DIARY OF A VISIT TO ṢAFED.

By R. A. Stewart Macalister, M.A., F.S.A.

With Travel-notes of the Journey from Nâblus to Ṣafed, viâ Beisân.

By Dr. E. W. G. Masterman, M.A., F.S.A.

As the guest of Dr. Masterman, who during the present year is in charge of the London Jews' Society's Hospital at Ṣafed, I spent about three weeks in Galilee in January of the present year, and was enabled to make a number of observations, which I propose in the present communication to lay before the readers of the *Quarterly Statement*. It has seemed most convenient, in view of the diversity of character in these notes, not to attempt to classify them, but to present them in the form of a diary.[1]

Wednesday, 2nd January, 1907.—Accompanied by Dr. Masterman and a friend from London, as well as by Yusif, the foreman of the Fund's excavation works (whom I took with me to assist in measurements, etc.), I left Jerusalem at 7 a.m. We took advantage of the gradually progressing carriage-road to Nâblus by driving to *Khan Lebban*, which is the present terminus of the completed portion. The last time I travelled by this road, about three years ago, it had been constructed as far as Sinjil only: it is a matter for thankfulness that it is no longer necessary to use the abominable bridle-path which the newly-finished section supersedes. At Khan Lebban we found the horses, which had been sent in advance the day before, awaiting us, and rode through showers of rain to Nâblus, where we arrived about sundown. On the way we paused to visit Jacob's Well. The Greeks are gradually clearing the foundation of the church (Crusaders', with Byzantine materials re-used) erected over

[1] [As it was impossible to publish all the photographs, sketches, and plans with which Mr. Macalister illustrated his remarks, those which are not here reproduced can be seen at the Fund's Office.—Ed.]

this site, and presumably intend in time to re-erect a building upon it. It was too late and too dark to attempt to make a plan of the structure, even if the presiding genius of the place had permitted such a proceeding. Proceeding towards the city we noticed traces of recent illicit tomb-robbing on Mount Ebal. It is only too evident that much damage has been done. The tombs here seem all to be late, with *arcosolia*, no *kokîm*. One tomb at least has a stone panelled door, swinging on hinges.

Civilisation is making itself felt even in the backward town of Nâblus, and has recently become materialised in the shape of an imposing hotel, established by the Hamburg-America Company at the north end of the town. The small boys of Nâblus have, however, not yet learnt to desist from greeting strangers with highly objectionable expressions!

Thursday, 3rd January.—Leaving Nâblus we took the path that diverges at the Barracks eastward from the Jerusalem road. We halted for a moment at the village of *'Askar*, and examined the copious flow of water that issues from a tunnel hewn in the rock at the eastern end of the village. At the mouth of the tunnel is a masonry platform, in which is to be seen a stone about 80 cm. long, evidently taken from some building. A sketch is forwarded. Dr. Masterman and I went up the tunnel a short way—not having satisfactory lights we could not explore it to its end; but so far as we went it seemed in every way similar to the rock-hewn water-courses I have already seen and measured in various places in Southern Palestine.

The village and its spring naturally led us to a discussion, that added an interest to our way, upon the site of Sychar, the "city of Samaria" referred to in John iv, 5.

The main points of this controversy are fairly well known. By Jerome and others of the early centuries Sychar was spoken of as *distinct* from Shechem (Nâblus) being a mile east of it. The theory adopted by the Crusaders (and therefore probably wrong), strangely countenanced by Robinson, *identified* the two places. In the last century Canon Williams proposed the identification with *'Askar*, in which he has been followed by practically every writer since.

The identification, however, has been seen to be not free from difficulty. The lesser difficulty, however, is that to which the greatest weight has been attached: I refer to the presence of the letter *'ain* in the name of the modern village, which does not appear

in any old Semitic equivalent of "Sychar." Prof. G. A. Smith (who, in his *Historical Geography*, devotes a chapter to the question of Sychar) meets this difficulty satisfactorily by recalling the analogous case of *Ascalon*, which in modern Arabic has likewise developed an *'ain*. In any case, it would be very easy for the letter to intrude in the name of the village under discussion, by means of a popular etymological confusion with the common Arabic word *'askar*, the regular colloquial expression for "soldiers."

But to my mind the chief—the insurmountable—difficulty lies in the presence of the spring, which is convenient and sufficiently copious to supply the modern village. A brief consideration of the narrative will show that the Samaritan woman came from some waterless settlement. Her words of misunderstanding, "give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come all the way hither to draw" (v. 15), show that to satisfy her own bodily wants she was at all times obliged to come to Jacob's Well as the nearest source of supply. This rules out Shechem, with its many springs, as her dwelling-place, and also, in my opinion, rules out 'Askar.[1] Dr. Masterman, to whom I stated this objection, reminded me that someone had already anticipated it, and had met it by assuming that the woman was drawing water *for the reapers*. I have not been able to lay my hand on the reference to this contribution to the question, but it is obviously an inadmissible evasion; for beside the woman's definite statement, above quoted, that she used the water of Jacob's Well for domestic purposes, we learn from v. 35 that the incident took place four months before harvest-time (for surely the words which follow, "the fields . . . . . are white already unto harvest" are to be understood figuratively).

Moreover, I could not see at 'Askar any recognizable signs of a pre-Arab settlement. Now between Nâblus and 'Askar, on the right-hand side of the road, there is a small mound of rubbish, 324 paces in length and 128 in maximum breadth. It is just north of the hamlet of Balâta, from which it takes its modern name, *Talûl Balâta*. It is covered with potsherds, that show it to have been occupied at any rate from the period of the Hebrew monarchy till the time of the Roman occupation. In the absence of any evidence of other ancient settlements near to Jacob's Well, I

[1] That the woman was a native of *Sychar* is nowhere definitely stated in the narrative, but I think the evangelist means to imply this by his mention of the name of the village.

venture to suggest that this mound may be the actual site of the long-lost Sychar. In fig. 1 is a sketch map shewing the relative positions of the places in question.

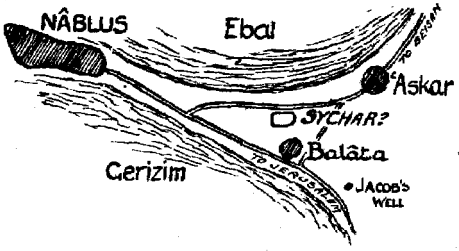


FIG. 1.—Sketch map showing suggested site of Sychar.

It might be objected that so small a mound would hardly be signified as a "city" (πόλις). But πόλις is used quite loosely: the prohibition in Matt. x, 5, to "enter not into any city (πόλις) of the Samaritans" is surely meant to include villages of any size.

Proceeding on our way we crossed a *col*, at the top of which there burst on our eyes the most impressive piece of scenery I have seen in Palestine—the glorious *Wady Bilân*, down which we rode for some miles.

I may pass over in silence the various villages that we noticed, as I am able to append many valuable observations, taken as we proceeded, by Dr. Masterman. We paused for a few moments at the group of Roman milestones marked on the inch map (sheet XII) between *Tûbâs* and *Teiâsîr*. One of them bears an inscription of which a few letters can be deciphered: they were originally picked out with red paint, of which traces still remain :—

. . . . . NID . . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . . .
. . . . CONSTANTINVS
. . . . . .
. . . . . MIL . . . . . .

The rest is quite hopeless. There are six of these stones, most of them of the ordinary shape—a cylinder rising from a rectangular base—but one has a roll-moulding intervening between the shaft and the base.

At Teiâsîr (I follow the orthography of the map, though *Tayasîr* would be preferable) we stopped for lunch at the curious little building known as *El-Ḳusr*, described in the *S.W.P. Memoirs* (Vol. ii, p. 245). I have forwarded an elevation of the doorway; in the *Memoirs'* sketch the mouldings are not given quite correctly, nor are the masonry joints marked.

The masonry of the building so completely resembles that of the Galilean synagogues that there can be little doubt that it is of the same date, and possibly was used by a small community for the same purpose, although its close connexion with tombs makes this latter suggestion rather doubtful. A large tomb has been cleared out underneath the building since the description in the Survey was written. It is a single square chamber, about 16 feet in diameter, having arcosolia recesses in each of the three inner sides. I send two photographs: one of them showing *El-Ḳusr* in its present state (it has suffered considerably since the survey photograph was taken); the other showing the relation between it and the tomb below. Of the fragment of a classic cornice, sketched in the *Memoir*, no trace now remains, except a very pretty piece of floral scroll-work on a stone lying hard by, now stopping up the mouth of a disused cistern.

There are several other tombs near by, which time and want of light prevented our exploring properly. In the rock on which the sculptured stone just mentioned is lying there is cut a wine-press.

The Teiâsîr people are no more superior to the temptations of illicit tomb-robbing than others of their kind. From the sheikh I heard the usual alluring stories of the lucky man who found a bit of glass in a tomb with a woman's head upon it, and gained thereby £100—which I need not say is a sum of such a fabulous amount to most *fellaḥin* that it is more suggestive to them of the dreamlands of the *Arabian Nights* than anything else. I have heard of this bit of glass before; but it is getting dearer—the last time its price was mentioned to me it was £7. The two discrepant statements may perhaps be reconciled by supposing the one to be the price paid *by* the dealer to the lucky finder, and the other the price paid *to* the dealer by the rich *Inglîz*—by all accounts this would represent about the usual proportion of profit in such transactions. It is easy to see how disastrous an effect these exciting stories must have on a people in whose life *money* constitutes the one thought by day and the one dream by night. The entire responsibility, of course, rests

on the persons usually and correctly described as "Frankish lunatics" by the Arabs with whom they come in contact.

Leaving Teiâsîr with such painful reflections in our minds—noting an uninscribed milestone at the end of the village—we passed down a rapidly deteriorating road till we reached a place where riding was impossible owing to long stretches of slippery rocks, over which we were obliged cautiously to lead our horses. When this unpleasant section was passed we found a better road, and, shortly after, one more group of milestones (also marked on the map) near the embouchure of the *Wady el-Khushneh*. Two of these are inscribed, but one of them (which like the previously described example has been "picked out" with red paint) is hopeless. On the other I could make out—

IMP
CAES
IVLIAN
MAXIMVS
NOBILIS
HCM

but a good deal of this also is worn and broken off.

The following notes of the day's journey were made by Dr. Masterman:—

The route from Nâblus to Ṣafed *viâ* Beisân (though the usual one for Jews and others going from Galilee to Jerusalem, and, as will be shown, over much of its course an ancient highway) is one but seldom taken by travellers in Palestine, and, so far as I know, it is not described anywhere in detail. The section from *Nâblus* to *Beisân* is, in all the guide books I have consulted, described from the itinerary of Robinson, who took a road in places quite different from that I am here describing; while the section from *Tiberias* to *Ṣafed* (though a much-traversed modern high-road familiar to every muleteer in North Palestine) is entirely ignored in favour of a much longer route *viâ Khan Minyeh*. The times mentioned are everywhere for *slow* travelling, as Mr. Macalister and I rode slowly and stopped several times *en route* to examine objects of interest.

