

(Kuryet el-'Enab); of the ancient tomb with ossuaries discovered a few months ago on the Mount of Olives (plan and sections); and of additional inscriptions—names of centurions—found by Father Germer-Durand on the stone tube of the syphon of the high level aqueduct near Rachel's Tomb. Amongst the papers of more general interest, one by Father Lagrange, *Études sur les religions sémitiques, Les Morts* deserves notice.

Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins, vol. XXIV, part 4.—The first paper contains valuable notes by Professor Dr. Röhrich, on Bernhard von Breitenbach's Map of Palestine, accompanied by a reproduction of the map in three sheets. There is also a most interesting and well-illustrated paper on the Orpheus mosaic (*see Quarterly Statement*, 1901, p. 423), by Professor Dr. Strzygowski, who arrives at conclusions which differ in several particulars from those of Father Vincent. The paper concludes with some notes by Dr. Dadian, on the Armenian mosaic near the Damascus Gate. There is also an appreciative notice by Professor Guthe of Dr. Otto Kersten and his work.

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NOTES AND QUERIES.

1. *Graffiti from Mashita*.—Of the graffiti from the ruins of Mashita¹ which Mr. Nies has reproduced in the *Quarterly Statement* for October, 1901 (*see* p. 367), No. 5, curiously enough, has exactly the form taken by בן, "son," in the Şafâ inscriptions, found in the region of the Ḥarra to the south-east of Damascus. From Doughty's table ("Arabia Deserta," vol. I, p. 125), it would appear also to be the wasm of the Moahib. Nos. 2 and 4 partially suggest Palmyrene analogies, but no plausible transliteration lies at hand; the latter, at least, is not unlike the wasm represented by Sachau, "Reise in Syrien," p. 134, l. 2 (1883).

The confusion between wasms and "ancient words or letters" is a very natural one, since a number of the former seem to have been borrowed from a south Semitic script for the same purpose as the *koppaias* and *samphoras* of the ancient Greeks. Others of them undoubtedly represent natural objects, though it would not be safe to assume that the modern native explanations and interpretations are everywhere correct. The late Professor Robertson Smith once

¹ Compare *Meschta* on Bureklhardt's map, and *al-Mashtah*, "Robinson's Lists," p. 169.

suggested that the wasms, "if collected in sufficient number, with careful notes of the places they come from, might, when compared with the modern camel-brands, have a tale to tell." But no systematic attempt, as far as I am aware, has ever been made to investigate this interesting subject, owing, no doubt, to the limited amount of material. The marks which Mr. Nies has collected do not at present lead to any clue, but the hope may be expressed that future travellers may be induced to give the subject due consideration.¹ For those who may desire to pursue the inquiry further the following additional bibliographical references may be of some assistance :—

Bent, "Southern Arabia," p. 369.

Burekhardt, "Bedouins and Wahabys," p. 113.

Burton, "Land of Midian," I, p. 321.

Burton and Drake, "Unexplored Syria," I, p. 342.

Conder, *Quarterly Statement*, 1883, pp. 178-180, *cf.* "Heth and Moab," p. 349 *seq.*, "Tent Work," II, p. 290.

Ewing, *Quarterly Statement*, 1895, p. 163.

Sachau, "Reise," pp. 119, 136.

Schumacher, "The Jaulân," pp. 67 *seq.*, 90.

Wetzstein, in "Globus," xxxii (1877), p. 255 *seq.*

For parallels outside the Semitic world, reference may be made to A. L. J. Michelsen, "Die Hausmärkte" (Jena, 1853), and R. Andree, "Ethnographische Parallelen," 2nd ser., pp. 74 *seq.* (Leipzig, 1889).

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2.—In his Primer, Colonel Conder says of Hebron, "the old city lay on the low hills to the west of the valley," but in the *Spectator* (May 17, 1902) "Hebron never was, and is not, on a hill."

The discovery of Jacob's Egyptian wrappings (the mummy will be missing) beneath the great mosque would virtually settle the site of the cave of Machpelah, and the western position of Hebron or Mamre, before which was the cave in the field of Machpelah (Gen. xlix, 30), or one of the three.

¹ The present is a convenient opportunity to express the hope that the allusion which Mr. Nies makes to the "long Hebrew inscription" at Juadic (el-Yadudeh ?) will not escape the attention of travellers.

Excavation will probably reveal traces of the walls of this ancient city. An indication of its precise position happily existed 46 years ago. Hebron like Jebus, Gibeon, &c., would doubtless have access to a supply of water, and possess a secret passage or *gutter* as an outlet from within the walls (Judges i, 25 ; 2 Samuel v, 8). The survey of Western Palestine (*Mem.* III, 307) describes a fine perennial spring (on the western hill) Ain el-Judeideh, in a vault or cave (reached by steps), traditionally older than Adam. H. Bonar (*Land of Promise*) states that "from (adjacent) ruins (Deir el-Arbain), on a height, it is said there is a passage to the mosque a mile distant." Grateful then for this clue, for "mosque" I read "spring," and thus identify the passage leading from the Deir with the required *gutter* of Hebron.

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