

In thus offering to our readers a few out of the many cases of various readings in which the Revisers have deviated from the Text adopted in 1611, or have recorded an alternative reading in the margin, we would earnestly commend to all readers of the Greek Testament who have access to a critical apparatus, the careful prosecution of this inquiry for themselves. It will abundantly repay the labour which they may be able to expend upon it. And it will leave on the mind of the student a deep impression of the fidelity with which the Revisers have adhered to their purpose and their commission, of presenting to the Church as near an approach as existing appliances can furnish, to the veritable autographs of the Sacred Writers.

J. F. FENN.

ART. III.—SOUTHERN PALESTINE.

1. *Southern Palestine and Jerusalem.* By W. M. THOMSON, D.D., forty-five years a Missionary in Syria and Palestine. 140 illustrations and maps. New York: Harper Brothers. London: T. Nelson & Sons. 1881.
2. *Le Pays de l'Évangile; Notes d'un Voyage en Orient.* Par EDMOND DE PRESSENSÉ. Paris: Meyrueis. 1864.
3. *Our Holiday in the East.* By Mrs. GEORGE SUMNER. Edited by the Rev. G. H. Sumner, M.A., Hon. Canon of Winchester, and Rector of Old Alresford, Hants. Hurst & Blackett. 1881.

IT was a true instinct that led the translators of the Bible who provided for us the Authorized Version in the reign of James I., to intend to prefix to their work an account of the Holy Land. The proofs that such was their deliberate intention are to be found partly, if not chiefly, in the correspondence which took place between them and the members of the Synod of Dort, regarding the rules to be observed in the publication of vernacular Bibles in England and Holland. Some copies of our Authorized Version have such an account of Palestine prefixed. How far this document was viewed as official, and what its real value may have been, we need not now inquire. All that is here urged is that our translators instinctively and truly felt that there is an essential, and, so to speak, organic connection between the Holy Book and the Holy Land.

A very large part of our obligation for having this wholesome thought strongly and deeply impressed upon us in modern times, and, indeed, made part of our whole conception of Bible study,

is due to America : and it is not a little remarkable that help for understanding the immediate East should have so largely come to us from the remote West. It seems like part of the fulfilment of the prophecies regarding the binding together of all parts of the world in one sacred knowledge. The great work of Dr. Robinson may be somewhat dry and tedious : but it is wonderfully copious and exact : when it was published it conferred a signal benefit on all the English-speaking people of the future : and, in fact, as was often remarked by the late lamented Dean of Westminster (himself one of our great benefactors in this field), it constituted an epoch in the history of the science of Sacred Geography. Another American writer, Dr. Thomson, who has resided nearly half a century in Syria, and has travelled through Palestine on frequent occasions and in all directions, has in another way laid us under great and permanent obligations. His treatise, "The Land and the Book," with its lively illustrations of Bible scenes and Bible customs, has been long before the world. More recently, he has published, in New York and in London, with copious and sumptuous illustrations, a work entitled "Southern Palestine and Jerusalem," which is, in fact, a part of his former work, re-cast, re-arranged, and in a great measure re-written. It is to be hoped that this is only an instalment of a similar re-issue, with mature improvements, of his whole work. Meanwhile, this present publication may be used for suggesting some remarks on Southern Palestine, with collateral illustrations from a French book printed a few years ago, and a very recent account of a tour in Palestine by an English lady.

The great principle, stated above, of the essential connection between sacred history and sacred scenery, has been well laid down, in vivid language, by Dr. Thomson ; and it is quite worth while to quote some of his sentences relating to this subject :—

The land where the Word-made-Flesh dwelt among men must ever continue to be an important part of Revelation ; and Palestine may fairly be regarded as the divinely-appointed table whereupon God's messages to man have been graven in ever-living characters by the Great Publisher of Glad Tidings. . . . This fact invests the Geography of the Holy Land with special importance. . . . Palestine, fashioned and furnished by the Creator's hand, was the arena, and the people of Israel were the actors brought upon it, and made to perform their parts by the Divine Master. . . . The Land has had an all-pervading influence upon the costume and character of the Bible. Without the former, the latter, as we now have it, could not have been produced. . . . The Land and the Book constitute the all-perfect text of the Word of God, and can be best studied together (pp. 1-3).

