

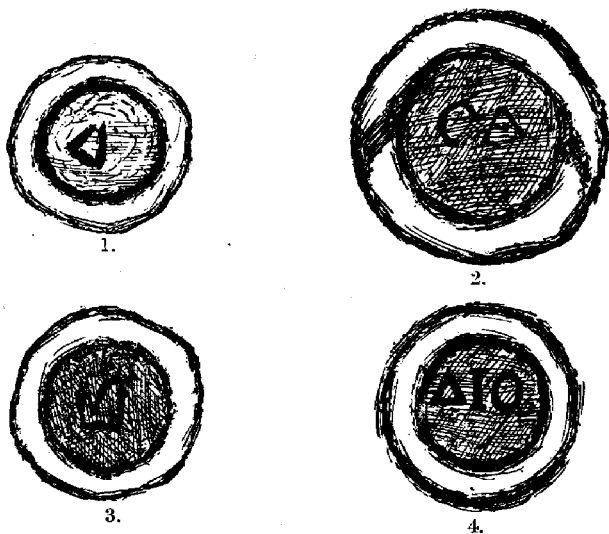
## NOTES ON POTTERS' MARKS, LAMPS, AND INSCRIPTIONS.

By G. ROBINSON LEE, F.R.G.S.

### POTTERS' MARKS ON CHRISTIAN LAMPS.

ON page 487 of "The Recovery of Jerusalem," I find the following:—  
"The Christian lamps have been found, &c. It is remarkable that none of them bear potters' marks on the under side."

Enclosed are squeezes of the under side of four Christian lamps in my collection, numbered 1, 2, 3, and 4, each bearing a potter's mark.



these lamps are of the same shape, but only three are alike in design, although every one has the palm branch on the tongue, near the wick hole. Nos. 1, 2, and 3 are made of dark-red pottery, and the fourth of burnt black. I have eleven others, similar in shape but without potters' marks. They were all found near Jerusalem. Are they the first that have been found on which are potters' marks?

### LAMPS WITH GREEK INSCRIPTIONS.

A tomb has been recently opened at Isawyeh, on the north-eastern slope of Scopus, containing about 100 lamps, all unmistakably Christian. Fifty-one of them are like the pear-shaped lamp on p. 484 of "The

Recovery of Jerusalem," and 17 are similar to the engraving on the opposite page of the same work, but the inscriptions are different. Below are copies of all the inscriptions. The remainder of the lamps vary, both in shape and design, but have the sign of the cross. Not having time to visit the tomb I asked Mr. Charles A. Hornstein to go. He says the tomb consists of one chamber, which is reached by a small flight of steps. The entrance is very small, only 30 inches wide. On the right hand are two sunk loculi, similar to the one in the tomb supposed by the late General Gordon to be that of our Saviour, three in front, and two on the left-hand side. All are filled with bones. The lamps were all found on the partitions dividing the loculi. On the walls of the tomb are three crosses.

- (1) Μ Μ Ι Ψ Α Θ Ε Η Π Α Λ Λ Θ Ο Ι
- (2) Μ Ο Μ Θ Θ Μ Θ Μ Ο Μ
- (3) Λ Ο Ο Ξ Α Π Θ Π Α Σ Ι Ι Ο Χ
- (4) Λ Χ Η Θ Ε Ι Ψ Κ Η Ψ
- (5) Η Α Μ Μ Θ Η Μ Λ Α Β
- (6) Θ Μ Ο Μ Θ Θ Μ Ο Μ Θ
- (7) Η Θ Ι Β Ο Σ Κ Ι Ξ Θ Ι Ψ Ο Η
- (8) Λ Χ Η Α Μ Α Κ Θ Υ Α
- (9) Η Μ . Ν Α Θ Α . Μ Θ
- (10) Ν Θ Ο Μ Μ Χ Η Α Τ Ο Χ

The letters in No. 5 are raised very high.

The above are copied as near as possible to the original.

