

We have then the following progression for the contents of the several cylinders :

	Multiple.	40 Rati =	$\frac{1}{2}$ Kat.	
	100	4,000	50	Hon.
$\frac{1}{8}$ cubit cylinder	125	5,000		pint.
$\frac{1}{4}$ " "	1,000	40,000	500	gallon.
$\frac{1}{2}$ " "	8,000	320,000	4,000	bushel.
" "	64,000	2,560,000	32,000	quarter.

(To be continued.)

### THE IMMOVABLE EAST.

By PHILIP G. BALDENSPERGER, Esq.

(Continued from Q.S., 1906, p. 102.)

The Arab, at times so sober in words, and at times overflowing with voluble language, whether for praise or (more especially) for insult, indulges in much mimicry, and employs a language of signs with his hands, feet, and face.

Blushing is almost unknown, though I *have* seen a blush even through their dirty yellow-brown skin. They can tell fibs and lies without flinching, but *kadhhab* "liar" is an insult, and only hurled at liars of the most outrageous description. Denial can therefore be expressed by an action, viz., by shaking the index-finger of the right hand from left to right several times. "No!" would be, slightly throwing the head backwards. "Yes!" throwing the head forward, or shutting the eyes a few times in quick succession. "I have nothing at all, not an atom," can be indicated by putting the nail of the thumb to the teeth of the upper jaw and by releasing them by a violent movement of the hand forwards, thus producing a slight sound between nail and teeth. Beckoning with the hand palm downwards is "come"; throwing the fingers forward in the same position is "go." Holding the beard and gazing steadfastly means, "I swear by my beard." Holding the beard and inclining the head sideways, "please have pity." Touching and twisting the moustache, with furious eyes, "I will avenge myself." To

make a sign of spitting is "too vile for me." Hand on the head and bowing slightly, "at your command." Gathering the fingers point upwards with a slight jerk, "wait a moment." Gathering the fingers point upwards and a movement from shoulder-height to girdle-height, stopping them suddenly, "beautiful!" Throwing the right hand up and down with the index-finger pointed inwards, "dreadful news." Biting the index-finger, point outwards, "don't tell the secret." Putting the same finger stretched up before the lips, "hold your tongue!" Throwing the right hand, slightly hollowed, in a diagonal movement from the right to the left upwards, "it is of no consequence, say what you like!" A slight guttural sound without opening the mouth, "don't be silly." A shrug of the shoulders, "I don't care!" or expressed in words "sixty years and forty days" is much stronger, it means "I do not care for all the consequences." Passing rapidly the upper part of the hand under the chin and throwing it forwards, "bad, useless" for an object, or "I will never consent" for a person. A slight but firm movement with the fist, "he is strong, courageous!" A slight wave of the open hand, all fingers in a vertical position, "fled." A wave with the left hand, "not worth while." Holding both index-fingers with the other fingers closed is a sign of friendship; whilst rubbing them means a quarrel. Putting down the thumb, "suppression, I am stronger." Lifting the turban slightly, "please God! may he be punished." Taking the open part of the dress in the right hand and shaking it, "I have nothing to do with it." When Nehemiah made the rulers of Jerusalem promise to restore the unjust money which they had exacted from their brethren, he says, "I shook my lap and said, 'So may God shake out every man from his house, and from his labour, that performeth not this promise'" (Neh. v, 13).

Uncouth language is also well understood by all kinds of movements with the fingers and hands, and often considered as great an insult as with words.

The language on a whole is pure Arabic, and though some letters are differently pronounced in different regions, the fellahin may be called the most learned *illiterate* people among all the Arabic-speaking people I have met or tested in their own country, extending from Syria by Palestine and all along the coast of North Africa. The Arabic of Mesopotamia is more classical than the Syrian. It is supposed to be the more elegant, but it is in fact as incorrect and ugly to Arabs as Parisian is to French. Amongst Palestinian

fellahin the Beni-Hassan pronounce the language best. All, it is true, have some vernacular, scarcely a *patois*, but all can talk a correct Arabic, and recite poems of considerable length, which no other peasants perhaps in the whole world can do.

