GEOGRAPHICAL GAINS FROM TEXTUAL CRITICISM.

An extremely interesting but obscure description of the route of an Assyrian invader of South Palestine is given in Isaiah x. 27 (end)–32. By whom it was written is not known with any certainty. The plays on the place-names remind us of Micah i. 10–16, the textual difficulties of which I have already sought to mitigate. I venture to attempt a restoration of the text of the passage in Isaiah.

1 The Hammer comes up from the north: he falls upon Aiath;
2 He passes through Migron; at Michmash he lays up his baggage;
3 They go through the pass; Geba is their place of bivouac;
4 Ramah is terror-stricken; Saul’s Gibeah flees.
5 Shriek, O Beth-gilgal; listen, O Elasah:
6 * * * * *; thou art humbled, O Anathoth.

1 Jewish Quarterly Review, x. [July, 1898], pp. 565 ff.
2 Without adequate notes (from want of space) it will be given in the Addenda to the Hebrew edition of Isaiah in Haupt’s Sacred Books of the Old Testament.
7 Rimmonah takes to flight; the inhabitants of Bahurim gather their goods to flee.
8 He halts on the sacred Gibeah, shaking his (clenched) fist.

Line 1a. Robertson Smith in 1885 proposed "the Destroyer comes up from the north" (Journal of Philology, xiii. 62 ff.). The material provided by the Massoretic text is מַהֲכָן שְׁכַן. Either of these words might be a corrupt fragment of הֶכִּים. But the metre requires three words, and it is open to us to conjecture that נְגוֹ comes out of an illegible יָ. Nebuchadnezzar is called the hammer of the nations in Jeremiah ii. 20; cf. also Nahum ii. 2 [1], where perhaps יָפָס (A.V. "he that dasheth in pieces") should be יָפָס, "a hammer." Aiath is probably the same as Ai, which was near the modern Dër Dirwân, but where, is uncertain (Badeker's Palestine, ed. 2, p. 119). From Bethel to Dër Dirwân is a straight road.

Line 2. Migron seems to correspond to the ruins at Makrûn, north of Michmash, on the road to Ai. Those who go from Michmash to Bethel "ascend towards the north to the table-land along the east side of a narrow but deep valley which runs into the Wady Suweinit. At the point where we obtain a view of the valley there are several rock-tombs on the west slope, above which lies the ruins of Makrûn, the ancient Migron (Isa. x. 28)." So Badeker, i.e. the late Prof. Socin, who edited the book.

Line 3. The pass is no doubt the deep defile of the Wady Suweinit. Geba is the modern Jeba', which commands the pass of Michmash. For לַעֲלִי, "to us," we should read לְעֹלִי, "to them"—an easy change.

Line 4. Ramah is er-Râm; Saul's Gibeah Tell el-Fûl, a fine conical hill with an extensive view, four miles north of Jerusalem.

Line 5a. The text gives לְעָדָךְ, "O community of
Gallim. Gallim can only mean "heaps" (of stones); the sense "springs" could only be justified by Canticles iv. 12, where, however, גָּלֵיו should be גָּן, "garden" (so Budde). Considering, however, that a place called Beth-gilgal is mentioned in Nehemiah xii. 29, in connection with Geba and Azmaveth, and a place called Geliloth, and also Gilgal, on the border between Benjamin and Judah (Josh. xviii. 17; xv. 7), it is reasonable to suppose that some circle of prehistoric stones is meant, near which a village or town had sprung up, and to assume Geliloth, or, better, (Beth) Gilgal to be the name written by the prophet. Either name would be more distinct and distinctive than the common reading Gallim, "heaps." Probably the prophet or poet means the place which is called Beth-gilgal in Nehemiah, and Geliloth "which fronts the ascent of Adummim" (i.e. the Tel'at ed-dam, which rises above the khan of the Good Samaritan on the way to Jericho), in Joshua xviii. 17.

