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Arthur Penrhyn Stanley (1815–1881) was a Biblical historian and was also considered the leading liberal theologian of his day. After being appointed a Canon of Canterbury Cathedral in 1850 he was elected Regius Professor of Ecclesiastical History at the University of Oxford before becoming Dean of Westminster in 1863. During 1852 and 1853 Stanley travelled extensively in Egypt and the Holy Land. In this book, published in 1856, Stanley describes in vivid detail the ancient monuments and sites he visited, relating these locations to descriptions in the Old Testament and discussing the 'sacred geography' this creates. His work was immensely popular, with this volume running into a fourth edition within a year of publication. It provides a classic example of the combination of Biblical scholarship with historical literature which formed the basis of historical scholarship on the ancient Near East in the late nineteenth century.

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# Sinai and Palestine

*In Connection with their History*

ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY



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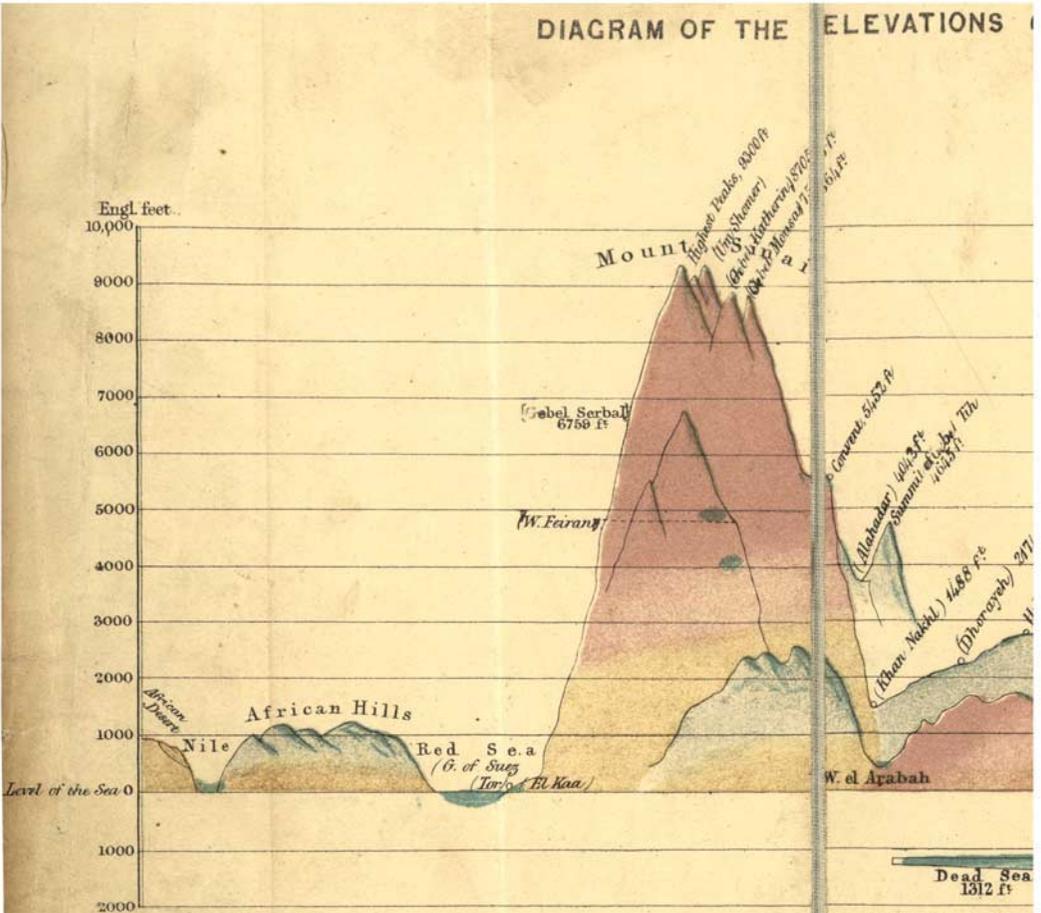
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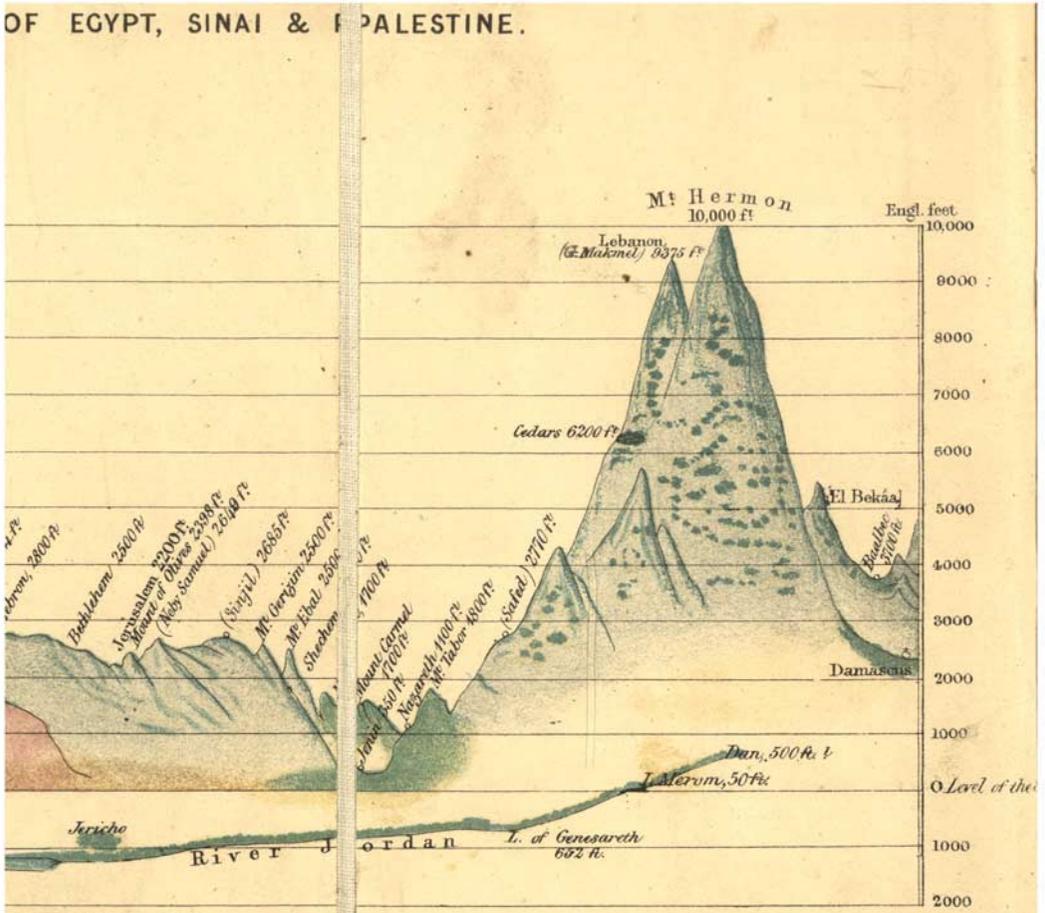
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- Purple Red
  - Light Red
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  - Dark Green
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  - Light Yellow
  - Brown
  - White

The modern names (in Maps where)

The Maps have been constructed, with the help of M<sup>r</sup> Pierrmann, part

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OF EGYPT, SINAI & PALESTINE.



Albemarle St. January, 1856.

- pearance which the country actually presents.
- Granite & Basalt.
  - Sandstone.
  - Limestone.
  - Forest.
  - Pasture land.
  - Corn land.
  - Sand.
  - The Gravel of the Desert.
  - White Limestone, Salt or Snow.

the two are mixed ) are in brackets.

ly from observation on the spot, partly from the Maps of Russogger, Hüpert & von Raumer.

