

defile much broader than the first, on each side of which were ranges of tombs, with sculptured doors and columns, and on the left, in the bosom of the mountains, hewn out of the solid rocks, is a large theatre, circular in form, the pillars in front fallen, and containing thirty three rows of seats, capable of containing more than three thousand persons. Above the corridor was a range of doors opening to chambers in the rock, the seats of the princes and wealthiest inhabitants of Petra, and not unlike a row of private boxes in a modern theatre.

The whole theatre is at this day in such a state of preservation, that if the tenants of the tomb could once more rise into life, they might take their places on its seats, and listen to the declamation of their favourite player. To me the stillness of a ruined city is no where so impressive as when sitting on the steps of its theatre; once thronged with the gay and pleasure seeking, but now given up to solitude and desolation. Day after day these seats have been filled, and the now silent rocks have echoed to the applauding shouts of thousands; and little could an ancient Edomite imagine that a solitary stranger from a then unknown world should one day be wandering among the ruins of his proud and wonderful city, meditating upon the fate of a race that has for ages passed away. Where are ye, inhabitants of this desolate city? you who once sat on the seats of this theatre, the young, the high born, the beautiful, and brave—who once rejoiced in your riches and power, and lived as if there was no grave!—where are ye now? Even, the very tombs, whose open doors are stretched away in long ranges before the eyes of the wandering traveller, cannot reveal the mystery of your doom; your dry bones are gone, the robbers have invaded your graves, and your very ashes have been swept away to make room for the wandering Arab of the desert.

But we need not stop at the days when a gay population crowded this theatre. In the earliest periods of recorded time, long before this theatre was built, and long before the tragic muse was known, a great city stood here. When Esau, having sold his birth-right for a mess of pottage, came to his portion among the mountains of Seir, and Edom growing in power and strength, became presumptuous and haughty, until, in her pride, when Israel prayed a passage through her country, Edom said unto Israel, 'Thou shalt not pass by me, lest I come out against thee with the sword.'

Amid all the terrible denunciations against the land of Idumea, 'her cities and the inhabitants thereof,' this proud city among the rocks, doubtless for its extraordinary site, was always marked as a subject of extraordinary vengeance; 'I have sworn by myself saith the Lord, that Bozrah (the strong or fortified city) shall become a desolation, a reproach, and a waste, and a curse, and all the cities thereof shall be a perpetual waste. Lo, I will make thee small among the heathen, and despised among men. Thy terrible-ness hath deceived thee, and the pride of thy heart, oh thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rocks, thou that holdest the height of the hill, though thou shouldest make thy nest as high as the eagle, I will bring thee down from thence, saith the Lord.' 'They shall call the nobles thereof to the kingdom, but none shall be there, and all her princes shall be nothing, and thorns shall come up in her palaces, nettles and brambles in her fortresses thereof, and it shall be a habitation for dragons, and a court for owls.'

I would that the skeptic could stand, as I did among the ruins of this city among the rocks, and there open the sacred book and read the words of the inspired penman written when this desolate place was one of the greatest cities in the world: I see the scoffer arrested, his cheek pale, his lip quivering, and his heart

quaking with fear, as the ruined city cries out to him in a voice loud and powerful as that of the risen from the dead. Though he would not believe Moses and the prophets, he believes the hand writing of God, himself, in the desolation and eternal ruin around him.—*From incidents of Travel in Arabia, Egypt, and the Holy Land.—By an American.*

From the British Magazine.

'SONNET ON PETRA.

Petra hath fallen! Vanish'd is her power;
And in the summit of her airy crest,
The boding owl skulks hooting to its nest.
The sculptured shrine, the imperishable tower,
The carved monument, the rocky bower,
Where beauty, sheltered from the sun, sought rest,
Proud in their glory, but by Heaven unbless'd,
Have crouched before the dark prophetic hour.
Her gardens, once the high-born maiden's pleasure,
Her merchants' homes, high-piled with orient treasure,
Are veil'd by briars and nettles; in her wells
And desert palaces the scorpion dwells;
And why? She scorn'd the great Creator's rod,
And learnt that man is man, and God is God.

THE PAST YEAR.

We have now reached the close of another year. The season calls us to indulge in retrospect. Were the period now closed utterly perished—were it passed away into entire and irrecoverable oblivion, never more to exert any influence upon our well-being—we might deliberately resolve to think of it no more, even as a dream when one awaketh. But time past, to such beings as we are, does not thus sink into the bosom of annihilation. It passes, but it does not perish. It revolves, but our yesterdays are imperishably linked with our to-days. The portions of the extending circle, which to a careless eye may seem to have vanished, as the hues of a faded rainbow, will again be revived, and reflect their shadows for good or evil, over our whole immortal being.

Time, mysterious, undefineable thing!—when viewed only in reference to our physical nature, is represented to us by continuous motion, measured out by successive instants, and speeding on to its final termination. The shadow on the sundial shews its never slackening course. Days, months, years, ages, are fractions of its career. But the motions of life may serve as a time measurer, as well as the motions of the spheres. The heart, in a state of health, beats about 4000 times an hour: it were easy to number its throbs in a life of threescore years and ten. We breathe about 840 times in the hour; it would be easy to number the respira-