We left the new Nâblus Hotel a little after 7 a.m. (barometer 28·6), skirted the city to the north on the ordinary Nâblus–Jerusalem road. Near the Barracks, we (at 7.20) turned off to the north-east, towards the eastern extremity of Ebal. At 7.40 we passed a rock-cut grave in a rocky projection to the right of the road just below which lay a considerable *tell*—evidently an ancient site.[1] Before us to the east lay the northern

[1] The same as that above identified with Sychar.—[R. A. S. M.]

extension of the *Mukhneh*. In the foreground was the traditional tomb of Joseph, while much farther to the east we could just make out the little modern village of *Salim*, near a small plain which drains to the north. In a quarter of an hour, we reached the village of *'Askar* which, though now but a group of hovels, is supposed by many to be the site of Sychar (John iv, 5). The copious fountain of this village is well known: even after the long drought there was an abundant supply. The present outlet is the mouth of a long tunnel partly rock-cut and partly built under some of the houses. How a woman of a village so well supplied with water came to the neighbouring "Jacob's Well" for water is a problem to which it cannot be said that any satisfactory answer has been given. It may be that, as has often happened, the name has been transferred here from a village ill supplied with water which has now disappeared.

At 8.17 we passed some ruins, one perhaps a small khan, and at 8.21 the path divided; we took the upper. Crossing a low ridge a magnificent prospect opened before us. To the right (east) towered the mountain range *Jebal Bilân* crowned by a shrine of the same name. The steep, and in places almost precipitous, slopes of this mountain are very fine. At one spot we could discern a "natural bridge" crossing a ravine. Between us and the mountain was the wild and rugged *Wady Bilân* descending rapidly to the north-east. The view to the north and north-east is one vast amphitheatre circled by hills on the north, west and south. In the centre are the roots of the *Wady Fara'*, on the course of which could be seen the roofs of many mills. Proceeding along a narrow —though for Palestine fairly good—path in the steep hill-side we at 9.5 came in sight of *Tallûzeh*, a large village with extensive groves of olives, above us to our left. A steep descent of ten minutes brought us into the bottom of the *Wady Tallûzeh* (bar. 29·37). Following the rugged and stony torrent-bed we, at 9.35, found the road divide. The path ascending is the direct road, but our muleteer recommended us to take a less rocky path to the right; after ten minutes we reached a spring and saw a mill below us in the valley; we turned sharp to the left up a steep and stony valley, and at 10 o'clock joined the direct route coming from the left. We turned to the right and ascended a small ridge. Looking back we had a view of part of *Tallûzeh* and its olive groves perhaps half a mile off, while between us and the modern village lay a magnificent *tell*. If, as Robinson suggests, we have in *Tallûzeh* an echo of the name *Tirzah*, this *tell* must be the site of the ancient capital of the kingdom of Israel (1 Kings xiv, 17; xv, 33, etc.). From this point we could also see the village of *Tammûn* to the east, and slightly east of north, across the wide valley of the Fara', the olive groves of *Tûbâs*. At 10.12 we passed an extensive ruined site on our left and commenced to descend a narrow wady. At 10.35 we passed a cave, partly artificial, on the left, and in five minutes reached the dry stream bed of one branch of the *Wady Fara'*.

We next crossed a small hill chiefly of conglomerate rock of rounded pebbles, passed a *tell*, apparently partly artificial, on our right, and descending once more reached at 10.50 the copious *'Ain Fara'*. The water bursts forth from several adjacent sources and flows off a copious mill-stream bordered by masses of oleanders. After watering our horses we ascended a stony path, the most easterly of three roads before us. To our east, on a hill overhanging the stream, lay the *Burj Fara'*, the ruins of a small fortress probably of the times of the Crusaders. Entering a valley to the left, we at 11.20 caught sight of an uptilted olive mill on the hillside to the right, and a few minutes later encountered our first indubitable traces of the ancient Roman road which we followed for the rest of the day. At 11.41 our road turned up a very rocky path to the right, and in a quarter of an hour we reached the olive groves of *Tûbâs*. The direct road leaves the village itself some 200 yards on the left. It is picturesquely situated on a hillside at the western extremity of a very fertile basin. It is probable that this is the site of Thebez (Judges ix, 50 ; 2 Sam. xi, 21). When I spent a night there some years ago I saw many ancient tombs around the village, indeed as we passed on this occasion rock-cuttings and tombs were visible from the high-road. The road led us due north across the plain ; half way across we encountered a caravan of most bedraggled-looking muleteers and Jews from Tiberias and Safed. In ten minutes (12.10) we crossed a ridge and saw the village of *Teiasîr* in the valley before us (the *Wady el-Khushneh*). After descending the road for five minutes we encountered a group of six broken Roman mile-stones on one of which, the least weathered, Mr. Macalister deciphered the name of Constantine. Following traces of the old road along the valley and up the eastern slope we, at 12.55, reached a curious ruin on the outskirts of the village. The owner of the property has recently been making some excavations on his own account and has cleared out a tomb-cavern with three arcosolia lying respectively north, east, and south *under* the ruin. In the rubbish near the entrance lay many fragments of Roman pottery and bones of cattle, but all traces of human bones and other treasures that may have been laid in the tomb with them have disappeared. It is the same everywhere in the land. Tomb robbery is rampant, and all that is really valuable to the archæologist is being destroyed for the sake of procuring a few very ordinary vases of ancient glass ! The building above the tomb has a moulded marble portal facing north, and square pilasters in relief on the walls around. It is greatly ruined and the stones, specially to the east, much disfigured by weathering. It is unlikely that any stones worth removing will be left *in situ* much longer, now that the owner has commenced to take an active interest in the property. There are several cisterns around. We lunched within this old building.

We left at 1.50 and passed numerous tombs and cisterns near the village. Although the inhabitants appear to be entirely dependent on

cistern water, yet from the old remains there can be no doubt this was an inhabited site in Roman times. The situation is attractive on a low spur round which the *Wady el-Khushneh* sweeps as it turns sharply from north to east. The land around, both to the south-east of the village and in the valley, appears to be unusually fertile, and the hills, to the east in particular, are well-wooded. What the site may have been it is impossible to say; but it struck us that the three villages we had passed, *Tallûzeh*, *Tûbâs*, and *Teiastr*, all occupied situations so attractive that they could hardly have been overlooked in ancient times. Just before leaving the village we passed a Roman milestone and, to our great surprise, observed the tracks of cart-wheels. At first we thought that wheeled traffic must somehow have reached here from Beisân, but on further enquiry we found that an enterprising Effendi—apparently the tomb excavator!—has conveyed a cart here in separate sections to convey manure to the fields from further east. We descended a small rough defile full of trees and shrubs and, crossing the *Wady el-Khushneh*, went straight on to the north up a steep ascent. At 2.30, we reached the summit of the ridge and passed a *khurbeh*, apparently that marked on the P.E.F. map as *Mukhubby*. The remains seem to be Roman or Byzantine. Descending the well-wooded valley before us and bearing to the right (north-east), we entered one of the best forested districts I have seen in Western Palestine. Whole hillsides for miles were covered with shrubs, of *buks* (box), *suwwaid*, *'addak*, and *rutm*—among which stood trees of terebinth, various kinds of oak, and enormous numbers of wild olives. Although I have known of groves of wild olives round the deserted or semi-deserted sites of villages, I have never elsewhere seen hundreds of these trees covering the mountain side to the very summit. Our muleteer recognised them as wild olives (*zeitûn barrîyeh*), and said that the fruit was scanty and useless. Of course, if grafted all these trees might be made fruit-bearing and the grove might become a profitable investment. An old grove at *Mughâr* in Galilee has in recent years been gradually reclaimed in this way. My impression is that wherever wild olives occur, in Palestine at any rate, they are descendants of the cultivated plant. When the trunk of the original grafted stock dies, the new branches, growing from the root, are always of the wild variety, indeed all ungrafted plants are wild or semi-wild. Whether some are self-propagated from the olive-berries themselves is doubtful. I am told that it is possible to grow olives thus but it is uncommon. Probably the more stony and less oily wild berries are more successful as seed. Yusif, Mr. Macalister's man, had a story that olives could only be successfully sown when eaten and deposited by a certain bird which he called *dallâm*. By the above theory this valley, down which we were travelling, must once have been the site of a considerable population, and the inhabited site may have been at the neighbouring *Khurbet Ibsik*, supposed to be the site of Bezek (Judges i, 4). Eusebius identifies the site as hereabouts and in his day two neighbouring

villages of this name stood here: the region is now uninhabited except by *bedu*. At 3 o'clock we passed a group of four milestones, and at 3.45 the valley became too rough for riding. Here appeared considerable gravel deposits from the old Jordan Valley lake bed (bar. 30·23). At 4 o'clock we reached the mouth of the narrow part of the wady. The path ascended the valley-side to the left, and in five minutes we reached another group of milestones. Two lay beside the road, but seven other fragments had been rolled down the steep slope and lay at various distances from the road. On one piece, under a bush half-way down the hill, Mr. Macalister found the name of the Emperor Julian. We were clearly on the Roman road again, but what course it had followed between this and the point where we had seen the last milestones we could not determine; it hardly could have followed the torrent-bed as we had been compelled to do. From near this point the whole *Ghôr* opened out before us. We could see the eastern mountains from near Gadara in the north to *Jebal 'Osha* above *es-Sâlt* on the south. The *Kulat er-Rabûd* was very distinct against the sky-line due east of us. The plain of Beisân lay before us to the north with the town itself just below the south-eastern extremity of the Galilean hills.

We now turned our steps in this direction, descending a small shallow valley. At 4.50 we passed a considerable mass of ruins on our right, known as *Rejum Ka'ûn*, and in a few minutes reached a small spring arising in a marshy valley bed. The squalid village of *Ka'ûn* lay a few yards to our east on the south bank of the wady. We ascended the north bank and entered the plain. At 5.10 we passed the village of *es-Samarîyeh*, built on the ruin of that name, marked in the maps. Here we crossed two streams. At 5.25 we rounded a small double *tell*—apparently chiefly of natural formation. At 5.35 we passed a ruined *wely* in a small grove of fine *Nebk* trees, and in five minutes more commenced to skirt the western end of the enormous *Tell Sarîm*. By this time night was gathering fast, and in the ever-increasing darkness we made our way over a number of small streams, branches of the *Nahr Jalûd*. We reached the khan at Beisân at 6.30; bar. 30·7.

For the sake of succeeding travellers we may say we obtained clean and comfortable, though primitive, accommodation in the rooms attached to the khan. (Time taken, 10 hours easy travelling, exclusive of halts.)

Friday, 4th January.—We devoted a couple of hours in the morning to a walk round the remains of *Beisân*, the ancient Beth-Shean and the Graeco-Roman Scythopolis. It is a wonderful site, but it has already been so often described, that there is nothing that could be added from our hasty examination. Excavation would yield rich results from all periods, from Amorite to Arab. I estimated roughly that its complete examination within the time

allowed by an Ottoman permit would require from £700 to £1,000 a month. As the public will spend its money on such folly as the "Garden Tomb," or in subsidising the rascals who have found out that Beisân is a profitable mine for plunder, it is to be feared that England will never have the honour of discovering what lies hidden beneath the ruins of ancient Scythopolis.

