

the surface of a curious underground aqueduct in connection with a simple but effective system of irrigation, which may be seen in working order at the present time. A wide well-like pit is sunk till water is found, often at a depth of from thirty to sixty feet, and then, along the downward slope of the land, another such pit is made, not quite so deep, some fifty or sixty yards away, and the two are connected at the bottom by a channel which just allows a slight fall, sufficient for the water to flow. Another and then another is sunk, each gradually decreasing in depth, until there is a long line of pits connected below by a continuous channel conducting a stream of water, which comes at length to a level with the surface, and is then employed to irrigate the land. Some of these aqueducts extend for two or three miles, and the long line of pits resemble an extensive earthwork; for the soil, when each is first dug, is thrown out in a ring some thirty feet in diameter around the pit mouth. This is what forms the regular basin-like enclosure, originally some four to six feet high, to which I have alluded, and which often leaves a unique and unmistakable appearance above ground, even when, as is now the case in the Jordan Valley, the pits and their subterranean channel are entirely obliterated. The whole plain of Damascus is full of these curious constructions, some crossing and running under the others, and catching the waste water which percolates through the soil from those above. Dr. Porter has described them in a sketch of Damascus.¹ They are called in some parts *karaizes*, and the channel connecting the

called at one time "The Valley of Twelve Thousand *Karaizes*," *Karaize*, being the name given to the water system of which these pits are a part. He says, "In the part of Persia that I journeyed over with the Afghan Boundary Commission—that is, in a line from Teheran—these works exist everywhere. There are men whose profession it is to find out a source of water below ground near the foot of the hills, and when this has been discovered there are men who will make the *Karaize*." *Palestine Exploration Fund, Quarterly Statement*, January, 1890. p. 56. The mistake into which Mr. H. A. Harper has fallen, in giving, on p. 12 of the first edition of *The Bible and Modern Discoveries*, my description of these pits, to which Mr. William Simpson alludes in the above paper, will be found explained and corrected in the *Palestine Exploration Fund, Quarterly Statement*, April, 1890. pp. 130-132.

* ¹ Murray's *Handbook for Travellers in Syria and Palestine*, pp. 497, 540. 1858.