

near the borders of England and Scotland, the material remains of a cult practised eighteen hundred years ago, which one is more accustomed to associate with the Ancient East, and the pedestrian who visits the sites where the followers of Astarte and the Baal of Tyre once maintained the worship of their deities will be amply repaid by the splendid views which delight the eye and stir the imagination.

CARLISLE,

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## THE OLD HEBREW ALPHABET AND THE GEZER TABLET.

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THE Hebrew tablet which Mr. Macalister had the good fortune to unearth at Gezer has, as was only to be expected, aroused the keenest interest.<sup>1</sup> Palestine has provided but few specimens of its ancient writing, and with the exception of the famous Siloam inscription and the Moabite stone, Hebrew palaeography has to rely upon the numerous small objects—seals, gems, pottery stamps, weights—which continue to accumulate slowly. Even old funereal inscriptions are as yet unknown.<sup>2</sup> The more welcome, therefore, is this little fragment of limestone with the interesting questions it has raised. That of its date is not the least important. This is a problem which cannot be solved by its contents. It rests upon a careful comparison of the script with similar scripts which can be approximately dated, upon a study of the evolution of the characters, and upon a comprehensive survey of all the evidence which the problem involves. The Gezer tablet is undoubtedly old. According to Prof. Lidzbarski, "we have, perhaps, the oldest Hebrew inscription, at all events, one of the oldest of the Semitic inscriptions" (p. 26).

<sup>1</sup> See Mr. Macalister, *Q.S.*, 1909, pp. 16 *sq.*, 88 *sqq.*; Prof. Lidzbarski, pp. 26-29, 194 *sq.*; Prof. G. B. Gray, pp. 30-33, 189-193; Mr. E. J. Pilcher, p. 33 *sq.*; Prof. Ronzevalle, pp. 107-112; Dr. Daiches, pp. 113-118; Prof. Dalman, p. 118 *sq.*; also Prof. Vincent, *Revue Biblique*, 1909, pp. 243-269, 493 *sq.*; Prof. Marti, *Zeit. f. Alttest. Wissens.*, 1909, pp. 222-229. (*Q.S.*, 1909, pp. 26-34, with the two photographs of the tablet, have since been printed separately.)

<sup>2</sup> See the remarks of Prof. Vincent, *Canaan d'après l'Exploration Récente* (1907), p. 241 *sq.*

Prof. Gray would assign it to the eighth century (p. 32 *sq.*), rather than a couple of centuries later (p. 193). Prof. Ronzevalle accepts the ninth or eighth century (p. 112). A slightly later date is favoured by Mr. Pilcher (p. 33), and is more explicitly proposed by Prof. Vincent (*Rev. Bibl.*, 1909, p. 266 *sq.*). As for myself, "I have always been inclined to a date somewhere about the Exile" (p. 233). In my efforts to form a less vague estimate I have found myself constantly hampered by a number of side-issues upon which the date of the tablet really depends. At every step it has seemed to me that the problem involves others which are still *sub judice*. On the other hand, in investigating the problem it has seemed that there is sufficient material to allow us to simplify these side-issues, and that these will give us a just idea of the place of the Gezer tablet in Hebrew epigraphy.

The script of the tablet (henceforth referred to as G in this article) agrees generally with the script of old North Semitic texts. These comprise (1) The Moabite stone (referred to as M, date from 850 B.C.); (2) Five inscriptions from the extreme North of Syria, (*a*) that of Z-k-r, king of Hamath (about 800 B.C.), (*b*) three from Zenjirli (middle and latter half of eighth century), and (*c*) one from Hassan-bey-li about 8 miles to the west<sup>1</sup>; (3) The Phœnician Baal-Lebanon inscription (probably middle of eighth century)<sup>2</sup>; (4) Various small objects—weights and seals—which, on various grounds, are older than the sixth century; and finally (5) The Siloam inscription (S), almost unanimously assigned to about 700 B.C. Now a very interesting feature at once presents itself. To quote Prof. Bevan—"the fact that in the ninth century B.C. the shapes of the letters were almost identical in regions so far apart as Moab and [Zenjirli] does not favour the view that the alphabet had been for many centuries in common use, for, in that case, local types would have tended to diverge more widely, as is shown by the later history of Semitic writing."<sup>3</sup> We may find an explanation of the marked variations among the different geographical subdivisions of *later* Phœnician and Aramaic alphabets; but in those texts which certainly belong to about 850-700 B.C. (*e.g.* Nos. 1, 2 *a* and *b* above), the differences are so small that they do not

<sup>1</sup> (*c*) is probably Phœnician, and, as Prof. Sachau has observed, is on palaeographical grounds somewhat later than (*b*) (*Sitz. ber.* of Berlin Academy, 15 Feb., 1895). For the text see Prof. Winckler, *Altor. Forsch.*, I, 305 *sqq.*; and Prof. Clermont-Ganneau, *Études d'Archéol. Orient.* (1897), II, 77 *sqq.*

<sup>2</sup> Two characters (*z*, *t*) have suggested a date near the period when the Greeks borrowed the North Semitic alphabet (Lidzbarski, *Handbuch d. nordsem. Epigraphik*, 1898, I, 176). But the text mentions the Sidonian king Hiram, not the contemporary of David, but probably that of Tiglath-Pileser IV, (738 B.C.); so W. Fr. von Landau, followed by Prof. Ed. Meyer (*Ency. Bib.*, col. 3753, n. 2), and Prof. G. A. Cooke (*Text-book of N. Semit. Inscr.*, 1903, p. 52 *sq.*).

<sup>3</sup> *Ency. Biblica*, art. "Writing," col. 5358.

presuppose any considerable interval between this date and their common ancestor. It is clear that if we can thus find one single North Semitic alphabet, several questions arise in connection with its relationship to the Greek and also to the South Semitic alphabets. The relationship is undeniable, and when we observe relatively later South Semitic scripts (Lihyân, Thamûd, Şafâ), which are derived either from the older Minaean and Sabaeen, or from collateral forms, and when the distinctive South Semitic scripts presuppose certain divergences of type, we have evidence which may be important in any investigation of the alphabet from which the North and South Semitic types were derived. Unfortunately it is still uncertain whether the South Semitic—which is very probably derived from the North Semitic—goes back even to the second millennium B.C., and it happens that those inscriptions which can be dated are comparatively modern. Thus, a bilingual seal has an Aramaean legend ascribed to the Persian period (*C.I.S.*, II., 96); a famous Minaean inscription is of the Ptolemaic age, and quite recently we have had at Delos a South Semitic and Greek text which may be of the third or second century B.C.<sup>1</sup> The problem of the old Greek alphabet is also intricate, and it is further complicated by the linear signs, apparently of an alphabetical character, found on pottery and other objects of the second millennium in the Mediterranean coastlands. In fact, from old Greek, South and North Semitic alphabets we can accumulate a variety of forms of the several letters which must obviously be taken into account in considering the earliest history of the Hebrew alphabet.

It is obvious that the date of G cannot be tested by criteria which do not affect the Hebrew alphabet. No weight, therefore, can be laid upon the closed tops of *beth*, *'ain*, and *resh*, or the zig-zag *shin*; since these features survive upon Jewish coins and in Samaritan. It is well known that about the beginning of the Christian era the Jews were using the so-called "square" Hebrew (whence our modern printed types are derived), which really belongs to the *Aramaic* branch of the North Semitic alphabet. Gezer itself has furnished specimens in its boundary stones and a few ossuaries. But there is no doubt that in Jewish coins and in Samaritan we have descendants of the old Hebrew, which, with Moabite and Phoenician, belongs to what may be called the *Canaanite* branch.<sup>2</sup> The Talmud has preserved the fact that the Samaritans retained the "Hebrew" character in which the Law was originally given to Israel, whereas the Jews used the "Assyrian" (*i.e.*, Syrian or Aramaic). Moreover, Origen's statement that in accurate MSS. the Tetragrammaton was written in archaic letters has been unexpectedly confirmed by a fragment of Aquila's version of Kings, where the Name appears in

<sup>1</sup> See especially, *Rev. Bibl.*, 1909, p. 486 sq.

<sup>2</sup> See especially, de Vogüé, *Mélanges d'Archéol. Orient.* (1868), pp. 154 sqq., and, most recently, J. A. Montgomery, *The Samaritans* (1907), pp. 270 sqq.

a form which is recognizably old "Hebrew," and entirely distinct from the form in "square" Hebrew, which resembled *pipi* in uncial Greek (ΠΙΠΙ). This recalls the fact that Rabbi Akiba, who is said to have been Aquila's teacher, was a contemporary of Bar-Cochba, who issued coins stamped with the Old Hebrew character; in any case, it "tends rather to bring down the date to which the old Hebrew alphabet continued to be used."<sup>1</sup> The date of the introduction of the Aramaic script into Palestine is uncertain. It is found upon jar-handles of Jericho of—to judge from the palaeography—the fifth to third centuries B.C., and, in general, the evidence goes to show that the introduction can scarcely be earlier than the Persian period. At 'Arâk el-Emir, near Heshbon, ערביה was found inscribed in "square" Hebrew, and the circumstances suggest a date in the first half of the second century B.C. Here, the circular 'ain would suggest a mixture of Aramaic and Hebrew influence, and a similar fusion may be recognized upon a seal which De Vogüé not unjustly regarded as Aramaic.<sup>2</sup> There are also some indications that the MSS. of the Old Testament were written in a "transitional" character, and in this connection the statements of Josephus (*Ant.*, XII, ii, 1, 4), and of the letter of Aristæus (§§ 30, 176) may be noticed.<sup>3</sup> But notwithstanding the increasing use of the Aramaic script, the Jewish coins—from the Maccabean age to Bar-Cochba's revolt (132-135 A.D.)—prove that the old character and the old language were at least intelligible. It was hardly the revival of an archaic alphabet which had long fallen out of use. The Samaritan alone proves that the old Hebrew script was never lost, for it is not derived from the coinage, and, in some respects, it diverges less from the earliest types. The coins, it is true, have some remarkably eccentric forms, but they also reveal several variants, and this, too, points away from the theory of an artificial resurrection of some antiquated alphabet. Either the Jews borrowed and debased the alphabet of contemporary Samaria, or the old type continued to have living representatives in both Judah and Samaria, from the second century B.C. The latter is the only probable view, and there is some evidence for the presence of a more or less contemporary script which differs from that on the coins and the (later) Samaritan inscriptions.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Prof. F. C. Burkitt, in his edition of the fragment (1897), p. 16.

