

THE CENTURY MAGAZINE.

VOL. XXXI.

NOVEMBER, 1885.

NO. 1.

A PHOTOGRAPHER'S VISIT TO PETRA.

WITH AN INTRODUCTION, BY THOMAS W. LUDLOW.

OWING to the difficulty of the journey and the inhospitable and treacherous disposition of the natives, graphically described by our Philadelphia Photographer, few Europeans and Americans have undertaken with success of late years to visit Petra, the Rock City of Seir; hence an air of mystery hangs over the place and adds not a little to its attraction.*

Petra is identified with the Hebrew Selah, "a rock," † the Amorite, Edomite, and Moabite stronghold (Judges, i, 36; 2 Kings, xiv, 7; Isaiah, xvi, 1). Diodorus Siculus (xix, 94-98) speaks of the varied fortunes of the two expeditions sent against the place by Antigonos, whose general, Athenaios, was very roughly handled by the sturdy Nabathæans, while his son, Demetrios Poliorketes, was content later to lead his army back from their wild country without having gained any appreciable advantage. Strabo (Geog. xvi, 663, v. 15, ed. Didot) tells us of Petra as a city shut in by rocks in the midst of the desert, yet supplied abundantly with water, and important as a place of transit for Oriental productions. Pliny, too (Hist. Nat. vi, 32, 3), identifies the site by a definite description. The town was deprived

of what independence remained to it by the Romans under A. Cornelius Palma in the time of Trajan, at the dawn of the second century A. D. There is evidence that it received some of Hadrian's widespread bounty, and that it was still in Roman hands in the day of Septimius Severus, a century later. It figures from the fourth to the sixth century in the annals of the Christian Church; but from the time of the Council of Jerusalem in A. D. 536, in which the Bishop of Petra, Theodorus, took part, until its discovery by the distinguished traveler, Burckhardt, in 1812, the old city drops entirely out of sight. The busy mart must have been destroyed by some incursion of the wild nomads of the desert.

It is not necessary to anticipate Mr. Wilson's picturesque description of the site of Petra beneath the venerable Mount Hor of the Bible, ‡ and of the scenes, strange to Western eyes, through which the traveler passes to get there. The city lay in a narrow valley, surrounded by precipitous hills. On the eastern and western sides the cliffs rise almost perpendicular to the height of six or seven hundred feet. On the north and south the natural barriers

* The artist Gérôme gained entrance with a party of his countrymen, about 1870. An interesting and amusing sketch of their experiences has been published by one of their number—"Le Fayoum, le Sinai et Pétra." Par Paul Lenoir. Paris, 1872. The American artist, Mr. F. E. Church, visited Petra in 1868, and made a number of oil studies there, from which he painted his picture of the Khuzneh. Mr. Wilson furnishes the following list of English and American travelers, besides himself, who have visited Petra with parties since 1860:—

W. H. Bartlett, about 1861; Dean Stanley, 1862; Rev. Henry Formby, about 1862; Professor E. H. Palmer, about 1870; Dr. James Strong, 1874; Miss Sophie M. Palmer 1882; Lieutenant Conder succeeded in getting in, it is believed, in 1883.

† This slight sketch of the history of Petra, and the remarks that follow upon the present condition of the site, are based particularly upon the valuable article upon Petra by the Rev. James Strong, D. D., in the Cyclopaedia of Biblical, Theological, and Ecclesiastical Literature, by the Rev. Drs. M'Clintock and Strong (Harpers, 1867-1881).

‡ The map is from surveys made by Dr. Strong and Mr. Ward in 1874, and is engraved from the original draught. It is of peculiar interest as being, it is believed, the only one from original surveys since that of Laborde published in 1830 (Voyage de l'Arabie Pétrée. Par Léon de Laborde et Linant. Paris, 1830).

‡ Numbers, xx: 21, 22; xxxiii: 37.

are less formidable, and may in places be passed by camels. Many recesses, or small lateral valleys, open into the main valley. The circuit of the entire depression, including these lateral valleys, is about four miles.

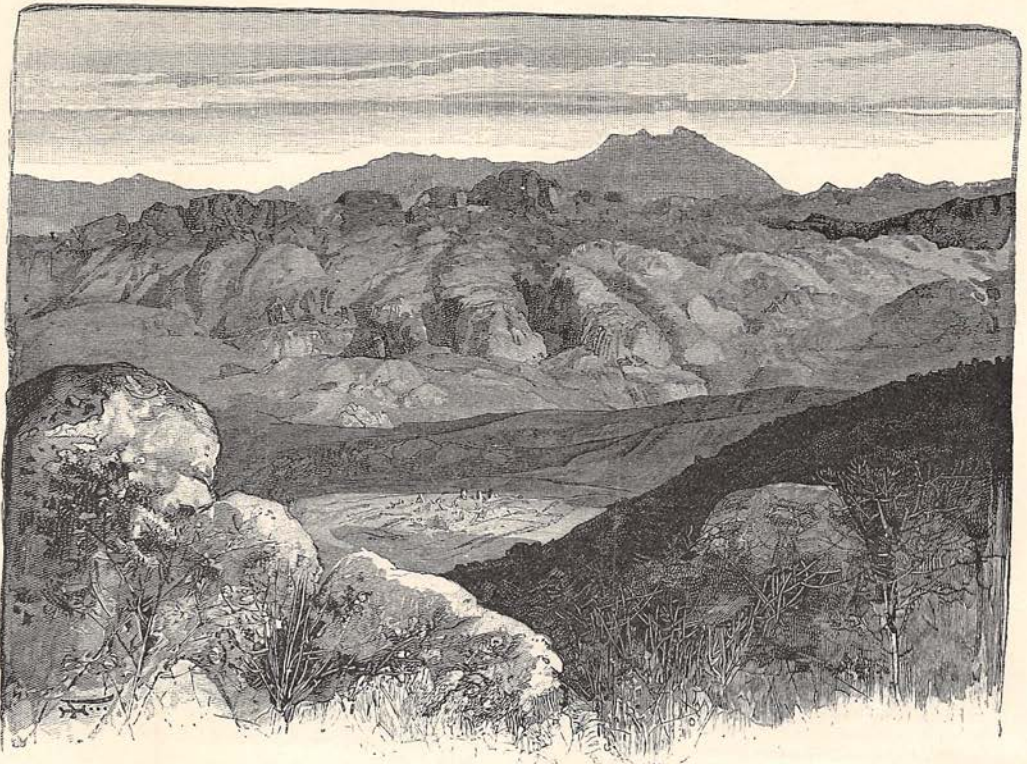
The central portions of the valley, especially on the banks of the little river, are strewn with numerous remains of ancient buildings, which were constructed of masonry in the ordinary manner. With one or two exceptions, little survives of these but shapeless ruins. There are traces of paved streets, fragments of columns and pedestals, and rock-cut foundations in the greatest plenty. These last occupy not only the bed of the plain, but surrounding eminences, and mark especially private dwellings, which, as was usual in antiquity, appear to have been of slight and comparatively rough construction. The chief existing memorials of the Roman domination, besides a few funeral inscriptions, are the theater hewn from the rock, and the great building known as the Kasr Pharoun, still inclosed by its

stately walls, with a noble arched entrance and an impressive colonnade. These monuments may probably be referred to the time of Hadrian.

But the chief attraction of Petra to the modern student lies in the rock-cut façades, chambers and stairways with which the cliff circuit of the city is almost surrounded, and which occupy the sides of the lateral valleys and other rock faces wherever accessible. Many of these façades, preceding one or more plain, rectangular chambers, with or without roughly hewn interior columns and niches or recesses, are very rich and elaborate. The most elaborate are as late as Hadrian's day, or later. There is hardly room for doubt that all these rock-hewn chambers were designed as tombs, after the fashion practiced by the Phœnicians, who in turn probably adopted the custom from the peoples of Asia Minor, to whom are due such remarkable creations as the necropoleis of Lycian Myra and of Phrygian cliffs—all traceable, perhaps, to the mysterious Hittite heritage.*

* Many facts and details are noticeable which point to more or less complete Phœnician influence at Petra. Without insisting upon this line of inquiry, it may be mentioned that the Petrean system of rock tombs with ornate fronts is thoroughly Phœnician, and not dissimilar in general character to that exemplified in such

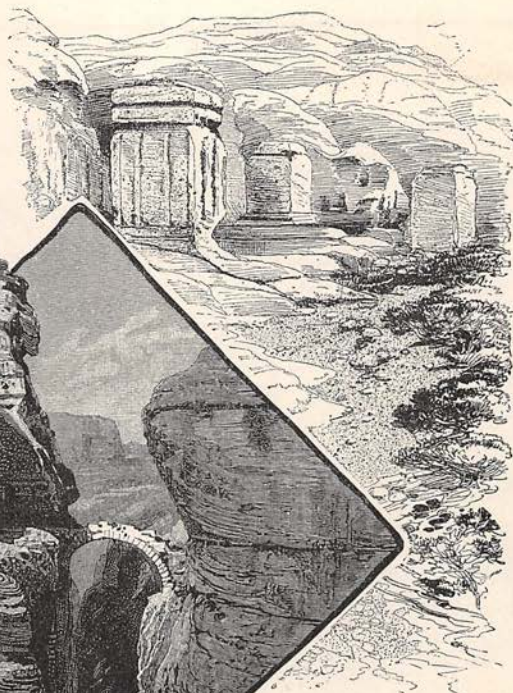
Phœnician necropoleis as Amrith. A parallel to the pseudo-classical architectural treatment of Petrean tombs is found at Nea Paphos in Cyprus, where the burial chambers surround courts with rude Doric colonnades cut in the rock. There are examples at Petra of a chiseled ornament in the form of flights of



JEBEL HAROUN—MOUNT HOR.

However, although cut from the rock for sepulchers, these Petrean monuments may well have served later the ends of the living as temples or as dwellings. An inscription in the so-called Deir, one of the very scanty inscribed memorials remaining of old Petra, seems to indicate that this edifice was at one time dedicated to the god Mithras; and it is certain from surviving signs that many of the chief cliff chambers were consecrated as Christian churches.

