

NOTES FROM THE MEMOIR.

The Vale of Siddim.—There has been much doubt as to the meaning of this name. Gesenius compares it with the Arabic *Sidd*, and Dean Stanley with *Sâdeh*. It is worthy of notice that the words *Sidd* and *Sâdeh* are frequently used in the Jordan valley with a meaning peculiar to the dialect of that part of the country. Thus we have *Sidd el 'Atîyeh*, "the dry Sidd," applying to one of the great marl banks below the cliffs of the Dead Sea, near Râs Feshkhah. The word was in this instance explained to us as meaning a cliff. Again, we have *Deir es Sidd*, "Convent of the Cliff," a ruin on the edge of a precipice; *Sidd Harîz*, "the fortified cliff," a precipice near Phasaelis; *Sâdet el Fikiah*, "the cracked cliff;" *Sâdet el Hirmîl*, "cliff of rue;" *Sâdet en Nahleh*, "cliff of the torrent;" *Sâdet et Tâleb*, "the straight cliff;" *Wâdy Siddeh*, "the valley of cliffs." The word is unknown to the inhabitants of the towns; it seems peculiar to the Jordan valley, and does not occur in the nomenclature of the other parts of the country. We may perhaps render the Vale of Siddim "Valley of Cliffs," and the title would apply to the neighbourhood of the Dead Sea or to the whole valley.

Ataroth Adar (Josh. xviii. 13).—This place is of the highest importance in drawing the boundary line of Benjamin. It is most minutely described as "near the hill that lieth on the south side of the nether Beth-horon." Looking at this spot on the map, I find it occupied by the ruin of *ed Dârieh*, which no doubt represents the ancient name Adar. The same place is perhaps the Addara of the Onomasticon, east of Lydda.

Irpeel (Josh. xviii. 27) is a town of Benjamin, long sought in vain. The root of the name may be recognised in the modern *Râ-fât*, being the same from which the name Rephaim is derived. The final *el* would in this case be supposed to have been lost, as in many other instances in the country in which it has disappeared.

Valley of Charashim.—I do not think I have ever noticed that this word is recognisable in the ruin called *Hirsha*, on the side of the valley which has always been supposed to be intended (1 Chron. iv. 14; Neh. xi. 35).

Nehhalîn, near Jerusalem, may perhaps be the native town of Shemaiah the Nehelamite, the enemy of Jeremiah (Jer. xxix. 24, 31, 32).

Bethulia.—This site has never been fixed in a satisfactory manner. The narrative of the Book of Judith requires that the place should be in the neighbourhood of Dothan (*T. Dothân*), and within sight of the plain of Esdraelon. It has never, I think, been noticed that this applies to the neighbourhood of the modern *Mithilia*, east of the main road from the plain of Esdraelon to Shechem. Mithilia approaches very closely in name to Bethulia; it is only about three and a quarter miles from Dothan, and the plain of Esdraelon is visible from the pass south of the village. The site is thus described in the Memoir:—

"A small village with a detached portion on the north, and placed

on a slope, with a knoll to the south. It is surrounded by good olive-groves, and has a plain to the north."

The place is not far from Sãnür, where Bethulia is generally placed, but Sãnür is open to the objection that the plain of Esdraelon cannot be seen from it.

Elon, a town of Dan, near Jethlah (*B. Tâl*) and Thimnatha (Josh. xix. 43). Possibly this might be *Beit Ello*, in which case Thimnatha would be the northern *Tibneh*, not far off.

Mount Seir and *Mount Jearim* were places on the boundary of Judah, between Kirjath Jearim and Beth Shemesh; the last was close to Chesalon (*Keala*). There are two ruins which seem to preserve these names. 1st. *Batn es Sughîr*, a ruin on the great ridge west of Soba. 2nd. Khûrbet 'Erma, a ruin on the brink of the great valley, two miles south of *Keala*, or Chesalon.

The New Work.—A cursory glance at the new traces which arrived in September shows that a great deal of value is to be recovered from them. The following points may be noticed.

Yemma, near Tabor, no doubt represents the Caphar Yama of the Talmud, which is said (Tal. Jer. Megilla, 70a) to have been the late name of Jabneel of Naphtali.

Kejr Kama is probably the Lekim of the same passage, the ancient Lakum of Naphtali.

Saiyadeh is no doubt the Ziadetha of the same passage, the ancient Nekeb, near *Damieh*, or Adami, of Naphtali.

Higher up the country is a ruin called *Ummah*, perhaps Ummah of Asher.

