A PRIMER

OF

BIBLE GEOGRAPHY.

A PRIMER

OF

BIBLE GEOGRAPHY.

FOUNDED ON

THE LATEST EXPLORATIONS.

BY

C. R. CONDER, R.E.,

AUTHOR OF "TENT WORK IN PALESTINE," "HETH AND MOAB,"
A "HANDBOOK TO THE BIBLE," ETC.

LONDON:
SUNDAY SCHOOL UNION,
56, OLD BAILEY, E.C.

PREFACE.

THIS little work is intended to help Sunday-school teachers and others in forming a true idea of Bible scenery and geography by aid of the latest and most accurate accounts of travellers and explorers. It is a primer, and does not claim to be an exhaustive work. With this idea, the order of the books of the Bible is followed, so that the teacher may find in one chapter, either accounts of all the chief places noticed in the book of the Bible at which he is working, or references to them as given on other pages of this volume. In order, however, to give a clear general idea in the first instance, an introductory chapter is added, giving a sketch of Asiatic geography, and a special description of the country of Palestine, with its inhabitants, fauna, and flora.

The places described in the Holy Land itself have

all been visited by the author while in command of the survey parties of the Palestine Exploration Fund, during ten years, between 1872 and 1882, and the accounts are taken from notes and diaries written on the spot.

The author has endeavoured to give his authority in all cases where the facts have not been ascertained by himself.

He has finally to express his best thanks to Colonel Sir C. Warren, K.C.M.G., F.R.S., R.E., for kindly reading the manuscript, and for valuable advice concerning its arrangement and contents.

C. R. CONDER.

CHATHAM, *October* 1, 1884.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER VII.

CHAPTER VIII.

CHAPTER IX.

LIST OF MAPS.

N.B. Nos. 1, 2 and 4 are reproduced by permission of Messrs. Longman's & Co., and Nos. 3 and 5 by permission of the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund.

A PRIMER

OF

BIBLE GEOGRAPHY.

INTRODUCTION.

LET us begin at the beginning, and look first at the map of Western Asia.

The Mediterranean sea-coast at the east end of that inland sea presents a straight shore, without any very good natural harbour, running four hundred miles north to the Gulf of Alexandretta, where the peninsula of Asia Minor projects westward to the Ægean Sea. Inland of this shore is the narrow strip of country called Syria to the north and Palestine to the south, and beyond this again, on the east and south, stretch the deserts of Syria and of Sinai, reaching to the plains of Mesopotamia and to the Red Sea. The great rivers Euphrates and Tigris, flowing on the east of the Syrian desert, south-east to the Persian Gulf, enclose Mesopotamia or Chaldea between them; and east again of Tigris rises the rough plateau of Media and Persia. On the north of Mesopotamia the highlands of Kurdistan and Armenia stretch west of the Caspian Sea, and the chain of the Taurus runs thence along the southern side of Asia Minor.

Such is the general scene of the Bible geography. Nineveh, on the Tigris, and Mount Ararat form the chief points on the east border of the country to be considered, which extends on the north to Philippi in Greece, and on the south to Memphis in Egypt, while on the west Rome is the furthest point. The events of the Old Testament are, however, confined to Western Asia and Egypt, and it is not till the last chapter that we shall have much to do with either Europe or Asia Minor.

The most important natural feature of Western Asia is the great river Euphrates; and second to this the river Tigris (running to the east of the former) claims notice. On the first river Babylon was built; on the second, Nineveh; and it is in Mesopotamia, between these rivers, that the history of the Hebrew race begins.

The Euphrates * runs for nearly eighteen hundred miles from its furthest source near Ararat, and drains the Armenian uplands, its two streams meeting after having run west for 450 and 586 miles respectively. The united stream then leaves the deep valleys of the Taurus, and, flowing south through open hills, passes the site of the famous Hittite city of Carchemish, north-east of Aleppo, and thence runs south-east for more than a thousand miles to the Persian Gulf, through low chalk hills, open pasture, and even dense forest, to Babylon, and through groves of date palms, and swampy jungles, lower down, where it joins the Tigris. In breadth the Euphrates does not exceed a quarter of a mile save when in flood, with a depth of twenty feet, and a strong current, which in spring is as much as four miles an hour.

The old name of the Tigris was Hiddekel or Diglah, "the arrow," on account of its swift, straight course near Nineveh. The two sources are both south of that Taurus chain through which Euphrates bores to reach the plains, and the country through which the Tigris passes is more

* See Chesney's "Survey of Euphrates and Tigris" (1850).

fertile and open than that along great part of the course of the larger river. Three important affluents run down to the Tigris from the east, and for forty miles before joining Euphrates the river flows through the marshes representing the Chaldean lake. When history opens, the head of the Persian Gulf was more than a hundred miles further north than at present, and the rivers Euphrates and Tigris both flowed separately into the sea. The Shatt el 'Arab, or "desert shore," through which they now flow in a single stream, has been formed, within historic times, by the mud brought down from the mountains of Kurdistan, just as the whole delta of Egypt below Memphis is believed to have been formed by the Nile since the first founding of that very ancient city.

The plain of Mesopotamia or Chaldea, when irrigated by the great mud aqueducts which the old inhabitants made between the rivers and carefully maintained, was a country of fertility equal to that of Egypt, whose fields were in like manner made fat with the mud of the Nile, washed down from the highlands of Abyssinia. Even now round Baghdad (on Tigris) the crops are of wonderful richness, though the devastation of Chaldea by the Mongols, the Turks, and other savage races has converted into a wilderness broad tracts which in the great days of Assyrian prosperity supported a teeming population.

From Mesopotamia the Hebrew Abraham travelled west to the coast lands of Palestine, and from the same home the Phœnicians also travelled west to Syria, probably as early as, or earlier than, Abraham. The hardy traders, whose fathers had sailed on the Persian Gulf, settled under Lebanon, beside the reefs and islands which they made into harbours and ports. The Hebrews, on the other hand, were a pastoral people, whose riches lay in flocks and herds, and they were attracted by the broad plains of Bashan, and of Sharon and Beersheba, rather than by the rocky shores of Syria. Thus from its home in lower

Mesopotamia, and in Arabia, the race of Shem spread westwards to the Mediterranean, and gradually encroached on the earlier settlers in Egypt, until, in or before the days of Jacob, the Arab kings called Hyksos ruled over the greater part of Lower Egypt.

The four hundred miles of Syrian coast above mentioned, are formed by a mountain chain which rises to about 10,000 feet at the highest points of Lebanon and Hermon, and sinks gradually southwards to the plains of Beersheba, which descend in steps to the great granite centre of Sinai. Two rivers run along the chain on the eastern side, the larger being Orontes, which flows north, the smaller, Jordan, running south. East of these rivers are mountain ridges, which gradually open on the broad desert extending to Euphrates; and into this desert the streams of Abana and Pharpar run eastwards near Damascus. Of these four great Syrian rivers, only Orontes reaches the sea, by a passage through the mountains near Antioch; the other three each end in salt lakes, which have no outlet, and which get rid of all the water poured into them by the rivers by means of the evaporation which, in the case of the Dead Sea, makes the summer level of the lake fifteen feet lower than its highest surface in winter. It is acknowledged by all recent geologists, that in this respect no change has occurred since the time of Abraham, and that the Dead Sea presented in his days very much the same appearance as at present. The broad channel of the Arabah, extending south from the Dead Sea to the Gulf of Akabah, has always been in historic times a dry desert; but while Palestine and the Sinaitic desert remain unchanged, Egypt and Mesopotamia have grown more than a hundred miles into the Mediterranean and into the Persian Gulf; and the position of the head of the Gulf of Suez (as we shall learn in a later chapter*) has been changed both by the rising of the shores and also by the

* Chapter ii. p. 49.

deposits from a branch of the Nile (Wâdy Tumeilât) which is now silted up. At the time of the Exodus (it can hardly be doubted) the sea ran up to the "Bitter Lakes," now traversed by the Suez Canal, and this, as we shall see presently, is an important fact in connection with the Bible history.

Let us now consider more particularly the rivers, mountains, plains, harbours, and chief towns of Syria and Palestine;* the climate, natural productions, cultivation, fauna, and inhabitants of the country which is the chief scene of the Bible narrative. And first as to the rivers.

The Orontes, once called the Tzephon or "northern" river, rises under the foot of Lebanon, on the west edge of the plain which divides Lebanon from the parallel chain of Anti-Lebanon, which runs on the border of the desert of Palmyra. From the deep blue pool under the rocks, the bright, shallow, rapid river rushes between the hills to the plains of Emesa. Here, after passing the great mound of the Hittite city of Kadesh, it enters a lake six miles long, artificially made by a Roman dam, and then flows between high banks to Hamath, and here traverses a rugged gorge, with a long bridge; thence, between mountains, through pastures and marshes, it flows slowly to the plain of 'Umk, and joins the navigable Kara Su, which comes from the Lake of Antioch. The sharp turn of the river westwards occurs a little before the junction with the Kara Suat (the "Iron Bridge"), on the road to Antioch. There are several lesser affluents to Orontes from the east. The united streams flow through the deep glens between Mount Casius and Mount Amanus, past Antioch, and through the groves of Daphne, to the shallow bay of Seleucia. The Orontes is flooded by the

* The name Palestine (derived from that of the Philistim or Philistines) properly applies only to the plain of Philistia, but by common usage it has come to mean the Land of Israel from Dan to Beersheba, in which sense it is here used.

rains in winter, and by the melting snows in April, when it is generally fullest. The total length of the river is nearly one hundred miles.

The Abana (now called the Barada), though less important, is not unlike the Orontes in character. It also rises from a fathomless, blue pool, near the foot of Anti-Lebanon, and flows through the deep glen of Abila and, amid poplar groves, backed by rough limestone cliffs, to the fertile plain of Damascus. Thence eastwards, its course is over the open flats to a salt lake in the desert, where its waters spread, and are evaporated by the heat of the summer sun. The river Pharpar is not certainly known. Some suppose it to be a smaller stream, near the Abana; others identify it with the river 'Awaj, which rises in Hermon, east of the Jordan source, and runs to a second lake just south of that which receives the Abana.

The river Jordan rises in Hermon, and is formed by the junction of three streams. Its furthest source is near the Druze town of Hasbeiya, on the west side of Mount Hermon, and the largest spring is that at Bâniâs (the old Paneas or Cæsarea Philippi) on the south side of the same mountain. This source of Jordan will be found more particularly described later,* and the scene is one of the most picturesque in the Holy Land. Soon after the junction of the three streams, the river enters the papyrus swamps of the Huleh lake, where it is about on the level of the Mediterranean, in an open valley. The Huleh (the old Waters of Merom) is about four miles long, and from thence to the Sea of Galilee the stream falls very rapidly, about sixty feet per mile, passing through a narrower valley. The Sea of Galilee, surrounded by heights on all sides, is a pear-shaped lake, twelve and a half miles long and eight miles across at its broadest. The water is fresh, and full of fish; the level is 682 feet lower than that of

* Chapter iii. p. 75.

the Mediterranean. The scenery is described in detail in a later chapter.*

From the Sea of Galilee to the Dead Sea is a distance of about sixty-five miles direct, but much more by the river, which often winds about. The fall in this distance is over 600 feet, the level of the surface of the Dead Sea being 1292 below the Mediterranean. The northern part of the valley is partly occupied on both sides of the river by fields of barley, but below Jericho the plain is barren and untilled, the salt marls only supporting a thin growth of the alkali plant and other low shrubs. The river itself, which is very rapid but not more than about a hundred feet wide, flows in a sunken channel a quarter to a half mile wide, with steep banks of white marl. A jungle of canes, tamarisk, and lotus surrounds the stream, which is often quite hidden. In the upper part of the course there are many fords, but near Jericho there are only two, and these cannot be passed in flood time (February), when the whole width of the channel is under water. There are four principal streams which flow into Jordan, two from the east and two from the west. The western are now called Wady Far'ah (which has a perennial supply) and Wady Kelt near Jericho. The eastern are the Hieromax from Bashan and the Jabbok from Rabbath Ammon in Gilead. There are many smaller affluents, some of which are very salt. The water of the Dead Sea receives its salt from these springs and from the flats and marshes throughout the valley, which are strongly charged with salt, having at an earlier period (before man's creation) formed the bed of great inland lakes which stretched from the present Dead Sea northwards almost to Hermon.

The Dead Sea is 40 miles long, about 10 miles wide, and 1300 feet at its deepest. The water contains more than one part in four of various salts, and is thus very

* Chapter viii. p. 150.

buoyant, swimming being very difficult, as the body floats high in the water. The scenery of the Dead Sea is some of the finest in Syria, presenting rugged cliffs two thousand feet high, and deep glens here and there filled with palm groves; on the east the rocks of sandstone are brightly coloured, with several great outbreaks of black lava. The pitch, or bitumen, often noticed by early writers is still at times found floating in the waters. To the south is the curious salt mountain, with salt flats and marshes; on the north the pebbly shore is strewn with drift wood from Jordan, whitened by the salt which covers the dry, dead trunks and branches. It is now generally agreed that the Dead Sea and Jordan valley were formed by a great fault or crack in the earth's surface long before the creation of man, and that the district presents in our own days much the same aspect as in the days of Abraham. It is vain, therefore, to suppose that the "cities of the plain" were beneath the present sea, although this view was held as early as the time of the Jewish historian Josephus.*

On the west side of the ridge of the Palestine hills several rivers or streams flow into the Mediterranean. None of them are navigable, and very few are perennial. The largest are the Kasimîyeh on the north of the Holy Land near Tyre; the Belus and the Kishon, which discharge into the Bay of Acre; and the Crocodile river (Zerka), and Mejarkon ('Aujeh), in the Sharon plain. There are also several streams on the east side of the Dead Sea, of which the largest is the river Arnon (now the Mojib), which flows in a deep gorge from the eastern desert of Moab. Palestine generally, save towards the south, is full of fine springs of water, and the hills of Gilead run with fresh brooks throughout the year. The words of Deuteronomy, in fact, apply most completely to our own times: "a land of brooks of water, of fountains

* Chapter i. p. 38.

and depths which spring out of valleys and hills; a land of wheat, and barley, and vines, and fig trees, and pomegranates; a land of oil olive, and honey" (Deut. viii. 7, 8).

The hot springs of Palestine are found in the Jordan valley, at the site of the old Hammath (Josh. xix. 35), on the west shores of the Sea of Galilee, south of Tiberias, and again in Wâdy Maleh, west of Jordan, and at Gadara on the east near the river Hieromax; while further south is a warm spring opposite Jericho, and several of boiling temperature in the Valley of Callirhoe, east of the Dead Sea.

In Northern Syria there are several streams besides the Orontes flowing down the west slopes of Lebanon to the Mediterranean. Of these one of the most important is the Eleutherus (now called Nahr el Kebîr), rising in a swampy basin which divides Lebanon proper from Mount Casius, which is the northern part of the same chain. The stream flows thence to the plain north of Tripoli. Further south the river Adonis descends through a deep gorge from Aphek on Lebanon, where the springs gush out in a fine natural theatre of rocks, the mouth of this river being near the famous Phœnician city of Byblos, or Gebal.

Tripoli itself is built on the fine stream called Kadesha, while north of the Eleutherus is the famous "Sabbatic River," an intermittent stream, fed by a spring which at uncertain intervals gushes suddenly out from the rocks in a deep ravine.

The great chain of Lebanon, running from near Sidon northwards, presents a fine outline of snow-crowned crags. The red sandstone forms the lower spurs on the west, and is dotted with dark pines and firs; while higher up, the hard limestone presents an utterly barren succession of ridges. The white chalk appears along the east slopes of the chain, but it is no doubt from the snowy summits that the range obtains its name Lebanon, or "milky

white." Sannin, the most conspicuous summit, is about 8500 feet high, and generally snowclad, but in some hot years the snow is entirely melted, both on this top and also on Hermon.

Mount Hermon (9200 feet) is an outlier of the Anti-Lebanon, looking down on the plains of Damascus and rising to about three times the height of any mountain south of it. Thus throughout Palestine the snowy dome-like summit is a conspicuous object in the northern view. Like Lebanon, the lower ridges on the west side of this mountain are of sandstone, and the upper of hard lime-stone. The vine is very extensively grown on both Hermon and Lebanon, and the bright apple-green of the vineyards brightens the scenery in summer all along the slopes.

The hills of Upper Galilee are rugged and bare of trees. They are also of hard limestone, with chalky spurs to the west, where fine olive-yards spread down to the seaside plain. Lower Galilee presents flat plains of great fertility, and rolling hills, with an extensive oak wood north of the Kishon, and fine olive-yards in other parts. To the east of this the plains of Bashan and the great lava field called Lejja are equally bare of trees; but while some of the finest corn-land in Asia is found in the former, the latter is a desolate region, full of deep ravines and hard basaltic rocks.

The plain of Esdraelon is the basin of the Kishon, flanked by the barren ridge of Gilboa on the east, and by Carmel on the west. The curious Mount of Tabor,* with its molehill form and its oak glades, stands almost alone at the north-east corner of this plain, while the Carmel block is a triangular range, with the chief ridge clothed with rich copses, running north-west for fifteen miles and jutting into the sea at the south end of the Bay of Acre.

As we pass south, the rugged mountains of Samaria

* Chapter iii. p. 81.

rise between Jordan and the plain of Sharon, the highest points being at Ebal* and, further south, at Baal Hazor. Round Jerusalem the white chalk prevails in many places, capping the dark, hard limestone of the Samaritan chain; and almost the whole height of the Mount of Olives consists of this soft, white formation.

In this southern part of Palestine the district called Shephelah, or "low-lands," gradually widens and becomes remarkable, consisting of chalk hills at the foot of the higher ridges, dividing them from the flat corn-lands of Sharon, which stretch to the sand dunes along the harbourless coast.

Opposite to Samaria, east of the Jordan, rise the steep hills of Gilead, the highest ridges being of dark grey limestone, while yellow and purple sandstones are found lower down. Rich oak woods cover these slopes, and gushing brooks pour down the glens; but above, all is desolate, while on the east the eye ranges over the low chalky downs of the boundless Syrian desert.

The Hebron mountains are almost as rugged as those of Samaria, but these soon sink to the plateau of Beersheba, the peculiar scenery of which will be found more particularly described in a later chapter.† On the west, the Shephelah hills still run beneath the higher mountain spurs, and the plain of Philistia widens more and more as it extends southwards. The vine is also much grown round Hebron, and the olive-yards of Judæa are scarcely inferior to those of Samaria or Galilee. Such are the chief features of the Holy Land, the plains of Philistia, Sharon, Esdraelon and Bashan being the great corn-producing districts of the country, although the sides of all the lower hills are everywhere carefully cut and built into terraces on which also crops of barley and wheat are raised.

* Chapter i. p. 33, "Shechem."
† Chapter i. p. 41, "Beersheba."

Syria and Palestine present, as already stated, a harbourless shore. The Bay of Acre is the deepest along the coast south of Alexandretta, but no gulf like that of Smyrna or of the Piræus exists on the east shores of the Mediterranean. The Phœnician ports were almost always formed by joining and improving a reef or row of rocks, which served to break the waves, and even the famous cities of Tyre and Sidon had no natural harbours. Beginning on the south, the chief ports are—first, the open roadstead of Gaza; next, the reefs at Ascalon; thirdly, the little shallow bay of Jamnia; and fourth, the rocky bar at Jaffa. The port of Cæsarea is almost entirely artificial, but at Haifa (the old Hepha), there is a shelter formed by the Carmel bluff. At Acre there are ruins of a port; and next, along the shore northwards, follow Tyre and Sidon, where rocky islands have been connected with the shore and small harbours formed by cutting and joining the reefs. The Phœnician port of Gebal, or Byblos, stands in a shallow bay north of Beirut, and next to this follows Tripoli, the harbour of which is said to be the safest on the Syrian coast. Laodicea is a dangerous roadstead, between which and Tripoli is the little island Aradus (El Rûâd), also an important Phœnician port. Thus we reach the shallow Bay of Seleucia, with its inland dock,* and the deep but stormy gulf of Alexandretta, or Issus.

In addition to the seaports thus enumerated many famous cities stood in every part of the country, which have, however, left little trace of their former condition, though most of them are still inhabited. The fine Roman cities have still ruins to attest their former prosperity; the Crusading forts and burgs preserve still their strong walls and towers; traces even of the pillared streets of Herod's towns remain; but very little that is really of Hebrew or of Phœnician origin has as yet been found in

* Chapter ix., p. 164, "Seleucia."

the country. It appears probable that, like the Assyrian towns, those built by Hittites, Phœnicians, and Hebrews were for the most part of sun-dried bricks and wood, standing on high artificial mounds of earth or on the flat summit of a hill. The tombs were hewn in the rock near the town, and these still remain, with here and there a rock-cut channel leading down to a cave in which the waters of a spring were carefully collected. In the desert districts, however, the tent took the place of a house, while even in Saul's time the poor lived, as they still do, in caves and holes on the hillsides.

Beginning from the north, we may first notice the great Greek city Antioch on Orontes,* and south of this, Hamath, on the same river, which, with Kadesh, further south again, was one of the chief towns of the Hittite tribes. Damascus, in its fertile, well-watered plain, is one of the first cities noticed in the Bible, and the natural capital of the southern part of Syria, as was Antioch of the north, although the latter has now been superseded by Aleppo, further east on the plains which stretch to Euphrates.

As we enter the Holy Land the number of well-known sites increases suddenly. More than eight hundred and forty places are noticed in the Bible which were either in Palestine or in the desert of Beersheba and Sinai, and of these nearly three-quarters have now been discovered and marked on maps. The most famous towns east of Jordan were Gerasa—whose temples and walls, theatres, race-courses, baths, and triumphal arch, date only from the second century A.D., when they were built by the Romans in the uplands north of the river Jabbok—and Rabbath Ammon, the strong fortress besieged by David, which lies south of the preceding, near the headspring of the Jabbok.

Bashan also is covered with the ruins of towns, which have been ignorantly called the "giant cities," but which

* Chapter ix. p. 163.

have been proved by more careful explorers to date only from the early Christian centuries; and at Heshbon, Medeba, and Dibon, on the plateau of Moab east of the Dead Sea, the chief remains are of the same age as in Bashan. At Dibon, however, the most southerly of the Moabite cities not far from Arnon, the famous Moabite stone (hereafter to be specially described) was discovered by a German missionary.*

The natural capital of Palestine west of Jordan seems to be at Shechem, in the centre of the land.† Samaria lies on the hill-slope west of this ancient city, and Jezreel, Ahab's chief town, is on the slopes of Gilboa further north. Galilee contains no town of great size except Safed on the mountain north of the Sea of Galilee; but Nazareth, on the hills west of the same lake and north of the great plain of Esdraelon, is specially interesting to us in spite of its natural insignificance.‡

In Southern Palestine two important towns stand on the highest part of the hills, namely Jerusalem, the holy city of David and Solomon, the capital of Judæa after the captivity, and Hebron, further south, the burial-place of the patriarchs Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. These towns will attract our special attention at the various periods when they are noticed in Bible history, with many others of less importance.

East of the mountains in the Valley of Jordan the cities round the Sea of Galilee will be specially described § with Jericho, which stood on artificial mounds in the broadest part of the Jordan plains. Engedi, the town in the desert of Judah, on the west shore of the Dead Sea, was famous for its palms and its vines, and on this same shore, further south in the midst of the wilderness, the strong fortress of Masada was built on the crags above the Salt Sea by Herod the Great, and was the scene of

* Chapter v. p. 124. † Chapter i. p. 33, "Shechem."
‡ Chapter viii. p. 147, "Nazareth." § Chapter viii. p. 150.

the last struggle of the Jews against the Roman army which, under Titus, had destroyed Jerusalem in 70 A.D.

The Philistine cities, famous as they are in the early history of Israel, have left few traces of their ancient prosperity. Gath, on its white cliff; Ashdod, on its red sandhill; Ekron, on the barren down further north; Gaza, amid its olives on a natural hillock; Ascalon, on the shore girt by the old walls of Richard Cœur de Lion,—are now only mud villages on crumbling mounds. Lachish and Eglon have almost entirely disappeared, and a large proportion of the unknown towns of Judah lay in the Philistine plains and further south round Beersheba.

The Beersheba desert is also full of ruined towns and villages. The remains appear to belong chiefly to about the fourth and fifth centuries A.D., when we know that a large Christian population inhabited this plateau. Much that has been written about the ancient ruins and legends of this desert (called Et Tih, or "the pathless") requires to be reconsidered, since many remains of Christian and even of Arab origin (such as town walls, stone circles, wells, etc.) have been attributed to the Israelites, and legends, probably taught to the Bedawin by monks and hermits, have been hastily supposed to have a much higher antiquity.

The climate of the regions thus described is much like that of Southern Europe. The summer heat in the plains and low hills often reaches 110° F. with an east wind; but with a sea breeze, which generally rises about ten o'clock in the morning, the greatest heat is not much above 90° F. In winter heavy rains prevail from November till March, and snow and frost are common not only in Lebanon but even at Jerusalem, only 2500 feet above the sea. The rainfall is twenty inches yearly, and showers are not unknown even in the harvest month (May–June). The views which some writers have expressed concerning a great change in the climate of Palestine since the times

of the Bible history cannot be said to find support either in the Bible narrative or in the reports of recent explorers. The races which inhabit Lebanon and Hermon are sturdy and healthy, for the mountain air is very bracing and the water clear and wholesome. The dry deserts of Moab, of Sinai, and of Beersheba are also famous for their healthy air, and the Arab tribes are hardy and active. In the cultivated plains and hills of Palestine, however, much sickness is caused by the want of proper drainage and by the rotting of vegetable produce under the hot sun. It seems probable that from the earliest times these districts have been unhealthy, and that fever, dysentery, leprosy, and eye sores have always been common among the inhabitants of the Holy Land.

The natural productions of Palestine are as unchanged as is the climate. The oak,* the terebinth, the poplar, the willow, the carob or locust tree, and in the plains where no frost is to be feared, the date palm (though of inferior quality), are still, as of old, the chief trees of the country. The cedars still grow on Lebanon, though sadly thinned, and the fir and pine are found on the highest tops of Gilead and on the slopes of Hermon. The "Rose of Sharon" (which the Jews say was the jonquil, or narcissus) is perhaps the most common of the early spring flowers in the plains. The mulberry, the pomegranate, the walnut, all mentioned in the Bible, are still all found in cultivation. Corn, wine, and oil are still, as of old, the true riches of the country, and though the woods have in some districts been thinned or quite destroyed, it is certain that in other parts the copses of myrtle, mastick, thorn, and wild olives have encroached on the ancient cultivation, and have swallowed up the old vineyards on the hillsides. In the deserts still springs the white broom ("juniper"), under which Elijah slept:

* See the index of animals and plants of the Bible in "Conder's Handbook to the Bible," pp. 390–399, for details, names, etc.

the hyssop (a kind of thyme) clings to the ruined walls; the mint is still fragrant on the untilled downs; the fig trees still flourish; the vine of Sodom still shows its yellow apples filled with dust; the gourds in the plains, the camphor (or henna) in the desert, the huge thorns, nettles, thistles, and briars in the ruins, the reeds, papyri, rushes, and canes in the streams, all recall the language of the Bible. All is unchanged, and still might the Holy Land become, under just rule and with a larger population, "a land flowing with milk and honey."

Not less unchanged is the fauna of Palestine, for, saving the lion and the wild ox or unicorn, both now extinct, the animals mentioned in the Bible are those now found in the country.

The camel, the fat-tailed sheep, and the goat, are driven in herds by the Arabs; the horse and the ass, as in the very earliest days, are the property of the rich and poor respectively. The dog is still an outcast, the swine (or wild boar) is still unclean. The wild goats, or ibex, haunt the rocks of the wilderness, the roe and the fallow deer are found occasionally in the woods, and the antelope in herds in the plains. The wolf, the hyena, the fox, the jackal (Samson's fox), the leopard, all mentioned in the Bible, with the bear (on Hermon) and the coney, or hyrax, are still the wild animals of Palestine. The porpoise ("badger" of the English version) is found in the Mediterranean, and the crocodile is native to the swamps of the Crocodile river under Carmel. Among birds, the ostrich, the pelican, the eagle, the vulture, the owl, and the hawk, noticed in the Bible, are still common. The stork, the crane, the dove, the quail, the partridge, the sparrow, the swallow, and the hoopoe (the lapwing of our version), with several others, may be added to this list; with the lizard, serpent, tortoise, and frog among reptiles. No species of fish are mentioned in the Bible. The ant, the locust, the caterpillar (or locust grub), the

scorpion, the hornet, and the bee, with flies and swarms of parasitic insects are also mentioned in the Bible, and the great description of a locust army in Joel (ii. 2–9) might well recall the ravages of this terrible scourge in modern times.

The old races which peopled Western Asia in the days of Abraham, of Joshua, of Ezra, and of Herod have also left their descendants to our own times. The Hittites and other Canaanite tribes are represented by the Turkoman shepherds, while both in language and customs the fellahin, or "ploughmen," of Palestine, represent the early Syrian tribes, of Semitic origin. The Jews of pure blood gather in the holy cities—Jerusalem, Hebron, Tiberias, and Safed, where the doctors of the law taught from the time of Christ down to the Middle Ages. The Greeks, who are numerous in Cyprus, are also found in the trading towns and ports of Syria; while pilgrims from Russia, Armenia, and Georgia pass constantly to and fro between Jerusalem and their native countries. The Arab, who first appears in the Bible narrative about the time of Ezra, and whose tongue has given many peculiar words to the language of the Book of Job, represents the sons of Ishmael (Nabatheans and "sons of the East"), together with the Meccan tribes and natives of Yemen who followed Omar into Palestine in the seventh century A.D., and who sprang from the race of Joktan mentioned in Genesis.

Of the Philistines, who appear to have belonged to the old red race of Egypt, no certain traces remain, although the peasantry of Philistia approach much nearer to the fellahin of Egypt, in face, figure, dress, and speech, than to the hardy mountaineers of Judæa and Samaria. The Persian race is probably represented also in Syria by the Druzes of Lebanon, although the language of these warlike horsemen is Arabic. The few survivors of the once

powerful Samaritans also linger at Shechem, as will be more particularly described later.*

Beyond the bounds of Syria many old races are also represented by existing stocks. The Kurds, who until quite recently preserved the great horn bows of an earlier age, are descendants of the Parthians, who were so formidable to the Romans, and who invaded Palestine about 45 B.C., after the death of Crassus. The Yezedis, or so-called devil worshippers of Persia, are also probably the last remnants of the Chaldeans, or of the Median pagans who conquered Babylon under Cyrus.

In the preceding pages, we have thus taken a general bird's-eye view of our subject, in order to understand the field over which we are to range. The chapters following are arranged in the order of the Bible books, which they are meant to illustrate, and by the use of the index the reader will be able to find what is said about any place which interests him. References will also be given to other works where fuller details may be found by those who wish to pursue their studies further than is possible in a short work like the present.

* See chapter i. p. 35, and chapter vi. p. 134.

CHAPTER I

GEOGRAPHY OF GENESIS.

Eden.

THE first place which is named in the Bible is the garden of Eden, or of "delight," which was in the east at the sources of four rivers, of which two were Tigris and Euphrates. A glance at the map shows that the writer referred to the uplands of Kurdistân near Mount Ararat, where Tigris and Euphrates rise. The two other rivers were called Pison and Gihon, and the latter watered Cush, or Æthiopia, which, as we shall see later, was the country south-west of the Caspian Sea. Gihon is therefore, in all probability, the famous river afterwards called the Araxes (or Jihûn er Râs), which flows from near Mount Ararat eastwards into the Caspian. The fourth river, Pison, is less easily recognized, but is supposed by some to be the Halys, which waters Asia Minor, and by others to be the Acampsis, which flows to Colchis, a land famous in connection with gold among the ancients, while Pison is also said to have flowed through Havilah, a land of gold. The plateau which seems thus indicated as the site of Eden has been described by Palgrave and other writers as possessing a magnificent climate, and a naturally fruitful soil. It has been the cradle of many warlike races, and its present inhabitants—Kurds and Circassians—are fine and independent tribes. It is true that another Eden existed in Mesopotamia, which some writers of late have sought to identify with the original Paradise, and which

is called Beth Adini in the annals of King Shalmanezer (see Isa. xxxvii. 12; 2 Kings xix. 12; Amos i. 5); but its position does not agree with the account above mentioned of the four rivers of Paradise, since it is not at the source of any river at all; and other good reasons have been brought forward to show that it was a different place.

It is from this very district, at the springs of Euphrates, that the oldest race known to the Assyrians, called Akkadi or "mountaineers," was believed to have come southwards to the plains between the two great rivers Tigris and Euphrates; and the story of the garden of Eden has been shown by scholars to have been well known to the Assyrians about the time of Solomon.

The land of Nod, or "exile," where Cain is said to have dwelt, was east of Eden, but its exact locality is not fixed in the Bible. No other places are noticed in Genesis until the time of Noah, when Mount Ararat is first mentioned, and when an important chapter describes the distribution of the sons of Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Ararat.

The mountain generally supposed to be Ararat is a fine peak south of the sources of the Euphrates, and some 17,000 feet high. It is covered with eternal snow, and is still called Ararat by the Armenians. The Chaldean story of the Flood (which is probably as old as Solomon's time) also points to the Gordæan mountains as those on which the ark rested—the same chain as that of Ararat,—and it should be noticed that the Bible speaks, not of Mount Ararat, but of "the mountains of Ararat" (a distinction which is not without importance), and notices Ararat not merely in one passage, but also in two others (2 Kings xix. 37; Isa. xxxvii. 38), where the English version now reads Armenia. The general appearance of the mountain is so familiar

from numerous drawings that it is not necessary to dwell long upon this question.

Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

The three sons of Noah were—Shem, which means "dark" or "brown" according to the best scholars; Ham, which means "black"; and Japheth, "white" or "fair," seeming to indicate the colour of the races descending from these stocks. It is very remarkable that the division of the races of Asia, Europe, and Africa, which has been established by some of our best scholars,* agrees entirely with the division which is given in Gen. x., and a little study in detail will serve to show this clearly.

The children of Shem include Asshur (the Assyrians), Elam (the early Persians), and a number of tribes descended from Joktan, many of which have been found to be Arabian. Thus, for instance, the name of Hazarmaveth remains unchanged to our own times as Hadhramaut, the district east of Yemen, on the south side of the great Arabian peninsula. The Hebrew and the Arabic names have the same meaning, "the dead region." Sheba and Ophir also, as we shall see later in speaking of Solomon, were situated in Yemen, towards the south of Arabia.

Another son of Shem was Aram, or Syria, and it is clear that the races thus noticed are those which are called Semitic by modern scholars, all speaking languages nearly akin to Hebrew and Arabic, and all distinguished by the deep bronzed hue which the latest scholarship shows to be meant by the name of Shem.

This agreement of science with the chapter of Genesis under consideration is still more remarkable in the case of Ham. His sons were—Cush, "the dark," Mitzraim (or Egypt), Phut (generally supposed to be Nubia), and

* See, for instance, Max Müller's "Selected Essays," vol. ii. p. 130.

Canaan; and the early inhabitants of Cush (the region east of Ararat), of Egypt, and of Nubia, together with the first dwellers in Canaan, are now recognized as having all been families of the great stock called Turanian. The Southern Turanians were remarkable for their dark colour and black hair, sometimes curly like the negroes'; and the Greeks called both the dark men of Asia and also those of Africa by one name, Æthiops, or "dusky faced."

Traces of this old dark race are still found, not only in India and the Polynesian islands, but even in Europe among the Basques, and probably the Esquimaux; and they appear to have migrated from their Asiatic centre even earlier than the fair races which appear to be indicated by the name of Japheth.

The sons of Japheth ("the white one") were—Gomer (the Cimmerians), Magog (the Southern Russians), Madai (the Medes), who lived south of the Caspian, and Javan (the Ionians), from whom sprang the Greek races. All these races, Caucasians, Medes, and early Greeks, are now known to have been akin, all speaking languages related to each other, and similar to the Greek, the Latin, and other tongues of Modern Europe. These races are generally called Aryan, a name assumed by the Medes as early as the time of Herodotus; and the fairer people of Europe are thus the children of the old Japheth, or "fair one."

Nimrod.

In this same chapter we find notice of Nimrod and the early inhabitants of Mesopotamia. Nimrod was a son of Cush, and thus belonged to that old dark race with black hair above mentioned in speaking of Ham—a race which the Assyrians called Akkadi, or mountaineers, and which was remotely akin to the Mongols. The rule of Nimrod is stated to have extended over Babel (Babylon) and Erech (the present Mugheir, further down the Euphrates),

and over Accad and Calneh, which are not certainly known, though Accad was evidently named from the Akkadians, who are thus clearly connected with Nimrod.

The next verse should read (Gen. x. 11), "Thence he went out towards Assyria, and builded Nineveh, and the city Rehoboth" (on the Euphrates above Babylon), with Calah and Resen which are not certainly known.* This account also agrees well with what we gather from the monuments, as to the early history of Assyria and Mesopotamia (or Chaldea), for it is now certain that the first civilization of these regions was due to the ancient Akkadian race, which came from the mountains of Ararat.

Ur and Haran.

As we pass on to the twelfth chapter of Genesis,† we leave the great plains of Euphrates to enter with Abraham into the promised land. The site of Ur of the Chaldees, whence the patriarch is said to have journeyed, cannot be held to be really known. Tradition places this city at the later Edessa, east of Aleppo; but modern scholars are inclined to suppose that Erech, or Uruk (now El Mugheir), is the real site of Ur. Erech was a very famous Chaldean town, and in Abraham's time it was probably a seaport, though now far from the mouth of the Euphrates, for the amount of land made by the river in forty centuries is known to have been enough to account for this difference. The old Babylonian story of the monster, half a man, half a fish (like Dagon), who taught laws to the men of Erech

* Calah is supposed to be the site of Tell Nimrûd, south of Nineveh. (Cf. chapter vii.)

† The Tower of Babel (Gen. xi.) is not specially noticed, as the question is not exactly geographical. It was built in the land of Shinar (part of Mesopotamia), and the mention of "slime" (or bitumen), used for mortar, agrees with the actual use of this substance in Assyrian buildings. The Jewish tradition makes this tower the same as the existing Birs Nimrûd; but the latter was not built till Solomon's time.

after coming out of the sea, may have some connection with the fact that the town was once a harbour; but though the site of Erech is pretty certainly fixed, it is not yet certain that it represents Ur of the Chaldees whence Abraham came forth.

Haran, or Harran, where Abraham first dwelt after leaving Ur, is also not certainly known. The name may mean "the sun-burnt land," and some have supposed the great district of the Harrah, south-east of Damascus, to be intended; but from another passage (Gen. xxxi. 21) it seems clear that Harran was east of "the river," by which name Euphrates is usually meant, while Padan-aram, the land in which Harran lay, was the old name of Mesopotamia, or the country between Tigris and Euphrates.

Shechem.

By what exact route Abraham travelled we are not told, but it seems to have been the same afterwards followed by Jacob, leading from Bashan or Gilead east of Jordan to the city of Shechem, which is the first place in the Holy Land noticed in the Bible, and of which, on account of its importance in all ages of Bible history, a short description may now be given.

Looking at the long chain of mountains which forms the backbone of Palestine, whether from the sea-coast or from the Gilead plateau, one sees near the middle two tops rising higher than the rest, with a gap or deep valley between. The northern top is Ebal, the southern Gerizim; the gap is the Vale of Shechem,* which is fifteen hundred

* The modern name of Shechem is Nâblus, a corruption of its Greek name Neapolis. It is necessary to explain that Shechem, Sychar, and Samaria, are three places quite distinct from each other and at some distance apart, for many errors have arisen as to these towns, and are still kept alive in popular books (as, for instance, in the illustrated edition of Farrar's "Life of Christ"). Samaria and Sychar will be noticed later (pp. 34, 119, 156).

feet deep, the tops being about three thousand feet above the sea. Both mountains are of hard limestone, with cliffs on their sides, and are very bare, but the valley is full of clear springs and fruit gardens, and is one of the most fertile spots in Palestine. From the summit of Gerizim, where is a flat sacred rock on which sacrifices were once offered, there is a very fine view. Snowy Hermon, and Carmel covered with dark bushes, are seen on the north; on the west, the wide Sharon plain, Cæsarea and its yellow sandhills, and the broad blue sea; on the south, the rugged mountains of Judæa; and on the east (just below), the brown plain of Moreh surrounded by hills, in which stands the tomb of Phinehas, while beyond are the high, dark mountains of Gilead. Some have thought that the Samaritans are right, in supposing Moreh and Moriah to be the same, and that Gerizim is the mountain in the land of Moriah where Isaac was sacrificed, but the Book of Chronicles makes Mount Moriah to be the Temple hill, at Jerusalem (2 Chron. iii. 1). Gerizim was, however, a sacred mountain, the mount of blessings (Deut. xi. 29), and on Ebal the monument was erected by Joshua, perhaps near the sacred place still shown on this northern mountain called "the monument of the religion" ('Amâd ed Dîn).

At the foot of Gerizim, where the Vale of Shechem joins the plain of Moreh, is Jacob's Well, seventy-five feet deep, and still at times containing water.* Captain Anderson, R.E., was lowered to the bottom in 1866, and has described it. There is a vault over it now, and remains of an ancient church. This is one of the most certain sites in the country, and one where we know the feet of Christ must have trod, and on the slope of Ebal, north of the well, is Sychar (now 'Askar), a little village with cactus hedges, of which more hereafter. Joseph's tomb is shown between the well and Sychar, but is quite

* See detailed account, "Tent Work in Palestine," vol. i. p. 73.

a modern building, though the real grave may perhaps exist below the floor.

Jacob appears to have been forced to dig this well (the only one in the place) when he purchased the ground near to it, on account of the jealousy of the Hivites; and similar jealousy as to the sharing of the springs still leads to village quarrels in the Holy Land. Near the well, and probably in the parcel bought by Jacob (Gen. xxxiii. 19), there seems to have been a famous oak tree which is often mentioned later (Gen. xxxv. 4; Josh. xxiv. 26; Judg. ix. 6), and which the Samaritans say stood where the little village of Balata is now found, west of Jacob's Well.* There is perhaps no part of Palestine where it is so easy to realize the old condition of the country as at Shechem, where the passover is still celebrated yearly by the Samaritans in a manner much closer to that described in the Bible than is the ordinary Jewish passover even at Jerusalem, and where one of the oldest existing manuscripts of the law is so jealously guarded that there are probably only about a dozen Englishmen, who have ever been allowed to see the real old text.

Bethel and Ai.

A day's journey south of Shechem over the rugged mountains of Ephraim brings us to Abraham's second camp, which was between Bethel (or "the House of God") and Ai, a city east of Bethel and not far from it. The site of Ai has been found by the explorers who have worked for the Palestine Exploration Fund, and it retains its name, slightly changed as Haiyân; while the modern village on the site of the old Bethel has a slightly corrupted name Beitîn for Beitel. Between these two there is a ridge, with two ruined churches, and it is clear

* In the last passage (Judg. ix. 6), the proper rendering "oak" is given in the margin.

that somewhere on this ridge the camp and the second altar of Abraham must have stood. The author has again and again visited the spot, but found nothing that he could safely suppose to be a ruin of this altar; but though it has probably long disappeared, the view remains almost unchanged from that which must have been seen by Lot and Abraham when they divided the land (Gen. xiii. 7). All round are long, hard limestone ridges, and on the east white chalk peaks of the Judæan desert, beyond which appears the gleam of water at the north end of the Dead Sea and the green plains of Jericho, with the wall of Moabite mountains, including Mount Nebo, beyond the Jordan valley. Thus, while Lot, tempted by the fertile distant scene, descended into the plains north of the Dead Sea, where Sodom and Gomorrah then stood, Abraham's choice was to all appearance the worse, including only weary hills and a sterile soil.

The most remarkable feature of the Bethel scenery is its bleak, bare, and stony character. Here Jacob can have had no difficulty in finding a stone for his pillow, and here (so high is the position) Abraham could with his eye sweep over a very large portion of that land which was to be given to his sons. In a later chapter we find Jacob reaching at nightfall "a certain place," and raising one of its stones as a "pillar," which he anointed: "he called the name of that place Bethel, but the name of that city was called Luz at the first." Probably the word "place" (Makom) means a "sacred place," and it was perhaps by Abraham's altar that his grandson slept that night unknowingly, and of its sacred stones that he erected the pillar in memory of the glorious dream which greeted him in the "sacred place" as he slept on the stony ground. No relic of that rough pillar (or "menhir" as it would be called in Wales) now remains, so far as the author was able to find by constant searches; but similar pillars, erected no doubt as early memorials, he has discovered in many

places east of Jordan, where cultivation has not destroyed them. The almonds of the Beitîn gardens near the fine spring in the valley-head south of the village also remind us year by year of the meaning of the old name of the city —Luz, or the "almond tree."

Hebron.

Two days' journey along the backbone of the land southwards from Bethel takes us to Hebron and Mamre, also named in Abraham's history. We have here a scene very different from that at Bethel—a flat, open valley, running south, with several fine springs and with low hills covered with olives. The whole neighbourhood abounds in the most magnificent vineyards, and the valley is by many supposed to be the Eshcol whence the spies brought grapes to Moses.

The sites called "Abraham's house" and "Abraham's oak," need not be noticed, for they are not either ancient or correctly placed, and the modern town of El Khalîl ("the friend"—that is Abraham, the friend of God) stands, not on the site of the Hebron of Abraham's time, but in all probability covers the field of Machpelah, which the patriarch bought from the Hittite chieftains (Gen. xxiii.). The name of the district appears to have been Mamre, and the cave was east of the city of Hebron. Abraham may be supposed to have encamped in the open part of the valley, now covered partly by houses, and the old city lay on the low hills to the west of the valley, where tombs and ruins still exist. The modern town has grown up round the Haram, or "sanctuary," which appears to have been probably built by Herod the Great to enclose the cave which tradition, common to the Jews, the Moslems, and the Christians, consecrates as the sepulchre of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of Sarah, Rebecca, and Leah. Into this mosque Europeans, excepting royal persons,

including the Prince of Wales and the Crown Prince of Germany, have not been allowed to enter, but the royal princes, sons of the Prince of Wales, explored its interior in 1882, when a correct plan was made. The cave itself is not now open, but through a hole in the floor of the mosque the author was able to look down into the outer chamber, and could see the little rock door leading into the inner cave where the bodies of the patriarchs are said to rest. The floor of the ante-chamber, dimly seen by the light of a silver lamp, was covered with sheets of paper, on which the Arabs had scrawled petitions to the patriarchs before throwing them down through the hole in the roof of the cave. This site of the cave of Machpelah may almost rank with that of Jacob's Well and the Jerusalem Temple as being preserved by local tradition dating back to the times of the Jewish kingdom at least.

It was from some point near Hebron that Abraham "looked towards Sodom and Gomorrah" (Gen. xix. 28), "and lo, the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." Tradition points to a high hill some miles to the east, where is a village now called Beni Naim, as being the actual spot, but the Bible gives no very exact description of the place. From the hill in question one can see across the desolate wilderness of Judah and as far as the mountains of Moab, while a glimpse of the Jordan valley can also be caught. The Dead Sea is too deep down to be visible; but Abraham, we are told, saw, not the Cities of the Plain themselves, but only the smoke rising from the deep chasm in which they stood.

Sodom and Gomorrah.

The cities of the plain were five in all—Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, Zeboim, and Zoar, and there can be no doubt that they stood in the broader part of the Jordan valley, north of the Dead Sea; but although the author

spent many weeks in carefully searching for any relics of their names on both sides of the river Jordan, he was never able to discover any certain traces of their position, except in the case of Zoar, which seems now to be fixed with fair certitude at a hillock called Tell-esh-Shaghûr, close to the foot of the Moab mountains, and at the edge of the plain of Shittim, north of the Dead Sea. Zoar was the only city among the five which was not destroyed, and the explorations seem thus to agree well with the Bible story; the cities which were destroyed having quite disappeared, while Zoar ("the little city") remains still recognizable as a small ruin.

The "slime pits," or "wells of pitch," which are mentioned in the Vale of Siddim, near the Cities of the Plain (Gen. xiv. 10), may perhaps have been petroleum springs, such as are thought still to exist near the Dead Sea. One of the hot springs near Zoar is covered with an oily slime, and the bitumen which washes up in the Dead Sea itself is well known, and is still at times collected by the Arabs.

Beer Lahai Roi.

It was from Mamre that Hagar and Ishmael wandered forth to the southern desert of Beersheba, and to the spring called Lahai Roi ("He lives and sees me") between Kadesh and Bered (Gen. xvi. 14). Its position is not certainly known, but there is a place south of Beersheba, in the flat chalky desert now only inhabited by wandering Arabs, which is called Beit Hajar, or "Hagar's House," and where a tradition of Hagar has been found by travellers still existing. Possibly this may be the real spot; but we must be cautious in weighing such legends, because it is certain that great numbers of monks and hermits lived in this district in the fourth century A.D., and it may be only a memory of their teaching which remains, and not a true tradition of much older times.

Ishmael.

The country in which Ishmael dwelt was the desert of Paran, which is now called Et Tih ("the pathless"), extending south of Beersheba towards Sinai, a white plateau covered in spring with scanty grass, and bushes of "juniper" or white broom. It has been explored by the late Prof. Palmer, and by the travellers who pass through it yearly from Sinai to Jerusalem, and has been found to contain many ruins of old towns built of great blocks of flint stone—probably not older than the fourth century A.D. The Arabs of Mecca claim to be sons of Ishmael, and believe that the scene of his wanderings extended as far as their sacred city. Twelve tribes descended from Ishmael are mentioned, the names of some of which remained unchanged even as late as the Christian era (see Gen. xxv. 13). Among them were—Nebaioth, the Nabatheans who lived in the Syrian desert east of Moab; Jetur, in Iturræa, south of Hermon; Kedemah, apparently north-east of Damascus; Dumah, apparently in the centre of Arabia; Tema, on the confines of Syria; and others less easily traced. Arab tradition thus seems to agree with the Bible in making Ishmael the father of the desert tribes of Syria and Northern Arabia.

It should here be remarked that the early Hebrew chieftains did not live, as so often represented by great painters, in well-built cities or even in villages. The Bible represents them dwelling, like the Arabs of our own day, in long low tents of black goats' hair, travelling with their flocks, herds, and camels in search of water and of pasture, and showing those virtues of simple courtesy, hospitality, and just dealing which yet distinguish the nobler pastoral tribes of the same country. Rich as he was in servants, in flocks, and in gold and silver, Abraham was yet not ashamed to kill the "calf tender and

good" with his own hands for his guests, or to cleave the wood for the sacrifice.

Beersheba, Gerar, and Rehoboth.

Beersheba was another of Abraham's camping-places and one of the most famous towns in Palestine. The patriarch is recorded to have dug wells there (Gen. xxi. 30), perhaps the same famous wells which still exist at Bîr es Seb'a; and by the wells he planted a tree, which, according to the true meaning of the Hebrew, was a tamarisk. The tamarisk is one of the few trees that are able to grow in these desert regions, and flourish best near water, such as the wells would have supplied.

The great valley on the brink of which Beersheba stood rises at Hebron and runs southwards, bending to the west where the hills of Judæa sink into the plateau of the southern desert. Thence it runs by Gerar to the sea, south of Gaza, and after leaving the hills it is a broad, flat watercourse, with steep banks and gravelly bed. Though apparently quite dry, it contains a supply of water flowing deep underground, and this is tapped by the Beersheba wells, two of which are always full. There are three of these great round masonry shafts, the stones of which are worn with many furrows by the water-drawers' ropes. The wells have no parapet.

Those who have seen this flat desert covered with hundreds of camels hastening to the water, and who have heard the songs and cries of the half-naked herdsmen racing to draw up the black goat-skin bags to fill the stone troughs, can imagine the strife of the herdsmen of Abraham and Abimelech as to the water of these wells; and the young Arab girls (of seven or eight years) who tend the goats and sheep in this desert are probably of the age which Rachel and Leah must have been when Jacob first found them at the well in Harran; for Oriental

custom is unchangeable, and had they been older they would have been at home in the tent, and would, besides, have been very old, from an Eastern point of view, when they were at length married to their cousin. It was at Beersheba also that Isaac, praying in the open "field," or plain, lifted up his eyes and saw far away the camels bearing his bride, whom he led to his mother's tent. Little indeed can be changed in the scene. The flat plateau, flint strewn, seamed with gulleys, and its marly soil covered with bright flowers in spring; the white peaks of the chalk spurs on the north, and the rounded hills of Judah, with their scattered thorn trees; the thick haze on the south, where low chains close the view; the pebbly bed of the water-course, and the tufts of white broom, the black tents, the browsing camels, the red cows, and black goats, make up a pastoral picture of Arab life which brings to our eyes the very days of the patriarchs.

Gerar also, further down the course of the valley, retains its old name under the form of Umm-el-Jerrâr ("mother of the pots"). Here is found a great mound, which appears to be the site of an ancient city, and there are pits dug in the valley bed whence the Arabs obtain water even in summer. If the wells which Isaac "digged again" (Gen. xxvi. 18) were anything like the pits now existing, it is easy to understand how the Philistines filled them up after Abraham's death. The springs called Esek ("strife") and Sitnah ("hate") were apparently in this same valley near Gerar, but no trace of such names has been found by recent explorers. The well of Rehoboth may, however, be supposed to have been at some distance, since Isaac "removed" from Gerar before digging it, and there seems no reason to doubt that the place intended is the important and ancient site of Rehoboth (now Ruheibeh, "the plains"), in the desert south of Beersheba, some fifteen miles distant. Ruins of a large town have

been found here, and it is mentioned in Egyptian papyri, but the existing buildings seem to be of Roman times, and in Isaac's day there was probably nothing except the well at the cross roads where two great routes divide.

Jacob's Journey.

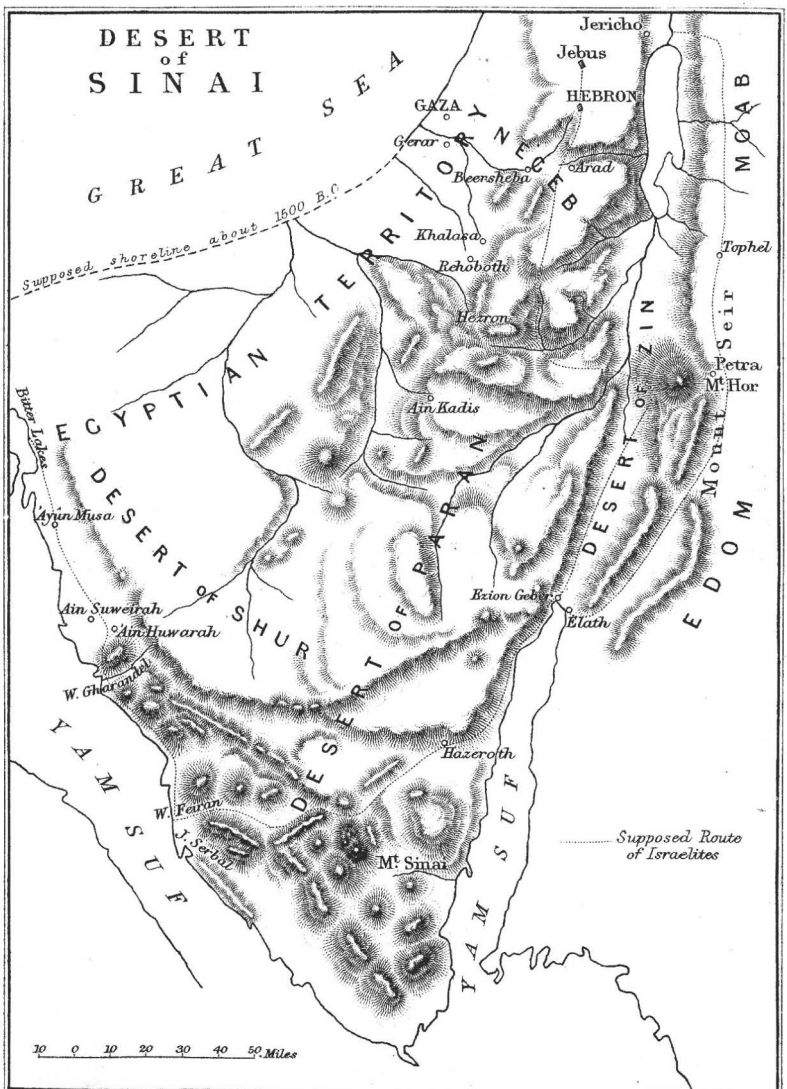
From the camp at Beersheba Jacob set forth to seek his bride in Padan-Aram, beyond Euphrates. Of Bethel, where he slept, we have already spoken, and of the "river" (*i.e.* Euphrates) which he crossed in returning (Gen. xxxi. 21). The place where Laban overtook his daughters receives several names—Jegar Sahadutha ("the heap of witness"), Galeed (meaning the same), and Mizpah ("the place of view"). It was perhaps the same Mizpah of Gilead where Jephthah afterwards had his home (Judges xi. 29–34), and though certainty is impossible, the most likely site seems to be the present village of Sûf in Mount Gilead, in the direct line from Succoth towards the Euphrates. It is very remarkable that in the neighbourhood of Sûf a great many ancient rude monuments of stone still exist, such as are called dolmens and cairns in our own land. The Palestine Exploration Society has not as yet been able to examine the spot as carefully as they have explored the country further south, but in the mean time the fact is a good illustration of the curious ceremony which is described as occurring at Mizpah in presence of Jacob and Laban (Gen. xxxi. 46). A stone set up on end became a memorial of the oath here sworn, and round it a great heap, or cairn, was raised by Jacob's "brethren," or followers. This is an old custom still observed, not only in the East, but even in Scotland, for each stone in the heap was no doubt supplied by a different man, and was a witness of his presence on the occasion. Thus by the size of the heap passers-by might judge of the importance of the meeting which had taken place on

the spot, and but for the plough such a memorial might still perhaps exist even to our own days.

On the heap thus raised, the two chiefs ate bread together in token of their friendship, and still among the Arabs the eating of bread or of salt remains a means of declaring friendship or swearing "brotherhood."

The best road from Gilead by which Jacob with all his flocks and herds might travel to Beersheba would perhaps have led round the south end of the Dead Sea or across the fords at Jericho, and thence by Hebron. But Esau, the injured brother, was coming up from Seir (the country round Petra, south of the Dead Sea), and the fear of meeting him seems to have made Jacob turn back until he was caught. It is not certain where Mahanaim ("the camps") may have been; but Succoth ("the booths"), where Jacob stayed after crossing the Jabbok, has been pretty certainly fixed at a great hillock on the north side of the river Jabbok (now called the Zerka). This being so, it would seem that Penuel (Gen. xxxii. 30) was south of the Jabbok (see xxxii. 23; xxxiii. 17), and it appears to have been the name given to a hill or ridge which Jacob "passed over" (verse 31). The name means "the face of God," and this term was applied by the Phœnicians to bold mountain tops. The author is inclined to think that the true site of Penuel is the great mountain called Jebel Osha, south of the Jabbok, and it will be found that this agrees very well with the history of Gideon, to be related in another chapter.

Although these places may not yet be quite certain, there is no doubt as to the river Jabbok over which Jacob crossed. It rises near Rabbath-Ammon on the top of the great plateau of Gilead, and runs north for a time before it turns round west to Jordan. At first it is a clear stream, full of small fish, running over pebbles from the fine springs, and here and there bordered with canes. The hills round it are utterly bare, and in places there are dark



C.R. Conder, R.E. Del.

cliffs full of caves. Gradually the stream, which is increased by that from Gerasa, flowing from the north in a narrow ravine full of pink-blossomed oleanders, runs down into a deep mountain valley between the barren grey range of Gilead on the north and the oak woods on the southern spurs. The valley is broad and covered with corn, and among the fields rise hillocks full of Roman tombs, with scattered stone coffins here and there. The stream is hidden among the canes and oleanders, and passes through a long gorge as it goes further west, where the steep mountain sides are densely covered with woods of oak and fir, full of deer and song birds and beautiful flowers. From these hills other brooks, breaking at times down the cliffs in thin waterfalls, run into the Jabbok, which at length flows out into the broad Vale of Jordan—a stream almost as large as the river itself, in a bed with high white banks of marl. Even after heavy rain in spring, the Jabbok is nevertheless fordable almost down to its mouth, where, in a jungle of tamarisk and reeds, it joins the swirling Jordan stream.

The Jordan itself could not be forded at its junction with the Jabbok, but must be crossed by a boat or by the ruined bridge still existing here: but north of the Jabbok near Succoth there are several fords over the river, discovered by the author's surveyors in 1874; and by one or more of these Jacob may probably have crossed. The journey thence to Shechem, which was probably quite unexpected by Esau, who thought his brother to be coming slowly after him to the south, would have led through a country where both pasture and water could be obtained in abundance for the cattle of Israel, for almost opposite the Jabbok another stream flows into Jordan, having its head-springs under Mount Ebal. Of this valley we shall have more to say in speaking of Ænon, but Jacob's road along its course seems quite clear, since he would thereby naturally arrive at Shalem (now Sâlim), a little village at

the north end of the plain of Moreh east of Shechem, where, according to the story, he next encamped before buying the plot of land in which he dug his well. Some have supposed this Shalem (Gen. xxxiii. 18) to be the Salem of which Melchizedek was king; but the later Jews believed the latter place to be Jerusalem, though this is not said in the Bible itself. It is also possible that this Shalem, where Jacob pitched his tent to pasture his flocks in the open plain of Moreh, was the Salem near which John was baptising at the clear springs of the stream of Ænon.

Dothan.

Jacob's journey from Shalem to Beersheba leads us over country which we have already noticed in speaking of Abraham and Isaac, and only one other important place in Palestine which is mentioned in Genesis remains to be noticed. The pillar of Rachel's grave near Bethlehem no longer exists, though its probable site is well known, and this, with Bethlehem itself, we may have to consider later; but Dothan, where Joseph was placed in the well, is one of the most certain and most interesting places to be found in the central district of the Holy Land. The site has never been really lost, and it keeps its old name unchanged as Dothân ("the two wells.") The place is on the south side of a plain which runs out of the larger plain of Esdraelon on the south-west. On the west of the plain there is a great valley, along which goes a main road to the plain of Sharon and to Philistia and Egypt. This same road (along which the kings of Egypt used to march to meet the kings of Assyria or of Babylon) crosses the Dothan plain, and runs thence by Jezreel to Jordan, and so to Damascus, and no doubt formed one of the chief caravan routes for bringing merchandise from the East to Egypt.

Thus we see that Dothan was not only a fit place for

pasturing the herds and flocks, having open ground and water, but that it was near the caravan road by which the Midianites and Ishmaelites would have naturally travelled, "bearing spicery and balm and myrrh, going to carry it down to Egypt" (Gen. xxxvii. 25). And, moreover, we understand why Joseph's brothers "lifted up their eyes," because the direct road was not exactly through Dothan, and the caravan could be seen at a distance.

The myrrh which they carried was the gum of the cistus plant, so plentiful on the Gilead mountains. The balm was "balm of Gilead;" the spicery was also a Syrian product, and none of the Indian spices mentioned later in speaking of the trade of Tyre seem to have been known to the Ishmaelite slave-trader of Joseph's time.

More than once has the author stood beside the two wells of Dothan, the one being a spring well like those at Beersheba, running over with water in winter, the other, now enclosed in a garden, being deeper and requiring a bucket. But neither of these was the "pit" into which the brethren lowered their envied half-brother, for "the pit was empty, there was no water in it." It may have been one of the corn-pits so often dug in Syria, or an ancient tomb, or cistern hewn in rock. Little can the view be changed from the day when the rude herdsmen saw the camels coming over the brown plain on the north amid the flickering mirage; for the city of Elisha's time (2 Kings vi. 14) has disappeared and only a shapeless mound with a dark tree upon it is left. Here, in the shade of a cactus hedge, the Arab cow-boys lie watching the red kine swishing the flies with their tails, and may gaze across the rich pasture land to the low chain of bare grey hills which close the view. Here, at a later time, the servant of Elisha saw the "mountain full of horses and chariots of fire;" and here, according to the Book of Judith, the army of Nebuchadnezzar was spread out to attack the hill village

of Bethulia (now Mithilia), barring its passage to Shechem. Through the olive groves and corn-fields south-east of Dothan the figure of the Jewish heroine flitted on her mission while the men of the city watched till they saw her no more.

At Dothan, then, we must pause a moment before descending with Joseph into Egypt.

CHAPTER II.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE EXODUS.

Land of Goshen.

THE triangular plain called the Delta of Egypt is termed by Herodotus "the gift of the Nile," because it has been gradually formed by the rich mud which the river Nile brings down year after year from the highlands of Abyssinia. When we are studying the Egypt of the time of Moses we must never forget that the country is continually, though slowly, growing larger, and pushing out into the Mediterranean Sea, and that great changes are proved to have taken place even since the Suez Canal was made. Several of the old branches of the river Nile are now quite dry, being choked by the mud of the stream which once flowed along them, and in addition to this growth which has made the modern isthmus of Suez some twenty or thirty miles broader than in the time of Moses, it is generally agreed that the land of the isthmus, which is said to have risen even during the last forty years, must have gradually increased in level above the sea. It seems, however, pretty clear that the isthmus existed at least as early as the time of Abraham, for we find no notice of any crossing of the sea in Genesis, either in the history of Abraham or in the story of Joseph's brethren descending into Egypt.

The land of Goshen can be shown to have been the district immediately east of the Nile which is now a desert intersected by the Suez Canal. It is called "the field of

Zoan" in the Psalm (lxxviii. 12), and Zoan was a famous city on the Mediterranean shore even as early as 1600 B.C. The ruins still remain, half covered with sand, close to Lake Menzaleh, amid the desolate and marshy flats; and great statues carved in basalt, with long inscriptions in hieroglyphics as old as the days of Moses, have been here recovered and read by the learned. They are relics of those "shepherd kings" of Arab origin who invaded Egypt before the days of Joseph, and who were probably the Pharaohs from whom Jacob and his sons received so much kindness, whereas the dynasty which expelled the Israelites were of Nubian or Negro origin.

The land and city of Rameses given to the sons of Jacob are not yet known for certain. Zoan itself was once called Pi-Rameses, but the discovery of Pithom makes it doubtful if Zoan was the real starting-point of the Exodus; for quite recently M. Naville has succeeded in showing that Pithom and Succoth were the same place, and situate at Tell-el-Maskhûtah, where the first English victory was gained in the Egyptian war of 1882. At that time only lofty sand dunes were to be seen beside the modern canal, but M. Naville's excavations have now resulted in the discovery of a city on the spot, and of inscriptions with the names Succoth and Pithom applying to the site. If this point be taken as settled, it becomes not improbable that the Rameses of the Bible (Gen. xlvii. 11; Exod. i. 11) may be yet found at Tell-el-Kebîr, where the great battle was fought; and thus by a curious coincidence the advance of the English into Egypt seems to have been along the very line whereby Israel went out, namely along the course of the valley called Wâdy Tumeilât, which has all the appearance of being an old arm of the Nile now silted up.

