

BUHL'S NEW GEOGRAPHY OF PALESTINE,
AND CERTAIN GEOGRAPHICAL PROBLEMS.

PROF. BUHL, the successor of Delitzsch, has already proved himself an expert in the geography of the Holy Land. He has travelled in Palestine. In his *Studien zur Topographie des nördlichen Ostjordanlandes* he made some valuable identifications and discussed other proposals with much acuteness and information. Those who have used his edition (the twelfth) of Gesenius' Lexicon, know how much superior the geographical articles are to those in any other completed dictionary of the Hebrew language. It has been of great profit to us all to have one, who is otherwise master of the Old Testament, giving himself with such labour to topographical problems. We have therefore looked with great expectations for the complete geography of Palestine which was promised from his pen. This now appears as the tenth part of the useful series, entitled: "Grundriss der Theologischen Wissenschaften," under the name of *Geographie des alten Palästina*.¹ The ground-plan of the series forbids an elaborate treatment of the subject; detailed argument of all the problems, as well as the fascinating discussion of the history in the light of the geography, has to be avoided. Details, if they are to be given, must frequently assume the form of a mere catalogue. With these restrictions, Dr. Buhl has succeeded in producing a work of remarkable fulness and accuracy. It is wonderful how often he has been able to give at least a summary of the more important topographical arguments, although in some

¹ Von Dr. F. Buhl: Freiburg i. B. und Leipzig: J. C. B. Mohr, 1896.

cases, I think, his limits have prevented him from doing full justice to the statement of views to which he is opposed. With its fulness and accuracy the work will long serve as a trustworthy means of reference to the details both of the land itself and of the geographical literature which has been heaped upon it. Nor will the more general sections fail to give the student a just and vivid sense of the disposition of Palestine as a whole, and of her unique place in the middle of the ancient world. One notices very few misprints (on p. 52, line 7, for *setân* read *setâv*). The transliteration of Arabic and Hebrew words is successful. Dr. Buhl is to be congratulated on abandoning the barbarous *dsch* for the soft gimel in favour of *ğ*: it is time we English did the same with *j*. The map is a simpler edition of Fischer & Guthe's well-known work, with several alterations to suit Dr. Buhl's own conclusions. The plan of Jerusalem is a reproduction, also with a few changes, of that which appears in Benzinger's *Archäologie* in the same series. But on both map and plan the cumbrous *dsch* remains; and the former still reproduces the older and incorrect disposition of the valleys of Eastern Moab.

I now proceed to point out the original contributions of the volume, and to discuss some of its more debatable conclusions. I shall take advantage of a few of these to state one or two results which have recently commended themselves to me.

Dr. Buhl commences with a summary "History of Research in Palestine." In this the only emendations one can suggest are—that to the debts we owe the early pilgrim literature has to be added the list of place-names with which it provides us (p. 3); to the mediæval works, given on p. 4, Bongars' *Gesta Dei per Francos*; to those on p. 5 the monumental work of Quaresmius; and to the modern works on p. 8 the invaluable writings of English and German colonists.

In the section on the "Natural Frontiers and Disposition of the Land," Dr. Buhl might have stated in his description of the southern frontier (p. 11) that this is a case where a strict geographical definition does not do justice to the historical facts. The political significance of this region is that there was no strict physical frontier. The second chapter is on the "Surface, Form and Constitution of the Land." On p. 15 there falls to be added to the paragraph on the formation of the coast the influence of the muddy efflux of the Nile under the prevailing S.W. winds. As to p. 24, the Merj el Gharak is more than a swamp in winter: in 1891 we found it a lake even in May. At the end of the third chapter on "The Climate," Dr. Buhl adheres to the very doubtful theory of Blanckenhorn and others that the decay of cultivation in Palestine is due to a continuation within the historical period of the decrease of both moisture and cold, which we know to have begun in previous geological epochs. Benzinger¹ is correct when he says that we have no proof of the climate to-day being different from that which prevailed in Old Testament times. Any decay of woodland which has taken place must be traced to other causes.