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# SINAI AND PALESTINE

IN CONNECTION WITH THEIR HISTORY.

BY ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY, M.A.

CANON OF CANTERBURY.

WITH MAPS AND PLANS.

SECOND EDITION.

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In the references to the *Erdkunde* of Professor C. Ritter throughout this work, the following names have been adopted for the volumes relating to Sinai and Palestine :—Part XIV. (or Vol. I.) is designated Sinai : Part XV. (Vol. II.), Sect. 1. Jordan : Sect. 2. Syria : Part XVI. (Vol. III.) Palestine : Part XVII. (Vol. IV.), Sect. 1. Lebanon : Sect. 2. Damascus.

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## ADVERTISEMENT.

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WHAT is personal in this book may be briefly told. In the winter of 1852, and in the spring of 1853, in the company of three friends<sup>1</sup>, to whose kindness I shall always feel grateful for having enabled me to fulfil this long-cherished design, I visited the well-known scenes of Sacred History in Egypt, Arabia, and Syria. Any detailed description of this journey has been long since rendered superfluous by the ample illustrations of innumerable travellers. But its interest and instruction are so manifold, that, even after all which has been seen and said of it, there still remain points of view unexhausted.

Much has been written, and still remains to be written, both on the History and the Geography of the Chosen People. But there have been comparatively few attempts to illustrate the relation in which each stands to the other. To bring the recollections of my own journey to bear on this question; to point out how much or how little the Bible gains by being seen, so to speak, through the eyes of the country, or the country by being seen through the eyes of the Bible; to exhibit the effect of the 'Holy Land' on the course of the 'Holy History;'

<sup>1</sup> I trust that I may be permitted to name Mr. Walrond, Mr. Fremantle, and Mr. Findlay.

—seemed to be a task not hitherto fully accomplished. To point out the limits of this connection will be the object of the following Preface.

As a general rule, it has been my endeavour, on the one hand, to omit no geographical feature which throws any direct light on the history or the poetry of the sacred volume; and, on the other hand, to insert no descriptions except those which have such a purpose, and to dwell on no passages of Scripture except those which are capable of such an illustration. The form of narrative has thus been merged in that of dissertation, following the course of historical and geographical divisions. Whenever I have given extracts from journals or letters, it has been when it seemed necessary to retain the impression not merely of the scene, but of the moment. Only in a few instances, chiefly confined to notes, the main course of the argument has been interrupted in order to describe in greater detail particular spots, which have not been noticed in previous accounts. I have, as much as possible, avoided the controverted points of sacred topography, both because they mostly relate to spots which throw no direct light on the history, and also because they depend for their solution on data which are not yet fully before us.

The Maps have been framed with the intention of giving not merely the physical features, but the actual colouring offered to the eye of the traveller at the present time. In the use of the geographical terms of the Old and New Testament, I have aimed at a greater precision than has been reached or perhaps attempted in the Authorised Version; and have thrown into an Appendix a catalogue of such words, as a help to a not unim-

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portant field of philological and geographical study. For the arrangement of this Appendix, as well as for the general verification of references and correction of the press, I am indebted to the careful revision of my friend, Mr. Grove, of Sydenham. Throughout the work I have freely used all materials within my reach to fill up the deficiencies necessarily left by the hasty and imperfect character of my personal observation. It is unnecessary to describe more particularly the nature of these sources; they are mostly given in the long catalogues of writers affixed to Robinson's 'Biblical Researches,' and Ritter's volumes on Sinai, Palestine, and Syria; and I may perhaps be allowed to refer for a general estimate of their relative value to an essay on 'Sacred Geography' in the Quarterly Review for March 1854.

Finally, I have to express my deep sense of all that I owe to my friend and fellow-traveller Mr. Theodore Walrond, Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford. Without him the journey, to which I shall always look back as one of the most instructive periods of my life, would in all probability never have been accomplished: on his accurate observation and sound judgment I have constantly relied, both on the spot and since; and, though I have touched too slightly on Egypt to avail myself of his knowledge and study of the subject where it would have been most valuable, I feel that his kind supervision of the rest of the volume gives a strong guarantee for the faithful representation of the scenes which we explored together, and of the conclusions to be derived from them.

