

Church. She recognized no distinction between Jew and Gentile. We see now what within the Church is the equality of all her members before God ; all are prophets, priests, kings, martyrs. There may be differences of degree, but in essential privileges all occupy the same footing. The supposed Judaic apostle, long accustomed to the differences of the theocracy and the temple and the synagogue, has now at least obviously surmounted his Judaic feelings and prepossessions, and has been able to throw himself into the heart of a system all the members of which are called, when we think of the most fundamental conditions of their state, to the discharge of equally important duties, and the enjoyment of equally precious privileges.

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### THE ROUTE OF THE EXODUS.

WHEN I wrote the article on the Route of the Exodus, published in the April number of the EXPOSITOR, I did so merely as an exponent of Canon Scarth's theory, which seemed to me to fulfil the requirements of the Bible narrative more nearly than any other that had been proposed. Since then I have considered the subject more carefully, and some of the very objections urged by Mr. Whitehouse (in his Paper contained in the EXPOSITOR for June) had occurred to my own mind before reading his statement of them, and had led me to form an independent theory, differing slightly from those both of Canon Scarth and of Brugsch Bey, but supported in its rendering of the meaning of the term יַם־סוּף *Yam-Sûph* by first-rate Hebrew scholars. I shall not now repeat more than is absolutely

necessary what I then said on the points on which I still agree with Canon Scarth, but will offer a few remarks on the objections urged by Mr. Whitehouse to the Canon's theory; and, in so doing, will briefly state the view which I myself have been led to form—a view which has been submitted to and approved by some very competent judges.

All Egyptologists hold that the modern fishing-village of Zan or San (this word being the Arabic, and Tanis the Greek, form of Zoan) occupies the site of a town called after his own name by Rameses II.; and most authorities are of opinion that this town was the Rameses of Exodus xii. 37. This being granted, the great distance of Tell el Maschuta from San (involving a march of nearly thirty miles), is greatly against its identification with the first halting-place of the Israelites.

Succoth is a Semitic word signifying *booth, tent, or tent-camp*, and might well be supposed to have been bestowed by the Hebrews (see Genesis xxxiii. 17) on the place where they probably made their first encampment under *booths* of reeds (like those used as dwellings to the present day by the people living near the southern shore of Lake Menzaleh), were it not a well-ascertained fact that the whole district known under the Greek conquerors of Egypt as the Sethroitic Nome was called Suko or Sukkôt by the Semitic aggressors and shepherd tribes from the East, who had pastured their flocks in this region, and named it from their *tents*, before Jacob and his sons arrived in the Delta.

It is therefore probable that Moses merely localized to the particular spot on which the host he led first encamped, the designation he found applied to the region in which it was situated. However this may be, it is certain that the Succoth of Exodus xii. 37 has no necessary connexion with the Pithom of Exodus i. 11. The latter name, which means "Abode of Tum," was doubtless shared by two or

three towns containing temples consecrated to the worship of Tum, or the setting sun, a favourite deity with the ancient Egyptians. I do not dispute the identification of Tell el Maschuta with one of these towns; but, as the fugitives would assuredly endeavour to avoid towns, this seems to make it the less likely to have been the site of Succoth.

Canon Scarth agrees with Mr. Whitehouse in considering Etham to have been one of the line of frontier fortresses extending between latitude 30° and 31°. The portion of this wall of fortifications lying nearest to the Mediterranean appears to have borne the Semitic name of Shûr, which was thence bestowed upon the waterless wilderness to the east of it ("the wilderness" of Numbers xxxiii. 8, mentioned before "the wilderness of Etham," as if distinct from the latter). This northern part of the line of forts, being most exposed to the attacks of the Semitic invaders, would naturally have early acquired a Semitic designation, whilst the wall of defences south of Canon Scarth's Etham (the modern Kantara), together with the desert extending for some distance south-east of that place, continued to bear the Egyptian name of *Khetam*, rendered in Hebrew by Etham.

