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1920.

*THE RUINED CITIES OF PALESTINE, EAST AND WEST
OF THE JORDAN.* By ARTHUR W. SUTTON, ESQ., J.P.,
F.L.S. (Illustrated by lantern slides.)

THE view of Beyrout as we enter the harbour is most beautiful. The foreshore, covered with red-tiled houses, is backed by groves of mulberry and pomegranate trees; and behind these are the sloping hillsides terraced with the cultivation of vines and olives, with the mountains of Lebanon in the distance covered with snow.

After crossing for some miles very soft plains, once vineyards and oliveyards, but now a sandy desert with a few pines, planted a hundred years ago by the Governor of Beyrout to consolidate the soil, we come to the River Damur and then to the orange groves round Sidon, second only to those at Jaffa. Sidon is not only the most ancient city of Phœnicia, but one of the oldest of the known cities of the world, and is said by Josephus to have been built by Sidon, the eldest son of Canaan, and is mentioned with high praise by Homer in the *Iliad*, where he says that as early as the Trojan War the Sidonian mariners, having provoked the enmity of the Trojans, were by them despoiled of the gorgeous robes manufactured by Sidon's daughters, these being considered so valuable and precious as to propitiate the goddess of war in their favour. Sidon was renowned for its skill in arts, science and literature, maritime commerce, and architecture; and according to Strabo the Sidonians were celebrated for astronomy, geometry, navigation and philosophy.

Sidon was captured by Shalmaneser in 720 B.C., and it was again taken in 350 B.C. by Artaxerxes Ochus. It fell to Alexander the Great without a struggle, and afterwards came into possession successively of the Seleucidæ and the Ptolemies. During the time of the Crusaders Sidon was four times taken, plundered, and dismantled. Excavations have revealed several rock-hewn tombs, with elaborately carved sarcophagi. The most celebrated is the sarcophagus of Alexander, which before the war was in the mosque at Constantinople. He was certainly never buried in it. A sarcophagus was opened the other day at Sidon, full of fluid and containing a beautiful body in perfect preservation, but immediately it was lifted from the fluid it lost all shape.

At Zarephath we saw the churning of butter in a leather bag full of milk, which is swayed backwards and forwards until it is formed.

This is the site of Sarepta, where Elijah raised the widow's son to life (1 Kings xvii, 8-24); and near here, on the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, our Lord healed the daughter of the Canaanitish woman.

We next approach Tyre, now called Sur, from which the name of Syria is derived—Syria really meaning the land of the Tyrians or Surians. The origin of Tyre is lost in the mist of centuries, and Isaiah says its "antiquity is of ancient days" (xxiii, 7). Herodotus states it was founded about 2300 years before his time, *i.e.*, 2750 B.C. William of Tyre declares it was called after the name of its founder, "Tyrus, who was the seventh son of Japhet, the son of Noah." Strabo spoke of it as the most considerable city of all Phœnicia. Sidon was certainly the more ancient city of the two, but Tyre by far the more celebrated and one of the greatest cities of antiquity. It was besieged by Nebuchadnezzar for thirty years. The siege of the city by Alexander the Great in 332 B.C. was the most remarkable and disastrous episode in the history of Tyre. The island city held out for seven months, but was finally captured by being united to the mainland by a mole formed of the stones, timber and rubbish of old Tyre on the shore, which were conveyed into position by the Grecian army. Then the island was made a peninsula, in which form it exists at the present day. This siege was so remarkable a fulfilment of the prophecies of Ezekiel that the words of the Hebrew prophet read more like a history than a prediction. "Therefore thus saith the Lord God: Behold, I am against thee, O Tyre, and will cause many nations to come up against thee, as the sea causeth his waves to come up. And they shall destroy the walls of Tyre, and break down her towers: I will also scrape her dust from her and make her a bare rock. She shall be a place for the spreading of nets in the midst of the sea; for I have spoken it, saith the Lord God: and she shall become a spoil to the nations . . . and they shall make a spoil of thy riches, and make a prey of thy merchandise: and they shall break down thy walls and destroy thy pleasant houses: and they shall lay thy stones and thy timber and thy dust in the midst of the waters" (Ezek. xxvi, 3-5, 12).

