

NOTES OF A JOURNEY THROUGH HAURAN, WITH INSCRIPTIONS FOUND BY THE WAY.

By Professor GEORGE ADAM SMITH, D.D., LL.D.

IN May last, with a company of friends, I made a journey from Tiberias through Hauran to Damascus. My chief objects were to revisit Gadara, to see Ibdar and Abila of the Decapolis, and to examine the supposed sites of 'Ashteroth Karnaim, on Tell el-'Ash'ary and Tell 'Ashtarah. The following are my notes by the way. They are partly a record of the changes apparent since my last journey in 1891, partly an account of some new inscriptions which we had the good fortune to find, including an important monument of Sety I of Egypt, in Tell esh-Shihāb, and partly some evidence as to 'Ashteroth Karnaim.

I.—FROM GADARA TO TELL ESH-SHIHĀB.

On May 1st we struck our tents at Semak, at the south end of the Lake of Galilee, and after a visit to the neighbouring ruins of Kerak (Taricheæ?), on the west bank of the Jordan, we rode to the hot baths of Hammi, in the gorge of the Yarmuk below Mukes (Gadara). We reached these, not by the usual road up the course of the Yarmuk, but across the spurs of the Jaulān plateau to the north. The spurs hold one or two clusters of ruins—of small villages and a tower. They are bare and waterless, but in a few of the depressions on their surface are small, poor fields, cultivated to-day by the inhabitants of Fīk. The view down the Jordan valley is magnificent: the eye follows the course of the Yarmuk from its issue from the hills to its junction with the Jordan.

We reached the Hammi at 12.40. It was the end of June when I visited these famous baths in 1891, and then they were being used by only a few Arabs. But on this visit, in the season for the baths, the peninsula on which they lie was alive with patients and their attendants, chiefly Jews, with some Turkish officials from Irbid, and one army colonel. Tents and booths of branches clustered round the hotter springs. We had to wait our turn for entering the large pool on the north-west; in this

the temperature of the water is 103°; that of the air at 2 p.m. was 89° in the shade.

We climbed up to Muķes in the afternoon. The slopes are much more cultivated than in 1891. This change somewhat prepared us for alterations on the plateau above; but no one who knew the latter in past years can visit it now without disappointment. Muķes has greatly increased, but at the expense of the remains of Gadara. I need not go into particulars. Schumacher has described, in the "Zeitschrift" of the German Palestine Society for 1900, the complex of dwellings and barns which the village Sheikh has built on the top of the plateau. Content, till a few years ago, to live in the tombs to the east of the ancient city, the villagers have now the ambition to build houses for themselves, and have used, and are using, the ruins of the latter, and especially the stones of the two amphitheatres, for that purpose. It is one of the many proofs with which our journey provided us, that if the ancient sites of Palestine are to be explored and the civilisations they contained brought to light, this must be done as soon as possible. *Every year means irrecoverable loss.* May the fact impress itself upon all subscribers to our Fund!

On the 2nd of May (temperature at 6 a.m. 65°) we struck east, at 8.45, along the ridge, upon the old Roman road. The basalt pipes of the conduit, which I saw in great numbers in 1891, have nearly all disappeared. The soil, though still cultivated, is very shallow. Every year the fine oak woods are being thinned. At 10 we left the Irbid road where it begins to descend to the south-east (temperature 75° with slight breeze) and, striking E.N.E., passed at 10.10 the large oak which stands conspicuous in the wood. At 10.25 the wood was behind us, and in front a long bare plateau sloping up slowly to the east. Hatim lay below us to the south, and beyond it Irbid, which, with Beit Rās, had stood out, from the earlier stages of our march, clear against the south-east sky, but was now sunk almost invisible against the dark background of the Jebel Kafkafa. We reached the top of the slope at 10.45: hewn stones, a sarcophagus, and much pottery, a clear view of the Jaulān Hills and Hermon, with Samar in the near north. From the top the ground slopes gently down towards Ibdar, which I visited in order to see if there is any evidence for my proposal to identify it with the Lidebir of

Joshua xiii, 26, the Lo-debar of Grätz's emendation of Amos vi, 13. Ibdar, though slightly under the level of the neighbouring plateaus, lies on the edge of a plateau of its own. The present village clusters upon the top of the precipitous side of a deep Wady (300 to 400 feet deep) at the junction of the latter with the Wady Samar. There are a few ancient hewn stones, and a number of caves. It is a strong and commanding position. To the south, from the other side of the Wady el-'Arab (in its upper portion Wady el-Ghafr), Gilead slopes up to the distant horizon. To the south-east Beit Rās is conspicuous, commanding the head and southern end of a ridge running south from the main plateau on which the road eastward from Mukes runs. To the north Hermon is clear and the country between. Altogether the place is suitable for such a frontier-fortress between Gilead and the Aramean territory, as Lo-debar was. It lies near the road from Hauran to Gadara—which I still think may have been Ramoth-Gilead—and the Jordan.

At 11.40 we descended into the Wady 'Ain et-Turab, close beside the 'Ain and a rich grove of oleanders. Striking up the Wady E.N.E. we reached the watershed at 12, and in five minutes more we began to descend, almost due north, the Wady el-Kueilby, reaching the 'Ain el-Hrebi at 12.45. Schumacher has sufficiently described this, the most important spring in the district, in the "Zeitschrift" of the German Society, vol. xx (1897), p. 184, where he makes the valuable suggestion that the aqueduct running from the east into Gadara was supplied from el-Hrebi, and was not connected, as is usually supposed, with the Kanātir Fira'un at Edre'i.