Such are some of Dr. Thomson's true words in his Introduction : and elsewhere he says, more particularly, that Palestine is "the birth-place of the psalm and the hymn," and that "God

made the Holy Land and the Sacred Poet, the one for the other." It must be added that the thought thus expressed is well sustained throughout the book.

As to the definition of Southern Palestine, it may be made, in the present instance, somewhat arbitrarily. This, however, is of little moment; for that which is aimed at is convenience of description, not precise geographical subdivision. It is hoped that this paper will be followed, at short intervals, by similar papers on the Jordan Valley, on Northern Palestine, and on Jerusalem. Beginning with the headland of Carmel, we may here follow the plain of Sharon, and then—after pausing at Lydda and Ramleh—the wider plain of Philistia; thence skirting the edge of the desert about Beersheba, may pass into the "hill country" of Judæa proper, taking Hebron and Bethlehem on our way to the Mount of Olives. In pursuing such a route we shall touch various distinctive passages of sacred history—the early journeys of Apostles—the great wars of Saul and David—the primitive homes, if it is proper to call them homes, of the Patriarchs—and, finally, both the earlier and later passages of Gospel History. The tribal territories we shall cross in this brief circuit are those of Dan, Simeon, and Judah, the most renowned of all, and two of the most obscure.

Carmel, to quote a phrase used by Camden of a certain district of England, "lies sore on the sea." Thence it runs south-eastward, so as to form a frontier-line of very high ground, enclosing the land of the central and southern tribes as in a sanctuary. Thus, for some distance, the level ground along the coast is at first comparatively narrow, and then, to the south, widens out to a considerable breadth. The former may, for our immediate practical purpose, be termed the plain of Sharon, the latter the plain of Philistia, Joppa being taken as the point of division between them.

The plain of Sharon, as we see it now, hardly justifies the poetry with which its name is associated. There is, indeed, considerable woodland beauty near the higher ground; but along the coast there is a belt of sand and sand-hills, which has encroached on the pasture and arable land more and more. Another effect of this encroachment is seen in the damming up of the streams from the mountain country, so as to leave, here and there, large tracts of unprofitable marshy ground. The carefully made Roman road which passed this way, followed, as Dr. Thomson has remarked, in some places a line at some little distance from the shore, for the sake of securing better positions for bridges over these streams. It is in connection with such Roman roads, and with the early missionary movements of the Apostles, that the chief Biblical interest of this northern part of the plain along the coast is found.

Along the whole coast line of Syria and Palestine the communication was easy between Antioch and Alexandria: and important passages of the history of the Seleucidæ and Ptolemies are connected with this easy communication near the shore, as indeed is true likewise of modern passages of history, English, French, and Turkish. Our attention is here, however, to be given chiefly to the Roman and early Apostolic period. When the region of Syria was under Roman sway, the small part of Palestine with which we are now concerned was one of its most populous and flourishing districts. It is most instructive to study the Itineraries, to note the stations which are marked there, and to connect them, and the distances which separate them, with the early journeys of the Apostles. Taking the wider view of such journeys, we naturally think of the well-trodden road between Antioch and Jerusalem, over which St. Paul, with Barnabas and Silas, and other companions, travelled at various dates, on philanthropic and religious errands. But in connection with the coast line to the *south* of Carmel, we have chiefly to think of St. Peter and St. Philip. The journeys between Cæsarea and Joppa, first, of the messengers sent southward by Cornelius, and then of the same party northward, when Peter and his companions were with these messengers, are for ever memorable in the annals of our religion; and these few miles of unattractive coast deserve, on this account, a closer attention than is commonly given to it by travellers.

