

SECTION IV.

CHAPTER V. 2—VIII. 4.

The Shulamite relates to the court ladies a dream which she has had, in which she manifests great attachment for her beloved (2—8). The court ladies, surprised at this extraordinary enthusiasm, ask what there is particular in his person to cause such an attachment (9). The Shulamite then gives a description of him (10—16). Whereupon the court ladies inquire where he is, and offer to seek him (ch. vi. 1). The Shulamite, suspecting their intention, gives an evasive answer to their inquiry (2, 3). The king, having heard the Shulamite's beloved mentioned, immediately comes forward and seeks to win her affections (4—9); in exalting her beauty, he repeats how the court ladies had praised her when they first saw her (10). The Shulamite, having explained how she came to be seen by the court ladies, withdraws (11, 12.) The king calls her back (ch. vii. 1); and, as she returns, describes her charms, and wishes to enjoy the love of one so beautiful (2—10). The Shulamite refuses the king's desire, stating that her affections were espoused (11); then addressing herself to her beloved, she asks him to go home with her, and descants upon their rural pleasures (12—14). Remembering, however, that circumstances even at home prevented the full manifestation of her love, she longs for those obstacles to be removed (ch. viii. 1, 2). Overcome by her feelings, she wishes that none but her beloved may support her (3), and with the little strength she has left, adjures the court ladies not to persuade her to change her love (4).

THE SHULAMITE.

2 I was sleeping, but my heart kept awake,
Hark ! my beloved ! he is knocking !
Open to me, my sister, my love !
My dove, my perfect beauty !

2. *I was sleeping, &c.* The sympathies manifested by some of the court ladies for the Shulamite, at the close of the last section, encourage her to relate to them a dream which she recently had. The purpose of this narration is the description of the shepherd to which it leads, and which is necessary to the completion of the whole drama. *שׁמַע*, like the participle form generally, may be used to express *all* the relations of time. Comp. *שׁמַע יְהִי*, *for all were sleeping*, 1 Sam. xxvi. 12; 1 Kings iii. 20. Gesen. § 134, 1; Ewald, § 306 d. *בָּבֶן*, *heart*, here the *seat of thought*. The Hebrews regarded the heart, not only as the seat of the passions, but

also of the intellectual faculties of the mind. The whole clause is merely another way of saying *שׁמַע בָּבֶן*, Gen. xl. 17. The circumlocution is chosen in preference to *שׁמַע בָּבֶן*, to indicate that the powers under which the exhausted frame succumbed, could not keep her mind from dwelling upon the object of her affections. *חֹק*, *hark*; vide supra, ii. 8. *רֹא* is best taken with the Sept., Syriac, Vulg., and many modern commentators, as a separate clause, *he is knocking*. The Sept. adds *אֵת תָּרַח θύραν*, *at the door, after רֹא*, *he is knocking*.

Open to me, &c. She introduces him speaking. To make his request the more urgent, he pleads that he had

For my head is filled with dew,
My locks with the drops of the night.

- 3 I have put off my tunic,
How shall I put it on ?
I have washed my feet,
How shall I soil them ?
- 4 My beloved withdrew his hand from the door hole,
And my heart was disquieted within me.
- 5 I immediately arose to open to my beloved,
And my hands dropped with myrrh,

been drenched with dew. The dew falls so copiously in the East, during certain months, that it saturates the clothes like rain. See Judges vi. 38 ; Rosenmüller, Orient. i. 122 ; Winer, Bib. Dict. s. v. A similar passage occurs in Anacreon, iii. 10, where love is represented as standing at night behind the door, begging for admittance, and pleading the same excuses.

"Ανοιγε, φησι
Βρέφος εἰμί, μὴ φόβησαι
Βρέχομαι δέ, καστέληνος
Κατά νίκτα πεπλάνυμαι.

"'Fear not,' said he, with piteous din,
'Prsy ope the door and let me in :
A poor unshelter'd boy am I,
For help who knows not where to fly :
Lost in the dark, and with the dews,
All cold and wet, that midnight brews.'

Comp. also Propert. i. 16, 23 ; Ovid Amor. ii. 19, 21. יְמִינָךְ, *my perfect one*, is well explained by Rosenmüller by מֵתָךְ, there is no fault in thee, iv. 7 ; 2 Sam. xiv. 25.

3. *I have put off my tunic* ; was the answer she gave in her dream. τὸν τόπον, χιτών, *tunic*, is an inner garment, commonly of linen, descending to the ankles, which is taken off when one retires. On the costume of the Hebrews, see Rosenmüller, Orient. ii. 19 ; Winer, Bib. Dict. ; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s. v. ; Saalschütz, Archäologie der Hebräer, vol. i. c. 2.

I have washed my feet, &c. In the East, where people wear sandals, which protect the soles only, or go barefoot, as in the passage before us, the feet soon get dirty and parched ; it is therefore essential and refreshing to wash the feet after much walking

(Gen. xviii. 4; xix. 2), or before retiring to rest : remembering this, we can appreciate the hospitality shown to travellers in providing for the washing of their feet, Judges xix. 21. On the masculine suffix in οὐρανός, referring to the feminine נֶהֱלָה, see iv. 9.

4. *My beloved withdrew his hand*, &c. Hearing her excuses for not getting up, he at last grew weary and ceased knocking, which immediately caused her uneasiness. The words בַּיּוֹם וְבַיּוֹם פָּלַשׁ are better translated, *he sent away his hand from the hole*=withdrew ; so the Sept. and Rashbam, בַּיּוֹם וְבַיּוֹם הַחֲזָרָה לְצַדְמוֹן בְּהַדּוֹת, *he took his hand back from the hole in the door*. The expression סִירָב, like שִׁמְרָה, has not the modern sense of bowels, which is restricted to the *lower viscera*, but denotes, like τὰ σπλάγχνα in Greek, the *upper viscera*, comprising the heart, lungs, liver, &c. Hence it is used for the heart alone as the seat of passion, Isa. lxiii. 15; Jer. xxxi. 20; and for נֶהֱלָה, *soul*, Job xxx. 27 ; Ps. xl. 9. נִמְרָחָה, *to hum*, to make a noise, which is frequently used for the roaring produced by the waves of the troubled sea (Isa. li. 15 ; Ps. xlvi. 4 ; Jer. v. 22), is employed to denote the motion of an agitated heart. With upwards of fifty MSS. and several editions we read נִמְרָחָה, *in me*, instead of נִמְרָחָה, *to him* ; the phrase thus exactly corresponds to עִילָּה נִמְרָחָה, Ps. xlvi. 6, 12.

5. *My hands dropped with myrrh*, &c. Alarmed at his ceasing to knock, she flew at once to open the door, and in trying to unfasten it, her hands came

And my fingers with liquid myrrh,
Upon the handles of the bolt.

6 I opened to my beloved,
But my beloved had withdrawn, was gone !
My soul departed when he spoke of it !
I sought him, and found him not ;
I called him, and he answered me not.

7 The watchmen who patrol the city found me :
They beat me, they wounded me ;

in contact with the liquid myrrh which her beloved had poured upon the bolts, and which dropped from her fingers. So Immanuel, נִשְׁתַּחֲוֵת לְפָנֶיךָ וְנִשְׁתַּחֲוֵת בֵּין בְּמִקְרָם אֹשֶׁר נִגְעָן בְּרוּךְ וְבְשִׁלְחוּ זֶה מִן הַחוּנוֹת בְּשִׁמְתוּךְ וְקָנְלוּ מִן הַרְחִיחָה שְׁהִיא בְּרוּךְ וְצָבָרָה Lovers, in ancient times, whilst suing for admission, used to ornament the door with wreaths, and perfume it with aromatics. Thus Lueretius, iv. 1171,

*At lacrimans exclusus amator limina sepe
Floribus, et sertis operit, postcisque superbos
Unguit amaracino, et foribus miser oscula figit.*

"Then, too, the wrstched lover oft abroad Bars she, who at her gate loud weeping stands, Kissing the walls that clasp her ; with perfumes Bathing the splendid portals, and around Scattering rich wreaths and odoriferous flowers."

Comp. also Tibul. i. 2, 14." Sc Herder, Kleuker, Ewald, Döpke, Rosenmüller, Philippson, &c.; Rashbam however is of opinion that the liquid myrrh which distilled from the Shulamite's hand, was the perfume with which she had anointed herself after washing. Whilst Percy supposes that "she got up in such haste, that she spilt upon her hand the vessel of liquid myrrh, whieh she had brought to anoint and refresh his head, after having been exposed to the inclemencies of the night." *liquid myrrh*, see i. 2; and not, as Le Clere eroneously supposes, *current myrrh*, that kind of myrrh whieh is most passable in traffic. The Vulg. has, *Et digitu mei pleni myrrha probatissima*, evidently mistaking the prep. *על* for *אֲמַרְאָה*, and takes the words over to the following verse, *Pessulum ostii mei aperui dilecto meo.*

6. *My beloved had withdrawn*, &c. To her great grief she found, when open-

ing, that her beloved had gone. The asyndeton *בְּרוּךְ צָבָרָה* is very expressive, and the use of the two synonymous terms strengthens the sense. This figure, which is effected by the omission of the *conjunctive particle*, is used in animated descriptions, both by sacred and profane writers. Comp. Σιώπα, πεφίμωσο, Mark iv, 39. Winer, New Testament Gram. § 66, 4. The phrase *שָׁבֵד נִזְמָן*, properly denoting the departure of the soul from the body, (Gesen. xxxv. 18; Ps. exlv. 4,) like *שָׁבֵד נִזְמָן*, is used to express the *momentary loss of the senses*, i.e. to faint. *בְּרוּךְ*, in his speaking, i.e. when he had spoken of it, (Judg. viii. 3; 1 Sam. xvii. 28), i.e. of his going away: so Rashi, שָׁמַר לֹא אָבָא אֶל בֵּית כִּי מִתְחִילָה לֹא, "Because he said I will not now enter thy house, for thou didst at first refuse to open me," and Immanuel, נִשְׁתַּחֲוֵת בְּרוּךְ אֲלֵי הַגִּיא הַלְּכָל לְרוּכִי אֲזָרִי שְׁלָא, "Thathchi halil." "My soul departed when he told me, Now I am going away, because thou wouldst not open me the door." We must employ a finite verb with a conjunction to express in English the Hebrew construction of the infinitive with a preposition, and the relation of time must be gathered from the conneetion, Gesen. § 132, 2, 3.

7. *The watchmen who patrol the city*, &c. That the seeking and calling mentioned in the last verse were not confined to the door, is evident from this verse. *הַפְּנִים*, *צָבָרָה*, are again an asyndeton. *צָבָרָה*, which occurs only once more, Is. iii. 23, is a kind of *veil-garment*, which Oriental ladies still wear, and denotes more properly an out-door

The keepers of the walls stripped me of my veiling garment.
 8 I adjure you, O ye daughters of Jerusalem,
 If ye shall find my beloved,
 What will ye tell him ?
 Tell him that I am sick of love.

DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.

9 What is thy beloved more than another beloved,
 O thou fairest among women ?
 What is thy beloved, more than another beloved,
 That thou thus adjurest us ?

THE SHULAMITE.

10 My beloved is white and ruddy,
 Distinguished above thousands ;

cloak. See Schroeder, *Vestit.* *Mul.* p. 368 ; Gesen. on Isa. iii. 23 ; Winer, *Bib. Dict.* s. v. ; Saalschütz, *Archaëologie der Hebräer*, vol. i. p. 28.

8. *I adjure you*, &c. Having mentioned the indifference with which she had treated her beloved, the Shulamite is anxious to impress upon the court-ladies that this was in a dream, and that in reality, so far from her affections being abated, she was as dotingly attached to him as ever; and bcs of them, if they should see him, to tell him so. For the masculine termination in *תְּבוֹנֵת* and *רָבֶב*, see ii. 7. We must supply *וַיֹּאמֶר לְךָ*, *tell him*, after *וְאַתָּה תִּשְׁלַח*, *what will you tell him ?* The omission is designedly made, to give animation to the request. The emendation proposed by Houbigant, to read *וְאַתָּה*, instead of *וְאַתָּה*, is gratuitous, like all his emendations. The Sept. adds *ἐν ταῖς δυνάμεσιν καὶ ἐν ταῖς λοχύσεσιν τοῦ ἀγροῦ*, “by the powers, and by the virtues of the field,” the false rendering of *וְאַתָּה תִּשְׁלַח*, from the preceding formula of adjuration.

