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*THE RECENT SURVEY OF WESTERN PALESTINE,
AND ITS BEARING UPON THE BIBLE.*

THE subject of the discourse which I have been requested to deliver this evening is the Maps of Western Palestine now exhibited. They are the results of the labours supported by the Palestine Exploration Fund during the last ten years. This work of the Fund is of such a unique character, that it may be interesting to tell how it was brought about. The Fund was a consequence of the preparation of Dr. William Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*, in three large volumes. The researches for that great work forced upon its numerous learned contributors, and especially upon Mr. George Grove, who wrote the principal articles on the topography of Palestine, a keen sense of the defective state of the geography of the Holy Land, especially with reference to the understanding of the Bible. The Palestine Exploration Fund was established to supply the want in 1865. Its first work was an experimental journey made by Captain (now Colonel Sir Charles) Wilson, and Lieutenant, afterwards Major, Anderson, lately deceased, who surveyed a track from Damascus to the Sea of Galilee, Samaria, and Jerusalem, on the scale of a mile to an inch, and thus confirmed the instructive character of the results that were expected from a similar Survey of the whole area. Other preliminary journeys and the Survey of Jerusalem next engaged the attention and resources of the managers of the Fund; and it was not till the year 1872 that the complete Survey of Western Palestine was commenced. The maps now exhibited are derived from that Survey. The larger map is on the scale

of a mile to an inch, and it is printed in twenty-six sheets. The smaller maps are reduced from it to a scale of three-eighths of an inch to a mile, and each of them occupies six sheets. The maps on both scales exhibit all the waters and water-courses, roads and tracts, mountains and hills, plains and valleys, woodlands, plantations, and remarkable trees, the cultivation of olives, figs, vines, palms being expressly distinguished. Towns and villages, whether inhabited, deserted, or in ruins, caverns, tombs, cisterns, and rock-cut presses for oil and wine, wells, springs and fountains, and every vestige of antiquity, are comprehended in this Survey. The altitudes of many prominent heights and places above the sea are also given. The work was executed by Surveyors of the Corps of Royal Engineers, trained on the Ordnance Survey of Great Britain, and permitted to undertake it by favour of the Government, and the officers in charge were Lieuts. C. R. Conder and H. H. Kitchener.

It will be perceived that the Survey is at present confined to the country on the west of the Jordan, including the ancient sites of Dan on the north and Beersheba on the south. This includes so large and important a part of the Holy Land that it was determined by the managers of the Fund to proceed at once with the application of the Maps to the illustration of the Old and New Testaments, without waiting for the extension of the Survey to the east and south, where many very interesting Biblical and other historical sites remain to be explored, being often quite unknown. The Survey has been already commenced on the east of the Jordan, and I would strongly urge upon the members of the Victoria Institute, and all other lovers of the Bible and students of history, the claims of that interesting part of the Survey upon their liberal support. It was my good fortune formerly to direct, in Stanford's Geographical establishment, the preparation of the Biblical maps for Dr. Wm. Smith's Ancient Atlas, when all that could be done with the materials existing before the present Survey was attempted, under the learned editorship of Mr. Grove. This and other labours in Biblical geography probably led the managers of the Fund to request me to bring my old studies to bear upon the new Survey. I heartily availed myself of the opportunity, and I am here to-night to give you some idea of the work.

The study of Biblical geography is placed by the present Survey to a great extent on a perfectly new footing. The abundant local details of the most interesting and dramatic Biblical narratives had escaped out of knowledge, in numerous instances, before the beginning of the Christian era and the

times of the Jewish authors of the Talmuds and Josephus. Since the beginning of the Christian era, from the fourth century onwards, valuable works have been written at successive intervals to preserve the knowledge that remained, and their stores of ancient and mediæval learning were systematically incorporated in the exhaustive researches of Hadrian Reland, composed in Latin, and entitled *Hadriani Relandi Palestina ex Monumentis Veteribus Illustrata*, printed at Utrecht in 1814.

About the commencement of the present century it was perceived that an accurate knowledge of the existing state of the ground was a necessary basis of archæological inquiry; and several attempts were made by governments and individuals to satisfy the general desire for the application of such inquiries to Palestine. An instructive list of the writings on this subject, from the fourth century onwards, with critical remarks, is given in an appendix to Dr. Robinson's *Biblical Researches*; Dr. Bonar's work on the "Land of Promise" adds to the number; and the most important are notified at the end of Mr. Grove's article on "Palestine" in Dr. William Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

The method pursued throughout these long centuries of studious labour failed to satisfy critical examination. Its very aim was imperfect. Scraps of information picked up here and there on the spot, or laboriously extracted from past literature,—surveys of varying quality along beaten tracks, and sometimes unfrequented byways, however successfully compiled,—were neither complete nor accurate, for great blanks remained without examination. Such a method ought never to have been expected to reveal the fully delineated features of the face of nature, in which might still be traced the stories of ancient days, that told of the histories and destinies not only of the chosen people in the faith of Abraham, but also of their Christian brethren and of the whole human race along with them.

