

(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.

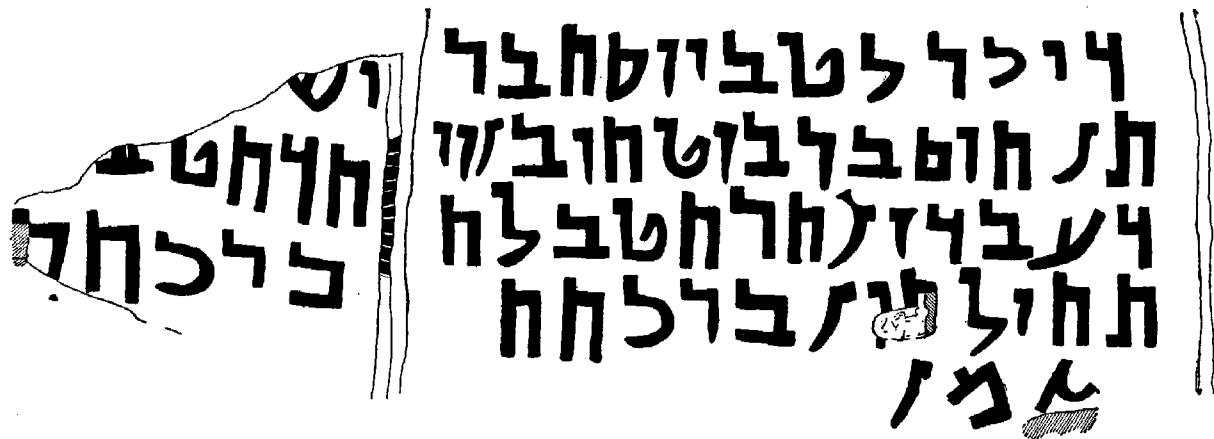
By Professor CLERMONT-GANNEAU, M.I.

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

The Hebrew Inscription in Mosaic at Kefr Kenna.



..... י(ש)[?]
 הדה ט(ב) [לה][?]
 ברכתה

דיכר לטב יוסה בר
 תנחום בר בוטה ובנוי
 דעבדין הדה טבלה
 תהי להון ברכתה
 (א)מן

In good remembrance; Yôseh, the son of Tanhûm, the son of Bûtah (?), and his sons, who have made this T-B-L-H; may it be for a blessing to them. Amen. . . . This T-(B-L-H) ? . . . blessing . . .

made up of at least two portions, the second part beginning on the column following.

The inscription is exceedingly interesting for the history of Hebrew epigraphy, and this copy enables us to form an opinion of the palæography of the text, which was hitherto difficult on account of the deficiencies of the photograph. The characters are boldly and neatly made. Not to mention other details, it will be noticed that the *he* is not in any way distinguished from the *heth*, contrary to what has been observed, for example, in the alphabet of the ossuaries. On the other hand, the *daleth* and the *resh* are carefully differentiated with only one exception, viz., הרה (l. 3), although it is not impossible that this anomaly is due to an imperfection in the copy, or to some flaw upon the mosaic. At all events, it is certainly owing to one or other of these causes that the *tav*, occasionally deprived of the little stroke at the extremity of the left leg, appears to be identical with *he* or *heth*.

Meanwhile, Messrs. D. H. Müller and Sellin have published a monograph on this inscription which I have been unable to procure.¹ Their reading of ll. 3-4 is as follows:—

דעבר תסרה מבלה תחיל בא באב הת . . . אמן

“Who made the mosaic-slab. He began on the first of (the month) *Âb*, finis[hed] . . . Amen.”

M. Halévy,² more fortunate than myself in obtaining a copy for review, whilst accepting this rather strange reading, proposes to restore l. 4 thus:—

תהילתה באלהא “Praise be to God!”

It is hardly necessary to say that these three scholars have pursued the wrong route, as is proved conclusively by the new and unambiguous document which I am discussing.

¹ D. H. Müller and E. Sellin, “Die hebräische Mosaikinschrift von Kafr Kenna, mit einer Tafel,” Vienna, 1901. I do not know either the name of the publishers or the exact date of this publication. [“Sitz. ber. d. Kais. Ak. d. Wiss. zu Wien,” 1901, xv; June 12th.—Ed.] I have every reason to think, however, that it is later than my first communication to the “Académie des Inscriptions” (Comptes-rendus, November 2nd, 1900, p. 354, *seq.*), and the printing of my first notice in the *Quarterly Statement*. In this case it is to be regretted that Messrs. D. H. Müller and Sellin did not know of this notice of mine, which even then gave the true reading of the inscription, and would have enabled them, I venture to think, to escape the errors into which they have fallen.

