

tumble down. Recently some excavations were made east of the tombs but without result.

(h) About 160 feet south of this tomb were found, at the time when the tomb was discovered, the cribs or mangers of the "Asnerie" of the Middle Ages, about 7 feet under ground; so at that time the level of the ground was 9 or 10 feet lower than now, and the whole face of the tomb was above ground, and visible. Very likely the *arched buildings* then stood in front of the tomb. The whole accumulation of earth is of later date.

(i) Captain Conder, in *Quarterly Statement*, 1881, page 202, gives a view and plan of another rock-cut tomb found in this region 500 feet west of this one, which he thinks might have been "the real tomb of our Lord" (page 205), so that every one may choose which he likes from the three we now have.

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### III.

JERUSALEM, *January 2nd*, 1892.

A few months ago the American Consul here, Dr. Merrill, made some excavations at the American burial ground, near the Neby Daud building, and invited me to come and see what he had found. It was the basement of once a large building, standing on a floor of concrete 5 feet under the surface. There is only *one* layer of well dressed but large stones, over 3 feet high. A projecting pier has no indications, except northwards, of having been connected with walls, but was a pier standing by itself; it seemed to me to be Christian work, and not Jewish; perhaps a part of the large old Church of Zion. North of it other pieces of masonry, very likely from the same or some adjoining building, were found, but I could not make much out of them.

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### LETTER FROM MR. G. R. LEES ON LAMPS, &c.

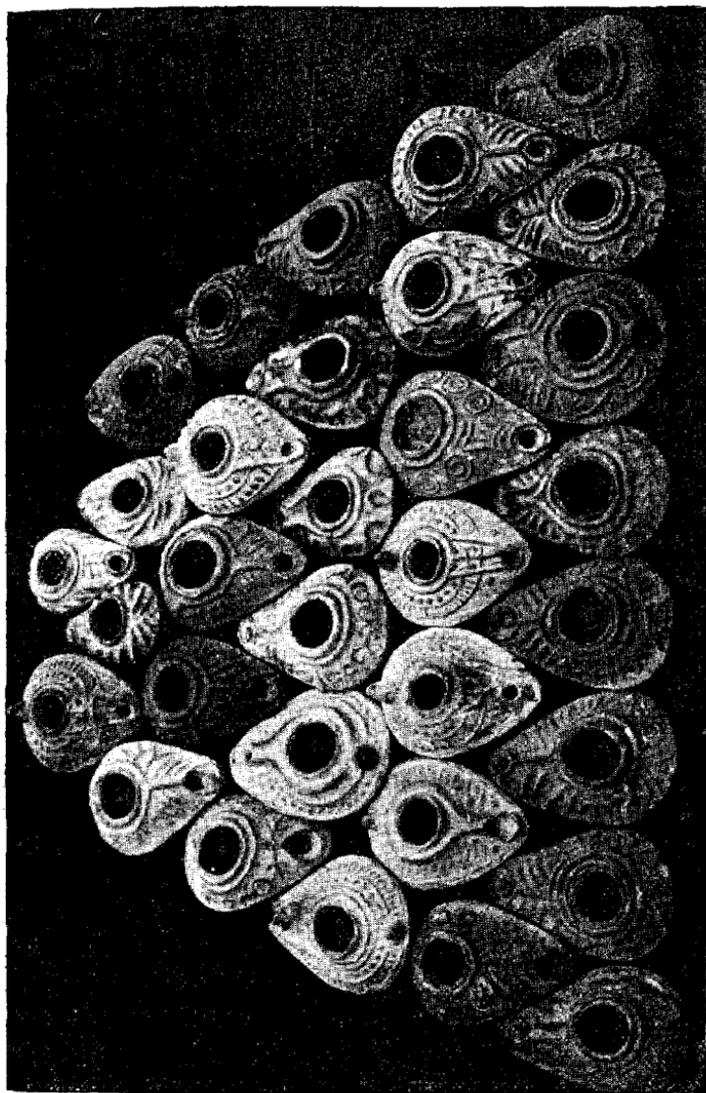
JERUSALEM, *December 16th*, 1891.

Two other tombs have been opened below the Mount of Olives, and one contained a lamp and tear bottle, exactly like those found in the tombs containing the sarcophagus on which was the name Drosos, see *Quarterly Statement*, 1891, page 243.

The acquisition of this lamp is of great value to me, as it enables me to date a large number, and I think I can trace several changes in lamps of this and an earlier period. I hope soon to send you photographs with descriptions of lamps.

In passing, I may say that whenever lamps are found in the vicinity of Jerusalem, I visit the place, if possible, and purchase the pottery direct from the owner and finder, giving commission to my informant. I have intimate friendly relations with a native here, who works well and

honestly for me. Many times has he been tried and tested, and after three years I still find him trustworthy. He brought me the *Pottery*



[From a Photograph.]

LAMPS IN THE COLLECTION OF MR. LEES.

*Mask* from a Fellah who brought chickens from Gaza to the Jerusalem market. The man said it was found near Ascalon.

It is undoubtedly ancient, and very much worn; of very light red pottery, quite unlike anything made at the present time. The back part is 4 inches long and 3 inches wide; length of face  $3\frac{1}{4}$  inches from forehead to chin; from the top of forehead to back of head 2 inches. Originally there was a hole at each side, showing that it must have been tied to something, but one is now broken.

I have since received another mask, very similar, but much more worn and badly broken.

I fully recognise the importance of sending squeezes instead of copies of inscriptions, and shall endeavour to do so, when practicable. Unfortunately, I was unable to do this at Busr-el-Hareer, and after many attempts I failed to secure good squeezes of the lamps.



### THE HEBREW-PHOENICIAN INSCRIPTION OF TELL EL HESY.

I HAVE received the cast of the inscription of the fragment of Tell el Hesy, and I thank you very much for it.

Had I seen it sooner I should have proposed a reading and translation different from those suggested to me by the sight of the drawing, imperfect in certain respects, published in the *Quarterly Statement*, 1891, pp. 70, 240, and 250; different also from those previously proposed by Major Conder, Professor Sayce, and your anonymous correspondent.

I am now of opinion that the four readings: להנדך, לסמך, להמדך, and להשך must be equally rejected. An attentive examination of the cast now leads me to read להוסך. M. Renan, to whom I have submitted it, is of the same opinion, and I think that persons, competent in Semitic paleography, will easily agree to it.

The first and the last letter are unquestionably *lamed* and *caph*.  
 $\begin{matrix} 4 & 3 & 2 & 1 \\ \text{ד} & \text{ל} & \text{ל} & \text{כ} \end{matrix}$ . The second letter presents all the constitutive elements of a *he*: a nearly vertical stroke to which are joined, on the left, three