

Hiram and Nathan are received with all kindness by their host and his family, who when they hear who he is, look upon the latter almost with reverence ; water is brought to wash their feet and poured upon their hands, and savoury meat is set before them. The old man is wearied with his journey, and retires into an inner chamber to rest, but it is yet early in the day, and Nathan seeks a horse that he may visit the Pools of Solomon. It will be a long ride, but his Arab mare is fleet of foot and he longs to see the place which he visited with his father thirty years ago. They push forward at a gallop over a wild and rocky tract where the pathway is scarcely visible among the fragments with which it is thickly strewn, yet this has been a highway from the days of Abraham ; and we read of chariots being used along these roads.

Now, the way lies over a slippery, rocky surface, again narrowed between blocks of stone, or tangled roots, or gored by wide fissures. Nathan's fleet Arab bounds on unconcerned, whether the course is over smooth turf or rugged rock, she sweeps along as if it were a pastime. They pass through Bethlehem, and on the road to Hebron come to the Pools of Solomon from which water was once conveyed to Jerusalem. The name of the pools in Arabic, is El-Burak : they consist of three large reservoirs partly excavated in the rock, partly built of square stones and bearing marks of the high antiquity claimed for them. They are placed one above the other on the slopes, but not in a direct line, and so arranged that the bottom of one is higher than the surface of the next below. Flights of steps lead down to the water which is now very shallow. Nathan dismounts, walks from