

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 Ammán 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).

The Da'ja mark, a tribe near 'Ammân, is the 'Ain common to so many Semitic alphabets.

The Beni Hassan mark near Sûf and Jerâsh closely approaches the Himyaritic *Resh* or Nabathean *Beth* (Safa).

A mark of one of the Belka tribes near Heshbon, somewhat like one of the Himyaritic letters, namely *Theh*, which is also used as a numeral; or it may be the Æthiopic *Vau*.

The mark of the Beni Sakhr, which they call "the coffee-spoon," is the Himyaritic *Yod*; also found in Safa inscriptions.

Another mark of the Fâtz family of the Beni Sakhr, is called "the necklace." This is the Himyaritic *Tza*, but bears no resemblance to the *Teth* of the same alphabet.

Another division of the same great tribe is perhaps only a variation of the "coffee-spoon," but approaches the Æthiopic *Daloth*. The preceding mark and the coffee-spoon occur with a single stroke to show the elder family of the tribe division bearing the mark.

The mark of the Jibbûr, a division of the Beni Sakhr. They say it is not a cross, but it is clearly the *Tau* of Himyarite and other Semitic alphabets.

The "Raven's foot" is also used by the Jibbûr. This is the Himyaritic *Heh*, but more nearly akin to the Nabathean form of the letter.

AND

Used by divisions of the Khurshân, who belong to the Beni Sakhr tribes. These approach the Himyaritic and Æthiopic *Vau*.

The mark of the Sherârât, also a division of the Beni Sakhr. This is the Himyaritic *Tzadi*, a very peculiar form not found in other Semitic alphabets.

A mark of the Sh'alân, who are a division of the 'Anezeh. It somewhat resembles the Æthiopic *Beth*.

A mark of the Kowâkbeh, who are a division of the 'Anezeh. This also may be a *Beth* approaching the Nabathean and Palmyrene forms.

A mark of the Shawâbkeh, another Belka division. This may be a *Resh*, as in Nabathean. It is akin to the 'Ajermeh mark.

Called "the door," is the mark of the Khadr, also a division of the Beni Sakhr. This appears to be the Himyarite *Beth*, and it is interesting in this case to see the name of the latter still preserved, for *Bab*, or door, is the *Beth* in Hebrew also.

These marks I obtained on the spot, and they were explained to me by the Arabs themselves, who, however, being unable to read, have no idea of the derivation or meaning of the marks which they use on camels and other stock, also on tombs, and which they place on the walls of ruins where they suppose treasure to be concealed, to which they thus lay claim. They also place these marks on menhirs and dolmens, and on solitary

stones, and sometimes in such numbers as to have the appearance of inscriptions.

The German Palestine Society published a number of these tribe marks in 1879 with the title *Inscripfen*, including many of the marks above given. The distinction between real inscriptions and collections of tribe marks is, however, simple, because Nabathean and Himyaritic inscriptions are written in regular lines.

It is natural that some of these marks should originate from a southern Semitic alphabet, because the stronger Arab tribes which exist in a nomadic condition in Syria originate from Yemen and the Nejed. They began to push northwards a little after the Christian era, and have gone on migrating in this direction ever since. We should naturally expect inscriptions in the same character east of Jordan, and, as mentioned in another paper, four such inscriptions have recently been found, but these belong probably to the time of the semi-civilisation when Zenobia ruled in Palmyra; for the majority of the Bedawin share the peculiarity of which Muhammed was proud, being quite unable to write or read. The list of tribe marks is by no means as perfect as could be desired, but it is sufficiently long to indicate clearly the origin of these signs. It is noticeable, however, that while the 'Adwân and Beni Sakhr marks are letters of the south Semitic alphabet, the Ausâm (pl. of Wusm) of the 'Ajermeh and other old Belka tribes are nearer to the Nabathean and Thamudite. The Belka tribes are probably of the old Nabathean stock, but the dominant tribes—Beni, Sakhr, and 'Adwân—immigrated from Arabia some three centuries ago. The distinction is thus natural and very instructive.

C. R. C.

APHEK.

THIS word in Syriac is said to mean "springs." At Afka on Lebanon magnificent springs occur, as also at 'Ain Fiji, and at Fikieh. The Apek east of the Sea of Galilee is also in a situation with water, and the derivation seems thus to suggest that other Apeks would be at or near springs.

In Judah we have an Apek, or Apekah (Josh. xii, 18; 15, 53; 1 Sam. iv, 1), which some writers have conjectured to be the present Kustul. There is no connection of name, and nothing beyond an insignificant land spring, at that place. The Apek of Joshua xii, 18 may be a northern Apek near or on Gilboa, perhaps Fukû'a (1 Sam. xxix, 1), or Fûleh, near the well-watered valley of Jezreel. The Apek of Joshua xv, 53 was not far from Beth Tappuah (Tuffôh, near Hebron) and Humtah (perhaps Khamasa). The Apek of 1 Samuel iv, 1 was on the way from Mizpeh to Philistia. It may perhaps be thought to be the present Wad Fûkîn, the Pekiin of the Talmud, which is close to Khamasa, and situated in a remarkably well-watered valley beside one of the main high roads