



Occasional Papers on the Modern Inhabitants of Palestine: A History of the Doings of the Fellahin during the first Half of the Nineteenth Century, From Native Sources

R. A. Stewart Macalister & E. W. G. Masterman

To cite this article: R. A. Stewart Macalister & E. W. G. Masterman (1905) Occasional Papers on the Modern Inhabitants of Palestine: A History of the Doings of the Fellahin during the first Half of the Nineteenth Century, From Native Sources, Palestine Exploration Quarterly, 37:4, 343-356, DOI: [10.1179/peq.1905.37.4.343](https://doi.org/10.1179/peq.1905.37.4.343)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1179/peq.1905.37.4.343>



Published online: 20 Nov 2013.



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)



Article views: 6



View related articles [↗](#)

OCCASIONAL PAPERS ON THE MODERN INHABITANTS
OF PALESTINE.

By R. A. STEWART MACALISTER, M.A., F.S.A., and E. W. G.
MASTERMAN, F.R.C.S., F.R.G.S.

A HISTORY OF THE DOINGS OF THE FELLAḤĪN DURING
THE FIRST HALF OF THE NINETEENTH CENTURY,
FROM NATIVE SOURCES.¹

PART I.

*The Manners and Customs of the Fellaḥīn during the Domination of
the Sheikhs.*

AFTER the departure of the French soldiers in the year 1798, the inhabitants of Palestine returned to the condition of guerilla warfare in which they had previously been from time immemorial, especially to the state of endless quarrel between the *Kais* and the *Yaman*, of which an account occurs further on. The fighting always took place in accordance with the will of the sheikhs of the various districts, who were quite irresponsible, so that between them the country was reduced to great poverty. The land was allowed to lie waste, no one cultivating it. Villages when captured by the rival faction were thoroughly plundered. All property was insecure—the rich of one day became the poor of the next. It was quite common to see people shoeless, and even naked. On one occasion, when the Sheikh of *Bani Ḥārith* wished to attack the *Bani Ḥamār* to the west of his territory, his army, 400 strong, had not one shoe among them, except one man who had a single sandal.

The poverty was reflected in the scarcity and purchasing power of money. Land that now sells for more than 1,000 piastres could then be bought for 20. A *roṭl* (about 5 lbs.) of rice cost 30 paras, 2½ *roṭls* of wheat likewise 30 paras, a *roṭl* of meat 6 paras, and a

¹ The materials from which these accounts are made are Arabic manuscripts, inspired and collected by the late Rev. John Zeller. A great deal has been omitted, as having been published elsewhere. In the Introductory part the past tense is used throughout, as it is written with special reference to the period, now happily past, of the Sheikh government. Many of the customs described, however, if not most, have survived, with but little modification, to the present time.—[R. A. S. M. and E. W. G. M.]

jar of oil 25 piastres. The unit adopted in counting money was not the piastre, as now, but the *zalatah* of 30 paras, or three-quarters of a piastre. The coins then in use were (i) the *wazari*, a coin weighing 7 drachms of silver, reckoned at 5 *zalat*; (ii) the *zalatah*, a silver coin of 4 drachms weight, reckoned at 30 paras; (iii) the *nakishlah* or *hamidan*, of 3 drachms; (iv) the '*ashrawiyah*', of a half drachm, worth 50 paras (now 10 paras); (v) the *mahmûdi*, of 3 drachms; (vi) the *kuṭ'a*, or *masri*, one half of the '*ashrawiyah*'. The latter coin was the commonest. In gold there were the *jahad et-tary* (a flexible coin) worth 91 *zalat*, and the *jahad el-yâbis*, worth 80; the *fundukli*, worth 4 *zalat*; and the '*adili*', worth 12. The reckoning in *zalat* was abolished by Ibrahim Pasha, who introduced the piastre currency at 40 paras to the piastre; he introduced the *ḥâri* coins in two types, one worth 20, the other worth 24 piastres, and the *ghazi*, also worth 20 piastres.

The military was divided into six groups. The most important were the Janissaries, who were possessed of great power in Constantinople. Next came the Arnaout or Albanians, then the Mughârbi, the Suleimaniyah, the Dillateyeh, and the Hawâra.