The different villagers have each their peculiar ways of speaking, either in brief and energetic sentences or in slow trailing words, whereby it is known at once to which village they belong. Those of Beth 'Atab have a very energetic language, those of Siloam a lazy one. In Bethlehem they address anybody by "my small brother!" *ya khei'yi* (يا خيي); in Beth Jâla the salutation runs, *ya tanêbi* (يا تنيبي) "my protector!" in a very singing voice; in Jebel Khalil it is *ya khâl* (يا حال) "oh, maternal uncle!" in Kariet Abu Ghôsh, "O . . . . .!" as if looking for some title but never finding any; in the Fluh, "O father of . . . . .!" (يا ابو) without further title.

In the mountains the people generally own the lands as far as the village lands reach; there are no lands belonging to the community as a rule. On the other hand, in the plains the lands belong to the inhabitants, and every one possessing oxen with which to plough may claim his share, when it is time to prepare them for sowing. Previous to 1872 there were no deeds proving them to be owners, but tradition was sufficient and respected by everybody. The right of might certainly had also a good deal to do in times past; strong villages simply occupied the lands of the weaker ones, and exterminated the inhabitants in their numerous bloody feuds—now partly disappearing. The fiercest contests that I remember are those of the lordly inhabitants of Kariet-el-'Enab, better known as Abu-Ghôsh—against the vile inhabitants of Beth-mahsir (بيت محسير) whom they considered little better than slaves, and whom they attacked whenever they tried to maintain their rights in the occupation of the arable lands in the region of Der-Imhessen and thereabouts. It may be added that planted vineyards and olive trees are very seldom contested, and the owners have their deeds (كواشدين) from Constantinople.

The villagers of the plains of Sharon and Philistia are usually co-proprietors of all the lands, but when the new law to establish deeds was promulgated, the poorer denied owning any land in order to avoid paying the cost of the deed, and thus became deprived of

their lands; in others they sold their right for a trifle. Beth-dejân sold one-third of its lands to Jaffa Effendis, one-third still belongs to the whole village, and the rest is private property. In Emmaus it belongs to the whole village.

In consequence of these different situations, in those places where the lands belong to everybody, lots are cast as to which family is to occupy which part, thus changing position every year. The kindred divide the lot either by paces or by goad-lengths (مساس, *massass*).

A man was murdered on the lands belonging to the village of Kātra, on the right bank of the Wādy, now the boundary line between that village and Mughar (مغار); the government seized the elders of the village to find out the murderer, as the law suspects the owner of the ground where the murder was committed, but to escape punishment they denied that they were the owners of the land, and as Mughar is the next village, the government forced them to be owners and gave them deeds. The inhabitants of Kātra tried to take their lands back again when the murder-affair was settled, but to no avail.

When the Bedawy incursions were more dangerous than they are now—some fifty years back—the Sheikhs of the plains sought to gather as many men around them as they possibly could, and gave to each family of settlers houses and lands, and even, in some cases, oxen, provided they agreed to be ready: (1) In time of danger to aid in repulsing the invaders; and (2) to work the lands entrusted to them. Generally those settlers had oxen, which fact alone entitled them to as much land as their animals could plough in one season. To illustrate the utility of a pair of oxen, or the value in the eyes of the Sheikh, it is related that a man and his family came to Kbébé with a yoke of oxen (فدان *faddān*) and asked for a house and land, and he agreed to plough and sow, and share all general expenses with the villagers. Forthwith a villager, who owned only a house but no oxen, was turned out of his house and the stranger installed in his place. Naturally the turned-out villager protested, as he had built the house with his own hands, but the council of elders would not listen, and only gave way when he promised to become a regular agriculturist. Having been allowed a few days in which to make his arrangements, the stranger received a new lot and had to build a house, which was done by the help of

the whole village. The other man meanwhile set out to Ramleh on a market-day, and having purchased a yoke of oxen, drove them home. But before entering the village, he took away his turban and wrapped it well around the horns of the oxen. Being asked what this meant, he replied, that the ox was evidently the most respected person here, without the ox no home, and because of the ox he was permitted to live in his own house, therefore honour to whom honour is due, and the turban to the head of the family!

