CHAPTER III.

Without attempting to describe the scene of tenderness and transport occasioned by this unexpected meeting, we proceed to state, that the Hebrews, being furnished with horses and money for their journey by their good friend the Alabarch, left Alexandria in the morning, as soon as the gates were opened, and hurried forward, in an easterly direction, scarcely venturing to look behind them for fear of pursuit, and endeavouring, as much as possible, to avoid observation from wayfarers of every description. The inhabitants of Alexandria, who were already in commotion and alarm, as the portentous apparition
at the festival began to be eagerly buzzed about the city, little dreamed that the imagined goddess was timidly stealing away from the walls; and Zillah could hardly believe in her own identity, when she reflected, that, but a few hours ago, she had scared the whole assembled court from their banquet, while, at the present moment, she could not encounter the humblest individual without a feeling of apprehension. For these fears, however, natural as they were, there was not the smallest foundation; the travelers pursued their way unquestioned, and though they avoided any such exertion of speed as might excite suspicion, they had, ere long, left Alexandria at a considerable distance behind them, and striking out of the high road, according to the instructions they had received, they found themselves in a wild and unfrequented district, where, being relieved from all fear of immediate pursuit, they ventured at length to halt under a clump of palm-trees, to
afford their horses a short respite. Now that Zillah was safe, Gabriel’s solicitude on the subject of his darling jewels recovered its ascendancy in his mind; and, in spite of the remonstrances of his companions, who were eager to push forward, he insisted on withdrawing its precious contents from the box, and secreting them about his person and garments, before they proceeded any farther. To this process he attached too much importance to effect it in a hasty or imperfect manner: it was, however, at length completed, and they renewed their journey, every hour inspiring them with fresh confidence that their escape from Egypt would be happily accomplished. At this prospect, coupled as it was with the recovery and concealment of his gems, Gabriel became so elated, that he snapped his fingers, and shouted aloud the chorus of his friend Jonathan the Tanner’s Bacchanalian song, being the first time he had indulged himself with his favourite distich for a
considerable period. Simon, instead of gazing like his companions at the fine prospect of the Lake Mareotis, and the towers and temples of the city beyond it, was busy in inspecting the arms with which they had been provided at Alexandria; observing, as he drew himself upright, and grasped his sword, that he should not object to being again made prisoner by the uncircumcised Pagans, if he could previously have a fair fight for it; but that it was gall and wormwood to his soul, to be caught like a trapped chameleon, as had been the case when the pirate Salvius had surprised their ship. Once, indeed, as his eye fell upon the fertile district of the Delta surrounding them, he remarked, it was no wonder the temples were so stately and magnificent, since the people must be well able to pay tithes; expressing, at the same time, a great wish to know the salaries of the inferior priests, and whether they were
obliged to perform menial offices, and sing in rotation, like the poor Levites.

Although the spot they occupied commanded a view of Alexandria and all the intervening country, and thus enabled them to ascertain that they were unmenaced by pursuit, Zillah's apprehensions, and the Sagan's impatience, urging them forward, they resumed their journey; keeping at no great distance from the coast, and directing their route by a small chart, with which the provident Alabarch had furnished them. He had also supplied them with provisions, that they might not be under the necessity of seeking an inn; so that, when their horses required a bait of some continuance, they drew up on another eminence crowned with mulberry-trees, whence they could observe the approach of any suspicious wayfarers, and, seating themselves upon the ground, partook of the first meal which they had for a long time enjoyed in the
inexpressible luxury of liberty. This circumstance, combined with the prospect of soon beholding their native country, not only elevated every heart, but imparted a more exquisite perception of pleasure to every sense. The air seemed more fresh, sweet, and balmy; the water with which they slaked their thirst more pure and bright; the earth and sky invested with richer and more beautiful hues; the song of the birds, and the music of the breeze amid the mulberry-trees, more cheerful and melodious, than in any other country of the world, not even excepting their beloved Palestine: such enchantment does the mind diffuse around it when it is buoyant and gladsome in the first consciousness of recovered freedom. As if to make the heart of Zillah sympathize more deliciously with Nature, and exalt its sweet and tender sensations into rapture, the Sagan and Gabriel were enthusiastic, almost to rivalry, in their grateful encomiums of Felix; each con-
tending for the honour of having first discov-
ered that he was infinitely superior to the rest of
the Pagans, and both eulogizing the generous
though rash ardour that had prompted him to
attempt her rescue from the soldiers, not less
than the subsequent forethought and penetra-
tion which had directed him to secure the in-
terference of Cleopatra by piquing her jealousy.
Zillah listened to their praises in blushing
silence, but the dews of Hermon could not fall
more gratefully upon the parched and withered
herbage of summer, than did this welcome in-
cense upon her long-agitated and almost ex-
hausted heart. Simon was the only one who
ventured to dissent from the laudatory strain
of his companions; observing, that though the
young Roman might be a brave soldier, he had
by no means proved himself to be a good one;
since, if he had waited till the escort had passed,
and then unexpectedly attacked them in the
rear, Zillah might have escaped in the first con-
fusion, which she could never have done when they were assaulted in front. His modesty prompted him to add, that he would not have hazarded this opinion, but that having occasionally done duty as one of the Temple guard, he must, of course, know something of military tactics.

