

In none of these is there any resemblance to the two letters of the Lachish text, which Dr. Sayce runs into one; whereas, taken separately, they are both well-known forms of the *Heh* and *Nun*. The suggestion of the scholar who does not append his name to his proposal is equally unsatisfactory. He neglects the *Nun* altogether: The *Heh* to which he would give the additional crooked stroke is one of the most constant letters of the Phœnician alphabet.



The early forms are as shown. None of them have more than four strokes. Both the proposed readings must therefore, I think, be rejected, as unsupported by any extant evidence—so far as I am aware. Both scholars seem to me to be puzzled by the last letter but one, which they render *Mim*, though it is closely like a form of *Vau* known from the seals of 8th cent. B.C.

THE HEBREWS ON THE TELL AMARNA TABLETS.

By MAJOR CONDER, R.E.

IN the excellent translations of some of these invaluable letters by Father A. J. Delattre, S.J., it is noticed that the name of Canaan is spelt with the same sign which is used in the name of Gaza, to represent the Hebrew guttural \aleph , not with the value *Kh* or *Gh*, but with the value 'a. This agrees with what I have already published as to the 'A *biri* in these letters being the Hebrews. As the task of translation goes on it becomes apparent that the language and the system of characters used by the chiefs of Phœnicia and Canaan who were subject to the King of Egypt are neither of them purely Assyrian or Babylonian, but represent the Phœnician or Amorite language and writing of the age of Joshua.

BAAL GAD.

By MAJOR CONDER, R.E.

THIS is a somewhat important place, being the north limit of the Land of Israel according to the Book of Joshua (xi, 17; xiii, 5). Robinson placed it at Baniyas, but its position is defined in the two passages as being "in the valley of Lebanon, under Mount Hermon," and the region inhabited by the Gîblites is said to have extended thence to the entrance to Hamath. It seems to me, therefore, more probable that it should be

sought on the north side of Hermon, since Baniyas could not be described as being in the valley of Lebanon, being in the Jordan Valley.

There is an important spring called 'Ain Jideideh, on the north of Hermon, on the road from Damascus to Beirut, and the plain here is called the Plain of Jideideh. This is close to the south end of the valley of Lebanon, and is at the foot of the north spurs of Hermon. The name comes from the root *جد*, the same from which the Hebrew Gad is taken. It appears to me, therefore, that no position could be more suitable for Baal Gad, and that the name is preserved at a spring, as are the names of several ancient cities in Palestine, such as Chezib, for instance.

NOTES ON THE QUARTERLY STATEMENT.

By MAJOR CONDER, R.E.

DR. POST'S useful papers on the population sometimes apply rather to the Christian town population of Syria than to the peasantry of Palestine proper, or to the nomadic Arabs. Most of his statements I am able to confirm, as far as my six years' experience goes, but at times his experience is different to my own.

Pp. 110-111. The word *fás*, pl. *fás*, was usually applied in my hearing not to a hatchet (an instrument I never remember seeing among the peasantry), but to the common hoe.

For the axe the Turkish word *Batta* I found to be commonly employed.

P. 114. The form *murej* instead of *nurej* for the threshing sledge can hardly be considered a "corruption," because it is the older form, being the Hebrew *moreg*, and this is a proof of the archaic character of the peasant dialect.

P. 117. One custom in connection with the harvest, which may be regarded as superstitious or religious, Dr. Post does not mention, namely, leaving the corner of the field unreaped. Such a custom existed among the Celts in our own islands, and exists among the peasantry in India. In both cases the untilled part was sacred to the genius of the ground.

P. 121. The hyssop is often identified with the *Origanum*, as Dr. Post proposes, but Dr. Chaplin pointed out to me that the plant called *Miriamtyeh* is used to the present day much as hyssop was used, and grows on the walls of ruins as the hyssop is described to have grown in the Bible. This is the *Satureia*, a kind of plant resembling mint, and believed by scholars to be the *ῥύσσωπος*, or hyssop of the Greeks. The *Za'ter*, which is properly the thyme, never, as far as I know, grows on walls, and is therefore hardly to be identified with hyssop. It is very common on the soft chalky hills throughout Palestine.