

A Utah Woman's Visit to Beirut

THE night, brilliant with stars, is calm and peaceful, the Mediterranean placid and of deepest blue save the foamy track that the "Grecque" leaves behind as she swiftly speeds along. Our members bound for Syria and the Holy Land, were conversing on the steamer's deck, of our landing at Beirut on the morrow. Some decided that they would see the sun rise over the storied mountains of Lebanon.

Before 5 a. m. on the following morning two or three of the party met as agreed to catch the first glimpse of the land we were approaching. Heavy clouds were hanging over the mountains; as they gradually lifted, the houses of Beirut look like trees extending in rows to the edge of the water. But soon the clouds are flung with rays of light, the stately Lebanon takes on some shades of color, then the glory breaks through a dark, drooping cloud, the lower part of which takes the form of a huge pupil, with heavy fringe, on whose top the brilliance

bat in which Pius, after the fall of Jerusalem celebrated the birthday of his father Vespasian by throwing thousands of captive Jews to the wild beasts.

Among her ancient remains is the Roman aqueduct, that supplied the city with water, over the river Beirut. The earthquake that destroyed the city in 551 A. D. July 9 is described as fearful. Enormous chasms were opened in the earth; huge masses were thrown into the air; the sea was greatly disturbed, the very mountains torn from their foundation, and one cast into the sea forming the present harbor of Beirut. Dig down anywhere within the walls of ancient Berytus, and you will come upon the remains of grand palaces, porticoes, theaters and other edifices. Recently a bronze statue, representing the Goddess Ashtar, was found, crowned with a crescent, the hand rests upon an ear, with an inscription "To the Sigidians" in Phoenician characters. Portions of the city were submerged, and many ruins may be seen through the clear waters, lying at the bottom of the harbor. In 1849 to protect the harbor, the governor of Beirut built a breakwater entirely of

three bridges which span the stream, while one of the party photographs us. The scene is gloriously picturesque. Mountains are towering on either side, the Dog river is thundering along on its way to the sea; the scent of spring is in the air, the bracing breeze is wafted from snow capped Hermon, which is in close proximity to us. Only think! All the Roman emperors from Marcus Aurelius, have passed over this road to Egypt and Syria. Above this point the Dog river divides, one part going over the Lebanon district for irrigation, the other to the sea.

Long before the advent of Christ the Egyptians, Assyrians, Greeks and Romans, marched their countless hosts through this pass, and have left enduring records of their power, in monumental tablets cut in stone, recording their achievements. Above a dozen of these tablets, carved on the face of the rock, may still be seen above the old road, near the mouth of Dog river. Some are much defaced, while others are in good preservation. They look as if set in a frame, the rock being carved away, leaving a cornice above, with moulding running down the sides. They are of different shapes, some square at the top, others round. The panels are sunken and of different sizes, but all large enough for the full length figure of a person. Three of these tablets are Egyptian, bearing the cartouch of Ramses II.

have conquered. But earlier than this time Hittites dwelt in northern Syria, which is also called "the land of the Hittites" the book of Joshua.

Thames I is believed to have reigned 470 B. C. and in his day attacked Egypt. On the death of Thamus III, they recovered their independence and became a formidable power. The early conquest of Phoenicia by the Babylonians is shown in the tablets recently discovered. The kings of Egypt and Mesopotamia were then in alliance, and governors who used the cuneiform script appear to have been posted at Tyre and Sidon, but the scientific invaders were jealous of the Hittite's power and Tunep (now Tenib) appears then as later a Hittite city.

RAMSES II. Two centuries later followed the Hittite power as formidable as ever. In their advance, the Egyptian advance followed the coast line route of Beirut, where the bas-reliefs have been found in the cliffs by the Dog river, and the army must have reached a town near the Suburban river. Speaking of Lebanon, and Egyptian traveler says: "The sky is darkened by the cypresses, the oaks and the cedars, which grow to heaven. There are also cypresses, wolves and hyenas." Two centuries passed by, and with the decreasing power of Egypt, the prospect of the independent kingdom of Israel, and of the Hittites increased. Yet, while Samuel was still a child, we find David's Pileus hunting in the Lebanon.