Now, I desire to assure you that the Surveyors of the Palestine Exploration Fund have succeeded in delineating the surface of Western Palestine with a degree of perfection that has already thrown light upon many obscure and misunderstood parts of the Biblical record. As a student of the documents that existed before it, the New Survey appears to me like a revelation, and it sustains that character in requiring for its understanding prolonged and patient attention. It would be folly to assume that the study of the Bible in the light of that Survey has been, or could be, exhausted or perfected in the brief time that it was possible to allow me to apply to it. Still

I trust that it will be found that considerable progress has been made in opening up a new line of Biblical investigation, and I proceed to submit to you some idea of the process and of the results.

There is reason to believe that many intelligent and educated persons turn aside from an elaborate map as from an insoluble problem. It must be confessed that at first sight the great Map now exhibited looks like a mass of confusion. It is consoling to a map-maker to think that a page of print must be little else to one who cannot or who declines to read. But the first step in the present inquiry is the understanding of the ground; and, to assist in that object, I have prepared this special edition of the reduced Map for publication, and the present copy of the large Map is also coloured similarly for this occasion.

The first point to notice is the COAST LINE, defining the boundary between the land and sea. In this case the coast line is very simple, running from north to south, with a trend to the westward for about 150 miles. Its prominent features are:— (1) The small peninsula or island of the ruined city of Tyre; (2) the famous headlands of the White Cape and Hewn Cape, or Ras el Abiad and Ras en Nakura, along the precipitous faces of which is carried the Tyrian Ladders, or passage of the very ancient coast road, so often traversed by the armies of the Assyrians, Egyptians, Greeks, and Romans; (3) the City and Bay of Acre, the Bay being formed at the southern end by the projection of the famous Mount Carmel for about two miles further west than the more northerly shore; (4) the coast to the south of Carmel, which is unbroken, and has no natural harbour. The only maritime cities that now remain along this coast are Jaffa and Gaza, both of great antiquity. Formerly the Biblical cities of Dor, Cesaræa, Ashdod, and Ascalon also peopled this coast, and possessed strong fortifications, magnificent temples and public buildings, and artificial harbours.

The attention should be next directed to the rivers, water-courses, and inland lakes. A part of the course of the River Jordan forms the eastern limit of the Map, along with the inland lakes which pertain to it. The river enters the Map at an altitude above the sea of about 1,000 feet, and rapidly descends to the plain of Huleh, which is only about 200 feet above the sea where the Jordan enters it. From the plain the river flows southward to Lake Huleh through a dense growth of papyrus, which fills the upper part of the lake, except some narrow passages which were explored by Mr. Macgregor in the *Rob Roy* canoe. The lake has open water in its

southern part, and its altitude is only 7 feet above the Mediterranean. The Jordan passes from the southern end of the Huleh Lake, through a rugged gorge, in which it forms a continuous rapid, till it enters the Sea of Galilee, the surface of which is depressed to 682 feet below the level of the Mediterranean. The Sea of Galilee is fourteen miles in length and nearly seven miles broad in its widest part; its greatest depth is about 150 feet. The Jordan leaves the Sea of Galilee at its southern end, and continues its descent with an increasing depression below the Mediterranean till it enters the Dead Sea, the surface of which is no less than 1,292 feet below the Mediterranean. I refrain from entering into further particulars about this unique river, except to point to the line on the Map which defines approximately the great extent to which the western bank of the Jordan would be submerged if its waters rose to the level of the Mediterranean. One of the vertical sections also illustrates the descent of the river.

The next subject includes the rivers and watercourses that lie between the Jordan and the Mediterranean coast line. These present a very complicated problem. They certainly display at first sight an appearance of great confusion, and look almost too much entangled to be unravelled. The reduction of this labyrinth to its natural elements will be found described at length in my published *Introduction to the Survey of Western Palestine*, illustrated by the special edition of the Reduced Map. In a few words the explanation is as follows:—All the watercourses and streams, with a very few remarkable exceptions, fall either into the Mediterranean or into the Jordan. Each outfall pertains to a distinct drainage area or basin. The limit of each basin is called its water parting, and it is ascertained originally by tracing up every stream from its outfall to its source; and, if the stream has branches, the principal branches would be traced likewise. On the Special Map the water parting of each basin is distinguished by a coloured line, which could easily be made bolder, and the basin is named after its main channel. Thus the outfall to which each part of the country belongs is seen at a glance, and then it becomes easy to distinguish the division of a large basin among its principal branches. Having defined the limits of the basins and traced their chief features, it will be found that the basins differ in the following respect. Only some of those on the Mediterranean slope are contiguous to Jordan basins, while some only of the Jordan basins are contiguous to those of the Mediterranean. Those basins which fall short of the Mediterraneo-Jordan water-parting are distinguished on the Special Map by a green tint, and the

distinction often has reference to the important subject of natural lateral communication through the highlands of the country. The definition of the limits of the basins also enables the main water-parting to be distinguished, and thus the whole of the region belonging to the western side of the Jordan is made visible upon the Map, apart from the Mediterranean slope or watershed. Three intermediate basins are also brought to light which have no superficial outfall. By this analytical process every part of the country is referable to its proper natural division, and then it becomes a simple matter to subdivide the larger natural divisions or basins in accordance with the water-partings and outlets of their main channels and principal branches. Thus, the most intricate combination of valleys is rendered intelligible, and a thorough knowledge of the country becomes practicable to perseverance.