We left the 'Ain at 2.30 (temperature 82°) and following the Wady, on the sides of which are many ancient tombs, we arrived at the *col* on which the ruins of Tell Abil lie, before 3. These display all the importance which Schumacher assigns to them ("Abila of the Decapolis," published by the Palestine Exploration Fund in 1889), and nothing need be added to his descriptions. The strong and well-watered site, the architectural remains on the two hills on either side of the *col*, the colossal wall of solid masonry on the east face of the northern hill, the heavy dam across the Wady Kueilby,¹ with its vaulted sluice, and the

¹ The ridge composed of the two hills with the *col* between them runs north and south, parallel to the Wady.

neighbouring cemeteries assure one (even on a hurried visit like ours) of the fact that we have here a great Greek site, similar in its situation, and in the remains which occupy it, to the other members of the Decapolis.

Leaving Tell Abil at 3.40, we entered at 4 a small Wady running north into the Wady esh-Shellāle, just opposite to ed-Dnēhe. The Wady esh-Shellāle is one of the most imposing among even the gorges of Syria. Where we broke upon it, it lies over 1,000 feet deep, and at the top (according to Schumacher) is about two kilometres broad. The lofty, steep sides had all their yellow colour brought out by the still high afternoon sun. At the bottom, also in sunshine, lay in brilliant contrast a long, pink ribbon of oleanders masking the bed of the stream. On the southern side the path is very rugged and steep; one cannot ride, and can hardly lead a horse either up or down. Our pack mules crossed the Wady much higher up. It is a permanent frontier, impassable in winter, and in summer impregnable against a vigilant defence. Its waters descend to the Yarmuk by a series of cataracts—hence its name. Along with the Yarmuk, and curving as its upper course does to the south, it cuts off the district of 'Ajlūn from that of Hauran, and in ancient times must have formed the usual frontier between Gilead and Bashan, Israel and Aram.

We reached the bottom of the Wady at 4.30, and, leaving it a few minutes before 5, arrived on the plateau on the opposite side about 5.25. Striking east across the extremely fertile plain, very different from the barren hills to the south of the Wady, we passed 'Amrawa at 5.40, crossed the Wadies esh-Shomār and el-Meddan, and reached our tents by Tell esh-Shihāb at 6.30.

The route we had followed all day is the most direct between Mukes and Tell esh-Shihāb, both of them important towns in ancient times, and it passes Tell Abil or Abila of the Decapolis. Yet it can hardly have ever been a main line of traffic between Gadara (with the Jordan Valley) and Hauran. The depth and ruggedness of the Wady esh-Shellāle forbid this, and after striking off the Gadara-Irbid road (*see* above) we were mainly on local paths. The only traces of a highway were between Tell Abil and the Wady esh-Shellāle; the only ancient remains were in the short Wady leading to the latter. We must, therefore, believe that the great Roman roads between Gadara and Hauran

did not pass Abila but swung round more to the south and east. The significance of the district about Abil and immediately south of the Wady esh-Shelläle was rather military. Wetzstein ("Reisebericht," 149) relates how in 1858 a Bedawin tribe, retreating from the north, made a stand here: their pursuers being checked by the Wady Shelläle and gorges of the Yarmuk, and retiring after two days had convinced them of the impregnableness of the position of their enemies. Which incident illustrates the ancient contests on this ground between Aram and Israel.

II.—TELL ESH-SHIHĀB AND THE DISCOVERY OF A SECOND EGYPTIAN MONUMENT IN HAURAN.

Tell esh-Shihāb, one hour E.S.E. of Muzeirib, occupies a strong and picturesque position on a promontory formed by the junction of the Wady el-Meddān with the Wady Tell esh-Shihāb (or Wady et-Tell)¹, just opposite the high cataract by which the waters of the Wady el-Bajjeh pour into the Wady et-Tell. The village is said to be the lowest in Hauran, standing a little over 1,000 feet above the sea; the neighbourhood forms a gathering place of waters. In deep, rapidly-falling beds five or six Wadies concentrate to form in the Wady et-Tell the upper course of the Yarmuk; the Wady esh-Shelläle draining the Eastern 'Ajlūn from as far south as the Jebel Kafkafa; the almost parallel Wady esh-Shōmar, springing from the Zumal range of hills, passing Er-Ramtheh and entering the Wady et-Tell near 'Amrawa; the Wady el-Meddān, or lower course of the Wady ez-Zēdi, whose tributaries rise on the south-west slopes of the Jebel ed-Druz and flow united past Edre'i; the Wady edh-Dhahab (formed of winter brooks draining the west face of the Jebel ed-Druz), which runs into the Wady el-Meddān above Tell esh-Shihāb; the Wady Zignani (?); and the Wady el-Bajjeh draining the lake at Muzeirib.²

From all this it is obvious that Tell esh-Shihāb must always have been a site of great importance. The cataract gives water-power for a large number of mills, to which grain is brought from

¹ The name Wady Zignani was given to me for the portion of this Wady above and east of Tell esh-Shihāb.