The rocks of Syria give evidence of long history, which before could not be substantiated. A star was believed to fall annually into the lake of the temple in Cyprus and Babylon. The sacred river, which falls in cascades in a deep and wooded gorge, flows into the sea at Byblos, had its spring. The river itself was said to flow with the blood of Adam, the bay and town of Beirut, which gives it this appearance. The cedars of Lebanon were used by all the monarchs of Babylon and Assyria to adorn their temples and palaces. The supply of this wood was taxed by Justinian, to reward the "hundred" of Israel, and the built at Jerusalem, in later times even the private houses of Sidon were ceiled with cedar.

TURKEY'S BEST PROVINCE.

Lebanon today is the one bright spot in the Turkish empire, the first and best governed of the sultan's provinces. It is under the guardianship of the European states; has a Christian governor; a constitution; a taxation amounting to only a shilling a head; has a smart mounted and collected police force; the mountains. The Lebanon province is prosperous; its people cheerful and happy; it is covered with vineyards and olive trees, and its climate is most healthy. To the ill-ruled province of Tripoli, to the north and the ruined regions of Palestine on the south.

The fountains of Aboonabou, were built over a hundred years ago by the governor of Jaffa. The afternoon drive that we take around the cliffs, on the outer side of Beirut, is full of interest. From a cultivated hill, where trees and shrubs abound, and where the covered reservoirs of the waterworks are situated, there are a number of houses. The view here of the bay and town of Beirut, is beautiful. Mount Lebanon in the distance, rising over there.

THE PIGEON'S GROTTOS.

The brink of the cliffs descend abruptly to the sea. Here on the coast opposite this small rocky island, are several beautiful caves, known as the Pigeons' Grottoes. The largest, being 130 feet long; the second is double; and the third a very narrow cleft in a projecting cliff, opposite to which is a garden of rock, when the sun stands behind this and the play of colors in the water beneath is magnificent and will not soon be forgotten. Far down the coast is Tyre and Sidon, and it is well worth a long gaze upon the scene where Christ came for a rest, to the bracing sea breeze, from the oppressive, enervating climate of Gallilee.

THE AMERICAN COLLEGE.

The grounds of the American college are beautifully laid out, are wide and fine institutions, are a credit to our land. To gaze upon this scene, to drive through the grounds, bring warm heart throbs. We are proud of our country and her many great enterprises. The percentage of those who can neither read nor write is very low. The important work of educating the girls is now left in hand, and Christian influence is extending. The American and Jesuits have the best printing houses in Beirut. This city is the center of the oriental book trade in Syria, and a number of newspapers are printed here. Since 1888 a French company has supplied the town with gas.

THE ORPHANS' HOMES.

These belong to both Germany and France. Here orphan girls are educated free of charge. This is worthy of imitation, for they are accomplishing a wonderful work, and their influence is great. An orphanage, from Beirut a railroad goes to Damascus, and a seven hours' ride away. The line crosses two ranges of mountains, rising on the Lebanon 4,000 feet above the sea, passing through some very beautiful scenery. In vineyards interspersed with groves of mulberry and pine, villages nestle on the slopes, and the cool breeze from the snows of the higher peaks is deliciously refreshing.

ORIGIN OF DOG RIVER.

There is a tradition concerning the Dog river, which explains its name. The Nahr-el Keib (Dog river) rises on the Saminin, and was known to the Greeks as the Lykos (Wolf's river). It is said that on a cliff in the sea (still pointed out) stood a gigantic stone dog, which always barked on the appearance of an enemy. Between the bridges on this river is a fine Latin inscription, telling that the mountain pass was hewn out in the rock by order of the Roman emperor, Marcus Antoninus, 161-180 A. D. A hundred paces above the new bridge stands an ancient stone bridge. Probably this bridge was here from the earliest times. An Arabic inscription states that a bridge was built here by Sultan Selim I, who died in 1520. The old Roman road was cut through the solid rock, and paved with huge stone boulders wherever necessary, making it the great highway, which remains to this day.