The most noteworthy of the rock façades of Petra are late in date, florid in their pseudo-Roman* style, and more lavish and extravagant than pure in design. Yet their effect is most surpris-



1. NECROPOLIS AND RIVER SIK.
2. ENTRANCE TO PETRA.
3. UNFINISHED TEMPLE.

trast with the rugged rock which frames them, and with the vast and weird expanse of desert through which the visitor must pass for days before reaching Petra. Mr. Wilson's contagious enthusiasm for this unparalleled jewel casket of antiquity is thus amply justified.†

NARRATIVE OF THE VISIT TO PETRA.

ing. This is due to many causes, not a little to the wonderful natural coloring of the soft sandstone from which they are chiseled, ranging, as it does, from pure saffron-yellow through the most brilliant red, purple, and blue, with their gradations, and relieved by plain black and white. The elaborate architectural forms, too, are in the most striking con-

steps rising and descending. This ornament was derived from the Assyrian form of battlements, and is clearly of Assyrian origin. It is common on Phœnician monuments, as on the Amrith rock tombs, and on many minor antiquities (*cf.* Perrot et Chipiez: *Histoire de l'Art dans l'Antiquité*, III., p. 131.) Again, the slowly tapering pyramidal funeral steles referred to by Mr. Wilson and by other travelers, are Phœnician.

THERE are two moldering cities of past ages, widely different from each other, and each, in its own peculiar way, unlike any other—Venice, the queenly city of lagoons and bridges, and Petra, the city of stupendous natural fortifications and rock-hewn architecture. With the Queen of the Adriatic the world is familiar; but only a few travelers have seen Petra, and these have vouchsafed us but little information concerning it. I had dreamed amid the dimmed glories of Venice; I had longed to enter the portals of Petra, the fallen capital of the old Naba-

* It may be said of the Khuzneh, even from the point of view of the severe critic, that it is not without much grace and elegance, despite its lavishness. It is the most Roman of the Petrean rock edifices—Roman in the style of a Pompeian wall-painting.

† We regret not to have had access to Hittorff's recent "*Mémoire sur Pompéi et Pétra*" (Paris, 1876).



ANCIENT EDMO, AND THE CLEFT OF PETRA.

RUINS OF A VILLAGE.

thæans, and of Trajan's province of Arabia Petraea.

The site of Petra lies half way between the Gulf of Akabah and the Dead Sea, about seventy miles as the vulture flies, from each. Its wonderful ruins are continually guarded by a tribe of Bedouin Arabs, who live in the village of Eljy, two miles north-east. They keep careful watch, because they believe that somewhere in the old town great treasures are hidden, and that it is the object of every white traveler who visits Petra to discover and carry away the riches of antiquity. All who have left record of their visit to Petra tell of the difficulties encountered with these suspicious Bedouins. Many a would-be visitor has been driven back from the very gates, robbed and insulted, without so much as a bird's-eye view of Petra to compensate him for ten days of hard desert travel.

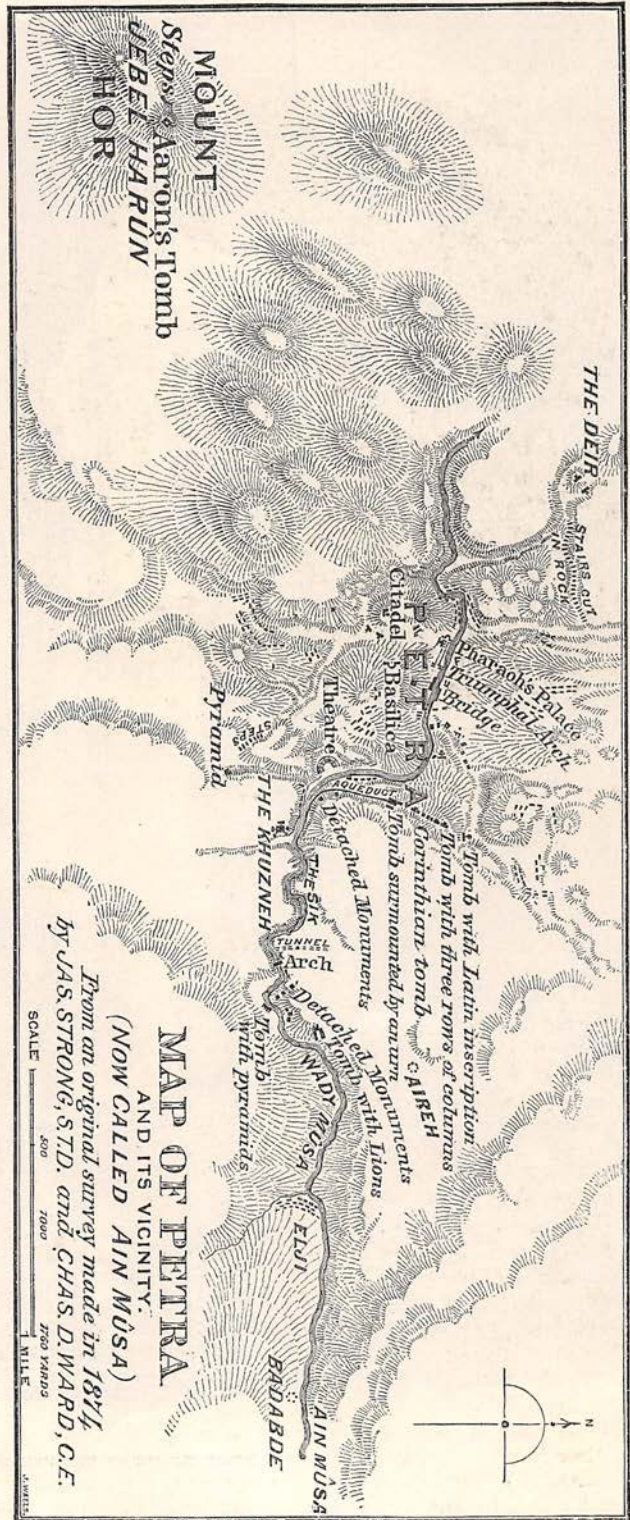
When, on the Nile, I revealed my design to see Petra, various dragomen and tourists declared that it was "impossible to enter the place," and that "no white person had done so for over eight years." This did not shake my determination to make the effort, at least, to "take Petra." I might be driven back disappointed. I might succeed in securing the material and the information I coveted. So, at Cairo I made my preparations to carry out

plans formed before I left my Philadelphia home.

The first step was to secure a dragoman. I knew of only one with whom I felt willing to risk my life. He had guided through the desert General George B. McClellan, Dr. Charles S. Robinson, Professor Charles M. Mead and Dr. Henry Clay Trumbull, the author of "Kadesh Barnea." He had been spoken of by Mr. Charles Dudley Warner in his "In the Levant" in such terms as to confirm my desire to secure him. His name, Mohammed Achmed Effendi Hedayah, indicated, among other things, that he was a good Mussulman, "an educated man," as he put it, of good social standing, able to read and write, and of partly Moorish extraction. Never shall I forget our first consultation. The difficulties and dangers of what I proposed were mapped out for me with true Arabic eloquence. Seeing that I did not shrink, my new-made acquaintance then depicted the horrors which those who had made the attempt to get into Petra were obliged to undergo. He failed to move me from my determination. "Then," said he, pushing his red tarboush nervously back upon his head and rolling his eyes up toward heaven, "I see you are an old traveler and an educated gentleman and I will go with you. I am an educated man; I have been twenty-five years a dragoman; I have been three times to Petra; no white man has been there for eight years. I know Salim the Sheikh of Petra; once he

was brought to Hebron and put in prison for stealing from travelers. I found him there and went security for his good behavior, and he was released. He is as my brother. You shall see Petra and perhaps I can get you in the short way. No other dragoman could take you. I would go only with an educated gentleman, an old traveler, or a very religious man. I am all these myself. My business is good, but I love to act as dragoman better than I love selling silk or eating—when I can go with an educated gentleman.”

Four months of companionship with the worthy Achmed taught me that none too much had been said in his praise. He knew his business exactly. He proved truthful, trustworthy, generous, manly, and brave. I have seen him rush at a fellah who was pointing his musket at him, wrench the weapon away and fling it on the stones at his feet. I have seen him hasten with a long stride peculiarly his own into the midst of a fight between our attendants, jerk their swords away and send the combatants sprawling upon the ground. I have seen him, when we were surrounded, kneel first upon the sand and commit the gentlemen to the keeping of Allah, and then go out with his life in his hand to meet insult and injury in our behalf. I have seen him too, when we had all been taken prisoners, act with the greatest forbearance and wisdom, knowing full well that our safety depended upon his patience. He understood stooping to conquer. Achmed was as bright as any Yankee, as politic as a Pennsylvania Congressman. He was seldom at a loss even under the most trying circumstances. A hint that the accomplishment of any task would add to his fame always secured his best efforts, which would be supplemented by the request: “Please mention in your book that Hedayah Effendi’s address is No. 8 Silk Bazar, Alexandria.” Mounted on his camel, Achmed

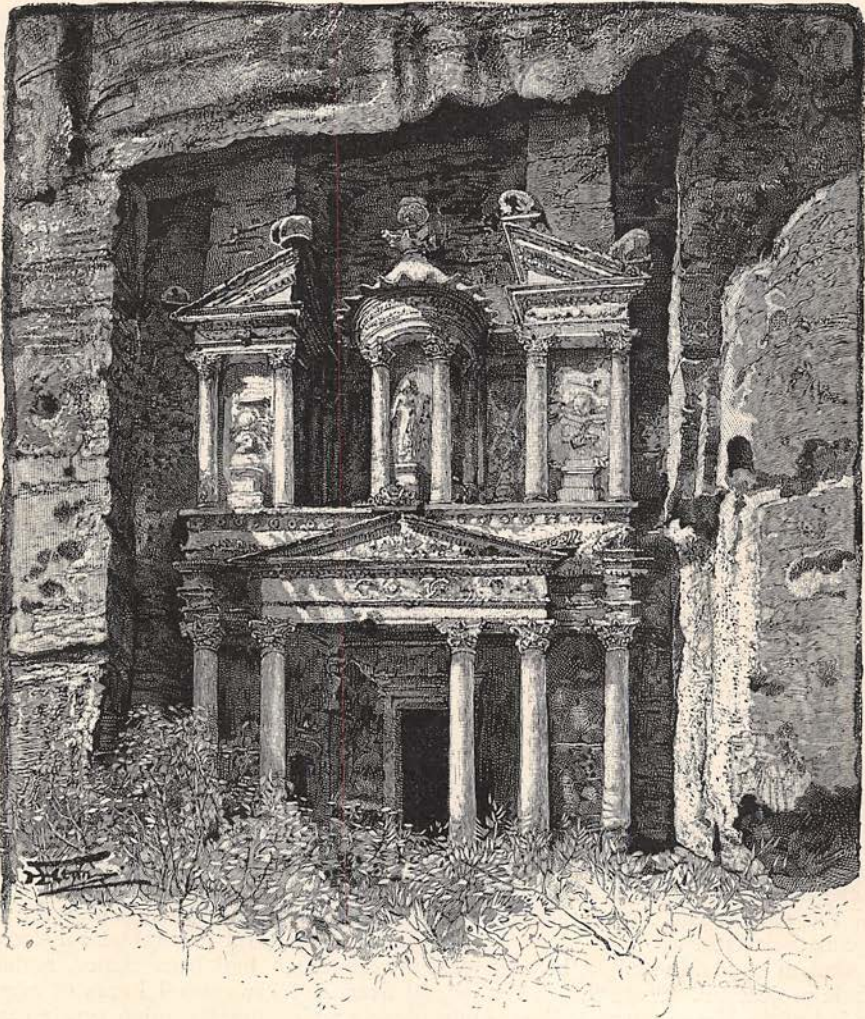


From an original survey made in 1814
by JAS. STRONG, STD. and CHAS. D. WARD, C.E.

