

of the consonantal alphabet with independent vowels. If Cyprus took the one and Greece the other from Phœnicia, it is well for the world that Greece should have been unready in the Thothmes age for the less perfect gift.

The state of the stone No. 4 is such that many parts of what I now send are far from trustworthy. I have bestowed a great amount of labour on the comparison of different parts of your squeezes, but am far from satisfied in some parts of the result. I conclude with saying that I see a railway survey is said to be in hand from the coast to the Euphrates, and your journals will, I hope, be forwarded to the officers and men engaged on the work.

Yours very truly,

DUNBAR ISIDORE HEATH.

ESHER, SURREY, *Nov. 20, 1872.*

JERUSALEM.

Mr. Conrad Schick, the Imperial German architect at Jerusalem, who has recently been engaged in making measurements for the construction of models of the Kubbet es Sakhra and Haram es Sherif, for the Turkish Government, has kindly forwarded to the Palestine Exploration Fund plans and sections of certain cisterns and buildings which have not been previously described.

Anything which adds to our knowledge of the "sacred area" cannot fail to be of value, and the following notice of Mr. Schick's discoveries will be of interest to many of the subscribers to the Fund.

1st. At the north-east corner of the platform three rock-hewn cisterns,* not previously visited, have been examined, and plans made of them. Like the well-known "great sea" in the southern portion of the Haram, they are hewn out of the soft "malaki" rock, and the overlying stratum of "missae" has been left to form a roof. The only passages noticed as entering the cisterns were the ducts for leading in the surface drainage. The cisterns are from 28ft. to 45ft. deep, and the natural rock lies close below the surface.

2nd. Mr. Schick has made a minute examination of the eastern side of the platform, and found two closed openings into it, one near the north end, which appears to have been a small door leading to a chamber under the platform, the other south of the steps in front of the Dome of Chain. This, which is almost covered by rubbish, also led to a chamber, and on each side of it is a closed window, 6ft. high and 2ft. 6in. wide. From the steps to the south-east corner, there were at one time buttresses, 1ft. 11in. thick, at intervals of 9ft. 7in. Traces of five still remain, and the position of the others can be seen on a careful examination, though the broken faces of the stones which bonded them to the

* Two of these cisterns are numbered 2 and 34 on the Plan of the Haram, in "Recovery of Jerusalem;" the other Mr. Schick has numbered 35.

wall have been chiselled over. There is also a small cistern, apparently built with masonry, immediately below the south-east corner. The northern opening alluded to by Mr. Schick is probably that of the Cell of Rostam mentioned by Mejr ed Din, who says that the door was closed in his day; and the southern opening is doubtless that of the Cell of Samed, mentioned by the same writer as adjoining the Stairs of Burak. The door of this was also closed.

3rd. At the north-west corner of the platform, Mr. Schick has succeeded in exploring a place which is thus described by Mejr ed Din:— "Below the platform on the west there is a place called Bakh-Bakh (wonderful and beautiful), which is the place of El Khydr: it is now abandoned." This is a small mosque under the platform, 42ft. 6in. long and 23ft. wide, with a *mihrab* at the southern end. The roof is a pointed arch of rough stones, and on the west side are two openings, which appear to have been windows. In front of the mosque are two pillars of red granite, carrying an arch which supports the modern Kubbet el Khydr. The floor of the little chapel, Kubbet el Arwah, is said to be natural rock.

4th. In a small building near the Bab en Nazir, an earthenware pipe was found, bringing water from the north into the building, whence it was distributed to other parts of the Haram by three additional pipes.

5th. Mr. Schick forwards a detailed plan of the ancient remains at the Damascus Gate, and draws attention to the great thickness of the masonry on the left (east) side, in which he thinks there may be a staircase.

6th. Near the site for the new Protestant Church, without the city, four loculi have been discovered sunk into the rock, and covered with flat stone slabs. A steep flight of steps led down to them, and they are covered by a vaulted chamber of masonry.

7th. Some additional excavations were made at the tombs described by Lieut. Conder,* but no results were obtained from them.

8th. Mr. Schick forwards a sketch of the ruins of Seilun (Shiloh), and the plan of a small building known as Jamia ed Daim (Mosque of the Eternal). The interest attaching to Shiloh, as the place in which the ark rested from the latter days of Joshua to the time of Samuel, is so great that a short description of the existing ruins may be acceptable. "Go ye now unto my place which was in Shiloh, where I set my name at the first, and see what I did to it for the wickedness of my people Israel," are the words in which the prophet Jeremiah (Jer. vii. 12) refers to it as a striking example of the Divine indignation.

