

BIBLE PLACES ;

OR.

The Topography of the Holy Land :

A SUCCINCT ACCOUNT OF ALL THE PLACES, RIVERS, AND
MOUNTAINS OF THE LAND OF ISRAEL, MENTIONED
IN THE BIBLE, SO FAR AS THEY HAVE BEEN
IDENTIFIED :

TOGETHER WITH THEIR MODERN NAMES
AND HISTORICAL REFERENCES.

BY

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Canon of Durham.

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“ A fruitful land maketh He barren.”

NOTE TO FOURTH EDITION.

ANOTHER edition of this little work being called for, the Author has most carefully revised it, making full use of the very important reports and memoirs of the officers of the Palestine Exploration Fund during the past two years.

Although more than a hundred insertions and alterations will be found in this edition, yet it is satisfactory to note that with few exceptions they are identifications of sites hitherto unknown, but now recovered through the labours of the Survey, and but very few are corrections of former statements. One of the most interesting features of the recent discoveries of the P. E. F. officers is the clear evidence indicated that the lists of the cities of the various tribes in the Book of Joshua are given in strict topographical sequence. Much new light has thus been cast on the geography of Palestine. Some of the proposed identifications the Author has not yet incorporated, being loth to insert conjectures unsupported by evidence which doubtless will be hereafter forthcoming. There is still much to be learnt on that sacred soil. Not a rock-hewn tomb, nor a grass-grown mound, but holds the dust of Israel, and "Thy servants take pleasure in her stones, and favour the dust thereof."

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NOTE TO ELEVENTH THOUSAND.



THIS edition has been carefully revised, and the latest discoveries, including the Siloam Inscription, inserted.

COLLEGE, DURHAM,
30th April, 1884.

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION.



THE object of the author in sending forth this small volume, is to afford, in a compendious form, a short account of every place in the Holy Land mentioned in Scripture, of which the site has been more or less satisfactorily identified. The work is especially intended for such as have neither time nor opportunity to refer to larger treatises on the geography of Palestine. In order, therefore, to keep the volume within the prescribed limits, all disquisitions on the reasons for the determination of the various sites have as much as possible been avoided, and the writer has generally confined himself to the statement of his conclusions, which have not been arrived at without the most careful examination and weighing of evidence. He does not, however, pretend to invariable accuracy, and he is fully aware that some of his determinations may be called in question. Some mistakes will probably be found, but in all cases he has availed himself of the latest authorities, wherever his personal investigations in the country have not reached.

The chapters have been arranged, and the places described in groups, according rather to the physical geography of the country than to its political divisions.

But in most instances these are nearly identical, and the outlines of the tribal boundaries were generally guided by the natural features of the land. The examination of the country commences naturally with the south country of Judah, the portion first touched after the Exodus from Egypt, and which though now, through the researches of Professor Palmer, accurately mapped, has been, until within the last few months, a complete blank in our knowledge of Scripture geography.

The Book of Joshua, "the Domesday Book of Israel," is our best guide to the ancient topography, and every name which there occurs has been referred to, and, when possible, identified. All other places which, omitted there, are found in the subsequent sacred writers, have been also, as far as possible, noticed and traced. Such has been the marvellous persistency of the Semitic names, that after a lapse of more than 3,300 years, wherever the land has been carefully examined, scarce a single village, however insignificant, is wanting in the modern Arabic nomenclature; and there is every reason to expect that the survey now being carried out by the Palestine Exploration Fund will restore to our knowledge, under its Arabic form, every name of city, village, or hill which occurs in the inspired history of the chosen people.

All research, whether topographical, physical, or archæological, has uniformly illustrated the intense accuracy of Old Testament history and description; and the Author can only pray that this little book may serve in the Bible student's hand, however humbly, to the advancement of Scriptural knowledge and to the greater glory of God.

GREATHAM VICARAGE,
27th December, 1871.

PREFACE TO THIRD EDITION.

THE three years which have elapsed since this little work first passed through the press, have been by no means barren of discoveries, topographical and archæological, in the Holy Land.

Lieut. Conder, R.E., has been almost continuously occupied in the detailed Survey, and M. Ganneau, on his researches in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem, both under the auspices of the Palestine Exploration Fund. The writer has also had the opportunity of traversing the Land of Moab, where he has been able to identify various sites, hitherto scarcely known or only guessed at.

The results of all these recent additions to our topographical knowledge have been carefully incorporated in the present edition, involving upwards of one hundred additions to this little compendium. It has been a satisfaction to find that the changes in the body of the work are for the most part additions and not corrections. Among the most interesting are the recovery of the Great Altar of Ed by Lieut. Conder, and of the site of Adullam.

Thus, step by step, is modern research setting forth more and more distinctly the minute accuracy of God's Word in matters of detail, and shedding light upon the framework in which its dogmatic revelations are contained.

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BIBLE PLACES;

OR,

Topography of the Holy Land.

CHAPTER I.

THE WILDERNESS, AND THE NEGEB, OR SOUTH COUNTRY.

The going up out of Egypt—Desert of Tih—Wilderness of Paran—Hazeroth—Kadesh Barnea—*Ain Gadis*—Eshcol—Beer-lahai-roi—Hagar's Well—Rithmah—Hornah—Zephath—Akrabbim—Eboda—Adar—Hezron—River of Egypt—*Wady el Arish*—South Country, or Negeb—Negeb of Kenites—of Judah—of Philistines—Gerar—Sitnah—Tribe of Simeon—Rehoboth—*Ruheibek*—Description of the South Country—Kabzeel—Kenites—Kinah—Dimonah—Ararah—Ziph—Telem—Bealoth—Hadattah—Kerioth-Hezron—Shema—Moladah—Wells—Hazor-Gaddah—Heshmon—Hazor-Shuah—Beersheba—Azim—El Tolad—Chesil—Ziklag—Shilim—Ain-Rimmon.

THE consideration of the topography of the Holy Land, or, as it was called before the conquest by Joshua, the Land of Canaan, the modern Palestine, may best be commenced from the southern extremity, the point first touched by the Israelites, within a few months of their exodus from Egypt when they attempted their unsuccessful advance from Kadesh Barnea.

The passage from Egypt is frequently spoken of as the "going up" out of Egypt. In order to understand how strictly accurate is the term, we must remember that, after leaving Sinai and traversing the Desert of the Wanderings, or the "Tih," in a northerly direction, the low ranges of hills which are successively reached present the appearance of a succession of gigantic terraces, or steps, running from east to west. These are formed by the

gradual expansion and depression of the great mountain range of the Lebanon, which, as it runs down between the Mediterranean and the Jordan Valley, forms successively the mountain region of Galilee, the hill country of Samaria, and the hill country of Judæa. Extending from Hebron, it spreads over the south country, widening as it is traced southward, as if the hills had been pressed down to the east and west, and exhibiting no central crest like that which forms the watershed from Lebanon to Hebron.

In travelling northwards from Sinai, there is a graduated ascent through the Wilderness of the Wanderings, now called the Desert of Et Tih, dykes of porphyry separating the pink granite region of the Sinaitic range from the sandstone district, into which we rise over the Jebel et Tih, a long limestone range running east and west, and which gradually shelves up into the plateau of the same name. A similar range of limestone ridges, with the same general direction, forms the boundary between the Tih and the "Negeb," or south country of Judah. But this range is much less regular in its outline than the frontier ridge south of the plateau, and forms a vast bay receding northwards in the centre. All along the edge of this ridge the country for many miles, as it sinks into the true Desert, is now sterile and barren, yet not utterly desolate. It presents traces of a primeval race of inhabitants, probably the Amalekites, in the cairns and stone huts which have been explored and described very recently by Messrs. Holland and Palmer.

The arc which forms the northern boundary of the Desert may be said to spring from the western side of the Wady Arabah, opposite to Petra, thence winding in a north-westerly direction nearly to Sebaita, the ancient *Hormah*, and then curves to the south-west to the Wady el Arish due west of Petra. Into this bay of the wilderness the children of Israel would seem to have marched at an early period of their wanderings. The western face of this

plateau was that "mountain of the Amorites" spoken of by Moses as the southern limit of the Land of Promise: "We came to *Kadesh Barnea*. And I said unto you, Ye are come unto the mountain of the Amorites, which the Lord our God doth give unto us" (Deut. i. 19, 20).

The desert plain south and east of this was the Wilderness of *Paran*, which commenced where the Wilderness of Sinai ended, *i.e.*, it was the limestone region now known as the Desert of Tih. To the north and east of this the Wilderness of *Zin* gradually sloped towards the Arabah and Dead Sea. The northern barrier of the Desert of Paran or Tih, which forms the terrace of the "Negeb" or south country of Judah, is well described by Williams as "a gigantic natural rampart of lofty mountains, which we could trace for many miles east and west of the spot on which we stood, whose precipitous promontories of naked rock, forming, as it were, bastions of Cyclopean architecture, jutted forth in irregular masses from the mountain barrier into the southern wilderness, a confused chaos of chalk." We can well understand how, with this barrier in front of them, the children of Israel always spoke of "going up" into Canaan.

The whole of the range of steppes lying to the west of the Desert of Tih, though now arid and comparatively barren, yields evidence of having once sustained a not inconsiderable population. From lat. 29° 30' there are continual traces of tombs, wells, forts, and other ruins. It is worthy of remark that Prof. Palmer found at the ruins of Contellet Garaiyeh, more than thirty miles south-west of Kadesh Barnea, jars built into walls, and frames with mortices, beams, &c. Now all these old beams were of shittim wood (*seyal*); and at the present day there is but one solitary *seyal* tree in the whole Desert of Tih. The face of the country must have been strangely changed by the destruction of the timber.

From this spot, as we travel north to the site of

Kadesh Barnea, we are on the frontier line of the old "south country" of Judah, the Negeb. It is a mountain region with many groups of hills, among which the wadys or valleys, that take their rise at the edge of the crest, meander westward to the sea. These, of course, are much more fertile than the open plain.

Along the edge here, with the Canaanites and Amorites watching them from the upper defiles, the Israelites marched on their first direct journey from Sinai after leaving *Kibroth Hattaavah*, and they abode at *Hazeroth* (Numb. xi. 35). The word *Hazeroth* (the plural of *Hazor*) simply means enclosures, or open, loose villages, the low circles of stones, on which the Bedouins, to this day, are in the habit of pitching their tents, when about to encamp for a longer time than merely a few days. All along this route there are great numbers of these *Hazeroth* or ancient enclosures. They are always on a hill-side, or in some sheltered spot, while the tombs or cairns are invariably on the crest of a hill.

About twenty-five miles south of *Kadesh* these stone circles are innumerable, and cover the whole Valley of *Mayin*. Close to this, in another valley, are later ruins, belonging doubtless to one of the unidentified cities of Southern Judah, now called *Lussan*. The valley has been terraced, and the water carefully regulated and distributed through the enclosed patches of ground. It has been inhabited in the Roman period; and there yet remains a house, with chambers, courtyard, and an archway perfect.

From *Lussan*, a day's journey brings us to *Ain Gadis*, at the head of the *Wady Gadis*, the name being the exact Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew *Kadesh* (i.e., a sacred city or separated place). It is just at the frontier of the south country of Judah, of which it is the key strategically, as its identification is the key topographically, to this part of the history of the wanderings. It exactly answers to

the description of the Bible ; the Israelites waiting, as it were, on the threshold of the southern portion of the Promised Land, and, from the evidence on all sides, we may fairly conclude that the surrounding country was better supplied with water than it is now ; and that it was, therefore, at least as suitable for the encampment of the Israelitish hosts as any spot in Sinai. There are three springs which form shallow pools, one of them overflowing and producing a stream of water in the rainy season ; its exact position is lat. $31^{\circ} 34'$, long. $43^{\circ} 31'$, and situated on the natural border of the country.

We are here on one of the most interesting spots in early Scripture history. It is first mentioned in Gen. xiv. 7, in the account of the foray of Chedorlaomer, who crossed from Seir, or Petra, to *Kadesh*, defeated the Amorites, and then turned back to the north-east to *Hazezon Tamar*, or *Engedi*, by the Dead Sea. The *Horites*, or Cave-men, whom he smote, have left their traces, not only in Mount Seir, but in many parts of the Wilderness of Paran, where the cave-dwellings may still be distinctly traced, as Mr. Holland has shown. It is next mentioned in Gen. xvi. 14, as marking the situation of Hagar's Well, *Beer-lahai-roi*, which lay between *Kadesh* and *Bered*, a site not yet satisfactorily identified. Hence Joshua and Caleb, with their companions, were sent to spy out the country, and hither they returned with the grapes of Eshcol and their report of the land. Here broke out the murmuring ; and here, after those who had brought up an evil report died of the plague, began the forty years' penal wandering in the wilderness. Hence, stung with shame and sudden remorse, the people, against the exhortations of Moses and without the presence of the Ark of the Covenant, went up against the Amalekites and the Canaanites, and were defeated and discomfited even unto *Hormah* (Numb. xiv.) Hither Israel returned after the rebellion of Korah ; and here Miriam died and was buried (Numb. xx. 1).

There is one objection to the identification of Ain Gadis with *Kadesh*, and that is the fact of the spies having brought grapes from Eshcol, which has ordinarily been placed close to Hebron, and is, therefore, far too distant for the conveyance of grapes, especially by men traveling cautiously as spies. But Prof. Palmer observes it is a curious fact, that among the most striking characteristics of the Negeb are miles of hill-sides and valleys, covered with the small stone heaps, in regular swathes, along which the grapes were trained, and which still retain the name of *teleilat-el-'anabor* or grape-mounds.* Gadis, then, answers every condition of the history. Israel had nothing but the wilderness around them and no formidable hostile peoples in their rear.

Turning west-north-west from *Kadesh*, we come, at a distance of about fifteen miles, to Ain Muweileh, a spring, in the valley at the foot of the mountains, which has, with some reason, been identified with *Beer-lahai-roi*, Hagar's Well. The slopes of the hills are covered with ruins, their crests with cairns, and their sides studded with cave-dwellings, and at the spot itself has evidently stood one of "the cities of the south," which has been inhabited down to Christian times, as chapels and crosses painted on the walls still remain. The Arabs have a tradition that Hagar dwelt here; which, if it be a mere legend, yet is interesting as one of the oldest in a country which has hardly yet been touched by strangers. We must not forget that it was here too that Isaac sojourned (Gen. xxiv. 62, xxv. 11), both before and after the death of his father; and that in the wide pastures below, between *Kadesh* and *Shur*, Abraham kept his flocks and herds.

Just below this is the Wady Erthama, or Rithma, probably the very site of the Israelitish station of *Rithmah*, corresponding to the first sojourn at *Kadesh*,

* See also "Land of Israel," p. 297.

and near Hazeroth (Numb. xxxiii. 18); and where there is a remarkable rock, with a spring bursting forth at its foot.

After the defeat of Israel near Kadesh, we are told (Numb. xiv. 45) the Canaanites chased them unto *Hormah*. *Hormah* seems, with reason, identified with the ruins of *Sebaita*, twenty-four miles north of Kadesh. It is on the very northern extremity of the Wilderness of Paran. It has been a place of importance down to the Christian period, and contains very perfect ruins of three churches, with fresco paintings still to be traced on an arched niche in one of them. The houses are all of one type: small arched chambers with niches here and there, and a little courtyard. Many of the walls stand from twenty to twenty-five feet high; and there are more than twenty-five streets or alleys plainly to be traced. Nearly every house has its well; and they are also conveniently placed in all the corners of the public places. The outer wall, or fortification, still remains, and there are traces of an older and very thick wall outside it, which once surrounded the town. Surrounding the city for a considerable distance may be traced the once well-kept and fruitful gardens, when the hills around were covered with orchards of pomegranates and other fruits, and with terraces of clustering vines. Near the centre of the city stands a strong tower, or blockhouse, built of massive stone with arches for its several storeys.

About three and a-half miles north-west of this stands the ruined fortress of *El Meshrifeh*, *i.e.*, the watch-tower, placed on a most commanding position on the top of a hill, protected by five large towers and the rocks on all sides cut down in escarpments, with bastions. The masonry is very solid and compact, and the blocks are of immense size. The walls are, for the most part, of unhewn stones. The hills all round are covered with vine-terraces and ruined enclosures for cultivation, and with wine-presses; and every little gully is carefully

embanked and built up with rude masonry. Everywhere advantage has been taken of every scrap of ground for agriculture.

Zephath and *Hormah* have always been considered identical. "Judah went with Simeon his brother, and they slew the Canaanites that inhabited Zephath, and utterly destroyed it. And the name of the city was called Hormah" (Judg. i. 17). Now Zephath signifies a watch-tower, and, as has been said, El Meshrifeh exactly corresponds with this, both in its position and in the meaning of the name. But Sebaita is the Arabic equivalent for Zephath. May we not, therefore, understand the word Zephath in its proper signification, and consider the "city" as separate from the tower or fortress thus attacked and destroyed? The city, protected by so commanding a fort, might well be spoken of as the City of the Tower. Probably, therefore, in El Meshrifeh we see the site of *Zephath* itself, and in Sebaita that of the city of Zephath, to which the Israelites, after their victory, gave the name of *Hormah*. But as the Ishmaelite has, through all the revolutions and vicissitudes of history, kept hovering in the neighbourhood, he has preserved to this day, in his vernacular, the old Canaanitish name of Zephath. This was one of the towns of Simeon, whose possessions were scattered among those of his brother Judah in the south (Josh. xix. 1-9).

Having thus found the locality of Kadesh Barnea, we are easily able to trace the southern frontier line of Judah eastward (Josh. xv. 1-4). It went "even to the border of Edom (Petra); the Wilderness of Zin southward was the uttermost part of the south coast; and their south border was from the shore of the Salt Sea, from the bay (or tongue) that looketh southward. It went out to the south side to the going up to Akrabbim, and passed along to Zin, and ascended up on the south side to Kadesh Barnea."

The southern bay of the Salt Sea is evidently the southern Ghor, or dead level plain, which reaches twelve miles to the mouths of Wadys Fikreh and Jeib. Here it would join the frontier of Edom. Thence it trended south-west ("went out on the south side") by the course of the Wady Fikreh to the steep passes of Es Safah or *Akrabbim*. Hence the frontier touched the Wilderness of *Zin* by the Wady Marreh; and still, according to the Domesday Book of Joshua, trending south as it ran west, reached to *Kadesh Barnea* (Gadis), the extreme point of Israelitish territory.

The Wady Marreh and Es Safah stand bold and high; the wady heading the southern edge of the plain and descending very rapidly to a level more than 400 feet lower down, Es Safah standing boldly forth on a mountain spur 850 feet above the plain, on the extensive ruins of Abdeh, the *Eboda* of the ancients, but not mentioned in Scripture, nor certainly identified with any city of Judah. It must have been a place of importance and great strength. But the Desert has reassumed its rights—the intrusive hand of cultivation has been driven back—the race that dwelt here have perished, and their works now look abroad in loneliness and silence over the mighty waste.

Proceeding westward from Kadesh, the boundary line is more difficult of identification. It "passed along to *Hezron*, and went up to *Adar* (*Hazar-addah*—Numb. xxxiv. 4), and fetched a compass to *Karkaa*. And from thence it passed toward *Azmon* and went out unto the river (Nachal) of Egypt, and the goings out of that coast were at the sea" (Josh. xv. 3, 4). None of these places have been identified, excepting *Adar*, probably Lussan. *Hezron* is only another form of *Hazor* or *Hazeroth*—stone enclosures.

But, following to the south for a distance of fifty miles, there are the ruins of many cities, visited by Prof. Palmer,

in a region hitherto untouched, such as Garaiyeh and Lussan, which he has described, which furnish sites for these cities and many more, before reaching the Wady el Arish, if that be the "river of Egypt."

Commentators are divided as to whether to assign the name to this wady, running to the sea from lat. 30°, or to refer it to the Nile. It must be remembered that from El Arish to the frontier of Egypt is absolutely desert, and that the nomad tribes which roamed over it were tributary sometimes to Egypt and sometimes to Syria, and, in the days of David and Solomon, to the Jewish monarchy. But in some passages, when the Nile is spoken of, the word "nahr" (river) is used; and "nachal" is, strictly, only a winter torrent such as the Arish. We may be content, then, to take this, the furthest limit of ancient civilisation till the frontier of Egypt was reached, as the old boundary line of Judah and Simeon, since no settlements can have existed beyond it. It is a boundary drawn by nature, on the north of which is cultivation, on the south desert. Even when there is no water in the wady, it may always be found by sinking to a moderate depth.

Having thus traced the southern frontier of Judah, with which Simeon was intermingled, we may next follow the topography of these tribes in detail. Their portion—the largest and, in many respects, the most important of all the Holy Land—is divided into three regions, which are always distinguished by name in Holy Writ, and which have very distinct natural or physical characteristics. They are: I. The south country or Negeb; by which Hebrew name we shall distinguish it. II. The low country or Shephelah, *i.e.*, the Philistian plain on the sea coast. III. The hill country of Judæa in the north.

I. The Negeb. This extends along the whole southern frontier from east to west. It is spoken of when Abram went up out of Egypt into the *south*; when he went on

his journeys from the *south* even unto Bethel, &c. (Gen. xii. 9, xiii. 1, 3); as where Isaac lived (xxiv. 62); and was inhabited by the Amalekites before the conquest. It was the region in which David wandered, under the protection of the Philistines, during his outlawry. It is an irregularly shaped tract, extending from the mountains of Judah on the north to the edge of the Desert of Paran, and from the south end of the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean; but stretching in a sloping direction towards the north-east to the Dead Sea, and to the south-west to El Arish, thus occupying a middle position, both topographically and physically, between the rich soil of central Canaan and the sandy wastes of that great and terrible wilderness.

The "Negeb" itself was also subdivided into three districts. (1) A small district, allotted to the descendants of Jethro, called (1 Sam. xxvii. 10) the *south* of the Kenites. We read (Judg. i. 16): "The children of the Kenite, Moses' father-in-law, went up . . . into the wilderness of Judah, which lieth in the *south* of Arad, and they went and dwelt among the people." Here they were found by Saul, when he was sent to exterminate the Amalekites (1 Sam. xv. 6). To them, among the other inhabitants of the Negeb, David sent presents from Ziklag (1 Sam. xxx. 29). There is no difficulty in identifying *Arad* with Tell 'Arad, a white-crowned hill, with traces of ruins, a day's journey west of the south end of the Dead Sea. The ruins of Khirbit 'Ader, south of Gaza, seem to preserve the name of *Eder*, the second city of Judah in the south, mentioned by Joshua, and which does not occur elsewhere.

(2) The *south* of Judah (2 Sam. xxiv. 7; 2 Chron. xxviii. 18). By far the largest portion of the region, including nearly the whole of the allotment of Simeon, stretching south-west from Arad to Kadesh.

(3) The *south* of the Cherethites or Philistines (1 Sam.

xxx. 1, 14, 16), lying to the south-west as far as the upper part of the Wady el Arish or River of Egypt, and deriving its name from the Philistines having formerly occupied it. It comprised the fine pastoral land lying south-west of Beersheba and west of Kadesh, and was known, in the time of Abraham, as the kingdom of Gerar. Light is thrown on the subsequent history of this region by a casual expression in 1 Chron. iv. 39, where we read that the Simeonites "went to the entrance of *Gedor* . . . and found fat pasture and good, and the land was wide, and quiet, and peaceable; for they of Ham (*i.e.*, the Mizraimite Philistines, or Cherethites, from Caphtor) had dwelt there of old." ("*Gedor*" appears an error of the transcriber for *Gerar*—the Hebrew letters being very similar (גר)—and the LXX. corroborates this by reading *Gerar*.) After the time of Abraham, the Philistines, then a pastoral people, as we see by the life of Abimelech, gradually encroached upon the Canaanites in the maritime plains and migrated to the sea-coast, while Amalek pushed on upon them and occupied Gerar, where they were found by Israel at the Exodus.

The interest of *Gerar* centres in the history of Abraham and the Patriarchs. Afterwards it is only once mentioned, when Asa (2 Chron. xiv. 13) defeated and pursued the Ethiopian invader Zerah. From the spoil of tents, sheep, and camels, we see that, though protected by cities or fortress-towns, it was the same pastoral region it had been when Abraham sojourned there and digged wells for his flocks. Here, probably, Isaac was born: here was his favourite residence. The name still remains; and the Wady *Jerur*, a little south of Muweileh or Hagar's Well, with a magnificent prospect and vast rolling plains, covered with herbage, and many ruins on the hills above it, indicates the camping-ground of the Father of the Faithful. On the *Tell Jerur* I counted more than 80 ancient wells within an area of a few acres, all long

since choked. North of this wady, all the way to Beersheba, is a long line of ruined cities and of old wells.

We may here trace Isaac's course. Driven northwards from *Gerar*, he sank wells in the wady, first at *Esek*, then at *Sitnah*. The Well of *Sitnah* has been identified by Prof. Palmer with the modern name of Shutneh, a very little way west of Ruheibeh or *Rehoboth*.

Still pressed by the Philistine herdsmen he proceeded north to Rehoboth, and finally to Beersheba (Gen. xxvi. 6-23). The vernacular names still enable us to trace his course. More than half-way between Jerûr and Beersheba we find the ruins and well of Ruheibeh, the Arabic equivalent of *Rehoboth*. There are many towers and ruins around, some of them still twenty feet high; and round the well are troughs and other masonry, of immense proportions, and, seemingly, of very great antiquity. The well had soon collected a settled population, for the town has been four hundred yards long. The well itself may certainly be that of Isaac, from its appearance: much larger and more ancient-looking than any others in the region. Thus each of the three Patriarchs has left wells for the benefit of posterity at Beersheba, Rehoboth, and Shechem. The striving of the Philistines for the wells sunk may be easily understood, from the certainty that such wells would attract settled inhabitants and stimulate the planting and tillage of the soil: thus, in time, setting up claims of proprietorship at variance with the interests of the nomad pastoral chieftains.

The well Prof. Palmer identifies with *Rehoboth*, and described above, is not at the ruins called Ruheibeh, but near them. The name, though now confined to one spot, may be a reminiscence of a more general title. Travellers in this region have differed in their descriptions of this well, for the simple reason that wells here are very many, and that no two have examined the same.

We may now proceed to consider the characteristics of the Negeb of Judah, having examined the sites of the *south* of the Kenites and of the *south* of the Philistines.

The *south* differs from the hill country to the north of it, not merely so much in being pastoral instead of cultivated, for its whole extent yields proof of very extensive though not universal cultivation in former times; nor in its being less hilly, for it has but few plains of any extent; but in its deep ravines, torn and rent by winter torrents (*aphikim*), "the streams of the south" of Psa. cxxvi. 4. These torrents, quite dry in summer, cut down steep cliffs into narrow gullies by their violence in winter. On the west side they drain towards the Arish and Philistia, on the east towards the Dead Sea, none running south into Paran or the Wilderness.

The wide central expanse is now a sort of upland wilderness, a series of rolling hills, with scanty herbage more abundant on their northern slopes, but without a tree or a bush more than three feet high. Occasionally, by a well, the rich soil, scratched for barley or wheat, shows that with care, as in the days of Isaac, it might still yield a hundredfold. It was especially the land of the lion (Isa. xxx. 6), which, unlike the leopard, prefers dry, open land; of the scorpion, whence the name *Akrabbim* (or scorpions); of sand vipers, which still swarm there; while the beasts of burden were asses and camels—not oxen. The camel ceases to be employed when we reach the hill country, and the ox takes its place.

Besides the places which have been already mentioned, there are no less than twenty-nine cities, with their villages, in the *south*, assigned by Joshua to Judah and Simeon. Probably every one of these survive, covering many acres with ruins which might, with very slight labour, be again rendered habitable: with oil-presses and wine-presses lying at their gates; containing cisterns,

reservoirs, and conduits still perfect and beautifully cemented, with a rich soil in the lower grounds ; in short, everything that might be supposed to attract a settled population. Nearly all these cities have been identified, with more or less probability.

Yet, throughout the whole extent of the *south* country, thickly strewn as it is with traces of its former occupants, and peopled with hardy tribes who pay but a nominal allegiance to the Turkish government, there is not so much as a single inhabited village. Not until the traveller has fairly crossed its northern boundary and entered the hill country, does this strange spectacle of deserted towns and a houseless population cease to arrest his attention. The Arabs of the south country, contrary to the usage prevailing in every other part of Palestine, carefully avoid taking up their abode in the ancient sites ; and, in a country habitually exposed to sudden visitations of whirlwind and storm, prefer the shelter either of a tent or of some cave bequeathed by the Horite aborigines, or perhaps of the very quarry which furnished the materials of the adjoining city. The words of Dr. Robinson, about Zephath or Hormah, may be applied to every city of the Negeb :—"Once, as we judged upon the spot, this must have been a city of not less than 10,000 or 12,000 inhabitants. Now it is a perfect field of ruins, a scene of unutterable desolation, across which the passing stranger can with difficulty find his way." A mighty spell seems to rest upon the cities of the *south*. We turn to the word of prophecy, and we read, "The cities of the *south* (Negeb) shall be shut up, and none shall open them: Judah shall be carried away captive, all of it: it shall be wholly carried away captive" (Jer. xiii. 19).

We now come to the consideration of the sites of the twenty-nine cities of Judah and Simeon in the south. These occupy but a small space in the after-history of Israel. In fact, with the exception of Beersheba and

Ziklag, none of them ever reappear, except in way of most cursory allusion, in the Scripture narrative. Commencing, as Joshua does (xv. 21), from the east, the first city is *Kabzeel*, the native place of David's mighty man of valour, Benaiah the son of Jehoiada (2 Sam. xxiii. 20). This has been identified with Ain el Arus, at the mouth of the Wady Kuseib, probably the Arabic equivalent for *Kabzeel*, at the end of the Sebkha at the south of the Dead Sea, exactly on the limit pointed out for the Jewish frontier, and where the writer observed traces of buildings of rough undressed stone. It is just at the beginning of the ascent of Akrabbim. *Eder* and *Arad* have been already noticed, as in the Negeb of the Kenites.

Of *Jagur* we find no trace, nor of *Kinah*, the next on the list. From the order in which they occur they were probably in the region of the Kenites, and the reading of *Hazor-Kinah*, "the camp town of the Kenites," has been suggested. That the Kenites were here even before the conquest seems to be implied by Balaam's apostrophe, as from the top of Peor, whence this range is plainly visible, he looked on the Kenites, and with prophetic ken exclaimed, "Strong is thy dwelling-place, and thou puttest thy nest in a rock. Nevertheless the Kenite shall be wasted, until Asshur shall carry thee away captive" (Numb. xxiv. 21, 22). They were mingled, too, with the Amalekites, as we see by Saul's friendly warning, "Get you down from among the Amalekites" (1 Sam. xv. 6). I visited a camping-ground with stone heaps and ruins, about two hours from Arad, called El Hudhera (the Arabic for Hazeroth), which would well answer for this place.

Dimonah, or *Dibon* (Neh. xi. 25), a little further north-west, preserves its name in Ed Dheib, a collection of rude ruins at the head of a wady of the same name, five miles north of Arad.

Adadah. West of the southern end of the Dead Sea,

not far from Tuweirah el Foka, are a group of ruins, still bearing exactly the same name, Adadah. *Aroer* of Judah is mentioned among the places where David and his men were wont to haunt, and to which he sent presents after the recapture of Ziklag. The name remains unchanged in the Wady Ararah. The only relics of the ancient city consist of a few wells, two or three of them built up of rude masonry, and some of them containing water. Fragments of pottery abound. It is about twelve miles south-west of Arad.

Kadesh, or *Kadesh Barnea*, has been already mentioned. Next follow *Hazor* and *Ithnan*, the latter name possibly from the Horite chief Ithran (Gen. xxxvi. 26), in which case it may be conjectured to be Hhora, a cave-city, of which there are so many in the district: notably one to the west of Arad visited by Van de Velde, and another further west visited by myself. It is to be borne in mind that the *Horites*, or *Cave-men*, the predecessors of the Canaanites in the land, have left many traces in its nomenclature, as at Beth-horon, north of Jerusalem, and Horonaim, in Moab. Their occupancy seems to have ceased long before the Exodus.

Ziph is another site not yet recognised. *Telem*, or *Telaim* (1 Sam. xv. 4), chosen by Saul as the rendezvous for his attack on Amalek, was probably a spot where the roads towards the Amalekite territory converged, and is perhaps the head-quarters of the *Dhullaim* Arabs, the equivalent to the Hebrew name, and where, at El Kuseir, or little tower, there are the foundations of a stone-built village.

Bealoth, or *Baaloth Beer*, the *Ramath Negeb* of Josh. xix. 8, was part of the lot of Simeon, the name signifying Holy Well. It is mentioned (1 Sam. xxx. 27) as one of the places to which David sent presents, and (1 Kings ix. 18) as one of the frontier towns fortified by Solomon. where it is simply called Baalath. From these incidental

notices and the names, we gather that it was a watering-place of importance (Beer Baal) and had artificial tanks; that it was on a commanding height (Ramath); that it was on the frontier: and we might expect traces of fortification to remain. All these conditions are fulfilled in Kurnub, south-west of Dhullam, where alone for many miles water is always found in plenty, and where the ravine is crossed by a strong dam to retain it. The walls of a fortified town are yet clearly to be traced, with extensive ruins, and it is at the head of the most frequented pass into Palestine from the south-east.

Hazor and *Hadattah*, next on the list, should probably be taken as one word; and the place is easily identified with the ruins called Hadadah,* a watch-tower on the edge of a bluff on the high ground at the head of the Zuweirah Valley, south-west of the Dead Sea.

The four next names should be read together, *Kerioth-Hezron*, which is *Hazor Amam*. *Kerioth*, the plural form of *Kir*, or *Kirjath*, denotes a fortress or stronghold, like the Welsh *caer*. The plural number points to there having been more than one castle; and we recognise the spot in Kureitein, *i.e.*, the two castles, on the road north from Arad to Hebron on the frontier of the hill country, due south of Maon and Kurmul. The ruins of Kureitein are much scattered, consisting of long rows of primitive walls crossing each other at right angles and more than 500 yards long. Adjoining one of them is a vast quadrangular enclosure; and up a small glen, a little further on, are similar ruins covering the summit of a high cliff.

Shema may be recognised in Rujum Selameh, *i.e.*, the mound of Selamah. It is a knoll with a green basin of fine pasture, enclosed in a circle of smooth rolling hills. The ruins are mere foundations, scattered irregularly over a very considerable area, and affording no clue to their architecture or period. The mention of *Shema* just

* "Land of Israel," p. 370.

before Moladah, and the fact of both being in the heritage of Simeon, support the conjecture of its identity with Selameh, especially as it is called Selmaa in the LXX.*

Sheba (Josh. xix. 2) has been supposed to be a misreading for *Shema*, but it is more probable that it is represented by Tell es Sebá, a large double tell or mound, with ruins and a well, two miles from Beersheba, on the road to Moladah.

Hence a day's journey due west brings us to *Moladah*, *Malatha* of the Greeks, *El Milh* of the Arabs. It



WELL OF MOLADAH.

remained in the occupation of Simeon in David's time, and was resettled after the return under Nehemiah (Neh. xi. 26). It is spoken of as a fortress by Josephus, and was afterwards the station of a Roman cohort. The two wells are in the shallow valley, or plain beneath, very finely built of marble, about seventy feet deep, their sides scored with the ropes of the water-drawers of many centuries. The ground around is strewed with records of the Roman occupation. Fragments of shafts and

* Land of Israel, p. 371.

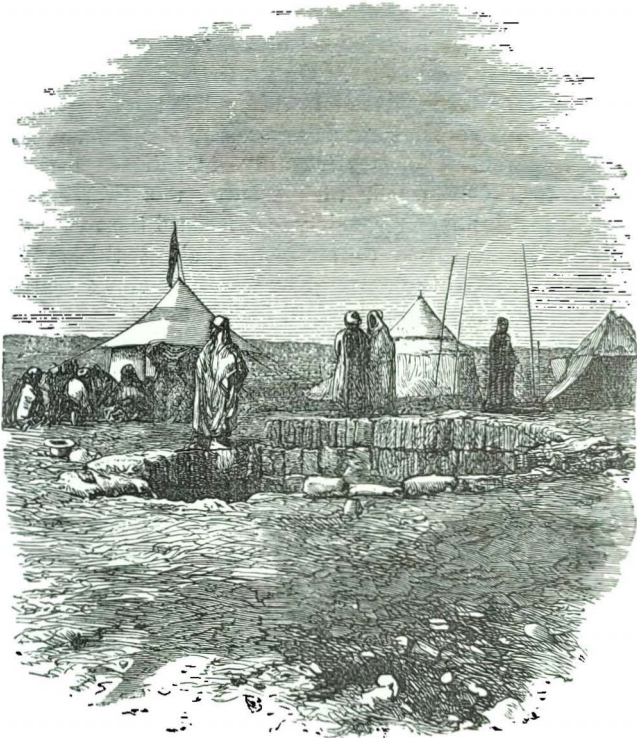
capitals, probably the supports of the roofs that covered the wells, and eight large marble water-troughs, lie around the mouths. There are traces of pavement. Just to the south of the wells stands a small isolated "tell," or hill, covered with ruins, and now used as the burying-ground of the Dhullam tribe. This hill was the fortress of the city below, spoken of by Josephus: and we could clearly trace the circuit of the wall that once surrounded it, nearly square in shape, and still, in places, three or four feet high. The traces of buildings and fragments of walls cover an extensive area both south and north of the citadel; and near its foot, on the south-east, are the outlines of a building, probably a Byzantine church. The other ruins seem to belong to an earlier and ruder period, and are, perhaps, the remains of the old town of Simeon.*

"*Hazor-Gaddah*," "the enclosure or fold of the kid," has been by some identified with the Tamar of Ezekiel (xlvi. 19), the Thamara of Greek and Roman writers, the modern Hudhrûr (Hazeroth), a few scanty ruins near the mouth of the Wady Mubughik, south-west of the Dead Sea. But there is no evidence of anything more than a fort there; and there can be little doubt that it is correctly placed at Jurrah, or El Ghurra, a group of ruins on a high marl peak, with steep sides, very near El Millh, on the road to Beersheba.

Heshmon is very well placed by Capt. Conder at El Meshash, three miles east of Tell el Milh, in the Wady el Sebà, where there are ruins and two wells still full of water, and much frequented. Nothing further is known of Bethpelet, the next city, but from its position in the different lists, it was probably near Beersheba and Moladah. It may possibly be El Hora, an important site on the edge of the hills, with five small outlying forts surrounding the town, called by the Arabs Kasûr el Melhafseh.

* "Land of Israel," p. 375.

Hazor Shual, "the enclosure of jackals," is four times mentioned, but only incidentally. It belonged to Simeon, and, from the passages where it occurs, was to the west of Moladah. Jackals abound most in the dry sandy district adjoining Philistia; and to the north-east of



WELL AT BEERSHEBA.

El Meshash, on a high bluff, are the ruins of a considerable place, built of large flint blocks, and still known by the similar name of S'aweh.

Beersheba, also belonging to Simeon, is on many

accounts the most interesting locality in the south country. Its position admits of no doubt—the well-known Bir-es-Seba. Long lines of foundations mark the ancient city, or rather village, for it seems to have always been what Jerome describes it in the fourth century—a very large unwallled place, with a garrison. The ruins are about half a mile in extent, but scattered, and include the foundations of a Greek church, with apse, sacristy, and aisles. Only a fragment of the apse remains above the pavement, although in the fourteenth century some of the churches were still standing.

The seven wells vary from five to thirteen feet in diameter. One which we measured was twelve and a-half feet in diameter, thirty-four feet till the rock was reached, and seems to be pierced about thirty feet further through the rock. The water, when we visited it, was standing at thirty-eight feet, but varies with the season. The Arabs may well point with pride to the work of their father Abraham. The sides above the native rock are built with finely-squared large stones, hard as marble. Yet the ropes of water-drawers for 4,000 years have worn the edges with no less than 148 flutings, the shallowest of them four inches deep. Ancient marble troughs are arranged at convenient distances round the wells, some oblong and some round. The wells are at the north edge of the water-course of the wady, which is embanked by an old stone wall. In winter there are frequently violent torrents on the gravel beds. Among the ruins are the traces of a Jewish fortress—a circular tower or keep of double walls, each four feet thick, and with a like space between them. There are many fragments of pottery strewn about, with occasional bits of glass, and the squares or “tesseræ” of Roman mosaics.

One feature in particular marks Beersheba as the boundary between the south country and the uplands,

though all else has perished. This is the cultivation of large portions of unfenced land for corn by the Arabs. The low-lying flats are scratched for wheat and barley, and then left two years fallow. They are the lingering evidence of what the land once was, and may yet again become. Beersheba is, indeed, a featureless place. No traces of trees remain, for fuel is as precious as water. Abraham planted a grove of terebinth, and grateful, indeed, would be the boon of its shade to the desert wayfarer; and, if permitted to grow, the terebinth would still flourish in the rich sandy soil.

Here is the place where Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob often dwelt. We are by the very well Abraham digged. Hence he journeyed with Isaac to Mount Moriah. Hence Jacob started on his lonely travel to Padan Aram. Here he sacrificed to the Lord before setting out to join his son Joseph in Egypt. Here Samuel made his sons judges. Here Elijah parted with his faithful servant before wandering into the wilderness. To this place Joab's census extended, the wandering population to the southward being not included in the settled territory, of which this, as the place of departure for the caravans to Egypt, was the recognised limit. Over those wide rolling hills, covered with verdure and carpeted with spring flowers, the Patriarchs used to gaze on their thousands of flocks and herds.

The remaining towns, chiefly Simeonite, lay south and west of Beersheba. *Bizjothah*, "God-despised!" is, perhaps, an epithet of the following Baalah or Balah, a term of contempt for a place devoted to the worship of Baal. Names having reference to this idolatry still remain on the southern frontier of Philistia, as Deir el Belah.

Im and *Azem* Mr. Wilton proposes also to unite, and seemingly with reason, as *Im* is omitted in the subsequent lists. It is probably represented by El Aujeh, of the Azázimeh Arabs, who seem to derive their name

from this Azem, their ancient head-quarters. The name *Im* (crooked) has the same signification as Aujeh. Prof. Palmer has been the first accurately to describe these important ruins, lying two-thirds of the way from Beersheba to Kadesh. There is a strong fort on the summit of a hill commanding the wady; a church, with the apse still standing; wells now dry; the ground for a great distance strewn with ruins, broken walls, foundations, and many bits of pottery and glass. Though all is now desert, the immense number of walls and terraces for miles round show how extensive cultivation once was. There are many miles of plain where corn has been cultivated; and all the hills are covered with the rows and heaps of stones for trailing the vines, which have been already mentioned.

El Tolad, i. e., born of God, may be the name given by Abraham in commemoration of Isaac's birth. Possibly El-Toula, near the Wady Lussan, marks its situation.

Chesil, the *Betheel* or *Bethel* of the south of the later lists, evidently, from its name, connected with worship or a sacred place, and also not far from Ziklag and Hormah, the first city named to which David sent presents, is identified with Khelasa—with very extensive ruins, wells, and fragments of sculptured marble, but now utterly destroyed—a little to the north of Rehoboth, on the road to Beersheba.

Hormah, or *Zephath*, has been already noticed. Next we come to *Ziklag*, so intimately connected with the eventful history of David, a town of Simeon. *Ziklag*, though so often mentioned, is one of the most difficult to determine of all the southern cities. Its general position is clear. It had been wrested from Israel by the growing power of the Philistines, since Achish, King of Gath, gave it to David, who lived here with his two wives Abigail and Ahinoam, till he and his men left it for Hebron. It was in the cultivated lands—not the

low country or Shephelah of the Philistines, and below the settlements of Amalek—in fact, a border city. The site has very recently (in September, 1877) been visited and satisfactorily identified by Lieut. Kitchener, R.E. The ruins bear the name of Khirbet Zuheilikah, and occupy three small hills, nearly half a mile apart, in the form of an equilateral triangle. There are a number of ancient ruined cisterns. The site is in the open rolling plain, eleven miles east-south-east of Gaza, and nineteen miles south-west of Beit-Jibrin or Gath.

Three miles south of it is Wady Bashkkeh, or Sheriah, which may be the brook Besor (1 Sam. xxx. 21), where the 200 faint and weary ceased their pursuit of the Amalekites with David.

Five miles east of Zuheilikah is Khirbet Zebâlah, a large and important ruin, probably the *Balah* or *Baalâh* of Josh. xix. 3, a city of Simeon. Between this and Beersheba is another ruin of some extent, Remâmim, probably the *Remmon* of the same list.

Madmannah or *Beth-marcaboth*, “the place of chariots,” as also the next town of Simeon, *Sansannah* or *Hazar-susah* (Josh. xix. 5), “the horse village,” were evidently stations of passage on the great caravan-road to Egypt. The former seems to be Minyây, fifteen miles south-west of Gaza. The latter is represented by the ruins of Beit Susin.

Lebaoth or *Beth-birei*, “lionesses,” cannot be traced in the vernacular nomenclature. *Shilhim*, “tanks or reservoirs,” elsewhere called *Shaaraim* (1 Chron. iv. 31), “barley,” implies some spot in that thirsty land well-watered and fruitful. The name still lingers in Wady Siram, twelve miles a little to the west of north of Kadesh, where the ruins bear the name of El Birein, “the wells.” There is a very fine aqueduct, leading to a large reservoir, most elaborately constructed and cemented, with earth outside and buttresses. The aqueduct

and reservoir are described at length by Prof. Palmer. He thus pictures the scene: "The broad valley was filled with verdure; grass, asphodel, and òshej grew in great profusion; flowers sprang beneath our feet; immense herds of cattle were going to and fro between us and the water, and large flocks of well-fed sheep and goats were pasturing upon the neighbouring hills. The valley has been enclosed for purposes of cultivation; and the terraces, banked-up to stop the force and spread the waters of the soil over the cultivated ground in the wady bed, extend along its whole length." Prof. Palmer also mentions the noble trees under the shade of which he rested. Mr. Drew, the only other traveller who has visited it, was struck with the patches of corn which he saw.

Sharuhen may be Tell esh Sheri'ah.

Ain and *Rimmon* are the last places mentioned—evidently a misreading for *Ain-Rimmon*, as we see by the subsequent catalogues. It is incidentally mentioned in Zech. xiv. 10, and means "the fountain of the pomegranate," one of the very fruits of which the spies brought samples. *Um er Rumamim*, "the mother of pomegranates," lies twelve miles north of Beersheba, and seems, without question, to be the site of the ancient city.

We have examined at some length the bare catalogues of the cities of the south, with a view to their exact identification, because, though they have but small importance in the topography of Scripture history, yet this is the part of Palestine least known; and the slight incidental allusions which we trace, the signification of the names, and the attestation of a vast former population by their ruins, are not among the least interesting or telling of the illustrations of the Word of God.

CHAPTER II.

THE SHEPHELAH, OR LOW COUNTRY, GENERALLY SPOKEN OF
AS PHILISTIA.

Characteristics of the Low Country—Five groups of Cities—Philistia—Gaza—*Guzzeh*—Ashkelon—Ashdod, or Azotus—Ekron—Gath—Beit-Jibrin—Eleutheropolis—Blanche Garde—Encroachment of the Desert—Lachish—*Um Lakis*—Its sieges—Inscriptions of Nineveh—Sennacherib—Eglon—Bozkath—Jobtheel—Dilean—Saphir—Gederoth—Beth-dagon—Naamah—Makkedah—Mareshah—Achzib—Keilah—Nezib—Ashan—Ether—Libnah—Shaaraim—Goliath—Sochoh—Azekah—Vale of Elah—Battle-field—Adullam—Jarmuth—Eshtaol—Zorah—Timnath—History of Samson—Zanoah—Cities of Dan—Ajalon—Shaalbim—Joppa—*Yafa*—Its history—Lydda—Antipatris—Caesarea—Der.

THE second physical division of the allotment of Joshua was the *Shephelah*, or low country, translated generally in our version as “the valley” (Josh. xv. 33), and sometimes “the plain.” It comprises the low-lying flat country, whether desert or corn growing, which intervenes between the central backbone of hills extending from north to south and the sea. The expression, though equally applicable to all the coast plains of Palestine, is generally confined to those of Philistia and Sharon, which are limited northwards by the bold projecting spur of Carmel; while the next plain, that of Acre, is similarly cut off by the precipitous Ladder of Tyre from the Plain of Phœnicia.

This region in the allotment of the tribes fell principally to Judah, in the south of whose portion were several towns assigned to Simeon; while the northern part, better known as the Plain of Sharon, was the rich but narrow heritage of Dan. Practically, however, the more important and valuable part of this vast corn-plain

was never conquered till after the monarchy, and remained in the possession of the Philistines, who were often the terror and the scourge of Israel. There is no natural boundary line between Philistia and Sharon. The plain stretches with scarce an undulation, but with very varying depth inland, from the southern frontiers of the Desert of Gaza to the foot of Carmel.

The descent from the Negeb, or south land, to the low country is gentle and insensible on its southern limit, but much more steep and clearly defined from the hill country of Judah on the east. The towns of the maritime plain are given in Joshua xv. 33-47, where Shephelah is rendered "the valley," and are there divided into four groups:—1st. Those in the north and north-east, fourteen cities in all. 2nd. Those which, so far as they have been identified, lay in the central south-western part of Judah, sixteen in number. 3rd. A group which clung rather to the western face of the hill country, and were often situated on the edge of the mountain range, of which nine are enumerated; and 4th, the Philistian cities in the extreme south-west, of which only three are enumerated, Ashkelon and Gath being omitted. Besides these, lying on the coast to the north was the portion of Dan, to which tribe fifteen cities of the Plain of Sharon were appropriated (Josh. xix. 40-46).

We shall most naturally proceed with our investigations by passing from the south country into Philistia, where, leaving Gerar, the old seat of the Caphtorim or Philistines, the first city which arrests our attention is Gaza.

There are not many places of greater interest in southern Palestine. Its frontier town, *Gaza*, was the key of the road to Egypt. Before the days of Abraham it was the border city of the Canaanites (Gen. x. 19). Along that road the Pharaohs, Shishak, and Necho invaded Israel by the way of the Philistines. By the same

road, too, one Eastern despot after another—Assyrian, Chaldean, Persian, and Syro-Grecian, marched to win the rich prize of the Valley of the Nile.

At the conquest by Joshua, Gaza was taken by Judah, but it was soon wrested from them, and during the whole period of the Judges was the chief of the five Philistine



GAZA—NOW GUZZEL.

cities. Its gates were taken by Samson and carried to the top of the neighbouring hill. But it still maintained its power, and its subjection by David and Solomon was only temporary. The efforts of Samson died with himself. It was here that his enemies enjoyed their short-

lived triumph over their dreaded captive, when, blinded and mocked, he overwhelmed them and himself in one common ruin, when he bowed himself with all his might and brought down the pillars of the court-house in which the Philistine lords were crowded. In the vast corn-plain which stretches round Gaza, Samson had spread destruction by turning loose the jackals (foxes) with firebrands at their tails.

The inscriptions of Nineveh tell us that in after times Sennacherib gave the King of Gaza part of the territory of Hezekiah. Soon afterwards Gaza was stormed by Pharaoh-Necho after the battle of Megiddo. Its siege arrested the march of Alexander the Great for five months, and when he had stormed it he put its defenders to the sword to the last man. Again and again, in the wars of the Maccabees, the Herods, the Khalifs, the Crusaders, Gaza was the scene of many a struggle.

It was on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza that Philip met the Ethiopian eunuch; and the baptism of Queen Candace's treasurer must have taken place very near Gaza, since Philip reached Ashdod, the town to the north of it, on his return. Thus Gaza, the key of Egypt, became the highway, not only for the caravans of Syria, but for the message of the gospel of peace to the continent of Africa. There are two roads from Gaza, one along the coast through Ashkelon and Ashdod, the other through Beersheba to Hebron. Not far from Eglon, on this route, is water, the probable scene of the baptism.

The capture of Gaza was one of the earliest feats of the Saracens; but it was wrested from the Moslems by the Crusaders, and garrisoned by the Templars. It was visited by Richard I. of England, but finally yielded to Saladin, A.D. 1170, and its Christian history closed. Its Great Mosque was a church founded by the British Empress Helena. Its arches, supported by columns taken

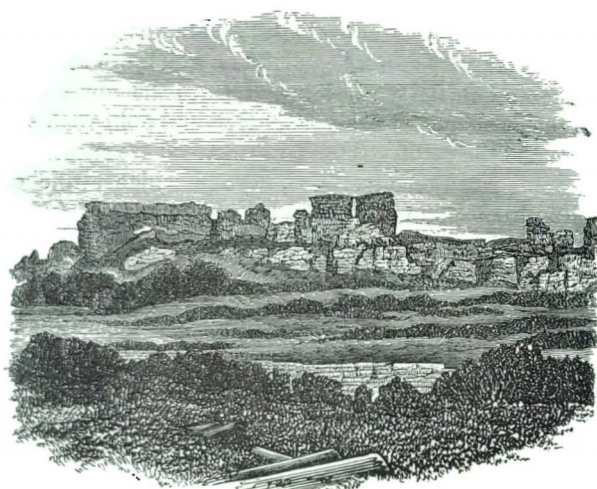
from old heathen temples, and its apse, still remain. Here, in the now desecrated shrine, Roman Emperors and French and English kings have done homage to their Saviour.

Gaza, now Guzzeh, is the second town of Palestine, next after Jerusalem. But it has now neither walls nor gates. Gardens, hovels, and fine arches are mingled in all directions. The sea is only three miles distant; and the whole space is one uninterrupted line of old foundations and ruins, strewn with pottery and marbles. The old port, which was entirely artificial, has been long since choked with sand, the drifts of which are steadily encroaching on the corn-plain. But, to the north and east, the gardens and orchards, green and gold with the orange and the palm, stretch far away, and are succeeded by a noble wood of olive-trees, beyond which stretches one illimitable plain of wheat—the old granary of Judah—with neither hedge nor tree to vary its extent. It reaches, with scarce a hillock to interrupt it, to the very foot of Carmel.

Proceeding by the coast on the edge of the cultivated plain, about twelve miles north of Gaza, we arrive at *Ashkelon*, the second Philistine city, close to the shore, and still bearing the name of Askulân. Gardens and vineyards fringe the old crusading walls landwards, but the sand is rapidly encroaching on them and drifting up to the foot of the ancient fortifications on the south. There is a large village, El Jurah, to the north, but the site of Ashkelon itself is absolutely without inhabitant. “Ashkelon shall be a desolation” (Zeph. ii. 4). “Ashkelon shall not be inhabited” (Zech. ix. 5). But the stupendous fortifications, enlarged by the Crusaders, still remain, with their encients unbroken, forming a semicircle from the sea, one and a-half miles in diameter, and incomparably the largest mass of ruins in Western Palestine. The masonry is magnificent. The whole city

is a mass of luxuriant gardens and fruit-trees, struggling in a maze of prostrate columns and marble fragments, but no human being resides within its limits. There are many wells still in use ; and the sea face is formed by a range of cliffs, built up with many granite and marble columns.

The Biblical history of Ashkelon is unimportant. Its interest centres in the exploit of Samson, who slew thirty men there and took their spoils. In after times it rose

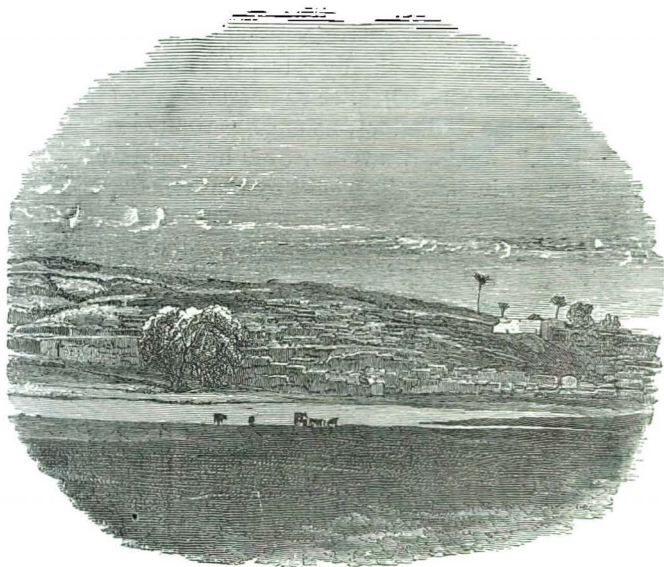


ASHKELON.

to greater importance. It shared many of the sieges of Gaza, and was one of the prizes repeatedly struggled for between Crusader and Saracen. It was the last place in Palestine which held out against the Crusaders, and was at length taken by Baldwin and the Templars. Retaken by Saladin, one of the greatest feats of our own Richard Cœur-de-Lion was the wresting of Ashkelon from the infidel ; and here he held his court. The place was finally destroyed by Sultan Bibars.

Ashkelon was the seat of the worship of a female Dagon or fish-goddess—the Syrian Venus. Its gardens were always famous, and especially its onions. The *scallion* or *shallot* of our own gardens is only a corruption of Ascalonia, the Ashkelon onion.

Twelve miles north again, a little way inland, lies *Ashdod*—*Azotus* of the New Testament, now *Esdad*—



ASHDOD.

another royal city of the Philistines, allotted to Judah, but never conquered, and now a mere mud village. Its position on the great high-road was commanding; and on the little hill stood the temple of Dagon, the fish-god, to which the Philistines brought the Ark of God, after the battle of Aphek, when Dagon fell before it and was the next night broken to pieces, and the pestilence of

the emerods compelled the men of Ashdod to transfer the ark to Gath (1 Sam. v.).

Ashdod stood several sieges, both in Scriptural and in later history. Uzziah dismantled it and settled the neighbouring country with fortresses (2 Chron. xxvi. 6). It was besieged and taken by Tartan, general of the Assyrian king Sargon (Isa. xx. 1), and afterwards sustained the longest siege on record, when, about B.C. 630, in the reign of Josiah, Psammitichus, King of Egypt, invested Ashdod for twenty-nine years, as told by Herodotus. Jeremiah incidentally refers to the effects of this siege when (ch. xxv. 20), after enumerating the kings of the land of the Philistines, he adds, "and the remnant of Ashdod." Again, it was destroyed by the Maccabees, and long lay in ruins till rebuilt by the Romans. It is only mentioned in the New Testament as the place to which Philip returned after the baptism of the Ethiopian. Wretched as the modern village is, the luxuriant fruit-trees and green corn-plains surrounding them attest the natural fertility of Philistia.

Proceeding northward from Ashdod, but turning more inland, we enter a country in which the Philistine possession was more effectually disputed by Judah, and to reach Ekron, about thirteen miles distant, we pass through Yebna, the *Jabneh* of 2 Chron. xxvi. 6 and the same as the *Jabneel* of Josh. xv. 11, one of the border cities of Judah. Between them was *Shikron*, probably represented by the modern Zernuka, a little to the north of the straight road.

Ekron, now Akir, was the northernmost of the five cities of the land of the Philistines. It is named in Joshua (xv. 11) as a frontier city of Judah on its north, where it was contiguous to Dan, the border running thence by Jabneel to the sea, but afterwards (xix. 43) it fell to the lot of Dan. It remained in the hands of the Philistines to the time of the monarchy, and was the last place to which the Ark of the Lord was conveyed, before its

restoration to Israel, by way of Beth-shemesh. After this it scarcely appears in history, and is now a squalid mud village with only two ancient wells to mark its former importance, although the plain is rich as elsewhere.

Gath, the last of the Philistine chief cities, had lost its ancient name in the fourth century, A.D., and Eusebius and Jerome were ignorant of its position. It is now called Beit-Jibrin, the *Baitogabra* of Ptolemy, *Betogabri* of the Peutinger Tables, but better known as *Eleutheropolis* of the ancient Itineraries and Notitiæ. The modern village has shrunk far within the limits of the old city, but its identity with *Gath* is corroborated by the fact of the old ruined heaps in its centre being known as Khirbet Gat, the ruins of *Gath*; and from the name *Beit-Gat*, the *Baitogabra* of Ptolemy is evidently derived. Beit-Jibrin has the same signification, "the house of the mighty." The modern village stands in the midst of ruins, foundations, columns, huge dressed stones and subterranean reservoirs, showing its former strength and importance. It must have been from its position, when fortified, the key of Philistia. It was the scene of many bloody struggles, and was often captured and recaptured.*

In the neighbourhood of Beit-Jibrin are a series of subterranean excavations, very rarely visited, the date and purpose of which are still unknown. Some of them are partially open to the day; but the principal ones consist of a series of hollow domes, sixty feet high, to which no ray of light has ever penetrated, surrounded by winding galleries, and connected by innumerable chambers and passages, honeycombing the whole of the hill, and only accessible by descending a narrow well-like entrance in the hill-side.

* Capt. Conder, however, objects to this identification, and gives many reasons for preferring Tell es Safieh as the *Blanche Garde* of the Crusaders, and *Gath*: but these are not sufficient in the writer's opinion to account for the absence of ruins in the one place, and their abundance in the other.

It was to Gath that Saul pursued the Philistines after the death of Goliath, whose home it was. Hence David would seem scarcely to have acted with his usual caution, when he fled to Gath after the slaughter of the priests at Nob by Saul. He was soon recognised as the slayer of the giant, and had to save himself by feigning madness—then, as now, a sure passport in the East to popular sympathy or at least toleration. From Gath, he escaped to the Cave of Adullam. Again driven by Saul's ceaseless pursuit, David throws himself on the protection of Achish, King of Gath, and had the distant outpost of Ziklag assigned as his possession. He had Philistine friends and followers, as we see from the touching affection shown by Ithai the Gittite (*i.e.*, of Gath—2 Sam. xv. 19).

From the time of David, Gath, lying eastward of the great Egyptian road, scarcely appears in history. It was, however, restored by the Crusaders as a frontier fortress, under the name of Blanche Garde; was captured by Saladin, A.D. 1191, but retaken and rebuilt by Richard of England in the following year. The country round is classic ground to the Englishman, the scene of many of the heroic adventures of the lion-hearted king. On three occasions he was attacked when alone, or almost alone, on the plain between Blanche Garde and Gaza, by the Saracens, and each time cut his way through, killing many, and once capturing five and at another time seven to his own hand.

Each of the five Philistine cities stood on a little rising ground, generally on the edge of that famed plain, a little Egypt for its richness. It was fringed with a narrow belt of sand, which, during ages of neglect, has been steadily encroaching from the sea on the plain, till now the very existence of Gaza and Ashdod are threatened. The sand-bank slopes gently to the sea, and much more steeply towards the land: the wind thus gradually rolls the sand up the slope and then it quietly

drops on the other side. Eastward, the frontier of the plain is indented by many a spur from the Judæan hills, with deep valleys between them, the scene of many a hard-fought struggle with the inhabitants of the mountains. Open towards the Desert, the plain is exposed to the unchecked incursions of the Arab marauders. Long since have the prophecies been fulfilled, that Ashkelon shall not be inhabited (Zech. ix. 5): "I will cut off the pride of the Philistines;" while the squalid hovels and the sand-choked ruins are an existing commentary on the denunciation: "O Canaan, the land of the Philistines, I will even destroy thee, that there shall be no inhabitant. And the sea-coast shall be dwellings and cottages for shepherds and folds for flocks" (Zeph. ii. 5, 6).

But the line of demarcation between the Philistine and Judæan territory was an ever-fluctuating one; and we find that many of the sixteen cities enumerated in the second group—the south-western part of the tribe of Judah north of the Simeonite settlements—were intermingled with the Philistine towns. Few of these, with the exception of Lachish, bore any important part in Scripture history; yet nine or ten of the sites have still preserved their ancient names sufficiently closely in the vernacular to be easily identified.

The site of *Lachish*, the most south-westerly town of this group, is found in Um Lakhis, on the road from Gaza to Eleutheropolis and Jerusalem, about twelve miles from the former city. It is a low round knoll, rising from the plain, covered confusedly with heaps of small stones and here and there fragments of marble columns, and all choked and overgrown with thistles. At the foot of the knoll, to the south-east, is a half-filled ancient well, with broken marble shafts and watering-troughs strewn around; but all "utterly desolate and without inhabitant"—a truly "desolate heap."

Yet round that heap are crowded a host of sacred

memories. The King of Lachish was, with his neighbour chiefs, one of the first of the Amorites to attack the Gibeonites for their league with Joshua, and one of the first to feel the vengeance of the Great Captain after the rout of Beth-horon. He was slain at Makkedah, and Libnah soon after fell; and the effort to aid it by the King of Gezer only precipitated his own utter destruction. Its strength is shown by the incidental mention, that while the other cities were stormed the first day, Lachish held out for two days. It was evidently the Amorite fortress towards Philistia. For this reason, doubtless, Rehoboam fortified it after the revolt of the ten tribes (2 Chron. xi. 9). Hither Amaziah, King of Judah, fled for safety from the conspiracy against him in Jerusalem, but in vain—treachery evidently having foiled him.

But the importance of Lachish is best shown by the circumstances connected with its last appearance in history, when Sennacherib, King of Assyria, in his famous invasion, was compelled to "lay siege against it, his power with him" (2 Chron. xxxii. 9); and here he remained to command in person, while he sent his officers to demand the submission of Jerusalem and its monarch. Already, during the siege of Lachish, had Hezekiah sent an abject message: "That which thou puttest on me will I bear." Thirty talents of gold and three hundred talents of silver were demanded; the treasury was emptied, the temple was stripped, but it was not enough to satiate the invader. Rabshakeh's blasphemy was responded to by the prayers of the pious king; and the angel of the Lord smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred fourscore and five thousand. The scene of the visitation was somewhere in the plain near Lachish, and was long remembered. Herodotus gives us a distorted version, derived, no doubt, from Assyrian sources, that an army of mice nibbled the bowstrings of the invaders in the night and so compelled them to retreat.

The interest of this episode in Israelitish history has been greatly increased by the discoveries of Layard in the mounds of Nineveh. At Kouyunjik, the ancient Nineveh, some of the inscriptions run thus: "Hezekiah, King of Judah, who had not submitted to my authority, forty-six of his principal cities and fortresses, and villages dependent upon them, of which I took no account, I captured and carried away their spoil. I shut up himself within Jerusalem, his capital city. The fortified towns, and the rest of his towns which I spoiled, I severed from his country, and gave to the kings of Askalon, Ekron, and Gaza, so as to make his country small." How exactly this agrees with the Inspired Record: "Sennacherib king of Assyria came up against all the fenced cities of Judah, and took them" (2 Kings xviii. 13). One of the most remarkable instances of historic testimony on record is the coincidence between the amount, thirty talents of gold, levied according to each account. Of silver the Scriptural account says three hundred talents, the Nineveh inscription eight hundred. The discrepancy may be accounted for by Hezekiah's having been only able to *pay* three hundred talents, while the Assyrian monarch includes his plunder in the captured cities.

Another inscription gives a full account of the capture of Lachish. The king is represented sitting on a richly-carved throne on an elevated platform, with his feet resting on a sculptured footstool, with arrows in his right hand and a bow in his left, and above his head this inscription: "Sennacherib, the mighty being, king of the country of Assyria, sitting on the throne of judgment at the entrance of the city of Lachish: I give permission for its slaughter." On the slabs there is a view of the city of Lachish, with its towers and battlements, crowded with defenders, armed with bows and arrows, slings, torches, and other weapons. Mounds of earth are thrown up in front of it, battering-rams are being pushed against the

walls, from which scaling-ladders are being thrown back by the garrison, and a vast number of assailants are drawn up in array, the bowmen in the front rank kneeling, those in the second line stooping, and the third shooting as they stand upright: with horsemen and charioteers behind.

Other slabs represent the capture of the city, a long procession of captives before the king, their torture and slaughter. Their physiognomy is strikingly Jewish: some are dragged by a hook in their nose—all are stripped of their ornaments, and are left barefooted and half-clothed. The women, too, are treated with the same contumely. All their ornaments, described by Isaiah (ch. iii. 18–23), are removed: they wear “instead of a girdle a rope, and instead of a stomacher a girdling of sackcloth.”

Another slab seems to give a ground plan of the city after its occupation, with heathen worship going on at a sacrificial altar; and the town appears to be on a hill, with a hilly country in the distance. It is represented as surrounded with *palm-trees*, the characteristic fruit-tree of the maritime plain, and the country round covered with vines and fig-trees.

After this Lachish hardly appears in history, excepting the cursory mention of its re-occupation by the Jews after the captivity, and a passing notice by Eusebius and Jerome.

About three miles west of Lachish, another low round hillock, covered with a shapeless mass of ruins, marks the site of *Eglon*, and still bears the name *Ajlan*. This was another of the confederate Amorite cities whose king was slain at Makkedah, after the great battle of Beth-horon; and the city itself was taken immediately after the capture of Lachish (Josh. x. 34). It does not occur in subsequent history.

Bozkath, named by Joshua, between Lachish and Eglon, and the native place of King Josiah's mother, has not been identified, though its remains are doubtless to be

found among the numerous desolate heaps which stud this region, and fill its maps, but few of which have been recognised under their modern names.

Cabbon, *Lahman*, and *Kithlish* may be El Kubeibel, Kirbet el Lahm and Makkum, all occurring near each other and in this order. Kithlish is called Maachus in the LXX, the exact rendering of the present Arabic name.

Jobtheel, mentioned just before Lachish, may perhaps be Beit Jerja, a little north-west of Lakis. Next to it is named *Mizpeh*, a very common name in Palestine and signifying "watch-tower." The name is always given to some fort in a commanding situation. It must have been on the spur of one of the hills of Judah, near Gath or Blanche Garde. It seems to be Khirbet Mesheirefeh, near Gaza. The word is the Arabic equivalent of the Hebrew.

Dilian, the next town, is also lost. The place never occurs in history after the allotment of Joshua, but seems to have lain between Mizpeh and Ekron. The name, signifying "gourd" or "cucumber," is most appropriate for this cucumber-growing district, and is, with fair reason, identified with Tina, a village with ruins, some miles south of Ekron.

The next town mentioned, *Migdalgad*, is easily identified with the modern Mejdal, two and a-half miles inland from Ashkelon; it was evidently the centre castle of Judah in front of that city. The position of the next two cities of the group, *Hadashah* and *Zenan* (*Zaanan* of Micah i. 11), in the district east of Ashkelon, is marked by the ruins of Abdas and Khirbet Sameh.

Along with *Zaanan* and other places in this region, the Prophet Micah mentions *Saphir*, the modern Sawafir, a group of three villages, all with the same names. They lie about eight to ten miles north-east of Ashkelon, beyond Mejdal, and in the direction of the four remaining cities of this group.

These are *Gederoth*, i.e., "sheep-cotes," *Beth-dagon*,

Naamah, and *Makkedah*. These are represented respectively by the modern Ghuderah, Beit-Dejan, Naaneh, and Mughâr. Beth-dagon (the house of Dagon) clearly points to a sect of Philistine idolatry. Ghuderah and Mughâr are close together, about two miles south-east of Ekron, with which they form a triangle; Naamah—its name unchanged—is six miles north-east, and Beit-Dejan twelve miles north, near Lydda.

The identification by Prof. Palmer of the village of El Mughâr (*i.e.*, *the Cave*) with *Makkedah* is most important, and shows how much may still be done in Biblical topography. It stands on a hill on the west of the road from Ashdod to Ekron, which passes through a little valley; and on the east side stands Ghuderah. Sir G. Grove had already pointed out, from the history of Joshua, that in this district *Makkedah* must be looked for. Unfortunately the caves, from which it takes its modern name, have not yet been explored. The Cave of *Makkedah* is for ever linked with the memories of the first great victory of Joshua—the battle of Beth-horon, before referred to—which gave Israel the whole Amorite district of the south. The cave must have been a well-known one, and outside the city. To it the five kings fled after their utter rout. Joshua at once followed with his victorious hosts. The cave had already been blocked by him to prevent escape. After significant ceremonies, calculated to strike terror into the Canaanites, the five were hanged, probably on some tree sacred to idolatrous rites, and, when cut down at even, buried in their hiding-place, to the mouth of which great stones were rolled, that it might never again serve as a refuge for the foes of Israel. But meanwhile, flushed with triumph, the warriors had, during the afternoon, stormed the city of *Makkedah* itself, and put its inhabitants to the sword. *Makkedah* was thus the first city captured after the fall of Jericho; nor does the place again occur in history.

We now turn to the east of the low country, to the group of cities mentioned by Joshua as in the plain, or *Shephelah*, nine in number. These appear to have clustered on the edge of the hill country, most of them rather facing and commanding the plain than actually on it, though their lands stretched far below their fortresses.

The most famous and central city of this group, *Betogabra*, the *Eleutheropolis* of the Greeks and Romans, and now Beit-Jibrin, *i. e.*, the house of the giants, perhaps from the Hebrew form *Beth-gibborim*, is the *Gath* of Old Testament history, already mentioned. In Roman and Christian times it became the capital of Southern Palestine, was destroyed by the Saracens, rebuilt by the Crusaders, who have left ruins of great extent, and, finally, it has dwindled to an Arab village. Near it are many cave-dwellings and subterranean villages, the work of the Idumæans.