## PREFACE.

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### THE CONNECTION OF SACRED HISTORY AND SACRED GEOGRAPHY.

THE historical interest of Sacred Geography, though belonging in various degrees to Mesopotamia, Egypt, Asia Minor, Greece, and Italy, is, like the Sacred History itself, concentrated on the Peninsula of Sinai and on Palestine. Even in its natural aspect the topography of these two countries has features which would of themselves rivet our attention; and on these, as the basis of all further inquiry, and as compared with similar features of other parts of the world, I have dwelt at some length<sup>1</sup>. But to this singular conformation we have to add the fact that it has been the scene of the most important events in the history of mankind; and not only so, but that the very fact of this local connection has occasioned a reflux of interest, another stage of history, which intermingles itself with the scenes of the older events, thus producing a tissue of local associations unrivalled in its length and complexity. Greece and Italy have geographical charms of a high order. But they have never provoked a Crusade; and, however bitter may have been the

<sup>1</sup> See Chapters I. II. VII. and XII.

disputes of antiquaries about the Acropolis of Athens or the Forum of Rome, they have never, as at Bethlehem and Jerusalem, become matters of religious controversy—grounds for interpreting old prophecies or producing new ones—cases for missions of diplomatists, or for the war of civilised nations.

This interest in Sacred Geography, though in some respects repelled, yet in some respects is invited by the Scriptures themselves. From Genesis to the Apocalypse there are—even when not intending, nay even when deprecating, any stress on the local associations of the events recorded—constant local allusions, such as are the natural result of a faithful, and, as is often the case in the Biblical narrative, of a contemporary history. There is one document in the Hebrew Scriptures to which probably no parallel exists in the topographical records of any other ancient nation. In the book of Joshua we have what may without offence be termed the Domesday Book of the conquest of Canaan. Ten chapters of that book are devoted to a description of the country, in which not only are its general features and boundaries carefully laid down, but the names and situations of its towns and villages enumerated with a precision of geographical terms which encourages and almost compels a minute investigation. The numerous allusions in the Prophetical writings supply what in other countries would be furnished by the illustrations of poets and orators. The topographical indications of the New Testament, it is true, are exceedingly slight; and, if it were not for the occurrence of the same names in the Old Testament or Josephus, it would often be impossible to identify them. But what the New Testament loses by the rarity of its allusions, it gains in their vividness;

and, moreover, its general history is connected with the geography of the scenes on which it was enacted, by a link arising directly from the nature of the Christian religion itself. That activity and practical energy, which is its chief outward characteristic, turns its earliest records into a perpetual narrative of journeyings to and fro, by lake and mountain, over sea and land, that belongs to the history of no other creed.

It is easy in all countries to exaggerate the points of connection between history and geography; and in the case of Palestine especially, instances of this exaggeration have sometimes led to an undue depreciation of any such auxiliaries to the study of the Sacred History. But there are several landmarks which can be clearly defined.

I. The most important results of an insight into the geographical features of any country are those which elucidate in any degree the general character of the nation to which it has furnished a home. If there be anything in the course of human affairs which brings us near to the ‘divinity which shapes men’s ends, rough-hew them how they will,’ which indicates something of the prescience of their future course even at its very commencement, it is the sight of that framework in which the national character is enclosed, by which it is modified, beyond which it cannot develop itself. Such a forecast, as every one knows, can be seen in the early growth of the Roman commonwealth, and in the peculiar conformation and climate of Greece<sup>1</sup>. The question which the geographer of the Holy Land, which the historian of the Chosen People has to propose to himself is, Can such a con-

<sup>1</sup> For the sake of convenience I may here refer to an essay on “The Topography of Greece,” in the first number of the Classical Museum.