The Necropolis of Beisân is enough to make an archaeologist weep. Rows on rows of recently plundered tombs gape in the hill side, making one think of a library of unique manuscripts that

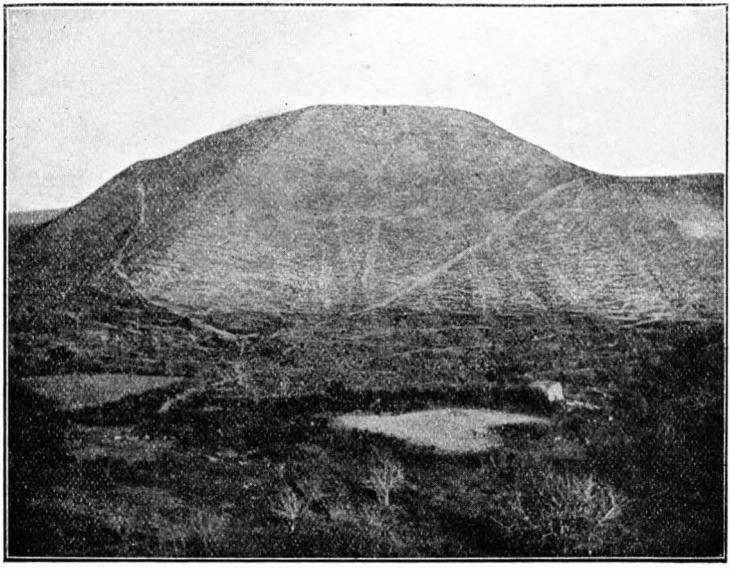


FIG. 2.—Beth-Shean.

have been destroyed by an army of savages. The Nazareth dealers are the usual channels whereby the Beisân antiquities reach the market. I forward photographs showing the sites of Beth-Shean (fig. 2) and of Scythopolis (fig. 3), and the remains of the fine Roman bridge. There seems to have been a street of columns running round the Beth-shean tell, which, in the later periods of the city's history, probably served as an acropolis. One of these columns has a curious console projecting from one side, as though for the support of an arch or lintel.

Leaving Beisân, we passed by the modern cemetery, where I noticed a grave very elaborately decorated with red and blue lines painted on the plaster, a curious variant of the usual palm-leaf motive of ornamentation (fig. 4). We then proceeded by the Roman road running northward along the western side of the Ghôr, without making any observations that specially need recording—under the Crusader fortress, now known as *Kaukab el-Hawa*, across the *Wady Bîreh*, and past the *Jisr el-Mujâmi'a*, till we reached the spot where the road impinges on the course of the Jordan, im-

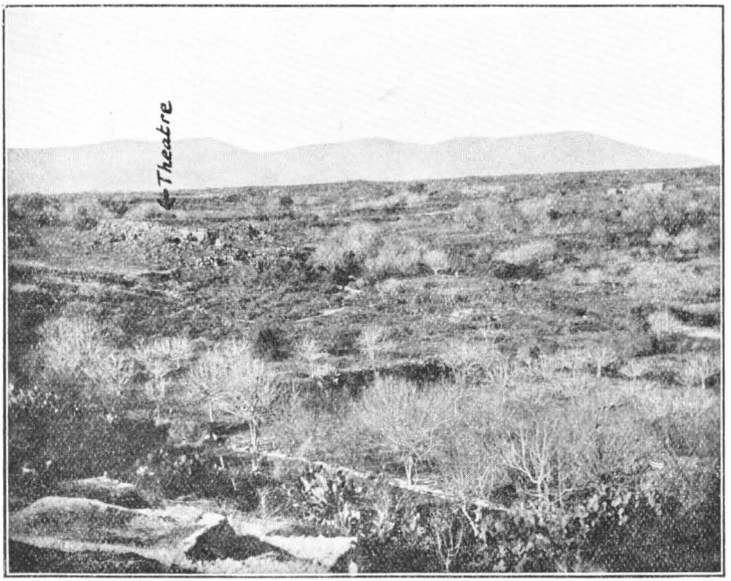


FIG. 3.—Scythopolis.

mediately south of its confluence with the Yarmûk. At this picturesque bend in the river we halted for midday rest and refreshment. There is here a ruined settlement, built of basalt, now a shapeless heap, which has not been recorded on the inch map; it is immediately east of the road, and immediately south of the river-bend referred to. As there was no one to be seen in that deserted region save our own selves, we were unable to ascertain its name. There is little of any interest to be seen in this ruin; the only carved stones we noticed were part of a large door-jamb,

with a reveal and bolt-holes, and a fragment of a sarcophagus, with two round flat bosses cut in relief on its sides.

Proceeding thence we continued along the northern road. In passing the picturesque but evil-smelling and (to judge from the miserable physical appearance of the inhabitants) unhealthy village of *'Abedîyeh*, we were interested to notice the firewood of the community piled up on the graveyard, evidently with the expectation that the ghosts of the dead would protect the property of the living. Such a practice is common and well-known throughout the country.

At the southern end of the Sea of Galilee we left the path for a little in order to examine the great *tell*, known as Kerak, and commonly identified with Tarichaea. So far as I can judge, the identification is sound. We want a fairly large city whose history begins in the Graeco-Roman period, and this is just what the

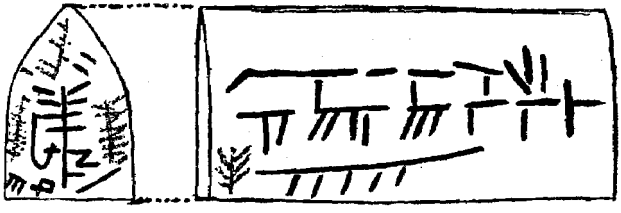


FIG. 4.—Modern tomb at Beisân (fine line blue, dotted lines red).

appearance of the *tell* indicates; for whatever city it may have been, it was an extensive settlement of the Graeco-Roman period (as the potsherds show) and with little or no previous history, as appears from the evidently shallow depth of the accumulation. I do not profess to have gone fully into the question whether the position of the *tell* will suit the historical references to the city, my superficial reading on this point has not, I may say, suggested any doubts of the identification proposed.

From Kerak we made our way to Tiberias, where we spent the night. As before, I append Dr. Masterman's notes to the day's ride :—

In the morning, before leaving, we spent two hours wandering about the site occupied successively by the cities of Beth-Shean and Scythopolis. I had been here some years before with Mr. Dickie, and it seemed to me that much that was then on the surface had now been destroyed or been

covered by the rapidly growing native village and gardens. The modern town consists of a straggling group of mud hovels and one street of fairly well built stone (basalt) houses, along which are planted a number of Persian lilacs. It is situated on the high ground to the right (*i.e.*, south) of the great wady in which, apparently, lay the principal buildings of the ancient chief city of the Decapolis. The new railway station is a mile off to the north-west on the north bank of the river.

The valley of the *Nahr Jalud*, which here flows through high, steep banks, is at *Beisân* greatly widened by the inflow of another stream from he south-west. The two streams have together eroded a wide area, in the midst of which has been left a steep hill—*Tell el-Ḥuṣn*—the site at once of the earliest settlements and of the Acropolis of Graeco-Roman times. This very remarkable *tell* consists of the natural lacustrine deposits to the same level as the high banks to the north and south, the natural soft rock appearing in places to this level; but above this is a great accumulation of rubbish, the remains of successive civilizations. Pottery of all periods is scattered around. Extensive remains of a great encircling wall are visible in many parts of the *tell*. The ruined theatre is built in the west bank of the wady facing the Acropolis. Though much destroyed, its main architectural features are discernible. There are scattered columns between the theatre and the Acropolis, and also to the east, which suggest that there was once here a street of columns, as at Jerash. Perhaps the most striking place for grasping the general situation of Scythopolis is from the ruined bridge spanning the River *Jalud* to the west of *Tell el-Ḥuṣn*. Much of the original massive Roman work remains, though the present narrow bridge is Arab work built on a portion of the old foundations. Here, looking down the gorge of the river towards the Jordan, one can realize the magnificence of the site selected by the old Greek settlers. Fine as are the sites of *Jerâsh* and *Ammân*, this situation is by nature adapted for an even greater city; the ruins, however, are much more completely destroyed. The river (even in the season when streams are at their lowest) was abundant, and that after it had supplied dozens of off-shoots to fertilize the surrounding plain. It is now half hidden by tangled brambles and reeds, but still works a few semi-ruined mills. The nature-loving Greek must have delighted in these abundant, rushing waters; while the plain, for miles around, abundantly irrigated by the simplest care, is capable of supplying sustenance to a great population. The extensive scattered ruins, covering an area probably larger than any other half-deserted site in Western Palestine, testify to the abundant life which must once have been here. Another testimony is the great necropolis which apparently covers the whole of the north bank of the river, beyond the ancient city's boundaries. Sad to say, the ubiquitous tomb-robber has been very active here, and the hill in places presents an extraordinary mottled appearance from hundreds of little mounds of earth, each marking the site of a rifled tomb—and *a lost*

antiquarian treasure! From the high ground to the west of Beisân, also strewn with ruins, we looked up the "Vale of Jezreel" between *Jebal Dahi* on the north and the *Jebal Fakû'a* (mountains of Gilboa) on the south, and saw the summit of Carmel in the east—a striking reminder at once of the flatness of the Plain of Esdraelon and of the narrowness of the strip of land known as Western Palestine.

We left Beisân at 9.30. The road commenced with the newly-made avenue of Persian lilacs already referred to. It then crossed the Jalûd by a low Arab bridge, in a most dangerous condition of disrepair. From here an artificial water channel, fast silting up, skirted our road to the east for some miles. At 10.35 we passed three milestones and a small ruin on a low hill. The railway line soon approached us on the hills to the left, and after a mile or so it crossed our path and descended rapidly towards the Jordan. Our road was in good condition, but although evidently an ancient highway, it showed few signs of artificial construction. At 11.35 we passed below *Kaukab el-Hawa*, the ruined remains of Belfort of the Crusaders, and at 11.44 found a milestone a little to our right. At 12.15 the road abruptly descended almost to the level of the Jordan, which here bends westward. To the south-east we could see about a quarter of a mile off the old *Jesr el-Mujâmi'a* and the Khan, and close to them the modern railway bridge, making, with the river and its wooden banks, a pretty picture. The hills to the west are at this point peculiar. There has been a volcanic outflow down a small break in the mountain range. The volcanic stone can be distinctly seen emerging from between the limestone cliffs and spreading itself out delta-wise over the plateau; it does not descend into the *zôr* or actual trough of the Jordan. Ascending once again to the plateau, we, in half an hour, again approached the bridges of the Jordan in the neighbourhood of some ruins, among which was a black basalt sarcophagus. At 12.50 we reached the banks of the river itself. At this spot, immediately after the *Yarmûk* joins the Jordan, the river bends sharp to the east, and a considerable stretch of it was visible. While lunching we noticed a peculiar phenomenon. A slight breeze sprang up from the west, which blowing lengthways down the stretch of river, impinged at the end on some high banks. A curious rumbling sound was produced, which we took for some minutes to be due to a train passing up the Jordan valley; but careful observation showed that the loudness of the sound varied directly with the strength of the wind. At 2 o'clock we resumed our way. After half an hour we crossed a small wady with running water, and a little later again approached the Jordan near the picturesque village of "*el-Abeidîyeh*." The village, as viewed from the south, is on a low hill directly overhanging the river; in the foreground is a small open plain; on the left a stretch of blue river, overhung by steep banks to the east; while to the west of the village was a grove of trees, including a few palms.

Our road took us to the west of the village, where we passed the cemetery, in which were numerous ploughs, bundles of wood, etc., left to the guardianship of the Spirits of the Dead.