MAP OF PETRA
AND ITS VICINITY.
(NOW CALLED AIN MUSA)



THE FIRST GLIMPSE OF THE KHUZNEH.



THE KHUZNEH.

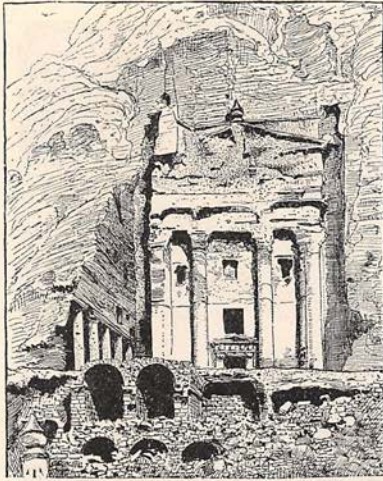
Hedayah was even noble looking—nor did his character belie his appearance. Side by side, on camel, on horse, and on foot, we traveled for four months, happy and free.

On the appointed day we set out for Petra, pondering over the scanty details the books could give us of a city which once received the caravans of Arabia, India, and Persia, and sent their rich stores on to Egypt, Syria, Palestine, and Greece,—a city whose king, during the last melancholy tragedies of Jewish independence, marched out at the head of fifty thousand men, entered Jerusalem, and besieged the Temple until commanded by Rome to desist.* Our curiosity was aroused by the image of a historic site which had been lost to civilization for nearly a thousand years,

and by anticipations of its unique edifices. There was just enough peril about our enterprise to make it enchanting. My companions were Messrs. William H. Rau, Douglass P. Birnie, and William B. Ogden, all Americans. Our route was by rail from Cairo to Suez; across the Red Sea a few miles south of Suez; down the desert to Mount Sinai; thence north and east to the head of the Gulf of Akabah.

It has been said that there is but one entrance to Petra. Yet there is a "back door," so to speak, through which some travelers have made their way into the city, and by means of which they have also more suddenly made their departure. The real approach is through a narrow gorge some two miles long, of which the gateway faces the east. This is reached from

* King Aretas of the Nabathæans, who connived with Antipater and Hyrkanos to overthrow Aristobulus II., King of the Jews. See Dr. Smith's New Testament History, page 65.—EDITOR.



TEMPLE OF THE URN AND ARCHED TERRACE.

Palestine by way of Moab, east of the Dead Sea, and from the south by the route which I took.

The back door may be gained from north or south by way of the Wady Arabah—the vast desert waste which lies between the Gulf of Akabah and the Dead Sea, into which it opens near the base of venerable Mount Hor. Visitors who enter thus may perhaps escape a contest with the Bedouins, but they lose the most imposing and startling scenery, that of the approach through the Gorge of the Sik, as well as the most satisfactory first impressions of the ruins. They see the town from the back; they enter the grand theater from behind the scenes, and regret their lack of courage all their lives.

At Akabah opposition might be met and the whole project fail. There Sheikh Ibn-jad, or Ben-jad, of the Haiwayat tribe, lives. Only by his consent could we hope to see Petra.

My heart sank when I looked into the grim chief's yellow, dissembling face, and saw the scornful smile which came over it as I made known my desires through my dragoman. After much argument, conducted in the true Arabic fashion, I was informed that in one week I could be supplied with dromedaries and men, who would take my party to Petra, provided no visitation of Providence intervened. I had no disposition to remain a week where the Mecca pilgrims had left a true Egyptian plague of fleas and flies; and I replied to Ben-jad that unless our departure could be made in two days, we would go back to Suez. This disturbed him somewhat, and he expressed sorrow that we showed him so little respect as to desire to leave his territory so soon. I did not relent. Of course, the Sheikh's true reasoning was that the longer we

remained in Akabah the more he would get of the money that we must have with us.

The Tawara Arabs who had brought us from Suez, and whom tribal law forbade to conduct us into the country of another tribe, had returned to their homes. Yet I assured Ben-jad that rather than remain in Akabah a week we would walk back to Suez. For a time it looked very much as if I should have to carry out my threat, so obdurate was the Sheikh. With my companions I retired to the beach to form our plans—just as Solomon used to sit by the sea and watch the coming of his vessels from Ophir,—leaving Ben-jad, on his side, an opportunity for reflection. In about an hour I went back to our camp to see if there was any show of weakness on the part of the Arabs. The scene was indescribable. Our tents had been taken down; our luggage was spread on the ground in confusion; camels and men enough to accommodate three parties such as ours had made their appearance mysteriously; and the Bedouins were pulling about our boxes of stores and photographic paraphernalia, and quarreling over them, all anxious now to join our caravan, since the Sheikh had decided we could make our departure at once.

I placed our new friends in a quandary again by mounting one of our large provision boxes, and shouting to them at the top of my voice to remove our property at once from their camels and to get out of my sight. Chaos ceased for a time, and further consultation was had. I refused to allow the camels to be loaded until I knew who was to be our conducting Sheikh and who the camel-drivers, and until a contract satisfactory to my dragoman had been signed, sealed, and delivered. After several hours of argument, during which the Egyptian scribe stationed at the fort at Akabah had written, altered, and destroyed several contracts, one satisfactory to both sides was agreed upon. Like all such documents, the first part was made up of salutations and compliments, while the last lines consisted of compliments and salutations. The business in it was added as a postscript. Exactions were made for castle fees, for a useless guard of soldiers during our three nights at Abakah, for camels, camel-drivers, a conducting Sheikh, water at five dollars per barrel, for barley for the horse of the Sheikh, a present for his newest wife, an entrance fee, or "blackmail," for each white person in our party, and a special tax for our Nubian servant Abdullah, "because he was a foreigner and black!"

The route over which it was agreed to conduct us was the one I preferred and one but rarely taken, that by way of the "long desert"

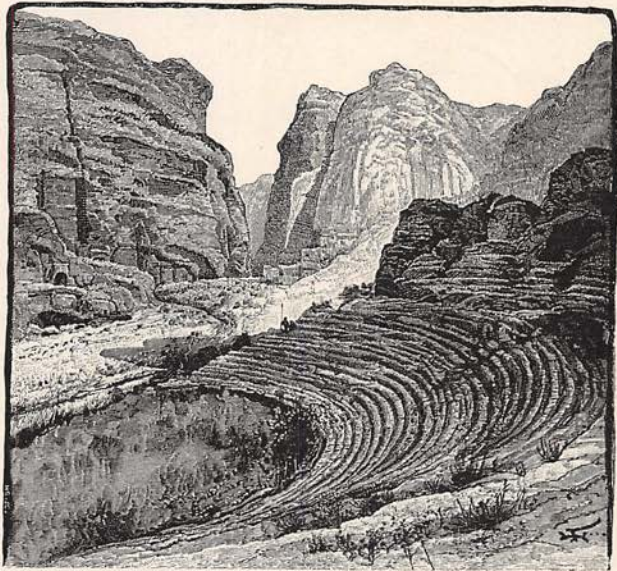
which runs east of the Wady Arabah through a magnificent mountain range known as Mount Seir. On March 21, 1882, leaving Akabah and passing between the sites of ancient Eloth and Ezion-Geber, we traversed the Wady Arabah for about two hours, and then entered the mouth of Wady el Ithm. Then we advanced eastward until the mountain caravan route was reached, when we turned north again. Most uninviting to us were these desert highways. Though always lined with mountains whose forms are picturesque, they are bleak, and barren of all that holds life. The most striking feature of the way is its wildness, so complete that the road is almost indistinguishable from the wilderness through which it passes. Yet we were upon a route over which for over four thousand years caravans between Eloth and Edom had traveled.

From day to day, as we plodded northward, we came to narrow tracts of soil which had evidently been cultivated. Once, in a cave, I found a rude plow, such as I had seen in use at Egyptian Heliopolis. Two or three times we saw small oases. At Humeiyumeh there is a subterranean well, with stone-cut steps leading down to its mouth. From this, our camel-drivers drew water in vessels of goat skin and poured it into basins hewn in the stony floor of the desert to water their beasts.