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nection be traced between the scenery, the features, the boundaries, the situation, of Sinai and of Palestine on the one hand, and the history of the Israelites on the other? It may be that there is much in one part of their history, and little in another; least of all in its close, more in the middle part, most of all in its early beginnings. But whatever be the true answer, it cannot be indifferent to any one who wishes—whether from the divine or the human, from the theological or the historical point of view—to form a complete estimate of the character of the most remarkable nation which has appeared on the earth. If the grandeur and solitude of Sinai was a fitting preparation for the reception of the Decalogue and for the second birth of an infant nation; if Palestine, by its central situation, by its separation from the great civilised powers of the Eastern world, and by its contrast of scenery and resources both with the Desert and with the Egyptian and Mesopotamian empires, presents a natural home for the chosen people; if its local features are such as in any way constitute it the cradle of a faith that was intended to be universal; its geography is not without interest, in this its most general aspect, both for the philosopher and theologian<sup>1</sup>.

II. Next to the importance of illustrating the general character of a nation from its geographical situation is the importance of ascertaining how far the forms and expressions of its poetry, its philosophy, and its worship, have been affected by it. In Greece this was eminently the case. Was it so in Palestine? It is not enough to answer that the religion of the Jewish people came direct from God, and

<sup>1</sup> See Chapters I. and II.

that the poetry of the Jewish prophets and psalmists was the immediate inspiration of God's Spirit. In the highest sense, indeed, this is most true. But, as every one acknowledges that this religion and this inspiration came through a human medium to men living in those particular 'times' of civilisation, and in those particular 'bounds of habitation,' which God had 'before appointed' and 'determined' for them, we cannot safely dispense with this or with any other means of knowing by what local influences the Divine message was of necessity coloured in its entrance into the world.<sup>1</sup> Again, as there are some who would exaggerate this local influence to the highest, and others who would depreciate it to the lowest degree possible, it is important to ascertain the real facts, whatever they may be, which may determine our judgment in arriving at the proper mean. And lastly, as there was in the later developments of the history of Palestine, in the rabbinical times of the Jewish history, in the monastic and crusading times of the Christian history, an abundant literature and mythology of purely human growth, it becomes a matter of at least a secondary interest to know how far the traditions and the institutions of those times have been fostered by local considerations<sup>2</sup>.

III. In the two points just noticed, the connection between history and geography, if real, is essential. But this connection must always be more or less matter of opinion, and, for that very reason, is more open to fanciful speculation on the one side, and entire rejection on the other. There is, however, a connection less important, but more generally accessible and appreciable, that, namely, which,

Explanations of particular events.

<sup>1</sup> See Chapters II. and XIII.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapters I. II. and XIV.

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without actually causing or influencing, explains the events that have occurred in any particular locality. The most obvious example of this kind of concatenation between place and event is that between a battle and a battle-field, a campaign and the seat of war. No one can thoroughly understand the one without having seen or investigated the other. In some respects this mutual relation of action and locality is less remarkable in the simple warfare of ancient times than in the complicated tactics of modern times. But the course of armies, the use of cavalry and chariots, or of infantry, the sudden panics and successes of battle, are more easily affected by the natural features of a country in earlier than in later ages, and accordingly the conquest of Palestine by Joshua and the numerous battles in the plain of 'Esdraelon' must be as indisputably illustrated by a view of the localities as the fights of Marathon or Thrasymenus. So again<sup>2</sup> the boundaries of the different tribes, and the selection of the various capitals, must either receive considerable light from a consideration of their geographical circumstances, or, if not, a further question must arise why in each case such exceptions should occur to what is else the well-known and general rule which determines such events. It is to the middle history of Palestine and of Israel, the times of the monarchy, where historical incidents of this kind are related in such detail as to present us with their various adjuncts, that this interest especially applies. But perhaps

<sup>1</sup> See Chapters IV. VII. IX. and XI. In these portions of the work I have ventured on a more continuous narrative than would elsewhere have been admissible. Where history and geography

were so closely blended, it seemed most natural not to attempt a separation.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapters III. IV. V. VI. VIII. and X.

there is no incident of any magnitude, either of the New or Old Testament, to which it is not more or less applicable. Even in those periods and those events which are least associated with any special localities, namely the ministrations and journeys described in the Gospels and in the Acts, it is at least important to know the course of the ancient roads, the situation of the towns and villages, which must have determined the movements there described in one direction or another<sup>1</sup>.

