

NOTES BY M. CLERMONT GANNEAU.

NOTE II.*

Jaffa, 8th October, 1881.

BESIDES short expeditions to different places in the neighbourhood of Jaffa, I spent nearly five weeks in Jerusalem and its immediate environs. I started the 2nd August and did not return until the 7th September. Upon reaching Latrun I mounted one of the carriage horses and made my way to Amwās. There I obtained three fragments of ancient inscriptions, one Greek and two Roman; one of the latter is an imperial protocol. The Greek inscription consists of two lines; in the first line one can still distinguish the characters ΠΟΛ which are possibly part of the word ΝΙΚΟΠΟΛΙΣ; if so this gives us the ancient name Emmaus Nicopolis. On the second line we find [Υ]ΠΑΤΙΑ either signifying Hypatia, a feminine name, or else the word *ὑπαρεία, consulship*.

Amongst the fresh inscriptions which I have collected at Jerusalem, and of which I have brought back either copies or photographs, I must mention the following:

A fragment of a Roman inscription containing the name of a certain 'Rufus' (with the addition of the word "*patronus*"), who may be identical with the governor of that name at the time of the revolt of the celebrated Barkochebas, which ended in the transformation of Jerusalem into a Roman province under the name of Ælia Capitolina.

Another fragment from the neighbourhood of Jericho.

A fresh Jewish ossuary with Greek and Hebrew inscriptions. Amongst the number are references to the following names, all of some interest:—

ΜΑΘΙΟΥΤΟΥ ΚΑΚΤΟΥ—ΒΕΡΟΥΤΑΡΙΟΥ ΚΑ
ΝΙΚΑΝΔΡΟΥ—ΤΡΦΩΝΟΣ ΠΡΕΣΒΥΤΕΡΟΥ—
ΜΑΤΤΑΘΙΟΥ—ΒΕΡΟΥΤΑΡΙΟΥ ΝΕΩΤΕΡΑΣ, &c.

One of these ossuaries has an epigraph written in cursive Greek characters which are not easy to decipher, and which are too indistinct to photograph. I have taken a careful sketch of it. Another has a Hebrew inscription (written in the early square characters) in which the name of Jesus is twice repeated, followed by some patronymic which I have not yet succeeded in reading.

Three fragments (Greek and Roman) from Colonia, a village near Jerusalem, one of which contains the letters ΝΙΑ—the end perhaps of the ancient name of this place which was apparently a Roman settlement.)†

* Note I appears to have been mislaid or not to have arrived.

† This locality is worth careful exploration. They told me of the existence of some long inscription, but I searched for it in vain; but I do not despair of finding it at some future time.

There are also a number of mediæval inscriptions of the period of the Crusades and of the later Jews. I especially noticed one at the base of one of the columns of the galleries in the interior of the Haram esh Sherif, and belonging apparently to the epitaph of some Templar. (Characters of the 12th century.)

[hic ja] cet *D* [ominus] *Ogo* (or *Odo*) *de Bus*.

Two shields of the 15th century, painted on paper and found glued to the interior wall of the Cœnaculum, the present Neby Daoud, under an old plastering. One is dated 1414, and has on it the name of a certain Kunz (Conrad) the Geuder von Noremberg—the other with the name of Sigmund Laber would be of about the same period. Ancient writers, especially Faber, tell us that the pilgrims to Palestine were in the habit of affixing their names and arms on the walls of the sacred buildings which they visited. I have taken photographs of these shields, and send the one of Sigmund Laber as a specimen.

There are also a number of Greek inscriptions, for the greater part Christian; amongst them I found the epitaph of the Abbess of a convent on the Mount of Olives, of Armenian origin. I must also mention another Armenian inscription from Kerak on the other side of Jordan, which seems to be very ancient and of historical value.

I find that the making of false inscriptions is still carried on in Jerusalem. I revealed the existence of this species of imposture in 1874, and some of my discoveries regarding it are not wanting in interest.

I have paid particular attention to the Hebrew inscription (in Phœnician characters) discovered a year ago on the rock in the subterranean canal which connects the Pool of Siloam with the Fountain of the Virgin. I have spent a good deal of time in very uncomfortable positions in the aqueduct during my endeavours to decipher it, for the inscription has naturally attracted much attention; even now it is not fully understood. I think I have arrived at the correct reading of all those parts which are not completely destroyed, and I have some very good squeezes of it. I hope soon to write a paper on the subject, in which I shall endeavour to point out its exact meaning, and try to decide upon the origin of this channel. At present I will merely call attention to two facts:

Firstly.—Every one makes a mistake in considering this to be the first inscription in Phœnician characters yet discovered at Jerusalem. They seem to have forgotten that twelve years ago I discovered two in identically the same characters engraved in like manner on the rock which forms the outer wall of a cave near Siloam.

Secondly.—I think that with regard to the history of the source in question we must take into consideration *three* epochs; *the first*, during which the water took its natural course into the valley of Jehoshaphat, then much deeper than at present; *a second* period, when the inhabitants wishing to gain access to the pool without exposing themselves to the blows of a besieging enemy, bored an inclined subterranean passage through the rock, which enabled them to draw water from a well pierced vertically below the source; *the third epoch* being when the inhabitants, not content

with this defensive precaution, and wishing to deprive the enemy of the water which still continued to run into the valley, determined to alter its course, and caused it to run into a new bed which they formed for it under the hill, and thence into a large reservoir which they made in the valley of Tyropœon, and which was protected by the neighbouring walls. And it is to this latter work, I think, that the inscription refers; the previous work being represented by the subterranean system discovered in 1867 by Colonel Warren under the hill of Ophel.

With respect to my own archaeological researches I have two matters of importance to relate, leaving aside all secondary points.

Firstly.—I have succeeded in inducing the Turks to make some excavations in the interior of the Haram, such excavations being strictly forbidden to the Christians. I attained this result by referring to a certain Arabic inscription which I discovered years ago in the wall of the Haram, and which says that *at that point there are stones buried for the use of the Haram.*

As at this moment the Turks are proposing to make some repairs, thanks to this inscription, I was able to persuade them to make an opening in the wall, about fifty yards from the inscription where from certain indications I expected we might find a door which had been walled up and has hitherto remained undiscovered. My prediction was realized. The door was there, and gave access to the open ground in the interior of the Haram. They were continuing their excavations when I left, and it is not unlikely that they will make some very unexpected discoveries. I hope to return and verify the results.

Secondly.—I have been on the spot and paid a good deal of attention to the vexed question of the origin of the vast mausoleum called the Tomb of the Kings. And I think I am in a position to produce new and important, if not decisive elements of information on the subject. One result of which is, that I believe the sarcophagus which M. Sauly took to the Louvre, and which he and other authorities considered to be that of a Queen of Judah, is really the *sarcophagus of Queen Helena of Adiabene with her national name written in Adiabenean and in Hebrew.* My return journey to Jaffa was not without result. I went to Gezer and commenced some explorations which I hope will result in discoveries. My speedy return there obliges me to shorten this report. From Ramleh I have brought back fragments of a Greek inscription and a pair of capitals from Niane, a neighbouring village, on one of which is the same inscription that we found on the capital at Anwās—**ΘΙC ΘΘOC** engraved in a semi circle. I have also a bronze seal with the name *Cucius Ælius Optatus.* A short visit to Lydda had no result. But in passing Sarfend I obtained two more fragments of inscriptions, one Greek, the other Arabic. I noticed, whilst there, indications of important ancient remains, to which I hope to return.

