

The German Excavations at Jericho.

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DR. SELLIN has decided to close the excavations conducted by him for three years under the auspices of the German Oriental Society at Tell-es-Sultân, the Old Testament site of Jericho. In the first two years he had already brought to light a considerable part of the outer wall of the Canaanite city, a network of walls and buildings ascribed to a citadel and two distinct groups of houses ranging from the Canaanite to the late Jewish periods. Last year, although he was unable to trace the further course of the outer wall, he ascertained that the so-called citadel was in reality part of an inner wall forming a strong second line of defence to the Canaanite city. He also laid bare a large building to which he is inclined to attribute a very interesting origin. He found the true explanation of the flights of stone steps which lead from the plain to the top of the city mound. The remains in the central part of the city have been further explored and trenches have been dug at various points of the area. Several more inscribed jar handles have turned up. Altogether the results of last year's work add materially to our knowledge of the city destroyed by the invading Israelites and rebuilt or refortified in the reign of Ahab by Hiel the Bethelite.

Even before the appearance of the final memoir, we may gather an idea of the archæological history of Jericho from the three yearly reports of the excavators.¹ Tell-es-Sultân is an isolated rock in the valley of the Jordan, about a mile and a half north of the road which descends from Jerusalem to the fords of the river. The *tell* or 'mound,' oval in shape, measures 1181 feet by 570 feet; its average height is 39 feet above the Aines-Sultân, popularly known as Elisha's fountain, which bursts from the base of the eastern slope and flows into the Jordan.

The reports do not make the stratification of

¹ The first report appeared in the *Anzeiger* of the Vienna Academy, 1907, No. xiv, p. 82 sqq., but is more accessible in the almost verbatim reproduction in the *Mitteil. u. Nachricht. des Deutschen Palästina Vereins*, 1907, p. 65 sqq. The two other reports form Nos. 39 and 41 of the *Mitteil. der Deutschen Orient-Gesellschaft*.

the mound particularly clear. Under the Canaanite stratum contemporary with the city walls, in a shaft dug in a trench running from east to west across the greatest width of the *tell*, were found near the inner wall remains of at least four older layers, which carry back the beginnings of Jericho to the third or fourth millennium B.C. No traces of pottery could be discovered in the two earliest, but flint implements proved all the more numerous. In the second stratum from the bottom of the pit, which, curiously enough, was not sunk to the rock surface or the virgin soil, were found three monoliths embedded in a house wall and therefore older than the stratum. One of them showed on its face two cup-shaped depressions connected by a shallow groove, and recalls the much more important Neolithic finds made elsewhere in Palestine, especially in Gezer. Above the Canaanite city lie three or four other layers, the topmost of which belongs to the late Jewish or Hellenistic period. A jump then occurs to the early Byzantine age, of which remains were found over all the surface of the mound, especially along the eastern slope, where in fact the older strata were ruthlessly removed. The Roman or Herodian Jericho, situated a mile or two further south, never included the *tell*.

The chief interest of Jericho lies in its two Canaanite walls. The outer, like the mound, is in the shape of an egg with the point turned toward the south, and the inner resembles an elongated stirrup, or rather a sugar loaf of which the rounded top also points southward. No traces of either exist on the eastern side. According to Dr. Sellin, the missing section of the former wall was destroyed apparently by the Byzantine settlers, and that of the latter, according to the architect Dr. Nöldeke, probably by the Israelites. The uncovering of the outer wall was entrusted to Dr. Langenegger, who marvels at the excellence of its technique; it is certainly a striking proof of the high state of civilization attained by the predecessors of the Israelites. Its circumference, however, was small, as it did not reach $\frac{2}{3}$ ths of a mile. The area, which may be estimated at 10 acres, measured 1007 feet in length by 528 feet in

breadth, *i.e.* roughly, twice the length and breadth of St. Paul's Cathedral. Yet Jericho compares favourably in size with the other *tells* excavated in Palestine; only Gezer, apparently, is larger. This outer wall circled in a graceful curve the base of the mound, except on the eastern side, where it extended for about 100 feet into the plain to include the spring within its circuit. A brick building at the south-east of the hill, where the wall now ends abruptly, may represent the site of a gate. The wall consists of a foundation of clay and gravel laid on the rock, a stone substructure $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet high or more, bulging outwards and containing one or two rows of enormous blocks, and a stone glacis of about the same height, on which towered a brick wall $6\frac{1}{2}$ feet thick, and from 22 to 26 feet high. To erect the glacis, the Canaanite builders laid down brick gradients which led from the plain to the top of the stone substructure, thus enabling beasts of burden to distribute building materials along the crest of the wall during its construction. The slopes of the hill were deeply cut into to receive the stone base, which thus held back the weight of the earth behind. Similarly kept up at the back of the glacis, which also served as a retaining wall, ran an artificial bank of earth that raised the level of the city near the wall and gave facilities for throwing projectiles from the top of the rampart. On account of its great inclination the breadth of the glacis was reduced at the top to little more than 3 feet, so that the brick wall rested partly on the glacis and partly on the earth embankment. The total height of this cleverly devised bulwark reached inside the city, 20 to 26 feet, and outside, not less than 39 to 49 feet.

