

but a heap of *débris* and foundation walls. (*Vide* my report in *Quarterly Statement*, 1887, p. 84, and *Memoirs S.W.P.*, Vol. II, p. 7.)

6. *Beisan*.—In sinking trial pits for the railway company last December, the Italian workmen struck an underground channel, cut into the soft rock on the northern bank of the Jalûd river, opposite Beisan. The channel or cistern was plastered, 5 to 6 feet high, and 3 to 5 feet wide, and had a total length of more than 100 feet. It leads around a slope, and had an outlet towards the hill plateau, Tell el Mastabeh, above it. The top of the cistern was round. No antiquities were found. Below the ruins of the ancient bridge, Jisr el Maktua', opposite Tell el Husn, near Beisan, the Mudir of the imperial farms has constructed a new handsome stone bridge at the crossing of the high road leading from the Jisr el Mujâmi'a to Beisan. The bridge has two spans of 16 feet 6 inches each, leaving sufficient waterway for the Jalûd river. The town of Beisan, since being created the head place of the Sultan's farms in the Jordan Valley, is rapidly growing; paved streets, a sùk or market place, barracks, Government mansions, and a large khân have been built, and I am told that the construction of twenty magazines for storage of grain and an inn ("locanda"), to meet the requirements of native tourists, have already been sanctioned by his Majesty. The extensive garden adjoining the Mudir's residence contains hundreds of poplar trees and rare specimens of oranges and other Syrian fruit trees. The sanitary conditions of Beisan have not much improved, but the large plantations of *Eucalypti* will doubtless lead to a reduction of the fevers now prevailing.

About twenty yards to the south of Khân el Ahmar (Beisan) I have been able to trace the columns of a large basilica or temple. The main axis runs due east and west, the eastern end is not traceable, hence no apse discoverable, but the western abutment shows five aisles, viz.: two on the north of 13 feet 3 inches width each, a central nave of 26 feet 6 inches, and two southern aisles of 13 feet 3 inches width; prostrate columns and corinthian capitals are scattered about the place, and to judge from the mouldings and other ornaments built into the walls of Khân el Ahmar, this building, erected in the thirteenth century, must have been built of the materials of the basilica or temple.

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## BETH-DEJAN.

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SOME notes about this large village may be of interest to readers of the *Quarterly Statement*. They were collected on the spot, and some supplementary notes added.

The modern name Beth-dejan is evidently derived from the ancient village or town of Daghoun, situated about a mile and a half west of the

present village on the way to the modern settlement of Rishon l'Zion, founded in 1881 by Russian-Jewish refugees. The modern village may have been peopled some 150 years ago. Daghoon was inhabited by Moslems, whilst Beth-dejan, which then had another name, was inhabited by Christians, probably of the Greek Church. The Christians were industrious, making baskets and mats, whilst the Moslems chiefly lived by robbery, having a good situation for that purpose, between the high roads between Jaffa and Jerusalem and Jaffa and Gaza. In consequence of their vagabond life snails infested their gardens and lands, whilst the lands of their Christian neighbours were thriving, but the Christians had to strive hard against their oppressors. One day, probably during the governorship of Jezzar Pasha, two men met at the limits of the lands—a slight elevation—called Abu Sweda, أبو سويدا, the place of the plum tree,

now marked by a Nubk tree, called also Sidr. The men had to settle a frontier dispute, and the Christian being stronger killed the Moslem, in consequence of which the Moslems fell on their Christian neighbours unawares, killed and dispersed the men, excepting such as turned Moslems, and kept the women for themselves. They then abandoned their village, Daghoon, to the snails, and settled in Beth-dejan, to which place they gave this name. The churches were turned into mosques, and the industries changed hands; the modern mosque of Sidna Sa'ad el-Ansâr,

سیدنا سعد الانصار, is very probably a corruption of Nasâra=Christians.

Some very fair faces are still found in Beth-dejan, and are probably of crusading descent. Although I have collected these notes in Beth-dejan, the inhabitants, as well as those of Deir-Abbân, pretend to know nothing about the story.