Line 5b. הרִיש (E.V. Laishah) is presumably the same as לִיש (Laish); cf. 1 Samuel xxv. 44, and 2 Samuel iii. 15. No such place-name, however, as Laish is known in Benjamin, and no such personal name as Laish occurs anywhere, except in the two passages referred to; it is, on the whole, probable that in both Samuel and Isaiah לִיש, or הרִיש, is a corruption of 깔 (God has made), and that in Isaiah reference is made, not to the Eleasa of 1 Maccabees ix. 5 (represented by the modern Il'asâ), but to the spot represented by the village el-Isawiye, towards Anathoth (which Bädeker, p. 117, wrongly identifies with Nob). This is new, but, I believe, true. For the personal name Elasah, see 1 Chronicles ii. 39 f., viii. 37, ix. 43; Ezra x. 22; Jeremiah xxix. 3.

Line 6. The רֵינָא of the text can hardly be right. We may either read רֵינָא (Pesh., Lowth, Ewald, Cheyne [formerly], Duhm, etc.), or (since half a line seems to
have fallen out) read מִדַּמְמֵנה, as proposed here, or with Grätz we may read מִדַּמָּנָה, which is the name of a place in Benjamin, Nehemiah xi. 32.

Line 7. מִדַּמְמֵנה (Madmenah) should mean "dung-heap" — a most improbable name, even after we have duly assimilated the fact that heaps of very mixed origin are to be seen at the entrance to Arab villages (see Delitzsch, Job, pp. 62 f.). Almost certainly we should read רַמְנָה; compare רַמְנָה, Joshua xxii. 35, on which Dillmann remarks that we should probably read רַמְנָה (see 1 Chron. vi. 62). All similar names, such as Madmen (Jer. xlviii. 2, from נְמַרְמִים, Nimrim), Madmannah, are beyond reasonable doubt corrupt. The Rimmonah meant was not "the rock Rimmon" of Judges xx. 45, but nearer to Jerusalem. There were doubtless not a few places in Palestine called Rimmon, or Rimmonah. בָּהֲרִים, "the trenches," is also an improbable name. Read בָּהֲרִים, Bahurim, which was most probably not the same as Almon (now Almit), as most moderns have held, in deference to the Targum, but near Jerusalem on the old road to Jericho (see Buhl, Geographie, p. 176; Grove, Smith's Dict. of the Bible, ed. i., 162a). י and ב, ר and י are liable to confusion; transposition accounts for the rest of the process by which הָבָרִים has become הָבָרִים.

Line 8 is largely made up of corrupt dittograms and glosses. יְלַעַד is a corruption of יְלַעַד. יֶעַר is a corruption of a dittographed יֶעַר. יֶעַר is a corrupt fragment of נְבַעַת יְרוּשָׁלָם. נְבַעַת יְרוּשָׁלָם represents נְבַעַת יְרוּשָׁלָם. An otherwise scribe inferred from the context that mount Zion must be meant, though the phrase נְבַעַת יְרוּשָׁלָם, "hill of Jerusalem," nowhere else occurs. בְּיֵרְצֵי יְרוּשָׁלָם is a corrupt fragment of נְבַעַת יְרוּשָׁלָם. Later students conjectured בְּיֵרְצֵי יְרוּשָׁלָם to it, thus producing the familiar phrase "the daughter (= people) of Zion"; to this phrase יְלַעַד was prefixed to clear up the meaning of the unfamiliar
(corrupt) phrase, "the hill of Jerusalem." It still remains unaccounted for. It is a corrupt fragment of אַלֹהֵי. It is a curious collection of errors, to which, however, there are many parallels, especially in the Psalter.

Probably the above re-examination of a much-debated passage will further illustrate the criticism which experience forced from me, and not any captiousness towards Prof. H. P. Smith, on the remark that conjectural emendation "should not be put in the same class with emendation on the basis of evidence, even the evidence of a version." A conjectural emendation may, at any rate in many cases, have better evidence than an emendation based on a version. Conjectural emendation is an art which requires to be slowly and painfully learned, like any other art; and I think that experience shows that conjectural emendation based on evidence can remove not a few serious difficulties which have hindered the due appreciation of some parts of the literary records of revelation.

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