From the 19th to the 21st September I made a hasty visit to Haifa, Carmel, and St. John of Acre, in order to prepare for the researches which I hope to make a little later on.

Amongst my various expeditions in the neighbourhood of Jaffa, I must mention my rambles to the south of the town, a region very little known, and which even the map of Palestine leaves unnoticed. I have discovered some very interesting points, ancient cities rich in remains of buildings, pottery, glass, mosaics, etc., especially Tell Dalbeh, Hajar Gādām, and above all *Tell Younès*. All these points are situated between Jaffa and Yabneh.

Amongst the objects with which I have lately enriched my collection of antiquities, I must mention :—

The handle of a dagger in enamelled copper of the time of the Crusades.

A Jewish ossuary with ornamentation in relief (very rare).

A beautiful fragment of a sculptured marble vase.

A Greek inscription from Moughar.

A fresh brick of the 10th Legion *fretensis* (Beit Jala).

A fragment of a Greek inscription from the Necropolis of Jaffa.

A radiated head of Helios (bronze statue from Tripoli).

A winged Cupid (bronze statuette from Gaza).

Four fragments of Greek inscriptions, and one Hebrew from Gaza and Ascalon.

A little bottle of crinkled glass.

A cylinder with Egyptian hieroglyphics.

A Phœnician scarabee in pierre dura.

A leaden ball.

A glass Tessera with a Cufic inscription (from the same places), etc.

NOTE III.

I. EXPEDITION TO BEIT DEJAN AND SAFERIYEH.

AN ANCIENT TOMB.

Jaffa, 22nd October, 1881.

THE Caimakam, or Governor of Jaffa, Youssef Effendi, is a most intelligent man, and has a taste for archæological research, which I have done my best to encourage. A little while ago he begged me to go and examine an ancient tomb recently discovered near the villages of Beit Dejan and Saferiyeh, on the left of the road from Jaffa to Jerusalem. I hastened to avail myself of his invitation, and we started on the 24th June, accompanied by an officer of the Zabtiyeh (gendarmerie), who had been despatched on the first rumour of the discovery to preserve the monument

and any objects of value which it might contain. For a distance of about six or seven miles we continued along the road which leads to Jerusalem, passing the village of Yazûr,* the sanctuary of Imam Ali, and the village of Beit Dejan. Between the third and fourth of the small block-houses which command the road all the way to Jerusalem, we turned off, bearing to the left across country and in the direction of the western plain. After walking about a hundred yards over undulating ground we arrived at a spot called *Wâdy Abu Rûs*, which may be translated "valley of the father of heads," or better, "valley of heads." This valley is formed by a very slight depression of the plain. It is accurately marked in the Survey Map, only its name is not given. There we found at a depth of about three feet below the ground the newly discovered tomb, half exposed to view. It consists of a rectangular receptacle in soft calcareous stone, and is of the ordinary dimensions. But the lid (cover) which had been already raised to get at the interior is of a peculiar type. About a dozen years ago I had one dug up which was exactly like it, at a distance of about seven miles from the *Wâdy Abu Rûs*, and in the direction of the Mussulman sanctuary of *Neby Danian* situated to the south-east and close to Lydda. This specimen was carefully raised under my directions, and a drawing of it was made by M. Lecomte during my mission of 1874.

The top of the lid has simple finials (acrotères), one at each of the angles and one in the middle of each of the longer sides; the top is made with inclined planes, the intersecting edges of which form a large cross.

It is possible that this cruciform design is not the result of pure hazard, but that a religious feeling suggested the choice of this particular geometrical form. With the aid of some fellahin from the village of Beit Dejan we completed the digging out of the tomb, but neither on the exterior of the tomb nor on the top did we find the slightest trace of any characters or inscription. One of the two longest sides of the tomb had been stove in either by some one in search of treasure or by the pressure of the earth. We next examined the interior, which was partially filled with mould, but in spite of the most careful search we did not find a single object; the bones, however, were in their respective positions, and I at all events hoped we should recover the skull, as it would have been an object of interest for anthropologists; but in vain did we search for it, although the position in which it should have occupied was clearly indicated both by the position of the bones and by the place formed for its reception at one end of the sarcophagus. The search ended, the fellahin carefully replaced the bones, saying amongst themselves that they were perhaps the remains of some saint, which possibly caused them to look on our researches with no very friendly eyes. In

* For a long time Yazûr was supposed to be Gezer, until I discovered the true position of this royal city of the Canaanites at Tel el Gezer, near Abu Shushéh. This discovery was confirmed by some inscriptions in Hebrew and Greek characters engraved on the rock, and giving all the letters of the name of the town.

replacing the heavy top, it broke through their want of skill, and they were then ordered to cover the whole with earth.

The absence of the skull is certainly remarkable, and naturally leads to the supposition that the occupant of the tomb may have been decapitated. On this hypothesis the defunct must have been the victim of one of those religious or political turmoils of which Palestine was so often the scene.

I cannot help connecting the fact with the name of the valley—*Wady Abu Rûs*, “valley of heads,” by which the place is locally known, and the still more characteristic name of “*Maqtaleh*”—place of murder or slaughter—borne by a neighbouring spot on the opposite side of the road to Jerusalem. I am aware that popular tradition (which by-the-bye always requires strict examination) accounts for this name by a commonplace story of brigands and cut-throats; but it is not improbable that in this tale we may find the obscure survival of some events more or less historic and belonging to one of those periods to which I have alluded. Popular tradition is more tenacious than exact; in every country it follows a sort of law which may be resolved into the following somewhat paradoxical formula: “Tradition only preserves the truth at the expense of changing it.” In no place is this truer than in Palestine, the classic ground of tradition.

One may suppose that the tomb is not an isolated one, but that it belongs to a group of sepulchres made at the same period, and in which were buried a number of people (possibly Christians), who had met with a common and tragical fate. In any case I think it would be advisable to carefully explore the immediate vicinity of this tomb, which possibly indicates the existence of a large or small necropolis belonging to either Beit Dejan or Saferiyeh. The actual spot is in the territory of Beit Dejan.*

These two villages—Beit Dejan and Saferiyeh—undoubtedly represent two ancient sites.

For a long time the first was supposed to be identical with the Beth Dagon (Βῆθ Δαγών—Καφὰρ Δαγών) of Eusebius and St. Jerome, which they regarded as the Biblical Beth Dagon of the tribe of Juda, and described as being between Diospolis (Lydda) and Yabneh. The modern identification

* Joshua xv, 41, דַּיְטָן דַּיִת, the house of Dagon, the celebrated god of the Philistines. “Dajûn” (Note). I believe I have found a mention of this locality, Dajûn, in the Samaritan chronicle “El Tholledoth,” under the form of Tsadjoun, “Abraham, son of Our of Tsadjûn, is the father of the children of Tobiyah and of the children of Gala. (“Asiatic Journal,” 1869, pages 443 and 405, the translation of Neubauer.)

