

THE EXCAVATION OF ASKALON, 1920-1921.

PROF. GARSTANG reports that there is little to add to the account which was given in the *Quarterly Statement* for January. In Field 61 various walls of the Temple of Fortune were linked up before the season closed, and further architectural details were examined, but it is still not possible to give a final opinion as to the precise form, style and character of the great building which is gradually coming to light. The special feature at its southern end, where the Peace Pool and surrounding theatre take the place of the more usual portico, remains also to be examined in greater detail. The marble flooring of the original structure and some of the original seats of the theatre around are amongst the latest discoveries unearthed. Objects of sculpture include the lower half of a life-sized Apollo.

A photograph of Field 61 is reproduced, giving a general view of the excavations from the south.

Meanwhile, further excavation has been made of the pottery fragments from the section-cutting in the northern escarpment where Field 187 descends to Field 183. See Fig. 2. The excavators are satisfied that it is possible from these results, and at this place, to isolate and distinguish the pottery of the Philistine period. Some few fragments have been brought to England for study, and greatly interested the Members of the Committee. There was no unanimity as to any real affinity with the pottery fragments of other areas. The apparent relationships ranged from Susa to Crete, but the

general tenor of comment shows that Cypriote influences predominate. The Committee agreed with the excavator that, having got upon this scent with a Philistine house coming to view, this track should not be left, so that when work resumes in April, it will be largely concentrated along this escarpment, embodying the Fields 183, 182, 161, 187, 188 and 169, with a new plan of work derived from the experiences gained. Meanwhile the excavation of the Tycheion in Field 61, and of the very remarkable theatre which abuts upon it in Field 67, will be methodically completed. The Bir Ibrahim, No. 88, will be examined and search will be continued for the necropolis of Philistine period, which has hitherto eluded the excavators.

A new plan of the site of Askalon has been prepared by Prof. Garstang and students of the British School of Archaeology in Jerusalem, and is issued with this number. The following details should be noticed :—

In *Field No. 1* are Roman foundations.

In *Field No. 5* is the Byzantine Church, which encroaches upon Fields Nos. 24 and 7.

In *Field No. 85* and Point IX are Crusaders' ruins.

In *Field No. 86* are standing remains of a Crusaders' Church.

In *Field No. 88* is traditionally located the Bir Ibrahim.

In *Field No. 61* is the Temple of Fortune, or Tycheion, or some other public building, with the Peace Pool at its southern end, surrounded by a theatre which encroaches on the roadway and Field 67.

From *Field No. 51* were taken, in former days, a number of stout granite columns, now mostly lying near the cross-roads. These may indicate a temple of Jupiter disclosed by Lady Hester Stanhope's cursory examination.



Fig. 1.—The “Tyche” Field 61 with a general view of the excavations from the south.

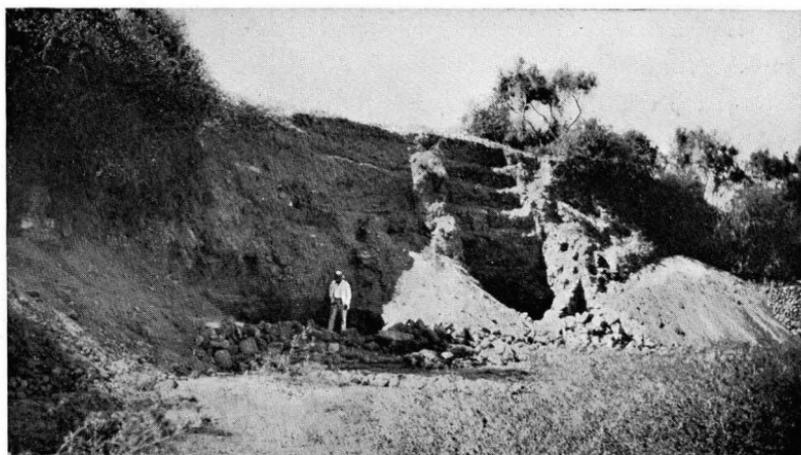


Fig. 2.—Northern scarp of Field 187.

Points I to IX on the site, and X, XI on the seashore, indicate survey points used in this new triangulation. The walls upon the ramparts seem to be largely of Byzantine origin, repaired by both Moslems and Crusaders in later days. Mounds on which these stand seem to indicate the ramparts of much earlier times. The central mound abutting on the sea seems to have been the more primitive settlement. The rising ground in the north of the enclosure remains to be examined, and may prove to contain early remains.
