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THE ANCIENT CITY OF JOKTHEEL.

At one Time the Strongest and Wealthiest City on Earth now a Field of Ruins.

The following account of Joktheel is given because of the intense interest of the story and the value of the information. It is taken from The Union Bible Dictionary, published in Philadelphia in 1885:

(2 Kings xiv. 7.)

The name given by Amaziah to Selah, or the modern Petra. It was the capital of Idumea, and one of the most magnificent of the ancient cities. It was situated near the base of mount Hor, about three days journey from Jericho, and the same distance from mount Sinai; and must be regarded as the most singular spot in all Arabia—perhaps in the whole Eastern world. Its remarkable character and history, which have been but recently disclosed, and its close connection with prophecy, require a more extended article than would otherwise be given to it.

This city appears to have been coeval with the birth of commerce; and there is indubitable evidence that it was a flourishing emporium seventeen centuries before the Christian era. It was the point to which all the trade of northern Arabia originally tended; and where the first merchants of the earth stored the precious commodities of the East.

With the decline and fall of the Roman power in the East, the name of Petra almost vanishes from the page of history. About the period of the Crusades, it was held in such esteem by the sultans of Egypt, on account of its great strength, that they made it the depository of their choicest treasures; and, in the course of these religious wars, its possession was strenuously contested by the Turks and Christians, who regarded it as the key that opened the gates of Palestine. From that time it was known only as the seat of a Latin bishop. Its once crowded marts ceased to be the emporium of nations. The obscurity of nearly a thousand years covered its ruins. The very place where it stood became a subject of controversy.

The accounts of recent travelers, who have discovered the ruins of this great city, tell us of the utter desolation which now reigns over those once celebrated regions described by an inspired pen as the fatness of the earth. It is scarcely possible, they say, to imagine how a wilderness so dreary and desolate could ever have been adorned with walled cities, or inhabited for ages by a powerful and opulent people. The aspect of the surrounding country is singularly wild and fantastic. On one side stretches an immense desert of shifting sands, whose surface is covered with black flints, and broken by hillocks into innumerable undulations; on the other are rugged and insulated precipices, among which rises mount Hor, with its dark summits, and near it lies the ancient Petra, in a plain or hollow of unequal surface, (Wady Mousa,) enclosed on all sides with a vast amphitheatre of rocks.

The entrance to this celebrated metropolis is from the east, through a deep ravine called El Syk; and it is not easy to conceive anything more awful or sublime than such an approach. The width in general is not more than sufficient for the passage of two horsemen abreast; and through the bottom winds the stream that watered the city. As this rivulet must have been of great importance to the inhabitants, they seem to have bestowed much pains in protecting and regulating its course. The channel appears to have been covered by a stone pavement, vestiges of which still remain; and in several places walls were constructed to give the current a proper direction and prevent it from running to waste. Several grooves or beds branched off as the river descended, in order to convey a supply to the gardens and higher parts of the city.

On either hand of the ravine rises a wall of perpendicular rocks, varying from four hundred to seven hundred feet in height, which often overhang to such a degree that, without their absolutely meeting, the sky is intercepted—scarcely leaving more light than is in a cavern, for a hundred yards together. The side of this romantic chasm, from which several small streamlets issue, are clothed with the tamarisk, the wild fig, the oleander, and the caper plant, which sometimes hang down from the cliffs and crevices in beautiful festoons, or grow about the path with a luxuriance that almost obstructs the passage. Near the entrance of the pass a bold arch is thrown across it at a great height. Whether this was the fragment of an aqueduct, or part of a road formerly connecting the opposite cliffs, the travellers had no opportunity of examining; but its appearance, as they passed under it, was terrific; hanging over their heads between two ragged masses apparently inaccessible. Without changing much its general direction, this natural defile presents so many windings in its course, that the eye sometimes cannot penetrate beyond a few paces forward, and is often puzzled to distinguish in what direction the passage will open. For nearly two miles its sides continue to increase the height as the path descends. The solitude is disturbed by the incessant screaming of eagles, hawks, owls and ravens soaring above in considerable numbers, apparently amazed at strangers invading their lonely habitation. At every step the scenery discovers new and more remarkable features; a stronger light begins to break through the somber perspective, until at length the ruins of the city burst on the view of the astonished traveller in their full grandeur, shut in on every side by barren, craggy precipices, from which numerous recesses and narrow valleys branch out in all directions.