There is also mention of this place in the Arabic Treatise on Geography of *Moqaddesy*, which is of great importance. I am not able to quote the passage exactly, not having either my previous MS. note or the later publication of the text by M. Goeje by me, but in it the different routes branching away from Ramleh are enumerated: the road to Lydda, to Jaffa, to Egypt, etc., and finally, the road to Dajûn (دأجون), “which leads to the town of that name.”

seems to me to be open to question. About seven years ago I discovered to the south, and towards Sitt Nefiseh, an ancient site called *Dajûn*, which does not appear in the Name Lists, and which answers quite as well as Beit Dejan to the description of the Beth Dagon given by Eusebius and St. Jerome, and from a topographical point of view even better, for we cannot say that Beit Dejan is situated between Lydda and Yabneh, while *Dajûn* actually is; hitherto the latter place has escaped the attention of explorers, and its name is not marked on the Survey map. *Dajûn* is certainly worthy of exploration, and it is one of the places which I have marked on my programme. With regard to Saferiyeh, Van de Velde has suggested that it is the episcopal *Σαριφαια*, which is mentioned in several ecclesiastical documents, and which has been supposed to lie a little more to the south-east near Sarfend. If future explorations lead to the discovery of a Christian necropolis in the position which I have indicated, the hypothesis of Van de Velde will gain weight. I shall not lose sight of this interesting question, and I propose to commence further excavations directly I have a favourable opportunity.

It would be necessary to bore round about the tomb we have already found. I must add that owing to the suspicious disposition of the fellahin we were unable to find out the exact date of the discovery, or the circumstances which attended it. Upon consulting my old note-books, I came across the following passage written at Jaffa in 1874, "There is a talk of an ancient tomb having been recently discovered at Saferiyeh." But at that time I had not sufficient leisure to allow me to verify the report. I am inclined to attribute to this period the caving in of the side of the sarcophagus. I am assured that the fellahin often search for ancient tombs with good results. The people of Yahudiyeh, a little village to the north of Saferiyeh, are the cleverest at it; and I am told that for this purpose they use long iron bars, with which they bore into the ground.

I must verify these reports, and endeavour to have an interview with these fellow archæologists.

II. EXPEDITION TO AMWĀS.

(EMMAUS-NICOPOLIS).

ON the 25th June last, feeling somewhat better and being able to spare a little time from the affairs of the Vice-Consulate, I determined to make a two days' expedition to Ramleh, Goubab, Latrûn, Amwās, and Lydda, the chief object of my little tour being to examine the ruins of the church at Amwās, and especially a Hebrew inscription which has lately been dis-

covered there. Not being well enough, however, to bear the fatigue of riding I was obliged to go by carriage, a mode of progress which proved most awkward. I reached Ramleh at eight o'clock in the morning, and whilst the horses were being baited I took a hurried ramble through the bazaar and the town, and talked to some of the inhabitants, who were most of them old acquaintances, with a view to further explorations at Ramleh. It is a most interesting town, but as a rule it is neglected by travellers, as they usually pass through it at night. It is chiefly on account of its Mussulman antiquities that it deserves attention. The Crusaders, also, erected some important buildings, notably a fine church, which is now transformed into a mosque, and of which we made a plan and drawings with the aid of M. Lecomte in 1874. I drew especial attention to a fine and curious relief on the lintel of the door of the minaret, and of which I possess a very good drawing.

During my short halt, a workman of the town brought me a fragment of a Cufic inscription. I bought it of him rather by way of encouragement than for any actual value that it possessed. It is very necessary to act on this principle in Palestine in order to obtain things of real importance. A little money thus expended often has the best results in the future. It is only sowing to reap. I have always followed this system, and hitherto it has repaid me a hundredfold. On this fragment amongst other legible words I find سنة, year—but the date which should follow and which would make it of value has unluckily disappeared. At Ramleh, both in the public and private cemeteries and religious buildings, there are a great number of ancient Arabic inscriptions which might furnish really valuable materials for a collection of Mussulman epigraphs.

In about an hour's time we recommenced our journey towards Amwās. Soon after leaving Ramleh we noticed towards the south south-east and to the right of the road, Abu Shusheh and Tel Yezer, commanding all this region, in which one notices the commencement of the orographic upheaval which further on develops itself in the mountains of Judæa. It is difficult to understand how this site, which is undoubtedly that of the ancient Gezer, and which is so visible to all travellers on the road from Jaffa to Jerusalem, can so long have escaped the notice of archæologists and explorers.

The strategic importance of this point alone should have sufficed to attract attention to it; Abu Shusheh, Kubab and Latrūn (the fortress of Amwās) form a triangle which completely commands the entrance to the mountains of Judæa. And this explains the number of battles fought in this region at the time of the Seleucides and the Maccabees.

At about eleven we arrived at Latrūn, having passed Kubab, which I hoped to examine on the way back. So far we had got on very well save for the rough joltings caused by the bad condition of the so-called carriage road, which was made about twelve years ago between Jaffa and Jerusalem. This road passes one end of Latrūn, which lies on the right

of it, but Amwās is some little distance from it on the opposite side. I was anxious to proceed there at once, but the heat had become intense, and I hesitated at carrying out my intention of mounting one of the carriage horses and riding to the church. Instead of doing so I told the coachman to turn off the high road and drive down a road which turns off from it a little beyond the "blockhaus" between Kubab and Latrūn, and which leads straight to Amwās at a distance of rather more than a mile. This road I believe to be really the old Roman way which ran from Emmaus-Nicopolis (Amwās) to Gezer, and which crosses the modern road to Jerusalem at an angle of about 45°. It is the same road by which Eusebius and St. Jerome measured the four miles which they gave as the distance between these two towns. I must admit that I speedily repented my resolution of driving along it, for after rumbling on for a few hundred yards over large boulders the carriage gave a violent jolt and was turned over by a sort of embankment. The shock was terrible. My head came in contact with an iron bar, and for some moments I remained under the carriage completely stunned. At length I succeeded in disengaging myself, and with the help of some fellahin, who ran to the coachman's aid, we succeeded in lifting the carriage up again, and in the end I did what I ought to have done at first, mounted one of the carriage horses and in a few minutes reached the ruins of the church. There I found that a little building had been erected to facilitate a surveillance over the work of exploration which has been undertaken at the expense of Mlle. St. Cricq. Captain Guillemot is directing it with much zeal and intelligence, and several ecclesiastics had come from Jerusalem to view a discovery which they suppose will supply a perfect proof of the truth of a religious tradition to which I shall refer later on. As soon as I had recovered from the effects of my shaking, I proceeded to examine the inscription which was the principal object of my journey. In default of photographs I must give a short description of it. Unluckily the photographs I took with the gelatine bromide process proved very imperfect when I developed them at home. Doubtless the plates were injured by the overturning of the carriage. But I shall be able to replace them directly I go to Jerusalem, as the monument has now been transported to Bethlehem. It consists of a capital of white marble in false carved Ionic style, coarsely and irregularly sculptured. On one side between the two traditional volutes is a cartouche in form of a *titulus*, having to the right and the left the two little side pieces which it is supposed to be fixed by. On the cartouche is an inscription written in two lines, separated by a horizontal stroke and engraved in Archaic Hebrew (that is to say Phœnician) characters. It can easily be deciphered $\frac{\text{ברוך שם}}{\text{ולעולם}}$ "Blessed be His name for ever!" It is exactly the reading which I had suggested from the imperfect copy of the inscription sent to me on its first discovery, but from that I could only give my intuitive conclusion, and I felt a certain doubt as to its accuracy. On the other side, disposed in a circle, is the inscription $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma\ \epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$.—"There is one God." Finally I discovered a large mason's sign, on the part

intended to be placed downwards on the top of the shaft of the column.

