

Gibeon, Geba, and Anathoth, priestly cities of Benjamin remain to this day, while "Gibeah of Saul is fled." Why fled? Because after prophesying, he sacrificed, slew priests and talked with the witch. These cities, destitute of Byzantines, flourish on their names, while the highest rock (2,605 ft.) in the wilderness of Gibeon, by nature a very Gibeah, though rich in Byzantines, is not even reckoned among the many Gibeahs, but lies under oblivion—*caret quia vate sacro*—and the missing sherd. Samuel told Saul that he would come in order (1) to the hill of God, (2) the city, and then (3) to the high place. The saunterer from Jerusalem will now, at Wādy ed-Dumm, be (1) at the foot of the hill (Gibeah), (3) at Kh. Adaseh he will search the high place, (2) about midway at the city he may expect that old Jewish pottery waits to be discovered, but whether red like my sherd from Shiloh, or black like one from Hebron, who can tell? "*Caveat Emptor*" mindful of Moabite pottery.

DEAD SEA OBSERVATIONS.

By Dr. E. W. G. MASTERMAN.

Autumn Visit to 'Ain Feshkhal, 1911.—The visit was made by Mr. Hornstein accompanied by Mr. Newton of the P.E.F. and other friends.

Left Jerusalem Nov. 15 at 10.30 a.m., Bar. 27.65. The early rains had already produced a good deal of verdure. Reached Jericho 6.30 p.m. Bar. 30.8, Ther. 71.6.

Visited the site of ancient Jericho near *'Ain es-Sultan*: the sundried bricks of the ancient city, exposed by the excavations of Prof. Sellin, are undergoing rapid disintegration from the effects of the weather.

Nov. 16.—Left Jericho at 7.15 a.m., followed the road via *'Ain el-Jehēyfir* and reached *'Ain Feshkhal* at 10.25. Bar. 31.25. Temp. of air 72.5, water 77.9. Sky clear, no clouds, slight breeze from the south-east. "White line," faint and broken, stretched from north-east to south-west.

Measurement at "Observation rock" 13 feet $5\frac{1}{2}$ inches, showing a fall of level of 2 feet since the spring.

In the pool the difference of level since the spring was only 11 inches.

General Observations.—No human beings seen near oasis. Two coveys of sand-partridges and a distant hyaena observed.

On the return, *Khurbet el-Yehud*, near *Wādy Kumrān*, was visited. Some of the graves here showed evidence of recent disturbance, probably by "treasure hunters."

The Spring Visit in 1912.—The notes of this visit will be found in the *Quarterly Statement*, 1912, p. 213.

The Autumn Visit in 1912.—Accompanied by Mr. Hornstein and some friends I left Jerusalem Nov. 27, at 10.30 a.m.—a cloudy, cool morning—and arrived at Jericho about 4.30 p.m.

Nov. 28.—Left Jericho 4.40 a.m. (Temp. 69° F.), rode to 'Ain Feshkhah, viâ 'Ain el-Jehelyr, and arrived at the pool at 8.15 a.m. Temp. of air (at 9.50) 70° F., of water 77° F. Bar. 31.2.

The reeds in the oasis were more extensive than ever, though burnt at one patch by the Bedouin. The pool looked very large and the whole rock in the centre was hidden below the surface. Our mark on the rock was 1 foot $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches below the surface.

State of the Level.—The measurement from the P.E.F. mark was 13 feet $2\frac{1}{2}$ inches—21 inches lower than last spring and 3 inches higher than last autumn.

The sea was somewhat disturbed by wavelets, but there was no wind to be felt at first; at about 10.30 a south-south-east wind was noticeable and the surface became more agitated and the north shore strewn with banked up foam. There was no "white line." Heavy black clouds crossed the sky from west to east to the north of us, and soon it was evident that a heavy shower was crossing the neighbourhood of Jericho towards *es-Salt*. The mountains of Moab, which opposite to us were brilliantly clear, to the north became blotted out in rain and mist.

We returned viâ *Nebi Mūsa* and the old pilgrim road; a heavy shower fell when we were at *Nebi Mūsa*, but it was fine, though cloudy, most of the way home. We encountered a fairly strong westerly breeze from the time we reached the higher mountains.

Animal Life, etc.—Never, in any of my visits to 'Ain Feshkhah, have I seen so many persons and animals at the oasis and its neighbourhood. As we approached the district we saw large flocks

of goats and sheep being driven down the hills to the springs ; as we entered the district we found large numbers of camels grazing, and we encountered all over the oasis members of the *Ta'amereh Bedu*—men and women—looking after their flocks, driving donkeys, etc. On reaching the pool we found it rather annoying to be so beset, but, after an hour or two, many of the party started up the steep ascent to the hills above. At the spring itself was a dead and desiccated camel.

As regards wild animal life, we saw the tracks of many young wild-boar between *'Ain el-Jeheryr* and *'Ain Feshkkeh*. We heard the clucking of partridges near *Wady Kelt* and near *'Ain Feshkkeh*, but did not see the birds. We saw "Tristram's Grackle" and a covey of starlings at the oasis ; also storks, vultures, owls and small birds on our route home.