The Second Part of the volume deals with the Historical Geography. The first chapter of this is upon the "Names and Frontiers," a full and valuable discussion of, not only the ideal, but the actual limits of Israel's territories. Among other points of interest, Buhl suggests that Hašer 'Enan, "Enclosure of Wells," is Baniyas, and not the more easterly El haḍr, as Van Kasteren has proposed. *Apropos*, I may notice here that Buhl rejects (p. 238) my proposal to identify the ancient Dan with Baniyas instead of with Tell-el-Kadi. He calls it "impossible." Yet it still remains true that Tell-el-Kadi is both an unhealthy and an indefensible site; that any tribe who, like Dan, held the north Jordan

¹ *Archäologie*, 32.

valley must have had their citadel at Banias; and that Deuteronomy xxxiii. 22 (which Buhl overlooks) speaks of Dan as *leaping from Bashan*, a description appropriate not to Tell-el-Kadi, but only to the fortress above Banias. Jerome's statement (*Comm. ad Ez.* xlvi. 18), *Dan ubi hodie Paneas*, is not conclusive, but it bears in the same direction as my proposal.

On p. 73, n. 29, Buhl agrees with Schürer that it was Aristobulus who first really conquered Galilee. But on the other side there are the facts that his predecessor Hyrcanus had his son brought up in Galilee (xiii. *Ant.* xii. 1), and that in the opening of the next reign, that of Alexander Jannäus, Galilee was already so Jewish that Ptolemy Lathyrus had great difficulty in his siege of Asochis, and was unable to take Sepphoris (*ibid.* 4, 5).

The second chapter of the Second Part deals with the "Political Division of the Land." In this Dr. Buhl does not discuss the problems of the exact size and directions of the gradual increase of the territories, *e.g.*, of Judah in the beginning of the history. He does not come to a definite conclusion about the eastern conquests of Manasseh, though he appears to follow Budde. In Roman times he says (p. 82) that Galilee was bounded on the east by the regions east of Judæa and Gennesaret, but this is to omit the fact that the political territory of Galilee included the eastern coasts of the lake.

The third chapter treats of the natural features of the country in their historical designation and significance. In the paragraph (55) on the Old Testament names for the natural features, is it correct to limit the Ashedôth to "Felsenwand"? Did not the term cover all mountain slopes and flanks? Again, was the distinction between 'ain and *be'er* more exact than that to-day between 'ain and *bîr*.

In a long note (on p. 104), Buhl opposes my definition of

The Shephelah, but apparently without a clear understanding of what that is. He quotes it as affirming that the term "Shephelah," at least so far as we have means of knowing, "signified exclusively" the low hills to the west of the Judæan range. But I have nowhere used the term "exclusively"; on the contrary I have admitted that "the name may originally have been used to include the Maritime Plain," and that "this wider use may have been occasionally revived" (*Hist. Geog.* 202 f.), e.g., as in the definition of Eusebius. Still I regard the customary application of the name to have been to the low hills, in distinction alike from the mountain range on the east and the Philistine plain on the west, and have given for this both textual and geographical reasons. The reasons which Buhl now adduces to the contrary do not appear conclusive. For (1) the testimony of Eusebius (if correct) may be dealt with as above. Nor (2) is the wider signification of the name confirmed, as Buhl thinks, by 2 Chronicles xxvi. 10: "Uzziah built towers, and digged wells in the Midbar, for he had much cattle and in the Shephelah and the Mishor." Buhl apparently argues that because the Shephelah stands with the Mishor and was used for cattle, it can only mean a low plain, like Philistia; whereas this kind of land was not used for pasture, like the high Mishor of Moab, but for cultivation. In particular, Philistia itself was not a cattle, but a wheat, country, while the low hills to the east of it are now, and probably always were, used for pasture. (3) In the lists of the different parts of Palestine, given in Deuteronomy i. 7 and Joshua ix. 1, the Shephelah and the Hoph ha-yam both occur. By confining the latter to the coast north of Carmel, Buhl makes it necessary to include the coast south of Carmel and its plain under the Shephelah. But this is to beg the question: Why should the Hoph ha-yam be so limited? Take it in its most natural extension to the whole coast, and the lists become a further

