Miscellaneous.

THE WELL AT SYCHAR.

From Mrs. Charle's Journal of her "Wanderings over Bible Lands and Seas."?

Towards evening we reached the entrance of the valley of Nablous, one of the few places in Palestine which has preserved the intrusive Greek name (Neapolis), instead of the earlier scriptural one, Shechem or Sychar. The narrower valley of Shechem branches off from the broad valley we had been skirting, to the left, between the mountains Ebal and Gerizim.

It is said that no place in Palestime is more absolutely identified as connected with an event in the history of our Lord than this spot. And this spot at the meeting of the valleys, links together the sacred history of more than three thousand years.

Here is Jacob's well, dug by the prudent patriarch (whose father, Isaac, had had so many disputes about wells), in the parcel of ground he bought from Hamor, and, perhaps, gave at once to Joseph, then the only son of Rachel. Here the children of Israel laid the body of Joseph, which they had brought embalmed from Egypt. Here one of the most dramatic scenes in Jewish history was enacted, when the whole multitudes of victorious Israel, with the strangers among them the women and the children, in two great companies, covered these "two hills, and probably the valley between and around them, whilst Joshua read the blessings and the curses of the law successfully from Ebal and Gerizim and, from time to time, the deep Amen of the nation echoed from height to height, and swept through the plain. And here Jesus, with all these recollections speaking to him from hill and valley, "being wearied with the journey, sat thus on the well." And to us all the other memories of the plain shine through the light of the last.

We turned off a little to the right to see this sacred spot, but a very great disappointment awaited us. Until last January, they told might bathe His feet with tears; that he us, the well had been preserved—a relic of three thousand years, and of one hour worth them all! Until last January you could sit on the edge of the well and look down into the depths too deep for Him to draw from.

The depth is the standard of the well and look down into the depths too deep for Him to draw from. But this year the Arabs had broken and scattered the stones, and filled the well with rubbish. The Christians and Turks had been at war in Nablous, a Turk had been accidentally killed by a Christian, and they told us the filling of this well was an act of revenge on the part of the Moslems, knowing how sacred it was to Christians. It made us feel very bitterly, as we stood among the scattered stones and heaps of rubbish

one interesting feature about it in connection | vest of the Gentiles. him to the "fruitful bough by a well whose branches run over the wall." A fine old in eager groups as they came, and questioning her, on account of whose saying they vine springs out of the tomb throwing its

As we rode to and from this tomb some still lingering, they besought Him that He wall. peasants, working in the fields, warned us would tarry with them. from the place with furious gestures, but It was a new incident in that life spent whether they thought our own infidel feet among bitter enemies, and disciples so slow would descrate Joseph's tomb, or our in understanding and heart. The people of horses' feet injure their fields, we could not Sychar had seen no miracle, they had heard make out. Perhaps they were venting on none of those unequalled discourses. They our innocent heads their wrath for some of had only heard that One sat on the well, at the wrongs inflicted on them by our late com-

panions, the Bashi-Bazonks. We passed once more before entering the We passed once more before entering the valley of Sychar, by the sacred ruined well.

Scorn to have dealings with Samaritans.

They came all that way in the evening from Except that sacred relic itself, all was unchanged. Down that narrow valley, the woman came with her pitcher, whilst Jesus was resting on this well. The Saviour and the sinner met alone, and to her at first He was nothing more than a stranger and an alien from her race. Then followed that rapidly-varying dialogue with its vivid imagery, taken, as so constantly in our Lord's conversations or sermons, from the things in sight at the time; the imagery so suddenly abandoned to flash the unexpected light on her conscience. Then the answer of the woman, betraying how, in hearts where no human eye would suspect a serious thought, deep religious perplexities may be dimly stirring, and how theological uncertainty and moral laxity accompany each other Probably not a person in Sychar suspected that Samaritan woman of having a conscience, still less of weighing the merits of various religions, and expecting a Christ who would solve all difficulties. Was there, she seems to have thought, indeed, after all, a true faith to be found? The Jews believed one thing and her people another, and there might, perhaps, be much to be said on both sides; the balance of probabilities was pretty even, but might there, indeed, be One who would tell her absolutely which was right? There certainly was One before her, no empty disputant on her own level, speaking without authority, but "a prophet," Who knew all her life, yet did not scorn to speak to her. to her. To Him the secret perplexities of the doubting, sin-burdened heart came out. Words, altogether new to her, came in reply. The controversy was carried to a higher level than her thoughts had reached. It was to be no more Jew or Samaritan; but God and adoring men and women. No more heart. Through all that life of sin and doubt the ruin of the well.

a dim desire and longing had lived on. The Christ was coming, the expectation of Jew and Samaritan alike. One who could answer all the heart's questionings was coming. One who could read all the heart's secretswas before her. In words, at least, she made no inference, but all the secret aspirations of her soul were poured forth.

And she found the answer to which, perhaps, her heart had already almost sprung, "I that speak unto thee am He." Then, also down this valley, unless they had bought bread in that village on the hill-side nearer, came back the disciples.