<sup>2</sup> Instead of ערביה, the old reading, טרביה, has been confirmed recently by Littmann (see Clermont-Ganneau, *Recueil d'Archéol. Orient.*, VII, 217). For the seal see Vogüé, *op. cit.*, p. 135 (No. 37); M. A. Levy, *Siegel u. Gemmen* (1869), p. 37. It is inscribed בן בנמנרן כריה, with open ך, a unique ה, and a spelling of the name Seraiash which points to Aramaean influence.

<sup>3</sup> See further, Prof. Driver, *Samuel*, p. lxx sq. (The seal quoted in n. 2 above is reproduced *ib.* p. xii.)

<sup>4</sup> The "Samaritan" jar-handle (*Q.S.*, 1899, p. 326) is more probably old Hebrew of the Hasmonæan type (Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris für semit. Epigraphik*, I, 55). The inscription from Amwâs (between Joppa and

The Jewish coins show no essential development during their period, and from them, and from the earliest Samaritan, we can gain a fair idea of the last stages in the history of Palestinian or Hebrew epigraphy.<sup>1</sup> Now, it has been the practice of recent Hebrew epigraphy to rely too much upon the Moabite stone of the ninth century, and the Siloam inscription ascribed to about 700 B.C., and to pay relatively little attention to the other end of the old Hebrew script. The date of small objects is not uncommonly inferred from the apparent chronological relation of the writing to that of M or of S, or from its apparent position between them. As a matter of fact, most specimens suggest one or the other, and a merely mechanical comparison would cause hopeless confusion. M, because of *zain*, *heth* and *taw*, is apparently later—palaeographically speaking—than the Baal-Lebanon inscription, though its priority could be supported by *aleph*, *šadé*, and *qoph*. The latter three preserve forms older than S on the seal Levy, No. 7, which Prof. Cooke ascribes to the seventh or sixth century (*Text-book*, p. 362). The seal of Asaph, found at Tell el-Mutesellim, has a design, which, in the opinion of Prof. Erman, may be of the seventh century, or later,<sup>2</sup> the writing is of the same style as S, and yet the seal of Jeroboam, which was found on a higher level, has a much more archaic appearance, resembling M. Again, the seal of "Jehoezer, son of Obadiah," with an open *ain*, is ascribed by Prof. Clermont-Ganneau to the Persian period; on the other hand, Prof. Lidzbarski points out features which suggest that it is older than S (*Ephem.*, I, 15). The latter scholar, too, observes that on the weight inscribed to "Zechariah Jair (יִצְחָר)", the letters have a general resemblance to M, though the presence of certain late forms awakens suspicion (*ib.*, II, 149). On the other hand, the editor Prof. G. A. Barton, had dated the stone very near the Christian era. Finally, the seal of "Obadiah, son of Sheharhor" (*Q.S.*, 1902, p. 266), has features which "point to the Aramaeo-Persian age," and Prof. Lidzbarski agrees (*Ephem.*, II, 70); but neither this seal, nor that of "Sheharhor, son of Zephaniah," which Prof. Clermont-Ganneau ascribes to the same circle (*Q.S.*, *ib.*, p. 268), stands in that palaeographical relationship to our two stock inscriptions which these conclusions involve.<sup>3</sup>

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Jerusalem), perhaps fourth century A.D., is apparently Samaritan; but some forms agree rather with the Jewish coins, and the wording suggests the benediction which the Samaritans themselves eschewed (Montgomery, *op. cit.*, p. 275). A doubtful example of this uncertain script is to be found in *Rev. Bibl.*, XI, 99.

<sup>1</sup> The minor variations in the coins, and the problems of their true chronological position, do not affect the object of the present paper.

<sup>2</sup> *M.D.P.V.*, 1906, p. 33 sq.

<sup>3</sup> For the relatively later date of the second, *cp.* also Prof. William Wright, *P.S.B.A.*, IV, 54. Here one may note the pessimistic estimates of the possibility of dating seals expressed by Prof. Torrey (*Journ. Amer. Or. Soc.*, 1903, p. 205), and Mr. Pilcher (*Q.S.*, 1909, p. 33).

The Moabite stone can be approximately dated; can the same be said of the Siloam? Twelve years ago Mr. Pilcher pointed out the resemblance of its characters to that of the Jewish coins and suggested a date in the Herodian period.<sup>1</sup> Though I do not accept his suggestion, I have found no adequate attempt to refute his detailed arguments. The script seems to me certainly later than about 700 B.C., especially if G belongs to the eighth century, and the unusual order of the numerals "two hundred and a thousand" (l. 5, *cp.* Num. iii, 50; 1 Kings iv, 32) is noteworthy. Whatever arguments archaeologists may bring to connect the Siloam tunnel with Hezekiah's age, the script clearly shows transitional forms. This was, of course, noticed by the late Canon Isaac Taylor, whose treatment of the palaeographical argument is instructive. He remarked, in accordance with his "palaeographic canon," that, "the Siloam inscription, like all other inscriptions, must have its date determined by reference to the age of the most recent of the forms which it exhibits" (*Q.S.*, 1881, p. 156, *cp.* 292 *sq.*). From such evidence as was then accessible, he concluded that it came between the Moabite stone and the *early shekels of the time of Ezra* (fifth century); not earlier than the seventh or later than the sixth century (p. 292). It was at once pointed out that the date of these shekels was doubtful, but this does not affect the palaeographical evidence which led him to depart from the Moabite stone and to approach those coins which are now dated not earlier than the Maccabaeon age.<sup>2</sup> Further, no valid arguments have been produced to prove the early date of S. It can hardly be called a strong argument to assume that the Jews in the first centuries after the Return from Exile would scarcely have made so important a tunnel as that at Siloam, or that subsequently the Aramaic or "square" writing must have been used. Quite inconclusive, also, is any argument based upon a comparison of S with sundry seals of uncertain date, or upon the assumption that the names which the latter bear can only be pre-Exilic.

The seals and other small objects form an interesting field for archaeological and other enquiries, and other studies apart from palaeography may be enlisted to determine their chronological limits. At the outset, various local and individual factors may have to be taken into account. The possessor of a seal might prefer an archaic script, or might

<sup>1</sup> *P.S.B.A.*, 1897, pp. 165-182; 1898, pp. 213-222, and *Q.S.*, 1898, pp. 56 *sqq.*, in reply to Colonel Conder, *ib.*, 1897, pp. 204 *sqq.* Other inscriptions from Siloam, found by Clermont-Ganneau (*Archaeol. Researches in Pal.*, I, 305 *sqq.*), are in the British Museum (Room for Semitic Antiquities, Nos. 363 and 366), but no decipherment has as yet been published.

<sup>2</sup> Subsequently in *The Alphabet*, I, 236, he argued for the seventh century (time of Manasseh), on the ground that the script was earlier than the Phoenician inscription of Byblos. Here, as Mr. Pilcher long ago noticed, Canon Taylor relied upon data which have no value for *Hebrew palaeography* (*P.S.B.A.*, 1897, p. 166 *sq.*).

be influenced by his Aramaean or Phoenician neighbours. The Palestinian not improbably knew something of the Phoenician alphabet, and we know, from the tombs of Marissa, of a Sidonian colony settled there as late as the second century B.C. Although Greek is here employed, Phoenician was used as far south as Umm el-Awâmid (*Corp. Inscr. Sem.*, I, 7; 132 B.C.). From this, as also from the Jewish coins and Samaritan, we may observe the significant conservatism of Phoenician and "old" Hebrew, which stands in very marked contrast to the modifications of the Aramaic script and its descendant, the "square" Hebrew. This, too, combines with other arguments (p. 287 above) to support the assumption that an old Hebrew script, by no means distantly related to the common North Semitic ancestor, prevailed in Palestine during the Persian and Greek ages, and it would make it the more singular, that, of the increasing number of specimens of the old alphabet, only a very small number are held on palaeographical grounds, to be other than pre-Exilic. It is indispensable, of course, that the enquiries upon different lines should lead, in a natural manner, to converging results. But it is noteworthy that the seal of "Shemaiah, son of Azariah," appears, from its palaeography, to be very old—earlier than S (Lidzbarski); whereas, according to J. Menant (*Glyptique Orientale*, 1886, II, 236 sq.), the seal is not anterior to the seventh century.<sup>1</sup> It may be noticed that the personal names on the seals and stamps are, as a whole, of the familiar Old Testament type, and comprise those more especially found in Chronicles—Ezra—Nehemiah. In theophorous names the post-fixed form of Yahweh is nearly always *ydhâ*, whereas in the Jewish colony at Elephantine (fifth century) *yah* is regular. I draw no inference from these facts, or from the relation between the two forms in the Old Testament; a thorough study of the subject would be useful for a consideration of the approximate chronological limits of inscribed seals or pottery stamps.<sup>2</sup>

The Royal and private pottery stamps, discovered in the course of the Fund's excavations, form a new and important section of Old Hebrew epigraphical material. Jar-handles closely resembling the Palestinian have been found at Tell Amarna (about 1400 B.C.; *Q.S.*, 1900, p. 67). Uninscribed, this pottery was found in Lachish, City VI., usually dated 800–500 B.C. The inscribed stamps from the Shephelah sites, Gezer, etc., have been usually placed about 650–500 B.C., and they probably find their later analogies in the Greek and Rhodian handles. The peculiar design on the Royal stamps ("to the king") has been much discussed; with the four-winged type we may compare the seal of Hanan (*Rec.*, IV, 193,

<sup>1</sup> Vogüé and Levy dated it eighth or seventh century; for Lidzbarski, see his *Handbuch*, p. 116, n. 6. Menant also notes the late corrupt art of "Z-k-r Hoshea" (Cooke, p. 362, eighth to fourth century).