² “Revue Sémitique,” 1901, Oct., p. 374 *seq.*

14. *Baal-Bosor or Baalkosor?*—Through the courteous instrumentality of M. van Berchem I have just received from Professor Brünnow the squeeze of the inscription at Sûf, which I investigated in a preceding note (*Quarterly Statement* for January, pp. 15 *et seq.*). Although incomplete, this squeeze contains two of the doubtful names there discussed: that of the author of the dedication, and the name or surname of the god.

In regard to the first, the reading Ἀμέραθος, which I had indicated as being possible, rather than Professor Brünnow's Ἀμέραθος, is now absolutely verified; the fourth letter is not γ but ρ squared at the top.

In regard to the divine name, or, to be more exact, the second element of the name, viz.: ΚΩΩΡΩΩ or ΒΩΩΡΩΩ, the squeeze does not remove the doubt attaching to the first letter. It is difficult, I confess, to see in it a Β; on the other hand, however, the reading Κ, too, is not without difficulty, and I am not surprised that Professor Brünnow only marks the Κ as a possible reading. If, in spite of everything, it is really a Κ, the possibility must always remain that the stone-cutter, notoriously careless, has made some error, and has engraved a Κ instead of a Β, which, it may be presumed, was on his copy.

If, notwithstanding this, anyone, declining the suggested Bostra, should wish to retain the reading Βεελλωσώρω, it will be necessary to return to some of the combinations which I had previously rejected tacitly as scarcely plausible. Such a one, for example, is that which naturally suggests itself at once, and which consists in connecting the word with the Hebrew root קצר, which, amongst others, has the meaning "to reap," and in recognising in the name (with Lieut.-Colonel Conder¹), Zeus Helios Baalkosor, a kind of solar deity who presided over the harvest. Such a conception, however, is more decidedly Hellenic than Semitic. One may even be tempted, moreover, to suggest a comparison either with the pre-Islamic deity اقصير, "Okaîsir,"² or with the Phœnician god Χωσωρ (reading uncertain) of Philo of Byblos. A more specious suggestion would be to connect the name Κωσωρ with the ancient Cossura (the mod. Pantellaria), an island situated

¹ From information supplied to me by the Editor.

² On this god, and on his possible origin, see my "Recueil d'Arch. Orient.," ii, p. 247; iii, p. 280.

between Sicily and the Carthaginian coast. In support of this it may be pointed out that in this case it would furnish us with a geographical designation which, as analogy shows (*see above p. 19*), is precisely what is to be expected here; but this is going rather far afield to find a homonym to a god from Central Syria.

15. *The Depository of Ancient Arrows in the Castle of David.*—To the interesting question raised by Dr. Selah Merrill in the last number of the *Quarterly Statement* (p. 106), I happen to be in a position to bring to bear my personal testimony supported by something more substantial than mere "hearsay" evidence.

When I was in Jerusalem in 1869, I was fortunate enough to obtain a couple of arrows from a find made some ten years or so previously in the fortress of David. I made a present of one to a friend whose name I have forgotten, the other I retained and still have. Until quite recently it was intact, but I unluckily broke it in two, the wood, which was always somewhat worm-eaten, being rather fragile.

On the authority of competent judges to whom I have submitted the arrow, the wood is certainly from a conifer, but in order to determine its nature more precisely, it would be necessary to make sections for micrographic examination, and sacrifice a portion of the arrow, a sacrifice to which I am unwilling to have recourse. All that can be stated, from a superficial examination, is that the yew is out of the question.

The arrow measures 0·695 m. in length. The wood is cut with care, and polished. The shaft is round and thinner at either end, the diameter increasing gradually to the middle, where the maximum circumference (measuring 0·033 m.) is reached; evidently, therefore, care was taken to satisfy certain ballistic conditions. The extremity to which the metal point is affixed ends abruptly. It shows some signs of wear and tear, but bears no trace of any attempt ever having been made to prepare it for receiving the point.

The other end, forming a little rounded knob, is deeply notched in order to fix the arrow upon the bow-cord. There are no signs of any place for the feather.