At 3.30 we reached a forlorn-looking "Jewish Colony," called *Melhamîyeh*, consisting of a single wide street of red-tiled one-storied buildings. This and the neighbouring colony of *Yemma*, in the *Wady Fejjâs*, have an evil repute for unhealthiness; indeed, it seems a strange idea to plant European Jews in the miasmatic *Ghôr*. At *Isbaid*, on the Huleh, not only malignant malaria, but even the terrible "black-water fever" (the scourge of tropical Africa) is prevalent. As we passed the fields of *Melhamîyeh* we were glad to see many young Jews themselves handling the plough—a work they have left in most parts of Palestine to their *fellahîn* workmen. From this colony to Tiberias we followed a rough carriage road. Wherever the Jewish colonies are established, there the Jews manage to bring wheeled traffic—often by the most surprising routes. The same is true of the Circassian settlers east of the Jordan.

Our route was now all the way within sight of the Jordan. We passed a ruined bridge (*Jisr es-Sidd*), the piers of which still stand in the bed of the river: near it is a weir across the river, diverting much of the water into a canal on the west bank. On the opposite bank is the village *Umm Jûnieh*. A few minutes further on is the more extensively ruined bridge known as *Umm el-Kanâtir*. At 4 o'clock we reached *Kerak*, a picturesque *tell*, partly artificial, at the opening of the Jordan from the lake. It is surrounded by water on more than two-thirds of its circumference, and evidently has been at times entirely so surrounded. Many would identify *Kerak* with the Tarichaea of Josephus, and there is certainly no other site which has better claims. We gather from Josephus (*Wars*, III, ch. x, § 1–3; IV, ch. 1, § 1) that Tarichaea was on the west side of the lake, 30 stadia (3¾ miles) from Tiberias, easily approached from the lake, which washed it on some sides. It was in or near a plain, and near enough to a mountain for arrows to be fired into it. Pliny states that it was to the south of Tiberias. The one practical difficulty is that Vespasian, coming from Beisân, came to Tiberias before Tarichaea. This need not, however, present an invincible difficulty, if we suppose, as has been suggested, that Vespasian approached Tiberias by way of the mountains—a by no means difficult route—with a view to reducing the more politically divided city before dealing with Tarichaea, which appears to have been peopled by fanatical irreconcilables. It is expressly stated that there were hot springs between the two cities, and there are no suitable springs except those now utilized by the hot baths south of Tiberias. What struck us in visiting Kerak was the unique natural advantages of the site. There is no site on the whole compass of the lake more suited for an ancient fortified city; while the quantity of Roman pottery about, as well as the extensive remains of wall-foundations

show that it must have been occupied in the Roman period. The name *Kerak* may indeed preserve some echo of the name Tarichaea; and if Tarichaea was not here, what other city does this site represent?

Leaving *Kerak*, we descended the *tell* near an ancient causeway across the moat, and rejoined the main road. To our left were a few ruins on a small *tell*, known as *Sinn en-Nabrah*, a name which probably is a survival of the name of the old Roman fortress of Sinnabris, which was somewhere in the neighbourhood. From this spot, at the south-west corner of the lake, we followed the new and somewhat roughly finished carriage road, past the tomb of the famous Jewish Rabbi Meyer and the celebrated hot springs, and arrived at Tiberias at 5 o'clock. (Time taken, 6½ hours, easy travelling.)

Saturday, 5th January.—Leaving Tiberias early, we rode along the shore of the lake to the hamlet of *Mejdel*. On the way, as we passed, Dr. Masterman indicated a small rock projecting from the surface of the water, a few feet from the land, called *Hajar en-Niml*, or "stone of the ants," and told me this tale which he had picked up about it. It seems that on this bare stone a nest of ants had their habitation, once on a time, and were regarded as a permanent and miraculous illustration of Divine Providence, in that they were able to derive a living from so very unpromising a source. A certain infidel took this ill, and in order to get rid of so inconvenient an object lesson, he laid a long reed between the rock and the shore; the ants took advantage of the bridge thus provided them and abandoned their desert island for the more fruitful mainland. I translated this tale for the benefit of Yusif, who views all such legends with a cold scientific scepticism. He prosaically suggested that the rock had fallen into the sea, ants and all, in an earthquake! I forgot to mention that, of course, summary vengeance fell on the infidel.

From Mejdel, which may or may not be the Magdala of the gospels, we went past *'Ain el-Medawwerah*, of which I shall have occasion to speak later, through a village with the familiar name of *Abû Shûsheh*, and so on to the miserable, slippery, rocky bridle-path, which is one of the thoroughfares to the important town of *Ṣafed*.

It speaks much for the natural advantages of the site of Ṣafed that this town has grown to so considerable a size. For, from every direction, the approach to the hill-top on which it stands is a monotonous and wearisome climb, and all the roads leading to it are bad, even for Palestine. Owing to its conspicuous situation, it commands superb views all round, and is itself visible from a great

distance—we saw it first on our Thursday's journey, over 40 miles away. On this account it has become popular among a certain class of writers to speak of Ṣafed as the "city set on a hill" referred to in Matthew v, 14. Such prosaic people are worthy to be classed with the mediaeval persons who identified the House of Dives and the Inn of the Samaritan, or with the modern tourists who saw in the Apis-bull mummies the cattle of Pharaoh's dream. As a matter of fact, there is no reason whatever to suppose that in Our Lord's time Ṣafed had any existence at all, save as an altogether insignificant village.

The only evidences of pre-mediaeval antiquity that the city can boast lies in a few sherds of Roman pottery strewn sparsely over the mound in its midst, upon which rises the Crusader's castle; and *one* rock-tomb, which will be described in due course.

The following are Dr. Masterman's notes:—

Leaving Tiberias about 6.30 we skirted the lake northwards. At 7 o'clock we passed a steep hill on our left, crowned by the ruin *Khurbet el-Kaneitrîyeh* (a suggested site for Tarichaea), and just beyond it crossed the *Wady el-Amîs*, up which runs a much-frequented road to Nazareth and (*viâ Khan el-Tujâr*) to Jerusalem. The more ancient route by the *Wady el-Hamâm* is little used now, because of the extreme roughness of the paths. In another quarter of an hour we reached *Mejdel*. Here a German has lately acquired a good deal of property, and has just made a good road towards the "Plain of Gennesaret," in order to divert the old path from a piece of ground upon which have lately been found ruined foundations, supposed to be those of a church. Our path kept due north and traversed the whole western edge of *el-Ghuweir* from south to north. There was no water in the first channel we crossed, that from Wady Hamâm. We next visited *'Ain el-Medawwereh*, where I had an unsuccessful hunt for mud turtles, some of which I was anxious to bring to Ṣafed. From *'Ain el-Medawwereh* a copious stream flows southwards to the lake. North of this we crossed the stream of *Wady er-Rûbûdîyeh*, and a little further on the other half of the same stream, which is diverted to work the mills at *Abû Shûsheh*. Lastly, at the extreme north-west corner of *el-Ghuweir*, we crossed by a modern bridge the stream running out of *Wady el-Amûd*. There four streams, *i.e.*, that from *'Ain el-Medawwereh*, the *Wady er-Rûbûdêyeh*, the *Abu Shusheh* mill stream, and the *Wady Amûd* stream all traverse the "Plain of Gennesaret," and enter the lake in the above order from west to east. It may be that in very exceptional seasons some of these fail to reach the lake, but in every season of the year for many years I have always found them there. At 8.30 we commenced a steady ascent over a rocky, and in places slippery, path.

Looking back, the whole "Plain of Gennesaret" lay spread out like a map, with the lake beyond. Close at hand, to the south-west, is the deep, precipitous *Wady Amûd*, with many caves, some partly artificial, while about four miles due south were the towering cliffs of the *Wady Hamâm*. Between these two gorges with their limestone cliffs there is a black outcrop of volcanic rock, through which the stream in *Wady Rûbûdîyeh* has cut its way lakewards. To the south-west of the *Wady Hamâm* cliffs the famous Horns of Ḥattîn are visible, the highest summit, if not the source, of an independent outflow of lava. This spreads itself northwards to form the flat valley bottom on which the fertile lands of *Ḥattîn* are situated, but does *not* reach the north side of the upper reaches of the *Wady Hamâm*, while eastwards and southwards it has flowed towards Tiberias and down the *Sahel el-Alma*.

As we proceeded north we noticed the large village of *Mughar* (inhabited by Druzes and Christians) on a hill some six miles to the west, while to the north-west the bold height of *Jebal Zabûd*, the further side of the *Wady Tawâhîn* (as the upper part of the *Wady Amûd* is called). After an hour the road traverses a belt of scattered trees—the survival of a considerable oak forest, which here ran for some miles each side of the gorge of the *Wady Amûd*. We crossed a ridge, and at 9.15 made a steep and rocky descent into an open valley, the fertile upper reaches of the *Wady Bakr*. Here some mongrel *Bedawin* of the *Mauwâsy* tribe are frequently camped, and there are a few huts for the storage of their *tibn*, etc. The ordinary track is across a stony path to the north-west, but we took an easier road by going more directly down the wady and then turning sharp to the right to join the first-named. The route now crossed an exceedingly rough and rocky ridge and descended into the *Wady Akbara*, just south of the cliffs of Akbara. We crossed the wady close to a spring—*'Ain Sâleh*—from which a small stream keeps a number of willows green. Close to the road are a few small hovels. We now (11 a.m.) proceeded up the hill on the right side of the valley with the cliffs of *Akbara* towering above us on the left (*i.e.*, the east). This extraordinary limestone cliff, with its caves, is a landmark for many miles around. It appears to have been fortified by Josephus, who refers to it as the "rock of Achabari" (*Wars*, II, 20, 6). A little higher up the valley is the village of *'Akbara*, above which the wady bends somewhat to the east of north, and is for a mile or more full of fertile gardens irrigated by the copious spring *'Ain el-Hamra*. At this part the valley is known as *Wady el-Hamra*, and it is the natural road to Ṣafed, but on account of the cultivation in the valley-bottom the path between *Akbara* and *'Ain el-Hamra el-Taḥta* has to traverse the hill-side high above the gardens, and it is an impossible route for baggage animals. The section of the *Wady el-Hamra* between the above-mentioned spring and Ṣafed forms the natural approach to the town from the south-east, *i.e.*, *Tell Hûm*.

Our path—the Tiberias high-road—proceeded almost due north and then round the shoulder of the *Jebal el-Labâny*. After passing this, part of Ṣafed becomes visible, as well as the great panorama to the west and north-west, including the striking range of the *Jebal Jermak*. Our route took us through a squalid Moslem suburb and then through the Christian quarter, past the southern end of the Castle to our destination, which we reached soon after noon. (Bar. 27·5.) Time, 6 hours.

Monday, 6th January.—With Yusif I set off in the morning to examine the caves in the cliff of *'Akbara*, which had attracted my attention on the journey up. The village of 'Akbara stands on the east side of a valley that fissures the Ṣafed mountain in a southerly direction; just below the village the valley is deflected westward, and the cliff rises on the southern side of this lower section. We approached from the west side of the valley, and noticed a pile of débris, covered with Roman pottery, immediately over against the village. Descending from this point into the valley, in order to reach the village, we passed a remarkable modern hut. An enormous boulder projecting from the hill-side was utilised as a roof; a wall built underneath it enclosed the space sheltered by the boulder, and the house was complete. It reminded me forcibly of the groups of ancient rock-shelters I had seen in Ireland on the townland of Glenfahan in the Dingle Peninsula.

