

## BETHANY AND BETHSAIDA.

THIS name *Βηθανία*, only known in the Greek, has received many explanations. It may be only the Aramaic form of the Hebrew Bashan ("soft or sandy soil"), but this does not apply well to the site. On the other hand, we know that the Hebrew nomenclature of Palestine is to a very great extent of Pagan origin. The geographic lists of Karnak agree with Genesis in showing that a Semitic nomenclature existed long before the conquest of Palestine by Joshua, and though in some cases the names were changed by the Jews, in many other instances they were not. Anathoth, for instance, is very probably named from the Assyrian 'Anath. The name Beth Anna is used on Assyrian tablets of the Temple of Beltis, wife of Baal. Possibly this Beth Anna is the real original form of Bethany, and the site was perhaps once occupied by one of the idol temples of Solomon (that of Ashtoreth possibly). See 1 Kings xi, 5-7.

The name 'Anath (which is quite a different word) is found also in Beth Anoth of Judah (now *Beit 'Ainûn*) and Beth Anath in Galilee, identified by Sir C. Wilson at 'Ainatha.

Bethsaida,<sup>1</sup> again, is a name which may be compared with the Assyrian Beth Zida ("Temple of Life"), which was the shrine of Nebo and Nana (Mercury and the Moon).

That there is nothing strained in these suggestions is evident when we recall the names Beth Shemesh ("House of the Sun"), Beth Dagon, Beth Peor, together with numerous towns named from Baal. Ashtoreth Carnaim is another instance, and Dan, mentioned before the tribe of Dan inhabited the spot (Gen. xiv, 14)—indeed before Dan was born—may have been named from Daian Nissi ("the Judge of Men"), an old Assyrian name of the Sun, whence the later Dionysus is derived, for Dan in all ages was a centre of Sun worship.

C. R. C.

## NOTES.

THE *Quarterly Statement* for July contains one or two points which may excuse a note.

*Ashasharat el 'Arâis* (p. 120) given as a name of some trees by Mr. L. Oliphant, is apparently a misprint for *esh Shejerât el 'Arâis*, which means "the Trees of Bridegrooms" (pl.), not the "bridegroom's" (sing).

<sup>1</sup> In last *Quarterly* I have called attention to the name Abu Sudûn as occurring in Galilee, and perhaps connected with Poseidon. It might be objected that the *Yod* which occurs in the Hebrew Sidon is not found in Abu Sudûn. But in the Phœnician inscriptions from Athens and Carthage we find Sidon spelt without the *Yod*; and we also find a Carthaginian deity called  $\Upsilon\Delta$  who is no doubt connected with the same idea.

The name is commonly applied to springs in Palestine to the east and west of Jordan.

The name *Mezra'h* (p. 121) can hardly be considered more than descriptive; it means "the sown land," and applies to every sown plot in the country.

The discovery of Roman remains (p. 140) near Port Saïd, and the account of towns by Ptolemy (whose latitudes are not reliable), cannot be considered to conflict with my statements. Roman remains in Egypt cannot be much older than the Christian era, and Ptolemy lived yet later. My remarks referred to events occurring at least 1,500 years earlier.

C. R. C.

### ARAB TRIBE MARKS (AUSAM).

THE following tribe marks were collected both east and west of Jordan, and are of considerable importance for several reasons.

**T** This, with the next, was found inscribed on the walls at Masada by De Saulcy, who mistook both for planetary signs. The tribe marks at Ammân he also copied, but was unable to give any explanation of the meaning. The sign is that of the Jâhalin tribe who live in the vicinity of Masada.

**♀** This is the tribe mark of the Rasheideh, an old tribe now nearly extinct, in the vicinity of Engedi. The sign which is now used as that of the planet Venus is the *Ankh* in Egypt, and is found in Assyria as early as 1500 B.C., as a symbol probably of the planet Venus. The Abu Nuseir use a similar mark, and I have found it also east of Jordan.

**)** A tribe mark at Masada, although the tribe was not ascertained. This is one of the common Himyarite forms of the letter *Resh*.

**|** The tribe mark of the elder branch of the 'Adwân ('Ashîret Dîâb). This is the Himyarite numeral *one*.

**||** The mark of the second or junior branch of the 'Adwân ('Ashîret en Nimr) is the Himyarite No. 2.

**|||** The mark of the 'Abbâd, allied to the 'Adwân, is the Himyarite No. 3.

**∩** The mark of the 'Ajermeh, an old tribe near Heshbon. This is the Æthiopic *Gimel*. It is also found with a single stroke, marking a subdivision of the tribe. It is sometimes reversed and becomes *Lamed*. It is the Nabathean *Daleth*.

**∧** Another 'Ajermeh mark; is a'so probably *Lamed*, as in Æthiopic. It may also be a *Samech* or a *Gimel* in Nabathean (Sûfa inscriptions).