

sprung up from the north-west, and as we were carried along we were on the look-out for the flying fish, which from time to time leaped out of the water, and after skimming over the crests of the waves for some yards, disappeared. As we neared the harbour the sun went down behind Jebel Attakah, and soon after, the sky over the hills was all aglow, as if behind was concealed a great city in conflagration; the deep red of the west shading off through purple and roseate hues into the dark grey of the zenith. It is only in the East that such sunsets reward the beholder.

(To be continued.)

LETTER FROM CAPTAIN KITCHENER.

ABBASSIYEH,

13th January, 1884.

You will, I know, have received before this a full account of our proceedings from Professor Hull until we parted—he going to Gaza, and I striking across the desert to Ismailia. Our rate of travelling up the Wády Arabah was too fast for survey work. At first, while the valley was narrow, I was able, with Mr. Armstrong, to keep up by working hard, and being out almost every night after dark; but when the valley increased to fifteen miles wide I found it was impossible on camels to survey both sides at the rate we moved. I did all I could, and took up the work again later on the west side. My report will show how the work was done, and if you measure the distances I had to go I think you will find I got over as much ground as a camel would allow. They are bad beasts for surveying. I used to keep mine at a good trot for a bit until he got cross, which he showed by roaring, and then suddenly shutting up all four legs and coming with a thud on the ground, at the same moment springing up again and darting off in an opposite direction. Continued correction caused him to collapse again, and then roll, which was decidedly uncomfortable. I don't think I have ever done such hard work as I had up that Wády Arabah from Akabah to the Dead Sea. The result is, however, I think, very satisfactory; I have been able to run a triangulation up the whole way, and join on to the old work by measuring a base at Akabah. I took the levels by vertical angles, and kept up a complete chain of levels throughout. I found Akabah is out of position, being shown too far south on the Admiralty, and I found the south end of the Dead Sea to be terribly out—the Lisan has to be moved about three miles, and the whole shape of the south end altered. You will get full details in my report and plans, which I am preparing to send you as soon as possible.

By going up from the south end of the Dead Sea to Bir-es-Seba, I was able to put in a corner of the map and join on to our old work.

After Bir-es-Seba I considered that the road by El Arish to Egypt was already well known, so by myself, with only four camels and four Arabs, I made my way across to Ismailia, about 200 miles. One of the Arabs had been part of the road fifteen years before; none of the others knew anything of it, but they were good men from the Egyptian Haiweitats, under a relation of the Sheikh Ibn Shedid. We passed a good many Arabs of the Terabin and Ma'azi tribes, and I was received amongst them as Abdullah Bey, an Egyptian official, thus reviving a name well known and much revered amongst them; they supposed me to be a relation of the great Sheikh Abdullah. I was everywhere well received, and heard many expressions of the utter disgust the Arabs have for Palmer's murderers. They were also very full of accounts of Sir Charles Warren's pursuit of the murderers, and the energetic steps he took to catch them. My route—for there was no path or road—was a good deal over rolling sand drives, with no water supply. At one time we had a council of war, whether we should go back for water or push on to Ismailia; but as we had brought as much as we could carry from the last supply I insisted on pushing on, and we reached Ismailia without loss, but at our last gasp for water. The last two days' travelling were the most trying I have ever experienced; a very strong west wind blew the sand up into our faces, so that the camels would hardly face it. I will not anticipate my report and plans by giving you now a description of the route, but I can certainly say that it is a 200 mile trip I have no wish to traverse again. We only missed our way for a short time once during the whole march, and I was much struck by the wonderful way the Arabs can make their way across difficult country without compass to guide them. I travelled every day from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. without stopping, and with very little variation. One night we had to travel a good deal after dusk, to make a brackish pool of water, and I very nearly lost the party, as we had to separate to hunt for the water.

There was only one supply of good water after Wâdy Feira, and that was in Wâdy el Arish; after that we only found one brackish small supply as far as Ismailia.

H. H. KITCHENER.

ON THE RELATIONS OF LAND AND SEA IN THE ISTHMUS OF SUEZ AT THE TIME OF THE EXODUS.

THIS may be the proper place to refer to a suggestion of mine which has excited some interest, namely, that at the time of the Exodus there was a continuous connection of the Mediterranean and the Red Sea.¹ I never intended this to be considered other than a hypothesis towards the solution of a real difficulty which has occurred to all geographers who

¹ The *Times* and *Standard*, 18th February, 1884.