² The courses of these Wadies have for the first time been accurately determined by Mr. Schumacher (see the "Zeitschrift des Deutsch. Palästina Vereins," xx, 91 ff, with map; xxii, map of Golan and West Hauran).

a great distance,¹ and these, along with rich gardens by the water-courses and a stretch of fertile wheat-fields, secure for the large village a considerable prosperity. Its sheikhs to-day belong to a powerful house, and are reputed very rich; nearly all the villagers look happy and comfortable. The Wadies et-Tell and el-Meddān protect the village by their cliffs and steep banks on all sides except the east, where the level approach is crossed by ancient fortifications, still well preserved.² One may believe that a strong



FALLS AT TELL ESH-SHIHĀB.

and well-stocked fortress always existed here. At the same time Tell esh-Shihāb does not now lie, and cannot ever have lain, on a main line of road. There are too many deep gorges about it. The traffic from Gadara to Damascus must have swung round to the south and east. Any visitor to the district can see why the

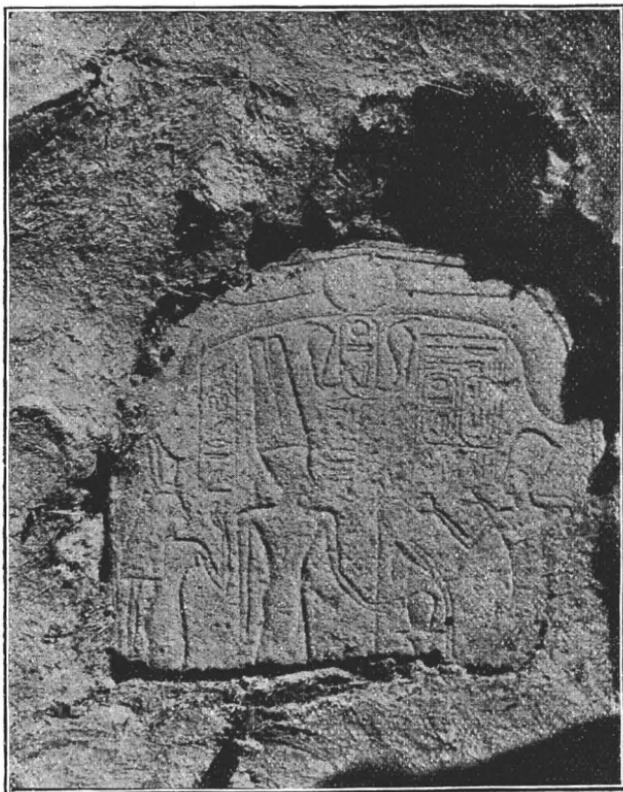
¹ Schumacher speaks of a much used road to the mills from Der'āt (*i.e.*, Edre'i) down the Wady ez-Zēli ("Z. D. P. V.," xx, 129).

² See Schumacher's "Across the Jordan" (published by the Palestine Exploration Fund), p. 200, with a section of the wall.

great roads from Damascus, Nawa and el-Merkez, Der'ât (*i.e.* the ancient Edre'i), the Jebel 'Ajlûn, and Gadara concentrate rather upon the less healthy and less fertile site of Muzeîrib, one hour east of Tell esh-Shihâb, for round Muzeîrib the Wadies are shallow, and the country almost flat.

The name, Tell esh-Shihâb, "Mound of the Warrior," is purely Arabic, and gives no clue to its ancient designation. One naturally seeks for a stronghold so important among the towns taken in this region by Judas Maccabeus on his march to relieve the Jews who were settled east of Jordan (1 Macc. v). Buhl ("Geog. des Alt. Pal.," 250) identifies it with the Raphon of 1 Macc. v, 37, and Josephus, "Antt." xii; 8, 4 (= Raphana of the Decapolis, Pliny, "Hist. Nat." v, 16). There is something to be said for this identification. Timotheus, having been defeated by Judas, presumably to the south-east of Tell esh-Shihâb in the latitude of Boşra, fled north and gathered another army "beyond the brook" (1 Macc. v, 37), Gr. χειμάρρους. If the latter be taken in its strict designation of "winter-stream" it cannot be the perennial stream flowing from Muzeîrib, and descending the cataract at Tell esh-Shihâb, but one of the other Wadies mentioned above which are dry in summer. It is not necessary, however, to take the term so strictly, and the other points given in connection with Raphon suit Tell esh-Shihâb. For when Judas crossed "the brook," from the side on which Raphon was and defeated Timotheus, the soldiers of the latter fled to Karnaim, *i.e.*, 'Ashteroth Karnaim, sites for which have been sought at Tell el-'Ash'ary, about six miles north of Tell esh-Shihâb, and Tell 'Ashtarah, four miles further on. Raphana has been identified with Kapitolas, on the ground that Pliny's list of the Decapolis contains the former but omits the latter, while Ptolemy's omits the former but contains the latter. According to the *Itinerarium Antonini* Kapitolas lay on the direct road from Gadara to Damascus; according to Ptolemy, north-east of Gadara on the same latitude as Hippos; and according to the Peutinger Table, on the road from Gadara to Edre'i, 16 Roman miles from either of them. Now Tell esh-Shihâb fulfils only some of these conditions. It is 19 Roman miles from Gadara, and less than 12 from Der'ât (*i.e.*, Edre'i); and, as we have seen, it can hardly have lain on any of the direct military and commercial roads through Hauran. Buhl's identification, therefore, remains insecure.

Nor is there another much better. One is indeed tempted to suggest Karnaim or Karnion itself. This was difficult to approach *διὰ τὴν πάντων τῶν τόπων στενότητα* (2 Macc. xii, 21); while if it be identical, as is probable, with one of the Ashtoreths of the "Onomasticon," it lay nine Roman miles from the other, which is



MONUMENT OF SETY I AT TELL ESH-SHIHĀB.

approximately the distance between Tell 'Ashtarah and Tell esh-Shihāb; and, besides, lay between Abila of the Decapolis and Edre'i, which Tell esh-Shihāb may roughly be described to do. But there are other data for Karnaim which do not suit Tell esh-Shihāb, and on the whole we must confess ourselves at fault with regard to the ancient equivalent of the latter. Yet see below, p. 360.

