

by travellers, still demands patient research. I hope, however, that if our future success be equal to that we have already obtained, we shall be able by the summer of 1876 to commence the publication of the Ordnance Survey of Palestine as completed from Dan to Beersheba.

CLAUDE R. CONDER, Lieut., R.E.,  
*In Command Survey of Palestine.*

*14th July, 1874.*

## THE JERUSALEM RESEARCHES.

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### LETTERS FROM M. CLERMONT-GANNEAU.

#### XI.

JERUSALEM, May 31, 1874.

I HAVE just rediscovered, within the Haram, an inscription of some Ancient importance, pointed out by several Mussulman authors. Up to the present time we have not been able to establish its existence: it is a stone on which are inscribed the dimensions of the Haram measured at a very ancient period.

The Arab chronicler of Jerusalem, Medjr ed Din (p. 29 of the text edited at Boulaq), after having recorded that Hafiz ibn Asakir assigns to the Haram 755 royal cubits of length and 465 cubits of breadth, quotes this passage of one of his predecessors, the author of the *Muthir el Ghoram*, from which he repeatedly borrows:—"I saw, a long time ago, in the north wall, above the door adjacent to the Bab ed Douidariyé, inside the surrounding wall, a slab on which are inscribed the length and breadth of the Haram. These measurements do not agree with what we have stated above. It is there said that the length is 784 cubits, and the breadth 455; the nature of the cubit is specified, but I was not able to see if it was the cubit mentioned above, or another, on account of the writing being injured."

The Persian Hadji, Nasir ibn Khosrou, who came on pilgrimage in the year 438 (A.H.), and consequently before the Crusades, saw this slab also. "On the northern side, which is contiguous to the Dome of Yakub (on whom be peace!), I observed an inscription on a tablet, to the effect that the Mosque was 704 yards long and 455 yards by the 'malak' (measure)."—*Major Fuller's translation.*

This inscription I have just found by accident fitted into the wall of one of the many Arab *Médrésés* which adjoin the northern face of the Haram; it is immediately to the right, coming out of the *Bab el Almé*, which seems to correspond to the "*Bab ed Douidariyé*" of the

ancient account. In order to see it, you must mount the steps of a stair leading to the upper floor of the *Médréssé*. The stone is of hard *mezzeḥ*, and the writing *neshky*, carelessly traced. It is composed of four lines separated by four horizontal strokes; the first being broken, with nothing on it but the traditional invocation, “*Bismillah er rahman er râhim.*” After this I read, without much difficulty, as follows:—“The length of the Mesjid is seven hundred . . . and four cubits, and its breadth is four hundred, fifty, and five cubits, the cubit of . . . .”

The length is broken off in the tens, but we cannot hesitate between thirty (*thalathin*), and eighty (*thamanin*): according to the author of the *Muthir el Ghoram*, the last number would be the true one. Nasir seems as well to have been embarrassed in the reading of the last number, and to have omitted altogether the doubtful number of tens. The last word, containing the designation of the kind of cubit, is hard to make out; it was also hard in the time of the author of the *Muthir el Ghoram*. Nasir does not hesitate to write the word *Malak* (of the king), but the appearance of the original makes me doubt the exactness of this reading.

Now that we are on this point, which is not without interest, let me notice further that the author of the *Muthir el Ghoram* gives as dimensions of the Haram, measured by the line, in his time, 683 cubits for the length of the east side, and 650 cubits for that of the west; the breadth, taken outside the surrounding wall, being estimated at 483 cubits.

In another passage (p. 377) Medjr ed Din also gives us the result of his personal observations on this point. He measured the Haram with a cord twice over, and found for the length, north to south, from the Mihrab of David to the *Bab el esbat* (not counting the walls), 660 cubits (the common cubit), and for the breadth, between the cemetery of *Bab er rahm * and the *M d r s * of Tenguiz, 406 cubits.

We have now before us very different figures and divergences, the more difficult to harmonise because they spring from the differences in the cubit employed; further difficulties are the manner and points of measurement, and the broken condition of the inscription quoted; all perhaps evincing, which would be of interest to us, real variation in the extent of the Haram at certain epochs in the Mussulman rule.

Mosaics in  
the exterior  
arcades of  
the Sakhra.

I have already informed you [in a private letter] of the existence of mosaics within the arcades of the outer wall of the Sakhra. It results from this fact that between the period when these arcades were opened and when they were completely covered by the fayence tiles now placed on them, they passed through an intermediary stage; that is, they were built up and transformed into little niches, the interior walls of which received a rich ornamentation of mosaics in coloured and gilt glass. If, as I have said before, these arcades were open and formed a part of the gallery in existence at the time of the Crusades, we must admit that this transformation is later than the Crusades, and the

addition of the mosaics to be the work of the Arabs, perhaps that of Saladin.\*

We know that Saladin must have subjected the Sakhra to many changes in order to efface the traces of Christian worship which had made the Mussulman sanctuary the *Templum Domini*. These mosaics are good enough, in colour and design, to belong to such a date. Thanks to the kindness of the Memour, who uncovered a second arcade next to the first, I ascertained that each arch had received the same ornamentation. The mosaics had disappeared from this arch, leaving marks in the casing to prove where they had been placed. M. Lecomte made a careful study of these mosaics, shattered as they were, and has succeeded in restoring the principal subject of the decoration in accordance with the position of the colours. You will receive, if not by this mail, at least by the next, the result of this restoration. By the intersection of the pattern, crosses are formed, to which I think it would be difficult to assign anything beyond a geometrical origin and value.

The presence, duly ascertained, of mosaics outside the Sakhra, is a fact of much interest in the history of this building, because it had been often doubted, in spite of the formal affirmation of the ancient descriptions. From John de Wirzburg to Medjr ed Din, all authors agree in saying that the Sakhra was adorned with mosaics inside and outside. The last trace of this system of decoration has disappeared from the inside, since the general application of the fayence—that is to say, since the 16th century.