It is difficult to say what the condition of this desolate country may have been in the time of Moses, but the drying up of the river and the decay of the cities have produced very great changes. Probably the lake of

Ismailieh (Timsah) may then have been the head of the Gulf of Suez, into which the Nile water was flowing down Wâdy Tumeilât. At Pithom we have evidence that the desert sand has drifted over a once important town, and traces of ancient cultivation and of old cities are said to have been quite recently observed in other parts of the district. Thus, although the higher ground with its gravelly soil may probably be much like what it was in Moses' time, there can be no doubt that the sand has encroached on the once fertile lands round the old river course, where pasture and water would have been found for the cattle of Israel.

We hear of no suffering from want of water among the Israelites until after the Red Sea was crossed, and, considering their numbers, we may safely suppose that they followed the course of Wâdy Tumeilât until they reached the mouth of this branch near Ismailieh. The discovery of Pithom (or Succoth) makes it impossible for us to suppose any other route; and we read that, "God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines" (Exod. xiii. 17)—that is to say, by the northern route, which from Zoan led along the sea-shore to Gaza, crossing the line of the present Suez Canal somewhere near Kantarah, which must at that time have been on the shores of the Mediterranean.

The Red Sea.

It may seem unnecessary to say that the sea over which Israel is related to have passed was some part of the present gulf of Suez, because this is very clearly shown by the fact that Israel encamped several days later on the shores of that same sea on the way to Sinai (Num. xxxiii. 10). Some writers have nevertheless tried to show that the sea intended was the Mediterranean, which makes a great deal of useless confusion in the history. Recent discoveries may be considered to make it perfectly clear

that the Exodus followed the Wâdy Tumeilât to its mouth, although the exact line of the passage of the sea may still remain a doubtful question. The so-called Bitter Lakes and the Timsah Lake are remains of the old head of the Gulf of Suez, and it seems probable that Pharaoh occupied the high neck of land called El Jisr ("the isthmus") immediately north of Ismailieh, thereby barring the land passage to Asia, and forcing Israel either to go back to Succoth, or southwards to the desert of Jebel Attakah, on the west side of the gulf. Thus the words of the Bible are easily understood: "They are entangled in the land, the wilderness hath shut them in" (Exod. xiv. 3).

The sites of Pi-hahiroth, Migdol, and Baal Zephon ("the northern ridge") are not yet known, so that it is impossible to say exactly where the passage of the sea is to be supposed to have taken place, but of this we may be certain that the history does not allow us to suppose that the place was north of Ismailieh. It may have been near Suez, but the author is more inclined to suppose that it was further north, near the old head of the gulf, for it is most distinctly said to have been through the driving back of the sea by an east (or "contrary") wind that a path was made for Israel, and that among the wet sands and quicksands left by the retreating waters the narrow chariot-wheels of Pharaoh's host sank, "so that they drave heavily" (Exod. xiv. 25).

Sinai.

After crossing the sea, the children of Israel travelled along its eastern shores towards the Sinai district, wandering for three days without water, until they reached the spring called Marah, or "bitter." This wilderness was called Shur ("the wall"), from the wall built by the Pharaoh's across the Isthmus.* We cannot suppose that the

* See Dr. Clay Trumbull's "Kadesh-Barnea," p. 45.

host could have gone more than some six or eight English miles per diem, considering the women, the children, and the cattle; and if the crossing was somewhere about the present Bitter Lakes, the third station would at most be as far south as the springs now called 'Ayûn Mûsa, or "the fountains of Moses," where Marah has been supposed by some authorities to have been. Others, who consider the crossing to have occurred near Suez, place Marah further south, at a salt spring called 'Ain Huwârah, and Prof. Palmer, who adopts this view (following the famous Burckhardt), relies on the number of days' journey between this point and Sinai; but it should be noted that although we have the names of five or six stations along this route (Num. xxxiii. 9–14), we have no notice of the length of time taken by the Israelites either in travelling from Rameses to the Red Sea, or from Marah to Sinai.

Dr. Robinson, who visited 'Ayûn Mûsa in 1839, says:— "A few stunted palm trees marked the situation. . . . Here I counted seven fountains, several of them recent excavations in the sand, in which a little brackish water was standing; others were older and more abundant, but the water is dark coloured and brackish, and deposits a hard substance as it rises: so that mounds have been formed around these larger springs, on the top of which the water flows out and runs down for a few yards till it is lost in the sand." Of the spring at the other site ('Ain Huwârah) he writes that it rises "on a large mound of a whitish rocky substance, formed apparently by the deposits of the fountain during the lapse of ages. No stream was flowing from it, though there are traces of running water round about. The basin is six or eight feet in diameter, and the water about two feet deep. Its taste is unpleasant, saltish, and somewhat bitter; but we could not perceive that it was very much worse than that of 'Ayûn Mûsa. . . . The Arabs, however, pronounce it bitter, and consider it as the worst water in these regions. Yet, when pinched,

they drink of it; and our camels also drank freely. Near by the spring were two stunted palm trees, and round about it many bushes."

Elim, where were twelve wells and seventy palm trees (Exod. xv. 27), is placed by Prof. Palmer, who was a member of the Sinai survey party, under Captain (now Sir Charles) Wilson, at Wâdy Gharandel, "a pleasant valley," with springs and groves of palm.

The great traveller Burckhardt suggested that Elim must be Wâdy Gharandel some eighty years since, and the Sinai survey party have followed his views in most cases. Dr. Robinson speaks of the valley as still containing a good deal of vegetation and brackish water, and as being one of the chief watering-places of the Arabs.

This site for Elim is probably therefore a safe suggestion, but unfortunately in the Sinaitic desert we find scarcely one of the original Hebrew names of places remaining, and even the position of Sinai itself has been greatly disputed, some writers having suggested Jebel Serbal, others Mount Hor, and others a mountain east of the Gulf of Akabah, as being the real Sinai. In spite of these disputes, there is a general feeling of confidence in the conclusions of the exploration party, and in the identity of the magnificent "block isolated from the surrounding mountains by deep valleys," with a fine bluff called Jebel Mûsa, or "the mountain of Moses," "rising precipitously from the plain."

"The popular idea," says the late Prof. Palmer, "of Sinai is that of a level desert plain, with one conspicuous mountain rising above it. On the contrary, it is one of the most mountainous, intricate regions on earth." "In front" of Jebel Mûsa on the north-west, he continues, "stretches a broad plain, which Captain H. S. Palmer, my fellow-traveller, has ascertained by actual measurement to be capable of containing over a million of spectators." All the explorers unite in admiration of the magnificent

character of the scenery of this great granite region, which in wild grandeur surpasses anything to be found in Egypt or in Palestine.

The position of Rephidim,* where the water is related to have been struck from the rock, is a matter second only in interest to that of Sinai. The surveyors were of opinion that Wâdy Feirân is the proper site for this event. It is, according to Palmer, "the most fertile valley in the peninsula," "sufficiently broad and open to admit the passage of a large body of men and cattle;" and the very rock which was smitten is pointed out by the Arabs. We must not, however, attach too much importance to the existing legend, for the name Feirân has nothing to do with Rephidim, being only the modern form of Paran; and about A.D. 600 there was a monastery of Paran at this place, and a monkish tradition as to the rock stricken by Moses. It is impossible now to prove whether the Arab story is a true tradition, or only a repetition of the teaching of the old monks, who knew no more about Rephidim than we can ourselves gather from the Bible. In default of more exact knowledge, Rephidim may, nevertheless, be very properly placed somewhere in Wâdy Feirân.

Kadesh and Mount Hor.

After leaving Sinai, Israel journeyed northwards towards Palestine, by way of Ezion Geber (at the head of the Gulf of Akabah), and up the broad valley of the Arabah to Kadesh Barnea. The names of eighteen places are mentioned along this route (Num. xxxiii.), but only one of these has been recovered with any great certitude, namely

* The Israelite march being along the coast, they did not visit the Egyptian mines at the place called Serabît-el-Khâdem ("the slave's pillars"), where fine sculptured tablets still remain. These mines were north of Rephidim, and were worked as early as the time of Noah almost. They seem to have been worked out and deserted long before the Exodus.

Hazeroth ("the enclosures"), which may be placed with some confidence at Hadhîreh (a word exactly the same in Arabic with the Hebrew name), in the desert north-east of Sinai, where a fairly good spring of water still exists. The discovery was made long since by Burckhardt, and is important as giving a clear idea of the direction of the Israelite march.

Before proceeding further it will perhaps be well here to speak of the Sinaitic inscriptions, since some of our readers may still be under the impression that these writings on the rocks have something to do with the history of Israel in the desert. These inscriptions are numerous in various parts of the Sinaitic desert, and have been carefully studied by good authorities. In 1860, Dr. Levy, one of the most reliable writers on this subject, showed not only what the inscriptions contained, but also very conclusively that they were not older than the third or fourth century A.D. The form of the letters is familiar, and was used about that time not only in this district, but far north-east of Damascus, and also in Arabia near Mecca. It is not the alphabet which was used by the Hebrews, Moabites, and Phœnicians, as we now know from the Moabite stone and the Siloam inscription, but a much later kind of alphabet which came into general use about the Christian era. The inscriptions have drawings of camels, and of other animals, connected with them, while others have crosses near them, and they are of little interest in themselves. They are records left by pilgrims, generally in the form of a short prayer, or pious expression, or wishing peace, health, and blessing for the writer.

The furthest point reached by the Israelites on their journey northwards before they turned again down the Arabah, and (after forty years of wandering) proceeded by the uplands east of Petra to enter Moab, was Kadesh-Barnea. The name Kadesh, or "holy," seems to have applied to a considerable tract, and still survives in the

Arabic 'Ain Kadis,* at a spring south of Beersheba; but this place seems too much to the west to allow of the supposition that it was the site of the second striking of the rock for water and of the rebellion of Israel. The Jews have always supposed that Kadesh lay not far from Petra, and this may also be inferred from passages in the Bible (Josh. xv. 3). Dr. Robinson, who is one of our most trustworthy authorities, places Kadesh at El Weibeh at the foot of the pass leading from the valley of the Arabah to the plateau of Arad, east of Beersheba, on the road from Petra. Meribah and En Mishpat (*i.e.* "provocation" and the "spring of the place of judgment") are other names of Kadesh, but neither of these has as yet been found surviving. Yet, if not at El Weibeh then near 'Ain-el-Yemen, on the same road rather further north-west, Kadesh-Barnea may be most probably supposed to have been situate.

At 'Ain-el-Weibeh three springs issue from the chalky hillside, and below is a jungle of coarse grass and canes, with marshy land and a few palms. Mount Hor is seen prominent above all other peaks on the south-east, and the lower parts of the chain are black with porphyry and other hard rocks. The two northern springs are scanty and bad smelling, but the southern has three small rills of clear and fresh water. Such is the account given by Dr. Robinson of the spot where he believed the miraculous spring to have burst forth.

The mountain (Hor) where ancient tradition supposes Aaron to have been buried is now called Jebel Neby Harûn, or the "mountain of the Prophet Aaron," and is one of the finest summits in the desert. A Moslem building on the top, which has been visited by many

* The identity of Kadesh-Barnea with 'Ain Kadis was suggested by Rowlands in 1842. The site is advocated by the Rev. Dr. Clay Trumbull, in his recent work, "Kadesh-Barnea." The objections to this view will be found detailed in Conder's "Handbook to the Bible" (third edition, pp. 249, 250).

travellers, is shown as the traditional tomb of the brother of Moses. The form of the mountain, says Dr. Robinson, "is a cone irregularly truncated, having three ragged points or peaks, of which that on the north-east is the highest, and has upon it the Muhammedan Wely, or tomb of Aaron." Immediately north of the mountain is the gorge called Wâdy Mûsa, or the "Valley of Moses," leading to the curious Nabathean city of Petra. The wonderful colour of the sandstones in this valley, and the curious architecture of the ruins, have excited the admiration of every visitor to this city of the desert; but there is nothing of great antiquity in Petra, though it is thought to be the Selah of the Bible (2 Kings xiv. 7) and the "strong city" of Edom mentioned in the Psalms (lx. 9; cviii. 10). The rugged chain of mountains east of the Arabah valley is the Mount Seir, or "rough mountain," which was inhabited by the children of Esau, and its other name Edom, or the "red land," was probably due to the brilliant colours of the sandstone rocks, which are so often noticed by travellers near Petra.

It was during the sojourn of Israel in this district that the spies were sent forth by Moses to view the Promised Land. They went north as far as Hebron (Num. xiii. 22), and brought back with them the grapes of Eshcol, a valley which, as noticed in the preceding chapter, is generally thought to have been the Vale of Mamre, still famous for its vineyards. It should be noted that this name is given in another passage (Gen. xiv. 13, 24) as that of a tribe or of an individual living close to Hebron, and it may be doubted whether vineyards can ever have existed at any place nearer to Kadesh than the Hebron hills, since the grape in Palestine seems only to flourish in the highlands, where water and autumn frosts are found, which are necessary for the growth of the fruit in so hot a climate.

From Kadesh also the disastrous expedition against the

northern Amalekites set forth (Num. xiv. 40), and on this same road ("the way of the spies") leading towards Hebron, the king of Arad (Num. xxi. 1) attacked Israel. His city, which is mentioned later (Josh. xii. 14) as a royal Canaanite centre, is still called by its old name, and stands on the road to Hebron from Kadesh, in the plateau below the Judæan hills—a great green mound when the author saw it in spring time. The position of Arad affords one among several reasons for placing Kadesh in the valley of the Arabah.

As regards the wanderings of Israel for forty years in the wilderness, we have no exact information, but it should not be supposed that the tribes were for all those years continually on the march. It is far more likely that, like the Arabs of our own days, they migrated backwards and forwards in the desert, perhaps frequently revisiting Sinai and Kadesh, going up in summer to the highlands, and descending in winter into the valley of the Arabah, moving from spring to spring, in a familiar yearly round, seeking pasture for their flocks and herds at each in turn, just as the tribes now annually revisit their favourite camping-grounds, suited for each season of the year. And thus they waited until the time arrived for the final march on Moab, when the new generation—no longer the meek slaves who fled from Egypt, but stalwart warriors inured to the hardships of a desert life, with senses made keen by the wild and adventurous existence of the huntsman and shepherd of the wilderness—had grown up as a powerful people capable of forcing its way through the hostile Edomites, and of meeting in battle the giants of Moab and Ammon.

Nebo and Shittim.

From Mount Hor, at the end of the forty years, Israel journeyed southwards, "by the way of the Red Sea, to

compass the land of Edom." (Num. xxi. 4). Passing once more apparently by Ezion Geber, the tribes reached Ije Abarim ("the ruins of the places beyond Jordan"), and arrived at Zared, a valley probably represented by the present Wâdy Siddeh, flowing into the Dead Sea on the south-east. Thence they passed over the deep gorge of the Arnon, even now a perennial stream, and camped near Dibon, the city where the famous Moabite stone, hereafter to be noticed, was found. The well Beer, digged by the princes, seems to have been near this city; and the next two camps, Mattanah and Nehaliel, are probably the great valleys called Wâdy Wâleh and Wâdy Zerka Maîn, in each of which the Israelites would have found at any season of the year a plentiful supply of clear, cool water.

We thus reach the neighbourhood of Mount Nebo, where the head-quarters of the host were established during the war with Sihon and Og, and no site in the Holy Land is known with greater certainty than is Mount Nebo (or Pisgah, as it was also called), where the author discovered, in 1881, the remains of ancient rude altars, probably as old as the time of the Amorites.

Heshbon, the capital of King Sihon, is now a great mound covered with the ruins of a Roman city, on the edge of the flat plateau of Moab, which is called the Mishor, or "plain," in the Bible. Heshbon can be seen from Nebo, though a ridge east of the summit of the mountain shuts out the view of the greater part of the plateau.

The plains of Moab are bare, dry, and treeless, and destitute of water, but the mountain slopes, which run down with bold spurs into the Jordan valley, are divided by deep ravines, in which the most beautiful brooks are always flowing throughout the year. Thus we see why Israel held their course along these slopes instead of camping on the open plateau above, since water for their encampment could only be obtained towards the west.

The great cities of the Amorites, Medeba, Dibon, Heshbon, Jazer, and others, have all been now examined by the Palestine surveyors, and near Heshbon they lit on one of the most remarkable of those great fields of rude stone monuments—altars, circles, and memorial stones—which they were able to show to be probably as ancient as the times of the Moabites and Amorites.

Heshbon having fallen, and Og, the king of Bashan—far away to the north of Mount Gilead, in the broad plains of the Haurân east of the Sea of Galilee—having been slain in one of those rapid raids which were made from the central camp in so many cases during the advance on the Promised Land, Israel descended into the Jordan valley and spread out their tents east of the river and opposite Jericho, in the well-watered and fertile plain called Shittim, from the acacia trees dotted over its surface. It was here that they rested while the King of Moab sent to Balaam, the seer, to come and curse the distant hosts; and from the plains of Shittim Moses again ascended to Mount Nebo to view the land he might not enter.

The author has given on the spot most careful attention to the question of these two Bible stories, and as there are few places connected with the Exodus which are as specially described in the Bible as are the scenes spread before the eyes of Balaam and of Moses, these may for the moment claim special notice in connection with several new discoveries recently made by the survey party.

Balaam, son of Beor, came from Pethor (a city of Mesopotamia, Deut. xxiii. 4), which has been recently fixed by students of Assyrian history close to Euphrates, on the north-east of Syria. The tribe he dwelt among were the Beni Amu (rendered "children of his people," Num. xxii. 5), living in the mountains of Aram, or Syria (xxiii. 7), and his reputation as a seer must, therefore, have been widely spread. The Beni Amu seem, however, to have been great travellers, for in Egyptian pictures

they are represented coming with wives and children even down to the Nile itself. The road which Balaam followed seems to have been that by which the Syrian Hâj, or pilgrim caravan to Mecca, now travels from the north, and at the Arnon, which seems to have been the north border of Balak's country, the king and prophet met, and set out thence to the western edge of the plateau, whence only could Israel, then encamped in the Jordan valley, be seen.

The first place whence the encampment was seen was Bamoth-Baal ("the high places of Baal"), which we gather from another passage (Num. xxi. 20) to have been immediately south of Nebo. The author has accordingly proposed to place it at a high ridge called Maslubîyeh, whence a view of the Jordan valley may be obtained, and which is separated from Nebo by a deep valley, on the slopes of which are found many ancient rude altars, which are no doubt connected with the old name "Bamoth in the Valley," since the Bamoth were certainly idol altars. Seven altars were built for Balaam on this hill, and some of them not impossibly still remain; but the author counted as many as a hundred and fifty of the dolmens (which seem so clearly to be ancient altars) on this hill-side, and it would seem that fresh altars must have been raised whenever an important sacrifice took place on this sacred hill of the Amorites. The illustration thus afforded of Scripture will not fail to strike the reader.

The second standpoint of Balaam was the ridge of Nebo, which will be more particularly described a little later. On Nebo, also, the author found three of the rude stone altars, or dolmens, still standing intact; and it is remarkable that, just as stated in the Bible, the view of the Jordan valley from Nebo is less extensive than that from the other two stations of Balaam.

The third station was the top of Peor, over against Jeshimon—that is, opposite the desert of Judæa and the north end of the Dead Sea. This may, the author thinks,

be very properly placed at a cliff called Minyeh, south of the ridge of Bamoth-Baal, where a very fine view of the valley—more extensive than that from the previous stations—can be obtained, agreeing with the words, "and Balaam lifted up his eyes, and he saw Israel abiding according to their tribes" (Num. xxiv. 2). On the very edge of this cliff remain yet seven ancient monuments, circles of large stones, each surrounding a central block or altar stone—a most wonderful illustration of the words of the Bible, "build me here seven altars."

Here, then, standing on the crest of the ridge, Balaam might have seen before him the places mentioned in his vision: in the valley below, Israel abiding in black tents among the acacia groves; in the extreme south, the peaks of Seir, and Edom, and Moab; on the horizon to the south-west, the chalky plateau where Amalek dwelt; and perched on its knoll, dark against the western horizon, the town of Cain, the nest of the Kenite; while Olivet and Jerusalem clearly visible opposite, with Bethlehem white and distinct on the left, suggest the Star which was to rise from Jacob.

Turning again to Nebo, we must recall the last view of Moses from its summit before his death. The ridge of Nebo is not very conspicuous, nor is it the highest point among the spurs which here run out from the Moabite plateau, but it is the nearest ridge to the Israelite camp in the plain of Shittim, and this may account for its selection (Deut. xxxiv. 1). It was early spring—a month before Easter (ver. 8)—when Moses gazed thence on the Land of Promise, a time when the bright blue sky of Syria is dappled with white clouds, casting long shadows over the landscape already green with grass and wild flowers, which fade so quickly under the sun of April. The Jordan, swelled by the snows of Hermon, was rushing down, hidden among the jungle of canes, willows, tamarisks, and other trees, which form a dark, snake-like

line along the centre of the green valley. The palms of Jericho, the acacias of Shittim, dotted the open plains beneath, then all ablaze with fields of wild flowers. The dark grey chain of Judæa and Samaria closed the western view, extending from near Hebron to Baal-Hazor, conspicuous for its belt of ancient oaks, and on to the gap where Shechem lies between Ebal and Gerizim; and beyond in clear weather might be seen Gilboa and Tabor and part of the chain of Naphtali. Hermon and the Sea of Galilee are hidden behind the lofty ridge of Penuel (Jebel Oshâ), and on the east and south the view is very restricted, but on the south-west the calm shining waters of the Dead Sea reflected the precipices of Engedi; and behind these the fantastic peaks of the Jeshimon, or "solitude," the dreary desert of Judah in which David hid from Saul, run up to the chain where the village of Tekoa stands up against the sky. West of the Jordan, Jericho and Gilgal might be distinctly descried, and above them Bethel and Ai, and the whole course of Joshua's march to Gibeon. Thus, at the most beautiful season of the year and from one of the finest points of view, Moses looked out on the Promised Land, which he might not enter with his fellows.

The burial-place of Moses is unknown. It was "in a valley in the land of Moab, over against Beth-peor" (Deut. xxxiv. 6), and if Beth-peor be that place whence Balaam looked on Israel for the third time, we may conjecture that the valley intended is the terrible gorge of the Zerka Mâîn, on the south side of the cliff of Peor, or Minyeh, one of the most magnificent valleys in Moab, conspicuous for its smoking hot springs, its palms, its gay coloured sandstone cliffs, and its dark basalt precipices. This valley was called Callirhoe ("the fair flowing") in later days, from the bright stream in its bed, and here the tyrant Herod was vainly bathed; but the old Hebrew name was apparently Nchaliel ("the valley of God"),

which seems appropriate for that vale in which Moses was buried, while, as already said, the position agrees with the description of his burial-place as being near Beth-peor.

Thus have we followed the great leader from his papyrus cradle on the Nile, by Sinai and Hor, to his grave in the "valley of God." But before closing the chapter we must glance for a moment at other places in the neighbourhood. It was in Shittim that the Israelites, enticed by the daughters of Moab, went astray to the worship of Baal-peor; and here, again, the explorations of the year 1881–2 serve to throw wonderful light on the narrative: for it is unlikely that the idolaters returned to the mountain shrines of Peor already noticed; and on the low slopes at the foot of the Nebo chain, the surveyors found another important centre of the old Canaanite worship, extending north and south over several miles. Some three hundred stone tables, each consisting of a rough slab supported on two or more upright stones, some with circles built round them, others with stone memorial pillars erected near, were visited and examined; and some of these may without any great improbability be supposed to mark the places where Israel worshipped the gods of Moab.

The country east of Jordan was the heritage of Reuben, Gad, and half the tribe of Manasseh, and little need we wonder that, after the long journey in the wilderness, they should have been content here to rest without tempting the chances of the victory awaiting them in the dark mountains of the west, beyond the rushing river. The Vale of Jordan was full of pasture land; the shady woods of Gilead were a cover from the heat; the valleys of Heshbon and Jabbok flowed with perennial streams which far surpassed the waters of Palestine in the district visited by the spies, as Caleb at least could have told them; and the corn lands of Bashan, just snatched from

the Amorites, were capable of producing harvests which only Sharon could rival. The traveller, coming from English meadows, can hardly appreciate the delight with which these way-worn children of the desert must have gazed (like Mohammed when first he saw Damascus, his earthly Paradise) on the rich and beautiful countries of Gilead and Bashan; and our only wonder should be that the followers of Joshua were inspired with the vigour and zeal necessary to induce them to march across the rapid Jordan, and to conquer the land where their fathers dwelt as pilgrims.

CHAPTER III.

GEOGRAPHY OF JOSHUA AND JUDGES.

The Canaanites.

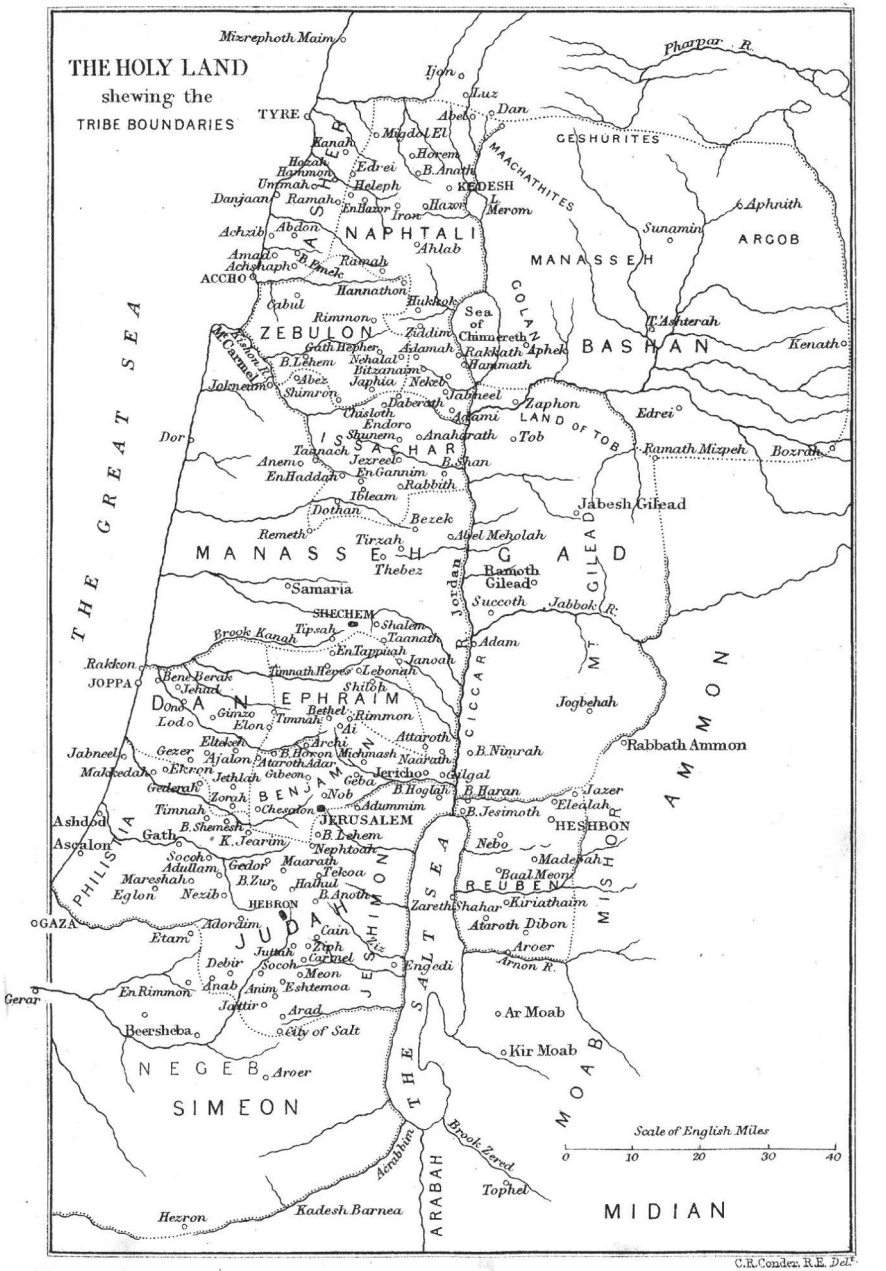
WE know but little as yet from monuments concerning the tribes which Abraham found in the Holy Land, and against which Joshua fought, but the little we do know agrees with what is told us in the Old Testament. The Canaanites were descendants of Ham, and not of Shem, and the names of some of these tribes are easily traced, such as the Arkites, at 'Arka, north of Tripoli; the Hamathites, at Hamath; the Arvadites, at the island Er Ruâd, off the Syrian coast. The Amorites, or "hill men"—the highlanders of the Bible,—lived in Galilee, in the Hebron mountains, in the hills of Moab and Gilead, and yet further south near Sinai. The name Amaur, or Amorite, is found in Egyptian records, applying to the mountain tribes of Galilee and Lebanon, about the time of Moses, and again in that of the Judges. The Canaanites, or "lowlanders," dwelt in the maritime plain and in the Jordan valley; and the old name of the Phœnician coast, as we know from coins and monuments, was also Canaan. The Kenites lived (as pointed out in the last chapter) at the town of Cain, which overlooks the desert of Judah, south-east of Hebron. The Hivites ("midlanders") inhabited the middle of the country from Jerusalem to Shechem, and dwelt also in Lebanon; and the Perizzites, or "rustics," appear to have lived in the low hills east of the Sharon plain, and also in Lower Galilee. The

Jebusites held Jerusalem; but the land of the Girgashites is not certainly known, nor are the Kenizzites * and Kadmonites fixed, though they appear to have lived near Beersheba.

In addition to these tribes there were three of great importance in Joshua's time. The Ammonites and the Moabites, descendants of Lot, spoke probably the same language with the Hebrews, and hence it arises that the names of a great many cities conquered in Palestine before Joshua's days by Thothmes the Third, King of Egypt, are Hebrew names identical with those in the Bible. But the Hittites, or sons of Heth, were an important race which held the greater part of Northern Syria, and which in Abraham's time had also a settlement at Hebron. Hence it arises that the names of a great many places in Lebanon and Syria noticed in Egyptian records are barbarous and evidently not Hebrew; for the Hittites were sons of Ham, and belonged to the old dark race which, as we have seen in the first chapter, came originally from the district of Mount Ararat; and in accordance with the Bible account, the best modern scholars have observed that the language of the Hittites was not of the family of Hebrew-like tongues, which is called Semitic.

A great deal has been written of late about the Hittites which is not always quite satisfactory. All we know at present is that they were a warlike people of Syria, who could read and write, and who had chariots, horses, and fortified towns. One of their capitals was Carchemish on the Euphrates, close to where Balaam's city Pethor has been fixed; another was Kadesh, south of Hamath, on the Orontes, the site of which the author discovered in 1881, as is now generally allowed by students of the subject. At Carchemish and at Hamath curious carved blocks of

* The Kenizzites may have been descendants of Kenaz, the father of Caleb, and thus the inhabitants of the country near Debir and Hebron, which belonged to Caleb.



C.R. Conder. R.E. Del.

basalt, with figures like those of the Assyrian monuments and with long hieroglyphic inscriptions, have been found. These are generally, and perhaps correctly, attributed to the Hittites or to kindred tribes; but they have not yet been read, nor is it known in what language they are written. The author has pointed out that they are very like Egyptian hieroglyphics, and when at length they are deciphered, we shall, it is hoped, have opened to us a third chapter of ancient history, to add to those contained in the Assyrian and Egyptian monuments, and which ought to throw quite as much light on the Bible as either of the other two.

The Phœnicians had already reached the Mediterranean and had founded Sidon when the Hebrews entered Palestine under Joshua. This strong and clever people, who in the later times had all the trade of the Mediterranean in their hands, are said to have come from the mouth of the Euphrates, as did Abraham also. They already traded with Egypt before the time of Moses, and it is probably to the Phœnicians that the introduction of the alphabet, not only into Palestine, but also into Greece, is due. We know that the Hebrews, at least as early as the days of Hezekiah, and probably much earlier, together with the Moabites and the Phœnicians, used an alphabet which was so simple and practically useful, that it has gradually superseded the clumsy hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, Assyrians, and Hittites, and has spread in various forms westwards all over Europe, and on the East throughout Asia to India.

This, then, was the condition of Palestine when Joshua entered it, and from the Bible it is clear that Israel, while it conquered the tribes from Dan to Beersheba, left untouched on the north the country of the Hittites and Phœnicians, and on the south-west only in part acquired a hold over the plains in which the Philistines dwelt. These last were "emigrants," as the name means, from

Egypt—children of Mizraim (Gen. x. 14), which is the Hebrew name for the Egyptian Delta; and in accordance with this description in the Bible, we find Egyptian scholars to have discovered that the plain of Sharon—that is Philistia—was under the rule of the kings of Egypt as late as the times of the judges.

The various tribes thus enumerated were not rooted out by Israel: they remained a thorn in the side of the nation to the very latest times, and in the days of the judges the power of the Egyptians and Philistines, of the Moabites and Ammonites, of the Midianites or tent-dwelling Arabs of the day, became strong when Israel was weak and was only broken by the rise of one hero after another. Even the kings of Israel were afraid of the Hittites, and David had Philistines (Pelethites and Cherethites *) as picked troops, and a Hittite general (Uriah). Solomon had Hittite princesses among his wives, and the aid of the skilled workmen of Phœnicia was employed in building the Temple. Yet the Hebrews were not mere barbarians, as some have thought, which we now can prove by pointing to the fine Hebrew inscription cut on rock in the tunnel close to the Pool of Siloam.