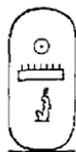
Mr. Schumacher "could discover neither inscriptions nor carved stones" at Tell esh-Shihâb,¹ and I do not know of any mentioned by other travellers. We made a strict inquiry, and were at first met with the usual denials. Then we were led to a faded and fragmentary Greek inscription on the north-west of the village, on which we could only make out the following letters:—

Φ A B
N E O T
A Λ T K
E T K E

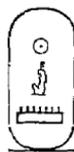
But we called afterwards on the Sheikh, and in answer to our questions after "written stones" he led us to the courtyard of a house, where, let into the mud wall, we saw a black basalt slab with Egyptian carving upon it. We took a photograph, a reproduction of which is given on p. 347.

The lower portion of the slab has been broken off. What remains is about 3 feet from top to bottom, and a little over that from one side to the other. All I was able to make out from a list of Egyptian cartouches was that it contained the cartouche of Sety I. On my arrival in London the photograph was examined by Mr. Percy Newberry and Mr. Herbert Thompson. The latter wrote me as follows:—

"It is undoubtedly of Sety I, his cartouche being written



, e.g., at Karnak, as well as



. Besides, his other

name is given in the usual form



= Sety, beloved of Ptah.

Above the names are the titles 'Lord of the two lands' and 'Lord of glories (?)' (the last word is applied to the rising of the sun and to the king ascending the throne—its exact meaning in the

¹ "Across Jordan," p. 203.

title is uncertain). Below are the words 'Giving life like Ra.' The king (on the right) is holding up two libation vessels before Amen, whose name with some titles is inscribed before him. Behind stands the goddess Mut, with her name."

The stone is of no little importance in connection with the conquests of the Pharaohs on the east of Jordan. Only one other Egyptian monument has been discovered in Hauran—the so-called Job's stone in Sheikh Sa'd (about 1,000 yards north of el-Merkez, the seat of the Hauran Government) with a figure of Ramses II, son of Sety I (see Erman in "Z. D. P. V.," xiv, 142 ff, xv, 205 ff). But long before both Sety and Ramses, Thothmes III had marched through Hauran. Not only does the list of his conquests contain, in No. 13, Damascus (as well as some places on the Lebanon), but in Nos. 28 to 31 we find the succession A-s-ti-ra-tu ("Records of the Past," second series, v, 45; cf. Ashtarti, Bezold and Budge. "The Tell el-Amarna Tablets in the British Museum," 43, 64), Anau-Refaa, Makata, and Luisa. Astiratu is usually taken for 'Ashteroth Karnaim, Refaa for Raphon, and Luisa for Laish or Dan. May not Maketa be the Maked of the campaign of Judas Maccabeus (1 Macc. v, 26, 36)?

Unfortunately the Sety stone at Tell esh-Shihāb has had the lower end broken off: on which some record of Sety's conquests may have been inscribed. I made inquiries about it, but none of the Tell esh-Shihāb people could tell me anything about it. There is no reason to suppose, however, that the monument has been far removed from its original site. The villagers said to me that it had been found at Tell esh-Shihāb; it is of the stone of the district, and it is so heavy that it could not easily have been carried for any distance.

In "Asien u. Europa" W. Max Müller says that "Sety waged war upon a much more limited territory [in Syria] than is usually supposed" (p. 199, cf. p. 55); that "the names of the towns conquered by Sety are, without exception, those of the plain of the Kishon and Western Galilee to the foot of Lebanon" (p. 200); and that Sety "succeeded only in a modest expansion [of Egyptian conquest] on the coast of Southern Phœnicia" (p. 276). But if this stone in Tell esh-Shihāb belongs to the east of Jordan, and, from what is said above, it is hardly possible to think otherwise, Sety, like Thothmes and Ramses, must have crossed the Jordan and made some conquests in Hauran.

At Tell esh-Shihāb I also obtained a cylinder seal and a coin. The seal produces an impression $1\frac{1}{4}$ inches long by about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch broad. It is of rough workmanship, hardly (I am told by those who know) Babylonian, but more probably an early Palestinian imitation of Babylonian work. There are three human figures, from the head (with some kind of headdress) to the hips—one figure to the one side and two to the other, of an object like an artificial tree; thus:—



The coin is silver (perhaps only plated), on the one side a lion rampant, with the legend round the rim: CONFIDENS · DNO · NON · MOVETUR · 16-86; and on the other a coat of arms, a small lion rampant at the foot, and the legend: ??? BEL · CAMPEN—MO · ARGCVI?— A hole bored in the top shows this to have formed part of a woman's headdress. At Banias I purchased a silver coin like this one, *i.e.*, identical on one side, except for the date, 1696, and on the other with the legend: FOE · BELG · WEST—MO · ARG · PRO · COI?.

III.—EL-MUZEİRĪB.