In more modern times the city was taken by the Mohammedans,

the lives and property of the inhabitants being spared on condition that there should be "no building of new churches, no ringing of bells, no riding on horseback, and no insults to the Moslem religion." Tyre was retaken by the Christians in 1124, but once more fell into Moslem hands at the final collapse of the Crusades in 1291. It was then almost entirely destroyed, and the place has never since recovered, though of late years there have been signs of a slight revival of commerce, and the city is gradually becoming more populous. In the middle of the last century it had fallen so low that Hasselquist, a traveller, found but ten inhabitants in the place!

The ruins which are now found in the peninsula are those of Crusaders' or Saracenic work. The city of the Crusaders lies several feet beneath the debris, and below that are the remains of the Mohammedan and early Christian Tyre. The ancient capital of the Phœnicians lies far, far down beneath the superincumbent ruins.

The ancient glory of Tyre has been described in Ezekiel with a graphic power of description and minute accuracy of detail which is scarcely equalled in the annals of literature. Strabo ascribes the prosperity of Tyre to two causes—"partly to navigation, in which the Phœnicians have at all times surpassed other nations, and partly to their purple, for the Tyrian purple is acknowledged to be the best; the fishing for this purpose is carried on not far off." The far-famed Tyrian dye was extracted from the glands of a peculiar species of shell-fish (*Murex trunculus*). Pliny says that the reason why Tyre was so famous in ancient times was "for its offspring, the cities to which it gave birth."

Nearly the whole of ancient Tyre now lies buried fathoms deep beneath the surface of the sea, the only thing remaining visible now of the ancient city being an enormous mass of magnificent granite and marble columns and ruins, which lie in the northern harbour, submerged by the sea, but distinctly visible when the water is clear. Thus, literally, have Tyre's stones and dust been hid "in the midst of the waters." "What city is like Tyrus, like the destroyed in the midst of the sea?" (Ezek. xxvii, 32).

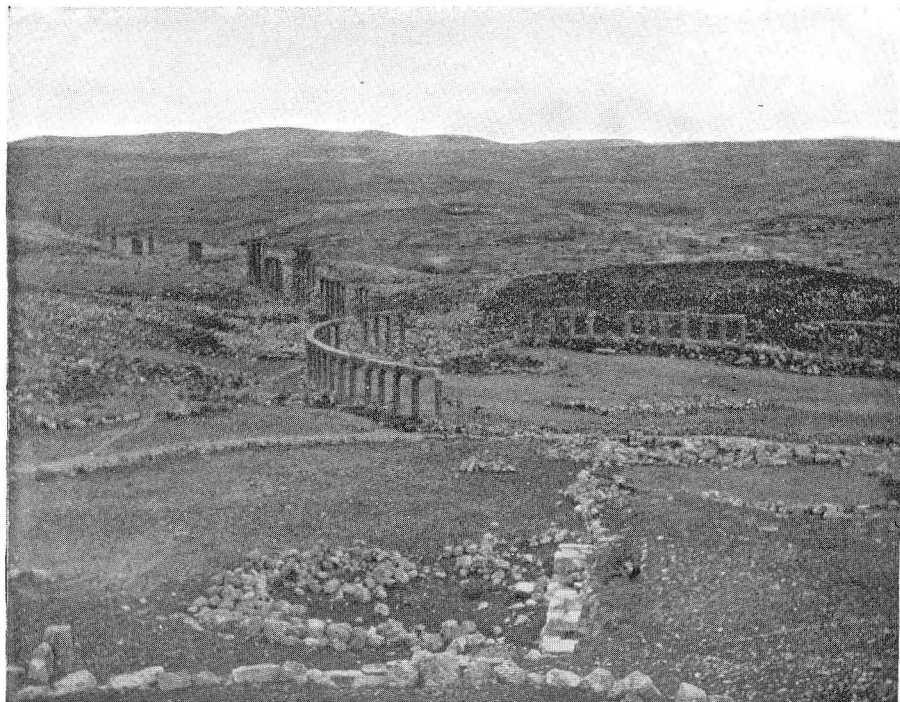
Passing up the Wady Ashur, one of the most picturesque and interesting ravines in Syria, we find ourselves in the region of the wonderful Phœnician rock-sculptures and tombs, and



I.—FORDING THE RIVER JABBOK.