Each year a governor, the Wali esh-Sham, came to Damascus and gave to every sheikh of the surrounding districts a suit of sheikh's robes—a robe of honour—and his orders, that is, the commands of the government. The sheikhs then guaranteed the taxes due from their several districts. These were allotted according to the sizes of the villages, the largest paying 500 *zalat*, while others gave 200, 150, or what not. A similar official came to Jerusalem for the same purpose.

If, however, the sheikhs refused to pay, it was almost impossible to force them, so that there were many districts that paid no taxes to the government. Mounted soldiers, when sent to these defaulting villages, would find them deserted and empty. Sometimes, however, the sheikhs used to lie in wait for the Wali when on his way to Jerusalem, and bribe him to put horsemen at their disposal to fight their own private or tribal enemies. Thus, in one year a certain sheikh would be able to carry all before him; in the next, his rival might (by approaching the Wali first, and by paying money to engage the services of some of the irregular horsemen) be put in a position to turn the tables upon him. A victory usually was followed by looting and the capture of the women, who might later be ransomed, or if not, be married off in the victor's village.

In fighting, the opposing parties dug trenches for their protection, and then fired from behind the ramparts at one another. Sometimes an attempt was made to carry the enemy's ramparts by a rush. It was understood all over the country that the person of a woman was respected, and women were never killed unless by accident. Women,¹ accordingly, often preceded the one army, in order to spy out the refuge places of the other. It was also common, on account of this prejudice against killing² a woman, for a man to use his wife as a rampart, standing behind her and firing over her shoulder or from between her feet. The enemy often asked of the women of the opposing army drink or food, and invariably obtained it; indeed, it was not unknown for men in the opposing armies to send by their wives their tobacco-pipes to one another, as a friendly mutual attention. The signal for surrender was the waving of a white flag mounted on a gun, the bearer calling out in a loud voice, *ya karîm, ya nâs* ("O generous, O people!") many times. Immediately on this signal being given, firing ceased, and often the people stood up without fear, acquaintances on the opposing sides greeted one another, shaking hands and congratulating one another on their safety, and then each side returned chanting *ya karîm* to its own villages. The struggle, however, might be renewed the very next day and continue for years.

The standard of the Yaman faction was a banner of white calico; that of the Kais was red. The latter also clothed in red.

While the country was thus divided into Kais and Yaman, the villages were divided into *hamûil*, that is, families. These were powerful in proportion to the number of their members; the strongest families appointed the sheikhs. The members of these families all stood together, joining to avenge wrong done to any individual of their number, and bearing in common any fine or penalty that any one of them may have incurred. The sheikh was first recognised by the people, and by accumulation of bribes and other emoluments, in time collected enough money to secure his

¹ "One of us happening to say that probably there would be no harm that day, because we had seen that the women were out with the men—'Are the women out?' said Sheikh Hamdân; 'then, depend upon it, that means fighting.'"—Finn's *Stirring Times*, p. 318.

² Finn, however (*ibid.*, p. 298), mentions passing, in 1853, the scene of such a fight, in which five women had been killed.

recognition by the government as well. The office generally was hereditary.

The Dress of the People.—The men wore (i) the *thób*, a shirt of coarse cotton reaching from the neck to the feet, and the '*aba šáf*, or woollen '*aba*, a cloak either natural white, or coloured with the natural white and black colours of the wool. It was also sometimes coloured with wool dyed blue. A girdle called a *sharabah* was worn; it was made of red leather. It was considered shameful to dress in the garments affected by the town dwellers, viz., in the *kumbáz*, *šidrīyah* or waistcoat, and especially in *libás* or drawers. Shoes were worn only in the village itself or in the towns, and dispensed with in the fields or in war. The beard was never shaved; a common form of oath was, "If I break my word I shall shave my beard," or sometimes "half my beard" (that is, one side).