It is difficult to assign an age to this arrow from the mere appearance of the wood. In any case, I can scarcely believe that it can go back to the days of the Crusaders. It seems more natural,

on *a priori* grounds, to descend to the time when portable firearms had definitely replaced the bow and arrow. It may be surmised that under one of the last of the Mamluks, for example, an arsenal had been established in the fortress of David, with a store of arrows for the garrison of Jerusalem in case of need, and that this depôt having become useless and buried in oblivion in consequence of the change of armament, was fortuitously discovered towards the middle of the nineteenth century—whence our arrow.

16. *The Plasterer Sosibios of Gaza.*—A short while ago Father Jaussen and Father Vincent published a new Greek Christian inscription¹ from Gaza, which now belongs to Baron Ustinow's collection at Jaffa. It may be classed, in every respect, in the same family as the inscriptions which I, too, discovered at Gaza in 1870, and through which I have been able with absolute certainty to fix the *terminus a quo* of the era peculiar to this town (October 28th, B.C. 61).² They read the inscription thus:—

1. + Ἀνεπίε
2. ὁ μακάρι(ος)
3. Σωσέβις
4. ὁ Γυ†οκ . . . τῆ
5. περι(ίου) γί', ζμχ'
6. ἐν(ικτιώνος) ε'

The name Σωσέβις is incontrovertibly a vulgar pronunciation and orthography of Σωσιβίος. The date corresponds to February 7th, 587 A.D.,³ coinciding with year V of the indiction. The only difficulty which this little text presents lies in the reading of the group of letters in line 4:—ΟΓΥ†ΟΚs. The editors would see in this an ethnic or an adjective, qualifying the deceased, written in an abridged form, and bisected by the introduction of a cross. But ὁ γυοκ . . . still remains quite inexplicable.

Notwithstanding the fact that the editors cite an analogy for this (Σερ + γίου on one of the Medaba mosaics), I am not of opinion that the fourth sign here is a real cross, in spite of the superficial resemblance. To my mind it is a ψ, of the same size as the other

¹ "Revue Biblique," 1901, p. 580.

² Clermont-Ganneau, "Archæol. Researches in Palestine," ii, 398-429.

³ Not February 13th, as the editors have it, since the 1st of Peritios coincides with January 26th (Julian calendar) in the Calendar of Gaza.

letters, to which a fantastically-minded engraver has merely given a *cruciform*¹ appearance. I propose, therefore, to read simply, ὁ γυψοκ(όπος), a name of a trade, formed on the same principle as ἀρτοκόπος, "baker," which is normally abridged into αρτοκο, or, like γυψοκ in this inscription, to αρτοκ.² The word γυψοκόπος, it is true, is not to be found in our classical dictionaries, but it is formed quite regularly from γύψος, "gypsum, plaster, lime," just as ἀρτοκόπος from ἄρτος, "bread," probably on the analogy of the working or manipulation of the flour on the one hand, and of the plaster or lime on the other. Both alike undergo the same operations—pulverisation, dilution, kneading or mixing, &c., not to speak of the cooking in the oven, which, although the last act in the case of the meal, and the first in the case of the plaster, completes the analogy. The Greek of the late epoch³ knows, besides, a word γυψοκοπέου, an exact counterpart to ἀρτοκοπέου, "bakehouse," to indicate the place where they spread, pound, or knead the plaster or lime. This word completely guarantees the existence of the trade-name γυψοκόπος, which is accordingly to be added to our Greek lexicons. It is unnecessary for me to recall that the use of gypsum seems to have been very widespread in Syria, as is attested by the existence of the Rabbinical and Syriac words גיפסין, גיפסין, גיפסין, &c., and of the Arabic جبسین, the older form of which is جص (contracted from جبص), and even قس, words which designate plaster as distinct from lime (شيد, سیر, شرد).

The whole text may now be translated as follows:—

" + Is deceased the blessed Sosibios, the plasterer (or lime-burner ?), the thirteenth day of the month of Peritios (in the year of the era of Gaza), 647 (= February 7th, 587 A.D.), indiction V."

¹ I have a vague recollection of having seen examples of this kind of whim before in the Græco-Syrian epigraphy: at present I can only recall certain examples of the cruciform χ from Cyprus (G. Colonna Ceccaldi, "Monum. Ant. de Chypre," p. 295, No. 25).

² See the examples cited in my "Archæol. Researches," ii, p. 143.

³ Ducange, "Lex. de la basse-grécité," s.v. Γυψοποιον, on the authority of Harmenop. lib. 2, tit. 4, § 27.