

Recent Biblical Archaeology.

BY PROFESSOR J. V. PRÁŠEK, PH.D., PRAGUE.

Two works belonging to this department have recently appeared, which deserve a somewhat detailed notice.

1. After a considerable interval of silence, Professor Winckler has published a new part of his *Allorientalische Forschungen*, which contains a very interesting study entitled, 'Zur Geschichte und Geographie Israels.' Winckler sets himself the task of proving that the geographical delimitation of Palestine remained unaltered from the patriarchal period down to that of the Maccabees, but that the knowledge of this fact was lost to the redactors of the Pentateuch. Close study of the Davidic period has already convinced Stade and E. Meyer that the data handed down regarding the so-called Israelitish empire under David leave much to be wished for in the matter of clearness, and in particular that its alleged extension beyond Talmyra, as far as the Euphrates, is historically impossible. Winckler has essayed to explain the Hamath boundary in the *Grundschrift* of the First Book of Maccabees (12²⁴⁻³⁴), and he localizes it not, as has hitherto been customary, at Hamath, on the Orontes, but close by the northern boundary of Palestine. For this conclusion he adduces convincing grounds from the Bible. When Jonathan is said to have moved against the generals of Demetrius, and to have come upon them in the neighbourhood of Hamath, the latter must be understood of the tract of country lying on the S.W. slope of Hermon, which stretches beside and behind Hamath, and is called in the O.T. 'Aram.' Now, this *Aram* (אֲרָם) is readily misread *Edom* (אֲדָם), an error which accounts for not a few of the impossibilities of the present text. But, if we assume, with Winckler, that the Hamath of 1 Mac. was on Hermon, the theory of the great empire of David extending as far as the Euphrates is robbed of its foundation, and his sway outside Canaan limited to the territory of the Hebrew tribes to the east and south, Ammon, Moab, and Edom. The fortress of Beth-sur, which has hitherto been discovered on the road from Jerusalem and Hebron, was, according to the ingenious theory of Winckler, the principal city of Aram; *i.e.* it lay in the north—a flat contradiction of the view hitherto held and

still supported by Buhl (*Geog. des alten Palästina*, p. 72). But in that case the position and direction of the river Eleutheros also become clear, this river being, according to the correct understanding of the passage in question, the modern Litâni. The Hamath which formed the northern boundary of Palestine is thus to be sought in the immediate neighbourhood of the lower course of the Litâni, and it was accordingly this same lower course of that river that formed the boundary of Palestine in the Maccabæan period.

Winckler carries out his idea further with the aim of showing that the Eleutheros-Litâni must at other times too have formed the northern boundary of Palestine. His guiding star in this direction is the Crusading tradition which gives to the *Nahr Kasimiye* (the modern designation of the lower course of the Litâni) the name Eleutheros. Here, according to Winckler, we have to do with a living tradition, and not with an identification made by the Crusaders with the Eleutheros of the ancients. The latter river should consequently be regarded as the boundary of the Israelitish kingdom even in the palmy days of David and Solomon. Since a river in Phœnicia, which also formerly bore the name Eleutheros, is now called *Nahr-el-Kebir*, Winckler infers that the southern Eleutheros as well must originally have had a significance equivalent to the modern Arabic *Kebir*, and with some such meaning as 'Great River.' But, then, in the well-known passage Jos 1⁷ we should read 'and Lebanon as far as the great river,' instead of 'as far as the Euphrates.' This last expression betrays itself as a later gloss founded upon a misunderstanding of the true conditions, for the Lebanon never stretched as far as the Euphrates. The mountain tract in the north of Israel was thus still regarded as belonging to Lebanon, and from here Solomon was supposed to have derived the cedar wood he required.

2. A keen interest has been awakened within the circle of those interested in biblical studies by the recent excavations systematically planned and executed on Palestinian soil. Professor E. Sellin, of the Evangel.-Theol. Faculty at Vienna, con-

ceived the idea of excavating the site, so full of historical interest, of the ancient Megiddo at the mouth of the passes leading from the south to the plain of Jezreel. Abundantly provided with the necessary resources [special mention must be made of Salo Cohn, a private gentleman who acted the part of a most generous patron of the undertaking], and accompanied by a young Bohemian student of Assyriology, Dr. Friedrich Hrozný, Dr. Sellin commenced, on 10th March 1902, his excavations on the hill known as *Tell Ta'aneh*. The first campaign continued till 12th July 1902. A second course of excavation was carried on from 7th to 30th March 1903; and the work was brought to a close in August 1904.