Women wore a *thób*, either in the natural white colour or dyed blue, made either of linen, silk, or cotton mixed with silk. The length of the cloth was 2 or 3 inches over the height of the wearer. The garment had long sleeves, touching the ground. Over the head was a veil of the same material as the *thób*, called *hirkah* or *shenba*, reaching to the ground behind. This was red or black in colour. Silver bracelets, necklaces, and chains hanging in front of the breast were worn as ornaments; to the ends of the chains were suspended pieces of silver, generally wazaris or old Spanish dollars (*real abú 'amúd*). Coins were also worn upon the head; the richer women might have a hundred dollars or more, the poorer perhaps a hundred wazaris.

Food and Drink.—Pure water alone was drunk. The staple food was bread—of wheat, barley, or maize. Various vegetables were cooked—lentils, vetches, beans, vegetable marrow, egg-plant, &c. The best food was meat with rice, pigeons, and fowls.

The cooking vessels were of two kinds: the *kidr*, which was made principally at El-Jib, was round, with wide mouth and handles on each side, and was of universal use; and the *kidr* or *dist*, of brass, a vessel of large capacity, employed on special occasions, such as marriages, feasts, the coming of guests, &c. The food was served in wooden vessels of various sizes, hawked and sold by itinerant merchants. The largest size, called *bâtīyeh*, was used for kneading dough; the middle, called *karmīyeh*, for the common family dish; the smallest, called *hanābeh*, for individuals, especially guests.

There was also a brass dish called *minsaf*, used by Bedawin for receiving guests. Spoons at the time were unknown, except among the greatest sheikhs, who sometimes took a pride in using them.

The Daily Labour.—For the men this consisted in ploughing, vineyard dressing, and tending flocks; even in times of fighting there were generally some who continued to follow these pursuits. The women had to bring firewood from the thickets (carrying them in long bundles on their heads) and, in the spring, grass for the cattle; fetch water in earthen jars or skins, and grind the various kinds of grain in mills, of which there was one in every house (in the Nâblus district there were also water mills). The women had also to cook, sew, sweep and wash the house. It was considered a disgrace for men to engage in any of these labours. All, of course, were quite illiterate; there was scarcely one in a village who could read. From this cause the people were extraordinarily credulous, and would believe any fable.

Marriage Customs.—The bride was nearly always sought for the bridegroom from among his own kin. When a suitable girl was found, two of the groom's relatives went to her father and arranged terms of dowry. This settled, the groom's relations went to the girl's father's house with a sheep, which they killed and prepared as a feast for the company. After supper, the spokesman of the groom's party would say to the father: "Muḥammad, the relatives of Ḥasan beg of you Faṭmah to marry her to him," to which the father would say: "Welcome to you; I will give her without asking her whether she will or not." Then the spokesman would say: "You cover us with favour. The girl is priceless, but we shall give you 20,000 piastres for her." Then the women present would begin to dance, sing, and cry with the peculiar call known as *zagharîl*. Then one of the bystanders would say: "Muḥammad, your relative (*i.e.*, the intended bridegroom) is not shortened in respect of your daughter's dowry; but what is your favour to us?" Whereupon Muḥammad would say: "For the sake of such an one I shall remit 1,000 piastres; for such another 2,000," and so on, till the dowry was reduced to a reasonable figure—that is, to the sum previously agreed upon in private. The money was then paid over by the groom's father to the bride's. Then the groom's father would bring in wood and fire to the village guest room, and while the inhabitants of the surrounding country gathered round and stood—the men on one side, the women on the other,

or else the women behind the men—and the young men, clapping their hands, they would begin to praise the bridegroom with rhymes; similarly the women danced, sang, and called with the *zagharît*.

