

I suggested another point (K) for digging a shaft to find out the edge of the rock, and how far the cave extended in that direction.

The third point for excavation would be at C C in No. 11, and find out the continuation of the blocked-up conduit Cx, in No. 11 and No. 12, which I suppose is hewn through the rock. In No. 12 section I have shown in dotted lines what I presume to be the form of the cave in the eastern and western parts. When excavations are resumed at points K and C, &c., I will continue this report.<sup>1</sup>

CONRAD SCHICK.

## RECENT DISCOVERIES IN GALILEE.

*Nazareth.—Discovery of Large Cave.*—At Nazareth, very few ancient remains are found, excepting the "sanctuaries" shown in the convents and in the vicinity of Nazareth, the explorer has few other proofs but those guided by faith and tradition, which are not always reliable; it is, therefore, welcomed if a discovery as the following is made.

In the convent yard of the "Sœurs de S. Joseph," at Nazareth, a cistern was to be dug, and in the course of the work an ancient cave was discovered, choked up with rubbish and mud which had to be removed at great expense, until the character of the subterranean room was seen. Signs of a well, the dampness of the interior, and the soft humid rocks, from which, even in summer, water was dropping, seemed to suggest the vicinity of a spring, which, according to local tradition, once flowed on the north of the "*beidar*," or threshing-floor of the city, which lies a couple of hundred yards south of the convent and the cave mentioned, and is said to have been in connection with *Ain Miriam*, the spring on the north of the city which supplies Nazareth with drinking water. The discovery of a fresh spring would be a matter of great importance at Nazareth, as it suffers from the want of water very much during the two hot months of summer. I was, therefore, asked by some priests and the abbess of the convent to examine the interior of the cave, and find out whether any spring was probable or not. I found the mud and rubbish only partly removed, while signs of large rooms adjoining were visible, and consequently recommended the continuation of the excavations. This advice was followed, and in October last I again examined the place, planned the caves, and now give the following account of it (see plan and sections):—

From the paved convent yard we step down the new-masoned stairs into the actual staircase, the floor of which we reach at a depth of about 20 feet below the surface. The staircase is vaulted, measuring 11 feet each side. The cross vault is carefully built with large soft limestones

<sup>1</sup> When the cave has been thoroughly explored the plans and sections will be published, at present they are in an incomplete state.



(*Nâri*), and well preserved ; the top of the vault shows conical fittings ;

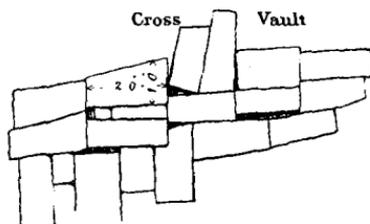


FIG. 1.

the joints are wide, and although once filled with mortar, are now open ; at the side of the last six steps is a masoned pit (O plan) about 2 feet 6 inches wide, leading from the surface through the vault ; at the end of the stairs near the floor a circular trough is placed on a bench of the bare rock, into which a small aqueduct (*see* plan and section) is led. Thus arrived on the floor we find that the room described is cut out of a soft white limestone rock, which was masoned on every side except the northern, near Cistern D. We step further through a sort of door, the upper part of which, 4 feet 9 inches wide, is cut out of the rock in a round shape, and two steps down arrive at the main room of the subterranean cave, the floor of which is about 30 feet below the surface. This room is rectangular, from 10 to 13 feet high, hewn out of the same soft rock, and is divided into three parts by terraces, the southern of which lies lowest, and the northern highest ; in the northern (cistern C of plan) we find on the western wall four rock-cut troughs, at a height of 3 feet 5 inches above the floor, the largest and deepest of which is 4 feet 4 inches long, 1 foot 8 inches wide, and 1 foot deep, or little more, all connected by small channels, to lead the water from the upper small one down to the lowest, the bottom of each being lower than its upper neighbour ; their width, 1 foot 8 inches, is the same. I consider these to be either water-troughs or mangers, as they are similar to those so frequently found in the Haurân subterranean stables and rooms ; M<sup>me</sup>. the Abbess believes they were troughs used by the ancient Jews for "purifications." Just above them (O plan and section) is a round mouth, 3 feet in diameter, used to draw water from the cistern, the upper part of which, while running through rubbish and earth for 9 feet 6 inches height, is masoned up with hewn stones, while the lower part through rock and clay is bare ; arriving at a depth of 19 feet, this pit opens in the form of a funnel to a cistern (C, section L M) irregular in shape ; the floor of cistern C is 15 feet 1 inch long, and 11 feet 7 inches wide ; from here we go down one step, about a foot high, to the central part, which in its eastern wall shows the first three stones of an arch of an original width of 15 feet, and in the opposite western rock wall one stone (I of map) belonging to the same arch probably ; in the floor of this apartment we see three connected rock-cut basins, the principal one of which is a little over 6 feet 3 inches