The chief interest of this part of the coast, as regards the Roman and early Apostolic period, is concentrated on Cæsarea. Nothing can be more dreary than its present aspect; and yet broken columns and fragments of fine masonry suffice to show what it once was. Tourists, however, rarely visit this memorable spot on the Syrian coast. It lies out of the line of the conventional route. Not now in this place is any "conflux issuing forth or entering," not now any governors "to their provinces hasting or on return," not now "lictors and rods, the ensigns of their power, legions and cohorts, or embassies from regions far remote." For, indeed, it is no exaggeration to apply to Cæsarea the language which Milton uses of the approaches to Rome. Here Herod built a magnificent city intended to be a copy of Rome. Here he opened mercantile communication with all the West. Here his grandson miserably died in the midst of public pomp. Here St. Peter threw wide open the doors of the Universal Church. From this harbour St. Paul was sent to Tarsus, when his first missionary efforts resulted in persecution; and from this city, after the magnificent successes of three missionary journeys, he went with Mnason to Jerusalem. Here he was two years in prison; and from hence he went finally to Rome. Nor does the historic claim of Cæsarea end for us here. It became

the seat of a Christian bishopric, and, in fact, a metropolitan see. Origen taught here, and Eusebius was one of its bishops. The romance of the Crusaders, too, has given a charm of its own to this desolate place on the coast. St. Louis fortified Cæsarea; and here was found the crystal vase which became the "holy grail" of the mediæval poets.

Nothing can be more curious than the contrasted histories of noted cities: and this general fact receives a good illustration in the instances of Cæsarea and Joppa. While the great harbour of Herod is utterly dead, the far earlier harbour, to which the Sidonians brought timber for King Solomon, lives on and retains its ancient name. There is a singular and almost comical variety in the associations of Jaffa. Here St. Peter prayed on the house-top, with the sea before him, over which the Gospel was to be conveyed to the islands and the far continent of the West. In the twelfth century of the Christian era Joppa belonged to the knights of St. John, was taken by Saladin, and was retaken by Richard Cœur de Lion. At the end of the last century associations of a very different character came over this scene. M. de Pressensé reminds us, with a sarcastic severity which we should hardly expect from a Frenchman, of Napoleon's remark, when he was urged to visit Jerusalem from hence, that Jerusalem "did not enter into his plan of military operations." It is in its character as the customary door of approach to the Holy City for modern travellers from the West, as well as because it marks the division between the plain of Sharon and the plain of Philistia, that we must here take special notice of Joppa. From the oldest associations we turn to the latest.

Mrs. Sumner has lately given to us a pleasant book of travel, written in an easy, natural and cheerful manner, from which we may take a description of the entrance upon a tour in Palestine from this point. It is thoroughly a woman's book: but it is all the better for its purpose on this account; and we must recollect that she had the benefit of the companionship of her husband, Canon Sumner, who, to say nothing of other writings, has enriched us by an excellent memoir of his honoured father, the Bishop of Winchester.

On a grassy platform overlooking Jaffa, with its white, flat-roofed buildings, surrounded by acres of orange and lemon-trees, and the blue sea beyond, we found our encampment—five stately tents, adorned within most brilliantly with appliqué work, in red, white, crimson, and blue patterns. . . . The Union Jack floated on the central tent . . . and we began to feel the grandeur and freedom of nomad life. Here we were in this wonderful sacred and historic old country, with a ready-made and portable home, free to go or to remain, according to the dictates of our own will and fancy; and our first realization of gipsy life was highly exhilarating (p. 70).

