

anger.'—(Jer. xxv. 38.) 'I will lay the land most desolate.'—Ezek. xxxiii. 28.) The same is predicted of the mountains and cities. 'The mountains of Israel shall be desolate.'—Ezek. xxxiii. 28.) 'Thy cities shall be laid waste without an inhabitant.'—(Jer. iv. 7.) It is impossible for the traveller to read these passages, without being forcibly struck with the accuracy of the description. I can bear testimony to their truth from recent personal observation. The country once represented as a land "of brooks of water, of fountains, and depths that spring out of valleys and hills;" "a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig-trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil, olive, and honey;"—"a land wherein thou shalt eat bread without scarceness, thou shalt not lack any thing in it; a land whose stones are iron, and out of whose hills thou mayest dig brass."—(Deut. viii. 7-9.) This region no longer presents its former aspect of luxuriance and beauty. Cities once famed in sacred story have now disappeared, or are to be traced only in their scattered fragments. The plain is strewed with the remains of the ancient Sarepta, or Zarephath, where the prophet once raised up the son of the widowed mother. The city of Cæsarea, where the prayers and alms of Cornelius came up for a memorial before God; where the Spirit was poured out on the first Gentile convert; and where Paul, imbued with a holy eloquence, constrained Agrippa to exclaim, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," is now a wide-spreading desolation, and its once lofty portico, and broken marble columns, lie sparkling in the waves. Bethany, where Jesus wept at the grave of Lazarus, and re-animated the cold clay, is now a heap of ruins. The grave is said to survive, as if to attest the recorded miracle, and the surrounding ruins no less proclaim the predicted desolation. Jericho, once the "city of palms," and of whose surrounding region Josephus remarks, "that he who should pronounce this place to be divine would not be mistaken, wherein is such plenty of trees produced as are of the rarest and most excellent sort;" this famed city now consists of a few miserable huts, and has lost its characteristic feature. The plain of Jordan around is a scene of barrenness and desolation. Mephitic vapors infect the air, and incrustations of salt lie sparkling on the surface of the ground, relieving its otherwise yellow and sulphuric tinge. The shores of the Dead Sea are appalling to the eye of the beholder. Along the line of Engedi, beyond Jordan, scattered stones and fragments of ancient walls are visible, the remains of cities whose very names are now lost and forgotten. There are portions even within the walls of Jerusalem itself, where there are numerous remains of ruined houses with the grass springing up from amidst the accumulated earth, "a joy of wild asses and a pasture for flocks," according to the prediction of Isaiah xxxii. 14. There have I stood on the rising ground, to the left of the gate of St. Stephen; there have I contemplated the surrounding desolation; and, with the Lamentations of Jeremiah in my hand, have exclaimed in the words of the Prophet, "How doth the city sit solitary that was full of people! how is she become as a widow! she that was great among the nations, and princess among the provinces, how is she become tributary!" (Lam. i. 1.) The environs of the city, once so celebrated for its trees and gardens, are now (to the north and west more particularly) stripped of their former embellishment."