

"MACCABAEAN" WARE.

By The REV. J. GARROW DUNCAN, M.A., B.D., F.S.A. (Scot.).

IN his discussion of the use of the term "Maccabæan Pottery" Mr. FitzGerald (*Q.S.*, October, pp. 189 *sqq.*) suggests that the term "Hellenistic" is the fittest to describe everything belonging to the period 313-67 B.C., and that the terms "Seleucid" "Greek" and "Maccabæan" should be dropped—especially "Maccabæan." To my mind this would mean a great loss of precision in description and dating. The term "Hellenistic," which he would confine to the period above named, I have always pointedly used to describe pottery which shows Greek influence, and I have discovered that it covers a very much longer period than he suggests. Greek influence made itself felt in Palestine probably as early as the 7th century B.C. Among my own finds there is one lamp which has been assigned to a very early period of Greek influence, at least the 5th or 6th century B.C., by one of the leading experts in Palestinian ware; and as our knowledge of the archaeology of Palestine advances, I am confident that we shall be compelled to extend the limits of the Hellenistic to cover a much longer and earlier period than the writer suggests.

The term "Seleucid" is properly used to describe pottery which is either Greek or shows Greek influence, belonging to the period defined by Mr. FitzGerald. The term "Greek" is correctly applied to pottery made in Greece and imported from Greece. There is no mistaking it. No one in Palestine was ever able to reproduce the fine black burnishing, the colouring and decoration. I have found many fragments of this pottery which had been imported from Greece, and I have used the term "Greek" consistently to describe this purely Greek imported ware. Some of this ware I have found only a few inches above the "Exilic" Hebrew stratum. It must therefore belong to a period very near to the 5th century B.C.

As for the term "Maccabæan," there is no other appropriate term to describe pottery of the Maccabæan Period, 160-50 B.C.

And as for the contention that there is no such thing as a characteristic ware of the Maccabaeian Period, it seems to me a pure assumption.

It may seem easier to connect two or three different classes of ware and label them by the broad term "Hellenistic"; but I feel that there has been in the past a too great tendency to take refuge in comprehensive and indefinite terms. In the period between 597 B.C. and 50 B.C. there are at least five different classes of ware to account for—Exilic, Post-exilic, Seleucid or Greek, Maccabaeian and Roman.

There is first the ware of the "Exilic" Period. Hitherto we have ignored it and spoken only of Pre-exilic and Post-exilic ware. No one ever thought of mentioning "Exilic" ware, and no one seems to have thought of trying to find some basis of differentiation between Exilic, Post-exilic, and Pre-exilic. Dr. Stanley A. Cook very aptly drew attention to this anomaly, viz., that we never speak of ware of the Exilic Period. Yet there must be a class of pottery found in Palestine which is attributable to this period, say between 597 B.C. and the building of the walls by Nehemiah, or the coming of Alexander the Great.¹ This blank I think I have been able to fill up, at least in part. Certain types of ware found in Ophel are undoubtedly to be attributed to the Exilic Period, and I have dated them accordingly, using the term "Exilic." The term "Exilic" at once suggests Hebrew ware of the period of the Exile, and avoids the indefiniteness of the term "Post-exilic," which may mean anything, and may even include ware of the present day, but which ought to describe Hebrew ware after the period of Nehemiah.

It appears to me that this tendency to take refuge in vagueness is what the writer would be encouraging when he suggests that the term "Hellenistic" be used to describe everything from the end of the 4th century B.C. down to 65 B.C. My purpose has been to fill up the blanks and throw light on the dark periods in our dating, wherever evidence permits. From the time of Hezekiah to the beginning of the Exile (c. 725-597 B.C.) is one dark period. There is nothing yet known that we can describe as typical of the period, and we are driven to the conclusion that the potteries of that time continued to reproduce the same classes of ware as are assigned to the earlier period, until definite evidence is secured.

From the return of the Exiles with Nehemiah down to the end of the 4th century B.C., i.e., about 442-313 B.C., the beginning of the

¹ See Dr. Cook's remarks at the end.

