

greater than our own, and shining with an intrinsic splendour, in comparison with which ours would fade into a minute star, scarcely, if at all visible to the naked eye. But have we any means of knowing, it may be asked, what would be the visible magnitude and brightness of our sun, seen from the distance of a star? Two principles of undoubted truth will enable us to form a definite opinion upon this point: first, that the *visible diameter* is inversely as the square of the distance. At double our present distance, for instance, the sun would have half the visible magnitude and one quarter the brightness which it now has. Pursuing this principle, we are altogether sure that if our sun were seen at 200,000 times its present distance, which at most would only equal that of the nearest star, its visible magnitude would be reduced to the 200,000th part of what it now is, or to be less than the 100th part of one second; and its brightness would equal only the 40,000,000,000th part of its present splendour. We are aware that numbers so vast furnish but a very inadequate means of forming a definite conception, but we have nothing better to take their place. It is ascertained, with a good degree of certainty, by direct measurement, that the solar brightness, diminished in the ratio expressed by those figures, would only equal that of a star of the second magnitude. The conclusion, therefore, that the stars are in fact resplendent suns, is not only admissible, but one which can no longer be resisted.

But the supposition which we have here made with regard to the distance of the stars, is the *least* which the facts allow. The stars *may be*—and there are very strong analogical reasons for believing that many of them are—inmeasurably beyond the limits here assigned.

*To be continued.*

## THE TRAVELLER.

*From the N. Y. Observer.*

### LETTER FROM EGYPT.

*The land of Goshen.—The Patriarch Jacob.—A Scripture Illustration.*

We have today been traversing the eastern border of the ancient land of Goshen, which is still "the best of the land of Egypt." The frequent villages, before reaching Salahieh, including Aboo-Zabell, Balbeis, Aboo-Hamad, and Graine, with those around, situated amid palm groves, and rich wheat, and clover fields, attest a numerous population and great fertility. I have no doubt, judging from the pile of rubbish and ruin about Balbeis, and elsewhere in Goshen, that the population of this region, has been in past ages far more dense than at present. This province is said to be, at the present day, more wealthy and productive of revenue than any other of equal extent in Egypt.

In the days of the good old Patriarch and his sons, after the days of the famine, Goshen must have presented a charming prospect. Methinks I see the excellent and venerable Jacob, in his happy old age, sitting at the door of his tent, looking out at eventide upon the calm beauty of the meadows towards the Nile, and upon his sons and grandsons amid the busy scene around him. There is a radiance in his serene countenance—a glory about his hoary head. The storms of life have long been beating upon him; but he is now in a great measure released from its cares, and fitted to enjoy that quiet which old age so naturally craves. His feelings have been subdued and chastened in the school of affliction. How much food for reflection does his past eventful life furnish, and how much in his present condition calculated to soothe his spirit. His sons have come to honour and prosperity in Egypt, and all is calculated to gratify his parental pride and affection. But his heart still cleaves to the land of his revered ancestors, where the remains of Abraham and Sarah, of Isaac and Rebecca, and of his own loved Rachel, as well as Leah, repose; and whither he fondly hopes that his own body shall soon be borne,

to a corpse, to its final rest. What a subject would the aged Jacob have furnished to the master hand of Cicero, as an exalted model of respectable, revered, old age. From the Scripture narrative I picture him to myself as the most venerable of men. What finer subject for the painter, than his noble attitude and bearing before Pharaoh, as depicted in this Scripture:

"And Joseph brought in Jacob his father and set him before Pharaoh, and Jacob blessed Pharaoh."

"And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou?"

"And Jacob said unto Pharaoh, The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years; few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the years of the life of my fathers, in the days of their pilgrimage."

"And Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and went out from before Pharaoh."

Josephus, too, well says, that Pharaoh admired Jacob, as he stood before him saluting him.

Neither Alexander, nor Cæsar, nor Napoleon, in the proudest moments of their successful career, ever stood in an attitude so full of dignity, so truly worthy of respect and admiration. Indeed in Egypt one should look, like Desdemona, more with the mind than with the eyes. And the prospect stretches out even beyond the mind's reach. For truly did one of yore say of Egypt:

"Time sadly overcometh all things, and is now dominant, and sitteth upon a sphynx, and looketh unto Memphis and old Thebes; while his sister, Oblivion, reclineth semisomnous on a pyramid, making puzzles of Titianian erections, and turning old glories into dreams. History sinketh beneath her cloud. The traveller as he paceth amazedly through her deserts asketh of her who builded them? and she mumbleth something, but what it is he heareth not."

The route from Balbeis through Aboo Hamad to Graine, where we halted for the night, a distance of eighteen miles, lies principally along the territory disputed between vegetation and the desert. Occasionally you see a fine wheat field boldly facing and abutting absolute sterility. Again vegetation pines and withers, till it is devoured by the barren sands.