The first mile out of the town took us through beautiful groves of orange and lemon-trees, as large as apple-trees in England. The size of the fruit is gigantic. Numbers of oranges are grown here for the Eastern markets; and at the time of the blooming of the trees their sweet perfume fills the air so strongly that, not only is the town of Jaffa redolent with it, but sailors some miles out at sea can tell that they are approaching the coast from the orange scent which is wafted to them from the luxuriant shore. We emerged from these fragrant groves into the plain of Sharon, with the snow-capped range of Hebron in the distance (p. 74).

All, however, is not unmixed delight in the first experience of the traveller in Palestine. The succession of noises round the encampment at night—the incessant talk of the Arabs lying in the open air—the figeting and fighting of the horses, getting loose and rushing through tent-ropes—the barking of the dogs of Lydda—are described with all the zest of discomfort. The filth of the streets of Lydda receives similar notice. The flowers, however, on the journey, are a perpetual charm. There is lunch at midday, after leaving this town, under the shadow of a great rock. “The ground was perfectly enamelled with scarlet anemones, purple and white cyclamens, abundant as English primroses, and as large as in a well kept greenhouse, pink linum, ranunculuses, chamomile, *planta genista*, and many others.”

Such is the arrival of modern English tourists in the neighbourhood of the place where St. Peter wrought his miracle on Æneas. We leave them to pursue their route on the customary road by Bethhoron to Jerusalem, and turn our eye towards the broadening plain of Philistia. Here, again, if we go further backwards in the history of the earliest spreading of the Gospel, the active work of St. Philip furnishes a link for us between the narrower plain and the broader. We know that he was residing at Cæsarea when St. Paul returned from his Third Missionary Circuit; and even before we have any account of St. Peter's journeys, we find Philip preaching to the Ethiopian eunuch, on the “desert” road which led (probably by Hebron) to Gaza: and afterwards, we are told, he was found at Azotus or Ashdod. These are two of the five cities of the Philistines, the others being Ekron, Gath, and Ashkelon. This last of the Philistine cities has, for two reasons, a special interest for us. It was the only one actually on the shore of the Mediterranean: and it is memorable in the history of the Crusades. Dr. Thomson describes with great care, and with much feeling, the desolate ruins of this city, where our own King Richard held his Court. But we pass on to Gaza, which is still a very large town, and the position of which at the extreme south-western corner of Palestine, on the way to Egypt, has in all ages made it important. Here again we obtain very full impressions of the place from the same dili-

gent American traveller. Remembering, however, that his purpose is to illustrate customs, as well as topography, we may turn to a subject of another kind, which he instinctively connects with this region.

He has been riding through the village of Lydda, and he says:—

The little circuit has afforded me a beautiful illustration of Scripture. Two women were sitting before the door of their house, grinding wheat on a hand-mill. I heard the ring of this apparatus some time before I saw it; and I now understand what is meant by the preacher when he says, "the grinders cease because they are few; the sound of the grinding is low." Jeremiah also saddens the picture of Israel's desolation by Nebuchadnezzar with the prediction that "the sound of the millstones" should cease. From this, on southwards through Philistia, there are no mill-streams, and we shall not cease to hear the hum of the hand-mill at every village and Arab camp, morning and evening, and deep into the night (p. 108).

The interest of this Biblical illustration reaches its highest point at Gaza. "This grinding at the mill was often imposed upon captives taken in war." Thus, Samson was compelled "to grind in brazen fetters under task, eyeless, in Gaza, at the mill with slaves," and, to continue Milton's description, "sung and proverbéd for a fool in every street."

All through the period of the Judges, and during the reigns of the two first kings of Israel, this Philistine country is the geographical basis of the most exciting struggles.¹ Our topics, however, being very various, and our limits scanty, the connection of sacred topography and sacred history in this region, with its varied identifications of memorable sites, must be left with a mere allusion. We must not, however, fail to note in passing that from this region of the Philistines, or "the strangers," the Holy Land derives its permanent name of "Palestine."