The next step in this inquiry relates to the hill-shading on the Map. It occupies the space between many of the water courses, and indicates the undulations of the surface, especially distinguishing the mountains and hills from the plains and valleys. The significance of the shading is often aided by the insertion of the actual altitude of the locality above the sea; but in the Jordan valley, instead of altitudes above, there are depressions below the sea. A right representation and understanding of the hill-shading will be found of essential value with reference to points of Biblical geography that have hitherto eluded research, and to some of which attention will be presently drawn.

There remain to be noticed the works of man upon the natural surface, indicated by stamps and symbols to denote the position of towns, villages, and ruined sites, cisterns, monuments, and various objects, together with the lines of communication or roads and tracks between them. It was to these points and lines that the attention of the old geographers was mainly given. They estimated or measured the distances from place to place along the lines of road, but anything like a complete delineation of the entire surface of the ground was beyond their conceptions. Thus, whenever a town ceased to exist, and the roads became diverted from it, there was but little prospect of its site being remembered after a lapse of ages, or of being again recovered when once forgotten. But, with the larger Map now exhibited, we may turn to the ancient record, and bring *it* to bear upon the various features named and unnamed that still exist upon the surface of the ground, and are here accurately and adequately indicated; and then we may proceed to inquire how far it is possible to identify one with another.

A few examples will serve to illustrate the foregoing remarks. The subject of "Galilee in the time of Christ" has for some years engaged the attention of a well-known American theologian, himself a traveller in the Holy Land. In the last edition of his work, bearing the date of 1881, it is stated that "the boundary line of this province, so explicitly laid down by Josephus (*Wars*, iii. 3, 1) is lost to us, as well as the line dividing between Upper and Lower Galilee." Allow me, in reply, to expound very briefly this passage of Josephus by the light of the Maps before you, reserving a fuller argument for a more ample opportunity.

Josephus says, in substance, that the two Galilees are bounded by the territory of Ptolemais and by Carmel, by Samaria and Scythopolis, as far as the River Jordan; its northern parts by Tyre and the country of the Tyrians;—that Lower Galilee extends from Tiberias to Zebulon, and of the maritime places Ptolemais is its neighbour; its breadth is from Xaloth, in the Great Plain, to Bersabe. The extent of Upper Galilee is also taken from Bersabe as far as Baca, which divides Galilee from the land of the Tyrians; and in the other direction it has Melloth on the one side, and Thella, near to Jordan, on the other.

Now, the Map displays Ptolemais or the modern St. Jean d'Acre, at the northern end of the Bay of Acre, in the midst of the maritime plain which extends from the Tyrian Ladders on the north to Carmel on the south, a distance of twenty miles. The plain is bounded on the east by the highlands of Upper and Lower Galilee, and its width varies from four to eight miles. Now Josephus defines the limit of both Galilees in this direction by the strong city of Zebulon, and a place called Meloth.

On the summits of a hill overhanging the Plain of Acre at the present moment is a place still partly fortified, bearing the name of 'Abellîn, in which both Van de Velde and Guerin find the obvious trace of the Hebrew Zebulon. Further north, in Upper Galilee, is the present village of Malia, on a summit that forms a part of the culminating line of heights that divide the slope which descends westward to the maritime plain from the edge of the high plateau of Upper Galilee, that spreads out its very varied surface to the eastward. This Malia was a noted place of strength in the time of the Crusaders, and corresponds well both in name and situation with the Melloth of Josephus. Further north, Josephus names Baca as a locality marking the frontier between Upper Galilee and the country of the Tyrians. If we proceed from Malia along the culminating line that divides the western slope from the interior plateau, we arrive at length at the Wady el Bakk,

where the waters of the Upper Ezziyeh Basin pass from the Galilean Plateau into a deep gorge of the western slope, on their way to the Tyrian Plain. This Wady el Bakk corresponds well both in name and situation with the Baca of Josephus, as it dominates one of the principal passes between the Upland of Galilee and the Lowland of Tyre. While, then, Ptolemais and Tyre commanded the maritime plains north of Carmel, the Uplands pertained to, and formed, the Galilees of the Jewish historian; and probably the dividing line between them was never more distinctly marked than it is by the three places now identified. We cannot agree, then, with the author of *Galilee in the time of Christ* that the boundary on this western side of the Galilees is any more lost to us now than it was to Josephus.