Now came a great desert expanse with only an occasional upheaval of sandstone to break its monotony. The Rock of El-Guerrah in this expanse is a most singular formation. There is no other elevation within several miles of it. It seems like a rocky island in the sea, bearing upon its summit an old fortress, about which our attendants could tell us nothing. Each day now we reached a higher elevation. On the third morning we seemed to be in a vast amphitheater, three sides of which were surrounded by magnificent peaks of strangely varied forms and colors. Red, brown, yellow, blue, purple, gray, and marl green were the prevailing tints, running in diagonal streaks and strata as amazing as they were beautiful. All the expectations aroused by descriptions I had read of wondrous coloring among the mountains of Edom were surpassed. Here amid all this beauty a fight arose among our camel-drivers, in which our conducting Sheikh became involved. Quick as a flash are these

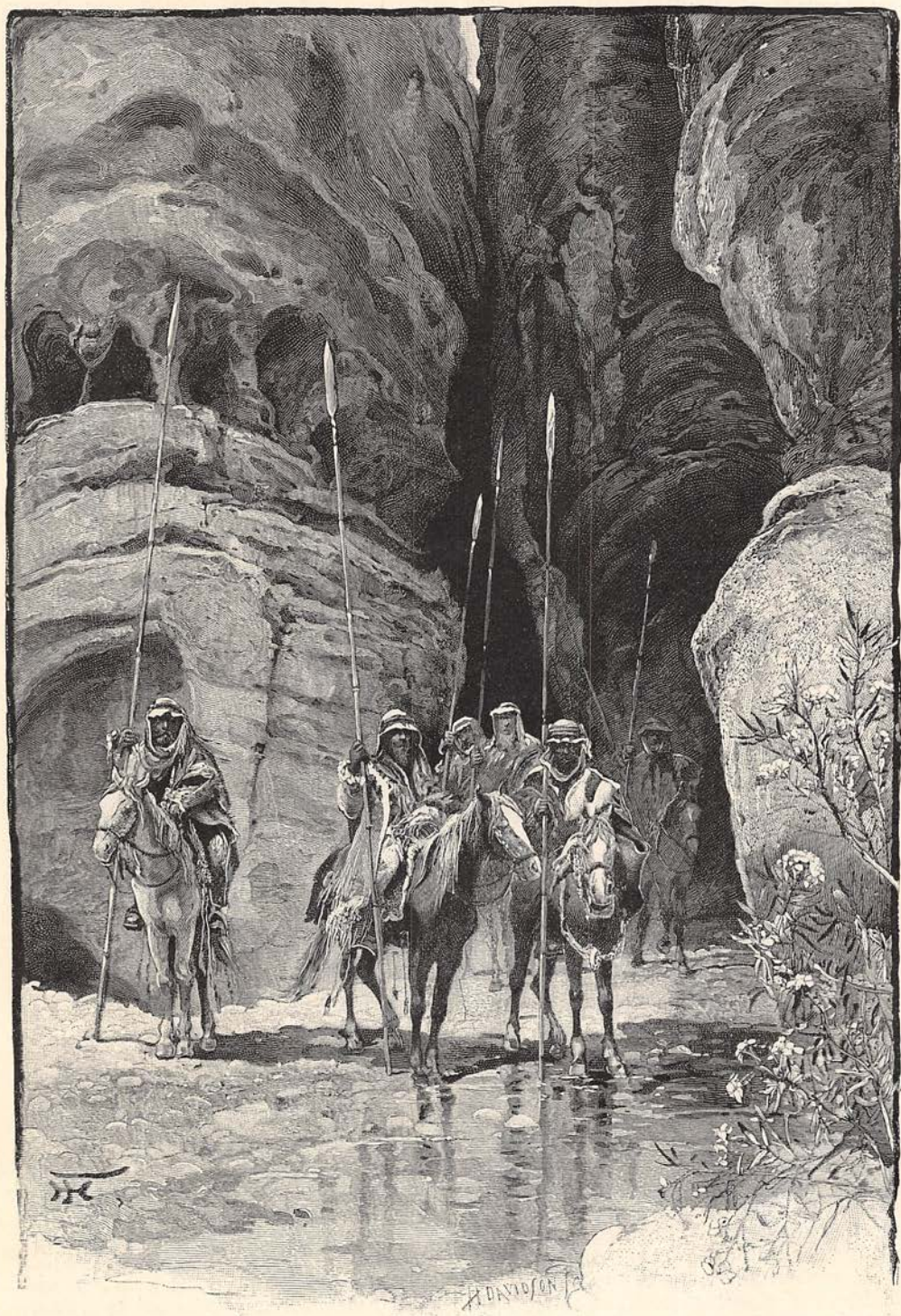
Arabs! Their striped abbahs were thrown upon the ground; cutlasses, swords, and blunderbusses — a display more curious than that in any pawnbroker's window — were drawn, and the battle began right and left, a hand to hand and wordy conflict. Not much blood was drawn. There never is in an Arab fight. About the time one looks for casualties, each combatant is seized by the lookers-on and saved from certain death. Then the Sheikh appears and declares that "it is a shame to be seen fighting before Christians," and that he "would rather lose his beard than look upon such a sight again."

That same night I took measures with Hedayah to execute a scheme partly planned in Cairo. It was to send a scout ahead, to reach



THE AMPHITHEATER.

Petra if possible some thirty-six hours before we could. If there was danger on the way, he was to return quickly and warn us. His capture we need not fear, for we would try to send a man who was *sahib* (friendly) to the natives. If he reported no danger, we were to proceed within a mile or two of Eljy, the Bedouin village near Petra, and then, leaving the caravan road, rough it across the country and try to get into Petra unseen and unheard. Among our attendants secured at Akabah was a giant Nubian. He had great scars down each cheek, and a row of upper tusks which might have driven me away from him with fear, had they not been balanced by a merry twinkle which came continually from his great, staring black eyes. To him about midnight was given our commission. His instructions were to "run" as do the post-boys in Nubia,



BEDOUINS IN THE KHUZNEH GORGE.



TEMPLE OF THE URN — EASTERN COLONNADE.

and to reach Eljy early the next afternoon. Money was given him to buy sheep, with which he was to regale and cajole the good and watchful people of Eljy. Onions and tobacco were supplied him also for distribution to any one who might give him trouble.

Our envoy was to make the most of the news of the war with Arabi Pasha, then brewing, and to exert every effort in his power to create such an excitement in the town that all the fellahin in the neighborhood would get word and flock in to see and hear him. Thus the coast would be made clear for us when it was time to sneak by. As we traveled along the Mount Seir spur, he could see us at least a day before we could him, and if there was danger he was to signal us when we approached. If all was safe he was to go on with the good work and not trouble himself about us, until we had passed. Shaking his brawny hand, I assured him of my confidence, bade him good-bye, and he departed. I then lay down to dream of the fable of the "Fox and the Turkeys."

On the fourth day, at the moment of a sun-

set of which the splendor was in harmony with the strange grandeur of the surrounding scenery, a shower drove us into a *nawami* or rock-house. We were now nearing Petra, and could make out the majestic peaks of Mount Hor two days' journey beyond.

On Saturday, March 25, the fifth day from Akabah, we rose at four o'clock. We ate a hasty breakfast by the light of our camp-fire of turfa-bushes, and began the travel of the day. We were within eight hours of Petra. If we arrived by sunrise undisturbed at the summit of a mountain spur just before us, we should catch a glimpse of Wady Mousa—the valley in which Petra lies. A sharp frost had visited us, and the tiny stream near our camp was frozen over. Command was given that no one should speak loudly, and scouts were sent ahead to guard against surprise or attack. Our hearts throbbed with excitement. I felt as when, in other days, I crept cautiously along in the night with my regiment, rifle in hand, suspecting every rock and stone, and expecting each moment to meet the foe.



CORINTHIAN STRUCTURE.

Our caravan was halted. Gathered close to our brave dragoman our quartette proceeded to gain the highest point ahead. What should we meet beyond? A hard scramble for an hour or more over a flinty road, brought us to this point. The scene which lay before us I shall never forget. The rising sun barely tipped the higher peaks with crimson glow. The shadows among the hills were still thick and long and wide, and I seemed to be looking down from a balloon upon a wonderful panorama. As the sun rose, a great, yawning chasm was seen splitting in twain the mountain range far below us, and creeping away to the West—a grim black scar. It was the Wady Mousa! Within its gloomy shade, as yet untouched by the morning sun, lay Petra—the climax of Edom, the Idumæan capital. My heart leaped, and in imagination I saw ruined cities looming up before me, more and more clearly defined each moment.

Beyond the western termination of the gorge a fine stretch of the Wady Arabah began to appear in light; and behind its westerly ranges, now also touched by the glories of the sunshine, were the hills about Hebron and the Dead Sea, and those bordering the Mediterranean close to Gaza. The coloring became more and more splendid, changing each moment in intensity as the light grew. There in the gloom of the valley was a long, zigzag line, winding like a river. It moved. Once in a while a bit of light would touch it, and then it would drop into the shadow again. From right to left it swayed at the will of its leader; then all at once it rose high in air as though to greet the God of Day, and the

mystery was explained. It was an immense flock of storks, awakened to new life by the genial sun.

The golden hill-domes were growing brighter and brighter, and were flushed with pink, like the blush on a peach. The great rock upheavals seemed like the billows of the sea. There was as yet no sign of our Nubian scout El Wafi. Had our scheme been a success? Or had he met a horrible fate which we soon must share?

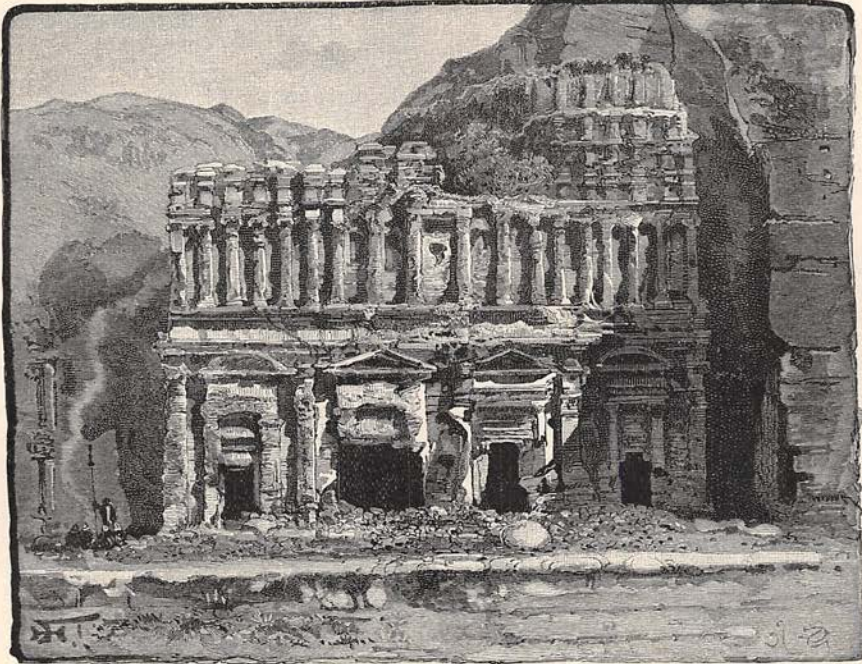
Near noon we came to a spring called 'Ain Daluga, where we halted for lunch. The great cleft of Wady Mousa was hidden from view; but for miles we could look back over the flinty path we had been climbing for six or seven hours. At our feet was a magnificent valley, along the grassy bottom of which we could see a winding stream lined with strips of land under cultivation. Suddenly we heard shouting, then the crash of fire-arms. Each moment we expected to hear the thud of Bedouin bullets against the rocks. There was no time to lose. Our camels were quickly arranged side by side to form a barricade. We speedily got behind them and awaited events. We seemed to thirst for Bedouin blood—for the blood of Esau's children. But no enemy approached. It was probably only the festival which El Wafi had been sent to organize. After all we had not been seen. With grateful hearts we quietly slunk down toward the Gorge of the Sik, or Wady Mousa. The great shadow had disappeared now, and the sun shone fairly into the gorge, giving fine effect to the blood-red of its walls, and bringing out strongly the lines of neighboring peaks. At the Western Gate, pyramid-like, stands a great rock-sentinel grim and defiant. It seemed to bar our escape in front from a Bedouin pursuit.