II.—TEMPLE OF THE SUN AT JERASH.



III.—GENERAL VIEW OF THE RUINS AT JERASH.



IV.—PROFESSOR MACALISTER'S EXCAVATIONS AT GEZER.

camp at Tibnin, whose fine large castle has been the chief feature of the landscape for some two hours before we arrive. The castle was founded by Hugh de St. Omer, Count of Tiberias, about 1104.

The second day's ride brings us to Safed, one of the four sacred cities of the Jews, occupying a conspicuous position on the summit and slopes of a lofty mountain, and supposed to be the place referred to when our Lord said, "A city that is set on a hill cannot be hid" (Matt. v, 14). To-day it contains about 15,000 inhabitants—9000 Jews, 6000 Moslems, and a few Christians. Like many other towns of Palestine, it is filthy beyond description. It was almost entirely destroyed by the great earthquake of 1837, when great numbers of the inhabitants perished. Baldwin III fled here after his defeat in 1157, and Saladin captured it after the battle of Hattin in 1187.

We now reach Tiberias. It has a population of about 6000, of whom 4000 are Jews, 300 Christians, and the rest Moslems, and is one of the four sacred cities of the Jews in Palestine. The earlier city of Tiberias was spoken of by Joshua (xix, 35) under the name of Rakkath. The Roman city was built by Herod Antipas, and dedicated by him to the Emperor Tiberias (A.D. 16). After the battle of Hattin, 1187, Tiberias fell into the hands of Saladin.

The Hammam or hot baths (temperature 144° F.) are to the south of the city, and are visited by people from all parts of the country. They occupy the site of Hammath, spoken of by Joshua (xix, 35) and by Pliny. Our Lord never entered Tiberias, as, according to early tradition, it was built on an ancient cemetery.

We now proceed round the foot of the lake, and up the gorge of the Yarmuk, from Tiberias to Deraa. Following the caravan road down the western side of the lake we come to an old ruined bridge over the Jordan, about a mile south of where it flows out of the Sea of Galilee, and ford the river on horseback; and after crossing the railway from Haifa to Deraa and Damascus at the station of Semakh, we follow the railway up the gorge of the River Yarmuk to the hot springs of Amatha. These springs are eight in number, some of them several miles up the valley, but the principal ones are close to a place called El Hamma. Their temperatures are 115°, 103°, 92° and 83° F. respectively. The principal spring is in a basin about 40 feet in

circumference and 5 feet deep. The water is so hot that the hand cannot be kept in it for any length of time, and is considered by the Arabs to be a sovereign cure for many disorders. Herod is supposed to have come here to be cured, and the Baths of Amatha were considered by the Romans as second only to those of Baiæ, and were much extolled by Eusebius and other ancient writers.

From the hot springs we climb up by a very steep pathway by the side of the gorge to Gadara, occupying a magnificent site on the western promontory of the plateau overlooking the Lake of Tiberias. Captured by Antiochus the Great, 218 B.C., it was, twenty years afterwards, taken from the Syrians by Alexander Jannæus after a siege of ten months. The Jews retained possession of it for some time, but, the city having been destroyed during their civil wars, it was rebuilt by Pompey to gratify the desire of one of his freedmen, who was a Gadarene. It was surrendered to Vespasian in the Jewish war. It was one of the most important cities east of the Jordan and called by Josephus the capital of Peræa, and was subsequently the seat of the bishopric *Palestina Secunda*.

The ruins of the two open-air theatres still exist, one with a full view of the Lake of Galilee in the distance below. There are enormous quantities of tombs everywhere, by which the neighbourhood is honeycombed, many of these having massive basalt doors which still swing on their hinges. More than 200 stone sarcophagi have been taken out of these tombs, and now lie scattered among the ruins of the city.

At Beit er-Ras we come on very extensive ruins—arches of great size, columns, Corinthian and Ionic capitals, chiefly composed of basalt; a vast subterranean ruin, with several fine arches underground. Inscriptions, chiefly Nabathean, are to be found among the ruins. This was a city of great importance in the Roman Empire, and has been identified with *Capitolias*, one of the cities of the *Decapolis*.

