

NOTES AND QUERIES.

1. *The Gezer Zodiacal Signs*.—In elucidation of this cylinder-impress, it may be interesting to note more fully the results of M. De Morgan's discovery of new *Kuduru* (or "protection") stones at Susa (*Delegation en Perse*, Vol. I, 1900, pp. 165-182). These present zodiacal signs, on Kassite monuments of the eleventh century B.C., and the meaning of the signs is noted in the accompanying texts. There are many of our zodiacal signs among them, but it is notable that there are more than twelve signs, and also that the order of their occurrence is not the same in every case. There are twelve of these stones in all.

No. 1 is important because the names of the gods are actually written in cuneiform on some emblems, which accompany a figure of the goddess *Gula*. These include: (1) a spear for *Marduk*; (2) *Gula* herself; (3) the sun; (4) the crescent; (5) a star (probably *Istar* as the planet Venus); (6) a ram's head with the name of *Ea* (this has Capricornus beside it); (7) possibly a wolf's head for *Zagaga* (a Kassite god); (8) possibly a mast and sail for *Sukannuna* (also Kassite); (9) a lamp for *Nebo*; (10) a serpent, which seems to have been the emblem of the year; (11) a kind of crocodile (rather like one emblem at Gezer), otherwise known to represent *Anu*; (12) a trident (probably the sign of *Nergal*); (13) a lion's head with the title *An Nu-ga* (the infernal god); (14) a scorpion (as at Gezer); (15) a bird (as at Gezer also). The order is that in which they are numbered in the Memoir, but not that of occurrence on the stone.

No. 2. A stone of about 1028 B.C., referring to a grant by *Nazi-maruttas* about 1360 B.C. It is inscribed and carved on all four sides, and has also a figure of *Gula* accompanied by her dog, besides the signs of twelve gods. The long Semitic text (Vol. II, pp. 86-92) contains this instructive passage (Col. iii, lines 15-24) in a curse on those who dispute the rights of the owner of a field in which the stone stood:—

Ilani rabuti mala ina eli narie-anni sum-sunu zakru, kakka-sunu kullumu, u subatum-sunu uddaa, arrat limutti liru-su.

"May the many gods, as many as on this stone have their names recorded, their arms shown, their shrines represented, curse him with the curse of evil."

The text then enumerates the names and signs, which include sun, crescent, star, scorpion, lamp, spear, trident, lion, tree, bull, etc. The meaning of the words which describe the signs is not always certain, but the bull belongs to "Adar son of Rimmon," the lighted lamp to Nebo, and others as before on No. 1.

No. 3. A stone of *Melisikhu* (about 1040 B.C.), with a very long text (Vol. II, pp. 99-111). It is the finest specimen of all, with four rows of double symbols representing seventeen gods, apparently Sinu, Istaru, Samsu, Anu, Ea (the ram's head and Capricorn), Belu, Rimunu, Zagaga, Nuga, Marduk, Gula, Nabu, Sit-lam-ta-uddu ("Sit rising from the plough"), and four others. Sit's signs are a bird standing on a plough, and a bird on a pillar. Beneath these is the serpent for the year, flanked by two signs (probably for the spring and autumn equinoxes), viz., a graduated arc and a scorpion.

The other examples give the same signs in various order, and in No. 11 (p. 179) the kind of ladder and vase occur together as at Gezer (the balance is a late zodiacal sign, and does not occur): the variants show clearly that these signs distinguished certain gods. At Gezer the signs—though some became zodiacal in a later age—seem clearly to be of the same character, and to represent eleven or twelve gods, with the serpent for the year. The chief peculiarity is the fish (probably for Ea, the ocean god), which does not occur on the *Kuburu* stones here described.

C. R. CONDER.

2. *St. Paul at Corinth*.—As the inscription found at Delphi containing a letter of the Emperor Claudius, which decides, in my opinion, the date of A.D. 52 for the major part of St. Paul's first residence at Corinth, is of considerable importance for the chronology of the Apostle's career, it may be desirable to furnish some further particulars as to the information concerning the date derivable from the text. The letter, in fact, possesses a definite date, because it distinctly refers to the year as being that in which occurred the 26th "*acclamatio imperatoria*" of the Emperor. The most erudite scholars upon the chronology of the earlier Emperors, such as M. Cagnat, and the Pauly-Wissowa Encyclopaedia, have in their most recent and final determination of the dates for the reign of Claudius, stated that the 26th imperial salutation occupied the year A.D. 52. Their chief authority for this is the very completely

dated inscription of the Arcus of the Aquae Claudiae at Rome, which gives the figures of the Tribunician Power, the Consulate, and the Acclamatio of Claudius for the year. From the evidence of the inscriptions then it is certain that the Delphi letter of Claudius is to be placed in A.D. 52.