<sup>2</sup> See, for some elementary notes, *P.S.B.A.*, XXVI, 1904, pp. 109–112, 164–167.

*Ephem.*, I, 10), and with the two-winged the more remotely related seals of "Chemosh-yehi" and "Shebanyâ'û, son of Uzziyâ'û." It suggests the Assyrian if not rather the Persian period.<sup>1</sup> The stamps were found in relatively late strata, associated with late Jewish pottery. The majority of them, discovered prior to the excavation of Gezer, are treated fully by Messrs. F. J. Bliss and R. A. S. Macalister, in *Excavations in Palestine*, 1898-1900, Part II., Chap. IV. Of the 80 Royal stamps (p. 107), 37 were from Tell Judeideh, where the Jewish pottery lay immediately below the surface stratum which had Seleucidan, Rhodian, and Roman ware mingled with earlier styles (p. 50 *sq.*). 17 were from Tell Sandahannah, a site which excellently displayed the overlapping of Seleucidan and pre-Seleucidan ware (p. 58). 17 also came from Tell Zakariya, where the upper stratum consisted of Jewish pottery with some Seleucidan (p. 18). Since then, jar-handles have been discovered at Jericho with Aramaic lettering (*yâhâ* and *yâh*), perhaps of the third century.<sup>2</sup> Of the Gezer Royal stamps, one was in a pool which pointed to the Maccabean age (1904, p. 12), and another was found in an ashpit, held not to be later than 500 B.C. (but the history of that pit is suggestive; 1908, p. 280). So far as the archaeological criteria availed, Mr. Bliss did not ignore the possibility that the specimens discussed by him could belong to the Persian age (*Exc. Pal.*, p. 116), and in reply to my enquiry concerning the Gezer epigraphical material, Mr. Macalister very kindly informs me that the inscriptions on pottery are "all of the Persian or beginning of the Maccabean period, to judge by the levels."<sup>3</sup> The Royal jar-handles, on the other hand, he would date "to the very end of the Hebrew monarchy." This interesting bridging-over of the Exile raises the question whether "the king" on these stamps necessarily refers to Zedekiah or his predecessors. To argue that the choice must lie between the latter and the Hasmonean kings (*Ephem.*, I, 182) is to ignore Zerubbabel, and the possibility that an Assyrian, Babylonian, or Persian sovereign, governor, or satrap meets the case. It is not certain that the jars in question were invariably sent "to the king" or his agent. Opinion tends to the view that the Royal stamp was a guarantee of the jar's capacity. Prof. Clermont-Ganneau, who compared the formula "On His Majesty's Service"—where naturally any proper official may represent the king—has also noticed the weights from Nineveh inscribed in Aramaic "the king's mina(s)" (*Q.S.*, 1899, p. 206; *Rec.*, IV, 14). Only in bilingual weights do the Assyrian texts mention the king's name; for current commercial use the mere reference to a king apparently sufficed.

<sup>1</sup> Dr. H. Thiersch, *Jahrbuch d. Kais. Deut. Archäolog. Inst.*, 1908, col. 357 n.

<sup>2</sup> Vincent, *Rev. Bibl.*, 1909, p. 277. The Royal stamps from Jerusalem lay over lamps of about second century B.C. (noted by Pilcher, *P.S.B.A.*, 1898, p. 217).

<sup>3</sup> The *Aint* (1905, p. 323) is of course excepted.

Moreover, Mr. Macalister has reported the discovery of a bronze weight with "to the king" in characters similar to those on the Royal stamps, and he would see in it "a government standard, distinguished from more or less unauthorised local standards" (1909, p. 189). Now, the Royal stamps specify four place-names: Hebron, Ziph, Socoh, and the obscure M-m-sh-th (see Prof. Hommel, *Expos. Times*, XII, pp. 288, 336), which are associated with a district still famous for its excellent clay.<sup>1</sup> In one case the place of manufacture alone is inscribed (1908, p. 281). It is probable, therefore, that the legend may be interpreted simply "Royal"; there are no palaeographical grounds for separating the Royal from the private stamps (usually regarded as those of the potters), and this explanation of the reference to the king finds support in contemporary usage and in the employment of the preposition "to" upon coins.<sup>2</sup>

The bronze weight inscribed "to the king," or rather "royal," is probably "a government standard," which is "evidently the same as that of the weights inscribed Q." There has been a distinct tendency to date this series not earlier than the Persian period.<sup>3</sup> The unit appears to be double that of the *beka'*, three examples of which are of palaeographical interest.<sup>4</sup> Another series of weights is inscribed *n-š-ph*, and there is a very marked palaeographical difference between the much-discussed "quarter *n*" (1894, pp. 220-231, 284-7) and the specimens of the unit itself, of one of which the late Prof. Robertson Smith wrote: "the character resembles that of the early Hasmonean coins rather than that of the Siloam inscription."<sup>5</sup> The difference may be local as well as chronological: the "quarter" came from Samaria and has been compared with Assyrian weights, whereas the specimens of the *n-š-ph* come from the south and have Egyptian analogies.<sup>6</sup> Finally, we may add two weights inscribed

<sup>1</sup> Tell Zif, 8 or 9 miles S.E. of Hebron, and esh-Shuweikch, 10 miles S.W. of Hebron. Memshath, if Mopsis or Mampsis (Lagarde, *Onom. Sac.*, 85, 3; 210, 86) lay on the road from Hebron to Elath.

<sup>2</sup> So, no specific king is intended in "the king's weight" in 2 Sam. xiv, 26 (a gloss of the Persian period is commonly recognised); *cp.* the identical Aramaic phrase in the papyri of the Jews of Elephantine, fifth century (Sayce and Cowley, A 7, B 14-15, etc; see also K 11); or in the "king's way," Num. xx, 17; *cp.* the same papyri (J 6-7), and the modern Palestinian "Sultan's way."

<sup>3</sup> 1904, pp. 209 *sqq.*, 357 *sqq.*; 1905, p. 114 *sq.*

<sup>4</sup> 1904, p. 210; *Z.D.P.V.*, 1906, p. 94, and *Journ. Amer. Or. Soc.*, 1903, p. 206 *sq.* The argument (*Ephem.*, II, 148) that these belong to the last part of the Judaean monarchy, and that after the Exile weights would scarcely have Old Hebrew legends, can with difficulty be maintained.

<sup>5</sup> 1894, p. 231. For the *n-š-ph* types see 1893, p. 32; 1899, p. 107, Pl. VII, No. 1; *Exc. Pal.*, p. 142; *J.A.O.S.*, 1903, p. 386.

<sup>6</sup> So Clermont-Ganneau, *Rec.*, IV, 32 *sq.* Since the *n* unit weighs about 10 grams and the "quarter" 2.54, the famous שָׁל רַבְעָה on the reverse of the

דפּיב; one (*Q.S.*, 1907, p. 266; 1908, p. 77) of "about 500 B.C."; the other on the seal of Zechariah (*J.A.O.S.*, 1903, p. 384 *sq.*, see above p. 28E).

Although I have refrained from pressing any argument in the above paragraphs, the direction in which they point is now pretty clear. It is not surprising, therefore, that one of the stamps from Sâfi (1899, p. 326) is compared with the Hasmonean coins (*Ephem.*, I, 55), that the Gezer stamp in 1903, pp. 204, 275, may perhaps be assigned to the second century B.C. (*ib.*, II, 145), and that the stamp of "Nahum Abdi" from Tell Judeideh is "certainly" post-Exilic (*ib.*, I, 183). At present, Hebrew palaeography recognises "pre-Exilic" and "post-Exilic" periods, but the "Exilic" is left blank. This "Exilic" gap, whether in epigraphy or archaeology, is based upon the ordinary reading of the Old Testament. It is always tempting to associate archaeological vicissitudes with the familiar events in Biblical history, and even to identify the names on seals or stamps with Biblical personages; but to the student of Palestinian history, the Israelite conquest, the fall of Samaria, the Exilic gap, and the return from Exile have not precisely the significance that they have for the ordinary reader of the Bible. Instead of the leap from the pre-Exilic to the post-Exilic period, the conditions arising out of the former and pre-supposed in the latter will claim his attention. It is of considerable significance, therefore, that archaeology associates important sections of the epigraphical material (stamps and weights) with the "Jewish" and later ware. Now, the characteristic deterioration of the debased "Jewish" pottery, noticed from the days of the excavations of Lachish, has invariably called for some explanation in the history, and one may compare the deterioration in Babylonian art explained by the Kassite invasion. But though it is tempting to connect the feature with the entrance of Israel, or with the foundation of the independent monarchy,<sup>1</sup> archaeologists have dated its occurrence from the latter part of the monarchy.<sup>2</sup> It is more probable, therefore, that the clue may be found in the profound political and social changes which began with the downfall of Samaria, and continued to the Exile of Judah. Here, amid deportation of aristocracy and skilled artisans, importation of colonists, and movements both in the south of Palestine (including Judah itself) and East Jordan, the student of Palestinian history will find an important dividing line between earlier conditions and those which led to the

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latter may perhaps be connected with the Oxford weight שְׁלֶשֶׁת, 10.679 gr. (see the facsimile, *Ephem.*, I, 13; Lidzbarski's view, on p. 14, that the imperfect שְׁל is to be read שְׁלַ, presupposes at all events an old Aramaic שְׁל, different from the form on the other side of the stone.)

