

figured in Perrot and Chipiez "Phœnicia," vol. i, pp. 54, 80, shows two figures in the same attitude, with hands upraised, presumably in an attitude of prayer. This comparison, to my mind, suggests the direction in which we are to look in determining the origin of the Saris cave.¹

Till all the earth can be cleared from the cave, it is impossible to say with certainty whether it was originally intended as a tomb-chamber, or whether the bones strewed through it and the ossuary are evidences of a secondary appropriation. In the meanwhile, I can only state my impression that the latter is the true alternative.

R. A. S. M.

EL-EDHEMÍYEH (JEREMIAH'S GROTTTO).

I SEND the following notes about the hill above Jeremiah's Grotto² :—

It is a knoll of limestone, with well-marked strata dipping perhaps 30 degrees, more or less, south to north, and about the same west to east. The rounded top of the hill is made by Moslem interments; and except two ruined welys—one of them reduced to foundations—there are no old buildings to be seen on it. The rock crops to the surface at the north-west side of the mound (towards the Dominican convent). The maximum depth of earth on the top I should estimate at about 10 feet. If the earth could be cleared away I should not be surprised to find part of the rock surface on top artificially flattened towards the south side of the hill; a small shelf of exposed rock, about 1 foot across, on the top of the scarp containing the cave popularly called the "Skull's Eye," has the appearance of being the edge of a rock-cut wine-press or threshing floor.

The excavations, &c., on the face of the hill-slope are as follows, in order, starting from the corner next the Dominicans :—

(1) A projecting boss of rock with a wine-press (?) of three vats with channels, sunk in its upper surface.

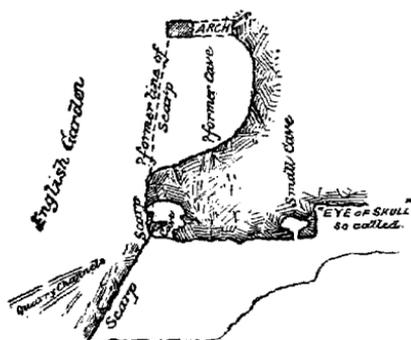
¹ [A very similar figure from Idalion is represented in Ohnefalsch-Richter, *Kypros*, taf. li, No. 6.—ED.]

² The modern Arabic name is to be preferred as being at once short and non-committal.

(2) A projecting boss of rock cut (?) into the form of a slightly pointed arch. No signs of tool-marks are to be seen upon it, so it may be natural; but I am under the impression that it is probably a section of an artificial cave, of which the rest has fallen in.

(3) A scarp running round the south-west corner of the hill. On the west side it is 25 feet 5 inches long (not straight, but rather convex), on the south 67 feet, ending in the cave called the "Skull's Eye." The maximum height (in the neighbourhood of this cave) is about 11 feet, and here it overhangs so that the top projects 2 feet 4 inches beyond the bottom of the scarp. It is probably merely a quarry, for there are evident traces of quarrying in the immediate neighbourhood of this scarp. I cannot detect any sign that would give a clue to its age.

(4) At the south-west corner of the scarp, a cave of two small irregular chambers, certainly artificial, though for what purpose is not clear. There is a sort of shelf on the right-hand side of



the entrance to the second chamber, possibly a rude arcosolium, though this is far from certain.

(5) Also at the south-west corner, a scarp running out from the main scarp, and at a lower level; also certain channels, evidently to be compared with the grooves cut between blocks in "Solomon's"

and other unfinished quarries. The rough sketch plan will give an idea of the way all these features are disposed.