Fearing to approach the town of Eljy too closely,—we were only two miles south of it,—we left the now descending roadway and crossed some cultivated fields, coming, at the foot of the descent, into a thick jungle of oleander bushes. Through this runs the noisy little river, the Sik. In a moment more we had crossed it, and stood in Wady Mousa, unseen, unheard, unopposed!

Breaking our way through the jungle on the farther side of the stream, we found ourselves in the very heart of the Necropolis of Petra. A group of tombs on our right tapering toward the top reminded us of some of those in the Valley of Jehoshaphat, or again, of the obelisk pedestals of Egypt. A little farther on, on the left, is a double structure of construction hard to understand. Though not a very beautiful ruin, it is a well-preserved specimen of Petran architecture. The lower

story displays a range of Ionic columns which lend to it an air of Greece, while the upper tier of the façade is adorned with a series of pyramid-shaped members suggestive of Egypt. This variety, singular in antiquity, may be at-

the ornate fronts are but caves squared by the old stone-cutter, and are lighted only by their doors. While the bases and beetling sides of these mountains are fashioned into architectural forms that are as enduring as the eternal



TEMPLE WITH THREE TIERS OF COLUMNS.

tributed to the fancy of the antique nabobs who caused its building — men who borrowed their ideas from the foreign lands with which they had dealings. Each story of the façade marks a curious interior. The upper one has a large recess cut in the rear wall with smaller ones on either side, and graves cut in them all. The lower interior is supplied on three of its sides with a continuous stone bench. In the rear, away up toward the ceiling, are two *loculi*, or recesses for sarcophagi.

It may be useful to remind the reader, before we enter Petra proper, that all its principal structures, be they tombs, palaces, or temples, are excavated from the rock, and not constructed of quarried stone. Very rarely are ornaments of these "monolithic edifices" found detached, and still more rarely in antiquity were blocks inserted or let into any of the rock-hewn architecture of Petra. The sides of the mountains, which form a natural amphitheater of nearly four miles in circumference and with walls from five hundred to six hundred feet high, are cut to smooth perpendicular faces, which are occupied by unbroken ranges of temples and of homes for the living and the dead. The interiors behind

hills from which they are hewn, the picturesque summits above display Nature in her wildest and most savage garb.

Continuing our advance, we followed the stream a few rods, and descending as the pass narrowed, the entrance of the frightful chasm, seen afar off at sunrise, was reached at last. What an impregnable gateway! Spanning it is a fine buttressed arch, resting upon rock-cut foundations. Beneath this a little stream gurgles. We followed it through the only entrance — the "front door" of Petra. Still undiscovered we had passed under the great portal now, whether triumphal arch as poetry calls it, or simple aqueduct — the latter the more probable interpretation in view of the similar bridges found higher up among the mountain clefts.

The top of the northern wall of the defile was once inhabited. Excavations, bridges, terraced gardens, and various other evidences remain upon it of the industry and artistic taste of a wonderfully persevering people. The grotto at Posilippo opened to the sky could not present the grandeur of this approach. It is difficult to conceive anything more sublime.



ROCK STAIRWAY AND PULPIT.

When we had come fairly inside the gorge, we found it at times so narrow that two of us could not walk abreast. Its perpendicular sides vary in height from four hundred to seven hundred feet, and frequently, without absolutely

meeting, they overhang to such a degree that the sky is shut out from the sight for a hundred yards at a stretch. On every side, more than a yard above the stream-bed, channels are cut in the rock as conduits for water, and in some places terra-cotta pipes are found cemented in these channels. Tiny niches abound also, cut in the sides of the gorge. In these indications remain of figures — old Pagan divinities, no doubt. The growth of oleanders becomes more dense as the gorge descends. Green caper plants dangle from the crevices, and here and there a graceful tamarisk is found in the shade. The tiny brook, the Sik, follows the whole way. The quarried stone scattered along the path indicates that the floor of the fissure was once paved.

We scraped away the débris to the depth of nearly two feet, and reached the antique pavement. It was found deeply furrowed by the tires of the chariot wheels, which once coursed along this cavernous highway — as deeply cut as are some of the lava pavements of resurrected Pompeii.

At every turn we saw evidences of indefatigable effort, and of how lavishly labor was

expended by the people who lived in Petra in its days of power. All seemed the work of some giant magician's wand. The defile, indeed, is called Wady Mousa by the Arabs because they believe that the patriarch Moses, by one stroke of his staff, caused the mountain to separate and to form this tremendous fissure in order to enable him to pass on to Mount Hor, accompanying Aaron, to help him die and to lay him at rest. For nearly two miles we followed this semi-subterranean passage. The pathway now descended; the water grew deeper, the opposing thicket more impassable, the scene more grand. A last struggle was made, a sudden turn in the gorge was passed; and as I looked skyward, through the rocky vista I caught the first glimpse of that remarkable creation — *The Khuzneh!* Only partly seen at first, beyond the tall, narrow opening, carved in stone of a pale rose color, were columns, capitals, and cornices, as new-looking as if of yesterday. With what subtle judgment was the site chosen! But when and by whom, no one knows — mysterious history conceals.

Each advancing footstep developed a bewitching and bewildering change of scene. The first sight revealed only the lower portion of a single column. A stumble over a bit of pavement, and a section of the front from base to pediment was disclosed. Another turn in the gorge hid all but a portion of the pediment from view. All this laboriously finished work formed a wondrous contrast with the rugged rock which framed the view. In a moment, the approach is more than ever obstructed by luxuriant oleanders. Only by climbing up to the top of a rock can even the urn be seen — seeming then to be floating unsupported in the air. The brilliant noonday sun streams through the gorge south of the Khuzneh. It was to secure this magnificent display that we accepted the hardship and risk of the "long desert" route. I had read about this first glimpse of the Khuzneh; I had seen engravings of it made after hasty sketches; yet I found it to surpass the most romantic ideal I had formed of its loveliness. At the time we could not but think our dragoman was right when he said: "See Rome, see Egypt, see Greece, see Baalbec and Palmyra, but above all, see the Khuzneh!"

Emerging from the gorge into an open area, we stood face to face with the strange edifice. To account for such a structure in such a place is as difficult as to tell the history of the gem from which was shaped the intaglio you wear upon your finger. How the work was done is not such a mystery, for on either side remain holes cut in the cliff to receive the scaffolding.

The Khuzneh is in a wonderful state of preservation, but the figures which once graced it, of which the nature can now be only guessed at, are too much defaced for recognition. Time did not do all the damage. For most of it the destructive hand of man is answerable. The portico, consisting now of five columns, one of the original six having fallen, with capitals of Corinthian style, supports an entablature with

a delicately proportioned pediment. The columns I judged to be about forty feet high. Measuring a fragment of the broken one lying near, I found their diameter was three feet. Between the outer pair of columns on either side there has been an equestrian figure. Vases connected by garlands of flowers adorn the entablature, and in the center of the pediment is carved a crouching eagle. Eagles are at the corners also, and over the doors. The superstructure is almost equal in height to the lower story. It consists of a small circular construction, reminding the fanciful beholder of the "Lantern of Diogenes" at Athens. It, too, is supported by Corinthian pillars, and is surmounted by a huge urn, and a smaller edicule of the same order stands on either side. Every part is richly sculptured. The façade I measured and found to be ninety-six feet wide. I estimated the height to be the same. The color is a



THE PYRAMID—SHIEK SALIM AND HIS STAFF.



INTERIOR OF TEMPLE WITH FLUTED COLUMNS.

delicate rose-pink, like that of the buildings further on in the city, almost unbroken by waves of other hue.

The steps to the portico are much defaced and are overgrown with grass. Beneath the portico are two chambers, each about eight by twenty feet in size, with niches at the back. Over each is a circular window partly walled up. The chief interior chamber of the Khuzneh is forty feet square, twenty feet high, and receives all its light from the door. The doorway is seven feet wide and richly decorated.

The Arabs call it "El Khasneh,"—The Treasure,—as they imagine that the great crowning urn contains wealth which will one day be divinely revealed to them.

After a thorough examination of the "Treasure" from near at hand, I clambered up a cliff opposite, whence I could view the whole at my leisure. I experienced a feeling of satisfied contentment and admiration. Scarcely had I chosen for myself a comfortable seat among the rocks, when I heard a great crashing noise in the gorge beyond, as though an earthquake had sent great masses of stone down to prevent our exit. The sound came nearer and nearer, booming and bounding through the gorge as I have heard the terrible wind-gusts come leaping over the snow when climbing our own Mt. Washington in winter. But it was no convulsion of nature this time. Now, voices were heard; then, closer, most demoniacal yells, and the unmistakable clash of hoofs. Our worst fears were to be realized.

The Bedouins were upon us! "Oh! El Wafi; traitor after all!"

"Don't be afraid, gentlemen," said our dragoman, quietly. "If they attempt to trouble us, it will be only to rob us of our money and our clothing. Our bodies will not be harmed."

With this assurance I scrambled down to the mouth of the gorge, arriving just in time to see rush furiously towards me six mounted Arabs of wily mien, with long-reaching lances on their shoulders. I stood to await their arrival. They were as surprised to see me as I was to see them, and now they halted. I cried out "Sahib" and offered my hand. To my surprise it was taken good-naturedly by all the party, and a declaration of friendliness passed between us. We were in their city, and now they were bound to protect us (and rob us!) they declared. The lances were planted in the ground while the subject was discussed. They had not seen us, but as our caravan was compelled to take the public road, it was discovered, and from our men the fact was learned that a party of travelers had gone ahead. Instantly they put spurs to their horses and came clashing through the gorge hoping to prevent our entrance; but they were an hour too late. Like good Mohammedans they accepted "God's will" in the matter, leaped from their horses, and insisted that we should take their places. We did so, and thus were led triumphantly into Petra by the very men who would have prevented our entrance amid exactions and bluster, had they caught us at the necropolis. The El Wafi scheme had worked, and the good-hearted Nubian came in with our cavalcade two hours after, his eyes looking larger, his breath smelling stronger of garlic, and his grin far broader than ever before.

