

endowment is appropriated exclusively for their benefit, out of which exhibitions of the yearly value of £40 are assigned to them, and further benefits are conferred on deserving Welsh students in necessitous circumstances." Under this state of things, it is no matter of surprise that the number of young Welshmen who avail themselves of the advantage of a University education is very limited, and that it falls very much below what it would be if the state of intermediate education in the Principality were more satisfactory, and if more ample provision were made for them, in the shape of scholarships and exhibitions at places of higher education.

I now drop my pen, but I may take it up again, and I shall next call attention to "the conclusions" and "recommendations" of the Committee on the subject of their Report.

J. POWELL JONES.

ART. II.—CENTRAL PALESTINE.

1. *Early Travellers in Palestine.* Edited, with Notes, by THOMAS WRIGHT, F.S.A. Bohn's Series. 1848.
2. *Vacation Tourists and Travels in 1861.* (Nablous and the Samaritans, by GEORGE GROVE, Esq.) Macmillan. London: 1861.
3. *Tent Work in Palestine: a Record of Discovery and Adventure.* By C. R. CONDER, R.E., Officer in Command of the Survey Expedition. Published for the Committee of the Palestine Exploration Fund. Bentley. London: 1880.

A PAPER on Northern Palestine, recently published in this Magazine, came to an abrupt termination under the consciousness that the extreme limits of space which were possible at that time had been reached. The plan of that paper was to follow in order the territories of the Tribes; and in one sense it may be said to have terminated naturally with the mention of Issachar; for the descendants of that tribe had their land symmetrically placed across the breadth of Palestine, between the three northern tribes, Asher, Zebulon, and Naphtali, on the one hand, and those three which were descended from Rachel and which lay together to the southward, Manasseh, Ephraim, and Benjamin, on the other. And in a different sense, too, the pause was natural. This territory of Issachar coincided almost exactly with that plain of Esdraelon which, intersecting the Holy Land from east to west, between the highlands of Galilee and the table-land of Samaria, is one of its most remarkable and

characteristic features. In resuming the subject, however, it is more fitting now that "Central Palestine" should be the title given to this present paper. It will end with Jerusalem, as two previous essays on "Southern Palestine" and on "The Jordan Valley," ended before.

It is evident, with the subject thus limited, that we have chiefly to do with the kindred and closely-associated tribes of Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh; but it is desirable, in the first place, carefully to recover our broken thread with ISSACHAR and the plain of Esdraelon.

In order to gain a good view of the well-defined territory of this tribe, it is very useful to go to some point beyond its limits, on the high ground to the north; and to this end, for obvious reasons, Nazareth shall be selected. Even for the poetical effect of scenery, and for its artistic treatment, this point would be well chosen. But a more serious motive guides the choice, in that this place, on the very mention of it, associates itself with the richest meaning of the Holy Land, and the greatest topic of the world's history. During thirty years Jesus Christ dwelt here in retirement. By far the greater part of the Saviour's life on earth was spent without any record of sublime teaching or of wonderful works. At the beginning of this period, we are told how Jesus, after His questioning with the doctors, "went down from Jerusalem to Nazareth;" at the end of it we are told how He went "from Galilee to the Jordan," to be baptized. The next notice of Nazareth is when He appeared as a teacher, with supreme authority, in its synagogue. Thus suddenly, with the most Divine meaning, does Nazareth—never mentioned in the Old Testament—take its great place in the world's history. No writer has appreciated this Divine meaning more thoroughly than Dr. Robinson. The somewhat heavy march of his style is here changed into enthusiasm, when, on the high ground above Nazareth, he enumerates all the elements of the view which must have been familiar to the Saviour's eyes. Thenceforth, the memory of Nazareth, though sometimes tinged with deplorable superstition, has continued from age to age. Nor has its interest been merely Biblical. Here Tancred was a feudal lord, holding his tenure from the Crusading King of Jerusalem. Here Napoleon, as we shall see, connected the name of Nazareth with ignoble human military glory.