long, and 1 foot 11 inches wide, and about 2 feet deep. I hold that these basins, in the way they are placed and connected (*see* plan), are deposit beds (*i.e.*, for beds into which the mud deposits settle, as often seen in this country, but the opinion that they were graves could hardly be admitted. These basins are connected with the southern part above mentioned, into which the stairs lead from the exterior. In this room, also, which is separated from the central one by a terrace 9 inches high, we find near the southern wall on the floor two separate basins, the largest of which is 4 feet 5 inches long, 2 feet wide and deep: the fact that they also lie, as the above in the lowest part of the floor, and that they are connected with an unopened apartment (cistern (?) H of plan) convinces me that they were also deposit beds of the cisterns. The walls of these cisterns or rooms described are bare, but there are signs of an original plastering in different parts, and among the rubbish and mud drawn to daylight, piles of a good thick mortar-cover are found, as well as pottery ware; only the western wall of this southern apartment shows a piece of masoned wall built on the soft clay rock (*see* section LM of plan), evidently a partition wall with three rectangular niches, and a fourth opening which is connected with an adjoining room to the west. This masonry must be of the same period as the vault described; the stones are also *Nâri*, large and not very carefully worked and fitted. Below this wall is an opening, a door cut through the soft rock, through which we enter by a narrow passage into a room of irregular shape, with a basin or deposit bed in the centre, above which a mouth (O of plan) opens towards the surface. This mouth, as well as the walls of the room, were built up by the convent while excavating, the rock then being in a dangerous, crumbling condition. We return a few steps back through the narrow passage, then turn left hand and crawl through a low door into a low room of irregular shape, which contains the most important remains of this cave, namely, two tombs, or Kokim, of nearly same size. The bearing of these Kokim is 54° N.W.; the southern one is on one side 6 feet 3 inches long, 2 feet 1 inch wide, and 2 feet 8 inches high (*see* section AB on plan), the other, merely separated by a rock partition wall, may have had the same length, but is now only 4 feet 7 inches long on one side, 2 feet wide, and 2 feet 6½ inches high; both have rounded ceilings, and are rock-hewn, the rock here being more compact. I consider these tombs, to which a *stone door* of *Nâri* was found lying near, of common form, 3 feet 6 inches long, 2 feet 5 inches wide, and 7 inches thick, to be the few original remains of this cave; unfortunately we found no ornament or sign whatever, either on the Kokim nor on the stone door. The bearing of the central large room of the cave is 11° N.E.