The inner wall stood about 100 feet from the outer, and ran more or less parallel to it. It crowned the top of the mound, and apparently did not, like the first, encroach on the plain on its eastern side to comprise the spring within its circumference. The fountain was thus situated between the two walls, and we may suppose that somewhere near it stood the city gates. The water supply of course must have been strongly protected, but the settlers of the Byzantine period unfortunately played havoc with all the buildings in this neighbourhood and no traces of the gates have been found. To judge by the plan, the circuit of this sugar-loaf-shaped wall measured about 1745 feet; the length of the enclosed space

is 682 feet, and the breadth only 260 feet. Unlike the outer rampart, this one is double: a small protecting wall still runs round the northern portion at an average distance of 11 feet, and it presumably circled the whole of it. The original height is not given, but the thickness reached $11\frac{1}{2}$ feet, that of the fore-wall being less than half. A kind of scaffolding seems to have been erected in the space between the wall and its fore-wall, perhaps to enable the garrison to hurl projectiles at the enemy. A three-storied castle with seventeen rooms, described in glowing terms in the first report, must apparently be located on or near this wall along its northern face. It should be noted that underneath this second wall was a section of a very strong pre- or proto-Canaanite city wall built of enormous bricks or rather lumps of clay, differently orientated from either of its successors, and presumably contemporary with one of the four older strata referred to above.

The chief Canaanite remains were found in the northern part of the mound, within the inner rampart. A fine curved street divides this quarter into unequal halves, of which one leans against the southern side of the inner wall. Some of the houses have attics resting on its summit, and recall Rahab's house, which, however, stood more probably on the outer wall. The pottery found here belongs to four successive periods, and on the whole shows Mediterranean and Egyptian rather than Babylonian influence.

In their first reports, the excavators seemed to be under the impression that the site of Jericho was deserted between its destruction by the Israelites and its rebuilding by Hiel. This opinion, based on the curse uttered by Joshua against the builder of the city, was hardly supported by the archaeological evidence, and it is certainly at variance with the historical data which, on several occasions, represent Jericho as an inhabited site in the three centuries and a half intervening between these events.¹ It is no surprise, therefore, to find that last year's excavations brought to light many remains of the early Israelite period. Even the year before, thirty houses had been discovered which ranged from the eleventh to the eighth century B.C. Terraced

¹ This point is emphasized by Mr. Stanley A. Cook in his searching analysis of the earlier reports of the excavators (*Quart. Stat. Palest. Expl. Fund.*, January 1910, p. 63).

on the northern slope of the mound, they face north, are closely packed together, and consist each of one room, rarely with an anteroom or court. The bodies of three infants buried in jars were found below the foundations. The trenches dug last year likewise show that there was an uninterrupted occupation of the *tell* from the Canaanite period.

In early times the hill sloped gently upwards from the plain, but after the Hebrew conquest the ruins of the houses and of the town walls, especially in the north, had considerably raised its level and made its sides much steeper. In order the more easily to carry their building materials to the top of the hill for the purpose of erecting their new city, the Israelites adopted on a large scale the means employed by their Canaanite predecessors for the construction of the outer wall glacis: they built broad flights of stone stairs to connect the level of the plain and the plateau of the mound. These probably existed on all four sides, although only unearthed on three. After the erection of the new city they naturally fell into disuse, and some of the steps formed convenient foundations for later houses. Meanwhile the Israelites undertook a most important piece of work: they levelled the plateau of the *tell*. As no further explanations are given by the excavators, the full meaning of this measure will only be known from the final memoir, but we must remember that the constant piling up of city after city on the same mound tends to give it a conical shape. If new settlers then arrive and wish to build a larger city than their predecessors, they must level the summit of the hill, and even, as in the case of Troy, remove for ever portions of previous towns.

The most important position in Jericho was a hillock on the eastern slope directly overlooking the spring. Remains of a very fine edifice were found here, about 63 feet wide by 100 feet long. It rests on the traces of an earlier 'palace' assigned to the Canaanite period; just under it lay fragments of early Israelite pottery, and at the level of the foundations were vases attributed to the ninth or tenth century B.C. Unfortunately nothing is left but the bare foundations, which show a plan similar to that of the *hilani* of Sindjirli excavated by Dr. von Luschan; but the date of the building (apparently the ninth century B.C.), its privileged position on the mound, and the presumed magnificence of its owner, all lead Dr. Sellin to conjecture that this may be none other than the

house of the rebuilder of Jericho, of Hiel the Bethelite.

One of the most interesting discoveries is a Jewish village which dates about the eighth century B.C., and stretches north-west from Hiel's residence over the central plateau. Its date is settled by specimens of Cypriote pottery. The houses were in a splendid—in fact in an almost un hoped-for—state of preservation. Merely abandoned, perhaps on account of fire, and not ransacked and destroyed by an enemy, this village, which struck the excavators by its miserably poor appearance, consists, so far as it has been excavated, of two narrow lanes bordered by small houses whose walls still rise to 7 feet, and are, as usual, of inordinate thickness. It contained curious granaries, jar buried infants under some of the foundations, and a large number of household articles. One house in particular consisted of an open court with a bench on the east, a long room on the south, and in an angle of the yard a kitchen where yet stood in a corner the clay receptacle for water. The inventory is complete: plates and dishes, jars and vases, jugs and flasks, corn grinders of red sandstone, lamps, torch carriers, and tools made of iron and staghorn. But the mean aspect of this village strikingly contrasts with the superb construction attributed to Hiel.