Gilgal and Jericho.

The route whereby Israel crossed Jordan under Joshua led clearly by the fords east of Jericho. The point where the waters "rose very high" (Josh. iii. 16) is not so certain, but it appears to have been at the city Adam (for the English rendering is here hardly accurate), which is supposed to be the present ferry of the Dâmieh, east of Shechem. The ford being thus dried up, the hosts passed over into the broad plain east of Jericho, which city stood

* The Pelethi and the Pheleshi, or Philistines, are supposed to have been the same; and the Cherethites were probably inhabitants of Cherith, or Keratiya, in Philistia, near Ascalon.

at the foot of the Judæan mountains, at the fine springs under the steep brown precipices of that mountain which the monks afterwards pointed out as the scene of the Temptation. Gilgal, the first camp, was so called from the "circle" of twelve great stones here erected as a memorial of the passage of Jordan, which may have been not unlike our English Stonehenge. Such circles are still commonly built in Palestine round sacred spots to fence them in; and there were other Gilgals, one in the plain of Sharon, one in Mount Ephraim, and another in Samaria east of Shechem.

Gilgal was not certainly known till the survey of Palestine was carried down to Jericho in 1873, when it was ascertained that the name still exists at a spot in the plain east of Jericho. There is a very large and ancient tamarisk here, and the place is sacred to the Arabs, who bury their dead beside the tree. The author has visited the spot again and again, striving to realize the scene when the black camp of Israel was first pitched here over against Jericho on its high white mound. The view from the spot is very striking, extending up the Valley of Jordan to Hermon, and on the south to the Dead Sea, with the rugged mountains on either side. On the east are the plains of Shittim and the range of Nebo, Bamoth-Baal, and Peor; on the west the brown crags and white ridges of the mountains of Judah, and the thorny groves surrounding the great tells, or "mounds," on which Jericho was built.

Curious legends of the "city of copper" and of the sun standing still yet cling to this spot, but they are evidently ignorant versions of Bible stories which the Arabs have probably learned from the hermits who in all ages have lived near Jericho.

Jericho itself is now a shapeless ruin, and though Sir C. Warren dug deep into all the great mounds, he found only foundations of sun-dried bricks on which the houses of the town probably stood. Perhaps it was of such brick

that the walls of Jericho were made, which, though sufficiently formidable to the Hebrews because of their height, are yet related to have fallen at the trumpet blast, for similar fortifications seem to have been used by Assyrians and Hittites, and indeed in our own days Damascus itself is in great part built of sun-dried brick and wood.

The Valley of Achor, near Jericho, where Achan was stoned, seems to be the brook now called Wâdy Kelt, issuing from a fine rocky gorge south of Jericho and running to Jordan. We may, perhaps, conjecture that the valley was chosen on account of the great quantity of stones to be found along its bed, for on the plains of Jericho in other parts hardly one stone large enough to be used in such an execution can be found, the soil being a soft smooth marl or crumbling earth, whereas along the course of the Kelt, among the cane brakes and in the running stream, boulders and blocks of every kind may be found rolled down from the western hills.

Gibeon, Beth-horon, and Makkedah.

Of Shechem and Ebal,* of Bethel and Ai, we have spoken in former chapters, and the next new site to be noticed is Gibeon, where Joshua defeated the kings of the Hivites and Amorites.

Gibeon was a royal city, a place of great strength, on the top of the hills of Benjamin, north of Jerusalem.

* The reading of the Law (Josh. viii. 30–35) requires no special notice. It fulfilled the command in Deut. xxvii. 4. Some writers believe that the exact scene is towards the east of Nâblus, just under the summits of the two mountains, where a recess occurs in Gerizim, opposite a corresponding recess in Ebal, making an amphitheatre said to have acoustic properties—that is, to convey the human voice to a great distance. A Moslem shrine, called "the pillar" ('Amûd), here exists at the foot of Gerizim, but this cannot be Joshua's monument, which was on Ebal. There is another shrine on Ebal called 'Amâd-ed-Dîn (the "monument of the faith"), which might have some connection with Joshua's altar (Deut. xxvii. 4; Josh. viii. 30). The Samaritans read Gerizim for Ebal in connection with this ceremony.

Many are the days which the author has spent in summer under the brow of the hill on which it stands in a fertile plain or basin among the mountains. Corn-fields and olive-yards surround it, and the vines run down the terraced sides of the old site, which, strengthened artificially by rock-cut scarps, presents a magnificent position for an ancient fortress. The modern village is of stone, and contains an old Crusading church, and under its houses are rock-cut tombs, perhaps as old as the time of the conquest of the Holy Land by Israel. On the east side, in a cave, wells up a copious spring, and as at Jerusalem so at Gibeon, a secret way led down from the rock above, so that the defenders might at any time close the usual entrance below (where still remain the bolt holes of the old door to the cave), and might descend to the spring from within the walls. On the west side of the rocky hill, towards the north, a very ancient reservoir is hewn in the rock. This, probably, is the "pool" where the champions of David and of Ishbosheth (2 Sam. ii. 13) afterwards met in deadly combat, though now the rock walls are broken and the pool dry and useless.

South of Gibeon is the high summit of Neby Samwîl—perhaps Mizpeh, of which more hereafter, and on the west a very rugged road leads along a mountain spur to the little village of Upper Beth-horon. In the plateau near Gibeon the Hivites no doubt awaited the host which, hurrying up along the steep passes from Gilgal by night, "came unto them suddenly," as a good general comes always on the enemy, and "discomfited them." Along that rough road they fled (where the Greeks fled later from Judas Maccabæus) to the great descent which leads down so suddenly to the nether Beth-horon, under the edge of the western mountain wall of Palestine which defends Jerusalem. As we follow down that steep path through the cutting made by the Romans to ease the ascent, we come on the ruin of a little chapel, perhaps once reared in

memory of the great day at Gibeon. From this spot we look south, and see the broad corn vale of Ajalon, and the distant plain of Sharon, where Makkedah still stands; and on the west, rather lower, but still in the hills, is the Lower Beth-horon, with its solitary palm amid its yellow threshing-floors.

But not even here was the pursuit of the Amorites stayed. Down the Valley of Ajalon, right into the plain, the victorious Hebrews followed them to Azekah and to Makkedah. Of these the first is not known, but the latter is placed by Sir C. Warren at the present village of Moghâr ("the cave"), south of Ramleh. The author visited it in 1875, and felt convinced of the justness of the suggestion. Caves are not to be found in every place in this plain, because there are not many cliffs or rocks in which they can be dug, but there is at Moghâr such a cliff just near the sites of Gederoth, Naamah, and Beth-dagon which were places near to Makkedah (Josh xv. 41).

Makkedah means "place of the cleft," and here in a cave the kings of the defeated Amorites hid for a time. On the hill of Moghâr an ancient tomb still exists, cut in the rock near the village caves, showing the place to have been a town in Jewish times; and on the south side is a stream of water flowing west to the sea at Jamnia, while cornfields stretch in every direction, to the yellow sand dunes on the one side, and to the Vale of Sorek and Samson's home on the other.

Hazor.

When Joshua had conquered the south country, he turned his arms against the north, and defeated the Canaanite kings near Hazor, a city which stood in Upper Galilee on the mountains which look down upon the waters of Merom. The name of the city (which means a wall or enclosure) still lingers here, and the place is a

dark, bare, rocky hillock, near the flat fertile plateau of Kadesh-Napthali and just above the steep slopes which run down eastwards to Jordan. The ascent to Hazor is among the most rugged in Palestine; but it was not in the highlands, but in the broad valley near the Merom waters, that the great fight took place. Here on the north rises the majestic dome of Hermon (Josh. xi. 3), and no more striking scene occurs in the Holy Land than that here found. The foaming Jordan rushing from its cavern through the poplar groves; the luxuriant oaks of Dan (Tell-el-Kady); the dark basalt field strewn with dolmens to the west; the strange craters of Bashan, marking the eastern boundary of the view; the calm waters of Merom, with papyrus beds and flocks of herons, cranes, and storks; the dark wall of Galilean hills, with Hazor frowning down on the battle-field,—make up a picture which the author will never forget among many scenes of the Holy Land.

Division of the Land.

It is not intended to go very minutely into the tribe boundaries in this work, for in some cases there is difference of opinion as to the exact line; but the survey of Palestine has settled for ever many of the vexed questions, and shows that the land was parcelled out into natural sections, which fell, we are told, by lot to the various tribes.

The tribe of Judah possessed the country between Jerusalem and Kadesh-Barnea from the Dead Sea to the Mediterranean. This included the wilderness of Judæa on the east; the mountains of Jerusalem and Hebron; the Negeb, or "dry" country, a chalky district south of Hebron; the Shephelah, or "low land" hills west of the mountains; and finally, the plain of Philistia, which was, however, never completely conquered. The north border

of Judah ran up the Valley of Achor, south of Gilgal and Jericho, to En Rogel, east of the Temple hill at Jerusalem, —a spring now called "the Virgin's Fountain." Passing up the Valley of Hinnom, generally supposed to be south of the Holy City, the border ran by Rachel's tomb (1 Sam. x. 2) to Nephtoah, which there are reasons to believe was the place now called "Solomon's Pools," south of Bethlehem. Thence the border ran west, by Kirjath-Jearim (of which more hereafter) and Zorah and Eshtaol, the home of Samson, and by Ekron and Jamnia to the sea.

Thus Judah held 1400 square miles of country in all, including Philistia, but not including the wilderness (400 square miles). The final boundary on the south seems to have been at Beersheba; and the land between that city and Kadesh-Barnea was given up to Simeon, including about one thousand square miles which had first been part of the land conquered by Judah. The territory of Judah included some of the best corn-land and vineyard country in Palestine; but the lot of Simeon was more fitted to the wants of a pastoral tribe such as Simeon seems to have always remained.

The border of Benjamin ran from north of Jericho to the mountain north of Bethel, and thence to Beth-horon, where it bent south to join the Judæan boundary near Kirjath-Jearim. Thus Benjamin possessed the hills between Bethel and Jerusalem, and part of the rich plains of Jericho on the east. The total extent of country is only four hundred square miles; but Benjamin was a little tribe, and had plenty of room within that amount of country.

Ephraim, north of Benjamin, had about the same extent of land, reaching to the neighbourhood of Shechem and including very rugged hills, with here and there a fertile mountain basin or plateau.

Dan, on the west of the two last, reached from Ekron on the south to the river called Me-Jarkon ("yellow

water") on the north. This stream appears to be the present 'Aujch river, north of Jaffa; and the territory of Dan was thus a part of the rich Sharon plain, with the lower hills immediately to the east.

The land of Manasseh, both east and west of Jordan, was very extensive, including on the east all Bashan (2500 square miles) and on the west nearly all of the later Samaria down to the sea-coast and up to Carmel and the plain of Esdraelon (1300 square miles), with fertile plains and low hills covered with olives. The apparent disproportion may probably be accounted for as in the case of Judah, by the fact that the territory so assigned was never as completely conquered as in other cases, for we find in the Book of Judges many facts which show how powerful were the Canaanites in the Sharon plain and the remnant of Amorites and Ammonites in Bashan and in Gilead.

The lot of Issachar included the great plain usually called Esdraelon up to Tabor and to the hills of Nazareth, with the Jordan valley east of Gilboa, some four hundred square miles of the richest corn-land, well watered and free in the main from rock.

Zebulon, again to the north, had the rest of Lower Galilee from Tabor westwards, about three hundred square miles in all. The hills of Nazareth, the rich plain of Sepphoris, with oak woods and a clear stream further west, and fine olive yards north of this, made up the fair portion given to this tribe.

The lot of Asher included the hills and sea-coast of Southern Phœnicia, and extended north even of Sidon; but the list of cities seems to show that the Phœnicians were never conquered by the sons of Asher, although the tribe learned from their northern neighbours maritime arts (Judg. v. 17; Ezek. xxvii. 6), which were foreign to the habits of the other tribes.

The author is inclined to think that the Bible plainly

indicates (Gen. xlix. 13) that Zebulon also possessed the sea-coast and a "haven," probably the present Haifa under Carmel, and that Asher did not claim the shore south of Accho; but as authorities of weight on the other hand suppose that the coast as far south as Dor is to be allotted to Asher, the question cannot be considered finally settled. Perhaps the ports of this part of Palestine may have been common to both these tribes, and even to the Phœnicians also.

The strong tribe of Naphtali dwelt in the mountains of Upper Galilee, and held the plateau east of Tabor above the Sea of Galilee. Though rugged and barren, their country was well fitted for the cultivation of the vine, and included the well-watered plain at the foot of Hermon. In all they had eight hundred square miles of land. In the New Testament, Zebulon and Naphtali are noticed (Matt. iv. 13) as the scene of the ministry of Christ, for Nazareth lay in Zebulon, and Capernaum, "His own city" (Matt. ix. 1), was in the border of Naphtali.

Two tribes remain—Gad, which possessed Mount Gilead from the Sea of Galilee almost to Heshbon, with its fertile valleys, great woods, and numerous streams, and Reuben, to whom was allotted the plateau of Moab from Heshbon to Dibon, and from the Dead Sea to the Eastern desert, a land where corn might be grown and where vineyards were certainly once cultivated, but especially fitted for flocks and herds, as noticed in the previous chapter. Reuben had only 400 square miles of land, being rather a weak tribe, but Gad possessed 1300, although scarcely more in the number of its population. As before in the case of Manasseh, this seems to be due to the strength of the population already existing, for we find the Ammonites early encroaching on Gilead, and demanding the heroic efforts of Jephthah and of David to curb their strength. Reuben in like manner, by the time of Ahab at latest, appears to have been subjugated by the kings of Moab;

and the tribes beyond Jordan seem in the end to have been dispersed or conquered long before their brethren west of the river.

The amount of light which has been thrown by the survey of Palestine on the question of the tribes is very great. About one hundred and fifty cities at least have been fixed by the author at sites which, in the majority of cases, have met with general acceptation. The boundaries have been shown to be natural in all cases, save when very detailed descriptions are given in the Bible; and the population to be thickest in the most fertile districts, and thinnest in the most barren. All these facts serve assuredly to prove that the geography of the Book of Joshua is no idle tale, but a real division of a real country, capable of the most minute critical examination by aid of the most scientific modern research.

Debir.

Joshua, the great general, died and slept at Timnath Heres, on the rough mountain south of Gerizim. Eleazar and Phinehas were gathered to their fathers at Gibeah, in the plain of Moreh, and the tombs of these worthies are still sacred to Jew and Samaritan, though lost—until the surveyors again lit upon them in the summer of 1872—to the Christian world of our own times. The zeal of Israel died out, and the old inhabitants of the land grew strong, save when at intervals arose judges who saved the Hebrews from [the hard tyranny of Egyptians and Philistines, Moabites, Ammonites, and Midianites. The records of Egypt tell us that at this time the Pharaohs were making expeditions even as far as Euphrates, and exacting taxes from all Syria, save perhaps from the hills of Jerusalem. The iron chariots of Sisera were no doubt made in Egypt, and the native rulers, called Katzin (the same word as the Arabic Kadi, or "judge"), who led the Hebrews (for Katzin

is the Hebrew which we render "judges" in the English), were probably ignored by the monarchs who strove with varying success to establish their sway over the Holy Land.* The history of the Book of Judges closes at a period when both Egypt and Assyria were, for a time, sinking in decay, and between these powers thus at length arose the Hebrew kingdom of Saul, David, and Solomon.

The first exploit of a Hebrew hero of the second generation after the conquest of Palestine was the capture of Debir by the bold brother of the faithful Caleb, Othniel (Judg. i. 12). Debir, which had been already taken once by Joshua when he had subdued Hebron, was known to lie somewhere south of that city. The author's proposal to place it at a village now called Dhâherîyeh has been generally accepted, on account partly of the position and partly because the modern name ("the ridge") has the same meaning as the Hebrew Debir, or "back." The village stands conspicuous on a long spur north of the Beer-sheba desert, and in the south or "dry" land, as noticed in the Bible. The springs of water which Othniel's wife coaxed her father to add to her possessions (Judg. i. 15) may also be recognized at some little distance on the north, and, as stated in the Bible, there are still "upper and nether springs," the former on the hillside south of Adoraim, the latter in the fertile valley below. There are, moreover, hardly any other springs in the district, so that the "blessing" which Achsah asked appears to have been no small boon to grant. Debir itself was called Kirjath-Sannah, or "palm town," and Kirjath-Sepher, or "city of books," as some would render the name, though this translation, together with the idea that Debir was a sort of Hittite university, seem to the author to be rather

* The Egyptian manuscript called "Travels of a Mohar" shows us that in the fourteenth century before Christ the kings of Egypt exacted taxes from the Hittites, the Phœnicians, and the inhabitants of Lower Galilee.

too risky suggestions of modern students, for Kirjath-Sepher may after all mean only the town of the "numbering" or "enrolment" of the warriors of Caleb's family.

Barak's Victory.

The forces of Barak were gathered on the slopes of Tabor, that curious dome-shaped hill which stands all alone in one corner of the great Plain of Esdraelon, looking like a gigantic mole-hill. Its sides, especially towards the north, are covered with oak woods, which, though now much thinned, are still a covert for the fallow deer, according to Canon Tristram, and which would effectually have hidden the number of the men of Zebulon and Naphtali, the neighbouring tribes, who here assembled. Sisera, captain of the army of Jabin, the Canaanite king, collected his forces and his iron chariots at Harosheth, a place which keeps its old name yet, meaning "forests," and given to a village in the great woods which cover the hills east of Carmel stretching down almost to the banks of the river Kishon, which divides these forests from the coppice of the Carmel ridge (see Judg. iv. 2). The Kishon is a stream of which the head-springs are near Tabor, while another branch comes from Taanach, on the west of the Plain of Esdraelon. It is a very dangerous stream, for although it is sluggish and narrow, running between high earth banks, amid cane-brakes and rushes, its bed is so soft and swampy that great numbers of men and horses have more than once been drowned in attempting to cross, floundering in the bottomless bogs along its course. Sisera's chariots, however, either forded the stream near Harosheth, where there is a pebbly bed in the gorge under Carmel, or perhaps followed the right bank on the north, over the harder open ground at the foot of the Nazareth hills.

The actual battle seems to have taken place near Endor,

on the south-west side of Tabor (Psa. lxxxiii. 10), and the defeated forces were driven back on the river, and perished in their frantic attempts to cross.

The flight of Sisera was in another direction, to the plain Bitzaanaim (Judg. iv. 11), where Heber the Kenite had pitched his tent after separating from his tribe, which, as we have already seen, dwelt at the city Cain, south of Hebron. This plain, as may be shown by arguments which it is not necessary here to give in detail,* was the plateau extending east of Tabor to the Sea of Galilee, and the flight of Sisera thus extended only a few miles to the encampment of Heber.

Heber was a descendant of Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses, and it is curious—though too much stress must not be laid on the fact—that the only Moslem shrine sacred to Jethro (who is to the Moslems a kind of saint, or Neby) which exists in Palestine is still to be found on this plain of Zaanaim, or Bitzaanaim as it is really called in the Old Testament, a name meaning "marshy," and still applying to a village and to certain springs on the rolling, treeless downs which extend westwards between Tiberias and Tabor.

Gideon's Victory.

The next Bible story refers to the country only a very little further south. Gideon was born in Ophrah of Manasseh (Judg. v. 24), which seems to be the present village Ferâta, west of Shechem, although this is not very certain. His first gathering-place was at or near Jezreel, by the spring of Harod. The Midianites, the Amalekites, and the Beni Kedem, or "children of the East," were invading the corn plain of Esdraelon. Like the modern Arab tribes from beyond Jordan, they were coming up in

* See "Tent Work in Palestine," vol. i. pp. 131–135, and Conder's "Handbook to the Bible," p. 427.

harvest-time to rob the Hebrew farmers, and the Valley of Jezreel was then, as it still is, the highway and gate of the west, whereby in troublous times the wild tent-dwellers come up to the tilled lands to levy tribute. It is a broad, open valley, with a stream in the middle and a few villages perched on knolls. On the south are the precipices of Mount Gilboa, a barren, stony range; on the north the land rises to the basalt downs east of Tabor, of which we have just spoken; and on this side is a curious pointed hill with a lava crater on its side, which is not impossibly the Hill of Moreh noticed in the story of Gideon.

The spring of Harod is not certainly known. It may, however, be that fine shallow pool which wells out under Gilboa below the city Jezreel; for we learn that Gideon was encamped in Mount Gilead (Judg. vii. 3), evidently not the Gilead east of Jordan, but rather some part of Gilboa, and the name may perhaps still exist at the pool just noticed, which, together with the stream flowing thence down the valley of Jezreel, is now called Jâlûd.

In this broad valley the author has often seen the black Bedawin tents spread out in large encampments, reminding us of the children of the East, who "lay along in the valley like grasshoppers for multitude;" and on one of the little limestone knolls which rise in places by the stream, Gideon may have ranged his followers when, breaking their pitchers to show the lamps, they charged down on the astonished and sleeping foe. The flight was by Beth-Shittah (now Shutta), and so towards Jordan to Abel-Meholah, the home of Elisha, now called 'Ain Helweh, in the open valley south of Bethshan, and thence across the fords, which are numerous in summer in this part of Jordan, to the highlands of Gilead and of Ammon.

The pursuit of Gideon was by Nobah and Jogbehah to Karkor, or "the plateau," where he finally scattered the host (Judg. viii. 11). Jogbehah is well known, and retains its old name hardly changed. It is a large ruined

town on the top of the hills of Gilead, north of Rabbath-Ammon; and the direct line from Gilboa to Jogbehah passes through the supposed sites of Succoth and Penuel which Gideon visited, but which it is not necessary here to notice, as they have been already mentioned in speaking of Jacob's journey through Gilead (see chap. i. pp. 43–46).

Abimelech's History.

The story of the son of Gideon is connected with the country round Shechem and with places already described. The Mount Zalmon, whence branches of trees were brought by Abimelech's followers, is thought to be the mountain south of Gerizim, still called Jebel Suleimân; but this is not certain, on account of the distance, and it is possible that some part of Ebal is really meant, as that mountain is still called Jebel Eslamîyeh, which is quite as near to the Hebrew as is the other name. Mount Zalmon is noticed as a snowy mountain in the Psalms (Psa. lxviii. 14), but all the heights round Shechem are in winter—often for many days—covered with snow, sometimes to a considerable thickness.

Thebez, the city where Abimelech was slain by the woman who threw a millstone on his head, still keeps its old name almost unchanged. It is a large village in an open valley among the mountains, north-east of Shechem, and not far from Tirzah afterwards the capital of the kingdom of Israel.

Jephthah's History.

There is no sadder story in the Bible than that of Jephthah. His vow condemned his daughter to death: "Whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house . . . I will offer it up for a burnt offering" (Judg. xi. 31), and "he did with her according to his vow" (ver. 39). Jeph-

thah lived in the land of Tob, which was on the south-east of the Sea of Galilee, and his home was at Mizpeh, probably the same Mizpeh where Jacob and Laban met (see p. 43.) Near this place yet remain many of those early altars of the Canaanites, on which there can be little doubt human beings were once sacrificed, just as among the Druids in our own country. The channels and cup-shaped hollows made to collect the blood of the victims can still be seen on the top stones of these altars, of which the author found some seven hundred in the district round Mount Nebo alone; and on such an altar at Mizpeh, we may suppose that the superstitious Jephthah slew his child, ignorantly supposing such a victim to be pleasing in the sight of the God who had given him victory.

Samson's History.

The scene of Samson's valiant deeds is on the south-west of Jerusalem, on and within the border of the Philistine country. The hero was born at Zorah, a little village on the top of a steep bare hill, which looks down on the fair open corn valley of Sorek, in which stands Beth-Shemesh, famous later in connection with the ark. On the west, the view extends towards the open plains of Philistia, and on the east the mountains of Judah rise with picturesque outline, and deep glens with dark lime-stone crags divide the ridges. Here, at Zorah, the author visited the rude shrine which for many centuries has been shown as the tomb of Samson, and heard stories (which are derived, though quite recently, from the Bible) related by the peasants concerning this famous hero. "The camp of Dan" (Judg. xiii. 25) is the old name of the fair valley beneath, which formed the boundary between Dan and Judah, and it was here that Samson grew up, and among the vineyards of Timnath in the low chalk hills on the south side of the valley that he

is related to have slain the lion. Here also he is said to have collected the four hundred jackals which he sent into the standing corn, which is very often still set on fire in summer, either by malice or by accident; and on the east, among the Judæan mountains, stands Etam, to which he fled from the angry Philistines. His hiding-place was the "cleft in the rock Etam," and in this rock under the village, which is now called Beit 'Atâb, the author found, in 1874, a curious secret passage and chamber communicating with the spring hard by, and still called "the Cave of Refuge." *

Ramoth Lehi (the "Hill of the Jaw") is unfortunately still unknown, in spite of every attempt to recover its site; but Sorek, the "grape" valley, where lived Delilah, Samson's faithless wife, is, as above said, the vale south of Zorah, his birthplace. Thus, with exception of Gaza, to which he was taken captive, the places mentioned in his story seem all to have been close together, and from the hill of Zorah they may all be pointed out. At Gaza, also, the memory of Samson lingers, and the prison, and the hill to which he carried the gates of the city are shown; but these are probably monkish sites which have no real authority.

Gibeah of Benjamin.

In closing this chapter a few words may be said about the scenery of the war between Benjamin and the other tribes. The crime causing this war was committed at Gibeah of Benjamin (Judg. xix. 12), a city north of Jerusalem and near Ramah. There can be no real doubt that this place, famous afterwards as Gibeah of Saul, is the present village of Jebâ, which stands on a conspicuous knoll on the south side of the great chasm of the Michmash valley, not far east of Ramah of Benjamin. The allied tribes who attacked Gibeah advanced from Bethel

* "Tent Work in Palestine," vol. i. p. 276.

(see Judg. xx. 31, margin), and the final flight of the Benjamites was to the rock Rimmon, which was fixed by Robinson at the village now called Rummôn, north of Gibeah, a strong and remote position close to the desert, where the author found a rocky hill with ancient tombs and other signs of the antiquity of the town. The view over the barren chains, with deep ravines full of caves and hiding-places, stretching east to the Jordan valley is very romantic, and the remnant of the Benjamites in this remote corner of the country were not only able to find refuge and to hide from their foes, but they were also only eight miles away from Shiloh, where they waited in the vineyards for the maidens who came forth to dance yearly at the "Feast of Jehovah."

Shiloh must, however, be left for the next chapter, with other places noticed in the story of Samuel and David.

CHAPTER IV.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE BOOKS OF SAMUEL.

Shiloh.

THE home of Samuel's father, Ramathaim-Zophim in Mount Ephraim, is not certainly known. The name means "heights of the views," and perhaps we may regard Ramah of Benjamin and the present Râm Allah as both possible sites. The place of Samuel's infant ministry, Shiloh, the city where the tabernacle is related to have been set up by Joshua (Josh. xviii. 1), is, on the contrary, one of the best known spots in the Holy Land. Though hidden among the hills and remote from the great north road, its position has never been really lost, and the little ruined village amid the vineyards is annually visited by crowds of travellers. The curious building south of the hillock on which the ruined cabins stand contains remains probably of an early synagogue; but with the exception of this and of a few rock-cut tombs, nothing of great antiquity has yet been found at the spot, though Sir C. Wilson has pointed out a terrace north of the village, which he supposes may have been the place where the Tabernacle stood, and which is sufficiently extensive to suit the measurements of that building. In the First Book of Samuel (i. 9) this holy place is called "the temple of the Lord," and the Jews believe that a sort of permanent building of stone was added to the tent, or tabernacle, at Shiloh. The Tabernacle itself was afterwards removed to Nob, to Gibeon, and finally to Jerusalem, and Shiloh ceased

to be the centre of the Hebrew worship after the building of Solomon's Temple.

The ark also did not long remain at Shiloh, being captured at Ebenezer while Samuel was yet a child. It was carried, as we know, first to Ashdod, the city on the red sandhill near the great dunes, which reach west of it to the harbourless coast of Philistia; thence to Gath on its white chalk cliff near the valley of Elah (of which more hereafter); and thence to Ekron, on the barren ridge which runs between the fine corn-lands of Sharon to the tiny bay of Jamnia. After these wanderings it was placed on the rude wooden cart to find its way whither it might be directed, and the oxen went straight eastwards along the open corn valley of Sorek, which passes south of Ekron and runs up to the low spur under the wall of the mountains of Judah, where Beth-Shemesh still stands. Beth-Shemesh we have already mentioned in speaking of Samson; but the exact position of the great stone on which the ark was set down (1 Sam. vi. 18) is of course no longer recoverable.

Kirjath-Jearim.

From Beth-Shemesh the ark was taken to Kirjath-Jearim ("the town of the woods"), a place which, though near, was yet not in, the lowlands. It would be out of place here to enter into long arguments concerning the situation of this town, which have been very fully discussed.* The site which seems to the author to be the only one known that fulfils all the requisites is the ruined town of 'Erma, on the south side of the great ravine which is the head of the valley of Sorek. A road runs down the valley from 'Erma to Beth-Shemesh—only four miles away,—and the "woods" whence the city took its name are still repre-

* See "Memoirs of the Survey of Western Palestine," vol. iii., sheet xvii., section A, under the name Kirjath-Jearim; and Conder's "Handbook to the Bible," p. 259 (third edition).

sented by the luxuriant copses which clothe the whole ridge and which surround the ruin itself. The view westwards from the flat rock which forms the "high place" or citadel of the town is among the most picturesque in the district. The rusty cliffs on the north side of the valley are burrowed with caves and hermits' cells, and beyond these dark limestone crags appears the rounded chalk spur on which Zorah is perched, with the conspicuous white dome of the traditional tomb of Samson. Beth-Shemesh is hidden, but the valley of Sorek and the plains near Ekron are visible—the whole course of the journey of the ark on its way to Kirjath-Jearim. This place, whence David afterwards brought the ark in triumph along the mountains to Jerusalem, was also not impossibly the city where Saul and Samuel first met, which is called Ramah by Josephus.

Mizpeh and Ebenezer.

These important places are unfortunately not known to us with the same certainty as Bethlehem and Shiloh, Bethel or Sychar; and Ebenezer, indeed, cannot be said to be known at all. Mizpeh is generally supposed to be the place now called Neby Samwîl, a lofty hill-top south of Gibeon, where the tomb of Samuel has been shown since the Middle Ages, but unfortunately in this case we have very little to guide us, and there were many Mizpehs in Palestine. The name means a "place of clear view," and hence a watch-tower; and there was a Mizpeh in Judah, another in Gad, and a third in Benjamin. The latter was probably the gathering-place of Israel in Samuel's days, and not impossibly Nob and Mizpeh may have been the same place, in which case the site must have been near the present village Shafat, just north of Jerusalem.*

* Conder's "Handbook to the Bible," p. 277, gives the reasons for this conjecture. See also Isa. x. 32; Josh. xviii. 26; Judg. xx. 1; 1 Macc. iii. 46; and Josephus, 11 Antiq. viii. 5.

As regards Ebenezer (the "stone of help"), a monument raised by Samuel after his victory over the Philistines, there is no doubt where the early Christian hermits believed it to be. They placed it near Beth-Shemesh, at a site now called Deir Abân; but unfortunately their authority in such matters is not sufficient, and it is very doubtful whether such a position can be considered to agree with the words of the Old Testament.

Saul's Journey.

The romantic story of the journey of Saul to find the asses of Kish, his father, is one of the most difficult questions in Bible geography. There has been much dispute about almost every place mentioned in the story, and this is no doubt due to the fact that we know really very little about it. Kish lived at Zelah, a town of Benjamin, and was a Benjamite by birth; but the site of Zelah is not known. Saul wandered first through Mount Ephraim (1 Sam. ix. 4), and by Shalisha and Shalim and the land of Yemeni (translated Benjamites); thence he gained the land of Zuph, which is no better known than the preceding; and so arrived at a city of which the name is not noticed, but to which Samuel had come on the same day (ver. 12), though whether he usually lived there is not clear. On his return journey (1 Sam. x. 2), Saul first passed by Rachel's sepulchre, which we know to have been near Bethlehem, and afterwards reached the "hill of God" (Gibeah ha Elohim), which seems pretty certainly to have been Gibeah of Benjamin. It seems possible that the city where the meeting took place was Kirjath-Jearim, though others place it at Bethlehem; but it is to be feared that the indications in these two chapters of the Old Testament, though of old they must have been easy to understand, are now too slight to lead to any very certain conclusion.

Bezek and Jabesh-Gilead.

At Mizpeh Saul was made king and the manner of the kingdom recorded, and at Gibeah he reigned over a few followers only, without abandoning his simple pastoral life (1 Sam. xi. 5). The tyranny of the king of Ammon then presented him with the occasion of showing his prowess, and Israel was gathered at Bezek (ver. 8) to undertake the relief of Jabesh-Gilead. The success of this expedition made Saul the popular hero of the moment, and his real reign seems to have dated from this event.

Bezek is one of the places which was unknown before the survey of Palestine, but which keeps its old name yet. It was situated almost in the centre of Palestine, measuring north and south, a little north of Tirzah on the eastern slope of the highest part of Gilboa. A main road leads past it to the fords of Jordan which are opposite Jabesh-Gilead, and the neighbourhood presents open country and numerous springs, and is thus fitted for the assembly of an army.