There is no more difficulty since the Survey, in defining the separation between Upper and Lower Galilee. Josephus, in the passage quoted, makes Bersobe indicate it. One eminent authority who has abundantly contributed to the literature relating to Palestine, both Biblical and Modern, includes in Upper Galilee "all the mountainous region north of the Plain of Esdraelon or Jezreel, the present Merj Ibn Amir." Thus he places the tribe of Zebulon with Nazareth in Upper Galilee. But Josephus names Xaloth, as denoting the southern limit of Lower Galilee; and there is no question about the identity of Xaloth with Iksâl, which is at the very foot of the mountains. But Iksâl cannot be at the same time the southern limit of Lower Galilee and also the southern limit of Upper Galilee, which would be the case if Upper Galilee were brought so far south as the northern edge of the Plain of Esdraelon. Besides, Josephus expressly names several cities as being in Lower Galilee,—including Sepphoris, Jotapata, and Selamin, all further north, the latter being identified by several authorities with Khurbet Sellameh, a ruined site about fifteen miles north of Iksâl.

It is in this direction that the natural features of the ground attract the student in search of the boundary between Upper and Lower Galilee, and also in search of the situation of Bersobe. The natural features alone clearly exhibit the distinction between Upper and Lower and demarcate it.

Lower Galilee is bounded on the west by the Bay of Acre. From that bay, the main channel of the Mukutta River (the Biblical Kishon) carries the boundary in a south-easterly direction to the head of the Valley of Jezreel, and along the present Nahr Jalûd to the Jordan.* The River Jordan and the Sea

* The Jewish commentators, in the Mishna, extend the division between

of Galilee form the eastern boundary. The whole of the intermediate region consists of lowland hills rising from the great plains of Acre, the Mukutta or Esdraelon, and the Jordan, and enclosing other plains, the largest of which is the Plain of Buttauf. All of these lowland hills are less than 2,000 feet above the sea. The separation between Upper and Lower Galilee lies along a succession of watercourses that form the definite southern base of a chain of mountains rising above 2,000 feet, and culminating in 3,440 feet on the summit of Neby Heider. This range has its western terminus near St. Jean d'Acre, and passes from thence eastward to the Jordan, where that river forms a rapid at the bottom of the gorge between the Huleh Lake and the Sea of Galilee. I will not trouble you now with the names of the watercourses that define this natural line of separation; but they will be found in my *Introduction to the Survey*. Suffice it to say that the natural distinction between Upper and Lower Galilee is due to their difference of altitude, which is made manifest to the eye in the Vertical Section before the meeting. The Section is published in my special edition of the Reduced Map. It is worthy of remark that this difference of altitude is suggested by the old Jewish commentators in the Mishnah, when they remark that the sycamore fig-tree, found in Lower Galilee and other warm parts, never grows in Upper Galilee, no doubt owing to the colder climate of the latter. The highest mountain of Upper Galilee is nearly 4,000 feet above the sea; and heights above 3,000 feet frequently occur.

We might rest the definition of the southern limit of upper Galilee on altitude alone, but the identification of the localities employed for the purpose by the ancients is still interesting. The nearest approach at present found to Bersobe is Khurbet Abu esh Sheba, near the foot of Jebel Heider, and close to Kefr Anan. This suggestion appears to be the more worthy of notice on account of its proximity to Kefr Anan, that being a place mentioned in the Mishna, under the slightly different name of Kefr Hananiya, as marking the frontier between the two Galilees.

The boundaries of Samaria supply another illustration of the value of the Survey; but, for lack of time, I pass on to an old Bible story, with distinct names of localities which have hitherto eluded discovery. I allude to Saul's eventful journey in search of his father's lost asses, narrated in the

Lower Galilee and Samaria further south; but they were only guided by religious considerations concerning the local application of ritual. I refrain from enlarging further on the statements of Josephus, as time forbids.

First Book of Samuel, chapters ix. and x. It is scarcely to be questioned that Saul started from his home; but the starting-point is not mentioned, as if it were unnecessary to do so. Saul's home was undoubtedly Gibeah, as we are told in 1 Sam. x. 26. Gibeah of Saul, in the Tribe of Benjamin, is generally identified with Tell el ful, a prominent site on the road between Jerusalem and Nablus, the Biblical Shechem; but other sites have been proposed. For the present purpose it is sufficient to accept that site, as either of the others would serve equally well in this case, though objectionable in some. Saul passed through Mount Ephraim, the Land of Shalisha, the Land of Shalim, and the Land of Benjamin, to the Land of Zuph, and the City of Samuel. Thence he returned by Rachel's Tomb, in the border of Benjamin, at Zelzah, to Mount Tabor, and the Hill of God, or Gibeath Elohim, garrisoned by Philistines, and afterwards called the Hill or Gibeatha.

