

persecution in this behalf. But who now dreams of any conflict between the two? Science has here maintained its ground; and the Bible too has triumphed. And who does not feel that the contemplation of God, as the author of nature such as this system reveals it to our conceptions, imparts a grandeur and glory to our idea of the Jehovah of the Scriptures, to which without that system we could never have attained? Just so, we doubt not, will it be with geology, when that science shall have reached the exactness and certainty which Newton developed in respect to the system of the world.

Just so it is too with every new discovery respecting the ancient world—with every lifting of the veil which has settled down upon our knowledge of the past. In our own day, the mysterious arrow-headed inscriptions of Persepolis have been deciphered; and they clear up for us several points in the chronology and history of ancient Persia, which again reflect light upon the Bible. They reveal to us the Persian form of the name Ahasuerus; and thus go to show that the despot of the book of Esther was the same monarch as the Xerxes of the Greek historians. His name written in ancient Persian letters, was *Ah-sa-y-r-sh-a*; from which the Hebrew made *Ahasaverosh* or Ahasuerus, and the Greeks *Xerxes*. In our own day too the curtain has been lifted from the mysteries concealed beneath the hieroglyphics of Egypt; and at every step the inquirer finds here a new illustration of Scripture. The triumph of Shishak over Rehoboam is sculptured upon the wall of the magnificent temple of Karnak; and the vast treasures of antiquity recently thus brought to light in the departments of painting, sculpture, and hieroglyphic writing, all serve to show that the sacred writers were not less exact in their minute allusions to manners and customs, and to historical events, than they were conscientious in their higher sphere as messengers of the divine will. The same is true of the topographical parts of the Bible; and the more Mount Sinai and Palestine are explored, the more wonderful does the minute accuracy of the divine book appear. The Old Testament is even now, after the lapse of nearly thirty centuries, by far the best guide-book which the traveller can take with him in those regions.

#### PRESENT STATE OF THE WALDENSES.

The following letter of a clergyman of the Scottish Church, describing the present state of the Waldensian churches, appeared in a recent number of the *Glasgow Guardian*; and will be read with interest by our readers.

Towards the latter end of September, I arrived at Turin, the capital of Sardinia, and immediately set out to visit the protestant valleys among the Alps, of which we have heard so much. For thirty miles, the road is one continued level, and kept in excellent repair, as far as Pinerolo, the chief town of that province, or district of Piedmont, in which "the valleys" are situated—the residence of a governor, who has much to do with the Waldenses, in carrying into effect the orders of Government—and the seat of the Popish bishop of the diocese. Nearly all the way from thence to La Tour, the chief town of "the valleys," the road scarcely deserves the name, for it is the very worst that can possibly be conceived, and positively dangerous, if attempted in a carriage—indeed it is worse than any cross-road in Scotland; and yet this is the only means of communication with three Protestant valleys, containing at least one-half of the population. It may appear incredible that in so trifling an affair as road-making, Popish persecution should show itself; yet it is a fact, that because "the Protestant limits" begin a little beyond the village of Bischerasco, Popish influence induced the Government to terminate the post-road at that village, that the heretics might not have the same facilities of communication af-

forded them which the faithful enjoy, though the Protestants (*qua* Protestants) are more heavily taxed for all such works than their Popish fellow countrymen. It is said that in the course of two years hence, it is the intention of the Government to carry on the road as far as La Tour; but that improvement is coupled with the opening of an immense Popish church and college now building there (on ground which a Protestant was forced to sell for that purpose,) by the rich order of St. Maurice and St. Lazarus (of which the King is member,) for the accommodation of a fraternity of missionary priests, whose business it will be to proselytise and gain converts to Popery by every means in their power, however unscrupulous, from among the descendants of the Protestant inhabitants of these beautiful valleys; so that the improved communication with Pinerolo and the capital, so far from being a boon voluntarily granted to the Protestants, is, on the contrary, only an additional facility placed in the way of their persecutors.

Notwithstanding the badness of the roads, however, the scenery after passing Bischerasco is such as to afford the most vivid delight. Every inch of ground that can be brought under cultivation has been occupied, and every rocky eminence, where the spade or plough are useless, is covered with fruit trees. The vines are planted in rows, between ridges of wheat or maize, and hang in most graceful festoons, between the long poles that support them; and the quantities of walnut, mulberry, and sweet chestnut trees, with which the valleys abound, give them an air of surpassing richness and luxuriance—while the snow-clad Alps in front, whose summits are lost in the clouds, and the lower chain of hills which branch out from them, studded thick with oaks and *chalets* as high as vegetation reaches, add, by their striking contrast, a romantic beauty to the scene nowhere else to be witnessed. The walnut and sweet chestnut trees are found growing on the Alps, and all along the Italian side; but these vallies surpass all the rest, both for the number and the size of these trees, and this year, at least, the harvest of fruit gathered from them must have been prodigious. In remarking this, I was most forcibly struck with the wisdom and goodness of God, "who heareth even the young ravens when they cry, and feedeth them," in his providential arrangements for this poor afflicted people's support in these valleys, who, when under the ban of the priests, cannot purchase for money the necessaries of life from their bigoted countrymen. The fruit of these trees supplies them with some of the chief necessities of life—from the walnut they obtain excellent oil, both for food and for light, and the fruit of the sweet chestnut, roasted, is not only an article of food in daily use, but it is also ground into a kind of coarse meal, or exchanged (if they can do so) for flour or wheat with the inhabitants of the plains below—thus rendering them in a great measure independent of their Popish countrymen. The contrast between a Protestant and a Popish territory is perhaps still more strikingly visible here, in the superior cultivation of the land, the greater order and cleanliness of the houses, and the neatness of their attire, than even in Switzerland, where it has been so often remarked.