reason for limiting the Shephelah to the low hills. The Shephelah, in Joshua xi. 2, Buhl takes to refer to the coast north of Carmel, where there is no maritime "plain," unless he understands by Shephelah that between Carmel and Acco. There seems more reason, therefore, to understand by the Shephelah of Joshua xi. 2 the low hills between Carmel and the main range of Samaria, which I believe to be that described in Joshua xi. 16, as *the Shephelah of (N.) Israel*. On the other side there are texts, the force of which Buhl ignores. 2 Chronicles xxviii. 18 distinguishes the Shephelah from Philistia, and describes its cities as all among the low hills; Obadiah 19 makes the same distinction. Zechariah vii. 1 recalls a time when the *Jews inhabited the Shephelah*, a statement never true of the Maritime Plain. Or take 1 Maccabees xii. 38 and xiii. 13, one of which defines Hadid as in the Shephelah, the other as over against the plain. Let us take these obvious limitations along with the admitted geographical singularity and isolation of the low hills, and I think we have grounds, apart altogether from the Talmudic evidence, that for all practical purposes the low hills were the Shephelah.]

On p. 111 the Targum name for Hermôn, "tûr talgâ," may be compared with the modern "Jebel eth-thelj." On p. 113 there are remarks on the Waters of Merom, including the judicious observation that if these are to be identified with Lake Huleh, the word for *waters* nowhere else signify a lake; and on the name of the town Haşor. On p. 118 the word Harerim of Jeremiah xvii. 6 is referred to the waste and stony tracts now known by the name of "harra," and to the Greeks as the Trachons. On page 119 the district Şuwet is proposed for Argob. On p. 121 Dr. Buhl seeks for the brook Cherith in the W. el Himar, rejecting the W. 'Ajlun (near which in all probability Tishbe stood, and which he identifies with the Bithron of 2 Samuel ii. 29) as too much of a thoroughfare for Elijah's retreat.

On p. 122, to the statement of the Talmud that there were hot springs near Pella, Dr. Buhl may add the fact that such springs still exist a mile or so to the E.N.E. of the ruins of the town, and close by the natural bridge. I bathed in them. The mountains of Abarim had probably a more general significance than is given to them on p. 122. Besides the name compare Jeremiah xxii. 20. That the Priestly Writing limits the name to hills opposite Judah is simply due to the fact that by its date these hills were the only part of East Palestine opposite to territory inhabited by Jews. As to the statement on p. 123 on Kal-lirhoë, Conder is probably right in identifying the Nahali-el of the itinerary of Israel through Moab with the W. Zerka Ma'in, in which the healing springs are found.

The fourth chapter on "Lines of Traffic" seems to me the least satisfactory in the book, and might have advantageously been enlarged. There are missing an emphasis on the road from the Philistine Plain by Michmash to Jericho, so frequented a path in ancient and mediæval times; a clear statement of the Galilean roads, and of the three trunk roads from Beth-shan by the south-east end of the Lake of Galilee and across Hauran to Damascus, by Gadara to Bostra and by Pella to Gerasa.

