures within the cartouch. On one face of rock, besides the cartouches are nine figures in a row, the largest in the centre seated, the others, four on each side, about four feet high, standing. On another rock is a female draped figure standing, much more Assyrian than Egyptian in the style of dress, which is full. All the figures have been cut in the rough face of the rocks, which have not been squared or dressed to receive them.

From Kanah there is a lovely ride into the interior, an excursion which will well repay the traveller for the extra day it will cost, or he may traverse the valleys of Asher and Naphtali till he reaches the magnificent mediæval castle of Tibnîn. • The route is up the Wâdy 'Ashûr. It is a narrow valley with a very steep descent, which winds down to the coast in a serpentine, meandering course. Frequently it contracts into a romantic rocky glen, so narrow at the

bottom that it is difficult for a horseman to pass a laden camel without dismounting, and where he may touch the cliffs on either side with his stick. The sides of the enclosing hills gently slope back, timber being absent, but its place taken by dense brushwood, lentisk, myrtle, arbutus, the lovely storax, and the Judas-tree all in blossom together, with an undergrowth of endless variety of flowers, generally very different from those of Esdraelon and Galilee, and partaking more of the character of the Lebanon flora—especially a number of ferns of northern type.

Just at the mouth of the valley is a little plain, and high up in the rocks on the north side of this opening are some very curious sculptures. On the face of the cliff is cut a square recess about thirty-two inches square, and thirty inches deep. It is set in a bevelled frame of five steps, each two inches deep, cut in the rock. On the back wall of the niche is a fine piece of delicate sculpture, rather weathered. There is a group of five figures, the central one seated and two standing on each side, apparently offering gifts. Over the group is engraved the Egyptian symbol of eternity, with the outstretched wings, the disk, serpents, and other emblems. In many of these Phœnician remains we have the Egyptian, in others the Assyrian recalled, but nowhere has yet been found anything resembling the Hittite type.

When we reach the head of the Wâdy 'Ashûr, north of the village of Kefra, the summit of the hill affords a magnificent view. Three thousand feet beneath is the strip of the Phœnician plain, with Tyre conspicuous, jutting out from its neck of sand into the sea, fringed by the Mediterranean. Turning round, Hermon (see pages 96 and 137, vol. ii.) and the craters of the Lejah stretch from north to south, with the great castle of Shûkif distinct, perched on its crag south-west of Hermon. One bit of snow behind it marks the beginning of the Lebanon (see page 99, vol. ii.), while on the top of an isolated cone immediately to the east frowns the castle of Tibnîn, as though still impregnable, and giving the idea of a stupendous fortress, looking all the larger from its isolation.

And now, having surveyed the highlands, we will descend by that charming glen again to Râs el 'Ain (see page 60), and after a farewell glance at its dripping cisterns and fairylike festoons of maiden-hair fern, we continue along the shore till we reach the bluff headland of Râs el Abyad, "White Cape," which boldly projects into the sea, the sharp and clearly defined boundary of the Phœnician plain (see page 65). The chalky headland is often called the Ladder of Tyre, and a true ladder it would be were it not that many of its rungs are wanting, and the path, being worn in the cliff's side without the slightest bridge or fence and overhanging the sea two or three hundred feet below, is somewhat trying to novices in Palestine riding. From the crest of the pass is a very impressive view of the Phœnician coast. Desolate as the plain is, it is, at least in early summer, green, and shows well with its girdle of sand curving gracefully as it recedes and then runs out in the headland of Tyre. Curving again inwards, from this point we can follow it beyond the promontory of Sûrafend, which forms the head of the second bow. The ridge of the limestone hills behind varies in colour, through blending shades of purples, reds, and yellows, closing with the white and glittering brow on which we stand, while behind all tower the snowy ranges of Jebel Sûnnîn and Jebel esh Sheikh (Hermon), from forty

