

## ARTICLE VIII.

## NOTES ON BIBLICAL GEOGRAPHY.

By E. Robinson, D. D. Professor at New York.

## I. THE A'WAJ, THE SECOND RIVER OF DAMASCUS.

IN the Number of this work for Nov. 1848, p. 760 sq. there are extracts from a letter of the Rev. Wm. M. Thomson of Beirût, describing some antiquities on the route to Damascus. At the close he spoke of having on his return traced to its sources the river *A'waj* (the crooked), probably the ancient Pharpar; and held out the hope of further information in respect to it. The following letter relates chiefly to that journey. I subjoin a few notes, comprising former notices of this stream, and the reasons for regarding it as the Pharpar of 2 Kings 5: 12.

Beirût, Nov. 29, 1848.

"You were pleased to express a desire for the remainder of my hurried journey to and from Damascus; and if I had supposed that the latter half led me over the region least known and therefore most interesting, I would have been more particular at the time in my observations, and more prompt in writing.

"I will dismiss the *city* of Damascus with one or two remarks; as it is well known and visited by all travellers. There are more extensive remains of antiquity in it, than is generally supposed. Not far from the site of the great church of St. John, (in which also are large antique columns and foundations,) are the remains of an immense building, constructed of heavy stones and evidently very ancient. It is at present about fifty-three paces long on the west side; and, on a stone about twenty feet from the ground, is a long Greek inscription, which I copied.—The great *castle* is built of stones having a *bevel* somewhat like the Phœnician. It is, however, evidently Saracenic; and has smooth cut stones mingled with the bevelled.—At the place where the Barada breaks through the mountain into the plain of Damascus, is a long Cufic inscription, thirty-five or forty feet high up in the perpendicular face of the mountain. I have got a splendid fac-simile of this curious relic of early Mohammedan times; the only one of the kind I have found in all my rambles. I may send a copy of this beautiful inscription, with a translation, at some future time.—Now for the ride home.

"April 19, 1848. Passing out of Bâb Allah, the south-western gate of Damascus, I entered at once upon the great plain which stretches away to Haurân and the desert. In an hour and a quarter came to Dârâya; where is a large square ruin, said to have been a convent (Deir), as most ruins are christened. This is the first place irrigated from the *Nahr A'waj*. In half an hour more reached a deep canal of water, in many places carried under ground by a good tunnel. Another hour brought us to Jûn; on a hill west of which is an old deserted castle named after the village. Here begins the trap rock formation, which continues throughout Haurân. Thirty-five minutes from Jûn is the bridge over the great canal of the A'waj; and in twenty-five minutes more I reached the Khân esh-Sheikh on the bank of the river itself. The Khân is a large square caravanserai, built of black compact lava. From this to Sa'sa' is three hours. During the last hour, the perfect level of the plain is broken by low hills and abrupt gullies; and small tributaries from Jebel esh-Sheikh begin to fall into the A'waj. The river is about as large as the Barada before the junction with the fountain Fjy. The largest of these tributaries is called es-Sâbirany, from a village at the base of the mountains called Beit Sâbir. Sa'sa' may be regarded as the point of union for all the tributaries of the A'waj. Various streams from the south, south-west, and west, here unite; and the river, full grown, begins its meanderings across the vast plain, in a general direction north-east, towards Damascus,—an endless series of windings through boundless fields of wheat, now in its glory. The great highway to Palestine and Egypt appears always to have passed along the line of our ride to Sa'sa'; and I noticed frequent traces of the Roman road. Along this road travelled caravans in the days of the Patriarchs; and caravans to Mecca, Jerusalem, and Egypt, follow still the same track.

"Sa'sa' is a fortified town, with large Khâns all in ruins. The walls are twenty-five or thirty feet high, built of trap rock and faced with smooth cut limestone. The figure of the city is square; and the corners of the walls were strengthened and defended by round towers. The whole is less than a mile in circuit. A large ruined mosk is the most conspicuous object within the walls. The villagers are all Muslims, a sad set of villains, who would cut your throat for a piastre. They have had a bloody quarrel lately; and, living on the borders of the desert, they have frequent fights with wandering Arabs and dogged Druzes. Shibly Aryon, the famous Druze chief who repeatedly defeated the whole Egyptian army in the Ledja, took Sa'sa', killed the guards of Ibrahim Pasha, and plundered his large stores laid up here for the army.—It must be nearly thirty miles from Damascus to Sa'sa'. We rode rapidly six and a half hours; part of the time on the gallop.

"I had often heard of people freezing to death on this plain. Many of

the troops of Ibrahim Pasha, and many horses, are said to have perished in this way in a single night. My experience during this day removed all my scepticism on this point. When we issued from Bâb Allah, a pleasant south wind barely sufficed to render the burning rays of Syria's sun endurable. As we advanced the wind rose and blew the dust, in whirling eddies, high into the air. Soon we put on our cloaks. The wind rose to a tornado. We were obliged to tie our cloaks around us with ropes, and our hats tight down with handkerchiefs. To keep warm we undertook to walk; but could not stand against the wind. It began to rain and hail. We put our horses to the gallop; and in an hour got into Sa'sa'. My Arab companions had already become stiff with cold and hardly able to speak. I had a great fire kindled; and by hot tea and friction they were restored. But had we been in the open desert, and obliged to pass the night without shelter or fire, I think some of them would have died. And this was the 19th of April.

"April 20th. Started for Baniâs in a direction nearly west, over rolling volcanic plains well watered and clothed with wheat, extending to the great fountain of Menbej. This fountain issues from a low cave beneath a hill of pudding-stone. There is no village near it. Many years ago I heard from an Arab sheikh of Haarbâ, that at certain periods this fountain rose from a great depth in the earth, threw out great quantities of fish on the plain, and then subsided. In Damascus, Dr. Meshaka told me that the water came out with a loud noise, like the roar of cannon; that at certain times the water was blood-red; and that it threw out immense quantities of fish, etc. At Sa'sa', and at the fountain itself, they told me that late in autumn the fountain dries up; that after the heavy rains of December, it returns with a loud noise deep in the cave; that the water is bloody at first, and crowded with fish. I examined the cave as well as I could; it being now full of clear cold water, swarming with fish, and very deep. A man at the place told me, that even when the stream is dry they cannot go into the cave; as the descent from the very mouth is almost perpendicular. Stones rolled down appear to fall into an abyss of water.

