

of irrigation at this particular spot, must be the constructions mentioned as a marked feature of the Vale of Siddim, so long ago as the days of Abraham? I allude to the "pits" of Gen. xiv. 10, which contributed largely to the defeat of the armies of the five Cities of the Circular-plain when driven northward by the victorious hosts of Cherdor-laomer, advancing upon them from the south.

The Vale of Siddim was certainly a portion of this same eastern side of the Jordan Valley. A striking evidence of this has been discovered by Major Conder, R.E., during the work of the Survey. He met with the occurrence of the precisely similar Arabic word *Sidd* at the present day, *in this part of the Jordan Valley, with a meaning which it has nowhere else in the country*, given as a technical name to a peculiar feature of the district. While engaged in this spot in taking down names for the Map, he observed that *Sidd* and *Sâdeh* were the appellations given to the cliffs, or banks of marl, which form a marked characteristic of the alluvial soil of that lower part of the valley through which the Jordan flows.¹ He has the following important note in the Memoir which accompanies the Survey Map of Western Palestine:—"There has been much doubt as to the meaning of this name (the Vale of Siddim). Gesenius compares it with the Arabic *Sidd*, and Dean Stanley with *Sâdeh*. It is worthy of notice that the words *Sidd* and *Sâdeh* are frequently used in the Jordan Valley with a meaning peculiar to the dialect of that part of the country. Thus we have *Sidd el' Attÿeh*, 'the dry Sidd,' applied to one of the great marl banks below the cliffs of the Dead Sea, near *Râs Feshkhah*. The word was in this instance explained to us as meaning a cliff. Again, we have *Deir es Sidd*, 'Convent of the Cliff,' a ruin on the edge of a precipice; *Sidd Harîz*, 'the fortified cliff,' a precipice near Phasaelis; *Sâdet et Fikiah*, 'the cracked cliff'; *Sâdet el Hermil*, 'cliff of rue'; *Sâdet en Nahleh*, 'cliff of the torrent'; *Sâdet el Tâleb*, 'the straight cliff'; *Wâdy Siddeh*, 'the valley of cliffs.' The word is unknown to the inhabitants of

¹ *Tent Work in Palestine*, vol ii. p. 16.