Sheikh Salim, the chief of the tribe, was absent when we arrived. His son headed the party who took possession of us. Salim had heard of some very fat sheep and attractive dromedaries belonging to a nomadic tribe, who had brought them to graze a few miles away, and had gone with a posse of his retainers to raid a portion of this desirable property. He returned that night a richer man; but what were a few sheep and camels in comparison with the gold which awaited him in the purses of the howadji, even then in Petra? At once he came thundering through the gorge and was with us at break of day.

Then another scheme had to be perfected. As a rule, when travelers get into Petra at all, they are hurried out again as rapidly as possible, seldom remaining a full day. I wanted to stay long enough to get at least a tolerable photographic record of the ruins. I must meet the chief with his own weapons. He would



THE ALTAR OF BAAL.

make objection to my further stay in Petra. I would object to making my departure. He would then attempt to levy upon my purse, and I would discuss the subject with him, agree to some of his propositions, pay on account, and ask until next day to consider the rest. Thus I might prolong my visit. The plan worked, but for four days only. I began to realize then that if we remained any longer we should be literally cleaned out, and perhaps killed by the Bedouins.

But to return to our early experiences.

As the inner gate of the city beyond the Khuzneh was entered, to the right and left wondrous architectural fancies loomed up. On the left is a group of square-cut edifices, seeming at first like gigantic steps, but out of which varied façades appear upon a closer view. Away in the distance, low down, amid surrounding cliffs, a glimpse of the theater is had — almost as impressive as the first surprising sight of the Khuzneh. On the right is a trio of tombs and temples hewn from the end of a range of cliffs, the last one looking like



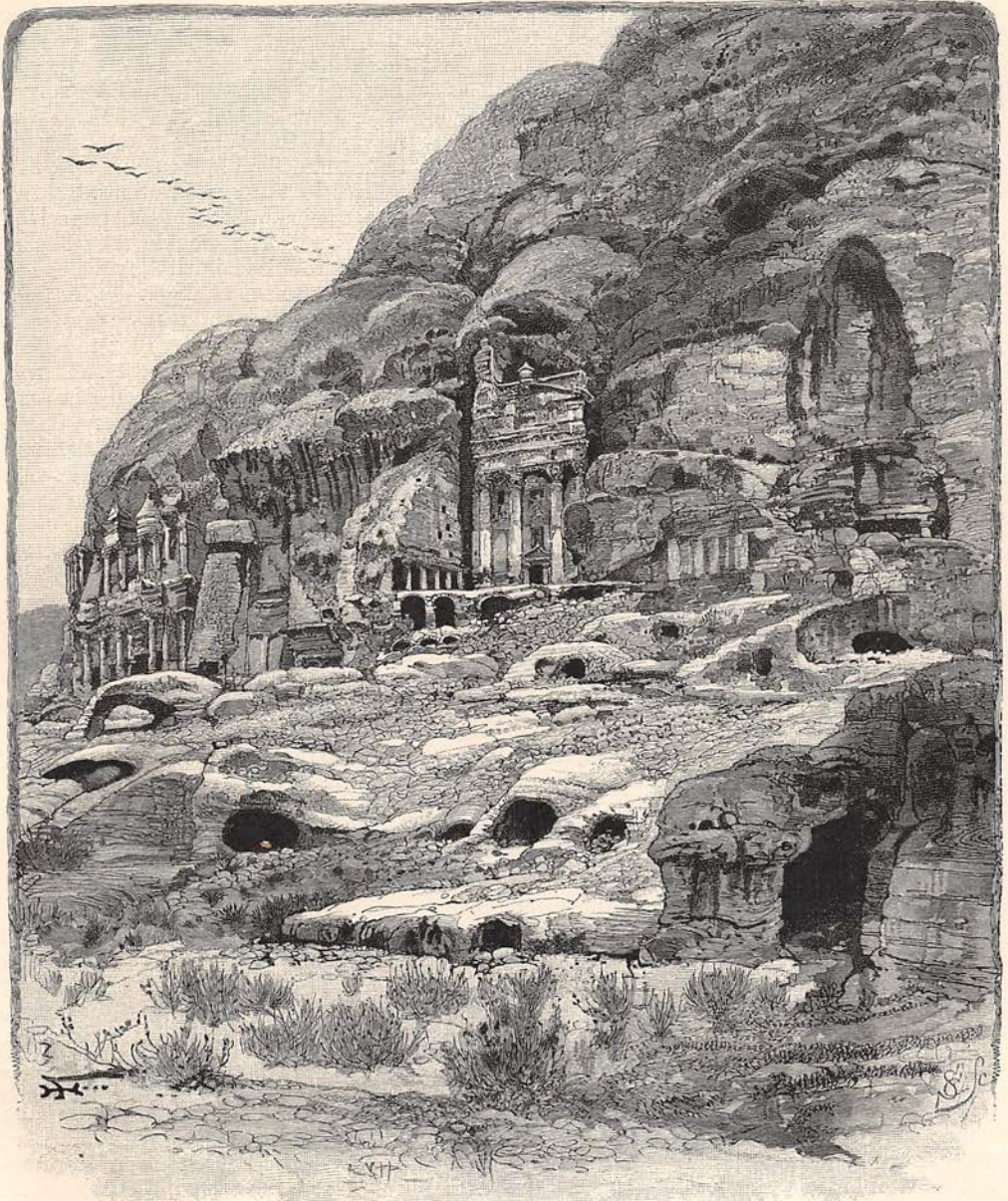
THE DEIR (OR CONVENT) AND STAIRWAY.

a great, grim warder at the city gate. Beneath are numberless excavations, each one of which, from its appearance, might have been used first as a home for the living, before being appropriated as a tomb. Opposite this group, on the left bank of the Sik, is the theater. Its auditorium forms about three-fourths of a circle, is one hundred and twenty feet in diameter, and has thirty-three tiers of seats, each capable of holding a hundred people. The "private boxes" for royalty and for the guests of the city are back of the upper row. It is hewn wholly from the rock. A grand view is that from the western side. In the dis-

tance is the gorge of the Khuzneh. The highest peak on the right is one that will be visited presently. Thence, no doubt, the citadel once frowned. About the theater fragments of the rich columns which once ornamented it can still be seen, partly covered by invading soil. So perfectly preserved, too, is the monument in all essential features, that if the tenants of the graves opposite could rise once more into life, they could readily find their old seats.

Now, emerging into the expanse of the little valley, the full glory of the Edomite capital burst upon us. Nature built these stupendous walls, and man adorned them with patient workmanship, each artist vying with his fellow in shaping these rainbow cliffs into forms of beauty.

In a bird's-eye view of Petra, one portion of the town, corresponding almost to a modern "block," is particularly prominent. More than a dozen splendid structures are here side by side, so that it is hard to select from them any one for illustration. One of the most striking is the so-called Temple of the Urn and Arched Terrace. Both Egyptian and



NEIGHBORHOOD OF THE TEMPLE OF THE URN (IN THE MIDDLE-GROUND).

Roman art influence are apparent in this broad façade. To obtain a good color and relief from monotony, the architect cut into the rock some fifteen feet and placed a row of columns on either side to form a portico. An arched terrace is employed to support the platform, of which the base is quite a hundred feet above the valley level. There are two tiers of terrace arches. The lower is nearly buried beneath the débris of other arches. Behind them

are several chambers cut out of the mountain underneath the façade. Originally five columns supported the gallery on each side. Four lofty pilasters adorn the façade, and there is not only a window immediately above the doorway, but a row of three other windows between the pilasters, a few feet below the capitals. These suggest the possible existence of upper chambers. Surmounting the pediment is a great urn, like others of its class a

constant aim for the bullets of the Bedouins, who try thus feebly to bring it down because they believe it to contain "great treasure." The colors of the stone are remarkable, and in the sunshine bright and beautiful. The material, sandstone, is so soft that the effect is like that of pastel. When the torrents come the water is absorbed by the rock. As the water percolates, the rock is colored by iron deposits, and thus a great variety of vivid hues is created. The arches of this temple are grayish brown; the front as far as the capitals is streaked with golden yellow and pink; up to the urn the pediment is white and red, lilac and blue.

The manner in which the colors occur, in stripes and waves, is illustrated by a study of the eastern colonnade. Through it the broken entrance to the dark interior is seen. There is but one wide and lofty chamber, fifty feet square. An inscription on the wall declares that it was once consecrated as a Christian church. At the rear there are three recesses. All these are so well preserved that they still show the marks of the chisel. The flocks seem to have made it their home once upon a time, but now the bats hold full sway.

The Corinthian structure near by, being more exposed to the elements, is not in so good repair. Twelve fine columns ornament its façade, and eight more of smaller dimensions surmount these. There are four entrances, which gave the architect opportunity not only to gratify his taste for lavish decoration, but to give variety in the construction of the pediments. Of these two are arched and two are triangular. Reaching quite across the front, between the architrave and the base of the pediment, is a strange frieze resembling a row of Corinthian capitals. I judged the height of this front to be about equal to that of the Khuzneh,—close to one hundred feet. The interior is divided into four chambers, all in front, with niches in the walls here and there.

Still more grand is the "Temple with the Three Tiers of Columns," which has four entrances and is four stories high. The builder fell short of his material of living rock on the left hand, and helped out the design with quarried stone. Earthquake has sent all these built-up portions tumbling to the ground, but a grand ruin remains. Its lower interior (I believe there are chambers in the upper stories, too, which I was not allowed to visit) comprises several apartments. In the walls are niches for images. The color display here again is most fantastic.

From the front of the Temple of Columns one can look to the right and left upon what once formed the principal quarter of Petra. On all sides it is encompassed by precipitous

mountains, whose spurs sometimes encroach upon the area, with natural walls from four to twelve hundred feet high.

