

Roma is mentioned as though in Galilee by Sæwulf in 1102 A.D. Rabbi Jacob, of Paris, in 1258 A.D., visited the same place, and mentions the tomb of the patriarch Benjamin as existing there, as also a cavern. Rabbi Uri, of Biel, in 1564 A.D., speaks of the same place, and of the Cavern of Caisran (it is not certain whether this is a proper name or not), from which cavern Messiah was expected to appear. From these accounts we gather also that Roma was in the vicinity of Sepphoris (Sefürieh), Caphar Menda (Kefr Menda), and 'Ailbon ('Ailebün), and we are thus enabled to identify the traditional site with the present ruin of Rümeh, near the village of Rummáneh (Rimmon of Zebulon).

Visiting this spot in the summer of 1875, I found on the east side of the site of the village (destroyed some thirty years ago) a cavern of moderate dimensions, of which we made a plan, and a rude Jewish tomb with *kokim* cut in soft rock. From the character of the capitals of pillars and other indications, it seems not improbable that a synagogue once stood close to this sepulchre. Instances of synagogues built close to sepulchres are not wanting in Galilee.

C. R. C.

THE SHAPIRA POTTERY.

By PROFESSOR SPRENGER, author of "The Life of Mohammed."

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It is now a few years since the English press disposed of the Moabite antiquities, and most readers of the *Academy* have probably forgotten all about them. To refresh their memory we may be permitted to remind them that the stir caused by the sale of the stone of Mesa among the Arabs both in Jerusalem and in the Desert was immense. Everywhere search was made after antiquities; in the year 1872 almost every day brought some curious remains into the shop of Shapira in Jerusalem. They were of two kinds, both of which, though different from each other, had something in common with the stone that had fetched so much money. At first the discovery of stone monuments seems to have been frequent. They were not exclusively Moabitic, but resembled the Mesa stone inasmuch as they were all covered with inscriptions, one of them so covered even on both sides. Of architectural ornaments or statues not a fragment turned up. In the eyes of scholars of the rank of Herr Wcser, the value of these inscriptions was very great. He writes respecting one of them in the *Journal of the German Asiat. Soc.*:—"This stone contains Psalm 117 in magnificent ancient Hebrew characters, similar to those on the stone of Mesa. Who can tell whether it is not the original from which the Psalm was copied in the Holy Writ?" Some more sober Hebraists discovered several incongruities in the writing, and finally honest Shapira himself came to the conviction that it might possibly be a forgery. It is not improbable that the archæologists of Jerusalem did not go to the expense of having the original executed, yet it is clear from these two instances that monuments in stone did not pay. They now concen-

trated all their attention on a less expensive article, ancient pottery; bearing in mind that since the discovery at Mesa, "Moabitea" had become the rage in Europe, and that men of the stamp of Weser have more taste for inscriptions than for the plastic arts. At this time those single-minded Arabs were very accommodating, and it might have been in the power of M. Ganneau to be of incalculable service to archæology. This gentleman relates that he was asked what sort of inscriptions would be most acceptable. Now supposing he had informed them that in Nineveh a whole library on tablets of clay was discovered, they would have at once understood the hint, and we may be certain that by this time the Museum of Berlin would be in possession of the library of Balak. It appears from Dr. Socin's account, that the indefatigable Shapira formed in 1872 three collections of Moabite pottery, containing respectively 911, 473, and 410 specimens. The few drawings appended to the book before us enable the reader to form an opinion on the value of the contents of these collections without entering deeply into the text. Fig. 1 represents an idol with a cocked-hat, imperial, sleepy eyes, and listless features. Every unprejudiced person to whom we showed it took it at the first glance for a clumsily-made copy of a likeness of Napoleon III. Fig. 2 is a ball, surmounted by a shapeless head, and perfectly meaningless. The object of the artist in modelling it seems to have been to find room for a new sort of inscription which he had just devised. There are only twenty-four letters on the ball, but they are so queer that Schlottmann, who exercised his ingenuity on them, considered the inscription as bilingual, and therefore particularly important. This seems, indeed, to have been the intention of those who devised it and allotted to it so prominent a place. Fig. 5 is a clay pipe. Fig. 7 is a bust in stays, the like of which we see in shop windows in Europe. Figures 8 and 9 are legs with gaiters. From the descriptive part of the pamphlet we learn that the other specimens are no better than those delineated, and Prof. Kautzsch points to the fact that in the whole set a most deplorable want of invention is observable. To the inability of the artist to devise new figures it is due that he modelled from objects like the picture of Napoleon, which, as he had formerly been in the service of M. Ganneau, it is to be presumed he had sufficient opportunity of seeing.