It is a sort of S and I suspect it is more likely to prove a numerical letter. To complete the description of the capital, I soon found on one side an eight-pointed star contained in a circle; and on the other side a sort of "fasces" tied with a band.

The capital was found in the pavement of the left hand side amongst other miscellaneous remains, used in like manner for paving this part of the building at some epoch which it would be well to know.

The formula εἰς θεός though it may be equally well applied as a general dogma of any one of the three great monotheistic religions, is in this form essentially Christian. It occurs very frequently in the stone inscriptions of Syria where it was apparently very popular. Probably it was from there that it passed into the creed of Islam under the form *عِيسَى*—god alone. A glance at M. Waddington's Greek and Latin inscriptions in Syria, shows us how frequently it occurs either laconically, as in the present instance, or else accompanied by words which more precisely define its scope.

As examples I may cite the following :—

On the lintel of a door at Oum-el-Jemal (Nabat)—

Εἰς + θεός with the cross.*

On another lintel at Dāna (Antioch)—

Εἰς θεός καὶ [ὁ] Χριστός αὐτὸν καὶ τὸ ἅγιον πνεῦμα, βῶν θῆτω—(of the year 483) †

On a lintel at Kokanaya (Antioch)—

Εἰς θεός καὶ Χριστός (of the year 318). ‡

On a lintel at Katoura (Antioch)—

Ἰησοῦ Χριστέ, βῶνθει, εἰς θεός μόνος (of the year 331). §

On the doors at Dellouza (Carriotide and Apamena).

+ Εἰς θεός ὑπέρ, etc. ||

On a lintel at Deir Seta (Antioch)—

Εἰς θεός βῶν θῶν πασιν (of the year 411). ¶

At Domeir (Damascus)—

Εἰς θεός ὁ [β]οει θη[γ]. **

At Dama (Trachonite)—

Εἰς θεός ὁ βῶν Το βειη. ††

At Salmeustha (Batan)—

Εἰς θεός ὁ βῶν θσ[ς]. †††

At Oum-er-rumman (Nabathæan)—

Εἰς θ[εός]. §§§

* No. 2,066. † No. 2,689. ‡ No. 2,682. § No. 2104; notice the strong form of monotheistic affirmation. || No. { 2,606 } or 000. ¶ No. 2078.

** No. 2,562. b. †† No. 2,451. ††† No. 2,262. §§ No. 2,057.

At Deir-el-meyas (Nabathæan)—
[Εἰς] θεὸς ὁ βολ[η]θ[ων].*

At Bastra (Nabathæan)—
Εἰς θεὸς κανος []'Αμην.†

It would be easy to multiply examples of this formula. I will conclude by citing Sinaic inscriptions, one of Jezzín (region Sidon)‡ another of Cyprus (Golos)§—an amulet belonging to M. Perétié with εἰς θεὸς ὁ μικῶν κακά—and especially an inscription at Arzouf-Apollonia εἰς θεὸς ὁ ζων.

The Christian character of this formula is clearly demonstrated by these examples. It is probably of Jewish origin, and must have sprung from the well-known verse (the fourth) in the sixth chapter of Deuteronomy,|| which contains the word יְהוָה אֱלֹהֵינוּ, Jehovah, rendered in the Septuagint by κυριος εἰς, and which precedes the dissertation on the Commandments. It is worthy of remark that this formula is generally found inscribed above the entrance doors, as ordained in the ninth verse (with regard to the Commandments, of which it is, so to say, the preamble), “and thou shalt write them on the posts of thy house, and on thy gates.”

This Jewish connection agrees well with the double inscription on our capital, in which the Hebrew and Greek are so closely associated, and of the former of which I will endeavour to give some details. The sense seems to me quite clear, though I foresee that attempts may be made to give other readings in order to justify certain preconceived opinions. But I think that my reading of it will be accepted by all those who have had any real experience of Semitic epigraphs: “*Blessed be His Name for ever*”—in reference, naturally, to the Name of God. The phrase seems to have been taken literally (with the omission of only one word) from Psalm lxxii, verse 19, “And blessed be His [glorious] Name for ever.” It is exactly the anthem of the Roman Liturgy, “*Sit Nomen Domini benedictum in secula.*” There is a similar form which frequently prefaces the

inscriptions of religious offerings at Palmyra, לְבָרֵךְ שְׁמָהּ לְעַלְמַיָּא “to

Him Whose Name is blessed for ever.” Making allowance for phonetic and grammatical variations between Hebrew and the Aramaic dialect in use at Palmyra, it is word for word the same as the formula which we

* No. 2073 b.

† No. 1918, or rather Εἰς θεὸς Ἄμην κανος (*sic*); M. Waddington corrects by καλος—perhaps it should read (ὰ)κανός—sufficing, and to be compared to the Arabic formula “God, He is enough,” and “God sufficeth me; He alone is enough.”

‡ E. Renan, “*Miss. de Ph.*,” p. 20.

§ Collected by M. Colonna, Accalok.

|| It is, properly speaking, the axiom of monotheism, besides which it plays an important part in the Jewish liturgy.


are considering. Very often the dedicatory word ל, "to" is omitted,* and the formula appears in the shape of a simple exclamatory invocation, בָּרַךְ שְׁמֵהּ לְעֹלָמַי, "His Name is blessed," or "blessed be His Name for ever!"

That we find this ancient Hebrew inscription on this particular capital is certainly very extraordinary, more especially from a palæographical point of view. For, in the first instance, if we adhere to the now well-known law which governed the development and changes in Hebrew writing, we should have to place the date of this inscription (written as it is in Phœnician characters) at a period long anterior to the Christian era, whilst, on the other hand, the style of the capital, and the presence of the Greek inscription (which from its appearance we should attribute to the fifth or sixth centuries after Christ) "on its opposite side," quite contradict this conclusion.

We cannot possibly suppose that the two inscriptions belong to different periods. Plastically the one is the pendant of the other, and the longer sentence seems equally a grammatical sequence of the other, as though we had to deal with a mixed phrase, half Greek, half Hebrew: "there is only one God, may His Name be blessed for ever!" Also it must be acknowledged that in the Hebrew part of it the word God is understood. This ellipsis certainly is not opposed to Semitic ideas, as we can see by referring to the formulas at Palmyra, which have just been cited.