<sup>1</sup> So Vincent, *Canaan*, p. 351 *sqq.*

<sup>2</sup> So Petrie, *Tell el-Hesi* (1891), p. 47 *sq.*; Bliss and Macalister, *Exc. Pal.* (1902), pp. 74, 101, 124. For the argument in the text, see more fully *The Expositor*, August, 1909, pp. 105 *sqq.*

vicissitudes of the Persian and Greek periods. To me, at all events, it seems very unlikely that the debased Jewish ware is earlier than the sixth century, and since it appears unnecessary to refer the Royal stamps to Zedekiah or his predecessors, I see no reason for severing these from the other stamps which Mr. Macalister dates not earlier than the Persian period. There is no gap in the archaeological history of Palestine; there is no break in the development of the Old Hebrew alphabet from the common North Semitic type to the early Christian centuries; there are no palaeographical or other reasons for the leap from pre-Exilic to post-Exilic periods; but there are converging lines of evidence which to me, at least, make it an irresistible conclusion that the sixth and following centuries are not so poor in epigraphical material as is generally supposed.<sup>1</sup>

In the following paragraphs I proceed to an independent examination of the palaeographical details. The rough attempts to indicate some of the types of North Semitic or Old Hebrew are merely to guide the reader who will naturally refer to the admirable tables in Prof. Lidzbarski's *Handbuch*, II (Nos. XLIV-XLVI), with his chapter on the North Semitic script (I, 173 *sqq.*), or to Prof. Cooke's *Text-book* (Pls. XII *sq.*), or to other accurate tables (*e.g.*, the latest edition of the *Hebrew Grammar* of Gesenius, by Kautzsch). The chief sources referred to are B-L (Baal-Lebanon Inscr.), G (Gezer Tablet), M (Moabite Stone), S (Siloam Inscr.)—*see* above, p. 285—further, Sam. (Samaritan), and Amwas (p. 287, n. 4). By *Pal.* I mean the pottery material in *Excavations in Palestine*, Pl. 56, and the alphabets on Pl. 57 (also *Q.S.*, 1900, facing pp. 209, 219, 341). References to the *Q.S.* are made by the year and page alone. The chief works enlisted are those of De Vogüé, *Mélanges*; Levy, *Siegel u. Gemmen*; Clermont-Ganneau, publication of seals in *Journ. Asiat.*, 1883, and his *Recueil d'Archéol. Orient.*; Lidzbarski, *Ephemeris*; G. A. Cooke, *Text-book*. Some references are made to seals in the British Museum (Room for Semitic Antiquities). It seemed useful often to cite the smaller objects by their legends—partly to illustrate the personal names in vogue; unless otherwise stated the fuller references will be found under each heading in the Glossary in Lidzbarski's *Handbuch*. It has been impossible to deal with the subject

<sup>1</sup> I see no necessity for dating the jar-handles, with Prof. Hilprecht, from 300 B.C. (*Q.S.*, 1899, p. 209), or, in the Herodian age (Pileher, *P.S.B.A.*, 1898, pp. 217-222). The archaeological evidence makes them generally pre-Seleucidian, and it may be noticed, that although Dr. P. Thomsen (*M.D.P.V.*, 1909, p. 41), in his recent description of "the Jewish period," assigns them to the Judaean monarchy, he proceeds forthwith to an account of "the Seleucidian period" (p. 42). In Prof. Vincent's description of Palestinian pottery they come in the "Judéo-Hellénique" period (ninth to fifth century), immediately before the Greek Age, although he himself follows the theory that the "king" pre-supposes the monarchy (*Canaan*, p. 359 *sq.*).

in these pages as thoroughly as I could have wished; I have, therefore, treated all the coins *en bloc*, and have often ignored small palaeographical variations. Of course, I may sometimes have relied upon inaccurate copies, and often it is very difficult to distinguish the finer nuances. I have included evidence, which sometimes certainly, and sometimes probably is not strictly Israelite; but, in so far as it appeared to be neither Phoenician nor Aramean, it may be used to elucidate the development from the time when there was practically only one North Semitic alphabet to the days of the last stage of the Old Hebrew type illustrated by the coins and by early Samaritan. Here and there I have mentioned the dates to which some of the evidence has hitherto been ascribed by scholars; these dates, however provisional, are of some interest as a starting-point for further enquiry.

𐤀 in the old North Semitic alphabet develops from (a)  to the Samaritan (b) , (c) , etc., and all three can be recognized on Jewish coins. (a) may be curved, as on the pottery inscription from Tell el-Mutesellim (Dr. Schumacher, Leipzig, 1908, p. 107, fig. 166). The development seems to begin earlier in the Aramaic than in the Phoenician branch, but in the latter (a) never really died out, though (c) is found in Ipsambul graffiti (towards close of seventh century). In Hebrew (a) is found in G and also on seals or stamps with clearly late forms, e.g., *Pal.*, No. 26, אלאמץ (see צ), . . . מנחמת and השנ (see ש f). Apart from intermediate forms where the cross-strokes are not yet parallel, (b) appears on S and on the Asaph seal (see ס). (c) also on S, on *Pal.*, No. 29, נאהבת, זכריהו יאר, עזא (see ז a), אבשדי (see ב c), ישמעאל (*Q.S.*, 1897, pp. 180, 309 sq.; ascribed to sixth century, p. 182; fourth to third centuries, p. 180), and apparently on Levy, 7 (Cooke, p. 362, *Brit. Mus.* 1046, the seal of עבדאלא and עבדמתת; see on צדקא, צ a). (a) is therefore no sign of antiquity, but the appearance of (b) and (c) distinctly points to a later modification.

ב, with triangular or rounded head, assumes (a) a more pronounced vertical shaft, which (b) is bent round at right angles, thus producing the square form ,  (coins and San.). The presence of a horizontal tail in (a)—as on G—is not significant without the vertical prolongation, which is marked in *Pal.*, Pl. 57 (*cp.* also *Q.S.*, 1903, p. 204). The seal of Jeroboam (p. 288 above) illustrates both the rounded and rectangular tail, but S has only the latter. Yet the former survives to the Amwas inscription. The opening of the head (c) is characteristic of Aramaic from the seventh century, though it is still closed a century or two later at Teima in North Arabia. There are a few cases of (c) on coins (Jewish and those of Gaza) and seals; of the latter, note אלשעב בת אלשמע (*Brit. Mus.* 1042), which, from its resemblance to M (but

see *ת* *b*), has been dated earlier than S (Lidzbarski, *Handbuch*, 116, note 6); and *אבשדי* (boustrophedon, *א* *c*, *י* *d*, *ש* *d*).

*ג*, apart from the clear distinction between the Hebrew and Phoenician *ג*, and later Aramaic *ג*, calls for no special remark; see *פ*.

*ד*. The triangular form (*a*) , M and B-L, stands in marked contrast to the oldest North Syrian, with circular head, and (*b*) a distinct prolongation. The oldest Greek follows (*a*), while the South Semitic is probably derived from (*b*) (with triangular head, as on Hassan-bey-li). (*a*) recurs on the Moabite seal of *נמשדק* (*מ* *e*; see *Eph.*, I, 136 *sqq.*), and that of Jeroboam. In G, l. 2, with the slightest projection upwards, as also in the late *Pal.*, *נחם עברי* (see p. 293), where lack of space prevents a leg. In Phoenician, (*a*) survives here and there, as at Abydos (probably fourth century), and in the later inscriptions from Sardinia, where that of Pauli Gerrei (second century probably) has a very slight leg in *לאהן* and *דנר*, but quite a pronounced one in *עבראשמן* (*ib.*), and in the archaic inscription from Nora (see above, p. 193). On the whole, Phoenician and Hebrew do not encourage the leg, in contrast to Aramaic, where, moreover, the head is opened at an early date.

*ה*. The old form (*a*)  is soon lost in Aramaic, but it is retained in Phoenician, Jewish coins, Sam., and in Aquila's Tetragrammaton. In Hebrew, the chief peculiarities are (*b*) the projection of the horizontal bar to the right—usually the top one; Susa,<sup>1</sup> stamps of Socoh, seals and some coins; or the middle one, in early Sam. Also (*c*) the projection upwards of the vertical bar, *Q.S.*, 1909, p. 22 (*contrast* 1907, p. 264), and the *Pal.* stamps of *הוישע* (Nos. 20 and 30; see *צ* *c*). A special peculiarity of the Socoh stamps is a combination of (*b*) or (*c*) with *four* horizontal bars. More significant is (*d*): the tendency to modify these bars into , and even  on Hasmonean coins, where, also with the loss of the leg, the character (*a*) resembles a reversed *E*.<sup>2</sup> With (*d*) we may compare (*e*),  on Levy, 13 (. . . *חשנ*, see *ש* *f*) and perhaps Levy, 3 (*Brit. Mus.* 1034; . . . *הנניה*), though in the latter the sign may be *ה* (*g*). See, however, the coin inscribed *יהו*, where  (*ה*) is quite distinct from *ה* (*a*) (*P.S.B.A.*, 1908, p. 45 *sq.*; from fourth century). (*f*) The remarkable approximation to the Aramaic "square" *ה* in the seal of Seraiah could conceivably be compared with Aramaic of fifth century, and the Aramaic

<sup>1</sup> By "Susa" is meant the fragments of inscribed bowls found by M. de Morgan in a stratum ascribed to a pre-Persian age and later than Assurbanipal's sack of Susa. See *Rec.*, VII., § 37.

