

in the bottom of the pool, which made it once so admirable a 'mud bath' in places, has now been scoured out, and the bottom is clean and stony.

Barometric Observations.—'Ain Feshkhah, 10.30 a.m., 31.44; Jerusalem, 8 p.m., 27.54.

Thermometer.—'Ain Feshkhah, Atmosphere, 81° F.; Water, 80° F.

General Observations.—Reeds in a somewhat dried up condition, except in patches, where the young reeds have not yet come to flower. They almost completely cover previously cleared areas. As there were no cattle and no men at the oasis, the process of clearing areas by burning the reeds is at present in abeyance. There was no stream from the *Haish el-Mukdâm*. The springs at 'Ain en Nahr are plentiful, and rise as high as ever they did.

Many storks, sand partridges and hawks seen, also a gazelle on the plain near *Wady Dabr*.

A new road has been almost completed, which will enable carriages to avoid the dangerous descent on the old Jericho road just before the plain is reached. This road runs from the Jericho road about a mile below the Inn of the Good Samaritan, following an old and much-frequented path to *Nebi Mûsa*, and after reaching the proximity of that famous shrine it follows the old Jericho-Nebi Mûsa road to Jericho. From the mountains it traverses the Jericho plain in a perfectly straight direction for between three and four miles. By means of this road several carriages conveyed passengers to the *Nebi Mûsa* festivals this spring. Some small bridges and culverts are still needed to complete the work.

NOTICES OF NEW BOOKS AND FOREIGN PUBLICATIONS.

Bible Side-lights from the Mound of Gezer. By R. A. Stewart Macalister, M.A., F.S.A. The publication of this book is well timed. Among the many subscribers to the Fund not a few have, from time to time, shown some impatience with the careful search of the ruins of Gezer and the results recorded in the *Quarterly Statement*, many of which have appeared to them as merely of

archæological interest. To them old walls, old pottery, old bones, seemed to have nothing to do with the Bible, and to be of no importance in connection with it. But those who read these few pages and examine the illustrations will rise from their perusal with a very different view. It is in the careful examination of evidence, however slight, that valuable knowledge can be gained; and the surmise which is supported by facts is worth much more than the most attractive theories unsupported. Mr. Macalister has shown in his book how the scientific unearthing of an ancient site not only yields evidence confirmatory of Bible narrative, but sheds unexpected light on matters only vaguely alluded to in Scripture or partially understood. His chapter on the "Iniquity of the Amorite" shows by the excavated evidence the nature of the ancient heathen worship, including the sacrifice of children, which the Hebrew prophets so continually denounced. In another chapter he suggests, from the evidence afforded by buildings, the manner of Samson's death. Elsewhere he shows us an example of such a tongue of gold as Achan hid in his tent; and the chapter (IX) in which he deals with the mention, in Chronicles, of the king's potters, whose very names he found on the fragments of broken jars, affords a good instance of how small evidence may prove highly interesting. It is to bring home to Bible readers generally the fact that archæological research in Palestine has a value for them, which is not merely scientific, that the book has been written in simple, untechnical language. It is well illustrated, chiefly by photographs, and by bringing together, in a concise form, the facts which have been gathered on one site, during the last two or three years, and some of the inferences from them, Mr. Macalister has produced in a popular form a very interesting little book.

Mittheilungen und Nachrichten des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins, 1906, PART I.—This number is occupied with the excavations at Tell Mutesellim during August, 1904, in various parts of the mound. The finds seem to have been of a good average nature: one of the most interesting being a circular enclosure which seems to have been a grave. The report is illustrated with several good photographs.

PART II.—In this number is contained the report of the excavation at the same mound in spring, 1905, the chief discovery of which was the very remarkable series of vaulted tombs with early pottery of about 1800–2000 B.C. It will be remembered that this

was found about the same time as the great burial-cave at Gezer, and the pottery illustrated by Dr. Schumacher presents interesting parallels to those discovered in the Gezer cave.

Zeitschrift des Deutschen Palästina-Vereins, xxix (1906), Part II.— This number contains a very thorough study by Pastor Zickermann of the ruin known as *Khurbet el Jehud* at Bittir, with good photographs of the walls and columbarium: a plan of the structure would greatly assist the comprehension of the very careful and accurate description. Pfarrer R. Eckardt contributes an exhaustive examination of the Bordeaux Pilgrim's account of Jerusalem, and Prof. Dalman a synopsis of the weights found in the excavations at Gezer and elsewhere.

Revue Biblique, April, 1906. The principal article in this number is the continuation of Father Vincent's most valuable paper on the Canaanite Towns, which is the first attempt at a synthesis of the results of the excavations that have been carried out in Palestine since 1890. The present instalment is occupied with a study of the fortifications and the private houses. Father Germer-Durand contributes a note on some antiquities found at Abu Ghôsh, including coins and some Canaanite antiquities, of which one (a terra-cotta head) is figured.

