

The summit of the hill is flat in some spots, as if it had been levelled by the hand of man, and embraces a circuit of half-an-hour's walk. In a country devoted, as Syria once was, to the worship of Baal, the top of Tabor must have attracted at an early period the priests of that fire-god whose rites were celebrated on hill tops (1 Kings xviii. 20) and, failing this, on the roofs of houses (Jer. xxxii. 29). Who can doubt but from the top of this hill the fires of Baal gleamed at an early age. That this idolatrous worship lingered here for centuries seems probable from the words of Hosea, who charges the priests of Israel with being to the people "a net spread upon Tabor" (Hosea v. 1). Till this very day the mountain is considered sacred. In the monastic ages Tabor was crowded with hermits. The early pilgrims could not regard their pilgrimage as complete until they had honoured Tabor with their presence and their prayers. On the afternoon on which we arrived we found before us there, some priests from Nazareth who were engaged saying mass at the altar they have erected on the summit. An American traveller, Professor Hackett, tells us that on his visit some ten years ago, he met these four men who had taken up their abode in this lofty retreat. One of them, an aged priest of the Greek church, had received (as he said) in his early years an intimation in his sleep that he was to build a church on some mountain God would show him. After wandering through many countries he found this mountain on Tabor, and there he lived, collecting money from pilgrims for his church, which was built after his death.

The common opinion that Tabor was the scene of the Transfiguration is without foundation in fact. There is evidence that in the time of our Saviour there were buildings on Tabor, and probably a garrison of Roman soldiers. We see now, on the top, the

remains of ancient foundations of old walls, of arches, of towers, of bastions and of gateways. There are also the remains of many cisterns, all of which are now so broken that they cannot contain any water. All these things indicate the presence of a town. The scene of the Transfiguration we must, therefore, seek some other where, very likely on the shoulder of the gigantic Hermon, which more truly than Tabor, was "a high mountain apart."

It is drawing towards evening, and with difficulty we withdraw ourselves from a spot of which we could speak almost in the language of Peter—"It is good for us to be here." Leading our horses we walked down lingering, in the cool evening, on this spot and on that, to contemplate the glorious *panorama* that lay beneath our feet, "a most pleasant mountainous country," as Bunyan says of Immanuel's land seen from the house called Beautiful, "a most pleasant mountainous country, beautified with woods, vineyards, fruits of all sorts, flowers also, with springs and fountains very delectable to behold." But conspicuous in the landscape, always meeting the eye and fixing it, was Hermon, which seemed the counterpart of Tabor, and his brother sentinel over the land. How fitting, therefore, the language of the Psalmist, "The heavens are thine, the earth also is thine: as for the world and the fulness thereof, thou hast founded them; the north and the south thou hast created them. Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name." Psalm lxxxix. 11, 12. "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in thy name;" these hills from which flared out on the heathen landscape the fires of Baal, the north speaking to the south, and the south in flames answering back the north, these very summits shall be consecrated to Jehovah, and all the land lying between. When shall this be?