

HEBREW CUSTOMS;

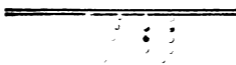
OR THE

MISSIONARY'S RETURN.

BY THE

AUTHOR OF "JANE SCOTT," "ONLY SON," &c.

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HEBREW CUSTOMS.

THE family of Mr. Barker consisted of two daughters and a little son. His wife had been dead several years, and he spent his whole time in taking charge of his dear children. Every day they spent several hours together in reading the Bible and other good books. Anna was his eldest daughter. She was a young lady of pleasing manners, and, what is far better, of humble piety. Mary, the second daughter, was thirteen years of age, and

was a sprightly girl, whom everybody loved. Joseph was the youngest of all, being not more than ten years of age. He was a favourite in the family, and had already learned a great many useful things, by being constantly with his father and sisters.

Mr. Barker loved all good people, and was fond of having them at his house. Whenever a pious minister visited the town, he was sure to find a welcome at Mr. Barker's. It happened, on a certain winter morning, while the family were sitting at breakfast, that a carriage stopped at the door. A gentleman came in; and as soon as Mr. Barker saw him, he knew that it was his old

friend Mr. Lewis, the missionary. They were all rejoiced to see him, and as soon as they had finished their meal, they gathered around him to hear him talk.

Mr. Lewis had been in a great many different countries. He had travelled in Greece, and Egypt, and Syria. He had lived in Palestine, and had visited many of the places which are mentioned in Scripture; and he intended to go back again to preach the gospel in those countries, after he had stayed a short time in America. They began to converse as follows:

Mr. Barker. Mr. Lewis, you see that my children have grown a great deal since you saw them

last. Joseph was then only an infant. I believe they all wish to learn, and I am sure you can tell them a great many curious things about the eastern countries, and especially about the Holy Land.

Anna. O, yes, sir! We are all anxious to hear. My father has often told us that we could not understand the Bible properly unless we knew something about the manners and customs of the east. Now, pray, be so good as to tell us.

Mr. Lewis. My dear young friend, I should be very glad to gratify you, but I scarcely know where to begin. I have seen, as your father says, many curious

things, but it would take me a week to give you an account of my travels ; and so many things come into my mind, that I do not know which to choose.

Anna. Did you not see many things in Palestine, which enabled you to understand the Scriptures more clearly ?

Mr. Lewis. Yes, indeed I did. I saw a thousand things which made me enjoy the Bible more. And no one can know, until he goes to the east, how many customs there are still existing, like those mentioned in the word of God. When I used to see tribes of Arabs, living in tents, with camels, and oxen, and thousands of sheep and goats, and when I

looked at their flowing garments, and the veils of the women, I could not help thinking of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob.

Joseph. Do the people in those countries dress very curiously, Mr. Lewis?

Mr. Lewis. It would look very oddly to you, Joseph. But the dress is very much the same that it was three thousand years ago. Eastern people do not change the fashions of their clothes, as you do in this country. I suppose the Arabs wear exactly the same sort of dress that the children of Ishmael did.

Mary. What sort of clothing do the eastern people generally wear?

Mr. Lewis. Sometimes the cloth or cotton dresses are very costly, but the common people are usually clad in a coarse, simple way. Their garments are loose and flowing, and more like gowns than coats. They have large, loose sleeves, and then they keep their large robes together by a band or girdle around their waist. The outside dress is often not sewed at all, but is merely a large square piece of cloth, which they wrap themselves in. And the poor use this for bed and blanket both. They stick their daggers and their pipes into their girdles, and generally carry their money in the same place.

Mary. I suppose in that part

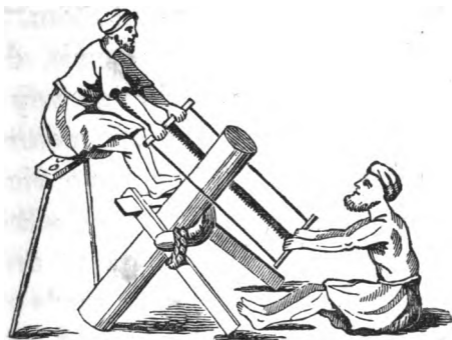
of the world they do not need very thick clothes ?

Mr. Lewis. Generally they do not, but sometimes it is very cold, even there. They wear many woollen garments, and sometimes they use a cloth made of goat's hair, or of camel's hair ; but in the very warm seasons, the common people are content with a single garment, which is something like the frock which some of the cartmen and butchers wear in America. Sometimes this dress (which is called *ihram*) is nothing but a sort of apron, tied round the waist.

I will show you a little drawing which I made of two Arabs, sawing a log of timber into

boards; for you must know they have no saw-mills in that part of the world.

Joseph. What have they got upon their heads?



Mr. Lewis. A sort of turban. It is only a strip of cloth tied around their heads. Now you see the man who sits uppermost has nothing on him but this light garment which I mentioned; and

the man who sits on the ground has no covering for his breast and arms. Yet they do not suffer in the warm days, and when it is colder they wrap a sort of cloak or blanket around them.

Joseph. But, Mr. Lewis, do the rich people dress in this way?

Mr. Lewis. By no means, my dear boy. They have rich muslins, and cloths, and silks, dyed of various colours; and their turbans have many yards of cotton cloth in them, and are very large. Their robes flow down to the ground, and they wear costly sashes and girdles. If you look into the first volume of Nevin's *Biblical Antiquities*,*

* This is one of the publications of the American Sunday-school Union.

you will see this explained, and there you will also see a picture of an eastern lady.

Anna. I should suppose, sir, from some things which are said in the prophecy of Isaiah, that the eastern ladies used to dress very expensively in old times ?