It is a very curious fact that, for identifying sites in this southwestern part of Palestine, one of the most important positions is a city, which did not exist, at least as a place of note, before the third century, and which ceased to exist in this character in the eighth century. This is the city of Eleutheropolis, now well ascertained to be identical in its site with Beit-Jebrin. We must not dwell on this topic, except just to observe that the different periods of historical geography in the Holy Land are so interconnected, that it is not safe to neglect any of them, while yet it requires great care to avoid confusing them with one another. Especially on the ground immediately before us it is important

¹ The romantic adventures of David during the time of his exile and wanderings have received much important illustration from the result of the survey of the Palestine Exploration Fund. Some particulars are given in the Quarterly Statement for last January.

to have regard to ecclesiastical and diocesan Christian history, and to the successes and reverses of the Saracens in this part of the world.

We may now take up our position suddenly on a totally new scene—namely at Beersheba—at the edge of the desert, on the south of the high land of Judaea. This region of nomadic life, where the patriarchs pitched their tents and fed their flocks, has a very distinctive character of its own. The exact place of Beersheba is known beyond any doubt; and its wells, and the scene around, are exactly in harmony with the patriarchal history. Whether the original name means “the well of Seven,” or “the well of the Oath,” we need not inquire. The name Bir-es-Seba is still there, as Dr. Thomson tells us, marking a spot “in lat. $31^{\circ} 4'$ and long. $34^{\circ} 47'$ east from Greenwich, and about thirty miles south, a little west, from Hebron.” When, long after the time of Abraham, the tribes were settled in Palestine, the possession of Beersheba seems to have wavered between Simeon and Judah. Virtually, however, this was the southern frontier of Judah—as it was the extreme limit reached by the sons of Samuel in the exercise of their functions as judges, and by Joab in his census of the people during David’s reign—and as it became the proverbial boundary of the whole country on the south, in combination with Dan at the source of the Jordan in the north.

The life of Abraham carries us in a direct line from Beersheba to Hebron. Nor is the journey thus traversed very far in distance. The change, however, is very great in the character and elevation of the country. It is interesting to revert to Dr. Robinson’s journey along this route. He describes how, with the mountains of Judah in view, the desert was gradually left behind; how, after travelling over an undulating country, green with grass and bright with flowers, he had left behind him the tamarisk of the wilderness—the Reten, or juniper-tree, under which Elijah rested; and saw, instead, around him the olive-tree of the hills, and found himself travelling among cliffs, and ascending and descending the steep sides of valleys. The vineyards of Hebron form one of its chief characteristics now, as was the case in the time of Joshua. “With Hebron,” says de Pressensé, “begins the vine-region of Judah. At every step we meet, as many travellers have remarked, the beautiful and touching parable of Isaiah: nothing is wanting, neither the vine, nor the hedge, nor the tower of the keeper of the vineyard.” It is, however, the memory of Abraham that gives its most lively associations to this city, which is often spoken of as the most ancient in the world.

The oak which bears Abraham’s name, and which is shown near Hebron, is a magnificent tree, of vast age, whose branches spread their

shade far over the grass. This legendary designation could not have a better place than in this country of the patriarchs. It was in such a place that Abraham, with that noble dignity which was always found in his tent, and with that urgency which was characteristic of his great heart, offered hospitality to weary travellers passing before him under the midday sun. There it was that in these travellers he recognized the angels of the Most High, and that, in a wrestling even more sublime perhaps than that of Jacob, he prefigured the mercies of Christ in interceding for the accursed city. Hebron is filled with his memory; and there repose his ashes, and the ashes of his family (p. 167).