#### HERALDIC DEVICE OR TOKEN.

I have just received from Kefr Melek a token or heraldic device, made of lead mixed with some harder metal. It is  $3\frac{7}{8}$  inches long and  $3\frac{1}{2}$  inches across, elliptical in form, with a hole at the top, and on it is engraved an eagle between two branches. It is certainly old, but I cannot give it any approximate date. It must either have been worn, or nailed to something; if the former, surely by a horse, as it weighs  $1\frac{1}{2}$  okies, or about 10 ounces, and if the latter, to what—a coffin? or door? I enclose a squeeze.

## INSCRIPTION AT BUSR EL HAREER.

On my last journey across the Jordan I was detained by the Government at Busr el Hareer, a border town of the Lejjah. Although my horses and baggage were under guard, I was allowed to wander about, and came across the following inscription, which is not in M. Waddington's book.

K A N Δ I Δ O E  
 K E Ξ E K V K E ~  
 A Γ Y I A M O C K C ~  
 A Λ Γ X A K O A B E C  
 A N O N O I E F O E  
 Θ I A I Γ Y E 7 E Δ  
 I W N O I K O N O M H Θ H

It was on a stone, built into a wall near the Seraglio. I may mention that the stone with the long inscription mentioned by Herr Schumacher in his "Across the Jordan," at Ed Dera'ah, as being about to be built into the new Government building, is now at the top of a doorway of an unfinished building, and upside down. I found another stone with an inscription, moved from the place where it was originally discovered, and used as a lintel stone; No. 2480 in M. Waddington's book is an inscription said to be, according to p. 567, "at the mosque near the minaret." It is now over the shop-door of a Christian merchant at Ezra'ah. Alongside of it are two other stones on which are Arabic inscriptions.

JERUSALEM, *November 5th*, 1891.

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 POTSHERDS.

THE durable character of potsherds when placed underground seems to have been recognised in the East from a very early period. Archæologists of the present day have discovered this character of permanency which fragments of broken pottery possess; but this knowledge is as old in India as the days of Manu, and had been applied to a practical use before his time. In Manu's great law book the rules regarding boundary

marks are given; external objects are mentioned, but in addition to these, there were to be "other hidden marks for boundaries." There were to be,—“stones, bones, cow's hair, chaff, ashes, *potsherds*, dry cowdung, bricks, cinders, pebbles, and sand. And whatever other things of a similar kind the earth does not corrode even after a long time, these he should cause to be buried where one boundary joins [the other].” “Laws of Manu,” viii, 250-1. I have made the word *potsherds* noticeable by putting it in *italics*. “Narada,” the name by which another old Hindu law book is known, xix, 5, 6, gives almost the same list of objects, including *potsherds*, but adds that they were to be placed in vessels when deposited underground as boundary marks. The value of *potsherds* in relation to archæological explorations has now become so important that it will justify the bringing of this old custom into notice; and primitive customs, as we know in other things, were often practised over the greater part of the East, it is just within the limits of possibility that deposits of this kind may be found in other localities besides India, and might be supposed to be nothing else than refuse which had been thrown away. In this light, such a scrap of knowledge may turn out to be useful to those who are engaged in the practical work of exploration.

WILLIAM SIMPSON.

## NOTES BY MAJOR CONDER, R.E.

### I.

#### THE SINAITIC INSCRIPTIONS.

It would seem from a paragraph in Mr. Harper's volume (“The Bible and Modern Discoveries,” p. 129) that the date and meaning of the Sinaitic inscriptions are regarded by some as still a matter of dispute. It would seem, therefore, not unnecessary to call attention to the fact that the question has long been decisively settled by scholars, and that it is certain that they are Nabathean pilgrim texts of the 3rd and 4th century A.D., written by travellers who were then visiting the Sinai convent, and the hermitage of Wâdy Feirân, and the traders who passed from Petra on the way to Egypt. They were first read by Beer in 1840, and the authoritative work on the subject is that of Levy in 1860 (Z.D.M.G., vol. xiv, pp. 363 to 480). The alphabet is the same which was used at Petra in the same age, and the texts, when translated, are found to contain pious sentiments, and invocations of peace, blessing, and health on the writer and to record the names of those who died in the desert. There are no dates on any of them, but the crosses which accompany the texts show them to be Christian. Those who still believe in the Rev. C. Foster's