We now reach Deraa or Dera'a (old Edrei), which to-day is a junction where passengers dine on the railway journey to Damascus; it is a remarkable place, for at least four cities exist here one above another. The present Arab buildings are on the top of a Græco-Roman city, and this again stands on the remains of one still older, in which bevelled stones are used. Beneath this again is a troglodyte city entirely excavated in the rock on which the upper cities stand, the subterranean

residence of King Og. The following passages of Scripture refer to Edrei :—

“Og, the King of Bashan, went out against them, he and all his people, to battle at Edrei” (Num. xxi, 33). “Moses after he had smitten Og the King of Bashan which dwelt in Ashtaroth at Edrei” (Deut. i, 4). “Salecah and Edrei, cities of the Kingdom of Og” (Deut. iii, 10).

The most prominent of the ruins, covering a circuit of two miles, are those of a large reservoir of Roman times, fed by a great aqueduct. There is a building, 44 by 31 yards, with a double colonnade, evidently a Christian cathedral but now a mosque. The most notable remains, however, are the caves beneath the citadel. They form a subterranean city, a labyrinth of streets with shops and houses, and a market-place. This probably dates in its present elaborate form from Greek times, but such refuges must always have been the feature of a land so swept by Arab tribes. The Crusaders who besieged it called it Adratum (*Encyclopædia Biblica*).

Merrill writes : “When King Baldwin III (1144–1162) and his Crusaders made their wild chase to Bozrah, they went by way of Dra’a. The weather was hot, and the army was suffering terribly for want of water, but as often as they let down their buckets by means of ropes into the cisterns, men concealed on the inside of the cisterns would cut the ropes and thus defeat their efforts.” Probably the underground city has connection with all the important cisterns of the place.

From Edrei we travel to Jerash, or Gerasa, which is a city of stupendous ruins, second only to Palmyra in size and importance, and second only to Baalbec in beauty of architecture. In many respects it surpasses them both, and as a perfect specimen of an ancient Grecian city it has no equal. These ruins, says Dr. Tristran, “in number, in beauty of situation and in isolation, were by far the most striking and interesting I had yet seen in Syria.” The later name, Philadelphia, was given to the city by Ptolemy II (Philadelphus), King of Egypt, who rebuilt the city in the third century B.C. Greek immigration flowed into Syria after the conquest of Alexander the Great. The Greeks gradually extended beyond Jordan, sometimes occupying the old sites and sometimes building new cities, as at Jerash.

According to Pliny, Gerasa was one of the original ten cities of the Decapolis. It is mentioned by Ptolemy, Strabo, Pliny

and other Greek and Roman writers, but no details are given of its history. We are informed that it was noted for its men of learning, and that it was the "Alexandria of Decapolis." It does not seem to correspond to any Old Testament site. The Crusaders made a campaign against it, in trying to form an eastern frontier for the Holy Land.

Exactly how or when the city was destroyed is not known. After going down in the Mohammedan invasion, it was probably left deserted for hundreds of years, because the state of the ruins after seven hundred years points clearly to the action of an earthquake and not the hand of man. An Arabian geographer, at the beginning of the thirteenth century, describes Gerasa as deserted. Hence we have here a Greek or Roman town standing as it was left seven hundred, if not twelve hundred, years ago.

High above the Peribolos or Forum, on a rocky knoll, supported and surrounded by a massive substructure, stands the ruin of a great temple, whose superb situation commands the whole town and looks straight north along the colonnaded street. The walls of this temple are $7\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick.

Outside the city, says Dr. Green, there are the remains of a naumachia or theatre, for the representation of naval spectacles, consisting of a vast stone reservoir 700 feet by 300 feet, surrounded by tiers of seats and supplied by conduits.

Not very far off is the site of the great and important city of Rabbath-Ammon, the ancient capital of the Ammonites, who, with the Moabites, are said to have been descended from Lot. These two nations drove out the gigantic aboriginal inhabitants east of the Dead Sea and the Jordan. Rabbath-Ammon is first mentioned in Deut. iii, 11, as the place where the "iron bedstead" of the giant King of Bashan was deposited; but it is celebrated chiefly for the siege against it by the Israelites under Joab, when Uriah the Hittite was slain—the blackest spot in David's history.