At the beginning of this inquiry it is necessary to fix on the situation of the Land of Shalisha. The only sites hitherto proposed have been towards the north-west of Gibeah, about fifteen Roman miles north of Lydda, according to the Onomasticon or Name List of Eusebius and Jerome, written in the fourth century. In that direction the existing names of Khurbet Sirisia and Kh. Kefr Thilth have been thought to indicate the locality. But it is sufficient to consider the nature of the ground between Tell et Ful and those places, to be assured that no wandering herd of any kind of cattle would ever be thought likely, by a master herdsman like Saul, to wander up and down the steep hills and ravines that cross in that direction. On reflection, the memory recurs to an older Biblical story about the movements of flocks and herds. The young lad Joseph was sent out of the Vale of Hebron to Shechem, by his father Jacob, to inquire after his brothers, who had taken their flocks to Shechem. Tell el Ful, or Gibeah, was on the same road, which was doubtless the great highway for traffic of all kinds, pastoral especially. A wandering herd would probably follow a well-known track, and not strike up and down hills and ravines, unfamiliar, steep, and probably trackless. Let us now look at the name Shalisha. It means a Third, and it occurs often in the Hebrew Bible. My attention was particularly riveted by the 19th chapter of Deuteronomy, where Moses commands three cities to be separated and the land to be divided into three parts to secure protection for the accidental man-slayer. Now, Shechem, where Joseph at first sought his brethren and their flocks, was a city of refuge and the centre of one of these third parts; and, considering the importance of the

cities of refuge to every man, it seems likely that these neighbourhoods might come to be familiarly known as Land of the Third or Third Land, as we speak of Tithe-land. Thus I understand the Land of Shalisha to be the neighbourhood of Shechem, to reach which from Gibeah Saul would have passed through Mount Ephraim, according to the narrative. The next locality in the series is the Land of Shalim. It must be borne in mind, that if Saul went as far north as Shechem, he had travelled thirty miles from home, and he would probably think of returning. Observe, then, that he came out of the Land of Benjamin, and passed from the Land of Shalim through the Land of Benjamin, before he passed to the Land of Zuph. Note also that he passes through Benjamin on his return without calling at his home, so that the circumstances of his route were probably such as to prevent him from doing so. His way back was different to that which he had taken to reach Shechem or Shalisha, and as it was different and longer, for it could not be shorter, so it would have been taken for an object, or the further search for the asses. On arriving at Shalisha, then, Saul finds himself near Shalem, which the history of Jacob has also made familiar. Shalem was to the east of Shechem, leading to valleys which dip down into the Ghor or Hollow of the Jordan. Saul's Land of Shalim is another word altogether. Fully transliterated in the *Englishman's Hebrew Concordance*, Jacob's Shalem is שָׁלֵם (*Shāh-lēm*'), meaning "Peace"; while Saul's Shalim is שְׁלֵימָה (*Shah-gāleem*'), meaning "Hollows," and corresponding exactly with the meaning of the present Arabic name of the Jordan valley, which is *el Ghor*, or the Hollow.

Thus Saul proceeds from the Land of Shalisha, probably in the Plains of Mukna and Rajib, in the neighbourhood of Shechem; and, turning eastward, he passes Shalem and descends into the Ghor of the Jordan, or Land of Shalim. Thus he was brought again southward to the Land of Benjamin, which extended to the Jordan, but in that part was separated from the highlands of his home by tremendous declivities broken by deep and precipitous defiles and ravines. If the lost animals had turned from the highland on to these declivities, and had descended to the plain of the Jordan by the summit of a spur or the depth of a ravine, by taking this route Saul would intercept them. Once in the deep valley, he goes on passing his distant home until he arrives at the end of the Plain of Jericho, where the Dead Sea blocks further progress in the valley, and an easy passage upward to the highland occurs. Then he commences his ascent by one of the ancient

roads, which take him to the Land of Zuph, obviously beyond the Land of Benjamin, and therefore in the tribal territory of Judah.

Zuph, as the name of a place, occurs in the Bible only in this passage. In the plural form it occurs twice, but joined with different words and differently spelt.* As the name of a man it occurs twice in one form and twice in others, but the root of the words is the same. The meaning has puzzled the lexicographers; but the word always implies something *over*, as overwhelming, overflowing, overseeing, and hence seeing beyond, both with reference to a fine view or prospect, and also as a seer or prophet.

The land of Zuph, which Saul was entering on his ascent from the plain to the highland, is still an emphatic example of the appropriateness of the Hebrew names of natural features. The present Arab occupants of the country have changed the Hebrew name for an Arabic word of the same meaning, and el Muntar, the watching-place or look-out, is the name of the dominant height on the route which we believe that Saul was taking. At different points along the highland road from its commencement in the plain of Jericho upwards, the road branches off towards Jerusalem and Gibeah on the right hand, and towards Bethlehem on the left. In the land of Zuph, Saul intimated to the servant with him his intention to return home. But the man said that in the city, *this* city, that is near at hand, there was a man of God of high repute who might show them the way that they should go. That city was Ramah, or Ramathaim-Zophim, the birthplace and residence of Samuel the Seer, identified by the Prophet Jeremiah, and in the New Testament with Bethlehem.† At the present time, about a mile eastward of Bethlehem, is the hamlet of Beit Sahur, a name which means "The House of the Seer or Magician"; and this name not unreasonably suggests a reminiscence of the great prophet Samuel. The identification of Ramah with the neighbourhood of Bethlehem, but in a different direction near Rachel's Tomb, was made by Dr. Bonar, and by other authorities noticed by Dr. Robinson, but not confirmed by him. Dr. Stewart objects to such a position, as being too near Rachel's Tomb, in which I agree. The same objection is not applicable to Beit Sahur.