Some hills, though of no great altitude, have an extraordinary power, by their isolation and characteristic form, in determining the expression of the scenery of a neighbourhood. Such is the Wrekin in Shropshire, and such is Mount Tabor in the north-eastern angle of the plain of Esdraelon, at the distance of a few miles from Nazareth. Lieutenant Conder, with a true instinct

has made a view of this hill the frontispiece of his excellent and most instructive book, "Tent-Work in Palestine." We cannot wonder that this hill was taken at a comparatively early date, when the spirit of pilgrimage eagerly sought out fit localities for Gospel incidents, as the scene of the Transfiguration;¹ and it is worth while to exhibit this feeling concerning Tabor in conjunction with actual visits to its summit, by extracts from two of the early travellers whose experience was given to us some years ago by Mr. Wright in a most convenient little volume.² Arculf has a peculiar interest for us, partly because he stands first in the list, and partly because, cast by shipwreck on the shore of Iona, he became associated with the purest and most poetical of primitive missionary work. In the summary given by Adamnan, we find the following:—

Mount Tabor in Galilee is three miles from the Lake of Gennesareth, of a remarkably round shape, and covered in an extraordinary manner with grass and flowers. At the top is a pleasant and extensive meadow, surrounded by a thick wood, and in the middle of the meadow a great monastery, with numerous cells of monks. The meadow is about 24 stadia in breadth and the height of the mountain is about 30 stadia. There are also three handsome churches on the top, according to the number of tabernacles described by Peter. The monastery and churches are enclosed by a stone wall (p. 9).

In all the early travellers the three commemorative chapels are conspicuous. Fuller, whether correctly or not, adduces one as saying that he saw on Tabor the actual tabernacles which Peter wished to make. With Maundrell, the British Chaplain at Constantinople, we come to a contemporary of Fuller himself, and to the dawn of a true spirit of Biblical inquiry; and especially we observe that this writer—the last in Mr. Wright's collection of Early Travellers—has a correct sense of the importance of studying the topography of the tribes. He says of Tabor:—

From the top of Tabor you have a prospect which, if nothing else, well rewards the trouble of ascending it. It is impossible for man's eyes to behold a higher gratification of this nature. On the north-west you discern at a distance the Mediterranean; and all around you have the spacious and beautiful plains of Esdraelon and Galilee, which present you with the view of so many places memorable for the resort and miracles of the Son of God. At the bottom of Tabor, westward, stands Daberah, a small village, supposed by some to take its name

¹ The true scene of this event is to be sought, as has been observed in an earlier paper, on the slopes of Hermon.

² The chronological list of Early Travels in Palestine, printed at the close of Dr. Robinson's third volume, with a list of later travels up to the time of its publication, is invaluable; and it is due to the United States to mention the Bibliographical appendix, by Dr. Abbott and Dr. Hackett, to the article "Palestine" in the American edition (in four volumes) of "The Dictionary of the Bible."

from Deborah, that famous judge and deliverer of Israel. Near this valley is the fountain of Kishon. Not many leagues eastward you see Mount Hermon, at the foot of which is seated Nain, famous for our Lord's raising the widow's son there, and Endor, the place where dwelt the witch consulted by Saul. Turning a little southward you have in view the high mountains of Gilboa, fatal to Saul and his sons. Due east you discover the Sea of Tiberias, distant about one day's journey (p. 479).

This mention of Endor and Nain, with Gilboa, carries our thoughts to two other isolated ranges of hill, which together determine the character of this eastern part of the plain of Esdraelon. The level ground between them is the connecting link of this plain with the low ground by the Jordan.

The intermediate of these three ridges, though very striking in form, seems to have no definite Biblical history at all; and yet it is popularly known now, without any true authority, as the Little Hermon. Lieutenant Conder speaks thus of this fact:—

The Crusaders called it sometimes Mount Endor, and generally Little Hermon, a title still known to the Nazareth Christians. The latter name was given in consequence of the expression "Tabor and Hermon shall rejoice in Thy name," whence they seem to have argued that Hermon was to be sought close to Tabor. They can never have looked northwards from the neighbourhood of Endor, or they would have seen the rounded isolated mound, like a huge mole-hill, which is Tabor, and behind it, far away, the magnificent snowy dome of the second sacred mountain of the text—the true Hermon (p. 62).¹