Mr. Lewis. They do so at this day. But rich ladies never appear in public, and it is very seldom that I have seen them. Even the poorer sort of women lay out a great deal for ornaments, such as bracelets, necklaces, ear-rings, finger-rings, and jewels for their hair, and trinkets for their noses.

Mary. Their *noses* ! I knew that savages wore rings in their

noses. But do tell me if the eastern ladies follow such a fashion?

Mr. Lewis. Yes, my dear. Fashion makes any thing tolerable. If it were not for fashion, it would be thought quite as strange to bore a hole in a young lady's ear, and put a ring in it, as to hang a jewel at her nose. Almost all over the east it is fashionable for the ladies to wear rings in their noses. For this purpose the left nostril is commonly bored. Sir John Charadin, a great traveller, says that he never saw a girl or a young woman in Arabia, or in all Persia, who did not wear a ring, in this way, at her nostril.

Mary. As the ladies have

the Indian fashion of nose-jewels, I suppose they likewise paint their faces.

Mr. Lewis. Why I cannot say that they exactly paint their *faces*, but they do what is quite as extraordinary, they paint their *eyes*. There is a kind of black powder with which they stain all the edge of their eyelids, at the root of the eyelashes. They put this colouring on with a sort of bodkin, and by this means they give their dark eyes a greater blackness, which is thought a beauty. Besides this, there is a kind of orange-coloured powder, with which they dye their lips, hands, and feet.

Joseph. What is the use of

dying their feet? Do not they wear any shoes and stockings?

Mr. Lewis. Such a thing as a *stocking* is quite unknown among them; and neither men nor women often wear any *shoes* when they are in the house. Whenever they come to the door, they slip off their shoes or sandals. It would be as impolite there to wear shoes in the house, as it would be here to keep one's hat on at a dinner-table.

Anna. I now see why Moses was commanded to put off his shoes from off his feet when the Lord spoke to him; it was a sign of reverence.

Mr. Lewis. Exactly so. The men wear *sandals* when they

walk out. The sandal is a piece of strong leather, like the sole of a shoe, or even a strip of wood.



This is put at the bottom of the foot, and tied around the ankle, and over the instep, with thongs or strings. This thong is what is called in the Bible a *shoe-latchet*. Gen. xiv. 23.

Mary. But had they no better shoes than these?

Mr. Lewis. It is true, they sometimes wear a kind of shoes or boots, when they are clad in their best. The Arabs make

these of the skins of beasts, with the hair outside.

Joseph. What are the shoes made of?

Mr. Lewis. The rich people have a sort of socks or slippers, made of red or yellow morocco.

Anna. Do the eastern ladies wear shoes and sandals?

Mr. Lewis. They do. When Lady Mary Montagu was in Turkey, she dressed like the ladies of the country. In describing her dress, she says, "My shoes are of white kid leather, embroidered with gold." And she tells us of another pair, made of white satin, finely embroidered. These are a principal part

of their finery. I have here a drawing of a female sandal from Arabia, which will give you a better notion of it than any description can do.



Here you perceive the flat sole under the foot, and the way in which it is tied around the ankle.

Joseph. Now, sir, you have told us about their shoes; will you please to inform us about their hats and bonnets ?

Mr. Lewis. My dear little fellow, the eastern people have neither hats nor bonnets.

Joseph. Why, sir, do they wear nothing on their heads ?

Mr. Lewis. I have already mentioned the *turban*, which is a piece of cloth, wound in a great many folds around the head. Inside of this a small cap is sometimes worn, especially in Persia and Africa. You must remember that in eastern countries there is not so great a difference between the dress of the men and the women as among us.

Anna. I have heard a great deal about the *veils* of the eastern women. I suppose, sir, that these are not used by the men ?

Mr. Lewis. They are not ; and they serve more than any thing else to distinguish the dress of one sex from that of the other. The ancient Greeks made great use of the veil, and in eastern countries it is thought very important. Females never speak to a stranger, even in their own houses, without being covered in this way. And their veils are not made of thin gauze, through which much of the countenance can be seen, but of thick cloth or cotton stuff, which entirely hides the face.

Anna. Here is a passage in Cowper's translation of Homer's *Odyssey*, where Penelope, the queen, is represented as coming

into the hall of the palace, among the princes :

“ When at length she came,
Loveliest of women, where the suitors sat,
Pausing, before her beauteous face *she spread*
Her slender veil.” *Od. xxi. 75.*

Mr. Lewis. And perhaps you remember what is said of Rebe-
kah, when she is coming to be
the wife of Isaac : when the ser-
vant saw his master, and told her
that it was he, “ *she took a veil*
and covered herself.” Gen. xxiv.
65. Sometimes when the ladies
go abroad, they wear two or
three veils at once. Lady Mon-
tagu says that there is one veil
which hangs before the face, so
as to cover all but the eyes ; an-
other is put over the whole head,

and hangs down upon the bosom, and then, above all this, there is a mantle, with long narrow sleeves, which hides the person completely.

Mary. I have seen pictures of veils with round holes for the eyes.

Mr. Lewis. Yes, these are very common; they are fastened to the sleeves below, and there is a fine gauze over the eye-holes. Here you have a picture



of an eastern lady with one of these veils. You can also see her large ear-rings, and also the outside veil, cast over the head. I will also show you another drawing, which represents a Persian female slave. She is bring-



ing a salver with vessels upon it. You perceive that her dress is very much like that of the men

in that country, except that she has a kind of veil upon her head. This appears to be turned up while she is in the house. Upon her feet she wears slippers or socks, instead of sandals.

