

RECENT DISCOVERIES AT JERUSALEM.

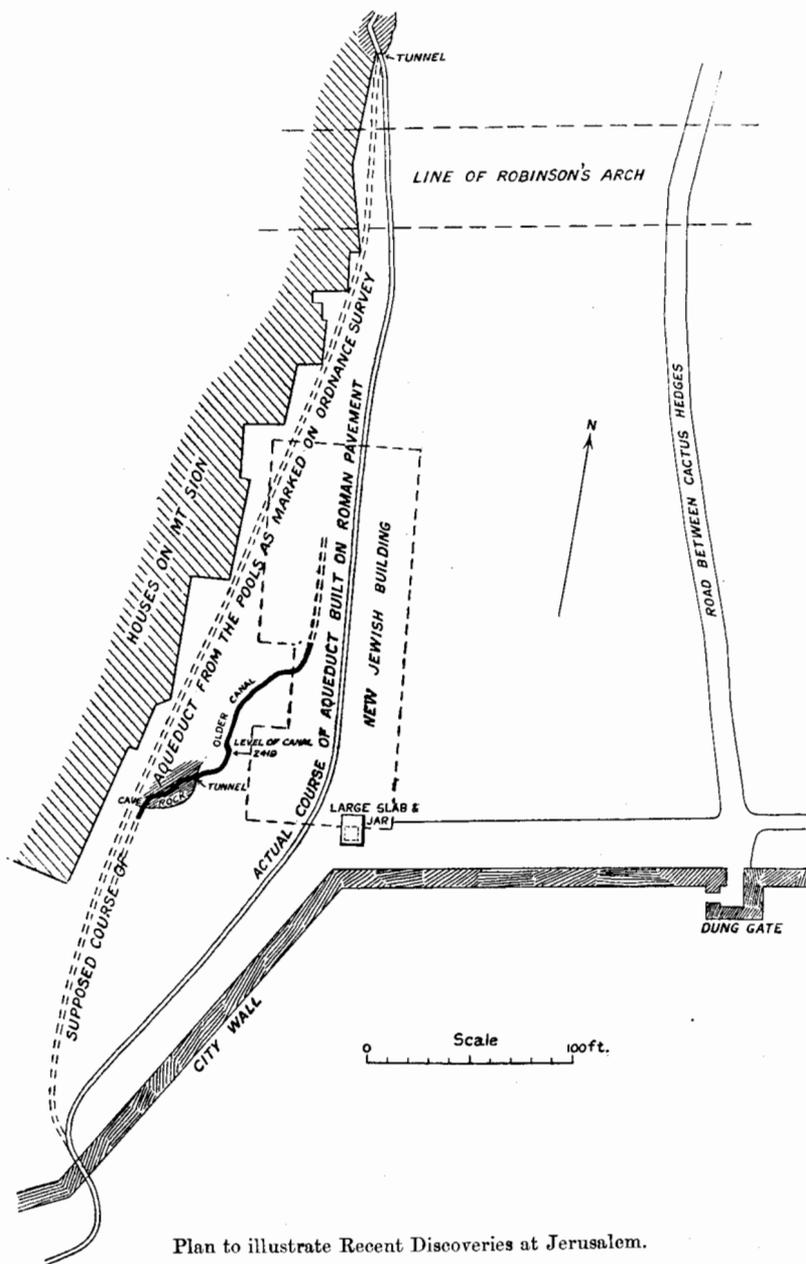
LETTERS have been received from Mr. E. F. Beaumont, in continuation of his reports given at page 29 of the *Quarterly Statement* for January, which contain some interesting information with regard to the excavations in progress outside the Damascus Gate, and also respecting some work that is in progress to the west of the Dung Gate, which will throw valuable light on the line of aqueduct leading round the western hill of Jerusalem from Solomon's Pools. As regards the first, he writes: "A sewage system for the Jewish colonies north-west of the city, and for some other parts also, is in process of construction. In connection with these a trench is being dug along the road leading north from the Damascus Gate towards the English church of St. George. This cutting begins at the new coffee house, the excavations for the foundations of which yielded the interesting section published in the *Quarterly Statement*.¹ Already Roman sherds have come up from ten feet depth." In a letter dated August 1st, Mr. Beaumont says: "The sewer trench was dug twelve feet deep, and carried, in its first section, 600 feet northward from the Damascus Gate, and in no place was the rock struck, nor even buildings found, except a poor wall and a cistern built in the rubbish. We made a careful examination of the sherds *in situ*, and, as Samian pieces were found above Arab, one concludes that the rubbish has not accumulated there, but was dumped from inside the walls. This trench will eventually pass through the suggested line of the third wall, and we are watching to see if any evidence of the latter appears."

