

founder of Jebus was, beyond all question, a keen Tartan in preferring even a little water to high rocks.

Jerusalem has been besieged at least twenty-seven times, and only in one instance is any mention made of even a temporary scarcity of water. Vegetius well observed, "Difficile sitis vicit, qui quamvis exiguâ aquâ ad potum tamen tantum in obsidione sunt usi."

THE ANCIENT HÆMATITE WEIGHT FROM SAMARIA.

In the *Quarterly Statement* for last July the correspondence which appeared in the *Academy* on Dr. Chaplin's weight is printed without the replies of Mr. Tyler and myself to Professor Robertson Smith. Had they been given it would have been seen (1) that I have never said that *netseg* was "derived" from *yâtsag*; (2) that the explanation of *netseg* is due to Dr. Neubauer and not to myself; and (3) that Dr. Neubauer's reference of it to *yâtsag* is not "a grammatical blunder."

As, however, I have been compelled to write again on the subject, I take the opportunity of commenting on Professor Robertson Smith's letter, which my absence in Nubia prevented me from doing last winter. Firstly, as to the word on the "bead" found at Jerusalem. The Professor wished to make it נצג instead of נצב, though he confessed that with this reading he could not explain the word. My experience of Phœnician *graffiti* leads me still to maintain that the last letter is "certainly" not נ but ג, and that the word accordingly must be *netseg*.

Secondly, as to the weight itself. I gather from the Professor's communication that although he began his examination of the inscription with a prejudice against my reading של, he was eventually forced to come round to it; but, in order to get rid of the obnoxious *shel* "of" he took refuge in the desperate conjecture that של stood for שלם! The idea that the inscriptions on the two sides of the weight are of different age and authorship, seems to me, I confess, to be preposterous. I have handled a good many Oriental seals and cylinders, and have never seen a clearer case of identity as regards both the form and the weathering of the letters. The only difference between the inscriptions is that one of them has been worn more than the other, probably owing to the weight having been usually laid on the side on which it occurs. And as Professor Robertson Smith himself acknowledged, unless my reading is adopted the inscription makes no sense. But ancient writers were not in the habit of engraving nonsense, whether on weights or on anything else.

A. H. SAYCE.

23, CHEPSTOW VILLAS,
August 3rd, 1894.

[The letters referred to by Professor Sayce as having been omitted in the correspondence reprinted by us are the following.—ED.]

(From the Academy.)

THE METHODS OF THE HIGHER CRITICISM.

London,

November 22nd, 1893.

I do not presume to enter into the discussion concerning the characters inscribed on Dr. Chaplin's Samaritan weight, or to estimate their value with regard to the date of the Canticles. I may say, however, that to me the title chosen by Professor Sayce, and which I have repeated above, has appeared not quite appropriate.

Now, however, I am concerned with some statements towards the end of Professor Robertson Smith's communication in last week's *Academy*. Professor Sayce (who is in Egypt) is accused of having committed a serious "grammatical blunder" in "deriving a segholate noun with initial *Nun*, namely *netseg*, from the root *yâtsag*," for "every Hebraist knows that if the word is *netseg*, it cannot possibly have come from *yâtsag*, or from any known Hebrew root." Now, "every Hebraist knows," though, it would almost seem, Professor Robertson Smith does not, that verbs with initial *Nun* are so closely related to verbs with initial *Yod* (the *Nun* being softened down into *Yod*), as to make it sometimes of little importance which form is chosen as the root. Indeed, with reference to these two forms, *yâtsag* and *natsag*, what Gesenius had previously referred to the latter he subsequently derived from the former. And as to segholate nouns with initial *Nun*, it may be seen from the *Lexicon* that these are sufficiently numerous. With the possible meaning of *netseg* I have nothing now to do.

THOMAS TYLER.

(From the Academy.)

THE INSCRIBED WEIGHT FROM SAMARIA.

Rodah, Egypt,

December 6th, 1893.

My departure from Cairo has prevented me from seeing until now the discussion which has arisen in the *Academy* over the letter I wrote about Dr. Chaplin's inscribed weight from Samaria. It has followed the course I expected, and the reading public will now be able to appraise at their real value the *ex cathedra* assertions of those who claim a monopoly of "the critical method." Dr. Neubauer and myself, after a careful examination of the original, found that the inscription contained certain words; and the "critics" peremptorily denied our reading without taking the trouble to consult the original.

Professor Robertson Smith is mistaken in saying that the explanation of *netseg* as "a standard weight" is mine, or that I "derive" it from the root *yâtsag*. The explanation is due to Dr. Neubauer; and from the first

moment he mentioned it to me, he has always "derived" it from a root *nâtsaq* with which *yâtsaq* would be connected.

