

hope that before long it will be found possible to expend the small sum necessary to protect from further injury one of the most venerable monuments in the world.

Among the surrounding ruins we found fragments of three red granite columns lying prostrate on the ground. Half a mile up the valley we found a fourth column, fifteen feet long, lying by the roadside. On making inquiry we learned that this column had been brought from the well to form an entrance to the modern barracks. The idea, however, was not carried out, and the venerable column was cast aside, and now lies neglected by the roadside. The four reminded us of the columns in Helena's Basilica at Bethlehem, and perhaps formed part of the original church built in the days of Constantine.

The Old Testament, the Samaritan woman, external evidence and tradition extending back to at least the fourth century, testify that the well is the work of the patriarch.

Jews and Samaritans, Christians and Moslems, agree that this rock-cut bore is Jacob's Well, so that "of all the special localities of Our Lord's life in Palestine, this is, perhaps, the only one absolutely undisputed."

JAMES KING.

NEPHTOAH AND KIRJATH-JEARIM.

THE following notes may perhaps be useful as throwing some light on the question raised by Rev. A. Henderson in the October number of the *Quarterly Statement*, respecting the line of the boundary of Judah, between Jerusalem and Beth-shemesh:—

This boundary has usually been drawn westwards by Lifta (supposed to be Nephtoah), and Kuriet el 'Anab, supposed to be Kirjath-jearim.

There is, however, one very great objection to such a line, namely, the passage in the history of Saul (1 Sam. x. 2), which incidentally mentions the tomb of Rachel as being in the "border" of Benjamin. The word גְּבוּל, used in this passage, is the word used in the book of Joshua to define the "boundary line" between the tribal possessions. The Rabbinical writers agree with this statement, saying that Rachel died within the territory of Benjamin.

There is another objection also respecting *Lifta*, namely, that the Arabic does not contain the guttural of the Hebrew Nephtoah. No town of the name of Nephtoah is mentioned, either in the passage of Joshua (xv. 9) or elsewhere in the Bible; the place is called "the fountain of the waters of Nephtoah" (מַעְיָן מֵי נַפְתוּחַ), and the word מַעְיָן translated "fountain," means a group of springs, or a large supply of water, such as does not exist at Lifta.

The Babylon Talmud Commentary on the tract Yoma of the Mishnah (fol. 31a) informs us that Nephtoah was the same place as Etam (עֵיטָם), whence an aqueduct ran to the Temple. The Etam in question has been recognised by Dr. Tobler and others as the present 'Ain 'Atán, close to the so-called Pools of Solomon, south-west of Bethlehem. From

this spring an ancient aqueduct still leads to the Temple enclosure in Jerusalem.

The site thus indicated by Jewish tradition, in a passage which has special value because the notice is merely incidental, appears very appropriate. First, because in this case the boundary line, running from Jerusalem southwards, and passing west of Bethlehem, would naturally be drawn close to Rachel's Sepulchre, on the watershed of the country. And, secondly, because a collection of springs, such as is indicated by the word מעין, does exist at this spot.

It seems, therefore, that there is a sufficient *primâ-facie* case to make the inquiry worth pursuing, and in order to make the question clearer it will be well to examine very carefully the special terms employed, in the passage of the book of Joshua which describes the boundary line, starting from En Rogel, the spring east of Jerusalem now generally identified with the so-called "Fountain of the Virgin."

JOSHUA XV.

Ver. 8. "The border *went up* by the valley (ני) Ben Hinnom to the shoulder (כתף) of the Jebusi to the south, and the border ascended to the top (ראש) of the hill which is facing Gehinnom west, which is by the end (קצה) of the Emek Rephaim northwards."

Ver. 9. "And the border was drawn from the top of the hill to the springs of the water of Nephtoah, and went out to the cities of Mount Ephron (עפרון); and the border was drawn to Baalah, which is Kirjath-jearim."

Ver. 10. "And the border compassed (נטב) from Baalah westwards to the hill Seir (שעיר), and *crossed over* (עבר) to the shoulder (כתף) of the hill Jearim northwards (מצפון) it is Chesalon, and *descended* (ירר) to Beth-shemesh and *crossed over* to Timnah."

JOSHUA XVIII.

Ver. 15. "And the south quarter from the end (קצה) of Kirjath-jearim; and the border went forth westwards, and went forth to the springs of the water of Nephtoah."

Ver. 16. "And the border *descended* to the end of the hill which is above the face (על־פני) of the Ge Ben Hinnom, which is by the Emek Rephaim northwards, and *went down* Ge-Hinnom to the shoulder of the Jebusi, and *descended* to En Rogel."