Seleucid Era, is another dark period. So far as Ophel is concerned I have not found any distinctive Hebrew ware which can without doubt be assigned to that period. This is the period that ought properly to be described as *Post-exilic*. When Nebuchadnezzar carried away the ablest and most skilful of the artisans with him, the pottery on Ophel seems to be marked by immediate deterioration. Certainly Exilic ware cannot compare in quality with Pre-exilic Hebrew ware, but I have not found any Hebrew ware which shows any marked improvement that might be attributed to the return of more skilful artisans with Nehemiah.

The period succeeding the last (313-150 B.C.), known as the Seleucid or Greek Period proper, is marked by pottery which is characteristically Greek, or imitation of Greek ware.

It is possible also that Greek influence can be traced in some of the pottery of the Maccabean Age (160-50 B.C.), just as no doubt purely Greek pottery continued to some extent to be imported also in their time.

But to accuse the Maccabees of Hellenising by naming their pottery "Hellenistic," is the last thing I should think of. On the contrary, I have felt all through that the Maccabees were strongly antagonistic to, and desired to uproot, all foreign influence. Their one aim and object was a return to Hebrew purity and exclusiveness. Nor is it exact to say that there is no ware which may be described as characteristically Maccabean. For (1) the western hill, popularly known as Zion, is, at a certain depth, packed full of the finely baked and excessively thin pottery which I found in enormous quantities on the face of the eastern wall and tower of Ophel. This ware is often little thicker than an egg-shell, and it is impossible to rebuild a broken vessel. Wherever a site was being excavated for the cisterns of a new house on the western hill I made a careful examination, and everywhere I found abundance of this ware. On Ophel I found it always on the stratum above late Hebrew ware, notably in front of the small turret at the northern end of our excavations and just north of the north step bastion of the Jebusites. There I found it almost in juxtaposition with the inscribed Hebrew handles which I have assigned to the Exilic Period. On no occasion have I found the well-known Roman ribbed ware, or any other well-known type of Roman ware, mixed with this type of ware, which I have called "Maccabean." I have, on the other hand, frequently found the latter on the stratum

above purely Greek mixed with Hellenistic ware, *i.e.*, ware showing Greek influence. Further, on the western hill I found characteristic Roman ware at a higher level, practically on the surface, while this "Maccabaeian" ware was at least 8-10 feet down. On Ophel we found characteristic Roman ware inside the city, and numberless fragments of stone vessels of the Roman Period, but I found none of these mixed with this fine, brittle, sharply ringing ware, which I believe I am right in assigning to the Maccabaeian Period.

I have found many other proofs of Josephus' statement that Simon Maccabaeus scraped the upper end of Ophel bare and threw most of it into the Tyropoeon Valley. Some of his sweepings he threw also over the eastern wall, and I attribute the great deep layers of this particular class of pottery and of other types found on the face of the wall to this activity of Simon Maccabaeus. The inverted and mixed stratifications at certain parts amply testify to the truth of this statement of Josephus, so that there is little doubt that this ware belongs to the Maccabaeian Age. It cannot be Roman, as the stratification everywhere attests. And there is nothing to justify us in describing it as Hellenistic. We can only call it Hellenistic or Seleucid by agreeing to assign it to a much earlier date than the Maccabaeian Age, and in that case we are left with a greater problem to solve.

The thin, ribbed pottery which Mr. FitzGerald refers to on *Q.S.* p. 191 (*d*) I found invariably in the same stratum, and never in conjunction with any definitely established type of Roman ware, but always with other types belonging to the Maccabaeian Age. (2) The writer admits that there is a type of lamp which is recognized as characteristically Maccabaeian. The two characteristic types of Maccabaeian lamps that I know are exactly the same type of ware as the class above described—exceedingly thin, red and yellow ware, very crisply baked. This is significant, and bears out what I say. (3) A third instance of this same type of thin, crisp, red and yellow ware is the class of tiny vases which I have described as children's toy pottery or unguent vases. When I showed a collection of these to a highly educated Jewish lady, who has a good knowledge of the antiquities of her people, she at once set them down as small vases for holding the precious ointments imported from Persia and the Far East. Modern imitations of some forms of these are sold as curios, I believe, in the Syrian Orphanage in Jerusalem, and other imitations

