

They were now about to enter on its enjoyment and test its real value. Would it fulfil their expectations? would it fully compensate all their toil? Every one had a separate and intense interest in the result. As tribe after tribe passes forward to the sacred courts of the Lord to ascertain their lot, we can almost read the contending emotions of their minds, in the anxious countenance of each individual. It is indeed a thrilling moment in the life of every one present. As the lots determine so must their future possessions be.

It was from Shiloh that the venerable Joshua dismissed the tribes located on the east of the Jordan, and gave them the impressive, parting address contained in the 22nd chap. of his book: "Take diligent heed to do the commandment and the law, which Moses the servant of the Lord charged you, to love the Lord your God, and to walk in all his ways, and to keep his commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your heart, and with all your soul."

Some time after this, Shiloh was the scene of a very singular transaction,—the Benjamites stealthily seizing the daughters of Shiloh in their dances and carrying them off for wives. The Israelites had assembled to chastise the tribe of Benjamin for a flagrant misdemeanor that had been committed among them, the latter resisted and a fearful conflict ensued. Great numbers of the Israelites were slain, but the tribe of Benjamin was nearly annihilated; and in their rage they burnt their cities and slew the women and children. When left to reflection, however, they soon relented and wept sore over the dreadful ravages of their dire resentment. They had debarred themselves by a rash oath from giving the remaining Benjamites their daughters for wives, and they said: "how shall we do for wives for them that remained." In the peculiar emergency the elders fall on the following expedient; they coolly told them, in the lax spirit of the times, "to lie in wait in the vineyards, and when the daughters of Shiloh came out to dance in dances at the feast of the Lord, to catch every man his wife, and go to the land of Benjamin." This practice of young maidens dancing in retired and secluded places, is a very ancient custom; and to this day the Oriental women have a great passion for suburban festivities, and have many contrivances for securing its enjoyment. Dancing was a very general recreation among the Jews—the sexes dancing apart—both in their ordinary entertainments and greater festival occasions. It was a general mode of expressing joy and exultation, whether religious, secular, or domestic. As the women in Israel were not *required*, like the men, to attend at the place at the tabernacle during the annual festivals, the young females in Shiloh may have been in the habit of embracing opportunities afforded by those seasons of relaxation, for amusing themselves in dances; it was evidently a common practice. Dr Robinson thinks that the scene of those dances was somewhere around the fountains of Shiloh. That spot was indeed sufficiently secluded; but it is questionable, from the nature of the ground in that quarter, if there could be "vineyards" there.

One of the most interesting recollections associated with Shiloh, is the story of Hannah, the mother of Samuel, and the dedication of her son to God there, where he spent his youth in the sanctuary. Poor Hannah was a woman of a sad and sorrowful spirit. She had drunk deep in the attendant miseries of bigamy, and, to aggravate her troubles, "the Lord had shut up her womb." She seems to have been in the habit of going up with her husband to the feasts of the Lord at Shiloh; and on one of those occasions she was employed in sending up her fervent supplications to the