There are the ruins of a theatre in good preservation, with forty-eight tiers of seats calculated to hold 6000 people, and so admirably arranged that, as may be tested to this day, ordinary conversation on the stage could be distinctly heard on the topmost semicircle.

Joab first took "the city of the waters"—that is, evidently, the lower town, along the banks of the river. But the citadel still held out, therefore messengers were sent to David asking

for a reinforcement and the presence of the King himself, in consequence of which David went in person and captured the citadel, with an immense quantity of spoil. In the third century B.C. the city was rebuilt by Ptolemy Philadelphus, King of Egypt, and called Philadelphia, under which name it is frequently mentioned by Greek and Roman writers. There are the remains of a large Christian church in the lower city.

The exterior walls of the citadel are constructed of large stones closely jointed, without cement, bearing in places the marks of high antiquity. The most interesting building on the citadel hill appears to be a specimen of the Sassanian architecture of Persia, probably dating from the same period as the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem. The panelling and scroll-work on the walls is very beautiful and perfect, closely allied to Assyrian work. These buildings form a link between the Byzantine architecture and that of Persia.

We next reach what is evidently the site of Medaba, a city of the Moabites, taken by Joshua and given, with its plain, to the tribe of Reuben (Num. xxi, 30; Josh. xiii, 9, 16). It was on the plain east of the city that Joab defeated the combined forces of Ammon and Syria, avenging the insult offered to the ambassadors of King David (1 Chron. xix).

Madeba was recaptured by the Moabites at the Captivity, and is therefore included in the prophetic curse pronounced upon Moab in Isa. xv, 2. It was an important fortress during the rule of the Maccabees, and it became an episcopal city in the early centuries of our era. Here was discovered a large tessellated map of Palestine.

Not far from Madeba is Dibon, which is now nothing more than a shapeless mass of ruins, but obtained a new celebrity in 1868 by the discovery of the Moabite Stone, containing a long inscription in which is recorded some of the acts of that King Mesha who is mentioned in 2 Kings iii. The inscription is in the old Phœnician character, and appears to be of the age of Mesha. The stone was unfortunately broken by the Arabs, but most of the fragments are now in the Louvre.

Mount Nebo runs out westward from the plateau with a narrow ridge, at the end of which is the summit, Pisgah, and the ascent to this ridge is Sufa or Zophim. Here we stand on a site rendered memorable by two important events connected with the history of the Israelitish occupation of Canaan. Hither Balak brought Balaam to curse the people (Num. xxii-xxiv),

and hence Moses viewed the Promised Land (Deut. xxxiv, 1). But towards the west, in the direction which Moses surveyed, there is a very wide and extensive view. The mountain ranges of Judea lie straight before us, with Jerusalem, Bethlehem and the Frank Mountain clearly visible. The Russian Tower on the Mount of Olives and the summit of Neby Samwîl are conspicuous objects in their midst. To the south-west is seen the ridge of Beni N'aim, near Hebron, whence Abraham beheld the smoke of the burning cities of the plain, whilst north of Olivet is seen the cone-shaped hill of Ophrah. The hills of Samaria are yet farther to the right, with Tell 'Asur—the ancient Baal-Hazor—Ebal, Gerizim and Bezek prominent amongst them. Gilboa, Tabor and the heights beyond Beisan are visible on a clear day; but Carmel and Hermon are hidden from view, the former by the intervening heights of Jebel Hazkin, on which stands Bezek, and the latter by Neby Osh'a. The whole of the Jordan valley, with the river itself meandering in serpent-like curves in its midst, lies outspread like a map at our feet, bathed in sunny verdure in early spring, at which time of the year Moses appears to have viewed it. From north to south “the land of Gilead towards Dan, Naphtali, Ephraim and Manasseh—all the land of Judah, towards the utmost sea (the Mediterranean), the southern hills, and the plain of Jericho” (Deut. xxxiv, 1-3)—all these the aged “servant of God” could embrace within the compass of his vision, without the aid of any miraculous powers.

