

SYRIA AND THE DESERT.

Water and heat are indispensable to vegetation. There can be no deficiency as to heat in Syria, owing to the latitude in which that country is situated; but the abundance of both is wanting, and this is what is water being wanted. When we speak of a desert, most persons think that the soil consists only of sand, in which the elements for the support of plants do not exist. This is not the desert of Lyons, but it does not apply to the wide Arabian. When rain falls vegetation flourishes to a degree that causes astonishment to those who witness it for the first time. But to the astonishment to those who witness it for the first time. But to the astonishment to those who witness it for the first time. But to the astonishment to those who witness it for the first time.

Thus the desert that stretches from the Euphrates to the valley of the Orontes and Antilebanon, is in a certain sense very fruitful, and still the harvests are not produced in abundance. But to the astonishment to those who witness it for the first time. But to the astonishment to those who witness it for the first time.

The influence of the climate is altogether different in those parts of Syria which lie between the coast and the mountains. The westerly winds, that bring with them the moisture derived from the sea increase the amount of rain. A like effect is produced by the snow which in winter falls in Lebanon, and moderates the heat and dries up at least a part of the hot season of the year.

The care, moreover, which is taken in the more favoured parts of Syria, to make the most of every spring of water, is very remarkable. As the water is scarce, which which abound even on the borders of Lebanon, and are intended to provide water for the mulberry trees, I was reminded of the saying of Solomon, "I made me pools of water, that I might bring forth the seed of the fruitful trees." (Ecc. ii. 6.) In our well-watered countries, we sometimes have to complain of ill-disposed persons, who out of revenge, cut down and destroy the trees which increase the value of the possessions of their enemies. In the East, such men destroy the cisterns and fill up the wells; they know that the desolating winds will soon complete the mischief. Thus we may suffer from the hatred of his enemies. (Gen. xxvi.) Nothing changes in the East. The history of the Bible describes events which occur in our times.

The Arabs have various laws respecting the rights of property in wells, which are enforced with extreme strictness. The plains of Damascus afford abundant evidence of the fruitfulness of the land in Syria, when it is well watered. If the two streams, the Barada and the Awash, were to dry the plains of Damascus, the soil would be as barren as the desert, which stretches out beyond their borders. The beauty of the environs of Damascus has often been celebrated by poets. The town and its environs are fertile, and the soil is the dull monotony of its mud-built houses, forms indeed a sad contrast to the surrounding neighbourhood. But still its two hundred thousand inhabitants, and the extensive cultivation in which it is engaged, show how fertile the soil must be, and how great the natural advantages which they enjoy.

But Damascus suffers from the Bedouins, who assist in carrying on commerce, but occasion much misery to the people. The influx are increased by the weakness of the Turkish authorities, who are unable to restrain them, and by the practice of *asay*, which causes so much misery in this otherwise favoured country. The Bedouins have a method of laying the country people under contribution, which is even worse than direct and open robbery. The Bedouins take a great deal of water, and they do not pay for it. They are called this "fraternity," they compel the country people to accept it. If a man builds a house or a stable, he may well

hope that no Bedouin will become his neighbour. Should this be the case, the Bedouin deems it his duty to fail to request the favour of being allowed to place one stone in the building, and then will most zealously maintain that from henceforth he and the proprietor of the house are no longer neighbours; and that if any one should attack his person or property, the whole tribe to which the Bedouin belongs is a great protection. This is certainly a great protection, but it is certainly a great protection, but it is certainly a great protection.

But it may be asked, Why do not the authorities help the poor peasants in these difficulties? The Turkish authorities have enough to do to take care of themselves and the Bedouins attempt to interfere in these despatches. They are soon frightened, and the indolence of the pashas leads them to wish to avoid quarrelling with the Bedouins.

Thus a contract is made, and the countryman will do well to take care that he has his money in readiness; for if it be not paid, the tribe that is to protect him will hasten and plunder him. But it may be asked, Why do not the authorities help the poor peasants in these difficulties? The Turkish authorities have enough to do to take care of themselves and the Bedouins attempt to interfere in these despatches. They are soon frightened, and the indolence of the pashas leads them to wish to avoid quarrelling with the Bedouins.

It is often said that the oppression of the Turks ruin both the Christian and Jewish population. There is some reason for this, but it is not sufficient to remedy the evils. The Bedouins must be confined to the deserts, properly so called. Thus the settled population would be freed from innumerable sufferings, and the Bedouins themselves would be compelled to acknowledge the authority of the Sultan, for whom they seem at present to entertain but little respect.

Three battalions of infantry would be sufficient, if distributed in different stations and fortified places, to guard the mouths of the river Jordan. The Bedouins have no artillery or means for storming a fortified place. Their troops are chiefly cavalry, and could not attack such places with any effect. They are not organized like European soldiers, and would have but little to fear from the Bedouins, who do not use any bayonets.

They could not blockade a place, as they are obliged to wander about, in order to find grass and water for their flocks. They might be successfully attacked by a regiment of cavalry, who could follow their movements.

It could be confessed that the fortifications which were built for the protection of the bridges over the Jordan are in a sad state of dilapidation; but as they are by no means extensive, it would not cost much to restore them, and a few more would be sufficient to keep the Bedouins at a distance. They seldom carry on an attack for any length of time.

And beside this, it may be observed that it is of no preference in their part has been found greatly to assist the inhabitants of the villages on the line from Hebron to Gaza, in their endeavours to defend themselves against the Bedouins. As soon as a regular discharge of musketry takes place, they retire.