Can the same document be considered to prove that this was also the year of Gallio's proconsulate of Achaia? The Emperor therein styles him proconsul and friend, the latter title being one given by the Emperors in their correspondence to proconsuls when in office; and nothing in the text at Delphi indicates that it alludes to acts of Gallio in time past: but apparently it relates to present events. Moreover, we know that other historical evidence has decided that Gallio's proconsulship took place either in A.D. 52 or 53.

If we now conclude that Gallio was proconsul in A.D. 52, we can, from information in the Acts, approximate the period of Paul's sojourn at Corinth. If the whole eighteen months first there alluded to was previous to the appearance before Gallio, and that took place immediately upon his becoming proconsul in A.D. 52, then Paul arrived in the autumn of A.D. 50; and as he tarried a good while after his indictment, but left just in time to reach Jerusalem for the Feast in March, it is probable he left Corinth early in A.D. 53.¹

JOSEPH OFFORD.

3. *The Hebrew Graffito in the Golden Gate.*—I send a facsimile of this inscription noticed by Mr. Hanauer (see *Q.S.*, p. 7). It is a name:—

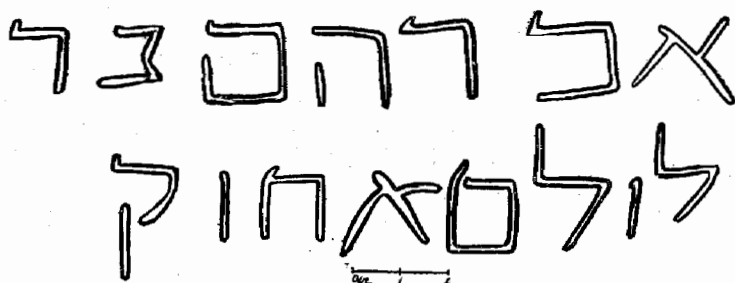
אברהם בר
לולמאחוק

The first line is easy enough, and presumably reference to a mediaeval Jewish onomasticon would elucidate the second, which is new to me.

The use of בר, and the peculiar form of the ב in that word, is to be noticed. Otherwise the principal interest of the inscription is its position, inside the Haram. There are a few quite modern

¹ For the new inscription see M. E. Bourguet, *De Rebus Delphicis Imperatoriae aetatis capitula duo* (Montpelier, 1905).

scribbles with pencil, in Hebrew, also in the Golden Gate; but as the orthodox Jews are well known to avoid entering the sacred enclosure as a rule, a Hebrew graffito within its walls is not unworthy of notice. The inscription is by no means modern, the forms of the ך and ן being of a rather early form of the square Hebrew character.



The facsimile sent has been traced from a rubbing, checked by a careful pencil copy.

R. A. S. M.

4. *Fellah Superstitions.*—Two events illustrating the fellah beliefs in charms and in the powers of the local saints have recently taken place in Abt Shûsseh.

(1) A gun belonging to one of the servants of Mr. Murad, administrator of the estate of the Bergheim family here, was stolen. By a judicial enquiry it was found that the thief must be one of twelve persons who were about at the time of the theft, but there was no evidence to show which of the twelve was the culprit. The local sheikhs offered to make the twelve go to the shrine of Sheikh Selmân, a powerful wely, whose white domed tomb is conspicuous on a hill east of El-Kubâb. The interference of this saint is seldom sought, except in the most serious cases, such as murder. The proposal was, that each of the twelve in turn should enter the building, and with his hand on the Sheikh's tomb, take an oath of compurgation.

The proposal was excellent, but a cause of grave anxiety to the twelve concerned, who spent an entire morning discussing the following question. If the guilty man be among us, he may take the oath with the rest; and if so, the Sheikh will assuredly make

some signal demonstration of his displeasure. It would be no wonder were he to strike him dead! If so, the government will assuredly hear of it, and will either believe, or pretend to believe, that we have murdered him, and then there will be no rest or peace for us or for the village for years. The end of the discussion was, that it was too risky to adventure the oath of compurgation, and the twelve decided to raise among themselves the price of the gun rather than face the dead Sheikh's resentment.

(2) A donkey, belonging to the Imperial Commissioner of the Excavations, fell ill, and after some days it was decided to send it to a horse-doctor in Ramleh, as no one in or about the village knew what was the matter with it. The malady, however, whatever it was, had gone too far, and the unfortunate creature succeeded only in reaching the bottom of the hill, where it fell, and, about an hour before sunset, died—in full view of the excavations in progress.