The entire face of the cliffs and sides of the mountains are covered with an endless variety of excavated tombs, private dwellings and public buildings; presenting altogether a spectacle to which nothing perhaps is analogous in any other part of the world. "It is impossible," says a traveler, "to give the reader an idea of the singular effects of rocks tinted with the most extraordinary hues, whose summits present nature in her most savage and romantic form; while their bases are worked out in all the symmetry and regularity of art, with colonnades and pediments and ranges of corridors adhering to the perpendicular surface." The inner and wider extremity of the circuitous defile by which the city is approached, is sculptured and excavated in a singular manner; and these become more frequent on both sides, until at last it has the appearance of a continued street of tombs.

About half way through there is a single spot, abrupt and precipitous, where the area of this natural chasm spreads a little and sweeps into an irregular circle. This had been chosen for the site of the most elaborate, if not the most extensive, of all these architectural monuments. The natives gave it the name of Kazr Faraoun, the castle or palace of Pharaoh, though it resembled more the sepulchre than the residence of a prince. On its summit is placed a large vase, once furnished apparently with handles of metal, and supposed by the Arabs, to be filled with coins; hence they dominated this mysterious urn the treasury of Pharaoh. Its height and position have most probably baffled every approach of avarice or curiosity from above; it is rendered as inaccessible by the bold protection of the rough rocks, as it is from below by the smoothness of the polished surface. The front of the mausoleum itself rises in several stories to the height of sixty or seventy feet, ornamented with columns, rich friezes, pediments and large fig-

ures of horses and men. The interior consists of a chamber sixty feet high; the walls and roof are quite smooth, and without the smallest decoration. The surprising effect of the whole is heightened by the situation and the strangeness of the approach. Half seen at first through the dim and narrow opening, columns, statues and cornices gradually appear as if fresh from the chisel, without the tints or weather-stains of age, and executed in stone of a pale rose colour. This splendid architectural elevation has been so contrived that a statue, perhaps of Victory, with expanded wings, just fills the centre of the aperture in front, which being closed below by the legs of the rocks folding over each other, gives to the figure the appearance of being suspended in the air at a considerable height; the ruggedness of the cliffs beneath setting off the sculpture to the greatest advantage. No part of this stupendous temple is built, the whole being hewn from the solid rock; and its minutest embellishments, wherever the hand of man has not purposely effaced them, are so perfect that it may be doubted whether any work of the ancients except perhaps some on the banks of the Nile, has survived with so little injury from the lapse of time. There is scarcely a building to be found of forty years' standing so fresh and well preserved in its architectural decorations as the Kazr Faraoun, which Buckhardt represents as one of the most elegant remains of antiquity he had found in Syria.

The ruins of the city itself open on the view with singular effect, after winding two or three miles through the dark ravine. Tombs present themselves not only in every avenue within it, and on every precipice that surrounds it, but even intermixed almost promiscuously with its public and domestic edifices; so that Petra has been truly designated one vast necropolis, or city of the dead. It contains above two hundred and fifty sepulchres, which are occasionally excavated in tiers one above the other; and in places where the side of the cliff is so perpendicular that it seems impossible to approach the uppermost, no access whatever being visible. There are besides numerous mausoleums of colossal dimensions, and in a state of wonderful preservation. Near the west end of the wady are the remains of a stately edifice, the Kazr Banit Faraoun, or palace of Pharaoh's daughter, of which only a part of the wall is left standing. Towards the middle of the valley, on the south side, are two large truncated pyramids, and a theatre, with complete rows of benches, capable of containing above 3000 spectators, all cut out of the solid rock! The ground is covered with heaps of hewn stones, foundations of building, fragments of pillars and vestiges of paved streets—the sad memorials of departed greatness. On the left bank of the river is a rising ground, extending westward for about three-quarters of a mile, entirely strown with similar relics. On the right bank, where the ground is more elevated, ruins of the same description are to be seen. In the eastern cliff there are upwards of fifty separate sepulchres, close to each other. There are also the remains of a palace and several temples; grotesques in vast numbers, not sepulchral; niches sometimes excavated to the height of thirty feet, with altars for votive offerings, or with pyramids, columns and obelisks; horizontal grooves, for the conveyance of water, cut along the face of the rock, and even across the architectural parts of some of the excavations; dwellings scooped out of large dimensions, in one of which is a single chamber sixty feet in length and of a proportional breadth; many other habitations of inferior note, particularly numerous in one recess of the city, the steep sides of which contain a sort of excavated suburb, access-

ible only by flights of steps chiseled out of the rock. In short, the outer surface of the strong girdle that encircles the place is hollowed out into innumerable artificial chambers of different dimensions, whose entrances are variously, richly and often fantastically decorated with every order of architecture: showing how the pride and labour of art has tried to vie with the sublimity of nature. The effect of the whole is heightened by the appearance of mount Hor, towering above this city of sepulchres, and perforated almost to the top with natural caverns and excavations for the dead.