This was repeated every evening for a week, after which the bridegroom made ready and rode out on a horse, dressed in his wedding robes, and attended by the young men attired in their best clothes; the women, also in their best, went dancing and singing before the bridegroom's horse. The bridegroom carried a knife mounted in silver under his clothes. At an appointed rendezvous the procession paused, and the young men amused themselves firing at targets, the women as before dancing and singing with the *zagharît*. In the middle of the ring of dancing women would be one bearing a kind of wooden doll or guy called *zarifah*, dressed in expensive women's dress: afterwards the men carried it before the bridegroom with shouts and cries. Then the bridegroom joined the other youths in galloping up and down, while the elders looked on. After this had gone on for about a couple of hours the party returned home, and the bridegroom's father made a supper for the whole village, if they were agreed together. The whole population collected, and meat with rice was brought out for them in wooden dishes. After supper one of the family stood up, and from every person present received a piece of money, saying as he received each piece, "May God, for the Prophet's sake, restore thee what thou hast lost," adding, "and may love be on the head of such an one"—naming any aged relative of the giver. All having given their gifts, called *nakât*, to the bridegroom, the assembly departed, each to his own house, except the young men, who accompanied the groom to one of the houses (in the case of Christians to the church). The bride, with her female attendants, was already in the same house. They were then left alone together. Next morning the bridegroom returned to the village guest chamber, where his father made a morning meal of meat and rice for all the village. With this meal the marriage ceremonies ended.

Birth Customs.—If a boy were born, the father brought fruit (dried raisins or figs if out of the fruit season) or bread steeped in *samn* (melted butter) or oil, and presented it to anyone who happened to be in the guest chamber of the village; or else he killed a goat and made a feast for the sheikhs and his friends.

If a girl were born, there was no special observance; indeed, in some places the family made demonstrations of mourning.

Mourning Customs.—A sick man, supposed to be dying, was visited night and day by his relatives until his death. After his death the relatives collected in the village, the women nearest in relation to the deceased having torn their dress from the breast to the lower hem, and immediately sewn it up again. The women also smeared their faces with soot mixed with oil, and plucked out their hair. The burial was, of course, the same day. It was a greater honour to bury quickly; for the body to commence to decompose before burial was a great indignity to the deceased. After the burial some of the inhabitants, not related to the deceased, made a feast for the relatives, and comforted them with such proverbial philosophy as "All must die, and none can continue in this world"; "Cease to weep for so-and-so, though he be worthy, for all must follow him on this road which all must cross." Then the friends from other villages came to offer consolation, bringing such offerings as a sheep, a robe (*kaftan*), a basket of rice (three rotls), a sum of money, &c. When they arrived at the village of the deceased, the relatives met them and proffered coffee, tobacco, food, meat, and rice, and thus they continued several days. In some parts it was part of the funeral ceremony that the nearest female relative should stand in the centre with her hair loose, while the relatives danced round her, waving their long sleeves. This occurred either in the cemetery or in an open place near the deceased's house. This was never done for women or children. The women of the neighbouring villages also came to join with those of the deceased's village in noisy lamentations, with beating of their breasts and in a eulogy of the deceased, in traditional form and tunes. This coming and going might last a month, during which the treating of all the arrivals was a considerable strain on the finances of the deceased's family.

The torn dress of the women was worn, to the exclusion of all others, till it became useless. The surviving relatives, as a mark of mourning, abstained from washing their faces or their persons or clothes for a considerable period—perhaps two years; in some extreme cases ten years; indeed, it has been known that women, after a bereavement, have ever after abstained from washing. Sometimes the wives cut off their hair and put it above the grave. If the deceased were one of the village notables, a coffee grinder, coffee-

pot, and cups were deposited with him, as well as his nargileh, if he were in the habit of using one. The corpse was dressed in the best clothes of the deceased, and bedding, with a prayer carpet, was put on the grave.

The Laws of Hospitality.—In nearly every village there was one or more guest chambers, *Maḍāfah*, also *Manzal* or *Sāḥah*, where strangers were received. There was a watchman, or servant, attached to the guest chamber to bring food to the guest from each family in rotation. If, however, the guest were known, or a person of distinction, there would be a competition among the villagers, decided by one of themselves, each offering reasons why himself should be privileged to entertain the guest; and the claim being decided by the adjudicator, who, after hearing what each competitor could offer, selected one and specified what he must supply. The person nominated produced a sheep or two, according to the number of the company, and made a great feast for the guest and those villagers who assembled to help entertain him. The best pieces of meat, called *el-shathāyah*, were placed before the guests, and the rice was cooked with great quantities of butter (*samn*). Sometimes when a specially-honoured guest comes, one of the villagers would begin killing his sheep, and if not stopped by the guest would kill them all.¹ Those who refused or were unwilling to offer food to guests were accounted miserly, and no one would give them brides for their sons, nor take their daughters for wives.