The ruins of Seilun cover the surface of a "Tell" or mound on a spur which lies between two valleys, that unite about a quarter of a mile above Khan Lubban, and thence run to the sea. The existing remains are those of a *fellahin* village, with a few earlier foundations, possibly of the date of the Crusades. The walls are built with old material, but none

of the fragments of columns mentioned by some travellers can now be seen. On the summit are a few heavy foundations, perhaps those of a keep, and on the southern side is a building with a heavy sloping buttress. The rock is exposed over nearly the whole surface, so that little can be expected from excavation. Northwards the "Tell" slopes down to a broad shoulder, across which a sort of level court, 77ft. wide and 412ft. long, has been cut. The rock is in places scarped to a height of 5ft., and along the sides are several excavations, and a few small cisterns. The level portion of the rock is covered by a few inches of soil. It is not improbable that the place was thus prepared to receive the tabernacle, which, according to Rabbinical traditions, was "a structure of low stone walls, with the tent drawn over the top." At any rate, there is no other level space, on the "Tell" sufficiently large to receive a tent of the dimensions of the tabernacle.

At the southern foot of the "Tell" is a fine spreading tree, and near it the Jamia ed Daim, a building of well-dressed stone, with two aisles. The longest dimension is from east to west, and there is a *mihrab* in the southern side. The building probably dates from a later period than the Crusades. To the south-east is a small reservoir with steps, and beyond this the Jamia el Arbain (Mosque of the Forty), a curious building, which has been noticed by all travellers. It appears originally to have been a mosque, and to have been afterwards converted into a small fortress, heavy buttresses having been built against the walls, closing all the doors except one.*

Between Seilun and Turmus Aya there are distinct traces of an old road, 10ft. wide, running towards Simil.

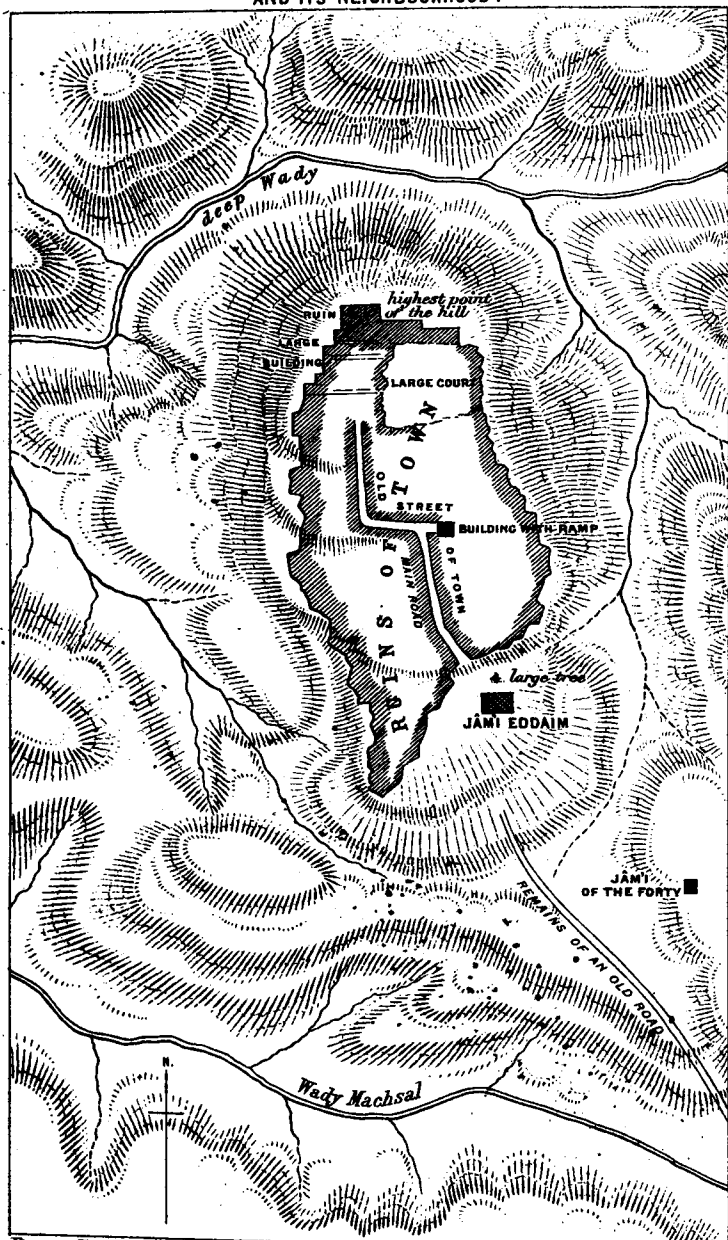
The spring of Seilun is in a small valley which joins the main one a short distance north-east of the ruins. The supply, which is small, after running a few yards through a subterranean channel, was formerly led into a rock-hewn reservoir, but now runs to waste down the valley. There are numerous rock-hewn tombs near Seilun, generally of the same character, a small vestibule, from which a low square door leads into the tomb-chamber. Near the fountain, however, there is a peculiar tomb hewn in a huge fragment of rock. It consists of three loculi, two in the face of the rock and one on the top†.

C. W. W.

* Photo. 99 gives a view of this mosque, and Photo. 100 a general view of the ruins.

† See Photo. 101.

PLAN OF SHILOH (SEILŪN) AND ITS NEIGHBOURHOOD.



From a sketch by Mr. C. Schick

Stanford's Geog. Retab. 6 & 7 Charing Cross.