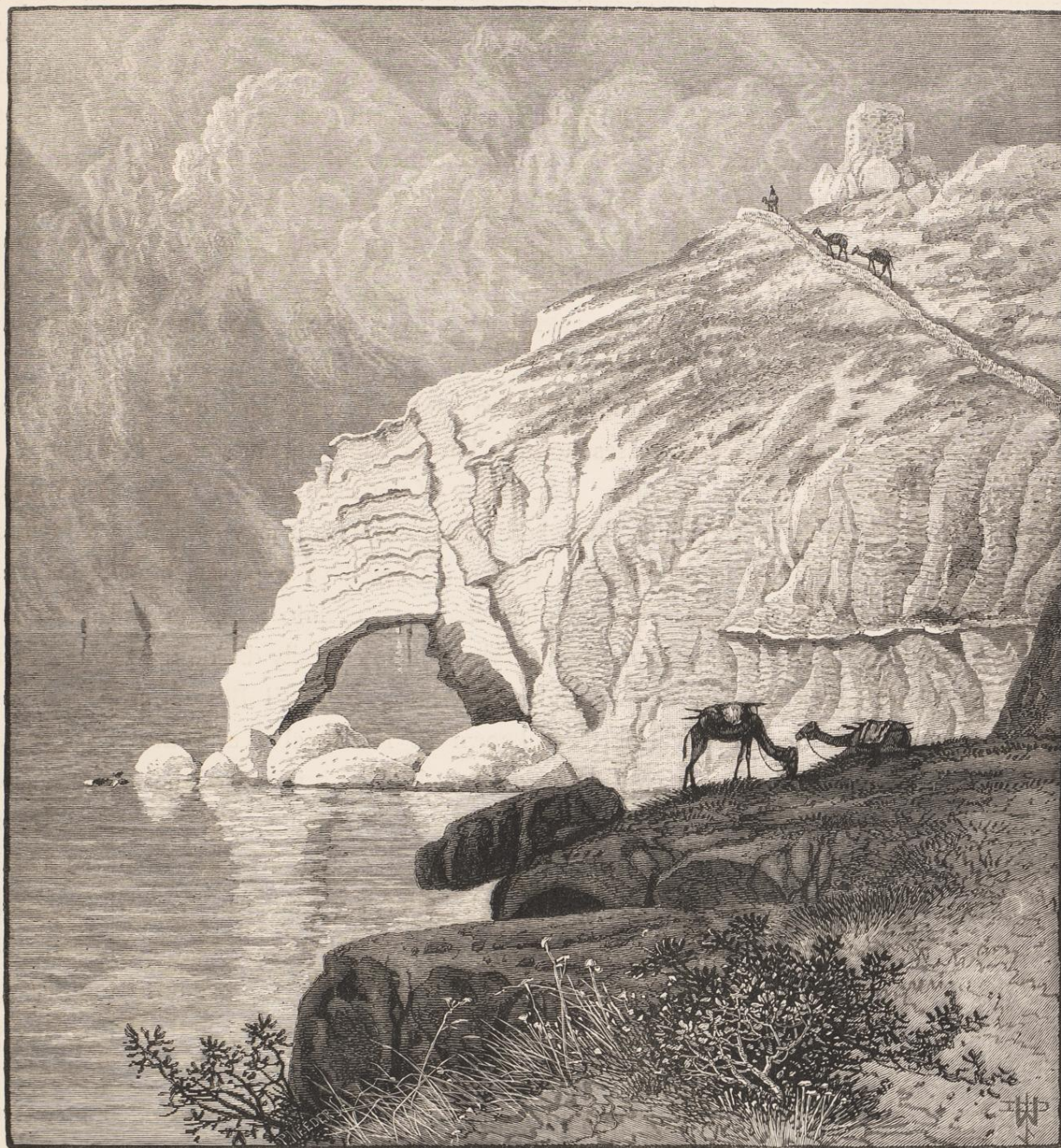
to sixty miles distant. From the Ladder of Tyre is a very narrow stony plain, extending in a crescent shape for about six miles as the crow flies, but over eight to ride, to the next headland, Râs en Nâkûrah (see page 69), beyond which commences at once the plain of Acre. Between the two promontories, slightly retired from the shore, are the ruins of a considerable town without a history, save that here Alexander encamped after the capture of Tyre, in honour of which a city was founded, called Alexandroschene, still preserving the name of Iskanderûneh. The embayed coast is here fringed by a rough



