

## AN ANCIENT SEWER AT JERUSALEM.

DR. SELAH MERRILL, United States Consul at Jerusalem, has kindly forwarded a plan (p. 393) of the course of the ancient sewer found by the people of *Silwan* (Siloam). Dr. Merrill was the first to explore this old drain, and the following description of it has been compiled from his notes :—

The length of the sewer from a to F is 1,830 feet, and of this 1,415 were examined. Except where it is cut in the rock the drain is paved throughout with large stones, and its walls are of ordinary stones set in mortar. Its dimensions are fairly uniform, the width being 3 feet, and the height of the sides 5 feet. For upwards of 200 feet from B towards A the sewer is cut through the solid rock, and for some 80 feet from C towards B it is roofed with large flat stones about 8 inches thick. Elsewhere it is vaulted, and is 6 feet high in the centre. Between C and M there was moisture and some slime, but on the whole the great sewer was found to be fairly clean, and free from offensive odours. There are no openings to indicate the junction of branch sewers, and for most of the way a man can walk through the tunnel without difficulty.

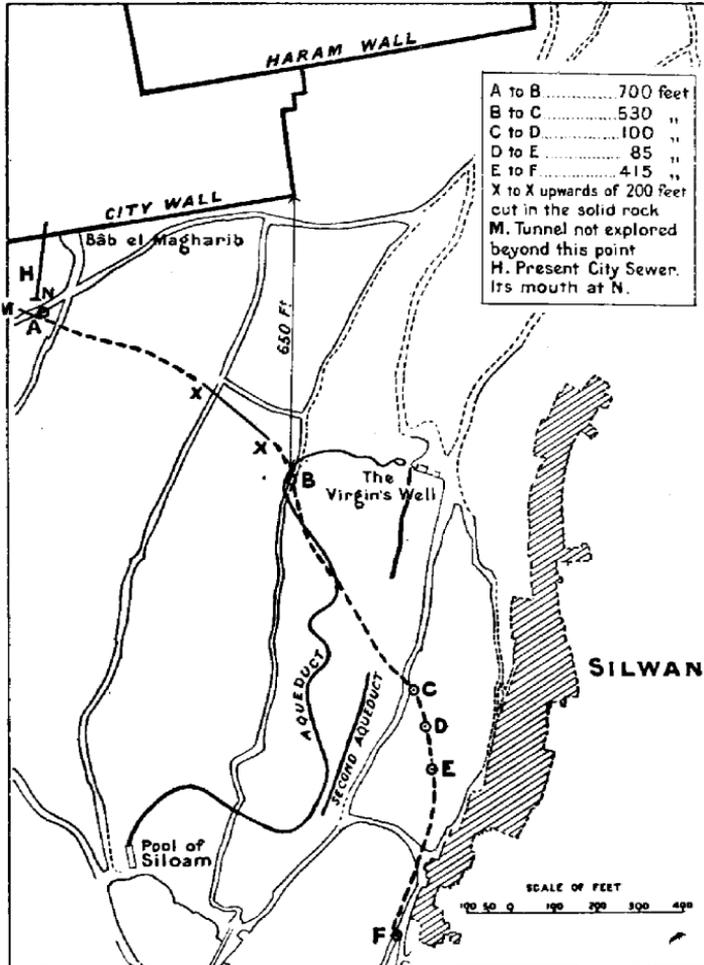
The sewer has not been explored beyond M, south-west of the Dung Gate, where it is 30 feet below the level of the existing sewer of the city, which at the point N becomes a foul open drain. At B, on the brow of the hill, there is an opening to the ancient sewer, and immediately to the south of it the people of *Silwan* have lately built a small house of which Dr. Merrill has sent a photograph.<sup>1</sup>

"It is probable that a considerable number of canals, tunnels, and the like exist under the soil at different points. For drainage and water supply every succeeding city would have its own conveniences. Whenever a city was destroyed these would be destroyed, or covered and lost sight of in the general ruin. Later there would be rebuilding, and new canals and tunnels would be constructed. Hence we find their remains at different points, running in different directions, and, what is interesting and confirmatory, at greatly differing levels."

The natives report the existence of a number of tunnels in the vicinity of the sewer. Schick's "Second Siloam Tunnel," and that entered by Masterman and Hornstein would run under the ancient sewer. "Barclay mentions a tunnel, very near the Fountain of the Virgin, which he entered, and followed towards the Temple. This, from his description, could have no connection with the sewer." Schick (*Quarterly Statement*, 1902, p. 35) speaks of entering "a rock-cut tunnel and following it for 400 feet." This would be in 1862, for he says it was 40 years before.

<sup>1</sup> Not published.

The tunnel I am describing is not "rock cut" except as already mentioned. I have read also what Warren says of Barclay's statement, in the "Recovery of Jerusalem," but get no light on this particular tunnel.



PLAN OF ANCIENT SEWER AT JERUSALEM.

[Note.—In the spring of 1865 I entered the sewer described by Dr. Merrill at the point B, with Dr. Schick, who probably mistook the date when writing in 1902. We followed the sewer through the portion cut out of the rock until we found our way blocked by earth, and then

returned. Dr. Schick was asked to watch for a favourable opportunity for the examination of the sewer, but apparently never found one. Dr. Merrill has been fortunate enough to make a most interesting discovery, and one that may have some bearing on the topography of Ophel. May not this sewer be the passage by which the people of Silwân introduced some Egyptian soldiers when Ismail Pasha took Jerusalem?—C. W. W.]

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## A SUPPOSED EARLY COPY OF THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH.

By A. E. COWLEY, Bodleian Library, Oxford.

SOME time ago a statement appeared in the daily papers announcing the discovery of a Samaritan Pentateuch dated in the year 116 of the Hejra, *i.e.*, 734 A.D. As this was brought to my notice at the Bodleian Library, and as I was fortunate enough to obtain photographs of it, which enabled me to judge of the facts, I wrote a note on the subject in the *Jewish Quarterly Review*, vol. xvi, p. 483. Since then a friend has sent me a cutting from one of the daily papers, and the Secretary of the Fund has received an account of the MS. from Dr. Baroody, editor of *Aṭ-ṭabīb* in Beyrout, so that it may be of interest to readers of the *Quarterly Statement* to know something about the volume. Of course an eighth century copy of the Pentateuch would be of great interest. Of the Masoretic text we have nothing *dated* earlier than the St. Petersburg codex of 916 A.D., though Dr. Ginsburg in his introduction assigns an undated MS. to an earlier period. No Samaritan copy, as far as I know, is nearly as old as this. The earliest (*dated*) is probably the fragment mentioned by Harkavy, which was written in 599 A.H. = 1202 (3) A.D., and is now in St. Petersburg. There is, of course, the famous copy at Nâblus, said to have been written by Abisha, the great-grandson of Aaron, 13 years after the settlement of the Israelites in Canaan, but as no scholar has ever had an opportunity of really examining it, we are justified in leaving it out of consideration. Fragments also exist in which an early date has been forged for commercial purposes.

The present copy, therefore, although it would probably not add much to our knowledge of the text, would be our earliest evidence for either recension of the Pentateuch if its age were really as stated. Such, however, is unfortunately not the case. The accompanying plate shows the manner in which the date is given. In the early chapters of Deuteronomy the scribe begins to divide the text into two columns. When he comes to a letter required for what would usually be the