Mr. Stephens, in his Incidents of Travel, mentions, that tombstones in the Turkish burying grounds are all flat, and contain hollows which hold the water after a rain, and the work and the intelligible to slake their thirst and gain amongst the trees.

LATEST FROM AUSTRALIA.

There have been several arrivals from the different Australian colonies during the course of the week, and so intelligible they bring, if not so startling and important as we have been previously accustomed to, is nevertheless highly interesting and important. Some apprehensions are expressed out of the fact, that the labour market of all kinds, and it was feared, that the progress of the public and private works would be necessarily in some degree arrested.

The reports from the gold diggings continue very favourable, several new alluvial diggings have been discovered, and the number of persons trying their fortunes at those diggings was on the increase, and their labours were attended with success. Several small shafts have been sunk on the Whimbley Reef, and the Whimbley Reef, several claims have been lately sold at high prices, and the whole line of ground presents a most healthy appearance. One person lately crushed 900 ounces of gold out of a ton of quartz, and the amount of gold had taken place among the miners at Ballarat. Axes, tomahawks, picks, bludgeons, and blocks of road metal were brought into play, and hundreds of men are said to have been employed. The returns for the banks of Australia during the first quarter of the present year are very satisfactory, showing a steady progressive business. The deposits are increasing in a greater ratio than the liabilities of the colonists to the banks.

The *Ovens and Murray Altercations* says:—"In consequence of the success of various parties near M'Donald's restaurant, at the One-mile, a large rush set into that quarter. The rush commenced six days ago, and since that time about half a dozen persons have been killed, and a number of numerous branch stores and restaurants have been opened. A few days ago M'Donald's house stood alone at the top of the hill, and there was not a tent to be seen but now the hill is covered with tents, and now nearly two miles of closely packed tents, stores, &c., and these are mostly of a substantial description. The diggings extend over a very large space. Something like a new discovery has been made in heading towards Padman's Gully, and a number of good patches have been found on both sides of the road, and in the direction of the race course. A few holes here and there are yielding gold, and some of these are yielding half an ounce to the dig. A party arrived in town yesterday, who reported the discovery of a rich quartz reef in the neighbourhood of the Buckland-road, and about five miles from this city." This reef is said to be richer than any other in the district. The reef is about two miles off the road, in a westerly direction, and on the top of a range opposite John's Flat. The name of the discoverer is not mentioned, but it is probable that the particulars in order that himself and mates may become entitled, as the prospectors of the vein, to an increased claim.

on the crown of the reef. There is a good deal of speculation going on just now in the purchase of claims and shares of claims. A few days ago, two of the bosses sold, each, one fourth share of their respective claims, the former bagging the handsome sum of £300, the latter, a Miss situated nearly opposite the Hit Hotel, and both of them had been considerably well worked. The bosses, on their bidding farewell to the wretched, gave their workmen a grand supper at the above hotel. A sufficient number of men were erected a bridge over the gully near Scott's bakery without seeking Government aid. It is to be commenced immediately."

THE GALLEY SLAVES' REVOLT.—A disturbance occurred some days since among the galley-slaves of Civita Vecchia. It appears, that the Government pays them a small gratuity for their daily work, and that this pay is continued even when there is no work. Lately, however, orders were received from Rome only to pay for work done. This led to seditions cries on the part of the galley-slaves, who refused to go to mass on a Sunday, and as the governors enforced the regulation by the aid of the case, one of the prisoners resented the chastisement by returning blow for blow. The disturbance was quelled by the military, and on the following day, seven of the culprits received 25 strokes of the bastinado.

A letter from Brescia of the 11th says:—"Our province is infested with brigands; a band of forty miscreants spreads terror among the peasantry, and the whole of the band is called Stringini; and his chief deserters. The other day, one of the richest land-owners of Mantua, M. Pastore di Castellone, was seized by these ruffians, and had to pay 8,000*l.* as the price of his liberty."

A terrible and fatal riot occurred at New Orleans on the 12th ult., at a ball given by the Shamrock Society; a young man named Thomas Barry was killed, and another named James McDonnell was wounded. An altercation occurred between some men in the back part of the room was the first evidence of what occurred, at 2 o'clock; immediately after, a general fight ensued. At this time, the hall is represented as particularly wild and terrible, the men being mixed up in a general melee, or striving to preserve peace; the ladies, some screaming some terrified, and others barely seeing their friends; knives, daggers, and sticks were used, and many men saw scene shocking to behold.

HASZARD'S GAZETTE.

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Saturday, August 23, 1856.

We have two reasons for directing our readers' attention to the advertisement of the City Corporation, in relation to the sale of the lotteries; one, to show, that the Corporation is in earnest and fully determined to carry out the improvements in the streets in the best possible manner; the other, to call the attention of the government to this sensible and judicious plan of the City authorities, and endeavor to persuade them to do the same with respect to the whole Island. The necessity of providing good roads is no obvious a duty as that of providing good streets, and it is more especially the part of those entrusted with the affairs of a country wholly dependent upon agriculture, and situated in a fertile country, requiring correspondent attention, in the endeavor to persuade them to do the same with respect to the whole Island. The necessity of providing good roads is no obvious a duty as that of providing good streets, and it is more especially the part of those entrusted with the affairs of a country wholly dependent upon agriculture, and situated in a fertile country, requiring correspondent attention, in the endeavor to persuade them to do the same with respect to the whole Island.