

cannot but be worth our earnest consideration. That solution, I believe, is found in the LXX, where Zephathah is altogether omitted and *kara Boppav*, "north of," put in its place. This alteration is not arbitrary, but has arisen in the easiest possible manner from a mistake of frequent occurrence in the Hebrew letters. If you compare the Hebrew of *kara Boppav*, i.e., צפונה with צפתה, which it displaces, you will find that it requires a mere dot to join the two letters ך and ן together at the top, when they become a ת, and the one word is changed for the other. It is curious that the reverse mistake between the same two words also exists in another place. In a conflate reading of the LXX, in Joshua xix, 27, the second rendering for צפונה is *Σαφθα*, showing that some one had read the word צפתה. The solution then which I here propose consists in a slight correction of the Hebrew. In general I am no advocate for correcting in any degree the Hebrew Bible by the LXX. At least, when the circumstances of any variation between them are equal, I would always ascribe the mistake to the LXX rather than to the Masoretic Hebrew. But when the circumstances are not equal, a friend of the truth must judge impartially. Here, when we remember the above difficulties caused by the common reading, and compare the improvements which we shall see below to be obtained from the LXX reading by that small correction, can we reject these improvements because they come from the LXX only? It seems to me that the Version cannot be deprived of the palm in this case. For now, when the words of the above text are changed into "the valley north of Mareshah," then instead of למרשה being harsh and elliptical, it is quite smooth according to Hebrew usage. Instead of its being superfluous, it is indispensable, so that we cannot do without it. Instead of the battlefield being at too great a distance, and in an unlikely direction from Mareshah, we see it on the most suitable spot close by. Kh. Marash is found on the map to lie on an elevation between two feeders of the river called Nahr Sukereir. One of these feeders or streamlets is south, and the other north of the village. The valleys, therefore, through which they run, must have been called respectively the valley south of Mareshah, and the valley north of Mareshah. Hence the author had to point out distinctly that the battle was in the valley north of Mareshah, not south of it; and this indeed was, under the circumstances, far more likely to be the place of meeting of the two hosts than any other conceivable place.

E. FLECKER.

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## DEAD SEA WATER.

(From the "Times," November 21st, 1885.)

Many scientific readers may be interested in the following analysis of water from the Dead Sea, which has just been furnished to me by

Dr. Bernays. The water was taken by me from the northern end of the lake, but not near the Jordan, in the month of March. In the autumn season, and further south, the solid matter would have been in still larger proportion. The analysis was made under Dr. Bernays' instructions by Mr. J. C. Bredin, superintended by Mr. C. G. Stewart, the chief assistant in the chemical laboratory of St. Thomas's Hospital. Dr. Bernays informs me that this is the first time that the nitrates in the water have been calculated.

WILLIAM ALLAN.

*St. James's Vicarage, Bermondsey, March 30th.*

Sp. gr. 1.1528 at 15.5 deg. C.

|   |         |                  |          |
|---|---------|------------------|----------|
| Total residue                                     | 15260.0 | grs. per gallon. |          |
| Calcium carbonate                                 | ....    | ....             | 70.00    |
| Calcium sulphate                                  | ....    | ....             | 163.39   |
| Magnesium nitrate                                 | ....    | ....             | 175.01   |
| Potassium chloride                                | ....    | ....             | 1089.06  |
| Sodium chloride                                   | ....    | ....             | 5106.00  |
| Calcium chloride                                  | ....    | ....             | 594.46   |
| Magnesium chloride                                | ....    | ....             | 7388.21  |
| Magnesium bromide                                 | ....    | ....             | 345.80   |
| Iron and aluminum oxides                          | ....    | ....             | 10.50    |
|   |         |                  | <hr/>    |
|   |         |                  | 14942.43 |
| Organic matter, water of crystallisation and loss | ....    |                  | 317.57   |
|   |         |                  | <hr/>    |
|   |         |                  | 15260.00 |

## THE PHYSICAL FEATURES OF EGYPT AND SYRIA IN RELATION TO BIBLE HISTORY.<sup>1</sup>

THIS little work comes opportunely to hand at a time when general attention is turned towards the East, and when such an extraordinary and unexpected amount of light has been thrown on the history and customs of the inhabitants of Ancient Egypt and adjoining countries. Sir William Dawson's book supplies a link in the chain of history connecting the historical with the prehistoric epochs, in a manner which has not hitherto been attempted, and in language which will be quite intelligible to the ordinary educated reader. It unfortunately happens that few Egyptologists and students of ancient history are geologists as well; so that such a book as the present, written by an author of matured judgment and wide knowledge, and who has been a keen investigator of geological phenomena in the field for many years, may be expected to throw fresh light on the physical changes which Ancient Egypt, Palestine,

<sup>1</sup> *Egypt and Syria and their Physical Features in relation to Bible History.*  
By Sir J. W. Dawson, LL.D., F.R.S. Religious Tract Society.