The Laws of Revenge.—When a person was killed his whole family sought an opportunity of revenge. If the revenge were delayed it was accounted a disgrace upon the family, and the women stirred up their male relations to consummate the revenge. When the family saw the murderer they rushed at him excitedly; if they could not find him another of the family would be killed instead. Then the second family claimed revenge; and the process continued, either indefinitely or else till peace was made, one death being reckoned against the other.

Preservation of Domestic Purity.—If a woman were found in an act of adultery she was either killed at once, or the sheikhs were informed, who, after hearing evidence, gave sentence, if she were found guilty, that she should be put to death by being made a mark

¹ An acquaintance of ours once saw seven sheep killed in this way among the Bedawin before the guest could stop his hospitable host.—[R. A. S. M. and E. W. G. M.]

for bullets, all the men taking a share in her execution. The male transgressor was put to death in like manner, and if he escaped his family was made answerable—their possessions being confiscated if they did not produce him. The body after execution was not buried in the cemetery, but cast into a cave. If the proof was clear the punishment was, without doubt, death. In the case of a man making evil suggestions to a woman to which she would not consent, she was known as *sayyaḥat ez-zahr*, “the crier of midday”; in this case the man was accounted guilty, the woman innocent. The punishment of the man was a heavy fine or death, according to the circumstances. The husband was not allowed to carry out sentence of death on the insulter; the duty devolved on the woman’s brother. No village or sheikh dared protect such a man, as the demand for his being delivered up would be enforced by warfare, leading even at best to the exile, if not the death, of the guilty man.

Pilgrimage. (i) Christians.—On feast days the young people of the villages, dressed in their best, visited those places counted holy. On the arrival of a party of young persons at the door of the Holy Sepulchre Church, the girls began to sing and dance as though for a wedding, while the men entered the church running, crying with a loud voice the well-known rhyme—

Christ has visited us to-day,
And ransomed us with His blood;
We to-day are happy
And the Jews are sad;
There is no religion
But that of the Messiah.

So singing, they would clap their hands and run round the chapel of the Sepulchre, sometimes one mounting on the shoulders of another. This specially occurred at the celebrated “Holy Fire,” which they called “the Fire of Jesus Christ.” Singing and dancing was also practised at the church of the Tomb of the Virgin in the Kedron valley.

(ii) Muslims.—The feasts of Nabi Mûsa and Nabi Rubîn, and at various holy tombs, used to go on much as they do now. The people would go in their best clothes, preceded by darwishes with drums and tambourines, and lutes and banners mounted on long poles. The darwishes would chant, waving spears and swords, while the women sing. When they arrived at the place of procession—Nabi Mûsa, Nabi Rubîn, &c.—the darwish began to tear his dress

and strike himself with spears, and allow himself to be so smitten that the onlookers might see that the men of God are invulnerable. Others carried snakes, which they twisted round their necks. If by an accident a darwish were killed or wounded he was supposed to be ceremonially unclean. All the days of the feast were spent in eating, dancing, singing, and shows of this kind.

PART II.

Former Divisions and Local Government of the Fellahîn of Judaea and the District of Nâblus.

Before entering upon an account of the doings of the fellahîn at the time of the great sheikhs, it is necessary to enumerate the districts into which the land was at that time divided. The names of these districts survive to the present day, and some of them will be found marked on the P. E. F. maps, and it is probable that many of these divisions are of considerable antiquity. Each district was domineered over by certain chieftains, or sheikhs, belonging to great families who by their skill in war, their wealth, or their traditional position, were able to keep themselves at the top. They were the aristocracy of Palestine, and to-day, though their ancient power is practically gone, the heads of these families are recognised as leaders. In the greater number of cases the same families are to the fore to-day as were so then, but now they are obliged to be more or less orderly and law-abiding. Some of the individuals mentioned here are real national heroes, and around them have already gathered many mythical stories.¹

In Finn's *Stirring Times* many references to these sheikhs will be found, supplementing in some cases the facts given below.