As soon as the setting of the sun gave the signal for the close of the day's work, the villagers ran home to their sheikhs, that they might make for them a spell to prevent wild beasts devouring the carcase of the donkey—the idea being to take the first opportunity of quietly removing its hide for sale to a tanner. The spell consisted in binding a thread round a clasp-knife, and repeating over it the following words from the eighty-first sūra of the Koran (I quote from Sale's translation): "When the sun shall be folded up; and "when the stars shall fall; and when the mountains shall be made "to pass away; and when the camels ten months gone with young "shall be neglected; and when the wild beasts shall be gathered "together"—the last clause repeated four times. So long as the thread remains intact on the knife, no wild beast dare touch the carcase. This spell, be it noted, was performed in the village, not over the remains of the donkey. Unfortunately—whether because a word was mispronounced, or because mice ate the string, or because the jackals and hyaenas¹ actually succeeded in forestalling the spell, Allah knows!—the bones were found picked clean the following morning.

But that the spell, when properly performed, is efficacious, is proved by the following incident:—Some time ago a shepherd was tending his flock, and towards evening one of the she-goats gave

¹ There are a number of hyaenas about Abû Shûsheh just at present. A child belonging to a Bedawin encampment temporarily settled here was seized and devoured by one a few weeks ago.

birth to two kids which, however, were dead. The shepherd, as it happened, had not got his two dogs with him, which he regretted, as he would prefer that they, rather than the jackals, should have the dead kids to eat. So he made the spell, and returning the following morning with the dogs, he found the carcasses just as he had left them the night before. The dogs were set on them, but it was as though some hand were grasping their muzzles—they could not open their mouths to eat, till the shepherd cut the thread bound round the clasp-knife; whereupon they promptly fell on the dead kids and tore them in pieces without a moment's delay.

R. A. S. M.

5. *Palestine Folklore in Spain*.—In Mr. Hanauer's recently published collection of Palestinian Folklore is a tale (p. 263) of a dog which was buried by his master with the respect due to a true believer; for which the master "would have been severely dealt with had he not told the judge that the animal had proved his sagacity by leaving a large legacy to his worship." The same story was recovered by Yusif, in this form: the dog had saved a she-goat alive from a leopard; and died, after the subsequent descendants of the she-goat numbered twenty. When the owner was accused of his crime he told the judge that of the twenty kids, ten were consecrated to the poor, the other ten to his worship, who thereupon asked why notice had not been given him in time, that he might come to officiate at the funeral.

Mr. Hanauer (p. 317) has observed that the incident is to be found in *Gil Blas*. This has reminded me of another curious coincidence that I have never seen called to notice, though it ought to be fairly well known. The "Dome of the Chain," beside the Dome of the Rock (the so-called "Mosque of Omar") is named, according to tradition, from a chain which in Solomon's time hung down from heaven, and which was always drawn up out of the reach of a false swearer. This most valuable adjunct to the judgment-hall was confiscated (to the irreparable loss of posterity) when a certain debtor swore that he had paid his creditor, and verified his oath by succeeding in grasping the chain—the money being actually concealed in the debtor's staff, which he gave to the creditor to hold for him, in order that his hands might be free for

the ordeal, and which he of course recovered after the successful issue of the test.

In *Don Quixote*, Part II, Chap. xlv, a precisely similar incident will be found. The debtor and creditor come before Sancho Panza, established for the while in his long-desired governorship. The same juggle is performed with the staff: but the astute Sancho guesses the trick, breaks the staff, and out falls the money. Whereupon "all were amazed, and held their governor for a new Solomon."

Now, is this a mere coincidence, or did Cervantes pick up and utilize a bit of the floating traditions of the Arabic-speaking world, through someone in touch with the Moorish element in the population of Spain?

R. A. S. M.

6. *Sacrificial Cakes*.—The passages which illustrate the sacrificial cake (p. 75 of the January *Quarterly Statement*) are Jeremiah vii, 18, and xlv, 19. The second is a specially interesting passage, being in defence of idolatrous practices by the Jews in exile. "Cakes to worship her," verse 19, is literally, "cakes to make an image of her"—the word for "cakes" is Babylonian (Prof. Driver). "The queen of heaven" is the moon goddess, the receptive power in nature; the circles in the figures on p. 75 may represent moons. It is curious that there is a custom in the North of England to make dough cakes representing a woman and child—no doubt the Virgin and Child—at Christmas, an old Roman Catholic custom quite unconsciously preserved, and that, too, probably derived from pagan sources.¹

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¹ [See further on this subject the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, col. 460 (§ 2), and col. 3992.]