Whatever they may be, these two phrases seem inseparably joined one to the other, both with regard to their position and their age. This leads us to ask why they should have used, several centuries after Christ, a Hebrew alphabet which, according to all historical and archæological researches, had fallen into complete disuse, having been replaced by the square characters. There is but one possible reply to this question, namely, that it was an *artificial archaism*, similar to those which have been found on Jewish coins. On them we also find inscriptions in the ancient Phœnician characters. Though we ought to make some exceptions with regard to the earliest coins, the evidence with regard to the later utterances is convincing, those, for instance, which took place under Barchochebas in 135 A.D. These epigraphic anachronisms have their parallels in other countries and periods, and are easily accounted for by the national or religious prejudices, which caused the Jews then in certain cases to make use of the ancient Hebrew alphabet, which had already become important through disuse. This factitious revival, however, must not put us on the wrong scent. Upon carefully examining the palæography of the inscription on this capital, one feels at once convinced that it belongs to about the same period as the above-mentioned coins. It is not impossible that it was

* Psalm cxiii, 2; cxv, v. 2. Daniel ii, v. 20. I would cite as examples the following numbers from the collection of M. de Vogüé: "Syria (Central)," Nos. 78, 79, 82a, 82b, 85, 87, 88, 90, 94, 100, 101, 112, 115. M. de Vogüé has already drawn attention to the similarity of this Palmyrian formula and the Jewish and Christian invocation.

either from them, or from documents of the same character, that the graver of the inscription took his models for the letters. I have not the necessary materials by me to enable me to make a careful comparison, or to determine the exact issue of coinage, which it might have been, as for that purpose it would be necessary to have the actual specimens before one's eyes in order to examine them. I must content myself with pointing out the curious form of the *vau*, which occurs three times, and which is almost identical with that generally adopted on the copper coins, which are supposed to belong to the earliest period,* and which form but seldom appears in the subsequent utterances. I would call attention also to the little hook which forms the lower part of this letter  This peculiarity is quite in accordance with the tendency in the Hebrew alphabet to curve (towards the left) the tails of the lower part of the letters //. The word *שמך* is separated from *לעולם* by a visible point. We know that the separation of words by means of a dot is found in the oldest form of Semitic epigraphy.

Before endeavouring to fathom the motive with which so curious an inscription came to be made, it is necessary first to inquire why it was graved upon a column, and also for what purpose this column can have been used.

There are examples of inscriptions having been placed on capitals, for instance, in Cilicia, at Cyinda, at Tarsus, and Mopsuesta; but keeping within the limits of Palestine, I may mention one which I discovered at Nablus, on the capital of one of the columns of the large mosque,† and which, if I remember rightly, runs thus **ΛΟΥΚΙΟΥ ΙΑΚΚΟΥ** *Lucius Iacchus*. This epigraph is really very different to the one we are considering—it evidently has reference to the name of the giver of the column, and is therefore similar in appearance rather than in reality.

I have already mentioned that the lower side of our capital possesses a mason's sign. We know that not only in the early mediæval, but also in the early classical and Byzantine periods, these signs were very often the

* As far as I can judge from an imperfect reproduction which I have, the copper money attributed to the period of the first revolt and issued by Simon, has the shin, the ayin, the lamed, the resh, and the vau, very like the ones on our inscription.

† On the abacus of a capital in the Corinthian style, at the western extremity of the nave and the second column of the northern row. More than this, at one of the angles of the volute there is a B, probably a numerical letter signifying No. 2, and on noticing the position of the column we find it is really the second of the row. The conclusion which may be drawn from this latter accordance of number and position, is that for the churches erected at the time of the Crusades (and since turned into mosques by the Mussulman), the builders made use of foundations and materials which had belonged to more ancient edifices, and that they paid attention to their position. I think I have proved the existence of the same thing in the Great Mosque of Gaza.

actual initial of the masons—the mark of the builders. But I doubt whether this is the case in the present instance, on account of the nature of the sign which I am more inclined to consider a numerical letter; the *episema Fav*. If it had been any other letter, one might have supposed it to be as an initial of the name of the workman, but at this epoch the *Fav* was no longer a letter, but a number pure and simple, signifying 6. On this hypothesis our capital is marked number six, which naturally leads to the conclusion that there were at least six similar capitals. I say similar, for had they been exactly alike, it would not have mattered which of the six shafts received them, consequently, the numbering of them would have been useless. This care in marking the position which they were to occupy, shows us that they were sufficiently alike to satisfy the requirements of architectural symmetry, and perhaps also to be mistaken one for the other, and seems also to prove *the presence of inscriptions which had to be placed in certain progression or in a particular order, as it is not impossible that they formed a series of sentences.* This last conjecture seems to me quite plausible, for whatever architectural combinations we may imagine, we should never regard a column as being entirely isolated. It must at all events have had a pendant, and this second capital would also have devices and inscriptions corresponding to the one discovered, or would more or less repeat them. But if we accept the sign as meaning six, this would bring under our consideration a group of not less than six columns. Looking at it in point of size, the capital is not large. The lower part, which is notched in a circle (or rather elliptically) in order that it may fit on to the shaft, measures in diameter, taken at two points, and running parallel, 0·31m. or 0·42m. The diameter of the column near the summit could not then have exceeded 0·36m. or 0·37m., which, taking the largest system of proportion, would only give a column of very moderate height. The height would naturally be limited by the distance at which the characters could be read, and the letters are far from large, so that we cannot recognise in it a portion of a large edifice; nor does it seem possible that it can have been one of the columns of the church, in which it now, after unknown vicissitudes, forms part of the paving. At the most, it could only have formed part of some interior erection, an altar, a ciborium, or even a baptistery. If the original number of columns may be taken at six, they might have been disposed in a circle, or else in a rectangular or hexagon form. I remember various specimens of baptisteries, built in the shape of a hexagon—there is one at Sienna, another at Parma, one at Aquileia, and in Central Syria there is one at Deir Seta.*

On this hypothesis the presence of religious axioms might be easily explained, provided that they were merely Greek Christian mottoes, like the almost hackneyed $\epsilon\iota\varsigma\ \theta\epsilon\omicron\varsigma$, and others of the same class which we meet with so frequently on the religious buildings in Syria. If the inscription is connected with a baptistery, one might recall the verses

* De Vogüé, "Syr. Centr. Arch. civ, et rel.," p. 117.

inscribed on the architraves of the one of St. John at Latrûn, which was constructed by Constantine, and restored by Sextus III.* But the appearance of a Hebrew inscription (and that inscription in archaic characters) is an unprecedented occurrence for which it is most difficult to account. One could understand it a little more easily had the inscription been written with square characters, such as were used at the period at which the capital was made, for we know that the influence of the Jewish over the Christian ritual was sufficiently great—especially in Palestine—to admit of the use of a language which had already given to the Christian liturgies such words as Hosanna, Alleluiah, Amen, etc. It is possible that if I had the minute directions contained in the “*Guide de la peinture du Mont Athos*,” before me (which unluckily I have not), I might find a proof that, in certain forms of Byzantine art, the use of short Hebrew epigraphs was permitted. In any case we know that in Christian art the square Hebrew characters were then still used for writing the ineffable name of Jehovah. It is no more extraordinary than the design of a seven-branched candlestick, an essentially Jewish symbol, found upon a fine capital which was discovered at Beit Jibrin, and of which we made a drawing during my explorations in 1874. I expect this column must have belonged to the ancient Church of Sandanna, which had some points of resemblance with that of Amwās. But I must repeat that the great difficulty lies in the archaic form of the characters. The half Hebrew, half Greek inscription, which I discovered on the shaft of a column, and below a seven-branched candlestick, in the mosque at Gaza, was in the square character.† One may next inquire whether the inscription may by some chance have been of Jewish origin, in the case of the capital having belonged to some synagogue. But it is scarcely worth while lingering over such a supposition. Even putting aside the thoroughly Christian formula *Εἰς Θεός*, it is certain that a Jew at that period would have made use of the square character, for we have a number of authentic Jewish inscriptions in Palestine dating from the first century of our era, and without an exception they are written in square characters. And even if we attempt to attribute it to the Samaritans, who have kept to the ancient characters down to the present day, we do not find in it any of the peculiarities which distinguish the Samaritan alphabet in the inscriptions on the most ancient of their (known) buildings, some of which date from the fifth and sixth centuries after Christ. It also seems very improbable that we should find a Samaritan building at Amwās. The inscriptions on the capital were evidently engraved from a Christian point of view.

