

THE RECENT PILGRIMAGE TO JERUSALEM.

By F. J. BLISS, M.A.

AFTER a brief but most interesting stay of nine days in Palestine, the pilgrims of the party, under the leadership of Mr. Woolrych Perowne, have embarked on their special steamer for Athens. As several lectures were given to the party in Jerusalem under the auspices of the Fund, an account of the pilgrimage will be of interest. On Sunday, February 25th, the party landed at Jaffa in comparative comfort, whereas the company arriving in the "Fürst Bismarck" on the Friday following were tossing about for forty-eight hours before an embarkation was possible. The pilgrims numbered one hundred and twenty.

There were twenty-two clergymen, including the Bishop of Worcester, Canon Tristram, of Durham, the Rev. Osborne Jay, of Shoreditch, and five Nonconformist ministers. About fifty proceeded to Jerusalem at once by train, while the rest followed on Monday, some by train, some by carriage. The hotel accommodation here was somewhat strained, but all were comfortably housed.

Notwithstanding the fatigue after the long journey, a large number turned out to hear Canon Tristram lecture Monday evening in the lecture room of Christ Church, kindly lent for the week by the Vicar, the Rev. Mr. Kelk. Canon Tristram began by referring to a remark made to him years ago by Rawlinson, that a large part of the history of Kings and Chronicles could be reconstructed from the Egyptian Monuments, but that Palestine itself, the theatre of those events, furnished hardly any such monuments. The reason is a double one. First, the geology: Palestine is a limestone country, Egypt used the imperishable granite, Assyria employed the equally immortal burnt clay, while Palestine worked in the soft and friable limestone or the perishable wood. Hence the preservation of inscriptions becomes most difficult. Second, the climate: In Egypt the wonderful dry atmosphere and the preserving sand have kept painted wooden panels perfectly fresh for thousands of years. Here the frosts and rains of winter alternating with the fierce heat of summer have destroyed the monuments. Wood in Palestine is exceptionally perishable. Tyre was in advance of Egypt in metal-work, but could not hand it down; the climate made this a physical impossibility.

The lecturer then reviewed the country between Jaffa and Jerusalem. Jaffa was Phœnician rather than Israelite. The coast between Scandaroon and Gaza has only two natural harbours, suitable for large shipping. The pilgrims had reason to notice the reefs, cropping out above the water, parallel to the coast at Jaffa. Similar reefs may

be observed all along the coast, at Cæsarea, Acre, Tyre, Sidon, Gebal, &c. These formed the earliest harbours of history, seized upon by the Phœnicians with a sort of instinct, as suitable for small shipping; they built a breakwater out from the land at the south, leaving the entrance at the more protected north. Before history began this mysterious people started from their harbourless coast, and sailed to Cornwall and to the Canary Isles. In these islands the lecturer had seen the Phœnician inscriptions carved before the time of Solomon. They brought back with them the orange, the golden fruit of the Hesperides. This narrow coast was all their home; they wanted no land, but, like sea-birds, only nests in the rocks for their wives and little ones. He had visited the island of Ruad (the ancient *Aradus*), which also has its reef of rocks. Here he found a singular survival: it was absolutely covered with houses, but they contained only women and children. The men were all off on a voyage, to New York, to Liverpool, to Buenos Ayres. Here then were the descendants by blood and habits of the old Phœnicians.

The great system of plains along the Syrian coast, interrupted only by Carmel and the Ladder of Tyre, has had much to do with the history of the country. Here were fought the great battles of the nations. It has been the high road of armies for 5,000 years; the arterial military road between Egypt and Assyria, as testified by the tablets at Dog River, near Beyrout. Humanly speaking, these plains were the preservation of the Kingdoms of Israel and Judah. The armies marched with cavalry and chariots, they could not deploy and manœuvre, and so left undisturbed the mountain kingdoms. The plains made the wealth not the strength of Syria. David and Solomon were good strategists and never fortified the plains, but only the hills. When the alien armies marched across the plains the nations retired to the mountains, returning in times of peace to cultivate their corn.