can be picked up as salt-cellars, etc., in ordinary grocers' shops. These vases unquestionably belong to the Maccabaeon Period, and may be described as characteristically Maccabaeon. They correspond to the alabaster unguent pots of Egypt and are only a little smaller. (4) The small "close fold-over" lamps found in such numbers in the same stratum as above are an example of the Maccabaeon reversion to the types used by their ancestors. Here again the ware is of that same excessively fine, thin, crisply baked type described above. A saucer or complete bowl of this ware rings almost like modern china when one taps it.

It is clear, therefore, that here we have struck a class of ware that may be fairly described as characteristic. It was used in the manufacture of every form of vase and domestic utensil—platters, saucers, cups, bowls, jugs, vases, lamps, cooking-vessels and simpulae. It varied in thickness from $\frac{3}{32}$ inch to $\frac{1}{8}$ and $\frac{3}{16}$ inch. So far as Ophel is concerned, all the evidence points to its being Maccabaeon.

(5) Another type of ware belonging to the same period, and which I have always found in the stratum which I call the "Maccabaeon," is the mottled greenish-grey ware mentioned in the *Q.S.*, January, 1925, p. 22, 8. This ware is undoubtedly of the same class and date as the above. It shows the same careful mixture of the paste and the same crisp baking. Though it is slightly thicker, as being part of a large jug or water-pot, it is exceedingly light, and belongs to the same period when it was recognized that strength of fabric may be attained by careful mixture of paste and careful baking, instead of the clumsy lumpiness of earlier Hebrew ware.

(6) Another well-known Maccabaeon type is the ointment-vase, with long thin neck, long solid stem, and the small suddenly bulging body between them. Everyone is familiar with this type, and here again the characteristics of paste-mixture thinness and baking are markedly the same. Some of these are of excessively thin ware.¹

(7) Another instance of this type of thin, hard-baked ware, is the cooking-pot with one or two, if not more, small spouts, with a hole

¹ I regret that I have not the illustrations of the various classes of ware which I have described as Maccabaeon beside me, and I write from notes and memory. Some specimens of the rougher and shorter type of ointment vase have, I know, been found in Delos.

that would barely admit a pin, to serve as steam-escapes. These pots must have had lids. In the cooking-pots with lids, the lids of this period also are the first which I have found with a small hole pierced through the handle for the escape of steam. These are usually of the very thin, finely ribbed class. The lids used in "Earlier Hebrew" pottery have no provision of this kind for steam-escape.

(8) To this period belongs also the peculiar type of water-jug (for drinking) with a narrow neck and aperture, sometimes $\frac{1}{8}$, sometimes $\frac{1}{4}$, inch in diameter. Into this aperture fitted a small, pointed stopper. We found numbers of these necks, and beside them the stoppers.

These also may be described as characteristically Maccabaeian. The ware shows the same qualities of crispness and thinness. (9) Bowls with stands which resemble modern fruit-bowls, decorated internally with brown concentric rings, also belong to the period. They were made also of the ordinary white limestone, and even in the limestone specimens the same predilection for fineness and lightness is shown. (10) There are also the white or yellow cylindrical jugs or vases—with handles and without handles—of frequent occurrence. These narrow at the shoulder and expand again at the rim. Some measured 11 inches in height, $5\frac{1}{4}$ inches at the widest, $3\frac{3}{4}$ inches at base and rim. A feature of this class is the one slender handle rising from the shoulder and joining at the rim. Many varieties of this yellowish-white pottery were found, and again its main characteristic is its excessive thinness and crispness. (11) Other features of Maccabaeian ware are the perfectly formed and pronounced ring bases and the curious spiral finish on the base, though these are not confined to ware of that period. (12) Of 18 different designs of incised and relief decoration on pottery which I found in the Maccabaeian stratum none can be described as "Palmettas" (if by that term palm-leaves are meant). Of those in relief one, however, is a leaf or flower-bud design; several are elaborate floral scroll designs on the body, with a conventional triangle or boss design running round the rim. Of the incised designs, some are a stamped flower, half-blown or full-blown. Others are simply a symmetrical design of spiral lines or punch holes. "Concentric circles" do not occur. Of the brown painted ware referred to (*Q.S.*, October, 1925, p. 191 [a]) I have found one specimen with what resembles a sprig of ivy painted in white on a brown background running