Down to the middle of the nineteenth century the country was divided into 18 districts, the names of which, with their ruling families, being as follows:—

1. *Jabal el-Khalil: Kâisiyah el-Fokâh.*—This was the district round the town of Hebron. Ruling family, 'Omar; chief sheikh at the second quarter of the nineteenth century, 'Abd er-Rahmân.² Chief town, Dûra; other villages, Yatta, Samû'a, edh Dhahariyah, &c.

¹ See *Quarterly Statement*, 1905, p. 122.

² For account of the rise of this man to power, and of his doings, see *Stirring Times*, p. 236f.

2. *Ḳaisiyah et-Taḥtah* (north and north-west of No. 1).—Ruling family, el-‘Azzah and el-‘Aml. Chief sheikhs, Muṣṣaḥ el-‘Azzah and Muḥammad ‘Abd en-Nabi el-‘Amlah. Chief town, Beit Jibrîn; other villages, Tell eṣ-Ṣâfi, Dhikrîn el-Buradân, Idhna, Kudna, Kûfin, Sûrif, Nôba, Kharâs, and others.

The two sheikhs named were of gigantic stature, as was also ‘Abd el-‘Azîz, the brother of Muṣṣaḥ. Of ‘Abd en-Nabi it was said that he could lift up and carry off a horseman from the back of his horse; indeed once, in a battle, he thus unhorsed 13 men, one after the other. It is also related that a famous Egyptian giant came to the country, hearing of the strength of the sheikh, and desirous of matching himself against him. He met the sheikh, without knowing him, in the guest-house of the village Beit Ūla. When he stated his business, the sheikh bade him join his hands, then, seizing them with one of his own, he said “Pull your two hands from my one and then you will be a match for ‘Abd en-Nabi.” The Egyptian, blazing with anger, endeavoured to free himself, with the result that he broke both his arms! On account of his skill as a marksman this sheikh was surnamed ‘Azra‘il (the angel of death); he was also distinguished for his hospitality.

3. *El-‘Arkâb* (east of No. 2).—Ruling family, el-Laḥḥam. Chief sheikh, ‘Othmân. Chief town, Beit ‘Atâb; other villages, Deir Abân, Eshû‘a, &c.

4. *Bâni Ḥasan* (east of No. 3).—Chief sheikhs, ‘Ali Muḥammad and Muḥammad Darwish. Chief town, Walajah; other villages, about 10 in number, Mâlḥah, ‘Ain Kârim, Beit Jâla, el-Khudr, Sôba, &c. In the last-named place was an old castle, pulled down with great labour by Ibrahîm Pasha.

5. *Beni Mâlik* (north-west of No. 4).—Ruling family, Abû Ghosh. Chief sheikh, Haj Muṣṣaḥ abû Ghosh. Chief town, Kuriet el-‘Anab; other villages, about 20 in number, Beit ‘Anân, Lifta, Yâlo, Beit Lekieh, Khurbatah, Beit ‘Ur el-Foḳah, Beit ‘Ur et-Taḥtah, &c.

6. *Wadiyah*¹ (east of Jerusalem).—Ruling family, ‘Araykat. Chief sheikh, Muḥammad ‘Araykat. Chief town, Abû Dîs; other villages, eight in all, et-Târ, Silwân, Beit Sahûr, a Bedawîn en campment called Sawahrat el-Wad, &c.

7. *Jabal el-Ḳuds* (the district containing Jerusalem).—This was sub-divided into four parts, whose chief sheikhs and towns were as follows:—‘Abd el-Latif Simhân el-Kaswâni; town, Beit Ikṣa.

¹ In the P. E. F. Memoirs this district is called *El Kerâdiyeh*.

Aḥmad 'Ali; town, Deir Diwân. Ḥasan 'Abd Allah; town, Beit Ūnia. 'Amr esh-Shama'; town, Bîreh. Among the other villages of this district are Ram Allah, Kefr 'Akûb, Jeba', er-Râm, Sha'fât, Mukhmas, &c.