In the bit of desert near Beersheba and Beit Jibrin is a ruin called *el Benâwy*, possibly Libnah.

As regards mediæval and other places there is also much of value in the new traces. There was a town of St. George, the position of which is carefully described by Marino Sanuto as in the great valley now called Wady Shaghûr. Here I find a place sacred to St. George, marked on the new work by one of the principal villages.

The tomb of Habakkuk is often noticed by mediæval Jewish travellers near *Yakûk*; it is shown on the new trace.

Beth Shearaim was an important place, as being the seat of the Sanhedrim. A ruined site called *Sha'arah* has been found in a position which seems suitable.

Lachish.—The part of the country in which this town should apparently be sought is now completed, and I find nothing to shake my previous view, which is as follows:—

The site was apparently known in the fourth century, and is placed seven miles from Eleutheropolis, towards Daroma, that is towards the "south," and not, as some have supposed, towards the town called Darum by the Crusaders, which is explained in the Chronicles to mean "Greek Monastery" (*Deir-er-Rûm*).

Robinson's site at *Umm Lays*, as the name is pronounced, does

not agree in distance with the Onomasticon, nor in name has it any connection with Lachish. The place was, I may boldly say, never the site of an ancient city, consisting only of a few traces of ruins, two masonry cisterns, and a small low mound, which I visited in 1875.

On the main road from Beit Jibrin (Eleutheropolis) to Gaza is the great mound of Tell el Hesy ("hillock of the water pit"). It is a conspicuous and important site, supplied well with water, and giving its name to a great valley. It is ten miles from Beit Jibrin, and not far from 'Ajlân (Eglon). The name *el Hesy* may, I would suggest, be a corruption of Lachish, the Hebrew *Caph* being changed into the guttural, just as it has been changed in the case of *Mukhmâs*. Tell el Hesy is evidently an important site, commanding the approach to the hills, and fits well in position the requirements of Lachish.

Passing from Biblical questions to those of mediæval sites, I may enumerate the following:—

The *penance mountain* of St. John was shown to Bertrandon de la Broquière in 1432, between Gaza and Hebron. I find on our map that the hill south-west of *Dhâherîyeh* still retains the name *Mukut'at Ahya*, "the place of separation of St. John the Baptist," showing yet one more Christian tradition lingering among the Moslem peasantry.

The *Tombs of the Patriarchs* were shown to Paula at or near Shechem, as noticed by Jerome. Robinson expresses his inability to find a trace of this tradition; but there is a sacred place on the north side of the town of Nablus, near the modern cemetery, which is called *Oulâd Ya'kûb el 'Asherah*, "the ten sons of Jacob." This, no doubt, represents the early Christian site.

Anath, a town of Judea, north of Jerusalem, mentioned in the Talmud (Neubauer, p. 754) as built by the giant Ahiman, is perhaps *Kefr 'Ana*, near Bethel.

Bethamari, noticed in the Onomasticon as near Gabaa, is probably *Beit Ummar*, near the southern *Jeb'a*, south of Jerusalem.

Beidan is noticed in the Samaritan book of Joshua as being the place of purification of the hosts entering Palestine to build the temple on Gerizim. The upper part of the great Wâdy Fârâh, by which a host from beyond Jordan would naturally approach Shechem, is called *Beidân*, and is well supplied with water for the purifications described.

Arimathæa.—A very good instance of the uncertainty which was felt regarding many Scriptural places in the fourth century is afforded by this town. Jerome mentions two places—one in the district of Thamnitica, near (*juxta*) Diospolis, which he makes to be both Ramathaim Zophim and also the town of Joseph. This would probably be *Rentieh*, near Lydda. A second place, called Remphis, in the bounds (*finibus*) of Diospolis, was considered by many to be Arimathæa. This second site farther from Lydda would be the modern *Rentis*. Evidently there was no certain tradition, at least on this subject, in the fourth century.

El Heidhentîyeh, "the place torn down," is the native name of the rock which Christians call Jeremiah's Grotto at Jerusalem. This is a

valuable instance of change. Mr. Bergheim tells me that in the sixteenth century, according to the Moslems of Jerusalem, the name is found in Arabic MSS. written *Heiremâyeḥ*, or "Jeremiah," and is thus derived from the fifteenth-century tradition. Hence we may see how many changes have occurred which it is now quite impossible for us to trace in the nomenclature, and how wide a field of conjecture might be entered upon if we once discarded the rule to accept for identification only names radically unchanged.