From Dr. Sellin's pen we have now a detailed account of the results of these excavations in his work entitled 'Tell Ta'aneh: Bericht,' etc., in the *Denkschriften* of the Kaiserl. Akademie der Wissenschaften in Wien (with an Appendix, 'Die Keilinschriften von Ta'aneh,' by Dr. Hrozný). The book, with its 13 tablets, 132 illustrations in the text, 4 plans in the text, and 2 large plans, exhibits such fruits of the work carried on at the above-named hill that a stimulus will be given to systematic excavation in Palestine. Sellin began digging down at the N. and N.E. sides of the hill, at first operating with two shafts driven obliquely towards the centre and intended to meet there. Slowly the work was pressed on till he came upon a very respectable 'dry' polygonal wall 1.9 m. in height, testifying to the existence of an ancient fort. Behind this were some remains of houses, two cisterns and jars with bodies deposited in them. The fort appeared to have been built on one side of a space supported by five buttresses. At a depth of 3.4 m. a large clay jar was found containing a child's skeleton. The neck of the jar was broken off, no doubt in order to gain entrance for the dead body, and the opening was closed with another clay fragment. A cistern with broken pieces of clay vessels at the bottom of it was also discovered. At a distance of 6 m. from the latter a monolith was found, to which five stone steps led down. The stone was 1.30 m. high, 0.40 m. broad, with a hole in the side, and behind it remains of a house with an earth floor. Among the numerous pieces of pottery and clay vessels, a basalt grater and a scarabæus deserve prominent mention. Round about the opening of a cistern discovered at a

depth of 3 m., stood large clay patches, some of which were marked with close 'hatchings.'

In all, to judge from the potsherds, we must distinguish, with Dr. Sellin, seven strata between the present surface and the virgin soil. The first and second, counting from below, are characterized by red potsherds upon whose surface are scratched parallel lines, lying close together, running in different directions and of no great length; in other cases there are cross-strokes that form a figure resembling a texture woven in linen. Dr. Sellin fixes the date of these strata at the earliest period, in the time of the Amorite population, after whom the country was called by the Babylonians *mat Martu* and afterwards *mat Amurri*. To the same period he assigns also what he calls the western fort, a very well-preserved building of quite hard limestone of a yellow colour, in which the stones are carefully disposed, the interstices between them being filled up with stones of small size; as well as a building on the northern hill connected by stairs with a room underground. To the third stratum belongs the fort at the east end of the plateau, which in its construction betrays an approach to a more artificial plan, and is to be assigned, with Dr. Sellin, to the period between Rameses II. and the advent of the Israelites. The fourth stratum shows that the Babylonian influence was already upon the decline, and therefore Dr. Sellin assigns it to the Solomonic period. To this stratum belongs the so-called northern fort, which rose above an ancient sacred street of ten monolith stones, and was surrounded by a trench 5 m. deep. In the potsherds found here there are already traces of Greek influence.

It is further to be noticed that from the neighbouring Rummâneh, a name in which that of the Amorite god Rimmon (called also Adad) may have survived, an ancient road leads to Ta'aneh. That Rimmon, who was worshipped under the form of a bull, had also his place of worship at Ta'aneh, is shown by the discoveries at the latter of bulls' heads with a human face. There was also discovered in a shaft belonging to the fourth stratum, a figure of Astarte with dwarfed trunk, misshapen head and gigantic earrings; another Astarte figure of bronze had a peculiar diadem, a thick neck-ring, while the whole body was covered with a veil, and the shoes had extraordinarily high heels. In the second stratum was found a Babylono-Egyptian seal-cylinder of black syenite, 3 cm. in depth, the

half of whose surface is occupied by three lines of archaic Babylonian cuneiform writing, containing the words of the seal, while a small zone contains the twice repeated sign for 'life' (' $\eta\chi$) and the sign for 6. The cuneiform legend names one Atanâhili, son of Hâbsûn, servant of Nirgal, as the possessor of the seal. In the accompanying adoration scene we see, standing before the god Nirgal, Atanâhili in a long robe and with uplifted hand engaged in prayer; between the two figures stands an altar. Besides this cylinder, which bears an unmistakable Egyptian character, we have to notice also twelve cuneiform tablets containing letters and lists. They represent part of a correspondence sent to Ta'aneke. The writers are named Gnli-Addi, Ahi-Jawi, and Aman-*hašir*, the last named of whom orders the sending of tribute to Megiddo; the person to whom the letters are addressed is called Ištar-mašur. These tablets