In the east of the cave (cistern C) is an irregular door, through which we find a cistern (E of plan) of rectangular shape, 10 by 10 feet, rock-hewn, the upper part of which is covered by a round vault somehow different from the cross vault of the staircase, showing a projecting stone (Fig. 2) in the western part with the object of leading rain-water from the surface into the cistern. From here we proceed through

an opening to a large adjoining cistern (D of plan); this cistern measures 16 by 12 feet, is of an oval shape, and has a central deposit bed (*see* section KF of plan); it is connected with the staircase by two openings near its ceiling, and from the unexplored cistern, H, a small aqueduct leads to it, which is interrupted by the door leading to the stairs of entrance (*see* plan). This small aqueduct evidently was built before the staircase was used as such, and had the object to supply cistern D with the surplus of cistern H. The aqueduct is composed of large channeled stones placed on the clay rock, and measures 4 by 6 inches in width. To the north of cistern E another cistern (F of plan) was discovered, but not cleared out yet, also to the north of cistern C a narrow sloping passage leads to a wide room (unexplored cistern G of plan), which yet awaits clearing.

In the yard itself, above the cave described, but evidently in no direct connection with it, the "Sœurs" found three pillars free of common masonry; they are composed of large *Nâri* stone, and to judge from their form and shape, seem to have formed arches; they are situate above the ancient arch of the central room (11 feet 9 inches south of mouth O of cistern C lies the first pillar). The excavations must be continued on the surface, before satisfactory results are obtained.

Among the *débris* found in the cave was a handsome little marble column 3 feet 3 inches long, 5 inches in diameter (Fig. 3), with no base

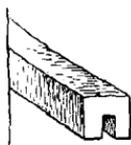


FIG. 2.

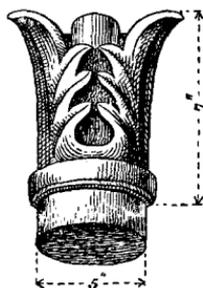


FIG. 3.

but a capital worked to it 7 inches high, which, although defaced, shows careful carved work; another marble column 8 inches in diameter, a pedestal cornice of 'Ajlûn marble, having the following shape (Fig. 4):

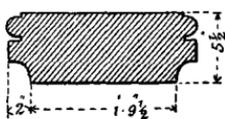


FIG. 4.

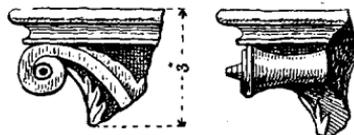


FIG. 5.

Large granite columns were also excavated in lengths of 4 and 5 feet, and an upper diameter of 1 foot 7 inches. A fragment of a beautiful little Ionic capital found shows parts plated with goldleaf (Fig. 5);

also a small statuette  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches high (Fig. 6), of which unfortunately the head and legs are broken, made of a soft limestone, was once plated with gold. This most pretty little work, although much defaced by the damp, shows a rich folded and ornamented dress, the arms holding something like a bunch of flowers, besides a mass of glass lachrimatories, generally broken to pieces; the "Sœurs" gathered heaps of mosaic glass, the pieces varying about an eighth of an inch square, representing every possible colour, and some being nicely gold-plated: also large pieces of dark glass up to  $\frac{3}{16}$  of an inch thick, many glass beads (pearls) of different colour and size, and any amount of fragments of pottery ware from jars, pots and plates, some painted with simple black stripes, others red and brown, and a nice collection of well preserved lamps of pottery ware (see Fig. 7). None of these lamps



FIG. 6.

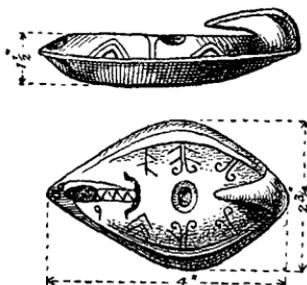


FIG. 7.

showed any inscription—or letters, merely antique ornamentalations, as seen from the annexed sketches. I also found among the remains an instrument made of bone, of the following shape and ornamentation, probably used for weaving (Fig. 8):—

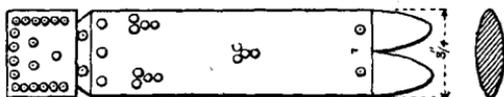


FIG. 8.

Among the coins found I recognised some Arabian, which bore the inscription, *الله هو العزيز والامام المنصور*. Some other Roman coins of common appearance; of still greater interest were some Jewish coins, or at least some pieces having old Hebrew characters, much defaced, but worth a special study.