Few descriptions could be more carefully worded; the terms used for going up, down, or across, are all explicit, and the description is properly reversed as the border is described from east to west, or from west to east.

Without entering into the question of the identity of Gehinnom with one of the two valleys which claim the name, it is evident that the border ran south of Jebus, and ascended to the hill west of Gehinnom and north of the Emek Rephaim.

The position of the Emek Rephaim is, however, of importance, as it

was close to the border. The word Emek (עמק), equivalent to the Arabic *Ghamik*, or "deep," is used in the Bible to signify the great open valleys between mountain chains, and sometimes the plains bounded by mountains. Thus the broad valley of Elah is called Emek; the term cannot properly be applied to a gorge or ravine.

Josephus says that the Valley of Rephaim was a valley extending from Jerusalem to Bethlehem (Ant. vii. 12. 4), and the authors of the Onomasticon understood the name to apply to the hollow plateau which extends from south of Jerusalem to Mar Elias, and which is generally now called the Plain of Rephaim.

From various passages in the Old Testament the proximity of this Emek Rephaim to Bethlehem may also be inferred.

The Philistines were there encamped when the dangerous expedition of David's heroes to Bethlehem was undertaken (2 Sam. xxiii. 13; 1 Chron. xi. 15). In another passage the Philistines are said to have spread themselves in the Emek Rephaim, showing it to have been an expanse suitable as a camping-ground; and David's pursuit was by Geba to Gazer (2 Sam. v. 22), by which we may understand a flight by the main valley west of Bethlehem, above which stands *Jeb'a*, the ancient Gibeah of Judah.

The identification of Nephtoah with 'Ain 'Atan; the probable position of the Emek Rephaim; and the incidental notice of Rachel's sepulchre as being on the boundary, all therefore point to the watershed between Jerusalem and Bethlehem as forming the boundary between Judah and Benjamin.

The identification of Kirjath-jearim with *Kuriet el 'Anab* (as proposed by Dr. Robinson) will, however, not agree with such a boundary; but this rests solely on the evidence of early Christian writers, and the important part of the Hebrew title—viz., *Jearim*—is not found in the Arabic name.

The indications which we possess as to the position of Kirjath-jearim in the Bible are scanty. It was in the territory of Judah (Josh. xviii. 14), and therefore a distinct place from Kirjath of Benjamin, which may very probably have been *Kuriet el 'Anab*, or, as it is generally called, *Kurieh*. The place called Mahaneh Dan (מחנה דן), which was apparently near Zoreah and Eshtaol (*Sur'ah* and *Eshu'a*), was also "by" (ב) and "behind" (אחרי) Kirjath-jearim (Judg. xviii. 12). This place, judging from the general use of the word (compare, for instance, the plain called *Mukhnah*, near Shechem), must have been a broad flat expanse suitable for a camp, such as is found in the open valley of Sorek south of Zoreah. We are thus induced to look for Kirjath-jearim not far from these towns of Dan, and probably it should be sought in the hills, for the name Baalah sometimes applied to the site indicates a lofty position, and the ark while at Kirjath-jearim is said to have been in "the hill" (Gibeah, 2 Sam. vi. 3).

Beth-shemesh, whence the ark was taken to Kirjath-jearim, was south

of Zoreah. We might naturally expect Kirjath-jearim to be not far from Beth-shemesh, even without the testimony of Josephus, but fortunately that authority distinctly states (Ant. vi. 1. 4) that Kirjath-jearim was "a city in the neighbourhood of Beth-shemesh."

In a former paper I have noticed the discovery by the survey party in 1874 of a ruin near Beit 'Atab named 'Erma. This word preserves the principal letters of *Arim*, the later form of the ancient *Iarim*, which means "thickets," and forms the important part of the name—Kirjath-jearim, "the village of thickets." The surrounding hills are more thickly clothed, even at the present day, with dense copse than is any part of the district in which the town can be sought. The ruin is situated on the southern brink of the great valley which broadens into the valley of Sorek, and it is about four miles east of the site of Beth-shemesh ('Ain Shemes), thus agreeing with the words of Josephus. The probable site of the Mahaneh Dan is north-west of the ruin, and Zoreah and Eshtaol are on the opposite side of the flat valley, which may be supposed to have formed the "Camp of Dan." There is no difficulty in drawing the boundary from the Pools of Solomon to this new site for Kirjath-jearim. The watershed of the long spur called *el 'Arkub* ("the ridge") would be followed all along westwards, and this ridge may perhaps be the Mount Ephron of the book of Joshua, though in such a case it has lost its name, in common with all the other natural features of Palestine mentioned in the Bible. It remains to inquire whether the line can be drawn west of the site of 'Erma in a satisfactory manner. The number of points described are more numerous because the line appears to have been artificial, twice crossing over some valley or stream.