"I suspect there are several reservoirs or pools under this pudding-stone projection of Jebel ash-Sheikh; one at least of the interior ones acting upon the principle of the syphon; which, put in play, sends its large volume of water, with sudden and noisy violence, down a succession of waterfalls, into the pool immediately below the mouth of the cave. This may account for the suddenness, violence, and noise, attending the return of the stream. When the pool at the mouth of the cave is filled up, these precipices, causing the waterfalls, are covered; and the noise ceases. Probably some of these precipices are of trap rock highly col-

ored with oxyde of iron or manganese ; and this will account for the red color of the water at first. To this cause, I know, may be ascribed the blood of Adonis which sometimes tinges the Nahr Ibrahim.

“ So much for Menbej ; which sends forth a large mill-stream, completely covered with long and gracefully trailed sedge-weed, altogether unique in appearance. The water unites with the Nahr Jennány, which comes down from Beit Jenn, a village high up in a wild gorge of Jebel esh-Sheikh, an hour and a half from Menbej, a little south of west ; and the united stream passes by Sa’sa’.—I think there can be no reasonable doubt, that the A’waj is the second river of Damascus. It waters ten times the arable land that the Barada does ; though the other alone passes through the city.

“ Passing through Mazra’at Beit Jenn, at the termination of the gorge we began in earnest to climb the heights of Jebel esh-Sheikh, over vast fields of trap rock ; and in two hours reached the summit of this pass, near a small village called Hádr. The descent towards the Háleh, by Sahita, Mejdél, and the castle of Bâniás, to the town of this name, took three and a half hours. We passed the lake Phiala a little on our left. The whole ascent was on trap rock, near the junction of the limestone, which constitutes the towering summits of Hermon. Those heights rose steeply on our right ; and to-day, at least, were battling with a wild snow-storm. At our elevation, it was a cold rain ; but the snow was whitening the cliffs within a bow-shot of us. It was a gloomy, sour ride, with now and then an opening into the sullen sublime. The view over Gilead and Bashan and the plain of Damascus was, at times, very grand and very desolate.

“ At Bâniás there had been no rain ; it was a glowing *summer* evening. In three short hours we had descended from Arctic snows and storms to the balmy breezes, sweet birds, and sweet flowers of the tropics. It is a prodigious come-down, to the level of the Háleh.

“ I reached Beirút in two days of hard riding from Bâniás, by the ordinary route.”

Yours, truly,

W. M. THOMSON.

NOTES.—1. The route of Mr. Thomson from Damascus to Bâniás, seems to have been precisely that of Irby and Mangles in 1818. As they passed from Sa’sa’ westward, “the first part of the road,” they say, “led through a fine plain, watered by a pretty, winding rivulet, with numerous tributary streams, and many old ruined mills ; from whence we began to ascend over a very rugged and rocky soil quite void of vegetation, having in some places traces of an ancient paved way, probably the Roman road lead-

ing from Damascus to Cesarea Philippi. As we ascended we had the highest part of Jebel Sheikh on our right. We found the snow in some places of considerable depth, and difficult to cross with our horses." This was on the 24th of February. In descending to Baniâs, they had the lake Phiala close upon their left. They do not mention either Menbejer or Beit Jenn; though they must have passed near to both.—Burckhardt, travelling in 1810 from Baniâs to Damascus, appears to have followed nearly the same route reversed, as far as to Beit Jenn; though he does not speak of Phiala. He describes Beit Jenn as situated an hour and a quarter below the summit of the mountain, on the east side, in a narrow Wady, at a spot where the valley widens a little. A quarter of an hour further down is 'Ain Beit Jenn, a copious spring; and after another half hour, the valley opens upon the plain on the eastern side of the mountain. Burckhardt did not at that time visit Sa'sa'; but took the route from Beit Jenn, by way of Keft Hauwar and Katana, to Damascus.<sup>1</sup>

2. The part of Jebel esh-Sheikh which Mr. Thomson speaks of climbing, above Beit Jenn, is the lower ridge which branches off from the lofty Hermon proper, towards the south, and is called by Burckhardt Jebel Heish. Further towards the south it sinks down into a broad swell of high table land; and is there crossed by the usual caravan road from Sa'sa' by el-Kuneitrah to the bridge of the Jordan. Burckhardt says that from el-Kuneitrah, "the ground continues to rise, until we reached the chain of [isolated] hills, which here form the most conspicuous part of the mountain Heish. The ground being here considerably elevated above the plain of Damascus and Jaulôn, these hills, when seen from afar, appear like mountains; although when viewed from their foot they are of very moderate height. They are insulated; and terminate at the hill Tell Faraa, towards the plain of Jaulôn."<sup>2</sup> With this agree substantially the accounts of Schubert and Wilson, who speak of a plain of table land and of single hills; but not of a chain of hills.

3. Burckhardt, in speaking of the A'waj lower down, at Kesweh, gives its name correctly; but as he passes along its banks below Sa'sa', he calls it the Sâbirâny.<sup>3</sup> It appears from Mr. Thomson's account, that this latter name belongs strictly to a tributary of the A'waj. Some travellers have copied Burckhardt; while others name the stream according to the place where they happen to be; as Nahr Sa'sa', Nahr Kesweh, etc.

4. Burckhardt speaks, at Kesweh, of "the river A'waj;" and describes it, half an hour below Sa'sa', as running "in a deep bed of the Haurân black stone."<sup>4</sup> Irby and Mangles merely mention it as "a fine stream." Monro, in 1833, describes it<sup>5</sup> as "a rapid stream flowing towards Damascus, which, being increased by others in its course, forms the Pharpar,

<sup>1</sup> Trav. p. 45 sq.<sup>2</sup> P. 314.<sup>3</sup> P. 53, 312.<sup>4</sup> P. 53, 312.<sup>5</sup> II. p. 54.

one of those rivers which have ever been the pride of the Damascenes; while the Abana, issuing from the mountains near to the city, is now called the Barada." According to Schubert,<sup>1</sup> the A'waj at Sa'sa' is "a small lively river." Dr. Wilson, who rejects the idea of its being one of the rivers of Damascus, because it does not water the city itself, speaks only of its course as "rather notable in a geological point of view. The basaltic and cretaceous rocks meet at it on the same level. The first of these forms its right bank, and the second its left. The basalt ceases where the Damascus road leaves it."<sup>2</sup> I do not remember to have met with any further notices of the A'waj, beyond the mere mention of it by some name.