IV. Those who visit or who describe the scenes of Sacred history expressly for the sake of finding confirmations of Scripture, are often tempted to mislead themselves and others by involuntary exaggeration or invention. But this danger ought not to prevent us from thankfully welcoming any such evidences as can truly be found to the faithfulness of the Sacred records.

One such aid is sometimes sought in the supposed fulfilment of the ancient prophecies by the appearance which some of the sites of Syrian or Arabian cities present to the modern traveller. But as a general rule these attempts are only mischievous to the cause which they intend to uphold. The present aspect of these sites may rather, for the most part, be hailed as a convincing proof that the Spirit of prophecy is not so to be bound down. The continuous existence of Damascus and Sidon, the existing ruins of Ascalon, Petra, and Tyre, showing the revival of those cities long after the extinction of the powers which they once represented, are standing monuments of a most important truth, namely that the warnings delivered by 'holy men of old' were aimed not against stocks

<sup>1</sup> See Chapters VI. and XIII.

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and stones, but then, as always, against living souls and sins, whether of men or of nations<sup>1</sup>.

But there is a more satisfactory 'evidence' to be derived from a view of the sacred localities, which has hardly been enough regarded by those who have written on the subject. Facts, it is said, are stubborn, and geographical facts happily the most stubborn of all. We cannot wrest them to meet our views; but neither can we refuse the conclusions they force upon us. It is by more than a figure of speech that natural scenes are said to have 'witnessed' the events which occurred in their presence. They are 'witnesses' which remain when the testimony of men and books has perished. They can be cross-examined with the alleged facts and narratives. If they cannot tell the whole truth, at any rate, so far as they have any voice at all, they tell nothing but the truth. If a partial advocate like Volney on one side, or Keith on the other, has extorted from them a reluctant or partial testimony, they still remain to be examined again and again by each succeeding traveller; correcting, elucidating, developing the successive depositions which they have made from age to age.

It is impossible not to be struck by the constant agreement between the recorded history and the natural geography both of the Old and New Testament. To find a marked correspondence between the scenes of the Sinaitic mountains and the events of the Israelite wanderings is not much perhaps, but it is certainly something towards a proof of the truth of the whole narrative<sup>2</sup>. To meet in the Gospels allusions, transient but yet precise, to the localities of Palestine, inevitably suggests the conclusion of

<sup>1</sup> See Chapters VI. and X.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter I.

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their early origin, in the times when Palestine was still familiar and accessible, when the events themselves were still recent in the minds of the writers<sup>1</sup>. The detailed harmony between the life of Joshua and the various scenes of his battles<sup>2</sup>, is a slight but true indication that we are dealing not with shadows, but with realities of flesh and blood. Such coincidences are not usually found in fables, least of all in fables of Eastern origin.

If it is important to find that the poetical imagery of the prophetic books is not to be measured by the rules of prose, it is not less important to find that the historical books do not require the latitude of poetry. Here and there, hyperbolic expressions may appear; but, as a general rule, their sobriety is evidenced by the actual scenes of Palestine, as clearly as that of Thucydides by the topography of Greece and Sicily. That the writers of the Old and New Testament should have been preserved from the extravagant statements made on these subjects by their Rabbinical countrymen<sup>3</sup>, or even by Josephus, is, at least, a proof of the comparative calmness and elevation of spirit in which the Sacred books were composed. The copyists who, according to Origen, changed the name of "Bethabara" into "Bethania," or "Gergesa" into "Gadara," because they thought only of the names<sup>4</sup> most familiar to their ears, without remembering the actual position of the places, com-

<sup>1</sup> See Chapters III. V. X.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapters IV. VII. XI.