Jaffa is famous as the landing-place of the materials for the Temple brought by the Phœnician allies. Ascalon is counted as a Philistine town, but really belonged to the Phœnician Tyre and Sidon. The house shown as that of Simon the Tanner is not an unlikely site; it is close to the town wall, satisfying the Jewish law that tanneries should be outside the city, and has a fine well of water. *Cœur de Lion* took Jaffa for the Crusaders. The sad and dark spot in its history is the cruel massacre of prisoners by Napoleon. The lecturer has talked with an eye-witness of this scene, which occurred near the place where the English Hospital now stands. Jaffa has doubled itself in thirteen years; its present growth being as rapid as its former decay, for after the Crusaders it became almost as deserted as Cæsarea is now. The famous oranges of Jaffa are of course not indigenous. Neither is the prickly pear, which comes from America. Reference was then made to the beautiful plain of Sharon. The rose of Sharon was identified with the sweet-scented narcissus. The rose, in the common understanding, is not indigenous in low lands.

Canon Tristram then passed on to a bird's-eye view of the general character of the country. The frame and lighting of a picture have much to do with its value. So the setting of the Bible is most important. In no other country beside Palestine can so many phenomena of different latitudes be seen in so small a compass. Here are all maritime phenomena, here are rich plains, wild hill-country, and eternal snow. The depression of the Jordan Valley is a phenomenon absolutely unique. There you may find plants and animals that belong to Nubia, Central Africa, Madras, and Ceylon. The consequence is that the writers of the Bible were familiar with the phenomena of the whole world. Had the Bible been written in India how impossible would have been the imagery of the snow and hail! One night beyond the Jordan the lecturer was encamped under palm trees, the next, after a hard day's ride, he was encamped under Scotch firs! The Bible was written in the one land in the whole world which provides illustrations that appeal to every inhabitant of the globe.

Objections are made by some to the large population claimed for Palestine in old times. The Canon pointed out that the terrace cultivation was quite equal to that of Malta. There is no reason why in Solomon's time Palestine should not have been as thickly populated as Belgium and Barbadoes to-day. Rain was then much more plentiful. Native forests existed everywhere. The evergreens, the ilex, the sweet bay, drew down much moisture. When these were cut down their place was taken by the olive-tree, which brings down more moisture than any other tree.

An intelligent study of the fauna of Palestine may check some of the results of the higher criticism. In Leviticus Moses gives a list of animals which he repeats thirty-eight years after in the Book of Deuteronomy, with the addition of nine new species. Why this addition? Because the first list was compiled only nine months after the children of Israel left Egypt, while the second was made after their long sojourn in the wilderness. Now, while the Canon was travelling across the Jordan he picked up all the Arabic names he could find of animals and birds, with the result that eight out of nine of these added species were found to be creatures that now exist in the desert and which only could have existed in the desert and are not found in Egypt. This change in the lists is far better accounted for by the view that Moses wrote the Pentateuch than by the theory that it was compiled by Ezra one thousand years after. The Jews were neither travellers nor naturalists.

On Tuesday the pilgrimage proceeded to Jericho. On arriving at the "Good Samaritan's Inn" we found luncheon ready in the great court-yard. Canon Tristram's lecture-talks were intended to follow the route taken, so after lunch, standing against a big rock, with the attentive pilgrims sitting and standing below, above, and around him, the traveller of almost half a century began his interesting account.

We were now, he said, in the Wilderness of Judæa. The ancient kingdom was divided into three parts—the Hill Country, the South

Country, or Negeb, and the Wilderness. The Hill Country has always been fertile, and was once very well watered. The South Country used to be well populated and watered as shown by the numerous cisterns. But the Wilderness was never cultivated except in patches. 'Ain Shems is the last spring till we get to Jericho. The torrent beds are not often flooded, but when they are the inundation is tremendous. The Canon has encamped in a dry wady, but at midnight has been forced to flee from the sudden flood. He saw then the difficulty of measuring geologic forces by time, as a single flood may carry away much land. Much of the imagery of the Psalms is furnished by David's wanderings from the Wady Kelt to 'Ain Jidy. "A dry and thirsty land where no water is," "Turn our Captivity as the torrents of the South," are phrases easily understood here. The Canon has seen the wild boar driven up here after the Jordan floods, as the lions were driven up from the "swellings of Jordan" in old times. The last lions in Palestine were killed on Carmel at the time of the Crusaders, but the bear and the leopard are still to be found in the Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon. The features of this part of the country have not changed from Bible times.

