

sources. But in the rich, low-lying valleys we saw splendid fields of wheat and barley which were well-grown in the middle of March. On the hill-sides I noticed terraces after terrace of olive trees and fig-trees which would remunerate the husbandman for all the labour expended on them. And then the summits of the mountains on which we frequently found ourselves were literally bedecked with anemones, and cyclamens, and maiden-hair ferns, and pinks, and pimpereles, and many other plants and flowers which perfectly charmed all of us, and especially the ladies of our party. How our own professor Fowler of Queen's University, or any other enthusiastic botanist, would revel among these fruitful valleys, and terraced hill-sides, and flower-decked mountain summits of Samaria! The merest sight-seer could not but bring away with him the most pleasing reminiscences. One magnificent view was obtained from a lofty eminence, which is called Sela. I saw with the unassisted eye, on the south the twin mountains of Ebal and Gerizim, on the west the blue waters of the Mediterranean, on the east beyond the Jordan, the old storied hills of Gilead and Bashan, on the north Mount Carmel, and a glimpse of the Sea of Galilee, and, though yet full four score miles distant from it, my first sight of snow-clad Hermon, one of the towering peaks of Lebanon. Very striking is the contrast between all this array of grandeur, beauty and fertility and the desolated Arab village now occupying the site of the celebrated city of Samaria which gave its name to the surrounding region. Verily, as Cowper has it in the oft-quoted line "God made the country, and man the town." The ancient city of Samaria, as represented to us in Old Testament history, was in perfect keeping with the grand and beautiful surrounding natural scenery. As the gay capital of the Ten Tribes of Israel it was a splendid, strongly fortified city. It was built originally by Omri as related by the inspired historian: 1. Kings, 16:24. In the very centre of Palestine, about forty miles north of Jerusalem, and about six miles from Shechem, it is one of the finest situations for an inland capital. The rounded hill on which the city was built rises up gracefully about five hundred feet above the level of the fertile

valley which spreads out to a breadth of five or six miles at its base. And then all around the city there are mountains rising up still higher like so many sentinels guarding it from the approach of the enemy. As I walked thoughtfully over and around the commanding eminence a thousand vivid visions of the past history of the place rose before my mind's eye. It was here that Ahab and Jezebel and other kings and queens of Israel reigned during a period of two hundred years in great pomp and splendour. It was here that the model young man Obadiah lived who said to Elijah: "I thy servant, fear the Lord from my youth." It was here that Naaman, captain of the host of the king of Syria, came to be cured of his leprosy. It was here that the four leprous men sat at the gate of the city perishing of hunger in a time of siege and famine, and resolved in the last extremity to go into the camp of the enemy, and to their great astonishment and delight found plenty where they feared death. It was here that Elijah and Elisha performed many of the acts that are recorded of them in the Old Testament history. But the celebrated capital of the Ten Tribes of Israel, beautiful for situation, strongly fortified by nature and art, and with a thousand memories of its eventful history, is now represented by a small peasant village consisting of a number of poor mud huts in which you would think it impossible for human beings to live in any degree of comfort. The Ruler of nations said it by His prophets, and it has been done. "Samaria shall become desolate, for she hath rebelled against her God." Samaria stood like a tower of strength as if defying the attacks of any enemy. But a short time after the words were spoken Shalmaneser king of Assyria, and after him Sargon besieged it, and after a siege of three years razed the city to the ground, and carried away the Ten Tribes into captivity. After the destruction of the city by the kings of Assyria various attempts were made to rebuild it; but it would not stay rebuilt. The modern village of Sebastia, occupying the same site bears no resemblance to the ancient Samaria. It was very significant of the vanished glory of the olden times to see here and there built into the mud walls broken pieces of beautiful pillars, and carved marble mouldings that once adorned the