5. In 2 Kings 5: 12, Naaman the Syrian says: "Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel?" In the Hebrew Keri, and in the marginal reading of the English Version, the first river is written *Amana*; and this is probably the correct form, as affording a good etymology, 'the perennial,' comp. Isa. 33: 16. Now by "rivers of Damascus," it is hardly to be assumed that Naaman intended streams running through or watering the city itself. He doubtless meant rivers of the territory or plain of Damascus; just as he did those of the territory of Israel. It is then not difficult to identify the *Amana* with the Barada; first, because the larger and more important stream would naturally be first mentioned; and then, because we find a part of Anti-Lebanon adjacent to Hermon also called *Amani* (Cant. 4: 8), corresponding to that portion of the mountain where the Barada has its sources, and taking its name apparently from the stream. This leaves the Pharpar to be referred to the A'waj, which beyond all question is the second river of the plain of Damascus, both in size and importance. I was led to this conclusion some years ago, while investigating the waters flowing east from Anti-Lebanon; but have not found this view brought forward by any one before Monro, as quoted above. The notices of Mr. Thomson go strongly to confirm the view.—There are only two other hypotheses respecting the second river. One regards it as a branch of the Barada, where that river is divided up into many channels in order to water the city of Damascus and its environs. The other refers it to the fountain and stream of el-Fijeh, described by Mr. Thomson in his former letter,<sup>3</sup> which joins the Barada after a course of a hundred and twenty paces. These hypotheses were obviously mere shifts to escape a difficulty, while no appropriate second river was yet known. But why they should be persisted in at the present day, it is more difficult to see.

<sup>1</sup> III. p. 271.

<sup>2</sup> Lands of the Bible, II. p. 324.

<sup>3</sup> Biblioth. Sac. 1848. p. 763.

## II. NATURAL BRIDGE OVER THE LITANY OR LEONTES.

In April, 1844, the Rev. Eli Smith and Rev. S. H. Calhoun left Jerusalem by way of Jericho, intending to pass up the valley of the Jordan to Tiberias. They proceeded as far north in the valley as the mouth of Wady el-Fâria'; beyond which they were unable to obtain guides or any other aid from the terror-stricken Arabs. They therefore turned their course by way of Sândr to 'Akka; and from thence took their way across the mountains, by Rumeish and Bint Jebeil, to Kadesh of Naphtali and Baniâs, by a route before unexplored. They returned to Beirût by way of the bridge of Khûrdela and the castle esh-Shûkif; continuing along upon the higher parts of Lebanon until they came opposite to Sidon, where they descended. A full journal of the whole tour was kept by Mr. Smith, a copy of which is in my hands. It is exceedingly valuable; and we may hope that it will one day see the light.

In May and June of the same year, Mr. Smith resided for some weeks at Hasbeiya; and made excursions into the neighborhood and also to Damascus. Full notes of all these were kept by him; of which, too, I have a copy.

A third journal, by the same hand, is made up from notes of various excursions into different parts of Lebanon; mainly the portion lying in and between the tracts drained by the Nahr el-Kelb, north of Beirût, and the 'Awâly, which enters the sea near Sidon. Within these limits there is scarcely a village which has not been visited and its position described. It is by far the most minute and exact topographical account of Lebanon, its features and its villages, which has ever been drawn up.

In the journal at Hasbeiya there is brought to notice for the first time the natural bridge over the Litány, which Mr. Smith visited and described. It is understood that he directed the attention of the officers of the late Dead Sea expedition to this bridge; who also visited it and brought away a drawing. It is due to Mr. Smith that his account, as the earliest, should be laid before the public. Some other extracts are prefixed, describing the nature of the country and the singular channel of the Litány.

In passing up Wady et-Teim, and not far above the fountain of Hasbeiya, Mr. S. left that valley and crossed the intervening ridge to the valley of the Litány, near the little Metâwileh village of Kilya. "On the left," he says, "a hill projected [from the ridge just crossed] towards the bold side of Lebanon, which but for the Litány it would have joined. Just there, however, the river rushes through an awful chasm; and soon passes Bûrghûz [with its bridge] on the further side of the hill. The village of Kilya stands just on the brink of the left bank of the river. Both banks were perpendicular, and corresponded with each other in the strata of the

rocks ; being just far enough apart for the passage of the stream, and probably hundreds of feet high. In a similar position, on the opposite bank, was another little village called *Insah*. The inhabitants could converse with each other across the river ; and, notwithstanding the steepness of the banks, they have got a footpath up and down them. The ridge we had crossed slopes gradually on this side ; and is generally arable. Beyond the stream, also, Mount Lebanon (north of the pass towards *Bürghüz*) does not come quite down to the river, but leaves an arable tract. Some distance [three or four miles] to the north, a higher tract crosses from the eastern ridge to the mountain, intersected by the river, and having the village of *Yühmur* upon its top, just on the left bank of the stream. The region thus defined has the general form of a large basin. Through the midst of it runs the river, everywhere between the same precipitous banks. There is, most of the way, no depression of the ground as you approach the banks, the undulations of surface on each side being the same ; so that, whenever you lose sight of the chasm of the river, you would not suspect that the whole was not one continuous surface. So deep a channel, formed with so little disturbance of the contiguous region, seemed to me not to be the work of an earthquake ; but the result of the gradual wear of a waterfall. I should add, that everywhere it seemed to have selected the lowest part of the tract."

From *Kilya* Mr. S. proceeded to *Yühmur*, a *Metawilah* village on the higher tract north of the basin, in an hour and three quarters, by a somewhat circuitous path. At *Yühmur* he goes on to say :

"We were now at the most majestic part of the wonderful chasm. Its banks I judged to be at least a thousand feet in height ; higher than at any other point. The rock, being less firm in its texture than below, had, in many places, been worn away or had slidden down ; thus widening the distance between the banks, but adding much to the variety and beauty of the views presented. At the bottom, like a silvery ribbon, rushed the stream from rapid to rapid, foaming among the rocks, and decked with the gay blossoms of the oleander along its margin. It was a scene to be visited at leisure and studied for hours. But we hastened on.

