

picture, and to the right of it, is the walled-up entrance to another cave. This ought to be opened, but, strange to say, no attempt seems to have been made to do so. I should not forget to remark that the partitions seen in the trough are masonry, not rock.

EL-EDHEMÎYEH (JEREMIAH'S GROTTTO).

By the Rev. J. E. HANAUER.

IN his notes accompanying a plan of Jeremiah's Grotto, the late Dr. Schick says, in the last three lines on p. 41 (*Quarterly Statement*, January, 1902):—"A flight of steps leads to the roof of the last room, and to a recess in the rock which is said to be the resting-place of some saint"; and in a footnote he continues: "I understood him to be Assar or Lazarus." This identification is objected to by Mr. Macalister, who in the *Quarterly Statement* for April, 1902, p. 131, remarks "the saint's name seems to be Jeremiah, not Lazarus." Struck by this apparent contradiction, I called on Mr. Macalister some weeks ago, and, in the conversation we had on this point, remarked that I suspected that the name Dr. Schick heard was that of El-'Ozair, a personage who figures very conspicuously in the hagiology of the Moslems, and who, as has often been remarked by writers on the Koran¹ and others, is none other than Ezra=Esdras=Jeremiah, or, according to the ignorant fellahin of Siloam (as I have ascertained since my conversation with Mr. Macalister), El-'Ezer or El-'Azar,² i. e., Lazarus of Bethany, and who also, as Professor

¹ For instance, Maracci, D'Herbelot, Sale (see Professor Rendel Harris's *Rest of the Words of Baruch*. London, 1889, pp. 39-42), and Kasimirski.

² I have noticed that the fellahin sometimes pronounce the name of Lazarus "Azar," or "Ezer," without the preceding syllable El; it is written العازر.

One should therefore be careful to distinguish the name "Azar," written with an initial 'ain, from "Azar," written with an initial alif. The latter was the name, according to the Moslems, of Abraham's father Terah, who died an infidel, and is referred to in the *Koran*, in Sura vi, 74; ix, 115; and lx, 4.

According to a Moslem legend (Von Hammer, *Gemäldeaal* I, 74, quoted by Kasimirski, *Le Koran*, p. 497, note), Ibrahim had promised his father that he would intercede with Allah on his behalf that he should be saved from perdition, but that, at the moment when the Patriarch opened his mouth to pray for 'Azar's salvation, a hideous lizard approached him, and Abraham affrighted and disgusted, and not knowing that the reptile was his father metamorphosed, kicked it into the bottomless pit. By this act he unconsciously fulfilled the Divine counsels without failing in his filial duty.

Clermont-Ganneau shows in his *Archæological Researches* (vol. ii, pp. 62 and 63), may be identified with Eleazar the son of Abinadab (1 Sam. vii, 1), whose *makām* is at Karyet el-'Anab or Abu Ghôsh; as well as with Eleazar the high priest, whose *makām* is at 'Awarteh, near Nâblus.

In order, however, to be quite sure of my position, some days ago I went to El-Edhemiyeh, which I had not visited for at least a dozen years past. The Sheikh who has charge of the place was absent, but a Moslem fellah woman who opened the door showed me what was to be seen, and my conjecture was fully verified. Built into a low wall on the left hand side, just within the door, I noticed a stone, the surface of which was deeply indented with grooves, as if tools or something else had been ground upon it. It was so very conspicuous that I instantly conceived the idea that some legend might be connected with it, and I inquired what it was. "Oh," was the instantaneous reply, "those are the finger-marks of Sayedna El-'Ozair." In due time I was led to the foot of the flight of steps above mentioned, and informed that they led to the place where El-'Ozair had slept for 40 years (the number is worth noticing¹) with his cheek pillowed on his hand. When I reached the top of the flight of steps at the foot of the great scarp, and marked "C" on Dr. Schick's plan, I noticed on the flags with which the landing is paved smooth hollows and grooves, of the same kind as those noticed on the rock surface in the north-west part of the Haram area (*Quarterly Statement*, 1891, p. 206, *seq.*), and inquired what they might have been. "Oh," replied my guide, "they are the marks made by Jarmiyâh when he slipped." His name was El-'Ozair at first, but he had a habit of dragging the water out of that cistern instead of drawing it, and so he got the name "*jar miyâh*" (جَر مِيَاد), *i.e.*, "he dragged waters." I have no doubt that this is an entirely modern legend, and it is curious as illustrating the way in which many of these folklore tales were doubtless started. The Arabic way of pronouncing the name Jeremiah is "Ermiâ."