At the present moment they are proceeding to the repair of the inclined roof which covers the lower sides of the Sakhra. In the progress of this work the lead is being removed, so that it is now possible to penetrate to the interior of the framework, and to see the whole central drum exposed from the ceiling to the springing of the roof. We can thus examine at our ease the whole external face of the drum. We have been enabled to ascertain the total absence of the mediæval dressing in the materials used in the work. There is only one block in one of the buttresses which bears a trace of it. The materials in the buttresses differ in general from those of the drum itself. They are large, and show a dressing worked with a point, which I think is ancient. It is found on several large blocks which are visible in certain parts of the Haram, which I believe to have been utilised by the Arabs.

We have only found one mason's mark on all the stones examined. It is quite of the same kind as that which we have noted in the exterior outspread wall.

We have found in a magazine close to El Aksa a fragment of vessel in a magnificent vessel in basalt, with a bluish tinge and a very close

\* Medjr ed Din says (p. 434) that Al Mostanser Billah came to Jerusalem in 861-2, A.D., and renewed the mosaics of the Sakhra above the marble of the exterior.

grain. Sarcophagus or bath, this vessel, the fabrication of which must have been extremely costly on account of the beauty and the hardness of the material, must have been ordered for some great personage or some important use. The sides are not vertical, but widened out like those of a bath. The vessel increases 0·57 metre in depth, and 0·81 in length. The thickness of the sides is 0·11 metre, and the longest part preserved is 1·19 metres. At the end is an opening, perhaps made more recently to let the water flow easily.

Gabaon,  
Ebal, Geri-  
zim, Her-  
mon,  
placed near  
Jericho by  
the legend.

You will remember the Bedouin legend which I have already noted as referring to the tradition of Joshua stopping the sun at Jericho. The alterations of this kind in the history of Joshua are very ancient. We find very early this tendency to group round Jericho the places which hold the chief place in the history of the successor of Moses. Thus it is that we find Procopius, Eusebius, and Jerome, saying that Mounts Ebal and Gerizim, claimed later at Samaria by the Samaritans, are in reality not far from Gilgal. It seems that this grouping took place earlier than the Christian writers whom I have cited, and that they borrowed their theories from the Jews, who maintained them out of hatred to the Samaritans.

The transference of the miracle of Gibeon seems to belong to the same epoch, if not to have been determined by the same cause. In any case it is expressly indicated by the Russian Patriarch Daniel, who says (p. 56), "To the west of this convent (of the Archangel Michael at Gilgal) is a fountain called Gibeon. It is lofty and very great. It is above this mountain that the sun stood still for half a day, until Joshua had overcome his enemies when he fought against Og, King of Bashan, and Sihon, King of the Amorites, and all the land of Canaan. When Joshua had overcome them, the sun went down behind the mountain of Gibeon. We see a great cavern in this mountain. Here it is that our Lord Jesus Christ fasted forty days and forty nights, and, when he was a hungered, the devil drew near to him." So that the mount of Joshua, when pointed out, is the mountain of Gibeon.

Not only Ebal, Gerizim, and Gibeon have been transported to Jericho, Hermon has also shared the same lot. The Onomasticon, Antoninus, St. John of Damascus, and a number of pilgrims, agree in placing the Hill of Hermon near the Jordan, not far from Jericho.

The excavations I had undertaken in the caves of the Via Dolorosa, and of which I shall give you an account presently, have led, among other things, to a discovery of great value.

In the deepest of the newly found rock-cut chambers I have explored, and under the great pieces of broken ceiling which testify to some great destruction on this spot, we found a large terra-cotta vase, which we could only bring away in pieces. Fortunately the vase, although broken, is so nearly complete, that it has been possible to reconstruct it by gumming the pieces together. You will find enclosed two photographs, pending the arrival of the original.

This cup is in terra-cotta, very hard, and of a grey colour. It

measures 0·36 metre (nearly 14 inches) high; it is mounted on a low foot of simple design, and is very capacious, with a maximum circumference of one metre. It has no neck, the opening being very small, with a little collar 0·235 metre in diameter. It is ornamented by two handles, each formed of a double tress elegantly twisted. On the upper part of each handle is cut a small rectangular cavity, towards which two large serpents appear to be turning as if to drink. They are in relief, symmetrically disposed, and climbing along the sides of the vessel; their tails are lost in the base of the handles. Immediately below each handle is sculptured in relief a Gorgon's head.

Further, close to either handle is twice impressed a kind of small medallion, representing a male figure, nude, upright, the left arm raised and leaning on a long lance or thyrsus; the right arm extended and pointed to the ground. The right hand appears to hold an indistinct object over another also indistinct placed upon the ground.

The external mouldings of this little figure, of which I shall speak presently, are repeated six times on one vase.

At nearly equal distances from the two handles, and on each side of the vase, is repeated twice a second moulded medallion of larger dimensions, representing a naked Mercury, whose body is seen in full, the head turned to the left. He has the petasus, and has his tunic tied across the breast and thrown behind him; he holds the caduceus in his left hand, and raises with his right an object which seems to be a purse—the frequent attribute of the Hermes of antiquity.

In the circle which surrounds him are four objects, which appear to be meant for fir-cones. The medallion is encircled by a small border, formed by means of a moulded repetition of six points arranged in a circle round a seventh central point. This ornament is reproduced in profusion on the rest of the vase.

On one of the two nearly symmetrical segments into which the vase is divided by the handles, the medallion of Mercury is flanked on the left by the small medallion previously described, and to the right by a symbolic group which demands a description by itself. Under a sort of portico, divided into three by four little fluted columns, is seen in the central intercolumniation a vessel with two handles, the mouth very wide. In the left-hand intercolumniation is an altar, lofty, narrow, and fluted, reminding one of the Assyrian altars, surmounted by eight little spheres disposed in form of a pyramid. In the right-hand intercolumniation is a second altar the same as the first, but with a few essential variations. The number of spheres is only seven, and a rectangular tablet is fixed in the altar at its middle.

