

## NOTES AND QUERIES.

*New light upon incidents in the Exodus.*—An interesting sidelight on incidents in the Exodus is noted by Prof. C. M. Cobern in an illustrated article on Kadesh-Barnea (*Homiletic Review*, April, pp. 261 *sqq.*). “The mining and drilling of rocks was no rare thing in the Mosaic era.” “It is made plain by various texts that to strike the rock with official authority was a well-understood signal that the engineers were to begin work at that point at once.” In one old Egyptian text we read: “The gold appeared on the mountain at the mention of thy name! When thou didst speak: ‘come thou upon the mountain,’ it rained immediately! When the prince said: ‘I will have a well here,’ the water which was in the depth was obedient to him.” According to these old panegyrics “the Pharaoh had but to speak the word and lo! the water leaped from the living rock. No miracle was accomplished and no miracle was reported. It was simply the ordinary pictorial Oriental method of saying that the prince gave the command for the work to be done and it was done quickly and successfully.” That the Hebrews were accustomed so to describe similar achievements is fortunately settled by the old popular song, Num. xxi, 17 *seq.* “A well dug with a sceptre or staff is evidently one dug with picks at the command of the ruler who holds the sceptre and staff.” Professor Cobern goes on to say: “The finding of water at the needed moment and in the most unexpected place was a divine providence so marvellous that Kadesh-Barnea was always remembered as the scene of God’s special manifestation. The waters may have been hidden in the cliff from the time of the earth’s creation; but when at the command of Moses the limestone barrier was broken away, they poured forth in what still seems a miraculous stream.”

---