9. *What is thy beloved*, &c. The great solicitude manifested by the Shulamite for her beloved, induces the court ladies to ask what peculiar attractions there were in him more than in an ordinary lover, to cause such an unusual manifestation of feeling, and thus an opportunity is afforded her to give a description of him. It is evident from this question of the court

ladies that Solomon is not the beloved of whom the Shulamite has been speaking in the preceding verses. For surely these court ladies knew the aspect and character of Solomon better than the Shulamite. This is, moreover, established beyond doubt from ch. vi. 2, 3, where the damsels, at the end of the description, designedly states that the object of her delineation and attachment, is the shepherd. The particle *וְ*, prefixed to *רָבֶב*, with which the comparison is made, expresses the comparative, Gesen. § 191, 1. For the form *רָבֶב*, see i. 8, and for the form *רָבֶבֶב*, Ewald, § 249, d.

10. *My beloved is white*, &c. The Shulamite answers this question by giving a very graphic description of her beloved. The colour of his countenance and body is such a beantiful mingling of white and red as is seldom seen, and by which he is distinguished above thousands. A similar description is found in Virg. *Aen.* xii. 65, seq.

*Flagrantes perfusa genas : cui plurimus ignem
 Subiecti rubor, et calefacti per ora eucurrit. . . .
 Indum saquinoe veluti violacrit ostro,
 Si quis ebur, aut mixta rubent ubi lilia multa
 Alba rosâ ; tales virgo dabat ore colores.*

“ At this a flood of tears Lavinia shed ;
 A crimson blush her beauteous face o’erspread,
 Varying her cheeks by turns with white and red.
 The driving colours, never at a stay,
 Run here and there, and flush and fade away.
 Delightful change ! thus Indian ivory shows,
 Which, with the bordering paint of purple
 glows ;

Or lilies damask by the neighbouring rose.”

Comp. also Ovid. *Am.* ii. ; *Eleg.* v. 39 ;

11 His head is as the finest gold,
His flowing locks are black as the raven.

Hor. Od. i. 13, v. 2; iv. 10; v. 4; Tibul. Eleg. 111, 4; vv. 29, 30. **בַּרְקָה**, *bright, white*; compare Lam. iv. 7, where it stands in parallelism with **בַּרְקָה**, *clear*; from the same passage we also see that the predicates **בַּרְקָה**, *white*, and **אַדְמָה**, *red*, are not restricted to the countenance, but refer to all the parts of the body which the Oriental costume left exposed, to the carnation as it were of the picture. **נִימָה** denom. from **נִימֵלִי**, *banner*; prop. to be furnished with a banner, i.e. his singular beauty renders him as distinguished above multitudes, just as a standard-bearer is marked above all other soldiers. **בַּרְכָה**, *more, above*, vide supra, ver. 9, **רַבְכָה** indefinitely for a large number, see Gesen. xxiv. 60.

11. *His head is as pure gold.* That is of consummate excellency. Having characterized his whole person as charming, the Shulamite describes the beauty of the individual parts of his body, and begins with his head. *Geld* is frequently used, both in Scripture and in profane writers, to denote *consummate excellency and beauty*. Thus the illustrious personages are called gold and fine gold in Lam. iv. 1; and Theocritus (Idyl. iii. 28.) calls the beautiful Helen *golden*. The words **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ** are variously rendered. The Sept. has *χρυσίου καιφάτ*, *gold of Cephaz*, Aquila and Sym. *λίθεα τοῦ χρυσίου*, so the Syriac **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ ? בְּמִזְבֵּחַ**, *a precious*

stone of gold. The Chald. has **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ**; so the Vulg. *aurum optimum*. The Rabbins too vary in their explanations of these words. Ibn Ezra takes **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ** to be a *diadem*, and **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ**, *precious stones*. Rashi indefinitely **בְּנֵלֶת מֶלֶךְ**, *choice things, which kings treasure up*. Rashbam explains **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ** by *a heap of gold*, and **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ** by *gold*, and says it is called **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ**, “because its colour is like pearl.” The majority of modern commentators, after the Sept., Vulg., Chald., take **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ** as a poetical expression for *gold*, and derive it from **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ**, *to hide*, to

conceal; like **סְגִיר**, *gold* (Job. xxviii. 15), from **סְגִיר**, *to shut up, to conceal*, because precious metals are generally kept shut up or concealed. This meaning and derivation of the word are supported by the fact that treasures and precious things are generally expressed in Hebrew by words whose roots signify to *conceal*; comp. **אֲוֹזֵן**, *a treasure* (1 Kings vii. 51; xiv. 26), from **אוֹזֵן**, *to shut up*; **מִזְבֵּחַ**, *a treasure, gold* (Isa. liv. 2; Prov. ii. 4), from **מִזְבֵּחַ**, *to hide*; **מִזְבֵּחַ**, *riches* (Job xx. 26), from **מִזְבֵּחַ**, *to conceal*. As for **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ**, it is translated by some *purified, pure*, from **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ**, *to separate, to purify* (Gesenius, &c.); and by others *solid, massive*, from **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ**, *to be strong, solid* (Rosenmüller, &c.). But **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ** never occurs as an adjective to **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ**, or to **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ** (בְּמִזְבֵּחַ מִזְבֵּחַ) בְּמִזְבֵּחַ, 1 Kings x. 18, is a contraction of **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ**, comp. Jer. x. 9; the word itself invariably means *gold* (see Job xxvii. 17; Ps. xix. 11; xxi. 4; cxix. 27; Prov. viii. 19; Cant. v. 15; Isa. xiii. 12; Lam. iv. 2.); and accordingly ought to be rendered so here: “thy head is as gold, gold.” As this, however, would produce tautology, it is therefore best to take **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ** as a contraction of **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ** (a variation of **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ**; see Gesenius, s. v.; Henderson on Jer. x. 9, and Stuart on Dan. x. 5), with which this word goes together, 1 Kings x. 18; Jer. x. 9; Dan. x. 5. As **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ** is regarded as the best gold; hence the rendering of the Vulg. *aurum optimum*, and Chald. **בְּמִזְבֵּחַ**.

Black as the raven, i. e. of the purest and most jet black, so highly esteemed by the Orientals as well as by the classical writers. Thus Hafiz, as quoted by Dr. Good:—

“Thy face is brighter than the cheek of day,
Blacker thy locks than midnight's deepest sway.”

And Ossian, Fingal, 2: “Her hair was the wing of the raven.” Comp. also Anac. xxix.; Ovid. Am. El. xiv. 9. **בְּנֵלֶת תְּלִילִים**, is rendered by the Sept. *elatæ palmariæ*, *the young leaves of the palm*; so the Vulg. *sicut elatae palmarum*; similarly

- 12 His eyes, like doves in water streams,
Are bathing in milk, sitting on fulness;
- 13 His cheeks are like beds of balsam,
Elevations of aromatic plants;
His lips are like lilies distilling liquid myrrh.
- 14 His hands like golden cylinders, inlaid with chrysolite,

Gesenius, De Wette, &c., *pendulous branches of the palm*; but this signification does not lie in the root פָלַל, which simply means *waving, hanging, or flowing down*; hence פְלִילִים (according to the analogy of לִילִים and קְלִילִים, comp. Ewald, § 158, b) *flowing curls, locks*.

12. *His eyes, like doves, &c.* The vivid and black pupils of his eyes, sparkling forth from the encircling lacteal white, in which they are, as it were, bathing and sitting on the fountain of tears, resemble doves bathing gaily in pellucid streams. The doves themselves, and not their eyes, are the point of comparison (vide supra, i. 15, and iv. 1.) Doves are very fond of bathing, and hence choose for their abode regions abounding with streams (Boch. Hieroz. ii. 1, c. 2.) The deep blue or grey dove, reflecting the lustrous dark hue about its neck when bathing in the limpid brook, suggested this beautiful simile. A similar figure occurs in the Gitagovinda: "The glances of her eyes played like a pair of water-birds of azure plumage, that sport near a full-blown lotos in a pool in the season of dew." The words בְּתַחְתֵּב מִמְּלֹא, *bathing in milk*, referring to the eyes, are descriptive of the milky white in which the black pupils of the eyes are, as it were, bathing. בְּתַחְתֵּב עַל, *on the fulness*, also referring to the eyes, correspond to the מִמְּלֹא מִמְּלֹא, *by the brooks of water*, which are predicated of the doves. Hodgson's rendering of שְׁבָנוּ בְּתַחְתֵּב עַל, *by and dwell among the ripe corn*, is absurd.

13. *His cheeks are like beds of balsam, &c.* His round cheeks with the pululating beard, resemble beds growing aromatic plants. The Sept., Arabic, Æth., Chald., read מִרְגִּילִות, the

part. Piel, instead of מִרְגִּילִות, which many modern commentators follow, but without MS. authority. The lily here referred to is most probably the *crown imperial*, of a deep red colour, whose leaves contain an aqueous humidity, which gathers itself in the form of pearls, especially at noon, and distils clear and pellucid drops; see Rosenmüller, Alther, iv. 138; Winer, Bib. Dict. s. v. There is, however, no necessity for referring the words "*distilling liquid myrrh*," to the lilies. Indeed, it seems to be more consonant with the context, to take them as predicated of the lips, expressing the sweetness of his conversation. Comp. iv. 11.

14. *His hands are like, &c.* His rounded arms and fingers tipped with well-shaped nails, as if inlaid with precious stones, resemble golden cylinders: and his white and smooth body, covered with a delicate blue vest, resembles polished ivory. בְּלִילִי (from בְּלִיל, *to roll*), *a roller, a cylinder*. Kleuker, Gesenius, Döpke, &c., translate "בְּלִילִי בְּרָב וּבְרָב", *his hands are like golden rings, adorned with gems of Tarshish*, comparing the hand when closed or bent to a golden ring, and the dyed nails to the gems in the rings. But בְּרָב never occurs in the sense of a ring worn on the finger; the word so used is בְּגָדָה, which would have been used here had the figure meant what Kleuker, &c. understood by it. שְׁבָנוּ, according to the Sept., Aquila, Josephus, and modern writers, is the chrysolite, and owes its Hebrew name to the circumstance that it was first found in Tartessus, that ancient city in Spain, between the two mouths of the river Bactis (Guadalquivir). The chrysolite, as its name imports

His body is like polished ivory, covered with sapphires.
 15 His legs are like pillars of marble
 Based upon pedestals of gold.
 His aspect is like that of Lebanon.

(*χρῖστος*, *gold*, and *λίθος*, *a stone*), is of a yellow or gold colour, and pellucid. Being of a glass lustre, the chrysolite is beautifully chosen to represent the nails. The words מְפֻלָּאִים בְּחֶרְשָׁבֶן refer to יָדָם. The expression עֲצֵמִים, prop. *the internal parts* of the human frame (v. 4), is here used for the *external*—the body; so Dan. ii. 32. מַתָּאָה is taken by most modern commentators to denote *something fabricated*, or *wrought*; an *artificial work*; thus deducing this sense from the secondary meaning of מַתָּאָה, which the Syriac (מְתַכָּה, *work*), seems to favour; but this is incompatible with the description here given of the beloved. The Shulamite, throughout the whole of this delineation, depicts the splendour and colour of the body as they dazzle *the eye*, but makes no reference to the wondrous construction of the frame, which could have been discerned only by the exercise of the *intellect*. It is therefore better, with Ibn Ezra, Kimchi, Rashi, Rashbam, Luther, Auth. Version, Mendelssohn, Kleuker, Williams, Good, Hengstenberg, &c. to take מַתָּאָה, from מַתָּאָה, in its primary meaning, *to shine*, *to be bright*, in the sense of *brightness*, *polish*; comp. Jer. v. 28.

Covered with sapphires. These words refer to his body, and describe the purple tunic covering the snowy white skin. Good, Meier, &c. take it to describe the blue veins which were seen through his clear snowy skin, like a sapphire stone through a thin transparent plate of ivory. But this is against the meaning of מַתָּאָה, which signifies *covered*, and not *inlaid*; the external covering, and not the internal seen through the outer cover. Commentators are not agreed whether that which we call the genuine sapphire, a transparent stone of a beautiful sky-blue colour, in hardness and value next

to the diamond, is meant by קָרֵז; or the sapphire of the ancients, which, according to Pliny, (Hist. Nat. xxxvii. 39; Theophrast. De Lapid. 231,) is a stone of a pure blue colour, and has frequently pebble spots of a golden yellow hue, which were formerly thought to be really gold, and is evidently our lapis lazuli, lazur-stone. As the latter does neither suit Job xxviii. 6, for the lazur-stone is not very precious; nor Exod. xxviii. 18, since it is too soft to bear engraving, it is more probable that the real sapphire is meant by קָרֵז in the Scriptures. This stone is often found in collections of ancient gems; see Rosenmüller, Bib. Bot. and Miner.; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s. v. The Syriac, which translates מַתָּאָה סְפִירִים by קָלָלָה חֲסָנָה, upon the sapphire breathing,

must have had another reading.
 15. *His legs are like pillars of marble*, &c. His white legs, standing upon beautiful feet, resemble the purest marble columns based upon golden pedestals. שָׂמֵן, as Kimchi well explains it, מה שהוא על הרגל חליל וגייס עד הברכים, is that part of the limb from the knee to the foot. That קָרֵז refers to his feet (Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Kleuker, Meier, Hitzig, &c.), and not to his sandals (Good, Williams, &c.), is evident from ver. 11 and 14, where the head and the hands, the visible parts of the body, are described as golden; and it is but natural that the feet, the only remaining exposed parts, should also be described as golden.