Not so fascinating were certain excavations back of our tents. News spreads like wild-fire in modern Edom; and before we first saw the sunset beyond Mount Hor some sixty of Esau's descendants had followed us and had opened offices in these excavations. Never was so savage a haunt for banditti conceived by Salvator Rosa. The trouble then began. Each individual Arab claimed the privilege of showing the city to the stranger. From their bluster I made up my mind that we were soon to be cut into pieces in order that the work might be done more expeditiously. During those four dreadful days I obtained more satisfactory studies of Hades, Purgatory, Sheol, and Gehenna than I had previously flattered myself I should secure in this world. A vile band of robbers never existed. I had fallen voluntarily into their hands, and it behooved me now to make the best bargain I could to get away. But just here was the trouble. No bargain agreed upon was adhered to for an hour at a time. Some item was always "forgotten." At each amendment of the contract an amount of discussion had to be undergone that was exasperating beyond measure. The only compensation I had was that these discussions secured me more time in the town. Between arguments I snatched the coveted views with my three cameras. Frequent settlements were had in my tent, with Salim, and they were always dramatic. After the money was counted out in English sovereigns and Egyptian "dollars," it was separated into various sums and spread out upon the rug. Then Salim would take first one sum and then another and tie them up in the corners of his garments, begging that his staff should not be told of it. Thus, like a politician of the good old school, he obtained his "commission." Then, with the remaining portion in the up-held skirt of his royal robe, he would retire with his staff to one of the caves and proceed to divide. A dreadful scene always followed, of quarreling and sword-drawing; but they always seemed to come out of it unhurt, and I ceased to worry about them. One day I caught the rascals with my camera, after one of their angriest discussions, as they emerged from their "office." The exactions here were similar to those of Akabah, but largely multiplied, because there were more here to divide with. My photographic apparatus, with my leather cases of glass, were a mystery to them. No custom-house appraiser was ever more gloriously baffled over the witchery of a female smuggler than was Salim and his staff over my American camera. It was at last decided to be "magical appa-

tus" which "meant no good to Petra" and I was taxed accordingly.

To Petra's peculiar style of architecture there is only one surviving exception of importance. It is called by the Arabs *Kasr Pharoun*, or the Castle of Pharaoh. Elsewhere on classic soil it would scarcely attract attention. But here, it not only represents an important period in the life of the capital of Idumæa, but it was one of a group of magnificent structures, which represented the wealth and taste of a wonderful people. Its locality is near the western exit of the city. When Burckhardt discovered Petra in 1812, the ruins of a triumphal arch stood nearly opposite the Kasr Pharoun. Now its stones lie upon the ground intermingled with fragments of columns of Egyptian syenite and Arabian porphyry, which still bear their pristine polish and perfect form. Here too, lying in confusion, are the drums of columns which once supported a great building. These, with a dozen piles of ruins near by, tell of wealth and magnificence and of dreadful calamities. Great changes have occurred here in seventy years. When Burckhardt and Laborde were here they saw standing also portions of walls of other structures and a graceful column.* All now lie in ruins. The work of destruction is done largely by the torrents. Each year they come sweeping down the mountain sides, carrying with them rocky débris which they have loosened on their way. By undermining and bombarding the chiseled mysteries of the town, they break them into shapeless masses and even carry their fragments a long distance. The peculiar soft texture of the rock makes the ruins highly destructible. At no place is this so evident as along the higher stairways. Sometimes these are worn almost to smooth inclined planes. In some interiors I could see, by marks high on the walls, where the water had risen. Broken bridges are found in the ravines, and here and there a cemented cistern, filled with rubbish. Some curious lamps were found by our party amid broken pottery, delicate in form and decoration.

West of the Kasr Pharoun I found an unfinished temple, which explains vividly the methods adopted by Petran architects. After the site had been selected, the face of the cliff was smoothed perpendicularly and scaffolding erected; then the work of shaping the façade began at the top. Thus the weight of the material above was always supported solidly during the work, and the débris was never in the way of the workmen. The interior of the structure now under examination was wholly excavated and put to use as a tomb; but the front remains unfinished.

Thus far I had been guided by the descriptions of explorers who had gone before me. I was satisfied that there was more to see. A great ravine leading south-east from the Kasr Pharoun gave me this assurance and seemed to invite a test of my mettle. Calling the attention of my guide, I pointed to the ravine and said: "Tahly-henna" (Let us go up there). His answer was: "La! la! ma-feesh!" (No, no! No good.) But I acted on my own opinion, as one always must with these people, and began the ascent of the ravine, ordering Mousa to follow. I was ambitious to see what others had not seen, and thus add to scanty information concerning this strange site. I was amply rewarded by the discovery of rich treasures. I followed up a dry torrent-bed which wound most curiously for about a mile, and then came within sight of a walled terrace, the finest example of its kind I had yet seen. Just before reaching it, on the left, I was attracted by an irregular doorway. Entering it, I found myself standing within a low chamber containing a large number of fluted columns, all hewn from the mountain. They seemed to bear the weight of the great mass above. The dripping water had dealt hardly with this strange example of architecture, but had stained it in beautiful colors, red, white, and blue. Dr. Olin noticed a similar interior near this, three of whose sides had four fluted semi-columns each. I did not find it. In the time I had I could not begin to see all there was to see. Climbing now to the terrace, a lovely spot was found, about two acres in extent, shut in by lofty cliffs whose sides were adorned with a great number of carved façades, and to whose summits winding stairways led, cut from the rock. This lofty platform was carpeted with grass, and oleanders and fig-trees grew there in profusion.

As I climbed the winding stairway just beyond the walk, I found on its rocky sides niches with tiny figures in them similar to those in the gorge below and not unlike those near the cave of Pan at Cæsarea Philippi. A part of a human foot was found carved in the wall near some curious inscriptions and figures like those on the rocks in the region of Mount Sinai. At the head of the stairway two hollowed-out rocks, canopied by overhanging cliffs, seemed to form pulpits with sounding-boards. Tanks were cut in the rocks beneath, as though for baptism, and away below was a grassy plateau, where our imagination pictured a congregation. It was the only place I saw in Petra which seemed really to have an air of holiness about it. St. Paul might have preached from these lofty pulpits. One

* This column, the Zob Pharoun, as it was called, was seen standing by Gérome, and also by Dr. Strong, eight years before Mr. Wilson's visit.—EDITOR.

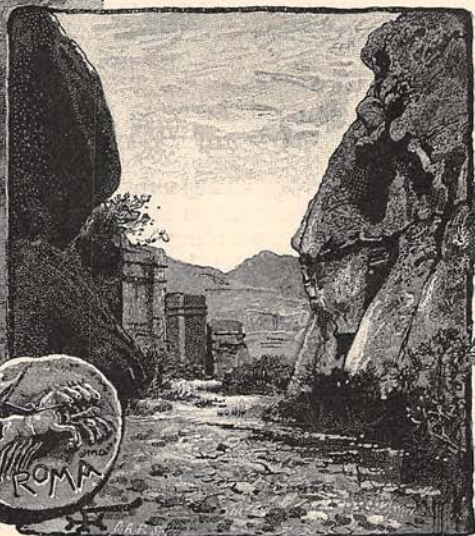


SPUR OF MOUNT HOR—THE RAVINE OF THE DEIR.

can well believe that here the early martyrs assembled. As I turned one of the elbows in my climb, I came upon what others had observed at a distance and called "a pyramid." This was my first disappointment in Petra. What I touched with my hand was unworthy of being dubbed an obelisk, even. It was about twenty feet high. It was twelve feet wide and seven feet through at the base, tapering to about half those dimensions at the apex. It was rough-hewn and undetached from the mountain. A vast platform had been leveled there, and the stone having been cut away about this little monolithic pinnacle, the "pyramid" was left. In a south-westerly direction stood a similar mystery, a trifle smaller in size.

The afternoon was waning now, and I was obliged to make haste. The summit must be gained. The weird wildness of the scene, not without enchantment, was intensified by the shouting which came floating up to us from the lawless rabble who infested the caves near our tents. How pictures, each claiming attention, multiplied on every side! Alas! the day was nearly ended, the sunshine was going, and we must make the descent before dark.

Satisfied that there must be yet more, where there were so many wonders, I clambered down a rocky stairway, which I felt could not have been cut at so great expense of labor without a purpose. I crossed a short depression, ascended another stairway,



A PRELIMINARY GLIMPSE OF PETRA.

and came out upon a summit which had been hewn to a level, from one edge to the other. There, cut in the rocky platform, are several curious tanks and what must be an altar of sacrifice. This is at the west side of the platform, on a rock by itself, to which four stone steps lead. It consists of a shallow circular basin, forty-eight inches in diameter, in the middle of which is a deeper depression eighteen inches across. This was designed, no doubt, to catch the blood. From it runs a small drain drilled through the rock and leading into a tank a few feet away. I looked upon my discovery as one of the "altars in high places," consecrated to false gods, of which

the Old Testament speaks with words of warning. A tiny recess was hewn at the left of the stairway, where the pans, shovels, basins, flesh-hooks, and censers may have been stored by heathen priests. There are other tanks, and possibly remains of other altars, on the plateau. Below these, further to the south, is still another tank, filled with good water and containing some comical little fish. I caught some of them. They are blind, like those found in Mammoth Cave. All these tanks are lowest at the south-east corner, and are supplied there with outlets cut in the rock, leading into channels down the mountain.

Descending a narrow gorge, I came out by the theater. On the way we passed channels and rock-cut cisterns on all sides, and a wide stairway whose colors were as rich and varied as those of any Persian rug. Now and then a tiny garden-spot was reached whose grassy sod alternated with a variety of flowering shrubs and peculiar large bulbous plants, with stalks just shooting forth. In one great reservoir, some twenty by sixty feet in size and twelve deep, several trees are growing. One end of this reservoir is walled with hewn stone, and a flight of stone steps, still well preserved, leads to the bottom. The cement upon the sides is in good condition, and but little cleansing would be needed to make the great receptacle again available. All around are sculptured remains and excavations of various sizes, showing that the ample water supply attracted quite a constituency of dwellers.

Our last morning in Petra was devoted to an excursion to a temple second only in beauty to the Khuzneh, but less florid. It is much larger and is located upon a peak fully fifteen hundred feet above the valley. It is called *El Deir*, or "The Convent." From the plain below the great urn upon its pediment can be seen distinctly, peering above the adjoining rocks. *El Deir* was reached by climbing a deep ravine northwards — a ravine which would have been impassable but for the steps cut in the rock. Sometimes they were upon the very verge of precipices, whose depth could not be fathomed. Through openings between the cliffs, glorious "bits" of the lower town could be observed. After a climb of one hour we reached the spacious façade of *El Deir* — one hundred and fifty-six feet wide and about one hundred feet high. The interior chamber is thirty-seven by forty feet. Inscriptions resembling those near Mount Sinai are found upon the rocks on the ascent and upon the walls of the interior chamber. Opposite the doorway is a niche, over which is an image of the Christian cross.