With regard to the strange use of the archaic characters, it seems to me to have proceeded from a determined design which is worth our

* See the “*Liber pontificalis*.”

† This inscription, which I hope to describe at greater length elsewhere, is distinctly Jewish, and probably a dedication to a certain “Ananias, son of Jacob;” it is instead of a statue, the erection of statues not being allowed on account of the iconoclastic tendencies of the Jews.

consideration. According to my view the author calls attention to the past Jewish dispensation, a time which even then was comparatively remote. It is probably to the tradition, in commemoration of which the church was built, that we must turn whilst searching for the solution of the enigma. Here we are met by the grave questions—what was the name of this church, and what right has Amwās to be identified with Emmaus of the New Testament, the place at which Jesus supped with two of his disciples after His resurrection, and was recognized by them through the breaking of bread? It is no part of my present purpose to enter into a discussion with regard to this delicate topographical and religious question, one which has already raised numerous archæological controversies, not to say quarrels. But of this we may be certain, namely, that in the fourth century Eusebius and St. Jerome, both reliable authorities, considered the Emmaus of the New Testament to be identical with the town called Nicopolis, which is decidedly the Amwās of the Arabs. In addition to the many proofs which have been adduced in favour of this identification, I will add one which to me seems conclusive, and which I obtained through my discovery of the true site of Gezer: the inscriptions which I found engraved on the rock give the very name of this town. The position of Gezer, then, being fixed, so to speak, with mathematical accuracy, we gain the key to that of Emmaus, from which point the Onomasticon takes its bearing in giving the position of and distance to Gezer—and this measurement and description only applies to Amwās).

The house of Cleophas (one of the two disciples) in which the miraculous manifestation is said to have taken place, was at an early period transformed into a church. St. Jerome even speaks of the existence of a basilica; and Willibald, in the eighth century, writes as though he had seen it, unless, indeed, he merely imitates St. Jerome. It would indeed be singular if the Christians, ready as they were to preserve and commemorate the smallest incidents in the life of Jesus (even on the slightest foundations) should have neglected to consecrate so distinct a tradition by the erection of a church.

We can understand that from the time when Amwās-Nicopolis* came to be considered identical with the Emmaus of the New Testament, the ancient church (of which this capital is apparently a remnant) would

* The ancient name of *Amwās*. As a secondary proof, I would point out that at the time of St. Jerome, the place which he identified with Nicopolis apparently bore a Hebrew-Semitic name equivalent to the actual Arabic Amwās. He explains the name of Emmaus as being *populus abjectus*. He evidently alludes to the Hebrew words מַאִים + עַם *Amm + Maous*. This etymology is rather far-fetched, but it shows us that St. Jerome analysed in his own method the name *Ammaous* with an ayin similar to the Arab form *Amwās*. Also that, for this reason, he preferred the form מַאִים to any of the other forms used in the Talmud. Moudjir-el-din says that the Arabic name عَوَاس is pronounced 'Amwās or 'Amawas. In the place itself I discovered a third method of pronunciation, *Ommās*.

become associated with the sacred and half-proved tradition. But even this does not explain the presence of the Hebrew inscription. We allow that this epigraph represented very nearly the laudatory formula for the blessing of bread according to the Jewish ritual) and was, perhaps, in reference to the act which, according to the account of the Evangelist, revealed to the two disciples the personality of the Founder of the Last Supper. But was it not quite apart from the end they had in view, to engrave this formula in characters which had ceased to be used long before the time of Jesus? The use of the ordinary square characters would have been quite sufficient. Why then this effort of erudition? Was it really a reference to the evangelical tradition, or was it not rather a pointing back to the earlier Jewish period? For the present I can only ask this question without pretending to solve it, though I hope to return to the subject. In the meantime I will point out one fact which furnishes food for reflection. Excepting in the two passages of St. Jerome and Willibald to which I have just referred, ancient writings, although containing a great deal about the Emmaus of the Gospel, are almost silent with regard to the church of Amwās. It is not until much later that any reference is made to it, and then under quite a different character.

It is then called the "Church of the Maccabees.* At present I cannot imagine for what reason this surprising name could have been given to it, nor can I understand how it originated. I cannot even say whether the writers, who have preserved this appellation, and who presumably had it upon the authority of earlier traditions, refer to the Asmonean princes or to the seven brothers of the same name who, according to tradition, were martyred under Antiochus Epiphanes. At an early period these two sets of Maccabees were already confused. Even St. Jerome falls into this error, which became general, and was favoured by the universal veneration in which the Jewish martyrs of Antioch were held (in the fourth century) throughout the whole of eastern and even in some parts of western Christendom.† In these more or less fabulous stories we see that they were the prototype of all the Christian martyrs. I should not be inclined to rely on this appellation as evidence, for the name may have been given to the church of Amwās at a later period, though if it has any foundation it would very well account for the use of the archaic characters, taken as they were from the ancient national alphabet, which was affected by the Maccabees and was a known characteristic of their dynasty. Certainly in no place would this perplexing epigraphical resuscitation be more likely to occur than in a church consecrated to the name of the Asmonean princes, or to the other Maccabees who were identified with them through an erroneous but wide-spread legend. Only on this hypothesis we must

* Tucher (1479), Mariti (1767), Quaresmius (1616), and several more ancient writers speak of the church of the Maccabees, a little distance from Latrūn and north of the road.

† The church of St. Just, at Lyons, was originally dedicated to the Maccabees.

allow that this appellation of the church was given after the time of St. Jerome, who, confusing the identity of the Asmoneans and the seven brothers of Antioch, associates their memory with Modin, but *never* with Emmaus. In the endeavour to reconcile all these conflicting points, we may imagine that the church or rather basilica of Emmaus was erected on the supposed site of the house of Cleophas, the scene of the miraculous supper—and that it contained a chapel, a confessional or a “martyrion” especially dedicated to the Maccabees. And this martyrion possibly contained, according to a usual custom, some relics taken from their actual sepulchre at Modin—the present Medyeh.* In which case the capital would belong to one of the columns which sustained the *ciborium*, or else may have ornamented the altar itself.

We know that the ciborium, a sort of baldachin placed over an altar or martyrion in a basilica, was supported by columns, the number of which might be two, four, or six, which latter number reminds us of the possible numeral on our capital.

