

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

wild lucubrations on the subject are perhaps not aware of the existence of a bilingual, in Greek and Sinaitic, of which Sir C. W. Wilson brought home an excellent cast and squeeze, which I have been enabled through his kindness to study. Mr. Harper says that "Various are the ideas about them," and I have been often asked whether they may not be writings of the Israelites. The peculiarities of the Greek letters, in the bilingual in question, show, however, that the Greek cannot have been penned before the 4th century A.D., and no one is likely to contend that the Israelites wrote Greek. On the other hand it is certain, from the arrangement of the Sinaitic version, that it was written after and not before the Greek. The monument has the figure of a man (with phallic detail) on the top, and of a horse below. The text is as follows :—

75 195 16 9F 11 11 9F 96 15 540  
 ΜΗΕΘΗ ΑΥΣΟ ΓΕΡΣΟΥ  
 ΚΑΛΙΤΑΙ ΟΥΡΑΡΟΥ  
 19F 11 11 11 ΕΝΑΡΑΘΟΥ

I have not got Levy's work in my possession, and do not know whether he has translated this bilingual, but it presents no great difficulty, since the Greek, and the Nabathean or Sinaitic, appear to mean exactly the same.

The Greek, which appears to be rather rude, runs, as I suppose thus :—

*Μνησθη Auso Γερσου  
 Καλιται ουμαρου εναραθοι.*

"Remember it is asked Ausu, the son of Gersu, Let your pilgrimage be prayed for." In this case *Ουμαρου* is from "Ομ, and *αἰρειν* "to march together," or go in company. Equally imperfect Greek is found in the 4th century texts of the Hauran.

The Nabathean transcribed in modern Arabic letters reads—

مزكثير اوسو بن خرسو كني و بكن  
 سلمة بسوب

"Let Ausu, the son of Khersu, be remembered, and to you be safety on the journey" (or pilgrimage).

This single instance is sufficient to explain the character of all the Sinaitic texts, since they are all in the same alphabet and dialect. The object of writing in both Greek and Nabathean, in this instance, was apparently that Greek pilgrims might pray for Ausus as well as native Nabatheans. Greek texts of the early Christian period are found in other cases on the Sinaitic rocks.

We have at present no evidence of the use of any Semitic alphabet in the time of Moses, and we know that as late as 1430 B.C. the inhabitants of Syria were using cuneiform characters. But if the Hebrews in Sinai used an alphabet, the forms of the letters would not be less archaic than those of the Moabite stone; and it may, therefore, be of interest to show what this text would look like if written in that character:—

99 YWY& 9ZYIY  
 999Y ZYYYW4H  
 9YW9 X4CW

The degradation of the Sinaitic forms robs them of all similarity to their prototypes, and the connection has only been traced by much labour through the later Aramean. It will also be observed that the writing has become cursive, and that the letters are joined together, as in the Cufic of the 6th and 7th centuries in Palestine and Bashan. This use of ligatures is one of the surest distinctions between the Nabathean and the older Hebrew, Phœnician, Moabite, and Aramean texts.

SOUTHAMPTON, July 11th, 1891.

## II.

### ALOSHA ELISHAH.

In the collection from Tell Amarna there are no less than ten letters to the King of Egypt from the Prince of Alosha, or Alasiya, written in the same Semitic language then used (1500 B.C.) all along the Phœnician coasts. The name is spelt  $\text{Y} > \text{EY} \text{K} \text{E} \text{EY}$  *A-la-si-ya*, but the Egyptians called this region Alosha. From one of these recently translated ("Proc. Bib. Arch. Soc.," June, 1891), which is No. 12 of the collection as arranged by Dr. Winckler, it appears that Alosha was a maritime region. The Prince says, "My merchant men and my ship (*ilappu-ia*) let not thy guardians treat them ill." Since the collection includes letters from as far south as Ascalon and Lachish, it is possible that Alosha was not far