Immediately below the porch, and corresponding with the three intercolumniations, is stamped in relief a group of three little figures representing a feminine personage, draped, the left hand supported by a long spear, the right hand directed towards the ground and holding some undetermined object. Thus these figures appear to be the repetition of the same *ektypon*, reproduced again twice, but singly on this

side of the vessel. The altar on the right is also repeated once by itself.

I must lastly mention, in concluding this segment of the vase, a large leaf, with its branches in high relief, stamped beside one of the serpents.

If we pass to the opposite segment, we find the same elements arranged in nearly the same way; but we notice that the little figure, three times repeated, is not grouped as in the other part of the vase, that the vase between two columns is reproduced apart, and that the altar on the left, but not on the right, is repeated by itself.

The lower half of the vase is decorated by two borders, formed by concentric semicircles with seven extremities. This type, reminding one of the seven-branched candlestick, appears several times in the upper part. Below is a third circle, formed by the juxtaposition of a lozenge. Below this again, the same type grouped in triangles, the point of which is prolonged to the foot, completes the decoration.

I forgot to say that the collar of the vessel is adorned with five or six parallel lines of small mouldings, made freely but not without taste.

One curious matter of detail is that the whole surface of the vase, especially in the places covered with mouldings, is thickly set with little holes made before the baking by the print of a sharp chisel or a knife. This cannot be the result of an accident. On the other hand, there must have been some serious motive in covering the mouldings with holes which spoil the figures. Perhaps it was to assist the baking.

This great vase, so rich in ornamentation, is nevertheless executed with a certain amount of negligence. Its form is elegant, but it wants symmetry and is not perpendicular; the handles are put on awkwardly; and the details of the mouldings show carelessness. All round it may be seen the marks of the fingers which repaired the accidents produced in removing the mould. The arrangement of the figures and the symbols seems done by chance and without rigorous method. Nevertheless, such as it is, this vessel, with all its imperfections, is most remarkable from an artistic point of view.

The profuseness in detail and the carelessness in execution, lead me to think that it is a kind of specimen, the essay of some artist wishing to make a model, which he might subsequently reproduce with greater care, perhaps in metal.

This is the place to record that we found, beside the vase, two fragments of terra-cotta, which did not form part of the vase, as the colour and form show, but which present striking analogies with it. We observe in the two fragments, which fit together, the same mouldings in the upper part; a Gorgon mark like that on the large vase, but of less dimensions; the same element of ornamentation in the concentric semicircles; and an absolute reproduction, probably obtained from the same mould, of the little male figure leaning on a spear. A hollow impress of palm leaves completes the decoration.

The juxtaposition of these two similar vases seems to indicate the presence of a local manufactory rather than the result of an importation, as we might be tempted to suppose, when we reflect how sterile Jerusalem appears to us at the present time from an artistic point of view. We know that in imperial days they still made at Arretino vessels in red clay, with ornaments and figures in relief, cast in moulds, and consequently very different from the ornamentation of the Greek vases of the old style, which were modelled by the hand alone.

After the description of the vase, it only remains for us to determine its date, its use, and the symbolic signification of its complicated decoration.

If we take into account the place where we found it, and consequently the history of Jerusalem, we are inclined to attribute the vase to the Roman period; that is to say, to see in it an object belonging to *Ælia Capitolina*. The fabrication and style accord very well with this hypothesis.

The general form of the vase and the disposition of the mouth appear to imply the existence of a lid similarly ornamented, which has disappeared. To judge by the breadth of the mouth and the stability of the foot, the vase departs from the type of the amphora, and belongs to the category of vessels from which water was drawn, not poured out. It belongs, in fact, to the *κρατῆρ* class, although the handles are a little too highly placed for the classic *κρατῆρ*, whose handles, generally above the vase, are more often destined to move than to carry the vessel.

The vases might have had a religious or simply a domestic use; that is, to serve as libations offered to the gods, or to be employed at ordinary repasts. In both cases mixed liquids, generally water and wine, were drawn by means of the *simpulum* or the *cyathus*—a kind of long-handled spoon which served to fill the cups. Even when the *κρατῆρ* was only destined for profane use, it preserved a religious character. It was the custom, in banquets of ceremony, to have three vessels of different shapes. The first, according to Suidas, dedicated to Mercury, the second to Charisius, and the third to Jupiter the Etruscan. According to others, the first cup (some say the third) was consecrated to the food deity (*Ἄγαθοδάιμων*). Three make the cup of Health. One cup bore in its decoration all the signs of a religious vase, and I am tempted to believe that it was destined for sacrificial libations, these vessels being, as a rule, not only dedicated to divinities (as *ἅραθματα*), but employed for them as in the communion service.

The four serpents which are proceeding to drink out of the receptacle hollowed for them in the handles the drops which have escaped from the *simpulum*, appear to represent the *genii loci*, and remind me of the serpentine form of the *Ἄγαθοδάιμων*, to which in so many ancient monuments libations are offered.

The Mercury twice repeated recalls the cup consecrated to Hermes. In this case, might the fragment be a piece of the second vase?

The little male figure six times repeated on the great vase, and for a seventh time on the fragment, is not easy to make out. It is singularly like the Bacchus which appears in the coins of *Ælia Capitolina*, notably on those struck during the reigns of Antoninus and Gordian III. If this figure be an imitation of the numismatic type, the uncertain gesture of one figure may be that of the right hand holding a bunch of grapes to a panther upright or sitting down. If necessary it may be regarded as a hand letting the wine flow from a *carchesium*.

In any case, the presence of Bacchus is not at all strange on a vase destined to contain wine. Is it the *Charisius* of Suidas? The pinecones which surround the Mercury might perhaps be better for the Dionysiac attributes.

As to the female figure, I avow my inability to explain it at present : but I doubt not that European archæologists will succeed in making it out. Can it be Hygeia?

