

I ordered a man to make a shaft in the centre, in order to ascertain the depth and the condition of the bottom, whether cemented or not. In the rock towards the north-west is a cleft, as if it had been once the source of a spring, but now dry. On the eastern height, not far from the pool, is a ruin and a cave, or rather a sunken court in the rock, and on one of its sides is an opening like that of a Jewish rock-cut tomb. People told me that some time ago sarcophagi were found in it, and removed. On the western height is a cistern, and further down another one, and also a ruin. The people have no proper name for the place, but call it simply the "Hosseini's Pool." Hosseini is the name of a noble family in Jerusalem, so this name is rather a modern one. I am wondering that we have not any notice of this pool, either in the Bible or in profane writings.

4. *Reckoning of time among the Armenians.*—It is perhaps not generally known that the Armenians have their own peculiar mode of reckoning dates. They count from the date of the first Armenian, who, they say, lived in the time of Shem, 4,386 years ago. Also they use a second reckoning, starting from the year 551 A.D. I became acquainted with this by noting on an inscribed slab the dates 1834 and 1283, which I thought indicated that the stone was put into its present position in the year 1834, and was then 551 years old. But the Secretary of the Convent told me this is not so, but the date 1283 indicates that according to the Armenian reckoning which corresponds to 1834 A.D.¹

5. *The Armenian Cross.*—With reference to Major Conder's objection to the opinion that the Jerusalem Cross came from the Armenians (*Quarterly Statement*, 1894, p. 206), the Secretary said to me, "Whatever others may have had, I know that always, in all the centuries, the Armenian Cross had one beam longer than the others. That the Latins have it also, is no proof that we had it not."

REPORTS FROM GALILEE.

By Dr. G. SCHUMACHER.

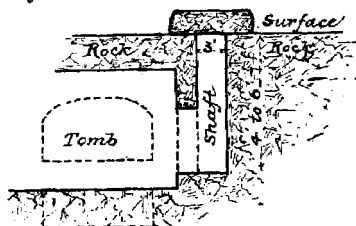
THE excavations on ancient sites carried on by native explorers with the object of finding articles of value, extended not only over the district between the seashore and the Jordan, but also over Jolân and 'Ajlun; during a period of more than two years the Turkish Government placed

¹ In the year 351 A.D. a certain Andreas, of Byzantium, drew up an Easter-table for 200 years. Towards the end of that period it was found to deviate considerably from the astronomical indications, and a new adjustment had to be made. This was done in 551 A.D., and ever since then the Armenians have reckoned from that year. See Ideler, "Lehrbuch der Chronologie," Berlin, 1831, p. 439.—[ED.]

no obstacle to these proceedings, especially as the diggers confined themselves to the opening of old tombs and the antiquities they found there, such as ancient glass ware, earthenware lamps and tear bottles, jars, coins Roman and mediæval, bracelets and other ornaments of comparatively little value. But as "l'appetit vient en mangeant," the explorers commenced a regular trade with European and native antiquarians. Their operations extended, especially along the brow of Mount Carmel between Haifa and Cæsarea, which is honeycombed with ancient rock hewn tombs, excavations were made on a large scale, and small boats anchored along the coast to smuggle away the results. At length the local Governors have been instructed to stop these excavations entirely.

Regarding the tombs opened, their plans differ very little from each other: an entrance, with semi-circular top, of $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 3 feet in height and 1 foot 8 inches to 2 feet wide, generally closed by a slab of limestone, led to a square room of 10 to 15 feet each way and about 6 feet in height; in each of the three perpendicular walls opposite to and adjoining the entrance we find loculi and kokim pierced into the soft rock. Amongst the fifty-four tombs opened on the site of Ten'ameh, near Tell es Samak, the greater number contained but two loculi under arcosolia in each wall; others only one, and some three.

