

April 28.

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I find it necessary, after reaching a certain stage in a room, to leave it alone for a while, and then come back to it. Sometimes, after a few days, the newly opened area has so dried out, that it is possible to distinguish fallen brick from standing brick walls, and so forth. A number of problems of that nature, which we could not solve last year, were easily answered this year when we returned, and could see walls and bricks that we could not make out previously, and had simply left, rather than take the risk of cutting through them unwittingly.

April 29.

Good news from Jerusalem, that Eliffe is continuing to recover, although, poor chap, he is undergoing a severe cure. It seems that his body has to be held tightly in position with sandbags, so that the lung wound can heal more rapidly. There has been a four day curfew imposed on the Arab section of the Old City in Jerusalem, with permission for the inhabitants to emerge only two hours a day to purchase food supplies. This curfew was imposed as the result of the shooting of a British constable on duty in the Old City by an Arab youth. All the English families living behind the American School, near the Iliffes, have been moved out by the Government, I am informed. The process of the evacuation of our section of Jerusalem by Europeans, which I described in one of my recent News-Letters is now complete. For the present, I still think that we can keep the School open. We are situated on a main road that is now well patrolled by English constables. When I return to Jerusalem, I shall study the question as to the future safety of the residents of the School. At the present time, I have no fears on that score.

April 30.

The weather remains surprisingly pleasant for this late in the spring, but the natives of the place have told me that it would remain nice for over another month. I hope they are right. The season has commenced much later this year than last. In both instances we arrived after the end of the spring rains, which last year were over in March, while this year, as my last news-letter indicates, it poured on April 8. It also rained here last Thursday. My architect is leaving us on May 10, in accordance with prearranged plan, because he has other commitments, and we shall, weather and the general political situation permitting, remain several weeks longer.

I really looked at the most legible of the ostraca for the first time the other day with more than a passing glance, and what I have written above about having seen the name of the God of Sinai, namely Turiel on the ostrakon is unadulterated balderdash. Actually it seems to be some sort of a wine receipt, as far as I can make out of it now. It is still an important ostrakon, but nothing like what I had perhaps hoped it would be. The room in which the ostraca were found has been a very difficult one to excavate. Except for some fragments of Period IV wall, the entire room is filled with a mass of debris, which the most careful sealing down failed to disentangle, till we got to the level of the large zir with the Minaean letter, and the other pottery with it, - which seems to be a level of III A. Below it is a very heavy burning of II, the roof beams and covering palm branches and leaves of which have left a thick, and clearly mark roof burning. Owing to the large size of the room, its central location, the presence of an unusual amount of pottery, and what appears to be a sacred stele, I still think, ~~beside~~ aside from the fact that the ostraca do not seem to have any sacred significance, that this large room of Number 50 may well have been a sanctuary. We have thus far elsewhere in the tell