The immense number of these stupendous ruins corroborates the accounts given, both by Greek and profane writers, of the riches of Petra, their costly grandeur and their ancient and unceasing royalty. Great must have been the opulence of a capital that could dedicate such expenditures to the memory of its rulers. Its magnificence can only be explained by a reference to the immense trade of which it was the common centre from the dawn of civilization.

These magnificent remains can now be regarded only as the fragments of Idumea, in which its former wealth and splendor had interred. The state of desolation into which it has long fallen is not only the work of time, but the fulfilment of prophecy, which foretold that wisdom and understanding should perish out of mount Seir; that Edom should be a wilderness; its cities a perpetual waste, the dwellings of every man clean as a stone. (Isa. xxxiv. 5, 10, 17.) No where is there a more striking and visible demonstration of the truth of these divine predictions than among the ruins of Petra. The deserted palaces of Idumea, the dwellers in the cliffs of the rocks are brought low; the princes of Edom are swept away, or reduced to empty chambers and naked walls; and the territory of the descendants of Esau affords as miraculous a proof of the inspiration of Scripture history as the fate of the children of Israel.

Fifteen Cents may be Fixed by Farmers' Union.

The sentiment in the Farmers' Union meeting at Birmingham, Ala., is strongly against Southern farmers selling their cotton early. The belief is that the short crop warrants fifteen cents and the leaders wish all farmers to help secure that price by not hurrying the crop to market. Some favor fixing a minimum price of fifteen cents. The majority seem to favor leaving the fixing of the price to the executive committee, which will probably make a floor minimum to be adjusted according to conditions. The Union does not control enough warehouses to store the crop, but is urging the erection or control of others, hoping in a few years to reach that position.

The big problem is "How to Prevent Early Selling." It is recognized that the twelve-cent price is tempting that many are in debt, and the efforts of the leaders are being directed toward much earlier selling. They believe if the crop is held awhile everybody will get fifteen cents, but no fixed price is probable.

Night on Bald Mountain.

On a lonely night Alex. Burton of Fort Edward, N. Y., climbed Bald Mountain to the home of a neighbor, tortured by Asthma, and curing him with Dr. King's New Discovery, that had cured himself of asthma. This wonderful medicine soon relieved and quickly cured his neighbor. Later it cured his son's wife of a severe lung trouble. Millions believe it the greatest Throat and Lung cure on Earth. Coughs, Colds, Croup, Hemorrhages and Sore Lungs are surely cured by it. Best for Hay Fever, Grip and Whooping Cough. 50c and \$1.00 Trial bottle free. Guaranteed by All druggists.

THE SITUATION AT GOLD HILL.

Its Former Glory and the Activity of Men Hath Temporarily, It is Hoped, Repaired.

EDITOR CAROLINA WATCHMAN: Your many readers have not been satisfied for the past few months with the many jottings from this community by this correspondent. Of late I have not been very much moved by the spirit of driving the pencil, and the occasional happenings, in and around the community of Gold Hill have not been such as to inspire in me a frequency of writing. And so the pen has become blunt and the pencil has lain inactive. But perhaps your readers are none the worse for that. Swiftly borne on time's rapid wing, the months have come and gone. They have glided swiftly away and we were here, conscious of their passing. And now the harvest is past, the summer ended and we are again in the winter season. The weather is not so cold as it was some months ago, but it is still a long way from the spring. The crops are not so good as they were some months ago, but they are still a long way from the fall. The people are not so busy as they were some months ago, but they are still a long way from the winter. The situation at Gold Hill is not so bright as it was some months ago, but it is still a long way from the bottom.

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The Finest Horses in the World.

Secretary of Agriculture, United States of America, James Wilson, who attended the Salla-Foto Combined Shows, recently was led in his praise of the performance, and particularly so of the excellent exhibition given by the world famous \$25,000 Armory grays, the prize winning international champions. Among Secretary Wilson's complimentary remarks were the following:

"Every farmer and his son should see the Armour team, they are the largest and most beautiful draft horses in the world. These powerful gray Percheron geldings are a great attraction." This splendid and exceptional equine exhibition has no duplicate anywhere else, and their tour has been marked with prominent success abroad and at home. The Pacific coast up to now, and recalled the most wonderful high class attraction that has ever been seen in this country. General James Wilson, Secretary of the United States of America, who attended the Salla-Foto Combined Shows, with great interest the admission of any respectable citizen to this big show is offered, provided he is not thoroughly satisfied with the excellent exhibition given by the Armour gray under the name of the exceptionally clever whipper, William ("Bill") Wagon. The Salla-Foto Shows will exhibit horses October 1st.