In a few instances the entrance, instead of being on the side of a rock cliff, was formed by a shaft leading from the flat surface of the rock vertically 4 feet or more down to the door of the sepulchral room. In such cases no stone door was discoverable, the shaft having been closed on the surface (*see sketch*). The shaft showed a square section of about 3 feet each way.



SECTION OF ROCK-CUT TOMB.

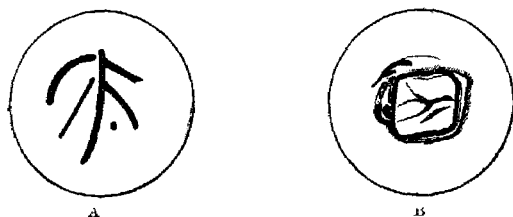
On the eastern slope of Tell es Samak, a tomb was closed with a marble door, $2' 2'' \times 1' 10''$ and 3 inches thick; having a cross



engraved on its front. Any number of marble fragments were excavated at Tell es Samak, a proof of wealth.

1. *Glass Ware.* The most interesting article brought to me is a round piece of green glass, with Aramaic characters on its sides. I consider it to have been a weight, and enclose a wax impression of the

letters. One end of the glass was broken, and the piece fitted on again by a thin solution of gum-arabic; this procedure will not have affected the original weight considerably; the gum may just rebalance the weight of the few very small glass chips missing. The glass is supposed to have been found in a tomb near Râs en Nakûra, 8 miles north of Acre, near the sea-coast; it has diameters of $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches and $3\frac{5}{8}$ inches, not being precisely round, and an equal thickness of $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch English, its periphery is rounded off; the two flat sides bear on the obverse the following characters (A of sketch), and on the reverse (B of sketch), the



other lines on the reverse seem to have been produced in preparing the glass. In comparing these characters with Professor Euting's "Tabula Scripturæ Aramaicæ," and with Levy's excellent book on Jewish coins,¹ the obverse seems to represent the Hebrew letters נ, ז, and ל, and on the reverse there seems to stand the letter י.

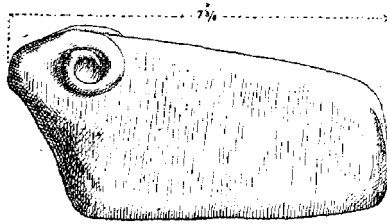
The exact weight of this glass is 275·20 grammes, or 3,492·29 English grains (taking the English pound at 453,592 grammes = 5,760 grains; 1 gramme therefore equalling 12·69 grains). According to Levy (*op. cit.*, p. 156), the weight of a shekel of Simon varies between 14·33 grammes as a maximum and 13·46 grammes as a minimum; our weight being 275·20 grammes, represents therefore the twenty-fold of a shekel of 13·76 grammes, or four of the Syrian (or Hittite) "Netzegs," of 5 shekels, described by Professor Flinders Petrie, in "An ancient Hebrew weight from Samaria," *Quarterly Statement*, 1890, pp. 267, 268; but our Netzeg would be equal to 873 grains instead of 627, the weight determined by Professor Petrie.

To judge from the look and the characteristic silver skins appearing on its surface this ancient glass must be genuine.

2. Several fragments of other ancient glass of a dark-green colour have been shown to me. They contain inscriptions and stamps in Arabic and Cufic characters, most of them illegible to me; they also represent weights of an early Arabian period, but being fragmentary I cannot determine them. I inclose impressions of the inscriptions, which partly seem to recite Koranic sentences, partly represent stamps of some high official. They are noted as found near K'akûn, in the plain west of Nâblus.

¹ Dr. M. A. Levy, "Geschichte der Jüdischen Münzen," 1862, pp. 136, 137.

3. *Stone antiques from Yâzar*.—I inclose the sketch of an interesting stone idol, $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches long, which was found by the German colonists in ploughing land near the village Yâzar, situated a few miles east of Jaffa on the Jerusalem road. The idol—for this it must have been—shows a ram's head and horns and sort of a tail, but no feet nor any other limb; the work, although very primitive, is not without skill; it is made of a



bluish-grey hard limestone, weighs 1,082 grammes, or 2.38 lbs., and is doubtless genuine.