The post-exilic remains occur chiefly on the northern slope of the *tell*, between the two town walls. They have yielded *inter alia* terracottas in the shape of the human head or of animals, Rhodian jar handles, and infant jar burials under several of the houses. The jar deposits—evidently foundation sacrifices—are particularly instructive for the history of popular religious practices after the Exile, as they had not been proved hitherto for this late period, although it had been strongly suspected that a similar infant burial had been unearthed in the eighth city of Lachish (c. 400–330 B.C.). But the most interesting finds were fourteen jar handles stamped with the name of Jehovah in Aramaic characters. Four show the reading *Yah*, יה; the rest have *Yaho*, יהו, as in the Aramaic papyri of Elephantine. They date from the fifth to the third century B.C. Pre-exilic jar handles had been unearthed in plenty in various sites, including Jericho, impressed with a winged symbol and with the legends—'to the king: Hebron'; 'to the king: Ziph,' etc. According to a very plausible explanation, the jars thus stamped

were intended to hold the taxes in kind, such as grain, deliverable to the reigning monarch in Jerusalem. Dr. Sellin adopts Father Vincent's suggestion, that as the taxes in post-exilic times were paid into the temple for the benefit of the restored community's real King, Jehovah, the divine name was in consequence substituted on the jars for the mention of the pre-exilic sovereign.¹

The second report mentions that near the outer wall, on the north-east of the mound, a jar handle was picked up quite intact and bearing the letters מצה stamped in Aramaic characters. Dr. Sellin hesitatingly suggests the meaning *suck, drink*, but it seems difficult to suppose that such an obvious term would be officially impressed on a jar. One could understand it more easily of a graffito such as להסך, *ad libandum*, scratched on the neck of a jar, or בלע, *swallow*, scribbled on a plate, both of which were found in Lachish. On the other hand, it can hardly be the name of the potter or of the owner,

¹ *Revue Biblique*, 1909, p. 277.

as we should expect the usual addition of the patronymic. Possibly we may see here the name of a town. It may be noted that Mr. Macalister has picked up in Gezer a handle bearing the name of the town Memshath and the winged symbol, but without למלך.² In a later period, especially after the Exile, we may expect the disappearance of the winged symbol, so that the handle would bear nothing but the mention of the town; nor is there any reason to suppose that this town must necessarily be Hebron, Socoh, Ziph, or Memshath, the only four already known. If so, Mozah, an unknown locality mentioned only in Jos 18²⁶, and belonging, like Jericho, to the tribe of Benjamin, may be suggested as the reading of the מצה handle.

Although perhaps no great surprises, such as a high place or inscribed tablets, have come to light, the excavation of Jericho will prove a great gain to the science of Palestinian archæology, still in its early infancy.

² *Quart. Stat. Palest. Expl. Fund.*, 1908, p. 281.

The American Sermon.

I.

THE METHODIST SERMON.

It is probable that the Methodist preacher of America who is best known in Britain is the Rev. Louis Albert Banks, D.D. And it is possible that he is the least worth knowing. For Dr. Banks, with all his popularity, is not a preacher. He is a teller of stories. And sometimes the stories are good, and sometimes they are not good. Sometimes they are to the point, and sometimes to some other point. But, however good it is, and however pointed, a story is not a sermon; much less an accumulation of stories.

And yet, curiously enough, 'anecdoteage,' that disrespectful epithet suggesting mental decrepitude, is not the word to apply to the sermons of Dr. Banks. He uses his anecdotes bravely, boldly, heroically. With all their multitude and with all their mush, his audience does not grow wearied of them. And that is simply because the anecdotes are not introduced into a Bible text or into a Bible situation; the text and the situation are introduced into the society of the

anecdotes. The Bible is brought down to the days of Dr. Louis Albert Banks; to the people among whom he ministers, to the church in which he preaches. And the people go to church to hear a good talk about religious things well spiced with anecdote. And they feel that it is better for them than if they had gone to hear a good talk about the politics of the day or the fashions of the hour.

Dr. Banks has published more than ten volumes of sermons—amongst the rest, *The Great Portraits of the Bible*, *The Great Saints of the Bible*, and *The Great Sinners of the Bible*—and most of his volumes may be had for a dollar and a half from Messrs. Eaton & Mains in New York.

After Dr. Banks for fecundity comes the Rev. George Clarke Peck. But he probably comes a good way after; for we have seen but four volumes of his sermons. Their titles are *Old Sins in New Clothes*, *Vision and Task*, *Ringing Questions*, and *Bible Tragedies*, each of which may be had from Messrs. Eaton & Mains as before (75 cents net).

The most striking characteristic of Mr. Peck's