The ground and ruins where the above-described cave is located is called the *Jâma' Abd es-Samad* by the natives. The Nazarenians, as well as the "Sœurs," stated to me that a mosque stood there at a late period. Old men pretended to know that, according to tradition, the *Jâma'* was

built on and rebuilt out of the stones of an ancient church which stood on the same place.

This is what I gathered on the spot.

The caves were visited during last summer by competent historians; among others, by M. V. Guérin himself, whom I had not the pleasure of speaking to, but who, according to what was stated to me by Mdme. is of the opinion that this cave represents the edifice mentioned by l'Abesse Arculphus, of the seventh century (according to Adamnanus<sup>1</sup>), and the description of which Guérin quotes in his work, "Description de la Palestine," Paris, 1880, Galilee, vol. i, p. 99, as follows:—

"Civitas Nazareth, ut Arculfus, qui in ea hospitatus est, narrat, et ipsa ut Capharnaum murorum ambitum non habet, supra montem posita; grandia tamen lapidea habet ædificia, ibidemque duæ prægrandes habentur constructæ ecclesiæ, una in medio civitatis loco super duos fundata caneros, ubi quondam illa fuerat ædificata domus, in qua noster nutritus est Salvator. Hæc itaque eadem ecclesia duabus, ut superius dictum est, tumulis et interpositis arcibus suffulta habet inferius inter eosdem tumulos lucidissimum fontem conlocatum, quem totus civium frequentat populus, de illo exhauriens aquam, et de latice eodem sursum in ecclesiam superædificatum aqua in vasculis per trochleas subigitur. Altera vero ecclesia in ea fabricata habetur loco ubi illa fuerat domus constructa, in qua Gabriel archangelus ad beatam Mariam ingressus ibidem eadem hora solam est locutus."

Comparing the above description of the church standing on the place of tradition, where Jesus passed His early youth, with my account given, we find that there may be a possibility of identity if we admit that a second arch, besides the one of which remains still are found, has existed, on which the church was built, and if the expression "tumulos" can be identified with the two rock-cut tombs or Kokim above described, — a comparison which is not adopted by all explorers of the place. However this may be, there is this much to state that the subterranean cave before us had at least two periods of use; the first and ancient period is represented by the two Kokim, which, considering the coins found, may have an ancient Jewish origin, and the cave represented a subterranean burial-place, like many others found throughout Palestine; a second period may have changed and widened the sepulchral cave into a large cistern, or group of cisterns, with a large central room, to which the women descended by the stairs shown, to fill the jars as they now do at the present day; the cisterns lying aside of this room were kept as reservoirs for time of want. This period, with the masonry work remaining, excepting the arch (1), may have had its beginning in the middle ages.

To have an idea of the plan represented by the four pillars found above the cave, excavation work must be done westwards, that is, on the place where the Jâma' Abd es-Samad actually stood; here, doubtless, interesting results would be obtained, and it is very desirable that the

<sup>1</sup> Adamnanus, "De Locis Sanctis," cxi, § 26.

Sœurs de S. Joseph at Nazareth should continue the excavation work at this interesting locality.

*Jâ'uni*.—At the Jewish colony Rushpina, near Jâ'uni, at one hour's ride eastward from Safed, I lately came across an old ruined Jâma', also known by the name "Beit el 'Arab," بيت العرب "the house of the Bedawin," which, from its plan, must have been something like an ancient bath (Fig. 9).