A little to the south of it, Marash marks the *Mareshah* of Joshua. It commanded one of the passes from the hill country, and was fortified by Rehoboam after the severance of the two kingdoms. To Mareshah the vast hordes of Zerah, the Ethiopian, advanced up the Philistine plain, when he was met and routed by Asa (2 Chron. xiv.) and pursued to Gerar. It was the birthplace of Eliezer the Prophet (2 Chron. xx. 37), and is denounced along with other cities of this region by Micah (i. 15). It bore an important part in the history of the Maccabees. Its ruins are not very extensive: the materials having been employed in building Eleutheropolis. Next to it both Joshua and Micah name *Achzib*, which has been identified as Ain Kezbeh, near Beit Nettif, noticed by Jerome as near Adullam, and is probably the same as *Chezib* (Gen. xxxviii. 5), where Judah was when his son Shelah was born.

Keilah, the modern Kila, lies half-way between Mareshah and Hebron, and really far retired from the plain.

Rescued by David from an attack of the Philistines, the only interest attached to the name is connected with his history. It was then a walled city, and David remained there for some time along with Abiathar, who alone of the priests at Nob escaped, and fled thither with the sacred ephod; but after a short sojourn it was revealed to David by the Lord that the men of Keilah would betray him to Saul, and he left the ungrateful city.

Hareth, the place in Judah to which David fled after his sojourn in Moab, may reasonably be looked for in the neighbourhood of Keilah, and we find it at one of the heads of the Valley of Elah, in the small Arab village of Kharas, a name embodying all the essential letters of the Hebrew word, with a slightly different termination.

The next city, *Nezib*, lies to the north-west of Keilah, about half-way between it and the plain, and is now known as Beit Nusib, seven miles east of Beit-Jibrin. Its remains are unimportant. A little north-west of this was *Ashnah* (*Asena*), identified with *Idhnah*, five miles south-east of Beit-Jibrin, of which we know nothing further, nor of *Jiphthah*, the next city given. The next two cities of this group, *Ashan* and *Ether*, must have been far to the south, towards Beersheba, and were, from their position, subsequently allotted to the tribe of Simeon. The latter seems to be represented by Tell Athar, a little to the north-east of Beersheba, and the former by 'Aseileh. Capt. Conder has suggested more northerly sites for these, at Kirbet Atr and Kirbet Hazanah, respectively one mile north-west and five miles south of Beit-Jibrin.

Libnah, the last of the number, has left no trace in the local nomenclature, but with good reason is identified with *Arak el Menshiyeh*, a ruin-covered hill or desolate heap, five miles north-west of Beit-Jibrin. This locality also agrees with the indications in Joshua's route, who, after the capture of Makkedah, marched

against Libnah and thence to Lachish. It was afterwards one of the cities of Judah, appropriated to the priests. It is mentioned as having rebelled against King Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, but is chiefly remarkable as the place besieged by Sennacherib after the fall of Lachish, and near which the angel of the Lord destroyed his host. Hamutal, the queen of Josiah, was a native of Libnah. It does not subsequently appear in history.

The identification of Capt. Conder differs from this, in fixing *Libnah* at Beit-Jibrin itself; Sir C. Warren would place it at Ibna, on the great coast road.

We now come to the group of fifteen cities of Judah, the first enumerated in the roll of Joshua, and which lay north and east of Philistia. Few of them are of any historical importance, and their chief interest arises from their connection with the history of Samson, and David's exploit against Goliath. *Gederoth* ("sheep-cotes"), *Gederthaim* ("the two sheep-cotes"), and *Adithaim*, are marked by the ruins called Jedireh and Hadid, in the plain, near the north boundary line of Judah. *Sharaim* or *Shaaraim*, the next city mentioned, occurs as on the route of the flight and slaughter of the Philistines after the fall of Goliath, on their way from the Valley of Elah (Wady Sumt), toward Ekron, west of Suweikeh—perhaps Tell Zakariya, a large hill, with steep terraced sides and caves, on the south side of the valley, and which must be passed in escaping to Gath.

Azekah, on the Wady Sumt, a little to the west of Socoh, probably the modern Deir el Aashek, on the south side of the Valley of Sorek, eight miles north of Socoh and a little further from Makkedah, is several times mentioned; first, as the place to which Joshua pursued the Canaanites after the battle of Beth-horon; and, again, as the spot beyond which the Philistines encamped before the battle in which Goliath was killed. It was fortified by Rehoboam (2 Chron. xi. 9), was one

of the few remaining fortified cities of Judah at the time of the Babylonish Captivity (Jer. xxxiv. 7), and was re-colonised after the return (Neh. xi. 30).

The whole scene of the defiance of David by Goliath lies here before us. As *Azekah* lies on the south side of a wide and not very deep valley, *Sochoh*, or *Socoh* (now Suweikeh), commands the valley on the north side, retired about a mile from its centre. The valley is the *Vale of Elah* or "the terebinth," now Wady Sumt, *i.e.*, "of the acacia." The name of a different tree, equally characteristic of the district, has been adopted; but still the butm, or terebinth, grows, and the celebrated butm of es Sumt is probably the largest tree of the kind in Palestine. A little way below Suweikeh, or *Socoh*, two other wadys fall into it, the whole forming an open space covered with fields, opposite which, probably, the Philistines encamped on the south side, at *Ephes-dammim*, now Damûn. In the centre is a pebbly torrent bed, "smooth stones of the brook," and stunted acacias growing here and there. The Israelites were camped nearer Socoh, on the north side. On the intervening open space the unequal contest took place between the champion of the Philistines and the youthful hero, described in 1 Sam xvii.

Adullam, the city named next, seems to have been a little to the east, due north of Beit-Jibrin, probably at Deir Dubbân, where are many of the vast caves mentioned above, any one of which may have been the Cave of Adullam which served as the hiding-place of David. The traditional site near the Dead Sea at Khureitun has no authority. Adullam, as these caves would indicate, was a very ancient place, mentioned in the life of Judah (Gen. xxxviii. 1), and the seat of a Canaanite king. It was fortified by Rehoboam and resettled after the Captivity.

Recent research has very strongly confirmed the conjecture, previously founded on historical grounds alone, that here must be placed the Cave of Adullam. In the

Valley of *E'lah*, half-way between *Sochoh* and *Keilah*, and about eight miles north-east of Beit-Jibrin, lie a collection of ruins, having the name *Ayd-el-Mieh*—the Arabic equivalent of *Adullam*. They are in a commanding position in the valley, and consist of confused remains of dwellings, with wells still open, aqueducts, tombs, hill terraces for cultivation, and rock fortifications. Without the walls and on both sides of the valley are a series of caves, still used as dwelling-places or stables, in which abundant room might be found for David and his followers. The city itself was evidently one of the strongholds by which the raids of the Philistines upon the fertile corn land of Judah could be held in check.

Just to the north of *Socoh*, on the edge of the hill country, was another Canaanitish royal city, *Jarmuth*, destroyed by Joshua—the modern village of *Yarmuk*. It has no subsequent historical importance.

The remaining cities of this group continue to occur as we proceed northward. We pass *Beth-shemesh* and enter the borders of Dan. With the history of the Danite hero, Samson, several of these places are associated. Indeed, two of them, *Eshtaol* and *Zorah*, or *Zareah*, were afterwards assigned to Dan. They are recognised in the modern *Surah* and *Yeshna*, about two miles apart, and two and a-half miles north of *Beth-shemesh*. *Surah*, or *Zorah*, the home of Manoah and the birthplace of Samson, is on the edge of the hill country, 1,150 feet above the sea, on the southern end of a crest overlooking a valley of the same name. From it we can see the line the milch kine must have taken in coming up with the Ark of the Lord from *Ekron*, and the valley the men ascended in carrying it up to *Kirjath-jearim*.

On the opposite side of the valley, low down, is the ruin of *Ain Shems*, the ancient *Beth-shemesh*, one of the border cities of Judah, just two miles from the Philistine

plain, and with a wide sloping valley still covered with corn-fields as it was when "the men of Beth-shemesh were reaping their wheat harvest in the valley," and rejoiced to welcome the returning Ark (1 Sam vi. 13).

Close to Ain Shems is a great rock, still bearing the name of Deir Eban, the great *Eben*, or rock, on which the Ark was placed on arriving from Ekron (ver. 14). This tradition of the "holy rock" is most remarkable.

Beth-shemesh was one of the cities of the priests, and was fortified by Rehoboam. Here was the scene of the defeat of Judah by Jehoash, King of Israel, when King Amaziah was taken prisoner and Jerusalem partly dismantled and the Temple plundered (2 Kings xiv. 11). In the time of Ahaz it was taken by the Philistines.

Still standing at *Zorah*, and looking across the valley further westward to the opposite crest, we can see the ruin of Tibnah, the ancient *Timnath*—the place where the Patriarch Judah kept his flocks, and to which "he went up," intimating that it was on higher ground than the plain. Samson went down to it to visit his betrothed, a woman of Timnath. It is not in the plain, but 740 feet above the sea; and Samson, in going to it from Zorah, would have to descend 700 feet into the valley and then reascend 350 feet. Vineyards and olives still line the sides of the hill (Judg. xv. 5), and corn waves in the valley as when Samson turned the jackals loose with the firebrands, and the Philistines *came up* to Timnath and burnt Samson's wife and her father with fire. Timnath was an important place in later Jewish history, and the fourth of the military cities at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem. It is now desolate.

Yeshna, probably *Eshtaol*, is on a hill in the other direction, two miles eastward from Zorah. Between them in the hollow was *Mahaneh-Dan*, the fortified camp of the warlike Danites in their constant struggles with the Philistines. Here, among the old warriors of

the tribe, Samson's boyhood was passed, and "the Spirit of the Lord began to move him" (Judg. xiii. 25); and hither, after his last exploit, his body was brought to rest in the burying-place of Manoah, his father.

From Zorah and Eshtaol came the daring band who crossed the whole territory of Israel, and surprised and destroyed *Laish*, under Mount Hermon, making the Dan of the north a more familiar name than the old Dan of the Plain of Sharon.

On the opposite side of the great valley which here forms the boundary of the tribe of Judah to the north, is a remarkable rocky knoll crowned by a village, Beit 'Atáb, probably *the Rock Etam*, a strong defensive position, though lower than the main ridge behind. Hence the expression, the men of Judah "came down to the rock Etam." There is a unique rock tunnel running down from the village eastward towards the principal spring, evidently of most ancient work, and admirably adapted for Samson's place of concealment, when he "went down and dwelt in the top of the rock Etam" (Judg. xv. 8). It is almost impossible for any one unacquainted with the locality to discover the entrance to the tunnel.

The five remaining cities of this group seem to have been crowded in this populous district, about sixteen miles west of Jerusalem. *Ashnah*—the Esna of later writers,—the modern Asalin, is quite close to *Zorah* (Sureh). *Engannim*, now Um Jina, and *Tappuah* (apricot or apple), which evidently took its name from the apricots grown so plentifully in this district, now Artuf, lie not far apart. Enam has not been clearly identified. *Zanoah*, the modern Zanûa, still exists as a village, two miles south-east of Zorah.

From this group we proceed naturally to the heritage of Dan, *i. e.*, the northern portion of the low country or *Sharon*, as distinguished from Philistia. Eighteen cities

are allotted to Dan in Josh. xix. 40-46. Five of these—*Ekron*, *Tinnath*, *Zorah*, *Eshtaol*, and *Ir Shemesh*, have been already considered, for *Ir Shemesh*, “the mount of the sun,” is only the old name of *Beth-shemesh*, “the house of the sun.” These were the border cities south and east. Of the others, with a single exception, we know scarcely anything, and few of the sites can be clearly identified. The heritage of Dan was the smallest of all, yet the richest, extending, according to Josephus, from the foot of Carmel down the whole coast line. But long after the partition of the land, “the inheritance of the Danites had not fallen to them among the tribes of Israel” (Judg. xviii. 1). The old possessors would not yield that rich plain of Sharon without a hard struggle; “and the Amorites forced the children of Dan into the mountains, for they would not suffer them to come down into the valley” (Judg. i. 34). It was only with the help of their neighbour Ephraim that they were able to wrest a portion from them.

It is to be observed that the genealogies of Dan are omitted in 1 Chronicles. The blessings both of Jacob and of Moses foretell long wars and struggles as the portion of this valiant tribe, which on coming out of Egypt was only exceeded by Judah in the number of its fighting men. Of its allotted cities, we find, from Judg. i. 35, that *Shaalvim* and *Ajalon* were long kept by the Amorites. The former may possibly be 'Esalin, near *Zorah*, but more probably *Selbik*, in the same district. *Ajalon*, “the place of deer,” is certainly *Yálo*, several miles north of it, close to the road from *Jaffa* to *Jerusalem*. It was on the frontiers of *Judah*, *Benjamin*, and *Ephraim*, and stands on the side of a long hill which forms the southern boundary of a fine valley of corn-fields, that *Valley of Ajalon* (now *Merj ibn Omeir*) which witnessed the tremendous rout of the Amorites by *Joshua*, and over which the Captain of Israel bid the moon stand still. It was afterwards fortified as a frontier city by *Reloboam*.

Jethlah, rendered by *Silatha* in the LXX, remains in the modern village of Shilta, not far from Yálo, a little to the north-west of the lower Beth-horon, between Ajalon and Elon. *Elon* is possibly Beit Ello, in the plain, and *Thinnatha*, not far off, the northern Tibneh, to be distinguished from the southern Tibneh, which represents *Tinnath*, p. 48.

The Danite city *Gath-rimmon*, which stood, doubtless, in the lower plain, is still unrecognised.

Mejarkkon and *Rakon* have been recently identified with



JOPPA.

Oyûn Kara, in the Plain of Sharon, three miles south-east of Joppa. *Baalath*, which occurs in the list of Danish cities between Gibbethon and Jehud, may be represented by the ruins of Bel 'Ain, discovered by Capt. Conder in the required position in the Plain of Sharon. *Beneberak* has left its traces in Ibn Ibrak, in the same neighbourhood, *Eltekeh* is most probably Beit Likieh, north-east of Latrun, and at the edge of the hills. *Jehud* may be traced in Yehudizeh, a village in the plain, seven miles from the

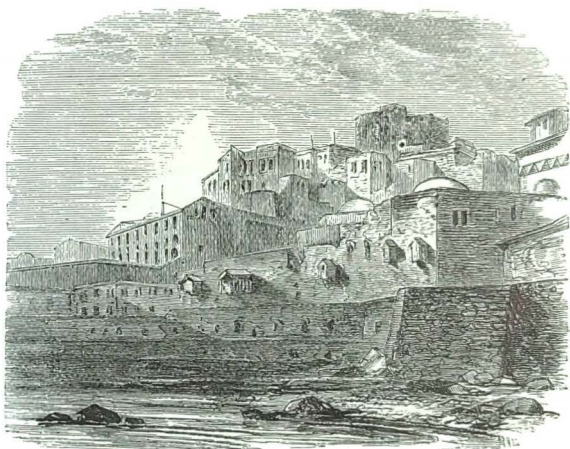
sea, east of Joppa; and *Gibbethon*, to the north of this, west of Samaria, was held by the Philistines (1 Kings xv. 27) and besieged by Omri (1 Kings xvi. 15). It may perhaps be the ruin of Geibuta, north of Jaffa.

Very different have been the fortunes of the last of the cities of Dan, *Japho*, or *Joppa*, now Jaffa, or Yafa, which has a continuous history in both sacred and profane story to the present, caused chiefly by its being the seaport of Jerusalem. In the monotonous line of coast, one elevated knoll rises about half-way between the Desert and Carmel, covered with buildings, the solitary existing landing-place for Judæa. Joppa has been often destroyed but rebuilt after the same old fashion, with curious beehive-shaped little domes for roofs. Its houses still fill the extent of the old walls, whilst a single gate opens on the road to Lydda, the first stage towards Jerusalem.

Its New Testament interest is concentrated in the fact of St. Peter's sojourn in the house of Simon the tanner, when the disciples had brought him thither from Lydda on the occasion of the death of Tabitha. But with that visit is bound up, not only the history of the resurrection from death of that disciple, the benefactress of her sex, but also at Joppa the new dispensation was first declared open to Gentile as well as Jew, by the vision of Peter on the housetop. The pilgrim is still shown Simon's house. The wall of its yard is washed by the waves. There is an old deep well in the court, notched and furrowed by the water-drawing of many generations. Tradition says that here was a tannery, and that the well was for its use. No place could be more secluded than where Peter prayed, if this be, indeed, the spot, shut out from view of the houses above, and close to the wall, away from the city's hum. There is the sea spread out, across which the glad tidings were soon to be borne to another continent. Along the shore, by a curve in the coast line, might be seen the road to Cæsarea, on

which the messengers were hastening from Cornelius. Behind, but out of sight, and hidden by a forest of palm-gardens and fruit-trees, was Lydda, with its disciples.

The history of Joppa stretches many centuries on either side of its central New Testament events. It has its place not only in Israelitish history, but in Grecian legend, in the story of the Crusades, and in the campaigns of Napoleon. Where the European traveller lands to-day, there the men of Tyre warped their rafts of cedar,



SIMON'S HOUSE.

floated down the coast from Lebanon, to be landed by Solomon's servants for the building of the Temple of the Lord. Here, too, by the charter of Cyrus, Ezra received his floats of cedar-trees from Lebanon for the building of the second Temple. It was at Joppa that Jonah took ship "to flee from the presence of the Lord," and was cast to the great fish in his voyage from the same port where the Greek poets fabled that Perseus delivered the virgin Andromeda from the sea-monster.

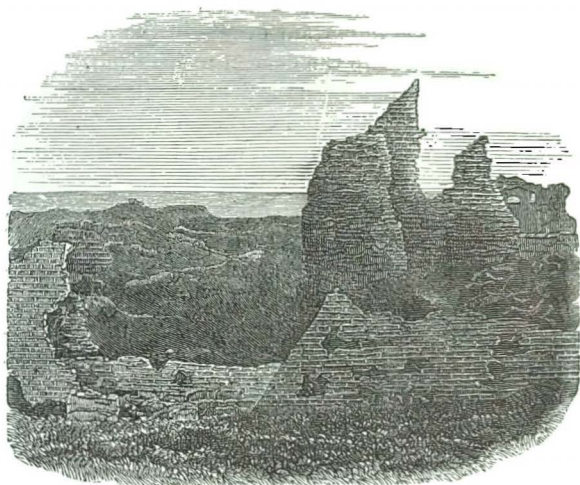
In later times Joppa has been the theatre of many struggles, as being the seaport of Jerusalem. It was the scene of the meeting of Maccabæus and Ptolemy. It was captured and recaptured and twice destroyed by the Romans. Again, it was overthrown by Saladin in the Crusades. Three times in those wars were its fortifications destroyed—by Godfrey de Bouillon; again, by our own Richard Cœur-de-Lion; and, lastly, by St. Louis of France. Ever since the crescent has trodden down the cross in Syria, Arab, Mameluke, and French have each in turn sacked the place; and the blood-stained treachery which dyes the last page in its story—its capture by Napoleon—will never be forgotten.

Nine miles inland from Joppa, after passing the village Beit Dijan (*Beth-Dagon*), we reach *Ludd*, the Lod of the Old Testament, *Lydda* of the New, and *Diospolis* of later Greek writers. Within a few miles of it are *Ono*, *Hadid*, and *Neballat* (1 Chron. viii. 12), still bearing the name of Kefr Auna, Hadithet, and Beit-Neballah, mentioned only in later records. The interest of *Lydda* concentrates in the visit of St. Peter when he healed Æneas, and was called to Joppa to raise Dorcas, "and those that dwelt in (the plain of) Saron turned to the Lord" (Acts ix.). *Lydda* had an eventful history in the later Roman wars, and not less in those of the Crusades. Pelagius was once tried before a council of bishops at *Lydda*. It was the birthplace and burial-place of St. George, the patron saint of England; and the church built by Richard Cœur-de-Lion is still a noble ruin, with a magnificent tower. *Ludd* is still a considerable village, buried in palm-groves.

On the road hence to Jerusalem, but twenty miles from that city, is the village of Amwâs, the ancient *Emmaus-Nicopolis*, but which must not be confounded with the Emmaus of St. Luke, the site of which is much nearer to Jerusalem.

During the Roman period, the ordinary military road

to the coast lay not by Lydda to Joppa, but by Gophna and Antipatris to Cæsarea, far to the north. *Antipatris* was a military town, built by the Herods, forty-two miles from Jerusalem and twenty-six from Cæsarea, on the site of Caphar Saba of Josephus. There is a modern village, Kefr Saba, two miles further from Cæsarea, to which the name seems to have become attached after the original site was deserted. That site is plainly marked out at Ras el Ain, where a large artificial mound



BUINS OF CÆSAREA.

is covered with old foundations, and on the summit is the ruined shell of the fine old castle of Mirabel ; while beneath it burst forth the springs of the Aujeh, the largest springs without exception in all Palestine, exceeding in volume those of the Jordan at Tell Kadi. At the foot of the mountains, this was exactly the point whence it was convenient for the horsemen to accompany St. Paul to Cæsarea without the foot soldiers. Two Roman roads may be traced from it, north to Cæsarea and southwards

to Lydda, on the former of which a Roman milestone still stands. To this day part of the pavement remains on which St. Paul rode to Cæsarea, and by which Pilate and Felix used to go up to Jerusalem.

Cæsarea (to be carefully distinguished from the Cæsarea Philippi of the Gospels) was an entirely new city and port built by Herod the Great, the official residence of himself and his successors, and, after them, of the Roman governors of Judæa, Pilate, Felix, Festus, and others. It lay half-way between Joppa and Carmel, and is associated with numerous and important events in the Acts of the Apostles. Here Philip the deacon resided (ch. viii 40, xxi. 8). Here Peter admitted the first Gentile convert, the centurion Cornelius, into the Christian Church. Here Herod Agrippa was smitten and came to his awful end. Hence St. Paul embarked for Tarsus after his escape from Damascus; and on his return from his second and third missionary journeys he visited Cæsarea. Two years did he remain there bound in prison, remanded by Felix and by Festus, before he was sent as a prisoner to Rome.

The harbour of Cæsarea was altogether artificial, with a magnificent breakwater, and the city had splendid temples, theatre, and circus. It is now a scene of utter desolation with vast masses of ruin, many of them projecting into the sea, but with no human inhabitant within miles of the once sumptuous capital of Palestine.

The only remaining town of Sharon is *Dor*, now the wretched village Tantûra, allotted to Manasseh, but said by Josephus to have belonged to Dan. It had a harbour of some size: "Why did Dan remain in ships?" The ruins are still extensive, projecting into the sea, while the old tower, broken as it is, is still a conspicuous landmark from afar. I found some fine fragments of carving built into the modern hovels. Dor remained long in Canaanite possession, and its chiefs were summoned by Jabin, King of Hazor, to fight against Joshua (Josh. xi. 2).

CHAPTER III.

THE HILL COUNTRY OF JUDAH.

Boundaries of the Hill Country—Absence of rivers—Jattir—Goshen Eshtemoz—Sochoh—Anab—Debir—Juttah—Jezreel—Zanoah—Maon—Carmel—Ziph—Castle of Kurmul—Nabal and Abigail—Zior—Dumah—Beth-tappuah—Adoraim—Hebron—Machpelah—Mosque—Abraham's Oak—Mamre—Halhul—Beth-zur—Beth-anoth—Gedor—Maarath—Tekoa—Beth-Haccerem—*Frank Mountain—Khureitun—Etam—Solomon's Pools—Bethlehem—Church of the Nativity—St. Jerome—Shepherds—David's Well—Rachel's Tomb—Ruth—Kirjath-jearim.*

From the low country of the coast we now turn eastward to the third physical division of the territory of Judah, recognised constantly in Holy Writ as "the mountains," or the "*hill country.*" The line of demarcation between it and "the south country" is very easily recognised, though they blend into each other. The great pasture district of the south melts into the hill country a few miles to the south of Hebron. The northern part of the "Negeb" presents the appearance of a long series of gently-rolling downs, wide shallow valleys, and broad rounded ridges.

But a few hours before reaching Hebron the valleys become narrower and steeper, the hill-tops are sharper, the ridges are full of caves, natural or artificial—the dwellings of the Horites, or Cave-men, in olden times; and when we reach Debir we can fully understand the petition of Achsah to her father Caleb: "Give me a blessing; for thou hast given me a south land: give me also springs of water" (Judg. i. 15), as we see the springs

gushing forth from the rocky side of the valley, and feel we are no longer in a "south land." Here the ruins of the cities of Judah begin to crowd upon us. Almost every hill-top is marked by the groups of deserted dwellings—not grass-grown, like those of the south, but with walls and narrow streets, bare and barren. Every name recalls some incident in the life of the Bethlehemite—Jattir, Lebaath, Eshtemoa, Maon, Carmel, Ziph—scarcely altered in the Arabic vernacular from the old Hebrew.

The register of Joshua gives thirty-eight cities in the hill country of Judah, divided into five topographical groups; and even among these are omitted some of future distinction, as Bethlehem and Tekoa. In the New Testament history this region, with one important exception, scarcely bears any part.

But it is impossible to wander among these hills without perceiving that the expression, "her towns," applied in the enumeration to many of the cities, was no mere figure of speech. The groups of ruins, "the desolate heaps" of Judah, far outnumber any catalogue of her cities that has come down to us. There are no streams, but many springs, and wells innumerable.

The hill country culminates at Hebron, but it slopes very little either east or west, forming throughout its whole extent a rugged plateau from Philistia to the Dead Sea; and its deep dells, or wadys, are scarcely seen till we are upon them. They run for the most part east and west from the central ridge, and add immensely to the natural strength of the district, every nook of which is almost a natural fortress, independently of the cities whose ruins crown every brow, where once "the Lion of Judah" crouched secure. The wells are sunk in hill and vale alike; and all the hill-sides, ribbed with their parallel lines of terrace, once covered with gardens, vineyards, and fig-trees, attest the indefatigable industry no less

than the dense population of its ancient inhabitants. But the position of the towns and the character of the ruins are so constantly alike, that it is in vain to attempt separate descriptions for each, save in very few instances.

The first group of eleven cities, given in Josh. xv. 48-51, comprises the hill region south-west of Hebron, that which is traversed in coming up from Beersheba. Of these nine have been satisfactorily identified—the number of unidentified desolate cities far exceeding any number given in Scripture; but the local names, so far as yet ascertained, do not help us to assign the exact sites. Giloh, the birthplace of Ahitophel, is possibly Kirbet Jāla. *Shamir* and *Holon* remain undiscovered. *Jattir* is, so far as we know, the furthest south-west of the number, on the border of the hill country.

From this border, as we travel northwards, the ruins follow fast and thick one after another. A large portion of the houses remain intact: true troglodyte dwellings, chiefly long archways, either the vaults of houses or the roofing of streets, just as, to this day, many of the streets of Hebron are dark tunnels, with an occasional glimmer of light through openings in the archways.

Jattir, which is very perfect and still called 'Attir, one of the haunts of David in his exile and to which he used to send presents—one of the cities allotted, with its suburbs, to the priests—stands on a green knoll, in an amphitheatre of brown rocky hills studded with natural caves. The writer counted upwards of thirty arched crypts remaining entire within the broken walls, some longer and some shorter, but most of them without end walls, as though they had been passages or streets with houses over them. They are generally eighteen or twenty feet long, though I measured one forty feet. Those, of which the gable ends were built up, had square doorways, generally with ancient carvings over them. There were several tiers of large dressed stones,

forming the ground plan of a square building, probably the church which existed here in the time of Jerome. Outside the town, in two places, lay the under stones of very large oil-presses, an undeniable evidence of the existence of olive-trees of old, where trace neither of tree nor shrub remains. The ancient terracing and the "vine heaps" on the hills remain, and there are many wells, all now dry and partially choked with rubbish. But there is no human inhabitant.

An hour north of Jattir we come on another deserted city, very similar to it, called Rafat, with its oil-presses and very large ruined church, into which are built fragments of yet more ancient architecture. Probably, from its position, this may be the *Goshen* of Josh. xv. 51. But Capt. Conder assigns *Goshen* to the modern Lekiyeh, and *Irpeel* to Rafat.

Lying midway between these two to the eastward is a third desolate site, El Ghuwein, the *Anim* of Joshua, the names having identical meanings. Capt. Conder, however, identifies this with the *Ain* of Simeon, and would place *Anim* near the upper and nether springs at Khirbet el Dilbeh. Half-an-hour north of Rafat we reach Semûa, the ancient *Eshtemoa*, and the first inhabited place in the whole distance from Egypt to Palestine. A short way before reaching it, cultivation begins to appear in the valleys, in the shape of a few unfenced patches of corn. At *Eshtemoa*, too, we meet with the first trees—a grove of olives, a shrunken, decrepit witness of former fatness. It must have been a flourishing place to the time of the Mohammedan conquest; for there are many Greek remains, among them the walls of a fine Basilica or Early Greek church. It is 2,225 feet above the sea.

Within sight of *Eshtemoa*, due west, between three and four miles distant, we could distinctly mark the ruined heaps and broken walls of Suweikeh, the ancient *Sochoh*,

or *Socoh*, another city of this group. North again, about equi-distant from *Sochoh* and *Eshtemoa*, are the ruins of *Anab*, the name of which has been handed down in the speech of men unaltered for more than three thousand years.

Kirjath-sannah, or *Kirjath-sepher* (Judg. i. 11), the same as *Debir* (Josh. xv. 15), lay between *Socoh* and *Anab*, south-west of *Hebron*, near *Dannah*, identified by Capt. Conder with the modern *Domeh*, on the western boundary of the district. It was taken by Joshua after *Hebron*, or rather, as we see by the more detailed account, by *Othniel*, for love of *Achsah*, daughter of *Caleb*, and was one of the cities afterwards allotted to the priests. It does not appear in later history.

Debir, in the "south," *i.e.*, the "dry" land or *Negeb*, must have been at some little distance from the springs, or rather pools (Hebr. *gulloth*) of water. It must have been, as a royal *Canaanitish* city, an important place. Every condition is fulfilled by the large village of *El Dhoheriyeh*, between *Socoh* and *Anab*, with an immense number of most ancient cave dwellings, wells, and cisterns. From it five ancient roads lead, south-east to *Jattir*, east to *Socoh* and *Eshtemoa*, west to *Anab*, south to *Beersheba*, and north to *Hebron*. Large stones have been found at the distance of 3,000 cubits, marking the boundary of the priests' lands round the city.

The upper and lower springs may be found in the *Seil el Dilbeh*, a secluded valley, west of *Yutta*, and six and a-half miles from *El Dhoheriyeh*. There are both upper and lower springs, feeding a brook which runs through little gardens for four or five miles, a phenomenon indeed in the *Negeb*, where no other springs occur. Here there are in all fourteen springs divided into three groups, which feed the stream.

The second group given by Joshua centres round *Hebron*; the third, consisting of ten cities, lies to the south

and east of the second and close to that we have been examining. *Juttah*, the modern Yutta, is the centre of this group. It was one of the cities of the priests, all of whose cities were in Judah, while all the Levitical towns were distributed among the other tribes, and is interesting as the traditional residence of Zachariah the priest, and the birthplace of John the Baptist, and perhaps the very place where Mary visited Elisabeth (Luke i. 39). Its remains are very like those of Jattir and Eshtemoa, but seemed to me less decayed than those of any other town I examined, and there are still a few inhabitants in hovels among the ancient buildings.

Of the towns named after it—*Jezreel* whence David took his wife Ahinoam, *Jokdeam*, *Gibeah* (i. e., "the hill"), and *Timnah*—we have not yet found traces in the Arabic vernacular. *Zanoah* is represented by the ruined city Şa'nūt, lying south-west of the others, north of Jattir, and immediately west of Khirbet Yekin, which is probably the ancient *Cain* mentioned in the list after *Juttah* and *Zanoah*. But there are numerous unidentified sites, as Susieh, Jembah, Mirked, and Um el Areis, each of which must have had several thousand inhabitants. None of these places recur in later history.

There remain, however, three, whose identification is undoubted, within five miles of each other, in a line from south to north, a little east of Juttah, *Maon*, *Carmel*, and *Ziph*, now Maïn, Kurmul, and Zif, all three immortalised by their connection with the romance of David's early history. Tell Maïn or *Maon*, the possession of Caleb and the birthplace of Nabal, stands on a hill surrounded by waste pasture lands, where David and his men were bathing when the treacherous Ziphites brought Saul down upon them. Here ranged the 3,000 sheep and the 1,000 goats of Nabal. The hill is more elevated than the rest, but the ruins less distinct, though perforated by caves as numerous.

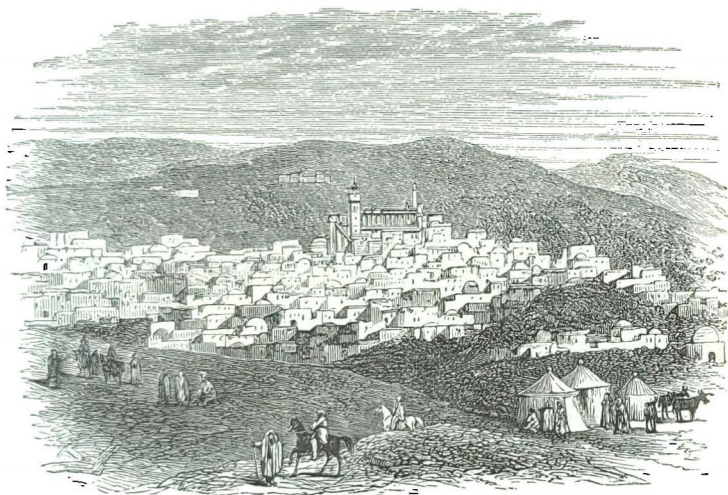
Down the hill and up the next rise, we soon reach the extensive ruins of Kurmul, the *Carmel* where Nabal sheared his flocks, the native place of Abigail the Carmelitess. Here, in later times, Uzziah had his vineyards (2 Chron. xxvi. 10). It became an important place and a Roman garrison. A fine castle surmounts the ancient ruins, built by Herod, in the walls of which we see the large bevelled masonry of Jewish architecture, and repaired by Crusaders and Saracens. The interior is vaulted in two storeys, and there are many pointed arches, with crypts intact. There is also a double-walled round tower and the remains of several churches; and a little way down the hill, a *birket* or large open reservoir, full of water, mentioned in Crusading history. *The hill Hachilah* is probably the high hill bounded by deep valleys north and south, on which the ruin Yekin (*Cain*) stands, commanding a view of the Dead Sea desert or Jeshimon. Three or four miles north we examined the ruins of *Ziph*, as deserted as its neighbours, with very little left above ground, and not a vestige of the woods where David lurked: all is bare and desolate.

We are now within three miles of *Hebron*, round which the second group of mountain cities clustered. None of them reappear in history. *Eshean*, *Janum*, *Aphek*, *Humtah* are unidentified. *Arab* may be traced in a very ancient site, a little to the east of Hebron, known as *Khirket el-Arabiyyeh* (the Arab ruin). *Zior* seems to be Sa'ir north of Hebron, while *Dumah*, now *Duweimeh*, lies six miles south-west, and *Beth-tappuah*, still with the same name, *Teffah*, is west. The apples or apricots from which it is named are gone, but the old terraces are still cultivated, and it lies in a nest of olive-yards and vineyards.

Just to this, south of it, are the ruins of *Adoraim*, now *Dura*, a fortified city built by Rehoboam; and six miles south of *Dumah*, on the direct road from Egypt, on a commanding height, 2,040 feet above the sea, are the

ruins of Dhoheriyeh, where the great battle of Beth-Zacharia was fought between Antiochus Eupater and Judas Maccabæus (1 Macc. vi.). The ruins are very extensive, and there is still a village; or rather inhabitants live in the caves and vaults.

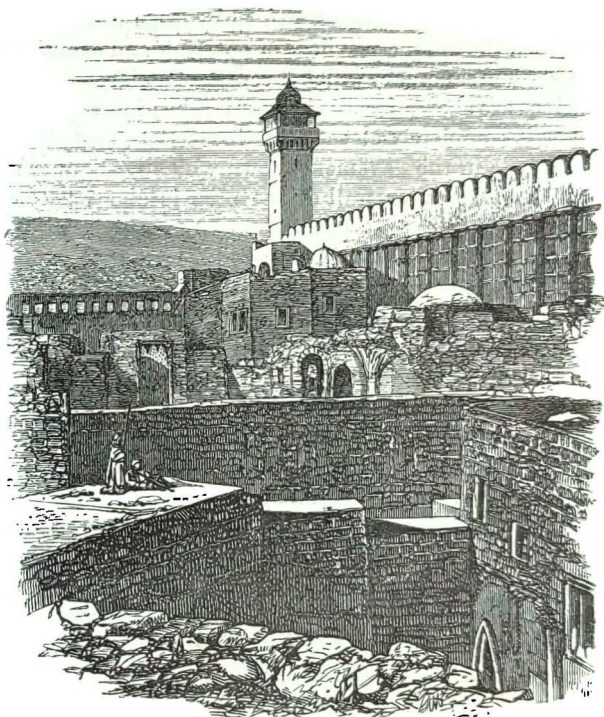
Hebron, originally *Kirjath-Arba*, now *El Khulil*, *i.e.*, "the friend" (of God), meaning Abraham, stands 3,029 feet above the sea, twenty Roman miles south of Jerusalem: it is one of the oldest existing cities in the world,



HEBRON FROM THE SOUTH.

a rival of Damascus in antiquity, and still a thriving place. Its chief interest is in connection with the histories of Abraham and David. On its hill-sides, and in the valleys below, Abraham walked and communed with God. Beneath the huge walls which seal the access to the cave of Machpelah under the sacred Mosque, the dust of the Patriarchs moulders, or perhaps their embalmed bodies still remain. It was a city when Abraham entered Canaan,

3,790 years ago, and had not then fallen under the Anakim who temporarily named it Kirjath-Arba. In the field and cave of Machpelah, bought from Ephron the Hittite, were buried Sarah and Abraham, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah. At the conquest it was the portion of



MOSQUE OF HEBRON (MACHEPELAH).

Caleb, was afterwards assigned to the priests, and was one of the six cities of refuge. David reigned here over Judah seven and a half years before the murder of Ish-bosheth opened to him the sovereignty over the whole land. Its subsequent history is unimportant. Burned by Ves-

pasian, taken by the Crusaders, retaken by the Saracens, it has had the vicissitudes common to all the land.

There is nothing striking in the houses or streets. The Great Mosque or Haram, over the cave of Machpelah, is the one spot of all absorbing interest. We were unable to do more than look within the sacred enclosure. To the Prince of Wales, accompanied by Dean Stanley, was accorded the unique privilege of entering and examining the Moslem sanctuary which covers the Patriarchs' tombs. Shrines are shown for all the Patriarchs; but the cavern below is completely closed from inspection, except by a small hole in the pavement, down which no light is admitted. The outer wall of the area is about 200 feet long by 115 wide, and upwards of 50 feet high, without a single window or opening of any kind, except the doorways to the north. It embraces not a level space, but the side of a very steep hill, just such as would include a sepulchral cave. The stones are sumptuous in style and dressing, like those of the great platform of the Temple area at Jerusalem. Some are between 20 and 40 feet long by $3\frac{1}{2}$ or 4 feet. There are shallow pilasters $2\frac{1}{2}$ feet wide and 5 feet between each, running evenly to the top; and there is a simple and an austere grandeur about the massive plainness of the ancient wall which not even the paltry Saracenic addition on its top and the two minarets at the corners can affect. It is patriarchal in its magnificent simplicity. There is every reason to believe that this wall is the work of the royal Solomon, or perhaps of his greater father. It was far older than the time of Herod, and Josephus extols its beauty.

There are two enormous reservoirs of massive stone, one at the south, the other at the north end of the city. The former was "the pool" by which David taught a higher morality to Eastern conquerors, and hanged up the murderers of his rival Ish-bosheth. The well Sirah, where Abner was before his assassination by Joab, is a little off the road, and still called Ain Sareh.

About a mile and a half west of Hebron is a famous oak, one of the largest in Palestine, 22 feet in circumference, and the representative to modern pilgrims of Abraham's Oak of Mamre. It is not, however, its descendant, for Abraham's tree was a terebinth, while this is a holm-oak.

A walk up this valley, called, probably incorrectly,



ABRAHAM'S OAK

the Vale of Eshcol, explains at once that catacomb of perished cities, the hill country of Judah. Not an inch of space is lost. Terraces, where the ground is not too rocky, support the soil. Ancient vineyards cling to the lower slopes; olive, mulberry, fig, almond, and pomegranate-trees, fill every available cranny to the very crest;

while the bottom of the valley is carefully tilled for corn, carrots and cauliflowers, which in summer give place to a second crop of melons and cucumbers. Streamlets of fresh water trickle on each side of the path. Two interesting manufactures are still carried on in Hebron, the preparation of skin bottles and glass-works.

About two miles north of Hebron is a very interesting ruin, now called Rameh or Ramel, said to be the ancient *Mamre*, and where Abraham's celebrated terebinth once stood, under which, after the final overthrow of the Jews at Bether, A.D. 135, thousands of captives were sold as slaves. The tree has long since perished; but a few courses of the great Basilica, erected here by Constantine, still remain, one 214 feet long and the other 162, the stones being many of them 15 feet by 3 and 4 feet; and Abraham's well by its side, built like those of Beer-sheba, 17 feet in diameter, still contains water. On the hill above, Abraham could easily have seen the ascending smoke of the Cities of the Plain.

North of Hebron lay the fourth group of six mountain-cities given by Joshua. A mile north of Rameh we come on the first of them, *Halhul*, where the little village still bears the same name unaltered. On the hill on the opposite side of the road is the next, *Beth-Zur*, still called Beit-Sûr, a strong natural position, commanding the route to Jerusalem and the scene of many desperate encounters in the Maccabæan struggles. A mile to the east of Halhul are the ruins of *Beth-Anoth*, another of these cities, still called Beit-'Anûn.

A little to the north of Halhul are some important ruins, named Khirbet Kueizibah, identical with *Chozeba* (1 Chron. iv. 22), a city of Judah, evidently in the hill country. It is interesting to find the archaic name remaining unchanged.

About three miles further north and two miles west of the road from Hebron to Bethlehem, another hill is

crowned by the desolate ruins of *Gedor*, now *Jedur*. But an important group of ruins occurs just before *Jedur*, called *Beit-Ummar*, and which can be scarcely any other than *Maarath* of *Joshua*. The Wady in which it stands still bears the name of *Wady el Ma'hair*. A different identification has been suggested by *Mr. Drake*, who thinks *Maarath* may be *Mons Mardes* of *St. Enthymius*, which is probably *Khirbet Mird* near *Marsaba*. This would place *Maarath* further to the eastward. *Eltekon*, the last-named of the group, has not been discovered; but there still remain very near *Jedur*, to the east, four ruined cities whose Arabic names do not aid in their identification, one of which is doubtless *Eltekon*.

The ruins of all these cities, especially *Beth-Anoth* and *Beth-Zur*, fortified by *Rehoboam*, are very important. At *Beit-Anûn* are four large cisterns and a square half mile of ruins, of fine quarried stones; one building, 83 feet by 72; and the very streets may be traced. Near them was the great highway to *Egypt*; and traces of the ancient paved road remain and marks of wheel-ruts, where no wheeled carriage has passed for centuries.

There are some cities of *Judah* omitted by *Joshua*, which naturally come into this group. *Tekoa*, about seven miles north-east of *Beth-Zur*, is still called *Tekua*. It is the centre of a strictly pastoral region, and was probably never a walled town, though the ruins show many Hebrew traces. It is interesting as the birthplace of the wise woman sent for by *Joab* to reconcile *David* with *Absalom*, and especially of the Prophet *Amos*, whose expressions often illustrate the wild character of his native place. It was fortified by *Rehoboam*.

Between *Tekoa* and the road from *Hebron* to *Bethlehem* a gently sloping valley still bears the name of *Bereikût*, the valley of *Berachah*, *i.e.*, "of blessing," where *Jehoshaphat* and his army halted to bless the Lord, on their return after the mutual slaughter of the

invading forces of Moab, Ammon, and Edom (2 Chron. xx.). This is a remarkable instance of a name bestowed, late in Old Testament history, in memory of a special event, being preserved to the present day.

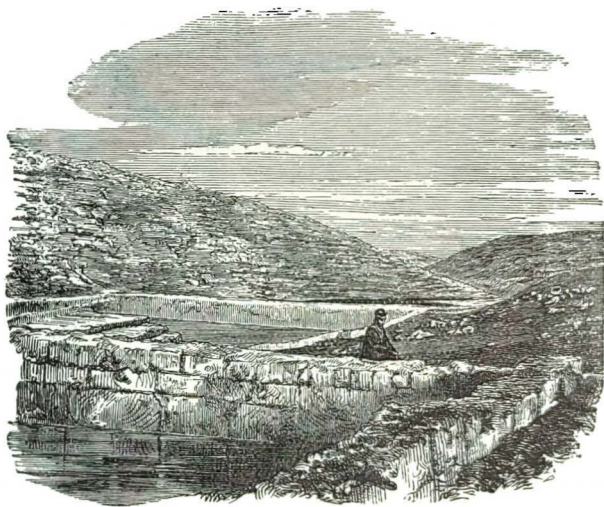
Just opposite to Tekoa, on the north, stands the most remarkable fortress in Judæa, *Beth-Haccerem*, formerly a beacon-fort, mentioned by Jeremiah (vi. 1): "Blow the trumpet in Tekoa, and set up a sign of fire in Beth-Haccerem." It was fortified by Herod and called Herodium; and hither that cruel monster's body was brought for burial after his death at Jericho. It has since been called Frank Mountain, and now *Jebel Fureideis*, and is a singular truncated cone, rising like an artificial mound above the neighbouring hills, and does not appear to have been occupied since the Roman times.

Between Tekoa and Fureideis are the caves of *Khureitum*, the traditional *Adullam*. They are vast enough to afford concealment in their miles of labyrinth for any number of men; but, from the circumstances of the narrative, I am inclined to place the true Cave of *Adullam*, as has been stated in the last chapter, near *Deir Dubban*, on the borders of the low country, in the west of Judæa.

Descending from Fureideis to the main road, between Hebron and Bethlehem, we pass up the valley of *Urtas*, the ancient *Etam*, fortified by Rehoboam, but more interesting as the site of the Gardens of Solomon and probably the hereditary patrimony of David, described by Josephus. The valley is now a blooming garden, having been purchased and tilled by some Christian Israelites from Jerusalem; and many most interesting proofs of its former wealth have been exhumed, especially a beautiful set of marble baths, built after the Jewish fashion, with rich carvings in the Egyptian style, probably the site of the baths of Solomon's summer-house; but restored by Herod the Great, the capitals of some of the marble columns having the lotus leaf

ornamentation, and the style of sculpture which we see at Petra.

The valley is fed with water from the pools of Solomon, one and a quarter miles above, at El Burak, on the road to Bethlehem. These are among the most wonderful architectural remains of the old monarchy, partly excavated and partly built in the narrow valley, one below the other. In length, they vary from 380 to 580 feet; in breadth,



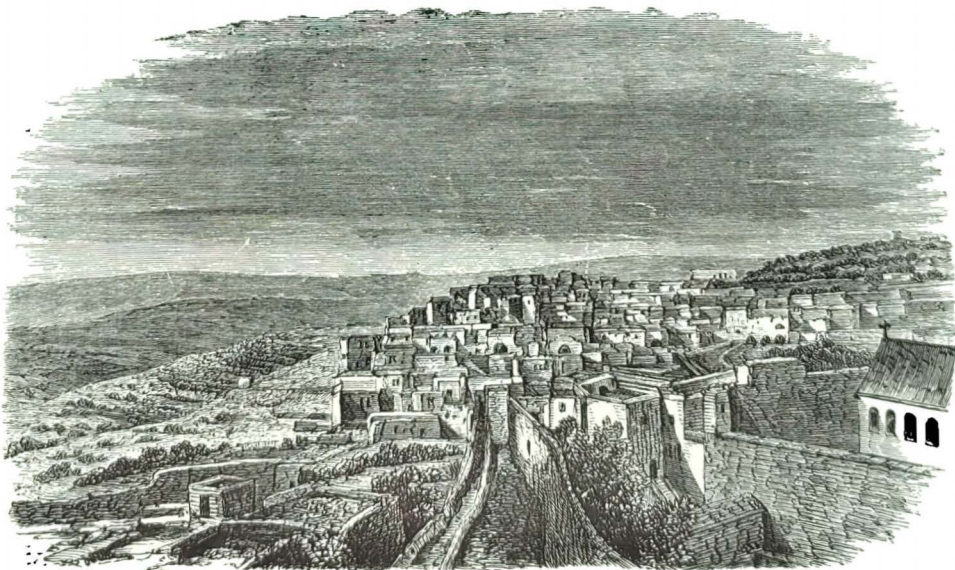
SOLOMON'S POOL.

from 207 to 236 feet; and are from 25 to 50 feet deep. They were the reservoirs which once formed part of the water-supply of Jerusalem, as they still do of Bethlehem and of the valley below. The labours of the Palestine Exploration Fund have shown how, to feed these great cisterns, springs in various directions have been tapped at their sources and conveyed by secret channels to the upper pool, the sealed fountain of Solomon's Song (iv. 12); while solidly-built aqueducts at three different levels—the

lower one completely concealed from the detection of an invader, so that if the upper, or even the second, were taken, the third should secure a never-failing supply—conveyed the water by the hill-sides to Bethlehem and then to Jerusalem northwards, while another channel drew off a part for the supply of Hebron. Even to the present day the water flows in the lower aqueducts, and is brought into Jerusalem under the Great Mosque on the site of Solomon's Temple. It is, no doubt, of these pools and of Etam that the wise man writes: "I made me gardens and orchards, and I planted trees in them of all kinds of fruits; I made me pools of water, to water therewith the wood that bringeth forth trees" (Eccles. ii. 5, 6).

Three miles north of Solomon's Pools stands the hallowed town of *Bethlehem*. Though not named by Joshua, it was a very ancient place, known by its earlier name of *Ephrath*, or *Ephratah*, when Jacob returned from Padan-aram. The old name lingered long, used both by Psalmist and Prophets. The hill-side, from its base, is irregularly scarped with terraces, and these are covered with the evergreen olive. In many a corner the luxuriant fig-tree hangs in strange shapes from the rocky bank, and vines are trained over the terrace walls in all directions. Along the edge of the vineyard the turf is carefully preserved and pastured by tethered goats. From the gardens and vineyards we pass abruptly into the town, now no longer fortified even with that pretence of a wall which surrounds most Eastern cities; there are a few buildings outside, a rare exception to the usage of Palestine. The houses are flat-roofed, with very few windows looking into the street, generally only a lattice over the narrow doorway. But most of them have a little courtyard, into which the lower rooms open, while a balcony projects in front of the upper storey, and a flight of stone steps leads up to the roof.

The population is at present about 4,000, though a few



BEJERLEM.

years ago, before the Egyptian war, it passed 7,000; and it is probable that with peace it will rapidly increase, owing to the growing trade of the district. There are no Jews in Bethlehem; like Nazareth, its Christian associations repel them. In the cradle of his royal race the Jew is even more a stranger than on any other spot of his own land, and during the Middle Ages neither Crusader nor Saracen suffered him to settle here.

The only public buildings of Bethlehem are those connected with the reputed birthplace of our Lord. The church or Basilica, to the east of the town, is a grand pile of masonry, erected by the Empress Helena, the mother of Constantine, A.D. 327, and dedicated to St. Mary. It is beyond doubt the most ancient existing Christian church in the world, and for 1,550 years has been uninterruptedly devoted to Christian worship. It is an oblong, nearly square, with a nave 170 feet long and a double aisle on each side. The columns are of marble, said to have belonged to the Temple of Jerusalem. The east end is separated off by a wall and divided into chapels, from which there is a descent into a grotto, said to be the birthplace of our Saviour. It seems to have been a low cavern hewn into a rock, and not such as might have been connected with a dwelling-house as a stable, or have had access for cattle. But the whole ground has been so altered by building, that we cannot pronounce it impossible.

At 'Attir, Yutta, and other places, we find several rooms hewn out of the side of the hill and a large open cavern adjoining, evidently intended for cattle. The inn, or caravanserai, may have stood here, perhaps the very one founded by Chimham, son of Barzillai (Jer. xli. 17). In the stable adjoining, Joseph and Mary were compelled to take refuge. The subsequent convulsions of the country swept away all traces of the caravanserai, but the tradition of the spot survived—for we know it to be

much older than the time of Constantine—and attached itself to the principal local feature, the cave or grotto below the inn.

In the days of Jerome this grotto was believed to be the Holy Place of the Nativity, and was adopted by that holy father as his home for more than eighty years. Here in seclusion he laboured and wrote, and here he worked at that noble legacy to the Christian Church, the Latin version of the Holy Scriptures, which forms the basis of the Vulgate.

On a green slope rising from a narrow plain, about a mile east of the Church of the Nativity, stands a group of ruins surrounded by olive-trees, pointed out as the spot of the angel's appearance to the shepherds. From the richness of the soil and the fact of its being even now chiefly devoted to corn, it is far more probable that the corn-fields of Beaz, where Ruth gleaned, may have been here, than that so fertile a spot should have been given up to pasturage. But following on a few miles further to the eastward, we soon reach the bare hills where the wilderness begins, over a large part of which the Bethlehemites still exercise common rights of pasturage. Here the sheep would be too far off to be led into the town at night; and here the jackal and the wolf still prowl, as the lion and the bear had done in the days of the Shepherd King; and the watchful presence of the shepherds is required to guard their flocks by night and day during the winter and spring, when alone herbage is found there.

That Bethlehem never rose to be a place of any importance, although it lay on the high-road between Syria and Egypt, is probably due to the absence of water on its site. Solomon partially supplied this want, as we have seen, by the aqueduct from his Pools; but before that, the only dependence of the inhabitants was on a large cistern outside the village on the north-east, still used and still known as David's Well, evidently of most ancient con-

struction. When David exclaimed, "O that one would give me to drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, that is at the gate!" he was hiding in the Cave of Adullam. The Philistines had garrisoned Bethlehem, but their camp was to the north of it; and David's men, coming from the south, broke through the garrison and drew water from the well, without entering the Philistine's camp.

Not far north of the well is shown a simple square



RACHEL'S TOMB.

tomb, the burial-place of Rachel, who was "buried in the way to Ephrath, which is Bethlehem" (Gen xxxv. 19). Thus the story of Bethlehem carries us back to the earliest days, when the Patriarchs traversed this road between Shechem and Beersheba.

There is one touching domestic incident interwoven with the memories of Bethlehem which is brought vividly before us, as we look on those sloping fields to the east—

the story of Ruth the Moabitess. As we stand on the convent roof over the Church of the Nativity, we can clearly descry, beyond the line of haze which marks the Dead Sea, the hills of Moab. There must long have been some friendly intercourse between Moab and Bethlehem. Elimelech at once withdraws to Moab in the time of famine and continues there; there is no difficulty about intermarriage; and when David wishes to secure his parents from the fury of Saul, he sends them to the house of the King of Moab.

To this day the fields of Bethlehem illustrate many an incident in the Book of Ruth. The very salutation, "The Lord be with you!" and the reply, "The Lord bless thee!" may be heard as the farmer goes up to his labourers. The supper of the reapers, when the day's work is done, is still the parched corn eaten on the spot—a few bunches of fresh ears, singed in a fire kindled for the purpose and then rubbed and roughly winnowed by the hand. The large cotton or linen cloth, "the veil," which binds down the head-dress of the Bethlehemite woman, is very distinct from the female dress elsewhere. and is still, like Ruth's, large enough to hold six measures of barley; and still the owner sleeps by his corn-heaps at night, generally with all his family, till the harvest is finished.

About equidistant from Jerusalem and Bethlehem to the west—in fact forming the angle of an equilateral triangle with them—is a large almost isolated *Tell*, now called Bittir, the ancient *Bether*, where the revolted Jews under Barchobas made their last desperate stand against Hadrian, A.D. 135. The place is a natural fortress, and tradition still preserves the memory of that bloody struggle in the name Khirbet el Yahud, "the castle of the Jews," by which the ruins are known.

We are now close to the northern frontier of Judah and the border of Benjamin. But to these four groups of

hill-cities, from south to north, Joshua adds a fifth, comprising only two cities, *Kirjath-Baal* and *Rabbah*, lying west of Jerusalem, on the northern frontier adjoining Benjamin and Dan, where Judah projected in an angle to the north-west. *Rabbah* has not yet been recognised. *Kirjath-Baal* is the same as *Kirjath-jearim* (Josh. xv. 60), and is also several times called simply *Baale* or *Baalah* (2 Sam. vi. 2), doubtless from a high place of Baal which once existed there. It is now called *Kuriet el Enab*, *i.e.*, "the city of grapes," its old name signifying "the city of forests;" and it is worthy of note, that the only piece of true primeval forest I ever found in Southern Palestine was on the ridge of hills between Enab and Wady Ghurab.

Kirjath-jearim is still a thriving village with a fine old Christian church, desecrated, and lies on the high-road between Jaffa and Jerusalem. As a frontier city it is mentioned both in connection with Mahaneh-Dan and with Benjamin. The high-place of Baal was probably on the heights just south of the road. Its chief Biblical interest is in the fact of its having been for twenty years the resting-place of the Ark of the Lord (1 Sam. vi., vii.; 2 Sam. vi.), whither it was fetched from Beth-shemesh and deposited in the house of Abinadab, whose son Eleazar was consecrated as its keeper, until David brought it up to Jerusalem. There is, doubtless, an allusion to the name "*Jearim*," *i.e.*, "woods," in the expression of the Psalmist in his song on the bringing back of the Ark: "We found it in the fields of the wood" (Ps. cxxxii. 6). *Kirjath-jearim* only appears in subsequent history as the birthplace of the Prophet Urijah. It should not be forgotten that *Kirjath-jearim* was a city of the Gibeonites, who were thus for a time honoured by the presence of the Ark of the Lord.

From *Kirjath-jearim* the border of Judah passed westward by *Mount Seir*, and then by *Mount Jearim*, which is *Chesalon*: this last preserves its name of *Kesla*. *Jearim* is

represented by Kirbet 'Erma, on the brink of the great valley, two miles west of it, and Seir preserves its name in Saghir, on the ridge between 'Erma and Kuriet el Enab.

A little off the road hence to Jerusalem to the north is the small village called Amwas, which is most probably the *Emmaus* of St. Luke's Gospel, as has been pointed out by M. Ganneau. Captain Conder holds that this Amwas represents the Emmaus Nicopolis of contemporary writers, and that the Emmaus of the Gospel is to be found at Khamasa, with some very remarkable ruins, not far from the Roman road which passes by Solomon's Pools, south of Jerusalem.

CHAPTER IV.

THE WILDERNESS OF JUDAH AND THE DEAD SEA VALLEY.

The Wilderness, "Midbar"—The Salt Sea or Dead Sea—Description—Its rivers—Jordan—Callirhoe—Arnon—*Jebel Usdum*—Mountain of Salt—Southern *Ghor*—*Safeh*—Cities of the Plain—Sodom and Gomorrah—Lot's selection—View from Mamre—from Pisgah—Invasion of Chedorlaomer—His route—Vale of Siddim—Zoar—Beth-arabah—City of Salt—Engedi—Hazezon-Tamar—*Ain Jidy*—Wild Goats—Vineyards—Cliff of Ziz—Masada—*Sebbeh*—Its siege and end—Beth-Hogla—Gügal—Valley of Achor—Adummim—Keziz—Jericho—*Er Riha*—Rahab—Elisha's Fountain—Elijah—Aqueducts—*Ain Dük*—*Quarantania Mountain*—Monasteries—Fords of Jordan—Beth-Nimrah—Bethabara—Passage of Joshua—of Elijah—of our Lord—Zemaraim—Phasaelis.

To complete our survey of the territory of Judah, there only remain the six cities named by Joshua as in the "Wilderness," *Midbar*, *i. e.*, the wide open space or country of the nomads, as distinguished from the cultivated and settled lands. From the fact of *Engedi*, the *City of Salt*, and *Beth-arabah* being included, it must have embraced not only the waste lands of the upper level, but also the cliffs overhanging the Sea and the strip of shore at their feet, on the edge of the Lake itself. The whole west shore pertained to Judah; and it will be convenient, therefore, to examine the basin of the Dead Sea at the same time.

Very soon after leaving Hebron and Bethlehem, and almost immediately after leaving Jerusalem, we enter upon the "*Midbar*" or Wilderness of Judæa, which forms the whole eastern frontier of Judah. It has never been cultivated, excepting in a few spots, and seems to have been always destitute of trees. With the exception of an old fort, here and there, there are scarcely any traces of former permanent habitations. Its wadys, with, for the

most part, only scanty and occasional supplies of water, run eastward to the Dead Sea, cutting through the soft limestone to amazing depths near its shores. The general slope of the ground is towards the east, till, close to the Sea, it breaks off into precipitous heights, with very few passes, beetling 1,000 feet and more above the shore.

But here and there, at the mouths of the ravines, are little embayed spots of surpassing fertility and a tropical climate, where towns have formerly stood. As the surface of the Lake is depressed no less than 1,300 feet below the level of the Mediterranean and Red Seas, the temperature is exceptionally warm, and the products, animal and vegetable, are truly tropical, and, for the most part, entirely different from the indigenous forms of life in the rest of the country. This "*ciccar*," or Plain of Jordan, has, therefore, from the very earliest times of history, been inhabited and cultivated by man.

There is no evidence, but the contrary, that there has been any change in the general form and appearance of the Lake since the creation of man. It is about forty-six miles long and ten wide, and has no outlet whatever, being, in fact, the deepest depression known on the surface of the earth. It receives at its northern end the constant flow of the River Jordan, on its eastern side the *Callirhoe* and the *Arnon*, now the Zerka Main and the Mojib, besides some smaller streams. At its south end, the Fikreh, Jeib, Kuseib, Ghurundel, and other streams draining the Arabah, empty themselves into it; and on the west, the little stream of Engedi and several others add to its waters. Yet this enormous inflow is fully counterbalanced by the continual evaporation from its surface. There are also many springs on its shores and within its shallower waters, some hot, some salt, some sulphurous, and others fresh, which contribute to its bulk.

The most famous characteristic of the Lake is its extreme and nauseous saltness and bitterness, concerning

the effects of which many fabulous tales have been told. That no living thing can long exist in these mineral waters is an ascertained fact. But, apart from the water itself, there is nothing unhealthy or poisonous in the Lake or its surroundings; and wherever there are fresh streams or springs close to it, they absolutely teem with life. From the perennial tropical summer which exists in this deep chasm, a variety of animal and vegetable life has been preserved, especially about the southern end, which is truly tropical in its character and very different from any



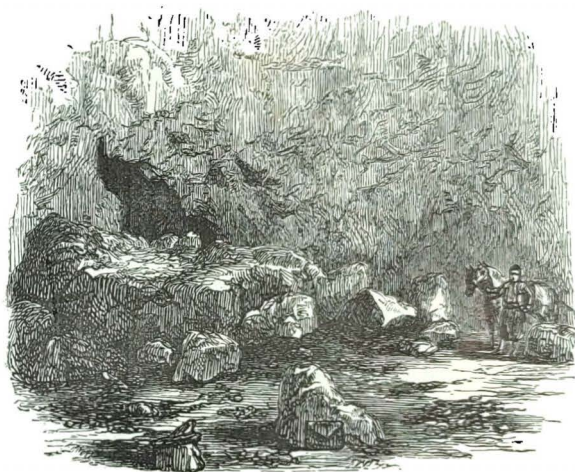
SCENE NEAR SOUTH END OF THE DEAD SEA.

other within many hundred miles. The water is so saturated with salt that it is impossible to sink in it, and, in fact, at the south end it is really a saturated solution of salt. There are various other mineral salts in solution which add to its nauseous qualities. The principal cause of its saltiness is to be found in Jebel Usdum, an isolated mountain of rock salt.

From the name of this mountain, Jebel Usdum, it has been popularly supposed that Sodom was situated at the south end of the Lake. It must be admitted that the southern end is very shallow—little more than a lagoon;

and there is a wide plain, a dead level, extending some eight or ten miles south of the lake, called by the Arabs "El Ghor," which is conjectured to have been the site of the Cities of the Plain. But this plain is covered by a layer of sand, gypsum, and salt, and yields no evidence of having ever been cultivated in historical times.

The most singular feature connected with the Dead or, as it is always called in Scripture, the Salt Sea, is this



MOUTH OF CAVERN IN JEBEL USDUM.

Jebel Usdum, a great mass of rock salt, three hundred and fifty feet high, about seven miles long from north to south and from a mile to a mile and a half wide, covered at the top with a loose crust of gravel, flint, gypsum, and chalky marl, almost level but full of fissures and cracks, so that it is impossible to explore what looks like an innumerable collection of blunt pinnacles crowded together. Portions of the salt cliff are continually splitting off and falling, leaving perpendicular faces; and there are some long

narrow caverns, like the labyrinths of a deserted mine. By the side of, and under the salt mountain, various streams are continually percolating towards the Lake and carrying with them the thick solution of brine they absorb in their course. The consequence of this is a continual increase in the solid matter contained in the waters of the Lake, which are more intensely saturated with the various salts at the shallow south end than at the north, where the inflow of the Jordan and the immense depth of the fissures of the Lake, in places over two hundred fathoms, combine to modify the saturation.

But though no life, animal or vegetable, can possibly continue in the Lake, there is—wherever, as on the whole south-east shore and in various spots on the west side, fresh water flows into the Lake—a positive exuberance of life to the water's edge. This is especially the case in the "Safieh," the southern plains of *Moab* at the south-east, and at *Engedi* on the opposite shore. From the earliest times to the present these spots have been carefully cultivated. *Engedi* was contemporary with the Cities of the Plain. When we see the surprising fertility and delicious climate of these buried nooks, we can well understand the attractiveness of these cities and their lands to Lot.

Of the site of the four cities, *Sodom*, *Gomorrhah*, *Admah*, and *Zeboim*, destroyed by fire and brimstone from the Lord, it is scarcely necessary to say that no trace remains, though an enthusiastic and somewhat imaginative traveller believed that he had detected them. Scripture does not state that they were engulfed in the Sea, but that they were destroyed, and "the whole land thereof is brimstone, and salt, and burning, that it is not sown, nor beareth, nor any grass groweth therein" (Deut. xxix. 23). A description which would equally apply to the desolate plain at the south end and to the barren, sulphur-spread tract between Jericho and the north end. It has been questioned at which end these, almost the oldest cities.

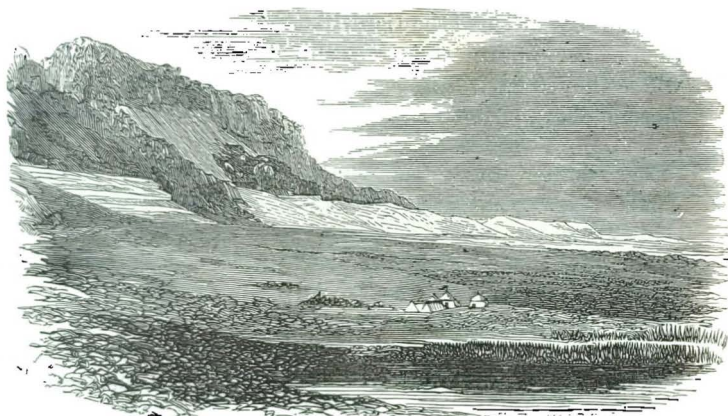
in the records of human history, stood. Tradition places them at the south.

There is, however, some reason for supposing them to have been at the north end. When they are first mentioned (Gen. x. 19), they are spoken of as cities of the Canaanites on their border. They are next named in Gen. xiii., in the account of the separation of Abraham and Lot. Abraham and Lot stood together between Bethel and Hai, when "Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere, before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt, as thou comest unto Zoar" (Gen. xiii. 10). From the hills where they stood, it is impossible to gain a glimpse of the south end of the Dead Sea, while the plain of Jericho is spread almost at the beholder's feet.

Again, after the destruction of the cities we are told that Abraham, then encamped at Mamre, "looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and, lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace" (Gen. xix. 28). The accuracy of the expression is to be noted. Not he *saw*, but *he looked toward* the Cities of the Plain. From the hill above Mamre the plain itself cannot be seen, but the depression between the nearer hills and the distant tops of Gilead is plainly to be perceived, which is not the case with the depression of the southern end of the Dead Sea. Thus Abraham could at once have identified the locality whence the smoke arose.

Once more, in the view which was granted to Moses from the top of Pisgah, he beheld "the south and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar." Now from the summit of Nebo it is utterly impossible to behold the south-east of the Dead Sea, the situation of the modern Dra'a, which is said, by a tradition not earlier than the times of Josephus and Jerome, to

be *Zoar* : but if we place Zoar—as it naturally would be placed, according to the narrative of Lot's escape—somewherenorth of Engedi, on the west side—or, as I conceive, more reasonably in the same parallel on the east side of the Dead Sea—we see the limit of Moses' view, in accordance with the Sacred Record. From the top of Nebo, the view of the plain of the Jordan runs on uninterruptedly till it is cut off by the headland of Ras Feshkhah, the Arabic equivalent of Pisgah, and exactly in front of it, Ziara, projecting in front of Nebo.



RAS FESHKHAH.

The Cities of the Plain are connected with the history of an event which is on many accounts of much interest—the first organised expedition for conquest recorded in history. Chedorlaomer, Prince of Elam, having extended his conquests over Babylonia and the adjoining region, nearly two thousand years before the Christian era, organised, with his subject princes, an expedition against Canaan, and having marched an army nearly twelve hundred miles, from the Persian Gulf to the shores of the Dead Sea, held Palestine and Syria in subjection for

twelve years. He was the prototype of the great Oriental conquerors, who have suddenly built up vast empires in Asia, which have as suddenly crumbled. On the rebellion of the Cities of the Plain, in the fourteenth year, we are told (Gen. xiv.) that the Assyrians smote the Horites in Mount Seir unto El Paran (see ch. i.), and returned and smote the country of the Amalekites and also the Amorites that dwelt in Hazezon-Tamar or Engedi. After this the King of Sodom and his confederates met the invaders in the *Vale of Siddim*, and, on their defeat, Abraham pursued the victors on their march home by Damascus, and overtook them in Laish, or Dan, under Mount Hermon. Had Sodom and the other cities been situated at the south end of the Sea, it was certainly not *after* smiting the Amalekites and the Amorites at Engedi that they would have met the invader, but long before he reached Hazezon-Tamar. But if Sodom and the confederate cities were in the plain of Jordan, there is a topographical sequence in the whole story: while Abraham and his allies hurriedly pursue the plunderers up the Ghor, or Jordan Valley, without delay, till they overtake them at the source of the Jordan.

The *Vale of Siddim* is only mentioned in this place (Gen. xiv.), and it is added, "which is the Salt Sea." But as the word vale, *emek*, signifies a broad valley enclosed by hills, and as, from the narrative, it must have been north of Engedi, it seems most probable that it was one of the wide open valleys near Jericho, or the plain at the north-west corner, and that the expression, "which is the Salt Sea," signifies, as in other similar passages, "which is at the Salt Sea."

Admah has been supposed by some to be traceable in Damieh, the city *Adam* (Josh. iii. 16), at the place where the "*ciccar*" or plain of Jordan suddenly contracts at the north.

There is some difficulty in fixing the site of *Zoar*, the

fifth of the confederate cities, and the only one which escaped destruction. Its oldest name was *Bela* (Gen. xiv. 2). It is only mentioned afterwards in the prophecies of Isaiah and Jeremiah (Isa. xv. 5; Jer. xlvi. 34), in connection with places in the north of Moab; and more especially in the account of the view granted to Moses from the top of Pisgah: "The plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar," referred to above. In accordance with this, the Targum of Jerusalem identifies it with Jericho, from which it could not be far distant. But we find from later writers that there was a Zoar to the south-east of the Dead Sea—the modern Dra'a. Though the names are somewhat similar, this place could not have been the refuge of Lot, as, wherever Sodom be placed, it was far too distant to be reached during the short period of Eastern sunrise. I believe the exact site is to be found on the other side the Dead Sea, just below *Nebo*, in a line between it and Ras Feshkhah, and on a knoll very slightly rising above the plain of Shittim, the modern Seisaban. The reasons for the identification are more fully given in ch. xv.

We scarcely know more of some of the later cities in the Wilderness of Judah, named by Joshua. *Beth-arabah* (house of the Desert) must have been in the sunken valley and on the border of Benjamin, as it is afterwards given among the cities of that tribe (ch. xviii. 22), and therefore was on the northern boundary of Judah, south of Jericho. *Beth-hogla* (Ain Hajla) is a frontier-city of Benjamin, the site of which is well known.