That Gilboa, on the contrary, should be so pre-eminently famous in the Hebrew annals, is one of the caprices of history and geography: and when we think of this southern ridge, we must not only call to mind the death of Saul, but remember also that Jezreel is on its eastern edge. By the help of this position we can kindle into life again some of the most important passages of the lives of Ahab and Elijah. Between the little Hermon and Gilboa, sloping down to the Jordan, is "the valley of Jezreel." When in connection with this part of the plain we think of the decay and deserved ruin of the Israelitish kingdom, we read there the lesson of a terrible retribution in the words of the prophet, "I will break the bow of Israel in the valley of Jezreel."

One inevitable characteristic of the plain of Esdraelon is that it has been the battle-field of Palestine. This broad level has

¹ The very name "Plain of Esdraelon," which all modern writers on the Holy Land use so freely and easily, is, like the name "Palestine," one of the anomalies of history, and comes simply from a passage in the Apocryphal Book of Judith. Josephus styles this expanse of low level ground "The Great Plain."

been to the history of the Holy Land what Belgium has been to the history of Europe. Taking into account the heights near the plain, with the plain itself, it is here that nearly all the decisive battles have been fought, which have determined successively for the moment the fate of Palestine. A mere enumeration will suffice to show that this is no extreme and wild exaggeration. First, there is the great conflict of Sisera and Barak, in which the Canaanites were decisively defeated. Next follows the war of Gideon and the Midianites, when the plain was full of the camels and hostile array of Oreb and Zeb. Then the defeat of Saul by the Philistines, and his death on Gilboa, near the eastern edge of the plain. From this we pass to the conflicts of Ahab with the Syrians, and of Josiah with the Egyptians. The Greek period of the Seleucidæ and the strong period of the Roman Empire, saw military struggles here which were not without their importance. But let us pass to the Middle Ages. Dr. Robinson tells us, in a note, of a fight here with the Saracens, in which the Knights Templars and the Knights Hospitallers suffered severely. But, above all, we must remember, that it was in the outskirts of this region that the great battle of Hattin took place, in which the Saracen victory over the Christians, in regard to the Holy Land, was achieved. To pass suddenly again (and these transitions are very startling) to a nearer period of history—precisely here it is that General Kleber, in 1799, defeated the Arabs in that battle of Mount Tabor which is familiar in modern French military inscriptions, and after which we are told that Napoleon dined and slept at Nazareth. And if with the plain of Esdraelon before us, we have stretched our view to the East, so as to take Saladin into our thoughts, it is fair that we should stretch it to the sea-coast on the west, and remember Sir Sydney Smith and Mahomet Ali. It is quite worth while also—in fact, it is necessary for completeness, in pointing out the relation of this physical feature of Palestine with its history—to refer to smaller recent invasions. Lieutenant Conder tells us, how, in 1870 and 1877, this plain was “black with Arab houses of hair.”

Closely connected with the physical characteristics of this ground, and with its military history, is the course of the river Kishon, which, taking its sources in the springs beneath Tabor, and gradually collecting the drainage of the whole basin of Esdraelon, finds its way to the sea in a narrow opening under Carmel. The conditions of this river vary extremely, according to the season of the year. It may be a dry watercourse, and it may be a torrent: but it is always treacherous; and the traveller in its neighbourhood, at more points than one, must beware of quagmires. In the battle of 1799 many Arabs were drowned in the same river which was fatal to the troops of Sisera. Springs send their water into its bed at various points along the southern hilly

frontier of the plain, and there is a considerable affluent under Carmel, where Elijah slew the prophets of Baal.