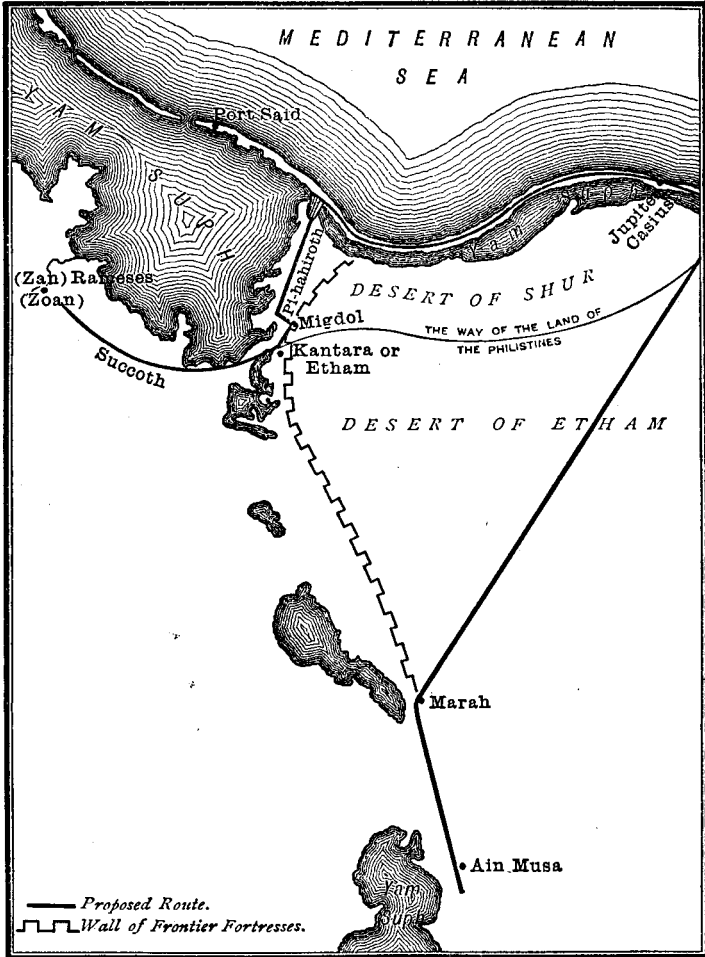
Past Khetam and Migdol ran "the way of the land of the Philistines;" but, "though that was near," the Divine command came to Moses to turn back from the frowning fortress barrier, and, leaving Migdol on the right, to encamp between it and the sea; for "God led the people about through the way of the wilderness of the יַם-סִיפִי *Yam Sûph*." In the meaning attached to this term *Yam Sûph* lies the main point at issue. It is first used in Exodus x. 19; and, if we allow the modern Zan or San to be the ancient Rameses or Zoan, we must I think agree with Canon Scarth that the *Yam Sûph* into which the locusts were cast by a strong *west* wind could be none other than

Lake Menzaleh ; for, as he points out, " a *north* wind would be needed to blow them forty or fifty miles over the desert to reach the Red Sea at Suez." The Hebrew word *Sûph* conveys a meaning almost as broad as that attached to our English word *weeds*, and includes marine as well as fresh-water plants ; for in Exodus ii. 3 we find it applied to the *flags* in which the ark of bulrushes was hidden, and in Jonah ii. 5 to the *seaweeds* wrapped about the prophet's head. The Red Sea was and is famous for its *seaweeds* ; Lake Menzaleh for the luxuriant growth of *flags* and reeds fringing its shores ; so that *Yam Sûph* is equally applicable to both seas. So, too, is the Greek term ἐρυθρὰ θάλασσα ; for Lake Menzaleh was and is a *red sea*, being (as I stated in my former paper) often tinged with reddish sand, especially at the time of the inundation of the Nile, one or more of whose branches flowed through it at the time of Moses as at the present day.

We ourselves apply the same descriptive names to several localities ; we have, for instance, more than one Whitesand Bay in the county of Cornwall alone ; but we are more careful to avoid repetition where the definite article precedes the noun, and therefore *the* Red Sea stands by itself. The ancients were, however, far more vague than we are in their use of geographical terms ; and, when we find Herodotus applying the appellation ἐρυθρὰ θάλασσα to the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, we need not wonder at the Hebrews classing Lake Menzaleh, as well as the Red Sea with its Elamitic Gulf, under the one designation of *Yam Sûph*. They may in this have followed an ancient tradition that the Red Sea and Lake Menzaleh were once one ; and, in so doing, they would be supported by geological evidence of the more northerly extension of the Red Sea in former ages ; for in the bed of Lake Timsah fossil shells have been discovered of a species now confined to the Red Sea, though, at the time of the Exodus, the Red

Sea had receded almost to its present limits, leaving only the Bitter Lakes, Lake Timsah, and one or two lakelets to mark where it had once flowed.

The levels and the configuration of the country between



Lakes Menzaleh and Sirbonis render it a matter of extreme probability that, in the days of Moses, the two lakes were joined by a narrow strait, so as to form one *Yam Sûph* or

Sea of Weeds (flags or reeds being understood as the *weeds* here indicated by the word *Sûph*). It will be seen on reference to the accompanying sketch map, that, according to the route proposed, the Israelites kept Lake Menzaleh, or the *Yam Sûph*, close upon their left from the hour of their leaving Rameses till their encampment at Pi-hahiroth; thus "God led the people about through (or *made them to turn toward*) the way of the wilderness of the *Yam Sûph*."

