



## Discovery at the Pool Bethesda

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In my opinion the caves at Khurbet el-Ain are of much greater interest than even the colossal excavations of Beit Jibrin; and of the series on this hill none can compete in importance with that now described.

Close by it is another, of very similar type, but not nearly so extensive.

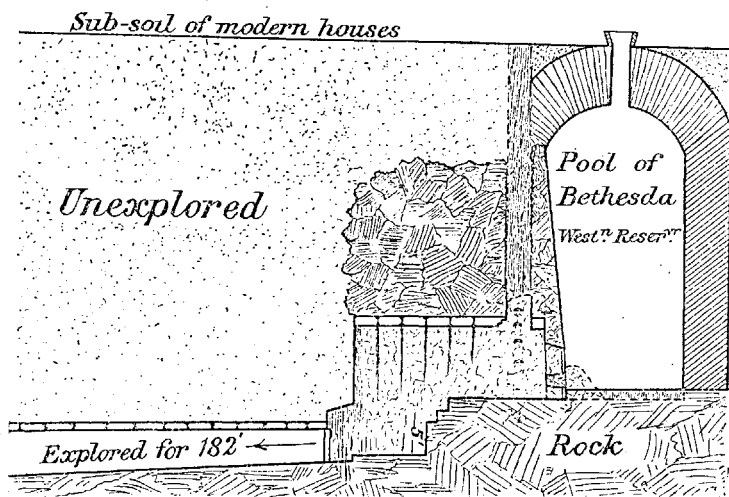
## DISCOVERY AT THE POOL BETHESDA.

By PÈRE LÉON CRÉ.

IN the *Quarterly Statement* for 1888 (pp. 115-134) there is a description, with plan and sections, by Dr. Schick, of the twin pools near the Church of St. Anne, which are called by the earlier historians of the Crusades *Piscina Probatica* or Bethesda. The pools, then recently discovered, were only partially examined; and, as more than half of them lie beneath private Moslem houses, complete exploration is still impossible. It was thought, however, that something more might be done, and in 1899 the Committee of the Fund placed a small sum at the disposal of the "White Fathers" who had conducted the previous excavations. The result has been the discovery of the outlet of the western pool, and of the drain connected with it.

Père Léon Cré, to whose initiative the work of exploration is due, writes that when the south part of the western pool was cleared of rubbish they noticed, against the south wall, two masses of rock which resembled the piers that support the sluice-gates of European reservoirs. Digging between these, they found a channel 2 feet  $11\frac{1}{2}$  inches wide and deep, and then a rock-hewn opening, 3 feet  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches high, in the south wall, at a depth of 62 feet 4 inches below the present level of the ground. Beneath this opening was another, 1 foot  $7\frac{1}{2}$  inches square, which allowed the pool to be emptied for cleansing purposes. Passing through the opening, they found themselves in a high passage with rock sides, which was roofed with large flag-stones, and at the bottom of the shaft by which men passed up and down, by means of small foot-holes cut in the rock, to open or shut the sluice-gate. Beyond the shaft the passage was covered with stalactites, which wainscoted its rocky sides or hung in rows, like petrified snakes,

from the joints between the covering flag-stones. When the hardened mud, which covered the floor to a depth of about 3 feet  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches, was cleared away, they found two rock-hewn steps of 1 foot  $3\frac{3}{4}$  inches, then a third 5 feet 3 inches high, and a fourth, all leading down to a drain, of which only the crown of the semi-circular covering arch was visible. The vault is well preserved, and is formed by five parallel lines of voussoirs, each 7.87 inches wide, but varying in length, the maximum being a dimension, 3 feet  $6\frac{1}{2}$  inches, met with in previous excavations in the pool. The bottom and sides of this fine drain, which was followed for 182 feet from north to south, are of rock. Father



Cré estimates that the Birket Israil was only 131 feet distant from the point at which they were obliged to stop. Here the channel was filled up, apparently from another source, and a larger drain ran east towards the Valley of Jehoshaphat.

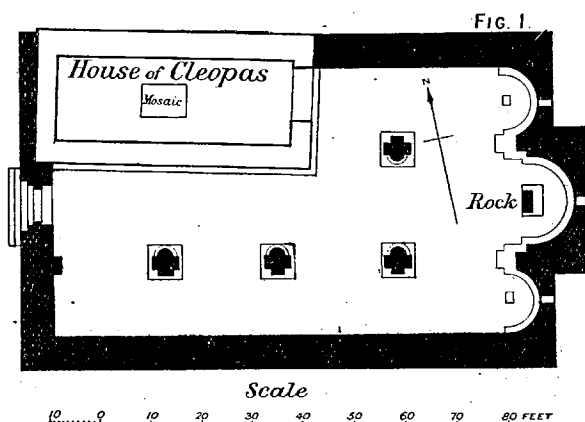
Dr. Schick writes that the western pool, which at the time of his previous report was full of soil, has been cleared, and that the level of its floor is about 54 feet below the level of the street leading to St. Stephen's Gate. The pool is a little wider than it is shown on his 1888 plan, and, like that to the east, from which it is separated by a rock wall 27 feet high, has rock-hewn sides on the south and west, and masonry on its north side. Dr. Schick believes that both pools extend 100 feet further to the north, and

that the large passage and drain were made when the pools were excavated. He says that the outlet of the pool is under the point where there is a drain (marked 13 on the section, Plate 2, *Quarterly Statement*, 1888, p. 118), and that its floor is on the same level as the overflow duct of the Birket Israil shown on Sir C. Warren's section (Plate XVI, "Jerusalem Portfolio of Plans, &c.").

### KUBEIBEH (EMMAUS).

*Abridged from a Paper by DR. C. SCHICK.*

IN vol. iii of the "Memoirs" of Western Palestine, p. 130, there is a description of Kubeibeh, and of the remains near it of an earlier village and church. Since the publication of the "Memoirs" the church has been rebuilt, and much else has been done. I am



now able to forward copies of complete plans of the church, and of the ancient site. The original church contained a building which was apparently older than itself, and this has been restored, and is called the house of Cleopas (Luke xxiv, 29, 30). The walls of the church, curiously enough, are not in line with those of the house. This building gives the church a peculiar appearance, and I have seen nothing like it except the Coenaculum which, as the house in which the Last Supper of the Lord was eaten, was included in the Byzantine Church of Zion. Whether, as in