The exact site of Jabesh-Gilead is not yet known, but its whereabouts is fairly certain, and its name (signifying "dry") is still alive in that of Wâdy el Yâbis, an important valley in the northern part of Mount Gilead. Beth-shan is not far north of Bezek and within a day's journey of the Valley of Jabesh-Gilead, and thus we understand how it came to pass that the men of Jabesh-Gilead were the heroes who took Saul's body from the wall of Beth-shan, for they were perhaps the very men whom Saul had rescued from Nahash the Ammonite when he threatened to thrust out their right eyes.

From Jabesh-Gilead the army marched back down the Jordan valley to Gilgal, where the public acknowledgment of Saul as king took place.

Jonathan at Michmash.

The power of the Philistines about this period seems to have been very widely extended, and the Egyptian records would seem to show that the Philistines—who were of Egyptian origin—were subject or allied to the Pharaoh with whom Solomon afterwards entered into alliance. Gibeah of Benjamin was a Philistine post, and the Philistines are found again much further north in the neighbourhood of Jezreel. Perhaps we may suppose that these posts resembled those which the Turks have established in Moab and Gilead at the present day, the governor having really little power beyond that of exacting the yearly tax or tribute, while native chiefs, who are fully recognized by the inhabitants, have an authority only in part dependent on the Ottoman governor, who is defended by a small detachment of foreign soldiers.

Such a post the Philistines held on the south side of the great gorge called the "Valley of Thorns." On the north side was the small town of Michmash, and the district round was called Gibeah, from its chief town Geba of Benjamin. This post the heroic Jonathan attacked, and drove the Philistines over the ravine to the north side, where they established themselves in a strong position and where they were joined by a large force sent to their assistance. On each side was an almost inaccessible precipice, and the traveller who has once crossed the gorge, and after toiling down one side has proceeded (as the author once did) to scale the height on the other, will acknowledge, on the one hand, the extreme fatigue and exhaustion which must have been felt even by such hardy warriors as Jonathan and his squire, and will understand, on the other, the astonishment of the Philistines when the two climbers appeared in their camp. The panic which followed was due perhaps to a belief that other enemies were behind; for when the solitary Arab advances fear-

lessly on a large party it is always safe to conclude that he has his fellows hidden not far off. The feat, however arduous, is still not impossible, for there is always foothold on the Michmash cliffs; and when one gazes on the numerous caves which line the valley on either side, one is able to understand how "the people did hide themselves in caves, and in thickets, and in rocks, and in high places, and in pits" (1 Sam. xiii. 6), and how the Philistines said, "Behold, the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves" (xiv. 11).

The name of the northern cliff was Bozez, or "shining," and the midday sun as it shines on this side of the valley gives a dazzling whiteness to the chalky summit still. The southern cliff was Seneh ("the thorn"), and hence the valley bore the same name, and still bears it, in the Arabic Suweinît, or "little thorn trees." This scene is, therefore, one which can be more perfectly realized at the present day than most of the episodes of the Books of Samuel, although the wood where Jonathan found the wild honey near Bêthaven, or Bethel, in the pursuit of the Philistines, has disappeared entirely with others in this part of Palestine.

Saul and the Amalekites.

After the defeat of the Philistines, Saul attacked the Amalekites in the south country or Beersheba desert, but spared the Kenites, who, as has been already explained, lived south of Hebron at the town called Cain. On his homeward march Saul reached Carmel, not the famous mountain so called, but a city, Carmel of Judah (Josh. xv. 55), which is in the Hebron hills south of the city of the Kenites. This was on his direct road across to Gilgal (1 Sam. xv. 12), and here he "set him up a place" (or "hand," as the Hebrew really means), a rude monument (perhaps like Jacob's stone at Bethel) commemorating

his victory, as did the stone of Ebenezer the victory of Samuel, and just as the Arab of our own day commemorates any particular event by a stone or a cairn raised on the spot. Nothing, indeed, is more striking in reading the Books of Samuel than the extreme simplicity of the life which the Hebrew chieftains led, and the impoverishment of the people they ruled, who had not even a smith to forge their weapons of war (xiii. 19), so that Saul's own armour was probably a single suit seized, in one of his expeditions, from the Philistine tyrants. Long after he was made king he lived in the open, under trees (perhaps in a tent) or in caves, sleeping on the ground. He tended the herds himself, and sought his father's donkeys when lost. Samuel also seems to have driven his sacrifice before him to Bethlehem (xvi. 2); and David was a shepherd boy. In such pictures of simple rustic life we have strong proofs of the genuineness of the Bible history, which have been lost in the false representations of painters and writers, who have supposed the civilization of the Hebrews to have been like that of the Greeks and Romans, and not like that of the present native race, which may still be studied in the Holy Land.

David and Goliah.

We shall have occasion to speak of Bethlehem, David's home, later on. The first scene which presents itself when we think of this ruddy shepherd boy with his sling, and his harp or lyre, his leather wallet, and single garment, his bare legs and light sandals, his curling black locks and shawl head-dress, is the Valley of Elah, where he defied the giant, who, clad in mail, with a round helmet, came spear in hand to meet him. Goliah was about nine feet high, and apparently but one of a family of giants. His native town was Gath, which, though not certainly known, seems to have been the place afterwards called

Blanche Guarde, where the Crusaders built a castle. This stands on a chalk cliff on the edge of the Philistine plain, where the Valley of Elah leaves the low hills; and the place where David and the giant met was some miles further east, near Shochoh. The Valley of Elah is here a broad open vale, full of corn-fields, and bordered by rough hills, on which grow thick copses of lentisk. In the middle of the valley runs a deep trench, some twenty feet wide, with banks ten feet high, a water-course worn by the winter torrents, its bed strewn with smooth white pebbles. This no doubt was the "brook" whence David took the "five smooth stones;" and with the shepherd boys may still be found slings made of plaited goat's hair, which they use with a dexterity almost equal to that of the Hebrew hero. From this spot the flight of the Philistines was directed along the valley westwards to Gath, where they found refuge in the frontier fortress of Philistia.

David's Wanderings.

The position of David when outlawed by Saul was that which an Arab now holds when he is expelled from his tribe—either he must live with enemies of his own people, as David did, or he must become one of the broken outlaws who find refuge in the wilderness, among the rocks of the wild goats and the caves and dens of the desert. David's flight from Saul was first to Ramah, where he sought the protection of the terrible Samuel; and whence he ventured forth to his secret meeting with Jonathan: his retreat next took him to Nob, to which no doubt he retreated as a sanctuary, for the priest of the Lord and the Ephod were there, with the shewbread, and probably, as the Jews believe, the tabernacle also. Nob was a sacred city just north of Jerusalem, but too near to Gibeah to be a safe asylum for long, and the treachery of

Doeg, the Edomite herdsman, obliged David to fly to Gath just in time to escape the massacre of all the inhabitants of Nob—the city of the priests.

From Gath the outlaw retired to Adullam, which was discovered in 1870 by M. Clermont Ganneau, and visited by the surveyors in 1875. The place bears its old name almost unchanged, and is situate in the Valley of Elah, not far from the spot where David killed Goliah. A flat hill, with ruins of a village and a Moslem saint's tomb, a cave in which an Arab family now lives, two ancient wells, and some magnificent terebinths standing among the corn-fields make up the scene. The position is one of great strength, and Adullam was indeed a royal city of the Canaanites (Josh. xii. 15). The situation is half-way between the hills of Benjamin and Judah, where Saul reigned, and the plains of Philistia, where Achish ruled, and it thus very naturally became a centre for the outlaws and discontented, broken men who followed the valiant David. Uriah the Hittite was among them, but many came from the towns in the south (2 Sam. xxiii.), from Bethlehem and Tekoa, from Netophah and Carmel, as well as from Gibeah itself, and Beeroth.

Warned by Gad the seer, David left the "hold," or fortress, of Adullam, to return to the mountains of Judah, and retreated to the forest, or city, of Hareth, whence he issued later to assist the inhabitants of Keilah when the Philistines came up to rob the threshingfloors (1 Sam. xxii. 5; xxiii. 1). Both these places are now known, for Keilah—which has never actually been lost—retains its old name, as does Hareth ("the wood") under the slightly changed Arabic form Kharas. Both are villages on the slopes of the Hebron hills, overlooking the head of the Valley of Elah, and not many miles from Adullam. Thus David's wanderings from Gath extended gradually southwards along the course of this great valley, which was the highway from Gath to the higher

mountains of Hebron. Up this valley the Philistines came to exact their tribute from the villagers in harvest-time, for the fortress of Gath was the gateway from the plains to the eastern hills, and David's history thus becomes a simple and connected narrative when a proper knowledge of the geography is gained.

The deeds of David coming to Saul's ears, and the ingratitude of the men of Keilah being revealed by Gad the seer, it became necessary to shift to a new country; and the band marched up into the mountains and southwards to the Hebron hills and the desert of Judah. The desert of Ziph is that part of the wilderness which is immediately east of the crest of the mountain chain near the ruined mound still called Tell Zîf. A single day's march would easily have taken the outlaws from Keilah to this wilderness, and the new district possesses advantages as a hiding-place to which the broken men of the inhabited country still flee for concealment, caves and deep gulleys existing amid the desolate marl peaks and long sharp ridges of the Jeshimon, or "solitude," the waterless desert which sinks down to the plateau of Engedi, overlooking the bitter sea of Sodom. Here nought but the white broom and the alkali plant can grow, but the ibex courses in droves over the plains, and the desert partridge runs beside the pools of rain water in the ravines. Here is the long ridge called El Kolah, running out beneath the hillock of Ziph, and probably representing the hill Hachilah (1 Sam. xxiii. 19), where David hid. Further south is the ruined town of Maon and the deep gorge of Malâky, probably the Sela-ham-Mahlekoth of the same story, where, separated by a narrow but impassable defile, David and Saul met within speaking distance. Near Ziph also is the ruin of Khoreisah, probably the Choresh Ziph to which Jonathan came to comfort his persecuted friend. Further east are the grand precipices which wall in the Dead Sea, and the narrow

path leading down to the spring of Engedi, which bursts forth halfway down the cliff. The wildest and grandest scenery of Palestine is found in this wilderness among the "rocks of the wild goats" (1 Sam. xxiv. 2), where Saul hunted his enemy "as a partridge on the mountains." How easily in such a scene can we realize the wild adventurous life which made the future Psalmist so familiar with nature in all her moods, and which nursed the poetic genius of the "sweet singer of Israel." We can picture the stealthy night marches, the concealment in caves and folds of the ground, the daring visits to Saul's sleeping camp, and can understand the despair of the pursuers, who failed again and again to surprise the wary outlaws. The story has a wonderful reality when it is read among the wastes of the Jeshimon, the trackless and waterless desert of Judah.

The story of Nabal the Carmelite again recalls a scene which might be acted in our own days in this same district, for Carmel is that same town at the edge of the desert already mentioned as visited by Saul. The neighbourhood is still rich in flocks and herds, which the peasants take down in spring to crop the scanty herbage of the desert downs. "Now thy shepherds," said David to the churlish Nabal, "which were with us, we hurt them not, neither was there ought missing unto them" (1 Sam. xxv. 7), while they ranged in the wilderness, held by David's wandering band. And so at the shearing feast, he sent up to the hills "to him that liveth in prosperity," hinting that some return was due for the immunity enjoyed. Just such a protection do the Jehalin Arabs extend to the shepherds from the hill villages, and just such a return do they expect in harvest-time from the village chiefs and rich men round Hebron. The time-honoured custom could not be ignored with safety, as the clever Abigail knew well; but the Ziphites seem to have taken Nabal's part, and the country became unsafe for David soon after, so

that he was forced once more to flee to Achish, the Philistine king at Gath.

Ziklag, the city assigned by Achish to the now powerful tribe of fighting men who followed David, is not certainly known. It may perhaps be the ruin 'Asluj, which has been found in the deserts south of Beersheba, for there are many indications pointing to the city having been in this district, and at some distance from Gath. The only difficulty lies in the fact that Ziklag was three days' journey from the neighbourhood of Jezreel (1 Sam. xxx. 1), but this may perhaps be met by supposing that David's men were mounted on riding camels, which would easily have traversed the distance in the time. All David's friends (see 1 Sam. xxx. 26–31) lived in the country between Beersheba and Hebron, "the places where David himself and his men were wont to haunt."

Saul's Death.

Saul's power, though it extended over a very small district, compared with the size of David's kingdom a little later, still seems to have been acknowledged at least in Lower Galilee, where his last fatal fight with the Philistines was fought. It is one of the saddest pages in the Bible which tells us of the death of the strong man, whose early time had been of so great a promise; who stood a head taller than his comrades in more ways than one; who had been greeted with the first shout, "God save the king," uttered by Hebrew voices; and who was now in his age tortured by suspicion and envy, hemmed in by foes and outlaws, renounced by his old friend and teacher Samuel; and whom "the Lord answered not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets" (1 Sam. xxviii. 6).

His forces were gathered round the fountain in Jezreel and on the slopes of Gilboa, and his enemies the Philistines were on the north side of the valley near Shunem. The

battle was thus to take place almost exactly where Gideon had overthrown the Midianites; but how different was the confidence of that hero from the faint heart of Saul! "he was afraid, and his heart greatly trembled" (ver. 5). In the darkness he crept out across the wide valley and over the basalt downs, round the spur of the curious cone-shaped mountain (perhaps the hill of Moreh), to the northern slopes which face towards Tabor. Here was the little village of Endor, a poor mud hamlet now, with a few cactus hedges and one or two small caves scooped out in searching for lime to make mortar. Against one of these the scattered rocks have formed a curious natural circle, and the fancy of the visitor might picture the witch performing her midnight rites in its centre; but there is nothing in the Bible to suggest the scene. We must banish from memory the witch's cave and cauldron of the fairy tales, and remember that she was "a woman with a familiar spirit," such as may yet be found credited in the East, who throw themselves into a mesmeric trance, and answer questions under the supposed influence of possession.

The last scene followed close on that of the unhallowed night journey. Strong as was the position on Gilboa, with crags and steep slopes in front and high open ground behind, and a good spring on the hillside, the Philistines seem nevertheless to have found out its weak point, and came up probably on the west, driving Saul's men up the hills into the rugged, waterless ridges of the barren chain of Gilboa, where escape was almost impossible on account of the roughness of the country.

When we gaze on this bare grey chain, rising between the rich corn plain of Esdraelon on the west, and the green vale of Jordan on the east, we are almost tempted to think that David's curse on Gilboa has been fulfilled. "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" (2 Sam. i. 21). And from its ridge we look down to where the Vale of Jezreel widens into the Jordan valley, and see the great mound beside the stream which marks the site of Bethshan, where the bodies of Saul and his sons were hung from the fortress wall until the grateful men of Jabesh-Gilead came boldly over Jordan in the night, and stole the corpses away, and burnt them in Jabesh, where the bones were buried, far from the heroes' home in Benjamin, to which, however, they were restored later by the piety of David (2 Sam. xxii. 12).

David's Conquests.

How David reigned first in Hebron,* how he took Jebus or Jerusalem, how the crafty Joab overcame the adherents of Saul, we all can read in the early chapters of the Second Book of Samuel. Of Jerusalem we shall speak in the time of Solomon; Hebron and Gibeon have already been described, as has Kirjath-Jearim,† whence the ark was brought to David's new capital. When these first troubles and civil changes were over, "the king sat in his house, and the Lord had given him rest round about from all his enemies." Not long after we read, however, of expeditions and conquests on every side. The Philistines, who had at first dared to come up, even to the valley of the Rephaim south of Jerusalem, are now driven back to their plains; Moab is conquered, and two-thirds of the captives slain (2 Sam. viii. 2); the King of Zobah, whose realm extended from Damascus towards Euphrates, is defeated, and war chariots for the first time added, by capture, to the Hebrew forces; Damascus is garrisoned,

* The well Sirah near Hebron, where Abner was found when he was killed by Joab (2 Sam. iii. 26), is now called 'Ain Sâra, and is by the main road north of the city (see "Tent Work in Palestine," vol. ii. p. 86).

† See pp. 37, 72, 89.

with Berothai which some think to be the modern Beirût; and on this frontier David becomes the ally of the Phœnician king, Hiram of Tyre, and of Toi (probably a Hittite) ruling in Hamath. On the south, Edom is also added to the kingdom, garrisons being posted in the wilderness probably as far as the Gulf of Akabah.

Thus was the kingdom bequeathed to Solomon carved out by his father, some thirty thousand square miles in all. Gilead was the last and seemingly most difficult conquest, perhaps on account of the rugged nature of the country; and at first the independence of the Ammonites was recognized, until David's messengers to the new king of Rabbah were insulted (2 Sam. x. 4). Then arose another war, when the Syrians and Ammonites met David in alliance together, with the men of Maachah in Upper Galilee, of Rehob (probably near Hermon), and of Tob, the country of Jephthah, south-east of the Sea of Galilee. This confederacy having been defeated by Joab at some place not specially noted, the siege of Rabbah, the capital of the Ammonites, took place, "after the year was expired at the time when kings go forth to battle"—an expression which it may be noted in passing is well illustrated by the yearly war expeditions of the kings of Egypt, Assyria, or Babylon, as they are recorded in the papyri, or on the bricks once kept in the royal archives of Chaldea.

Rabbath-Ammon is the ruin now called 'Ammân, on the highlands of Gilead nearly east of Bethel. A large Roman city was built there in the second century A.D., of which fine ruins yet remain. The country round is very bare and waterless, but the town lies in a ravine with dark brown cliffs on either side, and a clear stream (the source of the Jabbok, as already noticed) running past the temples and tombs, the theatres, baths, and pillared streets of the Roman town. Rough tombs like those of the Jews still, however, remain, cut in rock, to show that Rabbath was inhabited long before the Roman age, and

great dolmens on the hills around are perhaps old altars of the Ammonites, already standing in the time of David. A sort of spur runs out from the northern plateau, presenting a naturally strong site, rendered yet more defensible by a broad cutting which divides it from the high neck of land on the north. Thus we see at once, while looking down from this fortress, what is meant by the "city of waters" (the suburb by the stream in the valley), which Joab took, and how there yet remained a harder task in the siege of the citadel, requiring fresh forces, which David took with him (2 Sam. xii. 29).

The cruelty of David to the conquered defenders of this place marks an age still very barbarous, though it may have been justified in public opinion by the unprovoked insults to his heralds; but Rabbath is memorable for a yet more cruel deed, for the one great sin and consequent crime of the Psalmist's life. It was beneath the wall of Rabbath, that the brave Hittite, Uriah, was slain (2 Sam. xi. 17), and the parable of Nathan, with its short moral, "Thou art the man," follows in the next chapter.

Absalom's Rebellion.

And now the brightest days of David's reign were over, and troubles, due to the wickedness of his sons, gathered thickly round him. First came the death of Amnon, killed by his brother Absalom at Baal-Hazor, which is the mountain north of Bethel still called 'Asûr, where probably an idolatrous shrine of Baal was at that time to be found. Then followed Absalom's flight to the north, and the intrigues in which the wise woman of Tekoa (south of Bethlehem) was concerned. The open rebellion of Absalom and the sudden flight of David over Jordan came next. Ahitophel, the traitorous adviser, was a native of Giloh, a city of Judah, now called Jâla, near Hebron. Hushai, David's real friend in these times, came

from Archi, a town of Benjamin, west of Bethel, now called 'Ain 'Arîk. Bahurim, where Shimei, the bitter reviler, a man of Saul's family, came out to curse and stone the weary David, is said by the Jewish commentators to have been the same place as Alemeth of Benjamin, which is on the northern of the several roads from Jerusalem to the Jordan valley. It was here also that David's spies were hidden in a "man's house in Bahurim, which had a well in his court;" and the ruin is still remarkable for its many rock-cut cisterns, in one of which Jonathan and Ahimaaz may have been hid when "the woman took and spread a covering over the well's mouth, and spread ground corn thereon, and the thing was not known" (2 Sam. xvii. 19).

The battle between Absalom and his father took place east of Jordan in Gilead (2 Sam. xvii. 26), for David was at Mahanaim, somewhere north of Rabbath-Ammon (the precise site is not known), and thus the wood of Ephraim (2 Sam. xviii. 6) was east of Jordan, and may have been one of the fine woods near the town Es Sâlt, where oak trees still flourish of great size, like the one in which Absalom was caught by his long flowing locks. After the sad end of this story, we find David travelling down to the fords of Jericho, and returning with peace, but with a saddened heart, to his house in Jerusalem.

Abel-Beth-Maachah.

David's authority was weakened by this revolt, and another soon after had to be put down in Galilee. Abel-beth-Maachah was a city near Hermon, still called Abl, and standing at the north end of that fine valley already described, where Joshua defeated the king of Hazor (2 Sam. xx. 14). Here Joab did his last service to the king he had so long fought for, and the head of the rebel Sheba, son of Bichri, was thrown over the wall of Abel.

Joab's Census.

The last chapter of the Second Book of Samuel relates the journey of Joab to number Israel, and gives us an idea of the extent of David's kingdom at this time. East of Jordan the census-takers went south as far as Aroer (perhaps the city on the Arnon river so called), and thence through Mount Gilead. On the north the boundary was Kadesh of the Hittites (Tahtim-Hodshi*), which has been mentioned in the last chapter. Returning thence, they came to Danjaan (Daniân), on the border of Phœnicia, and thence proceeded south to Beersheba. David's kingdom, bounded by the realms of the Assyrians, the Hittites, the Phœnicians, and the Egyptians, thus very nearly represented the Land of Promise given to Israel in the Book of Numbers (chap. xxxiv.).

* This identification has been doubted, but it will be seen by referring to the Greek (Septuagint) translation of the Bible that there is very good reason to suppose that Tahtim-Hodshi is a corrupt reading for Ha-Khittim-Kadeshi ("the Hittites of Kadesh").

CHAPTER V.

GEOGRAPHY OF KINGS AND CHRONICLES.

Jerusalem (from David to Nebuchadnezzar).

THE Holy City cannot be said really to appear in history before the time of David. The later Jews, it is true, thought that Salem, the city of Melchizedek, was Jerusalem; but this is uncertain. (See, however, Gen. xiv. 17 and 2 Sam. xviii. 8.) The city of the Jebusites is also mentioned in Joshua (xviii. 28) and Judges (i. 21; xix. 10, 11), and in the first of these passages is said to be the same as Jerusalem.

The conquest of Jebus was made by David in his thirtieth year (2 Sam. v.), after Joab had stormed the "gutter," or ditch, outside the "stronghold," or fortress, of the town which was called Zion, but afterwards "the City of David." It is not easy to write on this subject without entering into disputed questions, yet a glance at the many proposed restorations of Jerusalem shows that there is a very general agreement as to the main facts among those who have given most study to the question, including such authorities as Robinson, De Vogüé, Warren, and others. Josephus seems to have been quite right in saying that at the time of David's siege there was an upper city and a lower (7 Antiq., iii. 1, and 5 Wars, iv. 1); and it is practically certain that the former (the upper city) was the broad, high hill on the south-west side of the town, which is now partly occupied by the Armenian quarter of Jerusalem. It is equally clear that the lower

city occupied the slopes north of this first hill, near the present Church of the Holy Sepulchre and eastwards. A broad deep valley, now filled up with some eighty feet of rubbish, divided the lower city on the north from the upper city on the south, and joined a ravine running south, which divided off the long narrow ridge on the east on which the Temple of Solomon was built. The space south of the Temple was called Ophel, and the deep ravine east of the Temple was the Kedron, beyond which again rose the chalky range of Olivet. The valley which runs eastwards on the south side of Jerusalem to join the Kedron, may be shown to be (as very generally allowed) the valley of Hinnom;* and the valley dividing upper and lower city, and joining Kedron and Hinnom at Siloam, is called Tyropœon by Josephus.

Such must be considered to be the general position of the important parts of the city as they will be found laid down (with exception of Hinnom) on Sir C. Warren's latest maps. On the east, the Temple Hill, with Ophel towards the south end of the ridge; on the south-west, the upper city; on the north-west, the lower city, part of which was called Akra by the Greeks. As to the names City of David and Sion, there is no doubt that both terms are used rather vaguely and perhaps differently by different ancient writers, so that the best view seems to be that the City of David was Jerusalem as it existed in David's time, and that Sion was a general poetical name for the Holy City, and sometimes applied to the Temple mountain in particular.

The "gutter" crossed by Joab was the ditch outside the town walls, and some part of this may be thought still to exist, for in the south-west corner of the old town there yet remains a magnificent wall of live rock, cut vertical and having an artificial rock ditch outside. Although this may not be the point where Joab scaled

* See Conder's "Handbook to the Bible," p. 330.

the walls, the discovery of this scarp, which may be seen by travellers in the garden of the Bishop's School and in the Protestant cemetery, serves to illustrate in a remarkable manner the taking of the "castle of Zion" by David.

David's buildings included a place called Millo (2 Sam. v. 9), which the later Jews identified with Akra, the lower or northern city, a quarter which was probably not within the walls of the Jebusite "stronghold." Hence this northern quarter is called in the Psalms (xlviii. 2), "the city of the great King." The eastern ridge was still outside the town, and presented a bare flat plateau, with corn growing on the slopes, and in summer a yellow threshingfloor covering the rock which was to form the foundation of the Holy House.

On the western hill the ark was kept (2 Sam. vi. 12), but the Tabernacle was at Gibeon; and only in the last days of David's reign was an altar raised in the open field, which was afterwards enclosed within the courts of Solomon's Temple.

Solomon was crowned at Gihon ("the spring head"), which recent writers agree in considering to be the spring on the west side of the Kedron valley at the foot of the Ophel spur. This curious fountain rises in a cave, which, though partly natural, has been enlarged by excavating the rock at the back. The water flows irregularly and rises very suddenly at times, like the spring of the famous Sabbatic river in Syria.* It seems at first to have flowed out into the Kedron valley, but was diverted later through a rock-cut tunnel to Siloam. Hence the spring was also called En Rogel, which appears to mean "fountain of the aqueduct."

Adonijah, the rival of Solomon, was proclaimed at the stone, or rock, Zoheleth (1 Kings i. 9), which was by or near En Rogel. The name Zoheleth, meaning "slippery,"

* See "Heth and Moab," p. 53.

has been discovered by M. Clermont Ganneau, still clinging to the great cliff east of the Kedron, and opposite to the spring of Gihon, or En Rogel, just described. The houses of the village of Siloam stand on this cliff, but in Solomon's time it was no doubt clear of buildings and presented a very conspicuous position, where a large crowd could stand on the flat ground above the cliff. These discoveries give us quite a new idea of the scene recorded in the first chapter of the First Book of Kings. On the east side of the Kedron valley, Adonijah and his friends feasted, sacrificed, and shouted in view of the whole city; on the west slope of the same valley, Solomon on the king's mule, with Nathan and Zadok and Benaiah, came down the steep hill to the open ground near Gihon, where "they blew with the trumpet, and all the people said, God save King Solomon." The Cherithites and the Pelethites were there—David's old Philistine bodyguard—by the side of Solomon; and the court intrigues of the old age of David having thus been settled, Adonijah fled to the solitary altar in the threshingfloor of Araunah, the sanctuary of Jerusalem.

It would be very interesting to know exactly where David, Solomon, and other famous Hebrew kings were buried; but we shall probably never attain to great certainty in the matter unless the royal cemetery be discovered some day, as that of the most famous kings of Egypt was found only a few years ago. The author is strongly inclined to believe that the tomb of these kings of Israel and of Judah still exists, and that it is shown to travellers inside the present Church of the Holy Sepulchre under the name of the "tomb of Nicodemus." There is at all events no doubt that the tomb in question, which was originally made to hold at least twelve bodies, is a very ancient Jewish sepulchre, and the later Jews (in the second century A.D.) appear to have known of the true position of the royal tombs, which (save the tomb of

Huldah) were, they tell us, the only sepulchres existing within the city walls.

After the building of Solomon's Temple a kind of suburb, inhabited by the priests, Levites, Nethanim, and other Temple servants, grew up south of the sacred courts on the narrow spur of Ophel. On this spur also, according to general agreement, stood the palace of Solomon, adjoining the Temple; and the House of Pharaoh's daughter, or harem of the palace, was part of the same building, and was outside the original city of David.

This growth of an eastern suburb led to the extension eastwards of the city walls to include the priests' quarter, the royal palace, the royal gardens, and the Temple. Thus Jotham began a wall on Ophel (2 Chron. xxvii. 3), and Manasseh appears to have finished it (2 Chron. xxxiii. 14); while Hezekiah, preparing for the expected attack on the city by Sennacherib, undertook a labour which no doubt at the time was considered a great engineering triumph. He blocked up the entrance of the Gihon spring and apparently made the pool or cave within; and then, in order to carry off the water which, as before explained, rises suddenly in the pool, he tunnelled through the hill of Ophel southwards, carrying the aqueduct to the great rock-cut pool of Siloam (2 Chron. xxxii.), which appears already to have existed in the time of Ahaz (Isa. vii. 3), together with a second or lower pool connected with it by an aqueduct. This lower pool and the connecting channel both still exist near the Siloam pool.

Nor was this all, for Hezekiah seems also to have made a shaft descending from the surface of the hill above down to the Gihon spring, a rocky gallery which has been explored and described by Sir C. Warren.* Another channel, again, cut probably at the same time, led "westwards to the City of David," and this also has been recently

* "Memoirs of the Survey of Western Palestine," Jerusalem volume.

discovered leading from Siloam along the south slope of the western hill—the upper city, or stronghold of Jebus.

Such were the great works of Hezekiah, and their achievement was considered so important that some of the details were recorded in a fine Hebrew inscription in six lines, cut on a smooth tablet of rock in the tunnel near the Siloam pool. This inscription—the oldest Hebrew text as yet found—was accidentally discovered in 1880, and is now counted among the most famous and valuable inscriptions of antiquity. Unfortunately, however, it contains no name or date, and its chief importance consists in the evidence which it affords of Hebrew civilization at this time, the beauty of the writing and the purity of the language being equally remarkable.

The following is Prof. Sayce's translation of the "Siloam inscription," as it is now called :—

"The tunnel. Now this is the story of the tunnel: While the miners were still lifting their picks towards each other, and while there were still three cubits left, . . . the voice of the one called to his fellow, for there was too much rock to the right. They rose up, they struck to the west of the cutting; the miners struck to meet each other pick to pick. And the waters flowed from the spring to the pool twelve hundred cubits, and . . . cubit was the height of the rock above the miners."

From this curious text we learn that the tunnel was begun at the two ends and met in the middle. The exact place where the two parties met has been now found, and the length of the tunnel, as measured by Sir C. Warren, and again by Captain Conder, is very nearly 1200 cubits of between 16 and 17 inches for the cubit.

The more detailed account of the gates and walls, and of Sir C. Warren's great discovery of the wall of Nehemiah on Ophel, will be found in chapter vi. of this volume. The preceding pages give a general idea of Jerusalem from the time of David down to the destruction by Nebuchad-

nezzar, but a few words may be added as to the Temple on Moriah, and concerning the idol temples of Solomon on Olivet.

The Temple of Solomon.

We know nothing of Solomon's Temple beyond the account given in the Bible, and no remains have been found which can be said certainly to belong to this building. Not only was it destroyed by the Babylonians, but its foundations seem to have been removed by Herod to be replaced by the magnificent structure which was standing in the time of our Lord. It may, however, be regarded as certain that Solomon's Temple stood on the same ground occupied by Herod's, and we know that this was on the top of the hill or ridge of Moriah. There is really little doubt that the holy house stood very near where the present Dome of the Rock (built in 688 A.D.) is now standing; and, if we may trust Jewish tradition, we must regard the latter building (the Dome of the Rock) as standing exactly on the site of Solomon's Temple, while the little Dome of the Chain, east of the larger building, occupies very nearly the site of the great altar of the Temple. We shall have occasion to return to this question in speaking of Jerusalem as it existed at the time of the Crucifixion.

The description of Solomon's Temple (1 Kings vi.) shows clearly that it must have very closely resembled the great Egyptian temples, which may still be seen at Karnak and Thebes. The dark interior, the numerous little chambers for the priests, the two pillars, and the great porch on the east, the open court with its altar, and the cloister (described by Josephus), all reproduce the details of an Egyptian temple. We know that Solomon was friendly with the Phœnicians, who built the Temple for him, and allied to the king of Egypt by marriage; and as the

Phœnician art and architecture was a mixture of Egyptian and Assyrian, there is no reason to be surprised at the likeness between the Jerusalem and other temples.

The cherubs, or man-headed bulls with wings, which were carved on the walls of the Temple also resembled the sculptures found in Phœnicia and in Assyria, while winged human figures are also represented standing on either side of an ark in many Egyptian pictures. Palm-trees, pomegranates, and floral designs were also decorative patterns in Egypt and in Assyria, and the art of Solomon's time thus seems to have been closely like that of the surrounding nations with whom he was allied.

The Temple of Jehovah was, however, not the only one built by Solomon. Persuaded by his Egyptian, Hittite, Phœnician, Edomite, Moabite, and Ammonite wives, he erected in his old age temples to the gods of surrounding nations. On Olivet he built a shrine for Chemosh, the Moabite god; and Ashtoreth (or Venus), with Moloch (or Saturn), were also honoured in like manner. The temple of Moloch seems to have stood at Tophet, a place in the valley south of the city, where the horrible human sacrifices which were the usual rites of this bloody idol were performed down to the time of the Captivity. No traces of these temples now remain, and they were, perhaps, rude small buildings, entirely destroyed by the reforming kings who endeavoured to stamp out the worship of Ashtoreth and Moloch in Jerusalem.