"I could not, however, resist the temptation to turn aside and examine a curiosity of which I had heard at *Hasbeiya*—a natural bridge across the *Litány* ; which, from its name *Kúweh*, I expected to find an elevated perforation through the rock. After traversing the open fields beyond [north of] *Yühmur* for a time, I descended into a *Wady* which came down from the right. The declivity soon became so steep, that I lost my confidence in the feet of my careful horse, who in innumerable defiles of Palestine and Lebanon had never yet betrayed me, and I dismounted. The *Wady* soon descended by a bound into the river far below ; and I, turning to the



left around a lofty precipice, continued my descent, having the precipice above and the awful chasm below, with the river roaring at its bottom, and here so narrow as to coop the stream within straitened bounds; while the opposite precipice, near at hand, rose up so high above as to exclude every prospect but the sky. I seemed to be descending into the bowels of the earth; and a fitter haunt for beasts of prey or marauding robbers I never saw. Yet even here nature had her ornaments; and the beautiful oleander smiled upon me from many a nook in the frowning precipice. At length, with knees wearied by the steep and long descent, I reached the bridge, the Kûweh. The river was still many feet below me, running in a channel worn in the rock entirely by its own friction, and so narrow and tortuous as occasionally completely to hide the water from view. The Kûweh has evidently been formed by the falling of masses of rock from the precipices above, which still threaten to throw down more. The fallen masses, spanning the narrow stream, have in time become covered with earth and bushes, and now form a bridge. It is in fact now crossed by a road; for, difficult as I had found the descent, this is one of the roads from Hasbeiya to Deir el-Kamar and Beirût. It ascends, on the other side, a declivity apparently as steep as the one I had descended; and crosses the ridge of Lebanon by a gap somewhere south of Niha."

### III. KEDESH OF NAPHTALI AND THE HÛLEH.

From the first journal of the Rev. Eli Smith, mentioned above, I extract the following account of the ancient Kedesh of Naphtali, still known as *Kedes*. The place has seldom been visited by travellers; and, so far as I know, this is the most full and exact account we have of it in modern times. A few notices are added respecting the streams of the Hûleh.

On the 23d of April, 1844, Messrs. Smith and Calhoun left the direct road from 'Akka to Hasbeiya at Bint Jebeil; and turned more to the east in order to visit Kedesh. Passing over a high rolling region of country, they came in an hour and a half to the village of Mâlikiyeh, situated in a beautiful though not large plain, in which were growing some very large and old terebinth trees. This plain forms one of the first offsets or steps of descent on this side towards the Hûleh. On the eastern hills, which rise but little, they stopped.

"We had here, considerably below us, another *step* towards the Hûleh, in which, directly beneath us, was the plain of Kedes, separated by hills and a Wady from another plain on the north. We descended immediately and rapidly to Kedes; which we reached, directly at the foot of the hill, in two and a half hours from Bint Jebeil.

"Kedes, the once ancient Kedesh of Naphtali, is on a Tell, resting against the side of the hill which we had descended, with a plain of uncommon loveliness lying before it. On the highest part of the Tell, over which we first passed, is the modern village. A step down from this towards the south-east, an offset projects for some distance towards the plain; but yet at a considerable height above it. Here we encamped in the midst of grass of a luxuriant growth. On the south-west side of the Tell the plain extended up in the form of a narrow valley; in which, just at the foot of the Tell, bursts out a copious spring of the most limpid water. On the opposite side, lower down than the projection just mentioned, there projects another and larger offset; in the centre of which, at its junction with the main Tell, is also another beautiful fountain.

"On this lowest part were two ruins, of large hewn stone, apparently of Roman origin. The walls of one, in part, and one door-way, were standing; but we saw no traces of columns. Between the two ruins were some uncommonly large sarcophagi, which we conjectured to be older, but we could discover no inscriptions; one or two of them were double. In the village above, we saw one or two columns lying on the ground.

"Everything indicated that this was once a large and important place. And well it may have been; for I have rarely seen a place with which I was so much charmed. The abundant supply of water has been mentioned. The plain, three or four miles long, from north to south, and a mile wide, is perfectly level, and has the fertility of an alluvial bottom. The eastern hills in front are low and partly wooded. They hide the Hùleh; but you see over them the vast table-land of Jeidûr, extending from the foot of *Jebel esh-Sheikh* to the *Jaulûn*, with its groves and luxuriant pasturage, and now spotted everywhere with the black tents of the 'Anazeh Arabs; while *Jebel esh-Sheikh*, with its snowy summits, rose up in all its majesty full before us.

"The present village is occupied by people from *Haurân*, who had moved over but a few months before. Previously it was nearly or quite deserted. It was interesting to remark, in this case as well as in that of *Mâliktyeh*, how the country of the *Metâwileh* is becoming the asylum of the oppressed. This is owing to the present upright and mild but firm government of *Hamid el-Beg* and *Husein Suleimân*, hereditary sheikhs of the family of 'Aly ez-Züghir, who now jointly govern the districts of *Beshârah* and *Shükif*. In passing through the territory twice, I have never heard them otherwise than well spoken of, whether by Muslims or Christians. The people here had fled from *Haurân*, to escape the depredations of the nomadic Arabs on the one hand, and the enormous exactions of the *Damascus* government on the other.

"The following bearings, among others, were here taken :

Jebel esh-Sheikh . . . . .	50
Castle of Baniás . . . . .	53
el-Khureibeh . . . . .	186
Benit . . . . .	195

"*Khureibeh* is a Tell, apparently with ruins on it, at the south end of the plain of Kedes. Just there, in a deep ravine, the Wady el-Mu'adhhamlyeh, known before in going from Safed to Bint Jebeil,<sup>1</sup> finds its way into the plain of the Hùleh at the fountain of Mellâhah. By this fountain there rises a conical peak from the superjacent mountain, which serves as an important landmark." There is some reason for supposing that el-Khureibeh marks the site of the ancient *Hazor*.<sup>2</sup>

"*Benit* appears as the point of a higher and distant table-land." It was from Benit that Mr. Smith and myself obtained a view of the basin of the Hùleh in 1838.<sup>3</sup>

The travellers left Kedes the next morning, and in half an hour reached the eastern edge of the plain. "It here extended up in a small offset into the eastern hills; but there was no outlet, nor did any appear anywhere. Indeed, this portion seemed the lowest, and was covered in part with water; which however seemed fast drying up. Coming in a few minutes to the eastern declivity of the hills, we ascended a point on the right, which commanded a magnificent view of the whole basin of the Hùleh.

"Our principal object was to discern the course of the rivers; but from this position it could not be determined. They appeared at one point, and disappeared in another; and finally seemed entirely lost in the marsh before entering the lake." Two days afterwards they were informed by an old man resident at Tell el-Kâdy, that the four rivers which enter the Hùleh, viz. that from Baniás, the Leddân from Tell el-Kâdy, the Hasbâny, and the Derderah from Merj 'Ayûn, all unite below Sâlihlyeh a large encampment of Arabs in the Hùleh, near a cluster of trees. In the afternoon of the same day they crossed the high ground above Abil, on their way to the castle of Shûkif. "This position gave us the most distinct view we had of the rivers of the Hùleh. It produced the conviction of certainty, that the rivers do not continue distinct to the lake. We could clearly see the junction of two of them, the Hasbâny and that from Baniás, at the point above specified, below Sâlihlyeh; and these form but one stream below that point. I was not sure but that the Hasbâny and Leddân unite a little higher up; but Hasbeyians well acquainted with the Hùleh assured me afterwards, that the *three* rivers form a junction at the

<sup>1</sup> Bibl. Res. in Palest. III. p. 370.