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THE AMERICAN COLLEGE IN BEIRUT.

large granite columns, that were taken from the sea in front of the city.

A NOTED SCHOOL.

In the third century a Roman school of laws flourished here, which afterwards became very celebrated. At that time the Roman empire was supplied with silk fabrics from Berytus and Tyre. From these towns, famous for silk manufacture, the industry was carried to Greece, and from thence to Sicily. It is not known in what age the silk culture was introduced into Syria, but it is certain that it was long before the middle ages. In the rebuilding of Beirut, its ancient magnificence was not restored, nor its school of laws re-established. In 600 A. D. it still was in ruins and in 635, it fell into the hands of the Moslems. In 1125 it was captured by the crusaders under Baldwin, with little intermission, it remained in their possession down to the battle of Hattin, July, 1187. In modern Beirut many Christians have settled, especially since the Christian massacre of 1860. The town is beautifully situated on the slopes facing the sea. The plain is covered with luxuriant gardens. The rocky tip of the mountains, contrasting with the deep blue of the sea, in evening light is a most picturesque scene. The scenery resembles that of Italy; but the climate of Beirut is genial and seldom excessively hot. The crocus, cyclamen and other flowers thrive in the winter and palms are frequently seen. Of its population of about 130,000, 35,000 are orthodox Greeks; the remainder is divided among Protestants, Jews, Catholics, etc.

SLEW THE DRAGON.

On landing we were met by the carriages, which were to convey us to Dog river, a ride fraught with the deepest interest. At a small town we stopped and entered the church built to St. George, who killed the Dragon. This town is in a line with Beirut river and the coast. This beautiful bay, it is said, is subject to severe storms. After crossing a large bridge we are in the Lebanon Mount district, and government. Fourteen thousand Christians were massacred here by the Turks in 1860. By the powers intervening Lebanon was separated from Turkey. This village by St. George's bay was built in memory of the prophet Elijah; a picture of him hangs over the altar of the Catholic church, which we visit. On the wall is a painting of Elijah, showing him driving out the prophets of Baal. "Candles, the short of the people, pass by on the road, each with a heavy block of stone fastened on either side. Building material is thus conveyed to its destination, the camel being the chief means of transportation. Up in the mountains we stop at a Turkish khan, and while the horses rest wander among the Lebanons, so famous for the cedar wood of the Lebanon. On the mountain bearing the following inscription:

1860-1861. Emperor Napoleon III. Armée Française. General De Beaufort, Harkpoul, Commander en chef. Colonel Osmont. Chef d'Etat-major général. General De Crol commandant.

This tablet has a rock frame, and seems to have been cut over an ancient tablet. This army enabled the Christians to throw off the Turkish yoke, thus gaining the freedom of Lebanon.

CHRISTIAN TURKS.

At the khan, Christian Turks were eating the special food for Easter (prepared ahead of time). It is made of meat, finely cut up and spiced, highly flavoured with cream. They take the unleavened cakes, break off a piece about three centimetres, which they make wide at the top and closed at the bottom, into which they place the prepared meat (all the while using the knife). These people are with great relief. These people are entertaining and very polite to strangers. They graciously offered us some of this food, which we ate, and returned the compliment with baklava.

This khan is built in the prevailing style of the country. It is made of stone, with no outside doors or windows, entered by a covered archway, into which the doors open on either side. In this archway it is pleasant and cool, and here the people sit or lounge during the heat of the day. The stairway is at the back of the house on the outside. The doors of the house are heavy and thick; they are closed in the day time, thus keeping out the heat and odors, and retaining the unsavory odors. The windows have heavy shutters, but no glass.

DOG RIVER.

Six miles north of Beirut, Nahr-el Keib, or Dog river, a wild, romantic stream, empties into the sea. It gushes out of mysterious caverns, under the rocky peaks of Lebanon. The stream through which this river flows, afforded the easiest passage of the mountains, and for many centuries was the great highway for commerce and travel. We ascended by this old Roman road, and stand on one of the

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