

inadmissible to apply the expression "the valley (*emek*) of the dead bodies," etc., to any part of the country beyond the west and south valley, and not adjoining Jerusalem.

Thus this valley being the only valley available must be that intended by the prophet, and as it is called (*emek*) it could not possibly be the valley (*ge*) of Hinnom.

The use therefore made above of this passage is fully justified.

W. F. BIRCH.

## VARIETIES.

It may be well to correct a few errors and misapprehensions.

*Emmaus*.—The anonymous paper on this place is incorrectly credited to me by Lieutenant Conder.

*The Siloam Inscription*.—In *Quarterly Statement*, 1881, page 141, the Pool of the Virgin (*Birket Sitti Maryam*) near St. Stephen's Gate is confused with the Virgin's Well, half a mile to the south. It is from the latter that the canal is cut to the Pool of Siloam.

*The Table land Rock*.—On page 327, this is given by the Rev. James Niel as one of the titles of Jerusalem. The allusion is obviously to Jer. xxi, 13, 14, "Behold I am against thee, O inhabitant of the valley, and rock of the plain, saith the Lord; which say, Who shall come down against us? or who shall enter into our habitations?"

There could hardly be a more beautiful illustration of the use of topographical research than this passage affords. Here the Hebrew word for valley is *emek*, and that for plain *mishor*; but the inhabitants of Jerusalem did not dwell in an *emek*; and *the mishor* is an expression only used of the upland downs east of the Jordan, so that this verse cannot be applied to Jerusalem, unless the utmost violence be done to Biblical usage.

The *topographical key*, however, turns this dead-lock with perfect ease. The inhabitants of Rabbath-Ammon boasted (Jer. xlix, 4) of their well watered valley (*emek*), while their citadel overlooked the surrounding country or *mishor*. Our *key* fits exactly, and makes it certain that the prophet refers to Rabbah. Besides, "Who shall come down to us?" is the very question asked in Jer. xlix, 4, "Who shall come unto me?" and the king of Babylon was advancing against both Rabbah and Jerusalem (Ezek. xxi, 20, 21), though he took the latter first. See *Quarterly Statement*, 1878, page 189.

*Gibeah*.—It seems to me that Kh. 'Adaseh, nearly two miles east of Gibeon, represents the long-lost site of *Gibeah* (Judg. xx), of *Gibeah of Saul*, and of the hill of *Ammah*, *lit.* the *Gibeah* or hill of the chief city. The arguments for this identification seem to me conclusive, but it will be

requisite to search for ancient tombs and a water supply close at hand, as such do not seem to be marked on the Survey Map.

*Nob*.—After placing Gibeah of Saul at Kh. 'Adaseh, I can no longer recognise Almon as representing Nob, which identification (*Quarterly Statement*, 1877, page 51) I have long regarded with increasing suspicion, and now abandon, for the following reasons:—

(1.) I find Josephus to be utterly untrustworthy on Old Testament topography.

(2.) A Levitical city in Benjamin would probably be described as a city of the children of Aaron the priest or of the sons of Aaron, and not simply as a *city of the priests*.

(3.) While many places mentioned in the Bible had different names, e.g., Jerusalem, Hebron, Debir, Bethel, etc., I cannot find a single clear instance in which some note of explanation is not added.

(4.) It is not certain that Ahimelech enquired of God for David (*see* "Speaker's Com."); so that there is no reason for thinking that David went out of his way to Nob, which he would have done if Nob had been at Almon (Almît).

(5.) If Is. x, 28, etc., describes (as I believe it does) the actual march of the Assyrian, then he ought to have advanced from Geba towards Jerusalem by the ordinary route near Tuleil el Fîl and not past Almît. For the same reason Aiath cannot apparently be identical with Ai, unless the latter be placed at Kh. Haiy. Lieutenant Conder, 1881, page 254, writes in favour of Ai having been at Kh. Haiyan, but unfortunately he does not offer any suggestion as to the position of the valley (*emek*) in Josh. viii, 13, nor as to the crossing and recrossing of the deep valley (*gai*) on the north; while "before the plain" (viii, 14) means, as Mr. Guest has pointed out, "in sight of the Jordan valley."