8. *Bani Ḥârith* (north of the preceding).—This was divided into two, the "northern" and "southern" Bani Ḥârith.¹ Of the northern division the ruling family was Simhân. Chief sheikh, Isma'il (killed by Ibrahim Pasha in 1834), and after him Ḥasan es-Sa'id and Muḥammad ibn Isma'il. Chief towns, el-Jâniyah and er-Ras;² other villages, Beit Illu, Jemâla, Abu Qash, Surdah, Jifna, Bir ez-Zeit, Deir 'Ammar, Mezra'a, Dura, Karâwa. Of the southern Bani Ḥârith, the ruling family was Ka'râja. Chief sheikhs, 'Abd Allah and his son Muṣṭafa. Chief town, Beit Izbîâ; other villages, Saffa, 'Ain 'Arîk, Ain Kâniâh, and others.

On account of the favouritism of sheikh Isma'il for the sheikh Nasr of Bir ez-Zeit, no taxes were collected from that town during the former's lifetime. When he was succeeded by Ḥasan Simhân and Muḥammad Simhân an attempt was made to levy a toll of 150 jars of oil. This was resisted by Mûsa ibn Nasr, sheikh of Bir ez-Zeit, and a conflict took place, in which 120 men of Bir ez-Zeit engaged 3,000 of the sheikhs' followers. After five days' fighting the matter was referred to the arbitration of the governor of Jerusalem, who decided that the people of Bir ez-Zeit were autonomous, and that the house of Simhân were not to enter the village.

9. *Bani Murrah* (beside the northern Bani Ḥârith).—Till the Egyptian domination the sheikh was Aḥmad abû 'Abd Allah of Mazra'a esh-Sharḳiyah; after his death, in the time of the Egyptian domination, the district was divided into two, which, with their towns and sheikhs, were: 'Abd el-'Azîz el-Ansawîyah; town, Mazra'a esh-Sharḳiyah. Muḥammad abû Mubârak; town, Silwâd; the other villages are 'Ain Sinia, Jiljiliah, Sinjil, Turmus 'Aya, &c. The sheikhs named were appointed by Ibrahim Pasha.

10. *Bani Salim* (east of No. 9).—Chief sheikhs ed-Daykah of Kefr Mâlik, and 'Abd el-Hamîd abû Ibrahim of Deir Jarîr. Other villages, Tayibah and Rummân.

11. *Bani Zaid* (north of the Bani Ḥârith esh-Shamaliyah).—The sheikhs of this district originally belonged to the family

¹ *Bani Ḥârith esh-Shamaliyah* and *el-Kibliyah*.

² Also called *Râs Kerker*.

el-Baraghît ("fleas"), and their chief town was Deir Ghassânah. The representatives of this family before the Egyptian domination were Mârîf and 'Asi Rabbâh; during the early days of the Egyptian rule they were 'Ali Rabbâh, son of 'Asi and 'Abd el-Jabâr abû Şâlih, nephew of Mârîf. These were both put to death by Ibrahîm Pasha. Their successors were Mûsa Aḥmad of Abwain and Sa'îd ibn 'Ali er-Rabbâh of Kabar. In the latter days of Mûsa, Şalâh ibn 'Abd el-Ḳadar of Deir Ghassânah became sheikh, and great enmity arose between these two. The villages of Bani Zaid were 'Attara, 'Ajul, 'Arâra, Mazra'a, Kefr 'Ain, Beit Rîma, 'Abûd, &c.

The family of el-Baraghît was one of great wealth and pride. The members boasted of noble origin. They had a remarkable gift of eloquence. It was a custom of this family absolutely to seclude their wives from the view of any but their husbands. Deir Ghassânah was, as stated, the headquarters of the family, and even till recent times many of them, including the most influential members, are to be found in that village; but owing to a dispute they divided, part settling in Kâbar, part at Beit Rîma, and others at Deir edh-Dham and elsewhere.