4. *Seals*.—I inclose an impression of a hæmatite ancient Arab seal which I read: "billah muzaffar ben 'Alâd } (hu),"

or 'Allân }

بِاللّٰه

مظفر بن علاء [or علاء]

هو

which, for its ancient characters, is interesting. The dots are omitted on the seal. I am doubtful about the reading of the last word, but I interpret: "Through (the mercy of) God, muzaffar (the victorious) Son of 'Alâd (the severe), it is he" (or: he is it). According to Weil, "Geschichte der islamitischen Völker," p. 423, the Muzafferides were in the fourteenth century (1380) the princes of the Persian Irak and Chuzistan. Whether this seal had any connection with that family can hardly be answered.

A second impression also I transmit, an impression of Greek characters engraved on a copper ring, which was found in the Haurân, near Keir Hârib.



5. *Tantârah*.—It will probably interest your readers to learn that "el burj," the so-called "tower" of Tantârah, situate about a mile north of the present village on the rock precipice bordering the ancient site and sea, collapsed on the 15th of January, nothing remaining of this important landmark, so familiar to all acquainted with the neighbourhood of Cæsarea,

but a heap of *débris* and foundation walls. (*Vide* my report in *Quarterly Statement*, 1887, p. 84, and *Memoirs S.W.P.*, Vol. II, p. 7.)

6. *Beisan*.—In sinking trial pits for the railway company last December, the Italian workmen struck an underground channel, cut into the soft rock on the northern bank of the Jalûd river, opposite Beisan. The channel or cistern was plastered, 5 to 6 feet high, and 3 to 5 feet wide, and had a total length of more than 100 feet. It leads around a slope, and had an outlet towards the hill plateau, Tell el Mastabeh, above it. The top of the cistern was round. No antiquities were found. Below the ruins of the ancient bridge, Jisr el Maktua', opposite Tell el Husn, near Beisan, the Mudir of the imperial farms has constructed a new handsome stone bridge at the crossing of the high road leading from the Jisr el Mujâmi'a to Beisan. The bridge has two spans of 16 feet 6 inches each, leaving sufficient waterway for the Jalûd river. The town of Beisan, since being created the head place of the Sultan's farms in the Jordan Valley, is rapidly growing; paved streets, a sùk or market place, barracks, Government mansions, and a large khân have been built, and I am told that the construction of twenty magazines for storage of grain and an inn ("locanda"), to meet the requirements of native tourists, have already been sanctioned by his Majesty. The extensive garden adjoining the Mudir's residence contains hundreds of poplar trees and rare specimens of oranges and other Syrian fruit trees. The sanitary conditions of Beisan have not much improved, but the large plantations of *Eucalypti* will doubtless lead to a reduction of the fevers now prevailing.

About twenty yards to the south of Khân el Ahmar (Beisan) I have been able to trace the columns of a large basilica or temple. The main axis runs due east and west, the eastern end is not traceable, hence no apse discoverable, but the western abutment shows five aisles, viz.: two on the north of 13 feet 3 inches width each, a central nave of 26 feet 6 inches, and two southern aisles of 13 feet 3 inches width; prostrate columns and corinthian capitals are scattered about the place, and to judge from the mouldings and other ornaments built into the walls of Khân el Ahmar, this building, erected in the thirteenth century, must have been built of the materials of the basilica or temple.

BETH-DEJAN.

By P. J. BALDENSPERGER, Esq.

SOME notes about this large village may be of interest to readers of the *Quarterly Statement*. They were collected on the spot, and some supplementary notes added.

The modern name Beth-dejan is evidently derived from the ancient village or town of Daghoun, situated about a mile and a half west of the