<sup>3</sup> It is said, for example, by Rabbinical authors, that Hebron could be seen from Jerusalem; that the music of the Temple could be heard at Jericho (Joma iii. 2, Tanid iii. 2); that the

superficial area of Palestine is 1,440,000 English square miles. (Schwarze, p. 30.) In Josephus may be instanced the exaggerated descriptions of the precipices round Jerusalem (Ant. XV. ii. 5), and of the Cave at Paneas (B. J. I. xxi. 3).

<sup>4</sup> See Chapters VII. and X.

mitted (if so be) the error into which the Evangelists were almost sure to have been betrayed had they composed their narratives in the second century, in some city of Asia Minor or Egypt. The impossible situations in numerous instances selected by the inventors of so-called traditional sanctuaries or scenes, from the fourth century downwards—at Nazareth<sup>1</sup>, at Tabor<sup>2</sup>, on Olivet<sup>3</sup>, at the Jordan<sup>4</sup>—are so many testimonies to the authenticity of the Evangelical narratives, which have in every case avoided the natural snares into which their successors have fallen.

This kind of proof will have a different kind of value in the eyes of different persons. To some, the amount of testimony thus rendered will appear either superfluous or trivial; to others, the mere attempt to define sacred history by natural localities and phenomena will seem derogatory to their ideal or divine character. But it will, at least, be granted that this evidence is, so far as it goes, incontestable. Wherever a story, a character, an event, a book, is involved in the conditions of a spot or scene still in existence, there is an element of fact which no theory or interpretation can dissolve. “If these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out.” This testimony may even be more important when it explains, than when it refuses to explain, the peculiar characteristics of the history. If, for example, the aspect of the ground should, in any case, indicate that some of the great wonders in the history of the Chosen People were wrought through means which, in modern language, would be called natural, we must remember that such a discovery is, in fact, an indirect proof of the general

<sup>1</sup> See Chapter X.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter IX.

<sup>3</sup> See Chapters III. and XIV.

<sup>4</sup> See Chapter VII.

truth of the narrative. We cannot call from the contemporary world of man any witnesses to the passage of the Red Sea, or to the overthrow of the cities of the plain, or to the passage of the Jordan. So much the more welcome are any witnesses from the world of nature, to testify on the spot to the mode in which the events are described to have occurred ; witnesses the more credible, because their very existence was unknown to those by whom the occurrences in question were described. Some change may thus be needful in our mode of conceiving the events. But we shall gain more than we shall lose. Their moral and spiritual lessons will remain unaltered : the framework of their outward form will receive the only confirmation of which the circumstances of the case can now admit. The Sacred story would doubtless become more marvellous if it were found to be in direct contradiction to natural features now existing ; if Egypt had no river, Sinai no mountains, Palestine no rocks, springs, or earthquakes. But it would be not only less credible, but less consistent with itself, and less fitted for the instruction and guidance of men.

V. Even where there is no real connection, either by way of cause or explanation, between the localities and the events, there remains the charm of more vividly realising the scene ; if only that we may be sure that we have left no stone unturned in our approach to what has passed away. Even when, as in the last period of the Sacred History, local associations can hardly be supposed to have exercised any influence over the minds of the actors, or the course of events, it is still an indescribable pleasure to know what was the outline of landscape, what the colour of the hills

Illustration  
of the  
scenes of  
events.

and fields, what the special objects, far or near, that met the eye of those of whom we read. There is, as one of the profoundest historical students of our day<sup>1</sup> well observes, a satisfaction in treading the soil and breathing the atmosphere of historical persons or events, like that which results from familiarity with their actual language and with their contemporary chronicles. And this pleasure is increased in proportion as the events in question occurred not within perishable or perished buildings, but on the unchanging scenes of nature; on the Sea of Galilee, and Mount Olivet, and at the foot of Gerizim, rather than in the house of Pilate, or the inn of Bethlehem, or the Garden of the Holy Sepulchre, even were the localities now shown as such ever so genuine.