<sup>2</sup> See Biblioth. Sac. May 1847, p. 403.

<sup>3</sup> See Bibl. Res. in Palest. III. p. 339 sq.

same point, and that it is called *el-Kaiteh*. The Derderah, on the contrary, wanders off towards 'Ain Belâtah, and is lost from the view.

"*Difneh* is a small collection of cabins used by the Arabs for granaries, with a cluster of trees near it, in the direction of the Hûleh, and bearing 202° from Tell el-Kâdy. Our guide, an old man from Baniâs, thought it had its name from an Arab burying-place in the neighbourhood. The etymology will allow of this; but it seems also to be a resemblance to *Daphne*." Many have supposed this to represent the *Daphne* (*Δάφνη*) mentioned by Josephus (B. J. 4. 1. 1.). But the reading of Josephus is far more likely to be an error for *Δύνη*, which is read in Antt. 8. 8. 4; seeing it required but the accidental insertion of a single letter. Josephus too speaks (B. J. 1. c.) of the place as having in it the fountains of the lesser arm of the Jordan; which is not true of *Difneh*. The old Arab's etymology is probably the correct one.

#### IV. KADESH-BARNEA, "IN THE UTMOST BORDER OF EDMOM."

From the northern Kedesh we pass at once to Kadesh Barnea in the southern extremity of Palestine. Since the discovery of the great valley of the 'Arabah by Burckhardt, most commentators and geographers have sought the position of the place somewhere in that valley, not far south of the Dead Sea, "in the uttermost border of Edom," Num. 20: 16. In the *Biblical Researches*,<sup>1</sup> I have assigned the reasons for probably fixing it at the fountain el-Weibeh, or some other fountain not far distant, on the western side of that valley, north-west of Mount Hor and in full view of it, and at the foot of the western mountain by which all the ancient roads from the valley and from Petra and Edom ascended into the south of Judah. Those reasons it is not necessary to repeat here.

In the appendix to the work of Mr. Williams, entitled *The Holy City*, Lond. 1845, is printed a letter from his companion, the Rev. J. Rowlands, who travelled from Gaza through the desert by way of el-Khûlahah (Elusa) and Rubaibeh to Suez, giving an account of his supposed discovery of a *Kûdes* or Kadesh near his route, and quite in the interior of the desert. Until recently it has seemed to me, that the very fanciful and amusingly credulous character of the whole narrative would put every one upon his guard; and furnish in itself the best exposition of the fallacy of the whole matter. But the idea has since been taken up by Prof. Tuch of Leipzig, as falling in with a theory of his own on another topic;<sup>2</sup> and his article has been translated by Prof. Davidson, and published in England.<sup>3</sup> Winer, also, in the new edition of his *Realwörterbuch* (art. *Kadesh*)

<sup>1</sup> II. p. 583, 610.

<sup>2</sup> *Zeitschr. der D. Morgenl. Gesellsch.* I. p. 179.

<sup>3</sup> *Kitto's Journ. of Sac. Lit.* July 1848. p. 90.

adopts the same view, relying on the supposed identity of the name. Hence it has become worth while to bring the matter to the test of examination.

Mr. Rowlands appears in his writings, and is described by those who know him, as a very amiable man; but fanciful, visionary, and full of credulity. A letter written some years ago mentioned respecting him the following incident: "He said, that in passing Mount Carmel he observed a tumulus, as to which he at once conjectured that it covered the remains of Baal's prophets (1 K. 18: 40); and on inquiring of his Arab guides, he was assured that it was a fact! And his eyes glistened as he proceeded to tell of several other like things he had discovered in those parts. His letter in Williams's Appendix, is a tissue of moonshine." After this, no one can wonder that he should have found Kadesh, his "much-talked-of, and long-sought-for Kadesh," to his "entire satisfaction!"

Mr. Rowlands went first from Gaza to Khūlaah; in which he thinks he finds the ancient *Chesil*; though very few now question its identity with *Elusa*. From thence to Ruhaibeh his route was of course the same with that of Mr. Smith and myself in 1838, in the opposite direction. A quarter of an hour before coming to Ruhaibeh, he found an ancient site, "only a few traces of a city, pottery, etc." called *Sepāta*; this he holds to be the ancient *Zephath* or *Hormah*. We passed over the same ground, but neither saw nor heard of any such place; and, most assuredly, Mr. Rowlands heard no such name, for the word *Sepāta* is an impossible one in Arabic; that language not having the sound of *p*. Ruhaibeh itself, he "has not the slightest doubt whatever," is the *Rehoboth* of Gen. 26: 22. I had already pointed out the identity of the name; but with the remark, which still holds good, that Isaac's Rehoboth was simply a well with no mention of a city, and was situated apparently, according to the context, much further north.<sup>1</sup>

In ten hours with camels from Ruhaibeh Mr. R. came to el-Muweileh, a brackish fountain in a Wady of the same name. This is a usual station on the direct route between Sinai and Gaza; but lies a little west of our route; though it is mentioned by us and inserted on our map.<sup>2</sup> The name *el-Muweileh* is a common one in Arabic, and signifies "salt places." Mr. R. writes it *Mouīāhhi*, and finds in it nothing less than Hagar's *Beer-lahai-roi* of Gen. 16: 14. He "has no doubt about it whatever;" and "the grand settling point is its present name;" that is to say, the Hebrew *Beer* (well) has been changed into Arabic *Moi* (water); and then of course *lāhhi* corresponds to the *lahai-roi* of the Hebrew! This is the proof; and such is the philology in which we are invited to put faith.

<sup>1</sup> Bibl. Res. in Pal. I. p. 291.

<sup>2</sup> Bibl. Res. in Pal. I. p. 281, 561.