To this south-western corner of the plain our thoughts are carried, under very different conditions, from the north-eastern, by the lives of Elijah and Elisha. Ahab went with speed, and with a terrible warning in his speed, from Carmel to Jezreel. Elisha, moving across the same space between the mountain by the sea and Shunem, which was near to Jezreel, "passed by continually" as a man of peace. We must now leave the plain, and travel from the territory of Issachar into that of Manasseh. The most characteristic entrance is at the place just mentioned on the south-west.¹ Here El Lejjun probably marks the site of Megiddo. Van de Velde seems at this place with good reason to have identified, by the resemblance of the name, the scene of Hadadrimmon.²

The true meaning of the territory of the tribe of MANASSEH is, that it was the border land of the tribe of Ephraim on the north. This frontier, curving round from Carmel on the west to the Jordan on the east, presented a vantage-ground from which these two central clans could look down on the approach of marauders, or more formidable enemies, as the Highland clans looked down upon the plains of Stirling or Perth. The Galilean mountains on the north of the plain are far higher than the Samaritan hill-country on the south; but the elevated table-land held by Manasseh and Ephraim was a strong and formidable position. Of these two tribes the former was far weaker than the latter. If we read in the Psalms of the "thousands" of Manasseh, we read of the "ten thousands" of Ephraim. It cannot be denied, as an old writer quaintly expresses it, that "the print of Jacob's fingers remained visible in the happiness of Ephraim's posterity," so that "behind Manasseh in age, he proved before him in honour." Yet we must in justice remember that we have here on the west of Jordan only half the tribe of Joseph's first-born. The tribe of Manasseh was in truth a warlike one; and the conquest of the land on the east of Judæa had been very difficult. The descendants of Machir, the oldest son of Manasseh, are conspicuous in the subduing of Gilead; and "out of Machir" came governors to be enumerated among the heroes of the song of Deborah. But with this fame in the east the military ardour of Manasseh seems to have been exhausted. When David was crowned at Hebron, the eastern Manassites were 120,000 in number, all thoroughly armed, while those of the same tribe from the west were only 18,000. It is probable that the two

¹ The western road from Damascus to Egypt went through this Pass.

² Here a reference may be allowed to the articles "Megiddo," and "Armageddon," in "The Dictionary of the Bible." It must, however, in candour be added that Lieut. Conder finds the site of Megiddo considerably to the eastward.

sections of the tribe, which in one place near Bethshan and Jabesh-Gilead were separated only by the Jordan, became in the end almost strangers to one another.

It would be difficult to exaggerate the importance of the name of EPHRAIM in Hebrew history. We might exemplify this by passages taken from the prophets only, where this name occurs, and by such passages taken nearly at random. Ephraim was almost a synonym for the kingdom of Israel. "Syria is confederate with Ephraim" (Isa. vii. 2). "Ephraim shall receive shame" (Hosea x. 6). "I will cut off the chariot from Ephraim" (Zech. ix. 10). To state the same thing in another form, and still to refer to the prophets, Ephraim is almost synonymous with Samaria. "The head of Ephraim is Samaria" (Isa. vii. 9). A tribe which included in its ranks such names as those of Deborah, Samuel, and Jeroboam, and especially Joshua—a tribe which contained within its geographical range such places as Shiloh, Samaria, and Shechem; the first representing the sacred history of the Hebrews until the taking of Jerusalem; the second connecting all their later history with the Evangelic and Apostolic history of the New Testament; the third ranging in its interest from Abraham to Christ—a tribe spread over the commanding table-land from east to west, from the Mediterranean near Joppa, to the Jordan near Jericho—such a tribe must necessarily be pre-eminent, and must draw to itself a very large share of observation. Here the reader's attention will be invited only to Shechem and its immediate neighbourhood.

Of Shechem it may be said, with more exact truth than of any other place, that it is the geographical centre of the Holy Land. Nor is any other place, on the whole, so central for its history; for its memory radiates to every point of that history, and not simply, as has just been said, from Abraham to Christ, but from Abraham to St. Stephen. Let us briefly put together the facts of the case.

