

not seen even yet, the 'land of morning glories and unexampled green' which awaits the people of God. It is Joshua and the Land of Promise, as he may be made useful for instruction in righteousness by us to-day.

In conjunction with Messrs. Nisbet the Christian Literature Company of Edinburgh have published a small volume of 'Verses on the Christian Life,' by the late William J. Govan, entitled *In His Presence*. Few of the poems can be quoted at length, yet few are unworthy if we had space. Take the first two verses of 'God Blessed for Ever'—

Our God, could we but see
The loveliness Thou art,
Then would our waking heart
Seek only Thee.

All happiness is Thine,
And happiness below
Is but the after-glow
Of joy divine.

The Church Directory and Almanack is one of the bravest enterprises in publishing of our day. It could be called so last year on its first appearance. Now it may be called also one of the most

successful. So well has it been received that the editor makes it larger and fuller this year, and the publishers issue it at the same price (Nisbet, crown 8vo, pp. 672, 2s. net). This is to bring within every man's reach all the information he can desire regarding the Church of England, its Clergy, and its Benefices, and all in the most marvellous accuracy. This year's volume begins a list of the Colonial Clergy, which next year's volume is expected to present in completeness. It is useless for any clergyman to go farther or pay more; he will get everything here, including notes for his sermons and a selection of books for his library.

LIFE: ITS MYSTERIES NOW AND AFTER DEATH. BY THE REV. ALEXANDER WRIGHT, M.A. (*Oliphant*. Crown 8vo, pp. 230. 3s. 6d.)

The things beyond the veil never lose their interest albeit we get no nearer their knowledge with all our discussions. Mr. Wright knows now, for he was just on the shore, it turned out, as he prepared his book. But he wrote before he knew, and although he had a pleasant manner of writing and ample acquaintance with the literature, he leaves us where we were. His book should be got by those who cannot afford Salmond's *Christian Doctrine of Immortality*.

The Rivers of Damascus.

BY ERNEST W. GURNEY MASTERMAN, F.R.C.S., F.R.G.S., LATE OF DAMASCUS.

'Are not Amana (A.V. Abana) and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean?' (2 K 5¹²).

UNANIMITY of opinion regarding the identification of the Amana and Pharpar may perhaps be scarcely hoped for. It is indeed possible, though highly improbable, that an entirely new theory may some day be started. It may be, too, that some new discovery may settle the question once for all; but, meanwhile, I am venturing briefly to review the 'Rivers of Damascus' as I have seen them during three years' residence in the capital of Syria, in the endeavour to help others to form their own conclusions as to the possibility of a satisfactory identification, and as to the merits of rival suggestions. My notes, made on the spot some

years ago, have been laid aside, as I thought it was impossible much difference of opinion on the subject could be maintained; but as I find at least two rival theories holding the field, I venture now to write them up.

Briefly, then, I propose (1) to describe all the known 'rivers of Damascus' as we find them to-day; (2) to indicate the many proposed identifications; and (3) to state my reasons for adopting the only one which appears to be at all tenable.

1. *The Modern Rivers of Damascus*.—To those visiting Damascus for a hurried excursion there appears to be but one river—the Barada—that beautiful, quick-running, noisy stream which to-day accompanies the railway train, as once it