From Tell esh-Shihāb we rode over in something less than an hour to MuzeİRĪb. The railway has come here since my last visit in 1891, and MuzeİRĪb is the terminus of the narrow gauge line which runs south from Damascus more or less parallel to the great Hajj road. There is little change in the village itself, but the sight of a railway station and of engines on a landscape which was hitherto associated only with Arab markets and the gathering of the Meccan pilgrimage is sufficiently strange. The lake was much shrunk, partly from the clearing of the Wady el-Bajjeh, mentioned by Schumacher ("Z. D. P. V.," xx, 167), and partly because of the drought of last spring. No more ancient remains were discovered in the construction of the railway; the Greek

inscriptions in the castle are less decipherable than ever. The long Arab use of the place in connection with the Hajj has destroyed all chance of discovering its ancient name. Yet the abundance of good water (not in the lake, which is brackish, but in the stream, which feeds the latter from the Rās el-'Ain), the concentration of several ancient lines of road across the level neighbourhood, and the large basalt blocks on the island, as if from some pre-Mohammedan fortifications, prove that the site must always have been one of importance. Buhl ("Geog.," 249) has proposed Muzeirib for the first Ashtaroth of Eusebius ("Onomasticon," Ἀσταρωθ); and it suits so far the data for the latter: six Roman miles from Edre'i, and nine (it is actually eight) from Tell 'Ashtarāh, if this be the other Ashtaroth (Ἀσταρωθ Καρναίμ) of the "Onomasticon." But it does not suit the description of Karnion or Karnaim (presumably one of the Ashtaroths) given in 2 Macc. xii, 21, for it is not "difficult to get at by reason of the narrowness of all the places"; nor does 2 Macc. xii, 21, make any mention in connection with Karnion of the lake—the most prominent feature of Muzeirib. But 2 Macc. xii, 13, speaks of a lake two stadia broad near Caspis, or Caspin (the Casphor or Casphon of 1 Macc. v, 36: κάσφο of Jos., "Antt." xii, 8, 3); and till further evidence is found we cannot but identify el-Muzeirib with this town captured by Judas before he advanced (from the south) upon Karnaim.

IV.—TELL EL-'ASH'ARY.

From Muzeirib we rode N.N.W. by the main road for el-Merkez and Nawa. About a mile and a half before it reaches the bridge across the Wady el-'Ehreir we struck west from it over fields to Tell el-'Ash'ary, which had been visible for a long time across the plain. The ride from Muzeirib took rather less than an hour.

Tell el-'Ash'ary is a long mound, running from north-east to south-west upon the edge of the deep gorge of the Wady el-'Ehreir (which is here called the Wady Tell el-'Ash'ary). The east face of the mound rises about 90 feet above the plain; the west sinks precipitously for at least double that depth into the gorge.¹ The summit is broad, for the most part flat, but with an appreciable

¹ Oliphant, "Land of Gilead," 88, says the gorge is 500 feet deep. This is certainly exaggerated. He gives a sketch.

decline from north to south. Schumacher gives the height as 1,551 feet above the sea.¹ The view is magnificent. Looking west and south the foreground is occupied by the precipitous gorge, with the stream brawling down its rocky bed, and dividing round a long islet just below the mound. Beyond are the green orchards and vineyards, the red-tiled offices and arboricultural school of the Jewish colony of Jillin. The summit of Tabor is visible in the extreme south-west over the east hills of Galilee. Jebel 'Ajlûn fills all the south, and Jebel ed-Drûz the south-east, from which the eye is carried northward on the clear line of the Lejâ to the hills south of Damascus. There was a haze in the north, but above it, like the edge of a cloud, lay the long silver line of Hermon's snows. Nearer were the volcanic peaks of northern Hauran and Jaulân. The mound Tell 'Ashtarah stood up from the plain about five miles to the north, and beyond it the government buildings at el-Merkez.

The water supply of Tell el-'Ash'ary is good. Besides the perennial stream at the bottom of the Wady el-'Ehreiz, a good spring rises near the south-east corner of the mound. The water flows past the south end on a shallow bed with oleanders, and over a small cascade into the great gorge. There is also here a hollow, said to be a marsh in winter, which is called the Bahret el-'Ash'ary; it is surrounded by ruins.

The most superficial review of the mound reveals the remains of architecture of different styles and ages. To begin with the present inhabitants—Schumacher in 1884 found about 150 inhabitants in about 50 dwellings on the north of the mound.² They were diminished in numbers and had removed to the west slope when he made his second visit.³ We found but two or three poor negro families in huts constructed from the old ruins. The whole of the ancient basalt buildings on the plateau have been abandoned, except the few still used as folds and stables. A good deal of the building dates from Arab times, as is proved from the way in which carved Greek stones stand in it upside down; compare also the Arabic inscription given by Schumacher,⁴ and the native legends (quoted by him) of the former greatness of the place.

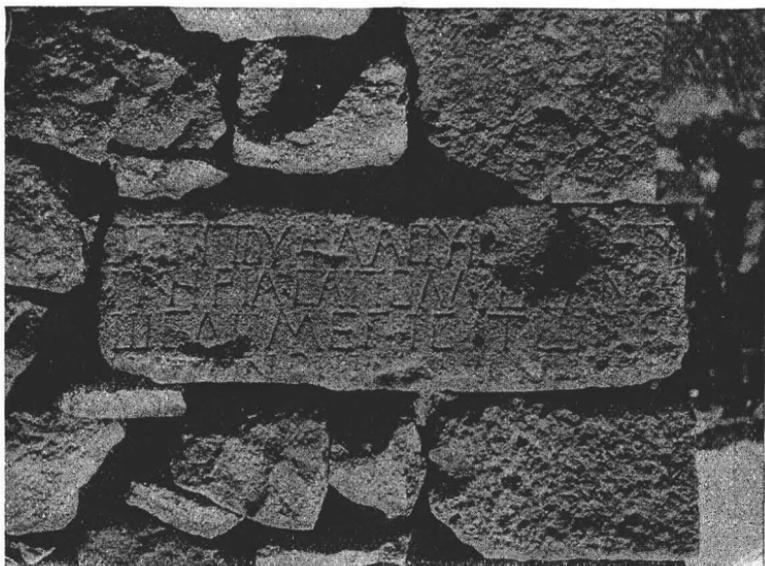
¹ "Across Jordan," p. 208. On the map, "Z. D. P. V.," xxii, p. 179, 472 metres.