The woman had placed her pitcher by the well. It was not in her hands. She had not drawn any water for herself or for Jesus. But she had understood Him, as so few did. Water-pot, water, all were forgotten. There were men in Sychar who wanted the Christ as she had; there were hearts there who looked for him. She had good news to take. And up that valley, to the city out of sight behind the folding of those hills, sped her eager steps.

The disciples loved their Master, they had followed Him faithfully; they had gone to buy Him food while He rested. But when we turn from the Samaritan woman to them, it is like turning from earnest, intelligent eyes which read your every glance, to a dull prosaic countenance—beaming, indeed, with the best intentions, but understanding neither glance nor illustration, but exactly the literal words you say and no more. Jesus said, "I have meat to eat that ye know not of;" and the disciples, who had walked with Him from Jerusalem, and listened for months to His teaching, of which almost every sentence was an illustration, had notidea that He could mean anything by "meat" but something to eat!

Women and the Pharisees often understood our Lord best. The Pharisees, because their understandings were sharpened by dislike and fear, and "they knew He spoke these parables against them;" and women, because their hearts were warm, they felt what He meant, felt that sinners must help a mother whose young daughter

I wonder if the disciples understood the next parable which our Saviour spoke, or perplexed themselves as to what He could mean: by there being "four months to harvest;" and yet the fields, so obviously green with the young corn, being "white already to harvest!"

Probably the eye of the Master directed them to the explanation, as, turning from the broad valley behind them, green with the where the well had been.

Near this melancholy ruin is the tomb called Joseph's.—It is a holy place of the Moslem's, plastered and domed like the Moslem's, plastered and domed like the Moslem's, plastered and domed like the Moslem's plastered and domed like the Sychar, and watched the Samaritans coming tombs of Mohammedan saints. But there is to Him,—the golden first-fruits of the har-

They came down that deep valley, probawith Jacob's blessing to Joseph, comparing with Jacob's blessing to Joseph, comparing bly guided by a woman, no doubt conversing LADIES: AND CENTLEMEN. aves and fruitful branches over the had come. And when they reached the well where the Saviour and the disciples were

> the opening of their valley, a stranger, Who saw with prophetic insight into the inmost heart and the past life, a Jew who did not their city, simply because they had some dim hope of finding the Messiah there. And when they found Him, they recognized Him. We do not read that He wrought any wonders among them. We might think it was impossible for Him to come to any place without being troubled with compassion by its sorrows as well as by its sins, and healing bodies as well as souls. But we are told nothing of the kind. And for eighteen hundred years since then, His heart being the same, and His arm not shortened, He has been content, whilst healing souls, to let bodily sickness fulfil its work of discipline. Perhaps He could trust these Samaritans enough to treat them in the same way. He abode there two days.

Up this valley, which we were entering, He walked with that listening company and the wondering disciples. Beside this stream they went to that white cluster of flat-roofed houses, nestling among the thick trees.

Here, in the bosom of the hills, amongst the figs, pomegranates, and mulberries, festooned with vines, on the fresh grass under the shade of the grey olives, and among the delicious sound of many waters lour Lord abode and taught for two days, and the Samaritans understood Him as, perhaps, neither Pharisees nor apostles had yet done, to be not only indeed the Christ, but "The Sayiour of the world."

It was Saturday evening as we rode up that lovely valley. Our tents were pitched outside the town under the thick shade of trees, amongst a chorus of streams flowing on every side. And here we were to remain for nearly two days, from Saturday until

I may add some lines which were written Gerizim, or Sion; but the Father and the that Sunday at Nablous, to give some consohuman spirit. One more secret lay in her lation for our great disappointment about

ON JACOB'S WELL RUINED BY THE ARABS. They have stopped the ancient well, Which the patriarche dug of old; Where they watered the patient flocks at noon, From the depths so pure and cold.

Where the Saviour asked to drink, And found at noon repose:
But the Living Spring He opened there
No human hands can close.

They have scattered the ancient stones Where at noon he stopped to rest; None ever shall rest by the well again. And think how His accents blessed !

But the Rest for the burdened heart, The shade in the wearied land, The riven Rock with its living streams For ever unmoved shall stand.

Earth has no Temple now, No beautiful House of God; Or earth is all one Temple-floor Which those sacred feet have trod.

But in Heaven there is a Thione, A Home and a House of Prayer: Thyself the Temple, Thyself he Sun; Our pilgrimage endeth thee! Nablous, Sunday, June 22d, 156.

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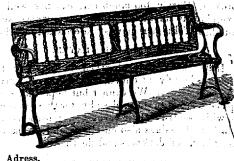
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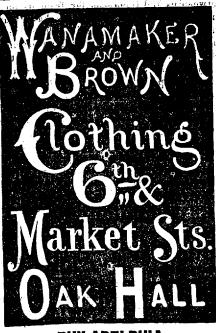
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