

Interesting facts concerning Belshazzar's sister have just been published by Père Dhorme. She was a priestess in the temple of the god Sin at Ur, from the shrine of which came the above-mentioned Nabonidus' cylinder.

XI. *Babylonian Contract Tablet, with Aramaic Text.*

In the *Revue d'Assyriologie* for 1914, a cuneiform engrossed tablet relating to a loan transaction is edited, with translation. The monetary amount concerned is stated to be a half-mina and 5 shekels (kaspā a-an $\frac{1}{2}$ ma-na 5 siqlu).

Around two edges of the tablet is incised an Aramaic docket confirming the financial sum in question, which reads:—

I כסף פרס
ש על נבורון II III

“Money amounting to 1 paras and 5 shekels against Nabû-riwan.” This proves conclusively that a paras was equivalent to half a mina.

The text is of some moment in connection with Daniel v, 25, where u-Pharsin (Peres of the LXX) is “halves of a mina”; and also mystically, as separating the mina into moities, meant “divide.” It also could convey the sense of Persian by a play upon the word.

The tablet is dated in the sixth year of Cyrus, and the first line notifies that the loan, which was graciously made by the deities Belit and Nana, was in “argent blanc,” so the mina in question was not the special gold mina.

DR. H. CLAY TRUMBULL AND KADESH-BARNEA.

By Prof. CAMDEN M. COBERN, Allegheny College,
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PROF. Camden Cobern, of Allegheny College, Meadville, U.S.A., has forwarded to the Secretary the following criticism, with a request for its insertion in the *Quarterly*, a request with which the Committee readily comply.

It must, however, be observed that the authors of the *Annual* (1914–15), trained observers and archaeologists, have carefully described facts supported by photographs.

No one looking at their photographs, Plates X, XI and XII, can fail to find Dr. H. C. Trumbull's description in pp. 272-5 ("written up from notes" on his return to America, see note p. 274) a very remarkable exaggeration of the scene, as now existing. Nor must it be forgotten that Dr. Trumbull's visit was a very hasty one by a traveller who was no expert, and whose party were in fear of attack by Arabs. His book, however, shows much careful study of the subject, and was especially sent out to our authors on that account. It must be added, in excuse for what may be allowed to be rather curt expressions of criticism on their part, that their book was written under pressure and without an opportunity of seeing proofs, both authors having volunteered for military service and joined the army before the book went to press.

J. D. C.

The recently published annual volume of the Fund, "The Wilderness of Zin," contains much interesting and valuable information, but a few paragraphs antagonistic to the location of Kadesh-barnea by Dr. Trumbull deserve some criticism. A number of minor imperfections, logical and philological, might be mentioned, but this other more serious matter overshadows these.

1. The fundamental structure of the argument is wrong. Mr. Lawrence evidently fails to appreciate the complexity of the problem, supposing that he has proved that 'Ain Kadeis could not be Kadesh-barnea because 'Ain el-Kuderat, and perhaps one or two other near-by places, have a better water supply. But that is a superficial fact perfectly well known to Rowlands and Trumbull as well as to the more recent explorers who still maintain the identification established by those two pioneer travellers.

Mr. Lawrence practically ignores Dr. Trumbull's argument in favor of the spring at 'Ain Kadeis being the Biblical spring, although this argument changed the opinions of the greatest living geographers in all lands.

2. It was Dr. H. Clay Trumbull who so powerfully summarized the argument that the district about 'Ain Kadeis—not the Arabah or some other far distant place—was the general locality represented by the Biblical Kadesh-barnea that, for a quarter of a century, this

has been accepted by scholars as one of the geographical certainties; but while our author finally admits that if the Bible is correct in its claims that the entire "tribal group" camped together at Kadesh-barnea, then this little group of springs and wells—all within some ten miles of 'Ain Kadeis—represents the only district in the Wilderness of Zin where such a body of people could be supplied with water—even building an argument in favor of 'Ain el-Guderat upon this fact—yet he does this without giving any credit whatever to Dr. Trumbull for this far-reaching and important identification. Instead of this he speaks of this epoch-making work as a book of "fantastic descriptions" written by "a Mr. H. C. Trumbull, an American."

3. Dr. Trumbull is most caustically criticised for his statements concerning the "verdant beauty" of the oasis at 'Ain Kadeis, with its "carpet of grass," its "fig trees," and "shrubs and flowers," amidst which birds were singing and bees were humming, and for his words concerning the fountain from which the "gurgling water" went "rippling and cascading along its narrow bed."

But it is noticeable that not one of the direct claims of Dr. Trumbull concerning his observations has been disproved. On the other hand Mr. Rowlands also mentions the birds, flowers, grass, and "cascades," and several later travellers, like myself, have seen most of the evidences of an "oasis" which Dr. Trumbull mentions. Indeed Mr. Rowlands, in his day, can say: "I have not seen such a lovely sight anywhere else in the whole desert—such a copious and lovely stream."

That Mr. Lawrence failed to see a rabbit or lark or quail, in his very brief visit, is no proof whatever that some other traveller may not have seen these. That the pool was very shallow when Mr. Lawrence visited it is no proof that it was the same depth when Dr. Trumbull saw it, or when the Israelites were camped near it. In Palmer's day Kossaima was little more than a desert, but it is now surrounded with gardens and palms.

What Dr. H. Clay Trumbull declared he saw, he most certainly did see. This distinguished gentleman was trusted and honored throughout the whole United States as the long-time editor of the most widely read religious periodical in America, if not in the world. His practical judgment, keen intelligence and wide knowledge, as one of the most active religious leaders of his time, caused him to be selected by Yale University for a course of lectures on

religious problems. His personal honor and transparent truthfulness were never challenged.

Dr. Trumbull, like most of us Americans, enjoyed using a rather tropical and Oriental rhetoric. This is the national *koina*. But errors of rhetoric are not to be confounded with errors of observation or untruthful statements. Even sub-tropical rhetoric can hardly be counted more culpable than a frigid rhetoric which is reticent of appreciation of pioneer work.

Undoubtedly Mr. Lawrence's crisp words were not written with the intention of thus undervaluing the work of Dr. Trumbull. The writer perfectly understands this. The unfortunate impression given to some on this side of the Atlantic is probably to be explained from the fact that Mr. Lawrence viewed this ancient site merely as a scientific observer, while Dr. Trumbull and others have viewed and reported it from the preacher's standpoint, and with the exuberant enthusiasm of those who supposed themselves to "stand where Moses stood." While congratulations are due to the authors for the splendid work done in this volume, may we not hope for the revision of these objectionable statements in the second edition?

NOTES AND QUERIES.

The Eastern Frontier of Egypt.—Through the kindness of Dr. Alan H. Gardiner the Library of the Fund has obtained a copy of an instructive pamphlet by C. Kùthmann, of Hanover, on the Eastern Frontier of Egypt.¹ The subject is discussed with all necessary thoroughness, and the following brief account will be especially interesting to our readers in view of the present situation.²

¹ *Die Ostgrenze Ägyptens: Inaugural-dissertation zur erlangung der Doktorwürde genehmigt von der philosophischen Fakultät der Friederich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin*, von C. Kùthmann, Hanover. (W. Drugulin, Leipzig, 1911.) Presented to the Library by Dr. Gardiner (see *Q.S.*, Jan., p. 9).

² For general information, readers may be referred to the articles on "The Exodus" and "Goshen," by Prof. W. Max Müller, in the *Encyclopaedia Biblica*, col 1437 *sqq.*, 1758 *sq.*