Mr. Beaumont's reports, with reference to the work inside the south city wall, and near the Dung Gate, are as follows:—

Jerusalem, *March 31st*, 1914.

"The work on the new Jewish Hospital near the Dung Gate, which Dr. Masterman asked me to keep touch of, is progressing.

¹ See *Quarterly Statement* for January, 1914, p. 32.



Plan to illustrate Recent Discoveries at Jerusalem.

“ Numerous shafts have been sunk to the rock, and more are yet
 “ to be put down. I have visited the place several times, and, in
 “ company with Father Vincent, have obtained the rock level at
 “ several places. He has made a section, and was kind enough to
 “ allow me to copy it to send to you, which I will do as soon as I
 “ have run the levels from one of the trench marks in the vicinity.

“ The true course of the aqueduct from Solomon’s Pools has
 “ been ascertained from where it enters the city to the tunnel in
 “ the western hill, or so-called Mount Sion. The Roman Wall
 “ supporting the aqueduct is built on a Roman pavement, which
 “ rests on older walls, thought by Father Vincent to date from
 “ about the sixth century B.C. At the base of this old wall a large
 “ stone slab was found, supported about four inches above the
 “ levelled rock by dressed stone blocks at either end. This large
 “ slab, which measures 5 feet 6 inches by 3 feet 6 inches, has not
 “ yet been removed, so we do not know what is under it, but we
 “ will try to be there when it is lifted. Leaning against the slab
 “ was a jar about 2 feet high, which had been crushed by the
 “ pressure of the rubbish that is about 14 feet deep at this place.
 “ Father Vincent thinks the jar belongs to the sixth or seventh
 “ century B.C.

“ The trench is to be pushed on up the hill from the point
 “ where the slab was found. This point is just 20 feet north of
 “ the city wall, and 10 feet east of the aqueduct as it exists. The
 “ actual course of the aqueduct is 85 feet east of the line of aqueduct,
 “ as marked on the Ordnance Survey map.”

May 26th, 1914.

“ The work on the building near the Dung Gate is progressing
 “ rather slowly, so I have delayed sending the section, etc., as two
 “ more shafts are to be sunk west of the aqueduct, and I wish to
 “ extend the new section which I am making up through these
 “ shafts.

“ The large slab has been lifted, and nothing but the smooth
 “ rock found underneath. There is considerable interest attached
 “ to it, however, as, when it was first uncovered, the ancient jar
 “ was found just beside it, along with a partially burned ram’s horn
 “ and bits of charcoal and burnt sheep horns. In the jar was sandy
 “ earth and charcoal. Father Vincent, and Captain Weil, who has
 “ charge of the Siloam excavations, reconstructed the large jar, and
 “ both date it as early as the time of the Captivity or the return of

“Nehemiah. The style is similar to that of the jar from Tomb No. 7 at Beth Shemesh, shown in the last Annual, Plate XLIX, but with a slightly more pointed base. Their opinion is that the slab and jar had to do with a foundation sacrifice, and this seems reasonable.”

August 1st, 1914.

“Regarding the work on the south side of the city, I would say that the first stage of the building is complete, but I cannot finish the section as I would like to do until they have completed the second stage of the excavation, which is the cutting into the high bank of *débris*, seen to the left in the enclosed Photograph No. 1. This will no doubt disclose the great scarp on which the buildings seen above are built.

“Since writing last, another distinct and probably earlier canal from Solomon’s Pools has been found to the west of the one we call Roman. We were able to go into this for a distance of about 50 feet towards the south-west, as it here emerged from a short tunnel into a cave, and the way was blocked with fallen stones. See Photograph No. 2. In some places we could walk almost upright. We also traced its course some distance northwards. Below is a rough section of the canal looking north” (see No. 3). The canal is 2 feet 6 inches high and has 30 feet of rubbish above it.

“I enclose a rough tracing (see plan) which will give some idea of these aqueducts and of the position of the large stone. The last canal found, which is indicated by the heavy black line, shows every evidence of being the older. The level given for this canal may be subject to some slight modification if we succeed in finding the bench mark on the Dung Gate, which is now covered with rubbish some feet in depth.”



Fig. 3.—Section of the Canal.