round it just under the rim. This may be "a conventional wreath." One specimen has rude figures in white upon a red background and another has a nondescript pattern of brown or red on a white background. All of them, however, are of the same very thin, crisply baked ware mentioned above. The last-mentioned specimen is decorated internally and ribbed externally. The painted decoration may be imitation of Greek, but the ware is undoubtedly Maccabaeian.

(13) The ware which I have elsewhere described as "burned black" or "carbonized," and which has never had a trace of paint near it, is also, I believe, Maccabaeian.

(14) As for the pots of "highly burnished red ware" with the peculiar, short, cylindrical stump, which are by some assigned to the Maccabaeian Period, I believe the form, composition, and the baking of these vessels may justify this date assigned to them; but I am aware that they are assigned by many to an earlier period, and a mixed stratification is not always reliable.

Instead, therefore, of refusing any individuality to the Maccabaeian Dynasty, which after all covered a period of over 100 years and was a very pronounced movement in the direction of re-establishing Hebrew taste, thought, feeling and belief, and merging them, with all their products, as poor imitators, under the general term "Hellenistic," I think facts compel us to admit the use of the term "Maccabaeian." Personally, I feel that the term "Hellenistic" might be used as a generic term, covering everything from, say, 500 B.C. downwards that shows traces of Greek influence, but it might be better to drop it altogether, and retain only the terms "Exilic," "Post-exilic," "Seleucid," "Maccabaeian" and "Roman," especially in reference to Palestinian remains in the neighbourhood of Jerusalem. It should be noted that the terms "Exilic" and "Post-exilic," and "Pre-exilic," have a special significance as applied to that part of Palestine.

Mr. FitzGerald closes his article with the words, "Since it will hardly be contended that undecorated wares are of any great assistance," *i.e.*, in dating. This is surely a curious statement, and one to which few can subscribe. To myself, who have been accustomed for the past two years to dating and classifying pottery almost solely by its paste, baking, form and finish, and to one who knows Neolithic ware and ware of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd Bronze Ages, it seems a

somewhat rash statement to make. Mr. FitzGerald would apparently confine all sure dating to the basis of decoration. I note also that all through his statement he takes no account of the peculiarities of the ware, whereas most experts in Palestinian pottery—or, in fact, in any class of pottery—consider this a most essential factor in dating.

[*Note on the term "Exilic," p. 34 above.*—My criticisms concerning the failure to insert an "Exilic" Period between the "Pre-exilic" and "Post-exilic" (*Q.S.*, April, p. 100) go much deeper than merely calling attention to an obvious lacuna in the terminology. Frankly, I dislike all three terms, and I am averse from prematurely associating archaeological periods with the Biblical history except as provisional and popular pegs for assisting the memory or as stepping-stones to a more scientific terminology. The two terms "Pre-exilic" and "Post-exilic" are illogical without the third, and I should agree with Mr. Duncan that the term "Post-exilic"—if it is to be used at all—should begin with Nehemiah (c. 442 B.C., p. 34) rather than earlier (*viz.*, Age of Zerubbabel). Moreover, I should not expect any notable cultural improvement then, whereas the fall of Jerusalem was more likely to leave its mark on the archaeology. I should also agree that the Maccabaeon Age would mean a prominence of more typically Jewish types as a reaction against foreign influence, but I should not have thought that it lasted long, nor do I care to see the term "Hellenistic" stretched as Mr. Duncan suggests. It is above all necessary to consider very carefully whether terms are purely historical (like Seleucid), cultural (like Hellenistic) or Biblical, in the wider sense (like Jewish and Maccabaeon), and in trying to arrive at a decision it is important to have before us different points of view, like those of Mr. FitzGerald and of the Rev. Duncan.—S. A. Cook.]