Hebron, which we next reach after crossing the Jordan and passing south by Bethany and Jerusalem, is one of the oldest cities of the world. It was known at the time of its capture by the Israelites under Joshua as Kirjath-Arba, which means the “Fourfold City.” Probably, like Jerusalem at the present day, it was divided into four quarters, inhabited respectively by different races of people. The Septuagint describes it as the “Metropolis of the Anakim.”

It is known as “City of Abraham, the Friend of God,” to the Arabs, who have abbreviated the name to El Khalif—“The Friend” or “The Beloved.” It is one of the four sacred cities of the Moslems.

Haram: Cave of Machpelah. Travellers are not admitted within the precincts of this mosque, though a few royal European visitors have been privileged to enter this most cherished Moslem sanctuary by special Irade of the Sultan. This is one of the

“Sacred Sites” of Palestine, about the genuineness of which there can be little or no doubt. It is almost certain that the mosque stands over the original Cave of Machpelah, which was the burial-place of Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, Jacob and Leah. The mosque itself was originally a Christian church founded by Justinian in the sixth century, and completed by the Crusaders. It has, however, been considerably altered by the Moslems. There are six monuments, said to stand over the spots where the tombs of the six male and female patriarchs are located in the cave below. The Crusaders, impressed by the veneration accorded to the Cave of Machpelah by the Arabs, who claim to be the sons of Ishmael, the son of Abraham by Hagar, called the place the Castle of St. Abraham.

Hebron was at one time the capital of King David. He made it the base of his operations against Jerusalem, which in turn became his royal city. Absalom made it the headquarters of the unsuccessful rebellion against his father. Hebron lost importance after the Captivity, and in the time of the Romans it was hardly reckoned as being a Jewish town. The large square stone reservoir, now called the “Sultan’s Reservoir,” is the Pool of Hebron, where Rechab and Baanah, the murderers of Ishbosheth, were hanged by David (2 Sam. iv, 12). There is little else to see in Hebron, with the exception of the glass-works.

Beit-Jibrîn (House of Gabriel) was in the much contested borderland between the Hebrews and the Philistines. It was known to the Israelites as Mareshah, and was fortified by Rehoboam, who “built cities for defence, Gath and Mareshah” (2 Chron. xi, 8).

This district was at some time inhabited by people who devoted an almost incalculable amount of time and trouble to the formation of great artificial caves. The result of this energy is concentrated as in a nucleus in the immediate neighbourhood of Beit-Jibrîn. It is difficult to give an account of the principal excavations of this type without appearing to use the language of exaggeration. Except for their immense size, the Beit-Jibrîn caves are of comparatively small interest. Prof. G. A. Smith (see his entrancing volume on the *Historical Geography of the Holy Land*) and others adopted the view that the caves as we see them are the work of the Early Christian inhabitants of Palestine, because of the destruction of Jewish tombs in the course of cutting out the caves, the various Kufic and Christian inscriptions on the walls, etc. It

was the seat of a Christian Bishop as early as the fourth century. The Crusaders, who were powerfully established at Beit-Jibrîn, which they called Gibelin, beautified one cave by a handsome Romanesque doorway.

To sum up the subject of the "Riddle of the Caves" in the district round Beit-Jibrîn, there is an innumerable number of artificial caves. The date of a few of these is later than the Jewish period; a few others are demonstrably earlier than the end of the Jewish monarchy, and there is Scriptural evidence that similar caves existed at an earlier date still (Judges vi, 2): "Because of Midian the Children of Israel *made them* the dens which are in the mountains and the caves and the strongholds." This shows that such artificial caves were made in the times of the Judges for refuges. Certain chambers were prepared as cisterns, store-chambers, etc. There is no means of dating such chambers. Other chambers were used for religious rites, filters, prisons, quarries, traps for wild beasts, etc.

We next reach Gezer. The site of this famous ancient city had been forgotten in modern times until about 1870, when Prof. Clermont-Ganneau commenced his research. Biblical records of the city commence with the time of Joshua. Its king, Horam, helped Lachish against Joshua's attack, and he and his army were utterly annihilated (Josh. x, 33). Gezer was allotted to Ephraim who, however, failed to drive the Canaanites out (Judges i, 29). Other historical sources carry us back to the time of Thothmes III, who captured it about 1500 B.C., though the excavations prove the history of Gezer to go back a further 1500 years, of which there is no written history.

