

the heavenly bodies, they would exchange for their common field, where men perform their tasks, and receive their ration, and eat, and drink, and sleep, and die; while infancy is committed to the tender mercies of the state nurseries, in which, during the experiment in France, nine out of ten died; a system which, by infanticide and disease, had in half a century reduced one half the population of the Sandwich Islanders, and, were it to be universal and permanent would in a century depopulate the earth.

Thus would political atheism suspend the kind attraction of heaven upon us, and let out the storm of guilty passion, and by one disastrous wave, from stem to stern, make a clear breach over us, clear of what patriots, and Christians, and Heaven have done to render us happy.

It would unspiritualize our souls, and cut off eternity from our being, to hang its leaden weights upon the wheels of our machine, till it runs down and stops forever. It would teach us to regard accountability as a fiction, and right and wrong as obsolete terms, without use or meaning, while with singular inconsistency, it anathematized the ministry of Christ, it eulogized the most abominable crimes, and covered the most exalted virtues with contempt and obloquy.—*Dr. Beecher.*

MISSIONARY INTELLIGENCE.

From the Missionary Herald.

STRIA AND THE HOLY LAND.

Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Whiting at Jerusalem.

Feast of Purim.

March 16, 1835. The Jewish feast of *purim*. This is a day of great excess, intemperance, and boisterous mirth with the Jews. In many places all manner of indecencies are practised among them. And no wonder, for the Talmud, which is of more authority with them than the word of God, actually enjoins intoxication on this day, as a duty. "A man is in duty bound," (these are the words of the Talmud,) "to get so inebriated that he cannot distinguish between the words 'cursed be Haman,' and 'blessed be Mordecai!'"

28. During the past week I have disposed of a considerable number of books, chiefly in Greek, among the pilgrims. At first I sold a few small books during my walks; but the pilgrims having learned that I have books for sale, have begun to come to the house and buy them. I have sold this week eleven Greek New Testaments, eleven Pentateuchs, fourteen psalters, and some sixty or seventy Scripture tracts; and have given away perhaps twelve or twenty Greek, and as many Arabic tracts. Several school books, also, Greek and Arabic, I have sold. May this be the beginning of better days, and may the blessing of God attend his truth thus disseminated. Most of the purchasers of these books are pilgrims from Asia Minor, Romelia, etc.

31. In my missionary walk, found an old man, a Bethlehemite, sitting under a tree, and entered into conversation with him. He said he was ninety years of age. I spoke to him of the fewness of his remaining days, and the necessity of his being prepared for another world. It was difficult to gain his attention to the subject, or to make him understand what I meant by being prepared to die. It is difficult to make any of these people understand this subject. The old man said this was an evil generation, that all the people were wicked, and that there was no love nor truth among men. On this account, he appeared to think, it was in vain for an individual to try to be good, and in vain to remonstrate with men, or exhort them to repentance. This feeling is very common among the people, as is also the impression that the poverty and grinding oppression they suffer is a good excuse for neglecting the concerns of the soul, and living content with the mere name and lifeless form of Christianity. Is not this owing, in a great measure, to the notion, so prevalent in all these countries, that religion consists much in shutting up one's self from the world, leading a life of solitude and devotion, and in practising austerities for which the mass of the people, being poor, have no time, even if they had the inclination?

April 11. Our dear friends from Beyroot, whom we have been long expecting, arrived this afternoon

in health and safety, having experienced much of the Lord's goodness during the journey. The party consists of Mr. and Mrs. Smith, Mr. Pease and Doct. Whitely, together with an American friend and former neighbor of ours from Beyroot.

12. Sabbath. Our English congregation consisted of twelve persons, the largest number we ever had, and perhaps the largest number that ever united in divine worship in our language in Jerusalem. Besides our Beyroot friends, two English and one French gentlemen were with us, Mr. Nicolayson preached, on the offices of the Holy Spirit—a most solemn and edifying discourse.

13. Walked out with our friends to Mount Zion, to visit the graves of our departed friends, Doct. Dodge and Mrs. Thompson. Afterwards we visited the mosque which stands over the sepulchres of David and the other kings of Judah.

Hebron—Plains of Mamre—Feast of Unleavened Bread.

15. Set off with our friends on a tour to Hebron, by way of Bethlehem and Solomon's pools, and reached B. at half past three; spent an hour in visiting the "sacred places" and then rode on about an hour to the pools of Solomon, where we pitched our tents for the night.