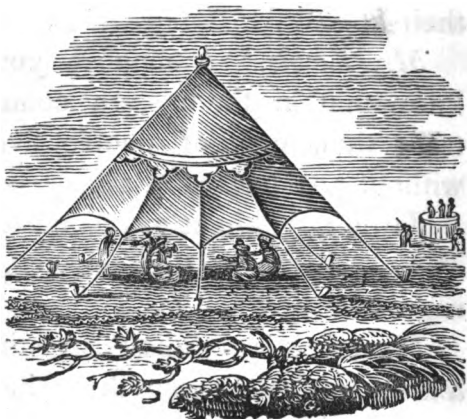
Joseph. You have told us a good deal about the dress of these people; will you be so good as to say something about their *houses*?

Mr. Lewis. I suppose you know that in the eastern countries, thousands of people live without any houses at all.

Joseph. Without any houses! Why, where do they sleep at night?

Mr. Lewis. They live in *tents*; and they use these be-

cause it is easy to move them about when they travel with their flocks and herds. One or two posts are stuck into the ground, and a thick cloth is spread over the top of these. This is what is called a *tent*. At the ends of the covering there are cords which are fastened to pegs driven into the earth.



Joseph. Then they have but one room in their house.

Mr. Lewis. Sometimes they hang up a carpet, or mat, inside of the tent, and this answers for a partition. It is a very beautiful sight to behold a great many of these tents, all together in the midst of a large plain, with the herds and flocks around them, and the camels lying down, or feeding among them.

Anna. In the fourth chapter of Genesis, it is said that "Jabal was the father of such as dwell in tents, and of such as have cattle." Pray, what is meant by this?

Mr. Lewis. I suppose Jabal was the first who began to wan-

der about with flocks and herds, and that he therefore found he needed dwellings which could be carried about, and so invented tents. In many parts of Palestine the chief inhabitants are wandering Arabs of this kind. The family of an Arab needs but little furniture, and all they have may sometimes be carried by a single camel. Their tents are very simple. I have seen them made in some such way as this. Three upright sticks are driven into the ground, and one is laid on the top of these. Then a large brown cloth, made of the hair of goats or camels, is put over all. They drive two smaller sticks into the earth, and fasten

a rope between them ; to this rope they tie the feet of their asses or mules. In another place they tie their horses in the same way ; but the camels are so gentle, that they scarcely ever need any fastening.

Mary. Now I should like to hear a little about their real houses.

Mr. Lewis. The better sort of houses are built of stone, brick, or earth ; but there is not so much use of wood in building as in this country. Timber is not so plenty. It is not common in the east for houses to have more than two stories, and generally they have but one.

Mary. I have been told that the roofs are flat.

Mr. Lewis. Yes, that is almost always the case. And around this flat roof there is usually a parapet, or little wall, a few feet high, to keep persons from falling off. What is very strange is, that they often spread clay or earth over the tops of the houses, so that I have often seen grass and herbs growing on the flat roofs. But the sun very soon parches and kills this. Perhaps you remember what is said in the second book of Kings, xix. 26. "They were as the grass of the field, and as the green herb, as the *grass on the house-tops*, and as corn blasted before it be grown up."

Anna. This explains what is

said, in the 129th psalm, of the enemies of Zion : “ Let them be as the *grass upon the house-tops*, which withereth afore it groweth up.”

Mr. Lewis. When you go into a house from the street, you pass through a porch, or gateway ; then you go into a square *court*, or open place, without any roof. The rooms are all around this open court. This is called in Scripture the “middle of the house (Luke v. 19). Here I suppose our Lord delivered many of his sermons. In summer they spread a cloth or awning over the court, to keep off the rays of the sun.

Mary. Where were the stairs in these houses ?

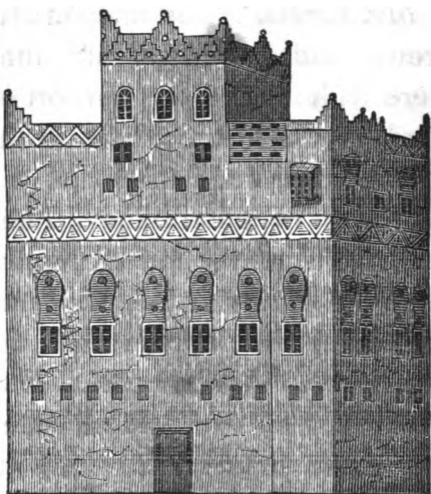
Mr. Lewis. The stairs commonly go up at one corner of the court, or else in the porch ; and they are so built, that you can go all the way up to the roof without passing through any of the chambers.

Anna. Now I see what is meant when our Lord says, Let him that is on the house-top not come down, &c.

Mr. Lewis. The top of the house was the most private place You remember that "Peter went up upon the house-top to pray" (Acts x. 9).

Joseph. Had they any windows ?

Mr. Lewis. The ancient Hebrews had windows, but they were without glass. One sort of window was a mere hole in the wall. Sometimes they had lattices, like Venetian blinds. They had no chimneys, and the smoke escaped by a hole. In the summer season the people sleep upon the tops of the houses. You have often read of what is called an *upper chamber*. This is thought to mean a small story, or little addition at the top of the house, consisting of one or two chambers. It was commonly just over the porch, and had a stair-case of its own. I will show you a drawing of an Arabian house, in which you may



plainly see this upper apartment.

Mary. But I suppose the very poor people have not houses as good as this in the picture ?