Shechem may correctly be said to be one of the earliest links of the patriarchs with Egypt—that great back-ground of Jewish history: and this, as we shall see, is a point to be carefully observed. For on the first entrance of Abraham into Canaan, in obedience to the Divine command, it is not simply said that Shechem was his first temporary home in the land of promise—"Abraham passed through the land unto the place of Shechem, unto the place of Moreh"—but the narrative immediately proceeds to say that he went southwards to Egypt, and returned from thence. To one who looks with a reverent eye into the mysterious passages of the earliest history, it is a most striking fact that the First Patriarch should have stood, and within a few years, in the Valleys of the Euphrates and

of the Nile. Jacob, on the return from his exile to the Land of Promise, came first to Shechem; and there was the earliest fragment of ground possessed by the Hebrew family. In his grandfather's time, Shechem is termed merely a place. Now "a city" was built there. "Jacob came to the city of Shechem, when he came from Padan-Aran, and pitched his tent before the city; and he bought a parcel of a field, where he had spread his tent." And presently here again, most remarkably, we find our thoughts brought into contact with Egypt. It is not merely that Jacob himself, in due time, went thither. But Joseph's brethren led a nomadic life in this region. "His brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem. And Israel said unto Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send thee unto them. So he sent him out of the Vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem." The name of the place is impressed, with a most singular distinctness, on this memorable passage of the sacred story. Now here they were in the region crossed by the Caravan Road from Gilead into Egypt. When they were debating how to deal with this inopportune visit of their hated brother, there came some Ishmaelite merchants, with their camels and spices, on their way to Egypt. So it came to pass that Joseph was sold into Egypt. And if we now follow his biography, we find it linking itself at the close, in a most extraordinary manner, with this self-same Shechem. In order to feel all the wonder of this combination, we need only put together three passages relating to Joseph's death and burial. Joseph, with a marvellous prophetic instinct, and with the memory of his early days, doubtless, mingling with his vision of the future, said to his brethren, "I die: and God will surely visit you, and bring you out of this land, unto the land which he sware to Abraham, to Isaac, and to Jacob: and Joseph took an oath of the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you, and ye shall carry up my bones from hence. So Joseph died, being a hundred and ten years old: and they embalmed him, and put him into a coffin in Egypt." We know what this embalming means; and this knowledge infuses a strange wonder into what we read in the account of the departure from Egypt. "God led the people through the way of the wilderness of the Red Sea; and Moses took the bones of Joseph with him; for he had strictly sworn the children of Israel, saying, God will surely visit you; and ye shall carry up my bones hence with you." In fact, the mummy of Joseph was carried by the children of Israel, during these long forty years, through the wilderness. And now we come to the burying of that mummy, where perhaps it still exists in calm preservation with the hieroglyphics fresh upon it, in the central place

of the Holy Land.¹ When the conquest is over, and the land has been divided, it is said: "The bones of Joshua, which the children of Israel brought up out of Egypt, buried they in Shechem in the piece of ground which Jacob had bought." Thus ends the Book of Joshua. But in another sense this place absorbs the interest of the closing part of that Book. At Shechem, in the midst of his own tribal settlement, the hero saint gathered all the tribes, to give them his last blessing, his last warning, and to remind them of their memorable history since their departure from Egypt. "So Joshua made a covenant with the people that day, and set them a statute and an ordinance in Shechem;" and a stone was set up, "and the people departed unto their inheritance."

Such being the earlier part of the local history of Shechem, we should expect its interest to be continued through later ages: and this we find to be the case. At this place (we wonder that it was not at Jerusalem) Rehoboam was proclaimed king on the death of his father Solomon. "Rehoboam went to Shechem: for all Israel came to Shechem to make him king." At this time Jeroboam was in Egypt; and here again we have one of those curious links, to which attention has been already invited. The whole history of the Chosen People passes now rapidly through a revolution, with Shechem as its centre. The separation of the ten tribes is accomplished, and "Jeroboam built Shechem in Mount Ephraim, and dwelt therein." It now became a royal city, the capital of a rival monarchy. Thenceforward the history of Shechem is the history of the northern kingdom. But even after the Captivity the tenacity of its life continued. It became the centre of worship for the mysterious people whom we call the Samaritans. This fact introduces us to a memorable passage of Gospel history. Jesus passed through Samaria, and "came to the parcel of ground which Jacob gave his son Joseph;" and as He sat on Jacob's well, the woman of Samaria said unto Him—"Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship." This is quite enough, of course, if there were no other Gospel incidents in this region, to give a most living interest to the connection of Shechem with the Evangelic history. But the interest of a similar connection reappears in the pages of the book of the Acts. When the first martyr made his defence before the High Priest and the Sanhedrim, he laid special stress on the old patriarchal burial place in Shechem, and on the connection thus established with Egypt. In fact—possibly (it is a reasonable conjecture) because he himself may have been from Alexandria—Egypt

¹ In such a speculation, however, we must remember the extraordinary power of the climate of Egypt in preserving relics of the past.

fills more than half the space of St. Stephen's speech. It is as if the shadow of the pyramids was thrown across the history of the Acts of the Apostles.