His aspect is like that of Lebanon. Having depicted the single parts of his body, the Shulamite now joins them together, and presents them in one whole, the appearance of which impresses the mind with a sense of beauty and majesty, like that of Lebanon. “That goodly mountain,

- He is distinguished as the cedars.
 16 His voice is exquisitely sweet;
 Yea, his whole person is exceedingly lovely.
 Such is my beloved, such my friend,
 O daughters of Jerusalem.

DAUGHTERS OF JERUSALEM.

CHAP. VI. 1 Whither is thy beloved gone,
 O thou fairest among women?
 Whither is thy beloved turned away?
 Say, that we may seek him with thee.

even Lebanon" (Deut. iii. 25), being so luxuriant in its vegetation and rich in scenery, appeared very beautiful and majestic at a distance. "Lebanon is a noble range of mountains, well worthy of the fame it has so long maintained. It is cultivated in a wonderful manner, by the help of terraces, and is still very fertile. We saw on some of its eminences, more than 2,000 feet high, villages and luxuriant vegetation; and on some of its peaks, 6,000 feet high, we could discern tall pines against the clear sky beyond. At first the clouds were on the lofty summit of the range, but they cleared away, and we saw Tannin, which is generally regarded as the highest peak of Lebanon. There is a deep ravine that seems to run up the whole way, and Tannin rises to the height of 10,000 feet. The rays of the setting sun gave a splendid tint to the lofty brow of the mountain."—Mission of Inquiry to the Jews, p. 240, &c.; comp. also Isa. xxxv. 2; Rosenmüller, Alterth. i. 2. p. 239; Volney, Travels, i. 293.

He is distinguished as the cedars, i.e., in his stature. The lofty cedar, towering above all other trees, is easily distinguished from the rest (Ezek. xxxi. 3-16; Amos ii. 9). A similar comparison occurs in Theocritus, xviii. 30, as quoted above, i. 9. The Chald., Ewald, Magnus, Philippson, &c., take יָזָר for *young man, youth*; comp. Ruth iii. 10; Isa. lxii. 5, "A young man like the cedars;" but the point of comparison is lost in this case. Besides, we should then expect the sing.

אֲרוֹנִים, and not the plur. אֲרוֹנִיּוֹת. Moreover, 2 Kings xix. 23, and Jer. xxii. 7, where the same phrase קְבַדְרַ אֲרוֹנִים is used, is against it.

16. *His voice is exquisitely sweet, &c.* The members, after being analysed separately, have been viewed as a whole; but the beautiful person thus described is inanimate, like the splendid marble columns or the lofty cedars, to which she had compared him. In this verse the Shulamite represents the charms of his speech; and thus affirms his whole person, bodily and mentally, as most lovely. "Such," she triumphantly exclaims, "is my friend; and now, ye daughters of Jerusalem, judge for yourselves wherein my beloved is more than another beloved." פֶּה, prop. *palate*, is used for the *organ of speech*, and *speech* itself, Job vi. 30; xxxi. 10; Prov. v. 3. That פֶּה here does not mean any part of the body, is evident from the context; for it would be preposterous to recur to the *palate* or *mouth* after the whole person had been described. מְחֻקָּם and צְלָמָים are *abstracts* (see i. 2), *adjectively* used (Gesen. § 106, 1, Rem. 1), to give intensity to the idea; comp. Gen. i. 2. רֵאֵב, *his whole person, bodily and mentally.*

1. *Whither is thy beloved gone, &c.?* The court ladies, moved by this charming description, inquire of the Shulamite what direction he took, and offer to seek him. The word הַגָּן is omitted after רֵאֵב, for the sake of brevity and pathos. For the superlative force of הַגָּדוֹת בְּצָבָא, vide supra, i. 8.

THE SHULAMITE.

- 2 My beloved is gone down into his garden,
To the beds of aromatics,
To feed in the gardens, and to gather lilies.
3 I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine ;
He who feeds his flock among the lilies.

SOLOMON.

- 4 Graceful art thou, O my love, as Tirzah,
Beautiful as Jerusalem,
Awe-inspiring as bannered hosts !
5 Turn away thine eyes from me,

2, 3. *My beloved is gone down into his garden*, &c. The Shulamite, knowing that the court ladies are anxious to induce her to transfer her affections to the king, replies in a vague manner, that he is gone to his garden, he is not lost, nor has her affection to him abated, though they are now separated, nor does she fear that his love for her is diminished. This incontestably proves that the object of the damsel's affection, of whom she gave a description in the preceding, is not the king, but, as she herself tells us here most unequivocally, a shepherd. For ver. 3, comp. chap. ii. 16.

4. *Graceful art thou, O my love*, &c. Just as before (i. 9), Solomon made his appearance as soon as the Shulamite inquired after her beloved, so here he comes forward again when she speaks of her absent lover; thus endeavouring to show his own attachment to her. He addresses her, as before, in the most flattering terms: "Thou art as graceful as the delectable Tirzah, as charming as the delightful Jerusalem, as striking and conquering as an imposing army in full battle array." Tirzah was the royal residence of the kings of Israel after the revolt of Rehoboam, and retained that distinction till the time of Omri, who built Samaria (1 Kings x. 15-21; xvi. 14; 2 Kings xv. 4). It was a city of fascinating appearance, as its name, תִּרְצָה, *delightful*, indicates; and hence yielded a very flattering comparison. The

Sept. takes תִּרְצָה as an appellative, ὡς εὐδοκία ; so Aquila, κατ' εὐδοκίαν, Sym. εὐδοκήτη, Syriac, אַמְרֵת חֲנָן

The Chald. paraphrases it תִּרְצָה בְּזֶבֶחַ, in the time of thy willingness, and Rashi inclines to it; the Vulg. has suavis et decora. But there can be no doubt, as Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, and all modern commentators take it, that it is a proper name, Tirzah, the capital of Jeroboam's kingdom. It may be that the ancient versions resorted to the expediency of taking תִּרְצָה as an appellative, because they wished to avoid the contrast of the two capitals, since this would speak against Solomon being the author of this book. Jerusalem, "the perfection of beauty" (Lam. ii. 15), afforded another excellent figure.

Awe-inspiring as bannered hosts! The fascinating power of a woman is frequently compared to the prowess of an armed host. Comp. Prov. vii. 26. בְּנֵי, which occurs once more in connexion with אֹוֹי, Hab. i. 7, means awful, awe-inspiring, imposing. בְּנֵי נְפָרָא, Niph. part. prop. *bannered, people furnished, or arrayed with banners*, hence *armies, hosts*. The feminine is here used to express a collective idea; comp. מִלְכָא, *caravans*, Isa. xxi. 13; Gesen. § 107, 3 d.; Ewald, § 179 c.

5. *Turn away thine eyes from me*, &c. These awe-inspiring hosts are described as concentrated in her eyes, which

For they inspire me with awe !
Thy hair is like a flock of goats
Springing down Mount Gilead ;

6 Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep,
Which come up from the washing-pool ;
All of which are paired,
And not one among them is bereaved.

7 Like a part of the pomegranate
Are thy cheeks behind thy veil.

8 I have threescore queens,
And fourscore concubines,
And maidens without number;

9 But she is my only one, my dove, my perfect beauty,
She, the delight of her mother,
She, the darling of her parent !

Solomon implores the Shulamite to remove from him. "The artillery of the eyes," says Dr. Good, *in loco*, "is an idea common to poets of every nation." Thus Anacreon, xvi.

Σύν μὲν λέγεις τὰ Θήβας,
'Ο δ' αὖ Φρυγῶν ἀυτάς·
Ἐγὼ δ' ἐμάς ἀλώσειε.
Οὐχ ἵππος ὥλεσέν με,
Οὐ πεζός, οὐδὲν οἶης.
Στρατός δὲ καινὸς ἄλλος,
'Απ' ὅμματων με βάλων.

"Sing then of Thebes—let others tell
How Troy's foundations rose and fell;
My numbers shall alone repeat
My own encounters and defeat.
Me fleets and armies ne'er appal—
'Tis to a different host I fall:
A host within thine eyes, my fair,
That lurk and ply their arrows there."

Comp. also Ode ii. בָּאֵר, in Kal, to tremble (Isa. lx. 5), and Hiphil, to cause to tremble or fear, to frighten, to awe. Similarly the Sept. ἀνεπτέρωσάν με. Vulg. me avolare fuerunt, "they make me flee for fear;" and the

Syriac **מְאֹרֶבֶת**, *they make me fear*. The explanation of Ibn Ezra, מְאֹרֶבֶת, which is followed by the Authorized Version, cannot be deduced from the root; nor does it suit the context. Equally untenable is the explanation הגִּירָאֵבֶת, Rashi and Rashbam. For **מְאֹרֶבֶת**, *mas*, with **מְאֹרֶבֶת**, *fem.* see supra, iv. 9.

6, 7. *Thy teeth are like a flock of sheep*, &c. For the interpretation of the second half of ver. 5 and vers. 6, 7, see iv. 1-3, where the same description is given, with the exception that there קבנְגָוֹת is used for sheep, and here חֲלִילִם, and that the first half of ver. 3 is here omitted in the Hebrew, which is here given by the Sept. We cannot refrain from quoting the beautiful explanation of these figures from the manuscript commentary of Immanuel : תַּחַת שֵׁעֶץ וְשָׂוֹרְחֵי נְפָלִים וְהַלְּבָד לְמַיִן עָזָר הַעֲוִים שָׁהֵם נְתָלִים הַל וְהַבָּרוּם וְשַׁנְּכָר הַמְּלָגִים שְׁוִים לְמַיִן עָזָר הַחֲלִילִם שְׁפָרְדוּם בְּנֵן וְהַסְּעִילִים מִן הַחֲזָבָה שְׁלָמִים מִתְּחָאמָמוֹת שְׁבָא לְשִׁיחָה שָׁהֵם שְׁוֹתָה נְשֻׁכָּה אֵין דָם שָׁאֵן שָׁן שְׁמִינִיה גְּנַעַת וְחַדְרָר אוֹהֵם הַחֲאָר הַחֲלִילִם שָׁהֵם שְׁמִינִיה וְאַזְנָבָן בָּהָם שְׁבִילָה וּבְנֵי שִׁינָה וּזְמָנוֹת אַלְיָהִם. The Septuagint adds after פְּלִצְבָּה אֵין בְּדָם, and not one among them is bereaved, in ver. 6; ὡς σπαρτίον τὸ κόκκινον χειλὶ σου, καὶ λαλιά σου ὥραιά, like a braid of scarlet are thy lips, and thy mouth is lovely, from chap iv. 3.

8, 9. *I have threescore queens, &c.* The flattery and praise here exceed all that have been previously offered. Solomon protests that, though he is surrounded by a numerous retinue of women of all ranks, the Shulamite is the sole possessor of his heart: she who is the

- The damsels saw her and praised her ;
 The queens also, and the concubines, and extolled her thus :
 10 “ Who is she that looks forth as the morn,
 Beautiful as the moon, bright as the sun,
 Awe-inspiring as bannered hosts ? ”

THE SHULAMITE.

- 11 I went down into the nut-garden,
 To look among the green plants by the river,
 To see whether the vine was budding,
 Whether the pomegranates were in bloom.

best beloved of her mother, and whose consummate beauty has elicited the highest praises from the queens, concubines and maidens. The discrepancy between the number of Solomon's wives and concubines here stated, and that described in 1 Kings xi. 3, may be reconciled by taking מִשְׁׁלָה, מִשְׁׁלָה and אֵין קָבֶר for indefinite and large numbers: *many, very many, without number*: so Kleuker, Rosenmüller, Magnus, &c. We must supply 'י, to me, after מִשְׁׁלָה, there. For מִשְׁׁלָה, mas, instead of מִשְׁׁלָה, fem., see ii. 7. The pronoun אַתָּה, she, is the subject in all the three clauses, and מִשְׁׁלָה in the first and second clause, and מִשְׁׁלָה in the third are predicates. We must supply יְהִי after אַתָּה אֲתָּה, she is my only one; just as מִשְׁׁלָה. The word אֲתָּה is used for the only one of its kind (Job xxiii. 13; Ezek. ii. 64; vii. 5), favourite; comp. אֲתָּה עַזְּזָה, 2 Sam. vii. 23.