A transgressor against the laws of the fellahin may flee from the village and remain absent for years, till his transgression be either arranged or forgotten, and during his absence his land passes to the neighbours, but he receives it again after his return, though certainly not without trouble.

The Hebrews also possessed arable lands in common, and lost their right by absence, but on their return received them back. So the widow of Shunem returned after an absence of seven years, and found her house and lands occupied, and nobody would restore it to her until after the intervention of the king, who was interested in her experiences, and asked her to tell him all about the prophet's miracle. On hearing her story he ordered that both her lands and income should be given back to her (II Kings, viii, 6).

In small plains, as the plain of Rephaim (بِقْعَة, *bak'at*) and the plain of Khadder, the lands always belong to the same owners, and are only separated by landmarks (رَسْم, *rassem*, or حِجَارِ التَّخْمِ, *hejar et-takhm*)<sup>1</sup>. In the plains the land-marks are only necessary for the crops, not for the lands, which change masters every year. The *gebûl* of Deut. xix, 14, was a fixed land-mark, never to be moved, and a curse was on him that removed it (Deut. xxvii, 17).

A *yoke of oxen* is called *faddân*, but the land also is divided into *faddân*, which means land that can be ploughed by a yoke of oxen in twenty eight days. The land about Emmaus is very heavy, and a *faddân* is four oxen, which plough alternatively in pairs every hour. In most other places the *faddân* means two oxen, and the land they can plough in a season. The *sahm* (سَهْم) is the part (lit. share) of a man in a village. This is necessarily different according to the wealth of the village, *i.e.*, the extent of land and the number of

<sup>1</sup> Also called قَنْطَرَة *kantara(t)*, lit. a bridge, *i.e.*, that which bridges from property to property.

inhabitants. A *me'nah* (מענה) is a portion of land measuring forty paces square.

The *divisions of land* were, no doubt, the same among the Hebrews. The faddân of oxen is called **צִמּוֹד הַבְּקָר** (1 Sam. xi, 7, 1 Kings xix, 21), and a faddân of land is called **צִמּוֹד שָׂדֵה** (1 Sam. xiv, 14).

The ploughing land in general is known as *watâh* (وطاء) but it is only in the plains that divisions are made—by lots, or by measures. The prophet Amos, himself a native of Tekoa, probably had the plain of Tekoa in mind when he said: “Thy land shall be divided by line” (Amos vii, 17).

The farms of the lands, whether they are terraces, or broad divisions in the valleys, or on mountain tops, or so forth, have other names in addition to the more general terms. Thus, a complete extent of land, which a man could cultivate with his animals and the help of his family, is a *falhat*. The *shkârat* (شكارة) is a small plot of ground given to a widow or such as cannot afford the expenses of animals, and the ploughing and sowing is done with the help of loaned animals, or begged ones, as they call it.

Lands belonging to Mosques, Churches or Welys are called *wakf*, and have either been dedicated to the Saint from time immemorial or are even now given to them by the fellahîn. The Haram of Hebron is considered to be the richest land-owner. The administrator of these lands is expected to give one-fifth of the total revenue to the service of the Haram. The government has now taken almost all the *wakf* lands into its hands, and has an Inspector of the *wakf* in Jerusalem. Nevertheless many less notable saints have their private administrators. The lands of Rubîne are given by ‘Abd-el-majîd Effendi from Ramleh to the fellahîn and Bedu of the district. The income goes towards the expenses of the mosque, and during the month of pilgrimage (generally in September) an evening meal, consisting of meat, rice and bread, is offered daily to the poor before the administrator’s tent. I have seen hundreds of beggars in tattered and torn clothes fall on the big dishes and snatch the food from each other. The tent with the White Standard of Rubîne—white, with the crescent and star, red—is open to every visitor, and he is readily invited if he cares to accept. At the death of the present manager, the rights will pass to his eldest cousin, and so forth, never remaining in one family—from father

to son. The managers (وكيل *wakil*) of all minor mosques have the same rights.