Such being the extraordinary interest of Shechem—the sacred annals having, as it were, in every part a lingering attachment to it—it is inevitable that we should observe carefully the aspect and scenery of its neighbourhood. And they are clearly described to us by all travellers. We find ourselves here in park-like woodland scenery, amid the twittering of birds, and a moist and refreshing atmosphere. The contrast this scene presents is as sharp as possible with the arid mountain country of Judæa and the low fertile corn land of Esdraelon. Most true to the facts of the case is the placing within this verdant environment the famous apologue of Jotham and the trees. The late Dean of Westminster, with his quick instinct, seized and quoted a passage in Van de Velde's narrative, in which these features of the country near Shechem are vividly described. The quotation relates to a visit early in the year. But this Dutch traveller went to Shechem again at a later season; and on the second occasion he was even more delighted than on the first:—

Shechem this time has still more charms for me than it had two months ago. Then it was winter, and only the olive and the orange-tree were clad in green. Now all the trees of the valley, whether apricots or mulberries, pomegranates or vines, figs or walnuts, showed themselves in the fulness of their splendour. Shechem now lies embosomed in a forest of fruit-gardens. As far as Nature goes, one might almost call it a little paradise. And if you wish rightly to appreciate its value, there is nothing like a previous hard day's journey over the barren hills, or through the scorching valleys of this country. . . . We get round the mountain, and our eye rests at once upon a carpet of the most lovely green, whilst the shadow of Mount Gerizim increases the depth of its tints. What a charming valley! What a lovely view! What a splendid situation has this town! We ride along its northern wall, and coming on the west side of the town, we find ourselves in the most delicious part of the gardens. What a splendour has Nature bestowed upon this spot! What lovely melodies from among the branches rejoice the heart! What a rushing of waters from numberless rivulets! What a delightfully cool atmosphere in this shade!—*Narrative*, vol. ii. pp. 293, 294.

Most readers will feel that there is something of exaggeration here. But we must make allowance for the temperament of a traveller and for the experiences he may recently have gone through.

But there is a physical feature of the neighbourhood of Shechem of far greater historical moment than its woodland verdure. This is Mount Gerizim, which rises above the city in parallel dignity and rivalry with Mount Ebal. True to the

facts of the case, the mountain is named in the apologue of the Book of Judges along with the city and its trees. "Jotham went and stood in the top of Mount Gerizim, and lifted up his voice, and cried, and said unto them, Hearken unto me, ye men of Shechem, that God may hearken unto you. The trees went forth on a time to anoint a king over them." There is no doubt that Gerizim is the mountain to which the woman of Samaria alluded, when speaking to the Saviour; and the mountain was full in view as she spoke. No religious fact in the world is more curious and more interesting than the survival of the small remnant of the Samaritans here in Nablous or Sichem. Their numbers are scanty in the extreme, and they have suffered much; and the town, as a whole, is intensely Mahomedan. Still they survive with wonderful tenacity. "Four times a year they go up to Mount Gerizim in solemn procession to worship; and then they begin reading the Law as they set off, and finish it above. These seasons are—the feast of the Passover, when they pitch their tents upon the mountain all night, and sacrifice seven lambs at sunset; the day of Pentecost; the feast of Tabernacles, when they sojourn here in booths built of branches of the arbutus; and lastly, the great day of the Atonement in autumn."¹ Canon Farrar saw the celebration of the Passover by the Samaritans in 1870, and describes how they eat it standing, with shoes on the feet, and with loins girded, and how they hand round the morsels of unleavened bread with bitter herbs. Mr. George Grove was at Nablous in 1861, at the time of the great day of Atonement; and he describes minutely, in "Vacation Tourists and Notes of Travel" for that year, the ceremonies observed in the town below, and especially the music in the synagogue. But not only, or chiefly, for this reason is Mr. Grove's name placed at the head of this article. No one can go carefully through the historical incidents and the questions of topography that are connected with the distribution of the Hebrew tribes—availing himself of the assistance provided by this able writer in "The Dictionary of the Bible"—without being sensible of extreme and varied obligation; and perhaps nowhere is it more fitting that this sense of obligation should be expressed than in connection with the great tribe of Ephraim and with Shechem.

