

which existed north of Palestine was the Lebanon inhabited by the *Khar*, or Phœnicians.

Siloam, p. 105.—A misconception seems here to arise, as there is certainly but one aqueduct from the Virgin's Fountain to Siloam, viz., that known to Gesenius, Robinson, and all later writers.

Tomb of the Twelve Patriarchs, p. 109.—It seems to have escaped notice that these have been found by the Surveyors in Shechem, where Jerome also knew them, though the Samaritans have a different belief (see "Memoirs," vol. ii, pp. 218, 220).

Rachel's Tomb.—Herr Schick says (p. 111) that the tomb north of Kustul is sometimes called Kubbet Rahel. I have asked on the spot more than once, but never was able to confirm this view. But even if it were the case, this site could not possibly represent the Tomb of Rachael, which is specially mentioned as near Ephrath (Gen. xxxv, 16). This position agrees exactly with the border of Judah according to the line which I have proposed ("Handbook to Bible," p. 258).

C. R. C.

THE ROUTE OF THE EXODUS.

WHILST studying Canon Scarth's article on "The Route of the Exodus," together with the four papers on the same subject that appeared in the last *Quarterly Statement*, and Brugsch Bey's statement of his theory, I have been forcibly reminded of the well-known story of the two knights riding from opposite directions, and disputing about a certain shield that was suspended between them, which was silver on the one side and golden on the other. The antagonists on the vexed question of the Route of the Exodus seem to me to represent these knights, and I have worked out a theory which tends greatly to harmonise the various routes proposed by Brugsch Bey, Captain Conder, Canon Scarth, and other authorities, by showing the Yam Suph to present a different aspect according to the side from which it is viewed, like the shield in the allegory.

A year or two ago, when standing on the shore of the Red Sea near Suez, I felt my heart thrill within me at the thought that my feet were pressing the very spot whence the children of Israel passed over dry-shod. I then held the view which I had embraced with unquestioning faith in the days of childhood; but I have since become convinced of the physical impossibility of the Red Sea being driven back at this point by the east wind.

Unless, therefore, we are prepared to translate the Hebrew words rendered "east wind" in our Authorised Version as simply a "contrary wind," we must, I think, give up the formerly received identification of the crossing-place of the Israelites; but we are not thereby called upon to cease calling the Red Sea the Yam Suph.

In ages past the Red Sea appears to have been continuous from the modern Aden to a point north of Zoan, and probably at one period it extended as a strait between the Indian Ocean and the Mediterranean. In course of time, however, its entrance into the latter sea became silted up, and it then presented the appearance of a serpent's forked tongue, the two forks being Lake Menzaleh and Lake Serbonis.