Khans are as unchangeable as roads, and we may well believe that this is the spot referred to by our Lord in the parable of the Good Samaritan. There were always cisterns here; here, for once, we are on no apochryphal site. Partridges abound, and David speaks of being chased "as a partridge in the wilderness." John the Baptist roamed all over this wilderness, perhaps preached here at this very Khan. Locusts and wild honey would be his natural food. The Arabs still catch locusts here; when fried and eaten with salt they taste like marrow. The hives of the wild bee, *Apis lagustri*, yellower than our bee, are found here in the caves. In the autumn the land is so bare that the bees eat their own honey. The honey is prized by the Arabs, who catch a bee, gum a tiny fragment of feather to his abdomen, let him go, and follow him to his hidden hive. Not far away is the Frank Mountain, where a castle was built by Herod as a last impregnable refuge in case he was driven from his kingdom. He may lie buried there in a tomb at the bottom of a pond.

On arriving at Jericho we found that a magic town had sprung up in the night: a huge circle was formed by about forty white tents, with great dining tents in the middle; the camp at Jericho being under the personal management of Mr. Alexander Howard. The general arrangements in Palestine were made by Messrs. Thomas Cook and Son. After dinner Mr. Bliss gave an informal lecture on the Lebanon. The next morning the party rode off to the Jordan and the Dead Sea, while Canon Tristram and I took a quiet day for exploration. It was difficult to realise that thirteen years had gone by since his last visit to Palestine: every bird, every plant were as familiar to him as if he had seen them the day before. In the cuts made by the Fund at Tell Abu 'Aleik and the Tell at 'Ain es Sultan, I was pleased to recognise several distinct varieties of the pre-Israelitish or Amorite pottery, so familiar to me in the lower

strata of Tell el Hesi. It shows that this was not a local Philistine type, and we may hope now to find it in other sites, furnishing a key to their age. About two and a half miles north of Riha (the modern Jericho), just after crossing Wady el Nuwei'meh we found the Arabs digging out stones from some low mounds, for a new building at Jericho. The ruins cover a space some four hundred and fifty yards by two hundred and fifty. We found many important Roman traces, a Corinthian capital, marble fragments of pavements, tessellated pavements, bath tiles, well built walls, frescoed walls, &c. A detailed report will be given later. Canon Tristram and I talked the matter over, and in his evening lecture in the dining tent he gave a brief description of what we had observed, suggesting the strong probability that the place was Herod's Palace which he bought from Cleopatra. It was most gratifying to myself, the last explorer of the Fund, to have been associated in this discovery with one of its first explorers.

The Canon began by saying that in this deep depression of the Jordan Valley we have the key to the physical history of the world as well as to the history of the human race. We have here a problem of geology. The depth of the fissure at the north end of the Dead Sea is 1,600 feet below the Mediterranean level. An examination of the strata on the east and west sides shows that the fissure is no recent volcanic one. All the volcanic traces are superficial and subsequent to the Iocene period. The Jordan once flooded the whole valley, as fresh-water shells, similar to those found in the river to-day, occur on the top of the ridges. When the Canon began his work, absolutely nothing was known in the great museums of the fishes of Galilee and the Jordan. Now, 38 species have been found in the Sea of Galilee (27 by the Canon himself), and the fish turn out to be, not those of the Euphrates or the Orontes, but those of Tanganyika and the other great African lakes. Hence his belief that there once extended a great chain of lakes from Hermon to the Transvaal. It is the putting of little things together that has solved the great problems of the world. Like all lakes that have no outlet, the Dead Sea owes its extreme saltiness to evaporation.

