

AN EGYPTIAN LIST OF PALESTINIAN AMBASSADORS.

THE well-known Egyptologist, Prof. W. Max Müller, of the University of Pennsylvania, has described in a recent issue of the *Jewish Quarterly Review* (April, 1914, pp. 651-656) an Egyptian document of much interest for the early history of Palestine. The Russian Government, it seems, has published a magnificent collection of some of the papyri in the museum of Petrograd, containing many important texts dating from the "Middle Empire" (after 2000 B.C.). Among them is one hitherto unknown, consisting of what seems to be a list of official accounts "dealing principally with payments in grain from the royal granaries." "After closer examination," proceeds Prof. Müller, "it proves to contain a piece of great importance for the history of Palestine, which I believe my duty to bring directly to the knowledge of Biblical students. It is a list of Palestinian ambassadors to whom rations in grain and beer were measured out from the governmental magazines, probably at Thebes."

Referring readers to the *Jewish Quarterly Review* for Prof. Müller's article, we may state briefly the leading facts. The list appears twice in the papyrus, with some variants. It purports to be the account of the grain furnished to the nobles (*ma-ra-y-na*) of Syria (*Ṣa-hi*). A dozen towns in all are mentioned: (1) Megiddo, "The name stands first because of the very prominent part played by that city, not only during the first campaign of Thutmosis III. It had an important situation on the most direct road over the Carmel, connecting Palestine and Phoenicia." As is well known, the "hill-country of Megiddo (*har Megiddo*), the great battle-ground of nations, became the typical scene of the world-fight, and, in the form Armageddon, passes into the Apocalypse of St. John as the last great battlefield. (2) Kinneroth, the Naphtalite town. (3) *Y(a)-ka-si-pu*, apparently the Biblical Achshaph (on the border of Asher). (4) *Shama-du-na*, which Prof. Müller identifies with the name Shabbethon. (5) The familiar Taanach. (6) [*Ru*]-*sha-'a-ra*, explained conjecturally by Prof. Müller as "God's summit" (רֶאֱשִׁית אֱלֹהִים). (7) *Ti-n-ni*—a

problem; Dan or a mistake for *Ti-pu-nu* (Dibon) are hesitatingly suggested. (8) and (9) The familiar Sharon and Ashkelon. (10) *Hu-su-ra*, apparently Hazor. (11) *Ha-tu-ma* is unknown.

Prof. Müller observes: "The principal importance of this list is that it gives us an idea of those cities which in the time of Thutmosis III, *i.e.* after 1500 B.C., were seats of kings. Only an independent king would deal directly with the suzerain in Egypt; chiefs under his rule had, of course, to communicate through the agency of the king; otherwise it would have been high treason for them, just as Pharaoh could not tolerate one of his vassals to write to Assyria or to the king of the Hittites."

Especially noteworthy is the fact that Egypt pays for the maintenance of the messengers, or "nobles" as they are grandly styled. "This would agree with their coming as bearers of tribute or in other important functions. I feel doubtful whether every bearer of a tablet to the Egyptian court could claim support from the Egyptian officials on the road or those at Pharaoh's residence. Thus those 'messengers' may have had a somewhat exceptional character. At any rate, they were hardly an accidental gathering. The selection of names gives us the impression that a small caravan was formed in Galilee to keep company on the unsafe roads of Palestine"

Finally (12) in an isolated part of the papyrus we read "account of grain and beer for the messenger of *Ra-ki-sha* . . ." This is the first mention in an Egyptian text of Lachish and it supports the fact that the city was an important one even in the time of Thutmosis III.

Prof. Max Müller's study of this interesting document should be consulted by those who desire fuller and more technical information.

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