In the same letter, Mr. Beaumont writes that the Fathers of St. Anne have been continuing their excavations at the Pool of Bethesda, and that Father Vincent is engaged on a study of the

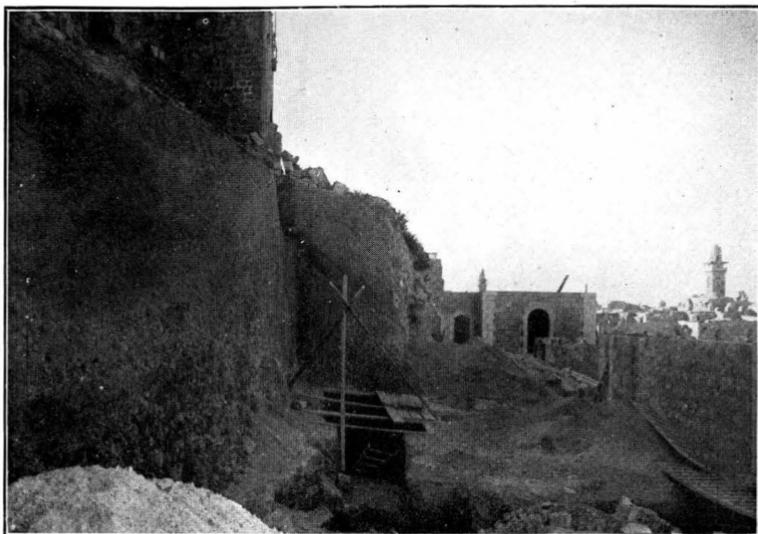


Fig. 1.—View showing Bank of Debris.

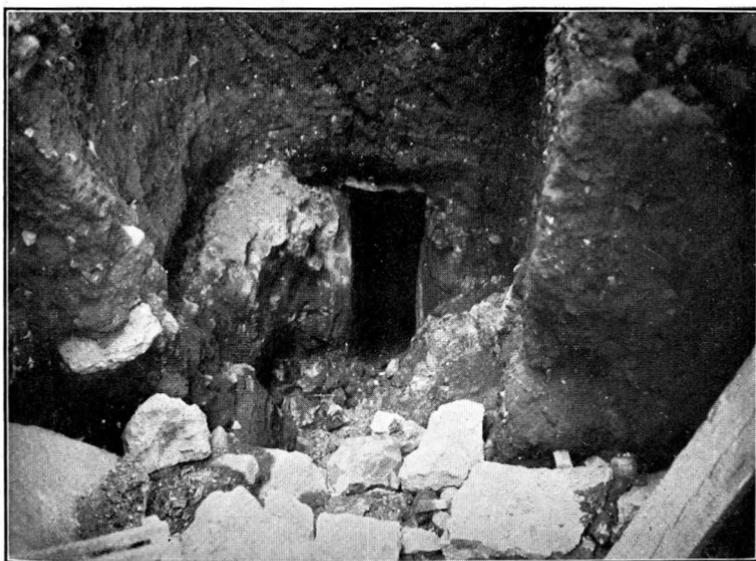


Fig. 2.—Cave showing Access to Canal.

architectural history of the Church of St. Anne. The result of his investigations will be of great interest to all students of Jerusalem history, as the original church on this site is one of the most ancient in the city and is shown in the Medeba mosaic.

Mr. Beaumont also writes:—"You are no doubt aware of the activity of the American Standard Oil Company on the south-west side of the Dead Sea. They are at present constructing a road, about 50 miles long, from Hebron to the Dead Sea at great expense, and are said to be employing 2,000 men on this work. They are evidently quite satisfied that oil will be found, and are bringing out by special steamer a great quantity of machinery and eight motor trucks and automobiles. The Pierson Company's men are prospecting on the east side of the Dead Sea, and appear equally hopeful of success."

C. M. W.

SAFED.

By DR. E. W. G. MASTERMAN.

SAFED (سفيد), is one of the most highly situated towns in Palestine, it lies 2,750 feet above sea level, as compared with Jerusalem 2,500 feet, and Damascus 2,264 feet. Hebron is, however, 300 feet higher. The height of Safed is the more striking because of its wide outlook over the low-lying country around: thus the Lake of Galilee, which in the clear atmosphere looks very near, is over 3,400 feet below it; and the famous Tabor and Carmel, each only 1,800 odd feet above sea level, seem as of no height at all. The descent from the town of Safed to the lower ground is abrupt on all sides, and the steep and winding paths are still only possible to pedestrians or to horses and mules. Although visible from the south and west from considerable distances, and pointed out by the dragoman to the traveller going from Nazareth to Tiberias as the "City set on a Hill," the town is, except from the west, hidden from the approaching traveller, until the ascent of the steep mountain slopes is almost completed.