The presence of the vase and the two altars grouped under the same porch completes the religious aspect of one vase. We must note that the vessel in the ornamentation is of a type very different from that of the vase itself. The existence of the two altars and the curious form they possess are points of the highest interest. The number of spheres contained in the cavity of each altar is not indifferent. Whatever be the nature of the objects represented, it is certain that the number seven in the first case recalls the cosmic conception of antiquity of five planets, together with the sun and the moon ; the number eight in the other case is that conception together with the eighth element, Phoenician *echmour*, which represents the seven all together. I do not insist on this symbolic value of the numbers. I confine myself to remarking the employment of seven points disposed in a circle, six round a seventh, and the seven extremities of concentric semicircles.

We may ask again how it happens that this vase and the similar fragment have been picked up in such a place, that is to say, in the rock-cut chambers. It is very improbable that the vases have been met with in their original place, that is to say, in a sepulchral cave. The *débris* of all kinds with which we found them mixed up would rather make me suppose that they have been thrown at some remote period into these caverns pell-mell with refuse. If they ever served for sacrifices offered by the pagans of *Ælia Capitolina* at the Sanctuary of Jupiter, which stood not far off, it is very easy to understand how, at the official triumph of Christianity, these vessels of a proscribed worship would be ignominiously thrown away with the most vile rubbish. If that is so, the earthquake which destroyed the caverns took place after the religious reaction.

Whatever opinion be adopted as to these difficult questions, the vase, which I propose to call the Vase of Bezetha, remains one of the most precious archæological objects that Jerusalem has yet produced ; and I

do not doubt that the interest it will excite among *savants* will equal the curiosity that it will excite among the public.

C. CLERMONT-GANNEAU.

P.S.—Capital in the Haram-esh-Shereef representing the Presentation of Christ.

MM. Palmer and Drake during their first journey to Jerusalem remarked and pointed out to me on the minaret at the north-west angle of the Haram a marble capital with mutilated figures. We went to see this interesting relic, and I send you a drawing of it by Lecomte. Although the heads have been broken by Mussulman iconoclasts, it is not difficult to make out the scene portrayed. On the left the old man Simeon receives the infant Jesus from the hands of the Virgin enveloped in swaddling clothes; on the right is also a personage round whose head is a nimbus, who seems to be St. Joseph. The same subject appears to have been treated in the three capitals placed in the same minaret, but the other two have been a great deal more broken. Not only the capitals, but also the columns and the bases which support them, seem to have made a single whole. The three capitals were cut so as to be placed between two walls at right angles. I think that it is easy to divine whence they came. Phocas, describing the *Templum Domini* (the *Sakhra*) of the Crusaders, says that in the interior, opposite to the cave, there are two little chapels or chambers (*καμαραι*), in which are represented, in one, "the meeting (*ὑπαντη*) of the Lord Christ, for it is here that Simeon received him in his arms;" in the other, the vision of Jacob. It is highly probable that we have in these two capitals the fragments taken from the chapels after the restoration of the *Templum* to the Mussulmans by Saladin. The sacerdotal costume worn by Simeon is extremely interesting.

## XII.

The period of the Crusades is no exception to the extreme poverty of inscriptions which appears to be the peculiar character of Palestine. Written traces of the western rule in the Holy Land are of the greatest rarity. During all the years that I have hunted for inscriptions in this ungrateful soil I have met but five or six texts belonging to the period, and even they were for the most part fragmentary.

Tomb and  
portraits of a  
Crusading  
Bishop of  
Palestine,  
contemporaneous  
with  
St. Louis.

It is a fact which at first seems the more singular because the period is comparatively but little removed from us, and because the passage of the Occidentals, although rapid, has left a broad and deep impress upon the architecture of Palestine. I have elsewhere established technical and invariable rules which enable us at first sight and without any possible error to determine any stone cut by the Crusaders. The application of this law—much more certain than the observation, so delicate and so much disputed, of styles, and which permits us to determine the

date of monuments not only taken as a whole, but in their elements, to number up, so to speak, the materials employed by the hands of the Westerns—has demonstrated the prodigious movement of construction which took place during this brief period. It is natural, then, to think that the men who knew how to use stone would not have neglected to confide to it the written record of their memorable deeds.

This almost total absence of mediæval European inscriptions can only be explained by a pitiless reaction against everything which could recall a conquest odious to the Mussulmans, and a yoke borne with impatience by even Oriental Christians.

Therefore the discovery of a Crusading text even mutilated, on the very soil, is always a piece of good fortune for science. In our last excursion to Jaffa I found two. The first (drawn by M. Lecomte, No. 48), engraved in large and splendid letters on a fine block of white marble ( $0\cdot77 + 0\cdot27 + 0\cdot19$  metres), consists of two lines, of which only the middle one remains, and traces of a third line.

. . er : augustus : io . .  
[ . . . anno dominice incarnationis]  
[ ti ] .

I put between brackets the restorations which seem probable. I think that of *anno dominice incarnationis* will be admitted without difficulty. This manner of dating the year of the incarnation of the Lord, and the way of writing *dominice* (ꝝ), are found in a number of the charters of the kingdom of Jerusalem in the eleventh and twelfth centuries (E. de Roziére, *Cartulaire du St. Sepulcre*).

The palæographic aspect of the letters, especially that of the T, tends also, if my memory serves me, to attach this inscription to the twelfth century.

The second inscription, which I brought from Jaffa (No. 49 in M. Lecomte's sketches), is much more interesting, first, because it accompanies a very curious iconographic monument; and secondly, because it offers great chronological precision. It comes from a Mussulman wely called Sheikh Mourad, and situated about 20 minutes W.N.W. of Jaffa.

This precious monument—it is only a fragment—consists of a slab of white marble measuring actually  $0\cdot70$  metre in length, by  $0\cdot55$  in height and  $0\cdot05$  in thickness. The fragment is broken into two pieces, which fit each other exactly.

Here is portrayed a personage, full face, with a sharp beard, and mitre for head-dress, and holding the episcopal crozier; and its position, hard to the left, shows that we have to do with a bishop and not a mitred abbot.