We now come to the human history. With the exception of Egyptian campaigns, the raid of Chedorlaomer is the oldest in history. We can trace his march to the point where he was met by Abraham on the plains to the north. At that time all the plain was as rich as this oasis of Riha, as may be proved by digging anywhere through the marl to the alluvial soil. The Canon sought to drive out of people's heads the opinion that the Cities of the Plain were at the bottom of the Dead Sea—a story absolutely without foundation. That the cities were on the plain to the north is easily proved; it was from a hill between Bethel and Ai that "Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, that it was well watered everywhere before the Lord destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah." From this hill to-day you can see the plain but not the sea. Again, Abraham ascends a hill near Mamre and looks *towards* (not *at*) Sodom and sees the smoke rising; now, from this hill the intervening

hills prevent one from seeing the plain itself, but smoke rising from the plain could easily be seen, whereas smoke rising from the Dead Sea would be quite invisible. This was first argued by Grove and followed by the Canon.

From the Jebel Nebá Moses might well have surveyed a large part of the country. Canon Tristram was the second to identify this with Nebo and the first to publish it. The preservation of the ancient name of Gilgal is most significant. In 1857 there were still a few palm trees left at Jericho. There was once a vast forest here which did not interfere with the corn-culture beneath. Palms must have salt in the soil—here the water is mainly brackish. Cleopatra cleared away the palms to introduce the Balm of Gilead (*Balsama dendron*), which must have a tropical climate. Like all exotic plants it finally died out. In Crusading times Jericho became the property of the Knights of St. John, who introduced the culture of the sugar-cane; the ruins of their mills may yet be seen. The revenue was then £1,500 a year. At the time of Joshua, Jericho was near 'Ain es Sultan. The Canon pointed out the difficulty of a vast army in crossing the Jordan without boats, which we know they did not have. You cannot, he said, explain Scripture history if you try to deny miracles. We can follow Joshua's march to Ai and to Bethel up the dangerous pass of 'Ain Duk. How easily the spies could have been concealed among these crags.

Not the least interesting place here, though very traditional, is Mount Quarantana, the Mountain of Temptation. The Canon described a wonderful system of hermit caves, partly artificial, some of them walled in. For some time they were deserted, but now, principally in Lent, they are re-inhabited by hermits from Egypt and Abyssinia. The walls are covered with frescoes, dating from the time of the Arian controversy. There is not a trace of a crucifix nor of the Adoration of the Virgin. In the lists of Apostles, St. John appears at the head.

While the lecture was going on the rain beat down upon the tent and the prospects looked very grave for the morrow, but Thursday dawned clear and cloudless and the pilgrimage returned to Jerusalem in comfort, some by Mar Saba and the rest by the ordinary route. A good audience assembled in the evening to hear the Rev. Mr. Kelk lecture on Walks about Jerusalem, which he modestly called the tale of an ordinary observer. He pointed out the fact that Jerusalem is once more becoming a city of Jews. It is not many years since the estimate of the population gave 8,000 Jews, 10,000 Mohammedans, and 12,000 Christians. He believes that there are now 40,000 Jews, 8,000 Mohammedans, and 12,000 Christians. He stated that this is disputed, some putting the number of Jews as low as 26,000, but five years ago he caused a careful census of the Jews to be taken, and they then numbered 30,000; since then there is certainly an increase of 13,000, so that he believes the above estimate of 40,000 to be under the mark. Mr. Kelk then described the familiar but ever interesting walk around the city, beginning at the Jaffa gate and going southwards.

On Friday morning half the party went to Bethlehem, with Canon Tristram to lecture there and on the way, while the rest of the party had the privilege of listening to a peripatetic lecture by the Rev. Mr. Hanauer upon the present Walls and Gates of Jerusalem.