The next point in Saul's progress homeward from the City of Samuel is Rachel's Tomb, the place of which, about a mile

* It is only necessary to mention one instance of it now, namely, Ramathaim=Zophim, or Ramah, the birthplace of Samuel the prophet.

† Jeremiah, xxxi. 15; Matt. ii. 18.

on the north of Bethlehem, is beyond dispute. There is something to be said about Zelzah, the Plain or Oak of Tabor, and the Hill of God or Elohim, with its Philistine garrison; but, having touched upon the essential points of Saul's route, it will perhaps be more useful to apply the brief remainder of the time at my disposal to another subject.

In the Book of Joshua the numerous cities of the Tribe of Judah are arranged as follows:—

1. "The uttermost cities towards the coast of Edom southward," or in the Nejeb.
2. Three groups "in The Valley," or Shephelah.
3. Three groups in the Philistine Plain encircling Ekron, Ashdod, and Gaza.
4. Five groups in "The Mountains."
5. One group in "The Wilderness," or Midbar.
6. A group in the north of Judah named only in the Septuagint.

Only the northernmost part of the first group falls within the present limits of the Survey. The interest attracted by the Nejeb, or country of the South, is displayed in the masterly work of the Rev. C. Wilton, and we must hope that the Palestine Fund will be enabled to survey that unknown region.

The three groups in the second series are said to be in "The Valley," according to the authorised version; but the Hebrew word is "Shephelah." The Shephelah is amply discussed in Dr. Wm. Smith's *Dictionary of the Bible* under the Greek form of Sephela. It is there assumed to be a "low-lying flat district" between the central highlands and the Mediterranean. The article quotes the various English words by which the same Hebrew word is rendered in the authorised version, as "the vale," "the valley," "the low plains," and "the low country." The article also remarks that "no definite limits are mentioned to the Shephelah, nor is it probable that there are any." The article also asserts that "a large number of the towns mentioned in Joshua were not in the plain, nor even on the western slopes of the central mountains, but in the mountains themselves." This is said "to seem to show that one district might intrude on the limits of another," or, "which is more probable," says the article, "that the name Shephelah did not originally mean a lowland, as it came to do in its accommodated Hebrew form." The article goes on to identify the Shephelah with the maritime Plain of Philistia, with what accuracy will be presently seen. The article is an example of the keen and logical criticism with which it was attempted to penetrate the obscurity which had always prevailed, at least, in literature,

from times anterior to the Christian era. This obscurity is now removed by a study of the present Maps.

It is now clearly observable that the Shephelah is quite distinct from the Plain of Philistia on the west, and the mountains of Judah on the east. It is neither "the valleys" nor "the low plains," but it is in every respect a hilly lowland, exactly similar to the Lowlands of Scotland, which are well known to be hilly enough.

One consequence of the accuracy with which the hilly surface of the Shephelah is now displayed for the first time since the Creation is the remarkable distinctness of the separation of its low hills, from the high mountain range to the eastward. The hills of the Shephelah never reach an altitude of 1,800 feet above the sea, and seldom rise to 1,500 feet. But the mountain range of Judah has many points above 3,000 feet, and culminates in 3,747 feet at Yutta, the reputed birthplace of John the Baptist. The distinct separation between the mountains and the Shephelah is found in a succession of valleys running north and south, notably the Wady es Sur and the Wady en Najil, from which the hills of the Shephelah rise suddenly on the west, with steep escarpments facing the east, and opposed to the general slope of the country. From the same valleys the mountains of Judah rise on the east, in general gradually, and with a long slope, in striking contrast to the abrupt and opposing face which forms the eastern limit of the Shephelah.

Between the maritime Plain of Philistia and the system of valleys now brought to light, the remains of the three groups of cities of the Shephelah are, I believe, to be found. In like manner the five groups of cities in "the Mountain" are eastward of those valleys, and beyond them again is the group of towns in the Midbar or Wilderness of Judea, which descends in a series of terraced calcareous downs to the cliffs of the Dead Sea. These downs are burnt up in the summer, but they afford good pasture in the proper season.

I have now concluded this attempt to give you some idea of the invaluable aid that the study of the Bible derives from the Survey of Western Palestine, if it be thoroughly pursued with the helps which the managers of the Fund are bringing to it. My Map of Western Palestine, according to the Old Testament and the Survey, will be published in a few weeks; and a similar Map for the New Testament has been prepared, and will be taken up by the engravers immediately. So much that is new will appear in those Maps as to render it necessary to accompany them by an explanatory volume, the character of which has been foreshadowed by the paper which is now finished.