The fifth chapter treats of "Towns, Villages, Castles, and the like," by provinces and parts of provinces. The following are a few of the hundreds of points touched: For the *water of the pool Asphar*, by which Jonathan and Simon encamped in the wilderness of Tekoa, Buhl reports the usual identification with the ruins and cistern of Ez-za'ferâne, south of Tekoa. This is not deep enough in the wilderness to provide a retreat for Jewish armies, who before invincible invaders were accustomed to withdraw almost to the coast of the Dead Sea, e.g., Herod the Great, and the survivors of the Siege, by Titus, of Jerusalem. I am inclined to find the Pool of Asphar in the modern Bir-Selhub, a consider-

able reservoir six miles W.S.W. of En-gedi, and near the junction of three great roads. The hills around still bear the name of Sufra. On the vexed question of Kiriath-Sepher, Kiriath-Sanna, and Debîr, Buhl rightly holds (p. 164) that "decidedly the best" solution is the usual identification with Ed-dahariye. He prefers (pp. 166-7) the identification of Kirjath-Jearim with Kiryat-el-'enab to Henderson's proposal of 'Erma. I am glad to see that he adheres (p. 169) to the Beth-horons as the name which gave Sanballat his designation of Horonite, as against Schlatter's proposal of Horonaim in Moab. In evidence he points to the LXX. of Joshua x. 10, which has the form Ὠρωνεῖν. As was to be expected, Buhl prefers (pp. 181 ff.) Kuráwa for Korea, and the Kurn Sartabeh as the site of Alexandrium.

In the Negeb, Buhl suggests (185) the identification of Sebbe the site of Masada, with the Haşar Gadda of Joshua xv. 27. On the west of Judæa he identifies the Emmaus, which Vespasian gave his veterans, with the modern Koloniyeh, N.W. from Jerusalem, and with the Emmaus of Luke, in which case the Evangelist's description of the position of the town does not agree with that of Josephus. Farther south the name Kh. Surik is pertinently quoted (195) as perhaps echoing the name of the Vale of Sorek. On p. 196, Dr. Buhl wisely declines to fix the seat of Gath.

In Samaria some interesting points are made. One of the most important is the identification (202) of the hitherto impracticable Gilgal of Deuteronomy xi. 30, where it is described as lying over against Ebal and Gerizim, with the ruins of Julêjil (cf. Schlatter, *z. Topog.*, 240 ff., 274). Much less probable is the further conclusion that here we have the Gilgal of 2 Kings ii. 1, and of the books of Amos and Hosea. Tirzah is identified, not with Talluze or Tei'asir, but with the Tiratthana of Josephus, and the suggestion made that the latter is now represented by Ettire on the west side of the Mahne plain. As to Aphek,

where the Philistines gathered before advancing to Jezreel and the Battle of Gilboa, Buhl rightly adheres to the opinion that it must have lain in Sharon. He quotes, as has been already done, the tower Apheka, which Josephus mentions as the muster-place of Jews against Romans; and prefers, for reasons of sound, the modern Baka to my suggestion, on purely military grounds, of Kakun. I have the following to add: In the list of towns conquered by Thothmes III., there is a place, Apuku, which may also read Apuki, and which is given as lying between the the group Joppa, Lydda and Ono on the South and on the North Suka, probably the present Shuweikeh and Yhm, at which the roads across to Esdraelon part company, and which may be the present Yemma, on the edge of the Samaritan hills. This would place Aphek somewhere between Shuweikeh and Ono, and that agrees perfectly with the data for the Tower of Aphek given by Josephus in *Wars* ii. 19, 1. The Apku mentioned in a fragment of Esar-haddon as thirty "double leagues" (?) from Raphia (Schrader, *K. A., T.*², 204) is perhaps the same place. No modern place-name can be quoted as echoing the old name; but two may be noted. There is a village, Fejjeh, *i.e.*, Feggeh, about nine miles N.E. of Joppa, which, however, does not lie near enough to the east limit of the plain to suit Lucian's version of 2 Kings xiii. 22. And in the list of mediæval Arab place-names about Cæsarea, quoted by Röhricht, *Z. D. P. V.*, 1896, p. 61, there occur a Şair Fuğa, and a Fağın.

