

vigour, and forward its growth; but great care must be taken to remove from it, all fat or putrid substances, as they are very prejudicial to the plant.

There is no tree known which is so durable and hardy as the palm. Braving all the severity of the weather, it preserves its original vigour for several centuries; so that the natives never remember to have seen one palm tree wither, unless it had been injured by some instrument. When this happens, the tree is cut at the root; it is then burnt on the spot; and its ashes are covered with a layer of earth, from the middle of which a new shoot soon arises, and becomes strong in the course of a few years. As the palm tree is sometimes called phoenix in the scriptures, I am inclined to believe that the fabulous history of the Arabian bird of that name reviving from its ashes, is founded on this circumstance.

This tree, as is well known, is become the symbol of every thing great and wonderful among man. It signifies victory, triumph, duration, innocence, justice, and particularly the fertility of Judea. When the Romans made themselves masters of Jerusalem, they struck some medals, on which was represented a beautiful woman sitting at the bottom of a palm tree, which she was bedewing with her tears; and below were these words; *Judea captiva*, Judea subdued.

In the plains of Jericho, and the neighbouring places, is found a tree called *zaccou* or *zaccum*,* not mentioned by any of the Oriental writers, which induces me to believe that they were not acquainted with the salutary oil extracted from its fruit.

The *zaccou* has a great resemblance to the *stue* tree. Its branches are covered with prickles, about four or five inches in length; its bark is knotty and wrinkled, and of a green colour when on the tree, but it grows yellow as it dries. Its wood is of the colour of box wood; and though it has not the same degree of hardness, it acquires in the lathe an equal polish and lustre. Its leaves are like those of the olive tree, but narrower, sharper, and of a more beautiful green colour. It bears a white odoriferous flower; its fruit is a kind of acorn; without a calyx, and inclosed in a pellicle; it yields little pulp, and shrinks almost to nothing when taken

from the tree; but it contains a stone with a kernel, which when squeezed dissolves into oil.

The Arabs set so much value on this oil, that they prefer it to that of *balm* for internal contusions, wounds, and bruises.

When the Christian caravans arrive at Jericho, troops of women may be seen advancing to meet them, in order to offer to pilgrims this salutary oil, which they sell in small bags made of skins. As it has, however, been discovered, that this oil is mixed sometimes with that of olives, it is better for those who wish to purchase it, to cause it to be prepared under their own inspection; if it costs a little more, it will be pure and unadulterated.

The manner in which I saw it made was as follows: a sufficient quantity of the fruit of the *zaccou*, perfectly ripe, was thrown into a large vessel, where the skin, the Pulp, the stone, and the kernel were bruised; and in proportion as the oil issued from them, it was put into another vessel. The remaining part was then squeezed with the hand till it became dry; after which it was thrown into a kettle of boiling water; in order to extract all its oily parts; and, having risen to the surface, it was easily taken off, without losing a single drop of it. This oil is much inferior to the former.

The oil of the *zaccou* has the taste and colour of that of sweet almonds; but it clarifies with difficulty, because the method used to extract it does not disengage it from the dregs.

I observed that the Arab women, when squeezing it out, rubbed every part of their bodies with it. Having asked them the reason, they replied, that they found it beneficial, as the oil checked the excessive perspiration occasioned by the heat of the climate, and which weakened them very much. Mr. Limery describes oil of *zaccou* as proper for dissolving thick cold humours.

Quaresmius says, that it instantly allays the severest colics; and adds, that he himself experienced this virtue in it.

I also can attest its healing power, as I was witness to a cure which it performed on a Venetian traveller. This person being hurt by a fall from his horse, he felt a severe pain in his breast, which gave him great uneasiness; but being advised to rub the place affected with oil of *zaccou*, and

* *Zaccou*, a kind of plum-tree growing in the plain of Jericho, takes its name from the churches of *Zacchæus*, near which it is found. From its fruit, which are a kind of round plums, green at first, and afterwards yellow, when ripe, is extracted an oil, used for dissolving cold viscid humours. Vide *Manuel du Naturaliste*.