Mr. Lewis. No, indeed. The poor Hebrews lived in miserable

hovels, made of mud, reeds, and rushes, and often of unburnt brick. Therefore, we read in Scripture of *digging* through houses. Job says of robbers, "In the dark *they dig through houses*, which they had marked for themselves in the daytime." Job xxiv. 18. Ezek. xii. 5. Such houses are still very common in Egypt. I have seen them built entirely of mud, even the roof being of this material. Sometimes they are shaped a good deal like one of our ovens. There is but one apartment, and the door is so low, that one must stoop to get in.

Mary. The furniture of such a hut could not be very fine.

Mr. Lewis. It amounts to no more than this; a mat, a few large vessels to hold water, a pitcher of fine clay, to cool the water, a rice-pan, and a pot for coffee.

Anna. But how are the better sort of houses furnished in the east?

Mr. Lewis. In the best houses, the chambers have beautiful curtains and hangings, of damask, or velvet, of different colours. The ceilings are often of wood, panned, and the edges of the pannels are gilded. The floors are usually covered with tiles, or with a hard plaster.

Joseph. What kinds of chairs and tables do they use?

Mr. Lewis. They have neither *chairs* nor *tables*. Their rooms are covered with the finest carpets they can afford; and they sit down cross-legged, without any chairs or benches. At the end of each chamber there is a little platform, or stage, raised a few feet above the floor; and here they have their beds. Besides this, there is a small settle of the same kind, all round the room, two or three feet high. This is covered with carpets and mats, and sometimes padded, and furnished with stuffed cushions, like a sofa. It is called the *divan*. Here they sit, leaning against the wall, and here also they often sleep. The most honourable

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place is in the *corner*. Thus when Hezekiah was sick, *he turned his face to the wall*, when he wished to pray. 2 Kings xx. 2.

Joseph. I think that is a very lazy way of sitting. Do they loll upon these cushions all day long?

Mr. Lewis. The orientals are very luxurious and indolent. They sit cross-legged most of their time. The Turks, in particular, scarcely ever leave their seats. You seldom see one of them get up and walk about the floor. They often laugh at Europeans, when they see them pacing up and down in a room, without any particular business. They have their pipes, with long

stems, and sit and smoke and chew opium, day after day.

Anna. Will you please to explain to us the way in which they sat at their meals?

Mr. Lewis. The Jews, in our Saviour's time, used to lie upon long couches, like sofas, when they ate. These couches were covered with soft cushions and pillows. They lay on their left side, and used only the right hand in eating. Their feet were extended back from the table, so that a person could go round behind, and touch the feet of any one who was dining, without approaching the table. In this way the woman in the gospel came behind and washed our Saviour's

feet with her tears. And when they reclined near to one another, one person often leaned on the bosom of the next. In this way, the apostle John is said to have leaned upon the bosom of Christ.

Mary. Do the Turks and Arabs use this posture now ?

Mr. Lewis. No. They sit upon the low seats I have mentioned, and the food is placed either upon the sofa by them, in trays, or upon a little raised platform. They use no knives or forks, but thrust their hands into the dishes. Every thing that is brought to the table is cut up so small, that they do not need knives. And when such things

as boiled fowls are set before them, they tear the limbs apart with their fingers.

Anna. I see more and more the necessity of remembering how different the manners and customs of these people are from our own. It would appear very strange for one of us to enter a house, and see the gentlemen and ladies sitting upon the floor, with dishes before them, and tearing their meat to pieces with their hands.

Mr. Lewis. In order that you may have a better idea of their way of sitting, I will show you this drawing.

Here you observe two orientals sitting upon the raised settle, or



divan, with their feet turned under them. You see the fashion of their dress and turbans also. They appear to be conversing together.

Joseph. At what time of day do they eat ?

Mr. Lewis. It is the custom of the eastern people to eat as soon as they rise in the morning. Dr. Russel says that they breakfast on fried eggs, cheese, honey, and the like ; but it is impossible for me to give you an account of all their articles of diet. In different places they have different kinds of food, and almost every thing which we eat in America is made use of at one time or another ; besides a great many fruits and productions which we have not. They depend more, however, upon simple *bread* than any thing else. When the Arabs travel in the desert, they always

take care to carry plenty of meal with them.

Anna. Do they eat any thing with their bread ?

Mr. Lewis. Oh, yes: sometimes they dip it in olive oil, which is used instead of butter; sometimes they sprinkle salt over it. At their meals, they make a sauce of oil, vinegar, honey, and other things, and dip their bread into this.

Anna. This reminds me of the reapers of Boaz. It is said, in the second chapter of Ruth, that Boaz spoke to her thus: "At meal-time come thou hither, and eat of the *bread*, and *dip thy morsel in the vinegar.*"

Mr. Lewis. Very true. But

you must not think that they have nothing but bread. We read in the Bible of a great many different kinds of food; millet, barley, wheat, parched grain, lentiles, butter, honey, figs, raisins, and a great variety of fruits and meats.

Anna. I find it said in Scripture, that the Jews used to wash before eating their meals, and I suppose this practice is still common.

Mr. Lewis. There are no people in the world who are more fond of bathing. In those warm climates this is necessary, as well as delightful. The heat and dust are such as to render it important every day. The Egypt-

ians used the bath very frequently, and were particularly fond of washing themselves in the river Nile. Herodotus says that they used to bathe twice in the day and twice in the night.

Mary. It was a part of the religious duty of the Hebrews, was it not ?

Mr. Lewis. Yes ; they were commanded by the ceremonial law to use many washings ; and in eastern countries, at present, it is considered one of their greatest luxuries. They not only have baths in their houses, but there are public baths, where men collect for amusement, just as they do here in coffee-houses. After bathing in warm water,

they are rubbed all over with coarse cloths or brushes. After this they perfume themselves with the richest odours.