In Galilee, Dr. Buhl favours (217 f.) the possibility of placing the Aphek of Joshua xii. 18, on the plateau between Tabor and the Lake, and of identifying it with the Aphek of the Syrian wars (1 Kings xx. 26, 30; 2 Kings xii. 17), and he suggests that it lay at the modern Tamre, on the caravan road from Jezreel to the East. In the great strife on the site of Capernaum he takes very decidedly the side

of Tell-hum: as "immer noch die relativ beste Lösung." He founds chiefly on the evidence of Theodosius, that it lay 2 R. miles from the well Heptagegon, which he identifies with the 'Ain et Tabigha, and apart from Theodosius he feels that Capernaum would be best sought for in the ruins described by Schumacher at 'Ain et Tabigha itself. As one who is inclined to support the claims of 'Ain et Tineh to be the site of Capernaum, I feel that Buhl has not done full justice to the case for it, and that in particular he depreciates too much the evidence of Arculf. In any case he is not correct when he says that in Tell-hum, "man sucht jetzt allgemein das N. T. Kapernaum"; for many experts still support the opinion that our Lord's city is to be sought for in 'Ain et Tineh. Dr. Buhl does not fully argue the question of Taricheæ, but he leads good evidence (228) for the southern site. Further on (242)—the gap is a little inconvenient—he comes to the same conclusion on pretty much the same evidence as myself (*Hist. Geog.*, p. 457), that there was but one Bethsaida, that on the plain to the east of the mouth of the Jordan; but he makes this very important addition, that Bethsaida, the native town, ought to be distinguished from the heathen Julias, which our Lord must have avoided as he did Tiberias, and which as a large town, according to Josephus, was incompatible with the *κώμη* that Mark viii. 23, 26 describes Bethsaida to have been. Schumacher, as Dr. Buhl quotes, had already (*Z.D.P.V.* ix. 319) stated as possible that Bethsaida was the present ruin El 'Arag, lying on the Lake and connected with Et-Tell, the probable site of Julias, by the remains of a fine road. The site Kal'at el Hös, further down the same coast, Buhl, probably rightly, follows others in identifying with Hippos rather than with Gamala. Gamala he seeks, with Van Kasteren and Furrer, in Râs el Ḥal, by the village of Jamli, across the river Rukkad.

It is in the surrounding region of Eastern Palestine that

Dr. Buhl has already made successful topographical researches on exceedingly uncertain ground. Accordingly the pages which are devoted to it are among the most valuable in this volume. I can hardly go with him in following Schumacher to identify Bêt Erre with the Bathyra or Baithyra, where, according to Josephus (xvii. *Ant.* ii. 1-3), Herod the Great settled some Jews from Babylon to keep in check the bandits of the region. It seems to me that the town must have lain nearer the bandits' refuge in the Leja; and the name may be echoed in that of Busr el Hariri, on the borders of the latter. Busr, Buhl identifies, as others have done, with the Bosor of 1 Maccabees v. 26 (253). Dr. Buhl repels (246) the identification of Kasphon with the modern Hisfin, on the ground that the passage from K to H is impossible, and prefers with Van Kasteren the combination of Hisfin with Ḥasfiya of the Talmud. Casphon of 1 Maccabees v. 36 is doubtless the same as the Caspis of 2 Maccabees xii. 13 ff., which is described as a walled fortress near a lake two stadia broad. These data suit El-Muzeirib, which is not identified with any other Bible name, and yet must have been a place of importance. I am inclined therefore to put Casphon at El-Muzeirib, especially as I do not think Buhl's argument (248 f.) conclusive for the identification of the latter with the more southerly of the two Astarôths. The Raphon of 1 Maccabees v. 37, afterwards Raphana, one of the Decapolis, Buhl seeks (249 f.) in Tell esh-Shehab, in the Wadi of the same name.