Altneuland. Prof. Warburg writes on the general geographical and internal conditions of Syria in the numbers for February, March, and April. Herr Oetken, in the April number, contributes a short preliminary account of his impressions of Palestine, the disadvantages under which the natives labour, and the steps that are necessary for the amelioration of their lot.

Jerusalem. In the March number P. J. Germer-Durand writes on the *columbaria* of Palestine; Jules Rudolph on the "rose of Jericho." Salvator Peitavi contributes a number of miscellaneous notes on Syrian superstitions. Belief in the *jinn* predominates: they take animal form, suffer human passions, live for several centuries but are not immortal. Their favourite abode is the chain of invisible mountains (*skaf*) which encircles the earth. They are ubiquitous and not necessarily hostile. It is the *afrit* who is the malicious demon who dwells upon the roofs or behind doors and works mischief. As regards holy individuals, it is curious to find that the man bereft of reason enjoys the liveliest regard. That

sacred places abound is well known. They enjoy a great reputation for sanctity, are usually found on the tops of hills—like the “high-places” of old—and stand first in the native’s religious ideas. There, children are consecrated, vows are made, sacrifices are offered, and the holy place (*kubbeh*, dome; *mazar*, altar; or *mukâm*, place) is the centre of every local cult. A sacred tree is usually found in the vicinity of the shrines, which may be divided into six classes: (1) ancient sacred places; (2) sites founded upon Christian tradition and often bearing Christian names (*Boulos*, Paul; *Boutros*, Peter; *Metta*, Matthew); (3) unidentified names: Camil, Anin, Balian, Nouran, the sheikh Zeitûn (olive) with his mother, and the sheikh Waheb (giver) with his sister Sadeh; (4) the companions of Mohammed, and celebrated sheikhs of later centuries; (5) saints described by epithets, e.g., “the Persian,” “Madianite,” “giver of rain,” “charmer of serpents;” and finally, (6) sheikhs bearing ordinary names: Abraham, David, Joseph, Ali, Suleiman, Ahmed, etc. Around these holy places have gathered a number of local legends and traditions of the most diverse origin, reminiscent of Jewish, Christian, and Mohammedan belief. Among the great pilgrimages the writer notes that of Neby Mûsa, to the north of the Dead Sea, in Passion Week. Charms and amulets are also described, and Salvator Peitavi’s collection ends with a brief description of superstitions regarding lucky days and the reverse.

Records of the Past: March, 1906. The Rev. Dr. Bacon contributes an extremely interesting description, with some excellent photographs, of the Sun-temples of Coele-Syria. This district was visited by the Palestine branch of the American Institute of Archaeology last October. It is estimated that within a radius of twenty miles from Baalbek, on the slopes of Lebanon and Anti-Lebanon, there are at least fifteen ruined sun-temples, the grandeur and beauty of which would have made them famous but for the surpassing splendour of Baalbek. A careful study was made of all the ruins, and many useful observations are here recorded for the first time. It is instructive to observe that the temples belong to the period of Rome’s great struggle with Christianity. Three centuries at the utmost is the period of their development, and so long as the *pax Romana* endured, wealth and agricultural prosperity spread over the whole of the Syrian province. Emphasis is laid upon the great fertility of the land, the wealth of product, and in

particular, the cultivation of the vineyards, which underlies the frequent use of the sheaf and vine upon the carvings of the smaller temple at Baalbek. This seat of nature worship, if it owed its temples to Rome, repaid the debt by sending thither its philosophy, and it is observed that "emperors who found a symbolism of real truth in the thinly-disguised nature worship of the Lebanon mountains, might well lend all the encouragement in their power to native enthusiasm, seeking only to clothe in more philosophic form for themselves and the more enlightened, the rude mythology whose hoary antiquity was no secret to them."

NOTES AND QUERIES.

1. *The Apollophanes Text*.—Mr. Macalister will excuse my defending my position as to this text:—

(1) The doors in question I understood to be those of the tomb itself, not between the text and the body, or even the gates of death.

(2) I do not feel convinced that the text is merely a graffito.

(3) Nor that the last line is really later.

(4) My rendering is perhaps too free, as the lady says only that she can do no more to please the dead, and that she *still* loves him. The remaining objections seem to me to make little difference in the general result. *Pneuma* is a common word for "spirit," and the meaning, in my belief, is that she rests among the spirits. No doubt *Krouō* means "to hit," "to make a knocking noise." It is the *noise* she objected to, due to further carving or excavation.

C. R. CONDER.

2. The Rev. J. E. Hanauer sends a description of a great stone with cup-hollow on the top, eight inches wide and three deep. This stone forms the *hadd* or boundary-mark between the lands of Artūf and Eshū'a, and stands upon a rock-platform on the bare hill-top to