gladdened the weary eye of the diligence traveller, for the last hour and a half of his journey from Beyrout to Damascus. The stream, and the beautiful verdure produced by its distributed waters along the narrow valley of the Wady Barada and out into the great plain—the *Ghútah*—in which the 'Oldest City in the World' lies 'like a pearl set in emeralds,' can never be forgotten by any who have been privileged to see it, much less by any who have lived on its banks, and upon its abundant produce. Rising high up in the heart of the Anti-Lebanon—at the northern foot of Hermon, in a large open pool 300 yards long, it speeds quickly over the short space of level ground which forms the southern end of the great plain of *Zebedani*; and passing to-day under a railway bridge, it plunges into its valley path, down which it descends, by a long succession of cascades and torrents, a thousand feet in 23 miles. The waters of this abundant '*Ain Fundyk*' are more than doubled, rather over half-way down, by the copious, almost ice-cold, spring '*Ain Fejeh*, which to-day rises from the bowels of the earth amid the ruins of a temple dedicated in ancient times to the god of the Spring. As it approaches Damascus, but before it leaves the *Wady Barada*, the river, now of considerable volume, is subjected to a succession of dams, whereby its waters are turned off right and left into canals. Of these there are six, making with the main stream seven,¹ 'rivers' for the watering of Damascus and district. These canals pass off at different levels, so that at *Rubweh*, the mouth of the valley, one finds as he passes out five streams to the right of the road, and two to the left. As a matter of fact, very few visitors have taken the trouble, or had the opportunity, to observe this; and in many travellers' accounts, both ancient and modern, only two, three, or maybe four streams are mentioned.

Commencing with the canals on the right bank of the river, we find high up on the cliffs—

(1) The *Nahr Daiwané*, ديوانى.—This arises above the village of *Dummar*, and supplies a large mill near there. It contains² a comparatively

¹ Eight, counting the '*Akrabani*, which branches off just inside the modern city.

² The remarks on the condition of the canals were written on the spot some four years ago.

small quantity of water, through want of repair and consequent leakage. It passes through deep tunnels in the solid rock in many places, and was made to hold much more water than it does at present. As it turns out towards the plain, in the direction of the village of *Darayya*, which it was apparently made to supply, it contains little water, and is much overgrown with reeds.

Some 10 feet or more lower down is the—

(2) *Nahr Mezzaweh*, مززوه.—This at present contains a somewhat larger volume of water than the *Daiwané*; in places it passes through rock tunnels, but it is chiefly an open channel; at present it is a good deal overgrown with reeds, etc. It goes to the village of *Mizzeh* and the gardens beyond.

(3) Below this again is the *Nahr Kanawat*, قنوات—the River of Canals, literally. This stream, of course, leaves the *Barada* a good deal further down than the two before mentioned. For any who go to Damascus, I may mention that I have noted that it arises 'close to the railway signal-box where the road crosses the railway.' It contains also much more water than the channels above. It passes east of the new barracks, runs parallel with the new railway along a covered-in channel, and passes into the city by a fine old Roman aqueduct, now half hidden by the high level of the road beside it, and thence supplies a large section of the city with water.

(4) The *Banias*, بانياسى, is also a large and important canal: it arises near the mouth of the *Wady*, and passing east of the *Merj*, at several spots traversing rock tunnels, it enters the city about half-way between the *Kanawat* and the *Barada*, and supplies another large section of the city.

As these canals, at any rate the ones of importance, are from time to time emptied by diverting the waters in order that they may be cleaned out, the inhabitants know well enough, to their cost very often, from which canal their houses are supplied.

(5) The main stream—the *Barada*, بردى,—would be much smaller than it is but for the continual leakage into it from its canals on each side. It passes from the *Rubway* through some gardens, and emerges at the *Merj*,—a large open meadow,—where it runs beside the high road (the French

diligence road) until it reaches the Serai Square. Here it plunges beneath a bridge, *not* (as Dr. G. A. Smith¹ has it) to pass 'in lesser conduits and pipes to every house and court in the city,' but to give off the canal 'Akrabāne (عقرباني) which runs 'between the walls,'—that is, between the sites of the two lines of walls which protected this northern side of the city. It emerges a little farther on, after passing under the Serai Square, and runs along the moat of the north wall of the city until it reaches Bāb Tuma. Here it leaves the city to wind among the gardens, and finally, with much of the water of other channels also, it loses itself in the great marshy lakes to the east of the city.

The two remaining canals, those on the left bank, are both large and of elaborate construction. They are, in many places, built up of masonry to a great height against the steep cliffs.

