

and majesty, loftiness and imperishability.

But if this mountain possesses the king of the trees, it serves only as an asylum to the king of the birds. Here it is that the eagle, after having run through the plains of air, or to tear the prey which it has *ravished*, settles on the topmost branches. Ezekiel, in allusion to the conduct of Nebuchadnezzar, makes use of this fine allegorical figure:—"A great eagle, with great wings, long-winged, full of feathers, which had divers colours, came unto Lebanon, and took the highest branch of the cedar." Sacred writ, indeed, abounds with passages upon this ruler of the forest dynasty; Isaiah is perpetually celebrating it, and in chapter after chapter indulges in his favourite expression of "*Gloria Libani*," the glory of Lebanon.

But it is sometimes used metaphorically by the poets, to illustrate mournful and lamentable events. Zechariah, thinking of the future desolation of the Temple of Jerusalem by the Romans, breaks out into a fine strain, commencing, "Lebanon, open thy gates, that the fire may devour thy cedars." This, it will be seen, alludes more particularly to the temple itself, which was constructed for the most part of the cedars of this forest. At the time of its building, it will be remembered that Solomon sent to Hiram, King of Tyre, saying:—"As thou didst deal with David my father, and didst send him cedars to build an house to dwell therein, even so deal with me; send me cedar-trees, fir-trees, and algum-trees, out of Lebanon, for I know that thy servants can skill to cut timber in Lebanon."

To which epistle Hiram answered in writing, and among other things, said: "And we will cut wood out of Lebanon, as much as thou shalt need, and we will bring it to thee in flotes by sea to Joppa, and thou shalt carry it up to Jerusalem."

It is also said that thirty thousand Israelites were sent to be hewers in the mountain, to help the Sylonians in their labour.

At the present remote day, there are planted at the foot of these beautiful cedars, many white stone altars, at which the ecclesiastics say mass. In fine seasons, these cedars are frequented by the christians, who come from all parts of the Ottoman empire, and even from Persia. The Maronites, the inhabitants of all the surrounding villages, go there with their priests; after mass, they eat, drink, sing, and dance to the sound of cymbals, dulcimers, and melodious music. At their departure, the venerable pilgrims carry with them branches of the ever-green cedars, with which, on their arrival at home, they decorate the doors of their houses.

There is a pleasing custom observed by travellers at the present day, which is that of lifting the bark of the cedar, and thereunder inscribing their name, by incision, into the trunk. There is to be seen at this minute the name of an Englishman, bearing the date of 1600. Voyagers still continue this practice; and upon the most beautiful cedars, names are to be found engraven, of Dr. Merryon, Lord North, Lady Stanhope, Taylor, Delaborde, and other distinguished persons.

But that glory which once crowned the mountain, has now much declined, particularly within the last two centuries. There exist now no thousands, from which the floor-beams and roofs of imperial palaces are to be hewn or carved out. Their number is decreased to sixteen. These are certainly fine noble trees, rich of bough and beauty, and certainly still glorious to behold; but, indeed, compared with their former abundance, their present diminished number forms but a sorry contrast; and they cannot but excite, in common with all the other splendid wrecks of the holy city, a melancholy feeling of the glory which once existed, but hath now so utterly departed.—*Archer*



FALSEHOOD.—A liar begins with making falsehood appear like truth, and ends with making truth appear like falsehood.—*Shenstone*