10. *Who is she that looks forth*, &c. That Solomon quotes here the eulogy mentioned in the preceding verse, which the court ladies pronounced upon the superlative beauty of the Shulamite when they first beheld her, has long been recognised by the Rabbins, and is now admitted by most interpreters. This is, moreover, confirmed by Prov. xxxi. 28, where the same words, אֲתָּה and מִשְׁׁלָה, are used, and the following verse contains the eulogy which the husband utters. The rising morning, with its red light looking down from heaven over the mountains (Joel ii. 2); the beautiful and placid complexion of the moon, and the resplendent and re-

splendent appearance of the sun, have often afforded, both to the Oriental and to the Greek and Latin writers, exquisite similes for beauty and grandeur. Thus Sirach (l. 5, 6), describing the High Priest, says :—

“ How splendid he was in his interview with the people.
 In his coming out from the house of the veil !
 As the morning star amid the clouds,
 As the moon when full in her days,
 As the sun when beaming upon the temple of the Most High.”

Comp. also Rev. i. 16; Theocritus' description of Helen, xviii. 26—28; Lane's Arabian Nights, i. 29. מִשְׁׁלָה and מִשְׁׁלָה are poetical epithets for the sun and moon, Isa. xxiv. 23.

11, 12. *I went down into the nut-garden*, &c. As Solomon had referred, in uttering his encomium, to her first coming within sight of the court ladies, the Shulamite here instantly interrupts the king, in order to explain how that came to pass. “ I did not go to meet the king, to exhibit myself and be admired by him or his royal retinue; I merely went into the garden with the intention of seeing whether there were any herbs to take home for use, and whether the fruit promised well; and this (מִשְׁׁלָה) intention of mine brought me unawares near the monarch and his cortége.” Though מִשְׁׁלָה, nut-tree, (so Sept., Vulg., Chald.,) nut occurs nowhere else in the Old Testament, yet its meaning is established from the cognate languages, and its frequent usage in the Talmud and latter Hebrew writers, בְּמִשְׁׁלָה, to look among (Gen. xxxiv.), with the intention of choosing

12 Unwittingly had my longing soul brought me
To the chariots of the companions of the prince.

(She goes away).

that which pleases, Gen. vi. 2. *אֲבִ הַתְּלֵל*, *the green or vegetables growing by the river side*; so the Sept. γενήματι τοῦ χειμάρρου, and Rashbam, *הַלְּשׁוֹן הַתְּלֵל*. The Sept. has here *אָה דָּוִי* *אָה שָׂמֶן*, from chap. vii. 14, which the Arabic, Ethiopic, and several modern commentators wrongly follow, as it has no MS. authority, and has evidently arisen from a misunderstanding of this passage.

12. *Unwittingly*, &c. This verse has caused much perplexity to interpreters. The ancient versions, finding the sense obscure, have altered almost every word, and hence increased the difficulty. Thus the Sept. has οὐκ ἔγνω ἡ ψυχὴ μου ἐθετό με ἄρματα Ἀμιναδάβ, which Luther follows: “*Meine Seele wusste es nicht, dass er mich zum Wagen Aminadib geetzt hatte:*” They take *ψηψη* as the subject, alter *ψηψης*, the first person com., into *ψηψη*, the third fem., to agree with *ψηψη*, a fem. noun, *ψηψη*, the third fem., into *ψηψη*, the third masc. referring it to Solomon, and regard *ψηψη* as a proper name. The Vulg. has *Nescivi, anima mea conturbavit me propter quadrigas Aminadab*; altering *ψηψη*, the Kal of *ψηψ*, to *put, to place*, into the Hiphil of *ψηψ*, to *be astonished*, *ψηψη* into *ψηψ*, the plural of *ψηψ*, with the preposition *בְּ*, and taking *ψηψ* as a proper name. Passing over these textual alterations, and the emendations proposed by modern commentators, as unauthorized, we shall first examine the words as they are in the text, and then the most plausible interpretations deducible therefrom. *ψηψ* are rightly taken by most, though differing in their opinion as to the rendering of the remainder of the verse, as *adverbial*, in the sense of *suddenly, unwittingly*, and as subordinate to *ψηψη*, *my soul has unwittingly put me, or placed me*; comp. Job v. 9; Isa. xlvi. 11; Jer. I. 24. The verb *ψηψ*, *to put, to place*, may be construed with two accusatives, one of the person, and the other of the

thing; and *ψηψ* may be taken as the second accusative (comp. Ps. xxxix. 9; 1 Sam. viii. 1; Mich. i. 7), or *ψηψ* may be taken as a designation of *place* after *ψ*, a verb of motion; comp. Isa. xl. 26. *חַרְגָּבָה*, a *chariot*, used for warlike purposes, or for state or pleasure, Gen. xlvi. 29; Exod. xv. 4; 2 Sam. xv. 1. The expression *ψηψ* may either mean *populares mei*—(the Hebrews having no separate word for “countryman,” use this expression to denote one of their own people (Gesen. xxiii. 11; Lam. ii. 11), and *ψ* may be an adjective for *ψ*, as the article is sometimes omitted through following a noun with suffix)—or *ψ* may here be used, like *ψ*, for *companions, attendants, followers*, (Eccl. iv. 16,) the ‘in *ψ*’ not being a suffix, but *paragogic*, and a mark of the const. state (Deut. xxxiii. 16; Lam. i. 1), and *ψ*, a noun in the genitive of the king or prince. As to how much stress there is to be laid on the Sept., which takes *ψηψ* as a *proper name*, and is followed by the Arabic, Æthiop., Vulg., and which also produced some variations in the orthography of these words, we need only refer to vii. 2, where the same version renders *ψηψ* by θύγαθηρ Ἀμιναδὰβ. The verse, therefore, may either be translated: “*My soul has unwittingly made me the chariots of my noble countrymen*,” or, “*My soul has unwittingly placed at, or brought me to the chariots of my noble people, or to the chariots of the companions of the prince*.” Now against the first rendering we urge, in the first place, that if the chariots be taken in the accusative, and hence in a figurative sense, we are unavoidably led into a bewildering maze of conjectural and fanciful opinions. The following may serve as a specimen. Rashi takes the chariots to be a sign of *ignominy*. נְפָשִׁי שְׁמַתִּי לְהִזְמִין מִרְבָּבוֹת הַרְמִיבָּה, “*My soul has made me to be chariots for foreign princes to ride upon*”; i.e. *I have willingly brought upon me a foreign yoke*. Ibn

SOLOMON.

CHAP. VII. 1 Return, return, O Shulamite,
Return, return, that we may look at thee.

THE SHULAMITE.

What will you behold in the Shulamite ?

SOLOMON.

Like a dance to double choirs.

Ezra takes the chariots as a figure for *swiftness*, *לֹא רָצַח שָׁהִיחַ הַלְכָה בְמִרְצָחָא אֵיךְ*, “ *I did not know that I was hurrying on to thee with the rapidity of the chariots of the great prince who is among my people ;* ”

which the Syriac, *אֲנָזְבָּדָתְּ נָזְבָּדָתְּ*

אֲנָזְבָּדָתְּ נָזְבָּדָתְּ, though sharing somewhat in the errors of the Sept. and Vulg., seems to favour. Herder takes the chariots as a symbol of *martial power, guard, and protection* (Ps. xx. 8 ; 2 Kings ii. 11, 12). Hengstenberg affirms that the chariots signify *champion, guard, defence*. And secondly, this translation interrupts the connexion of this verse with the preceding one. Now the second rendering avoids all this. Solomon has repeated in verse 10 the praise which the court ladies had pronounced on the Shulamite when they first saw her ; the Shulamite (in ver. 11, 12), in reply, explains how she came to the carriages of the court ladies.

1. *Return, return, &c.* Here we see how little all the persuasions, promises, and eulogies of the king and courtiers affected the sincere and deeply rooted affections of the Shulamite for her beloved shepherd. No sooner had she explained (as she incidentally informs us) how she came to be noticed and taken up by the king, than she actually started off. But the king entreated her to return, that he might look at her once more. The Shulamite, pausing a little, turns round and modestly asks :

What will you behold in the Shulamite ? That is, what can you see in a humble rustic girl ? *וְהַנְּחִילָתֶךָ*, as is evident

from the article, is a gentile noun, according to the analogy of *לְשָׁנְגָתָה*, (1 Kings i. 3 ; 2 Kings iv. 12, 25.) Ewald, § 156 c: and a female inhabitant of Shulam, *i.q.* Shunem. Shulam still exists as a village, now called Sôlam, about three miles and a half north of Zerîn, (Jezreel), and lies on the declivity, at the western end of the mountain of Duby, the so called Little Hermon. “ There is little room for doubt that it is the ancient Shunem of the tribe of Issachar, where the Philistines encamped before Saul’s last battle, (Josh. xix. 18 ; 1 Sam. xxvii. 4.) From the same place, apparently, Abishag the Shunammite was brought to the aged David ; and here it was probably that Elisha often lodged in the house of the Shunammite woman, and afterwards raised her son from the dead (1 Kings i. 3 ; 2 Kings iv. 8—37 ; viii. 1—6). Eusebius and Jerome describe it in their day as a village lying five Roman miles from Mount Tabor, towards the southern quarter, and they write the name already *Sulam*.” Robinson, Palestine, iii. 169, &c. The transition of *בְּ* into *בִּ* is of frequent occurrence ; comp. *עַלְיָה* and *עַלְיָה*, *to burn*. (Gesen. Lexicon, *בְּ a*; Ewald, § 156, c.) *הַנְּחִילָתֶךָ* is not the feminine of the name *הַנְּחִילָה*, which would be *הַנְּחִילָתְּךָ* ; comp. Lev. xxiv. 11 ; 1 Chron. iii. 19 ; Ewald, § 274, f.

Like a dance to double choirs, replies the king, *i.e.* “ to see thee is like gazing at the charming view of a festive choir expressing their merriment in a sacred dance. The Hebrews, in common with other nations (Strabo, 10), used sacred dancing, accompanied by vocal and instrumental music, as expressive of joy and rejoicing (Exod. xv. 20 ; 2 Sam. vi. 15 ; Ps. exlix. 3).

- 2 How beautiful are thy feet in sandals, O noble maiden !
 The circuits of thy thighs like ornaments,
 The work of a master's hands.
 3 Thy navel is like a round goblet,
 Let not spiced wine be wanted in it;

A sight of such an assemblage of various beauties, all swelling their voices into one song of joy, and blending their several forms in one choral dance of joy, must have afforded a delightful picture. No wonder that such a scene is described by Homer (*Iliad*, xviii. 590,) as portrayed on the famous shield of Achilles, and that

"On either side spectators numerous stood,
 Delighted."

To this charming scene, therefore, does the captivated monarch compare the view of the Shulamite. מִחְיָה, from מִחְיָה, to turn round, a dance, the joyous dancing on a festive occasion. מַחֲנָה, prop. a camp, also a multitude, a band of people, Gen. 1. 9. מַחְנִים is the regular dual, and not the plural (Sept., Vulg., Gesenius, Döpke, &c.), and is here used because this dance consisted of a band arranged in a double line, something like our country dance. On the different kinds of Oriental dances, see Rosenmüller, Orient. ii. 19—22; Wilkinson, Manners, &c., ii. 328—340. Saalschütz, Archäologie der Hebraer, vol. i. 302. The words מַחְנָה וּמַחְנִים have elicited a variety of interpretations. Some take מַחְנִים as a proper name, and say that reference is here made to some particular mode of worship practised in that place in consequence of Jacob's sojourn there; but this is purely imaginary. Others again suppose that an allusion is made to Gen. xxxii. 2, 3, and hence render מַחְנִים by steps or מַחְנָה; but this is unfounded, since we have not the slightest intimation in that passage that the angels were engaged in dancing.

2. *How beautiful are thy feet in sandals!* The Shulamite, in obedience to the king's request, returns, and as she advances, Solomon is arrested by her beautiful feet, with which he begins his last highly flattering delineation of her beauty, and his last attempt to win

her affections. קֶרְלִין, Chald. גְּלִילִים, sandals, formed an important part of an Oriental costume (Ezek. xvi. 10; Judith xvi. 9). The ladies bestowed great pains upon, and evinced much taste in ornamenting this article of dress, which attracted the notice of the opposite sex. בֵּן נָבִיב does not mean a descendant of a titled family, but, according to a common Hebrew idiom, which applies בֵּן, and other terms of human kindred to relations of every kind, expresses that she herself was of a noble character. Comp. 1 Sam. i. 16; Gesen. § 106, 2 a; Ewald, § 287 f.