In Gilead, Dr. Buhl suggests nothing for Ibdar (255), which must have been an important site on the back of the most northerly ridge of Gilead, and on the high road from Bethshan to Bosra. May we not seek here for the site of Lo-debar? (Amos vi. 13 by Grätz's emendation). Compare the Li-debir of Joshua xiii. 15 ff. The natural position on the *back* of a hill suits the name. Dr. Buhl follows Schlatter in distinguishing a second Gadara in Eastern Palestine,

which Josephus (iv. *Wars* vii. 3) calls the capital of Peræa, and in identifying this also with the Gadara twice besieged by Antiochus the Great and conquered by Alexander Jannæus. They find this more southerly Gadara at Es-Salt, undoubtedly a modern site in need of an ancient identification, and with a well, known as Jêdûr or Jâdur (cf. p. 263). But in some of these things there is nothing more than probability. I had already (in article "Camon" for A. & C. Black's forthcoming Dictionary) identified the modern Kumem or Kumeim with the Kamun seized by Antiochus the Great along with Pella and Gefrun, between which it lies (Polyb., v. 10, 12), and with Kamon of Judges x. 5; and Buhl reaches (256) the same conclusion. He agrees (257) with Merrill in identifying 'Edun with Dion of the Decapolis, and does not think sufficient my objection from Ptolemy's definition of Dion's position. But there is surely no process that could bring 'Edun out of Dion. Buhl approves (257) Van Kasteren's identification of Istib and the chapel Mâr Elyas with the ancient Tishbe of Elijah—an identification that will be new to most English readers; while Mahanaim he looks for in Mihne.

South of the Jabbok, Buhl (262) would find Ramoth Gilead in the ruins El jal'aud, three miles from the river, and would also place here *the city Gilead* of Hosea vi. 8.

The latter identification may be correct; the former, in spite of the evidence which Buhl adduces from Eusebius (that Ramoth lay fifteen R. miles west of Philadelphia), and from the Talmud (that it was opposite Shechem), I cannot judge conclusive. Buhl (n. 882) thinks that the data of Eusebius contradict the theory advanced in my *Hist. Geog.* for a more northerly site (cf., too, Cooke's note in Driver's Deuteronomy). So they do; but the data of Eusebius, especially east of the Jordan, are not always reliable. It is not certain that Ramoth still existed in his day; while the whole Bible history of Ramoth

Gilead, which so often passed from Israel to Aram, and Aram to Israel, points very clearly to a position on the very north of Gilead, and I still prefer some site along the ridge south of the Jarmuk, or further east about Irbid or Remtheh.

In Moab, Buhl advances the hypothesis (269) that the much disputed 'Ar or 'Ar Moab (Num. xxi. 15, 28; Deut. ii. 9, 18, 29; Isa. xvi. 1), which some have identified with "the city in the midst of the valley" (Deut. ii. 26, etc.), and others with the modern Muhâtet el hajj, was "no city, but a Moabite district, perhaps the region south of Aram." In Moab, if we may judge from the map as well as the text, Buhl does not seem to have taken advantage of the new survey and observations recorded by Bliss in his *Narrative of a Journey through Moab* (P. E. F. Q., 1895).

Into the question of the Cities of the Plain Buhl does not enter, but he favours (271) the identification of the Zo'ar of Genesis and Deuteronomy with the Zo'ar of the Moslem period, at the *south end* of the Dead Sea; and he very pertinently points out that the Biblical city could not have lain at the N. E. corner of the sea, because, while expressly mentioned as a Moabite town (Isa. xv. 5; Jer. xlvi. 34), it nowhere appears in the lists of cities belonging to Israel. He seeks for it in the ruins in the Ghor es-Sâfiye. He also notes (274) that, according to Ezekiel xvi. 46, Sodom lay south of Judah, and that this contradicts the theory that the Five Cities were N. E. of the Dead Sea. All this is surely sound.

GEORGE ADAM SMITH.