The head and the shoulders are surrounded by a trilobe resting on a little column with a capital. In the corner to the right of the trilobe is represented an incense-bearing angel, with a nimbus and wing, who censes the head of the bishop. This detail is excellent in its movement.

The general drawing is remarkable for its primness and precision ; it recalls at first sight the style of the thirteenth century, and everything, as we shall see, justifies this impression.

We have here one of those flat tombs which were placed on a level with the ground, and which are so numerous at this period.

I would willingly believe that the slab was not only engraved, but also inlaid ; the drawing, deep and narrow, with vertical strokes, was probably destined to receive some hard and coloured matter ; we remark, besides, in the mitre and the crozier, deep holes, in which may have been inlaid enamels or glass to imitate precious stones.

The mitre is rather higher than those which we see on monuments of the twelfth century.

The pastoral staff terminates with the head of an animal ; it was meant to be carried in the left hand ; the right, which has disappeared, is occupied, in most similar monuments, in giving the benediction.

There only remains of this slab a piece comprising the left half of the face to the springing of the shoulders. All round it ran a Latin inscription in mediæval characters forming a frame. A few words only remain, which I will examine immediately.

The back of the slab has also received a later inscription in Arabic, of which this is the translation :—

“ In the name of God, merciful and clement. Certainly he restores the mosques of God who believes in God and in the day of the Resurrection, who makes prayer, who gives alms, and who only fears God ; perhaps he will be [in the number of those who follow the paths of goodness]. The construction of this blessed mosque has been ordered by him who was poor before the Most High God, the Emir Jemal-ed-din, the son of Isheik, whom God have in his mercy. The year seven hundred, thirty-six . . . ”

This inscription was written on the back of the other, the first part of which is borrowed from the ninth sonnate of the Koran (v. 18). The poem called “ On Repentance ” is disposed in such a fashion as to show that the slab was cut up into five or six pieces in the year 736 of the Hegira (A.D. 1335). They cut in the original slab a piece nearly square, on the reverse of which the Arab inscription was cut. This slab subsequently underwent a slight mutilation, which took off the lower left angle with a part of the face and breast of one side, and the first words of the new inscription on the other. We know from historians, and also from an authentic inscription of Bibars, preserved at Ramleh, the exact date of the definitive expulsion of the Franks from Jaffa : it was, according to William of Tyre, the seventh of March, 1268, in *Redjeb*, 666, according to the Mussulman authorities. Our monument could not, therefore, *a priori*, be later than this, which, taking it in a minimum limit, brings us to the middle of the thirteenth century.

We come next, having arrived at a historical limit of time, to the interpretation of the inscription, or rather the fragment of Latin

inscription which ran round the slab. I read it, with restorations in brackets:—

[*Anno millesimo*]o: C<sup>o</sup>.C.: *quiq[ue]gesimo*: octavo: in festo: *sanc[t]orum*: o [nnium? .]

If we regret the loss of the Bishop's name, we have at least the satisfaction of possessing almost entire the part which probably contains the date of his death.

The day is specified by the words *in festo sanctorum*; as for the next word, I am not certain whether it begins with an *o* or a *c*: in the former case *omnium* must be indicated: it will be the day of All Saints.

The preceding words contain the year; it is impossible to mistake *quinquagesimo sexto* in spite of the orthographic irregularity. C<sup>o</sup>.C. is for *ducentesimo*. There remains the *millesimo*, of which the *o* remains, with the broken *m* preceding it.

The date is therefore 1255, probably the day of All Saints. The text is unhappily too much destroyed to inform us who the personage was.

In the absence of certain indications these hypotheses are possible:—

1. The slab may have been, like so much building material, transported to Jaffa from some other neighbouring city, Ain, for example, the site of a bishopric.

2. It may have covered the remains of a bishop of some other diocese who died at Jaffa during the French occupation.

3. It may belong to a bishop of Jaffa.

In the two first cases all conjecture at the exact truth would be without foundation; we have only two positive elements of solution, the date of the death and the rank of the deceased, which are insufficient, at least with the sources of information which I possess here. I have, in fact, vainly searched through the *Oriens Christianus* of Lequien, and the *Familles d'Outre Mer* of Ducange, for the name of a Latin bishop, archbishop, abbot, or prior, who died in Palestine in 1255.

The third hypothesis, which, until proof to the contrary, rests the most probable, deserves a few moments' consideration, especially as it raises a curious historical question—that is, whether there was or was not a bishopric at Jaffa during the Crusades.

Before the arrival of the Franks, Joppa, an important centre, and a town of special veneration, as having been the sojourning place of St. Peter, was an episcopal seat; we know that certainly, and know also the names of several of its bishops: Fidus, Theodotus, Elias, Sergius.

Under the Crusaders it appears, at least at first, to have lost this rank, for it does not figure in the list of Latin bishoprics as they are preserved in the contemporary documents. Jacques de Vitry, Bishop of Aire in 1216, says expressly in his history of Jerusalem, that the city of Jaffa had no bishop, but was under the immediate jurisdiction of the priest and canons of the Holy Sepulchre. He adds that it was also the case with Nablus, which was similarly without a bishop, and belonging to the abbey of the *Seraphim Domini*. He remarks, *à propos*, that many other cities of Palestine, ancient episcopal seats, Greek and Syrian, are

in the same situation, and have been united by the Franks to other bishoprics.

But Lequien says that, notwithstanding this statement, after the date of Jacques de Vitry he finds mention of bishops of Jaffa, and he cites a passage of Mich. Ant. Baudrand (Tom. i., Geog., p. 327, col. 1), in which it is written that Jaffa, city of Palestina Prima, was formerly a bishopric under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Cæsarea. He uses the word *olim*, it is true, which is somewhat vague. The Latin bishops of Jaffa mentioned by Lequien are,—

1. Guy de Niman, died 1253.

2. A bishop whose name was unknown, who went in 1273 to the Council of Lyons, died 1274.

3. John de St. Martin, died Dec. 23, 1374.

I have nothing to say about the third bishop, because I have not with me the author referred to by Lequien to confirm his conclusions. I confine myself to the fact that since one lived in 1374, and the others in 1274, it is impossible that either the second or the third could be the bishop on this monument. Besides, Jaffa was surrendered in 1268. Guy de Niman remains, who died in 1253; the bishop of my slab died in 1255, so that there is chronological incompatibility. Nevertheless we must not forget that the *Estoire de Eracles Empereur*, from which Lequien borrows this fact, contains in matters of date very grave errors, and it is very easy in manuscripts to get such confusions as MCCLVIII. and MCCLI.

