

recited the virtues or heroisms of the dead.

On the day after our arrival in Palestine this sound of sorrow, old as humanity yet ever new, was one of the first to meet our ears. From the high hilltop near the rude stone village of Abu-Gosh, so named from a robber-chief, who for over a score of years terrorized the whole region, we heard the wailing chant borne on the air, and saw through our glasses a group of women circling round a spot on a distant hillside. We set out to



PILLAR OF ABSALOM.

investigate and soon met a procession of women and girls, marching with locked hands in twos and threes, and singing, in plaintive cadence, a lamentation for a dead sheik of a neighbouring village. Our dragoman interpreted the words as follows: "Our good sheik, Mustafa, is dead. Come, virgins, let us go to make lamentation for him. He was a good horseman. Our sheik Mustafa is dead, let us make lamentation for him." Curiously enough the deceased was a descendant of the robber-chief, Abu-Gosh, whose

tomb, revered like that of a saint, we saw in the neighbourhood.

Again, from the top of the pylon of the temple of Denderah in Upper Egypt, we heard a similar lamentation, akin to that which ran through the land of Nile on the death of the firstborn. The weeping and wailing of women, like Rachel weeping for her children, who would not be comforted because they were not.

Again at eventide, in the streets of Jerusalem, accompanied by the saddening notes of a plaintive flute, the sound of the mourners going about the streets met our ear, and upon the shoulders of sorrowing friends were borne the remains of the departed, not far from the very spot where, well-nigh nineteen hundred years ago, devout men bore the martyr Stephen in like manner to his burial. (Acts viii. 2.)

Surely one of the strangest lamentations ever heard was when recently the mummies of the Pharaohs were discovered in a tomb in Upper Egypt. For three days three hundred Arabs were employed in conveying their mummy cases to the river side. As the Nile steamboat bore them down the river to the distant city of Cairo, news of the strange recovery of the bodies of the ancient lords of Egypt spread through the whole Nile valley, the people left the villages and flocked down to the river side. The men fired off their guns, the women unbraided their long hair, and wailed their lamentation for the dead Pharaohs, their high priests and princes, with possibly scarce less fervour than that of the professional wailers who followed them to their tombs four thousand years ago.

After the interment of the dead a generous repast was generally furnished for the refreshment of kinsfolk who came from a distance and perhaps from a natural re-