LOOKING TOWARDS TYRE FROM NÂKÛRAH.
An old olive-tree in the foreground and a Muslim cemetery on the hillside.

stony plain, or rather a gradual crescent-shaped slope, soon rising into low hills. One conspicuous Doric column still stands erect in the wilderness, with the shafts of many others, which have formed a colonnade, strewn around. A little farther on, marble fountains, fragments of tessellated pavement, gateways and architraves may be seen half buried in the thickets, with

many pieces of sculpture, some with emblems of Ashtaroth, or the moon goddess. No inscription has been found here, nor is there now a solitary inhabitant in the bay till we reach Nâkûrah at the next pass. The road or stony track keeps close along the shore and then



RÂS EN NÂKÛRAH.

The road over this headland, which has also been called the "Ladder of Tyre," has lately been greatly improved. South of it there is a spring called 'Ain el Musheirifeh.

climbs by the brow of the headland of Râs en Nâkûrah, the second Ladder of Tyre, the southern side of which is shown on this page.

So soon as the crest of the pass has been surmounted a fine view bursts suddenly upon the traveller. The rear of the rocky platform is shut in by Jebel Mushakka, and in front is spread the whole expanse of the plain of Acre, at least of its shore-line as far as Carmel. As the eye

follows the fringe of sand, a brown knob a few miles off marks the site of Zib, the ancient Achzib, the frontier town of Asher. Far beyond, another spit of sand is crowned by the buildings of the historic Acre, one of the few spots in Syria which has drawn to its focus a concentration of historic episodes, which link its name with almost every chapter in the story of Syria's fortunes for two thousand years. Beyond it again, in the far distance, the glass reveals the white spot in a crescent of green which, nestled under Carmel, marks the now flourishing Haifa. We here get our first view of Carmel from the north (see page 72). While able to realise its full extent, the effect of this outline is rather tame, as it gradually slopes towards the sea; yet the length of the ridge rising suddenly at this point of view from the plain, and forming a barrier across the horizon, makes it a conspicuous feature. But the nearer view, a green cultivated plain many miles in extent, studded with olive groves, with their grey-blue hue spangling the carpet, and each grove half concealing a village, affords a striking contrast to the solitudes of the Phœnician coast.

The road to Acre lies along the shore, but there are too many objects of interest to allow us to hurry onwards. Zib itself possesses nothing but its name to delay us. It is simply a modern village built on a mound of ruins. The valley of the little stream, Wâdy Kûrn, which is almost lost in the sands as it reaches Zib, where in ancient days it may have formed a creek for the fishing boats of Asher, is one which well repays a few days' exploration. The stream, swarming with fish, winds through a wooded glen which pushes into the plain, and forms one of the several spurs which, running from the Galilean hills, practically divide the plain of Acre from that of Esdraelon. A ride of four and a half hours from El Bûssah, in a south-east direction, brings us to the mediæval fortress known as Kûl'at el Kûrn, the *mons fortis*, Montfort of the Crusaders. Few travellers have entered it, but it is one of the finest ruins of Palestine. It is the first of that great chain of fortresses, stretching from the sea to Mount Hermon, by which the knights bade defiance to any attempted invasion from the north. Montfort was the apex of a triangle with the strongholds of Tyre and Acre at each extremity of its base. Thence a short day's march east found the battlements of Tibnîn. From that citadel, a few hours distant, the impregnable walls of Shûkîf (Belfort) commanded the passage of the Litâny. South of Shûkîf and Tibnîn, on the hill where now stands the village of Kaukâb el Hawa, Belvoir overlooked the passage of the Jordan and the bridge south of the Sea of Galilee, while northwards frowned Hûnîn (see pages 99 and 102, vol. ii.), commanding the plain of Hûleh; and within sight of it again the mighty fortress of Subeibeh (see pages 116 and 117, vol. ii.), overhanging Bâniâs, under Hermon, and guarding the eastern approaches from the Haurân. Every one of these was, while sufficiently garrisoned, impregnable under the conditions of mediæval warfare, and no invader could dare to leave them unmasked in his rear.