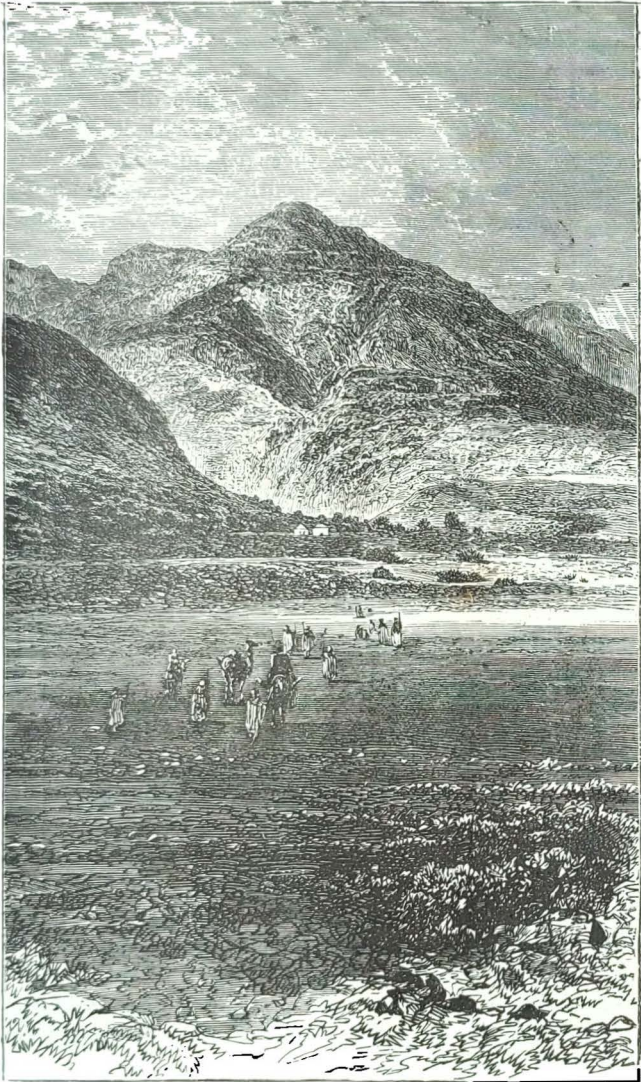
Middin, coming in the list next to *Beth-arabah*, must be on the northern limit of the desert. It seems to be Kirbet Mird, a site of some size on the high plateau, east of Marsaba.

Of the next cities, *Secacah* and *Nibshan*, no trace has been found in modern nomenclature, though there are many sites along the western shore, as Terabeh, Fesh-

khah, the Arabic equivalent of *Pisgah*, and others, which afford proofs of ancient occupation. Being probably mud villages, all traces have long since disappeared. The *City of Salt*, where there are so many salt springs with vegetation round them, gives us no further clue: though not far from Masada, south of En-gedi, one of the ravines, with a stream and green borders, bears the name of Wady Malah, *i.e.*, salt valley.

The last city, *En-gedi*, now Ain Jidy, "the spring of the kid," is well known. It is the most lovely spot on the borders of the Salt Sea. Its more ancient name was *Hazezon-Tamar*, *i.e.*, "the pruning of the palm" (2 Chron. xx. 2), and it was an existing city when Hebron first arose. Associated by its name and by Scriptural allusions with the palm-tree, the camphire, and the vine, not a trace of these remains above ground. The "cluster of camphire in the vineyards of En-gedi" (Cant. i. 14) is withered and gone, all save a few straggling plants, on the verge of extinction. Their place is occupied by the dark gnarled acacias, with their umbrella-like flattened tops, by tamarisk-trees and a few jujube thorn-bushes. These dot a semicircular recess, about a mile and a half in extent every way, scooped out of the mountains which bury that deep Salt Lake.

Through this little embayed plain three fresh sweet streams work their way to the Sea. The centre one is the true Ain Jidy (*En-gedi*). Several hundred feet up the slope its little silver thread may be seen, bounding and skipping kid-like, from rock to rock, in tiny cataracts, till it reaches the little plain. Below these falls, in the centre of the plain, is a group of ruins of some extent, built of large squared, but now much weathered stones, so confused as to afford no clue to the old ground-plan of the buildings. These crumbled walls carry us with a mighty stride across the history of man. They are all that remain to tell of a city as old as the oldest in Syria, perhaps in the world.



EN-GEDI, FROM THE SOUTH.

En-gedi rarely occurs in subsequent history. David with his men resorted to its cliffs—then, as now, the strongholds of the “wild goats” or Syrian ibex. It was the trysting-place of the hosts of Moab and Ammon,



EN-GEDI.

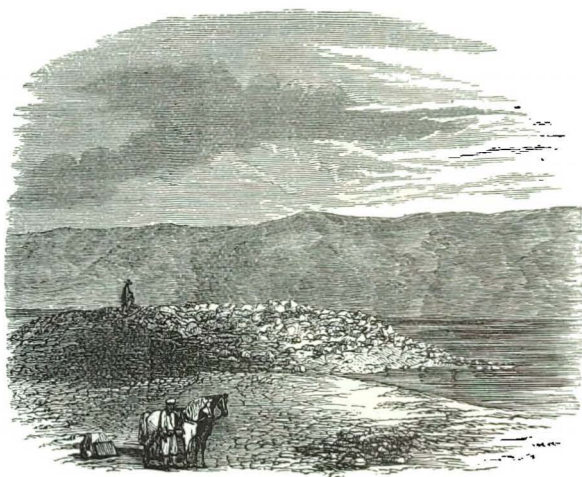
when they came up against Jehoshaphat (2 Chron. xx. 2), and is to this day the route always taken by invaders from the south-east, who march along the shore round the south end of the Dead Sea and up the west side as far as En-gedi, when they ascend the pass. North of it the shore is quite impracticable.

The vineyards of En-gedi have withered, but the terraces—with the tanks, cisterns, and beautifully-wrought channels for conveying the water to the roots of the vines—still remain uninjured on all the lower slopes of the surrounding hills, though not a vestige of soil now covers the rocks. Its balsam, camphire, and palms remained till the fourth century A.D.; and there are abundant evidences of the palms in the masses of petrified palm-trees, with their fronds and fruit, in the limestone gorges opening on the plain. The name does not occur in after history; and the only inhabitants are a few Arabs, who occasionally encamp and plant cucumbers and melons on the gravelly soil.

Just above En-gedi seems to have been the *Cliff of Ziz* (2 Chron. xx. 16), by which the road to Tekoa passed. The table land immediately above the pass is still called El-Husasah, *i. e.*, *Haz-ziz*.

We can scarcely leave the western shores of the Dead Sea without mentioning one place, *Masada*, now Sebbeh, which, though it does not occur in Holy Writ, bears an important part in the closing scenes of Jewish history. Half-way between En-gedi and the south end of the Lake stands a bold isolated rock—a very inland Gibraltar—crowned by certainly the most remarkable ruin in Palestine. The fortress was built by Jonathan Maccabæus in the second century B.C., and was strengthened and beautified by Herod the Great, as a last impregnable place of refuge. On the fall of Jerusalem, when taken by Titus, Eliezer and a band of desperadoes seized Masada, which was abundantly stored with provisions and arms. Flavius Silva, with a strong Roman force, besieged it for months in vain. At length a stupendous causeway, which still exists, was erected against its western side, and the walls battered into a breach. This the Jews repaired by the erection of a framework, which the Romans at length succeeded in igniting. When entering on the following

morning, prepared for a final attack, they found Herod's palace blazing in ruin, and apparently not a human being left alive, till an old woman emerged from a vault and told the tale of horror : how two women and five children were the sole survivors of nine hundred and sixty-seven persons, who, rather than submit, had first slain their own wives and children, and then drawn lots to decide who should be the executioners of their brethren ; until the last who remained, after despatching his brother exe-



NORTH END OF THE DEAD SEA.

cutioners, set fire to their gathered treasures, and having examined the prostrate multitude to see that not one breathed, fell on his own sword—the last, as he thought, of the garrison of Masada. The two women and their children had concealed themselves, and escaped alone to tell the tale. From that day the name of Masada disappeared from history, till it was re-discovered standing out over the waste a few years ago. With Masada closed the chapter of Jewish national history.

North of En-gedi again are several green oases under the cliffs, where springs or the mouths of wadys nourish vegetation, and where some of the lost cities of Judah must have stood. Ain Feshkhah, the most northerly of these, the *Ghor*, or *Plain of Jordan*, begins. The plain is arid and sterile, strewn with sulphur, salt, and gypsum, yet there are frequent traces of old buildings. We are here on the frontier of Judah and Benjamin. The boundary is thus described (Josh. xv. 5-7): "The east border (of Judah) was the Salt Sea, even to the end of Jordan. And their border in the north quarter was from the bay of the sea at the uttermost part of Jordan" (*i.e.*, at the mouth of the river); "and the border went up to Beth-hogla, and passed along by the north of Beth-arabah: and the border went up to the stone of Bohan the son of Reuben; and the border went up toward Debir from the valley of Achor, and so northward, looking toward Gilgal, that is before the going up to Adummim, which is on the south side of the river; and the border passed toward the waters of En-shemesh, and the goings out thereof were at En-rogel."

Let us take each name separately, and we shall be able to trace the land with almost minute accuracy. From the Jordan's mouth the line ran to *Beth-hogla*.

Beth-hogla still continues as Ain Hajla, five miles south-east of Jericho, and not very far from the ruins of a large convent. The well, considered by the Arabs the best in the country, is in a slight depression in the midst of a sandy, scrubby plain, unmarked by tree or ruin. It has been neatly built, and its overflow—for it is a perennial spring—forms a little oasis of herbage round it, with a green strip towards the Jordan till its moisture is exhausted. The stones have probably been all removed for the building of the monastery.

Beth-hogla is probably the *En-eglaim* of Ezek. xlvi. 10. The names are not very different in Hebrew. In the

vision of Ezekiel, En-gedi and En-eglaim seem to denote extreme points such as this would be. We have also the authority of an old Jewish writer for the identification.

Gilgal stood near this, about two miles north-west, "in the east border of Jericho." Its position can be laid down accurately, though but faint ruins mark its site. Its interest centres in its having been the first camping-ground of the hosts of Israel after crossing the Jordan. Here were set up the twelve stones taken from the bed of the river as a witness. Here the younger Israelites were circumcised, and here the first Passover was kept in the land. Joshua seems to have made it a permanent camp; and Saul here marshalled his forces against the Philistines (1 Sam. xiii. 4, 7). Afterwards it became one of the holy places, where Samuel offered sacrifice and executed judgment. Hither the men of Judah came to meet King David on his return from his flight after Absalom's defeat. It is never mentioned afterwards, excepting in Hosea and Amos as having been a seat of the idolatrous worship of Israel. The site, a mile and a half from Er Riha, the modern Jericho, is marked by a number of artificial mounds called Tellayla't Jiljulieh, traces perhaps of the permanent camp of Israel. Latin writers speak of the spot as being venerated, though deserted, in the Christian times.

Next to Beth-hogla is *Beth-arabah*. The name has not been recovered, but the place is indicated by some ancient ruins on Tell el Moghyfer, near the opening of the ravine Khawr el Kataf. The next landmark, *the Stone of Bohan*, has not been identified, M. Ganneau's conjecture, though ingenious, being scarcely satisfactory in identifying it with Hajr el Asbah. Of *Debir*, the next place, we have a trace in the Pass of Dabr, near the khan on the Jerusalem and Jericho road. Next, the line follows the *Valley of Achor*, which can only be the Wady Kelt, so well known to travellers from Jerusalem to Jericho, and the only valley near Jericho besides the one named above.

It was in the opening of this valley, near the city of Jericho, that Achan was stoned (Josh. vii. 24).

Next, we have "*the going up to Adummim*, which is on the south side of the river." By "the river" Wady Kelt only can be meant. It is the most conspicuous feature here, and has three sets of springs. "*The going up*" is probably the ascent to Tel'at el Damm, *e.g.*, "Mount of Blood," a mediæval fortress, surrounded by a rock-hewn moat, standing above the well-known khan, and commanding the Jericho road, on the south of the Kelt. The name, "Mount of Blood," applies not only to the castle but to the eminence of bright red-coloured rock on which it stands. It was known to the Crusaders as "Tour Rouge."

En-shemesh, "the fountain of the sun," the next landmark, is probably Ain Haud, on the same road to Jerusalem, which will be mentioned hereafter.

Thus the whole boundary ran along that pass above the *Kelt*, which has been from the earliest times the road from the Valley of the Jordan to Jerusalem; on which the scene of the parable of the Good Samaritan is laid; and which our Lord so often traversed. At the foot of the pass was probably the Valley of *Keziz*, one of the towns of Benjamin, of which no further mention occurs.

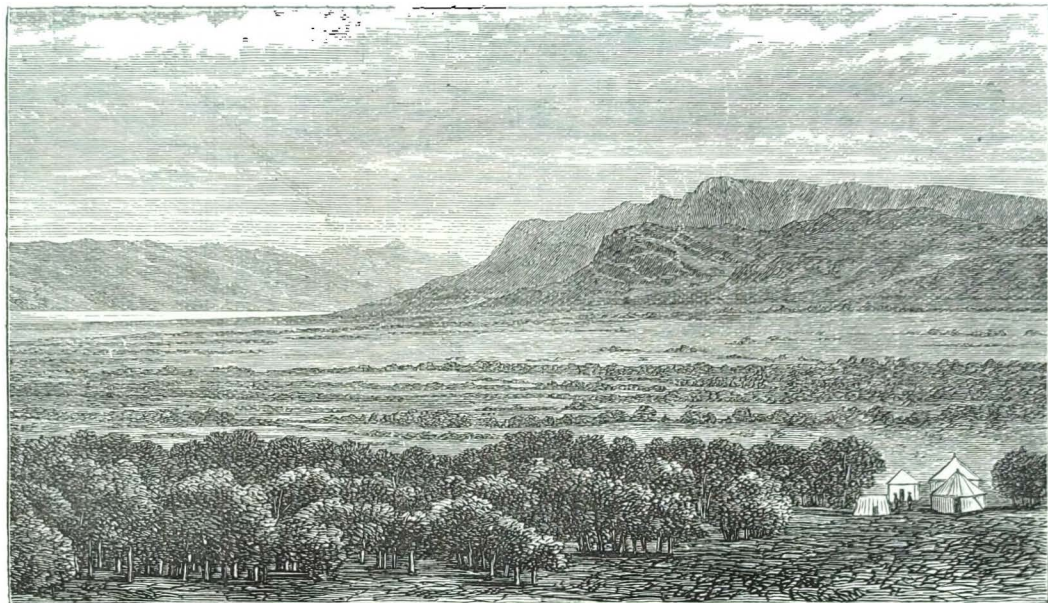
Jericho itself is the next town, always the most important in the Plain of Jordan. At the time of the conquest it was a walled city of importance and of great wealth, as we learn from the account of its spoils, where brass and iron are especially mentioned. The name has been preserved in the modern Arabic, in the village of Er Riha, which, however different in our English pronunciation, is actually the equivalent of the Hebrew *Jericho*.

The history of *Jericho* extends from the entrance into the Land of Promise by Joshua, through the New Testament epoch to the time of the Crusades. It was in the allotment of Benjamin, but so close to the frontier, that "the city of palm-trees" is more than once spoken of as

if it pertained to Judah, in the same way that Jerusalem is frequently referred to. The palm-trees, which require human care to continue their succession, have all but disappeared. One old tree, with a clump of seedlings round it, was all we found, and that on the outskirts of the oasis of Jericho near Gilgal.

Jericho is first mentioned when the spies from the camp at Shittim were entertained by Rahab. She and her family were saved and lodged without the camp; but there is no hint that her house escaped the general destruction, though the monks of the Middle Ages professed to show it. Rahab afterwards married Salmon, the father of Boaz, and of course had settled at Bethlehem. It has been a question whether Jericho continued to exist in village-shape after its destruction by Joshua and the curse on its restorer, fulfilled in the domestic desolation of Hiel (1 Kings xvi. 34). As it was assigned to Benjamin, we can scarcely suppose that its fields remained uncultivated; and the curse was upon the restorer of the *city*, as a walled town, not upon its cultivator. Two springs of marvellous exuberance are the source of the wealth of Jericho, and they must have had the same fertilising power of old as now. It is true that one of them, Ain Sultan, seems to be beyond question identical with the fountain whose bitter waters were healed by Elisha, by whose name it is familiarly known among Europeans; but in its former brackish state—a character which it shared with many existing springs of the neighbourhood—its waters, though disagreeable and unfit for drinking, were not inimical to vegetation, especially to the characteristic palm, which rejoices in saline ground. The land was, therefore, in all probability continuously cultivated, though the husbandmen may have lived at Gilgal and the many other villages in the neighbourhood.

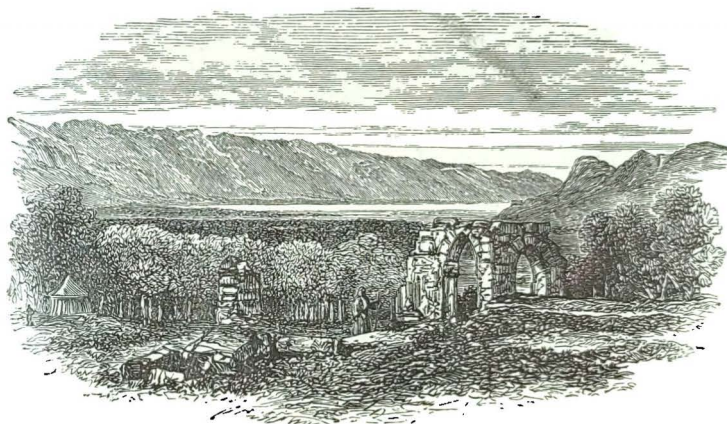
Once restored, it rapidly became of importance. It was on the route across Jordan, both from Judæa and



THE PLAIN OF JORDAN, FROM THE HILL BEHIND JERICO.

From Benjamin, and from it the road diverged to the lower fords towards Moab and the upper ones towards Gilead. Here was established one of the schools of the prophets, frequently resorted to by Elijah and Elisha. It was the last place visited by them before the translation of Elijah just across Jordan, and hither his successor returned and healed the spring of the waters (2 Kings ii.).

Down to the Plain of Jordan Zedekiah fled after the capture of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar (2 Kings xxv. 5), and here he was taken by the Chaldæans. The place was



SARACENIC RUINS AT JERICO.

restored after the Captivity, and the men of Jericho bore their part in the rebuilding of Jerusalem (Neh. iii. 2).

In later times it became one of the five chief cities of the Jews. Here Pompey encamped. Herod the Great, who had a passion for public buildings, bestowed much labour on Jericho, with whose rose-plants Wisdom herself did not disdain comparison (Ecclus. xxiv. 14), and especially extended its orchards and grove of balsam. Anthony assigned its revenues to Cleopatra, from whom

Herod farmed them ; and here he retired to die. In the amphitheatre of Jericho, of which no trace remains, Salome announced the tyrant's death.

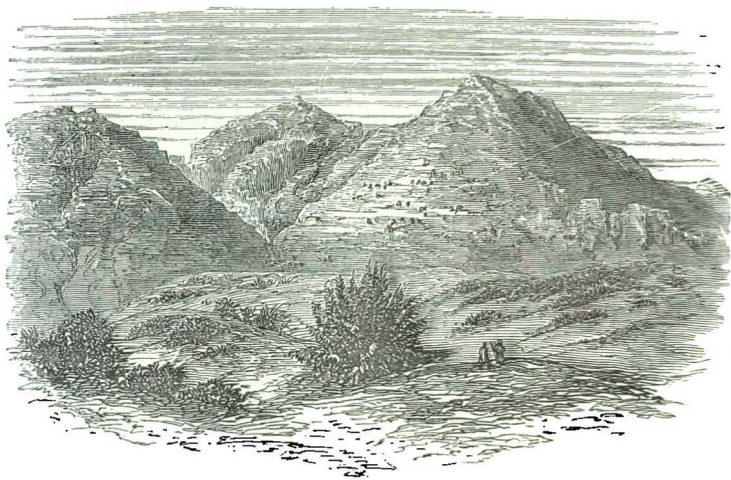
Archelaus restored Jericho a fourth time, but built it further in the plain. It was this later Jericho, of which many traces remain, which our Lord visited ; where Zachæus was called and the blind were healed ; where the parable of the king and his rebellious servants was spoken, in allusion, doubtless, to the history of Archelaus. The modern Jericho was destroyed by Vespasian, but again rebuilt, and it became an important Christian centre and episcopal see, visited by Jerome and by Origen. There are still the remains of several large monasteries in the neighbourhood, and the faces of the bold precipitous mountains, which rise just behind its site to the height of 1,503 feet, are absolutely honeycombed by the cells of ancient anchorites and hermits from top to bottom.

In the time of the Crusaders the revenues of the Plain of Jericho were of immense value, and assigned to the Templars of Jerusalem, when they were reputed worth £5,000 per annum. These were largely derived from the culture of sweet cane : the mills for pressing which still remain and retain their names, though the sugar-cane, like the palm, has been long extinct.

The old town, which was probably the Canaanite city as well as that of Hiel, was close to the Fountain of Elisha, around which are many indistinguishable heaps, a few later ruins and some curious mounds, evidently artificial, from the fragments of pottery mingled with the stones and earth. The fountain is of remarkable volume, quite warm, and waters many acres of ground. Just above this are the ruins of the sugar-mills and also of aqueducts, doubtless those made by Archelaus, which once intercepted the waters of the Kelt at higher levels, and brought them down, so as to irrigate the whole of the upper plain. Many very fine arches still remain, spanning the deep

ravines several miles above Jericho, which have been quite overlooked by travellers.

About two miles above is a fountain of equal magnificence, of sweet water, known of old as now by the name of Ain Duk. Round it may be traced the ruins of another old city. The site of Herod's Jericho was to the south, more directly on the road from the fords to Jerusalem, and just where the road from the hills suddenly debouches on the plain. The road which our Lord frequently



MOUNT QUARANTANIA, BEHIND JERICHO.

traversed can be distinctly traced, as well as the aqueducts leading down to this part of the plain; but the ruins are only shapeless masses. The modern village of Er Riha is about half a mile further south, a wretched collection of hovels with a large square redoubt or castle, now used as a Turkish garrison, built by the Saracens or Crusaders, though popularly called the house of Zacchæus. This was doubtless the site of the Jericho of the Crusaders. The inhabitants are the most degraded and vicious of the

population of Palestine, and seem of a race quite distinct from the Arabs or Syrians.

On the top of the Mount Quarantania, immediately behind Jericho, are the ruins of an ancient chapel, perhaps near the spot where the sons of the prophets stood to view when Elijah and Elisha set out for the Jordan. The cells, with which the face of the mountain is honeycombed, contain many frescoes and interesting inscriptions, dating back to the earlier Christian ages, of the fourth or fifth centuries. They seem to have been little disturbed since, as the Greeks neglect them, though a few Coptic and Abyssinian pilgrims visit those of them which are still accessible, on their annual pilgrimages.

The zone of vegetation does not now extend for more than three miles from Er Riha, the remainder of the path to the Jordan being across a barren plain; but though now salt-covered and barren, there is evidence that it has once been fertile, by the irrigation of the plenteous streams above; nothing but neglect has reduced it to this desolation. In the midst of it, at least three extensive convents still stand in ruins, one of them once inhabited by St. Jerome; and, though roofless for centuries, such is the dryness of the climate, many of the frescoes remain distinctly traceable. One of these monasteries, known as Kasr el Yehud, almost on the Jordan bank due east of Er Riha, has, in 1881, been restored as a monastery by the Greek Patriarch of Jerusalem, and has suffered, as such remains usually do, in the process. There are the remains of an aqueduct which once conveyed water six miles right across the plain, from the holy fountain of Elisha to the Convent, but the present inhabitants are dependent on the Jordan.

Two roads from the upper country converge at Jericho: one from Jerusalem, before mentioned, which comes out by the side of the Wady Kelt; the other to the north of Quarantania, leading up to Bethel, and especially inte-

resting as that taken by Joshua and the Israelites after the fall of Jericho. Two routes also diverge hence to the upper and lower fords respectively. The lower one, leading to Moab, is at what is known as the pilgrims' bathing-place. It is but little used, and is certainly not near the place of the passage of the Israelites. The other is about six miles higher up, and was the principal ford in ancient times opposite *Beth-Nimrah*, or *Bethabara*, now *Beit-nimrim*. The road passes across the barren plain for about six or seven miles after leaving the oasis, while the Plains of Shittim may be seen on the other side, sparsely dotted with acacias. The immediate banks of the river present a striking contrast to the sterile level on either side. There is a terrace lower than the plain, fringing the Jordan, at a width varying from a hundred yards to a quarter of a mile, with an impenetrable tangle of forest shutting in the river, the limbs of trees hanging over, and the branches dipping into the water. A narrow glade opens the passage to the ford.

As the Plain of Shittim, in its widest part, is immediately opposite this ford, the passage of the hosts under Joshua probably took place here, although, as the drying up of the waters was by a distinct supernatural intervention, and the river bed was left dry, it is not necessary to limit the passage to any special ford, and probably the many thousands occupied a wide reach of the river on their march.

By this ford, too, did Elijah most probably pass, when he had vainly attempted to prevent his faithful Elisha from accompanying him, as, for the last time, he hastened towards the mountains of his native Gilead, thence to be carried up to his eternal home. Up to that bold peak of Quarantania behind, the sons of the prophets had climbed, and there they "stood to view" and watch as master and scholar walked across the plain, till they descended to the wooded bank. There was no delay, as the stricken waters

made a path for them dryshod; and thence they would naturally follow the road to the mountains. Not long had they walked, still absorbed in converse, when the chariot and horses of fire appeared, and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. Not long—for when Elisha returned, the sons of the prophets had not yet relinquished their post of observation. Still had they gazed on, waiting till their fathers should return, when soon they recognised Elisha, coming back in all the power and spirit of Elijah. It could not, therefore, have been far from this ford that heaven and earth were brought so near together.

There is a peculiar appropriateness in this identification since he who was to come “in the spirit and power of Elias” appeared, completed his mission and discharged his function of herald of the Kingdom, by the baptism of Christ at Bethabara, just opposite, near the very spot where his prototype had disappeared. By this ford, too, our Lord and His disciples passed over Jordan, when they came by the plain on the east side and ascended from Jericho to Jerusalem.

It is interesting to note that the local name of one of the fords here is el Mandeseh, *i.e.*, “the place struck.”

One other city of Benjamin is named, which appears to have been in the lower Plain of Jordan, *Zemaraim*, between Beth-arabah and Bethel, and, therefore, on the edge of the hill country. It may be recognised in Sumrah, a collection of crumbling heaps, close to the rise of the hills, about five miles north of Jericho. Though little remains above ground, there are many extensive quarries beneath, whence sandstone has been hewn with great order and system for many more buildings than Sumrah ever contained, and which possibly supplied material for Jericho and the neighbouring monasteries. *Zemaraim* does not occur in later history.

The only other remaining ruins in this region, till we reach the territory of Ephraim, are those of *Phasaelis*,

now Fusail, about ten miles further north, at the mouth of a beautiful glen. It was built by Herod, who utilised the mountain stream, as he did at Jericho, and thus fertilised a previously desert tract. The aqueduct is broken down, the waters are wasted, and the rich *Aulon* is now again the barren Ghor. Its interest arises chiefly from its being the traditional site of the retreat of Elijah during the dearth. This seems scarcely probable, as the brook (or wady) *Cherith* was probably east of Jordan, where, however, the name has not yet been re-discovered.

CHAPTER V.

THE HILL COUNTRY OF BENJAMIN.

Boundaries of Benjamin—Character of the country—Crowded peaked hills—Ascent from Jericho to Ai—*Wady Harith*—Bethel—Luz—Its history—Migron—Oak of Deborah—Beth-aven—Camping-ground of Abraham—Ai or Hai—View from the Hill of Ai—Rock Rimmon—Ophrah or Ephraim—Ophni or Gophna—Michmash—*Mukhmas*—Achievement of Jonathan—Geba—*Jib*—Sennacherib's March towards Jerusalem—Parah—Alemeth—Beeroth—Chephirah—Beth-horon—Western passes of Beth-horon—Battle and Victory of Joshua—Gibeon—Pool of Gibeon—Joab—Solomon's Vision—Ramah—Mizpeh—*Neby Samwil*—*Mountjoye*—Ebenezer—Gibeah—Samuel and Saul—Anathoth—Nob—*Sumah*—Zelah—Mozah—Rekem—Nephtoih—*Lifta*—Spring—Valley of Hinnom—En-Rogel—En-Shemesh—Bahurim—Gallim—Madmenah—Gebim—Bethphage—Bethany—Mount of Olives—Place of the Ascension.

Of none of the tribal boundaries have we more accurate or minute descriptions than are given by Joshua (ch. xviii. 11–20) of the portion of Benjamin. His inheritance ran down in a narrow strip, as we have seen, to the north end of the Salt Sea. Then it mounted the steep ascent, its southern boundary embracing Jerusalem, and its northern running north of Bethel, and then gradually narrowing to a point on the western edge of the hill country, where it sinks into the Plain of Sharon. Thus the great passes into the central heart of Palestine—Michmash on the east and Beth-horon on the west—lay within the limits of this smallest but most warlike of the tribes.

The metropolis, too, lay just within its border. Round Jerusalem were thickly studded the walled towns, which crowned every height of little Benjamin. It was, in fact, the Middlesex of Palestine. No plain like that of Sharon, no "*midbar*" like the Wilderness of Judah, extended its

frontiers; the little portion of the plain of Jordan round Jericho was its only possession beyond the highlands.

This region, like the hill country of Judah, of which it is a continuation, has no rivers or wide valleys, but steep ravines, running eastward to the Jordan, and less precipitous ones draining towards the Mediterranean, and often overlapping each other, as they start from the crowded hills on the crest of the watershed. Instead, however, of the ranges of brows running east and west in Judæa, we find here a number of isolated knolls rising out of this table land, suggesting, by their very appearance, either the sites of fortresses or "high places" for worship. With both these the little territory was crowded. Mizpeh, "the watch-tower;" Ramah, "the high place;" Geba, Gibeah, Gibeon, all signifying "hill," tell us at once of this characteristic feature of this territory of mountain fastnesses.

We have already examined the sites of the five cities of Benjamin in the Plain of Jordan. We pass from Jericho by the same ascent by which Joshua led the armies of Israel against Ai. Great strategic skill is shown in the selection of this route to Bethel. The ordinary road is by a rugged ravine, winding up just on the south of the Mount Quarantania, and then after a steep ascent turning northward, which ravine afterwards formed the frontier of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel. When wooded, as in the days of the Israelite kingdom, it was the secure home of bears, which maintained themselves exactly as they now do in similar ravines of Lebanon (2 Kings iii. 23). Leaving this pass on his left, and skirting the eastern base of Quarantania, and the great fountain *Docus* (1 Macc. xvi. 15), Joshua led his army up the Wady Lûeit, where a Roman road can still be traced by Rummaneh (*Rimmon*). A number of rolling hillocks, piled one behind the other in irregular order, with shallow wadys forming a network

of paths, but all converging, as though a great net had been pressed down diagonally on the slope, reach to the upper plateau. Up these the army could march in loose order, secure from surprise, and safe from any attack in the rear, until the narrow open plain in front of Ai was attained. "Joshua sent men from Jericho to *Ai*, which is beside *Beth-aven*, on the east side of *Bethel*" (Josh. vii. 2). After the failure of the first attempt, an ambush was placed in the pass, high up, between Ai and Bethel; and, as is fully described by Joshua, Ai was captured and destroyed.

Just above the head of the ravine stood *Bethel*, named in the first, or eastern group, of twelve Benjamite cities by Joshua (xviii. 22). Of these the first four were in the plain, the others in the highlands. The other group of fourteen cities comprised the southern and western portion of the tribe. *Bethel* (the house of God), or *Luz*, as it was anciently called (Gen. xxviii. 19), now Beitin—though the latter (*Luz*) seems to have been rather the *city*, and Bethel the holy place close by—is among the oldest cities of Canaan. Here Jacob was favoured with the vision which told him of the nearness of earth to heaven, and setup his pillar, which, according to Jewish tradition, was long preserved and found a place in the second Temple.

In the time of the Judges, Bethel frequently comes into notice as a place favoured by the Sacred Presence. Hither Israel went up to ask counsel of God (Judg. xx. 18, &c.), when Phinehas, the son of Eleazar, had set up the Ark of the Covenant. Samuel visited it regularly in circuit (1 Sam. vii. 16). After the rending of the kingdom, though in the portion of Benjamin, it, like Jericho, was held by Israel, though wrested from Jeroboam by Abijah (2 Chron. xiii. 19), till retaken by Baasha (2 Chron. xvi. 2). Jeroboam here set up the rival worship of the golden calf, after the Egyptian fashion. It is

unnecessary to recapitulate the visit of the Prophet of Judah and the temporary visitation of Jeroboam. It maintained its importance till the downfall of the kingdom of Israel; but appears always to have contained some worshippers of the true God, as Elijah and Elisha visited it; and, after Assyria had carried Israel captive, there were still some priests here who taught the true worship of Jehovah (2 Kings xvii. 28). The destruction of idolatry by Josiah fulfilled the prophecy of the days of Jeroboam. The pillar of the man of God yet remained; and after the return from captivity, men of Bethel and Ai returned with Zerubbabel. Bethel afterwards sank and disappears from history. It now consists of a few wretched hovels, amid several acres of foundations and hewn stones, among which stand the ruins of a Greek church, built out of the fragments of some more classic edifice, with sculptured capitals and cornices protruding from the walls. An enormous cistern, 300 feet by 200, is the chief relic of antiquity.

A very little way east of Bethel, the name of Makrun, given to a desolate heap on the top of a bold rocky mound, identifies *Migron*, *i.e.*, "the precipice," a village only twice mentioned: once, when under a pomegranate-tree there Saul mustered his handful of men at the lowest ebb of the tide of Israel's reverses (1 Sam. xiv. 2); and again in the magnificent description of the march of Sennacherib against Jerusalem: "He is come to Aiath, he is passed to Migron" (Isa. x. 28).

Close to Bethel, in the valley to the south, was the 'oak of tears,' *Allon-bachuth*, where Deborah, Rebekah's nurse, was buried (Gen. xxxv. 8).

Beth-aven, *i.e.*, "the house of naught," on the east side of Bethel" (Josh. vii. 2), seems to have been close to that city, so close that, in the language of the later prophets, when Bethel had become the head-quarters of idolatry, the name of "the house of God" (Bethel) was

exchanged for that of "the house of naught, or of idols" (Hos. iv. 15, &c.; Amos). Of the name no trace now remains.

The second camping-ground of Abraham in the Land of Promise was at "a mountain on the east of Bethel, having Bethel on the west, and Hai on the east" (Gen. xii. 8). There is a gently sloping grassy valley, south-east of Bethel, where the patriarch's flocks may have grazed; and we recognise the mountain in the little rugged hill opposite, with shapeless cairns on its top, Tell-el-Hajar, "the hill of the stones."

Ai, destroyed by Joshua, called also *Aiath* (Isa. x. 28), of which *Avim*, in the list of Joshua, is possibly a corruption, appears to have been situated on the hill above the village of Deir Duwân, a couple of miles further to the east. When Bethel is known and examined, it is almost impossible to mistake the site of *Ai*; and also that of Abraham's second encampment.

The modern name of the knoll on which *Ai* stood is a most remarkable incidental confirmation of sacred history. We read (Josh. viii. 28) that "Joshua burnt *Ai*, and made it an heap (*Tell*) for ever, even a desolation unto this day." Now the place has no other name than "et Tell," *the heap*, and it is to be noted that the word *Tell* only occurs three or four times in the Hebrew Bible, while it is one of the most universal and familiar words in the Arabic, every place on a rising ground having this prefix, as Tell Arad, Tell Hum, Tell Kadi. But nowhere else do we ever find it standing alone. Et Tell — *the heap*, the one made and cursed by the leader of Israel.

Between et Tell and Bethel there is a fine irregular plain, affording room for the military evolutions described in Josh. viii. Between this and Bethel, in the ravine of the Wady Harith, Joshua placed his ambush. Hither Abraham had returned with Lot to the same "place where

his tent had been at the beginning, between Bethel and Hai, unto the place at the altar which he had made there at the first." This altar would naturally be *on the hill*, and not in the plain below. From its top Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the Plain of Jordan. This is the most westerly spot whence the plain can be seen. To the east there rises in the foreground the jagged range of hills above Jericho, in the distance the dark wall of Moab, and between these lies the wide valley of the Jordan, its eastern side clearly visible. The view also south and west is wide and commanding, as far as the hills round Hebron. Here it was that "the Lord said unto Abram, Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art, northward and southward and eastward and westward; for all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever" (Gen. xiii. 14, 15).

Two miles north of this spot, on the very edge of the hill country, with a precipitous descent towards the Jordan Valley, is the *Rock Rimmon*, where the little village still bears the name of Rummon, the houses clinging to the sides of the cliff like steps, rising several hundred feet above the deep ravine. Here, in the inaccessible fastness, the remnant of the Benjamites, after the slaughter of the tribe, took refuge for four months, till released by the tribes, who agreed to spare them (Judg. xx. 45, xxi. 13).

Two miles north of this was the frontier city of *Ophrah*, on the edge of the wilderness, or uncultivated hill country. It scarcely occurs again in history, excepting as the *Ephrain* that was wrested by Abijah from Jeroboam (2 Chron. xiii. 19), but is especially interesting, as probably identified with "the city called Ephraim" (John xi. 54), to which our Lord retired for a time from Bethany, after the raising of Lazarus, almost immediately before His passion. It is now called Taiyebah, and contains the ruins of a fine Byzantine Church. The

population is for the most part Christian. It is on a bold knoll projecting over the Jordan Valley, and is peculiarly isolated and secluded; truly "the lonely Ephraim."

Three miles north of Bethel is the village of Ain Sinai, which M. Ganneau appears very satisfactorily to identify with *Jeshanah*, the third city recovered from Jeroboam by Abijah (2 Chron. xiii. 19).

Turning westward we come to the most northerly city of Benjamin, *Ophni*, the name of which never occurs again in Scripture history, but which is the same with *Gophna*, frequently mentioned in Josephus, on the great Roman road northward from Jerusalem, which can still be traced in places. It was one of the principal places of Roman Palestine, and here Titus halted for the last time on his march to besiege Jerusalem. It is now a little Christian village, with the same name as of old, *Jufna*, the ruins of a castle and of a church, surrounded with luxuriant vineyards and fruit orchards. Little more than a mile south of it is *Zereda*, now *Surdeh*, the birthplace of Jeroboam.

Chephar-Naammonai, *i.e.*, "village of the Ammonites," preserving the recollection of some Ammonite inroad, the next city named in the allotment, has not yet been traced. In the same district, too, must be placed *Shebarim*, *i.e.*, "the fissures," which is only named in the capture of Ai (Josh. vii. 5), and probably took its name from the broken rents in the soil so common in this neighbourhood.

Michmash, now *Mukhmas*, admits of no question. It stands "eastward from Beth-aven," on the north edge of the Wady Harith, here, in its upper part, called Wady Suweinit, "the passage of Michmash." The olden fortress is now a squalid village, the sides of the ravines are honeycombed with caves, in which Saul's army hid themselves after they were driven out of the citadel, and up

this ravine the king returned from Gilgal to Gibeah (1 Sam. xiii. 15). The ruins are, if possible, more desolate but more massive than those of Ai or of Bethel; and the city seems, by the fragments of columns, as well as by two large rock-hewn cisterns, to have continued to a later date. Michmash is not named in the catalogue of Joshua, but rose to importance afterwards. Its interest concentrates in the history of Saul, when it was the extreme eastern fortress taken and held by the Philistines (1 Sam. xiii., xiv.). Up the ravine, "between the passages," Jonathan and his armour-bearer climbed on their daring and heroic adventure, between two sharp rocks, *Bozez* and *Senh* (1 Sam. xiv. 4)—which must have been some of the now worn mounds and hummocks which strew the rough gorge—and, clambering up the steep, discomfited the garrison, seized with sudden panic, till the children of Israel came out of their hiding-places; the king saw it from the top of Gibeah, and the route was complete. "So the Lord saved Israel that day, and the battle passed over to Beth-aven."

Once again, in the magnificent description by Isaiah (ch. x.) of the march of Sennacherib, Michmash is named. After passing Ai and Migron, "at Michmash he hath laid up his carriages" (*i.e.*, his heavy baggage). It was resettled after the Captivity (Neh. xi. 31), and was the seat of government of Jonathan Maccabæus. It is mentioned by Eusebius and Jerome.

Right opposite Michmash, on the south side of the ravine, is the round-topped hill of *Geba*, now *Jeba*, with its terraced sides. Here we can trace the vivid accuracy of Isaiah's poem on Sennacherib's advance. After leaving the incumbrance of the army at Michmash—for the wady is too rugged to admit of the carriage of heavy stores—"They are gone over the passage: they have taken up their lodging at Geba" (ch. x. 29), *i.e.*, they have crossed the ravine, and bivouac at Geba, and now "Ramah is

afraid ; Gibeah of Saul is fled : ” for the latter of these is in sight of Geba, Ramah is only half an hour westward. From the top of the hill we looked back to Gilgal, as the Philistines, from the keep, looked towards the camp of Saul. Perhaps the fort which Jonathan captured (1 Sam. xiii. 8) was on the site of the large square stones which form the base of the ruined tower. The military topography of this district, as shown in the history of the advance of Joshua, of the campaign of Saul, and the march of Sennacherib, is wonderfully accurate. Every allusion can be recognised at once on the spot : the whole history is re-enacted before the mind’s eye.

In the reign of Josiah we find Geba named as the frontier of the southern kingdom (2 Kings xxiii. 8), and the Wady Suweinit was admirably suited as a line of defence. On this account Asa fortified it with the materials of Ramah (1 Kings xv. 22). It was resettled after the Captivity (Neh. xi. 31).

Parah, the last to be noticed of the cities of the first group, has not been identified, but the name remains in the Wady Fa’rah, the ravine immediately to the south of Geba, running into the Suweinit, the caves of which are inhabited by Arabs. I was told of ruins, but was not able to find them.

On the south side of this wady there rises a bleak, rugged hill, without a village or a house, but crowned with shapeless ruins, called *Almêt*, *Almon* of Joshua, *Alemeth* of 1 Chron. vi. 60, by which name it has come down to us, a city of the priests, of which nothing further is mentioned.

The central and western cities of Benjamin are given in Joshua as fourteen in number, including Jerusalem ; but many other places in this district are mentioned in after history. About two miles south-west of Bethel stands *Beeroth*, now *Bireh*, the most northerly of these, one of the four cities of the Gibeonites which entrapped Joshua

into a league (Josh. ix. 17). The Benjamites seem to have subsequently expelled its Hivite inhabitants (2 Sam. iv. 3). The murderers of Ish-bosheth, son of Saul, were of Beeroth. The Well of Bîreh is the first halting-place for caravans from Jerusalem, and hence there is some reason for the tradition, received generally in the country, that this was the place where Joseph and Mary discovered that our Lord had stayed behind, and was not among their company.

The place is still a flourishing village. There is a noble fountain by an old mosque outside, where pilgrims and travellers camp on a grassy sward, and also a large khan. In the centre of the village is a noble old Early Pointed church, built by the Knights Templar, and so perfect, that it can scarcely be called a ruin. It is attributed to the English knights who possessed this village.

Chephirah, another of the four Gibeonite towns, was further west, two miles west of Ajalon, on the frontiers of Benjamin, the modern village of Kefir.

We are here close to the north-western frontier of Benjamin and Ephraim, *Beth-horon* (Josh. xvi. 3, xviii. 13). Though the town itself were in Ephraim, yet these passes and their history belong to Benjamin. The pass of Beth-horon was the western access, as that of Jericho was the eastern, to the hill country and the fastnesses of Central Palestine. At the head of the pass stood the cities of Mizpeh and Gibeon. From the slaughter by Joshua, near Gibeon, the Canaanites fled "along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon" (Josh. x. 10). From thence they crossed the ridge and descended towards the west. "And it came to pass, as they fled from before Israel, and were in the going down of Beth-horon, that the Lord cast great stones from heaven upon them unto Azekah" (v. 11). Standing on the summit of the pass, with Gibeon behind him, Joshua looked down the broad green vale of Ajalon, as it unfolded in the distance into the open Plain

of Sharon and the wide expanse of the Mediterranean beyond. The sun "was in the midst of heaven," for it was noon-day, the moon was visible above the hailstorm which came driving up from the west, when Joshua spake, "Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon; and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon." "And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man: for the Lord fought for Israel" (vers. 12, 14). Down the same pass, too, David drove the Philistines (2 Sam. v. 25). It was the scene of a victory of Judas Maccabæus, and of the last success of the insurgent Jews over the Romans just before the siege of Jerusalem by Titus. Up the same pass the Crusading armies advanced under Richard Cœur-de-Lion.

Beth-horon the Upper and *Beth-horon the Nether* have survived all the vicissitudes of four thousand years, and the same names still remain in Beit'ur el-foka and Beit'ur et-tahta: the upper village perched on the crest and steep side of the hill, the lower (et-tahta) on a low hill, further down on the other side of the pass; and the road from Gibeon and Michmash to the Philistine Plain still passes by them.

Lower down, between Beth-horon and Lydda, but off the road to the south, is a place which does not occur in the Inspired Scriptures, but is most closely connected with the most glorious epoch of later Jewish history—*Modin*, the birthplace and ancestral burying-place of the Maccabees. At Modin was struck the first blow in the war of independence, and near it were fought the greatest battles. It is to be recognised in the modern El Midyeh, an Arab village on a hill, surrounded by wadys, at the foot of the Judæan range, in sight of the sea, of Ramleh and Lydda. On the other side of the valley are the Kabur el Yahud, "Tombs of the Jews," the burial-place of the Maccabæan family. The tombs are minutely described in 1 Macc. xiii., and by Josephus.

The seven pyramids erected over them have been long since destroyed, but there are traces of their bases, and the great slabs over the rifled tombs beneath them still remain. The whole structure is of a very different character from any others in the country.

Gibeon, now El Jib, is about five miles to the east of Upper Beth-horon, on the other side of a low ridge, across which the ancient road can, here and there, be traced. A few scattered hovels stand on the top of a little isolated hill, whose sides are terraced for vineyards and covered with trees, with the remains of an old fortress, a fine fountain in a cave, and a large open reservoir below the village. This is the "Pool of Gibeon," at which Abner, with the adherents of Ish-bosheth, met Joab and David's men, and where, after the defeat of the former, Asahel fell by the spear of Abner (2 Sam. ii.); a tragedy which afterwards led to the treacherous murder of Abner by Joab.

We are told (2 Sam. ii. 16) that the place where the mutual slaughter took place was called *Helkath Hazzarim*, i.e., "the field of strong men." A reminiscence of this seems to be preserved in a broad, smooth valley close to the village ("which is in Gibeon"), called Wady el Askar, "the vale of the soldiery." At the spring of Gibeon—"great waters" (Jer. xli. 12)—Johanan found the traitor Ishmael.

Gibeon first appears in history as the chief of the four confederate Hivite cities which lured Joshua unwittingly into a league with them, and which league was the origin of the Amorite confederacy, so utterly discomfited, and which ended in the execution of Makkedah. Next it was the scene of the wager of battle mentioned above. A second time it appears in Joab's history, when, in searching for Sheba, the Benjamite rebel against David, Joab seized the opportunity of basely assassinating his rival Amasa, by the "great stone which is

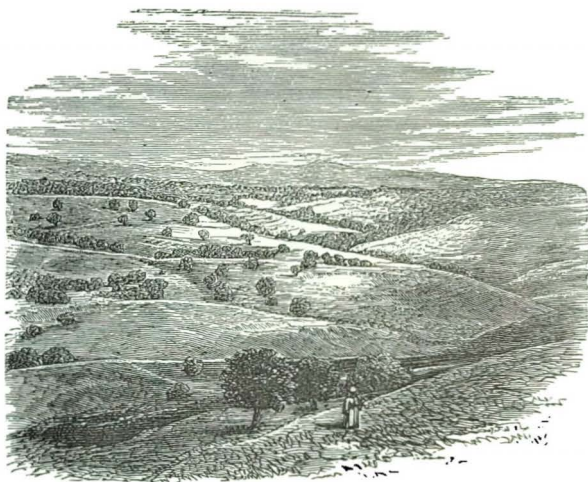
in Gibeon," under circumstances more atrocious than even the murder of Abner (2 Sam. xx. 4-13). By a righteous arrangement of Providence it was at Gibeon, whither Joab had fled to the horns of the altar (1 Chron. xvi. 39), that he was put to death, on the sentence of Solomon, by Benaiah, the son of Jehoiada.

It is not quite clear whether David removed the Ark of the Lord to Gibeon ; but it is quite certain (1 Chron. xvi. 30) that in his time the brazen altar of sacrifice was here, and the priests, with Zadok at their head, attended to its service. Hither, soon after the execution of Joab, the youthful King Solomon went up to offer his magnificent sacrifice of a thousand burnt-offerings (1 Kings iii. 4), attended in pomp by all his officers of state. Here the Lord appeared to him by night, and, on his choice of an understanding heart, promised him wealth, honour, and long life. So soon as the Temple was completed, Solomon again returned to Gibeon, and brought up the tabernacle and all its sacred vessels to the newly erected Temple of Jerusalem. This city of the priests, to whom, with its suburbs, it was allotted, thenceforth sinks into obscurity. The men of Gibeon assisted in the rebuilding under Nehemiah ; and the place is occasionally referred to by Josephus.

Ramah, now Er Râm, stands about five miles east of Gibeon, placed, like the other towns of Benjamin, on the summit of a round hill. A little to the north of it, in the deep hot valley, "between Ramah and Bethel," was the palm-tree of Deborah, where Rebekah's nurse was buried. As a frontier fortress, after the schism of Judah and Israel, it was constantly taken and retaken. Here, too, Nebuzar-adan, the Babylonian captain, halted with his prisoners, on the way to Babylon. But it is more directly connected with the life of Samuel, if it be the same, as we believe, with Ramathaim Zophim of Mount Ephraim (1 Sam. i. 1), the birthplace of the Prophet.

Mount Ephraim is often loosely applied to all the hill country under the power of that tribe, as the greater part of Benjamin frequently was. It is supposed to have been the place where Samuel anointed Saul to be king over Israel. The modern collection of hovels, called a village, has some fragments of columns and large bevelled stones used up in their construction, indicating its ancient importance. It was resettled after the Captivity.

Ataroth-adar, mentioned (Josh. xviii. 13) as "near



VALLEY OF THE KEDRON AND NEBY SAMWIL.

the hill that lieth on the south side of the nether Beth-horon," is recognised in the modern *Atâra* or *Dariah*, two miles and a half north of *Ramah*.

Turning again to the south-west, the highest hill in the neighbourhood is the well-known *Neby Samwil*, the ancient *Mizpeh*, the most conspicuous spot in the whole country round, commanding a view of *Jerusalem*. It rises abruptly from the table land, with terraced and well-cultivated sides, to a height of 500 or 600 feet.

No other peak in Southern Palestine affords such a panorama. Gibeon, Ataroth, Beeroth, Ophrah, Rimmon, Ramah, Gibeah, are all distinctly seen ; Gilead, Moab, Bethlehem, the hills of Hebron, the Plain of Sharon, and the Mediterranean are visible in the far distance. It was, therefore, well named *Mizpeh*, "the watch-tower." It is supposed to be the Mountjoye of the Crusaders, where men first caught sight of Jerusalem, and where our Richard I. refused to gaze on the city, but, hiding his face, exclaimed, " O Lord God ! I pray that I may never see Thy Holy City, if so be that I may not rescue it from the hands of Thine enemies ! " The Crusaders believed Neby Samwil to be Shiloh : not unnaturally, from the grandeur of its position. The Mohammedan tradition declares it to be the burial-place of Samuel. Some modern travellers have raised difficulties in the identification of *Mizpeh*, or *Mizpah*, with Neby Samwil, but the preponderance of evidence seems overwhelmingly in its favour.

Here, at Mizpeh, all the children of Israel, 400,000 strong, assembled to take vengeance on the hideous crime of the men of Gibeah, in sight of the scene of wickedness itself. It was to Mizpeh, again, that the Prophet Samuel summoned all Israel to confess their sins and to fight against the Philistines ; and after the victory, when the foe was driven as far as *Beth-car*, Samuel set up the memorial-stone, and called it *Eben-ezer*, now a household word in Christendom (1 Sam. vii. 12). The stone was raised between Mizpeh and *Shen*, which latter, like Beth-car, is unknown. A second time did Samuel, many years later, call a national gathering at Mizpeh, when Saul was taken for king (1 Sam. x. 17) ; and for the first time in Israel the cry was raised, " God save the king ! "

At Mizpeh Samuel regularly judged Israel, as one of the three holy cities, with Bethel and Gilgal. It was afterwards fortified by Asa, who employed the material pre-

pared by Baasha, at Ramah, for a counter fortress against Judah. The men of Mizpeh returned after the Captivity, and aided in the building of Jerusalem. The height is crowned by a large dilapidated mosque, and round it are about a dozen houses, built of old sculptured fragments and partly hewn out of the sides of the rock, like the deserted towns of Southern Judah.

About four miles east of Mizpeh, and a little more than that distance north of Jerusalem, stood *Gibeah* (the *Gibeah* of Josh. xviii. 28), generally called Gibeah of Benjamin, or Gibeah of Saul, now Tuleil el Fül. It was the scene of the tragedy of the Levite and his concubine, the vengeance for which brought almost extermination on the tribe (Judg. xx.); yet Gibeah afterwards gave Israel her first king. It was the city of Saul, and spoken of as his home. Here the king, with the manners of primitive simplicity, is found tending his herds, when summoned to defend his trans-Jordanic subjects from Ammon (1 Sam. xi. 5). Again he returns to it after the campaign against Amalek (ch. xv. 34), when he and Samuel parted for life, nigh to the two hill-tops close in sight of each other—Ramah and Gibeah. In the wars of Saul with the Philistines, Gibeah is often mentioned. It was at Gibeah that Jonathan, with his garrison of 1000 men, held his ground, while the Philistines were at Geba opposite. From Gibeah he struck the blow at Geba, which rallied Israel, but roused the vengeance of their foes (1 Sam. xiii. 2). Again Israel rallied at Gibeah (ver. 16), though Michmash was lost; and it was the base of operations in the great battle which established for years the supremacy of Saul. Here the Gibeonites hanged the seven descendants of Saul, to avenge the massacre of their brethren (2 Sam. xxi.); and here Rizpah, the mother of two of the victims, watched the bodies day and night, till the touching tale of a mother's devotion reached David's ears, and they were buried with honour.

Beyond an incidental reference here and there, Gibeah only appears in later history in Isaiah's description of the march of Sennacherib.

Gibeah, or Tuleil el Fül, "the hill of the beans," is a rounded conical hill, its top covered with ruins, which are little more than a confused heap of stones, dreary and desolate. Its sides are roughly terraced, bare, and treeless.

All authorities agree in identifying *Geba* with the modern *Jeba*, but Capt. Conder, after very careful examination of the district, discredits the identification of Gibeah with Tuleil el Fül, and suggests a neighbouring Tell in view of Michmash, which is not visible from Tuleil el Fül.

Anathoth, now *Anâta*, a city of the priests, two miles east of Gibeah, on the other side of the Wady Selâm, is not mentioned in the list of the cities of Benjamin, but occurs afterwards in the catalogue of the priests' cities. It is now a small village, looking eastward from the edge of the highlands down into the Jordan Valley, with an ancient reservoir, hewn out of the rock, and many hewn stones and fragments of columns strewn the ground. It is only an hour and a half's ride from Jerusalem. Anathoth was the city of Abiathar, the priest, who so faithfully followed David in his wanderings, after his escape from the massacre of the priests at Nob; and "to his own fields at Anathoth" he was banished by Solomon, for his share in the unsuccessful attempt of Adonijah. But the great distinction of Anathoth is, that it was the birthplace of the prophet Jeremiah. Here the Word of the Lord came to him, and here he lived, till driven by persecution to take refuge in Jerusalem. By Anathoth, Sennacherib is represented as advancing to Nob, in sight of Jerusalem: "O poor Anathoth" (Isa. x. 30).

A little to the north of *Anâta* is the village of *Hezmeh*,

which seems to answer to the *Azmaveth* of Ezra ii. 24, Noh. vii. 28, mentioned along with Anathoth.

Nob, another city of the priests, between Anathoth and Jerusalem, was the last station in the march of Sennacherib, when his progress was arrested. "As yet shall he remain at Nob that day: he shall shake his hand against the mount of the daughter of Zion, the hill of Jerusalem" (Isa. x. 22). Nob is incidentally referred to by our Lord (Luke vi. 3), as the place where David, fleeing from Saul, had some of the shewbread given him from the holy table by Ahimelech the priest. Here his trophy, the sword of Goliath, had been hung up. Then followed the frightful massacre of the priests, women, and children, by Doeg the Edomite, under Saul's orders, when Abiathar alone escaped to tell the tale (1 Sam. xxii.). All traces of the name of Nob have since disappeared from history. Mr. Porter has, as I am convinced, after carefully examining the locality, rightly placed Nob on a peaked hill, just east of Shafat, two miles north of Jerusalem, and in sight of Mount Zion. Capt. Conder, however, would identify it with Mizpeh, his theory being that Nob was a later substituted name. The hill is called Sûmah, and in the hewn cisterns and large stones and ruins there is the evidence of an ancient place. Nob, not being a city, but only a village dependent upon Anathoth, is not given in the catalogue of priests' cities.

The other enumerated cities of Benjamin seem to have lain to the west of Jerusalem. *Kirjath-jearim*, a frontier town with Judah, "Kuriyet el-Enab," has already been named. *Zeluh*, the native place of the family of Kish, the father of Saul, and where Saul and Jonathan and his other sons were buried, has not yet been traced; nor have the towns named next it, *Irpeel*, *Taralah*, and *Eleph*: though Capt. Conder thinks Irpeel to be the modern Rafah.

Mozah does not reappear in history. The Mishna tells us it became a privileged colony in the Roman times and was called *Colonia*, the modern village of Kulonieh, in the Valley of the Terebinth, midway between Kirjath-jearim and Jerusalem. The old name lingers in Khirbet Beit Mizzeah, on the hill above Kulonieh.

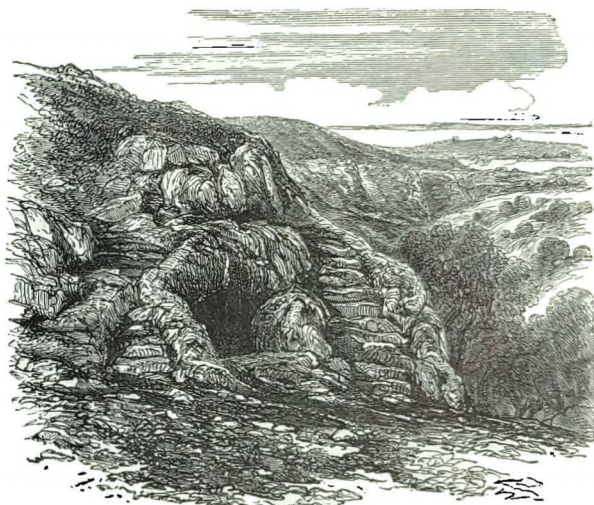
Rekem is reasonably identified with the modern village of Ain Karim, about a mile and a half south of Mozah, where is a plenteous spring and vestiges of antiquity.

Nephtoah, "the fountain of the water of Nephtoah," is twice mentioned as on the boundary lines between Judah and Benjamin. It is now known as Ain Lifta, two miles and a half from Jerusalem off the road to Kirjath-jearim. The spring, whence its name, is still very abundant, and may have been utilised in very ancient times for the water-supply of the city. On the crest of the hill above the village of Lifta is a very curious chasm in the rock. At the top it is only wide enough to allow of a man squeezing through, but lower down it expands, till, at the depth of 125 feet, it is about 15 feet by 30 inches. It widens to the bottom, which is at the immense depth of 155 feet from the surface. Water trickles down its sides, and runs away at once, as if possibly it were tapped by some underground conduit, and so conveyed by a subterranean channel for the supply of Jerusalem. The chasm appears to be partly artificial.

From Nephtoah we can easily trace the boundary line to the *Valley of Hinnom* round the west and south of Jerusalem. On the southern brow of the valley Solomon erected high-places for the idolatrous worship of Molech; and here the later kings, who fell into idolatry, performed the cruel and horrid rites of this superstition. It was afterwards polluted by Josiah; and, from its ceremonial defilements and its former human sacrifices, the name *Ge-Hinnom*, or *Gehenna*, became applied to the place of eternal torment. Four hundred yards from the south-

west angle of Mount Zion, the valley, hitherto wide and sloping, turns suddenly and steeply down to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, contracting to a narrow defile. A little below En-Rogel it joins the ravine of the Kedron, or Valley of Jehoshaphat, below Ophel, beyond the south-east corner of Mount Moriah.

The next place given by Joshua, in tracing the frontier

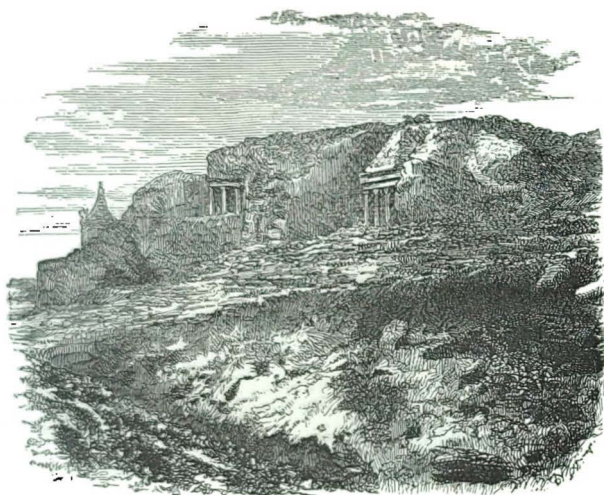


ANCIENT SEPULCHRES IN THE VALLEY OF HINNOM.

of the two tribes, is *En-Rogel*. This has been generally placed at Bir-Eyub, or "Job's Well," a little way down the Kedron Valley, in the King's Gardens, and south of Siloam, though others claim for it the Fountain of the Virgin, at the foot of Ophel and north of Siloam. The question has been set at rest by the discovery that the ledge of rock leading down to the Fountain of the Virgin, in which steep steps are cut, is still called by the resident Bedouin of Siloam Ez Zehwele, the exact equivalent of

the stone *Zohemoth*. There can, therefore, be no question but that the Virgin's Fountain is En-Rogel. En-Rogel is twice mentioned incidentally in history. Here Jonathan and Ahimaaz remained concealed for information when David fled from Absalom; and here Adonijah held his feast by the stone of *Zohemoth*, on his futile attempt to seize the crown from Solomon.

The next boundary mark is *En-Shemesh*, "the fountain



VALLEY OF JEHOSEPHAT.

of the Sun." If we take the northern line, this would be Ain Haud, a well-known halting-place below Bethany, on the road down to Jericho. If we take the more southerly line by the Valley of the Kedron, it would probably be the Fount of St. Saba, by the well-known Convent of Marsaba, in the Wilderness of Judæa. This spring is one of the very few, and the only one of importance in the Wady Nar or *Kedron*, till it reaches the Dead Sea, at the north end of which the frontier line began. But

the northern line has the weight of evidence in its favour.

Several other places in the thickly-peopled district of Benjamin are mentioned in Scripture, of which we have no certain identification. *Bahurim* must have been on the south border, between En-Rogel and En-Shemesh. By it David passed down as he was reviled by Shimei; and here Jonathan and Ahimaaz were hid by a woman



DIR-EYUB.

when their escape was detected by Absalom (2 Sam. xvi., xvii.). Here Phaltiel bid farewell to Michal when David demanded her back.

Gallim must have been near Bahurim, and near Jerusalem on the east. Here Phaltiel lived (1 Sam. xxv. 44); and it is mentioned by Isaiah as on the march of Sennacherib, close to Anathoth: "Lift up thy voice, O daughter of Gallim: cause it to be heard unto Laish, O poor Anathoth. Madmenah is removed; the inhabitants of Gebim gather themselves to flee. As yet shall

he remain at Nob" (Isa. x. 30-32). As we know all the other places are named in topographical order, we may place *Madmenah* and (*Gebim* between Anathoth and Nob. To the site of the former we have no clue. *Gebim* is probably the village of El-Isawiyeh, the position of which, two miles north of Jerusalem, meets all the required conditions.

Two places remain to be noticed in this immediate



BETHANY.

connection, neither of them once referred to in the Old Testament, but which have since, from the incidental connection of one of them with a single family, become household words in Christendom—*Bethany* and *Bethphage*. Of Bethphage, "the house of figs," no trace has been discovered. It must have been very near Bethany and probably a little to the east of it. The village remained to the times of Eusebius, Jerome, and Origen.

Bethany, on the contrary, has continued beyond ques-

tion. On the eastern slope of Mount Olivet, screened from sight of Jerusalem by the crest of the hill, stands the little mountain hamlet, containing little more than twenty houses, scattered irregularly in a labyrinth of narrow lanes and ruinous walls: a shrivelled and decaying place. Apart from its associations, there is nothing to attract or interest in the view of Bethany, or, as it is now called, "Lazariyeh." The gardens that surround it scarcely deserve the name. There are a few clumps of fig-trees, and gnarled old olive-trees sparsely dot the rocky soil above to the crest of the Mount of Olives. But the crumbling and ruined lines of stones—the traces of the terraces by which every inch of the soil was once cultivated—as well as the shattered walls of the village itself, with large Jewish-dressed stones frequently inserted in the modern structures, remind us of earlier and better days. Its name, too, Bethany, "the house of dates," recalls the former abundance of the date-palm, where now it has utterly disappeared; but the feathery crest of which must once have waved along the sheltered road by the base of the hill, and supplied, by their long leaf-stems, a carpet, for the triumphal entry of the Son of David in the Holy City.

With His earthly sojourn that village is almost as closely bound up as is His own city in Galilee. What Capernaum was to Him there, Bethany was in Judæa. Here dwelt His dearest friends—Lazarus and his sisters. Hither He was accustomed to retire after His daily labours in the Temple. Here, in the house of Simon the leper, Mary anointed His feet with precious ointment, and wiped them with her hair; here He wept by the grave of His friend, and crowned the long series of His miracles of mercy by raising him from the dead and presenting him to his sorrowing sisters. Hence He set out on His last entry into Jerusalem—the triumphal procession to the cross; and close by, though out of sight

of the village, His feet last touched the earth, and, with arms stretched out to bless, the cloud received Him from the sight of His gazing disciples.

As in all other parts of the Holy Land, so in Bethany, localities have been found for every Gospel incident. The house of Simon the leper, of Lazarus, and especially his tomb, are shown to every traveller. The tomb is a deep vault, dug out of the rock, to which there is access by a steep staircase. It is in the middle of the village, and most unlike the character and situation of Jewish sepulchres. But there are innumerable spots close to the village where the tomb may have been. At least, we are certain it was not far off. But, apart from the question of holy places and their identity, there are three points of interest further to be noticed at Bethany: the road to Jerusalem, the view from the place itself, and the site of the Ascension.

Though there are three paths which lead to the Holy City, there can be no question but that the triumphal entry was by that round the southern base of Olivet. Paths, like wells, are in the East the most unchanging of human institutions. It is little more than a mile and a half—fifteen furlongs. Bethany stands in a shallow hollow, scooped out of the shoulder of the hill. The path follows this till the descent begins at a turn where the first view of the Temple is caught. First appeared the castles and walls of the City of David; and immediately afterwards the glittering roofs of the Temple, and the gorgeous royal arcade of Herod, with its long range of battlements overhanging the southern edge of Moriah. Then burst forth the shout of "Hosanna;" and at that moment the national pride of the disciples impelled them to exclaim, "See what manner of stones and what buildings are here!"

Not so easily identified, but scarcely less certain, is the site of the Ascension, on a little platform, as far

from Jerusalem as Bethany, but between the two, retired from the latter by the little brow above the village, and shut out from Jerusalem by the ridge of Olivet. It certainly was not on the crest of the hill where modern tradition places it; for that is not as far as Bethany, and, from its conspicuous and exposed situation, wholly inappropriate. It is on the hidden and secluded slope, just above the village of Lazarus, that we may meditate undisturbed on the crowning act of our redemption.

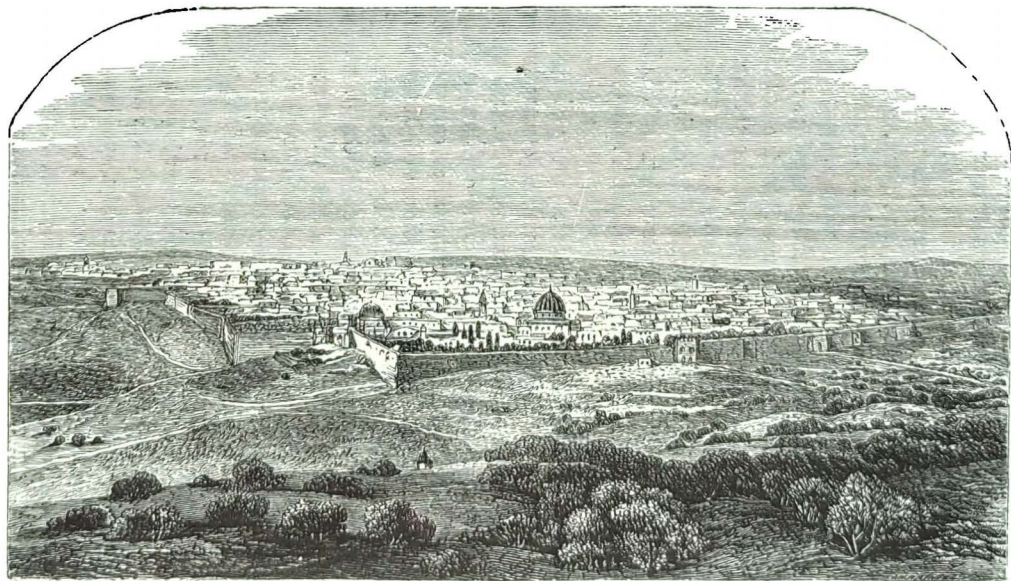
CHAPTER VI.

JERUSALEM.

Jerusalem—Natural position and strength—Surrounding hills—Valley of Hinnom and Kedron—Tyropeon—City of David—Steps—Mount Moriah—Ancient walls—Mount Zion—Salem or City of David—Upper City—*Muristan*—Akra—Xystus—Mount Moriah—Araunah's Threshing-floor—Ophel—Its walls and towers—Bezetha—Tower of Hippicus—Palace of Herod—South line of city way—First wall—Second wall—Gate Gennath—Third wall—Gates of Jerusalem—Roads from Jericho—from Joppa—from the north—from Bethlehem—Platform of the Temple—Dome of the Rock—Caves—Site of the Altar and Holy Place—Natural form of the Mount—Its ridge—East wall of the Platform—Amount of *débris*—Golden Gate—Size of stones—South wall—Triple Gate—Solomon's Stables—Royal Porch—Robinson's Arch—West wall—Wilson's Arch—Tower of Antonia—Pool of Bethesda—*Mosque of El Aksa*—Mosque of Jesus—Crypts of the Temple—Dome of the Roll—Solomon's Porch—Water supply—Solomon's Pools and Aqueducts—Upper Pool of Gihon—Lower Pool of Gihon—Pool of Hezekiah—En-Rogel—Fountain of the Virgin—King's Pool—Pool of Siloam—Village of Siloam—*Bir Eyub*—Subterranean outlets—Tombs—Tomb of David—Aceldama—Tombs in the Valley of Jehoshaphat—Gethsemane—Tombs of the Kings—of the Judges—Church of the Holy Sepulchre—Sieges of Jerusalem—Alexander the Great—Antiochus—The Maccabees—Pompey—Herod—Titus—Adrian—*Ælia Capitolina*—Constantine—Julian—Chosroes II.—Khalif Omar—Crusades—Baldwin—Saladin.

THE City of Jerusalem, said by the monkish writers to be the centre of the earth, is emphatically the centre of Palestine. It is exactly on the watershed of the Mediterranean and the Dead Sea, 2,650 feet above the level of the former: a truly mountain city. Built on the very backbone of the country—the summit of that long ridge which traverses the Holy Land from north to south, and only approachable by wild mountain roads—the position of the city was one of great natural strength. Two bold spurs project southward, side by side, from the mountain plateau, the westernmost projecting further and slightly towering above its sister.

Between the plateau, on which the city stands, and



MODERN JERUSALEM, FROM THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

the great tract of Benjamin to the north of it, treated of in the last chapter, there is no natural ravine worthy of mention; the only barrier is found in a few slight depressions, where only after rains is there any water. The city itself is not on the highest peak, as all the other sides rise somewhat higher than the plateau on which the city stands. On the west, a long ridge is slightly higher, without any special elevations: to the south is the "Hill of Evil Counsel," to the south-east the "Mount of Offence," on the east the "Mount of Olives," and to the north the hill "Scopus." This position explains the illustration in Ps. cxxv. 2: "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even for ever."

But the great natural strength of the position lies in the ravines which separate it from these surrounding hills. The whole of the table land is rocky, and rifted by deep gullies, through which flow no constant stream, but only the intermittent torrents which carry off the winter rains. The twin hills of Zion and Moriah are enclosed, excepting on the north, by the ravines of *Hinnom* and of *Kedron*. They rise to the north of Jerusalem, very near each other. The westernmost—the *Valley of Hinnom*, *Wady er Rahabi*, or *Jehenna*—runs southward for a mile and a quarter, skirting the city of David to the west, then turns suddenly to the east, and, passing through a deep gorge, joins the *Kedron* at *Bir Eyub*, a deep well, south-east of the city. The *Valley of Kedron* or *Jehoshaphat*, *Wady en Nâr*, beginning to the north of the city, runs eastward for a mile and a half, and then makes a sharp bend southward, skirting the Mount Moriah, separating it from the Mount of Olives, and rapidly descends, till, at its junction with the Valley of Hinnom, it is 670 feet below its original starting-point.