My special purpose in visiting the village of 'Akbara itself was to examine the ruin known as *El-Kuneiseh* ("the little church") which stands to the south of the settlement. But I cannot say that I felt much the wiser after having seen it. It is the foundation of a rectangular building of some sort, of which parts of two sides remain. The walls are 4 ft. 1 in. thick, and are built of well-squared stones having a fairly uniform measurement of 2 ft. $7\frac{5}{8}$ in. long, 1 ft. $9\frac{1}{8}$ in. high and 1 ft. $11\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick. In one side a row of twelve such stones remains, in the other fourteen, but this does not represent the full extent of either wall: from the one stones have evidently been taken away, while the end of the other is lost in an impenetrable growth of prickly pear. There is only one course to be seen, except at one point where the top of a lower course appears above ground. The dressing of the stones has been made with a finely toothed comb-pick; but no characteristic stone-dressing, mason's marks, nor potsherds can be seen to enable us to form any idea of the date of the structure.

Close by is a rock-surface with cup-marks, containing olive-stones,

which shows for what purpose they are used by the inhabitants of ʿAkbara. In one of the cup-marks is lying a small stone roller, evidently used for crushing the fruit.

The cliff of ʿAkbara is no doubt the *Rock of Achabari*, which Josephus (*B.J.*, II, xx, 6) claims to have fortified along with a number of other places. It is an imposing precipice, the face of which is scooped by caves, that give it the appearance of a colossal dovecote. To these caves narrow shelves, by which the sheer fall of the cliff is broken, give access. Yusif had heard from someone in the town that one of these caves contained a well or cistern covered with cement, and that when a Christian power should take Jerusalem the treasures of the Ḥaram are there to be concealed. Is there in this story some distorted recollection of the flight of the Jews, and their ultimate settlement in Galilee, after the destruction of Jerusalem? I make bold to say that there is actually no such cave at ʿAkbara: I think Yusif and I exhausted all the hollows to be seen, and we found every one of them to be merely apse-shaped recesses in the rock-face, none extending more than two or three mètres at the most. I need hardly say that I could find no traces of Josephus's fortifications, which probably were temporary structures of wood or earth. At the eastern end of the cliff are the ruins of a small settlement; its potsherds show it to be modern Arab. These rock-hollows are occasionally occupied by people who lie in wait there to shoot birds (or perhaps for even less legitimate game); and smoke-blackening on the cave walls and scraps of potsherd on the shelves outside are evidences of this practice. I picked up one fragment of pottery, unfortunately not absolutely distinctive, but certainly more like pre-Israelite ware than anything else. If this scrap actually have such an antiquity it shows that the temporary use of the ʿAkbara caves as lairs for "sportsmen" or for robbers is no modern custom.

Returning in the afternoon to Ṣafed I learnt that there was great excitement among the Jewish population of the city. As is well known, Ṣafed was devastated by a terrible earthquake that took place 1st January, 1837; the loss of life at the time has been estimated at 5,000. Earthquakes are caused (according to local belief) by the turning of a monster who, Atlas-like, supports the earth—others say by the ox which balances the world on the tip of his horn throwing it to the other horn, to relieve his tensioned muscles. In either case, they occur every seventy years, so that it

was believed that a repetition of the great disaster was now due. A certain local rabbi named Simon (who had probably been worrying over the matter during his waking hours) saw in the visions of the night his grandfather, a rabbi of great fame in his time, who bade him "leave the city with his brethren"—and the news of this dream had become known, and was creating something like a panic in the community.

Tuesday, 7th January.—Dr. Masterman and I, with Yusif, left in the morning for a walk to Meirôn, where is a fine synagogue. We went down the valley that runs north of Ṣafed, and then turning northward followed the road as far as Bir esh-Shîh. From this a path turned off on the left which we followed, passing a ruined *wely*, or saint's tomb, adorned with rags. We turned aside to examine *Khurbet Keyûmeh*, the remains of a village strewn with potsherds, some Roman, some early Arab: one fragment that I picked up with traces of green enamel on it adorned with brown lines might conceivably be a late Egyptian importation. Yusif found a worn Cufic copper coin. There seemed no interesting buildings of any sort in the ruin, and nothing beside potsherds to be picked up, so we left and took our way (noticing as we passed two large circular hollows on the left-hand side of the road, apparently dug out as receptacles for rain-water) towards Meirôn, along a road rapidly increasing in roughness and rockiness. The site of Meirôn is plentifully strewn with Roman potsherds as well as some fragments of glass; I noticed nothing older.

The first spot to which we turned our attention was the curious row of rock-cuttings, which had previously been noted by Robinson. This is a series of recesses cut in the open face of the rock: four survive intact, but there have been others which have been almost completely quarried and weathered away.

From these interesting tombs we ascended to the synagogue, which has been partially excavated by the German *Orient-Gesellschaft*. To that society therefore must be left the task of describing it. The façade is in the same condition now as it was when the *P.E.F.* photograph (reproduced in *S.W.P. Memoirs*, Vol. I, facing p. 252) was made, save that only two stones of the cavetto above the central door now remain.

Meirôn is the site of the traditional burial-place of Rabbi Hillel and other worthies of Judaism, so that it seemed a natural place of refuge from the expected earthquake. On our way thither, and

again on our return journey, we passed family groups of fugitives riding or walking to this sanctuary. We found men busily engaged in erecting shelters for themselves and their households till the danger should be over.

Having a little time to spare we climbed the steep hill to the south of Meirôn on the top of which is the ruin known as Khurbet Shem'a. The remains here proved of such especial interest that I determined to return with Yusif the following day to examine them as carefully as they seemed to deserve.

As the day was now declining we retraced our steps to Ṣafed. In the valley at the hill-foot and on the slopes of the hill we passed forlorn groups of panic-stricken people, afraid to sleep in their houses for fear of the earthquake. The excitement by this time had spread from the Jews to the Muslims and Christians. Dr. Masterman's two servant-maids, who are Greek Catholics, were with the greatest difficulty persuaded to remain in the house for the night. The Caimmacam of Ṣafed gave orders that the people on the hill-sides should return to their houses, but they all rushed out again at the first opportunity.

Some of those responsible for the panic seem to have realised that if no earthquake should come at all they would run the risk of losing no little credit; so an ingenious loophole was devised which Yusif overheard being expounded in the street to a peasant by an aged Jew—namely, that the earthquake was surely coming, and if it came *from east to west* it would destroy the city; but if it came *from north to south* no one would feel anything!

Wednesday, 8th January.—In accordance with the resolve made the previous day I returned with Yusif to Khurbet Shem'a, in order to make a full examination of the remains there to be seen.

First of these must be named the extraordinary megalithic structure known as *Sarîr Nebi Shem'a*, the "Throne (or "Bedstead") of the prophet Shammai." It is illustrated in *S.W.P. Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 246; but the illustration, though from a photograph, conveys no adequate idea of its great size. A more recent illustration, with description by Prof. Dalman, will be found in the *Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins*, XXIX, p. 195.

The great interest of this extraordinary structure lies in its being, in style at least, a sort of connecting link between a dolmen and a rock-tomb. There is a considerably extended dolmen field stretching northward from this point: and it may seem as though

the erection of this cumbrous and costly monument had been suggested by the contemplation of one of those prehistoric memorials. From a certain resemblance to the so-called Tomb of Hiram at Tyre this is sometimes spoken of as a "Phœnician" tomb. So very definite an appellation is perhaps hardly desirable.

A few paces north-east of the *Sarir* is a fine olive-press cut in the rock. It has a peculiarity I have not seen elsewhere in cuttings of this class. As a rule they consist of three members—a platform for crushing the fruit; an intermediate vat for receiving the juice and allowing it to stand till impurities had sunk out of it; and a third vat, draining out of the second, for receiving the refined juice. In this example the two vats are both connected by channels with the crushing platform.

The above remains are all situated on the *col* connecting the hill bearing the ruins called *Khurbet Shem'a* with the next hill to the south. These ruins represent a large village, which seems not to have been protected by a wall. The village streets are more easily traceable than is usual in such shapeless heaps of *débris*. The buildings were of better masonry than is usual.

Near the hill-top to the south I noticed what looked like a standing stone, and on asking a shepherd about it, he told me it was the *mashhad nebi Shem'a*, that is to say, the "indicator of the Prophet Shammai"—heaps of stones being often erected as "indicators" or "witnesses" on roadways at points where the shrines of saints come into sight.[1] The object, whatever it was, seemed worth visiting, and I made my way up to it, only to find that it consisted of a row of three extraordinary natural pillars of rock: I forward a photograph I took of one of these. In the side of this example is a hollow, which shows traces (smoke-blackening and candle-grease) indicating that candles, and possibly incense, are burnt therein on occasion.

Returning past Khurbet Shem'a, we visited the spring of good water which supplies Meirôn. There is a capital of a column similar to, but not quite identical with, the capital remaining in the ruin above described.

From there we climbed the Meirôn hillside, in order to visit the tomb of Rabbi Hillel, for which we had had no time on the previous day. There is a good plan with description of this tomb in the

[1] My informant was a Muslim; from a Jewish guide Prof. Dalman (*loc. cit.*) learned a name quite different.

S.W.P. Memoirs, Vol. I, p. 253; but the description (quoted from Renan) is not correct in one point—the statement that the tomb is "without inscriptions." On the middle sarcophagus-lid, on the left-hand side of the vestibule, Yusif's sharp eye detected faint traces of letters, which I read—

ΜΕΙΧΙΜΝΟΥ

with considerable doubt as to the first two letters, and some little uncertainty regarding the third and fourth. I should not wonder if more inscriptions would be found could someone clean off the filth with which all the sarcophagus-lids in the tomb are thickly covered.

The local Jews use this tomb as a sort of *genizah*, and some forlorn fragments of printed books, sodden and festering, are lying about. I searched among this disagreeable heap for manuscripts, but found nothing.

So, well satisfied with the day's work, we returned to Ṣafed. Darkness had already fallen when we reached the neighbourhood of the town. The hill-side was illuminated with the camp fires of fugitives, still afraid to enter their houses for fear of the coming earthquake. We were given to understand that the danger would be passed if the earthquake should fail to take place that night.

Thursday, 9th January.—Dr. Masterman and I rode first to the Saracenic ruin *Khân Jubb Yusif*, the "inn of Joseph's pit." Beside it is the pit, now nearly filled up, into which, in defiance of all topographical possibility, Joseph is said to have been cast. A modern dome, with an Arabic inscription reading "Sacred place: pit of Joseph, on whom be peace!" has recently been erected over the pit. The khân itself is built in an effective alternation of white limestone and black basalt. A plan and description will be found in the *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 234.

From the khân we proceeded, by a shocking road, to the shapeless ruins of *Kerâzeh* (Chorazin). Here we found a large number of fragments of carved stone, the *disjecta membra* of the synagogue. This structure still awaits excavation. We found (under a heap of manure) the fine niche figured in the *Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 401, fig. 1; the stone shown in the lower figure on the same page we did not see. A number of sketches which I made of other stones are reproduced on the accompanying Plate.