Franco's Profitable Policy.

The Franco State for the Franco State has a national income of approximately \$5,000,000, or \$1.75 per acre. Approximately six million acres are managed by the State, the national cost of management being 95 cents per acre. This great achievement of Franco in forestry has been the establishment of protective forests where much destruction has been caused by floods. Before the close of the nineteenth century about 2,500,000 acres comprised in the Department of the Landes were little more than shifting sand dunes and disease-breeding marshes. This section is now one of the richest and most productive and healthful in France. This change has been brought about by the intelligent cultivation of pine forests. Thousands of acres now cover the country, the sand dunes and marshes have long since disappeared, and the wood charcoal, tar, pitch, resin and kindred industries have brought prosperity to the department, which was formerly the most barren and malarious in France. The climate is now mild and healthy, the great change being wrought by the forests—Science.

Peary Has Done Himself

Hartburg, Sept. 10.—Comments on the last interview with Commander Peary sent out from Battle Harbor, Labrador, the Henniker Nachrichten says: "These high sounding words have made an extremely unpleasant impression, and they will surely draw new friends to Commander Peary."

This exemplified the general tone of the North German press, which leans, in the polar controversy, strongly to Cook, who is supported by the Hamburg Geographical Society.

Go Brief—Life is Short.

Long visits, long stories, long conversations and long prayers seldom fit those who have to do with them. Moments are precious. Don't be general, abrupt and incoherent. We can endure only one thing—your brevity. It is your growth in wisdom, and many of our friends of the past are glad to hear of it. Learn to be brief. Lay off branches; stick to the main facts in your case. If you would receive and get through; if you speak tell your message and hold your peace. Boil down two words into one, and three into two. Always learn to be brief.

STATE NEWS.

Up to the end of last week Davidson College reported an enrollment of 815 students, the A. and M. at Raleigh 420.

Jos. Black, of French Broad township, Buncombe county, is in jail charged with mistreating his own daughter.

Jerry Wentz, a weaver in the Gibson mill at Concord, who assaulted and seriously wounded Chalmers Propst, the timekeeper at the mill, last week, is in jail. Propst is expected to recover.

Zeb. Cathey, 14 years old, was found dead in a ditch partially filled with water, on his mother's farm in Haywood county, last week. The boy was subject to fits. He was working in the ditch and it is supposed that he was seized with a fit, fell in the water and was drowned.

At Lumberton Saturday Police-man Currie went to arrest Niel Goodman, colored, who was drunk and disorderly, when the negro opened fire on the policeman. The officer returned the fire, inflicting wounds from which the negro died next day. The coroner's jury decided that the killing was justified.

President Taft's appointment of Prof. Glasson, of the choir of economics at Trinity College, as census supervisor in the fifth district, has aroused a bitter protest among the Republican organization.

After a short conference the owners of the new hotel, which is being erected at Marion, stated that the damaged to the unfinished building caused by the collapsing of the middle wall about two weeks ago will not amount to over \$500. The middle wall will be reinforced with concrete which will make it strong enough to carry several times the weight which will be placed on it. The men injured by the accident some time ago are recovering. Work on the building will be rushed rapidly to completion.

George Mebane, the big colored man afflicted with pellagra, died Monday at Durham and an autopsy performed that night disclosed the mysteriousness of the disease. Dr. Dolly, of the State University Pathological Department, conducted the examination, and not a trace of the disease could be found internally though Mebane died as crazy as a lunatic. The germ found in the recent examination was again located in the negro's blood, but an effort to inoculate the guinea pigs by infusion of pellagrous blood failed. The pigs are as fat as ever.

An Advertising Tale.

In a certain barnyard there were two hens, one of which, when she laid an egg, cackled, because she knew when she had a good thing and wanted others to know it—that hen believed in advertising. And many were the breakfasts her enterprise supplied.

When the other hen laid eggs she declined to cackle. "What's the use?" she said. "Everybody knows I lay eggs," and she cackled not.

One day the owner of the hens by accident discovered the nest of the Noiseless One, and it was full with eggs. But they were too old to use. And immediately he cut off the head of the hen that had refused to be "modern" and advertised.

Mr. Merchant, are your goods becoming "over ripe?" Try "cackling"—advertise.

The Road to Success

has many obstructions, but none so desperate as poor health. Success to-day demands health, but Electric Bitters is the greatest health builder the world has ever known. It compels perfect action of stomach, liver, kidneys, bowels, and tones and invigorates the whole system. Vigorous body and keen brain follow their use. You can't afford to slight Electric Bitters if weak, run-down or sickly. Only 50c. Guaranteed by all druggists.