It is very difficult to say whether, considering the many revolutions which Palestine has suffered, the people continue to own the same lands for many generations. Some villages near Jerusalem may perhaps have retained possession for centuries. But if we take as an example Urtas, which was a mighty village, and used its right of might, till the men were slaughtered by the inhabitants of a village in the *kase* (كيس), the few remaining inhabitants could not defend more than the lands immediately around the village, and the more powerful neighbours, as the Fawâghry (فواغرد) of Bethlehem, took all they could, thus owning the lands in the next vicinity. In Philistia the smaller villagers have hardly been in peaceful possession for more than thirty years, and bloody contests have occurred yearly, even since the establishment of the legal deeds, merely on account of the illegal action, real or presumed, of the new possessors. There is continual feud between the villages of Khulda and Beth-Maḥsir for the lands around the ruins of Der-Imḥesen, El-Masiyeh, Khirbet ed-Jemâl, Im Sarrisse(t), Es-Saffâre, etc. As late as 1885, when the inhabitants of Beth-Maḥsir were reaping on the lands of Der-Imḥesen, belonging to them, the inhabitants of Khulda fell on them, and began regular warfare. Messengers were sent to the Beni-Malik, *i.e.*, Emmaus, Yalo, Bethmeba, who cried out at the top of their voices: "The Mahasry (inhabitants of Beth-Maḥsir) are slaughtered." The dormant ranks of the old divisions of belligerents were roused, and the "battle-line" (صف) was formed, and the armed villagers marched against the enemy, the "Şaf" of Abu Ghosh against the "Şaf" of Laham. When the Lahamites saw the Beni-Malik advancing, they retired and left the booty which they had gathered, and never appeared again. Naturally, the further the villages are away from the centres of government, the fiercer the contests.

The *Christian Churches* have also many landed properties, but more especially the Greek Church, and next, the Latin and Armenian Churches. The Greek Church possesses immense olive-yards about Mar Elias, midway between Jerusalem and Bethlehem, in Bethlehem and Beth-Jâla and Jerusalem, the well-known Nicophoriyeh. The vineyards about el-Khadr, St. George's Asylum, are also owned by the Greeks, in consequence, it is said, of a bargain made by the

Abbot and the fellahin, by paying them a certain sum for all the lands he could see from the convent. The bargain agreed, the Abbot went on top of the convent and showed them the lands. Thus he became owner of a great part of the vineyards and the fine arable lands forming the plain of El Khadr. The convent has many yokes of oxen to cultivate the ground. There are also about a dozen olive trees on the road from Jerusalem to Hebron, marked by crosses hewn in the gnarled old stems, which the Greek convent claimed as their own, and which they received after the ordinary process in the Orient. It is said the Greek Convent possesses deeds written on a gazelle's skin from the Khalif Omar himself, and sealed by a print of his whole hand, confirming them in their proprietorship of houses and lands. The Latins also have bought lands, but, as a rule, they do not date many years back.

The Fellahin *buy and sell* their lands, but it is always understood and mentioned in the deeds that the relations desist from all their rights, which in case of foreigners must be paid. This is the "right of redemption," as it is called in Jeremiah xxxii, 8. *Hak il-bida* (حق البدا) is always observed, and the sale is never complete as long as the minor relatives are not of age, to signify their will, or renounce their rights; accordingly it is always very difficult to arrange a sale, especially if the family of the seller is very large and comprises many relatives.

(*To be continued.*)

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## THE BEDOUIN OF THE SINAITIC PENINSULA.

(*Continued from Q.S., 1906, p. 33.*)

By W. E. JENNINGS-BRAMLEY, Esq.

### XII.—*Medical Lore, &c.*

IT is difficult to distinguish between what they consider the medicinal properties of certain things, and what seems to us mere superstition. An Arab who gives his child burnt scorpion to swallow believes he is giving him a medicine whose natural properties are to render him invulnerable to the poison of scorpions; while when he