

Mongol princes of Ur had relations with countries lying near Amanus and Cappadocia. The limits of their empire almost entirely correspond, on the north, with the limits of the so-called "Hittite" civilisation, which is known to have existed before 1600 B.C., while two of the Hittite texts, at least, are as old as 1500 B.C. The probability that these texts were written, in most cases, by subjects of the kings of Babylon, before 2000 B.C., is thus greatly increased, by the recent information as to the conquests of these monarchs, which has been published by the British Museum, in France, and in America.

NOTICES OF FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS.

Revue Biblique, vol. xii, No. 4.—The most helpful paper in this number is Father Vincent's elaborate discussion of the ruins of 'Amwās, with photographs and plans, in the course of which he investigates the question whether the remains are of Roman *thermæ* or of a Christian basilica. P. Ronzevalle gives an account of a Babylonian bas-relief found in the Jebel Akrûm in North Lebanon by R. P. Lammens in 1899; it represents a man, barefooted, draped in a tunic, contending with a lion, which is depicted marching erect after the familiar manner of Assyrian-Babylonian art. A little to the south lies the W. Brîsa, where M. Pognon discovered two cuneiform inscriptions of Nebuchadnezzar II, upon one of which is figured a practically identical scene. From this it would seem that the newly-discovered relief is probably of the same period (ca. 587 B.C.).

Revue Biblique, vol. xiii, No. 1.—Father Vincent presents a critical and exegetical study of the passages in Nehemiah relating to the walls of Jerusalem; he recognises that no discussion of the topographical difficulties can carry any weight unless it is founded upon a careful criticism of the sources, and his valuable article should not be overlooked by future enquirers. Professor Guidi edits an Arabic fragment of a Biblical onomasticon. The names are entirely personal, and the interpretations are in agreement with the Greek in Lagarde's edition, but they are not derived directly from the Greek, but through the Syriac. Among the archæological items are various Greek fragments, one from a tomb of the family of Bizzos (the grave of Rebekka, the mother of Mannos); another commemorates Marchion, son of Kronides of Pella (Μαρχίων Κρονίδου Πελλεύς). In Πελλεύς, Father Savignac perceives an ethnic of Πέλλα or Πέλλη, which is not the site in the Decapolis, but the city mentioned between Emmaus and Idumæa in *Jos., Wars* iii, 3, 5, and in the same list with Lydda, in the neighbourhood of which the inscription was actually found. From the ruins at Beersheba come a fresh fragment of the imperial rescript, and various pieces of pottery

including an uncommon variety of an Astarte figure, a curious object to be found among the lamps and bowls of Roman and early Christian periods. An account of sepulchral chambers at Jerusalem, to the east of St. Stephen, is of particular interest on account of the discovery of a Roman inscription of the time of Hadrian.

Zeitschrift d. Deutschen Pal.-Vereins, 1904, I.—Dr. V. Schwöbel contributes the first part of a valuable monograph upon Galilee. He deals at length with its geographical features, commerce, and population, and does not omit to point out its possibilities in the future. Galilee, as he observes, is a land that has special claims to our consideration on several grounds. He shows that its position made it ever the battle-field of nations. Its population has always been a mixed one, and this is a factor which is not to be neglected in a study of the present resources of the country. Although more fruitful than Judæa, or even Samaria, it has never been “a land flowing with milk and honey.” In the course of a lengthy history it appears at certain periods as a rich, highly-cultivated and thickly populated district, the home and starting-point of the highest spiritual religion; at other periods we find it sunk in oblivion. The economic conditions have always been affected by the dryness of the land; it might, concludes Dr. Schwöbel, be made to support a much greater population than at present, provided the desert proved no hindrance. But in spite of its fruitfulness, substantial yields are only to be obtained when the soil is tilled with persevering industry and intelligence, and the very heterogeneity of its population is not conducive to concerted action.