Procuring accommodations for the night at a large village, which had been indicated to them by the Alabarch, our wearied travellers gladly retired to rest, not less desirous to avoid observation from the peasantry, than to procure that repose of which they all stood so much in need. At an early hour of the following morning, they renewed their journey with fresh strength and spirits, passing many of the industrious villagers, who were already at work in the open air, weaving cloth for sails and tents. During the whole of this day they travelled through a beautiful district, taking an inland direction, to the southward of Damietta, abun-
dantly irrigated with little streams, which divided the whole territory into a succession of gardens. The first rains having begun to fall, every thing was fresh and verdant; the rivulets gamboled along their channels, sparkling and making a pleasant music, as if they rejoiced in their recovered vigour: notwithstanding the lateness of the season, many of the palm, pomegranate, olive, and plum-trees, were laden with ungathered fruits; and the latter grapes still remained in luxuriant clusters upon the vines. Their next day's progress carried them into a much more sterile and unlovely scenery, which, in their successive journeys, became gradually more wild and desolate, until, at length, they beheld in the distance the great wilderness extending to Beersheba, and the chain of mountains that run from Mount Seir to the sea. The part, however, which they had to traverse was by no means a desert, in the modern acceptation of that term, but an
extensive tract of uncultivated country, which in these days would be called a continued common, provided with rude inns at stated distances, for the accommodation of travellers between Egypt and Judæa. Upon the margin of this dreary tract our Hebrews were seated at their daily meal, which they always preferred taking in the open air. The place they had chosen was beneath a ledge of earth and rocks, covered with heath and immense bushes of tamarisk, while before them lay outstretched the shaggy, haggard, and apparently interminable wilderness, broken by remote clumps of palms, which only served to mark the great extent of the waste beyond. Where they sate, a few scattered olives relieved, by their cool dim green, the glare of the sky, for the mid-day sun was still fierce and sultry; and though the scenery was such as we have described, it was neither undivested of animation in the foreground, nor was the distance without a mourn-
ful magnificence, even in the midst of its desolation. Wild goats and saphans were seen leaping upon the rocks that wound down into the plain; brilliant butterflies, like winged tulips, were hovering in the air; grasshoppers were jumping and chirping in the herbage; painted lizards basked in the sun; ringdoves and turtles were cooing in the olive-trees; and, at no great distance, a party of travellers were seen winding up out of the wilderness, the uncouth figures and patient looks of their heavily-laden camels according well with the scene, while the faint tinkling of their bells formed a not uncongenial harmony with the plaintive murmur of the doves. The attention of the Hebrews was, however, more particularly attracted to another spot, where a hart was teaching his young one to leap amid the bushes; and they were admiring the graceful vaults of the former, not less than the playful gambols of the fawn, when an immense bear burst through the
crashing tamarisks above them with an appalling roar, leaped over the heads of the whole party, and plunged into the underwood in pursuit of the unfortunate deer. In his spring from the ledge above he had detached some of the earth and large stones, which fell upon Zillah, and beat her to the ground. She was only slightly bruised; but the terror and sudden shock proved too much for a mind exhausted by the fatigues of travelling, and the previous anguish and agitations to which she had been exposed. For the last two or three days she had felt the approach of sickness, although she had suppressed the fact in her anxiety to reach Palestine: but it was now no longer to be concealed; her debility, her faint shudderings, her looks, betrayed her state to her companions, who instantly decided not to attempt the passage of the wilderness, which would demand increased exertions, until her strength should be restored.

At a little distance from them was a strag-
ging village, the usual halting-place of parties emerging from the wilderness, or about to cross it. Thither they retired, and easily discovered the inn; a building of some extent, which promised as good accommodation as they could have anticipated; but it contained no other tenant for the moment than a little girl, whose language they could not understand. The landlord, it subsequently appeared, was a breeder of fighting-rams, and had gone to preside at a pitched battle between one of his own combatants and a horned rival from the next village; a contest of such general interest, that his whole household, and most of his neighbours, had accompanied him. Gabriel wandered to the field of battle, a rude shealing for sheep or goats, within which he beheld two enraged rams making furious onsets upon one another, while around this rustic arena was collected a group of sunburnt peasants, half-naked children, and their swarthy mothers, shouting and gesticulating as
their respective champions prevailed, their dark eager eyes glittering in the sun, and all too busy to attend to any thing but the battle before them. Gabriel was obliged to wait patiently till it was concluded; when the landlord, exhilarated by the victory of his favourite ram, accompanied him back to the inn, promising to render his new inmates as comfortable as the nature of his establishment would allow. Although larger than the other houses of the village, it was not less rude and primitive in the mode of its construction, being only one story high, built of unburnt bricks, its floors of earth strewed with rushes, and its principal room, common to all comers, having only an earthen seat that ran round the walls, and was covered with mats. The chambers, however, were tolerably spacious, and a bed-room, somewhat more civilized in its appearance than the other apartments, having been secured for Zilla, the Sagan determined to remain there until she should
be in a condition to resume her journey. Rest and tranquillity he believed to be the only restoratives she required; indeed they were all she could obtain, unless he had chosen to take advice from the barbarous practitioners among the goatherds, whose materia medica consisted of little more than spells, charms, and incantations.

Quiet was easily ensured; but the peace of mind, upon which the fond father had so confidently relied, proved to be of more difficult attainment. In the solicitude and bustle of her escape from Alexandria, Zillah's thoughts had found little leisure to revert to Felix, who remained a prisoner upon her account. As the fears of pursuit, however, subsided, this reflection suggested itself with an increasing pertinacity; and now that she was stationary and unoccupied, it obtained a painful predominance in her mind,—an ascendency rendered still more harassing by her secret consciousness that it
was prompted by an attachment too deep and tender to be easily eradicated. She felt humiliated at the idea that Cleopatra should have discovered her weakness, and degraded in her own eyes, when she accused herself of having resigned her heart to a man who had never made any formal declaration of his love:—and that man too a Pagan, between whom and every pious Hebrew maiden there ought to be a gulph as impassable as the Great Sea itself. True, he might embrace the religion of the Hebrews; she had begun a conversion, which she trusted his own reflections would complete; but even then he was a Roman, the enemy of her country, whose sword might at every moment be brandished against the throats of her kindred; and to crown the absurdity and indelicacy of the passion to which she had given admission in her bosom, she neither knew whether she should ever again behold its object, nor if she did, had she the smallest warrant for concluding that he
would overlook the numerous obstacles to their union, and reciprocate her love. Under these circumstances, she contemplated her feelings as criminal, and struggled so vehemently to subdue them, that the conflict of her mind aggravaed her bodily disorder. A low fever was the consequence, which, in spite of the unremitting attentions of her father and Gabriel, continued to depress her for several days, so that three weeks had elapsed before she had recovered sufficient strength to attempt the passage of the wilderness.

In spite of the secret disquietude and inward melancholy which still hung heavily upon her heart, she assumed, as much as possible, the appearance of her usual placid equanimity, and even wore an air of cheerfulness, as she set about the preparations for departure. These were soon completed: their little store of provisions was packed up, they mounted their horses, and, ascending the eminence terminated
by the rocky ledge whence the bear had bounded, once more beheld the vast wilderness outspread before them. A small caravan, marching in a straggling and disorderly manner, was just emerging from a thicket of wild olive-trees and clumps of tamarisk. Some of the camels and one of the elephants were lame, others were without any burthen upon their backs; there were several litters apparently carrying wounded people; the great drum, which usually announced the hour of march, was broken; while the forlorn dejected air of the whole escort, covered as it was with the white dust of the desert, and moving forward with evident difficulty, seemed to intimate that it had met with some catastrophe. It was soon explained by those who headed the straggling procession,—swarthy, turbaned, wild-looking men from the borders of the Red Sea, and the sunny depths of Arabia. They had been attacked, and after a desperate conflict defeated and pillaged, by a
numerous band of robbers in the mountains beyond the wilderness; the same troop which had so long ravaged the provinces of Palestine, and which was commanded by the celebrated and not less formidable Jareb the Revenger, who, after a temporary absence, had rejoined his little army of banditti, and had signalized his return by this daring exploit. In detailing their misfortune, the grief and rage of the narrators seemed to be renewed; some burst into bitter imprecations, and, as they pointed to their pillaged camels, stamped upon the ground, tore their beards, and gnashed their teeth with all the intemperance of Oriental passion; while others stalked along with a scowl of silent bitterness, that appeared to have not yet lost all hope of revenge. Emptied as were most of the skins and bales, the air was still perfumed with the fragrance of the rich gums and spices they had contained; the sole evidence now left to these unfortunate travellers of the valuable
merchandize they had once possessed. At the sight of their destitute condition, Gabriel's blood tingled in his veins, for the thought of the concealed jewels so unexpectedly recovered, and to which he felt his attachment increase, in proportion as they became menaced with new dangers. Every enquiry convincing him that there was at present no possibility of passing the mountains without a military escort, he submitted to the Sagan the propriety of returning to the inn, that they might deliberate upon their future proceedings: a suggestion to which the latter, terrified at the prospect of exposing his daughter to fresh perils, gave an eager assent.