A. H. SAYCE.

NOTE BY THOMAS CHAPLIN, M.D.

The elaborate report of the late Professor W. Robertson Smith on this weight has a melancholy interest from its having been one of the last pieces of work to which that distinguished scholar set his hand.

Although apparently drawn up with much care it appears to me that there are in it some important mistakes, and respecting these I would beg to offer the following remarks.

1. Whilst allowing that the object itself and the much-worn inscription on it are ancient, the Professor found it difficult to believe that the less-worn inscription "can be anything but a modern forgery." If this is so, the weight must first have been found, then have passed into the hands of some clever scoundrel who cut, or got someone else to cut, a new inscription on it, and then have been handed to an ignorant peasant boy who sold it to a passing traveller for a silver mejjide, or 3s. 4d. Is this at all probable? Where was the profit to come from? What could have been the inducement? The weight would have sold as well without the second line of inscription as with it.

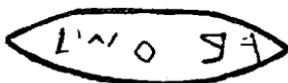
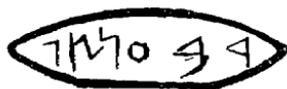
2. If Professor Smith was right in supposing that "the inscriptions on the two sides of the weight are not of the same date" (which I am not prepared to admit), it nevertheless appears to me that the weight was in use long after the second inscription was made, for the edges of the letters are certainly worn and rounded by use. This is particularly observable in the third letter from the right—the 'ain.

3. The suggestion that the less-worn inscription "exhibits a different and inferior technique" has occasioned me considerable surprise. I can discover no indication of this. If the "uncertain hand" which cut the (so-called) second inscription "could not keep a single direction truly" neither could the hand which executed the first. On this latter the first stroke of the second letter from the right is unnecessarily prolonged upwards as a fine shallow groove with a slight curve—obviously a slip of the tool—and the vertical stroke of the last letter on this side is not straight and could not, in my judgment, have been "effected by a clean and uniform saw-cut." It looks as if a cut sloping very slightly downwards towards the left had first been made and, being not quite right, had been remedied by a vertical cut which left ever so little a projection of the first cut on its right side.¹ On the less-worn inscription slips of the tool may be observed (1) below the horizontal stroke of the second letter (from the right), and (2) on the right side of the lower part of the upright (last) stroke of the fifth letter. None of these slip strokes are straight.

¹ It is this that gives the slight curve to this stroke which is very accurately shown in Mr. Burkitt's drawing.

4. This brings me to another point. Professor Smith speaks of the strokes of the letters as "saw-cuts." To me it appears that they were made with the point of a graving tool. Had they been made with a saw they would have been straight and of the same depth from one end of the stroke to the other, whereas on both lines of the inscription not only are some of the strokes not straight but all of the less-worn ones are broader and deeper in the middle than at the ends, where they terminate in points. By use these shallow and tapering ends have in several letters become nearly or quite obliterated, as in the *'ain* of the less-worn side, and in all the letters, except the last, of that which is more worn, and this obliteration sometimes separates the ends of strokes which ought to touch one another, as in the first letter of the much-worn side, and that which Professor Sayce regards as a *shin*. In nearly all the letters on both sides the bottoms of the grooves are more or less smoothed, almost polished, as if they had been finished by rubbing with a blunt tool. I do not remember to have seen this peculiarity in any modern forgery.

5. Below is a reproduction of a drawing of the inscription kindly sent to me by Professor Robertson Smith. The drawing was done, I believe, by Mr. F. C. Burkitt, of Cambridge. It will enable scholars to form their own opinion as to whether the prolongation of the respective lines of the disputed letter until they meet would form a figure representing an old Hebrew *shin* as suggested by Professor Sayce. Without presuming to enter into a controversy which must be settled by the experts, I venture to think that there is little room for doubt that Professor Sayce is right. As shown on the drawing, the lower ends of the strokes of this *shin* are not much further apart than the ends of the lateral strokes of the *raish* on that side, and the prolongations of the strokes required to make a perfect *shin* appear to me no more "imaginary" than the prolongations required to complete the *raish*, which is a letter no one calls in question. It is strange to find Professor Robertson Smith remarking that "the point of the spindle would naturally be less worn than the middle," for the most worn of all the letters, except the disputed *shin*, is the *raish* at the extreme end of the spindle.



The interest attaching to this weight with its inscription is so great that I feel it ought not to remain in the keeping of a private person, and I have, therefore, presented it to the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford, where doubtless it may be seen by those desiring to study it.