

out to establish some other result, the boundary line indicated is the 34th parallel of N. latitude.

Some may be tempted to imagine that this is but a trifling point ; but if, as many believe, and as the whole of the great work undertaken by the "Palestine Exploration Fund" seems plainly to indicate, Britain be the Divinely ordained instrument for effecting the restoration of the Jews to the Land of Promise—these investigations may become of paramount value.

APPENDED NOTE.

Since writing the above it has occurred to me that it may, after all, be possible to identify *Hethlon*. If there be any reasonableness in the following proposed etymologies, it is more than probable that *Hethlon* is only another name for *Baalbek*. I submit the etymologies for the consideration of Hebrew scholars.

BAAL-BEK.	HETH-LON (חֶתְלוֹן).
(1) בעל, בקע = to cleave, break, rend ; whence בקעה, <i>El Bek'a'a</i> , "The Valley."	(1) חתת = to break or crush ; לון by contraction for לאון, "for Ōn"—Ōn being another designation of the sun-god, Baal.
(2) בעל, בבה = to weep.	(2) <i>Same</i> , only with the derived meaning for the root חתת = to alarm, be terrified.

In the first case the meaning of the two names will be "The Breach of Baal or Ōn." In the second case, "The Sorrow, or Terror, of Baal, or Ōn." If either of these meanings be established, we have at once the identification of the else unknown "Way of Hethlon ;" the track, namely, leading from Beirût and the sea across the steep ranges of Lebanon and Antilebanon, with the majestic ruins of Baalbek lying between, to Sudud on the edge of the Syrian desert.

I may further add that what I have lately learnt from a friend, who has himself ridden along the Syrian coast, about the continuity of the Valley of Coele-Syria, with scarcely any perceptible watershed between the Orontes and the Leontes, has in no wise affected, in my own mind, the striking nature of the identification set forth in my article. May I venture to hope that the subject may not be left altogether unnoticed ?

"OXONIAN."

SILOAM AND THE POOLS.

THE newly-discovered aqueduct "in connection with the Fountain of the Virgin, which apparently carried water direct to the lower Pool of Siloam" (1882, 4), seems to me to supply a missing link and to clear up an important question. I was of opinion four years ago (1879, 180) that "the waters of Shiloah" had to do with the Virgin's Fountain, and yet could not

have flowed along the Siloam tunnel, as that seemed to me to be undoubtedly the work of Hezekiah. Professor Sayce (1882, 62) fixes the date of the Siloam inscriptions as not later than the time of Ahaz, for the two following reasons:—

- (1) "As Shiloah signifies 'a conduit,' the tunnel with the inscription in it must have existed before the time when Isaiah viii 6 was written, and have given its name to the locality."
- (2) "The fact that the reservoir is called simply 'the pool' in the inscription is one I cannot easily get over. If other similar reservoirs existed at the time in Jerusalem, as we know they did in the time of Isaiah, it is difficult to understand how it could be called merely 'the pool,' and not 'the Pool of Shiloah' or 'the King's pool,' as in Nehemiah iii, 15, and ii, 14."

On the assumption that the newly-found aqueduct really does lead from the Virgin's Fountain, we may safely assert that it is more ancient than "the Siloam tunnel," since it would be unnecessary after the latter was completed. The true explanation, then, seems to be that in the time of Ahaz (and probably long before it) the waters of Shiloah used to flow from the Virgin's Fountain along the lately-discovered aqueduct into a pool (for this very reason called the Pool of Siloam), represented by one of the two present pools. Thus this new discovery shows that point (1) is a fallacious argument. The tunnel need not have existed in the time of Ahaz for the waters to flow along it, as there was already existing another aqueduct along which they might and undoubtedly did flow. It also solves what in my opinion was a very great difficulty, viz., how to apply to a locality near Ain Silwan *all* the various passages where Shiloah, Siloah, and Siloam are mentioned in the Bible and Josephus. I am glad, therefore, to come back to the popular opinion (1878, 187) about Siloam.

Point (2) seems to be answered by 2 Kings xx, 20: "Hezekiah made a (Heb. *the*) pool and a (Heb. *the*) conduit, and brought water into the city." This king is emphatically stated to have made *the pool* (and the inscription speaks of *the pool*) and *the conduit*, though both a pool and conduit are named earlier (Isa. vii, 3, 8), in which place the prophet need not speak proleptically.

Without question, then, the canal seems to me to be the work of Hezekiah, and to be referred to in two passages in the Bible, 2 Kings xx, 20, and 2 Chron. xxxii, 30. I anticipate that the wording of the inscription will finally be allowed to confirm the identity of this canal with these works of Hezekiah.

On page 148 (1881) apparently,

המריצא (5) represents מריצא in 2 Chron. xxxii, 30.

מאתרי (5) represents למטה in 2 Chron. xxxii, 30.

Thus Captain Conder seems to me to win his point (which I have previously questioned), viz., that Gihon in the latter passage is the Virgin's Fountain, as it certainly seems to be in 2 Chron. xxxiii, 14. After this I

must concede that Gihon in the third place (1 Kings i, 33, 38) is also the Virgin's Fountain.

I give up at once the identification of Enrogel with the Virgin's Fountain, and of Zohelath with M. Ganneau's Zahweileh. The "overwhelming evidence" (1878, 187) claimed in their favour is apparently fallacious. Three points only need be mentioned now, viz. :—

- (1) As to the *stone* of Zohelath. This stone was an *eben*, which term is never applied to a *cliff* like Zahweileh, but to a stone that might be rolled over by human strength.
- (2) As both the terms *ain* and *bor* are applied to the same spring in Genesis xxiv, 16, 20, it is quite allowable to identify Ain-Rogel either with Joab's Well or the spring which at times bursts out of the ground a little to the south of it.
- (3) Since Gihon was the Virgin's Fountain, Enrogel must be looked for elsewhere, as (a) the two names can hardly be applied to the same place in 1 Kings i; and (b) it is incredible, and not consistent with the sacred narrative, that Solomon should be crowned in full view of Adonijah and his supporters, which would be the case if the stone of Zohelath were identical with the cliff of Zahweileh.

Other interesting points of detail become now more probable if not certain, viz. :—

- (1) The two walls (2 Kings xxv, 4; Isa. xxii, 11) are those reaching one from the upper city and the other from the city of David (on Ophel) to the present upper Pool of Siloam.
- (2) This pool represents "the ditch between the two walls."
- (3) The present lower Pool of Siloam most probably is the King's Pool (Neh. ii, 14) and "the old pool" (Isa. xxii, 11).
- (4) One can hardly avoid identifying "the pool that was made" with (the pool of) the Virgin's Fountain, improbable though it may seem that the wall on the west side of Gihon in the valley (*nachal*) was built *so near* the eastern base of the Ophel ridge as to come *quite close* to the pool, as appears to be required by עַי (A.V. *to*) in Nehemiah iii, 16. Or could the chasm (Jer. Rec., 1871, 251) with water at the bottom have been "the pool that was made?" Or was a pool constructed on the south slope of Ophel, and supplied with water from the aqueduct (Jer. Rec., 105) by its being carried across the Tyropæon?

W. F. BIRCH.

THE INSCRIPTIONS AT JERĀSH.

SIR,

In the report of the Princes' visit to the Holy Land, in your last *Statement*, there is a copy of a tolerably long inscription found at Jerāsh, No. 4, which is spoken of as "newly found." If, however, you go back to your