"Surely, my dear father," said Zillah, as they resumed possession of their apartment, "we are singularly unfortunate, to be thus beleaguered and beset both by sea and land, whithersoever, in short, we turn our steps. Nabal predicted that I should encounter many dangers,
but why should we be environed with more perils than other travellers?"

"Alas! my child, we are not: but we have fallen upon evil days, an iron age, a time of almost universal violence and rapine, for which we are to thank these pests and scourges of mankind, the Romans. Their ambition carries them to the uttermost bounds of the earth; aggression begets reprisal, and war becomes the business of the world. They break in pieces the armies that are opposed to them; the scattered bands, having acquired a distaste for the arts of peace, disperse and become wandering banditti. Some nations, conquered by land, still struggle for liberty upon the sea; their fleets are defeated, but every scattered vessel becomes a pirate. Insurgent slaves, and fugitive gladiators, swell the ranks of the sea-rover and the freebooters upon shore; so that, although there may be security and peace in the immediate vicinity of the Roman fleets and armies,
every where else there is lawlessness and outrage. *Raca! may the evil Angel Sammael have them for a portion!"

"O that I had never quitted Jerusalem!" ejaculated Zillah, whose self-upbraiding thoughts were again reverting to Felix.

"Would that I had left thee there, my child! How vain are the plans of mortals! I meant to carry thee from the storm, to place thee in an ark of safety, and lo! I have led thy footsteps into the midst of the snares and pitfalls."

It was decided that they should remain at the inn until they learned that the banditti had quitted the mountains; unless in the mean time some escort should present itself sufficiently strong to secure them from attack. The latter protection offered itself sooner than they had anticipated. By the arrival of fresh travellers, all of whom halted at the village, afraid to traverse the wilderness without a guard, they learned
that a small detachment of Ethiopians, coming from Alexandria, was then marching for Palestine, in order to join the rest of their cohort, who were with Herod's army. At the mention of Alexandria and the cause of Herod, both the Sagan and Zillah were filled with new apprehensions, which Gabriel, however, removed, by urging the impossibility of their being recognized, and reminding them that the danger of encountering the banditti was much more formidable than the chance of any molestation from these wild Cushites. Emboldened by such assurances, they determined to await the arrival of the troops, and march with them into Palestine; carefully concealing from these Herodian auxiliaries that they were the agents of King Antigonus.

On the following day, the Ethiopians arrived, startling the village by their barbaric music, and attracting all eyes by their white dresses and turbans, their savage aspect, uncouth-looking
weapons, and the broad polished plates around their naked arms and legs. A few horse-soldiers accompanied the baggage-waggons, the whole detachment being commanded by an effeminate-looking Roman stripling, whose fair complexion, splendid armour, and perfumed locks, presented a singular contrast to the rude equipment of his sable army. In one respect, however, he proved himself as well acquainted with the usages of war as any veteran; for he no sooner found that several travellers were waiting to accompany the troops, than he extorted a sum of money from each as the price of his protection. This being willingly paid beforehand, the whole party having made the requisite preparations, departed from the village, and presently plunged into the thickets and overgrowth of the wilderness.

Several times did the young Roman address his conversation to the Hebrews, talking in a flippant and affected style of the recent occur-
rence in the Hall of Isis at Alexandria, and dwelling so pointedly upon the finesse and cunning of Cleopatra, that Zillah began to fear he knew more of the real nature of the transaction than he chose at present to reveal; especially as he eyed her occasionally with a particular notice. Nor were her companions less alarmed, when he talked of Mark Antony as his friend and patron, abused King Antigonus as an usurper, and declared that, if any of his adherents fell into his hands, he should treat them as rebels and traitors. It was a terrible trial to Zillah, that she could not interrogate him concerning the safety of Felix, and his restoration to the favour of the general; but she was too discreet to propose a question which might have excited his suspicions, and have led perhaps to the most perilous results.

The wearisome wilderness was traversed without any incident worth recording, and they were now close upon the range of hills forming the
western frontier of Judæa, when the young Roman officer, although he laughed at the idea of regular troops being attacked by a disorderly band of robbers, thought it prudent to send forward his horse to reconnoitre a long and narrow defile through which the road lay. On their return, they reported that they had examined the whole pass, as far as the opening on the other side of the mountains, without discovering an enemy of any sort; and the party accordingly moved forward in the full assurance of safety. The defile was not only narrow in itself, but the rocks on either side were so high and black as to exclude the sun, and impart a sinister gloom to the enclosure. For some time the road shelved rapidly down to a runnel that crossed it, after which it again ascended with equal abruptness. The detachment had reached this central point, and both men and horses were refreshing themselves with the clear stream, when a flight of arrows from some unseen bow-
men stretched several of the party writhing upon the ground, or rolling in the water, which they suddenly dyed with their blood. Modern warfare scarcely allows of any attack so terrible as this. Musketery and cannon not only betray by their brazen throats the source of an assault, but drown the groans of the wounded, and madden with their noise the courage of the assaulted warrior, as the roar of the wild beast inflames the wrath of his antagonist. An arrow from an invisible bow appals by its uncertainty, and unmans the stoutest heart by allowing the scream of anguish to thrill through the ear. Such was the effect of the first volley upon the Ethiopians in the defile. A second discharge, levelled with still more fatal certainty, completed their bewilderment and consternation; and, before they could recover themselves, the banditti, issuing from their hiding-places in the caves and chasms of the rocks, rolled down huge crags and stones upon their unfortunate
victims, miserably crushing some, and blocking up the road against the advance of the survivors, while the baggage-waggon answered the same purpose in the rear.

In a moment the gloomy pass was a scene of indescribable tumult, agony, and destruction. The horses plunged, snorted, screamed, and leaping madly amid the foot-soldiers, increased the general havoc and confusion. Unable to fight or fly, the black Ethiopians, rolling their infuriated eyes around them, gnashed their teeth in despair, and discharged their arrows at random, amid groans, outcries, and execrations; while the banditti above them made the rocks ring with shouts of joy, insolence, and triumph.