Solomon's Kingdom.

Solomon was not a conqueror. His kingdom had been won by David his father, and its limits were defined by the territories of four powerful races—the Assyrians, the Hittites, the Phœnicians, and the Egyptians.

The power of Egypt was declining, and the conquests of Rameses were being lost by the feebler kings of the

priestly twenty-first dynasty. The fact that Gezer was given as a dower to Solomon's bride (1 Kings ix. 16) seems to agree with the view suggested in the preceding chapter, that the Philistines were subject to the Egyptians, for Gezer was far from Egypt itself, and stood, indeed, on the north border of Philistia, east of Joppa. The true site we owe to M. Clermont Ganneau, who first found the name Tell Jezer still applying to a ruined town near the foot of the Judæan hills.

On the north the border of Solomon's kingdom was somewhat extended, according to the Second Book of Chronicles, including the Hittite city Hamath. Tadmor (the later Palmyra) became an emporium on the route from Damascus to the Euphrates, and Ezion-Geber was Solomon's Red Sea port, at the head of the Gulf Akabah. The extreme limits of the kingdom, according to the First Book of Kings (iv. 24), were Tiphsah, or Thapsacus, on the Euphrates,* and Azzah, or Gaza, on the south frontier of Philistia.

The age was one of peace and of commerce. The Arabian trade on the south was conducted by Hebrews and Phœnicians from Ezion-Geber. The eastern trade route passed through Tadmor, and the chiefs of Syria and of the Hittites (1 Kings x. 29) were supplied through Palestine with chariots (costing £100 each) and chariot horses (£50 the pair), brought up, together with the famous Egyptian byssus, or "linen yarn," by Solomon's merchants.

The division of Palestine into twelve departments under Solomon roughly corresponds with the twelve tribes (1 Kings iv.). The first division was Mount Ephraim; the second, the plain of Dan; the third, Judah; the fourth, Manassch; the fifth, Issachar; the sixth, Manasseh, east of Jordan; the seventh, Gad; the eighth, Naphtali; the ninth, Asher; the tenth, chiefly in Zebulon; the eleventh,

* The Tiphsah of 2 Kings xv. 16, is not the same, but probably the present Tafsah, south-west of Shechem.

Benjamin; and the twelfth, Moab, or Reuben. The territory of Simeon only is unnoticed, and being a wilderness was perhaps included with Judah. The Simeonites had probably been long dispersed (1 Chron. iv. 27–43), and their territory was at the time very likely under Philistine dominion.

Sheba and Ophir.

The fame of Solomon spread southwards even to Yemen, with which State his ships traded. These ships formed "a navy of Tharshish," like that of Hiram, King of Tyre, and every third year the traders brought back ivory, apes, and peacocks (1 Kings x. 22). The length of time taken in the journey has induced some writers to think that Ophir, whence these articles of trade were brought, is to be found in India, and it is remarkable that the words used for ivory, or "elephants' tooth" (Shen Habim), apes (Kophim), and peacocks (Tucciyim), are Tamil or South Indian words for the same animals. It is not, however, necessary to suppose that the Hebrew ships went all this distance, for there was apparently an old coast trade from India to Yemen; and the Indian traders may well be supposed to have brought to Ophir the Indian products which Solomon's servants brought thence up the Red Sea.*

Ophir seems, together with Sheba, to be very clearly placed in Yemen, or Southern Arabia, in the Book of Genesis (x. 28–29), and the Arab queen came up with her camels, bearing the spices of Yemen, by the old caravan route through Mecca and Medina—a journey not much longer than that which the pious Moslems from Damascus still take every year by the same road.

As regards Tarshish (see Gen. x. 4), mentioned in this

* Apes and elephants are also represented, with the rhinoceros and Bactrian camel, on Ninevite sculptures about 700 B.C. They may have been brought by the caravan route through Herat and Candahar.

passage, we have unfortunately less certain knowledge, although the Tarshish, or Tarsus, of Asia Minor was a Phœnician town not far from the sea, and may have been famous as having a ship-building port. This explanation may, however, not be thought sufficient to account for 2 Chron. ix. 21, which would point to a Tarshish in Yemen, as yet unknown. That a Tarshish in Spain is intended in the Bible is also possible, but does not in any way assist the understanding of the question.*

Dan and Bethel.

The golden age of Solomon's prosperity was soon followed by the rupture of the kingdom and the establishment of altars at Dan and Bethel, where Jeroboam commanded the Israelites to assemble to worship the calves which he set up, and to which human sacrifices were offered, according to the latest authorities on the translation of the Bible.†

A great deal of light has of late been thrown on the character of this idolatrous worship so often condemned by the prophets, and the discovery of dolmens near the site of Dan (which the author made in 1882) is of interest in the same connection. There can be little doubt that when Hosea described the altars of the Israelites as being "as heaps in the furrows of the field" (xii. 11), he saw before him such a "dolmen field" as may still be seen in Moab; and that the kings of Judah, when they cut down the sacred groves and poles, also overturned and "smashed" such stone altars, together with the great upright stones, which were rude idols, like those to which the early Arabs also offered human sacrifices.

The site of Dan was close to the springs of Jordan,

* See chapter vii. p. 141, on "Tyre."

† "Speaker's Commentary" on Hosea xiii. 2, which should read, "Let them that sacrifice men kiss the calves."

near Banias, a lovely spot which has been already described. Here, between the three streams which join lower down to form Jordan, there is a long spur of ground covered with the remains of rude monuments made of the basalt blocks which lie strewn around, marking the site of one of those centres of primitive pagan worship, already described, in Moab. Some of the monuments seemed to have been purposely thrown down, while in other cases the groups of stones might be only natural collections; but in a few instances the careful building showed human workmanship, while the great weight of the blocks made it clear that much labour must have been expended on the work.

These altars, perhaps, may have been connected with the calf worship at Dan. No temple on the spot is noticed in the Bible, although mentioned by Josephus, and it is possible that the idol stood in the open field, surrounded by dolmen altars. The great mound of Tell-el-Kâdi, a little further east, with its shadowy terebinths and clear brooks is, however, the spot generally supposed to mark the exact site of Dan.

Judah and Israel.

The division of Palestine into two kingdoms does not seem to have exactly coincided with the limits of the tribes of Benjamin and Judah on the north. Bethel, a town of Benjamin, was, as just noted, one of the religious centres of Jeroboam's kingdom, while Ajalon, a town of Dan, belonged to the king of Judah. Rehoboam's territory did not include the Philistine plain, nor (seemingly) the Beersheba deserts, and on the north it extended only to the Valley of Michmash, while Ramah, near the head of this valley, belonged to Israel (2 Chron. xvi. 1). A little later, however, the power of Judah having increased, the frontier was pushed north to include Bethel, with other towns on the north border of Benjamin (2 Chron.

xiii. 9). The boundary was no doubt often changed, according to the strength or weakness of the two kingdoms, and in the same way the name of Mount Ephraim sometimes applies in the Bible to country south of the border of the tribe of Ephraim as laid down in the Book of Joshua.

Solomon had reigned over 30,000 square miles. Rehoboam's kingdom had only an extent of some 2000, and the power of the kings of Judah decreased so quickly that Ahaz ruled probably over not more than 300 square miles round Jerusalem (2 Chron. xxviii. 18), the Syrians, the Philistines, the Edomites, and other tribes having revolted. Josiah, however, for a short time was recognized as king even as far north as Dan (2 Chron. xxxiv. 6), and the sea-port of Ezion-Geber on the Red Sea was only lost after the time of Uzziah (2 Chron. xxvi. 2).

Tirzah.

The capital of the northern kingdom was constantly shifted. Jeroboam lived in Shechem, and at Penuel east of Jordan. Baasha and Elah were of the tribe of Issachar by birth, and their capital was Tirzah, where also the rebel Zimri reigned till slain by Omri, who built Samaria. Tirzah is probably the ancient village Teiâsîr, a small place in a fertile plateau near Thebez, north-east of Shechem, and close to the south border of Issachar. There are many ancient tombs round the village. In the Song of Solomon (vi. 4), the beauty of Tirzah—consisting in its fruitful olive-yards no doubt—is mentioned, together with the comeliness of Jerusalem.

Samaria.

The capital of the house of Omri stood on a hill north-west of Shechem, at the point where two great valleys

join. On the north a steep chain with several difficult passes divides the district from the plains of Lower Galilee, and on the south and east there are rugged and barren ridges; but the immediate neighbourhood of Samaria is a fertile country, consisting of flat chalky hills with broad open valleys. The hills have been terraced by cutting and walling, and up to their summits they are covered with corn. Fine groves of olives also flourish throughout the district, and good springs of water are found near Samaria. The site is naturally very strong, though modern artillery would command it from the mountains. Only on the east is the hill joined to the mountain spur, of which it forms the western end, by a saddle of high ground; on all other sides the slopes, naturally steep, have been artificially scarped, and terraces covered with olive trees extend to the flat ground in the valleys. The remains of the colonnade built by Herod the Great, are still to be seen running round the hill, and on the east is the modern mud village and the ruin of the fine Church of St. John Baptist, built in the twelfth century. The modern name Sebastieh is a corruption of Sebaste, the Greek for Augusta, the name given to Samaria by Herod when he rebuilt the place in honour of Augustus Cæsar.

The tombs of the kings of Israel, including Omri and Ahab, ought to exist still at Samaria, but are unknown. It is curious, however, to note that a real Jewish tomb exists under the Church of St. John, and not impossibly this may be the royal sepulchre preserved—as in the case of the tomb of the kings of Judah—by Christians, who have named it the tomb of Zachariah, the father of the Baptist.

In the time of Elisha, Samaria was besieged by the Syrians from Damascus (2 Kings vii.). The panic which caused them to raise the siege was due to the fear of Egyptian forces, "for the Lord had made the host of the

Syrians hear a noise of chariots, and a noise of horses, even the noise of a great host." They fled apparently by the way by which they came. "And they went after them unto Jordan, and lo, all the way was full of garments and vessels, which the Syrians had cast away in their haste." The story of the siege, of its horrors and hopelessness, of the four lepers going out by twilight from the gate, and finding the tents empty, and the beasts of burden standing tied, is among the most graphic passages of the Book of Kings.

Ramoth-Gilead.

The name of this city is familiar to us, though the site is yet uncertain. It was the capital of Mount Gilead, and, which is important for its recovery, it was a place which could be approached in chariots. To enter into a long discussion as to its site is impossible, and the arguments may be found elsewhere.* The most probable identification seems to be with the village of Reimûn, on the north side of the Jabbok, west of the great ruined city of Gerasa. Following the Jabbok valley, a chariot might ascend to the flat ground in this neighbourhood, which can also be reached from the plains of Bashan, and the district is thus one natural for the meeting of the forces of Ahab with those of the Syrians (1 Kings xxii. 29). It was at Ramoth-Gilead also that Jehu was anointed king by Elisha, and thence in his chariot he proceeded to the fords of Jordan and to Jezreel.

Elijah's History.

Elijah came from Gilead, and to Gilead he seems to have gone back when his message was delivered (1 Kings xvii.), for the brook Cherith, where he stayed, was "before Jordan," an expression generally meaning on the

* See "Heth and Moab," p. 174.

east. Gilead, as we have seen, is remarkable for its fine brooks, which only dry up in very rainless years. The name of Cherith has, however, not as yet been found existing either east or west of Jordan.

Zarephath, the city to which the prophet next travelled, was near Sidon, and is the present Sarafend, a town near the seashore north of Tyre. It seems to be the Misrephoth Maim of another passage (Josh. xi. 8), and appears as Sarepta in the New Testament (Luke iv. 26).

Carmel.

Mount Carmel is one of the most famous places connected with the story of Elijah and Elisha. On its steep slopes, among its thick copses and woods, the lonely hermit, in his rough mantle of skin, found a fitting retreat. The mountain is a triangular block, with a main ridge running north-west for about fifteen miles to the coast, and rising to 1700 feet above the sea. The dark colour of the copses makes the chain conspicuous amid the surrounding limestone and chalky mountains, and the knoll, or peak, at the south-east, or inland, end of the chain can be seen in fair weather almost as far south as Jaffa.

This point commands a most magnificent view on all sides —on the west, to the plains of Sharon and the sea; on the north, to the hills of Nazareth and the higher mountains of Upper Galilee; on the east, across the broad plain of Esdraelon to Tabor, and Gilboa, and Jezreel; and on the south, to Ebal and the hills of Manasseh. The peak is now called El Mahrakah ("the place of burning"), and may well be thought to be the very spot where Elijah restored the ruined altar of Jehovah, and where the priests of Baal, like the Dervish fanatics of our own time, cut themselves with knives and swords, frantically shouting as they leapt on their altars, "O Baal, hear us." Down below we can see the course of Kishon, the swampy river

beside which these priests were slain; and just below the rock or peak there is a plateau, where a great crowd might have assembled on the mountain, and a well under a spreading oak, whence the water poured over the sacrifice may have been taken. From the peak also, like Elijah's servant, one may still look out and watch the little cloud rising from the sea "like a man's hand," and swelling into the autumn thunder-pillar over the hills, until "the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a very great rain."

Jezreel.

Jezreel was one of the important towns of Ahab's kingdom, and his royal residence. Here Naboth owned a vineyard. Here Jezebel was trampled under the hoofs of Jehu's chariot horses. The town stood on a kind of shelf of rock on the western slope of Gilboa, east of the great plain of Esdraelon. On the north and east steep slopes and cliffs rose above the open Vale of Jezreel, where Gideon's host gathered by the spring Harod; but on the south and west the hill dies away gradually into the plain. Thus Jehu must have driven round to the west in full sight of the watchmen on the tower of Jezreel, and could have been seen far off down the valley, coming up from the Jordan fords. The peculiarities of the site fully allow for the events recorded—the sending forth of the two horsemen, and their desertion to the enemy (2 Kings ix. 19), while the ground is sufficiently flat and smooth to make the furious driving of Jehu possible. The flight of Joram would naturally have been to the east, and it is on this side that remains of rock-cut wine-presses have been found by the surveyors, showing that, though now bare and uncultivated, the slope of Gilboa was once laid out in vineyards, including that vineyard of Naboth hard by the king's house, in which the body of King Joram was cast after his murder, in accordance with Elijah's prophecy.

Elisha's History.*

Just opposite Jezreel on the north is the little village of Shunem, at the foot of the south slope of the pointed hill, which may perhaps be the hill Moreh (see chapter iii.). It has flat ground on the south, and a shady lemon grove on the west, with running water. Here the rich Shunamite who hospitably received the prophet dwelt. Hence, in the glare of the harvest sun, she set out on her long ride to find him in the thickets of Carmel. In these fields her son was stricken, and by this road Elisha must often have passed to and fro, for while his favourite retreat was Carmel, his home was Abel-Meholah, in the Jordan valley, to which the shortest way led down the Vale of Jezreel, past Shunem. The "little chamber" which the Shunamite made for him was easily built up of sun-dried bricks; the bed was probably only a reed mat, the lamp, the stool, and the table such as may yet be seen in the peasant houses, for the "great woman" of Shunem was a simple landowner, whose husband reaped his own corn in the fields (2 Kings iv.).

Moab.

"Now Moab rebelled against Israel after the death of Ahab" (2 Kings i. 1). "And Mesha, King of Moab, was a sheep-master" (iii. 4). These notices, together with the account of the siege of a Moabite city and the sacrifice of the king's son (ver. 27), have received a wonderful illustration through the discovery of the Moabite Stone at Dibon, in 1869. This celebrated monument begins its record as follows:—

"I am Mesha, son of Chemoshgad, King of Moab. My

* The story of Naaman contains a reference to Jordan and the rivers of Damascus, for which see the introductory chapter. With this exception, the other sites noticed in Elisha's history have all been described in previous pages.

father reigned thirty years, and I have reigned after my father, and I have built this sanctuary to Chemosh in Karha, for he has saved me from all enemies, and has made me look on all my foes with scorn." "Omri was king of Israel, and oppressed Moab many days, and Chemosh was angry at his conquests. And his son came after him, and said, I will oppress Moab."

Then follows the account of the revolt, and of the conquest of towns from the "men of Gad" and the king of Israel. Among these are noticed Baal-Meon, Ataroth, Kerioth, Shophan, Nebo, Beth-Bamoth, Bezer, Beth-Diblathaim, and Jahaz, the sites of nearly all of which are known as lying on the Moabite plateau, east of the Dead Sea.

The monument bearing this important record is of hard basalt stone, and seems to have been set up in the temple of Chemosh in Dibon, in the ruins of which city it was found.

The importance of this text is not only historical. It also shows us that the art of writing was already known as early as 877 B.C. to the tribes surrounding Israel; while the Siloam inscription (probably as old as 703 B.C.) presents differences in its letters which sufficiently prove that the art of writing in these countries must have existed much earlier. The Hebrews, Phœnicians, and Moabites were indeed at this time in advance of both Assyria and Egypt in this respect, for they had invented a system much simpler than the hieroglyphics of the Egyptians, or the clumsy, arrow-headed signs of Babylon. The best authorities, it is true, now agree that these letters were derived originally from Egyptian symbols for sounds, but the inhabitants of Syria were certainly the first to invent an alphabet, which was soon used for trade purposes even in Nineveh, and which has spread all over the world.

Lachish.

The campaign of Sennacherib against King Hezekiah is now found recorded on the pottery cylinders of the time of the first-mentioned monarch, and the account given by the scribes of Sennacherib agrees well with the Bible narrative. Jerusalem was not taken, but reduced to pay tribute; but Lachish and Libnah, with other towns in Philistia, were besieged, and an Assyrian sculpture exists showing the siege of Lachish, a walled city in a plain, with palms and distant hills (see 2 Kings xix. 8). The site of Lachish is not fixed with certainty, but perhaps the most probable position is the important ruin of El Hesy, or Lehesy, in the Philistine plain, just south of the well-ascertained site of Eglon (the mound of 'Ajlân). The next town attacked, Libnah, is also unknown. According to the cylinders, however, Ekron and Ascalon were also both taken in this campaign, and an army of Egyptians and Æthiopians, advancing, it would seem, to help the Philistines, was also defeated.*

Megiddo.

The history of the Hebrew monarchy ends really with the battle of Megiddo, for the feeble successors of Josiah, who was here slain by Necho, King of Egypt, soon fell before the victorious Nebuchadnezzar, after he had defeated the Egyptians at Carchemish on the Euphrates east of Aleppo.

The site of Megiddo is uncertain. Until lately Dr. Robinson's view had been accepted, which places this important town at the Roman city of Legio, on the west of the Plain of Esdraelon. But this conjecture has absolutely no foundation, excepting that the site of Legio

* See G. Smith's "Assyria," p. 112.

is near Taanach, a city often mentioned with Megiddo. On the other hand, a large ruin with fine springs exists at the foot of Gilboa where the Vale of Jezreel opens into the Jordan valley, and still retains the name Mujeddâ, which is almost identical with the Hebrew Megiddo. There seems to be no very strong argument which can be brought against this site, first proposed by the author in 1876, and there are many notices of Megiddo in the Egyptian records, which seem to fit very well with the proposed site at Mujeddâ.* Until, therefore, some valid objection can be brought against the proposal, we may perhaps consider Megiddo to be now known, and the discovery is important in connection with the account of the battle of Armageddon (that is, Mount Megiddo), in the Book of Revelation (xvi. 16). There have been at least two battles of Megiddo, one fought by Thothmes III. while advancing on Damascus, and thus naturally passing down the Vale of Jezreel, and one when Josiah attacked Necho, marching by the same route to the Euphrates. Military men are of opinion that if another campaign should ever occur in Palestine, the neighbourhood of Megiddo is one of the most likely places for a battle in the future.

* In 2 Kings ix. 27, we read that Ahaziah fled from Jezreel towards Beth-hag-gan ("the garden house"), possibly Beit Jenn east of Tabor, and was smitten in the "ascent of Gur," leading to Ibleam. Possibly these names survive at Kâra and Yebla, on the north side of the Vale of Jezreel. This would all fit with the proposed placing of Megiddo at Mujeddâ.

CHAPTER VI.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE BOOKS OF EZRA AND NEHEMIAH.

Jerusalem in Ezra's Time.

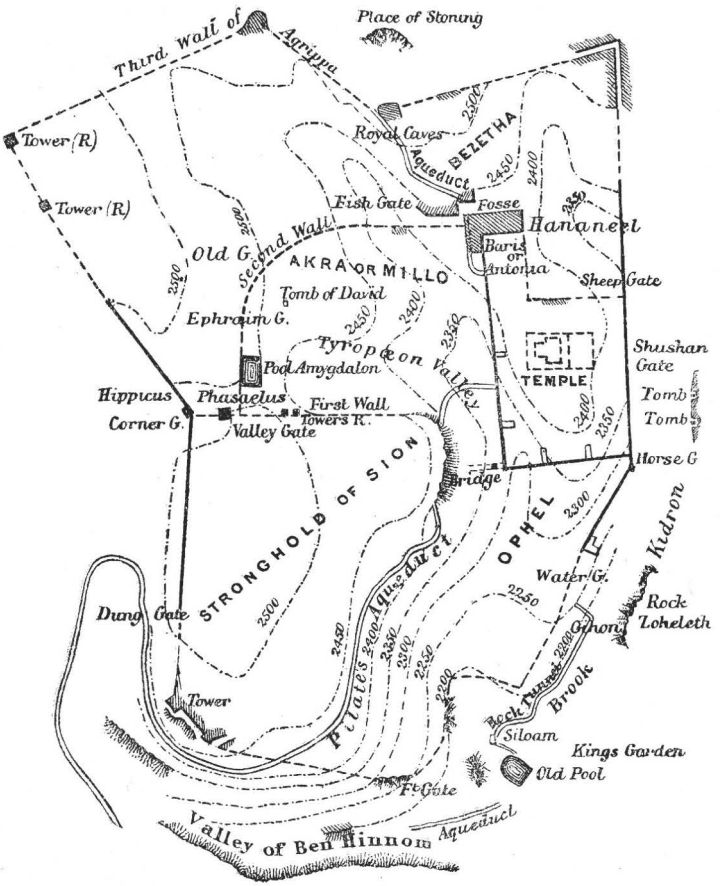
At the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Nebuchadnezzar the population of the city was more than 10,000 souls (2 Kings xxiv. 14), and it is possible to calculate, from various statements in the later books, that the number of the Jews who returned under Ezra and Nehemiah, and took up their abode among the ruins gradually increased from about 3000 or 5000 to over 10,000 souls. The town was "large and great" (Neh. iv. 19), and the number of its inhabitants not enough to fill it. Thus we see that Jerusalem in the time of Ezra must have been at least as large as the modern city *El Kuds* ("the holy") covering the same site.

The Temple built by the returning captives was, however, by no means equal to the earlier building of Solomon. The "chief of the fathers, who were ancient men, that had seen the first house, when the foundation of this house was laid before their eyes, wept with a loud voice; and many shouted aloud for joy" (Ezra iii. 12). The altar and the Holy House stood on the old spot, and served to mark the site for three centuries; but the work of Zerubbabel was finally replaced in Herod's time, by the third Temple built by the priests, and enclosed in the cloisters built by the king.

In the Book of Nehemiah we have three chapters which, though not intended to give a complete account of the

ANCIENT JERUSALEM.

Showing the Rock Surface & Ruins.



C.R. Conder R.E. del. 1879 A.D.

Harrison and Sons, Lith., St. Martin's Lane, W.C.

led out to the Valley of Hinnom, somewhere not far from the site of the present Jaffa-gate of modern Jerusalem. There was also a gate called "the Corner-gate" on the west side of the city opposite the castle, and this name seems to be explained by the fact which comes out clearly from Josephus' account of the city, that a V-shaped angle existed on the west side of the city walls, on the neck of land joining the hills of the upper and lower city. All plans of ancient Jerusalem which have any authority have always shown this angle, and the Corner-gate is perhaps one of the most certain points on the wall upon this side of the city.

The Dung-gate was one thousand cubits from the Valley-gate (Neh. iii. 13), and in this part of Jerusalem (the upper city) the gates were few as compared with the north side. This is natural, because of the great depth of the valley west and south of the upper city. No main road entered Jerusalem on this side, and no gates were wanted. The city was entered usually, as it still is, from the north-west and north, and the modern gates indeed stand on the very same roads, though not quite on the same sites, which were occupied by the old gateways.

The Fountain-gate, or "Gate of the Spring," seems to have led out to the pool of Siloam from the south-east corner of the upper city. The Water-gate is quite a different entrance, and was on Ophel, above the spring of En Rogel, or Gihon, which has been before noticed. It seems probable that the great shaft, cut in rock, which Sir Charles Warren found leading up from En Rogel to the surface of the Ophel hill, may have come out close to the Water-gate, and may have given the name to this entry.

On this side of Jerusalem, the east side of the Ophel hill, south of the Temple, Sir Charles Warren made a discovery with which no other made by mining in Jerusalem can compare. He found the ancient city wall standing in place to a height of seventy feet, but entirely

covered with rubbish, so that all former travellers had been walking about over it without suspecting that this mighty rampart existed still. They had sought traces of it diligently on the surface, little knowing the enormous thickness of rubbish due to the many destructions of the city.

The wall was traced for a total length of eight hundred feet, and was found to join on to the Temple wall at its south-east angle. Yet more interesting was Sir C. Warren's discovery of a huge outlying tower on the wall, measuring eighty feet in breadth, and projecting forty feet, for there can be no reasonable doubt that in this we have the "tower that lieth out," mentioned in the Book of Nehemiah (iii. 25).

The masonry of this Ophel wall is probably not all of one date. The smaller work near the top may perhaps be even later than the time of Herod, but the foundations may well be attributed to Nehemiah, as will be found fully explained in the official account of the explorations.* The base of the wall was built of rubble, founded not on the rock, but on the clay above, so that one mine was actually driven under the foundation from one side of the wall to the other. This rough work, which contrasts with the beautiful finish of the Temple walls, may well be due to the hasty restoration of the fortifications by Nehemiah.

The Prison-gate was near the royal palace, and the gate of Benjamin was further north. The Horse-gate seems also to have been an entrance by which horses came into the palace, which, as we have already seen, stood south of the Temple, perhaps where the royal cloister was afterwards built by Herod the Great. It would be out of place here to enter into very detailed arguments concerning the

* See page 229 in the volume on Jerusalem, published by the Palestine Exploration Fund, containing Sir C. Warren's full account of his discoveries; also the "Recovery of Jerusalem," and the original reports in the Palestine Exploration Fund's Quarterly Statements.

exact position of these and other buildings, for enough has perhaps been said to allow the reader, when comparing this account with the general description of ancient Jerusalem in the former chapter (iv.), to form a clear idea of the chief features of the Holy City as described in the Bible.

As to the interior of the city, we learn little in the Bible. There was a quarter called Mishnah, or "second," which seems to have been the lower city (2 Kings xxii. 14; Zeph. i. 10). There was a bazaar of the bakers (Jer. xxxvii. 21), as in any modern Eastern city, and the Tyropœon valley possibly took its name from the "money-changers," who still frequent this part of Jerusalem, and whose shops were also in the same quarter in the fifteenth century.

The State of the Land.

The Jews who came back from Babylon to Jerusalem with Ezra settled either in the Holy City or in the country round it (Ezra ii. 1). The list of cities (Neh. xi. 25) includes the names of places between the Beer-sheba desert on the south and Bethel on the north, including towns in the fertile lowlands of Dan, which were colonized by men of the tribe of Benjamin.

The Holy Land had at this time become a Persian province. The governor "on this side the river" ruled probably all Syria and Palestine, for by "the river" in the Old Testament the Euphrates is almost always meant. The kings of Babylon had carried out in Palestine their usual policy in transplanting colonies of strangers from other districts, and thus mixing the populations over which they ruled. Thus the Cutheans, or Cushites, with Babylonians and Hittites from Hamath, were brought yet earlier to Samaria and other cities of the Israelite kingdom (2 Kings xvii. 24), and some of these colonists seem to

have belonged to the old dark race (Cushite or Accadian), of which the original Canaanites were, as we have seen, a branch.

In addition to these new populations, the Philistines on the south had intermarried with the Jews of the lower class who had not been carried away captive—the "poor of the land" (2 Kings xxv. 12) who were left as vine-dressers and husbandmen, and who were probably, even in Nebuchadnezzar's time, a mixed race. The children of these marriages spoke a dialect which was half Hebrew, half Philistine (Neh. xiii. 24), perhaps a mixture of Egyptian with the entirely distinct Semitic speech of the Jews. We know that even in the time of Rameses II. such a mixed dialect was spoken in Lower Egypt, for numerous foreign words are found mingled with the Egyptian of the writings of that age, and in the same way Egyptian words are found even in the Bible, in Exodus or in Job, showing how great was the influence which Jew and Egyptian exercised from an early time on one another.

But besides this mixed speech, another difficulty lay in the fact that the language of the Jews themselves had changed with time, and with their long sojourn in Babylon. They now spoke more like the Assyrians, and the language of the Law of Moses could not be understood by the common people until it was explained or translated into their dialect. Thus the reading of the Sacred Books had, as we learn in the Bible, to be accompanied by an explanation (Neh. viii. 8), and this custom continued in the synagogues down to the time of our Lord (Luke iv. 20).

Even the writing of the returned Jews was different from the old alphabet, which we have seen to be now known through the Siloam inscription. The letters were more like those used in Babylon, and the change went on so fast, that by the time of Christ the Jews had two alphabets, hardly to be recognized as having come from one original

character. The old alphabet was used on coins and for commerce, but the new, which became finally the "square Hebrew" of the modern Hebrew Bibles, was specially used by the priests in writing sacred rolls. The tomb of the Bene Hazir (1 Chron. xxiv. 14) at Jerusalem still exists, with a long inscription in this sacred character above its porch, and any copies of the Law written in Ezra's time would have been rather nearer to square Hebrew in the form of the letters than to the original writing of Hezekiah's time, as known in the Siloam text.

The Samaritans.

The jealousy between the strong tribes of Judah and Joseph was very ancient. It led in time to the separation of the kingdoms of Judah and Israel, and it was probably the origin of the hatred between Jew and Samaritan, which grew constantly stronger from Ezra's time down to the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.

The Samaritans are mentioned in the Second Book of Kings (xvii. 29). The Jews called them Cuthim, and said that they were descendants of the Cushites, or men of Cuth, who are mentioned in the chapter cited as having been sent to colonize Samaria. This charge was in part perhaps well founded; but the priests of Samaria at least, seem clearly, from the Bible account, to have been sons of Joseph, who were sent to teach the Law and "how they should fear the Lord" (ver. 28). The modern Samaritans at Shechem, who have been so carefully described by many visitors, are perhaps of mixed race, but they have a strong family likeness to the best type of the Jews, and have probably much Israelite blood in their veins. They still preserve the ceremonial of the Law, and observe the Passover after the oldest manner on Gerizim; whereas the Jewish Passover differs materially from the rite described in Exodus. The Samaritan alphabet also

is derived from the very oldest Hebrew alphabet, and they have never used the square Hebrew, which has already been noticed as originating with the Jews after the Captivity.

The Samaritan literature has little value, none of their books being earlier than the Middle Ages, and our knowledge of their history is very meagre. In Nehemiah's time Sanballat and the Samaritans appear in league with the Ammonites, the Arabs, and the Philistines (iv. 7), as enemies of the Jews, and the jealousy with which these tribes regarded the returning exiles seems never to have died out while Jerusalem was a city. Intrigues and false accusations of the Jews to their Persian masters impeded the building of the Holy City and the Temple, and the Samaritans were ever ready to join the Greeks, the Romans, or any other enemies of the Jews, down to the latest times. In the seventh century A.D., the Samaritans spread all over Palestine; but in our own times there are fifteen thousand Jews in Jerusalem, and less than two hundred Samaritans at Shechem, while their colonies in Gaza, Damascus, and elsewhere, have become extinct. Nevertheless, the Samaritan manuscript of the Law of Moses is perhaps the oldest copy of the Pentateuch in existence, and, in spite of peculiar corruptions and readings, its value and interest are of the highest degree. There are three ancient manuscripts in all in the synagogue at Shechem, which the author has seen side by side. Two of these belong to the eleventh and thirteenth centuries A.D., but the oldest is certainly more ancient, and may perhaps be as early as the sixth or seventh century.

CHAPTER VII.

FOREIGN GEOGRAPHY OF THE OLD TESTAMENT.

In the first chapter of this primer we have spoken of places east of Palestine, and in the second chapter of others in Egypt and in Sinai. We have now to speak of the chief places noticed in the Prophets and in other books of the Old Testament, which lie in countries surrounding the Holy Land, and are mentioned at the time of the Captivity or later. These may be conveniently grouped in one chapter.

Nineveh.

The great city on the river Tigris, named from the Akkadian god Nin, and long the capital of the Assyrian empire, has within the last forty years been explored by Layard and other authorities with results which are familiar to us all. Nineveh does not appear to have been the earliest capital of the realm, which was fixed till about 1350 B.C. at Asshur, some sixty miles further south along the river Tigris. The prosperity of the great city reached its height about 630 B.C.,* when Assur-bani-pal ruled all Assyria, Mesopotamia, Syria, Palestine, and Egypt, with part of Media and Asia Minor, Elam and Arabia. He adorned the capital with palaces, sculptures, and a complete royal library; but in 606 B.C. Nineveh was sacked by the Medes and the Babylonians, and from that

* See G. Smith's "Assyria," pp. 24, 182, 191.

time it ceased to be a capital city. It was already a ruin about 460 B.C., when Herodotus wrote. The great mounds have ever since preserved their priceless records and sculptures, although in time a new city (Mosûl) rose on the opposite or west bank of the Tigris, close to the site of Nineveh.