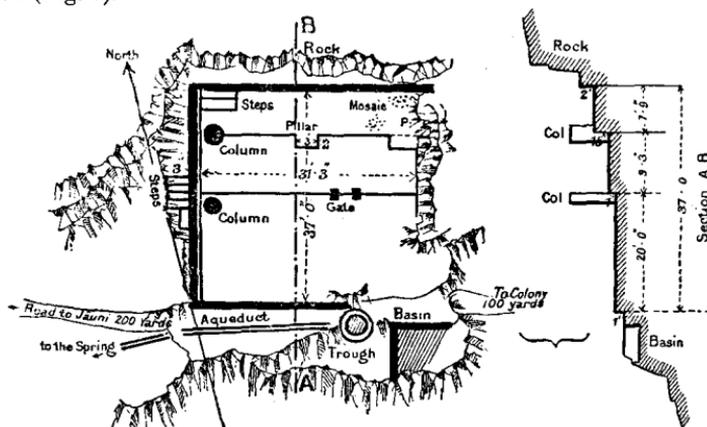


FIG. 9.

Coming from the colony we enter a flat, rectangular space, evidently hewn out of the solid rock, measuring 37 by 31 feet, with steps in terraces, the first of which is 1 foot high and 20 feet broad, the second 9 feet 3 inches wide and 1 foot high, the third 15 inches high and 7 feet 9 inches broad. This latter terrace has three pillars, on one of which a column still stands (Fig. 10); the floor was paved with mosaic, regular

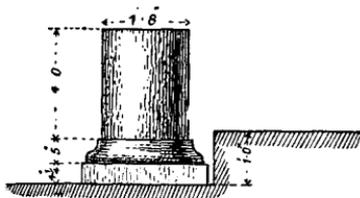


FIG. 10.



FIG. 11.

square pieces of hard limestone placed in good mortar, together  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch thick. The mosaic stones had different colours—black, white, and grey. Behind this third terrace there is a wall, formed by the bare limestone rock, about 5 feet high, which also continues round the western side. From the north and west, where the rock overhangs the ruin, rock-hewn steps lead to the interior. On the second terrace a column still stands, 1 foot 8 inches in diameter, and 5 feet in height, with base, and remains of a gate or door are visible.

At the lowest point and southern end of the building we find a large stone trough 4 feet in diameter, and near by it a small ruined aqueduct leading in a south-western direction to the spring of the village; on the other side of the trough there are ruins of a cistern. The road from the village to the colony leads along its southern side.

As before said, the ruin with the aqueduct, as well as the plan of the interior, speaks in favour of a bath; in this case, the lowest terrace must have been the bathing basin, the second one the room for clothing, and the third one, with mosaic, the room for rest, with a door to the exterior in the north-west corner.

Nearer and towards the colony Rushpina I came across an old cemetery; among the scattered stones once forming the graves lie parts of a high column of hard limestone, measuring 3 feet 2 inches in diameter. The different parts were fastened together by pins, same as seen at *Tabakât Fakîl* ("Pella," p. 26) (Fig. 11); the pin-holes had the form of a cross, 1 foot long, 1 foot 2 inches broad, and 3 inches deep; another pin-hole was circular and 4 inches deep. The ground being flattened, although lying on a slope, and having a commanding position over the plain down to the Lake of Merom (*Hâleh*) and vicinity, the columns may have belonged to a temple. The Jewish colony, founded by the generous Baron Ed. de Rothschild with the name of Rushpina, is flourishing. Gardens, vineyards, and about thirty-five buildings, partly with gable roofs, decorate the rocky slopes around *Jâ'uni*.

*Esh-Shejara*.—While laying out roads I came across a flat rock (Fig. 12), situate on a slope of the vicinity of the village *Esh-Shejara* (between *Lâbiék* and *Tabor*, on the road from *Kefr Kenna* to *Tiberias*), which has the following shape:—

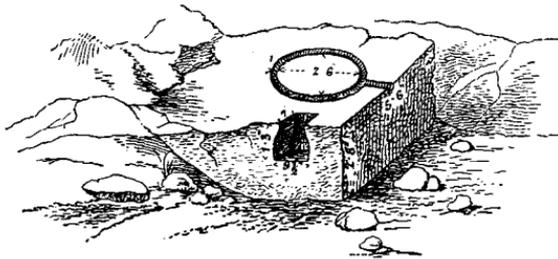


FIG. 12.