But against this identification there is a much more serious objection, which at the same time puts in question the existence of a bishopric at Jaffa altogether. The passage of the *Estoire de Eracles* is as follows:—

“A MCCLI amourent le rois Henry de Chipre et l'evesque de Jaffe Guy de Nimar.”

Now a MS. variation gives the word *Baffe* for *Jaffe*, which would be Paphos (Baphe) in the island of Cyprus. M. G. Rey, in his edition of the *Familles d'Outre Mer*, has adopted this reading, and admits that Guy de Niman, whom he calls Mimars, and makes die in 1272 instead of 1273, was Bishop of Paphos.

In another passage of the same *Estoire* the word *Baphe* is read with a variation of *Jaffa*. “Li maréchaus . . . manda à Baphe pour les galères . . .”

The same error may have occurred with regard to the second Latin Bishop of Jaffa on Lequien's list, and in exactly the same way.

Here is the very existence of our Latin bishopric of Jaffa deduced from the names of these three bishops, compromised, especially if we remember the very distinct statement of Jacques de Vitry. Nevertheless, in the face of this negative argument, we must place an official document, a letter of Pope Alexander III. addressed to Peter, Prior of the Holy Sepulchre (*Cartulaire*, pp. 291, 292), whence it clearly results—

(1) That King Amaury and his homonym, the Patriarch of Jerusalem, had deprived the Prior of the Holy Sepulchre of the Church of

Jaffa, restoring it to its ancient dignity of a cathedral church, which it had lost through the violence and the occupation of the Heathen.

- (2) That the Pope, in spite of the protestation of the Prior, believes it to be his apostolic duty to maintain the restoration, at the same time advising that compensation be made in exchange.

The bishopric of Jaffa was, then, actually accomplished. The cathedral church could only be the church of St. Peter. As to the compensation, it very likely consisted of the Church of St. Nicolas, conceded by King Amaury in 1168.

I confess that it seems difficult to reconcile this fact with the assertion of Jacques de Vitry, who could not have been ignorant of it. However this may be, the facts seem sufficient to permit us to believe in the existence of a Latin Bishop of Jaffa, and, in this case, in the discovery of the tomb and portrait of one of them.

In any case, the certain date 1258 is only six years before the arrival of Louis IX. at Jaffa, two years before the death of the king, and in the time of John d'Obelin, Count of Jaffa, ten years before the definitive taking of the city by Sultan Bibars.

If the slab really belongs to the Bishop of Jaffa, it may very well be supposed that it lay originally in the metropolitan church of St. Peter. This church, constructed on the traditional site of the recovery of Dorcas, or Tabitha, frequently figures in the Cartulary of the Holy Sepulchre.

Once (p. 71), in the act of donation of the patriarch Ebremar, there is mention of the cemetery which depended on it. "Ecclesiam Sancti Petri majorem, quæ et apud Joppenas eum cimeterio ecclesiæ pertinenti."

One would say that the church, to judge by the expression "apud Joppen," was outside the city, like another church of Jaffa, that of St. Nicolas, which is said in the Act of Donation of Amaury to be situated without the walls and to the north (Cartulary of St. Stephen, p. 289).

These churches must not be confounded with that which St. Louis caused to be built by the Cordeliers during his stay at Jaffa, and which contained the altars, nor with that which the Knights Hospitallers possessed within the city—"in corpore civitatis."

Although some authors admit that the Church of St. Peter was south of Jaffa, we might perhaps suppose that the Wely of Sheikh Mourad from which the slab comes, and where probably stood the mosque built by the Emir Jemal in 1335, succeeded this Church of St. Peter, and that consequently our monument has never changed its place.

This substitution of a Mussulman for a Christian sanctuary is quite according to Oriental usage, and it would not be the least interesting thing about this precious fragment if it had enabled us indirectly to rediscover the exact spot on which this church stood, consecrating one of the most ancient souvenirs of Christianity. I may add that this conclusion is possible, but not necessary.

## XIII.

JERUSALEM, June 25, 1870.

Here are a few details on our recent expedition to Jaffa, with which I am very well satisfied. It lasted seventeen days. Starting from Jerusalem on the 3rd, we returned on the 19th. The journey was intended to verify certain points which have engaged me for a long time. It enabled me, not to explore completely, but to visit a triangular region having Jerusalem, Jaffa, and Ascalon for the three angles. The list of our camps will indicate the line followed and the centres of research: Abu Gosh, Bir el Main, Lydda, Jaffa, Yebneh, Ashdod, El Moghâr, Artuf, and Jerusalem. Our harvest is of two kinds, epigraphic and topographic, without counting archaeological observations properly so called, and an abundant crop of popular and rustic legends, which are to the Bible just as the popular tales, for example, in German are to the old German mythology.

I bring back twenty inscriptions, more than one per diem; all, with the exception of Nos. 12 and 20, are originals or squeezes.