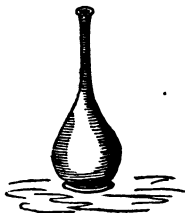
Anna. I have often been surprised to find how much is said in the Scriptures about *anointing with oil*.

Mr. Lewis. This means the sweet-smelling oils which they pour upon their hair and their persons. They use the most fragrant herbs and spices in manufacturing this. They delight in perfumes. The ladies constantly carry perfume-boxes, some of which are as large as my hand. The rich have them of gold, richly adorned with jewels; the box is full of holes, and inside of

it there is a black paste, made chiefly of amber and musk.

Mary. Is it not common to treat visitors with perfumes?

Mr. Lewis. It is; so much so, that I never visited a person of distinction without having this compliment paid to me. When the visit is nearly over, servants come in and sprinkle rose-water or some fragrant liquid over the guests; or they perfume them with aloes wood. I can show you the drawing of a little flask,



or bottle, such as the Arabians use for the rose-water. These are often made of silver, and generally of the shape which you see in this figure.

Mary. But what sort of a vessel is used when they *burn* sweet-wood, or spices?

Mr. Lewis. They then make use of a kind of chafing-dish, or censer, such as you see represented in this figure.



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Anna. And now, sir, you have kindly told us so much about the *inside* of the houses, we should be pleased if you would go *outside*, and inform us how they used to cultivate the ground in ancient times.

Mr. Lewis. I am very ready to do so ; but to tell you all about this subject would occupy a whole day ; so I shall mention one or two things, which I can make plainer by some little drawings which I happen to have with me.

In very ancient times, I suppose, they had but few implements or tools. A rough spade, or hoe, was perhaps used before ploughs were invented.

Anna. It is said that "the oxen" of Job's sons "were ploughing," when "the Sabeans fell upon them." i. 14.

Mr. Lewis. That is true, and it shows that the Arabians had ploughs fifteen hundred years before Christ. The Romans had not this useful instrument till hundreds of years later. In the forty-fifth chapter of Genesis also, Joseph says to his brethren, "and yet there are five years, in the which there shall be neither *ear-ing* nor harvest." Now I wish you to observe, that the word **EARING** means, in old English, the same with *ploughing*.

Mary. Indeed! I have often

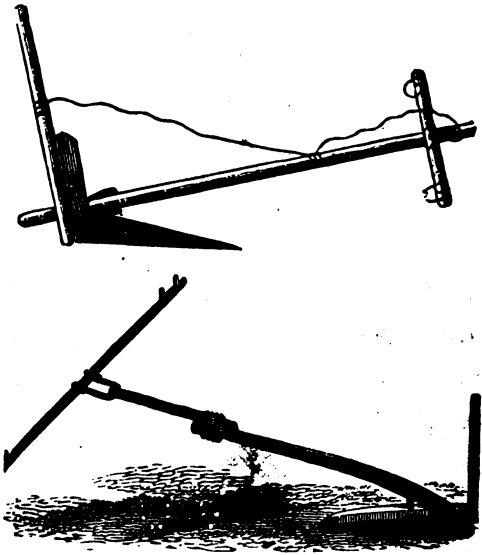
read that passage, but never knew this before.

Mr. Lewis. Many persons ignorantly suppose that *earring* means *gathering the ears* of grain. It means ploughing, in the following passages, to which you will please to turn, in your Bibles. Exodus ix. 31. Isaiah xxx. 24. 1 Samuel viii. 12. Deuteronomy xxi. 4. Genesis xlv. 6. Exodus xxxiv. 21. Take notice, also, of what is said concerning the unicorn (Job xxxix. 10): “Canst thou bind the unicorn with his band in the *furrow*? or will he *harrow* the valleys after thee?”

Mary. Yes, I see there is an allusion both to ploughing and harrowing.

Mr. Lewis. The first kind of *plough* was perhaps nothing more than a strong bough of a tree, made sharp at one end. This may have been fastened into a large piece of wood, to which the oxen were tied. In some parts of the east they still use ploughs which have no iron about them. The next thing, I suppose, was to put a handle to the plough, for the husbandman to take hold of, in order to guide it, and to make it go deeper into the earth. The next thing was to add the iron parts, the *share* and the *coulter*, to cut through the ground.

Now I will show you a drawing of two ploughs. The upper



one is still used in India ; the lower one is common in Arabia, and various parts of Asia. You see they have only one handle. You also see the piece of wood

to which the oxen, or asses, are fastened.

Joseph. Do they not use horses ?

Mr. Lewis. Horses are very much in use for riding ; but in farming they commonly employ oxen, asses, and mules. When the Philistines sent home the ark, they put it into a cart, which was drawn by two *cows*. 1 Sam. vi. 7. Isaiah mentions “the *oxen* and the young *asses* that ear the ground.” Isaiah xxx. 24. But it was not lawful for the Israelites to yoke both together. The law was, “thou shalt not plough with an ox and an ass together.” Deut. xxii. 10. Oxen were greatly valued among the Israelites

especially those which came from the fine pasture grounds of Bashan.

Joseph. I suppose they put yokes upon their oxen, as the farmers do in this country.

Mr. Lewis. Yes, they always did so. The *yoke* was placed on the necks of the oxen, and they were thus fastened to the plough. It was a heavy and unpleasant thing, and is therefore used as an emblem of hardship and oppression; and to *break the yoke* is to set a person free. So Jeremiah says, "these have altogether *broken the yoke*, and burst the bonds" (v. 5). And Isaiah also says, "thou hast *broken the yoke* of his burden" (ix. 4)

Anna. In the book of Judges, iii. 31, it is said, that Shamgar “slew of the Philistines six hundred men, with an *ox-goad.*” Pray, what kind of a weapon was that?