None of these, though the most decayed may compare with any other ruin in the country (for the Saracens, though they may have captured, took care to do no more than dismantle them), can rival Kûl'at el Kûrn in its state of preservation. Seven miles from the coast, one thousand

and fifty feet above the sea, and five hundred and sixty above the stream at its foot, a tongue of rock stands out between two ravines with perpendicular sides, not more than twenty yards wide and two hundred yards long, and cut off from the ridge behind by a deep artificial chasm. Where needful its sides have been coated with masonry, each tier sloping inwards, but the course above projecting three inches, so that scaling was impracticable. On the top are four successive fortresses, each successively defensible, and under each enormous cisterns, securing an independent supply of water. From the masonry of the lower structures it would seem that the fortress was originally Phœnician, that it was afterwards enlarged, and, perhaps, rebuilt by the Syrian Greeks or the Romans, and finally strengthened as we now see it by the Christian knights. It is, indeed, one of the most interesting relics of the long and hardly won, and still more hardly kept, dominion of our Norman ancestors. Yet all that history tells us of it is, that it was built by Hermann, grand master of the Teutonic knights, in A.D. 1229, and captured by Sultan Bibars in A.D. 1291. The knights, however, did little more than restore and strengthen fortifications of far earlier conquerors, as Phœnician, Greek or Maccabæan, and late Roman work, can be successively traced below the mediæval structures.

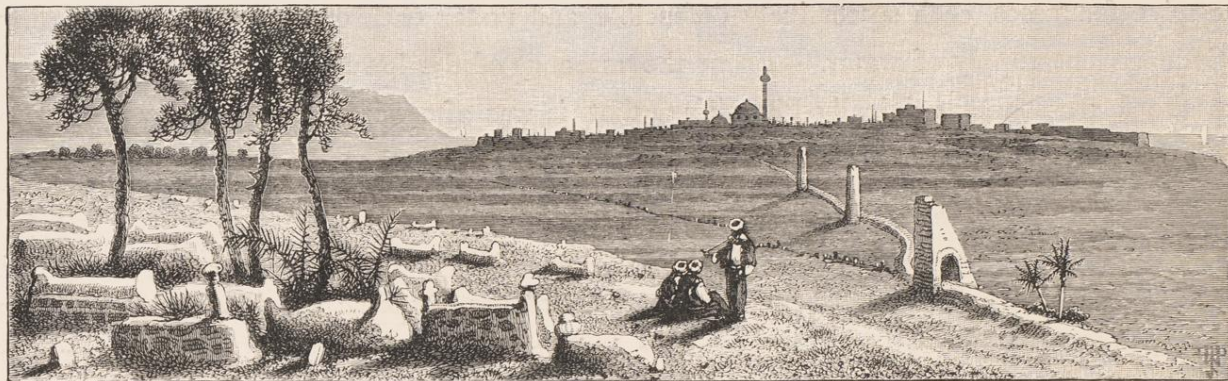
From Kûl'at el Kûrn the road to Acre passes through a partially wooded undulating plain for about four hours, till the maritime plain, drained by the classic river Belus (see page 72), now the Nahr Na'mân, is reached. The spurs of the Galilean lower hills run far down and form a low barrier between the plain of Acre and the plain of Esdraelon. From these spurs are fed the springs which supplied the aqueduct on the north. From the south-east the Belus (see page 72) works its way through its marshy bed, the sand almost absorbing it as it nears the shore.

The whole of this plain of Acre is studded, especially at the foot of the surrounding hills, with mud-built villages, many of them inheriting ancient names, but none bearing any other signs of antiquity. Thus we find to the south-east of Acre, Kabûl, the Cabul of Joshua and Kings, and north of it Amkah, the old Beth-emek; Semîriyeh, anciently Sherivron-meron; Abdeh, or Abdon; Jefât, the Jotopata of Josephus; and many others. The fame of the river Belus arises from the Greek tradition, that the invention of glass manufacture was due in the first instance to the accidental discovery on its banks of a vitreous mass produced by a fire of seaweed among the flints and sand, which some sailors had lighted when camping here. There are no traces of glass works to be seen, but we know that the Tyrians were the first manufacturers, and the tradition may very probably be true.