West of Kirjath-jearim was Mount Seir, and of this, perhaps, the name is recognisable in *Khurbet S'aireh* (a ruin), which is on the same block of hill, though too far south to have been actually on the boundary line.

From Mount Seir the border went to Mount Jearim, not to the top, but to the slope or shoulder of the mountain. This hill appears also to have been wooded, and was called Chesalon (מצוניה היא כסלון). The border appears to have gone north, and crossed over a valley between Mount Seir and Mount Jearim.

We have a further indication in this part, for the towns of Zoreah and Eshtaol were so close to this boundary that they are in one passage (Josh. xv.) enumerated as towns of Judah, and in another (Josh. xix.) as towns of Dan. This accounts for the irregular course of the boundary, twice crossing over between Kirjath-jearim and Timnah, and having Beth-shemesh (a town of Judah only) south of the line.

From the Survey map (Sheet XVII.) this boundary can easily be traced. The line has to cross a deep valley between the hill on which 'Erma stands and the long ridge on which to the north is *Kesla*, the recognised site of Chesalon. It has again to recross the same valley to get to Timnah after passing Zoreah and Eshtaol on the south and

Beth-shemesh on the north. The border cannot, however, be drawn to the top of the mountain on which *Kesla* stands, but would run over the western slope or "shoulder," just as described in the Bible.

In connection with the line thus proposed, it is noticeable that no cities of Judah are enumerated in the Hebrew Bible north of this line. In the Septuagint, indeed, no less than six towns are enumerated which are identified with places lying in the territory which would have belonged to Benjamin according to the new boundary. These are *Calon* (*Kolonia*), *Sores* (*Saris*), *Carem* (*'Ain Kârim*), *Galem* (*B. Jâla*), *Bether* (*Bittîr*), and *Manocho* (*Mâlhab*). The interpolation of these names may, however, possibly belong to a later period, when the old boundaries were forgotten, and when it was noticed that this group of important places west of Jerusalem was unnoticed in the Old Testament.

Another important gain is, that *Lifta* being no longer supposed to represent *Nephtoah*, we are at liberty to identify it with *Eleph* (עֶלֶף) of Benjamin, mentioned in the lists next to Jerusalem (*Josh. xviii.*), and therefore very probably in about the actual position of *Lifta*.

If we could recover *Perez*—*Uzzah*, *Chidon*, or *Nachon* (*2 Sam. vi.*, *1 Chron. xiii. 6*), and *Mount Ephron*, the question might be further elucidated; but of these names I have not been able to find any trace.

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ZOAR.

My attention has been called by Mr. Besant to the interesting report of Rev. Selah Merrill on the "Cities of the Plain" (*4th American Statement*). He supposes *Tell Ektanu* to be the site of *Zoar*, and marks it on his sketch map as two miles east of *Tell er Rama*, while, according to the map in the *3rd Statement*, *Tell esh Shâghur* is very nearly a mile and a half from the same spot.

I cannot quite reconcile the two maps, since the latter gives also an intermediate *Tell*, while Mr. Merrill says there are exactly five *Tells* in the plain of *Shittim*, without counting *Nimrin*—viz., *Tell Kefrein*, *Tell er Rama*, *Tell el Hammam*, *Tell Ektanu*, and *Suweimeh*. As he places the first and third of these about a mile to the north of the wady passing by *Tell er Rama* and *Tell Ektanu* (it also passes by *Tell esh Shâghur*), and marks *Suweimeh* some miles to the south-west of them, one would like some explanation as to the fate of *Tell esh Shâghur*.

It is strange that Professor Paine should recover the very name of *Zoar* in *Tell esh Shâghur* without commenting on it, and Mr. Merrill afterwards describe the *Tells* in the "plain" and yet pass by the Arabic title without notice. *Tell esh Shâghur* is evidently the "Segor" visited by *Thietmar*, A. D. 1217 (*Bibl. Dict.*, *Zoar*). This hill cannot, I now think, be that described by *Canon Tristram*, for Mr. Merrill writes: "Between *Tell Ektanu* and *Tell el Hammam*, and close to the foot of the mountains, there are some of the largest and finest dolmens that I have ever