As regards El-'Ozair himself, Maracci, as quoted by Professor Rendel Harris, remarks that "some persons say that it is not Ezra, nor Nehemiah, but a certain Alchedrum." He evidently means El-Khudr, whose name is revered throughout the East, and whose

¹ Compare Professor Rendel Harris's remarks on D'Herbelot's legends *Rest of Words of Baruch*, p. 41.

legends may be represented by another hagiological equation: El-Khudr = St. George = Elijah the Tishbite = Phinehas, the son of Eleazar (Judges xx, 28). Who El-'Ozair was is evidently a doubtful question amongst commentators. The following is the story as told by Mujir ed-Din (*Tārīkh el-Uns el-Jalīl*, vol. i, p. 138, Cairo edition):—"Ermia (Jeremiah) the Prophet, on whom be peace, lived in the days of Zedekiah, the last king of the Beni Israel. Ermia commanded them to repent, and threatened them with Bukhtunussur (Nebuchadnezzar), but they gave no heed to him. But when he saw that they would not turn from their evil ways, he left them and hid himself till Nebuchadnezzar subdued them and destroyed El-kuds, as we have related. After this Allah revealed to Ermia His determination to restore the city Beit el-Makdas, and commanded him to go thither. So Ermia approached El-kuds, and lo, it was in ruins. Then he said, 'Praised be Allah, He ordered me to descend to this city, and told me that He would rebuild her. Now when will He rebuild her, and when will Allah raise her from the dead after her death?' So he laid down his head and slept. And he had with him an ass and a basket of food—namely, figs—and also a vessel in which was grape-juice. Now, his story is that to which Allah alludes in His precious book when He says¹: 'Like him, who passed by a city which had been destroyed to its foundations, and Allah said "I shall revive this one after her death." So Allah caused him to die for a hundred years, and then Allah woke him and said, "How long hast thou slept"? He said, "A day, or part of a day." Allah said, "Nay, thou hast slept a hundred years. Now look at thy food and drink which are not corrupted, and look at thine ass, for we shall make thee a sign unto men; and look at these bones, how we shall raise them and clothe them with flesh." Now, when this had been shown unto him, he said: "I know that Allah is almighty." Now, it has been said by some that the owner (hero) of this story is El-'Ozair, but the soundest explanation is that it is Ermia.'"

The story, whether it refers to Ermia or El-'Ozair, is doubtless a curious mixture of several legends. It reminds one of that of the Seven Sleepers of Ephesus, and one would be inclined to think of that as its germ, were it not that a special chapter of the Koran—viz., the XVIII, entitled "the Cavern," deals with that myth. One is

¹ The *Koran*, Sura II, entitled "the Cow," verse 261, Comp. Sale, p. 28, note x (Warne and Co., 1890).

also reminded of Ezekiel's vision of the dry bones (Ezekiel XXXVII). It seems, however, clear that the bones in 'Ozair's story were those of the ass which had died during the saint's century-long nap.