1. Abu Gosh, Church of the Crusaders.—A mediæval *grafito*.
2. Kubab.—Mediæval inscription.
3. Amwâs (Emmaus).—Ancient funeral Greek inscription in a sepulchral cave.
4. Jaffa.—Monumental inscription in marble.
5. Do.—Sepulchral slab of a bishop or mitred abbot of the Crusades, with his portrait, and an inscription running all round: the personage is censed by an angel. The marble, which must have been of considerable dimensions, has an inscription behind it, which it has subsequently received, on the back, in Arabic inscription, date 736 A.H.
6. Do.—A Græco-Jewish funeral inscription of ΙΩΤΔΑ son of ΖΑΚΧΑΙ.
7. Do.—Do., incomplete, containing two feminine names with the word בָּנִיָּה and the beginning of another Hebrew word.
8. Do.—Do.
9. Do.—Μνῆμα of Reuben, son of Jacob the Pentaphile; inscription preceded by the sign ρ, in which I am inclined to see a Christian symbol.
10. Do.—Do., ANNA son of ΕΙΛΑΣΙΟΣ.
11. Do.—Do., do.
12. Do.—Do., do.
13. Do.—Two large vase handles stamped with the name of the potter.
14. Mukhalid.—Greek sepulchral inscription.
15. Do.—Slab with Greek sepulchral inscription.
16. Lydda.—Large Greek Christian inscription engraved in a column of the mosque.
17. El Moghâr.—Greek Christian sepulchral inscription.

18. Khirbet er Saidé.—Greek Christian inscription. Monumental and votive—half of this already known (Guerin and Conder).

19. Ancient Gate of Yabneh.—Fragment of pottery, with word ΑΘΑΝΑΣΙΟC.

20. Mijmeh el'adé, near Tell el Jezer.—*Bilingual inscription in Greek and Hebrew marking the limit of Gezer.*

I have no time at present to give you details of these inscriptions, which are a rich contribution to the scanty epigraphy of Palestine, and in which we may see promise of further results in searching again.

Let me call your attention particularly to the group of ten new inscriptions coming from Jaffa, eight of which are Græco-Jewish.

The new group belongs to the series which I have been the first to open up in Jaffa, all coming from the place which I showed on my arrival here to be the cemetery of the ancient Joppa, from which I have carried away so many curious inscriptions. There is here a valuable mine to work, and I am convinced that *hundreds of inscriptions* could be found here which might throw singular light on the Jewish world at the commencement of our era. I studied the question carefully during a four days' halt at Jaffa, and I ended in determining exactly the site and limits of this cemetery, which extends from the adjacent mamelon to Suknet Abu Kobir, a length of more than 600 metres.

But the most important inscription of all, the discovery of which is the grand result of this campaign, is that of Gezer. I have already touched upon it in a few words written hastily from Jaffa.

Here, then, are new details on the subject, pending the full study which will accompany the original. I send you a drawing of the inscription, made by M. Lecomte with his accustomed care and ability. This may serve as a basis for the observations of savants. I was the first to establish the identity of Tell el Jezer (the Abu Shusheh of the maps) with the royal Canaanite city of Gezer, hitherto vainly sought and generally placed at Yasûr. I communicated this discovery to different persons at Jerusalem, and during my last stay in France I had the honour of reading before the Academy of Inscriptions a memoir on the subject, which was only partially published.

I now remember that, when I had finished the reading, the president of the Academy asked me if I had found on the spot any inscription confirming this identification, made, so to speak, *a priori*, and having for *point de départ* a little-known passage in Medjr ed Din.

I was obliged to confess that I had not in support of my theory any proof of this kind, and that I could only quote, outside my narrow base, the classical and critical arguments which from the time of Robinson have served to establish the principal Biblical identifications.

Very well;—this unhoped-for proof, improbable even in Palestine, where not a single corresponding example has been met with, I have had the great fortune to find.

At a very short distance from Tell el Jezer, on the east side, the text in question exists, engraved on a slab of rock nearly horizontal, and very nearly two metres in length.

It is bilingual: it begins with the Greek word ΑΑΚΙΟ... in characters of classical epoch, immediately followed by the Hebrew letters of ancient square form, of which nothing, I think, can be made except גְזֵרָה + גְזֵרָה.

In the second word we have *the very name of Gezer just as it is written in the Bible.*

As to the first, I can see nothing else than the defective form of גְזֵרָה. The omission of the *vau* is perfectly admissible considering the remote period at which the inscription was written.

As for the signification of the word, it is clearly that of *limit*. The word is not Biblical, but it is frequently employed in the Talmud to determine the distance that must not be exceeded on the Sabbath day—*חַחֲמָה שְׁבָתָה*.

The Hebrew inscription must, then, be translated as *limit of Gezer.*

Is this the hieratic, or simply the civil limit?

Two facts appear to argue in favour of the first conjecture:—

1. The special acceptation of the word גְזֵרָה in the Talmudic language.

2. The quality of the city Gezer as belonging to the group of Levitical cities, so that the observation of the Sabbatical limits would be more rigorously observed than elsewhere.

I have no time to enter into the still obscure question of the length of a Sabbath day's journey. I reserve that for the special publication of this precious text, which will perhaps actually solve it, if it means really the Sabbatical limit and not a non-religious boundary.

I need not recall the well-known passage, Numbers xxxv. 2—34,\* where the limits of the Levitical cities and these suburbs are so exactly ordered. It may very well be that in the same radius round Tell el Gezer we may find at the other cardinal points similar inscriptions. I mean to look for them.

One particularity on which I must insist, as it may enlighten us on the real destination of this singular and unique inscription, is that of its position. The letters are placed so as to be read, not by any one who came from Gezer and intended to cross the hieratic boundary, but by one who coming from without sought to pass within. This makes me inclined to believe that we have not simply a warning for the Sabbath rest, but a line of demarcation much more important and necessary.

Let me recall, *en passant*, the fact that Gezer was a frontier town of Ephraim, though I would not pretend to see a tribe-limit in this city boundary.

Gezer was a Levitical city (Joshua xxi. 21). “They gave [the

\* Ver. 5. “Ye shall measure from without the city on the east side two thousand cubits, and on the south side two thousand cubits, and on the west side two thousand cubits, and on the north side two thousand cubits; and the city shall be in the midst,” &c.

Levites which remained of the children of Kohath] Shechem with her suburbs in Mount Ephraim, to be a city of refuge, for the slayer; and Gezer with her suburbs."

It is also possible that the Sabbatical limit was the same as the Levitical.

