

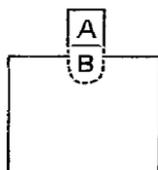
It has been for many years used by the Turks as an armoury, and was and is, an excessively difficult place to visit owing to their foolish jealousy; but it was cleared out in 1881, and fortunately Dr. Freshfield was enabled to see it so cleared.

He describes the apse (v. *Athenæum*, 15th August, 1885) as having marble benches, somewhat similar to those at Torcello, near Venice.

By an unexpected stroke of good fortune he was enabled to obtain two excellent photographs of the interior, showing the receptacle for liquids, to which I referred above.

These he has kindly lent to me.

The shape was clearly this: but the exact connection between the



large part and the lip is concealed by a large pump at A and a stone cistern at B, with which the Turks have adorned it. This is the only existing example, other than that of St. Stephen's, which I have been enabled to find.

8th September, 1891.

RUINS ABOUT MERJ HÎN IN SUBALPINE LEBANON.

By the Rev. GEORGE E. POST, M.A., M.D., F.L.S.

ON the morning of the 22nd of July of this year, Professor Robert H. West, M.A., of the Syrian Protestant College, Rev. J. Stewart Crawford, of Damascus, and myself left our camp at Merj Hîn, a beautiful meadow in the northern part of Lebanon, just north-east of the Dohr-el-Qodib range, and rode up the Wadi Şifşâf towards Rijâl-el-'Asherah, the northernmost two mamillary projections of the Dohr. When half way up the valley we were informed that there was a ruined village above. At the head of the valley is a meadow about half a mile long and a quarter wide, in the middle of which is a tarn. This meadow is called *Merj Buswâyyeh* or *Buswâye*h or *Buswâyyeh*. The average pronunciation is *Buswâye*h, which I have adopted. There was an Arab tent in the upper part of the Merj. Taking a couple of the cheesemakers as guides, we

climbed the slope at the end of the meadow, and at a height of about two hundred and fifty feet we came upon a somewhat level spot about a hundred yards in circumference. Before us stood the steep slope of Dohr-el-Qodib. On the right an open grove of lizzâb trees, with the ruins of the village going some hundred and fifty feet to two hundred feet up the side of the valley. On the left was a similar valley side, and near the top a cemetery of rock-hewn tombs, with a few lizzâb trees interspersed.

The ruins consist of hewn stones, often still lying in the lower courses of the walls, giving the idea of a style of construction quite superior to that of the modern villages in the remoter parts of Lebanon. Near the lower part of the ruins we found half of a sculptured stone, apparently the lid of a sarcophagus, or part of an altar. By hunting about we found the other half. I made the accompanying sketch of the whole, with the line of fracture as represented.

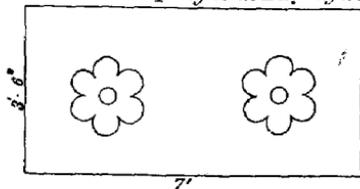
*Cover of Sarcophagus? from Buşwâyeħ
broken across its middle
33½ inches*



The first half was found just below and the second in the ruins of a small church, of which the semicircular apse remains. It is six feet in diameter. The herdsmen assured us that there were inscriptions, but could not show them to us lest we should use them in finding treasure.

Near the top of the hill was a sarcophagus, without any inscription. On the face of it were two rose figures sculptured into the stone.

Face of a Sarcophagus at Buşwâyeħ

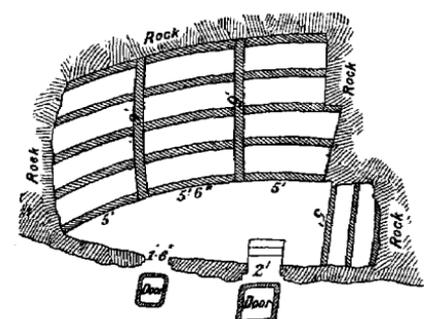


The village may have had from two to three hundred inhabitants. Its lowest portion is over 7,000 feet above the sea. At a little distance

from it, over the divide which separates the Buswāyeh valley from that of Ain-el-Beïda, are several springs, the most copious of them giving its name to the Wadi-'Ain-el-Beïda. Dr. Wm. Thomson came up the latter valley to its head, and then appears to have sheered off over the top of the range which forms the left flank of the Buswāyeh and Şifsâf valleys, and so just missed these most interesting ruins. He makes no mention of them in his picturesque description of his ride from Sir to el-Hurmul.

On the opposite side, the right (east), of the valley are the rock-hewn tombs. I did not stop to count and plot them, as our time was limited. But there are a number, and their style of execution carries us back to the early Christian or Pagan period. I found no Christian emblems, nor, in fact, any emblems at all sculptured on the rocks, nor inside. There were many bones and fragments of bones in the sarcophagi. In several instances there were quite old juniper (lizzâb) trees growing in the mouths of the sepulchres, obstructing entrance to them.

The accompanying plan shows the construction of the principal sepulchre.



Specimen of Rock hewn tombs at Buswāyeh

The slabs used as doors were in this case supine before their respective doors. The floor of the sepulchre was about eighteen inches lower than the bottom of the main door. It is now encumbered with rubbish. The roof is four feet above the top of the partitions between the tombs.

On the following day I obtained information of four other ruins around Merj Ĥin. One is found in Arq-el-Ĥima (أرض الحمى) on the west flank of the enclosing mountains of Merj Ĥin. My informant told me that it consisted of a portion of a masonry conduit and a built wall, halfway up the mountain side, about opposite the middle of the meadow.

He told me that in the eastern mountain mass overlooking the meadow, an hour away, there was a ruined village with hewn stones similar

to those of Buswâyeh. It is called Kharâb-el-Hâtim (خَرَابُ الْحَاتِمِ).

There is also not far from this last Qarnet-er-Ruweis (قَرْنَةُ الرَّوَيْسِ) a small ruin. He was not clear whether there were hewn stones in it.

At the northern end of the Merj is a ruin of a more modern aspect, apparently a fellâh village of our own, or a late epoch. The outlines of the houses are easily traceable, the only stones employed being unhewn ones. It is interesting as showing a more recent occupancy of the Merj by a settled population.

ON THE MONTHLY AND ANNUAL MEAN TEMPERATURE OF THE AIR IN PALESTINE AND ENGLAND IN THE TEN YEARS ENDING 1889.

By JAMES GLAISHER, F.R.S.

THE following discussion of the temperature observations at Sarona and Blackheath is in continuation of those published in the *Quarterly Report* for July, 1891, pages 224—239.