How any Jebusite came to be left in possession of so much valuable property in such a situation the sacred history does not tell us.

Josephus says, "Araunah was not slain by David in the siege of Jerusalem, because of the good-will he bore to the Hebrews, and a particular benignity and affection which he had to the king himself."

I have no doubt it was something particular, yet not particularly creditable to Araunah, though, fortunately for him, we have no Jebusite account, nor, indeed, any professed account at all, of the transaction, otherwise there might be a revulsion of popular feeling as to his *noble* character. Araunah was the (but *nil de mortuis nisi bonum*) one who lost nothing when Zion fell, neither life, nor goods, nor, so far as we know, even character.

One word in the Hebrew (Tzinnor), followed by Captain Warren's wonderful discovery of the secret passage leading from the Virgin's Fount, has enabled us to understand a most obscure and baffling passage in the Old Testament, and to follow the very track by which the adventurous Joab gained access to the stronghold of Zion.

Who will say that a great discovery is not recorded in chapter ix. of "Jerusalem Recovered"? Who will question about the Bible being the most accurate and truthful of all books?

<div style="text-align: right">W. F. BIRCH.</div>

AI.

LIEUT. KITCHENER's suggested identification of Ai with Kh. Haiy, one mile east of Mukhamas, has much to recommend it.

1. Ai was on the *east* of Bethel (Josh. vii. 2) and of Abram's tent (Gen. xii. 8). As the orientals call every wind an *east* wind which blows from any point between east and north and east and south (Jahn, Antiq., p. 17), this extensive meaning of *east* favours equally any position for Ai in any degree east of Bethel.

2. "The Israelites pitched on the north side of Ai; now there was a valley (Hebr. *gai*) between them and Ai. . . . (13) Joshua went that night into the midst of the valley (Hebr. *emek*)" (Josh viii. 11-13).

With Ai placed at et Tell or Kh. Haiyan, Lieut. Kitchener well observes on the peculiarity of a force after approaching the city from the east crossing an almost impracticable valley, to be recrossed the next day. The valley north of et Tell might suitably be described as the *gai*, but we have also to find another wider valley answering to *emek*; for the two different words cannot here well mean exactly the same valley. The "*plain* to the north of Kh. Haiy" would, however, just suit the expression *emek*; and possibly the *gai* may be a ravine interposed between the liers in wait and Ai, unless the *gai* was the bed of a watercourse in the *emek* (see 1 Sam. xvii. 2, 3, 40).

3. As all the men of Bethel assisted Ai, it is strange that the former

city was not taken at the same time, for the Israelites would be close to it, if Ai = Et Tell or Kh. Haiyan. That the two cities were not taken together seems clear from Josh. xii. 9, 16.

4. But putting Ai at Kh. Haiy, where it commanded the road into the interior, its capture becomes essential to further progress.

5. From the order of the names, Michmash, Ai, Bethel, in Neh. xii. 31, it is natural to look for Ai between the other two, but in Neh. vii. 31, 32 they are classed differently. "The men of Michmas, 122. The men of Bethel and Ai, 123." Clearly there is no geographical order here. Probably, however, the places are grouped in Neh. vii. according to other considerations. In verse 29 the three Gibeonite cities, Kirjath-jearim, Uhephirah, and Beeroth are joined together; Gibeon (25th v.) being, as it seems likely, *not* the town of that name in Benjamin, but some Gibeah in Judea. So likewise the political connection first seen existing between Bethel and Ai (in Josh. viii.) may have led to these two places being always named together (Josh. xviii. 22, 23; and Neh. vii., xii. above). In Esdras v. 21 the two places are curiously welded into one—viz., Βητολίω, though Michmash was afterwards built between them, a possible origin of the apocryphal (Βετύλουα) Bethulia.

6. If Sennacherib invaded Judæa from the east, as did Joshua, then he would *naturally* come to (Ai) Kh. Haiy, and we escape the difficulty of having to account for his diverging from the central north road, so as to get to et Tell or Kh. Haiyan.

7. The theory that all the places in Is. x. 28-32 (except Jerusalem) are visible from Geba is unaffected by Kh. Haiy being Ai. I may rather say it receives a finishing touch from the identification. Lieut. Kitchener ascertained, on the revision of the survey, that not only et Tell was visible from Geba, but also Kh. Haiy. Taking Mignon (*i.e.*, the precipice) in Isa. x. 28 to be the hill forming the north cliff of the passage of Michmash, the proper order of the names with Ai at et Tell or Kh. Haiyan ought to be Aiath, Michmash, Migron; but with Ai at Kh. Haiy the order as seen by a spectator from Geba would be exactly as in Isaiah, Aiath, Migron, Michmash. Supposing Geba to be the centre or axle of a wheel, and straight lines drawn from it to the various places named (Isa. x. 28, 29, 30, 31) to be the different spokes, all the places will be found to be named exactly in geographical order, without one exception. This is the perfect result given by the new map. I may add, on the same authority, that Anathoth is visible from Geba, and so also must be Laish, since the relative heights are Geba, 2,220 feet; Anathoth, 2,225 feet; and a mile farther south, Laish, 2,390 feet. As to the other places I have no further information.

It seems to me highly desirable for Kh. Haiy to be visible from the site of Abram's encampment on the east of Bethel, and I should think it certainly is.   W. F. BIRCH.