Fig. 2 is a restoration of a much-injured capital: two of the volutes and most of the egg in the centre have been broken away. Fig. 3 is a small fragment built into the *wely* known as Sheikh Ramaḍan. Fig. 4 is a column base. Fig. 5 is the moulding of the western door. Fig. 7 is the lintel moulding of the central south door, which had a span of 6 ft. $8\frac{3}{4}$ in. Fig. 6 is the lintel moulding of a side south door, with a span of 4 ft. 9 in. Fig. 9 is probably a fragment of an ornamented stylobate: three sides (and presumably the fourth, which is hidden by lying on the ground) are decorated as shown. Fig. 10 is interesting, being the voussoir of an arch. Fig. 11 is a fragment of a palm-leaf capital, like the famous column under the Aksa Mosque. Fig. 12 is remarkable for the representation of a lion—motives drawn from the animal kingdom are common in the Galilean synagogues. Figs. 13, 14, are specimens of diapered columns, several fragments of which lie about. Fig. 14*a* is a projection of the ornament on the shaft of fig. 14.

There are a few families of half-nomadic Arabs settled among the ruins, who offered us *antikas*—a handful of bronze spangles, a half-defaced Cufic coin—and a penny of His Majesty King Edward VII. The proud possessor of the last-named treasure informed us that he had found it five years before; but as the coin was only three years old, we felt some little difficulty in accepting this statement.

A curious mill-stone (?) lying in the middle of an ancient house is added to the plate of carved stones from Kerâzeh (fig. 15). It is drawn to half the scale of the other stones illustrated.

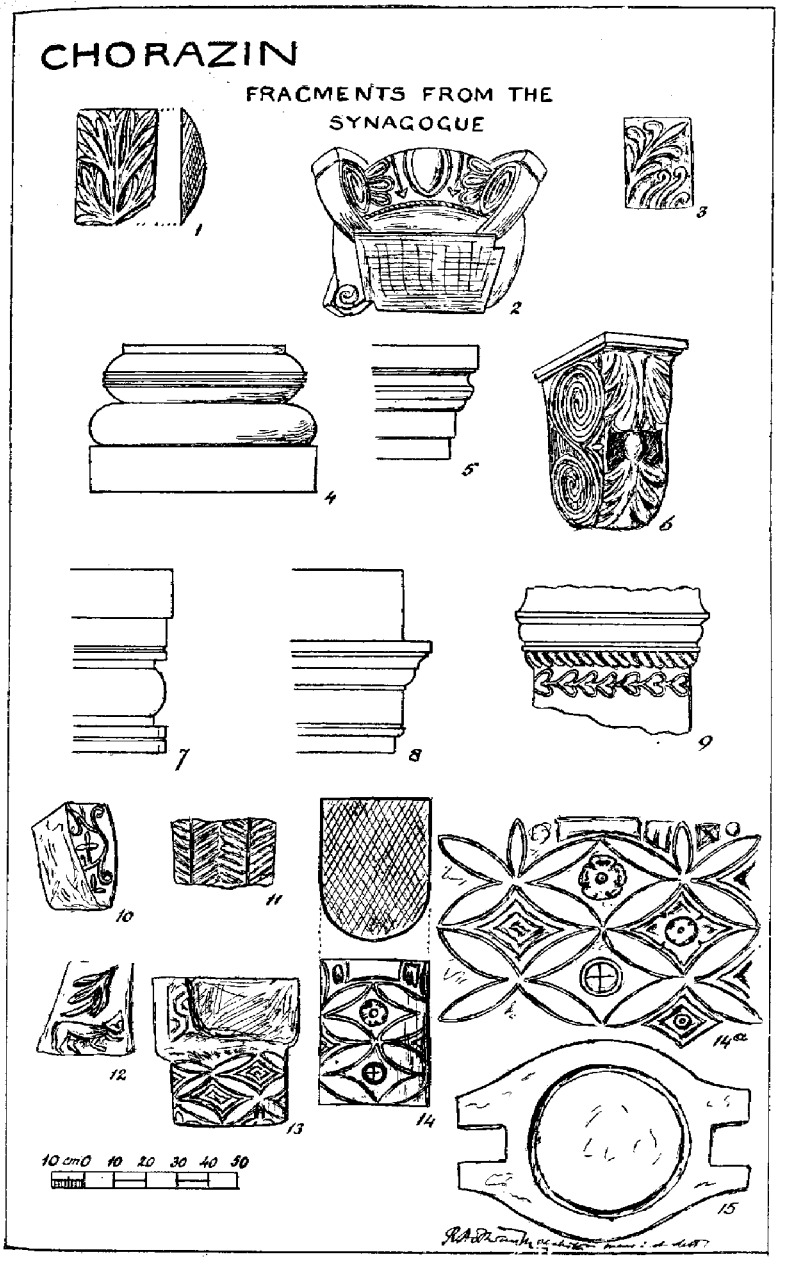
Leaving Kerâzeh we proceeded by way of *Talḥûm* to *Tâbigha*, where in the German Catholic hospice we found shelter for the night.

Friday, 10*th January*.—This day was devoted to the consideration of the problem of *Capernaum*. It had seemed to me that here was an excellent example of a controverted site to which the crucial test of potsherds might be applied with a reasonable hope of success. The result surpassed my expectations. The claims of Talḥûm were triumphantly vindicated.

Four sites have been suggested for Capernaum from time to time. These are:—

(1) *'Ain Medauwerah*, near Mejdel. The arguments for this place are two. Better than any other spring on Gennesaret can it be said to water the plain: and in its water is the coracin fish.

(*To face p.* 116.)


CHORAZIN
FRAGMENTS FROM THE SYNAGOGUE
1
2
3
4
5
6
7
8
9
10
11
12
13
14
14a
15
10 cm 0 10 20 30 40 50

These are the two characteristics of the "Fountain Capharnaum" mentioned by Josephus (*B.J.*, III, x, 8). The fatal objection to this identification is the total absence of ruins in the neighbourhood.

(2) *Khurbet Minyeh*, for which numerous arguments have been proposed from time to time; but the single fact that every scrap of pottery to be seen on the site is *Arab* entirely negatives them all. An inspection of the site, and a comparison of the level of the ruin with the level of the surrounding plain, is enough to show that the

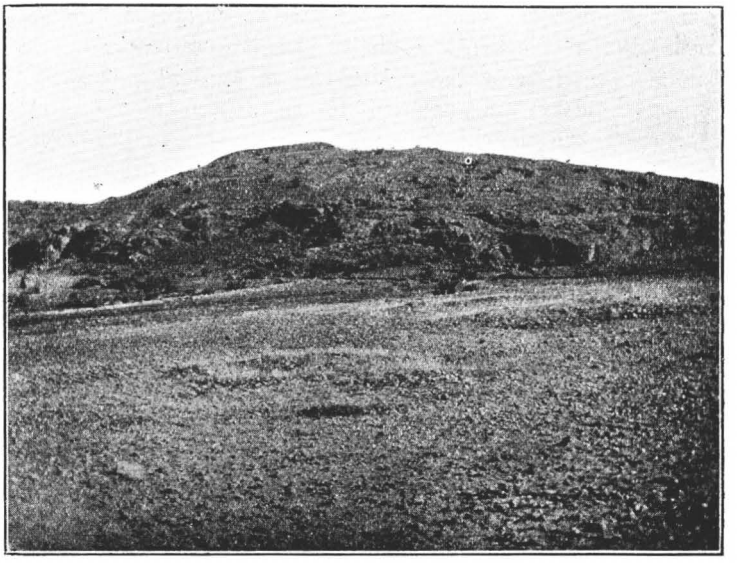


FIG. 5.—Tell 'Oreimeh, from Khurbet Minyeh.

Arab remains on the surface cover no earlier stratum. *There was, therefore, no settlement here whatever in the time of Capernaum.*

(3) *Tell 'Oreimeh* (fig. 5), a large mound between Minyeh and Tabigha. This mound, when I saw it from a distance, seemed to me as though it might be the real site of the long-lost city—a guess in which I have been forestalled by others. When we climbed up to the hill-top I was astonished to find that *'Oreimeh is the site of a forgotten pre-Israelite city*, and that it had been deserted for ever before the establishment of the Hebrew monarchy. As Minyeh is

too late, 'Oreimeh is too early for its identification with Capernaum to be possible.

There remains the large and important city represented by the ruin called *Talḥûm*, with its elaborate synagogue, recently excavated by the German society. To the many arguments that have been advanced by supporters of this site may now be added the fact that the pottery shows it to have flourished at exactly the period of the glory of Capernaum.

I may be allowed a word in justification for the orthography of the name of the site that I have here adopted, in preference to the usual spelling, *Tell Ḥûm*. It is admitted that Capernaum = *Caphar Nahum*, "the village of Nahum," which is known to reappear in Talmudic writings in the modified form *Caphar Tanhum*. Also *Caphar*, "village," is supposed to have been altered to *Tell*, "mound," when the city fell to a ruin; while "*Ḥûm*" is supposed to be a contraction for *Nahum* or *Tanhum*. I find it difficult to believe that the suggested contraction is possible: nor would any Arabic speaker ever think of applying the word *Tell*, "mound," to this flat, wide-spread ruin, which is essentially *not* a mound. It seems to me more probable that the name is one word, *Talḥum* (تلحوم), not two, *Tell Ḥûm* (تل حوم). These two forms would be indistinguishable in pronunciation; but the first is easily explained as simply a corruption of *Tanhûm*, the *Caphar* being dropped altogether; whereas the second, as we have seen, cannot be explained except by some very doubtful assumptions. The mutation of *n* to *l* is also illustrated by *Berdawîl*, the curious form in which the name of the Crusader king *Baldwin* appears in modern place-names.

If Talḥûm be Capernaum, the "fountain of Capharnaum" described by Josephus (*loc. cit.*) must be the great spring now known as *Birket 'Ali Dhaher*. It is some distance from Talḥum, but this is not a serious objection, so long as Capernaum is the *nearest* large town to the spring. For when a spring has a name involving the element *caphar*, *kefr* ("village"), it must be named from the neighbouring settlement; whereas when a village has in its name the element *'ain* ("spring")—as 'Ain Karim near Jerusalem—it must be named from the water-source. A little thought will show that the connexion between the spring and the settlement must generally be closer in the latter case—the spring being merely in the neighbourhood of the settlement in the one, being the cause of the existence of the settlement in the other. On the shores of the Sea

of Galilee, the problem of water-supply was never pressing, so that it is not necessary to assume that the spring Capharnaum was the source of water for the town of the same name.