Some of the pottery found its way to Stuttgart, other small lots may have been bought by tourists, but the honour of securing the lion's share was reserved for the Prussian Government. It bought 1,700 choice specimens for 22,000 thalers (£3,300). Of this sum two thousand thalers were contributed by the Emperor. In the meanwhile the late Mr. Drake and M. Ganneau succeeded in tracing the fabrication of the pottery to a man of the name of Seleem, and in pointing out the very oven in which it had been baked. The evidence which they brought forward is so conclusive that it would even satisfy an Irish jury if Seleem had been an Irish patriot. No doubt it also satisfied so clear-sighted a man as Dr. Falk, the Prussian Minister of Public Instruc-

tion, and convinced him that he had been duped. His share in the business consists simply in his having run after false prophets. There were in Berlin men like Wetzstein, who is better acquainted with Syria and the character of its inhabitants than any other man in Germany, and the late Prof. Rödiger, the soundest Biblical scholar of his days; but instead of consulting these the Minister applied for advice to Prof. Fleischer in Leipsic, whose literary pursuits never went beyond the subtleties of Arabic grammar, and to Prof. Schlottmann, an enthusiast, and followed them implicitly. Yet even this mistake, though serious in its results, is pardonable, for these two men enjoy great celebrity in Germany. The Minister might, therefore, without compromising himself, have taken such steps as circumstances demanded. He has as yet remained perfectly silent, and as he is a man of great energy we can ascribe his passiveness only to a desire to spare the aged monarch whose munificence has been so cruelly abused the annoyance which would be caused to him by increasing the publicity of the hoax. The German Consul in Jerusalem, assisted by Herr Weser, as soon as the revelations of Ganneau and Drake reached him, made a sham inquiry, in which the simplicity of honest Weser rendered the task assigned to Seleem and his associates very easy. The principal witness, with Oriental complacency, contradicted the statement which he had given to Mr. Drake in writing, and the defendants invited the consul and Weser to an innocent game of hide-and-seek in the fields of Moab, where they afforded Weser the opportunity of disinterring ancient pottery with his own hands. A report of the proceedings was published in the *Journal of the German Asiatic Society*, and therewith was done what could be done to hush up the matter. If the objects of sale had been rotten silks or wine that turned into vinegar the affair might have been consigned to oblivion, but suppositious antiquities exhibited in a public museum are as dangerous as base coins put into circulation; and it therefore now became the duty of scholars to take care *ne quid detrimenti capiat respublica*. Prof. Kautzsch, a distinguished biblical archæologist, and Prof. Socin, the author of *Baedeker's Palestina und Syrien*, responded to the call, *caveant consules*, and published the pamphlet, or rather the book—for it consists of 191 pages—under review. It is profoundly learned and free from egotism and animosity against opponents to a fault, and Prof. Socin's illustrations of the character of the Shemites, as well as Prof. Kautzsch's essay on the religion of the Moabites, have a permanent value. But it appears to us that a little scurrility would have better served the purpose than elaborate argumentation.

It cannot be said that there is method in Seleem's forgeries; they are extremely odd and whimsical, and archæologists found it difficult to classify them, and to tell for what purpose each description may have been intended. Luckily they were not met with in ruins of cities, but almost anywhere in uninhabited places, at no great depth under ground, and this circumstance reminded Schlottmann of the words of Isaiah (ii. 20), "In that day a man shall cast his idols of silver and his idols of gold, which they made each one for himself to worship, to the moles and