16. A ride of five hours from the pools brought us to Hebron. The country between Bethlehem, like all the hill country of Judea, is a constant succession of hills and valleys, reminding the traveller continually of the description that was given of this land to the Israelites before they entered it, "The land whither ye go to possess it, is not as the land of Egypt, where thou sowest thy seed, and waterest it with thy foot, as a garden of herbs; but it is a land of hills and valleys, and drinketh water of the rain of heaven."—As we drew near to Hebron, we were struck with the increasing beauty and fertility of the country. The hills become less lofty, and the valleys broader and richer. The vineyards and olive-yards that cover the valleys are by far the best I have seen in any part of the country. To this place came the twelve men, among whom were Caleb and Joshua, who were sent by Moses to spy out the land; and it was probably from one of these valleys that they took the famous cluster of grapes, as a proof and specimen of the fruitfulness of the country. I do not wonder that Caleb desired Hebron with its mountains and valleys, as an inheritance for himself and his descendants. For it is a most enviable inheritance. The place had before been called Kiriath Arba. In the time of Abraham, who also dwelt here, it was called Mamre. The town and his mountainous region around it are now called El Khaleel, (which means the friend, or the Beloved,) after the name "Friend of God," which was given to Abraham. We had intended, after the example of the patriarch, to pitch our tent in the plains of Mamre; but as it was raining when we arrived, we were obliged to seek a shelter in the town. We first called on the governor, Ibrahim Aga, who very hospitably welcomed us to his own house. We hesitated and apologized; but he said there was absolutely no other comfortable house in the place, and insisted that we must take lodgings with him. Accordingly our baggage was brought up, a fire of coals was kindled for us, coffee was brought to us and they received us every one, because of the present rain, and because of the cold. After a few moments agreeable conversation with the governor, his excellency politely retired, and left us in the sole possession of his own room.

After taking some refreshment, we read those portions of the sacred history in which this place is mentioned, and then walked out to that part of the town which was once the field of Machpelah, and which is situated on the side of a high hill, sloping to the southwest. Over the cave of Machpelah, which was the burial place of the patriarchs, stands a splendid mosque, held by the Moslems as no less sacred than Haram Shereef at Jerusalem. This building we were, of course, not allowed to enter. It is truly a noble structure. It was erected, I think, by Helen, the mother of Constantine. The Moslems, however, say it was built by Solomon. A few minutes' walk from the mosque brought us to the summit of the hill above it, from which we have a fine view of the several parts of the town, and of the beautiful

plains of Mamre. We thought and conversed of the father of the faithful, who dwelt on these plains more than three thousand years ago; and read in Arabic to the Moslems who accompanied us, the 23d chapter of Genesis. On our way back to our lodgings, we turned aside to the Jewish quarter, and called at the house of the chief rabbi, with whom Mr. Nicolayson, one of our company, was acquainted. Here we were very politely received. It was the week of unleavened bread. The house had been recently washed and whitewashed from top to bottom, after the manner of the purifying of the Jews—for they always have a thorough house-cleansing immediately before this festival.

Cave of Adullam—Ramah.

17. Leaving Hebron at seven, A. M., and taking a circuitous path which led in a northeasterly direction, through the valleys and past the ruined village of Tehoa, at two, P. M., we reached the cave which is supposed to be the cave of Adullam. This cave is an immense subterranean labyrinth. We lighted our tapers, took a long line in our hands, one end of which was held by a man at the mouth of the cave, and entered. We passed through several large and lofty apartments, some of which were vaulted with so much regularity that one might almost believe them to be the work of art. We proceeded to the distance of perhaps two hundred yards of the mouth of the cave, winding in various directions, but always horizontally or nearly so; passing now through low, narrow openings, on our hands and knees, and now through spacious rooms. We might have penetrated farther into the bowels of the mountain, how far we know not; for no one, to our knowledge, has ever gone to the end of the vast labyrinth. But finding the air oppressive, and being fatigued by our ride, we retreated. We went far enough, however, to understand how David and his four hundred men might easily have lain concealed in "the sides of the cave," unobserved by Saul and his party. The situation of this cave is wild and gloomy in the extreme. It is in a very deep, narrow, dry ravine, both the sides of which are formed of almost perpendicular rock. The entrance is about midway between the top and the bottom of the cliff. It was with difficulty and some danger, that we wound our way down to it; but it was more difficult to retrace our steps, and climb the steep ascent. "Hic labor est" was often brought to our remembrance. This cave is in the midst of a very dry and thirsty region, about two hours southeast of Bethlehem, whence the three brave men, at the peril of their lives, brought water to their persecuted master, when he was in the cave. We too were thirsty, and thought of the "fountain in the gate of Bethlehem." After refreshing ourselves with an orange, and the little water that remained in our canteens, we remounted our mules and rode by a winding romantic path, over hills and dales, through the villages of Betulia and Beit-Sahoun, (Beth-Sour,) to Jerusalem.

27. Rode with our brethren to Ramah, once the city of the prophet Samuel. The situation is exceedingly beautiful. It is about two hours distant from Jerusalem, to the northwest, on an eminence commanding a view of a wide extent of beautifully diversified country. Hills, plains, and valleys, highly cultivated fields of wheat and barley, vineyards and olive yards, are spread out before you as on a map; and numerous villages are scattered here and there over the whole view. To the west and northwest, beyond the hill country, appears the vast plain of Sharon, and farther still you look out upon "the great and wide sea." It occurred to me as not improbable that in the days of David and Solomon, this place may have been a favorite retreat during the heat of summer: and that here the former may have often struck his sacred lyre. Some of the Psalms, or at least one of them, (see Ps. civ. 25,) seem to have been composed in some place which commanded a view of the Mediterranean, and this is the only place, I believe, in the vicinity of Jerusalem, that affords such a view.

Ramah was once a strongly fortified city; but there is no city here at present. A half ruined Mohammedan mosque, which was originally a Christian church, stands over the tomb of the prophet: besides which, a few miserable dwellings are the only buildings that remain on this once celebrated spot.