(6) The *Taura*, طوراً, or more correctly, طوراً, the lower of the two, arises not far up the valley. At *Rubway* it makes a remarkable dive through a tunnel in an obstructing ridge of cliff. On reaching the open it works north-westward, making a great sweep round the western flank of the city. It passes chiefly through gardens, but supplies the western suburbs outside the ancient city walls. It moves on as a shallow stream with muddy banks, overhung with trees, to water the land beyond the city, and, like the Barada, terminates in the lakes.

(7) The *Yazid*, يزيد.—This, the largest and highest of the canals, leaves the Barada near *Hameh*. On reaching the *Rubweh* it makes a wider sweep northward than the *Taura*, almost, one might say, skirting the foot of the northern hills. It flows through and supplies the suburb of *Salyheh*, and passes to the villages of *Harista*, *Dūma*, etc.

The Arabic historians,² Idrasi, 1154 A.D., and Dimashki, 1300 A.D., give almost identical names to these channels. The Yazid, Thaurah, and Barada are identical. The Banias is called the Banas by Idrasi, and the Balniyas by Dimashki. Banas is probably the ancient name, which has become corrupted to Banias through some confusion with Banias, the site of Cæsarea Philippi

and source of the Jordan. The Mezzaweh is called by both the Kanat et Mizzeah, after the village it supplies, and the Dairané is the Adayah of Idrasi and the Darayyah of Dimashki—all practically the same. The only doubtful one is the *Kanawat*, which, though so called by Dimashki, must correspond to either the Nahr *Sakt* or the Nahr *Yashkūr* of Idrasi; the 'Akrabani may be the other.

It is evident that these canals are of extreme antiquity, especially those on the right bank, as without them the site of the city of Damascus would be a waterless desert, intersected with one green-fringed river—the Barada.

When we turn from the Barada we find but one other river in the Damascus district. This is the '*Awaj*—the 'brawling little Awaj,' as the late Dr. Wright called it. It seems to have fared badly in his descriptions, the reader's prejudices against it being excited by the mention of the large number of 'toads, tortoises, frogs, and leeches' that surround any one venturing to bathe in it. I shall not attempt a detailed description of the crooked Awaj (that will be found fully in Dr. Porter's works), but it is far more attractive than would be supposed. Rising from the very heart of Hermon at '*Army*, or, by its other head, from the south-west slopes of that great mountain near *Beit Jenn*, the Awaj has as clear and fresh a beginning as any river in the district. The two branches unite at *Sasā*, and the stream runs a very crooked course through the plain south of the *Jebal el Aswad*, under the modern bridge on the Damascus-Mezerib Railway, and on to the southernmost of the marshy lakes of Damascus. It is true that in the latter part of its course it is muddy, but that is no drawback to its usefulness. Even to-day it is used for irrigation purposes, and one canal still passes towards the city; but it is evident that in old days its waters were much more utilized. Remains of old aqueducts are found to-day, and the south end of the *ghútah*, which evidently should be watered from it, is now, for want of water, little cultivated, and a marked contrast to the immensely fruitful area supported by the sister stream, the Barada.

I have said there are but two 'rivers' of Damascus, but I should perhaps add that a small stream coming down the *Wady Helbon* has by some been claimed to be the Pharpar. To me this identification appears to be impossible, and the

¹ *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*, 7th ed. p. 646.

² See *Palestine under the Moslems*, by Guy le Strange (Palestine Exploration Fund).

comparison of such a streamlet with the Jordan absurd.

Putting this aside, there are at least four proposals that have had, or have, their day. At the middle of last century I find¹ that the Barada was supposed to be the Pharpar, and the Awaj the Abana. I am unable to say on what grounds this identification was made; but I agree with a still earlier writer who states that the first mentioned, the Amana (or Abana), was certainly the more important, and therefore of these two must be the Barada.