to the bats," and he pronounces them to be Kanaanite *penates* cast away in the manner described by the prophet. Kautzsch remarks that the prophecy refers to the Israelites, and herein he is undoubtedly right; yet it is very likely that it will also be fulfilled in reference to the Moabite idols at Berlin. Kautzsch's own labours may be the cause of their being cast to the moles. At Vienna they are already in discredit. I learn from a private letter that Shapira has sent some specimens for sale to the Oriental Museum there, and that they find no purchaser. The antiquarians have discovered two peculiarities in the terra-cotta figures which give them a clue to their meaning. One is the absence of every kind of detail or ornament, with the exception of seven dots, no more and no less, and in various positions. There are seven dots round the cocked-hat; there are as many on the inexpressible utensil, also under the chin of the pipe-head, as well as on the gaiters, and equally on the moustache of fig. 6 of Kautzsch's illustration. Weser at once caught their meaning (whether by his own ingenuity or on a hint of Seleem we do not know); he recognises in them a symbol of the seven planets, and expresses his conviction that the worship of the stars was not unknown among the Moabites. By this characteristic feature a considerable group, bearing on star-worship, is separated from the rest. Schlottmann points to the fact that the capital of the Moabites is called Areopolis by the Greeks, and that the coins struck there at the time of the Roman emperors bear the figure of Ares, armed with sword and spear, and shield, and he infers from it that Chemosh had, even at a more remote period, been considered as the god of war. Kautzsch reminds us that the Greeks were in the habit of giving to foreign proper names a Greek form, and that at the time when these coins were struck the Moabites had disappeared and the Nabateans had taken their place. He therefore derives Areopolis from Ar, the original name of the Moabite capital, and considers Mars on coins as natural a sequel of the name as the bear in the armorial bearings of Bern and Berlin. As the god of war was originally one of the planets, we may hope that the seven stars on the cocked-hat and the gaiters will enable Schlottmann to hold his position; the former evidently covers the head of Mars, and the latter are not gaiters, but his boots. But, speaking seriously, I think Kautzsch's premisses do not bear so sweeping a conclusion, and that Schlottmann is right in assuming that the gods of small communities generally bore a warlike character, and that in the Ares on coins there may be some recollection of Chemosh.

The other peculiarity which is of great use to the antiquarian is the artist's predilection for obscene subjects. What is more natural than to consider all figures of such a character as illustrations of the cult of Astarte? Schlottmann has taken great pains to show that this lady of doubtful reputation had as many votaries among the Moabites as among the Phœnicians, and he even succeeded in discovering an image of her, and the name which she bore, in Moab. He writes, August 18, 1872, in a postscript to his first report on Moabitic treasures, published in the *Journ. Germ. As. Soc.*, vol. xvi., p. 416:—"At the

same time I receive a copy of the size of the original of a naked female figure with a diadem in the form of a crescent on her head, and on the diadem there is written, in elegant letters: *el 'ammāt*. This means, in the *status constructus*, Divinity of the people, or, what is more probable, Divinity of union, and is, in my opinion, equivalent to Astarte. It is, however, just possible that 'Urūmath or 'Ammath is the proper name of the goddess." Subsequently he published an engraving of the "Moabitic Astarte" in Riehm's *Handwörterbuch der bibl. Alterthumsk.*, and as the editor of this work professes to exclude every contribution containing controvertible assertions, this novelty was thereby at once raised to the rank of undoubted fact. Professor Kautzsch is visibly horrified at the thought that by these means the error is likely to be perpetuated in schools, and takes great pains to refute it, employing more particularly philological arguments. To me it appears that the inscription is perfectly clear and unimpeachable. When Saleem had succeeded in modelling the lady to his satisfaction, he called her, for the sake of fun, *the aunt*—this is the meaning of *el 'ammāt* in Arabic. What I am struck with is, that he, in this instance, for once took the trouble to present to his decipherers a legible word, whereas in other instances, as appears from Kautzsch's analysis of the inscriptions, he put together any letters of the Moabitic alphabet at random, and employed in the poser mentioned above even fancy letters of his own. He first became acquainted with the Moabitic character by copying part of the inscription of Mesa before it was brought to Jerusalem.

I cannot conclude this notice without expressing my esteem for the erudition, ingenuity, zeal, and candour of Prof. Schlottmann. What he wants is the quality which Goethe recommends to every man as most essential—resignation. It is this quality which gives to Kautzsch the vantage ground over his friend and colleague. Both *savans* enter on any given question with the same ardour; but Schlottmann invariably jumps to a conclusion, while Kautzsch weighs not only the *pros* but also the *cons*, and whenever they are of equal force he has resignation enough to confess that his inquiries lead to no result.

NOTE.—On Thursday, March 16th, 1876, on the occasion of the Lower House of the Prussian Diet resuming consideration of the estimates of the Education Department, attention was drawn to the inefficient administration of the Royal museums, and, as an illustration, to the acquisition of the so-called Moabite antiquities. Professor Mommsen spoke strongly on the manner in which their genuineness had been advocated. The purchase was made on the recommendation of the German Oriental Society, and especially on that of Professor Fleischer. The administration of the museums is to be completely reorganised, and, we suppose, the collection destroyed.

LETTER NO. III. FROM DR. TOBLER

SIR,—I have duly received your esteemed letter of the 11th, and the July number of the *Quarterly Statement*, and I am very satisfied with