It measured about 5 feet 6 inches square, with a height of 2 feet 8 inches, but was evidently higher originally, the fellahin excavating around the rock, seeking for a *Kenz* (treasure), and thus laid it bare, but covered a part of it up again. The flat surface of the rock has a circular ring 2 feet 6 inches in diameter, forming a groove only 1 inch wide, and about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch deep, with a straight groove of about the same width, leading from the ring to the edge of the rock. On the western vertical side of the rock I found a notch, cup-formed, 9

inches wide below,  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches on the top, 1 foot 3 inches high, and 7 inches deep (see sketch). The rock is hard limestone. The level surface was not worked, but seems natural; the sides were evidently shaped with a tool, although no mark or sign is discernible. An old fellah Sheikh, who accompanied me, named this rock *El-Mókadi* الموقدى (probably from <sup>ق</sup>ق "to slice into pieces"), which expression was repeated to me later by others. The people seem to have a hazy superstition as regards this rock, the history of which I hope to gather later. Was it an altar or a press? Further up the hill towards *Lábieh*, and from here north-westwards down its slope, I found a number of unique coniform cuttings in the surface of the flat rocks, one to one foot and a half deep



FIG. 13.

and wide, and also less, some only a foot wide and half a foot deep; they are situate at considerable distances from any cistern or well, and spread all over the rocky slopes.

Between the villages *Esh-Shejara* and *Kefr Sabt*, near the *Sultáni* (high) road, leading from the *Súk el Khán* to Tiberias (see Palestine Exploration Fund Map), I found a circle formed by huge, unhewn stones, with a diameter of 50 feet. The stones have a height from  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to  $3\frac{1}{2}$  feet. This ruin is called *Rujm el Hardik*, رجم الحرايق "the mound of the burnings," and is doubtless of great age. The vicinity is called *Daher es-Salib*, ظهر الصليب "the slope of the cross," as according to the fellahtn, a cross was chiselled on one of the large blocks mentioned, but which I could not discover.

Walking from the village *Esh-Shejara* towards *Khibet Kaisharún* (see Palestine Exploration Fund Map), I found on the slopes passed, near this ruin, some caves, which were quite recently discovered and opened by shepherds. Their interior, which I explored, has a distinct sepulchral character, i.e., rooms from 10 to 15 feet square, with *Kokim* and *loculi* worked into the vertical walls, some of which yet contain human bones, but the limestone rock is so soft and crumbling, the interior to such a degree fallen and full of dust and stones, that a plan could not be made. I can merely state that the plan would be very nearly the same as that of the grand cave at *Sheikh Abreik* (on the road from Haifa to Nazareth), smaller of course, but having a number of rooms connected by narrow low passages, only to be entered in a crawling position. Curious enough, the cave, or rather caves, for several were found which may have a connection with each other, have not an entrance from the front, as others, in the

face of the rock, but seem to have been reached by a passage (Fig. 14)

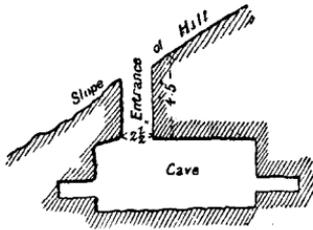


FIG. 14.

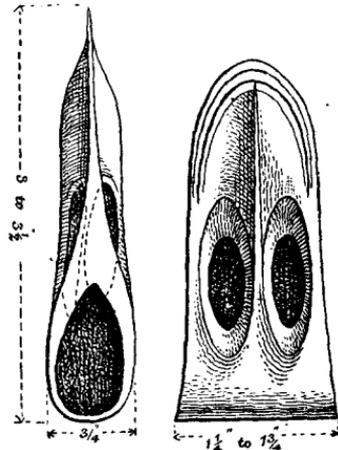


FIG. 15.

through the ceiling, about 2 to 2½ feet wide, as several were found leading into the same cave, but probably among the brushwood of the slopes the general entrance will yet be found.