The two things that Josephus tells us about the spring is that it contains the coracin fish, and waters the plain of Gennesaret. The existence of the coracin in *Birket 'Ali Dhaher* has been denied, but Father Biever of Tâbigha told us that he has seen the fish within it, and Macgregor (Rob Roy) has made the same observation. I do not attach much weight to arguments from fauna, however, in view

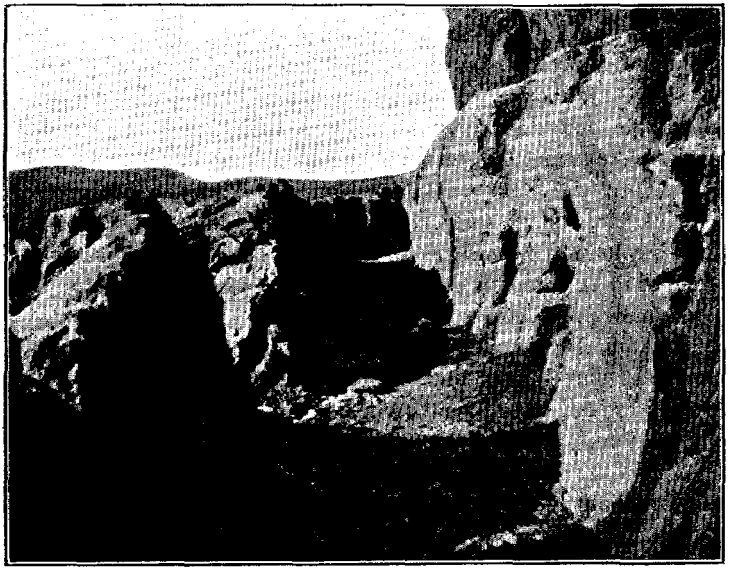


FIG. 6.—Aqueduct, Tell 'Oreimeh.

of the profound modifications that accidental changes of temperature or of chemical substances in the water, earthquakes and other natural catastrophes, human agency, etc., could produce in the course of years. Through the great rock-cut aqueduct that runs round the face of 'Oreimeh (fig. 6 shows a section of it), this spring may be said to have watered the plain quite as much as any other source. That this is a true aqueduct, not a road as some have supposed, is proved (1) by the traces of cement lining it shows here and there, (2) by the needlessness of a road round the southern end

of 'Oreimeh, as there is an excellent road north of it, and (3) by the existence of a branch, which does not appear to have been noticed before, evidently intended to work a mill, traces of which remain.

I may mention that at Talḥûm, beside the synagogue (which as before must be left to its excavators to describe) I noticed a sign of civilisation in the shape of a built drain running through the ruined town.

Saturday, 11th January.—The weather, till now propitious, broke this day, and I was kept indoors by incessant rain.

Sunday, 12th January.—We learned to-day that we had been the innocent cause of a recrudescence of the earthquake scare, by our excursion to Tâbigha. It was rumoured throughout the town that the English doctor had "from the taste of the water" discovered that the catastrophe was imminent, and had fled with his guest—leaving, it would appear, his family to their fate! All manner of stories were current as to what we had seen at Tâbigha—a star had fallen into the Sea of Galilee and turned its waters red and undrinkable, and so forth. In the evening an emissary from the Jewish colony of *Ja'ûneh*, east of Ṣafed, arrived to enquire into the truth of these rumours, and to obtain the latest information as to earthquake prospects.

Monday, 13th January.—In the morning the weather was still inclement, but I went out in the morning with Yusif and took a walk round the town itself, and made a few miscellaneous observations.

The Muslim houses are almost all protected by the hand sign, conventionally represented, boldly painted in blue over the doorways or at the sides. There are a number of old capitals and bases hollowed through and used as well-heads in the streets of the town; most of the former are common Attic bases and are of little interest.

On a sheikh's tomb, in the middle of one of the streets, we found a trace of the Crusaders in the shape of a fragment, about 15 cm. high, inscribed in Lombardic letters. This fragment afterwards had a sad fate. While I was copying it a man came up and asked Yusif what it signified. Yusif unfortunately said he could not read it, as it was Latin. Two or three days afterwards, happening to pass the same tomb, we found that the stone had disappeared: no doubt our interrogator, or some other loafer who had heard the question and answer, had removed it, to prevent the

holiness of the sheikh from being further profaned by this infidel stone. There are a number of uninteresting fragments of modern Arabic inscriptions, broken from a neighbouring water-tower, also lying on the tomb.

In the afternoon Dr. Masterman and I visited the remains at *Nebratein*, where is the foundation of a small synagogue, partly excavated by the Orient-Gesellschaft. The settlement dates from Ptolemaic to Arab times. I made a not very successful attempt to copy the enigmatical Hebrew inscription carved on the fallen lintel of the synagogue. On the hill above is *en-Nebrah*, a smaller settlement of the same date. There are here to be seen a number of column-drums and bases. I suspect that these are the relics of another synagogue, though the German excavators have searched for one without success. We noticed traces which resembled the foundation of a rectangular building about 40 feet broad, with a single column base appearing above ground in one corner.

Tuesday, 14th January.—The weather was hopelessly bad all day.

Wednesday, 15th January.—The weather continued bad, but I was able to visit Jami'a el-Aḥmar, the oldest mosque in the town. It has a Saracenic doorway, having a partially defaced Arabic inscription over it. Inside there is nothing of antiquity to see but two Byzantine capitals of simple Corinthian pattern. There is a plain octagonal capital, of large size, used as a well-head outside the mosque. Into the wall of the neighbouring shrine of the *Banât Hâmid* there is a pretty bit of Byzantine scroll-work built. Returning we came over the castle hill, and I noted the following corrections to the plan in *S.W.P. Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 249:—

(1) To the wall of the outer bailey add circular external towers, corresponding exactly in position with the similar towers, which are correctly represented in the plan to the inner bailey wall.

(2) Add a cistern in the middle of the extreme south end of the mound that represents the keep.

(3) Add another cistern in the middle of the keep.

(4) Delete the small square block of masonry at the north-east of the inner bailey, which, whatever it was, has disappeared.

There is an old cannon lying in the outer bailey at the south-east. We picked up a small silver coin of Sultan Selim, and a small fragment of a damascened scabbard in the ruins.

Thursday, 16th, and Friday, 17th January.—The storm continued and made outdoor work impossible.

Saturday, 18*th January*.—Taking advantage of a break in the storm, I paid, with Yusif, a hurried second visit to *Nebratein*, in order to try to improve on my copy of the inscription. The break proved deceptive, for torrents of rain began to fall while we were on the way; at last, however, it held off long enough to enable us to take two squeezes, necessarily imperfect, as the dampness and cloudiness of the atmosphere prevented their drying properly. They supplement each other, however; and with their aid and the help of a pencil rubbing, and the copy made earlier in the week, I am able to present the following as a facsimile of this perplexing legend (fig. 7).

I cannot claim to do more than afford materials for someone more expert than I in late Semitic epigraphy to work upon. The extraordinary farrago of Hebrew letters, contractions, and signs seemingly quite arbitrary, is to me altogether unintelligible.

Sunday, 19*th January*.—On this day took place the funeral of the late Herr Josef Miklasiewicz, Consular Agent in Ṣafed for Great Britain and for Austria, who had died on the previous day in the eighty-fourth year of his age. The funeral service was conducted in the private chapel of the residence where he had lived for fifty-one years. He was an enthusiastic student of oriental manners and customs. Through the kindness of his son and successor, Herr Ladislaus Miklasiewicz, I have been permitted to refer to, and extract a few notes from some of his private diaries, which incidentally contain very valuable observations on the native life he saw around him. Such careful and conscientious note-takers are rare, and the loss of any of them deserves to be recorded by a Society like ours with deep regret.

Monday, 20*th January*.—Renewed rain all day.

Tuesday, 21*st January*.—The rain still continuing, I went with Yusif to examine the one rock-cut tomb known to exist in the neighbourhood of Ṣafed. It is entered by an insignificant hole in the ground, just outside the boundary of the *Hâret el-Kurâd*. It is of very curious design, being divided up by colonnades into chambers: I have never seen another cave of similar type. Yusif heard it called *Mughâret 'Anl'ârîs*, whatever that may mean, but there is another and more intelligible name, *Mughâret el-Kufâr*, "the cave of the infidels." This latter name is due to the fact that when first discovered it was found to be quite full of human bones. These are explained as being the bones of the Crusader

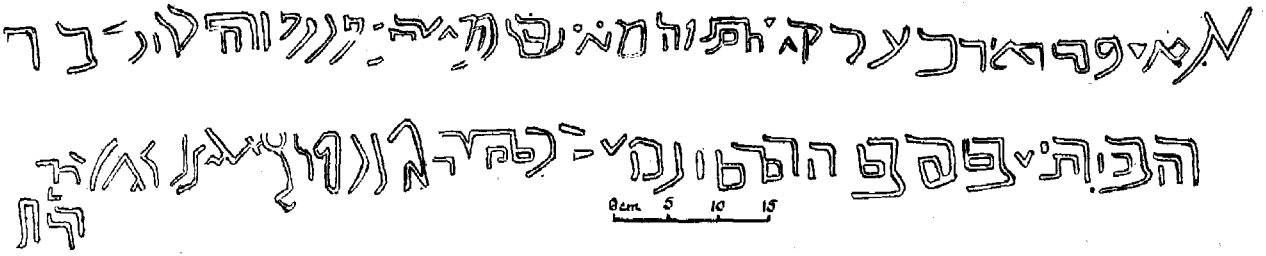


FIG. 7.—Inscription at Nebratein.

(The original is in one line, divided into two sections by a representation of the seven-branched candlestick. It is here divided into two lines for convenience.)

garrison of the castle, who were slaughtered and whose bodies were here cast. Large quantities of these bones have disappeared, but a fair number are left; and from measurements I made of them,[1] it seemed to me highly probable that the local tradition which accounts for them is for once correct. The indicated stature is rather superior to the average stature of the inhabitants of the country. I am indebted to Dr. Masterman for verifying my guesses that some pathological peculiarities I noticed in turning over the bones were due to rheumatoid arthritis or to syphilitic affections. Some of the skulls showed caries of some form, and one had an injury, evidently the effect of a blow on the temple, which had probably been the cause of death.

Wednesday, 22nd January.—At last, the long-continued rain-storm came to an end, and the morning broke fine and frosty. Dr. Masterman and I set off together on the road we had previously taken to Meirôn, which we followed as far as Bir esh-Shîh. We then took the road to Sufsâf. On the way we passed an old track, crossing ours at right angles, leading apparently from Khurbet Keyumeh to Kadîtha. This road is not marked on the inch map. Continuing further, we passed a dolmen, consisting of three stones on end supporting a cover-slab; the cover-slab measures about $7\frac{3}{4}$ by $8\frac{1}{2}$ by 1 foot. Close by is a second dolmen, which has fallen into ruin.

At Sufsâf we saw the fragments of carved stone built into the modern mosque. These are exactly as they are represented in *S.W.P. Memoirs*, vol. I, plate facing p. 257, save that the left-hand of the two moulded voussoirs at the side has disappeared in some repair of the structure.

From Sufsâf we proceeded through a cold, biting wind to El-Jish. The description of this place in the *S.W.P. Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 224, needs some supplementing.

First, there seems no special reason to believe in the existence of the *synagogue in the town* at all: the only ground for asserting it seems to be the presence of fragments of columns, capitals, bases, stylobates, lintels, etc., lying about or utilised as building material in the modern houses. These might, however, belong to any sort of building, and need not be assumed to have formed part of a synagogue.

[1] Particulars regarding these bones will be published later; to insert them here would swell unduly this already lengthy paper.