Canaanites, Israelites, Arabs, all have successively inhabited the mound through the centuries. We read in 1 Chron. xx, 4, of Philistine giants whom David's men slew at Gezer. The Canaanites lingered on in Gezer till the reign of Solomon. When Solomon celebrated his marriage with the daughter of the King of Egypt, the Pharaoh "went up and took Gezer and burnt it with fire and slew the Canaanites that dwelt in the city, and gave it for a portion unto his daughter, Solomon's wife" (1 Kings ix, 16).

Two tables which have lately been found give evidence of an Assyrian occupation of Gezer. Gezer had varying fortunes during the wars of the Jews and the Syrians. About 160 B.C. it was captured by the Syrians and afterwards recaptured by Simon Maccabæus, the great High Priest, who fortified it, and

built himself a dwelling-place, which has lately been discovered. The history of Gezer stretches on through Roman, Crusader and Arab periods.

From the excavations we get an idea of the primitive religious customs which Israel met with on their entry into Palestine, the idolatry and the moral abominations, and from the discoveries made it is easy to see why the worship of the High Place was so fiercely denounced. The evidence of the wholesale sacrifice of children, the images found testifying to the licentiousness pervading the whole worship, the evidences of bodies sawn asunder, and other savageries, all throw a lurid light on the "iniquity of the Amorite."

We next reach Jaffa, whence we embark on our way to England, and thus our delightful tour is brought to an end.

DISCUSSION.

PREBENDARY FOX: I will not detain you for more than a minute or two, but I cannot let the meeting go further without expressing thanks to Dr. Masterman for his very able lecture, and for explaining the slides to us with such admirable skill. I am sure we shall not forget this meeting for a long time. I move a vote of thanks to Dr. Masterman.

MR. THEODORE ROBERTS: I have much pleasure in seconding this. Can you tell me with relation to the Mosque of Omar whether it is to be taken from the Turks and given to the Jews?

THE SECRETARY announced the next meeting of the Institute would take place on January 19th in the same room, when Dr. Schofield, to whom our very best thanks are due for taking the Chair to-day at a moment's notice, will give us a Lecture on "The Psychology of the Female Mind," which will be of great interest to all men and of curious interest to all ladies.

MR. MARTIN ROUSE: May I ask a question about Gezer? I read an account of Dr. Macalister's discovery at the time of the bodies of little children, and I heard a lecturer in America dispute the fact that these children were sacrificed on the ground that there was no injury found to the skeletons. There was no sign of charring or anything to prove that they were sacrificed.

MR. MASTERMAN: I think the inference was that the bodies were put there for some ritual. There had been a regular flooring made

of stamped and dried earth, and under that floor the skeletons were found placed in a deliberate line on the base of these stones, so that I think there can be no doubt that there was some ritual connected with it. I do not think there was any sign of burning, but the argument that there was no injury found would be no argument. We have many indications that it was connected with the killing of the first-born. It is certain that they were new-born babes. The bones were undoubtedly those of new-born babes. They used to get rid of their old relatives in the same way, and so combined sacrifice and economy.

Dr. SCHOFIELD: May I ask one question? In the Cathedral of Prague there was shown me a chest containing the bones of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Knowing that Mahommedans guarded the Tomb of Machpelah, how could Charles IV have got hold of the bones of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? Then one of the pictures had great interest for me: the picture of the wall which had tumbled down. We have recovered the site of Jericho, and we have a very tolerable idea of what they would be like.

Dr. MASTERMAN: The remains of Jericho have been examined and the walls were all mud and they stood quite apart from one another.

Dr. SCHOFIELD: Although the meeting is closed I may say that I happened to be at Jericho when the walls were uncovered by Dr. Sellin, and when I dined with him I asked him about the walls of Jericho, and he said they had found the top of the wall of Jericho in the bottom of the ditch outside, so that the walls fell into the ditch. They are of dried mud. I found the 'house on the wall,' for there is only one, and I sat on the lintel of the window where probably 'the scarlet line' was attached by which the two spies descended into the deep ditch outside. With regard to the sudden fall of the wall, it seems to me that in His miraculous interposition God does not use supernatural means when natural means are sufficient to accomplish His purpose. When Joshua marched round Jericho seven times there can be no doubt that the walls were crowded with the inhabitants of Jericho watching the spectacle with intense interest, for they had learnt that Joshua was not marching for a hostile purpose. All was done in silence until there was the

shout and the blast, and then these walls, about 3 feet thick at the base, shared the fate of the Hyde Park railings when the mob in Park Lane threw them over on the grass. I think the walls fell down from the tremendous pressure behind, and that the people of Jericho themselves not only laid the city bare, but filled up the ditch outside. All fell, except the house which was built on the wall.