The circuits of thy thighs like ornaments, &c. To describe the beautiful appearance of an object, the Orientals frequently compared it to some precious metal or gem; see supr. v. 11; Prov. xxv. 12. The simple metal or gem, however, seems not to suffice here to express the exquisite symmetry of these parts of the body; they are, therefore, compared with some beautifully-wrought and highly-finished ornaments, formed of such materials. The rendering of מַכְלִים by steps (Sept., Vulg., Ewald, Döpke, Hengstenberg, &c.), and מַכְלִין by Schwingungen, movements (Hengstenberg), is contrary to the scope of the description, which obviously depicts the several members of the body (beginning with the feet and gradually ascending to the head), and not their actions. תְּהִלָּתִים is not the dual (Luther), but the plural; according to the analogy of אַגְּדָתִים, בְּרִיאָתִים, פְּרִיאָתִים. The s in the plural is preferred to the ' in consequence of the preceding A sound. Gesen. § 93, 66; Ewald, § 186 e.

3. *Thy navel is like a round goblet, &c.* The reference and the import of the figure are obvious. בְּרִיאָה, i.q. בְּרִיאָה, mixture, mixed wine. The ancients were in the habit of mixing wine with spices, to make it more stimulating and exciting. Wine thus mixed was called בְּרִיאָה, viii.

Thy body is like a heap of wheat,
Hedged round with lilies.

4 Thy bosom is like two young fawns,
Twins of a gazelle.

2, the *vinum aromatites* of the Greeks and Romans. (Comp. Ps. lxxv. 9; Prov. ix. 5; Isa. v. 22; Mishna, Maaser sheni, ii. 1; Baba Mez. v. 2; Pliny, Hist. Nat. xiv. 15; Gesen. Thesaurus, p. 808; Winer, Bib. Dict. s. v.) שׁרֵךְ is one of the few instances in which וְ are resolved before suffixes, owing to the broadness of the vowels when preceding הָ, or הַ. Comp. הַ with suffix וְלִילֵהּ: וְלִילֵהּ דָרֶךְ הַגְּרָדִים, Ewald, § 265; Fürst, Lexicon, s. v. הַ—. The particle הַ expresses a subjective wish, Gesen. Lexicon, הַ, ii. 6, Ewald, § 320.

Thy body is like a heap of wheat, &c. The point of analogy seems to subsist between the appearance of the body and that of a quantity of corn heaped up, which Ibn Ezra well explains עַבְתָּה מִלְמָחָה וְקָה מִלְמָחָה; so also Rashbam. Remembering that corpulency was deemed essential to an Eastern beauty, this comparison will appear obvious. Selden, who is followed by others, takes this passage as a prediction of the bride's fertility: as:—"Wheat and barley were among the ancient Hebrews emblems of fertility; and it was usual for standers-by to scatter these grains upon the married couple, with a wish that they might increase and multiply." Uxor Hebraica, lib. ii. cap. 15. "A custom," adds Williams, "which might probably originate from this passage, or vice versa."

But though it is true that it was a common practice among the Jews at marriages to distribute among the company dried seeds (Talm. Chethuboth, ii. 1), probably to indicate a wish that the newly-married couple might be fruitful, it does not follow that it was the practice at so early an age, or that it is the meaning here. Were this the sense here, we should expect that the Jewish commentators, who well knew and practised the manners and customs of their own people, would have recognised it. Whereas, Rashi,

Rashbam, Ibn Ezra, &c., explain this figure as referring to the appearance.

Hedged round with, &c. The threshing-floors in ancient times were in the open air; and when the wheat had been threshed out, fanned and heaped up, each heap was stuck round with thorns, in order to keep off the cattle. (Hos. ii. 5, 6.) To render the figure more flattering, the enamoured king changes the hedge of thorns into a fence of lilies. Others, however, refer these words to a robe embroidered with lilies, covering her body; and others, again, to some ancient custom of surrounding or covering the newly-threshed heap of wheat with a sort of garland of flowers, indicating the joy of the husbandman at the return of the harvest.

4, 5. *Thy bosom is like, &c.* These verses, with a little variation arising from the fact that a different person is the speaker here, contain the same figures as iv. 4, 5. The comparison between the beautiful symmetry, erect bearing, and ivory colour of the neck, and between the elegant structure, lofty altitude, and white colour of a tower, appears more striking and apposite from the description given by Josephus of the towers of Jerusalem: "They were so very tall, they appeared much taller by the place on which they stood; for that very old wall, wherein they were, was built on a high hill, and was itself a kind of elevation that was still thirty cubits taller, over which were the towers situated, and thereby were made much higher to appearance. The largeness also of the stones was wonderful; for they were not made of common small stones, nor of such large ones only as men could carry, but they were of white marble, cut out of the rocks: each stone was twenty cubits in length, and ten cubits in breadth, and five in depth. They were so exactly united

5 Thy neck is like an ivory tower ;
 Thine eyes are as the pools in Heshbon,
 By the populous gate ;
 Thy nose is as the tower of Lebanon,
 Looking towards Damascus.

6 Thy head upon thee as purple,

to one another, that each tower looked like one entire block of stone, so growing naturally, and afterwards cut by the hand of the artificer into the present shape and corners; so little, or not at all, did their joints or connexion appear." (Jewish War, book v. chap. iv. 4.—Whiston's translation.) The comparison of the neck with ivory is also used by Anacreon (Ode xxix. 28, 29), in his description of Bathyllus :—

Τὸν Ἀδώνιδος παρελθόν
 ἐλεφάντινος τράχηλος.

"But never can thy pencil trace
 His ivory neck of Paphian grace."

Thine eyes, &c. That is, are as bright and serene as the celebrated translucent pools of this city. Heshbon, a town in the southern parts of the Hebrew territory, about twenty miles east of the point where the Jordan enters the Dead Sea, originally belonged to the Moabites (Numb. xxi. 25), and afterwards came into possession of the Amorite king Sihon (*ibid.*; Deut. ii. 24; Josh. iii. 10). It was conquered by Moses shortly before his death (Numb. xxi. 25), and was first assigned to the tribe of Reuben (Numb. xxxii. 37; Josh. xiii. 17), and afterwards to the tribe of Gad, and became a Levitical city (Josh. xxi. 39; 1 Chron. vi. 81). It was retaken by the Moabites when the ten tribes were carried into exile (Isa. xv. 4; xvi. 9; Jer. xlvi. 2), but the Jews conquered it again afterwards (Joseph. Antiq. lib. xiii.). The ruins of Heshbon, the name by which the place is still known, have been visited and described by modern travellers. (Burckhardt, Travels, p. 365; Biblical Repos. for 1833, p. 650; Robinson, Palestine, ii. 278.) Heshbon was the pride of Moab, was famous for its fertility, verdure of plantation, and beautiful reservoirs. Hence the simile

here. A similar comparison is used by Ovid, *De Arte Ama.* ii. 722 :—

"Adspicies oculos tremulo fulgare meiantes,
 Ut sol a liquida saepe resulget aqua."

בָּתְּהַבְּמָם is well explained by Rashbam, *the populous*, שָׁרוּבּ בְּנֵי הָעָרָ יִצְאֵן וַיַּכְסֹן בָּהּ, "because, through it a multitude of the inhabitants of the town walk in and out;" שָׁהָרְבִים גַּם־לְהַסְחָנֵל שָׁם, "because it is the chief place of concourse." בָּתָּה, daughter, like בָּן, son, is idiomatically used in Hebrew to express quality. Compare שָׁפֵן—בָּתָה, *a son of fatness*, i.e. fat; Isa. v. 1, and supra, vii. 2. The Septuagint, which is followed by the Vulgate, not understanding this idiom, renders it literally ἐν πλαίσιοις θυγατρὸς πολλῶν, *by the gates of the daughter of many*.

Thy nose, &c. This tower must have contained a projection or an overhanging part, celebrated for its great symmetry and elegance. Hence the comparison between the beautifully projecting tower and the well-proportioned nose.

6. *Thy head upon thee, &c.* פֶּרְכִּי stands here for קְרַבְּלִי, *purpura*; so Ibn Gamach, Ibn Ezra, Fürst, &c. This shell-fish is of a spiral form, and "the exquisite juice which is so greatly sought after for the purpose of dyeing cloth is situate in the middle of the throat. This secretion consists of a tiny drop contained in a white vein, from which the precious liquid used for dyeing is distilled, being of the tint of a rose, somewhat inclined to black." Pliny, Hist. Nat. ix. 60, 61; Arist. Hist. Anim. lib. v. c. 14. The simile here subsists between the spiral form of this shell-fish and the pyramidal shape in which the hair was anciently tied up on the top of the head. The Chinese and other Eastern women still wear their hair rolled up into a knot or bunch at the top of the head; and

And the tresses of thy head as crimson.
The king is captivated by the ringlets :
How beautiful and how charming,
O love, in thy fascinations !

7 This thy growth is like a palm-tree,
And thy bosom like its clusters.

even in this country ladies used to dress their hair in a somewhat similar manner. The rendering of the ancient versions of מְרַגֵּל, by *Mount Carmel*, which the majority of modern interpreters fellow: they take the simile to be between the beautiful appearance of the bride's head and the charming, luxuriant, and picturesque summit of this celebrated mountain; but this is against the parallelism and 2 Chron. ii. 16, 13; iii. 14. מְרַגֵּל is derived from מָרַג, to be shininely red, with לִי appended, according to the analogy of מְרַגָּה; vide Fürst, Lexicon in voce; or it may be that this shell-fish was so called because it was found on the shore near Carmel. At all events, there is no need to look for the etymology of this word out of the Shemitic family.

And the tresses, &c. Fine hair is frequently compared by the Greeks and Romans with purple. Thus Anacreon, xxviii. 11, 13.

γράφε δὲ εἰς ὄλης παρεῖν
ὑπὸ πορφύρασι χαίταις
ἐλεφάντινον μέτωπον.

Then paint, from her full cheeks,
Beneath her purple hair,
Her ivory forehead.

Compare also Virgil, Georg. i. 405; Tibul. i. 4, 63. The purple here referred to is that kind which Pliny describes as "nigrans aspectu indemque suspectu refulgens." מְרַגָּה, the costly colour extracted from the shell-fish, is from מָרַג, kind. מָרַג, to colour, with the prosthetic נ and termination לִי; vide supra, chap. iii. 9.

The king is captivated, &c. The ringlets, like the lashes of the eyelids, are frequently represented as the net of love. Prov. vi. 25; Sirach ix. 3, 4. Thus Jami, in his Joseph and Zuleikha, chap. i., as quoted by Dr. Good, says:—

"When Love in graceful ringlets plants his toils,
The fool he catches, and the wise man falls;

But, thence released, the sage his snare discerns,
And Reason's lamp with woutred lustre burns."

תְּכַלֵּת stands for תְּכַלֵּת הַמֶּלֶךְ; the article is not unfrequently omitted in poetry; comp. Ps.ii.2; xxi. 2; Gesen. § 109; Ewald, § 277, b. מְרַגָּה, a ringlet, so called from its flowing down over the shoulders; vide supra, chap. i. 16. The construction of מְרַגָּה with אַיִלָּה, i.e. royal purple (one of the Greek translators in the Hexapla, Vulgate, Syriac, Luther, Henbigant, &c.), is against the punctuation and the evenness of the metre, interferes with the interpretation of the remaining words, and has evidently arisen from a misunderstanding of the passage. Besides, no people is known by such a name. It was owing to a feeling of being consistent that the editor of Calmet felt himself constrained to take אַיִלָּה as a proper name, Argamen, to correspond with the parallel מְרַגָּה; and to explain this clause as alluding to a particular mode of plaiting the hair, like the weaving of Arech, a city in Babylonia, supposed to be famous for its weaving manufactories.

How beautiful, &c. The captivated king, having described the beauty of the several parts of the body, now combines the separate members into one lovely form, and endows it with life and fascination, which none of the inanimate beauties to which he had compared her, however admirable, possessed. אהַבָּה, love, abstract for concrete, loved one, vide supra, chap. v. 1. מְנֻעָה, charm, attraction, such as living beings possess. Aquila and the Syria, separating the word מְנֻעָה, תְּמַנְּעָה, render it θυγάτηρ τρυφῶν, תְּמַנְּעָה.

7. *This thy growth, &c.* The beautiful growth of the palm-tree, like that of the cedar and cypress, supplied a forcible image to the ancients.

- 8 I long to climb this palm-tree,
 I long to clasp its branches.
 May thy bosom be unto me
 As the clusters of the vine,
 And the odour of thy breath
 As that of apples ;
 9 And thy speech as delicious wine,

Thus the Son of Sirach, xxiv. 13,
 14 :—

"I grew up as a cedar of Lebanon,
 And as a cypress upon Mount Hermon ;
 I grew up as a palm-tree in En-gedi,
 And as a rose-tree in Jerieho."

