

of Helena dates about 50 A.D., and there is a tomb with a Hebrew text in the large cemetery round the so-called "Tomb of the Judges." The tombs in the Hinnom Valley are Christian tombs, in some cases as late as the ninth century A.D., as shown by their inscriptions. They were mainly cut for the monks of the Church of St. Sion, as recorded in the texts.

P. 307. Herr Baldensperger's further paper shows that the Questions issued by the Fund are capable of receiving very exact answers. The fellahin differ from the Arabs: (1) In never praying facing the east; (2) In visiting the tombs on Thursday. The Arabs only visit tombs when passing. The idea of the Mahdi fighting Satan at Lydda is inherited from an ancient Jewish belief, noticed in the Talmud, which points to the same site for the contest. The fellahin seem to confuse Ed Dejjâl with Dejjan or Dagon. The old custom of the female Nazerite, noticed in the Mishnah, seems also to survive (p. 317) in a distorted legend. The sprinkling of blood is also observed by the Arabs of the desert; and a story of the Moabite Arabs (see "Heth and Moab") speaks of Antar's mother hung up by her eyelashes.

P. 330. There is only one Stone of Proclamation noticed in the Mishnah ("Taanith," iii, 8); it was a stone on which men stood to proclaim lost property, and had no connection with any trial.

THE CITY SEHLALA.

By MAJOR CONDER, R.E., D.C.L., &c.

THE only city noticed in connection with the wars of Aziru against Geba in the Tell Amarna tablets which I could not discover in the vicinity was Sehlala, but on further search I find a village in one of the valleys east of Batrun (the Batruna of the tablets) called Beit Shelalah, which is probably the place in question. The letter in which it is noticed is much broken, but the central part runs as follows (158B):—

ù s'arrabunum ina amati rinum ù caru rabu zabi
 Ali Sehlali ù anuma inririr istu alu Irapada ù nacu ina
 Ali Tsumura ù yanu amili sa asbunum ina cari rabi si ù anumma amili
 sa asbunum ina cari rabi si Sabilu Bilimianu Maya Arzaya
 anumma IV amili sa asbunum ina cari rabi si ù icbunum sunu ana yasi
 lizipanna simi istu suti zabi Ali Sehlali ù huse izzina istu suti zabi Ali
 Sehlali xxv sa iducunum Sehlali ù inuma babi ici
 zabi unuti istu Ali Tsumuri anumma la adru udeku
 zaribunum Khazanuti ena panica

The translation, though rendered difficult by the breaks in the text, appears to be—

"And they had rebelled from the orders . . . they had
 and the fortress the soldiers of the City of Sehlala, and now it

was aided by the City of Arpad, and . . . from the City of Semyra, but not by the men who dwelt in her fortress, and these are the chiefs who had lived in her fortress, Sabilu, Bilimtanu, Maya . . . Arzaya. These are the four chiefs who dwelt in her fortress, and they had said to me, May we hide from destruction by the hands of the soldiers of the City of Sehlala, and help to take us away from the hands of the soldiers of the City of Sehlala, . . . twenty-four whom they will slay . . . Sehlala, and lo to the gate have come soldiers . . . the possessions . . . from the City of Semyra . . . Now I did not repel . . . they were hidden (being) rulers from your presence" . . .

The town would seem at this time to have been in the hands of the league hostile to Egypt. Arpad was a city near Tunip, which latter was ruled by Aziru the Amorite rebel. The letter would have been written after the fall of Semyra, and of the various towns to the south which were near Sehlala.

9th November, 1893.

CIRCLE AND SERPENT ANTIQUITIES.

By C. Fox, M.R.C.S., F.S.S.

THE very interesting new contributions of the indefatigable Baurath Schick furnish matter for inferences of no less interest, and set us several problems. Two or three of them I incline to remark upon thus, in case it may throw some light upon their meaning and use :

I.

The above-named explorer twice appears to present to our notice *circular* edifices, in his last paper :—1st. In the so-called "Church of St. Martin" (*Quarterly Statement*, October, 1893, p. 283) by the great synagogue north of the Mosque el-Omar. 2nd. On the knoll containing Couder's tomb of Our Lord (*Quarterly Statement*, October, 1893, p. 298).

In the first, as I read, there is a square and a cupola or dome above it, though whether this is the whole of the ancient structure—and even its shape, probably—is not yet quite ascertained. If it be as just stated, there is presented the combination of square and circle which is highly mystical, and signified in the Great or Sacred Pyramid, and in the Freemasonry of which this is probably the original. Both figures occur, as has been observed in these *Statements* already, in the Hebrew mysteries, but the circle least ; and I am inclined to think this may be the older form—and, therefore, anterior to Judaism—causing it to be little seen under it. It is to be much remarked under Paganism, which is the corruption of the *original* worship and, therefore, hands down the primitive form of mysteries ; but the square and cube are prominent in religion