In this trying extremity the young Roman proved himself more worthy of his nation than might have been anticipated from his effeminate appearance and demeanour. Encouraging his men both by his voice and his undaunted bearing, he rallied the scattered remnant of his
troops, put himself at their head, and, through the arrows and rolling fragments, made a desperate effort to pass the baggage-waggons, and regain the open country. As they rushed along for this purpose, carrying every thing before them, Zillah, who had dismounted, was separated from her friends, and thrown behind a crag, whence she saw the living torrent sweep tumultuously towards the waggons, leaving the road unoccupied, except by the dying and the dead. By the cries, and the clashing of swords, she concluded that the battle was renewed beyond the carriages; but it was not of long continuance; the remaining Ethiopians had cut their way through into the open country, and the returning robbers spread themselves tumultuously along the defile, to ascertain what booty they had made. Two of them discovered Zillah, as she leaned trembling and aghast against the crag. "Kedar, my beauty! I worship thee," exclaimed one of them. "By Cherem and
Shamathah! she is a stately lass, and worthy to be a Corban to our noble captain. Let us lead her to his tent.” So saying, they took her unresisting arms, for she was in a state of passive bewilderment, and, passing through the narrow ravine made by the brook, carried her to the back of the rocks; where a black tent was pitched among the broken crags, which it so much resembled in colour as not to be distinguished except upon a near approach. This they entered; and placing her upon a couch of rushes and leaves, covered with painted cloth, which had probably been plundered from the caravan, they again retreated, carefully closing the entrance.

Zillah’s impaired health so little qualified her to endure a shock and surprise of this nature, that she had been, in the first instance, overcome, nor did she immediately recover a perfect consciousness of what had happened. When she could collect her faculties, her first thought
was of her father, her second was of her own escape; and she was rising up to try whether she might not perchance slip out of the tent, when the sackcloth at the entrance was thrown back, and Esau, the self-styled "Wild Man of the Mountains, rushed into it. His appearance was flushed and disordered: the heat and the blood of battle were still upon him: it might have been conjectured that he was still inflamed with all its passions, for his looks were wild and menacing as those of a distracted person. Both uttered an exclamation of utter amazement as they recognized each other; but Zillah's surprise was unmixed with terror, for she believed that she had found a friend in her anticipated enemy. "Is it possible," she said, "that I behold Esau?—him whom I so lately left in the island of Sicily?—him whom I first encountered beneath the walls of the Holy City?"

"No!" was the reply, uttered in a loud and terrible voice: "I am now Jareb the Revenger!
—Adoni-bezek, the lightning of the Lord!—

Harod, astonishment and fear! one who has sworn never to spare man in his wrath, nor woman in his desire; and well art thou here, my beauty, to enable me to fulfil my vow. Come, then, to mine arms, and kiss me with thy lips, for thy love is better than wine.” Scared at his wild looks, not less than at his proffered embraces, Zillah started from him, exclaiming, “What mean you, terrible and mysterious man? Your looks are those of madness!—you know not what you say!—never, never can you meditate outrage and violence against her whom you have hitherto followed with gentle purpose and friendly warning.”

“I was then in hopes of gaining that which I have now lost. Mad, did you say? Who would not be raving, distracted, if, like me, he had been twice robbed of his love? One, upon whom I doated, was stabbed in my arms; another has been stolen from my embraces;—but thou—
thou shalt be mine, ere fate or fortune can snatch thee from me. Come, then, my beauty, let us not trust to the future, but snatch the present moment."

"I implore you, by all that is pure and holy!" exclaimed Zillah, falling on her knees.

"In vain! you ask pity of the lion that has been twice robbed of his mate. I am desperate, raving, frantic, if you will; but I am not to be again defrauded; and thus—thus will I compel you to my wishes!"

He seized the arm of the shrieking Zillah, when, in her struggles to get loose from him, he caught hold of the necklace, and dragged the large star from her bosom. Its talismanic influence seemed instantly to have returned. Holding it in his trembling hand, he riveted his eyes upon it for a short time, during which all his savage and turbulent passions became gradually tamed, and he at length ejaculated, in an altered voice of tenderness and deep emotion,
"Amazement! it is the talisman! My beautiful, my murdered Zaida, it was thine! Forgive me, damsel, forgive me! never will I harm the wearer of this precious, this sacred amulet. My heart throbs at the sight of it. By her who is no more, I swear to protect thee!" At these words he struck his hand sharply upon his forehead, and rushed out of the tent, leaving Zillah in such a tremor of agitation and astonishment, that she could hardly believe in the reality of the danger with which she had been menaced, nor account for the mysterious influence which had delivered her so unexpectedly from it. Esau, for by that name she still thought of him, seemed to her to have been visited by a temporary delirium, which the sight of the necklace had proved powerful enough to dispel; but his derangement might return; no reliance could be placed on the forbearance of so wild, mysterious, and inconsistent a being; and she resolved therefore to fly
from the tent, and seek her friends while she was yet at liberty to do so. She passed out of it accordingly, and while gazing around her, uncertain what direction to take, she had the delight of seeing the Sagan and Gabriel speeding towards the spot where she stood, accompanied by Esau, mounted on the well-known black Arabian, and followed by Simon, leading the horse she had rode previously to the attack.

"Wait not a moment for gratulations or enquiries," exclaimed Esau, in a hurried and agitated voice; "yonder is your road," and he pointed it out with his sword; "mount, damsel, mount, and be gone quickly, for my mind is unsettled, I know not sometimes what I do—I cannot answer for my own resolutions—fly, fly, fly!" Zillah was not slow in obeying the injunction; she vaulted into the saddle, called to her friends to follow her, and urged her horse rapidly forward in the direction that had been indicated; while Esau, striking his hand re-
peatedly upon his bosom, as if to still the throbblings of his heart, hurried to rejoin his troop, and disappeared.