Comp. also Homer, Odyss. vi. 162, and supra, chap. v. 15. **לְבָשָׂר**, *bunch, cluster*, of grapes, dates, or flowers; the context must decide which. Here, from its close proximity to **תַּכְאֵל**, *palm-tree*, dates are most probably intended. For the etymology of **לְבָשָׂר**, see supra, chap. i. 14; and for its form, both here and in ver. 9, Ewald, § 212 d.

8. *I long to climb, &c.* After this flattering description Solomon tells the Shulamite how greatly he desires, and how happy he should be to enjoy, the affections of one so lovely and charming. We earnestly request those who maintain the allegorical interpretation of the Song seriously to reflect whether this verse, and indeed the whole of this address, can be put into the mouth of Christ as speaking to the Church. Would not our minds recoil with horror were we to hear a Christian using it publicly, or even privately, to illustrate the love of Christ for his Church?—**מִתְּבָשֵׁל**, *to speak, also to wish, to desire*, Gen. xliv. 28; Exod. ii. 14; 1 Sam. xx. 4. **אָמַרְתִּי** does not express *the past*, but *the present*; comp. **לְמִתְּבָשֵׁל** in the preceding verse; Gesen. § 126, 3; Ewald, § 135 b. The second verb **לְבָשָׂר** is subordinate to the first, vide supra, chap. ii. 3. **לְבָשָׂר** is added to **לְבָשָׂר**, to distinguish it from *the dates* in ver. 7.

And the odour of thy breath, &c. That is, be as sweet and as quickening as that of apples. **לְבָשָׂר** is used in preference to **רֶבֶד**, because the nostril, or the breathing (which **לְבָשָׂר** literally means) is regarded by the Hebrews

as that which in distension betokens pleasure, anger, &c. The appropriateness of this expression will be more manifest when we remember that hitherto all that the Shulamite showed towards Solomon were resistance and independence. There is also a play of words here, **לְבָשָׂר** being derived from **לְבָשָׁה**, *to breathe*, and **לְבָשָׂר**, from **לְבָשָׁה**, *to breathe*. Hodgson strangely renders **לְבָשָׂר פָּנָה**, “the fragrance of *thy face*,” because several MSS. read **לְבָשָׂר** with a *yod*.

9. *And thy speech, &c.* That is, Let thy language to me be as the sweetness of delicious wine. Rosenmüller, Döpke, De Wette, Noyes, Delitzsch, Hengstenberg, &c., put these words into the mouth of the maiden. But it is incredible that this modest woman would approve of these expressions with regard to her own person, and that she would continue the words **לְבָשָׂר פָּנָה לְבָשָׂר**. **לְבָשָׂר**, *pulate*, metonymically for speech; vide supra, chap. v. 16. **לְבָשָׂר** is used as a *substantive*, and placed in the genitive after **לְבָשָׂר**; comp. Ps. xxi. 4; Prov. xxiv. 25; Ewald, § 287 b. The phrase **לְבָשָׂר יְמִינָה** describes the smooth or mellow wine, which is of a very superior quality, and highly prized, Prov. xxiii. 31. The expression **יְמִינָה** is added in order to describe still more forcibly the nature of the wine, and affords a more striking illustration of the pleasantness of the damsel's speech. Her voice is not merely compared to wine, valued because it is sweet to everybody; but to such wine as would be sweet to a friend, and on that account is more valuable and pleasant. Ammon, Ewald, Heiligstedt, Hitzig, &c. regard **יְמִינָה** as having erroneously crept in here

Which to my friend flows down with mellowed sweetness,
And causes slumbering lips to speak.

THE SHULAMITE.

10 I belong to my beloved,
And it is for me to desire him.

11 Come, my beloved, let us go into the country,

from ver. 11, whilst Velthusen, Meier, &c. point it **לְבָנִים** in the plural; but this is unsupported by MSS. Hodgson, taking **לְבָנִים** for **לְבָנִי**, translates it *ad amores, delightfully*, corresponding to **לְבָנִים** in the next clause. But this rendering, to say the least, is contrary to the general meaning of this word. The rendering of Williams, "which I sent to those whom I love for their integrity," is preposterous.

And causes slumbering lips, &c. The wine is of such an animating nature, that it even causes silent lips to speak. Thus Horace, Epist. lib. i. Ep. v. 19:—

Fecundi calices quem non fecere disertum?
"Whom have not soul-inspiring cups made eloquent?"

Others, however, with less probability, explain these words to mean wine of so excellent a flavour, as to induce those who have indulged in it to dream of it, and converse about it; or wine so delicious and tempting that it leads to excess, in consequence of which the drinkers fall asleep, and then either disclose the subject of their dream, or mutter unintelligible words. **לְבָנִים** is not *gently flowing, suffusing* (Ewald, Döpke, Gesenius, De Wette, Lee, Magnus, Noyes, Meier, Philippson, Hitzig, &c.), but *causing to speak* (Vulg., Rashi, Ibn Ezra, Rashbam, Mendelssohn, Klenker, Hengstenberg, Fürst, Delitzsch, &c.) This is corroborated by the derivative **לְבָנָה**, which primarily means *something spoken, a report*, either good or bad, as is evident from Gen. xxvii. 2; Numb. xiv. 37, where the adjective **לְבָנִי**, *evil*, is joined to it; and from Ezck. xxxvi. 3, where it stands in parallelism with **לְבָנִים**, and by the frequent usage in the Talmud and other Hebrew writers of the word **לְבָנָה**, for *speaking*. **לְבָנִים** is

the Poel of **לְבַבָּה**, a form frequently used in verbs **עֲזַבָּה** (comp. **לְחַנֵּה**, Ecel. vii. 7; **לְכַבָּד**, Ps.lix. 7; Gesen. § 67, 8), and, like the Piel, is often the *causative* of Kal, Gesen. § 55, 1. The Sept., Vulg., Syr., read **לְבָנָה בְּשֶׁפֶת**, *the lips and the teeth*, instead of **שְׁפָט** **לְבָנִים**; but this is neither supported by MSS., nor yields a better sense.

10. *I belong to my beloved, &c.* The Shulamite gently but decidedly refuses the wishes of the king, declaring that her affections are fixed on one whom she ardently loves, and on whom alone it is her sacred duty to look. Even Ibn Ezra and Rashbam, though explaining it differently, admit that the maiden here refuses the petitioner of the last verse on the plea that she belonged to her beloved. **לְבָנִי**, lit. *on me*, i. e. *it is upon me as a duty*. **לְבָנָה** is frequently used to denote *duty or obligation*, which rests upon one like a burden, and must be discharged. Thus 2 Sam. xviii. 11; **לְבָנָה תְּלִיכִים עַלְלִיכָּה**, "peace-offerings are due from me," Prov. vii. 14; Gesen. Lexicon, **לְ** A. 1, **א** γ. Ewald, § 217, 4 γ. The suffix in **לְבָנָה** expresses the object, i. e. *the desire for him*. This is often the case; comp. **לְאַזְנָה**, *his fear*, i. e. *the fear for him*, Exod. xx. 20; Gesen. § 121, 5; Ewald, § 286 b. We thus obtain the same sense of this clause which Hodgson gives it, without changing the words into **לְבָנִים וְלְבָנָה**, upon the slender authority of one MS. to support the first, and three MSS. to support the second alteration.

11 *Come, my beloved, &c.* Having distinctly and finally refused the king, who forthwith quitted her, the Shulamite now addresses her beloved shepherd, who approached her, urging their departure from the royal palace for their festive bowers in Na-

Let us abide in the villages.

- 12 We will go early to the vineyards,
We will see whether the vine flourishes ;
Whether the buds open ;
Whether the pomegranates blossom ;
There will I give thee my love.
13 The mandrakes diffuse fragrance,
And at our door are all sorts of delicious fruit,

ture's hall. The want of separate names, or initial letters of names, generally used in profane composition to indicate the speaker or the person spoken to, is amply supplied here by the skill of the inspired poet in putting into the mouth of the Shulamite such rural language as shows most plainly that she was a rustic maiden, and that her beloved, whom she here addresses, is a shepherd. Comp. also chap. i. 7; ii. 8; v. 2, 4, &c. To ascribe these words to a princess addressing king Solomon is preposterous. Döderlein, Ewald, Meier, &c., take פְּנִים as the plural of פֶּן, cypress, vide supra, i. 14; iv. 13; but 1 Chron. xxvii. 25, where פְּנִים, like here, coupled with שָׂדֶה, field, forms a contrast to עִיר, city, is against it. חַזְוֹה is the accusative of place, 1 Sam. xx. 11; Gesen. § 118, 1.

12. *We will go early, &c.* Transposed with the thought of her speedy arrival at her mother's house, the Shulamite vividly depicts to her beloved the scenes of home, where they will again together enjoy rural life. It may be that Milton thought of this passage when he wrote the words :—

"To-morrow, ere fresh morning streak the east
With first approach of light, we must be risen,
And at our pleasant labour, to reform
Yon flowery arbours, yonder alleys green,
Our walks at noon with branches overgrown."
Paradise Lost, iv. 623, &c.

בְּשִׁמְעָה לְפָרָגִים is *constructio praegnans*, and is well explained by Rashbam, and Gen. xxx. 14, is, according to the testimony of the ancient versions, the mass of commentators and modern travellers, the mandrake-plant, *Atropa mandragora*, called *yabrochack* by the Arabs, the fruit of which is highly valued by the Orientals for its supposed exhilarating, aphrodisiac, and procreative properties. "It grows low, like lettuce, to which its leaves have a strong resemblance, except that they have a dark green colour. The flowers are purple, and the root is for the

expressing his joy and affection, but the Shulamite, anxious to get off as quickly as possible, tells him that at home, amidst the charms of nature, they may indulge in sweet effusions of love. The Sept. and Vulg. have here again פְּנִים, breasts, instead of לְזִים, love. But in addition to what has already been remarked, we would state that whenever breasts are mentioned in this Song, פְּנִים is invariably used.

13. *The mandrakes diffuse, &c.* Another reason for hastening away from the royal prison into the rural home. There nothing will be wanting; they have there the highly prized apples, they have all sorts of precious fruit, which she left on the trees for him. A similar passage occurs in Virgil, Eccl. i. 37, where the loved one kept fruit on the tree for her lover :—

Mirabar, quid moesta deos, Amarylli, vocares;
Qui pendere sua pateris in arbore poma:
Tityrus hinc aberat.

"We stood amazed to see your mistress mourn ;
Unknowing that she pined for your return :
We wonder'd why she kept her fruit so long,
For whom so late th' ungather'd apples hung :
But no, the wonder ceases, since I see
She kept them only, Tityrus, for thee."

לְזִים, which occurs only once more, (Gen. xxx. 14), is, according to the testimony of the ancient versions, the mass of commentators and modern travellers, the mandrake-plant, *Atropa mandragora*, called *yabrochack* by the Arabs, the fruit of which is highly valued by the Orientals for its supposed exhilarating, aphrodisiac, and procreative properties. "It grows low, like lettuce, to which its leaves have a strong resemblance, except that they have a dark green colour. The flowers are purple, and the root is for the

There will I give, &c. The shepherd, gladdened with the fact that his loved one is restored to him, is desirous of

Both new and old;

I have reserved them, O my beloved, for thee !

CHAP. VIII. 1 Oh that thou wert as my brother,

As one who had been nourished in the bosom
of my mother !

If I found thee in the street I would kiss thee,
And should no more be reproached.

2 I would lead thee thence,

I would bring thee into the house of my mother ;

most part forked. The fruit, when ripe, in the beginning of May, is of the size and colour of a small apple, exceedingly ruddy, and of a most agreeable flavour." See Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit.; Wiener, Bib. Dict. s. v. Here, however, this plant is mentioned merely to fill out the picture of charming and highly prized plants, without reference to any supposed internal properties, and has evidently been suggested by the preceding יָדֵי, *beloved*. לְבָנִים, lit. *love-apples*, is the plural of לְבֵן, from the root לְבַן, *to love*, with the termination -י, like תְּמִימִים, the plural of לְמִימִי, from the root לְמִימָה. Gesen. § 93, 6, 6; Ewald, § 189 g. לְבָנִים is well explained by Rashbam, אֲצִילָתָה פְּרוֹת שְׁלִמָה, "in our garden, close to our doorn," &c. הַ has not unfrequently the sense of *neighbourhood* and *contiguity*. Gesen. Lexicen, הַ 3. Others however render הַ, *over*, i. e. "and over our doore grow," &c.; others again translate *in*, i.e. "in our house are," &c., taking חֶרֶב in the sense of *house*; comp. Prov. xiv. 19, but with less probability. Houbigant's transposition of letters, viz. חֶרֶב, *in nostris malis aureis*, instead of לְבָנִים, is an idle conjecture.