Secondly, we find the two fountains² 'Ain Funduk (or Barada) and 'Ain Fejeh suggested as the two rivers; but it seems to have been made by those who relied on false descriptions of the locality.

Lastly, we have the two rival popular views of to-day—that of the late Dr. Wright³ and that supported by Robinson,⁴ Porter,⁵ and I know not how many others. Dr. Wright availed himself of so many opportunities for bringing his views to the front, and did so with such assurance and enthusiasm, that they have been widely adopted in spite of their not having (as he himself says of Porter's views) 'a single claim, logical or archæological, to be so honoured.'

Dr. Wright's view was briefly this, that the Abana was the Canal Baniyas, and the Pharpar the Canal Taura. For the elaboration of his views I must refer the reader to the *Expositor*, vol. iv.,⁶ 1896. Briefly his arguments are—(1) that the word Baniyas (he calls it Abanias) is like the word Abana; (2) that the Taura, inasmuch as it supplied the best baths of the city, must have been the Pharpar; (3) that the Awaj, being too muddy for a satisfactory bath, could

¹ John Wilson, *Lands of the Bible*, 1847; Kitto, *Geography of Palestine*, 1850.

² *Descriptive Geography of Palestine*, by S. Schwarz, translated by Isaac Leaser, 1850.

³ Wright in *Expositor*, 1896, vol. iv.; *Leisure Hour*, 1874; *Palmyra and Zenobia*; 'Bible Society's *Handbook of the Bible*,' etc. Also Sir C. W. Wilson in *Smith's Dictionary of the Bible* (1893), vol. i. p. 3; *Oxford Companion to the Bible*, p. 110; Armstrong's *Names and Places* (Palestine Exploration Fund).

⁴ Robinson's *Researches*, vol. iii. pp. 446, 447.

⁵ Porter's *Four Years at Damascus*, vol. i., 1855; *Journal of Sacred Literature*, Nos. 8 and 9 (July and October), 1853.

⁶ The passages quoted below are either from this source or from Dr. Wright's *Palmyra and Zenobia*.

not have been the Pharpar; (4) that his views are supported by local tradition; (5) that an Arabic version of the Bible, published in 1545, supports his views; and (6) that his view is supported by Benjamin of Tudela.

Against the first argument two objections may be urged. The name Amana is now generally accepted instead of Abana; and secondly, the name Abanias, on which Dr. Wright laid so much stress, is certainly *not* the name of the canal in question. All the best modern authorities give the name as Baniyas. I myself, after much inquiry, never found any trace of a name Abanias. Further, I have just received a letter from the Rev. J. Stewart Crawford, who, in addition to having been born and brought up in Damascus, has spent many years there as a missionary. He says, 'I have never heard the Canal Baniyas called Abanias. I have inquired of Moslems since getting your note, and none of them ever heard "Abanias."' "

In the old Arabic writers the name always appears, so far as I know, as Banas or Balniyas.

I cannot help thinking that some Damascenes had endeavoured to please Dr. Wright by furthering his views with a piece of fictitious nomenclature!

2. The identification of the Pharpar seems to rest on no grounds at all—mere guesswork. The Taura is by no means one of the most important canals for *the city*. The Kanawat, Baniyas, and the Barada are all more important. The Taura is entirely cut off from the city proper by the main stream. As to the 'western suburbs, luxurious and healthy,' they rest on no historic or antiquarian grounds, and at such a time of political unsettlement are, to say the least, highly improbable. It may be pointed out, too, that Dr. Wright entirely ignores the main stream, the Barada itself, which must always have been a prominent object in the city.

When first I became acquainted with Dr. Wright's theory I thought perhaps that I might find evidence that once there were but two rivers entering Damascus, and these, the Barada, bifurcated into the Baniyas and the Taura; but of this I find none. Dr. Wright indeed himself admits, 'There need be no question that the same,' *i.e.* seven, 'rivers with various names flowed through the city in the days of Naaman and Eliaha.' Is there not, too, an almost insuperable difficulty

in associating the rivers of Damascus as contrasted with the Jordan with *canals*, artificially made, and emptied and filled periodically at will? The fact that *Nahr*, i.e. river, is prefixed to the names of these canals adds nothing to Dr. Wright's argument, as it is used for almost any running water.

