THE JEWISH INSCRIPTION FROM 'AIN DUK.

By RABBI A. MARMORSTEIN, PH.D., Jews' College.

All students of Jewish history, to whom Father Vincent's article in the Revue Biblique (1919) is not accessible, will surely feel greatly indebted to Mr. S. A. Cook for his comments on and review of the inscription in the Quarterly Statement, 1920, April, pp. 82-87. There is no need to point out the great importance of the find. The endeavours of Father Vincent, Prof. Clermont-Ganneau, and of Mr. Cook show clearly the difficulties as well as the importance of the new inscription. Jewish literature is, we think, the best help in dealing with the many problems facing the archaeologist. We may be permitted to offer a few remarks on this subject.

In lines 1 and 4 occur the phrase "כרים לם, דבויי לם or לם דבויי. This figure of speech reminds us of the similar words which are placed at the head of memorial lists found so frequently in the fragments coming from the Cairo Geniza. Such memorial lists were published by M. Gaster (in the Gedenkbuch für David Kaufmann, p. 241), by J. Greenstone (Jew. Qy. Rev., n.s. 1, p. 43 ff.), by S. Poznański (Rev. Ét. Juives, 51, 52; 66, pp. 60–74), by G. Margoliouth (Catalogue of Heb. MSS., British Museum, Or. 5549, 1). Some of these lists are headed by the formula:

דכּרֶנּ חֶבּרְנֶה לָמַּא נֶמֶשַּׁעְלְאוֹר דְּמֶשַּׁעְלְאוֹר דְּמֶשַּׁעְלְאוֹר דְּמֶשַּׁעְלְאוֹר דְּמֶשַּׁעְלְא

(Gaster, l.c., p. 241). MS. Adler No. 2953, 3, reads also:

דכּרֶנּ חֶבּרְנֶה לָמַּא נֶמֶשַּׁעְלְא

It is identical with the similar formula used in the Rabbinic writings:

(see M. Baba Mezia, p. 60A; Pal. Berachoth, 12C; Bab. Sanh. 2B; Bab. Hullin, 54A; Bab. Tuanith, 10B; cf. Zunz, Zwr
THE JEWISH INSCRIPTION FROM ‘AIN DUK.

Geschichte und Literatur, p. 308, and M. Güdemann, Geschichte des Unterrichtswesens, p. 154; H.B., XIV, 44). The phrase is used with reference to the living as well as to those departed from this world (v. Reifmann in Ozar Tob, 1881, p. 40; R.E.J., IV, p. 228, and LXX, p. 109).

In line 2 we read בִּכְמִית הַרְכָּמֶה. In Palestinian documents and writings there is a tendency to spell the words plene, whilst the Babylonians write defective. Instances for this fact are given, and other interesting observations on this subject can be found in Rapoport’s Letters, אבות תייר עָרָה, pp. 63, 158, and 180. Benjamin is styled יִתְנָה, which may be either instead of ויִתְנָה, כֶּרֶס, or ‘ד הָרְכָּמֶה, or ‘דכֶרֶס, the community, the city. Jewish literature is still lacking a useful monograph on the history of the title and dignity of the Parnas. Some valuable hints are given in A. Büchler’s The Political and the Social Leaders of the Jewish Community of Sepphoris in the Second and Third Centuries. London, 1909 (Index s.v. Parnas). In the documents from the Geniza the family name יִתְנָה is not unusual. To the meaning of the word, v. M. Sachs, Beiträge zur jüd. Sprach. und Altertumskunde I, p. 100, note, and M.G.W.J., III, p. 36.

Line 3. The name is often to be found in Palestinian sources, e.g., ר יִתְנָה בֶּר (Jer. Tuan., 63c); ר יִתְנָה בֶּר אֶבֶּר (J. Hq, 79a); ר יִתְנָה בֶּר רָבִּי (J. Tuan., 64a); see Z. Frankel, Introductio in Talmud Hierosolymitanum (Breslau), p. 99 f.

Lines 6 and 10 see Targum Onkelos Ex., 29, 31, and Targum Escl. 8, 10.

Line 8 see Bab. Sanh. 110A, with R. Eleazar’s remarks (3rd cent.) on Deut. xi, 6 (“and all the substance [A.V., R.V. ‘every living thing’] that followed them”):

אֵין אֱלֹהִים שֶל אִישׁ שֶה שְׁמֵי שֶםֶדֶרֶשׁ עָלֶיהָ יִתְנָה.

R. Eleazar says, “this is a man’s wealth which places him on his feet,” see also Bab. Pes. 119A. We find also the word מַכְּהָה, in the meaning of “property,” e.g., Gen. rab. 73, and Levit. rab. 5.

1 See MS. Bodl. 2878, 88; 2878, 1 and 11; Tayler-Schechter (Cambridge), 24, 49.

2 Gen. rabba 73, 4. R. Levi ben Zechariah says: “Before a woman gives birth to a child, she is being blamed for every offence; after she gave birth to a child:

תְּמוּנָה הֵבִיבִא מַכְּהָה בַּרְכַּה

תְּמוּנָה הֵבִיבִא מַכְּהָה בַּרְכַּה.
Line 9 cannot be read ניקנה, it is certainly ניקנה means in later Hebrew “contribution,” e.g., in the Chronicle of Abraham Ibn Daud (ed. Neubauer, Mediaeval Jewish Chronicles, I, p. 67):

הקדמ להב יהודיה סבה שכטת חוק שול של ישיבת

The lacuna may be filled in perhaps: החנה כינת חוקית “and those who have offered their contributions”?

Who ate this good thing? Thy son. Who broke this valuable thing? Thy son.” Lev. rabba 5, 8, R. Acha says: “There is a woman who understands the way of borrowing things, and there is another who does not understand the way of borrowing things. The woman who knows how to borrow comes to her neighbour, although the door is open, she knocks at it, and says: ‘Peace be with you, my neighbour! How do you do? How is your husband? How are your children? May I come in?’ She (the neighbour) says: ‘Well, come in! What can I no for you?’ She says: ‘אינך תמקה פלונית תחת ולית. Have you got such and such a thing, could you give it to me? She says ‘yes!’” R. Abbahu, in the name of R. Jochanan, says: “That is the order of a σύμφωνα (σύμφωνα, agreement): I, X, the son of Z, marry you, Y, the daughter of P, on the condition to give you פלון פלון כמות פייל, such and such property (or amount of money).” Jer. Gittin 7, 6, see also Jer. Maaser Sheni 5, 3, פלון בִּיב בִּיב מְכָה פלון נית, “My son X shall take this or that property (valuable thing).”

1 “And before this time, for some reason, the contribution for the Academies were cut off,” v. R. E. J., LXX, p. 102, note 1, where בה מד is a misreading for להב.