

from other indications I place at *less than 40 yards* distant from the corner of the city wall, south of the Haram Area.

I hope in the next number to show full reason for this on a plan. Omitted accidentally in *Quarterly Statement*, 1879, p. 175.

## GATH.

Of the five Philistine cities, four are well known,—Ekron (Akir), Ashdod (Esdūd), Askelon (Askalán) and Gaza (Ghúzzeh). Gath alone is missing, having apparently slipped out of notice before the time of Josiah, not being mentioned in Jeremiah xxv, 20; Zephaniah ii, 4-7.

Where then stood this famous city, often contested for (1 Chronicles xviii, 1; 2 Kings xii, 17; 2 Chronicles xxvi, 6), and rich in reminiscences of David's eventful life? For here in the home of the loyal Ittai he twice took refuge with Achish; here the braggart Goliath grew up to being "six cubits and a span;" here the abusive Shimei stumbled over the fugitive slaves.

Dr. Porter identifies Gath with Tell es Sáfi, a white chalk cliff guarding the mouth of the Valley of Elah. This theory is at first sight very attractive, yet here the old error which formerly placed Zoar on the mountains, appears to recur, as there is no reason for supposing that Gath was not in the plain, like the other cities of the Philistines. Their strength lay in chariots of iron (Judges i, 19). The "Shining Hill," however is apparently open to attack from the interior over ground ill-adapted for their use, and the list of cities in 2 Chronicles xi, 5-10, admits of the missing city having been situated as far from the hills as was Lachish. If some indications point to Gath having been towards the north of Philistia, they are at once neutralised by the fact that Ziklag, one of its towns, was in the south (1 Samuel xxvii, 6; xxx, 14). We must, therefore, scour the whole open country for the object of our search.

On sheet XX of the large map, a "Wády el Ghúeit" is marked, about 10 miles west-north-west of Beit Jibrín.

This probably implies that there *has been a place of that name*. Mr. Finn recovered the name *Ghutt*, as that of a deserted place near Beit Jibrín, but states that *Gath* in Arabic would most probably be *Jett* or *Jatt*. If *Ghúeit*, however, could represent Gath, we seem to have a clue worth following.

Near the Wády is a Crusading tower now known as Kú'at el Fenish, Castle of the Philistines ("Tent Work" ii, 163), adjoining the village Keratiya.

Uncertain as is the precise value of these two points, there is another reason for this being the neighbourhood of Gath. Micah (i, 10, 11) says, "Declare ye it not at Gath, weep ye not all; in the house of Aphrah roll

thysself in the dust. Pass ye away, thou inhabitant of *Saphir*." It is a remarkable coincidence that near the same Wâdy, not 2 miles from Keratiya, is the village *Beit* (= house) *'Afeh*, and another 2 or 3 miles farther down called *es Sâdîr*.

The resemblance of these names to those above must be more than accidental.

Saphir has already been identified with *es Sâdîr*, and if we take *Beit 'Afeh* to represent "the House of Aphrah," Gath must have been near.

The Onomasticon of doubtful credit, mentions a Gath between Jammia and Antipatris, and one 5 miles from Eleutheropolis (*Beit Jibrin*) on the way to Diospolis (*Lydda*), but Jerome (in Micah i, 10), states that Gath was on the borders of Judah, on the way from Eleutheropolis to Gaza. This exactly suits a position at (or near) Keratiya close to the track from *Beit Jebrîn* to *El-Mejdel* (near *Ascalân*), and the Antonine Itinerary, and the Pentinger Table give the stages thus: Eleutheropolis—Askalon—Gaza.

About two miles east of *es Sâdîr* there is marked on the map a low eminence (248 feet above the sea) called *Khirbet Jeledtyeh*, close to which are ruins and cisterns. As Bethany has become *el Aziriyeh* in memory of Lazarus, so the ruins of Gath may, owing to her famous champion, have been named *Khirbet Jeledtyeh*, if this word as well as *Jâlûd* would be the Arabic form of Goliath. With Gath removed from *Tell es Sâfi*, the identification of the latter with *Libnah* ("Sinai," p. 258) seems to me irresistible.

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## EASTERN PALESTINE.

THE recent publications of the Palestine Exploration Fund Plans of Western Palestine, have enabled me to check the correctness of my reconnaissance of the Jordan Valley East, Gilead, and Moab, with the most gratifying results.

Starting with the peak of *Kurn Surtabeh*,\* as a point of reference for latitude and longitude, I find that my position of Jericho is exactly correct for latitude, and differs only 4 seconds of arc for longitude (equal to 03 inch on the scale of ½-inch to the mile). The island on the northern extremity of the Dead Sea is also exact for latitude and 18 seconds too far west in longitude, or about 15 inch on same scale.

My sketch of the Jordan lies over that on the published plans, crossing

* Kurn Surtabeh.	Latitude.	Error.	Longitude.	Error.
Trig. Survey....	32 5 43....	— ....	35 27 22....	—
Warren ....	32 5 25....	-0 13....	35 27 50....	+0 28
Anderson ...	32 5 33....	-0 15....	35 29 03....	+1 41