When Zillah thought she might safely relax the extreme speed of her flight, which was not until the defile and the banditti had been left a long way behind her, she related to her friends the inexplicable demeanour of Esau in the tent, attributing it to temporary alienation of mind; and the mysterious effect of the necklace, of which she was utterly unable to afford any plausible solution; more especially when she recollected that the exclamations he had uttered, and the allusions to the murdered Zaida, were almost word for word the same that had been pronounced by the old Egyptian astrologer in the house of Mark Antony at Rome. Gabriel's curiosity was less excited by this circumstance, strange as it was, than by the fact that Esau no longer wore upon his finger the marvellous ruby; and he regretted, that, in the hurry of
rejoining Zillah at the tent, he had quite forgotten to request a sight of it. To the Sagan and his daughter the impenetrable character and inscrutable motives of Esau formed a copious subject of conversation and wonder during the remainder of their journey, which was now rapidly drawing to a termination. On ascending the heights of Beth Dagon, they had the ineffable delight of once more beholding the white towers and walls of Jerusalem, reposing in solemn magnificence, and belted around with rocks and hills. "Solyma! Solyma! the Citadel of God!" shouted the Sagan, who was the first to discover it; "the chosen mountain of Jehovah! the perfection of beauty! the joy of the whole world! Hail to thee! hail to thee, Zion! Peace be within thy walls, and plenteousness in thy palaces!" and in the enthusiasm of the moment he dismounted, kissed the ground, and, taking up a portion of the earth, pressed it to his heart, as if the very soil were
holy and precious. Tears of silent transport stole down Zillah's cheeks as she gazed; her feelings were too mighty for utterance; her bosom heaved with the swelling emotions of joy and gratitude, and for some time she could only look and weep. Gabriel snapped his fingers, and dismounted, and mounted again half a dozen times, in the unconscious impatience of his delight; while Simon, who had been able to distinguish the two Maccabee columns set up on Mount Sion, assumed an animated look and a perpendicular position upon his horse, and delivered himself of a most stentorian—"Mi ca-moca baelim Jehovah?" the war-cry of the family. In a moment after, however, as if determined to use his favourite exclamation, whatever might be the occasion or the nature of his feelings, he ejaculated, in a lower and more solemn tone of voice, "Amen, Amen. Selah!"

When they commenced the descent of the hill, they all joined in a Psalm, which it was
customary to sing upon returning to the Holy City; and in this state of excitement and rapture, after all their manifold perils, fatigues, and long travels, our rejoicing Hebrews once more entered within the walls of their beloved Jerusalem.
CHAPTER IV.

Upon the return of the travellers it was found that during their absence great alterations had occurred in the state of affairs. King Antigonus, abandoning himself more and more to the effeminate pleasures of his palace, as the precariousness of his usurped power became more manifest, and the necessity for vigorous measures more urgent and imperative, left every thing to the management of his ministers and generals. Of this supine and indolent sensuality the ambitious Salome, the wife of the Sagan, had taken full advantage. By her political intrigues, in conjunction with Tubal the chief of the Pharisees,
and Jesse the King's favourite, the trio had contrived to get into their hands the whole influence of the government, and the uncontrolled direction of public affairs. Nothing, however, had prospered under their administration. Pappus the Greek, whom they had appointed to the command of the Jewish forces, had indeed defeated the Herodian army, and slain its commander Joseph;—but the active and undaunted Herod had no sooner put himself at the head of his scattered troops, whom he quickly reinforced with auxiliaries, than every thing was instantly changed. He obtained a signal victory over Pappus, who with the greater part of his army was left dead upon the field of battle; and the soldiers and partisans of Antigonus, being no longer able to face their opponents in the open country, had been compelled to retreat to Jerusalem, and to console themselves by vaunting the impregnability of the Holy City. Recent occurrences, however, hay-
ing somewhat diminished the confidence of the inhabitants, and proved to them that their boasted ramparts were assailable, gloom and consternation, aggravated by factious dissensions among themselves, had thrown the whole city into disturbance. Parties and sects struggled furiously against one another; plots against the King were formed, detected, and unrelentingly punished; new conspiracies were hatched, and the intelligence that Antony had determined to support the cause of Herod, and dispatch a Roman army to assist in the siege of Jerusalem, threw the minds of the populace into a state of fermentation which was perpetually outbursting into clamour and tumult, sometimes directed against the usurping monarch who had exposed them to this jeopardy, and at others assuming the character of fierce and fanatical denunciations against the accursed Pagans who should dare to come up in hostile array against the City of God, the mountain of holiness, the
beautiful bulwark of the heavenly King, the lovely, the sacred, the august Solyma!

After the travellers had made a solemn expiation for all the offences against the ceremonial law, or other crimes which they might have committed during their peregrinations among the heathen, the Sagan and his kinsman proceeded to the palace, to communicate to the King the result of their mission. Gabriel had arranged his jewels in their most attractive form, relying mainly upon their influence for procuring a favourable reception, in which he was not altogether disappointed. Although his visitors approached Antigonus in their diplomatic character, and with intelligence of no mean importance to his future fate, he was too ill or too indolent to move from the banquet-table at which he was seated with Lydia his favourite concubine, his inseparable companion Jesse, and others of the same stamp, for whose recreation and his own, female dancers were exhibiting
their voluptuous movements in accordance with the melting strains of flutes and dulcimers, while the atmosphere of the magnificent saloon was saturated with the perfumes fuming up from golden censers, mingled with the natural fragrance of aromatic shrubs and flowers. Into this most unusual audience-chamber, the music and the dancers having previously been dismissed, the Sagan and his kinsman were ushered. Antigonus, who seemed to have become much more enervated, both mentally and corporeally, by his excesses, received his ambassador with a languid smile of recognition; and instead of propounding any question on the subject of his mission, enquired whether he had brought back with him his stately and beautiful daughter, whose face and form he declared that he perfectly remembered, though he had forgotten her name. Lydia tossed her head scornfully, observing in a loud whisper to Jesse, that those
who had once seen the Sphynx, or any other such monstrous idol, were not likely to forget it. The Sagan answered the question, and was waiting in expectation of some more pertinent interrogatories, when Gabriel, who thought that the whole importance of the embassy resolved itself into the recovery of the jewels, opened his case and displayed its sparkling contents before the eyes of the assemblage. "Hishtommoth!" ejaculated Lydia, starting up and clapping her hands in ecstasy,—"What a splendid collection! The pectoral of the High Priest, when compared with it, is but as the twinkling of a star to the blaze of the meridian sun. What a glorious carbuncle! surely it must be on fire. This golden Chrysolite is ten times purer than mine; and yonder pearl pear is an absolute beauty. Does it not remind you, King, of your promise to give me one?"

"It reminds me rather of Solomon's pro-
verb," said Antigonus, "that a fair woman without discretion is like a jewel of gold in a swine's snout."

"Excellent!" shouted the courtiers with an obsequious laugh, all of them rejoicing in the mortification of Lydia:—"who so witty as the King? who so ready with his repartee?"

