

leave such proposals to be discussed on their own merits, and that by publishing them in the *Quarterly Statement* the Committee do not sanction or adopt them.

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The Committee are always glad to receive old numbers of the *Quarterly Statement*, especially those which have been advertised as out of print.

Subscribers who do not receive the *Quarterly Statement* regularly are asked to send a note to the Secretary. Great care is taken to forward the periodical to all who are entitled to receive it, but changes of address and other causes give rise to occasional omissions.

It has been asked whether, since the Survey is finished, the *Quarterly Statement* will be discontinued. The Survey, as stated above, will be actually completed when it is entirely published, and not before. But its completion does not mean the completion of the work of the Society, as reference to the original prospectus will show. And there is, more than ever, need of a periodical devoted to the special line of research which is the *raison d'être* of this *Quarterly Statement*. It will therefore be continued as long as the Society exists and there is work of the kind which it represents to be done and reported.

DISCOVERY OF A STATUE NEAR GAZA.

THE following appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette*, November 11th, 1879:—

“An interesting archæological discovery is reported from Palestine. An Arab who was quarrying stone the other day at a place about four miles and a half from Gaza unearthed a marble figure supposed to be a colossal god of the Philistines. The dimensions of the figure are as follows: 3 feet from the top of its head to the end of its beard, 27 inches from ear to ear, 13½ inches from top of forehead to mouth, 54 inches from shoulder to shoulder, 81 inches from crown of head to waist, and 54 inches the circumference of the neck. The total height of the figure is 15 feet. The hair hangs in long ringlets down upon the shoulders, and the beard is long, indicating a man of venerable age. The right arm is broken in half, while the left arm is crossed over the breast to the right shoulder, where the hand is hidden by the drapery of a cloth covering the shoulders. There is no inscription on the figure or the pedestal, which is a huge block carved in one piece with the figure. The statue was found in a recumbent position, buried in the sand, on the top of a hill near the sea. It had evidently been removed from its original site, which is unknown. Its estimated weight is 12,000lb. The Pasha

of Jerusalem has ordered a guard to watch this relic of ancient art, and to prevent any injury to it by the fanatics of Gaza."

See also Dr. Chaplin's letter on the same subject in *Notes and News*.

Lieut. Conder communicates the following notes on this discovery:—

"Gaza is mentioned in the Talmud as a place where Jews might live in spite of the idolatry of its inhabitants. A place called *Yerid* ('market') or '*Alluzah* ('meat market') existed outside the town, where an idol was worshipped (Abodah Zara i. 4, Jerusalem and Babylonian Talmuds).

Although Christianity was early introduced at Gaza (a Bishop Silvanus of Gaza is mentioned by Eusebius as early as 285 A.D.) idolatry kept its hold on the city as late as the fifth century. Porphyrius, the Bishop of Gaza, was authorised by the Empress Eudoxia to destroy the pagan temples and to erect a church in 406 A.D.

The temple outside the town was possibly the place called Bethelia mentioned by Sozomen (Hist. Eccl. lib. v. cap. 15) as a flourishing village near Gaza, having temples venerable both for age and beauty, especially a Pantheon standing on a hill like a citadel above the town. The village in question is no doubt the present *Beit Lahia*, standing on the sandhills $1\frac{3}{4}$ miles north of Gaza, and the great statue now discovered may have belonged to the Pantheon at this place.

The principal deity worshipped at Gaza was Marnas, the Cretan Jupiter. Zeus was also worshipped, and in the fourth century Gaza is said to have had eight temples (Life of St. Porphyrius, Bishop of Gaza, Acta Sanctorum, vol. v. p. 655). The Sun, Venus, Apollo, Proserpine, Hecate, and Juno were among these deities. The Temple of Marnas was round, and was considered one of the most magnificent in the world: it had a double cloister, apparently resembling the Dome of the Rock at Jerusalem. The church which Eudoxia built on its site was, however, cruciform, with thirty columns. Jerome speaks of the Temple of Marnas as overthrown in his own time (Comm. on Isaiah xvii. 3), but the final destruction was not effected until the beginning of the fifth century.

In the Pascal Chronicle (at 379 A.D.) a place called Tetramphodos, or 'Cross roads,' is noticed at Gaza, where was a marble statue of Venus above an altar. This may be the same as the market noticed in the Talmud (see Reland, vol. ii. p. 793).

The God Marnas is identified by Lenormant with the Moabite Hobal, who was represented as an old man with a long beard, holding a red stone in his right hand, and sometimes the seven arrows of fate (Ezekiel xxi. 21) without points or feathers. Hobal is called the male Venus, the Arabs worshipping among the planets only Venus and Jupiter, the latter symbolised by a stone. Hobal and Marnas were both the Lords of Fate, and were prayed to for rain. They answered to the old Greek divinity Uranus, and 360 smaller statues, symbolising the degrees of the celestial circle, are said sometimes to have accompanied their images (see Lenormant's *Lettres Assyriologiques*, No. 5).

It appears, therefore, that pagan worship survived at Gaza side by side with Christianity (supposing the bishops to have resided at their sees) as late as the fifth century A.D., and the resemblance between the description given of the new statue and the representation symbolic of Marnas, the god of Gaza, as an aged and long-bearded man, is so strong, that I would suggest to learned authorities that it is the statue which once stood in the principal temple of Gaza which has now been unearthed, perhaps after having been purposely buried at the time of the destruction of the temple by Porphyrius.

C. R. CONDER, Lieut. R.E.

16th November, 1879."

THE MASONRY OF THE HARAM WALL.

By Colonel C. W. WILSON, R.E., C.B.

*From the S. W.
angle to Bar-
clay's Gate.*

THE ancient masonry at the south-west angle, and about fifty feet on either side of it, is the finest and best preserved in the wall, above ground, and has every appearance of being *in situ*. One of the corner stones, about 62 feet above the true foot of the wall, is 38 feet 9 inches long, nearly 4 feet thick, and 10 feet deep, and others are of scarcely less size. The bonding of the stones has been carefully attended to and the workmanship is admirable, but unfortunately the accumulation of rubbish and the bushes of cactus do not allow of its being seen to the same advantage as the south-east angle. The south-west angle is a right-angle.

Thirty-nine feet north of the corner is the fragment of an old arch, first brought to notice by Dr. Robinson, and now known by his name; portions of the three lower courses remain, and from the appearance and position of the stones they evidently formed part of the original wall; the upper stones have slightly slipped, and the surfaces of those taken from the soft *malaki* bed are so much weather-worn that the curve is almost lost. The arch is exactly 50 feet long, and the line of its springing is on a level, or nearly so, with the present surface of the ground; an offset of 1 foot 3 inches in the wall, which forms a sort of pier or buttress, is just visible.

From the arch northwards to Abu Sáûd's house, and within his house, where it can be seen, the wall is made up of a mixture of plain dressed stones and those having a marginal draft, but immediately beyond the latter, in a small yard to the south of the Wailing Place, the older masonry is again found in the shape of an enormous lintel, which covers a closed doorway known as "Barclay's Gate."

At the north end of Abu Sáûd's house, and partly *Bab al Maghâribé.* over Barclay's Gate, is the Bab al Maghâribé, or Gate of the Western Africans, so called from its proximity to the mosque of