A third ravine, the Tyropæon of the ancients (*i.e.*, the Valley of the Cheesemongers, or, perhaps, the Tyrians), rises well up in the plateau, passes through the heart of the city, dividing Bezetha and Mount Moriah from the Upper City and the City of David, and then enters the basin formed by the confluence of the other two, near the Pool of Siloam and the King's Garden. From that point the united gorge pursues a south-east course, under the name of the Kedron, passing the Convent of Marsaba, and enters the basin of the Dead Sea. Thus we see that these gorges, in their passage round the city, completely separate it from the surrounding district on three sides: east, south, and west.

The sides of the valleys of Kedron and Hinnom are now encumbered with rubbish; but they are still sufficiently steep to be difficult of access, and every here and there the rock has been scarped, or cut perpendicularly downwards, to give additional security. This is shown when the *débris* has been cleared away, as at the south-west corner of Mount Zion, where, in the English cemetery, the steep and much-worn steps, hewn in the side of the rock, are exposed. They are alluded to when David, in his siege of the Jebusites, proclaimed: "Whosoever getteth *up to the gutter* and smiteth the Jebusites . . . he shall be chief and captain" (2 Sam. v. 8). Further east are the well-known steps of *Nehemiah*, spoken of in Neh. iii. 15: "The wall of the pool of Siloah by the king's garden, and *unto the stairs that go down from the city of David.*" Here we have the exact position of these steps: west of the Gate of the Fountain and of the King's Gardens, which are admitted to be in the valley leading down to the Pool of Siloam, where they may be seen and trodden to this day, on the steep sides of Ophel.

On the eastern hill, Mount Moriah, once stood the Temples of Solomon, of Zerubbabel, and Herod, with

the Tower of Antonia and the Pool of Bethesda behind them ; and on the western hill, or Mount Zion, 120 feet higher than Moriah, was the old city and fortress of the Jebusites, afterwards the City of David ; and here, in later or New Testament times, was the Palace of Herod, the three towers of Hippicus, Phasaelis, and Mariamne, and the Upper City of Josephus.

The city of Jerusalem, surrounded on three sides by such steep precipices, undoubtedly owes its security to them : for, before the invention of gunpowder, though commanded, as we have seen, by higher eminences, it was effectually shielded from attack, and only exposed on the north side, where there is no natural break between the rock on which it was built and the great ridge or plateau behind. This quarter was consequently always defended by the best fortifications the people could build. Though the city was repeatedly taken and destroyed, yet new walls, on the northern side, were constantly put in the place of those which had been swept away. How different would have been the fate of Jerusalem, if it had been on the coast, or on a fertile plain ! Its site might have changed after each catastrophe. But " Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together " (Ps. cxxii. 3). " He built His sanctuary like high palaces, like the earth which He hath established for ever " (Ps. lxxviii. 69).

Only on the north, then, could the city be extended : and to determine its northern limits is the most difficult task in studying the ancient topography of Jerusalem : for the line of walls did not depend upon the form of the ground, but solely upon the will of the builders. There were, besides, in the height of its prosperity, three lines of wall, at a considerable distance from each other, the results of successive enlargements of the place. In the lapse of centuries the old architectural structures disappeared and gave place to others,

often built on the site of the old ones. All the assaults against the city were made on the north side, from those of Sennacherib, when he halted at Nob, and of Nebuchadnezzar, down to those of the Saracens and Turks.

DIVISIONS OF THE CITY.

Leaving for the present the exact position of the northern wall indeterminate, we can yet trace, with tolerable accuracy, the divisions of the Holy City, as it existed in the Scripture periods. These were: 1st, *Mount Zion* or the *Upper City*; 2nd, *Akra* or the *Lower City*; 3rd, *Moriah* or the *Temple Area*; 4th, *Ophel*; 5th, *Bezetha*.

1st, *Mount Zion*. This was the highest and the largest of the hills on which the city stood. Only a portion of it is comprised within the modern walls, which have shrunk northward, so as to leave the southern part of the ridge outside. The crest of Zion is more than 300 feet above the Kedron at En-Rogel. It was the first spot in Jerusalem occupied by buildings. Probably the *Salem* of Melchizedek, it was certainly the *Jebus* of the Jebusites, and then the *City of David* (2 Sam. v. 7), the *Upper City* or Upper Market of Josephus. Here David built his palace, and for more than a thousand years the kings and the foreign rulers who succeeded him resided here. In it David constructed the Royal Sepulchre, where he and fourteen of his successors were laid in the grave. Zion was the last spot which held out against Titus and the Romans. When the Temple fortress had been stormed, the last remnant of the Jews crossed the Tyropæon by the bridge, and held the City of David and the old palace of their kings till the very last, and perished among its ruins.

It may be asked whether this be the same as the City of David, and whether that were not rather to

the north-west of the Temple area, the same as the Akra or Lower City of Josephus. Sir. C. Warren has very ably discussed this question, into which, however, it is not necessary to enter, as it but slightly affects the topography of the city generally. Sir C. Warren has shown that there are strong reasons for believing the identity of *David's Zion* and the Akra of Josephus, which he places midway between the Temple area and the Church of the Holy Sepulchre: taking the *Upper City* of Josephus to be the same with the modern Zion.

Taking, however, the modern Zion as identical with the City of David *and* the Upper City of Josephus, its limits are clear. The researches of Sir C. Wilson and Sir C. Warren have shown that the Tyropæon Valley has been filled up to the depth of 120 feet between Zion and Moriah, at the south-west angle of the Temple area; and that the rock here must have been inaccessible, till the bridge was thrown across the ravine, very near the Dung Gate, which is the south-east gate in the wall of Zion. Zion and Akra were fronting each other, we are told by Josephus, separated by a valley, at which the rows of houses terminated. This valley must, therefore, have bounded Zion to the north. No trace of it appears on the surface; but the excavations of the Palestine Exploration Fund have shown that, underneath the rubbish over which stand the modern buildings, there is a distinct valley—in fact, the upper portion of the Tyropæon—commencing near the Pool of Hezekiah, within the Jaffa Gate, a few yards to the north of the citadel, and running due east towards the north-west angle of Mount Moriah.

This valley crosses what is now called the Muristan, a wide vacant space within the city, now merely an arable field, but once the site of the Hospice of the Knights of St. John, and of the Convent of St. Mary. Thence it enters what is recognised as the Valley of the

Tyropæon, nearly opposite the Dome of the Rock, or the crest of Mount Moriah. The beginning of this western branch of the Tyropæon can be distinctly seen by the Jaffa Gate, where the old massive tower of Herod—the lower courses of which are probably of the date of David or Solomon—is founded on a scarpèd rock, which rises forty feet above the bottom of the ditch, and is the rocky crest on which, Josephus tells us, the three great towers were built.

2nd, *Akra*. The valley we have traced, now filled in with rubbish, evidently separated the Akra from the Upper City. [Whether the Akra of Josephus be, as Sir C. Warren holds, identical with the Zion of David, does not affect this question.] The Akra is not mentioned in Scripture. Josephus tells us it was separated also from the Temple Mount by a broad valley, across which was another hill, not so high. This valley, which ran from north to south, was filled up by the Asmonean princes, in order to connect the city with the Temple; and to supply material, they levelled the top of Akra. The Akra, then, would comprise the greater part of the present Christian quarter, north of the Jaffa Gate, including the Church of the Sepulchre and the western part of the Mohammedan quarter.

The name *Millo* frequently occurs in connection with ancient Jerusalem. It is mentioned when David took the city from the Jebusites (2 Sam. v. 9). It was one of the great works of Solomon (1 Kings ix. 15, &c.). Hezekiah, too, “repaired Millo, in the city of David;” and here King Joash was murdered. It is difficult to say what Millo was. The most satisfactory explanation is, that it was an old Canaanitish name, applied to the fortress or “keep” of Mount Zion: the *Akra* of Maccabees but not of Josephus, the mound and fortifications of which were razed by Simon Maccabæus, after its capture from Antiochus.



JEWISH QUARTER.

Silla, spoken of in connection with Millo (2 Kings xii. 20), is quite unknown.

3rd, *Mount Moriah*. We now cross the ravine of the Tyropæon by what was called the *Xystus*, a strip of building and ground on the west of the ravine, lower than the crag of Zion. Several viaducts, or bridges, spanned the ravine, two of which—Robinson's Arch and Wilson's Arch—have been discovered south of the *Xystus*, which lay in the upper part of the valley. *Moriah* yields even less evidence on its surface of its original form than does the western promontory of David's city. It is not so much a separate hill as the centre and highest portion of the eastern ridge. Originally there was a mound of rock in the centre of this ridge, having only a narrow platform on the crest: the old threshing-floor of Araunah. Round this central platform rock, now called the *Sakhra*, Solomon raised a vast platform, supported partly by massive piers and arches, tier above tier, and partly by walls of stupendous masonry, filled in with stones and earth; and the whole sub-structure largely utilised for tanks and reservoirs. The immense platform-wall of the Harem Area, as it is now called, still exists, and enables us at once to identify the general positions of the sacred buildings, and the extent of *Moriah* on three sides. To the north it was separated by another valley, now filled up, from *Bezetha*, by which was the deep reservoir or *Pool of Bethesda*. At the north-west angle was the Tower of *Antonia*, the military key of the position.

It was on Mount *Moriah* that Abraham offered up his son Isaac and the typical ransom was found which so clearly set forth the Christian doctrine of substitution. The suggestion of Mount Gerizim as the theatre of this event and of the Lord's promise to the Patriarch cannot be admitted as according with the details of the narrative. But the immediate cause of its selection as

the site of the future Temple was the fact of the destroying angel in the pestilence here staying his hand over the threshing-floor of Araunah the Jebusite, in response to the prayers and sacrifice of David (1 Chron. xxi. 14-27). It is evident that, up to this time, Jerusalem had not extended east of the Tyropæon.

4th, *Ophel*. This name was applied to the southern low projecting shoulder of Moriah, beyond the south wall of the Temple platform. This ridge extends south to the Pool of Siloam, at the junction of the Kedron and the Tyropæon, terminating in the cliff that overhangs the pool, and which forms the apex of a long triangle. The whole of it is now outside the city walls, and is terraced for gardens, as the descent southwards is very steep.

Ophel seems to have been enclosed in the city about the time of Solomon, or soon after, as we read (2 Chron. xxvii. 3) that King Jotham "on the wall of Ophel built much;" and there could scarcely have been very much extension of the city in the period between Solomon and Jotham. Afterwards we read of large extensions of the city by Manasseh, and that he "compassed about Ophel, and raised it up a very great height" (2 Chron. xxxiii. 14). Nehemiah also included it, and assigned it as the convenient residence for the Nethinims, or Temple servants (Neh. iii. 27).

The eastern wall of Ophel has been discovered by Sir C. Warren, at a depth of seventy feet beneath the surface—so vast is the accumulation of rubbish—being a continuation, at a very oblique angle, of the east wall of the Temple platform. In these discoveries there is interesting illustration of the minute allusions in the Sacred History.

Sir C. Warren suggests that Ophel may have been the site of King Solomon's palace, evidently at a lower level than the Temple, and, therefore, King Jotham

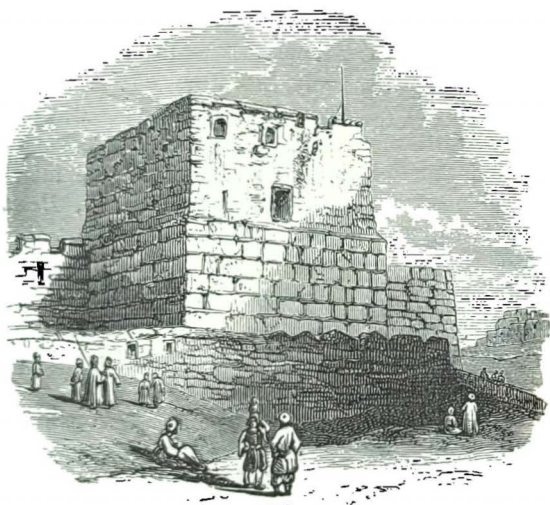
may still have built much on the wall. Manasseh raised it up to "a very great height," and the buried portion is still seventy feet high, which our explorers have traced, and have measured a great tower of drafted stones, which is evidently that of which Nehemiah speaks: "The great tower that lieth out, even unto the wall of Ophel" (iii. 27). Sir C. Warren also remarks on masonry let into the wall to strengthen it, evidently subsequent to its first erection, and yet of the same antique Jewish dressing: thus evidencing the additions of Jotham and Manasseh.

5th, *Bezetha*. This, the latest addition to the city, is not mentioned in Holy Scripture. It is very precisely described by Josephus, who tells us that, the city gradually overflowing, the inhabitants crept beyond the walls; and the quarter north of the Temple made so considerable an advance, that a fourth hill, *Bezetha*, *i.e.*, new town, was added. He also states that it was separated from Antonia (the fort at the north-west angle of the Temple platform) by a deep trench, excavated in the rock, to strengthen the Tower of Antonia, and render it less accessible. He adds that *Bezetha* was the highest of all the hills, and alone overshadowed the Temple on the north. These particulars identify it beyond a shadow of doubt. It forms the greater part of the Mohammedan quarter of modern Jerusalem: a broad, irregular ridge, separated from Moriah by the fosse and great Pool of Bethesda, from Akra by the Hasmonian Valley, and with a rugged, precipitous descent on the east to the Valley of Jehoshaphat or Kedron. The northern part, now a Moslem cemetery, is outside the walls. From Mount Scopus (*Nob*, of Old Testament) a good view of the Mosque of Omar may be had. This view is lost as we descend the hill, being just cut off by the higher ground of *Bezetha*. It is important to bear in mind that *Bezetha*, though in-

habited, was not surrounded by a wall till eight years after the Crucifixion of our Lord, when Herod Agrippa fortified it. Had it been part of the earlier city, the traditionary site of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre would have been absolutely impossible, as this must have been within the third wall.

WALLS,

Of the ancient walls of Jerusalem few traces are left

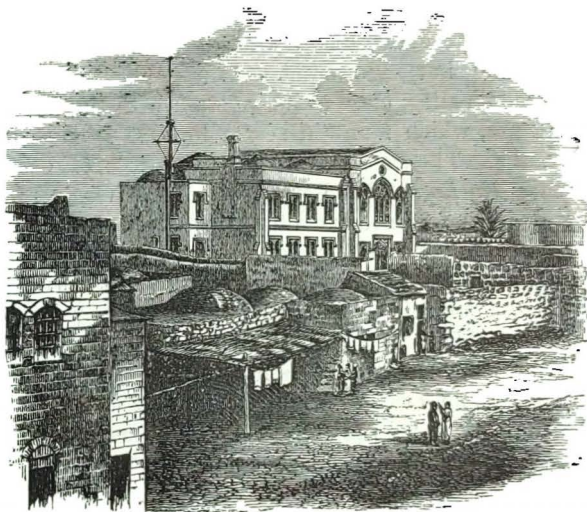


TOWER OF HIPPICUS.

above ground. The most interesting remaining building of the Upper City, indeed the only erection above ground which survived the destruction by Titus, is the *Tower of Hippicus*, by the Jaffa Gate, built by Herod the Great on the crest of the hill; and which Titus left as a specimen of the fortifications over which he had triumphed. It stood at the north-west angle of the wall of the Upper City. The Crusaders called it the "*Tower*

of David." It still forms part of the fortifications, as it has done in every re-building of the walls.

On the open space near it, on the highest point of the City of David, have been erected the neat English Church, with its parsonage attached, and other Mission buildings, belonging to the London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews. The services in the church are celebrated in several languages, to meet



ENGLISH CHURCH AND MISSION BUILDINGS ON MOUNT ZION.

the requirements of Jewish converts and other Protestant residents.

Beyond this, to the east, stood two similar massive towers, *Phasaelis* and *Mariamne*, but their sites have not yet been rediscovered. These towers were in the first wall, which went thence to the *Xystus*, the place of public assembly, connected at its southern end with the Temple by a bridge, probably the very one lately

discovered by Sir C. Wilson, west of the Dome of the Rock, known now as Wilson's Arch.

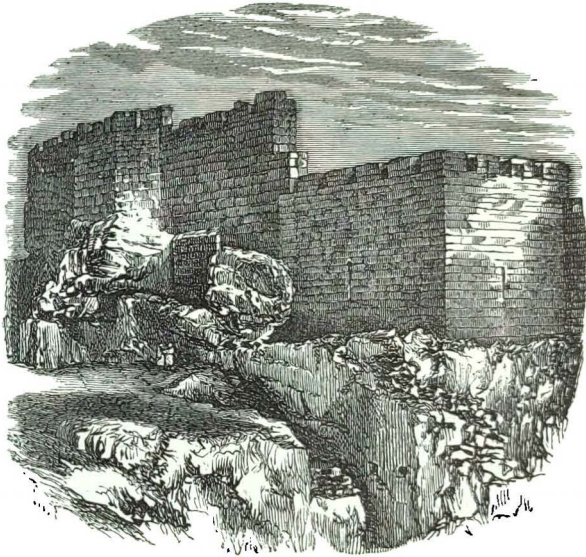
Adjoining the *Xystus*, and near to the wall at this spot, was the *Palace of Herod*. This was probably on the site of the Palace of David, and seems, in Herod's time, to have been extended right across the hill to the western towers. To this palace our Lord was sent by Pilate to be examined before Herod.

From Hippicus, southward, the wall seems to have extended far beyond the present circuit to the very edge of the ravine of Hinnom, where is now the English school and burying-ground. It thence crossed the Tyropæon Valley, close to its junction with the Kedron at Siloam, which fountain seems to have been within the walls. Thence it embraced the whole of Ophel, leaving *En-Rogel*, the Fountain of the Virgin, just outside it, and thence it continued northwards, forming the east wall of the Temple platform, by the Golden Gate, on its present lines, to the north-east corner of the Temple area.

Within this was a still older rampart, running on the west side of the Tyropæon and making the Upper City defensible, even after the capture of the Temple. This wall embraced the old fortress of Jebus, the "City of David," strictly so called.

The *second wall* is more difficult to trace. It embraced *Akra* or the Lower City, beginning at the *Gate Gennath*, or *Garden Gate*, of the King's Palace. Dr. Robinson argues with great force that this wall commenced very near the Tower of Hippicus, as it was there Titus made his assault, *after* he had taken the second wall. The Pool of Hezekiah must have been within it, and thence, after embracing *Akra*, it terminated at the north-west angle of the Tower of Antonia. We know, from Josephus, that no attack was ever made against the Upper City until the second wall and Lower City had

been taken : therefore it must have protected the whole Upper City. The conclusions of Dr. Robinson have been vehemently impugned by the upholders of the traditional sacred site of the Sepulchre ; because, if his theory be true—and it seems to be in accordance with history and topography—the Church of the Holy Sepulchre is far within its limits, and, therefore, cannot be the place where our Saviour suffered “without the gate.”



NORTH-WEST ANGLE OF THE WALL OF JERUSALEM.

The *third wall* is of less interest here, as it was not completed till after the close of Scripture history. It commenced from the Tower Hippicus, and ran north to the Tower *Psephinus*, on a more commanding site. This fort has not yet been identified. It then passed opposite the monument of Helena, now known as the Tombs of the Kings, and then by the “Royal Caverns” to the

Tower of the Corner, by the Fuller's Tomb. These sites are not ascertained with any certainty; but the natural course may easily be traced on the spot, and the Tower of the Corner must have been on the crest of the ridge, where the Valley of the Kedron, after flowing east, makes a sharp turn southward. The wall thence ran southward by the crest of the ridge till it reached the Temple wall at its north-east extremity. This outline shows how vastly greater was the area of the ancient than of the modern city, both on the north and south.

GATES.

Of course the *gates* are much less easy to determine than the outlines of the walls. No less than twenty-three names of gates are given in the Bible, including those of the Temple, though some of them may be different names of the same gate. Nehemiah gives nine in order, in the account of the rebuilding, and names two others afterwards. Few of these can be identified. *The Fountain Gate* was doubtless on the south, near Siloam. It appears to be that by which Zedekiah attempted to escape: "By the way of the gate between two walls, which is by the king's garden" (Jer. lii. 7). The two walls may have been the inner wall of the City of David and the outer first wall. "The *Gate of the Valley*, before the Dragon Well" (Neh. ii. 13), was opposite the Fountain of Gihon, at the north-west end of Zion, probably a little north of the modern Jaffa Gate. Dr. Porter suggests its identity with the *Gate Gennath* and the *Water Gate* of Josephus. The *Dung Gate* is placed by tradition at the south-east of the City of David.

ROADS.

Though the gates were so numerous, the approaches to the city were but few. There seem to have been

but four main approaches to the city: 1st, from the Jordan Valley by Jericho and the Mount of Olives, sweeping round its southern base. This was identical with the modern road to Jericho and the Jordan, and was that invariably used from the east, and frequently from the north. By it David fled from Absalom. By it our Lord repeatedly came to Jerusalem, not only in His last journey from Peræa, when He raised Lazarus, but in other journeys from Galilee (Luke xviii. 35). It was also used by Pekah, King of Israel, on his return to Samaria after his victory over Ahaz (2 Chron. xxviii. 15).

The road from Joppa and the west was not that usually traversed by modern travellers, but lay a little to the north of it, ascending by the pass of Beth-horon, described in the last chapter, as far as Gibeon, whence it turned to the south by Gibeah and Ramah, and descended from the north upon the city. Though seldom used by Europeans, this track is still followed by the native muleteers, and is less steep than what is known familiarly as the Jaffa road. The latter passed by Kirjath-jearim, but does not seem ever to have been used by large bodies of men, whether from the south, Philistia, or from Cæsarea and the north.

The modern road towards Samaria by Bireh (*Beeroth*), which is invariably followed by modern travellers, is also an ancient route. It was less adapted for the passage of armies than the others. It seems to have been that by which Ahaziah would have fled to Jerusalem, when Jehu slew him "by the way of the garden house," *i.e.*, *Engannim*, the modern Jenin. By this road, too, our Lord must have passed when, wearied with His journey, He rested by Jacob's Well, outside the gate of Shechem.

There was a fourth road, due south, to Bethlehem and Hebron, the course of which is followed still, and

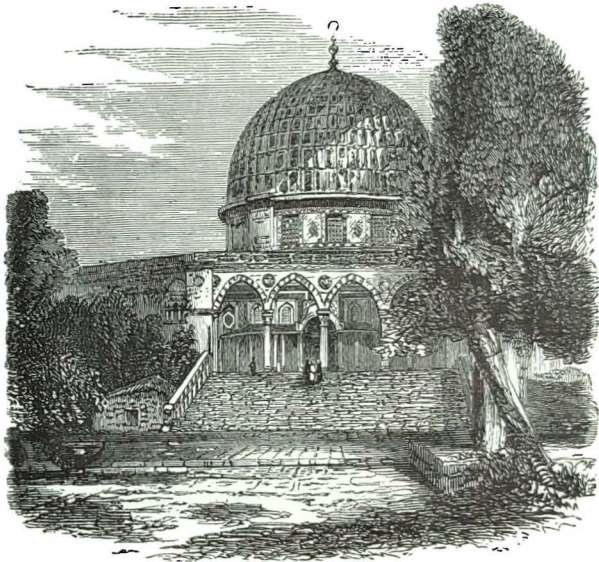
which, like the others, was carefully constructed and paved by Solomon. Along this road, tradition says, he often drove his chariots to Bethlehem. Though for centuries no wheel carriage has ever passed on a road in Palestine, yet on all these lines there are occasional traces of the old pavements, some of which may date back to the time of Solomon.

SITE OF THE TEMPLE.

Of all the buildings of the Jerusalem of the Bible, scarce a recognisable trace remains above ground outside of the Temple platform. Eleven sieges and destructions have utterly erased all that was visible of the city of the Maccabees and Nehemiah, still more of the city of the Jewish monarchy, of David and of Solomon. The Palestine Exploration Committee has brought to light various subterranean works, which we may glance at in studying the water supply. But it may be well to examine more particularly the Temple area and the huge platform on Mount Moriah. It is wholly beyond the scope of this volume to enter on the various views set forth by different writers as to these localities. Almost every author has had his own theory. But as many of these have been set at rest by the excavations and tunnels of Sir C. Wilson and Sir C. Warren, we shall not attempt more than to give a general view, such as seems to be best in accordance with the history and topography, without entering into the controversies which bristle round the subject.

The platform, now called *Haram esh Sherif*, is a vast artificial work, raising the area nearly to a level with the central rock, which we suppose to have been the site of Araunah's threshing-floor and of the altar of burnt-sacrifice in Solomon's Temple, now crowned with a magnificent dome, called the *Kubbet es Sakhra*, or Dome of the Rock. The platform is supported by

stupendous walls, built up from the slope of the hill on three sides. The enclosure is oblong, measuring 926 feet on its south face and 1,530 feet on its east side; the northern and western sides being respectively a little longer. We assume that Araunah's threshing-floor must have been close to the central Dome of the Rock, because threshing-floors in the East are invariably



DOME OF THE ROCK.

placed on the ridges of hills and in the most exposed positions, in order that the corn and chaff may catch any breath of wind when they are thrown up into the air by the shovel. "They became like the chaff of the summer threshing-floor, and the wind carried them away."

There is nothing extraordinary in the shape or isolated position of the sacred rock, which is simply the central

peak of the rugged hill. Beneath it is a cave, to which there is an entrance by steps at the south-eastern side of the rock. The cave is similar to others in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. It may have been artificially enlarged, but the marks of chiselling, if any, are concealed by the plaster. In the centre of its roof is a cylindrical opening penetrating to the top of the rock, like the mouth of a cistern; but its sides are not furrowed by the marks of draw-ropes. On the floor of the cave is a small slab of marble, which the Mohammedans call the "Well of the Spirits." It is possible that this cave was the receptacle for the offal of the sacrifices and connected by a system of sluices with the water supply, which was so arranged as to carry off underground all the refuse of the burnt-offerings of the daily sacrifices as well as the blood, without its being seen: this we learn from the rabbinical commentaries. As will be noticed hereafter, Captain Warren, with great probability, assigns the Dome of the Rock, a little to the south-east of the Dome of the Rock, as the *exact spot* of the altar of burnt-offering.

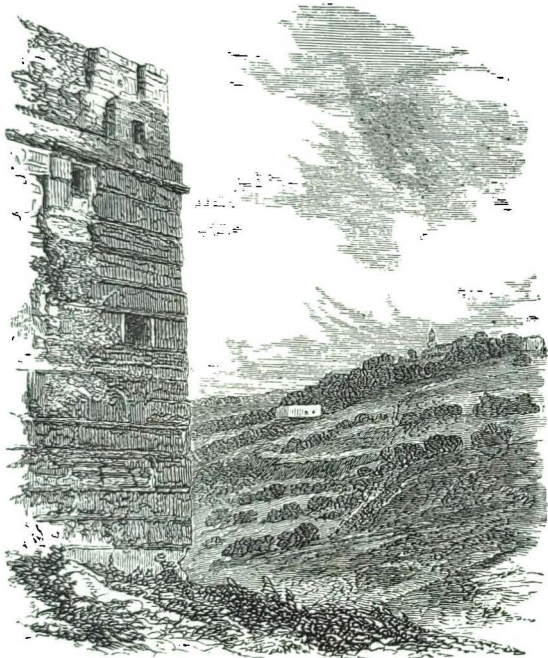
The position of the great altar being determined, we can easily fix approximately the site of the Holy Place and of the Holy of Holies. The Holy Place stood exactly west of the altar of burnt-sacrifice; and west of it, only accessible through it, was the Holy of Holies, separated off by the Veil of the Temple. These, therefore, probably stood exactly between the Kubbet es Sakhra and the west wall of the area, about a hundred yards north of the viaduct which spanned the Valley of the Tyropæon, and recently discovered by Sir C. Wilson, R.E.

Over the central rock now stands the magnificent Dome, said by the Mohammedans to have been erected by the Moslem chief Abd-el-Melek, but which may possibly have been an earlier Christian edifice. The

theory that it is the Church built by Constantine over the Holy Sepulchre seems sufficiently disposed of by Mr. Williams, in "The Holy City." During the Crusades, it was of course occupied as a Christian cathedral. It is a sumptuous building, richly adorned with marbles of various colours, many of which probably formed part of Herod's Temple. There are fifty-six pointed windows, filled with the richest stained glass, and the eye is dazzled and confused by the brilliancy of their colours and of the encaustic tiles with which the piers are sheathed. There is an inner circle of marble columns, of different sizes and fashions, evidently taken from earlier buildings, perhaps from the porticoes of Herod's Temple. The whole interior is richly gilded; and Arabic texts encircle the edge of the dome within, beautifully interlaced in Arabesque fashion.

The labours of Sir C. Wilson and Sir C. Warren, R.E., have enabled us to form an exact conception of what Mount Moriah was before Solomon commenced his vast works. They have shown us that the rocky Mount is one vast system of caverns and cisterns: that it is everywhere pierced by wells and honeycombed by reservoirs. Having obtained the height of the surface of the native rock in all the tanks of the Sanctuary, and having also measured the exact height of the rock along the foundation line of the platform wall on all sides, we have now a very exact description of the natural shape of Moriah. It is somewhat flattened at the top, and the ridge runs along from the north-west angle of the platform, nearly in a straight line, south-east by south, till it reaches the Triple Gate, about 100 yards west of the south-east angle of the platform, where it is 65 feet below the crest of the rock. East and west of the central ridge the rock slopes rapidly, so that the north-east angle is 162 feet, the south-east 163 feet, and the south-west 150 feet below the sacred

rock. This means that the platform has been raised on a vast sub-structure, which commences on all sides, excepting at the north-west junction of the ridge, 150 feet or more below the level of the summit. It would be absurd, therefore, to suppose that Solomon placed his Temple anywhere but on the central ridge, round



SOUTH-EAST ANGLE OF THE TEMPLE PLATFORM.

which he elevated this stupendous platform, nearly 1,000 by 1,600 feet, in order to accommodate the worshippers at the great festivals, and to enable all to see the sacrifice on the altar.

The east wall of the platform seems to have been always on the same site where first placed by Solomon,

and the greater part of the existing wall below ground to be his actual work. The wall has all the appearance of being a part of the very oldest work ; and here, moreover, the recent excavations have revealed to us the masons' marks on the buried stones of the foundations, painted in red vermilion, and which have been decided to be Phœnician, and, therefore, certainly older than



GOLDEN GATE.

the Captivity. These characters are found both at the north-east and south-east angles of this wall, which is more than 1,600 feet in length, though the northern portion of St. Stephen's Gate, and also the front of the Golden Gate, 1,020 feet from the south angle, slightly project. The existence of these Phœnician letters, buried for nearly three thousand years, is an interest-

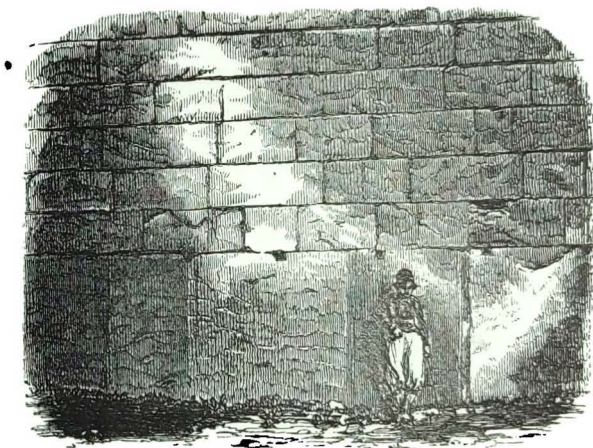
ing illustration of the fact mentioned in 1 Kings v. and 2 Chron. ii., of Hiram, King of Tyre, supplying Solomon with cunning workmen to direct the execution of the building of the Temple.

So enormous has been the mass of rubbish thrown down from the platform into the Kedron Valley, at the successive destructions of Jerusalem, that the *débris* is heaped against the wall to a depth varying from 30 feet at the Golden Gate, to 80 feet at the south-east angle, and 142 feet in the deep valley filled up near the north-east angle at St. Stephen's Gate. The result of the accumulation of this mass of material is, that the bed of the Kedron has been pushed 30 yards to the eastward, and raised 42 feet above its original level.

The most striking feature in the eastern wall is what is called the Golden Gate, with a double portal and semi-circular arches long since walled up. It is evidently a later insertion. Both Jews and Mohammedans here localise the scene of the Last Judgment,—an interesting coincidence, when we remember that it was probably in front of this gateway, now choked and crowded with tombs, that our Lord, standing on the slope of Olivet, described the events of the gathering of all nations before Him for judgment.

The stones of the eastern, as of all the platform walls, are of great size and accurate workmanship. The joints are close, and the finishing of the bevelling and facing is so clean and fine, that, when fresh from the hands of the builder, it must have produced the effect of gigantic relievo-panelling. The chief corner-stones are 20 feet long, and some are 6 feet in height, but are exceeded by some in the south wall, which are 23 feet long, and one 38 feet 9 inches long. "The foundation was of costly stones, even great stones; stones of ten cubits and stones of eight cubits" (1 Kings vii. 9, 10).

Equally amazing are the results of the excavations at the south wall of the platform. By the repeated sinking of shafts on the sloping face of Ophel, it is established that the south wall is buried for more than half its depth beneath an accumulation of rubbish, and that, if bared to its foundation, this wall would present an unbroken front of solid masonry, of nearly 1,000 feet long and 150 feet in height. The wall, as it now stands, with less than half that height emerging from



PART OF THE PLATFORM WALL OF THE TEMPLE.

the ground, has always been regarded as a marvel. What must it have been when entirely exposed to view, and the tall erections of the Temple towering over it? No wonder that prophets and psalmists should have rejoiced in the walls and bulwarks of the Temple; that simple peasants gazed on it with awe; and that Tacitus should have described it as "built after the fashion of a citadel." "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bul-

warks, consider her palaces ; that ye may tell it to the generation following " (Ps. xlviii. 13).

Three gates appear in the southern face, called the



CORNER GATE.

Double, Triple, and Single Gates. The Triple and the Double, or Hulda Gates, divide the wall into three nearly equal portions. At the Triple Gate the rock

comes nearly to the present surface, shelving rapidly to 90 feet at the south-east angle, and to an even greater depth under the rubbish at the south-west angle.

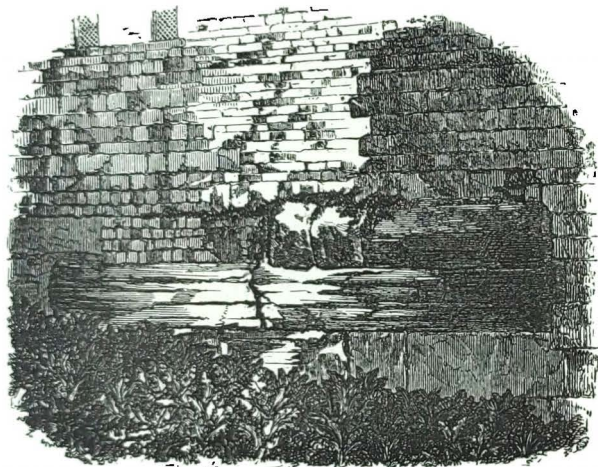
It seems that Solomon's Palace originally stood at this south end of the platform, reaching about 600 feet from the east angle to the Double Gate; and that the tradition is right which calls this Triple Gate, consisting of three arches, each 25 feet high and 14 wide, the entrance to Solomon's Stables, the great vaulted crypts which extend from these underneath the platform. Herod appears to have added the western third of the wall towards the Tyropæon, and on the whole he erected the magnificent colonnade, called the Royal Portico, which ran the whole length, with its pinnacles, 150 feet high, so that the spectator looked down 300 feet into the valley beneath.

The Temple of Solomon would appear then to have been an oblong of over 900 feet by 600, with his Palace, 600 by 300 feet, to the south of it: and a square of about 300 feet was added by Herod to complete the rectangle at the south-west, when the whole platform, including the site of the Palace, was thrown into the Temple area, thus making it co-extensive with the present Haram Area.

A very interesting relic of the old city may yet be seen above ground in the spring of a Cyclopean arch at the south-west angle, discovered by Dr. Robinson, and which evidently belongs to a bridge which once spanned the Tyropæon, at a height of 115 feet from its bottom. This bridge is mentioned by Josephus. Beneath this arch the excavations have brought to light, buried under more than a hundred feet of rubbish, the old pavement, with the stones of the Temple lying on it exactly as they fell; and beneath this, again, the stones of an earlier destroyed arch, and a conduit of fresh water, flowing in a hewn channel, underneath again. We read in

Josephus how Titus parleyed with the Jews on the viaduct, after he had taken the arch, and they had retreated to the City of David; and how, finally, rejecting all his overtures, they withdrew the temporary supports of the undermined arch, and, with its fall, all hope of any surrender was finally extinguished.

Following the course of the west wall, by the side of the buried Tyropæon Valley, for a little more than 600 feet, we come to a second series of arches, buried under



SPRING OF ROBINSON'S ARCH, SOUTH-WEST ANGLE OF TEMPLE AREA.

55 feet of rubbish, and discovered by Sir C. Wilson, with vast vaults, or reservoirs for water, underneath; and which arches formed another causeway, spanning the valley higher up, and attached to the western walls, undoubtedly of the very earliest date—the time of Solomon. Near this is the Wailing-place, the only part of the outside Temple walls which the Jews are permitted to approach, and where they gather every Friday in the narrow lane weeping and wailing, kissing

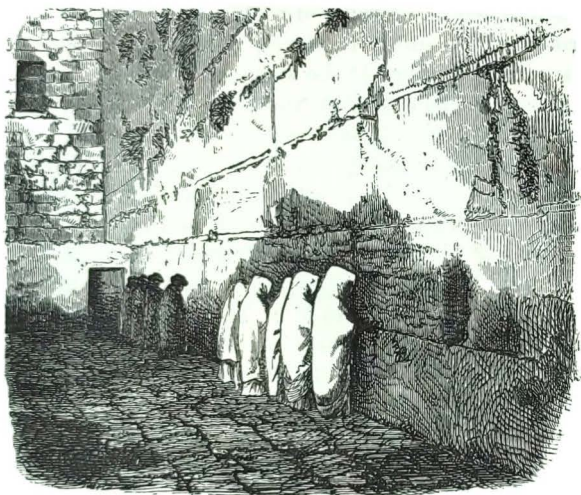
the stones which surrounded their fathers' sanctuary, and reciting prayers, psalms, and the prophecies of Isaiah.

Thence the wall runs north till it reaches the angle north-west of the area, the crest of the ridge, and where we suppose the great fortress of Antonia to have stood, guarding the Temple on this, its only accessible side, where the Palace of the Turkish Governor now stands. It is founded on a crown of rock, twenty feet above the level of the Temple platform, and has a conspicuous share in the history of the siege by Titus.

Running due east from the fortress by St. Stephen's Gate to the Kedron, has been discovered, filled in with rubbish, another valley, not at all visible on the modern surface, which divides Bezetha from Moriah. Across this valley was constructed the enormous *Pool of Bethesda*, now called Birket Israil, and which, from its being carefully cemented, was evidently constructed as a vast reservoir. It is 360 feet long, 130 broad, and 85 deep; the Sanctuary wall rising immediately on its south side, and having there a height of 100 feet. It communicates with two subterranean channels westward, by which it was supplied with water. It is easy to see how greatly this reservoir added to the northern defence of the Temple. Traces have been found of the piers which supported the arcades, under which the sick folk must have sat, waiting for the movement of the waters.

We have thus traced the outline of the platform. It only remains to observe that, beside the Great Dome over the central rock, there is a vast pile of building at the south-west angle of the area, called now the Mosque el Aksa, and where some would fix the site of Solomon's Temple, regardless of the fact that this is on an artificial platform, at the corner of Mount Moriah. It appears to have been a Christian church, built by Justinian, in honour of the Virgin, and is described by Procopius.

It was used by the Khalif Omar, after he took Jerusalem, as a place of prayer, but afterwards was allowed to fall into decay, and was almost rebuilt by the Saracens. During the Crusading kingdom it gave its name to the knights who held it, thence called the Knights Templar, who added a fine Transition Norman porch. It is 272 feet long by 184 wide, supported by forty-three columns,



JEW'S PLACE OF WAILING.

of every variety of marble and style, and, doubtless, from the wreck of previous buildings. It has a noble dome and several smaller chapels or mosques attached. To the east of El Aksa is a smaller mosque, called, strangely enough, by the Moslems the Mosque of Jesus; and under it is a crypt, in the middle of which is a stone niche, sculptured like a sarcophagus, and shown with great reverence as the cradle of Jesus.

This crypt opens into some of the other spacious

vaults, which, tier over tier, occupy the subterranean recesses beneath the platform. The capitals of the columns are often highly ornamented and beautifully carved, and attest, by their patterns and workmanship, their Phœnician or Solomonian origin.

Sir C. Warren is inclined to place the site of the great altar a little to the south-east of the Dome of the Rock, at what is called the Dome of the Roll, because, immediately below this, he has found vast tanks, with a very complete system of drainage and sluices, so that water was brought into the tank immediately below, which communicates by a perforation, supposed to be behind the altar, with the surface, and then, by sluicing all the offal and blood, could be carried by a hidden tunnel far down the Kedron Valley. His arguments, which seem satisfactory, are quite in accordance with the general plan here laid down.

Solomon's Porch (John x. 23, &c.) was a magnificent cloister, running along the whole east wall of the area by the Golden Gate, and commanding a noble view of the Kedron Valley, and the Mount of Olives opposite.

WATER SUPPLY.—FOUNTAINS, WELLS, AND AQUEDUCTS.

The water supply of Jerusalem was most elaborate, and its examination reveals most to us of the old Jerusalem of David and Solomon. What the *cloaca maxima* is to Rome—the record and relic of her earlier kings—that the conduits are to the capital of Israel. Tacitus, the Roman historian, speaks of Jerusalem as a fountain of never-failing waters and as mountains hollowed beneath the surface into cisterns. The supply was threefold: from springs, tanks, and aqueducts. The supply culminated under Mount Moriah, into which, to this day, the lower of the three aqueducts from Solomon's Pools, already described (p. 71), still

conveys a never-failing stream. The probable supply from *Nephtoah*, Lifta, has also been noticed (p. 124).

Then there was the *Pool of Gihon*, just to the south of the Jaffa road, now the Birket Mamilla. Here Solomon was anointed king, when "Zadok the priest and Nathan the prophet caused Solomon to ride upon King David's mule, and brought him to Gihon. And Zadok the priest took an horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon" (1 Kings i. 38, 39). It is spoken of by Isaiah, who went forth to meet Ahaz "at the end of the conduit of the upper pool in the highway of the fuller's field" (ch. vii. 3). Here, too, Rabshakeh stood, when he delivered the insolent message of his master, the King of Assyria. We read also that "Hezekiah stopped the upper watercourse" (*i.e.*, the outflow of the waters) "of Gihon, and brought it straight down to the west side of the city of David" (2 Chron. xxxii. 30).

The *lower Pool of Gihon* is also mentioned by Isaiah: "Ye gathered together the waters of the lower pool" (ch. xxii. 9). This pool is also seen still—a vast reservoir, Birket Sultan—on the west side of the Valley of Hinnom, west of the City of David.

There is also another great reservoir, the *Pool of Hezekiah* or of the Patriarchs, within the city, in Akra, fed by the upper conduit from the upper Pool of Gihon, and which Sir C. Warren considers to be the lower Gihon. This Pool of Hezekiah seems to be alluded to in 2 Chron. xxxii. 3, 4, where we read that, in expectation of the siege by Sennacherib, Hezekiah "took counsel with his princes and his mighty men to stop the waters of the fountains, which were without the city. So there was gathered much people together, who stopped all the fountains and the brook that ran through the midst of the land, saying, Why should the King of Assyria come, and find much water?"

Now this reservoir, which measures 240 by 150 feet, is, to this day, fed from the upper Pool of Gihon. As Hezekiah made a *pool* and a conduit, and brought water into the west side of the City of David, we can scarcely doubt that here we have his work existing to this day.

Within the city we find everywhere a labyrinth of conduits and a maze of cisterns, almost as extensive as those mentioned beneath the Temple.

Then, as has been noted in speaking of Robinson's Arch, there has been discovered, running in a channel, buried under a depth of from 50 to 115 feet of rubbish, an uninterrupted flow of sweet water; in fact, the rivulet that once washed out the channel between Zion and Moriah, ere Jerusalem was a city.

The two most interesting historical fountains are those of the Virgin, now proved to be *En-Rogel*, on the east side of Ophel, and that of Siloam, on the south extremity of Ophel. These are both fed by subterranean aqueducts; and a most extraordinary channel has been discovered between them, which has caves connected with it, in which are relics, proving them to have been places of refuge during the sieges of Jerusalem: cooking dishes, water jars, lamps, and even a little heap of charcoal, have been found here.

This Fountain of the Virgin, *En-Rogel*, is intermittent with an irregular flow, the water rushing down to it at uncertain intervals. It was outside the wall, but close to it, and so protected, that it could be used by those within the city. The flowing of the water generally happens two or three times a day, though, in summer, sometimes only once in two or three days. There are several such fountains in Syria. It seems to be the same as the *King's Pool* (Neh. ii. 14). The water springs up at the bottom of an artificial cave, 25 feet deep, to which we descend by steps, first into an outer

grotto, thence into an inner chamber with a gravelly bottom. From hence it flows on by its hidden channel to Siloam, and at the other side is connected with the vast cisterns beneath the Temple.



POOL OF SILOAM.

Siloam, though not the largest, is the most famous and hallowed of the pools of Jerusalem. It is referred to as peculiarly sacred by Isaiah; and Jewish writers

tell us that, on the last and great day of the Feast of Tabernacles, the water to be poured over the sacrifice was brought with great ceremony by the Levites, in grand procession, to the Temple, from Siloam, in commemoration of the waters flowing from the rock of Rephidim. To this ceremony our Lord alluded; and to Siloam's Pool He may have pointed when, on that great day, He stood and cried, "If any man thirst, let him come unto Me and drink." The expression of Isaiah, "the waters of Shiloah that go softly," has a further reference to the gentle, steady-flowing stream, which passed from Siloam by the King's Gardens, down the Valley of the Kedron, the richest and most fertile suburb of Jerusalem, and which owed its freshness to the perennial moisture from "cool Siloam's shady rill."

Though Jerusalem has long since shrunk from its old boundaries, we know that Shiloah was anciently by the city wall (Neh. iii. 15). It is now two connected basins, dilapidated and ruinous, to which we descend by broken steps, surrounded by crumbling masonry. The inner pool is a small rock-hewn cave, only 6 feet wide, into which the water regularly runs through a subterranean channel. Hence it pours forth into the larger reservoir, about 50 feet long, and less than 20 wide. A few broken columns, still standing, show that, like most other Eastern tanks, it was once shaded by an arcaded building. At that time it must have been near 20 feet deep; but the dam has long since been broken down, and it does not now contain more than three or four feet of water. The edge of the old structure can be traced, where the blind man may have stood as he stooped to wash his eyes in the pool. From this deep reservoir the waters were *sent* forth to water the garden below; and many old commentators observe the allegorical parallel between the *One sent* to give life

and the waters *sent* to quicken the earth, as also between the waters "flowing softly" and Him who should "not cry, nor lift up, nor cause His voice to be heard in the street."

We are quite certain the spot is the same. The name has come down to us unchanged in the language of the country. An old traveller, four hundred years ago, describes this bath as surrounded by walls and buttresses like a cloister, and the arches supported by marble pillars, the remains of which have been mentioned. But now this is gone. "The present pool is a ruin, with no moss or ivy to make it romantic; its sides falling in; its pillars broken; its stairs a fragment; its walls giving way; the edge of every stone worn round or sharp by time; in some parts mere *débris*; once Siloam, now, like the city which overhung it, a heap; though around its edges wild flowers, and, among other plants, the caper-tree, grow luxuriantly." Besides the caper, or *hyssop* of Scripture—the plant which brightens many an otherwise arid spot and hangs in dark green tufts from the walls of Jerusalem—the sides of the inner pool are almost clothed with the lovely fronds of the maidenhair fern, that most beautiful ornament of every well and pool in Palestine.

Reference has already been made to the subterranean channel which supplies the water to the Pool of Siloam from the Virgin's Well (Ain Umm el Deraj). In 1880 a most important discovery was made in this tunnel of an inscription, about 20 feet above the exit of the water into the pool, which records the completion of the tunnel. The inscription, which is almost perfect, is in archaic Hebrew, and has been thus translated by Professor Sayce: "Behold the excavation! Now this had been the history of the excavation. While the workmen were still lifting up the axe, each towards his neighbour, and while three cubits still remained to cut

through, each heard the voice of the other, who called to his neighbour, since there was an excess in the rock on the right hand and on the left; and on the day of the excavation the workmen struck, each to meet his neighbour, axe against axe, and then flowed the waters from the spring to the pool for 1,200 cubits, and . . . of a cubit was the height of the rock over the heads of the workmen." It is curious that, unlike almost all other ancient inscriptions, we have neither the king nor the architect mentioned by name. The upper part of the tablet is bare, and the part covered by the inscription is below the water-line. Probably, therefore, the inscription was cut by the engineer secretly, he not having been allowed otherwise to commemorate his work. The date, therefore, can only be judged of approximately by the form of the letters used. These are of the most archaic type. They cannot be later than the time of Hezekiah, and may be as old as Solomon. Professor Sayce inclines very decidedly to the earlier date. At any rate, we have here not only a work belonging undoubtedly to the period of the Jewish monarchy, but we have the very earliest Hebrew inscription ever found, a contemporaneous specimen of the language of the Old Testament, written in that ancient form of the Phœnician alphabet already known to us from the Moabite Stone and a few legends on seals. But the form of the alphabet belongs to a period even older than the Moabite Stone; and, as Moab must have obtained its alphabet from Phœnicia through Judah, we can hardly escape the conclusion that this inscription must be of an earlier period, which would bring it back to the constructive epoch of Solomon. Topographically, the inscription reveals nothing, but, metrologically, Professor Sayce infers that the cubit may be taken roughly at $20\frac{1}{2}$ inches. It is, however, especially valuable, as indicating the extent to which

writing was known and practised among the Jews at that early epoch, while the idioms are those of the Old Testament of the time of the Kings.

Just opposite the pool, on the other side of the gorge of the Kedron, is the straggling village of Siloam, once mentioned in the Gospel in connection with the fall of its tower, and still bearing the name of Siloam. It must have been very close to Ophel in ancient times, and perhaps the tower that fell was the one spoken of



VILLAGE OF SILOAM.

by Nehemiah as an outwork: "the tower that lieth out." But there are now no traces of antiquity among its hovels, save a solitary tomb.

Sir C. Warren has discovered an underground hidden channel from Siloam to Bir Eyub, 600 yards lower down the Valley of the Kedron. This well was long supposed to be identical with En-Rogel. It is, unlike the others, very deep, 125 feet, and never fails. There

have been various secret openings on the side of the ravine from the underground channel to this well—or rather channels, for there are two: one probably for conveying pure water, the other the sewer from the altar of burnt-sacrifice. Beneath this well there is another underground passage down the valley. At a spot, 500 yards lower down, Sir C. Warren opened a spring; and at a depth of 12 feet a stone suddenly rolled away, and revealed a staircase, 25 feet deep, and passages at the bottom, leading north and south. These passages, which have been explored for a considerable distance, were doubtless for the purpose of leading off the surplus water of Jerusalem out of the reach of an enemy during a siege. “Why should the king of Assyria come and find much water?” Thus Jerusalem was truly, as the historian describes it, “a city full of water within, but utterly thirsty without.”

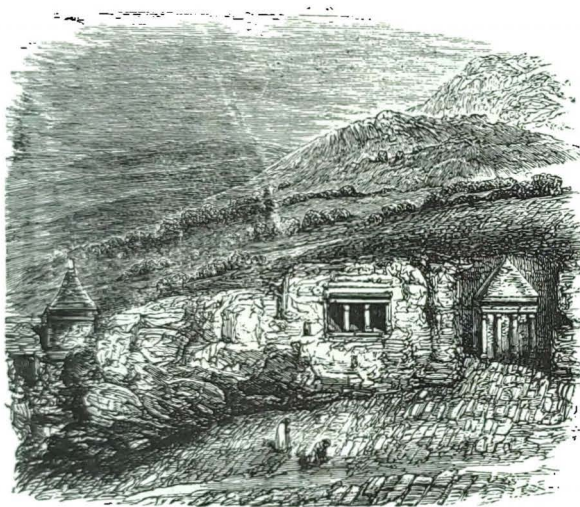
TOMBS.

The tombs of Jerusalem are among its most interesting memorials. Every hill and valley round it is a crowded cemetery, and the sepulchres far outnumber the houses. In the City of David, we know, were the *tombs of David* and of most of his successors. Their position is pointed out with some precision by Nehemiah (iii. 15, 16) as between the Pool of Siloam and the lower Pool of Gihon, within the city wall. This exactly accords with the tradition which places them on the southern brow of Mount Zion, outside the modern walls, under the Cœnaculum, now a mosque. The tomb of David is said to have been plundered by Hyrcanus, and afterwards by Herod. It is now revered by the Moslems as a holy place, and has never been examined for many centuries.

The Valley of Hinnom, opposite, is full of rock-hewn tombs; and a little further down it is the traditional

Aceldama, the field of blood, bought with the price of our Lord's betrayal. It is a natural cave, enlarged artificially, and strewn with bones, as it was long used as a common charnel-house.

Both sides of the Valley of Jehoshaphat, or the Kedron, are full of tombs. Among them are four very conspicuous ancient buildings, called the Tombs of Zacharias, of Absalom, St. James, and Jehoshaphat.

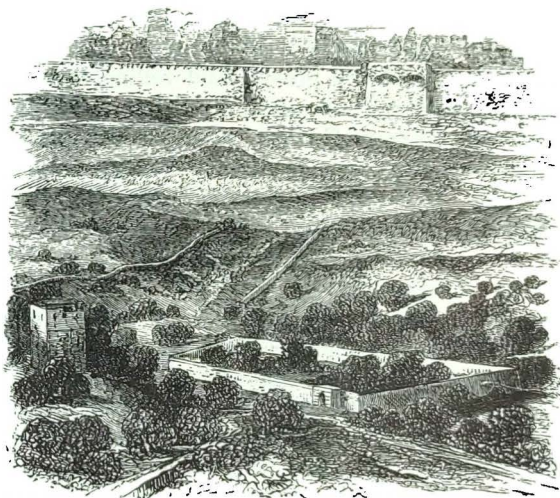


TOMBS IN THE VALLEY OF JEHOSHAPHAT.

There is, however, no historical authority for accepting this tradition about any of them. Though ancient, they are probably none of them older than the time of Herod: one of them much resembles the tombs of Petra.

On the Mount of Olives, due east from these about a quarter of a mile, are a large collection of underground chambers, connected and forming a labyrinth of tombs, without inscription, and called the Tombs of the Prophets. There is but one entrance to the whole excavation.

A little higher up the valley, nearly opposite the Golden Gate, at the foot of the Mount of Olives, is the Garden of Gethsemane. Its position exactly accords with the indication to be gathered from John xviii. 1 : "He went forth with them over the brook Cedron to a garden, where He ofttimes resorted with His disciples." The little plot is surrounded by a wall, and contains a few olive-trees of immense antiquity.



GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

From Gethsemane is a short but steep ascent to the top of the Mount of Olives, nearly 200 feet higher than the city, and crowned by the Church of the Ascension; though it is evident that the scene of that glorious event must have been in a retired nook, nearer Bethany, and out of sight of the city.

It is needless to describe at length what are called the Christian antiquities, founded chiefly on monkish

legends, as the Church and Tomb of St. Ann, and that of St. Mary, just outside the Gate of St. Stephen. On the north side of Jerusalem are some very interesting tombs, of most elaborate structure, known now as the *Tombs of the Kings*, but really the tomb of the proselyte Jewish Queen Helena; and about a mile further on are the *Tombs of the Judges*, on the road to Neby Samwil. They are a vast system of excavated chambers; but history does not record for or by whom they were hewn out. All these tombs illustrate Scriptural incidental notices. In one I have seen the stone fixed above and below in its rock-hewn groove, and rolling by its own great weight exactly in front of the doorway, so that it requires no ordinary effort to *roll it back*; while if an intruder were to attempt the feat alone, the stone rolling into its place again would secure him alive in the tomb, without possibility of escape.

CHURCH OF THE HOLY SEPULCHRE.

It is beyond our purpose to give any account of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, a vast pile of buildings, in the Lower City, in possession of the Christians; and where, under one roof, or collection of roofs, are said to be crowded all the sites of the great events of our Lord's Passion, especially the Crucifixion and the Sepulchre. Whether the spot was ever without the walls, and, therefore, could possibly be the true site, remains very doubtful, and must do so till the second wall shall have been traced. The present building was commenced by Constantine, on what he believed to be the true site, though there is no trace of a previous tradition on the subject, and the city had been, for many years after its destruction, desolate and uninhabited by Jew or Christian. Chosroes the Persian destroyed the Church of Constantine A.D. 614. It was soon afterwards rebuilt, but destroyed by the Khalif

Hakim in A.D. 1010. The dome was repaired and the rest rebuilt in A.D. 1048. The Crusaders, who took the city A.D. 1099, completed, extended, and greatly enriched it, and it has remained in Christian possession ever since. It suffered greatly from fire in A.D. 1808 ; but has been carefully restored.

HISTORY.

The history of Jerusalem is, in fact—from the time of Solomon to the close of the New Testament records—the annals of the nation, and no concise sketch can be given of it in our limits. Twenty years after the restoration from the Babylonish Captivity by Cyrus, the second Temple was dedicated B.C. 516. For nearly two hundred years after this Jerusalem enjoyed comparative liberty. The High Priest was recognised as the municipal chief of the State, under the Persian Satrap of Damascus, who never interfered in their domestic politics. When Alexander the Great had overrun the Persian Empire and conquered Darius, the Greeks met with a stubborn resistance in Syria, both at Tyre and Ashkelon, both of which at length were taken ; and from Tyre Alexander turned to Jerusalem, which had refused to submit. He was met outside the city by the High Priest in his robes, attended by a crowd of priests in their vestments and citizens clad in white. The Conqueror advanced to the High Priest, and reverently saluted the name of Jehovah on his mitre, saying it was not the man, but the God Whose priest he was, Whom he worshipped, and Who had appeared to him in a dream, and promised him the conquest of Persia. The High Priest then showed him the prophecies which foretold his empire ; and Alexander granted the Jews many valuable civic privileges.

At Alexander's death, Jerusalem fell to the lot of

his general, and enjoyed peace for sixty years under the Ptolemies of Egypt. Ptolemy Philadelphus, B.C. 285, had the Septuagint Version of the Old Testament, in Greek, executed at Alexandria. At length Palestine was wrested from the King of Egypt by the rulers of Syria. In B.C. 170 Antiochus Epiphanes, King of Syria, sacked Jerusalem and polluted the Temple. Two years afterwards, his general, Apollonius, fell upon the unsuspecting Jews on the Sabbath-day, and perpetrated a general massacre. He forbade any Jew to approach the Temple: "the sacrifice and oblation ceased;" the Temple was dedicated to Jupiter, and heathen sacrifice offered on the altar.

At length the priestly house of the Asmoneans organised resistance. For twenty-five years Judas Maccabæus and his brethren maintained the desperate struggle, in which the flower of the Syrian army fell, losing, it is computed, over 200,000 men. Finally, the Maccabees succeeded; and the Jews were accustomed to date from B.C. 143 the era of their new independence. Their freedom, however, was more civil and religious than political, though, at one time, the kingdom of Judæa comprised Idumæa, Galilee, and all the region of Gilead and Bashan.

In B.C. 63 Pompey, with a Roman army, advanced by way of Jericho against Jerusalem, besieged the Temple, and, after a desperate struggle, which lasted for three months, at length stormed it. After examining the sacred places, he had the Temple purified, and abstained from any pillage, leaving Hyrcanus High Priest, and imposing a tribute. In the year B.C. 40 the Parthians made an inroad and captured Jerusalem, setting up Antigonus as Governor. Herod, whose father, Antipater, had been appointed Procurator by the Romans, but afterwards murdered, now returned with a Roman army, and, after five months, stormed

the city, but saved the Temple. With Antigonus fell the Asmonean rule; and Herod the Great was made king by the Romans. His great architectural work was the rebuilding of the Temple. After the death of Herod and his son Archelaus' summons to Rome, Judæa was made, A.D. 6, a Roman province.

In A.D. 72 the Jews finally revolted; and, after the famous siege by Titus, the place was utterly destroyed, except the three great towers of Hippicus (which still exist), Phasaelis, and Mariamne, and the western walls.

In A.D. 136 the Emperor Adrian, after suppressing a desperate rebellion of the scattered Jews, ordered Jerusalem to be rebuilt, under the name of *Ælia Capitolina*, with a temple of Jupiter on the site of the Temple, and forbade any Jew, on pain of death, to approach the place. In the third century, however, Christians, who were partially tolerated, began to make pilgrimages to Jerusalem.

When Constantine established Christianity the ban was removed: his mother, the Empress Helena, visited the Holy Places, and splendid churches were erected.

Julian the Apostate encouraged the Jews to rebuild their Temple; but they were stopped, as we are told by contemporary historians, through miraculous interventions of Divine displeasure.

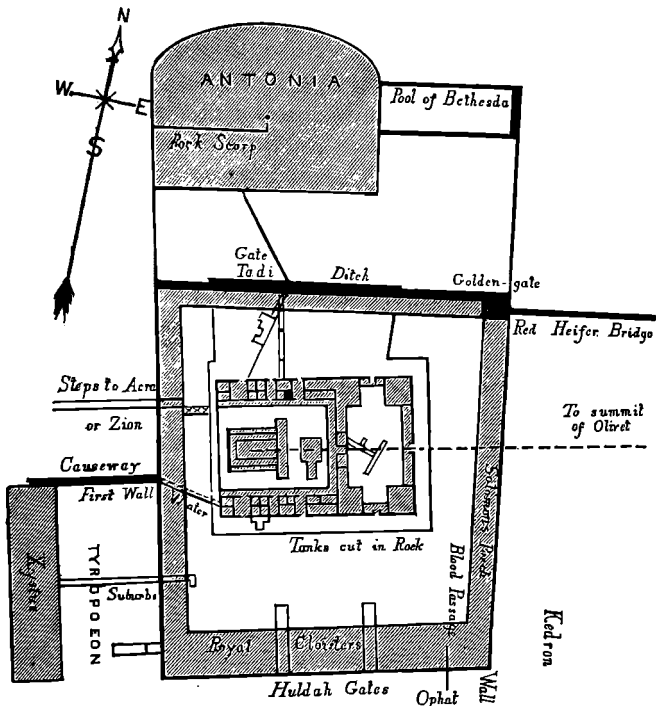
Justinian, about A.D. 535, built the splendid Church of the Virgin, now the mosque of El Aksa.

In A.D. 614 Chosroes II., the Persian invader, took and almost destroyed Jerusalem; but in A.D. 628 Heraclius re-entered the city in procession, and all the damage of the Eastern hordes was repaired.

The recovery was but of short duration. In A.D. 636 the Moslem invaders, under the Khalif Omar, after a siege of four months, compelled the city to capitulate on lenient terms, leaving the Christians in possession of their churches.

Omar ordered the mosque to be erected on the site of the Jewish Temple, over the Holy Rock.

From time to time persecutions arose, and the Khalif Hakim destroyed the Church of the Sepulchre in A.D. 1010, for the third time within a century. In A.D. 1077



PLAN OF HEROD'S TEMPLE AND ENVIRONS.

Jerusalem was pillaged by the Turks, who now supplanted the Khalifs. Their cruelties soon provoked the Crusades. In A.D. 1099 Jerusalem was taken by the Crusaders: Godfrey of Lorraine, Robert of Flanders, Robert of Normandy, Tancred and Raymond of Tou-

louse, being their chieftains ; and Godfrey of Bouillon was elected King of Jerusalem.

For eighty-eight years the city remained in the hands of the Christians, till retaken by Saladin in A.D. 1187. In the year 1229 it was surrendered by treaty to the Emperor Frederick. Again it was taken by the Emir of Kerak ten years after, and held for a short time ; but four years later, A.D. 1243, the Christians were finally driven out, after the defeat of Gaza. Since then it has remained under the iron rule of the Moslems, Egyptian or Turkish.

CHAPTER VII.

EPHRAIM.

Southern Frontier of Ephraim—Mount Ephraim—Its natural strength—Richness of the territory—Cities of Ephraim—Ataroth-addar—Gezer—Hazor—Nebalah—Shiloh—*Seitán*—Desolation—History—Eli—Samuel—Lebonah—Plain of Shechem—*El Mokhna*—Ebal—Gerizim—Shechem—Nablous—Oak of Moreh—Parable of Jotham—Samaritan Worship—Sychar—Mount Zalmon—Temple on Mount Gerizim—Samaritan Passover—Samaritan Pentateuch—Jacob's Well—Joseph's Tomb—Shalem—*Salim*—Enon—Arunah—Janohah—*Kurn Surtabeh*—The great Altar of Ed—Tappuah—*Atáf*—River Kanah—Pirathon—Tirzah—*Talúsa*—Thebez—*Tubás*—Asher—*Yasir*—Succoth.

ADJOINING Benjamin, and approaching within a few miles of the capital city of the southern kingdom of Judah, was the frontier of Ephraim, from the very earliest times the leader and centre of the northern confederation. The possessions of *Ephraim* stretched across Western Palestine, from the Jordan Valley, where it was conterminous with the northern boundary of Benjamin, to the passes of Beth-horon, whence it was conterminous with the tribe of Dan as far as the sea, just below the ancient Cæsarea. Its northern frontier is much less clearly defined. The possessions of Ephraim and her sister tribe of Manasseh seem to have been very much intermingled on this side, only that, for the most part, Manasseh lay northward and Ephraim southward.

Another difficulty, in examining systematically the territory of Ephraim, is that, in the case of this tribe alone, we have no regular catalogue of the cities assigned to it; we can only depend upon the boundary line laid down, for its limits, and to subsequent incidental mention of its towns, to ascertain what cities

Ephraim possessed. As many of these never occur in history, we find the whole district studded with existing villages and ruined sites, the vernacular names of which tell their Hebrew derivation, but of which we have no record in sacred history.

The central hill country of Palestine is often spoken of as "*Mount Ephraim*," an expression which comprises all the hilly region from within a few miles north of Jerusalem at Bethel, as far as the Plain of Esdraelon, including, therefore, the whole of the west allotment of Manasseh. Mount Ephraim was to the northern country what the hill country of Judah was to the southern—the backbone, centre, and strength of the nation. Like the hill country of Judah, and unlike the possessions of the northern tribes by Esdraelon, or the western ones by the coast, it was inaccessible to invaders, who were not prepared for the risks of mountain defiles and the storming of hill forts. Its military topography is such, that it is defensible at every turn, and nothing but a panic could disorganise the defence of such a region. Thus the tribe of Manasseh was charged by the High Priest "to keep the passages of the hill country, for by them there was an entrance into Judæa; and it was easy to stop them that would come up, because the passage was strait for two men at the most" (Judith iv. 7).

But there is a great difference in the appearance of the country of Ephraim and of Judah. The hills are much less regular and monotonous; the ridges do not run so regularly east and west. There are many wide upland plains in the very heart of the mountains; above all, there are everywhere abundant springs, and, consequently, luxuriant vegetation. Very appropriately, then, while the strength of Judah was typified by the lion of the dry and arid south, that of Ephraim is illustrated by the mighty bison (A.V., unicorn) of the

forest. "Blessed of the Lord be his land, for the precious things of heaven, for the dew, and for the deep that coucheth beneath; and for the precious fruits brought forth by the sun, and for the precious things put forth by the moon; and for the chief things of the ancient mountains, and for the precious things of the lasting hills; and for the precious things of the earth and fulness thereof. . . . His glory is like the firstling of his bullock, and his horns are like the horns of a bison (or aurochs, *a. v.*, unicorns): with them he shall push the people together to the ends of the earth: and they are the ten thousands of Ephraim, and they are the thousands of Manasseh" (Deut. xxxiii. 13-17).

The southern frontier of Ephraim may be traced with tolerable accuracy, commencing from close to Jericho, "*the water of Jericho*" (Josh. xvi. 1), *i. e.*, the stream, probably from the upper fountains of Ain Dûk, by the "*wilderness*," *i. e.*, bare pastoral land, of Beth-aven, east of Bethel. Thence it passed close to Bethel and the town of Luz, whence we see how easily Bethel, though, strictly speaking, in Benjamin, became the frontier city of the kingdom of Israel. Thence the line was by *Archi*, *Ataroth-addar*, *Japhleti*, to *Beth-horon*, *Gezer*, and the sea (Josh. xvi. 2). By the subsequent recapitulation it would seem to be drawn from Jericho by *Naarath*, *Ataroth*, *Janohah*, to *Beth-horon*.

Of *Archi* we have no further mention, except as the native place of David's friend Hushai (2 Sam. xv. 32). It has been satisfactorily identified with the village now called *Arik*, exactly in the required position, between Bethel and Beth-horon. Proceeding onward we reach the village of *Tireh*, the ancient *Ataroth-addar*, "*near the hill that lieth on the south side of the nether Beth-horon.*"

Naarath (*Naaran*—1 Chron. vii. 28) was lower down the wady than *Ataroth*. Though no ruins preserve the

name, it still possibly exists in the Wady Na'imeh—the name of the ravine of Jericho—and which would be the natural frontier line. Capt. Conder prefers El Aujeh, close to the north of this. Of *Japhleti*, the next mark to nether Beth-horon on the frontier, no trace has been found. Beth-horon has been already noticed under Benjamin.

Near the two Beth-horons was *Uzzen-sherah* (1 Chron. vii. 24), three miles south-west of the lower Beth-horon; the name of which is preserved in Beit-Sira. It was the extreme south point of Ephraim.

From Beth-horon the line ran by *Gezer* to the sea, *i.e.*, across the Plain of Sharon, where it abutted on the tribe of Dan. *Gezer*, lying near the plain, is frequently mentioned in history. It was a city of the Kohathite Levites, but seems to have remained in the hands of the Canaanites, owing to its proximity to the Philistines; for we read (1 Kings ix. 16) that the King of Egypt had taken it, and gave it as a present to his daughter, the queen of Solomon. Solomon at once rebuilt and fortified it. Its king, Horam, had been slain by Joshua, when he came to aid Lachish; but the subjection can have been only temporary, though it paid tribute to Ephraim (Josh. xvi. 10). At Gezer David's pursuit of the Philistines ended (2 Sam. v. 25), as they were here in a friendly country.

Gezer reappears under the name of Gazara, in the history of the wars of the Maccabees, held sometimes by the Jews, sometimes by the Syrians. John Hyrcanus made it his military residence. Eusebius tells us it was four Roman miles from Emmaus Nicopolis (the modern Amwâs). M. Ganneau has recently rediscovered it in the Tell el Jezer, where the ruins of a large city occupy the plateau on the summit of a hill, with a number of rock-hewn tombs, and the remains of an aqueduct, exactly four Roman miles from Amwâs.

It was the extreme southern point of the old territory of Ephraim. Situated on a swell of the low hills, it forms a conspicuous object from the Jerusalem and Joppa road. On the rock have been found deeply chiselled the old Hebrew characters for Gezer, marking out the boundaries of the Levitical city. Though the name of *Gezer* has been lost to topographers for ages, the Arabic equivalent, *Jezer*, has been found still to remain among the villages.

In the neighbourhood is Beit Nebala, *Neballat* (Neh. xi. 34), occupied after the Captivity by Benjamin, as was also *Hazor* (ibid. ver. 33), Tell-Azur, which is evidently within the old lines of Ephraim.

Of *Kibzaim*, another frontier city and assigned to the Kohathite Levites, no trace has been found, unless it be identical with Jokmeam (1 Chron. vi. 68).

Entering within the limits of Ephraim, we soon come to *Shiloh*, now Seilûn, "on the north side of Bethel, on the east side of the highway that goeth up from Bethel to Shechem, and on the south of Lebonah" (Judg. xxi. 19). It is about twelve miles north of Bethel. The features of the country are still rather those of Benjamin than of Ephraim. There is a bold knoll, rocky and irregular, strewn with a mass of shapeless ruins, with large hewn stones occasionally marking the site of ancient walls. It is surrounded by other higher hills, except towards the south, where opens a very narrow valley. Inhabitants there are none. The very mosque, once a church, is now a ruin, by which towers a large, gnarled old terebinth, the solitary tree of the district. There is one square ruin, probably a mediæval fortress-church, and a few broken Corinthian columns strewn about. There is not a relic to be found of the old Israelitish sanctuary among all the wasted stone heaps which crowd the broken terraces. The house of the Ark of God, the home of Eli and Samuel, is utterly

destroyed. "Go ye now unto My place, which was in Shiloh, where I set My name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of My people Israel" (Jer. vii. 12).

We cannot stand on Shiloh without an oppressive sense of its God-forsaken desolation. Scarcely a tree, not a dwelling is in sight: straggling valleys, too open to be termed glens, within an amphitheatre of dreary, round-topped hills, bare and rocky, without being picturesque, are the only characteristics of this featureless scene. What, then, was the cause of the honour put upon Shiloh, by its selection to be the religious centre of Israel through so many generations, and the gathering-place, where the land was allotted to the tribes by Joshua? One reason may be found in this very natural unattractiveness—a protest against the idolatry of the people of the land—which selected every high hill, and every noble grove, as the special home of their gods: here there was neither commanding peak nor majestic cedar, neither deep glen nor gushing fountain. Moreover, it was a central point for all Israel, equidistant from north to south, easily accessible to the trans-Jordanic tribes, and in the heart of that hill country which Joshua first subdued, and which remained to the end of Israel's history the district least exposed to invaders.