Bîr Eyûb.—Here also we find a change creeping over a tradition. This well was discovered and opened up by the Crusaders in 1184, and a century later it had come to be considered the ancient En Rogel, whence the modern name, "Joab's Well." In the eyes of the peasantry, however, it is *Neby Eyûb*, or Job, not Joab, after whom the well is named. The tradition has thus become distorted, and furnishes yet another instance of the preservation of Christian traditions and of the influence of the monks over the peasantry during the palmy days of Christian rule.

Succoth.—A great deal of argument has been expended on the question whether *Sâkât* in the Jordan valley could be Succoth. The general conclusion has been that it was not the Biblical town, which is rather to be sought east of Jordan, and much farther south. The name *Sâkât* has radically not the least connection with Succoth, the first letter only being common to the two words in Hebrew. It is interesting, however, to note that Marino Sanuto on his map marks Succoth just where *Sâkât* now exists. Probably, therefore, we have here a mediæval traditional site.

Abel Mea and *Abel Maula* were places, the first on the way from Scythopolis to Neapolis, the second ten miles south of Scythopolis, and called Beth Aula in the fourth century. The first would probably be represented by the ruin of *Bel'ameh*, south of Jenin, on the road from Beisan to Shechem, across the great plain. The second is evidently the present *Ain Helweh*, ten miles south of Beisan. This would very well suit for Abel Mehola, with which Jerome identifies it.

Surtubeḥ is well known to have been a beacon station in the late Jewish times connected with the watching for the new moon. Perhaps the name *Dalûk*, "burning," applied to one of the principal tops of this block, may have a connection with this fact, especially as the valley leading down from the peak is called *Wâdy en Nâr*, "the valley of fire," and another of the principal peaks is called *Umm Hallal*, "mother of the new moon."

Zîr.—In the last *Statement* of the American Society I notice traditions of this famous chief in the Jordan valley. We also collected some of these traditions. The camp of Zîr is shown close to Fusail, and one of the fords of the river at this point is named apparently after his brother Jerro. Farther north, at *Ma'lûl*, near Nazareth, the curious structural tomb measured by Major Wilson is called "Zîr's house," and a little farther north is the *Meidân* or "open place" of Zîr. Zîr and his

brothers Kuleib ("little dog") and Jerro ("cub") are said to have come from beyond Jordan, and to have camped at Semmunieh, west of Nazareth. Their tent-pegs were made of acacia wood, and from them sprang the acacia trees of Semmûnieh, which are of a species (*Acacia vera*) not generally found in Palestine.

It must be noted that the same tradition occurs in the south of Palestine (see Finn's "Byeways," p. 151). The acacia trees of *Wady es Sunt*, which is named from them, are said to have sprung from the tent-pegs of a certain king of Egypt called Abu Zeid, who was here defeated.

The derivation of a few curious names may also be noticed.

Bornata, meaning "hat," is a name applied to several ruins. Perhaps it may be considered to be the Aramaic *Birnathuh*, meaning "a palace" or large building.

Werdeh, commonly translated "rose," is the name of a great many springs in Palestine. It is unnecessary to say that there are no roses near any of them, because roses do not exist in Palestine. The word has a very special meaning of "going down to fetch water," and is thus equivalent to the Hebrew *Yered*, which has a similar meaning. Thus at Tell Jezer we have a spring which is called either *Werdeh* or *Yerdeh*, the latter from being understood by the peasantry to mean "collection" of flocks, &c., round the water. It is, in fact, the root of the name of Jordan, "the descender," which still lingers in the language.

El Mîneh.—This title is applied to the various harbours along the coast, but it is not an Arabic name. In the Talmud the harbour of Casarea is called *Lemîneh*, though not a Hebrew word. It is, in fact, the Greek λιμνη, "a harbour," which was adopted apparently by the Jews, and which has become corrupted into *El Mîneh*. The Jews were not a maritime people, and Palestine has no harbours; thus for the small ports built by the Romans they seem to have adopted a foreign title still used, though its derivation is obscured by a slight corruption.

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JOSHUA'S TOMB.

THERE are two places in Palestine which might claim the honour of being the place of sepulture of Joshua. The one is pointed out by Christian tradition, the other by Jewish and Samaritan.

The name of the city where Joshua was buried was Timnath Heres, and it was situate in Mount Ephraim; but the exact site of it is not defined in the Bible, except by the statement that it was on the north side of Mount Gaash, a place as yet not known.

Christian tradition points to the town of Thamnathah, now the ruin of *Tîbneh*, on the Roman road from Antipatris to Jerusalem. Jerome speaks of this place as on the border between the possessions of Dan and Judah (though that border was not very well understood in