Mr. Lewis. In driving oxen it was needful to have something to spur them on, and make them go faster. For this purpose they use, in the east, a stick, or rod, seven or eight feet long, and sometimes six inches round, at the thick end. At this large end is fixed a strong piece of iron, which the ploughman uses to scrape the earth from the ploughshare. On the other end is a sharp spike, or goad, with which he pricks the oxen. This is the

ox-goad, and here is the figure of one.



You perceive that it is much like a *spear*, and that a strong man might very easily use it to kill his enemies.

Joseph. What sort of *har-row* did the Hebrews use ?

Mr. Lewis. Indeed, my little friend, I am unable to inform you ; but I am sure it was not as complete as ours. The ancient Romans used to drag a bundle of fagots, or sticks, over their grounds ; and the Egyptians at the present time have nothing better than a heavy board, to which they fasten cords. To make this heavier, they sometimes pile stones upon it.

But before I proceed, I ought to mention that one great reason why the agriculture of the east differs so much from ours, is, that their climate and seasons are so different.

Joseph. Please to tell us a little about their seasons.

Mr. Lewis. The seasons in Palestine may be divided into the *wet* and the *dry*. The wet season is their winter, the dry season is their summer. In the wet season it rains almost every day; in the dry season it scarcely ever rains.

Anna. When does the wet season begin?

Mr. Lewis. Gentle rains begin to fall in September, and then there are commonly twenty or thirty days of good weather. But what the Bible calls the *former rain* falls in October or November. These are very useful in

causing the grain which has been sown to spring up.

Anna. When do the *latter rains* come ?

Mr. Lewis. These fall in April, and are also very useful in causing the ears of grain to fill up.

Anna. Have they any very cold weather in Judea ?

Mr. Lewis. The cold of winter is often very severe, even at Jerusalem, and further south ; but it seldom lasts more than six weeks. But the heat of summer is oppressive, especially on the plains. Yet you must observe that the climate of Palestine varies in different places. In Galilee, among their delightful hills

and mountains, it is often very temperate when it is insufferably hot in the plains of Jericho. In the mountainous regions the days are very hot, and the nights remarkably cold.

Mary. There is much said in the Scriptures about *dew*; is there any thing remarkable in the dews of Palestine?

Mr. Lewis. I have observed that they are very heavy. I have seen my tent wet with the dews of a single night; and in Rocky Arabia the dews would sometimes wet me to the skin. Yet they are entirely gone when the sun has been up a little time; which, I suppose, is referred to in that passage, "Your goodness is

as the morning cloud and the *early dew.*" Hosea vi. 4.

Anna. At what time does the spring commence?

Mr. Lewis. Much earlier than with us. I have seen roses blooming in Judea at the close of March.

Mary. I have some curiosity to know how the operation of *threshing* is performed in the east.

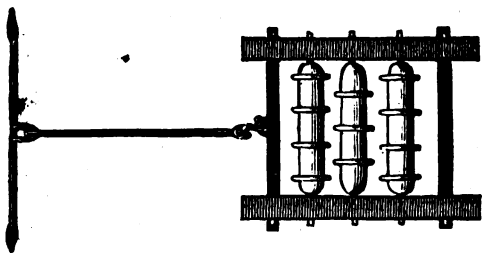
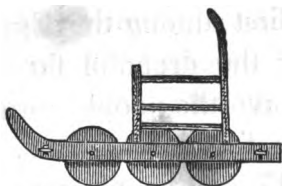
Mr. Lewis. They usually lay their grain upon a hard piece of smooth ground, in the open air, called the *threshing-floor*. They then drive oxen, or other animals, many times over it, until the grain is entirely trodden out.

Mary. But this does not ex-

plain a place in Amos (ch. i. 3) where I read about "threshing instruments of iron."

Mr. Lewis. True; there are various instruments used in order to thresh out the grain more quickly. In Arabia, they use a great hewn stone. In Syria, they have a thick piece of timber, with rough points on the under side. In Egypt and Persia, they drag over their grain a square instrument, made of four pieces of wood fastened together; under this there are two or more rollers. In Persia and Mesopotamia, these rollers have spikes, or teeth, set in them. Sometimes there is a seat, on which the driver of the oxen places him-

self. I can show you pictures of two *threshing instruments* of this kind.



Joseph. You have said a good deal about the animals which they used; now I should like to hear something about their *horses*.

Mr. Lewis. Some have thought that horses were first used in Arabia, but I believe we hear of them first among the Egyptians. During the dreadful famine, Joseph gave the people corn in exchange for their horses. Gen. xlvii. 17. The plague of murrain is said to have fallen particularly upon them. Gen. xlix. 3. When Pharaoh pursued the Israelites, it was with "horses and chariots." Ex. xiv. Indeed, this country was so much celebrated for horses, that we find Solomon having "horses brought out of Egypt" (1 Kings x. 28), and the prophets rebuke the Israelites because they depended so much for their safety upon horses from

the same land. Isaiah xxxi. 1.
Ezek. xvii. 15.

Anna. Is Egypt still famous for these animals?

Mr. Lewis. Not so much so as it once was; yet there are fine horses throughout the country. They are not equal, however, to the Arabian horses, which are stronger and more active.

Mary. If I do not mistake, there were horses in Canaan when the children of Israel conquered it.