<sup>2</sup> This form seems to appear on the Jerusalem seal of Haggai (*cp.* Levy, No. 17, who dates it later than the prophet Haggai, see also Pilcher, *P.S.B.A.*, XIX, 172).

jar-handles from Jericho with יהו (𐤎 = ה) point to Aramaic intrusion; the seal with its old מ, and transitional ס, certainly suggests a mingling of Aramaic and Hebrew influences (see above, p. 287). The fifth century is also suggested if we compare the ה on the Phoenician Byblos Inscr. (C.I.S., I, 1), or the later separation of the two lower bars. In any case this is probably the highest date. Finally, if the third character at the foot of G is really ה, and it is confirmed by Vincent (*Rev. Bibl.*, 1909, p. 269), it is a distinctly cursive form, and would make an eighth century date impossible; yet, from the cast, I feel almost certain that the original sign was merely ו. At all events, I do not think we can use the character in estimating the date of G.

7. The oldest types are (a) 𐤒 in Aramaic and Phoenician, which soon becomes 𐤒, and (b) 𐤒, M. In Hebrew we find (c): type (b) with a V-shaped head, in אביו (Levy, 9, and also *Rev. d'Assyr.*, VI, 84), עזיו (Le., 9), קניו (*Rec.*, III, 189), and in זכריהו (א e); or, with a prolongation upwards of the vertical, on coins. (a) is found on the coin יהו (ה e), and with slanting shaft in זכר הושע (ז d), and חורץ (*Eph.*, I, 274). Another type (c) is 𐤒 on the archaic בן עזריהו, ישמעאל, אבגיל, יוקם, עבדיהו (*Rec.*, I, 34), and on coins; it is reversed in הושע (*Pal.*, No. 20). With the dislocation of the head in (a), and prolongation, we get perhaps (d) 𐤒 as in יחמליהו (*Rec.*, II, 27), יהושע בן עשיהו (*J.A.O.S.*, XXIV, 205). Here we may note (e) the head 𐤒, in S, עזיהו (see ז e), and analogous forms, e.g., 𐤒 in נתניהו, יהועזר, יהועזר (*Rec.*, III, 189 sq.), and reversed on עשיהו. חנניהו (Clermont-Ganneau, 1, 2) belongs apparently to (d), rather than (e).

𐤒 (f) in רפתי יהובל (*Pal.*, No. 27; see *Eph.*, I, 55) recalls 𐤒 on coins and Amwas Inscr., on the doubtful אלשמע (*Rev. Bibl.*, 1909, p. 124 sq.), and perhaps on אציה (*Rec.*, III, 188 sq.). In Sam. MSS., 𐤒 may be connected with (d) or with (f); in the early inscriptions, however, we find a slanting 𐤒, which resembles (g): 𐤒 on coins, on חנניה (but see ה e), and on Aquila's Tetragrammaton. It is identical with the old digamma. It is conceivable that the digamma was an old North Semitic form, and that, as Vogüé conjectured, type (e) (cp. d) is its descendant (*Mél.*, p. 133, n. 1). The Hebrew (or Palestinian) alphabet is conspicuous for its various types of 7, and a lack of uniformity is found on the coins, on the earlier stamps (*Pal.*, Pl. 57), and on individual seals (e.g., שבניו, Le., 8; עשיהו, *ib.*, p. 54). This feature is important for the much-discussed character on G where we have the types (a), l. 6; (b) with round

and with V-shaped heads (l. 5 and l. 2; the former can be recognized between  $\eta$  and  $\zeta$  on the cast, l. 1, end), and with a dislocation of the head in l. 1 (before  $\text{אָסָף}$  *cp.* above, p. 194). Of these it is true that  $\Upsilon$  occurs very frequently in the Sinaitic inscr. (before  $\text{דְּכִיר}$ ,  $\text{שָׁלֵם}$ , etc.) as a *symbol*, and it is also tempting to compare (a), in l. 6 with  $\eta$ . On the other hand  $\eta$  should slant from right to left, and the particular form in l. 6 would in any case be relatively late ( $\eta$  c). It is certainly impossible to find  $\eta$  throughout, as Prof. Vincent has suggested, whereas the Hebrew  $\eta$  is remarkable for its variety of forms, and those which occur on G are in accordance with all analogy. The mere presence of this lack of uniformity in an *old* inscription is in any case noteworthy (*see* below, p. 306). It should be added that the above arrangement, (c) to (f), is not to be taken as chronological; it would be useful if one could determine the true development of the character.

$\eta$  on the Zenjirli Inscr. changes from (a)  $\text{I}$  to (b)  $\text{Z}$ , though (b) appears on the earlier inscription of Z-k-r, king of Hamath, and on the later Aramaic inscr. of Nerab (seventh to sixth centuries),<sup>1</sup> and (a) in the perhaps contemporary seal, *C.I.S.*, II, 90. Both forms seem to underlie the South Semitic *dh* and *d* (*Eph.*, I, 117). M shows the tendency (c) to slant the vertical; in Phoenician (b) becomes normal in contrast to the later simple vertical stroke in Aramaic. G, and *Pal.* Ziph-handles approximate (c). (a) is found in  $\text{עֹזָא בֶן בַּעֲלַחָן}$  ( $\text{א}^c$ ,  $\text{ב}^b$ ,  $\text{ה}^c$ , and  $\text{נ}^c$ ),<sup>2</sup>  $\text{עֹזָר הַנִּי}$  ( $\text{ה}^c$ ), and in  $\text{יְהוֹעֶזֶר}$ . (b) appears in  $\text{אֲחִיו}$  ( $\text{א}^a$ ,  $\text{ק}^a$ );  $\text{יִנְאָל בֶּן אֲלָחָן}$  ( $\text{ה}^b$ ), and  $\text{עֲזִיו}$  (*Le.*, 8). The chief peculiarity in Hebrew is (d) the addition of a hook to (a) ( $\text{I}$ ) in Ziph-handle, *Pal.* No. 14,  $\text{אֲבִיו עֲבָד עֲזִיו}$  ( $\text{א}^c$ ,  $\text{ו}^c$ ), in  $\text{זָכַר הוֹשַׁע}$  ( $\text{ו}^a$ ,  $\text{ש}^e$ ), and in  $\text{זָכַר עֲזִיר}$  ( $\text{ז}$  reversed) which Lidzbarski judges to be earlier than S (*Handbuch*, p. 116, n. 6). Such a hook to type (b) seems to explain the Phoenician  $\text{H}$  (Cyprus, from fourth century). By giving a distinct turn to the hook of (a) we have apparently the Sam.  $\text{X}$ . The double hook appears in S  $\text{H}$ . Hence with prolongation of the hooks (e)  $\text{H}$  in  $\text{עֲזִירָה בֶן חֲרָף}$  ( $\text{ו}^e$ ,  $\text{נ}^c$ ; *Rev. d'Ét. Juives*, XLI, 174, and (f)  $\text{H}$  in  $\text{חֲנַנְיָהוּ בֶן עֲזִירָהוּ}$  ( $\text{ו}^c$ ,  $\text{נ}^c$ ), a seal interesting for its design of pomegranates. In S the  $\eta$  evidently comes towards the close rather than the beginning of the development.

<sup>1</sup> The unique B-L  $\text{H}$  finds an analogy in Old Greek (Formello vase). It is questionable whether one may compare  $\text{H}$  (for  $\text{H}$ ) in the archaic  $\text{שְׂמַעְיָהוּ בֶן עֲזִירָהוּ}$  (M a).

<sup>2</sup> Vogüé, 41, not earlier than fourth century (*Mél.*, p. 140).

ק, in Zenjirli Inscr., develops from (a) three bars  to (b) two, while in the later Nerab texts the latter occurs only once, and the single bar begins to be normal in Aramaic. Nevertheless, a stone inscription from Egypt of 482 B.C. represents three, two, and even one bar only, and retains older forms of י and כ (as also do other stones in contrast to the contemporary papyri), while in other respects it agrees with Aramaic of the period. (a) is regular in Phoenician, but (b) appears in M. In Hebrew (a) survives down to Jewish coins and Sam., but (b) is elsewhere frequent, and it is just conceivable that the form came in from East Jordan.<sup>1</sup> (b) is found in אחמה (מ e), נחמיהו (מ c), חורץ (צ end), חגי (י e), and in . . . השב (see ש f). In two examples of the name שחרהר (which is possibly parallel to Phoenician שחרבעל and Old Testament שחררה), both ascribed to the Persian age (*Q.S.*, 1902, p. 267), (a) appears with ה b, ו c or d ש d; (b) with ו c צ a, ש d. A distinct peculiarity is the unequal length of the bars, and (c) especially, with the two-barred type (ב, פ) found on the Moab. בעלחנן (מ e), on כמשיחי (see ו a), מנחמת אשת גרמלך (see ש f), חנניו (see ה e; but type (a) in חנניהו, Clermont-Ganneau, 1 and 2), יחץ (צ a), *Pal.*, No. 24 (מנחם) and 28 (עור חגי). In type (a) one may also note (d) absence of prolongation downwards in אחתמלך (see ת b), or (e) in both directions. With (e) compare Phoenician Nora Inscr. and Old Greek; it is found on a Hebronite stamp (*Pal.*, Pl. 57) and regularly on coins. In G type (a) is used with considerable irregularity in the prolongation of the verticals; in I. 5 the curious position of the character is presumably on account of the half erased letters underneath (? . . . חו).

