

ON THE SITE OF EMMAUS.

LIEUTENANT CONDER has in his Book (I. p. 14) given his adhesion to the old view revived by Dr. Robinson that the Emmaus of Luke xxiv. is Nicopolis, the modern 'Amwās. He does so apparently on the strength of the testimony of the Sinaitic MS., which in Luke xxiv. 13 reads 160 stadia. But the reading of that MS. is not sufficient to set aside other MS. authority, and still less to overbear the difficulties its adoption would create. (1) The weight of authorities is so decidedly against the Sinaitic—supported as it is only by MSS. I. K. and N.—that even Tischendorf does not accept it, partial as he naturally was to that MS. with the discovery of which his name will be always associated. Moreover the testimony of the Sinaitic lies specially open to suspicion on such a point. It has been thought by many scholars not improbable that it is one of the MSS. of the New Testament prepared by Eusebius at the command of Constantine. Its peculiar arrangement of four columns on the page is one that Eusebius says characterised some of those he had prepared; while its correspondence in doubtful passages with the readings approved by him is very notable. That Eusebius of Cesarea knew Nicopolis as Emmaus of the Maccabees is certain; as also that he knew it to be about 160 stadia from Jerusalem, and that he believed it to be the Emmaus of Luke xxiv. May he not be the author of this correction (?) on the Sinaitic, to bring it into agreement with the distance of that Emmaus from Jerusalem? Can the Sinaitic be regarded with certainty as an independent witness, and not just the Onomasticon over again?

(2) The distance of Nicopolis—160 stadia—from Jerusalem is quite incompatible with Luke's narrative. It implies a journey of 40 miles in one day, the second half after the evening meal! Such an objection would have had no weight with Eusebius. The *deus ex machina* of a miracle would have rid him of it had it been suggested. It is expressly stated that our Lord and the disciples had reached Emmaus (ver. 28, 29).

(3) The exact language of Luke in describing the place is equally opposed to the view that he intended Nicopolis. Twice in his narrative he calls it "a village;" though his use of "*city*" and "*village*" by no means indicates oversight of the distinction (viii. 1; xiii. 22). Moreover the phrase "*a village called Emmaus*" is one not likely to be used in speaking of a fortress so famous in Jewish and Roman history as Emmaus Nicopolis. In Mark xvi. 12, which is of undoubted value, whoever the author, the destination of the two disciples is described in the same style—"they went into the country" (*εἰς ἀγρόν*), which would scarcely have been used had they been going to a well-known city.

(4) The force of this consideration is intensified when we look to the Maccabees and Josephus. In 1 Macc. iii. 40, ix. 50, we have simply "Emmaus," without any description. And so throughout Josephus (e.g. Antiq. xvii. 10. 7, 9; Bell. Jud. v. 1. 6; 2. 3; 13. 1) Nicopolis is simply "Emmaus." Frequently, moreover, he calls it "a city" (*πολις*)

(Antiq. xii. 7. 3; xiv. 11. 2; Bell. Jud. iii. 3. 5). But when he speaks of Emmaus by the shore of the Sea of Galilee, near the "City" of Tiberias, he describes it (Antiq. xviii. 2. 3) as "a village named, *Emmaus*." Again, in describing that Emmaus where a colony of 800 of the disbanded soldiery was settled (Bell. Jud. vii. 6. 6), he calls it "a place (*χωριον*) called *Emmaus*, distant from Jerusalem 60 (or according to another reading 30) *stadia*." He spells the name slightly differently, as 'Ammaous. Whether the reading in this last-cited passage be 60 or 30 stadia, Josephus could not mean the city of Emmaus "in the plain." It seems utterly inconceivable in the light of such usage why Luke should have spoken of Emmaus as he has done, if he meant the famous city. It has been said it might be but a village since its destruction by Varus. Possibly, but that would not affect the pre-eminence its history had given it, and which led Josephus, and doubtless every one else, still to speak of it as simply "Emmaus." If the Evangelist had meant that Emmaus, he would have made his intention clear by simply, as Josephus does, calling it by its familiar name.