throw light upon the earliest conditions prevailing in the place of their discovery. We see that the district was subject to Egypt, whose overseer (*rabiš*) was stationed at Megiddo, that an Amorite dignitary in the service of the Pharaoh resided at Ta'aneke, and that, as in the time of the Amarna tablets, the Babylonian language and script were current. Dr. Sellin and Dr. Hrozný date these tablets at \pm 1450 B.C., *i.e.* immediately after the time of the conqueror of Palestine, Tahutmes III. (1515-1461 B.C.). To the Bible student the establishing of the name Ašira as that of a goddess is highly important. Further, we find in compound names the deities Bîl (in *Bibrâm*), Adad, Amon (in *Aman-*hašir**), and Jawe, probably identical with Jahweh, and borrowed from the Kenites of the Sinaitic peninsular.

At some future time Dr. Sellin thinks of starting excavations at the Dothan of the patriarchal history.

Books for Boys and Girls.

BLACKIE.

IF there is a war great or small, far or near, or even an expedition which involves fighting, British boys have learnt to look for a story about it from Messrs. Blackie. For many years these stories were provided by the late G. A. Henty—*With Kitchener in the Soudan*; *For Name and Fame, or To Cabul with Roberts*; *The Dash for Khartoum*; *With Buller in Natal*; and *With Roberts to Pretoria* were some of the names he gave them. This year Mr. Henty's place has been taken by two writers: Mr. Herbert Strang and Captain F. S. Brereton, both of whom have given us a story of the Russo-Japanese War. This is Mr. Strang's second book about the war. Its title is *Brown of Moukden* (5s.).

Last year he gave us *Kobo*, which dealt with the early incidents of the war from the Japanese standpoint. In *Brown of Moukden*, on the other hand, he has chosen the later incidents, from the battle of Yalu to the conclusion of peace, and has viewed them from the Russian standpoint. He knows quite well that this will not be so popular with the average schoolboy, but he tells us his reason for doing it. 'It is not the romancer's business to be a partisan,' he says, 'and we British people were at first, perhaps, a little blind to the fact that the bravery, the endurance, the heroism, have not been all on the one side.'

Captain F. S. Brereton's war story, *A Soldier of Japan* (5s.), is attractively bound in bright red and gold, and realistically illustrated. It is a stirring tale, animated by the patriotic and dauntless spirit of the little Japanese.

A Knight of St. John (6s.) is also by Captain F. S. Brereton. It is a tale of the siege of Malta in the days of good Queen Bess.

Mr. Strang has issued a second book at this time, *The Adventures of Harry Rochester* (6s.). It is a story of the days of Marlborough and Eugene, and is far above the average. In it we have accurate history and a true picture of the customs of the time, combined with the most stirring adventures, full of dash and go, which rivet our attention from beginning to end. There is an underplot also which is capably wrought out to a dramatic climax.

The Romance of Women's Influence, by Alice Corkran (6s.), prepossesses us at the outset by its clear type and thick paper, by its lightness and its beautiful illustrations, reproductions either from paintings or photographs. We are still more attracted by the contents. In pleasant, easy-flowing English Alice Corkran has given us an account of some eighteen women who have become famous by their influence. She has written it because she believes that 'it is through the glorification of the obscure virtues that we shall attain to the well-being of the race. It is in putting into every woman's heart, and also into the heart of every man, a great respect for them that we produce the atmosphere in which alone gifted souls can breathe and work. Yet self-sacrifice must be enlightened; that most precious and splendid quality must not be wasted by the untrained "givingness" of one who is but too ready to give, no matter who is to profit by her sacrifice.' Let us read it and we shall be enlightened.

The Nelson Navy Book, by J. Cuthbert Hadden (6s.), is a book to gladden the heart of every jack tar and of every boy with aspirations that way. It is a fascinating account of Britain's navy from the days of King Alfred to the present day, and it has also several practical chapters on How to