and is often the scene of fatal accidents. Here a rock pierced by a torrent forms a natural cascade ; another as­sumes the appearance of a natural wall ; ledges of stones washed down by the waters resemble some of the fine ruins which abound in the country. In other places, the waters, undermining the rocks, have formed caverns or subterrane­an channels. At other times, rocks loosened, or thrown off their equilibrium, have been known to fall on the adja­cent dwellings, and to crush the inhabitants. Such dan­gers, however, which are common to Alpine countries, do not deter the inhabitants from their elevated residences ; the comparative security which they enjoy from Turkish oppression being accounted a compensation for these evils.

The higher Libanus presents a steep and barren ascent, on which the traveller toils for two hours till be reaches the summit. The lower Libanus is a more wooded coun­try, fit for cultivation. The far-famed cedars are visible from the top, standing at the foot of the steep declivities of the higher division of the mountain. They form a small wood, which stands on the uneven ground of the mountain. Burckhardt mentions that he counted nearly 400 trees of all descriptions. Of the oldest and best-looking trees there are about eleven or twelve, distinguished by having the foliage and small branches at the top only, and by four, five, and even seven trunks springing from one base. They were covered with the names of travellers, one of which was dated in the seventeenth century. The trunks of the old­est trees were apparently dead. There were twenty-five large trees, about fifty middling ones, and 300 smaller and young trees.

The country that lies between the two ranges of Libanus and Anti-Libanus is inhabited by an industrious race of cultivators ; and throughout its whole extent are scattered small towns, with from 100 to 200 bouses, and everywhere the most splendid remains of antiquity, which have drawn to this unfrequented region a numerous concourse of Eu­ropean travellers. It is a plain, which is divided into the territory of Bekaa (signifying a mulberry tree, from the number of those trees which grow on it, and which form the wealth of the natives), and the territory of Baalbec. On the eastern side it comprises the mountain of Anti-Liba­nus to its top, and on the western side the Libanus range, also to its summit. Northward the valley widens consider­ably, as the range of Anti-Libanus takes an eastern direc­tion, where it terminates. This valley is fertile; and Burck­hardt mentions that, twelve years before his arrival, the plain and a part of the mountain were covered, to the dis­tance of half a league from the town, with grape planta­tions; but, owing to the oppressions of the government, they are now destroyed, and the inhabitants, in place of eating their own grapes, are obliged to import them from other parts.@@1 Wherever they are treated with ordinary hu­manity and justice, which is the case in some parts, they are industrious, and, though not rich, independent. They live in houses of mud, supported with beams of pine-wood and earth, with which the flat roofs of the houses are covered, but which are so feeble, that deep snow, which falls in win­ter, would break through, if it were not carefully removed by the inhabitants every morning. They generally depend for subsistence on the cultivation of their vineyards and a few mulberry plantations, or on their fields, in which grain is produced ; and partly on a trade which they carry on in Kourdine sheep; also on their shops, and on some trifling ma­nufactures in cotton cloths, which they use as shirts, or as gowns when dyed blue. They likewise fabricate woollen mantles. This hilly district is abundantly watered by rivulets: almost every village has its spring, all of which descend into the valley, where they generally lose themselves, or join the

Liettani, between Baalbec and Zahle, which is one of the most considerable towns in this territory, containing about 5000 Catholic Greeks, with a few Turkish families. There are several other towns scattered over the country ; and to these the oppressed inhabitants sometimes fly from the ex­actions of the pacha of Damascus, or other petty tyrants who have at different times ruled over most parts of Syria.

The land in this valley of Bekaa, between the two great mountain ranges of Libanus and Anti-Libanus, is not so well cultivated as on the opposite or western declivity of the mountain, probably because the industrious cultivator is not so sure to reap what he may industriously sow. About one sixth of the land only is cultivated, the remain­der being left for pasture to the wild Arabs. The pro­prietors of the soil are mostly noble families of Damascus, which lies about sixty or a hundred miles to thc east, or of the Druse mountains, by whose exorbitant demands the peasant cultivators are scarcely left a bare subsistence. The whole of this valley, with occasional rocky spots, is fertile and productive. The inhabitants consist of various races ; the majority are Turks ; one fifth are Catholic Chris­tians, with an intermixture of Arabs, who migrate along with the season, in order to find pasture for their flocks ; and also of Druses and others. In other districts, the great­er part of these mountaineers are Christians. In Bshir- rai, near the northern termination of the range, they are all Christians ; and in other parts three fourths are Chris­tians, mostly of the Greek church. The Arabs generally pass the winter months on the sea-shore about Tripoli, Jebail, and Tartous, though they have no fixed habitations. They have the true Bedouin features, and they have the general propensity of their tribe to thieving. Their pro­perty, besides camels, consists in horses, cows, sheep, and goats. The country in many parts, from its abundant springs and the heavy dews which fall, produces a luxu­riant pasturage ; and here the various wandering tribes, the Arabs, Turkmans, and Kourdines, pasture their cattle. These latter bring annually into Syria from 20,000 to 30,000 sheep from the mountains of Kourdistan, the great­er part of which is consumed in Aleppo, Damascus, and the mountains, as Syria does not produce a sufficient num­ber for its own consumption. The Kourd sheep-dealers first visit with their flocks Aleppo, then cross the Anti- Libanus mountains, Hama, Homs, and Baalbec ; and what they do not sell on the road they bring to pasture on the Syrian mountains, whither the inhabitants of the neigh­bouring towns repair, and buy up thousands of them, which they afterwards sell in retail to the peasantry. The coun­try produces in abundance the mulberry, the vine, and the olive. The silk-worm thrives remarkably well, and the in­habitants rear a large produce of silk. Tobacco of a very fine quality is also produced on Mount Libanus ; as also honey throughout the whole of tliis mountain district. Fruit trees succeed remarkably, and walnuts and other fruits form an article of export. Oaks, pines, the spread­ing palm, and other trees, flourish ; and Burckhardt mentions that he had seen the former more than sixty feet high. Galls and medicinal plants are also produced in these moun­tains, and are exported from Tripoli and other ports. The mineralogy of this country has been little explored. Burck- liardt, from whom we derive most of our knowledge, men­tions, that on digging he found several pieces of a metallic substance, which he took to be native amalgam of mercury. He also inferred from what he heard that cinnabar was to be found. The ground all around the village of Hasbeya he discovered to be impregnated with iron. Here are also numerous wells of bitumen, situated on a chalky hill, be­low the surface of which bitumen is found in large veins.

@@@∙, Burckhardt's Travels in Syria and the Holy Land, p. 10.