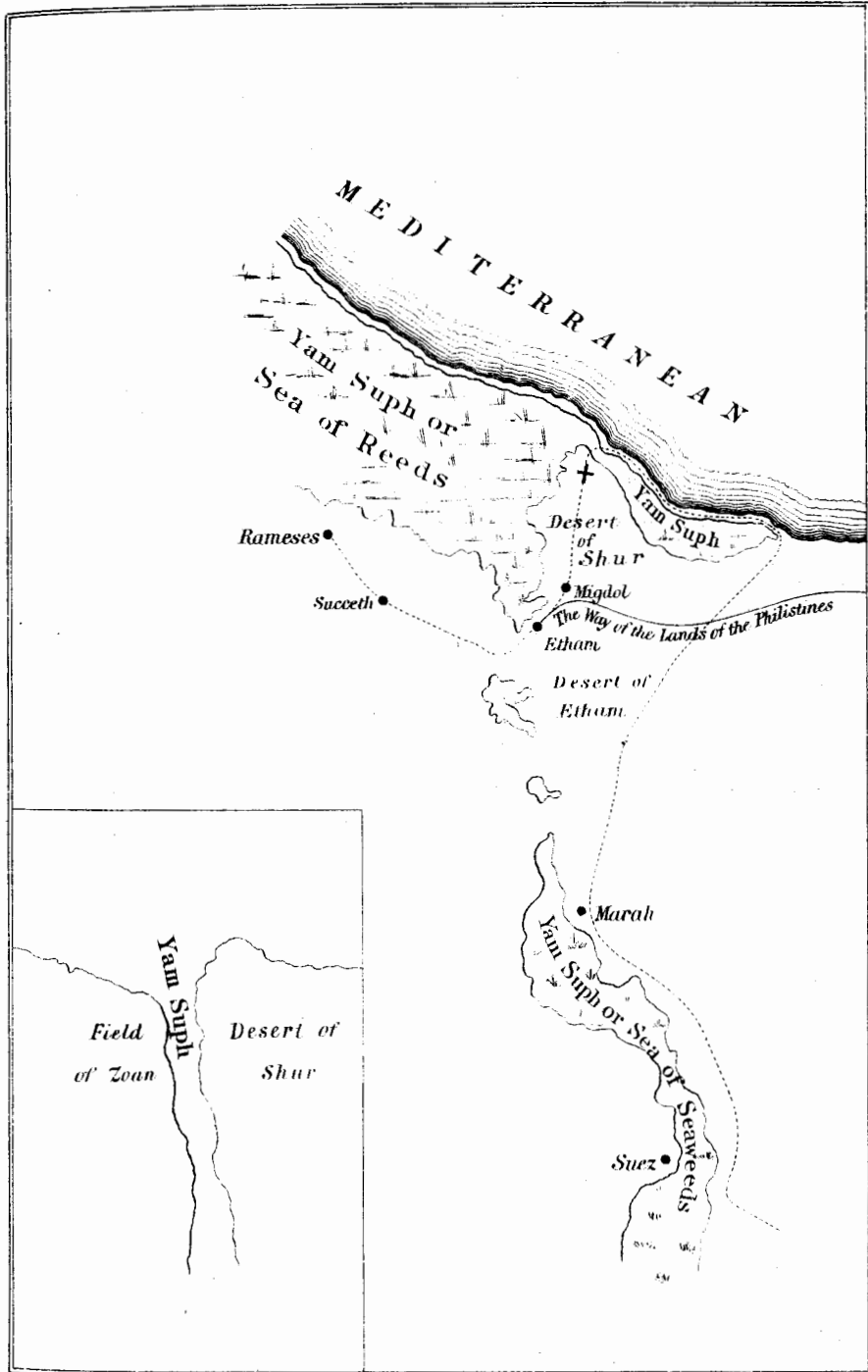
It was then so full of algæ as to receive the appellation "Sea of Seaweeds." By-and-by the centre part dried up, leaving isolated basins of brackish water, to the south of which was the Red Sea itself; to the north, Lakes Menzaleh and Serbonis, the two latter forming one whole. Much as we find the brook Kedron bearing the same name throughout its course, though a great part of that course is lost to sight far underground, so the northern and southern portions of the Red Sea, though now severed from each other, still kept the same designation, namely, that of "Sea of Seaweeds," which the Israelites translated by *Yam Suph*.

Even at the present day the appellation "Sea of Seaweeds" continues to be appropriate to the Red Sea proper; but from the moment when its northern portion (afterwards called Lakes Menzaleh and Serbonis) became severed from the southern, and ceased to have any connection with the sea, the characteristic vegetation of this sheet of water underwent a change, and reeds, such as papyri and flags, took the place of algæ. Inappropriate as the English name "Sea of Seaweeds" would now have become to this large lake, yet the Hebrew term was not at all so, for *Yam Suph* bears the meaning of "Sea of Reeds," as well as that of "Sea of Seaweeds," *Suph* or *Soph* being used in Exodus ii, 2, to designate "flags," whilst in Jonah ii, 5, the same word conveys the meaning of seaweeds.

I think Canon Scarth has shown conclusively that the *Yam Suph* of Exodus x, 19, into which the locusts were blown by "a west wind," was Lake Menzaleh; for, as he points out, "a north wind would be needed to blow them forty or fifty miles over the desert to reach the Red Sea at Suez." This would help to fix the starting-place of the Israelites at the modern San, the ancient Zoan, or Rameses, an identification upon which most authorities are now agreed. No such unanimity, however, prevails regarding the subsequent stations of the Exodus.

Powerful as are the arguments adduced by Captain Conder (in the last *Quarterly Statement*) against the theories of Canon Scarth and Brugsch Bey, I must confess to not finding them convincing.

In the first place, with regard to the ancient physical features of the Delta, the fact must be borne in mind that not only have Roman graves dating from an early period been discovered at Port Saïd, and ancient Roman towns not far to the south of it, but that Greek antiquities of the time of Ptolemy have been lately found upon islands on the bosom of Lake Menzaleh, close to Port Saïd, where Greek cities were situated in the days of that great geographer, thus proving that in Ptolemy's time the towns of Egypt extended to much the same north latitude as Port Saïd does now. As to the absence of water on a portion of the Kantara route, the difficulty would be no greater than that which the Israelites had after-



wards to encounter, when, as we read in Exodus xv, 22, "they went three days in the wilderness and found no water."

Then with regard to the objection to the Israelites with women, children, flocks, and herds, having taken the long daily marches which the route proposed by Canon Scarth is supposed to imply, I would answer, in the words of Mr. Pickering Clarke, "Are we obliged to allow only three days after leaving their homes before the Israelites made their encampment at Pi-hahiroth? The Bible account does not say so."

