

NOTES AND QUERIES.

1. *The Neolithic Altar*.—The analogy pointed out by Mr. Clarkson Wallis (*ante*, p. 164) between the Troglodyte place of sacrifice at Gezer and the Sakhrāh in Jerusalem is complete, and it has struck more than one visitor who has come to Gezer fresh from Jerusalem—though Mr. Wallis is the first to notice it in print. The only points of difference are: (1) The extension of the Jerusalem drain *through* the cave, by means of the passage now known as *Bir el-arwah*, which has no parallel at Gezer; and (2) the absence at Jerusalem (so far as the restrictions on an examination of the rock permit me to judge) of the associated cup-marks.

I do not, however, agree that to such an altar Abraham would have brought Isaac. According to any feasible scheme of chronology, the religion that centred round *standing stones* (which, as the Gezer excavations indicate, are a later development than that of the perforated rock) had come into being in Abraham's time, and if the "Moriah" of the story of Isaac could be identified with the Temple "Moriah," I should prefer to associate with Isaac's sacrifice the seventh stone in the Gezer alignment (which a geological expert has declared to be probably of Jerusalem provenance, and which there are several reasons for supposing to have been originally a *Massēbah* of the Jebusite High Place captured by the Gezerites as a war-trophy). But the identification is for several reasons improbable. Professor Paton draws a parallel between *Martu*, the Babylonian name for Syria, and the Moriah of the story (*Syria and Palestine*, p. 16). Another suggestion is one which I ventured upon myself in the *Expository Times* of last year, namely, that for the *ארץ המריה*, literally, "Land of the Moriah" of the text, we were to read *ארץ המדונים*, "Land of the Midianites," which would locate the sacrifice as an act of Yahweh-worship in the most likely place for such a sacrifice in Abraham's time, and in the place which down almost to the latest days of the monarchy the Hebrews regarded as the original and normal habitation of their god.

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2. *Jews in Ramleh in 1015 A.D.*—So little is known of the mediæval history of the Jews in Palestine before the time of

Saladin, that the following notice is worth recording. In a document brought from Egypt and now in Cambridge (T.S. 13, J. 1²) we have positive evidence of the existence of a fully organised Jewish community (with a *Beth Din*) in Ramleh in 1015. In another document (T.S. 13, J. 1⁶), dated 1023, we are told of a Fostat Jew who settled in Ramleh in the year last named. The documents will be published by Dr. S. Poznanski later on in a Hebrew periodical, but the fact which they present is new, and ought, perhaps, to be put on record without delay. For other references to the close connection between the Jews of Egypt and Ramleh (at a slightly later date in the eleventh century), see Dr. Poznanski's article in the *Revue des Etudes Juives*, vol. xlviii (particularly p. 156, note 2). It is clear that Ramleh occupied a military position superior to that of Jerusalem at the period in question. The officials at Jerusalem are found taking their orders from the Governor of Ramleh.

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