In its desolation, what a crowd of hallowed memories rush in as we gaze on the Hill of Shiloh, once the place of the tent he pitched among men. It was during the life of Joshua that the tabernacle was set up here (Josh. xviii. 1). Here, "before the Lord," Joshua cast lots, when the whole congregation of Israel had assembled, for the partition of the remaining portion of the land among the seven tribes who were not yet located, *i.e.*, all except Judah and Joseph and the tribes east of Jordan (Josh. xviii. 10).

The annual feast of the Lord was kept at Shiloh; and when, for the crime of the Gibeonites, forty years after Joshua, the tribe of Benjamin had been almost exterminated, the people were in a dilemma, unwilling to break the vow they had made, not to give their daughters to a Benjamite. An escape was suggested, by permitting them to steal wives for themselves of the daughters of Shiloh, when they came to dance in the fields; and they carried away two hundred of them to be their wives (Judg. xxi.).

About half a mile from the site is a copious fountain, in a narrow valley, with a large reservoir for watering cattle, secluded from the town, which was probably the scene of the event, so like the Roman rape of the Sabines. It is the only fountain near, and must be that which supplied water for the use of the sanctuary.

It was at Shiloh, too, that Hannah "in bitterness of soul prayed unto the Lord" that she might have a son; and vowed "to give him unto the Lord all the days of his life." So soon as Samuel was weaned, she "lent him to the Lord" and "brought him unto the house of the Lord in Shiloh; and the child did minister unto the Lord before Eli the priest" (1 Sam. ii. 11). Here the youthful Samuel was brought up; here the Lord appeared to him, charged him with a warning to Eli, and called him to the prophetic office.

For three hundred years the Ark had remained at Shiloh, till the godless sons of Eli, having carried it into battle against the Philistines, in the vain hope of securing the Divine protection, were slain; and Eli fell back and broke his neck at the sad news. The Jews still point out by tradition the tombs in the rocks near the fountain where Eli and his sons were buried.

With the loss of the Ark the glories of Shiloh departed. It sank into insignificance, and is only once mentioned in after history as the residence of the

prophet Ahijah (1 Kings xiv.). In the fourth century, St. Jerome tells us, it was utterly desolate.

To the north-west of Shiloh, as described in Judges, at a distance of less than three miles, is the grey, venerable village of Lubban, *Lebonah* (Judg. xxi. 19), high on the hill, with a large ruined khan and a gushing fountain in the plain beneath it. To the north-east of Shiloh is the *Corea* of Josephus, now Kuriyut.

There are no places of historic note from Shiloh, till, proceeding northward, we enter the *Plain of Shechem*, now El Mokhna, a long, level, and most fertile tract, with scattered olive-trees, straggling here and there, among the unfenced stretch of corn-land: those very harvest fields on which our Lord, wearied with the walk over the sultry plain, bid His disciples lift up their eyes, as He sat by Jacob's Well.

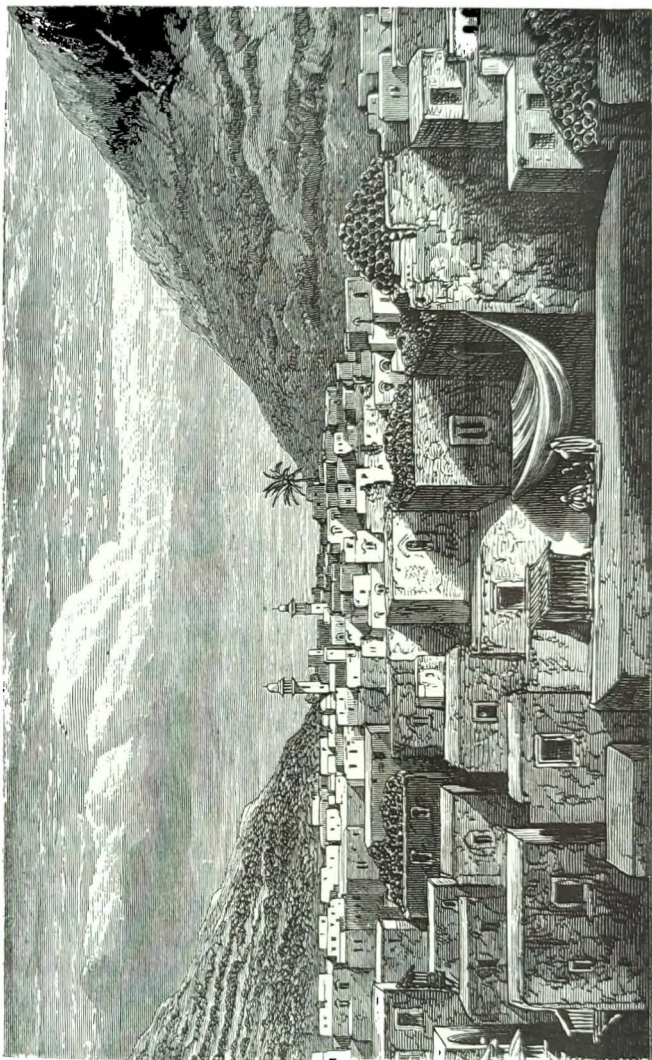
Shiloh, though for three hundred years the sanctuary, was never the capital of Ephraim. It was in a more permanent home that the chiefs of the nation took up their final abode. The western side of the *Plain of Shechem*, El Mokhna, is bounded by the abutments of two mountain ranges, running from east to west. These ranges are *Ebal* and *Gerizim*. Exactly opposite Jacob's Well is the opening between them. A mile and a-half above the well, and out of sight of the plain, is Nablous, the modern *Shechem*, called by an old writer the boss or navel of Israel. Round this spot the story of the tribe of Joseph revolves. Geographically and historically we are here in the central spot of the Holy Land. The long backbone of Palestine—its bisecting mountain range—is here suddenly cleft in twain, and a deep valley, in places scarcely more than 500 yards wide, is sunk 800 feet below the enclosing mountains of Ebal to the north, and Gerizim to the south. Their sides are very steep, and many a cavern is worn in the soft limestone ridges, while countless streams gush

forth, chiefly from the southern mountain, rendering the little vale a perennial centre of life and verdure.

So exactly, too, is Shechem in the centre, between east and west, that the streams, which burst forth copiously from springs within its walls, run from the east gate-down to the Jordan; and those which dash over the pavements, at the west end of the town, find their way through the Plain of Sharon to the Mediterranean.

A site so fair and lovely invited, like Damascus, by its many waters, the earliest settlement of mankind: destined by nature to be a city, in which man, wherever he exists at all, is sure to congregate. As old as Damascus and Hebron, older than any other known city of Syria, Shechem was a city while Abram yet tarried in Chaldæa. It is the artery through which all commerce between north and south must pass. The city is spread out in line along the valley, pleasingly broken by groups of dark orange-trees and occasional palm-trees. It leans on Gerizim, and rather avoids Ebal, along the southern edge of which is a narrow level strip of ancient olive-trees, and rich green turf. The sides of Ebal are clad with smooth prickly-pear. Gerizim, facing north, seems more bare and scarped: caves and springs diversify its face. Up the little wadys, or nullahs, which furrow its sides, rich fruit-orchards of orange, almond, pomegranate, peach, and fig-trees climb, till the rocks are too bare to support them; and on the highest brow, on the north-east corner, is the little Moslem chapel, which crowns the ruins of the Samaritan temple.

The history of Shechem first dawns when Abraham made his first encampment in the Land of Promise, under the terebinth of Moreh, at Shechem. "The Canaanite was then in the land," when the Father of the Faithful, under the shade of that tree, erected the



NABLOS, THE ANCIENT SHECHEM.

first altar ever raised in that land to the honour of Jehovah ; and the pledge that his seed should possess it was renewed to him (Gen. xii. 6). It was from Hamor the Hivite, the sheikh of the district, that Jacob purchased the plot of land at the opening of the plain, where he sunk his well. Soon afterwards occurred the defilement of Dinah and the vengeance taken on the men of Shechem by his sons Simeon and Levi for their sister's dishonour. Under Abraham's terebinth Jacob buried the images and idolatrous charms which his family had brought from Padan-aram. When the Patriarch was at Hebron, his sons returned with their flocks to Shechem, where Joseph was sent to inquire after their welfare. The piece of ground was bequeathed by Jacob to his son Joseph, whose embalmed body was laid by his descendants, under Joshua, in his patrimonial plot (Josh. xxiv. 32).

In the allotment of the tribes, Shechem fell to Ephraim, but was assigned to the Levites as a city of refuge. Here was held the grand national gathering, when Israel took final possession of the Land of Promise. The position is exactly adapted for that scene, where, between the eastern end of the modern town and the mouth of the valley by Jacob's Well, Joshua and the princes of the tribes were gathered in the centre of the valley, the priests and Levites and other chiefs arranged in ranks, rising tier above tier, on the sides of Ebal and Gerizim ; while the ample plain would afford space for all the multitude of the nation—the furthest being in sight, if not in hearing. Just before the valley opens on the plain, there exist, exactly facing each other, two natural recesses, formed like amphitheatres, at the base of both Ebal and Gerizim, where the leaders of the people were gathered, and where they led the loud echoing responses to the curses proclaimed on one side and to the blessings on the other.

Here, too, Joshua gathered his people for his dying farewell (Josh. xxiv. 1). Here, under Abraham's Oak, he set up the altar of witness.

These two natural recesses exactly face each other—one under Gerizim, the other under Ebal. The former is walled in, a holy place of the Moslems, and is known by the name of El Amud, "the pillar." Now it was by the oak, or oak grove of Shechem, that Joshua set up the pillar for a memorial (ch. xxiv. 26). Thus we have the oak, the pillar, and the sanctuary all brought together, and inside the enclosure a column still stands. The Samaritans inherited this holy place and its traditions from the Israelites, and retained it down to the fourth century after Christ, when Epiphanius writes, "There is also at Sichem, which is now called Neapolis, a place of a *Proseucha* (praying-place) outside the city, resembling a theatre, situated two miles from the city, which the Samaritans, who imitate the Jews in all things, have built in an open court." The Samaritans, though now shut out from it, still regard the spot with veneration.

It may be noted that Jacob settled, and sank his well within half a mile of his grandfather's sanctuary.

Shechem has a prominent place in the history of the sons of Gideon (Judg. ix.). "By the oak of the pillar," or rather "by Abraham's terebinth in the plain," the men of Shechem, at Joshua's altar, set up their kinsman, the usurper and fratricide, Abimelech, as king. To denounce this act of usurpation and treason, Jotham, clinging among the brambles at the top, and looking down over the olive-trees, fig-trees, and vines beneath him, spoke to the men of Shechem, from the overhanging heights of Gerizim, the first parable recorded in history. Three years afterwards, when he had been driven out, Abimelech returned with his men, and, in revenge, destroyed the city and sowed it with

salt. He afterwards captured and destroyed the citadel, putting the garrison to the sword.

But Shechem soon recovered ; and, no doubt with a view to conciliate the northern tribes, Rehoboam went there to be made king : but, with foolish obstinacy, rejected their request, and was afterwards compelled to fly to Jerusalem (1 Kings xii.) At Shechem Israel soon reassembled, crowned Jeroboam, and completed the schism unhealed to this day.

No wonder that all these events, crowded under the shadow of Gerizim, made that little valley to be, in after ages, the ecclesiastical and political centre of the tribe of Joseph. As the regal residence, it soon had to give place to Tirzah, and then to Jezreel and Samaria. Up to the Captivity, the royal capital changed with the ever-changing usurping dynasties ; but the heart of the people was round Joseph's Tomb and Jacob's Well. After the Captivity of Israel, Shalmaneser, and afterwards Esar-haddon, sent colonies to occupy the deserted cities (2 Kings xvii. 24 ; Ezra iv. 2) ; and these settlers, mingled with the old inhabitants, adopted a mongrel worship. At length idolatry was abolished ; and on the crest of Gerizim, the great national Temple of the Samaritans was erected B.C. 300. The enmity of the Jews succeeded in utterly destroying it B.C. 129. It was to the ruins of this temple our Lord looked and pointed when He declared to the Samaritan woman, "The hour cometh, when ye shall neither in this mountain nor yet at Jerusalem worship the Father."

From the time of the origin of the Samaritan sect, the history of Shechem is bound up with that people : and here, and not at Samaria, was the metropolis of the creed.

In the New Testament, Shechem is by many supposed to be mentioned under the name of *Sychar*, probably a term of reproach—"folly"—substituted by Jewish

animosity for the old name. But although this is supported by mediæval tradition, yet we find that Jerome separates Sychar from Shechem. It seems far more satisfactory to identify *Sychar* with the village of Askar in the plain and just above Jacob's Well. It suits the Gospel narrative better, as being an obscure place, "a city of Samaria." It is visible from the well, where a path ascends to it, and is a poor village with no great marks of antiquity, but with remains of ancient tombs near the road on the east shoulder of Mount Ebal. Here our Lord, after His conversation with the woman at the well, abode two days, and "many more believed because of His own work" (John iv.). Shechem is supposed by some to have been the city where Philip preached (Acts viii. 5).

Shechem was the native place of Justin Martyr. It was destroyed in the Jewish war, and was afterwards rebuilt by Vespasian, who gave it the name of *Neapolis*, which, contrary to the almost universal rule in such cases, it has retained, being now known only as Nablous. Of its population of over 5,000, not 200 are of the Samaritan faith. One of its mosques has been a very fine Christian church.

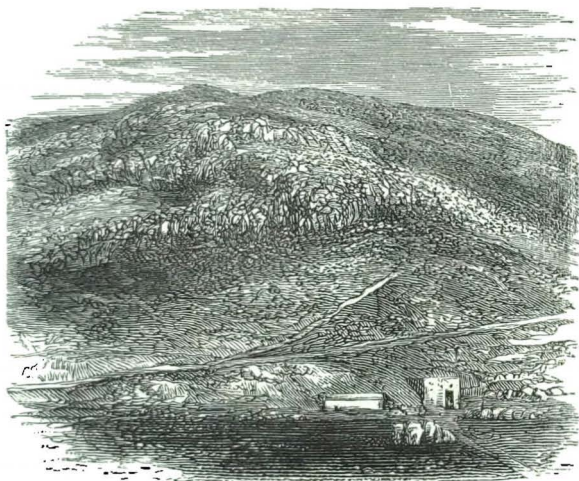
The old city appears to have extended considerably from this to the eastward, *i.e.*, nearer Jacob's Well, as may be seen by the number of old foundations in the olive-yards.

Mount Ebal, overhanging Shechem on the north, is about a hundred feet higher than Gerizim, and is strewn with ruins which are quite undecipherable. On its south-east shoulder is the ruined site, called 'Askar, supposed with good reason to be the Sychar of the Gospel.

The Altar of Joshua on Ebal appears to be represented by a site still sacred among the Moslem peasantry, called Amud ed Deen, "monument of the faith." It is

interesting to note this local tradition, held by those who are neither Samaritan nor Christian.

Mount Zalmon, the wooded height, from which Abimelech and his followers cut down branches to set fire to the Tower of Shechem (Judg. ix. 48), must have been near Ebal, perhaps a part of the range which, to the north and west, is not clearly defined; but no trace of the name has been found. It is doubtful whether the allusion, "white as snow in Zalmon," is to the same hill.



MOUNT EBAL.

Gerizim, "the mount of blessings," to the south, has far more objects of interest. The ruins are at the north-east brow of the hills overhanging, not the city, but Jacob's Well and the plain eastward. There are the remains of a massive wall, which once surrounded temple and fortress. The stones are of great size, but not dressed with the care of those of Jerusalem. There are a great number of ancient and very deep wells, both

within and without the enclosure. About two hundred yards to the south of the brow are a row of twelve stones in the ground, held by the Samaritans to be the stones of the tribes, brought up by Joshua from the Jordan, but which seem rather to have been part of Justinian's fortress. A little further back is the sacred spot of the Samaritans, a large bare rock, sloping west, with a deep cave or well in its rear, apparently used, as



MOUNT GERIZIM, FROM THE NORTH-EAST.

this was the stone of sacrifice, for the drainage of the blood and offal.

Though the daily sacrifice and the paschal lamb have ceased to be offered by the Jews since the fall of Jerusalem, the Samaritans, or Cuthites, as the Jews call them, have maintained to the present day their annual Passover and its sacrifice. Every year the little community gathers on the slopes of Mount Gerizim, though not on the site of their old temple, and with imperfect

and mutilated rites, three or four lambs are slain and eaten : the last remaining vestige of Mosaic sacrifice.

The Samaritans hold the Pentateuch but reject the Prophets. The Law they interpolate in places, appending to the Decalogue a charge to worship the Lord on Mount Gerizim. For this mountain they claim the meeting-place of Abraham and Melchisedec ; and assert it to be the Moriah, where Abraham offered up Isaac. Their schism and temple seem to have been devised by a schismatic priest, Manasseh, dismissed by Nehemiah from his office for an unlawful marriage ; and who took with him to the Assyrian settlers in Mount Ephraim a copy of the Law of Moses, the original of the Samaritan Pentateuch.

These people, who thus adopted a mutilated Jewish ritual, were hardly Ephraimites at all ; though afterwards, intermingled, they claimed Jacob as their father : " Our father Jacob which gave us the well." Their features, though Jewish, are distinct in type from those of the other Hebrews. They still remain, a mere handful, at once the smallest and almost the most ancient religious sect in the world. They have but one synagogue, an obscure building, retired amongst a labyrinth of courts, in Nablous. After the Christian epoch they were a people of some consideration, but wars and rebellions reduced their numbers, till, from the sixth century, they appear no more in history.

Their sacred roll is well known, and is exhibited with great pomp on their high days. It is practically the object of Samaritan adoration ; and, though not of the immense antiquity they claim for it, is probably amongst the oldest manuscripts in the world. It is written, as are all their books, in the *old* Hebrew character, while all Jews, since the time of Ezra, have used the Chaldæan character, in which our Hebrew Bibles are printed.

The *Oak of Moreh*, already referred to, the first camp and altar of Abram in the Land of Promise, was before Shechem (Gen. xii. 6), at the entrance of the valley, in the plain, and, therefore, close to *Jacob's Well*. There is no spot in sacred story more accurately marked out than this; and it adds to its fascination to know that here we are on the very spot consecrated by the sacred presence of our Divine Saviour; that exactly where we are sitting He sat. The arched arcade that protected the well and invited the wayworn traveller by its shade, has long since crumbled; but its pillars and ruins are strewn around us.

This is the parcel of ground that Jacob bought of Hamor, the father of Shechem, where, like his grandfather, he first encamped when he came from the land of the east: here he, too, erected his altar, and here he sank that well, which has remained to the present day (Gen. xxxiii. 18-20). The very circumstances of the case explain both his purchase and his sinking this well. Though the plain is the richest in the land, yet the streams in it are few. The brook that flows eastward from the valley is but scanty, for most of the springs drain to the west. Two of the three great fountains on this side the city were within its boundaries, and the third belonged to the village of Shalem hard by. Jacob knew well the jealousy between the settled inhabitants and the nomad herdsmen, who would certainly not be permitted to water their flocks within the precincts; and, therefore, with that cautious prudence which ever stamped his character, he purchases a small piece of land, quite outside the valley, where there could be no suspicion of his making a stronghold, and in it he sinks this well—which must have been, for those times, a most costly work—deeper far than the wells sunk by his grandfather Abraham, under similar circumstances, at Beersheba, and which

also remain to this day. We know not the original depth of this well, but it measured some few years ago, 105 feet: and probably this falls far short of its original depth, since rubbish has been continually and wantonly thrown in, till now it is choked at a depth of 75 feet.

Four hundred yards north of this well, on a gentle slope, is the small white building that marks the *Tomb of Joseph*. It stands alone, a little square yard, enclosed in a whitewashed wall, and a tomb placed diagonally across the floor of the wely or chapel. It has been preserved from molestation, from age to age, by the common reverence in which the Patriarch is held by Jew, Samaritan, Christian, and Moslem alike; while the fact of his name being the common property of all has prevented any one of them from disfiguring by a temple the primitive simplicity of his resting-place. Joseph, on his death-bed, took an oath of the children of Israel: "God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence" (Gen. l. 25). "The bones of Joseph, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem, in a parcel of ground which Jacob bought of the sons of Hamor the father of Shechem" (Josh. xxiv. 32).

About two miles due east of Jacob's Well, at the other side of the Plain of Shechem, a tongue of the plain extends a little further into the opposite hills, and in front of it is a small featureless village, Salim, the ancient *Shalem*. It is well supplied with water. "Jacob came to Shalem, a city of Shechem, which is in the land of Canaan, when he came from Padan-aram; and pitched his tent before the city" (Gen. xxxiii. 18). By some this Shalem has been supposed to have been the city of Melchisedec. The place is again incidentally referred to in the New Testament, when we read of John the Baptist "baptizing in *Ænon*, near to *Salim*, because there was much water there." St. Jerome places Salim

in the Jordan Valley, some eight miles south of Bethshean, near Succoth. But the name Salim is not uncommon, and that locality is unsuited to the narrative, there being no necessity to mention "much water" close to the Jordan.

Ænon cannot be traced in the Jordan Valley. But just to the north of this Salim, at the head of the Valley of Shechem, are copious springs in a broad open valley, called Wady Far'ah. This valley rises near *Salim*, separating Mount Ebal from the chain of Nebi Belan, and forming a great geological feature in the country. It soon becomes a deep and narrow ravine, with steep hill-sides burrowed with caverns, in which a perennial copious stream, shaded by oleanders, runs towards the Jordan. There is a succession of springs after the ruins of Burj Far'ah, with flat meadows on either side, where great crowds might gather on either bank of the stream. It is one of the most picturesque spots in the country, and is close to one of the old main lines of road from Jerusalem to Galilee. A little to the north of the springs is the village of Aynun, the exact Arabic equivalent of the ancient *Ænon*. Thus the position of John Baptist's station and of *Ænon* is satisfactorily set at rest.*

To the south-west of the Plain of Shechem, or Mokhna, a ruined site, on a projecting "tell," or mound, called El' Orma, marks *Arumah* (Judg. ix. 41), the residence of Abimelech, the usurping son of Gideon. It is half-way between Shechem and Shiloh, six or seven miles distant.

About three miles further east, the position of *Janoah* has not been so utterly deserted, for the place still

* Capt. Conder, however, was not able to trace the name of Salim among the Arabs of the district, and questions the identification. I obtained it from the Samaritans of Nablous and not from the peasantry.

exists on the east slope of the hills, as they descend to the Jordan Valley. It is now called Yanûn; but the village is very small, and the ruins are unusually extensive and perfect. There are ancient houses still entire, covered with great heaps of earth. Janohah was a frontier town of Ephraim.

The road down to the Jordan Valley from Yanûn leads by the base of Kurn Surtabeh, the most conspicuous feature on the west side of the Jordan Valley between Jericho and Bethshean, and which, in fact, appears to bisect the long plain by its bold and projecting horn. Just opposite to it are the ruins of a bridge, Jisr Damieh, which belonged to this road: the principal route from Ephraim to Southern Gilead.

Kurn Surtabeh is by far the most conspicuous natural feature in the whole Jordan Valley. On its summit the cone has been artificially cut to a platform 100 yards by 30, enclosed by a very ancient wall of great hewn blocks of stone,—a gigantic altar or beacon station. That it was used as the latter is evident from the traces of fires which have been kindled on it. We read in Joshua (xxii. 10) that the Reubenites and Gadites on their return home after assisting in the conquest of the Land of Promise, “when they came unto the borders of Jordan, that are in the land of Canaan, built there an altar by Jordan, a great altar to see to,” *i.e.*, to be seen from far. Again (ver. 34), “They called the altar *'Ed*, for it shall be a witness between us that the Lord is God.”

The name *'Ed* still lingers on the spot in the name of the road up to the north. “The going up which leads to *'Ayd*,” the exact Arabic equivalent for the word written “*'Ed*” in A.V. The site perfectly fulfils the requirements for the witness altar. It is on the direct road down which the men of the two tribes and a half must have passed. It is “to be seen from far” on every side. It is just above the “borders” (*gelilloth*,

the hillocks or rolling mounds) of Jordan; and on its summit are the remains of the great ancient platform of altar and beacon. The altar we note in the history was a *great altar*, not a pile of stones that might be raised in a day, but a monument to record to later times the share of the trans-Jordanic tribes in the conquest. It is thus actually the oldest historical artificial record existing in Palestine, and the only one known to be coeval with the time of Joshua.

From the summits of Kurn Surtabeh and of Beisan we can trace every detail of the flight of the Midianite invaders and of their pursuit by Gideon. "They fled to *Beth-shittah* in *Zererath*, and to the borders of *Abelmeholah*." *Zererath* appears to have been the name of a district, the same as the *Zarthan* (1 Kings vii. 46), between which and Succoth were the brass foundries of Solomon; and as the *Zartamah* one of his commissariat districts. This seems to be identical with the *Zaretan* of Josh. iii. 16, opposite, at some distance, to the place where the flow of Jordan was arrested, so as to afford a passage to the hosts of Israel across Jordan.

The Alexandrian Codex seems to throw a light on this subject. It reads *Σαραμ*, and there is a very conspicuous and unusually large mound, south of Bethshean, called *Tell Sarem*. In Joshua, Zaretan is mentioned as near the city *Adam*, i.e., "red earth." A mile to the south of Tell Sarem is Khirbet el Hamrath (red), and the ford opposite is called the ford of the red earth, fitly so named from the colour of the soil. The word "forest" seems a transcriber's error for city, by the transposition of two letters, and the LXX. reads "city."

Another ancient track falls into the same road towards the bridge down the Wady el Ferrah, the north route from Shechem, passing by what was probably the boundary line of Ephraim and Manasseh, near *Tappuah*.

On the slope, as the wady opens into the Jordan Valley, are the ruins of the city of *Archelais*, founded by Herod's son Archelaus; and the modern name of which, El Basaliyeh, retains the tradition of its royal origin. On one of its tombs yet remains an inscription in the old Hebrew character.

Tappuah is mentioned as on the boundary line of Ephraim and Manasseh. From its name (*i.e.*, "apricot," or "apple"), it was probably in a fruit district; and the name and position of a desolate heap of ruins, with walls, called Atûf, on the north side of Wady el Ferrah, seems to indicate its site.

Taanath-shiloh is also given (Josh. xvi. 6) as one of the frontier towns of Ephraim. It seems to be marked by Tana or Thala, a site between Shechem and the Jordan, west of Janohah.

Michmethah, another frontier town, on the north, has not been met with, nor the name discovered by travellers ancient or modern.

Finally, the boundary between Ephraim and Manasseh, towards the sea, was the *River Kanah*, *i.e.*, the stream of reeds. There is some doubt as to which of the various streams flowing into the sea between Joppa and Cæsarea is here intended. The most probable conjecture is that which identifies it with Nahr Falaik, which enters the sea about half-way between the two towns, starting between Shechem and Samaria, and which, in the early part of its course, is called Wady Khanah, or "reedy wady." Probably in the same district, near the coast, was *Hepher*, whose king was slain by Joshua, and which was one of the districts of Solomon (1 Kings iv. 10).

In the mountain country, near the sources of the Falaik, was the Ephraimite town *Pirathon*, the native place of Abdon the Judge (Judg. xii. 13-15), and which may be Ferata, with the name scarcely changed,

a little west of Shechem. It is stated to be in the Mount of the Amalekites, perhaps a traditional vestige of the incursions of that ancient people. Capt. Conder suggests the important ancient site called Faraûn.

A little to the north of Shechem, in the mountain district, twelve miles from Samaria, on the road from Nablous to Beisan, in a well-wooded country, lies Teiasîr, the ancient *Tirzah*. It was an old Canaanite city, whose king fell before Joshua (ch. xii. 24). Its remarkable beauty, "Thou art beautiful, O my love, as Tirzah" (Cant. vi. 4), caused it to be selected as the royal residence by Jeroboam.

His successors, Nadab, Baasha, Elah, and Zimri, also resided at Tirzah, where Baasha and probably the others were buried. Here was matured the conspiracy of Zimri, and, in retribution, he in his turn was here besieged by Omri, who, after the capture of the place, resided here for six years, till he removed the capital to the new city of Samaria. Several generations later, at Tirzah, Menahem organised his rebellion against Shal-lum; but, so soon as he was successful, he established his government in Samaria. There are numerous cave-sepulchres north of the village, among which may be the tombs of the first four kings of Israel, who were buried here.

Some other towns in the north-east border of Ephraim, beyond Tirzah, occur in the history of Abimelech (Judg. ix.). *Thebez* was taken by him after his cruel exploit of suffocating a thousand men of Shechem in their stronghold with green wood. A tower resisted, and he was about to repeat his stratagem of Shechem, when a woman of Thebez let fall a piece of a millstone upon his head, and put an end to his career (see also 2 Sam. xi. 21). It is now a thriving town, buried in olive-groves, and its name, Tubâs, scarcely changed.

Proceeding north-east about four miles, we come to

Asirah, the *Asher* of Josh. xvii. 7, and a frontier town of Manasseh, on the road to the fords of Succoth.

In this region also we must place *Shamir*, the residence and burial-place of Tola the Judge (Judg. x. 2). Van de Velde fixes it at the ruins of Sammir, north-east of Janohah.

From *Asher*, or Yasîr, following the course of the Wady Malih, we descend into the Plain of the Jordan, passing by numerous shapeless heaps of ruins, and at length, about half a mile from the Jordan, reach the ruins of a village—rough foundations of unhewn stones—called Sâkût, which we identify, with some little doubt, with the *Succoth* of Scripture. It is nearly opposite the entry of the Yabis (Jabesh Gilead) into the Jordan, and stands on a low projecting bluff, at the foot of which there bursts forth a beautiful fountain of sweet water.

We read that Jacob, after his interview with Esau, on his return from Padan-aram, “journeyed to Succoth, and built him an house, and made booths for his cattle” (Gen. xxxiii. 17). By Succoth, Gideon passed in pursuit of the Midianite invaders; and being refused food for his men, punished the seventy-seven elders of the place on his victorious return. Between Succoth and Zarthan Solomon erected his brass-foundries, for casting the metal-work of the Temple. There is a ford across the Jordan not far from Sâkût.

Timmath-serah (*Timmath-heres*, Judg. ii. 9), “in Mount Ephraim” (Josh. xix. 50), “on the north side of the hill of *Gaash*” (ch. xxiv. 30), was the possession given to Joshua himself, after the allotment to all the tribes had been completed. The site of *Timmath-serah* was in the south-western portion of Ephraim, about six miles north-west of Gophna, at a place now called Tibneh. The name *Heres*, “rugged mount,” lingers here in Bâtn Harashah, Kefr Harès, and Harès, all to the west of Mount Ephraim.

Of Timnath, St. Jerome says: "Very marvellous is it that the distributor of the possessions should have chosen for himself so rugged and mountainous a spot." Surrounded with deep valleys and wild rugged hills, remote from the ordinary route of travellers, it is a picturesque site. An oval "tell," with steep and regular sides, forms the site of the town. Southward, on the other side of a broad valley on the northern face of a hill ("the hill of Gaash"?) are excavated a number of tombs, some of the finest in Palestine, and at the foot of the town runs the great Roman road. On the north slope of the hill a fine spring breaks out of a rocky channel. Little of the city remains, but the tombs are very perfect. The finest of them, and perhaps the most striking monument in the country, is still known as Joshua's tomb. The walls of its great porch are studded with over 200 niches for lamps, all smoke-blackened. The capitals of the porch are very simple, unlike all the later Jewish tombs. Inside is a large square chamber, with niches for bodies, and beyond it a smaller inner chamber, with a single niche for a body on one side, and for a lamp on the other. Here we are in the tomb of Joshua.

The name Jiljilia (*Gilgal*) lingers in several places. One—thirteen miles north of *Lydda*, on the road to *Cæsarea*—is, probably, the *Gilgal* of Josh. xii. 23. There is another a little further north again; and a third, about half-way between *Tibneh* (or *Timnath-serah*) and *Shiloh*, seems to be the *Gilgal* so often spoken of in the history of *Elisha* as that which was *above Bethel*, in contrast with the *Gilgal* by *Jericho*, also visited by the Prophet.

Many other names in Mount Ephraim point to old Israelite cities, as *Deir Balüt* (*Baalath*), *Kuriyet*, *Harit*, *Yabud*, and others; but they cannot be assigned satisfactorily to any historic sites.

CHAPTER VIII.

SAMARIA, MANASSEH, AND CARMEL.

Boundaries of Manasseh — Samaria — Its Origin — Natural position — Sieges — Elijah and Elisha — History of Samaria — *Sebustiyeh* — Ruins — Fulfilment of Prophecy — Dothan — Joseph and his brethren — Ophrah — Bethulia — *Sanâr* — *Taanach* — *Hadad-Rimmon* — *Rummanah* — Megiddo — *Lijjûn* — Description of Site — *Armageddon* — Battles — *Barnk* and *Sisera* — *Josiah* and *Pharaoh Necho* — *The Kishon* — *Jokneam* — *Tell Kaimon* — Mount Carmel — Characteristic features of Carmel — Its beauty — High Places — *Elijah's Sacrifices* — *El Mohrakah* — Altar — Well and Spring — Perennial — View from Summit of Carmel — Historical Reminiscences — *Tell Kassis* — Mound of the Priests — Fire from Heaven — *Elisha* and the *Shunamite* — *Pythagoras* — *Vespasian* — *Carmelite Friars* — Road to *Egypt* — *Caiffa* — *Achsaph* — *Alammelech* — *Amad* — Boundary of *Asher*.

THE inheritance of Manasseh, west of Jordan, was, as we have seen, much interwoven with that of Ephraim on the south, and the boundaries difficult to define. On the north, however, the frontier was natural and more clearly laid down. The border cities, with Ephraim, have been already mentioned. But we may notice the statement (*Josh. xvii. 10*), "They met together in *Asher* on the north, and in *Issachar* on the east." The tribe of Manasseh stretched right across Western Palestine, its northern limits being crescent-shaped, with one horn projecting into *Asher* at *Dor*, on the sea-coast, the other into *Issachar* at *Bethshean*, in the east. Its historical importance lies in its occupation of the passes of *Esdraelon*, or the Plain of *Jezreel*. Whenever that richest and most open part of the Holy Land was occupied by hostile forces, it was from the passes of Manasseh that it was commanded. On this turns the whole history of the great hero of Manasseh, *Gideon*,

who, among these hills, was raised up to descend on the Midianite swarm of invaders.

A ride of about eight miles brings us from Nablous (*Shechem*) to *Samaria*. The portion of the road up the Vale of Shechem is the brightest and most civilised scene in modern Palestine. Olive-groves, gardens, orange-groves, and palm-trees, form a maze of beauty in strange contrast with the decay which elsewhere prevails. Then crossing a ridge, probably the whole limit of Ephraim, we descend upon this network of valleys, among which rises the hill of *Samaria*.

Samaria was not an original city, though the later capital of the kingdom. The story of its origin is given with much minuteness in 1 Kings xvi. 23, 24. When Omri bought the hill of Shemer, and built the city which he named after the old proprietor, the position had great natural advantages. The hill is oblong, with a wide platform at its top, and steep terraced sides. It is completely isolated from the surrounding hills, which are higher, so that it was safe from surprise, and no enemy could approach it from any quarter unobserved. In this respect it bears a strong resemblance to Jerusalem. It commands a noble view of the Plain of Sharon to the west, and of the sea beyond it. How often from this spot must the besieged Israelites have gazed on the Syrian hosts investing their city on all sides! (1 Kings xx.; 2 Kings vi.)

Here Ahab, at the instigation of his wife Jezebel, built a splendid temple to Baal. In this reign was the first siege of *Samaria* by the Syrians, and the second, in the reign of Jehoram, quickly followed, when, after a three years' blockade, the siege was raised by Divine intervention, as had been foretold by Elisha. *Samaria* was the scene of many important events in the lives of Elijah and Elisha. At the Pool of *Samaria* the dogs licked the blood of Ahab, as Elijah had foretold, when

his body was brought up from Ramoth Gilead. Into besieged Samaria Elisha led the blind-stricken detachment of Syrian troops who had been sent to take him, and delivering them to the King of Israel, taught him a lesson of clemency. Here he received the visit of Naaman, and taught the Syrian general a yet higher lesson. We can picture, at the end of that second siege, the camp of Benhadad in the valley below, while starvation wasted the crowds within; then the discovery of the panic of the Syrians by the lepers; then the rush at the gate just over the brow, and the scattered garments and vessels along that valley by which the invaders had fled towards the east.

In B.C. 721 Samaria was taken, after its second three years' siege, by Shalmaneser, King of Assyria, and with its fall closed the history of the kingdom of Israel.

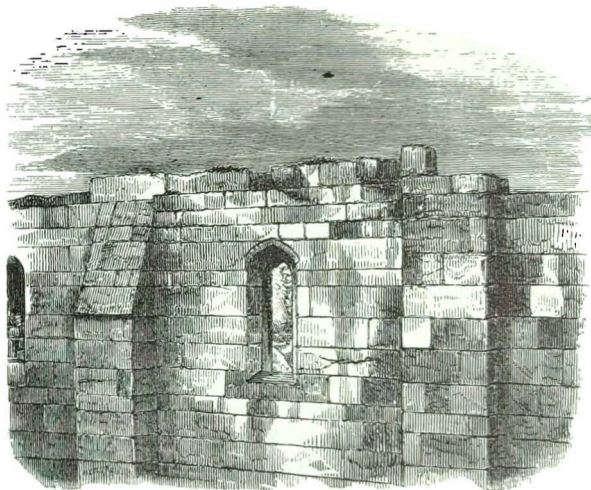
It was afterwards taken, and its inhabitants transplanted by Alexander the Great. Again, the Jews, under Hyrcanus, nearly destroyed it; and, in turn, the old inhabitants were re-established by Pompey.

Augustus gave it to Herod the Great, who re-colonised it, rebuilt it, and added most sumptuous palaces, theatres, temples, stadium, and colonnades, changing its name to *Sebaste* (*i.e.*, *Augusta*), in honour of his patron, by the Arabic form of which, *Sebustiyeh*, it is still known.

In the New Testament, though the term Samaria is several times used generally for the people and villages of the country, yet it seems that here Philip the Deacon preached and founded a church, and here Simon the Sorcerer was converted. It was the seat of a Crusading bishopric, the church of which remains.

The modern village of *Sebustiyeh* is on the side—not the top—of the hill, containing perhaps 500 souls. It clusters round the old Christian Church of St. John, now a mosque, nearly perfect, excepting the roof of the nave. Higher up, long streets of columns in different

directions, some fallen, some broken, others half-buried, but very many standing perfect, show the extent and splendour of Herod's city. There are also gateways and a ruined triumphal arch standing. When we look down on the gaunt columns rising out of the little terraced field, and the vines clambering up the sides of the hill, once covered by the palaces of proud Samaria, we recall the prophecy of Micah; "I will



REMAINS OF CHRISTIAN CHURCH AT SAMARIA.

make Samaria as an heap of the field and as plantings of a vineyard; and I will pour down the stones thereof into the valley, and I will discover the foundations thereof" (Mic. i. 6). Not more literally have the denunciations on Tyre or on Babylon been accomplished. To the eye-witness the fulfilment is startling in its accuracy.

Of the Israelite, or older city, no traces remain—unless, possibly, the reservoir by the old Church of St.

John be the "Pool of Samaria," where the blood was washed from Ahab's chariot after the fatal day at Ramoth Gilead.

About twelve miles north of Samaria, close to the road to Galilee, is *Dothan*, still bearing exactly the same name. The country is full of the old fortified villages of Manasseh, every one of them a natural stronghold, and full of deep gorges, a perfect network, twisting down towards the Plain of Esdraelon. Dothan is the very richest of pasture-grounds—a little upland plain, with a smooth hill at the southern end, on which are some ruins, and a fine spring bursting at its foot. Here Joseph found his brethren, and into a cistern here they cast him. Sitting by that spring, they bartered their brother to the Ishmaelite traders (Gen. xxxvii.) The only other incident in Scripture connected with Dothan is Elisha's residence there, and the attempt to seize him by the Syrians, frustrated by Divine intervention. The plain, though so rich, is now uninhabited.

Just to the south-west of Dothan is Arrabeh, conjectured by some to be the *Ophrah* of the Abiezrites, the native place of the Judge Gideon. It is a village on a hill, surrounded by a wall, and is probably as large a place now as in the time of Israel. Its scriptural interest concentrates exclusively in the life of Gideon. Here he was born (Judg. vi. 11), and in a good old age was buried (ch. viii. 32). Here he commenced his public life, by cutting down the grove of Baal and erecting an altar to the Lord (ch. vi. 24-32); and here, after his victory over Midian, he established a shrine, and set up an ephod, made of the spoils of their chieftains, which became a snare to his house and to idolatrous Israel (ch. viii. 27).

Three miles south-east of this is a strongly fortified but now ruined fortress, on a commanding hill, Sanur, whose sheikhs long resisted the Turkish power, and

have within the present century sustained two sieges. After four months it was taken in 1830. The position exactly meets the description of *Bethulia*, in the Book of Judith. From this and from its natural strength it has been identified with Bethulia. There is one objection, however, to this identification of Sanur, that the Plain of Esdraelon cannot be seen from it. Not far from Sanur a small village has recently been discovered called Mithilia, little more than three miles from Dothan. It commands a view of the plain, and may be the ancient *Bethulia*.

At Dothan we are close upon the descent into the Plain of Esdraelon, the rich heritage of Issachar. But the mountain region continues unbroken in an irregular curve towards Carmel, and was held by Manasseh. Three places of historic interest are situated on the front of this hill country, between Dothan and Carmel—*Taanach*, *Hadad-Rimmon*, and *Megiddo*.

Following the margin of the hill country, we go round the head of a small valley, and turn along the crest of a long ridge which projects from the mountains of Manasseh into the Plain of Esdraelon, which forms two embayed plains on either side of it. It terminates in a large mound commanding the plain, the ancient *Taanach* (*Tanach* of Josh. xxi. 25), to this day unchanged in name, *Ta'annik*, an old Canaanitish stronghold; its king was slain by Joshua (ch. xii. 21), and the city was allotted to Manasseh and afterwards assigned to the Kohathite Levites (ch. xxi. 25).

The place, however, long remained in the hands of the Canaanites, whom Manasseh could not expel (Judg. i. 27), a difficulty which can easily be understood when we observe the natural position of the place; and, though afterwards reduced to tribute, they do not appear ever to have been altogether driven out. *Taanach*

seems to have been the gathering-place of Sisera's host. "Then fought the kings of Canaan in Taanach by the waters of Megiddo" (Judg. v. 19). The old ruins are extensive, but featureless, on the top of the hill. The modern village is nearer the base, at the south-east side of it. Many of the small feeders of the Kishon take their rise in this neighbourhood.

In 1 Chron. vi. 70, '*Aner* is substituted for Taanach. This may be recognised, perhaps, in the modern village of 'Anim, near Ta'annik, where are the remains of an ancient site.

Following along the crest of the ridge westward, to reach Megiddo, we come to the village of Rummaneh, which by its name recalls the *Hadad-Rimmon*, where Jeremiah and the people of Judah mourned for Josiah, when he had fallen in the battle of Megiddo. "In that day shall be a great mourning in Jerusalem, as the mourning of Hadad-Rimmon in the valley of Megiddo" (Zech. xii. 11).

In a nook of the hills, about five miles north-west of Taanach, just on the borders of the plain, are ancient ruins, strewn with large fragments of marble sculptures and granite, on both sides of a little stream, but no modern village or houses. The place bears the name of Lejjün, the Arabic corruption of *Legio*, the Roman name of the *Megiddo* of the Old Testament. The older Israelitish town appears to have been a little higher up the hill, where the mound of ruins is called Tell Muta-sellim. We see at once that the sister city of Taanach was a natural outpost and commanded one of the gorges of Manasseh. In fact, to this day the caravan road from Nazareth and Galilee to Egypt, by the Plain of Sharon, passes up this valley.

There are few spots of greater interest in the old history of Israel. From the brow here we look out upon the great Plain of Esdraelon (the Greek corruption

of its old name, the plain or "valley of Jezreel"), the great battlefield of Israel. The wide western portion of it may be called the Plain of Megiddo. Megiddo was the fortress of the western portion of the plain. From its position it was the point of contact between the Israelites, who relied solely on their infantry, and the Canaanites and subsequent invaders, whose strength was in their cavalry and chariots. Hence it has been taken in the Apocalypse as the figurative name of the place of final conflict between the powers of good and evil, "called in the Hebrew tongue, Armageddon" (Rev. xvi. 16), *i.e.*, "the Mount of Megiddo."

Two of the great battles of Old Testament history occurred in front of Megiddo. The first was when Barak, stirred up by the prophetess Deborah, roused all the northern and central tribes to shake off the yoke of Jabin, King of Canaan: Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh on the one side; Zebulon, Issachar, and Naphtali from the north. Sisera's 900 chariots of iron were mustered in front of Taanach and Megiddo. Barak descended from Tabor, on the opposite side of the plain, and, as a terrific storm burst upon the Canaanites, fell upon them. The mountain torrents, rapidly swollen, poured down into the Kishon, the river overflowed, and the torrent swept away chariots and horses in hopeless confusion. "They fought from heaven: the stars in their courses fought against Sisera. The river Kishon swept them away, that ancient river, the river Kishon. Then were the horse-hoofs broken by the means of the prancings, the prancings of their mighty ones" (Judg. v. 20-22). So "the Lord discomfited Sisera."

Very different were the circumstances and the results of the second battle of Megiddo, 650 years later. Pharaoh-Necho, King of Egypt, marching against the King of Assyria, came, as it would seem, along the Plain

of Sharon, and then, rounding Carmel, turned to march up the central plain towards Syria; when Josiah, determined to oppose his progress, met him at Megiddo. Here, exposing himself in his chariot, Josiah was mortally wounded by the Egyptian archers and carried to Jerusalem, where he died, overwhelming his nation in the bitterest grief (2 Chron. xxxv. 20-22). The lamentations for Josiah "were made an ordinance in Israel." The battle of Megiddo is mentioned by Herodotus, who speaks of the Jews as Syrians. Josiah was not the first king of Judah to whom Megiddo had been fatal, for here Amaziah died of his wounds when he fled from Jehu (2 Kings ix. 27).

Megiddo looks out upon its plains and the *Kishon*, the modern Nahr el Mukatta, *i.e.*, river of slaughter, while behind it the hill country of Joseph rises in irregular masses. But as we proceed to the north-west, this soon contracts, till we can look down on the Plain of Esdraelon north and that of Sharon south.

About six miles from Megiddo a rounded hill ends the territory of Manasseh. It is covered with traces of ruins, though utterly desolate, and is Tell Kaimôn, the *Commona* of Eusebius, *Jokneam of Carmel*, a Canaanitish city conquered by Joshua (xii. 22). It was assigned to the Merarite Levites (xxi. 34), but was in the tribe of Zebulun, whose border reached to the river that is before Jokneam either the *Kishon*, a mile in front of it, or rather the *Wady el Milh*, just west of the hill, and which is the boundary ravine between the bare hills of Manasseh and the wooded glades of Carmel, and thus between Asher which held Carmel and Issachar. The four tribes thus met at this point. By this wady is one of the roads from Sharon to Galilee, and through it Napoleon led his army in A.D. 1799.

Just in front of Jokneam there rises a sudden bold bluff over a steep base studded with noble trees. This

bluff is the east end of *Carmel*, one of the historical mountains of Palestine. It is also one of its most striking natural features. Not a peak, like Hermon, nor a rounded hill, as Tabor : Carmel is a long ridge branching off from the mountains of Samaria, and running for eighteen miles north-west, forming a bold headland, the one indentation of the long straight coast-line of Palestine. It forms by its projection the Bay of



CARMEL AND THE PLAIN OF ACRE FROM THE LADDER OF TYRE.

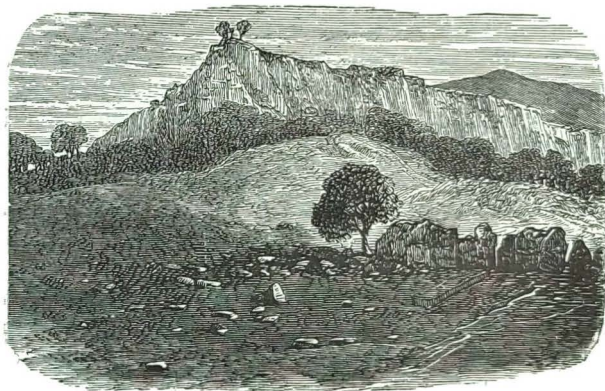
Acre to the north, and runs out with a bold bluff, almost as precipitous as its eastern end, into the sea itself, leaving but a narrow strip of sand at its base. It thus stands as a wall between the maritime Plain of Sharon on the south, and the more inland Plain of Esdraelon on the north. It is nearly 1,800 feet high, but gently descends towards the western front of the bluff, which is not more than 600 feet in height, while the eastern end is 1,600 feet above the sea.

The name of "Carmel," or "park," is illustrated even by the present condition of "Carmel by the sea." Nothing so park-like, such a mingling of forest and glade, is to be seen elsewhere in the Holy Land. Not that the trees are really of great size, with a few exceptions. Pines crown the highest parts, and some of the dells have noble trees, though much of the forest has been cleared for charcoal. There still remain holm-oaks and chestnuts. But the characteristic of the "excellency of Carmel" (Isa. xxxv. 2) is the wonderful profusion of flowering and perfumed shrubs — bay, storax, linden, arbutus, and innumerable others, wafting their fragrance in volumes through the air, while the open glades, with flowers of every hue, orchis, cyclamen, tulip, lily, are like the Garden of Eden run wild. But all this "excellency" only lasts for a month in spring. Moreover, nothing can be more marked than the sudden contrast from the brown bare hills of Samaria to the copse and woodland which greets us as soon as Carmel is touched. "No wonder that to an Israelite it seemed the park of his country; that the tresses of the bride's head should be compared to its woods (Cant. vii. 5); that its ornaments (excellency) should be regarded as the type of national beauty; that the withering of its fruit should be considered the type of national desolation" (Amos i. 27).

Part of Carmel fell within the territory of Asher, which extended along the coast of the Plain of Sharon as far as Dor (see ante, p. 56); and on many places on its slopes I have found the old wine-presses of the Asherite proprietors of old, with their cemented corn store-houses, under ground now, all overgrown with bush and tangle.

But what makes the memory of Carmel imperishable is its close connection with the grandest events in the lives of Elijah and Elisha. There seems to have already

existed "on a high place" of Carmel an altar of the Lord, which had been overthrown on the introduction of Baal worship (1 Kings viii. 30). This is at the east extremity of the ridge. On the summit, at the very edge of the cliff, where it sinks steeply down 1,000 feet into the Plain of Esdraelon, are heaps of old dressed stones, marking the site of a fort, perhaps of a yet older altar cast down by Jezebel. This was the spot from whence a view of the sea can be first obtained, and to it must have come Elijah's servant, while his master



EAST END OF CARMEL—PLACE OF ELIJAH'S SACRIFICE.

prayed on the terrace a hundred feet or more below, and sometimes returned to gaze, till over the distant Cyprus the little cloud at length arose portending the coming rain, exactly as it does now.

From this spot a slippery path descends 300 feet lower down to the Mohrakah, the "burning" or "the sacrifice." There is no village, no house, only a shapeless ruin; yet here the spot has a name, and the recollection of the miracle is imbedded in the Arabic nomenclature. It is a glade overlooking the plain, somewhat

in the shape of an amphitheatre, and completely shut in on the north by the well-wooded cliffs. No place can be conceived more adapted by nature to be that wondrous battle-field of truth, where Elijah appealed to Israel, "How long halt ye between two opinions?" In front of the principal actors in the scene, with the king and his courtiers by their side, the thousands of Israel might have been gathered on the lower slopes, witnesses of the whole struggle to its stupendous result.

In the upper part of the amphitheatre to the left is an ancient fountain, overhung by a few magnificent trees, among them a fine Turkey oak. The reservoir of the spring is stone-built and square, about eight feet deep, and the steps which once descended to it may yet be traced. The roof partially remains. The water is of some depth, and never fails. In illustration of this there are small shell-fish (*Neritina*) found attached to the stones in it, which, though common in the Kishon and other rivers of the country, are not found in the neighbouring wells, and can never exist where the water fails at any time of year, as, unlike the other fresh-water shell-fish of Palestine they cannot bury themselves in mud. In that three years' drought, when all the wells were dry, and the Kishon had first shrunk to a string of pools, and was finally lost altogether, this deep and shaded spring, fed from the rocks of Carmel, remained. Hence Elijah drew for the trench round his altar, while Ahab sat under the rock, probably just where the oak-tree grows now.

There are few finer views in the whole land than that from this eastern crest of Carmel's ridge. It ranges from the bare hills of Galilee in the north and those of Samaria in the south, while Mount Tabor rises proudly in the east, seeming almost to span the distance from Galilee to Gilboa. The sites of Jezreel, Megiddo, Shunem, Nain, and many others are in front. For

twenty miles the eye follows the wide plain, with not a tree and scarcely a village in its whole extent. Behind, to the south, stretches the sea, whence rose the little cloud, with a narrow strip of Sharon and the ruins of Athlit and Dor standing out. On the other side, to the north, there is a peep of the Plain of Acre and the sea washing its edge.

Down distant Tabor once poured the hosts of Barak; on the edge of that Gilboa the shouts and the sudden gleaming lights of Gideon's trusty three hundred startled the sleeping Midianites; and in the unbroken darkness of another night, Saul crept up that same Gilboa's side to seek the witch's cave, which he quitted but to lose kingdom, army, and life on its top, "for *there* the shield of the mighty was vilely cast away."

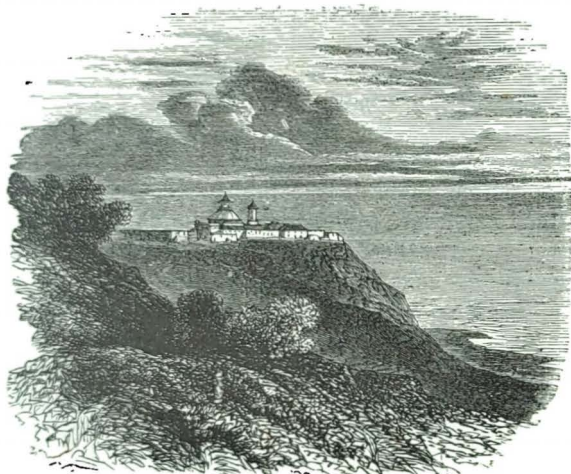
Across that plain fled, in broken disorder, the hosts of Sisera, to be engulfed in the mud and swamps and overwhelmed in the Kishon, then, as often now, swollen and treacherous, and hardly a bush or a tree to mark its sluggish course. Across that plain marched the Assyrian hordes of Shalmaneser to the final destruction of Israel; and nearer still to Carmel fell Josiah at the battle of Megiddo.

But down below, name after name has stamped on the locality the memory of Elijah's sacrifice. From the Mohrakah, or place of burning, a slippery path leads down to the *Kishon*, which now bears, in memory of that awful day, the name of Nahr el Mukatta, "the river of slaughter." Immediately below, on its banks, is a small green flat-topped knoll, apparently artificial, Tell Kassis, "the mound of the priests," marking, in its name, the very spot where Elijah slew the priests of Baal, when he had brought them down to the "brook Kishon."

On Carmel, also, it would appear Elijah was staying when King Ahaziah sent fifty after fifty to apprehend

him for his rebuke on his idolatrous quest after Baalzebub the god of Ekron; and here he "caused fire to come down from heaven" and consume the first two companies (2 Kings i. 5-15). The word translated "an hill" (ver. 9) should be "the mount," and is always used for Carmel, and in connection with Elljah, for Carmel only.

Carmel was also the residence of Elisha for a time



WEST END OF CARMEL WITH THE MONASTERY.

(2 Kings ii. 25; iv. 25), and at this east end of the mount he was when the Shunamite's son died. Looking down from the height, he recognised her afar off, hurrying on her ass across the plain, and sent his servant to meet her. Up the the hill she came, till, reaching the Prophet, she flung herself down and caught him by the feet—just as an Eastern will do to-day in distress—appealing for help. Nor would she leave him till he arose and followed her (2 Kings iv. 22-30).

The memory of Elijah's sacrifice rendered Carmel sacred even among the Greeks. Pythagoras retired here to meditate, and we are told that from one of the many caves at the western end he came down, when he saw a ship in the offing, and sailed for Egypt. The Emperor Vespasian, too, here consulted the oracle—probably at the place of Elijah's sacrifice, for we are told there was neither image nor temple, only an altar and sanctity.

The western end of Carmel, so frequently visited by travellers, has no scriptural events attached to it, but is celebrated for its convent, whence sprung the "Carmelite," or "barefooted" friars, who have spread throughout Europe for centuries, and who still maintain themselves in this, the cradle of their Order, which was founded here during the Crusades by St. Louis of France. Edward I., of England, was a lay brother of the Order.

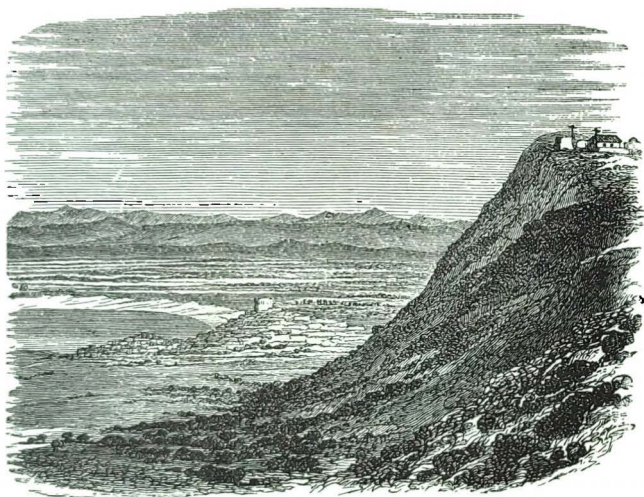
The common name of *Carmel* now is "Mar Elyas" (Elijah), though "Kurmul" is occasionally used.

Beneath the western foot of Carmel is a narrow belt of plain, the great highway between Egypt and Assyria. Round this hill Sennacherib's hosts marched from the passes of the Lebanon, where they have left their tablets, to the siege of Lachish, and Pharaoh-Necho to Megiddo: to say nothing of Crusading armies, of the hosts of Saladin, and of Napoleon advancing to the siege of Acre. Above all, probably by this route Joseph brought the child Jesus and His mother to Nazareth, when, hearing that Archelaus was king in Jerusalem, they "turned aside" to the parts of Galilee.

Close under the west shoulder of Carmel, on the north, at the south crescent of the Bay of Acre, lies the modern seaport of Hhaiffa, or Caiffa, the *Achsaph*, probably, of Joshua, which was a Canaanite city, whose king was smitten by Joshua (xi. 1, xii. 20), and was afterwards allotted to Asher (xix. 24). Two miles out.

of it are the sculptures and ruins which mark the site of the Greek and Roman city of *Sycaminum*, still overshadowed by the sycamine fig-trees whence it derived its name. It has frequently been identified with *Achsaph* or *Caiffa*, which for a time it supplanted. It is now called *Tell el Samak*.

Other frontier cities of Asher lying, probably, close under the northern slopes of Mount Carmel, are *Helkath*



WESTERN END OF CARMEL, FROM THE SOUTH.

Hali and *Beten* (Josh. xix. 25). *Helkath* and *Beten* are both mentioned by Eusebius as being in this district. But their sites have not been discovered. About six miles east of *Hhaiffa*, I discovered, close under Carmel, by a magnificent spring, indications of an old town which may have been one of these. But as "Asher continued on the sea-shore, and abode in his creeks" (Judg. v. 17), taking no part in the struggle of

his brethren, absorbed in trade with the neighbouring Phœnicians, the tribe is almost unnoticed in sacred history.

Alanmelech (Josh. xix. 26) seems marked by the Wady el Malek, a little stream running into the Kishon, six miles inland from Hhaiffa.

Five miles west of Wady el Malek, I examined a little mound with traces of ruins, on which some Bedouin were camped, called Un el 'Amad, identical with the next city in the enumeration of Asher, *Amad* (Josh. xix. 26), the guttural 'ain being preserved in the modern name. Thus the frontier between Asher and Issachar seems to have run along the low ridge which faintly separates the plains of Acre and Esdraelon. Of Misheal, the next frontier town of Asher, nothing has been traced. Thence the line ran to Carmel westward.

CHAPTER IX.

ISSACHAR; AND ESDRAELON, OR THE PLAIN OF JEZREEL.

Description of the Plain of Jezreel or Esdraelon—Plain of Acre—Of Megiddo—Jezreel—Eastern part divided into three—Heritage of Issachar—Character of the region and of the tribe—Population—Tola-Baasha-Omri—En-gannim—*Jenin*—Ibleam-Remoth—Jezreel—Ahab—Elijah—Jehu—Jezebel—Well to Harod—Fountain of Jezreel—Mount Gilboa—Battle of Gilboa—Night Walk of Saul—Beth-Shean—Scythopolis—*Beisan*—Ruins—View—Road to Egypt—Saul's Death—Decapolis—Rehob—Zarthan—Beth-Shittah—Abel-Meholah—*Enon*—Salim—Meroz—*Murusseh*—Hill of Moreh—Little Hermon—*Jebel Duky*—Shunem—*Sulem*—Shunamite Woman—Shulamite—Nain—Tombs—Endor—Caves—Chesulloth—Chisloth-Tabor—*Ikadl*—Daberath—*Daburieh*—Mount Tabor—Ruins—View—History—Shihon-Kishion.

HAVING traced the northern boundaries of the hill country of Ephraim and Samaria to their western limits, including Mount Carmel, which, though in the territory of Asher, is geographically but an outlying extension of the hills of Ephraim, we come next to the great central Plain of Palestine, which may be said almost to bisect the country from east to west. The peculiar characteristics of the great plain, and its historical reminiscences, have been beautifully drawn out by Dean Stanley. It is a wide rent, scooped out for about twelve miles in width, in its narrowest parts, from north-west to south-east. It is, however, not one even plain, but, though always open, has slight undulations. Its watershed, which is a mere imperceptible rise, is at an irregular line drawn a little to the west of Mount Tabor and Gilboa.

It may be divided into three parts: 1st. The coast plain, known as the *Plain of Acre*, which has always been distinguished from the rest, cut off by the bold ridge of Carmel from the Plain of Sharon, and on the

north-east off from the Phœnician Plain by a bold headland which pushes right into the sea from the Galilean hills, called Râs en Nakûra. Eastward, it is separated from the great central plain by a low, sparsely wooded ridge, through an opening at the south end of which, under Mount Carmel, the Kishon winds its tortuous way, and creeps to the sea. This part of the plain is also drained by the little classic stream of the *Belus*, and by the Wady Kurn.

2nd. The central plain, more strictly that of *Jezreel* or *Esdraelon*, sometimes also the *Valley of Megiddo*, stretches to the south-east, commanded on its southern edge by *Jokneam*, *Megiddo*, *Taanach*, and *En-Gannim* or *Jenin*, where it narrows to a point, and there is flanked on the east by the spurs of *Mount Gilboa*, *Jezreel*, and *Little Hermon*; or *Jebel Duhy*, and on the north by *Tabor*, the hills of *Nazareth*, and *Sefurieh*, or *Diocasarea*.

3rd. To the east three branches of the plain slope gently towards the Jordan, separated by nearly isolated ranges, rising out of the plain itself; the southern portion lying between *Jenin* and *Mount Gilboa*, but not extending down to the *Jordan Valley*. The central portion, which is the true Plain of *Jezreel*, is a fine rolling slope of the greatest fertility, fenced on the south by *Gilboa*, at the eastern end of which *Bethshean*, *Beisan*, commands the *Jordan Valley*, into which this plain imperceptibly blends, while it is separated from the northern branch by the oblong ridge of *Jebel Duhy*, or *Little Hermon*. To the north of this, again, a third branch of the plain stretches eastward, opening to the west between *Little Hermon* and *Mount Tabor*, and drained toward the *Jordan* by *Wady Bireh*. On its southern skirt, on the edge of *Little Hermon*, or *Jebel Duhy*, the *Hill of Moreh*, hang the villages of *Nain* and *Endor*.

Nearly the whole of this rich plain was the heritage

of Issachar, according to the prophetic blessing, "Issachar is a strong ass, crouching down between two burdens. And he saw that rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute" (Gen. xlix. 14, 15). There is no part of the country, except the Plain of Sharon, that can vie with this district in fertility. Its wonderful natural productiveness is in striking contrast with the bare hill-sides of Manasseh, and especially with the grey, bleak rocks of Gilboa and Jebel Duhy. But with all its richness, there is no part of the land more neglected. No towns or villages, no solitary homesteads dot its deserted surface, except on its eastern edge. Very little of it is cultivated; all is abandoned to the wandering Bedouin, who frequently plunder the crops of the hapless peasantry of the surrounding hills, and retreat across the Jordan with their booty, like the Midianites of old, "as grasshoppers (locusts) for multitude, and whose camels were without number."

Issachar was one of the chief tribes at the time of the census, being third in number of fighting-men. But this pre-eminence was not maintained in after history. The very richness of their territory was the cause of the military weakness of the tribe—"the seed-plot of God," as the name Jezreel signifies. So the prophecy of the Patriarch Jacob describes him "as a strong ass," *i. e.*, the he-ass used for carrying burdens, "crouching down between two hedgerows," as it might rather be translated; quiet and stolid, devoted to agriculture, and willing rather to submit to the tribute imposed on him by the various marauding tribes which time after time invaded his plains and plundered his crops. The blessing of Moses adds, "Rejoice, Issachar, in thy tents" (Deut. xxxiii. 18), as though Issachar, submitting to the invader, should become not only submissive, but even "rejoicing" in his nomad or semi-nomad life.

From the time of his settlement he seems to have sunk into a sort of dependence on his brother-tribe of Zebulun, which lay immediately to the north, possessing the southern highlands of Galilee.

Issachar possessed very few strongholds, and scarcely any of the heights commanding the great plain. Bethshean, one of the strongest positions in the country, though topographically within its boundaries, was yet allotted to Manasseh. Tabor it shared with Zebulun.

Once only did Issachar take a prominent part in the military achievements of Israel. This was when Deborah and Barak rallied the northern tribes to shake off the yoke of the northern Canaanite king, Jabin, and when so signal a victory was gained over Sisera by Barak, on the great Plain of Megiddo.

One of the Judges was of the tribe of Issachar, Tola, the son of Perah; of whom nothing further is recorded than that he judged, not in the defenceless plain, but in Shamir in Mount Ephraim, the future Samaria, quite outside the limits of his own tribe (Judg. x. 1).

In the time of David, the population of Issachar had increased threefold since the enumeration in the wilderness by Moses. It has been observed, that of the 145,600 soldiers reckoned by Joab, 36,000 are said to be "bands" (1 Chron. vii. 4), a term applied only to freebooters and wandering nomads, and especially to the tribe of Gad across Jordan; thus pointing out that Issachar had begun to "rejoice in tents." We read, too (1 Chron. xii. 32), that the heads of Issachar "were men that had understanding of the times, to know what Israel ought to do," implying either their skill in political diplomacy, or, as the Rabbis interpret it, in the knowledge of astronomy and the signs of the heavens.

More than one dynasty of the kings of Israel sprung from this tribe. Baasha, the son of Ahijah, who by treason and murder supplanted the son of Jeroboam on

the throne, was of Issachar; and it seems probable that Omri, the father of Ahab, who set up his capital in Samaria, as Tola had ruled there before, was also of this tribe.

Once again, and only once, does the tribe of Issachar appear in history, when a multitude of their people assembled at the invitation of Hezekiah (2 Chron. xxx. 18), to keep the Passover of the Lord in Jerusalem, showing that there were many, even thus far north, who had yet maintained their allegiance to Jehovah.

Taking the inheritance of Issachar, as given in Joshua (xix. 17-22), there are but fourteen cities there enumerated, but several others occur in subsequent history. The extreme southern point of the possessions of the tribe was *En-gannim* (Josh. xix. 21), on the direct road between Samaria and Jezreel, on the very edge of the plain of Jezreel, but itself in the hills. The name signifies, "fountain of gardens," the modern Jenin, a thriving little town, just where a spreading valley opens into the plain. The hills rise behind it; round it are a considerable belt of rich gardens, with fine orange and citron trees, and, here and there, a tall palm waving over them. It is the first place where the traveller from Shechem meets the palm in any numbers. There is an excellent spring, from which the place derives its name, which bursts from the hills behind, and the water of which is conveyed in an aqueduct to the town and also distributed to the gardens. *En-gannim* was allotted to the Gershonite Levites (Josh. xxi. 29), and is called *Gināa* by Josephus. It is once again mentioned (2 Kings ix. 27) under the translated form, "by the way of the *garden-house*," when Ahaziah fled towards *En-gannim* (the *Garden-house*) from Jehu. Finding the road too steep for escape in his chariot, he turned towards the edge of the plain, westward, and, while at the ascent of Gur, by Ibleam, he was mortally wounded,

and, skirting along the foot of the hills, reached Megiddo, where he died.

No modern name reveals to us the precise locality of the *ascent of Gur*, but it must have been one of the steep hills between Jezreel and En-gannim. *Ibleam*, which was near it, appears to be identical with *Bileam* (1 Chron. vi. 70), and is to be traced in the modern hamlet of Belameh, about three miles north of Jenin. The principal road through Palestine runs up the Wady in which are the ruins. Though in the territory of Issachar, it belonged to Manasseh (Judg. i. 27), but continued long to be held by the Canaanites.

Near En-gannim also, we must place *Remeth*, supposed by some to be a rocky hillock rising in the middle of a green plain, buried among the hills between Jenin and Samaria, and now called Rameh. There is also *Jarmuth*, a city of Issachar, assigned to the Gershonite Levites (Josh. xxi. 29), possibly another name for Remeth; but no satisfactory identification has yet been made. There are traces of antiquity about Mezar, on the west face of Mount Gilboa, which suggest that it was a city of Issachar, and from the order in which Remeth stands in Joshua, they possibly may be identical.

Passing from Jenin, through Belameh (*Ibleam*), a little over six miles to the north, we reach Zerim, the modern representation of *Jezreel*. We rise from the plain and ascend a low spur, which seems to stretch forward as an outpost of Mount Gilboa into the plain—a projecting knoll of rising ground, covered with a few flat-topped huts and a square tower of evident antiquity, with fresh verdure all around; but not a tree or shrub. Of the once capital of Israel not a vestige remains, though the situation is lovely. The very ruins have crumbled from desolate heaps to flat turf-clad hillocks, Many old sarcophagi, or marble coffins, lay strewn about, some converted into horse-troughs, and several richly

sculptured with the figures of the crescent-moon, the symbol of Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Zidonians ; but these are the only relics of the ancient beauty of Jezreel. Its situation explains why it was chosen as a royal residence. On the east side it has a defensible steep rocky descent of, at least, 100 feet, and from its tower there is a commanding view north, east, and west. For miles the route from the Jordan by Bethshean can be traced, by which, after dashing up round the knoll of Bethshean, Jehu urged on his horses over the smooth plain, as he drove from Ramoth-Gilead. On the other side the plain is in view past Taanach and Megiddo, as far as Carmel.

The importance of Jezreel was limited to the reigns of Ahab and his son. Ahab selected it as his favourite residence, without deserting altogether Samaria as the political capital. Here he erected his palace and built his "ivory house," its inner walls, probably, panelled or veneered with ivory ; and here Jezebel lived after his death. At Jezreel she maintained a grove and temple of Ashtoreth, the abomination of the Zidonians, with her 400 priests. From the watch-tower any marauding parties coming from the other side Jordan could be descried. But it is the sad story of Naboth which is most forcibly brought before our mind as we stand on the mounds of Jezreel. The royal grounds most probably have stretched down the hill. Then to the east is the little valley, where was the plot, the patrimony of Naboth, on the way up to the city. There Elijah met the king and rebuked him to his face in the hearing of Jehu and Bidkar (1 Kings xxi. 17), and there the retribution of the father's crime fell on the equally criminal son, when Jehu encountered Joram and Ahaziah on the very spot. Joram fell at once ; Ahaziah fled, only to receive his death-wound on the hill going up to Ibleam and to die at Megiddo. It was on the east side, also,

that Jezebel looked out of the window and taunted Jehu (2 Kings ix. 34). Here was an open space such as is found by the gate of all Eastern cities, where the labourers wait to be hired, where the laden camels collect, and where the pariah dogs, the scavengers of the streets, prowl about. Into this open space Jezebel was flung from the window and was soon devoured by the dogs.

Jezreel disappears from history with the fall of the house of Ahab and the destruction of the idolatrous temple by Jehu; and the later prophets speak of Jezreel as synonymous with that wicked house, and as sharing their fortunes (Hos. i. 4, 11). It has been conjectured that the tower of Jezreel was the *Migdol*, near which Herodotus tells us the army of Pharaoh Necho was encamped before the battle with Josiah at Megiddo.