By the courtesy of Mr. Arthur Sutton we are able to reproduce four of the slides used; and perhaps the following notes on them may be of interest.

The first gives Mr. Sutton's party crossing the Jabbok shortly before its junction with the Jordan. This famous boundary between Sihon, King of the Amorites, on the south, and Og, King of Bashan, on the north, is extremely beautiful, fringed with cane and oleander and bordered with oak-forests. In winter it is impassable, receiving so many tributaries from the mountain behind. The meeting of Jacob and Esau here will be remembered by all. Two principal tributaries, that bring down a great volume of water in the winter, from Gerasa and Rabbath-Ammon respectively, join it higher up. Respecting the latter, the royal city (2 Sam. xii. 26, 27) of the Ammonites, Prof. T. K. Cheyne takes great exception to its being called "the city of waters," apparently another instance of the danger of criticising statements when one has never visited the locality in question—for an Eastern traveller has pointed out that if he had, he would have seen the appropriateness of the name at once. Ammân, which represents to-day the old Rabbath-Ammon, is at the junction of the river with the modern Jerka (Jabbok), and lies all along the waters. It is true the old castle (probably Rabbah) is on the hill above, but in Joab's time the city proper would lie as now, in the watered valley: and this would nullify another objection of Prof. Cheyne's. He says, "after Joab had taken the royal city, what was then left for David to take?" Of course it would be this citadel on the hill. A parallel instance is when Joshua took Jerusalem, but only 400 years afterwards did David take the Jebusite citadel (city of Zion) on the hill Ophel.

The other stream I have spoken of comes from Jerash. This wonderful city is the subject of the next two illustrations. Gerasa, or Jerash, on the extreme east of Peræa, must not be

confounded with Gergesa on the Sea of Galilee (wrongly rendered Gadara) where the miracle of the swine took place which proved so disastrous to Prof. Huxley in his controversy with Mr. Gladstone. It will be remembered that he claimed to have proved this miracle false, and that therefore no other miracle was credible, including the Resurrection. Gerasa or Jerash is thirty or forty miles away from Gergesa, which in Roman times was one of the most famous cities of Palestine. It lies twenty-five miles north of Rabbath-Ammon. It is not mentioned in Old or New Testament. The magnificent ruins that now exist are those of the days of its greatest splendour (A.D. 138-180).

It became later the seat of a Christian bishopric. The ruins are by far the most beautiful and extensive east of the Jordan. The stream on which they are situated falls into the Jabbok about five miles below the city. This is now a little rivulet, thickly fringed with oleander, which winds through the valley, giving life and beauty to the deserted ruins.

The city was nearly a mile square, with a wall round, a large portion of which, with its bastions, is still standing. Three gateways are nearly perfect, and 230 columns still remain on their pedestals. (See Plates II and III.)

The fourth picture shows Prof. Stewart Macalister's explorations at Gezer. He has shown that this town has actually been occupied by men from the Neolithic Age down to the times of the Maccabees. There are seven distinct periods of occupation. The earliest dwellers were about 5 feet 5 inches and lived in caves and cremated their dead. In the third period they rose to 5 feet 11 inches and buried their dead. The fifth and sixth state are the Israelitish occupation. The city was rebuilt by Solomon. At first the Israelites buried an infant beneath the foundation of a house, probably alive. Later on they abhorred these rites. Then a dead infant's body was placed in a jar, and later still, bowls (with blood or grape-juice), and lambs were placed, and have been found by Prof. Macalister in great numbers.

The top stratum is Gezer after the Captivity, and here all idolatry has come to an end, and some of the great religious monoliths have been destroyed, Prof. Macalister thinks by Simon Maccabæus.