The next place is the Kadesh in question. "The water of Kûdés or Kûdés, called 'Ain Kâdés, lies about twelve miles (or four and a half hours by camel) to the E. S. E. of Moilâhhi." Where then is this Kûdés? The reader, perhaps, will be surprised to learn, that the spot here pointed out is mentioned both by Seetzen and in the text of the Biblical Researches, and is inserted on our map. If he will turn to the map he will find marked, in that direction and about that distance from el-Muweileh, a fountain called 'Ain el-Kudeirât; it is a little east of our route, and is described by us according to the accounts of the Arabs.<sup>1</sup> The *Kudeirât* are a tribe or clan of Arabs in this region, who water their flocks at this fountain, and sometimes also as far north as Beersheba.<sup>2</sup> Seetzen lodged at one of their encampments.<sup>3</sup> The conclusion is inevitable, that the name *Kûdés* as here presented by Mr. Rowlands is the mere blunder of a tyro in Arabic for *el-Kudeirât*; nor is it to be wondered at in one who could first make *Moilâhhi* out of *Muweileh*, and then form it into the representative of *Beer-lahai-roi*.

As therefore the whole hypothesis of a Kadesh in this place rests upon the supposed identity of name; and the said name is thus shown to be a mere blunder; it might perhaps be sufficient to let the matter rest here. There are however certain other considerations bearing so strongly upon the point in question, independently of any name, that it may not be labour lost briefly to present them.

1. We read in Ex. 13: 17, that in the exodus of the Israelites out of Egypt, "God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return into Egypt: but God led the people about through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea." The object of this circuitous route was to avoid the Philistines; and therefore in approaching Palestine they came first to Kadesh. Now if Kadesh was at 'Ain el-Kudeirât, or anywhere in that region, then the direct and usual route from it into Palestine is and always was by way of Beersheba. But this would have brought the Israelites directly along side of the Philistines; and thus have frustrated the very purpose for which God led them by so great a circuit. Besides, if here was to be the point of their approach to the Promised Land, they might just as well have taken the route of Jacob when he went down from Beersheba to Egypt; and the whole circuit, and the visit to Kadesh itself, were unnecessary and without purpose.

2. In Num. 20: 16, Kadesh is described as "in the uttermost borders of

<sup>1</sup> Bibl. Res. I. p. 280.

<sup>2</sup> Bibl. Res. II. p. 619.

<sup>3</sup> Ritter, Erdk. XIV. p. 837 sq.

Edom." Now, at that time, as all agree, the territory of Edom was limited to the mountains on the east of the 'Arabah. At a later period, indeed, in and after the exile, when the Nabatheans from the east pressed upon the Edomites, the latter passed over and took possession of the south of Judah as far as to Hebron; where they were afterwards subdued and incorporated with the Jews.<sup>1</sup> But in the time of Moses they had no territory west of the 'Arabah; otherwise, the Israelites in journeying three times between Kadesh and Ezion-geber must have passed twice through Edom; which we know was not permitted.—It follows, that if Kadesh was at 'Ain el-Kudeirât, it lay more than forty miles distant from any part of Edom; and was therefore in no sense "in its uttermost border."

3. According to the scriptural account, both the spies and the Israelites in entering the Promised Land from Kadesh, had immediately to ascend a mountain.<sup>2</sup> If Kadesh was at 'Ain el-Webeh or in the vicinity, all this is a natural and exact representation; since the ascent from the great valley begins immediately back of that fountain. But if Kadesh be sought at 'Ain el-Kudeirât or anywhere in that region, the language of Scripture is wholly inapplicable. The tract between the latter spot and Beersheba is an open rolling country; there are swells, but no mountain, to be crossed; and none to be ascended until we reach the mountains of Palestine proper on the north of Beersheba towards Hebron; a distance from 'Ain el-Kudeirât of about sixty miles, or four days' march for troops.

4. While at Kadesh the Israelites sought permission from the king of Edom to pass through his territory, in order to shorten their journey around the Dead Sea; and when this was refused, they "turned away," and "journeyed unto Mount Hor," Num. 20: 14—22. If Kadesh was at or near 'Ain el-Webeh, all this again is easy and natural. Over against that spot is the broad Wady el-Ghuweir, affording an easy ascent into the land of Edom; while in the south-east towers the lonely summit of Mount Hor, toward which they "turned away," and at whose base they encamped after a day's march. But if they were at 'Ain el-Kudeirât when the refusal of Edom came, they did not "turn away" at all; but, in proceeding to Mount Hor, they marched for at least three days, through a mountainous and pathless region, in precisely the direction they must have taken had Edom granted their request. But as "Edom came out against them with much people, and with a strong hand," such a march is hardly supposable.

5. The testimony of Eusebius and Jerome, if it does not serve definitely to fix Kadesh at 'Ain el-Webeh, is yet wholly inconsistent with any position of it on the high desert west of the 'Arabah. In the Ono-

<sup>1</sup> See *Bibl. Res.* II. p. 557 sq.

<sup>2</sup> Num. 13: 17. 14: 44, 45. Deut. 1: 24, 41.

masticon, art. *Cades*, they write as follows: Euseb. *Κάδδης Βαρνή, ἐρημος ἢ παρατεινούσα Πέτρα πόλι τῆς Παλαιστίνης*. Jerome, translating and correcting: "*CADES, ubi fons est judicii, et CADESBARNE in deserto quae conjungitur civitati Petrae in Arabia.*" Also in art. *Barne*; Euseb. *Βαρνή, αὐτὴ ἐστὶ τῆ Κάδδης Βαρνή ἐν ἐρήμῳ τῆ παρατεινούσῃ Πέτρα πόλι*. Jerome: "*BARNE, haec ipsa est, quae et Cades Barne in deserto, quod extenditur usque ad urbem Petram.*" Again in his Comm. on Gen. 14: 7, Jerome writes: "*Significat locum apud Petram, qui fons judicii nominatur, id est Cades.*"—At that time Kadesh was a known place; for both Eusebius and Jerome speak of the sepulchre of Miriam as still shewn there in their day. It must have been situated on the route between Hebron and Petra.

