

sought on the north side of Hermon, since Baniás could not be described as being in the valley of Lebanon, being in the Jordan Valley.

There is an important spring called 'Ain Jideideh, on the north of Hermon, on the road from Damascus to Beirut, and the plain here is called the Plain of Jideideh. This is close to the south end of the valley of Lebanon, and is at the foot of the north spurs of Hermon. The name comes from the root *جد*, the same from which the Hebrew Gad is taken. It appears to me, therefore, that no position could be more suitable for Baal Gad, and that the name is preserved at a spring, as are the names of several ancient cities in Palestine, such as Chezib, for instance.

NOTES ON THE QUARTERLY STATEMENT.

By MAJOR CONDER, R.E.

DR. POST'S useful papers on the population sometimes apply rather to the Christian town population of Syria than to the peasantry of Palestine proper, or to the nomadic Arabs. Most of his statements I am able to confirm, as far as my six years' experience goes, but at times his experience is different to my own.

Pp. 110-111. The word *fás*, pl. *fás*, was usually applied in my hearing not to a hatchet (an instrument I never remember seeing among the peasantry), but to the common hoe.

For the axe the Turkish word *Batta* I found to be commonly employed.

P. 114. The form *murej* instead of *nurej* for the threshing sledge can hardly be considered a "corruption," because it is the older form, being the Hebrew *moreg*, and this is a proof of the archaic character of the peasant dialect.

P. 117. One custom in connection with the harvest, which may be regarded as superstitious or religious, Dr. Post does not mention, namely, leaving the corner of the field unreaped. Such a custom existed among the Celts in our own islands, and exists among the peasantry in India. In both cases the untilled part was sacred to the genius of the ground.

P. 121. The hyssop is often identified with the *Origanum*, as Dr. Post proposes, but Dr. Chaplin pointed out to me that the plant called *Miriamtyeh* is used to the present day much as hyssop was used, and grows on the walls of ruins as the hyssop is described to have grown in the Bible. This is the *Satureia*, a kind of plant resembling mint, and believed by scholars to be the *ῥύσσωπος*, or hyssop of the Greeks. The *Za'iter*, which is properly the thyme, never, as far as I know, grows on walls, and is therefore hardly to be identified with hyssop. It is very common on the soft chalky hills throughout Palestine.

Many of the plants enumerated show their foreign derivation by their names, and probably came into Syria in post Christian times—such as the orange, potato, and perhaps the mulberry. Others mentioned in my recent paper on Greek words used by the Jews are also foreign, such as the lupine, pea, rice, tomato. Tobacco is in colloquial speech *Dokhân*, “smoke.” The strong tobacco for the water-pipe is called *Tumbak*. The beech is unknown in Palestine itself. The *Derdâr* in the south is not a plane, but a thorny tree of the desert.

P. 126. As regards features, we observed that each village, as a rule, had its characteristic physiognomy, due to inter-marriage of the villagers, as I should suppose. In the north the type resembles that of the Assyrian monuments, in the south it approaches the Egyptian. The pure Arab type beyond Jordan is far more aquiline, and purely Semitic. The Christian population has probably much Greek blood in its veins, and often a good deal of Italian blood also. The peasantry may have Turanian blood of various stocks—from the Hittite down to the Turk. The Arab proper, in type and in speech, approaches nearer to the true Semitic type of Arabia. As regards height, I have met a good many very tall men in Palestine, especially in Philistia and beyond Jordan. The ugly ears of the Moslems—often bent down and always standing out—are accounted for by the great weight of the turban. The *temper* of Christian women is not, so far as I know, superior to that of the Moslem women. The recriminations of Christian women at the Well of Nazareth, for instance, are quite equal to those of their Moslem sisters. The beauties of Nazareth and Bethlehem are believed to have much Italian blood in their veins. Among the Druzes of Carmel I have seen a good many women quite as beautiful as any of the Christians, and others among the Adwân (who do not wear the veil) superior in type of aquiline beauty to any of the Christians. I have also personal experience of the very great muscular strength of many of the men, both among peasants and Arabs. Dr. Post's remark on this point (p. 127) seems rather to apply to the townfolk. The keenness of eyesight and power of rapid observation, among the lower classes, is also worthy of notice.

I do not think that artists will agree with Dr. Post as to the want of taste among Syrians. The Oriental conception of colour is superior to that of most western peoples, as evinced both in costume and also in their fabrics.

The reasons for the position of towns and villages standing on heights appear to me to be: 1st, for security; 2nd, because the low ground near water is usually feverish. I doubt its being influenced by any particular love of scenery.

P. 134. Although the Syrians are very unpunctual, my experience always was that they were remarkably faithful to agreements, whether sealed or verbal. I have often entrusted muleteers with large sums of money, and never once lost any so entrusted. The sanctity of a trust is one of the strongest sentiments of the peasantry.

P. 137. The remarks as to the virtue of married women do not agree with what I have heard from other residents. Many clandestine meetings are arranged, in remote fields or unfrequented spots, and the lepers are often the means of conveying such messages. The poisoning common among women in Damascus is said to be mainly due to such irregularities. The morality of the herdsmen is also said to be notoriously bad.

The common word *Yallah*, used in all cases when "haste" is desired has, I believe, nothing to do with the name of God, or the invocation *Ya-Allah*, "O God," though this is the common explanation. It is originally a Turkish word from the root *yel*, "to hasten," and is probably adopted from the Turks, who are the persons usually most accustomed to 'hurry' their Semitic subjects.

P. 145. The assertion that "religion is universal" is not my experience. The Arabs have little religion, beyond a belief in the presence of their ancestral spirits, and of demons in general. They very rarely are found to pray. The peasantry also are very ignorant of the tenets of Islam, and their beliefs belong to the old superstitions of earlier days. Of these superstitions Dr. Post has as yet told us nothing.

P. 187. I must apologise for supposing Herr Schumacher's tomb at Shefa 'Amr to be the same I explored. The similarity is remarkable.

P. 189. As regards the derivation of *Millo*, we may with advantage refer to the derivation given by Gesenius, who does regard the *mim* as servile. He derives it from the common Hebrew and Arabic root "to fill," מִלֵּא, and renders it "mound," or "rampart."

THE GUTTER NOT NEAR THE FULLER'S FIELD.

By REV. W. F. BIRCH.

IN the astounding identification of "the conduit of the upper pool which is in the highway of the fuller's field" (2 Kings, xviii, 17), with the top of the Ophel shaft (*i.e.*, the gutter) Mr. St. Clair finds good (!) evidence (p. 190) that "the shaft was *outside* the wall." As this would ruin my gutter, let me apply a little healthy criticism to his paper.

He says, "The upper pool is believed to be the Virgin's Fountain." Commonly, the worse the error the more it is believed; yet he omits to add by whom or on what evidence such a thing is believed. He and I agree that the Virgin's Fountain represents Gihon, but that Gihon was identical with the upper pool is (so far as I know) only a conjecture of Mr. St. Clair's, improbable for at least two reasons. (A) Names of places are not interchanged in the Bible without a note of explanation; and