To find a position suiting both the advance of Sennacherib and the flight of David from near Kh. 'Adaseh, I am driven to look for traces of an old town in the neighbourhood of Shafat. The spot marked Kh. el Merâghib on the Survey Map seems to me the most likely, and near it Murray's "Handbook" (page 190) states there are some remarkable tombs, with the remains of a considerable town, called el-Musahny.

*Zeboim*.—The connection I endeavoured to establish (1879, page 102) between this name and Tell esh Sha'ib seems now to me to be but fanciful.

*The Dung Gate*.—Mr. Beswick (1880, 109) objects to this name being connected with "the place called Betluso" (Jos. "Wars," v. 4, 2), and suggests that the meaning of the latter word is the "Interdicted Place," and not the "dung place," as proposed by Dr. Robinson. A short visit, however, to the heaps of rubbish outside the Jaffa Gate would probably show that sanitary considerations are unsafe guides in questions of oriental topography. The further fact that the royal towers, etc., of *Herod*, at the north-west corner of Zion (so called), were separated from the dung gate of *Nehemiah* at the south-west corner by an interval of something like 1,000 cubits, and 400 years ought not, as a matter of scent, to make the identification *absurd*.

*Kirjath-jearim*.—There are some serious objections to the identification of this place with Khürbet 'Erma.

1. According to Josh. xv, 10, "the border compassed from Baalah (*i.e.*, Kirjath-jearim) *westward* unto Mount Seir, and passed along unto the side of Mount Jearim, which is Chesalon." The line, however, as drawn by Lieutenant Conder (1881, page 264) runs northward instead of *westward* from 'Erma to Kesla. I can find no authority for his rendering the Hebrew יבדד (with verbs of motion) as equal to "looking west instead of *westward*."

2. Again, in Josh. xviii, 15, from the end of Kirjath-jearim the border (of Benjamin) "went out *on the west* (*i.e.*, *westward*), and went out to the well of the waters of Neptoah." The line from 'Erma is, however, by Lieutenant Conder drawn *entirely eastward* (and *not westward at all*), towards 'Ain Atân near Solomon's pools. These seem to me to be two fatal objections to Kh. 'Erma representing Kirjath-jearim.

3. Josephus, whose testimony is worth little, says that Kirjath-jearim was near Gibeon, which is an equipoise to his statement that it was near Beth-shemesh. On the principle "*medio tutissimus ibis*," I should say that no site seems to me more suitable than Soba, about half way between the two, especially as the border can be drawn *westward* along Wâdy Esh Shemmarîn and then *eastward* up Wâdy es Sikkeh.

4. Kirjath-jearim, along with Chephirah and Beeroth, was a city dependent on Gibeon. Kh. 'Erma seems too far distant.

5. Lieutenant Conder does not seem to speak of any ancient Jewish tombs at 'Erma.

6. In Josh. xviii, 28, we read "Gibeath, *and* Kirjath; fourteen cities with their villages." A comparison of the Hebrew and LXX versions would rather lead one to suppose that the original reading was "Gibeath of (or which belongs to) Kirjath-jearim."

7. In this case Gibeath (or rather Gibeath) was a town of Benjamin at "the end of Kirjath-jearim," and is probably represented by Kh. el Jubeiah near Soba, while Kirjath was not a town of Benjamin at all, but only an imperfect reading for Kirjath-jearim.

8. If Zorah and Eshtaol are correctly identified with Sura'h and Eshû'a, it is difficult to see how the "Mahaneh Dan, in Judah behind Kirjath-jearim" (Judg. xviii, 12) can be identical with "the Mahaneh-Dan between Zorah and Eshtaol" (xiii, 25) as the Danites from these two towns went *up* and pitched in Kirjath-jearim, in Judah (xviii, 12).

Probably the name of the camp of Dan was given to two places: one the spot where they assembled and to which they carried out their stuff; the other at the end of their first day's journey, just west of Kirjath-jearim.

*Rabbah* (Josh. xv, 60) was apparently a city in the mountains of Judah, and cannot therefore be the present *Rabba* in the Shephelah. Kh. Rab'a, about a mile from 'Erma, seems a likely position and similar in name.