From the springs of the Nahr Na'mân is an interesting ride up a gentle wooded slope to Shefa 'Amr, one of the principal villages of the district. We know nothing of its biblical name or history. It first came into notice in the time of the Crusades, and was the head-quarters of Saladin when endeavouring to raise the siege of Acre. On the crest of the hill are the ruins of an extensive mediæval castle, apparently of Saracenic construction. Nothing of interest beyond its massive walls remains. There is a very fine view of Acre, Haifa, and the plain from this castle. Not a mile to the south, on the opposite hill, is another smaller ruined castle, El Burj.

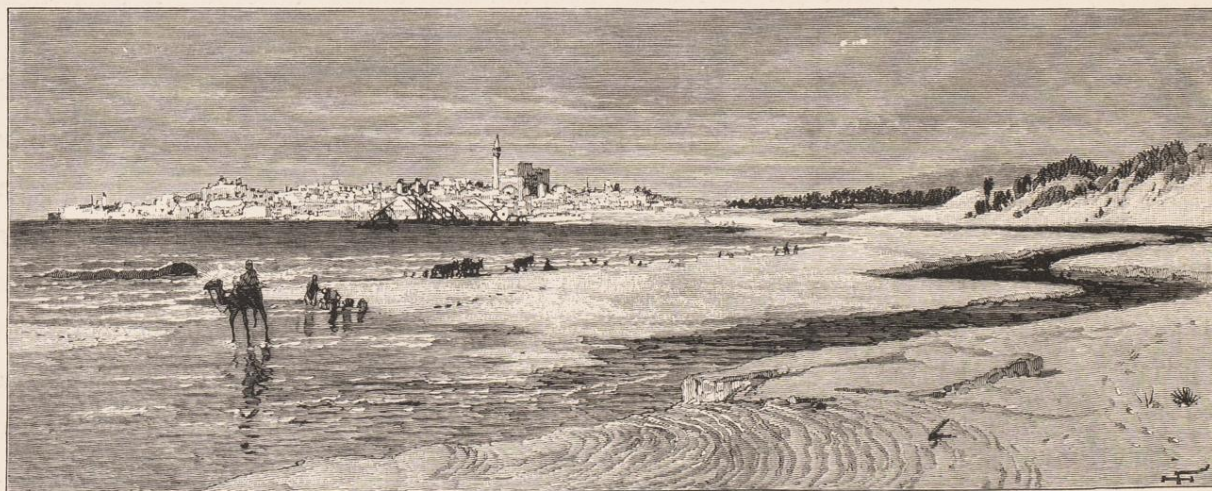
Shefa 'Amr, which is chiefly Christian, also possesses a church and schools of the Church Missionary Society.

From Shefa 'Amr is a beautiful ride through wooded glens—almost the only park-like scenery with fine timber left on the west side of Jordan, but, alas! rapidly perishing under the



THE CITY OF ACRE (AKKA) FROM THE NORTH-EAST.
Mount Carmel is seen in the distance, beyond the bay. Muslim cemetery and aqueduct in the foreground.

axe of the charcoal-burner—till we reach the large village of Sefûriyeh, the ancient Sepphoris, Diocæsarea of the Romans, Kitron of Joshua, eight miles to the south-east, girt with olive groves. Here are ruins reminding us of the part that Sepphoris played in the history of the Herods and of the Crusades. The central apse of the Crusaders' church still exists, and above



THE CITY OF ACRE FROM THE SOUTH.
The mouth of the Nahr Na'mân, the ancient river Belus, in the foreground, where, tradition says, glass was first produced by an accidental combination of the necessary materials.

it on the hill is the castle; the lower portion of the work of the Herods, or even earlier, but the gateway and pointed arches above of the Crusading period (see page 48, vol. ii.). The place which once boasted a Roman mint is now a squalid Muslim village.

From Sefûriyeh good horse-paths lead both to Nazareth and to the coast.