distant on the Phœnician coast. It was a country where bronze was manufactured (No. 37, British Museum Collection). It occurred to me that possibly the name is a weaker form of the name Aloth (עלוֹת), mentioned in the Bible as that of a region, or a town, in or adjoining the land of Asher, which was one of the provinces of Solomon's dominion (1 King, iv, 16). The Hebrew name would mean the "higher places," and may refer to the low hills east of the south Phœnician coast, above the narrow plain of Asher, which hills also belonged to the same tribe. But perhaps a better explanation is to connect it with the Hebrew Elishah (אֵלִישָׁה) (Gen. x, 4; Ezek. xxvii, 7) a suggestion which, as far as I know, has not yet been made. The Sons of Javan (Ionia) are said to have included Elishah, Tarshish, Kittim, and Dodanim (or Rodanim), and in Ezekiel's time Elishah traded in purple with Tyre. In this passage, the "isles" (אֲיִלִּים) of Elishah are mentioned, but the word is well known to mean rather "shores" than isles; so that Elishah was clearly a maritime region. The places with which it is mentioned are all probably near Asia Minor, including Kittim or Cyprus. For Tarshish is most probably *Tarsûs*, on the south-east coast of Asia Minor. The Dodanim are supposed by Gesenius to be really the Rodanim, or Rhodians, on account of 1 Chr. i, 7, and the Samaritan and LXX of Gen. x, 4. According to the Samaritan version Elishah seems to be understood to be Elis (אֵלִישׁ); others read Hellos, the Talmudic writers Elis or Æolis. The purple of Laconia is mentioned by Horace (Od. ii, 18, 7, as quoted by Gesenius).

The result seems to me to be that Alosha was a region on the south coast of Asia Minor. The Aramean influence in Cilicia was very strong at an early period, and the Phœnician coast adjoined. I am tempted to suppose that this was the old form of the name of Lycia, as pronounced by the Greeks, which region lay on the shores of Asia Minor between Rhodes and Tarsus. On the Lycian monuments the name of the country appears to me to be written *Lacha*, with a soft *ch*, which is a nearer approach to Elishah. The Phœnician coast was not rich in minerals, as far as we know; their copper was brought from Cyprus and their tin from Tarshish, which it seems to me impossible to place at Tartessus in Spain, where there was little if any tin, since the name occurs with those of other Asia Minor places. Tin was well known in Western Asia long before Spain can have been reached, and was probably brought from the Caucasus. Asia Minor appears to be richer in the metals than Phœnicia, and this would agree with the proposed identification of Alosha with Elishah, as on the south coast of Asia Minor.

SOUTHAMPTON, 29th October, 1891.

## III.


## NOTES ON HERR SCHICK'S REPORT, TELL EL HESY INSCRIPTIONS, AND DINHABAH.

*Queries.*—The suggestion of Mr. Guy le Strange is no doubt excellent. I would suggest he should state what are the unanswered questions to which he refers. If I am able to answer any of them I should be happy to do so.

*Herr Schick's Report.*—The discovery of a rock-cut way, north-west of the Church of the Holy Sepulchre, seems to me of great interest. It is close to an ancient road-crossing, and just where I have always supposed the "Old Gate" of Nehemiah's wall should be placed. It may, perhaps, mark the entrance to that gate. The aqueduct, on the west side of the city, also seems to follow the line of the 3rd Wall, and may have had some connection with it. The levels agree in showing the existence of an original knoll (*Akra*) near the Holy Sepulchre.

*Tell el Hesy Inscription.*—If the letters are, as I suppose, given in *fac-simile*, they belong to the Greek alphabet, as in use in Palestine about the Christian era. (See, for instance, the "Warning Stone," of Herod's Temple.) They are not the forms of the earlier Greek letters, which were more like the Phœnician. These letters appear to have been found near the base of the town. The bricks which Mr. Bliss dug into may, I would suggest, have formed part of an artificial mound, on which the town stood (as in Assyria, and in other instances in the Palestine plains). Perhaps Mr. Bliss can inform us whether such a conclusion would agree with his observations.

I may be excused for expressing my interest in his picturesque account of his work, which shows that he thoroughly understands the natives; and how to deal with them.

*Dinhabah.*—We owe to the Rev. H. G. Tomkins many valuable identifications of ancient towns, including, I think, Tunep of Syria; but I feel some doubt as to the present proposal. One would more naturally look for Dinhabah in Edom than in Moab (Gen. xxxvi, 32). The name *Hodbat et Toneib* would seem to mean "hummock of the tent rope." I have not actually been at the site, but I have been very near it, and as far as I have heard or seen it does not appear to be the site of a town. Perhaps Mr. Selah Merrill can throw light on the subject. If, as I suppose, the *t* is , this is rather a difficulty in connecting the site with Dinhabah, which, it may be observed, was the royal city of Bela when reigning in Edom, and therefore perhaps rather to be sought near Petra.

SOUTHAMPTON, 26th October, 1891.