The circuit of the ruined walls embraces seven and a half English miles. The foundations—great banks of earth, rubbish, and sun-dried bricks—stand fifty feet high. On the west side of the city a great mound covers the site of the palace of Sennacherib (700 B.C.), while a second further south, now sacred to the prophet Jonah, was found to preserve the palace of Esarhaddon. The former occupied a hundred acres of ground, and the great cherubs, or winged bulls, of its courtyard, standing each fifteen feet high, are well known to us all by models and drawings.

The general plan of all Assyrian buildings was much the same. They stood on mounds thirty to fifty feet high, of sun-dried brick or of earth, which, like the Hittite Tells or mounds, were faced with stone, forming terraces, with retaining walls generally adorned with sculpture. The houses above were of wood and brick, the walls faced with a wainscot of alabaster carved with figures, while above was plaster, often painted, as the prophets also describe (Jer. xxii. 14).

The wide spread of Assyrian trade is evidenced by these sculptures. The elephant, the rhinoceros, the ape, and the Bactrian hound and camel are shown being brought as presents, and only from India could some of these beasts have reached Nineveh. The writing of the Phœnicians, the hieroglyphics of Egypt, and seals of her kings, were also found by Layard, proving intercourse with the West, and the record of the war of Sennacherib against Hezekiah was found written beside the great cherubs of the palace of the Assyrian kings in Nineveh.

In the Second Book of Kings (xix. 36), Sennacherib is

said to have dwelt at Nineveh, where he was succeeded by Esarhaddon. A century earlier we find Jonah visiting Nineveh, "an exceeding great city of three days' journey" (iii. 3). The history of its foundation as part of the Assyrian dominion has been already noticed (see chapter i. and Gen. x. 11).

Babylon.

Babel, or Babylon ("the gate of God"), was the largest probably of ancient cities, not even excepting Thebes. According to Oppert, it was twelve miles square, extending on both sides of the Euphrates. The chief ruins lie now east of the river, opposite the town of Hillah. On the north was the famous temple of Bel, with seven terraces, each painted a different colour. A great reservoir was included within the walls, and fed by the river. The remains of the palace of Nebuchadnezzar were found to consist of pale yellow brick in fine cement. A few sculptures were recovered by Layard, and other remains, including texts of great value, have been found since. The most important of these are perhaps the inscriptions which describe the conquest of Babylon by Cyrus, in the time of Nabonahid, only published in 1882. The names of the kings of Babylon are now known as far back as about 2500 B.C., and down to the time of Alexander; but the capital was transferred by Darius the Persian to Susa, which is to be noticed immediately, and the great city of King Nebuchadnezzar fell gradually into decay after its conquest by Cyrus, so that in the time of Alexander the temple of Bel was already in ruins. The proudest days of Babylon were those when, after the fall of Nineveh, it became the capital of the Babylonian power, extending over Mesopotamia and Assyria, Syria, Palestine, Egypt, and part of Asia Minor. The inscriptions of Nabonahid would make the city as old as 3800 B.C.;

but this must be regarded as doubtful, for inscriptions do not always record truth any more than books or human traditions.

Shushan.

In the Book of Esther we find mention of Shushan, the palace of King Ahasuerus. The place in question is the city of Susa, capital of Elam, or Persia, built due east of Babylon, on the river Choaspes, which flows south-west from the mountains of Media, to join the Tigris and Euphrates near the point where these latter rivers flow together. Susa is noticed in inscriptions as early as 660 B.C., when the palace was taken by Assur-bani-Pal. Darius the Persian made it his capital, and built here a palace resembling that of Xerxes at Persepolis in Persia proper, further to the south-east. The ruins of the city extend over about a square mile. The remains of seventy-two pillars, each originally more than sixty feet high, have been found at Susa, marking very clearly the site of the palace, and an inscription of Artaxerxes Mnemon has been found on the spot. It is doubtful what king is intended in the Book of Esther, but the name Ahasuerus is only a Hebrew rendering of the Sanskrit Kshatra, or "king."

Gog and Magog.

The nations intended by these names (see Ezek. xxxviii. 2; xxxix. 1; Jer. xliv. 1) are generally allowed to have dwelt in the Caucasus, and to be the Scythians of Greek history. A Scythian incursion into Palestine is noticed by Herodotus about 615 B.C.

Medes and Persians.

These two distinct stocks belonged originally to one great race—the Aryan or Indo-European, which spread

from Central Asia to India on the east, and to Europe on the west. The Medes came from the south shores of the Caspian, and brought with them a religion which was more spiritual and less barbarous than that of the Babylonians, whom, under Cyrus, they conquered in 539 B.C. The oppression of Israel ended when Babylon fell, and the tolerance of the new kings allowed of the return of Zerubbabel, Ezra, and Nehemiah; and the rebuilding of the Temple at Jerusalem took place about thirty years after the conquest of Mesopotamia by the Medes.

Egypt.

Several Egyptian cities are mentioned by name in the Prophets, concerning which a few words may here be said. In the nineteenth chapter of Isaiah there is a prophecy concerning the raising of an altar to Jehovah in Egypt, and this the Jews held to be fulfilled when Onias, one of the latest high priests of the race of Aaron, fled to Egypt and built, in imitation of the Jerusalem Temple, a temple near Heliopolis, or On, in Egypt. The foundations of this temple are still to be seen at a ruin called Tell-el-Yahûd, or the "Jews' Hill," near Belbeis, north-east of Cairo. On, or Heliopolis, is a ruin about ten miles north-east of Cairo, east of the Pelusiac branch of the Nile. It is called Aven in the Bible (see Ezek. xxx. 17, and Gen. xli. 45), and was sacred to Ra, the midday sun. The Phœnix was here worshipped, and some of the monuments are as old as 2000 B.C. It is probably On which Isaiah intends by the "City of Destruction," or more correctly, as in the margin of our English version, "City of the Sun," and this view agrees with the fact that the temple built by Onias was close to On, if it be right to suppose, as the Jews have always done, that Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled by Onias in 160 B.C. That

five cities of Egypt should speak the language of Canaan (Isa. xix. 18) is not so incredible as might have once been thought, since students have discovered how, even as early as 1300 B.C., this very language of Canaan had given many words to the common tongue of Egypt.

Among other Egyptian cities mentioned by the Prophets is Moph, Noph, or No, the famous city of Memphis, or Menopher, south of Cairo, the oldest of Egyptian towns, which, when founded, is supposed to have been close to the Mediterranean, the Delta having since been formed by the Nile mud, so that the ruins, now all but entirely destroyed, with twenty miles of tombs in the Lybian desert, are now more than a hundred miles from the shore.

Pi-beseth, or Bubastis (Ezek. xxx. 17), was the city of the lion-headed goddess Bast, near the modern Zagazig, north of Cairo, forty miles from Memphis, and east of the Nile. Pathros (Isa. xi. 11), a district of Upper Egypt, is recognized as the Pathyrite Nome, or province; while Tahapanes (Jer. ii. 16, etc.) appears to be the Daphnæ of the Greeks, now Tell Defenneh, a desolate mound not far from Kantarah, on the Suez Canal. Beth-Shemesh, or "the House of the Sun" (Jer. xliii. 13), is another name for Heliopolis, or On.

Tyre.

In speaking of foreign geography, we must glance for a moment at the magnificent trade of the Tyrians as described by Ezekiel, giving an idea of the commerce and riches of the Phœnicians about the time of the Captivity. Isaiah calls Tyre the "mart of nations" (xxiii. 3), and from the Book of Jonah it is clear that Joppa was a Phœnician port (i. 3), the Hebrews themselves not being sailors. The corn of Egypt (Isa. xxiii. 3) was brought to Sidon, and in the little Phœnician ports (though a single modern ironclad could hardly enter them) were gathered

navies of coasting galleys, which worked their way all along the Mediterranean to Marseilles, to Spain, to Greece, Egypt, and Carthage. Ezekiel speaks of Tyre as standing in the sea; and the double island, which has now been carefully explored and mapped, was not joined to the main land till Alexander the Great filled up the narrow passage to the shore. The poem on Tyre (Ezek. xxvii.), written in rhythmic measure, speaks of all the places with which the city traded. Firs for ship planks were brought from Hermon, cedars from Lebanon, and oaks from Bashan. The ivory from Cyprus came no doubt first from Egypt, with the linen for which that land was famous; but purple was fished on the coast of Syria and Asia Minor. The mariners were from Sidon, Tyre, Arvad (Aradus), and Gebal, all Phœnician cities; but Persian and Nubian troops were hired by the traders of Tyre, as well as Scythians (Gammadim). From Tarshish were brought silver, tin, iron, and lead, whence it is argued that the mines of Tartessus in Spain are intended. Ionian and other tribes of Asia Minor brought slaves and bronze from the north-east. Horses came from Armenia; ivory and ebony from the Persian Gulf (by the Indian traders); precious stones, embroidered works, and purple from Syria; wheat, honey, oil, and balsam from Palestine. Damascus sent many goods, and especially white wool, with the wine of Helbon (a place on Hermon). From Dan and Ionia came coasting vessels with wrought iron; and spices of India were brought by the overland caravans from the East.

The trade with Arabia was also very large, in flocks of sheep and goats, with spices of Yemen, precious stones, and gold. Merchants came also from Assyria and Chaldæa with various fabrics. This list, so fully detailed by the prophet, is confirmed by the Egyptian paintings, which represent the Phœnician traders bringing bronze, gold, and other precious merchandise, with child slaves, who, to

judge by their colour, must have come (as stated by Ezekiel) from the Caucasus, whence Georgian and Circassian slaves are still brought to Turkey.*

Job's Country.

The Book of Job, so remarkable for its many signs of knowledge of wild nature and wild lands, is in language and feeling a truly Arab book. Tradition would point to Bashan as the "land of Uz," where the patient man lived; he was "the greatest of all the men of the East" (Job i. 3), and it is generally agreed that some part of the Arab country east or south-east of the Holy Land is clearly indicated in the Book of Job.

Of the friends of Job (ii. 11) one came from Teman, or "the south;" while Tema, Sheba (vi. 9), the Chaldæans, and the Sabeans (i. 15, 17) are all mentioned, indicating probably the neighbourhood of Petra as that of the abode of Job. The account of mining given later in the book (chap. xxviii.) agrees with this view, as the mines of Sinai were very ancient, while others existed in Midian itself. There are other marks of acquaintance with Persia on the one hand, and with Egypt on the other, and with cities as well as with the open desert, which point to some such a highway of trade with East and West as early passed through Petra, the city of the Nabatheans, or sons of Nebaioth. The names of the stars are no doubt Chaldean names (see Job ix. 8), the ships of reeds (ix. 26) may have floated either on the Nile or on the Euphrates, the inscriptions graven on rock (xix. 24) still exist in Edom; but Job knows also of the frost and snow, which are felt only in the highlands of Syria (xxxviii. 10) or on the mountains of Edom. He

* The Semitic origin of the Phœnicians, who were sons of Aram, son of Shem, is beyond doubt, and Tyre is not mentioned in Genesis, and Sidon (x. 15) only as inhabited by a Hamitic race akin to the Hittites; for the Phœnicians, as we have seen (pp. 11, 63), came from the Persian Gulf.

speaks of the juniper, or white broom, which grows all through the chalky deserts of Syria. He knows also the habits of the ibex, of the wild ass, and of the great wild ox, which, though now extinct, was once hunted by the kings of Assyria (this is called the unicorn in our English version). He knows how the ostrich buries its eggs in the sand, and the ostrich still runs over the wilder parts of the Syrian desert. The horse, so wonderfully described in Job, must early have been tamed by the Arab tribes; and it is known to have been brought to Egypt from Asia about the fourteenth century B.C. or earlier. The stork, with its long wings; the migratory hawk, who "seeks the south;" the eagle on the precipices, are all familiar to the traveller in the Syrian deserts (see Job xxxix.). As regards leviathan and behemoth (chaps. xl. and xli.), some writers hold that the Egyptian crocodile and hippopotamus are intended; but the description is less exact than that of the desert animals, and the writer may perhaps never have seen either the alligator or the river-horse of the Nile. Uz was a Syrian nation (Gen. x. 23), which Jeremiah couples with the Philistines (Jer. xxv. 20), and these indications quite agree with the view that the Land of Uz was the Syrian desert near Petra.

CHAPTER VIII.

GEOGRAPHY OF THE GOSPELS.

Judæa, Samaria, and Galilee.

THE division of Palestine in the days of our Lord can be very clearly understood by aid of the writings of Josephus and the Rabbis. The rule of Herod the Great extended over most of the country which formed Solomon's dominions; but after his death, in the year of the Nativity, the sons of this Edomite king divided the country among them. Archelaus ruled over Judæa, Edom, and Samaria; Herod Antipas over Galilee, Gilead, and Moab; and Philip over Bashan and part of the anti-Lebanon, near Damascus.

The boundaries of Samaria, Judæa, and Galilee are also very well known, through the recent recovery of the sites of several frontier towns. It is hardly necessary to give the details.* The greater part of the old land of Ephraim was included in Judæa; and Samaria, roughly speaking, was the land of Manasseh, west of Jordan. Galilee began on the south at Ginæa (now Jenîn), on the border of the great plain of Esdraelon, and Upper Galilee included the mountains of Naphtali, its southern border being at Caphar Hananiah (now Kefr 'Anân), south of Safed. The division between Galilee and Phœnicia is very minutely described in the Talmud, and the north limit of the Holy Land is therein fixed at the foot of Hermon, near Paneas (Bâniâs). It is important, finally, to notice that Samaria is never reckoned by Jewish writers as part of

* See Conder's "Handbook to the Bible," pp. 301–318.

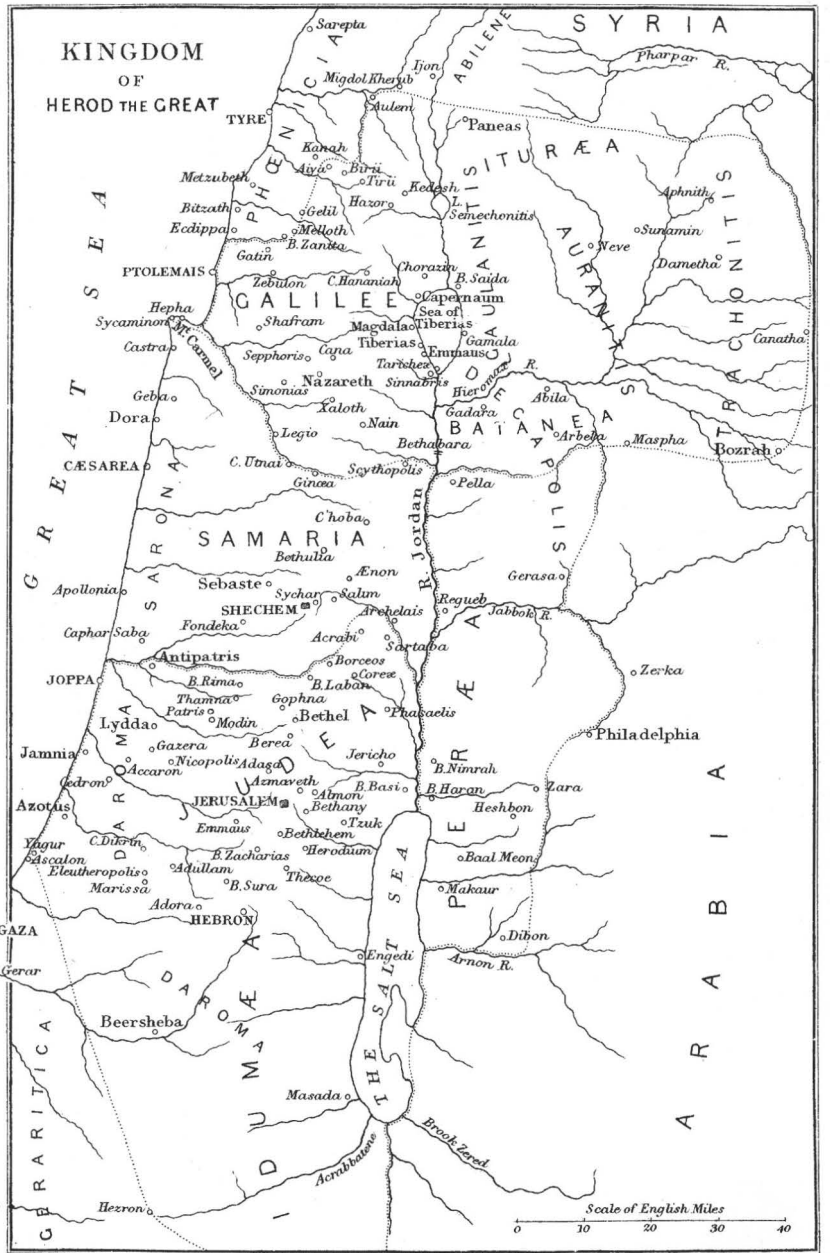
the Holy Land; and as the pious Israelites of Galilee might not cross Samaria in travelling to Jerusalem, it became necessary that they should cross Jordan somewhere near the Sea of Galilee, and journey down the valley on the east side of the river almost to Jericho before recrossing (see Mark x. 1).

Decapolis is a district mentioned twice in the Gospels (Luke viii. 37; Mark vii. 31). It lay on the south-east of the Sea of Galilee, and the name applied to a confederation of ten cities, inhabited, it would appear, by Greeks. This probably accounts for the herds of swine mentioned in the Gospels as kept by the shepherds of Gadara, since no Jew or Samaritan would have been likely to follow the calling to which the despised prodigal is related to have been reduced.

Bethlehem,

a flourishing Christian town of white stone houses, with schools, nunneries, and chapels, now spreads over the long narrow chalky ridge through which Pilate's aqueduct to Jerusalem is bored. On the north-west a square domed building of no great antiquity marks the site which has always been considered that of Rachel's tomb. On the east, a fortress monastery looks down on the plateau called the "Shepherds' Plain," and encloses one of the oldest Christian churches in the world—the basilica, built by Constantine over the supposed site of the cave-stable and manger where Joseph and Mary rested, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The tradition which points to this spot is one of the earliest Christian traditions, and there can be little doubt that the present site has been venerated since the second century A.D., although in the fourth century the grotto was found by Jerome in possession of pagans, who here celebrated the birth of Adonis.



R. C. Conder, R.E. Del.

ago before the eyes of the boy Christ on the hill-top, with this difference only—that the scene to us is full of the memories of His own life, of chapels reared to consecrate some spot where He is supposed to have stood, and is thus more sacred for His sake than because of the triumphs or woes of the race from which He sprang.

Modern Nazareth within the last thirty years has become a flourishing town. The old Crusading monastery, with the cistern called the "Holy House," is close to a Moslem mosque and a Protestant church. An English orphanage dominates the whole town, and the source of the fountain is covered by an old Greek church. The Jewish tombs are burrowed in the cliff above the principal part of the village, and it seems probable that ancient Nazareth stood higher up the slope. The "brow of the hill whereon their city was built" (Luke iv. 27) was probably, not, as the monks thought, the precipice far south of the town, at the edge of the plateau where the road winds down to the plain, but rather the low cliff, partly hidden by rubbish, partly standing sheer over the houses, on the north side of the place, above which probably the rustic synagogue was built where Jesus, like any other respected Rabbi of the time, used to read the *Parcha* and the *Haphtora*, or first and second lessons of the service, and explain them by means of a *Deresh*, or exposition in the Aramaic tongue* (Luke iv. 16).

The beauty of the scenery round Nazareth has perhaps been rather over estimated. The hills are bare and shapeless, and the views, though extensive, are not romantic. Hidden on the west, the glades of the woods of Harosheth are within easy reach; and here, by the clear stream of Wâdy-el-Malek, under the cool shadow of the oaks, soothed by the low notes of the innumerable ring-doves, Christ

* See Conder's "Handbook to the Bible," p. 184. The language used by our Lord was Aramaic, though Greek was not unknown to the Jews at this time.

may have wandered often; but on all other sides the burnt hills reflect in summer the glare of the sunlight, and the absence of trees and springs makes the whole district barren and unlovely.

Bethabara.

Bethabara is often called the place of our Lord's baptism. This is not exactly stated in the passage (John i. 28) in which the name occurs, although we may perhaps infer that the baptism did take place at this spot. John was baptising in the Jordan valley (Matt. iii. 13; Mark i. 5; Luke iii. 3), and Jesus came from and returned to Galilee after this first act of His ministry. Christian tradition places Bethabara near Beth-Nimrah, east of Jericho, but it is almost impossible in this case to suppose that our Lord could have reached Cana, a city of Galilee, on or before the "third day" (John ii. 1; compare i. 43), considering that on the second day He was yet at Bethabara.

Bethabara, then, should be sought much nearer Galilee. It was east of Jordan, but probably near the river, for its name means "House of the Ford." In the year 1873 the Jordan valley was surveyed, and the names of all the fords recorded. There are more than forty of them in all; but one, and one only, bears the name 'Abârah, identical with the Hebrew Beth-'Abârah, or "House of the Crossing." This ford is at the point where the road from Lower Galilee crosses over to Decapolis, a little north of Bethshan or Scythopolis. Since the recovery of this name, the author's suggestion on the subject has met with approval from many writers, and it removes indeed one of the geographical objections which had been often quoted against the Gospel of St. John. The ruins of the town itself may perhaps some day be found east of the river near the ford.

Cana of Galilee.

The site of this town is uncertain. Early Christian tradition places it at a village now called Kefr Kenna, on the road from Nazareth to Tiberias. The Crusaders, on the other hand, supposed the ruin Kâna, further north, to be the true site. Modern writers have been divided in opinion between the two traditions; but nothing can be found in the slight notices by Josephus and other writers to enable us to decide. The general opinion seems to be in favour of Kefr Kenna on account of its position; but it must not be forgotten that a fine spring called 'Ain Kana exists yet nearer to Nazareth, east of the village of Reineh, on the road to Kefr Kenna. It is by no means impossible that the Cana of the fourth Gospel may have stood near this spring.

Sea of Galilee.

This quiet lake among the mountains is almost as familiar to us through pictures and descriptions as if it were part of our own country. The scenery is not unlike some of the wilder lakes of Westmoreland, and the length of this so-called sea is not greater than that of Winandermere. In rugged grandeur the view cannot compare with the shores of the Dead Sea near Engedi or Callirhoe, nor is it rendered beautiful by woods or fertile fields. On the east, the steep cliffs, seared with many torrent beds, rise to a flat plateau, and the rocks are white or tawny. On the west, the slopes are more gradual, save where the brown bastion of rock at the mouth of Wâdy Hâmam stands out conspicuous, with the curious peak of Hattîn above. On the north, the shelving shore slopes up to the grey mountains of Safed, and is black with basalt blocks, and rank in spring with giant thistles, which bury the ruins from sight. On the north-west, the little plain of Gen-

nesaret is still remarkable for its abundant streams of water; but though, through rich soil and warm climate, it was celebrated in early times for its fertility, we can hardly doubt that it must always have been an unhealthy district, and indeed from the Gospel itself the same fact may be inferred (Luke iv. 38–40). The south end of the lake is remarkable principally for the large ruined town on the edge of the water (called Tarichæ by Pliny and Josephus). The Vale of Jordan here opens out east of the river, while steep slopes run down from the plateau west of the river.

The long reflections of the hills in the calm mirror of Gennesaret; the sudden storms which sweep down the gulleys, and against which the clumsy craft of the native fishers can make no head; the glory of the red oleanders amid the dusky bushes on the rocky northern shore; the pale green flush over the dark rocks in spring; the glare of the chalk ridges in summer; the great shadows of the thunder-pillars in autumn,—have so often been described by the countless writers who have lingered by the lake, that it is hardly necessary once more to note the scene; and we must hasten to notice the towns which in the time of Christ stood on the shores of the Galilean Sea.

Capernaum.

There are two sites which different writers point out as representing Capernaum. One may be called the Christian site, since all pilgrims from the fourth century to our own days have supposed Tell Hum, the ruined town on the edge of the water not far west of the Jordan inlet, to be Capernaum. The other is the Jewish site, since such brief notices of Capernaum as are found in the Talmud and in the early Jewish travellers' journals clearly refer to Minieh, a ruined mound beside the spring Et Tîneh, in the north-east corner of the plain of Gennesaret.

It is impossible here to enter into the long controversy which has arisen on this subject. The two sites are only three miles apart, and Capernaum is only important in connection with the Gospel narrative. Many of the arguments once brought forward fail entirely before a better knowledge of the localities and of the dates of various buildings, which the survey of Palestine has supplied; but the main question whether Christian tradition is in this case reliable, remains still a matter of opinion to many. The author himself believes that Tell Hûm has no claim whatever to be regarded as the real site of Capernaum, and that its ornamental synagogue is clearly not older than about A.D. 130; that the mounds of Minieh contain probably the foundations of that synagogue in which Jesus taught; and that the very name records the ancient contemptuous term in which the Jews once spoke of the Christians, or "Sons of Capernaum," as *Minim*, or "pagan sorcerers." *

Chorazin.

The site of Chorazin is fixed with certainty, and has indeed never been really lost, though first thoroughly explored and described in modern times by Sir C. Wilson and his comrade, Captain Anderson, in 1866, when the existence of a synagogue in the ruins was ascertained. This is probably another of the twenty-four synagogues which were built in Galilee in the second century A.D., and which Jewish tradition ascribes to the famous Rabbi Simeon-bar-Iochai.

Chorazin (or, as it is now called, Kerâzeh) stands on a hill about two and a half miles north of Tell Hûm. The ground in the neighbourhood is chiefly hard basalt rock, and a ravine with low cliffs runs immediately beneath the site. The remains of the houses stand partly in a shallow

* See "Tent Work in Palestine," vol. ii. pp. 182–190.

valley head, partly on a rocky spur, and it is on the higher ground that the ruined synagogue was found. A fine tree grows in the middle of the town, and a spring rises from beneath it, flowing into the ravine. Traces of an old paved road are found leading away to the north.*

Bethsaida.

The position of this third town on the north side of the lake is much disputed. Some writers suppose two places of the name to have existed, one (mentioned by Josephus) east of the Jordan near the point where the river falls into the Sea of Galilee, the other somewhere near Capernaum. This idea seems on the face of it unlikely, and a careful study of the Gospels rather leads to the view that all notices of Bethsaida may be referred to the site east of the river. The Hebrew form of the word is not certainly known, and the name may mean "House of fishing," or "House of good luck." The site usually supposed to represent Bethsaida (or Julias, as it was called when Philip the Tetrarch rebuilt the town) is a mound called Et Tell, north of the inlet where Jordan enters Gennesaret, and east of the river. The ruins are described by Robinson as extensive, though chiefly built of uncut basalt blocks.

Tiberias.

This city had in the time of our Lord been newly rebuilt on the west side of the lake. It occupied the site of the old town of Rakkath ("the shore"), and was chiefly inhabited by Greeks. Tiberias is now one of the four sacred cities of the Jews, because it was long the centre of Rabbinical government and teaching; but no remains of

* See Sir C. Wilson's account of this site in the "Recovery of Jerusalem," p. 348.

antiquity have as yet been found here beyond the tombs of several famous Rabbis. The walls of the town are about a century old, although they no doubt replace others built by the Crusaders. Tiberias is only noticed in the fourth Gospel, and appears never to have been visited by our Lord.

Magdala.

Magdala, a little village on a hill-side north of Tiberias, and at the south end of the plain of Gennesaret, is also mentioned in the Gospels. The name means a "watch-tower," and in the Talmud it seems to be called Migdol Nunia ("fish-tower"). It was of this town apparently that Mary Magdalene was an inhabitant.

Feeding the Multitudes.

The two miracles related in the Gospels of feeding the five thousand and feeding the four thousand both occurred near the shores of the Lake of Galilee. Tradition since the fourth century has placed the site on the west or the north-west, near Tiberias or above Minieh; but these views cannot be said to agree well with the Gospel accounts. The five thousand were fed on the eastern shore of the lake (Matt. xiv. 34). The four thousand seem probably to have assembled near the same spot (see Mark vii. 31, viii. 1; Matt. xv. 39), and the miracle is related to have taken place immediately after our Lord had visited Decapolis. Monkish tradition must, therefore, in this case be abandoned.

Cæsarea Philippi.

From Magdala our Lord journeyed to Cæsarea Philippi (Mark viii. 22–27), and it would seem to have been near this city that the Transfiguration is intended by the

Evangelist to be understood as occurring. Cæsarea Philippi was the Greek name of Paneas, or Dan, the town under Hermon, where Jordan issues from the cavern. The scenery of the spot has already been described.* The solitary fastnesses of Hermon form an appropriate scene for the Transfiguration, and the sudden formation of cloud on the mountain-top (as in other cases where a high summit stands alone above land or sea) might perhaps be thought to throw some light on the words of the Gospel, "and there was a cloud that overshadowed them." In the second century A.D. the Transfiguration was believed to have occurred on the top of Mount Tabor; but there is no mention of this mountain in the New Testament.

Nain.

It is a curious coincidence that the story of Elisha's raising a child to life and that of the raising of the widow's son by our Lord are fixed at places on the south and north slopes respectively of the same mountain. Shunem is on the south, Nain on the corresponding northern slope. It is a small village, once much larger, and surrounded with ruins. On the west some rock-cut tombs appear in the face of the hill, and it was probably towards this graveyard that the sad procession was marching when our Lord met it at the town gate. The road from Capernaum, whence Christ was then coming (Luke vii. 1–11), led up to the plain east of Tabor, and passing round south of that mountain, crossed the flat ground near Endor, and ascended the slope on which Nain still stands, near the foot of the conical hill which, as already noted, seems to have been called the Hill of Moreh.

* Page 75.

Sychar.

This site has already been mentioned* in speaking of Jacob's well. It must not be confused with Sychem, or Shechem, being a distinct place, a little village on Ebal, now called 'Askar. It is near Jacob's well (John iv. 5), and is a site of undoubted antiquity.

Ænon,

where John baptized (John iii. 23), was a place (as its name shows) with "many waters," near Salem. There is only one place in Palestine where these names are found together, namely at 'Ainûn and Sâlim, north-east and east of Ebal, seven miles apart; while one of the few perennial streams of the Holy Land flows between them down the romantic ravine of Wâdy Farah, forming the north border of Judæa.*

Bethany.

The site of this little village on the south slope of Olivet is certain. It is now called El 'Azerîyeh, from Lazarus, and in its centre rises the ruin of a Crusading castle which was once called "St. Lazarus." A small underground chapel in among the stone houses is called Lazarus' tomb; but it is more probably to one of the rock-cut sepulchres beside the Jericho road, east of the village, that the name should apply.

Bethphage

is by some supposed to have been close to Bethany; others place it on the summit of Olivet, where the Arab hamlet

* Page 34.
† See "Tent Work in Palestine," vol. i. p. 91.

of Et Tôr now stands. A third possible site is the present village of Silwân, especially if we may suppose the name to be a corruption of Beth-Aphek, and to mean "House of the Fountain" (En Rogel). The position and the name are, however, alike doubtful.

Emmaus,

where the two disciples recognized their Master (Luke xxiv. 13), is also not certainly known. The author has suggested an ancient site called Khamasa, which is about the right distance, and many other places within sixty furlongs of Jerusalem have been proposed; but at none of these latter has the old name really been found. *

Jerusalem.

We must once more speak of the holy city as it was in the time of Christ. In former chapters we have seen what is known of Jerusalem before and after the Captivity (chaps. v. and vi.), but under Herod the Great's direction many great alterations commenced. The extent of the walls at the date of the Crucifixion did not much differ from that of Nehemiah's wall, for it was not until the year A.D. 40 that Agrippa began to build the great third wall on the north, which was hardly finished in A.D. 70, at the time of the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus.† The controversy about the walls has of late sunk to rest, as a substantial agreement exists among the latest authorities as to their direction; and the exact line of the second wall,

* See Conder's "Handbook to the Bible," p. 326.

† The pool Bethesda ("House of the Stream"), noticed in the fourth Gospel (v. 2), appears to be the spring in the Kedron valley called Gihon and En Rogel (see chap. v.). The site of Gethsemane ("the oil-press") is not exactly known, but it was somewhere on the east slope of this same valley.

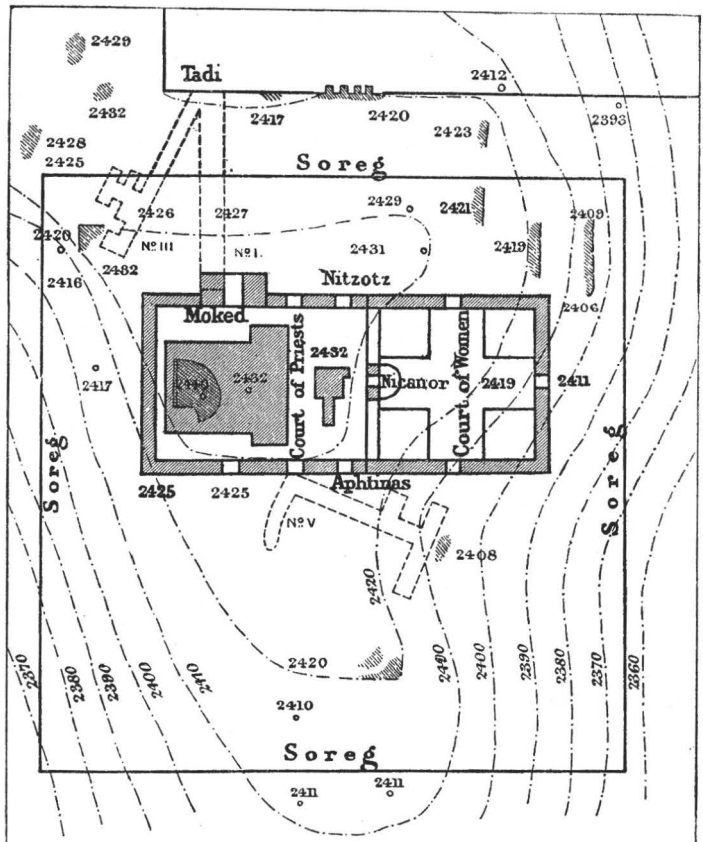
once fiercely disputed, has not really the interest which disputants suppose, since it seems clear, from a consideration of the valleys as they are now known, that whether or no the traditional Holy Sepulchre were within this wall, it must at any rate have been surrounded by the houses of the city at the time of the Crucifixion, and thus could not properly represent the tomb of Joseph in the garden "nigh at hand" to Calvary and "without the gate" of Jerusalem.

