

chased down the valley past Gath, Ebenezer, which was set up between Mizpeh and Beth-car, might be sought for in that neighbourhood; and the locality of the earlier battle, when "the ark of God was taken," would be fixed thereabouts, for the Israelites pitched in Ebenezer (1 Sam. iv.) and the Philistines in Aphek.

This suggested removal southward of all those scenes in Samuel's life which follows the abandonment of Neby Samwil for Sôba as the Mizpeh of 1 Samuel (not the Maspha of later times) seems to accord better, not only with these narratives, but also with vii. 16, as the places of judging are more equally distributed; with xv. 12, which implies that Samuel's house was not very far from Carmel; with viii. 2, as his sons at Beersheba were not so removed from him as otherwise might seem; and we would thus understand why David clung so tenaciously to a neighbourhood, hostile and treacherous to him (as Keilah), because of Samuel's frequent presence there.

July, 1878.

ARCHIBALD HENDERSON.

NOTE ON GAZA.

WHILE the Survey was being carried on from Gaza three sunken pillars were found, marking the angles of a racecourse or exercising-ground for horses, called Merdân ez Zeid. It was situated to the east of the town, in the level country beyond el Muntar, and is supposed to have been laid down by the Saracens about 700 years ago.

The pillar at the south-west corner was found to bear an inscription; it was of grey granite 18 inches in diameter. The inscription was considerably worn by time, and partially covered by the ground.

Mr. W. D. Pritchett has lately informed me of the discovery of a fourth pillar, exactly completing the rectangle, but only showing a few inches above the ground after the winter rains, and also inscribed.

The letters were filled with a red pigment, of which traces remain throughout. The rugged line shows where the stone was broken off with the portion probably bearing the date.

The inscription is 14½ inches long by 12 high.

M. Clermont Ganneau, to whom this inscription has been submitted, reads it as follows:—

+ τοῦ κυρίου ἡ γῆ καὶ τὸ
πλήρωμα αὐτῆς
ἐπὶ Ἀλεξάνδρου
διακόνου ἐπλα=
κῶφη τὰ ὄδε(α)-(ε=)
τους χμ περιτίου

He remarks: The first two lines appear to belong to a religious formula, a Biblical text; it is found in the commencement of Psalm xxiv., "The earth is the Lord's, and all that therein is." The inscription gives the exact text of the Septuagint version.

The rest of the inscription relates to a work done under the Deacon Alexander, the facing with stones of the groundwork of some monument.

An inscription found at Ayûn, in Nabatea, mentions an exactly similar work employing even the same word ἐπικακόθη, meaning "has been faced." The modern Arabic term Belâteh, meaning "to pave with flags of stone," is in common use among the Arabs. The inscription is dated of the year 600, in the month Peritios (February), dating from a local era much used at Gaza, and employed in many other inscriptions of that place.

It is possible that the date may be read of the year 640. In the first case, the date $\overline{\text{XM}}$, where the M is not a numerical figure, but the initial of the word *μήνας* = month.

In the latter case, the superimposed line would extend over the $\overline{\text{XM}}$, forming one date.

As there is no sign of this horizontal bar this must remain an open question for the present.

M. Ganneau also remarks on the peculiar form of the Alpha in Ἀλεξάνδρον and in διακονου.

H. H. K.

THE GERMAN ASSOCIATION FOR THE EXPLORATION OF PALESTINE.

WE have received from Herr Baedeker the first number of the Journal of the new German Association, with a copy of their rules.

The Journal opens with a preface written by Professor E. Kautzsch, in which the writer, after thanking the supporters of the undertaking, and explaining the necessity of establishing a German Society for the Exploration of Palestine, gives a sketch of the origin of the new Association.

It was in the summer of the year 1876 that Dr. Zimmermann, Dr. Socin, and Professor Kautzsch met together to consult on the best way of founding such a society. It seemed to them that the co-operation of influential men might be best obtained by personal and individual effort in introducing the subject by letter. This was accordingly done. The answers received proved more encouraging than was at first anticipated. A year was spent in preliminary arrangements, and on September 28th, 1877, the Society was at last definitely constituted. At a meeting held for the purpose a General Committee was elected, rules and statutes were read and approved, and an Executive Committee was chosen from the general body.

The following is a list of the General Committee:—Baron von Alten, Herr Karl Baedeker, Dr. A. Berliner, Dr. A. Brüll; Herr Brüning, German Consul-General in Syria; Dr. F. Delitzsch, Dr. O. Fraas, Rev.