"By the Shamaim, and by Ashemoth of Samaria!" cried Jesse, "yonder ruby would just replace the ring which I lost in stopping the King's horse when it took fright at the flapping of the great Maccabee banner."—"Wear it for my sake, then," said Antigonus, presenting it to him; "that which Ahasuerus gave to Mordecai could neither be more rare nor better merited." Upon this hint all the courtiers had presently found a tongue and lost a jewel. Never was such a careless or unlucky set. One had dropped a signet from his finger, another the jeweled clasp of his girdle, a third the precious stone that fastened his sandal; and
by a singular coincidence, each of the lost ornaments bore a marvellous resemblance to some individual gem in the collection of Gabriel. Such was the infatuation and imbecility of both King and courtiers that they totally forgot for the moment the purport of the Sagan's visit, or the result of his embassy, in the superior interest of these glittering baubles, which they admired with puerile transport, and of which each endeavoured to obtain some portion by the same finesse as Jesse's, or by a selfish sycophancy which experience had taught them to be the most effectual means of cajoling their effeminate King. Gabriel, in the mean while, leaving the Sagan's message and the war with the Romans to come after his own explanations relative to the casket and its contents, began a narrative of his adventures, or rather of the adventures of the jewels; magnifying the perils to which their bearer had been exposed, and extolling so preposterously the forethought,
address, and courage, to which alone their preservation was attributable, that the Sagan, who knew their recovery to be merely accidental, felt himself called upon to interpose. "Peace! peace, good Gabriel!" he exclaimed. "Remember that the breath of self-praise soils the mouth of the speaker, even as the censer is dimmed by the smoke of its own perfume. It is fortunate that we have brought back the deposit with which we were entrusted, since it affords so much gratification to the King. Is it the pleasure of Antigonus that I should repeat to him here the message with which I am charged from Mark Antony?"

"Ay; I should have asked you for it sooner. What says the proud Pagan?"

The Sagan repeated the hostile message, which produced an effect he scarcely anticipated. Antigonus, who had been of a daring and impetuous temperament before the excesses of the palace had enervated him, piqued at being
thus flouted in the presence of his courtiers, seemed suddenly to become animated with the spirit of his former days. His dim eyes flashed, his pale jaded features were lighted up with a rush of blood, he grasped his sword, and, starting upon his feet, exclaimed with the energy of momentary passion, "Let them come, let them come! Herod the Idumæan, and Antony the uncircumcised Pagan, let them make impious league together, and bring up the brazen cohorts of Rome, and plant their golden eagles before our battlements, before the walls of unassailable Jerusalem. There shall they lie, as did the Chaldæans when besieging Tyre, until their heads grow bald with wearing helmets, and their shoulders peel with carrying burthens. Our quivers shall be their open sepulchres; our swords shall be for ever red and warm with passing through the flesh of Romans; our spears shall bathe in gore; our arrows shall be drunk with blood; and the skirts of our garments
shall be crimson, like his who treadeth the winepress. *Mi camoca Baelim Jehovah?* the ravens of Palestine shall be gorged with the flesh of these Italians, our dogs shall bury their hearts in the earth because they are surfeited with eating them, and the valley of Hinnom shall be white with their bones!"

"The blood of the valiant Asmonæans is in his veins," cried the obsequious courtiers, not a little astonished at this martial ebullition: "our brave King shall be as terrible to the Romans as was his ancestor, the renowned Judas Maccabeus, to the Greeks."

Antigonus, however, who had been electrified for the moment by the glowing language of scripture and a flash of happier recollections, had by this time again sunk into listlessness, and filling a large goblet of spiced wine quaffed it off at a draught to recover himself from the transitory effort he had made. The deep potent quickly drowned every nobler and more
manly thought; he again took the casket of jewels in his hands, and, eyeing them with a doating look, said to the Sagan—"You should love these gewgaws—they have saved you half your beard; for had you not brought them back to me, after the Pagan had declined my overtures, I should have treated you as the King of the Ammonites did the ambassador of David. And your daughter, the stag-eyed and stately beauty, why did she not accompany you? Let me see her at the court, for verily I would climb to the topmost pinnacle of my palace, might I but behold her as David did Bathsheba." In this maudlin style he continued to talk for some time; his conversation betraying so manifestly the influence of the wine, and assuming such an offensive tone in his references to Zillah, that the Sagan seized the first opportunity of withdrawing, and left the royal debauchee and his kindred revellers to finish their carousel.
To Zillah the most interesting change that had occurred during their absence was the introduction of a new inmate into the Sagan's house in the person of Lilla, a beautiful girl, about her own age, but in every other respect as different as possible from herself. She was a niece of the Sagan's first wife. Her father, a merchant living upon the borders of the Red Sea and trading to India, had married a beautiful Arabian woman, by whom he had this only child, equally beloved by both parents, and yet a perpetual subject of dissension between them. The mother, adhering to the religion and habits of her native country, took advantage of her husband's compulsory absences and long journeys with the caravans in the prosecution of his commercial pursuits, to decamp from their home, carrying her child with her, and, joining the Arab tribe to which she herself had originally belonged, where she carefully instilled into her daughter all the wild notions of her
race, and made her conform as much as possible to their practices. She had no intention, however, of deserting her home altogether. When the husband returned, his wife and child soon rejoined him; but he had always the inexpressible mortification of finding that great pains had been taken to eradicate from the mind of the latter every thing that was Hebrew, either as to faith or practice, and to substitute the doctrine and system of the Arabs. Hence there were incessant differences between the parents; while Lilla, who loved both with an equal affection, and wished to obey the injunctions of each, grew up in an intermediate state, as to thought, habits, and demeanour; although a shrewd observer might presently have detected that the mother's influence prevailed, and that the Arab predominated over the Jewess in her character. None, however, could for a moment doubt that the beauty of both races was united in her person; and this circumstance,
by procuring her admirers of either country, only increased the anxiety and inflamed the quarrels of her ill-mated parents. A lover at length presented himself, who quickly obtained the heart of the daughter, and might have been thought expressly calculated to unite the suffrages of both parents. By birth, education, and faith, he was an Israelite; but some political offence, which he did not choose to divulge, having compelled him to fly from Jerusalem, he had become the captain of a band of roving freebooters, and might so far be assimilated with the predatory Arabs, whose mode of life he imitated. Lilla's mother would have gladly gratified the inclinations of her child by bestowing her upon him in marriage; but the father, not willing to have such an ambiguous and lawless character for his son-in-law, and fearing that the headstrong and impetuous Lilla would not listen to his remonstrances, caused her to be secretly conveyed to an Island in the Red Sea,
whence, after a detention of some time in the strictest concealment, she was transferred to the care of her relation the Sagan at Jerusalem. This place her father had been induced to select, not only to withdraw her from her mother, but because her lover had repeatedly declared that his life would be in immediate jeopardy were he once to pass within the walls of the Holy City, thus confessing himself to be an outlaw, though he would never reveal how he became such. From the precautions used in transferring her to Palestine it was hoped that her lover, a rover upon the face of the earth, would not discover her place of retreat; and that, if he did, his regard for his own safety would deter him from approaching her. Her father had accompanied her to Jerusalem; and the Sagan's wife, upon an explanation of the circumstances, had not only consented to receive her into the house, but had promised to keep watch over her conduct, and prevent, if
possible, her escape, which it was thought not unlikely that she might attempt.

