

KU FOR KING.

PROFESSOR SAYCE'S opinion carries weight, but I cannot admit that I was mistaken in saying that Mr. Pinches and Mr. Bertin consider *Ku* to be an Akkadian word for king. I have their letters still in my possession, The fact is that Dr. Sayce differs from not only Mr. Bertin and Mr. Pinches, but also from Lenormant, and Norris, and Fox Talbot, in denying the existence of this word. The matter is not of very great importance, since I have been able to show independently of Akkadian that such a word exists in Turanian languages with such a meaning. It would appear that what Professor Sayce calls a "makeshift" on the part of Norris was really a discovery.

The authorities who give this word were well aware of the existence of the word *anin* or *unan*; but because we have the word "monarch" in English this does not deprive us of the word "king."

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BIRDS AND ANIMALS NEW TO PALESTINE.

AMONG the 2,000 bird skins which I collected while in Palestine, from 1882 to 1886, there are several which, so far as I know, are new to that country, and hence they should be added to the list of those already known. Dr. Tristram's catalogue is the one followed, and to which the additions are supposed to be made:—

- (1) Brambling—*Fringilla montifringilla*.
- (2) Cuckoo, Lineated—*Cuculus leptodetus*. An eastern form of a West African bird.
- (3) Curlew, slender-billed—*Numenius tenuirostris*.
- (4) Duck, Golden eye—*Clangula glaucion*.
- (5) Duck, Common Sheldrake—*Tadorna vulpanser*.
- (6) Phalarope, Red-necked—*Phalaropus hyperboreus*.
- (7) Plover, White-tailed—*Chettusia leucura*.
- (8) Pratincole, Nordmann's—*Glareola melanoptera*.
- (9) Yellow-ammer—*Emberiza citrinella*.

It may be of interest also if I make a few additions to his list, following the same order, chiefly as to the locality of birds. In two or more instances I was fortunate enough to obtain specimens which he has entered in his list, but which he did not obtain himself.

No. 6. Rock Thrush—*Monticola saxatilis*.

Tristram.—"It arrives in the beginning of April. South of Lebanon it is only a passing traveller tarrying but a night."

Addition.—It is true that it arrives in April, and in some seasons as early as March; but to the last part of his statement I would

add that between the 10th and the 30th of September I shot several pairs in the immediate vicinity of Jerusalem.

- No. 28. White-throated Robin—*Erethacus gutturalis*.

Tristram.—“Discovered it on Hermon and Lebanon.”

Addition.—Near Jerusalem in August, 1885, I shot a fine specimen of the female of this species.

- No. 30. Eastern Nightingale—*Erethacus philomela*.

Tristram.—“Not obtained by me in Palestine. It may be discovered there.”

Addition.—I have three good specimens, one shot in August near Jerusalem, and the others shot in the Jordan Valley.

- No. 68. Hermit Fantail—*Drymæca inquieta*.

Tristram.—“It is very scarce wherever found.”

Addition.—I should say that it was quite common, for I saw it frequently on different journeys to and from the Jordan Valley. On this road I shot several specimens in November, also one near Jerusalem in September.

- No. 90. Palestine Bulbul—*Pyononotus xanthopygus*.

Tristram.—“Never found in the hills or upper country.”

Addition.—I shot several at Hebron, which is 400 feet higher than Jerusalem.

- No. 94. Red-backed Shrike—*Lanius collurio*.

Tristram.—“Have not obtained it south of Esdraelon.”

Addition.—I have shot specimens in the hills near Es Salt, also others in the hilly region between Jerusalem and the Plain of Sharon.

- No. 109. Palestine Sun Bird—*Cinnyris osee*.

Tristram.—“Beyond the gorge of the Jordan I never but once found it, and that was at the south of Mount Carmel.”

Addition.—This bird, or a *species* of Sun Bird, is abundant at Jaffa. The markings of those found in Jaffa differ from those found in the Jordan Valley, and I have shot them both in the spring and autumn at each of these places. Whether or not these are distinct species I do not now pretend to determine.

- No. 111. Serin—*Serinus hortulanus*.

Tristram.—“Is only a winter visitor to the wooded districts and the little glens near the sea. It has not been noticed inland.”

Addition.—In January and February, 1885, these birds were very abundant about Jerusalem, and at different times during those two months I shot a dozen specimens.

- No. 113. Tristram's Serin—*Serinus canonicus*.

Tristram.—“Belongs to the Lebanon and anti-Lebanon exclusively. I cannot trace it on any of the spurs southwards, either from Hermon or Lebanon and there it is very local.”

Addition.—On the 7th of March, 1885, I shot a beautiful speci-

men about half an hour distant from Jerusalem, near the Convent of the Cross.

No. 116. Hawfinch—*Coccothraustes vulgaris*.

Tristram.—“Only twice detected it, once in Gilead and once near Tabor.”

Addition.—I have three specimens, one from east of the Jordan, and two from the neighbourhood of Jerusalem.

No. 139. Grakle—*Amydrus tristrami* *Sclater*.

Tristram.—“Appears to be confined to the immediate neighbourhood of the Dead Sea.”

Addition.—This bird ascends the Great Wadies to a higher point than these words would seem to imply. In the upper part of Wady Farah, and in Wady Suweinit, not far from Mukhmas, I have frequently seen them in large numbers.

No. 167. Night Jar—*Caprimulgus tamaricis*.

Tristram.—“Only three specimens known.”

Addition.—I have a beautiful specimen which I obtained at Jericho in December.

No. 193. Montagu's Harrier—*Circus cineraceus*.

Tristram.—“Not often come under my observation. Obtained three specimens by the Lake of Galilee.”

Addition.—I obtained two specimens near Jaffa in November, 1885, and one in the Jordan Valley in April, 1886.