If we follow this supposition still further, we may imagine that the designer of the Hebrew inscription on this capital destined to form part of the martyrion of the Maccabees, took for his palæographical model the great inscription on the tomb of the Asmoneans at Modin, and which perhaps contained almost literally our formula, with even other phrases which were reproduced on the other capitals of the ciborium. I need hardly say that I offer these conjectures with *great reserve*, and merely in order to give the data of a problem which still remains to be solved.

Whatever it is, the Hebrew inscription on the capital of Amwās is a most curious discovery, in spite of, or rather on account of its *not* belonging to a very remote period.

It is incontestably in the most recent form of the archaic Hebrew characters, and in virtue of its being the “terminus adquem,” it deserves to be inserted in the “Corpus Inscriptionum Semiticarum.”

I cannot help being grateful to the good fortune which allowed me to bring to light (at an interval of a dozen years) both the most ancient and also the most modern known inscriptions in the archaic Hebrew characters, of which at present the Moabite Stone and the capital of Amwās form the alpha and omega.

After having examined the capital which has formed the subject of this long digression, I went and looked at the ruins of the church, a portion of which has already been excavated (thanks to the efforts of Mlle. de St. Cricq) under the direction of M. Guillemot. The two lateral arches have been entirely freed. The body of the church has, however, still to be excavated, and there, perhaps, we may make some interesting discoveries. According to my idea there is a chance of our finding in it some historical mosaic pavement, containing perhaps inscriptions which will throw *mor*

* The distance from Medyeh to Amwās, as the crow flies, would, I think, be about seven Roman miles.

light on the past history and origin of the church, than all the suppositions to which for the present we are reduced. I think that the idea of excavating this church originated with me in the year 1874. It was true I only took soundings, but they proved to me that of the church erected previous to the Crusades a portion had been used again. It is another point of resemblance between the church of Amwās and that of Beit Jibrin. According to the laws of mediæval masonry, which I discovered and explained seven years ago, we are able to clearly distinguish the work of the Byzantine period from that of the Crusades, tracing it block by block. Further than this, on several stones cut or recut by the Crusaders, I have come across some lapidary signs which I shall add to the large collection I already have of these curious marks, and which some day I hope to publish an account of. Nothing is of more value for the critical study of the ancient buildings of Palestine, in the classing of which there is often such difficulty, than these technical indications, which are really a better guide than the considerations of style, which so often prove deceptive. I shall have occasion to give further details of the church of Amwās, the rest of which we hope soon to bring to light.

A few days after my visit to the ruins, M. Guillemot sent me a cutting of a fragment of an inscription, which in like manner had been discovered amongst the mixed pavement on the left side of the church, where the enigmatical capital was found. It is a piece of marble, with portions of an inscription on either side. The Greek characters, belonging to the Byzantine period, which can be traced on it, are fairly well executed. The following will give an idea of the inscription :—



It may be seen that it was no easy matter to decide on the words of which these letters are the remains. At first sight I was inclined to give as the reading of the first word on side A.—ε [τ] ε [ι] year. But the τ is indistinct, and might be ρ. Again one is tempted to imagine it έγε [ιρε] especially as there seems to be an indication of the foot of an I after the second E. It is not impossible that it may be a quotation from the Psalms,* 'Ο έγειρων από γής πρωχόν, etc.

This verse was used in the Christian epigraphy of Syria, as we may see by the inscription on the lintel of a door at el Barra, which is 'Εγειρει από γής πρωχον, etc. The first line of side B may perhaps be [άγ] ίων, "of the saints." The second lines of both sides most likely were the same word. The fact of the two inscriptions being back to back seems to indicate that the inscription was either repeated or continued, and also that the stone was intended to be viewed from both sides.

This word in the second line is in both abridged, and contains the

* Psalm cxlii, v. 7.

letters **ΥΖΥΓ**, followed, at least on side A, by **KA** [I].* The restitution of letters is naturally limited to a small number of combinations. *ΕὐΖυγος* belongs to poetical language, and would be out of place here. *Βουζύγης*, *Βουζύγιον* is no better. There remains *συζυγία* and its collaterals. But *συζυγία* may be taken in several senses; that of marriage might perhaps be appropriate. This supposition accords well enough with the *ἔπει*, and implies a distinct date. If I had even the index to the "Corpus Inscriptionum Grecarum," I could find out if *συζυγία* was ever employed for dates. We may suppose that this fragment belonged like the capital to the ancient church, and was re-utilised for paving.

In going through even the village of Amwās, I noticed several ancient fragments, capitals, and bits of frieze, etc., which testify to the importance of the ancient Nicopolis.

Above the door of one house I noticed a sort of vase or funeral urn made of black basaltic stone, and sunk into the wall, the concave side outermost. All round it were engraved characters, but of what nature I could not tell owing to their height. It required a ladder to reach them: I very much wanted to get at this vase, but the proprietor of the house was at that time imprisoned at Jerusalem with several other villagers who had been arrested after a violent conflict which had caused the death of a man. But it will be a thing to return to. In the immediate vicinity of the village the peasants are led to seek for ancient foundations in order to extract material for new buildings. I noticed here and there the traces of large ancient buildings. In one of their explorations they brought to light a huge block of calcite.† It had apparently been the lintel of a door. Inscribed on the cartouche is a Greek inscription, three lines in length. The characters are irregular, and so much worn away that it is very difficult to decipher them. I took a copy of them, from which I have made the following letters. The inscription seems to read—

**EYTIKIT
OΓAMOC
ΔΙΑΒΙΟΥ**

ἐντ[ε]χ[ε] ἴρ[ε] ὁ γάμος διὰ βίου.

I must mention, however, that I am doubtful about several of the letters. The formula *ἐντυχῆτε* has occurred in Syro-Greek epigraphs — and the orthographical form *ἐντιχῆτε* is not peculiar. We may compare it to an inscription on the lintel of a door at Kseir, in the neighbourhood of Tyre, **EYTYXI ZΩΙΑΕ ΚΤΙCΤΑ**. M. Renan, who discovered it, thinks it is a funereal inscription similar to No. 4564 in the "Corpus Insc. Gr."‡ and another mentioned by M. de Saulcy in his "Journey round the Dead

* Waddington, "Inscrs. Gr. and Lat. of Syria," No. 2651.

† "Mission de Phénicie," p. 646. The name of the place Atabeh signifies threshold or lintel, and probably originated from this stone.

‡ Waddington, "Inscrs. Gr. and Lat. of Syria," No. 2395.