The population of Beth-dejan may amount to 2,500 souls, there being 500 paying men—i.e., paying the tax—عداد 'Adad, "numbering." The village is situated about half a mile east of the Jerusalem carriage road, and west of the railway. It is about five miles from Jaffa. The inhabitants are very industrious, occupied chiefly in making mats and baskets for carrying earth and stones. They own camels for carrying loads from Jaffa to Jerusalem, cultivate the lands, and work at buildings, &c., in Jaffa or on the railway works. The women flock every day to Jaffa, and on Wednesdays to Ramleh—to the market held there, with chickens, eggs, and milk. They have a very bad reputation, see *Quarterly Statement*, October, 1893, p. 309.

The Jewish colony of Rishon l'Zion also affords the Dejanites plenty of work, in planting vineyards and as domestic servants.

The lands of the village do not all belong to the villagers. In consequence of the introduction of legal Government deeds—Koshan, كوشان—introduced early in the seventies of this century, many of the villagers, to escape the trifling tax for the legalisation of deeds, had their lands given to the Effendis of Jaffa, so that many villagers have now no land

at all, but work the lands of the Effendis and share the produce. About one-third of the lands belong to the Effendis, one-third to private villagers, and one-third to the villagers in general. This refers only to the arable lands. The olive trees and enclosed gardens are private property, and extend in a broad line westward away over the Jerusalem road, towards a watch tower built for protection in the time when Mustapha Abu Ghosh reigned *en maître* over almost all Judea. An olive tree here, near the road, is shown where General Buonaparte sat, in 1798, overlooking his army encamped in the groves.

The village is situated on a hill, or rather on the slopes. The vestiges of a castle crowned the top of the hill, but it is now almost covered by houses. Below the Kala'a is a closed cavern. I was not admitted, for fear of "stirring the spirit," for, of course, the cavern is haunted, *marsudé*, *مرسودة*, and contains a treasure, like every such place. The owner would not even talk about it, fearing lest the intrusion of a stranger might prove fatal to him and his family—examples of which are plenty!

The village has five Jawamé, *جوامع*, pl. of *جامع*, or prayer-houses:—

East, Sidna Sa'ad el Ansâr	سيدنا سعد الانصار
In centre, Jamé el Sheikh Marzuk	جامع الشيخ مرزوك
West, Jamé Ahl el Ghad u Sa'ad wa Se'ed	جامع اهل الغاد وسعد وسعيد
North, Jamé Muhamet el Zawani	جامع محمد الزواني
East, in the cemetery, Sheikh Ethman	شيخ عثمان

Besides these five prayer-houses, the centre one of which is mostly used for ordinary prayers, a grave of a Sheikh was discovered a few years ago beside the road. The owner of the field had a dream: someone threatened to choke him. He awoke, and when he saw it was a dream slept again. He dreamed again, but did not heed. A third time he was threatened, and then asked, "Who are you?" So his visitor revealed himself as Sheikh Imhamad, the son of Sidna Sa'ad el Ansâr, and bade him dig in such a place, and he would find the grave. On the morrow he took several witnesses, and on digging discovered the grave, which is now honoured, and has a lamp lit at it every evening. There is at present only a stone to mark the grave, but it will by-and-bye become a real Jamé. The villagers have water from a byara, or Persian wheel-well. To the north-west of the village is a large swamp during winter and spring, where the animals of the village drink, but when summer comes this swamp causes malarial fever. The inhabitants sometimes fall sick *en masse*.

Every portion of land, whether belonging to private persons or to the village in general, has a name; an undulation of land, slope, hill, lowland, and so on, suggesting the denomination. The following names may prove interesting, as showing how they are chosen from the nature of the soil, the form, the situation, and so forth.