Herod's Temple.

The work of Sir C. Warren has very clearly defined the extent of the great Temple enclosure, and he has pointed out the only existing remains of that Temple—the great rampart walls, of which only half the total height is in some places to be seen above the surface of the rubbish which has been heaped up during eighteen centuries.

It may now be considered as certain that the outer wall enclosed a space, roughly speaking, one thousand feet square, and that the rocky fortress of Antonia projected above and beyond this area at the north-west corner, its citadel being on a rocky base fifty feet high, which is still visible under the Turkish barracks.

Herod removed the old foundations of the cloisters, and built anew from the rock. Sir C. Warren found the great stones (some of which are from twenty to thirty feet long and six feet high on the wall) let into the live rock at the foot of the wall. He dug down more than a hundred feet to find these foundations, and upon them he discovered the red paint marks and letters of the native Hebrew masons. He found also on the west the pier of the great bridge, which led over the deep Tyropœon valley to the Royal Cloister, which ran along the south rampart wall as far as the corner where the old city wall from Ophel joined on to the east cloister of Herod's Temple. Beneath still remain the tunnels leading up northwards to the inner



BLOCK PLAN OF HERODS TEMPLE.

Levels above Sea and existing remains shewn thus

Restoration thus —

100 0 100 200 300 400 500 600 feet

100 50 0 100 200 300 100 cubits

court, and opening out through gates called by the Jews the Huldah, or "mole," gates, because of these underground galleries.

Of the Holy House itself, which rose to a height of one hundred and seventy feet above the surrounding court, no traces now remain. Titus, and many after him, have so completed its ruin that not one stone is left upon another. But inside the great enclosure exists still a gallery corresponding to those on the south, which Sir C. Warren has shown to be that noticed in the Talmud as leading to the northern underground gate called Tadi, or "darkness," under the ramparts of Antonia.

The exact position of the Holy House itself is still a matter of opinion, though strong reasons exist for supposing its site to be represented by the beautiful Arab building called the Dome of the Rock, which is popularly, but very wrongly, styled the Mosque of Omar. This dome was built in A.D. 688, by the Arab Khalif 'Abd el Melek, over the sacred rock and cave, which are revered by Moslems not less than the famous stone of Mecca. A sacred stone (and probably this same one) stood, according to the Jews, beneath the Holy of Holies of the Temple, and thus the spot which was to a Jew the most holy of all the holy ground in Palestine is still venerated by the population of the country as it was also by the Christians of the Middle Ages, who also believed the Temple to have stood on this same spot.

For a minute account of Herod's Temple, of its courts, cloisters, and chambers, the reader is referred elsewhere.* One great pillar alone remains of all the numberless columns once standing, and this is preserved in the vault of one of the Huldah gates above noticed. Its size is just that of the pillars described by Josephus, for three men are scarcely able to girth it round.

* Conder's "Handbook to the Bible," pp. 359–386 (third edition).

Calvary.

The question of the true site of Calvary and of the Holy Sepulchre long seemed doomed never to be answered; but there are signs still to be read which have led the author to conclusions that have received very general acceptance among those interested in this most interesting question—and their number is great.

It may be said, then, to be generally agreed that the tradition preserved by the Jerusalem Jews is worthy of belief.* This tradition, discovered by Dr. T. Chaplin, places the old "House of Stoning," or place of public execution according to the Law of Moses, on the top of the remarkable knoll outside the Damascus gate, on the north side of Jerusalem. It was from this cliff that the criminal used to be flung before being stoned (according to the Talmud), and on it his body was afterwards crucified; for the spot commands a view all over the city; and from the slopes round it the whole population of the town might easily witness the execution. Here, then, was the Hebrew place of crucifixion, and here in all human probability once stood the three crosses bearing the Saviour of men between the two thieves.

But if this be indeed Calvary, the "place of the skull," the garden with its rock-cut tomb should be nigh at hand. Several tombs do exist near the rock, but they are clearly shown to be of Christian times. It was not until 1881 that the author was able to point out a really ancient single Hebrew tomb near the spot, but the excavations for new houses then laid bare a Jewish sepulchre facing the cliff of Golgotha, and cut in a rock further west on the other side of the main north road.

Other tombs may perhaps be found later, but as it stands at present, this rough and perhaps half-finished

* See "Memoirs of the Survey of Western Palestine," Jerusalem volume (end).

sepulchre may fairly be said to have greater claim to be regarded as that in which the body of our Lord was laid than any other of the numberless rock-hewn monuments round the holy city.

These discoveries have induced many entirely to reject the claims of the sites which for ages have been shown to pilgrims in the middle of modern Jerusalem. However many be the feet which in humble faith have trodden the flags and knelt within the marble tomb-chapel of the Crusading cathedral of Saint Sepulchre, we may yet feel thankful that the scene of the great sacrifice of love, and the tomb of the Friend of Man have never been desecrated by the torrents of blood, the shameless riots and brawls, which have during many centuries made unholy that gloomy pile named from His Resurrection.

While Crusader and Moslem have struggled and bled for the spot which the hasty Constantine decreed to be the holy tomb, the bare cliff of the Crucifixion has stood up a silent witness of that awful deed, and the new tomb in the garden has been hidden by the hallowed mould of the olive-yard upon its rocky knoll. Long may these really holy places so remain untouched by the gaudy trumpery of ephemeral architecture, with the bare ground beneath and the open sky above, the eternal witnesses of the great drama of which they formed the scene.

CHAPTER IX.*

FOREIGN GEOGRAPHY OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

THE scenery of the travels of the apostles is chiefly in lands outside Palestine, and the places noticed in the Book of Revelation are almost all in Asia Minor. Most of these places are well known and have often been visited, and the history of the Greek towns has long been studied, so that until about twenty years ago much better information was in the hands of scholars regarding Greece and Rome, than any collected in the Holy Land. This has now been greatly changed, and our knowledge of Palestine is brought to a level with that of Greece. The wanderings of Paul are, however, quite as clearly understood as is any geographical passage in other parts of the Bible.

Tarsus.

The native place of St. Paul was the city of Tarsus, not far from the south coast of that part of Asia Minor called Cilicia. Here the great Gulf of Alexandretta runs in under the steep rocky ridges of the Taurus, and the river Cydnus runs south to the sea. Tarsus was a

* The information in this chapter is chiefly derived from Dr. Howson's articles in Smith's "Bible Dictionary," and from Chesney's "Survey of the Euphrates," and other works, except in cases where the author describes scenery from his own observation, as in the cases of Cyprus, Rhodes, Crete, Smyrna, Patmos, Samos, Malta, Sicily, Rhegium, Puteoli, Cæsarea, and Antipatris. The sites of Lydda, Joppa, Samaria, and Ashdod (or Azotus) require no particular notice, though mentioned in the Book of Acts.

city founded by Sennacherib about 690 B.C., in a fertile plain on the banks of the river. It was sacred to Baal Tars, and Phœnician coins of the town have been collected. Augustus made Tarsus a free city; but its history goes further back, and not impossibly the Tarshish of some passages of the Old Testament may be this same town. There are no ruins of importance on the spot, so far as is at present known; but enough is recorded of Tarsus to prove that it was (in Paul's words) "no mean city."

Antioch,

the great capital of the dynasty of Greek Syrian kings called Seleucidæ, was the place where the Nazarenes were first called Christians (Acts xi. 26), a name which in vulgar Greek was soon corrupted to Chrestoi, or "pious" men. Antioch was founded by Seleucus in 300 B.C., and its convenient position on the river Orontes, and near the junction of the highways from Hamath and Damascus, from Aleppo and Babylon, with easy access to the seaport of Seleucia at the river mouth, soon made Antioch the centre of a large trade between Europe and the far East.

The city occupied a deep valley and climbed the slopes of Mount Silpius on the south. Seleucus adorned it with fine buildings, to which his successors added, and even in Roman times Antioch ranked with Rome and Alexandria. A street with four rows of columns ran right through the city east and west, and a second like it north and south, dividing the town into four quarters. In later times, a basilica, a theatre, and a bath were built by Julius Cæsar, while Agrippa and Herod also adorned the city with villas and new streets. It is now hardly more than a large village, but the ruins of the great walls which Justinian built (in the sixth century A.D.), and which the Crusaders were unable, save through treachery, to gain, may still be seen running along the mountain spurs.

Not far off, beside the Orontes was the great grove of Daphne, with its luxuriant oleanders and fresh springs and a famous temple of Apollo, restored later by the Emperor Julian. The river, though not navigable, could be used for light boats, and a good road led to the coast. Thus by position and through a prosperous trade Antioch became the capital, not only of Syria, but of all Western Asia, and one of the most important cities of the Roman world.

Modern Antioch is a town of six thousand inhabitants on the south bank of the stream. The plain around is fertile and beautiful, and silk is still manufactured.

Seleucia,

named from Seleucus and built at the same time as Antioch, was the sea-port of that city. It may appear at first strange that an artificial port should have been made in the shallow bay at the mouth of the Orontes when a deep gulf existed close by to the north. The gulf, however, could only be reached by a long coast road or over the steep pass of the "Syrian gates," and Seleucia was the nearest point on the coast. The gulf also is, and always must have been, most dangerous, on account of the deadly fevers of the coast marshes, while the storms which blow down the gorges of the mountains rising close to the shore, render the harbour unsafe in winter. Of the city and port of Seleucia little now remains beyond the mounds which mark the artifical harbour, now silted up by the river, and the ruined walls with a circuit of four miles. The port was an oval basin four hundred paces across, with a narrow entrance. Two temples and an amphitheatre, tombs, and sarcophagi are still visible, and a curious hollow road with tunnels leads through the hills to the sea. It was here that Paul embarked on his

THE EASTERN MEDITERRANEAN
illustrating the
TRAVELS OF St PAUL

BY W. HUGHES, F.R.G.S.

English Miles 0 50 100 200 300

Euxine Sea
Ravenna
Florentia
Ancona
Rome
Three Taverns
Appii Forum
Tarracina
Puteoli
Neapolis
Paestum
Tarentum
Brundusium
Dyrrachium
Melita
Illyricum
Dalmatia
Italy
Sicily
Panormus
Aulian Is
Messana
Rhegium
Syracuse
Adriatic Sea
Macedonia
Thessalonica
Amphipolis
Philippi
Neapolis
Berœa
Apollonia
Thasos
Samothrace
Hebrus
Hadrianopolis
Byzantium
Propontis
Troas
Alexandria Troas
Assos
Adramyttium
Pergamos
Lesbos
Mitylene
Smyrna
Thyatira
Sardis
Philadelphia
Chios
Ephesus
Samos
Miletus
Laodicea
Colossæ
Hierapolis
Antioch
Iconium
Lystra
Derbe
Tarsus
Perga
Pamphylia
Caria
Lycaonia
Mt Taurus
Cilicia
Mallus
Issus
Cyrrhus
Euphrates
Berœa
Seleucia
Cnidus
Rhodes
Patara
Myra
LYCIA
Coos
Cythera
Crete
Cape Salmone
Fair Havens
Phenice
Lasea
Cyprus
Salamis
Paphos
Laodicea
Epiphania
Emesa
Aradus
Tripolis
Byblus
Berytus
Sidon
Tyre
Damascus
Ptolemais
Cæsarea
Joppa
Jerusalem
Gaza
Palæstina Prima
Palæstina Secunda
Arabia
Petra
Pelusium
Delta
Egypt
Memphis
Nile
Alexandria
Cyrene
Cyrenaica
Syrtis major
Africa
Lepti
Libya
Mediterranean Sea
Euxine
Pontus
Bithynia
Galatia
Cappadocia
Phrygia
Lydia
Mysia
Hellespont
Propontis
Sinope
Heraclea
Amisus
Trapezus
Halys
Amasia
Ancyra
Prusa
Cæsarea
Archelais
Euphrates
Tropic of Cancer
Melita — Track of Ship in which St Paul sailed

10 15 20 25 30 35 40

40 35 30

Longitude East of Greenwich

first missionary journey (Acts xiii. 4), on his way to the island of Cyprus, which was only about seventy miles from the port.

Cyprus.

This important island, the largest in the Mediterranean east of Sicily, was early colonized by the races of the surrounding shores. The Asiatic Greeks from the north, the Phœnicians from the east, the Egyptians from the south, each sought in turn to possess its rich vineyards and fertile fields. Seen from the sea, the island closely resembles the scenery of Palestine itself, but the climate of the double range of the Troados mountains is more healthy and strengthening than that of the hills of Judah. The island is full of ancient remains of tombs, Greek and Phœnician, of temples, of inscriptions, and coins. The peculiar characters used in Cyprus, and also in Caria and Lycia on the mainland to the north-west, have been shown by George Smith to be of ancient Greek origin, and the texts when read proved to be in a barbarous Greek dialect; but there are much earlier records of the history of Cyprus, which is often mentioned in Egyptian texts and contained a strong Phœnician colony. In the Bible, under the name Kittim (Gen. x. 4), it is ranked with Tarsus and other districts as populated by Javan, the Ionian race from the mainland to the north. The "ships of Kittim" which afflict Assyria (Num. xxiv. 24) were no doubt early Grecian navies; and from Assyrian tablets we learn how Sennacherib fought with a Greek navy off the Cilician coast as early as 690 B.C.* Ezekiel (xxvii. 6), appears to refer to the Egyptian trade with Cyprus. The copper mines of Cyprus were farmed by Herod the Great.

Paul and his companions passed through the entire

* G. Smith's "Assyria," p. 124.

length of the island, landing at Salamis and travelling thence to Paphos. Salamis was the old name of the modern Famagousta, situate on low ground on the east of the island. Paphos, famous for the temple of the Paphian Venus, stood on the west coast near the modern town of Baffo. In both these towns, as in most of the Mediterranean sea-ports, colonies of Jewish traders had settled, to whom first the apostle addressed himself, preaching in the synagogues.

Paul in Asia Minor.*

From Paphos, the missionaries sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, a city near the shores of the great gulf north of the western part of Cyprus. The river Cestius, here flowing south, is navigable, and Perga was sixty stadia inland from its mouth. Extensive ruins still remain at the place under the Turkish name Eski Kalesi, and a famous temple of Artemis once existed here. From Perga Paul went about a hundred miles inland, to Antioch in Pisidia, due north of the former city. This town was founded by Seleucus, the builder of the more famous Syrian Antioch, and extensive ruins still remain at the site, which is now called Yalo-batch in Turkish.

From Antioch the apostle turned east to Iconium (the modern Konieh), on the table-land of Lycaonia. This important town, now chiefly remarkable for Saracenic buildings, stood in the west part of an extensive plain north of the Taurus ridges which separate it from the coast of Tarsus. The journey was continued thence south-east towards Paul's native place, through Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia. Lystra stood on the east

* The districts of Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, and Pamphylia, all in Asia Minor, are noticed in the Book of Acts (ii. 9, 10), with Parthia and Media (south of the Caspian), Elam (or Persia), Mesopotamia, Judæa, Cyrene (or Tripoli in Africa), Egypt, Crete, Arabia, and Rome.

side of the Lycaonian plain, probably at the site now called Bin Bir Kalesi, at the foot of a conical volcanic mountain called the Kara Dagh, or "black hill." Many ruined churches are said still to exist at this place, showing the early dignity of Lystra in Christian times.

The site of Derbe, a neighbouring town, is not exactly known; and doubts also exist about Attalia, the sea-port in Pamphylia, whence, after a second visit to Iconium and Antioch and Perga, Paul went by sea to his head-quarters at the Syrian Antioch. This first journey in Asia Minor was much shorter than those later undertaken by the apostle, and on his way to Greece he once more passed through Derbe and Lystra, probably coming through his native town of Tarsus, lying between Lycaonia and Antioch.

Paul in Greece.

From Lycaonia Paul journeyed north-west through the centre of Asia Minor to Phrygia, and thence to Mysia, the country on the south shore of the Sea of Marmora (then called the Propontis). Troas (or Alexandreia Troas) was the port where he embarked to cross the Ægean Sea to Europe. The town, which is not far south of the narrow Dardanelles straits, is now called Eski Stamboul, and the ruins of an old town wall a mile square remain, with a port about four hundred feet by two hundred feet. Thence, by a straight course, Samothrace—then a small free State—was reached, a conspicuous and lofty island halfway to Neapolis, which the ship reached on the following day.

The position of Neapolis is not quite certain, but most probably the town of Kavalla in Macedon represents this spot where Christians first set foot in Greece. The ruins of a Greek city here occupy a lofty promontory, with a harbour to the west, measuring one and a half miles by one mile. This place, the port of Philippi, has still a population of five thousand souls.

From Neapolis Paul travelled nine miles inland to Philippi, which he twice afterwards revisited. He had to cross a pass of the mountains sixteen hundred feet high, and descend thence to a plain where, beside the river bed, the traces of the city, its walls and buildings, can still be seen. It was at Philippi that Lydia, the purple-merchant from Asia Minor, received the missionaries, and here Paul and Silas were imprisoned and converted their jailor (Acts xvi.).

Journeying south-west parallel to the coast of Macedon, Amphipolis was next reached at a distance of thirty-three Roman miles from Philippi. The town stood on an eminence east of the river Strymon, which winds round it and enters the lake Cercinitis below the town, and the sea is only three miles away. The modern name of this old Athenian colony is Jeni Keui in Turkish.

Apollonia, the next stage, was thirty miles from Amphipolis and thirty-seven from Thessalonica, which the apostle next reached. This last was a walled city on the shore, with mountains rising behind it, built at the very back of the deep Thermaic Gulf, and named after the sister of Alexander the Great. Under its modern name Salonika, it is still one of the most important places on this coast, second probably only to Constantinople, which alone possesses a larger population. In Christian times Thessalonica afterwards bore the proud title, "the orthodox city."

Driven from Thessalonica, the apostle went next to Berea, west and inland of the former. An ancient road leads between these cities, and Berea is now a walled town of twenty thousand souls, retaining its old name, hardly changed, as Verria. Persecuted in Berea, the apostle escaped, leaving Timothy and Silas behind; and "they that conducted Paul led him to Athens."

Two sites in the great city are mentioned in the book of Acts—the first, Mar's Hill, or the Areopagus (xvii. 22);

the other, the market (ver. 17). The first was at the south-east end of the rocky hill of the Acropolis, where two rude stones, or menhirs, were raised east and west of the court, where, in the open air, the Athenian judges sat to try criminal charges. The accuser stood at one stone, and the accused at the other; but in later times the Areopagus became the scene of various philosophic discussions, such as that which Paul commenced with the famous words, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are very religious." The market-place where the apostle disputed daily was beneath the rock of the Acropolis on the south. It is beyond our purpose to enter into any longer account of the capital of Greece.

From Athens Paul journeyed west, along the isthmus, to Corinth, one of the most remarkable natural fortresses in the world. The city stood upon a rocky plateau two thousand feet above the sea, commanding a magnificent view over the gulf to the north, where snowy Parnassus rises; while on the east the Saronic bay and the hills of Athens are in sight, the Acropolis itself being visible forty-five miles away. The citadel of Acrocorinthus occupies the highest part, and the city stood on terraces descending to a table-land; but only a miserable village called Gortho now remains, with the spring Pierene in the Acrocorinthus and other fountains lower down. On the north was the port Posidonium, and here in the narrowest part of the isthmus were celebrated those Isthmian games from which Paul drew the imagery of his epistle (1 Cor. ix. 24–26). No doubt he had himself visited the platform by the deep ravine, where still remain a few ruins of the theatre and temple; for at Corinth Paul remained a whole year, tolerated by the indifferent Gallio, before sailing once more to Syria from Cenchræa. Cenchræa was the eastern port of Corinth, on the Saronic Gulf, nine miles from the city. An important pass separated the town from its harbour: traces of the moles of the port are still to be

seen near the village of Kikries. Here the travels of the apostle in Greece were ended, and by Ephesus, Cæsarea, and Jerusalem, he returned to Antioch.

Paul among the Islands.

After another journey to Asiatic Churches, and after his famous visit to Ephesus (concerning which city more will hereafter be said), Paul returned to Troas and Philippi, and thence again to Assos, a sea-port of Mysia, only twenty miles from Troas. Its ruins are still well preserved, including a citadel, a theatre, and a street of tombs. Thence the traveller passed on to Mitylene, the chief town of Lesbos, now called Castro, on the east side of the island. The next day the ship was opposite Chios, the unfortunate island now called Scio, devastated in 1881 by one of the terrible earthquakes common in this part of Asia. Steering still south, the lofty isle of Samos, conspicuous among the numerous islands of the Ægean Sea for its barren and rugged cliffs, was reached; and the ship anchored for the night at Trogyllium (Acts xx. 15), the rocky promontory in which the ridge of Mycale ends, where a narrow passage exists between the mainland and Samos, with an anchorage still called St. Paul's port.

Miletus, the next harbour, was about twenty-five miles from Ephesus, and was an ancient Ionian city. The site is low and swampy, and only a few ruins of a temple of Apollo remain; but the town had once four ports, and was the natural southern sea-port of Ephesus, to which city Paul sent messengers from Miletus.

By a straight course southwards, Paul reached the small island Coos, or Cos, and on the next day arrived at Rhodes, one of the most famous of the Greek islands. The town was then as now on the north-east side of the isle, with the harbour fabled to have been spanned by the legs of the Colossus. The steep hills of yellow limestone with

cultivated terraces, and the remains of the strong Crusading fortifications, with the street of the Knights of St. John, are among the most picturesque scenes to be met in the Ægean; but Rhodes was only touched by Paul's ship on its way to Patara, and thence to Tyre and Cæsarea in Palestine.

Patara was a Lycian city on the south coast of Asia Minor, east of Rhodes, and not far from the left bank of the river Xanthus. The harbour is now blocked with sand and silt, but ruins of a theatre, of baths, and a triple arch of triumph still remain.

From Jerusalem to Rome.

We may now trace the last recorded journey of the great missionary who spread the power of the Christian faith to Italy. From his prison in the citadel of Antonia he was sent down by night along the rough road which leads by Bethel, and thence north-west to Antipatris, a town standing at the foot of the hills beside the abundant springs of Râs el 'Ain,* whence the river Aujeh runs to the sea near Joppa. Thence north-west the prisoner was brought down to Cæsarea, the sea-port of Central Palestine and one of the cities built by Herod the Great. The ruins of this city, within the Roman or Herodian walls, include a magnificent amphitheatre, a racecourse, and a temple, close to which the remains of the Crusading cathedral are still visible. The great tower Drusus, built by Herod on the mole, has also perhaps left traces beneath the Crusading masonry, but the pillars which once adorned the streets and buildings of Cæsarea were thrown down by the mediæval builders, and either used up in the fortress walls or thrown into the sea to form a landing jetty.† The harbour is naturally small and open, but is the only one

* See "Tent Work in Palestine," vol. i. p. 230.
† *Ibid.*, p. 205.

along the straight Sharon coast between Joppa and Dor which could be made useful by artificial improvement. It was in this sandy bay that a Greek ship waited, into which, after the long delays and imprisonment at Cæsarea, the apostle was taken, leaving Asia no more to return.

The long coasting voyage to Italy commenced by a northern course to Sidon, and thence, delayed by contrary winds, past Cyprus (leaving Paphos to the right), and up to Myra, a city of Lycia. It was a large sea-port town east of Patara (already mentioned). The remains of fine Lycian tombs, with inscriptions in the curious Lycian writing, are still visible, with the ruin of an enormous theatre and a Byzantine church in a deep gorge.

At Myra a ship from Alexandria was found sailing to Italy, and a tedious voyage against the wind took the prisoner to Cnidus, an important sea-port at the south-west corner of Asia Minor, west of Myra. Remains of walls and theatres are found here, and a good harbour on the south-east of Cape Crio, with a second smaller one north of the artificial isthmus formed to connect the island with the shore. Hence the course was due south to Salmone on account of the wind, Salmone being the eastern promontory of the island of Crete. Under the lea of this romantic island (now Candia), a westerly course became possible, and the ship sailed in full view of the rocky shores, which rise to the central peak of Ida, with fruitful vales among the bold mountain spurs. Seen in spring from the Mediterranean, under the warm flush of sunset, with the snow-capped central peak, this island is far more beautiful than any of the bare wind-swept rocks of the Ægean Sea. The "Fair Havens" on this southern shore are supposed to have been five miles east of the southern point of Crete, now called Cape Matala, and here Paul would have stayed for the winter, sheltered from the north-west storms, but for the illadvised obstinacy of his guards. Tempted by a southern breeze, the ship

set out west, only to meet the furious euroclydon, a "typhoon" or "tempestuous wind" from the north-east, driving the vessel to Clauda, a little island west of Cape Matala. For two weeks the fated ship was driven before the tempest, and drifting five hundred miles at about one mile and a half an hour, it at length reached Melita, or Malta, on the fourteenth night (Acts xxvii. 27). The "helps undergirding the ship," are explained to have been cables or chains, which the Greeks used to pass round the hulls of their vessels, and strain tight to prevent the seams from opening under stress of a storm. The natural landing-place at Malta is that now known as St. Paul's bay, on the east of the island, and a study of the currents and the anchorage appears clearly to show that it was here that the shipwreck so graphically described in the Book of Acts occurred.

Three months later, the ship *Castor and Pollux* took Paul from Malta to Syracuse, a rich city on the south-eastern shore of Sicily. Thence, after three days, he went on to Rhegium (now Reggio), at the very toe of the Italian boot, where the mountains rise with desolate crags above the deep blue waters. Hence, passing in full view of the great snowy summit of smoking Etna, through the swirling race of Charybdis, and by the rock of Scylla, past some of the most romantic scenery of Europe, the prisoner sailed to Puteoli, on the coast north of Naples. This port, now called Pozzuoli, was already a Jewish colony. The ruins of the temple of Serapis, now standing (on account of the sinking of the shore) in the water, with the baths, amphitheatre, and concrete moles, show us how important a town Puteoli was in the time of Paul.

Here, then, the apostle first touched the mainland of Italy, and along the Appian Way he travelled to Rome. Appii Forum was a station forty-three Roman miles from the capital on this route, the ruins of which are still

to be seen near Treponti. The "Three Taverns" were ten miles further, near the modern Cisterna. Here "brethren"—whether Jews or Christians we do not learn—met the way-worn group (Acts xxviii.), and with the entry to Rome, and the subsequent sojourn in his "own hired house," the real history of Paul closes, though tradition preserves the story of his supposed journey to Spain and of his final martyrdom.

Patmos and the Seven Churches.

The places mentioned in the Book of Revelation alone remain to be noticed. Patmos, the little island where John was in exile, is one of the most rugged among many rocky islets in the Ægean, and lies not far from the coasts of Ephesus near Miletus (see back, p. 170). A narrow isthmus joins the two halves of the island, and on the southern height stands the monastery of St. John; and the cave in which he is supposed to have lived is beneath. All Oriental churches have, as a rule, a sacred cave, and all great events seem, according to Greek tradition, to have occurred in grottoes; but no cave is mentioned in the Book of Revelation, one vision at least having been seen on the sea-shore. A single palm now grows in Patmos in the valley called the Saint's Garden. There is a harbour and a small town on the east side, but otherwise the island is one of the most desolate spots in the Ægean Sea.

Seven Churches are addressed in the early chapters of the Revelation, all of which belonged to the western part of Asia Minor. Of these the first and perhaps the most important was at the great city of Ephesus, famous for its ancient idol of Diana and for the great temple in which the idol stood. The situation of Ephesus was convenient though not healthy—a flat plain, five miles across, opposite the island of Samos close to the shore. The town stood partly on the plain, partly on hills, with a

harbour called Panormus at the mouth of the river Cayster. The temple of Diana was raised on strong foundations in swampy ground at the head of the harbour. It occupied a space 425 feet by 230 feet, with pillars 60 feet high. The games took place in May, and the great theatre remains still very perfectly preserved. Only a small hamlet now occupies part of the site. The statue of Diana, of which we read in Acts (xix. 28, 35) as having fallen from heaven, is also known to us from coins, and its ugly and archaic form seems to show that it was a very ancient specimen of Greek art. Like many early statues, it ended in a block. The head was "tower crowned," and many breasts were given to the body. Lions and other animals were carved on the lower block, and none of the beauty of Greek sculpture is discoverable in this old figure of the "mother goddess of Asia."

Smyrna, the second of the Seven Churches, is still one of the great ports of Asia. The magnificent gulf and the fine natural harbour formed behind the great double peak of the "Twin Brethren" must always indicate Smyrna as a refuge for the traders of the Levant. The quaint Turkish town, with its dark cypresses and painted wooden houses, its traditional tomb of Polycarp and a few ruins, is backed by the steep and brigand-haunted heights, among which the strange figure of the weeping Niobe was carved almost as early as the time of Moses. The worship of Dionysus (the sun) in this city was famous in Greek history, and it is thought that some allusion is intended, in Rev. ii. 8, to the sufferings of the Christ as contrasted with the story of Dionysus.

Pergamos ("the fortress"), a city of Mysia, stands third in the list of seven. Here, twenty miles from the coast, was a remarkable cone-shaped hill, and a city of temples with a famous grove sacred to Æsculapius, the god of health, originally, like Dionysus, a Phœnician or Chaldean deity. No doubt there is a reference to this divinity in

the words "where Satan dwelleth" (Rev. ii. 13) and in the hidden allusion to licentious rites. The Nicolaitans, who infested both Pergamos and Ephesus, were, according to the fathers, among the most wicked of all the many heretical sects of the second century of our era.

Thyatira, the fourth Church, was a city on the road from Pergamos to Sardis, on the left bank of the Lycus. It was famous for its dyers, and contained a temple of the sibyl Sambatha in an enclosure called the Chaldean court. This sibyl is supposed to be the Jezebel of the Book of Revelation (ii. 20—21).

Sardis, the fifth Church, was the old capital of Lydia, on a spur of the mountain Tmolus, south of the valley of Hermus. The ruined Acropolis still exists at Sert Kalesi, and two great Ionic pillars of the old temple of Cybele are conspicuous objects standing amid the ruins.

Philadelphia in Lydia is the sixth Church, a city on the slopes of the Tmolus ridge, twenty-five miles east of Sardis and one thousand feet above the sea. It was the seat of many free-thinking Jews, and rich vineyards covered the volcanic district round the city. The furious worship of Bacchus prevailed at this place, and the Jewish infidels are noted in the Revelation (iii. 9).

The seventh and last Church was that of Laodicea, not the Syrian sea-port so named, but a town in the valley of the Mæander on the river Lycus east of Ephesus. It is now a ruin called Denislu, but in early Christian times was famous as a bishopric and because of the councils there held. It was founded by the same Seleucid dynasty which built two towns, also called Laodicea, in Syria, one on the coast, the other on the Orontes, at the site of Kadesh of the Hittites.

Thus of the Seven Churches Pergamos is the furthest north, Laodicea furthest south-east, and Smyrna and Ephesus nearest the sea.

INDEX.

The long (-) and short (˘) accent is shown according to the proper pronunciation.

THE END.

PRINTED BY WILLIAM CLOWES AND SONS, LIMITED, LONDON AND BECCLES.

WORKS BY THE SAME AUTHOR.

TENT WORK IN PALESTINE.

(BENTLEY, 1878.)

"Full of information for the historian and the archæologist, for the lovers of natural beauty and the lovers of adventure."—*Edinburgh Review.*

"The greatest contribution to our knowledge of Palestine which has been made since the volumes of Dr. Robinson."—*British Quarterly.*

"It will always remain one of the most valuable contributions to the literature of Palestine."—*Pall Mall Gazette.*

A HANDBOOK TO THE BIBLE.

(LONGMANS, 1879.)

By F. R. CONDER, M. Inst. C.E., and Capt. C. R. CONDER, R.E.
Recommended by His Grace the Primate.

"A *multum in parvo* furnishing everything that a young student could expect in such a manual."—*Guardian.*

"This valuable work should be heartily welcomed by Bible students and readers generally."—*Rock.*

"A Bible dictionary of modest but very serviceable dimensions."—*Scotsman.*

HETH AND MOAB.

(BENTLEY, 1883.)

"Captain Conder is one of those rare travellers who know exactly what people want to be told. Seldom has much research in out-of-the-way pages of history been made to assume so attractive a garb."—*Times.*

"Worthy of the eminent orientalist who made the survey. "Heth and Moab" is a book to be read and enjoyed, and a book to be pondered and preserved."—*Rock.*

"A most valuable addition to our knowledge of Eastern Palestine."—*Saturday Review.*

"It combines the careful research of the experienced scientific explorer with the novelty of discovery, the excitement of adventure, and almost the charm of romance."—*Edinburgh Review.*