² "Across Jordan," p. 203.

³ "Z. D. P. V.," xx, p. 167.

"Across Jordan," p. 206.

Going behind the Arab period we find several fine specimens of the domestic architecture characteristic of Hauran during Roman and Byzantine epochs, and in especial one building composed of the usual parallel arches with cross-beams of stone. We saw the Ionic capital, sketched by Schumacher.¹ But there are many other hewn stones of the same age, and similar to those one meets with in the cities of the Decapolis. I turned over several carved with a broad lip, exactly like those forming the seats of the Amphitheatre in Gadara, and there are two or three



GREEK INSCRIPTION IN WALL AT TELL EL-'ASH'ARY. (In the wall the inscription lies upside down. In this reproduction it has been reversed.)

of the upright stone water-pipes for raising water, with their conical stone stoppers (?). Schumacher mentions no Greek inscriptions. We came upon four, two very fragmentary—

ANNIANAY²
ΘΡΑΚΙΔΑ

and

ΕΥΦΑΝΟΥ
ΝΕΥΝΤΑΙΤ

and two larger ones, which we both copied and photographed. Reproductions are here given of the photographs.

¹ "Across Jordan," p. 204.

² The name occurs also in Wadd., 1959.

If we take the first two letters of the first line to be the last of the word **AUTOKΡΑΤΟΡΟΣ**, we have an inscription of the reign of Titus, and one of the earliest of Greek inscriptions in Hauran. In 1891 I discovered, a few miles away at Taffas, an inscription from the brief reign of Otho. This one, from the time of Titus, records the erection of an altar (*see* the fragmentary lower line, where we may read *τὸν Βωμόν*), and the deity is Apollo.

The other inscription, also of a dedication of an altar, is on the altar, which lies on its side in a court of one of the houses on the top of the plateau (p. 354). I copied what was legible of it under the glaring sun, and have made out the rest from the photograph by aid of a glass. The letters are smaller and much ruder than those of the other:—

ΥΠΕΡΩΤΗΡΙΑΣΚΑΙΔΙΑΜΟΝΗΣ
 ΤΙΤΟΥΑΙΛΙΟΥΑΔΡΙΑΝΟΥ
 ΔΑΝΤΩΝΕΙΝΟΥΣΕΒΑΣΤΟΥΕΥΣΕ
 ΒΟΥΣΚΑΙΤΟΥΣΥΝΠΑΝΤΟΣΑΥ
 ΤΟΥΟΙΚΟΥ
 ΠΑΜΦΙΛΟΣΕΥ?? ΝΙΟΥ
 ΒΟΥΛΟΥΤΗΣΔΕΤΕΧΙΑΝΗ
 ΚΥΡΙΑΤΟΝΒΩΜΟΝΕΚΤΩΝ
 ΙΔΙΩΝΚΑΤΕΥ? ΗΝΑΝΗΓΕΙ
 ΡΕΝ

Line 1.—The Omega of *σωτηρίας* is defective; *cp.* with first four lines an inscription from the same reign at Hebrân in the *Quarterly Statement* for 1895, p. 353; Waddington, 2286.

Line 4.—*συν*—not *συν-παντος*; *cp.* Waddington, 2212.

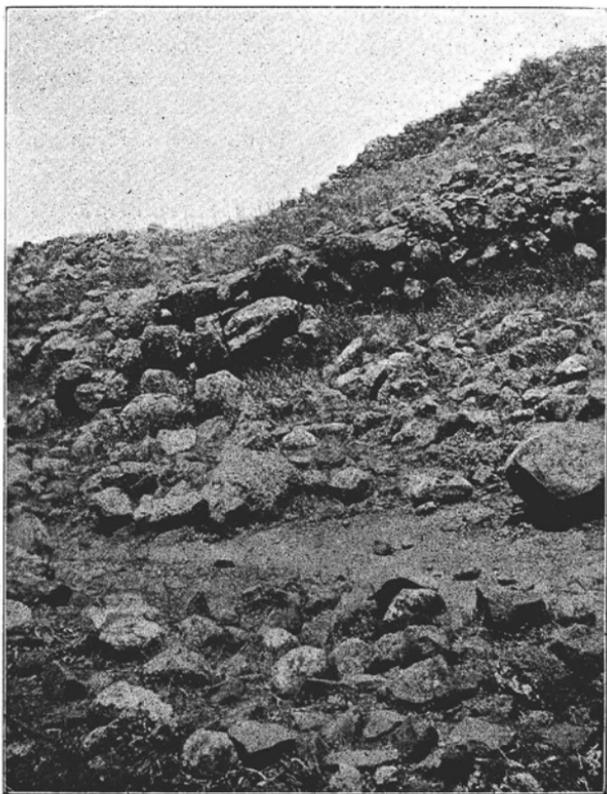
Line 7.—*βουλουτης* (*sic*). ΔΕΤ may be ΑΠ. There is a mark after what I read as X. It may be a letter, and with the X may have originally made M.

Line 9.—The χ of *εοχην* is illegible.

Translation—“For the safety and duration
 of Titus Aelius Hadrianus
 Antoninus Augustus Pi-
 us and all his
 house
 Pamphilos (son of) ???
 a councillor in the 4th year
 to the Mistress the altar at his own
 expense, in fulfilment of a vow, erect-
 ed.”