In ascending from the plains, the first Protestant hamlet at which the traveller arrives, is called St. Giovanni (St. John,) where, on opposite sides of a small rivulet, the Protestant and Popish churches face one another at the distance of about 3000 yards. To show what mean and petty annoyances the Protestants are subjected to from the Papists of St. Giovanni, a mere handful, having complained many years ago to the Government that they were disturbed by the singing of the psalms in the Protestant church, an order was instantly issued for Protestants to erect an immense wooden barricade before the door of their church, to impede the sound; and when, in course of time, board after board had rotted away, until the remnant was blown over by a storm three years ago, the cure actually travelled to Turin, to get the Government again to renew the order for its erection, although happily without success, the Governor of Pinerolo refusing to restore what time and the elements alone had undone! And yet it is said in many quarters that the persecuting spirit of Popery has long since died away! On reaching La Tour, which is situated nearly at the confluence of the rivers Po and Angrogna, the first object that strikes the

eye is the Popish church and college of St. Maurice and St. Lazarus, already mentioned. The church is said to be large enough to contain, when finished, the whole adult population of the Val de Lucerna, in which La Tour is situated; and the people look on it with great dismay, and when questioned about it, shake their heads mournfully, as if uncertain what new misery may be inflicted on them next. Indeed, this new institution may be looked upon as one of the most cruel persecutions to which these suffering people have been subjected in modern times. It has been raised at the suggestion and under the influence at Court, who has publicly sworn never to rest till he has exterminated finally the Waldenses. While on the one hand it is intended as a residence for a set of missionary priests, who have authority to employ every means for proselytising in these valleys, while the Protestant friends of those whom they may inveigle, are strictly forbidden under pain of law to interfere for their rescue—it is intended, on the other, to serve as an institution for training up all Protestant children whom the priests can kidnap, for Popery. In connection with this, it is well that our countrymen should be aware, that in the case of mixed marriages between Protestants and Papists, the priests immediately take their children, whom they call illegitimate on that account, from the parents, baptize them according to the rites of the Romish Church, and then place them for security in some Roman Catholic Asylum, where they are trained up in the dogmas of Rome until they are ten, if girls, and thirteen, if boys—after which, by another cruel edict, the parents are forbidden to demand the restitution of their children if they have any inclination towards the Romish faith; so that this College of St. Maurice and St. Lazarus will afford such an asylum within the very limits of the Protestants, and allow the priests increased facility for carrying on this truly diabolical work, which is already in practice.

To be continued.

\* The edict of 1602, now in force, prohibits protestants from offering any opposition to the conversion of a Protestant to the Romish faith.

#### THE TRAVELLER.

##### REMINISCENCE OF PALESTINE.

CONCLUDED.

In the evening we attended prayers at the bishop's house, and returned to our lodgings at a late hour.

Words are not sufficient to express my feelings on the occasion of this Sabbath day at Jerusalem.

Having mounted our mules, we proceeded by the Damascus Gate to visit some objects of interest without the walls of the city. We followed the valley of the children of Hinnom, round the base of Mount Zion, to the Upper Pool of Siloam, near which, connected by a subterranean passage, as the Pool itself. By a flight of stone steps, I descended to wash and taste of the water which, through our blessed Master's efficacy, healed the blind man. On leaving the pool, to the right is seen the tombs of the Patriarchs, in the valley of Jehosaphat, near which is the Hebrew burying ground; and to this day many aged and infirm journey to the holy city, to die and be buried with their forefathers in this ancient burial place.

On leaving this interesting valley, we passed at the base of Olivet, and went to Bethany, two miles distant, a miserable and wretched village, with few inhabitants, situated on the eastern side or base of the Mount of Olives. We descended into the tomb of Lazarus, cut out of the solid rock, by a staircase which conducted into a spacious chamber; from thence we again descended by a difficult passage into a tomb or sepulchre. "Here they lay him; and Jesus wept, and said unto Martha, I am the resurrection and the life; he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." Turning our faces once more towards Jerusalem, we crossed the peak of the Mount of Olives, on which is a small mosque. The view from this summit was comprehensive and interesting beyond description. At our feet lay the holy city, without a murmur of voices, or busy din of an active multitude, almost lifeless and deserted. The best view is here obtained of the Mosque of Omar, with its beautiful garden around