The close agreement of the localities mentioned in the papyrus dating from the reign of Seti II, with those referred to in Exodus xiii, xiv, as the camping-places of the children of Israel, seems more than merely accidental. The route proposed by Canon Scarth coincides with that followed by the pursuer of the fugitive slaves nearly 3,000 years ago as far as Migdol, where it trends north-westwards, leaving the caravan route to Syria; for here God commanded the Israelites to "turn," because He "led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; but God led the people about through the way of the wilderness of the Yam Suph;" and in thus turning they continued to keep the Sea of Reeds close on their left as they had done ever since leaving Rameses.

The identification of Pi-hahiroth, originated by Canon Scarth, is most striking in its exact fulfilment of all the requirements of the Bible narrative, and not less so is his localisation of the crossing-place of the Israelites from thence through the Yam Suph to the bank of sand which divides this Sea of Reeds from the Mediterranean.

Many people have, however, been led to reject the Canon's theory altogether, because of the subsequent march to Port Saïd and back, which he imagines the children of Israel to have undertaken; but it seems to me that the necessity for this march may be obviated by supposing Lake Menzaleh and Lake Serbonis to have formed one Sea of Reeds at this period, connected opposite Pi-hahiroth by a somewhat shallow strait. When the east wind blew, this strait would become a broad isthmus of sand, a watershed between the two lakes over which the Israelites would cross, having the waters of the Sea of Reeds as "a wall unto them on their right hand, and on their left." Arrived at the sandbank before mentioned as the northern boundary of the Yam Suph, they would turn to the south-east and continue along it, skirting the seaward shore of Lake Serbonis,¹ thus having still a wall of waters on either side, the left hand wall being now the Mediterranean, the right hand one the Sea of Reeds as before.

¹ As in after times (when the strait dividing Lakes Menzaleh and Serbonis became permanently dry land) a high road from Asia is said to have run past the Temple of Zeus Casius along this very sandbank to the north of Lake Serbonis, it is unlikely that in the days of the Exodus it was intersected by either the Pelusian mouth of the Nile, or the inlet of the Mediterranean described by Mr. Chester in the *Quarterly Statement* for April, 1881, though it is possible the Mediterranean may have occasionally broken over the strip of sand in a west wind, and that its doing so to the rear of the marching Israelites may have added to their safety, and aided in the destruction of their foes.

Meanwhile, Pharaoh's host had begun crossing over the natural bridge, but the east wind ceasing to blow, the isthmus disappeared beneath the rising waves, and the Egyptians perished in the Yam Suph, or sank into the numerous quicksands abounding in the neighbourhood of Pi-hahiroth; "the sea covered them," and "the earth swallowed them" (Exod. xv, 10, 12).

Being now freed from all fear of pursuit, the Israelites took a southerly course, which led them first for three days through the desert of Shur. They seem, from Numbers xxxiii, 8, to have occupied another three days in traversing the wilderness of Etham, so that it was not until the evening of the sixth, or the morning of the seventh day after they had quitted the shores of the Sea of Reeds, that they reached Marah, which appears to be satisfactorily identified by Canon Scarth and Brugsch Bey with the Bitter Lakes. Elim may possibly be Ayún Músa (the "Wells of Moses"); at all events it is clear, from Numbers xxxiii, 10, that the day after leaving Elim the Israelites encamped by the Yam Suph, which cannot here mean, as before, the Sea of Reeds, but must be used in this verse to indicate the Sea of Seaweeds, or the modern Red Sea; the double signification of "Suph" or "Soph," as I have before pointed out, making the appellation equally appropriate to the Red Sea as to Lakes Menzaleh and Serbonis, and the probability of a connection between the three having existed in times antecedent to the Exodus, being greatly enhanced by the fact that fossil shells, of a species now peculiar to the Red Sea, have been discovered in the bed of Lake Timsah. Lesser reasons than these, however, would have sufficed to induce the Hebrews to bestow an identical name on more than one piece of water, for in 1 Kings ix, 26, we find them applying the very same term of Yam Suph to the Gulf of Akabah, thus proving that this ancient Semitic race was not so precise in its use of geographical names as our modern English topographers are. The Greeks seem to have been equally vague, and, as Canon Scarth reminds us, seeing that Herodotus and other Greek writers carry the name of *ἐρυθρά θάλασσα* to the Persian Gulf, and even confound it with the Indian Ocean, it is not to be wondered at that they should not confine the title of "Red" to the sea now known by that name, but should bestow it also on the Sea of Reeds, which was tinged deep red at the time of the inundation of the Nile by the Ethiopian soil brought down by the Tanitic branch of that river, which flowed through the Yam Suph. The Septuagint, instead of translating Suph, substitutes for it the nomenclature more familiar to the Greeks, and in Acts vii, 36, and Hebrews xi, 29, the Septuagint text is followed.

A. G. WELD.