Sea," both of which are funereal, and contain the *ἐντύχει* or *ἐντύχι*. I cannot say anything definite with regard to the first, not having it before me, but the second would certainly read *ἐνψυχι*—which is a well-known funereal exclamation. I doubt though whether the verb *ἐντυχεῖν* would be here taken in the funereal sense. In the following inscription of Deir el Leben (Auranite) it has a distinctly religious meaning, *Εισελθε χαίρων Ηλιε τῶν κόσμου Ευτυχ[ε]ν*. Several times we find the adverb *ἐντυχῶς feliciter*, in the ordinary dedication of an edifice—often associated with the expression *Αγάθη Τύχη*.* *Εύτυχεῖτε* is exactly the Latin *valetē*, by which it is translated in the imperial and proconsulate decrees of which we have epigraphs.†

The succeeding words seem to be *ὁ γαμος δια βίον*, so that the whole seems to constitute a sort of nuptial exclamation. It may be compared to a Syrian inscription (at Dāmā, Trachonite), which also refers to a marriage, and is one of those I cited as containing the formula *εἰς θεός*: it ends with a vow made by the constructor of the edifice: *χὴ ὁ βοθησας (sic) εἰς την οἰκο δομν ν βοηθήσηκε[ε]ῖς τους γάμους*. No one can exactly fathom the meaning of this expression *διὰ βίον*—it occurs pretty frequently in the Græco-Jewish epitaphs of Italy under scarcely recognisable forms—*Zà βιον, διὰ βιο*, "*dia viū, ia bius*," and its actual signification is not yet decided. I need not point out that it is most interesting to come across it in Palestine, the country where it originated, and on a monument which to all appearance is Christian. Some explain it as referring to earthly life, others consider it a funereal exclamation which alludes to the life eternal; a transla-

tion from the verse in Daniel xii, 2; **לְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם**? —*εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον—ad vitam æternam*, equivalent to *διὰ βίον αἰώνιον*. Our inscription thus adds a new point to the problem. It remains for us to know whether it refers to the indissolubility of the human marriage tie according to the Christian ideas, or rather to the symbolic marriage under which image the New Testament and the early fathers designate the mystic union of Christ and the Church. Before giving a decision it would be necessary to know whether the lintel had belonged to a religious or to a private building; whether it formed part of a house destined for the reception of a bride, and ornamented accordingly with a device at once pious and gallant, or whether it belonged to some chapel.

We may compare this formula with various nuptial sentences written in letters of gold on glasses and other objects evidently given by Christians as wedding presents—for instance, the *feliciter nuptiis* of the

* For example, at Meschgough (Nabat), Wadd., *op. cit.*, No. 2053, shows us that we must correct No. 2491 from *ἐν τυχός* into *ἐν τυχῶς*; also No. 2197 in the same way, at least, if it be not a proper name, see *ἐντυχῶς* at Ephs (Wadd., *op. cit.*, No. 150), and *ἐπί ἐντυχία* at Aphrodirias of Caria (*ibid.*, No. 594).

† For example, Wadd., *op. cit.*, gives (No. 866) a letter from Antonius the Pious to the Panhellenes of Aczanitide—it occurs before the final date. Also No. 877 ends with *ἐντυχεῖτε*.

celebrated golden medal struck on the occasion of the marriage of Marcius and Puleteria. It only requires the addition of the epithet *aternalis* for us to find in it almost a literal translation of our Greek formula.

NOTE IV.

Jaffa, 19th November, 1881.

AN Arab of St. John of Acre has given me copies of two inscriptions, one of which is of considerable interest.

The first is from the village of Yerka, situated at a distance of about ten miles from St. John of Acre. It is in Greek, and as far as I can judge from the words which I have been able to decipher, it must be Christian. It is, however, incomplete, the right hand portion being still underground. The copy is too imperfect to be of much use, and I shall not risk giving an interpretation of it until I have at least a good squeeze. On the other side of the paper are more characters, apparently Greek, and copied perhaps from another inscription at the same place.

The second copy comes from St. John of Acre, and is sufficiently clear to admit of nearly all of it being read. It is the epitaph of a Frenchman, a certain Gautier Mein Abeuf, and of his wife Alemane.

Ici gist sire Gautier Meine-Abeuf qui tres (passa) an l'an de l'incarnation nostre Seign(o)r Jhu. Crit. (M) CCLXXVIII, a XX iors de ive, esc espouza Madame Alemane qui trespassa a XX (? ?) iors dou.

I send a slight sketch of the copy I have before me. I need hardly add that both the sketch and the above reading may need alteration when compared with the original. In the year 1275 the Crusaders were still in possession of Acre, their last Syrian stronghold. It was at that time and in that very city, which was so soon destined to fall again under the Mussulman yoke, that Charles of Anjou, through his representative the bailli Roger de St. Severin—disputed the crown of Jerusalem with Hugues III, endeavouring to gain what was already no more than an empty title.

I have been lucky enough to come across a document which enables me to identify the subject of our epitaph. I have found his name in a chapter granted by Jean de Ibelin—Sire de Barut—on 15th September, 1256, to the Teutonic Knights, letting them the Casale Imbert* and the appurtenances thereof, for a term of ten years. Amongst the witnesses we find the name of *Gautier Maynebeuf*. I do not know whether the spelling has been accurately given by the editors of this work, but the original character, written in French, is, I believe, preserved amongst the archives

* Situated between Tyre and Acre.

of Venice. Although the orthography is different, the identity of the name is, I think, certain. I would also point out that Gautier Meine Abeuf was very possibly a relative of Barthélemy Mainebeuf, one of the vassals of Julian, Sire of Sagette, whose signature we find at the end of a deed of sale drawn up for his suzerain in 1254.*

Meine Abeuf or Meine à beuf seems to me a merely different form of the name Mainébeuf, if it is really thus that these names are spelt in the original documents, which unluckily here are not accessible to me.

The name of the wife Alemane recalls that of the family of Aleman who played a somewhat important part in the Holy Land.† The inscription has various orthographic irregularities, and contains several points which deserve to be examined by experts. For instance, I do not know what to make of the character which ends the epitaph of the husband; perhaps it is indistinct at this point: one would naturally look for the name of a month—June or July perhaps.

The wife, it seems, died the same year, in the month of August, and apparently soon followed her husband to the grave; the exact date of her decease is uncertain, as the units following XX are indistinct.

The epitaph of Madame Alemane was, I conclude, added afterwards, and, as far as one can tell from the copy, was not so carefully engraved, for the letters are not divided by two points, as are those in the epitaph of the husband. But whatever its correct form may be, this inscription is none the less a precious record in connection with the history of the Crusaders.

A PHœNICIAN FUNEREAL TABLET.

THE bronze tablet from the collection of M. Péretié, of Beyrout, of which Lieutenant Conder, R.E., published a description and a drawing,‡ is of so much interest as a work of art, and an illustration of the religious ideas of Western Asia, that I would venture to add some remarks upon it. In these notes I have chiefly drawn upon Assyrian and Babylonian sources, as it is evident upon the most casual inspection of the bronze, that the Phœnician artist has also engrafted the mythological conceptions and art representations of Assyria and Egypt, and even of the tribes of North Syria, the Hittites, into his representation of the Story of Death which he has portrayed in so weird a manner in this tablet. The mixed character of the sculpture is quite in agreement with the other examples of Phœnician metal work which have been preserved to us. In the bronze bowls from Cyprus, which form so valuable a portion of the Cesnola collection; and in

* Archives de Venise. *Mélanges diplomat.* Busta XV, No. 297; also "Recherches sur la domination des Latins en l'Orient."

† Paoli Codice Diplomatico I, No. 123; also Ducange.

Ducange. *Les familles d'outre Mer.*, ed. Rey, pp. 505, 559.

‡ *Quarterly Statement*, July, 1881.