Rev. H. A. STERN, D.D.—It affords me great satisfaction to move “That our best thanks be presented to Mr. Trelawney Saunders for the paper now delivered, and to those who have read papers during the session.” As the hour is late, I will not trespass on the indulgence of the meeting by making any lengthy remarks upon the very excellent paper to which we have listened; but I may say that I am certain every one present fully appreciates the instructive remarks on the geography of Palestine just made. (Hear, hear.) I am convinced that when the paper is printed it will not fail to throw some new light upon places so familiar to the student of Scripture. There is something peculiarly interesting in everything connected with that land which is so minutely described in the Word of God. Whether we look back to the past or contemplate that country as it is at present, we see how strikingly the threatenings contained in the Scriptures have been fulfilled. Two thousand years ago it was a land flowing with milk and honey; at the present day it is a land utterly desolate, so that any one who visits Palestine or Syria with a Bible in his hand, even if he goes there as an unbeliever, must be very much prejudiced indeed against that Book if he does not come away a believer. We, however, look forward to the day,—and perhaps the signs of the times justify us in anticipating that it is not far distant,—when that land, at present so desolate and down-trodden, will become again, to use the language of Scripture, “the glory of all lands.” It has been my privilege to visit Palestine, and I have followed with the greatest interest those spots that were pointed out to us on the Map while Mr. Saunders was reading his paper. I confess that when, with the Bible in my hand, I first saw those mountain regions, valleys, and low lands, I felt at almost every step I took, and every locality I visited, that prophecy had exactly anticipated that which actually took place so many hundreds of years subsequently. Surely as the curses there given have been fulfilled, we may hope, nay, have we not every reason to believe, that the blessings still bound up with the country will also receive their fulfilment? To me it seems something perfectly marvellous that, with such striking illustrations of the truth of God’s Word, sceptics can still argue against what palpable facts incontestably prove. But as time rolls on, and event after event rapidly succeeds each other, I have not the least doubt that the truth of Scripture will be more strikingly illustrated, and that the spirit of unbelief will receive such a severe blow as will compel multitudes, who are at present the advocates of rationalism and infidelity, to admit that the Bible is indeed the Word of God,—that it comes from God,—that it was revealed by the Spirit of God, and that it contains predictions which only He, who sees the end from the beginning, could have foretold. Thus, perhaps, the day will be ushered in when all men will acknowledge that God has indeed revealed His Word for our comfort and for the salvation of our souls. I will now conclude by simply moving the resolution that has been placed in my hands, merely adding that we are all exceedingly obliged to Mr. Saunders for the very interesting paper with which he has favoured us. (Applause.)

Rear-Admiral H. D. GRANT, C.B.—I will not at this hour occupy your time by doing more than briefly seconding the resolution that has just been moved. It affords me peculiar pleasure to speak here for the first time, although I have been a member of the Institute since its foundation by my dear friend, Mr. Reddie, who has gone to his rest. I remember that when he proposed its formation his first idea was the motto under which we are acting,—“Ad Majorem Dei Gloriam,”—and I think that such a paper as we have heard to-night, as well as the remarks we have had from those who have already spoken, cannot but help to advance the glory of God through the medium of this great Institute. (Hear, hear.)

The resolution was put and carried.

The Rt. Hon. A. S. ARYTON, P.C.—I have very great pleasure in asking you to bring our proceedings to a close by moving a resolution in which I have no doubt every one present will readily concur; not because our proceedings will thus be terminated, but because the noble lord who is the object of the resolution is one whom we all most highly value. (Hear, hear.) Every one who has observed the course of public affairs for many years past must have been struck by the fact that, wherever there was a movement of great social importance for the moral welfare of the country, my noble friend in the chair has been found ready to lend his assistance in the promotion of that object, actuated always by the most disinterested feelings, and constantly achieving the most beneficent results. Although we might differ as to the cause of some of those things that we so often see and deplore, yet, I think, every one will agree in this, that in regard to the culture of the educated classes of this country there has been, and there still is, a wide and palpable gulf. (Hear, hear.) How this has been occasioned it might take some time to explain, and even then we might not all be of one mind; but, with a knowledge of the fact, this Society undertook what I regard as a great and most laudable duty when it endeavoured to fill that gulf, and set itself to the task of reconciling those divergencies which had arisen as the consequence of ages of indifference and neglect. (Hear, hear.) I think, therefore, that no work of greater importance could have been presented to the consideration of the noble lord than that which he undertook in giving his support to this Institute, and in accepting the office he now holds with so much distinction to himself and, I may add, with so much advantage to this Society. (Applause.) Therefore, I, for one, regard with great pleasure his presence here this evening as furnishing practical testimony to the opinions I am sure he entertains in common with all the members of this Institute. The objects you have in view are very simple, and yet they are very difficult to attain. There are many difficulties to be surmounted in this intellectual age, and in the endeavour to meet and overcome them this Society has been making great progress. I trust that at no distant day it will reach that point when it will not only be able to afford its own members the gratification of seeing how error is to be arrested, but will also be able so to expand its efforts in limiting and correcting the evils which have been inflicted on society in all parts of the world. (Hear, hear.) This, of course, will be a work of labour and of cost; but I

hope there will be found men who will not scruple to devote themselves to the work for which so wide a field is open to them, and pockets that will be available for defraying the expense to be incurred. I am quite sure we shall always derive advantage from having so conspicuous a member of society as my noble friend in the chair, and I have no doubt you will concur with me in tendering to him our most hearty thanks for his services as President of this Institute. (Applause.)

