

by flying flocks of gazelles. As we approached the gorge of the Barada we learned that the bridge across the stream was wrecked by a recent flood. Abdallah rode ahead and reported that, while it was badly shattered, it might possibly be crossed. As I was determined to take no risks, I gave orders to make a long *détour* over the barren hills to a safe ford.

We soon descended into a deep, romantic ravine, bordered by towering cliffs, and skirted, on a narrow ledge, the rushing Barada. A curious passage through the rocks was evidently a former aqueduct. Through the poplar and walnut foliage came stealing on our ears the sound of rushing water. After a short ride we reached the famous fountain of El-Figeh, the chief source of the Barada—a name probably corrupted from the Greek *πηγη*—a spring. A rushing torrent, clear as crystal, thirty feet in width and four feet deep, bursts forth from the foot of a lofty cliff with a current strong enough to turn a mill.

High above the birthplace of this storied stream, on massy foundations of huge stone, are the ruins of an ancient temple, some thirty feet square; and lower down near the water, another with walls two yards thick. This once formed a large vaulted chamber twenty feet high, with wide portal. The ancient Syrians, like the Greeks, deified their streams and fountains, and doubtless here, as at the source of the Jordan, were celebrated the rites of the ancient nature-worship of the land. Beneath the shade of fruit trees, beside this magnificent fountain, we ate our lunch and mused and moralized upon the eventful scenes of which, throughout the ages, it had been the theatre.

In the afternoon we rode up the narrowing gorge, past the Kefr-el-Zeite (Village of Oil), and Kefr-el-Awamid (Village of Columns), where are enormous prostrate pillars of an ancient Greek temple, between yellow, chalky cliffs from 800 to 1,000 feet high. The vividness of the verdure in the bright spring sunlight, the infinite blue depths of the sky, and the picturesque outlines of the cliffs made a picture of surpassing beauty which haunts the memory with an abiding spell.

Crossing an old Roman bridge, which leaps in a single spring across the stream, we soon reached our encampment at Suk Wady Barada. Here, long ago, took place one of those ruthless massacres of a band of pilgrims and merchants which are so characteristic of Moslem misrule. The road here cuts a deep chasm through the anti-Lebanon range, bordered by cliffs 700 feet high, above which rises the stupendous mountain wall, like a vast amphitheatre. The scene is one of wild magnificence, whose interest is heightened by the remarkable remains of ancient power and