Somewhere near the place where the tribes of Ephraim and Benjamin meet on the west, and where they both meet what may be designated the fading tribe of Dan—and on the frontier line of the high ground, overlooking the northern part of the Philistine plain and the sea—is a spot of surpassing interest,

¹ Robinson, vol. iii. p. 106. It seems, however, doubtful whether the Samaritans go to the top of the mountain for any part of their celebration of the day of Atonement.

though too often altogether forgotten by English travellers in the Holy Land. This is Modin, the birth-place of the heroic family of the Maccabees, and the place of their burial. The illustrations of the Holy Land which may be obtained from the Apocrypha are far too much neglected. They are, in fact, considerable in amount, and really important. Here a slight reference is made simply to the Books of Maccabees. What an extraordinary novelty of interest is given to the Holy Land in this period by these two facts—that elephants were then used there in war, and that it was then that the first communications between the Jew and the Roman began! The rise of the great patriotic war with Antiochus Epiphanes is told simply thus by Dean Milman. "In Modin lived Mattathias, a man of the priestly line of Joarib, himself advanced in years, but with five sons in the prime of life—Johanán, Simon, Judas, Eleazar, and Jonathan. When the officer of Antiochus arrived at Modin, to enforce the execution of the edict against the Jewish religion, he made splendid offers to Mattathias as a man of great influence, to induce him to submit to the royal will. The old man not only rejected his advances, but publicly proclaimed his resolution to live and die in the faith of his fathers; and when an apostate Jew was about to offer sacrifice to the heathen deity, in a transport of indignant zeal, Mattathias struck him dead upon the altar. Mattathias then fell on the king's commissioner, put him to death, and summoned all the citizens who were zealous for the Law to follow him to the mountains."¹ Thenceforward a war of religious patriotism was prosecuted with singular heroism and wonderful success. When Judas Maccabæus, the great soldier of the family, was slain, Simon set up at Modin "aloft to the sight," a monument of polished stone. "Moreover, he set up seven pyramids, one against another, for his father and mother, and his four brethren; and in these he made cunning devices, about the which he set great pillars; and upon the pillars he made all their armour for a perpetual memory, and by the armour ships carved, that they might be seen by all who sail on the sea. This is the sepulchre which he made at Modin; and it standeth yet unto this day." So writes the author of the First Book of Maccabees (xiii. 27-30):² and not only Josephus, but Eusebius also, and Jerome, assert that the monument remained in their time. The historic associations of the Holy Land are so manifold and various, that this can hardly be deemed a

¹ "History of the Jews," vol. iii. p. 1.

² For this period of Jewish history, careful use should be made of Archdeacon Cotton's "Five Books of Maccabees" (Oxford, 1832). Lient. Conder has recently added to our obligations to him by publishing, in the "New Plutarch," a Life of Judas Maccabæus.

digression in our circuit, along the borders of Ephraim, Dan, and Benjamin.