The Rt. Rev. S. A. CROWTHER, D.D., Bishop of the Niger.—It is with great pleasure that I second the resolution calling upon this meeting to offer its thanks to our noble President, and I may add, that not only now, but on many previous occasions whenever I have read the reports of benevolent and philanthropic societies, I have scarcely ever missed the name of the Earl of Shaftesbury as President.

The resolution was then carried amid general applause.

The PRESIDENT.—Those who have proposed and seconded this vote of thanks have spoken of me in terms far beyond my deserts. The Right Rev. Bishop Short told you that he appeared before you as a stranger. I, at least, cannot claim to be a stranger, for I have been before you a great many years,—I am afraid, very much in the character of a dummy. I have been connected with this Society from its very commencement; but I have never been able to attend many of its councils, nor to give much personal supervision to its proceedings; and, in point of fact, I have only retained my position by the kindly and generous forbearance of those who desire to maintain in the post I occupy one who was among the living founders of the Institute. But you will all admit that the age at which I have now arrived will hardly justify me in thinking that I can remain your President for many years to come. Turning, however, to the subject more immediately before us, I may say that this has been a very remarkable night, because it has shown how ably and how safely we can discuss those matters which specially engage the attention of this Institute; and, further, that we are carrying towards completion the objects for which the Society was founded. This Institute was not founded solely as a religious society for the promotion of Christianity and maintaining its evidences, but also, among other things, for insuring that religion should have the same fair play that is accorded to science. (Hear, hear.) I can well remember the time when a good deal of overbearing spirit was displayed, and a desire to suppress those who wished to give their opinions in defence of religious truth against the attacks of its opponents. Scientific men, in many instances, endeavoured to arrogate the ascendancy, and looked down upon their opponents as low and uninformed. This Society was founded and maintained by able and enlightened men who have controverted the objections put forward by certain scientists; and, if we have done no more than issue the papers that have been printed during the past few years and obtained the adhesion of the men who have been brought into our ranks, we have at least shown that we are able to assert and promote the objects for which the Victoria Institute was established. When we introduced the sentiment of religion we were told by our scientific opponents, "We can have nothing to

to do with that; you are for religion and we are for philosophy." This Society has proved, however, that true religion is true philosophy, and that, on the other hand, true philosophy is also true religion. It has shown that these two things are combined and inseparable. And now I may observe, in reference to the deeply interesting paper which has been read by Mr. Saunders, what a change it exhibits in the mode of thought adopted in the present day as compared with what we were formerly accustomed to. I remember that when the present Lord Albemarle published his *Journey Overland*, and the report of the investigations he made in the East, and quoted two or three passages from the Scriptures in marginal notes, he was instantly pronounced "a confounded saint" for bringing the Bible into a book of that description. It is very different now, when every day is bringing forward new facts in support of the authenticity of the Bible narrative. The completion of the Survey of Palestine will produce an accumulation of evidence which will make that narrative irresistible, and, although a man may continue to be an unbeliever if he so determine, he will be regarded as utterly unreasonable in the judgment of every thinking man. A great astronomer, — a friend of mine, — told me that once, in conversation with Laplace, the latter said to him, — "We have principles enough in science; what we want are facts, facts, facts!" This I presume to repeat, and to say, The more facts we get, the more certain will be the progress we shall make in real science, and the only complaint I have to make against science is that it does not go fast enough in this direction. In the career of facts it lags very much. The greater the number of facts the greater are the means of approaching truth, and the accumulation of facts that will arise from the Survey of Palestine will be such that, as a geographical work, it will settle positively all questions of this sort. I believe that if our friend, Mr. Saunders, had treated us to some details as to the survey of the peninsula of Sinai, he would have proved that if Moses had existed at the present day he would, most undoubtedly, have been President of the Royal Geographical Society. (Hear, hear, and laughter.) The accuracy of the geography of Moses, as attested by the Ordnance Survey, and the officers to whom that great work was entrusted, is such that it is not to be surpassed by anything which is done at the present day. I have only now to congratulate you on the progress made by this Institute. It is extending its sphere of usefulness, not only in England, but also in the colonies and in America. The popular edition of the works of the Institute is circulating among the mass of working people, and I believe you will be able to date from the commencement of this Society a very great change in the aspect of religion and the truth of God's Word in their relation to science, and God be praised for it. (Applause.) Before we separate I ought to propose to the meeting a vote of thanks to our Secretary. (Hear, hear.) We are indebted to Captain Petrie to an extent we can hardly realise, and he is fully entitled to our gratitude. I therefore assume at once that you accord to him a hearty vote of thanks. (Applause.)

The proceedings then terminated.