No. 197. African Buzzard—*Buteo desertorum*.

Tristram.—“This may probably be entered among the birds of Palestine, though I have never obtained a specimen.”

Addition.—I have three good specimens, one of which was obtained near Mar Saba, and the others in the Jordan Valley. One of these was taken in December, and the others in April. As Dr. Tristram says that it has never been found in Palestine, I am glad to be able to bring it to the attention of the public.

No. 203. Booted Eagle—*Aquila Pennata*.

Tristram.—“Appears to be confined to the wooded regions of Galilee and Phœnicia, and to the Lebanon.”

Addition.—I shot a fine specimen near Jerusalem in May, 1886.

No. 226. Pygmy Cormorant—*Phalacrocorax pygmaeus*.

Tristram.—“Found on the Leontes and other streams flowing into the Mediterranean. I did not observe it on the Lake of Galilee.”

Addition.—I obtained several specimens from the Jordan near Jericho.

No. 236. Little Bittern—*Ardetta minuta*.

Tristram.—“Plentiful in the rushes and reeds round Lake Huleh.”

Addition.—Plentiful also on the Aujeh, near Jaffa, and on the Lower Jordan.

No. 237. Night Heron—*Nycticorax griseus*.

Tristram.—“Found in small numbers about Lake Huleh, and Gennesaret.”

Addition.—Also on the Lower Jordan.

No. 251. Ruddy Sheldrake—*Tadorna casarca*.

Tristram.—“At the south end of the Dead Sea, and near the Lake of Gennesaret.”

Addition.—They are just as abundant at the north end of the Dead Sea, and are found all along the Jordan.

No. 257. Garganey—*Anas circia*.

Tristram.—“I have not taken the Garganey myself.”

Addition.—I have four fine specimens from the Jordan, one of them shot in November, one in December, and two in May.

No. 294. Stone Curlew—*Ædicnemus scolopax*.

Tristram.—“Plentiful in the Ghor at the north end of the Dead Sea.”

Addition.—I saw it frequently in the region about Mar Saba, and in the hills east of the Jordan. I have specimens from both these localities, and others from the vicinity of Beirut, as well as still others from the north end of the Dead Sea. I should say it was pretty evenly distributed over the country.

No. 296. Cream-Coloured Courser—*Cursorius gallicus*.

Tristram.—“Rare in Palestine Proper. I twice obtained it near Acre; also saw it in the southern wilderness, and on the upland of Eastern Moab.”

Addition.—Very abundant between Jerusalem and Bethlehem on the Plain of Rephaim and south-east towards Mar Saba.

No. 305. Dotterel—*Eudormias morinellus*.

Tristram.—“Vast flocks near Beer-Sheba.”

Addition.—I found them near Mar Saba in May, 1885.

No. 344. Manx Shearwater—*Puffinus Anglorum*.

Tristram.—“Obtained a dead specimen near Mount Carmel.”

Addition.—I have two fine specimens, obtained at Jaffa in 1884.

I observed, during my residence of nearly seven years in Palestine, that there were great variations in the migrations of birds. Some years the land was full of them, and the next year, perhaps, there seemed to be very few. For example, I remember that for two years there were but few ducks anywhere in the southern part of the country; the next year, however, they were very abundant. What Dr. Tristram says of the dotterel, No. 305, may have been peculiar to that year. The same I know is true of my observation under No. 296, respecting the cream-coloured coursers. In other years, while found here and there, they were scarce; the year referred to they were abundant. The Arabs brought to our hotel large numbers of them for our table. Similar remarks would be true of quails, and of some other birds. Seasons vary in character and circumstances which we cannot explain, and may combine to cause these variations. As I have had occasion elsewhere to remark, this

is a study where there can be no monopoly of knowledge on the part of any single observer. Many observers are necessary, and each may add something valuable to the general fund of information.

As to animals, I may mention that I secured a fine specimen of the ratel or honey badger, *Mellivora ratel*, which was taken between Mar Saba and the Dead Sea; also a pair of foxes, *Vulpes famelica*, small, delicate, with splendid brush. The most beautiful little creatures of the kind that I have ever seen. So far as I am aware these are both new to Palestine.

In his list of animals Dr. Tristram states of the coney, *Hyrax syriacus*, that it is "not known in Lebanon." A writer whose name does not appear, and who is unknown to me, in the "Edinburgh Review" for April, 1886, p. 326, speaks of the coney as "confined to the gorges of the Dead Sea and Arabia Petræa. It is rare in the rest of the country, and unknown in the Lebanon." The preface to Tristram's "Flora and Fauna" is dated in 1883, and the volume itself in 1884. But since 1876 I have had in my collection a fine large specimen of this animal, that was taken near the well-known Lebanon village of Abeih. Dr. Tristram's remark of the crocodile in the Zerka I would apply to this case of the coney: "An ounce of fact is worth a ton of theory."

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THE INSCRIPTIONS OF SARIS AND MOUNT OLIVET.

It is very desirable that exact squeezes should be taken of the inscriptions described by Mr. Hanauer, as found in a cave at Saris, since the characters are evidently old Phœnician, the first one being an *aleph*. The sculpture accompanying them, moreover, is in the same style as the "Proto-Phœnician" rock-sculptures I have visited near Tyre.¹

The inscription No. IV, given by Mr. Schick, which was found on the mosaic flooring at the Campo Santo on the Mount of Olives, reads: Χ[αίρετ]ε · μνήσθητι τῆς δούλης σου Ζάννας. "Farewell! remember thy servant Zanna." In Egypt the first letter of the proper name might be identified with the Coptic letter Η, and the name accordingly read Hanna, but this would not be possible in Syria.

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¹ Squeezes of this inscription have since been received by the Fund, and will be forwarded to Professor Sayce, who is now in Egypt.