(5) The reading, 60 stadia, is supported not only by the weight of New Test. MS. authority, but by the MS. evidence for the same reading in Josephus (Bell. Jud. vii. 6. 6). The consent of these independent witnesses to the placing of an Emmaus at that distance from Jerusalem will settle the point to most minds. It may be added that a distance of 160 stadia would be no localisation at all, seeing that the *direction* from Jerusalem is not given. Let any one plant a circle of 40 miles diameter on his map of the land and judge the value of such a description of the situation of a village! A site must be sought on the circle formed by a radius of 7 or 8 miles from Jerusalem.

Of the claimants to represent the Emmaus of Luke xxiv. this will dispose of two—*Amwas*, which is twenty miles from Jerusalem; and *Kulonieh*, which is too near, though it might suit the 30 stadia of some MSS. of Josephus. The arguments for it are not of much force. It is not proved that though a colony was settled here it was *the* colony of Josephus (B. J. vii. 6. 6). Four sites still remain at which it has been proposed to locate Emmaus.

(1) Kuriet el Enab (Smith's Dict. Geog., and Thomson's Land and Book). The only argument is that this place is at the required distance from Jerusalem; that it is a suitable scene is a matter of opinion or of sentiment. The Greek tradition in its favour is of doubtful value. Its present name is the ancient one; being probably the Kirjath of Josh. xviii. 28. It is not likely that it was also known as Emmaus. If it had been, Luke or Josephus would have surely distinguished it by the use of that distinctive name.

(2) Etam, which is thus put by Lightfoot, and which we leave, with him, to the reader's judgment:—"Cum observamus ut Chammath, חמט, vel *Thermæ Tiberiadis*, vulgo reddatur Graecæ Ἀμμαούς, cumque observamus etiam *Emmaunta* nostram, aquis celebribus quoque nobilem, non recognoscere non possumus *Aquas Nephtoe*, vel *Fontem Etam*, unde

deductæ per tubos sunt aquae ad Templum: qui quidem erat ab Hierosolymis ab eodem cardine coeli, quo et *Emmaus* nostra. Et formari potest Ἐμμαῖος nostra ab תמא *Ammath*, *Canali aquarum*, aequae altera Ἀμμαῖος, ab תמא *chammath*, *Thermis*. Sed iudicet lector." (*Light-foot Chorographica Pauca*, *Lucae Praemissa*, Cap iv. § iii.)

(3) *El-Kubeibeh*, which is at the required distance to the north-west of Jerusalem; the exact measurement being $62\frac{1}{2}$ stadia. It has the doubtful evidence of Crusaders' tradition. It has been said they found the name of Emmaus applied to it by the native population as early as the eleventh century. The claims of Kubeibeh have been set forth at length by Dr. H. Zschokke, of the Austrian Pilgrim House at Jerusalem (*Das Neutestamentliche Emmaus beleuchtet*, Schaffhausen, 1865). It is supported by several resident authorities there, as Herr C. Schick and others. The weak part of the evidence in its support is the date at which the name Emmaus first appears there, and the authority for its appearance even then. On the other hand, it may be said that, though apparently an ancient site, the present name is not (like Kuriet) an ancient one, and no native tradition conflicts with the Crusaders' testimony.

(4) *Khâmäsa*, also at the required distance, but to the south-west of Jerusalem. Its claims are set forth by Lieutenant Conder (*Quarterly Statement*, 1876, p. 172), who, however, has now cast off his foundling. The chief argument for it is its name, which may be derived from the ancient "Hammath." On this we are unable to judge. If scholars agree on the origin of the name it would be a weighty argument, and would probably secure for this site general acceptance. Possibly the spring which still exists, and which gave its name to the ruins, "ruin of the fountain of the church," was once a thermal spring. The absence of a warm spring in a country so liable to volcanic changes could scarcely be pressed against any of the claimants, though Emmaus Tiberias still deserves the name.

The choice among present claimants seems to lie between the two last *El-Kubeibeh*, as every one who has visited it will admit, befits the scene of such a story, and certainly the Crusaders were not often as fortunate in the suitability of the sites they identified with Bible places. From Lieutenant Conder's account *Khâmäsa* seems quite as suitable, and has the advantage in the transmitted native testimony which its name affords. We still incline to it; though amidst so much uncertainty, the only thing we feel certain about is, that the place was not Nicopolis. There is perhaps something befitting the narrative and the manner of all the Lord's appearances during the forty days, in this veil cast over the scene of it. Possibly we would not be gainers if it could be localised.

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