The following divisions are in the district of Nâblus:—

12. *Jama'in* (south of Nâblus).—Divided into two; the first under the family of Ḳâsim el-Aḥmad, named from the famous sheikh Ḳâsim el-Aḥmad of Deir Istîa, and including the villages of 'Azzûn Silfit, Rantis, Skâka, Ḥableh, and others. The second was under the family of Rayan, a collateral branch of the family of Ḳâsim el-Aḥmad. Their city was Mejdel,¹ their chief sheikh Şâdiḳ, who, in 1851, was exiled to Trezibond, and was succeeded by his brother Mûsa Abu Bakr. The other villages included Kefr Burin, Zawiah, Murdah, Ḥawârah, and others. In all, there were 58 villages in the *Jama'in* district. It derived its name from the village of *Jama'in*, the original home of the chief family.

13. *Bani Sa'ab* (north of No. 12).—Ruling family, el-Jayusah; chief sheikh Yusif Wakid of Kefr Sur. Other villages, Kalkîliah, eṭ-Ṭayibah (Nâblus), Jayûs (from which the family name of the sheikhs is derived), Jinsâfût, Kefr Zebad, Kefr Jemmâl, and others.

Like the Baraghît, the *Jama'in* and the *Jayûsah* strictly secluded their wives. Indeed, no family in the country was so jealous in this

¹ This is apparently the Medjel of the Memoirs (iii, p. 286); the ruling family of this village is there said to be Beit el-Jem'ainy.

respect as the Jayûsah, for by them no woman was permitted even to see her brother after marriage. Occasionally she was allowed to see her father, but this was the sole exception to absolute exclusion.

14. *Wadi Sha'ir* (north of Nâblus).—Two ruling families, Ḥaffah and Saif. The chief sheikhs of the first, Isma'il Yusif, Mus'ûd Ḥamdân, and Maḥmûd el-Haj Isma'il; of the second, Muşţafa Burkayah. Chief villages, Sebustah, Zawâta, en Nâkûra, Jennesinia, Beit Imrîn, Nusf Jebil, &c.

15. *Sharawiyah el-Ghurbiyah* (north of the preceding).—Ruling families, Jarrâr, and 'Abd el-Ḥâdi. Chief sheikhs of the former, Muḥammad el-Ḥaj, Aḥmad Yusif, Abû Khalîl, and Dadiwah el-Mufah; of the latter, Ḥusain Bek 'Abd el-Ḥâdi, his brother, Maḥmûd Bek, and the latter's son Sulaiman Bek. Chief town, 'Arrâbah. The Dar Jerrâr originally lived at Jeb'a, but a branch of the family built Sanûr and lived there. Other villages, Shweikah, Kâkûn, Bâ'ka, 'Attîl, Silet edh-Dhahr, 'Ajjah, Kejr Lebâd, &c.

The original rulers were the Jerrâr. Husain Bek 'Abd el-Ḥâdi had two other brothers, 'Abd el-Ḥâdi, governor of Jenîn in 1851, and Abd el-Kadar Husain, who was poisoned in the Bakhyah gardens, near 'Akka, by the sister of Ibrahim Pasha. He had four sons, Maḥmûd (governor of Gaza in 1849, afterwards exiled), 'Abd 'er-Rahmân, Şâleh, and Ş'aîd.

16. *Sharawiyah el-Sharqiyah* (under the same sheikhs).—Their villages were 58 in all, including Tûbâs, Ta'mûn, Zebâbdah, Sîr, Sîris, Jeba, Kabâtiyah, Fendukûmiyah,¹ and others.

17. *Mashariyah Nâblus*.—Ruling family, Dawahat; chief town, Baita; other villages 'Awurtah, Beit Furîḳ, Beit Dejan, Belat, 'Askar, and others.

18. *Mashiyah Dar el-Haj Mahmud*.—Ruling family, Naşr Manşûr; chief village, Jalûd; other villages, Kuriût, Kusrah, 'Aḳrabah, Dûmah, Kubelân, &c.

19. *Nâblus City*.—Chief family, Tuḳân, of whom the most famous was Mûsa Bek Tuḳân. In 1854, 'Ali Bek Tuḳân was governor of Nâblus.

All the above-mentioned districts were similar in customs and in condition, except for a few small differences in detail.

(To be continued.)

¹ All these villages are in the P.E.F. Memoirs included in the district *Mashârik el-Jerrâr*.