Lilla’s figure was small; but she had the perfect symmetry, and almost the light and agile elasticity of the antelope, combined with a muscular strength that seemed neither compatible with her diminutiveness nor her sex. Fleet as a greyhound, she would put her hand upon the shoulder of the tallest camel, and vault over it; strong as an Amazon, she would draw a bow which had baffled the efforts of many a stout archer. As the occasional resident of the wilderness and the desert, she had acquired much of the wildness of uncivilized life; and yet her manner would at times attest that, in her father’s house at Suez, she had become familiarized with many of the observances of more polished society. Violent in her passions, impetuous, headstrong, irascible, and fierce when provoked, she was equally fervid in her attachments: to have conferred a single favour upon her was to tame, at once, all
that was wild in her disposition, and to convert her into the most gentle, grateful, and affectionate of creatures. She wore the Arab dress, a species of turban upon her head, allowing a braid of her raven hair to be seen on either side her forehead; a richly decorated tunic, with short sleeves; loose trowsers, gathered in at the middle of the leg; broad silver bracelets, studded with brass, and anklets of the same description. To complete the strangeness of her appearance, she carried a small dagger in her girdle; while her mother had not only tinged her nails with the golden-coloured henna, but had made punctures in the flesh of her arms and legs, wherever it was exposed to view, and by rubbing different coloured powders into the incisions, had produced a rude resemblance of various flowers. It looked as if Nature, to mark Lilla for a child of her own, had stamped upon her skin some of the vegetable products of the wilderness and desert, which had always formed
her favourite haunts, and then sent her forth, in the bloom and spirit of her floral beauty, to show the superiority of primitive wildness over all the cold, tame, sophisticated daughters of civilization.

"They tell me we are not cousins, and that we must not call one another such," she exclaimed, on being first introduced to Zillah.

"Let us, then, be friends, which is the dearest of all relationships. I see, by your face, that I shall love you: by the first glimpse I always know whether I shall like people or hate them. Salome's haughty looks filled me at once with aversion, and it has since been constantly increasing."

"Hush, hush!" said Zillah, "she is in the adjoining chamber; she may overhear you."

"What then? it is better she should hear an unpleasant truth than that I should tell a lie. She ordered me to change my dress, and adopt that of the Hebrews. Ordered! Re-
quest or entreaty might have won me to compliance; but I would rather die than obey a command so imperiously given. She threatened to compel me, called me a wild Canaanite, and dared to cast reflections upon my mother. I drew my dagger, and told her, that if she breathed another syllable of reproach against her who gave me being, I would sheathe it in her heart. She termed me a young Idumæan tigress, left me, and we have rarely met since; so that I have had little recreation at Jerusalem, except in playing tricks upon Jesse, the King's favourite, who has fallen desperately in love with me, or by amusing myself in my own chamber with the dear companion I brought with me from Arabia."

"I knew not that any such had been left with you; I thought you were alone."

"You shall see," said Lilla, running out of the room, and re-appearing in a moment with a rude sackbut of five strings in her hands.
"This is my play-fellow; it has awakened echoes in the desert and the wilderness, in the camp of our horsemen, and amid our flocks and herds when they were pasturing. I love to listen to it, for its sound seems to give wings to my heart, and enable it to fly back to the scenes that it loves." She struck it, and with an untutored though far from unmelodious voice, warbled a wild Arab song, of whose import Zillah was ignorant, although it seemed to excite the most vehement emotions in the singer. "Have you seen much of our dear Jerusalem since your arrival?" enquired Zillah when she had concluded her song.

"Little beyond what I saw in entering it, nor did I wish to know more of it; I hate all cities. What are they good for, but to breed slaves, and ensure the subjection of the country in which they are built? Your handmaids, Rachel and Deborah, tell me that Jerusalem is threatened with a siege, a prospect which fills
its inhabitants with consternation. The moveable towns of the Arabs are exposed to no such humiliations. If an enemy approaches whom it suits us not to attack, our tents are struck, our flocks and herds are driven away, and our city, another and the same, rises up in a single night upon the banks of some distant river. Hence is it that ours is the only country which has never been conquered. The wide world is our inheritance, liberty is our portion, and we need little envy those, who call themselves more civilized, the disgraceful splendour of their marble prisons; for such are their proudest cities."

A slight expression of reproach passed over the countenance of Zillah as she replied, "We have pleasures which you, the daughter of a true Israelite, and speaking the language of the Hebrews in the Holy City, ought never to have forgotten; we have our religious festivals, which to us are all in all."

"So have the Arabs, in addition to their
other enjoyments. We always observe the feasts of Alelat and Alelatta, and that of the golden-footed Antelope."

"Lilla! you shall go forth with me and see the wonders of Jerusalem, the glory of our God-hallowed temple, the monuments of our past greatness. You shall again read over with me the sacred volume, and you will then blush to talk of these unworthy idols of the Arabians. Come, shall we walk abroad?"

"It is a restraint to me to walk. I am fettered by such sluggish motion. I would rather run, leap, vault like the wild goat. O that I had wings to fly! I sometimes feel that I ought to have them; and look upon my shoulders, and am ready to weep for the want of them. But if it is your pleasure to crawl along amid the walls of our common prison, I am ready to accompany you. Come, let us hasten to creep forth, that it may be the sooner over."