NOTE. It may not be out of place to mention, that the name Kadesh under different forms has been not unfrequently found of late years. So Mr. Rowlands says that el-Muweileh is also sometimes called 'Moi-lähhi Kadésah;' from which I infer that it may occasionally be known as 'el-Muweileh el-Kudeirât,' i. e. as a watering place of the Kudeirât. Messrs. Williams and Rowlands, also, when at a point of the high ground some hours west of the Tell of Madûrah, and overlooking the south-western part of Wady Fikreh, had pointed out to them "some hours to the west, in a valley, the site of *Kaddese*, the Kadesh of Scripture." Now this could hardly have been 'Ain el-Kudeirât, the Kâdès of Mr. Rowlands; which is at least thirty miles distant from their position on an air line, and towards the *south-west*. Bertou likewise says he found 'Kadessa' (Kadesh) at the Tell of Madûrah itself.<sup>1</sup> Earlier than all these, Seetzen speaks of a dry 'Wady el-Kdeis,' on his route between Gaza and Sinai; but it is difficult to fix the locality of it. At an encampment of the 'Azâzimeh the Wady and fountain el-'Ain were described to him as lying a few hours towards the east; and from thence he travelled one and a half hour on the usual road from Hebron to Suez, before reaching Wady el-Kdeis. This would seem to place it some fifteen or twenty miles south-west of el-'Ain. At any rate the Wady can have no relation to Mr Rowland's 'Kâdès;' nor has any one else heard of the like name in that quarter.<sup>2</sup>

## V. POSITION OF THE ISRAELITES AT SINAI.

A discussion has of late years sprung up, not only in respect to Sinai itself, but likewise respecting the position which the people of Israel must have occupied before the mount. This latter point has been brought into consideration only in recent times; the earlier travellers and writers appear never to have thought of it.

<sup>1</sup> Bibl. Res. II. p. 662.

<sup>2</sup> See Ritter XIV. p. 839 sq.



The decision of both these questions, so far as they can be decided at all, must have reference to and depend upon the specifications in the 19th chapter of Exodus. The verses which have a bearing upon the points before us, are the following:

V. 10. And the Lord said unto Moses, Go unto the people, and sanctify them to-day and to-morrow, and let them wash their clothes, (11) and be ready against the third day: for the third day the Lord will come down in the sight of all the people upon mount Sinai. (12) And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, Take heed to yourselves that ye go not up into the mount, or touch the border of it: whosoever toucheth the mount shall be surely put to death. (13) There shall not a hand touch it, but he shall be surely stoned or shot through: whether it be beast or man, it shall not live.

V. 16. And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunders and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount. . . . (17) And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God; and they stood at the nether part of the mount. . . . (21) And the Lord said unto Moses, Go down charge the people, lest they break through unto the Lord to gaze, and many of them perish. . . . (23) And Moses said unto the Lord, The people cannot come up to mount Sinai: for thou chargedst us, saying, Set bounds about the mount, and sanctify it.

Chap. 20: 15. And all the people saw the thunders, and the lightnings, and the noise of the trumpet, and the mountain smoking; and when the people saw it, they removed and stood afar off.

In this language there are implied *three* specifications, or particulars, which must all be present in any spot answering to the true Sinai:

1. A mountain-summit, overlooking the place where the people stood.
2. Space sufficient, adjacent to the mountain, for so large a multitude to stand and behold the phenomena on the summit.
3. The relation between this space where the people stood and the base of the mountain must be such, that they could approach and stand at "the nether part of the mount;" that they could also touch it; and that, further, bounds could appropriately be set around the mount, lest they should go up into it or touch the border of it.

Let us now apply these tests to some of the leading hypotheses.

Jebel Serbâl, which has recently been very strenuously and ingeniously put forward by Lepsius as the true Sinai, is at once excluded by its utter want of adaptedness in the *second* and *third* particulars. According to the special map of Lepsius himself, and the description of Mr. Bartlett, there is no place near that mountain where a multitude could stand or even approach the base.<sup>1</sup>

In like manner Jebel Kâtherin, proposed by Rüppell, is excluded, and for the like reasons. For although a large multitude might by possibility

<sup>1</sup> See Lepsius *Reise nach der Sinai*, spec. Map. Bartlett *Forty Days in the Desert*, p. 54 sq.

be congregated in the valleys either on the east or on the west of this mountain; yet its base is so irregular and shelving, and extends so far, that the circumstances required in the third particular are wholly wanting.

There remains the isolated ridge of Sinai, strictly so called at the present day; having on its southern end the peak of *Jebel Músa* with an open region towards the south-east, and at its northern end the lower summit *es-Súfsáfeh* impending over the plain *er-Ráhah*. The question is narrowed down to this, viz. On which of these two summits was the Divine glory manifested, and on which of the tracts below did the people stand?

In 1838 the Rev. Eli Smith and myself spent a day in visiting and exploring the ridge of Sinai, in reference to this very question. We ascended both *Jebel Músa* and *es-Súfsáfeh*; though *Lepsius*, who must have read our account very cursorily, represents us as unable to climb the latter. We had no prejudices to warp our minds in any direction; not even the poor motive of desiring to differ from our predecessors; for at that time the question had never been put forward. After full and earnest consideration, the conviction forced itself upon us both, that all the particulars and circumstances above enumerated, existed very strikingly in connection with *es-Súfsáfeh* and the plain *er-Ráhah*; but did not thus exist in respect to *Jebel Músa* and the tract on the south. In the former case, the naked and perpendicular mountain, impending over the plain at the height of twelve or fifteen hundred feet, and rising abruptly from its base, so that one may approach and touch it; the plain itself shut in like an *adytum* by stern mountains, and enlarged by a recess on the west and by the opening of *Wady esh-Sheikh* on the east; these satisfied all the conditions of the question; and the language of Scripture, as applied to them, became singularly descriptive and beautiful. As the southern summit (*Jebel Músa*) is not visible from any part of the northern plain, we felt that if the people stood in *er-Ráhah*, then *Jebel Músa* could not be assumed as the place of the celestial phenomena; because Scripture describes these as having been manifested "in the sight of all the people," *Ex. 19: 11. 20: 18*. The observations and measurements made by us, as well as our conclusions, are fully described in the *Biblical Researches*.<sup>1</sup>

It has not as yet been denied, I believe, that the statements on which our conclusion was based as to the northern summit and plain, were correct; nor that there is, in all the circumstances, a very striking correspondence to the specifications of Scripture. But yet there attaches to *Jebel Músa* such an idea of veneration, either as a higher summit or as the seat of tradition, that many are still desirous to regard it as the scene

<sup>1</sup> Vol. I. p. 130, 140 sq. 154 sq. 157 sq.

of God's wonders and the giving of the law. To this end the place of the people has been sought in the tract on the south of that mountain. Laborde, in his *Commentaire Géographique* published in 1841, was the first distinctly to propose this view; and he gives a plan of the southern tract, but so distorted and incorrect that no one would ever recognize it. Other travellers have examined the ground with more care, as Mr. Kellogg in 1844, and Strauss and Krafft in 1845; and, on the report of the latter, Ritter in his great work<sup>1</sup> has adopted the same view. They have doubtless established,—what no one has ever called in question,—the *possibility* of a standing-place for the Israelites in that quarter. At the same time they appear to me to have overlooked several circumstances, which militate strongly against the *probability* of such a position; circumstances, too, which leave the third particular or test above specified wholly out of view. The weight of Ritter's authority gives an importance to the subject, which it would not otherwise possess.