Though mature deliberation has led me to reject Canon Scarth's theory of the march to Port Said and back again over the same ground, yet the rejection of this after-march into a *cul de sac* need not involve the refusal to acknowledge the marvellous manner in which the localities he has fixed upon for Pi-hahiroth, and for the crossing-place of the Israelites, fulfil almost every requirement of the narrative in Exodus xiv. as none proposed by other authorities have hitherto done. Yet even with regard to the Canon's theory, no less than with regard to that of Mr. Whitehouse, an unbeliever, after looking at the ordinary modern maps of the Delta, might be ready to exclaim, "What need was there that God should have opened a way for the Israelites through the midst of the sea, when they might just as well have gone by land!" On consulting the Admiralty chart, however, he would find that the twenty miles of country lying between Lake Menzaleh and the Lake Sirbonis of the ancients are, even at the present day, by no means always dry land; but that in winter some six or seven miles of the intervening space are turned into a lake, and the level of part of the remainder is nearly thirty feet below that of the Red Sea. These and other physical features of the sandy tract bordering the Mediterranean, between Lake Menzaleh and the "Sirbonian bog," seem, as I have before hinted, to prove that, at the period of the Exodus, the Israelites, on arriving at the extreme north-east end of Lake Menzaleh, would find their further advance barred

by the strait connecting it with Lake Sirbonis. Pursued by the host of Pharaoh, and shut in to the east and south by the wilderness of Shûr, and to the west and north by the *Yam Sûph*, the Israelites were "sore afraid, and cried unto the Lord." Strange, indeed, must have sounded to them the words in which He answered their cry: "Speak unto the children of Israel that they go forward." To do this seemed to be only the exchanging of a probable death in the wilderness for a certain death by drowning; but swiftly followed the Divine command, with its re-assuring promise: "Stretch out thine hand over the sea and divide it; and the children of Israel shall go on dry ground through the midst of the sea." "And Moses stretched out his hand over the sea, and the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong *east* wind all that night, and made the sea dry land, and the waters were divided. And the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea upon the dry ground, and the waters were a wall unto them on their right hand and on their left."

Just at the very spot (at the north-east end of Lake Menzaleh), where Canon Scarth fixes the crossing of the Israelites, I imagine the shallowest part of the strait to have existed; and I believe the *east* wind to have caused that portion of it to have become dried up and turned into a ridge of sand, dividing the two lakes which the strait had before united; thus enabling the children of Israel to go into the *midst* of the sea upon the dry ground.

The upholders of the theory that the Red Sea is the *Yam Sûph* through whose waters the Lord opened a passage for his chosen people are obliged to maintain that the word *east* in Exodus xiv. 21 is a mistranslation, because the effect there described as having been brought about through the agency of the *east* wind could never have been produced by an *east* wind on the Red Sea.

On the other hand, observations made on the spot by

Canon Scarth prove that Lake Menzaleh is, even to the present day, driven back by an *east* wind in exactly the manner narrated in Exodus xiv. 21. The Canon's description (which I gave at full length in my former paper) holds equally good if we suppose the crossing-place to have been a narrow strait; and *this* view fulfils more literally the conditions of Exodus xiv. 21, 22, for it shews how, during the passage through the midst of the Yam Sûph, its divided waters were a wall unto the Hebrews on either hand; and how, even after their arrival at the long strip of sand forming the northern boundary of the Sea of Reeds, they would be still marching between two walls of water, the right-hand wall being formed by the familiar Yam Sûph, and the left by the Mediterranean, then first seen by the fugitives. In later times, when the strait connecting Lakes Menzaleh and Sirbonis had become more permanently dry ground, it gave access to the main route from Egypt to Syria, which traversed the narrow strip of sand to the north of Lake Sirbonis along which the Israelites marched, secured from the pursuit of their enemies by the returning waters that covered the natural bridge over which the Egyptians had expected to cross, like the children of Israel, through the midst of the sea. Many of Pharaoh's warriors fell into the quicksands that abound in the neighbourhood of the site of Pi-hahiroth: "The Lord stretched out his right hand, *the earth swallowed them*"; and of the rest "there remained not so much as one, for God blew with his wind and brought again the waters of the sea upon them" (Exodus xiv. 28, xv. 10, 12, 19). The change of the wind to the west, indicated in Exodus xv. 10, caused the corpses of the drowned Egyptians to be washed ashore at the feet of the children of Israel as they were marching along the sand bank between the Yam Sûph and the Mediterranean (Exodus xiv. 29, 30), towards the base of the hill afterwards crowned by the temple of Jupiter Casius.



After rounding the eastern end of Lake Sirbonis, the Israelites seem to have occupied three days in traversing the wilderness of Shûr, and another three days in crossing the desert of Etham, ere reaching the halting-place of Marah, in whose bitter waters we seem to recognize the modern Bitter Lakes. Here they would be again in the neighbourhood of the frontier wall; but, as the forts were not so frequent along it towards its southern end, it did not here prove so formidable a barrier as at Etham; for, having been built long before of crude bricks, it had already crumbled away wherever it was not kept in repair.

The next station to Marah, we are told, was Elim, which Brugsch places not far from the present Ain Mûsa (the "Wells of Moses"). "And the children of Israel removed from Elim, and encamped by the *Yam Sûph*." The term *Yam Sûph* in this verse (Numbers xxxiii. 10) undoubtedly applies to the Red Sea itself; and, having thus traced the wanderings of the Israelites along the shores and through the very midst of the northern *Yam Sûph*, whose *weeds* were *reeds*, we leave them encamped on the sandy margin of the southern *Yam Sûph*, whose *weeds* were the *algæ* of the ocean.

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