This interest pervades every stage of the Sacred History, from the earliest to the latest times, the earliest, perhaps the most, because then the events more frequently occurred in connection with the free and open scenery of the country, which we still have before us. It is also a satisfaction which extends in some measure beyond the actual localities of events to those which are merely alleged to be such; a consideration not without importance in a country where so much is shown of doubtful authenticity, yet the object of centuries of veneration. Such spots have become themselves the scenes of a history, though not of that history for which they claim attention; and to see and understand what it was that has for ages delighted the eyes and moved the souls of thousands of mankind is instructive, though in a different way from that intended by those who selected these sites.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Palgrave's *History of Normandy and England*, i. 123.

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter XIV.

In one respect the sight and description of Eastern countries lends itself more than that of any other country to this use of historical geography. Doubtless there are many alterations, some of considerable importance, in the vegetation, the climate, the general aspect of these countries, since the days of the Old and New Testament<sup>1</sup>. But, on the other hand, it is one of the great charms of Eastern travelling, that the framework of life, of customs, of manners, even of dress and speech, is still substantially the same as it was ages ago. Something, of course, in representing the scenes of the New Testament, must be sought from Roman and Grecian usages now extinct; but the Bedouin tents are still the faithful reproduction of the outward life of the patriarchs; the vineyards, the corn-fields, the houses, the wells of Syria still retain the outward imagery of the teaching of Christ and the Apostles; and thus the traveller's mere passing glances at Oriental customs, much more the detailed accounts of Lane and of Burekhardt, contain a mine of Scriptural illustration which it is an unworthy superstition either to despise or to fear<sup>2</sup>.

VI. Finally, there is an interest attaching to sacred geographical and proverbial use of the geography. Poetical and proverbial use of the geography. home with especial force to the Eastern traveller. It has been well observed<sup>3</sup> that the poetical character of many

<sup>1</sup> See Chapters I. II. and X.

<sup>2</sup> Although the nature of the work has not permitted me to enlarge on this source of knowledge, I cannot refrain from acknowledging the great advantage I derived from the opportunities of constant intercourse with at

least one genuine Oriental—in the person of our faithful and intelligent Arab servant, Mohammed of Ghizeh.

<sup>3</sup> Milman's History of Christianity, vol. i. p. 131. "This language of poetic incident, and, if I may so speak, of imagery . . . . was the vernacular

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events in the Sacred History, so far from being an argument against their Divine origin, is a striking proof of that universal Providence by which the religion of the Bible was adapted to suit, not one class of mind only, but many in every age of time. As with the history, so also is it with the geography. Not only has the long course of ages invested the prospects and scenes of the Holy Land with poetical and moral associations, but these scenes accommodate themselves to such parabolical adaptation with singular facility. Far more closely as in some respects the Greek and Italian geography intertwines itself with the history and religion of the two countries; yet, when we take the proverbs, the apologues, the types, furnished even by Parnassus and Helicon, the Capitol and the Rubicon, they bear no comparison with the appropriateness of the corresponding figures and phrases borrowed from Arabian and Syrian topography, even irrespectively of the wider diffusion given them by our greater familiarity with the Scriptures. The passage of the Red Sea—the murmurings at the “waters of strife”—“the wilderness” of life—the “Rock of Ages”—Mount Sinai and its terrors—the view from Pisgah—the passage of the Jordan—the rock of Zion, the fountain of Siloa, and the shades of Gehenna—the lake of Gennesareth, with its storms, its waves, and its fishermen,—are well-known instances in which the local features of the Holy Lands have naturally become the household imagery of Christendom.

In fact, the whole journey, as it is usually taken by modern

<p>tongue of Christianity, universally intelligible and responded to by the human heart throughout many centuries. . . . The incidents were so</p>	<p>ordered, that they should thus live in the thoughts of men; the revelation itself was so adjusted and arranged that it might insure its continued existence.”</p>
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