ט. The more or less circular type develops in Zenjirli from (a)  to (b) , and speedily opens in Aramaic in the effort to make the letter with one stroke. M, like Old Greek, has (a); (b) (the prototype of South Semitic forms) is found on the stamp, *Q.S.*, 1907, p. 264 (1908, p. 76), and conceivably in 1909, p. 22. In G, ט can hardly be read at the beginning of l. 2, and the reading in *Q.S.*, 1909, p. 97, is uncertain. Phoenician, even in the fourth century, shows in (b) a relic of the original cross-bars, and subsequently has an open top. The letter is so rare in Hebrew, that it is only necessary to observe in Sam. the form  (with a faint

<sup>1</sup> If (b) is a characteristic of Hebrew, one may perhaps use it as a criterion for distinguishing Hebrew from Phoenician. The "Phoenician" examples comprise Levy, Ph. No. 11, יונאל בן אלחנן (Hebrew, so Lidzbarski), אלחנן (but see *Eph.*, I., 275), מנחם ברבעל (with ת b); also Clermont-Ganneau, No. 17 (עברכחנן) and No. 34 (חלץ עבר מלכרם).

suggestion of the cross-bar at the top), the opening thus distinguishing it from  $\nabla$ ,  $\epsilon$ .

י. The old form (a)  $\curvearrowright$ , speedily develops in Aramaic, where, in fifth century papyri from Egypt, it is already the smallest letter of the alphabet. On stone inscriptions, however, the original type is retained. In Hebrew it survives on Jewish coins. The special prolongation of the lowest bar (b)  $\exists$  is found in Phoenician graffiti at Ipsambul, and more often in the Persian and later period, though the Byblos Inscr. retains (a). In Hebrew (a) is usual, but (b) is found in חנניו (see ה e, נ c), and עבדיהו (Rec., I, 34, כ ו, מ c). In Sam. (b) is turned round so that the vertical shaft of (b) now becomes horizontal, a feature which recurs in Phoenician (Ipsambul, and more especially later). (a) and (b) occur together, perhaps on the seal ישמעאל (see א c), and certainly in S. Another feature of (a) is (c), the hook to the bottom horizontal stroke, which appears already in G, ll. 1 and 2, where it turns up, and l. 6, where it turns down, for the latter cp. עשיו בן יוקם (with several late features; Levy, p. 54; Cooke, p. 362, ascribes to the fifth or fourth century), and also יחץ (ה c, צ a). Again (d), the bottom bar is lost ( $\bar{\text{ך}}$ ) in אבשדי (ב c), perhaps אליעם (Brit. Mus. 1024; see W. Wright, P.S.B.A., 1882, p. 54), and in Aquila's Tetragrammaton. Also (e), the top bar is written separately, Pal., Pl. 57; possibly on the stamp, 1909, p. 22, compared with 1907, p. 264, and on coins. More remarkable is  $\neq$  in חני (Clermont-Ganneau, 6, ח b; read חנו?).

כ. The old form (a)  $\text{ך}$  shows a tendency (b) to modify the distinctive head, and (c) to a curvature, which finally approximates the square form  $\text{ך}$  (Sam.),  $\text{ך}$  (coins). The change (b) became usual earlier in Aramaic than in Phoenician, and various forms may be seen in examples of the Persian and later period. In Hebrew, apart from the rough slanting a in G, l. 5, and the variations on the stamps (Pal., Pl. 57), there are few special forms. Thus (d)  $\text{ך}$  in נחמיהו בן מיכיהו (ה b, מ c, e), elsewhere in inscriptions of Nerab, of Hassan-bey-li, and Phoenician from fifth century.  $\text{ך}$ , in seal of אחיה (א a, מ e, צ a, ה b) and . . . ננש (see ש f).  $\text{ך}$ , in that of מנחמת אשת גדמלך (see ש f); also on coins elsewhere, from fourth century.  $\neq$ , on רפתי יהוכל (ו f); cp.  $\text{ך}$  on coins. To these add  $\text{ך}$  on . . . חשב (see ש f). (e) varies from the curve in S (with a tendency to (b)) and Amwas to the very distinct angular bend on the stamps, Exc. Pal., p. 122, and perhaps, 1903, p. 204 (both ב b).

ל. The old form with rounded base (𐤀) has an early tendency in Phoenician and Aramaic to become angular; and in later Phoenician it ends in a hook (𐤁, *cp.* the "square" Hebrew ל). The latter feature is not found in "old" Hebrew, which has both the rounded base and the sharp angle; the latter extending from G (ll. 1, 5) to coins and Sam.

מ. The old form (*a*) with zigzag, or wave, is modified in Aramaic in seventh century, and in Phoenician by fifth century (with occasional exceptions). In Hebrew (*a*) is found in G with a remarkable slant (the angle of the zigzag being reminiscent of שמעיהו, *see* ז *a*), in אלשמע (ב *c*), אברם (boustrophedon), האמן (ה *c*, ק *b*), אחתמלך (ת *b*) and in the relatively late סריה (*see* ה *f*). Early modifications of the head can be recognized (*b*) in S, seal of Jeroboam (*see Eph.*, II, 143 *sq.*), of שמע, "the king's servant" (*Rev. Bib.*, XII, 605), and Levy, 7 (*see* א *c*). The different later types are well illustrated in *Exc. Pal.*, Pl. 57. One may also note (*c*) the head 𐤌, frequently on seals, הנמיהו, זמריהו (Eph., I, 11), משלם (1902, p. 263), ישמעאל (*see* א *c*), נחמיהו, רמליהו (Rec., II, 27), also (*d*), the more Phoenician type 𐤍, in אלרם (*see* ר), אלאמץ (*see* ע *b*). Also (*e*) type 𐤎 in the Chemosh-compounds (Eph., I, 136 *sqq.*), אמץ (*see* כ *d*), הציה (*see* צ *b*), מנחם (Pal., Nos. 22, 24), מנחמת (*see* ש *f*), אחמה (ה *b*). Also (*f*) as 𐤏 in 1904, p. 211; 𐤐 in מיביהו (כ *d*), the weight פים (*J.A.O.S.*, 1903, p. 384 *sq.*), and *Exc. Pal.*, p. 122, fig. 45; and as 𐤑 in יוקם (*see* ש *e*). The head of type (*e*) (also rounded 𐤒), with bent leg, gives us the form of 𐤓 on coins and Sam. The extent of the curvature is no doubt a criterion apart from the type of the head; it is already found in S (*b* above), and is especially marked in נחם (*e* above).

נ. The old form (*a*) 𐤔, in pre-Persian period already 𐤕, is generally retained in Aramaic, Phoenician, and Hebrew. Hebrew, however, is characterized by (*b*) a distinct tendency to bend round the shaft, whence the square form on coins and Sam., and also by (*c*) the head 𐤖 or 𐤗 on the coins. Hence late 𐤘 and 𐤙 converge, and on the stamp, 1903, p. 204, either is possible (p. 275, *Eph.*, II, 145), although on *Pal.*, No. 22, the reading is obviously נחם. The presence of the older head is therefore no criterion, and one must also notice whether (*b*) is simply a gentle curve (as in S), a marked bend, or even square. Thus the head 𐤖 (without *b*) is found on several seals with relatively late features, *e.g.*, נחמיהו (מ *c*), . . . ננש (ש *f*), צפניהו (*see* צ); contrast also the ננף weights (*a* and *b*, צ *e*) with רבע ננף (*a* with צ *a*; *see* below צ). (*c*) goes with the straight shaft in סריה (ה *f*), חנניה (also *a*, *see* ה *e*),

and Hebron stamps (Nos. 1, 3; contrast No. 2 with slight *b*). But usually (*b*) and (*c*) go together, and among the more interesting examples are בעלנתן (ת *b*), חנניהו (straight and curved shafts; נ *a* with curve), קניו (ו *c*, ק *a*) בעלחנן (ז *a*), עשיר בן יוקם (ש *e*). *Pal.*, Pl. 57 shows how the various forms could prevail at one period—notice also the variations among the coins—but there is no evidence for those which are pre-supposed in the view that ך occurs on G (*see* ך end).

ד. Zenjirli Inscr. illustrate the change from (*a*)  to (*b*) , and those of Nerab from (*b*) to (*c*) () which approximates the uncertain  *Eph.*, I, 11. The latter as (*d*)  is found in Phoenician from the Persian period. M has (*a*), and in G the vertical is prolonged upwards; if the latter is not an accidental peculiarity, to be classed with other similar features in G, we may compare some Old Greek forms, and the possibility that ד originally represented the rough outline of a tree or branch (*Eph.*, II, 136). On the Asaph seal (א *b*) we seem to have ך; the Lachish להסך is insecure (1892, pp. 126-8). The form (*b*) (Aramaic to sixth century) occurs on אמץ הספר (*see* צ *b*). On the seal of Seriah, type (*d*) could be compared with Phoenician from fourth century, or Aramaic, three centuries earlier (*see* ה *f*). Sam. clearly preserves the tradition of the three bars, but, owing to the rarity of ד in Hebrew, we cannot determine how late the form (*a*) survived. Although even the change from (*b*) to (*c*) is early, we cannot argue from the development during the eighth century in Zenjirli that the form in G would not be found after that date; this is clear from other examples of the special development illustrated by these North Syrian texts (*see* ך, ח, ק and ת).

ע. The oldest, more or less circular form (*a*) is retained throughout Phoenician and Hebrew. The opening (*b*) occurs early in Aramaic, but is rare elsewhere. Among the examples of it are, a Syrian cylinder with a compound of בעל (*Eph.*, I, 12), אלמץ בן אלשע (with מ *d*) from 'Ammân, ascribed by Euting to seventh century (*M.D.P.V.*, 1896, p. 4), by Clermont-Ganneau to fifth or fourth century (*Rec.*, II, 46), and יהועזר בן עבדיהו (ו *e*), on which *see* above, p. 288. The coins show oval, circular, and rectangular shapes of (*a*); Sam. has a triangle; the variation, which can be illustrated from the *beka'* weights, is scarcely a criterion.