Mr. Lewis. Yes, when the northern kings of Canaan united against Joshua, "they went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand

that is upon the sea-shore in multitude, *with horses and chariots very many.*" Josh. xi. 4. The army of Sisera had chariots also. Judg. iv. 15; v. 22: and when the Philistines fought against Israel, in Saul's time, they had "thirty thousand chariots, and six thousand horsemen." 1 Sam. xiii. 5.

Mary. But on what animals did the Hebrews themselves commonly ride?

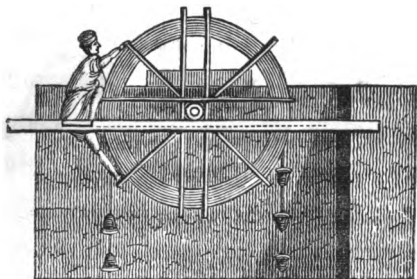
Mr. Lewis. Generally upon camels and asses. Jair "had thirty sons, that rode on thirty ass-colts," and it seems to have been the privilege of rulers to ride on white asses. Judg. v. 10; x. 4; xii. 14. In later times, when

the commerce of the Hebrews increased, they made great use of horses. I will show you a drawing which is copied from an ancient piece of sculpture at Persepolis, and which will give you an idea of the simple kind of chariot which was used in ancient times.

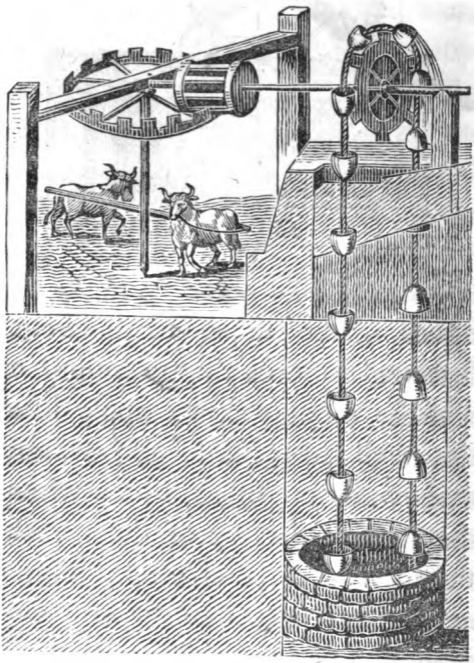


Anna. It is very plain, from these ancient vehicles, and from other things, that the mechanical arts were not carried to a very great height among the ancients.

Mr. Lewis. Not in general. Their contrivances were usually very simple. Yet we must not do them injustice. In some arts they were very eminent. In architecture they had great skill, and the ruins of some of their buildings show that they must have possessed wonderful contrivances for raising immense stones. Some of their simple machines were also quite ingenious. For instance, here is a machine for raising water, which has been used in the east for



ages. The cups, or buckets, fastened to a chain, go round a wheel; they go down empty into the well, are filled with water, and come up full. Then, when they get to the top of the wheel, they turn over and empty themselves into a trough, which conveys the water to different parts of the ground. The larger cut represents the same method of



raising water, but there is more machinery about it, and oxen are used to raise the buckets.

But I have now been talking with you several hours, and it is almost time that I should stop.

Mr. Barker. Before you finish, my dear sir, I wish to inquire about a particular subject. Besides, as I see you have a large port-folio full of drawings, I hope you will favour us with many conversations. What I wish to ask about is the *palm-tree*, which I find mentioned in Scripture, and in ancient books, as a very noble tree.

Mr. Lewis. I will very willingly gratify you. The palm-tree grows over the greater part

of southern Asia, from Egypt to the Indus, and also in Africa.

Mary. Does it not flourish in Palestine?

Mr. Lewis. Not so much as formerly. It is rare. There is no doubt that it abounded in ancient times.

Mr. Barker. This is plain from the Bible. At the feast of tabernacles, the people were commanded to use "branches of palm-trees." Lev. xxiii. 40. And Jericho is called "the city of palm-trees." Deut. xxxiv. 3. Judg. i. 16; iii. 13. I find also, in ancient writers, that the moist lands about the Dead Sea, and parts of Cœle-Syria, produced palms. I have also read of a

palm-grove, near Jericho, which was twelve miles long. The Jewish historian, Josephus, speaks of the country around the lake of Tiberias as having many palms; and, indeed, I conclude that they must have been plentiful, because the palm is used on many ancient coins as the emblem of Judea.

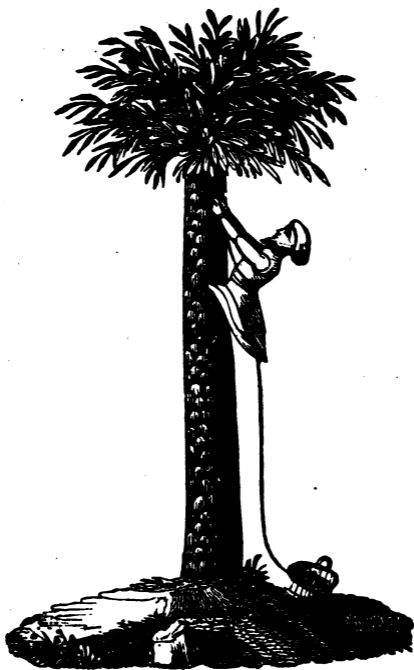
Anna. Deborah the prophetess “dwelt under the palm-tree of Deborah, between Ramah and Bethel.” Judg. iv. 5.

Mr. Lewis. The reason why there are so few at present is, that the country has become desolate and unfruitful. This tree requires great attention, and much watering, and it bears no

fruit unless a particular operation is performed on the flowers. The wild palms are stunted, and bear very little fruit. The palm-tree grows best in light, sandy ground, on the edge of streams. It is an evergreen, and grows to the height of more than thirty feet. The trunk is long and slender, and the foliage rises in an immense bunch from the top.