Secondly, there are the foundations of *one* synagogue outside the town, in a valley *to the east*. It is by no means obvious why this should have been erected so far from the city: there is a little Roman pottery in the fields about, but no trace of any extensive occupation immediately round the site. Excavations have been made in this synagogue by the Orient-Gesellschaft. When we came up to it we found a native measuring one of the stones of the ruin. He evidently mistook me for a member of the German excavating party, for he came to me to ask if I would allow him to take "only one very little stone" to fill a gap in his house. I took it upon me to say that I could not allow anything of the sort under any circumstances—but, of course, whatever little respite I may

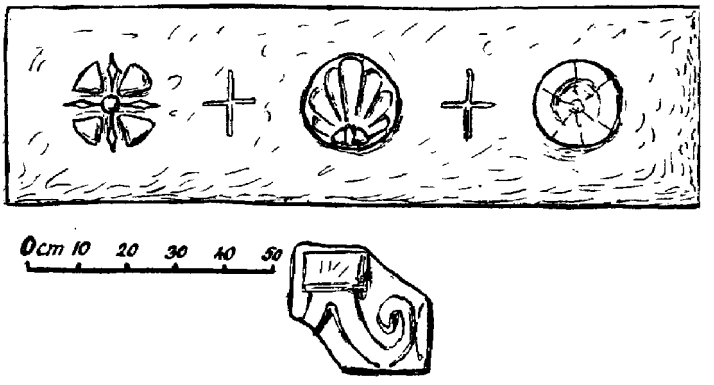


FIG. 8.—Lintel and fragment of sculpture, El-Jish.

have thereby gained for this interesting structure can only be temporary.

As before, the task of describing the building must be left in courtesy to the excavators, but I may be allowed a word or two on the inscription carved on a fallen column drum, as there are several misunderstandings about it in the *Memoirs*. There is a worthless copy (Vol. I, p. 225) given with the remark that it was "probably written by some Jew who came to lament over the noble buildings of his ancestors." A few lines further down Renan's description is quoted. He unaccountably places the synagogue *north* of the town, and then gives a translation of the inscription ("Joseph Ben Nahum built this arch. May a blessing fall upon him!"), after which is the comment, "The column and inscription have now apparently disap-

peared." They are, however, still intact, and I forward a rubbing. It is not necessary to reproduce it here, as the inscription has already been accurately rendered by Renan in the *Mission de Phénicie.*

In the town itself, we were fortunate in getting the guidance of an intelligent young man employed as schoolmaster for the Maronite inhabitants, who showed us everything to be seen in the town. The most interesting stone is the lintel (fig. 8), now over the door of the Maronite Church.[1] The smaller stone in the same figure is built into the wall of a conventual building attached to the Greek church. This convent fell into ruins in a heavy rain a few years ago. In the Maronite Church the confessional box is decorated with three skulls placed on top.

An essay might be written on a comparative study of styles of house surface decoration in various parts of Palestine. In Ṣafed several house-doors are ornamented by a kind of scale-pattern in open fretwork, applied to the surface of the door. In Sufsâf I noticed several doors decorated with a *semée* of hemispherical depressions, as though produced by blows of a round-ended hammer. The inhabitants of el-Jish are fond of sculpturing on the lintels of doorways ornaments consisting of hexagons in circles and similar geometrical devices, also (in the Christian quarter) quaint figures of animals. Over an opening in a house near the Greek church there is a lintel of four stones forming a flat arch, the face of which is divided by little pillars, between which are rude figures of animals —an elephant, an ostrich, and two unrecognizable.

Several houses in el-Jish have a little circular mirror let into the stone above the doorway. In a ruined house I found specimens of an effective form of mural decoration, consisting of an arrangement of mud ropes applied to the wall, forming spaces filled by a criss-cross of reeds, the whole being then washed thickly over with lime cream.

South of the city there is a fine sarcophagus, now much broken, resembling, but not identical with, that shown in the *S.W.P. Memoirs*, Vol. I, p. 224. Near this is lying a stone measuring 6 ft. 10 in. × 4 ft. 7 in. × 3 ft. 9¾ in., having a double grave cut in it, close to which are two similar stones almost buried in the ground. The whole looks like the *disjecta membra* of a structure like the *sarîr* at Khurbet Shem'a, above described.

[1] The crosses are, of course, later additions.

Returning to Ṣafed we took the more direct road avoiding Sufsâf, and passing on the way the *Birket el-Jish*. This great reservoir is said in the *Memoirs* (Vol. I, p. 217) to contain water all the year: and the statement is repeated by a writer in Hastings' *Dictionary of the Bible*, s.v. "Lake." I found, however, by several enquiries, that it dries regularly during summer.

Thursday, 23rd January.—This day was devoted to a visit to *Kefr Bi'rîm*, where there were two synagogues. One of these has been cleared by the Orient-Gesellschaft. I made an effort to copy the Hebrew inscription over one of the windows: I regret that I had not Renan's transcript by me at the time. What I made of it was this meaningless succession of letters—

סעיו[ע]כבכוצבריוך

The inscription is too faint to see clearly, especially at the beginning. The second synagogue has totally disappeared; the magnificent gateway (*Memoirs*, Vol. I, plate facing p. 232) was destroyed within the last few years for building material by a local stonemason.

Friday, 24th January.—The morning was devoted to preparation for departure from Ṣafed. In the afternoon we walked to Jebel Kina'an, from which a fine view is to be obtained of the Bahr el-Ḥuleh and the Sea of Tiberias, with the section of the Jordan between them. Returning round the head of valley north of Ṣafed, we noticed a hole in a section of the cliff, to which we climbed. It proved to be the opening to a water-conduit cut in the rock, which had been broken into by quarrying. There is no special reason to suppose it an aqueduct of very ancient date: it may have been part of the work done by Dhaher el 'Amer in Ṣafed.

Saturday, 25th January.—Left Ṣafed about 9 a.m. and proceeded to *Hattin*, which (owing to some annoying delays on the way) I did not succeed in reaching till nearly 3 in the afternoon. The time did not permit for the deflection to *Irbîd* which I had promised myself. From Hattin proceeded to the carriage-road, as yet unfinished, from Nazareth to Tiberias, joining it at *Khurbeh Meskeneh*, an extensive Roman and Byzantine site. There are many caves and rock-tombs here, as well as foundations of houses. There is also a large reservoir, just by the road-side, which is used as a robbers' lair at night-time.

On the way Yusif entertained me with gossip he had heard in Ṣafed respecting the father of our muleteer, who, it seems, had

been a noted robber in his day. The following is a specimen of these tales of oriental rascality:—Many years ago, a great "lord," apparently English, came to Ṣafed, and arranged with the Caimmacam of the period to have his camp guarded by a force of twenty (price, 1 mejidi or 20 piastres each). The hero of the tale tried to be engaged, but failed. So, coming by night to a hiding-place, he stripped off his clothes, tied something which would simulate a tail to himself, and stole up to the camp on hands and knees. The watchmen thought it was a large dog, and endeavoured to scare it off by the cry *wisht*, which, as we have recently been told in the *Quarterly Statement*, is the expression used for the purpose. The "dog" came up, stealing nearer and nearer, now retreating, now advancing, till he seized the opportunity of darting into the tent. Then he seized the "lord's" box, shouldered it and made off through the guards in the darkness. He recovered his clothes and brought his plunder to the castle, broke it open, and found to his disgust nothing in it but garments. He appropriated a small selection of these and hid the remainder in the castle. Next morning there was of course great excitement over the missing box; the Englishman had a stormy interview with the Caimmacam, and departed for Beyrout breathing out threatenings and slaughter. The poor Caimmacam in despair proceeded to arrest everybody he could lay hands on, till the prison was too full to hold anyone else.

Meanwhile, the thief's brother conceived a suspicion that no one else could have committed the robbery except his notorious relative. So he went to the house, where he found him sleeping the sleep of the just. Waking him roughly he seized him by the throat, and demanded to know where was the box. After some parley the thief confessed; the brother went to the castle, found the box, and bore it to the Caimmacam: that functionary immediately sent a number of soldiers to overtake its owner, restore the property, and request him kindly to overlook the inconvenience to which he had been subjected. The thief's brother was one of the escort sent with the box.

And so the box was restored, and the owner opened it, and slipped out the inner lining, revealing to the astonished and envious eyes of the escort "more gold pieces than there were in all Ṣafed" in the false bottom. So the brother returned, and said to the thief, "Fool that you are, next time you steal a box, *break it in pieces!*"

Reached Nazareth about 7.30 p.m.

Monday, 27th January.—Rode from Nazareth to Jenîn by the uninteresting muleteer route across the Plain of Esdraelon. Arriving at Jenîn (where, as at Nâblus, the Hamburg-America Company have recently established a hotel) two hours before sunset, I devoted the time to an examination of the ruins of *Bel'âmeh*, about half a mile to the south. I was surprised to find them of considerable importance; they are hardly mentioned in the *Memoirs*, an extract from Guérin alone being given. The following observations will therefore be useful:—

Bel'âmeh (Ibleam) is an enormous *tell*, about the size of the mound of Gezer, though being approximately circular instead of long and narrow it is difficult to compare their areas by an eye estimation. There is no very distinct evidence of the depth of accumulation, which must, however, be considerable. The ground is here and there pitted by conical depressions which possibly mark the positions of cisterns. There is one cave, now blocked, on the hill-top: a circular shaft (in addition to the entrance) is cut in the roof of the chamber, and there is a cup-mark at the mouth.

A large area of the hill is occupied by an extensive keep, now completely ruined all save one corner; this building is apparently of Crusader date. There is also a modern *wely* or saint's tomb. At its entrance is lying the fragment of an Attic base. I did not find the tunnel described by Guérin.

The city has been inhabited continuously from the Amorites to the Early Arabs, and potsherds of every period are strewn over the ground. Besides these I found some fragments of stone bowls (such as are common in Palestine about 1000 B.C.), one small fragment of a Cypriote vessel, and some flints. I also picked up a Rhodian jar-handle, inscribed:—

ΕΠΙΑΙΣ
ΧΥΛΙΝΟΥ

Tuesday, 28th January.—From Jenîn to Nâblus by the ordinary muleteer route *viâ* Jeba' and Beit Imrin. The first settlement passed on the road is the important village of *Ḳubâtiyeh*. There is a little Roman pottery on the plain below. A peculiarity of this village is the great heaps of firewood before each of the houses. This is said to be due to a local custom, prevalent only in this and the immediately neighbouring villages, whereby the girls of a family devote their spare time to collecting firewood and storing it up till

they marry, when they have it by them to use in their new homes. There is a well-cut olive-press in the rock on the hill-top.

The short road from Jeba' to Nâblus is bad, wearisome, and monotonous, and it is well worth while following the longer route by Sebasteh.

At Nâblus, Herr Hesselschwert of the hotel showed me, among a number of antiquities he had acquired, a curious vessel in bronze and a haematite seal-cylinder, the latter from Beisân is here illustrated (fig. 9).

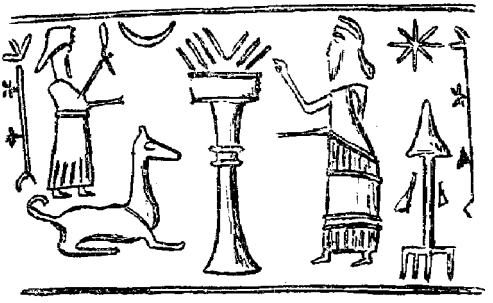


Fig. 9.—Cylinder-seal from Beisân.

Wednesday, 29th January.—Of the well-beaten path between Nâblus and Jerusalem, the transit of which occupied this day, there is nothing new to say. I reached Jerusalem about 5 p.m., just in time to escape a furious torrent of rain.