The source of the story is indicated by Professor Rendel Harris, in the work to which I have already several times referred. It comes from an apocryphal book attributed to the Ebionites or Jewish Christian heretics of the second century. In that story Jeremiah is represented as wishing to send Abimelech (Ebedmelech), the Ethiopian, away from Jerusalem, in order that he should not see its destruction, and the Lord directs him to send him to the gardens of Agrippa, where he shall be hidden in the mountain side until the return of the people from exile. Accordingly, Jeremiah directs Abimelech to take a basket and go to the place indicated and bring back figs. Abimelech obeys, but falls asleep under a tree. He wakes after a nap of sixty-six years' duration, and returning to the ruined city, fails to recognise it. The other prominent element in the 'Ozair legend is the story of Esdras and his ass, of which tale Professor Clermont-Ganneau found traditions still preserved amongst the Abu Ghôsh peasantry.

I do not know at present whether there are in any of the old Eastern churches hereabouts frescoes or the like of the Esdras-Baruch myths, but I have reason, however, to believe that such pictures, either on plaster or in mosaic, once existed, and that some of the latter may yet be discovered. As a matter of fact, when I was living at Jaffa a few years ago, and when everybody was talking of the recently-found and now famous mosaic map at Medeba, I was told by Mr. Dickie, who had specially visited Medeba in order to examine it, that he had been informed by the people of that place that amongst other portions of the mosaic destroyed before his visit was a picture of a man asleep near an ass and a basket.

[Mr. Dickie writes that the mosaic fragment was evidently one of a series of pavement panels surrounding the church. Some of these were fairly well preserved at the time of his visit, and measured approximately 8 to 9 feet square. The panel in question was described by a native of the village as follows:—"Here a part of a donkey, there the legs of a man, sleeping, and near him was something like a basket." The question of the contents of the basket was discussed, but his recollections of such details were too much subject to the influence of suggestion to be of much value. In fact, this particular portion was too fragmentary to make any definite statement. The character of the mosaic surrounding the church

was such as is constantly being discovered throughout the country, and which can be dated with a fair amount of certainty somewhere about the seventh or eighth centuries. To this Mr. Hanauer observes that there happen to be at present in Jerusalem several reproductions of the Medeba mosaics. They are not all of the same size, and are evidently by different hands. Two of them are at the Anglican College (St. George's), and one of these shows some of the panels referred to by Mr. Dickie. Amongst them is a picture of a man leading a horse or donkey. Mr. Hanauer hopes to be able to obtain and forward a photograph of this panel.]

THE SAMARITAN PASSOVER.

By the Rev. ROLAND G. STAFFORD.

THE following account of the Samaritan Passover¹ and the diagram were obtained from the present High Priest, Yakûb, in the course of a journey through Palestine during the winter of 1900. It was written at his dictation by his son, and having no knowledge of Arabic, I was dependent upon my dragoman for the translation, and cannot therefore answer for it:—

“On the eve of New Year's Day the whole sect assemble and appoint an elder ('a man who knows'). They collect a sum of 3,800 piastres to give to him to spend on the offering ('Corban') in order that he may prepare all things necessary 20 days before mounting Gerizim, when all things needful must be quite ready.

“After 20 days the ascent of Gerizim is made seven days before the 'Corban Festival,' though this early (beforehand) ascent is optional. There are some who mount 10 days before the appointed time, and some who mount seven days beforehand, and some who mount one day beforehand; but those who mount one day beforehand will be those who are in mourning (owing to death). No one of this sect is allowed to be late in mounting at the appointed time of the 'Corban,' not even if he had the greatest of hindrances—*e.g.*, even if he is very ill—he is obliged to perform his duty and ascend the mountain: such a one they put on a mule and take him up to eat the Passover Corban. One day before this Passover they make thin unleavened bread like that of the Jews, which they call Massah, and they eat up this during the seven days of this Unleavened-bread Feast.

“The day which is the 3rd of Nisan (April 15th), or the 29th of Adâr (April 10th), or the 7th of Nisan (April 19th), or the 24th of Nisan (May 6th)—these are the appointed dates in their reckoning. They bring with them seven sheep which are unblemished, that is to say,

¹ Cf. *Quarterly Statement*, 1901, pp. 82–92. [Another interesting description of the Samaritan Passover from an eye-witness is given by Professor Curtiss in his recently published *Primitive Semitic Religion To-day* (Appendix F).]