פ. The oldest forms (*a*) have a curved, less often an angular, head (, ). The rectangular head, 1909, p. 97, seems artificial, though, of course, the Greek development could be cited. In Hebrew, the tendency is to (*b*) a distinct curvature, and, although the letter is not

found on coins or in early Sam., later Sam. shows the ultimate square form (*cp.* ב, נ and נ). The tendency towards a more square type can be illustrated from *Pal.*, Pl. 57 (stamps צפן, weights נצף, and also פים; jar-handles of Ziph, and also the seal of צפניה). It is noteworthy that the "quarter *neseph*" has (*c*) a more archaic form (𐤏), which closely resembles that on פקה (ח *b*, ק *b*), פקחי (ח *a*, see ק *a*), and thus can hardly be distinguished from ג, from which פ is otherwise distinguished by its more rounded form. The older form (*a*) appears in פקלל (ק *b*), אסף (*see* ס). Together with (*b*), (*a*) is seen in אמץ (צ *b*), רפתי (ו *f*), הררה (*see* ו *e*), and with a still more pronounced bend at the base in S.

צ. The oldest type (*a*) consists of W, with prolongation downwards of the left-hand bar (𐤛). In Phoenician and Aramaic the latter feature is more prominent; in M and Hebrew more attention is devoted to the W. The downward, and sometimes more or less vertical stroke, is marked in אלאמץ (מ *d*, נ *a*, ע *b*), אציה (*see* כ *d*), צדקא, Levy, 7, (א *c*, ד *b*, מ *b*, ק *a*, ת *a*), and רבע נצף (פ *c*); much less so in M and the Moabite כמישצדק (ד *a*, מ *e* rather bent, ק *a*), in יהץ (ח *e*, י *c*; ascribed to fifth to fourth centuries), and in the clumsy צפניה (ח *b*, פ *a*). In אמץ (מ *e* rather bent, ס *b*, פ *a*), and in להצל (*Brit. Mus.* 1048 ?), it is almost lost. This tendency (*b*) to ignore the stroke can be observed on G (*cp.* ll. 4 and 5), and it is further developed (*c*) on the stamps of צפן *Pal.*, Nos. 20 and 30, and the נצף weights—with נ *a*, *b*, and פ *b*.<sup>1</sup> Here we have a rough form of 𐤏 which in the נצף weight (1899, Pl. VII, No. 1, facing p. 106) has the lower horizontal bar prolonged to the left. From this can be explained (*d*) S 𐤏. Here, and in the forms on the coins (*e.g.*, 𐤏, *cp.* צפניה above), and in the more highly developed Sam., a trace of the old downward stroke can still be recognized. The history of this letter is complicated in Old Greek, and also in North Semitic, since the development in (*b*) is not late, if, as seems apparent, the Susa bowl (ascribed to about sixth century) represents 𐤏 (in הצי "half"), and thus resembles the form in the uncertain לסרע (*Eph.*, I, 11, *see* ס *c*), and חורץ (ו *a*, ח *b*, ק *b*, *Rev. d'Assyr.*, IV., 157 sq.).

ק. The old form (*a*) φ already opens in Zenjirli Inscr., though it is still closed in Nerab texts and in *C.I.S.*, II, 53 (with upward

<sup>1</sup> The Safi stamp (p. 287, n. 4 above) read as שפם (1900, p. 27) or צשם (? *Eph.*, I, 55) seems to be a debased copy of צפן.

prolongation of the vertical; ascribed to seventh or sixth century). It is even open in B-L where it approaches the modern Hebrew ק. In Phoenician of the Persian period we have the type  $\Psi$  (much earlier in Aramaic), which towards the Christian Era comes to resemble Sam.  $\nabla$ . In Hebrew, the old form with a more or less circular head is found in seals with early and late features, e.g., צדקא (see צ a), יוקם (see ש e), קניו (ר c, נ c). In G, l. 2, the vertical is slightly prolonged upwards (see above, and cp. ס). With a partly open rectangular head it occurs on פקחי (ז b, פ c, *Rec.*, II, 117). The Greek type (b)  $\varphi$  appears on פקח (ח b, פ c), but open on חרוץ בן פקלל (see פ end); with rectangular head on האמן בן גרקל (*Eph.*, I, 12, ה c, מ a), and with a similar but open head on the *beka'* weight, 1904, p. 210. In South Semitic there is a corresponding line above the circle (˙). S preserves, though with modification, the two more or less circular segments ( $\Psi$ ), but in the coins the type has become T and P.

ר resembles ד but has a longer tail. It soon assumes an open head in Aramaic, but not in Phoenician, and very rarely in Hebrew. Here the examples are סריה (ד, f), the stamp, 1903, p. 204 (see נ), and perhaps אלרם (מ e, נ c; *Brit. Mus.* 1039).

ש. The (a) old zigzag form ( $\mathbb{W}$ ) is still retained on the coins, together with (b)  $\omega$ , also in Amwas, with which compare (c) Sam. ש. On coins of the revolts (a) and (b) may appear on different sides of the same specimen. A relatively late feature is (d) the intersection of the lines in (a), see *Pal.*, Pl. 57, שחרהר (ח b, p. 288 above), משלם (see מ c), אבשרי (see ב c). The irregularity in G, especially ll. 2 and 3, is in keeping with the roughness of this script. Next, one may note the rough (e)  $\mathbb{W}$  on עשיהו בן יוקם (ו c, e, ז c, f; נ c, ק a, ascribed to the fifth or fourth century, Cooke, p. 362); יהושע (see ו d, ascribed to seventh century, *Eph.*, II, 145), and זכר הושע (ו a, ז d). Type  $\nabla$  (f) is also late; cp. . . . השנ (א a, ה e, ח b, כ d, מ e), . . . ננש (נ d, א a), and מנחמת אשת גדמלך (א a, ד inverted, ח c, כ d, מ a), which has a Persian design, and may, in the opinion of Vogüé, be Ammonite. Finally (g), it is not clear whether we may rely upon the prolongation downwards of the left stroke of (a) in כמשצדק (see צ a), or the right-hand one of מעשיה משלם (1902, p. 263 sq.; *Rev. Bibl.*, 1902, p. 438 sq., מ c). This prolongation of the middle or right-hand stroke, or of both, is found in Phoenicia, in the last centuries before the Christian Era.

ת. The leading old types are (a) X and (b) †. The former, rare in Phoenician (*Nora Inscr.* and *Abydos*), is found in M and frequently in

Hebrew down to the coins and Sam. Examples are S, Susa fragments, and seals of אבגיל, מנחמת (*see* ש *f*), צדקא (*see* צ *a*). (*b*) is found on B-L and has Greek analogies, and, with a more slanting form, develops in Zenjirli Inscr. from X to , although Nerab inscriptions still retain the earlier form. This type soon bends the right arm, thus giving us the normal Phoenician and Aramaic character, in striking contrast to Heb., which retains the older form. (*b*) appears on the weight שלשת (*Eph.*, I, 13), the seals of אלשנב (א *a*, ב *c*, מ *a*), אחתמלך (א *a*, ח *d*, מ *a*), רפתי (*see* כ *d*), בעלנתן (נ *c*, *see* *Eph.*, I, 140), נתניהו (ר *e*), אציה (ר *f*, כ *d*), and on coins. The relationship between (*a*) and (*b*) must be left open. South Semitic has (*a*) which in Ethiopic has been turned round into (*b*) (). On the other hand, a slanting (*b*), as on the Mute-sellim fragment (א *a*), would equally suggest the development from  to X. On G we find  which could lead to or be derived from either.

The more one studies Hebrew epigraphy the more is one struck by features which merit fuller and more competent study than I can give. In particular, one may note (1) that the presence of the oldest form of any character, taken by itself, is not significant—this applies even to the triangular ג and the zigzag מ. But (2) the presence of transitional and later forms is everywhere important (*e.g.*, א *b*, ב *c*, ה *d*, e, f, ז *d*, e, ט *b*, י *b*, c, d, כ *d*, מ *b*, c, נ *c*, ס *b*, פ *b*, צ *b*, c, d, ש *d*, e, f). The importance of (3) curve, bend, or approach to squareness (פנמכב) will depend upon its extent and the presence of (2). But in general (4) judgment will not be based upon isolated phenomena, whether notably early or late, but upon a combination of features. (5) The two characteristic styles of M and S may suggest two rather different types of alphabet (*Q.S.*, 1881, p. 285; *Jew. Quart. Rev.*, 1904, p. 287), but note the differences in Egyptian-Aramaic stone and papyri texts of the fifth century. Yet several interesting questions are raised by the types of ג (*a*, *b*, and ?*g*), ה (*a* and *b*), צ (*a* and ?*c*), ק (*a* and *b*), ת (*a* and *b*). (6) In connection with this it is noteworthy that some special features do not survive on coins or in Sam. (ה *b*, e, י *c*, ק *b*, ש *d*, e, f). Nevertheless, it is clear that the coins did not borrow from some earlier and archaic alphabet (note צנמכה); their eccentricities (*e.g.*, א) are more accidental, and the coinage alphabets as a whole may be instructively compared and contrasted with Sam. Finally (7), the palaeography supports archaeology in dating the *Pal.* pottery inscriptions, as a whole, in the Persian period; a few may be earlier, a few later. As regards S, we have not the best kind of material for comparison; but the characteristic curvature and, more especially, certain forms (א *b*, c, י, י *b*, מ *b*, צ *d*, ק) suggest the lower rather than the upper end of the Palestinian pottery material.