3. Much of Dr. Wright's argument is founded on the idea that Naaman, captain of the host of Syria, was chiefly engaged in considering what river would give him the cleanest bath! Surely the question of the purity of the water is entirely beside the point. The thousands of pilgrims who annually throng the banks of the Jordan for a dip in its sacred waters are not greatly concerned that its waters are loaded with sediment, or that it is a dangerous river for a swim. I imagine Naaman may have had two thoughts in his mind: (1) the relative powers of the local gods of the two districts, and (2) the usefulness of the rivers. The first, and very probably the only thought, lies behind the whole story. Was not his pride humbled at having to submit to the God of Israel? Did he not connect that God intimately with the land,¹ and doubtless also with the river of that land?

But if the second thought was also present, how truly he spoke, that is, if we may judge of such early days by what we know since. Were not Amana and Pharpar (if the Barada and the Awaj) better than all the waters of Israel in the immense area of fertility—the wealth of the whole kingdom—produced by their widely spread waters? Where in Israel could such rivers be shown?

This wide outlook on his country's gods, or his country's possessions, or both, is surely more worthy of a general than thoughts of 'the crystal waters that flowed through his court, and had so often refreshed him in his marble bath when he returned weary and dust-stained from his campaigns'²

4. With respect to local tradition, I venture to say it is all against Dr. Wright. The only local opinion he quotes is that of the late Dr. Mashaka³—a learned Protestant, no doubt, but not a native of the city (I understand that either he himself or his father came from the Ionian Isles). Mr. Crawford in his letter to me says, 'I never found natives with any ideas about the Pharpar except what they got from *Frangies*.'

5. The Arabic Version of the Bible published in 1545 seems after all to be at the root of the whole thing, and all that can be said is that the translator appeared to hold the same views as Dr. Wright as far as the Pharpar is concerned; but whether he had ever visited Damascus or seen the rivers is an open question. Because a translator substitutes for Amana and Pharpar the words Abana and Taura, it is no proof of any carefully reasoned out identification. I would prefer to quote against this the newly published *Arabic Biblical Dictionary*, edited by Dr. Post of Beyrout, in which Porter's identification is unquestioningly adopted.

6, and lastly. Dr. Wright claims that the pilgrim Benjamin of Tudela supports his views. He wrote in 1163 A.D., and his writings have been translated into English. Let me quote what he says, and the reader who has followed the description given above will be able to see how far the pilgrim's account supports Dr. Wright, or indeed tallies with the account of the rivers given, nine years before, by the Arabic traveller Idrisi. He writes:⁴ 'The rivers Amana and Parpar, the sources of which are in Mount Hermon (on which the city leans), run down here: the Amana follows its course through Damascus, and its waters are carried by means of pipes into the houses of the principal inhabitants as well as into the streets and markets. . . . The Parpar runs between the gardens and orchards in the outskirts, and supplies them copiously with water.'

A footnote, added perhaps by the translator, says Amana = Barady: Parpar, now called, El Faige. I can see nothing in all this to support Dr. Wright's theory.

In conclusion, let me briefly recapitulate the positive reasons for identifying the Amana with the Barada, and the Pharpar with the Awaj.

In Damascus as a district there are but two rivers; in ancient time undoubtedly both these were of essential importance to the city's prosperity, as the whole district was irrigated by their waters; both of these rivers arise from the roots of Hermon, and both end in similar marshy lakes to the east of the city, and were therefore fairly comparable with the only other river rising from Hermon, the Jordan, which also, it may be noticed, ended in a lake; in the rivalry between

¹ See 2 K 5¹⁷. ² *Expositor*, vol. iv. p. 296. ³ *Loc. cit.*

⁴ *Early Pilgrims in Palestine* (Bohn's edition).

the two countries, Palestine and Syria, the great rivers of the two countries must have been prominent objects of comparison; in many respects the 'rivers of Damascus' must have, to a Syrian, appeared far finer than the comparatively useless though larger and longer Jordan.

