

the goddess Calypso to the hero, when about to return to his kingdom, "go, and first find him who guards the herds near the Coracian rock where flow the black waters of Arethusa." It is situated near the south-eastern extremity of the island at a distance of three leagues from the sea, and consists of a narrow basin, at the summit of a lofty ravine, fed by waters which trickle from the overhanging rocks. The traveller, seated near the ruins of the temple which formerly covered the spring, beholds the soft slopes of the valley richly mantled with large-leaved plants and odoriferous bushes; at a distance, through an opening in the "verdurous gloom," his eye catches sight of the azure sea. From the crest of the rock is unrolled an extended panorama, embracing the blue mountain-peaks and fairy isles of Greece. Into this enchanting solitude came the hero of the Odyssey, three thousand years ago, to take his rest on the margin of the spring which to-day refreshes the Ithacan goat-herds. Dr. Dodwell praises its waters as clear, fresh, and agreeable to the taste; they issue, he says, from a massive crag, still called Korax (Κόραξ). The basin is about three feet and a half in depth; it has been surrounded with a parapet, to prevent the water from overflowing. On issuing from an orifice pierced in the encircling wall, it flows into a trough for the benefit of the thirsty cattle. In 1798, the island of Odysseus was in the possession of the French, and they have left a souvenir of their brief sojourn in the inscription which still may be read on the rock of Arethusa, and which recalls the troubled associations of a stormy time: "Liberté, Egalité, Fraternité."

Everywhere beneficent, springs acquire a peculiar importance in the sterile deserts of Africa; where, in the grim solitude, they give life and freshness to those islands of verdure which are called *oases*. The Bible speaks of the fountains of Marah and Elim, in the desert of Arabia; whose brackish waters the Israelites corrected, as the Arabs still modify those of the desert, by mixing them with the juice of certain plants.

[Palestine, according to Dean Stanley,* is a land of springs; a land of brooks

* [Dean Stanley, "Sinai and Palestine," pp. 122, 123.]