About a mile east of Jezreel a fine fountain, gushing from the rocks which form the base of Mount Gilboa, supplies a pool of clear water, fifty feet in diameter, more than once mentioned in history as the *Well of Harod*, by which Gideon and his army encamped before their victory over the Midianites. Here the captain tested his men by their method of drinking, and at this pool there is space for a large number to drink together. The name "Harod" means "trembling," and seems to have been given in memory of the panic which seized the Midianites. It was also known as the "*Fountain of Jezreel*" (1 Sam. xxix. 1), where Saul was encamped before the battle of Gilboa, and is now known as Ain Jalûd, perhaps a corruption of *Gilead*, which seems from Judges vii. 3 to have been an ancient name of Mount Gilboa. There was a tradition, given by Josephus, that this was the pool where Naboth and his sons were murdered, and where dogs licked the blood of Ahab. That, however, must rather have been at Samaria.

We are now at the foot of *Mount Gilboa*, famous as the scene of Saul's great defeat by the Philistines, and of his death and that of Jonathan, which wrung from David the touching lament, "Ye mountains of Gilboa, let there be no dew, neither let there be rain upon you, nor fields of offerings; for there the shield of the mighty is vilely cast away, the shield of Saul, as though he had not been anointed with oil" (2 Sam. i. 21). And Gilboa is still a barren, bleak, and desolate range. It is about ten miles long, and not more than 500 or 600 feet above the plain, reaching from near Jezreel in the west to Bethshean at the eastern extremity. It separates the southern Plain of Jezreel from the central portion which slopes between Gilboa, and Little Hermon to the Valley of the Jordan, and is now known as *Jebel Fukua*. On the top of the mountain, at the east end, a village called *Jelbon* preserves the old name of Gilboa. On the top, at the western end, is the village of *Wezar*, entirely peopled by Mohammedan dervishes, a colony which recalls the old cities of the priests in the Mosaic times.

The battle of Gilboa was fought on the northern slopes of the mountain. The Philistines had collected their army at *Shunem*, now *Salem*, under the *hill Moreh* (Little Hermon), on the opposite side of the middle portion of the eastern plain (1 Sam. xxviii. 4), and pitched in *Aphek* (xxix. 1), a place we cannot now identify; while Saul gathered the troops of Israel opposite to them at the *Fountain of Jezreel* (xxix. 1)—the same as the *spring Harod* of Gibeon, and perhaps selected in memory of that glorious day for Israel—under the north-western brow of Gilboa. It was an ill-chosen battle-field with the enemy at *Shunem*. Close behind Saul were the steep sides of the mountain, affording no opportunity of falling back or of retreat in case of defeat. Both flanks were completely exposed

to the Philistine attack, while these also had the advantage of a gentle descent all the way from Shunem to the camp of Israel. During the night before the battle, Saul, ill at ease, went in secret to consult the witch of Endor, feeling that God had forsaken him. But she resided just in the rear of the Philistine camp. The king, therefore, must have crossed the plain to the east, and, making a *détour* round the eastern base, or climbing the eastern shoulder of the hill of Moreh, descended upon Endor, where, appalled by the appearance of Samuel's spirit, he heard the doom of his house and kingdom.

Next morning the Philistines made their onslaught. Saul, oppressed with gloomy forebodings, soon found the warning of Samuel true. The ranks of Israel were broken. They fell back on the steep sides of the mountain, and were cut down with a terrible carnage. "The beauty of Israel is slain upon thy high places" (2 Sam. i. 19). "O Jonathan, thou wast slain upon thy high places" (ver. 25), "as though the bitterness of death and defeat were aggravated by being, not on the broad and hostile plain, but on their own familiar and friendly mountains." On the mountain next day were found by the victors the bodies of Saul and his three sons, for they had evidently made a stand to the last, though the mass of the fugitives would fly down the valley to the Jordan. It was not far for the Philistines to take the corpses to *Bethshean*, a city still held by them, and there, with every indignity, they exposed the decapitated bodies till they were carried off by the men of Jabesh.

Bethshean was one of the most important places in this part of the country, and maintained its pre-eminence for many ages. Its natural position is very peculiar and one of great strength. The citadel stood on a spur of limestone rock, forming a singularly rounded flat-

topped hill, in shape like the crater of some extinct volcano. This bluff projects boldly, as if an outwork, beyond the east end of Gilboa, commanding the Jordan Valley, rising almost perpendicularly 300 feet above it and leaving a strip of rich luxurious plain, rather more than three miles wide, before the river is reached. But the old city was not confined to the "tell" on which its fortress stood. The ruins extend over a surface of three miles. The spot is not only in shape a miniature Gibraltar, it is marvellously favoured by nature in other respects. No less than four perennial streams flow through the ancient city, dividing it into quarters. The river Jezreel, draining the northern slopes of Gilboa, fringed with caves and shaded by oleanders ("willows by the water-courses") washes the northern side of the citadel hill; another stream, fed from the eastern slopes of Gilboa, washes the south side, and then unites with the Jezreel under the citadel to the east. The old town extended further to the south, and two other little streams rush down from the hills, almost parallel to each other, through a labyrinth of Greek and Roman ruins, and water also the modern village. The ruins surpass any others in Western Palestine. There are several noble Roman bridges over the Jezreel, two of them still tolerably perfect; a very fine amphitheatre, 180 feet in diameter, with its seats, corridors, and dens for wild beasts all entire; a large Saracenic khan, with arches and pavements, and columns of black basalt and white limestone alternating; many Roman temples, of which more than twenty tall columns are still standing erect, belonging to four or five sumptuous edifices. There is also a fine Greek cathedral, which has been converted into a mosque, but now is a deserted ruin, nearly roofless; and on the crest are the ruins of the more modern citadel, built from the ruins of older buildings, with beautiful marble columns, richly carved.

capitals and friezes built into its walls, now in its turn a ruin. The startling contrast between ancient civilisation and modern degradation appears nowhere more forcibly than in the wretched huts, like Hottentot kraals, of the modern village, made of earth and stone. "How are the mighty fallen!"

The view from the keep of Bethshean is one of the finest in the Jordan Valley, with the rich plain, and the river winding through its centre, for the foreground; the ruins of *Pella*, on the heights opposite across the river; the ravine of the *Jabesh*, with the oak forests where stood *Jabesh Gilead* beyond, and then the whole range of Gilead, Mount Ajalon, and Mount Gilead, as far as the hills of Moab, while to the north the view extends past the road up from the Jordan and Jezreel, where *Jehu* drove, till *Hermon* towers in the distance, and the heights of *Bashan* fill up the range between *Hermon* and *Gilead*.

Bethshean lay in the line of the ancient road between *Damascus* and *Egypt*. Hence the magnificent caravanserai, now in ruins, which has been mentioned. It was the road by which the *Ishmaelites* went down into *Egypt*, when they purchased *Joseph* of his brethren. The road crossed the *Jordan*, coming down from *Damascus* by way of *Gadara*, at the bridge below the *Sea of Galilee*, then by the plain to *Bethshean*; thence it crossed the shoulder of *Gilboa* at the village of *Jelbon*, and to *En-gannim* and *Dothan*.

Bethshean, though in the territory of *Issachar*, was assigned to *Manasseh* as a frontier outpost. But it remained *Canaanite* for centuries. *Manasseh* could not drive them out (*Judg.* i. 27). The *Canaanites* remained to the days of *Saul*, perhaps as a colony of the *Philistines*; for when they exposed the bodies of *Saul* and his sons after the battle of *Gilboa*, they hung up their armour as trophies in the idol temple, called

in 1 Sam. xxxi. 10 "the house of Ashtoreth," while they fastened Saul's head in the temple of Dagon (1 Chron. x. 10). Bethshean was the chief of one of Solomon's districts, extending up the valley (1 Kings iv. 12), but it is not again mentioned in the Old Testament. In the Apocrypha it is called the Bethshean, and also *Scythopolis*, or city of the Scythians, the name given it by the Syrian Greeks, perhaps from a colony, like the Egyptian colony which now inhabits it.

Scythopolis was the chief of the ten cities of *Decapolis*, in the New Testament (Matt. iv. 28 ; Mark v. 20, and xvii. 31), and was the only one of that great Roman district which lay west of Jordan. These ten cities had special privileges and immunities granted them by the Romans, and were all of great wealth. They were Scythopolis, Hippos, Gadara, Pella, Philadelphia (or Rabbath Ammon), Gerasa, Dion, Canatha, Damascus, and Raphana. Others omit Damascus, and insert Abila, the head of the tetrarchy of Abilene. Of all these cities (excluding Damascus) seven are utterly desolate and without inhabitants, and only three, Scythopolis, Gadara, and Canatha, have a few wretched families, living at Gadara in tombs, and in the others in the most miserable of huts and caves.

With the splendour of Scythopolis its memory has passed away. The name of Scythopolis has long since been forgotten, and the old name of *Bethshean*, suppressed for centuries, alone survives in the modern Beisan, by which the ruins and the hovels are now known.

Many places incidentally mentioned in the Old Testament must have been very near Bethshean, though it is difficult to identify some of them. *Gath Rimmon* (Josh. xxi. 25) was a city of *Manasseh* assigned to the Levites. In 1 Chron. vi. 70, *Bileam* is substituted, and the Septuagint reads Bethshan. This could not be

Bethshean, and is doubtless identical with Ibleam (p. 229).

All the way from Bethshean to Succoth, each "tell" is covered with ancient traces. Rehab, four miles south of it, recalls *Rehob*, of which name there were several places mentioned in Joshua. It is a collection of grass-grown mounds on a low "tell" or projecting hillock. Some identify it with the "Rehob, as men come to Hamath," which the spies sent by Moses reached (Numb. xiii. 21). It seems probable that the route taken by the spies lay in this direction, but that Rehob was probably higher up, the Beth-Rehob near Laisha or Dan (Judg. xviii. 28). There were also other Rehobs in the territory of Asher.

"*Zartanah* beneath Jezreel" (1 Kings iv. 12) is mentioned as one of Solomon's commissariat districts close to Bethshean, and would appear to be the same place as *Zarthan* (1 Kings vii. 46), and perhaps also as *Zererath*, one of the places past which the Midianite hordes fled from Gideon (Judg. vii. 22). The name lingers in Ain Zahrah and Tullûl Zahrah, three miles west of Beisan, indicating that *Zartanah* was the name of a district rather than a place. (See p. 201.)

Beth-shittah, *i.e.*, "the house of the acacia," is mentioned in the same passage (Judg. vii. 22) as the first place past which the Midianites fled. Now as we know the battle began very near the spring of Jezreel, where Gideon encamped, we can hardly question the identification of *Beth-shittah* with *Shutta*, an existing village in the marshy plain, about half-way between the spring and Bethshean. The remains of antiquity are many grass-covered mounds.

They next fled to "the border of Abel-Meholah," *i.e.*, "the meadow of the dance," a place mentioned (1 Kings iv. 12) as near Bethshean, and where Elisha resided, till he was called by Elijah from his father's

oxen (1 Kings xix. 16). The place remained to Jerome's time as *Abelmea*, in the Jordan Valley, eight miles from Bethshean, where is now a spot called *Sher-Habil*, and a trace of the name may perhaps linger in the neighbouring *Wady Maleh*. When we observe that the next place to which the Midianites fled was *Tabbath*, which has been most probably identified with *Tubukhat-Fahil*, a bold terrace on the east side of Jordan, on which stand the ruins of *Pella*, I think we may conjecture *Abel-Meholah* to be the rich meadow land which extends about four miles south of Bethshean, moist and luxuriant, with the mounds of a ruined town on a knoll above, called by the Arabs *Tell el Ma'ajerah*.

If we follow the account in Judges vii. of the flight of the Midianites, we see that Gideon, after clearing the Bethshean valley of the invaders, crossed the Jordan near *Succoth*, while a part of the Midianites, cut off by this manœuvre, fled down the west side, intending to cross by the lower fords near Jericho. Here they were intercepted by the men of Ephraim, summoned from the highlands by Gideon's messengers, and "they slew *Oreb* upon the rock *Oreb*, and *Zeeb* they slew at the winepress of *Zeeb*, and brought the heads of *Oreb* and *Zeeb* to Gideon *on the other side Jordan*" (ver. 25). In the situation required by the narrative, down the Jordan Valley, overlooking the broad plain north of Jericho, is a sharp peak, still known as *Ash el Ghorab*, "the Raven's, or *Oreb's* peak." Two miles north-west of this is a wady and mound, known as *Tuwayl el Diab*, "the Wolf's Den," *Oreb* and *Zeeb* being simply the Hebrew words for raven and wolf. The Bedouin leaders to this day commonly select as their cognomen the name of some savage or predatory animal. As the rock and winepress of *Oreb* and *Zeeb* were on the west side of Jordan, there is every reason to accept this identification.

Passing now up from the Jordan Valley and Bethshean, to the north-eastern borders of Issachar, we traverse the rich unbroken plain which gently slopes down to the river. There is not a tree; but the rolling downs, with a fat loamy soil, develope, as they slope eastward, into wadys which convey streamlets to the Jordan. There are several ruined villages, the grass-grown sites of which are marked afar by a deeper green than clothes the rest of the downs. One of these, almost the most prominent, is called Murussas, about four miles north-west of Bethshean, near the foot of one of the southern slopes of the hills which spread out from Little Hermon (Jebel Duhy) and from the northern watershed of this section of the plain. It would command the passage from the Plain of Jezreel to the Jordan, and I am satisfied, by careful investigation, that this place marks the site of *Meroz*, whose inhabitants refused to take part with Barak against Sisera. They might have intercepted the fugitives in their flight; hence, therefore, the denunciation of Deborah, "Curse ye Meroz, said the angel of the Lord, curse ye bitterly the inhabitants thereof; because they came not to the help of the Lord against the mighty" (Judg. v. 23). The curse has been fulfilled. In the midst of the richest pasturage of Issachar, the place has long since perished and left but a name.

A little north of Meroz is a large village, till recently inhabited, Kefrah, with many ruins: and on a beetling brow overhanging the Jordan, three miles north-east of Kefrah, are the ruins of Belvoir Castle, the finest Crusading ruins in Palestine, but with no previous history.

The *Hill of Moreh* (Judg. vii. 1), already mentioned, known by travellers as "Little Hermon," and by the natives as Jebel Duhy, though but once mentioned in Scripture, is an important feature in the topography of

the plain. On its south slope, facing Jezreel and the Well of Harod, the Midianites were encamped against Gideon; and almost the same position was taken up by the Philistines before the battle of Gilboa. It is of much less extent than Gilboa, running for a few miles from north-west to south-east, and separating the central and northern branches of the eastern part of the great plain.

At the foot of the Mount, on the south-west corner, stands the village of Sulem, the ancient *Shunem*, a town of Issachar, twice mentioned in subsequent history; once as the camping-place of the Philistines before the battle of Gilboa, but chiefly as the home of the hostess of Elisha. This was the village where the great lady of the place recognised the hallowed character of the wandering Prophet, and had the chamber on the wall made for him. Contented with her lot, dwelling among her own people, the only thing wanting to complete her happiness was a son. The blessing was granted. Round Sulem we may still see those corn-fields, the richest in the country, where the boy went out to his father to the reapers, and was struck down by sun-stroke. To Carmel, right in view for many miles, the wide plain stretches, and across it the bereaved mother rode, and returned with the man of God to receive back her son, thus doubly a gift from heaven (2 Kings iv. 8-37). The distance from Shunem to Carmel, in a straight line, is more than twenty miles.

There are no remains at Sulem, but the gardens are most rich, and the village flourishing, partially defended by great cactus hedges. Shunem was also the native place of Abishag, the beautiful wife of David in his old age; and as Sulem and Shunem are identical, there is some reason to believe that the fair Shulamite of Cant. vi. 13 refers to the same person.

The track from Shunem passes close under the

western bluff of Little Hermon, and as the corner is turned, the first view of Tabor is caught standing grandly forth, an even, rounded cone, into the plain, almost isolated, with a background of undulating forest-clad hills. Behind it stands out the snow-white peak of Hermon, towering to the skies. "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name."

As soon as we have turned the angle of the hill, looking north, we are in the little village of *Nain*. Its situation is bleak and bare, but there are few places even in this land of hallowed associations more interesting than *Nain*. The name is still unchanged. It stands on the slope of the hill. A little above it, both on the east and west sides, are many tombs hewn out of the rocks. About ten minutes' walk to the east of it is the principal burying-place, still used, and probably on this very path our Lord met the sorrowing procession (Luke vii. 11-18). A few oblong piles of stones, and one or two small-built graves with whitened plaster, mark the unfenced spot just below the old tombs. *Nain* must have been "a city;" the ruined heaps and traces of walls prove that it was of considerable extent and a *walled* town, and therefore with gates, according to the Gospel narrative, though it is not mentioned in the Old Testament. It has now shrunk into a miserable Moslem village, *i.e.*, a few houses of mud and stone, with flat earth roofs and doors three feet high, sprinkled here and there, without order, among the wreck of former and better days. All around is bare and forbidding, as though it had not known the time of its visitation, and therefore its houses had been left to it desolate. To the west of the village, just outside the traces of the wall, is an ancient well or cistern. Fountains never change, and the existence of this one is, doubtless, the cause of the place remaining partially inhabited.

About two and a half miles further north-east, still on the slope of the hill, is *Endûr*, the ancient *Endor*, within the territory of Issachar, but assigned to Manasseh (Josh. xvii. 11). "The spring of Dor," from which the place takes its name, trickles from a natural cave just above the village, and is unfailing, though small. *Endor* was long renowned as one of the places marked in the defeat of the Canaanites by Barak, where some of their chiefs were slain: "Who perished at *Endor*" (Ps. lxxxiii. 10). But it is chiefly known as the scene of Saul's interview with the witch the night before the fatal rout of Gilboa, when the king walked over the shoulder of the Mount from the spring of Jezreel, a distance of eight or nine miles, to consult her (1 Sam. xxviii. 7-25). The place has a strange, weird-like aspect—a miserable village without a tree or shrub to relieve the squalor of its decaying heaps. It is full of caves, and the mud-built hovels are stuck on to the sides of the rocks in clusters, and are, for the most part, a mere enlargement or continuation of the cavern behind, which forms the larger part of this human den. There are many caves around, with crumbling heaps at their mouths, the remains of what were once other habitations.

Abez is named (Josh. xix. 20) as a town of Issachar in this neighbourhood. The name is possibly a corruption of *Thebez*, and seems marked by Bir Tebes, little more than a mile north-west of Nain, where, as the name implies, there is still a well.

Hence we proceed north for three miles across the plain towards Nazareth, and at the foot of the hills reach the village of *Iksâl*, identified with *Chisloth-Tabor* (Josh. xix. 12), which was in the border of Issachar and Zebulun, and seems to be the same as the *Chesulloth* (Josh. xix. 20), in the territory of Issachar. Josephus calls it *Xaloth*, whence the modern *Iksâl*. It is the



TALOR AND HELMON, FROM ENDOR.

place given next after *Daberath*, and can scarcely, therefore, be fixed in any other spot. There are some ruins of considerable importance here: an old square fortress with strong vaulted chambers and halls quite perfect, sarcophagi, and what is apparently an old Roman altar of black basalt.

Turning to the east, along the boundary of Issachar and Zebulon, by the edge of the plain, in about four miles we reach Duburieh, the ancient *Daberath*, a border city of Issachar, assigned to the Levites (Josh. xix. 12; xxi. 28). It is now a small but, comparatively, thriving village, with several Protestant families, the fruits of the English Church Mission.

Daberath rises at the foot of *Mount Tabor*, now *Jebel et Tûr*, which was shared between the two tribes, one of the most striking and celebrated mountains of the Holy Land. It is not lofty, only 1,400 feet above the plain, which here is 500 feet above the sea; but its peculiarly isolated position, standing out into the plain completely severed from the bank of Galilean hills behind it, its remarkable symmetry of form and graceful outline, its wooded slopes, in a land where timber is so scarce, its shaded leafy glades, have won for it universal admiration. "As Tabor is among the mountains, and as Carmel by the sea" (Jer. xlvi. 18). "The north and the south, Thou hast created them; Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name" (Ps. lxxxix. 12).

The ascent to the top of Tabor is not difficult, and on its summit is a flattened platform, strewn with ruins of considerable importance, but now utterly uninhabited. There are walls, and great bevelled stones, Jewish and Roman, and the arches and loopholes of later fortifications built by the Crusaders, who erected a strong castle here, as well as churches and a monastery. There are also many cisterns, and generally abundance of water. The popular belief has made this the scene

of the Transfiguration ; but this must be rejected, as that wondrous event probably took place on Mount Hermon, near Cæsarea Philippi.

The view from the summit gives the best idea of this part of Palestine. All the Plain of Esdraelon is spread like a map before us, from the Mediterranean past the ridge of Carmel, a vast expanse of green, to Jebel Duhy, with Nain and Endor in front and Mount Gilboa peering



SUMMIT OF TABOR.

out behind them ; then the slope down to the Valley of the Jordan by Bethshean, and the river for many miles up, till the eye rests on the Sea of Galilee, the south part of which is shut out from view, and the dark walls of the mountains of Gilead stretching far away. To the north the Horns of Hattin stand out over the hidden Plain of Gennesareth, and beyond is the high table-land of Bashan, as far as the rugged Hauran, while over Hattin towers the snowy peak of Hermon.

and to the north-east the southern roots of Lebanon stretch to the sea.

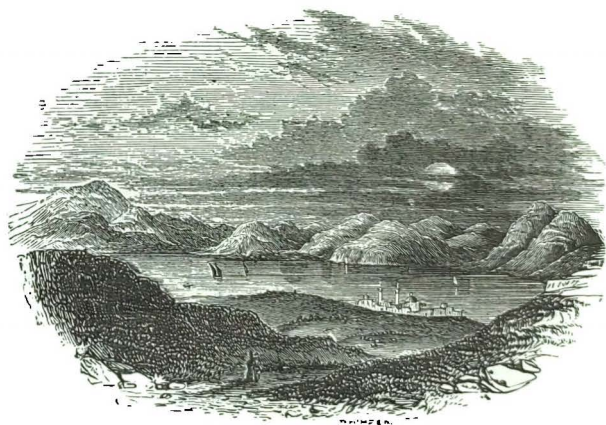
Tabor is supposed to be alluded to in the prophetic blessing by Moses of the two tribes. "They shall call the people unto the mountain, there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness" (Deut. xxxiii. 19), and it has been conjectured that this was a sanctuary of the Northern tribes. It appears afterwards to have been devoted to idolatrous rites. "Judgment is toward you, because ye have been a snare on Mizpeh, and a net spread upon Tabor" (Hos. v. 1). Whether it were a centre of worship, however, or not, it was a rallying-place in military operations. Here Barak, at the command of Deborah, mustered the warriors of Zebulun and Naphtali (Judg. v. 6). Here Zeba and Zalmunna, the Midianite chiefs, slew the brethren of Gideon (Judg. viii. 18). Tabor is not mentioned in the New Testament, but was a fortress of importance. It was held by Antiochus in the wars of the Maccabees, and in the Roman times was strengthened by Josephus.

Shahazimah (Josh. xix. 22), and *Beth-shemesh* (*id.*) are given as two other frontier towns between Tabor and the Jordan; but the names do not appear to have been preserved among the numerous ruined sites in the Wady Bireh, where they must have stood. *Shihon*, only mentioned in the list of Joshua, may probably be represented by Schi'in, a small village near Deburiyeh.

Haphraim, mentioned in the list next to Shunem, is probably represented by the little village of El Afuleh, two miles west of Shunem, in the plain, which in the Arabic is much closer to the Hebrew name than in the English translation. It is not noticed again in history. *Rabbith* may, perhaps, be identified with the modern Arrabeh, in the plain. *Anaharoth* is represented by the modern En N'aurah, situated in the plain, where the context would require it.

Of *Kishion*, a town given to the Gershonite Levites (Josh. xix. 20), nothing whatever is known. *Kishon* (ch. xxi. 28) is the same as *Kishion*, and in 1 Chron. vi. 72, *Kedesh* is substituted for it. This was possibly the *Kedesh* named along with *Megiddo* and *Jokneam* of *Carmel*, as places whose kings were slain by *Joshua* (ch. xii. 22). It seems to be the ancient ruined site *Tell Kedes*, near *El Lejjun*, in the *Plain of Esdraelon*. The name of *Kishion* remains in a low mound, with a well by it, indicating an ancient place on the *Plain of Acre*, about six miles south-west of that port, and still called *Tell Kison*.

The last two towns given in the catalogue of *Issachar*, and therefore probably on its western boundary, are *En-Haddah* and *Beth-Pazzoz*, both of which are lost, unless the former be represented by *Ain-Haud*, about two miles from the sea, north-west of *Carmel*. This, however, seems rather beyond the boundary of *Issachar*.



LAKE OF GALILEE, FROM THE WESTERN HILLS.

CHAPTER X.

UPPER GALILEE. — ZEBULUN.

Upper Galilee—Boundaries of Zebulun—Prophetic blessings of Zebulun—Character of its people—Natural features of the country—Achievements in war—Galilee—Boundaries of Galilee—*Idalah—Shimron—Nahalal—Japhia—Yafa—Nazareth—Nazireh*—Character of the country round—Brow of the hill—Mount of Precipitation—Fountain of Nazareth—Head-dress of the women—Parable of Ten Pieces of Silver—Trade—Population—View from above Nazareth—Towns of Zebulun—*Bethlehem—Sephphoria—Diocæsarea—Sefurieh—Cana—Kefr Kenna—Gath-hepher—El Meshhad—Jonah's Tomb—Rimmon—Kattath—Kanael Jelil—Zebulun—Abilin—Jiphthah—Jotapata—Jefüt—Aijalon—Jalün—Hannathon—Deir Hannah—Hattin—Beth-arbel—Irbid—Robber caves.*

WHILE the Lower Galilee of the New Testament times corresponded pretty nearly with the old tribe of Issachar, Upper Galilee comprised all the mountainous region north of the Plain of Esdraelon, which was the original portion of the tribes of Zebulun and Naphtali. The line between Issachar and Zebulun ran along the base of the Galilean hills which fringe the great plain to the north. Zebulun, we are told by Josephus, stretched from the Lake of Gennesareth, its eastern limit, as far as Mount Carmel and the sea. The frontier between it and Naphtali seems to have run down to the little lake, north of Tiberias, most probably by the Wady Hamam and the south boundary of the Plain of Gennesareth. Immediately behind the enclosing hills of the lake, its possessions comprised the wide plain, now called Ard el Buttauf, the richest part of the country next to Esdraelon.

The expression in the prophetic blessing of Deut. xxxiii. 18, "Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out," is

explained to mean the possession of the outlet "going out" of the Plain of Acre; and as we know (Josh. xxi. 34; xix. 11) that *Jokneam* by Carmel, or the river which is before *Jokneam* (*Caimon*), was on the south-western limits, we find the frontier brought definitely not many miles from the sea. This accords with the prophetic blessing of Jacob: "Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for an haven of ships; and his border shall be unto *Zidon*" (Gen. xlix. 13), intimating the connection of this tribe with the trade of the Bay of Acre, and its share in the commerce of Phœnicia.

The same commercial tendencies of the tribe seem alluded to by Isaiah: "The land of Zebulun and the land of *Naphtali* . . . by the way of the sea, beyond *Jordan*, in Galilee of the nations" (ch. ix. 1), where "the way of the sea" is explained to refer to the then highway of commerce, the outlet from Syria to the Mediterranean, which was by the great road down by the west side of the Lake of *Gennesareth*, and through the chief part of the territory of Zebulun, as far as Acre and Carmel. Thus the men of this tribe must have been brought much into contact with the merchants of the east and of the coast. Hence, perhaps, they attained the reputation ascribed to them by Deborah, "Out of Zebulun came they that handle the pen of the writer" (Judg. v. 14). This handling of the writer's pen seems to have led them to methodical and systematic study of the military art; for among those who came to David at Hebron were "of Zebulun, such as went forth to battle, rangers of battle, who could set the battle in array" (1 Chron. xii. 33). At the same time, as we see from 1 Chron. xii. 40, Zebulun was rich in agricultural produce.

Indeed, in the district we have defined, there is no waste or rugged ground. The hills, though not rival-

ling the fertility of the *Ard el Buttauf*, which was the granary of Galilee, yet have not the barren nakedness of many of the less wooded and watered hills of Southern Palestine. With some few favourable exceptions, there is a marked contrast in the general appearance of the hills of Galilee and those of Ephraim and Judah. This may, indeed, arise from the fact that the timber has not been exterminated in the former, as it has been in the latter; but also, these hills, approaching the southern spur of Lebanon, seem always to have had a more copious and less precarious supply of water than the more southern ranges.

The position, commercial, agricultural, and political, of Zebulun, thus early removed it from an active share in the events of the kingdom; and it had already acquired, in the days of the monarchy, the epithet, "Galilee of the nations:" there being a large Gentile admixture from early times, as also in the New Testament epoch. Yet there was one celebrated occasion on which Zebulun stood forth pre-eminent; and the share which Zebulun and Naphtali took in the deliverance of the whole land from the iron rule of Jabin and his captain Sisera, render these tribes illustrious for ever in sacred history.

As from Issachar, so from Zebulun, one judge is recorded to have sprung—Elon of Aijalon (*Judg.* xi. 12), of whom nothing further than his burial-place is recorded. But it would appear almost beyond doubt that Ibzan of Bethlehem, the judge who preceded him, was also of this tribe, and belonged to Bethlehem of Zebulun, not Bethlehem Ephratah.

Zebulun was, with its neighbours Naphtali and Issachar, swept into captivity by Tiglath-pileser, as is referred to by *Isaiah* (ix. 1; *2 Kings* xv. 29, and xvii. 18). At the same time many must have been left among the mountains; for we find that in the reign of Hezekiah,

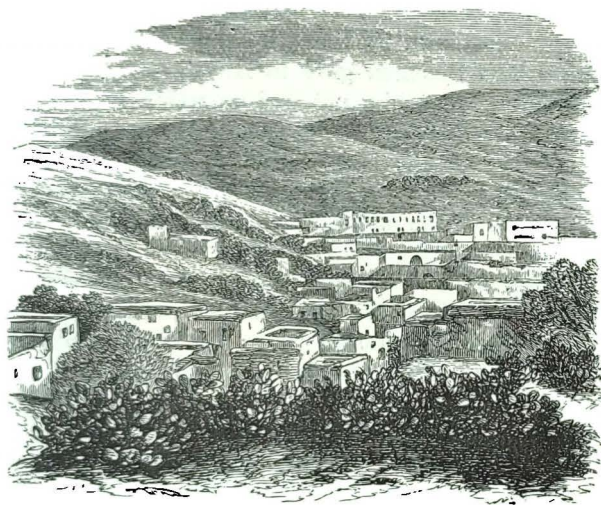
“a multitude of the people, even many of Ephraim and Manasseh, Issachar and Zebulun . . . did eat the passover” at Jerusalem.

But it is rather as the central part of *Galilee* that the region allotted to Zebulun has its chief interest for the Bible student. The name of *Galilee* rarely occurs in the Old Testament, and then with a significance much more limited than in the Gospels. It is first mentioned in Joshua, “Kadesh in Galilee in Mount Naphtali” (ch. xx. 7), the word Galilee meaning “circle,” and seems to have been applied to a circuit round Kadesh. We next meet with the name, as applied to the twenty cities which Solomon gave to Hiram, King of Tyre, but which pleased him not, and to which he gave the name of *Cabul* (*i.e.*, “displeasing,” in Phœnician), with a punning signification, from Cabul in Asher, one of the border towns (1 Kings ix. 11–13). Isaiah speaks of “Galilee of the nations” (ch. ix. 1), referring to the same district.

But the name of a small district became afterwards that of one of the three provinces into which the land was divided in our Lord's time; the other two being Judæa and Samaria. Galilee thus embraced the whole country north of Mount Ephraim. It was divided into two parts, *Lower* and *Upper Galilee*: “Lower” being almost identical with the tribe of Issachar, and Upper Galilee comprising all Zebulun and Naphtali, the district in which our Lord's ministry was chiefly exercised. Galilee was separated from Lebanon by the deep gorge of the River Leontes.

Turning to the several towns mentioned in Zebulun, or Upper Galilee, the most southern, in a westerly direction, seems to have been *Idalah* (Josh. xix. 15), which has been identified with Ed Dalieh, a site on Mount Carmel, not far from Jokneam of Carmel, which we know was the south-western frontier of the tribe.

Shimron, the next place named, was one of the cities whose Canaanitish king joined Jabin against Joshua. It is now Simuniyeh, a village lying between the last-named sites and Nazareth. About a mile and a half farther on we come to the village of Mahlul, which we have the authority of the Talmud for identifying with *Nahalal*, one of the four cities of Zebulun assigned to the Merarite Levites (Josh. xxi. 35). It is in the plain, but just under the hills of Nazareth.



NAZARETH, FROM THE EAST.

Japhia is given as the town on the border of Zebulun, between Daberath on Tabor and Gath-Hepher. It lies three miles east of Mahlul, and two miles south of Nazareth, and is still a flourishing village, with a few palm-trees, called, with scarcely any change of spelling, *Yáfa*. It is not mentioned again in the Bible, but is prominently mentioned by Josephus as a very large

place, which he occupied in his struggle with the Romans, and where a terrible slaughter of Jews was made to the number of fifteen thousand. There is here a remarkable series of caves, of three storeys, opening into each other, unlike any others in Palestine; certainly not tombs, but probably great storehouses for grain.

Rising over the low hills which stand behind Japhia, we soon descend again into what looks like a shallow basin, opening into a winding valley, which runs east and west; and in front of us, on the further edge of the basin, is spread out the town of *Nazareth*, or, as it is now called, En Nazirah. From its very position, this unwall'd town—the precious memories of which are entwined with our holiest thoughts, and whose name has become a household word to the ends of the earth—seems to covet obscurity and seclusion. Unlike Bethlehem and the cities of Judah and Benjamin, perched on the hill-tops: unlike Shechem, whose gushing fountains and perennial streams have invited the earliest settlements of man, the site of Nazareth offers no natural advantages. Among the many smaller ridges which crowd round the platform, from which rises the mountain chain of Lebanon, several here are clustered, forming a wide natural amphitheatre, the crest of which rises round the basin of Nazareth, as though to guard it from intrusion: “enclosed by mountains as the flower is by its leaves.” The town clings to the hill-side, on a steep slope at the north-west of this hollow, unknown and unnamed in the Old Testament,—a place that had no history till He came, who has hallowed and immortalised it.

The rim of hills round Nazareth is generally bare, rocky, and treeless, in this contrasting strongly with Northern Galilee. Nazareth has been filled by monastic inventions with holy places, such as the Virgin's House, and others equally unhistorical. But there is

one special incident of our Lord's life at Nazareth which points to a definite locality, and that is "the brow of the hill whereon their city was built," down which the infuriated men of Nazareth sought to cast headlong Him whose teaching had offended them. This has been transferred by the monks to the so-called "Mount of Precipitation," half an hour south-east of the town, a site contradicted by the history. There are several precipitous cliffs in Nazareth itself. So steep is the place generally, that in many parts there are only houses on one side of the street, the other being simply a wall of rocks, whence building material has been quarried. But while the extension of the modern town is towards the valley, the traces of the older village are rather higher up. There is almost a semicircle of steep cliffs, though now concealed, for the most part, by a luxuriant growth of prickly pear; and in excavating the upper platform, there have recently been found many traces of ancient buildings, situated above the amphitheatre which forms the modern town.

There is yet another spot at Nazareth, not mentioned in the sacred narrative, yet intimately connected with it, of the identity of which there can be no doubt—the Fountain of Nazareth. About five minutes' walk to the east of the present town, through a pathway shaded by noble old olive-trees, is a copious fountain, the only one for the supply of the place. The water is conducted to it from the hills by underground conduits, which are of great antiquity, and the supply never fails. The structure is modern, having been erected a few years ago, but is on the exact site of the older one. In the little open space close by stands the Greek Church of the Annunciation: for the apocryphal tradition is, that the Angel's salutation to Mary was given as she was drawing water at this fountain. Here, from early morning till long after evening has closed in, the maids and matrons

of Nazareth, with their little ones trooping after them, pass to and fro, with their tall pitchers poised on their heads or shoulders. The well itself is the general rendezvous of the place; for, being an unwalled town, there is no "gate of the city" at which to congregate.



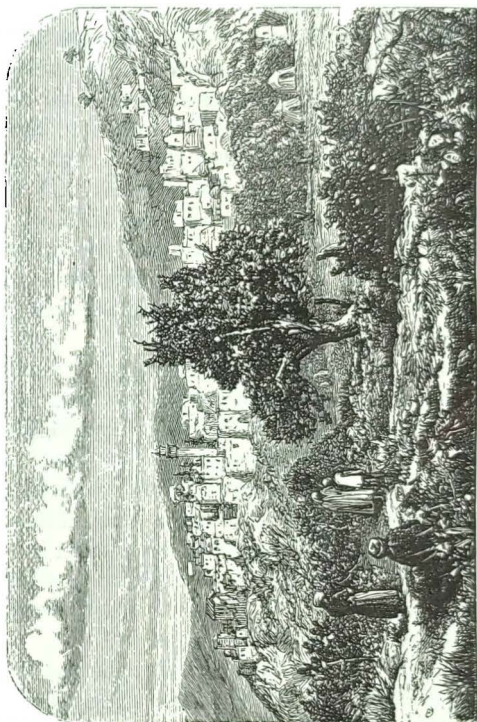
GIRL OF NAZARETH.

Often and often may the infant Saviour have passed with his mother, as the boys do now, following her. The path under the olive-trees, like that from Bethany round the base of Olivet, and like Jacob's Well, is one of the few where we may be perfectly sure we are treading for the moment in His earthly footsteps.

There is a peculiarity in the head-dress of the women of Nazareth and the neighbouring villages, which helps to illustrate one of the most familiar of our Lord's parables, that is the "semadi," or roll of coins, which every woman, however poor, carries round her face. The silver coins, piled one on another and strung through the centre of each, are fixed in a sort of pad encircling the head. These coins are the woman's private property, which the husband can never touch, descending from mother to daughter. It is to them our Lord alludes in the parable of the lost piece of silver. Poor, indeed, must she be, who had only ten such pieces; and piteously would she bewail the loss of one piece of her little store. How she would light her lamp and search her dark room—for the houses of Nazareth have no windows to the *inner* apartments, where are stored all the goods, chattels, and implements of the family—and how joyously would she proclaim her good fortune, in the evening, to her neighbours at the well!

Nazareth is now a place of much greater importance than at any former period of its history. Though shunned by the Jews, it has become the chief commercial centre of Galilee, and contains a population which is now over 5,000 souls. The number of its inhabitants has been largely recruited from the Christians of the various villages of Esdraelon, who, harassed by perpetual marauding forays of the Bedouin, have sought security and peace in the town, beyond the reach of the freebooters. The trade of the place arises chiefly from its being the mart of exchange between the exporting merchants of Acre and Caiffa for Europe and the wild Bedouin sheep-masters and sheikhs, who can ride here from the Jordan, and transact their business, without giving the Turkish officials time to intercept or molest them. They feel, at least, within reach of their native

deserts. There is also a Protestant population of 700 souls ; and the new English church on the brow of the hill—the first ever built in Galilee, and in which the Rev. J. Zeller gathers his flock—is by far the most conspicuous and architectural building in Nazareth.



NAZARETH, FROM ABOVE THE WELL.

We ought not to leave the topography of Nazareth without noticing the fine panorama from the hill behind it, which overlooks the low ridges that shut in the basin of Nazareth from the Plain of Esdraelon, and sweeps the whole of the great battle field of Israel from east to

west. Hermon, Tabor, and Carmel are all in view. To the east the green dome of Tabor, with Gilboa to the south of it. In front, there is the plain across which Sisera fled and Jehu sped ; where were decided the struggles of Gilboa and Megiddo ; and whose story of battles runs down from the inroads of Midian, through the campaigns of Tancred and the Crusaders, till the battle of Mount Tabor, as it is called, fought in front of Nazareth, wreathed one of his earliest laurels on the brow of Napoleon. Before us rise the slopes, on which stand Endor and Nain. Jezreel and Megiddo are in sight, and Carmel, pushing into the sea which forms a glittering silver fringe for the landscape. Turning towards the north, the irregular hilly mass of Galilee gradually rises, till walled in by the snowy peaks of Hermon ; and the horizon is bounded by the rugged hills of distant Bashan, with many a black crater rising from a foreground of forest.

Turning again from Nazareth towards the north-west, we come upon a succession of ruined sites, some of the two hundred and forty towns with which Galilee was studded in the time of Josephus, but of which, as the ancient names have not been recorded, we have no clue to the rendering of the modern names. Yet we may often be sure of the old unnamed town from its Arabic designation. Thus Zebda, Jebâta, Arrabeh, tell plainly of a *Zébad*, a *Gebatha*, an *Arabah*, which have never been engraved on the records of history.

About eight miles a little to the north of west of Nazareth, is Beitlahm, the *Bethlehem* of Zebulun (Josh. xix. 15). It is a squalid village of a score of houses in the plain, and is not mentioned again in Scripture, except as the native place and burial-place of Ibzan, the Judge who succeeded Jephthah (Judg. xii. 8, 10).

A few miles to the east of Beitlahm is the flourishing village of Sefurieh, the mean hovels of which are built

among a number of ruins, carved sarcophagi, prostrate columns, the remains of a large Crusader-church, and a much more ancient square fortress. It is the *Sepphoris* of Josephus, the *Diocæsarea* of the later Romans; and though not mentioned in Scripture, unless as *Kitron* (Judg. i. 30), bears a very important part in later Jewish history. Herod Antipas made it the largest and strongest city of Galilee; and it took precedence of Tiberias. After the destruction of Jerusalem, it became the seat of the Jewish Sanhedrim before it was transferred to Tiberias. It was afterwards a Christian bishopric. In the time of the Crusades it was a centre for the Christian armies. At the Fountain of Sepphoris the Crusaders mustered before the fatal battle of Hattin; and on the same spot, a few days after, Saladin encamped with his victorious troops, on his way to Acre, where the last struggle of the Crusades was fought.

About four miles east of Sepphoris, and little more than the same distance north of Nazareth, is the village of Kefr Kenna, *Cana of Galilee*, memorable through all time as the scene of our Lord's first miracle; where again He met the nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum (John vi. 46); and where the Apostle Nathanael was born (ch. xxi. 2). It is now a small village, chiefly Christian, and contains a ruined church. But Kenna is not the only claimant for the Cana of Galilee of the Gospels. The other, Kana el Jelil, is considerably further to the north. The tradition, affixing the scene to Kenna, is very old; and though the modern name of the other is closer to the ancient, yet its proximity to Nazareth, and the fact of its being on the direct road between Nazareth and Gennesareth, seem to me to far outweigh the claims of the northern and remote site. Of course the monks have localised the house of the wedding, and show the water-pots.

There is a small Protestant congregation at Kenna, an offshoot of the Church of Nazareth.

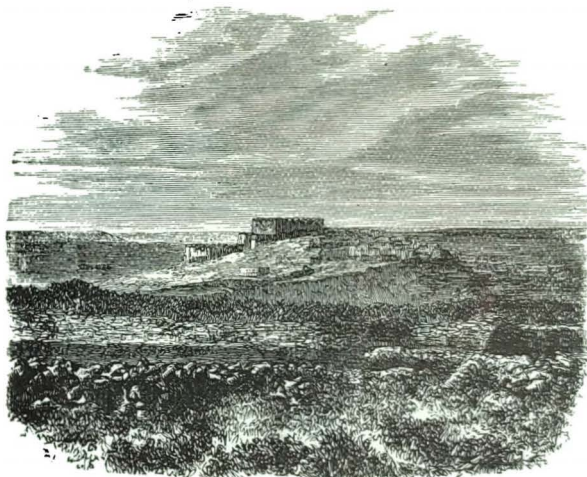
Between Sepphoris and Kenna, on the left hand in going from Nazareth to the latter, is a little village, perched on the top of a rocky hill, and now called El Meshhad. It is the ancient *Gittah-hepher*, or *Gath-hepher* (Josh. xix. 13), which was in the border of Zebulun, and is celebrated as the birthplace of Jonah the prophet (2 Kings xiv. 25). The identification is very satisfactory. The Rabbinical writers tell us that the Tomb of Jonah was shown at Gath-hepher, on a hill, near Sepphoris; and at El Meshhad his tomb is still shown, venerated by Moslems and Christians alike.

No one has yet been able to point out *Ittah-kazin*, the next landmark given in Zebulun; but the following place, *Remmon-methoar* (or rather *Remmon*, for "*methoar*" simply means "which reaches to"), has left its name in Rummâneh, a little village on the edge of the plain on Ard-el-Buttauf, more than three miles north-east of Sepphoris. It has been known and mentioned by early as well as later travellers. It seems probable that *Remmon* is the same as *Dinnah*, one of the cities of Zebulun assigned to the Levites, the sons of Merari (Josh. xxi. 34), and which is not otherwise named among the towns of the tribe. The change of the letters d (ד) and r (ר) is very easy in Hebrew. Of *Kartar*, the fourth Levitical city in the tribe, no trace has been yet discovered.

Neah, mentioned next after Remmon, must, from the position in the list, have been to the north; but it has not been recognised. *Kattath*, *Katunith* of the later Rabbis, seems probably to be the same as Kana el Jelil, the Syriac of which is Katna, and somewhere in the neighbourhood of which Kattath must have stood. It may be the *Kitron* of Judg. i. 30, which is said to be *Sepphoris*, now Seffurieh. As we have seen that its

claims to be the Cana of our Lord's ministry are met by those of Kenna, a village near Nazareth and on the way to Tiberias, this more remote site may very well agree with Kattath.

From Joshua (xix. 27) we find that the landmark on the north-west, between Zebulun and Asher, was *the Valley of Jephthah-el*. Thence it ran to *Zebulun*, considered by Van de Velde to be the town of Abilin, on



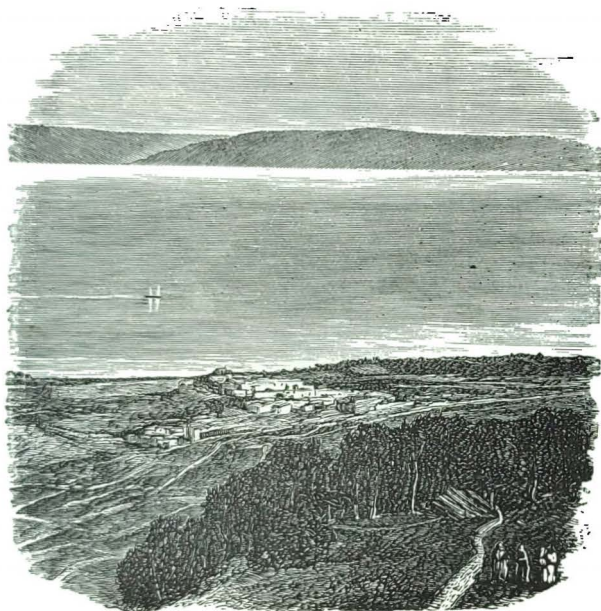
SHEF-AMAR, AN ESDRAELON VILLAGE.

the Wady Abilin, but lower down in its course, close to the opening on to the Plain of Acre. The line is easily traced on the spot. The border of Zebulun passed from Carmel, at Jokneam, to Zebulun (Abilin), thence by the Valley of *Jephthah* to *Cabul*, where it touched Naphthali as well as Asher.

Part of Carmel belonged to Zebulun, but a strip of land by the sea fell to the heritage of Asher, and between

Jokneam (Keimun) and the sea may be recognised, along the south boundary of Carmel, el Mezra'ah, possibly *Maralah*, the crusading Merla, and *Dabbasheth*, the modern Duweibeh.

Jephtah, though never mentioned again in the Sacred history, claims especial notice as the *Jotapata* of Josephus,



HATTIN.

and retains its old name of Jefat. It is a singular and lonely spot. An isolated round hill, connected only on the north by a narrow rocky ledge with the surrounding heights, with a platform of bare rock on the top, perforated with cisterns—the sides hollowed in every direction with caves. But there is not a stone or a trace of a fortress—only on the neck are many hewn

stones, belonging to former buildings. Yet there is not a shadow of doubt that this is the place so long defended by Josephus against Vespasian, and it is most exactly described by the Jewish historian. Here he resisted the Romans for forty-eight days, but was obliged at last to surrender.

Some miles to the north of Jefat, a ruined site on a hill bears the name of Jalûn, probably the *Aijalon* (Judg. xii. 11), where the Judge Elon of Zebulun was buried.

Pursuing an easterly course from Jefat, we come to the village of Arrabeh, perhaps the *Maralah* of Josh. xix. 11, though there is no certainty of the identification; and *Sarid*, as yet undiscovered. A little further east, among the hills to the north of the Plain of Buttauf, on a conical hill, the ruins of a deserted site, called Deir Hannan, preserves the memory of *Hannathon*, the last place to be noted on the northern frontier of Zebulun (Josh. xix. 14).

Hence the boundary ran down by the north of the Plain of Buttauf and Hattin to the Lake of Galilee by the Wady Hamam and the south of the Plain of Gennesareth. On the high table-land, which intervenes between the Buttauf and the Lake, rises a conspicuous saddleback hill, something like two horns, called the Horns of Hattin, and celebrated as the scene of the fatal defeat of the Crusaders, 5th July, 1187, by Saladin, in which the Christians were almost annihilated, and after which Jerusalem and the whole country fell under the Moslem yoke to this day.

Below, on the brow of Wady Hamam, and very near the Plain of Gennesareth, are the ruins of Irbid, the *Betharbel* of Hosea (x. 14), the capture of which by Shalmaneser was marked by a cruel massacre of every age and sex. In later times, the wonderful labyrinth of caves, which line the whole of this stupendous gorge,

were the stronghold of powerful robber bands, the capture and destruction of which were among the severest feats of Herod the Great, who could only reach the fortresses of the freebooters by parties of soldiers, let down in strong cages by chains from the heights above. These storied caves still remain, extending for more than a mile, and many of them can only be reached by means of ropes.*

* See "Land of Israel," pp. 450-452.

CHAPTER XI.

UPPER GALILEE.—NAPHTALI.—GENNESARETH TO HERMON.

Sea of Galilee—Its extent—Fishery—Former population—Town—Chinnereth—Lake of Gennesareth—General view—Ziddim—*Hattin*—Tarichæa—Rakkath—*Kerak*—Hammath—Baths of Tiberias—Tiberias—*Tubariyeh*—History—Remains—Dalmanutha—*Ain el Bareideh*—Gennesareth—*El Ghuweir*—Migdol—Magdala—*Mejdel*—Plain—Glens—*Wady Amud*—*Wady Leimun*—*Ain Mudawarah*—Round Fountain—*Khan Minyeh*—*Ain et Tin*—Capernaum—Three claimants—Bethsaida—*Ain Tabighah*—*Tell Hum*—Ruins—Synagogue—Chorazin—*Kerazeh*—Entrance of the Jordan—Bethsaida—Julias—*Wady Semakh*—Gergesa—*Khera*—Gamala—Aphek—*Fik*—Hukkok—*Yakuk*—Ramah—*Safed*—Giscala—*El Jish*—Iron—*Yarun*—Beth-anath—*Anátu*—Horem—*Hurah*—Migdal-el—*Mujeidel*—Waters of Merom—*Huleh*—Battle of Joshua and Jabin—Edrei—Hazor—*Tell Harah*—Kedesh-Naphtali—*Kedes*—Description—Ruins—Synagogue—Zaanaim—Harosheth—Heleph—*Beitlif*—Beth Rehob—*Hunin*—Abel-Beth-Mauchah—Abil—Ijon—*Ayún*—Laish—Dan—*Tell Kadi*—Ruins—Source of the Jordan—*Hasbany*—*Wady Teim*—Cæsarea Philippi—Panaas—*Banias*—Baal-Gad—Spring of Banias—Upper Source of the Jordan—The Transfiguration—Castle of *Subeibeh*—Mount Hermon—Sirion—Sion—Shonir—*Jebel Sheikh*—Northern boundary—Temple on the summit—Dew of Hermon.

At Hattin we are close to the Lake of Gennesareth, and though part of its shores washed the territory of Zebulun, yet, as its historical interest is chiefly bound up with that portion which pertained to Naphtali, it may be well to commence the examination of the northern part of Upper Galilee, or Naphtali, with a survey of the sacred Lake.

The parallel ridges which shut in the Jordan Valley here slightly expand, so as to allow for the spreading of the waters of the river, of which the Lake is really a part. On the west side there is a narrow margin of low-lying land, which expands in the centre into the little Plain of Gennesareth, about three miles square. The Lake is about twelve and a half miles long and six

and three-quarters wide, and is 655 feet below the level of the Mediterranean Sea. On the east side especially the water is of great depth, and there the cliffs come close to its edge, shelving almost perpendicularly for 2,000 feet below the great plateau or table-land of Bashan, which here abruptly ends. Above the Lake these hills slope gently down. Owing to its great depth, the climate is almost tropical; the plants are different from those of Galilee, and are, most of them, like those which fringe the Dead Sea; and snow and frost are unknown.

The Lake absolutely swarms with fish, and the shoals may often be seen on the surface in dark masses, which, as their top fins appear on the surface, look at a distance as though a violent shower were rippling the surface for an extent of an acre or more. Yet the fishing is almost extinct. Only two or three boats can be seen on the Lake, and the few fishermen on its banks either fish with a hand-net, or a cast-net close to the edge of the shore, or fling poisoned crumbs upon the shoals as they come within reach, and then collect the dying fish by wading into the water.

In the New Testament period there were nine cities on its shores, besides many villages on the sides of the hills, while hundreds of boats pursued the fisheries, or ferried passengers and merchandise across what was then the highway from Damascus and Syria to Europe. It was then, as we are told by Josephus, the most densely peopled region of Palestine. Now those shores are almost deserted. Tiberias is the only town remaining, and it is shrunken, decrepit, and for the most part in ruins. There are a few mud hovels at Magdala; and one house where once was Bethsaida; and that is all.

The *Galilean Lake* is rarely mentioned in the Old Testament, where it is known as "*the Sea of Chinnereth*"

(Numb. xxxiv. 11), and is given as on the eastern border of the western tribes; and again in Josh. xi. 2 and xii. 3, where it is called "*Chinneroth*," and ch. xiii. 27, "the edge of the sea of Chinnereth." It never recurs till we meet it, as the chief scene of our Lord's ministry.



TIBERIAS.

in the Gospels. There it is called *the Sea of Galilee* (Matt. iv. 18; Mark vii. 31; John vi. 1, &c.); *the Sea of Tiberias* (John vi. 1, and xxi. 1); and *the Lake of Genesaret* (Luke v. 1). It is now called Bahr Tubariyeh (the Sea of Tiberias)—all these names being taken from places on the western, the more inhabited side.

The first glimpse of the Sea of Galilee obtained by the traveller from the west is very impressive. One ridge after another, after crossing the basin, or plain, called Ard el Hamma, is passed, and on a sudden the calm blue basin, slumbering in placid sweetness beneath its encircling wall of hills, bursts upon the view, and the hallowed scenes of our Lord's ministry are spread at our feet a thousand feet below us. The northern end and the entrance of the Jordan, as well as the river's exit at the southern end, are shut off from sight by projecting promontories. In front lies, at the foot of the steep hills, a narrow plain sloping to the sea, and the city of Tiberias, the only remaining town on its shores, enclosed by crumbling fortifications, with shattered but once massive round bastions, and its walls and towers running forward into the water. The Plain of Gennesareth is shut out, excepting only its beach; and along that fringe, or not far behind it, lie what traces there remain of Chorazin, Bethsaida, and Capernaum. Across the Lake runs the line of heights of the country of the Gadarenes, and the scene of the feeding of the five thousand. On some one of the slopes beneath, the Sermon on the Mount was delivered. Though the Lake looks small for the theatre of such great events, yet all the incidents seem brought together as in a diorama. There is a calm peacefulness in the look of its western shores, with the paths by the water's edge, which make them the fitting theatre for the delivery of the message of peace and reconciliation.

None of the places which are so indelibly impressed on the memory as the scenes of our Lord's ministry and miracles, occur in the Old Testament history, but had all sprung into importance with the commercial rise of Galilee. Yet five or six of the fenced cities of Naphtali would seem to have been near the shores of the Lake. The first-named in the catalogue of Joshua

is *Ziddim* (ch. xix. 35), stated by the Jerusalem Talmud to be the same as *Kefr Chittai*, which has been guessed, with some probability, to be the village of Hattin, at the foot of the famous Horns of Hattin, six miles north-west of Tiberias. The village has several traces of antiquity in its tombs, and is, compared with many others, a clean and thriving place. Of *Zer*, next named, we know nothing.

From the heights of Hattin we "come down" to the shores of the Lake, as our Lord *came down* from Nazareth among the heights to Capernaum. Descending by the lower end of the Lake—which we have no record of our Lord ever having visited, probably because Tiberias, the Baths, and Tarichæa, were all Herodian and Roman rather than Jewish centres at that period—we find a perfectly level plain of deep rank verdure, which receives the Jordan as it silently cuts its way through its low banks, and winds away down the wide opening of the valley. Just above the exit of the river, on the western side, are the ruins of *Tarichæa*, now called Kerak, and probably the *Rakkath* of Joshua, since it is placed in the list of Joshua next *Hammath*, which is close to Tiberias. Kerak stands on a little peninsula, covered with ruins, with a long Roman causeway, through the arches of which the water of the Lake sometimes flows. It is not mentioned further in Scripture, but was a place of importance in the war with the Romans, fortified by Josephus, and at length, after a stubborn resistance, taken and destroyed by the army of Titus. The mound is about fifty feet high, and the ditch, which completed the isolation, was partly artificial. The soil is full of remains, mosaic pavements, and fragments: for Tarichæa was celebrated for its pottery.

From the exit of the Jordan a narrow path leads up the west side to Tiberias. The bold cliffs come close to the water's edge and occasionally push into the Lake,

where the road climbs a shoulder and descends again. On the bluff is a village, with the name of Kadis, one of the many of Galilee which recall *Kadesh*.

About four miles up are the Baths of Tiberias or Hammám, the *Hammath* of Joshua. It is the same which is given as *Hammoth-Dor* (Josh. xxi. 32) and *Hammon* (1 Chron. vi. 76), one of the cities of Naphtali allotted to the Levites. The name was written as



TIBERIAS.

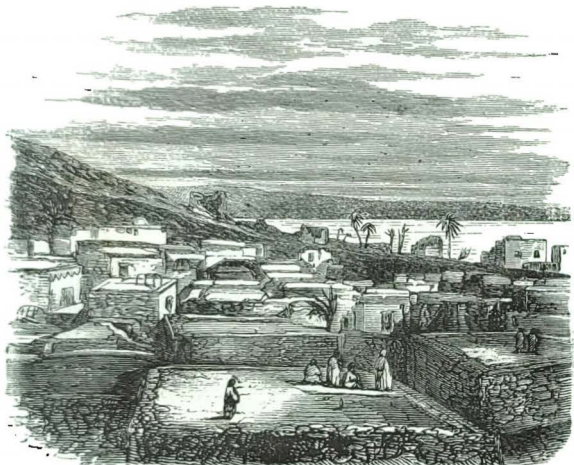
Ammaus by the Greeks. For ages these baths have been famous. They consist of four most copious springs, gushing down not far from each other very near the Lake. The steam of the hot water can be seen at a distance. The temperature is 144° Fahr., the waters are salt and sulphurous, and have always been resorted to for their healing powers, especially in rheumatism. There are modern buildings over two of the springs, forming public baths; but the splendid old city has gone.

For more than a mile round, both inland on the shore, and in the water, the ground is strewn with ruins. Pedestals and columns, prostrate or broken, in the Lake; columns, marble and basalt, erect, prostrate, or sloping, some broken, some entire; massive walls, Roman pavements, hewn caves in the cliffs behind, mark where Roman temples, costly villas, and Jewish synagogues once adorned the borders of the Lake, and formed an Oriental Puteoli.

The ruins continue, with scarcely any interruption, till we reach *Tiberias*, now the only town on the shores of the Lake, about a mile further north—the *Chinnereth* of Joshua, according to Jerome. The ruins indicate that the ancient city extended rather to the south of the present site, and the modern name, Tubariyeh, is identical. It is probable that the still earlier city of Chinnereth was a little further north. There is no indication in the Gospel history that our Lord ever visited Tiberias. This may be explained by the history of the place. It was founded by Herod Antipas, the murderer of John the Baptist, and who frequently resided there. He named it in honour of the Emperor Tiberius. It was here, according to some, that the festival was held, at which the daughter of Herodias danced before the tyrant. It is said to have been built on the site of an ancient burial-ground, and therefore to have been ceremonially unclean, and consequently almost exclusively inhabited by Gentiles.

It is remarkable that a Roman city should have subsequently become one of the chief Jewish holy places. In the wars with the Romans, Tiberias bore a conspicuous part; and after the destruction of Jerusalem, from the middle of the second century, it was for three hundred years the seat of the Jewish Sanhedrim, which had settled for a time, first at Jamnia, and then at Sepphoris. Here the great Rabbinical commentary, the Mishna,

was compiled, and also the Jerusalem Talmud and the Masorah. It has ever since been the seat of the Jewish Rabbinical university. The modern Jews have a tradition that the Messiah will rise from the Galilean Lake and land at Tiberias, which, consequently, is one of their four sanctuaries: the others being Jerusalem, Hebron, and Safed, at which latter they say the Messiah will establish His throne. Tiberias was taken by the Khalif



INSIDE TIBERIAS.

Omar, afterwards by the Crusader Tancred, who founded a bishopric. Now the place is almost exclusively Moslem and Jewish. There are a few Protestant families.

The modern town of Tiberias is sadly shattered and ruined by earthquakes. Its fortifications and walls are rent, and some of the towers overthrown. Many of them project into the Lake, in which are still standing lines of walls partially submerged. A large space within the fortifications is empty and deserted, and used merely as camping-ground by travellers, with a few palm-trees

waving here and there. There is a gently sloping space, about a quarter of a mile wide, from the steep cliffs and hills that here recede a little from the Lake, and which is all strewn with ruins. On the hill sides are the whited sepulchres of many venerated Rabbis, especially of the celebrated Maimonides.

A little to the north of Tiberias the hills again approach the Lake, leaving only a narrow strip of beach, along which is a path for three and a half miles to the Plain of Gennesareth, while many sunken rocks and jagged peaks and reefs may be seen above and below water when we watch the calm clear surface of the Lake. The path sometimes recedes into a sloping field, sometimes contracts into a mere rugged track, which unites the slopes of Tiberias with the fertile *Gennesareth*, El Ghuweir, the central point of the life and works of our Redeemer. Just before emerging on this is a little open valley, widening down from a narrow ravine in the cliffs, called Ain-el-Bareideh, with a few rich corn-fields and gardens straggling among the ruins of a village, and some large and more ancient foundations, by several copious fountains, probably identified with *Dalmanutha* (Mark viii. 10). This is inferred by a comparison with Matt. xv. 39, where we read, "Jesus came into the borders of Magdala." Hence they must have been near together. There are a few traces of an unwalled town.

The steep cliffs then come close down to the shore, with a path over a low shoulder, and thence recede almost at a right angle, leaving a wide marshy plain, at the south corner of which is the squalid and filthy collection of hovels, called Mejdol (*Migdol* or *Magdala*), with a crumbling and not very ancient watch-tower, once, perhaps, the key of the entrance to the plain. This is all that remains of a spot, whence is derived a name familiar and loved through Christendom. *Magdala* is only the

Greek form of *Migdol*, or watch-tower, one of the many places of the name in Palestine.

From the angle of the ridge above Magdala is a splendid view of the Plain of Gennesareth and of the



PLAIN OF GENNESARETH.

Sea of Galilee. The soil of the plain is wonderfully rich. It is a wilderness—not, as in the days of Josephus, an earthly paradise ; but it is a strikingly beautiful one. Wild flowers spring up everywhere. Tulips, anemones, and irises, carpet the ground. The various streams

are lined with deep borders of oleanders, waving with their rosy tufts of bloom, one sheet of pink. Thick tangles of thorn-tree every here and there choke the straggling corn-patches, festooned with wreaths of gorgeous purple convolvulus. The plain is almost a parallelogram, shut in on the north and south sides by steep cliffs, nearly a thousand feet high, broken here and there into terraces, but nowhere easily to be climbed. On the west side the hills recede not quite so precipitously, and streams of black basalt boulders encroach on the plain. The shore line is gently embayed, and the beach is pearly white—one mass of triturerated freshwater shells—and edged by a fringe of the exquisitely lovely oleander. At the north-west and south-west angles, tremendous ravines open upon the plain. That to the south, Wady Haman, where the cliffs rise perpendicularly twelve hundred feet, is the ravine of the robber caves, already mentioned, with its tiers of cavern chambers.

The glen to the north-west, the Wady Amûd, is scarcely less striking, and in some places, from its narrowness, is even more imposing. Both are the homes of thousands of griffon vultures, which rejoice in the deserted caverns and solitude. Wady Amûd rises in the Jurmuk, the highest mountain of Galilee, and in the greater part of its course is called the Wady Leîmun. Between these two a third wady, Rubudiyeh, opens in a wider valley comparatively open. From each of these perennial streams run to the Lake, fertilising the whole plain; and in ancient times aqueducts conveyed the waters to every part.

A little way to the south of the middle valley, a copious spring bursts forth into an ancient circular fountain, about thirty yards in diameter, Ain Mudawarah, from which a little stream runs right across the plain to the Lake. This I formerly believed to be the

Fountain of Capernaum, described by Josephus. But it has been since shown by the researches of Sir C. Wilson that the larger and similar Fountain of Et Tabighah, to the north of the plain, had its waters conducted by an aqueduct, which has been traced, right into the plain, round the projecting headland which forms its north-eastern angle, and, therefore, the description of Josephus will apply equally to it. No doubt there are difficulties connected with the site of Capernaum, whichever of the three localities claimed for it we accept; but, after the recent surveys, I am not prepared to maintain the site of Mudawarah.

In the plain itself there are no other ruins of importance till we reach the north-east angle; and if Capernaum were, as all writers describe it, *in* the plain, it must have been either here or at Mudawarah. Josephus describes the Round Fountain of Capernaum as watering the plain. But the Round Fountain need not have been quite close to the town; and as Sir C. Wilson has shown that the waters of another Round Fountain, which, like Mudawarah, also contains the fish called *Coracinus*, are brought by an aqueduct into the plain, the *exclusive* claim of Mudawarah stands no longer, for the Round Fountain and the fish *Coracinus* which it contained are the two points in Josephus' account.

The ruins at this point are few. There is a large ruined Saracenic khan, some chambers of which are still used as cattle sheds. It was known seven hundred years ago as a halting-place on the road from Damascus, and is called Khan Minyeh. A few yards lower down, nearer the shore, is Ain et Tin, "the fountain of the fig-tree," bursting copiously from the rocks, and sending forth a supply of sweet water under the shade of three fine fig-trees, whence its name. The little stream, after a course of about thirty yards, forms a small

luxuriant marsh, skirted with oleanders, and choked with waving tufts of the beautiful tall papyrus of Egypt. The ruins, the second claimant for *Capernaum*, are to the west of it, forming a series of mounds, but no fragments of columns or carvings have been found. On the hill above are some more distinct ruins and tombs, and just above the khan the aqueduct from Ain Tabighah winds round the cliff, and is now used as a horse-path. The spot loses none of its interest from the disputed identification. Whatever it be, many times must our Redeemer have trodden the path by that fountain; and often the walls below and the cliffs above it re-echoed the voice of Him who spake as never man spake.

Passing north, we leave Gennesareth's plain round the edge of a bluff which descends to the water's edge, wholly interrupting any passage by the shore, and having no beach. Descending immediately, the path leads close by the beach, and at little more than a mile stands Ain Tabighah, usually agreed on as *Bethsaida*, "the house of fish," and still the chief fishing-station on the Lake, the few naked fishermen casting hand-nets into the shallow waters; one boat being used to supply the Tiberias market. A few hundred yards behind on the hill is the great Round Fountain before alluded to, and supposed by Sir C. Wilson to be the Fountain of Capernaum of Josephus. It is the largest spring in Galilee—half the size of that of the Jordan at Cæsarea Philippi. It was formerly raised by a strong octagonal reservoir some twenty feet above its source, and thence conveyed to the plain by an aqueduct. Neglect has long since suffered the great reservoir to be broken through, as well as the aqueduct, of which here and there piers may be seen. There are four other fountains, all slightly brackish and warm. These, sending up a cloud of steam in the still atmosphere,

produce a luxuriant semi-tropical oasis around them, but are otherwise wasted, save that a portion of the water is collected in an aqueduct to turn a corn-mill, the only one in working order of five, and the solitary inhabited dwelling of Bethsaida. The white beach gently shelves, and is admirably adapted, with its little curved bay, for fishing-boats. The anchorage is good, and is partly protected by submerged rows of stones, though there does not appear to have been any break-water. Rocks, however, project more than fifty yards out at the south-west, forming a sort of protection. The sand has just the gentle slope fitted for the fishermen running up their boats and beaching them.

Here we may safely fix the scene of the miraculous draught of fishes and the subsequent call of Peter and Andrew, James and John (Luke v. 1-11). Bethsaida was coupled, in the woe denounced by our Lord, with its sister cities Chorazin and Capernaum; and now, not only in the desolation of their sites, but in the very dispute about their identity, we see it has been "more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon" in the day of their *earthly* judgment than for these cities. *Their* names are preserved, *their* sites are unquestioned, but here the names are gone, and even the sites are disputed (Matt. xi. 21-24).

This Bethsaida, the birthplace of Andrew, Peter, and Philip, is called *Bethsaida of Galilee*, to distinguish it from the other Bethsaida, north of the Lake, on the east side of Jordan, *Bethsaida Julias*.

Proceeding northward about a mile and a half, we come upon a little low promontory running out into the Lake, covered with sculptured ruins and known as Tell Hum, the third and, I am now inclined to believe, the rightful claimant for the site of ancient *Capernaum*. The most conspicuous ruin is at the water's edge, called the White Synagogue, built of hard white limestone,

while the district round is strewn with blocks of black basalt. It is now partly buried, and is nearly level with the surface, the capitals and columns having been for the most part carried away or burnt for lime. The excavations of the Palestine Exploration Fund have, however, shown many of the pedestals in their original position and many capitals buried in the rubbish. There can be no doubt, from the form and plan of the building, that it is a Jewish synagogue.

Nine synagogues have been examined, all upon the same plan—rectangular, longest north and south, and divided into five aisles by four rows of columns. With one exception, the entrances are at the south end, and are three in number, one larger and a smaller on each side of it. The lintels over the doors are sculptured, sometimes with seven-branch candlesticks, sometimes with the Paschal lamb, or with vine leaves and a bunch of grapes. The capitals are various, Corinthian or Ionic, but more generally a peculiar capital ornamentation of partly Jewish origin. The roofs appear to have been flat and covered with earth. The windows, so far as they remain, were very small.

The outside of the synagogue of Tell Hum was decorated with pilasters, and attached to its eastern side is a later addition, a rectangular building with three entrances on the north and one on the east, but without a doorway to connect the two buildings. But the most interesting relic here is a large block, once a lintel, with the pot of manna sculptured on it. If this be Capernaum, then this must, beyond doubt, be the synagogue built by the Roman centurion (Luke vii. 4, 5), and it was within its walls that our Lord uttered the discourse in John, chap. vi., and perhaps, pointing to the pot of manna carved over the door, proclaimed, "I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead." It is possible, from the Corin-

thian and Ionic mouldings, that this place is a later erection of the time of the Emperor Hadrian, and that the name Tell Hum, or "bill of Hum," was applied to it when it took the place of the earlier Kefr na-Hum, or Capernaum, "the village of Hum." The remains of the later building are probably those of the church which we are told was built at Capernaum, and is described, about the year A.D. 600, as a Basilica enclosing the house of Peter.

Round the synagogue and stretching for half a mile from the shore, the area is covered with the ruined walls of private houses and the traces of a main street. Beyond these are some remarkable tombs above and below ground. There are no traces of a harbour, and it could never have been a convenient spot for fishing-boats. But at least it seems tolerably certain that whether this be the Capernaum of our Lord's time or not, it is the Capernaum of the Jews when, under Hadrian, they were permitted to return to their land. Its distance from the Round Fountain and from the Plain of Gennesareth seems the obstacle to a decisive admission of its being the city of the Gospels.

Two and a half miles north of Tell Hum, on the left bank of a valley which falls into the Lake near it, are the ruins of Kerazeh, *Chorazin*. Its ruins cover as large an extent as those of Capernaum, and are situated partly in a shallow valley, partly in a rocky spur formed by a sharp bend in Wady Kerazeh, here a wild gorge eighty feet deep, and which lower down is called Wady Tell Hum. The most important ruins are a synagogue with Corinthian capitals and sculpture, cut, not as at Tell Hum, in limestone, but in the hard black basalt. Many of the dwelling-houses are in a tolerably perfect state, the walls being in some cases six feet high; and as they are probably the same class of houses as that in which our Saviour dwelt, a description of them may be inte-

resting. They vary in size, generally square, the largest about thirty feet, and have one or two columns down the centre to support the roof, which appears to have been flat, as in the modern Arab houses. The walls are about two feet thick, built of masonry or of loose blocks of basalt; there is a low door in the centre of one of the walls, and each house has windows a foot high and about six and a half inches wide. In one or two cases the houses are divided into four chambers. There are traces of the road both down to the Lake, and also of that which connected Chorazin with the great Damascus road. Chorazin is especially interesting, as there is no reason to believe that any building has there been occupied since the fall of the Jewish nation.