With respect to the two rivers themselves, the larger, more important, and the one that must under all circumstances have been mentioned first, must have been the present Barada, which therefore is the Amana. Some slight support to the identification of the Pharpar may be derived from the present name *Jebal Barbar*, in the neighbourhood of one of the tributaries of the Awaj. I think Dr. Wright is quite correct in saying the 'Wady

Barbar' and also, I may add, the *Nahr Barbar* which figures large in the Palestine Exploration Map, have no existence. Mr. Crawford, who has unusual facilities for knowing this district, also tells me, 'I have never been able to find a native who said "Nahr Barbar." The river you and I crossed near *Ain esh Shaara* takes its rise at *Uruch* and sweeps around the base of *Jebal Barbar*, which everybody knows by that name. There is no *Wady Barbar*, and the river is not known by that name in any of the villages near its source.'

On the whole, modern names do not help us much, and I think a satisfactory identification can more surely be obtained on the broad lines given above.

Recent Foreign Theology.

The New Edition of 'Schürer.'

AMONGST those books which, by no figure of speech but in the most literal sense, are indispensable to the student of Scripture, all competent judges will accord a place to Schürer's *Gesch. d. Jüd. Volkes*, or *History of the Jewish People*. The frequency with which, in our Bible dictionaries, commentaries, etc., we find the reference *G.J.V.* or *H.J.P.* is the best testimony to the reputation of the book. It is some time since vols. ii. and iii. appeared, and were noticed by us in these pages, and many have been waiting with eager impatience for the publication of vol. i. This has now happily been issued from the press, and when the Index, which is promised shortly, makes its appearance, we shall be provided with all that we need in this department of study for many years to come. The general character of a work so well known needs no description. Accordingly we will confine ourselves to a few points that distinguish the new edition.

As in the case of the other two volumes, the principal feature of the new edition of vol. i. is found in its additions. These have enlarged the

volume by more than a hundred pages. They have been necessitated partly by the fresh literature that had to be taken account of, and very largely by the numerous recent discoveries of inscriptions and papyrus texts. Witness, for instance, pp. 65-70 (on the history of the persecutions of the Jews at Alexandria), and pp. 514 ff. (*ἀπογραφαί* in Egypt). Similarly, the extremely valuable account of Josephus has been expanded from twenty-five to thirty pages.—The burning question of the shekels and half-shekels attributed by many numismatists to Simon the Maccabee is investigated afresh, and the author shows even more inclination than before to assent to the view of such experts as Reinach, Imhoof-Blumer, and Babelon, that these coins really belong to the period of the rebellion, 66-70 A.D. In this he is at one with Professor A. R. S. Kennedy in his article 'Money' in vol. iii. of Hastings' *D.B.*, an article by the way which our author describes as a 'sehr gute Zusammensetzung.'—The Excursus on the Census of Quirinius occupies thirty-five pages as against thirty in the previous edition. In view of Professor Ramsay's defence of the accuracy of Lk 2, as put forward in his book, *Was Christ born at Bethlehem?* and in his recent articles in the *Expositor*, many will turn with interest to ascertain what is Schürer's final verdict. He sees no reason to alter his former conclusion that St. Luke has perpetrated a twofold slip: (a) in attributing to Augustus the order that

¹ *Geschichte des Jüdischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi*. Von E. Schürer, ord. Prof. d. Theol., Göttingen. Dritte und vierte Auflage. Erster Band: Einleitung und politische Geschichte. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs, 1901. Price M.18; bound, M.20.