The sixth volume of the *Recueil d'Archéologie Orientale* starts in an auspicious manner with a careful discussion of two charters of the Crusaders preserved by the Arab author, Sâleh ben Yahya (fifteenth century). They belong to the thirteenth century and are of great importance for the light they cast upon the good relations which subsisted between the Mohammedan Emirs and their neighbours the Christian overlords of Sidon and Beirût. The charters in question are concessions or rather leases relating to a *shakâra*. This word, as Professor Clermont-Ganneau justly argues, has nothing to do with “hunting rights,” nor is it a place-name. There is little doubt it denotes a piece of land held in return for certain specific duties. The word is Aramaic, but ultimately is probably of Assyrian origin—the derivation from *sakar* “hire,” suggested by Professor Clermont-Ganneau being rather uncertain. § 3 is a discussion of Saida and its environs after Edrisi. § 4 deals with a Greek and Latin dedication to Baal-Marcod, recently edited by P. Ronzevalle. The inscription was found at Dêr el-Kalfâ, and introduces us to the goddess *Σμα*, whose position between Hera and the New Hera testifies to her importance in the pantheon of Syria. Whether the name is related to Zeus Seimios is uncertain. New inscriptions from Leptis Magna are handled in § 5. Dr. Littmann's recent argument that

meskin, "poor," was also used to mean "leper, leprous," receives fresh support in § 6. According to this scholar, *πρωχός* in Luke xvi, 20 (where the Syriac uses *ܡܫܟܢܢܐ*), is an example of this usage, and certainly when one recalls how tradition associated Lazarus with leprosy the view has considerable probability. Professor Ganneau would go further and see in the *πρωχρία* of the Byzantine age leper-houses. One of these, founded at Jerusalem, was situated *ἐν Φορδισίῳ*, and it is ingeniously suggested that the last-mentioned is merely a translation of the Aramic *pardaisa*, "garden." It is obvious that the *Φορδισία* would be in the outskirts of Jerusalem. The account of the Phœnician *Platanos* (§ 8) is a translation of the note which appeared in the *January Quarterly Statement*. Of great interest is the publication of an Egypto-Phœnician inscription from Gebal (§ 9). The Egyptian portion bears the cartouche of Shishak (Sesonk I); the Phœnician, as the palæography shows, is later and imperfect, and contains the name Abibaal. It is, unfortunately, too indistinct to be read with certainty, and it will be sufficient to quote the savant's translation: "which Abibaal erected . . . of Gebal, in Egypt, for Baal— . . . citizen of Gebal." In § 10 there is an account, with a plate, of a statuette of Jupiter Heliopolitanus, now in the possession of M. J. Löytved, of Beirut.

Semitic Epigraphical Notes, by Professor C. C. Torrey. (From the *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, xxiv, 1903, pp. 205-226.)—Professor Torrey publishes an old Hebrew seal, an agate, inscribed *לְיוֹשֻׁעַ בֶּן עֲשִׂירָה* ("the seal) of Joshua, son of Asaiah." The legend is on two lines, separated by a rather more elaborate device than the usual single or double stroke. The characters are beautifully engraved in a script which has several features in common with that of the Siloam inscription. Professor Torrey observes that there is nothing to indicate the period to which it belongs, and he places it anywhere "from the early kingdom down to the time of the Roman rule." The resemblance which the seal may bear to the *undated* Siloam stone is of very little guidance in settling the question of date. The author next discusses a weight inscribed *בַּקֶּע* "half." It weighs 5.8698 grams or 90.58 grains, *i.e.*, about half of the Babylonian (or Persian) Royal silver shekel of about 11.5 grains. It bears no obvious relation to the stone weights with the legend *בַּנֶּה* which seem to represent a weight a little more than 10 grams. *בַּקֶּע* appears only in Gen. xxiv, 22; Ex. xxxviii, 26; and since the Targum in both cases vaguely renders "weight," Professor Torrey suggests that *בַּ* "half-shekel" had become obsolete at the time when the Aramaic paraphrases were made. Further notes deal with a Palestinian forgery, the difficulties of the recent Sidonian royal inscriptions and a Phœnician (?) bronze-weight. The last-mentioned is in the form of a crystal with 14 sides, each bearing an incised oblong, stamped *117*—possibly the numeral 12.