1. *Oh that thou wert as my brother*, &c. The charming description which the Shulamite gave of their happiness when at home, recalled to her mind the obstacles which they met with, even there; and hence she is led to wish that he had sustained to her the relation of a brother, that, whether in the street or the house, none might misinterpret or interrupt the manifestation of their attachment. לְבָנִים is used to express the *optative*. Comp.

Deut. v. 29; xxviii. 67; Ps. xiv. 7; Job vi. 8; Gesen. § 136, 1; Ewald, § 329 c. מִתְּבָנָה is the *accusative*. The rendering of the Septuag., Τίς δώρη σε, ἀδελφιδέ μου, θηλάζοντα μαστοὺς μητρός μου; and Luther, "O dass ieh dieh, mein Bruder, der du meiner Mutter Brüste saugest, draussen fande," are wrong. נְתַנְתָּנוּ, deea net mean "an infant still sucking the breasts." (Grotius, Gill, Good, Williams, &c.), but "one whe *had* sneked and is now a youth;" it is the second accusative to בְּרִיתְךָ, and stands in parallelism with בָּנָה, *brother*; like the participle נִתְּנָה (which does not mean one who just gave birth), and בְּנָה, vide supra, chap. vi. 9. נְתַנְתָּנוּ is *conditional*, with the particle בְּנָה implied, Judg. xi. 36; Prov. xxiv. 10; Ewald, § 367 b. בְּנָה is used poetically for גַּם, *and*, Judg. v. 4; Jeel i. 12. תְּנַנְתָּנוּ: the third person is used to express the indeterminate third person, the *passive* in English. Gen. xli. 14; Gesen. § 157, 3. For תְּנַנְתָּנוּ, *me*, five MSS. and two editiens read תְּנַנְתָּנוּ, *thee*, which Ewald adopts. But this is against the majority of MSS. and all the versions, and does not at all improve the sense.

2. *I would lead thee*, &c. As a brother, she could unreservedly bring him from the spot, where she met him in the street, to her mether's heuse. We must supply בְּנָה, *thence*, before בְּנָה; so Rashbam. Simple as the word בְּנָה seems to be, it has nevertheless produced a variety of renderings. The Septuagint and Syriac, followed by Perey, entirely omit it, and interpolate here הַנְּצָרָה, *and into the apartment of her who gave me birth*, from chap. iii. 4; after בְּנָה, צְבָאָה.

- Thou shouldst be my teacher,
 I would cause thee to drink
 Of the aromatic wine,
 Of my pomegranate juice.
- 3 Let his left hand be under my head,
 And his right hand support me !
- 4 I adjure you, O daughters of Jerusalem,
 Neither to incite nor to excite my affection
 Till it desires another love.

the house of my mother. Ibn Ezra, the Authorized Version, Kleuker, Döderlein, Hitzig, &c., supply פָּרָה, who, before פָּרָה, and refer it to פָּרָה, *my mother*. But this interrupts the construction, and, against the scope of the description, introduces the mother as an actress. Hodgson and the editor of Calmet, strangely enough, render it *Talmudni*, as a *proper name* of the maiden's mother. The most natural way seems to be to take it with the Vulgate, Chaldee, Rashbam, Luther, Ewald, Döpke, De Wette, Delitzsch, Hengstenberg, Philippson, &c., as the second person masculine.

I would cause thee to drink, &c. On the aromatic wine, see supra, chap. vii. 3. The pomegranate-juice was and still is a favourite beverage in the East. "The Orientals," says Dr. Kitto, "indulge largely in beverages made with fresh juice of various kinds of fruits. Among these, sherbet made with pomegranate-juice is particularly esteemed, and, from its agreeable and cooling acidity, the present writer was himself accustomed to prefer it to any other drink of this description." פְּנַי, is either an anomalous construct (Gesenius; Fürst, Lex. s. v.), or the absolute, and פְּנַי, apposition in the accusative. Compare פְּנַי, 1 Kings xx. 27; Gesen. § 116, 6, Rem. b; Ewald, § 287 h. פְּנַי and פְּנַי are a paronomasia, vide supra, chap. i. 3. רַבִּי, *my pomegranate-juice*, i.e. which I myself have prepared. The noun in the genitive, expressing the quality of the nominative, has the suffix; compare פְּנַי, פְּנַי.

my holy mountain, Ps. ii. 6; Gesen. § 121 b; Ewald, § 291 b. From an oversight of this most probably arose the readings of מִמְּרוֹם or מִמְּרוֹם (several MSS.), רַבִּי (Vulgate, Syriac), the supposition that רַבִּי is an adjective (Schultens), and the opinion that it is an abbreviated plural from רַבִּים, like יְהָנָן for יְהָנָנים, (Ps. xlv. 9, Meier, Fürst, Lexicon, n, 3 b.)

3. *Let his left hand*, &c. Exhausted with the attempt to describe her un-failing attachment for her beloved shepherd, an attachment far deeper than external circumstances permit her to manifest, the Shulamite desires that no other hand should raise her drooping head, no other arm support her enfeebled frame, than those of her beloved; compare chap. ii. 6.

4. *I adjure you*, &c. This last affecting scene, having brought the Shulamite's struggle to a successful termination, is closed by her adjuring the court ladies as before (ii. 7, and v. 3), to make no more attempt to draw her affections away from her beloved to any one else, since they were unalterably fixed. The Septuagint, which is followed by Good, &c., supplies here בְּאֶתְנָהָרָה אֵין גָּאֲלָה דְּשֻׁבָּה, from ii. 7, and v. 3. It is obvious, from the change of נַא into the more urgent negative particle נַא, (comp. Job xxxi.; Ewald, § 325 b), that the variation is designedly made; and indeed the haste in which the Shulamite is to depart with her beloved does not permit her to use the lengthy adjuration.

SECTION V.

CHAPTER VIII. 5—14.

The Shulamite, released from the palace, returns to her native place with her beloved (5). On their way home they visit the spot where they had been first pledged to each other; and there they renew their vows (6, 7). On their arrival at the Shulamite's home, her brothers are reminded of the promise they had made to reward their sister's virtue (9, 10). The Shulamite mentions the greatness of her temptations, and her victory over them (11, 12). The shepherds visit her, to whom she declares, according to request, her unabated attachment to her beloved shepherd (13, 14).

THE COMPANIONS OF THE SHEPHERD.

5 Who is it that comes up from the plain,
Leaning upon her beloved?

THE SHULAMITE.

Under this apple-tree I won thy heart,

5. *Who is it that comes up*, &c. The last successful resistance secured for the Shulamite her liberty. Convinced that even the blandishments of a king cannot overcome the power of virtuous love in the heart of a rustic damsel; satisfied that "all the wealth of his house" could not buy it, Solomon dismisses her. Then, reunited to her beloved shepherd, the happy pair immediately depart for home. As they approach their native place the inhabitants, beholding them at a distance, exclaim, "Who is it that comes up from the plain, leaning upon her beloved?" *רַקְמָה*, *the plain* (*vide supra*, iii. 6), most probably the plain of Esdraelon, at present known by the name of Merij Ibn 'Amir, lying between Jezreel and Sulem (Robinson, Palestine, iii. 169), which the lovers had to cross on their way home. *רַקְמָה* (*from רַקְמָה*, *to lean*; hence *רַקְמָה*, *an arm*, on which one leans, Talm. Sahbath, 92), *supporting herself*, being weary with so long a journey. So the Sept. *ἐπιστηρίζομένη*; the Vulg. *innixa*, &c. As for the additional *λελευκανθισμένη* in the Sept., and *deliciis affluens* in the Vulg., the one most probably arose from the word

רַקְמָה, used in chap. vi. 10, where a similar question occurs, and the other from a marginal gloss, *רַקְמָה מִתְּנִינָה*.

Under this apple-tree, &c. As they drew nearer home they beheld the endeared spot—the memorable shady tree under which the shepherd was born, and where their mutual love was first kindled. These sweet musings are at length terminated by the Shulamite, who joyfully recounts the pleasing reminiscences of that place. The frequent meetings of shepherds and shepherdesses under shady trees, (*vide supra*, chap. i. 7), often resulted in the formation of a sacred tie. The solemn vow of love was then engraven on the bark of the tree, as a witness of their union. Thus Theocritus, Idyl. xviii. 47, 48:—

*γράμματα δ' ἐν φλοιῷ γεγράψεται, ὃς παριόν τις
ἀννείμη, Δωριστή, σέβου μ'. Ελένας φυτὸν εἰμι.*

" — and on the bark,
In Doric, shall be engraven for all to mark,
'To me pay honour—I am Helen's tres.'"

Compare also Idyl. xxiii. 46; Propert. I. xviii. 22; Virg. Ecl. x. 53; and Pope, Past. iii. 66, 67.

Here thy mother travailed,
Here labouring she gave thee birth.
6 Oh, place me as a seal upon thy heart,
As a seal upon thine hand !

" Oft on the rind I carved her amorous vows,
While she with garlands hung the hending
boughs."

Here thy mother, &c. Confinements in the open air are of frequent occurrence in the East (Gen. xv. 16). "There are in Asia," says Dr. Chardin in his manuscript notes, "large districts in which no midwives are to be found, and even if some live there they are little known, for mothers assist their daughters, and often female relatives or neighbours fill the place of the former. In Kurman, I saw a woman who was delivered without any assistance in the open fields, three hours from a village, and to my great surprise, she arrived not much later in town where I was. The people there smiled at my astonishment, remarking that similar cases were very frequent in their country." (See Rosenmüller, Orient. i. 188; Paxton, Illustrations of Scripture, i. 462; Kalisch on Exod. p. 18.) יָצַא, to excite, to move to love, vide supra, ii. 7; iii. 5; viii. 4. שְׁלֹמֶת does not mean *conceived thee* (Aquila, Schultens, Hitzig, &c.), which the Shulamite could not know, nor *plighted*, or *engaged thee*, (Houbigant, Michaelis, Percy, Kleuker, Good, Williams, Boothroyd, Magnus, Meier, &c.), which is contrary to the Piel signification of this verb, but signifies *laboured with thee*, (Sept., Syriac, Chaldee, Rashi, Rashbam, Ibn Ezra, Luther, Ewald, De Wette, Gesenius, Philippson, &c.); compare Ps. vii. 15, and Hupheld *in loco*. To put these words into the mouth of the bridegroom as addressing his bride, (Percy, Good, Williams, Boothroyd, Delitzsch, Hitzig, &c.), is contrary to the words in the text, which have masculine suffixes. The form שְׁלֹמֶת is used instead of שְׁלֹמֶת, to correspond in sound with שְׁלֹמֶת in pause, vide supra, iii. 11. שְׁלֹמֶת, i.q. שְׁלֹמֶת אֲנוֹתֶלֶת. The Vulgate, which seems here to savour of allegorism,

translates שְׁלֹמֶת אֲפֵק שְׁפָה הַגְּלִילִית אֲפֵק שְׁפָה הַגְּלִילִית, ibi corrupta est mater tua, ibi violata est genitrix tua. "The tree," the Roman Catholics explain of the cross; "the individual" excited to love under it, the Gentiles redeemed by Christ at the foot of the cross; and "the deflowered and corrupted mother" means, the *synagogue of the Jews* (the mother of the Church), which was corrupted by denying and crucifying the Saviour.

6. *Oh, place me as a seal, &c.* That is, "Let me be near and dear to thee." The Shulamite, having shown her faithfulness during a period of extraordinary trials, could now look up to the witnessing tree with an inward satisfaction. It is therefore very natural that she should remind her beloved, in the presence of this witness, of his vows. In ancient times, when the art of writing was confined to a very few, and writing materials were not so easily procurable, rings or signets, with names engraven upon them, were generally used as manual signs. This contrivance for a signature soon became used as an ornament. People who could afford it had these seals or signets made of silver or gold, inlaid with precious stones. Being indispensable articles of use, and highly prized as decorations, they were carried in the bosom, suspended from the neck by a string (Gen. xxxviii. 15), or were worn on the right hand (Jer. xxii. 24; Sirach xlix. 11), and thus became a symbol of what is dear and indispensable. Jehovah himself uses this metaphor, Jer. xxii. 24:—

" Though Coniah, the son of Jehoiakim, king of Judah,
Were as a seal on my right hand,
Yet I would pluck thee thence."

Comp. also Hag. ii. 23; Sirach xvii. 22; Rosenmüller, Orient. vi. 252; i. 183; iv. 190; Wiener, Bib. Dict.; Kitto, Cyclop. Bib. Lit. s. v.

- For love is strong as death,
 Affection as inexorable as Hades.
 Its flames are flames of fire,
 The flames of the Eternal.
 7 Floods cannot quench love ;
 Streams cannot sweep it away.
 If one should offer all his wealth for love,
 He would be utterly despised.

ONE OF THE BROTHERS OF THE SHULAMITE.