Here, then, from the reign of Antoninus Pius we have another altar, and to a goddess. The last word of the seventh line, which reads **EXIANH** (= viper) as I trace it, may be the name of the town or of the goddess.

These inscriptions prove that in the first and second Christian centuries there was on Tell el-'Ash'ary a town and sanctuary.



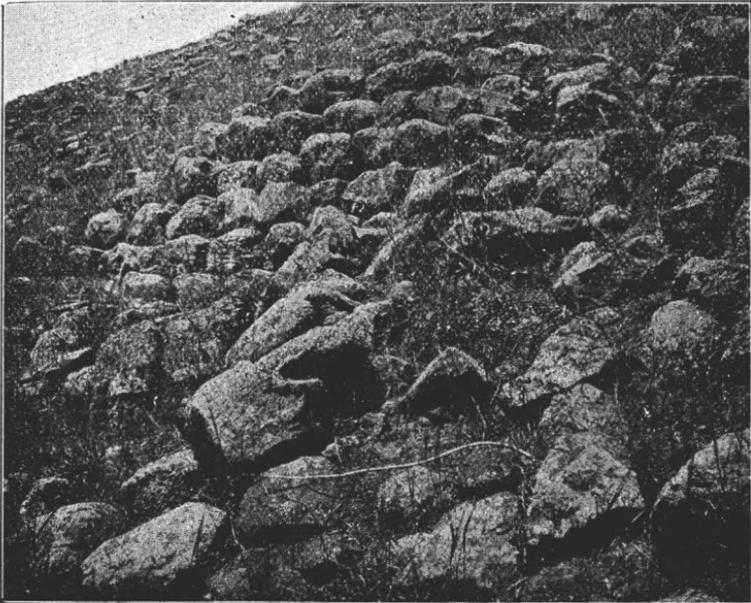
REMAINS OF WALLS ON TELL EL-'ASH'ARY. (The latest wall is that on the sky-line.)

The ruins round the pool may be (as Schumacher suggests) those of a Naumachy such as we find in the remains of some of the Decapolis; while from the north of the mound, as far as the bridge over the Wady el-'Ehreir, there runs an ancient (Roman?) causeway. Schumacher also traced the ruins of mills and canals

“nearly as far as el-‘Ajamy, one and a quarter miles away to the south-west.”¹

There are also remains scattered over the plain to the east. All these probably date from a large and prosperous city in the time of the Antonines.

But the human history of Tell el-‘Ash‘ary must have stretched much further back. The eastern face of the mound once carried a great wall of unhewn and very roughly hewn basalt blocks, mostly large, with a kind of tower thrown forward on the slope.



LOWER LINE OF ROUGHLY-HEWN BASALT STONES ON TELL EL-‘ASH‘ARY.

Above this line, on the south-eastern corner of the mound, a curving wall of hewn stones runs up towards the plateau. We thought also that we detected the traces of a third wall mentioned by Schumacher,² but would limit his statement that all three walls “have the appearance of great antiquity” to the lowest and heaviest line of rough basalt blocks. The second line running up towards the plateau seemed to me of the same age as the bulk

¹ “Across Jordan,” p. 207.

² *Ibid.*, p. 204.

of the architecture on the latter. About it and lower down the slope were scattered a great number of stones, similar to what are found in the ruins of the Decapolis, *i.e.*, with a planed face, but behind it rough and diminishing in size.

The lower line, on the other hand, appears older, and, as if it belonged to a ruder civilisation. The stones are larger, and as I have said, unhewn or roughly hewn. They resemble walls found on old Canaanite sites in other parts of Palestine, and sometimes vaguely described as "Amorite." Whether they be really so, it is impossible to determine; but they form an interesting proof (observable elsewhere in Hauran) that while Porter's claim for considering the basalt architecture of Hauran to belong to the earliest times, is unjustified—because this is obviously of the Roman period—the architecture in question is often founded on the remains of older civilisations. Some photographs of the walls on the east and south face of the mound are reproduced on pp. 356, 357.

It remains now to consider whether there are any grounds for the theory of Laurence Oliphant¹ and Schumacher,² that Tell el-'Ash'ary is one of the two Ashtaroths of Eusebius and the 'Ashteroth Karnaim of the Old Testament. The two explorers found their identification (1) on the fact that the place was held sacred in Mohammedan times, and was a Greek sanctuary and fortress; (2) on the name; and (3) on the statement that "the double peak of the southern mount of the hill, formed by the depression running from north to south, would make the appellation of 'Karnaim' or 'double-horned' extremely appropriate, and this feature must have been still more distinct before the depression was filled in by the rubbish and detritus."³ G. F. Moore ("J. B. L.," 1897, 156 ff) also explains 'Αστάρωθ Καρναεμ as the "Astarte of the two-peaked mountain." In a Talmudic discussion as to the constructions for the Feast of Booths, it is said that 'Ashteroth Karnaim was situated between two mountains which gave much shade ("Succa," 2a; *cf.* Neubauer, "Géog. du Talmud," 246).

To take the third of these reasons first—it is hard to say what shape the southern end of Tell el-'Ash'ary might assume, if it

¹ "Land of Gilead," 88 ff.

² "Across Jordan," p. 207.

