

of the encroaching tongue of sand stretching eastwards from Cæsarea, and other natural features of the district, may be studied with advantage.

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(From the *Observer*, New York.)

OUR American Exploring party have made a brilliant beginning for us. We were expecting valuable discoveries, but not so soon. Our allotted field is beyond the Jordan, and only preparatory labour was looked for on this side the river. But while Lieutenant Steever has been hard at work day and night in Beirut, organising the expedition, testing his instruments, and getting everything ready for the final march, our archæologist, Professor Paine, has not been idle.

THE HAMATH INSCRIPTIONS.

The readers of the *Observer* have all heard of the famous Hamath inscriptions. Our countrymen, J. Augustus Johnson, Esq., then American Consul-General in Syria, and the Rev. Samuel Jessup, were the first to discover and describe them, some three years ago. Copies of them, first published by our own Society, are now exciting the liveliest interest among scholars. We shall soon be able to put the public in possession of more exact and authentic copies. The stones were taken through Beirut a few weeks ago, on their way from Damascus to Constantinople. Our Consul-General in Syria, J. Baldwin Hay, Esq., persuaded the Turkish Government to permit our party to take impressions of them. The time was short, but Lieut. Steever and Professor Paine gave themselves eagerly to the work, and the result is a complete set both of squeezes and of plaster casts, which are now on their way to America. Our pamphlet, which is soon to be put to press, will tell the whole story; but meanwhile it may not be amiss to state that what have been called the fourth and fifth inscriptions turn out to be but parts of a single inscription carried round the stone.

THE GREEK INSCRIPTIONS AT DOG RIVER.

But of still greater importance is Professor Paine's discovery of three new Greek inscriptions, the existence of which appears not to have been even suspected. We accept the discovery with gratitude as an auspicious inauguration of our work in the Holy Land. Nahr el Kelb, or the Dog river of modern Arabic geography, is the *Lycus Flumen*, or Wolf river, of the Roman period. It rises in the heart of Lebanon, plunges down a wild and romantic gorge, and empties into the Mediterranean about two and a half hours, or seven miles, north-east of Beirut. The southern mountain wall which overlooks this rapid stream terminates at the sea in a bold promontory, around which, at the height of 100 feet above the water, winds an ancient road cut in the solid rock. The present road was cut in the reign of Marcus Aurelius, about 173 or 176 A.D. It is some six feet in breadth, paved with large uneven

stones. But above it, for a part of the distance, there are traces of a still more ancient road. On the wall of rock that lines the roads (three of them on the present Roman, six of them on the older road) there are nine historic tablets, first discovered by Maundrell in 1697, and often described and copied since. Three of them are Egyptian, and six Assyrian. According to Lepsius, the three Egyptian tablets bear the cartouche of Rameses II., about 1300 years B.C. Of the Assyrian tablets, one at least is the work of Sennacherib, about 700 B.C.

It was on the upper and more ancient road that Professor Paine made his fortunate discovery. He found there three Greek inscriptions, one of eight lines, one of twelve, and another of ten. He took squeezes of them all. The longest, of twelve lines, he has deciphered and rendered into English. Some errors may have crept into the transcription, but the legend is substantially as follows:—

Προκλε πεπον Τατια του Αρισιοιο Α
 κοιο γενεθλης ιθαγενιο
 Αρχικα πατριων εξωριαζων φανλω
 πρωθηβης φοινιξ Ηλιομπολεως Θεο
 φιν αρχων Αιψα Μαλεκ τελειω ιερα
 οσσα νοω φρονει φοινικη αυτη
 οσον και τοΔε εργαζοτεόν νοήμα
 ω μεγα Θαυμα τα αιψατα των
 σκοπελων ισον εθηκεμεσον
 οφρα Διτηρεκεως ομαλην οδου ει
 ν υοντες φειγωμεν χαλεπεις
 υψος οδοπλανης.

Proclus, friend of Tatian, son of Arisius, of A
 co as to his birthplace, of honourable descent,
 leaving behind the royalties of his fathers for a
 common rank,
 A Phœnician in the bloom of youth, of Baal'bek by
 the will
 of the gods, the ruler. Forthwith to Malek perform-
 ing sacred rites,
 As many as he thought prudent for Phœnicia itself,
 in proportion also to this very to be executed purpose.
 Ah, great marvel! the steepest parts of the
 promontories he made level in the middle:
 In order that, from beginning to end, the road being
 even, in
 the rainings we may escape difficult approaches;
 the height being circuitous as to the route.

These names are new to history. Proclus appears to have been a Phœnician, of Aco (Acre), of royal blood, governor of Baalbeck. Of his date, as related to the Egyptian, Assyrian, and Roman dates, this is not the place to speak. Professor Paine's report will soon be published, and our scholars will then have the problem fairly before them.

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