As to Jebel Mûsa itself: If its claim is supposed to rest on its greater elevation, then we ought rather at once to assume Jebel Kâtherln, which is much loftier. If it depends on tradition, then it remains to be shown that there is any tradition at all reaching back beyond the fourth or fifth century. The Scriptures afford no evidence that the later Jews had any tradition on the subject. The flights of steps and the many inscriptions on and around Jebel Serbâl are supposed to indicate, that this mountain was at one time regarded as the true Sinai. When too the angels bore the dead body of St. Catherine to this peninsula, it may be supposed that they intended to deposit it in the most sacred place; and if so, then Jebel Kâtherln was at that time regarded as the holy mount. Indeed, there is nothing which definitely connects tradition with the present Sinai, before the establishment of the convent by Justinian in A. D. 527.

In respect to the application of the three particulars, above specified, to Jebel Mûsa, there is here of course the mountain, and also space before it on the south-east sufficient for all the people. But as to the *third* particular,—and this is the point I wish to bring out,—it may well be doubted, whether the relation between this space and the foot of the mountain is such, that bounds may be supposed to have been necessary, lest the people should *approach* and *touch* the mount. It is just this point, which those who adopt this view seem to me to have overlooked.

Mr. Smith and myself sat for hours upon the summit of Jebel Mûsa examining this very question in all its bearings. And I suppose it will be admitted, that, from whatever part or tract there is a view of the mountain from below, there will be an equally full view of that tract from the summit above. There is visible in the south-east the head of Wady es-

<sup>1</sup> Erdkunde, Th. XIV.

Sebâ'yeh, spreading itself as a narrow plain (Burckhardt calls it here a broad Wady, p. 539, er-Râhah he calls a plain, p. 596;) among what appeared to us as naked *gravel* hills; which, however, Mr. Kellogg says are *granite* hills. There is also the similar bend of another valley, Wady el-Wa'rah, running south-east, towards the gulf of 'Akabah. But let the space in these heads of vallies be larger or smaller,—and I think it has been not a little exaggerated,—there were two main reasons which led us to believe, that this was not the position occupied by the Israelites before the mount; viz. *first*, the distance from the base of the mountain, which at the nearest point cannot be much (if any) less than half a mile, and for the most part is much more; and *secondly*, the rough and impassable character of the intervening ground, consisting of abrupt, gravelly (or, still better, *granite*) hills, accumulated apparently around the base in irregular masses of low broken cliffs, precluding all idea of easy approach, or of the setting of bounds.

This general view appeared to us so convincing, that we neglected to examine more particularly the immediate base of Sinai on this side. But it has since come to light that there is here a deep ravine between the mountain proper and the low adjacent cliffs, completely separating them and the open ground beyond from the mountain; thus demonstrating still more strongly the correctness of our view. Such a valley Ritter infers (p. 593) from the language of Schimper, who speaks of passing in his botanical excursions quite around the ridge of Sinai, by following several irregular vallies with only some hills between. It is, however, most fully described by Mr. Kellogg in the Literary World, of Feb. 19, 1848; accompanied by a sketch on wood, which is "inaccurate," as he admits, and is also greatly exaggerated.

Mr. K. had ascended for about five hundred feet the *south-western* face of the Mountain of the Cross or Jebel ed-Deir, in order to obtain a good view of the peak of Sinai, which he was anxious to sketch.

"Here," he says, "close at my right, arose, almost perpendicularly, the holy mountain. . . Clinging around its base was a range of sharp, upheaving crags from one to two hundred feet in height, which formed an almost impassable barrier to the mountain itself from the valley adjoining. *These crags were separated from the mountain by a deep and narrow gorge*; yet they must be considered as forming the projecting base of Sinai [?]" \* \* \*

"I remained at work until nearly sunset, when I discovered people coming towards me through the deep ravine between the mountain of Sinai and the craggy spurs which shoot up around its base. I feared they might prove to be unfriendly Arabs; but, as they came nearer, I discovered them to be my companions and their guides, who were returning from Mount St. Catherine." \* \* \*

Returning the next day, with a companion, he says: "From Wady es-Sebâ'yeh, we crossed over the granite spurs, in order to pass around the southern border of Sinai into Wady Leja. These spurs are of sufficient size to have separate names

among the Arabs. Around them were generally deep and rugged gorges and ravines or water-courses, whose sides were formed of ledges of granite nearly perpendicular. . . . Whilst crossing over these low hills, my friend pointed out the path between them and Sinai, through which he had passed yesterday on his return from St. Catherine. . . . This ravine around Sinai becomes a deep and impassable gorge, with perpendicular walls, as it enters Wady Leja, passing through the high neck connecting Sinai with the mountain on the south. Descending into el-Leja, under the rocky precipice of Sinai, we found the Wady narrow, and choked up with huge blocks of granite, which had tumbled from the sides of the adjacent mountains. We could now see the olive-grove of the deserted convent el-Arbain."

Had Ritter been acquainted with the nature of the ground and the ravine here described; and especially could he have stood for half an hour on the summit of Jebel Mûsa; I cannot help thinking, that the authority of his great name would hardly have been given to the view in question.

One other point may be noticed. It would appear from the language of Scripture, that Moses ascended the mountain in the presence of the people; and the bounds were set (in part) lest the people should "go up into" the mount (Ex. 19: 12, 20, 24). Now on its southern side the peak of Jebel Mûsa is perfectly inaccessible; and it can be ascended only from near the convents in the vallies on each side, out of sight of any space on the south. But from er-Râhab, a ravine leading up through the steep face of es-Sûfâfeh, affords a way of ascent directly in sight of the whole plain. This is not improbably the *Derb el-Sarîh* of Pococke.<sup>1</sup>

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## ARTICLE IX.

### GREEK INSCRIPTIONS.

[Addressed to one of the Editors.]

*Yale College, March 26, 1849.*

MY DEAR SIR:—I send you copies of inscriptions transcribed by Mr. Thomson during the tour, his account of which is contained in the *Bib. Sac.* for November 1848. The inscriptions are, I regret to say, unimportant in themselves, and in an extremely corrupt state. They ought, however, to be published, as a slight contribution to the epigraphic de-

<sup>1</sup> See Pococke, *Descr. of the East*, I. p. 144. Ritter, *Erdk.* XIV. p. 542.