"After thee, O BENJAMIN!"—This historic war-cry reveals to us a great part of the character of this tribe—its vigour, valour, and promptitude; its ferocity in war, its tendency to take the lead. A tribe which gave birth to such men as the first king of Israel, the great general of that king, the famous Jew at the court of Esther, and the chosen Apostle of the Gentiles—a tribe which contained within its limits such places as Gilgal, Jericho, Gibeah, Anathoth, Shiloh, and Ramah—is clearly one which ought to have large attention in any complete description of the territorial distribution of the early Hebrew inhabitants of Palestine. But a very slight notice of this subject must form the brief conclusion of this scanty essay. Simply one point of interest will be selected in connection with this tribe, for the purpose of calling definite attention at the close to the invaluable results obtained for us through the operations of the Palestine Exploration Fund. The map, published within these few last weeks, has been mentioned in a previous article. Here reference is made to the *Quarterly Statement*, which appears punctually, and always with matter full of interest. The October number is peculiarly rich. It records, indeed, two serious losses, in the deaths of the Rev. F. W. Holland and Major Anderson, to whom so much is due in the survey of Sinai and of Western Palestine respectively. Both were closely associated with Sir Charles Wilson in these invaluable enterprises of Biblical illustration. But amid these sad changes the work of Biblical illustration advances, and its results remain. Among the contents of this number is some account of Gibeon—identified beyond any doubt with *El Jib*, where the surveying party were for some time camped during the present year. Gibeon has a prominent place in the Hebrew annals in connection with the lives of Joshua and Solomon. But it is for the sake of a terrible passage in the life of David that this reference is made. Lieutenant Conder gives us in his narrative the following sentences:—

Our camp has been fixed at the famous city of Gibeon for ten days, and we have carefully examined the site of the ancient town. *El Jib*, the modern village, occupies the north end of a detached hill, some 200 feet high, surrounded by broad flat corn valleys on every side. The inhabitants state that the old city stood on the south part of the hill. . . . There are eight springs on the hill, the largest being one of the finest supplies of water in this part of Palestine. One of the springs is called *El Birkeh*, and flows into a rock-cut tank, measuring eleven feet by seven feet, the water issuing from a small cave. This place is south-west of the village, and close to the main east and west road through Gibeon. The pool is cut in the face of the cliff, and has a wall

of rock about three and a half feet high, on the west. Above it grows a pomegranate tree, and near it are ancient tombs in the cliff. The reader will remember the dramatic account of the meeting between Joab, with David's followers, and Abner, with the clansmen of the house of Saul (2 Sam. ii. 13); how they sat one on one side, the other on the other, at "the pool in Gibeon," and arranged the fatal duel between the young men who were bid to "arise and play before us." The Hebrew word describing the pool is the same as the modern Arabic, *Birkeh*; and the apparent antiquity of the ancient tank, fed partly by rain water, partly by the little spring in the cave, seems to countenance the idea that we here find preserved one of the lesser sites of the Biblical narrative, the recovery of which lends so much force and reality to the ancient narrative (pp. 255, 256).

It is precisely such illustration of "the lesser sites of the Biblical narrative" which gives to this modern "Tent Work in Palestine" much of its peculiar value. In the case before us, which is further made more vivid by a drawing of the water, the rock, and the pomegranate, it may or may not be true that we have presented to us the precise pool, near which occurred a scene so tragic in itself, and in the death of one of "the sons of Zeruiah," which followed the pursuit of Abner by the other two "by the way of the wilderness of Gibeon." In fact, Lieutenant Conder himself mentions another and a larger pool, which has good claims to this identification. It is because we are guided by scientific and conscientious inquiry, and by reverent and sympathetic observation, that we set so high a value on what our engineer officers are doing for us in this sacred field. Every small particular, too, may turn out to be of great importance in the end.

Such guidance through the territories of the Hebrew tribes and the scenes of Gospel story gives new life to Biblical study. But here we must end for the present. Here, in the tribe of Benjamin, we are close to Jerusalem. We have, on previous occasions, approached the Holy City from the south, and from the east. Now, after traversing the country from the north, we are again at the same Holy City, which is so absolutely on the frontier line of Benjamin and Judah, that it may almost be said to belong to both. This peculiarity of the position of "Jerusalem, which is Jebus," has much to do with the whole history of the Hebrew nation. The Jewish Chronicles may well record, with some enthusiasm, the taking of this fortress by David. "The inhabitants of Jebus said to David, Thou shalt not come hither. Nevertheless, David took the Castle of Zion, which is the city of David." Here the metropolis of national and religious life was fixed. For this purpose God "chose not the tribe of Ephraim," but the tribe of Judah.

J. S. HOWSON.