After meeting at the Jaffa Gate, this section proceeded up David's Tower, then on to the Rock Scarp of Zion at Bishop Gobat's School, and so on as far as St. Stephen's Gate. The party was somewhat large for an open-air lecture, so in the afternoon the section that had visited Bethlehem in the morning heard Mr. Hanauer's lecture in the lecture room, and then guided by the dragomans, visited the places described. Mr. Hanauer pointed out that the present city walls, though comparatively modern, yet present many points of interest which, as a rule, receive scant attention. Legendary lore has a real value, as, for example, the legends connected with the district east of the city which point unmistakably to the mysterious sect of the Essenes. The present walls, the lower parts of the Haram enclosure excepted, are the work of Suleiman the Magnificent, and were erected between the years 1536 and 1542. The order of the building may be followed from the inscriptions. Several interesting legends are extant, one of which tells that the architect who had excluded Neby Dauid lost his head for his impiety. The lecturer, however, pointed out that the first reference to this spot as the sepulchre of David is by Raymond D'Argilis. The circumference of the walls is about three miles. Space forbids my following the lecture any further, but its value lay, not only in the folk lore, of which Mr. Hanauer has made a speciality, but also in the fact that the lecturer has passed most of his life in Jerusalem, and as a boy assisted in Warren's excavations. I hope that we may see it published in full some day.

Friday evening the Rev. Mr. Zeller gave a learned lecture upon the Druzes, but as the substance of the lecture is in the September number of the "Church Missionary Intelligence and Record" (Salisbury Square, London), for 1887, I refer the reader to that magazine. It was originally intended that on Saturday morning Mr. Hanauer should accompany the party to the Haram, but it was decided to have his lecture beforehand in the lecture room, and at the early hour of half-past eight the room was crowded. The enthusiasm of the pilgrims for the lectures was most gratifying to those who arranged them. In six days they listened to ten lectures and visited all the sites of Jerusalem besides.

Mr. Hanauer illustrated on the black-board the original contours of the Temple Hill, showing how it had been altered in the course of centuries. A most hearty vote of thanks was accorded to the lecturer, who had come up from Jaffa, and who was obliged to return immediately in the midst of a wild storm in order to preach twice the next day.

In the evening Mr. Bliss lectured on the "Mounds of Palestine," with an account of his work at Tell el Hesi. On Sunday the Bishop of Worcester preached in the morning at Christ Church from the text "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." He spoke of the

uncertainty attaching to the different sites here, and emphasized the spiritual character of Christianity. In the evening the sermon was by the Bishop of North Dakota, who had made a most stormy landing at Jaffa that morning.

Monday dawned with the fine weather which had become proverbial with the pilgrims. A small section left by land for Damascus, and the rest returned to Jaffa to embark that night. At Athens they are to hear lectures from Professor Mahaffy, who also spoke to them in Cairo. The lecturer at Rome was Archdeacon Farrar.

JERUSALEM, *March 7th*, 1894.

THE CHURCH AT JACOB'S WELL.

By F. J. BLISS, M.A.

IN December last I travelled by land from Jerusalem to Haifa, *via* Nâblus. The thorough work of the survey of Western Palestine has left very little to be done above ground, and the principal way to help the Fund now is to be on the alert to watch operations in places that are being dug up. One of the most interesting places in Palestine, because one of the least disputed, is Jacob's Well. It is a link between the histories of the Old and the New Testaments. It is the spot where the universality of the Christian religion was proclaimed in definite terms. The site has been greatly neglected, and I am glad to announce (what has been known to recent travellers) that at last proper care is being taken of the place.

For some years the property about the spot has been in the hands of the Greek Monastery, and has been enclosed by a wall. Visitors of former years will remember that to see the well they were obliged to descend by a hole at the surface of the ground into a small vault, choked with *debris*, but apparently some 20 feet by 10 feet. The discovery of the well-stone itself is described in the *Statement* for 1881, p. 212. The present Abbot is a Greek of genuine archæological tastes and enthusiasm. During the past year he has done some excavating with valuable results, which I shall now describe.

He began by clearing out the vault entirely, showing it to be a perfectly preserved cruciform crypt (*see* A, B, C, D on plan). The eastern arm is 13 feet by 9 feet 6 inches, but the western arm is only 3 feet 6 inches deep. The east and west axis of the crypt is 25 feet 6 inches, and the north and south axis 20 feet. At the point E he found a doorway with a stair, leading up out of the crypt to a pavement some 6 feet above the floor of the crypt, but several feet lower than the top of its vault. The walls between which the stairway passes are plastered. At F he found a similar door, but he has not yet cleared away the rubbish under which corresponding steps are doubtless hidden. At the point H