While crawling about in the interior my companions found two similar copper instruments of the following shape (Fig. 15):—Each one is from 3 to 3½ inches long, 1¼ to 1¾ inches broad, and ¾ inch thick; its shape is that of a short spear or hatchet, with a rib on its broad (flat) side separating two oval holes which stand in connection with the ear of the instrument, to fasten its handle in. The flat end, the edge of the instrument, bears some parallel ornamental lines. Perhaps these instruments—for they could hardly be anything else—were given the dead into the grave as one of the favourite weapons. Also a thin bracelet of copper, ½ inch thick, much defaced, was found, having at its end something like a snake-head (Fig. 16).

Finally they brought me a copper coin, found among the dust in a grave, which I reproduce in its natural size and stamp (Fig. 17):—



FIG. 16.

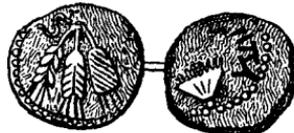


FIG. 17.

On one side there are three ears, tied together with a sling, surrounded by a ring of pearls; the other side shows a sort of purse with tassels and some letters, which I am unable to decipher.

Modern *Esh-Shejara* is only about fifty years old, but it is built on a ruined site with the name—according to information collected on the spot—of *Deir Hânîn* دیر حانین to which also the ruined mosque and church near the spring and village (see "Memoirs of the Fund," vol. I) belonged. According to tradition, *Deir Hânîn* was a very important market place, it being situate on the crossing of the two high roads—Damascus to Jerusalem, and 'Acca to Haurân. Both roads are still frequented, but the market was transferred to *Sûk el Khân*, a Karavan-serai of old style near the foot of Mount Tabor; even that market was done away with some years since, the people becoming more settled; their wants are supplied from the cities of Nazareth and Tiberias.

G. SCHUMACHER.

*Haifa, December, 1888.*

### THE "VIA MARIS"

#### A REPLY.

IN the July number (1888) of the *Quarterly Statement*, the Rev. Ch. Druitt wishes to have explained "the ground for my identification of the Via Maris of antiquity with the caravan road which bisects Upper Jaulân in the direction of 'Acca and Haifa."

I have to state that I followed the opinion of Ritter, who, in his description of the upper and central Jordan districts ("Erdkunde," xv, a, "Palastina und Syrien" II, a, pp. 269-272) states that the central of the three large (northern, central, and southern) caravan roads which connected Damascus with the lands of the Kanaanites, passed by the fortified Jisr and Khân Benât Y'akûb, and, coming from Damascus or the Euphrates Valley, and crossing the Jordan at this bridge, took a southern course to the Sea of Galilee, to the important custom house Capernaum, and from here to the Mediterranean Sea. Its name, Via Maris or "Road to the Sea," "Sea-Road," may have therefore been derived either from the Sea of Galilee, or the Mediterranean; see also Gesenius ("Comment. zu Jesaias," Th. I, pp. 350-354) for further proofs. That this very important sea road, which during the middle ages was used by caravans from Damascus to Phœnicia, was meant by Quaresmius ("Eleucid. Terr. Sctæ," T. I, Lib. I, c. 8, fol. 19) when he said "via maris publica quedam via est, qua venitur ex Assyria ad mare mediterraneum," can be proved by a look on the map: the high road I marked as Via Maris on the Jaulân map, leaves Damascus, and follows the level Haurân plateau (or rather Jaidûr) to S'asâ and continues in a straight line to el Kuneitra, and from here as direct as possible through the Jaulân to the Jisr Benât Y'akûb, from here it follows the Jordan course along the slopes forming the western banks of the river until it arrives at the ruined Khân Minyeh (by some supposed to be Capernaum) which lies very near the Sea of Galilee. Here, or at Khân Jubb Yûsef, a ruin a little north of Khân Minyeh, the high road must