We must add here, however, that the lives of Abraham and David converge at this point in the most remarkable manner; for here David reigned seven years before Jebus was taken by him and became Jerusalem. And while we are thus connecting sacred topography with sacred history, let us not fail to observe once more the great height which we have reached above the plain, alike of the coast and of the desert. Dean Stanley observes, in one of those vivid comparisons which help us so much, that Hebron is only 500 feet lower than Snowdon. How well, he adds, one understands the expression, "They went *down* into Egypt."¹

But here other associations demand our attention. This "hill-country of Judæa," in some part of which took place the solemn meeting of Mary and Elizabeth, is the scene of the earliest narratives of the Gospel history, and of the infancy of our Saviour. The interest of the whole is, of course, concentrated in Bethlehem, which is not far to the south of Jerusalem. Again a sentence may be quoted from de Pressensé, the charm of whose French writing reminds one of Chateaubriand and Lamartine, while he is free from the fetters of their traditional views, and, though equally devout, is on a level with the results of modern research:—"From the terraces of Bethlehem the view is far extended. We are shown in the distance the field of the Shepherds. However this may be, these are the plains which heard the angelic message. We felt afresh the power of that sweet and serene poetry which is in the earliest chapters of St. Luke."

Bethlehem is very near to Jerusalem. Let us pause, then, at the Mount of Olives; and here let us recall the impressions which have been made in the mind during our rapid circuit from Carmel and round by the coast and the edge of the desert. The Mount of Olives, too, will combine itself easily with what we shall have to say hereafter; for it connects itself very closely with the

¹ We must not forget that Southern Palestine is bounded on the east by the Dead Sea. In the middle of the shore-line of this sad salt silent sea is the sanctuary of Engedi, noted in the life of David. De Sauley says he was not prepared for a place of such rest and beauty in so desolate a region.

Jordan Valley, and in the end it will bring our view full upon Jerusalem.

It was with Jerusalem full in view, that our Lord, seated on the Mount of Olives, on two occasions during the solemn days immediately preceding the crucifixion, spoke words which have sunk deep into the heart of Christendom. Mrs. Sumner has touched these two points in the manner which is most natural to the English traveller:—

March 21.—It was Palm Sunday; and after morning service in the English Church, which was crowded, we determined to walk to Bethany, and so return back to Jerusalem along the very same road which our Lord had trodden on the first Palm Sunday. Bethany lies on the other side of the Mount of Olives, between two and three miles from Jerusalem. The road, which wound along the mountain-side, was wild and rocky. The blue iris and bright crimson anemones—called “drops of blood” by the pilgrims—studded the hill-sides. Occasionally we passed fig-trees, bearing, as is usual at that season, small early figs. The interest of our walk culminated as we returned towards Jerusalem, and rounded one of the shoulders of Mount Olivet, when the view of Jerusalem suddenly burst upon us, and we felt that we must be standing at the very point where Our Lord halted as He rode from Bethany. The valley of Jehoshaphat was immediately beneath us; the Holy City crowned the mountain beyond. It was spread before us like an ideal city, surrounded by battlemented walls, adorned with domes and minarets gleaming in the sun, almost like the pictorial descriptions of the heavenly Jerusalem (p. 108).

March 28.—On Easter Sunday afternoon, spent a long time high up on the Mount of Olives, looking over Jerusalem. It was a brilliant day, glorious with sunshine and blue sky, and the view was splendid. In this very place Our Lord Jesus Christ might have sat with His disciples, when they came to Him “for to show Him the buildings of the Temple,” and when He said, “Verily, I say unto you, there shall not be left here one stone upon another that shall not be thrown down.” Again the description in the Book of the Revelation forced itself upon our minds as we gazed on the city before us, all radiant and resplendent in the glorious sunlight (p. 153).

Dr. Thomson, after describing the ascent upwards from the Jordan Valley and Jericho, may be said to end his account of Southern Palestine with the Mount of Olives; for he prefixes these words to each of his four last chapters. His tent was “pitched under a spreading fig-tree in the open court of a cottage on the north-west side” of the mountain. He describes excursions made from this camping-ground, again and again, through the streets and in the environs of Jerusalem. We shall use these descriptions, along with the accounts given by others, when, after some further survey of the Holy Country, we come to the Holy City.

J. S. HOWSON.