As we were passing through a palm grove, I observed a tall Arab, dressed in a red cap and turban, and a long brown linen frock, turning a large wheel with his foot to water his little piece of wheat, which was eared but not yellow for the harvest. This he did by successively pulling with his hands, and stepping with his foot upon some pegs projecting from the outer side of his water wheel, near the rim.

The scene, thus occurring in Goshen, immediately suggested the following obscure passage of Scripture, which I immediately took the Bible and looked out, and read with great satisfaction; with this new full light upon it, on seeing doubtless the very mode of raising water for irrigation which was present to the mind of Moses when "he spake unto all Israel in the wilderness," and said: "The land whither thou goest to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt from whence ye came out, where thou sowedst thy seed, and wateredst it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs."

It must, too, have been a cheering prospect to his countrymen, who had been only accustomed to the tedious process of irrigation, which is indispensable in Egypt, for raising crops, to be told: "But the land whither ye go to possess it is a land of hills, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven."

Rain rarely falls here in spring and summer. I have been a month in the country, and out every day, without having yet had occasion to use an umbrella for rain.

Ibrahim advised us not to go out into the village of Graine, for he said it was full of "teefs," and there was no "great governor," nor any "forlezza." We therefore pitched our gay green tent, which we had purchased at Cairo for \$25, for the first time, beside a palm grove. It was profusely adorned with figures of yellow and red cloth sewed on, representing spears, &c., and with red tassels. A person's importance among Arabs is very much inferred from the richness and gaudy colors of his tent. Our's must have astonished the natives; for with its border of black, blue, yellow and red, together with the figures,

it was garish enough for the taste of any African or Indian chief.

We hired an Arab to stand guard over us during the night, with a gun, and lay down in our tent, upon our mattresses, to sleep. I. W.

## THE SABBATH SCHOOL.

### A SUNDAY-SCHOOL SCHOLAR IN A DUNGEON.

WHEN I was in the West Indies, said the Rev. Mr. Young, I heard of a poor soldier who had been condemned to die, and I wished to see him in his condemned cell. On applying to the gaoler, he allowed me to do so, on condition that I should be enclosed in the dungeon during the interval of meals, for some hours. That in a West India dungeon was not a very agreeable thing. However, as I had a sincere desire to talk with this man, I submitted to the condition, and was shut up with him. I found him an interesting young man; and, to my surprise, his countenance indicated pleasure, rather than grief, when I presented myself before him. I began to inquire relative to the state of his mind; and, to my astonishment, he told me, that he had obtained salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ. He went on to detail, in a most interesting manner, how he had found his way to the Redeemer. Knowing that no pious person had previously visited him, I wished to be informed how he had obtained his light; when he gave me the following narrative:

"Oh! Sir," he said "I was a scholar in a Sabbath-school at Nottingham. I was a very bad boy. I was expelled from the school twice in consequence of my conduct. I cherished evil principles in my heart, because I was an exceedingly dissipated young man. In a fit of intoxication, I enlisted as a soldier, and, in a few days, left my native town. Soon afterwards, was I sent out to this country; and I fear my conduct has broken the heart of my widowed mother. After I had been in this country some time, I did not like the army, and deserted. I was apprehended, and flogged. I deserted again. I was betrayed by a companion, apprehended, and am now sentenced to die. When I came to this loathsome place, I was as dark and as ignorant of God as it was possible for any sinner to be. I meditated vengeance against the person who had informed of me, and against my Judges; and I thought that I would be amply revenged if I could but escape from my place of imprisonment; but, when left alone to my own reflections, I thought of the Sabbath-school at Nottingham, and all at once the instructions which I received there, flashed upon my mind. I wept,—I prayed,—my heart was broken; and I found my way to that Saviour who had so often been named in the school to which I refer; and blessed be God," said he, "he has manifested his love to my heart, and saved me from the fear of death."

The time came when he was led forth to be shot. When he arrived at the place of his execution, his conversation, and the whole of his proceedings, indicated the tranquility of his mind. He then knelt upon his coffin,—prayed for himself, for his regiment, for his mother, if still alive, and expressed himself in terms of confidence and hope. Now, here was bread found after many days. That Sunday school teacher at Nottingham had no idea that he had done any good to this young man when he left the school, he had no hope concerning him; and yet the seed, which had been scattered in Nottingham, produced glorious fruit in a West India dungeon.

### BENEFICIAL EFFECTS OF FOREIGN MISSIONS.

—In the four groups of Islands in the Pacific ocean, where thirty years ago the people were idolaters, and most of them cannibals, there are now forty thousand members of Christian churches. In one district in Southern India, the Church Missionary Society have nineteen thousand candidates for baptism, and six hundred and ninety-three communicants. In New Zealand, in a district of the Island, the average attendance of the natives upon divine worship is seven thousand five hundred and seventeen; candidates for baptism one thousand four hundred; native Christians eight hundred and seventy-eight. By the labors of missionaries of the American Board, fifty-nine churches have been gathered among the heathen, embracing about twenty thousand members.