

mountains, their feet washed by that "great and melancholy marvel," the Dead Sea; far away the Jordan Valley, with its line of verdure; and, in the distance, rose notable peak after peak, until the eye rested on snowy Hermon, its white, glittering summit set against the distant sky. The entire length and breadth of the land was clearly discerned, and we were filled with wonder that a country so small and circumscribed should have exercised so potent and imperishable an influence on the destinies of humanity. Yet here it is—the land of patriarchs and of prophets, the land of Immanuel!

Now we descend into the valley of the Jordan to the northern shore of the Dead Sea, passing here and there in our windings down the hills and through the pasture land of the tents of Kedar, which, in the distance, look like black, circular rings. The sea, usually calm and placid, was disturbed by the wind, and the great waves lashed the shore. But we were all eager for a dip, and plunged in. The waves rolled over us. How the water made the eyes smart, and the whole body tingle! It filled our mouth. Ugh! What a taste of potassium, sodium, magnesium, asphaltum, and the decayed sinners of Sodom and Gomorrah! That pungently, acrid, nauseous, detestable taste, salt, bitter, sulphurous; that unpleasant, sticky, glutinous stuff, making the body burn and smart, inflaming the eyes, stiffening the hair and setting "each particular hair on end!" We were not able to ascertain the boyant property of the waters, for swimming was impossible, but we noticed the great specific gravity by the weight and violence of the waves. It has been ascertained by careful analysis that while sea-water contains less than four per cent. of salts, fully twenty-five per cent. of this water consists of various salts. Most mysterious of seas! Covering a superficial area of two hundred and fifty miles, its surface thirteen hundred feet below the level of the Mediterranean; its deepest bed is at least twenty-six hundred below the sea-level, a phenomenon without parallel. It has no outlet, and though receiving the waters of the Jordan and other smaller mountain torrents, its mighty cauldron is never filled to overflowing, and it never rises more than a few feet above the average level. The sea lies in a deep trough and shut in by lofty cliffs of barren limestone; exposed to the unclouded beams of the sun the evaporation is so rapid that the supply of water never exceeds the demand. It is