Returning to the shores of the Lake, a walk of two miles among rugged boulders and blocks of black basalt brings us to the mouth of the Jordan. In a flat plain, perhaps three miles wide, of the richest alluvial mud, the Jordan enters the Lake, the only object which breaks the dead level of the prospect being a clump of palm-trees. No oleanders or shrubs here mark the course of the Jordan, which, turbid and muddy, rolls rapidly through low oozy banks to the Lake. About two miles up is the ford and the mound or "tell" of *Bethsaida Julias*. On the rising ground, a miserable wattled village, inhabited by Arabs, stands among heaps of shapeless stones; but all traces of sculptures have perished, or lie below the surface. There is abundant grass on and below the slope, and abundant space here for the multitude to have sat down when our Lord fed the five thousand with five loaves and two fishes "in a desert place," probably on the hill-side to the south (Luke ix. 10-17). By the ford opposite they crossed over from the other side.

Bethsaida was a small village enlarged and beautified

by Philip the Tetrarch, who gave it the name of *Julias* in honour of the Emperor's daughter. Philip himself was buried here. It is necessary to notice the distinctness of the two Bethsaidas. Here, on the east side, our Lord fed the five thousand (Luke ix. 10), and then sent the people away to the other side, toward the other Bethsaida (Mark vi. 45). And then "He departed into a mountain (on the east side) to pray" (Mark vi. 46; John vi. 15-17); and when even was come He was there alone. Then the storm sprang up in the night, while His disciples were crossing in the boat, and was allayed when Jesus appeared, and "immediately the ship was at the land whither they went."

Although the east side of the Lake was in Manasseh, and not in Galilee, it may be convenient here to notice the few places of interest on that side. The notices of this side are very few. The high table-land of Bashan approaches the east shore much more closely, and breaks more abruptly, than do the hills of Galilee on the west.

About one-third of the way from the north end, a little stream from a deep valley enters the Lake, the Wady Semakh, and on the south side of it, at the foot of the hills at the beginning of the little plain, are the ruins of *Gergesa*, now called Khersa. The ruins are enclosed by a wall, but are unimportant. Here was the scene of the casting out the legion of devils and the destruction of the herd of swine (Matt. viii. 28). Sir C. Wilson thus describes it:—"About a mile south of this, the hills, which everywhere else on the eastern side are recessed from half to three-quarters of a mile from the water's edge, approach within forty feet of it. They do not terminate abruptly, but there is a steep even slope, which we would identify with the 'steep place' down which the herd of swine ran violently into the sea, and so were choked." Mr. Macgregor remarks :

“Between Wady Semakh and Wady Fik there are at least four distinct localities where every feature in the Scripture account of this incident may be found in combination. Above them are rocks with caves in them, very suitable for tombs, and further down there is ample space for tombs built on sloping ground, a form of sepulture far more prevalent in Scripture times than we are apt to suppose. A verdant sward is here, with bulbous roots on which swine might feed. And on this I observed—what is an unusual sight—a very large herd of oxen, horses, camels, sheep, asses, and goats, all feeding together.” *Gergesa* was in the district of *Gadara*, hence the place is called “in the country of the Gadarenes” (Mark v. 1 ; Luke viii. 26).

Three miles lower down the Wady Fik enters the Lake ; and a little way up, on the crest of the precipice which encloses it, are the ruins of *Gamala*, now *Kulat el Husn*, not mentioned in Scripture, but celebrated by Josephus for its desperate resistance to the Romans. It was one of the cities of Decapolis.

Further up, at the head of the wady, on the great eastern high-road to Damascus, still used, is the town of Fik, the ancient *Aphek*, “which did furnish both death and gravestones to 27,000 Syrians,” as old Fuller quaintly remarks. Lying as it did on the military road between the two nations, it was a frequent battle-field (1 Kings xx. 26–30 ; 2 Kings xiii. 17).

Returning to the hill country of Naphtali, we find its interest wholly confined to the Old Testament, in which more than twenty of its towns are named. The southern landmark westward of the Jordan was *Aznoth-Tabor* (Josh. xix. 34), of which nothing is known. It must, from its name, have been near Mount Tabor, probably to the north-east. Next we have *Hukkok*, recognised in *Yakuk*, a village six miles west of the Lake of Galilee, and seven miles south of Safed, near one of the feeders

of the Wady Rubudiyeh. It is said to contain the tomb of the Prophet Habakkuk. Five miles north-west of Hukkok we find the name of another of the fenced cities of Naphtali in Ain-Hazur, *En-Hazor* of Josh. xix. 37. There are many Hazors in this district, to judge by the frequent occurrence of the modern Hazar. This, however, is the only Ain-Hazur.

Not less numerous here, as elsewhere, were the Ramahs or "heights." The *Ramah* of Naphtali may be traced in a round-topped hill covered with grass-grown mounds, two miles north-west of Ain-Hazur, and still preserving the name of Rameh. The principal place in this district, and one of the holy cities of the Jews, is Safed, a place which is not named in Scripture history. It is situated on the top of a hill, 2,775 feet high, and most conspicuous from the neighbourhood of Gennesareth. Tradition makes it the "city set on a hill" to which our Lord pointed in the Sermon on the Mount. It is largely inhabited by Jews, and is a great seat of Rabbinical learning. Before the great earthquake of 1837, which has made it almost a heap of ruins, there was a Hebrew printing-press and many synagogues and schools.

There is a road across Galilee from Safed to Tyre. About two hours' journey on this road are the ruins of *Giscala*, now El Jish, the last place in Galilee that held out against the Romans. North of this again, the site of *Iron*, another town of Naphtali, is marked by the ruins called *Yarun*, among the hills.

Beth-anath, another of the fenced cities of Naphtali, seems marked by Anâta, a group of ruins on a hill five miles west of Kedesh. It was one of the cities out of which Naphtali could not drive the Canaanites (Judg. i. 33). *Beth-shemesh* is mentioned on both occasions with *Beth-anath*. No trace of the name has been yet recorded; but the district is full of traces of places on

every hill, of many of which I was not able, while wandering among them, to ascertain their names. Deir-Shum, a group of ruins a little south of Horah, may possibly preserve the traces of Beth-shemesh. Like the others, they crown a low hill or "tell."

Horem, now Hurah, must not be identified with this Horah, but is another fortified town of Naphtali, of which nothing remains but the traces on a hill in the centre of the country three miles west of Yarun (*Iron*).

Still further west, the frontier of the tribe is marked by *Migdal-el*, "the tower of God," Mujeidel, as it is now called. The ruins are at the head of a valley, Wady Kerkerah (perhaps *Kartan* or *Kirjathain*, a Levitical city in Naphtali), running down to the sea (Josh. xxi. 32).

Most of the remaining cities of Naphtali seem to have been collected on the highland plateau west of the *Waters of Merom*, which has always been fertile and well peopled, and was the centre of the Canaanitish power in the north before and after the conquest by Joshua. From the head of the Lake of Galilee to the Waters of Merom, a distance in a straight line of ten miles, the course of the Jordan is through a rich but deserted plain, shut in, as elsewhere in its course, by the enclosing ranges. There are many mounds in this plain, marking the site of perished villages, but not one inhabited, though here and there the wattled huts of the stationary Arabs, or the black tents of the wandering tribes, may be seen. But the lofty plateau which faces the great swamp and little Lake of Huleh, the *Waters of Merom*, on the west side, is full of ruins, many of which recall Scripture names. The hills descend precipitously, and the ruins are crowded near their brow. Between their base and the Lake and swamp is a rich corn plain, cultivated by the people of the uplands, who only encamp below for sowing and harvest time. Probably

its unhealthiness always prevented this plain from being permanently inhabited.

Merom is only mentioned in the Bible (Josh. xi. 5-7) as the scene of the great battle in which Joshua utterly broke the power of Jabin, King of Hazor, and the confederate Canaanites of the north. This battle was, in fact, for the north what that of Beth-horon was for the south. It was the last combined struggle against the conqueror. All were gathered for it from Philistia to Hermon. "They went out, they and all their hosts with them, much people, even as the sand that is upon the sea shore in multitude, with horses and chariots very many" (ch. xi. 4). It must have been in the low plain, west of the Lake, that the army of Israel fell suddenly upon them, routed them utterly, and chased them westwards over the hills to Great Zidon and eastward, or rather north-east, up the Jordan Valley to the Plain (*bikah*) of *Mizpeh* or Cœle Syria, still called by the same name "*Bukaa*." Their horses were houghed and their chariots burnt. This was the first time that we read of chariots and horses in these wars; and the result of the victory was to give the four northern tribes possession of their inheritance.

The open water of *Merom* is very small in extent, merely a triangle, with its apex at the exit of the river, and barely four miles each way. But the impenetrable morass at the head of it is of much greater size, about eight miles in length and four wide, one mass of floating papyrus and reeds, on which it is impossible to find a footing, and through and under which the Jordan works its way to the open water.

On the brow of the ridge, nearly opposite the head of the open water, is a conical rocky hill, called Tell Khuraibeh, "the hill of the ruin," with some remains of ancient buildings, assigned by topographers to *Edrei*, a fenced city, named next Kedesh in the lists of Joshua.

About three miles north-west of this, and two miles south-east of Kedesh, is an isolated hill, called Tell Harah, with the remains of a large city of very ancient date. On the top of the hill are the walls of the citadel, and below a portion of the city wall can be traced. All the buildings are of the same character—rough courses of undressed stones, with the interstices packed with small stones. Sir C. Wilson has convincingly argued that this is the *Hazor* of Jabin. The position is one of great strength, and overhangs the Lake; there are numbers of large cisterns on the hill, and it seems to have escaped the ravages of the Crusading period.

Kedesh-Naphtali, now *Kedes*, is very little to the north of this. It is full of interesting ruins. There are fine old tombs, double sarcophagi, placed, not in cases, but on pedestals of massive masonry; remains also of many ancient buildings, but especially one very large building, of which the eastern front and part of the other walls are still perfect. The central doorway is richly sculptured with wreaths, and it is supposed to have been a synagogue of rather late date. There are also the remains of a tolerably perfect building, square without and cruciform within.

Kedesh, when freed by Barak from foreign foes, must have comprised within its borders everything that could make it a flourishing town. Situated on an eastern slope, behind it rise herbage-clad hills, where flocks and herds pastured for the greater part of the year. The town stood on a knoll, where it could not easily be surprised. Just below it gushed forth a copious spring. Then down a gentle slope were several hundred acres of olive-groves, and beyond them a rich alluvial plain, supplying abundance of corn and vegetables. Below the rugged brow of the steep ridge, it had its strip of marsh land of incomparable fertility. Thus they had every kind of produce at their very doors, like that long string

of towns which studded the goodly heritage of Naphtali: "Satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord" (Deut. xxxiii. 23), from Chinnereth northward to Dan.

Kedesh, *i.e.*, "holy," was, as its name implies, an ancient sanctuary, and it retained its character after the conquest. It was not only assigned to the Levites, but was the city of refuge for the northern tribes (Josh. xx. 7). But its chief historical interest is in connection with Barak. Here the warrior-judge was born. Hence Deborah the prophetess sent Joshua to Mount Ephraim, and hither she returned with him to marshal the soldiers of Zebulun and Naphtali against Sisera. It was near Kedesh, too, that the Canaanite general met his tragic end at the hands of Jael. It was taken by Tiglath-Pileser along with Hazor (2 Kings xv. 29), and was the scene of events in the wars of the Maccabees and the Romans.

Zaanammim or *Zaanaim*, in the border of Naphtali, was the plain near Kedesh (Judg. iv. 11). By the oak, or terebinth, of Zaanaim, Heber the Kenite had pitched his tent when Sisera sought refuge under it. The terebinth still grows to a great size in the upland plain east and south of Kedesh, which, doubtless, must be identified with Zaanaim, though the name has not yet been recovered. From the identity of signification, it has been conjectured to be *Bessûn*, a little east of Tabor. In this plain the black tents of the Bedouin, the modern Kenites, may constantly be seen.

Harosheth of the Gentiles, in this neighbourhood, was the residence of Sisera, and was probably, therefore, in the low ground, in the upper part of the Plain of Jordan on the west side, as this position would be more suitable for the use of chariots and horses, than the highlands of Hazor, where his master, Jabin, had his royal city. There are many ancient sites here, and Tell Harâ, over-

looking the Waters of Merom, may be the site of Sisera's head-quarters.

Of the remaining cities in the borders of Naphtali, *Heleph* has been identified with Beitlif, a ruined site, on the edge of a ravine far west of Kedesh, and which probably formed the boundary line between Naphtali and Asher. *Jabneel*, which the Talmud tells us was called Yama, is the modern Yemma, near Tabor. *Nekeb* has been assigned to Saiyadeh or Hazedhi, further east, a corruption of the later name of Nekeb. But a far more satisfactory identification has been recently discovered in Nakib, a site in the Ard el Hamma, the plain between Tabor and the Sea of Galilee. *Adami* still retains its name as Damieh, and *Lakum* may be traced in Kefr Kama. It has been suggested that this may possibly be *Admah*, the northernmost of the cities of the plain. Of *Adamah*, given by Joshua, the traces have not yet been discovered among the numerous unexplored and unnamed desolate heaps which crowd this region. *Janoah*, the modern Yanukh, is near the western limits of the territory of this tribe.

Towards the extreme north of the land of Israel was *Beth-rehob*, first mentioned in Numb. xiii. 21, as the furthest place visited by the spies: "Rehob, as men come to Hamath." We also read that *Laish*, or *Dan*, was "in the valley that lieth by *Beth-rehob*" (Judg. xviii. 28). It is spoken of as a Syrian dependency in the time of David (2 Sam. x. 6-8). From the various allusions to its position, *Beth-rehob* seems, as Dr. Robinson has argued, to agree exactly with the modern Hunin, where there is a fine ruined castle on the edge of the heights, where the road descends, seven miles north of Kedesh, towards the valley that leads to Laish. The moat of the castle has been hewn out of the rock, and it has been from the earliest times a fortress of importance. Every kind of architecture may be traced here ;

the old Jewish bevel, Roman arches, Saracenic and Crusading masonry, and modern hovels over all. It stands just where the road from the south to Hamath leads into the Buka'a or Plain of Cœle Syria, on the way to Hamath.

Lower down on the edge of the slopes, three miles to the north-east, is Abil, a small village on a knoll, representing the ancient *Abel-beth-Maachah*, or *Abel-Maim* (2 Chron. xvi. 4), a city of Naphtali, first mentioned as the place where Joab besieged the rebel Sheba, and which was saved by the persuasion of a wise woman, who induced her townsmen to deliver up the head of the traitor (2 Sam. xx. 14-22). Being so near the frontier, Abel was an early sufferer from the invasions of Benhadad (1 Kings xv. 20); and was finally carried captive by Tiglath-Pileser into Assyria (2 Kings xv. 29).

North of Abel-beth-Maachah was *Ijon*, probably the northern limit of the tribe, which shared the same fate at the hands both of Syrian and Assyrian. The name is preserved in the little plain, called Merj Ayûn, about seven miles north of Abil, at the upper end of which a round hill, covered with the remains of a strong city, and called Tell Dibbin, doubtless marks the site of the ancient Ijon, in the Valley of the Hasbany, or Upper Jordan.

Ayûn is to the west of Mount Hermon. Following down the course of the Hasbany, till it descends into the Plain of Merom, we cross the river, leaving the territory of Naphtali, and at the head of the plain, at the south-west angle of the base of Mount Hermon, a singularly shaped, flat-topped circular mound, half a mile in diameter, but only eighty feet high, bears still the name of "Tell Kadi," "the Mound of the Judge," or "Dan," the ancient *Dan*, the still more ancient *Laish* (Josh. xix. 47).

It is first named in Scripture when Abraham pursued

Chedorlaomer up the Jordan Valley unto Dan, and rescued his captives (Gen. xiv. 15). It was afterwards settled by a colony from Zidon; and in the rich plain "the people of Laish dwelt, careless, quiet, and secure," till the Phœnician colonists were suddenly surprised by the onslaught of the expedition of six hundred Danites in search of a new settlement. These adventurers, unscrupulous alike in things sacred and profane, stole the teraphim and graven image from Micah of Mount Ephraim, on their way, and carried off also his Levite to officiate as their priest in their new colony (Judg. xviii.) In this place, the north-eastern extremity of his kingdom, Jeroboam set up one of the golden calves, and established his idolatrous worship to suit the convenience of the northern tribes, and to prevent their being tempted to make a pilgrimage to Jerusalem (1 Kings xii. 28-33).

The name of Dan is most familiar as that of the northern border city. "From Dan even to Beersheba" became a common proverb for the whole extent of the land from north to south. Dan is only once specially mentioned after its conquest, and that is when it was taken and pillaged by Benhadad (1 Kings xv. 20). The capture of Laish, and the settlement of a southern tribe so far north, was a fulfilment of the prophecy, "Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan" (Deut. xxxiii. 22).

On the higher part of the mound to the south, ruined foundations can still be traced, where tradition places the temple of the Golden Calf. Nature's gifts are here poured forth in lavish profusion, but man has deserted it. Yet it would be difficult to find a more lovely situation than where "the men of Laish dwelt quiet and secure—a place where there is no want of any thing that is in the earth" (Judg. xviii. 10). Here, too, is what is considered the source of the Jordan. On the

west side of the mound an impenetrable thicket of oaks, oleanders, and reeds entirely conceals the shapeless ruin, and beneath them burst forth the "lower springs" of Jordan, a wonderful fountain like a large bubbling basin, the largest spring in Syria, and said to be the largest single spring in the world, where the drainage of the southern side of Hermon seems to have found a collective exit. Full-grown at birth, at once larger than the Hasbany, which it joins, the river, here called Leddân, perhaps from ancient Dan, dashes through an oleander thicket.

Three miles further on, this stream is joined by that from Baniás (*Casarea Philippi*) above, and in another mile the two unite with the Hasbany to work their way through the morasses of Merom, and are from this point called the Jordan. The true source of the river, measured by distance, is far further to the north. The Nahr Hasbany is to the Jordan what the Missouri is to the Mississippi, and it takes its rise in the Wady et Teim, far away to the north of Hermon, fed by the drainage from the northern side of the mountain, and thence skirting its western base.

From *Dan* (Tell Kadi) we begin to mount the southwestern shoulders of Hermon, and passing through olive-groves and woods of noble oak-trees, in five miles reach Baniás, the *Casarea Philippi* of the New Testament, *Baal-Gad* of the Old Testament, and *Paneas* of the Greeks. The situation is magnificent, with tall limestone cliffs north and east, rugged torrents of basalt to the south, and a gentle wooded slope for its western front. Though its history is long, its remains are not remarkable, the most perfect being the citadel and the fine Roman bridge over the gushing torrent of Baniás, and the tablets carved in the cliff over the fountain, or "upper spring" of Jordan. At the base of a cliff 100 feet high is a cave, at the mouth of which the river

starts forth, and water oozes from the gravel on all sides to join it. This cave was the grotto of Pan; and the sanctuary, or Greek temple, of which the ruins strew the ground, marked the seat of the idolatrous worship whence the name of *Paneas* was derived. Here Herod the Great built a splendid temple in honour of Augustus. Philip the Tetrarch afterwards beautified this temple, and gave the place the name of *Cæsarea Philippi*, in honour of Tiberius, adding his own name to distinguish it from *Cæsarea* on the coast. Everywhere around the ruins is a wild medley of cascades, mulberry-trees, fig-trees, dashing torrents, festoons of vines, bubbling fountains, reeds, and the mingled music of birds and waters.

The Roman name has been long forgotten, and the old one still clings to the place under the form of *Banias*. But there is reason to believe it had a yet older, and that it is the "*Baal-Gad*," in the valley of Lebanon, "under Mount Hermon," of Josh. xi. 17, xii. 6, which was the north-western limit of the land, spoken of as *Dan* was in after times; as *Hamath* was the extreme north-east, and "Mount *Halak* that goeth up to *Seir*" the extreme southern limit.

But the one thing which impresses the interest of *Banias* more deeply than its ruins, its scenery, history, or fountain, is that into "the coasts of *Cæsarea Philippi*" our Redeemer came (Matt. xvi. 13; Mark viii. 27). Among these rocks St. Peter confessed His divinity—that confession which was the "Rock of the Church." Six days at least did He sojourn here. From hence He took the chosen three up into that mountain of Hermon behind, and was transfigured before them. Here was set that wondrous seal to the resurrection of the body as well as to His Godhead. Hence He set His face for the last time to go up to Jerusalem, and here unfolded His coming passion. Perhaps it was on the open space, in

the pathway that leads up to this mountain (the only path up from Banias), that He healed the demoniac boy, and taught His disciples the power of faith.

On a bold bluff 1,000 feet above the town stands the Castle of Subeibeh, one of the grandest and most perfect ruins in Syria. There is the rock-hewn fosse, the ancient Phœnician substructure of great bevelled stones, the Roman arches, and Crusading or Saracenic chambers and arches over all. Some noble cisterns still contain a large supply of water, and several Saracenic halls and long corridors are quite perfect. The building is over 1,000 feet long and 200 wide, with a separate or inner citadel. It was the easternmost of the line of great castles which protected the northern frontier, first Phœnician strongholds, then Jewish frontier fortresses, and made use of in after ages by the successive holders of the country.

There are several retired platforms on Mount Hermon behind this, the last recess of Palestine, where the scene of the Transfiguration may have occurred, with the disciples "apart by themselves."

Hermon itself, although its peak was scarcely within the limits of the Holy Land, yet, as its southern, eastern, and western slopes were shared by the three tribes of Dan, Naphtali, and Manasseh, must be considered a mountain of Palestine, of which it was the north-western boundary. It is the culminating point of the anti-Lebanon range, the watershed east of Jordan, and which, in its prolongation, forms the mountain ranges of Bashan, Gilead, and Moab. It towers into the region of perpetual snow, between 9,000 and 10,000 feet above the sea, and worthily holds the name of "Jebel esh Sheikh," *the chief mountain*; not quite so lofty, indeed, as the summit of Lebanon, but, with its isolated white-tipped cone, far grander in appearance. Its name *Hermon* signifies "lofty peak." By the Sidonians it

was called *Sirion*, "the glitterer;" by the Amorites, *Shenir*, "the breastplate." "Which Hermon the Sidonians call *Sirion*, and the Amorites call it *Shenir*" (Deut. iii. 9). (See also Cant. iv. 8; Ezek. xxvii. 5.) It was also called *Sion*, "the lofty one" (Deut. iv. 28). "As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion," *i.e.*, *Sion* (Ps. cxxxiii. 3).

These names are, all of them, forcible and expressive, for Hermon was the great landmark of the whole country to the northwards. There is scarcely an eminence with a commanding prospect, from the Dead Sea northwards, where Hermon does not catch the eye. From the plains of the coast, from the crests of Mount Ephraim, from the Jordan Valley, from Gilead and the high lands of Bashan alike, that white-crowned cone towers into the blue sky. It seems used as an equivalent for "the north." "The *north* and the south, Thou hast created them; Tabor and *Hermon* shall rejoice in Thy name" (Ps. lxxxix. 12).

The crest of Hermon is strewn with ruins and the foundation of a circular temple of large hewn stones, as well as the remains of a later temple. Both probably belonged at different periods to the Baal-worship of Syria. Perhaps the earlier one was overthrown by Israel, when they held the mountain, in obedience to the command to "utterly destroy all the places, wherein the nations which ye shall possess served their gods, upon the *high mountains* and upon the hills" (Deut. xii. 2). It was certainly the centre spot of Syrian idolatry. The eleven remaining temples of Baal in Syria, wherever situated, all face towards Hermon. The mountain is, consequently, sometimes called *Baal-Hermon* (Judg. iii. 3; 1 Chron. v. 23). St. Peter, in reference, doubtless, to the Transfiguration, calls it "the holy mountain" (2 Pet. i. 18).

Hermon appears, during the flourishing period of the

Israelitish monarchy, to have been held by the eastern portion of the tribe of Manasseh ; for we read, " they increased from Bashan unto Baal-Hermon and Senir, and unto Mount Hermon " (1 Chron. v. 23).

The expression, " the dew of Hermon," seems to have been proverbial, and is well explained by facts. Hermon, unlike most other mountains, springs from its base at once. It is more than 10,000 feet above the sunken ghor from which it rises, and which seethes in a tropical heat. The vapours exhaled by the sun from the vast swamps of Huleh rise during the day to the higher regions, and, congealed by the snows of the mountain, descend nightly in most copious distillation, saturating everything on its sides.

CHAPTER XII.

PHŒNICIA.—TRIBE OF ASHER.

Asher and Phœnicia—Boundaries of each—Wealth and resources of Asher—Mingling with the heathen—Anna, the Prophetess—Plain of Acre—Shihor Libnath—River Belus—Accho—Ptolemais—Acre or Akka—Achzib, Zib—Cabul—Neiel—Beth-Emek—Amkah—Hebron, Abdon—Abdek—Rehob—Ummah—Alma—Hammon—Kamah—Tyre—Sûr—King Hiram—Sieges of Nebuchadnezzar and Alexander—Crusaders—William of Tyre—Cathedral—Port—Prophecies—River Leontes—Litany—Zarephath—Sarepta—Surafend—Zidon or Sidon—Saida—Commerce—Harbour—Mole—Ruins—Aphek—Afka—Berthah—Beirût—Hamath—Hamah—Northern Frontier.

WE now come to the north-western portion of Palestine, that assigned to the tribe of *Asher*. This is better known as *Phœnicia*, though the two are not strictly identical. *Asher* comprised a considerable tract of territory south of Phœnicia, while the latter, at least in profane history, includes a long strip of coast line north of the boundaries of the Holy Land, and never extended into the hill country behind Tyre and Sidon, where many of the towns of *Asher* were situated. The chief towns of Phœnicia were Tyre and Sidon, by the names of which the country is commonly expressed in the Old Testament. The name Phœnicia, signifies in Greek "the land of palm-trees." Its native name was Canaan, or "lowlands," as opposed to *Aram*, or "highlands," the Hebrew name of Syria. Strictly speaking, Phœnicia only extended from Ras-el-Abiad, or the Ladder of Tyre, a bold headland north of the Plain of Acre, to the headlands which push out from Lebanon south of Beirût; a narrow plain twenty-eight miles long and from one to five miles wide.

Afterwards, Phœnicia was spoken of as extending far north of Beirût, the *Berothah* or *Berothai* of 2 Sam. viii. 8, and Ezek. xlvii. 16, to *Gebal* now Jebeil, and *Tripolis*, or *Tarâblous*, and *Arvad* now Ruad. These places are mentioned in Ezek. xxvii. 8-11, as among the dependencies of Tyre. The name Phœnicia only occurs in the New Testament, and no indication is there given of the boundaries or localities assigned to it.

Asher does not seem to have embraced the whole of the strip of coast line in its northern portion. Its boundaries are given (Josh. xix. 28, 29) as "unto great Zidon," "and to the strong city Tyre." At all events, it never had these cities in actual possession; and the league of friendship between David and Hiram, King of Tyre, continued and cemented by Solomon, would seem to indicate that Tyre was scarcely looked upon as within the limits of Israel. Zidon, however, clearly was within the limits of Asher. (See Judg. i. 31.)

The boundaries of Asher, so far as we can trace them, seem to have run south of Carmel from *Dor*, embracing Mount Carmel and the coast of the Plain of Acre, running far east among the hills of Galilee, conterminous with Zebulun and Naphtali, as far as *Ahlab*, or *Giscala* (el Jish); and thence sloping north-east till it reached *Kanah*, north-east of Zidon, whence it turned down to the shore. This territory must, therefore, have been one of the richest in the whole land, as well as more extensive than many.

At the numbering of Israel in the wilderness, Asher was by no means the smallest of the tribes, and it had maintained its position in the time of David (Numb. i. 41; 1 Chron. xii. 36). Yet the history of the tribe is obscure and inglorious. He shared to the full the temporal blessings promised him, and with the usual deadening results of worldly prosperity. In his rich soil, according to the promises of Jacob, his bread was

fat, and he yielded royal dainties (Gen. xlix. 20) in the crops of the Plain of Acre, and the rich olive-groves and orchards of Phœnicia. Moses promised, "Let Asher be blessed with children; let him be acceptable to his brethren, and let him dip his foot in oil. Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deut. xxxiii. 24, 25). The record proves how he was blessed with children; the olive-yards on the south-western shores of Lebanon are, to this day, the most extensive in the country; and in the foundries and copper and bronze work of Tyre and Sidon were the iron and brass for his shoes.

The consequence of this mingling among the heathen is soon evident in the subsequent history. First, there is the long catalogue of cities (Judg. i. 31) from which Asher did not drive out the inhabitants; but whereas, in the case of most of the other tribes which did not gain complete possession of their cities, we are told either that they could not drive them, or that they put them to tribute; of Asher alone we have the significant remark, "The Asherites dwelt among the Canaanites, the inhabitants of the land, for they did not drive them out" (Judg. i. 32).

Bitter is the reproach cast on this tribe, already denationalised and its patriotism eaten out by commerce, in the triumphant song of Deborah, "Asher continued on the sea shore, and abode in his creeks (or harbours)" (Judg. v. 17), while their neighbours, for their country "jeoparded their lives unto the death." Asher never supplied a judge or a ruler to Israel, and no warrior or hero sprang from the tribe. The only proof given that the tribe had not become utterly absorbed in the idolatry as well as the commerce of Tyre and Sidon, is, that divers of Asher accepted the invitation of Hezekiah to the Passover, and humbled themselves and came to Jerusalem (2 Chron. xxx. 11).

One name only of the tribe of Asher shines out of the general obscurity—the aged widow “Anna, the daughter of Phanuel, of the tribe of Aser,” who, in the very close of the Jewish history, “departed not from the Temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day,” till at the age of eighty-four she was rewarded with the sight of the infant Messiah, and “spake of Him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem” (Luke ii. 36–38).

When we come to examine the cities of this part of Israel in detail, we find more than usual difficulty in identification, from our imperfect knowledge of the way in which the boundaries are laid down. At all events, Asher extended as far south as Dor; and the towns in that neighbourhood have already been discussed under Mount Carmel. Between Carmel and the headlands which separate the Plain of Phœnicia from that of Acre, was the fairest portion of Asher's heritage, embracing its “creeks” (translated “breaches” in our Version), *Achsaph* or *Haiffa*, already noticed, *Accho* and *Achzib*.

Shihor Libnath (Josh. xix. 26) seems to have been near the south limits of the tribe. It is probably the Wady Shaghoor, in the south of the plain, flowing into the Belus. It is thus more than an ingenious guess that identifies it with the Nahr Namân, the river *Belus* of the ancients, which drains the plain near Acre, and which is celebrated as the site of the first invention of the art of glass-making by the Tyrians; the Hebrew name being interpreted to mean “glass-river.”

From the very earliest times, the most important place in the Plain of Acre has been the town of Acre itself, practically the sole access by sea to the Plain of Esdraelon and the interior of Central Palestine. It has been called the key of Palestine; and it has been remarked that the lord of Acre may, if it please him, cause a famine to be felt even over all Syria. One only bay

indents the straight coast-line of Palestine. Carmel forms the southern horn of the crescent, with the roadstead of Haiffa within it. The northern horn terminates in a little tongue of land, formerly extended by a mole to form a harbour. On this headland stood *Accho*, a Phœnician town, which Asher never subdued (Judg. i. 31), and which is never again mentioned in the Old Testament. During the dynasty of Alexander's successors, the Ptolemies of Egypt, its name was changed to *Ptolemais*, which it retained during the Roman period. It is once mentioned in the New Testament as having been visited by St. Paul for a day on his last journey to Jerusalem (Acts xxi. 7).

Afterwards the old name revived under its present form of *Akka* or Acre, and it became the theatre of the most eventful scenes in the stirring history of the Crusades. It was captured by King Baldwin, A.D. 1104, but surrendered to Saladin after the battle of Hattin, A.D. 1187. In A.D. 1191 it was retaken by Richard I. of England, Philip of France, and their allies, and in A.D. 1229 became the seat of the kingdom of Jerusalem, and was defended successfully by Edward I. of England. Finally, in A.D. 1291, it was besieged by the Sultan Khalil, at the head of 200,000 men; the city was stormed, 60,000 Christians were either slaughtered or sold as slaves. The Knights Templar were butchered almost to a man. King Lusignan escaped to Cyprus; the last effort of the Crusades was crushed, and, in the words of Gibbon, "a mournful and solitary silence prevailed along the coast which had so long resounded with the world's debate."

Acre belongs also to modern and to English history. It was besieged by Napoleon in 1799. Sir Sydney Smith drove back, with a handful of sailors, the repeated French assaults, and compelled the invader to raise the siege, thus baffling his dreams of Eastern

conquest. Again, in 1840, Admiral Stopford and Sir Charles Napier bombarded and almost destroyed the town, and were the principal means of the expulsion of Ibrahim Pacha from Syria, and the restoration of the country to Turkish rule.

There are few remains of antiquity in Acre, and nothing but its name older than the Crusades.

Seven miles north of Acre is another old Phœnician port, *Achzib* (Josh. xix. 29), from which the Canaanites were not expelled (Judg. i. 31), now Zib, a little hamlet on the shore with traces of the old port, but not a fishing-boat nor a vestige of commerce. A little stream here falls into the sea, the Nahr Herdawil, fed from the Wady Kurn, which runs up into a fine and rich portion of Galilee, full of ruins, Phœnician, Greek, and Saracenic, but scarcely yet explored. The castle of Kurn is one of the finest in the country, and a sister fortress to Tibnin and Subeibeh, evidently originally a Tyrian stronghold, from the character of its masonry.

In the interior of the plain behind Acre and Achzib, on the edge of the hill country, we may trace several of the old towns of Asher. *Cabul*, the name of which has remained unchanged by a letter, is now a small village, and is situated about eight or nine miles east by south of Acre, on the edge of the Galilean hills, and no great distance west of *Jotapata* or *Jefat*. It was a border city of Asher, and only occurs once again in Scripture, when we read that Solomon gave twenty cities in Galilee to Hiram, in return for his aid in building the Temple (1 Kings ix. 11-14). It would seem that the population was then chiefly Gentile, or Solomon would not have transferred his own countrymen to a foreign ruler. Hiram being dissatisfied with them, called them *Cabul*, after the name of this one of them, which signified in Phœnician, though not in Hebrew, "displeasing" or "worthless."

A short distance east of Cabul is Mi'ar, a ruined site on a lofty crest of a hill, which has been identified with Neiel (Josh. xix. 27), both because of its position according to the record between Cabul and Jefat, and from the name, which in the Hebrew has some affinity.

Some way north of these, in the plain at the foot of the hills, is Amkah, the *Beth-emek* of Joshua. There are no remains of great antiquity left above ground here. *Beth-dagon*, the next place given, seems to have been at the western end of the boundary of Zebulun, *i.e.*, on the river Belus, on the banks of which it is represented by Tell Dâûk. *Aloth* (1 Kings iv. 16) is probably marked by 'Alia, with the same meaning, the position of which suits the division into districts.

Hebron or *Abron*, quite a different word in the Hebrew from the Hebron of Judah, seems to be the same as the *Abdon* afterwards given (Josh. xxi. 30) to the Levites, and which may be recognised in Abdeh, a most interesting group of ruins at the very north of the Plain of Acre, on the banks of the Wady Kurn, just where it opens into the plain. I examined this place carefully, and found traces of a very extensive town, with sculptures of the Greek period, and a solitary column standing out in the plain at no great distance. It is a commanding position overlooking Achzib.

Next to *Abron* is mentioned *Rehob*. There were two cities of the name in Asher, besides a third identified by Robinson with Hunin near Merom, visited by the spies, and already referred to. Neither of these Rehobs has been yet discovered. One of them was a Levitical city.

From Abdeh and Zib we now climb the headland Ras-en-Nakura, sometimes called "the Ladder of Tyre," which more strictly is confined to Ras-el-Abiad, and which, boldly pushing out into the sea, and many hundred feet high, completely shuts out Palestine from Phœnicia. Six miles north of it is another bold pro-

montory, Ras-el-Abiad, "the White Cape," and between them a rough, crescent-shaped plain, with many villages among the roots of the hills; among these is Alma, a Christian village now chiefly Protestant, standing on the top of the ridge, five miles from the sea. Every hill-top near it has a name and a ruin, some of them of walled cities; but not one is inhabited save by tent-dwellers occasionally. Alma is conjectured by Dr. Robinson to be identical with *Ummah* (Josh. xix. 30).

Just to the north of Alma one of these mounds bears the name of Hamûn, probably the *Hammon* of the same passage.

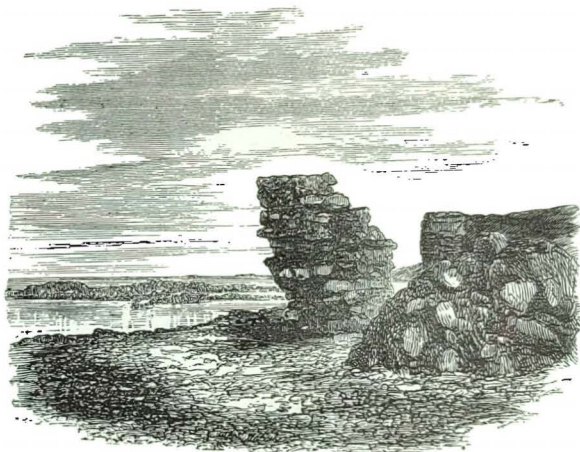
Descending into the plain and proceeding eight miles north-east to the spurs of the Galilean hills, *Kanah*, an inhabited village retired among the hills, behind the celebrated Tomb of Hiram, still preserves the name of some Kanah of Asher, unchanged. But the *Kanah* mentioned by Joshua (ch. xix. 28) seems to have been further north, nearer Zidon, where, twenty miles north of this, on the edge of the hills, ten miles inland, but in sight of Sidon, a village, Ain Kanah, still remains, and there are many traces of better days, olive-presses and square cisterns, and especially some weather-beaten and coarsely hewn figures of men in the cliff below, standing out in bold relief from the rock, but unaccompanied by other traces of antiquity. They are evidently far older than any Greek remains, and must be Phœnician.

Ramah, mentioned close to Tyre, though a heap of ruins, still preserves its name, three miles inland from that city.

Tyre itself, *Tzôr* of the Hebrew, Sur of the modern Arabs, signifying "rock," is first mentioned in Scripture among the cities of the district of Asher, "the strong city Tyre," but does not occur again till the time of David. It was up to this period probably the de-

pendent, as it was certainly the daughter city of Zidon. It was originally a rocky islet, separated from the mainland, on which also stood another city, called *Palatyrus*, or Old Tyre. The main city continued thus insular until united to the mainland by a mole, by Alexander the Great.

The population of "the stronghold of Tyre" would appear to have been included in the census of Joab



RUINS OF ANCIENT TYRE.

(2 Sam. xxiv. 7); but this was probably only the Israelite residents, as it is certain that David was on terms of amity with the Tyrian king, "for Hiram was ever a lover of David" (1 Kings v. 1). Indeed, the first time that Tyre prominently occurs in Scripture history, is when Hiram sent David cedar-trees, and carpenters and masons to build his palace. Afterwards, as we learn from 1 Kings v., 2 Chron. ii., he rendered still more important aid to Solomon in building the Temple at Jerusalem, sending him not only cunning workmen—

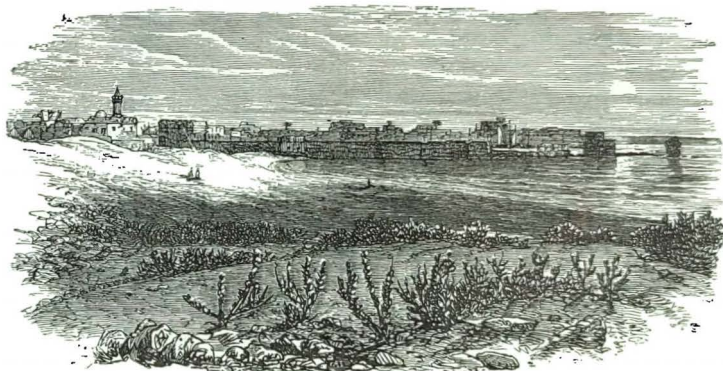
Hiram, the widow's son of Naphtali but a Tyrian by his father's side, a skilled brassfounder, with carpenters, masons, sculptors, and men skilled in all kinds of metal work—but also supplying woodmen to fell trees in Lebanon and send them down by rafts to Joppa. Solomon, in return, afforded scope for an extension of Phœnician commerce, by allowing his sailors the use of Ezion-geber, the Israelitish port on the Red Sea, where trade was opened to the far east (1 Kings ix. 26–28).

Tyre scarcely occurs again in Bible history as distinct from Zidon, till the times of the later prophets, when the relations of the kingdoms had much changed (Joel iii., Amos i.), when we find Tyre denounced for its cruel trade in Hebrew captives to the neighbouring nations and to the Greeks. After the overthrow of the kingdom of Israel by Assyria, Shalmaneser vainly attempted the siege of Tyre, then the chief city of Phœnicia, and blockaded it for five years. This is probably referred to by Isaiah, chap. xxiii. It soon recovered its prosperity, until Nebuchadnezzar again laid siege to it. It resisted his arms for the long space of thirteen years, during which it was blockaded by land. As Ezekiel says (xxix. 18), “Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon caused his army to serve a great service against Tyrus.” Yet it does not clearly appear that he actually stormed it. The passage in Ezekiel (xxix. 18–20) would seem rather to imply the contrary. It seems probable that without an actual capitulation Tyre submitted to the supremacy of Babylon, and thus purchased her commercial freedom.

The 27th chapter of Ezekiel presents a wonderful picture of the vast trade, manufactures, and commercial connection of Tyre, embracing every quarter of the then known world, and every commodity which wealth and luxury could command. Her trade extended from

Persia, and perhaps India, to Spain : her mercenaries and mechanics were drawn alike from the three continents. Her merchandize embraced all the then known metals : gold from India ; silver, iron, lead, and tin from Spain ; copper from Cyprus ; wheat and cereals, honey, oil, and balm from Palestine ; wools from Arabia ; ivory and ebony from the far east ; linen fabrics from Egypt ; dyes from Greece ; wines from Syria, and every kind of jewelry from Damascus.

Tyre submitted on easy terms to the Persian superiority, and assisted in building the second Temple, as it



TYRE.

had the first (Ezra iii. 7). After a practical independence of two hundred years, Tyre alone of the Phœnician cities refused submission to the third Greek empire, and cost Alexander the Great a siege of seven months before he took it, which he only accomplished by making a causeway from the mainland. He sold 30,000 of the free women and children as slaves, and slaughtered its defenders.

The Romans gave Tyre municipal privileges, and it continued to flourish, and escaped destruction at the

hands of the Mohammedan invaders on condition of its submission to the conquerors. It was taken by the Crusaders in A.D. 1124, and William of Tyre, the celebrated historian and a Frenchman, became its bishop. In A.D. 1291 it surrendered to the Saracens, and has ever since continued to decline. A century ago it had fallen so low, that it contained but about ten fishermen, its only inhabitants; but has lately risen to a comparatively flourishing town of about 4,000 inhabitants.

At present a desolate ridge of sand connects Tyre with the broad plain beyond, heaped by the sea-drift upon the causeway which Alexander made to connect the island with the mainland. Though Tyre has risen again within a century, yet the filth and squalor of the little towns are unsurpassed in Syria. Scanty bazaars, about five feet wide, wattled over at intervals with decayed sticks and palm-leaves; dilapidated, windowless hovels, raised among huge fragments of polished granite and porphyry columns prostrate in rubbish—such is modern Tyre. For half a mile the sea flows to the depth of a foot or two over flat rocks, covered by one mass of broken columns, leaning or prostrate, in bewildering confusion, as if pitched pell-mell into the water. This is insular Tyre, “the waters have covered her.” “She is a place for fishermen to spread their nets on.” The columns, blackened by the salt water, appear to have been smooth, and not fluted, but they are now fretted and perforated by ages of exposure to storm and tempest. They are still quite sufficient to attest the grandeur of the later or Roman Tyre, to which, doubtless, they belong.

The only building easily recognised is the skeleton of the old cathedral, once the finest church in Syria, now an utter ruin, with a few miserable hovels plastered in its corners. The wall of the apse, part of that at the west end, and some massive buttresses remain,

showing it to have been 200 feet long by about 140 wide. Yet of this church Paulinus was bishop in the days of the Constantines. Eusebius wrote the consecration oration, still extant, for its opening service. The celebrated historian, William of Tyre, was its archbishop. Here was performed almost the last religious service ever held by the Crusaders in the Holy Land. Here moulders the dust of the great Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, who died at Tarsus, and whose



HARBOUR AND REMAINS OF ANCIENT TYRE.

body was carried down the coast to Tyre, to rest beside the bones of a yet greater man—Origen.

Revived and rebuilt, time after time, and age after age, it would be vain to seek for the ruins of the Tyre of Hiram and Solomon. The ruins that are exhumed to-day yield evidence that they were built of the fragments of the later imperial city. Excavations are made for quarrying, and the massive foundations which are uprooted are themselves formed largely of fragments of polished Egyptian granite columns.

There are traces, too, of the old trade and manufactures of Tyre, in the abundance of fragments of glass variously coloured and of deposits of shells which have been crushed for making the famous Tyrian purple dye. Part of the old sea-wall remains; but the little harbour is nearly choked with sand on the north of the causeway. The south harbour is entirely silted up.

There are traces of the old wells in insular Tyre, and several are still used close to the shore on the mainland. It is interesting to note, as an illustration of the history of Tyre, how along this coast we frequently find deep wells of fresh water within a few feet of the sea. One of these with ancient masonry is still used by the inhabitants of modern Tyre, and is known as "Hiram's Well."

The prophecies of Ezekiel seem on the spot like histories of Tyre. Its capture by Alexander the Great exhausted to the letter the inspired predictions: "I will make her like the top of a rock; it shall be the place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea, for I have spoken it. They shall lay thy stones, and thy timber, and thy dust, in the midst of the water. I will also scrape her dust from her" (Ezek. xxvi. 4, 5, 12). The first fulfilment may have been complete centuries ago. Tyre may have arisen again and again from her ruins, and may rise a fifth time. The Phœnician power which Isaiah and Ezekiel denounced has long since perished utterly; and, though the later Tyres have had no connection save a geographical one, yet their successive doom, and the wretched present, at least add force and power to the scriptural warning.

We have no positive mention of our Lord ever having actually visited Tyre. He must, however, have passed very near to it, if He did not enter it, on the occasion of His healing the daughter of the woman of Canaan (Matt. xv. 21, &c.) And among His hearers, previous to that journey, were many from about Tyre and Sidon



SIDON, AND THE ANCIENT CASTLE.

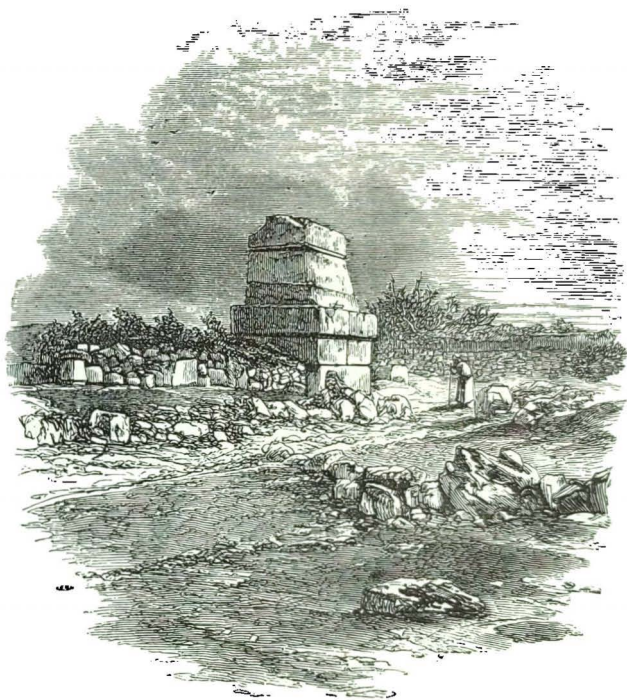
(Mark iii. 8). These hearers were, perhaps, the foundation of the disciples whom Paul found here, when on his last voyage to Jerusalem he landed at Tyre, and tarried seven days. On his departure we read of the brethren with their whole families escorting him to the ship, and of their farewell prayers together on the shore (Acts xxi. 3-6).

Six miles from Tyre, among the hills, stands, in a very perfect condition, a noble old Phœnician tomb—a massive sarcophagus, on a solid pedestal of great hewn stones. Local tradition assigns to it the name of "*Hiram's Tomb*." This can neither be proved nor disproved; but there it stands in solitary desolation, commanding the sea and that city over which Hiram ruled. A noble site for the noble sepulchre of a Tyrian monarch!

Past Hiram's tomb and Kanah, along the line of several wadys, an old road may be traced leading to El Jish, the *Giscala* of Josephus, quite in the interior, in the hill country, west of the Sea of Galilee, and supposed, with fair reason, to be the *Ahlab* of Judg. i. 31, a frontier town of Asher, from which the Canaanites were not driven out. *Hosah*, the landmark of Asher, next to Tyre, is not recovered.

Between four and five miles north of Tyre, the river *Leontes* or *Litany*, now the *Kasimiyeh*, enters the sea and is crossed by a bridge. Though never mentioned in Scripture, it is, next to the Jordan, the largest river in Palestine, and its banks, in the greater part of its course, afford the grandest scenery in Galilee. Rising in the plain of Cœle Syria and draining the southern slopes of the Lebanon, it makes a rift through northern Galilee, a stupendous gorge for the most part, pursuing a southerly course parallel to the sea, very near the head waters of Jordan, till nearly opposite Baniyas, or *Casarea Philippi*, it makes a sudden turn to the west and runs straight to the sea.

The shore for eight miles to Surafend (*Zarephath*) is full of ancient sites, with tombs and caves in the hillsides. One of these, Adlân, is supposed to be the "*Mearah*" (*i.e.*, cavern) that is beside the "*Zidonians*" (Josh. xiii. 4), and which was not taken by the Israelites.



HIRAM'S TOMB.

Zarephath, the *Sarepta* of the New Testament (Luke iv. 26), now Surafend, occurs as the house of the widow with whom Elijah dwelt during the latter part of the three and a half years of drought and famine (1 Kings xvii. 9-24). It does not otherwise occur in the Bible.

There are few remains, and the modern village appears to have moved further from the shore than the original town. The old well, still used, is within fifty yards of the sea on the sandy shore. The insecurity of the shore during the Middle Ages seems to have driven the inhabitants to the hills. The remains are few, for the very stones have been carried up the hill to build the village, out of reach of marauding horsemen. For a mile or more are foundations and broken columns. There is still a khan by the sea-side; and the old Crusading chapel, built on the traditional site of the widow's house, is turned into a Moslem sanctuary.

Some pretty Galilean streams, fringed with oleanders, have to be forded between Zarephath and *Zidon*, the road to which passes along the shore for seven miles, the Roman pavement being often visible.

Zidon, or *Sidon*—*i. e.*, "fishery"—now Saida, is barely twenty miles north of Tyre, on a spur which shoots out from a low hill a few hundred yards into the sea. Its memories carry us back to the world's infancy. It was the mother city of Tyre; and *Zidon* (Gen. x. 15) was the first-born of Canaan. It is twice called in Joshua "Great *Zidon*," and appears long to have maintained its precedence, though in later times Tyre became the ruling city, and the daughter outgrew the mother. It was manifestly the place to which the Canaanites looked for protection, as we read there was no deliverer for Laish when it was seized by the men of Dan, because "it was far from *Zidon*." It is mentioned in the "Iliad" of Homer for the skill of its daughters in weaving sumptuous robes—steeped probably in the world-famed Tyrian dyes. In the "Odyssey," as well as the "Iliad," the *Zidonians* are renowned also for their skill as silversmiths. When Solomon would build the temple of the Lord at Jerusalem, he sends to Hiram not only for an architect, but for skilled artificers.

“There is not among us any that can skill to hew timbers like unto the Zidonians.” Nor must we omit to mention the recently discovered proof of the skill of the Zidonians in stone as well as timber, in the marks painted in red on the foundation-stones of the Temple platform at Jerusalem, and identified as Phœnician characters.

The Phœnicians seem to have cared little for extending their power inland ; hence their peaceful relations with Israel. Asher supplied the markets of the great cities with fruits and vegetables ; while, busied in commerce, absorbed in founding colonies and equipping expeditions for distant shores, the Phœnicians, in ordinary times, were content to leave their neighbours to themselves. That strange and mysterious race, now so utterly perished, seems to have lived almost on, as well as by, the sea, content if they could only hold secure their harbours, whether in Western Asia, Africa, or distant Cornwall. Not even Venice was so truly wedded to the deep.

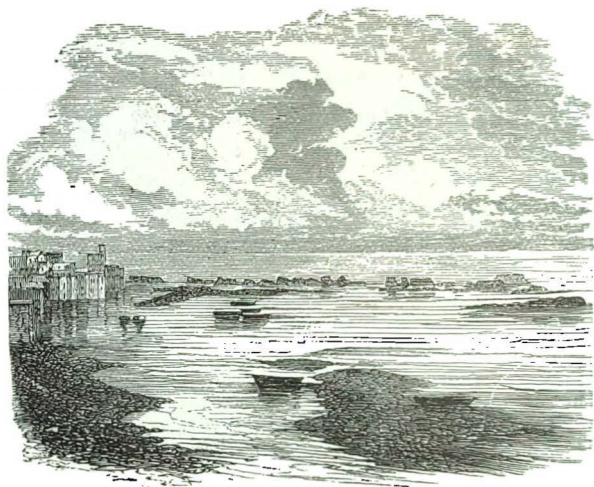
From the time of Solomon, Zidon is not often mentioned in direct connection with Israel. The event connected with it which most affected the chosen people during the monarchy was the marriage of Ahab with Jezebel, daughter of Ethbaal, King of the Zidonians. In the time of the prophets Tyre was the leading city, and other writers supply particulars of the struggles between the two for supremacy. Zidon was involved in the same ruin as Israel by the invasion of Shalmaneser. It submitted a century later to the army of Nebuchadnezzar. Its fleets, after it had fallen under the dominion of Persia, bore their share in the attack upon Greece by Xerxes, and its sailors were deemed the best of all in that vast host. But its history after the Captivity is apart from the Sacred record, and it never, after the Greek conquest by Alexander, regained its

former importance, though temporarily revived by the Crusaders, and also, 250 years ago, by the Druse Emir, Fakkr ed Deen. But its trade has since been diverted to the larger harbour of Beirût; nor is it likely ever to be revived.

It is seldom mentioned in the New Testament; yet once our Lord visited its coasts, and probably passed through Zidon itself on that journey when He healed the daughter of the humble-minded woman of Canaan. His fame had already reached Phœnicia, and probably He had many disciples in these heathen cities (Luke vi. 17). Local tradition makes Him to have passed through Zidon, and performed the miracle near Zarephath. It is a very natural tradition, whether founded on fact or not, which has assigned our Lord's visit to the same village which was blessed by the sojourn of Elijah. The negotiations of Tyre and Sidon with Herod Agrippa I., and the visit of St. Paul to the believers there, complete the New Testament incidents connected with Zidon.

Zidon, the cradle of the world's commerce, has now only a few fishing-boats in her harbour. The entrance has been narrowed by a pier, built out on arches, now in decay, at the end of which stands a massive but crumbling tower. Thus a harbour was formed—small, indeed, for the requirements of modern shipping, but larger than the famous ports of classic Greece. Along the reef we may yet see the traces of Zidonian skill. Large blocks of sculptured marble, and many polished columns of colossal size, lie strewn at the bottom of the sea, and are visible on a calm day, perforated and honeycombed by boring-shells. But there yet remain on the jagged, fretted rocks the huge stones of old arches, carved doorways, sometimes a fragment of the pavement of the quay, immense stones carefully fitted into the reef, upon which as a wharf were erected the

warehouses of Zidon. The holes are still visible where the iron stanchions of the gates and mooring-rings were attached. But in many places the sea has worn through the reef, and makes a clean breach into the harbour. It would by this time have swept away much more, but for the masses of huge masonry and broken shafts which have fallen outside, and form a breastwork against the force of the waves. It was on this quay

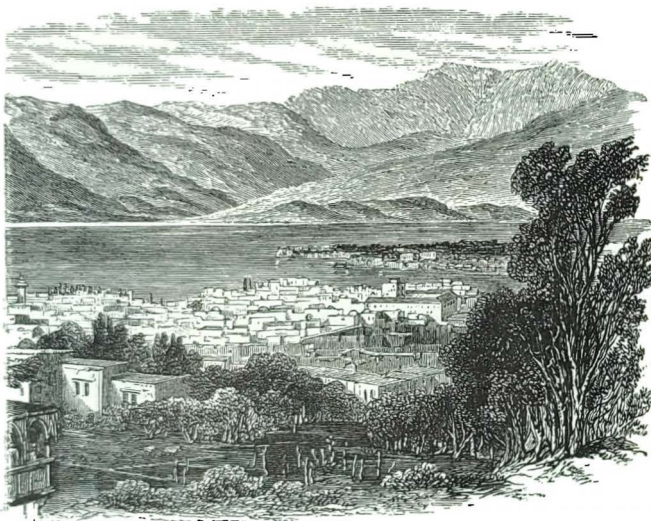


THE PORT OF ZIDON.

that St. Paul landed, when courteously entreated by Julius, on his way as a prisoner to Rome (Acts xxvii. 3).

The modern town, or Saida, is better built than many in the East. Its chief trade is that of the coppersmith, and its exports fruit and silk. The walls of many of the houses are mosaics of fragments of broken but rare and choice marbles, the *débris* of ancient Zidon. Beautiful mosaic pavements are frequently to be found among the gardens and lanes in the neighbourhood. In one

thing only does Zidon of to-day recall the past. Its luxuriant gardens and orange-groves tell us what the whole Plain of Phœnicia once was, with their wells everywhere, "watered by the foot." Zidon is buried landwards in these gardens, a wilderness of fruit-trees and a rank growth of vegetables beneath their shade. About two or three miles north of Zidon the little river



BEIRÛT.

Auwaly, the ancient *Bostrenus*, enters the sea: a stream which, though not mentioned in the Bible, was looked on as the northern coast limit of the Land of Israel. The name *Helbah* (Judg. i. 31) seems to linger on its banks.

A few places north of this limit are occasionally mentioned in Scripture. *Berothah*, the modern Beirût, has been already referred to (p. 298). *Aphék* (Josh. xix. 30), or *Aphik* (Judg. i. 31), seems to have been in

the extreme north of Asher, but was never occupied by that tribe. It is said (Josh. xiii. 4) to have been on "the border of the Amorites," and has been identified with the *Aphaca* of classic writers, celebrated for its Temple of Venus and licentious rites, now Afka, a ruined site on the north-west of Lebanon, beyond Beirût, with magnificent remains of the old temple by the Fountain of *Adonis*, now Nahr Ibrahim. It is a spot of strange wildness and beauty, with a stupendous precipice overhanging a maze of wood and water. The temple was destroyed by Constantine.

Hamath is repeatedly mentioned as the northern extremity of the Land of Promise, as Kadesh Barnea was its southern. It is in the upper valley of the Orontes, far beyond the crest of Lebanon, and is still a very important town of 30,000 inhabitants, called Hamah. From "the entrance of Hamath" (Numb. xxxiv. 8) was to be the frontier, *i.e.*, from the pass on the watershed of the Leontes and Orontes (see also Numb. xiii. 21; Josh. xiii. 5). We next read of Hamath as an independent state, when (2 Sam. viii. 9, 10) Toi, its king, sent his son Joram with presents, to congratulate King David on his conquest of Toi's old enemy Hadadezer, King of Zobah, and probably to acknowledge David's suzerainty. Hamath was probably also tributary to Solomon, as included in the region named 1 Kings iv. 21, for we find that he built "store-cities" in Hamath (2 Chron. viii. 4)—like the old "factories" of England in the Levant—colonies of Israelite merchants, with their warehouses. At the rupture of Israel it became again independent, but was recovered 150 years afterwards, by Jeroboam II., King of Israel (2 Kings xiv. 28), who dismantled it (Amos vi. 2). It was soon afterwards taken by Sennacherib (2 Kings xviii. 34), and with this capture its connection with Bible history ends.

CHAPTER XIII.

BASHAN.

Contrast between Eastern and Western Palestine—Bashan—Og—Half-tribe of Manasseh—Machir—Boundaries of Bashan—Geographical and Political divisions of Bashan.

Golan—Gaulanitis—*Jaulan*—Cities of Golan—*Aphek*—*Gamala*—*Ashtaroth*—*Beeshterah*—*Tell Ashtereh*—*Jetur*—*Ituræa*—*Jedur*—*Argob*—*Trachonitis*—*Lejah*—Description of *Argob*—The "*chebel*" or "rope"—Sixty cities—Battle of *Edrei*—*Havoth-Jair*—*Geshur*—*King Tolmai*—*Absalom*—*Edrei*—*Adraa*—*Edhr'a*—Ruins, and Giant Cities—Cyclopean buildings—*Der'a*—*Kenath*—*Canatha*—*Kunawdt*—*Rephaims*—*Kiriathaim*—*Hauran*—*Auranitis*—*Salcah*—*Sulkhad*—Citadel—View from *Salcah*—Deserted towns—*Beth-gamul*—*Orman*—*Kerioth*—*Kureiyeh*—*Bozrah*—*Bostra*—*Busrah*—Vast Ruins—*Batanæa*—*Bathaniyeh*—Oak Forests—*Maachathites*.

IN striking contrast with the west of Palestine, with its narrow valleys and broken ridges of hill, crowded with towns, and their sides ribbed with terraces, stretches forth the wide trans-Jordanic region in actual extent far greater than the whole inheritance of the ten tribes, if we except the south country of Judah, yet having the most insignificant bearing on the future history of the nation. The first conquered, these regions were the first lost, and after the Assyrian captivity of Israel they were never re-peopled by the chosen race, but remained in Gentile occupation.

These regions are first named in the lives of the early Patriarchs, who traversed Bashan and Gilead in their journeyings to and from the Land of Promise. At the time of the Exodus they were held by two great Amorite chieftains, Sihon and Og, the former holding southern Gilead, the latter Bashan and northern Gilead. Shortly

after the conquest of Sihon by Moses, Og, King of Bashan, mustered all his hosts, and was completely defeated by Israel at *Edrei*, his people exterminated, and the land taken in possession long before the entrance into Canaan (Numb. xxi. 33-35).

The whole kingdom of Og was assigned to the half-tribe of Manasseh, the descendants of his eldest son Machir, and thus this warlike section of a tribe became the possessors of a territory only equalled in extent by the lot of the entire tribe of Judah (Josh. xvii. 1).

The boundaries of *Bashan*, the northern portion of Manasseh's inheritance, are very clearly laid down, although we have no catalogue of its cities, as we have of the other tribes (Deut. iii. 8-14). It extended from the southern slopes of Mount Hermon in the north, to Gilead in the south—the frontier line between Bashan and the northern Gilead of King Og being the river *Hieromax* or *Sheriat-el-Mandhur*, which runs due west and enters the Jordan just below the Sea of Galilee. North of this the country is comparatively flat, a high table land, whence the name *Bashan*, *i.e.*, "level;" while south of it is the undulating and rugged country of Gilead. The Upper Jordan and the Sea of Galilee bounded Bashan on the west, the city of *Salcah* and the country of the Geshurites and of the Maacathites, on the east.

Bashan was further divided into four provinces, which were in the times of the Greeks and Romans recognised political divisions, each of them singularly distinct in its natural physical characteristics: (1) *Golan*, the *Gaulanitis* of the Romans, the *Jaulan* of the moderns, in the west. *Ituræa*, now *Jedur*, in the north, was not strictly in Bashan, though at one time held by Manasseh. (2) *Argob* of the Old Testament, *Trachonitis* of the New, the *Lejah* of to-day, in the east; and (3) *Hauran*, the Roman *Auranitis*, the still unchanged *Hauran*, in the

south-east ; while (4), still further to the east, stretched the smaller Roman district of *Batanæa*, or Bathaniyeh, melting into the eastern Syrian desert.

Viewed from any commanding height, the whole country seems a boundless plain, covered here and there with noble pieces of forest, "the oaks of Bashan ;" but in reality deeply furrowed by many a ravine which winds its tortuous way towards the Jordan Valley. It is now, as it ever has been, a pastoral land. The bulls of Bashan, the wild oxen and bisons of old, have given place to tamer herds ; but the men are still the wild nomads which the sons of the warlike Machir were ; for it was to their *tents*, not to their cities, that Joshua dismissed them, after they had aided their brethren in the conquest of Canaan. "Return with much riches unto your tents, and with very much cattle" (Josh. xxii. 8). From this time it appears no more in Bible history, except as one of the commissariat districts of Solomon, till we read of its being smitten by Hazael, in the time of Jehu, when the Lord began to cut Israel short (2 Kings x. 38).

The region of *Golan* or *Gaulanitis*, the modern Jaulan, the western part of Bashan, stretches from the waters of Merom under Hermon, to the Sea of Galilee. It is a vast table-land 3,000 feet high, covered with splendid pasturage, rising by a series of terraces from the Jordan Valley. Along its western edge run from Hermon a series of round-topped conical hills, looking, in the distance, like extinct craters, but generally covered with oak forests.

The city of *Golan* itself, though several times mentioned by Josephus, never occurs in Scripture after the first mention of its being allotted to the Levites out of the share of Manasseh, and being made one of the three cities of refuge east of Jordan (Josh. xx. 8). But it must have been of some importance, as giving its name

to a province ; yet no trace of it has hitherto been found, though the village of Nawa, on the west of the district, with a wide extent of ruins, proving the existence of a considerable city, has been guessed to be Golan.

The district has once been densely peopled. Dr. Porter states that no less than 127 ruined sites are known in it, all of which, excepting eleven, are now uninhabited and mere heaps of ruin. Very few of these, however, can have had a place in written history. *Aphek*, now Fik, still existing, and *Gamala*, deserted, now Kulât-el-Husn, near the Sea of Galilee, have been described in the account of that lake. The only other city of this district named in the Bible is *Astaroth* (Deut. i. 4, &c.), called also *Beeshterah* (i.e., *Beer-Astaroth*) (Josh. xxi. 27), and allotted to the Levites of the family of Gershon, the name of which is preserved in the ruined site crowning a hill in the south of the Jaulan, east of Fik, called Tell Ashtereh.

North-east of the region of Golan lay *Ituræa*, the modern Jedur, only once mentioned under the Greek form (Luke iii. 1), "Philip, tetrarch of *Ituræa* and of the region of *Trachonitis*." It occurs very early in history ; for Jetur, the son of Ishmael, had his towns and castles named after him (Gen. xxv. 15, 16). In after ages the Manassites, as we learn from 1 Chron. v. 18-23, made war with the Hagarites or Ishmaelites, and conquered *Jetur*, *Nephish*, and *Nodab*, "and dwelt in their stead until the captivity. And the children of the half-tribe of Manasseh dwelt in the land : they increased from Bashan unto Baal-Hermon, and Senir, and unto Mount Hermon."

We have thus indicated to us the exact position of Jetur—between Bashan and Hermon, exactly coincident with the modern Jedur. In the second century B.C., Aristobulus King of the Jews reconquered the district. It is a table-land with many little conical hills : the

southern portion consisting of fine pasture plains, but the northern, nearer Hermon, very different, looking like a stormy sea of black molten rock, suddenly arrested and petrified, which indeed it is, being a rugged surface of lava, with deep fissures in all directions, reminding me when I visited it, in all particulars, of the volcanic country of Auvergne in Central France.

There are no towns specially named in history belonging to Ituræa; but Dr. Porter records thirty-eight names of ruined sites, of which ten are utterly deserted, and the remaining twenty-eight each contain only a few families of peasants, living in wretched hovels amid heaps of ruins which, in their character, are very like the Cyclopean or giant cities of Bashan, constructed of slabs of basalt, with doors of the same material.

South-east of Ituræa lies a country, the physical character of which is almost without parallel elsewhere—the *Argob* of the Old Testament, *Trachonitis* of Greek and Roman times, and now the *Lejah*. The nature of the country is implied alike in the Hebrew name *Argob*, “a heap of stones,” the Greek *Trachonitis*, “stony,” and the Arabic, *Lejah*, “a place of refuge.” It is about twenty-two miles by fifteen in extent, and sixty miles in circumference. “It is wholly composed,” says Dr. Porter, “of black basalt rock, which appears to have in past ages issued from innumerable pores in the earth in a liquid state, and to have flowed out on every side till the plain was almost covered. Before cooling, its surface was agitated by some fearful tempest, or other such agency, and it was afterwards shattered or rent by internal convulsions and vibrations. The cup-like cavities, from which the liquid mass was projected, are still seen; as is likewise the wavy surface which a thick liquid generally assumes in cooling while flowing. There are in many places deep fissures and yawning gulfs with rugged

broken edges, while in other places are jagged heaps of rock that seem not to have been sufficiently heated to flow, but were forced upwards by a mighty agency, and then rent and shattered to their centre. The rock is filled with little pits and protuberances like air-bubbles ; it is as hard as flint, and emits a sharp metallic sound when crushed. I did not observe any approach to columnar or crystallised basalt."

Another remarkable feature of Argob is the sharp boundary which separates it from the surrounding country. It is always mentioned in Scripture as the region, "*chebel*" (*i.e.*, rope), of Argob, for it is encircled by a sort of rocky shore, sweeping round it in a clearly defined circle, like some mighty Titanic wall in ruins. On this outer boundary or rope most of its towns were situated. The *chebel* applied to Argob is not less apposite than *mishor*, "plain," applied to Bashan ; for all the surrounding plateau from the heights above the Jordan on the west, till the plain melts into the vast desert eastward, is a rich down of luxuriant pasturage, almost without a stone.

Forbidding and repulsive as this region seems, it was, in the very earliest period of history, thickly peopled, and probably for that very reason. It was an important part of the kingdom of Og, and contained in his time "threescore cities, all fenced with high walls, gates, and bars ; beside unwalled towns a great many " (Deut. iii. 4, 5). Coming out from his strongholds, Og gave Israel battle at *Edrei*, where he was completely defeated and his people destroyed (Numb. xxi. 33). Argob fell to the lot of Jair, who called the small towns collectively *Havoth-Jair*, *i.e.*, "the villages of Jair " (Deut. iii. 14). He also possessed twenty-three places in Bashan. But he took, besides, *Geshur* and *Aram*, "with the towns of *Jair*, with *Kenath* and the towns thereof, even threescore cities " (1 Chron. ii. 23).

We never hear of the region again in the Old Testament, except in 1 Kings iv. 13, where, along with the possessions of Jair in Gilead, Argob formed one of Solomon's commissariat districts governed from Ramoth-Gilead. In the New Testament *Trachonitis* is only mentioned as the tetrarchy of Philip (Luke iii. 1). After the time of the Herods it disappears from history.

The Lejah is still rather thickly inhabited for such a region, chiefly by Druses, with a few Christians and some wild Bedouin tribes. It has been for ages what its name implies, a *refuge* for outlaws of every kind and for the victims of Turkish oppression. Time after time the Turks have been repulsed in their attempts to subdue it, and even Ibrahim Pasha was completely defeated in endeavouring to force its defiles.

Geshur appears to have been a little principality to the east of Argob, north of the Maachathites, and, though within the limits of Manasseh, was not conquered (Josh. xiii. 13). It adjoined *Aram*, or Syria, on the north. Its most interesting connection with Bible history is from David having among his wives at Hebron, Maacah, daughter of Tolmai, King of Geshur, of whom his son Absalom was born; and to his grandfather Absalom fled for three years after the assassination of his brother Amnon (2 Sam. xiii. 37), till Joab's artifice contrived his return. The character of Absalom is in accordance with the wild, lawless race from which his mother sprang.

Besides *Havoth-Jair*, only two of the sixty great cities of Argob are mentioned by name—*Edrei* and *Kenath*. *Edrei* only occurs as the place in front of which the great battle was fought which gave Bashan to Israel. Yet it continued an important city to the time of the Crusades, but has now dwindled to a village of fifty families.

Posted on a rocky promontory on the south-west edge of the Lejah, *Edrei*, or, as it is now called, Edh'ra, rises

twenty or thirty feet above the rich, wide plain of the Hauran, which commences immediately under the rocks. The ruins, all of black basalt, are three miles in extent, standing out in black shattered masses. Most of the great Greek and Roman public buildings have crumbled into ruins; but the low, massive giant or Cyclopean houses, perhaps far older than these, still remain, and the present inhabitants select their homes in them. Many of them have Greek inscriptions over the doors. The Church of St. George is still perfect, with an inscription over it, telling that it was a heathen temple converted into a church A.D. 516. Of the Church of St. Elias the walls, but not the roof, remain, with inscriptions; and there are other ruins, such as a cloistered quadrangle. Edrei was the ancient episcopal city of *Adraa*. But the most interesting remains are the small houses of remote antiquity, known familiarly as those of the "giant cities," with their walls of great blocks of basalt, closely fitted, but not in regular courses, their stone roofs, and their solid stone doors and windows still moving in the same sockets or "cup-and-ball" joints on which they have turned for thousands of years.

Extensive and important as Edrei was, there is no water but what is caught in tanks—no wells; and the only access is over rocks or through almost impassable defiles. The number of cisterns is immense, as it is in all the towns of the Lejah. In A.D. 1142, Baldwin III., with the Crusaders, made an unsuccessful attempt on Edrei. In another raid into Bashan, they took Der'a (the *Adraa* of Eusebius), fifteen miles to the south-west but the inhabitants fled to these secure fastnesses.