Zillah, who, from her long absence, felt as if
she were about to revisit a beloved friend, in again viewing the well-known streets and structures of Jerusalem, walked forth, accompanied by Lilla, into the City, gazing with renewed delight upon those lofty venerable structures with their balconies and crowning terraces, which, crumbling with age, and appearing to crush down the inferior stories, threatened to fall altogether, and threw back the mind into the remotest antiquity. The holy inscriptions upon the door-posts, the texts written over the windows, many of which were illegible from age, the sculptured records upon the walls and buildings, wherever any historical or religious incident had occurred, all contrasted strongly with the towns and edifices to which her eye had been lately accustomed, and imparted to old and familiar associations a certain air of novelty. Nor was the moving picture less characteristic and peculiar to the Holy City. Numerous priests, in all the solemnity of their robes and
long beards, were pacing in various directions. From large skins slung across the backs of asses, the water was streaming to lay the dust, preparatory to the great procession of the Feast of Lights, in memory of the purification of the Temple by Judas Maccabeus. The different sects were easily recognizable as they passed along:—the fierce and savage zealot, armed with his dagger, looking upon himself as the successor of Phinehas, who, in a transport for the honour of God, did immediate execution upon Zimri, and mistaking an outrageous and ferocious extravagance for a devout enthusiasm, even when it inflamed him to robbery and murder;—the Dashing Pharisee, so called, because he crawled along apart and in humility, the heel of one foot touching the great toe of the other, and neither foot being lifted from the ground, so that his toes were dashed against the stones;—the Bleeding Pharisee, whose legs streamed with blood from the
thorns inserted in the hem of his garment, or who shut his eyes to avoid the sight of women, and pressed so close to the walls in walking, that he wounded his feet and made them bleed; —the Pharisee of the Mortar, who wore a deep hat of that shape, so that he could not look upward, nor on either side, but only downward and straight forward; —the Pharisee, who cried aloud as he walked, "Let me know what my duty is, and I will do it;" and several others of the same sect, whose peculiar absurdities and hypocritical pretensions to superior sanctity it would be tedious to enumerate. All these wore unusually broad phylacteries, whence they had acquired the not inappropriate name of bridled asses, and were mostly followed by women, mumbling prayers, and affecting an enthusiasm of devotion, under which veil they were suspected of practices diametrically opposite to their professions. The scribes and fathers of the Sanhedrim, proud of their legal learning,
turned with profound contempt from these superstitious devotees, and gathering into little knots, so that their beards sometimes touched one another as they conversed, mooted abstruse points of doctrine with an eager, sharp-eyed earnestness; the voluptuous Sadducee, the Epicurean of the Hebrews, and generally a man of rank and quality, betrayed by the jaded elegance of his appearance, that he was determined to crowd as much luxury and debauchery as possible into the life which he considered to be a final one; while the Essenes, in their white linen garments, testified by the primitive simplicity of their garb, and the unaffected humility of their demeanour, that they courted not vulgar popularity, but contented themselves with that pious doctrine, and life of rigid virtue, which rendered them the most exemplary and irreproachable of all the Hebrew sectarians.

Mingled with these, there were factious and
tumultuous bands parading the streets with arms, and proclaiming with loud cries death to the partisans of Herod, who, since his acknowledged alliance with the Romans, the common enemy of all true Israelites, had become ten times more hateful. Terrified at the menacing aspect of these rioters, reminding her, as they did, of the perils she had encountered from similar desperadoes at the time of the fire in Rome, Zillah quitted the street Maktesh, and turned into the outer court of the Temple, where she showed her companion the stones of the old altar desecrated by Antiochus, which were lying piled up in a corner, until a prophet should arise to pronounce upon their final disposal. Beside a pile of wood, intended for the new altar of burnt-offerings, was seated an ancient Levite, gathering and putting aside the decayed billets; and beyond him was an aged brother of the same order, unravelling an old garment of the high priests, to make wicks for the tapers.
of the Sanctuary, it being held a desecration, that the robes, which had been consecrated to the use of the Temple, should be appropriated to any other service. Even the volatile Lilla stood still and silent as she gazed with an awe-stricken admiration at the stupendous proportions and solemn majesty of the Temple. "Alas!" said Zillah, observing her emotion, "the old men who returned from the Captivity, and recollected the glory of Solomon's Temple, mourned and wept when they saw the foundations laid of this inferior structure, stately and august as it may appear to us. This work of Zerubbabel and Joshua wants five things, which were the chief glory of the former Temple;—the Ark and its furniture—the Shechinah, or cloud of the divine presence—the holy fire—the Urim and Thummim—and the spirit of prophecy: but it is still not the less to be revered as the palace of the living God, a treasure-house of glorious and hallowed reminiscences,
a type of all that is infinite and invisible, a link that connects earth with heaven.”

As she spoke, the music of the choir within suddenly struck up, the shivering echoes of the silver trumpets, reverberating from the vast concaves of the building, thrilled through the air, and the deep voices of the choristers and singing Levites chanted in loud-swelling harmony, “Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God!” Upon Zillah the effect of this sublime consolation, dispelling for the moment all her foreboding fears, awakening a thousand sublime associations, and proving to her that she had indeed returned to the Holy City and the true worship, was electrical. At once elevated to rapture, and penetrated with deep emotion, she stood listening to the lofty strain, until the tears burst from her eyes and poured down her cheeks. Lilla was affected at what she conceived to be the distress of her companion, while, with a sweetness of entreaty
and tenderness of feeling, that seemed scarcely compatible with her wild character, she implored her to be comforted. "I am comforted," said Zillah, "soothed, exalted, transported. Oh, what a grand and glorious symphony! it dies away, its echoes have floated up to Heaven. Let us proceed."

They crossed the court, and going out at the north gate proceeded to the pool of Bethesda. How different was its present aspect from the scene of noise and tumult it had exhibited at the washing of the sheep. It was now the season when the angelic visitant was expected to descend and impart a healing virtue to its waters; and the lame, blind, and diseased paupers, who usually stationed themselves at the Temple gates, were crowded around the margin; while numerous others, the victims of every affliction and infirmity that flesh is heir to, thronged the five porches, imparting to the whole enclosure the appearance of a vast lazare-
house. The countenances of this wretched assemblage, wan and worn with sickness, or haggard with anguish, were still elevated to a certain degree above the sufferings of the flesh by an expression of devout faith and animated hope. In the midst of their pangs the mind manifestly triumphed over the infirmity of the body. Avoided by all, and cut off apparently from every human sympathy, the miserable lepers, forming a sad fellowship among themselves, were huddled together by one corner of the pool. In another quarter were the possessed of devils, foaming at the mouth, writhing their naked limbs in fierce contortions that sometimes snapped the cords wherewith they were bound, while they ranted and raved against the friends who confined them to the spot they occupied, in the hope of obtaining their cure. As Zillah and Lilla approached, either the wind, or the movement of something within the pool, occasioned a slight rippling of the waters,
when a buzz of eager anxiety ran round the margin: several whispered, "The Angel! the Angel!" a breathless silence ensued; every straining eye was riveted to the pool as if it would start from its socket; the possessed ceased their howlings, the lepers wore a faint smile upon their ghastly visages, the sorest cripple raised himself up from the earth, the palsied head became momentarily fixed, the pantings of asthma and the hoarse barkings of catarrh were arrested, the blind turned their sightless orbs towards the waters, stretching out their hands as if to feel for information; and all were for the instant transfixed in the postures and with the expressions they had severally assumed. But the pool was no longer troubled, its surface resumed its dull glassy appearance, and gradually, slowly, painfully the cadaverous assemblage sunk back into its previous position; the cough, the struggling breath, the groan, the maniacal howl were again heard; and the flash of
expectation that had lighted up every countenance was succeeded by a look of comparative disappointment, still sustained however by a patient, languid hope.

At the sight of so much human misery Zillah was affected, overcome. "Let us return home," she said to Lilla:—"hereafter we will extend our excursion, for I must show you the whole City. What I have witnessed to-day has sometimes humiliated, sometimes exalted, sometimes distressed me; but under every sensation my pleasant emotions have been ennobled, my painful ones assuaged by the great, the exhilarating, the ineffable delight of feeling that I am once more in Jerusalem."