³ "*Ibid.*," p. 208.

were thoroughly excavated to its original levels. But at present there is neither proof, nor promise, of the discovery of two such promontories or peaks as would suggest the name two-horned for a town on this site. Indeed, the whole suggestion that the two horns refer to the geographical features of the position of 'Ashteroth Karnaim is very doubtful. Much more probably the title was originally that of the goddess herself, derived not from the horned moon, but from some head-dress which her image wore ("Encycl. Biblica," i, 338). Nor can any ground for identification be found in the name Tell el-'Ash'ary (الاشعري). This has, it is true, three of the letters of the goddess's name, *عشتر*, but they lie in a different order, and they omit the medial *t*, which is found in all other instances of her name. As to the first reason, that Tell el-'Ash'ary is the site of a Mohammedan sacred place and Greek sanctuary, that is, as we have seen, certain, but it is equally true of countless other sites in Hauran. We may, therefore, conclude that there is nothing to prove that Tell el-'Ash'ary was once 'Ashteroth Karnaim. If the name which I cannot understand on the seventh line of the longest inscription be that of the goddess to whom the altar was raised, it does not at all look like a Greek equivalent of 'Ashteroth.

We left Tell 'Ash'ary at 2.50, and, by the line of ancient causeway running north-east, reached the bridge over Wady 'Ehreib, here a broad shallow stream, at 3.15. We left the bridge at 3.27. Just beyond it lies the base apparently of a Roman milestone. At 3.43 we were crossing a very shallow and green Wady, with a still and muddy puddle surrounded by rushes. To this our guide (from el-Muzeirib) gave the name of 'Ain el-mit—"dead spring." At 4.3 we crossed Wady 'Abu Yabis (according to our guide; Schumacher, Wady el-Yabis—"the dry Wady"), a mere trickle of water; and at 4.10, Schumacher's Wady el-Lebwa, or "Wady of Lions" (according to our guide, Wady Umm Tireh, or Imtireh). By 4.35 we were at Tell 'Ashtarah.

V.—TELL 'ASHTARAH.

This is a lower mound than Tell el-'Ash'ary. It lies on the plain, with a spring on the east end—Rās el-'Ain—and a small stream flowing round the south, not mentioned by Schumacher in

"Across Jordan" (209), nor given on his map ("Zeitsch. des Deutsch. Paläst. Vereins," xxii, 179). A little distance to the west is the larger stream, Moyet en Neby 'Ayyûb. On Tell 'Ashtarab there is no trace of the Hauran architecture of the Roman and Byzantine epochs. The stones of the ruins are all much worn and resemble those of the older remains on Tell el-'Ash'ary (see above, p. 358). On the top of the Tell they have been gathered to make sheepfolds. But on the southern edge the line of a large square building is still plain above the grass, which covers the plateau, and from which the old stones and some potsherds (grey and bevelled) peep out. There are remains of a surrounding wall not only (as Schumacher points out) "along the southern and south-western foot of the hill," but also on the eastern slope. The stones are large and coarsely hewn.

We have here, then, a site deserted in Roman times, but occupied by a town in earlier ages. The name Tell 'Ashtarab (عشتراب) at once suggests 'Ashtaroth. What else could it have come from? The town need not have been so insignificant as some have supposed.¹ If it was confined to the mound it would still be as large as many famous fortresses of the earliest times. By the Roman times the inhabitants may have removed to Sheikh Sa'd, two miles distant, where undoubtedly Eusebius² and Jerome³ place one of their Ashtaroths. But the name, though repeated there, may easily have clung also to its original position and so continued to the present day.

The balance of the evidence for the site of 'Ashtaroth Karnaim is thus in favour of Tell 'Ashtarab. Tell el-'Ash'ary is excluded, and if there was a second Ashtaroth, as Eusebius and Jerome say, nine Roman miles from Sheikh Sa'd, it must be sought for about, or in, Tell esh-Shihâb.

We left Tell 'Ashtarab at 4.55, and reached in half an hour el-Merkez, where the government of Hauran is still located, the purpose of moving it to Sheikh Miskîn (mentioned by Schumacher) having not yet been fulfilled. Leaving this at 5.50 we passed the 'Ain el-Lebwa at 6.20, with a ruin, and pool with reeds. Temperature at sunset 69°. At 7.10 we passed the Wady with a strong stream, on which stands Tell esh-Sheikh Hamad, but it was already too dark to examine the great walls which rise on this

¹ Cf. Wetzstein, "Reisebericht," p. 109.

² Onomasticon.

³ Vita St. Paulæ.

mound. Forty minutes afterwards we rode into our camp at Sheikh Miskîn.

Sheikh Miskîn (pronounced usually 's Miskîn) appears to have grown much since I was here in 1891. There was a good deal of goods traffic—grain going out, timber and cloth coming in at the railway station, which is the station not only for el-Merkez and Sheikh Sa'd, but for most of the villages between the railway and the Lejā. Temperature at 1.30 p.m. 83° in shade.



GREEK INSCRIPTION AT SHEIKH MISKÎN.

I append a photograph of an inscription in the Sheikh's house. It is not given in Waddington's collection. The letters are in relief:—

ΟΥΜΕΧΡΙΣΤΡΑΤΙΑ  ΣΕΩΣΑΠΕ
 ΝΙΜΕΝΟΥΛΠΙΑΝΩΤΟΓΕΡΑΣΟΒΑСС
 ΕΙΣΑΛΛΑΤΟΘΑΥΜΑΣΤΟΝΟΤΙΟΥΔΕΝ
 ΟΓΟΧΘΙΑΧΑΡΙΣΑΛΛΑΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΩ

In conclusion I desire to express the obligations of travellers in this region to the accurate surveys of Mr. Schumacher. The photographs given above are by two of my students: Messrs. Hartzell and Paterson.