Kenath, *Canatha* of the Greeks, the modern Kunawât, is at the south-east extremity of the "rope" of the Lejah. All we know of it from the Bible is, that it was one of the cities of Argob, and that Nobah of Manasseh called it after his name (Numb. xxxii. 42). It still re-

tained the name of *Nobah* when Gideon pursued the Midianites to the east of it, "by the way of them that dwell in tents" (Judg. viii. 11). But the persistency of names in the East has, for more than two thousand years, at least, restored the original name under its Greek and Arabic forms. Though now inhabited by only a few Druse families, the ruins are very fine and perfect, and the inscriptions endless. Temples and cathedrals, colossal sculptures of Ashtoreth and Christian crosses, theatres, halls, porticoes, and hippodromes, all are crowded here on the edge of the Syrian deserts, the skeletons of a perished civilisation. Strangest of all are the streets, with the Roman pavement, for the most part entire, but here and there broken, and showing the vaults beneath, while the deserted houses line each side, their roofs still entire, and the stone doors, panelled and sculptured, still turning in their sockets.

Although no other names than *Edrei* and *Kenath* are recorded, yet the evidence of the sixty cities of *Argob* is patent. The cities are there, and more than sixty, all attesting their antiquity by their antique Cyclopean architecture, with the basalt slabs for roofs and doors. We read of their "gates and bars." The huge doors and gates of stone eighteen inches thick, and the places for the bars, which can still be seen, take us back to the very time of Moses; perhaps even earlier—for, in the first campaign recorded in history, *Chedorlaomer* smote the *Rephaims* in *Ashteroth-karnaim* (Gen. xiv. 5). *Ashteroth* has already been mentioned in *Gaulanitis*, on the edge of the *Hauran*.

The *Rephaims* were the aborigines of the country, and these buildings tell of the infancy of architecture, when strength and security alone were regarded. Nor is it difficult to understand how these buildings may have stood. The black basalt is as hard as iron, and the

most durable of rocks, while the heavy stone flags of the roofs, resting on the solid wall, bind the structure till it is almost as lasting as the rock itself. The buildings, like their names, may have come down from the days of Abraham. Chedorlaomer smote the *Emims* in the plain of *Kiriathaim*, and the houses of Kureiyeh, or *Kerioth*, are probably the very work of the Emims.

In the days of the Romans these places were held to be the work of the ancient inhabitants (M. Marcellin). This could not have been said of any Greek or Græco-Syrian building; and we may be quite sure that the tent-loving children of Manasseh were not a building race. Besides, cities of some sort were there when they took the land; and it is more reasonable to suppose that not the Amorites, whom they dispossessed, but even *their* predecessors, the *Rephaim*, were the constructors, than to bring them down to a later date.

The "plain country" of the *Hauran* lies south and west of Argob. The name, which has come down unchanged in a letter (*Auranitis* of the Greeks), only occurs in Ezekiel (xlvi. 16, 18). It is the fairest and richest portion of Bashan, and is the part to which the name is most frequently applied, containing no less than 149 inhabited, or more generally deserted, towns, the names of which are known. Yet none of these, except *Salcah*, *Bozrah*, and *Kerioth* (if that were in Bashan) occur in Scripture; unless we add *Karkor* and *Jogbehah* (Judg. viii. 10, 11), which must have been in the level nomad country east of Kenath or Nobah, where Gideon surprised the Midianite chiefs Zeba and Zalmunna. But neither of these names have yet been traced.

Here and there a mound or tell of basalt suddenly rises in the plain, but otherwise the country is a vast open plain of surpassing fertility and luxuriant verdure in the early spring and summer. I have ridden for miles with the grass up to the saddle-girths, but the

Arabs had not yet arrived with their flocks and herds. Though the towns are deserted, with very few exceptions, they are not in ruins; and the few I visited, like the much greater number examined by Dr. Porter and Mr. Cyril Graham, are nearly perfect, like those described above, with the massive thick walls, solid roofs, and door and window-slabs still swinging. Among them are many traces of Greek and Syrian occupation, but scarcely any of the Saracen or later times.

Salcah, now Sulkhad, seems to have been the extreme south-east outpost of Bashan (Deut. iii. 10; Josh. xiii. 11). It is at the southern end of the Jebel Hauran, and immediately below it begins the great desert which extends to the Euphrates. The pasture-lands of the tribe of Gad reached to this point, which was their frontier (1 Chron. v. 11). It never occurs afterwards in Scripture history. The city, now utterly desolate, is marvellously perfect. It stands out with its castle, 300 feet above the city, on the top of the cone of an extinct volcano, a landmark seen far and wide from Gilead and Moab, and the Hauran, and all the plain of Bashan. I saw it even from the neighbourhood of Jerash. There are still perfect stone-built and roofed houses sufficient to accommodate three hundred or four hundred families. Not alone the houses of the town, but the very fields and fences of the farms of all the country round, are as distinct as if only left last year. They chequer the whole country. Here and there are groves of fig-trees, and terraced vines still shed their fruits on the deserted hill-sides. The Bedouin annually visit them, for "the spoiler is fallen upon thy summer fruits, and upon thy vintage. Joy and gladness is taken from the plentiful field, and from the land of Moab; I have caused the wine to fail from the winepress; none shall tread with shouting" (Jer. xlviii. 32, 33).

The ruins of the city itself contain many remarkable

colossal sculptures; but the Greek edifices are often crumbling or fallen, while the older Cyclopean houses are perfect. There are inscriptions not much later than the Christian era. The Crusaders never reached Salcah.

Dr. Porter thus describes the view from the top of the castle of Salcah: "The whole plain of Moab is spread out before us, and wherever we turn our eyes, deserted towns and villages are seen. *Bozrah* is on the west, some twelve miles distant—an old road running towards it straight as an arrow. The town of *Beth-gamul*, now *Um-el-Jemal*, is faintly visible far away on the south-west. In the plain immediately to the south are several deserted villages. South by west, about three miles off, is the high hill *Abd-el-Maaz*, with a deserted town on its eastern declivity. To the south-east, the ancient road runs straight across the plain, far as the eye can see. About two hours along it, on the summit of a hill, is a deserted town, called *Malah*. On the segment of the plain, from south to east, I counted fourteen large villages, none of them more than twelve miles distant, and almost all of them, so far as I could see with a telescope, still habitable, like *Sulkhad*, but *entirely deserted*. Not less than thirty deserted sites can be counted from this commanding spot. Well may we exclaim, with the Prophet, as we look over this scene of utter desolation, 'Moab is confounded; for it is broken down: howl and cry: tell ye it in *Arnon*, that Moab is spoiled, and *judgment is come upon the plain-country: upon Beth-gamul, and upon Beth-meon, and upon Keriath, and upon Bozrah, and upon all the cities of Moab far and near*' (Jer. *xlvi.* 19-24)."

Among other cities of the dead in this lonely wilderness, a few miles to the east of Salcah, is *Orman*, the *Philippolis* of ancient history, with Greek, but without Cyclopean remains.

In the wilderness north of it, Mr. Cyril Graham has

discovered innumerable rude sculptures, like the Sinaitic inscriptions.

North-west of Salcah, half-way between it and Bozrah, is Kureiyeh, an ancient *Kerioth*, formerly one of the chief towns of the Hauran, now with only a few families. It may possibly be the *Kerioth* of Moab, in the denunciation of Jeremiah, though there is another Kureiyat near Heshbon; and the pasture-lands of Moab, in its prosperity, may have extended to the Hauran. The strange Cyclopean houses, so often mentioned above, are here, perhaps, more massive and remarkable than elsewhere.

Bozrah, now Busrah, the *Bostra* of Greek history, must not be confounded with the *Bozrah* of Edom, now el-Busaireh, but may be the *Bozrah* of Moab, mentioned by Jeremiah (xlviii. 24), as the Prophet then speaks of cities "*far and near.*" There are only about half a dozen families in this once imposing city, the capital of a Roman province. It was taken by Judas Maccabæus (1 Macc. v. 26), afterwards by Trajan; was the birth-place of the Roman Emperor Philip, and afterwards its archbishop had thirty-three sees under his jurisdiction.

Its ruins, antique, Greek, Roman, Christian, and Saracen, are most extensive and perfect. Besides the great castle, one of the largest and strongest in Syria, there are temples, churches, mosques, triumphal arches, a great theatre, gateways, roads, and arcades. One Roman road can be traced which reached to the Persian Gulf. But it is beyond our limits to describe all the magnificent remains of *Bostra*.

The other countless deserted cities of Bashan may be passed over, as their modern names are apart from Sacred history.

East of the Hauran is another district, Bathaniyeh, the *Batanæa* of Josephus, a name probably derived from Bashan. The "oaks of Bashan" clothe the hills with their forests in all their pristine grandeur; and this is

probably the true forest of Bashan. It is scarcely explored; and its ruined and deserted cities are not crowded, as though it had been always chiefly forest land, but yet are very numerous and perfect, like those of the Hauran.

The *Geshurites* probably occupied part of it, and pretty certainly it was the country of the *Maachathites*, for *Maachah* lay east of Argob (Deut. iii. 14) and east of Bashan (Josh. xii. 5). The only time *Maachah* afterwards occurs in Scripture history is when its king helped Ammon in the war with David. That it was a very small state is shown by his contingent being only 1,000 men (2 Sam. x. 6; 1 Chron. xix. 7).

CHAPTER XIV.

GILEAD.

Boundaries of Gilead—Description of the country—Rainfall—Streams—Gilead—Jacob and Laban—Our Lord's Journeys—Cities of Jaiar, Arbela, Amathus, Gadara, *Um-Keis*—Remains—Mizpeh-Gilead—Jabesh-Gilead—*Yabes*—Pella—*Tabakát Fahil*—Mahannim—*Mahneh*—Jacob—Ishbosheth—David—Rogelim—Gerasa—*Jerash*—Jabbok—*Zerka*—Boundaries of Gad—Character and History of Gad—Captivity—Elijah—Tishbi—Succoth—Penuel—*Jebul Ajlun*—Beth-nimrah—Beth-abara—*Beit-nimrim*—Betonim—*Butneh*—Aroer—Abel-Shittim—Camp of Israel—Beth-haran—Livias—Beth-Jesimoth—Mount Gilead—*Jebel Osha*—*Jilád*—Ramoah-Gilead—*Es Salt*—*Jaazer*—*Seir*—*Jog-behah*—*Arák-el-Emir*—Rabbah—Philadelphia—*Ammon*—Ruins.

IN the previous chapters the line between Gilead and Bashan has been drawn at the river Hieromax. This boundary gives a large part of Gilead to the tribe of Manasseh, in accordance with the statement that Jair, of the sept of Machir, son of Manasseh, had half Gilead, *i.e.*, the part of Gilead which belonged to Og, King of Bashan, as far south as the Jabbok (Numb. xxxii. 39–41; Deut. iii. 15; Josh. xiii. 30). In this portion Manasseh had twenty-three cities (1 Chron. ii. 22). The *Jabbok*, now *Zerka*, divides Gilead into two pretty nearly equal parts.

Gilead, or *Mount Gilead*, signifies “rocky region,” and was a name given to this range of mountains extending from the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea, in contrast with the “*Mishor*,” or plains and downs of Bashan. Southward, Gilead gradually blends with the highlands of Moab, while eastward there was no defined boundary, as it melts insensibly, first into plains, then into the

great Syrian desert. From north to south its extent was about sixty miles.

The name of Gilead is still preserved in Jebel Jilad, little south of the Jabbok, one of the highest points of the mountain range which rises near 4,000 feet from the Valley of the Jordan beneath it. In all Gilead, whether forest, prairie, or valley, there is a wild grandeur, unequalled in any other part of Palestine. Rising abruptly from the Jordan Valley, its western bluffs are deeply furrowed by the many streams which drain the mountain-sides.

The traveller rides up and down deep concealed glens : sometimes by a track meandering along the banks of a brook, with a dense fringe of oleanders, " willows by the water-courses," shading it from the sun and preventing summer evaporation, while they waste their perfume on the desert air without a human inhabitant near. Lovely knolls and dells open out at every turn, gently rising to the wooded plateau above. Then we rise to higher ground and ride through noble forests of oak. Then for a mile or two through luxuriant green corn, or perhaps through a rich forest of scattered olive-trees, left untended and uncared for, with perhaps patches of corn in the open glades.

No one can fairly judge of Israel's heritage who has not seen the luxuriant exuberance of Gilead, as well as the hard rocks of Judæa, which only yield *their* abundance to reward constant toil and care. To compare the two is to contrast nakedness and luxuriance. Yet the present state of Gilead is just what Western Palestine was in the days of Abraham. Subsequently the Canaanites must have extensively cleared it, even before the conquest, and while the slopes and terraces were clad with olive-groves, the amount of rainfall was not affected. The terraces have crumbled away ; wars and neglect have destroyed the groves, until it would be

difficult to find any two neighbouring districts more strangely contrasted than the east and west of Jordan. But this is simply caused by the greater amount of rainfall on the east side, attracted by the forests, which have perished off the opposite hills. The area of drainage is about the same on each side. The ravines and wadys are numerous; but few of the streams are perennial on the west—all are so on the east. Every stream draining from Moab and Gilead is filled with fishes and fresh-water shells. I never found living fresh-water shells but in two streams on the west side. In other words, the brooks there are now but winter torrents. In Gilead and Bashan the Lord “made him suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock; butter of kine, and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs, and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats, with the fat of kidneys of wheat; and thou didst drink the pure blood of the grape” (Deut. xxxii. 13, 14).

The Bible history of northern Gilead is soon told. Gilead is first mentioned in the life of Jacob. On his return from Padan-aram he passed by Mount Gilead towards Canaan. In this region, at a place to which he gave the name of *Mizpeh*, or *Mizpah*, *i.e.*, “watch-tower,” and *Galeed*, *i.e.*, “heap of witness,” Laban overtook him, and, after their mutual reproaches and remonstrances, they sacrificed and parted in peace: Laban invoking Jehovah to *watch*, whence *Mizpeh*; and appealing to the “heap” of stones they had raised, hence *Galeed*, with a punning reference to the name of the country—a sort of play on words most common in the East. Thence Jacob came to *Mahanaim*, and further on, close to the brook *Jabbok*, to *Penuel*, or *Peniel*.

After the conquest of Sihon and Og, Jephthah was the only judge raised up on the east of Jordan, and he belonged to Manasseh, north of the *Jabbok*. In the

same region, too, the family of Saul found refuge while David reigned in Hebron, and to its fastnesses David himself in turn retreated during the usurpation of his son Absalom. Subsequently it became the battle-field of Israel and Syria, till Hazael began to cut Israel short.

In the New Testament the name does not occur; but the land of Gilead was blest by our Lord's presence on several occasions. Here He was baptized by John in Jordan; and down the eastern side of the Plain of Jordan He used to travel from Galilee to Jerusalem.

The names of places occurring in Sacred history situated in Gilead north of the Jabbok, or the portion of Manasseh, are few; for, though we are told that Jair had twenty-three cities, no list of them is given.

As a settled country, its importance was much greater after the Roman conquest than at any previous time. Some of the most important cities of the Roman province of *Decapolis* (Matt. iv. 25; Mark v. 20, vii. 31) were here situated, notably *Gadara* and *Pella*, and, according to some accounts, *Abila*, now Abil, whose ruins are twelve miles east of *Gadara*. *Arbela* (Irbid), further south-east, and *Amathus* (Amateh), on the Wady Ajlun at the edge of the Jordan Valley, must also, by their ruins, have been important Roman cities, though not connected with Sacred history.

Gadara is only incidentally mentioned in Scripture—"the country of the Gadarenes" being visited by our Lord (Mark v. 1; Luke viii. 26). As we have already seen, it was the capital of a district including *Gergesa* and many other places. It does not occur in history before its capture by Antiochus Epiphanes, King of Syria, B.C. 218. Retaken twenty years after by the Jews, it ultimately became part of Herod's dominions.

Gadara, now Um-Keis, stands on the south side of the Yarmuk or *Hieromax*, above the hot springs and

ruined Roman baths mentioned by Josephus, which are at the bottom of the glen (the Baths of *Amatha*). The most remarkable feature in the remains of Gadara is a perfect paved Roman street, more than half a mile long, with the ruts worn by the chariot-wheels; colonnades on either side, of which the columns are lying prostrate, though many bases are standing; and massive crypt-like cells in a long row, apparently a market or bazaar. There is, of course, a fine amphitheatre, and a very perfect theatre also, partially scooped in the side of the rock, and the remains of the Christian cathedral.

To the east is a dell, a wide open space, which is a field of tombs. Several acres are strewn with stone coffins and lids, most of them fairly sculptured with all sorts of designs, dragged out of the caves with which the whole district is perforated. At every step there is either a cavern or an artificial cave. These are now used as dwellings or shelter by the tribes who visit the district for a part of the year, and who have probably dragged the sarcophagi from their resting-places. In many cases the stone doors still remain swinging in their sockets.

Mizpeh, or *Mizpeh-Gilead*, or *Ramath-Mizpeh* (Josh. xiii. 26), was the spot of Laban's and Jacob's interview, and the place of "the heap of witness." It is not certain where this Ramath or Mizpeh was. It is frequently placed at Jebel Osha, but that is too far south to harmonise with the narrative, which puts it two stages north of the Jabbok (Gen. xxxi. 47-49). It is more probably on Mount Ajlun, the northerly crest of Gilead, and either this crest or Tibneh, a little west of it, would exactly accord with the history. I am inclined to place it at Tibneh. It was in the share of Manasseh (Judg. xi. 34), and here Jephthah, the Manassite judge, marshalled his people against Ammon, for the place was evidently looked on as the great sanctuary of the tribe,

from the tradition of the place of Jacob's covenant. Tibneh is the most conspicuous site in the district, a fine natural fortress on an isolated round mamelon-shaped hill rising above the wide plateau, and commanding a magnificent view of Western Palestine.

Jabesh-Gilead seems to have been the chief town of the Gilead of Manasseh. It is first mentioned when its male inhabitants were put to the sword for their absence from the war of Israel against Benjamin, and their daughters, to the number of four hundred, seized to supply wives for the remnant of that tribe (Judg. xxi.) This alliance seems to have created a friendly attachment, for Saul successfully repelled the attack of Nahash the Ammonite against Jabesh-Gilead; and was gratefully remembered when, after his death on Mount Gilboa, the Philistines exposed the bodies of himself and his son as trophies at Bethshean, and the men of Jabesh-Gilead, which was exactly opposite Bethshean, gallantly crossed the river by night, carried them off, and honourably buried them (1 Sam. xxxi. 11-13), for which act of loyalty David sent special messengers to bless them (2 Sam. ii. 5). Some years afterwards David removed the bones and buried them in Saul's ancestral sepulchre at Zelah (2 Sam. xxi. 12).

The name of *Jabesh* is preserved in the Wady Yabes, a deep glen with a perennial stream running down from Mount Ajalon to the Jordan, which it enters a little south of Bethshean. The site of the town is on a little hill, rather a strong position, which I visited, but for which my guides had no name, though Dr. Robinson heard of it as "Deir," which simply means "convent." Most of the ruins are grass-grown, with some broken columns, but no traces of Roman fortifications. It stands full in sight of Bethshean, which is worth noting. There is fine forest all around.

About six miles north-west of Jabesh stands a low

terrace, pushing forth in front of the Gilead mountain into the Jordan plain, called Tabakât Fahil, the ancient *Pella*, one of the cities of Decapolis. It has no Scripture history, but is deeply interesting as the place to which the Christian inhabitants of Jerusalem betook themselves before the siege of Titus, in obedience to our Lord's warning, and where they remained in safety. The place is now utterly deserted, but the ruins are very extensive, covering several acres with heaps of stones and granite columns. At the foot of the city is a splendid fountain, and two columns near it are still standing upright.

Mahanaim, the historical recollections of which are among the most interesting in Gilead, is, according to the different topographical allusions, somewhat perplexing to place. It was on the frontier of Manasseh and Gad (Josh. xiii. 26, 30), but belonged to the latter (chap. xxi. 38), for it was one of the Levitical cities of the tribe of Gad, yet it was on the border of Bashan (chap. xiii. 30). Again, from the history in Genesis xxxii., where it first occurs, it is placed between Mizpeh-Gilead and the Jabbok, therefore probably to the north of it. These indications can only be explained by the pasture-land of Gad overlapping Manasseh to the east in the *Mishor*, or "plain country," and so touching Bashan. These conditions are satisfied by a desolate site in the forest, which I visited, which still preserves the name of Mahneh, to the north-east of Jebel Ajlun and Tibneh, where I would place Mizpeh. At Mahneh there is a fine fountain and open pool, and traces of buildings, all grass-grown and beneath the soil, occupying several acres and partly covered with wood. As it is never mentioned after the time of David, there was no reason to expect later remains.

The name *Mahanaim*, or "hosts," was given to it by Jacob, when the angels, or hosts of God, met him (Gen.

xxxii. 2). It was a day's journey from the Jabbok. It afterwards appears to have been a very important place, for here Abner crowned Ishbosheth, son of Saul, king, when David was anointed at Hebron, and here Ishbosheth reigned two years. Hence Abner set out for Gibeon, and here the unfortunate Ishbosheth was murdered (2 Sam. iv.) To Mahanaim David fled on the successful revolt of Absalom. In the forest near it the great battle was fought and the rebel son slain by Joab. In the gate of Mahanaim David sat anxiously waiting to hear the fate of the day, while the watchman on the tower above looked out; and to the chamber over that gate the bereaved king retired to bewail his loved though wayward Absalom. Except as one of Solomon's commissariat districts (1 Kings iv. 14), it is never mentioned again.

Of *Rogelin*, the home of Barzillai, and of *Lo-Debar*, the home of Machir the son of Ammiel, the protector of Mephibosheth (2 Sam. ix. 4), and the hospitable helper of David in distress (chap. xvii. 27), nothing is known. *Lo-Debar* is, perhaps, the same as *Debir*, named (Josh. xiii. 26) as in the border of Gad and therefore not far from Mahanaim. It may be Dibbin, near Gerash, where I found a fine ancient fountain and other remains.

A little east of this, on one of the affluents of the Jabbok, stands Jerash, the ancient *Gerasa*, the ruins of which are the most perfect, beautiful, and extensive east of Jordan. Of its early history nothing is known. It was one of the most important of the Roman cities of Decapolis; was taken and burnt in the Jewish war by order of Vespasian, but restored with greater splendour than ever by the Antonines, whose inscriptions crowd the façades of its temples. There are no traces of the Saracens: everything here is as the Romans left it. It is probably the most perfect Roman city left above ground.

It occupies both banks of a little stream in the centre of a wide open valley. The paved roads, both north and south, are unbroken, skirted with tombs and monuments, pagan and Christian. The walls are, in places, of the original height, inclosing a square of about a mile, with the little stream, buried in oleanders, running through the centre, and many a street bridge over it. The streets remain—the principal one a double row of columns a mile in length, richly carved, fronting temple and palace in rapid succession. The side streets cross at right angles. For a thousand years it has been a silent wilderness, yet all can be traced. Even the sockets for the gates still remain in the arches of the gateways, and the water still runs in the channel to flood the circus for mock sea-fights. Temple, theatre, triumphal arch, forum, baths, Christian cathedral, are all here in every variety of later Roman architecture. Yet this was but a distant provincial city, standing almost in the Arabian desert, and almost without a history.

Ten miles from Gerash south, we reach the *Jabbok*, in its head waters the frontier between Ammon and Israel, in its lower between Manasseh and Gad, as it had been between the kingdoms of Sihon and Og (Josh. xii. 2). It was on its banks that Jacob met Esau on his return from Padan-aram (Gen. xxxii. 22). It is now the Wady Zerka, and is a perennial river of some size, beautifully fringed with oleanders, in a very deep wooded ravine.

The *Jabbok* brings us to the territory of Gad. This tribe seems to have had the richest and most valuable portion of the eastern side of Jordan. On the highlands Gilead is reached from the *Jabbok* south nearly as far as Heshbon (Josh. xiii. 26). Eastward it embraced half the territory of Ammon, from near *Rabbah*; the river *Amman*, a tributary of the *Jabbok*, being probably the eastern boundary. North of this, Gad afterwards

pushed as far east as Salcah, the very south-east extremity of Bashan, while on the west its boundary was the Jordan, from the sea of Chinnereth or Gennesareth, as far down as Beth-nimrah and the Wady Seir, or five miles above the head of the Dead Sea. Thus almost the whole of the east side of the Jordan Valley, or Ghor, was in Gad, which thus completely overlapped the Gileadite possessions of Manasseh to the west. This narrow strip is almost inaccessible from the range of northern Gilead, which rises precipitously from the plain, and contained but few towns, though its winter pasturage is wonderfully rich and luxuriant.

The territory of Gad then was as varied as it was extensive, and as the predominant clan east of Jordan, Gad and Gilead became, in common speech, interchangeable terms. The warlike character of Gad is intimated in Jacob's prophetic blessing, "Gad, a troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last" (Gen. xlix. 19); and in that of Moses, alluding also to his extension of territory eastward, "Blessed be he that enlargeth Gad; he dwelleth as a lion, and teareth the arm with the crown of the head. And he provided the first part for himself, because there, in a portion of the lawgiver, was he seated" (Deut. xxxiii. 20, 21): referring to the early allotment of land to this tribe, which had never in Egypt abandoned the pastoral habits of the Patriarchs.

At the conquest Gad, with the other trans-Jordanic tribes, held fast to their brethren, and, though their own lot was already secured, fought in Joshua's campaigns, and at the completion of the war were dismissed by him to their tents (Josh. xxii. 4), not to their cities. But for a time they took little part in the national struggles; and Deborah reproachfully exclaims, "Gilead abode beyond Jordan" (Judg. v. 17). In the early days of the monarchy, however, they were highly distinguished, and

their restless, predatory habits led them to cross Jordan and join the fortunes of David at Ziklag, "men of might, and men of war for the battle, that could handle shield and buckler, whose faces were like the faces of lions, and were as swift as roes upon the mountains" (1 Chron. xii. 8).

Before this they had had successful war against the *Hagarites*, or Bedouin of the far east beyond Bashan, and had taken enormous booty; and we are told dwelt in the "steads," or Hazereth, *i.e.*, the camps, of *Jetur*, *Nephish*, and *Nodab*, till the Captivity (1 Chron. v. 18-22). Gad was carried into captivity by Pul and Tiglath-Pileser, and planted in *Halah*, *Habor*, now Chabour, *Hara*, and by the river *Gozan*, the Chabour being the great Mesopotamian feeder of the Euphrates (1 Chron. v. 26). The country from that time forth seems to have been occupied by the Ammonites. We learn this from the lament of Jeremiah, "Concerning the Ammonites thus saith the Lord, Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? Why then doth their king inherit Gad, and his people dwell in their cities?" (chap. xlix. 1).

It must not be forgotten that the greatest of the Prophets sprang from this tribe. Elijah the Tishbite was of Gilead, though no trace of the name of *Tishbi* has yet been found. In all the actions and history of Elijah, we see the characteristics of the wild and hardy Gileadite of the tents. His dress, his strength, his endurance, his solitary habits, his wanderings in the wilderness, all bespeak the man of the eastern wilds, the one great Prophet who stands forth in the comparative dearth of sacred heroes from the eastern tribes.

Gilead has been so little explored, that the identification of most of its towns is a task of difficulty. We will take first those which occur in the long fertile strip of the Jordan Valley. *Succoth* is the first place named in this valley (Josh. xiii. 27). It belonged to Gad; but

there is a *Succoth*, probably that of Solomon, now Sakût, already referred to, on the west side near Bethshean. It is first mentioned as a halting-place of Jacob on his way from Gilead to Shechem (Gen. xxxiii. 17). Probably, then, there were two places of the name, for the Succoth to which Gideon came in his pursuit of the Midianites was east of Jordan, and therefore in the tribe of Gad (Judg. viii. 4), the one named in Joshua. Jerome and Burckhardt both speak of a Succoth east of Jordan. Though I passed many ruined places and desolate heaps in riding up the east side, at intervals of from one to four miles the whole way, I did not find the name of Sakut, or Sukot, assigned to any. This, however, is no proof that the place may not be found.

Penuel, or *Peniel*, lay between Mahanaim and the Jabbok (Gen. xxii. 30), where Jacob wrestled with the Lord in prayer and received his name of Israel. From Succoth Gideon passed to Penuel in his pursuit of the Midianites, and on his return destroyed its town and slew its men for having refused him aid. It was afterward fortified by Jeroboam (1 Kings xii. 25), probably because it commanded the passes of Jordan. No trace of the name has been found, but it cannot have been far from *Amathus*, the ruins of which retain the name of Amateh, at the entrance of the river Ajlun (*Ajalou*) into the Jordan Valley. *Zaphou*, next named in Josh. xiii. 27, remains undetermined.

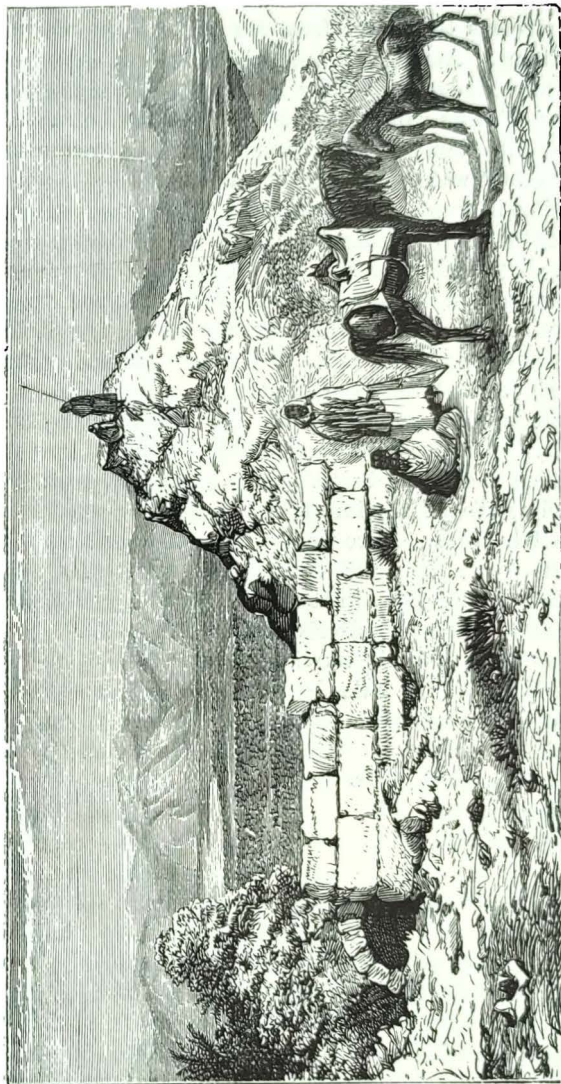
Beth-nimrah, *i. e.*, "the house of the leopard," is very satisfactorily identified with Beit-nimrim, "the house of leopards," very near the entrance of the Wady Shaib, or Nimrim, as it is called at its lower end, into the Jordan, at what are known as the upper fords, on the main road leading from Jericho to Gilead. The stream descends from Es Salt, or *Ramoth-Gilead*. Its New Testament and Septuagint name is *Bethabara*, where John baptized (John i. 28, &c.); for it is interesting to

observe that the LXX translate Beth-nimrah by *Beth-abra*, *i.e.*, "the house of the ford," the leopards having been exterminated by the increase of population, and the principal ford to Gilead and Galilee being at this spot. Now man has retired, and the leopard has resumed his sway; and with it the old name, never quite forgotten, has revived.

There is abundance of water here. Once there was a large, open, walled pool, like that of Capernaum: but now the spring bubbles forth, wasted and untended, feeding a luxuriant tangle of tropical trees and shrubs. The ruins are shapeless and generally choked by the prickly vegetation. It was here that our Saviour vouchsafed to be baptized, in order to fulfil all righteousness. Close to this place, too, Elijah was taken up to heaven, where his successor entered on his mission, and where our Lord was first proclaimed the Son of God with power (see p. 103).

A little to the north of this, on the highland plateau, above the right bank of the Shaib, are two ruined sites about three miles apart, Butneh and Aireh, probably the *Betonim*, *i.e.*, "pistachio nuts," and the *Aroer* of Gad, facing Rabbah. This Aroer must be distinguished from that of the Arnon. It was built by Gad (Numb. xxxii. 34), and was the scene of Jephthah's defeat of the Ammonites (Judg. xi. 33).

The site of Beth-nimrah presents also another point of interest, as it was undoubtedly very near the northern extremity of the camp of Israel in the Jordan Valley, in the plains of Shittim, before they crossed over under Joshua. *Abel-Shittim* (Numb. xxxiii. 39) signifies "marshes of the acacia," and from hence to Beth-Jesimoth, near the head of the Dead Sea, the camp extended. Immediately under the hills of Gilead and Moab a rich wilderness of garden extends the whole way, watered by the abundant, never-failing springs



RUINS OF KEFERIN, IN THE PLAIN OF JORDAN

and streams that gush from the foot of the wooded mountains. Among the tangled wilderness, chiefly on its western edge, still grow many of the acacia-trees, "*shittim*," from which the place derived its name. No place could thus be better situated for the vast camp—abundant water and forage behind, and open space for miles in front. Here, in these sultry groves, Israel was seduced by the Moabites into the licentious rites of Baal-Peor (Numb. xxv. 1). Upon this rich plain Balaam looked down from the top of Peor, from Pisgah (*id.* xxiii. 14–28), from the bare hill on the top of the rocks and from the cultivated field of Zophim, "that looketh on the face of the waste."

Here, not many months after, did Moses give his last blessing to the people he had led so long; hence he ascended those grey heights that towered beyond, and gained at length a glimpse of the land he was never himself to tread. Here were the tribes marshalled by his successor. In front of these green pastures their hosts were drawn out in the early morning just before their last halt on the river's brink (Josh. iii. 1).

Beth-haran (Numb. xxxii. 36) or *Beth-aram* (Josh. xiii. 27), one of the cities built by Gad "in the valley," is not again named in Scripture. Josephus tells us Herod changed the name to *Livias*. We are told it was three miles south of Bethanabra. It is marked by a deserted heap of ruins at that spot, called Beit-Haran, according to some, but for which my guides had no name. It is nearly in the centre of the oasis of Abel-Shittim, near the Wady Seir or *Jazer*. South of it again, the last city in the Jordan Valley was *Beth-Jesimoth*, belonging to Reuben, marked by the ruins called Ramah.

The great road into Gilead followed the course of the Shaib, from Beth-nimrah up to Jebel Osha, as the highest peak of Mount Gilead is now called, and immediately behind it was the great fortress of *Ramoth-Gilead*,

looked upon as the key of the country, now Es Salt. The peak of Jebel Osha, derives its name from possessing the traditional tomb of Hosea the prophet, and is esteemed a holy place. The view from it is considered the finest in Palestine. The whole plain of Jordan is stretched before us from Jericho to Bethshean, and almost to Tiberias, with the meandering line of the river in the centre, whose waters can be seen in some of their windings, sparkling like diamonds in the sunlight. Over it may be dimly seen the grey hills of Jerusalem and Benjamin, then Ebal and Gerizim, Gilboa and Tabor, in succession, with snow-streaked Hermon for the northern limit. Sloping down for more than 6,000 feet to the Jordan Valley, the corn-fields gradually melt into a lower wooded range, which descends, clad with trees of varying shades of colour as it sinks, into the plain. The verdure of the foreground, the rich red and grey of the background, cannot easily be surpassed.

A deserted site to the north-east of the peak, called Jilâd, is pointed out as the birthplace of Elijah.

To the south-east, on a bold shoulder of the mountain, stands Es Salt, or *Ramoth-Gilead*. The country round is a natural park, all the glades covered with wheat and barley in spring, and trees and shrubs grouped in graceful variety. Across the Jabbok rise the dark pine forests of Ajlun, and every now and then there is a glimpse of the plain of the Hauran on the one side, or of the Jordan on the other.

Ramoth-Gilead was a Levitical city, and the city of refuge for the tribe of Gad (Deut. iv. 43). It was also the head of one of Solomon's commissariat districts. But it is chiefly noted in connection with the death of Ahab. It had been wrested from Omri by Benhadad, King of Syria; and Ahab, with the aid of his ally, Jehoshaphat, vainly attempted to recover it, and, in

accordance with prophetic warning, lost his life by the arrow shot at a venture. His son Joram renewed the attempt some years after with the aid of Ahaziah, King of Judah; and, though he succeeded, was severely wounded (2 Chron. xxii. 6). Jehu was garrisoning it for him against Hazael, King of Syria, when he was stirred by the prophet to seize the throne, and here he was proclaimed king. From that time it disappears from history.

The modern town Es Salt is a considerable place, said to contain three or four thousand souls; but I could find no ruins, excepting an old mosque of massive construction, perhaps transformed from a Byzantine church, and some large bevelled cornices in the foundations of buildings. There is a fine old castle commanding the town on the height above, square, with corner towers, and the lower part of it apparently Roman. But there is no trace of earlier remains.

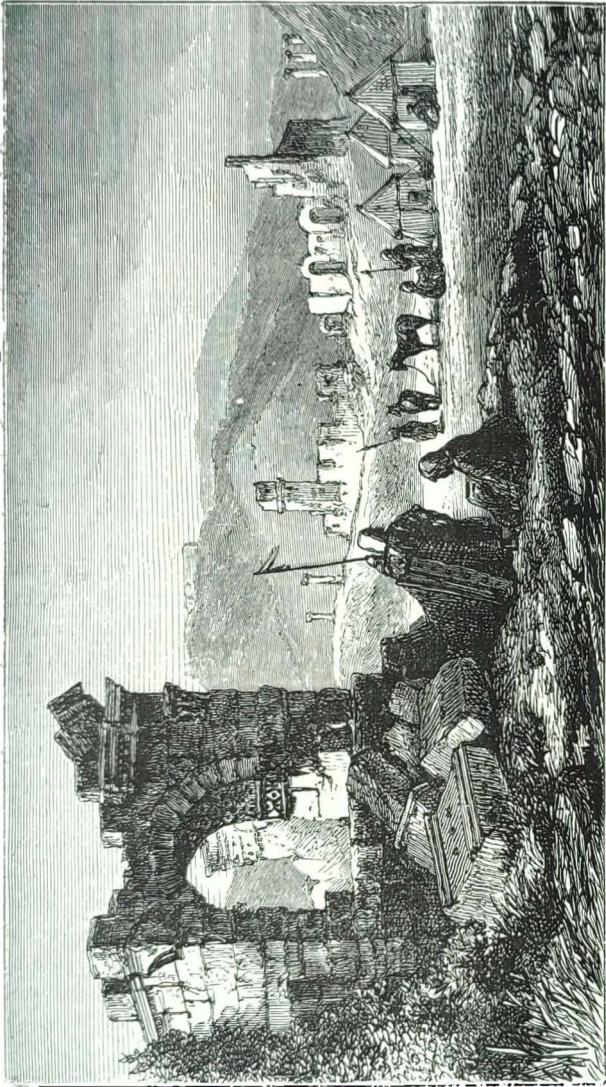
From Ramoth a road leads along the crest of the highland towards Heshbon. About twelve miles south on this road is Seir, *Jaazer* or *Jazer* of the Pentateuch. It consists only of grass-grown mounds and rows of foundations at the very head of the valley, above a marshy spring, the highest source of the Seir. By this route Israel marched after the conquest of Sihon, towards Bashan, and Moses took *Jaazer* (Numb. xxi. 32). It was rebuilt by Gad, and was assigned to the Levites. It was visited by Joab on his way from the Jordan to Gilead, in numbering the people, before reaching *Tahtim-hodshi* (probably in the extremity of Bashan). Jeremiah (ch. xlvi. 32) speaks of "the sea of Jazer." There is no trace of a lake, but possibly the marshy spring may have been restrained in a large basin or "*birket*."

Jogbehah (Numb. xxxii. 35) must have been in this neighbourhood, but the name has not been recovered.

It is again mentioned in the account of Gideon's pursuit of the Midianites (Judg. viii. 11). *Atavoth*, and *Atroth-shophan*, as the name should read (Numb. xxxii. 35), are probably marked by the many acres of ruins which cover the slopes of Jebel Attarus, between Heshbon and Dibon. The objection that this would place them too far south, would equally apply to the unquestioned Dibon. *Dibon*, mentioned in the same list, was afterwards assigned to Reuben.

The "half of the land of the children of Ammon" given to Gad (Josh. xiii. 25) doubtless was this rich undulating district west of Rabbah, which Sihon and the Amorites had wrested from Ammon, as they had Heshbon from Moab, and the retaining of which by Israel caused the bitter enmity of Ammon, as may be seen by the complaint of their king to Jephthah, that Israel had taken it from him, and Jephthah's spirited and eloquent reply (Judg. xi.)

Not far from Seir, but much lower down on the west, are some ruins, posterior to Old Testament history, but the most remarkable *purely* Jewish ruins existing, called Arák-el-Emir. This was built by Hyrcanus in the second century B.C. as a place of security against the King of Syria, and has never been altered or retouched by Roman or Saracen. Josephus describes it very exactly. It consists of a massive wall surrounding several acres, in the centre of which is the castle, built of stones of enormous size all fastened by ball and socket joints on every side, without mortar. The enormous slabs are sculptured with colossal lions, elephants, &c., in *alto-relievo*. Half a mile above the castle is a vast series of rock dwellings, impregnable by ancient warfare, with chambers, halls, stables for one hundred horses, with rock-hewn mangers, still perfect, and inscriptions in the old Hebrew character over the rock-hewn portals.



RUINS OF RABBATH-AMMON.

We can scarcely leave Gilead without noticing *Rabbah*, the city of waters, the capital of Ammon, which, though just outside the limits of Gilead, was closely bound up with its history, and was one of the cities of the Roman Decapolis. So far as we know, Rabbah was the one fortified city or stronghold of this nation, which was much less settled and more wild and predatory than the sister people of Moab. For the most part the Ammonites appear to have lived, in the wide plains east of Gilead, a true Bedouin life.

Rabbah was first attacked by David, after the confederacy of Ammon with Syria against him. In the first campaign, Abishai merely defeated the Ammonites, and drove them to take refuge within the walls. In the second, Joab, after a two years' siege, during which occurred the miserable incident of Uriah, took "the city of waters," *i.e.*, the lower town, within the walls of which the river, which is the head feeder of the Jabbok, rises, and then sent for David to complete the conquest by the capture of the citadel. Its after history is long and important, but out of the range of the Scripture story. Ptolemy Philadelphus, *b.c.* 285, changed its name to *Philadelphia*, which it retained during Roman times. The Saracens found it deserted, and never occupied it. It is now known only as *Ammân*, from the name of its ancient inhabitants.

The ruins, though not the most perfect, are perhaps the most extensive in all that land of ruins, Syria.

The expression of Joab, and the fact of the citadel requiring a separate siege, are at once understood on the spot. *Ammân* stands on the confluence of two little streams, which unite in the centre of the place, the two valleys converging into one, and enclosing between them a bold flat triangle of rock, the ancient citadel. This is of itself a large city of several acres, and here alone can any traces of building earlier than the Greek be re-

cognised in some of the great lines of foundation stone. The ruins generally exhibit nothing of Rabbah : it is only Roman Philadelphia that has left its story in its stones ; and nowhere else have I seen sculptures more elaborate and delicate. In number, in extent, in beauty of situation and in isolation, they are far the most striking and interesting I have seen in Syria, though not nearly so perfect as those of Jerash. The little stream, swarming with fish, which may be caught by a handkerchief, flows in a paved channel down the streets, and little quays of dressed masonry run on both sides for about $1\frac{1}{2}$ miles. There are at least three great Christian churches ; one which I ascended has a lofty tower, with its staircase still unbroken. There are three theatres and many temples, besides public buildings of every kind ; and columns and fragments of marbles or stone strew the surface in all directions. " Rabbah of the Ammonites shall be a desolate heap " (Jer. xlix. 2). As we camp among the shattered columns of Rabbath-Ammon, with a rude Bedouin guard lying around, we read the prophecy : " I will deliver thee to the men of the East for a possession, and they shall set their palaces in thee, and make their dwellings in thee. And I will make Rabbah a stable for camels, and the Ammonites a couching place for flocks " (Ezek. xxv. 4, 5).

CHAPTER XV.

REUBEN AND MOAB.

Boundaries of Reuben—Character of the Tribe of Reuben—Character and position of his territory—Previous history of the land—Moabites expelled by Sihon and Amorites—Gradual retirement of Reuben Eastward—Recovery of Cities by Moab—Beth-Jesimoth—Heshbon—*Heshbân*—Ruins—Fish-pools—Elealah—*El'Al*—Field of Zophim—*Ain Mûsa*—Ashdath-Pisgah—Mount Nebo—*Nebbeh*—Pisgah—*Feshkhal*—Panorama from the top of Nebo—Beth-Peor—Baal-Peor—Medeba—*Madyabah*—Baal-Meon—*Ma'in*—Zareth-Shahar—*Sara*—Callirrhoe—Macherus—*M'kaur*—Death of John Baptist—Bamoth or Bamoth Baal—*Jebel Attarus*—Kirjathaim—Kirjath-huzoth—*Kureiyat*—Progress of Balaam with Balak—Abarim—Shebam—Sibmah—Kedemoth—Mephaath—Nopha—Minnith—*Menjah*—Dibon—*Dhiban*—Dimon—The Moabite Stone—Bezer—Bosor—*Beshcir*—Aroer—*Ara'ar*—*Jahaz*—The Arnon, boundary of Israel—Moabite Cities—Sihon—*Shihan*—Kir-Haraseth, or Kir-Moab—*Kerak*—Raynald of Chatillon—Nimrim—N'meirah—Connection of David with Moab—Wars of Moab.

THE southern part of the first conquest of Israel under Moses, the territory wrested from Sihon, King of the Amorites, after the battle of *Jahaz*, was given to *Reuben*, the descendants of the eldest son of Jacob. The extent of the allotment of Reuben is very clearly defined (Josh. xiii. 15–21) from south to north, reaching from the tremendous ravine of the *Arnon*, now Wady Mojib, to a line about the north end of the Dead Sea, probably the Wady Na'ûr or *Heshbân*, and stretching from the lofty mountain-range east of the Dead Sea, to an indefinite distance eastward over the "*Mishor*" or "plain country" of Moab, now the Belka, till it melts into the desert, towards the Euphrates.

From the time of the conquest we almost lose sight of Reuben. For this there are three reasons: (1) the

character and position of his territory ; (2) its previous history and occupation ; and (3) the character of the Reubenites themselves. Reuben, like Gad, had never in Egypt thrown aside his pastoral habits. They had " a very great multitude of cattle " (Numb. xxxii. 1), and the country of Sihon, with the vast grazing-plain of the " Mishor " or Belka, was a land for cattle. They therefore requested it might be granted them, and the stipulation was made that they should assist in the conquest of Western Palestine, leaving their flocks in their new possessions. In pledge of their union with their western brethren, on their return they erected a great heap of stones as a witness, not as an altar for sacrifice, on the west side of Jordan, at the place of the passage of the host, and called it *Ed* (Josh. xxii.), on the peak now called Kurn Surtabeh (see p. 200).

But Reuben was of too nomad and roving a disposition to continue close co-operation with his western brethren. Accordingly, we find that he did not respond to Barak's call for help against Jabin. Deborah, indignant, asks, " Why abodest thou among the sheepfolds, to hear the bleatings of the flocks ? For the divisions of Reuben there were great searchings of heart " (Judg. v. 16).

The position of their territory also cut them off from the rest of Israel. By the frontier of the Dead Sea they were wholly inaccessible. The only way of communication was either round the south end of it, through the alien and often hostile kingdom of Moab, or by the very difficult passes down to the Jordan Valley by the Wady Heshbân. They had not, like Gad, a long strip of contiguous territory, with many fords across the Jordan.

Still more were they shut out by the previous history of their land. From the old archaic song preserved in Numbers xxi. 27-30, as well as from the historical statement in ver. 26. we find that Sihon, King of the Amorites, had only recently seized the whole country.

assigned to Reuben. Moab never forgot their prior possession, and persistently looked on Reuben as intruders, to be expelled on the first opportunity. We see that the feeling was as strong as ever 300 years later, in the remonstrance of the King of Ammon to Jephthah, and the bold reply of that Gileadite chieftain, "Israel took away my land from Arnon, even unto Jabbok, and unto Jordan." The reply is, "Israel took not away the land of Moab, . . . for Arnon was the border of Moab." Jephthah reminds him how Sihon, King of the Amorites, attacked Israel in Jahaz, and how they dispossessed the *Amorites*, but that Balak, King of Moab, never molested them; and asks, "While Israel dwelt in Heshbon and her towns, and in Aroer and her towns, and in all the cities that be along by the coasts of Arnon, three hundred years: why therefore did ye not recover them within that time?" (Judg. xi. 13, &c.)

It is evident, however, that Moab continued from time to time to press northward, and so drive Reuben further into the Belka eastward, and it is probable that a tribe so exclusively pastoral and tent-loving, cared comparatively little for the loss of frontier towns, so long as their rich pasturage was left them. Their wars were rather against Hagarites eastward, whose "steads" they seized and held from the days of Saul (1 Chron. v. 10), and thus receded further from connection with Israel. Most of the towns of Reuben are spoken of, in the latter part of the Old Testament, as Moabite rather than Israelite, as Heshbon, Aroer, Elealah, Sismah, Dibon, Jazer, Baal-Meon, and Kirjathaim. Not one man of note, after the rebellion of Dathan and Abiram, ever sprang from Reuben. He had neither prophet, judge, nor hero, among his genealogies. They forgot the worship of Jehovah, "and went a whoring after the gods of the people of the land," till Pul and Tilgath-

palneser, Kings of Assyria, carried them captive to *Habor* (the river Chabour) in Mesopotamia (1 Chron. v. 25, 26).

Reuben possessed but one town in the Jordan Valley, at the north-east corner, near the Dead Sea, *Beth-Jesimoth*, whose ruins may be traced on the Wady-Jerifeh, called by the Arabs to me "Rameh."

Hence the road into Moab, coming from the fords south of Jericho, passes up the valley of the little river Heshbân to *Heshbon*, still unchanged in name, Heshbân. Heshbon stands almost on the crest of the high table-land of Moab, very slightly retired from the edge.

The whole of the country is a table-land, with the ridge nearly 3,000 feet above the sea, and therefore more than 4,000 above the Dead Sea, from which it rises precipitously by a series of terraces so narrow and broken that passage is impossible; and then from the crest, scarcely more than from two to four miles retired from the sea, it gently slopes into the vast Belka, or "plain country," and the boundless wilderness beyond. It is deeply ploughed and seamed to its very centre by the stupendous ravines of the *Callirrhoe* (Zerka Ma'in) and the *Arnon* (Mojib), besides minor wadys.

Heshbon, evidently near the frontier of Reuben and Gad, as it is given by Joshua as one of the Levitical cities of the latter (chap. xxi. ver. 39), has very few Jewish traces, though its ruins are very considerable. It stands on an isolated round hill, one of the many *Hariths* or *Harosheths* of Moab—the name given by them to a round hill, with a little stream running past it. The hill is one heap of shapeless ruins, while all the neighbouring slopes are full of caves, once occupied as habitations. There are many Doric columns and Roman remains mingled with those of later and earlier dates. The public buildings are too much overthrown to be easily traced. In one edifice we noticed the old great stones with the Jewish or Phœnician bevel, Roman

arches, Doric pillars, and Saracenic work, all strangely mingled in their overthrow. There are also many large cisterns.

Below the city, to the east, are the remains of water-courses and an enormous reservoir, supposed to be that alluded to by Solomon : "Thine eyes are like the fish-pools in Heshbon, by the gate of Bath-Rabbim" (Cant. vii. 4). But more probably the allusion is to the bright clear pools which we met with in following the course of the Nahr Heshban, all swarming with a species of Eastern char. The plain also is full of deep wells, half-choked and dry, reminding one of 2 Kings iii. 19, 25, and rendering riding dangerous.

In the time of Hezekiah, Heshbon had evidently been recovered by Moab ; for Isaiah, in the burden of Moab (xv. 4), says, "Heshbon shall cry, and Elealah," &c. : and so it continued in the days of Jeremiah, a century later, as we see from chap. xlviii. 2, 34, 45.

Elealah is very near Heshbon, as we might judge from their being coupled, both by Isaiah and Jeremiah. "The cry of Heshbon, even unto Elealah." It is now called El'Al, and is, like Heshbon, on a "harith" or green knoll, bare and treeless, but with springs and plenty of wells, with luxuriant verdure. It is truly desolate ; "The shouting for thy summer fruits and for thy harvest is fallen" (Isa. xvi. 9). One solitary Doric column stands out ghostlike on its slope, the rest are all prostrate ; but heaps of carved cornices and capitals tell of its prosperity, even so late as the Roman times. Since then it appears to have been utterly deserted, for there are no Saracenic traces. It stands less than two miles north-east of Heshbon.

From Heshbon the table-land runs, with slight undulations and knolls rising here and there, to the point of the deep ravine of the Zerka Ma'in (*Meon*), but flanked on the west by the ridge, the highest point of which is

Mount Nebo. This cultivatable highland is the "field of *Zophim*" (Numb. xxiii. 14), to which Balak conducted Balaam, and of which *Pisgah*, the crest of Mount Nebo, is the highest point.

To the north of Nebo, in a valley leading to the foot of the mountain, is the fountain known as Ain Musa, the Well of Moses, and which is probably the *Ashdoth-Pisgah* of Deut. iii. 17, called in Deut. iv. 49, "the springs of *Pisgah*," the word *Ashdoth* meaning springs or roots. It is also mentioned (Josh. xii. 8, xiii. 20) in recapitulating the boundaries of Reuben.

Mount Nebo, now *Jebel Mebbeh*, though still retaining its ancient name, has only lately been identified and visited. It would seem that the range, of which it is the highest summit, bore the name of *Pisgah*, though now no trace of the name, *Pisgah*, can be recognised in the vernacular. The "field of *Zophim*," as has been said, was the high table-land sloping back from it, and thus *Pisgah* included both *Zophim* and *Nebo*. In the time of Jerome the name remained, and it is curious that, though not found on the east side, the Arabic equivalent for *Pisgah* is now given to a headland nearly opposite, standing out into the Dead Sea, *Ras-el-Feshkhah*, *i.e.*, the headland of *Pisgah*. This, of course, cannot be the *Pisgah* of the Pentateuch.

The view from *Nebo* strikingly illustrates the minute accuracy to the Sacred history. "The Lord showed Moses all the land of Gilead unto Dan, and all Naphtali and the land of Ephraim, and Manasseh, and all the land of Judah, unto the utmost sea, and the south (*Negeb*), and the plain of the valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar" (Deut. xxxiv. 1-3). To the eastward, as we turned round, the ridge seemed gently to slope for two or three miles, when a few small ruin-clad "tells" or hillocks, *Heshbon*, *Jelul*, and others, broke the monotony of the outline; and then, sweeping

forth, rolled in one vast unbroken expanse the goodly Belka, one boundless plain, stretching far into Arabia, till lost in the horizon—one waving ocean of corn and grass. Not a tree, not a bush, not a house could be seen; but the glass revealed the black tents dotted far and near. As the eye turned southward, the peak of Jebel Shihan (*Sihon*) just stood out behind Jebel Attarus, and the peaks faded with a rosy hue into the distance. Still turning westward, though the east side of the Dead Sea was too immediately beneath us to be visible, we could trace its western outline for half its extent. In the centre to the left a break and a green spot beneath it marked Engedi, the nest once of the Kenite, now of the wild goat. Behind we could trace the ridge of Hebron as it lifted from the south-west, as far as Bethlehem and Jerusalem. There was the Mount of Olives, with the church on its top, the gap in the hills leading up from Jericho, and the rounded heights of Benjamin on the other side. Still turning northward, the eye was riveted by the deep Jordan Valley and the twin oases of Jericho. Closer still beneath us, on this side the river, had Israel's last camp extended, in front of the green fringe which peeped forth from under the terraces in our foreground. The dark sinuous bed of Jordan was soon lost in dim haze. Then, looking over it, the eye rested on Gerizim's rounded top, and further still opened the Plain of Esdraelon, the shoulder of Carmel or some other intervening height just showing to the right of Gerizim, while beyond it was a faint and distant bluish haze. Northward again rose the distinct outline of unmistakable Tabor, aided by which we could identify Gilboa and Little Hermon. Beyond, Hermon's snowy top was mantled in cloud, and Lebanon's highest range must have been exactly shut behind it, while in front, due north of us, stretched in long line the dark forests of Gilead, terminating in Jebel Osha, behind

Ramoth-Gilead. To the north-east the vast Hauran or Bashan stretched beyond. The ruins of an extensive fort and town bearing the same name, Nebbeh, are about half a mile to the west.

The lateral range, which culminates in Nebo, terminates bluntly in a lower brow some distance to the west of it. On a bold headland on the edge of this lower terrace, half an hour's ride from the summit, is a large pile of ruins, with the remains of strong fortifications, and artificially scarped rocks, with great cisterns inside the fort, old temples and the Christian church, with the apse remaining standing, called by the Arabs Zi'ara. This is the equivalent of the Hebrew *Zo'ar*. This identification at once explains an expression in the description of the view granted to Moses, which has perplexed every commentator. "He beheld the south, and the plain of the Valley of Jericho, the city of palm-trees, unto Zoar." The narrative is describing the panorama from north to south, and ends by the feature nearest the spectator, *i.e.*, the city in front of him. On this the eye would naturally rest in its survey next after the Jordan plain. One expression may be noticed in confirmation of the identification: Zoar, though on a hill, must have had higher ground behind it, for we read (Gen. xix. 30) that "Lot went up out of Zoar and dwelt in the mountain . . . in a cave." The ground rises steeply behind Zoar for two or three miles, and is pierced by many caves. Heshbon, also, only a few miles distant, was the original seat of the Moabites (Numb. xxi. 26).

A recent traveller has endeavoured to show that Jebel Shi'agha, the spot where these ruins stand, is Pisgah. The arguments adduced would be equally conclusive on behalf of any of the many flat-topped mounds of the neighbourhood, one of which must have been Pisgah, though its Arabic equivalent, Fethkhah, seems to have dropped out of the local nomenclature.

Somewhere close to this was *Beth-Peor*; for Moses was buried in a valley over against Beth-Peor (Deut. xxxiv. 6), perhaps a Hebrew substitute for Baal-Peor, but the name or precise locality has not yet been traced.

Following the track of the ancient road which went through the very heart of Moab from Heshbon to Kir-Moab, and thence to Edom, we come to *Medeba*, now *Madiyabah*, not far from the centre of the plateau. The ruins are extensive, and indicate a high state of prosperity in the Roman period. With Heshbon and Dibon *Medeba* was one of the most ancient of the cities of Moab. Roads and streets can be easily traced in all directions; a few columns still stand erect, portions of gateways, Christian churches, with the apses yet entire. But the most remarkable relic at *Medeba* is the magnificent reservoir, constructed somewhat like Solomon's Pools, and 120 yards square. It is still perfect, but, the channels being choked, is now converted into a field.

Medeba was one of the cities of Moab taken by Sihon (Numb. xxi. 30), and, after his destruction, assigned to Reuben. Joshua speaks of it as in the plain (*Mishor*) or highland of Moab. But Reuben seems to have lost it before David's time, for here Joab's battle against Ammon was fought (1 Chron. xix. 7). In the time of Isaiah it had again become Moabite. "Moab shall howl over Nebo and over *Medeba*" (Chron. xv. 2). It was the scene of many a struggle in the days of the Maccabees, but has long since been utterly deserted.

About four miles south-west of *Medeba* are the ruins of *Ma'in*, the *Baal-meon* of Sacred history, called also by contraction *Beon* (Numb. xxxii. 3), and *Beth-Baal-Meon* (Josh. xiii. 7); one of the cities "built," or, more probably, restored by Reuben on the downs of Moab. It is close to the edge of the deep ravine of the *Zerka Ma'in*, the second principal stream east of the Dead

Sea, and situated on rising ground. The ruins here are very extensive, and the country well cultivated. Most of the remains are Greek or Roman, and none of later date. They occupy four adjacent hills, one having evidently been the central city, and connected with the rest by a wide causeway.

The Roman road down the wady to the Dead Sea can easily be traced, a little to the west of Ma'in. In an embayed recess on the shore, about three miles south of the mouth of the Zerka Ma'in, in a situation much resembling that of the oasis of Engedi, are the considerable ruins of Zara, the *Zareth Shahar* of Josh. xiii. 19. It is not afterwards named. The river, sunk in a dark chasm many hundred feet deep, with basaltic rocks on one side and red sandstone on the other, is shaded by oleanders; and, wherever there is space, the palm-trees, which formerly were so abundant all through the Jordan Valley, still grow luxuriantly and untended. It may be observed that Zareth Shahar is stated to be "in the mount of the valley," or "*emek*," *i.e.*, "the hollow," a word well describing its situation. Numerous hot and somewhat sulphurous springs fertilise the little plain.

On the way to it are the hot springs and ruins of *Callirrhoe*, before reaching which are some ancient rock-hewn tombs. To these springs Herod the Great went, in the vain hope of being cured of his loathsome disease. There are ten of these hot springs, so abundant that they heat the whole water of the stream to a temperature of 70° at its mouth up to 140° at the junction with the largest fountain. They are strongly charged with sulphur. One of them forms a cascade from a perpendicular cliff, which is covered with the incrustation of sulphur. The whole surface of the ledge is strewn with tiles and broken pottery, but the wady seems to be scarcely ever visited, even by the Bedouins of the neighbourhood.

Mounting again up this tremendous ravine, we reach the ruins of M'kaur, the ancient *Machærus*, about five miles south, and due west of Kureiyat. This famous castle is not mentioned by name in Scripture, but is connected with it from the statement of Josephus, that here John the Baptist was imprisoned and beheaded. It is often mentioned in the Maccabæan history, and was Herod's strongest fortress. It is stated to have been the strongest fortress of the Jews, and held out after the destruction of Jerusalem, having been enormously strengthened by Herod.

The fortress stands on a round hill at the east end of a narrow and isolated ridge, on which the inhabited city must have been built. It is very different in character from any other ruins in Moab. Nothing remains but a few courses of stones above the foundations. But the whole building material has been collected by the hand of man into one prodigious mass on the crest of the ridge, where it remains in weird-like desolation, a monument of the vengeance taken by the Roman legions against the last desperate patriots of the Jewish revolts. The outline of the fortress may still be traced very clearly, and in it two dungeons, one of them deep, and its sides scarcely broken in. One of them must have been the prison-house of the Baptist.*

Not far from this must have been *Bamoth* (Numb. xxi. 19) or *Bamoth-Baal* (Job xiii. 17), a high place of Baal, "in the valley," *i.e.*, the ravine overhanging the valley. The ruined sites here are very numerous, but the name has not yet been recovered.

To the south of the wady rises *Jebel Attarus*, evidently some ancient *Ataroth* of Moab, the highest mountain in the district, and often by older travellers

* *Machærus* and the whole district of the Callirrhoe have been explored by the writer, and fully described in his "Land of Moab." Canon Farrar, in his "Life of Christ," erroneously places *Machærus* to the north of the Dead Sea.

mistaken for Nebo. There are ruins to the west of it, and on its southern slopes. On its summit are the remains of a high place and of a sacred grove, in a great heap of stones and a solitary aged tree, once perhaps a sanctuary of Chemosh or Baal.

Close to the south of Jebel Attarus are the ruins called *Kureiyat*, probably Kirjathaim, mentioned as one of the cities rebuilt and renamed by the Reubenites. In the time of Jeremiah and Ezekiel it had reverted to Moab, and, written in our version *Kiriathaim*, is mentioned in the denunciation of that people (Jer. xlviii. 1; Ezek. xxv. 9). It is probably the same as the *Kirjath-huzoth* to which Balak took Balaam on his first arrival (Numb. xxii. 39), and which is nowhere else named. The ruins are considerable.

Accepting this interpretation, we can easily trace the progress of Balaam with the King of Moab. Balak first met him on the banks of the Arnon, then proceeded north with him to *Kirjath-huzoth*, the northern *Kiriathaim*, and its high place, the top of Attarus immediately above it, and the first conspicuous eminence north of the Arnon; then across the Zerka the next day to the high places of Baal, *Baal-meon*, afterwards changed by the Reubenites into *Beth-meon*. Thence, in order that he might see the utmost part of Israel's host, he brought him still further north to the top of *Pisgah*. Finally, in the last vain attempt to conciliate the Deity by fresh sacrifices, he led him to the *top of Peor*, which, following the topographical sequence, I would place where there are a group of ruins on the summit of the ridge due west of Heshbon and exactly opposite *Beth-Jesimoth*, which is probably identical with the *Jeshimon* of Numb. xxxiii. 28.

Thus we have, with every reasonable probability, the identification of the four sacrificial stations of Balak and Balaam.

Abarim (Numb. xxxiii. 44, &c.) seems to have been the general term for the whole mountain range from Gilead to the Arnon.

Sibmah, probably the same with *Sheban*, named between Elealah and Nebo (Numb. xxxii. 3), must have been close to Heshbon, but has not been yet recognised. It afterwards passed again into the possession of Moab, as we find from the prophets. "The fields of Heshbon languish, and the vine of *Sibmah*." "I will bewail with the weeping of Jazer the vine of *Sibmah*" (Isa. xvi. 8, 9). "O vine of *Sibmah*, I will weep for thee with the weeping of Jazer" (Jer. xlvi. 32).

Of other Reubenite cities named in connection with the above, as *Kedemoth*, *Mephaath*, and *Nopha*, nothing has been re-discovered.

Minnith, mentioned as the place to which Jephthah pursued the Amorites from Aroer (Judg. xi. 33), seems to have been a district in the "*Mishor*" or downs of Moab, the modern Belka, containing twenty cities. It was then, as now, a great corn-growing district, "the wheat of *Minnith*" being celebrated by Ezekiel (chap. xxvii. 17). The name may perhaps be traced in Menjah, east of Heshbon, and in Mahannah, further south, visited by Irby and Mangles.

The ancient south road from Heshbon to Petra next passes *Dibon*, now Dhiban, about 3½ miles north of the Arnon, one of the most celebrated of the Reubenite cities, and now further remarkable for the discovery of the Moabite Stone. Originally belonging to Moab, it had been conquered by Sihon (Numb. xxi. 20), and fell to Israel on his destruction. It was first rebuilt and occupied by Gad, but finally allotted to Reuben from its situation. At the period of the later prophets, like the rest of the district, it had been resumed by Moab, and is mentioned by Isaiah and Jeremiah in their denunciations of that people.

Its ruins are extensive, and, like many other Moabite cities, it has occupied two adjacent tells or low rounded hills, surrounded by one continuous wall of circumvallation. The Moabite Stone, discovered close to Dhiban in 1868, by the Rev. F. Klein, is one of the most important monuments of ancient times which has come down to us, though now, unfortunately, since its discovery, broken and imperfect. It is, in fact, the contemporary Moabite account of the events recorded in 2 Kings iii., and shows how, after the inroad upon Moab and the destruction of their cities by the combined forces of Israel, Judah, and Edom, Mesha, King of Moab, recovered his independence and made Dibon his capital. The whole of this territory seems, from the burden of Isaiah and Jeremiah, to have remained in the possession of Moab till the conquest by Nebuchadnezzar.

The *Dimon* of Isaiah (xv. 9) is more probably to be found at Dimnah, south of the Arnon, though, by a far-fetched interpretation, it has been identified with Dibon.

The ruins of *Bezer*, in the wilderness or downs (*mishor*), the *Bosor* of the Apocrypha, have been recently discovered by Prof. Palmer, little more than two miles south-west of Dibon, now called Kasur el Besheir. They are on a knoll, and are of some extent. Bezer was not only a Levitical city, but was one of the three cities of refuge east of Jordan.

Some clue to the position of Minnith, and certainly a most interesting illustration of the persistency of topographical nomenclature, as well as an illustration of the minute accuracy of the Bible narrative, may be found in the fact that a valley, or rather a gentle depression with sloping sides, running for about four miles east of Dhiban, is still called "Kurm Dhiban," the Vineyards of Dhibon. They are the old dykes or grass-grown ridges which mark the sites of the vines; but for

centuries not a vine has grown here. But when we turn to Judges xi. 33 we read that Jephthah, after his defeat of the Ammonites, "smote them from Aroer, even till thou come to Minnith, even twenty cities, and unto the *plain of the vineyards*, with a very great slaughter."

Aroer, the frontier city of Reuben, was situated due south of Dibon, on the edge of the ravine of the *Arnon*, and is now called Ara'ar. The ruins are utterly desolate.

The road from Aroer leads straight down the ravine, and the ruins of the bridge across the Arnon may still be seen. On the opposite brow probably stood *Jahaz*, now Muhatel el Haj. There are still the ruins of a fort, and the ravine is even here, so far from its entrance to the sea, of the tremendous depth of 1,500 feet. *Jahaz* or *Jahazah*, a Levitical city of Reuben, was the scene of the decisive battle in which Israel destroyed Sihon and the Amorites, and gained possession of the first instalment of their land (Numb. xxi. 23). It was evidently on the extreme south border of Reuben; yet, as the spot here named is south of the Arnon, it is quite possible that *Jahaz* must be looked for a little further north. *Ziza* has been suggested. But that is too far north and east.

The *Arnon* was the limit of the trans-Jordanic Palestine. "From Arnon to Hermon" was equivalent on the east side to "from Dan to Beersheba" on the west. The river absolutely splits by its narrow channel the great Moab range to their very base, for several thousand feet; yet its channel is not more than one hundred feet wide. South of it Israel never extended their conquests; while those north of it were, as we have seen, soon lost, at least as far as Heshbon. It is therefore difficult to separate the history of Reuben from that of Moab.

There are many cities of Moab south of the Arnon, whose names are preserved in the Arabic vernacular, but all of them, with one solitary exception, are forsaken ruins. One single town, that of Kerak, represents all that remains of a kingdom which could once withstand the united armies of Israel, Judah, and Edom. On a hill four miles south of the Arnon, the name of Shihan perpetuates the memory of the town of Sihon, the Amorite conqueror.

Further south is Rabba, the ancient *Rabbath-Moab*, once *Ar of Moab* and the capital of the nation, but now utterly desolate, though with the remains of magnificent cisterns, countless tombs, and superb temples. Some of these latter are among the finest ruins in Eastern Syria. And eight miles further south is Kerak, the ancient *Kir of Moab*, or *Kir-Haraseth*, where King Mesha sacrificed his eldest son to propitiate his god Chemosh in his war against Israel and Judah (2 Kings iii.)

Kerak still has a population of 7,000 or 8,000. Its history is continuous from the days of Moab. It was a bishopric in the early Christian times, and was afterwards the stronghold of the Crusaders east of Jordan. To the perfidy and insolence of Raynald of Chatillon, lord of Kerak, was due the fatal termination of the Great Crusade by the battle of Hattin, A.D. 1187. Raynald, by his refusal to make restitution for a caravan he had robbed, provoked Saladin to muster his hosts for the complete expulsion of the Christians. In the last Crusade the Emir of Kerak, A.D. 1238, captured Jerusalem and drove out the knights.

Kerak, "the nest in the rock" of Moab, was one of the strongest natural fortresses in the world before the use of cannon. It stands on the top of an almost isolated peak, 2,700 feet above the sea, and absolutely inaccessible to cavalry. Its crusading remains are magnificent.

The south-eastern corner of the lowland on the shores of the Dead Sea, now the Ghor es Safieh, is one of the richest and most luxuriant spots in the country. Its principal town was *Nimrim* or *Beth-nimrah*, not to be confounded with the Beth-Nimrah opposite Jericho. It is spoken of by Isaiah and Jeremiah. "The waters of Nimrim shall be desolate, for the hay is withered away, the grass faileth, there is no green thing" (Isa. xv. 6). The greenness, exuberant fertility, and plenteous fountains are still as marked as ever, but only a few Bedouins remain there in their wretched huts. The ruins of Nemeireh mark the site of an ancient city close to the shore of the lake; but there is another in the mountains, at the head of the waters, which is more probably the ancient city.

We cannot leave this now desolate land of Moab without recalling that David had Moabite blood in his veins from his great-grandmother Ruth; and that probably from this family tie he placed his parents with the King of Moab for safety during his wanderings from the face of Saul (1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4). Afterwards, however, David made war on Moab—we are not informed for what cause: possibly for treachery to his parents—and put to the sword two-thirds of the men (2 Sam. viii. 2). He thus reduced Moab to servitude. With the exception of Solomon having had Moabite wives, and erecting for their god Chemosh an altar on the Mount of Olives, Moab only again comes in contact with the history of Israel in its subjugation by Omri, its revolt against Ahab, and the combined expedition recorded in 2 Kings iii., 2 Chron. xx., and in the Moabite Stone.

Afterwards Moab made forays into Israel (2 Kings xiii. 20), and, in conjunction with Nebuchadnezzar, against Judah (2 Kings xxiv. 2), the former by the fords

of the Jordan, the latter, as Mesha had before attempted, round the south end of the Dead Sea.

On the return from the Captivity, Sanballat of Horonaim, a Moabite, was the bitter enemy of the returned exiles. From that time Moab as a nation disappears from history and becomes a mere geographical expression.



THE HOLY LAND.

Scale of English Miles
 10 0 10 20

35° Longitude East of Greenwich

36°

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