Other elaborate structures must have been

neighbors to *El Deir*, for here and there in the wide area in front are remains of huge columns and fragments of walls and terraces. Leading to the summit of the mountain out of which the *Deir* is hewn, is a narrow stairway, ending in a level plateau, where stand other extensive ruins. Excavated foundations are found near by in abundance; and the numerous stairways skirting the hills prove also that the neighborhood was much frequented. On an opposite cliff we found a rock-chamber with no façade at all. It is twenty-nine by thirty feet in size, with a niche at the rear ten by fifteen feet. A pediment and pilasters of beautiful design are cut from the rock about the niche.

Near our lofty stand-point, upon the flat surface of a rock, I saw lying in the sun, dead, a lizard about a foot long, and a striped snake twice that length. They were not there when I made the ascent, but had since met, disputed, and rendered "satisfaction" to one another. It may be that this typified the fate of Edom's capital. Perhaps some destroying serpent crept into Petra, challenged the rich, well-fed lizard-citizens to combat, and the battle raged until no soul was left to record the tale!

There is, besides the Greek and Roman influences, a mysterious element of originality in Petran architecture which lends to it a quality not found in other places. When the sway of imperial Rome crept into Petra by way of Asia Minor, Syria, and Egypt, her rock-structures grew rapidly in number. The influence of the excavated temples and tunneled tombs along the Nile, too, is clear not only in the rock-cutting but in the numerous tapering and receding façades, and in the abortive sphinxes and pyramids of the necropolis.

Intelligent Arabs like still to dwell upon their traditions concerning the once prosperous capital. Once a year, when they start in caravans from Hebron to carry oranges and other stores to Akabah for Mecca pilgrims, they prefer to pay a tax to Sheikh Salim, and to come through Petra, rather than pass down the Wady Arabah. Still to-day the sons of Esau want to be merchantmen. Salim would not fix a sum total of taxation for our entrance into Petra. He must have separate sums laid aside for the "purchase" of horse-shoes, barley, sheep, and so on. And how prices have changed since the day of Burckhardt! That noted and conscientious traveler sneaked into Petra as we did. He dressed like a Moslem and brought a tiny goat all the way from Hebron, pretending that he desired to sacrifice it on Mount Hor — the holy Mount of Aaron. That was *his* scheme. He "paid a fellah of Eljy a pair of old horse-shoes to carry the goat" and guide him. His trickery was dis-

covered, however. He took too much interest in the ruins on the way, and became glad to sacrifice the goat half-way up Mount Hor and make good his escape, so annoyed was he by the owner of the horse-shoes. I had to pay thirty dollars for the privilege of making my picture of the six scoundrels on their horses, though their protection during a second visit to the necropolis was "a present." Wherever we went we had to pay extra; and we were shadowed constantly, never being allowed to go any distance alone. Sometimes, to get rid of noise, a seat was sought in some retired place. Presently some débris of rock would be heard rattling down. Then, in the direction of the sound, a dusky head would be seen gazing down, posted there to watch our every movement. Backsheesh could not purchase freedom from this annoyance.

Nor did we succeed in exploring, even under surveillance, all the wonders of Petra. About one hundred yards before reaching the buttressed arch, on the right, is a tunnel beneath the mountain, about fifteen feet wide and nearly as high, perhaps two hundred yards long. It is overgrown with oleander bushes and partly hidden by them. I had nearly reached its further end when I was compelled to retrace my steps:—"Ma feesh!"*

The time had now come to contrive our departure from Sheikh Salim's dominions. Early in the morning my companions and I bade good-bye to the horde about us, and started under the guidance of Mohammed and Yusef, two native Petrans, to visit the Deir and Mount Hor. During our absence Hedayah was to break camp, and to meet us at noon, near the Kasr Pharoun, with our caravan. We were surprised, upon arriving at the appointed place, to see some sixty or seventy Bedouins, mostly mounted, and armed with lances, guns, and an assortment of knives and blunderbusses, awaiting our arrival. When they saw us coming a significant hoot was given, and we felt that trouble was brewing. Hedayah called out to us: "Don't be afraid, gentlemen, but mount your camels and proceed with your journey." It was "the custom," he said, "for these people to attend the departing stranger half a day's journey out of their city." For this scheme of *theirs*, all the horses and men possible had been pressed into the service now to do us honor. "Since they had not had the pleasure of greeting us when we came in, they wished to see us out."

Immediately we mounted our camels, they were seized by the brigands, and made to kneel. We were surrounded by the lancers, Sheikh Salim among them. The hooting be-

came louder and had an element of dissatisfaction and contempt about it which was not calculated to allay our anxiety.

"Keep cool, gentlemen," said the brave Hedayah, who thereupon fell into the most violent of Arabic demonstrations. The gauntlet had been thrown and the fight began. The quiet Mohammed, who had carried my camera for several days, now became a principal, and drawing his sword, made a thrust at our good dragoman. It fell short of its mark, but cut an ugly slit in his leggin without wounding him. Hedayah leaped from his camel, and with uplifted sword attacked Mohammed. The *mêlée* became general, the noise infernal, and we prepared ourselves for the worst. Salim sat there on his horse quietly watching events. Upon his honor being appealed to, he declared that he had no power over his men; that we had remained longer than they wished, and they were not satisfied with the money we had left behind.

While sundry battles of words were going on, each man with sword drawn, I settled with Salim for various "things which had been forgotten," including fifteen dollars for a "change of raiment." Hedayah and Mohammed had a settlement aside. The latter had a claim for two shillings, and for that was willing to kill Hedayah. All things being amicably adjusted at last, we were permitted to move on. Salim and I shook hands warmly once more, and wishing that "God might preserve us during the rest of our journey," he put spur to his horse and was soon out of sight. Not so all his hounds. New claims were made now, in the most threatening manner, and although we moved on, half the scoundrels followed us. Claim after claim was adjusted as we slowly proceeded, until, after an hour of horror, I held my empty purse bottom up in the air and declared that they now had all. Thereupon the greater number dropped behind, only a few remaining to bluster at Hedayah. They too departed at last, after satisfying themselves that there was no more money to be gotten from us.

At last, rid of our tormentors, we proceeded, quickening the pace of our camels. Scarce had we traveled half an hour, when, springing suddenly from behind a rock, a Bedouin made his appearance. At once he began a display of excited pantomime, drawn sword in hand. He made several attempts to stop our leading camels, but was beaten off. He persisted, however, in trying one after another. Exasperated that one man should so browbeat a whole caravan, I ordered some camel-drivers to arrest him and march him under their guns

* "Leading from the stream to the south-eastern entrance of this tunnel are remains of an open water-channel."—*Dr. Strong.*

to the head of the line, meaning to take him to Hebron and put him in prison. When this was done I learned that he had claimed a sovereign for a sheep which, he averred, Abdullah had purchased of him and forgotten to pay for. Afterwards he confessed that he had lied about it, but excused himself by saying that he was a poor man, and having arrived in Petra after the money had been divided, had taken his chances on the road.

Quiet was restored once more, but every rock was now suspected and watched. Presently a man with a gun in his hand was seen on the right coming quickly down a hill. "Sahib? Sahib?" called Hedayah, threateningly drawing his revolver. The wind blew so that the reply was not audible, and Hedayah fired. Had the rusty old weapon been true, one of our own drivers would have been the victim. Hardly had we said to ourselves, "What next, I wonder?" when another Arab appeared, and proved the most troublesome of all. Camel after camel was seized by him with the intention of stopping our march. Losing all patience, Sheikh Ouida, a tax-gatherer from Gaza, whom we found in Petra, and had hired as a scout and guide for a special expedition to follow, struck the fellow on the head with his stone pipe-bowl. This led to open war. Ouida leaped from his horse—the only one in our party—and grappled with the bandit. Several of us dismounted from our camels as quickly as we could, and ran to assist Ouida, now considerably behind us. Before we could reach the scene of battle the rascal had escaped. Running to the top of a hill, he aimed his gun at Hedayah, and said that unless five sovereigns were sent up to him he would fire. I was appealed to, and I called to him to surrender. He refused, and four of the camel-drivers, already ordered in position, at a signal from me fired upon him. With that he threw up his arms, and cried "Sahib," and I sent two men up to bring him down. He was wounded. I had him tied, and left him struggling violently and groaning in the road for his women to find when they drove the flocks home at night.

This wretch claimed a paper which he

said he had received direct from Mohammed in heaven, and had thrown into my tent in Petra, where I had kissed it and touched it to my heart and head! We had shed his blood; so, after leaving him, the good Musulman Hedayah, fearing the man might live to declare a blood-feud between them, insisted on going back and making peace. Two dollars would be needed. Alas! our whole party could not muster so much. There was only one recourse. We must borrow from our prisoner who was marched to me and the loans solicited. He declared that he was a poor man and had not a piastre on his person. I ordered him searched, excusing myself by saying that in America, when a man lied once, he was never after believed. He protested; but his money-belt was unbuckled and found well lined with some of the very dollars which I had paid Salim! We borrowed them of our prisoner to make peace with our enemy. The wounded man was again visited. He was found lying insensible in the road. The money was thrust into his clutched fist; Hedayah kissed him on each cheek, recited some passages from the Koran, and peace was declared and recorded in Heaven. Once more we proceeded on our way. No halt was made for lunch that evening until the eastern border of the Wady Arabah had been reached. We were too anxious until then to eat or rest. The "Rock of El Gohr" was no "refuge" for us. We passed it with all speed to escape the Edomites. Our camp was guarded during several succeeding nights. Through each day Ouida acted as scout, signaling us from the hill-tops when it was safe to follow, or leaving his lance in sight as a warning to us to halt, while he investigated certain black Bedouin specks in the distance.

It was not long after that Professor Palmer and his companions were murdered in the Arabian desert, not far from the region through which we had just passed. Calm reflection satisfies me, after our successful feat in the "taking of Petra," that our little party was in peril during every hour of the journey, from the time we left Akabah until we had passed through Edom and entered Canaan.

Edward L. Wilson.