8 Our sister is still young,

For love is strong as death, &c. True love seizes with a tenacious grasp. Like death, it rules with resistless sway ; like Hades, it is never moved to give up its object : neither power nor prayer can overcome it. **חֲזָקָה**, *hard, firm, inexorable*. **חֵנָה** is not *jealousy* (Sept., Vulg., Authorized Version, Percy, Kleuker, Good, Williams, &c.), but *devout affection, ardent love* (Ewald, Gesenius, De Wette, Noyes, Meier, Hitzig, Philippson &c.); it is here used as an intensive term for *love*, as is evident from the parallelism and the connexion.

The flames of the Eternal. These words are exegetical of “flames of fire;” i. e. the flames of love, though having the same energy as those of fire, are not of the same origin ; they emanate from the Eternal, the source of all love. Whether, with Ben Asher, we read **בְּרִיאַתְּךָ**, *conjointly*, like **בְּרִיאַתְּךָ**, Jer. ii. 31 ; or with Ben Naphtali, **בְּרִיאַתְּךָ**, *separately*, which is followed by most editions, Rashi, Ibn Ezra, and the majority of modern critics, and which is required by the parallelism ; this predicate does not state that the flames of love are “most vehement,” but affirms that they emanate from the Eternal. **בְּ**, an abbreviation of **בְּרִיאַתְּךָ** (see Kalish on Exod. iii. 14 ; xi. 2 ; Fürst, Lexicon, s. v.), like **בְּ**, Isa. xiv. 13, is the genitive of cause or origin. Comp. ἡ ἀγάπη ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ ἔστι, 1 John iv. 7. **חֶמֶשׁ**, *flame*, may either be a quadrilateral, formed from **חַם**, Arabic, *to burn*, with the insertion of the **בְּ** after the first radical, accord-

ing to the analogy of **חַלְעָה**, *violent heat*, (Ps. ii. 6), from the root **חַלֵּה**, *to be hot* ; or, which is more probable, is the Shaphel conjugation of **חַלֵּה**, *to burn*. Fürst, Lexicon, s. v. ; Gesen. § 55, 6 ; Ewald, § 122 a. The Sept. has φλόγες αὐτῆς, **בְּרִיאַתְּךָ**. That the original reading of the text was **בְּרִיאַתְּךָ** (Ewald, Döpke, Hitzig, &c.) is purely conjectural.

7. Floods cannot quench love. Being a flame of celestial origin no terrestrial influence, however great, can destroy or wash it away ; it is not subjected to means resorted to for the extinction of ordinary fires. **מְאֹם נְאֹם**, prop. *much water*, i. e. a great quantity of it (Num. xx. 11), *floods*. **שְׁמַשְׁ**, *to wash, or sweep away*, Joh xiv. 19 ; Isa. xxviii. 17.

If one should offer all, &c. Such divine love spontaneously flows from the heart, and cannot be purchased with money ; though one offered all his riches for it, they would be utterly despised. This affirmation, whilst true in itself, is levelled against the king, who attempted to gain love by flatteries and praises (vide supra, i. 11 ; vi. 8), but was utterly rejected (vii. 11). **וְאֵלֶּא** *any one, one*, Gen. xiii. 16 ; Exod. xvi. 29 ; Gesen. § 122, Rem. 2. **יְהִי**, the infinitive absolute, is employed before the finite verb **יְהִי**, *to express intensity*, Gen. xlili. 3 ; 1 Sam. xx. 6 ; Gesen. § 131, 3 a ; Ewald, § 280 b. **יְהִי**, the third person plural, is used for the passive, see supra, chap. viii. 1.

8. Our sister is still young, &c. The

And is not yet marriageable.
What shall we do for our sister,
When she shall be demanded in marriage?

ANOTHER BROTHER.

9 If she be like a wall,
We will build upon her a silver turret.
But if she be like a door,
We will enclose her with boards of cedar.

THE SHULAMITE.

10 I am like a wall,
And my bosom is as towers!
Then I was in his eyes

brothers are here introduced, on the arrival of the Shulamite, as repeating the promise which they had once given to their sister if she kept virtuous, and, when espoused, remained true to her vows. One of the brothers inquires of the others what they should do for the Shulamite when she reached womanhood, and is demanded in marriage. נָשָׁה תְּחִזֵּנָה אֶת, i. q. נָשָׁה אֶת, our sister, and is well rendered by the Sept. ἀδελφὴ ἡμῶν, the Vulg. *soror nostra*, Luther, *unsere Schwester*. The adjective נָשָׁה, like נָרָב, prop. denoting size, is also used with reference to age. Gen. ix. 24; xxvii. 15; Judg. xv. 2. נָשָׁה אֲנָשִׁים שָׁפֵךְ, i. e. she has not yet reached puberty. מִיּוֹם, when, Gen. ii. 4. בַּקְשָׁה, to speak for, to demand in marriage, 1 Sam. xiii. 9; xxv. 39.

9 *If she be like a wall, &c.* To this inquiry the second brother replied, that if, having reached that age, she should firmly resist every allurement as a battlement resists the attack of an enemy, they would decorate her as an impregnable wall; *i.e.* highly reward her. The expression "wall" is figuratively used for *impregnability*, Jer. ii. 18; so Immanuel, שְׁמֹמָה חַזֶּקָה כְּחַזָּקָה. The silver turret here mentioned most probably refers to the *silver horn*, a highly prized ornament which women wear on their heads. "One of the most extraordinary parts of the attire of their females" (Druses of Lebanon), says Dr. Macmichael,

is a silver horn, sometimes studded with jewels, worn on the head in various positions, *distinguishing different conditions*. A married woman has it affixed to the right side of the head, a widow to the left, and a virgin is pointed out by its being placed on the very crown. Over this silver projection the long veil is thrown, with which they so completely conceal their faces as to rarely have more than one eye (vide supra, chap. iv. 9), visible." Comp. also Bowring, Report on Syria, p. 8.

But if she be like a door, &c. That is, accessible (vide supra, chap. iv. 12), she shall be barricaded with cedar planks—be punished by being locked up. The word “door” is metaphorically used for *open to seduction*. The cedar wood is mentioned because it is exceedingly strong, and increases the idea of strict vigilance. Similarly *וְאֵם דָלֶת שְׁכַבְרָנֶת נְפַח נְצֹר עֲלָיהּ* *לְהִיא אָרוֹן בָּלָם*, *בְּנִיאָה בְּמַצְזָר וּסְכָרָן בְּעֶרֶת שְׁלָא* *תְּחִרְאָה וְכָלְחָה אָרוֹן שְׁהָוָה הַקְּרִיקָתָה*.

10. *I am a wall*, &c. The Shulamite now triumphantly responds, that she had proved impregnable as a wall, and had now reached womanhood, and therefore the promised reward was due to her. שְׁמֵן בְּמִלְחָמָה, i. q. שְׁמֵן, Ezek. xvi. 7, is well explained by Rashbam, הַגִּיעַת וְשָׁמַעַת לְזִבְחָה, my time for marriage has arrived, and is an answer to שְׁמֵן קָרְבָּן, in the preceding verse.

Then I was in his eyes, &c. That

As one that findeth favour.

11 Solomon had a vineyard in Baal-hammon ;
He let out the vineyard to tenants ;
Each of whom yielded for the fruit of it
A thousand shekels of silver.

12 I will keep my own vineyard :

is, in her brother's eyes. He now, being convineed of his sister's chastity, gave her the reward of virtue. The suffix in עֵינֶיךָ, *his eyes*, does not refer to Solomon (Ewald, Hitzig, Philippson, &c.), whose name has not been mentioned, but to the brother (Ibn Ezra, &c.), who last spoke. לִוְתָן, *peace*, has no reference to the name לִוְתָן, but is used in the sense of פָּנָה, *favour*, and refers to chap. i. 6; comp. Gen. xxxiv. 7 with ver. 11.

11. *Solomon had a vineyard, &c.* Having been obliged, when demanding her promised reward, to deseribe her virtue as an impregnable wall, the Shulamite now relates more circumstantially how she had resisted the attempt to gain her affections. Solomon had a large vineyard in Baal-hammon, which he offered to consign to her if she granted his request; but the Shulamite refused his offer, telling him he might keep his large estate to himself, for she was quite satisfied with her humble possession. Many are the conjectures hazarded as to the locality of Baal-hammon, which occurs nowhere else, and no place is known by this name. It is taken for Baal-Gad, or *Heliopolis* (Rosenmüller, Bib. Geog. ii. p. 253), for בַּעֲמֹן, *Hammon*, a place in the tribe of Asher, Josh. xix. 28 (Ewald), and for Βελαμών or Βαλαμών, *Belamon* or *Balamon*, a place mentioned in the book of Judith, viii. 3, not far from the plain of Esdraelon, Judith iii. 9 (Meier, Hitzig). It is, however, more probable, according to Rashi, that Baal-hammon was in or near Jerusalem, and was called עִירֵי אַנְשָׁה, *place of the multitude*, because its beauties and charms attracted a multitude of people, thus presenting a greater temptation for the Shulamite. The Vulgate strangely renders בָּרָם הַיּוֹם לִי מִתְּהִלָּה.

בָּנְצָל הַפָּנִים, *vinea fuit pacifico in ea, quae habet populos.*

He let out the vineyard, &c. This is intended to show the value of the vineyard. It was so extensive that it was leased out to a number of tenants, and every one of them paid a thousand shekels annually, and yet had two hundred shekels left for himself. שְׂרִיכָם, an *indefinite* number of keepers or farmers. שָׁאָל each, vide supra, ver. 7. The suffix in עֵינֵיךְ, *his fruit*, refers to בְּנֵי, *vineyard*, which is masculine. שְׂקָל, *silver*, stands for שְׂקָלָה שְׂקָל, *silver shekel*: substantives denoting weight, measure, or time, are frequently omitted. Gen. xx. 16; xxxvii. 28; Acts xix. 9; Gesen. § 120, 4, Rem. 2; Ewald, § 287 i. The amount of a shekel is supposed to be about two shillings and seven-pence. The shekel of the sanctuary, however, like all the weights and measures of the Temple, was computed at double the ordinary. See Ezek. xlvi. 12; 1 Kings x. 17; comp. with 2 Chron. ix. 16; Mishna, Shekalim, Maaser Sheni; Wiener, Bib. Diet. s. v. A thousand shekels, therefore, would be about one hundred and thirty pounds. Remembering that each of these farmers had to pay this sum annually, and that money in those days had fifteen or twenty, nay, according to Michaelis (Mos. Reeh. § 243), fifty times its present value, we shall be able to judge of the allurement which this ample estate offered.

12. *I will keep my own vineyard, &c.* And yet, notwithstanding all this, the Shulamite prefers to keep her little vineyard, and be with her beloved shepherd, rather than unfaithfully give him up for riches and honours. בָּרָם שְׁלִי, *my own vineyard*, the vineyard which belongs to me; vide supra, chap. i. 6. שְׁלִי lit. is before me; it is

Be the thousands thine, O Solomon,
And the two hundreds to the keepers of its fruit !

THE SHEPHERD.

- 13 O thou that dwellest in the gardens,
My companions are listening to thy voice,
Let me hear thy voice !

THE SHULAMITE.

- 14 Haste, O my beloved,
And be like the gazelle, as the young one of the hind,
Over the mountains of spices.

mine, and I will keep it : this is obvious from the immediately following *ךְ, thine, keep thou it.* The words *"ךְךְךְ"* are to be taken as an exclamatory phrase, Ewald, § 329 a. *ךְ* is here used collectively for all the thousands put together, which come in annually from the farmers ; so *םַחֲנָה*, *the two hundreds*. The Vulgate translates here again the proper *מִלְאָף, mille tui pacifici.*

13. *O thou that dwellest in the gardens, &c.* The companions of the shepherd, who had manifested their joy at the successful arrival of the happy pair (vide supra, ver. 5), and rejoice that one of their humble occupation has brought such honour upon the whole class, visit the Shulamite, to hear from her own mouth her avowed attachment to her beloved.

The shepherd, therefore, requests her to gratify this desire. She is no more *רֹוֹתֶcht בֵּיתְךָ תְּפִלָּךְ*, *sitting in the apartments of the king*, vide supra, chap. i. 4, but has the honourable appellation of *רִיּוֹשֶׁת גְּבִיכָם, dwelling in the gardens.* *חֲנִיכָם*, *companions*, i.e. my companions, fellow-shepherds, i. 8.

14. *Haste, O my beloved, &c.* The Shulamite complies with the request. In the presence of all, she calls *the shepherd* her beloved, and tells him always to hasten to her with the speed of the swift-footed gazelle; vide supra ii. 9, 17. He has no more to cross “the mountains of separation” (see ii. 17), for they are united. These rugged mountains have now given place to the much-wished-for *aromatic hills*, iv. 6.