However that may be, our inscription fixes one point of some perimeter about Gezer. The operations of measurement which we shall proceed to make will perhaps show us whether this radius is one, two, or three thousand cubits, or whether it is of the length indicated by several authors as that of the δδος σαββάτου.

What is the date of the inscription? Palaeographically and historically it seems that we may boldly assign it a date previous to Titus as a minimum limit.

I should not even hesitate to put it at the Maccabean period, during which Gezer plays so important a part, and becomes a political and military centre. The Greek and Hebrew characters may very well belong to the first century before Christ. The date, I believe, may thus vary between the two extreme points.

The name of Αλκιος does not help us in fixing it. Is it the name of a priest, or of a governor of Gezer? It indicates Hellenized habits which would be repulsive to the first Asmonæans, and which tend to bring our inscription down to Herodian times, in which Hellenism was flourishing.

As to the truncated form Αλκ:o, that may be explained by the fact of the two texts, Hebrew and Greek, being placed end to end on the same line; and commencing one at the right and the other at the left, the engraver carving his Greek word after the other, could not find room for the whole word, his o abutting on the η of the word Gezer. Besides, a broken place in the rock between the Λ and the κ took up a portion of the space at his disposal.

I think that the limit of the protecting boundary was not marked only by this inscription on the level of the ground, and difficult to see, but, besides, by some salient sign, some landmark, or *cippus pomarius*, which has disappeared, the traces of which I intend to look for. The existence of indicative marks seems pointed out clearly in Numbers xxxv. 4—26.

To sum up, this discovery has for its chief results—

1. The finding of a Hebreo-Greek text of ancient date, very important in Jewish epigraphy.

2. The positive confirmation that Gezer is really at Tell el Jezer, as I had shown from critical considerations.

This startling confirmation of an identification obtained solely by an inductive method has its weight in other Biblical identifications established on the same principles, gives them legitimacy, so to speak, and confirms the degree of credibility which belongs to them.

3. The probable solution of the much disputed controversy of the Sabbath day's journey and the hieratic limits of Levitical cities.

4. A well-grounded hope of finding in the environs of Gezer and the other Levitical cities analogous inscriptions.

I propose to return to Gezer to carry off the stone, and to study the other questions which belong to this subject; above all to measure the distance of the inscription from the city.

Our topographic harvest is also abundant: we have collected more than sixty names which are not found in any of the maps hitherto published. Very few, however, have escaped Conder. Among them are certain discoveries and identifications of great importance:—

(1.) *A Jeba* south of Abu Gosh, which appears to be that where the inhabitants of Kirjath Jearim deposited the ark.

(2.) *Bezka* = El Yezek (El Yezek for El Bezek of Medjr ed Din) which plays an important part in the battles of the Crusaders with Saladin.

(3.) *Oyün Kara* = Har-Rakkon and Mejarkon of the tribe of Dan (Joshua xix. 46).

4. *Zernúka* = probably by interversion, Sikron of the tribe of Juda (Joshua xv. 11).

5. *Dajún* = the real *Kefr Dagon* of the Onomasticon, between Lydda and Yabneh, instead of the *Beit Dejen* hitherto wrongly admitted.

6. *Deir Eban*, close to *Ain Shemes* = the great *Eben* on which the ark was placed on arriving from Ekron (1 Sam. vi. 14).

7. The country of Dalila and the *Kefr Sorek* of the Onomasticon, a few minutes west of Rafat and near Sara, whence comes the confirmation of the Wady Sarar as the *valley of Sorek*.

8. *Ain Gannim* = (probably) *Umm Jina*, &c.

Study of the ethnical names of localities which present the most interesting forms from a linguistic and topographic point of view, hitherto entirely neglected. I have collected a large number, and I have generally observed that the ethnic form was more archaic than the name of the locality. Here is the germ of a law which has not yet been applied, and which reserves for us most unexpected discoveries for Biblical identifications.

I have already pointed out the very striking example presented in the form *Midyeh* (*Modin*). A man of *Midyeh* is called *Midnāwy*, in plural, *Médāw'nè*. The ancient word, mutilated in the name of the village, reappears entirely in the ethnical name.

Legend of *Jalûd* (*Goliath*) at *Esdûd*, in the very country; tradition of a *neby* flying to *Hamâma*, near *Ascalon*; legend of Sampson divided among several personages in the neighbourhood of *Ain Shemeh*, whence it would seem that the tomb of the Danite hero is at *Wely Abû'l Meizar*, at *Ain Shemesh*; (2) that *Beit el Jemâl* is *Eshtaol* (*Judges* xiii. 25, &c.) The considerable alterations in these confused traditions throughout a region exclusively rustic and Mussulman are a guarantee that they have a certain antiquity.

Plans of three unpublished churches: at *Beit Nûba* (mediæval); at *Lydda* (Greek, contiguous to the Latin church); at *Yebneh* (mediæval, with a portal of the purest Western style); an abundant crop of masons'

marks; in the mosque of Ramleh a magnificent lintel ornamented with animals and Christian symbols; at Lydda a bridge constructed by Bibars out of the ruins of the Crusaders' Cathedral; application and striking confirmation of the law as to mediæval dressing at the church of Abu Gosh; fragment of a magnificent marble statue coming from Cæsarea; a beautiful marble head from Khalasa, &c., and a quantity of details more or less important, forming a mass of designs and sketches too long to enumerate.

*July 8, 1874.*

I told you in my last letter that I was most anxious to explore the neighbourhood of Gezer, persuaded that my inscription could not be the only one, and that we might find a series staking out the sacred limits.

*I have discovered a second, which is the exact reproduction and the most startling confirmation of the former.* It is placed due north-west of the first, at a distance of 150 metres (169·6 yards). It results from this that *the sacred boundary was a square, having its four angles at the four cardinal points.*

*July 12, 1874.*

I think I did not tell you in my last that we found between the first and the second inscriptions certain other characters, apparently Hebrew, cut in the rock. Lecomte remarked them first. I hesitate about the first and second; the third seems a *teth*, and the fourth an *aleph*.

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