North, and extending to Yásûr, we find them thus:—

Imatâbel	المتابل	Seasoning place.
Il-Shurtân	الشرطان	The conditions.
Il-'Eran	العران	The habituated (?) or the naked (!).
Sanura	سنورة	(Sunara) is a fishing hook. Sanura is a cat or a Prince.
Sabatté	سبته	Wickerwork basket.
Karasin	كراسن	The vetches (!)
Il-Jazeier	الجزائر	The islands.
Comassié	كواسيه	The arched.
Bistan	بستان	Garden.
Werba	وربة	Space between two ribs— or span.
Im'héte	اصحيت	The walled.
Ilmutawasit	المتواصت	The central.
Ilwasata	الوحدات	The centre ones.
Barâdi	برادى	Reeds.
Il-tkeiek	التكايك	The earthenware fragments.
Ish-Shamiat	الشاميات	The northern ones.
Abu 'l Karadeesh	ابو كراديش	The barley-bread place.
Teioun	طيون	A plant "Golden rod."
Il-Hanawieh	الهنأوية	The congratulating place.
Abu Slimân	ابو سليمان	Father of Solomon (also a nickname for the fox).

Towards the east :—

Bast Abu Shkeef	بصت ابو شكيف	The marsh of the cavern.
Shlul-el-Tut	شلول التوت	The field of mulberries.
El-Khanat	الخانات	The inns.
Runjasie	رنجسية	Place of Narcissus.
Abu 'l 'Ejoul	ابو العجول	The place of calves.
El-Hashash	الحشاش	The intemperate (smoker).
El-Za'zura	الزعرورة	The hawthorn tree.
Abu-r-Rus	ابو الروس	The place of heads.

The man who told me these names says that in this place, called "place of heads," a sarcophagus with two heads was formerly seen, but is now buried, as it hindered the ploughing. The place is about midway between the Jaffa road and Safurieh, beside the road leading from the main road to the village.

Towards the west :—

El-Kalashie	الكلاشيه	The place of sickles (?).
Ras-el-Hôd	راس الحود	The upper part of the pit.
Bassa-esh-Sharkie	بصا الشريقيه	The eastern marsh.
Ashabeer	اشابير	The spanned.
Mawakriéh	مواكرييه	The place of holes (of quadrupéds).
El-Thuanié	الثنانية	The doubled.
Bassa-el-Gharbiéh	بصا الغربية	The western marsh.
Muktal-'Ali Agha	مقتل علي آغا	The killing-place of Ali Agha.
Dannané	دنانه	Humming place.
Birket Hadj Ehmad	بركت حدج احمد	Haj Ehmad's pool.
Suttôhh	سطوح	Plain surface or roofs.
Khameisé	خمايسه	The fifth party.
Mesh'alie	مشعليه	Torch place.

Towards the south :—

Abu Swéde	ابو سويد	The plum tree place.
Abu Hattab	الو حطب	The wood.
Bissar	بيسر	Piles (?).
Frewat	فريوات	Furs.
Wad Sa'doun	واد سعدون	Sa'doun's valley.
Teiré	طايرة	The flying (a lofty tree on a hill).
Mitba'a	متبعه	The Hyena's cave.
Hikr 'Eed	حكر عيد	'Eed's field.
Wad-e-Sharki	وا الشقي	The eastern vale.
Tawalek	طوالق	The divorced.
Kalimbé	كلمبه	(?).
Zeidé	زايدة	The increased.

South-west :—

Dahret-el-Hassa	دهرت الحصة	The pebble hill.
Dahret-el-'Asfoura	دهرت العصفورة	The sparrow's hill.
Jort-el-Baloot	جورت البلوط	The oak depression.
Mitrada	مطرادا	The charging place.
Abu-el-Sakan	ابو السكن	The ashy place or hill.
Shakhloub Saleh'	شخلوب صالح	Saleh's overthrow.

Many of these names are modern, many belonging to the site of some wood, building, or wall, long ago disappeared. A very few have names dating probably very far back, so that the very name is incomprehensible; the Congratulating place, for example, must have been where the villagers and their next neighbours usually met on festivals of some kind. The Wood, of course, once has been, so the Oak depression. Bissar and Kalimbé seem strange names.