As for the date of the Gezer tablet we must begin by realizing that it is not a carefully prepared object. "The workmanship is rough" (p. 32), its "*gaucherie*" recognized (p. 112), "it has not a monumental character" (p. 26). The writer was "probably a peasant," and to this rough work "of a rustic engraver" Prof. Gray ascribes "the noteworthy differences in the several examples of the same letters" (p. 191). The right-hand corner is broken away at the beginning of l. 1, but although the rest of that side is rather chipped, no letters seem to be missing (p. 89). Indeed no effort has been made to trim the edge, and lines 3-7 begin each a little to the left of the other. Yet, the top edge is more regular, while on the left edge is a fret of diagonal lines. One might almost imagine that the writer, who has not striven after symmetry, consistency, or neatness, has utilized some piece of limestone, such as was frequently used later at Tell Sandahannah (*Exc. Pal.*, pp. 156 *sqq.*). In the Greek limestone tablets many marks which look like letters in the photographs prove to be accidental scratches or injuries (*ib.*, p. 158). Now on G there are apparent traces of an earlier writing (pp. 26 *sq.*). Is G a palimpsest, or rather is it a fragment of some larger stone, more carefully prepared—note the decoration on the left edge—which our writer utilized after erasing the original inscription? Mr. Macalister is not inclined to the view that there are traces of an earlier inscription (pp. 88 *sq.*). Prof. Vincent, on the other hand, who has also examined the tablet, writes "il en est résulté pour moi la conviction que la tablette a été inscrite plusieurs fois—les polissages successifs l'ont usée irrégulièrement" (*Rev. Bibl.*, p. 269). From my examination of the cast I am confident that there is underwriting in l. 5, but here it may be merely an error of the writer which he himself has corrected (*see* p. 299, on  $\text{𐤀}$ ). Elsewhere I strongly suspect traces, but must leave open a question which is important when we consider the present roughness of the fragment and its probable purpose. At all events upon this stone the writer has scribbled one of the most artless specimens of North Semitic script that one can imagine, and everything points to the conclusion that we have no artificial archaistic writing; the writer is obviously following "as best he could the forms of the letters current in his own day" (p. 193). To suppose that the lack of uniformity in the letters has no value would be to annihilate the study of Hebrew palaeography; some of the differences are of course unimportant, but  $\text{𐤀}$ , more especially  $\text{𐤁}$  and  $\text{𐤂}$ , and above all  $\text{𐤃}$ , are crucial. Either the writer belongs to the age *before* the alphabet had assumed the common North Semitic type, or our rustic engraver flourished later when these variations were more or less familiar.

It will be noticed that the palaeographical arguments which prove the antiquity of G do not furnish its date. They show that it is one of the oldest of the North Semitic inscriptions rather than that it belongs to the eighth century. For it is clear that there is a very noteworthy palaeographical gap

between it and S. In fact, it *must* be very much older than S, and if we date S about 700, G is evidently brought very close to the date of M (about 850). It might even be argued that *heth* and *samekh* are more archaic in G than in M; Ancient Greek forms could be compared; one could notice the variety of types which could be accumulated by comparing the oldest North Semitic forms with both Greek and South Semitic, and even with the old linear characters in the Mediterranean coastlands. On these lines one might argue that G represents a very primitive type of the North Semitic alphabet. But, the greater the antiquity of the tablet, the more remarkable the practical identity of the North Semitic type in Moab and North Syria in 850-700, in contrast to the distinctive types in South Semitic and Old Greek. Moreover, from *one* type have arisen all subsequent developments in the various North Semitic alphabets (Aramean, Phoenician, Moabite, Hebrew). We need not speculate whether cuneiform was used in Palestine in the first millennium, or under what historical circumstances the common North Semitic alphabet made its appearance.<sup>1</sup> We can only recognize that in 850-700 B.C., a well-established and standard type—the ancestor of all the North Semitic subdivisions—was to be found in Moab and the extreme north of Syria, and that, from what we know of contemporary Hebrew history, it is to be presumed that the same type became known in Israel and Judah about the same period.

This argument, based upon our present knowledge of the old North Semitic script, leads to the conclusion that G does not represent an earlier and primitive script, older than, or even contemporary with M. The divergences, which, by the way, may be urged against the view that it served some official purpose, presuppose the established usage of the North Semitic type in Palestine, and one may compare the absence of uniformity on groups of epigraphical material—seals, pottery stamps, Jewish coins, or the interesting variations of individual styles on the Phoenician graffiti from Abydos in Egypt (about fourth century). G has variations which are quite intelligible from later Hebrew palaeography, and they indicate an early stage of transition. The presence of older forms in any inscription is not so significant as that of younger ones; but here, all are old, especially *samekh*, and only the general absence of

<sup>1</sup> On the use of cuneiform, *cp.* Conder, *Q.S.*, 1899, p. 348; Winckler, *Allorient. Forsch.*, III (1903), 165-174; Benzinger, *Hebr. Archäol.* (1907), pp. 176 *sq.* Gezer has revealed cuneiform tablets of the seventh century, and also of the Neo-Babylonian age (p. 106 above). At Mutesellim one was found in Stratum VI. The Hebrew material from this site (Schumacher, *figs.* 147 *sq.*, 166) is ascribed to V., and probably belongs to the end of it or else to VI (*see* Vincent, *Rev. Bibl.*, 1908, p. 430). Now, since VII "est apparemment hellénistique," VI ("aux derniers temps israélites") must surely cover the Persian period, and needs lower chronological limits than Prof. Vincent seems to ascribe (*viz.*, seventh to sixth century).

uniformity, and the forms of *vav*, *heth*, and *shade* can be urged against too early a date.<sup>1</sup> This appears to me to point conclusively to an early transitional alphabet, and I agree with Prof. Gray when he remarks: "judging by the writing, I should conclude that the inscription is later than the Moabite stone, and earlier than the Siloam Inscription" (p. 32). Yet, I am as much struck by the signs of transition from M, which he evidently recognizes, as by the gap which severs the tablet from S, and I can only feel that G may be used as an additional argument against dating S about 700 B.C. S, if placed early, embarrasses, and will always embarrass Hebrew palaeography, and it is noteworthy that Prof. Vincent, in ascribing G to the sixth century, simply leaves S out of the question. This, however, is a bold step, and it still implies that the development revealed by M, G, and S, actually occurred in about a century and a-half.<sup>2</sup>

Finally, if we agree that the workmanship of the tablet is of the roughest, the writer no court scribe, and the script the current one of his day, the archaeological evidence is important. G was not some monument of historical value, or a seal to be treasured; it does not suggest an official document, and, indeed, the indications—especially if it be a palimpsest—give it merely contemporary importance. It served its purpose, and was cast away. It was not found in the ruins of a house; it was found associated with some potsherds which led Mr. Macalister to assign the deposit to the sixth century. In this case, we can hardly imagine that the tablet was some heirloom two or three centuries old, still less that it was fixed to the walls of a Palestinian house throughout the period. It is true that Mr. Macalister's date is not an absolute one (p. 88), but, until the complete Memoir of Gezer is published, it would be hazardous to discuss the chronological limits. If I understand rightly, the deposit lay on mother-earth, below remains of the Greek period, and, because the tablet is thus pre-Seleucidan (at all events), and has every appearance of being written for contemporary purposes, and because it was associated with the characteristic Jewish ware (p. 293 *sq.*), I am led to infer that its probable date is "somewhere about the Exile" (p. 233).

<sup>1</sup> The three letters at the foot of G are somewhat cursive, and if  $\eta$  is to be read, an early date is impossible (but see  $\eta$  p. 297).

<sup>2</sup> I repeat that I am not able to follow Mr. Pilcher's late date for S (p. 289 above). As in 1904 (*Jew. Quart. Rev.*, XVI., 287), I find it impossible to fix the approximate date with any confidence, and while past writers have thought of the reigns of Ahaz, Hezekiah, or Manasseh, the palaeographical evidence scarcely hinders us from thinking of the time of Simon, son of Onias (Ecclus. I. 3, see the Hebrew text). Mr. Pileher's unorthodox view was by no means condemned by Prof. Burkitt (above, p. 287, n. 1), and his arguments deserve a far more careful attention than they have hitherto received. The discovery of the Gezer tablet, in any case, must raise the question whether S is, or is not, to be used in dating the Hebrew epigraphical material.

This does not disagree with the palaeographical evidence, which points to a period between the oldest North Semitic type of alphabet and the pottery stamps, which, on palaeographical and archaeological grounds, may be ascribed roughly to the Persian period. The date in question—about the sixth century—is that reached by Prof. Vincent on other grounds, and also accepted by Prof. Marti, and, although I lay no weight upon the linguistic arguments which both these scholars adopt, the fact remains that the palaeographical features of the Gezer tablet have not forced them to propose an earlier date, and that Prof. Gray in turn evidently recognizes that they point to a development later than the ninth century Moabite stone.

<sup>1</sup> *Postscript.*—Perhaps I have not sufficiently emphasized the fact that the attempts to indicate some of the chief types of old Hebrew are not necessarily to be taken as strictly accurate (*see* p. 294). In spite of the care of printers and author it is very difficult to do more than give the reader a rough idea of the general development. The further difficulty, that of obtaining accurate copies, or facsimiles, must also not be overlooked (*see* p. 295). For the sake of convenience I have used the facsimile of the Siloam inscription in the last edition of the *Hebrew Grammar* of Gesenius, by Kautzsch. But it may be pointed out that the letters differ from the alphabet in *P.S.B.A.*, XIX, 1897. Part 5 (*see ib.*, p. 175 *sq.*), and from that in *Q.S.*, 1897, p. 204; while, although a new facsimile of the inscription was prepared by the late Prof. Socin (*see Z.D.P.V.*, XXII, 61-64), this, again, is said not to be above criticism (Lidzbarski, *Ephem.*, I, 53).

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