(6) The so-called "Skull's Eye" (the left-hand or larger eye). Unquestionably an ancient cistern, though every scrap of plaster has been removed from the walls. There is a square hole in the top (blocked up) for dipping buckets. In the north-east corner a small subsidiary water store has been formed of masonry, cemented inside: no doubt a later construction. On the west side is a small domed chamber, communicating with the main chamber and with an independent opening under the rock scarp. The main chamber is 8 paces north to south by 9 paces east to west. In modern times the cave has been used not only as a temporary dwelling, and the walls are smoke-blackened in consequence, but also as a refuge

for goats. The south wall was chiselled away when the scarp outside was formed, and the "Eye" thus laid open. From the weathering I should strongly doubt if this happened so much as 2,000 years ago; and, therefore, any resemblance the face of this hill may bear to that of a skull is an aspect later than the time of the crucifixion.

(7) A rather risky scramble along a narrow ledge conducts over the precipitous face of the rock to the second "Eye." It is much smaller than the first, being just high enough for me to stand upright in it. The plan is of this shape:—



In the floor, at A, is sunk a very curious little cistern.

The depth (above the stratum of rubbish covering the floor) is 2 feet. Water is conveyed to it by a small channel running along the face of the rock between the "eyes." But it is far from clear why a cistern was cut in so inaccessible a place, and why so small a receptacle for water should be cut anywhere.

(8) The last cutting on the hill is Jeremiah's grotto and its attendant scarps. A very good account by Dr. Schick, with plans and sections, is given in the *Quarterly Statement* for January (pp. 38-42). On this I forward the following comments:—(a) The original entrance to the grotto was apparently rather low, and of uniform height. Two great faults in the rock above the entrance have weakened it, and part of the scarp above the entrance intercepted by these has fallen. (b) The name of the buried Sultan is Ibrahim el-Edhem, and the saint's name seems to be Jeremiah, not Lazarus. (c) Under the square recess in the west of the cave is a small sinking, apparently for the butt-end of a beam, the other end of which fitted into a corresponding sinking in the neighbouring pier. This beam probably supported a ladder or staircase by which access was gained to the recess; the latter may well have been the bed of some hermit or recluse. Lower still, underneath the sinking first mentioned, is a tetherhole, *i.e.*, a niche with a bridge of rock left spanning it to secure an animal. This may be modern.

(d) The square hole "which has never been examined" does not look important enough to justify the risk involved in being let down to it by ropes. There seems to be a broken cave of some sort in the surface of rock above the finished scarp. Above the scarped surface is a stratum, perhaps 8 or 10 feet deep, of small loose amorphous limestone, its face receded some way behind the face of the scarp. The shelf thus formed is spanned by two arches of rock which (like the other arch already described) may be sections of a ruined chamber. To the south of these is the entrance to a small cave.

R. A. S. M.

ARCHÆOLOGICAL AND EPIGRAPHIC NOTES ON PALESTINE.

By Professor CLERMONT-GANNEAU, M.I.

13. *Fresh Remarks on the Hebrew Mosaic of Kefr Kenna.*—Thanks to the kindness of Father Prosper and of Father Léonard d'Estaires, of the Order of the Franciscans, I have just received an excellent tracing (made directly from the original) of the Hebrew inscription which I discussed in a preceding note (*Quarterly Statement*, 1901, pp. 374 *et seq.*). I give here a reproduction of it, which fortunately completes that made from the photograph (*ib.* p. 251), which, as I have already said, leaves much to be desired.

We are now in a position to estimate the measurements of the text; the maximum length of the part preserved is 0·85 m., the letters are, on an average, 0·05 m. in height. The copy fully substantiates the readings I had proposed, notably in certain cases where there had been reason for doubt:—בנוי (l. 2), טבלה (l. 3), תהי להון (l. 4), ברכתה (l. 8). The patronymic in l. 2 seems to be בר בוישה rather than בר בוישה.

Underneath the fourth line three letters may be distinguished which were not to be seen upon the photograph. The first is mutilated, possibly the remains of an *aleph*. This, with the two remaining letters, which are perfect, gives us the reading, בן (א), "Amen." This word, placed, as it is, by itself, at the foot of the first column, may be a clausula, indicating that the inscription was