Joseph. What sort of fruit do they bear?

Mr. Lewis. *Dates* are the fruit of the palm-tree, and they are the favourite food of the Arabs. When these are ripe, the man who is to gather them takes a long cord, one end being fastened to a basket, and the



other tied around his waist. He then climbs the tree, by means of its large rough scales, and draws the basket by the cord, and fills it. But you will understand all this better by means of a drawing which I have made.

Joseph. Oh, yes! I see the man climbing, with his string and basket.

Mary. Now, Mr. Lewis, there is only one subject more which I will trouble you about at this time. I wish to know a little about the *music* of the east, and of the Hebrews.

Mr. Lewis. Ah! I see you are still a musician. You promised to be such when you were an infant. But I am afraid I cannot give

you a great deal of satisfaction on this point, as I am not a musician myself. Jubal was the first musician of whom we read. In the time of Moses, you know there were silver trumpets, and in David's days, instruments without number.

Mery. The poetry of the Hebrews is so noble, that I am sure the instruments with which it was accompanied could not have been so despicable as some writers suppose.

Mr. Barber. There is great diversity of tastes as to music, and what pleased an ancient Hebrew very much might now seem no music at all to our ears. David seems to have encouraged

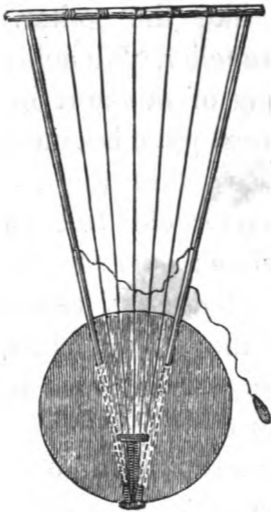
the art very greatly. He appointed four thousand Levites as musicians (1 Chron. xxiii. 5); these were divided into twenty-four classes (1 Chron. xxv. i. 31), and they were all under the direction of three leaders, Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman.

Mary. Have you among your drawings any which represent their musical instruments?

Mr. Lewis. Only one or two; and of these I cannot say much with certainty. After so many centuries, it is not wonderful that we know so little of ancient music. There is an instrument which the Jews call NEBEL, and which, in the English Bible is called *an instrument of ten*

strings. Ps. xxxiii. 2. It was a kind of lyre, and perhaps had not always the same number of strings. It was played with the fingers, like the guitar. The great traveller, Niebuhr, found something of this sort in Egypt. On the next page is a picture of it.

You see that the sounding-board is a circular piece of wood, like a plate; over this a leather is drawn tight, and two rods go through the leather, meeting in an angle, and having a third rod joined to their extremities. The strings are fastened to this third rod, after they pass over a bridge. Whether this is any thing like the Hebrew *nebel*, I do not pretend to say.



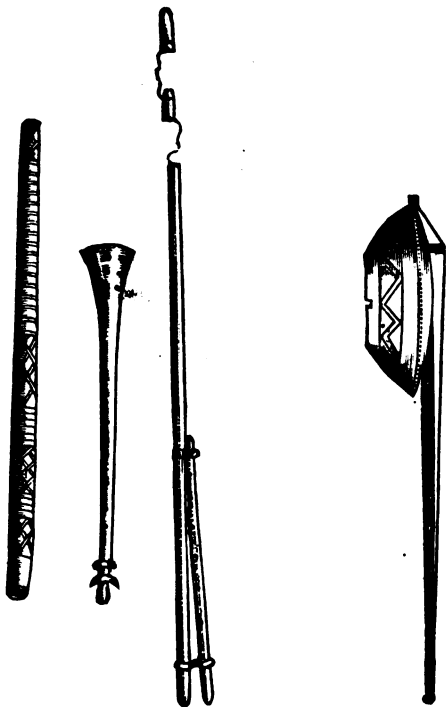
Mary. Were any wind instruments used among the Hebrews?

Mr. Lewis. They had many such, but I am unable to describe them particularly. They had horns, cornets, trumpets, pipes, and flutes; and, I suppose, many varieties of each. Their flutes, or pipes, were made of horn, bone, clay, metal, or wood, and were employed, sometimes in mourning, sometimes in joy. I will show you the drawing of several Arabian wind-instruments; perhaps they may give you an idea of those which were used in Palestine. Here you see the double-flute of the Arabs. It is jointed, and has holes for the fingers. The other instruments

which you see on the picture, I cannot describe; they are wind-instruments, and the drawing may give you some idea of them.

Mary. Did you not say that the Hebrews used instruments of music upon mournful occasions?

Mr. Lewis. Certainly. In the account of our Saviour's raising up a young woman, you know it is said, "when Jesus came to the ruler's house, and saw the *minstrels* (or pipers), and the people making a noise, he said unto them, Give place, for the maid is not dead, but sleepeth" Matt. ix. 23. And now I have only one more picture to show you at this time.



You know that in old countries, and especially among ruins, they often dig up medals, coins, or pieces of money, which were made hundreds of years ago. These coins have figures upon them, of various things, such as then were common; so that by examining these coins, we can sometimes get an exact idea of the appearance of ancient things. Here are the drawings of both sides of two old coins, which were found in Syria. You see upon each of them two musical instruments. These are thought by learned men to be the *cornets* which are mentioned in the Bible (Ps. xcvi. 6). But, my dear young friends must now ex-



cuse me, for I am beginning to feel weary from my journey and my conversation.

Mr. Barker and the young people heartily thanked Mr. Lewis, and then went to their several employments, while the missionary retired to seek repose.

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THE END.