

called also Ptolemais, now called Akka, or more generally *Saint Jean d' Acre*, eight miles from Carmel, and thirty miles south of Tyre, and (next to Beyroot) the most important sea port on the Syrian coast. This city, commanding the entrance to the plain of Jezreel (which plain is indeed the gate of the east for Europe and Africa) has been rightly called the "*Key of Palestine*." It was given to the tribe of Asher, but that indolent and cowardly tribe never claimed their property from the hands of the Phœnicians. After the dismemberment of the Macedonian Empire it fell to the lot of Egypt which (from Ptolemy) gave it the name Ptolemais which is its designation in Acts xxi. 7. the only passage in the New Testament in which it occurs. More than any city of Syria, Acre links the wars of the far past with the wars of the near present: for a series of sieges has been sustained by this walled city from the remote past to our own day; when before these walls, battered by balls, high debate was held by Napoleon, Ibrahim Pasha, and by Sir Charles Napier. It is an anvil on which many hammers have been broken in pieces. Shall it break any more? It is hard to say what form the Eastern question will yet assume, and therefore hard to say whether or not Acre has yet undergone its last siege. There must be something peculiarly strong in the position of a town of which Napoleon could have said years after he had to raise its siege: — "If St. Jean d' Acre had fallen, it would have changed the face of the world: the fate of the East was in the power of that paltry town." From the grass grown ramparts, showing marks of the siege of 1840, we looked out over the Mediterranean, without a ripple and with scarcely a sail; then we walked the deserted streets, where neglect and decay are visible everywhere, visited

the old convent, talked with the monks, and then, glad to leave, mounted our horses for our afternoon ride of some four miles to a pleasant orange grove near the country residence of the Governor of Acre. It was here that Mohammed, our military escort to whom I referred in a former paper, parted with us, and it was in our tent near that ruined aqueduct which once poured its precious contents into Acre that the conversation within narrated in a previous number took place. Our tents were pitched that night on the northern edge of the plain of Acre, which belongs geographically to Palestine, though Asher never made good his claim, and was therefore more or less exposed to danger; but on the morrow we hope to cross the barrier that separates Palestine proper from Phœnicia, and having crossed this rocky rampart that shut out the wandering Bedouins, we shall have no further need of soldiers.

Before daylight we are up, and breakfast over, we begin the ascent of a lofty ridge thrown out by the Lebanon chain towards the sea. This wall closed in the Phœnicians, (the Anglo-Saxons of Antiquity,) as completely from the invading foot of Egypt and Babylon, as the sea to-day shuts in Britain from the rest of Europe. When we gain the summit of this lofty promontory and look back, we obtain a parting view of the plains of Acre, which, from where we stand, to Carmel, is some sixteen miles in length, and from the sea to the hills some six miles in width. On the far horizon is Carmel dipping his foot into the sea; in the middle distance is Acre, with its elegant and lofty minaret; on the left hand are the Lebanon hills which ascend in a series of elevations toward Central Galilee. All that land belongs *naturally* to Palestine, although it has been in political connection with Tyre and Sidon, into whose pro-